

# **The Role of the Akali Dal in the Punjab Crisis - 1981-86.**

**by**

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## **Abstract**

In the study of federalism, scholars argue that federalization strengthens regional parties who subsequently promote ethnic conflict and secessionism. This paper seeks to reject the general applicability of this argument by examining a specific regional party in the Indian state of Punjab during the 1980s. The paper shows that parties must not be seen as homogeneous entities, but as heterogeneous groups in which different factions seek to take over leadership. Leadership had an important impact on the evolution of the Punjabi conflict. In the 1980s the party was dominated by moderate politicians who wanted to find a political solution to the conflict. However, over the years the moderates got weakened in the party, but widespread ethnic conflict and violence first occurred when the moderates were disempowered in the late 1980s. The paper shows that leadership and internal factional divisions of parties are important factors for analyzing ethnic conflict.

**Keywords:** Ethnic Conflict; India; Regional Party; Sikhism; Punjab

## **Dedication**

Ich widme diese Arbeit mit Stolz und Dankbarkeit meiner Familie und den unzähligen Menschen, die diesen Traum möglich gemacht haben. Diese Arbeit ist Zeugnis ihres beständigen Glaubens in mich und meine akademische Arbeit. Dafür werde ich ewig dankbar sein

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I dedicate this work with pride and gratefulness to my family and to all the people who made this dream possible. This work is a testimony of their constant beliefs in me and my academic work. I will be eternally grateful for this.

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# Table of Contents

Approval.....	ii
Partial Copyright Licence .....	iii
Abstract.....	iv
Dedication.....	v
Acknowledgements.....	vi
Table of Contents.....	viii
List of Tables and Figures .....	ix
List of Acronyms.....	x
Glossary.....	xi
<b>1. Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1. The Problem of Diversity .....	1
1.2. Argument and Objective of the Project .....	2
1.3. Methodological Background and Guiding Questions.....	3
1.4. Significance of the Project .....	4
1.5. Organization of the Project .....	4
<b>2. Regional Parties and Ethnic Conflict .....</b>	<b>6</b>
2.1. Defining Federalism.....	6
2.2. The Rise of Regional Parties .....	9
2.3. How Regional Parties Cause Ethnic Conflict and Secessionism.....	10
2.4. A Dangerous Pitfall and Alternative Explanations .....	13
<b>3. Methodology .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>4. The Case of Punjab .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>5. Analysis.....</b>	<b>23</b>
5.1. September 1981 – November 1984: Rising Confrontation.....	23
5.2. December 1984 – May 1986: Conciliatory Moves and Disappointments.....	32
<b>6. Conclusion.....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>References.....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>Appendices.....</b>	<b>52</b>
Appendix A. Timeline Punjab 1981-87.....	53
Appendix B. Causal Linkages between Akali Dal and Ethnic Conflict .....	56



## List of Tables and Figures

Table 1 Death Tolls in Punjab 1981-94.....	18
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## List of Acronyms

AD	Shiromani Akail Dal
ASR	Anandpur Sahib Resolution
AISSF	All India Sikh Student Federation
Congress(I)	Congress (Indira Gandhi)
DMK	Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam
AD(L)	Akali Dal (Longowal Group)
AD(T)	Akali Dal (Talwandi Group)
UAD	United Akali Dal
SGPC	Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee

## Glossary

Akal Takht	Literally translated as “The Throne of the Timeless One”, one of five Takhts and the seat of the Sikh authority.
Anandpur Sahib Resolution	Resolution passed by the AD in 1973 that demands deeper federalization and more autonomy for the Indian states.
Center	A term used for the Union government in New Delhi.
Dal Khalsa	Pro-Khalistan organization from Punjab.
Dharam Yudh	“War of Righteousness”. The Sikhs believe that in some cases war is justified (fighting tyranny and injustice). Similar to the European understanding of just war.
Gurdwara	Sikh place of worship. Literally translated as “Gateway to the Guru”.
Kirpan	Ceremonial sword worn by Sikhs.
Khalistan	“Land of the Pure” which should be a sovereign state that extremist Sikhs wanted to establish after secession from India.
Lok Sabha	Lower house of the Indian Parliament.
Morcha	Gathering of a group of people to protest for a common cause.
Operation Blue Star	Military operation to free the Golden Temple from extremist Sikhs from June 3-10 1984.
President’s Rule	Term used in the context of Article 356 of the Indian constitution that puts a state under direct federal rule. In the original sense the Governor of the state rules under the directives of the President of India. Democracy at the state level is therefore suspended.
Rail roko	A form of protest that aims to block railways.
Rasta roko	A form of protest that aims to block streets and disturb traffic.
Sarbat Khalsa	Deliberative assembly of all Sikhs whose resolutions are binding for all Sikhs.
Shiromani Akali Dal	Regional Sikh party in Punjab.
Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee	Committee that is responsible for the organization of the gurdwaras.
Sikhism	A monotheistic religion centered in Punjab. There are approximately 30 million Sikhs.

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. The Problem of Diversity

People struggle and sometimes fight in order to gain advantages or concessions from their counterpart. Every human being has interests and goals that he or she wants to achieve. The same is true for other entities like unions, NGOs, or states. On a more abstract level, it does not matter if these interests are socially constructed or exogenously given. They are out there and people fight for them. Therefore it is not very surprising that different ethnic groups also fight for their people's advantage. As a consequence of this, the field of social sciences deals with ethnic conflict.

The formation of the nation-state in Europe and later elsewhere has determined our thinking over a long period of time and its influence is still dominant (Flora, Kuhnle and Urwin 1999; Tilly 1990) even though some scholars challenge the concept of "methodological nationalism" (Jeffrey and Wincott 2010; Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2002). Outside Europe and after decolonization, states were constructed that saw their sovereignty as an inalienable right, however, they often lacked a common *demos*. They rather defined their state ethnically.<sup>1</sup> These states mostly consist of a plurality of ethnic groups that began to struggle to reach their interests and goals. The consequence of their struggle was often ethnic conflict and secessionist movements in various parts of the world. This phenomenon was not unique in the newly established states of the Global South, but it can be seen as a universal problem.

The ubiquity of the problem forced scholars to look for a solution. The debate centered on the old discussion of integration versus accommodation (Choudhry 2008). Some of the solutions include power sharing mechanisms (O'Flynn and Russell 2005)

<sup>1</sup> Demos is the political unity of the citizens of a state. It is not necessarily rooted in the *ethnos* of nationals. Different from an ethnic nation, race, language, etc. are not important. For further explanations see Habermas (1996: 129-33).

such as the establishing of consociational mechanisms or multiculturalism (McGarry, O'Leary and Simeon 2008), or the implementation of federal reforms and arrangements. The latter are the broader focal point of this project.

Federal arrangements were actually seen by many observers as a mechanism to conciliate the differing interests of distinctive groups. Nonetheless, federal arrangements also have strong critics. There has been broad discussion about their utility and advantage, and critics have queried whether federal arrangements accommodate ethnic conflict or rather exacerbate existing tensions (see for example Erk and Anderson 2010; Christin and Hug 2012; Hale 2004; Brown 2009). Does it make sense to implement federal reforms in divided societies, or must they be seen as a first step towards independence? Does autonomy solve the demands of territorially concentrated minorities for more self-rule, or does it only fuel the flames of secessionism? These are questions that scholars of federalism try to answer. One particular point of contention focuses on the negative impact of regional parties on the stability and integrity of a federal political system (Brancati 2006, 2009).

## **1.2. Argument and Objective of the Project**

This project's intention is to understand the relationship between regional parties and ethnic conflict in the Indian state of Punjab and the causal mechanisms linking these variables. More specifically, the focus is on the behavior of the AD, a regional Sikh party from the Indian state of Punjab and its party leaders, in the time before the outbreak of widespread ethnic violence and conflict in mid 1986. What was the impact of the AD on the rise of extremism and ethnic conflict in Punjab during the 1980s? Did the party promote and support the outbreak of violence in Punjab in order to establish an independent state of Khalistan or was the party rather an actor that had no significant influence on the development of ethnic conflict?

This paper argues that the AD was neither secessionist nor a supporter of ethnic conflict in Punjab per se. The moderate leadership of the AD which dominated the party most of the time was in favor of a political solution to the most contentious points between the Center and Punjab. Despite various negative external influences, the

leadership never left the path of 'peaceful agitation'. On this basis, how could ethnic violence break out? This is an important question to be asked. However, the project clearly shows that the general argument suggesting that regional parties cause ethnic conflict and secessionism, does not apply to Punjab without restrictions. Parties are not homogeneous entities and the party leaders during the time period of the analysis were "moderates" who preferred political negotiation over violent agitation.

The analysis starts in September 1981, after the religious preacher Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale was arrested by the police, and ends in May 1986 after the AD split. The reason for this time frame is twofold. (1) In the beginning, Bhindranwale was the main center of political and religious extremism in Punjab. With his arrest in September 1981 his rise in Sikh political and religious issues started. It was also around this time that the killing of Hindus and Sikhs by extremists began. (2) With the split of the AD in May 1986 ethnic conflict rose and broke out completely. Therefore the analysis of the party's behavior towards the causes of the conflict is not possible any more.

### **1.3. Methodological Background and Guiding Questions**

Following a detailed literature review on the impact of regional parties on ethnic conflict and secessionism, this paper will conduct a qualitative case study of Punjab. In this case study the relationship between the AD and ethnic conflict in the 1980s will be examined. The purpose is to find out what the impact of the AD and its leadership was on ethnic conflict in Punjab. With the intention of gaining valid results, the case study uses process tracing as its methodological tool. Process tracing is a helpful method in order to analyze the relationship between the AD as the independent variable and ethnic conflict as the dependent variable. It allows for an in-depth analysis of the various processes and steps (Checkel 2005, George and Bennett 2004) that led from the involvement and agitation of the AD in the early 1980s to widespread ethnic conflict in 1986. This method is further useful to examine the impact of the party's various leaders and factions on the political development in Punjab.

The main focus of the paper will be the extent of the party's impact per se and the political elite in the party on the escalating ethnic conflict. The main question

addresses why the general theoretical argument (Brancati 2006, 2009) cannot sufficiently explain the outcome of the AD's behavior in Punjab. The project argues that the factionalization of parties and organizations in general must be taken into account in order to sufficiently explain the issue at hand. Taking parties as a homogeneous entity – as much of the literature does – is a dangerous misperception. Therefore, leadership is the important mechanism to examine. The application of process tracing supports this case to uncover these assumptions.

## **1.4. Significance of the Project**

While some quantitative studies have revealed a significant relationship between regional parties and ethnic conflict, qualitative case studies are either missing or unsatisfactory (see for example Brancati 2006, 2009). Therefore, the purpose of this paper is twofold. (1) On the one hand, it shall test the applicability of existing quantitative case studies to the case of the AD and Punjab. Does the development in Punjab confirm the results from the statistical analysis and if not, why? (2) On the other hand, the case study of Punjab can provide an in-depth analysis of the so-called “Punjab Crisis” from a new perspective; the perspective of the AD. Arguments about the outbreak of ethnic conflict in Punjab are most often either seen to result from bad management at the Center, a radicalization of the youth because of the Green Revolution, a strengthening of Sikh nationalism, or the external influence of outside forces to weaken India (see for example Singh G. 2000; Fuller 1999; Kaur 1999). Therefore, this project adds another factor to this broad literature that can help explain the developments in Punjab in the late 1980s.

## **1.5. Organization of the Project**

Chapter Two provides a literature review. Here, the issue of regional parties is traced back to the study of federalism in general. The project starts by defining the central elements of federalism on a theoretical level. The paper makes clear that the specific structure of a federal political system is decisive for the stability of the political system as a whole. In a second step these structural differences are connected to the

evolution and power of regional parties. The chapter examines different reasons for the evolution of regional parties across countries. Furthermore, the chapter examines the theoretical relationship between regional parties and ethnic conflict. Why are regional parties said to promote ethnic conflict in societies? Afterwards, the general explanatory power of the theoretical construct will be discussed alternative explanations briefly examined, which leads to the question raised in this project.

Chapter Three deals with methodology. It provides the methodological background, as well as an overview of the primary sources that are used in the study. Chapter Four sets the stage for the analysis. It introduces the case of Punjab and India and describes the evolution that led to the events which started in the early 1980s. Chapter Five analyzes the period between September 1981 and May 1986, examining the impact of the AD on ethnic conflict and secessionism. In Chapter Six the results will be summed up and a conclusion will be given.



## **2. Regional Parties and Ethnic Conflict**

### **2.1. Defining Federalism**

A simple definition of federalism is not available. There is no “theory” of federalism that can be applied to this project and there is also not “the” federal political system that we can deal with. Moreover, we have to address a variety of different federal arrangements (Elazar 1995: 14, see also Benz and Broschek 2013). For example, Schultze (2010) distinguishes federal systems along differences in their normative goals with integration and equality of living conditions vs. autonomy and plurality of living conditions. On a political-institutional level, he distinguishes between a dual and a functional division of labour on different levels of government.<sup>2</sup> This, however, is only one way of categorizing federal systems. Erk (2007) shows that the term federalism can have different connotations depending on the context of the various countries. Whereas strengthening federalism in a unitary state means decentralization, it can mean centralization in a loosely bound federation. These examples show that federalism is a broad concept and its different variations must be taken into account when discussing the strengths and weaknesses of federal political systems.

In general, however, scholars agree on a definition provided by Riker (1964) which consists of three central elements that all federal political systems generally have in common. (1) In a federal political system, there are at least two different levels of government, where both deal with policy issues on the basis of self rule and shared rule (see also Elazar 1994). (2) This differentiation between self and shared rule also infers that every level of government has at least one policy field in which it has exclusive jurisdiction. This means that no other level of government can interfere in decisions

<sup>2</sup> A dual division of labour means that the federal and subnational levels of government each have certain policy fields to decide upon, implement and administer. In a system of functional division of labour, the federal level mostly passes legislation with regard to policy fields and the subnational level implements and administers them (Schultze 2010: 267).

made by the legislature of that level. (3) Finally, this division of competences must be included within the federal constitution of the country. This is one of the main differences between a federal and a unitary system. Thorlakson (2003) as well as Roust and Shvetsova (2007) demonstrate that this last element indirectly infers the existence of a democratic framework that recognizes the power sharing mechanisms. This is also stated by Burgess and Gagnon (2010) who argue explicitly in favor of the necessary symbiosis of democracy and federalism.

We can find these kinds of elements in almost all federal states around the globe. Federalism – seen as a type of control over a certain territory within the state by a subnational unit – also becomes more important in a time in which “territory has re-emerged as an important element in political life” (Keating 2001: 47). The control of subnational units is a way for territorially concentrated minorities to raise their voices in order to participate effectively in the political process of the country as a whole. Furthermore, federalism has increasingly spread in the past decades throughout the world and existing federations have deepened their federal structures continuously (Marks, Hooghe, and Schakal 2008a). Therefore the results of this case study are also interesting for further research on other cases.

If we now consider federalism in the problem of ethnic conflict and secessionism, we have to realize that federalism is largely viewed by scholars as an ineffective way to solve either problem. Federalism has long been seen as a poor way of regulating ethnic conflicts within multi-national societies (McGarry and O’Leary 1993). Even some well-known scholars of multiculturalism have argued that federal arrangements that had been established in order to accommodate conflicts may later be seen as a first step towards secession (Kymlicka 1998: 138-9). On the other hand, the federal idea has been defended. Gurr (2000) argues that federal arrangements and what he calls “negotiated autonomy” – between a majority and a minority group – are actually an effective way to avoid ethnonational wars of secession. This is because Gurr sees ethnic conflict as rooted in demands for more autonomy, because ethnic groups believe their cultural, linguistic, or other characteristics to be in danger. Bermeo also supports this line of argument by stating that federalism has helped states to remain unified and “no violent separatist movement has ever succeeded in a federal democracy” (Bermeo 2002: 108).

Therefore we can conclude that the success of federalism has an ambivalent evaluation with regard to ethnic conflict and secessionism.

All of these arguments should be interpreted in the context of widespread secessionist movements and partly ethnic tensions and conflicts from India and Nigeria to Spain and Canada. The phenomenon is not reduced to certain areas of the globe, but rather is universal. All of the countries named above have a certain kind of federal structure within their political system. Therefore, these structures were analyzed more explicitly to gain theoretical knowledge on how specific federal mechanisms can influence the problems of ethnic conflict and secessionism.

Ethnofederal arrangements which were a dominant form of federal structures in these multinational societies were at the center of the critique (see for example Christin and Hug 2012, Hale 2004, Roeder 2009). Roeder (2009) argues that ethnofederal structures are dangerous as they lead to federalization within a specific country along ethnic lines. Establishing these subunits therefore provides the basis for secessionist movements and these movements threaten the survival of the state as a whole. This is particularly true in cases where the whole ethnic group is included in one subunit in which they are the majority. New nation-building projects arise or are strengthened and a nation within a nation can be the result. This can harm unity amongst citizens of the state in an important way. It also leads us to question why this specific subunit should remain part of the state if it can fulfill the main duties of a state on its own (Heinemann-Grüder 2011). Therefore, Hale (2004) and to a certain extent Horowitz (1985: 604) argue that ethnic groups should be divided into more separate subunits in order to establish a collective action problem as the mobilization of interests as well as their organization will be weakened.

In sum, the conclusion could be to argue that ethnofederal arrangements should be avoided. However, this statement cannot be justified. Cases like India demonstrate that a state can survive even if there are these kinds of arrangements. A generalization is not the right way to handle the problem. In the words of Brown (2009), the context is decisive in whether federal political systems are stable or not. The same is true for discussions concerning regional parties in the following sections.

## 2.2. The Rise of Regional Parties

How do regional parties and/or movements arise? What is the reason for their evolution and how do they become powerful? The Cleavage Theory of Lipset and Rokkan (1967) argues that parties evolve around certain societal and economic cleavages: urban/industrial vs. rural/agrarian, center vs. periphery, confessional vs. secular, and/or labor vs. capital. The tensions between center and periphery can be decisive in multinational federal societies with territorially concentrated minorities. Ugo Amoretti calls these special cleavages *Territorial Cleavages*.

“A territorial cleavage exists when a self-conscious minority is concentrated in a specific area of a state’s territory [...] What matters is that the minority and the majority perceive themselves as collectively different and therefore of some kind of different treatment” (Amoretti 2004: 2).

For that reason Amoretti and Bermeo argue that it is necessary for states that have territorial cleavages to have federal structures and a kind of territorial autonomy to accommodate conflicts successfully. These territorial cleavages are dominant in many multinational federations across the globe and therefore are not a specific phenomenon that can be reduced to a certain part of the world (Amoretti and Bermeo 2004). Following these assumptions, regional parties are non-state wide parties that only compete for seats in the federal parliament within a certain area of the country where the specific group normally has a majority of its supporters. Therefore, they cannot win a majority in the federal parliament, but can sometimes support minority governments or join coalition governments. This has happened in instances such as the Catalan CiU and also through alliances with bigger parties like the AD or the DMK in India. However, we have to be aware that regional parties do not necessarily have to be ethnic parties and vice versa. The Bavarian CSU (Christian Social Union in Bavaria) is a regional party, but not organized along ethnic lines. On the other hand, the BJP is a Hindu-nationalist party that competes in the whole of India.

But why have these regional parties become more important over time? Several different lines of argument may be presented. Keating (2001: 48) explains this phenomenon with the increasing importance of culture in the reinvention of territory. Minority groups centralize their traditional linguistic and cultural patterns and affirm their loyalties to their ethnic identities compared to the country as a whole. This is supported

by the so-called “identity effect” (Marks, Hooghe, and Schakal 2008b) that arises in multiethnic societies, which explains that people prefer to be ruled by leaders that share their own ethnic identity and ethno-cultural norms. These ideational factors alone, however, cannot explain the power that some regional parties possess. In order to understand this mechanism we also have to take material factors like resource endowments into consideration.

To circumvent the aforementioned issues, this paper is mainly based on Brancati’s (2006, 2007, 2009) approach. She argues that ongoing federalization leads to the formation of regional parties and/or strengthens their power. The federalization of the political system can transfer power and competences to the lower level and strengthen particular interests in certain regions that would not be able to mobilize without the internal fragmentation of the political system. Thorlakson (2009, 2013) takes a similar approach. Her focus is on parties in general where she argues that the decentralization of the political system has an important influence on the party system. According to her argument, not only may regional parties arise, but state-wide parties might also split their organizational ties. If competences are delegated to the subnational level, there is an incentive for subnational chapters of the party to demand more autonomy and decrease the level of vertical integration within the party. Therefore, both authors argue more generally that the rise of the various regional parties can be explained by the federalization of the political system and the transfer of resources to the lower level of government.

### **2.3. How Regional Parties Cause Ethnic Conflict and Secessionism**

Why do regional parties promote ethnic conflict and secessionism? Not every federal system should be seen as unstable nor a proponent of ethnic violence. There are mechanisms that countries use to tame regional parties and their malevolent influences (Heinemann-Grüder 2011). One major group of federal structures in which ethnic conflict and secessionism is likely to break out are those states which adopt ethnofederal arrangements (see Chapter 2.1). As examined above, part of the problem is that these arrangements strengthen the periphery compared to the center, as more competences

are transferred to the subnational units (Roeder 2009: 21-2). This is the starting point for the analysis of power and political opportunities for regional parties. This shift in the balance of power strengthens ethnic elites and regional parties within the subunit (Brancati 2006, 2007, 2009, see also Chhibber and Kollman 2004). Depending on the literature, these ethnic elites and regional parties are generally said to be more secessionist and seek to gain more autonomy for their subunit. This leads to an increase in ethnic violence and has the capacity to destabilize the country as a whole.

There are three mechanisms that regional (ethnic) parties use to strengthen their power: the formation of regional identities and territorial cleavages, legislation that harms other groups in the specific territory, and/or mobilization around ethnic issues and secessionism (Brancati 2009).

The establishment of subnational units opens the door for the creation of regional identities and a deepening of existing territorial cleavages. As identities are social constructs created around specific narratives of a group's history, language, culture, etc. (Ross 2007), identities can also be altered over the long term by regional parties. Change is structured around institutional settings and leadership in the party, which are both important elements in defining regional identities (Brancati 2009: 30). So the main focal point can be the fear of losing this constructed identity which is sometimes used in order to mobilize around ethnic issues. The factor of leadership is crucial in this consideration. Leadership is seldom sufficient in explaining the outcome on its own because it interacts with other factors, but it is critical in ethnically divided societies. Ethnic leaders can have an important influence in the outbreak of violence or peaceful negotiations (Morrow 2005).

The leadership component is also crucial with regard to mobilization around ethnic ties and secessionism. The federalization and decentralization of the political system leads to a strengthening of subnational units as they gain more competences and resources compared to the center (Brancati 2009; Roeder 2010). Therefore ethnic leaders obtain resources in order to begin establishing differing nation-building processes, which can undermine the unity and integrity of the state as a whole. As this paper has argued above, this process is often seen as the first step towards independence and is therefore critical in leading to communal violence. The reason for

this is that the subunit is rarely a homogenous unit with only the minority living in it. Often there are members of the state-wide majority who live in the same regions and this can lead to the problem of so-called trapped minorities (Buchheit 1978).

Increased financial and institutional resources and the capacity of mobilization provides regional parties with the opportunity to effectively influence the policies in the subnational unit – constrained by the fact that the regional party has to gain a majority of the seats in parliament. The legislation passed by the parliament can lead to communal violence and ethnic conflict if the laws harm minorities within the subnational unit (Brancati 2009: 37). On the one hand, the decentralization of powers can decrease tensions in the center-state relations, but can also increase them within the subunit. However, the capacity of the regional party to adopt such legislation is constrained by the actual transfer of powers to the lower level. Therefore a political decentralization does not necessarily need to lead to ethnic conflict, but it rather depends on the specific context of the federal political system.

Examining material and institutional factors is, however, only one side of the coin. We also have to take the ideational factor of 'loyalty' into account. Following the work of Hirschman (1970), Rokkan describes loyalty as "the structures forcing the component parts to *stay* within the given system" (Rokkan 1974: 39; emphasis in the original text; see also Ferrera 2005). If we apply this concept to federal political systems it means that if the loyalty of the citizens in the subnational region is high with regard to the Center, secessionism and independence is very unlikely. This is why Bartolini (2005) labels loyalty as "internalized boundary".<sup>3</sup> For this reason, in order to achieve an independent state, regional parties need to find a way to transfer loyalty to the subnational level. On a different level, these internalized boundaries that are social constructs are important in the functioning of the state as they can deepen the cleavages within a divided society. Moreover, loyalty is a crucial factor in establishing a nation state and constructing a nation (Gellner 1983). One way of transferring loyalty is by strengthening competences in policy issues that are crucial for the population in the subunit. If the policies passed by

<sup>3</sup> Internalized boundary means that loyalty is seen as a social construct that limits the options of action for the people. The citizens will not cross the boundary of demanding secessionism if they feel high loyalty with the Center and the country as a whole compared to the subunit.

the legislature affect the citizens' lives they are likely to identify more with this level of government. A clear example is the issue of social policy in Canada.

“Defenders of the federal role counter that the decentralization of social programmes diminishes the role of the central government in the daily lives of Canadians, and that it *erodes the underlying sense* that, at some level, *all citizens are part of a common political community* with shared commitments to each other” (Banting 2005, 136–7, emphasis S.G.).

If the relationship between regional parties and ethnic conflict and secessionism depends on the context of the political system, under what circumstances can their outbreak be restrained? (1) Regional parties can often be constrained successfully if they need coalition partners in order to form government of the subnational unit (Brancati 2009). (2) The power and competences of the subnational legislature is also important (Brancati 2009, Thorlakson 2003). If the subnational unit lacks competences over key policy areas, it cannot pass legislation that harms minorities. Furthermore, the described features of loyalty are crucial in the analysis of secessionism. (3) A final important element is the style of leadership and the possibility of leaders to lead the party and frame discussions (Brancati 2009, Morrow 2005). Having the right leader at the right time can tame the forces that promote ethnic conflict within the party and can lead to peaceful negotiations with the federal government.

## 2.4. A Dangerous Pitfall and Alternative Explanations

The theoretical examinations above provide a solid basis for the analysis of federal systems and the outbreak of ethnic conflict and secessionism. Nonetheless, there are some shortcomings that cannot be answered sufficiently by this approach. One pitfall is the intrinsic implication that regional parties would promote secessionism and ethnic conflict if they had the opportunity to do so. If a constraining mechanism was not available in a federal political system, regional parties would exploit the situation. This, however, is a dangerous assumption even though it might sound logical.

“In multinational states with reasonably long traditions of democracy [...] there have been very few ‘credible’ secessionist movements [...] the best explanation for secessionist demands may be the larger state’s *refusal* to grant more autonomy and recognition *within* the state” (Norman 2006: 74; emphasis in the original text; see also Buchanan 1991: 18–22).



Norman rightly argues that the demand for secessionism and mobilization around ethnic lines is just a useful tool in order to blackmail the federal level to make concessions to the subunit and to guarantee more autonomy for it. The territorially concentrated minorities do not necessarily demand their own statehood. Of course, there are always those elements that demand self-determination, but these groups are generally not the powerful actors. "The historical preference of these groups [national minorities, S. G.] [...] has not been to leave the federation, but to renegotiate the terms of federation, so as to increase their autonomy within" (Kymlicka 1995: 12). Therefore the question is why some leaders of regional parties do not use ethnic conflict as a tool to achieve their goals, but use political negotiations? They might use the rhetoric of secessionism, but only in order to achieve their goal for more autonomy. This is one of the issues this project aims to solve. It will show how the AD in Punjab behaved on the eve of ethnic conflict in the 1980s and the extent of their influence on ethnic conflict. The project will demonstrate that leadership played an important role in how the whole process developed and was critical for avoiding secessionism and ethnic conflict.

Singh (1987) provides an overview of different approaches to the case of ethnic conflict in Punjab. These alternative explanations, however, are not sufficient to explain the outcome of ethnic conflict without the involvement of the AD as an actor of mobilization. One explanation is the involvement of external forces from Pakistan or diaspora communities in the UK or Canada (Government of India 1984: 3). Above all, the Pakistani government was said to have an interest in the insurgency in Punjab as a destabilization of India would have been appreciated in Islamabad. However, the influence of these external forces must not be overestimated. The AD played an important role in this approach because it was seen as a tool that these external forces used in order to agitate against New Delhi. The regional party therefore remains in the center of our considerations and needs to be analyzed more closely in order to find the causal mechanism that links it to ethnic conflict.

A second alternative explanation is the Green Revolution that took place in Punjab, which was seen as the granary of the nation. Modernization, urbanization, rootlessness, and rising graduate unemployment were the main reasons that nurtured tendencies of fundamentalism in Punjab (Jeffrey 1986). However, this argument has also been criticised. The rural Sikhs mostly benefitted from the Green Revolution (Singh

1987: 1272) and were not against it. Furthermore, they soon replaced the urban Sikhs in the AD. Therefore the AD was not heavily influenced by a powerful urban Sikh faction. Moreover, in this explanation the influence of the AD in mobilizing Sikhs is important. The urban Sikh community was only a smaller part of the whole community. The development in Punjab cannot be fully explained without taking the leadership component into account.

For all these reasons, neither the Green Revolution nor the involvement of external forces can sufficiently explain the outbreak of ethnic conflict in Punjab during the 1980s. The analysis of the AD and its leadership is necessary to fill the gap.

### 3. Methodology

Compared to other studies, this paper will go on a subnational level and take one Indian state (Punjab) and one regional party within this state (AD) to provide a qualitative case study on the relationship between regional parties and ethnic conflict. The reason for this is to examine the results of Brancati's (2009) quantitative study where she found the correlation to be significant over a large group of states.

This qualitative case study includes the method of process tracing which is the analysis of causal mechanisms. Process tracing is a way to reduce "the lag between input and outcome, between cause and effect" (Checkel 2005: 4). It is a tool that helps to overcome the deficits of correlative analyses and to look inside the "black box" between the independent variable (regional party) and the dependent variable (ethnic conflict). Process tracing, however, must not be seen as a mere telling of a story, but as an attempt to show connections between events that explain the correlation of variables in a specific case. Furthermore it is a theory testing tool in order to avoid acknowledging causality in cases where there is none. Correlation must not be equalized with causation (Schimmelfennig 2006).

However, we must recognize that we cannot generalize our results for every case that involves regional parties and ethnic conflict. Process tracing is a very specific tool that concentrates on one case. In order to use process tracing successfully, it is necessary to "establish an *uninterrupted* causal path linking the putative causes to the observed effects" (George and Bennet 2005: 222, emphasis added). The path for this project can be seen in Appendix B.

The main mechanism at work and on which the paper is based is leadership. The project talks specifically about the leadership of AD leaders.<sup>4</sup> How could they influence the evolution of ethnic conflict in Punjab? If this leadership mechanism is at work, we will see in the data a taming of the radical factions. Furthermore a decrease in victims of ethnic conflict in the earlier time frame period and an increase of victims and violence in the later years will be seen. This is to be expected because most of the AD leaders in the earlier years were moderates who supported a political solution. More specifically, we can expect a more cooperative behavior of the AD with regard to the Center. This, however, need not necessarily imply that we only observe cooperative acts. The data will show that many public speeches and interviews can be seen as aggressive, but the project will at the same time clearly demonstrate that the rhetorical aggressiveness was often not implemented into real actions.

After the assassination of Longowal, a leadership vacuum occurred in which rival leaders sought to overtake the party. This ongoing internal fragmentation combined with a weakening of moderate forces led to the escalation of violence in mid-1986. The disempowerment of moderate leaders and the leadership vacuum were main issues for the escalation of violence. The data will demonstrate how the question of succession in the AD leadership divided the remaining leaders and how the moderate factions intrigued against each other. Furthermore, the data will show how this led to a strengthening of the radical elements by pointing out their extending political actions and agitation, not only on a peaceful political but also on a violent level.

Qualitative case studies are useful in order to examine how an independent variable's impact on a dependent variable is dependent on other variables (Bakke 2010: 98). However, a single case study has no legitimacy to generalize the outcomes. The outcomes of this project must not be transferred automatically to other cases, but can provide new variables that must be taken into account in approaching different case studies.

<sup>4</sup> However, leadership also played an important role at the Center. This can be most obviously seen in the different styles of ruling between Indira Gandhi and her son Rajiv, who followed her as prime minister after her assassination.

The project aims to demonstrate how the conflict of Punjab with the Center developed and the role of the AD within this conflict. As already argued above (Chapter 1.3), the time frame is limited to the years between September 1981 when Bhindranwale became active and May 1986 when the AD split and conflict escalated. For the analysis of this time frame, the paper relies on both primary and secondary resources. The data consists mainly of newspaper articles of the 1980s. These include above all the biweekly news magazine “India Today International”, and also other Indian and Pakistani newspapers. Furthermore, the project uses information gathered from the online database “Foreign Broadcast Information Service” (FBIS). This database has translated official versions of foreign press releases and newspaper articles.

This project focuses on Punjab for several reasons. India is the biggest federal democracy in the world. Conflicts are more or less managed within a constitutional framework. Furthermore, the Punjab Crisis has been one of the most severe ethnic conflicts in India, causing thousands of deaths over several years. Punjab was, together with the Northeast and Kashmir, one of the main sources of ethnic conflict. As a settlement has been reached, the whole process from the breakup of violence until settlement can be researched. Additionally, Punjab is a case that has been studied well for other reasons, and therefore a wealth of information is available to examine.

**Table 1 Death Tolls in Punjab 1981-94.**

Year	<i>India Today</i> April 15 1993
1981	29
1982	22
1983	108
1984	456
1985	73
1986	~790
1987	~1400
1988	~2500
1989	~1900
1990	~4300
1991	~5000
1992	3783
Total	~20361

Following “K.P.S.Gill: True Grit”, 1993, April 15.

Ethnic conflict in this project is measured by the number of casualties that arose in the conflict in Punjab across communal lines. Therefore, the rising death toll in Punjab in the mid-1980s (Table 1) is interpreted as an escalation of ethnic conflict. This is also the reason for restricting the analysis to the time frame argued above. The regional party under consideration is the AD(L). This is the biggest faction amongst various AD factions. Therefore, other factions like the AD(T) and the UAD are only of peripheral interest and are analyzed only if their impact on the AD(L) makes it necessary.

## 4. The Case of Punjab

Ethnic conflict and secessionism are main elements that have to be considered in Indian politics. Nationalism was extremely high in Punjab (Singh 2008) and turned into violence over the 1980s. In the south, Tamil Nadu is an example of early ethnic conflict and nationalism in the 1950s and 60s. Nowadays, the Punjabi and Tamil conflicts are mostly solved. The northeast, however, is still a dangerous place with insurgencies and counterinsurgencies taking place (Baruah 2009, 2012, Lacina 2009). Jammu and Kashmir is a very distinctive case as it is divided between Pakistan and India, and is a location where terrorist attacks still take place.

In order to understand the behavior of the Center – above all under Prime Minister Indira Gandhi – with regard to Punjab, we have to recognize an important feature of Indian politics. India's federal system as a whole is shaped by one historical incident: the partition of the subcontinent in 1947 (Talbot 2010, Singh 2001). This event along with the struggles and wars with Pakistan and China regarding borders led to a mystification of the Indian borders; they became sacrosanct. This is the hegemonic belief which is shared by most of the Indian population, but which is not unchallenged. The separatist movements on the Indian periphery, however, strengthen these beliefs more than they weaken them. Every rearrangement of internal borders represents an important struggle for all parties and elites. In India, the parliament has the exclusive right to reshape internal boundaries and create new subunits. This is normally done along linguistic lines (see for example Bhattacharyya 2010). In the early years, Nehru was reluctant to fulfill the demands of ethnic minorities, but in order to save the national unity he was willing to restructure the country. This internal restructure took place with the *States Reorganisation Act* of 1956 which, however, neglected to establish Punjab as a state.

The number of states and Union territories has currently increased to 28 states and 7 Union territories. The Indian federal structure is still in flux and new states could be

established over the next decades. It is obvious that over the past decades New Delhi has been reluctant to create new states in the periphery<sup>5</sup> unless necessary. Demands in the Hindu heartland, however, have been treated differently (Singh 2001). The latest states created are all located in the Hindu heartland (Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, and Uttarakhand all in 2000).

Historically, Punjab was divided during the partition of the subcontinent between Pakistan and India in 1947. The Eastern part became an Indian state in 1966 (Punjab) after the Hindu majority in what is now Haryana, was separated from it. Chandigarh became the capital of both states and a Union territory. Punjab was the first state that inhabited a majority of Sikhs. According to the Census of India (2001), about 60% of the population is Sikh. Religion, however, was not officially the reason for the creation of Punjab, but rather the creation of a Punjabi speaking state (Singh 2008).

Furthermore, the turmoil in Punjab in the 1980s was not a spontaneous event, but had a significant background. The conflict between the AD and the Center had already begun in the 1950s with the struggle for establishing a *Punjabi Subah*. This struggle transformed in the late 1960s after the creation of Punjab and increasingly became economically motivated. Punjab was one of the richest states within India and the question about the river water distribution between Punjab and mainly Haryana was quite crucial, as the Punjabi economy heavily depended on agricultural production (Singh 2008). Nevertheless, the question of religious and cultural autonomy for the Sikh majority in Punjab remained on the agenda and the AD was active in demanding more power from New Delhi. The same is true for the transfer of Chandigarh to Punjab.

The AD was founded on December 13 1920 after the formation of the SGPC which was established in order to take management of gurdwaras away from corrupt priests. The structure of the party and its electorates changed several times over the years, but the AD mainly represents the peasant Jat Sikhs (Bhatnagar 2011). The Gurdwara Act (1925) made the SGPC the legal representative to manage and control

<sup>5</sup> With periphery I mean the regions in the North-East and North-West. West Bengal and Tamil Nadu, two states that are also on the periphery are said to be integrated in the main Hindi heartland so that they are dependent on this structure (Singh 2001).



Sikh gurdwaras. The AD became the political wing of the religious organized SGPC (Singh 2000: 83).

The internal factional fight within the AD was always concerned with putting more religious or political demands to the fore front of the political agenda. Sant Fateh Singh, an AD leader in the 1960s, gave the AD a more secular image by adding the demand for a Punjabi state to the goals of the AD.

"We do not seek a Sikh majority area. We are not concerned about percentages. We want the Punjabi Suba to comprise an area where Punjabi language is spoken regardless of the fact whether the Sikh are in a majority or minority." (The Tribune 30 October 1960 quoted according to Kaur 1999: 31-2).

Of course, there would have been a Sikh majority in any state that had a Punjabi speaking majority; the question was just how big the majority would be. The fight between Sant Fateh Singh and his opponent Master Tara Singh led to a split of the party in 1962.

In the 1970s the position of the AD in Punjab was quite good. After the *Emergency Rule* between 1975 and 1977, the AD won the elections in Punjab on June 12 1977 with a landslide victory and Parkash Singh Badal became Chief Minister of Punjab. Due to internal fights between Badal and party leader Jagdev Singh Talwandi in alliance with SGPC president Gurcharan Singh Tohra, the party weakened. After Indira Gandhi dismissed the democratically elected government on February 17 1980 – even though it still had a majority in the assembly – the Congress (I) was elected into government in June 1980 (Kaur 1999: 64-9).

As soon as the AD was out of office, they elicited an agitational movement in order to pressure the newly elected Congress (I) government to fulfill their demands. This movement was not very successful in the beginning and failed to mobilize many supporters. On August 20 1981, Harchand Singh Longowal was elected as the president of the AD.

## **5. Analysis**

### **5.1. September 1981 – November 1984: Rising Confrontation**

This first part of the period of analysis is marked by rising tensions caused by failed or missing compromises and an increase in agitational politics. Both sides, the AD and the Center, sought to secure the maximum outcome from the bargaining table and therefore the possibility for compromise was low. However, ethnic conflict did not break out due to the taming influence of AD leaders. Despite agitational actions they mostly had control over the situation and kept radical elements in the party small.

On September 9 1981, Lala Jagat Narain, a Hindu editor and founder of the Hind Samachar group, was assassinated. Following this murder, the mostly unknown preacher and head of the Damdami Taksal – a Sikh educational organization in Chowk Mehta – J. S. Bhindranwale was accused of involvement. He handed himself over to the police on September 21 1981 in his hometown. Hundreds of supporters came to this event and even the leaders of the AD including Longowal, Tohra and Talwandi joined to show their support to Bhindranwale (Khandekar, 1981, October 15). Bhindranwale became the symbol of a Sikh “martyr” who had sacrificed himself. This was the basis for his later success among Sikh masses. This image was legitimized by the AD leadership that showed up at his hometown, and this obvious sign of support helped Bhindranwale to build a larger group of followers.

Around the same time, the AD leadership submitted a list of 45 demands to the Center which was later replaced by an updated list of 15 demands. Longowal threatened the Center that he would launch a morcha if these demands were not fulfilled. He argued that the federal government “has not only refused to fulfill its solemn promises made by it to them on the eve of independence, but also because ever since it has consistently and deliberately tried to reduce them to the unenviable position of second class citizens”

(Sethi and Chawla, 1981, October 31). Longowal mixed religious and political issues in order to gain support for his way of handling the problem. By taking on extremist demands, he tried to woo back the extremists in his party. He also threatened to organize a civil disobedience movement if Bhindranwale was not released immediately from jail. This example clearly demonstrates the line of agitation that the AD leadership took in early years. The rhetoric used by them might sound aggressive, but the centerpiece of the actual agitation was always peaceful. The AD leaders threatened with a morcha, and a civil disobedience movement, but never with a violent uprising of the Sikhs in Punjab. A political solution was at the top of the agenda and the moderate leadership has never doubted this issue in general.

Furthermore, other party leaders like Badal also made it clear that the AD did not want independence for Punjab and did not promote ethnic conflict. Badal stated that "extremist elements are defaming the Sikhs [...] a separate nation for Sikhs has to be understood in proper perspective. We are as Indian as any other community and it is totally wrong to conclude that we are against the remaining part of India" (Sethi and Chawla, 1981, October 31).

A further attempt to free Bhindranwale was made by the Dal Khalsa, whose members hijacked an Indian airplane and flew it to Lahore on September 29 1981. Nonetheless, Bhindranwale was not immediately released and AD leaders such as Longowal refused to condemn the hijackings. Longowal in general seemed to be quite aggressive and reluctant to find a compromise at this time, but it must be realized that he was only leader of the party for one year and had to strengthen his standing within the Sikh community. Longowal had to speak aggressively, but as argued above, his main goal was to achieve a peaceful solution. When Bhindranwale was finally released on October 16 1981 (Prominent Sikh leader released from Jail, 1981, October 16) he started to agitate on the basis of discrimination against the Sikhs by the Center (Sikh leader decries discrimination against Sikhs, 1982, January 5).

A second important process began with direct negotiations between the AD leadership and the Center. Indira Gandhi participated in three of them. The meetings took place on October 16 1981, November 26 1981, and April 5 1982. From the very beginning, the strategy of the extremists was to sabotage the negotiations between the

moderate leadership and the Center. But even though Indira Gandhi signaled that she might accept the religious demands, in the end she did not accept any of them (Chawla 1982, May 31). The negotiations finally failed on April 9 1982 when she announced the building of the Jamuna-Sutlej canal, which would bring water from the Punjabi rivers to Haryana and Rajasthan. Gandhi, however, was aware of the dangerous impact of her actions. One of her key advisors told her that the situation in Punjab could soon escalate and the Center would then end up with a problem worse than that in the north-eastern region if a settlement could not be reached (Chawla 1982, May 31).

On the other hand, the moderate AD leadership was willing to negotiate. After Indira Gandhi had announced that she would not accept secessionism and terrorism in an important state like Punjab, the AD – as a sign of good will – condemned the hijackings and violence in Punjab and announced a postponement of their morcha (Chawla, 1981, November 15). This clearly shows the flexibility of the AD leadership. They were not completely stacked in a crude ideology, but could adjust to spontaneous changes. This shows once again how important moderate leadership was for the AD.

When, however, the negotiations failed, Longowal announced a civil disobedience movement and asked the Sikhs not to pay taxes or government loans until the Center gave in. During the protests 64 AD members were arrested (Sikhs begin resistance movement in East Punjab, 1982, April 10). Some days later, a Sikh convention demanded the establishment of a Sikh homeland *within* India and set a deadline to fulfill the demands of the AD by August 15 or a Dharam Yudh would be started (Ganguly, 1982, April 15). This symbolizes the general problem that will later be demonstrated in other situations. The AD leadership has never received real rewards for their flexibility from the Center and therefore had to return to more agitational measures. However, the moderates had to ensure the situation stayed on a political level and did not turn violent.

On July 26 1982, Longowal announced that he would unite his morcha with Bhindranwale's. This united morcha started on August 4 and led to the arrest of Badal and 1031 AD supporters. Until October 15, 30.000 AD supporters had been arrested and 19 died (AFP, 1982, October 15). Nonetheless, the rhetoric used by the moderate AD leadership was not secessionist or in favor of violence. Longowal stated, "we decided to

swim or sink with India [after the partition]. India is ours and we are with the Indians. We want a place of honour as Indians” (Thukral, 1982, October 15). However, there was no real progress in starting new negotiations and therefore the AD planned a Dharam Yudh from November 4 onwards.

Even though there were signs that New Delhi accepted the religious demands, the militants could not be satisfied. On November 4 1982, the Dharam Yudh was officially announced. This step showed a strengthening of the militant faction within the AD and the moderate leaders had to react to this shift in order to retain their credibility. Opposition leader Badal and SGPC President Tohra expressed their regret for the starting of the Dharam Yudh (Sikh Militancy: Breaking for a Showdown, 1982: November 15). This is an action pattern that could often be seen within the AD. Setbacks for the moderate leadership in finding a political solution strengthened more radical factions and leaders. This in turn had influence on the party behavior. The moderates, however, still remained in the stronger position and rejected violence. This can be seen in the fact that the door for negotiations had also not been closed. Longowal signaled this because he had not dismissed the 5-member committee that was responsible for the negotiations with the Center (Chawla and Thukral, 1982, November 30). Nonetheless, there were attempts by Bhindranwale to ally with Talwandi to force Longowal and Badal to a harder line with regard to the Center. However, their publicly expressed critiques of the Center must not be overestimated as the real action demonstrates a different picture. The rhetoric of the AD leadership was mostly more martial than their real actions showed. This clearly suggests how important the factor of moderate leadership was in the AD in order to avoid the escalation of conflict.

The next step that the more militant faction of the AD planned was the resignation of all MLAs and MPs for January 26 1983 (Chawla and Thukral, 1982, December 31). This would create a constitutional crisis in Punjab as 40% of the seats would have been vacant. On the other hand, it was also a question of internal rivalry within the AD as the Badal faction would have been weakened with regard to SGPC President Tohra if all MLAs resigned. The moderates tried to postpone these steps and extended the deadline until February 21 (Kapoor and Thukral, 1983, February 15). That this could happen demonstrates again the importance of moderate leadership. Even though the moderates had to adjust with more radical demands they could constantly

postpone their implementation and therefore obtain time to find different solutions to the problems.

Prior to the resignation, Indira Gandhi announced on February 13 that the major religious demands of the AD will be accepted, but she did not talk about the economic and political ones. This was the result of political considerations because the intention was to take away the religious reason for the Dharam Yudh. Rajiv Gandhi expressed that the “Akalis now have no ground for continuing their *dharmayudh* [sic!] because their religious demands have been accepted” (Chawla and Thukral, 1983, March 31). The calculation of the Center was still to get rid of the AD and the Gandhi administration played a dangerous game by trying to weaken the AD moderates. As the later prime minister I. K. Gujral correctly stated, “weakening the moderates would only help the extremist fringe” (Sethi, Thukral and Chawla, 1983, April 30).

Therefore the anger of Longowal who talked about “fraud aimed at dividing the Sikhs” (Chawla and Thukral 1983, March 31) and other leaders was understandable as all economic and political demands were excluded by the Center. These, however, were the most important demands. The AD answered with a *rasta roko* on April 4 1983. On April 8, the AD announced the formation of a *Sacrifice Squad* that should fight for the Sikh cause if necessary (AFP, 1983, April 8). On the other hand, Longowal again expressed his openness for further negotiation about the remaining Sikh demands, but not without a sideswipe at the Center. “We can sit anywhere, anytime if it can help sort out the issues [...] It is the Government that is prolonging the morcha not us. Why don't they come out with their decision, whatever it may be” (Thukral, 1983, May 31). Earlier in the month, Longowal had already announced the rejection of the AD to the plans of an independent Khalistan, and reaffirmed that all changes the AD demanded were within the framework of the constitution (Delhi Domestic Service, 1983, May 10).

These situations showed once more that the AD always tried to find the right balance between the threat of public mobilization and rhetorical offers to the Center. After having introduced a new line of action on May 12 that should begin on June 17, Longowal released an appeal for communal harmony and national unity on May 16 (Delhi Domestic Service, 1983, May 16). He released a similar announcement on June 28 (Delhi Domestic Service, 1983, June 28) and another one on July 17 (Delhi Domestic

Service, 1983, July 17). On July 10, Longowal also affirmed that “Hindus and Sikhs are brothers [...] and a brother should not fight a brother” (AFP, 1983, July 10). The moderate leadership did not see the enemy in the Hindu community, but in the Congress (I). This was their declared enemy who they had to fight in order to gain more autonomy for Punjab and the Sikh community. These announcements by the AD leaders show that they did not reduce the conflict to a mere fight between Sikhs and Hindus, but as one between Punjab and the Center. Clearly it was not mainly an ethnic issue even though the AD often had demands that put Sikhism in the center. However, the moderate leaders like Longowal and Badal avoided putting ethnicity at the forefront like the radical factions did. This is one reason why moderate leadership can be seen as a taming mechanism that avoided the outbreak of ethnic conflict during these years.

On the one hand, all these rhetorical announcements were not underpinned by action. The Akali Dal rejected a negotiation offer by the Center on June 15<sup>6</sup> and started a rail roko for June 17. These were the steps Longowal and the other moderates had to go in order to keep the militant factions calm. At the same time, the government did not really have anything to offer. Constrained by a crude ideology of saving the country's borders against internal and external threats (Singh 2001), above all in the sensitive areas at the Pakistani and Chinese borders, the Center could not accept nationhood for Sikhs or more autonomy. These questions, however, were crucial for the Sikhs.

On October 6 1983, President's Rule was declared over Punjab after six Hindus were taken out of a Bus and shot by Sikh extremists on the same day. The killings were condemned by all parties including the AD whose leader Longowal criticized them as shameful. Similar statements of sympathy were expressed by Badal and Barnala. Furthermore, President's rule was welcomed by most of the other parties. (Delhi Domestic Service, 1983, October 7).

At the same time, the tensions between the AD(L) and the Bhindranwale camp rose from day to day.

<sup>6</sup> However, the offer did not really offer anything new to the AD and therefore Longowal saw no new need to fly to New Delhi.

“It's an open secret that there's no love lost between the Akali moderates and the Bhindranwale camp. Although Longowal often goes to consult Bhindranwale, Badal makes no secret of his dislike of him. For this reason, any solution that is acceptable to the Akali leadership and isolates Bhindranwale opens up interesting possibilities” (Gupta and Thukral, 1983, October 31).

Longowal was able to obtain more space for action over the past months and he was willing to use it in order to find a solution to the stalemate. Part of the problem was Bhindranwale. This view was supported by the journalist Satindra Singh who wrote that “she [Gandhi, S.G.] should realise that the Akali moderates are as keen to get rid of the extremists as she is. [...] But it seems Mrs Gandhi's indecision will let the extremists overwhelm them. She will not give Chandigarh but will end up having to concede Khalistan” (Gupta and Thukral, 1983, October 31). But Longowal could not hand over Bhindranwale or any other extremist as this would have destroyed his credibility within the Sikh community. A satisfying deal with the Center, however, would have strengthened his position and ousted Bhindranwale. An example of how negligently the Center dealt with the issue can be seen in the negotiation offer without preconditions made by Home Minister Sethi, which was accepted by the AD. The minister, however, had to take the offer back and the AD moderates were left embarrassed (Gupta and Thukral, 1983, November 15).

Then, in early 1984 the rift among the party factions became more visible. Longowal publicly announced his different approach to the situation (Delhi Domestic Service, 1983, February 1) and released an appeal for communal harmony among Sikhs and Hindus (Delhi Domestic Service, 1983, January 29). However, after another round of negotiations had failed, the fighting reached a new dimension when Sikh leaders publicly burned parts of the Indian constitution on February 28.<sup>7</sup> This was a typical step of the AD to provoke and offer at the same time. Only two weeks later, Longowal expressed that the AD never wanted to achieve a separate Khalistan (Delhi Domestic Service, 1984, March 15). So even if the AD leadership burned parts of the constitution, this cannot be seen as an act of ethnic conflict. Rather it was a political act and the moderate leadership once more announced publicly its opposition to secessionism. The moderate

<sup>7</sup> Leaders like Badal burned Article 25 of the constitution which regulated religious issues because they wanted an amendment to the article that declared the Sikhs as a separate religious groups. They were afraid to be homogenized with the Hindus.



leadership of the AD did not want an independent state. They were the main forces in the AD against secessionism and ethnic conflict.

However, after many failed attempts at negotiation, the credibility of the Sikh leadership decreased within the Sikh community. In order to save the moderate leadership from failure, the Gandhi administration charged Longowal with sedition, but never arrested him (Delhi Domestic Service, 1984, March 20). This was a clever move as it strengthened Longowal within his community and forced militants like Bhindranwale to announce their support for the moderate leadership of the AD.

At the same time, the AD leadership planned a non-cooperation movement starting on June 3 1984 in order to protest against the Center. On June 2, the night before the next agitation, Indira Gandhi spoke to the Indian people. She justified the negotiation style of her government with regard to the AD and urging the AD to postpone the agitation in order to avoid more violence (Delhi Domestic Service, 1984, June 2). One day later, Operation Blue Star was implemented. Between June 3 and 8 the Indian army stormed the Golden Temple complex in order to wipe out extremism from this place. Bhindranwale was killed in the battle. According to numbers recorded by the government, 493 people were killed at the Golden Temple during that operation (Government of India 1984: 169). Other sources suggest that over 5000 people, most of whom were civilians, died during the operation (Singh 2008: 44). Longowal and Tohra were arrested by the military inside the temple complex. The Akal Takht and the Temple were mostly destroyed.

The reaction of the AD was harsh. Badal announced that there could be no negotiations with the government any longer as it “has declared war on the Sikhs [...] We have reached a point of no return” (Delhi Domestic Service, 1984, June 11). On the other hand, Indira Gandhi expressed that she did not see the AD as a legitimate partner for negotiations anymore (Delhi Diplomatic Information Service, 1984, June 18). Operation Blue Star can be seen as a success in the terms of killing parts of the extremist leadership at the first spot and arresting the main moderate leaders of the AD. However, it created a huge rift between the Sikh and the Hindu community in Punjab as well as all over India which will be seen later on. Even though most of the moderate leaders were in jail, the reason why the conflict did not escalate at this moment can be

seen in the fact that most of the extremist leaders were either dead or had left Punjab. The moderate AD leadership was not replaced by a radical one. An unorganized AD therefore could agitate neither pro violence nor pro political solution. This shows once again the importance that leadership had in these critical situations. Because of a lack of extremist leadership, the conflict did not turn violent. Moreover, over the next months the Gandhi administration had to realize that they could not solve the problem without the moderate AD leadership since many extremists fled from the Golden Temple complex and either spread throughout Punjab or entered the border to Pakistan.

The Center realized that it was not able to solve the conflict when it announced a Sarbat Khalsa in August 1984. It was, however, boycotted by the AD and the five High Priests of the Golden Temple. The AD organized the World Sikh Convention on September 2 1984 which was widely attended and helped to restore trust and credibility in the AD. Gandhi had to accept that the AD was the only power to effectively fight back extremism in Punjab. Secret parleys were said to be held with imprisoned AD leaders like Longowal and Tohra, and as a sign of goodwill the Gandhi administration removed the army from the temple and handed it back to the High Priests and the SGPC on September 25 (Chawla 1984, October 15).

The situation almost escalated again when Indira Gandhi was assassinated by two Sikh bodyguards on October 31 1984. In the aftermath, an angry Hindu mob, stirred up by some Congress members, killed Sikhs in New Delhi and all over the country. Although reports differ, it is said that between 3000 and 4000 Sikhs were killed in Delhi (Singh 2008: 45). These actions alienated both communities even more, and an increase of extremism and separatism was feared by the Center.

Summing up the whole period, the factor of leadership must be seen as the main element that prevented the outbreak of large-scale ethnic violence in Punjab. As shown above, the moderate leadership was able to restrain public moods and radical factions within the AD. Despite an aggressive rhetoric, the AD leaders remained on a path of political negotiations and condemned any form of violence. This was important because more extremist groups were hindered in gaining a strong organizational platform within the AD to promote ethnic conflict. Therefore the moderate leadership had a crucial impact on stabilizing Punjab and avoiding the outbreak of ethnic conflict.

## **5.2. December 1984 – May 1986: Conciliatory Moves and Disappointments**

The second part of the period of analysis is marked by more conciliatory moves by both sides. Both the AD and the Center were conscious that a political solution to the problem was possible and that extremist factions could be weakened successfully as long as a compromise was realistic. The most important element of this success was the newly elected Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and a strengthened AD president Longowal. The leadership factor became even more obvious in this period which ended with the outbreak of ethnic conflict.

After the Indian general elections of December 1984 in which Congress (I) won 401 out of 506 seats, Rajiv Gandhi's power strengthened. He established a committee to look at the case of Punjab and the ASR and also changed the Center's rhetoric with regard to Punjab and the AD. The AD on their part welcomed the new initiatives by the Center and a new offer for negotiations was made on January 9 (Thukral, 1985, January 31).

The main demands from the AD after the November riots were the release of their leaders and an inquiry of the Delhi riots. The Center took a first conciliatory step. Home Minister S. B. Chavan announced in a news conference on March 11 1985 that the government had decided to release twelve leading AD members including Longowal, Talwandi, and Barnala from jail (Delhi Domestic Service, 1984, March 11). This announcement was also hinged on the expectations by the Center to obtain a positive response from the AD as soon as their moderate leadership was reestablished.

Longowal, however, was weakened in his standing within the party after nine months in jail. Moreover, he lost most of his credibility within the Sikh community because he was arrested in the Golden Temple complex during Operation Blue Star and did not fight unto death as would have been expected from a Sikh martyr. Nonetheless, his presidentship was reaffirmed by the party leaders (Delhi Domestic Service, 1985, March 20). Longowal himself still believed in a political solution to the problems of Punjab. He saw the opportunity to reach a deal with Rajiv Gandhi about the question of the river waters and the transfer of Chandigarh to Punjab. In one of his letters to other

AD leaders from jail he stated explicitly: “Nor, I will state categorically, has the Akali Dal ever supported extremism and secessionism” (Gupta, 1985, March 15).

Longowal had to re-establish credibility in order to gain legitimacy for himself and the AD(L) in possible future negotiations with the Center. He realized that the Sikh community in its present spirit was not really interested in conciliatory moves and would back the leader who would use a more radical standing. Longowal had no other choice than to satisfy the Sikh community with more radical terms. As one other AD(L) leader correctly stated at the end of March 1985,

“The fact you all are overlooking is that he can hardly afford to speak any other language for at least another six months [...] it is our strategy to let the community give vent to it [anger S.G.] through angry utterances and once passions show signs of cooling we can proceed towards conciliation” (Gupta and Thukral, 1985, April 15).

This necessity of Longowal to improve his standing within the Sikh community was recognized by the Gandhi administration. It was not interpreted as a new threat to India’s integrity and unity, but as a necessary evil in order to re-establish a credible moderate partner in Punjab with whom the Center could solve the problem. Despite the aggressive rhetoric of Longowal, he never called for violent action.

The fact that he gained back credibility over time without an outbreak of ethnic violence shows his influence on the Sikh masses. Even though radical groups tried to undermine stability in Punjab, the moderate leadership of the AD was able to group Sikhs behind them and avoid drifting into uncontrollable ethnic conflict. This clearly demonstrates the important impact of moderate AD leadership and especially of Longowal in Punjab.

This behavior of the AD was rewarded and the Center continued to send positive signals to Punjab. In the Lok Sabha on April 11 1985, Chavan called for the release of other AD leaders and for the ban to be lifted on the AISSF. He also ordered an inquiry of the anti-Sikh riots of November 1984 by a Supreme Court judge (Delhi Domestic Service, 1985, April 11; Gupta, 1985, April 30). Even though Longowal publicly criticized the steps taken by the Center in not going far enough, the AD announced a postponement of the planned agitation to June 12 (Delhi Domestic Service, 1985, April 12). This is another example of the AD’s ambivalent actions. On the one hand, they had

to demand more in order to keep the extremists calm, but on the other hand, they sent gestures of acceptance back and showed the Center that they were interested in a political solution. This was only possible due to the strong AD leadership and a weakening radical faction. The difference between the Indira Gandhi administration and the Rajiv Gandhi administration was that the latter one had more patience with the AD and understood their problems better than the former one did. SGPC president Tohra was another leader who publicly announced that the AD does not support secessionism (Delhi Domestic Service, 1985, April 22). Longowal also declared that Indian unity and integrity was not to be questioned and that communal harmony was important for the AD (Delhi Domestic Service, 1985, April 28).

The path to negotiations could have been disturbed, however, by a new actor who entered the stage in the beginning of May 1985. Joginder Singh, the father of Bhindranwale, was asked for support by Longowal and Talwandi in mid-April. He decided to dissolve both the AD(L) and the AD(T) and unite them to a new AD (Delhi Domestic Service, 1985, May 2). This move seemed to lead to a shift of power within the party where the extremists had a chance to take over. This would have been the end of negotiations. Longowal resigned on May 11, but his resignation was rejected by the party leaders on May 22 (Delhi Domestic Service, 1985, May 22). With this decision, Joginder Singh was forced to cancel his plans to take over the AD and founded the UAD. The overtaking of the AD(L) would have been an important step to prevent future negotiations with the Center. Joginder Singh completely rejected any negotiations. A change in leadership would have resulted in a shift of the AD in a more radical direction. However, Longowal handled this problem and compelled the moderate forces to group around him and his leadership. The AD(L) became a credible partner for Rajiv Gandhi and provided the chance for him to find a settlement that the AD(L) could support in Punjab and among the Sikhs. Therefore, ethnic conflict and secessionism could be avoided by a strong moderate leadership in the AD.

The sign for a new attempt at negotiations arose in June of 1985. On the one hand, Longowal announced once again his opposition to secessionism, separatism, and terrorism and praised Sikh-Hindu unity in Punjab and India as a whole (see for example Delhi Domestic service, 1985, June 6; and 1985, June 9). On the other hand, the

government released more and more AD agitators (Delhi Domestic service, 1985, June 29). As a consequence, the AD even postponed their morcha again until August 20.

After letters sent back and forth between Longowal and Gandhi, the prime minister finally invited Longowal officially to New Delhi on July 17. Tohra and Badal were reluctant to accept the offer because they were afraid of losing the credibility they had just won if the negotiations failed (Gupta and Thukral, 1985, August 15). Longowal, however, decided to go to New Delhi and this was the first time after an almost 17 month impasse that direct negotiations took place. He met Rajiv Gandhi on July 23/24 and in the end they both signed the Punjab Accord, which dealt with all the open questions that remained between the AD and the Center including those about Chandigarh and the river waters ('Text' of the Punjab Agreement", 1985, July 25). The Accord can be seen as a breakthrough in the question of the AD-Center confrontation. Even though the militants of the UAD rejected the Accord, it was accepted by the main faction of the AD and the morcha was officially ended. However, even some moderate Akali leaders including Badal and Tohra expressed their "displeasure" with regard to some points of the Accord (AFP, 1985, July 26). The agreement remained unstable.

The fact that the Punjab Accord was negotiated on the highest level between Rajiv Gandhi and Longowal demonstrates once more the impact of leadership in this conflict. Longowal received a deal that was not expected up to that extent and it solved the demands of the AD. Even though it was not the optimal outcome, Longowal was able to impose the Accord within his party despite resistance from other important leaders like Badal. The moderate leadership of Longowal was a decisive element for a compromise with the Center and its imposition within the AD. Furthermore, the Accord was an important element to avoid the outbreak of ethnic conflict and secessionism in Punjab.

The next step for normalizing the situation in Punjab was an election and the end of President's Rule in the state. Longowal wanted a postponement of the elections until 1986 because he feared that violence could rise again during the campaigns. However, the elections were scheduled for September 22 and the campaigning began immediately after the announcement of the date.

During the campaign, however, Longowal was assassinated on August 20 1986. This was a shock not only for the AD(L), but also for the Center and the other actors who believed in a peaceful future for Punjab. Longowal left behind a leadership vacuum and he could not be replaced easily. Barnala was elected as the new party president against the will of leading AD members including Badal and Tohra. Barnala's election showed that the AD would stay in the tradition of Longowal because he was part of the negotiators who arranged the Punjab Accord (Sethi and Thukral, 1985, September 15). Barnala also put himself in the tradition of Longowal and wanted to keep on with his work. The elections were postponed to September 25 and the UAD announced its boycott of it, calling the Accord a "sellout" to Punjab interests (Dubey and Thukral, 1985, September 30). On the other hand, the elections were not really competitive. New Delhi had a vast interest in the AD winning the elections. If the AD was in government and ratified the Accord it would give the document greater legitimacy as if it had been implemented by the Congress (I).<sup>8</sup>

The AD won the election in a landslide victory. It won nearly two third of the seats in parliament and the voting turnout of 66.54% was even higher than in both 1977 and 1980, despite the threat of terrorism and the boycott by the UAD (Singh and Thukral, 1985, October 15). Barnala was elected as Chief Minister and led an AD government in Punjab. The election can be seen as a clear statement pro AD(L) and was therefore a defeat for the UAD. The militants had been weakened and on November 22 many important UAD leaders resigned and joined the AD(L) faction (AFP, 1985, November 22).

Nevertheless, the internal fight in the AD(L) faction created tensions in the new government and the party (Thukral, 1985, October 31; Thukral, 1985, November 15)). Badal and Tohra on the one hand and Barnala on the other tried to weaken each other in order to gain more influence within the party. This, however, weakened the party as a whole. Violence also rose after Barnala had announced the release of many prisoners from Punjabi jails most of which were Sikh youths. The turning point which strengthened

<sup>8</sup> Some sources state that the Congress (I) run the elections with weak candidates on purpose because they had the directive from New Delhi to lose. As one Akali leader put it: "This isn't an election. It's a friendly contest" (Dubey and Thukral, 1985, September 30).

the militant wings of the AD and the extremists was the failure of the Punjab Accord. As Rajiv Gandhi was concerned about losing the elections in Haryana in 1986, he was not really in opposition to the postponement of the implementation of Chandigarh's transfer to Punjab. This, however, caused a new credibility problem for the AD. Even negotiated agreements could not help the Sikhs to obtain "justice". The militant faction in the AD grew.

As a result, the militants formed the Parliament of Khalistan in the Golden Temple a day after the Punjab Accord should have been implemented (AFP, 1986, January 27) and terrorist attacks increased. Even though Barnala tried to convince Gandhi of the importance of an implementation and condemned violence as leading to the wrong results he could not succeed. These developments further demonstrate the problems of Barnala's leadership. He did not have the same standing as Longowal and had to struggle with other AD leaders who tried to get rid of him. His weak position was a possibility for the extremists to gain support. This is what happened with the formation of the Parliament of Khalistan.

On April 30 1986 the AD led government sent police forces into the Golden Temple and forced the militants to leave. This was another turning point in Punjabi politics. It was the first time that an AD government had sent police into a gurdwara and the consequences were drastic. On May 4 Badal and some other legislatures signed a protest note and some ministers resigned from the cabinet in protest against this police action. On May 8 Badal split with 27 other members from the AD(L) and formed a new parliamentary group (Delhi Domestic Service, 1986, May 8). As a result of the police action and the resignations, Barnala had no majority in parliament and his credibility was destroyed. The diffusion of leadership within the AD(L) was the reason for these developments. Barnala was not able to unite the different factions and this led to a strengthening of militants and rising violence in Punjab.

To sum up, the belief in a peaceful political solution died with Longowal. After his assassination, the AD faced a leadership vacuum that was filled by more radical factions because moderate leaders could not agree on a common denominator. The unchallenged leader had disappeared and there was nobody who had the credibility nor strength to fill the gap. Due to the questionable decision to send police forces into the



Golden Temple, the AD government lost its credibility and without the leadership of Longowal the situation in Punjab deteriorated dramatically within months. The lack of a strong moderate leadership caused the outbreak of large-scale ethnic violence in mid-1986 (see Table 1 on page 18).

## 6. Conclusion

As the analysis above demonstrates, this simple relationship that regional parties promote and cause ethnic conflict and secessionism fails to sufficiently explain their outbreak in Punjab during the 1980s. Of course, the AD played an important role in that state, but in a different way than the study of Brancati (2009) offered. This is due to the correlational nature of the study. As a quantitative inquiry, Brancati's study could only test the significance of the relationship and not the root causes for it. The root causes, however, are exactly what this paper sought to uncover in the case of Punjab.

The analysis of Punjab led to the following conclusions. There is one more general effect that must be taken into account when discussing the relationship between regional parties and ethnic conflict. We cannot take a party as a homogeneous entity. This is what the project clearly examined. The AD was deeply divided by different factions competing for influence in the party itself and the SGPC. This extreme internal fragmentation was a main reason for the instability of Sikh politics and policies. The leadership always had to take the militant factions under consideration and had to find the right balance between conciliation and agitation. This leads to the main issue of the paper: leadership as an important feature in the case of Punjab. The AD leaders were mostly moderates that sought to find a political solution to the problems of Punjab in general and the Sikh community in particular. After Bhindranwale had died in Operation Blue Star the extremists lacked a credible and charismatic leader, and there was nobody that could possibly challenge Longowal effectively in his way of political negotiations. The moderates realized that realpolitik was the only way to find a durable solution for their grievances. With only 60% of the Punjabi population being Sikhs, the AD also had electoral problems and could not win elections with a focus solely on Sikh problems. Above all, most of the demands made after mid-1984 were of a political and economic nature: the transfer of Chandigarh and the river water dispute were not merely a Sikh issue, but a Punjabi one.

Summing it up, the factor of leadership was important in avoiding the outbreak of large-scale ethnic conflict in Punjab for a long time. What we expected to see from the data (Chapter 3) can be seen in the case of Punjab. The moderate leadership could successfully avoid ethnic conflict. Furthermore, after the death of Longowal the leadership vacuum worsened the situation in Punjab. The strong impact of the leadership component caused problems for Punjabi and Sikh politics. The deep fragmentation of the AD was problematic and often hindered a compromise with the Center. Furthermore, reliance on a specific leader can cause problems after he leaves the stage like in the case of Longowal. Direct support for ethnic conflict, however, was never given within the AD leadership.

The ways in which the AD actually supported ethnic conflict and secessionism was more indirect in nature. As they were deeply internally divided, the AD gave some space for the extremists to agitate. Once extremists began to do so, it was difficult for the moderates to avoid negative consequences. On the other hand, the Center and especially the Indira Gandhi administration made it hard for the moderates to deliver positive outcomes to the Sikh community. Gandhi only offered slight changes to the status quo which was definitely not enough for the AD moderates. This changed under Rajiv Gandhi to a certain extent, but he also put the party's interest over the interest of India when he postponed the implementation of the Punjab Accord because of elections in Haryana.

The case of Punjab clearly shows that regional parties per se do not necessarily promote ethnic conflict and secessionism. Moreover, they are able to avoid these negative effects if the internal party structure is dominated by moderate forces. However, no party is immune to external effects and these were mainly responsible for the escalation in Punjab, not the AD. The assassination of Longowal and the split in the party eliminated the moderate forces, and this "failure" of the AD was one reason for ethnic conflict in Punjab. Therefore, three specific questions would be interesting to examine further. (1) How does the leadership effect influence (negatively or positively) the evolution of ethnic conflict and secessionism in other cases? (2) What was the influence of the AD in ending ethnic conflict in Punjab in the beginning of the 1990? Did the leadership have influence in the defeat of terrorism in Punjab or not? (3) How have

different factors like the Sikh Diaspora, the Pakistani connection, the Green Revolution and others influenced the AD leadership and vice versa?

All of these questions must take the role of the AD in Punjabi and Sikh politics into account. Such emphasis on the AD's importance during the 1980s and the outbreak of ethnic conflict was the main objective of this paper. This project clearly showed that regional parties can have an important impact on ethnic conflict, but this impact depends on the specific context and the leadership of the regional party under consideration.

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## **Appendices**

## **Appendix A.**

### **Timeline Punjab 1981-87.**

September 20 1981	Bhindranwale arrested.
September 1981	45 demands submitted to Center.
October 1981	15 revised demands submitted to Center.
October 16 1981	Meeting of Akali Dal leaders Longowal, Tohra, Badal, Barnala and Balwant Singh with Indira Gandhi and others in New Delhi.
October 17 1981	Civil disobedience movement to demand release of Bhindranwale.
November 26 1981	Second meeting with Gandhi in Parliament House.
April 5 1982	Third meeting with Gandhi in Parliament House.
April 25 1982	Dharam Yudh starts with regard to channel problem.
July 26 1982	Longowal announces support for Bhindranwale's agitation.
August 4 1982	Morcha starts which is led by Badal in Amritsar. 1000 Akalis arrested.
November 4 1982	Dharam Yudh declared.
November 30 1982	Tohra re-elected 11 <sup>th</sup> consecutive time as President of SGPC.
November 1982	Longowal Version of ASR.
February 21 1983	36 of 37 state MLAs and 4 MPs resigned.
February 22 1983	Akali Dal demands resignation of President Giani Zail Singh.
February 27 1983	Gandhi assures that some religious rights of Sikhs should be implemented.
April 4 1983	Rasta roko.
June 17 1983	Rail roko.
July 10 1983	Protest day against police repression.
August 29 1983	Kam roko (stop work).
September 5 1983	Meeting between Longowal and Bhindranwale.



October 3 1983	Talwandi and other leaders arrested under National Security Act.
October 6 1983	President's Rule announced over Punjab
October 27 1983	AD(T) resolution that no compromise with Center is possible if Talwandi is not part of the negotiation.
November 18 1983	Some Akali leaders released, but not Talwandi.
November 26 1983	Longowal said he accepts all solutions proposed by Akal Takht with regard to party unity.
January 19 1984	Longowal admits that he has policy differences with Bhindranwale.
February 1 1984	Cheema who is acting President of AD(T) announced that methods are too soft and leaders should make sacrifices.
February 25 1984	Burning of Article 25 of the Indian constitution which leads to arrests of Akali leaders.
April 27 1984	Tensions between Longowal and Bhindranwale arise again.
May 20 1984	Demand that police forces are revealed from around the Golden Temple.
June 2 1984	Indira Gandhi, discussion about "accommodation of all reasonable demands." No party interest involved, only unity and integrity of the country as a whole.
Juni 3-8 1984	Planned non-cooperation movement stopped by Operation Blue Star. Bhindranwale killed and many Akali Dal leaders arrested.
July 16 1984	Shaheedi Morcha to stop occupation of Golden Temple.
September 29 1984	Stop of morcha after 5 High Priests got management over temple complex back.
October 31 1984	Indira Gandhi assassinated.
November 7 1984	factional fight within Akali Dal becomes more intensive again.
November 30 1984	factional fight about new President of SGPC, but Tohra re-elected.
March 19 1985	Longowal told by 5 High Priests to ensure unity of the panth. Meeting on that day with ultimatum for Center to fulfill demands until April 12.
April 1985	Longowal and Talwandi went both to Baba Singh (father of Bhindranwale) to ask for support.

May 2 1985	Longowal dissolute 9 member ad hoc committee constituted by Baba Singh.
July 23/24 1985	Meeting Longowal and Rajiv Gandhi which results in the Punjab Accord.
July 26 1985	Talwandi opposes Accord.
August 19 1985	Longowal campaigning without Tohra and Badal during election campaign.
August 20 1985	Longowal meets both Tohra and Badal. He is assassinated at 3pm the same day.
September 25 1985	Akali Dal wins elections in a landslide victory.
September 29 1985	Barnala becomes Chief Minister.
January 26 1986	Sarbat Khalsa sponsored by Congress (I).
February 16 1986	Sarbat Khalsa by SGPC and Akali Dal in Anandpur Sahib.
April 29 1986	5 member committee proclaimed Khalistan from Golden Temple.
April 30 1986	Police kicks militants out of Golden Temple.
May 1 1986	Some of the Akali leaders that already opposed Punjab Accord split from Party as a consequence of police entering the temple.
July 5 1986	Formal split with Badal becoming new party leader.
February 2 1987	After Five High priests have been changed ultimatum to party leaders to resign until 5 <sup>th</sup> to unite panth again.
June 11 1987	President's Rule in Punjab.

## Appendix B.

### Causal Linkages between Akali Dal and Ethnic Conflict

