

THE SCHOOL OF MISSION AND THEOLOGY (MHS)



THESIS TOPIC:

**THE DESTRUCTION OF THE GOLDEN TEMPLE AMRITSAR IN PUNJAB,
INDIA IN 1984**

THESIS FOR

MASTER OF GLOBAL STUDIES

SUBMITTED BY CANDIDATE:

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DEDICATION

For My Dear Wife Jaspreet Kaur Brar, for everything

Abstract

This study aims to contribute knowledge on the destruction of the Golden Temple Amritsar in Punjab, India in 1984. The Golden Temple had destroyed three times before 1984 during the Afghan invasions but I have presented the knowledge about the event of 1984 in this thesis. The Indian government ordered the army to make Operation Blue Star to capture Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale and his followers from the Golden Temple. Indian government believed that Bhindranwale and his followers were terrorists and were increasing terrorism in the Punjab. On the other hand some Sikh people believed that Bhindranwale was a saint and after his death they called him as a martyr. The Indian army not only killed Bhindranwale and his followers they also killed thousands of innocent pilgrims in the Temple.

Moreover, the army destroyed the Golden Temple during the Operation Blue Star. The two more events are connected with this event first the assassination of the Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and the anti-Sikh violence of 1984 in Delhi. The purpose of this thesis is providing true information about all the events.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

I would like to present my master thesis about the destruction of the Golden Temple Amritsar in Punjab, India in 1984. The two main questions of this thesis are why the Golden Temple Amritsar was destructed and why did the Indian Army attack on the Golden Temple Amritsar? To find the answers to these main questions, I will also focus on five sub-questions:

- What was the result of the destruction of the Golden Temple?
- Who was Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale and why did the Indian government want to capture him from the Golden Temple?
- Why did the Sikh militants want to establish a separate Sikh state called Khalistan?
- Why was the assassination of the Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi done by her two Sikh bodyguards in Delhi 1984?
- Why did the Congress political party's leaders attacked on innocent Sikh people in Delhi 1984?

I need to present good and necessary background information about the topic of my thesis. All the Sikh groups were demanding an independent state in Punjab as Khalistan in 1970. But the Indian government did not agree with the demand of the Sikh people. Then the Indian government captured many Sikhs who were demanding this independent state during the emergency. Jarnail Singh Bhindrawale was working as a religious reformer and he encouraged the Sikh people to come back to the path of Sikhism. Jarnail Singh was a saint but later he became a leader of the militant group. When the Nirankaries killed his followers then He encouraged his followers to keep arms after this event. Jarnail Singh himself kept a pistol with him always.

Jarnail Singh was living in the Golden Temple with his armed group. His followers were doing violent acts against the Hindus. Police arrested Bhindranwale for his involvement in the murder of Lala Jagat Narain who was the employee of a Hindu newspaper. Police did not find any evidence of involvement of Bhindranwale in the murder of Lala Jagat Narain. After few day police had to

release him. In the beginning, Bhindranwale was not supporting the Sikhs to establish Khalistan but later he supported the Sikhs to establish a separate Sikh state. Indian government filed a case against Bhindranwale and his armed followers that they were terrorists and increasing violence. They were demanding a separate Sikh state and they kept illegal weapons into the Golden Temple.

Indira Gandhi ordered to make a Blue Star Operation to capture Jarnail Singh and his group from the Golden Temple in June 1984. Jarnail Singh and his followers were killed by the Operation Blue Star. But all the Sikh community was angry by this operation of the Indian government, because the Golden Temple was destroyed by this operation. The two Sikh bodyguards of Indira Gandhi killed her to response of her action of this operation in 31 October 1984. Then the members of Indian national Congress party were angry by the assassination of Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi by Sikhs. So members of Congress attacked the Sikhs to revenge the murder of Indira Gandhi. They killed thousands of the Sikhs people in Delhi and other part of the north India.

1.2 Mark Juergensmeyer's Article, *the Logic of Religious Violence*

I concentrate on Mark Juergensmeyer's article from the logic of religion violence where his case is taken from that of the Punjab. He explains the reasons why and how the event of 1984 in the Punjab took place. I got relevant information about my research topic by his article. Mark Juergensmeyer writes that

“One reason often given to explain why religious symbols are associated with acts of real violence is that religion is exploited by violent people. This explanation, making religion the pure and innocent victim of the darker forces of human nature, can be overstated; yet it contains some truth.”¹

In that case religion is sometimes exploited. In the case of the Sikhs, in the beginning, they were demanding some economic, political, and social demands; later, they demanded a separate Sikh state called Khalistan.

Bhindranwale became a leader of the Sikhs. He and his followers started to use weapons and they did violent acts against the government in the Punjab. This militant group entered in the Golden

¹ Mark Juergensmeyer, *the Logic of Religious Violence: the Case of the Punjab*, Vikas Publishing House, 1988, 76.

Temple and started to live in the Temple. They converted this place of worship into an arsenal. The violent people started to exploit the Sikh religion and they took all the commands of the Golden Temple in their hands. They were making plans on economic, political and social issues at this holy place. The Indian army had to attack on the Temple to remove the Sikh terrorist from the Temple. The army did not respect this holy place and destroyed the Temple. It was a shame for the Sikh community that their center place of worship became an arsenal and destroyed by the army. According to Mark Juergensmeyer, "it was a question that frustrated many observers outside the government as well as a good many moderate Sikhs among them. But frustration led to action and those actions made things worse."² The Indian army took an action against the Sikh militants into the Temple.

The Sikhs complained that the Sikhs are a minority community in India, and their separate identity within the Indian family is in danger. They wanted to live in a separate Sikh state. Juergensmeyer chooses to focus on the speeches of Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale to understand the militant Sikh position. He also presents the reasons of violence by Bhindranwale and his group in the Punjab in his article. Bhindranwale and his follower were demanding a separate Sikh state and wanted to establish Khalistan but Indian government did not accept their demand because the government did not want partition of India by the Sikhs. Bhindranwale started a movement against the government and his followers were doing violent acts in the Punjab to support Bhindranwale's struggle.

1.3 The Sources of my Research

I am going to use other sources some are written by Sikh writers, and some not. K.S. Brar was Lieutenant-General officer of the Indian army, a Sikh himself, and he commanded the Operation Blue Star to capture Bhindranwale and his followers from the Golden Temple. He wrote a book, *Operation Blue Star the True Story*. He mentions his experience and the true story of the Operation Blue Star in his book. I will use his book as source of my thesis. Jarnail Singh was a journalist and Sikh as well as he was a victim of the anti-Sikh violence of 1984. He wrote a book, *I Accuse the Anti-Sikh Violence of 1984*. He mentioned that the Congress party's leaders and their supporters

² Mark Juergensmeyer, *the Logic of Religious Violence: the Case of the Punjab*, 1988, 66.

killed thousands of the Sikhs in Delhi. I will use his experience in chapter 8. Khushwant Singh is also a Sikh writer, he has written many books about the Sikhism. I am going to use his sources in chapter 2 and 3 to give necessary background information about the Punjab and Sikhism. Piara Singh Sambhi is also a Sikh writer and he wrote a book *The Sikhs their Religious Belief and Practices* with W Owen Cole. His book is also a good source for my thesis.

Moreover, I will use some books, those have written by the writers who are not Sikhs. *The World Religions Reader* 2nd edition is a popular book written by Gwilym Beckerlegge. I got good information about the Sikhism and the Khalistan in this book and this book is also an important source for my thesis. I will use David Westerlund's book, *Questioning the Secular State the Worldwide Resurgence of Religion in Politics*. Edna Fernandes's book, *holly warriors* is also important source of my thesis. I am going to use the book *Sacred Place* written by Jean Holm with John Bowker to give information about the background of the Sikhism. I will also use some other books of non-Sikh writers as the sources of my thesis. Moreover, I will use *The Amritsar Massacre the Untold Story of One Fateful Day* book, written by Nick Lloyd in chapter 9. Nick Lloyd presented the whole story of the Amritsar massacre of 1919 and discussed the comparison between both massacres of Amritsar the Jallianwala Bhagh and the Operation Blue Star in his book. This book is very important source for chapter 9 in my thesis to present the both events together.

I face some difficulties for doing research on this event because it is a very sensitive topic and some writers are The Sikhs and other writers are non-Sikhs. The Sikhs writers presented their emotions and feelings about this terrible event and other non-Sikh writers presented their own different view about this topic. As I am a Sikh and writing thesis about this topic and it is necessary for me to know the history and provide true information about the topic. Sometimes it is difficult to get true information from different views on a same topic.

My purpose of writing thesis on this topic is getting true knowledge about the whole event and doing analyze on all views to provide true information about the event. As I am writing about the history and it is difficult to write true history but I will try to analyze the different views of the many writers about same topic together. All the writers write their own stories and all the stories are not same and cannot be called "true" stories. My aim is presenting their all stories together and doing analyze on these stories to provide a true information about the event.

1.4 Violence and Religion

Mark Juergensmeyer presents the general relation between violence and religion. All the acts of killing are violent. The term religion is more difficult to define. “Clifford Geertz, for instance, sees religion as the effort to integrate everyday reality into a pattern of coherence that takes shape on a deeper level.”³ Juergensmeyer discusses many definitions of religion. He states that all the definitions have in common their emphasis on a certain kind of experience that people share with others in a particular community. It is an experience of another reality that people know in everyday life. “Robert Bellah also thinks of religion as the attempt to reach beyond ordinary reality in the ‘risk of faith’ that allows people to act in the face of uncertainty and unpredictability. Peter Berger specifies that such faith is an affirmation of the sacred, which acts as a doorway to a different kind of reality.”⁴ These definitions help us think of religion as the subjective experience of those who use religious language. These definitions do not require religion to be violent, but it does lead one to expect religious language to make sense of violence and to incorporate it in some way into the world view it expresses.

Moreover, Juergensmeyer writes that religious language is about the tension between order and disorder, religion is frequently about violence. According to the symbols and mythology of Sikhism, the Sikhs often are occupied with violent issues. The two-edged sword, supported by two scabbards and surrounded by a circle is the most common visual symbol of Sikhism. “Sikhs often interpret the two edges of this sword as symbolizing spiritual and worldly foes, and they say that the battle sword included among the five objects that Sikhs are supposed to wear at all times symbolizes an awareness of these same enemies.”⁵ The Sikh scriptures do not contain accounts of wars, but the stories of the Sikhs’ historical past are bloody all the same. “The symbols of Sikhism are violent and these symbols increased Sikh’s propensity for violent action, the Sikh religion is

³ Mark Juergensmeyer, *the Logic of Religious Violence: the Case of the Punjab*, 1988, 72.

⁴ Mark Juergensmeyer, *the Logic of Religious Violence: the Case of the Punjab*, 1988, 72.

⁵ Mark Juergensmeyer, *the Logic of Religious Violence: the Case of the Punjab*, 1988, 73.

violent because Sikhs as a people are violent.”⁶ Mark Juergensmeyer said that religious symbols and myths express violent meanings.

Bhindranwale used religious language and symbols in his preach, and increased violence in the Punjab. Some of Bhindranwale’s harshest words were reserved for Sikhs who he felt showed weakness and a tendency to make easy compromises. He made a great plea for unity. He continued to preach unity, to establish a separate Sikhs state. “Bhindrawale and his supporters wished to give the impression that they were at the centre, following the norm of Sikh belief and behavior, and that the community should therefore group around them.”⁷ He believed that those who committed acts of religiously sanctioned violence were to be regarded as heroes and more.

1.5 Structure of the Thesis

I present necessary background information about Sikhism and Punjab in chapter 2. Sikhism is a new religion and founder of the Sikhism was Guru Nanak, life of Guru Nanak and his teachings are also presented in chapter 2. There were ten Gurus of the Sikhs and the tenth Guru Gobind Singh made new form of the Sikhs called Khalsa (‘pure ones’). The importance of the Sikh scripture and the teachings of the Guru Gobind Singh are also discussed in chapter 2. The Golden Temple is a central religion place of worship for the Sikhs. I present the symbolic importance of the Temple and the Afghan invasions on the Temple in chapter 3.

The Golden Temple had been destroyed many times during the Afghan invasions, but I researched only the event of the destruction of the Golden Temple in 1984 by the Indian army. The Indian army attacked on the Temple to capture Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale and his followers into the Temple. His life and work as a leader of a militant group are presented in chapter 4. The Sikhs wanted to establish Khalistan and they did not want to live in India. The reasons of the violence in Punjab by the Sikh militants, and further, the reasons why the Indian government did not accept the demands of the Sikh militants, are presented in chapter 5.

⁶ Mark Juergensmeyer, *the Logic of Religious Violence: the Case of the Punjab*, 1988, 74.

⁷ Mark Juergensmeyer, *the Logic of Religious Violence: the Case of the Punjab*, 1988, 74.

Jarnail Singh and his followers were killed by the army during the Operation Blue Star. Many of the pilgrims and soldiers of the army were also killed by this Operation. The Golden Temple was also destroyed by this Operation and these actions are presented in chapter 6. The Prime Minister Indira Gandhi wanted to remove the Sikh militants from the Golden Temple and she ordered the Indian army to make Operation Blue Star to capture Bhindranwale and his followers into the Temple. Indira Gandhi's life and her assassination will be presented in chapter 7. After the assassination of Indira Gandhi by her two Sikh bodyguards, the Congress political party's leaders attacked on the innocent Sikh people in Delhi and they killed thousands of the Sikhs in Delhi 1984. The 1984 anti-Sikh riots will be presented in chapter 8. I will also present the Amritsar massacre in 1919. It is also known by the Jallianwala Bagh massacre. I would like to discuss the comparison between events, the Jallianwala Bagh massacre and the Operation Blue Star. Both events were happened at the same place Amritsar in the Punjab.

I will try to analyze the events in the light of Juergensmeyer's religion and violence concept. He presented the reasons of all the events of the destruction of the Golden Temple.

CHAPTER TWO: SIKHISM

The Golden Temple is a Sikh Temple and situated in district Amritsar of Punjab state of India. I need to present good and necessary background information about the Punjab.

2.1 The Punjab

The Punjab is the homeland of the Sikh religion in North-Western India. It is the land of five rivers Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Sutlej and Beas. Now it is the richest agricultural state of India. Before the partition, the Punjab was much larger geographical region. Punjab was divided between Pakistan and India in 1947. The main area of it went to Pakistan. "Muslim refugees travelled west to Pakistan and many Sikhs and Hindus left these areas and moved east toward India."⁸ The Sikh left the areas where many of the Sikh Gurus lived and where some of the Sikh historic *gurdwaras* (Temples) were situated. Pakistan Government allows Sikh people to travel from India to Nankana Sahib for celebrating the festivals. The majority of the people were Sikhs, Muslims and Hindus in Punjab. The Sikhs were always very much in population than Muslims and Hindus.

After partition, the Sikhs and Hindu people distributed their communities in East Punjab. The Sikhs were concentrated more in the villages and rural settlements while Hindu people settled in towns and cities. The Sikhs demanded the re-establishment of Punjab borders on a linguistic basis, as Punjabi is the mother language of the Sikhs in Punjab. The Sikhs demanded an exclusive Punjabi speaking state, but the states Reorganization Commission refused their demand. Because it was feared that demand of the Sikhs might exacerbate intercommunal relations between Sikhs and Hindus. Hindu people also wanted to declare Hindi as their mother tongue in the Punjab. The Congress also supported the Hindus, and many leading members of Congress were also members of Hindu communal organizations. "Another factor which seems to have influenced the Commission's decision not to declare Punjabi as the only official language of Punjab was the fact that Sikhs and Hindus were dispersed all over the province and this complicated the adjustment of boundaries along exclusively linguistic lines. The Commission, therefore, recommended that both Punjabi and

⁸ Jean Holm with John Bowker, *Sacred Place*, a Casell Imprint, Wellington House London, 1994, 153.

Hindi should be the official languages of the province.”⁹ At any rate, during this long agitation Hindu, Sikh relations were severely strained.

2.2 The Teachings of the Sikhism

Sikhism is new religion. It rejected the caste system and encouraged the people to worship of on God. The Sikhism teaches the people to take part in social activities as people help each others, eat together, a view to achieving salvation through hard work and piety rather than by solitary meditation. Sikhism teaches the lesson of human equality. It was a non-violence religion during the time of the first four Gurus. There are ten teachers in the Sikhism, and they taught the divine teachings the disciple. These teachings of the Gurus are available in the sacred book. “Sikhism evolved under the guidance of ten historical gurus. The shift of authority to the sacred book, the *Guru Granth Sahib*, and the creation of the distinctive Sikh social institution of the Khalsa are attributed to the last of these teachers, Guru Gobind Singh (d.1708 CE).”¹⁰ Nanak had the divine spirit, and he imparted the message that God is the original Guru. Nanak’s divine spirit passed into the body of his successor, Guru Angad after Nanak’s death. Angad was the second Guru. Thus Nanak’s divine spirit passed into a series of ten Gurus by the same manner, and the divine spirit remained within the sacred scripture after the death of tenth Guru Gobind Singh. “Gobind Singh further declared that there was to be no other Guru after him. The Sikh Holy book, the Granth Sahib (also known as Adi Granth) was to be the ever-present Guru from whom the Sikhs were to seek guidance. Thus the line of living Guru came to an end.”¹¹

2.3 Guru Nanak

Guru Nanak was the founder of the Sikh religion and he was first of the Sikh Gurus. He was born at Talwandi in 1469. This village was situated near Lahore city in Pakistan. This place is now called Nankana Sahib. Guru Nanak belongs to Kshatriya family of the Bedi subgroup. Nanak father was

⁹ David Westerlund, *Questioning the Secular State*, C. Hurst & Co. London, 1996, 270.

¹⁰ Gwilym Beckerlegge, *the World Religions Reader 2nd Edition*, Routledge, London, 1998, 427.

¹¹ David Westerlund, 1996, 263.

Mehta Kalu Chand. His father worked for Rai Bular, the Muslim owner of the village of Talwandi as a revenue superintendent. According to Bala Janam Sakhi, the pandit (holy man) saw the Guru Nanak's horoscope in his childhood and realized that the new-born baby laughed like a grown-up man, and then pandit said, Guru Nanak will be known for his greatness. "Both Hindus and Turks will reverence him; his name will become current on earth and in heaven. The ocean will give him the way, so will the earth and the skies. He will worship and acknowledge only the one formless Lord and teach others to do so."¹² Nanak started asking questions from the holy men about the purpose of life. He got married with Sulakhani, the daughter of Mool Chona of Batala. His wife came to live with him, when he was nineteen. She had two sons, Sri Chand and Lakhmi Das. Nanak did not take interest in his home and social matters. He thought about spiritual problems. Nanak traveled extensively to different parts of India. Guru Nanak made a contemplative religion, today we call it Sikhism. This religion attracted villagers and low caste people in Hinduism and Islam became Sikhs. He was a critic of the formalized Hindu religion, because he searched for the internal spiritual values.

2.4 The Teachings of Guru Nanak

Guru Nanak encouraged his followers to follow a proper pattern of prayer and worship, and he respected all people who would like to eat together, it presents the unity of human beings. Guru Nanak believed that God is only the one, he was a monotheist. He did not agree with the concept of the unity of God. He disagreed with the people, who believed in the reincarnations of God. "Since God was infinite, argued Nanak, He could not die to be reincarnated, nor could He assume human form which was subject to decay and death."¹³ Guru Nanak presented his view about God in this inscrutable statement that "there is neither Hindu nor Muslim and the path which I follow is God's."¹⁴ Guru Nanak explained about God that God is timeless and formless and beyond birth and death. Nanak made a spiritual concept of God. Khushwant Singh has taken these lines from the holy Sikh scripture Guru Granth Sahib. According to Guru Nanak God is only one, and supreme truth.

¹² W Owen Cole and Piara Singh Sambhi, *The Sikhs Their Religious Beliefs and Practices*, Routledge Kegan Paul Ltd, 39 Store Street, London, 1978, 8.

¹³ Khushwant Singh, *A History of The Sikhs Volume 1, 1469-1839*, Princeton University Press, U.S.A., 1963, 39.

¹⁴ W Owen Cole and Piara Singh Sambhi, 1978, 9.

He is the creator of everything, loves everybody without fear and hate. God is beyond time and form; He cannot die to be born again. Nanak gave message that people should worship God with the grace of Him. "Nanak voice rose in praise of his Maker:

There is one God.

He is the supreme truth.

He is the Creator.

He is without fear and without hate.

He, the Omnipresent, Pervades the universe.

He is not born.

Nor does He die to be born again.

By His grace shall thou worship Him?"¹⁵

Guru Nanak was a religious and social reformer; he did not believe in the caste system and wanted to improve the position of women in society. He encouraged his followers to eat together. "Nanak took practical steps to break the vicious hold of caste by starting free community kitchens, *Guru Ka langar*, in all centers and persuading his followers, irrespective of their casts, to eat together".¹⁶ He was speaking against superstition, condemned worship of ancestors and the use of astrology. The Sikhs believe on rebirth. According to tenets of the Sikhism, man can only achieve liberation by the meditating on the name of God. "This can only be done by becoming aware of the inner presence of God as Sabd (word), Guru (God) and Nam (name of God) and by coming completely under their influence."¹⁷ Guru Nanak says man can also achieve the liberation by living his life of service as a householder in the world, because he can understand himself that he is attached with the world as a householder.

¹⁵ Khhushwant Singh, 1963, 31.

¹⁶ Khhushwant Singh, 1963, 43.

¹⁷ W Owen Cole and Piara Singh Sambhi, 1978, 68.

2.5 Guru Gobind Singh

The word Sikh means disciple. A person who comes from a Sikh family, and wears turban and speaks Punjabi language, he is a Sikh but he has to follow the tenets of Sikhism like holding certain beliefs, living according to tenets, and participating in certain rites associated by Sikhism. It is compulsory for every Sikh that he has to take part in one specifically religious rite, initiation into the fellowship Khalsa (Pure Ones). This is one of the major religious acts of tenth Guru Gobind Singh. Guru Gobind Singh maintained a Sikh army; his soldiers came from the poorer sections and lower castes to take part in this army. "Five men, a Brahmin, a Kshatriya and three men from the lesser castes were chosen to drink out of one bowl to signify their initiation into the fraternity of the Khalsa (literally the pure)."¹⁸ Guru prepared nectar (Amrit) from water and sugar crystals in an iron bowl and stirred with a two-edged sword. On Baisakhi (a Sikh festival) in 1699 the Guru selected five persons from the gathering according to his ideals, they belonged to different castes. The Guru gave this nectar to five persons, and after the Guru himself received the same initiation from his five Sikhs. Guru called them Panj Pyaras (beloved five). The Guru gave a new form of the Sikh as Khalsa and made some rules and tenets for all Sikhs and declared that, a person is true Sikh who takes part into a new brotherhood (Khalsa) by the initiation and follows all the tenets and wears five symbols.

"Finally the Guru proclaimed a code of Discipline. Tobacco, the eating of meat from animals slaughtered according to the Muslim ritual (halal), and sexual intercourse with Muslim women were to be avoided. The members of the new brotherhood, which was called the Khalsa were to have no dealings with those who followed rival leaders or their successors and were also instructed to wear five symbols, uncut hair, a comb, a steel wrist guard, a sword, and short breeches. Initiated men took the name 'Singh' (lion) and henceforth the tenth Guru was known as Gobind Singh."¹⁹

¹⁸ David Westerlund, 1996, 263.

¹⁹ W Owen Cole and Piara Singh Sambhi, 1978, 36.

CHAPTER THREE: THE GOLDEN TEMPLE

3.1 Amritsar

Guru Amar Das was the third Guru of the Sikhs. He started to build the pool at Amritsar. There was a pool of *amrit*, nectar at this place and Guru Amar Das gave the name Amritsar of this pool, Amrit means nectar and Sar means pool (the pool of nectar). It was constructed during the period of fourth Guru Ram Das. And fifth Guru Arjan completed this holy pool in 1586. This place is associated with earlier religions, and known as a sacred place from antiquity. Hindu people believe that their deity, Ram, and his sons Love and Kush fought at this place. "Ram was killed and was revived by water from this pool."²⁰ Lord Ram also came here and spent a few years at this place during his deport in the forests. According to Hindu tradition, one more incident is associated with this place. When Bhima was killed, then his brothers Pandav used holy water from this tank to spray on Bhima to bring him back to life in Mahabarta.

Some people say it was visited by the Lord Buddha, and he was so much impressed by the beauty and calmness of this place then he recommended it to the followers for their shelter. This place is also associated with an event about a girl called Rajani. "She was married to a man who was suffering from a horrible disease. She used to care for him. One day she had left him near the pool, and as he waited for her he noticed that the large black Indian crows which hopped into the water emerged pure white. He dragged his poor body into the water and was miraculously healed."²¹ The first Guru Nanak also came to live and meditate at this place. He encouraged his followers to bath in this holy pool and declared that this place will be the center place of worship for all the Sikhs. These all events present that Amritsar is surrounded by legends.

The Sikh people believe that all the devotees who bath in this pool, they get immortality. Golden Temple is a central religious place of worship for the Sikhs. Thousands of pilgrims come to worship, listen to hymns, and hear the Sikh scripture inside the gurdwara. Holy meal is provided all

²⁰ Jean Holm with John Bowker *Sacred Place*, 1994, 156.

²¹ Jean Holm with John Bowker, 1994, 156.

visitors at the gurdwara daily. "This position and this status of the Golden Temple are unique in the religious or political centers of the world history. It is the Mecca of the Sikhs because it is the religious center of the Sikhs, but it is vastly more."²² Harmandir Sahib is the capital of Sikh theocracy. Musicians sing hymns every day inside the Golden Temple. The Pilgrims come there daily from 2 a.m. until late at night.

Guru Arjan also built a temple in the center of the tank. Guru Arjan raised money to build the Harmandir Sahib. All Sikhs donated a tenth of their income in the name of the building of the temple. The name of this temple is Harimandir, *hari* means God and *mandir* means temple, meaning simply 'the temple of God'. People called it Harmandir Sahib to show respect. On the completion of the temple Guru Arjan to immortalize his sentiments on this unique occasion, wrote the following. These lines have taken from Adi-Granth, the main Sikh scripture.

"By bathing in the tank

All the sins that man committed shall be done away

And he shall become pure by his ablutions

The perfect Guru has given us this boon

Each day in the divine tank take bath

The name divine is holy water taking dips into it brings fulfillment of all objectives."²³

When the Guru Granth Sahib is put to rest at night then the drumming as Harmandir Sahib is very dramatic indeed, it is also a sign of the conclusion of worship and after the people come to eat *langar* (holy meal) in the langar hall. "At Harmandir Sahib, the Guru Granth Sahib is brought out in a palanquin made by of gold and silver and the Sikhs throw rose petals as the procession emerges."²⁴ When the Guru Granth Sahib is put to rest then everyone stands up and try to throw flowers on it to show respect.

²² Gwilym Beckerlegge, *the World Religions Reader 2nd Edition*, 1998, 473.

²³ J. C. Aggarwal, S. P. Agrawal, *Modern History of Punjab*, Ashok Kumar Mittal Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi, India, 1992, 108.

²⁴ Jean Holm with John Bowker, 1994, 171.

3.2 Symbolic importance of the Golden Temple

Guru Arjan welcomed Mian Mir to lay the foundation stone of the Harmandir Sahib. "Each account says that Guru Arjan himself laid the foundation stone, though a second tradition has grown up recently that Mir Mohammad (1550-1635), known as Mian Mir, a Muslim holy man of Lahore, was asked to do the honors."²⁵ It is a symbol of the respectfulness and spiritual reality of the holy people of other religions. This is an inter-faith significance of the Golden Temple. Guru Arjan prepared the Guru Granth Sahib (the Sikh Scripture) at Harmandir Sahib. He installed the Guru Granth Sahib at Harmandir Sahib on 16th August 1604, and he included the hymns of not only the Sikh Gurus but also of other holy men drawn from different religions like Hinduism, Islam, and belonging to low caste in this scripture. It is the unique example of the inter-faith significance of the Golden Temple. The original foundation stone of the Harmandir Sahib was apparently laid crooked and a mason straightened it. "This was seen as an omen and it was said that, had it been left crooked, the temple would have stood forever. As it was, it would have to be rebuilt. And indeed, this has been necessary. The temple was demolished several times and rebuilt."²⁶ Maharaja Ranjit Singh was a king of Punjab. He built the main structure of Harmandir Sahib; he decorated and covered it with gold, and thereafter became popular known as the Golden Temple.

Indian temples are built high, and most buildings open on one side, these temples have one door, but the building of Golden Temple has four doors. The Hindu Temples had only one entrance. "Arjan had the Harmandir open on all four sides. These architectural features were intended to be symbolic of the new faith, which required the lowest to go even lower and whose doors were ever open to all who wished to enter"²⁷ The four entrances of Harmandir Sahib always welcome the people of all castes and religions. It has symbols of the other places of worship. There was the caste system in ancient time in India and four *varnas* (castes) were popular in India. Varnas means four castes Brahman, Ksatriya, Vaisya and Sudra, and in old time in India people who belonged to Vaisya and Sudra castes they were not allowed to go temple for worship because they belonged to low castes. Only Brahman and Ksatriya people were allowed to go inside the temple for worship.

²⁵ Jean Holm with John Bowker, 1994,156.

²⁶ Jean Holm with John Bowker, 1994,156.

²⁷ Khushwant Singh, A History of The Sikhs Volume 1, 1469-1839, Princeton University Press, U.S.A., 1963, 56.

But the people of all castes can come inside the Golden Temple and worship God. “This building was open on all sides, and this is said to symbolize the four varnas- the Brahman, Ksatriya, Vaisya, and Sudra.”²⁸ Harmandir Sahib is a symbol of the glory, humanity, prosperity and power of all the Sikh people. This is an example of loveliness and the great peacefulness. The Sikh Gurus, many Punjabi and other poets have praised Amritsar, the temple and the pool. The poets have written about the pool of Golden temple that bathing in the pool washes away sin and brings liberation. “On the construction of Ramsar, a pool in Amritsar, Guru Arjan wrote: Ever bath in Ramsar [God’s tank]; Stir it up and drink the great nectarous juice. God’s name is holy water; He who bathed in it shall have his desires fulfilled. Where God is spoken of in the company of the saints, the sins of millions of birth are erased.”²⁹ Ramsar is the name of the tank of the Golden Temple.

Nowadays, Amritsar is a big city in Punjab. It became a pilgrimage place; people like to build residence there. It has a big residential area with a market. Maharaja Ranjit Singh gave the city a single wall, and in modern times the city has developed outside its original limits. The temple shows the centrality of the religion and the religious institutions are in the middle of the temple, and residential district and markets closely surround the temple. Moreover, airy suburbs and industrial estates are situated outside of this religious place. Guru Arjan built many other gurdwaras and he also built another tank exacted about ten miles south of Amritsar, at a place now called Taran Tarn (pool of salvation).

3.3 Akal Tkhat

The seventh Guru Hargobind built a new building in Amritsar. This building is known as the Akal Takht or the Akal Bunga. It is situated opposite with the Golden Temple. When Guru Arjan started to build the Harmandir Sahib then people suggested to Guru that the Harmandir Sahib be raised on high, but he built it low, because people have to go downstairs to come inside the temple. It shows respect for this religious place. The Akal Takht is situated on a platform; it is a center for holding

²⁸ Jean Holm with John Bowker, 1994,156.

²⁹ Jean Holm with John Bowker, 1994,157.

court and administration. Harmandir Sahib is a central religious place of worship and religious activities for the Sikhs. Reading of the Guru Granth Sahib inside the temple is the main activity and the Sikh people do other religious and social activities at the Akal Takht. "Harmandir Sahib is, and always has been, a building totally devoted to religious activity. The activity inside is the reading of the reading of the Guru Granth Sahib. The other activities have always taken place at the Akal Bunga."³⁰ Guru Hargobind lived in the Akal Bunga. He made a court there to justice.

Akal Takht is the Throne of the immortal. "Guru Hargobind wore two swords signifying a link between spiritual and temporal authority (piri and miri). The Akal Takt thus symbolizes Sikh aspirations to effective political influence. Five high priests preside over the Akal Takt and constitute the highest moral authority."³¹ The Guru raised army and armed unit of bodyguards; he watched fighting and military activities at Akal Takht. The Guru himself liked to practice swordsmanship. "He had eight hundred horses, three hundred troops and sixty men with firearms always in his service."³² The Guru encouraged a spirit of heroism for the Sikh people. The musicians were recited heroic ballads at the Akal Takht after the hymns at the Harmandir Sahib. "He built the Akal Takht (the throne of the timeless God), where, instead of chanting hymns of peace, the congregation heard ballads extolling feats of heroism, and instead of listening to religious discourses, discussed plans of military conquests."³³ The modern readers may get surprised with the usual image of a Sikh holy man as a soldier, but it was not unusual for a holy man to keep arms in Sikhism.

Guru Hargobind kept an administration system at the Akal Takht. He issued orders, *hukamnamas*, and meetings were held there. The Guru took decisions at Akal Takht. He made rules and kept record of his areas in files. *Pahul* (initiation ceremonies) also took place at Akal Takht. "Ratan Singh Bhangu says in *Pracin Panth Prakas* that the warriors held the Akal Takht in high esteem and that they used to frequent the place. He records some ceremonial practices, some rituals relating to the warrior tradition of India. After these had been performed, the warrior would take a bath in the

³⁰ Jean Holm with John Bowker, 1994,158.

³¹ David Westerlund, *Questioning the Secular State the Worldwide resurgence of Religion in Politics*, , 1996, 264.

³² Jean Holm with John Bowker, 1994,158.

³³ Khushwant Singh, 1963, 63.

tank, would then be dressed up like a bridegroom, and go fully armed to the Akal Takht. Drums and military music accompanied the proceedings.”³⁴

Traditionally, decisions of social and political life of the Sikh community were taken in gurdwaras through a consensus of the Sikh people. These kinds of decisions were compulsory. Nowadays, some gurdwaras have a temple authority to take decisions. These gurdwaras known as the *takhts* (literally thrones). There are five takhts, the Akal Takht at Amritsar, Patna Sahib in Bihar state where the tenth Guru Gobind Singh was born, Keshgarh at Anandpur Sahib in Punjab, Nander in Maharashtra state where Guru Gobind Singh died, and Damdama Sahib, where Guru Gobind Singh dictated the Guru Granth Sahib from memory. All these *takhts* are spread all around India. “Important decisions were always taken from the Akal Takht. The other Takhts are perhaps more concerned with supervising correct practices and ensuring adherence to orthodoxy. Their role has frequently been political.”³⁵

3.4 Historical shrines around the Golden Temple

The Sikh people built many shrines around the complex at Amritsar. They marked some sites where the Guru lived at Amritsar. There is one of the most pilgrimage site, known as *Atsath Terath*, it is said that bathing there is as effective as bathing in all of the sixty eight pilgrimage sites of India. Another shrine is also very popular, called Baba Atal. It is a tower with nine storeys. Atal Rai was the son of Guru Hargobind, and one storey of all nine storeys commemorates a year in the life of Atal Rai. “The little boy raised a dead play-fellow to life. Miracle-working is considered against Sikh tradition. So with the Guru reprimanded his son, the boy lay down and did not regain consciousness, giving his life to make up for the mistake.”³⁶ Ranjit Singh was a king of the Punjab and he was popular as Maharaja (king) of the Punjab, Lahor was the capital of Punjab during the period of Ranjit Singh, and Amritsar was the center religious place for Sikh community. Ranjit Singh came at Amritsar and worshiped there. He gave his contribution to cover Harmandir Sahib with gold and thereafter it became popularly known as the Golden Temple. He also provided white

³⁴ Jean Holm with John Bowker, 1994, 159.

³⁵ Jean Holm with John Bowker, 1994, 161.

³⁶ Jean Holm with John Bowker, 1994,162.

marble for the walls, and decorated it. He presented golden doors with floral designs for the Golden Temple. Ranjit Singh was the chief of the administration of the temple. He gave land and money to religious institutions as charity. He made special rules about the management of the Harmandir Sahib. "Indu Banga (1978:148ff) describes something of the complexity of the grants and the system, and also comments on how Maharaja Ranjit Singh's instructions regarding the management of the Harmandir indicate the nature of his control."³⁷

3.5 Architecture

Harmandir Sahib is recognized and admired for its attraction. It has main dome, and it is surrounded by many smaller domes. The craftsmen used various techniques to decorate the Golden Temple. Some form of the decoration has taken from Hindu architectural style, and some of the decoration is new style of its own. The gold was used for Golden Temple as an astonishing feature, and decorated with the forms of birds and flowers. Golden Temple is made by white marble and gold; it stands in the center of the pool, and is reached by a caused way. The white and gold building reflected in the water. Ranjit Singh also used Mughul's architectural style to decorate the Golden Temple. "However, the Harmandir does emphatically bring together the many facets of Sikhs architecture including the inlay of semi-precious stones such as lapis lazuli and onyx on marble panels, as well as mirror-work inlay in some of the interior decoration, especially in the Shish Mahal or mirror room and the roof of the building."³⁸ There are also murals depicting scenes from the life of Guru Nanak. "Another feature of the interior is the inscription of verses from the Guru Granth Sahib in gilded lettering on some of the walls."³⁹

3.6 Afghan invasions on the Punjab

Ahmed Shah Abdali was the ruler of Afghanistan. He attacked on the Punjab nine times, and destroyed the Harmandir Sahib three times. "He could not lay his hands on the elusive Sikhs so he

³⁷ Jean Holm with John Bowker, 1994, 163.

³⁸ W Owen Cole and Piara Singh Sambhi, *The Sikhs Their Religious Beliefs and Practices*, Routledge Kegan Paul Ltd, 39 Store Street, London, 1978, 61

³⁹ W Owen Cole and Piara Singh Sambhi, 1978, 61

spent his fury on the city of Amritsar. The Harmandir was blown up and the sacred pool filled with the entrails of slaughtered cows.”⁴⁰ He killed many of the Sikhs and insulted the temple. The destruction of the Harmandir Sahib had caused a lot of heartburning among the Sikhs. A clash between Afghans and the Sikhs was unavoidable. Deep Singh was the leader of the Sikhs and entrusted with the care of temple. The Sikhs fought a great battle with Afghans and they had taken back Amritsar from the Afghans. “The Sikhs took the Afghan prisoners to Amritsar and made them clean up the pool around the Harmandir.”⁴¹ The Sikhs resolved to capture Amritsar and clear the Punjab of foreigners and treasonous elements.

But the Sikhs troubles were not over, because Ahmad Shah Abdali once again attacked on Punjab, it was his sixth Invasions in 1762. The Sikhs called the holocaust of 1762 as the *Vada Ghallughara* (The great Massacre). “It is mentioned that Ahmed Shah caused the walls of those mosques, which the Sikhs had polluted, to be washed with their blood that contamination might be removed, and the ignominy offered to the religion of Mahomed be expiated. From Lahore, Abdali went to Amritsar. The Harmandir was again blow up with gunpowder and the pool filled with the carcasses of cows.”⁴² The Sikhs again prepared Sikh armies and fought with Afghans, and they entered the Amritsar and re-built the Harmandir Sahib. Ahmed Shah wanted to win the Punjab so he again attacked on it and destroyed the Sikh temple Harmadier Sahib by the seventh Afghan Invasion in 1764. “For the third time the Afghans blow up the Harmandir and filled the pool with dead cows.”⁴³ The Sikhs got angry at the Afghans. This time all Sikhs of Punjab took part in the battle and fought like lions with the Afghans, and won the battle. The Sikhs cleaned the pool of the Harmandir Sahib and the temple was rebuilt at a considerable expense.

3.7 The Sikhism can be a violent religion

The Sikhs learned that a community cannot become a strong and great nation without learning to shed blood. Abdali spilled more Sikh blood than any other. The history of the Sikhs shows that the Sikh people had feelings of revenge and they were fighting for their faith. Harmandir Sahib itself,

⁴⁰ Khhushwant Singh, 1963, 145.

⁴¹ Khhushwant Singh, 1963, 148.

⁴² Khhushwant Singh, 1963, 154.

⁴³ Khhushwant Singh, 1963, 158.

the actual building has been destroyed and rebuilt several times. As we will discuss later, the temple was destroyed during Operation Blue Star in 1984. Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi ordered to make this operation to capture Jarnail Singh and his group from the temple in June 1984. It was a military Operation, Indian Army was entered into the temple and fought with Sikhs, and destroyed the Golden Temple. The Hindu people attacked on the innocent Sikhs people in 1984 in Delhi after the assassination of Indira Gandhi. They killed thousands of the Sikhs and they destroyed their business and property.

We will also discuss later about the Amritsar massacre in 1919, it was a heartless attacked on the innocent Sikhs. These all violent encounters of the past in the Sikhism show that the Sikhism can be a violent religion. The history of the Sikhs leaves trails of blood. "It would be too easy to say that the prestige of violent symbols in the Sikh religion has increased Sikh's propensity for violent action, or that the Sikh religion is violent because Sikhs as a people are violent."⁴⁴ The Sikh Gurus were martyrs and their martyrdom was for the faith. The Sikh Gurus encouraged the Sikhs to keep arms and the tenth Guru Gobind Singh prepared an army as a Khalsa to fight with the Moguls. The Sikh Guru themselves fought with the Moguls so many battles. Afghan invasions on the Sikhs became big massacres in the Punjab; Maharaja Ranjit Singh also fought so many battles with Afghans and other Muslim and Hindu kings during his period.

⁴⁴ Juergensmeyer Mark, *the Logic of Religious Violence*, 1988, 74.

CHAPTER FOUR: JARNAIL SINGH BHINDRANWALE

4.1 Introduction

Jarnail Singh was born in the village of Rode, near the city of Moga in Punjab in 12 February 1947, the year of independence. His father Joginder Singh was a farmer and local Sikh leader. His mother is Nihal Kaur. In 1965 he enrolled at the religious school Damdami Taksal which trained young Sikh preachers. "He had become a firebrand head priest who championed orthodoxy and developed a reputation as a compelling speaker."⁴⁵ Kartar Singh was the head of this school. Jarnail Singh was the favorite student of Kartar Singh. Jarnail Singh became 'Sant' (saint) and the new head of the Damdami Taksal after Kartar Singh in 1977. He went to the village gurdwara (temple) every day and spent many hours in the gurdwara. He married Pritam Kaur.

4.2 Bhindrawale as a Saint

He memorized whole chapters from the Sikh scripture. He was working as a religious and social reformer. He went from village to village in Punjab as missionary and gave long speeches and asked the Sikhs to follow the rules and the tenets of Sikhism. He was fighting against the young Sikhs, who were taking drugs, alcohol, and tobacco. He encouraged them to return to the path of Sikhism. "Trimming beards, drinking alcohol, and engaging in other forbidden practices has not been unusual in the past. Bhindranwale criticized these Sikhs as straying from the true or falling prey to modernization."⁴⁶ He was a good preacher and he preached his followers that Sikhism is a different religion from others. Jarnail Singh encouraged the Sikh youth to take *Amrit* (the holy nectar).

4.3 Bhindranwale in Politics

⁴⁵ Edna Fernandes, *Holy Warriors*, 2006, 203.

⁴⁶ Martha Crenshaw, *Terrorism in Context*, the Pennsylvania State University press, United States of America 1995, 364.

Jarnail Singh also participated in politics. He was selected by the Indian Congress party but he was not a success in the general election. Indira Gandhi's son Sanjay Gandhi and party man Zail Singh suggested Indira that sponsoring a Sikh saint could be useful for their party. He could be getting more Sikh votes in the Punjab to Congress. Indira Gandhi gave attention on Sanjay's advice. In the beginning, the Congress supported Bhindranwale to join the Congress party, but later the Congress did not help him in politics because he was not a success in politics in the favor of Congress. "Indira Gandhi was playing with political dynamite. General Brar later described Bhindranwale as 'the Frankenstein of Sikh politics' but it was a monster that the Congress helped create and in the end could not control."⁴⁷ When Bhindranwale got popularity in whole Punjab, he rejected all offers of Congress and started a movement against the Centre Government. The Congress linked his name with assassinations of Hindu politicians, Nirankaries, Journalists and Policemen in the Punjab. The government also declared Bhindranwale and his armed followers to be terrorists. "Sanjay Gandhi's friend, the politician Kamal Nath, who became India's trade and commerce minister in 2004, was saying: "We would give [Bhindranwale] money off and on. But we never thought he would turn into a terrorist."⁴⁸

4.4 Conflict between Orthodox Sikhs and Nirankaris

Bhindranwale and his group believed that Guru Gobind Singh is tenth and the last guru of the Sikhs, because Guru Gobind Singh declared before his death that there will be not eleventh guru for the Sikhs and only the Holy Scripture Guru Granth Sahib will be the last guru of the Sikhs. On the other hand Nirankaries are another Sikh group, and they did not believe that Guru Gobind Singh was the last Sikh guru. The founder of the Nirankaries, Baba Dyal and his successors were the subsequent gurus of this group. Nirankaries have their own philosophy about Sikhism. They believe that their gurus are equal to all ten gurus. Orthodox Sikhs resented the philosophy of the Nirankaries. It was the main reason of conflict between orthodox Sikhs and Nirankaries. Orthodox Sikhs declared that Nirankaries are blasphemous.

⁴⁷ Edna Fernandes, *Holy Warriors*, 2006, 207.

⁴⁸ Edna Fernandes, *Holy Warriors*, 2006, 207.

Bhindranwale was the new messiah of the orthodox Sikhs. Akali Government invited Nirankaries to hold a convention in the city of Amritsar on 13th April 1978 on Baisakhi Day (Sikh festival). Akali Government created trouble by inviting Nirankaries in Amritsar on the day of the Sikh festival Baisakhi, because orthodox Sikhs and their new leader Bhindranwale resented this convention by the Nirankaries in Amritsar. Bhindranwale and his followers marched to the site of convention of the Nirankaries. "On reaching the convention a member of the procession, Fauja Singh, whipped out his sword and attacked the Nirankari guru, Baba Gurbachan Singh. One of the guru's bodyguards immediately shot Fauja Singh dead and in the ensuing battle, twelve Sikhs and three Nirankaries lost their lives."⁴⁹ The Akalis found themselves in trouble, because orthodox Sikhs believed that the Akalis supported the Nirankaries to attack innocent orthodox Sikhs in their convention. Bhindranwale encouraged his followers to keep arms after this event for their self-defense. "He exhorted his followers to carry either rifle or a pistol, in addition to the traditional *Kirpan* (sword) to display their prowess. He himself always carried a revolver tucked into a holster and wore a belt, filled with cartridges around his waist."⁵⁰ He welcomed openly the murderers of the slain Nirankaries. Bhindranwale's followers assassinated the Nirankaries guru Baba Gurbachan Singh on 24th April 1980 in Delhi.

This event once again invited violence in Punjab, which has taken lives of many Nirankaries Sikhs and orthodox Sikhs. Bhindranwale became a very popular preacher among the Sikhs. In the beginning he asked the young Sikhs to come on the path of the Sikhism. He started to use weapons on 13 April 1978 after a bloody confrontation in Amritsar with renegade Nirankaries. Thus Bhindranwale began his bloody career and became a new leader of a militant group.

"Bhindranwale informs his followers, and demands that something be done about the culprits who denude our womenfolk another occasion he urges his followers to 'seek justice against those who have dishonored our sisters, drunk the blood of innocent persons, and insulted Satguru Guru Granth Sahib (Sikh scripture)'. "⁵¹

Bhindranwale did not identify that who are the culprit in his speech but on yet another occasion the enemy seems to be Indian society in general. Bhindranwale said that the Sikhs are living like slaves

⁴⁹ K. S. Brar, *Operation Blue Star the True Story*, UBS Publishers' Distributors, New Delhi, 1993, 19.

⁵⁰ K. S. Brar, *Operation Blue Star the True Story*, 1993, 22.

⁵¹ Mark Juergensmeyer, *the Logic of Religious Violence: the Case of the Punjab*, 1988, 70.

in independent India. They are second rate citizens. “When the enemy is more clearly specified it is often a generic category or holder of a political office: they are ‘policemen’, ‘the government’, ‘the press’, ‘Hindus’, and the Prime Minister- whom he calls that ‘lady born to a house of Brahmins’ (Bhindranwale 1983a;2).”⁵² Bhindranwale presented his hate for the police, the press, and the government in his speeches. He also specified that the government is the enemy.

Bhindranwale said that it is a shame for all the Sikhs that the Hindus are able to insult the Sikh scriptures in the presence of the Sikhs. He encouraged his followers to fight against those people who were insulting the Sikh scripture. Bhindranwale reminds his followers the Sikh tradition has always been filled with conflict and there is need to fight against the people who are enemies of the faith. He said that the Prime Minister Indira Gandhi is the foe of today and she is implicitly compared with the Mughul emperors. Bhindranwale was not ready to compromise with the government for fewer demands; he wanted to establish a separate Sikh state. “In a sense, then Bhindranwale feels that individual Sikh demands can never really be met, because the ultimate struggle of which they are a part is much greater than the contestation between political parties and factional points of view.”⁵³ It is clear that the religious language of Bhindranwale is the language of ultimate struggle and his language is linked with violent acts.

Bhindranwale asked a group of unemployed youth to participate in a rally against the Nirankaris. This group is later known as anti-social group of militants. “Nirankaris were not the only target of this anti-social group of militants. Their hit-list also included sympathizers of the Nirankaries as well as dissident Congress and Akali functionaries.”⁵⁴ In the beginning, Bhindranwale was called a *Sant*, a holy man, because he was the head of a religious school, (Damdami Taksal). He was following the tenets of the tenth Guru, Gobind Singh. The Nirankaris killed many of Bhindranwale’s followers in their convention. After this event Bhindranwale carried weapons himself and encouraged his followers to have weapons for their safety. He declared that he is not only a saint; he is also a soldier who will fight for faith and nation. Then people called him *Sant Sipahi*, saint soldier. “This episode was followed by an attack from the Nirankaris that killed a

⁵² Mark Juergensmeyer, *the Logic of Religious Violence: the Case of the Punjab*, 1988, 70.

⁵³ Mark Juergensmeyer, *the Logic of Religious Violence: the Case of the Punjab*, 1988, 71.

⁵⁴ K. S. Brar, *Operation Blue Star the True Story*, 1993, 20.

number of Bhindranwale's followers, and further counter-attacks ensued. Thus began the bloody career of a man who was trained to live a calm and spiritual life of religious devotion."⁵⁵

4.5 The Assassination of Lala Jagat Narain

Lala Jagat Narain was the editor of the Jullunder based Hind Samachar group of Newspapers. He was writing against Bhindranwale and his group. He presented sympathetic comments towards the Nirankares. He also highlighted that Sikhs wanted to make a separate state in Punjab as Khalistan, and he warned the Government that they should not take the matter of Khalistan lightly, because this movement of the Sikhs is a cloud of fear for the Hindus who were living in Punjab. Lala Jagat Narain was assassinated on 9th September 1981 by Bhindranwale's followers. Lala Jagat Narain's editorials and his assassination became increasingly dangerous for Bhindranwale and his followers. The government issued an arrest warrant for Bhindranwale in case of his involvement behind the murder of Jagat Narain. "Bhindranwale gave the police the slip and took refuge in the safe sanctuary of the gurdwara at Mehta Chowk. The police and military forces surrounded the gurdwara and then Chief Minister of Punjab, Darbar Singh was adamant that Bhindranwale must be arrested."⁵⁶ The government did not want to create the problem of violence to arrest Bhindranwale, because thousands of Sikhs gathered at the gurdwara to protect Bhindranwale.

The government sent a few senior police officers to negotiate with Bhindranwale about his surrender. He allowed the police to arrest him and he ordered his followers not to be violent when police arrested him. In spite of this, his arrest provoked his followers and they started violence in the Punjab. They killed many Hindus, trains were derailed and an Indian airline plane was hijacked to Lahore in Pakistan. Moreover, Bhindranwale followers tried to murder a Deputy Inspector General of Police who arrested Bhindranwale. Police did not find any evidence of involvement of Bhindranwale in the murder of Lala Jagat Narain and after few days the police decided to release Bhindranwale to stop violence. Punjab police arrested Jarnail Singh for his suspected involvement in the murder of Jagat Narain. But he was later released because there was not any evidence against Jarnail Singh.

⁵⁵ Mark Juergensmeyer, *the Logic of Religious Violence*, 1988, 78.

⁵⁶ K. S. Brar, *Operation Blue Star the True Story*, 1993, 20.

After the assassination of Lala Jagat Narain, Hindu generalists started to write again about Bhindranwale that he is a terrorist, who is increasing terrorism in Punjab. Bhindranwale and his followers were making complaints; they said that the Sikh militants do not have any good reason for their complaints. They have everything and Punjab is more developed than other states of India. The Sikhs are rich and surviving in good atmosphere. Bhindranwale's followers started to eliminate Hindu generalists. They did not like their comments about their leader, Bhindranwale, they said our leader Bhindranwale is doing well for us and for our religion. We love to support him. Hindu press is bad for Sikh community, they wrote wrong about Bhindranwale. "The bad man Bhindranwale is misleading everybody. But we knew what was wrong and we loved Bhindranwale, no matter what the Hindu press saying about him."⁵⁷

4.6 Bhindranwale in the Golden Temple

The Sikh saint Longowal asked Jarnail Singh to come to the Golden Temple to take shelter in July 1982. Jarnail Singh did so with a big group of his armed followers. When Bhindranwale and his armed followers were living in Golden Temple then his followers murdered the Deputy Inspector General of Police, A. S. Atwal on 25th April 1983. Bhindranwale moved into the holy Akal Takhat with his armed group. The Sikhs came from all parts of the country to listen to his speeches. "His preaching became more venomous by the day and he succeeded in stirring up hatred between the Sikhs and the Hindus. His aim was to cause such great communal tensions that the Hindu living in Punjab would be forced to flee in fear."⁵⁸ He forced the Sikhs who were living outside the state to return to the Punjab. The Government once again, felt helpless when the Khalistani January 1984, India's Republic Day. Bhindranwale started to act as a virtual ruler. The Sikhs from all corners of the Punjab began to ask Bhindranwale to solve their problem instead of going to the courts or police stations.

His follower brought weapons inside the Golden Temple by vehicles, these vehicles used for *Kar Seva* (voluntary labor). The police was unable to search these vehicles for fear of reprisals. The

⁵⁷ Cynthia Keppley Mahmood, *Fighting for Faith and Nation, Dialogue with Sikh Militants*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia Pennsylvania, United States of America, 1996, 96.

⁵⁸ K. S. Brar, *Operation Blue Star the True Story*, 1993, 26.

Sikhs were demanding a nation state as Khalistan for the Sikh people in Punjab during his period Jarnail Singh did not demand it directly in his speeches. But he also never forbade establishing it. The high priest of the Golden Temple ordered Bhindranwale to leave holy Akal Takhat, but Bhindranwale did not leave Akal Takhat and he in turn issued them a strong threat. The young Sikhs were facing the problem of unemployment. Bhindranwale impressed unemployed Sikhs by his speeches and asked them to participate in the movement against the government. "With his martial image and fiery speeches that appealed to Sikh pride, he also won followers among unemployed young men who passed out of college but could not be absorbed into the ancestral farming business."⁵⁹

4.7 Bhindranwale's movement against Indian Government

The Akalis started a *Dharam Yudh* (battle of faith) against the centre government in 1982. They wanted to express their complaint to the Centre Government. But the Centre Government did not react on their complaints. Bhindranwale was not willing to wait for handouts. His followers started violence against the Hindus. He encouraged the all Sikh community to prepare for a war by his against Centre Government. "It should be clear to all Sikhs, whether living in urban or rural areas, that we are slaves and want liberation at any cost. To achieve this end, arm yourself and prepare for a war and wait for orders."⁶⁰ After his fiery speeches, the government quoted white paper on the Punjab. Sikh militants did not want any interfere in their work. They said that we want to live peacefully and if somebody disturbed us we could fight with him.

There was an interview in *India Today* with Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale who explained his view in an interview. He said that "we Sikhs know how to sacrifice our lives for peace, but at the same time we know how to cut others to pieces. We love peace, we die for peace, but if somebody interferes with our peace, we will not tolerate it, we cannot tolerate being slaves to a country that doesn't respect us, our religion, our culture, our language"⁶¹ Bhindranwale did not want to live more in India, he was not happy with the Indian Government and he encouraged the Sikh community to

⁵⁹ Edna Fernandes, *Holy Warriors*, 2006, 204.

⁶⁰ Edna Fernandes, *Holy Warriors*, 2006, 206.

⁶¹ Cynthia Keppley Mahmood, *Fighting for Faith and Nation: Dialogues with Sikh Militants*, 1996, 127.

start a big movement against the Centre Government. He believed that, staying in India would mean the genocide of the Sikhs. He wanted to establish a Sikh separate nation with the help of the Sikh community.

The Akali Sikh leaders made some political, economical, and social demands. Bhindranwale supported the Akalis, but they were not his primary concern. Bhindranwale was not ready to compromise with the government for a few demands by the Sikh leaders, because they changed these demands from time to time. "It is of no use to win on one or two points and fail on others. Compromise is impossible; only complete victory will signal that the tide has turned. For that reason Bhindranwale scolds the Akali leaders for seeking a compromise settlement of the political demands made by Sikh leaders."⁶² He had his own individual demands. The Indian Government never accepted his demands to establish a Sikh homeland. Bhindranwale alerted his followers that all the Sikhs are oppressed, even if they did not know it. He sent his people in rural areas in the Punjab to give his message that we have to fight for our freedom. "He ended one of his sermons with this fervent plea: I implore all of you in this congregation. Go to the villages and make every child, every mother, every Singh realize we are slaves and we have to shake off this slavery in order to survive."⁶³

4.8 Indian Army attached on the Golden Temple

When the Indian army started to make the plan of Operation Blue Star then Indian Government sent some senior officers of police and army to negotiate with Bhindranwale about his surrender. Bhindranwale forbade surrendering and he rejected all their offers. He also encouraged his armed followers to fight against the Indian army and sent a message for all the Sikhs that it is a good time to establish their Sikh separate nation. "Well, that political goal had already been declared by Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale when he had said that on the day that the Indian army would invade the Golden Temple, the foundation stone of Khalistan would be laid."⁶⁴ Bhindranwale reminded his

⁶² Mark Juergensmeyer, *the Logic of Religious Violence*, 1988, 71.

⁶³ Mark Juergensmeyer, *the Logic of Religious Violence*, 1988, 84.

⁶⁴ Cynthia Keppley Mahmood, *Fighting for Faith and Nation: Dialogues with Sikh Militants*, 1996, 131.

followers that the Sikh tradition has always been filled with conflict. He compared the Congress party leaders with Mughul emperors, who tortured the gurus of the Sikhs in the past.

Indian Government declared that Jarnail Singh and his followers were terrorists. They always have arms with them. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi initiated Operation Blue Star on June 3rd 1984 and ordered the Indian Army to arrest Jarnail Singh and his group from the Golden Temple. Jarnail Singh got himself and his followers in danger, and then he took shelter in holy Akal Takht with his group. Jarnail Singh and his followers were killed by the Indian Army. Jarnail Singh has remained a controversial figure in Indian history. Some Sikhs believe that he was a martyr, who was fighting for the Sikh rites. And others view him as a militant and extremist. "The millenarian vision propounded by Bhindranwale is a militant version of the fundamentals of the true faith, seeking to unify its followers and protect them from the discrimination and evil influences of outside forces."⁶⁵

On the other hand, some people believe that Jarnail Singh courageously tread on the path of the best Sikh traditions and values. According to Cynthia Keppley, "Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale was a truthful, devout saint-soldier of the tenth Guru Gobind Singh. He was not of a type who would care for his safety or security, but he was so much immersed in love of Guru that he devoted his whole self to the preaching of Sikhism."⁶⁶ The Sikh people believe that, Jarnail Singh was a saint because he encouraged the Sikh people to follow the rules and tenets of Sikhism. And he was also a soldier who was fighting for faith and Sikh nation.

⁶⁵ Martha Crenshaw, *Terrorism in Context*, the Pennsylvania State University press, United States of America 1995, 364.

⁶⁶ Cynthia Keppley Mahmood, *Fighting for Faith and Nation, Dialogue with Sikh Militants*, 1996, 96.

CHAPTER FIVE: KHALISTAN

5.1 The concept of the Khalistan

Sardar Kapur Singh was a senior civil servant in the Punjab. The Indian Government dismissed him from service on corruption charges. He then wrote a book, *Sachi Sakhi* in Punjabi language. He presented his innocence in this book and he attempted to get a fair chance from the Indian Government to prove his innocence. But his attempt was unsuccessful and then he alleged that the Indian administration imposed the corruption charges against him, because he was a devout Sikh. He also believed that it was discrimination against the Sikh people of the Punjab. "Kapur Singh began to propagate the idea of Khalistan in the 1960, and continued to do so until his death in 1986."⁶⁷ The idea of Khalistan was a demand of a separate Sikh state in the post-independence period by the Sikh people of the Punjab.

5.2 The Khalistan movement a foreign conspiracy

The Sikh raised this idea again and it was the movement for a separate Sikh state in India. Sikh leaders who were living in North America, Britain and Canada also gave the call for an independent Sikh state as Khalistan. Harbans Singh Ruprah, a businessman of South Hall, London, who claimed that the Khalistan movement was planned from abroad, expressed that Pakistan, Britain, the United States, West Germany and Canada supported the arrangement of the Khalistan, Other Sikh scholars also presented similar views about the Khalistan. The Sikhs lost the birth place of first guru Nanak during the partition of India in 1947. They were not able to visit and celebrate the birthday of Nanak in Pakistan because both countries, India and Pakistan, did not allow them to visit Pakistan to celebrate the birthday of Guru Nanak. But when the Sikhs started to demand Khalistan, then Pakistan offered the Sikhs that they could be allowed visiting Pakistan to celebrate the birthday of

⁶⁷ David Westerlund, *Questioning the Secular State The Worldwide Resurgence of Religion in Politics*, C. Hurst, London the United Kingdom, 1996, 277.

Guru Nanak and Pakistan wanted to support them to establish Khalistan. "India's arch-enemy Pakistan was openly supporting the Khalistan movement,"⁶⁸ Ahmed Ishtihag maintains.

5.3 Re-establishment of Punjab on linguistic basis

Sikh leaders of the Akali Dal demanded the resettlement of Punjab on a linguistic basis. The Sikhs wanted to establish a Punjabi-speaking state in Punjab. The State Reorganization Commission was set up in 1953 in India. The Commission accepted linguistic criteria to reorganize the states, and established several new states on a linguistic basis. But the Commission did not accept the re-establishment of Punjab borders on a linguistic basis. "However, when it came to Punjab the Commission refused to concede to the Sikh demand for an exclusive Punjabi-speaking state"⁶⁹ The Sikhs alleged that the decision of the prejudiced Commission was not in favor of the Sikhs, and the Sikhs were not happy with the decision of the Commission. On the other hand, the members of the Commission believed that the re-establishment of Punjab on a linguistic basis could be exacerbating intercommunal relations between Sikhs and Hindus. The Hindu people wanted to declare Hindi as the official language in Punjab. The Congress also supported the Hindus to declare Hindi as the official language in Punjab. Then the Commission accepted both Hindi and Punjabi to be the official languages of the Punjab. The Akali Sikhs started a movement for a separate Sikh state in the Punjab; police arrested thousand of Sikhs, who participated in this movement.

5.4 The movement of the Sikhs against the Indian government

Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale never directly demanded a separate Sikh state, but he preached his followers to resist the power of the Indian Government. He encouraged them to keep weapons and motorcycles. When Bhindranwale started to live in the Golden Temple with his heavily-armed followers, then he demanded the Sikh freedom from the Indian Government. "From here Bhindranwale intensified his campaign against the Government and began propagating the idea of a

⁶⁸ Ahmed Ishtihag *State, Nation and Ethnicity in Contemporary South Asia*, a Cassel Imprint, London Great Britain 1996, 136.

⁶⁹ David Westerlund, *Questioning the Secular State The Worldwide Resurgence of Religion in Politics*, 1996, 270.

separate homeland,”⁷⁰ Westerlund explains. Bhindranwale wanted to give the impression for the Sikh community that they are different from other religions and castes and they need to make unity to establish a Sikh separate nation. He used an Urdu (and originally Arabic) term *qaum* in his speech. The meaning of term *qaum* has become a ‘separate community in their homeland’. He gave this message for those who wanted to establish a Sikh separate nation. According to Mark Juergensmeyer, “even Bhindranwale was not an outspoken supporter of Khalistan; he often spoke of the Sikhs’ separate identity as that of a religious community with national characteristics. The term he used for religious community, *qaum*, is an Urdu term that has overtones of nationhood.”⁷¹ Indira Gandhi wanted to stop Bhindranwale’s movement against the centre government and then she ordered the Indian army to begin Operation Blue Star to throw out Bhindranwale and his followers from the Golden Temple, as we will discuss later about Operation Blue Star.

The Punjab is the homeland of the Sikhs and Punjabi is the mother tongue of the Sikhs. Their uncut hairs and turban is the identity of the Sikhs. They have their own culture and Sikhism is a different religion from other religions in India. The Sikhs also demanded the Sikh separate nation for their identity. “But the ideology of Khalistan was not born of economics. It was born of the desire for a distinct Sikh identity,”⁷² Juergensmeyer states. The Sikhs are the *Khalsa* (pure one) and they originated the Khalistan movement as a crusade for a land of the pure ones. The Sikhs wanted to remove Hindus from the Punjab, because they knew that it was not possible to create a Sikh nation without removing Hindus from Punjab.

The Sikh militants started to attack and torture the Hindus on the country side. The Hindus who were living in Punjab did not want to support any establishing of Khalistan as a Sikh nation in Punjab. When the Sikh militants stopped a bus, they identified Hindu passengers and they were executed by the Sikh militants. After this event Hindus felt uncomfortable to live in Punjab, and then the Hindus started a movement against the Sikh militants who were demanding Khalistan. “Violence against the Hindu community was an important part of their plan, the aim being to drive

⁷⁰ David Westerlund, *Questioning the Secular State The Worldwide Resurgence of Religion in Politics*, 1996, 275.

⁷¹ Mark Juergensmeyer, *the Logic of Religious Violence*, 1988, 78.

⁷² Edna Fernandes, *Holly warriors*, 2006, 195.

Hindus from the Punjab in preparation for the creation of a Sikh nation, Khalistan,”⁷³ Edna Fernandes emphasizes.

On the other hand, thousands of Sikhs did not want to establish a Sikh nation, Khalistan. They were happy to live in India; they believed that the Khalistan movement would become a danger for all the Sikh community and for Hindus as well who were living in Punjab. Moreover, the Sikhs who were living in other parts of India outside Punjab were also not supporting the Khalistan movement because they did not want to repeat the mistake of 1947 (partition of India). They were scared that Hindu people could force them to leave their places in India for a new home in Khalistan. Thousands of Sikhs were living in Punjab were also not sympathizers of Khalistan. The Sikh militants entered their homes at night time and demanded shelter and food from them. The Sikhs had to give shelter and food for terrorists because the terrorists had always arms with them. These terrorists forced them to support Khalistan movement. There were numbers of Sikh families who were tortured by Sikh militants even if they reported to the police against terrorists.

5.5 The Khalistan Charter

The Khalistan council published the monthly *Khalistan News* from Britain in December 1987. This *Khalistan News* was a declaration of the main constitutional structure of the future state of Khalistan. The Sikhs believed that the virtues of their religion and their specific attachment to Punjabi culture belonged in the Punjab. The Sikhs also claimed by this News that the presence of the Punjab Kingdom of Ranjit Singh is a historical proof of the Sikhs separate state. “The December 1987 and January 1988 issues provide a definition of the Sikh nation: a community sharing common belief in orthodox Sikhism. From this premise is derived the conclusion that just as Hindus were given India and Muslims Pakistan, Sikhs should have their own separate state.”⁷⁴

5.6 The Indian Government crushed the Khalistan movement

⁷³ Edna Fernandes, *Holly warriors*, 2006, 205.

⁷⁴ David Westerlund, *Questioning the Secular State The Worldwide Resurgence of Religion in Politics*, 1996, 279.

Thousands of Sikh militants were operating the Khalistan movement in many places of the Punjab, and they lost their life during this movement. "The Punjab conflict has continued to drag on over the years. According to one estimate some 35000 people were killed between 1984 and 1991."⁷⁵ The Sikh extremists and the police continue to perpetrate terrorism to haunt Punjab even in present. The Sikhs believed that the Khalistan was to be a revolutionary state which was to end caste system and big landlordism in the Punjab. The Sikhs did not want to live with other people of different castes in the Khalistan. They wanted to live separately in separate Sikh state. "Khalistan should be based on Sikh moral values and historical legacy the proponents of the Khalistan idea differ from each other on their conception of an ideal Khalistan."⁷⁶ The Sikh farmers and villagers supported the Khalistan in Punjab. The Khalistan movement was a conflict between the Sikh community and the Indian government. Indian Government made attempts to stop the Khalistan movement by Sikh militants. When the Sikhs raised the flag of Khalistan above one of the temple complex buildings on India's Republic Day, January 26, in 1984, then Indira Gandhi finally decided to order the Indian army to make Operation Blue Star to stop the Khalistan movement. "For years it retained an iron grip over the state until the Khalistan insurgency was ground into dust by the late Nineties after a zero tolerance policy was adopted by the central government."⁷⁷

The Sikhs lost their life and symbols of their religion. "The storming of the Temple which resulted in considerable damage to the buildings inside, including the burning-down of the library containing rare Sikh relics, and huge loss of human life was a fatal miscalculation by Mrs. Gandhi."⁷⁸ After the event of 1984, the police and armed forces tortured the Sikh people in Punjab, and they viewed Sikhs as either terrorists or Khalistani sympathizers. Police presented a report, telling that more than ninety thousand Sikhs were terrorists and operating in the Punjab. Later they were killed by the Indian police. The Indian Government feared that the Khalistani supporters could break-up from India, and then the Indian government ordered the police to kill the Khalistani supporters.

⁷⁵ David Westerlund, *Questioning the Secular State The Worldwide Resurgence of Religion in Politics*, 1996, 277.

⁷⁶ David Westerlund, *Questioning the Secular State The Worldwide Resurgence of Religion in Politics*, 1996, 278.

⁷⁷ Edna Fernandes, *Holly warriors*, 2006, 211.

⁷⁸ David Westerlund, *Questioning the Secular State The Worldwide Resurgence of Religion in Politics*, 1996, 279

Later, it is likely to conclude that the Indians admired the police, who finished the terrorism in Punjab. On the other hand, Sikhs believed that the Sikhs, who were killed by the police in the Khalistan movement, were real heroes and patriots. “India praised the police as heroes and patriots who had saved the country from the threat of fragmentation. But some who studied the terrorist phenomenon argued that the real heroes were the Sikhs who killed the Khalistan movement by cutting off oxygen of public support.”⁷⁹ Some scholars expressed their views that the Khalistan sympathizers did not get the public support for this movement. The Khalistan movement was crushed by the Indian Government.

⁷⁹ Edna Fernandes, *Holly warriors*, 2006, 193.

CHAPTER SIX: INDIRA GANDHI

6.1 Indira Gandhi's childhood

Indira Nehru was born on 19th November 1917 in Anand Bhavan in Allahabad. Her father, Jawaharlal Nehru was a freedom fighter, and led India's political struggle for independence from British rule. After the independence of India Jawaharlal Nehru became India's first Prime Minister. Indira's mother was Kamala Nehru. She was only child of her parents. Her father was busy in political activities and often away from his daughter, Indira. She grew up with her mother and grandfather, Motilal Nehru at the Anand Bhavan. Motilal had special affection for his granddaughter. He liked pick Indira up into his lap and play with her. "Indira grew up in a wealthy aristocratic family and was treated like a royal princess."⁸⁰ When Indira grew up, her parents wanted to give her high education and sent her abroad, her grandfather felt very lonely and he wrote to Jawaharlal Nehru that "I am always troubled by Indira's memories. Whenever I remember her innocent talk, I feel very disturbed."⁸¹ Thus Indira got the boundless love of her grandfather and all other family members. She spent her childhood in a very loving atmosphere.

Her mother, Kamala died in the year 1936. Indira was shattered by the death of her mother. Indira was in Oxford University, UK, that time and her studies were disturbed by the death of her mother. She decided to return to India. Her father was in jail during the illness and death of his wife. "Indira had decided that she would have to put an end to her wandering life. She would not let her father walk alone on the path of struggle. She would walk alongside him."⁸² She started to help her father in his politics activities.

6.2 Marriage with Feroze Gandhi

Indira decided to marry Feroze Gahdhi and she informed her father that she wanted Feroze as her life partner. People raised many objections about Indira's marriage with Feroze. Indira got her

⁸⁰ Barbara A. Somervill, *Indira Gandhi: Political leader in India*, Compass point Books, U.S.A. 2007, 20.

⁸¹ Meena Agarwal, *Indira Gandhi*, Diamond Pocket Books, New Delhi, 2005, 13.

⁸² Meena Agarwal, *Indira Gandhi*, 2005, 29.

education in a very open environment and she did not believe in any religious fanaticism or asterism. So she decided to marry Feroze Gandhi without caring for any kind of social restrictions. Jawaharlal Nehru put aside all objections and supported his daughter to get married with Feroze. "Nehru ji did not listen to anyone's objections and supported Indira fully in her decision. He decided to get Indira and Feroze married as soon as possible."⁸³ She got married with Feroze on 6th March 1942. They had two sons, Rajiv Gandhi and Sanjay Gandhi. Rajiv was born in 1944 and Sanjay was born in 1946 in their house in Allahabad. Nehru sent them to England for their higher education in engineering. Feroze Gandhi gave his important contribution in the struggle for independence. Indira also jumped into the struggle for independence with her husband and father. Both husband and wife were imprisoned in separate cells after six months of their marriage. Indira did not worry about this; because she knew that her country needed her help and she would have to make some sacrifice for her country.

6.3 In Active Politics

After the independence of India in 1948, Jawaharlal Nehru became the first Prime Minister of India. Indira became his father's assistant and she helped her father in his work. Gobind Vallabh Pant and Lal Bahadur Shastri were political leaders and they advised Indira to pay attention to politics. She was elected to the all India Congress Working Committee in 1955. She started the village Contact Program, and tried to solve the problems of the villagers by this program. She became more popular in the Congress party and was elected as its President. She gave her big contribution in the party and solved many problems of the country. Nehru ji became ill continuously and died on 27th May 1964. India lost its great leader on this day. Indira was shattered once again. But she did not stop her service to the nation. After Nehru, Lal Bahadur Shastri became India's Prime Minister. Indira was elected the post of the Minister for Information and Broadcasting. She did work very hard to achieve success in her work.

Shastri ji died suddenly by a heart attack and Indira Gandhi was elected for the post of Prime Minister of India after the death of Shastri in 1966? She was India's first woman Prime Minister.

⁸³ Meena Agarwal, *Indira Gandhi*, 2005, 31.

“She decided that she would dedicate herself to improving the future of India. But she was also aware of the fact that she would have to work very hard to achieve this.”⁸⁴ She made a promise that her foremost goal was the progress of India.

6.4 As the Prime Minister

Indira was capable to achieve the progress of India. India got industrial revolution during her period. Indira Gandhi dominated Indian politics for seventeen years (1966-1984). Pakistan attacked on India and she faced this war but India got victory in that war. Later Indira faced problems of industrial recession by the short of foreign exchange. Political instinct guided her to pay attention on India’s agricultural and economic self-reliance. Indira solved the problem of the industrial recession. “The task was not easy but, by the early 1980, India had not only achieved self reliance in food production but had turned into a grain surplus nation.”⁸⁵ Indians got considerable pride by the achievements of the Indira Gandhi period. Many low caste families did progress by taking advantages of the quota system and the reservation of the seats in educational and institutions and administrative services.

On the other hand, Indira also faced many political and religious tensions. The religious and political leaders demanded their states on linguistic basis and created tension during this period. “As a result, one of the noticeable developments in the Indira Gandhi era was an unprecedented increase in the incidents of violence. During the last decade and extensive social and political mobilization of India’s ethnic, religious, caste and linguistic groups by political and community leaders generated considerable inter-group tension,”⁸⁶ Malik and Vajpeyi write. The one worst case of political violence was the June, 1984 encounter between the Sikh terrorists and the India army on the premises of the Golden Temple as mentioned above.

⁸⁴ Meena Agarwal, *Indira Gandhi*, 2005, 31.

⁸⁵ Yogender Kumar Malik and D. K. Vajpeyi, *India: The Years of Indira Gandhi*, Library of Congress Cataloging, India, 1988, 2.

⁸⁶ Y. K. Malik and D. K. Vajpeyi, *India: The Years of Indira Gandhi*, 1988, 2.

6.5 The Punjab-Centre Conflict

The Sikhs wanted to re-establish the borders of the Punjab on a linguistic basis. The Sikh community demanded a Punjabi-speaking state. But the Commission did not accept their demand. A conflict between the Sikhs and the Indian government began when the government did not want to hand over Chandigarh, the capital of Punjab to the Punjab state. The Indian Government also took the control of Beas, the river of Punjab, and the Bhakra Dam, where there were hydro-electric projects from Punjab. The Congress party was in power at the center and did not want to lose power in any state in India. During this period, the Akali Dal Government was in power in Punjab. But Congress supporters ousted the Akali Dal Government on 22 November 1967 in Punjab. And Indira Gandhi again achieved power in Punjab. "Mrs. Gandhi offered the Akalis the rule of Punjab if, in return, they offered their support her rule at the Center. She was visualizing a repeat of the Tamil Nadu (State of South India) formula in which a Tamil regionalist party had reached a similar agreement with her. The Akali leadership rejected Mrs. Gandhi's offer."⁸⁷ As Sikh militants were demanding a Sikh separate nation, Indira Gandhi rejected their demand. Bhindranwale became new the leader of orthodox Sikhs and he started his violent activities against the police, Nirankaris, Hindus, Press and government in Punjab. Indira Gandhi declared Punjab as a disturbed area. She allowed extra security forces to stop the violence in Punjab, but she did not succeed to control violence.

Sant Harchand Singh Longowal, president of the Akali Dal party began a no-co-operation movement on 23 May 1984 against the centre government. Through this, he wanted to win the hearts of his country people "Indira Gandhi finally decided in favor of army action in April 1984. Before the Akalis could start their non-co-operation movement on 3 June, Mrs. Gandhi in her broadcast to the nation on 2 June 1984 announced the army take-over of Punjab. This army operation was named Operation Blue Star."⁸⁸ Bhindranwale and his armed group, thousands of pilgrims, and army soldiers lost their lives in this Operation. The holy Akal Takhat was very severely damaged during this Operation. Moreover, Indira Gandhi herself lost her life after this Operation. I will return to this topic shortly.

⁸⁷ Singh Pritam, *Federalism, Nationalism and development: India and the Punjab Economy*, Routledge India, 2008, 36,

⁸⁸ Singh Pritam, *Federalism, Nationalism and development: India and the Punjab Economy*, 2008, 43.

6.6 The Assassination of Indira Gandhi

Indira Gandhi was assassinated by two of her Sikh bodyguards, Satwant Singh and Beant Singh at 9.20 am on 31 October 1984 at her Sufdrjung Road, New Delhi residence. At that time she was walking in the garden of the Prime Minister's residence. Beant Singh fired five rounds into her body from his pistol, and then Satwant Singh fired 30 rounds into her body from his gun. After the assassination of Indira Gandhi, Beant Singh and Satwant Singh threw the weapons down. And then after a few minutes, Tarsem Singh Jamwal and Ram Saran soldiers killed Beant Singh, and other bodyguards of Gandhi arrested Satwant Singh. Indira Gandhi was brought at 9.30 to the All India Medical Science New Delhi. Doctors operated on her but she was declared dead at 2.20 pm. Kaher Singh was arrested later for advice in the attack and both Satwant Singh and Kaher Singh were sentenced to death and hanged on 6 January 1989 in Delhi Tihar jail.

All the Sikhs believed that Indira Gandhi was responsible for the destruction of the Golden Temple. Thus, two Sikh bodyguards killed Indira Gandhi in response of her action of Operation Blue Star. "Indira Gandhi's assassination sparked off organized violence against innocent Sikhs all over the North India, and it became extraordinarily vicious in Delhi."⁸⁹ After the assassination of Indira Gandhi, several thousand innocent Sikhs were killed by Hindu mobs in Delhi.

⁸⁹ Ram Narayan Kumar with Amrik Singh, Ashok Agrwaal and Jaskaran Kaur, *Recued to Ashes the Insurgency and Human Rights in Punjab Final Report: Volume One*, South Asia Forum for Human Right, Kathmandu, Nepal, 2003, 41.

CHAPTER SEVEN: OPERATION BLUE STAR

7.1 Interview with Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale

The Indian army did not have any information of fire positions in the basement, underground passages, manholes, and such locations which were hidden from direct observation. Information was available that Bhindranwale and his followers were lodged on the first floor of the Akal Takht. The Akali leaders, Tohra and Longowal were in Guru Nanak Niwas in the hostel. Some journalists came to Golden Temple to interview Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale before the army entered the Temple. Some of them were Indian and almost all of them were reporting for foreign newspapers. "They were anxious to rush out their dispatches as quickly as possible. The focal point for them was Bhindranwale. They wanted to read his mind, gauge his mood, and his reactions to the appearance of the olive green uniforms just outside the Temple."⁹⁰

They asked Bhindranwale that, if the army enters in the Temple then will you be able to match their might, and it would be better to surrender so that bloodshed is avoided? Bhindranwale replied that I will not surrender and will like to fight with them. They asked Bhindranwale that what are your demands for Indian government and the government will accept your demands or not? Bhindranwale replied we are the Sikhs and our community is separate and we want to live in separate Sikh state. If the government will not give us this separate state then we will start the movement against the government and we will also be ready to fight with government to get it. Further, they asked do you not believe that you can solve the problem to discuss with the government on your matter instead of fighting with the army. He replied that I have asked many times the government to accept the Sikhs' demands but the government did not accept the demands of the Sikhs. The army imposed the curfew throughout the State from the 3rd June. Punjab was cut off from the rest of India. All transport services were suspended, and the army sealed the border with Pakistan.

⁹⁰ K.S. Brar, *Operation Blue Star the True Story*, 1993, 50.

7.2 Operation Blue Star at the Golden Temple

Sri Harmandir Sahib Complex and the surrounding area were fortified by the Indian Army on 3rd June 1984, and the Operation Blue Star lasted for three days. The Prime Minister Indira Gandhi ordered the Army to start Operation Blue Star to remove Jarnail Singh and his followers from the Golden Temple. The Operation was led by General Kuldeep Singh Brar and he was also a Sikh. The Indian army used troops with tanks, artillery, helicopters and armored vehicles in this operation at Harmandir Sahib. The Indian army killed innocent civilians, Jarnail Singh and his group. Everywhere there were death bodies and blood inside the Gurudwara Sahib. And the Indian army destroyed many parts of the Golden Temple specially the holy place Akal Takht.

Many Sikh soldiers in the Indian army regained before this Operation because they did not agree with this operation at Sri Harmandir Sahib. When the Indian army entered in the Golden Temple on 3 June 1984, there were thousands of pilgrims inside the Temple celebrating and praying. According to a rough estimate, the Indian army expected about 1500 militants with arms inside the Temple; about five hundred were the really motivated hard core. Every building inside the complex was fortified, with the exception of Harmandir Sahib which had the pool all around it. The soldiers were in a foul mood. According to the official white paper on Punjab, 83 army personnel had been killed and 249 wounded during the operation.

After the destruction of the Akal Takht, they drank and smoked openly inside the Temple complex and indiscriminately killed those they found inside. For them, every Sikh inside was a militant.

“According to the white paper, 493 militants were killed, 86 wounded and 1,592 apprehended during the operation. These numbers add up to 2,171, and fail to explain what happened to at least 5,000 pilgrims trapped inside when the operation began. The eye-witnesses claim that 7,000 to 8,000 people were killed. Mark Tully estimated that approximately 4,000 people might have died.”⁹¹

Indian Army started this Operation at the Golden Temple on martyrdom day of fifth Guru Arjun ji. Many pilgrims, women, elders, and children were trapped inside the Gurudwara Sahib during the Operation. And thousands of the innocent pilgrims were killed by the army during this operation.

⁹¹ Ram Narayan Kumar with Amrik Singh, Ashok Agrwaal and Jaskaran Kaur, *Reduced to Ashes the Insurgency and Human Rights in Punjab Final Report: Volume One*, South Asia Forum for Human Rights GPO. Box Kathmandu, Nepal, 2003, 38.

Jarnail Singh and his group were killed by the army in this Operation. Sri Harmandir Sahib Complex suffered much damage due to this Operation. The Akal Takht and the Sikh library were destroyed and many other parts of the Temple were also damaged. "The Operation Blue Star waves of shocks among the Sikh community. Many sections of the public and legislators wanted the Government of India to come out with the factual position."⁹²

7.3 Violent Activities by the Militants

The Militants were the highly trained and motivated, and they were distributed throughout the complex. The army gave more concentration in the Akal Takht building. The date of the launch of Operation Blue Star has been one of the most debated aspects of the operation. "The Government has been blamed for its decision to order the army into the Temple at the time of Guru Arjun Dev's martyrdom anniversary, resulting in a very large number of devotees being trapped inside and many of them losing their lives during the army action."⁹³ Violent activities were at their peak at that time in the Punjab; the Government was forced to the conclusion and ordered the army to enter into the Temple at the time of Guru Arjun Dev's martyrdom anniversary, because the Government believed that further delay would be fatal. "Once the hard decision of calling in the army had been taken, and troops had moved in on the night of 3rd June to strengthen the cordon around the Temple, the operation to flush out the militants had to be launched as soon as possible."⁹⁴

The army needed more time to complete the preparation for the operation and there was a fear that when the news spread in the Punjab that the Golden Temple was under siege, then thousands of Sikhs could be incited to make their way towards Amritsar. It was possible to increase violence by the Sikhs in Amritsar because Bhindranwale ordered his followers to ask all Sikhs in the Punjab to gather onto Amritsar. "Bhindranwale made his fervent appeal to his followers throughout Punjab, to

⁹² J.C. Aggarwal and S.P. Agrawal, *Modern History of Punjab*, Ashok Kumar Mittal Publishing Company, New Delhi, India. 1992, 108.

⁹³ K.S. Brar, *Operation Blue Star the True Story*, 1993, 64.

⁹⁴ K.S. Brar, *Operation Blue Star the True Story*, 1993, 65.

converge from all directions onto Amritsar, as soon as the army laid siege to or entered, the holy Temple.”⁹⁵

Some philosophical people suggested to the Indian Government that if the army could be tried to stop the food supply in the Temple for the militants and they can cut the connection of water and light then the army can force the militants to surrender, and then they can flush out the militants from the Golden Temple without any war and they could be safe the damage of the Golden Temple. But the Government was unable to accept these suggestions because there was no dearth of grain, pulses, rice and other items of food inside the Temple complex. The Government also believed that they would have been able to do so in siege lasting only a few days. Moreover, thousands of devotees provided their meals in the community kitchen every day. And the stocks of all things are available for many days, at any time. There are wells and hand pumps available all over the Temple. They had their own generator for light and huge quantities of gas cylinders for cooking. So it was not possible to lay only a siege and starve the inmates into surrender, because it would have taken many months to lay siege in the Temple.

There was a fear that thousands of religious Sikhs could come into the Temple and destroy the Operation. “In this case, how could we ignore the eventuality that a human wave of religiously incited followers would literally have come down like a mighty flood, and trapped the troops in the cordon from both ends?”⁹⁶ The army awarded that the militants did not allow the devotees to leave the Temple over the last couple of days. Thousands of pilgrims were trapped into the Temple. For many days, finally, the army helped the pilgrims to come out of the Temple. All the devotees were sick and they were unable to leave their children inside the Temple. Some of them refused to get help from the army to come out of the Temple and the replied in the negative; they were disappointed by the army because the army killed thousands of innocent pilgrims and destroyed the Golden Temple.

7.4 The Sikh Masses on the Outskirts of Amritsar

The Akal Takht was heavily fortified with a very heavy concentration of automatic weapons. All windows and other openings were closed with brick masonry and sand bags with small loop holes

⁹⁵ K.S. Brar, *Operation Blue Star the True Story*, 1993, 66

⁹⁶ K.S. Brar, *Operation Blue Star the True Story*, 1993, 64.

through which machine guns were being fired. After the end of the Operation, the number of weapons discovered from the Akal Takht. Around 100 armed militants were ensconced in the Akal Takht. The Para Commandos were making attempts to get on to the first floor terrace of the building north of the *Nishan Sahib* from where they opened automatic fire on the Akal Takht. The army wanted to end this Operation in very short time. They realized that they could not allow this Operation to continue.

“At the same time, there were reports coming in of violent reaction from the Sikh masses on the outskirts of Amritsar, as the news of our having entered the Golden Temple spread. Some groups were believed to be heading for the city from the outlying areas, and unless tangible results were achieved by day break, or soon after, there could be an additional and very serious problem on our hands.”⁹⁷

The local population rushed out onto the streets, thronged the markets closet to them, they were looking for vegetables, milk, medicines and other essentials because there was curfew was relaxed after the end of the Operation. Many of them came too in the direction of the Golden Temple to see for themselves if the Temple was still there or not. They wanted to know what was now happening inside the holy shrine.

The army was loading trucks full of dead bodies and ambulances flitting about, transporting the wounded. “Brutalities committed by the Indian army on the Sikhs during Operation Blue Star, were shocking and terrific.”⁹⁸ The army announced on the public address system in the temple, on 6th June that it was an appeal to all militants and devotees who still were remaining in the rooms and basements to come out and surrender them. “These announcements continued up to well past 6 p.m. during this period, in response to our appeals, as many as 200 surrendered including 22 from the Harmandir Sahib. An emissary was thereafter sent inside Harmandir Sahib to request the head Priest, Giani Sahib Singh to come out too.”⁹⁹

⁹⁷ K. S. Brar, *Operation Blue Star the True Story*, 1993, 96.

⁹⁸ A. R. Darshi, *the Gallant Defender*, A. R. Darshi PSC Ludhiana, Punjab, India, 2005, 19.

⁹⁹ K. S. Brar, *Operation Blue Star the True Story*, 1993, 112.

7.5 Bhindranwale's Death

Bhindranwale was also killed by the army but there was still not any proof about Bhindranwale's death. The army officers estimated that he was hiding in the basement of the Akal Takht, or he was dead. They were also assuming that he had escaped during the night and gone across the border into Pakistan. The army cleared the Akal Takht on the 6th night and flushed out any militants who still remained inside. They closed all entrances of the Akal Takht and began to search militants. They succeeded to find militants inside and they killed them. The army located the body of Shabeg Singh in the basement. "The bodies were meanwhile brought to the open *verandah* on the ground floor of the northern wing where those of Bhindranwale and Shabeg were identified by a number of agencies including the police, and militants in our custody"¹⁰⁰ The news of Bhindranwale's death spread like wild fire, the aftermath of which was revealing. Michael S. Roth and Charles G. Salas said that "Bhindranwale did not die during Operation Blue Star; he is like a sleeping bull who will rise to lead the Sikhs against the Indian state."¹⁰¹ There was also a quiet gloom and sadness noticeable amongst the devotees who had remained behind in the Temple.

7.6 The reaction of the Hindu People

The reaction of the Hindu people who were living in Punjab was very different than the reaction of most Sikh people in the same region. They felt relief after the death of Bhindranwale's death. They were feeling uncomfortable in the Punjab before this Operation, because the Sikh militants had been forcing them to leave the Punjab. Bhindranwale and Shabeg Singh were the leaders of this militant group, after them there was no one left in their command post at the Akal Takht to take over. The Sikhs were in anger in India and abroad, they felt that their self-respect had been further damaged. "Many of them, who had earlier criticized Bhindranwale for converting the Temple into an arsenal and for desecrating the holy shrine now put blinkers on their eyes, and began to sing his praises for them, the desecrators of the Temple were the Indian soldiers."¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ K.S. Brar, *Operation Blue Star the True Story*, 1993, 114.

¹⁰¹ Michael S. Roth and Charles G. Salas, *Disturbing Remains: Memory, History and Crisis in the Twentieth Century*, 1997, 45.

¹⁰² K.S. Brar, *Operation Blue Star the True Story*, 1993, 119.

7.7 Reopened All the Gates of the Temple

The Golden Temple gates were closed during the Operation. After the end of the Operation, the army reopened all the gates of the Temple and the Temple was fully cleared of the militants. The devotees started to come at the Golden Temple and they were shocked and disappointed to see the destruction of the Temple. "The Sikh militant's literature portrayed the army Operations as a flagrant violation of the rights of Sikhs to their sacred sites, arguing that Operation Blue Star was deliberate insult to the Sikh religion and the Sikh community and therefore must not go unvented."¹⁰³ The Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, herself visited the Golden Temple on 23 June and on this day over 10,000 devotees were also estimated to have visited the Temple. Mrs. Gandhi expressed her grief over the unfortunate consequences of violence and terror perpetrated from within the Temple over the past few months.

After Operation Blue Star the Sikh people in Punjab did not believe that Bhindranwale could be dead, stories were in wide circulation in almost every village in the Punjab region that he had escaped to Pakistan across the border, on the night of 5 June. His followers even considered him being a super human. On the other hand some educated Sikhs believed that Bhindranwale had died, because there was not any evidence of him being alive. His body had been identified by his own brother and his followers in custody, many of them accepted his death. K.S. Brar said that,

"I was amazed when my reactions were sought by some very highly placed individuals on the announcements supposed to have been made on Pakistan TV that Bhindranwale was alive in Pakistan; that he was wounded and under the best medical care; and that he would appear on Pakistan TV on the 30 June, before transmission closed down that night."¹⁰⁴

7.8 The Repair and Restoration of the Akal Takht

Kar Seva (voluntary labour) decided to repair and restore the Akal Takht towards the end of June. The Government also wanted to contribute to this restoration of the Akal Takht. But the Sikhs did

¹⁰³ Michael S. Roth and Charles G. Salas, *Disturbing Remains: Memory, History and Crisis in the Twentieth Century*, the Getty Research Institute Publications, Hamburg, Germany, 1997, 45.

¹⁰⁴ K.S. Brar, *Operation Blue Star the True Story*, 1993, 134.

not accept the government proposal and they started to repair the Akal Takht by themselves with the help of *Kar Seva*. "However, many Sikhs were unwilling to accept the repair from the central government, which had visited such havoc upon the sacred complex."¹⁰⁵ The highly respected Baba Kharak Singh started the *Kar Seva* to repair the Temple.

"The Akali Dal wanted to extract maximum mileage from the damage caused the Akal Takht as a result of the Government having ordered army Operations inside the Golden Temple complex. They wanted the Akal Takht to remain in its damaged condition, and to become a monument to army aggression."¹⁰⁶

The Akali wanted to use it to stir up the emotions and religious sentiments of the Sikhs. They advised Baba Kharak Singh that the Sikhs did not want to repair the Temple with the help of the government because it would be inopportune and not in the interest of the Sikhs. The army was still engaged in carrying out a detailed search of the Temple premises; they found weapons, ammunitions in various corners of the Temple. The army believed that it was possible the militants could be once again starting their terrorist acts inside the Temple as before.

7.9 Legitimacy of Military Action in a Place of Worship

The Government ordered the army to enter the Golden Temple because there remained no other alternative. The army entered a place of worship and they converted this place into a place of violence, because Bhindranwale and his followers already converted the Golden Temple into an arsenal. According to K.S. Brar "had not the place of worship been transformed into a sanctuary for criminals and subversives? Hadn't the holy precincts been misused and desecrated by converting it into a military fortress?"¹⁰⁷

There are two aspects I need to discuss: was the army a savior or a destroyer? And secondly, was the army action desecration or a cleansing action? The army was a savior because the militants into the Golden Temple kept a high number of weapons and they were increasing violence day by day in

¹⁰⁵ C. Christine Fair and Sumit Ganguly, *Treading on Hallowed Ground: Counterinsurgency Operations in Sacred Spaces*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2008, 54.

¹⁰⁶ K.S. Brar, *Operation Blue Star the True Story*, 1993, 135.

¹⁰⁷ K.S. Brar, *Operation Blue Star the True Story*, 1993, 141.

the Punjab. And the army was also a destroyer because they killed numbers of innocent pilgrims including old people, women and children and they destroyed the holy shrine during the Operation. But the army was forced to do so because there remained no other alternative. The army action was a cleansing action, because the army removed the Sikh militants from the Golden Temple and once again they converted an arsenal into a place of worship.

7.10 The Application of minimum force

The army used tanks and artillery against the militants. Some people believed that this army operation was not against an adversary nation but their own people. And it was operated into a holy shrine so the army could use minimum force. On the other hand some army officers and media men believed that the militant group was highly motivated and they were able to flush out the forces from the Temple, in this case the situation was more serious. The army was forced to use tanks and artillery and maximum force. K.S. Brar says that “We were required to act against a well armed, highly motivated group of militants, well entrenched in a superlatively well fortified bastion. These militants, over the past few months, had made very elaborate preparations to ward off any attempt by Government forces to flush them out of the holy shrine.”¹⁰⁸ The militants were highly trained and they killed 83 army soldiers including junior and senior officers and 248 soldiers were wounded by militants in this battle.

7.11 Destruction of the Sikh Library

The army troops destroyed the Sikh Library. The Library was located on the first story of the southern wing of the Temple complex. There were numbers of valuable books and manuscripts including hand written copies of *hukamnamas* bearing the signatures of several Gurus; these were burnt down by this Operation. The Sikh Library on the first floor was on fire. K.S. Brar says that,

“It seems to me highly illogical how the blame for the accidental fire which occurred as a result of the actions of the militants could be placed on the troops who, in fact, did their best to extinguish it.

¹⁰⁸ K.S. Brar, *Operation Blue Star the True Story*, 1993, 145.

Having sacrificed such a large number of lives to preserve the sanctum sanctorum, what reason would they have to destroy the Library wantonly?¹⁰⁹

7.12 Operation Black Thunder

After the Operation Blue Star the problems became much greater, thousands of angry young Sikh people crossed into Pakistan and began training at terrorist camps. They wanted revenge with the Indian Government, because the army destroyed the Golden Temple. Ordinary, non-militant Sikhs also felt that their religious identity was under attack. "Operation Black Thunder in the context of continued terrorist activity, it may be tempting to dismiss it as a failure of sorts; however, Operation Black Thunder contributed to the demise of the militancy."¹¹⁰ Terrorism was rising day by day in the Punjab. The Indian Government ordered police and army to start Operation Black Thunder to stop this terrorism. "Operation Black Thunder took place from May 12 to 18, in 1988 in the Punjab. The plan which utilized anti-terrorism National Security Guards or Commandos Known as the Black cats used precision explosions and sniper fire to secure a victory over the terrorists occupying the complex."¹¹¹ Many Sikh terrorists surrendered during the Operation Black Thunder.

After the death of Bhindranwale, many young Sikhs wanted to revenge for Bhindranwale's murder. They were angry because the Golden Temple was destroyed by the army and many traditional and religious symbols of the Sikhism were destroyed in the Sikh Library during the Operation. "When Bhindranwale was murdered in the raid and Longowal was taken away safely under arrest. No wonder also that many regarded Longowal's assassination a year later as revenge for Bhindranwale's."¹¹² The Sikh community was feeling insulted for their religious respect, and the Sikhs were angry to see the destruction of the Golden Temple by the Indian army. The two Sikhs killed the Prime Minister Indira Gandhi as revenge for the destruction of the Golden Temple.

¹⁰⁹K.S. Brar, *Operation Blue Star the True Story*, 1993, 147

¹¹⁰ C. Christine Fair and Sumit Ganguly, *Treading on Hallowed Ground: Counterinsurgency Operations in Sacred Spaces*, 2008, 55.

¹¹¹ Edna Fernandes, *Holly warriors*, Penguin Group, New Delhi, India, 2006, 246.

¹¹² Mark Juergensmeyer, *the Logic of Religious Violence*, Vikas Publishing House, 1988, 79.

CHAPTER EIGHT: THE MASSACRE IN DELHI 1984

8.1 Introduction

The 1984 massacre was a terrible event in Delhi. The members of the Congress National political party attacked on the Sikhs and they burnt and destroyed their houses and business. "The Anti-Sikh riots, which followed the assassination of the prime Minister Indira Gandhi by her Sikh bodyguards, lasted approximately for four days and resulted in more than 3000 deaths."¹¹³ It was real violence of four days from 1 to 4 November 1984 in Delhi, the capital of India. More than 3000 Sikhs were killed by armed mobs of the Congress party in this violence. 20000 Sikhs left their home to save their life. The victims of these riots believed that the Congress leaders and their supporters were involved in this pogrom.

All the Sikh community was angry by this operation by the Indian government, because the Golden Temple was already destroyed by the Operation Blue Star. So the two Sikh bodyguards of Indira Gandhi killed her to respond to her action of this operation in 31 October 1984. Then the members of the Indian national Congress party were very anger by the assassination of the Indian Prime Minister by the Sikhs. So members of the Congress attacked on the Sikhs in result to their action of murder of Indira Gandhi.

8.2 Congress Leaders were the main Rioters of this Violence

The Congress leaders decided that the Sikhs had to be taught a lesson. The mobs used white powder to burn the Sikhs and their houses. They got this white powder from chemical factories and distributed it all over Delhi. This white powder was highly inflammable. The mobs identified the Sikh houses and marked them on the voters 'lists. "When the Congress leaders had organized everything, the crowd was incited by provocative speeches to kill Sikhs. The mobs were assured that nothing would happen to them because the police, the administration and the government were

¹¹³Praveen Kumar, *Communal Crime and National Integration: A Socio-legal Study*, Read Worthy Publication, Mansa Ram Park, New Delhi, 2011, 88.

with them. In fact the arrival of police spelt relief for the mobs, not the victims.”¹¹⁴ Some Sikhs managed to reach a police station to report against the mobs, but police did not accept their report. Some Sikhs tried to use licensed arms to protect themselves, but the police charged them with murder and cases were filed against them. The police and administration allowed the mobs to kill the Sikhs for three days in Delhi. Most people in that crowd of mobs were from the poorer areas. The Congress had previously used them as a vote bank during the elections. The Congress leaders gave them money and liquor and they provided necked swords, iron rods to kill and loot the Sikhs.

Some Congress leaders like the Congress Members of Parliament, Sajjan Kumar, Congress trade union leader Lalit Maken, Dharam Dass Shastri, Jagdish Tytler, H.K.L Bhagat, Balwant Khokhar, Tek Chand and Rajinder Sharma were the main rioters of this pogrom. They provided alcohol, money, iron bars, knives, and kerosene to their supporters and other rioters to kill Sikhs and burn their properties. These Congress leaders and their supporters were Hindu and they killed nearly 3000 Sikhs in Delhi the capital of India. These riots went on for four days continue. The police was also involved in these riots and police forbad writing report of victims against the rioters after the pogrom. Sikh women, children and old people are the victims and the main witness of these riots.

8.3 The Victims are waiting for Justice

The victims of this massacre presented thousands of affidavits to investigation of this pogrom. Many commissions and committees did inquire about these riots by these affidavits. Some of these commissions of inquiry were unsuccessful to investigate about the Congress leaders because of pressure from the Congress. And other commissions blamed on the poor and lower class society of these riots. Because the Sikhs were much richer than those lower class people so they took advantage of the situation and loot, rob the properties of the Sikh. “In October 2004, several national as well as international human rights organizations called for the perpetrators of the 1984 anti-Sikh violence to be brought to justice to heal the wounds of this period.”¹¹⁵ Gurdial Singh the head of a committee demanded the insurance claim of this pogrom for the victims, but Indian government refused this claim.

¹¹⁴ Jarnail Singh, *I Accuse The Anti-Sikh violence of 1984*, Penguin Group, New Delhi, India, 2009, 26.

¹¹⁵ Praveen Kumar, *Communal Crime and National Integration: A Socio-legal Study*, 2011, 88.

After that some commissions and committees recommended cases to be registered against some Congress leaders such as H.K.L Bhagat, Sajjan Kumar, and Jagdish Tytler. “In April 2009, the Congress party dropped two individuals, Jagdish Tytler and Sajjan Kumar, from its roster of general election candidates over their suspected role in the 1984 riots.”¹¹⁶ But the government did not open these cases. Then Jarnail Singh a Sikh journalist threw one of his shoes at Union Home Minister P. Chitambaram during a congress press conference. And despite this event Congress did not reopen the cases about Congress leaders who were involved into the 1984 riots.

8.4 Relationship between the Sikhs and Congress

The Sikhs were unhappy with the congress after the 1984 Anti-Sikh riots. The Congress tried many times to make good relationship with the Sikh community. Rajiv Gandhi the son of Indira Gandhi became Prime Minister of India after the death of his mother. He said about the 1984 riots that the Congress was not involved in these riots. People were angry because of the murder on Indira Gandhi and they believed that she was like a mother for them as well as successful Prime Minister of India. So the mobs attacked the innocent Sikhs. But the victims of these riots believed that the Congress leaders and their supporters were involved in this pogrom.

The 1984 Anti-Sikh riots were real pogrom of the Sikhs in Punjab and Delhi. The Congress leaders were responsible for these riots, because they attacked on the innocent Sikhs and their properties like butchers. There is no any evidence that all the victims of the 1984 riots were responsible for the murder of Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. Moreover, they were not demanding the independent state for Sikh community in Punjab as Khalistan. So there is a question for the Indian government, why did the Congress leaders attack the innocent Sikhs in 1November 1984? “This violence was essentially one sided. Namely, the non-Sikh attacked the Sikhs and damaged, looted and burnt their properties, and Gurdwaras, and killed a few thousand of them.”¹¹⁷ Tombiah maintains.

¹¹⁶ Leonard A. Leo, *International Religious Freedom* (2010): Annual Report to Congress, Diane Publishing Co. Washington, U.S.A., 2010, 247.

¹¹⁷ Stanley Jeyaraja Tombiah, *Leveling Crowds: Ethno Nationalist Conflicts and Collective violence in South Asia*, 1996 106.

However, Indian Prime Minister and Congress leader Manmohan Singh is also a Sikh. He called these riots a national shame. Sonia Gandhi daughter-in-law of Indira Gandhi and wife of Rajiv Gandhi is Congress president in the Parliament. She went to the Golden Temple to improve the relation between the Sikhs and Congress. Moreover, her son Rahul Gandhi said that the 1984 pogrom was an unfortunate event. Sonia Gandhi said sorry to the Sikhs regarding the 1984 riots. She also called these riots a national shame. Indian government gave 2500 US dollars for one victim as compensation. But all the victims in Punjab and Delhi did not get this compensation. Because they believe that this compensation is not enough to cover the losses from the 1984 riots and they are dissatisfied by the Indian government.

On the other hand, Punjab's Akali Dal Party is requesting to all the Sikhs who are members the Congress party to leave the Congress. It means the Sikhs are still unhappy with the Congress after the 1984 riots. We can say that the Congress has not yet succeeded to make good relations with the Sikh community. And the Indian government did not provide facilities and good services to victims and their families. Moreover, the Indian law is unable to punish the main rioters of the 1984 Sikh massacre.

The government television channel, *Doordarshan* continuously broadcast scenes of Indira Gandhi's body kept in state at Teen Murti Bhawan in Delhi. Avtar Singh Beer mentioned in his affidavit given to the Nanvati Commission, the channel was only broadcasting again and again that Indira Gandhi has been killed by her Sikh bodyguards, but the channel did not broadcast any news about the killing of Sikhs. The reporters also did not mention any news in their newspapers about the massacre against the Sikhs in Delhi and in other parts of the country.

8.5 The Mobs Attacked Gurdwaras

The mobs also attacked many gurdwaras in Delhi; they carried naked swords, iron rods and other weapons. When they came to attack the Gurdwara Sheesh Ganj, then the Sikhs decided that they would rather become martyrs than allow this sacred spot to be attacked. The Sikhs were ready to face the mobs inside the Gurdwara. The police noticed here that the Sikhs were more in numbers than the police and they had weapons so that the police started pushing the mob back towards the

Town Hall. This time the Sikhs did not allow the mobs to attack on their historical Gurdwara Shesh Ganj.

“The mob that attacked this gurdwara had been paying their respects to the body of Indira Gandhi in Teen Murti Bhavan. A rumour started spreading that Hindus were being held captive in Gurdwara Rakab Ganj.”¹¹⁸ The mob tried to enter into the gurdwara, and then workers and devotees somehow pushed them out. In a report we read,

“The Delhi administration reported to the Misra Commission that a total of 180 gurdwaras spread over different parts of the city had been subject to arson, looting and burning and that about eleven, educational institutions, all founded and run by Sikh groups had been damaged in a similar manner.”¹¹⁹

When an elderly Sikh came out and requested them not to destroy this holly place then the mobs caught him and beat him and then set him on fire. His son was unable to help his father and when he came out to save his father then the mobs set fire to him too.

8.6 The Police

The police was also involved in these riots and they forbade writing reports of victims against the rioters after the pogrom. Sikh women, children and old people are the main witnesses of these riots. Their families' members were killed by the mobs front of them. The mobs also burn their bodies, home and business. The mobs awarded that they could find the Sikhs into the gurdwaras and they started to attack on the gurdwaras. Then the Sikhs were getting worried inside the gurdwaras. The police reached the gurdwara and they ordered the Sikhs to go inside the gurdwara, they said, we would save your live. The Sikhs greeted their arrival with relief, but the Sikhs were shocked to find that the police began to fire in the direction where they had asked the Sikhs to collect. Many of the Sikhs were killed by the police. The police did not write FIR (complaints) against the mobs. “The language used in the FIR was, ‘Rioters killed (number of) Sikhs’. The FIR did not record either the

¹¹⁸Jamail Singh, *I Accuse the Anti-Sikh violence of 1984*, 2009, 39.

¹¹⁹Stanley Jeyaraja Tombiah, *Leveling Crowds: Ethno Nationalist Conflicts and Collective violence in South Asia*, University of California Press, 1996, 117.

investigation or the name of the accused. Because of the way the FIRs were written, it was not possible for them to be presented in court.”¹²⁰ The Delhi police did not help the Sikhs and did nothing to maintain law and order. When the police received information that the Sikhs had used the weapons for self-defense and they started the fire at a mob then as soon as the police arrived there and they started to fire at the Sikhs and killed many of the Sikhs.

8.7 The Army

The army officers received information that the mobs were going to burn houses, business belonging to Sikhs, and they have killed thousands of the Sikhs in the capital, then the army officers asked the administration to stop the violence, but the district magistrate BrijendraYadav refused to use force against the mobs. Captain Bereth of the Maratha Light Infantry of the Indian army just could not believe his ears when BrijendraYadav refused to use his force to stop the violence. “Bereth, in his statement to the Ranganath Mishra Commission, recalled that Yadav said, ‘take your army anywhere you want’ we will sort this out ourselves”¹²¹The Ranganath Mishra Commission conducted an investigation against the main accused of the violence, Yadav. But Ranganath Mishra Commission did not punish him for his role in the attacks. “The anti-Sikh violence (1984) was mainly a Delhi event. To the extent it spread, diffusion occurred within the same region, mainly in some Uttar Pradesh cities such as Kanpur, although there is large Sikh population elsewhere, most notably Calcutta.”¹²² The army asked the police and the administration to help and control the massacre many places in the country where the mobs were killing the Sikhs. But the army was not allowed to act against the mobs. The army was unable to take action without the orders of the magistrate, because the magistrate was senior officer of district level in the administration.

8.8 The Speech of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh

The Nanavati commission report on the anti-Sikh violence of 1984 had been presented in the parliament. The Prime Minister Manmohan Singh explained the action to be taken on the basis of the reports’s recommendation. “The Nanavati Commission report brought to light strong evidence

¹²⁰ Jarnail Singh, *I Accuse the Anti-Sikh violence of 1984*, 2009, 62.

¹²¹ Jarnail Singh, *I Accuse the Anti-Sikh violence of 1984*, 2009, 71.

¹²² Donald L. Horowitz, *the Deadly Ethic Riot*, University of California Press, California, 2001, 400.

against Sajjan Kumar and Tytler in the violence of 1984. Furthermore, the commission had strongly recommended restarting investigation into the charges against them.”¹²³ Sajjan Kumar and Jagdish Tytler were the Congress leaders and the main rioters of the 1984 Sikh massacre in Delhi. The Prime Minister Manmohan Singh is also a Sikh and he started to speak about the Sikh community’s service to the country had always been good and the Sikhs had been at the forefront of the fight against injustice from the struggle for independence to partition.

The Prime Minister also asked the Nanavati Commission giving a clean chit to the high command. He said the 1984 Sikh massacre is a big blot on the forehead of the country and he also accepted that our heads hang in shame for this. “He apologized to the Sikhs on behalf of the government and the country. The Prime Minister concluded, ‘We cannot rewrite history but we can make the future better’.”¹²⁴ All the members of the parliament and newspaper reporters agreed that the speech of Manmohan Singh was unique and it was a balm to the wounded hearts of the Sikhs. He also asked the CBI to undertake investigations against the accused with full sincerity. The Sikhs were feeling relief when the Prime Minister Manmohan Singh expressed his sadness in the country’s Parliament, and he also expressed regret for the massacre of Sikhs.

8.9 A Shoe against Injustice

The victims of the 1984 massacre were not asking for charity, their demand was for the justice. Sajjan Kumar and Jagdish Tytler were the main rioters and the Sikhs presented numbers of witnesses and evidence against them in the court and the Parliament, but they were not punished by the Indian law. The Sikhs were once again disappointed when the Congress had given Sajjan Kumar and Jagdish Tytler Lok Sabha tickets. “Sajjan Kumar and Jagdish Tytler have been the accused in every Commission and Committee that has investigated the violence. The worst blow fell when, just before the elections, the CBI recommended that all cases against Jagdish Tytler be closed.”¹²⁵ The CBI closed the case of Sajjan Kumar and Jagdish Tytler without any reasons. The CBI’s reasons were that it did not have faith in the witness. Chidambaram was the home minister and he called a press conference at the Congress headquarters. Many journalists attended the press conference and Jarnail Singh also attended it as a journalist. He wanted to ask Chidambaram some

¹²³ Jarnail Singh, *I Accuse the Anti-Sikh violence of 1984*, 2009, 144.

¹²⁴ Jarnail Singh, *I Accuse the Anti-Sikh violence of 1984*, 2009, 146.

¹²⁵ Jarnail Singh, *I Accuse the Anti-Sikh violence of 1984*, 2009, 151.

questions about the 1984 Sikh massacre. He asked how he could, as the home minister, be happy at the clean chit given to Tytler. Then Chidambaram did not reply and said this was not a matter for this press conference. Jarnail Singh asked this question because two days before this press conference, Chidambaram said that he was very happy that his friend Jagdish Tytler had been acquitted by the CBI. Chidambaram also blamed that Jarnail Singh was using the press conference for his own agendas.

Then Jarnail Singh took a step which shocked everyone, he threw his shoe towards Chidambaram at that press conference. "I did not have the intention of hurting Chidambaram. Despite my extreme emotion the shoe went towards a place where nobody was sitting even though a camera angle showed it in such a way as if it went near his face."¹²⁶ After this event Jarnail Singh accepted this action was a violation of the codes of journalism. Police arrested Jarnail Singh and he was taken to the Tughlak Road police station. Police started to ask questions as he reached there. He accepted this was a violation of ethics as a journalist, but he also asked what about the people who had not accepted their mistakes for the past twenty-five years? There was no case registered against him. He had expressed the sentiments of the Sikhs by throwing his shoe.

The victims of the 1984 massacre are still waiting for justice and they are disappointed by the decision of the Indian Government. Many young Sikhs still have the feelings of revenge for the killing of thousands of Sikhs in 1984. It is possible that frustration will lead to action, and the Indian Government could be repeating the same mistake in the future to stop the violent acts by the Sikhs. "Still, it is fair to say that quite a bit of bloodshed originated on the Sikhs side of the ledger, and within the Sikh community anti-government violence achieved a religious respectability that begs to be explained."¹²⁷ The Sikh community and the Indian Government cannot change the history but they can make the relations better in the future by stopping the conflict between the Sikh community and the India Government.

¹²⁶ Jarnail Singh, *I Accuse the Anti-Sikh Violence of 1984*, 2009, 154.

¹²⁷ Mark Juergensmeyer, *the Logic of Religious Violence*, Vikas Publishing House, 1988, 66.

CHAPTER NINE: THE AMRITSAR MASSACRE IN 1919

9.1 Introduction

The Amritsar massacre is also known as the Jallianwala Bagh massacre. Thousands of people including women and children were gathered in the Jallianwala Bagh (garden) to join a meeting on 13 April. This meeting was held to struggle for the freedom fighting. The people wanted to freedom from the British raj. This place is situated near the Harmandir Sahib (Golden Temple) in Amritsar Punjab. This event occurred on the day of Baisakhi. Baisakhi is a biggest festival of the Sikh people. People were celebrating this festival and thousands of people gathered in the Jallianwala Bagh. The people wanted to negotiate about some political issues. General Reginald E.H. Dyer was senior officer of British army and he did not want any meeting or movement by the Indian people in the Punjab in his raj. When Dyer heard about the meeting in Jallianwala Bagh then he went there with a group of armed soldiers. He wanted to stop this meeting and he immediately ordered his soldiers to fire on innocent people in the Bagh without any warning.

“Dyer positioned his men at the sole, narrow passage way of the Bagh, which was otherwise entirely enclosed by the backs of abutted brick buildings. Giving no word warning, he ordered 50 soldiers to fire into the gathering, and for 10 to 15 minutes 1,650 rounds of ammunition were unloaded into the screaming, terrified crowd, some of whom were trampled by those desperately trying to escape.”¹²⁸

The casualty number quoted by the National Congress was more than 1,500 killed in this massacre. People were unable to save their lives because the Jallianwala Bagh was surrounding on all sides by houses and buildings.

9.2 Dyer Made a Sinister Plan

Dyer's men informed him that the meeting at the Jallianwala Bagh was taking place. He got this information 12.40 p.m. The number of people was gathering at the Bagh, Dyer decided that an action needed to be taken if the people would be gathering at the Bagh. He planned for the

¹²⁸Kenneth Pletcher, *Understanding India, the History of India*, Britannica Educational Publishing, New York, 2011, 285.

massacre, and he took personal command of his plan to the Jallianwala Bagh. He did not inform the other senior officers about the plan, because he did not want any disturbance of the officers in his sinister plan. Dyer did not expect that the crowd would gather and defy his authority, and he believed that there was not need to make any plan. Dyer was a man prone to arrogance and he misused his authority on innocent people. Nick Lloyd says that, "The criticism that Dyer took no steps to prevent people from gathering in the Jallianwala Bagh is unfair and unrealistic. There was very little he could have done in the situation."¹²⁹ But Dyer explained the Hunter Inquiry that he was unable to stop a meeting at the Jallinwala Bagh, because he did not have enough men. And the people were not ready to leave that place because they wanted to start a movement for freedom of India from the British raj.

9.3 Dyer and the Jallianwala Bagh

Dyer started to fire within seconds of entering and he did not give a warning before the firing. It is a proof that he must have planned it in advance. There was a vast crowd including numbers of women and children in the Bagh. Dyer had enough men to fire on the crowd. "He had with him 25 Baluchis and 25 Gurkhas armed with rifles and 40 Gurkhas armed only with *Kukris*. Not including his immediate staff, Dyer's party comprised just 90 soldiers, surprisingly small given the oft-repeated assumption that his actions were premeditated."¹³⁰ Dyer's action was illegal, because he fired on innocent people including women and children without warning.

He knew that the crowd was not violent, and the people did not threaten him at the Bagh. Moreover, he opened fire for longer that was not necessary to disperse the crowd. The crowd did not expect that Dyer would break the law and open the fire upon them without any warning. The crowd did not have any intent of violence in the Bagh. But Dyer wanted to teach the crowd a lesson; he decided quickly to misuse the power. Dyer punished the crowd without any reason; his action was one of the main reasons of the violence that subsequently occurred in the Punjab.

¹²⁹ Nick Lloyd, *Amritsar Massacre The Untold Story of one Fateful Day*, I.B. Tauris& Co Ltd, London, 2012, 175.

¹³⁰ Nick Lloyd, *Amritsar Massacre the Untold Story of one Fateful Day*, 2012, 176.

9.4 The Assassination of Michael O'Dwyer in London in 1940

There were some narrow entrances but these entrances were locked. So many people died in stampedes and by jumping into the solitary well to save their lives during the shooting. It is said that 120 bodies were pulled out of the well after the massacre. General Dyer was removed from duty and forced to retire. Udham Singh was an Indian independence activist from Sonam. He witnessed the event of massacre in Jallianwala Bagh and he was himself wounded in there.

He decided to kill O'Dwyer in response of his action in the Jallianwala Bagh. O' Dwyer ordered Dyer for shooting on the people in the Bagh? Udham Singh shot and killed Michael O'Dwyer on March 13, 1940, 20 years later at Caxton Hall in London. O'Dwyer was the British Lieutenant-Governor of Punjab at the time of the massacre. He was the main planner of this massacre and he approved Dyer's action. And Dyer himself had died in 1927.

9.5 Comparing the Jallianwala Bagh with Operation Blue Star

The Indian Government used vast force in the Golden Temple in 1984, because the situation was very serious in the Temple. The army killed thousands of the Sikhs in the Temple. Indira Gandhi wanted to maintain order and stop the violence in the Punjab. She took a step and her action in 1984 was against the Sikh militants. She wanted to maintain control of such violence and she took clear action against any threat. Indira Gandhi made the same mistake like Dyer in 1919. The Indian Army officers who attacked the Golden Temple in 1984, they took the place of Dyer 65 years before. "Comparing the Jallianwala Bagh with Operation Blue Star (and subsequent events in the Punjab) provides a useful corrective to much of the conventional historical wisdom on 1919."¹³¹ Operation Blue Star was an event like the Jallianwala Bagh that left a legacy of bitterness and anger that ended by the assassination of Sir Michael O'Dwyer in 1940 and Indira Gandhi in 1984. The violence against the Sikhs did not end after the events of 1984 in the Golden Temple, the Congress leaders, the police and administration killed thousands of the Sikhs in Delhi and other part of the India in 1984 after the assassination of the Indira Gandhi.

¹³¹ Nick Lloyd, *Amritsar Massacre the Untold Story of one Fateful Day*, 2012, 207.

All Indian people cannot forget the sad movements of the 1919 Jallianwala Bagh massacre in Amritsar. Sikh people believe that the 1984 Golden Temple massacre is a bigger massacre than the JallianwalaBagh massacre, because the Indian army killed hundreds of Sikh people into the Golden Temple on the martyrdom day of fifth Guru Arjun ji. After the assassination of Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, leaders and workers of Congress party killed thousands of innocent Sikh people in Delhi in 1984.

As I am a Sikh and when I read and hear about the 1984 massacre into the Golden Temple and Delhi then I feel that it was a terrible event happened in Amritsar and Delhi against the Sikh people. When I discussed this event with my family then my grandfather said, “The event of the 1984 massacre into the Golden Temple is unforgettable, because the Indian army did not only kill innocent Sikh people into the Temple; they also destroyed the Golden Temple. It is the main holy place for all the Sikhs.”

Moreover, all the Sikh community was unhappy with the Indian government because they believed that, the event of the 1984 massacre in the Golden Temple is more terrible than the event of the 1919 Jallianwala Bagh massacre. The reason for this is that General Dyer was not an Indian citizen and he did this biggest mistake in British Raj, and that time people gathered into the Jallianwala Bagh for meeting about the fighting of Indian freedom. But in 1984 the Sikh people gathered in the Golden Temple to celebrate the martyrdom day of fifth Guru Arjun ji. And this time the Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was an Indian citizen and she did this biggest mistake of her life. The Sikh people also believe that, the 1919 Jallianwala Bagh massacre was a political issue but the 1984 massacre in the Golden Temple was not only political issue, it was also a religious issue. The Sikhs were victims of this massacre by their own people and in their own country.

CHAPTER TEN: CONCLUSION

I have presented the answers of two main questions of my thesis. These questions are the following: Why was the Golden Temple Amritsar destructed and why did the Indian Army attack on the Golden Temple Amritsar? I discussed whether the militant Sikhs were demanding a separate Sikh state with Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale as a leader of this militant group. He encouraged his followers to keep arms; he and his followers were doing violence acts against the Indian government in the Punjab to fulfill their demand of Khalistan. He was living in the Golden Temple with his armed group. The Prime Minister Indira Gandhi raised a case against Bhindranwale and his followers that he and his followers were increasing terrorism in the Punjab and they converted a place of worship into an arsenal. So she ordered the Indian army to capture Bhindranwale and his followers from the Golden Temple. The Indian army attacked on the Temple and killed Bhindrawale and his followers. The Indian army also destroyed the Golden Temple during the Operation Blue Star.

I have discussed all five sub-questions of my thesis and I presented the results found in the destruction of the Golden Temple. After this destruction the Sikhs were very angry and the two Sikh bodyguards of Indira Gandhi killed her. And this event did not end. Yet, the Sikh community still hates the Indian Government for the destruction of the center place of Sikhism. I presented the life and work of Bhindranwale in chapter 4. He was the leader of a militant group and they were increasing violence in the Punjab with the aim of establishing a separate Sikh state called Khalistan. The Indian Government did not want the partition of the India so the army wanted to capture him.

The militant Sikhs wanted to establish the Khalistan because they believed that the Sikhs were a separate community and their culture and religion are also different from other religions. They were demanding the Khalistan for their social and religious identity and integrity. They were also demanding it geographically because Sikhism was born in the Punjab and the Sikh Gurus also belong to the Punjab. A large part of the Sikh population was also living in the Punjab so they wanted to convert the Punjab into the Khalistan as their separate state. On the other hand, Akali Dal

was a Sikh political party in the Punjab and they also wanted to establish the Khalistan to end the Indian government's power in the Punjab. Akalis themselves wanted to become leaders of the Khalistan so this was a political reason to establish the Khalistan.

Some of the Sikhs believed that Bhindrawale was not a terrorist but a saint and after his death they called him a martyr. They also believed that Indira Gandhi was responsible for the destruction of the Golden Temple and the murder of Bhindranwale. So the two Sikh bodyguards of Indira Gandhi killed her. After the assassination of Indira Gandhi the Congress political Party's leaders and their supporters attacked on the Sikhs and killed thousands of the innocent Sikhs in Delhi in 1984. They burnt their homes and businesses.

I used Juergensmeyer's article and other sources, some are written by the Sikh writers, and some are by the non-Sikhs. Lt. Gen. K.S. Brar commanded the Operation Blue Star to capture Bhindranwale and his followers from the Golden Temple. He wrote a book, *Operation Blue Star the True Story*. I used his book as source of my thesis. Jarnail Singh was a journalist and Sikh as well as he was a victim of the anti-Sikh violence of 1984. He wrote a book, *I accuse the anti-Sikh violence of 1984*. I used his experience in chapter 8. Khushwant Singh is also a Sikh writer; I used his sources in chapter 2 and 3 to give necessary background information about the Punjab and Sikhism in general. Piara Singh Sambhi is also a Sikh writer and he wrote a book *The Sikhs their religious belief and practices* with W. Owen Cole. His book is also a good source for my thesis.

Moreover, I will mention some books that have been written by writers who are not Sikhs. *The world religions reader* is a popular book written by Gwilym Beckerlegge. I got good information about Sikhism and the Khalistan in this book. I also used David Westerlund's book, *Questioning the secular state the worldwide resurgence of religion in politics*. Edna Fernandes's book, *Holly warriors* is also important source of my thesis. I also used the book *Sacred place* written by Jean Holm with John Bowker to give information about the background of the Sikhism. I have used some other books of non-Sikh writers as the sources of my thesis. Moreover, *The Amritsar massacre the untold story of one fateful day book*, written by Nick Lloyd gave me good information about the Amritsar massacre of 1919.

The event of the destruction of the Golden Temple in 1984, teaches a lesson to the people of India. They need to pledge that never again will a place of worship be permitted to become an arsenal, and

the Temple should not become a center place of terrorists. The temple must always remain bastion of faith and brotherhood, not of communal hatred. After the destruction of the Golden Temple, two Sikh bodyguards of the Prime Minister Indira Gandhi killed her to take revenge for the destruction of their holy shrine. They burnt their homes and businesses.

The event of the anti-Sikh violence 1984 is a big blot on the forehead of the country and India's people feel ashamed for this. The people of India cannot rewrite history but they can make future better.

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