



**CHANGING ROLE OF RELIGION IN THE POLITICS OF
PUNJAB IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE 20TH CENTURY**

A THESIS

**Submitted to the
PANJAB UNIVERSITY, CHANDIGARH
For the Award of**

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

2022

in

FACULTY OF ARTS

BY

RAJWINDER KAUR

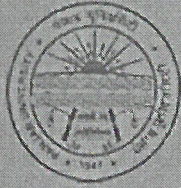
GUIDE

Prof. M. Rajivlochan

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

PANJAB UNIVERSITY

CHANDIGARH, INDIA



Department of History
Panjab University, Chandigarh

☎ 91-172-2534623

Certified that the Board of Examiners has not suggested any correction the Ph.D thesis of Ms. Rajwinder Kaur entitled "CHANGING ROLE OF RELIGION IN THE POLITICS OF PUNJAB IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE 20TH CENTURY".

(Prof. Hitender K. Patel) 28/8/23

External Examiner

Head, Department of History

Rabindra Bharati University

Kolkata - 700050

Hitendra K. Patel

Professor & Head

Department of History

Rabindra Bharati University

Kolkata - 700050


(Prof. M. Rajivlochan)

Supervisor

(Prof. Anju Suri)

Expert

Panjab University, Chandigarh
Student Approval Form for Electronic Thesis Submission

Thesis Title	Changing Role of Religion in the Politics of Punjab in the Second Half of the 20th Century	
Name of the Research Scholar	Rajwinder Kaur	Signatures
Supervisor	M RASIVLOCHAN	
Co-Supervisors	1. 2.	1. 2.
Department/Centre		

STUDENT AGREEMENT

- I represent that my thesis is my original work. Proper attribution has been given to all outside sources. I understand that I am solely responsible for obtaining any needed copyright permissions. I have obtained needed written permission statements(s) from the owner(s) of each third party copyrighted matter to be included in my work, allowing electronic distribution (if such use is not permitted by the fair use doctrine) which will be submitted to Panjab University Chandigarh.
- I hereby grant to the university and its agents the irrevocable, non-exclusive, and royalty-free license to archive and make accessible my work in whole or in part in all forms of media, now or hereafter known. I agree that the document mentioned above may be made available for worldwide access.

REVIEW, APPROVAL AND ACCEPTANCE

The thesis mentioned above has been reviewed and accepted by the student's advisor, on behalf of the program; I/We verify that this is the final, approved version of the student's thesis including all changes required. It is certified that electronic copy of thesis is the same as submitted in print form and as per the Shodhganga format.

EMBARGO AGREEMENT (OPTIONAL)

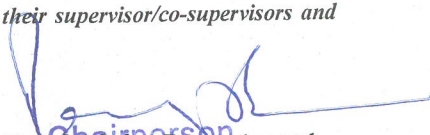
Kindly tick the appropriate option:

- No Embargo requested Embargo request for 6 months Embargo request for 1 Year

Please specify the reasons for Embargo:

- The student is applying for a patent on an invention or procedure documented in the thesis and does not wish to make the contents public until the patent application has been filed.
- The thesis contains sensitive and/or classified information
- Immediate release of the thesis may impact an existing or potential publishing agreement.
- If any other, please specify:-

Note: Research scholars are requested to please fill this form and get it signed from their supervisor/co-supervisors and HOD with proper stamp/seal and save the scanned copy of same in the CD (thesis).


Head of the Department
 Department of History
 Panjab University
 Chandigarh-160014

For Office Use only:

Incharge Thesis

Deputy Librarian (R&S)

Registrar
(Stamp)

Librarian

September 2022

DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis entitled ‘Changing Role of Religion in the Politics of Punjab in the Second Half of the 20th Century’ has been prepared by me under the guidance of Prof. M. Rajivlochan, Department of History, Panjab University Chandigarh. No part of this thesis has formed the basis for the award of any degree or fellowship previously.

Rajwinder Kaur

Department of History, Panjab University Chandigarh

Chandigarh

Date:

CERTIFICATE

I certify that Rajwinder Kaur has prepared her thesis entitled 'Changing Role of Religion in the Politics of Punjab in the Second Half of the 20th Century', for the award of Ph.D. degree of the Panjab University Chandigarh, under my guidance. She has carried out the work at the Department of History, Panjab University Chandigarh.

Prof. M. Rajivlochan

Department of History, Panjab University Chandigarh
Chandigarh

Date:

Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	<i>i</i>
LIST OF TABLES	<i>iii</i>
LIST OF FIGURES	<i>iv</i>
GLOSSARY	<i>v</i>
ABBREVIATIONS	<i>vii</i>
CHAPTER-1	1
INTRODUCTION	1
Present state of knowledge:	10
The relevance of the study:	27
The roots of Sikh revivalism	29
Emergence of the political consciousness in the Sikhs in pre partition period	33
CHAPTER-2	41
THE RELIGIO-POLITICAL STATUS OF PUNJAB: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND	41
Political dynamics	43
Literature and Punjab problem	50
Punjabi poetry	51
Punjabi Novels	55
Punjabi plays	59
Short stories	60
CHAPTER-3	67
FROM ANANDPUR SAHIB RESOLUTION TO THE EMERGENCE OF BHINDRANWALE	67
Sikh Politics in Punjab after Independence and Punjabi Suba Movement	67
Politics after Punjabi Suba Movement	71
Changing political dynamics	76
Impact of Anandpur Sahib Resolution and its revised edition	84
Resolutions passed by Akali Dal in Anandpur Sahib Resolution of 1978	86
Dispute over division of water	93
Applications of Sections 78 to 80	97
Emergence of Bhindranwale	102
New political stakes of Congress and the arrest of Bhindranwale	114
CHAPTER-4	119
OPERATION BLUESTAR: THE VIOLENT APPROACH TO SECULARISM	119
Failures of Akali-Centre negotiations and the ‘Nehar Roko Morcha’ by the Akali Dal	120
Communal activities in Punjab	123
Dharm Youdh Morcha and Bhindranwale	125

Operation Blue Star	129
Aftermath and reactions of the all-political parties on militant movement	131
Armed struggle to establish a new state based on religion called Khalistan	132
Changing patterns of political violence	136
Attempts to solve the Punjab problem through political initiatives	141
CHAPTER-5.....	151
NARRATIVES BY THE LOCAL PEOPLE: RELIGION, POLITICS OF FUNDAMENTALISM AND SECULARISM	151
Politics of Fundamentalism	151
Secularism and India	154
Data analysis and Interpretation	162
Public Opinion.....	163
Is religion an important tool for society?.....	164
Is religion important for politics?	165
Vote politics in Punjab	165
Impact of religious ‘deras’ on the politics of Punjab.....	168
Religious symbols as a political propaganda.....	169
Voting in the name of religion.....	171
Punjab crisis (Terrorism) due to indulgence of religion in politics	172
The emergence of militancy in the name of religion-based politics (1978-1995)	174
Have you ever faced any violence during the terrorism period in Punjab?.....	183
Have you ever faced any violence in the name of religion thrown by politicians?	184
Possibilities of separating religion from politics	185
CONCLUSION.....	191
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	213

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost, I would like to express my sincere gratitude and words of indebtedness to my supervisor Professor M. Rajivlochan, Department of History, Panjab University Chandigarh for his constant and profound support during my research work. His profound knowledge and wisdom about the subject under study made it easier for me to carry out the research work smoothly. His guidance and words of wisdom helped me to pursue my research interest with utmost sincerity and effort. I owe my gratitude to his indispensable guidance and motivation. Had he not been my supervisor it is not possible for me to carry out the research work with this much zeal and enthusiasm. He supported me throughout with his whole heart and soul. It is only his constant support that made it possible for me to complete this work.

My sincere thank also goes to the non-teaching staff of the department for their support and for being kind to me during my work. I am also grateful to Dr. Priyatosh Sharma, Chairperson, Department of History, Panjab University Chandigarh for his valuable insights which let me motivated during the completion of my research work. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Prof. Anju Suri, Prof. Manju Malhotra, Dr. Jasbir Singh and other faculty members in the Department of History, Panjab University Chandigarh to help me through their words of wisdom and courage to carry out this research work. I am also grateful to Prof. Pam Rajput, Dean Faculty of Arts for her kind words of encouragement and sharing her thoughts and insights about the research topic.

Special thanks to the library staff at A.C. Joshi Library, Panjab University, Chandigarh, and the Library at the Department of History, Panjab University. I am equally grateful to the Director, Punjab Digital Library Chandigarh for all his help as I searched through the archives for news and other records. I consider myself extremely fortunate to have been a recipient of the Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR) Study-cum-Travel Grant. The stipend made my research, especially my fieldwork, so much easier. I am deeply grateful to the ICHR for the same.

I am equally indebted to all the respondents for providing essential information on my research topic. I would like to applaud my husband Mr. Mandeep Singh Manesh for being a constant source of inspiration and motivation. His words of courage made it

possible for me to complete my research work. He supported me in every way possible to complete the present work. I am also highly thankful to my in-law's family for their continued support during this research work.

I am also thankful to my friends for their continuous support and valuable insights. Last but not least; I owe my big thanks to my mother, Smt. Baljit Kaur, my father Sh. Kewal Singh Batth and my brother Jagmeet Singh Batth for their kind encouragement and unbelievable support which motivated me to complete this research work. Above all, I would owe my heartfelt gratitude to Almighty God for granting me the courage, wisdom, health, and strength to carry out this work with utmost sincerity.

Place:

Rajwinder Kaur

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Unemployment allowance	83
Table 2 Utilization of rivers water in Pre-partition times as follows:.....	96
Table 3. Re allocation of rivers water according to Ravi-Beas Agreement 1981.....	100
Table 4 shows the tenure of the Chief Ministers of Punjab 1947-1995.....	117
Table 5 Showing selected areas of field-work for present research work	160

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 Geographical location of Ferozpur District	162
---	-----

GLOSSARY

<i>Shiva Bhakta</i>	Devotee of the Lord Shiva
<i>Janeu</i>	The sacrificial or sacred thread worn by Hindus
<i>Khalsa Panth</i>	A community created by Guru Gobind Singh ji in 1699
<i>Miri-Piri</i>	Two swords worn by the 6 th Guru of Sikhs Guru Har Gobind
<i>Akal Takht</i>	The Akal Takht is one of five Takhts (seats of power) of the Sikhs
<i>Udasi sect</i>	Udasi is a religious sect of ascetic sadhus centred in northern India
<i>Purohits</i>	Priest
<i>Jana Sangha</i>	A political party in India from 1951 to 1977
<i>Dharm Yudh Morcha</i>	The Dharam Yudh Morcha (righteous campaign) was a political movement launched on 4 August 1982, by the Akali Dal in partnership with Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale
<i>Jajiya</i>	Tax imposed on non-Muslims living in Islamic lands.
<i>Kharaj</i>	Tax on agricultural land and produce according to Islamic law
<i>Tauhid-i-Ilahi</i>	Religious sect proposed by Mughal Emperor Akbar in 1582
<i>Mahants</i>	A chief priest of a temple
<i>Ganapati</i>	God of wisdom and goodness
<i>Shivaji festival</i>	Birthday celebration of king Shivaji
<i>Dasam Granth</i>	Manuscript written by Sikh Guru Gobind Singh
<i>Morcha</i>	Morcha is a hostile demonstration against the government.
<i>Rahitnamas</i>	Rules and regulations for the Sikhs
<i>Sannyasis</i>	Life of renunciation and the fourth stage within the Hindu system of four life stages

<i>Tat Khalsa</i>	Sikh faction
<i>Pravda</i>	The official newspaper of the Communist party in the USSR
<i>Punjabiyaat</i>	Punjabiyaat meaning 'being Punjabi'
<i>Shuddhi Movement</i>	Shuddhi Movement was started by Arya Samaj in earlier part of 20 th Century to bring back the people who transformed their religion to Islam and Christianity
<i>Punjabi Suba</i>	A long drawn political agitation launched by the Akali Dal demanding the creation of a separate Punjabi-speaking state
<i>Ragis, Dhadis</i>	Musicians and singers of religious hymns
<i>Dasvandh</i>	Dasvandh is the one tenth part (or 10%) of one's income
<i>Guru Granth Sahib</i>	The holy book of writings of the Sikh Gurus
<i>Deradars</i>	Priest of Religious shrines
<i>Kshatriya</i>	A caste, supposedly warrior
<i>Panth</i>	A denomination
<i>Pundits</i>	Priests
<i>Sarpanch</i>	Head of a village
<i>Iftar</i>	It is a meal taken by Muslims at sun down to break the daily fast during Ramzan
<i>Padam Shree</i>	(in India) an award for distinguished service in any field

ABBREVIATIONS

AISSF	All India Sikh Student Federation
BJP	Bhartiya Janta Party
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
DGP	Director General Police
DSGPC	Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee
DYM	Dharam Yudh Morcha
GOI	Government of India
HSG	Hind Samachar Group
ISI	Inter Service Intelligence
INC	Indian National Congress
JSB	Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale
LTTE	Liberation Tiger of Tamil Elam
PEPSU	Patiala and East Punjab States Union
RSS	RashtriyaSwayamsevak Sangh
SAD	Shiromani Akali Dal
SGPC	Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee
NWFP	North West Frontier Province of Pakistan
CRPF	Central Reserve Police Force
ICS	Indian Civil Services
C.P.I. (M)	Communist Party of India (Marxist)
D.M.K	DravidaMunnetraKazhagam
U.S.	United States
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
KCF	Khalistan Commando Force
KLF	Khalistan Liberation Force
BBMB	Bhakra Beas Management Board
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
UAD	United Akali Dal

CHAPTER-1

INTRODUCTION

One of the widely held premises relating to social and political dynamics in South Asia is that contrary to the ideology of secularism, religion is central to all activity in the secular domain.

(Madan T. , 1987, p. 750)

The mutual connection between the religion and the politics is very deep. Religion tried to control the political system through its symbols, ideas, and institutions. Religion influences people on various levels, i.e., ideological, emotional and personal etc. Down the ages, people have been inspired by religious teachings and message to act against injustice and oppression. In India, the role of religion is more significant as it has an essential impact on every aspect of its people's life. In India, since the ancient time, religion was an integral part of dynasties. Mauryas were Buddhists and Jainists, Guptas were Vaishnavites and Harsha was Shivaitev (Singh U. , 2008). The medieval period of Indian history is also demarcated on a religious base. Some Turkish and Mughal Emperors tried to impose Sharia law over India to some extent. Even economy was not free from religious demarcation as *Jajiyah* and *Kharaj* were religious taxes for particular communities. Akbar scrapped pilgrimage tax in the name of public welfare (Chandra, 2007). Fights and murder on a religious basis are intervened in the history of Punjab and Sikhism (Singh K. , 1966). Martyrdom of Guru Arjun Dev Ji, Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji, and the martyrdom of the young sons of the tenth Guru etc. are an example of it (Banerjee, 1972). Since Guru Nanak to Banda Bahadur religion and politics both has a common source of legitimacy. Actually, throughout the history, politics acquired legitimacy from religion. Iltutmish to Sikander Lodi seeks Khalifa's approval for their enthronement. Akbar tried to come out little from religious umbrella but for this, he has to establish his own version of religion which was '*Tauhid-i-Ilahi*' (Mehta, 1979). Although, Aurangzeb destroys all the secular elements from Mughal polity and the Islamic fanaticism caused the collapse of Mughal Empire. However, a historian like Muzaffar Alam (1993) envisages Aurangzeb's political ambitions in his religious orthodoxy but that is

another debatable issue. The noticeable thing is that the politics of Indian history has been defined always under religious paradigm. The 1857 Revolt erupted primarily on a religious (Khan, 1859) (Savarkar, 1909) (Shaftesbury, 1858) basis in Barrackpore military camp. Proclamation by the Queen Victoria in Council to the Princes, Chiefs, and people of India, published by the Governor General at Allahabad, November 1st, 1858, precisely prohibited the British interference on religio-cultural matters of Indian peoples as-

“We shall respect the rights, dignity and honor of native princes as our own, and we desire that they as well as our own subjects, should enjoy the prosperity and that social advancement which can only be secured by internal peace and good government. Firmly relying ourselves on the truth of Christianity and acknowledging with gratitude the solace of religion, we disclaim alike the right and the desire to impose our convictions on any of our subjects. We declare it to be our royal will and pleasure that none be in any wise favored, none molested or disquieted by reason of their religious faith or observances, but that all shall alike enjoy the equal and impartial protection of the law and we do strictly charge and enjoin all those who may be in authority under us that the substance from all interference with the religious belief or worship of any of our subjects, on pain of our highest displeasures. And it is our further will that so far as may be, our subjects of whatever race or creed, be freely and impartially admitted to offices in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified by their education ability and integrity, duty to discharge. We know, and respect, the feelings of attachment with which the natives of India regard the lands inherited by them from their ancestors, and we desire to protect them in all rights connected there with, subject to the equitable demands of the state and we will that generally, in framing and administering the law due regard be paid to the ancient rights usages and customs of India.”

The ‘divide and rule’ policy of Britishers (Sandhu A. H., 2009) (Pande, 1987) could survive due to a strong religious affinity of Indian people, because the Indian people can be easily incited in the name of religion. They ready to kill each other in the name of religion. After the Revolt of 1857 Britishers have realized very well that they could rule over India unhindered if they keep themselves apart from the religious and cultural matters of people.

It is remarkable to notice that if there would have been the absence of Hindu and Muslim religions in India, the Indo-Pak partition would not have happened. About 10 million (Butalia, 1998) (Brass, 2013) people massacred in the partition and the basic question of riots was not only political but religio-political.

In the early 20th century anti-colonial mobilization often occurred on religious issues and brought people into the nationalist struggle as religious communities. For example, the Akali agitations against the corrupt, British-supported Gurudwara managements between 1919 and 1926 brought the Sikh community into the nationalist struggle. This brave and relentless agitation against ruthless *Mahants* eventually led to a strong movement against British rule itself (Josh S. S., 1977) (Singh M. , 1977) (Singh J. , 2020). The Khilafat agitation against the British in 1920-21 to restore the Caliphate in Turkey — once again a religious issue — drew this time the Muslims to the freedom struggle. The Khilafat movement contributed to the emergence of early India communism. Many Indian Muslims left India to join the defence of Caliphate. Several of them became communists whilst visiting Soviet territory. Some Hindus also joined the Muslim muhajirs in the travels to the Soviet areas (Overstreet & Windmiller, 1959) (Josh B. , 1979). These movements contributed to building a nationalist struggle against colonial rule, but also fortified a false sense of a homogeneous religious community disregarding the differences of class, region and lifestyle (Minault, 1982). Religious icons and symbols were also used to heighten anti-imperialist fervour. The popularization of the *Ganapati* festival, the *Shivaji* festival, rakhitying was done to involve the Hindus in anti-colonial struggle in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. *Kali* worship was also popularized in Bengal as a part of the Swadeshi and Boycott movements after the partition of Bengal in 1905 (Sarkar S. , 1989). The use of these Hindu festivals and symbols while serving the purpose of anti-colonial mobilization also ended up alienating communities from each other.

The advent of religion based political parties can be taken as the emergence of new religio-political legitimacy in India during modern period. Muslim League, Hindu Maha Sabha kind of political parties was concerned to shape India on their ideological basis. Sharia law and Hindu Rashtra were their utopias.

The All India Hindu Mahasabha, lying generally dormant since its foundation in 1915, now acquired a new life and began to hold its annual sessions on a regular basis. John Zavos (2000) argues: “By the 1920’s, when the *Sangathan* movement dominated the agenda of the Hindu Mahasabha, this notion of consolidation had developed into a defining principle of Hindu nationalism.” Sadly, this party also supported the writing of pamphlets/articles/pieces critical of Prophet Muhammad and

the leading Muslim religious and historical personalities. The Mahasabha's hierarchy demanded that Hindi language (Balabushevich, 1964) should be the *lingua franca* of India; it also called for the purification of the Hindus by withdrawing participation of Hindus in Muslim festivals; it even encouraged playing music before mosques at the time of prayers and instigated anti-cowkilling riots. One of Mahasabha's aims was to train Hindus for "self-defence" with the aim of driving out (meaning ethnic cleansing) the Muslims from India. The Mahasabha followers also took pride in identifying themselves with highly charged communal politics. The Hindu Mahasabha's anti-Muslim policies therefore led to the opening of one of the saddest chapters on Hindu-Muslim relations in India. The net result was that the Mahasabha policies widened the gulf between the Hindus and Muslims, the two major communities in India and the chances of any long-lasting unity between those two principal communities of India were slowly but surely destroyed (Andersen, 2019) (Chanderdeep, 2008) The Muslims felt quite insecure, annoyed and were greatly apprehensive of the intentions of the Hindu majority in India. The Muslims therefore, concluded that the aim of the Mahasabha was to establish Hindu ascendancy and supremacy leading to the unchallenged and unquestioned Hindu Raj in India – according to their manifesto (Malik, 2012).

On the other hand, the first political organization established by the Muslims of the British India was the Muhammeden Association formed at Calcutta, on January 31, 1856 (Majumdar, 1965). In April 1863, Nawab Abdul Latif (1828-93), the first Muslim member of the Bengal Legislative Assembly, founded the Muhammeden Literary Society at Calcutta, which *inter alia* aimed at creating interest in politics among the Muslims and bringing the Muslim requirements to the notice of rulers. The Society presented various addresses to the Viceroy and the Lieutenant Governors requesting redressal of Muslim grievances. The Government of India (GOI) also approached the Society on several occasions to get its opinion on issues affecting the Muslim community (Ikram, 1965).

On May 12, 1878, Syed Ameer Ali (1849-1928) founded the Central National Muhammeden Association at Calcutta and soon its branches were formed throughout India. The Association aimed at the wellbeing of the Muslims using all legitimate and constitutional means and their political regeneration by moral revival, and to obtain recognition of their just and reasonable claims (Majumdar, 1965) (Chughtai, 1962). In

1887, the Association attempted to hold an all-India Muslim conference in order to create some degree of solidarity among the ‘disintegrated’ Muslim masses. However, its endeavours could not be materialized otherwise ‘the history of the Muslim League would have been anticipated 20 years earlier’ (Chughtai, 1962). In 1883, under the guidance of Syed Ahmad Khan (1817-98), the Aligarh based Muslim leadership founded a Muhammadan Political Association with the object to protect the Muslim political interests; make efforts for their material advancement, and to represent their legitimate interests, rights and requirements before the GOI (Malik, 2012).

The foundation of Indian National Congress (INC) on December 28, 1885, claiming to represent all communities of India, posed another challenge to the Muslim leadership. In its very first session held in 1885, the Congress passed a resolution urging the reconstitution of the Legislative Councils on a representative basis thus suggesting a Hindu domination in them. Syed Ahmad vehemently opposed that proposal arguing that in such a case, the Muslims would be in a permanent minority and instead exhorted the Muslims to raise their educational status. In December 1886, he founded All India Muhammadan Educational Congress to create communal consciousness and solidarity among the Muslim community of India along with raising their educational standards (Malik, 2012).

In August 1888, Syed Ahmad founded the Indian Patriotic Association, which *inter alia* aimed at informing the British nation that the INC did not represent all communities of India (Malik, 2012). He also approached leading Islamic organizations and sought their assistance for fostering combined resistance to the INC. Consequently, almost every prominent Muslim personality and institution showed their resentment against the INC and resolutions of that effect were passed in the Muslim gatherings held at Lahore, Allahabad, Lucknow, Madras, Meerut and several other places (Malik, 2012). In 1892, the Indian Council Act was enacted accepting the INC demands to some extent which was again opposed by Syed Ahmad. He maintained that in a country like India, where homogeneity did not exist in any one of these fields, the introduction of representative government could not produce any beneficial results; rather it could only result in disturbing the peace and prosperity of the country (Malik, 2012).

On December 1893, in a meeting of influential Muslim leaders held at Aligarh, it was decided to form the Muhammadan Anglo Oriental Defence Association to promote political interests of the Muslims and place their point of view before the GOI and the British public. During 1894-96, the Association remained quite active and its demands were almost identical to the concessions, which were later asked by the Shimla Deputation (Jain M. , 1965). For instance, in a memorandum, drawn by Syed Ahmad in 1896, the Association *inter alia* demanded separate communal electorates with the Muslims voting for the Muslims only and weightage in representation of the Muslims in municipal councils and district boards (Malik, 2012).

With the dawn of the twentieth century, political status of the Muslims of India underwent a tremendous deterioration mainly due to the Hindu-Muslim riots, Hindi-Urdu controversy, absence of separate Muslim representation in the legislative and municipal councils, and feeble Muslim presence in the government services. The Muslims were growingly recognizing absence of a countrywide organization like the INC, through which they could effectively put forward their demands. For instance, in a letter addressed to The Pioneer, Moulvi Mehdi Hassan (1859) argued that while Syed Ahmad was alive, he had a great influence among the government circles, but after his death, a Muslim political organization was necessary to keep the government informed about the Muslim sentiments. Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk Moulvi Mushtaq Husain (1841-1917) observed that the Muslim community was in a predicament with difficult alternatives of either joining the INC or establishing a corresponding political organization of their own (Hamid, 1967). Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk Syed Mahdi Ali Khan (1837-1907), in his article published in the Aligarh Institute Gazette, also advocated that after the demise of Syed Ahmad, ‘the necessity of forming a Muslim organization was becoming more and more imperative’ (Malik, 2012). *Mian* Muhammad Shah Din (1868-1918), while commenting on the political situation in the columns of the Civil & Military Gazette (Lahore), argued that the time had arrived when Muslim leaders should take practical steps to safeguard interests of their community (Ahmad, 1962: 344). Likewise, Mian Fazl-i-Husain (1877-1936) while addressing a meeting organized by the Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam at Lahore highlighted the absolute need of a political organization which could unify the Muslims and fight for their rights (Husain, 1945).

Mian Muhammad Shafi (1869 – 1932) also contributed a series of articles in *The Observer*, in which he presented a sketch of the proposed organization suggesting its name as the ‘Indian Muslim Patriotic League (Malik, 2012). In a meeting of the leading Muslims of India held at Lucknow on October 20-21, 1901, under the presidentship of Syed Sharafuddin (1856-1921), it was unanimously resolved that a Muslim organization should be formed to look after their social and political interests (Ahmad, 1977: 69). In July 1903, the Muhammadan Political Association was established at a gathering of the Muslims assembled at Saharanpur (Malik, 2012). In March 1904, *Mian Shah Din* once again raised the issue of formulation of a central Muslim political organization, ‘with a view to take such political action, as under the circumstances, might commend itself to the Muslim community’ (Bashir, n.d.: 344). While these deliberations were going on, the provinces of Bengal and Assam were re-constituted in October 1906, to form two new provinces of Bengal and Eastern Bengal and Assam (Zaidi, 1964: 114-122). The Muslims welcomed that move, as in the later province, they were in a majority. Nawab Salimullah (1884-1915) of Dacca (now Dhaka), the capital of the new province, was among the prominent leaders favouring partition. He and his colleagues decided to organize the Muslim community into a compact body and to set up the Muhammadan Political Union to serve as a mouthpiece for the expression of view on all social and political issues related with the Muslim community (Malik, 2012). Meanwhile, on July 20, 1906, Viscount John Morley (1838-1923), the Secretary of State for India (SOSI), while delivering his budget speech in the House of Commons, hinted towards introduction of reforms and extension of the representative element in the Indian Legislative Council (Malik, 2012). The speech created great concern among the Muslims and, therefore, Aftab Ahmad Khan (1867-1930), Muhammad Yakub (1879-1942), Nawab Muhammad Ismail Khan Sherwani (1852-1922) and other Muslim leaders contacted Mohsin-ul-Mulk to represent the Muslim point of view to the GOI as it meant permanent Hindu domination. In fact, there was a general feeling among the young educated Muslims that old Aligarh leadership by refusing to join politics, remained unable to safeguard the Muslim political interests, and they did not suggest any plans for future except asking for funds to strengthen the M.A.O. College, Aligarh. There was also a general consensus that at present, no Muslim could get into the legislative councils by election and the Muslims appointed by the GOI’s nomination could not be considered as their true representatives. Therefore, in case of introduction of election element on a more

extended scale, the Hindus would capture the seats because of their majority, and consequently, the Muslims would remain unable to get into the councils by the elections. Therefore, they decided to submit a memorial to the Viceroy to draw his attention towards the Muslim apprehensions (Malik, 2012).

The draft memorial was prepared by Nawab Imad-ul-Mulk Syed Husain Bilgrami (1844-1926), with the help of Mohsin-ul-Mulk and others, and was discussed and finalized in a gathering of the Muslim leaders held at Lucknow on September 15-16, 1906 (Parwaz, 1990). Consequently, the Deputation comprising of 35 prominent Muslim leaders, headed by Sultan Muhammad Shah Agha Khan III (1877-1957), was received by the Viceroy, Earl of Minto II (1845-1914) at Shimla on October 1, 1906. The Deputation argued that the position accorded to the Muslim community in any kind of representation, direct or indirect, and in other ways affecting their status and influence, should be commensurate not merely with their population figures, but also with their political significance and their role in the defence of the British Empire. Referring to the inadequate Muslim representation in the councils, the deputation asserted that introduction of European type of representative institutions, without consideration of peculiar social and religious conditions of India, 'might place the Muslim interests at the mercy of an 'unsympathetic' majority'. The delegation proposed adoption of the separate electorates for ensuring Muslim presence in the municipal bodies, district boards and legislative councils. In reply, the Viceroy assured the delegation that the political rights and interests of the Muslim community would be protected in the electoral representation (Parwaz, 1990). Earlier, in a meeting of the Muslim representatives held at Lucknow on September 15-16, 1906, besides drafting the memorial to be presented by the Shimla Deputation, discussions were also carried out to form an All-India Muslim political organization to safeguard the Muslim interests. It was decided to take advantage of the gathering of the Muslim representatives on eve of annual meeting of the All-India Muhammeden Educational Conference (AIMEC) scheduled to be held at Dacca during the Christmas holidays and lay its foundation at once, formulate a constitution, and call upon the provincial leaders to set up its branches. On Muhammad Shafi's (1869-1932) proposal, it was also decided to name the proposed organization as Muslim League and Mohsin-ul-Mulk and Viqar-ul-Mulk were elected provisional secretaries of the proposed association to move forward in

that respect (Robinson, 1974: 358-418; Zakria, 1970: 70-80). Meanwhile, in November 1906, Nawab Salimullah of Dacca who earlier could not join the Shimla Deputation due to an eye operation circulated another scheme for the formation of a Muslim political institution named as the All-India Muslim Confederacy (The Bengalee, 1906: December 14).

When the Muslim leadership assembled at Dacca in December 1906 to participate in the AIMEC deliberations, Salimullah's scheme also came under discussion along with other proposals. Eventually, a public meeting of the Muslim leaders was held on December 30, 1906, with Viqar-ul-Mulk in the chair. After deliberations, it was agreed that a political organization of the Muslims be established styled as the All-India Muslim League (AIML), with the objectives: -a) To promote among the Muslims of India, feelings of loyalty to the British Government, and to remove any misconception that may arise as to intention of the Government with regard to any of its measures. b) To protect and advance the political rights and interests of the Muslims of India, and to respectfully represent their needs and aspirations to the Government. c) To prevent the rise among the Muslims of India of any feeling of hostility towards other communities, without prejudice to the other afore mentioned objects of the League (Malik, 2012).

The concluding years of the British rule in India witnessed the most gruesome Hindu-Muslim riots. The 'Direct Action Day' called by the Muslim League in 1946 set off large scale violence in Calcutta that continued for several months. Town after town witnessed killing sprees. Violence in Bengal and Bihar spread to the Punjab and NWFP. This was a time when the non-separatist Muslim leadership was completely overshadowed and popular support began to shift to the Muslim League, a fact which goes on to show the importance of violence for communal politics. Partition of the sub-continent took a further toll upon Hindu-Muslim relations. Communal killings whose number touched one million—and the accompanying displacement inflicted deep wounds on the national psyche and formed the basis of communal politics in independent India. Thus, the close affinity between religion and politics continued even after 1947.

In Punjab, after independence the emergence of Bhindranwale, Akali Dal and SGPC etc. were evidence of same political-religious consciousness. The Akali Dal

which is an organization of the Sikhs has starts propagate after partition that religion and politics is inseparable. It has become a part of the Sikh ethos and Sikh psyche maybe Khalsa establishment of 10th Guru conditioned that, religion is not safe unless it is defended by political sovereignty. In Punjab, not only Akali Dal but other political parties have also used religion as a tool often.

I

Present state of knowledge:

India is a highly heterogeneous region with sharp fault lines in race, religion and language. Much violence has been undertaken at the name of religion. In reality religion is often used, misused and abused in conflicts that often have serious political, economic and social-cultural motivations and causes. This tried to seek the role of religion in the politics of India's great region Punjab which is again reorganized in 1966 when Haryana was excluded from it after the partition of India in 1947. Thus, present research tried to find out the problem in present Punjab. Present research is not only about how religio- political forces have gained salience in the politics of Punjab but also about how the religion has become the most potent ideology and gathered a mass following in the region. The analysis about the role of religion in politics in general and Punjab in particular must be preferred with the fact that the growing religion- politics nexus is a global phenomenon: 'around the world, religion is leaving, or refusing to accept, its assigned place in the private sphere (Haynes, 1998). The world wide religious trends depict a new revolution which is a complete reversal of the prediction made in the 1960s that religion will eventually collapse and that most of humanity will be either atheists or agnostics (Cox, 1965). The trend, insisting on the return of religion to the political sphere, began in the 1980s almost four decades ago. Jose Casanova (1994), basing his analysis on empirical data, argued that in the 1980s religion was deprived in a number of countries around the world. Similarly, Jeffrey Hadden (1987) challenged the basis of the claims that religion was supposed to lose ground and insisted that these claims are based on a doctrine rather than the results of the systematic inquiry. Peter Berger (1999) argued that 'the assumption that we live in a secularized world is false.' He again argued that certain religious institutions have lost power and influence in many societies, but both

old and new religious beliefs and practices have nevertheless continued in the lives of individuals, sometimes taking new institutional forms and sometimes leading to great explosions of religious fervor. Conversely, religiously identified institutions can play social or political roles even when few people believe or practice the religion supposedly represented by these institutions. But it is interesting to note that Peter Berger in the 1960s claimed that the religion will have very little if any, role in public life. Even in 1999, some held the idea that religion had lost its public role and that the idea of God had run its course. Each theorist believed that religion in a fundamental sense an illusion. There are plenty of debates over the status of religion and its role in politics and society. The effort, here, is to examine the indispensability of religion in Punjab people's life. Whatever the preaching of a different religion are they assert strongly that the religion is but subjective phenomenon. Religion is but personal practice and based on inner purification and intrinsic realizations. As German Philosopher, Friedrich Nietzsche (1882) claimed 'God is dead and from now humanity is free from Godly bondages. Few scholars have worked on social functions of religion. Holt and Winstone (1958) in their book considered the functional significance of selected religious beliefs and symbolism. Primarily, the vision into social functions of religion has been at a micro level. Religion as a social institution and religious leadership has been investigated too. But the most significant aspect of this book in this research is linked to one of its sections related to 'religion and the other major social institutions' in the name of "the political order and religion."

Berger and Luckman (1967) on the sociology of knowledge wherein there is a profound affiliation between human thoughts and the social framework within which it arises. They explain how knowledge common sense, values, and social norms are socially constituted there by explicating constraints and extent of the society's influence on an individual life. With this, the knowledge obtained and ensuing social institution forms an objective reality to exist separately of our subjectivity, book makes many distinctive points, what someone think, someone know, it claims shaped by someone's societies to an extent for beyond what one might expect, thought occur in a social context, if for no other reason than that language itself a social in nature. Even the concept of *self* has a social component. They trace the idea of collective identity as false. Individuals shape societies as much as societies shape individuals, and the process is a continuing flux.

Wach (1971) traces the sociological function of religion. He discusses the sociological function of doctrine and cults as a theoretical and practical expression of religious experience. Indirectly he has mentioned the relationship between religion and politics and also traces the inter-relation of socio-political and religious grouping. Wach also mentions that the relationship between religion and the state has historically been as the most important form of organization of society, and then moves to the types of religious authority (includes organization of religious groups, charisma and leadership, the founder of religion, the reformer, the prophet, the seer, the magician, the priest, the religious, the audience). So, in the frame of the sociology of religion from the first half of the 20th century the social function of religion and the related concepts were considered and explored and this has been continued by various thinkers. Nottingham (1971) presents a socio-functional view of religion. Two important sections of this book that are relevant to this research are: 'religion and functional approach' and 'religion and revolution in the non-western world.' The two debates on 'religious interpretation of economic and political system' and 'religious organization and democracy' are also very relevant. In the first part, from a historical point of view, she mentions the use of political authority and institutions as a means to achieve a religious goal. Nottingham presents three social models to explain the social function of religion. First depicts a society in which religious values predominate, the model second is a combination of religious and secular values. And third is a type of society in which secular values are in the ascendant. She also traces the positive function of religion as an active agent in furthering changes in society and a negative function of religion as a barrier to social change. The influence of religion in revolutionary change is also mentioned and it could be concluded that in a colonial setup religion can bring about a revolutionary change.

Johnstone (1975) in his book traces the relationship between religion and society particularly in America. Three sections of this book are relevant for this research, the first one is 'the effects of religion on behavior and attitudes' including the effect of religion on social values, racial attitudes, anti-Semitism, marriage and the family, religious values and especially political party affiliation. The second one is 'religion and politics' which investigates the relationship of religion and politics and the relationship between church and state, and the influence of religion on politics including legislating morality, religion and voting behavior especially in USA, radical

right politics and religion, and politics in the third world. And in the third section 'the impact of religion on social structure', explains the functions of a religion performs for a society- and how religion performs an integrative or cohesive function for society in particular.

Madan (1991) examines different sides of religion and religious life in India from ethnographic and historical perspectives. This book captures the great diversity of religious phenomena in India and brings together the theoretical perspective of a wide variety of scholars. Madan described the diversity or plurality of religions in India at two levels, at a global level the major religions of India were in focus, and second the intra religious level, at which sectarian or quasi-sectarian movement operates. Book also trace how religious communities make their identities, for example, Macleod's (1991) article "*the Khalsa rahit*" especially pay attention to Sikh identity, in this context, the drawing up of the codes of conduct, *rahitnamas* for the Khalsa was a significant development. For Sikhs, the only true source of spiritual knowledge is the Gurbani, the word of the gurus, in Guru Granth Sahib. Those born in other religious traditions are welcome to embrace the Sikh faith identity. But a Sikh who lox in the observer of the Sikh way of life or worse follows the practice of other traditions is a lapsed or fallen (*patit*). So, he argues that Sikh faith in its Khalsa version is exclusivist not pluralist. Within last point he gives the detail account of many religious places like shrines, temples, church and gurdwaras emerged as a center of political activities.

With regard to theoretical debates and the social and political functions of religion, Davis (1994) traces the theoretical aspect of the function of religion and the opinions of the thinkers. In the chapter of political use and misuse of religious language, Davis shows how some nations or followers of a particular religion use religion in favor of their political interests.

The work of Emmons and Paloutzian (2003) dealing with the psychological aspect could be mentioned here. In their article 'The Psychology of Religion', they discuss the progress in the psychology of religion by highlighting its rapid growth during the last three decades preceding their work. They have emphasized on the cognitive and effective basis of religious experience within personality and social psychology.

Other important work in the context of social functions of religion produced by, Dhillon (2003), he traces that how religion makes identities. Religion has played a major role in anchoring ethnic and national identities; book additionally recognizes the multiple cross cutting ways that religion intersects with gender, sexuality, race, and social class. Ammerman argued that while religious institutions are important sites for the construction of religious identities, they are not the only suppliers of religious narratives, rather, that as identities intersect and are embodied in diverse institutional, relational and material contexts, religious and other identity signals are shaped from numerous religious and non-religious locates (e.g., commodified evangelical body tattoos, clothing and jewelry in pop culture). Williams argued that religion and religious communities comprise a natural base for social movement activism. He discusses the multiple resources (e.g., rituals, rhetoric, clergy leaders) religion provides for collective mobilization and the dilemmas religious social movements confront in negotiating the external political and cultural environment (e.g., political compromise versus ideological purity). So, in this part, some important sources in sociology were looked into, to know how sociologists see religion and its function in society are also discussed. In continuation of above-mentioned works of the sociologist, it's also very important to examine the political function of religion in the context of developing countries in particular.

In the domain of political science, religion is usually studied in relation to politics and power. Moyser (1991) described the relationship between politics and religion in some national contexts. According to him religion and politics have a lot to do with each other both interact in a number of important but in complex ways: whether it is at the local level, national and international level, whether it involves ordinary citizens, activists or major leaders, whether it concerns legislative institutions, pressure groups or competing political parties and ideologies, whether it is the first world of liberal democracy, the second world of state socialism, the third world of developing countries or the fourth world of abject poverty, religion and politics relate. He believes that 'secularization' or 'modernization' has not a marginalized religion in the modern world at least not to the extent that it ceases to have much relevance to politics or politics to religion. By studying various countries like Federal Republic of Germany, Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, Middle East and the Islamic world, Egypt and Iran, contemporary India, southern Africa, Latin

America, Central America, North America, he concluded that within the polity a clear religious imprint can be detected in every facet. “At the level of political culture, religious beliefs contribute; at the constitutional level, issues of the church and the state still remain contentious. And within the arenas of pressure group politics, electoral politics and policy making, religion takes a substantial part.” (Moyser: 1991). Other important works on religion and politics are ‘Politics and Religion in the White South’ edited by Feldman (2005), ‘Making Religion, Making the State, the Politics of Religion in Modern China’ edited by Yoshiko Ashiwa and David L. Wank (2009), and ‘Politics and Religion in Modern Japan, Red Sun, White Lotus’ edited by Roy Starrs (2011) are presenting that kind of setup in various countries.

Anthony Gill (2001) discusses that contrary to the ideas that tend to downplay the role of religion in political life, the vast majority of people in the world profess a strong allegiance to some spiritual faith. He believed that secularization theory has led many comparative scholars to ignore this potentially significant variable, but the resurgence of religious fundamentalism and “new religious politics” to consider religious factors as important. He mentions the “religious economy” school as a research body that seeks to address the problems of the research in this area by developing theories builds on solid micro-level foundations of human behaviour.

Another area that attracted attention in political science is the relation between religion and nationalism. Roger Friedland (2001) argues that religion participates in the symbolic order of the nation-state and contemporary nationalism is suffered from the religion. He believed that “religious nationalism calls into question the theoretical duality of the social and the cultural, a divide variety identified with the material and the symbolic class and status, economy and civil society.” Religious nationalism requires an institutional approach to the project of collective representation. It offers a particular ontology of power, ontology revealed and affirmed through its politicized practices and the central object of its political concern, practices that locate collective solidarity in religious faith shared by embodied families, not in contract and consent enacted by abstract individual citizens. Understanding the institutional basis of religious nationalist discourse helps to understand its affinities with socialist politics. He argues that religious nationalism cannot be adequately understood either through Pierre Bourdieu’s theory of Habitus and Field or through Jeffery Alexander’s theory of civil society. The first one imports the logic of dominant institutions and thereby culturally homogenizes

the institutional diversity of contemporary society, making the stake of politics a culturally empty space of domination. The second one identifies civil society who democratic political culture and thereby makes unnecessarily restrictive assumptions about the institutional sources of collective representation in modern society.

Kenneth D. Wald, Adam L. Silverman, and Kevin S. Fridy (2005) examines that after a long period of postwar neglect by mainstream scholars, religion assumed a new prominence in political science during the late 1970s, but in their view, much of the previous research focused on specific episodes or groups, without drawing on developing general theories, they have explored various expressions of religiously based political action from the vantage point of the social movement theory that regards the motives, means, and opportunities of political movements. They conclude that the translation of religious grievances into political action is contingent on a string of conditions that involve the interplay of motive, means, and opportunity. In their opinion, 'scholars should approach religiously engaged social movements with the same theoretical frameworks used to understand secular political forces and that focusing these interpretive lenses on religion will illuminate issues of general interest to the discipline.'

Michael O. Emerson and David Hartman (2006) argue that religious fundamentalism has risen to worldwide prominence since the 1970s. By reviewing the researches on fundamentalist movements, the writer tries to understand religious fundamentalism, the reason for their resurgence, their characteristics and possible links to violence, and their relation to modernity. Besides, by surveying work over the past two decades before their writing, they try to find both substantial progress in sociological research on such movements and major holes in conceptualizing and understanding religious fundamentalism. However, because of the growth of fundamentalism, certain religious movements in some countries and other issues related to religious groups, the post-secularism age has been outlined. The article of Effie Fokas (2009) 'Religion: Towards a Post-Secular Europe' is an important article that try to find some signs of post-secularism, although the signs themselves can show that secularism is related to the religious light and equality and plurality, he traces the patterns of religion at the national level in Europe, the role of religion in the European integration project, mobility and the changing religious landscape and religion in European public debate. Through these arguments, especially the issue related to

Islam, he examines some moves likely towards a post-secular age of Europe especially. His findings, indeed, confirm the new claim of Peter Berger that modernity does not necessarily lead to a decline of religion, but to religious pluralism. However, he believed that post secular age can be a new stage within a secular age itself that might lead to a redefinition of secularization or change of views.

Daniel Philpott (2009) in his article explains that “the past generation has witnessed a resurgence of religion in global politics, but political science has been slow to catch up with it.” In his words, “the reason lies in the secularism embedded in the field’s major theories, one that reflects actual secularism in world politics, beginning with the events surrounding the peace of Westphalia in 1648 and growing steadily through the middle twentieth century.” He believed that in the present time numbers of political scientists are exploring religion in ways that depart from secular assumptions. But the focus of present research is what kind of role played by religion in the political system of India in general and particular in Punjab region. For this purpose, the writers worked on it are also mentioned here. The survey of the literature on religion and politics indicates two main findings which are popular among scholars and historians of religion and politics. First, politicians have misused the religion in their own interests. The second vision among historians is that manifestation of religion in the politics of Punjab is an assertion of an identity.

First, politicians have misused the religion in their own interests. Rather, we find two parallel views on this subject among regional (Punjab) and national scholars. First, at a national level, Ahmad (1972) notices that power was a central issue that motivated the religious elite to enter into politics. Franklin A. Presler (1987) examines the relation of state, religion and politics in the south Indian state of Tamil Nadu. He focuses on the important position of Hindu temples in modern Tamil Nadu politics, and the state’s role in regulating and shaping them. Because of social, economic and political reasons, the temples have been significant in south India throughout the modern era and have attracted the attention of governments and politicians. The political parties have the relation with temples as the sources of patronage and conflict. The consequence of this bureaucratization has been the legitimacy for the secular state. Van Der Veer (2002) examines the religious use in South Asia and particularly in modern India. He noticed that the study of state formation provides a crucial perspective for the unraveling of the multiple

transformations of religion in the colonial and postcolonial public sphere. He believed that the transformation of the public sphere in this region shows the increasing importance of religious movements and of the political use of religious images in technologies of communication. Through this there have been attempts to create a homogenous religious community, not only within the national territorial space but also a transnational space. This offers a violent confrontation with the other. Amar Singh (2003) observes the Gandhian point of view on religion in politics. Gandhi believes in the recognizing the considerable values of religion in politics, according to him some moral values such as truth, justice, patience, a brotherhood of man and non-violence are essential for politics, which are infused by religion, but Gandhi not in the favor of communalism. Engineer (2004) notices that religion emotionally appealed and thus acts as a powerful instrument of mobilization of potential and latent elements. When religious sentiments and cultural ethos are manipulated for selfish gains, the results are communal tension and communal forces in this country have exploited diversity, especially the religious diversity, for creating conflict and thus tried to monopolize the votes of one particular community. Banu (2009) focuses on political parties, which played the game of politics with the issue of religion. According to her, adoption of religious symbolism in political mobilization was one of the factors that led to the huge increase in the BJP vote and share, from 2 to 184 seats in 1984 and 1999. She captures the variations in the form of social conflict lobbying shape in different parts of the country and their impact on the future of Indian democracy. Some writers have argued that in the British era, through their policy of divide and rule, communalism has rooted deep in India among every religion. Ali Riaz (2011) gives an example of religious use in politics in international level as in Nepal, the goal of religion as an ideology was to emphasize the homogeneity of national religious-cultural tradition, to preserve a social stratification process, and the construction of national identity. Sri Lanka, a similar vein, had adopted the Buddhist Sinhalese identity since its inception and provided an institutional and legal counter in the 1960s. This has politicized religion as much as it has made the polity subservient to religion. Yasumasa (2012) notices that in the 20th century, it is a fact that during the colonial rule, a possible path towards communalism was constructed. The emergence of Muslim League and Hindu Mahasabha and RSS is the example of this kind of action. He observes some communal riots in contemporary India.

In the specific context of Punjab, some writers highlight that kind of set-up. Nayar (1966) has done an excellent analysis of the different forces for and against the Sikh demand for Punjabi Suba during the fifties and the early sixties of the 20th century. In this context, he surveys the importance of the Akali control over the SGPC and the strategic role of Sikh religious symbols in the mobilization of Sikh masses in support of this demand. A similar study with slightly wider perspective and context is that of Brass (1974) believed that most of the Sikh religious and political leaders in the political arena have their economic strength in the rural areas and that they have built a separate institutional base for their activities in politics through their control over the Gurdwaras. In the backdrop of this situation, therefore religion has become ‘the most powerful symbol in the Sikh movement’. Anandpur Sahib Resolution adopted by Akali Dal was changed by them from time to time for their own gains. A paper written by Singh and Sandhu (1984) notices that the Akali Dal articulating and propagating demand for greater state autonomy particularly after the creation of Punjabi Suba in 1966 when the Sikh became a majority in the newly carved out state. In the Batala Conference Resolution (1968), the Akali Dal demanded greater autonomy for Punjab and other states but in Anandpur Sahib Resolution (1973) they reiterated the demand for greater autonomy for states and also demanded a geographical unit in which they would be in commanding position of power. Gobinder Singh (1988) pointed out that religious leaders play an important role in the politics of Punjab. He argued that SGPC passed the economic, cultural, religious resolution for the political motives of Akali Dal. *Dharm Yudh Morcha* started by the SGPC president in order to boost the morale of the Akali rank and file after the Akali Dal’s defeat in the 7th Lok Sabha elections. Suri and Dogra (1988) also examine the aspect of the SGPC election where their main issue centered on more autonomy for the state, basically political or constitutional issue which does not suit to a religious body. Sandhu (1992) notices that, on the name of minority Sikh demand for their own Sikh homeland, where they already live-in majority. However, Jat Sikhs have always dominated Punjab politics and their represented ratio in the election is much more than Hindus. Out of 15 chief ministers in Punjab 12 were Sikh (11 were Jat Sikh). Only 3 chief ministers were Hindu. Telford (1992) notices the secular strategy of the Akali Dal, which create space for the rise of Sikh militancy. Paper has demonstrated that Bhindranwale was a rational actor and that his supporters arose out of the lopsided benefits from the Green Revolution. These supporters were mostly

educated Jat Sikh youth and primarily came from Amritsar and Gurdaspur districts. In particular, Gurdaspur and Amritsar have consistently performed poorly average on number 9 or 10 out of 12 in the agriculture field. The Green Revolution in a Punjab was a revolution in education. Literacy rose from 27% in 1961 to 41% in 1981 and was projected to hit the 50% mark by the mid-1980s. And the number of students enrolled in colleges in Punjab rose from 35000, in 1964-65 to over 110,000 in the mid-1970s. Green Revolution and huge level unemployment among the youth of Punjab in 1980 becomes an economic and social base of Punjab crisis and illustrates the political pressure Bhindranwale placed on the Akali Dal (Telford, 1992). Harkishan Singh Surjeet (1992) argued that when the Akali Dal in regional level and Congress on center level played the politics of religion then the communist party failed to expose both. In Punjab SGPC almost synonymous with Akali Dal and Congress always talks about secularism but in reality, it adopts the communal approach under the cover of nationalism. The democratic demand of separation of religion from politics was never taken up seriously either by communist party or any other left or democratic force in the state. Ramesh Vinayak (1995) has done a comparative study of the capital growth in Punjab in 1985 and 1992. Where in 1984 the most of industries were shifted by other states due to the terror of militants there in 1992 many industries were again come to Punjab, which was the sign of the normalcy in Punjab. He provides a great detail of the all these industries with their investments. Asutosh Satpathy's (1995) paper is based on the electric process in Punjab in 1985. When due to the fear of militants and due to the boycott of elections by Akali Dal the 21% of total voters negated the Central government's perception of the so-called improved situation in the state. The low turnout and response were also indicated the apathy and animosity of the populace to the government's organized democratization process in the state. Sucha Singh Gill (1995) blamed that Punjab crisis was created by beginning from the pre-independence phase to the formation of the Punjabi Suba. The model of socio-economic development which engendered the famous Green Revolution also created many contradictions in the society. The struggle for political power between Congress and Akali Dal, which they later resorted to the game of manipulation of a Sikh and Hindu constituency on communal lines to match the Sikh sectarian approach of the former as also the misuse of the power of the central government, activated human power to generate this crisis. D P Sharma (1996) traces the picture of Punjab during the militancy with the detailed

information of all militant groups. In that time, the anger, the anguish and hangover of the hallowed trauma was visible on the face of everyone in the state, particularly on the faces of common men, who were sandwiched between blood thirsty militants on the one side and corrupt officials on the other.

According to Harnik Deol (2000) in India, nationalism had a cultural and religious context and “religion dominated the social bond that defined the characteristics of the nation.” She believed that it is a global phenomenon that religious revolt against secular ideology often accompanies a modern state. Harnik Deol traces the resurgence of religious nationalism to the weakening of political institutions and loss of faith in secular institutions. She sees it as a main cause of general weakening of the moral fabric that leads to divisiveness where religious masks the pretense as moral exemplars.

Dang (2000) observes a very important factor for the rise of terrorism in Punjab that both the major political parties in Punjab, Congress as well as Akalis, pursued long the policy of trying to use Bhindranwale and terrorism as a weapon to gain an upper hand for their narrow political objectives (Dang, 2000). Jodhka (2001) observes that whenever Punjab enters a phase of election, the Akali Dal seems to be shifting to the community. Religion axis of its politics in the hope of consolidating its electoral base. He gives the example of decision occupied by SGPC (2001) to classify three professional colleges run by the SGPC as minority institutions. Politicians have misused the religion in their own interests. This is a view that underlies the recent memoirs of Ramesh Inder Singh who was the Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar when Operation Blue Star happened (Singh R. I., 2022).

The second vision among historians is that manifestation of religion in the politics of Punjab is an assertion of an identity. A. S. Narang (1983) argued that in Punjab along with the rapid economic growth and development there had been an increasing social mobilization and a significant expansion of the traditional frameworks of apathy and social identification. The economic and social progress had also stimulated the process of communal identity building. The increasing affluence of the state does not seem to have in any way affected to the dominant role of such parochial factors as religion, language and region. Kirpal Singh Dhillon (2006) trace that Sikh militancy in its earlier phase (1985) could be regarded as a politically

inspired separatist movement. In the history of the Sikhs violence as a mode of political articulation has always been considered legitimate in Punjab and in the Sikh system of beliefs. The cultural and religious practice attributes a positive value to the use of violence to recover lost dignity and honour and to fight evil. Humanist militancy may frequently be replaced with martial militancy as an instrument of political protest and agitation in a given set of circumstances. Such conditions came into being in the Punjab of the 1980s. Rajinder Kaur (1992) believed that the militant Sikh youth has come to believe that the Sikh political identity can be preserved only by the establishment of an independent state for the Sikhs. Various Sikh militants' organizations have sprung up in Punjab to achieve this objective. As a reaction Hindu communal and revivalist group too have established a few militant organizations in Punjab. These developments have a serious and far-reaching impact on the distinct and separate identity of the Sikhs in the context of national integration. Gopal Singh (1994) notices that the demand for a separate homeland by a minority is not born in a day. It takes centuries and centuries for any minority to crystallize and articulate the demand while interacting with the majority and the political system of the state where the minority is located. Prem Singh (1995) tried to trace the views of Sikh intellectuals on the Punjab crisis. For this he observes the views of four intellectuals named Sant Singh Sekhon, prof. Gurbhagat Singh, Jaswant Singh Kanwal and Dr. S S Dosanjh. He finds that the first two totally favored the militancy with linking it to the history of the Sikhs and rest two praise militants but realize their limitations and Dosanjh openly decries violence and expresses disagreement with the Khalistan slogan. Pramod Kumar (1998) believed that the structural reality continues to produce a dwarfed Punjabi identity and a blocked economy, finding it difficult to accommodate emerging agrarian interests and create greater employment opportunities. Politics is not representative, competitive and federal. The absence of conditions for conducive human development paves the way for latent structural violence. The manifest form of violence was shaped by the opportunistic character of politics, underground economic activities, and excessive reliance on the repressive state apparatus and, on the external support. Grewal (1998) pointed out that Sikh politics after independence may be defined as politics based professedly on Sikh identity. In the world of politics and scholarship, the term used generally for 'Sikh politics' is 'communal' or 'fundamentalist.' It is more to the point that the constitutional movement for greater autonomy for the states in India and the militant

movement for a sovereign state outside the Indian union both get related to consciousness of a distinct Sikh identity. Puri, Judge and Sekhon (1999) try to understand the grassroots realities behind the terrorist movement in Punjab which fights for Sikh identity during 1980-1995. The book has highlighted the two main things in this case. First, a terrorist has no ideology for their activities and most of them joined it for fun and second is that they use this movement for their own selfish purposes like revenge from their enemies. Strange thing was that who joined this movement mostly belong to Jat Sikh community and were killed during movement in the majority were also Jat Sikh. The decline of the movement depends upon two major causes- first, diplomatic policies of police and army and second, the active and passive resistance of local people against terrorism. Mark Juergensmeyer (2003) says that "On the cosmic level", what happened in Punjab was "a battle between truth and evil" and a response to the threat posed to the identity and moral vision of the Sikhs. The apparently religion-driven politics was more a consequence of the crisis created in society by a small section of Sikhs who perceived modernization that came with prosperity as a menace to their religious faith. Mark Tully and Satish Jacob say that the Sikhs also faced an old threat of losing their identity to Hinduism, which had absorbed some of the other religions that were born in the country such as Buddhism.

Judge (2005) observed that in its lifetime of fifteen years, the Sikh militant movement made an assertive effort to define the Sikh religion, identity, and nationhood. He looks into the process of emergence of communal politics in Punjab by covering three aspects namely political dynamics of Punjab, history of the making of the legend of Bhindranwale and history of Damdami Taksal, the life story of Bhindranwale and the delineating of the events leading to his emergence in politics. He examines the issue of Sikh identity in the speeches of Bhindranwale. He argues that the militant movement also tried to draw its legitimacy from the constructed tradition of militancy and martyrdom in Sikhism. He analyses how militants use print media by sending a message under the headings 'warnings' and 'clarifications. Rajivlochan and Meeta (2007) explore that Punjab underscores the existence of a number of 'Deras' in various part of the state, in a contemporary time which always appearance of prevailing caste divisions and tensions. Dalits and other marginalized groups follow such Deras for it promises them an alternative to mainstream, and in many respects, especially in Sikhism. Yet they start acquired strategic political

overtone. The article proves its point with the example of Bhanjarawala, he is essentially religious guru but became a vote bank for politicians in the early 21st century in Punjab. The article traces that many commentators have noted with concern that an analogous conflict between another deras and the Sikhs in the late 1970s, with the tacit support of political parties to both sides in the conflict, had sown the seeds of terrorism in Punjab during the 1980s. Jetly (2008) explores the growth of militant sentiment among Sikhs in Punjab through given three reasons for Khalistan movement. First, centralizing policies of the state sowed the seeds of discontent among the Sikhs. Second, the movement had a strong base from a developed organization like Khalistan Commando Force, Khalistan Liberation Force. Third, external support from the Sikh diaspora in the US and UK, as well as from Pakistan. The cause for the failure of the movement was effective coordination of the police and army, atrocities committed by the militants in terms of murders, rapes, and extortion that had alienated many of the ordinary people, who could not tolerate such actions. In addition, Congress came into power at the center in 1992 and playing a vital role in transforming the situation of Punjab. Judge and Kaur (2010) explore the basic paradox of Sikh identity by delineating how ambivalence creates inclusion and exclusion within the Sikh community and why it remains politically functional for the Sikh leadership, which never bothered to involve the Sikh masses in the discourse through the democratic process. The article also examines how the British state played role in the emergence of the Sikh identity by giving special benefits to them. It is worth mentioning that the control over SGPC, which is the source of Akali income and political power, is very crucial for its political existence. Few unpublished works in the form of thesis is also available on the topic. V. D. Chopra observes that the concept that the Sikhs were an ethnic or racial minority was introduced, both overtly and covertly, by the British rulers to further their policy of divide and rule. Surinder Parmar (1984) traced the history of Bahujan Sang in Punjab in the tenure of 1952-1977. He has explained the genesis, ideology, organizational structure and its performance in elections of Punjab. Singh, Kanwar Chanderdeep (2008) has studied the Hindu Right Wing (RSS) during 1935-1984 in Punjab. Rekha Rani (2008) observed the role of the press during Punjabi Suba movement in 1947-1966. She has noticed that between 1947-1966, Press played a major role in highlighting the politics of Punjab. According to press, she noticed it may be said that formation of the Punjabi

speaking state failed to fulfill the political aims of Akalis. Harjit Singh (2010) argued in his thesis that Sikh politics after independence also may be defined as politics based professedly on Sikh identity. After independence, in its national integration policy the Indian state tried to project a 'cooperate identity' and in such a process, it had tried to incorporate various minority ethnic group to form a nation-state. Due to its state and nation building compulsions, whenever the state tried to intervene in the matter of community Sikhs reacted vigorously against it. Meenakshi Arora (2011) has done her research on the dispute and politics over the Sutlej Yamuna link canal. She believed that all the available options have been used to settle this water dispute but none of them has proved fruitfully, a solution to the conflict lies in the political acceptance. But the politician and parties are the hard nuts to crack. The only left out the way is the faith of negotiations and discussions. Pushpinder Kumari (2013) argued that the Green Revolution in Punjab has become the main causes for increased political consciousness among the peasantry of Punjab. Farmer starting dominated in the political scene. The politics of farmer no longer remained limited the village *Panchayat* elections. They were the dominant factor both the state and all India level. Jashandeep Singh Sandhu (2013) observes the Punjab politics since 1966 to 1984, he reaches at the point that the present impasse was reached because the struggle for power at the center of the Indian union passed the limits required for the functioning of a balanced federal parliamentary system. The crisis in Punjab is a crisis for the federal system and for the Indian state. Ramandeep Kaur (2014) tried to define communalism at the national level. She believed the emergence of Bhartiya Jan Sang and re-activism of RSS, posed difficult political problems at the national level. They propounded their own Hindutva ideology; it is alleged that its stems are largely from Hindu nationalism and Hindu culture. The Jan Sang believed that Hindu nationalism is Indian nationalism and Hindu culture is Indian culture. On the above light, she tried to explain the Hindu Muslim conflicts after independence. Beer Good Gill (2014) observed the social and economic challenges to Punjab in the light of partition of India in 1947. Aarti Suri (2015) noticed that the genesis of Punjabi Suba movement virtually lies in the pre-partition period wherein the Sikhs put forth the demand of Sikh state to counter blest M.A Jinnah's demand for a separate and a sovereign Muslim state carved out of the northwestern region of India. The Lahore Resolution (1940) set the Sikhs thinking alternatively.

The existing review of the literature reveals that various scholars have studied the concept of religion and politics in the light of two visions. First, the politicians misuse religion for their personal gain and the second is that religion in politics is being an assertion of an identity. Today, however, there is a third set of views that have become an important component in the understanding of the religion-political interface in India. This is best represented by the masterly work produced by Grewal (2017) on Master Tara Singh and M. Rajivlochan (2017) on Partap Singh Kairon, which talk of competing visions of a nation, one vision which privileges religion as the basis of the state and other vision which privileges an individual-centric secular-liberal state as the basis of the nation. Following these three kinds of understanding of the interface between religion and politics, our effort in this thesis will be to look into the details of these competing visions. Thus, this study tries to explore how this blending of politics and religion was looked at by the people of Punjab, the ones who had to suffer immensely because of the conflict has happened. A better understanding of the stimulus between religion and politics in Punjab would also help us to understand the ways in which it is possible for India to strengthen the idea of secularism and ensure that religion does not interfere in the processes of politics. In India this has been not studied in a historical perspective though, outside of India where we have studied that deal with the transactions between the religion and politics and the changes therein. Christine Fair and Wahid Abdullah had done that kind of study on Islamic militancy in Bangladesh to examine the public awareness and attitudes on it.

The time period taken in this research was since independence to the end of the militancy in Punjab. The purpose of this research is to examine the interface between religion and politics in Punjab. The study will investigate the mutual impact of religion and politics in Punjab. The study will especially seek the insights on these two and yet unexamined sources:

1. The data collected in favor of my hypothesis out of field survey, and
2. Re-conceptualizing the expressions from popular literature in Punjabi and exploring media to go through the day-to-day incidents in Punjab.

It is positively anticipated that this study will enhance our understanding about the interconnection among society, religion and politics. It shall analyze how Indian

politics get legitimacy and sovereignty from religion. If both the religion and politics are such strongly intertwined than what is the possibility of democracy and secularism in India. My effort is to examine also whether it is possible to keep religion apart from politics. In this course of study, my crucial work will elaborate the consequences of fundamentalism and its socio-political impact over the nation. Eventually, this study would unveil the hidden political mechanism of the state and its very character.

The relevance of the study:

Present research is not only about how religio- political forces have gained salience in the politics of Punjab but also about how the religion has become the most potent ideology and gathered a mass following in the region. The analysis about the role of religion in politics in general and Punjab in particular must be prefaced with the fact that the growing religio -political nexus is a global phenomenon. The worldwide religious trends depict a new revolution which is a complete reversal of the prediction made in the 1960s that religion will eventually collapse and that most of humanity will be either atheists or agnostics. The trend, insisting on the return of religion to the political sphere, began in the 1980s almost four decades ago. Jose Casanova, basing his analysis on empirical data, argued that in the 1980s religion was deprived in a number of countries around the world. Similarly, Jeffrey Hadden, in 1987, challenged the basis of the claims that religion was supposed to lose ground and insisted that these claims are based on a doctrine rather than the results of the systematic inquiry. There is plenty of debates over the status of religion and its role in the politics and society. The effort, here, is to examine the indispensability of religion in Punjab people's life. Whatever the preaching of a different religion are they assert strongly that the religion is but subjective phenomenon. Religion is but personal practice and based on inner purification and intrinsic realizations. As German Philosopher, Friedrich Nietzsche (1882) claimed 'God is dead and from now humanity is free from Godly bondages.'

It can be stated that every socio-political institution, movement or person involve with socio-political affairs do acquire legitimacy from religion because religion is deeply embedded in public sub consciousness. With religious claim all the things easily obtain validity to be justified. Even massacre, riots, mass-murder, human bombing, terrorism try to get legitimacy out of religion. A person can easily kill

thousands of people in the name of religion. This is what Taliban and Al-Qaida have done and still doing in West Asia. ISIS is massacring thousands of people in Mosul and Syria in the name of Islam. We cannot segregate religion from politics. The secularist movement like Bolshevik and communism couldn't survive longer due to lack of religious validity. In India the *Jana Sangha* turned *Bhartiya Janta Party* could attain majority in Parliament due to mass mobilization for *Rama Janmbhumi* Movement. Even Rahul Gandhi is claiming his family to be *Shiva- Bhakta* in election campaigns by keeping *Janeu* (Sacred Thread) visible to people. In India, Power, Money and Prestige are easily attainable by religious measures.

This study is oriented to Punjab in Particular. Punjab politics was never exceptional. The advent of Sikhism, the history of ten Guru *Sahiban*, the establishment of *Khalsa Panth*, *Miri-Piri*, *Akal Takht*, Sikh State etc. all these aspects of Punjab's history are clearly depicting the fusion of socio-religious and religio-political attributes. Since Maharaja Ranjit Singh to SGPC, Akali Dal to Operation Blue Star, religion and politics are progressing simultaneously and posing indelible influence on each other. Though the state is back to normalcy but the state of affairs as existed till late 1980s put a question mark on the claims of India as a successful democracy, its secular polity, efficiency of administration, intelligence and governing bodies as well as the loyalty to the democratic values/norms, to the respective state system and patriotism of the minority communities.

The various issues related with Punjab terrorism has been already studied (causes, governmental strategy) by various scholars in juxtaposition with the issue of political development or decay, during the period of militancy. Here in this research the point is to analyses the manner in which 'Religion' is used as a tool for political expediency and how the grievances of minorities are given communal overtones by the political elites to grab and sustain their control over power. Now religious fundamentalism leads to 'legitimacy' and 'structural crisis' resulting in the erosion of effectiveness of administrative machinery in handling the demand load on the polity. Thus, loss of faith in the present state-system as well as loss of people's cooperation to the state administration, making it more vulnerable to disintegrating and anti-democratic forces. Though the terrorism in Punjab had died, but the fact is that it is continuing in one way or the other putting a question mark on the govern ability and administrativeness of Indian state system.

My concern is to study the interdependence of society, politics and religion in light of secularism. I also tried to analyze the depth of religious traces in Punjab political processes and developments, to examine, the constructive and destructive roles of both upon each other, to assess how in Punjab religion was manipulated to mobilize the people under the flag of Khalistan movement and have tried to study the upcoming prospects of separatism. It will help to create a precise scenario of the future of secularism, socialism and democracy (our constitutional ideal) in Punjab.

II

The roots of Sikh revivalism

Sikhism was very much in decline when the British extended their Raj to the Punjab, and but for the effects of that intervention, its decline might well have continued (Ballard, 1993). Three very different sets of factors appear to have precipitated that reversal. Firstly, Guru Gobind Singh's ideal of a militant *Khalsa* constituted a very effective vehicle as Guru Ram Singh's revolt showed for the articulation of wholesale, if communally specific, resistance to the Raj and its institutions. Secondly and in sharply paradoxical contrast the British Indian Army's recruitment policy contributed very directly to a sharp resurgence in conformity at least to the external behavioral conventions of the Khalsa. Presumably because they were impressed by the exotic physical appearance of bearded and turbaned Sikhs, the British decided that such men would make particularly loyal soldiers. Hence a number of elite Punjabi Regiments required all new recruits to adopt the regalia of the Khalsa before they could be accepted. But it was reaction to Arya Samaji propaganda which proved to be by far the biggest boost to Sikh distinctiveness (Ballard, 1993).

At the very outset a number of leading Sikhs were ardent supporters of the Samaj, above all because it appeared to be such an effective bastion against the missionaries proselytizing efforts. That did not last for long, however. Once the movement matured, the Sikhs, too, found that their traditions and their scriptures were being dismissed as illegitimate excrescences by Arya Samaji ideologues. Guru Nanak's teachings were dismissed as worthless too, on the grounds that someone who knew no Sanskrit and who taught in Punjabi could not possibly have anything of philosophical significance to say. But although these criticisms in many ways paralleled the Samajis' equally scathing attacks on conventional Brahminical rituals,

they had very different implications. Rather than being a matter of theological dispute within a single religious community, most Sikhs regarded such criticisms as part of a hegemonic attempt to obliterate their very existence.

Prompted by these fears, members of the Sikh elite also began to organize themselves on their own account, forming a rival chain of Singh Sabhas to defend themselves against the encroaching force of Arya Samaji criticism. However, unlike the *Sanatan Dharmis* whose principal aim was simply to preserve the status quo against Samaji criticism the Singh Sabhas had much more active task to undertake if they were to establish a clear and categorical boundary between themselves and the Hindus, as now seemed necessary to keep those criticisms at bay. In doing so they very soon adopted an actively reformist role, which was at least as comprehensively revisionist in religious terms as was that of the Arya Samaj with respect to orthodox Hinduism. The easiest way of establishing a clear boundary between themselves and the Hindus was, of course, to press all Sikhs to follow Guru Gobind Singh's injunctions and to adopt the external symbols of the beard and turban (Judge, 2005). But although the Singh Sabhas set about restoring the rules of the Khalsa with a will, they soon found that much more was required before they could incontrovertibly establish their distinctiveness. Domestic rituals, in particular, were a weak point, not least because all Sikhs including the most devout still routinely employed Brahmins to conduct all their domestic rites of passage (Bingley, 1985).

For many, this was the most telling indication that Sikhs were still "really" Hindus. To refute that charge the Singh Sabhas led by the more radical Lahori group began to develop a whole series of counter arguments (Ballard, 1993). Besides insisting that Nanak's religious inspiration was wholly independent of the Hindu tradition, they argued that Nanak's lack of Sanskrit was in no sense a matter for regret. In sharp contrast to the Arya Samaji approach, they actively celebrated the Gurus' use of the Punjabi language, and the use of the Gurmukhi script as a vehicle for their transmission, regarding both as highly positive markers of their distinctiveness. A neat but crucial contrast emerges here. If the Arya Samaj offered a means of articulating a sense of Indian nationalism in the face of Imperial exclusionism, then the Sikhs, finding that the Samaj's vision of India directly threatened their own autonomy, began to articulate a rival sense of Punjabi nationalism. The seeds of

contemporary ethnic polarization had been sown. Even so, there was much more to be done before the argument that the Sikhs were not Hindus really became credible (Ballard, 1993). Perhaps most importantly of all, they needed to disengage themselves from what they now came to perceive as their debilitating reliance on Brahmin *purohits*.

Hence the period between 1890 and 1910 was marked by an immense amount of ritual inventiveness, as Singh Sabhas right across the Punjab began to create new and distinctively Sikh rituals with which to cope with the major life-crises of birth, marriage and death. Since ancientness is invariably regarded as a crucial mark of legitimacy, contemporary Sikhs find the suggestion that many if not all of their "traditional" ritual practices are a late nineteenth century invention deeply scandalous: but as Oberoi (1994) has shown in some detail with respect to marriage, that is precisely what they are.

However, the Sikhs were not alone in being heavily involved in the "invention of tradition" during this period: though they legitimated their creativity with a great deal of (largely specious) Sanskritic scholarship, the Arya Samajis were doing just the same. Their principle of defence against the missionaries' identification of Hinduism as essentially idolatrous was therefore to elevate the fire-sacrifice, *hawan*, to pride of place, dismissing all other ritual practices as irrelevant accretions. The Sikh reformers followed closely in the Samajis' footsteps, but in way that enabled them to claim that they were even better "ethical monotheists" (the missionaries' criteria of religious respectability) than their rivals. Rather than the sacred fire, they made the Guru Granth Sahib itself the focus of all their ritual activities, and instead of becoming involved in tortuous redefinitions of the Brahmin's role, held that any Sikh familiar with the contents of the Granth Sahib could act as ritual officiant. In the first instance these new rituals were only used by a small section of the urban elite: they only began to be widely used in peasant families towards the end of the nineteen thirties. Nevertheless, their introduction was viewed with alarm both by the Arya Samaj, and even more so by Sanatanist Brahmins: the former saw such a move as an irrelevant and unnecessary diversion from their vision of unity, and the latter as a threat both to their income and their privileges. Confirming the Sikh reformers' worst fears about the dangers of Hindu hegemony, the leaders of both groups vigorously opposed the use of the new rituals (Ballard, 1993).

While the emergent contradictions between different groups of reformists can ultimately be traced back to the impact of British rule, a further ironic consequence of that very Raj was that it was now the British and their institutions who were destined to be the final arbiters of the dispute itself. The question was simple, though crucial: were marriages conducted according to the new rites legitimate in law, such that they would guarantee the transmission of property rights? Court rulings indicated that legislative change was required to ensure this, and in the very process of organizing large-scale protests which were needed to persuade the British to do this, the Singh Sabhas considerably enhanced their authority as the collective voice of Sikh interests. Meanwhile the fact that these changes were pushed through in the teeth of widespread Hindu opposition strongly reinforced the argument that the Sabhas were a vital means of protecting those interests from the dangers of Hindu hegemony. If the mass protests which eventually led to the passage of the Anand Marriage Act in 1909 were the first stage in the process in the collective politicization of the Sikhs, then it was the much larger movements and much more violent confrontations led by the Akali Dal, and which culminated in the passage of the Sikh Gurdwaras Act in 1925, which set the seal on these developments, finally completing the move towards the construction of a wholly separate social, political and religious identity which the Singh Sabhas had begun over forty years before (Ballard, 1993).

This time round the issue at stake could hardly have been more crucial: anything less than control of the Sikhs' own historic Gurdwaras. Just as in most local Hindu shrines, the guardians of all Punjab's most important Sikh Gurdwaras were ascetic *mahants*. Though their behaviour, appearance and status were closely akin to that of Hindu *sannyasis*, they were members of the *Udasi* sect, which, though it traces its origin to Guru Nanak's own son, Sri Chand, differs from the long-established Sikh mainstream by demanding that its members should remain celibate. Moreover, the *mahants* had prospered under British rule: the land-holdings attached to most of the Gurdwaras had increased in value, Sikh revivalism, and the growing prosperity of rural Punjab had increased the scale of pilgrim donations, while the property-based legal system introduced by the British had turned *mahants* into virtual owners of all their temple's assets. Although *mahants'* role in the Gurdwaras had never before been a cause for concern, in the face of growing support for the neo-orthodox *Tat Khalsa* wing of the Singh Sabhas which took its cues almost entirely from Guru Gobind

Singh such that all alternative interpretations of Nanak's teachings were regarded as misguided sell-outs to Hinduism, their controlling position in the nascent community's most sacred shrines was becoming more and more untenable (Ballard, 1993).

Although the *mahants* found themselves under mounting pressure from the reformers either to conform to neo-orthodox expectations or to abandon their offices, none were willing lightly to abandon their positions of wealth, power and privilege, nor to change the theological positions to which they had long been committed. Conflict was inevitable, and most especially so when it became evident that this was an issue around which large scale mobilization of the peasant masses rather than just a narrow section of the urban elite could take place (Singh T. , 1922).

The scale of the popular response to the Akali Dal's call for "the expulsion of corrupt mahants" and "the restoration of the Gurdwaras to the Sikh community" during the early 1920s, together with the *mahants* anguished appeals to the authorities for protection faced the British with a major dilemma. Their immediate instinct powerfully reinforced by Vice-regal instructions from Delhi was to suppress all disturbances which threatened public order, and to protect the mahants property rights, as indeed vocal sections of urban Hindu opinion, led by the Arya Samaj, were also urging them to do. However, the popularity of the cause which was now seen as offering a challenge to both British and Hindu hegemony not least amongst the Sikhs who now provided such a significant proportion of recruits into both the Army and the Police made local officials painfully aware of how dangerously provocative it was to follow a policy of unmitigated oppression. But in the end the British cracked before the Sikhs: after 400 people had been killed, and more than 30,000 arrested, control of all the historic Gurdwaras was handed over to an elected Sikh body, the Shromani Gurdwara Prabhandak Committee in 1925 (Singh G. , 1997).

III

Emergence of the political consciousness in the Sikhs in pre partition period

The term Sikh land appeared in the geo-political lexicon relating to this region for the first time in 1859 in *Linguistic and Oriental Essays* by Robert Needham Cust, ICS, Secretary to the Royal Asiatic Society and at one time, assistant to the political agent of Punjab. He wrote as-

By a mere chance, by the fancy of a great man, by a fatality of circumstances, the writer found himself after a lapse of seven years again among a people whom he loved so well and, in a position, to study the character of the residents and visit the great cities of the rich tract which lies between the rivers Chenab and Beas, the original Sikh land, the cradle of the Sikh faith and the nursery of the chivalry of the followers of the guru.

The term Sikh nation first surfaced in the communication of the East India Company's British administration. Lord Dalhousie in his April 7, 1849 communication addressed to the Secret Committee repeatedly used the term 'Sikh Nation' (Singh & Singh, 1995). He stated-

We have no admissible alternative that as the only mode which is now left to us of preventing the recurrence of perpetual and devastating wars, we must resolve on the entire subjection of the Sikh people and on its extinction as an independent nation. We have been for the second time engaged in war with the most formidable enemy, we have yet encountered in India. They have resisted us through the course of a protracted and severe campaign (Singh & Singh, 1995).

The Khalistan articulation is traced to Dr. Vir Singh Bhatti of Ludhiana who conceptualized it within no time of adoption of the Lahore Resolution by the Muslim League on March 23, 1940 demanding Pakistan. He proposed it as a buffer state between India and Pakistan on the presumption of the two neighbours being hostile (Singh J. , 2020). Master Tara Singh who was not only president of Akali Dal but also a member of Punjab Congress working committee stated as-

While opposing the Pakistan scheme, some Sikhs have lost their head and they are preaching the establishment of Sikh rule. This will simply result in adding to the confusion already created by the Muslim League.... Swaraj is the only solution to our country's misfortune (The Tribune, 18 April, 1940).

At same time he was also president of the SGPC, he defines his concept of Swaraj at the *Pahali Lasaani Sikh Shaheed Akali Dharmik Conference* at Bhawanigarh in Patiala state in 1940 on October 12, stating "I want independent and not slavery of the British, the Muslims, the Hindus, the Germans or the Russians. We want Swaraj in which all are equal, not the one in which the Sikhs are slaves." The all-India Akali Conference held at Attari in 1940 announced its vociferous opposition to the demand for Pakistan. Master Tara Singh and Giani Kartar Singh declared that Pakistan would be formed over their dead bodies (Singh A. , 2005). The most vociferous opposition to the Pakistan demand had come from the SGPC in 1940 itself. This body took a

forceful stand against the Pakistan demand and on the protection of Sikh religion and identity. The Khalsa National Party of which Punjab minister Sunder Singh Majithia was a leader, adopted a resolution within a week of the Pakistan Resolution in 1940 that said- “it would be the height of audacity for anyone to imagine that the Sikhs would tolerate for a single day undiluted communal *Raj* of any community in Punjab which is not only their homeland but also their holy land” (Singh K. , 2006).The Sikh homeland issue thus surfaced before 1947 essentially in reaction to the Muslim League demand for Pakistan.

Demand for the Sikh homeland was first raised at the All-India Akali Conference at Vahila Kalan on July 12, 1942. This state was to be known as Azad Punjab and this demand was formally adopted by the Akali Dal at its working committee meeting on June 7, 1943. The state was to be known as Azad Punjab and this demand was formally adopted by the Akali Dal at its working committee meeting on June 7, 1943. The resolution adopted by the party to this aspect stated:

The Shiromini Akali Dal hereby declares that in Azad Punjab the boundaries shall be fixed after taking into consideration population, property, land revenue and historical traditions of each community...if the new demarcations are affected on the above-mentioned principles, then the Azad Punjab shall comprise Ambala, Jalandhar, Lahore divisions and out of the Multan Division, Lyallpur district and some portions of Montgomery and Multan districts (Singh H. , 1983).

Earlier, Giani Kartar Singh had asserted that the Azad Punjab demand was to confront the demand for Pakistan. The Azad Punjab idea originated with Master Tara Singh and Giani Kartar Singh in 1930 when they were in Gujrat jail (now Pakistan) in connection with the Congress Civil Disobedience movement. Sindh was separated from Bombay province on the demand of the Muslims around that time.

This demand was raised formally for the first time at the First Round Table Conference in 1930 in Landon by Sikh representative UjjalSingh and Sampuran Singh by way of re-drawing of boundaries of Punjab. The idea was to carve out a state for Sikh consolidation on the premise that geographical space was the prerequisite for preservation of the Sikh identity. It was the proposal that was followed up as reflected in the 1940 articulation on Khalistan and Azad Punjab.

The Azad Punjab scheme made territory as a key to the preservation of the Sikh community. In fact, it was this scheme which paved the way for partition of Punjab in case the demand for creation of Pakistan was conceded. The significance of Azad Punjab scheme lies in the fact that it set a pattern for the Sikh polity that continued to remain in political limelight for about two decades even after the partition. The Sikhs as a whole came to believe that only territorial re-arrangement could ensure the survival of Sikh community as a religious minority in the emerging democratic political system. Both the Hindus and Muslims strongly opposed Azad Punjab proposal and refused to concede any political space to the Sikhs. For Master Tara Singh and his colleague Sikh leaders, this came as a rude shock (Kapur P. S., 2006).

For the Sikh leadership, the crisis was now that of preserving exclusive identity of the community in a defined geographical space. The slogan of “Panth in danger” given by Master Tara Singh was rooted in this apprehension of once the rulers of the land getting marginalized. The demand for the creation of Pakistan was most vociferously opposed by the Akali Dal and the SGPC and not the congress. “In order to counter the Muslim League demand for a sovereign Muslim state, the Shiromani Akali Dal put forward the demand of the Sikh state. The main aim and the most important feature of this demand was to insist upon the partition of Punjab” (Singh K. , 2006). It was the statutory SGPC which took the most vociferous stand against Pakistan and raised the counter demand, which can be interpreted as the first step by a powerful Sikh organization towards articulation of the Sikh state at its general house meeting on February 27, 1943 at Amritsar, presided over by Master Tara Singh. It is moved by Sher Singh states as-

Keeping in view the danger being perceived to the Sikh religion, this meeting of the SGPC resolves as under- for the protection of the Sikh religion, it is imperative that such a state be created where maximum of the Sikh population can be accommodated. Neither the Sikhs, nor the Hindus or the Muslims should be in a majority in this state. This meeting is of the considered opinion that creation of Pakistan would be highly detrimental. After this re-organization to carve out the Sikh areas, the Muslim dominated areas could form a separate state or merged in neighboring state. In this Muslim dominated state, the Sikhs would have the same rights as enjoyed by the Sikhs and the Hindus in frontier province and Muslims in central province. Permanent protection should be granted to all religious communities in the country.

After that Master Tara Singh raised the demand for a separate Sikh state subject to creation of Pakistan at the Shimla Conference convened by the Viceroy on 25 June 1945. The Sikh state demand was adopted by the SGPC in 1946. The resolution to

this effect moved by Basant Singh Kukkar Pind at the general body meeting of the SGPC on 9 March 1946 stated- keeping in view the current political situation in the country and the state of mind of the nationalities and the repercussions thereof which have the potential to adversely affect the Sikhs and the likely revolutionary changes in the country and in the context realizing the need to maintain independent identity of the Sikhs, first, the SGPC declares that the Sikhs are a separate nation. Second, this meeting is of the opinion that the Sikh state is imperative for maintenance of Sikh shrines, Sikh traditions and culture, protection of dignity and freedom of the Sikhs and advancement of the Sikhs in future. Therefore, this meeting appeals to the Sikh masses to do everything possible for the achievement. Amar Singh Dosanjh, who seconded the resolution, said a separate Sikh state had become a necessity for the protection of Sikh religion and its propagation. He stated-“Sikhs are definitely a separate nation and fulfil all the conditions to qualify for the same. We are projected as branch of the big Hindu tree to mislead us. I maintain that this is being done to assimilate us. We can't prosper by being slave to another nation. Our minority status cannot come in the way of our attaining statehood. Being a separate nation, we should be treated as per with other communities” (Shamsher Singh Ashok: 1982). The demand for a Sikh state was forcefully advocated in the memorandum submitted by the Sikh leaders to the Sapru Committee too. The position of the Sikhs stated in this memorandum was in reaction to the proposal for the creation of the Pakistan. Sapru Committee stated as-

The Hindus claim the Punjab to be as much their homeland as of the Muslims. The Hindus have been there since the dawn of history. As for the Sikhs, if a community can lay special claim to the Punjab as its Homeland, it is they. They were the last rulers of the Punjab and their most important shariness stretch from Sirhind on the one side to Panja Sahib on the other, with the Golden Temple in Amritsar in the center of the province. It is not only the homeland but the holy land of the Sikhs, to which they are attached by all intimate bounds of a religion history and tradition.

The Sikh leaders pressed for a Sikh state which included the largest possible number of Sikhs, their important religious and historical shrines and to facilitate this, we demand the transfer of the Sikh population and their properties. Following the regulation master Tara Singh declared on March 22, 1946:

Whereas the Sikhs being attached to Punjab by intimate bounds of holy shrines, property, language, traditions and history claim it as their Homeland and holy land which the British took as a trust from the last Sikh ruler during his minority and where the community of the Sikhs being threatened on account of the persistent demand of Pakistan by the Muslims on the one hand and of danger of absorption by the Hindus on the other, the exclusive committee of the Shiromani Akali Dal demands for the preservation and protection of the religious, cultural and economic and political rights of the Sikh Nation, the creation of the Sikh state which would include a substantial majority of the Sikh population and their sacred shrines and historical Gurdwaras with provision for the transfer and exchange of a population and property (Singh H. , 1983).

There is an interesting observation made by Master Tara Singh later for the failure of the Sikhs to get their state besides other factors. ‘Another reason for our inability to put a pressure behind the demand for a Sikh state was that we were not fully familiar with the post-war international situation. None of us knew that a separate state could be carved out for a minority community by some other means. There was the case of the Jews who had been given a separate state. I learnt of this came to know only in 1949 when I was detained in a jail in Almora. At that time, I also came to know that the Russian paper ‘*Pravda*’ had also highlighted the fact that there were just two communities in the world which did not have a state of their own even though they possessed all the marks of a distinct community or nation. These were Jews and Sikhs. The Jews got their state but the Sikhs still remained in the wilderness’ (Kapur P. S., 2006).

After few months, another significant development took place relating to the Sikhs but outside their religio-political matrix. This was the thesis propounded in *Sikh Deshboomian* by Dr. Gangadhar Adhikari of the communist party of India on the Sikh homeland proposing Amritsar as the capital of the new state to be carved out on the basis of the right to self-determination (Adhikari, 1945). Although the thesis was the formulation of Dr. Adhikari, it was the communist leader from Punjab, Harkishan Singh Surjeet who was said to be the brain behind it and he admitted these decades later (The Hindu, 6 November 2000).

The existing turbulence in Punjab rooted in the events of 1978 has been shaped by the political dynamics of the Sikhs that goes back to the pre partition period. It is the Sikh Hindu dynamics that has defined the political context of Punjab’s

religious political cultural narrative since 1947. The boundaries of this Dynamics continue to be redefined. The Akali Dal has experimented with blurring the politico cultural boundaries dictated by the political dynamics of the times since 1966 by raising the slogan of *Punjabi*. This has followed the moves to sharpen the boundaries by pressing for exclusive political space for the Sikhs articulated in the demand for Sikhistan and the Anandpur Sahib Resolution.

It was in 1969 that the Akali Dal raised the slogan of a *Punjabi* in its election manifesto for the first time. This was the fallout of the rejection of the Sikhistan agenda on which the Akali Dal had contested the 1967 Assembly Elections. The party opted for *Punjabi* once again at its 75th anniversary conference at Moga in February 1996 after the Akali Dal had repeatedly supported the demand for a Sikh homeland during the militant struggle. One of the important factors that have played an active role in constructing the religious political dynamics in Punjab is globalization. The resurgence of radical Sikh political dynamics is now witnessed in the countries where the Sikhs are settled in sizable numbers. The fight for political space for which the Sikh struggle commenced following the 1940 Pakistan Regulation intensified under the changing political scene after 1947 as a majority and minority syndrome started dominating the political landscape and further sharpened after 1966. The partition uprooted millions of people and as the Sikhs started demanding their own religio-political space reminding the Congress of the assurance given to them before 1947, the Hindus perceived these issues to be pursuing this reason towards another partition. All the three communities in Punjab had paid too heavy price for freedom due to the partition of Punjab. More than one million people perished in Punjab during partition. Every issue raised by the Akali Dal was viewed through the prism of suspicion and distrust by the Hindu leaders owing to the Specter of yet another partition.

The struggle by the Akalis for political space resulted in the geographical boundaries being recast again in 1966 turning Punjab to be demographically Sikh dominated for the first time in history. Both the communities played the politics of victimhood during these agitations. A notable aspect of the armed struggle in Punjab is that it did not remain localized unlike other militant conflicts including those of

Kashmiris or the Nagas and the Mizos but its tremors were felt not just across India but also overseas. Thus, the 1980s experienced not only the growth of social divisions on the religious basis but it also witnessed the emergence of religion-based politics as the main factor in elections and public affairs. During this phase, the religion-based parties had involved into new strategies and organizational structure to promote their political goals. The 1980s witnessed the emergence of a new blend of religion and politics which was militant and aggressive in nature.

CHAPTER-2

THE RELIGIO-POLITICAL STATUS OF PUNJAB: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

‘Arts and literature are deeply entangled with our understanding of the social world.’

Thomos More (Utopia: 1516)

I

The word Punjab consists of two Persian words- ‘*punj*’ and ‘*ab*’. *Punj* means five and *ab* means water or rivers. The land in the north-west of the vast Indo-Pakistan sub-continent is known as the Punjab because therein flow five tributaries of the Indus river- the Jehlum, the Chenab, the Ravi, the Beas and the Sutlej. At present, however, this land of five rivers is not held by one single state (Narang K. , 1953). Punjab is also called the land of Gurus and Saints, because the Sikhism, the most well-known religion was born and flourished in the Punjab.

The Sikh movement was a part of the larger and composite Bhakti tradition in the medieval India. The great religious teacher Guru Nanak Dev initiated it in the 16th century. He institutionalized his teachings by nominating his successor which initiated the process and the tradition of transference of Charisma. In 1604, Guru Arjan Dev ji, the fifth Guru, compiled the works of Guru Nanak Dev and his four successors and the writings of other saints as the *Adi-Granth*, which became the sacred scripture of the Sikhs. A turning point marked the period of the sixth Guru Hargobind, symbolised by his donning of two swords- one of the continuing spiritual authority and the other of temporal power (Judge, 2005). However, it is the tenth Guru of the Sikhs, Guru Gobind Singh, who brought fundamental changes in the Sikh belief system and practices. He founded ‘*Khalsa Panth*’ a body of followers directly linked to the guru. Baptism ceremony obliged the followers to keep unshaven hair wear arms and uses the epithet of ‘Singh’ in their names. This clearly distinguished them from others who did not accept the new order the ‘Singh’ from the other ‘Sikh’. A militant ideology articulated and legitimized armed struggle against oppression when all the alternative means were exhausted. During his lifetime, he organized his Khalsa followers into an army, which waged battles against the rulers. Another significant contribution made by Guru Gobind Singh was that he abolished personal guruship before his death in 1708. Hereafter, guruship would be in the Panth- the *Sangat* (congregation) and the *Granth*

(the sacred book). The differences between ‘Singh’ and ‘Sikh’ remained, but without any construction of the discourse of Identity (Judge, 2005).

The geographical space of the Sikh movement was the undivided Punjab. Being located on the north-west frontier of the Indian sub-continent, Punjab has experienced numerous invasions, which took define shape with the rise of Islam in the Middle East. The spread of Islam and arrival of new rulers with different culture and civilization made an everlasting impact on Punjab. A large number of people in Punjab embraced Islam, which was largely a consequence of the impact of Sufi movement. Muslims came to constitute a preponderant majority of the population in the province, the six constituting about 7% of the population during the 18th century.

After Guru Gobind Singh, the rise of ‘Singhs’ to power was a part of the political process marked by three factors, One was the decisive decline of the Mughal empire and power by the middle of the 18th century. This gave chance to other powers to emerge like the Marathas and the British. Second was ‘Sikhs’ determined confrontation with Invaders such was Nadir Shah and Ahmed shah Abdali. The third battle of Panipat in 1761, which ended the expansionist designs of Marathas being the third factor.

Given the absence of an effective central authority, the Sikhs established their domination in Punjab by forming a confederate, generally called *missals*. Later on, beginning with his rule in 1799, Maharaja Ranjit Singh unified most of the confederated area through force, annexed other areas and established his empire. Bulk of the ruling class, consisted of the ‘Singhs’ majority of home was *Jats* and patronage was extended to Sikhs of other affiliations. The gulf between the nobility and common peasantry was wide. Chroniclers recorded sharing of religious faith alongside class and caste distinctions in social relations. After Ranjit Singh’s death in 1839, the Sikh power waned within a decade and the British annexed his state in 1849.

The interaction between the British and the Sikhs can be divided into three phases. In the first phase, the decline of the former ruling class was accompanied by the British effort to win over a major section of the Sikhs by preferential recruitment to the army reorganizing them by anthropological expression, such as martial race. In other words, the first phase spanning from 1849 to 1906 was the period of the Sikh

support to the British Empire. It was also the period of the beginning of religious reform movements, such as the Arya Samaj and the Singh Sabha, the latter emphasizing 'Sikhs' distinct identity and boundary demarcation from Hindus. The Arya Samaj further contributed to this sharpening of the demarcation through the *Shuddhi* movement, the purpose of which was the reconversion to Hinduism those who had earlier converted to Islam and even Sikhism. In fact, the attempt of the Arya Samaj to include Sikhs as the potential reconvertis to Hinduism vindicated the views of Kahan Singh Nabha (1973) that Sikhs were not Hindus. The second phase is the shorter period between 1906 and 1919, when the Sikhs began to move towards opposition to the British rule. The agitation of the farmers in 1906 in the canal colonies began the process and the Ghadar movement initiated by the Punjabis living in North America was the culmination of the process. During the last phase of communal electorates between 1920 and 1947, the Sikhs became differentiated as a political category. Participation in the democratic and militant struggle for freedom was accompanied by communitarian politics more as a reaction to the Muslim League's two Nations Theory and demand for a Muslim majority state of Pakistan. As the demand for Pakistan was accepted and India was partitioned, the plausibility of the realization of a separate sovereign state based on a common religion became a fact. In the subsequent years, the political vested interests were to articulate Khalistan for the Sikhs. Though the demand for Khalistan never became the part of agenda of the Sikh leadership, yet at certain levels it was always lurking in their minds in one form or the other at the time of India getting independence.

II

Political dynamics

The political dynamics of Punjab, like any other region, is complex and is not devoid of certain uniqueness of its own. Let us look at what makes Punjab political process a distinct and unique in its own right. Punjab is one of the few states, which are not having Hindu majority, but it is the only state with the Sikh majority. Before independence, the Muslims constituted the majority community. Immediately after partition, the Hindus constituted majority. The reorganization of the state in 1956 on the basis of language created the Punjabi Suba with the Sikh majority. It is generally taken for granted that the Akali agitation for Punjabi Suba was primarily aimed at having a

Sikh majority state (Nayar, 1966). However, Akali Dal has so far failed to perpetuate its formal political domination uninterruptedly, as the Congress continues to challenge and replace it regularly. The issue of language has remained volatile even today as it overlaps the communal identities. Tandon (1963: 66-67) has written on the language of Punjabis in the pre-independence period. It is adequate to quote him at length thus:

Our language, Punjabi, has no script and hardly, until lately, any except religious literature. For centuries the Muslims had used Persian which the Sikhs continued as their court language. The Sikhs had evolved the Gurmukhi script for writing Punjabi by modifying the Sanskrit alphabet, but this they do to avoid the sacrilege of recording their holy book, the Guru Granth Sahib, in Persian script, the script of the Muslims against whom they had revolved. Persian however continued to flourish as the language of culture and communication. Educated Punjabis were therefore bilingual, speaking Punjabi and reading and writing Persian (Tandon, 1963).

The British brought Urdu with them from the United Provinces and Delhi, and supplanted Persian. At the same time, they brought English.....

Hindi, in the Devanagari script, arrived later and was confined at the beginning to the Brahmins and to our women, the later through the influence of Arya Samaj (Tandon, 1963).

Tandon has succinctly and lucidly described the real situation in Punjab during the early British rule. The fact that Punjabi had no script of its own had serious political ramifications for the relations between the Hindus and the Sikhs after independence. The Punjabi was written in the Persian or Shahmukhi script, but the emergence of the Singh Sabha movement contributed to the popularization of the Gurmukhi script, in fact the Gurmukhi script was also popularized in the 19th century by the Hindu *parchariks* (preachers) who wrote various discourses by using this script. What is notable is that the language of these discourses was essentially classical Braj. In fact, the Sikh religious literature in the 19th century was largely in Braj, two of the examples of which are *DasamGranth*¹ and *Suraj Parkash*. The Arya Samaj movement simultaneously popularized not only Hindi but also Devanagari script. All this began in the late 19th century but gained momentum in the next century. The impact of the Singh Sabha movement can be seen in the form of another movement of writing the literature in Gurmukhi script though the most popular form of writing Punjabi continued to be the Persian. Thus, we find a complex situation in which a majority of the people of Punjab, including Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims, speaking Punjabi and

¹ Sikhs believed that Dasam Granth is written by Guru Gobind Singh Ji and it is most of in Braj.

writing in Persian script. The Sikh leadership was making all-out efforts to popularize the Gurmukhi script among the Sikhs, whereas the Arya Samaj was popularizing Hindi in Devanagari script among the Hindus.

The independence of the country was accompanied by the partition in which the states that were affected most included Punjab and Bengal. Communal riots broke out in Punjab as a result of which the Hindus and Sikhs from the Western Punjab and the Muslims from the East Punjab were forced to take refuge on the other sides of the newly created international border. The complex situation prevailing in Punjab with regard to the language began to have its ramifications in the form of polarization of the Hindus and the Sikhs. It seems ironical that there was no conflict between the Hindus and the Sikhs with regard to the swift and radical elimination of the Urdu language and the Persian script from the school curriculum of the state with an exception of Malerkotla region.² We have no record of controversy on these issues whether the Punjabi should be written in the Persian script or not. However, once the Persian script disappeared, the important issue that came to the fore was the identification of the script for the Punjabi language. Since the Urdu language and the Persian script was identified with the Muslims, the communalization of the script and language in the post-colonial Punjab also became a part of the process which, had begun in the 19th century.

Though the politics of language had its roots in the history of the separation of spoken language from the language of culture and sometimes communication, yet the rise of vernacular languages in India was a part of the process of emerging nationalism, and collective and regional identity. The first step that the government had undertaken in the post-colonial India was the reorganization of the states on linguistic basis. In Punjab, the politics of language and its overlapping with the religious identities might have dissuaded or discouraged the Union Government of India from the reorganization of Punjab. The communal divide between the Sikhs and the Hindus is dominantly based on the language controversy though the economic division between the Sikh cultivators and the Hindu traders has been added to this divide as another factor. In the census of 1951, the political mobilization took place in order to determine what the mother tongue of Punjabi was speaking Punjabis. The

² The Muslims, falling under the princely state of Malerkotla, were rather protected by the Sikhs in 1947. The story goes back to the times of the tenth Guru, Guru Gobind Singh Ji. When the governor of Sirhand ordered that the younger two sons of the guru be buried alive, the only one to oppose it was the Nawab of Malerkotla.

Hindus recorded their mother language as Hindi is the common phrase used by the Sikh leadership. Interestingly, a considerable proportion of the dalits of Punjab also recorded Hindi as their mother tongue. Nayar (1966) attributes this act of the dalits to their exploitation in the hands of the Sikh farmers in the rural areas. The association between the religion and the recording of the mother tongue may be regarded as one of the important factors in the postponement of the reorganization of the state for a while. However, the entire issue left bitterness between the two communities, which frequently came to the fore in various ways. The vernacular press, particularly the newspapers from Jalandhar, played an important role in communalizing the issue of language in Punjab. In terms of imposition of the Gurmukhi script, the Sikh leadership aimed at establishing its hegemony, whereas the politicization of this matter led to some kind of rejection of their mother tongue by the Punjabi speaking Hindus. Not everyone played and participated in the politics of language, but it has become a part of the life of the Punjabis in many ways and in the religiously charged political situation, the Hindus are made responsible for this betrayal.

The politicization of language did not prevent the formation of Punjabi Suba, but only delayed it. Even before the formation of Punjabi Suba the understanding of the domination of various social and religious groups may reveal the structure of political dynamics of Punjab. Nayar (1966) has provided some data on the social background of the Sikh leaders as-

Both Congress Sikhs and Akalis are overwhelmingly of rural origin (over 75%), though Congress Sikhs are more so. Only a small number were born in a town or city... ..

As for as cast composition is concerned, both groups show the predominance of the same caste groups. Among both Congress Sikhs and Akalis, the Jats are the predominant caste group (over 50%) though more so for the Congress Sikhs (70%) than for the Akalis (54%).

The political domination of Jats in the region prior to the formation of Punjabi Suba was obvious. It might also be true for the Haryana region, as it later on emerged that the Hindu Jats began to monopolize the state politics. An examination of the social background of the leaders of the communist parties may provide certain interesting information. Most of them belong to Jat caste. Even in the case of Naxalites, the same was true (Judge, 1992). Cast background of the leaders of the political parties in Punjab had tremendous consequences for the political dynamics of the state after the

formation of the Punjabi Suba. The articulation of various demands on the part of the Akalis was largely Jat-centric.

It was pointed out in the beginning that the main objective of the struggle for Punjabi Suba was to have a Sikh majority state and it was opposed by the Hindus. The Indian government was aware of this situation, as it can be interpreted from the writings of Puri (1983 and 1989) and Narang (2000). It also implies that when the government of India took the decision to form the Punjabi Suba, it did so with the clear understanding that it was creating a Sikh majority state. Narang observes that the Indo Pak war and subsequent decision of Sant Fateh Singh to postpone his agitation and self-immolation created the conditions for the formation of a Punjabi Suba.

“During the war, the role of Punjabis in general and Sikh population in particular was highly appreciated. In view of all these developments, within two days of the cease-fire, the Central government appointed as three men cabinet committee consisting of Y.B. Chavan, Indira Gandhi and Mahavir Tyagi to examine afresh the demand for Punjabi Suba” (Narang A. , 2000).

The Punjabi Suba created a Sikh majority state leaving out certain Punjabi speaking areas and from then onwards another era of the emergence of new issues began. Before we go into those issues, it would be worthwhile to first focus on the political consequences of the formation of the Punjabi Suba. Immediately after the formation of the Punjabi Suba, the Akalis came to power in the state in the elections that were held in 1967. They remained in power only for a short period, as there was a split in the Akali Dal and Lakshman Singh Gill, with the support of the Congress, ousted the then Chief Minister Gurnam Singh. Since the Jats dominated in the political dynamics among the Sikhs, the implication was that they were also competing with each other for power and irrespective of the political party affiliation, the political competition among them manifested in the inter-party interaction and politics. Pettigrew (1978) has shown how the Kairon-Rarewala conflict entailed struggle for domination in the period prior to the formation of the Punjabi Suba. It also involved the future politics of Punjab where the Jat elite competed with each other through various political parties. As a result, Punjab experienced alternative rule of two parties and the Akalis continued to compete with the Congress for formal power. Since the Akali Dal, along with its basic orientation and manifestation, was essentially a party with a base among the Sikhs, it got trapped into the process of articulation of the Sikh interests with aggressive posture so as to sustain and enlarge its appeal among the Sikhs. In the

process, the Akali Dal reached a point of no return and ultimately shared the platform with the extremist Sikh leader, Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, in 1982. However, on the way to its association with the extremists, the Akali Dal continued to exhibit and indulges in its aggressive posture with a short interlude immediately after the Emergency in 1977 when it was a partner in the Janata Party government.

Two aspect of the period following the formation of a Punjabi Suba require some explication. The first is that Chandigarh was turned into an apple of discord between Punjab and the newly formed Haryana. Till this date, no decision has been made regarding the status of Chandigarh, which the Akali Dal leader invariably used to mobilize the Sikhs. Darshan Singh Pheruman, who went on fast unto death and died, symbolises the struggle of the Sikhs for Chandigarh. The reason for not taking decision on the transfer of the city has always remained an intriguing issue. One can only make a conjecture that the elite of the city exercise strong influence in the Centre and they do not wish to go to any of the states. This lack of conviction of the Indian government is a readymade weapon in the hands of the Akalis. However, the issue of Chandigarh only evokes emotional response when it is combined with some other issues.

Secondly, one of the most emotive and continuous issues has continued to be the sharing of river water between Punjab and Haryana. The Green Revolution phenomenon, which has become indispensable for understanding various dimensions of the polity, economy and society of Punjab and Haryana, was and continues to be based on intensive irrigation besides the extensive use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides, and hybrid varieties of seeds. Over a period of time, the Punjabi farmer has shifted to the wheat paddy monoculture involving intensive irrigation giving rise to the politics of water in the region. Water has become the most valuable resource and the presence of large number of present proprietors in both Haryana and Punjab makes it the decisive issue with regard to the electoral politics. The politicians are therefore keeping the issue of water alive without any serious effort at resolving it. Haryana, being the successor state, has certain riparian rights over the resources of Punjab and these issues could have been handled amicably. However, this did not happen and the Akalis who could not keep their party in uninterrupted rule exploited these issues, but they also did it by twisting the economic issues to an instance and illustration of discrimination against the Sikhs. There emerged some readymade and set slogans that have come to stay and form an integral part of the mobilisation strategy of the Akali Dal. These are as follows

'Panth khatre wich hai' (the Panth is in danger), *'Sikha nnaal dhakka ho rihahai'* (There is discrimination against the Sikhs) (Judge, 2005).

Such slogans, coupled with the demands for higher prices for the procurement of wheat and paddy, and river water for Punjab, have given rise to the continuous articulation of the issue of Centre state relations and state autonomy. More powers to the state may be regarded as one of the fundamental issues. The Akali Dal is not the only one demanding for state autonomy, but it is the only party that is based on a religion in the secular context. The Akalis demand for state autonomy may be perceived as communal demand and this is exactly what has happened. Dhami (1977) wrote that owing to the outdated ideology of the Akali Dal as-

“Its support base is mainly confined to the local rural Sikh peasantry; the result is that they develop a different type of attitude which for four want of a better phrase may be termed regional chauvinism.”

The Anandpur Sahib Resolution, prepared by the Akalis became one of the most controversial documents in the post-independence period and everybody try to interpret it in his own way. The interpretations varied from characterizing it as a separate to defending it as a document that raises demand for more powers to the state. There is no denying the fact that it was prepared at the time when the Akalis were out of a power and the religious flavour in its wording created doubt among others.

A way of understanding and interpreting the orientations of the Akali Dal in the Punjab politics is to find out certain basic contradictions that seemed specific to the state before the rise of the BJP following the *Ram Janam Bhoomi* issue in the beginning of the last decade of the 20th century. The foremost among these contradictions was that in a secular country, the Akali Dal was based on the ideology of Sikhism or so it proclaimed. It invariably articulated the issues and problems being faced by the Sikh community. In a Sikh majority state, the religious card did not help the Akalis to remain in power without any threat. It began to raise issues, like Centre-state relations, more autonomy to the states that concerned with all the states of the countries. As the posture becomes more radical, the situation develops volatility that requires some body to take it to the extreme. Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale emerged as the first available adventurers and the Akalis had already prepared a situation for him to make the best use of it in the name of religion and community without bothering whether the two were same or different.

III

Literature and Punjab problem

As everyone know that Punjab is passing through a very difficult phase of history and if it is true that literature reflects the truth of the time then how could contemporary literature remain silent about this agonizing period. On the importance of literature in historiography Prof. Marwick says ‘Those historians and ordinary people who ignore the imaginary history of the era, are writing the history of the era, they are so stupid and unknowledgeable as to who are fully trusting in this literature’ (Carr, 1991). Thus, literature is the vocabulary of folk hearts. A writer is also a painter, doctor, philosopher of his own society. He takes a deep look at the problems of life around him, ponders, analyzes, and looks for solutions. It is impossible for any writer to remain indifferent to the religious, economic, social, political, and cultural activities of his contemporary life. Literature is a response to people's feelings. He exalts the voices of the people whose mediums are his creations. It is within this context of literary creation that modern Punjabi commentators have made a concerted effort to examine the linguistic, religious, cultural, economic, social and political aspects of the Punjab problem.

This portion of the chapter particularly tried to write the history of Punjab’s dark period with the help of contemporary literature available in Punjabi language. When leaders use religion badly in politics, Punjab was plunged into a dark crisis for a very long time. On the time of that dark period in Punjab during 1984-1995, the bulk of Punjabi, Hindi, English writing concerned itself with the Punjab imbroglio. Operation Blue Star was the sole reason for the terrorism in Punjab. It adversely influences Punjab in all manners. The killings were not confined to one community as the men, women and children of both the communities were being killed. The people terrified by the harrowing atmosphere dared not to travel at night; mothers prayed for the safe return of their children; the shrieks of widows and orphans continued to rend the air, the police excesses in the form of fake encounters and mysterious ‘escapes’ of some terrorists from police custody further worsened the situation. In this period of turbulence and turmoil, the writers gave an affective expression to the various aspects of the tragedy. All writers strongly believed that the politician create this problem with use of religion as a tool in politics of Punjab. The problem of Punjab which started with the demand of Anandpur Sahib Resolution reached at its highest peak

during Operation Blue Star and eventually Punjab was completely fallen in chaos. The writers continued to pose questions on the problem that prevails and felt that in questions alone lay the answers and the light.

Punjabi poetry

In this era Punjabi poetry remained dominant over other forms of literature to reflect the gloomy incidents in Punjab. A young poet Swarajbir in his poetry book *Apni Apni Rat* (Each one's Night) has described his painful experiences of those fateful nights in Amritsar when the city was totally burned as a result of the militancy crackdown on the Golden Temple during the operation Bluestar. Besides the pain and anguish, which he has expressed in highly evocative imagery, he has also tried to create a meaningful link with the literary and cultural tradition of the Punjab in his poems. Similar situation of Punjab is also depicted by Jaswant Zafar (1993) in his book *Do Sahan Vihckaar*, (Between the two Breaths) in his poem *Manwa* (Mothers). He writes as-

Then when
Returning home in the evening
Mother's heart with compassion-
The boy came home at the right time
The outside situation is not right.
Now that I was an alien
Every week the mother's account is published
With the lyrics, the mother writes-
The boy does not come home yet
Here the condition is not correct (Zafar, 1993).

In another very interesting poem '*Mitti Da Bawa*' (Clay Toy), he provides an intensely moving rendering of that era where Sikhs and non-Sikhs alike faced their own trials and tribulations; both faced with unique predicaments and dilemmas. The former would best not leave the house sans turban, lest they be killed by Sikh terrorists. The former, at the same time, ran the risk of getting mistaken for a terrorist and being gunned down by the police in fake encounters. His whole book portrays the Punjab problem in very clear term. Jaswant Deed (2002) in his *Bacche ton Dardi Kavita* (Poetry Frightful of a Child), depicted in a forceful manner, the innocence of childhood vis-à-vis the harsh realities of life which strangulate innocence. On one hand he talks of the bliss of innocence and nature and, on the other, he talks of the

dehumanizing influence of civilization and morality. Ajaib Kamal (1986) in his book *Chup Baithi Kavita* (Quiet Sits Verse) offers very interesting and significant analysis of the Punjab issue. He feels that man, having got trapped in religious, mutual and supremacist struggles has transformed into a brute. This has resulted in all kinds of tensions in human societies. He perceives communal tensions in Punjab in this light. Romesh Kumar (1986) in *Dhaul Dharam Daya Ka Poot* (righteousness is the mythical bull, the off spring of mercy), commits himself to focus only on these three issues. These ballads portray different elements of the mind-boggling circumstances in an exceptionally serious and energetic way. The poet has advanced an unmistakable idyllic expression of his own. Communicating his deepest sentiments on the Punjab catastrophe, he writes:

The Punjab is smoldering, burning
 Not only in his own cities and town
 But also, in the streets of Delhi
 We are all to be blamed
 We who call ourselves progressives

Another important work in this series was an edited poetry book *1986 Di Punjabi Kavita* (Punjabi Poetry on 1986) by Gursharan Singh published in (1986). All of his poems are centered around the agonies of Punjab. The poem *Eh Din* (These days) by Rajbir, depicts two unique scenarios - one depicted the retro movement of Punjab and the other takes us to Delhi where vicious groups execute, plunder and loot in the name of nationalism. Another poem in the same book, *Pachh* (The Cut on a Tree) written by Sarabjit Bedi (1986), depicts the hidden anger of Sikhs who seem to be very patient at the moment, like trees. The fallen tree ultimately becomes fire. The Poet says ‘the moment it starts drying up, the fire within starts spreading out.’

A prominent poet of Punjabi literature, Harinder Singh Mehboob (1990) has written so many poems on the Punjab crisis. The third part of his book *Jhana di Raat* (Night of Jhanas), specially deals with the dark period of Punjab. Mehboob, in very emotional verse depicts Operation Bluestar, especially when the Akal Takhat was destroyed into ruins. He suggested to the Punjabi community to solve all the troubles, by taking the path of humanism shown by their religious gurus. Another eminent poet Jagtar, whose poems which were written under this period was clearly influenced by the incidents which were happening in daily lives of the people in those days in Punjab. His

two very interesting books *Anmuk Safar* (2005) (Unending Journey) and *Har Mod te Saleeban* (2014) (Death Trap at every turn) reflect the everyday life of common people. He explains how the police itself was involved in criminal incidents instead of checking these. He writes about them as:

Who's that finally?
as soon as the evening falls
comes in our homes forcefully.
they unsolicited guests
and started to force us for everything forcibly.

Another important poet, similar to Mehboob and Jagtar, is Sukhpal. His book *Rehan Kathaon Nayon* (2014) (No place worth living), delineates the occurrences in Punjab by providing another dimension, for example:

One month back, the aggressors come in my sister's home. They were interested in nourishment and time was 11 during the evening. When they don't open the entryway, they had begun the firing. At the point when my sister attempted to call the police, police answered that they might come tomorrow (Sukhpal, 2007).

Sukhpal explained incidents in Punjab in very expressive terms and in one of his other poems as writes:

Son, take any way to this city,
And to tell each family unit there is a degree of (any) mishap with everybody.
There is no house in this city that no relative or companion passes on.
The Hindu Sikh's passing has no effect on anybody.
Executioners are not minded whether the general population
Have a turban or not (Sukhpal, 2007).

Arthur Victor's poem *Main Punjab Han* (I am Punjab) written in (1986), about the Punjab crisis was very popular in those days. He writes:

I am Punjab
Woven from the timeless spindle of history
I am Punjab
the strong and tested alloy of culture
of Trishul, Khanda and Cross.....
how it come to pass
that I lie wounded now
drop by drop bleeding to death
my sturdy veins drained
stabbed every inch
I lie wounded
I am Punjab..... (Victor, 1986).

The poetry book of Dr. Harbhajan Singh *Uni Sou Churasi* (Nineteen Eighty-Four) edited by Amarjit Chandan in (2017) is totally based on those tough days in Punjab. Along with his poems, three papers by Dr. Harbhajan Singh are also included in this book and are also based on the so-called problem of Punjab. In one of his poem, he writes:

Have seen silence of mobs,
And (have seen) their noise
To hear some words from a (just, reasonable) Man,
(to)which arbitrator should
(we) accompany.

Neither we have said (in support) Bhidranwale,
Nor we belong to Indira's (camp)
Two sabres for our heads
Which one should we choose.

On Operation Bluestar, being a Sikh himself, he very emotionally expressed his anger in the following manner:

(at) mandir of Hari, never had heard of
Such happenings,
Harmandir is open for all
(It has) fairness (for all) in abundance,
(I) walk towards Harmandir
With a subtle sinking heart,
(But with a question) where do I belong,
(To) leave this threshold to which other threshold should I go,
Who will solve this dilemma,
(Oh! My) mother Amritsar is dear (to me).

Hamdardveer's (1987) *Kale Samea de Naal Naal* (With the Dark Periods) talks about the dark period in the cultural history of Punjab. Amarjit Kaunke (1987), in his book *Nirvaan di Talash*, (Seeking Salvation) presents a hero who was depressed because of the sad situation and sometimes raises a voice against what has happened and what will happening. Balbir Atish's (1987) *Pagal Ghorhean de Summan Heth* (Under the time of mad Horses) is yet another book of poetry on the theme of Punjab problem. But the most important book of poetry on this theme is Swaranjit Savi's (1987) *Avagya* (Disobeyed). Savi understands the idiom of modern poetry and explores the psychology of his hero who is suffering not because of his own deeds, but who is entrapped in the painful situation (Punni, 1988).

Punjabi Novels

It is not only poetry which talks about militancy and the atmosphere of terror in Punjab. In the field of Punjabi fiction, writers have also contributed equally on violence in Punjab. Among Punjabi novelists, Om Parkash Gasso (1986) has written the novel *Tatti Hawa* (Hot Air or Loo). He presented his balanced and scientific study of Sikh terrorism and Hindu communalism. Exposing Hindu mentality, he states that these peoples are living in Punjab for reasons of prospering their business. Otherwise, they would have never considered Punjab as their native soil. Nor have they ever thought of doing anything worth while for its betterment (Singh B. J., 1986).

Punjabi novelist Shah Chaman (1987) had written his novel *Jakhmi Gulab* (Injured Rose) which depicts so many perspectives of the Punjab problem. He even dedicated his novel to Punjab writing ‘To my beloved Punjab which continuously fought against terrorism and separatism.’ The novel presented a story of a couple living alone after their love marriage against society. Suddenly the hero of his novel joined a militant group for finding employment, and suspicious events started happening in their life. With this depiction, the writer tried to show that unemployment was the main reason for increasing the number of militants in Punjab. He also presented selfish politics of politicians, the matter of Anandpur Sahib Resolution and massacre of the people of Punjab in his novel. This novel depicts the political, social, cultural and economic crisis with great success. There are a few plays written on the same theme.

Baljinder Nasralli’s (2014) tragedy novel *Veehvi Sadi Di Akhri Katha* (The last Story of the Twentieth Century), delineates the social environment of Punjab in all respects innovatively during the period of militancy. The novel depicts the reason why the youth of Punjab deliberately and deeply started engaging with terrorism but the actions of police also played a major role in pushing them into terrorism. He also observes that unemployment was a major cause behind militancy in Punjab.

Mitter Sen Meet, a well-known Punjabi novelist who is also famous for his different writing style as he always given detailed analysis of the

problems. He has also written a couple of Punjabi novels which are related to the Punjab crisis. The first one is *Taftish* (1990) (Inquiry) and the other one is *Katehra* (2014) (The Dock), in the novel *Taftish*, after the grandson of Lala Ji is kidnapped by the terrorists, the writer depicts this situation in the following way:

‘The letter was from one militant group, and they demanded Rs. 50,000 by the morning. Along with this, they have ordered Lala Ji not to organize Ram Leela and Ras Leela in the city, and if someone tried to disobey their orders the dead body of his grandson will be reached at his home by the evening’ (Meet, 1990).

According to Sen, almost all border districts were under militancy in Punjab. One other thing which makes his novel very interesting is his style of exploring the police department which was the most corrupt department as it used to harass common people during that time, very similar to what all the terrorist groups were doing. Mitter Sen Meet also agreed with other writers that unemployment was one of the serious causes behind the militancy. He writes:

Firstly, boys have started taking a drug..... He started living invisible from his home and started spending most of his time with other boys at the workshop. Unexpectedly a one day person comes to know that he was killed by the militants with their guns. So, Sen has portrayed the real situation of Punjab with so many these kinds of examples in his both novels (Meet, 1990).

Je Ratt Piwehe Manas (If Human drink the Blood), a novel written by Karamjit Singh Aujla (1987), depicts the Punjab problem in brief but another novel written by him under the title *Chenva ate Satnwa Darya* (The Sixth and Seventh Rivers) has become very important for understanding the Punjab problem. According to him, the sixth river in Punjab can be seen as tears the people have shed due to the Punjab problem and the seventh river, he compares with the human blood shed by terrorists as well as by activities of the police. One new perspective he provided on police corruption in his novel was the role of ‘gang wearing black underwear’ which later became famous and was held responsible for almost every bad incident which happened during nights in the last few years of the militancy in Punjab. The writer

portrays their illegal activities in his novel and as one mad woman character described it:

....wrong, totally wrong, they are real members of the black underwear gang. During all day they are wearing caps and pants but at nights they are wearing the black underwear. Because when they raped me, I saw that they had to wear the black underwear under their pants (Aujla, 1987).

Another significant work is *Painda Te Rah* (the distance and the track) by Surinder Pal Dhillon (1986). This novel deals with the period from Operation Bluestar to the anti-Sikh violence in Delhi in early November 1984. He depicts the political atmosphere of Punjab in very precise terms in this fiction. Explaining the Punjab accord with the help of a cartoon, he says: ‘a broad canvas. On one side stands the Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi like a young prince, under whose shadow take shelter many stalwarts holding tridents, tires, tines of kerosene and other weapons. On the other side stands Sant Longowal like a big tent sheltering wolf-like people who are hungry for power, between them is a blank space dotted with dead bodies. Both the leaders have been shown moving forward to shake hands over the jungle of corpses.’ In the field of fiction also, there is Ninder Gill's novel, *Chon Halka Payal*, talking about the Punjab problem.

Kartar Singh Duggal (1986) in his novel *Fhullan Da Sath* (Company of the Flowers) criticized both communities for the Punjab problem. He criticizes Gulzari Lal Nanda who was the home minister of India when the Sikhs were demanding their homeland for a long time; he denied their demands and this rejection made the Sikhs unhappy. So, Duggal links the problem of Punjab with the demands of the Sikhs after the partition of India. For finding a solution to the Punjab problem he argues that when Punjabi Hindus, without any political objective, consider Punjabi as their mother tongue, then the Punjab problem will be solved automatically. Dalip Kaur Tiwana's (1986) novel *Jimi Phuche Asmaan* (Earth Asking for Sky) is also very important in this context. For her, the Central government, Akalis of Punjab, the issue of Punjabi language, unemployment in Punjab and communal newspapers was responsible for the Punjab crisis. She has also found roots to this problem to the time of partition. She depicted it in the

following way: Harmandir, the Gurudwara in Amritsar was constructed by a Hindu Guru and its foundation stone was installed by a Muslim saint, and yet it is the sacred pilgrimage site of Sikhs. In other words, this is the situation of Punjab. But during Partition, Hindustan became the country of Hindus and Pakistan of Muslims, on this basis Punjab was divided. Just like how someone would divide Harmandir between Hindus and Muslims. And the Sikhs felt that they had been displaced.

Almost every novelist has criticized the role of government in creating the Punjab problem but only a few among them were very daring. One novelist that deserves to be mentioned here is Narinder Gill (1986). In his novel *Punjab Eighty-Four*, he tried to explore the dual kind of politics impinging on the Punjab problem: the government of Punjab as well as the central government. He writes:

They have banned the All-India Student Federation, then why they don't ban the Hindu Suraksha Samiti, we who have our guns seem to them terrorists but the Brahmans who have run their illegal workshops of the guns are nationalist? How.....? (Gill N. , 1986).

Narinder Gill tried to show that the Hindu was equally responsible as much as the Sikh for the Punjab problem. The Sikh massacre under the label of 'Riots of 84' he depicted as:

The dishonor committed against Sikhs during the 1984 anti-Sikh riots (should be called genocide not riots), has raised questions about the future living of the Sikh community (Gill N. , 1986).

Two trucks full of villagers have come...They have jerry cans of petrol...they have axes and rods...They are setting fires, looting shops...They drag Sikhs out of their homes and cut their hair with scissors...Then they hit and push them, beat them until they are half-dead...And then dragging these broken bodies they pour petrol over them and burn them to death...they don't even forgive children. No religion permits the genocide of men and women (Gill N. , 1986).

Another important work on this context is the novel *Dehshat de Dina Vich* (In the Days of Terror) which was written by Ninder Gill (1986). This voluminous fictional work tries to create a picture of what he calls 'during the days of terror' which was long-lasting in Punjab. In this novel he tried to

reveal the ways of influencing the ruling regime so that they can change their policies in favour of increasing public welfare.

The novel *Lahu Vatega Rang* (1987) (The Blood will Change its Colour) written by Harpreet Kaur deals directly with the problem of Jammu and Kashmir which began with the partition of India, but indirectly she has also depicted the problem of Punjab because both states have faced similar type of problems.

Similar to Harpreet Kaur, Jaswant Singh Kanwal, one of the most famous writers of Punjabi literature in his novel *Anaya Chon Utho Surma* (1985) (from the masses will rise the valorous) depicts the Punjab problem indirectly because this particular novel directly focused on the Naxalite movement in Punjab but one of his characters, Santokh Singh Sokha represents the Sikh community in the whole story of the novel. Through this novel, he also explored many different perspectives of the Punjab problem. *Ountre*, a novel written by Raj Gill (1987) is dedicated to violent events which happened to the Sikh community in Delhi after the assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and results of this paved the way for creating the Punjab problem. *Vapsi (Come Back)*, a novel written by Dr. Rashpal Singh (1987) depicts the story of youth of Punjab and international interference in the Punjab problem. He depicted that because of harassment by police youth of Punjab used to cross over the border, go to places where Pakistan ran training camp and then send them back to India for undertaking terrorist activities.

Punjabi plays

Punjabi plays also contribute to our understanding of the problem in an appropriate manner. Gursharan Singh (1986), a well-known Punjabi play writer has written three plays on the Punjab crisis, *Dastan-e-Punjab*, (The Story of Punjab) *Chandigarh Puare di Jarh* (Chandigarh, the Root Cause of Conflict) and *Curfew*. Gursharan Singh is forthright in his approach and takes to task all those responsible for the sad and unfortunate situation. He successively depicted in a straight forward manner, a fake police encounter, people suffering communal hysteria and innocents being shot down in cold

blood by the terrorists. A Punjabi monthly magazine from Amritsar, Samta, published a full-length play of Gursharan Singh *RaajSahban da* (1987) (Rule of President) presents the problems of the President's rule.

Short stories

Short story writers have also, in the same way, contributed during the period. Four stories books which is directly related to Punjab problem, *Kalle Samein Di Gatha* (A Story of the Dark Period) (1986) edited by Gurmit Saran and Harbans, *Ek Udas Kitab* (One Sad Book) (1986) edited by Amrita Pritam, *Ratt Ka Kangu* (this term is used by Guru Nanak Dev Ji in Baburbani for Babur) edited by Ram Saroop Ankhi (1986), and *Asin Jeounde Asin Jagde*, (We are Hale and Hearty and We are) edited by Amarjit Garewal and Tarlochan Jhande (1986). Around 80 stories related to Punjab problem were compiled in these books.

The story *Hit List* (1986) written by Gursharan Singh depicts the conversation between a terrorist and a common man, as 'two people went to the street on the motorcycle. They reached the home of one wise man. He opens the door, they told him your name is on hit list. He asked but why? Please save me, they replied we are not able to save you because we are also on a hit list.'

Rudan Billian (Weeping Cats) written by Gulzar Sandhu (1989) portrayed this problem very emotionally as *Bebe* (Old Lady) knows that the boys were at fault, what was the fault of a poor postman, shopkeeper, school master, various C grade employees, they were all scared in this situation. What was the bravery in the killings of innocent people.

Amrita Pritam (1986) edited the book *Ek Udas Kitab* (One Sad Book). Almost all the stories in this book related to the Sikh massacre in Delhi after the death of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. All these stories not only described the real situation of Punjab but also provide valuable criticism and evaluation of the Punjab problem. The story under the title *Ghusmsa* (Twilight) shows the psychological condition of a Hindu mother, who was witness to the Sikh massacre in Delhi. The mother is depicted as saying 'the old mother of Kishan Lal was coming from somewhere and addressed the

group of people standing near the chowk, “my sons, please stop them, my heart is very scared because all my three sons are at Amritsar right now. If you will save the Sikhs here, then it’s possible that someone will also save my sons at Amritsar.”

Another story *Kutte* (Dogs) (1988) written by Ajit Kaur tried to explore one of the most controversial perspective in the context of the Punjab problem. In this story, she believes that the role of Punjab police and CRPF makes the Punjab problem more complex in terms of solving it because so many young boys left their homes because of police verification and harassment. They rapidly joined the various terrorist groups. The Police was not only used to harass the ordinary people of Punjab but also..... for raping girls and responsible for all that kind of illegal activities.

The story *Fir Bahar Ayegi* (spring will come again) written by Davinder Mand (1987) concentrates on the brotherhood between both Sikh and Hindu communities in Punjab. He compared this brotherhood with the Banyan tree as roots of the Banyan tree looking him same like both communities. Another story written by Dev Bharadwaj is *Upre Bande* (Unknown Persons) in an edited book entitled *Ratt Ka Kangu*, (this word is used by Guru Nanak Dev Ji in Baburbani for Babur) exposes international interference in the Punjab issue. It depicts this problem as ‘one unknown person coming from another planet who tried to fight the people in the name of religion’. Two stories of K.L. Garg *Anaya Ch Ghir iLalten* (Lantern Surrounded by blinds), and *Antina Vich Fasi Patang* (A Kite caught in an Antenna) suggested a solution to the Punjab problem. Both stories believed that politicians have created this problem only for their selfish gains. They don’t even want to solve it and instead want to make it even more complicated. He believed that the killings of innocent peoples are not a solution to any problem.

Chuthi Koot, (2014) (The Fourth Direction) a very meaningful story written by Waryam Singh Sandhu reflects the situation of Punjab when no one dared to travel at night. It depicts how Hindus and Sikhs had started to be enemies with each other without understanding the reason. But at the end of

the story, they saved each other's lives. It shows that the harmony between the two communities still prevailed. Another very interesting story by Sandhu is *Main Hun Teek Taak Han* (1998) (Now I am well), this story reflects the life of common people who lived at their farmhouses. He has shown very ingeniously, how, on one hand terrorists, and on the other, police used to harass them. They were sandwiched between them. In his story *Parshanve* (1998) (The Shadows) again, he has shown the real situation of Punjab when Sikh extremists killed a Hindu family in cold blood without any fault on their part. Waryam Sandhu's most popular story is *Bhajjian Bahin* (1986) (The Fractured Arms), offers a penetrating analysis of a poor peasant family which was crumbling under the weight of communal tensions resulting from the socio-cultural and political situation. In this story too, Hindus killed by the terrorists shows the vulnerable condition of the Hindu community in a Punjab village in those days. Very famous female writer Sukhwant Kaur Maan in her story *Chadar Hethla Banda* (2004) (A Man under the Cover) has focus on the mobs of Delhi in November 1984. In this story, she demonstrates the catastrophe that struck a well-known tailor who lost his son and grandson in the anti-Sikh violence. His prestigious shop was burned by vicious groups in the name of patriotism. The same kind of story *Antim Safar* (2005) (The Final Journey) is written by S. Balwant. This story also describes how the attackers burned houses of Sikhs after the assassination of Indira Gandhi.

An anthology of short stories on the Punjab crisis were edited by Ninder Gill and Trilochan Jhande (1986) under the title *Asin Jiunde, Asin Jagde* (We are Hale and Hearty and We are Alert), Most of the stories in this anthology were earlier published in Punjabi magazines and debated and discussed in various forums. Notable among others are *Sanjh* (Kinship) by Mohan Bhandari, *Virlan Vichon Jhankda Hanera* (Darkness peeping through the Chinks), *Kakh Kan* (Straw) by Prem Gorkhi. The authors of these stories have imagined the blood-curdling events in Punjab as representing the psyche of the Punjabi people in an authentic manner.

Another book of short stories, *Nikkian Nikkian Gallan* (Petty Talks) by Darshan Singh (1986) presents vignettes of day-to-day Punjabi life as lived in Madhya Pradesh.

As we know the leader of Punjab uses religion to impress Sikh voters for their own selfish ends. The Akali Dal, a political organization of the Sikhs, has always taken the position that religion and politics are inseparable. It has become a part of the Sikh ethos and Sikh psyche that religion is not safe unless it is defended through acquiring political power. It has always stood for a *Panthic* government i.e., government that serves the Sikh *panth* or community. But in the story by Atarjit named *Baba Punjab Singh* the main character explored the politics of Akali Dal at the time of Punjab crisis in the following way:

Why are you dirtying the Guru's wisdom and politics, you big servants of the community (*panth*) ... Are you the Sikh 'payaras' we pray for during *Ardaas*...Do you always remember God's name or the seat of power?

In order to strengthen the political situation, this kind of Akali politics not only limits people's faith in religion, but also gives fuel to their divisive tendencies.

A similar situation is also depicted by Gurmail Madahad (1988) in his story *Dharti Lahu Luhan* (The Bleeding Earth). The writer believes that the Akali Dal was responsible for creating the Punjab problem because it did not stop militant activities at the right time. He writes

The Akalis could have done a lot. They could have told the people that they had no relation with the militants...They could have at least told them that 'golisikka' (bullets as coins) are being submitted to Harmandir Sahib. It is because of their silence that militant powers got their full strength.

Baljinder Nasrali (1990) in his story *Surajwanshi*, (*The Sun Dynast*) explores the role of communist politics on such situations in Punjab. He observes that the communist party has two kinds of groups; the first group was in favor of Congress politics and they supported the Congress party in Punjab at the time of elections for defeating BJP and Akali Dal and another group was against Congress policies on the Punjab problem due to ideological differences.

Raat Di Khukh Vichla Suraj (1987) (Sun in the Night Womb) was a story written by Baldev Singh also blamed the self-centered attitude of all political parties that created the problem. On the other hand, the story

BuddiLumbadi ate Jangli Ghoda (Old Fox and the Wild Horse) written by Jasvir Bhullar indicate how all political parties tried to use the Punjab crisis for their own selfish political gains rather than creating it. Prem Gorkhi in his story *Khunda* (Door handle) and Ajit Kaur in her story *Na Maro* (Stop Killing) depicted the inhuman actions of police, CRPF, and all government agencies against the common people of Punjab. This resulted in a situation where a large number of young men in the age group 18-22 years, fearing arrest, torture, and elimination in police custody, ran away from their homes and joined militant groups.

So, government agencies, political leaders and militant groups all tried to show concern about and defend human rights and values but the ground reality was all were only interested in exploiting human values and human rights as much as they can. During this period, if no one helped the police or government agencies, they immediately declared them terrorists and on the other side, if someone dared to oppose the policies of terrorists, they killed them in cold blood on the spot. These kinds of happenings have been depicted by Baldev Singh in his short story *Naagwal*, (Gordian knot) and which shows the real situation facing the common man in Punjab within these two perspectives. Another kind of story is *Dakkhana Khas* (Special Post Office) penned by a well-known Punjabi writer Baljinder Nasrali. This story illustrates how the militant movement was diverting away from its original aims, with the increase in mass killings.

Sarvmeet's (1886) Story *Oupari Sheh* (Strange/Alien Thing) demonstrates how the lives of ordinary people were affected by the advent of militant groups in their pursuit of power. In this story, the author describes how the arrival of militancy created terror for the ordinary people. The character Channa becomes a militant because of financial troubles at home. He used to get his shoes made from the cobbler Hansoo but after becoming a militant, he forcefully stops Hansoo from smoking cigarettes, creating a high level of tension. Because of the fear of militancy, Hansoo can't even fulfill his small need for smoking cigarettes. As the story unfolds, we come to know of the terror associated with rising militancy in the village, especially as the militants had commanded people of one community to leave the village.

From this, we also come to know the politics of militants wherein by trying to make Hindus leave, they are trying to establish 'Sikh Raj' or Khalistan here. The writer depicts this situation ingeniously as follows:

The advertisement poster on the shop of Chitta seemed like a Godly command. The Hindus of the village are warned that they need to leave the village within two days, and the failure of this would be rectified. In the village, those who help the children of Chandu will be dealt with just like Singh traitors have been handled. Under this, there was a signature in broken handwriting-- 'Leftenant General Charanjit Singh Channa' and the stamp of his self-made force (Sarvmeet, 1886).

In this way, the author is able to show the impact on the mental state of Hansoo as the situation changes, along with that of the ordinary man. The success of militancy and establishment of Khalistan is represented as:

'Yes, the rule can be anything, of anyone, but people's shoes will keep being worn and torn.' The writer doesn't nurture the illusion of curating the young people involved in the militant struggle as revolutionary protagonists, instead, in opposition to this, he sharply satirizes the exploitative character of the militants' status quo' (Ibid, 1886).

In the story by Waryam Sandhu (2014) *Parshanwe* (Shadows) the seeds of the Punjab problem were first sown due to multi-directional factors emerging and operating during the Partition of India and these only got worse in the post-partition period.

Similarly, Gurbachan Singh Bhullar's (1989) story *Ki Jana Mae Kon* (Who knows Who I Am) signals a movement towards lack of humanity in human beings because of the communal feelings being spread by militants.

A very sensitive Punjabi writer Prem Parkash's two stories deserve a particular mention here. His story *Satwanti* (1988) (Satwanti is a name of woman) depicts the mental condition of a woman who lost her children and husband in the Delhi violence and is also raped by her assailants. His story *Eh Oh Jasbir Nahin* (1988) (He is not that Jasbir) portrays the changing friendship between Hindu and Sikh boys. In a very creative manner, the writer depicts how the attitude of Hari changed towards Jasbir after he joined the militant movement after some time. Jasbir, however, was also scared of Hari in case he called the police to arrest him. An important aspect of the Punjab problem is the analysis of economic aspects, F.R. Garg's story is very important in this context, *Bhai Ghanayie di Mot* (The Death of

Bhai Ghanihya³). The storyteller thinks that the number of terrorists has also increased due to the inactivity of the educated unemployed youth in Punjab. The ill-educated unemployed youths of minor misery are easily distracted by separatist and extremist forces. This story provides an impartial analysis of the economic, administrative and terrorist aspects of the Punjab problem. Corruption, police excesses and culturally disrespectful of Punjabi villagers are some of the key aspects of the problem, he believes that the situation in Punjab could not have been so much worse if the right approach had been adopted.

Stories related to the crisis in Punjab have mainly shown the tension between militants and the government police. Many stories point to the social and political causes of this crisis. Where these stories put the police (government) in crisis-prone forces, the terrorist forces are directed and counted in the anti-people forces. In addition, these stories question the ability of terrorists to obtain and maintain power. In this way, the stories related to the Punjab crisis highlight the well-being of the two parties, citing the pain of the common man being engulfed in the struggles of the government and terrorists. Many storytellers are trying to look into the economic and political crises of Sikh peasants because of this crisis, pointing to government panic. They suddenly find the central government the main culprit of the crisis. The politically conscious storytellers of this era may be kept in the story of Waryam Sandhu, Mohan Bhandari, Prem Prakash, Santokh Singh Dhir, Atarjit, Baljinder Nasrali, Sarvmit, etc.

We may conclude with the remark that Punjabi literature clearly reflects the social, cultural and political realism in Punjab between 1984 and 1995. Not only have the writers pictured the blood-curdling realities of the Punjab, but also advocated their rightful solutions demand which were also the demands of common people of Punjab in those days. This is a most significant and a bird's eye view of the Punjabi literature which reflected the real situation of Punjab which is covered in this portion of the chapter.

³ Bhai Ganhaiya (1648–1718) was a Sikh, verbatim disciple, of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji and was requested to establish the Sevapanthi or Addanshahi order of the Sikhs by Guru Gobind Singh Ji. He was known for pouring water for all the wounded members of the battlefield no matter whether they were Sikhs or fighting against the Sikhs.

CHAPTER-3

FROM ANANDPUR SAHIB RESOLUTION TO THE EMERGENCE OF BHINDRANWALE

Khalsa Panth will either be a ruler or rebel. It has no third role to play.... The Sikhs constitute a separate political entity [which means] that they must act as a single group in politics, that they can only be rulers or rebels, and that religion and politics are inseparable.

Master Tara Singh (Hindustan Standard, July 4, 1958)

This chapter will talk about the political system for the rapid transformation of Punjab and find out under which circumstances the Anandpur Sahib Resolution came out, and how and why Bhindranwale insisted on the full implementation of the Anandpur Sahib Resolution.

I

Sikh Politics in Punjab after Independence and Punjabi Suba Movement

At the onset of independence in August 1947, the Sikh community found itself living in secular, democratic India. Before, independence, the composition of religious 'communities' in the colonial province of Punjab was about 61% Muslim, 26% Hindu and 13% Sikh (Government of India Census Report, 1941) (Kapur R. , 1988). After independence and Partition, the population of Indian Punjab became approximately 61% Hindu and 35% Sikh, with 0.63% of Muslim (Government of India Census Report, 1951) (Kapur R. , 1988).

Unlike during British rule, there were not separate communal electorates or reservation of seats for Sikhs in the elected political bodies of independent India. Such arrangements had been instrumental in reaffirming Sikh ethnic identity and providing Sikhs with significant group power in the political process during the British Raj. For example, in the 1940s, 'Pakistan' as a means of 'national unity' was far too convoluted, fanciful, and divisive an argument to make for the Congress, especially at a time when its entire leadership, together with tens and thousands of workers, were either in jail or underground. Nor was it easy for the communists to live with the charge of dis-loyalty given that the Congress was by now the sole arbiter of nationalism and patriotism. Any socio-political expression deviating from the Congress's version of nationalism was considered irredeemably anti-national or communal.

Indeed, there was some dissent within communists ranks that fully recognized the self-defeating implications of the Party's impossible political positioning. But, constrained by party discipline, they were left with little option except for half-heartedly following Bombay's dictates. The party's politically suicidal policy was most evident to those working in Sikh heartlands. There, the demand for Pakistan was complete anathema. Virtually all sections of Sikh opinion, led by the Akalis, were implacably opposed to the Pakistan scheme. Amid thundering denunciations of the League and threats of violent confrontation, counter proposals of a separate Sikh homeland were floated. Essentially turning the League's argument against it, the premise of these proposals was simple: with their distinct culture, religion, and history, Sikhs too were nation and hence entitled to their separate state, if Pakistan became a nation and hence entitled to their separate state. If Pakistan became a reality, they would not be forced to live under a Muslim Raj any more than Muslims would be forced to live under a Hindu Raj (Sandhu S. S., 1946) (Singh H. , 1945). The Communist Party's Bombay high command had clearly underestimated the strength of Sikh opposition to Pakistan. When pressed by Punjabi workers on how they could reconcile their policy with Sikh opposition, a flustered Adhikari could only propose increasing sales of party literature as the most effective means of winning public support for the party and its policy. Sensing the hopelessness of its position, the best the party could do was to lend its belated support to both Pakistan and Khalistan as a response to Sikh schemes of either Akhand (united) Hindustan or Azad Punjab (PPSAI 1944, Shimla). This argument for a Sikh state was later concretely spelt out in a pamphlet, Sikh Homeland through Hindu Muslim and Sikh Unity-better described as a lengthy rejoinder to the Akalis - issued by theoretician-in-chief Adhikari on the eve of the 1945/46 elections. Adhikari's Sikh state was to be established in the Sikhs' central Punjabi heartland, which allegedly had a 'cultural unity' forged by centuries of rich Sikh history (Adhikari, 1945). Adhikari's plan envisaged a tripartite division of the Punjab, with a Hindi-speaking East acceding to India, a central Punjabi non-Muslim zone, and a Muslim-dominated West Punjab with Amritsar and Lahore as their respective capitals.⁴ In some ways, this was perhaps the only logical outcome of the communist- and League-argument. Nor were they only ones making such arguments, as the appeals for 'Achhutistan' - meant as a homeland for Dalits - aptly indicated (Raza, 2020).

⁴Ironically, that is exactly what happened after the Partition of British Punjab and later reorganization of Indian Punjab.

Thus, the status of ethnic minorities in a Hindu-Majority India took on special significance for Sikh leaders in the immediate post-independence period. The Akali Dal had two main political goals after independence one proximate and other longer term. The Akali Dal's immediate goal was to try to form a Sikh- majority state in north India. For achieving its immediate goal, the Akali Dal initially adopted an 'infiltration' strategy, where an 'agitational' approach was preferred for its long-term goal (Nayar, 1966).

Regarding the former, the premier Sikh leader, Master Tara Singh, strategically placed Akali legislators into Punjab's Congress party, which was afflicted with bi-factionalism at the time. This allowed the Akali Dal to hold the balance of power between the two competing Congress factions, thus maximizing its leverage and influence (Chima, 2010).

This strategy initially worked very well. The Akali Dal managed to extract several political concessions from the Congress, including the 'services formula' the 'party formula' and most importantly, the 'Sachar Formula' during the period from 1947 to 1951. The first established an undisclosed proportion of government service positions for Sikhs, the second guaranteed an equal number of seats for Sikhs and Hindus in the state ministry, and the third demarcated Punjab into separate Punjabi speaking and Hindi speaking areas in which their respective language was to be the medium for education up to high school and the other would be taught after the fourth grade (Nayar, 1966). Hindu based organizations such as the Arya Samaj opposed all of these concessions to the Akali Dal.

These concessions aside, the Akali Dal performed 'poorly' in the 1952 State assembly elections, winning only 13 out of 126 seats in contrast to the congress which won 98 seats (Wallace, 1990). For the Akali Dal, this mediocre performance reinforced that it needed a smaller, Sikh majority state if it wanted to compete effectively with the Congress in electoral politics and ever form the state government in Punjab. For this reason, the Akali Dal reverted to an 'agitational strategy' in May 1955 and launched a *morcha* (agitation) for the creation of a Punjabi speaking state, which it hoped would also contain a larger Sikh population. Tens of thousands of Akali workers courted arrest in this *morcha*, but the states Reorganization Commission still rejected the demand for the Punjabi Suba (Singh S. , 1996).

Nonetheless, the high levels of political mobilization demonstrated popular Sikh support for the Akali Dal's demands, thus prompting the Congress party's Chief Minister of Punjab, Partap Singh Kairon, to offer concessions to the Akali Dal in the form of the 'Regional Formula'. The Regional Formula merged some Sikh- majority areas into Punjab, and purposely excluded Hindu-majority areas, thus resulting in a slightly increased Sikh population in the state (Nayar, 1966). It also divided the state into separate Punjabi- speaking and Hindi- speaking regions with two separate committees in the legislature. The Regional Formula mandated that legislation would have to be approved by both of the two regional committees and, in case of a disagreement, the Governor's decision would be final and binding. After this political compromise, a section of the Akali leadership once again 'infiltrated' or merged into the Congress party, and Kairon reciprocated by inducting several Akali legislators into his ministry. This gave Kairon's Congress ministry the appearance of being a 'Panthic' (Sikh) government.

Yet, the Regional Formula failed to solve the communal problem in Punjab. Hindu nationalist organizations such as the Hindi Raksha Samiti, the Jan Sangh, and the Arya Samaj reacted sharply to Kairon's concessions to the Akalis, and started the 'save Hindi' agitation demanding that compulsory teaching of any language be stopped (Singh G. R., 1979). This agitation ended without any official concessions, but Kairon did begin informally slowing down implementation of the Regional Formula in his attempt to maintain Hindu support in the state. This angered Master Tara Singh who launched a new *morcha* for the *Punjabi Suba* in 1960 in which about 60,000 Akalis courted arrest, but the government still refused to relent (Singh G. R., 1979). The Akali Dal once again performed poorly in general elections in 1962 (Wallace, 1990).

Master Tara Singh's repeated inability to force the central government to concede to the *Punjabi Suba* took its toll on his reputation, and Sant Fateh Singh and other Sikh leaders rebelled against his leadership, forming their own separate Akali Party. Thus, the Akali Dal split into two factions- the Akali Dal (Sant) and the Akali Dal (Master). It was suspected that Kairon and the Congress party engineered this split in their attempt to bolster the more moderate Sant Fateh Singh over Master Tara Singh (Kaushal, 1999). After all, Sant Fateh Singh emphasized that the *Punjabi Suba*

demand was purely a linguistic one, in contrast to Master Tara Singh who publicly admitted that it was designed to create a Sikh majority state (Chima, 2010).

The Sant faction narrowly gained control of the SGPC in 1962. Over the next two years, Sant Fateh Singh further consolidated his position as the premier Sikh leader over Master Tara Singh, and subsequently announced that he would lead a new agitation for the creation of the *Punjabi Suba* if the central government failed to accede to this demand (Singh G. R., 1979). On the eve of the proposal agitation, the Indo-Pak war broke out in September 1965 and the Akali Dal postponed its plans in order to fully cooperate in the nation's war effort against Pakistan. The patriotic role played by the Akali Dal and Sikhs during this war helped in reaffirm their nationalist credentials and loyalty to India. After the war ended, the Congress central government endorsed a plan to allow Punjab to be bifurcated into two states and in essence, conceded to the creation of the *Punjabi Suba*. Leaders in the Hindu majority Haryana region of Punjab also agreed to this bifurcation for their own partisan political reasons.

Politics after Punjabi Suba Movement

The *Punjabi Suba* was officially created in the fall of 1966. Thus, the Akali Dal had finally secured a separate Punjabi speaking state that also contained a Sikh- majority after nearly 20 years of periodic agitation. The population of the new, truncated Punjab was 60.22% Sikh and 37.54% Hindu (Government of India Census Report, 1971). Yet the creation of the *Punjabi Suba* did not completely ameliorate tension between the Akali Dal and the central government. The manner in which Punjab was bifurcated created a number of inter-state disputes between Punjab and its neighbors, and also between Punjab and the central government. These disputes included the central government's decision to take control of the Bhakra and Beas Dam projects, its decision to give Chandigarh the status of Union Territory instead of granting it to Punjab, and its unwillingness to incorporate certain Punjabi speaking areas into the state.

In the first state assembly elections after the creation of the *Punjabi Suba* the Congress won 48 seats, the Akali Dal (Sant) won 24, and the Master group won two out of 104 (Grewal J. , 1994). These results demonstrate that the Congress continued to be the dominant party in the state, but that the Akali Dal's political competitiveness had increased in the truncated, Sikh majority Punjab. In fact, these elections marked

that, for the first time in post-independence history, the Congress party failed to secure a majority of seats in the state legislative assembly of Punjab. As a result, the Akali Dal (Sant) and its allies formed the first non-Congress ministry in the state called the 'United Front' in 1967. Yet, this government fell within eight months after the Congress engineered the defection of dissident Akali legislators from the ministry (Grewal J. , 1994). These Akali dissidents subsequently formed a new coalition ministry with outside support from the Congress Party, but this ministry also fell in less than a year when the Congress withdrew support in mid-1968.

The fall of two consecutive non-Congress ministries after the formation of the *Punjabi Suba* prompted the Akali Dal (Sant) and the fledgling Akali Dal (Master) to temporarily unite against the Congress Party. This unity proved effective when the united Akali Dal won 43 seats, the Congress 38, and the Jan Sangh eight in the February 1969 midterm elections for the Punjab state assembly (Singh G. R., 1979). As a result, another united front ministry was formed between the Akalis and Jan Sangh in Punjab, and this government remained in power for three years (Grewal J. , 1994). Congress (I) came back into power in 1972 with Giani Zail Singh as Chief Minister of Punjab as a part of a 'Congress wave' that swept India after the nation's spectacular victory over Pakistan under the leadership of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi during the 1971 Indo Pakistan war. Sant Fateh Singh clearly remained the dominant leader within Sikh politics until his death in late 1972 (Chima, 2010).

Through the mid-1970s, the Akali Dal continued its largely confrontational relationship with the Congress (I) central government with controversies over the control of Delhi's Sikh *Gurdwaras*, the central government's attempt to unilaterally amend the 1925 Sikh Gurdwara Act, and continued tension over lingering inter-state issues. In 1975, Mrs. Gandhi imposed a national Emergency under which democratic rule was suspended throughout India. The Akali Dal responded by launching a 'save democracy' *morcha* which became the nation's only sustained, large scale agitation against the Emergency. Indira Gandhi withdrew the Emergency in 1977 and ordered fresh elections, as a result of which a Janata party led coalition, came into power in the Centre. This was India's first ever non-Congress government. This Janata led ruling coalition in the center also included the Akali Dal. For the first time in the post-independence era, the Akali Dal had a 'sympathetic' government in power in the center. In Punjab, the Akali Dal also swept into power in alliance with the Jan Sangh.

Thus, the Akali Dal had become much more competitive with the Congress in Punjab's 'secular' political system after the creation of the *Punjabi Suba*, making political competition between the two parties much more consequential and intense. This trend was exemplified by the fact that the Congress formed every state ministry in Punjab after independence until 1966, but that the Akali Dal and the Congress alternated in and out of power in the state afterwards. Yet, a fundamental transformation had occurred within internal Sikh politics after the passing away of Master Tara Singh and Sant Fateh Singh two consecutive hegemonic leaders who had reigned over Sikh politics from independence to the early 1960s and from the early 1960s to the early 1970s, respectively. In contrast, Sikh politics had become deeply divided by the mid-1970s with different leaders controlling their own separate spheres of power within the 'Sikh political system' instead of one clearly dominant or hegemonic leader as was the case previously. Jagdev Singh Talwandi had become president of the Akali Dal and controlled the organizational wing, Gurcharan Singh Tohra dominated the temple wing as SGPC president, and Parkash Singh Badal was the Chief Minister of Punjab and the leader of the legislative wing. Talwandi and Tohra, both of whom did not have to compete in Punjab's secular political system which also included Hindus, tended to be slightly more radical and ethnically oriented than Badal. These changing political dynamics increased the competitiveness of the Akali Dal and Congress in Punjab, and the emerging factionalism within Sikh politics was the prominent cause for the Punjab crisis.

Later on, the collapse of the government under the Chief Ministership of Parkash Singh Badal in June 1971, a team of Sikh delegates under the leadership of Jagjit Singh Chauhan, went abroad on a tour to Europe and USA to present the true depiction of the Sikhs in India before the Western lands. Dr. Jagjit Singh Chauhan, a medical practitioner from Tanda in Hoshiarpur District, Chauhan was first elected to the Punjab Assembly from the Tanda as a candidate of the Republican Party of India in 1967. He became Deputy Speaker in the Akali Dal led coalition Government and was Finance Minister in the Lachhman Singh Gill Government. In 1971, he moved to the United Kingdom and in late 1971, he went to Nankana Sahib in Pakistan to set up a Sikh Government. He then visited USA at the invitation of some supporters. On 13 October 1971, he placed an advertisement in 'The New York Times' proclaiming an Independent Sikh State. Chauhan was shown on Pakistani television receiving the

keys of Nankana Sahib Gurdwara, the famous Sikh shrine at the birth place of Guru Nanak near Lahore. He has also play very important role in Sikh politics after Operation Blue Star. The gesture of publicity marked Pakistan's basic sympathy with the leaders of an independent Sikh State. In 1971, India defeated Pakistan in the Indo-Pak war. East Pakistan became a sovereign republic of Bangladesh. Mrs. Indira Gandhi's reputation as a Leader and popularity as Prime Minister Sky rocketed as she was hailed as an incarnation of Goddess Durga. At the peak of her popularity, the Congress party swept the polls, both for Parliament in 1971 and the Punjab State assembly held in 1972. On 17 March 1972, Giani Zail Singh became Chief Minister of Punjab. During his Chief Ministership from 1972 to 1977, Zail Singh went to ridiculous lengths in sponsoring religious gimmickry, hoping thereby to wean off the religious extrovert supporters of the Akali Dal into the close of the Congress. In spite of his efforts and his religious stratagems to mollify the Sikhs, Zail Singh was not alert to the political direction the Sikhs were beginning to take. In April 1973, the Working Committee of the Akali Dal adopted a policy resolution in a conference held at Anandpur Sahib which advocated for the federal structure in which the Central Government should actualize the federal concept of India by granting autonomy to the provincial government in all the areas except Defence, Currency and Foreign relations.

The unpublished Punjabi version of the resolution described Sikhs as a nation and demanded safeguards and structural arrangements within which Sikhs would have a predominant role in the administration of the State. The issue of Centre-State Relations and of more Provincial Autonomy to the states was not a new issue raised only by Akali Dal in the 1970's. The leadership of the Congress and the Constituent Assembly at Independence was firmly in the hands of those who believed in the necessity for a strong, centralized State in India (Brass, 1990). In the Constitution of India and in the Indian federal system, there is a considerable array of central powers in relation to the States and numerous unitary features. Many political parties and intellectual groups had been demanding autonomy for the States in all other areas except defence, communications and foreign relations. The Government at the Centre had constituted several bodies to study the question. In 1965, the Administrative Reforms Commission had formed a study team under the chairmanship of Mr. M.C. Setalvad, a legal luminary, to examine and recommend changes in the Centre-State

relations. In 1971, Rajmanner Committee established by Tamil Nadu Government submitted its report which also referred to the feeling of anguish and frustration afflicting the state government because of overriding administrative and financial powers wielded by the Central Government (Commission on Centre state Relations-Report: 1987, 715). The demand was even more drastic than the one made through the Anandpur Sahib Resolution. According to the Report of Government of India on the subjects relating to Defence, Foreign Policy, Inter-State communication and Currency alone should remain with the Centre (Ibid, 1987, 718-119).

In 1967, when the leftist parties formed a coalition government in Kerala, under E.M.S Namboodiripad, they also faced teething problems as had piqued the Akali Dal led governments in Punjab. The United Left front had then submitted a proposition for a reexamination of the Centre-State relations, particularly in the area of finance, to the National Development Council. In 1977, the Communist Government of West Bengal had submitted another memorandum which argued that "nothing beyond foreign relations, defence, communications and currency should remain exclusively in the hands of the Central Government." While at that place were several attempts by non-Congress governments to take off the flawed Centre-state dealings, in Punjab the brain behind framing the isolated Sikh demands was Sirdar Kapur Singh ICS. He was an eminent Sikh Philosopher, theologian, politician, writer, who tried to argue for the right of Punjab to set up its own internal autonomous Constitution as was made out for the province of Jammu and Kashmir under Article 370. After his dismissal as a member of the Indian Civil Service, he became a vocal critic of the Government. On the insistence of Akali Dal leaders, Kapur Singh joined the Akali politics. In 1962, he was elected to the 3rd Lok Sabha from Ludhiana constituency. As a one man think tank of the Akali Dal, it was he who declared Sikhs to be "sui generis a free and sovereign people" and persuaded the Akali Dal to demand a "self-determined political status" for the Sikhs (Mann J. S., 1969).

He tried to persuade the leaders of the Akali Dal to demand autonomy for the State in all areas except defence, foreign affairs, communications, currency and economic planning. He asserted that the integrity of the Sikhs in India could not be a long-lived permanent feature, unless it was constituted on the terms on which they had joined the Republic of India. However, the majority view point in the Akali Dal

was not prepared to set out political objectives, requiring radical changes in the constitutional structure until the experiences during the 1960's-70's in which the state government was continuously interfered with and thus soured their tempers. They were instantly compelled to adopt a bold base.

The Anandpur Sahib Resolution was the effect of this change in the position of the Akali Dal. The political goal, the Resolution proclaimed, is enshrined in the commandments of the tenth Guru, the ultimate aim of which is the pre-eminence of the Khalsa.

II

Changing political dynamics

On 11 December 1972, Shiromani Akali Dal appointed a subcommittee to examine the situation and to revise the programme and policies of the Dal (The Tribune, 12 December 1972). The twelve members⁵ committee's first meeting was taking place at Amritsar and later venue was shifted to Chandigarh where the committee completed its task in ten successive meetings. The Committee prepared the draft, which was approved by the Working Committee of the Akali Dal at Anandpur Sahib on 16 October, 1973 (Hari, 1984) (Singh G. A., 1977). Direction was available to the subcommittee of Sirdar Kapur Singh, whose impress was carried by the draft emerging from its discussions. The document was adopted consistently by the working committee of the Shiromani Akali Dal at a meeting held at Anandpur Sahib on October 16-17, 1973 and came to be known as the Anandpur Sahib Resolution which became the basis for the demands that Akalis were to raise in the agitation which ended with the Indian Army storming the Golden Temple. It was endorsed in the form of a succession of resolutions at the 18th All India Akali Conference of the Shiromani Akali Dal at Ludhiana on 28-29 October, 1978. Judge (2005) wrote that the Anandpur Sahib Resolution, prepared by the Akalis, become one of the most controversial documents in the post-independence period and everybody tried to interpret it in his own way. The interpretations varied from characterizing it as a spearhead to defending

⁵ Surjit Singh Barnala, Gurcharan Singh Tohra, Jiwan Singh Umranangal, Gurmeet Singh, Dr. Bhagat Singh, Balwant Singh, Gian Singh Rarewala, Amar Singh Ambalavi, Prem Singh Lalpura, Jaswinder Singh Brar, Bhag Singh, and Major General Gurbakhsh Singh of Badhani.

it as a document that raises demand for more powers to the state. There is no denying the fact that it was prepared at the time when the Akalis were out of power and the religious flavour in its wording created doubts among others. Anandpur Sahib Resolution was also to provide Bhindranwale with a weapon to seize control of the agitation from the Akali Dal leaders.

First of all, it is important to mention here that how many forms of Anandpur Sahib Resolution and what the changes were made by the Sikh leaders in it time to time and most important that why they changed it. Here is the detailed analysis of the both version of Anandpur Sahib Resolution.

Anandpur Sahib Resolution⁶

(A) Principles.

- I. The Shiromani Akali Dal is the supreme body of the Sikh *Panth* and as such is fully authorized to represent and lead them. The basis of this organization depends on mutual relations, aspirations of man and his relations with the creator.
- II. These principles are embodied in the doctrines of Guru Nanak Dev, viz, *Nam Japo* (God Worship), *Kirat Karo* (Do hard labour) and *Wand Chhako* (share your hard earnings with others).

(B) Aims

The Shiromani Akali Dal shall strive for the fulfillment of following aims:

- i. Propagation of Religion and Sikh tenets and condemnation of atheism;
- ii. Maintaining the realization of Panth's independent entity and creation of such an environment where Sikh sentiment can find its full expression;
- iii. Eradication of poverty and hunger through an equitable economic structure-increase in wealth and end of all exploitation;
- iv. Removal of illiteracy, untouchability and casteism as laid down in Sikh scriptures; Ending ill-health and sickness—condemnation of intoxicants—so that the community is inspired to protect the Nation.

⁶Policy and Programme of the Shiromani Akali Dal adopted at Sri Anandpur Sahib on October 16-17, 1973.

PART-1

The Shiromani Akali Dal considers it a primary task to inculcate a sense of divinity among the Sikhs so that they are proud of being the same. In order to accomplish the same, the Akali Dal will initiate the following programme:

- i. Preaching the one-ness of God, worship, belief in the Ten Gurus and the Holy Granth, and information about the doctrines explained by them for implementation by the Sikhs;
- ii. For the successful preaching of Sikh Divinity, philosophy, tenets and kirtan etc. production of good preachers, singers, Dhadis and poets from Sikh Missionary Colleges so that preachers are able to propagate freely in India and abroad, villages and cities, schools and colleges etc.
- iii. The work of Amrit Parchar (Baptism) to be undertaken at a larger scale, particularly among the school and colleges. Study circles of college professors and students to be organised for this purpose.
- iv. Revival of *Daswandh* (donation of 1 /10th of income) among the Sikhs.
- v. Respect and honour the Sikh historians, intellectuals, writers, Parcharaks, Granthis etc. and provide facilities to raise the standard of their life, training and work.
- vi. In order to streamline the Gurdwara administration, arrangements to be made for the training of employees, maintenance of Gurdwara buildings and issuing of necessary directives to. The SGPC members in this behalf.
- vii. Correct printing of scriptures, research of old and new Sikh history, translation of scriptures and preparation of clean literature of Sikh principles.
- viii. Strive for the enactment of new All India Gurdwara Act under which all Gurdwaras in the country are managed efficiently and endeavour that old institutions of the Sikhs like Udasis, Nirmale etc. become an integral part of the Sikh society.
- ix. The Managers of all Gurdwaras in the world to be woven in a single chain in order to have effective benefits of the common means of religious propaganda.
- x. To secure “Open Darshan” of Sri Nankana Sahib and other Gurdwaras which have been snatched away from the *panth*.

PART-11

Political

The panthic political aim is definitely based on the directives of the Tenth Guru, which is engraved on the pages of Sikh history and is in the mind of the Khalsa Panth—Its aim is, *Khalsa Ji Ka Bol Bala*.

To this and in view, the Shiromani Akali Dal will strive and wage druggies for the following:

- a) The areas which have been taken away from Punjab or have been intentionally kept apart e.g. Dalhousie from district Gurdaspur; Chandigarh; Pinjore, Kalka and Ambala City in district Ambala; whole Una Tehsil of Hoshiarpur district, Deshilaqa of Nalagarh, Shahabad block of ' district Karnal, Sub Tehsils of Guhla and Tohana, Rattia Block of district Hissar and Sirsa Tehsil, 6 Tehsils of district Ganganagar of Rajasthan and the contiguous Punjabi speaking Sikh-populated areas, should be immediately merged, with Punjab under one administrative unit:
- b) In this new Punjab, the Central intervention should be restricted to Defence, Foreign Affairs, Post and Telegraphs, Currency and Railways. The rest of the departments should be under the direct control of Punjab:
- c) Effective arrangements should be made to safeguard the interest of the minority Sikh community living outside Punjab, so that they do not fall a prey to any discrimination;
 1. Shiromani Akali Dal will also try that the Indian Constitution becomes Federal in the real sense and all states are equally represented at the Centre.
 2. The Shiromani Akali Dal feels that the foreign policy of the Congress Government is useless and harmful for the country and the Nation as a whole. It will strive for good relations with all neighbouring countries, particularly where the Sikhs reside or where their religious shrines is found. Our foreign policy should not be tagged along with any other country.
 3. To ensure justice for Sikh employees at the Centre and States and to raise effective voice against injustice, meted out to them, is an important part of the Shiromani Akali Dal's programme. Particularly in the Defence Services, efforts will be made to maintain the conventions of the Sikhs and

the demands of Sikh soldiers would be constantly kept in view. Shiromani Akali Dal will also try that the “Kirpan” (sword) becomes an integral part of the Sikh soldiers’ uniform:

4. Creation of favourable atmosphere for the rehabilitation of ex-serviceman, provision of necessary concessions and safeguards for their rights so that they live a life of self-respect.
5. The Shiromani Akali Dal feels that every man or woman, who has not been sentenced by a Court of law, should be allowed to keep a fire-arm without license.
6. The Shiromani Akali Dal favours a policy of prohibition and ban on smoking at public places.

Economic Policy and Programme:

This is an Economic Policy and Programme of Shiromani Akali Dal as approved by the Working Committee in its meeting held at Shri Anandpur Sahib, on 17th October, 1973, it is also a part of Anandpur Sahib Resolution 1973. Though Indian economy is essentially an agrarian economy and no political force which is committed to building of a social order based on justice can ignore this, the crux of the whole problem is that the main lever of economy is in the hands of the big business, the capitalist and the monopolist class. It is precisely this class which has grown rich during 26 years of freedom though benefits of economic growths have been shared by other classes too. It is this class which essentially wields political powers. Therefore, any effort of building a new social order through peaceful means has to be directed in breaking the stronghold of this section of the population both on economy and politics.

The Akali Dal stands for removal of disparity between the rich and the poor, both in urban and rural areas. It, however, wants that the first attack on the concentration of wealth should be made on those who really control the economy. In the rural areas to the Akali Dal stands for the weaker sections of the population, scheduled castes, backward landless tillers, poor peasants and middle peasants. It therefore, stands for rationalization of land legislation in such a manner that all lands of above 30 standard acres should be taken over and distributed among the rural poor.

The economic policy of the Akali Dal, therefore, would mainly be directed to achieve these objectives.

Agrarian Sector

In the agrarian sector, the country has witnessed a series of land reforms on one hand and on the other hand a new phase of Green Revolution. The Akali Dal is pledged to stipulate the Green Revolution on one hand and to ensure that increase in Agricultural production leads to the improvement in the standard of living of all sections of the rural population, particularly the middle peasants and poor and landless population. To achieve this end The Akali Dal proposes to take in the coming period following measures:

- a) Initiate land reform measures to remove disparity and to increase Agricultural production. The existing legislation regarding ceiling on land would be reviewed and a ceiling of 30 standard acres per family be fixed. All remaining intermediaries on the land would be abolished and real security of tenure to actual tillers conferred. Landless agricultural labour and poor peasants would be settled on surplus lands and Government waste cultivable land would be distributed to the landless, preferably to the persons belonging to the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. The scheme for distribution of these lands would be evolved in such a manner that poor section of Harijans and landless population benefit from it. Along with these, the Akali Dal would also examine how the tenants can be given the right to mortgage their interests in land for obtaining credit and how restrictions can be placed on sale of lands given by Government to scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and backward classes in favour of others;
- b) The Akali Dal will also strive for the modernization of agriculture so that the middle, small and poor peasants too can benefit from cheap in-puts like electricity, water, seeds, fertilizers and credit through co-operatives and other public Agencies.
- c) The Akali Dal shall strive that agricultural prices are fixed on the basis of the cost of production of the average farmer. Prices should be declared well in advance of the sowing period. State Government shall have the authority to fix the price.

- d) The Akali Dal stands for complete state trading in food- grains and steps would be taken to facilitate take-over of wholesale trade in food grains and other agricultural produce be the State Government and Government Agencies.
- e) The Akali Dal is against all type of food Zones and restrictions placed on the Movement of Agriculture produce in the Country. The whole country be treated as a single Food Zone.
- f) Special efforts will be made to complete Thein Dam and Bhatinda Thermal Plant, so that irrigation facilities and electricity is augmented in the State and ultimately made cheaper. A concerted effort shall be made to set up an atomic electricity plant.
- g) Service co-operatives should be built up in rural areas and special attention should be paid to development of minor irrigation projects in those districts where canal irrigation is not available.

Industry

The Akali Dal demands that all basic industries should be brought under the public sector. The Akali Dal wants that all consumer industries dealing with essential commodities be nationalized so as to keep the price level under control and to end the exploitation of the poor consumer by the industrialists and the middle man.

Public Sector industries should be set up in such a manner as to remove the regional imbalances which has been created as a consequence of discriminatory policies of the Central Government.

A planned effort is made to develop agro based industries in the rural areas so as to relieve the pressure on population on the land. The management of industries is democratized to include to 50% representative of the Workers on the management and a detailed scheme be brought under the public sector. The Akali Dal is committed for progressive nationalization of transport.

Public Sector projects should be given more autonomy and manned by young competent persons committed to the project and special efforts should be made to build up a cadre of public sector project.

Fiscal Policy

The Akali Dal demands the review of the whole taxation structures in such a manner so that incentives for tax evasion and black money are totally eradicated. The Akali Dal stands for such taxation system whose incidence of the tax would be direct and could not be transmitted to general mass of the people. The present taxation simply penalizes the poor and provides big loop-holes to the rich. The Akali Dal stands for de-monetization of the currency in order to destroy the parallel black money economy in the country.

Workers Middle Class Employees & Agricultural Workers the Akali Dal would strive for:

- i. Need based minimum wage for the industrial workers,
- ii. Continued improvement in the standard of living of the Government employees.
- iii. Minimum wages for agricultural workers to be reviewed and if necessary, increased;
- iv. Plug loop holes in the existing labour Legislation to ensure decent living conditions for the workers.
- v. Execute urgent measures for increasing housing accommodation, both in the urban and rural areas, for the lowest running of the Society.

Unemployment

The Akali Dal stands for total employment in the country. To start with, it feels, it is the duty of the Government to provide jobs immediately, at least to all the educated and skilled people. Till the Jobs are not provided, unemployment allowance is provided to be shared on 50:50 bases between the Centre and the State Governments at the following rates:

Table 1. Unemployment allowance

(To be shared on 50:50 bases between the Centre and the State Governments at the following rates in Anandpur Sahib Resolution)

1. Matric and or trained hands	50/- per month
2. B.A.	70/- per month
3. M.A.	100/- per month
4. Engineers and Doctors	150/- per month
5. Other trained Labour	50/- per month

Source: Anandpur Sahib Resolution

All persons above the age of 65 should be given old-age pension.

Scheduled Castes and Weaker Section of Society

Akali Dal will strive to raise the economic standard of the Scheduled Castes and other Weaker Sections of Society by providing them educational facilities, employment and other concessions so as to bring them at par with the advanced sections of society. These classes will be provided food grains at subsidized rates.

Impact of Anandpur Sahib Resolution and its revised edition

Indira Gandhi the leader of the Congress party viewed the Anandpur Sahib Resolution as a secessionist document. She used it to depict the Akali Dal as a separatist and herself the savior of Indian unity. The Akali Dal officially stated that the Anandpur Sahib Resolution did not envisage an autonomous Sikh State of Khalistan. Its president, Harchand Singh Longowal in August 1977 declared:

"Let us make it clear once and for all that the Sikhs have no designs to get away from India in any manner. What they simply want is that they should be allowed to live within India as Sikhs, free from all direct and indirect interference and tampering with their religious way of life. Undoubtedly, the Sikhs have the same nationality as other Indians" (Singh K. , 1966).

In 1973, when the Resolution consisting of Charter of demands was adopted at Anandpur, it did not attract much attention. However, the excesses committed during the period of Internal Emergency accentuated the demand for more powers to the States. The manner in which the Fundamental Rights of the citizens were infringed by the Constitutional Amendments carried out by the Congress at the Centre, embittered the moderate voices within the Akali Dal in Punjab. Revised Anandpur Sahib Resolution was presented at the 18th Session of the All India Akali Conference at Ludhiana on 28-29 October 1978, presided over by Jagdev Singh Talwandi, where it was proposed by Gurcharan Singh Tohra, SGPC Chief and seconded by Mr. Badal, Chief Minister of Punjab and endorsed without any dissent (The Tribune, 29-30 October, 1978). Chandra Shekhar, leader of the Janata Party was present at the Conference and endorsed what the Akali Dal proposed. The Congress leaders did not respond to the Resolution in any form. The CPM regarded it akin to their demand for greater autonomy (The Ajit, 29-30 October, 1978, Commission on Centre state Relations- Report, 856). The following points were the part of the Resolution:

PURPOSE⁷

The Shiromani Akali Dal shall ever strive to achieve the following aims:

1. Propagation of Sikhism, its ethical values and code of conduct to combat atheism.
2. Preservation and keeping alive the concept of distinct and sovereign identity of the Panth and building up of appropriate condition in which the national sentiments and aspirations of the Sikh Panth will find full expression, satisfaction and facilities for growth.
3. Eradication of poverty and starvation through increased production and more equitable distribution of wealth and also the establishment of a just social order sans exploitation of any kind.
4. Vacation of discrimination on the basis of caste, creed or any other ground in keeping with basic principles of Sikhism.
5. Removal of disease and ill health, checking the use of intoxicants and provision of full facilities for the growth of physical well-being so as to prepare and enthuse the Sikh Nation for the national defence. For the achievement of the aforesaid purposes, the Shiromani Akali Dal owned it as its primary duty to inculcate among the Sikh religious fervour and a sense of pride in their great socio-spiritual heritage through the following measures:
 - a) Reiteration of the concept of unity of God, meditation on His Name, recitation of Gurbani, inculcation of faith in the Holy Sikh Gurus as well as in Guru Granth Sahib and other appropriate measures for such a purpose.
 - b) Grooming at the Sikh Missionary College the Sikh youth with inherent potential to become accomplished preachers, *ragis*, *dhadis* and poets so that the propagation of Sikhism, its tenets and traditions and its basic religious values could be taken up more effectively and vigorously.
 - c) Baptizing the Sikhs on a mass scale with particular emphasis on schools and colleges wherein the teachers as well as the taught shall be enthused through regular study circles.

⁷ Revised Anandpur Sahib Resolution was presented at the 18th Session of the All India Akali Conference at Ludhiana on 28-29 October 1978, presided over by Jagdev Singh Talwandi, where it was proposed by Gurcharan Singh Tohra, SGPC Chief and seconded by Parkash Singh Badal.

- d) Revival of the religious institution of *dasvandh* among the Sikhs.
- e) Generating a feeling of respect for Sikh intellectuals including writers and preachers, who also would be enthused to improve upon their accomplishments.
- f) Streamlining the administration of the Gurdwaras by giving better training to their workers. Appropriate steps would also be taken to maintain Gurdwara building in proper condition. He representatives of the party in the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee would be directed to pull their weight towards these ends.
- g) Making suitable arrangements for error free publications of Gurbani, promoting research in the ancient and modern Sikh history, translating holy Gurbani into other languages and producing first-rate literature on Sikhism.
- h) Taking appropriate measures for the enactment of an All-India Gurdwaras Act with a view to improving the administration of the Gurdwaras throughout the country and to reintegrate the traditional preaching sects of Sikhism like Udasis and Nirmalas, without in any way encroaching upon the properties of their deras.
- i) Taking necessary steps to bring the Sikh Gurdwaras all over the world under a single system of administration with a view to running them according to the basic Sikh forms and to pool their resources for the propagation of Sikhism on a wider and more impressive scale.
- j) Striving to free access to all those holy Sikh shrines, including Nanakana Sahib, from which the Sikh Panth has been separated, for their pilgrimage and proper upkeep.

Resolutions passed by Akali Dal in Anandpur Sahib Resolution of 1978

On 28 October 1978, the President of the Akali Dal, Mr. Jagdev Singh Talwandi in his address at the 18th All -India Akali Conference at Bhai Randhir Singh Nagar, Ludhiana, said that the unity of the Panth was the most serious problem facing the Sikhs. He affirmed the fact that the Creator had honoured the Panth and the State power had been bestowed on the Sikhs after great sacrifices by the Akali Dal. So, he suggested to his colleagues that they should not harm the larger interests of the Panth for short-term gains. He referred to the Amritsar and Kanpur incidents and said that

the Sikh martyrs had upheld the traditions and greatness of Guru Granth Sahib and brought glory to the Sikh religion (The Tribune, 29 October 1978). He lashed out against the Nirankaris and asked Akali workers to expose their "dark deeds" and appealed to all the Singh Sabhas, societies and institutions to spend a major part of their budgets in preparing literature to counter that of the Nirankaris for free distribution among the masses (Singh K. , 1966).

To mark the inauguration of the 18th All India Akali Conference in Ludhiana, the massive colourful procession started from Guru Nanak Stadium at 11:00 a.m. and terminated at Bhai Randhir Singh Nagar at 5:00p.m. covering a distance of about 11 km. The Akali Subjects Committee passed all Resolutions. The 512 member general house of the Dal, which is also known as the Subjects Committee were presented with 11 resolutions. The meeting was attended by 477 members. It lasted for an hour and passed all the resolutions unanimously and without any amendment. These resolutions have been adopted earlier by the Akali Dal Working Committee. It also passed a resolution on the Nirankari issue which was presented to it by the SGPC Chief, Mr. Gurcharan Singh Tohra. The resolution was framed earlier by a five-member sub-committee consisting of Mr. Kapur Singh, Giani Lal Singh, Mr. Satbir Singh, and GianiGurdit Singh besides Mr. Gurcharan Singh Tohra (The Tribune, 30 October, 1978). The Resolutions passed unanimously were as under:

Resolution No. 1

Moved by S. Gurcharan Singh Tohra, President, Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, and endorsed by S. Parkash Singh Badal, Chief Minister, and Punjab. The Shiromani Akali Dal realizes that India is a federal republic, a geographical entity of different languages, religions and cultures. To safeguard the fundamental rights of the religious and linguistic minorities, to fulfill the demands of the democratic traditions and to pave the way for economic progress, it has become imperative that the Indian constitutional infrastructure should be given a real federal shape by redefining the Central and State relation and rights on the lines of the aforesaid principles and objectives. The concept of total revolution given by Lok Nayak, Jai Parkash Narayan is also based upon the progressive decentralization of powers. The climax of the process of centralization of powers of the states through repeated amendments of the Constitution during the Congress regime came before the

countrymen in the form of the Emergency (1975), when all fundamental rights of all citizens were usurped. It was then that the programme of decentralization of powers ever advocated by Shiromani Akali Dal was openly accepted and adopted by other political parties including Janata Party, C.P.I. (M), D.M.K., etc. Shiromani Akali Dal has ever stood firm on this principle and that is why after a very careful consideration it unanimously adopted a resolution to this effect first at the All-India Akali Conference, Batala, then at Anandpur Sahib which has endorsed the principle of State autonomy in keeping with the concept of federalism. As such, the Shiromani Akali Dal emphatically urges upon the Janata Government to take cognizance of the different linguistic and cultural sections, religious minorities as also the voice of millions of people and recast the constitutional structure of the country on real and meaningful federal principles to obviate the possibility of any danger to the unity and integrity of the country and, further, to enable the states to play a useful role for the progress and prosperity of the Indian people in their respective areas by a meaningful exercise of their powers.

Resolution No. 2

This momentous meeting of the Shiromani Akali Dal calls upon the Government of India to examine carefully the long tale of the excesses, wrongs, illegal actions committed [against the Sikhs] by the previous Congress Government, more particularly during the Emergency, and try to find an early solution to the following problems:

- a) Chandigarh originally rose as a Capital for Punjab should be handed over to Punjab.
- b) The long-standing demand of the Shiromani Akali Dal for the merger in Punjab of the Punjabi-speaking areas, to be identified by linguistic experts with village as a unit, should be conceded.
- c) The control of headworks should continue to be vested in Punjab and, if need be, the Reorganization Act should be amended.
- d) The arbitrary and unjust Award given by Mrs. Indira Gandhi during the Emergency on the distributions of Ravi Beas waters should be revised on the universally accepted norms and principles, and justice be done to Punjab.

- e) Keeping in view the special aptitude and martial qualities of the Sikhs, the present ratio of their strength in the Army should be maintained.
- f) The excesses being committed on the settlers in the Terai region of the Uttar Pradesh in the name of Land Reforms should be vacated by making suitable amendments in the ceiling law on the Central guidelines.

Resolution No. 3 (Economic Policy Resolution)

The chief sources of inspiration of the economic policies and programme of the Shiromani Akali Dal are the secular, democratic and socialistic concepts of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh. Our economic programme is based on three principles:

- a) Dignity of labour.
- b) An economic and social structure which provides for the upliftment of the poor and depressed sections of society.
- c) Unabated opposition to concentration of economic and political power in the hands of the capitalists.

While drafting its economic policies and programme, the Shiromani Akali Dal in its historic Anandpur Sahib Resolution has laid particular stress on the need to break the monopolistic hold of the capitalists foisted on the Indian economy by 30 years of Congress rule in India. This capitalist hold enabled the Central government to assume all powers in its hands after the manner of Mughal imperialism. This was bound to thwart the economic progress of the states and injure the social and economic interests of the people. The Shiromani Akali Dal once again reiterates the Sikh way of life by resolving to fulfil the holy words of Guru Nanak Dev: "He alone realizes the true path who labours honestly and shares with others the fruits of that labor."

This way of life is based upon three basic principles:

- i. *Kirat Karo* - Doing honest labour,
- ii. *VandChakho* - Sharing with others the fruits of this labour, and
- iii. *Nam Japo* - Meditation on the Lord's Name.

The Shiromani Akali Dal calls upon the Central and the State governments to eradicate unemployment during the next ten years. While pursuing this aim, special emphasis should be laid on amelioration the lot of the weaker sections, scheduled and

depressed classes, workers, landless and poor farmers and urban poor farmers and urban poor. Minimum wages must be fixed for all of them. The Shiromani Akali Dal gives first priority to the redrafting of the taxation structure in such a way that the burden of taxation is shifted from the poor to the richer classes and an equitable distribution of national income ensured. The main plank of the economic programme of the Shiromani Akali Dal is to enable the economically weaker sections of the society to share the fruits of national income. The Shiromani Akali Dal calls upon the Central government to make an international airport at Amritsar which should also enjoy the facilities of a dry port. Similarly, a Stock Exchange should be opened at Ludhiana to accelerate the process of industrialization and economic growth in the State. The Shiromani Akali Dal also desires those suitable amendments should be made in the Foreign Exchange rules for free exchange of foreign currencies and thereby removing the difficulties being faced by the Indian emigrants. The Shiromani Akali Dal emphatically urges upon the Indian government to bring about parity between the prices of the agricultural produce and that of the industrial raw materials so that the discrimination against such states that lack these materials may be removed. The Shiromani Akali Dal demands that the exploitation of the produce of cash crops like cotton, sugarcane, oil seeds, etc., at the hand of traders should be stopped forthwith and for this purpose arrangement are made for purchase by government of these crops at remunerable prices. Besides, effective steps should be taken by government for the purchase of cotton through the Cotton Corporation. The Shiromani Akali Dal strongly feels that the most pressing national problem is the need to ameliorate the lot of millions of exploited persons belonging to the scheduled classes. For such a purpose the Shiromani Akali Dal calls upon the Central and State governments to earmark special funds. Besides, the state governments should allot sufficient funds in their respective budgets for giving free residential plots both in the urban and rural areas to the Scheduled Castes.

The Shiromani Akali Dal also calls for the rapid diversification of farming. The shortcomings in the Land Reforms Laws should be removed, rapid industrialization of the State ensured, credit facilities for the medium industries expanded and unemployment allowance given to those who are unemployed. For remunerative farming, perceptible reduction should be made in the prices of farm machinery like tractors, tube wells, as also of the inputs.

Resolution No. 4

This huge gathering of the Shiromani Akali Dal regrets the discrimination to which the Punjabi language is being subjected in adjoining States of Himachal, Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir, Delhi, etc. It is its firm demand that in accordance with the Nehru Language Formula, the neighboring states of Punjab should give "second" language status to Punjabi because of fairly large sections of their respective populations are Punjabi-speaking.

Resolution No. 5

The meeting regrets that against the "claims" of the refugees who had migrated to Jammu and Kashmir as a result of the partition of the country, no compensation had been provided to them even after such a long time and these unfortunate refugees had been rotting in the camps ever since then. This Akali Dal session, therefore, forcefully demands that their claims should be settled soon and immediate steps should be taken to rehabilitate them even if it involves an amendment to section 370 of the Constitution.

Resolution No. 6

The 18th session of the All-India Akali Conference takes strong exception to the discrimination to which the minorities in other states are being subjected and the way in which their interests are being ignored. As such, it demands that injustice against the Sikhs in other states should be vacated and proper representation should be given them in government service, local bodies and state legislatures, through nominations, if need be.

Resolution No. 7

The 18th session of the All-India Akali Conference notes with satisfaction that mechanization of farming in the country has led to increase in the farm yield and as a result the country is heading toward self-sufficiency in food grain. However, the session feels that poor farmers are unable to take to mechanization because of the enormity of the cost involved. As such, the Shiromani Akali Dal urges upon the Government of India to abolish the excise duty on tractors, so that with the decrease in their prices, the smaller farmers may also be able to avail themselves of farm machinery and contribute to increase in agricultural produce of the country.

Resolution No. 8

This conference of the Shiromani Akali Dal appeals to the Central and State governments to pay particular attention to the poor and labouring classes and demands that besides making suitable amendments in the Minimum Wages Act, suitable legal steps be taken to improve the economic lot of the labouring class, to enable it to lead respectable life and play a useful role in the rapid industrialization of the country.

Resolution No. 9

This session seeks permission from the Government of India to install a broadcasting station at the Golden Temple, Amritsar, for the relay of Gurbani Kirtan for the spiritual satisfaction of those Sikh who are living in foreign lands. The session wishes to make it clear that the entire cost of the proposed broadcasting project would be borne by the Khalsa Panth and its over all control shall vest with the Indian Government. It is hoped that the Government would have no hesitation in conceding this demand after due consideration.

Resolution No. 10

This mammoth gathering of the Shiromani Akali Dal strongly urges upon the Government of India to make necessary amendments in the following enactment for the benefit of the agricultural classes who have toiled hard for the sake of larger national interests: 1. Hindu Succession Act be suitably amended to enable a woman to get rights of inheritance in the properties of her father-in-law instead of the father's. 2. The agricultural lands of the farmers should be completely exempted from the Wealth Tax and the Estate Tax.

Resolution No. 11

This vast gathering of the Shiromani Akali Dal strongly impresses upon the Government of India that keeping in view that economic backwardness of the scheduled and non-scheduled castes, provisions proportionate to their population should be made in the budget for utilization for their welfare. A special ministry should be created at the Centre as a practical measure to render justice to them on the basis of reservations.

Resolution No. 12

The Congress government is called upon to vacate the gross injustice, discrimination done to Punjab in the distribution of Ravi Beas waters. The Central government must also give approval for the immediate establishment of six sugar and four textile mills in Punjab so that the State may be able to implement its agro-industrial policy (Anandpur Sahib Resolution 1978).

Thus, the Anandpur Sahib Resolution acquired the hallowed status of Magna Carta of Sikh demands as raised by Sikh party, Shiromani Akali Dal. From 1978 onwards, it remained the epicenter around which subsequent demands were woven from time to time. Thus, the issue of Centre-State relations, which was put on the back burner during Indira Gandhi's totalitarian regime, along with other democratic demands of the Akali Dal crystallized in the form of Anandpur Sahib Resolutions. The 'Provincial Autonomy' which was guaranteed even by the Government of India Act 1935, was demanded by the Akali Dal with more financial and administrative powers to the states. Some of the very important demands raised in the Anandpur Sahib Resolution and which originated from the flawed Punjab Reorganization Act of 1966 were: Chandigarh had not been transferred to the Punjab, the State's boundaries had not been re-adjusted and Punjabi speaking villages were left in neighboring States, Punjab's demand for a fairer allocation of river waters had not been accepted, Central government continued to control Canal headworks, Power and Irrigation projects. The issue of Punjab's demand for River waters and the control of canal headworks have been discussed in the next section to bring out the urgency of the water requirements for Punjab.

III

Dispute over division of water

Punjab has been politically divided twice in the 20th Century. In 1947, at the time of Partition of India, Punjab was divided when west Punjab went to Pakistan and east Punjab came to India. In 1966, the East Punjab on the Indian side was further truncated, on linguistic basis into the States of Punjab and Haryana. In 1947, at the time of Partition of India, a conflict arose between India and Pakistan with regard to

the sharing of the Indus waters. Out of the irrigated area of 9.6 of the pre-partition Indus basin, 8 mha had gone to Pakistan and 1.6 mha came to India. The Indus Waters Treaty is a water-sharing treaty between India and Pakistan. The treaty was signed in Karachi on 19 September 1960 by the Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and President of Pakistan Mohammad Ayub Khan. The World Bank (then the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development) was a signatory as a third party. The Indus Waters Treaty was the outcome of eight years of discussion and negotiation between the Governments of India and Pakistan carried on under the auspices of the World Bank.

The waters of the Indus basin begin in the Himalayan Mountains of Indian held Kashmir. They flow from the hills through the States of Punjab and Sind, converging in Pakistan and emptying in the Arabian Sea, south of Karachi. Where once there was only a narrow strip of irrigated land along these rivers, developments over the last century have created a large network of canals and storage facilities that provide water for more than 26 million acres - the largest irrigated area of any one river system in the world.

The partition of the Indian subcontinent created a conflict over the plentiful waters of the Indus basin. The newly formed states were at odds over how to share and manage what was essentially a cohesive and unitary network of irrigation. The political boundary between the two new countries was drawn right across the Indus basin, leaving India the up-stream, and Pakistan the down-stream, riparian on five of the six rivers in the Indus system. Moreover, two important irrigational headworks, one at Madhopur on the River Ravi, and one at Ferozpur on the River Sutlej, on which two irrigation canals in West Punjab had been completely dependent for their supplies, were left in Indian Territory. Pakistan felt its livelihood threatened by the prospect of Indian control over the tributaries that fed water into the Pakistani portion of the basin. Pakistan even wanted to take the matter to the International Court of Justice but India refused, arguing that the conflict required a bilateral resolution. "India and Pakistan can go on shouting on Kashmir for all times to come, but an early settlement on the Indus waters is essential for maintenance of peace in the sub-continent", reported to have said by persons in authority in London and Washington (Gulhati, 1973).

In February, 1951, David E Lilienthal, formerly the Chairman of the Tennessee Valley Authority and of the US Atomic Energy Commission, visited the region to write a series of articles for *Colliers* magazine. Lilienthal had a keen interest in the subcontinent and was welcomed by the highest levels of both Indian and Pakistani governments. During the course of his visit, it became clear to Lilienthal that tensions between India and Pakistan were acute, but also unable to be erased with one sweeping gesture. In the journal he wrote under the title, “Another Korea in the Making” that-

“India and Pakistan were on the verge of war over Kashmir. There seemed to be no possibility of negotiating this issue until tensions abated. One way to reduce hostility..... would be to concentrate on other important issues where cooperation was possible. Progress in these areas would promote a sense of community between the two nations which might, in time, lead to a Kashmir settlement... India and Pakistan work out a program jointly to develop and jointly operate the Indus Basin River system, upon which both nations were dependent for irrigation water. With new dams and irrigation canals, the Indus and its tributaries could be made to yield the additional water each country needed for increased food production. In the article, I had suggested that the World Bank might use its good offices to bring the parties to agreement, and help in the financing of a Indus Development program” (Gulhati, 1973).

Lilienthal’s idea was well received by officials at the World Bank, and, subsequently, by the Indian and Pakistani governments. Eugene R. Black, then president of the World Bank told Lilienthal that his proposal "makes good sense all round". Black wrote that the Bank was interested in the economic progress of the two countries and had been concerned that the Indus dispute could only be a serious handicap to this development particularly in the vital section of agriculture and hydro-electric development. Black proposed a Working Party made up of Indian, Pakistani and World Bank engineers. The World Bank delegation would act as a consultative group, charged with offering suggestions and speeding dialogue (Gulhati, 1973). After hectic round of discussions and deliberations, the treaty was signed. The treaty comprises of a Preamble, 12 Articles and 8 Annexures. All the water of the Eastern Rivers shall be available for the unrestricted use of India (Article II, The Indus Water Treaty, 1960). The term Eastern Rivers means The Ravi, The Beas and The Sutlej taken together. Provisions regarding western rivers, Pakistan shall receive for unrestricted use all those waters of the Western Rivers which India is under obligation to let flow (Article II, The Indus Water Treaty, 1960).

Prior to the signing of the Indus Waters Treaty in 1960, on the basis of an interstate conference on the ‘Development and Utilization of the waters of the Rivers Ravi and Beas’ held in 1955, the Central government in India had allocated the surplus of 15.85-million-acre feet (MAF) of the rivers, over and above the actual pre-partition utilization as follows (Kumar, 1984).

Table 2 Utilization of rivers water in Pre-partition times as follows:

East Punjab	7.20 MAF
Rajasthan	8.00 MAF
Jammu and Kashmir	0.65 MAF

Source: Pramod Kumar (1984), Punjab Crisis: Context and Trend, Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development (CRRID)

It is logical that water is an inseparable part of the land on which it flows, and the territory being an integral component of the state irrigation and hydel power are state subjects under Item 17 of the State List. This fact is enshrined in our Constitution wherein under Article 162 and 246(3), of our constitution gives full and exclusive legislative and executive powers to the States over water and hydel power. Agriculture and Industry being wholly dependent on Irrigation and Power, these have been kept purely State subject in our constitution. This is common in most of the countries in the world. The Introduction of sections 78 to 80 in the Punjab Reorganization Act, 1966 instead of giving Punjab complete power over water and hydel projects gave powers to the Centre. These sections of the Punjab Reorganization Act are violative of Article 14 of the Constitution which ensures equality. The Act on the one side gives exclusive rights of the waters of Yamuna to Haryana, it makes the waters of Punjab rivers not only distributable by the Centre but also vests their control with the Central government. Before the Reorganization of Punjab, there was a project called the Beas Project, under which about 0.9 MAF waters were supposed to be used in the Haryana area of the erstwhile Punjab, whereas the remaining waters of the Punjab Rivers were to be utilized in Punjabi Suba and for which channels had also been dug. But after the reorganization took place in 1966, as Punjab had become non-riparian with respect to Yamuna, similarly Haryana had become non-riparian with respect to Ravi, Beas and Sutlej and thus the question of giving even this 0.9MAF to Haryana could not arise.

Applications of Sections 78 to 80

Control over Punjab Rivers established before 1966, Punjab was in total control of its rivers and the utilization of their waters and hydel power. The multi-purpose projects in Punjab were controlled by a board. It's Chairman, Secretary, the General Manager and three members were from the Punjab Administration. There were only two members from Rajasthan and one from Himachal Pradesh. This Board and its administration worked under the Punjab Government (Punjab Reorganization Act, 1966). The entire budget and the administration of Punjab projects were controlled and approved by the Punjab Government and its legislature. But after 1966, Central Government under Sections 78 to 80 constituted a statutory Board which works under the Central Government. The Chairman, two Working members and two other members are appointed by the Centre and one member each is taken from Haryana, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Rajasthan (Punjab Reorganization Act, 1966).

The important fact is that whereas earlier every employee of the multipurpose projects was an employee of the Punjab Government, hence forward everyone has become an employee of the Central Government. Thus, the entire control, administration, functioning and development of the Punjab Rivers and their hydel power have been taken over by Centre. Another major irritant is the construction of Indira Gandhi Canal for diverting 8 M.A.F. (later 8.6 M.A.F.) of water to Rajasthan. Centre approached the World Bank for a loan to construct this Canal. The World Bank sent a team of experts to assess its feasibility and productivity. The team was headed by David E. Lilienthal. He gave the report,

“Viewed realistically the Rajasthan Project in its ultimate form is a dubious one. The ideal of extending the Rajasthan Canal parallel to the Indo-Pakistan border in the northern portion of the Thar Desert down to a point about opposite the Sukkur Barrage was a seductive one...” (Michel, 1967).

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation severely criticized India for wanting to undertake an irrigation scheme in desert lands, they warned that the consequences of persisting with the project from the technical and economic point of view would be plain frustration. And yet we find that out of 15.2 M.A.F. Punjab Rivers waters, 8 M.A.F. remained earmarked for non-riparian Rajasthan and later actually 8.6 M.A.F. were allotted to it. The net result is that out of 15.2 M.A.F. only 3.5 M.A.F. were given to riparian Punjab and the rest were managed to be diverted to non-riparian States. It is

significant to note that the same Rajasthan applied to the Narmada tribunal for water of that river. Its request was rejected outright because Rajasthan was non-riparian in regard to river Narmada. In 1966, after the reorganization of Punjab into the States of Punjab and Haryana, a dispute arose between the two States over their shares in the water once allocated to the composite State of Punjab in 1955. Haryana claimed 4.8 MAF out of the total of 7.2 MAF allocated to composite Punjab, and Punjab claimed the entire water available. Punjab wanted the entire quantity of water on 2 grounds: (1) On the basis of the Riparian principle, the rivers actually flow through Punjab. (2) That the waters of the rivers were to be made available for irrigation through the canal system which lies entirely in the reorganized Punjab. Haryana asserted that Punjab has no locus stand in the matter as the surplus waters of Ravi and Beas have been acquired by the Central government on the payment of compensation to Pakistan. Haryana also based its claim as a Successor State on the 'principles of needs and equity.' With the stalemate between Punjab and Haryana on the sharing of the Ravi-Beas Waters continuing, the Haryana Government approached the Centre and requested the Central government to determine the shares in accordance with the provision of Section 78(1) of the Punjab Reorganization Act, 1966, which provides for apportionment of the rights and liabilities between the States of Punjab and Haryana. Section 78 of the Act reads: "Notwithstanding anything contained in this act but subject to the provisions of Sections 79 and 80, all rights and liabilities of the existing State of Punjab in relation to Bhakra Nangal Project and Beas Project shall, on the appointed day, be the rights and liabilities of the successor states in such proportion as may be fixed, and subject to such adjustments as may be made, by agreement entered into by the said states after consultation with the Central Government, or if no such agreement is entered into within two years of the appointed day, as the Central Government may by order determine having regard to the purposes of the projects" (Punjab Reorganization Act, 1966).

This conflict continued to linger on with various fact-finding committees, commissions giving their reports. Finally, on 24 March 1976, the Central Government, with Mrs. Indira Gandhi as Prime Minister gave the award, which dealt with the apportionment of the surplus Ravi-Beas waters in accordance with the provisions of the Section 78 of the Punjab Reorganization Act, 1966. The award stated that 3.5 MAF of water was allocated to Haryana and the balance, not exceeding

3.5 MAF to Punjab out of the total surplus of Ravi Beas water of 7.2 MAF, which was the total share of the composite Punjab, after setting aside 0.2 MAF for the Delhi Drinking Water supply.

The Award of Indira Gandhi was announced when the National Emergency was imposed. This decision was resisted by the people of Punjab and finds explicit mention in the Anandpur Sahib Resolution No. 2, endorsed in the Ludhiana Conference in October 1978 (Government of India, White Paper on the Punjab Agitation, Delhi: 1984).

In 1977 Lok Sabha Elections, the Congress Party suffered a rout and Janata Party led by Morarji Desai came to power at the Centre. In June 1977, Punjab Vidhan Sabha elections, Akali Dal emerged victorious and Parkash Singh Badal became Chief Minister. The Punjab Government under Akali Dal filed a petition before the Supreme Court, seeking a verdict on the constitutionality of Sections 78 to 80 of the Punjab Reorganization Act, 1966 as also the March 1976 notification, apportioning the surplus Ravi- Beas flows between the States. The Haryana government, on the other hand, filed a petition in the Supreme Court praying, inter-alia, that a directive be issued to the State of Punjab for expeditiously undertaking the construction of the Punjab portion of the Sutlej-Yamuna Link (SYL) Canal and declaring that the March 1976 notification of the Centre allocating 3.5 MAF of Ravi-Beas waters each to Punjab and Haryana, was final and binding.

In January 1980, Lok Sabha Elections, after the breakup of the Janata Party, Mrs. Indira Gandhi returned to power at the Centre. She was sworn in as Prime Minister for the fourth time on 14 January 1980 (Frank: 2001). The Congress Party had come with a thumping majority capturing 351 seats out of 542 Lok Sabha Seats.⁸

“Indira needed a clean slate in the States too and she erased the past there by dismissing the nine Janata State Governments, imposing President’s rule and calling for fresh State Assembly elections. Congress won all.....” (Frank, 2001).

In 1980 after the spell of President’s rule, Punjab Vidhan Sabha elections were held in which the Congress party emerged victorious, and Darbara Singh became Chief Minister. With the States of Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan all under the Congress

⁸ The Times of India headline puts it, ‘*It’s Indira All the Way.*’

Rule, negotiations were opened and the suits filed by the Punjab and Haryana in the Supreme Court were withdrawn by the respective Chief Ministers under the orders from Mrs. Gandhi.

“On her return to power Mrs. Gandhi got round...by ordering her Chief Minister, the luckless Darbara Singh, to withdraw the Punjab Government’s case filed by Akali Government” (Tully & Jacob, 1985).

The March 1976 award was replaced by the accord signed by the Chief Ministers of Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan on 31 December 1981. According to this agreement, the new surplus Ravi Beas water was calculated as 17.17 MAF, based on the flow series from 1921-60 of the Beas Project Report compared to the corresponding figure of 15.85 MAF for the flow series for 1921-45 which had formed the basis of water allocation under 1955 decision (Dhillon G. S., 1984). The Chief Ministers of Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan agreed on 31 December 1981, that the main supply of 17.17 MAF (Flow and Storage) be reallocated as follows (Government of Punjab, Ravi-Beas Agreement, 1981, White Paper (Chandigarh, 1982), Annexure II):

Table 3. Re allocation of rivers water according to Ravi-Beas Agreement 1981

Punjab (Riparian)	4.22 M.A.F.
Haryana (non-riparian)	3.50 M.A.F.
Rajasthan (non-riparian)	8.60 M.A.F.
Delhi (non-riparian)	0.20 M.A.F.
Jammu and Kashmir (Riparian)	0.65 M.A.F.
Total	17.17 M.A.F.

Source: Government of Punjab, Ravi-Beas Agreement, 1981, White Paper (Chandigarh, 1982), Annexure II)

There is a public report that the Punjab Chief Minister, Darbara Singh was made to sign the above Agreement virtually under a threat. Haryana Chief Minister, Bhajan Lal was happy to get his share for Haryana because Haryana was going to Assembly Elections at that time. Under the Agreement, BBMB was to control headworks, ‘The control of the Ropar, Ferozepur and Harike-Pattan headworks will pass from Punjab to the Bhakra-Beas Management Board authorities under the accord on the sharing of the Ravi-Beas Waters signed in Delhi’ (The Tribune, 1 January 1982).

Akali Dal (L) Leader, Surjit Singh Barnala described the Ravi-Beas waters agreement as harmful to Punjab. According to Barnala several areas of Punjab would be rendered arid as result of this agreement (The Tribune, 1 January 1982). The Chief Ministers further agreed that until such time as Rajasthan was in a position to utilize its full share through the Rajasthan Canal (now Indira Gandhi Canal), Punjab should be free to utilize the waters surplus to Rajasthan's requirements. Thus, during this period Punjab's share would be 4.82 MAF. Haryana's share was left untouched. Parkash Singh Badal, leader of opposition in Punjab Assembly stated that "The divisible surplus water was of the order of 15.85 M.A.F. It was being shown to be 17.17 M.A.F. only to deceive the farmers of Punjab." The Chief Minister of Punjab, Sardar Darbara Singh hailed this agreement and stated that though Haryana's share of waters remained at 3.5 M.A.F., Punjab's share has risen from 3.5 MAF in 1976 Award to 4.22 MAF (The Tribune, 3 January 1982).

By offering this carrot to Punjab, Indira Gandhi incorporated Clause IV in the 'Accord' to make it obligatory for Punjab to construct the 6500-cusec SYL Canal in its territory by 31 December 1983, at the latest. It was further laid down that the alignment of the Punjab portion would be complete by 31 March 1982, failing which Centre was to undertake to do soon its own. A condition was also attached that work on those portions of the SYL Canal whose alignment had already been finalized would commence within 15 days of the signing of the accord. The monitoring of the construction of the SYL Canal was to be undertaken by the Central government. Haryana even agreed to bear the cost of suitably rehabilitating those families who were being displaced by the construction of SYL, so that the project should not get delayed. After signing of the agreement, Mrs. Indira Gandhi formally launched the construction of the SYL Canal at Kapuri village in Punjab on 8 April 1982. The very next day the Akalis in Punjab launched the *Nahar Roko* (Stop the Canal) agitation to prevent the construction of SYL Canal. It ultimately got merged in the '*Dharma Yudh Morcha*' (Righteous War) launched on 4 August 1982. Ultimately, the situation reached the signing of the Rajiv-Longowal Accord in July 1985, in which the latter committed the Akali Dal to complete the SYL Canal by 15 August 1986. Clause 9 of

the Rajiv-Longowal accord exclusively aimed at the sharing of River Waters, states as:⁹

9.1. The farmers of Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan will continue to get water not less than what they are using from the Ravi Beas system as on 1.7.1985. Waters used for consumptive purposes will also remain unaffected. Quantum of usage claimed shall be verified by the Tribunal referred to in para 9.2.

9.2. The claims of Punjab and Haryana regarding their shares in the remaining waters will be referred for adjudication to a Tribunal to be presided over by a Supreme Court Judge. The decision of this Tribunal will be rendered within six months and would be binding on both parties. All legal and constitutional steps required in this respect are taken expeditiously.

9.3. The construction of the SYL canal shall continue. The canal shall be completed by 15th August 1986 (Sant Longowal-Rajiv Gandhi Accord 1985).

Thus, the issue of River Waters like other demands continues to linger on without a satisfactory solution reached. “A feature of the Punjab situation which distinguishes it from earlier linguistic reorganizations is that it has never been completed. In particular, there have been three outstanding issues which have not been resolved in the two-and-a half decades since the reorganization: the status of the capital city of Chandigarh, which remains still the joint capital of Punjab and Haryana; the status of some mixed Hindi- and Punjabi-speaking territories in which Hindus are the predominant population; and the division, for irrigation purposes, of river waters which run through the territories of both states” (Brass, 1990).

IV

Emergence of Bhindranwale

When the Indian Punjab was reorganized after independence as a Punjabi speaking state in 1966, the Sikhs for the first time became a majority religious group in that Punjabi speaking province. According to the 2001 census, Sikhs are about 60% of Punjab’s population but merely 2% of India’s total population (Government of Punjab 2009, 94–95). This duality of Sikh location – a minority in India but a majority in

⁹ “Historic Accord with Akalis”, Indian Express, New Delhi, 24 July 1985.

Punjab – remains a continuing source of political conflict and tension between Sikh majority Punjab and Hindu majority India. Punjab's industrial backwardness but agricultural advancement that enables Punjab to be the main producer and supplier of food in India adds the economic dimension to the tensions between Punjab and the federal Centre (Singh 2008). Bhindranwale thus entered Punjab's and India's historical process as a part of the rise of religious revivalism in Punjab linked with the cultural changes taking place there as a result of the process of modernization of agriculture and rural society in the 1960s and 1970s. It could be said that Bhindranwale's appeal in the late 1970s and early 1980s was heightened by a combination of the identity politics of religion and language alongside a consciousness of conflict over political governance between the central government of India and the state of Punjab. Bhindranwale's emergence in the late 1970s coincided with important shifts in the economy and culture of Punjab, especially in its rural segment (Singh & Purewal, 2013).

Bhindranwale was born as Jarnail Singh Brar to a *Jat* Sikh family in 1947 in the village of Rode¹⁰, in Moga District of Punjab, situated in the part of Malwa. The grandson of Sardar Harnam Singh Brar, his father, Joginder Singh Brar was a farmer and a local Sikh leader, and his mother was Nihal Kaur. Jarnail Singh was the seventh of seven brothers and one sister.¹¹ There is one another perception about his birth as (Kaur H. , 1990), "he was the second son from the second wife" of Joginder Singh (Judge, 2005). He was put into a school in 1953 at the age of 6 but he dropped out of school five years later to work with his father on the farm. He married Pritam Kaur, the daughter of Sucha Singh in Bilaspur village at the age of nineteen. The couple had two sons, Ishar Singh and Inderjit Singh, in 1971 and 1975, respectively. After the death of Bhindranwale, Pritam Kaur moved along with her sons to Bilaspur village in Moga District and stayed with her brother. She passed away of heart ailment at age 60, on 15 September 2007 in Jalandhar district of Punjab.¹²

Joginder Singh went regularly to the gurdwara to hear the Guru Granth Sahib reciting and he made sure that his son was nurtured in the Sikh scriptures. Joginder Singh described Jarnail Singh, when a young boy, as 'someone who could fell a tree in a

¹⁰Few writers believed that Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale belonged to the twin villages called Rode and Lande in the then Faridkot district.

¹¹Singh, Tavleen (14 January 2002). "100 People Who Shaped India". *India Today*. <http://www.india-today.com/itoday/millennium/100people/jarnail.html> accessed on 30 June 2021.

¹²"*Bhindranwale's widow dead*". *The Tribune*, 16 September 2007, accessed on 1 July 2021.

single below and at the same time memories whole chapters of the scriptures and recite them a hundred times a day' (Tully & Jacob, 1985). Joginder Singh was in association with the Damdami Taksal and Sant Gurbachan Singh, the tenth head of the Damdami Taksal. Gurcharan Singh chose Jarnail Singh as his special acolyte. Damdami Taksal trains young people in the recitation of the Gurbani and after completing their training those become *pathis* or *granthis*. Many families such as Joginder Singh give one of their sons to *dera* largely due to hard conditions of their life (Judge, 2005). Thus, Jarnail Singh was one such case. Later it clear that the devotion and intensity of Jarnail Singh have made him a special follower of the Sant. Judge (2005) accurately states that the arrival of Jarnail Singh on the scene as the fourteenth head of the Damdami Taksal changed the direction of the events, as he intensified his criticism of the Nirankaries that subsequently led to the clash between the two.

The word 'Damdami' seems to be derived from the Punjabi word *dam* which means breath and it is historically connected with the few days of rest that the tenth guru of the Sikhs, Guru Gobind Singh, took after leaving Anandpur Sahib at Talwandi Sabo where the gurdwara Damdama Sahib is presently located (Judge, 2005). The word Taksal is a Punjabi word means mint in English and is used to described the Sikh schools which preach the pure and unalloyed message of the gurus, and in other words a Taksal is a seminary where a man is trained right from his childhood into proper recitation of *Gurbani* and *kirtan* (singing hymns) (Judge, 2005). Thus, the Damdami Taksal is an influential school founded by one of the great heroes of the Sikhism Baba Deep Singh.¹³ He was leader of one of the bands of the warriors who

¹³Judge (2005) noted interesting story that how the idea of having a seminary is related to Guru Gobind Singh is found in the history of Damdami Taksal. According to him, the story is woven around an incident that occurred when a Sikh, while reciting Gurbani pronounced some words wrongly, which led the tenth guru to intervene and explain to him that how the meaning could undergo a change of the words were pronounced wrongly. Since the guru had advised the Sikh in the presence of others, one of the *Panj Piaras*, Bhai Daya Singh approached the Guru to guide the congregation in this respect. However, the guru could not find time for it though he promised to do so. When the guru left Anandpur Sahib and reached and stayed at Talwandi Sabo, the Singhs reminded him of his promise. He told them to go to Dheer Mall at Kartarpur Sahib to get the Granth that had been prepared by the fifth guru so that the bani of the ninth guru could also be included in it. Baba Deep Singh met Dhir Mall and requested him to hand over the Granth. Dhir Mall challenged that if the tenth guru represented the charisma of the first guru, as was the case of the fifth guru, then he could himself prepare the Granth. It is in such circumstances that tenth guru dictated the entire Gurbani to Bhai Mani Singh and he also undertook the task of interpreting it. Two of his devout Sikhs, namely Bhai Mani Singh and Baba Deep Singh, were involved in the writing of the Granth. The dictation and simultaneous interpretation of the Gurbani took

had sworn to defend the Golden Temple during the time of the Afghan invader Ahmad Shah Abdali ruled the Punjab. Baba Deep Singh swore to alone for the Sikh failure to defend the Golden Temple after the first desecration by the Afghan army. He collected together a force of some five thousand villagers armed with the most rustic of weapons. His peasant army was intercepted on its way to the Golden Temple by a hurriedly assembled Afghan army. The Sikhs under the command of Baba Deep Singh fought so hard that the afghan general had to call for reinforcements but, in the end, he was able to prevent the army of Baba Deep Singh getting to the Golden Temple. The general desecrated the temple again as a lesson to the Sikhs. Tradition has it that Baba Deep Singh's head was cut off but he still managed to fight his way to the Golden Temple with his head in one hand and his sword in the other. That is, the reason that the pictures of the decapitated Baba Deep Singh are as very popular in Sikh households as picture of the ten Gurus. The Damdami Taksal he founded had been in the vanguard of the fight against Sikh apostasy for 200 years by the time that Jarnail Singh joined as a young boy (Tully & Jacob, 1985). Later on, the martyrdom of Baba Deep Singh, we discovered that there is a lineage of successors and Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale was fourteen in this course. It might be noted that till the tenth head of the Taksal, up to Baba Bishan Singh Muralewala, there was no suffix called 'Bhindranwale.' This suffix started with Baba Sunder Singh whom belonging to the village Bhinder Kalan in Ferozepur District of Punjab. The twelfth head of the Taksal Sant Gurbachan Singh Bhindranwale died in 1969 at Mehta in Amritsar. Sant Kartar Singh Succeeded him and things changed in a qualitative way, as the Sant became more belligerent in his sermons and turned the religion to the political space thus competing with several other such Godman for influence. The example of Kartar Singh Bhindranwale substantiates the general view that the political orientation of a religious leader creates an ideology emphasizing more and more puritanism in the religious practice, as such as emphasis is politically functional (Judge, 2005). Kartar Singh shifted his headquarter from the village Bhinder Kalan to Mehta where his predecessor had died. Therefore, the headquarter of the Damdami Taksal is in Gurdwara of Chowk Mehta in Amritsar district of Punjab. The gurdwara stands apart from the village, and young boys from the age of seven/eight were used to come here

nine months and nine days. According to the story as narrated in the official history of the DamdamiTaksal, the tenth guru nominated the *Guru Granth Sahib* as his successor when he was in Nanded. When Baba Deep Singh returned to Punjab, he started his Taksal at Damdama Sahib, whereas Bhai Mani Singh went to Amritsar.

for gain religious education and also taught to defend their faith with arms and with words. The reason for shifting had something to do with the internal conflict in the Taksal after the death of Baba Gurbachan Singh. In spite of his credentials, the Akali leaders Sant Chanan Singh, Sant Fateh Singh, Justice Gurnam Singh and Gurcharan Singh Tohra conspired to make his rival Mohan Singh the Taksal head (Kaur H. , 1990). Like the earlier heads of the Taksal, Kartar Singh maintained the suffix of Bhindranwale. Soon, he took on his activities quite aggressively and, in the process, got into a dispute with the Nirankaries. According to Sant Kartar Singh, the Nirankari sect was bogus, as it believed in the living guru. He also became critical of the gurus of the Nirankari sect for imitating the Sikh gurus.

Before Sant Kartar Singh Bhindranwale could start a campaign against the Nirankari sect towards the close of his life, the political scenario began to alter quickly. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi had imposed Emergency and was ruling over the country as a dictator. During this period the Akali Dal was the sole political party which went forward to protest against Indira by sending *jathas* (a group of volunteers) to court arrest. All political parties of India were in disarray as most of the leaders had either gone underground or arrested. Only CPI (Communist Party of India) was supporting the Emergency as it had allied with the Congress in the earlier elections. The history of the Damdami Taksal records an event during the Emergency in which Sant Kartar Singh had to interact with Indira Gandhi on December 7, 1975 on the occasion of the celebrations of the third centenary of martyrdom of the ninth guru of the Sikhs, Guru Tegh Bahadur, at Ram Leela Ground, New Delhi. Judge (2005) points out:

“When Mrs. Gandhi reached the spot, everybody stood up to welcome her, but Sant Kartar Singh kept on sitting and later on, he rebuked all Sikhs for this act by pointing out that in the presence of the Guru Granth Sahib no Sikh should have stood up. After this as Damdami Taksal alleges, Mrs. Gandhi talked about the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur. The Sant again told her that because of the ninth guru it could become possible for her to become Prime Minister” (Judge, 2005).

Though the vitality of Sant Kartar Singh could be observed during the period of Emergency. In his opposition to Emergency, Sant Kartar Singh has no rival in the history of that time. It also implies that from him began the entry of the seminary chief into a political space. His successor Jarnail Singh exploited that space effectively and with the tactical ability of a politician created an unforeseen political instability in Punjab (Judge, 2005). During the Emergency, when most of the Akali leaders were in prison, Sant Kartar Singh organized 37 processions. In the process he

came in conflict with the administration of the Gurdaspur district and at that time, the deputy commissioner of Gurdaspur, named Niranjan Singh was a Nirankari. Sant Kartar Singh was regarded as a man of learning and in his whirlwind tour of Punjab; he baptized a large number of Sikhs. It was during such a journey that he met with an accident in August 1977 and died (Judge, 2005).

With him over an era of the Damdami Taksal throughout which Sikh orthodoxy was antagonistically interpreted, preached and spread through the Khalsa ethics. The descendant of Kartar Singh was Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale with a different background from his precursor. Since he appeared as the main actor in the subsequent period in Punjab politics and religion eclipsing for a short period, everyone else and marginalizing the dominant players in the politics of the state, Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale soon became a dominant figure in the Damdami Taksal and his looks went with a prophetic role. Mark Tully (1985) mentioned the tale behind his headship of Damdami Taksal as-

“Jarnail Singh became the favourite of the head of the Taksal, Kartar Singh. His break came when Kartar Singh was fatally injured in a road accident. Bhindranwale’s teacher was such a fanatical Sikh that he refused to allow doctors to cut his hair so that they could operate on him after the accident. Before Kartar Singh died he made it clear that he wanted Jarnail Singh, not his own son Amrik Singh to succeed to the leadership of the Taksal. So Jarnail Singh became a Sant or Saint, and head of the Taksal” (Tully & Jacob, 1985).

At last, it seems clear that the devotion and intensity of Jarnail Singh might have made him a special follower of the Sant. His arrival on the scene as the fourteenth head of the Damdami Taksal changed the direction of the events, as he intensified his criticism of the Nirankaris that subsequently led to the clash between the two. Since it is believed that the Punjab crisis began with this clash.

Jarnail Singh also chose the name Bhindranwale as many of his predecessors had acted, after the village of Bhindran. Amrik Singh (son of Sant Kartar Singh Bhindranwale) was the university student and right hand of the Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, later he became president of All India Sikh Students Federation which was most popular and responsible for so many of the atrocities committed in Bhindranwale’s name.

Militancy movement has been associated with Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale more than with anyone else. What has been published on his life and of his speeches enables us to notice some of the relevant aspects of his activities and

attitudes. An open conflict with the Sant Nirankaries, who were looked upon as heretical by Sant Kartar Singh Bhindranwale, was a legacy inherited by Sant Jarnail Singh. What happened on the Baisakhi day of 1978 at Amritsar was an extension of his legacy, underlying the religious dimension of Sant Jarnail Singh's outlook and attitude. Till his death in June 1984 he continued to declare that religion was his sole concern (Grewal J. , 1998).

Jarnail Singh's appointment as head of the Damdami Taksal after the death of Sant Kartar Singh was coincided with a transformation in the political scene in the Punjab. In 1977 Indira Gandhi surprised India and the world by calling a general election and accepting the electorate's verdict against her Emergency. When she called for emergency powers few months earlier, arrested opposition leaders and censored the press, it had been interpreted as the end of one of the last surviving democracies in the developing world. Her motive behind declaring the Emergency had undoubtedly been to protect her own position. The Allahabad High Court had found her guilty of corrupt electoral practices (Tul). The opposition under the leadership of Jayaprakash Narayan had mounted a campaign to highlight the corruption of the Congress government run by Indira Gandhi. This campaign seriously damaged the image of Congress party and as well the image of Indira Gandhi. Soon she realised for restore the democracy. Because she was always conscious of her standing in the world and it had been much reduced the undemocratic Emergency. She maintained that democracy was suspended and not terminated and she was determined to disprove the allegation that she had become a dictator. There is also no doubt that she was unhappy about governing India in such a tight rein. She was well aware of the value of elections for letting off the head of steam which builds up against any administration (Tully & Jacob, 1985).

Election held after the Emergency was disaster for the Congress and for Indira herself. She was heavily defeated in her own home constituency in Uttar Pradesh and her party did not gain even an individual seat in northern India, the area worst affected by Sanjay Gandhi's Emergency programmes.¹⁴ In Punjab the Akali Dal formed a coalition government with the new Janta Party (later converted into Bharti Janta Party) which found itself in power in Delhi.

¹⁴Sanjay Gandhi had run so many undemocratic and unfair programmes during the emergency such as family planning, in many areas of northern India. Government servants, even school teachers and workers from other departments were forced to collaborate in a programme in compulsory sterilisation.

The attitude of the ruling Congress towards Akalis also underwent a marked change. So long as the Congress was a dominant party in Punjab it was able to play parliamentary politics well. But, after the successful Janata challenge in 1977 and the splits in the Congress, it had become intolerant and unwilling to share power with Akalis. As the Akali Dal had offered a resistance to the internal Emergency of 1975 and had shown that its concerns were political and transcended the Sikh interests, Congress adopted a policy of creating dissensions in it. This led Akali Dal, a Jat-based organization to mobilize non- Jat and scheduled caste Sikhs by emphasizing religion. By projecting the Akalis as fundamentalists, the Centre and the Congress were trying to win over the Hindus and the non- Jat Sikhs, particularly the scheduled caste Sikhs. When, even the moderates saw the government in this light and found it intractable, it was the end of the dominance of moderate politics in Punjab and soon extremism took over. No doubt, the Akalis did not share the political perspective of Bhindranwale, but they did not actively oppose it either. The government used the extremists to attack the Akali Dal, and then used the reticence of the latter on the question of extremism (Narang A. , 1987).

It was a hurried merger of the non-Communist opposition parties which fell apart because of competition between the three elderly politicians who vied to be the prime minister in 1977. In the Punjab the main force of the Janta Party came from the Jan Sangh. The Akali Dal had of course earlier experience of the troubles of a coalescence with the pro-Hindu party, but they did not hesitate to shape a government with Jan Sangh politicians again

Sanjay Gandhi the elder son of the Prime Minister Indira Gandhi has not accepted her defeat as end of her political career. It is believed that Sanjay realized how fragile the unity of the new Janta Party was and set out to develop it by acting on the contentions between the leadership of the different parties which had merged so hurried and then recently. It brought him less than three years to convey down the Janata government and visit his mother restored to force. It is strongly believed that Sanjay took the advice of the experienced politician among Sikhs Zail Singh, to attain the breakup of the Punjab coalition. Zail Singh was the Chief Minister of Punjab 1972 to 1977, until the defeat of Congress in Punjab. And it is possible that Zail Singh directed Sanjay to try to break up the Akali Dal on the place of Jan Sangh. There were three dominant leaders in the politics of Punjab in those days Parkash Singh Badal,

Gurcharan Singh Tohra and Harchand Singh Longowal. Tully & Jacob (1985) states that-

At first, Sanjay thought of playing these three against each other. But Zail Singh, with his deep knowledge of the complexities of Sikh politics, realized that displacing one of the Akali trinity would only lead to a strong alliance of the other two. He recommended Sanjay to look for a new religious leader to discredit the traditional Akali dal leadership (Tully & Jacob, 1985).

At last, they selected Bhindranwale for this purpose.¹⁵ Sant Jarnail Singh was most popular religious leader in the Sikh community. As a rigid fundamentalist, he could take advantage of on the compromises with Sikh religious interests that the Akali Dal leaders were bound to do to remain in force. There was, however, a difficulty. Bhindranwale needed an issue, a cause. When Sanjay's young men found him, he was travelling around Punjab with his followers preaching against the threats to the Sikh religion, but the evils of shaving beards and cutting hair, of drinking and drugs were hardly political issues. So, Sanjay and Zail Singh looked for a cause which was both political and religious (Tully & Jacob, 1985). So, the Congress and the Akali Dal two major political parties competed with each other on capturing the votes of the Sikhs. In this process, both tried to revive Sikhism in their own ways showing holier-than-thou behaviour. All these developments combined in a strange way when the violent clash at Amritsar between the adherents of Nirankari sect and the followers of Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale took place on 13 April 1978 (Judge, 2005).

Essentially the Sikhs resent the continuing criticism by the Nirankaries of their faith and of their belief in the *Guru Granth Sahib* as the person visible of the gurus. Sikhs accused the Sant Nirankaries of directly criticizing their religion and gurus in their religious texts, the *Avtar Bani* and *Yug Pursh*. For example, Avtar Singh used the allegory of churning butter, and wrote that he had repeatedly churned the *Gurbani* but that found that no cream or butter emerged from it. It was also alleged that the Nirankaries guru at the time, baba Gurbachan Singh narrated a story in the *Yug Pursh* about how prophets of all the world's major religions refused to go back to earth to spread God's true message except for Avtar, who decided to do so only after God agreed that anyone blessed by him would go to heaven irrespective of any worldly deeds (Chima, 2010). So, Sikh has protested against it.

¹⁵Tully and Jacob had written a very interesting story as Sanjay Gandhi sent some of the young men to search for a holy man to do this task. There was no shortage of saints in Punjab and the men came up with a list of twenty. Some from them were unsuitable, unwilling and at last the choice eventually fell on Bhindranwale.

This is what they attempted to do peacefully at the time of the big Nirankari congregation in Amritsar, coincident with the Baisakhi celebrations by the Sikhs. The Sikh group that went to the site had no violent intent. They were unarmed, except for their religiously required *kirpans*. And it believed that they were neither Nihang's nor Akalis, though most of the Sikhs are of Akalis persuasion politically. The bulk of the protesters in fact belonged to bhai Randhir Singh's *jatha*, whose primary concern is with kirtan or chanting of the holy hymns. Their other colleagues were from the *jatha* of Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale. The protesting Sikhs were met with a shower of bullets from the Nirankari congregation (Singh H. , 1979). The Nirankaries, who were well equipped with rifles and sten guns fired at the approaching Sikhs, resulting in the death of thirteen of them (The Tribune, 14 April 1978). The congregation, under the auspices of Gurbachan Singh, continued to more than three hours after the gruesome tragedy (Singh H. , 1979). As a consequence of this effect, a wave of anger gripped the Sikhs. The situation called for a serious act and there were apprehensions of clashes between the Nirankaries and the Sikhs.

Passions raised high and some top Hindu leaders of Punjab, backed by the Congress, began to espouse the cause of the Nirankaries and started accusing the Sikhs. Lala Jagat Naryan, chief editor and proprietor of the hind Samachar group of publications Jalandhar, appeared as a witness in the defence of the Nirankaries and did a considerable propaganda in the papers against the Sikhs through his writings (Punjab Kesri, Jalandhar, 12 July 1983). This propaganda became increasingly marked in the vernacular press (Vir Partap, Jalandhar, May 13, 1978). Virinder in one of the editorials in the 'Vir Partap' wrote-

“In the absence of any other support, the Arya Samaj would stand by the Nirankaries.” (Vir Partap, Jalandhar, May 27: 1978).

Thus, Sanjay Gandhi and the Congress Party used the martyrdom of the thirteen Sikhs to whip up the Nirankari agitation. The Akali Dal was in a dilemma which they never resolved so long as they remained in power. As the defenders of the Sikh orthodoxy, they could not disassociate themselves from a movement against a heretical sect. as coalition partners in the Punjab government, they could not openly support lawlessness. The Akali Dal leaders did little to courage the agitation against the Nirankaries so long as they remained in power. Most of the demonstrations took place

in Delhi, organized by the local committee in charge of gurudwaras which was controlled by the Congress party (Tully & Jacob, 1985).

Highly placed Congress leaders like Zail Singh and Sanjay Gandhi again needed a party to promote Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale to oppose the Akali Dal. One week before the Nirankari convention the new party was formed on 13th April 1978. Name of the new party was Dal Khalsa and it is strongly believed that its first meeting was held on Aroma hotel of Chandigarh, and according to the staff of hotel the bill was paid by Zail Singh. The establishment of Sikh sovereign state of Khalistan was discussed in this meeting. Later after the operation Blue Star government published a white paper on it and admitted as-

“The Dal Khalsa was originally established with the avowed object of demanding an independent sovereign Sikh state.”

Zail Singh continuously tried to promote the Dal Khalsa.¹⁶ Jarnail Singh never admitted that he has a relation with Dal Khalsa and till his death he sustained that he was a man of religion, not a politician. But Dal Khalsa always seems as the party of Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale. Bhindranwale encouraged to extensively touring the countryside in order to undermine the Akali influence and gather support for himself. He was even allowed to openly violate the provisions of the Indian Arms Act not only in the Punjab but also in Delhi, Bombay and in other Indian states. In the event, he assumed a larger-than-life image among the Sikh masses and in period of five years reduced the entire Akali leadership to a helpless bunch. The Congress aim was of course fully achieved and the political voice of the Sikh community was affectively silenced with the Akali party disintegrating through factionalism and fragmentation (Dhillon K. , 1998).

The Nirankari-Sikh clash of April 1978 also had several important political ramifications. First it put the Akali Dal and especially Punjab's Akali Chief Minister, Parkash Singh Badal, in a very precarious political situation. On one side, Sikh radicals and large sections of the community demanded immediate governmental action against the Nirankaries. On the other side, the Akali Dal's Hindu based Janta allies warned the Akalis not to trample on religious freedoms in the state. Second in the Nirankari-Sikh clash gave Sikh radicals within the “Sikh political system”,

¹⁶Tully write in his book that Zail Singh used to call the journalists of Chandigarh, they remembered how he used to ring them up and ask them to publish the news of the Dal Khalsa on the front pages of their newspapers.

including Akali Dal president Jagdev Singh Talwandi and SGPC president Gurcharan Singh Tohra, a salient issue with which to assert their power at the expense of the comparatively more moderate Badal. Talwandi and Tohra could afford to be, and actually needed to be, more radical because they were responsible to only the Sikh community. In contrast, Badal had to emphasize communal harmony in order to maintain his position as chief minister because he competed in Punjab's secular political system which included both Hindus and Sikhs. Third, the Nirankari -Sikh clash precipitated the emergence of a number of extremist Sikh groups and leaders who would eventually become willing to use violence against the Sikh panth's perceived enemies, including the Nirankaries (Chima, 2010).

In the year of 1979, Dal Khalsa and Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale were involved first time in the elections of SGPC. It was critical for the Akali Dal leaders hold control over the SGPC as it financed their party then controlled the Gurdwaras all over the Punjab, where the party message was set across. According to Tully & Jacob (1985)-

“Sanjay and Zail Singh had high hopes of Bhindranwale. He had become the most prominent leader of the anti-Nirankari agitation and he had built up a name for his preaching in the villages of the Bathinda, Faridkot and Ferozepur districts, which were the strong hold of the Akali Dal. They were to be disappointed. Candidates supported by Bhindranwale only won four out of the 140 seats in the SGPC election” (Tully & Jacob, 1985).

Akali Dal wins all the seats with great majority. In the year of 1979, Parkash Singh Badal Chief Minister of Punjab opposed the breakup of the Janta party which lead to the downfall of Janta government under the Moraraji Desai's leadership. Gurcharn Singh Tohra, president of the SGPC in other hand sided with the break way group in the Janta party. These divisions among the Akali Dal and downfall the coalition government in Centre ultimately weakened the Akali Dal in the elections of 1980. Zail Singh still thought it worth his while to bring in Bhindranwale on the Congress side. For all his protestations that he was not a politician, Bhindranwale campaigned actively for the Congress in three constituencies. His name was already so influential that two of the candidates printed posters saying 'Bhindranwale supports me' one of the candidates Bhindranwale supported was the Hindu R.L. Bhatia who was the president of the Punjab Congress party. Another was the wife of Pritam Singh Bhinder, a senior police officer who played a controversial role in the Emergency. Indira Gandhi later made Bhinder the police chief of Punjab and gives him the job of eradicating Bhindranwales' terrorists (Tully & Jacob, 1985). But Indira Gandhi never admitted ever the relationship of Bhindranwale with the Congress Party. Although the candidate of Janta party from

Gurdaspur constituency named prem Nath Lekhi claims that Indira herself in fact appeared on the same stage as Bhindranwale in the election campaign.

Thus, both Indira Gandhi and the Akalis assembled militant or extremist forces for political ends. Over the next several years, the militancy led to civil disorder that took on a political life of its own, increasingly out of the control of both the Akalis and the national government. Whether that simply was not foreseen or was ignored under the short-term pressure to seize political advantage may never be known (Kaushal, 1999).

New political stakes of Congress and the arrest of Bhindranwale

Indira Gandhi returned in power in early 1980 and Zail Singh was rewarded with the post of Home Minister in the cabinet ministry and appointed his rival Darbara Singh as Chief Minister of Punjab for balancing the political ambitions and power of Zail Singh. On the time of as a Chief Minister of Punjab during 1972-1977, he continuously tried to fight the Akali Dal through its own weapon religion. He tried to shows the Sikh community that he was as devout as any Akali Dal leader. Writer states that-

“He made a point of attending the celebrations of all Sikh festivals, and preaching sermons of them. He had developed a flair for preaching at the Sikh Missionary College at Amritsar where he was trained to propagate the faith. Zail Singh’s deed matched his words. He linked all the places where the last guru had preached by a road which he had called Guru Gobind Singh Marg. Then he set off to drive the 400 miles from Anandpur in the east, where Guru Gobind Singh had given the Sikhs his historic charge to defend their faith with arms and to wear the five emblems of their faith, to the western borders of Punjab. The cavalcade of tractors and trailers, trucks, buses and cars took four days to reach its destination, stopping at all the gurdwaras which marked the points where the guru himself had stopped” (Tully & Jacob, 1985).

Akali Dal leadership had also to accept it as a stroke of genius. But the Chief Minister Darbara Singh was not happy with all these tasks of Zail Singh he told prime minister that Zail Singh risking the Congress party’s reputation for secularism by ‘indulging in communal politics.’ But Indira not stopped the activities of Zail Singh and he continued to organise religious congregations and to insist that every public function start with Sikh prayers. He named a new town after one of the guru’s sons who had been martyred and even sent a string of horses said to be related to Guru Gobind Singh’s stallion down the new road he had built (Tully & Jacob, 1985). All these activities or in other words, his religious politics took the twist out of the Akali’s sails, thus he survived until Emergency without facing any challenge from the opposition

leaders. But when Darbara Singh became Chief Minister of Punjab in 1980, he decided to reverse Zail Singh's politics. Once during his interview, he stated clearly-

“There was a Sikh culture before. That Sikh culture has now reached the limit. Sikh culture is now dead.....now the Sikh culture has been converted into a composite culture. That is what I am doing” (Sunday Magazine, Calcutta 8th-11th August, 1982).

The outcome of these things that the orthodox Sikhs saw these remarks as an evidence of their worst fears that the Congress party's aim was to soak up their religion into the Hindu culture of the bulk of Indians. Darbara Singh choose his all officers who were secular by their ideology. A member of the CRRID (Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development) supposed that about it-

“One fiction (in the Congress) through in a minority with allegiance to Zail Singh kept on advocating the politics of accommodation (with religious communalism) rather than confrontation” (Kumar, Sharma, Sood, & Handa, 1984).

The incidents were started happened sharply in Punjab in those days which was related to Bhindranwale. In the last week of April of 1980 Gurbachan Singh, the head of the Nirankari sect, was shot dead in his house in Delhi. The police report was filed against the Bhindranwale in the murder of Gurbachan Singh because since the conflict with Nirankaries in Amritsar, he kept up his campaign against the sect. When Bhindranwale got wind of this he took sanctuary in one of the hostels of the Golden Temple. He stayed there until Zail Singh told parliament that the Sant had nothing to do with the murder. Shortly after that statement, Bhindranwale announced that the killer of the guru of the Nirankaries deserved to be honoured by the high priest of the Akal Takhat, the most senior priest of Sikhism. Bhindranwale also said that he would weight the killers in gold if they came to him. These remarks embarrassed Zail Singh but he overlooked them because Bhindranwale was still useful to him in his struggle with Darbara Singh (Tully & Jacob, 1985). Next biggest incident was the murder of Lala Jagat Narain on 9th September 1981. His influential daily newspaper the *Punjab Kesari*, was bitterly critical of Bhindranwale and sided with the Nirankaries. His editorials in paper played a role in fanning the flames of communal hatred between Hindus and Sikhs. He believed that the Anandpur Sahib Resolution was the part of the demand of separate nation. With his acts the whole press of Punjab converted into communal lines. Within few days of murder warrant of Bhindranwale's arrest had been issued. He was in Chando Kalan in that time (Haryana) and police failed to stop him driving some 200 miles back to the security of his own gurdwara at Chowk Mehta in Amritsar. Again, the leaders of Congress like Zail Singh and Bhajan Lal

(Chief Minister of Haryana) tried to save him. When it became public knowledge that Bhindranwale had fled to the Gurdwara at chowk Mehta, it was surrounded by police and paramilitary forces. Darbara Singh insisted that Bhindranwale must be arrested, although the Central government feared there would be violent because large numbers of Sikhs has gathered at the Gurdwara to protect him. Three senior police officers were sent to negotiate with Bhindranwale for his surrender and five days after his escape from the police at Chando Kalan he did agree to give himself up. He himself fix the time for his surrender. He addresses the religious congregation before his arrest. After his arrest his followers opened fire on the police and a battle ensued in which at least eleven people were killed (Tully & Jacob, 1985). The very day Bhindranwale was arrested the violence began which was to bring down Darbara Singh's government and lead eventually to the army action in the Golden Temple (Tully & Jacob, 1985).

Communal killings started in Punjab, moreover, Sikhs hijacking the plane of Indian Airlines to Lahore. Efforts were made to detail trains by tempering with the track. So many that kinds of incidents rapidly grow up in Punjab. Soon he was released by the Indira government with the hope that the Gurdwara Management Committee loyal to the Congress. By surrounding justice to pretty political gains the government itself created the ogre who was to dominance the last years of Indira Gandhi and to shadow her until her death (Judge, 2005).

However, after the killing of Santokh Singh, a president of Gurdwara Management Committee Delhi in 21 December 1981, who had also pleaded for Bhindranwale's release, Bhindranwale turned against Congress, which had encouraged him and helped him to become something of a cult hero. As a result, Bhindranwale began to cultivate his own following. During 1981 and 1982 Bhindranwale increasingly took advantage of his popularity to sever his links with Congress and to enlarge his political base (Kaushal, 1999). Consequently, by 1982 Sant Bhindranwale openly started using such choicest Akali agitational words as were used by other Akali leaders such as 'tyranny', 'slavery', 'holy war' etc. to influence the Sikh psyche. These words had already become the idioms of Punjab politics (Kaushal, 1999).

Thus, in the politics of Punjab, parties and ideologies did not matter, personalities did, and individual loyalties did. Ever since the first democratic contestations emerged in Punjab in 1937, personal ambitions were the only driving force. The period between 1947 and 1995 was a period of great political contestations in Punjab in which no particular group of persons was able to form a stable

government, bring the various factions together. An exception to this was Kairon, who first ousted a Chief Minister who refused to take action against communalism and then ensured stability to his own government by directly interfacing with the people through extensive tours and outreach programmes. This ensured that Kairon's detractors in the Congress and outside it found it difficult to challenge him. However, the sort of personalized outreach that Kairon was able to establish with the people required far too much energy and commitment. Other politicians simply lacked it. As a result, a typical chief minister stayed in office for less than a year. If one were to exclude the 8½ year period of Kairon then the average tenure of a CM in Punjab comes down to even less (Rajivlochan M. , 2020)

Table 4 shows the tenure of the Chief Ministers of Punjab 1947-1995

Sr. No.	Name of Chief Ministers	From	To	Party
1	Gopi Chand Bhargava	Aug 15, 1947	Apr 13, 1949	Indian National Congress
2	Bhim Sen Sachar	Apr 13, 1949	Oct 18, 1949	Indian National Congress
3	Gopi Chand Bhargava [2]	Oct 18, 1949	Jun 20, 1951	Indian National Congress
	President's rule	Jun 20, 1951	Apr 17, 1952	
4	Bhim Sen Sachar [2]	Apr 17, 1952	Jan 23, 1956	Indian National Congress
5	Pratap Singh Kairon	Jan 23, 1956	Jun 21, 1964	Indian National Congress
6	Gopi Chand Bhargava[3]	Jun 21, 1964	Jul 6, 1964	Indian National Congress
7	Ram Kishan	Jul 7, 1964	Jul 5, 1966	Indian National Congress
	President's rule	Jul 5, 1966	Nov 1, 1966	
8	GianiGurmukh Singh Mussafir	Nov 1, 1966	Mar 8, 1967	Indian National Congress
9	Gurnam Singh	Mar 8, 1967	Nov 25, 1967	Shiromani Akali Dal
10	Lachhman Singh Gill	Nov 25, 1967	Aug 23, 1968	Shiromani Akali Dal
	President's rule	Aug 23, 1968	Feb 17, 1969	
11	Gurnam Singh [2]	Feb 17, 1969	Mar 27, 1970	Shiromani Akali Dal
12	Parkash Singh Badal	Mar 27, 1970	Jun 14, 1971	Shiromani Akali Dal
	President's rule	Jun 14, 1971	Mar 17, 1972	
13	Zail Singh	Mar 17, 1972	Apr 30, 1977	Indian National Congress
	President's rule	Apr 30, 1977	Jun 20, 1977	
14	Parkash Singh Badal[2]	Jun 20, 1977	Feb 17, 1980	Shiromani Akali Dal
	President's rule	Feb 17, 1980	Jun 6, 1980	
15	Darbara Singh	Jun 6, 1980	Oct 10, 1983	Indian National Congress
	President's rule	Oct 10, 1983	Sep 29, 1985	
16	Surjit Singh Barnala	Sep 29, 1985	Jun 11, 1987	Shiromani Akali Dal
	President's rule	Jun 11, 1987	Feb 25, 1992	
17	Beant Singh	Feb 25, 1992	Aug 31, 1995	Indian National Congress

Source: Punjab Digital Library

Basically, the point would be that there was a tremendous amount of political instability in Punjab. There were far too many claimants to power and no one's lead was easily accepted. That enabled Bhindranwale to come forward, push religion as the main uniting force for everyone, and create a stable sort of polity in Punjab.

Thus, this chapter examines the 'patterns of political leadership' facilitating the initial potential for conflict between segments of the Sikh community and the central Indian state. To explain, the Nirankari -Sikh clash of April 1978 catalyzed a number of changing dynamics within internal Sikh politics. In particular, it allowed Sikh 'radicals' such as Tohra and Talwandi to challenge the leadership of the 'moderate' Badal and it also precipitated the emergence of 'extremist' Sikh leaders and groups such as Bhindranwale, the Dal Khalsa, and the National Council of Khalistan. Some, but not all of these extremist groups were aided and abetted by the Congress (I) in its attempt to weaken the Akali Dal in Punjab and ruin its cordial relationship with the ruling Janata party in the Centre. Later the intensified feud between Talwandi and Badal resulted in the Akali Dal splitting into two separate parties the 'radical' Akali Dal (Talwandi) and the 'moderate' Akali Dal (Longowal). The 'radical' Tohra played a pivotal role in tilting the balance of power within Sikh politics in favour of Badal over Talwandi in order to advance his own personal partisan interests.

Intensified factionalism within the Akali Dal prompted competing Akali leaders, especially the radicals, to look towards the extremists as potential allies in future intra-party power struggles. Collectively, the Akali Dal also began aligning with the 'extremist' in order to enhance its power vis-à-vis the Congress (I) central government. Thus, the extremists' power and influence in Sikh politics began to increase after the Akalis went out of power, the Congress (I) came into office, and fractionalized Akali leaders began to engage in the process of competitive 'ethnic –outbidding.' These 'patterns of political leadership' would soon intensify and combine with others, leading to the onset of violence and the 'Punjab crisis' which is discussed in next chapter.

CHAPTER-4

OPERATION BLUESTAR: THE VIOLENT APPROACH TO SECULARISM

The Shiromani Akali Dal is of the view that Hindustan (India) is a subcontinent of diverse national cultures, each with its heritage and mainstream. The subcontinent needs to be recognized with a confederal structure so that each culture could flower according to its genius and add a unique fragrance to the garden of world cultures. If such a confederal reorganization is not accepted by the Hindustani (Indian) rulers (government of India), the Shiromani Akali Dal will have no other option than to demand and struggle for an independent sovereign Sikh State (Amritsar Declaration 1994).¹⁷

-Amritsar Declaration, 1 May 1994

Although Bhindranwale was not the only Sikh to vie for hegemony in the Sikh community under secular terms, he did become the most prominent (Telford, 1992). Bhindranwale regarded either as a saint, a religious reformer, or as a simple-minded terrorist created and manipulated by larger political forces (Telford, 1992). To understand the Punjab Problem, it is critical that we look at Bhindranwale as a rational actor, having his own personal and religious goals. Primarily, his concerns on the urgent need for the “rejuvenation of the Sikh faith” and establish himself as the primary religious leader for the Sikhs (Pettigrew J. , 1975). As per discussed in the earlier chapter, as his movement progressed, he increasingly turned to the “external threats” that he perceived Sikhism was facing and launched an ideological crusade against the ‘cultural corruption’ of Punjab (Shiva, 1991). As Bhindranwale’s popularity continued to grow, the Indian Government feared that Bhindranwale’s leadership would “strengthen, spread and eventually result in the emergence of a cohesive Sikh nation... possibly demanding the separations of Punjab from the Indian State” (Sandhu R. , 1997). In his speeches, Bhindranwale argued that the Sikhs were suffering from “internal decline and external threat”, and insisted on the importance of establishing the Sikhs as religiously separate due to “assimilation dangers” and “losing the original Sikh identity” (Telford, 1992). This emphasis on the distinct

¹⁷ It is the part of the Amritsar declaration taken up by the Akali factions at Akal Takhat on May 1, in 1994, it was signed by Capt. Amarinder Singh, Jagdev Singh Talwandi, Simranjit Singh Mann, Bhai Manjit Singh and Surjit Singh Barnala. The draft was prepared by Dr. Gurbhagat Singh of Punjabi University Patiala, the initiative for this resolution had come from Gurchasran Singh Tohra.

identity of the Sikhs and the Sikh religion were often misconstrued as a form of political separatism by the Indian Government (Telford, 1992). Prompted by the Congress Party, his role as a Sikh preacher and leader was soon intertwined into the politics of Punjab and of India and Bhindranwale's reputation soon turned from a religious person into a preacher intentionally picked up by Congress with the intention to divide the Akali Dal and ensure the persistence of Congress rule in Punjab. Instead of joining the Congress Party, he later developed his own methods and became an independent political force in Punjab. As Chandra argued, Bhindranwale became such an influential and strong figure that he was both respected and feared by many Punjabi politicians who refused to oppose any of Bhindranwale's stands.¹⁸ Several scholarly writings also argue that Bhindranwale was used as a scapegoat by Congress in order to deflect attention from their own role in the Punjab crisis. Morris argues that one of the greatest tragedies of the Crisis was the support offered by the Congress Party towards Bhindranwale, which was primarily used for their own political gain. During the 1970s, Congress leaders supported Bhindranwale and his followers in exchange for his support in the 1980 general election. This move, argues Morris, was not made so that issues involving the Punjab crisis would be settled, but instead to have full political control of the state of Punjab.

Therefore, particularly in this chapter we will consider the grim picture of the complex politics of Punjab which ended with the rampant human deaths and destruction as a result of the fusion of religion and politics. We will also see in this what were the circumstances that led to the Operation Blue Star and then how all the political parties changed course for their own selfish interests and played bloody slow in Punjab.

I

Failures of Akali-Centre negotiations and the 'Nehar Roko Morcha' by the Akali Dal

Soon after the release of Bhindranwale Akali leaders met with prime minister Indira Gandhi to discuss their grievances. She chastised the Akalis for supporting Bhindranwale during his arrest, and the Akalis retorted by telling Mrs. Gandhi that the Congress had been supporting him for over four years to undermine their party in Punjab (Singh & Nayar, 1984). But she agreed to hold additional talks in the coming

¹⁸See article by Stewart Morris, "How did India's Punjab Crisis Arise and How has it been Resolved?"

weeks and in return the Akali Dal agreed to temporarily postpone its agitation. For their part Bhindranwale and the AISSF tried to convince Akali leaders not to negotiate with the center until those guilty of the police “excesses” at Chando Kalan and Mehta Chowk were punished, but the Akalis proceeded with their talks with the government regardless. After all, Akalis knew that they eventually had to face the Punjab electorate, and thus could not afford to be held ‘prisoner’ by Bhindranwale and his amorphous revivalist goals (Chima, 2010).

Their agenda for upcoming talks with the Centre government consisted of a revised list of only 15 demands of which one, the unconditional release of Bhindranwale had been met. The other demands included judicial inquiries into police actions at Chado Kalan and Mehta chowk, holding fresh elections for the Delhi Shiromani Gurdwara Managing Committee (DSGMC), restoration of the SGPC’s rights to send pilgrims to gurdwaras in Pakistan, permission for Sikhs to wear *kirpans* on domestic and international flights, the enactment of an All-India Gurdwara Act, granting Amritsar the status of holy city, installing a radio transmitter at the Golden Temple, naming a train after the Golden Temple, consider implementing the Anandpur Sahib Resolution (ASR), the merger of Chandigarh and Punjabi speaking areas into the Punjab, handing over control of the BakhraDam to Punjab and redistribution of river waters, and granting second language status for Punjabi in states bordering Punjab.

Progress was made on the Akali Dal’s religious demands, but those demands involving inter-state disputes (that is, the distribution of river waters, the status of Chandigarh, and the inclusion of Punjabi-speaking areas into Punjab) proved more contentious, (The Tribune, 24 Oct. 1981). According to Chima (2010) at the end, the talks between the both were described as being “cordial” and the prospects for an amicable settlement were not a far-fetched possibility. Shortly after this first round of official talks, “secret” negotiations between Rajiv Gandhi and the Akali Dal also ensued. Rajiv apparently suggested to the Akalis that they form a coalition government with the Congress in Punjab.

The Akalis responded by pointing out that this would essentially mean handing over leadership of the Sikh community to more extremist elements in Sikh politics (The Tribune, 1 Nov. 1981). But on the other hand, Akalis suggested that they be allowed to form the government and that the Congress support them from the outside. Rajiv

rejected this proposal because it would essentially mean losing Hindu support in Punjab to the BJP. Thus, both parties wanted to return of normalcy to Punjab, but neither was willing to potentially give-up a portion of their party's support base in the state to do so. So according to Tribune "in view of all this, the government and Akalis seem to be set on a collision course in spite of their desires to the contrary" (The Tribune, 1 Nov. 1981).

Once again Akalis held another round of negotiations with Mrs. Gandhi in November, but no compromise could be reached. The Akalis once again postponed their *morcha* to give time for "behind the scenes" talks to hammer out a comprehensive solution, but the prospects of this happening were shattered when Mrs. Gandhi unexpectedly and unilaterally announced the redistribution of Ravi-Beas River waters without consulting the Akali Dal (The Tribune, 1 Jan. 1982).

Indira Gandhi's announcement also mandated the construction of the SYL Canal (Sutlej Yamuna Link) to divert water from Punjab to Haryana, another Hindu majority state to meet its growing irrigation needs. This unilateral decision shocked the Akalis who had postponed their *morcha* several times to allow a bilateral compromise to be reached. Mrs. Gandhi appeared to be testing the Akalis will (Dang, 2000). Then, the Akalis reluctantly entered into a third round of talks with the government in April 1982, but these negotiations quickly broke down after Indira Gandhi refused to reconsider the revised river waters allocation that she had unilaterally formulated (Singh & Nayar, 1984). As a result, the Akalis left the talks humiliated, and they subsequently announced that they would resume their *morcha* which, at the time, had been suspended for over six months. In particular, the Akali Dal announced that it would try to prevent the government from digging the SYL, which had been mandated in Indira Gandhi's Beas-Ravi River waters accord. The Akali Dal's *Nehar Rooko Morcha* began in April 1982, when about a thousand activists of the Akali Dal attempted to block the digging of the SYL canal near the village of Kapuri in the Patiala district (The Tribune, 25 April 1982). To the Akalis chagrin the agitation was unable to maintain a steady stream of volunteers to sustain it. Thus, the *Nehar Rooko Morcha*, which was based on a single economic issue, becomes a huge embarrassment to the Akali Dal. Yet, as had been the case with the anti-tobacco agitation a year earlier, emotional ethnic issues would soon emerge that would unite the various Sikh groups and provide a basis for effective mobilization on a communal, as opposed to economic, grounds (Chima, 2010).

Communal activities in Punjab

When the political scenario rapidly changed in Punjab with the volatile mixture of religion and politics both communities, Hindus as well as the Sikhs, started communal activities. In 1981 three Sikh extremist groups Dal Khalsa, All India Sikh Student Federation and National Council of Khalistan resurrected the demand that the sale of tobacco be banned in Amritsar because the use of tobacco is considered taboo for Sikhs. This demand had originally been proposed by the Akali Dal in 1977 during celebrations commemorating the 400th founding anniversary of the city (Chima, 2010). This demand was communally sensitive because almost all the tobacco users and merchants in the city, as the case with most of Punjab, were Hindu. Sikhs claimed that the religious sentiments of Hindus had been honored by declaring Hardwar, Kashi and Mathura “holy cities” and that certain products had been banned near Hindu holy shrines in these cities. Harchand Singh Longowal, President of Akali Dal raised the stakes in the controversy by publicly expressing his support for the AISSF’s demand (The Tribune, 18 May 1981). They were helpless for doing this because they had already raised same demand a few years ago.

In the same month in 1981, thousands of Hindus took out a massive march, protesting the AISSF’s demand to ban tobacco and the Dal Khalsa’s demand for Khalistan (The Tribune, 30 May 1981). To make their point clear, many carried sticks capped with lighted cigarette packets as the procession marched through Amritsar’s bazaars. The agitators also yelled provocative slogans against Sikhs and beat up Sikhs by-stander son their route. In response to the massive Hindu march, Sikhs led by Bhindranwale, the AISSF, Dal Khalsa and national council of Khalistan planned a counter march to highlight their own grievances. Bhindranwale’s support for the proposed march was understandable because AISSF president Bhai Amrik Singh was the son of Kartar Singh, previous *Jathedar* of the Taksal. So, both organizations come together in support of each other in 1981 (Chima, 2010).

Approximately 20,000 Sikhs participated in in the protest except leaders. After this march Hindu- Sikh clashes erupted in Amritsar, forcing the government to institute special laws banning non-religious processions in the state. Communal tension subsided only after the government agreed to form a panel to determine the modalities for eventually granting “holy city” status to Amritsar (Chima, 2010).

This incident sparked the first Hindu- Sikh communal violence in Punjab since the Punjabi Suba movement about 15 years earlier. It also made AISSF important in Punjab politics. After the movement AISSF and Bhindranwale had proven their ability to effectively mobilize the rural Sikh population in the Majha region around an emotive ethnic issue on short notice.

The killing of Lala Jagat Narain also happened this year in the month of September which is already discussed in detail in the earlier chapter. But in 1982, several Sikh gurdwaras and religious texts were desecrated, purportedly by Hindu communalists, and a number of *amritdhari* (baptized) Sikhs were killed by the Punjab police in extrajudicial encounters (Dang, 2000). These incidents brought all Sikh leaders and factions together in a show of solidarity. This process began when Dal Khalsa activists placed two severed cow heads outside a Hindu temple in Amritsar, protesting the government's failure to grant "holy" status to the city (The Tribune, 27 April 1982).

These incidents outraged the Hindus, who revere the cow as a sacred animal that nurtures life and thus should not be slaughtered or eaten. This "desecration" of a Hindu temple sparked Hindu-Sikh violence throughout Punjab, and counter desecration of Sikh shrine so occurred. Like, Hindu communalists placed cigarettes in the Akal Takht and in number of gurdwaras in Delhi in early 1982 (The Tribune, 5 May 1982). A few weeks later several volumes of the *Guru Granth Sahib* were also found partially burned in different parts of Punjab (Singh & Nayar, 1984). All Sikh leaders and factions united in response to these acts and took out huge protest marches in both Delhi and Punjab. The size of these processions, which dwarfed the Akali Dal's protests at Kapuri, demonstrated that ethnic issues would better mobilize Sikhs than exclusively economic ones.

In July 1982, Zail Singh became President of India and his departure from the Union Home Ministry, which oversees law enforcement, allowed Punjab's Chief Minister Darbara Singh to confront Sikh extremism with an iron fist, without interference from his rival in the Central government, who had previously shielded extremist Sikh elements for his own partisan reasons. As a result, the use of torture and "fake encounters" by the Punjab police in which a suspect was eliminated while in custody but was officially reported to have been killed in an armed confrontation, escalated dramatically through the summer of 1982 (Tully & Jacob, 1985).

Akali Dal, Bhindranwale and AISSF all condemned these fake encounters and referred to their victims, often *amritdhari* Sikhs, as being martyrs. Bhindranwale in fact, swore to avenge the deaths of these martyrs (The Tribune, 13 June 1982). Ranbir Singh Sandhu had written the book on the speeches and conversations of Bhindranwale, after translating it from Punjabi to English under the title 'Struggle for Justice', in his book he mentions, recalling the condition of one victim of police torture, Bhindranwale exclaimed-

The day that bhai Kulwant Singh was cremated, I was present there in the village. When his body was bathed, there was no part of his body not a single one which was not broken.... Heated rods were put through his body. His skull at the forehead, at this spot was burnt with heated rods.....They hung him upside down. The weight of bricks was tied to him to cause additional pull (Sandhu R. S., 1999).

Thus, extremist began a campaign of selectively assassinating police officers suspect of torturing Sikhs in the summer of 1982, and cycle of killings and counter killings from both sides started and were continue in the next several years.

The Akalis, for their part, attended the last rites ceremonies of these victims of state violence and presented their families with *siropas* (robes of honour) for their sons' "sacrifices". Even though the Akali Dal not afford to remain silent while *amritdhari* Sikhs were being killed by the police under a congress state government. Thus, the "desecration" of the Sikh gurdwaras and the extra judicial killings of *amritdhari* Sikhs brought the Akalis and Bhindranwale closer together in defense of their religion and co-religionists in a way that mere economic issues could not do before. This would prove to be an effective, but ultimately dangerous, nexus (Chima, 2010).

III

Dharm Youdh Morcha and Bhindranwale

The repeated failure of the Akalis to wrest power from Congress had left them with the argument that increased militancy was the only means for protecting Sikh interests. As Bhindaranwale's popularity soared, the Akalis launched their own 'Dharm Yudh Morcha' or holy war in 1982. Actually, Akalis knew that Sant Jarnail Singh was being supported and protected by the Congress to undermine the Akalis. They in turn, were tempted to use Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale against the

Congress if and when they could (Grewal J. S., 1998). Kuldeep Nayar a well-known journalist writes that-

They (leaders of Akali Dal) believed their secular image during the coalition with Janta had damaged their equation with the Sikhs, who thought that their own government did little for them. They came to the conclusion that to get a better image they must woo the Sikhs; they must rely on the traditional stand of combining religion with politics (Singh & Nayar, 1984).

Most significant event that occurred and which decisively influenced the course of events was the arrest of Amrik Singh and Thara Singh of Damdami Taksal in July 1982 when they came to Amritsar for fighting the case of the arrested driver, who was an employee of the Taksal. Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale rushed to Amritsar when he heard of their arrest and thereon, he initiated the process of sending the *jathas* for arrests. It may be opined that the process that was initiated by Bhindranwale might not have sustained for long had the Akali Dal not supported it out of panic. At that time, the Akali Dal (Longowal) was organising the *morcha* (campaign) at Kapuri in which other parties were also participating. When the news reached Sant Longowal about the action of Bhindranwale, he and other Akali leaders rushed to Amritsar. It seems in retrospect that since there was nobody in authority present in the Golden Temple to prevent Bhindranwale from sending the *jathas* to give voluntary arrest to protect against the arrest of his two close aides. There was a fear that he might control the affairs of the Sikhs. After Longowal met Bhindranwale and discussed the matter with him, the Akali Dal withdrew from the *morcha* at Kapuri and started the *Dharam Yudh Morcha*. That movement called "*Dharm Yudh Morcha*" was aimed at mobilizing Sikhs to force the national government to accede to a series of demands, many of which had been spelled out in the Anandpur Sahib Resolution of 1973 - such as the transfer of Chandigarh to Punjab, readjustment of irrigation allocation for some river waters, and an extension of the SGPC's control to the gurdwaras outside Punjab.

It proved to be a turning point in the emergence of militant movement in Punjab. It also implied that Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale had moved away from the Congress and joined hands with the Akali Dal (Judge, 2005). Jagdev Singh Talwandi also agreed to discontinue his party's miniscule "*Desh Punjab*" agitation in Delhi, and join the *Dharm Yudh Morcha* initiated by the Akali Dal and Bhindranwale (The Tribune, 9 Sep. 1982).

The launching of the *morcha* followed by acts of political violence committed by Sikh extremists. These include the hijacking of two India Airlines flights and the attempted assassination of Chief Minister Darbara Singh by the end of September 1982. Nearly 20,000 Akalis had courted arrest throughout Punjab and other state' jails designed for only 7000 detainees were overflowing (India Today, 15 October 1982). Akali Dal again proved its ability to mobilize the Sikh community religious tactic. The Punjab government had estimated that less than 10,000 people would ever court arrest, but the number of Akali detainees reached nearly 25,000 by early October (The Tribune, 11 Oct. 1982).

This was surprisingly large number considering that the *morcha* was only two months old and the Punjab was one of India's smallest state. In contrast only about 60,000 people had ever courted arrest nationally during the "Quit India Movement" launched by Mahatma Gandhi during the struggle for independence from British rule (The Tribune, 11 Oct. 1982).

After receiving pressure from protest marches by sympathetic Sikhs in Delhi, Indira Gandhi order the release of 25,000 Akal workers in mid-October. She again tried to negotiate with Akali Dal but as Akali Dal was helpless, because Bhindranwale wanted to full flagged implementation of Anandpur Sahib Resolution, the talk for negotiation was failed. A compromise settlement was eventually reached with including the release of Bhindranwale's associates, the relaying of *kirtan* from the Golden Temple via an existing All India Radio transmitter, giving Chandigarh to Punjab, appointed a commission to examine all other territorial issues, settling the river waters dispute through the Supreme Court, and creating an all part group to look into the Anandpur Sahib Resolution and other issues of centre state relations (Singh & Nayar, 1984). Indira Gandhi accepted this settlement through his negotiating team, but when it was presented in parliament the following day, parts of the original agreement had been unilaterally altered (Singh & Nayar, 1984).

She had apparently reneged on the agreement overnight under pressure for the Congress Chief Ministers of Haryana and Rajasthan. Both states were Hindu majority states bordering Punjab. Longowal respond on it few days later with the announcement that the Akali Dal would disrupt the upcoming Asian Games in New Delhi by sending *jathas* to court arrest in the capital starting in mid-November (The Tribune, 5 Nov. 1982). This announcement shocked Indira Gandhi and rest of India for whom hosting the Asian Games in front of the international media was a source of great national pride.

Thus, she instructed Amarinder Singh, Congress MP and formal scion of the Patiala state, and Farooq Abdullah, the Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, to approach the Akalis for last-ditch negotiations (Chima, 2010). Again, compromise approved by both Akali Dal as well as Indira Gandhi, but as had been the case earlier, she once again backed out of the agreement at the last minute (Alexander, 2004). Because Chief Minister of Haryana Bhajan Lal was not agreed with them on the Chandigarh question. In counter response Akali Dal subsequently vowed to flood Delhi with protesters to highlight the perceived “plight” of Sikhs in India. The stage was set for an apparent physical confrontation between Akali activists and the government in Delhi in front of the world media (Chima, 2010).

On the few days ago of Asian Games, Bhajan Lal sealed the border between Punjab and Haryana. All Sikhs travelling from Punjab to Delhi, including those legitimately doing so to attend the Asian Games was humiliated by the Haryana police. People with high access like MPs and retired senior officers were also humiliated with same manner. As a result, many Sikhs previously unsympathetic to both the Akali *morcha* and Bhindranwale began actively sympathizing with team after the Asian Games having experienced humiliation by the government first hand. This strengthens the power of the extremists in Punjab politics, and compelled the Akalis to radicalize even further. Akali leader Jagdev Singh Talwandi summed up the situation by saying – we realise that we are our own prisoners.... but we are left with no alternative but to repeat these slogans (India Today, 31 Dec. 1982). After these incidents Longowal announced that a convention of Sikh ex-servicemen would be held in Amritsar in late December to discuss the Sikhs “plight” in India. About 10,000 retired officers and *jawans* attended the convention (Dang, 2000). Major General Shabeg Singh had also attended the convention that had later become the left hand of Bhindranwale.¹⁹ Thus, the convention passed a resolution supporting the Akali Dal’s *Dharm Yudh Morcha* and its goals. Intelligence agencies took serious note on it and Indira again tried to talk with Akalis in early 1983 but not reached on any decision. The failure of the negotiations between Indira Gandhi and the Akalis during 1982-84 marked an important turning point in the development of the Punjab conflict. It was during these two crucial years that the repeated inability to reach an agreement weakened the hold of the more moderate Sikh leaders over the regional nationalist movement (Kaushal, 1999).

¹⁹Major General Shabeg Singh was a hero of 1971 Indo-Pakistan war, who had subsequently been dismissed from the army on charges of corruption. He was later exonerated of these charges in a civil court, he had lost his pension because he was dismissed without a court martial before officially retiring.

Operation Blue Star

When the problem in Punjab started hotting up in the early 1980s, unanimous view was that army involvement would not be in the interest of the organisation or the territory and that should it be involved it would lead to trouble in some units. On the other hand, Bhindranwale now strode the Punjab like a colossus gathering strength and overcoming all opposition, due to his rising appeal in the countryside and with the help of his growing band of heavily armed retainers. Soon myths and legends grew among the Sikh masses and, not very chary of using the bullet even at the best of times to settle arguments with those who opposed him, he soon became a law unto himself and the arbiter of all that happened in the Punjab (Grewal J. S., 1998). Grewal (1998) stated that-

“He became the foremost champion of what to him was the ultimate Sikh demand- creation of a separate Sikh state, to be called Khalistan.”

Through the Congress governments both in the Punjab and in Delhi were somewhat alarmed at the turn of events, deterrent action against the Sant was not taken. On the other hand, his occupation of the Akal Takhat in 1983 as also the accumulation of a huge arsenal of sophisticated weaponry and other war like stores went unchecked by the authorities. Not even the day night killings of a senior Sikh police officer by the militants on the steps of the Temple in full view of the police and magistrates on duty at the place, brought forth a prompt and effective response from the government. Bhindranwale and his followers, operating now from the Golden Temple itself, let loose a region of terror in the Punjab and some neighbouring states, killing with impunity police officials and informers, government agents, political foes and Hindus and striking freely at chosen targets. The era of terrorism and militancy in the Punjab had well and truly commenced and nothing seemed to check the illegal and violent activities of Sant and his followers (Grewal J. S., 1998). With the situation fast deteriorating into anarchy and total chaos, the government of India finally decided to move the Indian army on 3 June 1984, and stuck with heavy armour and tanks (Grewal J. S., 1998). Operation Blue Star was not a great success in as much as large number of the followers of the Sant managed to escape, and a few hundred innocent pilgrims including women and children were killed. Bhindranwale and his close aides

were of course eliminated but extensive damage was caused to the Akal Takhat (Grewal J. S., 1998).

It also had very worst effects on the Sikh psyche. The loss of the Sikh library with its rare and irreplaceable documents was particularly a damaging blow to Sikh history and heritage. All this left the Sikhs full of anger and resentment. The immediate reaction of Operation Blue Star was one of the dismays and anguish. The Sikhs not only in Punjab but everywhere were outraged and shocked. A serious crisis of discipline was created, apart from doubting the suitability of Sikh for military and other sensitive services. It was a gross case of misuse of religious places' for destroying the secular character of our polity which has granted enjoyment of freedom of religion to its every citizen. This also puts a question mark on the functioning of our democracy as a successful means for the preservation of the secularism in India as enshrined in our constitution (Kaushal, 1999).

The biggest question which was emerged after these happenings that why the Golden Temple and other gurudwaras were being used to offer immunity to criminals, terrorists and those who worked to disrupt the unity and integrity of the country as well as of the piousness and sensitivity of the religion they claimed to be followers. In India's recent history it was this which necessitated the government to take action against those terrorists hiding in the Golden Temple. Sanctity of the Golden Temple was not violated by the government but by those who were breaking the pride and dignity of the nation and their religion as well. A realization later on grew that religious liberty and tolerance on the part of government and the masses in no way means the use of religious places by the people of any faith, to defy the authorities by turning them into armed fortresses. In fact, secularism will not survive in any country if a faith takes it on itself to destroy the essential unity and integrity of the country under any pretext. Misinterpretation of secularism and converting holy shrines into armed fortresses by a community like Sikh, who have disproportionately more men in armed forces, than they can legitimately said to be entitled to, may prove fatal to the security of nation. The action which the government has had to take in Punjab was neither against the Sikhs nor the Sikh religion, it was against terrorism and terrorists. Besides there was no alternative left with the government other than army action. The government in fact in the beginning adopted a persuasive and conciliatory approach to the problem. Its failure led to the army action. Whatever its consequences it was a horrendous event in the history of independent India (Kaushal, 1999).

Aftermath and reactions of the all-political parties on militant movement

These years represented a “transitory period” in which the Punjab problem could either escalate or de-escalate based on emerging patterns of political leaders after Operation Blue Star. After Indira Gandhi’s initial attempts to break the Akali Dal’s dominance over traditional Sikh institutions failed, she began sending “feelers” to jailed Akali leaders to re-enter negotiations for settling the Punjab problem (Dang, 2000). Yet prospects for the return of normalcy to Punjab became shattered when Indira Gandhi was assassinated by her Sikh bodyguards, and thousands of Sikhs were subsequently killed in anti-Sikh pogroms²⁰ throughout north India. Now new Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi, began seeking a solution to the Punjab problem after winning an unprecedented three-fourths majority in parliament. Yet, his government faced a major obstacle in immediately compromising with the Akali Dal namely, that the Akalis were internally divided. To explain, the moderate Longowal came out of jail in a conciliatory mood whereas the radical Talwandi came out in a defiant one, attracting huge crowds with his fiery uncompromising rhetoric. This faced Longowal to strategically radicalize in order to shore up his own ethnic support base and avoid being undermined by Talwandi. Yet, Longowal’s attempt to strategically “outbid” Talwandi which was initially tolerated by the government also had unintended consequences. In essence, it helped foster the creation of the “extremist” Akali Dal (united) led by Bhindranwale’s father, Baba Joginder Singh and also the re-emergence of the extremist AISSF. Thus, the Akalis internal divisions and their competitive “outbidding” once again, prevented effective compromise and helped foster the emergence of Sikh extremist groups (Chima, 2010).

In their subsequent attempt to forestall the ascendance of renewed extremism, Rajiv and Longowal signed the Punjab Accord as a compromise solution to the Punjab problem. Shortly after signing the Accord, Longowal was assassination by armed Sikh extremists for supposedly “selling out” the Sikh *quam* (community).

²⁰It has long been a matter of controversy that the very senior leadership of the Congress was responsible for the Sikh massacre after the assassination of Indira Gandhi but no one has yet been properly punished, see for detail, “1984: The Anti-Sikh Riots and After” by Sanjay Suri.

Surjit Singh Barnala, who was Longowal's closet aide, was made president of the Akali Dal over either Badal or Tohra because both of them had initially refused to support the Punjab Accord. The moderate Barnala received a huge boost when the Akali Dal won the state assembly elections in Punjab in September 1985. Yet Barnala's moderate government faced challenges from within Sikh politics, including from the reorganizing extremists and Barnala's comparatively more "radical" rivals within the Akali Dal, for example Badal and Tohra (Chima, 2010).

The situation in Punjab reached a critical juncture in early 1986 when the first major provision of the Punjab Accord the transfer of Chandigarh to Punjab failed to be implemented. This occurred because both Barnala and Haryana's Congress Chief Minister Bhajan Lal could not agree on which Hindi speaking areas Punjab should be transferred to Haryana in exchange for Chandigarh. Barnala refused to compromise too much with Bhajan Lal for the fear of being criticized by the extremists and his more radical intra party rivals and Bhajan Lal vigorously guarded the perceived interests of Haryana. For his part Rajiv was reluctant to act in decisive way by dictating terms to his intra party Congress underling, Bhajan Lal whose regional political support he desired in Hindu majority states bordering Punjab.

The failure to implement the Punjab Accord severely weakened the moderate Barnala, and strengthened the largely united extremists and also the radicals within the Akali Dal. Thus, three patterns of political leadership competitive, outbidding and factionalism between the traditional Akali leadership, the relative unity within the ranks of the extremists and internal disunity amongst ruling Congress state authorities coalesced to stymie successful implementation of the Punjab Accord and contributed to the initial resurgence of Sikh extremism in Punjab in the post Bluestar period (Kaushal, 1999).

VI

Armed struggle to establish a new state based on religion called Khalistan

In the year of 1986 circumstances changed rapidly, Damdami Taksal emerged as the primary centre around the Sikh extremists for a possible renewed Sikh Struggle. The families of co called "Sikh martyrs" lobbied the reinvigorated Taksal to give political

direction to the Sikh community in place of the Akali Dal. In the very first month of the 1986 Akali Dal (united) led by Joginder Singh²¹ (father of Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale), AISSF and Damdami Taksal took over the Golden Temple complex and prepared for the *karseva* to tear down the new Akal Takhat constructed by the government after demolished during Operation Blue Star. They also announced the *Sarbat Khalsa*²² for discuss the political crisis facing by Sikh community and chart out a future course of action. By capturing the Golden Temple complex, they want to challenge to the power of Akali Dal and the ministry of Surjit Singh Barnala.

In the *Sarbat Khalsa* the Damdami Taksal presented a *gurmatta* (collective resolution) and this accused the Akali Dal and SGPC of having “connived” with the Indian government to attack the Golden Temple and characterized Barnala’s government in Punjab as being “subservient to the Centre and determined to please the rulers in Delhi.” It also declares that a “long drawn struggle against the government was necessary and justified because the Sikhs are slaves in India and to get freedom is their fundamental right (The Tribune, 27 Jan. 1986). They had made two important announcements in *Sarbat Khalsa*, first, replaced Akal Takhat *Jathedar* Kirpal Singh with Jasbir Singh rode (nephew of Bhindranwale) second, they dissolve the SGPC and created a five member “Panthic Committee” for make all future religious and political decisions for the *panth* under the guidance of the Akal Takhat.

Thus, the extremist and militants created a set of parallel political organizations with which to challenge traditional Akali leadership. Their motive to capture key Sikh political and religious institutions in order to gain increased authority over the Sikh community and also give their renewed Sikh struggle added legitimacy. In this occasion they not declare the creation of an independent Sikh state, but saffron- coloured flags emblazoned with the words “*Khalistani Zindaband*” was raised at the top buildings in the Golden Temple Complex in open defiance of central authority (Chima, 2010).

²¹Surprisingly Bhindranwale is said to have been offered high positions by the government many times but he said that he was not fighting for a political position but only a year and a half after his death. Joginder Singh his father became the leader of politics.

²²By calling this *Sarbat Khalsa* the extremists strategically harked back to the 18th century had resurrected a much-forgotten Sikh political institution that had been previously used to make collective decisions for the community.

To counter them the traditional Akali leadership announced the another *Sarbat Khalsa* would be held under the guidance of the Akal Takhat *Jathedar* Kirpal Singh at Anandpur Sahib to discuss the “arbitrary decisions of certain people who violated the sanctity and traditions of the community” (“Step to avoid bloodshed: Sarbat Khalsa at Anandpur Sahib”, *The Tribune* 12 February 1986). A *gurmata* was passed during the counter convention which authorized the Akali Dal and SGPC “to end the illegal interference in Darbar Sahib and restore the Sikh traditions which have been usurped” (*India Today*, 15 March 1986).

Now Barnala appeared to have won this battle of competing *Sarbat Khalsa* conventions, but several problems emerged during the Akali Dal Longowal sponsored *Sarbat Khalsa* that weakened Barnala’s power in Sikh politics, firstly, Parkash Singh Badal publicly warned Barnala not to use force to vacate the Golden Temple complex as Indira Gandhi had done during Operation Blue Star (*India Today*, 15 March 1986). Secondly, Tohra resigned from his position as SGPC president without explanation. These were again strategic moves by both Badal and Tohra who wanted to distance themselves from any possible police action against the extremist in Golden Temple complex. Barnala appeared to be in control of institutionalized Sikh politics but in reality, his position was quite vulnerable. At last, the Punjab Accord had not been implemented and his fellow Akalis and supposed allies Badal and Tohra were lying in wait for an opportunity to undermine his leadership and enhance their own political power (Dang, 2000).

After the both *Sarbat Khalsa* there was a sharp upsurge in political and communal violence in Punjab which was described as being “the worst ever violence since the traumatic days leading to Operation Blue Star” (*India Today*, 15 April 1986). Violence started rapidly in Punjab and communal clashes between Sikh and Hindu, 53 peoples were killed in the last 15 days of March in 1986 (*India Today*, 15 April 1986). After situation deteriorated in Punjab Rajiv Gandhi send Julio Francis Ribeiro²³ as DGP in Punjab. As a new Governor Siddhartha Shanker Ray²⁴ had taken

²³Julio Francis Ribeiro had tackled underworld mafia violence in Bombay and had also prevented large scale communal disturbances while serving as police chief in Gujarat. For more detail see his autobiography “Bullet for Bullet: My Life as a Police Officer”.

²⁴Siddhartha Ray had been chief minister of West Bengal in the 1970s and had been credited with crushing the Naxalite insurgency in the state.

the charge and Ribeiro-Ray team symbolized a renewed “law and order” approach to the Punjab problem which the press colourfully termed as being a “bullet for bullet” policy for dealing with escalating Sikh extremism in Punjab (India Today, 30 April 1986).

The relationship between extremist was not long last they split into two groups. The split within the extremists’ ranks resulted in a lower-than-expected turnout for the second extremist sponsored *Sarbat Khalsa* held on the day of Vaisakhi in 1986. The Panthic Committee had originally planned to use this *Sarbat Khalsa* to compel the acting Akal Takhat *Jathedar* Gurdev Singh Koanke to declare the creation of Khalistan, but he was not an avowed separatist refused to take such a dramatic step without the support of other Sikh groups, including the Akali Dal united and both factions of the AISSF (Sharma D. , 1995). Then militant gangs started violence for declaring the creation of Khalistan publicly. As a result, Panthic Committee arranged a press conference and declare the creation of Khalistan in front of the media (India Today, 31 May 1986). Very interestingly, the ten-page declaration of Khalistan appealed to all countries in the world and the United Nations to recognize the creation of a sovereign Sikh state. The Panthic Committee offered to start talks with the government of India on all bi-lateral issues between India and Khalistan, and indicated that Khalistan wished to have “good relations” with all of its neighbours, including Hindu-majority India (The Tribune, 30 April 1986). The newly created Khalistan Commando Force led by Manbir Singh Chaheru was declared to be the armed wing of the Khalistan movement and the nucleus of Khalistan’s official defence force (Chima, 2010). Chima (2010) believed that the Panthic Committee did not make this declaration from a position of strength but rather from a position of weakness as a desperate attempt to distinguish itself from other extremist organizations to create a niche for the itself as the apex body for separatist Sikh militants and to please Pakistan and the Panthic Committee’s supporters in the overseas Sikh diaspora (Dang, 2000). It was a first time when Sikh political organization formally declares the creation of Khalistan. In the counter reaction from the state, Barnala send the Punjab police and National Security Guard (Black Cat Commandos) and raided the Golden Temple Complex on 30 April 1986 and arrested the 300 activists of Damdami Taksal and AISSF with Gurdev Singh Koanke also (The

Tribune, 2 May 1986). This event is also known by “Operation Black Thunder-I”. But no one from Panthic Committee was arrested by the police because they had slipped out of the complex immediately next day after declaring the creation of Khalistan.

Opponents get another chance against Surjit Singh Barnala so immediately after “Operation Black Thunder-I” Captain Amarinder Singh and other prominent member of Barnala’s cabinet ministry resigned from their positions. In the other hand in Akali Dal (L) Tohra and Badal resigned from the working committee of Akali Dal. With this act they also issued the statement as-

“The action has not only desecrated to shrine and violated the glorious traditions of the Panth but also put a black spot on the history of the Akali Dal” (The Tribune, 3 May 1986).

Thus, both leaders had got chance which they were finding from the last few months. Barnala defend this operation by giving explanation that he had only implemented the *gurmatta* passed by the Akali Dal (L) sponsored *Sarbat Khalsa* authorizing the government “to end the illegal interference in the Darbar Sahib” by “whatever means necessary” (The Tribune, 5 May 1986). After this explanation by Barnala, 27 Akali legislators broke from Akali Dal (Longowal) and established new party called Akali Dal (Badal) with Badal, Tohra and Captain Amrinder Singh (The Tribune, 9 May 1986). Thus, Barnala’s government was reduced to a minority in the state Legislative Assembly which only 48 seats in a house of 117. It had to rely on 32 Congress and four BJP legislators to remain in power (The Tribune, 12 May 1986). Now the extremist started using violence rapidly, so many Hindu families migrated in cities or in Hindu majority outer states from the rural areas (India Today, 15 June 1986).

VII

Changing patterns of political violence

New formed Akali Dal (B) leaders collectively called the radical subsequently employed heated ethnic rhetoric to shore up their Sikh support base and entered into a mutually-symbiotic alliance with the extremists to capture important Sikh political institutions from the moderates. The disintegration of the Akali unity and their subsequently competitive “ethnic outbidding” strengthen both the extremists as well militants, and also contributed to the escalation and sustenance of the Sikh ethno-

nationalist insurgency and in contrast a united traditional Akali Dal could have quite likely provided an effective bulwark against increased violence and militancy in Punjab (Chima, 2010).

The Central government entered into indirect talks with ‘the militants’ in the spring of 1987 through Darshan Singh Ragi, the Akal Takhat *Jathedar* and supported by the extremist as well as militants. These talks were made for the compromise settlement to the Punjab crisis but they were cut short when the central government unexpectedly dismissed Barnala’s ‘moderate’ Akali Dal government and imposed president’s rule on Punjab. It believed that Buta Singh faction within the Congress Central government apparently convinced Rajiv Gandhi to dismiss Barnala for its own factional partisan interests. Rajiv also wanted to appear tough on Sikh extremism for upcoming state assembly elections in Haryana, and he needed to placate its Congress Chief Minister Bhajan Lal. Thus, the lack of unity within the governing state elites also prevented a possible solution to the Punjab crisis and in fact indirectly facilitated escalating Sikh militancy (Chima, 2010).

It is fact that dismissing Surjit Singh Barnala’s government was an attempt to appease Punjab’s police chief, Julio Ribeiro, who had threatened to resign unless he was given complete control over police administration including the power to post and transfer officers at will.²⁵ Actually Ribeiro was frustrated at what he perceived to be political interference by Akali legislators in his prosecution of the war against militancy. Another reason behind dismisses his government was that Barnala had lost his political relevance in Punjab. Instead, a new structure of power had emerged within Sikh politics with the loose alliance forget between the unified Akali Dal the Head Priests the Damdami Taksal, the Panthic Committee and the AISSF factions. Akal Takht *Jathedar* Darshan Singh Ragi was also a more affective intermediary for talks between the government and the militants than the Akali Dal (L) thus making Barnala expendable. These entire reasons aside the Indian government lost a very important thing with the ouster of the Akali Dal (L) government namely a popularly elected moderate Sikh buffer between itself and the alienated Sikh community (Chima, 2010).

²⁵Well known journalist Tavleen Singh had taken interview of Ribeiro which was published in India Today, 15 May 1987 under the headline “Julio Francis Ribeiro: No chance of success.”

The Unified Akali Dal, Head Priests and the militants initially welcomed end of the Barnala's government. Unified Akali Dal specially hoped that Centre would hold fresh elections in Punjab after ousting Barnala. The militants on other side thought that the Centre would negotiate more seriously with them once Barnala's government was out of the political scene. But result was totally different, instead of holding elections or renewed negotiations the government ordered its security forces to launch aggressive new anti-insurgency operations resulting in the arrests of many extremists and forcing the militants' further underground. The experiment with political negotiations through Ragi appeared to be over and the central government had apparently reverted back to President's rule and a law-and-order approach to handling the Punjab problem (Chima, 2010). In the other hand Gurbachan Singh Manocahal resigned from the Panthic Committee citing personal differences with the committee members and complaining that the committee had failed to function as a well-knit unit (The Tribune, 30 April 1987). And he created new armed group named BTFK (Bhindranwale Tigers Force of Khalistan). Thus, BTFK joined the Babbar Khalsa, KCF (Khalistan Commando Force), KLF (Khalistan Liberation Force).

These all organizations were slowly factionalizing further signalling potential problems to come for the Khalistan movement. Soon after imposed the president rule the militants suspected that the Ragi and the radical/extremist United Akali Dal had reached a "secret understanding" with the Central government by which the UAD would be allowed to form the next state government in Punjab whenever elections were held these fears were participated by repeated calls by the UAD for fresh elections and Ragi's continued communications with Acharya Sushil Muni.

As a result, the militants felt threatened and they launched the two-pronged strategy to prevent further negotiations and any possible elections which they knew would set back their goal of creating an independent Sikh state. First, they warned Ragi not to engage in any further dialogue with intermediaries of the Central government until either a general amnesty was declared for Sikh political prisoners or until the government agreed to give the Sikhs an independent Khalistan. The Panthic Committee also began issuing press releases with the Akal Takht seal affixed to them without Ragi's approval. This was a direct challenge to Ragi's authority who threatened to resign if the other Head Priests, three of whom were nominated by the

militants refused to admonish the Panthic Committee for its actions (India Today, 15 July 1987).

To Ragi's chagrin, the other Head Priests refused to take sides on this issue. Thus, by the middle of July Ragi appeared to have fallen out with the militants. Second the militants also engage in increased political violence to prevent any elections from being held. For example, that KCF slaughtered 70 bus passengers, all of them Hindus, in two separate attacks within 24 hours period in early July (The Tribune, 8 July, 1987). This massacre was a part of a sharp increase in political violence after the imposition of a president's rule on Punjab.

In early August 1987 Ragi made one last attempt for rally the disparate "radical", "extremist" and "militant" groups around his leadership as Akal Takht Jathedar by calling a meeting of all major Sikh sects and political and social organisations at the Golden Temple complex to discuss the future critical direction of the Sikh Panth (The Tribune, 16 July, 1987). Those political organisations invited included the UAD, the AISSF (Manjit) the Damdami Taksal, the AISSF (Gurjit), the Pantic Committee, the KCF the KLF the Babbar Khalsa and the beat BTFK. The Akali Dal (L) was not invited because its leaders had previously refused to accept the authority of the Akal Takht. The attendees at this meeting were generally divided into two broad camps in terms of goals and strategies. Ragi, the UAD, the AISSF (Manjit) and most other Sikh sects and organisations succeeded in passing the resolution stating that the Sikhs political goal was the creation of an area and political setup in a North India where Sikhs can experience the glow of freedom (The Tribune, 5 Aug. 1987).

This was in essence demanding the implementation of the Anandpur Sahib Resolution. In contrast the Panthic Committee the AISSF (Gurjit) the KCF and the KLF made it clear that nothing short of Khalistan was acceptable to the Panth. In their first ever joint statement the KCF and the KLF stated-

"The gun is the only answer we have taken to the gun not as a hobby it has been thrust upon us. The war will end with our victory. There is no other alternative" (The Tribune, 5 Aug. 1987).

Ragi and representatives of the other organisations tried desperately to convince the militants to alter their line of thought. In this attempt, Ragi and other Sikh intellectuals

praised the militants for the sacrifices they had made and credited them for bringing the Central government to the negotiating table. They also suggested that negotiations were required to extract concessions to end the conflict but the militants refused to be swayed. Thus, the convention ended with a divide between those advocating the Anandpur Sahib Resolution and negotiations and those supporting Khalistan through armed means. Ragi admitted that he had failed to unify the philosophy of *josh* with the philosophy of *hosh*. Shortly thereafter, the Panthic Committee officially rejected the resolution passed at this convention. In apparent reference to Ragi and the extremist the Panthic Committee warned ‘those Sikhs leaders or committees that bank on votes with dire consequences’ if they compromised with the government (The Tribune, 5 Aug. 1987). Ragi’s alliance with the militants was essentially over.

Instead of risking a confrontation with the militants Ragi withdrew from the political scene in order to give the militants an opportunity to lead the Sikh Panth. He had preferred *gal* (talks) whereas the militants preferred the *goli* (bullet). After Ragi’s withdrawal from politics, the other militant appointed Head Priests further consolidated the militants hold on Sikh politics by issuing an appeal to the entire Sikh community directing it to lend its support to the militant they characterized as sacrificing their lives for freedom and for breaking the shackles of slavery imposed on the Panth (India Today, 30 September 1987). Soon Sikh politics was divided along the following lines. The most moderate Sikh political group was the Akali Dal (L) led by Barnala. It demanded implementation of the Punjab Accord but had lost most of its relevance in Punjab. The radical and extremist organisations rallied around Ragi and demanded full implementation of the Anandpur Sahib Resolution. The ‘radicals’ consisted of the SGPC and the Badal faction within the UAD, and the extremists included the AISSF (Manjit) and the Baba faction within the UAD. The militant Babbar Khalsa and the KLF accepted the authority of Akal Takht *Jathedar* Darshan Singh Ragi and urged other militant groups to do the same. These two-armed militant organisations demanded Khalistan but they were also not opposed to negotiations or a settlement short of a short of outright Independence. At the most militant end of the Sikh political spectrum was the Damdami Taksal, Panthic Committee, AISSF (Gurjit), KCF and BTFK, all of whom are not willing to compromise for anything short of Khalistan. All Sikh groups ranging from moderate to militant had animosity

towards the Central government but they were also deeply divided amongst themselves. Sikh politics had become exceedingly more complex within a year and half than ever before during the entire 'Punjab crisis' (Chima, 2010).

By late 1987 the Central government realised that president's rule had failed to curb political violence in Punjab. The number of killings in the state, in fact, escalated dramatically in the last half of 1987 in comparison to the first half (Sharma D. , 1995). The militants had also proven their ability to replenish their ranks even after the arrests of thousands and the killings of hundreds of them (Sharma D. , 1995). The militants were not on the run as both Roy and Ribeiro had so often stated- instead they appeared to be gained strength. Yet the central government was reassured by the fact that a major restructuring of political alignments had occurred within Sikh politics by the end of 1987. The year had begun with the radicals the extremists and the militants forming an alliance against the moderates and the Central government. It ended with the radical extremist UAD, SGPC and Ragi still aligned with the extremist AISSF (Manjit) but their collective relationship with the militants was clearly broken. Thus, the government saw an opportunity to pursue a strategy of building up the radical and the extremists in its attempt to either weaken or isolate the militants and try to negotiate a solution to the Punjab problem short of Khalistan (Chima, 2010).

VIII

Attempts to solve the Punjab problem through political initiatives

In this phase the sustenance of the Sikh ethno nationalist insurgency propelled by several continue patterns of political leadership although new patterns also began emerging which could eventually have a destructive effect on the moment. First disunity amongst ruling state elites continued to undermine attempts to solve the Punjab problem through political initiatives. To explain, Rajiv Gandhi had realized by early 1988 that the 'law and order' approach to solving the 'Punjab problem' had failed. For this reason, he ordered the release of jailed Akal Takht *Jathedar* the 'extremist' Jasbir Singh Rode²⁶, as a part of a new 'political initiative' on Punjab (India Today, 31 March 1988). Rajiv hoped that Rode could either rally the militants

²⁶Jasbir Singh Rode was the nephew of Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale. He came from the family which had lost over a dozen of its members including his own father and brother in various security operations including Operation Blue Star.

around his leadership or convince them to accept a solution short of Khalistan, or divide them and isolate those who refused to compromise. Yet the Rode initiative was undermined before it had a chance to play itself out. In particular, the Buta Singh faction within the Central government, in possible connivance with other forces antithetical to the 'Rode initiative' helped instigate an armed clash between militants inside the Golden Temple complex and Indian security forces for its own partisan political reasons. The subsequent Operation Black Thunder II effectively sank the 'Rode initiative' and ruined the prospects of securing a solution to the 'Punjab crises' through his leadership. Thus, disunity between the governing state elites continued to undermine solving the 'Punjab problem' through 'political initiatives' and contributed to the sustenance of Sikh militancy (Chima, 2010).

In the other hand the traditional Akali leadership remained internally divided during this period between Talwandi in the 'extremist' Baba faction of the UAD, the 'radical' Badal faction of the UAD (including Tohra and Captain Amrinder Singh), and the 'moderate' Akali Dal (L) led by Barnala. Each one of these parties engaged in hated ethnic rhetoric against the Central government. A small step in forging increased Akali unity was taken after Operation Black Thunder II when the Badal faction of the UAD attempted to break away from the extremists, who it feared would permanently marginalize the 'traditional Akali leadership' in Sikh politics. In particular, the Badal faction of the UAD dismissed the Rode led Head Priests and bifurcated from the parent organization (The Tribune, 31 May 1988).

Talwandi also defected from 'the extremists' and joined his fellow 'traditional Akali leaders' informing the UAD (Talwandi/Badal), but complete Akali unity could not be forged because the Akali Dal (L) remained a separate and competing political entity (The Tribune 26 Aug. 1988). Thus, continued factionalism within the traditional Akali leadership and its competitive radicalism against the government provided a fillip, both indirect and direct to militancy in Punjab. In contrast, the extremist remained internally united during this period, which helped them widely expand their support base to the detriment of the divided traditional Akali leadership. The extremists, in fact won the November 1989 parliamentary elections in a spectacular way, thus demonstrating strong and increasing popular support for the Sikh ethno nationalist movement.

The militants remained generally united during the initial part of this period. In fact, internal competition between them was relatively minimal. Yet this began to change after Operation Black Thunder II when the militant movement bifurcated into the “old” uneducated militants under the (first) Panthic Committee led by Manochahal and Zafferwal, and the new educated militants under second (Dr. Sohan Singh) Panthic Committee led by Dr. Sohan Singh and Daljit Singh Bittu and the Babbar Khalsa (Sharma D. , 1995) (The Tribune, 4 Nov. 1988). The fractionalization of the militant movement after Operation Black Thunder II involved not only its bifurcation into two distinct blocs of militants, but also the mushrooming of armed organisations with clear organisational schism and competition between them. There was a dramatic spurt of militant violence in Punjab after the bifurcation of the Panthic Committee with each militant outfit and grouping trying to establish its dominance over the others by proving its firepower. The death toll for 1988 as 1,839 civilians 110 security men and 373 militants were killed and 3,882 militants arrested (Wallace, 1995). Thus, the total death toll for 1988 was 2,322 almost doubling the toll for 1987 (1,238). Yet, the destructive effects of the bifurcation and increased factionalism on the Sikh ethno-nationalist insurgency were only in their incipient stages.

In this period the militants continued to maintain a viable but increasingly informal political front with the extremists during this period. For example, the militants who officially boycotted the November 1989 elections, nonetheless informally supported the ‘extremist’ AISSF (Manjit) and UAD (Mann) candidates in these polls, partially in the hopes of using them to increase the legitimacy of their separatist cause after the election. The extremist had shockingly dominated these elections with the UAD (Mann) with winning six out of seven seats it contested and extremist/militants in dependents supported by the Mann winning another two. In the other hand Congress (I) won only two seats, BSP and Janta Dal one each (The Tribune, 29 Nov. 1989) (Singh G. , 1991).

Yet, the previously close and formal organisational relationship between ‘the militants’ and the extremist began to loosen in important ways during these years. In particular, the militants lost a formal institutionalized political front, except for their own internal AISSF (Bittu) and AISSF (Bundala/Butter), shortly after Operation Black Thunder II. The emerging organisational bifurcation between the militants and the extremist was exacerbated when the KLF and the Babbar Khalsa aligned

themselves squarely with the 'militant' second (Dr. Sohan Singh) Panthic Committee, after Operation Black Thunder II, thus robbing the extremist of unarmed wing for the first time during the post Operation Blue Star period in short the militants and the experienced continue to maintain a close mutually symbiotic relationship during this period but they were becoming organizationally before catered in qualitatively new emerging pattern of political leadership.

The political scenario changed in 1990 with the coming of non-Congress government called 'National Front' led by VP Singh (Wallace, 1993).

After that the militants were at the height of their power in Punjab and all major groups including the Akalis acquiescing to them in support of Khalistan. The extremists did not support or oppose the creation of Khalistan, nor did they openly advocate or oppose the use of violence. The extremists were in many ways a 'wild card' in Sikh politics in that they were important for the Central government in trying to find a solution to the 'Punjab crisis' short of Khalistan, but they also were important for the militants in order to provide added legitimacy to their separatist cause (Chima, 2010). But it ended with the militants no longer in control of Sikh politics and the Akalis beginning to break free from their directives. Several patterns of political leadership many of which had begun in earlier years contributed to the 'containment' and the potential crushing of the Sikh ethno nationalist insurgency by early 1993.

First the militants had become highly functionalized and violently competed against each other thus undermining their own movement. The multitude of the armed militant groups were divided into four major clusters- the first Zaffarwal Panthic Committee led militants, second Dr. Sohan Singh Panthic Committee led militants, third Manochahal Panthic Committee led militants and the Babbar Khalsa. The fractionalization of the militants may not have been detrimental to the moment had the various armed groups not begun in engaging in intense internecine competition and violence. In essence 'the militants' began fighting more against each other for dominance within the separatist moment than against the Central state and its security forces. Levels of anarchy resulting from this fratricidal warfare became so instance at the grassroots level that the rural population of Punjab yearned for a return to 'normalcy.'

Furthermore, Sikh politicians previously supportive of the militants began reassessing their support for such a fractionalized and internally competitive movement. The militant's internal fractionalization also contributed to the security forces ability to turn the tide against militancy and start decimating their ranks in an escalating 'snowball' like fashion. They also lost an effective political front for their separatist struggle in the extremist for two interrelated reasons the fractionalization of the extremists and the dominance of the gun over politics. To explain the extremist had become completely fractionalized by 1992 into four competing organizations- the Akali Dal (Mann), Akali Dal (Baba), AISSF (Manjit) and SSF (Mehta/Chawla). These extremist organisations vied with each other for dominance within the political wing of the Sikh ethno-nationalist movement in contrast to being almost completely united earlier. This divided the movement's extensive Sikh political support base and allowed the 'traditional Akali leaders' to begin reasserting themselves in Sikh politics, thus reducing the movement's overall prospects for attaining success. The 'gun' also became completely dominant over politics instead of vice versa or having a mutually-symbiotic relationship as was the case in the past. In many respects, the extremist became just as much hostages to the militants as the traditional Akali leadership had become. For example, the 'six Panthic organisations' alliance was one forged out of fear of the militants rather than voluntary cooperation with them. As the security forces began 'turning the tide' against 'the militants' 'the extremists' began gradually breaking free of the militants and re-entering the 'normal' democratic political process in order to compete with the traditional Akali leadership. This robbed the militants of an effective political front with which they propagate their cause and retain and institutionalized political support base, thus weakening the separatist movement.

In other hand qualitatively new 'pattern of political leadership' namely a shift in the relationship amongst ruling state elites emerged during the period under examination and contributed to the Indian state's ability to contain the Sikh separatist insurgency. To explain during most of the Punjab crisis governing state elites had remained either internally divided within the ruling party that is the Darbara Singh, Zail Singh, Bhajan Lal's intransigence to compromise and the days functional Rajiv Gandhi-Buta Singh relationship, or divided within the ruling coalition that is, V.P. Singh's reliance on the BJP and Communist to stay in power and Chandra Shekhar's

reliance on the Congress (I). These divisions had forestalled the formulation and implementation of a coherent and effective approach to handling the Punjab problem. This changed with Narasimha Rao's Congress (I) government consolidated its power in New Delhi after the February 1992 elections in Punjab and the Congress (I) also came into power in the state under the leadership of Roy's closest loyalist Beant Singh. With the effective forging of unity amongst governing elites, the Narasimha Rao, Beant Singh, and KPS Gill team was able to formulate and implement a coherent policy on Punjab consisting of limited the Akalis ability to inflame ethnic sentiment, physically eliminating 'the militants' with a strict draconian 'law and order' approach and strategically holding a series of democratic elections designed to prompt political elites including both 'the extremist' and 'the traditional Akali leadership' to begin re-entering the 'normal' democratic political process. This co-ordinated state action under the leadership of unified governing elites helped the government 'turn the tide' against the militants and also contributed to Sikh political actors beginning to break away from the militants and start re-entering more 'normal' modes of politics. This gradual defection further weakened the Sikh separatist movement in Punjab.

Due to the defensive culmination of these emerging patterns of a political leadership the Sikh ethno nationalist insurgency was contained and apparently crushed by early 1993. These patterns included the fractionalization of the militants 'the militants' loss of an effective political front in the completely fractionalized 'extremists' and the effective forging of unity amongst ruling states elites. Yet, political 'normalcy' had not definitively returned to Punjab and the re-escalation of armed Sikh militancy could not be realistically ruled out until the traditional Akali leadership united, moderated and fully re-entered the normal political process, and until it also emerged clearly dominant over the extremists in Sikh politics.

The law-and-order situation in Punjab seemed to be quickly on the mend in early 1993 as the government security forces appeared to be wiping out the remaining militants in Punjab countryside and restoring increased confidence in the official institutions of the state. One newspaper writing it as-

The vendors of terror have cleared packed up. The guns are there but they belong to the police. The militants press handouts and threatening calls to newspaper offices have ceased.... now, for the first time in a decade have not reported any terrorist strikes in the past three months (India Today, 28 Feb. 1993).

If we talking about traditional Akali leadership it was divided at the beginning of 1993 between the 'radical' Akali Dal (Badal) including the 'radical' Akali Dal (Talwandi), the 'moderate' Akali Dal (Longowal) led by Barnala, and the 'moderate' Akali Dal (Panthic) under Captain Amarinder Singh. The annual Holla Mohalla festival held at Anandpur Sahib in mid-March 1993 demonstrated the improving security situation in the state, for the first time in 13 years, the Congress (I) eagerly erected a political stage at this festival (The Tribune, 10 March 1993). This was a notable development because only a year earlier the Congress (I) did not dare to participate, fearing for the physical safety of its members. The radical Akali Dal Badal and extremist Akali Dal Mann also predictably set up stages at this gathering (Dang, 2000). A gradual trend began to emerge in Sikh politics through 1993 when the Akali Dal (Badal) proved itself to be the most popular Akali party by scoring strong electoral performances in select democratic by elections in the state (The Tribune, 23 May 1993). The Akali Dal (Badal) apparent ascendance in Sikh politics after these by-elections prompted the other traditional Akali leaders to try to unite in an attempt to arrest Badal's growing power. This process culminated in the creation of the 'unified' Akali Dal (Amritsar) which included the other traditional Akali leaders, Tohra, Talwandi, Barnala and Captain Amarinder Singh and most of the extremists like Mann. Even they began holding joint rallies at Sikh religious festivals. In April 1994, the SGPC and Akal Takht Jathedar sponsored a series of 'Khalsa marches' associated with the 400th birthday anniversary of the 6th Guru and on the last day all major Akali and Sikh leaders gathered on a common *dharmic* stage under the supervision of the acting Akal Takhat *Jathedar* Prof. Manjit Singh. All leaders appealed to him to intervene in helping forge 'pantic unity' each presented him a hand written letter agreeing to resign from the leadership post of his respective political party for the Panth's wider interests (The Tribune, 14 April 1994). Thus, on May first Prof. Manjit Singh announced the formation of a unified political party called the 'Akali Dal Amritsar' which was to be led by a presidium leader including Captain Amarinder Singh, Barnala, Talwandi, Longowal, Bhai Manjit Singh and Mann etc. (Frontline, 3 June 1994). They all have signed a pledge promising to work together for the welfare of our community after sinking all the differences and to 'abstain from mutual leg pulling' (Kaur K. , 1999). Its political ideology and goals were enshrined in its official manifesto called the 'Amritsar declaration' which was a product of

mutual compromise between the ideological-diverse constituent members of the party.

Some parts of it read as-

The Akali Dal being a champion of Punjabi culture based on Guru Granth Sahib reiterates its commitment for waging struggle within democratic norms for the creation of a such a separate region for the Sikhs, where they could enjoy glow of freedom....this sub-continent needs restricting of its polity into a confederation of various cultures... if the Government of India fails to restructure the Indian polity into a federal structure, the Akali Dal would be left with no other alternative, but to wage a struggle for a sovereign Sikh state (Kaur K. , 1999).

Even though these other Akali leaders were united, the Akali Dal (Badal) continued to grow in popularity with that its increasingly moderate image in comparison to the 'unified' Akali Dal (Amritsar) which also included the 'extremists.' Akali Dal (Badal) purposely avoided religious and ethnic issues during its campaign, instead focusing primarily on secular issues such as the rising price of essential commodities, police excesses, corruption in government and unemployment (Frontline, 1 July 1994). Conditions for forging more complete unity between the traditional Akali leaders improved after both the Akali Dal (Badal) and Akali Dal (Amritsar) performed poorly in local elections in September 1994 in comparison to the Congress (I). After this 'mediocre' electoral performance, other 'traditional Akali leaders' realise that they could not effectively compete against either Badal or the Congress (I) even though they were united. In particular, their alliance with the extremist was a major liability in apparent post militancy Punjab. For his part Badal realised that the unified Akali Dal (Amritsar), even though it could not win many elections itself, could consistently siphon horn off enough Sikh votes to cause his party to lose in close electoral contests with the Congress (I) (Chima, 2010). Thus, all sections of the traditional Akali leadership had an incentive to unite by the late 1994.

This incentive was partially facilitated by the coordinated actions of united governing state elites in both Chandigarh and New Delhi, who continued their successful military actions against the last remaining 'militants' while concurrently depending the normal political process by strategically holding a series of democratic elections in the state. These elections continued to prompt both the traditional Akali leaders and also the extremists to fully re-enter the normal democratic political process in order to avoid being marginalized within the Sikh community in an increasingly post militancy Punjab.

In the beginning of 1995, efforts to forge complete Akali unity intensified. These efforts were prompted by the Akali Dal (Badal) and Akali Dal (Amritsar)'s renewed interests in uniting, Prof. Manjit Singh's threat to issue a formal *hukamnama* forcing the Akalis to unite, and the desire of 'traditional Akali leaders' within the Akali Dal (Amritsar) to disassociate them from Mann and "the extremists" (Dang, 2000).

This process gained momentum in mid-January 1995 when Prof. Manjit Singh made a public appeal to leaders of the Akali Dal (Badal) and Akali Dal (Amritsar) to hammer out their differences for the larger collective interests of the Sikh *Panth*. This appeal prompted Akali Dal (Badal) and Akali Dal (Amritsar) leaders, except for Mann who was in jail on charges of sedition at the time, to sign a pledge not to issue statements against each other (The Tribune, 12 January 1995). On the day of 13 April, 1995, the Head Priests announced that a unified Akali Party had been formed with Badal as its president and the Anandpur Sahib Resolution (ASR) as its official ideological manifesto (The Tribune, 15 April, 1995). This announcement stunned the extremists within the Akali Dal (Amritsar), including Mann and Bhai Manjit Singh after all they had not been privy to this decision. The extremists subsequently cried foul and accusing the Head Priests of acting in a unilateral, partisan way in favour of the traditional Akali leadership. The traditional Akali leadership within him Akali Dal (Amritsar) -Tohra, Barnala of the Akali Dal (Longowal), Capt. Amarinder Singh of the Akali Dal (Pantic), and Talwandi of the Akali Dal (Talwandi) had apparently struck a secret 'behind the scenes' deal to unite with Badal without the extremist's knowledge (The Tribune 16 April, 1995). With this amazing announcement the traditional Akali leadership was formally united for the first time in over 15 years since the late 1970s (Dang, 2000). The new organizational setup of the unified Akali Dal a few weeks later when the Head Priests announced that Badal would be the Party's President and the Mann would be its senior Vice President (The Tribune 5 June, 1995). But Mann refused to join the new party because it had been accepted the creation of a sovereign Sikh state as its stated political goal. Soon new formed unified party demonstrated its electoral strength by defeating Congress (I) candidate in the state assembly by election and also sweeping the Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee general house polls, defeating the Delhi based Akali factions supported by the Congress (I) (The Tribune 7 & 10 July, 1995). In the other hand, militancy was assumed to be dead in 1995 but in late August 1995, the last remaining cell of active Sikh militants in Punjab gave their unexpected and parting blast to the state by

assassinating Punjab Chief Minister Beant Singh with human bomb (The Tribune, 1 Sep. 1995) (Frontline, 22 Sep. 1995).

Shortly thereafter the Shiromani Akali Dal (Akali Dal Badal) moderated its image even further by portraying itself as being a regional political party committed to *Punjabi* (a composite Punjabi nationalism irrespective of religion) and *Halemi Raj* (governance based on compassion and equality) as opposed to being an exclusively Sikh ethnic party. Thus, the Akali Dal backtracking from the regional and ethnic demands found in the ASR (India Today, 31 March 1996). Thus, the Akali Dal (Badal) tried to explicitly project itself as being an inclusive ‘Punjabi party’ as opposed to an ethnic ‘Sikh’ one. Lastly, Badal unequivocally rejected extremists by saying-

“We are committed to peace in Punjab and shall not allow it to be disturbed at any cost” (The Tribune, 26 Feb. 1996).

The Shiromani Akali Dal subsequently proved its clear dominance over ‘the extremist’ in Sikh politics by nearly sweeping the SGPC general house elections in the fall of 1996 (India Today, 15 Oct. 1996). It also demonstrated its ascendance in Punjab’s ‘secular’ political system by scoring a tremendous victory over the Congress (I) in the February 1997 state assembly and parliamentary elections in Punjab. The Akali Dal Badal subsequently formed a coalition state government with the Hindu based BJP, which represented renewed Hindu Sikh *ekta* (unity) in the state (India Today, 28 Feb. 1997). When asked how he had changed from the last time he was chief minister in 1980, Parkash Singh Badal replied skilfully -

“Then I had a black beard and now I have a grey one, of course, I have gained in political maturity” (India Today, 28 Feb. 1997).

Thus, ‘the militants’ had been completely wiped out and ‘the extremists’ stood unequivocally marginalized within the Sikh community. In contrast, the traditional Akali leadership had united moderated its ideology and emerged clearly dominant, if not hegemonic over the extremists in Sikh politics. It had also fully re-entered the normal democratic political process by participating in a series of local and state elections strategically held by unified ruling state elites from 1993 to 1997. This process had culminated into the formation of an Akali Dal (Badal) BJP state government in Punjab in early 1997. The ‘Punjab crisis’ was over after nearly two decades of political strife and ethno-nationalist violence, which had threatened the unity of India and cost over 25,000 human lives (Wallace, 1995).

CHAPTER-5

NARRATIVES BY THE LOCAL PEOPLE: RELIGION, POLITICS OF FUNDAMENTALISM AND SECULARISM

When religion and politics travel in the same cart, the riders believe nothing
can stand in their way. (Frank Herbert, Dune)

Disastrous though its consequences may have been in recent years, religious and ethnic polarization is clearly in no sense unique to Punjab. Similar processes of division and confrontation are only too manifest elsewhere. We have seen these processes in action in many other parts of India, as also in almost every corner of the globe North and South, East and West, Capitalist and "Socialist", developed and under-developed. Wherever one chooses to look, religious and ethnic polarization is one of the most salient and perhaps simply the most salient source of social and political instability in the contemporary world. Once such processes of polarization are in full flow; they acquire a life of their own, one which may not be to the liking of everyone. This chapter consists of a field survey to elicit the views of local people on what constituted the problem around religion and politics in Punjab.

I

Politics of Fundamentalism

Rivalries between different religious groups have emerged in nations where authoritarian political institutions have collapsed. In India the collapse of the U.S.S.R. brought about a decline of the Communist Party of India (C.P.I.), even in Kerala where it had been particularly strong among Muslim voters. This has resulted in competition among other political parties trying to "capture" the Muslim vote (Elder, 1995). On a visit to India in 1993 Shimon Peres was asked why there was a new wave of fundamentalism in the last decade of the twentieth century. He responded that it was not a "new" wave but a protest to improve economic and social conditions. It was a demand for a more equitable distribution of wealth. He said, the problem arises when some of the rulers try to adopt holiness to fight this protest. When holiness begins, reason stops true religion does not have to be defended or propagated by guns,

bombs and knives. Religion is spread by its messengers, not murderers (India Today, June 15, 1993, p. 23). Fundamentalism speaks to the masses in many Third World societies where modern industrial economic reforms gave promises of employment in the public and private sectors. Where governments have been unable to meet popular demands, frustrations have been channeled toward efforts outside the system. Regardless of whether the political system has been authoritarian or democratic, fundamentalist groups have gained popularity among citizens where secular governments have not delivered on promises to provide the basic necessities of life (i.e., adequate food, clothing, shelter and jobs). In comparing militant religious fundamentalist movements, David Rapoport warns that "all major religions have enormous potentialities for creating and directing violence, which is why wars of religion are exceedingly ferocious and difficult to resolve" (Marty & Appleby, 1991, p. 226). When people fight for the cause justified by religious doctrine, beliefs, or revelation, issues of self-identity emerge, which release the greatest emotions and passions. For this reason religious conflicts are the most difficult to resolve and bring to a compromise. It has also been the case that religious wars have been longer in duration and more costly in the loss of lives than conflicts waged for political or economic reasons. The Fundamentalism Project case studies indicate that "fundamentalists can exploit the violence a religion contains, even when that religion is rarely perceived as having a violent potential" (Marty & Appleby, 1991, p. 226).

Fundamentalists prefer not to separate religion from politics. They want the state to protect their personal domain. They do not accept a political order that makes a distinction between one's public and private life. In most democratic or parliamentary systems where there is a separation of church and state, fundamentalist and secular parties compete on equal terms in the bargaining process. When there is no constitution to protect a minority religion, such organizations may become oppressive in requiring non-fundamentalists to conform to their customs and beliefs. Even in a secular society they may be instrumental in forcing those in power to move to the right of center on popular issues to gain votes at election time (Elder, 1995). Pandey notes that "the greatest danger posed by right wing movements is that they suppress all difference of opinion, and the very possibility of debate in the name of 'true' religion, 'authentic' tradition and 'real' nationalism" (Pandey, 1993, p. 16). An

example of this occurred in Gujarat where a Jain woman was killed in August of 1993 for attempting to impose a state ban against cow slaughter. When she was killed by Muslim butchers, vegetarian Hindus across the state became agitated. After her death, Jains, in association with the B.J.P., mounted pressure on the state government seeking a total ban on cow slaughter (It was interesting to note that Jains held top positions in the R.S.S. hierarchy in Gujarat). In a May by election Jains supported the B.J.P. candidate, as advised by their Jain monk, rather than a fellow Jain running on the Congress ticket. As the November election drew near, the Chief Minister Chiman Bhai Patel (Congress Party) hoping for re-election, wasted no time in passing a state law to protect cows before the polls opened, making Gujarat the seventh state in India to ban cow slaughter. Because the B.J.P. is extremely popular in Gujarat, it was politically expedient for Patel to go along with the emotional Hindu wave on this issue in order to gain votes (India Today, October 31, 1993, p. 32). This example reveals how the Hindu fundamentalist agenda, in this case, cow slaughter, was taken up by a center party for political reasons. The V.H.P. is also active in promoting cow protection. At a showroom near the Babri Mosque in Ayodhya a V.H.P. billboard listed tasks to be accomplished by Hindu youths. One poster read, "It is the religious duty of every Hindu to slaughter those who slaughter cows" (Pandey, 1993, p. 16). Fundamentalists give sacred events and places new meaning in the context of modern day issues with a charismatic intensity. According to their belief system the destiny of the people lies with those who control the sacred space. Believers want to reconsecrate holy ground and shield it from outside influences. Elder giving the examples of holy places are Mecca and Medina where Mohammad achieved revelation and where Islam has its origins. Muslims make a pilgrimage called the "Hajj" to these cities annually as a demonstration of their Muslim identity. When Hindus reclaim temples which they believe have been buried under Christian churches or Muslim mosques, (as they did at Ayodhya on December 6, 1992 when they tore down the Babri Mosque), they are taking back "holy" ground which they believe was usurped by non-Hindus. Hindus also make pilgrimages to sacred rivers. The place where rivers join (*tirtha*) is considered "holy" ground, particularly where the Ganges meets the Yamuna and *Sarasvati* Rivers. For Christians, Jerusalem and Vatican City in Rome are "holy" sites and for Sikhs, the Golden Temple at Amritsar is a spiritual center (Elder, 1995).

Fundamentalists are inventive in the sense that they construct new fundamentals of religion where they have not existed before. They use myths, religious symbols, and heroes to communicate themes which will enhance the popularity of a favored politician or political party. They retrieve relevant teachings of the past that enable them to reconstruct meanings which can be adapted to modern circumstances. According to Marty and Appleby, They are selective in retrieving doctrines, beliefs and practices from the sacred past. These are modified and given new expression. The ways they select, present and understand the fundamentals sets them apart from liberal, or moderate or orthodox believers (Marty & Appleby, 1991).

Secularism and India

The concept of the secular state as it has evolved in Asian societies is very different from the version known in the West. The United States represents a secular state which has a strict separation of church and state. In the West a secular state cannot aid any religion or perform any religious functions, but it may opt to aid all religions impartially. Although in India it is believed that the state provides aid to Hindus, and it does not do this for all religious groups. Therefore, India does not fit either model of the secular state. In the U.S. model the government is held responsible for protecting minority groups from majority oppression. At the same time minorities may not impose their will upon the general public or take over public property. As Peter Berger's definition, secularization refers to "the process by which sectors of society and culture are removed from the domination of religious institutions and symbols" (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). As this definition is applied to Indian political culture, secularism lacks the positive and powerful connotations that it has in the West because religion still plays a central role in the lives of the people of South Asia. Religion identifies their place in society and gives life meaning more than any other social or cultural factor. Muslims, who represent India's largest minority, cling to secularism to protect themselves from the majority. Nevertheless, they refuse to separate religion from politics claiming that they are not a "secular" people. Muslims as well as other religious groups associate secularism with atheism and materialism in Indian society.

While numerous examples of religious tolerance may be found throughout Indian history, historical roots of communal tension are also evident. All major

religions of South Asia - Buddhism Hinduism, Islam and Sikhism - require a total commitment on a follower's life. All four traditions take a clear distinction between the "religious" and the "secular." Their exclusive practices reveal both tolerant and intolerant attitudes. From the viewpoint of many Indians, secularism is a negative strategy in the sense that it puts the state at an equal distance from all religions of the people. Nehru viewed religious institutions as a hindrance to change and progress. As an agnostic, he opposed all forms of organized religion. In 1961 Nehru noted that he could not find a good word in Hindi for "secular" that did not also mean opposed to religion. His definition of the secular state was one which honored all faiths equally and gave them equal opportunities (Madan T. N., 1991, p. 406). However, if Nehru did not use the coercive powers of the state to hasten the process of secularization, neither did he use the ideology of secularism to enhance the power of the state in protecting all religious communities, or in arbitrating their conflicts. Had he set a precedent for the use of force by the state to protect the life and property of citizens, regardless of minority or majority religious status, the Indian government today might be better equipped to deal with communal violence. Secularism in the Indian context failed to end the divisive forces which resulted in the partition of the subcontinent in 1947. In 1936 Nehru argued that the communal problem was not based on religious differences but rather on its exploitation by politicians seeking their own ends. Moreover, secularists who deny the importance of religion in society provoke a reaction against secularism in India. Secularists who are insensitive to the role religion plays in Indian life also lack the effective means to confront fundamentalism and religious fanaticism. Ashis Nandy comments on the peculiar double-bind in Indian politics as "the ills of religion have found expression in Indian society but the strengths of it have not been available for checking corruption and violence in public life" (Nandy, 1988). On the other hand, militant secular ideology claims that all religions have the right to acquire more and more public space at the cost of other citizens. This sort of tolerance "cannot be extended indefinitely without the claims over public spaces of different religions coming into conflict as they have already done with tragic consequences" (Gopal, 1990, p. 215). This has become a recurring problem for the Indian government. The irony of the 1950 Indian constitution which set up the framework for a secular state was that it allowed and even encouraged communal divisions in society under the title, "freedom of religion." Citizens were

free to profess and practice their religions as well as "propagate" them. It also allowed educational institutions to be set up along communal lines. Not until 1976 in the 44th Amendment to the constitution was there a direct reference to secularism. The key to India's future as a democracy may depend more on its ability to apply force when needed to protect any group, be they members of a majority or minority (linguistic, ethnic or religious) than upon its commitment to its own version of secularism. Unlike the U.S. Constitution, distinctions between public and private are not clearly spelled out for Indian citizens. While its highly educated political elite defend secularism as a necessary principle in India's parliamentary democracy, they represent only a small minority of the population. And the same time these elite seem unwilling to vigorously enforce laws which have been set in place to protect both majority and minority rights. The power of the state has not been used to protect all religious communities and arbitrate their conflicts. During the 1960s and 1970s right wing political organizations succeeded in pushing the agenda of the dominant Congress Party to the Right, leaving minority groups fearful and uncertain about their future. These groups continued to gain support among voters during the 1980s and their presence created a serious political threat in the election of 1993 when the Bharatiya Janata Party (B.J.P.) tried to recapture five north Indian states which it had won in the previous election.

II

As mentioned earlier, present chapter is based on survey based research. Survey based research is defined as "the collection of information from a sample of individuals through their responses to questions" (Check & Schutt, 2012, p. 160). This type of an interesting study done by Pettigrew, Joyce J.M. (1995) under the title, *The Sikhs of the Punjab: Unheard Voices of State and Guerrilla Violence*. Pettigrew is a Scottish anthropologist who teaches at Queen's University in Belfast. *The Sikhs of the Punjab* "deals with the nature of Sikh resistance to the Indian state in the years 1984-92." The information was gathered during three field trips from 1990-93, often under difficult or dangerous circumstances. The book contains the findings from many interviews with Sikh militants and gives detailed information on particular militant groups and police tactics used during this period. Joyce Pettigrew's study is specifically based on interviews with the militants of Majha and Malwa areas belonging to the Khalistan

Commando Force (Zafarwal). She describes the movement as a political expression of a distinct and separate historical and cultural tradition. The movement originated in the form of socio-economic discontent and it was moulded by the incidents Operation Blue Star, Operation Woodrose and anti-Sikh riots, giving religious dimensions to the movement. The Sikh youth fed up with police atrocities, joined the movement in large numbers to defend the faith and the first time, Sikhs acted as a collective entity against the threat to the very survival of the faith. She says that the movement had ideological foundations, committed to secure a separate state for the protection of the faith. This was the prime reason that despite the use of its full might the state could not uproot the movement. This was the reason behind the state efforts to defame the movement, infiltrating anti-social elements for committing rapes, murders, extortions and looting. This tactic of the state earned bad name for the movement, which resulted in its sudden collapse (Pettigrew D. J., 1995).

Cynthia Keepley Mahmood (1997) is a Professor of Anthropology at the University of Maine, Orono (U.S.A). Her study is also based on interviews with Sikh militants reveals that Sikh militant movement in the 1980s was basically a movement to defend the faith which was facing threat from the state and resurging Hinduism. The surge in militancy in the post Operation Blue Star and anti-Sikh riots period, validated the view that Sikhs could go to any extent for the protection of their faith. As the state repression increased against the Sikh community, feeling of alienation and slavery got heightened among the community and its members took to arms for securing a homeland in which their aspirations could be fulfilled. To substantiate her point, she quotes the history of the Sikhs which is full of martyrdom to defend the faith (Mahmood, 1997).

Harish K. Puri, Paramjit Singh Judge and Jagroop Singh Sekhon (1999) have made an attempt to understand the phenomenon of terrorism in Punjab, through a field study, conducted in the districts of Amritsar and Gurdaspur. The study holds that the movement lacked ideological worldview. The study reveals that the militants were predominantly those who joined the movement for personal reasons of adventure, fun, money making and to set old scores with rivals. These fighters were not committed to the cause of the freedom of the Sikhs or a sovereign state and therefore did not enjoy respect among masses. The study ascribes the failure of the movement to various

factors such as drastic laws of the state, infiltration of the anti-social elements in the movement and strengthening of security forces. The study was conducted in 1994-95, when there was hardly any ideologically committed militant and the movement had got totally defamed in the wake of entry of criminals within the movement (Puri, Judge, & Sekhon, 2007).

Kuldeep Kaur's (1999) work is a comprehensive study on the Akali Dal in which she analyses the phenomenon of Akali splits and mergers over a long period of time so as to develop a holistic view of the nature of Akali politics. The author collected the information through the field study by interviewing many Akali leaders in their offices as well as in jails. Besides, she collected data from various sources such as party documents, government publications, biographical and personal accounts of the leaders etc. The author has explained the various factors of the dominance of rural Jat-Sikhs in Akali Dal since 1962 and the merger of the two factions after Batala Resolution in 1968. She gives reasons behind the factions in the various phases in Akali politics and argues that only that faction of Akali Dal dominates which has the control over Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee. The emergence of Sant Fateh Singh as a dominant leader of the SAD was because of his strong base in the peasantry against the leadership of Master Tara Singh, an urban Sikh. Further she argued that the clash of personalities viz. Sant Fateh Singh and Justice Gurnam Singh led to split in Akali Dal. Apart from this the differences of opinion between organizational ecclesiastical and ministerial wing led by various prominent leaders led to the split in Akali Dal on *Dharm Yudh Morcha* in the period of 1980-82. Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwala had also the basic policy differences with Akali Dal (Longowal) that created the dissatisfaction among the various factions of Akali Dal. She is of the view that the General Lok Sabha elections created the splits and mergers of the different Akali Dal. But ultimately in 1995, the Akali Dal (Badal) faction emerged as a dominant faction under the leadership of S. Parkash Singh Badal (Kaur K. , 1999).

'From Bhindranwale to Bin Laden: A search for understanding religious violence' written by Mark Juergensmeyer (2007) is again very interesting work based on field study. His search for understanding of these acts of religious violence perpetrated by activists around the world, from Bhindranwale to bin Laden, and he believed that these are religious responses to a political problem. Terrorists are

responses to the perception that the world has gone awry. He himself reached on this conclusion after interviewing so many terrorists involved in terrorism (Juergensmeyer, 2007).

However, before that, I have also done a project as a Story Scholar with the 1947 Partition Archive (U.S.A.) and have recorded 122 interviews of partition witnesses in the Punjab region for the Archive. In another project, I have conducted around 400 interviews of Drug-addicters under the age of 25 years in Punjab region with the team as an intern for Kailash Satyarthi Children's Foundation Delhi, under the title of the project "Drug Abuse and Vulnerability Among Children and Young Adults in Punjab." During both these projects, I learned that this method of research is the most effective because when one talks face to face, one can also read the emotions of the person in front. During the partition-based project, I came across various interesting facts which otherwise remain unspoken and can never be known from the written sources because the events they were talking about, was experienced by themselves.

Thus we can say that these studies show the importance of field work in historical research. By providing opportunities for researchers to meaningfully make use of alive evidence and the rich resources within the community to investigate the past, historical field work can help someone develop important connections with past events. Thus this method of data collection used in social research help us to gain accurate and scientific knowledge about the individuals and their society as far as possible.

III

Punjab has gone through a long period of terrorism and bloodshed when religion and politics interfered with each other excessively. Local people have been interviewed to understand this phenomenon.

We conducted interviews with a sample of 105 in the Ferozepur district of Punjab. Ferozepur is important because it laid on the borders of the area- the Khar Majha area- that was deeply suffering from militancy in the 1980s and had another area- that of Abohar- that has been suffered because of the pulls and pressures of linguistic communalism in the 1950s and 1960s. A sample of 105 people was selected (based on their knowledge on the present topic as Satish Saberwal has used the strategy for collecting the data in his study of Phagwara town called 'Mobile Men', where he

called it ‘networked sampling’ (Saberwal, 1976, pp. 117-132) for the present fieldwork. Respondents from each and every class on the basis of religion, caste and according to their position of work were chosen to make the research work more reliable. For example, if the respondent from a village/city belonged to the Sikh religion and if he was a farmer and if he belonged to the *Jat* caste then it was ensured that the other respondent in the same village belonged to another religion, in addition to doing other occupation such as being a laborer, shopkeeper or ex-serviceman and coming from Hindu religion or depressed classes to ensure all kinds of social representation in the survey.

The sample of 105 respondents was divided into three parts equally by the number of 35 from all the three zones of the Ferozepur district. The zones of the Ferozepur district are called the Ferozepur city zone, the Guruharsahai zone, and the Zira zone, and seven villages or cities were selected from each zone basis on the affected by militancy in the last two decades of the 20th century. The 5 respondents were further selected randomly from each village or city. The sample was selected based on 50% of men and 50% of women respondents above the age of 50 years because the respondents above the age of 50 years were eye-witnesses of the Punjab crisis.

Table 5 Showing selected areas of field-work for present research work

Locality	Ferozepur		
	Ferozepur city Zone	Zira Zone	Guruharsahai Zone
Rural	Mehma	Kachar Bhan	Tara Singh Wala
	Khalchiyan	Santu Wala	Dodh
	Sedarbela	WaadaPohwind	Jang
	Sur Singh Wala	Sodhi Wala	JhokMohde
	Ilmewala	Markhai	PirKe
	KhaiPHEME Ki	Shajjaan Wala	Bhroli Bhan
Urban	Mamdot	Zira	Gurharsahai

Before starting the analysis of collected data it is important to know the brief history of area chosen for the field work. Ferozepur is an ancient city situated close to the present-day Indo-Pakistan border. It is believed to have been founded by Ferozeshah

Tughluq in the 14th century. Another version claims that it was founded by a Bhatti chief called Feroze Khan. However, the first version is more widely accepted as Ferozeshah Tughluq had a passion for building new cities and renaming old ones, especially after his name.

Ferozepur's strategic position in the northwest of the country has resulted in its being part of many military expeditions in the area. During the first Anglo-Sikh war in 1845, due to the negligence of the British commander at Ferozepur that the Khalsa was able to cross the Sutlej unopposed. When Lord Hardinge declared war on the Sikhs, the first battle was fought at Mudki, 20 miles south-east of Ferozepur. In 1838, Ferozepur was the center from where British troops advanced to Kabul during the rest Anglo-Afghan war.

Three heroic martyrs of India's freedom struggle Shaheed Bhagat Singh and his associates Shaheed Rajguru and Shaheed Sukhdev have their final resting place on the banks of the river Sutlej in Ferozepur. On March 23, 1931, despite popular protest, these three heroes were executed in Lahore and were stealthily cremated in the dead of night near Ferozepur.

Today, a Shaheed Bhagat Singh Memorial marks the spot and every year on March 23, thousands of people gather to pay homage to these noble heroes. Ferozepur has another historical memorial, the Saragarhi Gurudwara, commemorating the sacrifice of 21 Sikh soldiers who perished at Saragarhi in Baluchistan. On 12 September, every year, people gather here to pay tribute to the heroic soldiers and celebrate Saragarhi Day. The memorial service also provides an occasion for ex-servicemen to have a reunion.

The total geographical area of the district is 5303 sq. km out of which 3258.78 sq. km fall under Bet area and 196.63 sq. km fall under Border area. The topography of the district is even. It is a plane of alluvial formation sloping gently @ 2ft. per mile from the North East to the South West. The district is divided into three main belts running somewhat parallel to the course of river Sutlej. On South West side, the bet area called "Hittar" having land alluvial dark and gray clay intermixed with straits of sand. On the South East side, the Rohi and Mukhi Plains have light and sandy soil and brackish water in wells. The district has two types of soil namely chestnut brown (Alluvial)-69% and desert soil (31%).

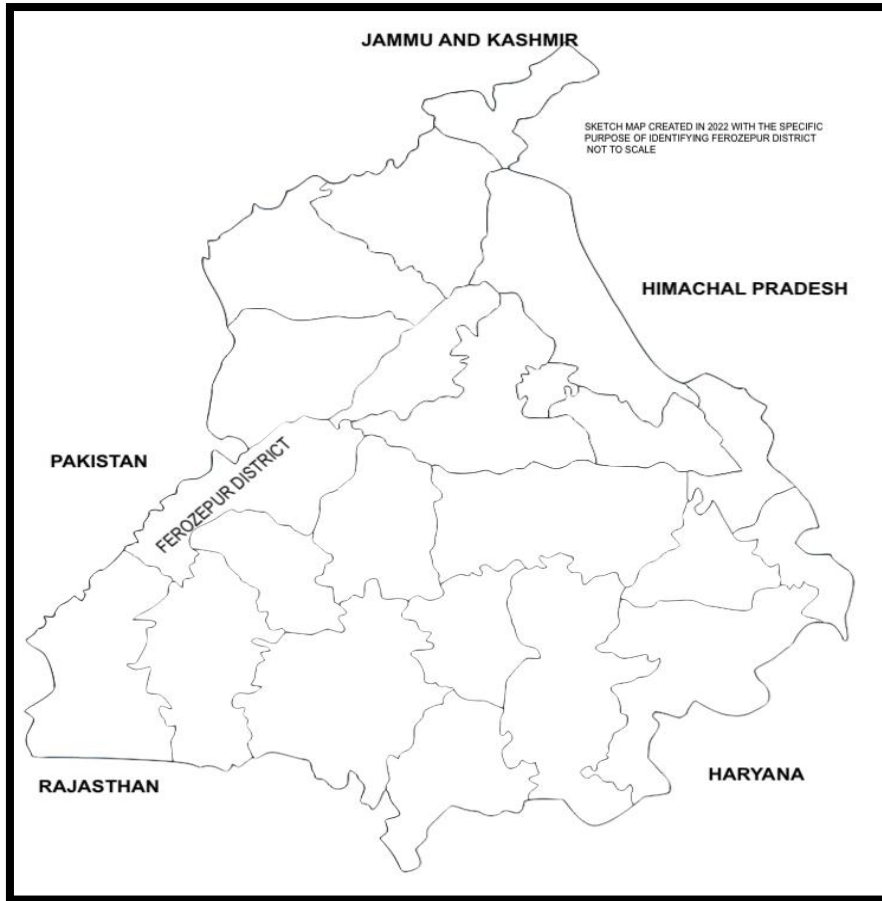


Figure 1 Geographical location of Ferozpur District

IV

Data analysis and Interpretation

The process of data collection spanned over one year. Extra caution has been used to avoid any sort of bias during the collection of the data, because the interviewer did not impose any of her own opinion, aspect or ideology during the interview on them and no attempt has been made to explain anything to them unnecessarily, but attempts were made to understand only their own personal opinion on the above subject. No person belonged to particular religion or ideology was interviewed. Special care has been taken during the interview that respondents should belong to every section of the society so that what they or their community have felt can be understood in the same context. Utmost care was taken to make certain there is no margin of error while collecting the data and any omission would be minimum and only coincidental. The questions were asked as worded for all respondents in order to avoid misinterpretation

of the question. Clarification of the questions was also being avoided for the same reason. However, the questions were repeated in case of misunderstanding. The questions were asked in the same order as mentioned in the questionnaire, as a particular question might not make sense if the questions before them are skipped. The interviewer was very careful to be neutral before starting the interview so as not to lead the respondent, hence minimizing bias. For this, maximum freedom and comfort was provided to the respondents to share their views on the topic. Where they were not comfortable to give their answers tried not to pressurize them.

There was a total of seventeen questions asked which were open-ended typed and respondents were free to agree or disagree with each question in the form of 'yes' or 'no' after that they have asked to give explanation why and how they were not agree or disagree on particular questions.

Thus, available data on the topic shows that the local people are well aware about the present problem in Punjab. 100% of respondents believed that the Punjab crisis or militancy happened due to the indulgence of religion in politics. 92.38% of respondents agreed that the voters are being fooled in the name of religion during elections. 91.42 % of respondents believed that most of time politicians used religious symbols at the time of elections. 72.38% of respondents observed that all political parties used religion as a tool to gain support from the voters. Whereas 100% of respondents stated that religion and politics always go side by side during elections. 68.57% agreed that religious deras have an impact on politics and 69.52% believed that the religious Gurus played an important role during the elections. 46.66% of people believed that they gave their votes in the name of religion. 100% of respondents agreed that religion was a necessary tool in society because moral values were equally important in politics and 78.57% of people believed that the separation of religion from politics was possible through appropriate actions. Detailed analysis of the available data during field work is given in the next part.

V

Public Opinion

Public opinion can be defined as “the complex collection of opinions of many different people and the sum of all their views.” Public opinion-based research is a way to measure the opinion of a large population by studying a random sample of that

population utilizing surveys, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions²⁷ (Davison, W. Phillips (2021, December 14). As already mentioned, for the present research work structured questionnaire is used to trace the public opinion through the interview method on religious interference in the politics of Punjab in the second half of the 20th century. Headings of each paragraph are given on the basis of the sequence of the questions in the questionnaire.

Is religion an important tool for society?

Religious instruction and belief remain today the lifeblood of society's moral ethos. Not only does religion teach virtue, it catalyzes moral action. As such, religion plays an essential societal role warranting special consideration. This role was rightly described by a Chinese economist studying democracy in America. "In your past," the economist explained, "most Americans attended a church or synagogue every week. When you were there, from your youngest years, you were taught that you should voluntarily obey the law; that you should respect other people's property, and not steal it. You were taught never to lie, and to respect the life and freedom of others the same as your own. Americans followed these rules because they had come to believe that even if the police didn't catch them when they broke a law, God would catch them. Democracy works because most people most of the time voluntarily obey your laws" (Christensen, 2009).

In present field work, according to all the interviewees, religion helps in creating an ethical framework and also a regulator for values in day-to-day life. This particular approach helps in the character building of a person. In other words, Religion acts as an agency of socialization. Thus, religion helps in building values like love, empathy, respect, and harmony.

Religion plays a crucial role for a person in giving a cultural identity. Each religion has festivals, traditions, mythologies that form a part of the tangible and intangible heritage of the country. Thus, religion contributes in order to protecting this heritage and also adds to the diversity in the country. People are always on the quest to fulfilling the economic and material pursuits in today's world. It is a religion that plays a crucial role in establishing our connection to the divine and developing the

²⁷ Davison, W. Phillips (2021, December 14), Public Opinion. Encyclopedia Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/public-opinion>

belief that there is supreme energy that acts as a regulator in our day to day lives. Thus, the components of prayer, chants, hymns, etc. create the spiritual bond.

The local public believed that each and every religion promotes its philosophy and the crux of it has always been the welfare and wellness of the people. For example, in the Sanatana Dharma, there are ideas like *Vasudaiva Kutumba kam* (the whole world is a family), *Sarve Sukhina Bhavantu* (let everyone be happy) which nurture and cultivate love and compassion in the society.

Is religion important for politics?

During the present field research work, I also tried to find, whether religion is a key determinant behind the voting behaviour of people in Punjab. As already mentioned that religion has deep imprints on human life each act and attitude of an individual is shaped by the influence of religion. In the same way, religion has a strong effect on the political attitudes of individuals. In the present field survey, we find that religious affect can be seen in two different ways on this question. Firstly, religion affects the value system. Religious teachings prioritize social values by accepting a few and rejecting a few of them. This value system then influences the political attitudes of individuals that formulate their voting behaviour. Then, religion directly influences the political behaviour of an individual. A particular group of people in the society who belong to a certain religious sect vote for their like-minded political party.

All the respondents strongly believed that ethical values like always speaking the truth, doing a good deed for the people, living in unity, feeling of brotherhood, helping the poor and needy are the values we get only through religion which are very important for politics. Local people believed 'religion instils in people from childhood the feeling that God will punish us if we do something wrong, so many people who are afraid of that punishment always feel a sense of guilt when they do something wrong. So, in this context, religious values are just as important in the political arena as in any other field.

Vote politics in Punjab

During current field work, we find that before independence our economic, social and political system was based on feudal values, and even after independence, not much change came into it. Even today some rich and elite people have control over politics

and political institutions. The sense of personality cult seems to be quite strong among the people of Punjab and they have more faith in the leader than in the ideology of the party. Local people believed that during elections, votes are asked in the name of the leader and people are asked to strengthen the hands of the leader of the party. In India, even the names of many political parties are on the name of the leader of the party as one respondent replied on the same question.

In the present field survey, we also find that voting behaviour determines the trends in electoral politics. Numerous social and political determinants formulate voting behaviour. During the survey, we find that voting behaviour is shaped and reshaped at two levels. Level first focuses on the socio-cultural setups which effects on the voting behaviour such as religion, caste, ethnicity, feudal structure, and power. The second level focuses on other techniques such as deception, spreading rumours, believing conspiracy theories and wired projection of candidate at print and electronic media.

In the present study, we observe that there is a huge difference in terms of voter's choice between rural and urban areas of Punjab. In rural areas sometimes, inner factors affect the decision-making. That includes race, *biradari*, religion, traditional groups and family loyalties etc. While in urban areas rational and educational factors play an important role, such as party manifestos, party loyalty and socio-political issues.

One respondent, who belonging to depressed classes observes that social systems influence the political system a lot and *biradari* is one key factor. In rural areas even, political parties nominate a candidate based on his race and clan. People are inclined to vote for a candidate who belongs to their tribe, race or cast and the party does not matter. He further explained that *biradari* works as an attachment and as well as a social status carrier at the same time. Especially in rural areas of the Punjab, *biradari* is decisive in electoral decision making. It influences the whole process of the elections from the nomination of a candidate to the formation of panels and also election campaigns.

One more respondent who was farmer and came from Rai Sikh community (village Tara Singh Wala) further add that *Biradari* appears as a force to meet physical, psychological, and social needs, as he said "Sometimes when we need

something, we need any help, the peoples from our *biradari* helps us first. This survey figures out that many people vote on *biradari* basis both in rural and urban setups. But few respondents have different views on it because they believed that *Biradari* is some time used as exploitation factor to weaken the political parties, because a person from a particular community/*biradari* may not be useful to everyone else or he may really do for the betterment of his *biradari* but that work may against the agenda of the party.

As we have observed during this study, respondents were believed that kinship relations are another form of *biradari* dominance. An agriculturist respondent who came from *Jat* caste (Village Dodh) add that in rural areas of Punjab, people also many times giving their votes based on kinship relations. Consequently, the whole village vote, in form of a block in favour of a leader or a party. One more respondent came from Scheduled castes and working as a labourer in the fields of *Jat* community from the same village said that people are mobilized by the village elite. People follow their village elites because they have regular contacts and access to them, and they can seek their benefit easily through them.

Almost all respondents observed that the second most favourite topic of study relating to voting politics is the role of media. A respondent (from Zira), retired Principal from a school mentions that ‘Media is playing an important part in making the minds of the people towards a particular candidate or party. Media is considered an important source of influencing human behaviour. In terms of rural-urban division, we also find that media impacts more on urban voters rather than rural people however, this trend is changing rapidly. The impact of newspaper media is very significant in political motivation. The majority of people read newspapers for only political information. The percentage varies in terms of male and female, age groups, rural and urban, income wise and even educational level wise. Another respondent, who was a journalist (from Guruharsahai) mentions about the role of social media. He said ‘Social media is the latest form of media. The role of Facebook and You Tube is very prominent in this regard. These social media platforms are used as a tool for direct interaction with voters’ especially young voters.’

Other than this, various respondents have discussed several other variables of voting politics just as one says that people vote for candidates, not for the party. They

believed race and ethnicity have a great influence on voting choice. And further adds that *biradari*, family's choice, party agenda, and the role of media are some key determinants of voting politics in Punjab. Thus, the personality of a candidate, *biradari*, ethnicity and party affiliations play a major role in voting decisions.

Hence, we find that on this question, party identification or identical faces have been a key determinant of voting politics since 1980 particularly in rural areas. Political parties of the candidate, party integrity, party leadership, and party manifesto are very important factors in this regard.

Impact of religious 'deras' on the politics of Punjab

The present field survey finds that religious gurus are men of all political seasons; they are an integral component of Punjab's electoral politics. They play a vital part, especially in the rural politics of Punjab because religious practices are deeply rooted in Punjabi society. During the field survey, the present study finds that one aspect of religious influence in the political process is the dominance of religious places, especially in Punjab. These religious places (Deras) have a huge following in rural areas, not only because of their religious importance but mainly because of the lack of education, ignorance and even feudalism. These deras have also exploited these simple rural people. They collect money from their followers and then spend it back on them to achieve their political goals.

Thus, Religion is one of the most fundamental characteristics of Punjabi society. It is also a key factor behind voting. Religious parties manipulate religion for secure electoral success as we find during field survey.

Religion affects human behaviour both at the individual and community level. However, religious beliefs have lesser impacts on the political attitudes of people in a society having diversity in terms of language, culture and ethnicity. Rather it is an ethnicity that tends to influence voting behaviour more than religion. However, the situation can be otherwise in a uni-ethnic society.

Respondents observe that the People show huge respect towards gurdwaras, temples, mosques, and shrines. Gurus or *gaddi nasheens*; who are custodians of deras of the religious and spiritual persons, are a significant figure of the society. There is a vast number of *deras* scattered all over the state, having thousands of followers. They

have a massive influence in their area. People give them respect, honour, love, and devotion. These gurus hold the spiritual, religious and even land power which makes them a strong reality of their area.

One 60 years old female respondent who was doing house hold works and for the last 30 years, she had been serving in a one of the famous religious dera of Punjab believed that the dera Gurus have contributed a lot in spreading the teachings of various religions in the state. It is sometimes because of their inspirational life and character that the people of Punjab converted towards various respective religions. They have beard difficulties and sufferings during their cause. That is why few saints enjoy respect, love and devoutness. However, with time many custodians of deras have indulged in worldly gains and manipulated their power and position. They have used religion for the sake of their lust for power and to safeguard their interests.

One 70 years old male respondent, who was retired as a Home Guard, interestingly observes that their (*deradars* or religious figures) role in politics is almost a thousand years old, history has many examples of their intervention in politics. Because of dera gurus influence over a large number of people they become a dominant player in electoral politics as their devotees look for their guidance during elections. They play an important position in the electoral politics by supporting a candidate of their own choice. Their support or opposition to electoral candidates plays a critical role in their success.

Further one more male respondent belonging to *Kshatriya* community and had doing the business of pesticides, amusingly states that due to religious dominance in a respective area few major political parties wilfully offer the party tickets to a few religiously influential persons (like Baba Ramdev, Yogi Adityanath etc.). However, because of their huge followership even they have been able to win the elections without the support of a major political party. This places them in a better position to bargain maximum benefits for them.

Religious symbols as a political propaganda

India is a secular country with religion occupying center stage. Accordingly, religion and religious propaganda are used in every election although an appeal for votes in the name of religion or religious symbols is a corrupt electoral practice. What to say of religion, ultra-nationalists may be shocked to know that appeal to even national

symbols such as the National Flag or the national emblem in electoral battles is also prohibited by the Representation of People's Act of 1951(RP Act).

One respondent, who was doing business, believed that India's failure in erecting a much-needed wall of separation between religion and the state was the first blunder of our Republic. BJP should forever remain indebted to Jawaharlal Nehru. Even in the 2014 elections, the *Har Har Modi* slogan was all over even though the development was the main plank of the party. After the results, the Vishva Hindu Parishad President Ashok Singhal declared that a proud Hindu is in power in New Delhi after 800 years.

On the question do politicians use their religious symbols during the time of elections? The majority of respondents replied that all politicians use religious symbols to get votes or during the counting of votes. According to an interviewee, (Navjot Singh Sidhu), a politician, changes his appearance with the voters. One male respondent, 56 years aged and serving in the Gurdwara as a head *granthi* from the last 32 years told that sometimes free pilgrimages are also viewed. Many leaders had sworn before *Gutka Sahib* (holy books of Sikhism) that they had garnered votes by forgiving people's debts. Politicians go to Gurdwaras and clean their shoes; if they have done anything wrong then may God forgive them so that they can get votes from the people.

Another 66 years old respondent who was retired as a teacher observes that the thousands of communal clashes have taken place as a result of which thousands of people have died and property worth crores has been destroyed. He further gives the example of it as “In Aligarh Muslim University in 1961, in Srinagar in 1963, in Maharashtra in 1966, in Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal and Assam in 1968, in Allahabad in 1969, in Bhiwandi in 1970 and in Delhi, Allahabad etc in 1979, so many communal incidents had taken place. Different political parties want to keep alive such issues so that they can able to exploit innocent people to promote their political interests.

One more 58 years aged female respondent working as a doctor replied “These days religious slogans are being raised in the parliament and instead of their loyalty towards the country, they express their loyalty towards their religion. The religious symbols are being used as political tools and secular India is watching all this as a silent spectator.”

Present field survey finds that sacrilege incidents in Punjab at the time of elections are a part of that kind of politics. One 52 years aged woman working as a teacher by profession remembered the attacks on Guru Granth Sahib always near elections as on-

- ❖ **October 12, 2015:** torn pages of Granth Sahib found near Gurdwara in Bargari (Kotkpura, Punjab).
- ❖ **October 20, 2015:** torn pages of Granth Sahib were found near Gurdwara in Gurisar village of Bathinda (Punjab).
- ❖ **November 4, 2015:** torn pages of Guru Granth Sahib were found scattered at Mallke village in Moga, Punjab.
- ❖ **July 3, 2016:** another such case was reported from Bhagta Bhai Ka in Bathinda (Punjab), all the above incidents were happened near the Punjab Legislative Assembly Elections of February 2017.
- ❖ **September 12, 2018:** torn pages of the Guru Granth Sahib found in Ram Nagar village in Bathinda (Punjab) near the Punjab Panchayat Elections in December 2018.
- ❖ **December 18, 2021:** attempted sacrilege incidents at Golden Temple in Amritsar (Punjab), near the elections of Punjab Legislative Assembly in March 2022.

Voting in the name of religion

Respondents from rural areas strongly believed that they have given their votes many times for the '*panth*' (to Akali Dal). One 61 years old respondent, who was a party worker (of Congress) by profession, interestingly observes that in the state till it was undone by the three farm laws in September 2020. Akali patriarch Parkash Singh Badal had famously called it a "*naumaas da rishta* (the two communities are like nail and flesh)." Although the two parties entered into a pre-poll alliance in 1996, when Akali Dal, a panthic party, adopted the *Punjabiyyat* agenda, the Akalis had started aligning with Jan Sangh, the precursor to BJP, way back in 1967.

Few respondents believed that it is not always possible that voters are giving their votes on the name of religion as one 55 years old male respondent, businessman by profession, replied 'in 2014; late BJP stalwart Arun Jaitley couldn't win from

Amritsar as the two communities did not vote along the lines of religion. While his Congress opponent Capt. Amarinder Singh garnered more votes in the Hindu majority segments, Jaitley polled more from Jat Sikh voters in the rural segments. In 2019 too, BJP Union Minister Hardeep Puri lost to Gurjeet Singh Aujla, a local, as he was considered an outsider.'

Punjab crisis (Terrorism) due to indulgence of religion in politics

K.P.S. Gill former DGP of Punjab says that the peculiar susceptibility of the people of this region to the creed of the Kalashnikov had raised important questions. History, culture, economics and a unique constellation of political forces would all be a part of any answer to these questions (Gill K. , 1997). He says that no single political party or segment of the Punjab leadership, or individual leader, can be singled out for blame in this regard - the failure of leadership in the state has been comprehensive (Gill K. , 1997).

Sharda Jain holds the view that terrorism is a product of bad politics and not necessarily a result of socio-economic injustice. It is, accordingly, a political problem and needs a political solution. She traces an interconnection among terrorists within and across national boundaries. She calls it "the menace of non-state insurgent terrorism, in the context of a pluralist society like India" (Jain S. , 1995). For her secession based on the right of self-determination of a linguistic or religious group is illegitimate and unconstitutional. She expounds the thesis that, even if we accept the premise that Sikhs are a nation, "it is not essential for them to have a separate sovereign state". This observation is rather unexceptional in that it has been boldly argued that there can be full freedom and liberty without sovereignty. It is not necessary that "the nation and the state should coincide". Autonomy should satisfy aspiring nationalities, according to her well-argued case (Jain S. , 1995).

Therefore, the highly researched and documented work of Sharda Jain, with a lot of primary source support, has tested several hypotheses and exploded familiar myths. One, terrorism cannot be dismissed as a mindless activity for fun. It was a planned and premeditated act engineered by politically motivated groups or leaders. It can be rightly said that terrorism is more often counter-productive and fails invariably

in its mission. Three, no another factor is more powerful than the political and in this too the internal forces play the most dominant role.

Whoever said Punjab is a state of mind was perhaps onto something. A state where politics often gets entangled with religion has never seen communal riots after partition, even during the dark decade of militancy. Sociologists attribute it to the homogeneity provided by its culture (Sharma M. G., 2021).

Reductive though it may sound, this is also a reason why it has resisted the nationalistic Hindutva agenda, and the Bhindranwale brand of Sikhism too could not last here for very long. “Hindus in Punjab are like half Sikhs,” says Dr. Pramod Kumar, a chronicler of politics and culture in the state (Sharma M. G., 2021).

For RSS, Sikhs are the sword arm of Hindus, a term that stems from the sacrifices made by Sikh gurus to protect the Hindus from the Mughals – Ninth Sikh Guru Tegh Bahadur, who stood up for Kashmiri *pandits*, was beheaded for defying Mughal rulers. Guru Gobind Singh’s two younger sons were bricked alive for refusing to convert. The community has continued with its martial tradition, joining the armed forces in large numbers.

Although Sikhs and their clergy are fiercely protective of their identity as a separate religion — an Akal Takht *jathedar* once called for banning the RSS for trying to co-opt Sikhs into the Hindu fold — in daily life there is fluidity between the two religions, and inter-faith marriages are common.

Cultural homogeneity notwithstanding, Punjab has seen its share of fissures. After Partition, Akali leader Master Tara Singh, who was born into a Malhotra *Khatris* family, spearheaded the movement for Punjabi Suba on linguistic lines (Rajivlochan M. , 2017). But the move was viewed with suspicion by many Hindus who thought it was a euphemism for a Sikh state, and recorded Hindi as their mother tongue in the census even though they spoke in Punjabi. Later, RSS Chief MS Golwalkar, on a visit to Jalandhar in 1966, underlined that Punjabi has no religion. “Punjabi is the language of every Punjabi,” he said (Sharma M. G., 2021). Very interesting book written by Prof. M. Rajivlochan on Partap Singh Kairon brings forth the fact that even Nehru was clear that Tara Singh wanted a communal state and

therefore Tara Singh was jailed and made irrelevant in Punjab politics by Kairon (Rajivlochan M. , 2020).

On the question, is Punjab crisis (Terrorism) was happened due to indulgence of religion in politics, a 65 years old female Sikh respondent who was retired teacher replied as ‘The year 1984 that saw Operation Bluestar followed by the assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and anti-Sikh riots in the country did not lead to any communal disturbances in Punjab through the distrust between the two communities was at its crescendo, and terrorists targeted Hindus several times. The militancy was finally defeated not just due to strong police action and political will but also because it lost grassroots support. The villagers ran out of sympathy for the “boys (munde).”

Another 75 years old Sikh respondent, who was agriculturist, on the same question replied as ‘yes, no doubt, terrorism period was the result of indulgence of religion in politics, even foreign powers also gave it a boost for a long time and today, the embers of the movement continue to be stoked in lands abroad by a handful of NRIs but it has little resonance in the state. Targeted killings of right wing Hindu leaders in the state in 2017 were quickly stamped out by the then Capt. Amarinder government.’

The emergence of militancy in the name of religion-based politics (1978-1995)

All the respondents’ were strongly agreed with the fact that the militant phase was the result of religion based politics.

One 66 years older Sikh respondent, shopkeeper by work mentions that during the times of Bhindranwale or during the Punjab crisis, the main source of inspiration for the militants was religion. It was widely used to recruit young men to do some kind of service to the Panth. Due to this, Bhindranwale was able to get support from the common Sikhs. The invocation of themes related to Sikh identity and commitment to Sikh philosophy helped him to gain the support of the Akali leadership. There was a time when he appeared to be the only saviour of Sikh honour and Sikh religion because according to Bhindranwale, the Sikhs were identified as a part of Hindu community through Article 25 in Indian Constitution and he made it clear that the Sikhs were a separate community.

The 63 years aged Hindu male respondent, who was the merchant, told that ‘In the post Operation Blue Star phase, the militants extensively used Sikh traditions and institutions to gain legitimacy in the eyes of the common masses. However, practically their violent acts were not following Sikh traditions and Sikh philosophy. This turned out to be a crucial factor in the loss of support from the common Sikhs. The 59 years old educated female respondent who was house wife believed that ‘The Akali leadership and the Sikh clergy which was to become the shield of the militants also condemned blind violence perpetrated by the militants. The infiltration of the anti-social elements further contributed to alienating the people as these elements committed certain immoral acts which were at odds with Sikh philosophy. All this earned a bad name for the militant movement which resulted in its sudden fall. The majority of the Sikhs started questioning the efficacy of the movement and dragged feet from giving support to the Sikh militants.’

One 70 years old respondent, labourer by profession and came from depressed classes believed that, in politics, Shiromani Akali Dal was more responsible for spreading terror in Punjab than the Congress party and Indira Gandhi. First, they promoted militancy in the state and later tried to control it, because Akali made a tie-up with Rashtriya Swyam Sewak Sangh (RSS) and tried to snub Sikhism through government agencies. He further said with a heavy heart “A community who sacrificed their lives for the nation, will not kill their people. Militancy did not damage the relationship, but actually, the wrong discussions were more responsible. Bhindranwale always told Hindus and Sikhs to remain firm in their religion. The behaviour affected due to communalism spread by agencies in the public mind.” He believes that there was a huge role of government agencies behind the Punjab turmoil.

A different respondent, Hindu shopkeeper replied on the same question as- “what I personally feel, the environment of Punjab was very peaceful and all communities were living together before the 1980s. Later, Shiv Sena and Indira Gandhi started politicizing every personal issue and demand made by Sikhs. She had a nature where she first was promoted the problem and later acted to control, but rang the wrong bell in Punjab issue.”

One more 55 years old Sikh respondent have cloth shop replied, “There were few leaders who have not wanted a solution of the problem and Punjab faced a huge loss in the context of love, life, respect and brotherhood. Today, the youth of Punjab is taking drugs due to unemployed. Sources of the state are shrinking, but the governments are not visionary anymore, I feel”.

A further 59 years aged female respondent from a Hindu background remembers the harmony in Punjab between both communities as “The environment of Punjab was cordial and very peaceful. People in cities and villages were in a good relationship. There was never any issue of Hindu and Sikh in the state. It all started with the Sikh-Nirankari clash in April 1978 which poisoned the environment because Pakistan in the meanwhile started supporting Sikh youth to wage war against the government and country in the 1980s and to break Hindu-Sikh unity but failed. The murder plot of Nirankari Saint had become a ready ground, which suited our enemy well and they used it to disturb us. They gave ammunition to our people to fight against the nation, and terrorism prevailed long in the state.”

One more male respondent who was police officer on the time of terrorism and, came from Hindu family observes that the role of political parties was to remain suspected during the period because few were supporting Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale. When he became a cult personality, the few other parties came in support of him to earn votes and save lives as well. The terror was so grave in the state that rich people like doctors were giving monthlies to terrorists to remain safe. We were hiding our original identity and do not disclose about family because many families of police personnel were eliminated by terrorists but the government was mum over that which encouraged them further. They were just doing politics and the Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI) of Pakistan converted it into religious colour. It trained terrorists in their land and supplied illegal ammunition in large quantities. Punjab remained an acute sufferer of terror and lost precious lives and economy which is still unrecoverable”. He further mentions that “the government acted in the last when militancy gripped the state. Our neighbouring country was supplying ammunition to the terrorists. I support the action of the government in the last phase by Beant Singh

and our former DGP, KPS Gill. The political trouble shifted to religious due to divide and rule policy of our leaders.”

The story described by one other 55 years old respondent, journalist by profession is an eye-opener where political leaders used this movement as a tool to fetch votes instead of crushing it. He explained with anger ‘it is all due to their (politicians) greed for power and chair. It is the apathy of the political system that the public was left free to kill in the hands of militants and anti-social elements. Although, the role of the press raises many questions that how their divided role was damaging the police system but this is also the truth that the fear gripped everyone and nobody was daring to write openly against the terrorists. In all matters, the silence of our political leaders was found as a serious concern. However, it is also true that militants were also human where they sometimes save the families of the police but the duo’s were on the target of each other which put pressure on both sides and their families were the worst sufferer of it.’

An ordinary Sikh female respondent remembers that “Punjab was a prosperous state before the 1980s and people of all religions were living together as they were leaving together for centuries. After 1980, the political enmity spoiled religion and prosperity in the state. The social relations at the personal level remained unaffected, but in general, it was shaped badly. The Hindu attached more with Hindu and Sikh remains in touch with Sikh only during discussions.” Even media was also divided into religious lines as she remembered ‘I frequently read Punjabi Tribune and Jagbani newspapers because it was not promoting enmity between the public as few other Punjabi newspapers were doing. They were promoting non-state actors in the state.’

On the same question, another 60 years old respondent, working in the fields, replied that the “Akali Dal tried to promote the problem while Congress party tried to control it. At certain levels, Congress too made mistakes, but Akalis were more in the mood to use terror in their favour. The government acted when militants established a mechanism against the state. It is my personal observation that governments had chances to do well, but they deliberately missed it. The leaders were busy in statements and militants were busy in the bloodshed of innocents. The state faced huge losses due to militancy movement and still, it is facing the impact of it.”

The reason for the trouble according to one different respondent, who was retired from Army, was Akali Morcha, which they launched against Emergency in 1975. Giani Zail Singh first time played religious cards and supported Sikh faces, but it went against him. Congress produced selected tough Sikh faces which were later used by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) together.

Further 64 years old Hindu respondent, journalist by profession remembers that during the years 1980-1984, the relationship between Hindus and Sikhs remain constant, but in selective areas, the terror and fear mounted high. He further said, “I remember that in the cremation of a Hindu brother at district Muktsar, only two persons were present in the cremation ground. Both state and Centre Government did nothing to save Punjab except promises and statements. If someone tried to do it, he was killed. The parties were treated Punjab as a laboratory for experiments. For writing critically, I too faced the threat of militants as one of my friends was killed by militants at his home. It was a political issue that later converted into religion and it sets back the state.”

One 75 years old Sikh agriculturist respondent blamed the Congress for its religion-based politics as “Punjab from the time of independence facing ignorance of Central leadership of Congress party. Former Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru promised Sikhs for preference in the political system, but that did not fulfil it. Punjabi, especially Sikhs sacrificed most of their lives for the country, but it did not appeal to them. To get rights, Sikhs chose the agitation path. Print media of that time was also following central leadership, so the genuine demands of the Sikhs to ignore by the press. The Anandpur Sahib Resolution of 1973 was meant for more autonomy in democracy and it was for all states but it took it in the wrong way. The 1978 incident at Amritsar was also a political mistake because the Centre was well aware of the enmity between Sikh organizations and Nirankaris and a major incident occurred which later hold the whole state.”

One ordinary Hindu female respondent on this question remembered that the environment before 1980 was peaceful, but after that political ignorance carried the state into a dark era. The Operation Bluestar was a result of that failure committed on

behalf of the state and Central Government. The relationship of Hindus and Sikhs was never disturbed except few cases. The people wanted to live together in peace, but the local and national press acted as the mouthpiece of the Akali Dal and Congress-led state and Centre Government.

60 years old former *Sarpanch*, during the interview again criticise the government as “the state government’s role was also not satisfying. It was just watching over the happenings. If we discuss the role of government, neither state nor Centre did anything constructive to save Punjab, instead of that, the poor working of our leaders of both the parties well used by the neighbour country. The Centre Government conducted Operation Bluestar, which was a big blunder and it created rifts in the mind of Sikhs. The pure political issue due to the negligence of political leaders converted into a religious matter. It set back the progress of the state and inhaled many innocent lives.”

Thus, the narratives of the local people explored many hidden facts. The relationship of Sikhs from the time of independence did not remain cordial with the Congress Party. Later, the demands put up before the government did not accept and it turned demand for autonomy of Sikhs due to various factors. The enmity between the Sikhs and the government encircled other communities too. The involvement of political parties and government spoiled the peace while foreign agencies earned the benefit of internal enmity.

Another Sikh female interviewee, who was migrated from Haryana 20 years back observes that “the social order of Punjab started to disturb after the year 1980 when Karnal Court cancels the case against Nirankaris registered due to 1978 Amritsar clash. The outcome of this verdict came into the murder of Nirankari Sant, but Hindus have not been involved in it in any manner. After the murder of Hind Samachar Group’s owner Lala Jagat Narain, the conflict shifted between Hindus and Sikhs. The radicals tried to put this issue in the minds of the Sikhs that Punjab is only for Sikhs and Hindus are not more suitable now being an enemy. Hindus started to migrate to cities from the villages and cities, they migrated to other states. It started after the incident in the year 1983 when Hindu passengers in a Bus, were killed on road by militants in Muktsar.” She further remembers that the Hindus and Sikhs are

brothers from centuries, but radicals pour drops of dispute in the relationship, so, there was the politics played by the politician for their selfish gains.

One further respondent, retired as a primary teacher again presents a different perspective related to the role of newspapers as ‘following different ideologies, the newspapers were more worried about money and *Rojana Ajit* and *Punjab Kesri* were on the similar line. Their money need to sharpen the teeth of militancy in the state due to the direct and indirect support in the name of religion. They were not worried to provide a solution to the problem. People till today are not able to single reply that why all that happened? Still, people use pictures of Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale behind cars and buses. If you ask them a question, they cannot reply accurately.’

During the interview, 55 years old Sikh respondent, who was farmer, link the Punjab crisis with dirty politics by the political parties as “Congress party to grab power tried to fractured Akali Dal and Sikh community. Later, the forces stood against Congress itself. This was the affection of the Hindu and Sikh community that after so much trouble and pain, politicians and extremists failed in their agenda to start riots. Congress did not keep its promises. Militants thought to achieve the goal with bullets, but they proved wrong. Where is the question of the government, it was not satisfactory at the initial level, but when the government acted, too much loss had happened. Pakistan, supplied a bulk of ammunition to our people to kill us. They were just spending on weapons, but their hands were ours. The extremist not just killed people, but they tried to snub centuries-old relationships. They failed because ‘Waheguru’ (name of God) was with truth. The political issue changed into a religious issue and our politicians got a chance to fool people. Still, the state is facing the burden of those dark days where families are broken due to the selfishness of few people and till day Punjab is paying for the suffering.”

The narration by the Sikh respondent exposes the incorrect methods used by the media to create more problems as-‘like as politicians, our press was too busy to make money. They succeeded, but on the dead bodies of their brothers and sisters. The role of the local press was not much constructive as it was required. It was the people who had not left the unity and failed the bid of extremists. The political hand

behind the rise of extremism described an anti-national role. Due to them, the sons of this motherland lost their lives on both sides.’

One other Hindu respondent emotionally answered on the same question as “For the rise of militancy, our politicians were responsible for it? They were fighting to grab state power so they were taking help from militants as well. In our country, the ultimate goal is chair and power. In Punjab, Sikhs killed Hindus and in Delhi, Hindus killed Sikhs but ultimately it was the murder of humanity. Militancy affected every single family directly and indirectly. The state government failed to reply against the militants and they misguided the people. My wife was deliberately disturbed by a few hardliners in office during government job and I made a complaint to the authority, but nothing happened. She had taken pre-retirement from office. Till the day, I am fighting for a Red Card due to being affected by militancy and in absence of action, I have to move to High Court for justice. The militancy which killed thousands of innocents made Punjab economically poor and left us divided into communities.”

Thus, present field study finds that the pain of the victims during militancy increased when the government system also denied protecting their rights. In this case, this all happened but the system was not worrying for anyone. The peaceful and loving people are divided into groups due to political gimmicks. The state and central leadership played a poor role instead of protecting them which was needed. The eagerness to grab power launched an enmity situation between the public. Though it was press or politics; both generated a fractured relationship. The killings of innocent Hindus in Punjab and Sikhs in Delhi riots thereafter is a result of political failures which people need to understand deeply.

One 58 years aged doctor during interview further mentions that “this was the same situation of Punjab, the prosperous and peaceful state Punjab before 1980 went into religious extremism. The Hindus and Sikhs were friends, later stopped to talk with each other. Only through the media in the form of Radio and newspapers, we were getting aware of the troubled situation in the state. The newspapers were covering militancy-related violent incidents on the top pages and the next morning when we were reading that news, it spread more fear in the minds of the public. Nobody had that dare to talk about it openly. The media was not giving any help to

understand the problem. We too were not keen and aware to get information about it. The newspaper was busy in promoting the incident into bigger shape. Second, people were getting killed in the name of religion and politics. Though I doubted on it, later it was clear that in the name of religion, they were killing people.”

One more female Sikh respondent, who has also lost her husband during the Punjab crisis, on the same question observes that the government gave time militancy to prevail. We also heard that after the murder of Baba Gurbachan Singh, the killer went to a politician’s house to hide. A political drama ruined Punjab’s economy and relations. She further adds that ‘later, I forgave those who were involved in my husband’s murder. They too are our brothers and if they had committed a mistake, it is our duty to forgive them.’

Further, one interviewee, who was a truck driver observes that the people of the state faced a very tough period and saw fear and death. People lost their family members and are still not able to overcome that loss. The enmity of Nirankaris and Sikhs turned personally and reached into homes and it also encircled Hindus thereafter. The enmity level went high after the issue of *Hukamnama* by SGPC against Nirankaris to severe relations. The terror groups involved in the carnage were blind in the name of religion. The failure of the political system brought the state under suspension and print media instead of prevention, become the partaker of it.

Therefore, the field study revealed that people still remember the major violent incidents that occurred in Punjab due to the indulgence of religion in politics. The Sikh-Nirankari clash in April 1978 brought stiffness in the relationship between the Hindus and the Sikhs. The incident sows the seeds of enmity between Sikhs and Nirankaris, and equally established a division between Punjabi society. The troubled period was started after the court verdict in the year 1980 wherein all Nirankaris were accused of the 1978 incident. The killing of Nirankari head in the year 1980 in Delhi had indicated in advance about the future developments. However, the political leadership unfortunately failed to understand the gravity of the problem. After that print media were targeted by militants for raising voices against them. Lala Jagat Narayan was killed on a state highway by militants in the year 1981 due to religious intolerance. Then, there was no full stop on violent activities in the society, which was bringing increasingly under the grip of violence of the whole of the state.

Have you ever faced any violence during the terrorism period in Punjab?

The field study showed that in the different areas many people have faced numerous communal incidents as an individual or as a community. Many respondents have shared memories of a few communal incidents which were happened with them. On December 10, 1990, in the village Tara Singh Wala, Makhan Singh along with his 3 brothers and his father was murdered brutally. All of the victims were shot dead at railway tracks. Among them, Kulwinder Singh escaped in injured conditions and the government, based on pity, granted him a job in the same village. This story was told by Kulwinder Singh.

Harbhagwan Singh from village Tara Singh Wala, a former *Sarpanch*, shared one more incident with heavy heart because in 1990 his whole family was murdered. He and his father alone survived. Hakam Singh, his brother and sister-in-law were going through village Butter, all were shot dead on red coloured Bullet Motorcycle by the terrorists.

Surjan Singh from village Bharoli Bhan along with the whole family was killed in 1989. Bhanga Singh from village Dodh was killed by the terrorist on the bridge of village Dodh. Adhadak Singh, village Deep Singh Wala was dead at a police encounter at village Jhok.

From Khalchiya village, Raj Singh during the interview said that from his relatives his nephew, to overcome his revenge, followed the terrorist with weapons. But instead, they killed the whole of his family. And when one family started residing outside the village in agricultural land, the terrorist killed them with an allegation of espionage.

In town Guruharsahai, one Hindu respondent said that his nephew after getting an electrical shock was admitted to a government hospital, Faridkot and when a person from a family goes to visit him by bus, an incident happened. Terrorists attacked innocent people. By reckless shooting they killed 8 people on the spot. He also told that terrorists also demanded money using a letter, but they were escaped this with help of a middleman.

One more resident of Guruharsahai town told that village Sharinwala Brar's person was living in farms, and had some relations with militants. But later militants started to disrespect their women and daughters. Then the family killed them by poisoning their food. Then DGP ordered for recognition and autopsy of the dead body, where police found that they were militants.

From Tehsil Zira, village Kachar Bhan, respondent told that from an adjoining village one terrorist was arrested by police. And thereafter they found so many weapons from *Sarpanch's* house, which was buried under agricultural waste. This incident was of 1990-91. From the same village, a women respondent told that from her village 'son of Mahjbiyan (scheduled caste)' also converted into terrorist and once he handed over a bag full of bloodied clothes to them in which there was a lot of money and he asked to hand over that bag to his mother.

From village Ilmewala, 55 years aged respondent told that they had a brokerage agency and terrorist kidnapped their owner and demanded Rs. 10,00000 and they settled at 5 Lakhs and on the spot they gave 2.5 Lakhs and next day it was found that during police encounter all those terrorist were shot dead. According to respondent there were two types of faces. One who was real, he meant that they seemed to be inherited militants and had a very rude behaviour and where another type who were more alike fake and used the name 'terrorist' just for the sole purpose of robbery.

(Many people were not comfortable answering this question in detail)

Have you ever faced any violence in the name of religion thrown by politicians?

Many times politicians have used their political powers for their selfish purposes one respondent said, he had participated in Naxalite Movement also and he observes that in the 1970s, Sikhs in Punjab had sought autonomy and complained about domination by the Hindus. Indira Gandhi government arrested thousands of Sikhs for their opposition and demands particularly during Indian Emergency. In Indira Gandhi's attempt to "save democracy" through the Emergency, India's constitution was suspended, 140,000 people were arrested without due process, of which 40,000 were Sikhs.

Another Sikh respondent, who was a trader during the black period in Punjab, mentions that after the Emergency was lifted, during elections, Indira Gandhi supported Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, a Sikh leader to undermine the Akali Dal, the largest Sikh political party. However, Bhindranwale began to oppose the central government and moved his political base to the Golden Temple in Amritsar, demanding the creation of Punjab as a new country. In June 1984, under orders from Indira Gandhi, the Indian Army attacked the Golden Temple with tanks and armoured vehicles, due to the presence of Sikh Khalistanis armed with weapons inside. Thousands of Sikhs died during the attack. In retaliation for the storming of the Golden Temple, Indira Gandhi was assassinated on 31 October 1984 by two Sikh bodyguards. And the assassination provoked mass rioting against Sikhs. During the 1984 anti-Sikh pogrom in Delhi, government and police officials aided Indian National Congress Party workers gangs in "methodically and systematically" targeting Sikhs and Sikh homes. As a result of the pogroms 10,000–17,000 were burned alive or otherwise killed, Sikh people suffered massive property damage, and at least 50,000 Sikhs were displaced.

The present field study finds that the 1984 riots fuelled the Sikh insurgency movement. In the peak years of the insurgency, religious violence by separatists, government-sponsored groups, and the paramilitary arms of the government was endemic on all sides. One 65 years old respondent, retired from civil services mentions with the example of Human Rights reports that separatists were responsible for the "massacre of civilians, attacks upon Hindu minorities in the state, indiscriminate bomb attacks in crowded places, and the assassination of a several political leaders." According to him Human Rights Watch also stated that the Indian Government's response "led to the arbitrary detention, torture, extra judicial execution, and enforced disappearance of thousands of Sikhs." The insurgency paralyzed Punjab's economy until peace initiatives and elections were held in the 1990s. Allegations of cover-up and shielding of political leaders of Indian National Congress over their role in 1984 riot crimes have been widespread.

Possibilities of separating religion from politics

As Punjab has a unique political culture. Homogeneity based on culture provides protection to people regardless of their religion. This is the reason the state has not

seen the emergence of an exclusive Sikh, Hindu, or even Dalit identity. As Pramod Kumar puts it, “In Punjab, the *Jat* Sikh CM is decided by the Hindus and the Dalits (Sharma M. G., 2021). The moment you start mobilizing Hindus as Hindus and Sikhs as Sikhs, you are bound to lose.” Food for thought for politicians. Louis Dumont, one of the most influential writers on Indian religion and society, viewed *sadhus* as the agent of development in Indian religion and speculation, "the creator of values" responsible for "founding of sects and their maintenance", and for the major ideas and social innovations (Sharma M. G., 2021). Under these changed circumstances, this consensus on the role of religious figures began to transform during the time of Indira Gandhi who relied on populist measures and appeal when it came to specific categories of voters. She drew Hindu religious figures into the limelight through her patronage of religious institutions and played the "Hindu card" against the minorities. The case of Sikh religious leader Bhindranwale is an example of her creation. She was systematically encroaching on the traditional vote bank of Jana Sangh. Indira Gandhi also co-opted Muslim religious figures in her attempt to hold on to the Muslim vote, pursuing her strategy of what was then called "Fatwa politics." Thus, the ideology and practice of secularism in reality were confronted with multifaceted and multi-dimensional challenges (Singh R. K., 2019)

During present field survey on this question we find that 78% people think that politics and religion should kept separate, but only 22% of people think that since both are an integral part of human life, they cannot be separated even if we want to. But 100% people agreed that misuse of religion for politics will be very dangerous for future. All most all believed that this problem can be solved only by educating people properly, because after attaining education, a person starts thinking logically. Respondents also believe that caste, race, religion, color etc. should be kept aside and we should live for the welfare of ourselves and our society and if this thinking is adopted by all people including politicians then the solution of such problem will be solved by itself.

A 52 year aged female respondent, earlier working as a nurse in private dispensary mentions that there are two consequences of this amalgamation of

religion, politics and public administration. First, it has given prominence in public life to religious leaders like "sants" and "mahants", "imams" and "priests". They have started playing an active role in governmental decision-making. The interference of religious leaders in administrative matters can prove dangerous to India's secular democracy.

One more 51 years old female professor relate this crisis at national level as 'in India despite partition on the basis of religion, the country resolved to be a secular state and promulgated its Constitution in 1950 accepting equal rights for all citizens irrespective of their caste, creed or race. It was undoubtedly a great step forward. But it was not easy to translate the constitutional ideals into practice in a society as complex as that of India.' She also giving the example of one of the prominent writer as 'The Indian state was characterized as a "soft state" by Swedish economist Gunnar Myrdal in his book *Asian Drama: An Inquiry into the Poverty of Nations*. The Indian state remained not only soft towards communalism but it also encouraged it, if it paid political dividends. 1970 onwards the Central and different state governments started the practice of arranging *iftar* parties for Muslims during Ramadan. Now, political leaders compete with each other when it comes to throwing lavish parties at national and state capitals and the practice has continued even in the regime of the BJP. Wide publicity is given in the media as to who attends these parties and what is being served. It is forgotten that such politicization of *iftar* is a sacrilege of a religious practice which may not be taken lightly by Muslims.

A ordinary female respondent, working in the fields, said that when leaders give us bogus promises or do politics in the name of religion or caste, we should talk to them about issues like rising poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, changing environment, deadly diseases etc. only then will the politicians themselves be forced to leave the old type of politics and come to the politics of issues and help themselves in building a healthy society.

One 50 years aged Sikh respondent, presently working in railways and his mother was principal in school, mentions that the primary goal of a secular state is to ensure trust between religious communities. He argues that the idea of a secular state, as

conceived by Nehru, varied substantially with the kind of Nehruvian secularism practiced after his death. A secular state is expected to protect minorities from majority domination, and possesses respect for all religions. He further mentions the statement given by Nehru, as Nehru says that “the word secular conveys something much more to him, although that might not be its dictionary meaning—the idea of social and political equality.” A state that encourages or tolerates such deeply inegalitarian, casteist practices is not secular. He found casteism to be as dangerous as communalism because both are effective barriers to democracy and equality ... Secularism is pitted against religiously grounded casteism. Second, although he does not use the term religiously grounded “patriarchy,” secularism is also pitted against this form of intra-religious domination. Nehru’s secularism also goes beyond protecting minority rights. He observes that both Hindus and Muslims have to be protected from the religious elite in their communities, who wish to further social oppression.

Another Sikh male respondent says that the politicization of religion largely depends on how the state interacts with religious communities. If communities’ cultures matter, then the state upholds their rights, gives them some form of religious autonomy, and provides freedom from discrimination. Otherwise, a cultural nationalist ideology can be adopted, forming a mono-communitarian state.

A Hindu respondent, businessman by occupation observe that sometimes few parties see people as members of a community first, and as individuals second; and this is how the parties form their political theories. A respondent give the example of Hindu nationalism, he believed that Hindu nationalism is based on the idea that the community is the creator and bearer of this meaning, as it transcends the boundaries between individuals, but also time. The nation is eternal, and carries within it the history and traditions of the community, including religious faith. In their analysis of present day politics, the BJP refers to previous periods of Muslim oppression. The Babri masjid-Ram *janma bhoomi* controversy is presented as a continuation of centuries of Muslim aggression and the members of the Muslim community of today as the heirs of oppressors.

One more 80 years aged Sikh respondent on the same question replied that the British viewed Indians in terms of their religion, and exploited this to create an entrenched sense of communal identity to “artificially” divide Indian communities. The creation of separate electorates was one such strategy that forcibly pitted Hindus and Muslims against each other, and increased social tension. He further gives the example that after the violence that accompanied partition, the Indian political elite attempted to create a “secular” India that provided equal status to all religions. A secular state must also inhibit and regulate the continuing attempt by the high priests of religion to impose their views and norms on ordinary men and women said by the respondent.

A doctor by profession and 61 years old respondent replied as ‘separation of religion and politics, what is that? It means that the state does not fund religions, or if they fund one, they fund all. Secondly, those specifically religious persons are not employed by the state or chosen by the state. Thirdly, it means that politicians are not employed by the religious institutions or chosen by the religious institutions (other than as each clergy votes like everyone else). But it does not mean that people cannot use their conscience guided by religion to vote, or for politicians to suggest laws, but politicians shouldn’t argue on that basis; that would be pretending to be clergy. This is a combination of religious freedom and separation of religion and politics.’

One more respondent working in private company replied differently as ‘you can’t really have one without the other just because religion cannot be separated from politics does not mean I think that there cannot be a separation of religion and politics or that religious people can make policy in the interest of people of other faith-convictions. The thing is that our understanding of reality, good and evil, and the role of government is shaped by our religious convictions. This is also true of philosophy, class, culture, etc. Individuals are shaped by their religious convictions, at least in part, and this influences how they vote and what policies they want to see implemented. Separation of religion and politics refers to corporate entities and there being no official established religious body of the State. It also entails religious freedom. The State is made up of individuals, however, and their collective convictions. You can’t separate politics from collective convictions, and you cannot separate religion from collective convictions. If you try to separate your convictions

from politics you will be doing politics from another perspective that is not your own. I see no reason to do that accept to concede that their perspective is better for making policy—but then why not just hold that perspective? There is no “neutral” conviction.’

On the question what is the possibility of separating religion from politics, a 66 years old respondent, agriculturist by profession says ‘no, you can’t. You can separate religious places from government; because they are both institutions and you can separate one institution from another. But you can’t separate religions from government. A religion is essentially a set of ideas, and you can’t separate ideas from politics.’

A laborer by profession, 55 years aged male respondent says ‘only as far as the people want them to be. As long as people are willing to base their voting decisions on religion, it will be a part of politics. Thus, religion and politics can't be separated completely in India. But voters must keep looking for the need of the relationship between state and religion.’

CONCLUSION

In the preceding chapters, an attempt has been made to study the changing role of religion in the politics of Punjab in the second half of the 20th Century. It is important to note that the role of religion in the modern world has been thoroughly reconstituted, so much so that religious debates and conflicts are no longer primarily waged over matters of belief, or the cosmological or transcendental references, as they once were; it is instead religion as the basis of identity and indentitarian cultural practices – with co-religionists constituting a community, nation, or civilization – that came to dominate public imagination and often constituted one of the most effective axis of political mobilization. India is a strongly religious country. Yet its political orientation has been committed to a form of secularism, no matter how one defines or understands it. Yet, the history of independent India, its creation on the basis of Partition of the sub-continent along religious lines, the contestations about the metaphors of religiosity in political life, the re-emergence of confessional parties since the mid eighties, had kept the role of religion in politics of the state an active issue.

This study is a selective attempt to address this question. It investigated the history and politics of Punjab state that resulted from the partition of India. The results of this investigation validate the central hypothesis: Religion worked as a key factor in shaping the political agenda of political parties in general and ideological based parties in particular in independent India. But the manner in which parties used religion depended on the context in which they were placed and their acceptability with the people.

The Punjab region was under Hindu rule for centuries, but then came under Islamic dominance for five hundred years. The Sikh religion was founded by Guru Nanak (1469 – 1539) and shaped by his nine successors in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in Punjab. The Sikh believes in the faith that politics and religion are inseparable. In the historical evolution of the Sikhs, they have had to deal with three forms of state power, the Mughal Monarchical state, the British colonial

state and the Hindu majority Indian nationalist state. They have collaborated with, as well as revolt against these three state forms depending upon the conjuncture of forces. Politics of religion in Punjab is exceedingly complex. The overwhelming majority of the followers of Sikhism emanate from the field of Hinduism. Hindus tended to look upon Sikhism as one of its own seats. The basis philosophical elements of Sikhism are the results of fusion of Islam and Hinduism. Yet, Sikhs are conscious of their differences vis-à-vis the Hindus, and over the years, this sense of difference has often assumed political overtones. Class has played a vital role in Punjab politics. The rural Sikhs benefited from the British interests in agriculture and the reservations of jobs for them especially in the army. The Sikh urban commercial sections had interests that were common with those of Hindu middle classes. To begin with they join hands with them and even cooperated with Arya Samaj. Soon, however, competition for jobs and the policy of reservations on communal basis in the elected bodies by the British government made them conscious of the needs for consolidation of communal identity. However, since the bulk of the Sikh community was agriculturalists, the urban Sikhs found that the only way to get latter's support would be to employ religious symbols. Thus was organized the 'Singh Sabha Movement' in the late nineteenth century and early part of the twentieth century to promote among the Sikhs as a modern sense of Self-consciousness and identity. Singh Sabha stressed that Sikhs were not Hindus and focused on weeding out remnants of Hinduism from Sikhism. Thus the feelings of sub-national identity became strengthen from the. This new identity was partially cemented into institutional and organizational form during the Gurudwara Reform Movement of 1920s. During this movement the Shiromoni Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC) was established and subsequently, the Akali Dal political party was formed. The Akali Dal emerged as an important political party with the 1925 Act. Institutionally, the SGPC and the Akali Dal have been at the core of Sikh politics and have been the self proclaimed representatives of Khalsa Panth (Sikh Community) interest. In March 1946, Alkali Dal declared Sikhs as a nation and adopted a resolution to protect Sikh economic, religious and cultural rights. Akali leaders gave up these demands only upon promises from Congress leaders that Sikh would have special status in independent India. Punjab after independence, involved in the partition, saw the emigration of almost entire Muslim population to

Pakistan, and the immigration of the almost entire Sikh population from the west Punjab to the Indian Punjab.

Sikh politics after independence was also based professedly on Sikh identity. This freed them from Muslim domination but in itself the partition could not solve their problems. They had to pursue their old concerns in the Indian union. After independence, in its national integration policy the Indian state tried to project a 'corporate identity' and in such a process it had tried to incorporate various minority ethnic groups to form a nation-state. Due to its state and nation-building compulsions whenever the state tried to intervene in the matters of the community, Sikhs reacted vigorously against it. By and large Sikh problems are more psychological, as they are economic and political. The identity crisis probably has been the most significant dimension of the problem. The more the commonality, the louder had been the protest by Sikh fundamentalists, which resulted in deepening of the crisis further. Sikhs on various platforms had lamented that Hindus have made every effort to absorb them. On the other hand with the help of persuasive misinformation and disinformation the state projected to the rest of the nation, the Sikh ethnic minority as an enemy within although Sikhs had always considered itself as an integral part of the Indian nation. The Sikhs were systematically alienated and isolated to such an extent that almost every Sikh questioned whether there is any future in the nation for the community. It is also a fact that the declining standards of public life in Punjab owe a great deal to the political ambitions of a few prominent Sikh leaders of the ruling Congress party and to an ongoing power struggle between them. Corrupted by its culture and operating from under the party umbrella they helped to destroy the decency and dignity of state's political life. In the process, they also destroyed the enduring warmth between the Hindus and the Sikhs. Tracing the developments leading to the Sikh dilemma we find that there is no single and simple answer. The most responsible factor was the galloping growth of political expediency in the last decades of twentieth century. The Congress party which had been in power for most of that period can be held responsible for having set the pattern of an 'unprincipled electoral policy' of survival at any cost, even at the cost of destroying the country's democratic base. Due to such a policy in June, 1984 as a result of Operation Blue Star, Sikh perceptions were convulsed into a form, no one could dream of earlier. The contagion

of such type of perceptions has reached out to touch all communities formulating a sense of deep concern into the national mood regarding their future. India's real politik is self destructive in the sense that it is intolerant of diversity. It has been encouraged by deliberately cultivated bogey that diversity is coterminous with disintegration and a natural pride in one's ethnic identity is anti-national. In the name of national integration pressure to conform on religious and ethnic minorities is increasing. The national mainstream is seen not as a confluence of various cultures which enriched the Indian scene, but is viewed by the majority as essentially the 'Hindu Sanskriti.' It is in this perception that the sense of alienation is felt by the people of the North-East, Kashmir and other parts of India, explaining why after all these years the spirit of insurgency lives on. Hindu fundamentalism is accepted by the majority (Hindu) community as its right in contrast to the Sikh and Muslim assertions which are projected not as religious manifestations but as political threats to national integration.

India's national leaders had to confront several language problems in the first two decades of independence. These problems included the official language issue, demands for the linguistic reorganization of the provinces of India whose boundaries during British rule didn't conform to linguistic divisions, and the status of minority languages within reorganized states. The process of linguistic reorganization of states in India was prolonged and divisive.

The Akali Dal has been historically a 'Sikh party.' In spite of this its political demands always outnumbered its religious ones and have been consistently 'Punjabi' and not totally 'Sikh' in character. Its carefully cultivated Sikh image was a response to the failure of the Congress to protect minority interests. To the Sikhs, this became clear in 1951 census itself when following the intense Arya Samaj campaign Punjabi Hindus disowned Punjabi as their mother tongue. This single gesture injected the virus of communalism permanently into Punjab politics. It strengthened the Akali Dal's claim to be the sole representative of Sikh interests and it aggravated the Sikh concerns about the submerging of their identity by the overwhelming Hindu majority culture. Here it is to be kept in mind that Arya Samaj movement itself was the Hindu reaction to the apprehensions aroused by a wave of Christian conversions. Playing the

old game of divide and rule the Congress strategy directed from New Delhi has been to split the Punjab electorate by encouraging both Sikh and Hindu communalism and exploiting factional divisions within Akali Dal.

In 1952, the Akali Dal issued a memorandum pressing for the establishment of a culturally similar Punjabi speaking Suba. For the Punjab case, the most important difference is the fact that Sikhs are a separate religious as well as linguistic group. However, the basis of the state was supposed to be linguistic. The States Reorganization Commission formed in 1953, rejected the memorandum on the ground that Punjabi language is not significantly different from Hindi. The rejection of Akali demands prompted the party to launch the agitation demanding Punjabi Subha. After a long political unrest, in 1966, Punjabi Subha finally conceded by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. The reconstitution of the new states of Punjab came along with the introduction of capitalism in Punjab agriculture. The Akali movement for creation of a Punjabi speaking state was not entirely based on its concern for the Punjabi language or the Sikh religion. Although Sikh religious revivalism and political extremism became overlapping phenomena in the 1980s, they arose in the late 1970s for different reasons.

The Congress party enjoyed the monopoly of power in Punjab since independence to the reorganization of the state on the linguistic basis in 1966. The Congress Party won all the three parliamentary elections and assembly elections of 1952, 1957 and 1962 with the thumping majority. The Akali Dal was the other important regional party, but it was unable to control the political power alone. However it merged into the Congress in 1948 and 1956, but got separated when its political goals were not fulfilled. The issue of Punjabi Suba dominated the political scene of Punjab in this era which was a period of turbulent agitations. One thing is important that the leadership of Akali Dal underwent a significant change as it went into the hands of the rural Jat Sikh Sant Fateh Singh from Master Tara Singh, an urban Sikh. The reorganization of the state brought several structural changes in demography, economic, cultural and political sphere. The most important change was that the Sikhs became a majority community in the state. This demographic change also transformed the electoral scenario in terms of support base of the political parties

especially the Akali Dal. The Akali Dal emerged as a powerful political party. It gave the challenge to the dominant Congress party in the state. It ended the monopoly of the Congress by making the coalition government with BJS (now BJP) and other political parties. Simultaneously the advent of Green Revolution in state brought the prosperity in the state. It affected the social, economic and political structure of the state and raised the expectation in the society a whole. But this momentum lost in between due to the lack of farsightedness on the part of political leadership. Though prosperity ushered in the Green Revolution, but it was largely skewed to the rich peasantry class. According to some political analysts, it became one of the reasons which pushed the state into political turmoil especially in 1980's and early 1990's.

Thus, use of religion in politics was not a new phenomenon in the politics of Punjab. This strategy continued throughout the 'Punjabi Suba' agitation and after the Congress projected the then unknown Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale against moderate Akali leaders, which resulted in the bloody Punjab imbroglio. And in the other hand, after the defeat of Akali Dal in 1971 general election and 1972 Assembly Elections, it raised the demand of state autonomy in the form of Anandpur Sahib Revolution. Moreover, the Akali Dal raised the 'Panthic issues' for mobilizing the Sikh voters in order to retrieve political power again. The Akali Dal vehemently opposed the Emergency imposed by Indira Gandhi. As a reaction, Indira Gandhi took the arbitrary decisions regarding the river waters which created the hostility between the Punjab & its neighbouring states and is still an unresolved issue in Punjab politics. The emergence of Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale in late 1970's posed a direct challenge to the Akali Dal.

Centre government's covert support to splinter and fringe groups amongst the Sikhs like the Nirankaris was also part of the broader game plan. The clash in Amritsar in 1978 between the Nirankaris and Bhindranwale's supporters was directly linked to it and was its bloody manifestation. It later on triggered the entire sequence of events leading to 'Operation Blue Star'. From 1980, when Congress came to power up to Operation Blue Star, events unrolled with great dynamism and velocity. Many opposition leaders, journalists and concerned Punjabis who made intensive efforts on their part to bring about a settlement have reported that Indira Gandhi and her

government didn't want a solution. Repeatedly whenever the negotiations were on the verge of success, the government reneged with some excuse or the other. These reports totally contradicted the government's claim reiterated in its 'White Paper on Punjab Agitation' that the Akalis were responsible for each aborted attempt. From 1979 to 1983, the Congress government actively magnified the image of Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale. In the next three years after 1980, Congress gave a helping hand in mounting his formidable challenge to the moderate Akali leadership. Playing the old game of divide and rule, the Congress strategy directed from New Delhi had been to split the Punjab electorate by encouraging both Sikh and Hindu communalism. Simultaneously the Congress projected Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale against moderate Akali leaders. But in real sense Indira Gandhi was riding a 'tiger.' Bhindranwale was a part of the grand design of the mandarins around her. This 'tiger' which they had nurtured themselves on was the one which got out of control later on and took to independent course of action. It ended up in control but took the country towards spiraling successive tragedies. The government's failure to prosecute Bhindranwale in the murders of Lala Jagat Narain and Nirankari chief Baba Gurbachan Singh has never been explained. Bhindranwale on the other hand became a cult figure in reviving the separate identity and ethnic existence of the Sikhs. He emerged as the main champion of Sikh grievances. The crisis of identity was the main concern from which Bhindranwale fermented such hatred for Hindus. His fundamentalism was founded on the fear of 'Hinduism' assimilating Sikhism in the long run. There was important section of Sikh community identified with the Akali Dal which saw 'modernism' that came with prosperity of Green Revolution, as a menace to their faith and a threat to their identity. It alarmed the orthodox section of the community. Beside it there was looming old threat of Hinduism. Orthodox Sikhs had a good reason to fear Hinduism. Sikhs being less than two percent of India's total population and eighty percent of them concentrated in Punjab. As such on the one hand they form a very small minority in India. On the other hand although caste and other factors divide the Hindu community, Hinduism on all the occasions had shown remarkable ability to influence and many times absorb rival faiths. Buddhism virtually disappeared from India although India was the land of its birth. Hinduism absorbed Buddhism converting them into an incarnation of 'Vishnu'. Jainism was also born in

India. It also met a similar fate but fared little better than Buddhism. When in 1978 Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale came on the scene; he took the center stage with his radical speeches and his way of working. The Khalistan movement has been associated with Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale more than with anyone else. He stressed again and again the separation of the Sikhs from Hindus and distinctiveness of their religion and scripture and against alleged actions to absorb Sikhs into Hinduism. He demanded therefore, that a constitutional amendment be passed recognizing the Sikhs explicitly as a separate community in India. He urged Sikhs to carry arms and to be prepared to use them 'to protect' their faith. As to bear arms was a religious duty of the Sikhs. The choice of arms was not confined to the 'Kirpan' (sword) as one of the five obligatory symbols. The choice was extended to modern weapons, which also carried the implication that they were meant to be actually used. The use of physical force was for him a legitimate part of religion because Sikhs subscribe to the idea that it is legitimate to use force when all other means have failed. His movement is looked upon as 'secessionist' as well as militant. On the eve of the Operation Blue Star when the Akali leaders were in favour of a settlement with government, he refused to agree to anything less than Anandpur Sahib Resolution. Thus an impression was created; particularly in the Sikh youth that while the Akalis were rebuffed by New Delhi the Central government did not dare to touch Bhindranwale. Sant Harchand Singh Longowal – president of Akali Dal consistently opposed the cult of violence and asked for peaceful means to solve the pending issues. Bhindranwale was never a member of Akali Dal but to counteract his strong violent challenge the Akalis themselves were forced to adopt more extreme postures in later periods. Police repression along with faked encounters in which many Sikh youngsters were killed following the increasing number of terrorist's murders of both Hindus and Sikhs further charged the atmosphere. The moderate Akalis started the 'Dharam Yudh Morcha' to press their so called demands. But unable to persuade the government to stop the 'repression' in the state, the Akali moderates slowly and steadily lost credibility with the Sikh masses. In the mean time Bhindranwale's influence grew and he 'high jacked' the 'Dharam Yudh Morcha' from their hands. For its part, the government also seemed bent on doing everything to alienate the Sikhs. A humiliating treatment was given to them by Haryana police during New Delhi Asian

Games in 1982 while passing through Haryana. No Sikh was spared, not even women or VIPs. For the first time Sikhs felt that they were suspects just because they were 'Sikhs.' Very few non-Sikhs protested against it, newspapers were silent. Neither any member of the government or of the ruling party said a word of criticism even though Congress Sikh MPs had been deliberately insulted. Not unnaturally, the majority of the Sikhs took this silence as tacit approval of police behavior. This incident was the inauguration of the community's isolation. Akalis were helplessly trapped between government's insidious policy towards a solution and challenge of Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale. The Akalis sensed that they were being pushed to the point of no return. To avoid any direct or violent confrontation they desperately wanted that the government should strengthen their position by accepting at least one of their major demands e:g the transfer of Chandigarh to Punjab which Indira Gandhi had earlier conceded. But giving any mileage to them didn't fit in with the strategy of the government at centre. It is widely believed that Indira Gandhi never forgave the Akalis for their resistance against her emergency and she was determined to destroy them politically. The post-emergency defeat of the Congress at the general elections had shaken the Congress party to its very foundations. In its reappraisal a new electoral arithmetic based on majority 'Hindu vote' as the safest vote bank took over. It coincided with the growing Hindu fundamentalism. In this situation the 'Hindu vote' became the 'holy grail' for the Congress (I). This Hindu vote factor ruled out any settlement with the Akalis, keeping the Lok Sabha elections in mind. It was thrust by taking into account the agenda of national integration. The goal demanded deliberate polarization of the Hindu community by terming the Sikhs as a dangerous threat to the majority. As such coinciding with the discrediting of the Badal-Longowal leadership through repeated negotiations, a fierce debate was launched in the media regarding 'Khalistan', Sikh traditions as well as history and the Sikh sense of identity. This campaign of deliberate dis-information to malign the entire community continued until the Rajiv-Longowal Accord in August 1985 although it persisted later on also. Khalistan until then was a concept taken seriously only by a small fragment of the Sikhs. But the Centre deliberately made it into a burning issue and discussed as if it was the accepted ambition of the majority of the Sikhs. The Home Minister and the other government representatives stated vehemently and repeatedly that

government could never accept Khalistan. The question was raised by the Akalis that who was demanding Khalistan? Akali leaders repeatedly went on making it clear time and again that Akali Dal never asked for a separate Sikh state and the Sikhs had committed themselves to the Indian union in 1947 and now also stood by their commitment. They explained at length that they wanted only the review of Center State relations in context of greater autonomy of states all over India. They charged that government itself was talking of 'Khalistan'. But their voices were deliberately ignored and they were accused of pretending being nationalists and of ambiguity. Instead the demand of alleged Sikh separatism was in good way traced back to the pre-partition bargaining tactics of the Akali leaders which they had made in order to stop the creation of Pakistan. The disinformation campaign described the Sikh sense of identity as a British creation during colonial rule, claiming that if the British would not have laid stress on the difference between Sikhs and Hindus, Sikhism would have relapsed back into the Hindu fold. The vilification of Sikh history and Sikh traditions continued. Angry Sikh historians repudiated the 'slandorous' attacks made on them. These attacks on concepts and traditions which were deeply rooted in their faith and in which the Sikhs took great pride, provoked deep hurt and anger. Where it suited, Sikh community's military traditions were brushed aside as another British creation related to artificial concept of 'martial races.' It has been said that, as always, distortion of history and of truth has been a destructive weapon in the psychological warfare and the same was applied here in the context of Sikhs. Even the Green Revolution was attributed to government's massive investment inputs and not to Sikh enterprise and hard work. This disinformation campaign served its dual purpose. On the one hand it made the entire Sikh community suspect all over the country on the other hand it increasingly alienated the Sikhs from the national mainstream. Whole of the process was planned and executed in such a way so as to destroy the very 'ethos' of the community to maximum extent. After the killing of DIG police – A.S. Atwal in 1983, the situation in Punjab deteriorated rapidly. Atwal's murder was a perfect moment to stop the Bhindranwale with a minimum of casualties but the government chose to do nothing and it let the situation to aggravate. Later on the government in New Delhi was projected as a strong government who finally took action through 'Operation Blue Star' for the unity of the country. It was skillfully done through

calculated dissemination of misinformation and disinformation. The immediate reaction all over India to Operation Blue Star was praise for 'strong government' which saved the nation. Certain political scientists had pointed out that the uprisings and assertions in Tamil Nadu and Telengana revolt in south India created no turmoil in the north but the alleged Sikh secessionism totally traumatized the south; all due to the propaganda machinery of the Centre. Actually the government had created in 'extremists' its own 'Frankenstein', as such it lost control of events during later periods. Between April 1983 and May 1984 law and order deteriorated in Punjab to the point where administration was completely demoralized, the government seemed paralyzed in spite of 'President's Rule' from New Delhi. In order to cover up its misdeeds the Centre launched a full scale military assault on the Golden Temple in June, 1984. It made a great impact on Sikh psyche. The attack had no parallel in country's history. Its consequences are still to be counted. The Golden Temple has unique place in Sikh psyche. It is more than just a place of pilgrimage for the Sikhs. The temple for them is a symbol of Sikhism which had been destroyed repeatedly by enemies of the faith, to be reconstructed every time 'phoenix-like' from its ruins. Each time the Sikhs rebuild it with their own hands and it became a symbol of their strength, their pride and self-respect. The Blue Star attack and the destruction of the deeply revered 'Akal Takhat' through it was an assault on their faith as well as their dignity and honour. The aggravated Sikh anger and pain this time was qualitatively different from the eighteenth century destruction of Golden Temple by foreign invaders. The June 1984 attack was mounted against them by their own government. It was the first instance of its type in India's history when a full scale military operation was mounted by the armed forces of the country against fellow Indians. This attack in a major way also legitimized the assault on religious shrines – an act which the Indian psyche had always revolted. 'Doordarshan' in its national network, which extends every nook and corner of the country, repeatedly showed the fortifications inside the temple and the cache of arms allegedly seized by the army. Under the then prevailing scenario it was hardly questioned that how these preparations were possible under the very eyes of para-military forces and government intelligence agencies, which held the Golden Temple under constant surveillance for over past six months preceding Operation Blue Star. A wave of 'state

terrorism' was let loose on innocent young men and their families. With draconian 'Black laws' operative in the state containing every small village, the state was under a 'total emergency' supported by continued censorship and restriction of movement. Many eminent persons outside Punjab warned that 'state terrorism invariably breeds terrorism' but New Delhi remained unconcerned and didn't paid any heed to it. The Sikhs had got alienated after Operation Blue Star and more so after their massacre in November 1984 that taking to violent methods seemed to be the only alternative. The Sikhs could not really understand the meaning and the purpose of the Operation Blue Star and the allied incidents; except surmising that it was designed to desecrate their most sacred complex and to 'teach them a lesson'. This fact was later confirmed by their large scale massacre in November 1984 in various parts of the country. The sayings of Bhindranwale which he conveyed at various gatherings had come true. The Delhi incidents also proved beyond doubt the involvement of Congress (I) party in killing of the Sikhs. The Delhi police and other security forces not only stood mute witnesses but many of them actively helped the 'hooligans'. Amidst this confusion in the Sikh's mind and continuous state violence their psyche underwent drastic transformation especially with regard to their characterization of the Indian state. No doubt they used to launch protests against their victimization by the state, but they gave due regard to its framework and operated within that framework. It was for the first time they thought that the state did not belong to them and it no longer owned them. They compared it to Mughal rule. It being referred as 'Islamic state' then and now it was regarded as 'Hindu state.' They thought that like the former the latter too was disposed towards decimating them. Here it will be sappriopriate to quote Ishtiaq Ahmed that they did consider earlier their separate ethnic identity from Hindus (Singh Sabha movement in late nineteenth century) but always conceived them as 'inclusive others' as part of the older family pitted against Muslims. But after June and November 1984 it became clear to the Sikhs that Hindus constitute an 'exclusive other'. Their confusion and alienation against the Indian state were later streamlined by the Sikh militants. The Sikhs were repeatedly warned by the Sikh militant organizations that this happened to them because they were 'Sikhs'. This self categorization reconstructed the 'Hindu other' who ruled at the center hence it was termed as 'Hindu Sarkar' and 'Hindu Raj.' They had never felt insecure till November

1984, as far as their mobility outside Punjab was concerned. Now they were not only conscious of their identity but also alert while moving out of Punjab. The Operation Blue Star and the massacre of the Sikhs in Delhi and other parts of India in November 1984 had sent shock waves throughout the Sikh community across the world.

During freedom struggle Rabinder Nath Tagore had returned his title (Sir.) and Gandhi also discarded the 'western dresses' in protest against the British policies. Similarly the Sikhs of different hues after Operation Blue Star returned their honours and decorations given to them by Indian government. The '*Padam Shrees*' were returned, numerous senior bureaucrats resigned from their lucrative posts in IFS, IAS, IPS and other allied services. The Sikhs started taking 'amrit' on large scale, wearing black and saffron turbans at various gathering as markers of protest and showing defiance to the Indian state. The Indian state which up to now like a strong guardian had kept the family united, now fell on the 'others' side and hence termed as partisan. The problem of 'recognizing' and 'accommodating' the necessary autonomies and rights of defined social 'collectivities' or 'segments', e.g. ethnic, regional, linguistic or religious, is one of the major items of the contemporary politics of states and international organizations. But the government on its part in the states and at the Centre has pursued a policy of resistance and confrontation, punctuated at times by accommodation. The Indian state responded to the demands of the Sikhs with a politically manipulative approach. It did not try to analytically search out the root cause of the problem.

Not that the Akalis (representing Sikh cause) were any better, they had also demonstrated the same kind of unprincipled electoral opportunism. Both the Congress and the Akalis lost initiative and made room for theocratic fundamentalist movement with all its resultant consequences. This failure to tackle the demands of the Sikhs entered as a factor in the rise of militancy associated with the movement for Khalistan. Without properly understanding of the Anandpur Sahib Resolution; it being termed as a secessionist document and with the help of persuasive misinformation and disinformation spread by the Centre, a 'chimeric' image of the Sikh fanaticism was created before the populace. At the same time there was subordination of local political considerations to national ones by the ruling Congress.

It also involved a lessened sensitivity to local ethnic, regional, and religious sentiments. In the case of the Punjab, a willingness to exploit religious fundamentalist appeals without regard for the broader consequences was main agent for Punjab crisis. The genuine ethnic demands being relegated to the background. Beside this the planning process and the redistribution of resources on part of Indian state were not so favourable for Punjab. At the same point of time due to advent of Green Revolution, the major share of profit went to the landed aristocracy or Zamindars. Small farmers were further marginalized. Unemployment problem was there among educated graduates on the eve of the beginning of the Punjab crisis in 1978. Due to negligible industrial share given by the Centre there were not major employment avenues for the youth who later thought it 'moral right' to get their dues through the barrel of the gun. During the growth of militancy and even prior to that, state was rather relaxed if not indifferent to the brewing up crisis in the earlier phases itself. Vigilance on the part of local administration could have avoided the confrontation between the Sikhs and the Nirankaris in Amritsar. The mishandling of that case and not finding any one guilty of thirteen murders must be taken as the weaknesses of the state and it was thought to be conniving with the accused; as strongly believed by the Sikhs of different hues. The inefficiency of the local and the state administration could also be seen in the inept handling of the Hindu-Sikh riots throughout Punjab. This indifference and inefficiency on the part of state administration was later reversed. The gearing up of legal, administrative, repressive and ideological apparatus of the state; huge diversion of public funds to Punjab to contain militancy etc were an act of 'empowerment' of its structures compared to their earlier 'underperformance'. The under compliance of the first phase was replaced by over- domination of the last phase. 'Both situations were an aberration in the normal functioning of a liberal democratic state.' The militants too grew more consistent in their actions over time. The loose and random killing became more targeted and specific. The militants undoubtedly responded more to the oppressive measures of the state, but they also did try to introduce socio-cultural reforms; not only to legitimize their actions, but also for realization of the formation of an 'alternative Sikh society.' Whatever be the compulsions of political and administrative nature of the state, it must execute its powers in such a way that negative and unintended consequences are minimal. The Indian state didn't try to

behave in that manner when it tried to settle the Punjab problem even through force. It defied all military and police codes of conduct and norms. This not only agitated Sikh masses but also resulted in indiscipline and loss of values in the security forces throwing away all professional ethos. 'Law keepers became law breakers'. As the intensity of movement picked up it scared the police. The police resorted to counter insurgency measures through undercover spotters, the 'black cats' and later '*kale kachian wale*'. Some of these infiltrated the militant ranks while others indulged in criminal activities in their names thus defaming their organizations. Pettigrew puts it that police seized the letter pads of the militant organizations and started carrying out robberies and rape in their name. Such activities like supporting one group against other were resorted to by the police to create chaos in the militant ranks quiet successfully. Sikh militancy during most part of the 1980's possessed all the characteristics and well known features of a politically oriented separatist movement. But subsequently and gradually it degenerated into pure and simple criminal terrorism, all maneuvered by state. The state in order to cover up its misadventures and to prove its legitimacy tried to take tactical course of action. It was facilitated through police infiltration into the terrorist groups in a major way – it turned the people totally against the militants. The flow of intelligence improved and soon it became a torrent. Another important factor which considerably improved the operational capabilities of the Punjab police was its reorientation, modernization and reorganization on the recommendation of high powered committee of experts. There was polishing and perfection of strategies through which the state got spectacular results in early 1990's. One of the main factors for the success was also tremendous response from the people themselves, in the form of intelligence and co-operation at the time, when militancy had lost its ideological base and degenerated into pure and simple criminal activity. The assembly elections in 1992 were boycotted by the Akali factions. Congress government was elected on minority vote, as low as ten percent of the electorate. In office, the government rediscovered the missing 'political will' in a sufficient measure, seriously to eliminate militancy trusted upon the state. It let the police act effectively, ruthlessly and even unlawfully. If necessary, existing laws were amended. New laws enacted to plug up loopholes. Police was given unprecedented freedom from legal and democratic accountability, if they show clear results. They

were free to resort to any means if possible, many times taking extra-legal course of action to eliminate the challenge of militancy. The people were also fed up as the movement had lost its ideological direction and appeal. Feeble protests by some human rights and civil liberties organizations were ignored or suppressed. The police and security forces claimed greater success, with the strategy of systematic pursuit of select militant leaders and activists. This policy succeeded in bringing down the level of violence. The violent phase of Sikh assertions, which had started in late 1970's remained rigorous up to early 1990's. Ultimately by 1992-93 the movement was suppressed by the state. In tune with most of the decolonized states, the Indian state had given priority to 'nation-building' after independence. But this policy had not been properly administered with an 'accommodationist approach'. As a result it has produced conflict and violence on large scale. Indian society is ethnically heterogeneous and the state is being administered through single administrative setup with a strong centre. Being underdeveloped the state has minimal resources in hand and it has unable to meet the aspirations and demands of various sections of people within its territory. As it has been unable to cater to the needs of the people, they are trying to fulfill them through their community identities. This inability of the state elites to fulfill the developmental needs and genuine demands of the minority groups has led to the decline in the 'state authority' which had adversely affected the state sponsored process of nation building. It is being challenge by counteracting ethno-nationalism. Without going in for 'integrationist approach' in nation-building for its plural society the state has taken recourse to 'assimilationist policy' towards various minority identities. As such in order to give itself a 'corporate identity' the state had tried to assimilate various ethnic minorities present in it. On many occasions it has tried to distort and prevail upon the separate identities of these groups. It has tried to impose its homogenizing ideology; that of majority dominant group controlling the state apparatus. In the process it has often questioned the separate ethnic existence of these groups and failed to accept them as separate entities e:g Sikhs, Jains and Bodhis are termed as part of 'Hinduism'. Due to such a flawed approach the minorities had felt threatened and alienated to a great extent. They have resisted and reacted against, what Gurnam Singh had termed as 'assimilationist policies and homogenous processes in a hegemonic mould' of the state. The Sikhs have been in the forefront to

resist such maneuvers of the Indian state. After independence when the Akalis, having moderate approach for the furtherance of their demands asked for various 'identity group rights' the state took recourse to 'evasive methods' to resist their demands. When the Sikhs took to a radical and violent stand for their separate identity existence, the state, with the help of its vast resources and state apparatus reacted with much violent recourse. In the process its own 'legitimacy' was affected. Due to such a policy on various fronts, today the Indian state is under the seize of forces of fission from within. Since the Indian state has been slowly and steadily losing its legitimacy, it has become less autonomous and more constrained over the years. The state has failed to create a psychological desire in all communities for a sense of security and confidence which had affected the fostering of a feeling of harmony and brotherhood between different sections of the society. Ethnicity and religion on certain occasions had shown its capacity to challenge the authority of the Indian state. Insensitive to the sensitivities of various minority identities, the state has usually taken recourse to 'confrontationist approach' with its coercive state apparatus. In Punjab, the response of the state to the challenge thrown by extremists Sikhs who controlled Golden Temple at Amritsar can be termed as wrong because the state underestimated the power of religious and ethnic bonding in the Indian society. In the clash between the ethnic identity of the Sikhs and the approach of Indian state, the state lost the ground due to its flawed approach in handling of such situations. The entry of the army in the Golden Temple, whether it was legitimate or not turned the tables totally against the state and the acts of omission and commission of the armed group of the Sikhs holding their most sacred shrine were forgotten as well as forgiven by the Sikhs. Result being Indian state emerged weaker and loser in its dealing with the demands of the Sikhs and other communities as well who feared same kind of treatment at the hands of state.

It deeply affected the Punjab politics especially the electoral politics in Punjab. The factionalism within the Akali Dal and its confrontation with Sikh radical organizations as well as with the Centre could not solve the Punjab tangle. In the last decade of the 20th century, Punjab again underwent a major change as the normalcy was restored by the Congress government led by the then Chief Minister Beant Singh. On the other side in Akali politics, the faction led by Parkash Singh Badal emerged as

the dominant faction which controlled the power in the state in 1997 and 2007 by making an alliance with the BJP. The Akali Dal shifted their stance from Sikh identity to Punjab identity, from the demand of Khalistan to peace. After the Moga convention in 1996, the SAD (B) gave emphasis on Punjab, Punjabi and *Punjabi*. It changed its stand from state autonomy to cooperative federalism, from religion-ethnic issues to socio-economic development issues. In a nutshell, it can be said that after the reorganization of the state, the struggle for power remained between the two parties i.e. the Congress and the SAD (B)-BJP alliance.

Therefore, present thesis covers the period from 1947 to 1995. The whole study has been organized into five chapters. The first chapter is an introductory description of the present problem. In this introductory chapter, an adequate light is thrown on the significance of the theme and its relevance. A brief analysis of the existing literature on the subject was done. The concept of religion and its changing roles in society discussed as a background to notice the continuity or change in the modern period.

In the second chapter, under the title ‘The Religio-Political Status of Punjab: Historical Background’ examine the historical background of religio-political situation of Punjab as a state in the crisis since the advent of Sikhism till Operation Blue Star in general and the rise of militancy in Punjab in particular. In this chapter, I have tried to know that when the problem arose in Punjab with religion based politics, how the intellectuals (writers) class associated with the issues of Punjab defines this problem through their writings. Punjabi literature clearly reflects the social, cultural and political realism in Punjab between 1984 and 1995. Not only have the writers pictured the blood-curdling realities of the Punjab, but also advocated their rightful solutions demand which were also the demands of common people of Punjab in those days. Thus, undoubtedly, the literature of that time, written by writers, eloquently describes the tragedy of Punjab before us.

The third chapter is written under the title ‘From Anandpur Sahib Resolution to the Emergence of Bhindranwale.’ This chapter deals with the political system for the rapid transformation of Punjab and find out under which circumstances the

Anandpur Sahib Resolution came out, and how and why Bhindranwale insisted on the full implementation of the Anandpur Sahib Resolution. The third chapter specifically deals with the Anandpur Sahib Resolution and the background for the emergence of Bhindranwale.

The Anandpur Sahib Resolution was changed by leaders time to time so this chapter tried to find the answer of the question that why the political leaders change it, and what kind of demands include in it for a change it time to time and what we seemed it as a demand of Khalistan or not. What were the circumstances behind the emergence of Bhindranwale and myth behind his relationship with Congress Party in Punjab is also discussed in this chapter and why Akali leader came with him in Golden Temple complex, was there any strategy behind this motive and how he became the warrior of Punjab is also discussed in it.

Thus, this chapter examines the ‘patterns of political leadership’ facilitating the initial potential for conflict between segments of the Sikh community and the central Indian state. To explain, the Nirankari -Sikh clash of April 1978 catalyzed a number of changing dynamics within internal Sikh politics. In particular, it allowed Sikh ‘radicals’ such as Tohra and Talwandi to challenge the leadership of the ‘moderate’ Badal, and it also precipitated the emergence of ‘extremist’ Sikh leaders and groups such as Bhindranwale, the Dal Khalsa, and the National Council of Khalistan. Some, but not all of these extremist groups were aided and abetted by the Congress (I) in its attempt to weaken the Akali Dal in Punjab and ruin its cordial relationship with the ruling Janata party in the Centre. Later the intensified feud between Talwandi and Badal resulted in the Akali Dal splitting into two separate parties the ‘radical’ Akali Dal (Talwandi) and the ‘moderate’ Akali Dal (Longowal). The ‘radical’ Tohra played a pivotal role in tilting the balance of power within Sikh politics in favour of Badal over Talwandi in order to advance his own personal partisan interests.

Intensified factionalism within the Akali Dal prompted competing Akali leaders, especially the radicals, to look towards the extremists as potential allies in future intra-party power struggles. Collectively, the Akali Dal also began aligning with the ‘extremist’ in order to enhance its power vis-à-vis the Congress (I) Central

government. Thus, the extremists' power and influence in Sikh politics began to increase after the Akalis went out of power, the Congress (I) came into office, and fractionalized Akali leaders began to engage in the process of competitive 'ethnic - outbidding'. These 'patterns of political leadership' would soon intensify and combine with others, leading to the onset of violence and the 'Punjab crisis' which is discussed in next chapter.

The fourth chapter 'Operation Bluestar: The Violent Approach to Secularism' attempts to focus on the events happened after Operation Blue Star. Particularly in this chapter we consider the grim picture of the complex politics of Punjab which ended with the rampant human deaths and destruction as a result of the fusion of religion and politics. This chapter also discussed in detail about what was the circumstances that led to the Operation Blue Star and then how all the political parties changed course for their own selfish interests and played bloody show in Punjab. Operation Blue Star has totally changed the picture of Punjab, so this chapter deals with the changing role of all political parties on militant movement in Punjab after the operation Blue Star. And additionally, it traces the changing ideology of pro-Khalistan Sikhs on the demand of Khalistan. Thus, in this chapter we find that 'the militants' had been completely wiped out and 'the extremists' marginalized within the Sikh community. In contrast, the traditional Akali leadership had united moderated its ideology and emerged clearly dominant, if not hegemonic over the extremists in Sikh politics. It had also fully re-entered the normal democratic political process by participating in a series of local and state elections strategically held by unified ruling state elites from 1993 to 1997. This process had culminated into the formation of an Akali Dal (Badal) BJP state government in Punjab in early 1997. The 'Punjab crisis' was over after nearly two decades of political strife and ethno-nationalist violence, which had threatened the unity of India and cost over 25,000 human lives.

In the fifth chapter under the title 'Narratives by the Local People: Religion, Politics of Fundamentalism and Secularism' an attempt has been made to understand the present phenomenon with the help of field survey. Thus, this chapter was consisting of a field survey to elicit the views of local people on what constituted the problem around religion and politics in Punjab and for whom who was responsible for

Punjab problem. It was also point out that what they think is it possible the separation of religion and politics in Punjab.

Thus, available data on the topic shows that the local people are well aware about the present problem in Punjab. 100% of respondents believed that the Punjab crisis or militancy happened due to the indulgence of religion in politics. 92.38% of respondents agreed that the voters are being fooled in the name of religion during elections. 91.42 % of respondent believed that most of time politicians used religious symbols at the time of elections. 72.38% of respondents observed that all political parties used religion as a tool to gain support from the voters. Whereas 100% of respondents stated that religion and politics always go side by side during elections. 68.57% agreed that religious deras have an impact on politics and 69.52% believed that the religious Gurus played an important role during the elections. 46.66% of people believed that they gave their votes in the name of religion. 100% of respondents agreed that religion was a necessary tool in society because moral values were equally important in politics and 78.57% of people believed that the separation of religion from politics was possible through a appropriate actions.

When we talked to the common people about this issue, we came to know that the common people have been the worst party during the Punjab crisis. They lost many of their beloved ones, their business came to a standstill, the sense of brotherhood disappeared from all the communities and the youth of Punjab was completely derailed and Punjab went back decades, all this happened because of the narrow and selfish purposes of the leaders. While Punjab has been rich for a long time, now it is lagging behind many states. And even today the leaders are filling their pockets by playing the same dirty game and dividing the people. The children of the rich are getting richer and the children of the poor are getting poorer. Drugs are being sold openly in Punjab and leaders are encouraging youth to go to abroad by promoting IELTS in their election manifestos. Rising unemployment is pushing the youth of Punjab to many wrong activities. Intellectuals are also sitting silently and some people are engaged in dirty tricks to make Punjab a separate country.

When people were asked about the solution to this problem, they were given many suggestions. All most all believed that this problem can be solved only by

educating people properly, because after attaining education, a person starts thinking logically. Respondents also believe that caste, race, religion, color etc. should be kept aside and we should live for the welfare of ourselves and our society and if this thinking is adopted by all people including politicians then the solution of such problem will be solved by itself.

We find the solution from local people during writing this chapter as when leaders give us bogus promises or do politics in the name of religion or caste, we should talk to them about issues like rising poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, changing environment, deadly diseases etc. only then will the politicians themselves be forced to leave the old type of politics and come to the politics of issues and help themselves in building a healthy society.

The Indian political elite attempted to create a “secular” India that provided equal status to all religions. A secular state must also inhibit and regulate the continuing attempt by the high priests of religion to impose their views and norms on ordinary men and women. Thus, religion and politics can't be separated completely in India. But voters and politicians must keep looking for the need of the relationship between state and religion.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources:

- Anandpur Sahib Resolutions of 1973 and 1978 (Punjab Archives Patiala)
- Census of India (1971), Government of India.
- Census of India (1981), Government of India.
- Census of India (1991), Government of India.
- Facts about Punjab (1970), Chandigarh: Director, Information and Publicity.
- Index and Abstract of News on Communal Tensions in Punjab (1982), Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development.
- Speeches of Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale (Sikh Reference Library, Inside Golden Temple Complex, Amritsar)
- The Punjab Reorganization Act 1966, Government of India.
- White Paper on Punjab Agitation, Government of India, 1984
- Ravi-Beas Agreement 1981 (Department of Water Resources Punjab)

Books and Articles:

- Adhikari, G. (1945). *Sikh Homeland Through Hindu Sikh Muslim Unity*. Lahore : Sharaf Athar Ali.
- Ahmad, I. (2011). *The Politics of Religion In South and Southeast Asia*. New York: Routledge.
- Alam, M. (1993). *Crisis of Empire in Mughal North India: Awadh and the Punjab 1707-1748*. Delhi: OUP.
- Alexander, P. (2004). *Through the Corridors of Power: An Insiders Story*. Michigan: Harper Collins Publishers.
- Andersen, W. (2019). *Messengers of Hindu Nationalism: How the RSS Reshaped India*. London: Hurst.
- Balabushevich, V. (1964). *A Contemporary History of India*. New Delhi.
- Ballard, R. (1993). The Politicization of Religion in Punjab. In R. Barot, *Religion and Ethnicity: Minorities and Social Change in the Metropolis* (pp. 80-95). The Hague: Kok Pharos.
- Banerjee, I. (1972). *Evaluation of the Khalsa*. Calcutta: A. Mukherjee & Co.
- Berger, P. (1999). *The Desecularization of the World: A Global Overview* . Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing.
- Berger, P. L., & Luckmann, T. (1966). *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*. London: Penguin Books.

- Bingley, A. (1985). *The Sikhs*. Delhi: National Book Shop.
- Brass, P. R. (1990). *The Politics of India Since Independence*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press.
- Brass, P. R. (2013). The Partition of India and Retributive Genocide in the Punjab 1946-47, Means, Methods and Purposes. *Journal of Genocide Research*, 71-101.
- Butalia, U. (1998). *The Other Side of Silence: Voices from the Partition of India*. London: Penguin Books.
- Carr, E. (1991). *What is History*. Landon: Penguin .
- Casanova, J. (1994). *Public Religions in the Modern World*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Chandan, A. (2017). *Unni Sou Churasi*. Ludhiana: Chetna Parkashan.
- Chandra, S. (2007). *History of Medieval India: From 647 A.D. to the Mughal Conquest*. Hyderabad: Orient Black Swan .
- Check, J., & Schutt, R. (2012). *Research Methods in Education*. CA: Sage Publications.
- Chima, J. S. (2010). *The Sikh Separist Insurgency in India: Political Leadership and Ethnonationalist Movements*. New Delhi: Sage Publications.
- Christensen, C. M. (2009). *The Importance of Asking the Right Questions*. Manchester: Southern New Hampshire University.
- Chughtai, M. (1962). The Central National Muhammeden Association: The First All India Muslim Political Organization. *Journal of the Punjab University Historical Society*.
- Cox, H. (1965). *The Secular City*. New York: Macmillan.
- Dang, S. (2000). *Terrorism in Punjab*. New Delhi: Gyan Publishing House.
- Davison, W. P. (n.d.). Public Opinion. *Encyclopedia Britannica*. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/public-opinion>.
- Deed, J. (2002). *Bache Ton Dardi Kavita*. Mohali: Unistar Books Publisher.
- Deol, H. (2000). *Religion and nationalism in India: the case of the Punjab*. New Delhi: Routledge.
- Dhami, M. (1977). Political Parties and State Autonomy Issue: A Case Study of Akali Party. In K. Bombwall, *National Power and State Autonomy* (pp. 144-161). Meerut: Meenakshi Prakashan.
- Dhillon, G. S. (1984). *White Papers on the Punjab Agitation*. New Delhi: Government of India .

- Dhillon, K. (1998). A Decade of Violence. In J. Grewal, & I. Banga, *Punjab in Prosperity and Violence: Administration, Politics and Social Change*. Chandigarh: K.K. Publishers.
- Elder, L. (1995). *Religious Fundamentalism in Indian Politics*. Michigan : Western Michigan University.
- Emmons, R. A., & Paloutzian, R. F. (2013). The Psychology of Religion. *Annual Review of Psychology*.
- Frank, K. (2001). *Indira: The Life of Indira Nehru Gandhi*. Landon: Harper Collins Publishers.
- Gill, K. (1997). *The Knights of Falsehood*. New Delhi: Har-Anand Publications.
- Gill, N. (1986). *Punjab Eighty Four*.
- Gill, N. (n.d.). *Dehshat de Dina Vich*. Chandigarh: Lokgeet Parkashan.
- Gopal, S. (1990). *Anatomy of a confrontation: The Babri Masjid-Ramjanmabhumi issue*. New Delhi: Penguin Books.
- Grewal, J. (1994). *The Sikhs of the Punjab*. New Delhi: Cambridge University Press.
- Grewal, J. (1998). The Akalis and Khalistan. In J. Grewal, & I. Banga, *Punjab in Prosperity and Violence: Administration, Politics and Social Change 1947-1997*. Chandigarh: K.K. Publishers.
- Grewal, J. S. (1998). Sikh Identity, the Akalis and Khalistan. In J. S. Grewal, & I. Banga, *Punjab in Prosperity and Violence: Administration, Politics and Social Change 1947-1997*. New Delhi: K.K Publications.
- Gulhati, N. (1973). *Indus Waters Treaty: An Exercise in International Mediation*. Allied Publishers.
- Hadden, J. K. (1987). Towards Desacralizing Secularization Theory. *Social Forces* , 587-611.
- Hamid, A. (1967). *Muslim Separatism in India*. Karachi: Oxford University Press.
- Hari, B. (1984). Anandpur Sahib Da Mata. In P. Kumar, *Punjab Crisis: Context and Trends* (pp. 14-17). Chandigarh: Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development (CRRID).
- Haynes, J. (1998). *Religion in Global Politics*. London: Longman.
- Husain, A. (1945). *Fazl-i-Husain*. Bombay: Longmans.
- Ikram, S. (1965). *Modern Muslim India and the Birth of Pakistan*. Lahore: Sh. M. Ashraf.
- Jagtar. (2005). *Anmuk Safar*. Ludhiana: Chetna Parkashan.
- Jagtar. (2014). *Har Mod Te Saleeban*. Ludhiana: Chetna Parkashan.

- Jagtar, Brar, J., & Mann, M. (2005). *Patharann Te Turde Lok*. Ludhiana: Chetna Publishers.
- Jain, M. (1965). *The Aligarh Movement*. Agra: Sri Ram Mehra & Co. .
- Jain, S. (1995). *Politics of Terrorism in India : The Case of Punjab*. New Delhi: Deep and Deep.
- Josh, B. (1979). *Communist Movement in Punjab 1926-1947*. Delhi.
- Josh, S. S. (1977). *Akali Morchian Da Itihas*. Delhi: Aarsi Publication.
- Judge, P. S. (1992). *Insurrection to Agitation: The Naxalite Movement in Punjab*. Bombay: Popular Prakashan .
- Judge, P. S. (2005). *Religion, Identity and Nationhood*. New Delhi: Rawat Publications.
- Judge, P. S., & Kaur, M. (2010). The Politics of Sikh Identity: Understanding Religious Exclusion. *Sociological Bulletin*, 345-366.
- Juergensmeyer, M. (2007). From Bhindranwale to bin Laden: a search for understanding. In L. E. Cady, & W. S. Simon, *Religion and Conflict in South and Southeast Asia: Disrupting violence* (pp. 21-29). New York: Routledge.
- Kapur, P. S. (2006). *Master Tara Singh and his Reminiscences*. Amritsar: Singh Brothers.
- Kapur, R. (1988). *Sikh Separtism: The Politics of Faith*. New Delhi: World Book Centre .
- Kaur, H. (1990). *Blue Star Over Amritsar*. New Delhi: Ajanta.
- Kaur, K. (1999). *Akali Dal in Punjab Politics: Splits and Merger*. New Delhi: Deep & Deep Publications.
- Kaur, R. (2021). The Punjab Problem of 1984-1995 and its Depiction in Contemporary Punjabi Literature. *Journal of Sikh & Punjab Studies* , 87-101.
- Kaushal, R. (1999). *Terrorism and Militancy: Case Study of Political Development in the Punjab*. Bhubaneshwar: Kalinga Publishers.
- Khan, S. S. (1859). *Asbab-e-Baghawat-e-Hind*. Oxford: Asia Historical .
- Kumar, P. (1984). *Punjab Crisis: Context and Trends*. Chandigarh: Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development (CRRID).
- Kumar, P., Sharma, M., Sood, A., & Handa, A. (1984). *Punjab Crisis: Context and Trends* . Chandigarh: Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development .
- Madan, T. (1987). Secularism in Its Place. *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 747-759.
- Madan, T. N. (1991). *Religion In India*. Delhi: Oxford University.

- Mahmood, C. K. (1997). *Fighting for Faith and Nation: Dialogues with Sikh Militant*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Majumdar, B. (1965). *Indian Political Associations and Reform of* . Calcutta: Gopal Publishers.
- Malik, N. S. (2012). Formation of the All-India Muslim League and its Response to some Foreign Issues – 1906 – 1911. *Journal of Political Studies*, 171.
- Mann, J. S. (1969). *Some Documents on the Demand for the Sikh Homeland*. Chandigarh.
- Mann, S. K. (2004). *Chadar Hethla Banda*. Ludhiana: Chetna Parkashan.
- Marty, M., & Appleby, R. (1991). *Fundamentalism observed*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Meet, M. S. (1990). *Taftish*. Sirhind: Lokgeet Parkashan.
- Meet, M. S. (2014). *Katehra*. Faridkot: Meet: People's Forum.
- Mehboob, H. S. (1990). *Jhana Di Raat*. Amritsar: Singh Brothers.
- Mehta, J. (1979). *Advanced Study in the History of Medieval India*. Delhi: Sterling Publication Private Limited.
- Michel, A. A. (1967). *The Indus Rivers: A Study of the Effects of Partition*. Yale: Yale University Press.
- Minault, G. (1982). *The Khilafat Movement*. Columbia: Columbia University Press.
- Moyser, G. (1991). *Politics and Religion in the Modern World*. London: Routledge .
- Nandy, A. (1988). The Politics of Secularism and The Recovery of Religious Tolerance. *Sage Journals*, 177-194.
- Narang, A. (1987). Politics of Alienation in Punjab. *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, 541-548.
- Narang, A. (2000). The Punjabi Suba Movement. In H. K. Puri, & P. S. Judge, *Social and Political Movements*. Jaipur: Rawat Publication.
- Narang, K. (1953). *History of the Punjab*. Delhi: U.C. Kapur & Sons.
- Nasrali, B. (2014). *Veehvi Sadi Di Akhri Kavita*. Ludhiana: Chetna Parkashan.
- Nayar, B. R. (1966). *Minority Politics in the Punjab*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Overstreet, M., & Windmiller, G. D. (1959). *Communism in India*. California: University of California.
- Pandey, G. (1993). *Hindus and others: The question of identity in India*. New Delhi : Penguin Press.
- Parwaz, S. I. (1990). *Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan*.

- Pettigrew, D. J. (1995). *The Sikhs of the Punjab: Unheard Voices of State and Guerrilla Violence*. New Jersey: Zed Books.
- Pettigrew, J. (1975). *A Study of the Political System of the Sikh Jat*. London: Routledge and Regal Paul.
- Ponto, J. (2015). Understanding and Evaluating Survey Research. *JADPRO*.
- Punni, A. S. (1988). Punjabi Scene: Two Types. *Indian Literature*, 104-109.
- Puri, H. K., Judge, P. S., & Sekhon, J. S. (2007). *Terrorism in Punjab: Understanding the Grassroots Reality*. New Delhi: Har Anand Publications.
- Rajivlochan, M. (2007). Caste and Religion in Punjab: Case of the Bhaniarawala Phenomenon. *Economic and Political weekly* .
- Rajivlochan, M. (2017, September 10). The Man behind creation of Punjab. *The Man behind creation of Punjab*. Chandigarh, Chandigarh, India: The Tribune .
- Rajivlochan, M. (2020). *Partap Singh Kairon: A Visionary* . New Delhi: Rupa Publications.
- Raza, A. (2020). *Revolutionary Pasts: Communist Internationalism in Colonial India*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press.
- Saberwal, S. (1976). *Mobile Men: Limits to Social Change in Urban Punjab*. Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study Shimla.
- Sandhu, A. H. (2009). Reality of Divide and Rule in British India. *Pakistan Journal of History and Culture* , 60-80.
- Sandhu, R. (1997). *Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale- Life Mission and Martyrdom*. Retrieved.
- Sandhu, R. S. (1999). *Struggle for Justice: Speeches and Conversations of Sant Jarnail Singh Khalsa Bhindranwale*. Punjab Digital Library .
- Sandhu, S. S. (1946). *The Sikhs Demand Their Homeland*.
- Sandhu, W. S. (1987). *Bhajjiyan Bahin*. Ludhiana: Lahore Book Shop.
- Sandhu, W. S. (2014). *Chuthi Koot*. Ludhiana: Chetna Parkashan.
- Sarkar, J. (1932). *Fall of The Mughal Empire*. New Delhi: Black Swan.
- Sarkar, S. (1989). *Modern India 1885-1947*. Delhi: Laxmi Publications.
- Savarkar, V. (1909). *The Indian War of Independance* . Bombay: Sethani Kampani .
- Sharma, D. (1995). *The Punjab Story: Decade of Turmoil*. New Delhi.
- Sharma, M. G. (2021, September 21). In Punjab, Punjabiyat Triumphs Over Religion, Other Fault Lines. *In Punjab, Punjabiyat Triumphs Over Religion, Other Fault Lines*. Chandigarh, Chandigarh, India: The Indian Express.
- Shiva, V. (1991). The Green Revolution in the Punjab . *The Ecologist* , 150-169.

- Singh, A. (2005). *Shiromini Akali* . Kapurthala: Arman Publication.
- Singh, B. J. (1986). *Punjabi Sahit Da Ithas*. Amritsar: Warish Shah Foundation.
- Singh, B. N., & Singh, B. K. (1995). *Rebels Against the British Raj*. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers.
- Singh, G. (1991). The Punjab Problem in the 1990s: A Post 1984 Assessment . *The Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics* 39.
- Singh, G. (1997). *The Singh Sabha and Other Socio- Religious Movements in the Punjab (1850-1925)*. Patiala: Publication Bureau Punjabi University Patiala .
- Singh, G. A. (1977). *The Draft of the Policy Programme of the Shiromani Akali Dal*. Amritsar.
- Singh, G. R. (1979). *The Illustrated History of the Sikhs: 1947-78*. Chandigarh: Akal Printmatics.
- Singh, H. (1945). *Punjab: Homeland of the Sikhs*. Punjab Digital Library .
- Singh, H. (1979). The Sikh Faith and the Nirankaries: A Historical Perspective. In G. Singh, *The Punjab Past and Present* (pp. 220-226). Patiala: Punjabi University Patiala.
- Singh, H. (1983). *The Heritage of the Sikhs*. New Delhi: Manohar Publication.
- Singh, J. (2020). *Rivers on Fire: Khalistan Struggle*. Delhi: Aakar Books.
- Singh, K. (1966). *A History of the Sikhs*. Bombay: Oxford University Press.
- Singh, K. (2006). *Partition of Punjab 1947*. New Delhi: National Book Shop.
- Singh, K., & Nayar, K. (1984). *Tragedy of Punjab: Operation Blue Star and After*. New Delhi: Vision Books.
- Singh, M. (1977). *The Akali Movement*. New Delhi: National Institute of Punjab Studies.
- Singh, P., & Purewal, N. K. (2013). The Resurgence of Bhindranwale's Image in Contemporary Punjab. *Contemporary South Asia*, 133-147.
- Singh, R. I. (2022). *Turmoil In Punjab: Before and After Blue Star: An Insider's Account*. New Delhi: Harper Collins.
- Singh, R. K. (2019, July 4). The Use of Religion in Indian Politics: And the Floundering Pillars of Secularism. Patna, Bihar, India.
- Singh, S. (1996). *The Sikhs in History*. New Delhi: Uncommon Books.
- Singh, T. (1922). *Gurdwara Reform Movement and the Sikh Awakening*. Delhi: Desh Sewak Book Agency .
- Singh, U. (2008). *A History of Ancient and Early Medieval India: From Stone Age to the 12th Century* . New Delhi: Pearson .

- Straits, B., & Singleton, R. (2009). *Approaches to Social Research*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Sukhpal. (2007). *Rehan Kathon Nahin*. Chandigarh: Lokgeet Parkashan.
- Tandon, P. (1963). *Punjabi Century 1857-1947*. Landon: Chatto & Windus.
- Telford, H. (1992). The Political Economy of Punjab: Creating Space for Sikh Militancy. *Asian Survey*, 969-987.
- Tully, M., & Jacob, S. (1985). *Amritsar: Mrs. Gandhi's Last Battle*. New Delhi: Rupa Publications.
- Victor, A. (1986). *Samain Da Sach*. Ludhiana: Chetna Publishers.
- Wallace, P. (1990). Religious and Ethnic Politics: Political Mobilization in Punjab. In F. R. Frankel, & M. Rao, *Dominance and State Power in Modern India: Decline of a Social Order* (p. 439). Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Wallace, P. (1993). The Regionalization of Indian Electoral Politics 1989-90: Punjab and Haryana. In H. A. Gould, & S. Ganguly, *India Votes: Alliance Politics and Minority Governments in the Ninth and Tenth General Elections* (pp. 144-148). Boulder CO: Westview Press.
- Wallace, P. (1995). Political Violence and Terrorism in India: The Crisis of Identity. In M. Crenshaw, *Terrorism in Context* (pp. 352-409). Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press.
- Zafar, J. (1993). *Do Sahan Vichkaar*. Ludhiana: Chetna Publishers.
- Zoves, J. (2000). *The Emergence of Hindu Nationalism in India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.



**CHANGING ROLE OF RELIGION IN THE POLITICS OF
PUNJAB IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE 20TH CENTURY**

A THESIS

**Submitted to the
PANJAB UNIVERSITY, CHANDIGARH
For the Award of**

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

2022

in

FACULTY OF ARTS

BY

RAJWINDER KAUR

GUIDE

Prof. M. Rajivlochan

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

PANJAB UNIVERSITY

CHANDIGARH, INDIA

CONCLUSION

In the preceding chapters, an attempt has been made to study the changing role of religion in the politics of Punjab in the second half of the 20th Century. It is important to note that the role of religion in the modern world has been thoroughly reconstituted, so much so that religious debates and conflicts are no longer primarily waged over matters of belief, or the cosmological or transcendental references, as they once were; it is instead religion as the basis of identity and indentitarian cultural practices – with co-religionists constituting a community, nation, or civilization – that came to dominate public imagination and often constituted one of the most effective axis of political mobilization. India is a strongly religious country. Yet its political orientation has been committed to a form of secularism, no matter how one defines or understands it. Yet, the history of independent India, its creation on the basis of Partition of the sub-continent along religious lines, the contestations about the metaphors of religiosity in political life, the re-emergence of confessional parties since the mid eighties, had kept the role of religion in politics of the state an active issue.

This study is a selective attempt to address this question. It investigated the history and politics of Punjab state that resulted from the partition of India. The results of this investigation validate the central hypothesis: Religion worked as a key factor in shaping the political agenda of political parties in general and ideological based parties in particular in independent India. But the manner in which parties used religion depended on the context in which they were placed and their acceptability with the people.

The Punjab region was under Hindu rule for centuries, but then came under Islamic dominance for five hundred years. The Sikh religion was founded by Guru Nanak (1469 – 1539) and shaped by his nine successors in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in Punjab. The Sikh believes in the faith that politics and religion are inseparable. In the historical evolution of the Sikhs, they have had to deal with three forms of state power, the Mughal Monarchical state, the British colonial

state and the Hindu majority Indian nationalist state. They have collaborated with, as well as revolt against these three state forms depending upon the conjuncture of forces. Politics of religion in Punjab is exceedingly complex. The overwhelming majority of the followers of Sikhism emanate from the field of Hinduism. Hindus tended to look upon Sikhism as one of its own seats. The basis philosophical elements of Sikhism are the results of fusion of Islam and Hinduism. Yet, Sikhs are conscious of their differences vis-à-vis the Hindus, and over the years, this sense of difference has often assumed political overtones. Class has played a vital role in Punjab politics. The rural Sikhs benefited from the British interests in agriculture and the reservations of jobs for them especially in the army. The Sikh urban commercial sections had interests that were common with those of Hindu middle classes. To begin with they join hands with them and even cooperated with Arya Samaj. Soon, however, competition for jobs and the policy of reservations on communal basis in the elected bodies by the British government made them conscious of the needs for consolidation of communal identity. However, since the bulk of the Sikh community was agriculturalists, the urban Sikhs found that the only way to get latter's support would be to employ religious symbols. Thus was organized the 'Singh Sabha Movement' in the late nineteenth century and early part of the twentieth century to promote among the Sikhs as a modern sense of Self-consciousness and identity. Singh Sabha stressed that Sikhs were not Hindus and focused on weeding out remnants of Hinduism from Sikhism. Thus the feelings of sub-national identity became strengthen from the. This new identity was partially cemented into institutional and organizational form during the Gurudwara Reform Movement of 1920s. During this movement the Shiromoni Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC) was established and subsequently, the Akali Dal political party was formed. The Akali Dal emerged as an important political party with the 1925 Act. Institutionally, the SGPC and the Akali Dal have been at the core of Sikh politics and have been the self proclaimed representatives of Khalsa Panth (Sikh Community) interest. In March 1946, Alkali Dal declared Sikhs as a nation and adopted a resolution to protect Sikh economic, religious and cultural rights. Akali leaders gave up these demands only upon promises from Congress leaders that Sikh would have special status in independent India. Punjab after independence, involved in the partition, saw the emigration of almost entire Muslim population to

Pakistan, and the immigration of the almost entire Sikh population from the west Punjab to the Indian Punjab.

Sikh politics after independence was also based professedly on Sikh identity. This freed them from Muslim domination but in itself the partition could not solve their problems. They had to pursue their old concerns in the Indian union. After independence, in its national integration policy the Indian state tried to project a 'corporate identity' and in such a process it had tried to incorporate various minority ethnic groups to form a nation-state. Due to its state and nation-building compulsions whenever the state tried to intervene in the matters of the community, Sikhs reacted vigorously against it. By and large Sikh problems are more psychological, as they are economic and political. The identity crisis probably has been the most significant dimension of the problem. The more the commonality, the louder had been the protest by Sikh fundamentalists, which resulted in deepening of the crisis further. Sikhs on various platforms had lamented that Hindus have made every effort to absorb them. On the other hand with the help of persuasive misinformation and disinformation the state projected to the rest of the nation, the Sikh ethnic minority as an enemy within although Sikhs had always considered itself as an integral part of the Indian nation. The Sikhs were systematically alienated and isolated to such an extent that almost every Sikh questioned whether there is any future in the nation for the community. It is also a fact that the declining standards of public life in Punjab owe a great deal to the political ambitions of a few prominent Sikh leaders of the ruling Congress party and to an ongoing power struggle between them. Corrupted by its culture and operating from under the party umbrella they helped to destroy the decency and dignity of state's political life. In the process, they also destroyed the enduring warmth between the Hindus and the Sikhs. Tracing the developments leading to the Sikh dilemma we find that there is no single and simple answer. The most responsible factor was the galloping growth of political expediency in the last decades of twentieth century. The Congress party which had been in power for most of that period can be held responsible for having set the pattern of an 'unprincipled electoral policy' of survival at any cost, even at the cost of destroying the country's democratic base. Due to such a policy in June, 1984 as a result of Operation Blue Star, Sikh perceptions were convulsed into a form, no one could dream of earlier. The contagion

of such type of perceptions has reached out to touch all communities formulating a sense of deep concern into the national mood regarding their future. India's real politik is self destructive in the sense that it is intolerant of diversity. It has been encouraged by deliberately cultivated bogey that diversity is coterminous with disintegration and a natural pride in one's ethnic identity is anti-national. In the name of national integration pressure to conform on religious and ethnic minorities is increasing. The national mainstream is seen not as a confluence of various cultures which enriched the Indian scene, but is viewed by the majority as essentially the 'Hindu Sanskriti.' It is in this perception that the sense of alienation is felt by the people of the North-East, Kashmir and other parts of India, explaining why after all these years the spirit of insurgency lives on. Hindu fundamentalism is accepted by the majority (Hindu) community as its right in contrast to the Sikh and Muslim assertions which are projected not as religious manifestations but as political threats to national integration.

India's national leaders had to confront several language problems in the first two decades of independence. These problems included the official language issue, demands for the linguistic reorganization of the provinces of India whose boundaries during British rule didn't conform to linguistic divisions, and the status of minority languages within reorganized states. The process of linguistic reorganization of states in India was prolonged and divisive.

The Akali Dal has been historically a 'Sikh party.' In spite of this its political demands always outnumbered its religious ones and have been consistently 'Punjabi' and not totally 'Sikh' in character. Its carefully cultivated Sikh image was a response to the failure of the Congress to protect minority interests. To the Sikhs, this became clear in 1951 census itself when following the intense Arya Samaj campaign Punjabi Hindus disowned Punjabi as their mother tongue. This single gesture injected the virus of communalism permanently into Punjab politics. It strengthened the Akali Dal's claim to be the sole representative of Sikh interests and it aggravated the Sikh concerns about the submerging of their identity by the overwhelming Hindu majority culture. Here it is to be kept in mind that Arya Samaj movement itself was the Hindu reaction to the apprehensions aroused by a wave of Christian conversions. Playing the

old game of divide and rule the Congress strategy directed from New Delhi has been to split the Punjab electorate by encouraging both Sikh and Hindu communalism and exploiting factional divisions within Akali Dal.

In 1952, the Akali Dal issued a memorandum pressing for the establishment of a culturally similar Punjabi speaking Suba. For the Punjab case, the most important difference is the fact that Sikhs are a separate religious as well as linguistic group. However, the basis of the state was supposed to be linguistic. The States Reorganization Commission formed in 1953, rejected the memorandum on the ground that Punjabi language is not significantly different from Hindi. The rejection of Akali demands prompted the party to launch the agitation demanding Punjabi Subha. After a long political unrest, in 1966, Punjabi Subha finally conceded by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. The reconstitution of the new states of Punjab came along with the introduction of capitalism in Punjab agriculture. The Akali movement for creation of a Punjabi speaking state was not entirely based on its concern for the Punjabi language or the Sikh religion. Although Sikh religious revivalism and political extremism became overlapping phenomena in the 1980s, they arose in the late 1970s for different reasons.

The Congress party enjoyed the monopoly of power in Punjab since independence to the reorganization of the state on the linguistic basis in 1966. The Congress Party won all the three parliamentary elections and assembly elections of 1952, 1957 and 1962 with the thumping majority. The Akali Dal was the other important regional party, but it was unable to control the political power alone. However it merged into the Congress in 1948 and 1956, but got separated when its political goals were not fulfilled. The issue of Punjabi Suba dominated the political scene of Punjab in this era which was a period of turbulent agitations. One thing is important that the leadership of Akali Dal underwent a significant change as it went into the hands of the rural Jat Sikh Sant Fateh Singh from Master Tara Singh, an urban Sikh. The reorganization of the state brought several structural changes in demography, economic, cultural and political sphere. The most important change was that the Sikhs became a majority community in the state. This demographic change also transformed the electoral scenario in terms of support base of the political parties

especially the Akali Dal. The Akali Dal emerged as a powerful political party. It gave the challenge to the dominant Congress party in the state. It ended the monopoly of the Congress by making the coalition government with BJS (now BJP) and other political parties. Simultaneously the advent of Green Revolution in state brought the prosperity in the state. It affected the social, economic and political structure of the state and raised the expectation in the society a whole. But this momentum lost in between due to the lack of farsightedness on the part of political leadership. Though prosperity ushered in the Green Revolution, but it was largely skewed to the rich peasantry class. According to some political analysts, it became one of the reasons which pushed the state into political turmoil especially in 1980's and early 1990's.

Thus, use of religion in politics was not a new phenomenon in the politics of Punjab. This strategy continued throughout the 'Punjabi Suba' agitation and after the Congress projected the then unknown Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale against moderate Akali leaders, which resulted in the bloody Punjab imbroglio. And in the other hand, after the defeat of Akali Dal in 1971 general election and 1972 Assembly Elections, it raised the demand of state autonomy in the form of Anandpur Sahib Revolution. Moreover, the Akali Dal raised the 'Panthic issues' for mobilizing the Sikh voters in order to retrieve political power again. The Akali Dal vehemently opposed the Emergency imposed by Indira Gandhi. As a reaction, Indira Gandhi took the arbitrary decisions regarding the river waters which created the hostility between the Punjab & its neighbouring states and is still an unresolved issue in Punjab politics. The emergence of Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale in late 1970's posed a direct challenge to the Akali Dal.

Centre government's covert support to splinter and fringe groups amongst the Sikhs like the Nirankaris was also part of the broader game plan. The clash in Amritsar in 1978 between the Nirankaris and Bhindranwale's supporters was directly linked to it and was its bloody manifestation. It later on triggered the entire sequence of events leading to 'Operation Blue Star'. From 1980, when Congress came to power up to Operation Blue Star, events unrolled with great dynamism and velocity. Many opposition leaders, journalists and concerned Punjabis who made intensive efforts on their part to bring about a settlement have reported that Indira Gandhi and her

government didn't want a solution. Repeatedly whenever the negotiations were on the verge of success, the government reneged with some excuse or the other. These reports totally contradicted the government's claim reiterated in its 'White Paper on Punjab Agitation' that the Akalis were responsible for each aborted attempt. From 1979 to 1983, the Congress government actively magnified the image of Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale. In the next three years after 1980, Congress gave a helping hand in mounting his formidable challenge to the moderate Akali leadership. Playing the old game of divide and rule, the Congress strategy directed from New Delhi had been to split the Punjab electorate by encouraging both Sikh and Hindu communalism. Simultaneously the Congress projected Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale against moderate Akali leaders. But in real sense Indira Gandhi was riding a 'tiger.' Bhindranwale was a part of the grand design of the mandarins around her. This 'tiger' which they had nurtured themselves on was the one which got out of control later on and took to independent course of action. It ended up in control but took the country towards spiraling successive tragedies. The government's failure to prosecute Bhindranwale in the murders of Lala Jagat Narain and Nirankari chief Baba Gurbachan Singh has never been explained. Bhindranwale on the other hand became a cult figure in reviving the separate identity and ethnic existence of the Sikhs. He emerged as the main champion of Sikh grievances. The crisis of identity was the main concern from which Bhindranwale fermented such hatred for Hindus. His fundamentalism was founded on the fear of 'Hinduism' assimilating Sikhism in the long run. There was important section of Sikh community identified with the Akali Dal which saw 'modernism' that came with prosperity of Green Revolution, as a menace to their faith and a threat to their identity. It alarmed the orthodox section of the community. Beside it there was looming old threat of Hinduism. Orthodox Sikhs had a good reason to fear Hinduism. Sikhs being less than two percent of India's total population and eighty percent of them concentrated in Punjab. As such on the one hand they form a very small minority in India. On the other hand although caste and other factors divide the Hindu community, Hinduism on all the occasions had shown remarkable ability to influence and many times absorb rival faiths. Buddhism virtually disappeared from India although India was the land of its birth. Hinduism absorbed Buddhism converting them into an incarnation of 'Vishnu'. Jainism was also born in

India. It also met a similar fate but fared little better than Buddhism. When in 1978 Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale came on the scene; he took the center stage with his radical speeches and his way of working. The Khalistan movement has been associated with Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale more than with anyone else. He stressed again and again the separation of the Sikhs from Hindus and distinctiveness of their religion and scripture and against alleged actions to absorb Sikhs into Hinduism. He demanded therefore, that a constitutional amendment be passed recognizing the Sikhs explicitly as a separate community in India. He urged Sikhs to carry arms and to be prepared to use them 'to protect' their faith. As to bear arms was a religious duty of the Sikhs. The choice of arms was not confined to the 'Kirpan' (sword) as one of the five obligatory symbols. The choice was extended to modern weapons, which also carried the implication that they were meant to be actually used. The use of physical force was for him a legitimate part of religion because Sikhs subscribe to the idea that it is legitimate to use force when all other means have failed. His movement is looked upon as 'secessionist' as well as militant. On the eve of the Operation Blue Star when the Akali leaders were in favour of a settlement with government, he refused to agree to anything less than Anandpur Sahib Resolution. Thus an impression was created; particularly in the Sikh youth that while the Akalis were rebuffed by New Delhi the Central government did not dare to touch Bhindranwale. Sant Harchand Singh Longowal – president of Akali Dal consistently opposed the cult of violence and asked for peaceful means to solve the pending issues. Bhindranwale was never a member of Akali Dal but to counteract his strong violent challenge the Akalis themselves were forced to adopt more extreme postures in later periods. Police repression along with faked encounters in which many Sikh youngsters were killed following the increasing number of terrorist's murders of both Hindus and Sikhs further charged the atmosphere. The moderate Akalis started the 'Dharam Yudh Morcha' to press their so called demands. But unable to persuade the government to stop the 'repression' in the state, the Akali moderates slowly and steadily lost credibility with the Sikh masses. In the mean time Bhindranwale's influence grew and he 'high jacked' the 'Dharam Yudh Morcha' from their hands. For its part, the government also seemed bent on doing everything to alienate the Sikhs. A humiliating treatment was given to them by Haryana police during New Delhi Asian

Games in 1982 while passing through Haryana. No Sikh was spared, not even women or VIPs. For the first time Sikhs felt that they were suspects just because they were 'Sikhs.' Very few non-Sikhs protested against it, newspapers were silent. Neither any member of the government or of the ruling party said a word of criticism even though Congress Sikh MPs had been deliberately insulted. Not unnaturally, the majority of the Sikhs took this silence as tacit approval of police behavior. This incident was the inauguration of the community's isolation. Akalis were helplessly trapped between government's insidious policy towards a solution and challenge of Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale. The Akalis sensed that they were being pushed to the point of no return. To avoid any direct or violent confrontation they desperately wanted that the government should strengthen their position by accepting at least one of their major demands e:g the transfer of Chandigarh to Punjab which Indira Gandhi had earlier conceded. But giving any mileage to them didn't fit in with the strategy of the government at centre. It is widely believed that Indira Gandhi never forgave the Akalis for their resistance against her emergency and she was determined to destroy them politically. The post-emergency defeat of the Congress at the general elections had shaken the Congress party to its very foundations. In its reappraisal a new electoral arithmetic based on majority 'Hindu vote' as the safest vote bank took over. It coincided with the growing Hindu fundamentalism. In this situation the 'Hindu vote' became the 'holy grail' for the Congress (I). This Hindu vote factor ruled out any settlement with the Akalis, keeping the Lok Sabha elections in mind. It was thrust by taking into account the agenda of national integration. The goal demanded deliberate polarization of the Hindu community by terming the Sikhs as a dangerous threat to the majority. As such coinciding with the discrediting of the Badal-Longowal leadership through repeated negotiations, a fierce debate was launched in the media regarding 'Khalistan', Sikh traditions as well as history and the Sikh sense of identity. This campaign of deliberate dis-information to malign the entire community continued until the Rajiv-Longowal Accord in August 1985 although it persisted later on also. Khalistan until then was a concept taken seriously only by a small fragment of the Sikhs. But the Centre deliberately made it into a burning issue and discussed as if it was the accepted ambition of the majority of the Sikhs. The Home Minister and the other government representatives stated vehemently and repeatedly that

government could never accept Khalistan. The question was raised by the Akalis that who was demanding Khalistan? Akali leaders repeatedly went on making it clear time and again that Akali Dal never asked for a separate Sikh state and the Sikhs had committed themselves to the Indian union in 1947 and now also stood by their commitment. They explained at length that they wanted only the review of Center State relations in context of greater autonomy of states all over India. They charged that government itself was talking of 'Khalistan'. But their voices were deliberately ignored and they were accused of pretending being nationalists and of ambiguity. Instead the demand of alleged Sikh separatism was in good way traced back to the pre-partition bargaining tactics of the Akali leaders which they had made in order to stop the creation of Pakistan. The disinformation campaign described the Sikh sense of identity as a British creation during colonial rule, claiming that if the British would not have laid stress on the difference between Sikhs and Hindus, Sikhism would have relapsed back into the Hindu fold. The vilification of Sikh history and Sikh traditions continued. Angry Sikh historians repudiated the 'slandorous' attacks made on them. These attacks on concepts and traditions which were deeply rooted in their faith and in which the Sikhs took great pride, provoked deep hurt and anger. Where it suited, Sikh community's military traditions were brushed aside as another British creation related to artificial concept of 'martial races.' It has been said that, as always, distortion of history and of truth has been a destructive weapon in the psychological warfare and the same was applied here in the context of Sikhs. Even the Green Revolution was attributed to government's massive investment inputs and not to Sikh enterprise and hard work. This disinformation campaign served its dual purpose. On the one hand it made the entire Sikh community suspect all over the country on the other hand it increasingly alienated the Sikhs from the national mainstream. Whole of the process was planned and executed in such a way so as to destroy the very 'ethos' of the community to maximum extent. After the killing of DIG police – A.S. Atwal in 1983, the situation in Punjab deteriorated rapidly. Atwal's murder was a perfect moment to stop the Bhindranwale with a minimum of casualties but the government chose to do nothing and it let the situation to aggravate. Later on the government in New Delhi was projected as a strong government who finally took action through 'Operation Blue Star' for the unity of the country. It was skillfully done through

calculated dissemination of misinformation and disinformation. The immediate reaction all over India to Operation Blue Star was praise for 'strong government' which saved the nation. Certain political scientists had pointed out that the uprisings and assertions in Tamil Nadu and Telengana revolt in south India created no turmoil in the north but the alleged Sikh secessionism totally traumatized the south; all due to the propaganda machinery of the Centre. Actually the government had created in 'extremists' its own 'Frankenstein', as such it lost control of events during later periods. Between April 1983 and May 1984 law and order deteriorated in Punjab to the point where administration was completely demoralized, the government seemed paralyzed in spite of 'President's Rule' from New Delhi. In order to cover up its misdeeds the Centre launched a full scale military assault on the Golden Temple in June, 1984. It made a great impact on Sikh psyche. The attack had no parallel in country's history. Its consequences are still to be counted. The Golden Temple has unique place in Sikh psyche. It is more than just a place of pilgrimage for the Sikhs. The temple for them is a symbol of Sikhism which had been destroyed repeatedly by enemies of the faith, to be reconstructed every time 'phoenix-like' from its ruins. Each time the Sikhs rebuild it with their own hands and it became a symbol of their strength, their pride and self-respect. The Blue Star attack and the destruction of the deeply revered 'Akal Takhat' through it was an assault on their faith as well as their dignity and honour. The aggravated Sikh anger and pain this time was qualitatively different from the eighteenth century destruction of Golden Temple by foreign invaders. The June 1984 attack was mounted against them by their own government. It was the first instance of its type in India's history when a full scale military operation was mounted by the armed forces of the country against fellow Indians. This attack in a major way also legitimized the assault on religious shrines – an act which the Indian psyche had always revolted. 'Doordarshan' in its national network, which extends every nook and corner of the country, repeatedly showed the fortifications inside the temple and the cache of arms allegedly seized by the army. Under the then prevailing scenario it was hardly questioned that how these preparations were possible under the very eyes of para-military forces and government intelligence agencies, which held the Golden Temple under constant surveillance for over past six months preceding Operation Blue Star. A wave of 'state

terrorism' was let loose on innocent young men and their families. With draconian 'Black laws' operative in the state containing every small village, the state was under a 'total emergency' supported by continued censorship and restriction of movement. Many eminent persons outside Punjab warned that 'state terrorism invariably breeds terrorism' but New Delhi remained unconcerned and didn't paid any heed to it. The Sikhs had got alienated after Operation Blue Star and more so after their massacre in November 1984 that taking to violent methods seemed to be the only alternative. The Sikhs could not really understand the meaning and the purpose of the Operation Blue Star and the allied incidents; except surmising that it was designed to desecrate their most sacred complex and to 'teach them a lesson'. This fact was later confirmed by their large scale massacre in November 1984 in various parts of the country. The sayings of Bhindranwale which he conveyed at various gatherings had come true. The Delhi incidents also proved beyond doubt the involvement of Congress (I) party in killing of the Sikhs. The Delhi police and other security forces not only stood mute witnesses but many of them actively helped the 'hooligans'. Amidst this confusion in the Sikh's mind and continuous state violence their psyche underwent drastic transformation especially with regard to their characterization of the Indian state. No doubt they used to launch protests against their victimization by the state, but they gave due regard to its framework and operated within that framework. It was for the first time they thought that the state did not belong to them and it no longer owned them. They compared it to Mughal rule. It being referred as 'Islamic state' then and now it was regarded as 'Hindu state.' They thought that like the former the latter too was disposed towards decimating them. Here it will be sappriopriate to quote Ishtiaq Ahmed that they did consider earlier their separate ethnic identity from Hindus (Singh Sabha movement in late nineteenth century) but always conceived them as 'inclusive others' as part of the older family pitted against Muslims. But after June and November 1984 it became clear to the Sikhs that Hindus constitute an 'exclusive other'. Their confusion and alienation against the Indian state were later streamlined by the Sikh militants. The Sikhs were repeatedly warned by the Sikh militant organizations that this happened to them because they were 'Sikhs'. This self categorization reconstructed the 'Hindu other' who ruled at the center hence it was termed as 'Hindu Sarkar' and 'Hindu Raj.' They had never felt insecure till November

1984, as far as their mobility outside Punjab was concerned. Now they were not only conscious of their identity but also alert while moving out of Punjab. The Operation Blue Star and the massacre of the Sikhs in Delhi and other parts of India in November 1984 had sent shock waves throughout the Sikh community across the world.

During freedom struggle Rabinder Nath Tagore had returned his title (Sir.) and Gandhi also discarded the 'western dresses' in protest against the British policies. Similarly the Sikhs of different hues after Operation Blue Star returned their honours and decorations given to them by Indian government. The '*Padam Shrees*' were returned, numerous senior bureaucrats resigned from their lucrative posts in IFS, IAS, IPS and other allied services. The Sikhs started taking 'amrit' on large scale, wearing black and saffron turbans at various gathering as markers of protest and showing defiance to the Indian state. The Indian state which up to now like a strong guardian had kept the family united, now fell on the 'others' side and hence termed as partisan. The problem of 'recognizing' and 'accommodating' the necessary autonomies and rights of defined social 'collectivities' or 'segments', e.g. ethnic, regional, linguistic or religious, is one of the major items of the contemporary politics of states and international organizations. But the government on its part in the states and at the Centre has pursued a policy of resistance and confrontation, punctuated at times by accommodation. The Indian state responded to the demands of the Sikhs with a politically manipulative approach. It did not try to analytically search out the root cause of the problem.

Not that the Akalis (representing Sikh cause) were any better, they had also demonstrated the same kind of unprincipled electoral opportunism. Both the Congress and the Akalis lost initiative and made room for theocratic fundamentalist movement with all its resultant consequences. This failure to tackle the demands of the Sikhs entered as a factor in the rise of militancy associated with the movement for Khalistan. Without properly understanding of the Anandpur Sahib Resolution; it being termed as a secessionist document and with the help of persuasive misinformation and disinformation spread by the Centre, a 'chimeric' image of the Sikh fanaticism was created before the populace. At the same time there was subordination of local political considerations to national ones by the ruling Congress.

It also involved a lessened sensitivity to local ethnic, regional, and religious sentiments. In the case of the Punjab, a willingness to exploit religious fundamentalist appeals without regard for the broader consequences was main agent for Punjab crisis. The genuine ethnic demands being relegated to the background. Beside this the planning process and the redistribution of resources on part of Indian state were not so favourable for Punjab. At the same point of time due to advent of Green Revolution, the major share of profit went to the landed aristocracy or Zamindars. Small farmers were further marginalized. Unemployment problem was there among educated graduates on the eve of the beginning of the Punjab crisis in 1978. Due to negligible industrial share given by the Centre there were not major employment avenues for the youth who later thought it 'moral right' to get their dues through the barrel of the gun. During the growth of militancy and even prior to that, state was rather relaxed if not indifferent to the brewing up crisis in the earlier phases itself. Vigilance on the part of local administration could have avoided the confrontation between the Sikhs and the Nirankaris in Amritsar. The mishandling of that case and not finding any one guilty of thirteen murders must be taken as the weaknesses of the state and it was thought to be conniving with the accused; as strongly believed by the Sikhs of different hues. The inefficiency of the local and the state administration could also be seen in the inept handling of the Hindu-Sikh riots throughout Punjab. This indifference and inefficiency on the part of state administration was later reversed. The gearing up of legal, administrative, repressive and ideological apparatus of the state; huge diversion of public funds to Punjab to contain militancy etc were an act of 'empowerment' of its structures compared to their earlier 'underperformance'. The under compliance of the first phase was replaced by over- domination of the last phase. 'Both situations were an aberration in the normal functioning of a liberal democratic state.' The militants too grew more consistent in their actions over time. The loose and random killing became more targeted and specific. The militants undoubtedly responded more to the oppressive measures of the state, but they also did try to introduce socio-cultural reforms; not only to legitimize their actions, but also for realization of the formation of an 'alternative Sikh society.' Whatever be the compulsions of political and administrative nature of the state, it must execute its powers in such a way that negative and unintended consequences are minimal. The Indian state didn't try to

behave in that manner when it tried to settle the Punjab problem even through force. It defied all military and police codes of conduct and norms. This not only agitated Sikh masses but also resulted in indiscipline and loss of values in the security forces throwing away all professional ethos. 'Law keepers became law breakers'. As the intensity of movement picked up it scared the police. The police resorted to counter insurgency measures through undercover spotters, the 'black cats' and later '*kale kachian wale*'. Some of these infiltrated the militant ranks while others indulged in criminal activities in their names thus defaming their organizations. Pettigrew puts it that police seized the letter pads of the militant organizations and started carrying out robberies and rape in their name. Such activities like supporting one group against other were resorted to by the police to create chaos in the militant ranks quiet successfully. Sikh militancy during most part of the 1980's possessed all the characteristics and well known features of a politically oriented separatist movement. But subsequently and gradually it degenerated into pure and simple criminal terrorism, all maneuvered by state. The state in order to cover up its misadventures and to prove its legitimacy tried to take tactical course of action. It was facilitated through police infiltration into the terrorist groups in a major way – it turned the people totally against the militants. The flow of intelligence improved and soon it became a torrent. Another important factor which considerably improved the operational capabilities of the Punjab police was its reorientation, modernization and reorganization on the recommendation of high powered committee of experts. There was polishing and perfection of strategies through which the state got spectacular results in early 1990's. One of the main factors for the success was also tremendous response from the people themselves, in the form of intelligence and co-operation at the time, when militancy had lost its ideological base and degenerated into pure and simple criminal activity. The assembly elections in 1992 were boycotted by the Akali factions. Congress government was elected on minority vote, as low as ten percent of the electorate. In office, the government rediscovered the missing 'political will' in a sufficient measure, seriously to eliminate militancy trusted upon the state. It let the police act effectively, ruthlessly and even unlawfully. If necessary, existing laws were amended. New laws enacted to plug up loopholes. Police was given unprecedented freedom from legal and democratic accountability, if they show clear results. They

were free to resort to any means if possible, many times taking extra-legal course of action to eliminate the challenge of militancy. The people were also fed up as the movement had lost its ideological direction and appeal. Feeble protests by some human rights and civil liberties organizations were ignored or suppressed. The police and security forces claimed greater success, with the strategy of systematic pursuit of select militant leaders and activists. This policy succeeded in bringing down the level of violence. The violent phase of Sikh assertions, which had started in late 1970's remained rigorous up to early 1990's. Ultimately by 1992-93 the movement was suppressed by the state. In tune with most of the decolonized states, the Indian state had given priority to 'nation-building' after independence. But this policy had not been properly administered with an 'accommodationist approach'. As a result it has produced conflict and violence on large scale. Indian society is ethnically heterogeneous and the state is being administered through single administrative setup with a strong centre. Being underdeveloped the state has minimal resources in hand and it has unable to meet the aspirations and demands of various sections of people within its territory. As it has been unable to cater to the needs of the people, they are trying to fulfill them through their community identities. This inability of the state elites to fulfill the developmental needs and genuine demands of the minority groups has led to the decline in the 'state authority' which had adversely affected the state sponsored process of nation building. It is being challenge by counteracting ethno-nationalism. Without going in for 'integrationist approach' in nation-building for its plural society the state has taken recourse to 'assimilationist policy' towards various minority identities. As such in order to give itself a 'corporate identity' the state had tried to assimilate various ethnic minorities present in it. On many occasions it has tried to distort and prevail upon the separate identities of these groups. It has tried to impose its homogenizing ideology; that of majority dominant group controlling the state apparatus. In the process it has often questioned the separate ethnic existence of these groups and failed to accept them as separate entities e:g Sikhs, Jains and Bodhis are termed as part of 'Hinduism'. Due to such a flawed approach the minorities had felt threatened and alienated to a great extent. They have resisted and reacted against, what Gurnam Singh had termed as 'assimilationist policies and homogenous processes in a hegemonic mould' of the state. The Sikhs have been in the forefront to

resist such maneuvers of the Indian state. After independence when the Akalis, having moderate approach for the furtherance of their demands asked for various 'identity group rights' the state took recourse to 'evasive methods' to resist their demands. When the Sikhs took to a radical and violent stand for their separate identity existence, the state, with the help of its vast resources and state apparatus reacted with much violent recourse. In the process its own 'legitimacy' was affected. Due to such a policy on various fronts, today the Indian state is under the seize of forces of fission from within. Since the Indian state has been slowly and steadily losing its legitimacy, it has become less autonomous and more constrained over the years. The state has failed to create a psychological desire in all communities for a sense of security and confidence which had affected the fostering of a feeling of harmony and brotherhood between different sections of the society. Ethnicity and religion on certain occasions had shown its capacity to challenge the authority of the Indian state. Insensitive to the sensitivities of various minority identities, the state has usually taken recourse to 'confrontationist approach' with its coercive state apparatus. In Punjab, the response of the state to the challenge thrown by extremists Sikhs who controlled Golden Temple at Amritsar can be termed as wrong because the state underestimated the power of religious and ethnic bonding in the Indian society. In the clash between the ethnic identity of the Sikhs and the approach of Indian state, the state lost the ground due to its flawed approach in handling of such situations. The entry of the army in the Golden Temple, whether it was legitimate or not turned the tables totally against the state and the acts of omission and commission of the armed group of the Sikhs holding their most sacred shrine were forgotten as well as forgiven by the Sikhs. Result being Indian state emerged weaker and loser in its dealing with the demands of the Sikhs and other communities as well who feared same kind of treatment at the hands of state.

It deeply affected the Punjab politics especially the electoral politics in Punjab. The factionalism within the Akali Dal and its confrontation with Sikh radical organizations as well as with the Centre could not solve the Punjab tangle. In the last decade of the 20th century, Punjab again underwent a major change as the normalcy was restored by the Congress government led by the then Chief Minister Beant Singh. On the other side in Akali politics, the faction led by Parkash Singh Badal emerged as

the dominant faction which controlled the power in the state in 1997 and 2007 by making an alliance with the BJP. The Akali Dal shifted their stance from Sikh identity to Punjab identity, from the demand of Khalistan to peace. After the Moga convention in 1996, the SAD (B) gave emphasis on Punjab, Punjabi and *Punjabi*. It changed its stand from state autonomy to cooperative federalism, from religion-ethnic issues to socio-economic development issues. In a nutshell, it can be said that after the reorganization of the state, the struggle for power remained between the two parties i.e. the Congress and the SAD (B)-BJP alliance.

Therefore, present thesis covers the period from 1947 to 1995. The whole study has been organized into five chapters. The first chapter is an introductory description of the present problem. In this introductory chapter, an adequate light is thrown on the significance of the theme and its relevance. A brief analysis of the existing literature on the subject was done. The concept of religion and its changing roles in society discussed as a background to notice the continuity or change in the modern period.

In the second chapter, under the title ‘The Religio-Political Status of Punjab: Historical Background’ examine the historical background of religio-political situation of Punjab as a state in the crisis since the advent of Sikhism till Operation Blue Star in general and the rise of militancy in Punjab in particular. In this chapter, I have tried to know that when the problem arose in Punjab with religion based politics, how the intellectuals (writers) class associated with the issues of Punjab defines this problem through their writings. Punjabi literature clearly reflects the social, cultural and political realism in Punjab between 1984 and 1995. Not only have the writers pictured the blood-curdling realities of the Punjab, but also advocated their rightful solutions demand which were also the demands of common people of Punjab in those days. Thus, undoubtedly, the literature of that time, written by writers, eloquently describes the tragedy of Punjab before us.

The third chapter is written under the title ‘From Anandpur Sahib Resolution to the Emergence of Bhindranwale.’ This chapter deals with the political system for the rapid transformation of Punjab and find out under which circumstances the

Anandpur Sahib Resolution came out, and how and why Bhindranwale insisted on the full implementation of the Anandpur Sahib Resolution. The third chapter specifically deals with the Anandpur Sahib Resolution and the background for the emergence of Bhindranwale.

The Anandpur Sahib Resolution was changed by leaders time to time so this chapter tried to find the answer of the question that why the political leaders change it, and what kind of demands include in it for a change it time to time and what we seemed it as a demand of Khalistan or not. What were the circumstances behind the emergence of Bhindranwale and myth behind his relationship with Congress Party in Punjab is also discussed in this chapter and why Akali leader came with him in Golden Temple complex, was there any strategy behind this motive and how he became the warrior of Punjab is also discussed in it.

Thus, this chapter examines the ‘patterns of political leadership’ facilitating the initial potential for conflict between segments of the Sikh community and the central Indian state. To explain, the Nirankari -Sikh clash of April 1978 catalyzed a number of changing dynamics within internal Sikh politics. In particular, it allowed Sikh ‘radicals’ such as Tohra and Talwandi to challenge the leadership of the ‘moderate’ Badal, and it also precipitated the emergence of ‘extremist’ Sikh leaders and groups such as Bhindranwale, the Dal Khalsa, and the National Council of Khalistan. Some, but not all of these extremist groups were aided and abetted by the Congress (I) in its attempt to weaken the Akali Dal in Punjab and ruin its cordial relationship with the ruling Janata party in the Centre. Later the intensified feud between Talwandi and Badal resulted in the Akali Dal splitting into two separate parties the ‘radical’ Akali Dal (Talwandi) and the ‘moderate’ Akali Dal (Longowal). The ‘radical’ Tohra played a pivotal role in tilting the balance of power within Sikh politics in favour of Badal over Talwandi in order to advance his own personal partisan interests.

Intensified factionalism within the Akali Dal prompted competing Akali leaders, especially the radicals, to look towards the extremists as potential allies in future intra-party power struggles. Collectively, the Akali Dal also began aligning with the ‘extremist’ in order to enhance its power vis-à-vis the Congress (I) Central

government. Thus, the extremists' power and influence in Sikh politics began to increase after the Akalis went out of power, the Congress (I) came into office, and fractionalized Akali leaders began to engage in the process of competitive 'ethnic - outbidding'. These 'patterns of political leadership' would soon intensify and combine with others, leading to the onset of violence and the 'Punjab crisis' which is discussed in next chapter.

The fourth chapter 'Operation Bluestar: The Violent Approach to Secularism' attempts to focus on the events happened after Operation Blue Star. Particularly in this chapter we consider the grim picture of the complex politics of Punjab which ended with the rampant human deaths and destruction as a result of the fusion of religion and politics. This chapter also discussed in detail about what was the circumstances that led to the Operation Blue Star and then how all the political parties changed course for their own selfish interests and played bloody show in Punjab. Operation Blue Star has totally changed the picture of Punjab, so this chapter deals with the changing role of all political parties on militant movement in Punjab after the operation Blue Star. And additionally, it traces the changing ideology of pro-Khalistan Sikhs on the demand of Khalistan. Thus, in this chapter we find that 'the militants' had been completely wiped out and 'the extremists' marginalized within the Sikh community. In contrast, the traditional Akali leadership had united moderated its ideology and emerged clearly dominant, if not hegemonic over the extremists in Sikh politics. It had also fully re-entered the normal democratic political process by participating in a series of local and state elections strategically held by unified ruling state elites from 1993 to 1997. This process had culminated into the formation of an Akali Dal (Badal) BJP state government in Punjab in early 1997. The 'Punjab crisis' was over after nearly two decades of political strife and ethno-nationalist violence, which had threatened the unity of India and cost over 25,000 human lives.

In the fifth chapter under the title 'Narratives by the Local People: Religion, Politics of Fundamentalism and Secularism' an attempt has been made to understand the present phenomenon with the help of field survey. Thus, this chapter was consisting of a field survey to elicit the views of local people on what constituted the problem around religion and politics in Punjab and for them who was responsible for

Punjab problem. It was also point out that what they think is it possible the separation of religion and politics in Punjab.

Thus, available data on the topic shows that the local people are well aware about the present problem in Punjab. 100% of respondents believed that the Punjab crisis or militancy happened due to the indulgence of religion in politics. 92.38% of respondents agreed that the voters are being fooled in the name of religion during elections. 91.42 % of respondent believed that most of time politicians used religious symbols at the time of elections. 72.38% of respondents observed that all political parties used religion as a tool to gain support from the voters. Whereas 100% of respondents stated that religion and politics always go side by side during elections. 68.57% agreed that religious deras have an impact on politics and 69.52% believed that the religious Gurus played an important role during the elections. 46.66% of people believed that they gave their votes in the name of religion. 100% of respondents agreed that religion was a necessary tool in society because moral values were equally important in politics and 78.57% of people believed that the separation of religion from politics was possible through a appropriate actions.

When we talked to the common people about this issue, we came to know that the common people have been the worst party during the Punjab crisis. They lost many of their beloved ones, their business came to a standstill, the sense of brotherhood disappeared from all the communities and the youth of Punjab was completely derailed and Punjab went back decades, all this happened because of the narrow and selfish purposes of the leaders. While Punjab has been rich for a long time, now it is lagging behind many states. And even today the leaders are filling their pockets by playing the same dirty game and dividing the people. The children of the rich are getting richer and the children of the poor are getting poorer. Drugs are being sold openly in Punjab and leaders are encouraging youth to go to abroad by promoting IELTS in their election manifestos. Rising unemployment is pushing the youth of Punjab to many wrong activities. Intellectuals are also sitting silently and some people are engaged in dirty tricks to make Punjab a separate country.

When people were asked about the solution to this problem, they were given many suggestions. All most all believed that this problem can be solved only by

educating people properly, because after attaining education, a person starts thinking logically. Respondents also believe that caste, race, religion, color etc. should be kept aside and we should live for the welfare of ourselves and our society and if this thinking is adopted by all people including politicians then the solution of such problem will be solved by itself.

We find the solution from local people during writing this chapter as when leaders give us bogus promises or do politics in the name of religion or caste, we should talk to them about issues like rising poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, changing environment, deadly diseases etc. only then will the politicians themselves be forced to leave the old type of politics and come to the politics of issues and help themselves in building a healthy society.

The Indian political elite attempted to create a “secular” India that provided equal status to all religions. A secular state must also inhibit and regulate the continuing attempt by the high priests of religion to impose their views and norms on ordinary men and women. Thus, religion and politics can't be separated completely in India. But voters and politicians must keep looking for the need of the relationship between state and religion.