

ACCORDING TO THE BABBAR KHALSA,
'FIGHTING A TYRANNICAL RULER IS THE
FAITH OF THE KHALSA. IT IS THE DUTY OF
THE SIKHS TO FIGHT AGAINST TYRANNY.
ERASING THE OPPRESSORS IS PART OF THE
COMPLIANCE OF THE SIKH CODE OF
CONDUCT?' (BKI, 1994)

EXPLAIN THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BABBAR
KHALSA AS AN ORGANISATION, WHICH HAS
ENGAGED IN AN ARMED STRUGGLE FOR AN
INDEPENDENT STATE OF KHALISTAN BASED
ON TEACHINGS AND HISTORY OF THE SIKH
FAITH.

by

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Abstract

Since the 1947 partition of India, there has been a rise in the call by Sikhs for self-determination and independence from India with a separate state called Khalistan in recent years. This thesis will focus on this call to self-determination by focusing on one organisation, whose mandate is clearly to fight for a Sikh State, called Khalistan through a physical armed struggle in accordance with the teachings of the Sikh faith. Khalistan itself will be based on being an independent theocratic state. This call for self-determination has been coming from groups and organisations within India and the diaspora outside of India which are affiliated with the Khalistan movement.

The organisation in question is Babbar Khalsa, which has been considered as the most notable and significant organisation in advocating for the goal of Khalistan. My research concludes that the Babbar Khalsa has engaged in armed struggle for Khalistan, an independent Sikh nation based on the teachings of the Sikh faith. The research will help those in understanding why organisations have engaged in a physical armed struggle to obtain their goal for Khalistan, as they claim this is embedded within the teachings of the Sikh faith.

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Glossary

- Akal Takhat – Temporal authority of the Sikhs Babbar
Khalsa – Sikh freedom fighting organisation
Banda Singh Bahadur – Leader of first established Sikh state
Begampura – City without sorrow described by Bhagat
Ravidass (poet)
Dharam- Faith
Gurbani – Word of the Guru
Gurmatta – Order of the Guru
Guru – Teacher
Halemi Raj – Government of tolerance without fear
Harimandir Sahib – Abode of God/Golden Temple
Janam Sakhi – Birth Stories of Guru Nanak
Jathedar – General/Leader
Jot – Light
Khalistan – Sikh State
Khalsa – Community of the pure
Kirat Karna – Work honestly
Maharaja Ranjit Singh – Ruler of Sikh Empire
Miri Piri – Spiritual/Temporal
Naam Japna – Repetition of God's name
Panj Pyare – Five beloved ones
Panjab – Land of the five rivers
Shabad – Sacred hymns
Sikh – Disciple/Student
Sukhdev Singh Babbar – First leader of the Babbar Khalsa
Vand Ke Shakna – Share fruits of one's labour

Introduction

The context of this study covers Sikh history which focuses on the Sikh independent movement known as Khalistan. This idea of an independent state is believed to be embedded within the teachings of the Sikh faith and has also been present within periods of Sikh history where there have been multiple occasions of governance under Sikh rulers who have tried to govern in accordance with the teachings of the Sikh faith. There has been a wealth of literature within recent years which has focused on the Khalistan movement through narratives which have included Sikh nationalism and extremism due to the violence being associated with it.

My research will try to develop an understanding different to the current academia as it will focus on the ideology of an organisation fighting for an independent state of Khalistan, but more importantly how it backs up its ideology through the teachings of the Sikh faith and also Sikh historical events. In addition to this, my research will also highlight the importance of engaging in an armed struggle in accordance with teachings of the Sikh faith as this implementation to engage in violence as this has been the primary method used by the organisation in their objective for Khalistan.

In the western world, the Babbar Khalsa is described as one of India's largest terrorist organisations and is believed to be 'responsible for hundreds of attacks against Indian security forces and civilians. Its activities include armed attacks, assassinations and bombings.' (Québec, 2017, n.p.) The organisation claims to be fighting using physical means for the establishment of a separate Sikh state called Khalistan which loosely translates to land of the pure.

My research question aims to provide a unique and new understanding of the organisation based on the teachings of the Sikh faith upon which the Babbar Khalsa claims as its reason for using physical means for their objective. This viewpoint and focus of my work will explore aims to understand the organisations use of armed warfare by providing a timeline based on Sikh history and theology which provides an understanding of the Sikh faith, in addition to displaying how events within Sikh history led to the foundation and creation of the Babbar Khalsa and its vision for a separate Sikh state autonomous away from India.

Furthermore, my thesis will propose a new understanding of the topic by trying to understand the narrative of which the Babbar Khalsa justifies the use of physical force to exert their demand for Khalistan. Whilst acknowledging that academia focuses largely on the organisation from a perspective of being a 'terrorist organisation,' my research aims to establish a justification for their activities and contribute to academia revolving around Khalistan and Sikh militancy.

Methodology

In order to present this argument, when discussing the Babbar Khalsa in the latter part of my thesis, I will discuss the organisation through its own publications which clearly define and discuss the reasons for fighting for Khalistan and involving themselves in an armed struggle.

Chapter one will introduce the Sikh faith and provide an overview of the lives of the 10 Gurus and their achievements in respect of the progression and development of promoting Sikhi. I will then discuss the creation of the Khalsa and its importance in the creation of a Sikh state as the Khalsa is argued to be a creation of a new identity and paving the way for a society based on the principles of the Khalsa.

The Sikh principles of Miri/Piri (political/spiritual) and Halemi Raj (kingdom of God on earth.) Miri Piri was the created and implemented by the sixth Guru, Guru Hargobind and focused on a combination of the spiritual and temporal, which is living a spiritual life based on the teachings of the Sikh faith but at the same time implementing them through the temporal life we are living on this earth.

The concept of Halemi Raj is based on the visualization of society which has its foundational principles focused on ideals propagated by the first Guru, Guru Nanak on truth, justice and freedom for all. These principles will relate back to the framework of the Babbar Khalsa when discussing their cause for achieving Khalistan.

Chapter two will analyse the theoretical perspectives of the vision for Khalistan itself. To discuss this, I will refer to the teachings within the Guru Granth Sahib and the teachings of the Sikh Gurus which relate to Khalistan through translations

which reflect examples of the ideals of a nation based on Sikh rules in accordance with the faith.

Chapter three will introduce the historical developments, establishments and the governing concepts of the various entities under the rules and regulations in accordance within the Sikh framework and teachings. Such entities termed as Sikh states gave a rise to prominent and powerful Sikhs which included Banda Singh Bahadur and Maharaja Ranjit Singh. This chapter will examine of the concepts of Sikh rule via these Sikh governments and how they coincided with the teachings of the Sikh faith which envisioned visions for an independent state that delivered and upheld justice for all.

Chapter four will look at the Sikhs and their struggle for independence from the time period of the partition of India up until the late 1980's. This section will focus on specific movements that were associated with an independent state for the Sikhs. This includes the Punjabi Suba struggle, the Anandpur Sahib Resolution and the abuses committed post Operation Bluestar which saw Sikhs turning to an armed struggle in order to obtain Khalistan.

Chapter five will focus on the Babbar Khalsa, its establishment and its ideology by considering its literature and publications which have voiced for Khalistan. This discussion will draw in an analysis of the teachings of the Sikh faith in order to understand its continuous reference to the teachings of the Gurus and Khalistan.

Chapter six will bring together and summarize the discussion on my thesis question and incorporate a final analysis on the topic.

Literature Survey

Through this thesis, the primary source I shall use will be excerpts from the Guru Granth Sahib. As the Guru Granth Sahib is the living guru of the Sikhs, The Guru contains teachings of the previous 10 Gurus and serves as a role model and provides spiritual guidance for both Sikhs and non-Sikhs alike. In these respects, the Guru Granth Sahib is in essence, the leader of the Sikh Faith.

This is important for many reasons, for this thesis, the primary reason is that the teachings form 'Gurbani' which roughly translates to the word of the Guru, but is a given directive/order for all Sikhs to follow. Therefore, from a devotional aspect, the Guru Granth Sahib is a source of wealth, knowledge where Sikhs can gain and strengthen morality and live in accordance by following the Sikh faith.

Gurbani used in this thesis, serves not just to explain the teachings of the Sikh Gurus and Sikh Faith, but will be used to explain how Khalistan can be viewed as a fundamental command of the Guru in order to promote the beliefs of the Sikh Faith and how the organisation of Babbar Khalsa has reasoned for the creation of Khalistan as a fundamental right of self-determination.

As the original scripture of Guru Granth Sahib is not in English, I have had to use translations. Whilst they may reflect a broad sense of understanding and relation to the original language, I must make it clear that the translations do not necessarily provide an accurate reflection of the text being translated. For example, one word within Gurbani may not have an English translation or a passage from Gurbani may have more than one English meaning.

Furthermore, translations can be interpreted differently based on the reader's perception. For instance, a translation within the Guru Granth Sahib on love and justice may differ between readers thus it is important to recognize that translations may not fully reflect the true message that is written within the Guru Granth Sahib.

There are also large amounts of secondary sources which have helped with this research and answering the thesis question. The majority of the sources used in my research have been journals, publications, online articles, past academic work and written books.

As the topic question is quite specific on Khalistan in relation to the Sikh faith and its principles, there has been difficulty in obtaining specific information from academic sources. Thus, there is research which has been referenced from websites, dictionaries and other non-academic sources such as online and media sources, which have provided me with information where it was not possible due to the lack of availability from mainstream academic sources.

The variety of research will allow me to develop a full overview of the research question and also critiques of specific views and teachings, by doing so this will allow me to provide a unique view on the research question and provide a coherent argument throughout my thesis.

When discussing the Babbar Khalsa and Khalistan, my focus has been on the organisation's view of Khalistan and how it fits in with the Sikh faith. Therefore, I have based my research on the Babbar Khalsa and its beliefs through its publications and speeches from its leaders which have been documented in academic publications which have been translated by other authors.

Chapter 1 - The Sikh Gurus

The Sikh faith or ‘Sikhi’ came into existence during the late fifteenth century in the Punjab area of what is now today’s Pakistan. Followers of the Sikh faith equate up to ‘30 million followers, making it one of the top 5 religions of the world and 0.4% of the world population.’ (WTP, 2018, n.p.) By this percentage, in 2019 we can clearly identify those that follow the Sikh Faith as a minority compared to the rest of the world’s religions.

The lives of the Sikh Gurus and the teachings they portrayed and implemented during their lifetimes are of importance in understanding how the Sikh faith developed and became what it is today. Each Guru played a significant role in developing and building on the foundation of the Gurus before them in order to establish the way of life which is practiced by over thirty million followers today.

Guru Nanak, the first Sikh Guru, came into the world in 1469. Guru Nanak grew up in a society that was focused on inequality, corruption, and the violation of human rights. This was enforced by an unethical societal system based on caste and through Babar, the first Mughal emperor, whose atrocities Guru Nanak witnessed first-hand as a prisoner.

From the outset, the words of Guru Nanak showed the importance of one God and the equality of all humans on Earth. Evidence of Guru Nanak’s teachings and encounters are recorded in the Janam Sakhis of Guru Nanak.

The Janam Sakhis are stories/literature which speak of his encounters with God. They also ‘elucidate mystic concepts of spiritual elevation, provide the earliest exegesis of the hymns

of Guru Nanak and illustrates the teachings of Guru Nanak by narrating interesting anecdotes.’ (Kirpal Singh, 2004, n.p)

Guru Nanak taught three core principles of Naam Japna (repeating Gods name) Kirat Karna (working honestly), and Vand Chakna (sharing your earnings with others). Naam Japna is the repetition and meditation on the name of God. Not only is it to remember God but also, it is required to ‘invoke His Presence in our consciousness.’ (Missionary, 2017, n.p) Furthermore, the repetition of the name of God allows us to ‘lead a peaceful life.’ (Chahal, 2007, p. 42)

Guru Nanak essentially envisaged the creation of the Khalsa and the concept of a new identity and nation, which would be succeeded by the later Gurus who would accomplish the creation of the Khalsa. Just as the change of culture takes time to take precedent and evolve over time, the same happened with the establishment of the Khalsa.

The divine light of Guru Nanak travelled through ten physical bodies of the Gurus whom throughout each of their lifetime, contributed to the creation of the Khalsa. This is reinforced through the teachings of the Guru Granth Sahib which states that ‘the light was the same, spirit was the same, the only change was a change of bodies.’ (Guru Arjan Dev, Sireeraag Mehala 5, SGGS, 1708, p. 74)

Western Scholars such as Dr Ernest Trumpp support this idea of the Gurus aiding the creation of the Khalsa and make it evident that ‘the doctrines uttered by Nanak were taken up by the following Gurus without any perceptible deviation.’ (Trumpp, 1977, n.p) By doing so, it is abundantly clear that Guru Nanak envisaged the Khalsa and the mission of the Khalsa which would lead to an independent Sikh nation.

Guru Nanak Dev Ji, set out to change the extreme form of an individualistic society. By challenging the shackles of the caste system, ignorant ritualism, idolatry and the exploitation of the common masses by the Muslim rulers, he marked a fundamental change which has never been attempted before.

By aiming for a society where all are equal and did not exploit others, the Guru knew this would be an uphill struggle, such a noble and benevolent act cannot be done at once as generations must educate and influence the next generation to phase out old, unjust and corrupt taboos.

The second Sikh Guru, Guru Angad Dev, continued the work started by Guru Nanak. He was pivotal in ‘standardizing the Gurumukhi (type of language) script in the 16th century.’ (Ghai, 2013, p. 70) This gave the Sikhs firstly their own language which later contribute to their identity and complete the Guru’s spiritual message and stood for a society where all were equal and not subject to discrimination based on gender, class or faith. Guru Angad Dev Ji declared “there was no place in his congregation for anyone who observed caste” in Mehma Parkash Patshahi (Narang, 1999, p. 198)

During the tenure of the third Sikh Guru, more emphasis was laid on social reforms whilst women’s emancipation was of the top of the agenda. Guru Amar Das was popularly known ‘as a crusader who advocated in favour of giving equal rights to women in all fields. He was also pivotal in abolishing the practice of Sati among Sikh women’ (Flash, 2016, p. 1).

The fourth Guru, Guru Ram Das was paramount in the organisation and foundational structure of Sikh life and society and promoted the ideal daily for Sikhs. ‘He authored Laava (Sikh marriage) and the four hymns of the Sikh Marriage Rites. However, most amazingly, he was the planner and creator of the township of Ramdaspur, which

subsequently became the Sikh holy city of Amritsar Sahib' (Kaur, 2017, n.p).

By establishing a true Sikh society through the foundation of the Sikh marriage rites, the Guru began to construct a Sikh social identity with the spiritual capital becoming what is now known as Amritsar.

Overall, we can see a general timeline of events from Guru Nanak to Guru Ram Das with each successor being issued with a direct order by their respective predecessor. Guru Nanak began preaching his message which in turn was continued by Guru Angad Dev and Guru Amar Das.

By the time the Guruship was passed onto Guru Ram Das, the message of Guru Nanak began the process of codifying itself into a socioeconomic community without borders, but with spiritual leaders.

The fifth Guru, Guru Arjan Dev, accomplished two very important tasks. Firstly, he began to compile the Sikh scriptures and secondly prepared the foundations for the second phase of political power which would give the Sikhs their own identity within the South Asian continent.

Furthermore, Guru Arjan Dev institutionalised the concept of 'Daswandh' which is to donate a tenth of their salary towards charitable causes and the Sikh community: 'every Sikh should donate one tenth of their income for the common cause of the Khalsa (Sikh nation).' (Narang, 1999, n.p)

During this point in history, the Sikhs had now become distinct, for they had their own divine scriptures, their own common language, their own religious practices, culture and devotional places of worship.

The compilation of the Sikh scriptures had the effect of restoring the truthful virtues of self-respect, self-help and confidence with the sub-continent as many Muslims and Hindus became Sikhs as the slave mentality of the Hindu caste system and the Islamic rule has been swept out.

Once this spiritual uplifting was completed, the fifth Guru paved the way and declared the ultimate of the subsequent mission that would be known to the world as the Khalsa Panth: 'The merciful lord has now given the command that no one will domineer over and give pain to another and all will abide in peace.' (Guru Arjan Dev, Sireeraag Mehala 5, SGGS, 1708, p. 74)

Once the values were spread out in the Sikh community, the next stage was to promote a self-sufficient society where more emphasis was laid on the promotion of trade and professional skills. They also became 'horse riders and traders.' (Narang, 1999, n.p)

By specialising in horse riding and trading, this made the Sikhs adventurous, fearless and wealthy which ultimately formed the nucleus of the Sikh power in the years to come, allowing the Sikhs to be prepared for the future financially and military.

The fifth Guru was also the first Sikh to be martyred, by offering his martyrdom, the Guru taught the most important lesson; God's will and divine plan must not be interfered with, even if one has to be subjugated to extreme torture by sitting on a hot plate and in boiling water, righteousness must be held at any cost.

Guru Arjan Dev further stated that future ‘initiates should be defenders of the Khalsa Raj (Sikh rule), and he should understand the esoteric meaning of the initiation to be that he dedicates his life for the establishment of the Khalsa Raj by wearing arms, the goal being the instrument for the establishment of Universal Society.’ (Law, 2014, p. 1) The Guru instructed his successor son to arm himself and the Sikhs now.

The second phase of the fifth Guru plan was implemented by the sixth Guru, Guru Hargobind, who clearly enunciated the message of Guru Nanak, although the Guru prohibited against greed and the accumulation of wealth, he was not against worldly life nor was he against the use of force for righteous causes (Narang, 1999)

Upon becoming the sixth Guru, the Guru ‘traditionally donned two swords, symbolizing the spiritual (piri) as well as the temporal (miri) investiture. He also built the Akal Takhat (throne of the immortal lord) facing the Harimandir (Golden Temple) which represented the new assumed role of temporal authority.’ (Pashaura Singh, 2003, p. 207) The reasoning behind the two swords was that ‘one sword was to smite the oppressor while the other was to protect the innocent.’ (International, 2015, p. 1)

‘Guru Hargobind was the first to take up arms in defence of the faith, the double swords reinforce the concept of Dharam Yudh which is just war. The Guru whilst a valiant fighter, his battles were entirely defensive in nature: ‘not an inch of territory was gained.’(Alvin William Wolfe, 1996, p. 13)

Here we can deduct that any violent means Sikhs adopt are purely for defensive reasons instead of aggressive ones. In all circumstances, the Sikhs do not attack first, and only raised

their swords and their weapons for general defence, and to protect others who could not protect themselves.

Hundreds of Sikh warriors from all over the Punjab region volunteered their services to the sixth Guru, and the Guru possess an even larger following of ‘seven hundred horses, three hundred horsemen, sixty gunners and four hundred trained warriors and were taught the concept and practical lessons of *a righteous war*.’ (Narang, 1999, n.p)

The seventh Guru, Guru Har Rai ‘continued to maintain an army, and his court displayed the pomp and circumstances of a semi-independent military chieftain.’ (Grewal, 1983, p. 25) His personality was one filled with love, compassion and tenderness. ‘At the same time, he kept as per Guru Hargobind Sahib’s instructions, an army of 2,200 mounted warriors. He was an avid hunter and a great social revolutionary.’ (Singh, 2004, p. 1)

Perhaps the most example of Guru Har Rai as a social revolutionary can be found with his aiding of Dara Shikoh, the true heir apparent to the Mughal throne. The Guru provided him with medical aid when he became ill and had also ‘assisted in his escape from his brother Aurangzeb.’ (Pruthi, 2004, n.p)

Guru Har Rai instilled within Sikhs the values of ‘courage, determination, iron will and devotion. He united the Sikhs into an unbeatable force and wanted Sikhs to stand up bravely to the troubled times that lay ahead for them’ (Sharma, 2006, p. 76), the seventh Guru had emphasised that in order to maintain peace and harmony, armed forces must be maintained and must follow a strict discipline of ethics as it’s means.

Guru Harkrishan, the eighth Guru, led a life of healing and devoted his time to promoting love and humility amongst his followers. Interestingly the eighth Guru was only five years old when he took the Guruship, and this fact proved to the world one key principle of Sikh thesis, spirit has no age, although the physical appearance of the eighth guru was that of a child, it contained the enlightened spirit of Guru Nanak.

The spirit plays the dominant role in life, whereas the body and its sense play a secondary one. With a plague running rife through India at the time, the Guru used his powers to heal his followers. By doing so, he, later, succumbed to the same plague and died. ‘When they were struck with plague the Guru cured them all because he could not bear to see them suffering. Later, when small pox broke out in Delhi, he refused to leave his suffering devotees behind. (Sharma, 2006, p. 54)’

The ninth Guru, Guru Tegh Bahadur was a ‘prophet-martyr whose ennobling spirit, transcendental vision, and humanistic outlook, are reflected in his life and poetical compositions.’ (Kapoor, 2017, p. 1) The Guru stood up against the tyrannical regime against the Hindus and sacrificed his life to ensure that the Hindu religion remained in existence.

Furthermore, the Guru had become the first ‘martyr for religious freedom and human rights. His martyrdom was unparalleled in world history as never before has someone laid down their life to protect the religious expression and freedom of all faiths.’ (Tanda, 2016, p. 1).

Therefore, the life of Guru Tegh Bahadur indicates the responsibility for Sikhs to provide protection for the needy and oppressed. It may have been easier for the Guru to turn a blind eye as neither he nor his community were facing the threat of forced conversion.

Further to this point, here we clearly see that the Guru led by example, he laid down his own life in order to usher in a new era where all faiths and culture would be granted freedom and the God consciousness individuals would flourish.

The Guru's second martyrdom inspired all those across the continent who were in fear of the tyrannical Mughal Empire, they challenged the norm of living in fear and persecution by the Mughals, resisted evil and stake their lives for freedom and righteousness. This concept will be explained further in the creation of the Khalsa.

The tenth Guru, Guru Gobind Singh was born in the mid-17th century. From the outset, Guru Gobind Singh (known before as Gobind Rai) described the purpose of his coming to this world and why he emerged from the supreme reality in human form to carry out his creator's command.

This command was essential to the survival of the Sikh faith and the Guru stated that we must 'uphold and propagate righteousness in every place and destroy the doers of sin and evil.' (Chanan Singh, 1955, p. 1)

The Guru throughout his life, instilled a sense of love and devotion towards God and the importance of remembering Gods' name through meditation. This was combined with his mentality of committing to going through war in order to eliminate evil.

Guru Gobind Singh inspired the Sikhs to remain steadfast and committed to the: 'Godhead, intellectual and spiritual pursuits in times of peace and self-sacrifice in war – war fought not for self-aggrandisement or for lust of power or sway but for the eradication of evil and for the restitution of the down-trodden.' (Chanan Singh, 1955, p. 2)

The essence and fundamental workings of the faith is based on the Sikh scripture, the Guru Granth Sahib, which is the eleventh Guru and is seen as the current living Guru for the Sikhs. The Guru Granth Sahib and its 'contents have an appeal, which is universal, for it has nothing sectarian in its form and spirit. It puts truth in a light, which removes darkness from all human minds.' (Gurmit Singh, 2004, p. 13)

The term Granth itself 'denotes to be a literary composition or code.' (Oxford, 2018, p. 1) Whilst the Guru Granth Sahib is in text form, it is essentially the manifestation of the Guru and its body. It carries the same significant status and authority that the ten previous Sikh Gurus carried during their lifetime.

The Gurus themselves were purely messengers of God and the compilation of the Guru Granth Sahib itself shows the importance of divine manifestation through one light (jot) and word (shabad).

The idea that the Gurus were messengers of God and essentially one light through different forms, is seen through their name being mentioned in the Guru Granth Sahib as Nanak I, Nanak V etc. This shows that the message of the Gurus is the same and are based on one light.

Chapter 2 - The creation of the Khalsa and its importance regarding a Sikh state

Perhaps the most pivotal moment for the Sikhs was the creation of the Khalsa in 1699 by Guru Gobind Singh. The Khalsa Panth refers to a spiritual institution of initiated Sikhs to uphold the values of the Guru through the means of being individual sovereign leaders. We cannot understand the importance and the value that the Khalsa holds, not just for Sikhs, but for minorities that were oppressed under the tyrannical Mughal rule under the discriminatory governance of Emperor Aurangzeb, the leader of the Mughals.

The importance of its creation was that it would establish ‘an order of saint-soldiers who would lead a spiritually pious and enlightened life and strive for the socio-political liberation of the oppressed and the exploited.’ (Kharak Singh, 2001, p. 45)

The five individuals who volunteered to meet the demand of five heads by the Guru became the ‘Panj Pyare’ (five beloved ones) and were the first to be initiated by the amrit made by two-edged sword or khande ki pahul. The importance of this sacrifice is symbolic of the importance of the creation of the Khalsa. ‘By identifying one’s own body and possessions as a sacrifice to the Guru or God was the ‘Sikh way of creating a commune.’

With the creation of the Khalsa representing the ‘militarization of the Sikh movement, this ideal was orientated towards dedication of one’s all to the revolutionary cause.’ (Jagjit Singh, 2015, p. 245)

If we look at the Panj Pyare from a political perspective, we will see that their creation and initiation was iconic as it gave vested leadership to five individuals instead of one. When the Guru gave amrit to the Panj Pyare, he also received amrit from them. This could be argued as being a sign of genuine democracy as he was showing that he was not superior to them but equal to them.

The vision of the Khalsa through the initiation of the Sikhs not only reinforced the idea that a Sikh state was for everyone but also mirrored the teachings of Guru Nanak who wished to see a universal and egalitarian society in which all were able to live peacefully under rule according to the teachings of the Guru peacefully and without tyranny or oppression.

This is supported by the teachings of Guru Nanak contained in the Guru Granth Sahib where Guru Nanak had stated the importance of the term 'panj' itself. It is stated that 'the five are accepted and they are the true leaders, the five are respected in the company of the holy, the five are decorated with honour in front of the lord and the five through meditation are guided by the light of one.' (Guru Nanak, Jap Mehalaa 1, SGGS, 1708, p.1)

The translations show us that in order to understand the message of the Guru, we need to come collectively under the leadership of the panj or five. By doing so, we will be able to understand the principles and ideals that the Guru would want from a universal nation for all.

The Guru, by creating the Khalsa, was implementing the concept of Gurmatta (Guru's intention or order) which was later seen in the Sarbat Khalsa's (gathering of Sikh nation) during the Sikh rule through Banda Singh Bahadur and Maharaja Ranjit Singh. This idea, which will be discussed later

was an important part of Sikhs being able to run their state according to the collective will of the people. It was not about creating a separate state for Sikhs only, but an independent state for all who could live freely under the teachings of the Sikh way of life which encompassed humanitarian values, including the right to practice a religion freely without the fear of persecution or to proselytize others.

The Gurus wanted ‘organisation of a community with trained motivations and aspirations to live as a fraternal people with a sense of independence and the capacity to discharge complete socio-political responsibilities, including struggle against oppression of the invaders and the establishment.’ (Bhagat Singh, 1993, n.p)

It can be highlighted that Guru Gobind Singh had essentially established the foundation of the Khalsa Panth by ending the physical lineage of the Gurus after himself and, even more importantly, making the succession of the Guru a ‘mystical presence within the sacred scripture and the corporate community of the Khalsa.’ (Choor Singh, 1996, p. 1)

By succession of the leadership and lineage to the Guru Granth Sahib, Guru Gobind Singh was showing his followers that in order to rule and live their lives according to the will of the Guru, they must be congruent with the teachings of the Guru Granth Sahib in order to exercise the right to rule. Furthermore, it would reinforce the balance of spiritual authority and temporal authority by consistently referring to the Guru Granth Sahib in order to lead a life which reflected the teachings.

In reference to Khalistan and its vision, the creation of the Khalsa Panth was a spiritual democracy and a government for the Sikhs. The establishment of this community by the Guru was pivotal in paving the way for a future state for the Sikhs. This is supported by the teachings of the Guru Granth Sahib: 'by Guru's grace, practice Raja Yoga.' (Guru Arjan Dev, Raag Gauri Mehalaa 5, SGGS, 1708, p. 211)

This implies the importance of not only practicing a spiritual life but also implementing the importance of fighting against tyrannical oppression and injustice against the innocent. The meaning of Raja denotes to 'royalty or worldly authority while Yog refers to spirituality.' (Kohli, 1994, n.p)

To practice Raj or Raja through the terms of worldly authority would mean that a Sikh must, as mentioned earlier, balance his life with the Yog (wisdom) of spirituality alongside having the spirit to stand up to what is wrong and rectifying that situation however possible in lines with the teachings of the Guru.

Furthermore, looking at the Guru's vision of creating the Khalsa it was clear that the Guru wanted to give the people the divine right to 'overthrow a tyrannical government and establish in its place a government of their choice.'

When looking at this from the context of the time, it was clear that the rule by the Mughal Empire was one of tyrannical despotism and organised oppression. Indian society itself at the time was more focused on the emphasis of 'asceticism, monasticism, celibacy and life negation.' (Kaur, 2000, p. 17)

The Mughal emperor Aurangzeb, who was in power at the time, had developed and implemented a religious policy which continuously persecuted and oppressed minorities in

every aspect of life. From the banning of idol worship, which was accustom to the Hindus, to prohibition of employment for non-Muslims to state official jobs, the policy of Aurangzeb was to force the entire nation fall under Islamic rule. A part of this was when he ‘introduced the jizya tax which was imposed on non-Muslims and destroyed temples.’ (Point, 2011, n.p)

More specifically for Sikhs, ‘Aurangzeb ordered the temples of the Sikhs to be destroyed and Guru’s agents, masands for collecting tithes and presents of the faithful, to be expelled from the cities.’ (Kartar Singh, 2010, p. 10)

The emperor was also responsible for killing the 9th Guru, Guru Tegh Bahadur as mentioned earlier, who had sacrificed his life to save the Hindu faith during the religious policy of Aurangzeb being forced upon those who were not of the Islamic faith.

A rejuvenation of the oppressed people and collective leadership was required in order to combat the Mughal Empire. It can therefore be argued that a need for a new state or new rule was needed. ‘The order of the Khalsa, as divorced from political activity and not dedicated to the achievement of political ends, aiming at eventual establishment of a universal equalitarian global fraternity, has no intelligible connotation.’ (Kapur Singh, 2001, n.p)

Interestingly, it also has been argued that the Khalsa and its creation in 1699 was a representation and influence of other historical events. By diminishing the divine right of kingship to one individual, ‘it was seen to have represented the Glorious Revolution which took place in Britain in 1689.’ (Gogia, 2017, p. 1)

When the Guru had given the right to the Sikhs to overthrow governments which were oppressive in their rule, it could be seen that the Guru 'was anticipating the Declaration of Rights by the thirteen American colonies in 1776.' (Gogia, 2017, p. 1)

The Khalsa and its principles further developed humanitarian values, such as equal status in society for all, and made no distinction between colour, creed and religion. The Guru 'enunciated ninety years earlier the principles of liberty, equality and fraternity which formed the bedrock of the French Revolution.' (Gogia, 2017, p. 1) One could put forward that the Gurus were clearly ahead of their time with their ideas and notions of liberty, politics and socio-political values.

Academics who have studied the creation of the Khalsa and its importance also imply similar themes to its relevance. J.D Cunningham said that 'a living spirit possesses the whole Sikh people and the impress of Gobind Singh has not only elevated and altered the constitutions of their minds but has operated materially and given amplitude to their physical frames.' (Nayar, 2017, p. 23)

To conclude on the importance of the creation of the Khalsa, it was clear that the Gurus were envisioning a new order based on a different social, political and economic order. The Khalsa itself was pivotal in shaping a new form of democracy through a spiritual lens. This was further reinforced by the creation of the Panj Pyare who, themselves, had all come from different backgrounds.

This represented the collective leadership required in accordance with the teachings of the Guru Granth Sahib. 'The Gurus envisaged a new social, political and economic order. The Khalsa is the saviour of humankind and a pioneer of a spiritual democracy and multicultural society. The Khalsa has a crucial role to play in contemporary social, religious, political and economic crisis.' (Arvinder Singh, 2014, p. 1)

More importantly, the Khalsa Panth and therefore Sikhi was the solution to all those that were disadvantaged, discriminated and persecuted by both the Mughal and Brahmin rule in the Indian sub-continent. As the Khalsa strongly rejected the notion of a caste-based society, this offered an alternative for all those that did not fit within the caste framework.

Whilst the Mughals and Brahmins created divisions within the Indian society due to religion and caste, by creating duality from such customs and governance rules, many looked to the Khalsa as their protectors of upholders of justice.

The importance of the Guru Granth Sahib being the eleventh and current Guru of the Sikhs is that it has encompassed the teachings of all the Sikh Gurus throughout their lifetimes. It provides the Sikh followers the paramount teachings of the Sikh way of life through the language of 'Gurbani' which is essentially the 'revealed Divine Words of the Sikh Gurus and of Hindu and Muslim saints from 12th to 17th centuries.' (Gurmit Singh, 2004, p. 12)

Furthermore, its compilation to provide not only a spiritual platform but also a platform which promotes and implements a universal 'message that is common to all and makes no distinction about any caste, colour, creed, gender, profession,

region, religion or status whether high or low.’ (Gurmit Singh, 2004, p. 12)

As the Guru Granth Sahib contains writings of saints from other religions such Islam and Hinduism, from a secular sociological view, those that formed a judgement on the Sikh faith could clearly understand through the teachings of the Gurus that the intention of the Sikhs was not to divide the diverse population of the Indian subcontinent, but to unite it under a banner of universal brotherhood and prescribes various methods and theories of how Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs can live alongside one another in peace, harmony and justice.

Chapter 3 – Miri Piri & Halemi Raj

Having discussed the Gurus and the Guru Granth Sahib, this section will explore the concepts and importance of Miri/Piri and Halemi Raj regarding the notion of a Sikh Nation and its impact for the justification for Khalistan.

Miri Piri originates from the ‘Arabic word amir (lit., commander, governor, lord, prince), which signifies temporal power and piri, from Persian pir (lit. old man, saint, spiritual guide, head of a religious order) stands for spiritual authority.’ (Tarlochan Singh, 2004, p. 1)

It is an important principle which has been pivotal in influencing and shaping the spiritual, political and social thought of the Sikh faith since its inception. Here we see that the teachings of the Sikh Gurus are not against material wealth as it can be used to create and sustain a just society, rather the Gurus were against material wealth to benefit individuals and taught that wealth must be shared throughout society.

The importance of Miri Piri is that it is the foremost duty of a Sikh to protect ‘righteousness’ (dharma) with the right use of his martial capacity. This mode of life is often termed as ‘Saint-Sipahi’ in Sikhism that is to be a ‘saint’ and a ‘soldier’ at one and the same time’ (Harbans Singh, 1986, n.p)

The principle of Miri Piri is something which was utilized by the organisation and objectives of the Babbar Khalsa. The inception of Miri Piri as a vision by the 5th Guru, Guru Arjan Dev, who saw the future difficulties of the Sikh people, felt it was necessary to build an army which would be able to defend against injustice and oppression.

This was something which was to be implemented by the sixth Guru, Guru Hargobind.

The following message by Guru Arjan Dev to Guru Hargobind before his martyrdom fully supports this principle that Miri Piri was a pivotal implementation required for the Sikh way of life to be sustained in the future: 'I have succeeded in effecting the object of my life. Go to my son the holy Hargobind and give him from me ample consolation. Bid him not to mourn or indulge in unmanly lamentations but sing God's praises. Let him also restrain from grief the other members of my family. Let him sit fully armed on his throne and maintain an army to the best of his ability' (Macaulliffe, 1983, p. 80).

This message from Guru Arjan Dev reinforces the notion that Sikhs had to be armed in the future for the means of self-defence. Currently, at this time of Sikh lineage, the spiritual aspect of the Sikh faith was formidably strong, 'but the practical side of Miri was being worked out. It cannot be ruled out that the eventual Sikh sovereignty (Sikh rule) was the vision of Guru Arjan Dev.' (Tarlochan Singh, 2004, p. 1)

Miri/Piri was implemented by the sixth Guru in two ways. During the initiation of the sixth Guru, instead of wearing the traditional attire attributed to previous Gurus, Guru Hargobind wore two swords titled Miri and Piri, 'one on each side, separate from each other at one intersection, symbolizing that both powers were separate together yet so close they have to exist in life together.' (Chahal, 2000, p. 3)

The other was the construction of a supreme political authority of the Sikhs, the Akal Takhat. The importance of this building and its construction all point to the self-defence of the Sikh faith and its protection of its

fundamental beliefs. This was shown when ‘Guru Hargobind intentionally elevated the height of Akal Takht up to 12 feet as against the instructions of the Mughal emperor that no throne should be beyond the three feet height.’ (Arvinder Singh, 2013, p. 106)

The political fortification of the Akal Takht was a response to the ‘unjust, cruel and barbaric Mughal rule at the time.’ (Arvinder Singh, 2013, p. 106) This notion to do the opposite of what the Mughal regime had stated and build a seat of political authority was a direct challenge to the regime and its emperors, stating that Sikhs were not going to carry on being victimised and oppressed under their rule.

In addition to this, Miri Piri also signifies the mission of the Gurus, including Guru Hargobind, to establish a rule in accordance with teachings of the Sikh faith by God entitled ‘Halemi Raj.’ Introduced by Guru Arjan Dev, Halemi Raj was a ‘visualisation of an egalitarian social order based on justice and freedom.’ (Dhillon, 2018, n.p)

It was essential according to the teachings of the Sikh Gurus, especially Guru Arjan Dev, that ‘the Sikhs may aspire to acquire political power but it should be exercised for the welfare of whole mankind.’ (Kashmir Singh, 2001, p. 30) By doing so, everyone would be able to live within a Sikh state, which was essentially visualised for the whole of the human race and for all of mankind.

In the Guru Granth Sahib, Guru Arjan Dev Ji defines real peace which supports the notion of Halemi Raj: ‘The Merciful Master has now ordained that no one annoys, oppresses or inflicts pain on, another. All shall abide in peace in a benign regime.’ (Guru Arjan Dev, Sireeraag Mehalaa 5, SGGS, 1708, p. 74)

This passage from the Guru Granth Sahib shows the reasons as to why it is necessary for a rule which was the opposite of the Mughal regime at the time.

The Mughal regime was infringing upon the rights of those who were not following the Islamic way of life in accordance to the Mughal emperors. Thus, the idea that those living in a regime should live with freedom and safety of not being oppressed. The teachings of the Gurus coupled with the loss of the Sikh empires has now empowered the Sikhs to call for a state based on Sikh rule called Khalistan today.

Chapter 4 – Theoretical Perspectives

Before discussing the call for a separate Sikh state, this chapter will provide a theoretical background discussion on the foundations of Sikh teachings that have reinforced the idea of a separate state. In addition to this, it is also paramount to look from a theoretical perspective at the principles of self-determination which is seen as an underlying right for Sikhs and their cause for an independent homeland.

The concept of self-determination for the Sikhs is based on an understanding of what Khalistan is, the reasoning behind Khalistan and the objectives which need to be met in order to require the attainment of Khalistan.

Khalistan itself translates to ‘land or state of the pure’ (Ross, 2015, n.p). Whilst there is no mention of Khalistan as a state within the teachings of the Guru Granth Sahib or from the Gurus, there are numerous passages which relate to the idea of a Sikh state or reference to the Khalsa which will be explored in further detail.

The idea of Khalistan itself from a spiritual principle is about rule based on the principles of the Sikh faith and the Khalsa which was initiated by Guru Gobind Singh.

Begampura

In the Guru Granth Sahib, the city of Begampura is translated to a ‘city without sorrow’. It is a town where the principles of Sikh are the core of its foundation.’ (Vangaar, 2018, p. 1) The Guru Granth Sahib quotes Begampura in the following:

‘Begampura, the city without sorrow, is the name of the town. There is no 'suffering or anxiety there. There are no troubles or taxes on commodities there. There is no fear, blemish or downfall there. Now, I have found this most excellent city. There is lasting peace and safety there, O siblings of destiny. God's kingdom is steady, stable and eternal. There is no second or third status; all are equal there. That city is populous and eternally famous. Those who live there are wealthy and contented. They stroll about freely, just as they please. They know the mansion of the lord's presence, and no one blocks their way. Says ravi daas, the emancipated shoemaker: whoever is a citizen there, is a friend of mine. (Bhagat Ravidass, Raag Gauri Bhagat Ravidass, SGGS, 1708, p. 345)

From looking at this passage from the Guru Granth Sahib regarding the idea of a state based on Sikh rule, we see a variety of attributes that suggest how a city in this instance represents the characteristic of the kingdom of God.

The term of Begampura itself being related to a city without sorrow or pain reinforces the notion that a nation, city or territory under the control of the teachings of God will not cause any negative impact on an individual living within it. ‘The attainment of this state is the final and of all the religious strivings. The characteristics of the redeemed person are not different from God. He in fact is a god on earth. His life now is a tool in the hands of God to further his purpose of redeeming the whole mankind.’ (Jassal, 2017, n.p)

The following quote from the description of Begampura shows the operations of how it would run: God's kingdom is steady, stable and eternal. There is no second or third status; all are equal there. That city is populous and eternally famous. Those who live there are

wealthy and contented.’ (Bhagat Ravidass, Raag Gauri Bhagat Ravidass, SGGS, 1708, p. 345)

This passage denotes the reality of a Sikh state where no one is suffering from any oppressive or tyrannical rule. In addition, it reinforces that a kingdom under the rules of God is not only a stable and steady one, but a kingdom that will be forever eternal.

The Gurus in their teachings constantly promoted the vision of a nation under Sikh rule. If we look firstly at the teachings of Guru Nanak, we can see that Guru Nanak wanted a state based on the values and teachings of God. This would mean that all those living within the state would be able to live in peace and happiness.

If we look at the teachings of the Guru Granth Sahib, we will see this clear correlation. ‘Thou art the creator and the cause; the self-dependent king, whose subjects are ever in bliss.’ (Guru Arjan Dev, Raag Basant Mehalaa 5, SGGS, 1705, p. 1190)

By analysing the above message from the Guru Granth Sahib, it clearly shows that the creation of this world is founded by God. The use of “cause” signifies that those individuals within the creation of the creator are subject to the creator, which in this instance is God.

The final sentence shows the how important in is that these individuals are in bliss. The translation promotes the view that those who are living within Gods creation, will be happy and in bliss. This is because they are living according to the government of God as he is self-dependent, thus doesn’t require authority from any other government, state or institution.

Furthermore, the teachings within the Guru Granth Sahib not only advocate the importance of rule in accordance with Sikh teachings but also explain why rule under the command of God is required to ensure all are able to live their lives happily. Guru Nanak points out that:

‘The kings are tigers, and their officials are dogs; they go out and awaken the sleeping people to harass them. The public servants inflict wounds with their nails. The dogs lick up the blood that is spilled. But there, in the Court of the Lord, all beings will be judged. Those who have violated the people’s trust will be disgraced; their noses will be cut off.’ (Guru Nanak, Raag Malar Mehalaa 1, SGGS, 1708, p. 1288)

Guru Nanak explains that those who are ruling are oppressive and tyrannical by nature towards the people they govern, acting out of sync with the teachings of God by violating the peoples’ trust and inflicting wounds onto the sleeping people. As discussed earlier,

Guru Nanak was seeing these actions taking place during his lifetime, thus the requirement of rule based on the teachings of God is something of paramount importance. In order to ensure life is focused on Sikhi and its principles, we need to ensure that the state or rule we are a part of is not oppressive or unjust against the lives of those living within that nation.

The words of Guru Arjan Dev make it clear that there is no use to having a nation or empire if it does not bring satisfaction to those living within it and under its rule of government: ‘Even empires are of no use at all, if they do not bring satisfaction.’ (Guru Arjan Dev, Raag Suhee Mahala 5, SGGS, 1708, p. 745) The city of Begampura is a prime example of this.

The teachings of the Gurus also express the need for freedom and sovereignty where the rule of God can be implemented for all. There is a Sikh slogan which is regularly mentioned within Sikh prayers which states that ‘The Khalsa will rule. This is said in the daily prayer of a Sikh.

Bhai Nand Lal who was a contemporary of Guru Gobind Singh stated that ‘the Khalsa will rule and the rebels will be eliminated. All will be obliged to join and only those who take sanctuary will survive.’ (Harjinder Singh, 2014, p. 94) This quote makes the point that those who will be able to live under the rule of God will survive against those who inflict oppression and tyranny upon others.

Here we also see Guru Gobind Singh give a direct order to all his initiated Sikhs to go out and deliver justice in order to destroy tyrannical individuals and regimes. The Guru gave Sikhs the kirpan for this purpose and Kirpa itself translates to divine blessing. The Guru, through the divine, legitimised violence solely for the purposes of delivering vast forms of social, economic and political justice.

The Sikh Gurus through their teachings encouraged that Sikhs should fight for a statehood which would focus on the mandate of God and the people. Political power should be in the hands of those who will follow the principles according to Sikh teachings. Ongoing from this perspective, any ‘opinion must be the main pointer in policy in which political systems must govern accordingly due to the teachings of the Sikh Gurus that God is prevalent within the people.’ (Bains, 1963, p. 242)

To conclude, if we take three terms from the times of the Gurus; Begampura, Miri Piri and the creation of the Khalsa; we will see that the Gurus, through their teachings, clearly outlined and defined the vision and reality of a Sikh state. Throughout the history of the Sikh faith, there have been periods of Sikh rule which have been gained and lost leading to a new call for a separate Sikh state in recent years.

Chapter 5 – Western theories and connection with a Sikh state

Firstly, nationalism is important when understanding the cause for Khalistan in relation to the Sikhs. There are a variety of conventional western theories of nationalism, which look at the foundational historical moments of revolutions and rebellions.

The work of Weber regarding nationalism shows that a community of people can seek for self-determination through seeking a state of their own. This can take place by ‘defining the state in terms of

its monopolization of the legitimate use of force over a particular territory.’ (Dusza, 1989, p. 80) This thought of Weber points out that a community of people will establish a nation of their own.

Furthermore, the theory of nationalism regarding the work of A.D Smith is that territory is paramount in order to be a prerequisite for nationalism. Smith defines nationalism as ‘an ideological movement for attaining and maintain autonomy, unity and identity for a human population deemed to constitute an actual or potential nation.’ (Leoussi, 2001, n.p)

When looking at nationalism in terms of a homeland or territory, Giorgio Shani summarises the work of Smith by pointing out that ‘Smith considers the ‘homeland’ or ‘ancestral land’ where ‘in the shared memories of its inhabitants, the great events that formed the nation

took place’ to be particularly important in the formation of national identity’ (Shani, 2014, n.p) Furthermore, these events which Sikhs resonate to include the empires of Banda Singh

Bahadur, Maharaja Ranjit Singh and the attacks which have taken place in Sikh history, most notably in recent years in 1984 at the Golden Temple in India.

In the case of the Sikh people, it was important for them to class themselves as a nation as they would be able to promote their cause for their own homeland and as a separate identity. Not doing so would mean that they would be depriving themselves from the 'scholarship of an excellent term to being referred as a nation or potential nation in the future.' (Rhodie, 1978, p. 67)

When understanding nationalism with reference to Sikhi, many scholars explain how Sikhs as a people are essentially a nation. Paul Brass makes it evident that 'of all the ethnic groups and peoples of north India, the Sikhs come closest to satisfying the definition of a nationality or a nation.

From a political perspective, the Sikhs had achieved a state under Maharaja Ranjit Singh and this provided the Sikhs with a vast pool of symbols to draw upon to feed the modern sense of Sikh identity.' (Brass, 2005, p. 278)

Misevic Nenad conceptualises nationalism into two versions, with the first focusing on the individual preference in regards to their own feelings of national identity. The second version focuses on those within a community and their objectives in order to achieve or maintain self-determination.

'First is the attitude that members of a nation have when they care about their national identity, and second, the actions that members of a nation take when seeking to achieve or sustain self-determination.' (Nenad, 2018, p. 364)

The latter definition is more suited to this thesis when looking at Khalistan and the self-determination of Sikhs as the actions of the Babbar Khalsa were carried out in order to achieve self-determination and independence for the Sikhs by attaining Khalistan.

Furthermore, the second definition itself ‘raises questions about self-determination and that it must be understood as involving full statehood with complete authority over domestic and international affairs’ (Nenad, 2018, n.p)

In addition to Sikhs being defined as a nation in regards to constituting towards a separate nation or self-determination, the work of Mehar Singh Chaddah in his book ‘Are Sikhs a Nation?’ makes the suggestion that Sikhs are essentially foundationally based on ‘a common race, common language, common history, common religion, common joys and sorrows, and common political aims and aspirations, which are the primary factors that make up a nation’ (Chaddah, 1982, p. 75)

These pre-requisitions of common history, religion, emotions, political aims and aspirations can be linked with the work of Ernest Renan who set the requirements for what constitutes a nation in his work ‘What is a nation?’

The main point Renan makes in his work is that the importance of a nation and its fundamental foundation is prioritized on an organisation of people who not only share experiences and history but also agree to remain united and be governed by authority which is consented by all.

This idea is supported through Renan’s comments which makes it clear that ‘A nation is a soul, a spiritual principle. Two things, which in truth are but one, constitute this soul or spiritual principle. One lies in the past, one in the present.

One is the possession in common of a rich legacy of memories; the other is present-day consent, the desire to live together, the will to perpetuate the value of the heritage that one has received in an undivided form.’ (Renan, 1822, p. 46)

Sovereignty is also an important aspect when discussing Khalistan. Sovereignty is ‘the cornerstone of international rhetoric about state independence and freedom of action, and the most common response which to seek to limit a state’s action in any that is that such initiatives constitute an impermissible limitation on that states sovereignty.’ (James, 1986, n.p) This idea states that the need for sovereignty is based on any limitations that will prevent the sovereignty of that state.

In terms of independence, it can be argued that sovereignty can be equated with independence on the basis that ‘the fundamental authority of a state to exercise its powers without being subservient to any outside authority.’ (Brownlie, 1979, p. 433)

Now when looking at this in the context of Sikhi and a nation based on Sikh rule, we will see that the importance of a Sikh state is based upon the teachings which are found within the Guru Granth Sahib.

The concept of Begampura and Halemi Raj as mentioned on page 22 clearly show the importance of a Sikh nation being founded on benevolent rule according to the command of the Lord, by doing so, as Renan points out that a nation is a soul or a spiritual principle: ‘Now, the merciful lord has issued his command. Let no one chase after and attack anyone else. Let all abide in peace, under this benevolent rule.’ (Guru Arjan Dev, Sireeraag Mehalaa 5, SGGS, 1708, p. 74)

Carrying on from this, Renan makes another clarification that a nation is defined through its 'culmination of a long past of endeavours, sacrifice and devotion, in addition to a large-scale solidarity, constituted by the feeling of the sacrifices one has made in the past.' (Renan, 1822, p. 4)

Renan establishes the principle that a nation and its foundation are a collection of historical events or sacrifices which have united people together and brought them under one banner, whether this is for self-determination or for the right to live a life free from oppression or tyranny. When linking this back with the Sikhs and for an independent nation based on Sikh rule, this idea that Renan promotes does have resonance in regards to Sikhi.

The creation of the Khalsa in 1699 at Anandpur Sahib (Sikh temple) by Guru Gobind Singh exemplified this idea of uniting the people under one community and not bound by religion, colour, creed or culture. The Khalsa was the creation of a new identity and was the 'just, equitable, self-respecting, loving and altruistic society envisioned by Guru Nanak'. (Singh, 1998, p. 32)

Ernest Gellner also focused on the ideas of nation and nationalism. Gellner believed that nationalism should be defined as 'the general imposition of a high culture on society, where previously low cultures had taken up the lives of the majority of the population.' (Gellner, 1983, p. 49)

This statement in relation to the Sikh narrative for independence is that the high culture of society which Gellner speaks of can translate to being the equal right to life for every human being. In addition to this, it makes sense that this high culture and low culture will need to be based on the teachings of the Sikh faith. If we look at the idea of low

culture, this essentially means those ideals that go against Sikhi. This can include but is not limited to oppression and the persecution of minorities, or, living a life against the teachings of God.

Furthermore, Gellners words also suggest that in order to achieve high culture, we must continually implement the values of high culture in order to replace the low culture which had been a part of the majority population of people living within society.

However, in accordance with Sikhi, if there is opposition in allowing for high cultures to be within society, physical means must be implemented once all other diplomatic avenues have failed.

This is based on the teachings of Guru Gobind Singh who exclaimed that ‘When all other means have failed, it is righteous to draw the sword.’ (Sarna, 1705, n.p) This means that to establish Sikh independence and a homeland with a society based on the teachings of Sikhi ‘force is essential to strengthen political liberty, and without political liberty religious cultural, intellectual, social and economic freedoms cannot be maintained.’ (Arvinder Singh, 2013, p. 48)

Manuel Castell’s theory of resistance identity is also an interesting concept that aids in the understanding of Guru Gobind Singh’s principle of using physical means if all others have failed. Manuel points out that resistance is necessary in defending a clear identity.

He states that ‘constructs forms of resistance against otherwise unbearable oppression on the basis of clearly defined identities making it easier to the essential boundaries of resistance.’ (Castells, 2010, n.p)

Now if we look at the concept of resistance identity from a Sikh perspective, we can see that throughout Sikh history, this notion of ‘resistance identity’ has been implemented and propagated throughout the Gurus lives and also those who followed the teachings of the Gurus. The protection of the oppressed and weak is a fundamental aspect of Sikhi.

The creation of the Khalsa by Guru Gobind Singh ensured that the downtrodden within society had the opportunity to not only free themselves from the situation they were in, but more importantly, they were also able to take a proactive approach in protecting society and tackling the issue causing that oppression.

Furthermore, the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur was another prime example of this resistance identity which Castell highlights in his work. The Guru sacrificed his life, not only to protect the existence of all faiths, but to also show that all who live within society have the fundamental right to practice their beliefs free from oppression or injustice.

This physical action of human sacrifice not only put an end to the forced conversions of non-Muslims by the Mughal government at the time but was also ‘the only example in the history of the world where a religious leader willingly gave his life fighting for the rights of others.’ (Sekhon, 2014, n.p)

When looking at Sikh independence and the objective of Khalistan, this mind-set implemented by the Sikh Gurus is an example of the qualities of the Sikh faith which would be pivotal in the creation of a nation based on Sikh rule. If we look at nations that are already in existence, we see that they too see the benefit of giving the right of all people to practice and follow their own religious, cultural and social beliefs behest from any form of persecution, tyranny or oppression.

One only needs to study the United States constitution to see that the first amendment of 1791 states that ‘Congress shall make no law establishing articles of faith, or a mode of worship, or prohibiting the free exercise of religion’ (Meiklejohn, 1961, p. 245)

The fact that this features in a constitution of an existing nation today shows that the principles of Sikhi are essentially universal which can benefit everyone in society not only from the past and present but most importantly for the future in the attainment of a Sikh state.

Chapter 6 – The establishment of Sikh states under Banda Singh Bahadur and Maharaja Ranjit Singh

In the previous chapters, I introduced and explored the theoretical perspective of Khalistan as a Sikh state which was supported by the religious and spiritual teachings of the Sikh Gurus and how they interconnect with the traditional western theories of statehood. This chapter will focus on two historical examples of Sikh governance which closely resembled Sikh statehood. The first was led by Banda Singh Bahadur and Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

Banda Singh Bahadur

The first Sikh state was ruled by Banda Singh Bahadur in the early eighteenth century. Banda Singh was successful in uprooting the ruling Mughal government of the time who had implemented a discriminatory feudal ruling system which adversely affected communities of other faiths and backgrounds.

Banda Singh made it his mission to liberate all those persecuted and were disadvantaged under the Mughal regime and his selection to undertake this task was given to him by Guru Gobind Singh before his passing.

The Sikh state under Banda Singh Bahadur showed a variety of institutional frameworks which suggested indications of the creation of Sikh nation after the period of the Gurus through the policies brought forward by Banda Singh. One example of this would be the creation of Sikh currency which was developed with the inscribing of coins to commemorate

the new rule under the Khalsa after the victory and control of Sirhind, where the two younger sons of Guru Gobind Singh were martyred, from the Mughals. The coins presented a fine example of a nation in its preliminary development with the introduction of a currency system. The coins themselves showcase to us the vision that Banda Singh had with regards to the creation of a Sikh state under the rule of the Guru:

‘Granted by Guru Nanak under the strength of his sword, the victory of Guru Gobind Singh, king of kings, has been achieved with the grace of God almighty. Coined at the place of peace and security, picture of a beautiful city, where the auspicious throne of the Khalsa is located.’ (Sagoo, 2001, p. 152)

Furthermore, Banda Singh progressed the development of the Sikh state with the foundation of an official government royal stamp. This stamp was used ‘for making impressions on the orders of his government.’ (Seetal, 2012, p. 68) The translation of the seal further supports the theory discussed earlier that this vision for Sikh rule was visualized by Guru Nanak all the way to Guru Gobind Singh:

‘The kettle to feed the poor, sword to defend and protect the meek and helpless and spontaneous victory received from Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh.’ (Sagoo, 2001, p. 155)

Dr Ganda Singh points out that Banda Singh Bahadur ‘abolished the zamindari system (tax collection) and introduced peasant proprietorship which up to this day is recognised as one of the best fiscal reforms.” (Singh, 1971, p. 67)

The elimination of this system gave farmers the right to collect their own revenue from their work and not through intermediaries who were abusing their position.

This system was replaced with a 'batai system' (sharecropping) which saw revenue from farming produce split between the workers and the government. 'On the economic plane, Banda Singh Bahadur could be given the credit for introducing revenue reforms in the Punjab.

This was a remarkable contribution which was later improved upon by Maharaja Ranjit Singh.' (Sagoo, 2001, p. 158) By doing so, the farmers were treated as equals and had control over their own property.

The objectives and reforms that Banda Singh Bahadur had implemented during the reign of Sikh statehood through his leadership reinforce the ideals of what a Sikh nation is to be based upon. The freedom of those from other religious backgrounds were able to practice their way of life freely and the action taken against those who had inflicted oppression and tyranny.

Whilst it is quite clear that Banda Singh Bahadur had obtained territory on his quest for Sikh sovereign rule, Banda Singh granted freedoms to the local population and unlike the Mughals did not discriminate and employed non-Sikhs into his army to fight for the Khalsa. 'Out of the Sikhs under Banda Singh, he forged an instrument of justice for the poor and the down-trodden and of severe chastisement for those who had been following trade of oppression with impunity. Banda Singh executed justice and taught the people of Punjab to fight against oppression and tyranny.' (Sukhdial Singh, 2005, p. 59)

The ideals implemented by him were simply reinforcing the teachings of the Guru Granth Sahib and the Gurus themselves, to instill justice and equality for all. Banda Singh had essentially envisaged the reality of a Sikh state. 'The idea of national state, long dead once again became a living aspiration and although suppressed for the time being by relentless persecutions. It went on working underground like a smoldering fire and came out forty years later with a fuller influence, never to be suppressed again' (Sukhdial Singh, 2005, p. 197) Banda Singh used the call to arms to exert influence and create a preliminary Sikh nation with a clear code of ethics, laws and with a physical border

Maharaja Ranjit Singh

After the reign of Banda Singh Bahadur, the next period of Sikh independence was under the rule of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in the late eighteenth century. This period of Sikh rule saw a development of the rule initiated by Banda Singh Bahadur. Maharaja Ranjit Singh's rule was a unique and interesting development of a Sikh state and showed many of the attributes and qualities that were reinforced through the teachings of Sikhi by the Guru Granth Sahib. I will be looking at the Sikh empire of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in accordance with the teachings of the Sikh Gurus with reference to the Guru Granth Sahib.

Statistically the Sikh state under the control of Maharaja Ranjit Singh saw Sikhs being a minority within its own control. 'Muslims made up around 60 percent of the state, with Hindus forming 25 percent and Sikhs only 20 percent respectively and around 5 percent of other faiths and communities.' (LM Joshi, 1997, p. n.p)

In addition to this, Maharaja Ranjit Singh had created a state which was a 'secular state that was unique for its time in nature. He hired talented Hindus, Muslims and even Christian Europeans to serve at his courts and train his army, and honoured all their religious traditions equally.' (S P Singh, 2001, n.p)

In the Guru Granth Sahib, we see that the policies implemented by Maharaja Ranjit Singh are supported by the teachings of Guru Nanak: 'Call everyone high, none appears to be low; everyone has been moulded from the same matter; and the same source of light shines in all.' (Guru Nanak, Sri Raag Mehalaa 1, SGGS, 1708, p. 62) The first of his policies to be implemented by his government was that all his officials must 'ensure welfare of the masses.' (College, 2008, p. 55)

The creation of the Sarkar E Khalsa government by Maharaja Ranjit Singh further supports the notion that he was following the teachings of Sikhi and the Gurus and can be linked to the idea that 'The Khalsa shall rule and there shall be no opposition. Those in the opposition camp shall return to join [the Khalsa] after bitter frustration' (Lal, 1700, n.p)

The Maharaja understood that in order for the Khalsa to remain in power, they must retain an efficient and powerful army which could defend the Sikh state and its people. The Maharaja transformed the Khalsa army from horseback to artillery and trained on a model based on European armies in order to ensure that the Khalsa army within the Sikh state had the ability and resources required to protect the state from its enemies.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh had 'reformed the staffing to emphasize steady fire over cavalry and guerrilla warfare, improved the equipment and methods of war. The military

system of Ranjit Singh combined the best of both old and new ideas. He strengthened the infantry and the artillery. (Singh, 1986, n.p)

The Maharaja knew himself that the army of the Khalsa would be the backbone of the reign of Sikh independence, and as a result he ‘moulded the brave but impetuous Sikhs through iron discipline into a formidable fighting force and governing his multi ethnic, multi religious subjects equitably and effectively.’ (Kumar, 2012, p. 30)

The principles of Miri-Piri discussed earlier were seen during an incident which saw the Maharaja receive a punishment after being summoned to the Akal Takhat (throne of the immortal.) ‘The fact that Ranjit Singh is willing to respond to this call again shows the negotiations and shifts between temporal and spiritual power.’ (Pashaura Singh, 2014, p. 262)

This reinforced that everyone is bound by the rule of the state in accordance with the teachings of the Guru. This also shows that all within the state were subject to the rule of God which is also connected to Guru Nanak’s concept of a state on Sikh rule where he points out that a just government should deliver justice to its people.

However, when it comes to administering justice: ‘a ruler can purify his mind only by administering justice.’ (Guru Nanak, Raag Sarang Mehala 1, SGGS, 1708, p. 1240) He himself, the king of the universe, administers justice.’ (Guru Amar Das, Raag Maaroo Mehala 3, SGGS, 1708, p. 1092)

Overall, the Sikh Empire under Maharaja Ranjit Singh had a broad vision and rule according to principles which largely focused on humanitarian values envisioned by Guru Nanak and the importance of the implementation of Miri Piri through the expansion and development of the Khalsa army.

However, the longevity of the empire and its sustainability suffered through internal conflict and betrayal. In relation to Sikh independence, the consequences of the loss of the empire are vital in order to find solutions to these problems and prevent them from arising again in a new period of Sikh rule.

Despite trying his best to develop the Sikh empire in accordance with the teachings of Sikhi and the Gurus, the Maharaja's 'bonpartist political theory and Sikh empire blew up in 1849 by mutual ideological conflict between the policies and aims of the republican Khalsa army and the despotic monarchical trends and aims of the civil apparatus of the government.' (Kapur Singh, 1959, p. 417)

By examining both periods of Sikh rule under Banda Singh Bahadur and Maharaja Ranjit Singh, we can see the importance of Sikhi principles which have come through the Guru Granth Sahib as a paramount factor in the operations of a Sikh state.

Additionally, it's also crucial to look at these periods of Sikh rule as a learning process in the creation of a Sikh state in the future. They have both showed that 'religiously regulated political action will always remain a possibility in the Sikh system because of the indivisibility of religious and temporal power.' (Pettigrew, 1987, p. 5).

Chapter 7 – Sikh independence post 1947

Sikhs in recent history have been steadfast in implementing the reality of a Sikh state. Most notably, we have witnessed this during the independence of India in 1947 and in the aftermath of Operation Bluestar in 1984 which saw Sikhs call for a separate Sikh state due to human rights violations.

When India had seen a possible exit from British rule and towards the independence of the Indian nation during the 1920's, Sikhs were beginning to realise the importance of safeguarding their future status as a separate community.

These safeguarding issues included the protection of the Sikhs against the 'cultural assimilation by the Hindu majority and uncertainties of conflictual history with the Mughal rulers lent a sense of urgency for a secure and honourable status in any agreement.' (Iqbal Singh, 1986, n.p).

The first recorded mention of a separate Sikh State of Khalistan was in April 1940 by Dr Vir Singh Bhatti who had proposed 'Khalistan comprising the areas from Yamuna to Jamaruad and as a buffer state between India and Pakistan.' (Dilgeer, 1997, n.p) This was in a pamphlet that outlined the geographical lines of the state was based upon the 'Sikh majority districts of Punjab, Sikh princely states of Patiala included non-Sikh princely states such as Simla Hill and states in today's Pakistan which included Sheikhpora and Lahore.' (Gur Rattan Pal Singh, 1979, p. 77).

From the writings of Dr Bhatti, it is evident he was trying to re-create the geographical vision of the former Sikh empire ruled by Maharaja Ranjit Singh which had its rule stretching from Afghanistan to India. This gave the Sikhs a starting point when it came to laying the boundaries of a new independent state of Khalistan.

On 9th March 1946, the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabhandak Committee (Sikh political organisation), through its working committee, passed a resolution in favour of a Sikh state. The committee oversaw the handling Sikh affairs, especially regarding the matters of the rights for Sikhs.

This demand made it clear that a Sikh state should include a 'substantial majority of the Sikh population and their shrines with provision for the transfer and exchange of population and property, by doing so the British would only return to the Sikhs what they had directly got in trust from them.' (Grewal, 1996, p. 7)

The introduction of this resolution made it evident that the Sikhs were pushing for a separate Sikh state to the best of their ability given the circumstances. The Sikhs wanted to safeguard their community and by having a separate state just with the demands from the Hindu and Muslim communities for respective states to protect their communities. The Hindus were given India and the Muslims were given Pakistan. Sikhs were not given their own land.

Prior to partition in 1946, the Sikhs had made a variety of requests to the British to push for a Sikh state. This included 'the establishment of a Sikh university, demand for 30% of representation in the Punjab administration, approval of the Gurdwara act, reinstatement of the Maharaja of Nabha

(prince of Nabha area) on the throne and also the demand of Khalsa Raj.’ (Ghuman, 1983, n.p)

For the Sikhs, the independence of India in 1947 and a separate state for Sikhs was a constant promise that was made the Indian Congress party of the time who went out of their way to ‘extend their promises to the Sikhs to hold on to their loyalties to prevent a possible coalition with the Muslim league.’ (Gulati, 1974, p. 102)

This was further supported by reassurances delivered by Jawaharlal Nehru, the leader of the party who made it clear that ‘if the Sikhs desire to function as a semi-autonomous unit, they should have it within the province so they may have a sense of freedom.’ (Suba, 1946, n.p)

Nehru also went on to formalize this pledge when he had moved a resolution in 1946 which stated that ‘adequate safeguards would be provided for minorities in India, it was a declaration and therefore in the nature of an oath we must keep.’ (Rao, 1968, p. 415)

However, there was a sense of uncertainty and worry among the Sikh people who felt that their wishes for a separate Sikh state would not come into fruition. This worry was based on the negligence of the ruling congress government in India at the time before the negotiations during the partition of India, which saw the Sikh community being unsuccessful in their application for a separate representation of the Sikhs within the Minto Morley Scheme of 1909.

Furthermore, the ‘Congress leadership were opposed to the demand of separate representation for Sikhs. In addition to this, they persistently claimed that they were of the Hindu identity and this was one of the reasons why the Sikhs were ignored in the Lucknow Pact of 1916.’ (Sahni, 2015, p. 37)

The pact itself allowed and 'encouraged Hindu and Muslim communalists to build up communal organisations asserting and working for the separate interests of their respective communities. This helped to prepare the way for the communal clashes in the 1920's.' (Owen, 1972, p. 587)

Despite these earlier setbacks, the promises made closer to the time period of partition, suggested that the Indian government was clearly happy in accepting the proposal of a separate Sikh state. However, once the British had left, these promises were not fulfilled or realised.

The Minority Sub Committee of the Constituent Assembly made it clear that 'no special provision should be provided for the Sikhs and that minorities and their statutory reservations for religious minorities should be abolished.' (Sarhadi, 1970, p. 181)

From a linguistic basis, the Sikhs felt that the reorganisation of the state of Punjab during independence had negatively impacted their community and this can be seen through the Punjab census of 1951 which had 'vital information that had been deleted with a view to negating the linguistic aspirations of the Sikhs.' (Iqbal Singh, 1986, n.p)

From the period pre- and post-independence, it is quite evident and clear that the Sikhs were promised a separate state by the Indian government at the time. However, as partition took place, these promises were not fulfilled and Sikhs had lost their voice to raise their need for a separate state.

By understanding the basic historical perspective of the impact of the independence of India for the Sikhs it is easy to see how the 'non fulfilment of the numerous promises

given by the national leaders emerged as a disquieting realization that the Sikh community had been democratically marginalized and reduced to a mere shadow of its past.'

(Ahluwalia, 1983, n.p) Furthermore, this resulted in a great deal of resentment, and lead to a spring of movements by the Sikhs for what they felt they deserved.

Chapter 8 – Panjabi Suba movement

While the partition of the original territory of the Punjab did not provide the Sikhs with any hope of a separate Sikh state, the years following on from 1947 saw more political agitation for the rights of the Sikhs living within the newly formed India.

One of the major movements which focused on the push for a Sikh state was the Punjabi Suba movement. The movement focused on the demand for a ‘Sikh state based purely on the linguistic basis which would struggle for a separate Sikh state within India’ (Sarhadi, 1992, n.p)

Its objective was to preserve the Punjabi language, which was the mother tongue for most of the Sikhs at the time. The translation of Punjabi Suba is a ‘state based on Punjabi, the mother tongue for the Punjabi people, written in Gurmukhi script.’ (Nahal, 2011, n.p)

Furthermore, the movement itself was unique as it was ‘the first organized and non –violent movement in post-independent India which challenged the secular credentials of a democratic republic of India in modern times.’ (Sharma, 2018, p. 1)

The movement pushed the Indian government to create a state of Punjab which would give the Sikhs the right to their way of life. The demand for the Punjabi state was raised by Master Tara Singh who had stated that the Suba was raised for the Sikhs due to the failures of the Akali Dal to secure constitutional safeguards for the Sikhs in the new constitution of India which saw ‘Sikhs being 33.3 per cent of the population.’ (Kapoor, 1986, p. 208)

In addition to this, the need for the Punjabi Suba was further reinforced by the promises broken by the Indian Congress leaders prior to partition who promised that ‘Sikhs will have the right to determine their own political status and that they were considered to be a sovereign community in India and in the constituent assembly.’ (Sarhadi, 1970, p. 94)

The Akali Dal, who were the mainstream Sikh political party of the time, alongside their leader Master Tara Singh, implemented a ‘variety of strategies in order to achieve the Punjabi Suba which included constitutional, infiltration and agitation methods.’ (Nayar, 1966, p. 221)

These strategies were aimed at the government-based State Reorganisation commission which was in charge of ‘the formation of linguistic states in India.’ (Sharma, 2018, p. 1) When it came to discussing the state of Punjab, the commission had caused outrage towards the Sikhs when they firstly rejected the demand of the Punjabi Suba and recommended that Punjab be joined with other states which had linguistically a majority Hindi speaking population.

This angered the Akali Dal and Master Tara Singh who exclaimed that the recommendation by the commission had delivered the ‘Sikhs bound hand and foot to the slavery of an aggressively communal group.’ (Rai, 1965, p. 243)

Throughout the early 1960’s until the late 60’s there was a continuous period of agitations, protests and government elections which all impacted the status and reality of the Punjabi Suba becoming formalized. The agitations, which were started by the Sikhs, were devised in a way that they created a ‘situation where all government activity concentrates on coping with the agitation.’ (Nayar, 1966, p. 234) By doing so this would lead to an ‘imminent break-down of law and

order, thus coercing the government into making concessions.’ (Nayar, 1966, p. 237) The entirety of the Punjabi Suba campaign saw approximately ‘twelve thousand Sikhs arrested for their peaceful demonstrations in 1955 and twenty-six thousand in 1960-61.’ (Deol, 1996, n.p)

The creation of a new Punjab state based through the Punjabi Suba was finally made a reality in 1966 and gave Sikhs a majority within the state with around ‘61 per cent of the total population being Sikh in comparison with the Hindu population being around 37 per cent.’ (Brown, 2003, n.p)

With Sikhs now being a majority within the new state of Punjab, this further pushed the vision for a Sikh state. Many Sikh intellectuals under the newly formed Punjab began to educate and propagate the people of the Punjab about the vital need for a Sikh state. This was through the academia of universities, their teachers and students, where they were ‘articulating the demand for an autonomous Sikh homeland.’ (AISSF, 1969, n.p)

Whilst the Punjabi Suba had helped the Sikhs on a temporary basis linguistically, the Sikhs were still not being delivered what was promised to them before the partition of India.

Although Sikhs had become a majority within the state of Punjab, many other areas with a high Punjabi speaking population were left outside of the state and a vast amount of river water from the Punjab had been re diverted to neighbouring states.

Chapter 9 – Anandpur Sahib Resolution

In 1973, the Sikhs furthered their demand for a Sikh state and this time it was formulated through a ‘documented expression of the Sikh community’s religious-political aspirations.’ (Nahal, 2011, n.p) This was coined the Anandpur Sahib Resolution, which combined ‘political demands for a federalist structure with rights over resources that were vital to agriculture’ (Chopra, 2012, p. 49).

Many believe that the Anandpur Sahib Resolution is an actual ‘ideological basis for the demand for Khalistan, whilst others believe it is a demand for an autonomous Sikh dominated Punjab.’ (Telford, 2012, p. 971)

Whilst the twelve objectives don’t call specifically for Khalistan, the resolution does call for the implementation of the promises and assurances made to the Sikhs by the government before the partition of India in 1947.

However, the declaration of the Sikhs as a ‘Quam’ meaning a nation within the resolution led to the suspicion of the Indian Government that the ‘Sikhs were seeking a separate homeland.’ (Telford, 2012, p. 972)

From a political perspective, the need for the resolution was vital for the Sikhs as it would ‘preserve and keep alive the concept of distinct and independent identity of the Panth and to create an environment in which national sentiments and aspirations of the Sikh Panth will find full expression, satisfaction and growth’ (Tatla, 1999, p. 27)

The resolution itself and its objectives attempt to pursue the wrongdoings done to the Sikhs during the partition of India and the Punjabi Suba movement, which preceded the Anandpur Sahib Resolution. Whilst the Punjabi Suba movement had led to a new state being formed in 1966, it had still left out states in which a majority of people spoke Punjabi as their main language. The Anandpur Sahib Resolution demanded 'the transfer of Punjabi speaking and contiguous areas to Punjab' (Harbans Singh, 1995, p. 104)

When it came to the safeguarding of the Sikhs on a basis of political identity and their culture, the resolution made clear statements which needed to be recognized:

'Whereas, the brute majority in India, in 1950, imposed a constitutional arrangement in India which denied the Sikhs of their political identity and cultural popularity, thus liquidating the Sikhs politically and exposing them to spiritual death and cultural decay leading inevitable to their submergence and dissolution. Whereas, the Sikhs have been shackled and enslaved in unethical and cynical repudiation of solemn and binding commitment and public promises earlier made to the Sikhs' (Harbans Singh, 1995, p 134)

For the Sikhs, the Anandpur Sahib Resolution was pivotal in their struggle for their rights as not only a nation but pledges that were already accepted by other nations including the Muslim League and the Congress party before partition. By reemphasizing that the Sikhs were a political nation, it suggested that the Sikhs had right to their own land which was promised by the likes of Nehru and the Congress Party:

‘Whereas, the Sikhs of India are a historically recognized political nation ever since the inauguration of the Khalsa, in AD 1699; Whereas, this status of Sikh nation had been internationally recognized and accepted by the major powers of Europe and Asia and again by the outgoing British as well as by the Hindu-dominated Congress and the Muslim League of India in the middle of the 20th century.’ (Harbans Singh, 1995, p. 134)

The importance of the Anandpur Sahib Resolution for the Sikhs in search of their separate state was that it identified a variety of key issues which Sikhs were facing living within India. This included the ongoing water problem which saw rivers of Punjab being redirected to other states, agriculture issues and the ongoing linguistic issue with Punjabi being the main language for the Punjab.

Despite this however, defining the Sikhs as a nation was one indicator that ultimately Sikhs wanted their freedom and independence. The broken promises from prior to the partition of India and the struggle through the Punjabi Suba led to the formation of the Anandpur Sahib Resolution as a solution, which needed to be implemented in order to combat the issues that were to rise in the following decades.

Chapter 10 – Dharam Yudh Morcha

During the late 1970's and early 1980's the movement for Sikhs and exercising their rights and demands which were promised prior to independence had increased quite largely due to the political struggle through the Punjabi Suba, the Anandpur Sahib Resolution and now, the Dharam Yudh Morcha.

The Dharam Yudh Morcha constituted a combination of the Anandpur Sahib Resolution and Punjabi Suba struggle, which was essentially a 'peaceful civil disobedience agitation.' (Harjinder Singh, 2014, n.p) This saw Sikhs courting arrests in their thousands as a result of the refusal of the Indian government and Prime Minister Indira Gandhi to meet the demands of the Anandpur Sahib Resolution.

The agitation and campaign were not purely aimed at the Sikhs and their demands for their autonomy but for all of those who classed themselves as Punjabi or lived within the state of Punjab.

These issues which had started from the Punjabi Suba struggle ranged economic issues, such as water diversion from the Punjab via its rivers, to a lack of investment in agriculture development by the government. These were further reinforced by the demands of the Sikhs for the promises made during the negotiations of partition.

Punjab, at the time, was the only state in India during this period that was the most vocalised for the demands of autonomy for their state. Due to this, the government was able to isolate the demand of the Anandpur Sahib Resolution and 'the central Government exploited the lack of call for autonomy from other states and isolated the resolution as

anti-national, communalist and even secessionist at times.’
(Rai, 2011, p. 1)

Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale (Sikh leader) was pivotal throughout the Dharam Yudh Morcha in ‘inspiring the masses to court arrest, through his speeches and preaching tours as a result of the breakdown in negotiations between the Sikhs and Indira Gandhi who ‘purposely maneuvered away from reaching a compromise.’ (Harjinder Singh, 2014, n.p)

Furthermore, ‘when the agitation began, it was led by reasonable men seeking a reasonable settlement of reasonable demands. At least three times there were prospects of agreement, but each time Indira Gandhi sabotaged the agreements.’ (Kuldip Nayar, 1984, n.p)

The refusal of Indira Gandhi at the time to accept the demands of the Dharam Yudh Morcha, resulted in the Sikhs and those in support of them to further their demand for their rights. This included courting arrest to show disobedience to the Indian government and ‘approximately 250,000 Punjabis courted arrest between 1982 and 1984.’ (Harjinder Singh, 2008, n.p)

The response by the government towards those protesting for the Dharam Yudh Morcha played a key role in the Sikhs furthering their demand for a separate state of their own. The government responded with an instigation of violence to repress the protesting taking place.

Fake encounters were implemented by the state under the authority of Indira Gandhi and her Congress government to target ‘baptized Sikhs who were arrested, tortured and murdered.’ Furthermore, the ‘notoriously inefficient and frequently corrupt Indian judicial system created a perverse

incentive for security forces to stage fake encounters to avoid the delays of the legal process.’ (Webb, 2016, p. 71)

These fake encounters, and the human rights violations that resulted, pushed Sikhs further towards the demand for Khalistan and a separate state away from India. ‘The State responded by crushing it with the full might of its security services and legal provisions leading to a cycle of counter State violence which also targeted politicians and public figures supporting the government line.’ (Rai, 2011, p. 1)

Chapter 11 – Post Operation Bluestar violations (Sikh Genocide 1984)

In the first week of June and on the martyrdom day of the fifth Sikh Guru, Guru Arjan Dev, Indira Gandhi ordered the Indian army to invade the Harmandir Sahib, also known as

Golden Temple codenamed ‘Operation Bluestar’ on the basis to ‘flush out suspected terrorists who were using it to kill innocent people, to apprehend suspected criminals who had taken base there and to remove cache of weapons inside of the temple’. (GOI, 1949, n.p)

The suspected criminals which Indira Gandhi and the Government were referring to were Sikhs such as Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, who was seen as the key figure in the Dharam Yudh movement for the Sikhs. The broken pre-partition promises, Punjabi Suba movement and Anandpur Sahib resolution united the community of the Sikhs through the emphasis and importance of a ‘distinct Sikh identity, insistence on fighting for justice in order to strengthen the Sikh movement for greater autonomy.’ (Kandola, 2011, p. 32)

Indira Gandhi’s refusal to negotiate with the Sikhs was evidenced by those within government at the time. Her orders to attack the Golden Temple, which is the holiest place for Sikhs, set the foundation stone for the Sikhs to fight for their independence of a Sikh state.

Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale explicitly stated that ‘if the Golden temple complex came under attack, the foundation for Khalistan would be laid. This formulation pointed to the responsibility for a rebellion in Punjab at the hands of the government.’ (Pashaura Singh, 2014, p. 578)

The Sikhs knew that the struggle for Khalistan and an independent state would have to come through physical means after they had learned that Indira Gandhi had been planning to attack the Golden Temple 18 months prior to the actual invasion. Her refusal to negotiate with the Sikhs saw her go to further lengths in order to stop the movement of the Sikhs and their struggle for independence.

The operation itself has been criticized as it was ‘not only envisioned and rehearsed in advance, meticulously and in total secrecy, it also aimed at obtaining the maximum number of Sikh victims, largely devout pilgrims unconnected with the political agitation.’ (Kumar, 2003, n.p)

During the operation ‘almost as many Sikhs died in a few days in India in 1984 than all the deaths and disappearances in Chile during the 17-year military rule of Gen. Augusto Pinochet between 1973 and 1990..... India, is refusing to confront its bloody recent history, stands in glaring contrast to these nations.’ (Crossette, 2004, n.p)

The operation also spread out into the villages within the state of Punjab which saw innocent Sikhs being killed by the Indian Army. Up to forty other Sikh Gurdwaras were attacked throughout the period of Operation Bluestar.

The army surrounded the villages and gathered ‘all males between the ages of 15 and 35 who were then trussed and blindfolded, then taken away...Thousands have disappeared in the Punjab since the Army Operation began. The government has provided no lists of names; families don’t know if sons and husbands are arrested underground or dead.’ (Weaver, 1984, n.p)

The army furthered its operations after Operation Bluestar through Operation Woodrose, Black Blotch and Black Thunder which further resulted in the violations of the Sikh community through arrest, torture and rape. The ongoing suffering of the Sikhs and the injustices placed upon them furthered their vision for a better life through an independent state of Khalistan.

The call for Khalistan became more and more noticeable and this action by the army under orders of the Indian government led Sikhs to regroup and form into organisations that would use physical means in order to achieve their struggle for Khalistan.

For the Sikhs, having their own state of Khalistan would bring an end to the ongoing killings of their people, which they felt was state terrorism: 'The Indian government has killed over 1 million to 1.2 million Sikhs. The only way to stop this state terrorism is to create a Khalistan state, where Sikhs and other religious people can enjoy their freedom.' (Sangat Singh, 1995, p. 138)

The attack on the Golden Temple marks a turning point in Sikh history. The events of June 1984 alongside the political battle have completely changed the relationship between the Sikhs and the Indian state as most Sikhs did not feel safe anymore living within India. 'The motherland they held in the highest regard for so long and the country for which they sacrificed their all. The massacre of several thousand Sikhs in Delhi, and in other Indian cities.' (Devinderjit Singh, 1986, p.35)

The Sikhs took up physical arms based on the teachings of the Sikh faith and the message of the Gurus which state that 'When all other means have failed, it is righteous to draw the sword.' (Sarna, 1705, n.p) They were a part of the Khalsa army that had been established by Guru Gobind Singh with a mission to uphold the tenets of the Sikh faith.

The violations carried out by the Indian government against the Sikhs led to a sharp rise in Sikh militancy which saw groups such as the Babbar Khalsa implementing a physical armed struggle in order to achieve the objective of Khalistan.

This sharp rise in Sikhs taking up physical arms post Operation Bluestar, which was termed as Sikh militancy, originated and 'grew rapidly from the Indian state for pursuing manipulative and iniquitous strategies leading to state terror in addressing the grievances and demands of the Sikhs in post-independent India' (Kirpal Dhillon, 2006, n.p)

This mindset to resort to other means once all others have failed is supported by the teachings of the Guru Granth Sahib which reinforce the need to protect the values of justice and freedom: 'The conscience resounds with the battle-drum, as the wounds of suffering strike the heart. The warriors take up the battlefield; now is the time to sacrifice one's all. He alone is a true warrior, who fights for the weak and oppressed.' (Bhagat Kabir, Raag Maaroo Bhagat Kabir, SGGS, 1708, p. 1105)

The failure in negotiations, very limited success of peaceful protests, and gross human rights violations led the Sikhs to follow the message the Gurus had instructed them to do and take up physical arms to obtain justice. This led to the need for organisations like the Babbar Khalsa.

Chapter 12 – The Babbar Khalsa

One organisation that rose to prominence in light of all the atrocities is the Babbar Khalsa, whose operations have been based on the teachings of the Guru Granth Sahib and its main objective for Khalistan. The Babbar Khalsa derives itself from the Babbar Akalis who fought against the British rule within India. The Babbar Khalsa organisation was formed in the late 1970's after 13 Sikhs were innocently killed by a sect called the Nirankaris.

The organisation was firstly setup to avenge the death of those killed and carried on to establish an independent nation of Khalistan. The existence of the Babbar Khalsa was 'first noticed in leaflets in 1980 shortly after the assassination of the Nirankari chief Gurbachan Singh.' (Today, 2011, n.p)

The definition of the name of Babbar Khalsa can be split by each word, with Babbar essentially translating to the term lion and Khalsa itself not only being attributed with the Khalsa Panth and its creation by Guru Gobind Singh in 1699, but from a historical perspective.

'Khalsa comes from an Arabic word Khalsah (khaal-saah) whose derivatives Khaalas, or Khalis translate to mean pure, and Khalaas, which translates to means free.' (Khalsa, 2017, p. 1) Furthermore, from looking at Khalsa from the Sikh faith, the reference of Khalsa within Babbar Khalsa can be linked to the idea of the Khalsa being a 'brotherhood of the pure and is an order of spiritual warriors of saint soldiers.' (Khalsa, 2017, p. 1)

The vision of the Babbar Khalsa to resort to full physical means for the objective of a Sikh state is backed and supported by the teachings within the Guru Granth Sahib and the teachings of the Sikh Gurus. If we firstly look at the teachings within the Guru Granth Sahib, we see countless examples where it is stated what is required in order to fight for the ideals of freedom truth and justice.

Within their published constitution they make it clear that their armed struggle for Khalistan is necessary in order 'to work for the establishment of Khalsa rule where there would be no distinction based on caste, colour, race, religion, origins or regional difference.' (Gunawardena, 2001, p. 227)

The organisation itself bases its creation and its need to avenge injustice in accordance with the teachings of the Guru Granth Sahib. According to the work of Dwight Hamilton, the Babbar Khalsa and the Babbar Khalsa International are 'entities of a Sikh organization whose aim is to establish an independent state called Khalistan (land of the pure.) Ideologically, members of the Babbar Khalsa and Babbar Khalsa International follow in the path of its historical namesake Babbar Akalis, and thus vow to avenge the deaths for Sikhs killed in defence of the faith. Spirituality is central to the group's goal.' (Hamilton, 2007, p. 200)

The founder of the Babbar Khalsa was Jathedar Sukhdev Singh Babbar (Sikh leader). The term Jathedar itself denotes respect in regards of leader, general or commander. In order to publicize and promote the ideals of the Babbar Khalsa, the organisation setup a monthly news program titled Vangaar. 'During the height of the insurrection in the Punjab, its monthly publication, the Vangaar, which was published between 1987-1994, routinely paid tribute to those "martyred

fighting for the faith” and demanded that their “murders be avenged.” (Gunawardena, 2001, p. 245)

In one of these editions of Vangaar, Jathedar Sukhdev Singh Babbar made it clear why the goal of Khalistan was necessary for the Sikhs: ‘We must make such a nation where the Khalsa is supreme, where it has its own flag, constitution and currency where we can enforce the principle of welfare for all through the principles of the Gurus. The poor and workers can be protected from exploitation and tyranny so that they may lead a happy life of self-respect and dignity and honour.’ (Babbar, 1991, p. 1)

Jathedar Sukhdev Singh came into the struggle for Khalistan after being influenced and taken back by the violence committed against thirteen Sikhs in the Amritsar Massacre of 1978. These thirteen Sikhs were protesting the anti-Sikh activities which were taking place by the Nirankari organisation, who were insulting the Guru Granth Sahib on the day of Vaisakhi, the celebrations of the day the Khalsa was created in 1699.

‘A clash ensued and 13 Sikhs were fired at. A case was then registered against Gurbachan Singh, but he was eventually acquitted. He was subsequently killed by Bhai Ranjit Singh, an Akhand Kirtani Jatha (Sikh organisation) member, on 24 April 1980. Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale emerged after the Amritsar Massacre, which is often depicted as the starting point of the Khalistan movement’ (Lionel Baixas, 2008, p. 16)

One of those 13 Sikhs who were killed by the Nirankaris was Fauja Singh. Fauja Singh was an individual who heavily influenced Jathedar Sukhdev Singh Babbar with the notions of the freedom. Fauja Singh was responsible for the creation of his Sikh camps called Khalsa farm where ‘he practised

Shastar Vidiya (the art of warfare) and believed firmly in the use of arms in protection of faith and this belief included using modern technology to combat modern tyrants.’ (Harjinder Singh, 2008, n.p)

In addition to this, the camps that he held were paramount in the rise of the Babbar Khalsa when Fauja Singh had died. This was due to the fact that many of those who attended the Khalsa farm camp later on went to become a part of the future leadership of the Babbar Khalsa. This included Jathedar Sukhdev Singh Babbar himself.

In order to look at the Babbar Khalsa and its reasoning for Khalistan and the use of physical means for the liberation of a Sikh state, I will focus on speeches and official publications of the Babbar Khalsa which clearly explain and discuss why Sikhs need freedom from India and how the fight for Khalistan is linked to the teachings of Sikhi through the Guru Granth Sahib and the Khalsa.

One of the main publications of the Babbar Khalsa is a booklet written on Raj Karega Khalsa which loosely translates to ‘the Khalsa shall rule.’ This booklet, which was published in April 1994, specifically details the importance of the creation of Khalistan and how its foundation is built on the principles of the Sikh faith. In order to justify the need for an independent Sikh state, the publication focuses on the teachings of the Gurus and the Guru Granth Sahib in order to support the argument that the foundational creation of Khalistan is based on the will of God.

The introductory parts of the publication focus on a general overview of the importance of Khalsa, Khalistan and how the state is based on Gods will. The Babbar Khalsa firstly proclaims that ‘Khalsa and Khalistan are both the same thing.

Khalsa means pure and without any impurities, thus the Khalsa is related directly to the true government which is God itself.' (Shan, 1994, n.p) This statement is supported with reference to the Guru Granth Sahib where it states that: 'Khalsa is God's army, it's sustained by the will of the Almighty.' (Guru Gobind Singh, Sarbloh Granth, 1698, n.p)

Whilst the Babbar Khalsa doesn't provide a clear-cut layout of how the government would function daily, it does however provide the principles of how that government will run according to the principles of the Khalsa.

These principles are reflected not only by the teachings of the Sikh faith, but also implemented in Sikh history which was seen under the rule of Banda Singh Bahadur and Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The Guru Granth Sahib is at the foundation of these principles to rule according to the will of God.

Further on from this, the Babbar Khalsa make it clear that 'Guru Gobind Singh Ji has created a collective based on the principles that enshrine a pure warrior-like spirit that is spiritually uplifted and self-sacrificing, which has been immortalised in the following lines of the sarbloh granth.' (Shan, 1994, n.p)

The Sarbloh Granth is a scripture which was created during the period of the Tenth Guru and is attributed to Guru Gobind Singh himself. The term Sarbloh itself translates to steel and Guru Gobind Singh himself had made God and sword interchangeable terms.

By referring to God through the term of Sarbloh, the Guru was symbolizing God 'in the weapons of war. He is presented as the punisher of the evil and the destroyer of the tyrant the benevolent aspect is simultaneously and equally forcefully emphasized and he is invoked as the fountain-head of mercy,

the kinsmen of the poor and bestower of felicity.’ (Kujur, 2005, p. 11)

Moving on, the Babbar Khalsa focuses on the state of Khalistan being under the rule of God’s will. They clearly define the main policies for all those living under a state based on Sikh principles: ‘This collective represents God on Earth and their reign will be God’s own reign. In this Khalsa reign there will be no classism, casteism, racism or any other type of discriminations. In this reign, there will be no enmity towards any other countries, races or religions and it will work to eradicate any false division.’ (Shan, 1994, n.p)

This vision for an oppression free society is linked directly to the teachings of Guru Nanak when he stated that there is no Hindu and there is no Muslim: This statement represents the message above within the Babbar Khalsa publication that if Khalistan is based on the will of God, it must represent the vision of God. This focuses on a society for all to live freely without oppression.

The Babbar Khalsa propagates the idea that the current environment which Sikhs are living within is dying. It needs to be invigorated with the principles of the Khalsa in order to obtain liberation: ‘This dying environment will be reawakened under the reign of Khalsa.

Everyone’s voice will have respect. This liberated environment will result in a peak of racial, religious and financial betterment. People will have self-respect and there will be no fear of others.’ (Shan, 1994, n.p)

This statement is supported by an example from the Guru Granth Sahib which states that: ‘The merciful master has now given the command. No one now chases and annoys

another. All abide in peace and this now has become a benign regime' (Guru Arjan Dev, Sireeraag Mehalaa 5, SGGS, 1708, p. 74)

When discussing the issues of crime and situations which may make the state unstable, the Babbar Khalsa state that 'benefactors of persecution, bribery and the destructions of others' respect will not find solace in this reign. The workers and labourers slaving away for the rich will be liberated under this reign. All of those working for an honest living will benefit from the natures given gifts.' (Shan, 1994, n.p)

This idea of an honest living for all those working under the state and being beneficiaries of nature's given gifts is a direct relation to the defined pillars of the Sikh faith which include the notion to work for an honest living and to share with others.

These were mentioned by Guru Nanak during his propagation of the Sikh way of life to his followers at the time and they are a core fundamental aspect of how Sikhs should live their lives. 'All share in your grace; none are beyond you'. (Guru Arjan Dev, Raag Maajh Mehalaa 5, SGGS, 1708, p. 97)

The final introductory section on understanding the vision of Khalistan through the rule of the Khalsa is that 'under the Khalsa's reign every person will be nourished and have justice. There will be light and greenery everywhere and everyone will be happy.

This reign will be a source of beauty and compassion and food will be plentiful. There will be no poverty, and oppressive rulers such as Aurangzeb, Abdali and Indira (leaders in Indian history) will not exist. In contrast Khalistan

will provide shelter and work for the betterment of all society.’ (BKI, 1994, n.p)

From looking at the first section within this publication on the Babbar Khalsa and its objective for Khalistan, it is quite evident through its consistent reference to the teachings of the Guru Granth Sahib that the organisation is prevalent on ensuring that their mission to attain independence is purely based on the command of God which is given through these teachings. This legitimises their vision for a Sikh nation through the teachings of the Guru Granth Sahib.

Furthermore, another set of publications which came under Vangaar magazine, spoke of the objectives of the Babbar Khalsa and its objective for Khalistan. It focused on the speeches of the first leader of the Babbar Khalsa, Jathedar Sukhdev Singh Babbar.

Sukhdev Singh makes it clear in his thoughts why the need for Khalistan is essential for the oppressed and how it will not only liberate those living within an unjust rule, but Khalistan will be a new society: ‘A new era is about to begin on the land of Khalistan. This new milieu will have exhaustive debates on the Khalsa culture, Khalsa vision, Khalsa rule and Khalsa society which will help us construct a beautiful model for the economic, political and social structural aspects of Khalistan.’ (BKI, 1991, n.p)

Furthermore, Jathedar Sukhdev Singh Babbar explains why Sikhs can no longer trust the Indian state due to its broken promises and betrayal of trust. From a political perspective, he describes how Sikhs had fought for the independence of India from the British and despite being provided numerous promises from political parties and national leaders for their own state, they had not delivered their promise. Jawaharlal

Nehru who became the first Prime Minister of India after independence had made the assurance that if Sikhs remained with India 'they could too experience the flow of freedom.' (BKI, 1994, n.p)

For this reason, Sikhs had to break away from India which the Babbar Khalsa saw as a form of 'Hindu colonial rule which has always betrayed Sikhs. Despite this, Sikhs fought for Indian independence and obtained promises from the Congress Party and Mahatma Gandhi, but when they claimed their right after 1947, they ignored the Sikhs despite Nehru remarking that 'He could tolerate civil war in the country but not in the Punjab state.' (Babbar, 1991, n.p)

The Babbar Khalsa also reiterated that the rule of India is through the systematic control of Brahmins (highest rank of people within Hindu caste system) which is not only exploitation of those who are not a part of the Brahmin caste, but also those who are of a religious minority living within India.

The term Brahmanism itself is defined 'as a system of socio-religious domination and exploitation of the Hindus based on caste, priest craft and false philosophy, - caste representing the scheme of domination, priest craft the means of exploitation, and false philosophy a justification of both caste and priest craft. (Dharma, 1946, p. 102)

Thus, the Babbar Khalsa see it as an oppressive government as it exploits ideals such as caste and false philosophy which go against the teachings of the Sikh faith. Due to this, the Babbar Khalsa term the Indian government as a regime which promotes and implements and rules as a 'Brahmanic culture and Brahmanic government. We are slaves both economically and politically, we are not the master of our

destiny in any sphere. Over the past 44 years we have been feeling at every step that our reins are in the hands of those who are blind themselves.’ (BKI, 1991, n.p)

Under Article 25 of the Indian constitution, Sikhs, and other minority religions such as Buddhists and Jains are classed as part of the Hindu faith. ‘Explanation II - In sub-Clause (b) of clause (2), the reference to Hindus shall be construed as including a reference to persons professing the Sikh, Jain or Buddhist religion, and the reference to Hindu religious institutions shall be construed accordingly’ (Government, 1950, n.p.)

Therefore, when discussing the Indian constitution and its benefit for Sikhs, the Babbar Khalsa makes it clear that ‘There is no place for Khalistan in this cartload of papers’ (Babbar, 1991, n.p) This reference to a cartload of papers is of the Indian constitution.

The precedent that Sikhs are not even recognized as a separate faith from Hinduism let alone the place for Khalistan within the constitution is enough for the Babbar Khalsa to not have any faith in the constitution of India, which is why they deem the importance for Khalistan to be separate from India.

The Babbar Khalsa not only promotes the need for Khalistan due to social and political circumstances, but also prophesises the need for the use of an armed struggle in order to obtain the objective of Khalistan. They refer to the teachings of the Guru Granth Sahib and also, the Gurus in order to reason the use of physical force to fight for Khalistan.

Firstly, the Babbar Khalsa define the type of struggle they are engaging with against India: ‘but what kind of a struggle? An armed struggle that must coordinate with peoples’ struggle

for the establishment of an independent and sovereign Khalistan since the given moment is most suitable to launch it. 'The international situation is in our favour and India too is a victim of serious economic and political crises' (Babbar, 1991, n.p)

When discussing the need to destroy the oppressors of the Sikhs, the Babbar Khalsa make it clear that the elimination of the tyrants and the protection of the poor needs to be followed through in accordance with the command of the Guru: 'Now it is not enough to identify the tyrants and killers, but they should be eliminated following the Gurus command. The Khalsa has been created to destroy the tyrant and the tyranny for the protection of the poor.' (Babbar, 1991, n.p)

The responsibility of the Khalsa to defend the innocent and weak was a key instruction by Guru Gobind Singh when he founded the Khalsa order in 1699. The Guru made it clear that the Khalsa should 'protect the poor and the weak and eventually, the Khalsa shall acquire political power and all that goes with it.' (Malhotra, 2004, n.p)

'O'Khalsa adorn yourself with weapons following the command of the Tenth Father (Guru Gobind Singh) and bring the present (Sikh) leadership on the right track to fight against tyranny. And if they refuse to oblige, then O'Khalsa remove these obstacles on your way to liberation.' (Babbar, 1991, n.p)

This command to adorn yourself with weapons is referenced as a part of the Khalsa order by Guru Gobind Singh where he states that 'Sikhs should venerate weapons as a source of power, bear arms, fight battles, face the enemy and never turn back.' (Malhotra, 2004, p. 67)

By understanding the vision and objective of the Babbar Khalsa for Khalistan, it is quite evident through its publications that this requirement for independence is linked to the teachings of the Sikh faith.

Whether it is the guidance of the creation of the Khalsa to the humanitarian principles of equality and justice which were implemented by Guru Nanak, the Babbar Khalsa have made it their priority that the requirement of a separate state of Khalistan will have to come through an armed struggle based on the current situation that Sikhs are living in.

For the Babbar Khalsa, the state of Khalistan would provide a better place not only for Sikhs but for other minorities who are being oppressed in the current regime they are living in.

Conclusion

Having analysed the theological and historical grounds for a Sikh state it is clear that the Babbar Khalsa has engaged in its actions for the state of Khalistan based on the teachings of the Sikh faith. This study has demonstrated from a religious perspective, the overview of the lives of the Sikh Gurus and how they in their capacity contributed towards a future of a Sikh state.

From a theological point of view, this study has shown how teachings from the main Sikh scriptures and the Gurus provide spiritual, moral and political justifications for the notion of a Sikh state for the welfare of all.

In addition to this, the discussion of western theories such as nationalism and other variety of school of thoughts have also been analysed in order to demonstrate the reason for a Sikh autonomous state. From examining the historical narrative of the Sikhs, especially in relation to periods of former Sikh ruling governments, we can clearly identify the continued desires of the Sikhs to establish their Sikh state known as Khalistan.

This study has been crucial as it helps us understand why the Babbar Khalsa has engaged in a physical armed struggle in order to obtain their objective for Khalistan. The organisation has justified its own constitution and principles based on Sikh teachings and its beliefs clearly show their demand for a Sikh state as an integral part of their faith.

The motivation of the Babbar Khalsa and its goal for Khalistan has been examined and analysed by Sikh history which has seen Sikhs obtain their own state on several

occasions. Furthermore, the earlier overview of the Gurus in reference to the creation of Sikh rule in accordance with the teachings of the Guru Granth Sahib, was essentially the foundational platform for future periods of Sikh rule.

These periods of Sikh rule were seen through Banda Singh Bahadur and Maharaja Ranjit Singh. With these two periods of Sikh rule, the development of a Sikh state was formulated through various policies and reforms which were in accordance with the teachings of the Guru. One example of this was the land reforms which helped workers earn a living and not losing out through intermediaries.

Furthermore, the religious freedom of all and their right to practice their way of life was again linked to the teachings of Guru Nanak who visualized a society where all could live free from oppression, something the Guru had spoken out against during the rule of Babar.

The time period in which the Babbar Khalsa was formed saw physical attacks against the Sikhs. Reinforced by the teachings of the Guru Granth Sahib and the words of Guru Gobind Singh, to draw the sword when all other means have failed, the organisation carried out numerous physical actions in order to achieve their objective of Khalistan and fight against the injustice they believe which was imposed on the Sikhs.

The importance of the study has also shown why Sikhs have resorted to physical means when engaging with the objective of a Sikh state. Their actions to engage in an armed struggle is a result of the unfulfilled promises and reassurances made to the Sikh nation from the partition of India, which saw subsequent movements such as the Punjabi Suba, Anandpur Sahib Resolution and Dharam Yudh Morcha.

These movements saw Sikhs use a variety of political agitations to push for their rights which were not considered by the Indian government after the partition had taken place. The instigation by the Indian Government with the implementation and execution of Operation Bluestar and its violation of human rights against the Sikhs revived and increased surging demand and increased for Khalistan as Sikhs no longer felt safe within India and belonged to the Indian Community and the Indian State.

To conclude, this study has demonstrated how the Babbar Khalsa, as an organisation, aims to safeguard the values and principles of the Sikh faith, by punishing its enemies whom they believe are attacking their mission in achieving the objective of establishing an independent Sikh nation of Khalistan.

Its belief and right to do so is supported by the teachings of the Sikh faith and the inspiration seen from earlier periods of Sikh rule which suggest that the Babbar Khalsa were carrying on the legacy and aspirations which were made a reality during the times of the Gurus, Banda Singh Bahadur and Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

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Some writers suggest that Guru Gobind Singh did not preach the message of Guru Nanak. Discuss how the creation of the Khalsa Panth shows this to be incorrect.

This essay will evaluate whether Guru Gobind Singh did not preach the message and teachings laid out by the first Sikh Guru, Guru Nanak. The creation of the Khalsa Panth (brotherhood) by the tenth Sikh Guru, Guru Gobind Singh, led to an externalization of identity and further militarization of Sikh identity that was started by the 6th Guru, Guru Hargobind.

Although it became militarized and externalized, this does not mean that the teachings of Guru Nanak were abandoned. Instead, it is clear that they were an ‘essential component of Guru Gobind’s Khalsa.’ (Singh, 1991)

The research undertaken within the essay will demonstrate the key interlinking principles that both Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh preached and implemented during their lifetimes. The discussion of the Khalsa Panth will be the main indicator supporting the question.

To understand the message of Guru Gobind Singh, we must first look and evaluate the profound teachings of Guru Nanak. Guru Nanak came into the world in 1469. Guru Nanak grew up in a society which had succumbed to inequality, corruption and the violation of human rights. From the outset, the words of Guru Nanak showed the importance of one God and the equality of all humans on earth.

After an experience with God, Guru Nanak spoke to the society of the time and proclaimed that ‘there is no Hindu and there is no Muslim.’ (Singh, 1991) This message by Guru Nanak states how all human beings regardless of their faith or background are equal in the court of God. No faith is higher than the other.

Guru Nanak taught three core principles of Naam Japna (repeating Gods name) Kirat Karna (working honestly), and Vand Chakna (sharing your earnings with others). Naam Japna necessarily translates to the meaning of repetition of the name of God. Not only is it to remember God but also it is required to ‘invoke His Presence in our consciousness.’ (SikhMissionary, 2017) Furthermore, the repetition of the name of God allows us to ‘lead a peaceful life’ (Chahal, 2007)

With regards to the first core principle of Naam Japna, Guru Nanak stressed the importance of repeating the name of God would help contain and eradicate the vice of Haumai which translates to egotism.

In the Guru Granth Sahib, the living and eternal Guru of the Sikhs, the words of Guru Nanak are echoed when describing the problems of egotism and how Naam Japna can save a person from suffering. For example, ‘Very rare are those persons in this world who have eradicated or overcome ego by continuously remembering God or having it in his thoughts and mind, no matter what they are doing (playing, walking, doing work, attending to household chores).’ (SGGS, 1708)

The above verse from the Guru Granth Sahib further reiterates the message of Guru Nanak and outlines that those people who meditate through Naam Japna and have overcome their ego while living on this earth have been scarce. It further shows the importance of Naam Japna as it provides a solution to overcome the vice of ego and negative thoughts which can enter the mind. Thus the importance of Naam Japna is vital as a key element of the Sikh foundation.

Guru Nanak also placed the high importance of Naam Japna due to the large prevalence of hypocrisy and falsehood in a society which at the time was oppressive and ritualistic. For example, Guru Nanak, who was born into a Hindu family, was tutored by a Hindu priest on a regular basis. His tutelage would regularly end up in arguments and debates with his teacher.

One specific event would shape a change in Guru Nanak's life. When offered to have a sacred thread tied around his neck according to the Hindu religion called a Janneu, Nanak refused and stated that 'sobriety and contentment ought to be cultivated in one's character which is real dharma, instead of wearing a symbolic thread.' (Singh, 2004)

Guru Nanak's rejection of the thread offering suggests that one's character should be focused on contentment and sobriety of understanding the message of God, which is done through the repetition of the name of God which is Naam Japna. By doing so, we would be able to live a life based on an 'ethical path and eventual salvation with God.' (Singh, 2004)

The second foundational principle which Guru Nanak focused on for the Sikh faith was the importance of Kirat Karna. This necessarily translates 'to do' which categorizes the cardinal rules of social and ethical behaviour. Guru Nanak stated that those who depend on the earnings of others and exploit them for their own selfish gratification lead a worthless life. (Kristen Haar, 2009)

This statement is also emphasized within the teachings of the Guru Granth Sahib: 'The true Sikh of the Guru shall make an

honest living by lawful work. Eat the food which is rightly earned' (SGGS, 1708) This passage from the Guru Granth Sahib states that by working hard, one can become a true Sikh of the Guru. We should also eat the fruits of our labor which are earned through hard work and not by illegitimate means.

The concept of Kirat Karna can also be attributed to the introduction of the Miri Piri concept which was started by the sixth Sikh Guru, Guru Hargobind. The ideals of Miri Piri was to not 'only remember the name of God through Naam Japna which Guru Nanak had introduced, but to be able to fight for justice and do things based on the ideals of truth, honesty and self-respect.' (Dawinder S. Sidhu, 2016)

The concept of Kirat Karna performed by Guru Nanak was also a solution not only for issues of his life but also for issues of the future and in today's society. One of these was the problem of poverty. By working hard and earning an honest living, a person following the teachings of Guru Nanak can realize the importance of being a householder not only within his personal life but for society.

During the times of Guru Nanak, society was suffering from inequality and moral decay. Men were disappearing from their daily lives to pray and achieve salvation while women were left to stay at home and look after children, unable to have a work life. The introduction of Kirat Karna helped get rid of this issue from society.

Kirat Karna is the principle to earn an 'honest, pure and dedicated living by exercising ones God given skills, abilities, talents and hard labour for the benefit and improvement of

the individual, their family and society at large.’ (Cheema, 2016)

In the Guru Granth Sahib, Kirat Karna is shown to promote giving back to others and being grateful for what you have: ‘One who works for what he eats and gives some of what he has, O Nanak, he knows the path. (SGGS, 1708)’

This passage from the Guru Granth Sahib emphasizes the importance of not only working to put food on your own table but to also give what you have to others who are in need. By doing so, one is on the path that the Guru has laid out for them. Today the principle of Kirat Karna can be seen through Sikh charities and organizations which help feed the homeless community or those in war-torn countries.

The third principle that Guru Nanak introduced was the concept of Vandh Ke Shakna. Vandh Ke Shakna translates to sharing of ‘surplus of earnings.’ (S.Tatla, 2008) The importance of Vandh Ke Shakna is the blessing of life that we have in this world. If we can put food on the table for our families and have a bed to sleep on at night, we should be able to help those who do not have the same luxuries in life.

The essence of Vandh Ke Shakna is letting go of what we have been given by God, to ‘share ones wealth with others in the community, to give to charity, to distribute in Langar (free Kitchen) and to generally help others in the community who need help.’ (Idris Ismail, 2015)

The Guru Granth Sahib contains a vast amount of relevance to the pillar of Vandh Ke Shakna. It is written that you should: ‘Dedicate yourself to giving charity, chanting the Naam and

purification. Worship the Lord with devotion, and get rid of your pride. Drink in the Ambrosial Nectar of the Lord's Name, in the Saadh Sangat, the Company of the Holy.' (SGGS, 1708)

This quote emphasizes that by dedicating yourself to charity and helping others, you will be able to focus spiritually on the name of God and be in the company that will help you to connect with God. This passage also combines the principles of Naam Japna and Kirat Karna which Guru Nanak Dev Ji emphasized.

Alongside this, it focuses on remembering the name of God and purifying your selves not only through charity but also through hard work and devotion which can also help to get rid of evils such as pride.

Having understood and analyzed three of the core teachings that Guru Nanak introduced when he came into this world, I will now look at the teachings of the 10th Sikh Guru, Guru Gobind Singh the creation of the Khalsa Panth. I will highlight the link between the teachings of Guru Gobind Singh and Guru Nanak Dev to disprove the suggestion that the 10th Sikh Guru did not preach the message of the 1st Sikh Guru.

Guru Gobind Singh came into this world during the mid-17th century. From the outset, Guru Gobind Singh (known before as Gobind Rai) describes the purpose of his coming to this world and why he emerged from the supreme reality in human form to carry out his creator's command: "For this purpose was I born, let all virtuous people understand. I was born to advance righteousness, to emancipate the good, and to destroy all evil-doers root and branch." (Zambala, 2013)

Guru Gobind Singh placed a paramount emphasis on the use of poetry not only to express love for the creator but as a means to reveal the teachings of the Sikh faith which included attributes that Guru Nanak had earlier eulogized to the world. Equality, compassion and a revolutionary mindset are just a few of the teachings that Guru Gobind Singh made evident in his poetry.

However, it is the Zafarnamah (Epistle of Victory) which showed the expression of the glorification of the sword being used as a fulfilment of God's justice needs to be delivered. (Fenech, 2013) It further showed the correlation in views and messages which were upheld and implemented through both Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh.

The Zafarnamah itself indicts the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb, 'against a spiritual frame of judgment and exposes their lack of morality in governance as well as in the conduct of war.' (Sarna, 2011) The criticism of the Mughal Emperor by Guru Gobind Singh was something which was seen earlier by Guru Nanak when he spoke out against the ruler Babur 'when he attacked and occupied the town of Saidpur (Eminabad).' (Chahal, 2007)

Whilst Guru Nanak Dev did not engage with an armed crusade in his life, the words he spoke set the foundation from which 'sprang the later heroic history of Sikh resistance to the tyranny unleashed by Aurangzeb and his successors.' (Talib, 1999)

The focus on using the call to arms as a means of self-defence is an important factor when looking at the teachings of Guru Gobind Singh and its interlinking with the teachings of Guru Nanak. Guru Gobind Singh proclaimed within the

Zafarnamah that when "All modes of redressing the wrong have failed, raising of the sword is pious and just." (Ji, 1705)

Gurbachan Singh Talib (1999) shows how Guru Gobind Singh Ji did, in fact, preach the message of Guru Nanak Dev from the perspective of raising arms to engage in physical warfare once all else has failed. By criticising and showing how the corrupt leaders and governments of the time were destroying society, The Zafarnamah ultimately became a 'brilliant exposition of the Guru's own spiritual beliefs, his political and moral philosophy and the true nature of God and creation.' (Sarna, 2011)

The Khalsa Panth is one of the main key indicators which show the intertwinement of teachings between the 1st and 10th Sikh Guru. The establishment of the new Sikh identity in 1699 not only promotes the humanitarian and revolutionary teachings laid out by Guru Nanak Dev but also encompasses the vision of Guru Gobind Singh to not waiver from the message of God which the previous nine Gurus had done so. Based on the work of Mcleod, "The term Khalsa is derived from Arabic and means Khalis or pure, and according to Guru Gobind Singh, the baptized Sikhs who followed all the injunctions were his Khalsa." (McLeod, 2004)

The initiation of the Khalsa took place through the baptism of the two-edged sword or khande ki pahul. The initiation of five individuals who offered the demand for five heads by the Guru became the 'Panj Pyare' (five beloved ones).

The importance of this sacrifice resembles the importance of the creation of the Khalsa. 'By identifying one's own body and possessions as a sacrifice to the Guru or God was the 'Sikh way of creating a commune.' With the creation of the

Khalsa representing the ‘militarization of the Sikh movement, this ideal was orientated towards dedication of one’s all to the revolutionary cause.’ (Singh, 2015)

The initiation of the Khalsa not only gave them a new-born life within society and as part of a new brotherhood, but gave them a distinct way of life which would give them freedoms from the constrained society they were living in. ‘freedom from the shackles of (a) earlier religions, (b) earlier deeds (karam), (c) caste, clan and race, (d) earlier taboos and customs, and (e) superstitions, rituals, etc.’ (Bhangu, 1841)

Moreover, the argument that Guru Gobind Singh did not preach the message of Guru Nanak Dev Ji is again refuted through the teachings contained within the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. Just as Guru Gobind Singh asked for five heads during the Vaisakhi of 1699, Guru Nanak earlier on had also asked for our heads when he stated that ‘If you desire to play this game of love with me, then step onto my path with your head in your hand.’ (Sikher, 2017)

The asking of the head represents the highest challenge posed to Sikhs by the Gurus. To give our head to the Gurus is to submit our egos at their feet completely. ‘Guru Gobind Singh’s Khalsa is a physical representation of what it means to completely give your head to your Guru.’ (LearnSikhi, 2016).

The physical manifestation which is being discussed in the quote refers to the external appearance that the Guru commanded the Khalsa to adorn. This includes but does not limit to uncut hair, the carrying of the kirpan (sword) and the following of the Sikh code of conduct which is termed the Rehat Maryada.

From looking at the creation of the Khalsa Panth, it is evident that the creation of it by Guru Gobind Singh Ji was primarily the 'realization of the ideology in practice which was perceived by Guru Nanak Dev Ji.' The Khalsa brotherhood was a model of the 'just, equitable, self-respecting, loving and altruistic society envisioned by Guru Nanak.' (Singh, 1998)

Furthermore, when Guru Gobind Singh took up arms to fight against the unjust and oppressive forces, it was a step fully in conformity with the values of peace and love held and preached by Guru Nanak.

This was because the fight was not for any selfish motives but was for the sake of righteousness or dharma (religious movement). In addition to this, it is important to note that the values of equality, universal love, and justice are more important. They cannot be sacrificed for the sake of keeping the peace.

It can be visualized that the creation of the Khalsa Panth by Guru Gobind Singh gave an ideal person (Khalsa as an individual self and the ideal social structure (Khalsa-Panth) in microcosmic form. The importance of its creation was that it would establish 'an order of saint-soldiers who would lead a spiritually pious and enlightened life and strive for the socio-political liberation of the oppressed and the exploited.' (Singh, 2001)

This was something that was of importance to Guru Nanak as he always emphasized the paramount importance of speaking out against injustice and oppressive ideals. This was proven by Guru Nanak himself when he spoke out against Babur.

Guru Nanak in the passages of Babur Bani spoke out against the brutalities of the Mughal invasion of India during his lifetime and also expressed the suffering 'of people at the hands of unscrupulous rulers and government officials.' (Dahiya, 2013)

This passage in Babur Bani from the Guru Granth Sahib explains how those who have violated the trust of people in this lifetime after abusing their rights and powers will be judged in the end: 'The dogs lick up the blood that is spilled, but there, in the Court of the Lord, all beings will be judged. Those who have violated the people's trust will be disgraced, and their noses will be cut off.' (SGGS, 1708)

Guru Nanak placed a significant emphasis on the equality of women. Guru Nanak's advocacy of women's rights throughout his life showcased the real values and importance of women not only within the Sikh faith but in life in general. 'Nanak consistently praised women, denounced their oppression and refused to make additions to the Adi Granth that would have reviled women.' (Singh, 1993)

In the hymns of Guru Nanak that are found in the Guru Granth Sahib, Guru Nanak gives women a 'a position of equality with men in matters religious as well as mundane.' (Singh, 1993) An example of this can be found when the Guru says: 'Why call her inferior from whom all great ones are born? The woman is born of a woman, and none is born but of a woman.' (SGGS, 1708)

Interestingly, Guru Nanak would also define women by the name of 'Bhandu' which meant vessel. The importance of this when understanding the importance of the need for

equality and equal status of women was that Guru Nanak saw women as a 'cornucopia from which all creation pours forth.' This need for a positive attitude towards women was essential in replacing the society stigmas at the time which had placed women at a low level in social life and 'mythicized women as the agent of sin and evil.' (Singh, 1993)

Similarly, Guru Gobind Singh also emphasized and stressed the importance of Women in life and their need in society. During the times of the Gurus, the custom of dowry where items would be given to the groom's family on behalf of the bride's family as a condition of the marriage was quite prevalent.

Not only did this put financial and emotional pressure on the bride's family, but it also emphasized that the groom was a lot more important than the bride. Guru Gobind Singh openly criticized this oppression against women by saying: 'He who giveth his daughter in marriage to a Sikh and taketh no money for her, is a Sikh of mine and may after his death reach my abode.' (Jean Holm, 1994)

The creation of the Khalsa by Guru Gobind Singh not only reinforced the teachings of Guru Nanak Dev Ji but also allowed Women to become a part of the Khalsa army. The Khalsa ceremony was available not only for men but also women. When a man is given the name Singh (lion) after taking Amrit, Women were given the name of Kaur.

Furthermore, obeying to the code of conduct of the Khalsa army meant that 'Sikhs were forbidden to exercise any rights over women captured in battle, they could also not be kept as slaves or wives but were to be treated with the utmost respect.' (Sikhs.org, 2011) Both Guru Nanak and Guru

Gobind Singh placed a paramount importance of women and their status in society, the creation of the Khalsa Panth further reinforced the need to respect women.

The work of McGregor perfectly describes the life of Guru Gobind Singh Ji and his success. McGregor firstly goes on to say that Guru Gobind Singh Ji, accomplished both the reforming of his religion and instituting a new code of law for his followers,' (SikhiWiki, 2017)

This code of law for his followers that McGregor is referring to is the creation of the Khalsa Panth. Further on McGregor points out the importance of 'his personal bravery under all circumstances and his persevering endurance amidst difficulties and the sacrifice of his four children in battle for the creation of a new community.' (McGregor, 2013)

It is clearly evident from the current research provided that Guru Gobind Singh did, in fact, preach the message of Guru Nanak Dev Ji. The Guru Granth Sahib is the ultimate development of all the Sikh Gurus as it formulated the messages of the Gurus into an external identity which gave the Sikh community an identity. In essence, the Guru Granth Sahib and its creation by the Sikh gurus allowed the world to understand the universal message laid out by the Gurus for all to understand and implement in their lives.

Guru Gobind Singh 'transmitted Guru Nanak's divine light into the divine word and declared that after him, the next Guru would be the Guru Granth Sahib. He commanded the Sikhs that it was to be received as the body and spirit of the ten Gurus.' (SG, 2007)

This further clarifies the argument that the teachings of not only Guru Nanak Dev Ji and Guru Gobind Singh Ji were the same but all the Gurus essentially preached the universal message, which led to the creation of the Guru Granth Sahib Ji, this would allow people to fully understand the message of the Gurus.

If we look at what is written within the Guru Granth Sahib, we will further see and understand how the message of the Gurus was the same. Whenever a hymn is read from the Guru Granth Sahib, there is usually a starting stanza which begins with 'Mahala 4' or 'Mahala 5.' (SG, 2007) This represents the hymns, and the number represents the Guru by their number.

Furthermore, the ending of the hymns will have Nanak; this is an indicator to represent that all the ten Sikh Gurus were one spirit. Furthermore, the works within the Guru Granth Sahib are termed by Nanak 1, Nanak 2, etc. this shows that the message of the Guru was the same but carried out by a different Guru.

This idea is embedded within the teachings of the Guru Granth Sahib: "The Divine Light was the same, The Way and Mode were the same, The Master had merely changed the body." (SGGS, 1708)

To conclude, it is clear that that Guru Gobind Singh did preach the message of Guru Nanak. The three key foundational Sikh pillars were the essential building blocks of the Khalsa Panth which further envisioned the true message of Guru Nanak.

The compilation and the installation of the Guru Granth Sahib brings together all the teachings of the Gurus which developed over time and thus the formation of the Khalsa Panth by Guru Gobind Singh Ji epitomises the importance of the message of Guru Nanak Dev Ji. The Khalsa Panth and its introduction into this world allowed the message of the Gurus to be given a platform and a set structure, where the foundational pillars laid out by Guru Nanak Dev Ji would be implemented. Without the institutionalization of the Gurus message, the importance and value of them would not be able to survive the length it has done today and will continue to do so in the future.

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