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DHARAM YUDH:
FUNDAMENTALIST RAMIFICATIONS OF SIKH AUTONOMY DEMANDS IN THE PUNJAB+

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PREFACE

Religious 'fundamentalism' among the Sikhs of Punjab is viewed in the course of this essay as constituting part of an on-going process of the politicization of religion in developing countries as a colonial and post-colonial legacy. A common manifestation of this process inheres in the emergence of religious revivalism in conjunction with nationalism, especially as a force emphasizing regionalist loyalties vis-à-vis a superimposed state system. In this light, it seems that in the case of India this phenomenon is widespread due to the contradiction between on the one hand, a state ostensibly founded on western, secularist precepts, encompassing on the other, an ethnically and religiously extremely diverse unit. In the course of pursuing a policy of 'national integration' the government appears however, to be effecting rather the opposite through denigrating or denying the authenticity and autonomy of the country's regional traditions, as will be illustrated in this context by the example of the Sikh minority.

In the Punjab religious revivalism emerged as a double-pronged response on the part of the underlying population to the new conditions created by colonialism. Its conscious ideological formulation ensued as a result of competition amongst the indigenous elites, Hindu, Muslim and Sikh and as a vehicle of reconciliation between their aspirations towards westernization with their own religion and culture. At the same time, it comprised a more spontaneous reaction on the part of the rural population to foreign and indigenous (loyalist)

+) Based on empirical and library research conducted in the field for a total of 12 months in 1982 and in 1983 and for the previous year in London, in the framework of a PhD thesis.
The editors are aware that the author argues from a Sikh perspective; they think that the article is therefore of special interest to our readers.

exploitation and as a means of mobliziation towards the attempted restoration of autochthonous traditions.

The forerunner in the process of the ideological formulation referred to was the movement of 'Neo-Hinduism' which according to Jones' argument, had been instrumental in paving the way for the Hindu's ascendence in the Punjab over and against the other two communities[1]. The Muslim and Sikh elites countered with the formation of their own revivalist movements along the same lines as that of the Hindus, revivalism among the Sikhs, as the weakest and smallest of the three[2] culminating in what one scholar terms "... a consciously felt minority psychosis giving rise to an unmitigated concern for the consolidation of the 'Panth' "[3], the religiously legitimized Sikh community.

INTRODUCTION

In the present discussion, an attempt will be made to examine the recent rise of Sikh 'fundamentalism' in the light of the historical development of Sikhism and early 20ieth century revivalism. On the most immediate level, religious 'fundamentalism' among Sikhs constitutes a culturally determined response to what is perceived as the oppressive policies of the central government towards India's minorities. An additional hypothesis of this paper is however, that it has also arisen within the last decade out of the escalation of a class struggle within the community itself fomented by a sudden growth of social, political and economic contradictions becoming acute within the past decade, particularly due to changes fostered by the impact of the 'green revolution' in agriculture in the Punjab.

The Sikh's rapid advancement as the most prosperous peasantry in South Asia today[4] has not devolved on a strictly equitable basis in that there has been an accompanying tendency towards a widening gap between rich and poor or rather less well off. This factor, coupled with a one-sided development in the Punjab, in that it has become a predominantly mono-cultural surplus producing agrarian state, the farmers lacking control over market conditions and even over access, to a certain extent, to irrigation possibilities, has lead to an increasing apprehension of loss of a sense of self-determination on the part of the Sikh masses, exacerbated by the growth of the following contradictions: a stated increasing disparity between rich and 'poor', a factor linked with the sudden extension of capitalist agriculturalist modes; rapid urbanisation and escalation of competition in this sphere, between Sikhs and Hindus and among Sikhs; frustration due to blockage of equitable development potential; non-fulfillment of the youth's rising expectations, the latter fomented through economic growth and greater access to education; given the Sikh's objective economic importance, lack of its due recognition by the ruling powers coupled with discrimination, real and imagined, against Sikhs; gradual blockage of

migration possibilities overseas, due to closure of borders; last not least, mounting impatience, particularly on the part of the youth, with the entrenched Sikh religious and political establishment and its manifest inability to find appropriate solutions to these problems, constituting perhaps the most significant factor among those referred to.

The dramatic rise of religious 'fundamentalism' in the last six years has proved to be the catalyst in the process of increasing politicization of groups formerly ignorant of or indifferent to finding out ways of improving their lot, especially the small farmers and urban Sikhs. The fact that this phenomenon denotes a revival of a specific militant form of Sikh religion and polity, that of the 'Khalsa', which had originally culminated in a peasant rebellion and in the extensive redistribution of land amongst the latter, has facilitated its employment in the articulation of Sikh grievances. The demand for more autonomy constitutes the political expression of grievances and the stated contradictions. An agitation, the 'dharam yudh morcha'[5] for the redressal of Sikh political, economic and religious grievances though initiated by the Sikh national party, the 'Akali Dal' in 1982, has gained unprecedented popular support mainly due to the impact of fundamentalism on the hitherto inarticulate masses.

In the following discussion, although most of the literary sources relied upon are those of established Sikh and western scholars, the interpretation of history and contemporary developments is largely this researcher's own. In this regard, the fundamentalist view point has been considered to the extent to which it coincides with data collected first hand and on the basis of the analysis of primary and secondary sources. The sympathy with this view point which may have tainted the objectivity of this presentation does not, therefore, emerge as a priori. Rather, the attempt to project at least some facets of the fundamentalists 'Weltbild' derives, as will become apparent, from the appraisal of this phenomenon among the Sikh minority as an appropriate and even rational response on the part of 'the masses' to socio-historical, economic and political contingencies.

FACETS OF THE HISTORICAL EVOLUTION

Although Sikhism has often been regarded as merely a sect of Hinduism or a syncretistic reform movement arising in mid-fifteenth century Punjab out of the collision between Islam and Hinduism, it is in fact a revealed religion harbouring an independent mystical dimension. As stated by its founder, "As the word comes to me, O Nanak, so I tell it to the world"[6].

A succession of ten Sikh Masters or 'Gurus'[7] lived between 1469 (birth of Guru Nanak) and 1708 (death of Guru Gobind Singh) and they not only composed the verses comprising the Sikh scripture and codified normative and ethnical principles but also projected themselves into society initially towards the

counteraction of social evils and eventually of Moghul domination. This was achieved it seems through the instillment of an ethic which could be characterized as 'protestant'. Sikhism constituted from the outset a critique of Brahmanical orthodoxy especially in its rejection of caste, religious ritualism and formalism, the institution of priesthood, the ideology of purity and pollution underlying the caste system and social injustices deriving therefrom: 'sati', widow immolation, asceticism, avoidance of commensality with status inferiors.

In terms of its theological basis, Sikhism rejects the concept central in Hinduism, of 'maya', perceiving the world as illusion and earthly life as a 'valley of tears'. In this light, whereas the 'raison d'etre' of Hinduism may be said to inhere in the attainment of 'moksha', the individual's liberation from the cycle of rebirth, although Sikhism also espouses the belief in transmigration of the soul its object is rather 'jivan mukti', a state of living bliss, achieved through the creation of a society governed by principles of 'dharma', righteousness. Towards this end, every Sikh is encouraged to become a householder and by the same token, renunciation is discouraged which probably accounts for the traditional absence of begging in Sikh society, although the latter also derives from the emphasis on the dignity of honest labour espoused by this faith.

On the basis of the competition existing even in those times in Northern India between different religions and sects over devotees and patronage, the necessity of a developed institutional framework for Sikhism was immanent. In fact, from the outset, its anti-Brahmanical stance had provoked the growing opposition of Hindu elites in conjunction with the Muslim ruling classes. A further threat to the religion's integrity was endogenous, deriving from sectarianism fomented through rivals for the Guru's office. In this regard, it appears logical that Sikh sovereignty, even of doctrine, had to be secured through political means.

The ensuing process of state formation was begun in the 17th century, by the Sixth Guru's formal decree of the unity of religion and politics, whereby the latter was subject of the dictates of the former. This relationship became embodied through the institution of the 'Akal Takht', timeless throne, the seat of religio-political authority which stands facing the 'Harimandir Sahib', commonly called Golden Temple, the main centre of Sikh religion. This innovation culminated in the final stage of religious institutionalization, that of the creation of the Khalsa in 1699 by the 10th and last Master, Guru Gobind Singh.

The religio-military brotherhood of the Khalsa, the 'master's own or pure-hearted' was partially created in response to the objective necessity for the Sikhs to commit themselves irrevocably to the defence of their newly forged identity and faith vis-à-vis the threat of their immanent extinction by Moghul persecution. In order to render the Sikhs capable of the feat of fighting the Moghul forces which greatly outnumbered them, the Guru created what may be considered a charismatically charged elite corps commited to the Khalsa's

moto 'degh tegh fateh', victory to the cooking cauldron and the sword, implying the dedication to the people's armed defence and their entitlement to a dignified existence.

'Panj Piare', five beloved or ideal typical Sikhs hailing from all social strata and from different parts of the subcontinent, who had proven their unflinching devotion to the Khalsa's cause, lead the others in the adoption of a specific behavioural code through partaking of holy water from the Guru's hands as part of a baptismal rite. Besides inhering in the prohibition from taking intoxicants, smoking, etc., part of this behavioural codex comprises the donning of the 'five Ks' characterising many Sikhs to this day: 'kes' or uncut hair, 'kara', a steel armband, 'kirpan', a small sword worn under the clothes, 'kanga', a comb, 'kachha', undershorts.

The five Ks made the Sikh immediately recognisable, rendering it impossible for them to shirk the obligation of their brethern's defence by for example, pretending to be Hindus. Just as these symbols applied equally to men and to women, so also the Guru's substitution of the caste or clan appelation for the last name of 'Singh' or lion for a man, instilling bravery and 'Kaur', prince (not, as commonly thought, 'princess') for a woman underlining her dignity as equal to that of a man's. The fact that in addition, the first names of Sikhs are not differentiated according to gender, performs the same function. In terms of the practical articulation of the equality between the sexes, Sikh history abounds with examples of women's bravery and even their leading role in battle.

Having created the Khalsa, Guru Gobind Singh substituted the living Guru by on the one hand, the Sikh scripture, henceforth known as 'Guru Granth Sahib' (composed by six Gurus in the vernacular) and on the other by the 'Guru Panth', thereby conferring the function of Guruship, hence, the responsibility for the creation of a righteous society on the religiously sanctioned collectivity of believers.

Hinduism had debarred the usage of arms from all but the warrior castes, leaving the peasant communities vulnerable to outside domination. By contrast, the 'Dal Khalsa', army of the Khalsa, was actually comprised by farmers, village menials and even traders. Upon the 10th Guru's demise in 1708, the Khalsa forces set out to combat the Moghul repression in the Punjab, precipitating a massively organised peasant uprising and the redistribution of land amongst the latter.

The Punjab's autonomy was achieved by the Dal Khalsa by 1765 on the basis of the formation of 11 'misls', military units considered equals despite disparities in size of territory controlled by them individually. 'Misldars', heads of the Misls, met regularly with their forces to discuss defence strategy against the on-going invasions from Central Asia in a large council called 'Sarbat Khalsa', the entirety of the Khalsa, and pass resolutions in the presence of Guru Granth Sahib called 'Gurmatas', decrees of the Guru. They were decided upon through deliberations of the panj piare in concurrence with the collective sanction[8]. This decentralised form of government, underlying what could be

called a segmentary system, was however nearly eradicated upon the unification and subjugation of the Misls by the son of one of the Misldars, Maharaja Ranjit Singh and his formation of a Sikh empire according to the Moghul monarchic blueprint in 1801, which came to comprise over three times the area of the present day Punjab.

Despite the fact that the Maharaja is considered by many historians and contemporary observers at his court an 'enlightened monarch' [9], fundamentalist Sikhs of today consider the very formation of a monarchy a radical deviation from the spirit of the Khalsa embodied through Misl formation. In fact, under the Sikh empire, the institution of Gurmata which had ensured a consensus corresponding to what may be characterised as a tribal democracy, was abolished or rather delimited to religious matters only. The degeneration of Sikhism (the Maharaja had reintroduced Brahmanical practices into the Sikh places of worship) and of Sikh society occured, according to the fundamentalist view point, as a result of feudalisation in the wake of the empire, still effecting the structure of Sikh society in present times [10].

As demonstrated by historian Fauja Singh, the necessity of centralization in the wake of empire formation which facilitated a more highly organised military appartus resulted to a great extent, from the growing threat of British hegemony [11]. Even the English had to admit that the Sikhs had evolved "... a more perfect system of military organisation than any which the British army had hitherto faced" [12], through a fortuitous combination of guerilla warfare tactics evolved by the Dal Khalsa and employment of European methods of organisation, weaponry and strategy. The fact that the Sikh forces could not however, ultimately prevail against the British, upon the Punjab's annexation in the mid-19th century as the last province to fall under British control, was ostensibly due to the traitorous activities of the Sikh feudal lords at the deceased Maharaja's court - members of the same feudal class which even in subsequent Sikh history have, in fundamentalist opinion, continued to betray the Sikh cause.

DEVELOPMENT OF RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONALIZATION

The religious sanctuary called the 'Gurdwara', the Guru's home, as evolved by Guru Nanak, accordingly embodies religious precepts based on anti-Brahmanic, reformist principles. Contrary to Hinduism which, due to rules underlying the caste system, did not espouse a congregational form of worship, the institution of 'sangat', the holy congregation, is central to the Sikh form of collective worship in the Gurdwara. The egalitarianism of this institution is further strengthened through the partaking of a meal in the 'langar', the free kitchen and mess attached to the Gurdwara, in which general commensality is practiced. In addition, the most important Gurdwara, Harimandir Sahib at Amritsar, has four doors signifying the equal access of all social strata (the

four 'varnas', caste groups of Hindu society), nationalities and religious groups.

Particularly upon the installation of the Guru Granth Sahib in the Gurdwara, this institution came to be regarded by Sikhs as the actual abode of the Guru in the form of 'shabad Guru', i.e., articulated through His Name. Thus, according to Gobinder Singh the Gurdwara has emerged as the most significant focus of the Sikh's social and religious life. It is a 'school for students, centre of spiritual knowledge for the believer, hospital for the sick, place of food for the hungry, forts of security for the women and inn for the traveller'[13]. On this basis, there has been a strong tradition of protecting particularly the main seat of Sikh religion and politics from desecration and destruction which had been frequently fomented by the Moghuls.

Gurdwaras were erected not only at places visited by the Gurus throughout India, but also in memory of important Sikh martyrs, particularly those who had sacrified their lives towards upholding the Gurdwara's sanctity. Traditionally, Sikhs have been accustomed to donating land and funds (according to religious precepts, one tenth of their income) to the 'golak', the collection box located in front of the Guru Granth Sahib. In this way, they are enabled to participate collectively not only in the upkeep of their shrines but in the symbolic affirmation of the maintenance of their Panthic identity, since particularly upon the Sikh state's demise the Gurdwara became an important framework for the articulation of this independent identity over and against the reality of loss of political sovereignty.

Because of Sikhism's rejection of the institution of priesthood any literate person officiated as 'Granthi', reader of the scripture and as Gurdwara custodian. However, during the dark ages of the 18th century in which Sikhs, recognisable through their outward appearance became persecuted, control over the Gurdwaras was deputed to the 'Udasis' who, since they formed a break-away sect from Sikhism did not generally sport uncut hair, were immune to persecution. Udasis were however, not generally antagonistic to the Sikh faith and accordingly served the sangat in a pious and humble spirit because, as renouncers, they were usually genuinely spiritually minded and learned in Sikh scriptures and history[14].

Annexation had witnessed the opening of an extensive network of canals necessary for irrigation, a measure making the lands attached to the Gurdwaras very valuable. As a result, many Udasis started marrying in order to enable their son's succession to their offices and thereby became 'Mahants', a hereditary caste of temple managers. Since the Mahants were conferred ownership of the Gurdwaras by the British, who in fact introduced the concept of 'private property' in India, Mahants of the historically significant Gurdwaras were thus encouraged to misappropriate the donations for their own corrupt purposes[15]. They had even begun placing Hindu idols into the Gurdwaras in order to attract a wider scope of donors and preventing the unrestricted entry of scheduled castes to the holiest Sikh shrine[16].

RISE OF RELIGIOUS REVIVALISM

Despite an initial improvement in their condition due to the extension by the British of canal irrigation, by the turn of the present century the Sikh peasantry had become more impoverished, according to Gobinder Singh's data, than their Hindu and Muslim counterparts in the Punjab and in addition were being squeezed harder by the proverbial 'Bania', an indigenous money-lender caste and by the lawyers, due to an attendent rise in land disputes, than any other peasantry in South Asia. Famine occured frequently at this time and the British government, instead of attempting to ameliorate the peasant's condition, increased the land rates and irrigation taxes and employed harsh methods in their collection[17]. The Sikh peasants it seems, could not articulate their grievances properly, a situation exacerbated by the fact that the Gurdwaras, which as indicated, were traditional sources of inspiration utilized as a focus for consolidation and mobilization against repression from outside, were being controlled by the stooges of government, the Mahants.

This development coincided with the rise of the 'Nirankari' and 'Namdhari' revivalist movements. The latter had a profound political significance in that it can be considered perhaps the earliest anti-colonial force: its leader, Baba Ram Singh, who had been a soldier in the Dal Khalsa disbanded by the British upon annexation, initiated the propagation of 'swadeshi', the exclusive usage of indigenous products and a boycott of British goods and institutions a full 40 years before Gandhi had conceived of this concept as an anti-colonial tactic[18]. In the process, Ram Singh had attempted to resurrect the Khalsa in the form of a new 'Sant Khalsa', an organisation calling for strict adherence to Guru Gobind Singh's code of conduct and preparation for an armed insurrection against the colonialists. Educationally, Ram Singh had called for the instruction of children at indigenous institutions and not at the newly established government schools, the usage of the panchayat system instead of recourse to British courts and implementation of an alternate postal service[19]. On this basis, Dalip Singh contends that the Namdharis had established their own parallel government. In fact, the severe repression of this movement, in the course of which 65 Namdharis were blown off canons and Ram Singh exiled to Burma, apparently helped spark off peasant agitations culminating in 1907 in the establishment of a revolutionary Kisan movement in the Punjab[20].

Following the repression of the Namdhari movement there emerged another revivalist movement which facilitated the development of Sikh institutions, that of the 'Singh Sabha'. It appears that a crucial distinction between the two movements inheres in the fact that that of the Namdharis can be characterized as a 'grass roots' force of the revival of an autochthonous religious cum cultural precedent. In contrast, many of its elite and middle class leaders having accepted the inevitability of loss of sovereignty and foreign domination, the Singh Sabha seems to have represented their aspirations to synthesize aspects of Sikh tradition with western educational and organisational precepts. Hence, the subsequent development of Sikh institutions ensued, to a crucial extent,

according to a European model in conformity with the superimposition of the English bureaucratic and legal appartus.

Two organizations which have since governed Panthic affairs, the Shromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) religious, and the Shromani Akali Dal (SAD) politico-religious, arose out of a popular initiative to wrest control over the Gurdwaras from the government backed Mahants. Known as the 'Akali Movement', it represented the culmination of the preceeding revivalist movements and was implemented by volunteers known as Akalis, the immortal, who conducted a series of morchas between 1920 and 1925, the year in which they succeeded in liberating the Gurdwaras and establishing the central Gurdwara management committee in the face of British opposition.

Although lead by the intelligentsia the movement itself was carried by and its success effected through the Sikh masses who had organised themselves into 'Jathas', groups of activists under the leadership of a Jathedar, whose readiness for sacrifice for the Sikh cause resulted in considerable losses: according to the official estimate, 400 dead, 2000 injured, 30 000 arrested and imprisoned, Rupees 15 lacs of fines and a ban on civil and military Sikh recruitment[21]. The casualties in particular resulted out of the Akali's employment of exclusively non-violent tactics of resistence in conformity with Gandhi's 'satyagraha' movement.

Perhaps the fact, however, that these tactics were not in concurrance with Sikh (Khalsa) tradition lead to the emergence of a parallel movement of 'Babbar Akalis', who set out to avenge the large-scale massacres of peaceful resisters through killing the perpetrators of the murders such as the British officials, police, Sikh and Hindu toadies. Although officially disowned by the Akali leadership due to their use of violence, they nevertheless contributed to this movement's success by increasing the Akali leadership's bargaining power through terrorizing the bureaucratic machinery and its supporters, thus compelling the government to come to terms with them[22]. In addition, the Babbar Akalis who enjoyed leftist support, through victimizing the loyalists, for example, the money lenders and feudal elements, weakened the opposition to the Akali movement in the villages, contributing thereby to the class struggle of peasantry versus vested interests.

POLITICO-ECONOMIC SOURCES OF FUNDAMENTALISM

Independence came as a mixed blessing for the Sikhs since it entailed the loss, for a majority of the population, of lives and property: the partition of the Punjab went right through the heart of what was previously the 'land of five rivers', reducing it to three rivers in the East, the smaller portion of the Punjab[23], which entailed terrible hardship for Hindu, Sikh and Muslim Punjabis, whose populations were transferred to the respective countries.

Most of the canal irrigated agricultural land remained with West Punjab, the area which had been brought under cultivation predominantly by the Sikhs. Therefore, it is not surprising that those Sikhs spearheading the movement in post-independence times for the protection of their identity and rights initially were migrants from West Punjab.

The Sikh leaders refused in 1950, to sign India's constitution as it did not safeguard the interests of the Sikh minority and in fact, subsumed them in terms of their legal status, under the category of Hindus. Thus, not only was the promise made to the Sikhs by India's leaders regarding an autonomous sphere never honoured[24], but all further attempts made by Sikh leadership in this direction have consistently met with stiff opposition on the part of the Congress government. What other states took for granted in this regard, was only given to the Punjab after a prolonged struggle on the part of Panthic leaders: the reorganisation of states on a linguistic basis, decided upon already in 1929 was implemented for every other state except the Punjab.

The subsequent demand for 'Punjabi Suba' which effected not only the Sikhs took over ten years of negotiations and two morchas to push through. It had been opposed by the majority of Punjabi Hindus because, encouraged by the propaganda disseminated by the Arya Samaj (a Hindu revivalist sect) dominated vernacular press, the Hindus were encouraged to falsely state Hindi as their mother tongue[25]. Finally, although the Sikh leadership had propagated Punjabi Suba on a linguistic basis, calling for the inclusion of all Punjabi-speaking areas in a separate state in which the Sikh population would not exceed 42 %, the Union government instead created the new smaller state of Punjab in 1966 according to religious, i.e. communal considerations on the basis of the Sikh population in the respective areas. The state was thereby reduced to 41 % of its former area with 55 % of its population[26].

Protests on the part of Sikh leadership that the demarcation left out key Punjabi-speaking areas crucial for the state's equitable economic development (for example, the forested regions containing minerals necessary for industrialization) went unheeded[27]. Thereby, the state remained predominantly agriculturalist with only middle range subsidiary industry, which the government apparently felt suited its Sikh majority of 60.22 % best (Hindus comprising 37.54 %)[28], although the ratio has since shifted in favour of the latter, Sikhs presently comprising only 52 %. It seems the reason for this economically one-sided development, Punjab being debarred by government ruling from establishing major industries in the state, inheres in the fact that the consequent lack of self-sufficiency makes the state more dependent upon the centre. In fact, according to Dalip Singh, the Punjab figures as the state most subject to government control due to its close proximity to Delhi, its sensitive border position and its strategic economic importance[29].

The 'green revolution' of 1965 was facilitated through the introduction of new, high-yield varieties, primarily of wheat and rice seeds (although sugar cane and cotton are also important cash crops). Out of all the states in the Union in which it had been introduced, this revolution was most successful in

the Punjab, one of India's smallest states which thus became the 'granary of India' in the short space of only ten years, contributing 60 % of the government's wheat pool and 50 % of its rice supply. In this way, the Punjab alone has freed the nation from an excessive reliance upon foreign food imports, thereby contributing substantially to the country's advancement[30].

In spite of the Sikh's objective economic contribution and advance in many fields, not only agricultural but also administrative and business, this has not in fact lead to a proportional amelioration of the condition of the Panth: as has been the case in most countries in which the 'green revolution' has been introduced, it has also lead in the Punjab to a widening of the gap between rich and poor and in fact to a worsening of the overall position of the agriculturalists[31]. Thereby, the tendency towards migration, originally necessitated by the partition of the country, particularly effecting the victims of marginalization of landholdings, to foreign countries has not been halted. Furthermore, in the state itself, despite the statistically shown near eradication of poverty as indicated, all its visible signs have not been alleviated. The image frequently employed by Sikhs is that, given more state autonomy, they would be capable of transforming the Punjab into India's California.

The important grievances of the Sikhs revolve around the deprivation of state control by the centre over important administrative functions effecting the economic, political and cultural development of the people. Perhaps the most important grievance concerns the fact that this primarily riparian state (i.e., relying for irrigation on its river waters) was deprived of control over its rivers in the wake of the reorganisation of the state during Punjabi Suba. The centre has since pursued a policy detrimental to the farmers by diverting the river waters to neighbouring, non-riparian states. Even alternate irrigation sources have been curtailed in that the power of dams built in the Punjab, necessary for the operation of tube wells, is also being diverted for example, to Delhi[32].

As indicated, the green revolution has a long-term detrimental effect on the lot of the majority of farmers not only due to increased marginalization but also as a consequence of the fact that, for example, excessive usage of chemical fertilizers has already begun to adversely effect soil conditions. These and other factors have rendered the Punjab's prosperity precarious, additionally exacerbated by the fact that although this state pays the highest taxes it is most neglected in the allocation of funds for development, working out to only approximately one percent of the total government allocation[33]. Furthermore, resulting from the centre's refusal to issue permits for the setup of large-scale industry under the pretext of Punjab's vulnerable border position, the raw materials produced like cotton and molasses have to be sent outside for processing and reimported, the consumers having to pay value added prices on the goods they themselves produced. Farmers are also not being given remunerative prices for their goods, the market being dominated by Hindu and to a lesser extent, Sikh traders. Thus, the demand is for state government control of prices through, for example, the purchase of goods by a state

cooperative.

Under dispute is the status of the city of Chandigarh, built as Punjab's capital under Nehru and designed by Le Carbousier as a model of an ultra-modern, poverty-free city of India's hoped for future. The Sikh's complaint is that, having been built on the basis of the state's surplus and on that of the eradication of larely Sikh villages it should not serve as the shared capital of two states (Punjab and Haryana, the latter having been carved out of Punjab's southern districts to house a Hindu majority). Chandigarh has been relegated to its own separate 'Union Territory', directly under central control, despite its still serving as the Punjab's administrative headquarters and Haryana has been allocated funds for the construction of its own capital. Impelled by the sacrifices of Sikh leaders having resulted in one successful fast-unto-death and one which was broken off, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi finally granted Chandigarth to Punjab as its sole capital, however, with a precondition unacceptable to the Sikhs - that two of the state's rich cotton-growing districts (said to contain uranium deposits still unexploited) should go to Haryana in compensation even though they are not even contiguous to this state[34].

An important source of discontent concerns the articulation of the Sikh's status as a separate 'quom', nation, a concept grounded in the religion itself, as has been shown, and their position as a minority requiring special legislation ensuring their rights and integrity vis-à-vis the dominant community.

In this regard, the introduction of a quota system which disregards merit has suceeded in steadily curtailing Sikh participation in the military from over 33 % in 1947 to less than 1.3 % today[35] and is particularly grievious not only due to the fact that soldiering represents a significant avenue of employment especially in the wake of the steady reduction through consolidation of land-holdings. For better or worse, military pursuits comprise an important part of the Sikh's cultural heritage and consequently this denigration of their prestige as a world renowned 'martial nation' is further exacerbated by the fact that it also represents, in the Sikh's view, a blatant disregard of the inordinate sacrifices made by Sikhs who comprised over 80 % of those who died or endured life imprisonment during the independence movement[36].

The question of community presige is also related to the expression of the Sikh religion and its official recognition in that Amritsar, in which the Golden Temple is located, despite many agitations and petitions in its favour has not been granted the status of a 'holy city' on par with those of the Hindus. The central government has in this connection, been continuously pursuing a policy of interference in Gurdwara management in for example, attempting to manipulate SGPC elections by trying to tilt the balance in favour of Congress candidates and to promote factionalism[37]. Also, in violation of pacts made by India's leaders with Panthic representatives safeguarding the SGPC's right to concern itself the welfare of all historically significant Gurdwaras in or outside the Punjab, the centre has succeeded in lessening the SGCP's hold over the management of Gurdwaras located outside the Punjab[38]. It has also, by the same token, blocked the institution of an 'All-India Gurdwara and Shrines

Act' centralizing Gurdwara management under the auspices of the SGPC.

The escalation of demands for redressal of Sikh grievances found its formulation in the 'Anandpur Sahib Resolution' officially put forward by the Akali Dal in 1973 for the first time, although it had already been formulated in 1968 by a prominent Sikh intellectual, Sirdar Kapur Singh who was nominated 'National Professor of Sikhism'. The Anandpur Sahib Resolution calls for the autonomy of all states along the lines of J.P.Narayan's 'total revolution', leaving only defence, communications, currency and foreign relations under central control. The salient statement embodying Sikh aspirations in this regard included in the resolution's preamble is taken from the 'Ardas', the most significant congregational prayer recited at the end of each religious service or when any important decision is to be made: 'Khalsaji ke bol bale' implies the demarcation of an area in which the innate socio-politico dynamism of the Khalsa formation as delineated by the 10th Guru is permitted to come to fruition.

THE CENTRALIZED RELIGIOUS BUREAUCRACY (SGPC), SANTS AND SECTARIANISM

The Shromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) was founded by leaders of the Akali Movement in order to bring Gurdwara management under centralized, popular control with a view to thereby safeguard the Sikh's religio-political identity and fortify it against outside threats. Originally the degeneration of Sikh religion was fomented due to government support of the Mahants, Udasis, etc., who as Gurdwara custodians were liable to infiltration, the Akalis assumed, because they did not possess the loyalty to the community due to their being members of different breakaway sects. On this basis it was deemed expedient to replace all or most of these custodians regardless of their actual participation in corrupt practices (in fact, many had not even possessed the means for such corruption) by employees selected and hired by the centralised committee of Gurdwara management, the SGPC.

This form of religious institutionalization also came about as an expression of an overall tendency towards politicization of religion in the wake of 'communalism', a phenomenon implying a particular religious community's pursuit of political and cultural aims through the projection of their religious identity, often leading to conflict with the dominant or other communities engaged in a similar pursuit. In India, communalism has perpetrated a hardening of boundaries between different religious groups and apparently in the case of the Sikhs, it has even strengthened the 'minority psychosis' referred to, particularly as a result of the virulence of Hindu chauvinism propagated through the Arya Samaj in the Punjab. This factor impinges decisively upon and has acted to determine the nature of religious institutionalization and ideology formation

as evolved by 'Neo-Sikhism'.

The attempted resurection by the SGPC of the original, corporate character of the Panth devolved on the basis of the counteraction of fissiparous and sectarian tendencies which the Sikhs believe threaten not only to erode the structure of the community paving the way for its reintegration into that of the Hindus, but even the very basis of the Sikh religion's individuality as distinct from Hinduism. Hence the SGPC arose out of an attempt to impose a uniformity on religious institutionalization in order to create a coherency of doctrine and ethics, religious practices and norms. This is primarily implemented through the SGPC's organisational branch dealing with intra-community missionary activity. Towards this end the SGPC runs many subsidiary missionary, welfare and educational institutions, manned by its employees numbering in the thousands.

The SGPC exists in a complementary relation to the Shromani Akali Dal, the Sikh national party, both institutions however, founded on the Sikh ideal of the unity between religion and politics, the latter subordinate to the dictates of the former, as indicated. In direct reversal of this precept however, the officials of the SGPC chiefly use this organisation as a stepping-stone to entry into Sikh politics, an indication of the fact that, despite their avowed aims, the SGPC officials are anything but religiously-minded[39] even though they are compelled by protocol to strictly adhere outwardly to the Sikh code of conduct, i.e., the five Ks, not to smoke, drink, etc.

It seems that the rise of a class of religious bureaucrats coincides with the predominance of the class of newly rich landowners dominating the Sikh organisations. As indicated by Gobinder Singh's data, those holding top positions in the SGPC belong to the strata of middle to large landholders[40]. Perhaps one reason for this situation derives from the fact that the SGPC's traditionally prominent position in terms of Panthic leadership has since the last 15 years become usurped by the Akali Dal. The SGPC referred to as a 'state within a state' due to its vast powers of patronage and its determinate role in terms of community development[41], its president was formerly considered the actual head of the Panth[42].

The Sikh national party's dominance of the SGPC may derive from the fact that the SGPC comprises the chief agent through which the redistribution and allocation of Panthic surplus in the form of Gurdwara donations is effected. Significantly, there has been a tremendous increase in the SGPC's income by 577.4 % between 1966 and 1980 due to the emergence of newly rich farmers who profited from the green revolution[43], a development exactly coinciding in terms of timing, with the Akali Dal's ascendence over the SGPC. A correct utilization of this surplus by the SGPC in the form of giving adequate pay to officials and employees, restoring and running the Gurdwaras and various subsidiary institutions properly and particularly the actual promotion of missionary activity amongst the peasantry (in theory having the biggest allocation of resources) would amount to a redistribution of surplus throughout the communality in accordance with Sikh principles.

Although this does ensue to a certain extent in that the majority of the employees of the bureaucracy and of its subsidiary institutions come from the lower income groups, it seems that a part of these funds are instead being diverted to the Akali Dal for use in its party politics[44] and misappropriated by the officials. Corruption in fact often appears to filter down to the local Gurdwara management committees, many members of which, having been popularly elected by the local congregations, are engaged in a perpetual power struggle to gain control over the Gurdwara donations to be deployed as party funds or even as capital investment. Furthermore, the Gurdwara stages are commonly employed as political platforms for the Akali Dal's and SGPC's candidates contesting state or Gurdwara elections.

As a result of the excessive politicization of religious institutionalization having as indicated, become employed to serve the objectives of party politics the original aims which the SGPC had been designed to fulfill have been in the eyes of many Sikhs, sorely neglected. This has fomented the subversion of an important goal, i.e., the counteraction of sectarianism and in fact has instead perpetrated the growth of independent religious 'free-lancers', some of whom are sympathetic to the Panthic programs, but a majority of whom it seems have allowed themselves to be weaned away from supporting the latter and instead are serving a different master.

Through government and private capital many of these sants and self-styled 'gurus' have been enabled to establish spiritual retreats from which vantage point they can offer the devotees an ostensibly completely 'depoliticized' rendition of Skihism besides fringe benefits in the form for example, of free, reliable medical care, shares in a business or industrial enterprise besides luxurious and peaceful surroundings[45]. The rendition of Sikhism often projected by the heads of these types of spiritual retreats often tries to integrate it firmly with Hinduism. Besides rejecting Sikhism's premise of the unity between religion and politics many of these sants or gurus go one step further and negate the validity of Khalsa formation altogether by denying the 10th Guru's injunction to henceforth consider only Guru Granth and Guru Panth as the sole embodiment of the faith and not any living guru. Instead, they orient their teaching towards semi-mythological renditions of the Sikh Guru's lives.

In thus relegating Sikhism to a personality cult, this type of sant is enabled to direct the devotee's affection for the Gurus on to his own person and thus foment a 'guru cult', a common phenomenon in Hinduism but not condoned by Sikhism. This process is abbeted by the additional role these sants often play as traditional physical and psychic healers, as 'miracle workers' in that for example, it is believed they can enable a woman to beget a child and as marriage councellors and brokers, services rendered free of charge. In this way the followers would be incited to develop a closeness with and dependence upon the sant in question even if it entails a grave deviation from the 10th Master's conference upon the Sikhs of the responsibility for the creation of a righteous society which he had effected through his delegation of Guruship on to the Khalsa Panth.

The government, presumably in accordance with their 'divide and rule' policy in order to detract the Sikhs from pursuing this aim, support and openly patronize these anti-Khalsa sants and sect formation. In gaining an institutional framework a particular religious leader is in a far stronger position to prevail against the Sikh religious and political establishment attempting to bring any nominally Sikh religious specialist into its own sphere of influence to counteract fissiparous tendencies as indicated. The ensuing situation of intense competition and rivalry between the various political parties, Akali, Congress, Hindu and even Communist over control over this informal sphere of religious institutionalization has perpetrated at times even violent confrontations between 'anti-Khalsa' and 'pro-Khalsa' sants in the Punjab. It is in fact this situation having resulted in an overall desecration of sacred Sikh tradition in the opinion of religiously minded Sikhs, which has fomented the recent upsurge of religious fundamentalism, a development encouraged by the economic contradictions and grievances indicated and by the Sikh organisations' incapability of effectively resolving this dilemma.

SANT JARNAIL SINGH KHALSA: FUNDAMENTALIST SIKH LEADER+

Arising out of the peripheral, informal sphere of religious organisation, fundamentalism has within the last six years been gradually gaining in momentum through the medium of different groups or 'jathas' (non-hierarchical units under the nominal leadership of a 'jathedar') some of which had been originally established in the wake of revivalism in response to colonialism. The jathas in question have as their organisational and ideological focus the restoration of precolonial and pre-empire conditions, reflecting the egalitarian spirit of the Khalsa. Paritcularly the 'democratisation' of Sikh institutions has provoked the critique of the fundamentalists who view their system of organisation, having developed as a consequence of the incorporation of parliamentary democracy, as having lead to the stated deviation from the SGPC's aims.

The 'Akhand Kirtani Jatha' is one such purist group which was founded out of protest against the development of this form of religious institutionalization, on the contrary principle of decentralization of religious organisation. Each small, local unit though linked by a superordinate governing body, is autonomously run not by religious specialists, bureaucrats or employees but by simple members of the congregation. The donation of funds is discouraged,

+) It must be noted that the escalation of violence for which the government has held Sant Jarnail Singh responsible, culminating recently in the Golden Temple's invasion, mainly took place after my departure from Punjab and has therefore not been dwelt upon in the context of this discussion.

all necessary items for the communal kitchen, for example, contributed by the community when the need arises, the Gurdwara functionaries as well not receiving any pay but rather performing this task in their spare time next to other gainful employment, in an actual spirit of 'seva' (selfless service), as prescribed by Sikhism. Besides constituting an attack on the current system of religious institutionalization, fundamentalism as a social phenomenon extends to a critique of the nature of Sikh society per se in that the dominance of Sikh organisations by the 'feudal' elements is seen in direct relation to an accompanying increasing deterioration of the condition of the common man.

Among the fundamentalist groups it is Bhindranwale Jatha which has recently had the strongest impact possibly due to the charismatic personality of its leader. Sant Jarnail ('general') Singh Khalsa is of humble peasant origin and has not been exposed to formal education beyond primary school, having been taken at a young age to serve and imbibe the teachings of the last two sants of this Jatha, who had also had a Khalsa orientation and preached against the activities of the anti-Khalsa sants referred to. He officiates as head of Bhindranwale 'Taxal', a 'true mint' for imprinting Sikh theology on people's minds through the training of preachers, readers of scriptures, hymn singers and musicians. The Taxal derives its importance from the fact that it was founded by the 10th Guru himself and a significant Sikh martyr, Baba Deep Singh, was its first head. It is an independent institution and does not rely on the SGPC for patronage since it has its own circle of donors. Jarnail Singh was appointed seven years ago by Sant Kartar Singh as his successor at only 30 years of age on the basis of religious zeal and spiritual aptitude.

It seems that this sant has emerged as the most significant religious leader of the Sikhs today mainly due to the fact that he has succeeded in politicizing hitherto indifferent or inarticulate groups to support the cause of the dharam yudh morcha through the medium of revivalism. In particular, he was instrumental in spurring the enthusiasm of the Sikh youth, the majority of whom had become disillusioned with the Sikh religious and political establishment and like youth in other parts of the country, turned in consequence to secular ideologies like communism or western liberalism in the attempt to find solutions to India's (and their own) social and economic problems.

In contrast to the communist cadres or to other sants, Jarnail Singh's appeal not only to the youth but also to the masses including intellectuals, inheres in his ability to integrate the revival of the religious, egalitarian and militant ideals of the Khalsa with the emphasis upon actual grievances and demands of the Sikhs. His personal charisma also emanates from a sincerely projected empathy towards all aspects of the condition of the common man, whose language, a rustic Punjabi, he speaks. This is reflected for example, in the fact that like the sants before him, he maintains a strict relation of equality or brotherliness in the Jatha between all its members, whether students, workers or his personal staff and contrary to most sants does not occupy a 'gaddi', a raised chair signifying elevated prestige. In giving equal

respect to all he does not put himself above or talk down to anyone in order to impress them with his superior wisdom or mystical aura.

All contributions made by devotees to the Taxal are immediately distributed to meet its requirements, the surplus being utilized for Panthic purposes and not for accoutrements intended to attract rich donors like private planes or luxurious accomodation for the pilgrims. Sant Jarnail Singh has become the focus of some international and especially national attention due to his image as a militant sant: members of his jatha are all armed, some with modern weapons and in the past few years, news reports abound with his actual or alleged activities geared towards the counteraction of the activities of anti-Khalsa sants and other anti-Sikh forces. His extraordinary popularity which these activities and his preaching have generated amongst the masses has prompted the ruling powers to engage in a vilification campaign against him, holding him responsible for all 'extremist' or 'terrorist' activities involving Sikhs in the Punjab or even in other parts of the country.

In a similar fashion to the great Namdhari leader Baba Ram Singh, Sant Jarnail Singh propagates a strict maintenance of the Sikh code of conduct in conjunction with the aim of the restoration of the symbols, ideology and organisation of the Khalsa in the interest of counteracting the 'anti-dharmic' forces and restoring the unity and corporateness of the Panth. Thus, the sant appeals to the Sikhs to maintain the five Ks and to arm themselves at all times with modern weapons even in the absence of a licence to do so. He supports the radical wing of the Akali Dal which calls for the cease of payment of taxes and that they should go instead to the Akal Takhat, the seat of Sikh religion and politics. To decrease people's reliance upon the market economy, the radical wing has tried to discourage farmers from sowing more crops than necessary for their own consumption and not to send the surplus outside by for example, utilizing sugar in its unrefined state, thereby decreasing the Sikh's reliance upon the market economy.

In this context, in conjunction with other fundamentalist groups like the Akhand Kirtani Jatha, Bhindranwale Jatha propagates the development of a simple and spartanic lifestyle through an attempted repression of reliance upon consumer goods and upon intoxicants. Even tea and coffee are discouraged on this basis and because they are not part of the indigenous culinary culture besides being detrimental to good health. Linked with this is a rejection of modern media not only because it promotes consumerism but mainly due to the fact that it has been utilized by the centre to denigrate Sikhs and Sikhism by projecting an uncomplimentary image of them and also because it generally disseminates 'unSikhlike' attitudes. In its place, the sources of entertainment or relaxation after a hard day's work considered appropriate, in accordance with the basics of Sikhism involve the collective singing and listening to of hymns, recitation of prayers at specified times and performance of 'seva', i.e., serving the congregation at the Gurdwara or whenever the need arises.

Particularly active in the fundamentalist movement is the Sikh youth who,

like the Babbar Akalis before them, have become impatient with the slow-moving tactics of the Akali Dal and have embarked upon a more militant strategy, particularly of retribution for the atrocities perpetrated upon the non-violent Sikh agitators and by-standers. In justification for their departure from the policy of non-violence espoused by the Sikh national party, the youth point to Guru Gobind Singh's contention that it is permissable to take up the sword once all other means have failed to restore justice[46]. The Dharam Yudh morcha has for example, engulfed an agitation 'rasta roko' entailing the blockage of rail and road traffic for one day, which resulted in the death of approximately 25 peaceful volunteers through police and army firing.

The students and graduates were recruited and organised through the medium of the 'All-India Sikh Student's Federation' (AISSF) whose head, Bhai Amrik Singh is the son of the former Sant Bhindranwale. The AISSF is a significant organisation because Sikh leadership, Akali and non-Akali, is largely recruited from the ranks of its former members and because it comprises a forum for the formulation of Sikh political ideology and tactics. The fact that Bhai Amrik Singh, who unified spiritual aptitude with a college education and mastery of English should have been elected president of the AISSF appears to indicate further the growing trend towards fundamentalism, particularly since there is a close collaboration between Amrik Singh and Sant Jarnail Singh. (Both Sant Jarnail Singh and Bhai Amrik Singh were recently killed during the Golden Temple's invasion by Indian army forces on June 5th, 1984.)

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The economic advancement of the Sikh minority in the Punjab has entailed an attendent rise of contradictions espousing a form of religious revivalism culminating recently in 'fundamentalism', a phenomenon implying the strict adherence to certain religious precepts, serving on one level, the redressal of political, economic and religio-cultural grievances, resulting from the Sikh's minority status. In this context, it has also been shown how revivalism emerged originally in response to two exploitative forces, one represented by colonialism and the other comprising the reactionary indigenous group, i.e., loyalists, 'feudals', moneylenders, etc. Perhaps as a result of the failure to re-establish popular Sikh rule by Baba Ram Singh, it seems that the Sikh movement became deprived of its inherent dynamism, having become coopted through the concurrance it facilitated of progressive with reactionary forces combining in the Akali Movement[47].

Though harbouring an anti-colonial thrust, this movement through having inadvertently perhaps aided the penetration of the core of Sikh religious and cultural life by westernisation, did not achieve the momentum allowing the Sikhs to gain a conscious awareness of their true interests in terms of identity

maintenance. Corroborated by the economic and other disabilities suffered by this minority since independence, but particularly in recent times due to the escalation of repression as indicated, the Sikhs have been reaping the fruits of this development. According to the historical precedent, religious revivalism has apparently reemerged in response in order to ameliorate this situation through the 'restoration of Sikhism to its pristine purity and the purging of anti-Panthic elements' - so the fundamentalist's interpretation.

In terms of its immediate impact, fundamentalism has acted as a force fomenting the social and religious polarization of Sikh society in that it has apparently facilitated the articulation of socio-economic disparities through a religious idiom. Signifying a further development in the process of the politicization of religion referred to, it seems that the fundamentalist groups are representing the interests of the masses of lower-middle and poorer peasantry in conjunction with a sector of urban Sikhs and are in the process of forming a 'united front' to oppose that sector of the Sikh population which embodies and supports the vested interests. The former are in turn, chiefly motivated to join the morcha for the restoration of 'dharma' as the overriding force regulating life on a normative and socio-political level. The latter, comprised on the one hand, by 'westernised, integrated' Sikhs, have become influenced to a greater extent through media, job constraints, etc., by government propaganda especially in the form of secularism and Hinduisation to pursue the goal of preserving their privileged position and first and foremost leading a good life in a worldly sense. On the other hand, they also include the 'feudals' comprising the landed classes dominating Sikh organisations including the moderate Akalis. Although outwardly espousing Khalsa ideology, they are in reality only paying lip service to Sikhism and to fundamentalism since it has become a force which needs to be tapped to mobilize the masses for the dharam yudh morcha. This latter group is fighting for economic and political concessions within the framework of the present government in order to further secure their own privileged position vis-à-vis the immanent threat of social upheaval due to ever increasing pauperization of the peasantry.

The existence, therefore, of different social and political levels of fundamentalism poses the question as to whether in the long run this phenomenon may merely represent a force of equalization of economic and other disparities arising through rapid capitalist development or whether it actually harbours a dynamic of an authentic popularist thrust to restore an autochthonous tradition. In this light, it seems that the revivalist Jathas referred to would theoretically welcome the formation of a Sikh state in harmony with the Khalsa model, i.e., egalitarian and non-capitalist in spirit if not in fact, according to the ideals upon which they base their own lifestyle. However, they have neither succeeded in promoting their own movement sufficiently in influencing more Sikhs to espouse fundamentalism practically nor in formulating a governmental model which could concretize their aspirations in this regard. Furthermore, the various different groups are presently still so divided amongst themselves as to probably hinder the formation of a permanent common platform.

The realisation of the religious fundamentalist's goals will ultimately depend upon the success with which they are able to direct the agitation to encompass not only an anti-government dimension but also to combat the 'enemy within'. The innate potential of the original Khalsa spirit can only be effectively revitalized once the ideal of a truly corporate society organised according to egalitarian principles becomes implemented, requiring a radical transformation of the structure of Sikh society. Whether the present or for that matter, any form of religious revivalism in the contemporary Indian context possesses the necessary dynamic to effect a social revolution of this proportion and thereby finally fulfill the Sikh Guru's injunction of the creation of a righteous society, remains to be seen.

Notes:

1) Jones, K.W., Arya Dharm: Hindu Consciousness in 19th-Century Punjab, Berkeley and Los Angeles, U.of.Calif.Press, 1976, p.22.
2) Khushwant Singh, A History of the Sikhs, Vol.2, 1839-1974, Delhi, Oxford U.Press, 1977 (Copyright: 1966), p.128-132.
3) Gobinder Singh, Religion and Politics in Punjab: A Case Study of the SGPC, Chandigarh, PhD thesis submitted to Punjab U.Chandigarh, 1982, p.53.
4) The percapita income of over 200 US dollars is highest in India and the percentage of those below the poverty line is slightly over one percent, whereas in the whole country it is 40 %; the age expectancy in the Punjab is 65 compared to the all-India average of 47 (Gopal Singh, A History of the Sikh People, Delhi, World Sikh U.Press, 1979, p.714).
5) 'Holy war morcha', an agitation for the restoration of 'dharma', righteousness. Morcha signifies a particular agitational strategy evolved by the Sikh national party. According to Nayar's definition, literally meaning entrenchment, it entails the involvement of government in largely non-violent direct confrontation, often organised and directed from within Sikh religious sanctuaries. It consists mainly of sending out groups of volunteers to violate the law in order to fill the prisons. (Nayar, B.R., Minority Politics in the Punjab, N.J., Princeton U.Press, 1966, p.234).
6) Gopal Singh, p.99.
7) The term 'Guru' (capitalized) is only used in Sikhism to refer to the ten Sikh Gurus or masters who founded this religion and to the Sikh scripture upon the 10th Master's demise. Sikh holy men are generally referred to as 'sant', roughly equivalent to saint.
8) Dilgeer, H.S., The Akal Takhat, Jullunder, Guru Nanak Inst.of Sikh Studies, 1983, p.32.
9) Gopal Singh, p.504.
10) Colonialism has relegated formerly feudal landlords to the status of ca-

pitalist entrepreneurs. The 'green revolution' in Punjab and elsewhere it has been implemented has aided mainly the upper rural classes including the rich peasants, the lower agriculturalist classes having increased in number especially due to the influx of cheap labour from other poorer states. In this context, even the lower classes can be classified as semi proletarians because they get the primary part of their income from wage labour. Still 'feudalism' may be seen as surviving in terms of its cultural forms and ethos (Comp.Omvedt, G., Cultural Revolt in a Colonial Society, Bombay, Scientific Socialist Education Trust, 1976, p.14; 301).

11) Comp.Fauja Singh, Military System of the Sikhs, Delhi, Shri Jainendra Press, 1964, p.35-36.
12) Khushwant Singh, p.56.
13) Gobinder Singh, p.62.
14) McLeod, W.H., The Evolution of the Sikh Community, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1976, p.93. The Udasis derive their origin from Guru Nanak's son, Baba Siri Chand, who became an ascetic contrary to Sikh principles and was thus not nominated by his father as his successor. For this reason, Siri Chand formed his own breakaway sect of Udasis.
15) Mohinder Singh, The Akali Movement, Delhi, MacMillan Publications, 1978, p.4.
16) Khushwant Singh, p.194-195.
17) Gobinder Singh, p.73-74.
18) Dalip Singh, Dynamics of Punjab Politics, Delhi, MacMillan India Ltd., 1981, p.5.
19) Fauja Singh, A Brief Account of the Freedom Movement in the Punjab, Patiala, Yugantar Press, 1972, p.9.
20) Dalip Singh, ibid.
21) Khushwant Singh, p.213.
22) Mohinder Singh, p.125.
23) Khushwant Singh, p.282.
24) Nehru stated at a press conference in 1946: "The brave Sikhs of the Punjab are entitled to special consideration (i.e., for the sacrifices made by them which were greater then those made by any other community in India for the cause of their country's independence). I see nothing wrong in an area and a set-up in the North wherein the Sikhs can also experience the glow of freedom". (Gur Rattan Pal Singh, The Illustrated History of the Sikhs, Chandigarh, Akal Printamatics, 1979, p.104-105.)
25) Dalip Singh, p.70.
26) ibid., p.37.
27) Gopal Singh, p.730.
28) Dalip Singh, p.68.
29) ibid., p.36.
30) Gopal Singh, p.714.
31) Rich peasants owning over 30 acres and middle peasants 10-20 acres together constitute 23.36 % of peasantry and operate 64.97 % of total culti-

vated area. Small peasants owning between five and ten acres comprise 20 % and farm the same percentage of holdings. Poor or subsistence farmers owning below five acres experienced a threefold rise in their numbers in the first phase of the green revolution, to comprise 56.22 % of rural population. (Dhami, M.S., Class and Politics in the Rural Punjab: A Study of two Villages in Sangrur District, p.295-296, in: Wallace, P. and Chopra, S., eds., Political Dynamics of Punjab, Amritsar, Guru Nanak U.Press, 1981.)

32) Gopal Singh, p.731.

33) Satindra Singh, Khalistan: the Politics of Passion, p.10 in: The Overseas Hindustan Times, Khushwant Singh, ed., Delhi, Hindustan Times Press, Vol.XXVII, n.42, Oct.15, 1980.

34) Gobinder Singh, p.731.

35) Satindra Singh, ibid.

36) Data compiled by Maulana Azed, as quoted in: Duggal, D.S., Sikh Quom da Shandar Virsa, 19 (?), Sikh History Research Board, SGPC, Amritsar, p.18.

37) Gobinder Singh, p.146.

38) Satindra Singh, ibid.

39) Gobinder Singh, p.219.

40) Comp. ibid., p.201-204.

41) Nayar, p.180-181.

42) Mohinder Singh, p.47.

43) Gobinder Singh, p.113. Previously, its yearly income exceeded an annual Rs.10 lacs (one lac = 100 000) (Khushwant Singh, p.214) and now its yearly income is said to comprise Rs.5,6 crore (one crore = 10 000 000) (Sethi and Chawla, Tinderbox of Religion and Politics, p.32, in: India Today, ed. Purie, A., Delhi, Living Media Pvt., Vol.VI, no.20, Oct.31, 1981.)

44) Nayar, p.176.

45) A good example is Radha Soami Dehra in Beas, Punjab, representing a large, reputable organisation headed by someone referred to as a guru, though stemming from a Sikh family. It is run mainly by Hindu business interests and personnel and due to its wide, international circle of devotees it has been able to expand rapidly and today may be said to comprise one of the most luxurious religious compounds in India. A fully modernised hospital is under construction, a project supervised by the guru personally.

46) Gopal Singh, p.750.

47) Ahluwalia suggests the origin of this development to lie in the Misl period: although embodying a 'democratic-republican' spirit, there could not evolve a corresponding form and structure of polity, thus the seeds of a new civilization inherent in Sikh doctrine were aborted. In the opinion of this author, the final loss of the potential for a Khalsa-type of social formation devoid of all feudal elements was sealed by empire formation (Comp.Ahluwalia, J.S., The Sovereignty of Sikh Doctrine, Delhi, Bahri Publications, 1983, p.100-101).