

ETHNICITY AND DEVELOPMENT : THE PUNJAB EXPERIENCE

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DECLARATION

Certified that this dissertation entitled "ETHNICITY AND DEVELOPMENT: The Punjab Experience" submitted by Miss Archana Srivastava in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy, has not been previously submitted for any degree of this or any other University. This is her own work.

We recommend this dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

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C O N T E N T S

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PREFACE

Growing up in India over the last decade, being sensitive to development around and being exposed to social science teaching have made me see and react to some of the contemporary issues in a theoretical perspective with a view to make the world worth living in. The problems in Punjab, Assam, Nagaland, Sri Lanka, Uttar Pradesh and Kashmir are all seen to be leading the people of India towards a gradually developing cynicism about the State playing a positive role in overcoming their socio-economic and cultural difficulties. A slow rift is seen to be developing between the State and the civil society. More and more people seem to be giving up their faith in the State as an ordering mechanism in sharp contrast to the hopes developed in the national liberation struggle phase. Consequently, shifting of the loyalties to ones primordial communities and the regional political parties who apparently stand to directly represent their communities, becomes an all pervading phenomenon.

But what has the State been doing? The State is seen to be promoting the kind of development which is leading to the resurgence of the problem of divisive ethnicity in India, which at times has led an further to include the concept of 'ethno-nationalism' and 'sovereign state' outside the Indian Union. This process is also seen to have its possible reversals.

In this work, an effort is made to see how the above named concepts are linked, if at all, both at the logical level and also at the emperical level. For this purpose, some of the prevailing explanations of these concepts and some of the theories which have explained these concepts have been examined for their strength as well as their soft points. The intention has not been to review these explanatory systems per se, but only to use them to clarify the utility of these concepts in light of their applicability to the context of this study, which is the sociological understanding of the Punjab problem over the last decade (Chapter I).

Hence, the study essentially involves a juxtaposition of concepts, theories and emperical reality. At times it has been absolutely impossible to de-link the three for they get inextricably interlocked, but at times it has been possible to work out areas where one or the other plays the dominant role of determining the contour of the others or at least establish their cognitive primacy, if not a possible solution to the problems involved with the other.

The essential aim of the study has been to trace the dynamics in its manifold dimensions (ethno-nationalism; statehood) of the ethnic processes, as has been quite evident in the descriptive statement of the historical evolution of the Punjab problem (Chapter II-IV).

However, in the conclusion it has also been ambitiously hoped that the study presents a logical argument of yet another view of reviewing a specific ethnic problem of intermeshing of cultural heritage, economic development and political processes in developing societies, yielding a meaningful frame to understand the general and; if possible, to see the feasibility of the analysis in the context of the developed countries as well.

This humble attempt at conceptualising a complex ongoing problem has been completed with due humility of a beginners effort in the full knowledge of ones own limitations. But doing is learning.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: EXPLICATION OF SOME BASIC CONCEPTS.

The contemporary India presents a complex mosaic picture of tradition and modernity development and under development, in various spheres of social, political and economic life. It is a country which today, according to its policies is seeking to reach high levels of modernization and development. Yet at the same time, its social reality presents a sad picture of vast pockets of under-development. Socio-economic disparities, oppression and exploitation of certain sections of population, and today, increasing riots, violence and blood shed. Under such situations peoples faith in State as an ordering mechanism is fast eroding, and instead a vacuum is being created between State and the civil society. Consequently, people are seeking solution and safety within their ethnic group boundaries.

Hence, ethnicity has emerged in India, as a solution as well as a problem to the prevalent social situation. Under these conditions, conventional wisdom and discourse is fast giving way. The need is hence to constantly alter or discard or modify the earlier ways of understanding a social situation.

In this chapter I have made a very modest attempt being only a premature researcher, to analyse some of the basic concepts in Sociology in relation to a particular concrete problem (Punjab ethnic problem) with which I am concerned, so

as to relate empirical research to the theoretical structure of sociology.

My aim has not been to review all the possible conceptual constructs exhaustively but only to analyse a few of them which I feel are salient for my work. Also, in this conceptual analysis I have chosen to mention only those aspects which I find are applicable for the problem I have chosen to study.

After a modest appraisal of some of the conceptual aspects with respect to their applicability for my work. I have also humbly put forward my perspective on seeing and understanding the empirical situation found in the state of Punjab in India, with its wider ramifications in the entire country.

My perspective is not a definition, but only a humble approach to the study of a problem which tries to answer and explain certain questions which I have raised in my hypothesis.

This chapter also puts forward my methodological position, which again has been formulated keeping in view the nature of the empirical situation proposed to study in this research.

PROBLEM

India is only a geographical expression like Europe or Africa. It does not mark the territory of a nation and a language but the territory of many nations and many languages.

- Seeley¹.

This is how a Colonialist sees India, but an Indian sees not only many nations and many languages in India but also many religions, many castes, many sects, many regions. Hence, a good measure of the literature on the subject, informed by diverse theoretical and ideological perspectives, stresses on the cultural diversity or cultural plurality of India, while at the same time maintaining that the concept of India as a nation was only a temporary one, being "a gift of imperialism".

Thus we can safely conclude that in India cultural diversity has reigned supreme, except for a very brief spell of time when the Indian National movement was at its peak. Yet India has maintained an almost five thousand year long uninterrupted history, where India's cultural diversity has posed little serious concern.

In India, caste, religion and language, in particular, have played important role in its social formation.

Schermerhorn, while stating on cultural pluralism and assimilation in Asian regions has remarked that, "the long history of the caste system, habituating people to the idea that the proper way to deal with social differences is to embody them in pluralistic custom and ritual for each variety of human grouping, is a trend that reaches its apogee in Indian civilization. Thus caste becomes a model for stabilizing human relationships, a model with normative force in all segments of society. A kind of benevolent plurality is deeply rooted in Indian life".³

But today, the seemingly benevolent plurality of Indian life has become a cause of much apparent stress and concern. In the absence of catholicity diversity of forms is becoming increasingly less compatible with assertive cultural identities. Consequently, identities based upon primordial ties of language, religion, caste, region, etc. are becoming more and more crystallized into separatedness and giving rise to ethnic group formations. They are seen by the dominant mainstream as posing a threat to the integrity of the Indian nation-state. Thus, ethnicity in this context is represented in a negative sense, as a saw, cutting into the hard unyielding block of nation-state formed of the majority community in the nation.

The term Ethnicity is perhaps one of the most live topics in the present times. The American Social Scientists can be acknowledged as not only the originators of this term but

also the ones who have contributed to the development of this concept, which has found its tremendous usage and applicability in the Third World Countries, and today, even the socialist Russia finds it necessary to comprehend and analyse their tensionful internal situation. But since, history and research acknowledge the difference between the various societies of the world, we must accept with caution what the scholars of each society have to submit in regard to ethnicity.

For the purpose of the explication of this concept we may now turn to the analysis of certain important definitions and theories and see how far they are applicable to understanding the ethnic problem in the Indian society.

But, before going on to a detailed discussion of the concept of ethnicity, we may point out that the term ethnicity which is generally seen as one kind of a social collectivity has often been confused with certain more prevalent terms of other kinds of popular social collectivities as 'nations' and 'nation-state'. On the onset therefore, we may first attempt to state the limits of each of these social categories as far as possible, more so because all the three are applicable and crucial to understanding India's ethnic problem. In empirical reality they often intermesh into each other where one cannot be understood in isolation of the other two. In a way therefore we are saying that there exists a chain link of interdependence between the three. The three can be seen as tributaries to a common empirical process with possible reversal of roles.

NATION

The term 'nation' has involved a lot of ambiguity. In certain cases it has extended to include the concept of 'nationality' and 'nationalism', and in most other cases it has been treated as synonymous with 'state', hence generating a new concept of 'nation-state'.

Therefore, at the onset, it is important to delimit the term nation from such other collectivities. Also, at this point we may add that we would not be going into the whole debate of the historicity and the origin and development of the term nation, but restrict its explanation only so far as we see its link in explaining some of the processes chosen to analyse and explain in this research.

The word 'nation' stems from the latin word 'nasci' meaning, "to be born". Hence in order to belong to a nation, one must share in common with other members of the same nation, characteristics which are acquired by them through birth in that particular nation. The people of one common nation are thus termed as natives. We may quote here from peterson who says that a nation is "...a people, a folk held together by some or all of such more or less immutable characteristics as common descent, territory, history, language, religion, way of life, or other attributes that members of a group have from birth onwards"⁴.

Stalin defined nation as a "historically evolved, stable community of languages, territory, economic life and psychological make-up manifested in community culture"⁵.

In both the above definitions we saw that it is the objective characteristics of culture which go to define the content of a nation. That is, in other words, nation is seen to mark an area of common living where all the characteristics acquired at birth, like, descent, language, religion and psychological make-up hold true and meaningful.

At this point it may be worth pointing out that this area of common living which defines a nation is not to be confused with the area of common living which also defines a 'tribe'. In case of tribes, the area of their interaction is more or less marked and is usually not very large. But in case of a nation, the interaction area is not limited to few square miles instead its boundaries are ever-widening and expanding. Certain scholars have pointed out the theories of fission and fusion in this regard. Hence, as opposed to a tribe, a nation is a historically expanding and contracting territorially based group of people, revealing commonality of living.

However, this is the understanding of nation in cultural terms. But nation, has come to be accepted as the central political concept in recent times.

In its political sense, scholars have placed more importance on the term nationality or nationalism. John Stuart

Mill defined nationality as "a group whose members place loyalty to the group as a whole over any conflicting loyalties"⁶ and Gellner expounds the idea that "nationalism is primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent"⁷.

The spread of nationalism on a global scale is a result of the Europeanization and modernization of non-western and pre-modern societies. As a phenomenon of modern European history, the rise of nationalism is closely linked with the origins of popular sovereignty; the theory of the government by the active "consent of the governed", the growth of secularism the lessening of the older religious, tribal, clanish or feudal loyalties and the spread of urbanization, industrialization and improved communications.

Hence, nationalism may be seen as a modern phenomenon, which grows with modernization. But it might be worthwhile to examine as to what happens to nationalism when development and modernization fails? Can we say that ethnicity emerges when development fails?

In India, modernization, as has been pointed out by various scholars, began with the coming of the British. Setting up of modern industries, introduction of fast and new means of communication, setting up of modern institutions of education and the like are some such examples of setting India on the path of modernization.

Literally, therefore, in India nationalism emerged in this phase of modernization, with the formation of the National Congress in 1885. India/Indians (various communities) stood forth as a nation to first modify and later to finally end the colonial rule.

And, ever since independence, we saw gradual withdrawal of, or rather a lack of much development or modernization. Consequently nationalism also retreated. But what has been constantly increasing ever since are the wide socio-economic disparities, and hence the emergence of ethnicity.

We have seen above, that nation and ethnicity are distinct in more ways than one. Unlike western countries ethnic groups and nations must not be confused. Though their content is largely cultural their formation, application and usage is widely different. However certain overlaps may also be seen wherein, as pointed out by Conner, "an ethnic group at times with an urge for possessing special constitutional status entailing special right in a country but not outright sovereignty is formed it may be called as 'ethno-nation' and the mobilization can involve an ideological process called ethno-nationalism"⁸. Thus, the concept of 'ethno-nation' emerges as a logical extension of the process of ethnicity, combining within it the cultural and the political meaning.

A further clarification hence needs to be drawn between nation and nation-state.

It is accepted that nation has a territorial referent but as Richmond puts it," may not necessarily coincide with particular state boundaries. Some degree of political autonomy (past or present) is involved although it may not go so far as independent statehood"⁹. He also explains further that, "nevertheless, given a territorial element in the definition of 'nation' some devolution of authority, fiscal power and administrative responsibility to a population resident in a certain locality, is necessarily involved"¹⁰.

Hence, we can see the importance of stressing that a nation must be understood in both cultural (in terms of question of its origin), as well as political sense, but at the same time, the cultural sense must not be identified with ethnicity and political sense must not be confined to state.

STATE

The essence of 'state' is best understood by Weber's celebrated definition as, "that agency within society which possesses the monopoly of legitimate use of violence"¹¹. Hence, the legitimate right to apply violence or use force so as to maintain order and stability in a society rests with one clearly distinguished central authority or a group within the territorial jurisdiction of that central authority. Hence, the idea of a centralised sovereign authority wielding power or force cannot be over stressed in the make-up of the idea of a state.

Going by these definitions, the idea of one-nation one-state is only an idealization of one possible combination that empirically took roots in certain historical conditions in Europe, but some problems emerge in many-nations one-state situation; and gets worse where a state is multi-national and these nations in turn are poly-ethnic.

Let us now turn to the concept of ethnicity.

ETHNICITY

The debate on 'ethnicity', trying to define and delimit its usage and applicability have been long complex and till date inconclusive.

Ethnicity, popularly deals with an ethnic group - a certain section of population of a plural society which shares certain common symbols of normative behaviour (language, religion, caste, region, etc.) and are identified by the other sections in the society as constituting a distinct category within a society¹², or as Brass puts it "a group of individuals who have some objective characteristics in common which go beyond their mere place in the social division of labour"¹³.

However varied its definition, ethnicity has been essentially understood in two ways. At times, as a positive phenomenon, as "both a vehicle for state building and for its limitations" (Enloe)¹⁴, and in the way it is being increasingly seen these days as a pathological phenomenon with discriminatory, exploitative and finally divisive functions.

Some other prominent ways of viewing it has been like those Van-den Berghe who suggests that ethnicity implies real important and often valued socio-cultural differences¹⁵. Whereas, the earlier Marxists had dismissed it as false consciousness generated by the ruling class and the problem of minorities as a simple class problem¹⁶. However, the fact is that in India, both the views need to be selectively combined, in the sense that it is a real problem which at times overlaps and at times simultaneously exist with classes in India.

The arguments however can be better understood by briefly analysing some of the popular conceptual constructs on ethnicity. We have tried to isolate three major views and their counter-views in order to assess the fundamental nature of ethnicity.

The first view centres round the debate between the primordialists and the Instrumentalists.

The primordialists emphasise on the ascriptive nature of ethnic group membership and the importance of early socialization and primary group membership, hence emphasising the link between ethnicity and kinship. Further, ethnic identity is seen as a core element in the development of personality intimately linked with the perception of self, early socialization, language learning and/or religion and political indoctrination (Geertz)¹⁷.

As opposed to this the Instrumentalists (Leach, Abner Cohen), emphasise on the utilitarian and the situational need of ethnic groups. According to Barth, the varied role-sets characteristic of modern societies call for multiple, overlapping and sometimes conflicting definitions of personal identity and group membership. Ethnic group membership may depend more upon rituals of social acceptance and subjective identification, than upon irreversible criteria of an ascriptive and involuntary nature (Barth; Isajiv; Nagata)¹⁸.

Further, people like Bentley conceive of ethnicity as an emergent process of power struggles, where cultural factors are epiphenomenal to the process.

The greatest criticism to the primordial approach was rendered by Barth who says that primordial collectivities must necessarily be defined in terms of their boundary. But others have criticised the Instrumentalists on the grounds that not all man's actions are based on rational or utilitarian principles, in fact, religion or linguistic and other cultural categories at times are worth paying attention to. Abner Cohen says, that Barth's "separation between vessel and content makes it difficult to appreciate the dynamic nature of ethnicity. It also assumes an inflexible structure of the human psyche and implicitly denies that personality is an open system given to modifications through continual socialization under changing socio-cultural conditions"¹⁹.

The second major view poses a debate between the Bio-social (survivalists) and Modernization (Evolutionists) theorists.

The Bio-social theorists - prominent among them is Van-den-Berghe, argues that, there are certain universal tendencies of human behaviour such as preference for kin, aggression, domination, and territoriality, that cannot be explained by learning alone and which must be understood as part of human nature. In light of this, hence, Van-den-Berghe treats ethnic group as a type of extended kinship system within which nepotistic behaviour, favouring those who are seen to be part of the group, is functional because it favour the survival of that particular gene-pool or ethnic group²⁰.

An extension of this view is seen in the argument posed by survivalists who say that ethnicity will never disappear for it serves the basic communal affective needs.

This view faces criticism that though it is easy to presume the intrinsic similarity in human nature it poses problems when one has to explain the diversity of mens social behaviour and variability of culture which is very evident in society and becoming particularly so in modern times.

This brings us to the argument posed by Modernization theorists. Modernization theorists believed that with modernization, phenomena like ethnicity would quickly

disappear, for now people would not be bound by ties based on kinship, language, religion and other such irrational principles but ties based upon rational principles, utilitarian needs or mutual interests.

A logical corollary to this theory argued that modernization (in its wider sense of related social change) would finally lead to assimilation and evolve a global pattern consisting of a comparatively small number of relatively homogeneous nation states.

Deutsch, highlights the role of communication and mass-media as an agent of bridging the gap between people and hence ultimately becoming a unifying factor. But Connor argues otherwise and says that mass media at times can strengthen ethnic identity at the expense of rational awareness, for at times an oppressed group may find itself excluded from regular channels of communication²¹. And where communication means power, this can have sad consequences.

Likewise Gellner talks of imparting education in one common medium universally in order to foster and insure national unity²². But little does Gellner realise the problems such propositions would face in a multi-dialectic and a multi-language country like India.

The third most important view on ethnicity is that of the Marxists. Marxists in their characteristic way believed that the cultural content of ethnicity is dependent on the

nature of economic relations. They believed that with capitalist development ethnic differences are reduced to class distinctions and it essentially focusses on the economically disadvantaged. Marx and Engels believed that "national differences and antagonism between people are daily more and more vanishing and the supremacy of the proletariat will cause them to vanish faster"²³.

But the criticism of the Marxist understanding is evident in history and the contemporary developments in advanced capitalist countries, where ethnic groupings exercise more influence than class affiliations in demanding economic and other social concessions. Even in socialist countries like Russia, ethnicity and nationalism if anything are growing and pressures on the Government to concede concessions to non-Russians is increasing.

Today, if anything the need is not to pose Marxists against Non-Marxists but to see how far and in what way class and ethnicity co-exist and even at times in certain spheres overlap.

After having briefly reviewed some of the major conceptual constructs on ethnicity. I would like to submit my view on the problem - not a definition, but merely an approach, a way of analysing and understanding ethnicity in India.

AN APPROACH TO UNDERSTANDING ETHNICITY IN INDIA

Given the fact of cultural - plurality in India, 'ethnicity',^{maybe} viewed as a way in which the various ethnic groups interact in a given social situation. But; 'ethnic groups' are not something which exists there is society. At best what one observes in society are the various culture groups, some of these culture groups come from other countries, but do not form any nation in our country - these one can easily identify as ethnic groups but at the same time, there are various culture groups which exist in India and occupy various regions; these at best can be termed as nations but not ethnic groups.

So what at all, if at all are the ethnic groups in India?

Ethnic groups in India are formed out of the various culture groups which already exist in India. At times the locus of their ethnicization is language, at times religion or at times region, etc. depending upon the context which places saliency on one or at times more than one attribute. Likewise T.K. Oommen states that, "it is not so much the attributes of ethnicity which are important, but the property of the situation in which they obtain and operate".²⁴

Having therefore ruled out the importance of attributes which most of the believers of ethnicity as a cultural phenomenon maintain, we stress first instead on the context which places itself before each culture group.

Secondly, we see that for a group to be termed 'ethnic' it must have certain essential attributes to its credit:

(a) The ethnic identity which is based on one or more primordial attributes must be 'compulsarily shared' by all other members of that group.

(b) The primordial attribute - a seemingly objective criteria must necessarily have its affective referent in 'subjective sharing of the same criteria'.

(c) The ethnic identity so formed must necessarily be made distant from similar groupings in society.

These three bases are to be seen as crucial for identifying an ethnic group and distinguishing it from other primordial groupings.

Hence, if nation means having a territory and state means having sovereign authority in a definite territory, then ethnicity may be viewed as, formation of a specific kind of a culture group with a purpose of safeguarding or securing certain interests. In fact, the very element which brings forth the ethnification of a particular cultural group is the element of 'interest'. An interest which they either wish to secure or an interest which is being threatened and which therefore they wish to protect.

Ethnic group formation therefore becomes a way of bargaining or securing certain valued interests. The interests

are not just economic interests or else we would have formation of classes instead of ethnic groups.

Glazer and Moynihan remark, "one of the striking characteristics of the present situation is indeed the extent to which we find the ethnic groups defined in terms of interest, as an interest group".²⁵ But; at the same time they also maintain that ethnicity becomes an effective means in the modern world of advancing interests because it involves more than interests.²⁶ Daniel Bell writes in his chapter; ethnicity has become more salient (than class) because it can combine an interest with an affective tie"²⁷. While, on the other hand, in the case of class, "what had once been an ideology has now become largely an interest"²⁸.

Glazer and Moynihan also explain that, "Talcott Parsons, using a term of David Schneider refers to the 'desocialization' of ethnic groups: the cultural content of each ethnic group, in United States seems to have become very similar to that of others, but the emotional significance of attachment to the ethnic group seems to persist"²⁹.

I had often believed that emotional attachment to a group or the engendering of "we" feeling were positive signs but today, they are not so, because; they are more or less forced upon as compelling necessities in order to safeguard or secure certain interests.

The question is how and why does the bargaining for or securing the 'interest' becomes a necessity?

Is it the engineered necessity or is it the situation which makes it so?

My answer once again is that it is the "social situation" which brings forth its formation.

This explanation can be sought in the following clarification.

All throughout this discussion on ethnicity, we saw that ethnicity is seen much as a cultural phenomenon; its contents are cultural; its guiding interests and its boundaries are defined by culture; and finally is expressed in cultural terms. But my contention is that, at this point one must make a distinction between two levels of consciousness, while analysing any phenomenon, that which is at a conscious level and that which is at an unconscious level, to gauge the true nature of a phenomenon. This analysis would also help one to come to an understanding as to why and how ethnicity comes to be posed as a problem? Thus, the central hypothesis in the work is to see why and how ethnicity is serving a dysfunctional rather than a functional role in society.

Hence, where at the conscious level; ethnicity is seen as a cultural phenomenon, at an unconscious level it should also be seen as a structural phenomenon. In other words, there

are certain structural aspects in a society which bring forth the formation and the dysfunctional/pathological expression of ethnicity.

My contention is therefore, that culture exists in the background but it is the structural forces which act from without on a particular ethnic group. These structural forces which act from outside are internalised and finally expressed or operationalised in cultural terms. This is where the objective symbols of normative behaviour which form an ethnic group are transmuted into subjective experiences. An effort in this work would be made to trace this process.

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It is only because the cultural aspect and expression is more visible that we concentrate while studying the problem of ethnicity only on the cultural level and largely overlook the relationship between the cultural and the structural. It will hence be my endeavour to trace the relationship between the cultural and structural aspects of society. The exposition of the cultural structural relationship would indicate the methodological position adopted in this work.

The two structural aspects which affect ethnicity from outside and finally shape its expression I see as, State and Development.

The two though seemingly different aspects are actually today rather complementary to each other. The state promotes the nature of development and the nature of development in turn

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helps to retain the social relations and structures existing within the state.

I must first explicate what I mean by State and what I mean by Development.

State as explained earlier I see as best understood by Weber's explanation as an agency which has the "sole source of the right to use violence"; wherein he further goes on to explain; "Hence, politics for us means striving to share power or striving to influence the distribution of power among states or among groups within a state."³⁰

So, ultimately it boils down to power given to certain groups/classes within a State.

There is a need to understand three things here: (1) Nature of 'power' given to these groups, (2) How these groups holding power are related to the State, and (3) How the groups holding power and being related to the State manipulate issues and later communities for their purpose.

I do not attempt to understand power in Weber's terminology, for Weber reduces power to the question of legitimacy and places it in a historical perspective. But for my understanding of the term power I draw from Poulantzas, for I find myself in agreement with him when he says, "by power, we designate the capacity of the social class to realise its specific objective interests"³¹.

The functionalist school has distinguished between the objective interests and the agents role; saying that the interests are objective to the extent that these interests are located in structures, while practices are reduced to conduct or behaviour.

Poulantzas also points out that it is important to note the areas in which these class interests are located. He says that "though we find relative autonomy of the various structures in our society; that is political, economic, etc. it should suffice to say that the relations of power are not located at the political level alone any more than class interests are located at the economic level alone. Infact, if anything, the field of social class struggle is seen to be divided between the two, that is, political class struggle and the economic class struggle"³².

The need is to see that the two are more or less linked, the capitalist state in terms of both the political and economic aspects is seen as an agent of "Isolation". Isolation here is seen in Marx's sense of the term. And this effect of isolation in the economic struggle has repercussions on the specific functioning of the political class struggle in a capitalist formulation, that is; it tends to constitute a class unit out of the isolation of the economic struggle. And once this particular class enjoys both political and economic unity it aims at conservation of this particular nature of the state and the existing social relations.

Gramsci in this context says - "in locating the relations of the capitalist state to the politically dominant classes, we can say that it is a state with "hegemonic class leadership"³³.

Given such a nature of State where political and economic power is concentrated in the hands of a particular dominant class and where the existing social relations support and in turn are supported by this particular dominant group little is the scope for Development.

Development is seen as not meaning modernization. The two though generally seen as related can also take place without the other. Development is a broader term by which we mean change in a particular desired direction. The desire and direction generally taken into account are those of the State and is finally then placed upon the general population as their own and for them.

Hence, having discussed above the nature of the State, it is not difficult to see why, our country faces tremendous socio-economic disparities and is still one of the most under-developed countries of the world.

Infact, one does not have to be a Marxist to see that under conditions of gross socio-economic disparity and lop-sided development, the only alternative left to people is to group together in various primordial collectivities which when posed against the other such primordial collectivities becomes

ethnicized.

Hence, ethnicity emerges as a problem given this nature of State and Development.

Similar views are expressed by Michael Banton and Prof. Oommen. Banton States, "Ethnicity only becomes a political problem when groups are crystallised in polarization because the political structure renders impossible the kind of bargaining that might otherwise modify the boundary between the communities.³⁴"

T.K. Oommen states, "the appalling poverty and ever widening economic disparity and the persistent concentration of power in a relatively few hands and structures at all levels - union, state and local have been constricting and debilitating the social development of various primordial collectivities. To achieve authentic social change, the under-privileged primordial collectivities are bound to initiate and involve themselves in collective mobilisation, to correct the prevalent distributive imbalance in all the above sectors³⁵".

Hence, under such social situations; State as an ordering mechanism weakens and ethnicity emerges.

The emergence of ethnicity should not be taken as a consequence of the break-down of the state machinery but as one of its serious symptoms.

The question now is what do the ethnic groups once formed do? How do they justify their formation? There are some interesting suggestions put forward by scholars in this regard.

T.K. Oommen divides primordial collectivities on the basis of the goals they follow and their direct consequence upon the nation. First category is of the primordial collectivities following symbolic goals (redefinition of status and privilege) seen as no threat to national social fabric, second category is of the primordial collectivities following Instrumental goals (reallocation of wealth and power) as not very serious threat to a democratic society, however, it does erode the secular ethos of the society and of the State too, if it responds to such demands. But for the primordial collectivities following both the symbolic and Instrumental goals simultaneously, secessionism is almost the inescapable demand."³⁶

Katzenstein, in an article distinguished between "old" form of ethnicity based on the demand for regional autonomy and the "new" form of ethnicity; which has as its objective not territory but quotas. The new form of ethnicity, he quotes, is embodied in the 'sons of the soil' movements, which are non-secessionist movements demanding socio-economic equality for an ethnic group, an equality which is bargained by seeking preferences or quotas in jobs and educational institutions.³⁷

But the Indian reality today cannot be satisfied with fixing quotas and allocating seats to a certain reserved section of the population. There is vast and varied pockets of under-development, directly as a resultant of lop-sided development.

And wherever this pocket of population has coincided with a certain, though not very distinctly marked territory, ethnicity has taken on the form of "ethno nationalism", that is, trying to establish a historical claim over a particular territory. The weakening of the central state power (dominant political party) and the strengthening of the regional power (dominant and organized regional party responsible for the mobilization of the community) is a significant factor in the emergence of ethnic nationalism.

Under such conditions, "ethnic groups provide the sense of security, need for familiarity and a sense of continuity, which the nation intends to provide within the framework of the state if and as development proceeds³⁸".

But if and where development does not proceed - demand for state-hood emerges as a logical corollary, where 'sons of the soil' can find their home and living on that soil.

The argument therefore is that the so treated divisive and secessionist movements have their structural roots within the socio-economic system and cannot or should not be taken

only in the cultural sense as a problem of identity amongst a minority community in India. The logic towards the understanding and a subsequent solution to the problem therefore demands the understanding of the structural cultural roots of the problem.

Hence, the process comes to its logical extremities in tracing the dynamics of manifold dimensions of the ethnic process - from Ethnicity to Nation to State. The movement can also be seen as a reversal of the said process. Infact; that is also what has been happening in India. The gradual weakening of the central State wherein many nations within Indian Union are becoming ethnicized, in order to finally after securing historical claims to their nation, earn and secure certain interests by ensuring sovereignty of status; at times in a separate state.

The need in India therefore is not just secularism so much as administrative de-centralization to a full fledged federal system.

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CHAPTER II

ETHNICIZATION OF SIKHS AND HINDUS - EMERGENCE OF THE PROBLEM

To get a dynamic view ethnicity in India as in any other society is to be viewed as a process, and an ethnic group, as a specific type of communal group which comes into being under definite complex social situations. Ethnicity in certain context extends to include processes of ethno-nationalism, or at times even independent state-hood. These processes also however include possible reversals.

Causal interpretations of processes of ethnic formations and their reversals can be cited from almost all corners of the Globe; from developed and developing countries alike.

Ironically enough, growing political awareness; modernization and development; in other words, increased mobilization of groups and the growth and intensity of inter-group and intra-group communication has tended to sharpen and consolidate identity consciousness and primordial loyalties; hence accentuating ethnic feelings leading to ethnic group formations, often culminating in a demand for a separate sovereign political entity.

The above however, is not the iron law, and does not always involve this chain process with always safe culmination in a separate State.

Ethnicity, Nation and State can exist independent of each other and one does not always lead to the other. In actuality however one finds various intermeshing processes of the above three, as, one nation and one state (almost ideal situation); or; two or more nations and one state, or two or more nations and two or more states. But, a very complex situation emerges in a multi-national single state situation, where each nation is also in turn multi-ethnic.

Such a State is India, where various nations in processes of formation from time to time have faced the ethnic problem, though, its nature has been different. The difference may also be noted in the nature of ethnic group formation, or to explain simply, the salient aspect of ethnic group formation has not been the same in various cases. At times it has been religion, at times caste, at times region and at times also language and script; around which these processes have developed. The saliency of the attribute has differed according to the social situation of the period and location in which the problems emerged.

Saliency of the attribute is also determined or decided at times by certain political elites of the community who are actually responsible for bringing about the ethnicization of a disparate culture group.

One may also note that in ethnic group formation saliency is given, generally, to one objective attribute which becomes the reason de' anchor of subjective consciousness and

identification for the entire community. It is important to avoid adding other attributes at this stage because unwittingly they may cross-cut other attributes, leading to further subdivisions within a broad based ethnic group. This however, does not mean that other attributes are left out and not taken into account. Infact; Paul Brass while talking of nationality formation writes : "The process of nationality formation itself then becomes one in which other symbols are brought into congruence with the leading symbol either by choice or out of conflict with competing or antagonistic groups" (Brass; 1974).

After having attached subjective importance to a seemingly objective criterion, and making it the basis for its communal existence, a culture group becomes ethnicized.

But, a question may be asked as to why, this need for ethnic group formation ? Scholars of developed countries may say that with development and modernization and increased communication, life has become more mechanical and impersonal. Therefore, ethnicity comes at places to fill the emotional vacuum created by development. But, what happens in under-developed or developing countries ? The emperical situation here shows that in these countries, there are vast pockets of under-development or technically speaking there is lop-sided development, where certain communities are sufferers and some gainers, hence there is a situation of continuous fighting for the limited resources. Under these conditions, ethnic group formation becomes one of the means of collective bargaining for

these resources. We may point out here, that, in these cases, at times the grievance or suffering may be genuine, at times it may be merely a mobilizational counter. Here the role of political elites which can make a community perceive that their suffering and grievances are genuine becomes important. Needless to say, that, once this political elite succeeds in this mission at times genuine, at times only perceived as genuine, it will have a mass following in that community. Once achieved the support of masses, politics can go a long way in shaping or altering the existing social structure within society or state.

Much of the contemporary problem has arisen from the interpretation, which reads the demand for changes and alteration within the state as a threat to India's political integrity and national unity.

The root of mis-interpretation is in the assumption which treats Hindu community as synonymous with the dominant nationality and hence State. Here all other communities are taken as sub-culture groups, some of which are given a minority status and some are categorized as scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. Consequently, any effort by these communities or culture groups to assert their nationality is interpreted as a threat to the Hindu national fabric.

The above misinterpretation is one of the most serious problems facing India today which needs analytical attention. Only after this is done should the government policies be

framed and action taken - or else unaccommodated ethnicity will fast grow as one of the most uncompromising and devastating problems in India.

To illustrate the above stated process of ethnicity, one can cite examples of several communities in India as; Nagaland; Assam; Punjab and more recently Kashmir.

In this work however; I have confined my analysis to just the Punjab problem as it surfaced in the 80's, but also tracing its roots to the developments of this problem in Punjab which began some decades ago.

There have been two reasons for choosing to study the Punjab problem, one, objective and the other; subjective.

Objectively, Punjab problem presents an ideal-typical case of a culture group facing ethnicization, and the movement finally bringing in questions of ethno-nationalism and stretching as far as a demand for independent state-hood. In this study hence, the endeavour would be to trace the entire process of ethnic formation to its logical extremities.

The subjective reason for choosing to study the Punjab problem seems equally valid. My interest in the subject and area goes back to 1984, when one night in the news on Television, I woke up rudely to the news-reader mentioning the Army action in the Golden Temple. Before I could digest the justification and implication of such governmental action, I was a witness to the

horror of Delhi riots. Being an unorthodox (though God fearing) Hindu and having some close Sikh childhood friends; such happenings left me feeling bewildered, helpless and disgusted. Often I wondered when, where, how and why did Hindu-Sikh relations become so bitter that one had no hesitation in taking the life of the other?

I asked some of my Sikh friends; but their reactions at the happenings were exactly like mine; so who was responsible for this unexplained bloodshed ?

This question puzzled me till date, till I finally decided to get down to some sort of a social science understanding of the problem.

The following analysis, hence; is in measure an answer to my subjective questionings. But; I have taken care to analyse and understand this problems in objective terms, keeping the argument more or less within the conceptual framework of my topic, Ethnicity and Development.

This however, is not to say that in my analysis I will be able to discuss neatly and separately the concepts; theories and emperical reality. I little need to explain that a study of any actual event/situation reveals usually an intermingling of the concepts, theories and emperical reality. At places though; one may see them with some clarity, at places, they co-exist and at other places they totally mix and mingle making it difficult to separate them.

Likewise, in my study, as far as possible, I shall try and point out areas of clarity, areas of co-existence and areas of intermingling of these concepts, theories and empirical reality.

PUNJAB

Punjab, the land of Five Rivers, situated in the North-West of India; is one of the most fertile and strategic state of India. To its North, are the Himalayas, to its West, are the Hindukush and Sulaiman Ranges with important Bolan and Khyber Pass leading as gateways to Pakistan and Afghanistan. To its North-East, is China, to its North, the state of Jammu and Kashmir, and to its South and South-East, the state of Haryana. Being thus land-locked by important states of India, and being the gateway to neighbouring foreign lands; safety of Punjab (The so called sword-arm of India) means much for India's internal security.

Being fed by Rivers and enjoying two monsoons and extreme temperature, Punjab land yields one of the highest output of grains. One well remembers it as the 'Land of Green Revolution'. Thanks to the efforts of the farmers who showed their calibre in making the best out of the infrastructural facilities and state sponsored inputs, Punjab boasts of world-class per hectare yields in rice, wheat and groundnuts. As a result Punjab contributes more than half of nations' food stocks. M.J. Akbar has said, "The enterprise of the farmer has lifted Punjab

away from the quagmire of third world prosperity into at least second world comfort"¹.

The state also rightfully boasts of one of the highest literacy rates and ranks third highest in per-capita income.

The present Punjab is the result of partition of India in 1947. Wherein the muslim population moved out of the Indian part of Punjab to go to Pakistan. However; in 1956; the territories of PEPSU were added to it. Hence was formed the population of Punjabis, having largely sikhs and Hindus. Muslims were left in a very small minority.

The following table gives the figures of total population in Punjab (post partition boundaries) by religion, 1901-1961.

Table 1: TOTAL POPULATION IN PUNJAB (POST PARTITION BOUNDARIES) BY RELIGION; 1901-1961.

Year	Hindu	Muslim	Sikh
1961	63.67	1.94	33.34
1951	62.28	1.80	35.00
1941	43.59	33.09	22.25
1931	45.46	32.42	21.12
1921	49.78	31.23	17.98
1911	50.71	31.27	17.26
1901	55.51	31.75	12.24

SOURCES. Compiled from Census of India, 1961, Vol.XIII, pt. I-A (i), pp.427, 429-30, and pt.II-c (i), pp.350-1; 1951, Paper No.1, 1957, pp. 157 and 238.

Today, however, there are only Sikhs and Hindus but no Punjabis in Punjab.

The following Table gives us the changes in the proportion of Hindus, Hindi speakers, Sikhs and Punjabi speakers in Punjab; 1921 and 1961.

Table 2: CHANGES IN THE PROPORTIONS OF HINDUS; HINDI-SPEAKERS; SIKHS AND PUNJABI-SPEAKERS IN THE PUNJAB,^a 1921 and 1961.

Religion/language	1921	1961
1. Hindus (%)	49.78	63.67
2. Hindi-speakers (%)	13.16	55.64
3. Ratio Hindi/Hindu	0.26	0.87
4. Sikhs (%)	17.98	33.34
5. Punjabi-speakers (%)	64.08	41.09
6. Ratio Punjabi/Sikhs	3.56	1.23

^aThe figures are based on adjusted boundaries, except that adjustments could not be made in some cases for 'transfers of isolated villages or groups of small villages'.

SOURCES. Adapted from Census of India, 1961, Vol.XIII: Punjab, pt.I-A (i), General Report (Delhi: Manager of Publications, 1969). pp.427 and 430, and ibid., pt.II-c (i); Social and Cultural Tables (Delhi: Manager of Publications; 1965), pp.224-36.

The reduction in the ratio of Punjabi/Sikhs and a consequent rise in the ratio of Hindi/Hindu clearly heightens the awareness of the loss of Punjabi to Hindi in Punjab due to communalisation of declared language affinity. Such an outcome is the result of the movement whose seeds were sown over five decades ago but finally came to growth only about a decade ago.

It might be worthwhile at this point to go back to trace when, where and how the first seeds of this movement were sown. In other words, the intention here is to separate gradually from the empirical reality the conceptual category of ethnicity and see how the Punjabis of Punjab came to be ethnicized as Sikh ethnic group and the Hindu ethnic group and distorted declarations of linguistic affinity.

ETHNICIZATION OF SIKHS

The word 'Sikh' means 'disciple' - disciples of the ten successive 'Gurus' (teachers) who gave birth to a new religion called 'Sikhism' in India. Now the term Sikh is used popularly for the whole community who profess their faith in the Sikh religion.

Growth of Sikhism

Guru Nanak (1469-1539), founder of the Sikh religion and its first Guru, was a Hindu mystic who had studied both Hinduism and Islam. The core of his beliefs was Hindu but he was undoubtedly greatly influenced by Islam. This accommodation of faiths is evident throughout Sikhism; (it is more close to Islam in its theology and more close to Hinduism in terms of its social institutions). although the religion also contains strikingly original elements. Nanak believed in a monotheistic deity whom he designated as 'Sat Nam' (true name) and who had created all men equal. This emphasizes on equality contradicted Hindu caste differences and insisted upon the dignity of

labour. He reacted against rituals as practiced by both Hindus and Muslims, placing individual conduct before religion.

The most important of the early Gurus in terms of contribution to institution building was the fifth Guru, Guru Arjun Mal, who completed the 'Adi Granth' or the first book of the holy scripture of the Sikhs, which contains sayings of Nanak; Kabir and other saints. His Sikh organization became so strong, that the Muslim ruler had him tortured and executed. The ninth Guru, Teg Bahadur was also executed by the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb, for refusing to renounce his faith. His son and the tenth and last Guru, Góvind Singh having seen his father being executed; set out to make the Sikhs into a fighting force and to strengthen the military and political aspects of the religion. He divided the concept of Guruship into three parts: personal; which would end with him; religious, which would live forever in the 'Granth', and temporal, which he vested in the community of Khalsa. In 1699 he instituted the ceremony of baptism (Amrit Chakhna). The first five persons baptised came from the five castes, thus symbolizing the unity of all castes. They took the name 'Singh' (lion) and swore to observe the "five K's": not to cut hair or beard (Kesh); to wear a comb (kangha); shorts (kachcha); iron bracelet (karha) and to carry a sword (kirpan). Certain other rules of personal conduct (Rehat) such as refraining from smoking were also enjoined. Baptism was voluntary and could be repeated as an act of renewed dedication to Sikh ideals. The Khalsa (community of the

pure) was said to exist wherever there were five baptised Sikhs. The foundations of the lay organization were thus established. Temples were important to the orthodox only because they were organized around the necessary nucleus of baptized Sikhs and housed the 'Granth Sahib'.

In the Sikh faith, the concept of 'Khalsa' is very important. One often hears the litany "Wahe Guruji ka Khalsa" and "Wahe Guruji ki Fatah" and also "Raj Karega Khalsa". One of the central tenets of Sikhism is that spiritual and temporal power, religion and politics, are indivisible, symbolised by Fifth Guru carrying two swords of 'miri' and 'piri' on his left and right.

The main Sikh devotion was service: service to one's family, to Sikhism, to mankind, and finally, the greatest service of all, to God through martyrdom. Daily prayers were generally said in private, and service took the place of both ritual sacrifice and ritual purity. Mysticism was thus wedded to a worldly and secular ethic².

All the debate therefore regarding whether Sikhism is to be treated as a part of Hinduism or Islam or as absolutely distinct is meaningless. Khushwant Singh writes: "There is little evidence to support the belief that Guru Nanak planned the founding of a new community, synthesising Hinduism and Islam. He simply planned to reform Hinduism"³.

Hence, with the muslims leaving for Pakistan after partition of India, Punjab was left back with a Hindu majority. This fact was much exploited by certain sections of Hindu and Sikh community to instill the fear in the Sikh community of their forcible absorption into Hinduism. The fear however, was further accentuated by certain changes affecting the Sikh society.

Hindu-Sikh fraternity

Punjab in earlier times represented an almost ideal picture of Hindu Sikh fraternity. Despite the objective marks of differentiation which the Sikhs possessed, the social and psychological distance between them and the Hindus was minimal. Most Hindus showed as much deference to the Sikh Gurus and the 'Adi Granth' as the Sikhs themselves, and they could be found in substantial numbers in Sikh religious congregations. Reciprocally; many Sikhs made pilgrimages to Hindu shrines. Inter-marriages between the two communities were also very common⁴. Many Hindu families baptized their first son as Sikh. Simply speaking, both communities shared common personal law and social customs and had limited differentiation confined largely to external religious symbols⁵. Paul Brass refers to the confusion caused to British Census authorities in the nineteenth century when, many Hindus declared themselves as 'Hindu Sikhs' and several Sikhs wanted to be recorded as 'Sikh Hindus'⁶. Thus; Hindu Sikh oneness was almost an article of faith with both the communities. The question here is then; why this divide from

the past? Why this schism between the two such close communities?

The answer lies in the question of dialectics of identity and integration.

But, yet another question emerges as to why this question of identity now? Why this fear of losing identity? What and who brings forth this fear?

These are the questions to which we shall try and seek certain plausible answers during the course of tracing the development of the movement.

FIRST SEEDS OF HINDU-SIKH ETHNICIZATION-THE ROLE OF BRITISH IN INDIA

The first seeds of Hindu-Sikh division were sown by the British in India. To consolidate their position in India, the British rulers exploited religion, regional, linguistic and caste differences among the Indian people. Since Hindus by and large constituted the backbone of Indian Nationalism, the British began showering favour on Muslims and Sikhs. They chose Sikhs particularly in Punjab because the Sikhs had offered tremendous help to the British during the 1857 mutiny. Consequently, the British started showing marked preference to Sikhs in many branches of Government service, and recruited them in a big way in the Indian Army.

In 1911 the Imperial Army contained⁷ :

20,060 Muslims

11,612 Hindus

10,867 Sikhs

21 Jains

In other words, the Sikhs constituted about 25% of the Indian soldiers in the Army, which had no relationship with their numerical strength in the total population of India.

But a point to note here is that in case of the Sikhs, the British Government even made an exception to its traditional policy of religious neutrality. It made the baptismal ceremony a condition for enlistment of Sikhs to Army. A British army official observed about the recruitment during World War I that "it was almost a daily occurrence for say Ram Chand to enter our office and leave it as Ram Singh - a Sikh recruit brave, happy and energetic"⁸ Sikh soldiers were further required to keep the five external symbols of Sikhism. Because of these various measures implemented by the British, it was noted that "there has been considerable revival of Sikhism"⁹. Further, British historians like Macauliffe and other bureaucrats proudly claimed that "Sikhs in the army have been studiously nationalised"¹⁰ and by "nationalization" they meant that Sikhs were encouraged to regard themselves as a totally distinct and separate nation.

Hence, were sown the first seeds of Hindu-Sikh division; leading to gradual crystallization of Sikh identity; for now it was beneficial to be classified and acknowledged as an orthodox Sikh.

OTHER FACTORS IN HINDU-SIKH ETHNICIZATION (ROLE OF MODERNIZATION)

The other factor which unwittingly has further strengthened this identity has been the growing modernization; consequently emerging unorthodoxy among the Sikh youths. Sikh community in India is perhaps the largest single community in India which has on an average at least one member of each family residing in a foreign land, Britain, Canada, Australia and East Africa. Sikh community also incidentally shows one of the highest literacy rates in India. Paul Brass writes, "the available figures on literacy in early decades of the twentieth century show clearly that the Hindus and Sikhs were the mobilizing communities of the Punjab and they left the Muslim far behind. Both the following tables show that rates of both general literacy and English literacy were highest between 1901 and 1931 among Hindus, followed by Sikhs but were consistently lowest among Muslims¹¹".

Table 3: MALE LITERACY BY RELIGION IN THE PUNJAB;^a 1901-31 (IN PERCENTAGES)

	1931	1921	1911	1901
1. Total population	9.5	7.4	6.3	6.5
2. Hindus	14.7	11.3	9.5	9.8
3. Muslims	5.5	3.7	2.7	2.6
4. Sikhs	12.6	9.3	9.4	8.5

^a Figures for the Punjab include the Punjab States.

SOURCES. Compiled from Census of India; 1931; Vol.XVII, pt.I; pp.252 and 263; pt.II p.230; 1921; vol.XV; pt.I; p.292; 1901, vol.XVII, pt.I; p.276; Vol.XVII-A; pt.II pp.VIII-ii, VIII-VI.

Table 4: MALE ENGLISH LITERACY BY RELIGION IN THE PUNJAB, 1901-31 (IN PERCENTAGE)

	1931	1921 ^a	1911 ^a	1901 ^a
1. Total population	1.60	1.03	0.67	0.68
2. Hindus	2.30	1.42	0.96	0.69
3. Muslims	0.99	0.51	0.37	0.26
4. Sikhs	1.89	0.99	0.56	0.46

^a Figures for the Punjab including the Native States.

SOURCES. Census of India, 1901, Vol.XVII, pt.I, p.277; Vol.XVII-A, pt.II, pp.VIII-ii-iii;vi; 1911, Vol.I, pt.II, pp.76 and 80; 1921, Vol.I. pt. II pp. 78 and 82; 1931, Vol.XVII pt.II, p.230.

Therefore; Sikh community emerges as one of the educated communities which has been exposed to Western, modern, secular ideas. Consequently, one has noted a gradual decline of orthodoxy among the Sikh youths. Ratan Singh states clearly. "The educated youth feels no emotional concern for Sikhism because it embodies no values that he recognizes. His values are different¹²".

But, such can be cited as an example of youths of any community, because there has been a uniform impact of the scientific age and the industrial revolution upon religious and spiritual values.

A point worth note here is that; unorthodoxy among Sikhs is generally seen as meaning to do away with one; two or all of the five symbols of Sikhism, particularly cutting the hair and shaving off the beard. A clear shaven Sikh is in appearance like any other man from any other religion. If he has given up the five basic baptismal symbols of his religion, he can have little regard for his religion and may well be absorbed into Hinduism. Khushwant Singh traces the process of assimilation of Sikhs into Hindu faith as a gradual development from one generation to another, usually involving four stages; (1) orthodox Sikh, (2) unorthodox Sikh; (3) Sahajdhari Sikh and (4) Hindu¹³.

The so called growing unorthodoxy among the Sikh youths has been made a terrible fear and a serious problem particularly as it seems to be heralding the danger of Sikh absorption

into Hinduism. Hence, efforts of Sikh political elites and many Sikh community leaders have been concentrated upon preventing the Sikh youth from going on the path of such unorthodoxy.

Hence, it was the growing fear that Sikhs might be absorbed into the Hindu Social System and thus lose their distinct communal identity that prompted the Sikh elite to conduct an institutionalized campaign for the assertion of a separate Sikh identity. In response certain Hindu Institutions and Political Organizations took up the task of simultaneous assertion of a separate Hindu identity among the Hindus of Punjab and maintain that Sikhs were just a sect among Hindus.

Thus primarily as a result of the British policy in India and the modernization, largely induced by them; the united Hindu and Sikh community became divided and developed separate identities. The development of these identities was round the separate 'religions' of the two communities.

On a closer look, this empirical situation reveals the gradual development of an ethnic group round the differential attributes of religion. It was only when this seemingly objective attribute was internalized that the identity consciousness developed among the Hindus and Sikhs alike. The attribute of religion, became the binding force of the separate and now also distinct Hindu and Sikh communities.

Hence, emerged the Hindu and Sikh ethnic groups in Punjab. However, the formation and crystallization of ethnic groups are

fostered by the mobilizing elite with definite declared goals. It can be either self preservation or it can be for securing certain advantages or concessions which are being denied to them; at least in their perception. The other community here is taken to be the chief obstacle responsible for their problem.

But, once again; little can be achieved by the ethnic groups unless they have a strong organization to articulate their common interests. Paul Brass has noted the presence of a strong political organization as a must for the success of an ethnic group. Punjab never had to lose out on count of such strong organizations, both religious and political to fight for the cause of their respective ethnic groups.

The presence and working of these organizations as will be noted, has further contributed to the crystallization of the separate ethnic group identities in Punjab.

ROLE OF HINDU AND SIKH ORGANIZATIONS IN CRYSTALLIZATION OF ETHNIC IDENTITIES.

What was happening in Punjab at this time was that a number of unorthodox sects had emerged which were drawing Sikhs away from their religion. Also caste divisions had never ceased to operate in the Sikh society. But a worse danger was seen to be posed by the Arya Samaj, which along with criticizing the Sikh faith, was also in some measures attracting some of the Sikhs to its fold.

SINGH SABHAS AND CHIEF KHALSA DIWAN

To counteract the above mentioned forces of the Hindu organizations, an outstanding Sikh movement emerged at the time in the form of Singh Sabhas (1873). This was founded by a group of rich landed orthodox Sikhs. The aim of these Sabhas was multivariate, however, its chief purpose was "to study the original source of Sikhism, and to restore it to its pristine purity"¹⁴. The process of reform took the shape of, quotes Teja Singh, "de-hinduising"¹⁵ the Sikhs. Lectures were delivered against Hindus and their institutions, or debates were held to convert the attacks of the Arya Samajists¹⁶. The Sabha also took the task of publishing literature, which emphasised the distinctiveness of the Sikhs and their faith. Hence, Bhai Kahan Singh's work "Ham Hindu Nahin" published by the sabha received tremendous appreciation among the Sikhs.

To Singh Sabha was added another co-ordinating body called the 'Chief Khalsa Diwan' (1902). Together the two organizations worked to promote social mobilization of the Sikh community and to strengthen internal communication. Literacy drive was launched, a number of schools and colleges were opened up, newspapers and religious tracts were published¹⁷. Khushwant Singh notes that "most of these educational and communication activities either promoted or used the Punjabi language written in the Gurmukhi script"¹⁸.

The spread of education brought political consciousness among the Sikhs leading them to make demands in the political

sphere for the recognition of the Sikhs as a separate community in politics and in law and the Grant of rights and privileges to them on that basis¹⁹. To this end, notes Ganda Singh; that Chief Khalsa Diwan, like the Aligarh movement adopted a loyalist political strategy of seeking political patronage from the British rulers for an allegedly backward Sikh community; to catch up with the more advanced and more favoured Hindu and Muslims²⁰. Hence, Chief Khalsa Diwan demanded "separate representation, weightage in representation; special privileges and safeguards in services; and facilities for developing their language and preserving their way of life."²¹

Thus paradoxically enough; early history of formation of ethnic separateness of Sikh community (and so also the Muslim) had an important element of politicality partially, sponsored by the British rulers. The Hindu response could cover separateness as a national response. Thus the two organization together played a crucial role in shaping the Sikh ethnic identity. All through these years also; the British patronage to Sikhs was at its peak; for the British had a vested interests in enlisting the Sikh services in the army due to the World War and a policy of "divide and rule" to counteract the growing threat from Nationalist leaders in India.

Soon however, events were to take a drastic turn in Punjab. Tully and Jacob point out that; after the Great War; the loyalty of the Sikhs to the British Crown became strained. Punjab's response to Mahatma Gandhi's first Civil disobedience

movement was enthusiastic. When the Mahatma was arrested on his way to Punjab, a violent protest followed, culminating in the tragic Jallianwalla Bagh massacre; a landmark in the history of India's freedom movement. Dyer was initially hailed as a hero by the British and; to the disgust; of the Sikh community at large by the sycophancy displayed by the priests of the Golden Temple²².

SHIROMANI GURDWARA PRABANDHAK COMMITTEE AND AKALI DAL

Such events; plus; the general corruption of Hinduized Mahants led some of the keshdhari Sikhs to take upon themselves the task of ousting these corrupt Mahants and hence restore the ownership of the shrines to the democratic control of the Sikh community. This religious task of reforming the Gurdwaras was taken up by a non-governmental organization founded in Oct.1920 called the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC) to basically manage the affairs of the Gurdwaras. In this task of reformation, this organization was helped by thousands of Sikhs who came from urban and rural areas alike as volunteers to oppose the Government (British Government which sided with and took up the cause of the corrupt Hindu Mahants) and occupy the Gurdwaras. Khushwant Singh notes that, hence; "a semi-military organization called the 'Akali Dal' was formed" and this formation marked the transfer of political leadership from the landed aristocracy to the Sikh middle classes. With this the Akali Dal emerged as the sole political organization of the Sikhs²³.

Hence, together SGPC and Akali Dal; the religious and the political organization respectively of the Sikhs emerged as the two most powerful regional organizations in India. SGPC and its action arm, the Akali Dal; sponsored a number of agitational movements connected with Gurdwara reform in Punjab and often ran into violent conflicts with the Government²⁴. But the success of agitations and struggles, helped the people of Sikh community to place their faith in them. Moreover; both Institutions became highly politicized and powerful.²⁵ Seven hundred Gurdwaras are estimated to be under the control of the SGPC since the passage of the Sikh Gurdwara Act of 1925²⁶. Control of Gurdwaras has also meant control over the distribution of Gurdwara resources (estimated annual budget of over Rs. 12 million)²⁷ and over the vast powers of patronage in the staffing of the Gurdwaras and their affiliated and associated institutions. And since the Akali Dal has been in control of the SGPC from the beginning, the resources and patronage of the SGPC have been available to it for its political activities²⁸. Khushwant Singh describes the SGPC as "a government within the Government²⁹" of the Punjab and as an "alternative in the formal government as a source of legitimacy and authority for the Sikh community³⁰". But Akali Dal over the years has moved from its present position as a leading political party in the Punjab and an alternative governing party in that state. Infact, as Baldev Raj Nayar states, "Akali Dal has not only attempted to establish itself; as the sole legitimate representative of the Sikh Community or Panth; but its leaders have

attempted to identify the party with the Panth"³¹. This identification according to Brass is a measure of the strong roots which the organization has developed in the Sikh community³².

The strength of Akali Dal has also been based upon the quality of leadership and from its ability to pursue a variety of agitational and parliamentary tactics in the pursuit of its goals³³.

During all this while; a point worth noticing is that as has been pointed out by Brass; the leadership of Sikh separatism has been the most cohesive of all in terms of its consistency of goals, though the elite composition of the Sikh community has changed over time. The early leadership of the Singh Sabhas came from 'the rich, landed gentry and the orthodox'. The most prominent leader of the Chief Khalsa Diwan was Sir Sunder Singh Majithia, who was descended from a family which had served under Maharaja, Ranjit Singh. During the Akali movement in the 1920's, the leadership was broadened to include middle class professionals such as Master Tara Singh himself. The middle class leadership of teachers and lawyers became increasingly prominent in later years; particularly after partition when urban Sikh refugees became prominent in the Akali Dal. However; the backbone of Sikh leadership through the Punjabi Sabha movement continued to comprise a combination of Sikh religious leaders; represented particularly by Sant Fateh Singh, and the rich Sikh farmers who dominate the SGPC³⁴.

Hence so far we have seen that; the idea of separate ethnic identity of Sikhs was sponsored and supported by the British rulers to serve their interest of "divide and rule". As Singh Sabhas and Chief Khalsa Dewan phase successfully concludes in mobilization of Sikhs for ethnic separateness, masses of Kisan and professionals also entered the Sikh movement. The result of this was the emergence of the Akali movement as a democratic, anti-imperialist and anti-feudal mobilization of the Sikhs as an adjunct to the national liberation movement. The dual character of the Akali movement is brought out by its encreasing mass participation of the Sikhs and also its separatedness (therefore division from the Hindu and Muslim masses). The successful mobilization of Sikh masses by the Akali also resulted in switch of leadership from the professional urbanites symbolized by Master Tara Singh to rural peasantry symbolized by Fateh Singh. In short; it always had a dual character and an ambivalent relationship with wider national community in formation. The movement developed while it mobilized support for original aims and in the process the goals and leadership both got transformed to unanticipated levels and direction.

HINDU ORANIZATIONS (ARYA SAMAJ; RSS AND JANSANGH)

As opposed to the Sikh religion and Sikh political organisations which played a major role in Shaping Sikh ethnic identity such other sects amongst the Hindus as the Arya Samaj and RSS and Jansangh, played a major role in shaping the Hindu

identity in Punjab. Both these sikh and Hindu organisations while positively fostering sikh and Hindu identities also helped formenting rival sect identities.

Arya Samaj came to Punjab in 1877-8; and during 1880 its primary thrust was on education and religious reform and proselytization. Its proselytizing activities; particularly among low caste groups whose religious loyalties were indefinite, brought the Arya Samaj into conflict with the religious ideologies and organizations of the Sikhs and Muslims³⁵. Arya Samaj activities further instilled the fear in the Sikhs of absorption with Hinduism and, as inter-communal rivalry intensified, solidarity among Hindus increased. Arya Samajis and orthodox Hindu in the province came close together. The primary bases of support for the Arya Samaj in the Punjab were among urban Hindu business castes.

According to Ganda Singh communally oriented Sikhs in the Punjab harbour considerable resentment against the Arya Samaj both for its religious activities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century and for its pro-Hindi; anti-Punjabi activities in more recent times. In contemporary politics; it has however been the language issue which has ostensibly aroused the most bitterness between the Arya Samaj and Sikh political leaders, but this issue itself is partly an expression of the more fundamental religions cleavage.³⁶ The anti Punjabi stance of Arya Samaj and RSS helped the spokesman of Sikh ethnicity to appropriate Punjabi language as Sikhs' exclusive

heritage. The issue of language, however has been picked up and supported also by the Hindu communal political organization the RSS and Jan Sangh. However; both these organizations were not as successful in mobilizing the Hindu communal solidarity in opposition to the Punjabi Suba movement as the Akali Dal was in mobilizing the Sikh community on behalf of the Punjabi Suba. However; the two did play their role as agents of further accentuating the Hindu ethnic identity and drawing the Hindu Sikh community further apart³⁷.

We shall see in further details the actual functioning of these organizations of the Sikhs and Hindus when we come to discussing certain other issues which were picked up by the various elites and workers within these organizations.

At the moment; the purpose is to only briefly say how and in what measure these organizations contributed in crystallization of Sikh and Hindu ethnic identities.

Hence, so far we have traced the development of a separate and distinct ethnic identity among both sikhs and Hindus in Punjab. The development of this identity was not a simple process; it was the identity which was posed against the identity of the other community; and had developed not as a natural cause but largely with the help of the manipulation of the fears and aspirations of the particular community by their respective elites and organizations devoted to their cause. And, this is where importantly the dynamics of the relationship

between culture and structure in society become significant and useful to analysing and understanding a social situation.

An interesting point to note here is that in the shaping of the ethnic identity and bringing forth the movement, the ethnic groups as such; in terms of its common members did not play so great a role as did the elites in their society who controlled the important political organizations, regional as well as central.

MOVE TOWARDS ETHNO-NATIONALISM

The later happenings in Punjab; in pre-independent India must necessarily be understood in the light of the policies pursued and demands put forth by the Akali Dal, congress and the nationalist leadership. Though opposed to Hindu communal organization, Akali Dal supported the Nationalist movement to free India from British dominion. Such gestures by Akali Dal helped it gain sympathies of the secular congress leadership. But, while co-operating with the Congress party; the Akali Dal engaged independently in political activity to secure political privileges; specifically for the Sikh community. Hence; demands were made for the Sikh community in services as well as in the representative bodies. Brass points out that, the dispersal of the Sikh community in pre-independent Punjab; however meant that Sikh political demands had to be confined primarily to questions of representation rather than to territorial dominance³⁸. Under the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms

introduced in 1921, the Sikhs were granted communal representation through separate electorates in the Punjab legislature, which was 17% (their proportion in the population being only 13%). This allocation of seats did not satisfy the Sikh community. Sikh representatives before the Simon Commission in 1928 demanded an increase in sikh representation to 30%; but the communal Award of 1932 granted only 18% representation to sikhs in the Punjab legislature³⁹.

During the Second World War Master Tara Singh did not wish to support the Congress in its drive of non-co-operation movement; instead wished to be in the good books of the British so as to continue the recruitment of the Sikh to the British army, removed his support from the Congress. The rationale of Master Tara Singh ~~was~~, as pointed out by Giani Gurcharan Singh was that "if Sikh recruitment to the army suffered at this time the future political influence of the sikh community would decrease"⁴⁰.

Meanwhile, the Muslim League began to push forward its demand for a separate state for the Muslim community; and in 1940 passed the "Pakistan Resolution"; demanding a separate sovereign state for the muslims in India.

This demand greatly upset the Sikhs. The Akali Dal leaders in response, began to look for some political arrangement that would secure a favourable political position for the sikhs and hence formulated the scheme of "Azad Punjab" in order

to secure greater political leverage for the sikh community. The Azad Punjab scheme involved a re-demarcation of the boundaries of the Punjab, so as to detach the muslim majority districts from the Punjab and to create a new province—Azad Punjab; in which the maximum of sikh population would be included and no single community would have a majority⁴¹, so that the Sikhs would be able to hold the "balance of power"⁴². A memorandum to the Cabinet Mission submitted by Master Tara Singh; stated : "Akali Dal preferred a United India; because any partition of India would either bring the Sikh community under Muslim rule or split it into two halves. It demanded, however, that the statutory majority given to the Muslims in the Punjab legislature should be removed and that the Sikhs should be given increased representation in the legislature. Alternatively, if this were not acceptable; the Akali Dal asked; re-echoing the Azad Punjab scheme, for the creation of a new province out of the territories of the Punjab. But in case Pakistan was formed; then the Sikhs must have an independent state of their own".⁴³

However, when it became clear in 1946 that Punjab was to be partitioned as a result of the formation of Pakistan; Sikh political leaders set about self-consciously to force the Muslims out of the east Punjab to make way for total migration of the Sikh people from the Muslim majority areas of East Punjab. Moon Wrote; "The determination of the Sikhs to preserve their cohesion was the root cause of the violent exchange of

population which took place"⁴⁴. In this way, says Nayar, the Sikh community established itself as the numerically dominant community in six districts of East Punjab and as a very large minority in five other districts⁴⁵.

It was not long before the sikh political leaders raised the demand for the conversion of their numerical dominance in a territorial area into a separate political status for the area. The territories of PEPSU were added in 1948 to the newly created state of Punjab and tilted further the ethnic demography in favour of Sikhs.

In February 1948 Master Tara Singh announced that "we want to have a Province where we can safeguard our culture and our tradition"⁴⁶ and added that "we have a culture different from the Hindus. Our culture is Gurmukhi culture and our literature is also Gurmukhi script"⁴⁷.

Some people read in this clear seeds of communalism. But Master Tara Singh asserted that he was not asking for a sovereign state but rather a Province within the Indian federation⁴⁸ (Punjabi Suba). A set of grievances were also put forward by the Sikh community to add to the central demand for Punjabi Suba within the Indian Union.

GRIEVANCES OF THE SIKHS

After Independence Indian government had revised its policy of recruitment of soldiers in the Army to a non communal

and regionally balanced one. The policy said that the recruitment from each state of the Indian Union should be in accordance with the population of that state. Thus Punjab's share comes to about 2.5%. The new recruitment policy hurt many Sikh families who had traditionally sought employment in the army. They protested, but in a democratic set-up the concept of "martial-race" or the policy of giving special favours to a particular religious community could not be sustained. The result was that a number of dissatisfied, unemployed young Sikhs and the ex-servicemen who desired careers for their sons and grandsons in the Indian Army looked to Sikh religious leaders for taking up their case with the government of India⁴⁹.

The other major grievance immediately was based in the overlap between community and class structure which emerged in Punjab soon after partition. Once the Muslims were out and they were made to migrate to the Pakistan side; the new Indian Punjab had a markedly different composition. Now the Hindus were 70% while the Sikhs were only about 30%. The Hindus were concentrated in the eastern region; dominating the rural as well as the urban areas; they were fewer than the Sikhs in the Punjab speaking heartland; their trading classes almost entirely occupying all the small and bigger urban points while peasants in the rural areas were almost 100% Sikhs⁵⁰. Hence, an Urban-Rural Cleavage coincided with a Hindu-Sikh divide.

Table 5: URBAN AND RURAL POPULATION IN THE PUNJAB (POST-PARTITION BOUNDARIES)^a BY RELIGION, 1901-61 (in percentages)

Year	Urban population			Rural population		
	Hindu	Muslim	Sikh	Hindu	Muslim	Sikh
1901	76.23	1.11	20.91	60.51	2.15	36.47
1911	70.35	1.05	27.13	60.48	1.96	36.76
1921	42.75	45.92	9.42	43.74	30.86	24.48
1931	43.03	46.81	7.96	45.81	30.30	23.06
1941	45.17	45.20	7.17	50.35	29.49	19.33
1951	44.14	45.84	7.22	51.50	29.50	18.47
1961	47.34	45.41	5.12	56.52	30.06	13.12

Sources: Census of India, 1961; Vol.XIII: Punjab, pt.I-c(i), Social and Cultural Tables (Delhi Manager of Publications; 1965); pp. 229-36.

Given the background of suspicion accusations of broken assurances, required little for the agitation to assume the appearance of a communal combat.

These set of grievances incidentally are essential aspects in justifying the formation. Existence and clashes of ethnic groups in a society.

Thus, contrary to whatever Master Tara Singh asserted; their demand clearly smelt of communalism; the framers of the constitution were bent upon stressing to the people, the secular nature of the Indian State.

Brass also notes that the Government of India had set down four essential rules in its treatment of ethnic group demands (1) no secessionist demands would be entertained, (2) no demand based upon religion will be accepted, (3) concessions will not be made to minority groups that do not demonstrate their ability to mobilize politically for their demands, and (4) concessions made to one ethnic group must be acceptable to rival groups⁵¹.

Accordingly, rule 1 did not apply and rule 3 was adequately fulfilled (presence of Akali Dal). Consequently rule 2 and rule 4 were crucial and of much importance for the Akali Dal, if they had to get their demand of Punjabi Suba to be accepted by the Government, because, (1) They must not present their demand of Punjabi Suba on the basis of religion (need to find an alternative) and (2) Their demands put forward thus must also be acceptable to the rival Hindu community.

Some Akali Dal leaders around Sant Fateh Singh were however, quick to find a solution to the first problem of displacing the basis of Punjabi Suba demand from religion to very conveniently language, But in this process, the Sikhs put forward a problem for the Hindus. The demand of Punjabi Suba enraged the Hindu community, for they knew that in asking for the creation of Punjabi Suba on the basis of Punjabi speaking areas, the Sikhs were actually demanding a Sikh majority state, so that, they may be able to command a Sikh majority in the legislature.

This demand was perceived by Hindu communal leaders as the Sikh communal aspirations under the cover of community of language. Hence it alivened the Hindu communal consciousness. In this process, they were adequately helped by their communal organi-zations like the Arya Samaj, RSS and Jan Sangh. During the height of Punjabi suba movement, the Arya Samaj formed alliances with other Hindu organizations and also spawned inter-organizational fronts to fight for the protection of Hindi in Punjab. Thus language controversy became a handy cover for communal confrontation.

This however led to the Punjabi Hindus refusing to acknowledge Punjabi as their mother-tongue, instead recording their mother-tongue as Hindi in the 1951 census. The basis of this difference was not the spoken language which was punjabi for it was spoken by both Hindus and Sikhs in Punjab, but the script the 'Devanagri' and the 'Gurmukhi' largely associated with the religious scriptures of the Hindu and Sikh communities respectively. Such actions by the Hindus were bound to impinge on the "collective consciousness" of the Sikhs, bringing forward their apprehensions of the loss of their religious and cultural identity, leading them to further defend their religious and cultural identity and attain political unification.

The following two tables give the religious composition of Hindi speaking and Punjabi speaking region in 1951 and 1961.

RELIGIOUS COMPOSITION OF HINDI-SPEAKING AND
PUNJABI-SPEAKING REGIONS IN 1951^a

District	Population	Hindus		Sikhs		Others
		Number	Per- cent	Number	Per- cent	Number
<i>A. Hindi-speaking region</i>						
1. Simla	46,150	37,287	80.8	7,417	16.1	1,446
2. Kangra	926,477	898,564	97.0	18,401	2.0	9,512
3. Hissar	1,045,645	954,714	91.3	80,394	7.7	10,537
4. Rohtak	1,122,046	1,105,046	98.5	7,907	.7	9,093
5. Gurgaon	967,664	794,019	82.0	6,310	.7	167,335
6. Karnal	1,079,379	974,959	90.3	96,458	8.9	7,962
7. Ambala ^b	943,734	681,477	72.2	232,456	24.6	29,801
8. Mohindergarh	443,074	438,347	98.9	2,615	.6	2,112
9. Kohistan ^c	147,403	130,937	88.8	13,206	9.0	3,260
Total	6,721,572	6,015,350	89.5	465,164	6.9	241,058
<i>B. Punjabi-speaking region</i>						
10. Hoshiarpur	1,086,224	794,688	73.2	284,320	26.2	7,216
11. Jullundur	1,008,766	429,747	42.6	569,487	56.5	9,532
12. Ludhiana	806,779	301,398	37.3	497,419	61.7	7,962
13. Ferozepur	1,308,237	505,937	38.7	780,024	59.6	22,276
14. Amritsar	1,270,320	351,710	27.7	897,309	70.6	21,301
15. Gurdaspur	761,782	346,884	45.5	354,681	46.6	60,217
16. Patiala	524,269	273,087	52.1	246,953	47.1	4,229
17. Barnala	536,728	112,635	21.0	380,811	70.9	43,282
18. Bhatinda	666,809	144,305	21.7	521,045	78.1	1,459
19. Kapurthala	295,071	104,679	35.5	187,568	63.6	2,824
20. Fatehgarh Sahib	237,397	80,141	33.7	154,714	65.2	2,542
21. Sangrur ^d	642,934	420,218	65.4	215,023	33.4	7,693
Total	9,145,316	3,865,429	42.3	5,089,354	55.6	190,533
Grand Total	15,866,888	9,880,779	62.3	5,554,518	35.0	431,591

^a Based on statistics given in India (Republic), Census Commissioner, *Census of 1951*, VIII, Part II-A, 298-300.

^b One-third of district in Punjabi-speaking region.

^c One-fourth of district in Punjabi-speaking region.

^d A little over half the district in Hindi-speaking region.

RELIGIOUS COMPOSITION OF HINDI-SPEAKING AND
PUNJABI-SPEAKING REGIONS IN 1961^a

District	Population		Hindus		Sikhs		Others	
	1951	1961	Number	Per- cent	Number	Per- cent	Number	Per- cent
<i>A. Hindi speaking region</i>								
1. Hissar	1,045,645	1,540,508	1,374,258	89.2	152,719	9.9	13,531	.9
2. Rohtak	1,122,046	1,420,391	1,400,347	98.6	6,439	.4	13,605	1.0
3. Gurgaon	967,664	1,240,706	1,011,862	81.6	8,362	.7	220,482	17.7
4. Karnal	1,077,381	1,490,430	1,293,354	86.8	177,602	11.9	19,474	1.3
5. Ambala ^b	1,017,254	1,373,477	981,288	71.5	340,968	24.8	51,221	3.7
6. Simla	106,177	112,653	104,784	93.0	5,392	4.8	2,477	2.2
7. Kangra	921,278	1,062,518	1,043,387	98.2	8,854	.8	10,277	1.0
8. Lahaul & Spiti	12,728	20,453	9,575	46.8	162	.8	10,716	52.4
9. Mohinderghat	443,074	547,850	543,480	99.2	2,222	.4	2,148	.4
Total	6,713,247	8,808,986	7,762,335	88.1	702,720	8.0	343,931	3.9
<i>B. Punjabi speaking region</i>								
10. Hoshiarpur	1,094,022	1,233,493	835,436	67.7	381,965	31.0	16,092	1.3
11. Ludhiana	1,055,600	1,227,367	662,631	54.0	550,232	44.8	14,504	1.2
12. Udhkotiana	807,418	1,022,519	365,429	35.7	644,266	63.0	12,824	1.3
13. Faridkot	1,275,195	1,619,116	657,712	40.6	936,953	57.9	24,451	1.5
14. Amritsar	1,367,040	1,534,916	506,170	33.0	990,344	64.5	38,402	2.5
15. Gurdaspur	851,294	987,994	494,635	50.1	424,190	42.9	69,169	7.0
16. Kapurthala	295,071	343,778	140,828	41.0	200,117	58.2	2,833	.8
17. Patiala	786,889	1,055,177	285,967	27.1	762,677	72.3	6,533	.6
18. Sangrur	1,111,594	1,424,688	738,816	51.9	622,227	43.6	63,645	4.5
19. Patiala	777,526	1,048,778	480,096	45.8	553,438	52.8	15,254	1.4
Total	9,421,643	11,497,826	5,167,710	44.9	6,066,409	52.8	263,707	2.3
Grand Total	16,134,890 ^d	20,306,812	12,930,045	63.7	6,769,129	33.3	607,638	3.0

^a Based on statistics given in India (Republic), Census Commissioner, *Census of India: Paper No. 1 of 1963*, Delhi: Manager of Publications, 1963, pp. 30-35. Note that 1951 population figures here given do not agree with those in Table I in several places, because of changes in boundaries of districts.

^b About one-third of district not in Hindi-speaking region.

^c About two-sevenths of district in Hindi-speaking region.

^d Discrepancy between 1951 and 1961 figures due to the non-availability for analysis of religious composition of some records for Jullundur district as a result of a fire.

But, led by religio-politico aspirations the Akali leaders found in Pujabi a potent instrument for the mobilisation of the Sikh masses for the formation of a sikh state. Indeed, since the congress was generally committed to the principle of the linguistic redistribution of the provinces in India the demand for a Punjabi speaking state seemed secular and was congruent with the objectives of the total national system⁵⁰.*

Therefore, after much agitations, and fasts by both Master Tara Singh and Sant Fateh Singh, and the threat of Pakistan War in 1965, led the congress government to re-think its stand on Punjab, for Punjab's security (as it occupied a strategic position, on the border of Pakistan) was important and the government wanted the unflinching support of the Sikh soldiers in the army. The Hindu opposition was modified by Sant Fateh Singh's emphasis on language as the basis of Punjabis' demand.

Hence Punjabi Suba was reorganized on the basis of language (and more particularly script) in 1966. This organization of Punjab brought far reaching changes in the demographic and political structure of Punjab. The most important of course was that it became a Sikh majority state. As per census of 1971, the Sikhs were 60.22% of the total population, By 1981 the percentage had come down some-what due to the migration of the labour from Bihar and Eastern UP over the last decade⁵³.

At the end of the chapter is a map of political division of Punjab between 1956 and the formation of Punjabi Suba in 1966.

Thus, was added a new symbol of language, to the already existent army of powerful set of religions symbols. Infact, as pointed out by Brass, Punjabi has fared better in maintaining its separatness from Hindi, not because it is linguistically more distinct, but because it became an important secondary symbol in the struggle for the Sikhs to preserve their separate religious identity and acquire a territorial unit in which they would be dominant⁵⁴".

Hence, it is important to note that language (rather Gurmukhi script) has always been treated by Sikh community as a secondary symbol of identification, the primary symbol being, the religion. Master Tara Singh, who is recognized as the Chief spokesman of Sikh nationalism, admitted that the primary motive behind the demand for the Suba was to protect Sikh religion and improve the position of Sikhs, the language issue was secondary⁵⁴. In the spokesman in 1961 he wrote, "you might declare it the language of the whole of India would that help Sikhs? What is therefore called religious stands indistinguishable from "temporal" or "political". As such a fight for a political state receives almost the same sanctity as per a religious cause. Political survival is perceived to be sine qua non of the religious and cultural existence of the entire group.

Justification for such demands is sought in the religious scriptures of the Sikh faith. The Sixth Guru Hargobind Singh wore the two swords of "miri" (worldly power) and "piri" (religious authority). In the Golden Temple, the highest spiritual place of the Sikh religion, are based Harmandir Sahib (symbolizing spiritual sovereignty) and Sri Akal Takht (representing temporal sovereignty). The two though seemingly different partake of the same spirit. But, in matters concerning the domination of one, Guru Gobind Singh made the 'Panth' supreme in matters both religious and political. According to Master Tara Singh, the Panth is a "political organization which has been founded upon religion⁵⁶. Infact, partaking in the political activities is a must for the survival of the Sikh religion, and it was with this aim that Guru Gobind Singh had established the Panth and made it supreme in all matters. Hence, we hear the famous litany "Wahe Guru ji Ka Khalsa", "Wahe Guruji Ki Fateh" and hence "Raj Karega Khalsa".

Therefore, Master Tara Sinh has said that the Khalsa Panth will either be a ruler or a rebel. It has no third role to play⁵⁷".

Loyalty to the plitical organization of the Panth has further more to be a complete one on the part of Sikhs. A sikh individual cannot owe loyalty to any other political organization without violating his loyalty to the first - the Khalsa Panth - of which he is a member as soon as he is born⁵⁸.

Hence, in the Sikh faith politics and religion are co-existent and complementary.

CONCLUSION

Thus, during the course of tracing the movement (emperical reality), we saw the gradual transformation of a culture group into an ethnic group, wherein, religion and language became two important symbols of bringing forth distinct and separate ethnic identity. Incidentally the various stages in the development of the movement may be taken as stages in further crystallization of ethnic identity of Hindus and Sikhs in Punjab.

We have also tried to see that once language was added to the single most salient attribute of religion, the scope of Ethnicity was stretched to include the concept of Ethno-Nation, as embodied in the demand for Punjabi Suba.

Almost during the entire movement the actual strings for the formation of ethnic groups and also the demand for a separate Sikh nation were put forward largely by the political elites who ruled the regional political parties. Infact, they, not being satisfied by a separate nation, were the ones, largely responsible for extending the demand for political sovereignty in an independent Sikh state. The dynamics of this argument would be analysed in the next chapter.

In this chapter therefore, we saw, through the emperical situation, the birth and the functioning of the concept of Ethnicity and also Ethno-nationalism.



Fig. 7 Political divisions of the Punjab, 1956-66

SOURCE. Redrawn after map 'Punjab', facing p. 435 of Baldev Raj Nayar, 'Political Divisions of the Punjab, 1956-1966', in Myron Weiner, *State Politics in India* (copyright © 1968 by Princeton University Press). Reprinted by permission of Princeton University Press.

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CHAPTER III

POLITICO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS IN PUNJAB

'65-'85 - Two Decades Of Broth Boiling

1966, was the year of re-organization of Punjab State boundaries for the third time (the first being in 1947, with the creation of Pakistan, and Second, in 1948, when the territories of Patiala and East Punjab States Union (PEPSU) were merged in it). The re-organization of boundaries also quite obviously brought forward changes in the demographic composition of population in the state. The third re-organization of state, saw the consolidation of a Sikh majority area in the new state called the Punjabi Suba.

Thus, the process of Sikh ethnicization was accompanied by a fusion of religion and language with a script traditionally associated with Sikh scriptures and a phased consolidation of Sikh population within the bounds of a certain territory. In 1966 this territory got statutory recognition as a unit of political administration. The Sikhs could be persuaded to believe that not only did they belong to a territory but the territory belonged to them. The ethnicity was ranging on Ethnic nation-hood and efforts could be made to aspire to sovereign status. But the process does not always end here, there are possible reversals too.

The ethnic group having acquired a territorial base of belongingness may achieve political sovereignty or may continue to live in a multi-national polity. In either case

sections of the ethnic group find themselves living in common territory with members of other ethnic groups. Thus sections of ethnic community must once again re-assert their ethnic identity beyond the territory of actual aspired for dominance. Hence, the reversal from nation to Ethnicity is built-in, only at times, to take the process further to its next aspired stage of independent state-hood. The state boundaries may sometimes co-incide with the boundaries of that particular nation, or at times may be re-drawn. However, the concept of state has little to do with the question of ethnic boundaries but much more to do with the idea of power and sovereign authority over a territorially organised community as discussed by Weber.

But the process which culminates at independent state hood may also reveal its possible reversals. In other words the process can at times be also seen as drawing and re-drawing of boundaries of state, Nations and ethnic groups. Only in certain cases the boundaries of one co-incides with those of the other and the process of fission are as natural as fusion, though interaction across territorial bounds over an increasing area may be seen as a global historical phenomenon.

The above conceptual analysis may well be helpful to arrive at an understanding of the development of the Punjab crisis of 84, which had built up over the last two decades. For this we may discuss the development of the crisis into two facets (1) as a consequence of the nature of economic development which enabled the Sikh political elite in the Akali

Dal and the Hindu political elite to re-assert the separate ethnic identity of the Sikhs and Hindus respectively in Punjab and (2) as a consequence of the political development of Punjab during '66 and '84 which led some political elite representing the Sikh ethnic group to put forward the demand for a sovereign status.

THE MEANING AND MODEL OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA

In order to understand the economic development of Punjab it is important first to see as to what is meant by development. Development as it had been envisaged by the government at the time of Independence. For little efforts have been made since to revise and alter its meanings and constitution in keeping with the emergent social situations. Rather, the social situations today are the result of the nature of development put forth by the framers of our constitution and our subsequent planners.

During the British colonialism Indian economy had impoverished in certain sectors like arts and Handicrafts and had remained static in the other like the agriculture sector. Thus, after independence, the role of politics was to re-establish the impoverished sectors and bring forward a sustained growth in the more static sectors.

At the same time, keeping in mind India's cultural diversity and various social cleavages, it was not possible to chart one single approach to development in India. But growth

was a must, at the same time attempt was to be made towards gradual removal of such disparities in society. And, it was believed that economic development, by itself would one day be able to weld the various communities together and hence bring about socio-political integration. A seemingly convenient approach therefore of blending capitalism and socialism was adopted, that is, a pattern of mixed economy whose aim was, achieving growth with an egalitarian society.

The Indian leaders it has been pointed out "were convinced that in view of the bewildering diversity of India, gradual economic development in accordance with the reconciliation model suited India more than the mobilization or the revolutionary model. Such gradualism and inter-group accommodations, they hoped would maintain the nation as well as develop it¹.

Yet, forty-three years after independence, we have seen little development in India as far as lessening of inequality is concerned. Infact, the movement is towards greater social and economic disparities and inequalities with vast pockets of under-development.

This is certainly not what our constitution makers and planners had envisaged. But given the nature of elite at the Centre it has been argued that this was only a logical outcome. To explain, we may agreeably quote here from AS. Narang who says that, "the elite in the congress was also the rural land owning

elite. Consequently once in urban areas, the so called urban elite in the centre corresponded with the local elite and rural elite in other places. Thus, despite their professed aims of carrying out elaborate development and welfare functions, the elected government after independence were able to establish only a token administrative presence at the village level. Like the colonial rulers before them, they realized primarily on the co-operation of established local leaders to organize peasant participation on behalf of national economic and social policies, similarly, the process of party building involved little more than pyramiding alliances among district and state factions which at their base often turned out to be personal following of local leaders².

Thus, ever since independence if any group has strengthened and consolidated its position, it is the elite group (Rural and Urban) where the other groups (lower and middle) are left to constantly fight among themselves for the scarce resources, , which also leaves them little time to unite and fight the elites. Hence, the reconciliation model comes forward as a seemingly conscious choice of the elite group which controlled the state, and has consequently been of use of them and a real curve for the other classes.

RELEVANCE OF ABOVE EXPLANATION FOR UNDERSTANDING DEVELOPMENT IN PUNJAB.

The above discussion of the meaning and model of development in India is crucial for understanding and assessing

the nature of economic development in any region in India even Punjab, and for also understanding the nature of the political elite who is also seen to belong to the economically well off strata. This link between the political and economic power of the ruling elite is a crucial factor in shaping much of the development in Punjab, as in other regions of India.

The fact that the ruling political elite in the Akali Dal belongs to the rich rural Jat Sikh peasantry class enables them on the basis of their political and economic power to mobilise a large section of their community even though not all of them belong to the same class to further their personal gains. Ethnic mobilization becomes predicated upon certain economic interests and their articulation.

In light of the above we may understand and assess much of the economic development in Punjab particularly the way it has been interpreted and posed by the ruling elite of both Hindu and Sikh Organizations to mobilize their respective communities and hence further crystallize their ethnic identity. It is far from our intention to advance economic interests as master explanatory variable, but as a contributory factor it cannot be dispensed with.

CONSEQUENCES OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF PUNJAB - '66-'84

Whenever one talks of development in India, Punjab is often quoted as an example of one of the most developed states in India. Statistics quoted the figure of Gross domestic

produce per person in the year 1980 as 2528 (about US \$ 250), nearly 20 percent greater than its closest rival Maharashtra, whose figures are inflated due to the inclusion of Bombay, India's major industrial city. The average per capita GDP for the Indian states was 1334; that of Punjab was twice as great. The income of the average Punjabi was 65 percent greater than that of the average Indian³.

But where does such higher economic growth rates come from in Punjab. The easy and obvious answer is — from its agricultural sector. Punjab is well remembered as one of the successful states of Green Revolution. Dalip Singh mentions that between 1964-5 and 1977-8. Punjab trebled its output of food grains from 3.4 million tonne to 10.3 million tonnes⁴.

Such figures clearly speak for the fact that the new agricultural technology introduced through the Green Revolution was successful and bore fruits in Punjab. Consequently today, more than 90 percent of its area under wheat and more than 80 percent under rice are planted with high yielding varieties.⁵

Therefore Punjab may be seen to have played the role of a "mother feeder" of the vast Indian population.

But while the government officials were happy with their experiment, of Green Revolution and were hence highlighting its merits, a number of changes were occurring in Punjab economy as a consequence of Green Revolution. These changes were crucial in the sense that they later became the basis of separate

mobilization of the Hindu and Sikh community by a certain section of the political elite within their community. We may briefly take into account some of these changes to understand more clearly how these issues were used as mobilizing agents.

Green Revolution in order to be successful besides requiring the HYV seeds; irrigation and fertilizers also needed large Farm holdings. Consequently the middle and small landholders were made to sell their land, leaving them with the options to either join the ranks of the landless labourers or to migrate to other states or even countries abroad. I. K. Gujral has mentioned that, in 1961 there were 16.02 cultivator land owner households. By 1981 it changed to 17.58 cultivator land owners to 11.04 landless labour households. The landless labour has thus increased from 17 percent of rural population in 1961 to 38.26 percent in 1981⁶.

Secondly, the consequent growth due to Green Revolution brought in good money to the land lords, and the labour prices in the area went up. The opportunity of better wages attracted a vast population of migrant labour particularly from areas of Rajasthan, U.P. and Bihar. This situation brought about a serious demographic imbalance in communal terms in Punjab. In the year 1971 quotes Gopal Singh (with slight exaggerations), "the Hindu population in the state rose from 40% to 48% reducing the percentage of Sikh population from 60% to 52%"⁷.

Both the above situations of migration of Sikhs to other areas in the country and abroad and the insersion of Hindu

migrant labour in Punjab, was not liked by the Akali leaders in terms of their electoral gains, and hence made much of in their mobilization of the Sikhs.

While taking into account the consequences of Green Revolution one may also note the crucial dynamics of centre state relations. Just before the third Five Year Plan, the central government imposed agricultural commodity zones. Across these zones trade was not permitted except under a central licence. The object of the government was to reduce prices and to ensure food supplies to urban and marginal rural areas through its fair price shops. The farmers of Punjab viewed these policies as harmful to their interests as well as those of India as a whole. They argued that if they got reasonable prices for their produce, they would have more to invest and this could increase production. Agricultural development involved increased use of fertilizers and digging of wells, fertilizers were available in only limited quantities and the farmers attributed this to foreign currency restrictions imposed by the government of India which gave agriculture a low priority than industries.⁸ Consequently Punjab farmers who were largely Jat Sikhs were made to see in it the governmental policy of discrimination against them and a bias in favour of the Hindus who dominated the industrial sector.

Another benefit of the Green Revolution which is now being interpreted as its sad consequences is the amount of wealth it has brought to the farmer families in rural areas.

Little knowing the consequence, the rich farmers of Punjab had invested much of their ^{wealth and} effort in opening up schools and colleges in rural areas. The farm management did not require more manpower to do the job. The next generation could not all be absorbed in agriculture. Consequently many of the rural youths received education in these institutions and developed newer career ambitions. This helped produce a distinct category of middle class intellectuals of rural origin. But the lack of employment opportunities (besides farming) in rural areas has made most of these educated rural youths who belong largely to Sikh Jat families, migrate to urban areas in Punjab or elsewhere or to go abroad. It was not a case of abject poverty but agricultural affluence resulting in creation of a new class with new aspiration but not finding employment of the liking and in accordance with their new cultural attainments. This has been a much talked about issue by the Akali leaders who have pointed out this fact also as an understanding and justification of the terrorist activities by the Sikh youths in Punjab.

Hence we see how the consequences of Green Revolution were actually interpreted by a section of the Akali leadership who were also largely drawn from the Jat Sikh farmer families to mobilize the Sikh community, a large section of which were also the farmers placed in rural areas by touching upon the factors which were related to them and to which they could identify. Also, in mobilizing this particular section of their

community and by seeking benefits for them (economic and political) the political elite belonging to the same social class had much to benefit from this exercise in political and economic terms.

INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION?

Punjab's economy as has been pointed out by many scholars presents a picture of lop sided growth where the agricultural sector has received much in terms of Green Revolution and has consequently contributed to the economic growth of the Nation. But the Industrial sector presents a sorry picture.

The Nangal Fertilizers and the Heavy Water Plant are the only two major public sector Industries in the state. Both of which notes I.K. Gujral are power gluttons and a heavy drag on the power generated by the Bhakra system. Furthermore, their employment potential is very low⁹.

As opposed to this, the neighbouring state of Haryana which is, notes I.K. Gujral again, "already industrially ahead of Punjab has been allocated an oil refinery a petrochemical complex and a fertilizer plant and also a proposal to link the state with petroleum and gas pipelines that will terminate at Karnal"¹⁰ a crucially important step for further industrial growth in the state.

Such comparisons by the elites between Haryana and Punjab were used to highlight the sense of discrimination by

the government against Punjab a Sikh dominated state and Haryana - a Hindu dominated state carved out of former composite Punjab.

Also in the sixth five year plan (1980-85) the central authorities allotted Rs.240 billion to investment in Heavy industry, but only Rs.100 million (0.04%) as pointed out by Robin Jeffrey was spent in Punjab¹¹.

The reason often cited by the government as a defence is that, Punjab borders the old enemy, Pakistan, and that wars have been fought along that border in 1965 and 1971. It might make little sense to put a vital aircraft factory within an hours drive of a Pakistan tank but as pointed out by Jeffrey, this is a poor explanation for the failure to locate less strategically important nationalised industries in Punjab¹².

Such situations left the people of Punjab with little choice but to open up certain small scale industries. Most of these however are largely located in the urban areas and largely owned by the Hindus. To support this we may quote from Victor D.Souza, who based on the 1971 census data shows that 69.37% of the Sikhs are concentrated in rural areas and are mainly cultivators and 66.39% of the Hindus live in urban areas and specialize in non-agricultural occupations such as trade, industry, services and other. Hence in urban based occupations Hindus are over represented and Sikhs under represented. (This is shown in the following Table).

Table 1 : REPRESENTATION OF HINDUS AND SIKHS IN TOWNS IN
DIFFERENT FUNCTIONAL CATEGORIES IN PUNJAB.

Functional Categories	Hindus	Sikhs
Manufacturing	1.50	0.48
Trade	1.85	0.53
Services	1.60	0.50
Diversified	1.40	0.60
All	1.67	0.54

Source: Victor D'Souza, 'Economic Roots and Punjab Communalism', Economic and Political Weekly, May 1982.

This link between the occupational and communal division has been of much concern and a contributing factor in the ethnic problem of Punjab.

Infact the power shortage in the state which has necessitated rationing has also been given a communal understanding by both the Hindu and Sikh elites in Punjab. K.S.Gill presents out that whenever there is more than a normal cut back on supply to agriculture, the cry is heard that it is to favour the "Hindu bania" industrialist and when the rationing gets a bit severe for industry, especially during serving and harvesting periods, the industrialist would grumble that the state pampers the Sikhs because of their agitational tactics¹³.

Another economic feature which had been made much use of by the Sikh mobilizing elites was the lack of employment opportunity for the educated youths in rural and urban areas which was largely attributed by them to the lack of industrial development in the state and hence responsible for denying the 'sons of the soil' a rightful place in their land and instead forcing them to migrate to other cities in India and countries abroad.

Infact much of the money which the families get as remittances from Punjabis abroad (estimated by Robin Jeffrey to be US \$ 200 million a year) is wasted. While some money is used to buy land and property and spent on other conspicuous consumption, most of it has been deposited in Banks. Bank deposits in the state therefore are quite high, shown in Table 2), but the irony of it is that 70% of these deposits in the state are transferred to support industrial and commercial enterprise in metropolitan and other towns outside the state. Hence the advanced deposit ratio in Punjab as quoted by Sucha Singh Gill and shown in Table 3 in the year 1979 was 42.3 much below that of the other states¹⁴. This decline in case of Punjab shows that though the state has capital, it is unable to use it particularly for the lack of investment opportunities (it was maintained by the political elites) in industrial enterprises in the state, for notes I.K. Gujral that the licences which are held by the centre are certainly not forthcoming¹⁵.

Table 2: PER CAPITAL CENTRE-STATE INSTITUTIONAL FINANCIAL FLOWS
1973-80.

(Rs.per capita)

States	Commercial Bank			Develop- ment Banks	ARDC	Total Invest ment (3+4+5)
	Credit	Invest- ment	Total (1+2)			
Punjab	734	42	776	78	87	941
Haryana	446	74	520	113	123	756
Maharashtra	610	49	667	151	30	848
Gujarat	323	69	392	219	27	638
West Bengal	321	49	370	70	9	449

Table 3: ADVANCE-DEPOSIT RATIO IN SELECTED STATES AND UNION
TERRITORIES IN INDIA (YEAR ENDING IN DECEMBER).

(In percentage)

State	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980*	1981*
Haryana	51.1	59.8	65.0	62.6	61.0	61.5	61.4	70.9	70.4	72.3
Punjab	33.2	41.3	43.8	38.1	37.7	42.3	37.0	42.1	42.3	45.9
Rajasthan	48.7	55.4	58.0	59.5	62.2	62.0	60.8	67.8	67.4	70.7
Chandigarh	38.7	69.6	58.8	11.1	54.3	83.7	46.7	92.1	209.2	170.2
Delhi	53.3	75.8	48.8	92.7	38.2	23.9	17.5	08.5	81.0	80.0
West Bengal	76.0	82.0	81.5	72.9	70.4	69.1	63.5	64.4	61.4	55.6
Gujarat	57.4	57.5	62.6	61.0	59.7	54.1	50.4	53.7	57.5	54.7

(In percentage)

State	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980*	1981*
Maharashtra	83.5	84.0	87.9	86.0	82.5	76.1	72.5	76.1	79.1	80.5
Karnataka	88.4	89.7	94.2	100	98.0	83.4	81.7	79.4	75.5	76.2
Kerala	70.4	70.8	71.1	71.7	67.5	61.3	61.9	64.3	68.1	72.1
Tamil Nadu	110	105	104	109	110	96.7	94.2	86.9	94.7	91.9
All India	67.2	70.3	71.0	73.5	77.0	72.7	69.9	68.9	66.9	66.8

Calculated from RBI Report on Trend and Progress of Banking in India various issues.

* Provisional

The above were some of the essential aspects of the nature of economic development in Punjab during the late 60's and 70's. It is evidently clear that Punjab economy inspite of statistically showing the highest per-capita income and GDP was also showing lop-sided development and giving rise to such social problems as Immigration, migration and unemployment. As we have noted much of these economic features were made political use of by the elites of the political organizations of the Sikhs and Hindus to highlight the sense of discrimination towards their community by the ruling elite in the state or the centre. A more serious mobilization in this regard was done by the Sikh elite in the Akali Dal who belonging to the Rural Jat Sikh families took up the cause of the rural Sikh Jat farmers (by first drawing a wedge between

the peasantry which was both Hindu and Sikh) in order to unite them ethnically so that they may serve their political ends.

This was done showing that the ones responsible for the lop sided and discriminatory development in their state was no other than the ruling Hindu elite at the centre who did not care for the largely Sikh dominated farming community who it was asserted deserved a better treatment having contributed to India's security (army) and economic development (agricultural output). Hence the only thing which could earn them their rightful shares from the Centre was their mobilization as an ethnic community in order to secure for themselves an autonomous state so as to once and for all bring to end all the feelings of discrimination grievances and fears of absorption into Hinduism and finally to be able to develop as a separate Nation under auspices of their own sovereign government who would be totally and completely devoted to their cause.

Hence in essence, the Akali demand for state autonomy was seen more as economic in nature, although we cannot ignore the political consideration in it too.

A.S.Narang quotes P.S. Badal as having said "There is rethinking in the Sikh leadership on how and where the Sikhs stand in the slowly growing unitary set up where minorities have no voice at all. The dark repression let loose against the Akali workers in particular and Punjab kisans and Sikh employees in general, would ultimately awaken this state to

launch bigger struggle for more autonomy for Punjab. We are absolutely not safe in the hands of so called secular and national government¹⁶.

ANANDPUR SAHIB RESOLUTION

Subsequently, in October 1973, in its convention at Anandpur Sahib, the Akali Dal put forward the demand of fixing remunerative use of agricultural produce, opposed the demarcation of food zones and the restrictions that go with it on the movement of food grains and demanded that "the whole country should be a single food zone". In the industrial sector, this resolution advocated the "nationalisation" of all key industries including consumer goods industry so as "to save the poor consumer from exploitation at the hands of the middlemen". But as Gopal Singh mentions, it clearly does not see the consumers of food grains and other agricultural products as being exploited in the same way by demanding for example, the setting up of nationalised collective farms. The resolution also demanded a planned effort to establish agro industries in rural areas and that the credit agencies, particularly the nationalised banks, be directed to invest a fixed ratio of their deposits in rural areas. And finally, it reesolved that the Akali Dal would try its best to fix need wages for industrial workers. But for agricultural workers its aim would be to reassess the minimum wages of agricultural labour and to effect necessary improvements as and when

necessary. Thus as Gopal Singh notes further, most of the demands in the Resolution were for making commercial agriculture more profitable. It is through the Akali Dal and its politico-economic programme that the demands of the rising class of capitalist farmers were sought to be realised¹⁷.

The above analysis of the Anandpur Sahib resolution shows how the economic demands were made the bases of ensuring political aims. Hence, also highlighting the important links and overlaps between the economic and political developments in Punjab.

PUNJAB CRISIS OF 1984 - The consequence of political Developments in Punjab '66-'84.

Having established in the previous section how economic factors in Punjab were being used to mobilize and crystallize the Hindu and Sikh ethnic identity and how the leaders in the Akali Dal had made the economic demands in the Anandpur Sahib Resolution as the basis of their political aims, of acquiring an autonomous status for Punjab, it might be worthwhile to see how the politics was being manipulated (in terms of electorate) within Punjab both by the political elite at the Centre and the political elite in the regional parties in Punjab to serve their narrow partisan and parsonal interests; which also incidentally became the building blocks of the Punjab crisis which finally erupted in the year 1984.

The formation of Punjabi Suba in 1966 was painted as declaration of Sikhs as a Nation eventhough it could be seen that the demand for Suba conceded only when Akali leadership articulated it as a Punjabi community demand rather than as a Sikh demand as was done earlier by Master Tara Singh. Yet, it proved a hollow victory for the die-hard Akalis. Because the Sikh votes were split, they still could not hope to become the natural party of power in the Punjab. The only way they could form a government was in alliance with one or the other political party in Punjab. Therefore in 1967 elections a non-congress United Front Ministry led by the Akali Dal was formed. Besides Akali Dal this included communist party of India and Jan Sangh and enjoyed support of the communist party of India (Marxists), Congress party with substantial Sikh support became the main opposition party in the Punjab legislative assembly. Both the government and the opposition were a composite Hindu - Sikh phenomena.

The story of the next five years was no smooth success story for Akali Dal. It spoke of the heavy role of factions in the state politics. This is shown in the following two tables.

PUNJAB GOVERNMENTS 1967-72.

Dates	Government	Chief Minister
March 1967 to Nov. 1967	- United Front, led by Akali Dal	Gurnam Singh
Nov. 1967 to August 1968	- Janta Party Minority supported by Congress	Lachman Singh Gill

Dates	Government	Chief Minister
June 1970 to June 1971	- Akali Dal (Sant Group) - Supported by Jan Sangh	Prakash Singh Badal
June 1971 to March 1972.	- Presidents' Rule	
August 1968 to February 1969	- President's Rule	
February 1969 to March 1970	- Akali dal Jan Sangh Coalition.	Gurnam Singh
March 1970 to June 1970	- Akali Dal(Sant Group) Jan Sangh coalition	Prakash Singh Badal

Table 4: PARTY POSITION IN THE PUNJAB VIDHAN SABHA AFTER THE 1967 AND 1969 ELECTIONS

Party	1967		1969	
	Seats Won	Votes polled (percentage)	Seats Won	Votes polled (percentage)
Congress	48	37.6	38	39.2
Akali Dal(Sant)	24	20.46	43	29.6
Akali Dal(Master)	2	4.23	-	-
Jan Sangh	9	9.85	8	8.8
CPI	5	5.16	3	4.5
CPI(M)	3	3.26	2	3.3
Republican	3	1.79	0	1.1
Praja Socialist Party	0	0.51	1	0.5
Socialist	1	0.72	2	0.8
Swatantra Party	0	0.50	1	0.9
Janata Party*	-	-	1	1.7
Independents and others	9	16.10	4	10.8

*Formed by Lachman Singh Gill after defecting from the Akali Dal

Source: Government of Punjab, Chief Electoral Officer; Report on the General Elections in Punjab 1967 and 1969.

The above tables gives a clear indication of the political manouvers over a period of five years (1967-72) which showed clearly that political alliances are fluid factions join and divide for advantage, and the labels of Akali Dal and Congress are often matters of convenience. They allow those who use them to portray themselves as defenders either of sikh interests or of supposedly claimed national interests. The choice depended on the circumstances of the time.

The year 1972, in the wake of libration of Bangladesh; saw Mrs.Gandhi at the height of her popularity. Her resounding victory in the elections to state Assemblies had given her added courage. Giani Zail Singh was made the Chief Minister of Punjab. A crucial role was played by Zail Singh in his five years tenure as the Chief Minister of Punjab. Khushwant Singh writes, "In his anxiety to losen Akali Strangle-hold on the management of Gurdwaras, he launched a movement designed to take religious winds out of Akali Sails by providing that despite commitment to secularism he could be a more devout Sikh than they, "Keertan darbars" were organized on a massive scale, public functions began with an ardas, the road running from Anandpur to Patiala was renamed Guru Gobind Singh Marg and much more"¹⁸.

However, this excessive show of religiosity by Zail Singh forced a number of senior members of his own party to complain to Mrs.Gandhi that the Punjab Government was communal.

To protect their position the Akali Dal decided to draw up a list of grievances which they hoped would convince sikhs that even Zail Singh was not going to meet their 'legitimate demands. The Akali Dal therefore set up a committee of eminent Sikhs and charged them with re-drawing the aims and objectives of the Sikh Panth to give a more vigorous lead for their achievement because notes Gopal Singh, of the anti-Sikh policies of the Government"¹⁹. In 1973 this Committee submitted a report, subsequently known as the Anandpur Sahib Resolution.

With the adoption of this Resolution, the sikhs were seen to be clearly moving towards a demand for a more autonomous Punjab. Seeds of sikh separation already sown abegan to sprout rapidly.

In the Anandpur Sahib Resolution the Akali Dal had baldly stated its claim to be the party of all sikhs. It said, "The Shiromani Akali Dal is the very embodiment of the hopes and aspirations of the sikh nation and as such is fully entitled to its representation."

However, inspite of Akali Dal's claim to be the party of all sikhs, rural and urban the Anandpur Sahib Resolution as analysed earlier, is heavily biased in favour of farmers (as distinct from agricultural labour) and against the traders and industrialists for not only do most of the Akali leadership belong to the farmer class but the two sets of occupations are also shown to almost clearly coincide with the Hindu-Sikh cleavage in Punjab.

Some of the most crucial demands of Anandpur Sahib Resolution were however the transfer of Chandigarh to Punjab. River water issue, and the restriction of Central Governments' interference to only defence, foreign relations; currency and general communications.

Because of the last of these issues of restriction on the powers of the centre in the State; the document was read by the government as secessionist and hence refused negotiations on it. But the Akalis at this stage were only however asking for more autonomy to Punjab. The Dal president, in the eighties, Herchand Singh Longowal, himself said : "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 tempering with their religious way of life. Undoubtedly the Sikhs have the same nationality as other Indians²⁰. But Akali leadership did speak with different voices, sometimes claiming "Sikhs a nation" and sometimes Sikhs as part of composite Indian Nation" Infact; as has been noted by Tully and Jacob, the Akalis were so lukewarm about pressing the Resolution that even during the Janta regime when they were in power for over two years with Badal as the States' Chief Minister they did little to pressurise the government, only urging them to recast the constitutional structure of the country on real and meaningful federation principles²¹.

However, the political situation in India changed suddenly in 1980. In spite of the Akali Dal's more or less firm grip over the Punjab politics, the political situation in Punjab could not remain unaffected by the developments at the national level. As has been pointed out by Narang; "at the close of the 1970's three major developments were taking place in the country : the Janata Party was proving to be a failure; two, the Congress (I) had intensified its crusade against the ruling Party, and three, factionalism within several parties was getting accentuated because of the power hunger of politicians.

Hence 1980 elections brought Mrs. Gandhi back to power in Centre. The Congress also did exceedingly well in the State Assembly Elections - even in Punjab.

The following table gives us the party position in the Punjab Vidhan Sabha Elections in 1980.

Table 5: Party Position in the Punjab Vidhan Sabha after the 1980 Elections

Party	Seats contested	Seats won	Percentage of votes polled
Congress	117	63	48.0
Akali Dal	73	37	26.9
CPI	18	9	6.5
CPM	13	5	4.1
BJP	41	1	5.4
Janata Splinter	62	-	4.7
Independents and others	398	2	4.6

Source : The Tribune, 3 June 1980.

In Punjab the Congress won 48% of the votes polled and Akali Dal 26.9%, which was a fall from 31.4% it has secured in the 1977 elections. However, the results did demonstrate the continued hold of the Akali Dal on the rural Sikh base in Punjab.

Meanwhile Darbara Singh who became the Chief Minister of Punjab decided to reverse Zail Singh's policies and revert to what he saw as the orthodox congress policy of secularism. Although a Sikh himself, in an interview given while he was Chief Minister Tully and Jacob quote Dilbara Singh as having said, "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."²²

After all, Dilbara Singh and Zail Singh, the Home Minister in the Union Cabinet and later the President of India and the Congress factions owing allegiance to these leaders, saw little eye to eye. This made things very difficult for Dilbara Singh in the State. He was given little free hand to tackle things as he deemed necessary without the interference of the centre. The evidence of such may be seen when during 1980. Bhinderwale was charged with murder of first the Nirankari Chief Sant Baba Gurbachan Singh (24 April, 1980) and later the veteran journalist who was supporting Hindu fundamentalism - Lala Jagat Narain (9 August 1981). The state

Government could take little action and Bhinderwale was released from Jail, believed sometimes on the initiative taken by Zail Singh who was friendly to Bhinderwale (Giani infact was in first place responsible for discovering him) and at times on the initiative of Mrs. Gandhi who was said to have used Bhinderwale's politics to draw a wedge in the Akali Dal to win the State Assembly elections in Punjab.

Hence, the terrorist activity unleashed by Bhinderwale's brand of fundamentalism was going unchecked and the Congress Government at the centre could also enlist little help from the moderate leaders of the Akali Dal to curb the terrorist activities in the State. Nirmal Singh has also pointed out that "the limited capacity of the congress leaders to win over relatively sober elements among Akali or to deal firmly with terrorists and to successfully isolate the extremists; was further diminished by Bhajan Lal, Janata Chief Minister of Haryana who had defected to Congress on block with his majority support in Haryana assembly, after Janata lost power at the Centre. He played hawkish politics within Congress to thwart settlement with Akali 'morcha'. In the name of electoral interests of Congress (I) outside Punjab; sepecially in Haryana, he sent out loud anti-Sikh and anti-Punjab signals hardly distinguishable from committed communalism and regionalism. Forces represented by him 'curbed' central leadership's flexibility to attempt honourable cooperation of Akali leadership; while the provocative action made even compromise-

prone Akali leaders shun the alternative for fear of losing all the following to the extremists."²³

The inaction by the Government at the Centre and the moderate leaders of the Akali Dal left open grounds for Bhinderwale to carry on his terrorist activities.

Thanks to our communal oriented press; Bhinderwale and his actions as well as the inactions of the Government were given wide coverage. Bhinderwale emerged as the cult figure - a hero of Punjab politics who was seen as genuinely devoted to the cause of the sikhs orthodox elements like the ban of tobacco in Amritsar, (acknowledgement of the following bearded sikhs as the true sikhs etc) and hence trying to fight for their cause like a fearless warrior with his own brand of terrorism.

However, this was not the interpretation read by the moderate Akali Dal leaders; who saw it as Bhinderwale's acts of individual terrorism. Prof. Nirmal Singh notes that "those acts of individual terrorism were not authorised by Akali leadership and in many cases were in open defiance of official leadership" but has also pointed out that the acts "were not publicly denounced by Akali leadership and sometimes even condoned by stalling these as a reaction to a repressive and non-responsive state"²⁴.

However the Akali Dal tried once again to bargain with the state and put forward 41 demands which were later reduced

to 15 demands, to the central Government in 1981. The following is the list of the revised demands.

**REVISED LIST OF 15 DEMANDS RECEIVED FROM THE AKALI DAL B
GOVERNMENT IN OCTOBER, 1981**

1. Unconditional release of Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale and judicial enquiry with regard to police action in connection with Delhi Rally (September 7); Chowk Mehta and Chando Kalan.
2. Removal of alleged Government high-handedness in the management of Delhi Gurdwaras, holding of democratic elections after removal of forcible control by "one of Government's stooges".
3. Restoration of the SGPC's right to send pilgrim parties to Pakistan and deploy sewadars for the maintenance of local Sikh shrines.
4. Permission of Sikhs travelling by air to wear kirpans in domestic and international flights.
5. An All India Gurdwaras Act should be passed.
6. Grant of holy city status to Amritsar on the pattern of Hardwar, Kurukshetra and Kashi.
7. Installation of "Harimandir Radio" at Golden Temple; Amritsar to relay kirtan.
8. Renaming Flying Mail as Harimandir Express.

9. As per the Anandpur Sahib Resolution, the S.A. Dal is firmly convinced that progress of States would entail prosperity of the Centre for which suitable amendments should be made in the Constitution to give more rights and provincial autonomy to States. The Centre should retain Foreign Affairs, Defence, Currency and Communications (including means of transport); while the remaining portfolios should be with the States. Besides, the Sikhs should enjoy special rights as a nation.
10. Merger of Punjabi-speaking areas and Chandigarh into Punjab.
11. Handing over of dams and headworks in the State to Punjab and re-distribution of river waters as per national and international rules.
12. Second language status to Punjabi language in Haryana, Delhi Himachal Pradesh and Rajasthan.
13. Stoppage to uprooting of Punjabi farmers from Terai area of UP.
14. Setting up of a dry port at Amritsar.
15. A licence should be granted for a New Bank in place of the Punjab and Sind Bank, which should be under Sikh control and remunerative price should be fixed for agricultural products by linking it to the index of industrial production.

In the above demands one can see that to some of essential demands of Anandpur Sahib Resolution (Territorial claim and River water issue) some religious demands like the broadcast of religious discourse and declaration of Amritsar as holy city)^{were added}. Such demands when accepted notes Prof. Nirmal Singh "were deemed to boost the self image of sikhs as a privileged group and their political consolidation behind Akali Dal as their sole representative". In other words the purpose of the Akali leaders was to mobilize the Sikhs along certain issues to a political grouping. And once the talks on these demands between the Akali leaders and Mrs. Gandhi broke down; much was made of this failure by the Akali leaders to rub into the consciousness of the sikh masses once again that all their efforts at negotiations were being turned down by the centre, an allegation which seemed very close to the truth, in light, of the political considerations working on Mrs. Gandhi at the time which prevented her from coming to any settlement with the Akali leaders. Three of such compulsions have been very perceptively pointed out by C.P. Bhambhri (1) The Congress party was in power in Punjab and successful negotiations between Mrs. Gandhi and the Akali leadership might have strengthened the opposition parties in Punjab because the Akali Dal was aligned with the opposition and the Akalis had shared power with the new Janata party in 1977, (2) The Hindu Communalists in Punjab might have shifted away from the Congress of the Akali Dal was to succeed in clinching a negotiated settlement with the government of India ... and (3)

Mrs. Gandhi suspected the opposition political parties, they might have exploited a negotiated settlement between the Congress and the Akali Dal in the electoral politics in Haryana²⁶ and Himachal Pradesh whose assembly elections were due in the following month. Both the States had a sizeable Hindu population who would certainly not have favoured concessions to the Party of the Sikhs. Haryana was of course also involved in the water dispute, hence Mrs. Gandhi could take no decision which might have alienated the Hindus of Haryana. And since she could also not have the Akali leaders move into the capital to press for their demands on the eve of the Asian Games scheduled to begin soon in the capital, she brought in Swaran Singh to look into the River water demand. Once the 'Crisis over', she turned down Swaran Singh's proposed solution.

The complete failure of all talks and solutions may be seen as a 'turning point' in the Punjab developments of the period. Kuldip Nayar saw the breakdown of these talks as a watershed. He wrote, "From that day onward the distance between the government and the Akalis began to increase. And like a Greek tragedy both sides relentlessly slipped into a situation that spelt disaster"²⁷.

The Akali Dal now had a reason to legitimize its formation of the 'morcha' and hence declare the 'Dharm Yudh' appealing to the Sikh sentiments that the "unity of Panth was in danger". Such statements were issued to further strengthen

the ethnic identity among the sikhs and on the basis of their ethnic solidarity gravitate towards mobilizing them to press for the demand of a sovereign status for Punjab which was now shown as the only hope of survival of the sikh community for both Hindu and Sikh terrorism was on an incline and the centre was non-responsive to the Sikh cause. Consequently on 20th September 1983 cries of 'Khalistan' were raised in the Manji Sahib Gurdwara within the Golden Temple by almost 4/5 of the gathering; where even sant Harchand Singh Longowal said "We say 'Raj Karega Khalsa' well it is for the Raj of the kind Guru Nanak dreamed about"²⁸.

A further impetus to sikh fundamentalism was being given all this while by Hindu fundamentalist activities in the State. Hindu Communal Organizations had once again implored to the Punjabi Hindus to declare Hindi as their mother tongue in the 1981 census, while the Janata Party group at Haryana continued to openly support them.

Indira Gandhi being apprehensive of Janata Government victory in Haryana began to weaken its support by coming out as a greater champion of the Hindu cause. Having lost out in the Assembly elections in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, there was a greater need to consolidate her position in the North which could only be done by supporting the dominant community in the region which was - the Hindu community.

The clever and calculating Mrs. Gandhi was too shrewd to realise that she could conveniently play upon the already

growing Hindu and Sikh ethnic cleavage and consequent rivalry in Punjab to secure the Hindu support by coming up as the champion and saviour of the Hindus against the Sikh community which was shown to be indulging in terrorist activities and claiming several Hindu lives.

And who could achieve this task easily quickly and subtly for her - no other than the Media; which is largely under central control and hence could be used for furthering the communal aims of the centre. The Hindu fundamentalism was hence aroused and the Hindu heartland consolidated thus, by circulating certain dominant images through the media for the purpose. Pritam Singh has pointed out some of these as follows:

- (1) Sikhs have been killing the Hindus in Punjab.
- (2) Sikhs are aggressive, unreasonable and have been demanding Khalistan.
- (3) Bhinderwale has been organizing the killing of Hindus.
- (4) Gurdwaras are training centres for terrorists and hiding places for criminals.

To such a role of the media was added the activity of Hindus Communal Organizations like the 'Vishwa Hindu Parishad' and 'Hindu Raksha Samiti'. Meanwhile Mrs. Gandhi in order to identify herself and her Party closely with the Hindus started visiting temples (more so after her son Sanjay's death) and meeting various Gurus, acharyas; tantriks and astrologers.

Meanwhile terrorism continued to grow at alarming rates for now it was supported by fundamentalism of both the Hindu and the Sikh ethnic groups.

But Mrs. Gandhi at the centre waited to strike. This bewildered many. Some could sense that she was postponing so that she could come as close as possible to her next election date in '85; For she knew that her action at the Golden Temple (which she had already planned) would bring feelings of euphoria and relief amongst the masses who were by now sick and scared of terrorist activities. This predictably would lead her to her victory in '85 elections.

However, the growing terrorist activities against the Hindus and hence the fear of alienating their support made Mrs. Gandhi strike slightly sooner than she had planned. In early June, the whole state was put under the control of the army and army action was launched at the Golden Temple.

Thus, began the Operation Blue star. Besides large scale firings which involved wide killings; there were searches and arrests. Bhinderwale was the well-known victim of the Operation Blue Star, his death was seen to symbolise the beginning of the end of terrorism in Punjab and elsewhere in the country.

After Operation Blue Star; the whole country except certain understandable section of the Sikhs were enveloped in a feeling of relief, almost as if they had actually been saved

from the terrible disaster of extinction at the hands of the terrorists. And now there was no threat of a foreign hand (it had been removed) or any other extremist group to destabilize India. And the one who had brought about all this was their saviour; well-wisher; secular minded Mrs. Gandhi. On the other hand Bhindranwale had built his strategy on the assumption that he could with impunity convert Golden Temple into a veritable Fortres and carry out all his sortees of terrorist attacks and anti-Hindu onslaught from within the precincts; without the Indian State daring to send its forces to storm them. He had declcard that foundation stone of Khalistan would be layed the day Indian Armed Forcs entered Golden Temple. Thus, far large number of Sikh fundamentalists and many more sikhs were alienated from Indian State. Operation Blue Star marked the event of Sikh becoming a nation; this time in a more totalitarian sense.

Mrs. Gandhi calculations had seemingly payed off. But little had she predicted that an October 31; 1984. She would meet her end at the hands of two of her bodyguards; who happended to be Sikhs.

This almost proved to be the proverbial last straw on the back of the secular camel. People now no longer hailed her as just their Saviour but revered her as a martyr. The media once again added its contributions in making much out of the 'Sikh' assassins of Mrs. Gandhi. Hindu fundamentalism which had not had enough time to calm down once again came to life, and

one often heard such fundamental statements as 'Sikhs must be taught a lesson' and hence followed the Anti-Sikh riots in Delhi and at other places in the country wherever there was a sizeable number of sikh population. The Hindu justification was "Sikhs deserve this". But few said what Hindus deserved for such inhuman acts of Killings; arson and looting perpetrated against the innocent and the unarmed which were witnessed in Delhi. The Sikh community at this time was too shocked and hurt to say anything. But the media was not to stop at this, it further rubbed into the communal minded people; how all the Hindu rites were religiously performed at the funeral of Mrs. Gandhi. What more could the Hindu want ? They were totally and completely sold in favour of the martyr who had died for the protection of the Hindus at the hands of the Sikhs - Such communal inter-pretations circulated by the Hindu communal organizations found roots in the Hindu communal consciousness. Now the only way the Hindus could repay this debt was by electing the son of their saviour to power in the next elections. Hence, Rajiv Gandhi rising on the 'sympathy' wave won a resounding victory in the 1985 Lok Sabha elections and later, the Congress won in the various State assembly elections. But no elections either to Lok Sabha or to the State Assembly in Punjab dissolved in 1983 were held with the rest of the country. Thus putting a seal on the alienation of Sikhs. Thus, came to a crisis in '84, the movement whose seeds had been sown by the British in India - that of dividing the sikhs and Hindus but watered and nurtured by later politico - economic developments in Punjab.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, an effort has been made to trace, how and why the Sikh community which had become a nation, on merit of its ethnic group formation, reverses to its ethnic identity, so as to be able to demand greater autonomous status and later separate statehood for their nation. Infact, till the coming of the Punjab crisis, the Sikhs at times asserted their national character, at times asserted their ethnic identity and only at a particular stage and under specific social circumstances raised the demand for independent statehood.

The forces and agents behind shaping the Ethnic process are seen to be the narrow personal and partisan interests of the elites in the centre and regional political parties, who at times uses genuine, at times semi-genuine and at times totally false arguments to mobilize their respective ethnic communities along certain issues into a political grouping so as to be able to use them to serve their interests.

In this process the lop sided nature of development and the crucial social problems it gives rise to comes in as handy argument and a convenient cover for the political aims of the elites, and if this coincides with a communal cleavage as it was exaggeratedly shown to be by the ruling political elites, all the more dangerous but beneficial for the elite.

A further impetus to the process in Punjab was given by the presence of equally strong communal organisations, and

political parties of the Hindus and Sikhs and the communal oriented role of the Media, wherein the electoral politics based on the communal card proved a disasterous combination, as evident by the Punjab crisis of 1984.

But the questions now are:

- Did the crisis end in 1984 ?
- If not! what has been the outcome or later developments?
- What is the functional significance of the Hindu and Sikh ethnicization?

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CHAPTER IV

CONSEQUENCE AND AFTERMATH

In the last chapter, an attempt was made to probe the working of the process of interaction of Ethnicity, Nation and State, with its possible reversals, as unfolded through the development and its final eruption in Operation Blue Star in 1984.

Operation Blue Star followed by Operation Woodrose in 1984 made the Sikh ethnic community develop a feeling that the Government at the centre was not going to concede to the demand of a separate sovereign Sikh state. If anything it would resort to brutal suppression of such a demand or any expression that could be construed to be verging on that even if in the process the religious susceptibilities of the Sikh masses (whether or not supporting the demand for a Sikh state) were trampled upon.

Further, the unfortunate assassination of Mrs. Gandhi by her two Sikh bodyguards which received wide communal publicity made the situation even worse. Now the whole of the Sikh community was attempted to be denounced as "the terrorists" and "the traitors". For now, one even heard such extreme communal statements like "the only solution to the Punjab problem is to kill all the Sikhs; wipe out the whole race". Actions by the government tendentious media coverage and consequent response, had a paradoxical effect. Little had the government realised this, but it further brought a cohesion in the whole of Sikh

community which was dispersed all over India and divided by various social cleavages. Sikh scholars, bureaucrats, army officials, all responded to such events, and even though, not favouring the formation of a separate Sikh state most felt the need to speak with a common voice in order to safeguard the innocents in their community who had become targets of the Hindu communal onslaught. Thus; ironically enough, the demand and the subsequent failure of the demand for independent statehood in the face of state repression further strengthened the consolidation of the ethnic identity among the Sikhs, quite visibly in the whole of India and even outside.

The subsequent unfolding of events in Punjab after 1984 crisis reveals the working of the said process. We may go over those briefly to see why and how this happens. And finally, to also see the present phase of events and the consequent response and developments of the interrelationships of Hindu and Sikh communities in Punjab.

ASSASSINATION OF MRS. GANDHI AND VICTORY OF RAJIV GANDHI IN 1985 LOK SABHA ELECTIONS

Mrs. Gandhi's assassination on October 31; 1984 was played upon by the Congress as an evidence of a secular leader laying down her life like a true martyr in order to safeguard the unity and political integrity of India. Hence, creating a sympathy wave which was used by the ruling party to ensure victory of its candidate in the coming Lok Sabha elections.

Nirmal singh Writes, "sympathy wave due to Mrs. Gandhi's murder; massive sentiment to defend the unity and integrity of India, a whirlwind campaign by Rajiv that Anandpur Sahib Resolution; supported by all Akalis was secessionist; which he pledged to fight; silence on Hindu chauvinism and the hopes aroused by his youth; all contributed to victory¹. Massive mandate bringing Rajiv Gandhi to power created possibilities of a welcome change in Punjab seenario. He put behind his electoral rhetorics and started the search for a way of solving the Punjab problem by first opening negotiations with the Akali Dal. Rajiv Gandhi realised that Punjab was a political problem demanding comprehensive settlement and not a law and order problem. It needed to be handled by astute politicians and not bureaucrats, police and army. His first step in this direction was appointment of senior Congress leader Arjun Singh as the Governor of Punjab; and Arun Singh as his own parliamentary Secretary. This was followed in a phased way by release of Longowal and other Akali detenus, promised early completion of Theim Dam, granted economic concessions to Punjab farmers, and announced the setting up of a wagon factory, earlier planned for Haryana and of a regional cultural centre. All these announcements at Hussainewala on the occasion of Bhagat Singh's martyrdom created congenial atmosphere for a negotiated settlement²

THE ACCORD

This was interpreted by some extremist group as the weakening of the government and hence they reacted once again with violence; making Hindus the targets of such acts. The short sighted Hindus reacted equally strongly by asking the government to stop all negotiations with the Akalis. But, Rajiv Gandhi on advice of Arjun Singh was set on settling the problem by accomodation; and this led to the talks with Sant Harchand Singh Longowal; the Akali supremo. The talks were; note Tully and Jacob, "concluded with determination speed and efficiency which was in sharp contrast to the dilatory tactics adopted by both sides when they met under Mrs.Gandhi. In less than forty eight hours a settlement was announced. Mrs. Gandhi could have resolved the main issue on the same terms three years. Then there would have been no Operation Blue Star; no Sikh mutinies and no assassination³".

The famous Rajiv - Longowal Accord was signed on July 24, 1985. The second came as a surprise to many most of them were not prepared to believe that there could be a total reversal of the policy of confrontation which had been followed for the preceding 3-4 years between the Akali Dal and the ruling party at the centre. It was said by many that the Accord was "too good to be true"⁴. A G. Noorani calls it "fair and statesman-like"⁵, and goes on to say; "both men showed qualities of leadership by over-ruling the hardlines in their

respective camps. Their sincerity and determination cut through all obstacles⁶.

The Accord of settlement ran into 11 clauses of varying degrees of importance. Five of the clauses stated the expected and obvious:-Clause 1-compensation for property damages; clause 2 -fairness in army recruitment clause; 4 - rehabilitation and gainful employment for those discharged from army; clause 10 - protection of interests of minorities and clause 11 promotion of Punjabi language.

But the three major issues which were raised in the Accord were the ones which had remained unresolved in June 1984. (1) Transfer of Chandigarh to Punjab (2) raising Punjab's share of river water and (3) Anandpur Sahib Resolution.

The Accord however also raised adverse reactions among a section of Akalis. Both Badal and Tohra refused to endorse the Accord. While some other sikh leaders withheld their opinions, for they wanted to see how the accord is implemented. They are quoted by Kuldip Nayar as saying "The Congress Government has cheated the Sikhs many times before; we want results on the ground"⁷.

PUNJAB ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS-1985

The next crucial step in making efforts to normalise the Punjab situation was in democratic restoring of political process in Punjab by holding the assembly elections in 1985.

The announcement of the elections were hailed by most sections of the society as a positive step in restoring democratic functioning in Punjab. It was hoped that restoration of democratic process in Punjab would not only initiate but accelerate the process of decommunalisation of political process and culminate in its secularisation⁸. It had been pointed out by Rajiv Gandhi that the real issue was the holding of elections themselves much more than the outcome⁹.

Hence, it was believed by many political observer that though Rajiv Gandhi did raise some anti-Anandpur Sahib Resolution propoganda in his election campaign in Punjab; he did not in earnest press the matter, for he felt that it was important for the Akali Dal to win the Assembly elections in Punjab and thus be able to offer the people of Sikh community the much needed healing touch. Therefore even when Longowal went on as far as eulogising Bhindranwale and other extremists who were guilty of anti-Hindu communalism; secessionism and terrorism and joined in public praise of Mrs. Gandhi's killers and once publicly raised Khalistan slogan; All this was glossed over by Congress, under Rajiv, as understandable rhetoric to nurse his constituency¹⁰.

But little did people know that Longowal was soon to meet his end at the hands of some extremists who were not happy with Longowal for having signed the Accord with Rajiv Gandhi, for they painted it as a "sell out" and had subsequently given a call to boycott the elections. Misgivings about the Accord

also persisted within the important sections of the Akali Dal. But, the assassination of Longowal in August 1985 only helped in isolation of the extremist from the Sikh masses and united the faction ridden Akali Dal on the eve of the elections.

The following Table gives us the percentage of votes polled and seats won by political parties in Punjab Assembly Elections in 1985.

Table 1: PERCENTAGE OF VOTES POLLED AND SEATS WON BY POLITICAL PARTIES IN PUNJAB ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS, 1985.

Party	1985	
	%	No.
Congress	37.31	32
Akali Dal	38.40	73
Jana Sangh/ Janta Party/ BJP	4.00	6
PSP/Janata		
P.(J.P.)	1.00	1
C.P.I.	4.50	1
CPI(M)	1.80	-
Minor parties ^a	-	-
Independents	12.99	4
Total	100.00	117

^a It includes Republican Party of India, splinter groups of Janata Party and Congress (U).

These percentges are based on quick estimates (for 115 seats) reported in Lolita Ghose and Ashok Lahiri, "Was Punjab Poll Communal", Indian Express, 12th October, 1985; The Tribune, 3rd Sept.-October, 1985.

Source: Adapted from sources reported in Dhami; n.3; p.85.

The above table reveals the clear majority which the Akali Dal won in the Assembly; winning 73 seats out of the 100 it contested for the 117 member Assembly, which was only a few short of the 2/3 majority. This resounding victory was seen by many as a result of the Akali Dal's moderate leaderships secular stand (Longowal signing the Accord) which even put up six Hindu candidates, two of whom won; one Christian who lost and one muslim, who was elected. Because of this secular stand notes Narang, the Akalis are reported to have secured more Hindu votes in this election than in the past it also won over those non-Sikhs who were already swayed in favour of the Dal by New Delhi's reported willingness to either handover power to the Akalis or let them share it with the Congress (I); for the simple reason that they wanted to win the goodwill of further rulers of the state. In rural areas, where the Hindus are vastly outnumbered but were not harmed during the communally surcharged atmosphere. This tendency was more pronounced¹¹.

But such seemingly secular understanding of Assembly elections in Punjab does not explain the continuance of the communal and extremist practices in Punjab. Infact; the intensification of communalism in the post election period may be attributed to the aggravation of communal polarization during the election campaign and in the exercise of franchise. A.S.Narang notes that a significant dimension of the issue is that the resounding Akali victory has been won by a combination of four factors. Firstly, for the first time, the Akalis have vigorously projected themselves as more of a regional party than a religious party; secondly, a sizeable section of non-Sikh Punjabis have come to believe that an Akali government in Punjab is the best guarantee of peace; stability and development, thirdly; the electorate has given a matchless hand to the Indian democratic process vis-a-vis fascist stances of various affiliation; and fourthly, the Akali Dal more than ever catered, though subtly, to Sikh emotions¹².

It is this fourth factor which is to be seen as crucially important for large scale consolidation overcoming caste class and regional differences behind the Akali Dal. At the election rallies, though the Dal raised all Punjab issues such as the transfer of Chandigarh to Punjab and the territorial and river water distribution etc. the Akali Dal presented the struggle on these issues primarily as a struggle of the Sikhs led by it. It reminded the people of the marches it organized, the suffering of its volunteers in jails. The

Accord signed between Longowal and Rajiv Gandhi was presented not as a negotiated settlement in which both sides compromised for the sake of peace, but as a culminating triumph of the Akalis struggle against an unreasonable centre. To muster the Sikh votes it also touched upon the Operation Blue Star though not in a big way for fear of alienating the Hindus. Because of this subtle partisan attitude of the Akali Dal to the Sikhs, the latter who were already bitter with the Congress (I) government needed little convincing to go with the Dal.¹³

Consequently the election results showed a bigger consolidation of Sikh votes in favour of the Akali Dal than ever before. Even the Mazhabi Sikhs and the other backward classes in the community which traditionally voted for the Congress, closed ranks and voted in significant numbers for the Akalis. The fact that the substantial number of Hindus voted for the Akali candidates and that some Congress candidates also won in the Sikh majority constituencies cannot negate this reality. It also needs to be stressed that the Akali victories in the Assembly were mostly from the rural areas which have a Sikh majority and that the Congress (I) picked up most of its seats from the Hindu-dominated areas, particularly from the four major cities of Amritsar; Jullundur, Ludhiana and Patiala. This confirms that, with a few significant exceptions, the electorate voted along communal lines. Moreover, there were clear signs that the Hindus exercised their franchise with great care; in several constituencies; they voted for the

Congress for the Lok Sabha but the Akali Dal was their choice for the Assembly. This happened in the Amritsar, Gurdaspur Hoshiarpur, Phillur and Ferozepur parliamentary constituencies. This is why the Akali Dal's victory was perhaps, not so much an evidence of their secularism, as their pragmatism¹⁴.

Certain other reasons which may be attributed as leading to continuance of the extremist activities in Punjab are firstly; the opportunism of the central government installing the transfer Chandigarh to Punjab due to partisan electoral considerations in the forthcoming elections in Haryana, the so called 'Nayay Yudh' of Haryana Sangharsh Samiti and the reluctance of the Barnala government in agreeing to the transfer of land to Haryana from Punjab in lieu of Chandigarh. Secondly, the Central government's failure to punish those who were guilty of committing atrocities on innocent citizens many of them being congress leaders, added to the arguments of the extremists in Punjab. Its refusal to release the detenus in Jodhpur jail in view of large scale increase in the activities of terrorists after the installation of Barnala government, led to the loss of credibility of the central leadership on the one hand and the loss of faith by Barnala government on the other. It had nothing to convince the masses and for eroding the mass base of extremists and terrorists¹⁶. The successful implementation of the Accord demanded of both the parties to struggle against the antiaccord extremist elements in their ranks but opportunist stance of compromising with extreme wings within

the supporters^{of} both Rajiv and Barnala let the letter and spirit of the Accord to be destroyed.

Another side which is generally ignored while studying the Punjab problem is the emergence and role of Hindu communal organisation in Punjab which further fanned the Hindu fundamentalism and did not allow communalism to die out in Punjab. For example; Hindu Shiv Sena was seen brandishing Trishul in opposition to the use of Kirpan by the Sikhs. Further, it was observed that during the 1981 census also, the Punjabi Hindu Press advised the Hindus to declare Hindi as their mother tongue. 'The Hind Samachar', 'Pratap' and 'Milap' groups of papers wrote series of articles to fan this chauvinism. This conscious assertion of the Hindu identity against a Punjabi identity, let alone the Sikh identity fanned the fire of the apprehensions in the minds of Sikhs; and in turn made them further affirm a separat ethnic identity of their own. Satyapal Dang very perceptively writes, "the emergence of a large number of senas and samitis of Hindus in Punjab and growth of Hindu communalism throughout the country has made the fear psychosis of minorities more acute¹⁶. You cannot give legitimacy to Hindu communalism by equating it with Nationalism and denounce Sikh communalism and Muslim communalism as separatism. The strengthening of Hindu communalism at National level and proliferation of Hindu militant bodies in Punjab was bound to strengthen Sikh communalism in Punjab¹⁷.

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Thus, communalism and also extremists activities were on the increase in Punjab even after the Punjab elections and the setting up of the new government under the Chief Ministership of Barnala, with the expressed hope of putting an end to the era of political and athnic confrontations.

BARNALA GOVERNMENT IN PUNJAB

The Akali government led by Barnala came to power in September 1985. But as Nirmal Singh Notes; "it had contradictory trends and self destroying forces in its make up. Notable among these were Rajiv Longowal Accord to work out solution to Punjab problems by Centre-State cooperation; legitimation of Akali communalism; including Bhinderwale extremism which had led to June 1984 disaster; indiscrete release of all Sikhs under trials and detenus etc. and pledge to forge all in Panthic unity even being soft on terrorists¹⁸". But, paradoxically enough, the efforts of the Barnala government to project itself as a Panthic government, as a tactic to face the challenges from within Akali Dal by the dissidents and from outside by United Akali Dal, All India Sikh Students Federation and terrorist groups proved counter productive. On the one hand it gave legitimacy to communalism and on the other hand; it created new apprehensions in the minds of Hindus and aggravated Hindu communalism. Thus it contributed in accelerating the pace of the process of communalisation by leading strength to vicious circle instead of breaking it¹⁹.

Further, after Longowal's death the Akali Dal was once again faction-ridden. The faction led by Prakash Singh Badal, Amrinder Singh and Gurcharan Singh Tohra; all of whom shared the basic desire of dislodging Barnala from power and had the ambition of becoming the Chief Minister of the State in his place, kept on lending clandestine support to the extremists and terrorists party on the pretext of protest against the entry of police in the golden temple; reduced Barnala government to minority by split/defection and began to lend open support to terrorists after the split.

The forces of communalism thus gained strength in Punjab as a result of victory of Gurcharan Singh Tohra in the election for the Presidentship of the S.G.P.C. with the support of Badal Amrinder Singh, Baba Joginder Singh and the militants on one hand and the support of some ministers of Barnala government on the other. The control of S.G.P.C. put the year resources of the committee at the disposal of the extremists and the terrorists, as well as enabled them to oust the high Priests and instead place their supporters in these positions. They also surprisingly united most other factions in the Akali Dal which further made it difficult for Barnala to continue. Barnala was declared 'tankhaya' and later ex-communicated from Sikh panth. Further, as notes Nirmal Singh "difficulties were increased by subtle support to detraction of Barnala.. by sections of central Congress leadership and lurking hope nourished by local congress leaders that Barnala's discomfiture could result in their sharing power once again²⁰".

But, Barnala could do little to keep the remaining Akali MLAs in good humour which had made him tolerate increasing political interference corruption and clandestine support to terrorists even by some of the Ministers. This made his task all the more difficult. His dependence on Congress (I) for remaining in power had further undermined his legitimacy in the eyes of Sikh masses and weakened his authority. This had also helped communalism in gaining further momentum²¹.

If we are to go chronologically, certain events immediately after the 1985 Assembly elections may be seen as crucial developments in the Punjab problem. On february 26, 1986 the extremists took over the complete control of the Golden Temple complex and hoisted the Khalistani flag over it. A sarbat Khalsa was organized by the Akali Dal for cleaning the Golden Temple complex of undesirable elements (February 8), clash during Hola Mohalla at Anandpur Sahib between Barnala led Akali leaders and the AISSF activists (March 27); declaration of Khalistan by the five member Panthik committee (April 29); recognition of the speaker of Punjab assembly of a 27 member dissident Akali group (June 2); election of Prakash Singh Badal as President of the splinter Akali Dal (July 5), are some of the major events in the Intra-Akali politics since the September 1985 Punjab election²². And there is a need to analyse the implication of each one of these developments in order to apprehend the broad contour of post election developments in Punjab. But the lack of space does not permit one to

go into details of each of these important events and to bring out their relevance to the total understanding of the Punjab problem. It may suffice here to mention that these events are a clear indication of the fact that the Punjab problem did not end with the eruption of the crisis in 1984; but has been continuing ever since with little let up in terrorist activities.

GOVERNOR'S RULE

The year 1987 brought forward the dismissal of the Barnala government (heralding the failure of the moderate Akalis) and setting up of the governor's rule under S.S. Ray. But if anything, violence and terrorist activities further increased during the period. Rajiv Gandhi at the centre kept trying out new ways; and new Generals were being sent to Punjab to try and solve the problem which once again was being mis-treated as a mere law and order problem.

Rajiv Gandhi and 1990 Elections: Rajiv Gandhi who had started with fresh enthusiasm and a seemingly fresh and accommodating approach in dealing with the Punjab situations was by the end of his term, seen as reverting back to his mothers'; the former Prime Minister; Mrs. Gandhi's brand of politics. Perhaps he was also beginning to think in the electoral lines of Mrs. Gandhi now that the Centre and State elections of 1990 were fast approaching. But the Congress defeat at the Centre and in the States particularly the northern

states shows clearly that Rajiv Gandhi had judged the situation wrong. Situation in Punjab if anything had been growing from bad to worse during his rule at the Centre. The credit of his defeat should squarely go to Rajiv Gandhi for his flip-flop policy vis-a-vis communal ethnicity, even after the Rajiv-Longowal Accord and installation of Akali Govt. Little attention was given by both the Akali Dal and Rajiv Gandhi government at the centre to root out the basic causes that had created the objective situation which had prepared the soil for the growth of communalism in Punjab. The basic issues included in this by many social science analysts were large scale unemployment, huge rural indebtedness; pauperization of marginal farmers and landless labourers.; slow growth of industrialization and removal of economic hardships and corruption in administration. Since, the objective conditions remained the same, the forces of communalism went on gaining strength by exploiting this situation and are therefore till date quite powerful.

The non-removal or non-solution of the Punjab problem and added to it the increasing violence day by day further widened the gap between the Centre and State. People in Punjab (and also elsewhere) began to remove their faith from state as an ordering mechanism and instead thought it beneficial to sink their faith in narrow ethnic loyalties. It was to a great extent due to this strengthening of ethnic identities in Punjab and elsewhere in India that the congress faced one of its major

defeats at the Centre as well as in the States in the 1990 Lok Sabha and Assembly elections, and instead the regional and opposition parties recorded a substantial win. A clear indication of strengthening of ethnic identity among the sikhs in Punjab is seen in the victory of Simranjit Singh Mann and Bimal Khalsa known to be clearly supporting the terrorist groups and activities in Punjab. In particular the victory of a fundamentalist like Mann clearly is a sad manifestations of the direction the Punjab problem is taking. But who is to be blamed for this? Who is to bring the solution to the problem? What is the solution to the problem? These are some of the pertinent and disturbing questions upon whose valid and successful answer rests the future developments; unity and integrity of India.

CONCLUSION

What we have tried to analyse in this chapter was how even, after the seeming end of the Punjab crisis in 1984 the Punjab problem has not been solved. Rajiv Gandhi seemed to have drawn a lesson from the 1984 crisis and the immediate events following in the wake^{of} signing of Punjab accord 1985 and holding of the Punjab assembly Elections in 1985), but the hope was soon shattered when the violence and terrorist activities further increased in the state. The Sikh community more and more felt alienated from the State and hence more and more sought the security in its ethnic identification with their community. Even the ones who opposed the idea of Khalistan and do not support the terrorist activities have now begun to

sympathise (not support) with them; a fact clearly revealed during the elections of 1990 (voting for S.S. Mann and Bimal Khalsa). The Hindu communal organisations in the meanwhile have kept up the Hindu fundamentalism alive in Punjab and have been further fanning it, either through such acts as declaring Hindi as the mother tongue by the Hindus in 1981 census or by such Newspapers as 'Milap', 'Pratap' and 'Hind Samachar' or by the Shiv Sena members brandishing Trishul.

We may also note here interestingly that in Post 1984 period the political elites have had little direct role in shaping the later developments in Punjab. Instead, this phase may be seen as the consequence and the result of their actions in the period between 1966-1984. The post 1984 period in Punjab is more marked for the growth of extremists and terrorists activities, and the emergence of terrorists may be seen as the outcome of the failure of the demands raised by Akali dal in 1973, 1981 and 1985, and the subsequent failure of talks and the failure of the government to concede to these demands or to half heartedly implement even the publicly professed items of accord.

Thus; the happenings of the post 1984 period may be seen as the consequence of the Punjab crisis of 1984 where the direct and fresh initiation of the political elite has been considerably reduced. Their functions are mainly restricted to seeing that the post 1984 developments stay within the manageable limits of the Centre and the State.

Hence, within the conceptual framework, we may say that the Punjab problem remains where it is even today only because the very objective reasons which had brought forward the ethnicization of the Hindus and sikhs in Punjab stand where they were.

Therefore, ethnicity is seen as the originator as well as the by product of the Process; if during the development of the process we also take into account its possible reversals.

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TABLE

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CONCLUSION

SUMMARISING THE MOVEMENT: POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS?

In view of the dialectical inter-relationship of the concepts of Ethnicity, Nationality and State-hood traced in the context of the Punjab experience of the 1980's (roots traced back to 1950's) we wish here to focus more closely on it, ^{so} as to highlight a few of the essential theoretical and methodological issues raised in the course of this work. The argument however is not conclusive and the discourse not settled.

The period of 1960's - 1970's has seen a resurgence of ethnicity almost all over the globe, in the developed and the developing worlds alike. The specificity of the social situation in each society has made the scholars interpret and use the term accordingly, thereby producing a slightly modified view of the same phenomenon. Hence under various situations the applicability and the meaning of the term has varied. To some it has come close to meaning a tribe, to some a racial group, to some a primordial collectivity based upon religion; region, language, caste, etc., to some an emigrant community and to some even a national transnational affinity.

This has resulted in much of the confusion and lack of clarity regarding the exact meaning of the concept. An effort has been made to de-link the term from these usages by delimiting its essential attributes which distinguish it from other formations of collectivities.

In India, given the fact of cultural plurality; ethnicity is seen as an interaction between various culture groups. An ethnic group is formed out of the various culture group already existing in society. The locus of their ethnicization may differ from language to religion to region, etc. depending upon the context which places saliency on one or at times more than one attribute. Saliency of one attribute over the other (so that there is no cross cutting) is important for the solidarity of the group. But there is no pre-determined or fixed hierarchy of these attributes. The attributes however are seen to converge in order to bring forth the nationality formation out of an ethnic group.

The ethnic identity which is based upon one or more primordial attribute must be compulsorily shared by all the other members of that group.

The Primordial attribute - a seemingly objective criteria must necessarily have its effective referrent in subjective sharing of the same criteria.

The ethnic identity so formed must necessarily be made distinct from similar groupings in society existing prior to the emergence of the ethnic identity.

The applicability of the above essential features of ethnicity in India are analysed through the emperical situation of Punjab in this work. The locus of Hindu and Sikh ethniciza-

tion in Punjab began with religion and then added to it attributes of language and script. The convergence of the three helped the sikhs to raise the demand for Punjabi Suba, which gave a national character to the Sikh ethnic community. Nationality formation here means, a subjectively conscious ethnic group identifying a certain territory as belonging to them and they belonging to that territory. The boundaries of the territory do not always co-incide with that of the existing state or administrative units within it, but are to be seen as historically expanding and contracting ones. Hence ethnicity stretches to 'ethno-nationalism'.

The gradual strengthening and subjective consciousness of their separate ethnic identity and nationality by the Sikhs led them to raise the demand of a separate sovereign state. State here is understood in Weber's sense of the term as "that agency within society which possesses the monopoly of the legitimate use of violence".

But a question which needs to be answered is; what is the very need of ethnicization of a culture group? What social factors are responsible for bringing forth this formation?

With modernization and the consequent emergence of nationalism it was believed that identities based upon so called irrational ties of ethnicity would disappear giving way to one-nation, one state ideal situation. But the resurgence of ethnicity in developed and developing countries and even the

socialist countries, speak for the growing necessity of existence of ethnic identities which along with serving as a solution is also emerging as a pathological phenomenon in the world today. Culturally each society is distinct but most of the scholars have focussed largely on the cultural aspects like 'immigration' and 'identity consciousness' in understanding ethnicity. Little effort has been made to see the dynamics of the relationship between the cultural and structural aspects of society. The same have been identified in this work as the role of the 'State' with its power centre located in a certain class of political elites who overlap with economic elites; and the role of 'Development' which is largely State sponsored and hence responsible for maintainng the existing social relations (of the elites) within the state.

Given this social structure in case of India, the lop-sided development and gross social inequalities emerge as logical outcomes. Under such social situation of haves and have nots, an ethnic group percieves the other group as not just the 'other' but as a mechanism of the State for excluding 'it' from political and economic gains. Hence ethnicity becomes a means of orienting group activity vis-a-vis the state; as seen to be done in case of Punjab by the Akali Dal, wherein the state was identified as a Hindu nationalist state. Consequently certain interests as put forward in the Anandpur Sahib Resolution and other Charter of demands were put forward before the State while some were to be safeguarded against the State

and secured through the State, like the creation of Punjabi Suba in 1966.

Thus a seemingly cultural group under the impact of certain structural aspects of the society and its developmental functioning comes to be politicised. This is where ethnicity is seen to become a dysfunctional phenomenon, as seen in the tragic consequence of the Punjab crisis in 1984 and continuing till date. A much greater role in this politicization is played by the political elites of both the central and the regional or sectional political parties like the Akali Dal and Jan Sangh or RSS in Punjab, who claim to represent the interest of the Sikh and Hindu communities respectively. Certain issues are raised by these competing elites and posed as expressions of discrimination (both actual and imaginary) by the State in favour of the other community. Hence the only way of safeguarding their ethnic identity in the consciousness of the ethnic elite and the mobilized masses; is to assert their national character which at times may stretch to accommodate their ambitious hopes of a sovereign state-hood.

Thus comes the ethnic process to one of its logical culminations. This process must not be seen as a unilinear development of these stages. It is more often a zig-zag movement involving reversals at each stage.

Such has been the conceptual and methodological framework adopted in this work, which has been introduced in the first chapter of the Dissertation. In the rest of the chapters

effort has been made to test its applicability through the historical tracing of empirical events in Punjab over the last few decades to understand in essence the nature of the Punjab problem recognized by many as the single most crucial event of the 1980's in India with its equally important visible ramifications in the present times.

In the analysis of the empirical situation of Punjab it has not always been possible to clearly isolate the various concepts and theories from actual happenings; though at places one has been able to see them with some clarity but often one has found an intermingling of the three.

In the second chapter, the emergence of the Punjab problem has been traced to the process of ethnicization of the Hindus and Sikhs in Punjab; the seeds of which were sown by the British policy of 'Divide and rule' seen through the examples like, the recruitment of Sikhs in the army on the basis of asserting their Sikh religious identity or the introduction of communal award with weightage also for the Sikh community. In the pre-independence phase religion was asserted as the basis of developing ethnic identity consciousness, to which was added in post-independence phase the element of language and more specifically the script of the two religious groups; the Hindus and Sikhs in Punjab, when during the 1951 census, the Punjabi Hindus guided by the communal appeal of Hindu communal organizations like the Arya Samaj; RSS and Jan Sangh were led to declare Hindi in the 'devnagri' script as their mother

tongue as opposed to Punjabi language in the 'Gurmukhi' script of the Sikhs.

Such ethnic assertions by the Hindus were manipulated by the Sikh political elite to their advantage who through their communal politico-religious organization like the Chief Khalsa Diwan, SGPC and Akali Dal tried to instill in the Sikh community the need to safeguard their ethnic identity which was shown to be under the danger of absorption ⁱⁿ Hinduism. This belief was further aided by visible signs of modernization among the Sikh youth who less and less believed in maintaining the external symbols of the Sikh religion (the 5 ~~was~~'s) Hence they propagated the need to safeguard the separate ethnic identity of the Sikhs in the Indian State; which was painted to be Hindu dominated. But in order to safeguard their religious identity the Sikhs could not demand any concessions from the government for at Independence, having learned the hard way through the partition of India the government was keen to assert secularism and had hence clearly explicated that it would not entertain religious demands ^{of} any community in India. Hence was brought in the difference in language, not spoken, for Punjabi was spoken by both Hindus and Sikhs in Punjab; but of the written scriptures (largely religious) of the two communities. Consequently linguistic differences became the basis of demanding a separate national boundary for the Sikhs. The Punjabi Suba was conceded in 1966 and paraded as a victory of the Sikh community.

A positive reason which worked in favour of ethnicization of Sikhs was the presence of a strong political organization; the Akali Dal, seen to represent the interests of the community. Their appeal was mainly restricted to only a section of the Sikh community i.e. land holding farmers from which hailed the Akali leaders themselves. Thus we could see a coincidence of economic interests vis-a-vis development and political stance in defence of ethnic identity and self determination. So far we have seen that the process of Sikh ethnicization which had gained strength and justification by the presence of the process of Hindu ethnicization was accompanied by a fusion of religion and language with a script broadly associated with Sikh scriptures and a phased consolidation of Sikh population in a certain territory. This territory got statutory recognition as a unit of political administration though ostensibly not on religious basis. The Sikhs could be persuaded to believe that not only did they belong to a territory but a territory belonged to them. Hence ethnicity was verging on ethnic nationhood and attempts could be made to aspire for sovereign status.

In the Chapter Three attempt was made to delineate the process of ethno-nation aspiring for sovereign status. It is important to note that each time there was a need to bargain with the state for some advantage or concession; it was the ethnic character of the community which was stressed even over and above the national character. The ethnic group placed in a fixed territory exhibits more solidarity; for its regional

identity merges with the earlier identifies based upon religion and language (scripts) hence producing much stronger ethnic bonds than a nationality which is dispersed over far-off regions and guided by and at times prevented by the other regional constraints (explanation of Hindu and Sikh fraternity in most of the urban areas in India). The point however is that even in 1966 after the formation of Punjabi Suba; the Sikh ethnic identity continued to be stressed. Hence one notes a reversal of the simplistically stated process of ethnicity to ethno-nationhood to statehood. But we could discuss the movement from nationhood back to ethnicity only as a consolidational sub-process preparatory to move to the next phase of aspiring for a sovereign state. Infact; even the earlier assumption of passing from ethnicity to ethno-nationhood could only be a short hand description of a complex and at the same time incomplete multi-pronged process. Each phase subsumes the simultaneous working of movement in the reverse direction.

During the period of 60's to 70's; the issues which were raised to mobilise the Sikh community were also the economic issues. During the period, the Central Government was seen to have pursued a policy which did not result in the Industrial development of Punjab. Consequently employment opportunity for surplus man power from agriculture was limited and the generated wealth due to the success of Green revolution in the absense of productive investment opportunities, was wasted in

conspicuous consumption or stored in Banks, which showed high deposits but low advance ratio in Punjab.

The demographic distribution of Punjab religious groupings lent itself to distortions by playing down internal heterogenieties of Sikhs and Hindu communities to propogate the false identities of Sikh-Rural-Peasant and Hindu-Urban-Industrialist. The economic development of Punjab; specially after the Green Revolution and attendant difficulties in the light of the above stated false identities was amply exploited to advance a fierceful communal colouration to the analysis. Such a communal cognition of the situation was well propogated to their advantage by the political elite in the Akali Dal who were themselves largely drawn from the rich rural Jat Sikh peasantry.

Here we have traced the process of religion based ethnicity increasing its strength by articulating linguistic commonality and identification with a territory. This multi-pronged ethnic mobilization coupled with a certain demographic distribution lent a fertile ground for communal cognition of developmental distortions in the State. We also have unravelled the confounding economic class interests of farmers with political expression of this complex ethnicity.

In 1973, came the Anandpur Sahib Resolution; a politico-economic charter of demands with an unmistakable focus on the economic issues which spoke clearly of the bias in favour of

the landowning Sikh Jats (who constituted the ruling elites in Akali Dal). However, the three important issues in the Resolution were the transfer of Chandigarh to Punjab; increased share of Punjab of River water against Haryana and restriction of Central Government's power in the State to Defence; Currency and Foreign relations. All these apparently secular demands had a communal underpinning. However; the last of these clauses had the potentiality of undoing the entire Resolution. The opponents of Akali Dal had an excuse to read this as a secessionist document although in the Resolution; the Dal had only been asking for greater autonomy for the Punjab State.

However; on the strength of these issues which at times were based on genuine; at times semi-genuine and at times totally false but made to be perceived as genuine issues; the Akali Dal ruling elite succeeded in mobilizing a large section of the Sikh community to a political grouping.

The Resolution besides pointing out the essential overlaps between the economic and political development; and pointing out the co-terminus economic and political aims of the Akali Dal, also shows how the political aims of the Akali Dal leaders could be conveniently garbed under economic issues.

This period is also seen to mark the beginning of real political manouvers and faction politics within the Dal. Dal's moves were many a times a response to the political manouvers and policies of the Centre.

The formation of Punjabi Suba had been a hollow victory for the hegemony seeking Akali Dal, for it had to necessarily share power with other political parties; which it chose to do largely with the Jan Sangh. In such a situation the Congress became the main opposition party. However, sadly enough the period of 5 years ('67-'72) saw a number of factions emerging in the Dal which were further aggravated by the power seeking Akali leaders. Internal dissensions of Akalis were also deliberately fostered and made political use of by the Congress opposition.

The presence of factions within the Dal has been one of the chief drawback of the Akali Dal Organization. Chiefly because of this, little could it achieve during the Janata Government's rule at the Centre; when Dal's nominees were accommodated in the Union Government and the Punjab Government was dominated by it. Infact; it was also because of the presence of factions led by Badal; Tohra, Longowal, Talwandi; Sukhjinder Singh etc. in the Dal that Indira Gandhi through Zail Singh could use Bhindranwale as a ploy to aggravate the Akali internal rivalries to be able to come back to power in the State which it did in 1980. Nirankaris were denounced by a section of Akalis led by its President Talwandi as enemies of Sikhs. Both Talwandi and Congress leader Zail Singh encouraged Bhindranwale to indulge in Street violence against Nirankaris when Badal was the Chief Minister.

Thus '78 saw the emergence of Bhindranwale, a cult figure of anti-Nirankaris group of the Sikhs. Bhinderwale was later charged for the murder of Nirankari Chief Sant Baba Gurbachan Singh and was also accused of murder of Lala Jagat Narain a well known journalist who denounced the anti-Nirankari activities of Bhinderwale. Anti-Nirankari action were supported by such terrorist organizations like the Dal Khalsa. Lala Jagat Narain at the same time was speaking to the Hindus of the danger posed to their ideologies and existence by Bhinderwale's brand of terrorism.

Bhinderwale's strong association with Zail Singh the Home Minister and later President of India and Mrs. Gandhi; the Prime Minister of India prevented any strong action to be taken against him either by the centre or the state under the Chief Ministership of Dilbara Singh. Meanwhile the Akali Dal moderate group who though did not support Bhinderwale's brand of terrorism did not wish to intervene and alienate its support among the terrorist groups. It wanted to avoid further factions and confrontations within the Dal's supporters.

Such inactions at all front and the wide media coverage of Bhindranwale helped him emerge as a bold hero of Punjab politics and Sikh masses; who in asserting the sectarian orthodoxy as the essence of Sikh religion was seen to be indulging in terrorist activities for a seemingly pious cause- which was; protection of the Sikh religious identity in Punjab.

A further justification for his actions seemed to be coming from the Dilbara Singh Government in the State who in his bid to stand for orthodox Congress secularism was coming out with such statements that could be interpreted as being anti-Sikh.

This again raised the fear among the Sikh masses of forced absorption into Hinduism. The issue once again was used by the Akali Dal leaders to mobilize the Sikh ethnic group into a political grouping.; but this time conniving at a stonger brand of fundamentalism in mixing religious with political in the 15 Revised demands it put forward to the Central Government. for consideration in 1981. The Akali leadership opted for an all-in unity of Sikhs including the extremist terrorist fringe.

This time it was not so much the extremist demands which were the undoing of the efforts at settlement but the other partisan political considerations of Mrs. Gandhi Outside Punjab which led to the break down of the talks. Mrs. Gandhi had lost in Andhra and Karnataka. But; the unnerved Indira Gandhi opted for a short cut in the forth coming Assembly Elections in Haryana and Himachal Pradesh. Haryana had a standing dispute with Punjab on Chandigarh and territorial adjustment and sharing of river water. Both the states were Hindu dominated States carved out of United Punjab. An anti-Punjab tilt and defernent of settlement with Akali could in Congress (I) calculations pay dividends in the elections in these States and may also help in consolidating her position in the Hindu

Heartland. A most convenient way of showing her support to the Hindus was by refusing to concede to any demands of the Sikhs; who were being posed as rivals of the Hindus and denounced as terrorists responsible for Hindu killings.

The failure of these talks were hence seen as a turning point in the history of Punjab. This led to the formation of a 'morcha' and declaration of the 'Dharm Yudh' by the Akali Dal, wherein for the first time some loud and clear voices were raised for a separate Sikh state-hood.

The ethnic consolidation at one end led to a similar consolidation at the other. This steadily but surely strengthened confrontationist against conciliation adjustment approach. The Central Government led by Indira Gandhi keeping the narrow partisan interests of her party and the electoral gains played no negligible role in this process. The Akalis too harped on 'separate identity' to consolidate Sikh vote bank and contributed their mite to move towards a final showdown. This brought to a head the 'fear psychosis' amongst the Hindus of Punjab, who were a minority in the state and now feared another partition and the danger of submergence of their identity. Consequently the Hindus appealed to Mrs. Gandhi; who in her enthusiasm to pose as a champion of Hindus refused to take any action at accommodation or any sort of solution to the fast emerging Punjab crisis wherein the terrorist activities by both the Hindus and Sikh fundamentalists had reached a high watermark. Meanwhile the communal oriented media boosted Mrs.

Gandhi's image as Hindu champion by Publicizing her visits to temples, meetings with Gurus and Acharyas and Tantriks; at the same time the images circulated of the terrorists through the media were such that the whole of Sikh community began to be feared as terrorist or aiding the terrorists.

Therefore the Punjab crisis when it came to a flashpoint with the march of Army into the Golden Temple; the Operation Blue Star followed by Operation Woodrose gave much joy to the communal section of the Hindus and had shattered all hopes of the entire Sikh community; even the section which had not been supporting the terrorist activities in the state or the demand for a separate Sikh state; by trampling upon their religious susceptibilities and ironically pushing them (earlier excluded; towards the assertion of an ethnic identity with their community.

In the communally charged situation resulting in Operation Blue Star and the following breakdown of traditional Hindu-Sikh mutual amity and trust a revenge had to come. On October 31; 1984 Mrs. Gandhi was assassinated by two of her bodyguards who were Sikhs. The Hindu religious rites performed at Mrs. Gandhi's funeral were depicted with vengeance by the communally oriented Press, Radio's television; and Hindu political organisation hailed Mrs. Gandhi as the martyr who died at the hands of Sikhs and hence depicted as 'saviour' of 'Hindu Rashtra'. The consolidated Hindu sentiment equated with Indian nationalism paid the debt by installing her son Rajiv as Prime Minister in the election that ~~the~~ followed.

Thus the demand for a separate state-hood was defeated but in the process ethnic identity among the sikhs and its minor image among Hindus had grown stronger and had now included most of the earlier isolated section of the community into the movement which has not ended with the crisis of 1984.

Chapter Four; begins with trying to see how the presence of such strong ethnic identities in Punjab were seen as serious threats to the future of democracy and the preservation of civil society in India. The astuate politicians of Rajiv Gandhi (Arjun Singh and Arun Singh) adequately warned him and he set out to restore the democratic machinery in the turbulent and shattered state of Punjab; for he realised that the Punjab situation was not a law and order problem and required a political settlement. The moderates among the Akalis had seen that confrontationist tactics and an all in unit of including the separatist and terrorist had not brought them any near power or fulfilment of their demands. Therefore; the desire on both the sides to bring about normalcy in Punjab led to the signing of the famous Rajiv-Longowal Accord and holding of the Punjab Vidhan Sabha elections in 1985. These steps were hailed by many but interpreted by some sections of the Akali Dal particularly supporting the terrorist activities as a "sell out" by the interests. Hence this section continued to believe in the cult of violence as the only means of securing the one and only settlement from the state (separate statehood). Hence Longowal could not survive and was assassinated before the

Assembly elections in 1985. With Longowal's death factions in the Dal which had always existed once again surfaced. Barnala's rule that followed the Elections was made ineffective by the Tohra, Badal factions within Akali Dal (Longowal) and Baba Joginder Singh's Dal outside. Tohra's presidentship of the GSPC and his belief and support to terrorism further aggravated the terrorist activities in the state even after the so called Punjab crisis of 1984 was supposed to have been resolved by Rajiv-Longowal Accord and Akali Dal being in power in Punjab Government. But neither; Rajiv carried out his part of the Accord for Akalis could break with extremism. Rajiv Gandhi in the absence of an effective moderate leadership (earlier represented by Longowal) and the coming General Elections in 1990 slipped out of his earlier shown wisdom in dealing with Punjab problem and like his mother had done in early 1980's (being now guided by similar partisan motives and personal desires of anyhow staying in power) too took to treating it was only law and order problem. Governor's rule was declared and police Commissioners were being sent to Punjab in quick succession to test their strength in dealing with the Punjab problem.

The strategy did not work the second time. The voters in India were moved by a number of issues. The ethnic division which had consolidated the majority community in 1985 against perceived threat from Sikh extremism did not work the same way this time. Firstly; many people had seen that "threat" are

used as electoral tactics; Secondly, Muslims were also being posed and seen as threat to Hindus vis-a-vis Babri Masjid Ramjanam Bhoomi dispute; thirdly, wiser after the event avowedly Hindu political sentiment was gradually and effectively mobilized by Bhartiya Janata Party in opposition to ruling Congress (I). Then there was a centrist formation in the form of Janata Dal, which had raised the question of corruption of Congress (I) government in a big way and got adjustment and support from both right and left forces. These are all at the level of conjectures. But the fact is that the bogey of Sikh separatism failed to consolidate Hindu ethnic vote bank behind Congress (I) which was voted out of power in 1990. The political change has not resulted in any clear reversal of the process analysed in this research.

Today, at this point of the problem one sees greater and clearer ethnic identities among the Hindus and Sikhs in Punjab. The leaders of Hindu communal organizations and Hindu communal papers as "Hind Samachar" 'Milap' and 'Pratap' continue to fan Hindu fundamentalism as seen in their effects to make the Punjabi Hindus still declare Hindi as their mother tongue even in the census of 1981, and oppose an overall settlement with the Akalis. They project that a settlement with Akalis is only gradually conceding Khalistan and that would mean a subjugation of the Hindu identity which is a minority in Punjab. This fear psychosis amongst the Hindus of Punjab has made them react at times with violence and justify the

terrorist activities of the Hindus, but has also at the same time led them to migrate to outside Punjab. This move of the Hindus has its replicas in the already existing fear psychosis' amongst the Sikhs of absorption into Hinduism for they see Hindus as not a minority group in Punjab but rather as a majority group in North India which has support in the Central Government. Consequently much of the Sikh population has had to move out of their land and compromise with the refugee status accorded to them in other cities of India. The important fact that the Sikhs are being treated as refugees and not as Indian nationals gives a sad indication of the government's policies and attitude towards them. Consequently the ethnicization of Sikh stands justified.

As long as the empirical situation in India itself justifies the existence of Ethnicity little can be done to solve the problem being faced by a number of states (Nagaland, Assam; Kashmir, U.P.) in India.

The biggest reason for the continuation of the Punjab problem is that there has been no effort to strike at the roots of ethnicization, that is, negate the objective reasons which have brought forward the ethnicization of Hindus and Sikhs in Punjab. Instead little effort has been made to take the demands of Akali Dal seriously. Some have been met only half-heartedly. The failure of negotiations and breakdown of talks does not establish that they were doomed to fail. The central government has each time justified its position by declaring the Akali DAL

demands as secessionists even when they were not and in a way leading them to raise a cry for sovereign status. On the other hand each failure has been advanced by the Akalis as a further proof that Indian Union is nothing but a Hindu State and Sikhs would never get justice through talks. This adds to the secessionist image. Most of the demands put forward by the Akali Dal even though political have been garbed under economic and religious issues. The garb has worked because there actually exist aspects of lop-sided economic growth, unemployment among educated youths; problems of migrancy and immigration; which have ^{been} largely explained by the mobilizing political elite in terms of the existing Hindu and Sikh communal divide which is also shown to coincide with the grossly exaggerated Sikh-Rural-Peasant and Hindu-Urban-Industrialist cleavage. Unless efforts are made to bring in systematic development in Punjab the root cause of ethnicity would not be removed and the situation would continue to be communally manipulated by the elites in the various political parties to mobilize their communities.

Another important factor which we saw during our analysis is that the Government in order to assert its secular character has made explicit that it would not entertain any demand based upon religion. Consequently, the Sikh and Hindu ethnicization which began with the assertion of separate religious identity had to include difference of language and particularly script, for Punjabi is spoken by both Hindus and

Sikhs in Punjab, in order to be acknowledged as a separate community. Consequently the Sikhs as a separate linguistic group could demand a separate territory of the Punjabi Suba in 1966. This unwittingly has brought forward a dangerous mix of religion with politics in Punjab. This has been further aggravated by the presence of a convenient link between SGPC and Akali Dal, the religious and political organizations respectively of the Sikhs in Punjab. Hence the government while seeking solutions must see to it that the policies which it has laid down for ensuring secularism in India does not force the other communities to paradoxically, enough adopt fundamental stands to secure certain interests. Efforts may also be made to de-link the SGPC and Akali Dal hence secularising much of the politics in Punjab.

Hence, many among the Sikhs; their leadership and secular Hindus in Punjab and outside express that a solution to the Punjab problem today is to put the things in the Centre and the State in a proper perspective by highlighting much of the visible and also many of the imperceptible contradictions which have been at the root cause of the problem and consequently work for its removal.

The removal can only be made through talks wherein the faith between Centre and State is to be revived. The talks however must take into account presence of strong factions and cleavages within the Akali Dal and within the Hindu and Sikh

community. The leadership of the Akali Dal is divided largely between the moderates and the extremists. The extremist group further shows two streams; one; represented by Bimal Khalsa (who took the oath in Parliament) and the other, by Simranjeet Singh Mann (who did not take the oath in Parliament). The formation of Khalistan is seen as a solution by some and not desired by some. Such difference would continue to persist but the Government has to take a bold and firm stand. Yet the stand must be accommodative. It must not read all the demands raised by the Sikh political elites even when they are not; as secessionist, as it had done in the past and had ironically pushed them to assert their fundamentalism and raise the demand for a sovereign status, for each failure of talks and negotiations had been advanced by the Akalis as a further 'proof' that Indian Union is nothing but a Hindu State and Sikhs would never get justice through talks. This added to the secessionist image; such a working of situations as has been analysed through the Punjab experience does not bode well for successful functioning of democracy in India; unless, the Government policies and attitude speak for de-centralization of administration to a meaningful federal structure.

Hence we come to conclude leaving many of the issues regarding the further developments in Punjab and the possible solution to the problem open to fresh insights; comments and criticism. The effort here has not been to come to any final conclusions regarding the Punjab problem but only to probe it

seriously through one of the possible sociological approaches, in the process revealing the dynamics of the ethnic process (ethnicity; ethno-nation, statehood) which has its possible reversals at each stage, as well as to show one of the ways in which they operate in an empirical situation (Punjab) in a developing country.

The scope of this work can be widened and made more meaningful by testing the applicability of the thesis enumerated in this work through further case studies of empirical situations in developing countries and also the developed countries where a similar nature of State (class contradiction) and development (State sponsored) may be found. But of-course the feasibility of the thesis needs to be tested in view of the specific social situation of the developed countries and even the Socialist countries, which have been experiencing a serious resurgence of ethnicity.

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