CONCLUSION

Through cultural products and objects people are able to remember the distant past. Representational memorial tools construct the memories of the past in a way that we can experience specific time and space through a subjective mode. When we have no idea of the existence of the victims, survivors or their past, it is only their representation in media, art, literature, and the web space that these characters of history become alive. Our memory seems to have been both conditioned and retrieved by the media. Media has grown as a window of information enhancing our knowledge of the past. In this thesis memory has been studied as a tool and an effect and not just a concept that an observer experiences while observing these tools of memorialization. It is only through these multiple discourses that the present generation can confront their understanding of past events and can enrich their experience of the present times while directing their aspirations of the future. The memories of the past can give rise to literary and artistic works but not to photographs. One might share a collective memory, cultural memory or individual memory and they become subjective because each one of us can interpret a shared past in one’s own way. The representations of the past might evoke different memories for an individual who has endured worse or witnessed events first-hand. Furthermore, the “transferential space” unlocks gates of the past for those who has not experienced it physically. Thereby the characters in a novel, film, or artifacts in a museum do not limit themselves to the tragedy alone but signify a lost hope, or at times a personal loss or a loss of faith in general.

Thus collected cultural memories are the memories of the past event that take shape in a particular text, object or mode of art. In the context of Operation Bluestar and its aftermath, the memories of 1984 have become an integral part of the politics of Punjab and “Punjabyiat”. Almost every assembly general elections scratch the wounds of 1984 in one way or another. For the victims of those times, traumatic memories of 1984 acted as a counter discourse. They have been living with their own personal ‘cadre’ or ‘frames’ of memories. Through the memorial sites they may
experience the shared grief of the “ghallughara”. But, with the passage of time, every new generation would view and perceive those events with a different lens of history.

While considering several modes of memory-literary and cinematic representation of 1984 Punjab and its aftermath that resurrects the violence, trauma, and the pain at the moment of their articulation - the present work also represents the significance and the various meanings attached to not just the memory but also the mode of remembrance of the tragedies in Punjab, in the year 1984 and its after effects. This thesis explores how temporary memorials function as a parallel between individual memory and the collective memory. Individual memory and individual expressions of memory are just as important to examine as the collective memory and collective expressions are. Acknowledging individual expressions within a larger culture opens the door for further study of an intangible heritage, and by extensions, the preservation and continuation of unique memorial practices. Yet, as the technology shifts to ever new mediums, items that were viewed as permanent through the act of visual recording, for example through photographs film, and digitization, have actually become ephemeral as the means of display have become obsolete.

Starting with the novel, Roll of Honour which enunciates an experiential relationship with the troubled history of mankind, the thesis elaborates on the attempt of the author to confront the turmoil of the epochal year. It enacts a metaphorical encroachment of the past into the present, representing the numerous ways in which the interpretation and understanding of histories shape our understanding of ourselves and the past in turn, is transformed, reclaimed, and finally regenerated. The aftermath of the trauma watermarks a major departure from the familiar uniformity of mundane perceptions, often, to the alien and uncertain grounds of the surreal. It leads to a differential interpretation of reality and reformulation of memories and identities. It affects our perception of history and the past in ways that may not always be immediately apparent. The novelty of this novel as a representation of the first generation trauma is at par with that of the film which represents the aftermath of the trauma of the first generation. Maachis, the foremost cinematic account to the violence of 1984 is so unique from the perspective of the second or “hinge generation” (Hoffman).
The thesis has addressed the issue of historical representation and narrativity, as well as the use of verbal and visual modes to transform past memories of a wider approach to memory studies in light of the political conflict in Punjab 1984. Through the analysis of the four texts, the thesis has tried to propose four different representations of the aftermath of Punjab 1984, which despite their differences and commonalities transmitted the same undertone of political influence over history and media manipulation in the aftermath of Punjab 1984. Moreover, I considered all the four modes of representation of post-1984 history and found that they enable the viewer/receiver to gain a perspective and, a critical detachment towards the events they depict through their traditional ritualistic practices of commemorating the events of 1984. Finally, although these mediating presentations retrieve different kinds of memories and offer different kinds of resolutions to the conflict and a stance on the future political relations between the communities, they all oppose the essentialist and polarizing religious views that triggered the conflict in the first place. Therefore, it is imperative that texts such as the ones discussed in this work gain more recognition within the wider historical debate and mnemonic devices applied in the texts will become a more common method amongst storytellers dealing with traumatic events in history.

The study of the re-presentation in post-1984 works on Punjab gives birth to numerous questions such as why did the youth of Punjab start following the separatist movement? Was merely killing the police personnel and the minister the ultimate purpose of those young fellows? Was their ultimate purpose only to evoke terror and violence among people? Did the separatist movement revolve around the cultural, social, and political problems of Punjab? Indeed, historical memories get provoked through these mnemonic tools of representation. Somehow, even if each work takes a stance for the revolutionary thoughts, it does not deny the efforts to blame the religious polarization that transpired the conflicts. The dialogues that have been made through these works could not deny the demand for ethics and morality besides justice. To some extent, if these representations fail to highlight the pain, turmoil and suffering of the turbulent period then who is responsible for subjective biases and prejudices? Is it the viewer/ reader or the creator of the text? Cultural artifacts
influence how a society comprised of the overwhelming majority of viewers/citizens with no direct experience of the events represented ‘remembers’ them. The notion of remembrance as distinct from individual or group experience ultimately refers to the construction of public memory as a social and cultural process reflecting power relations within a society.

Furthermore, the thesis has investigated the sources of representations of the 1984 Punjab and the type of traumatic memories existing in a sacred museum, in the context of the Operation Bluestar situated in Golden Temple, Amritsar. The analysis of the focus-gallery in the museum explores the public’s expectations in terms of the museum experience and engagement with objects and the potential of an experiential museum to facilitate deliberation about the past. I used the conceptual framework of recent studies on *Lieux de Memoir* (Nora) and prosthetic memory (Landsberg) to focus on ways of building the experiential archive needed to produce prosthetic memory. Such an analysis is relevant for two interconnected problems: the bidirectional relationship between a projected archive of Sikhs and a prospective public, and the role of this museum in the current debate on the memory of this particular traumatic past in the Indian democracy.

People may have undergone comparable experiences, but the cultural memory of those experiences is the ongoing result of public communication and of the circulation of memories in mediated form. The memory of the 1984 Punjab becomes a shared generalization of individual experiences. This is not to say that victims will forget the peculiarities of the Operation Bluestar and its aftermath, but it does mean that when they speak about the violence they do so within a framework with which the whole society is familiar. It is the incorporation of individual memories into a larger shared memory, so that in effect, the importance of individual memories disappears, because everybody is familiar with the same general story about the violence that happened during and after 1984 particularly in the northern part of Punjab. Precisely because the places of memory are not just artifacts where memories and the forgetfulness of the past are deposited or devices immobilized in time, they are in a continuum which is being modified by present day ‘consciousnesses’. According to Nora, the memories only survive thanks to their capacity for
metamorphosis, in the incessant changes in their significance and the unpredictable profusion of their ramifications. The places are thus diverse, hybrid, and mutant; intimately charged with life and death, time, and eternity. In other words, they are linked to processes: genesis, development, and sometimes an end. This becomes far more evident in the case of commemorations. Henri Lefebvre’s distinctions between lived, conceived, and perceived realms, or ‘spatial practice’, ‘representations of space’ and ‘representational space’ can be commandeered here to reflect the alternative realities that operate alongside one another in the production of memory as it relates to build form.

They make clear distinctions between the recollection that dwells within the individual and that which is constructed as part of a shared narrative. The difference between memory and history assists in characterizing the latter as sanctified and authoritative, while the former is considered nebulous and prone to reshaping. Memory is then confined to the empirical tests of veracity, and imagination regarded as necessarily suspect in its relation to memory’s adherence to some ‘real world’ of the past. When we refer to the sociological imagination or the historical imagination, this involves our capacity to move from one perspective to another, to alter between the individual and the collective form of experience, to bring large scale, impersonal, and local or intimate aspects of social and historical life into a relationship with each other.

One could argue that all the mediated forms of memory - as tertiary memory - are documents of the historical past. Films, books, and memorial sites thus serve as carriers of tertiary memory, to a past that was not necessarily experienced by the subject. Memory can thus be transported from one generation to another, but as representations change by the recollection of memory, the new generation automatically has a slightly altered version of the memory than the generation before. History for that matter, when one relates memory of the past to history, must also change over time, or else the historical representation will no longer be coherent with the memory.
The thesis has tried to shed light upon the migration and militancy—the diasporic appropriation, reconceptualization, and re-signification of what might be called the naturalized structures of memory in the post-1984 world of Punjab. The forms of the memories of violence are structured as to evoke the feelings and emotions of terror and violence, regardless of the fact whether the viewer experienced that violence or not. Their re-presentational forms might transit from a role of evoking memory to that of creating memory and informing history. History has always revealed that whenever the safe place, where dialogue is possible is taken away by any government or the public, the loss is always endured by the public. Human civilization has and will progress only through dignified, accountable, and forward looking exchange of views.

This type of representation helps both the victims to acknowledge their victimhood while the reaction from the apologetic state machinery is a step in the right direction towards admittance and acceptance of its political and civil weaknesses. Also, it is important to note that these pacifiers are not exactly those traitors or their representatives who commandeered the tragedies. The real representation not only punctures these apologetic narratives of the ancestors of the perpetrators but also of victims. No one seems to hear the words of the real silent and mute voices of victims and it is these very non-aligned narratives which are able to present the genuine truth about the events. Thus these texts can subvert the narrative of both victimhood as well as that of the pacifiers. What kind of representation can achieve this and the main question is to what extent these representation would help to heal the wounds? In a way, all these representation, verbal or nonverbal, become part of an empirical resolution available for those who are looking for some answers. All the narratives hence become part of the learned experiences and vivid representatives of version of reality. And all these help provide a vent for the charged emotions and offer some sort of resolution; be it the representative tokens of memorials or the continuous state of non-violent or non-threatening violent diasporic unrest; or lopsided but very artistic cine-realities.

Memory is a recollection over time of the events that may or may not have been experienced first-hand. It is a revival of incidences and scenarios which are part
of the collective narrative which is further interlinked and co-dependent on an individual’s imaginative and cognitive interpretation of those incidences. Eventually, the dialectic between individual and collective recall creates and recreates meaning over time through creative or non-fictional representations. The significance of these memories is also highlighted through their experiential quality. Collectives having undergone events, especially traumatic events, first hand will derive a very abject and stark memory of the trauma and hence result in representation that evokes the same stark experience for those who did not witness of experience the trauma first hand. Thus, there is also a massive difference between first hand recollection and hand-down representative memory of a particular event. Yet all kinds of memories - the empirical, the representative, the interpretive, and the creative memory – are crucial to form a wholistic narrative of the past, especially, when it is offered to posterity. That is why both the act of remembrance and the modality of memory used in the act of remembrance are extremely crucial to enable participation in a past that keeps knocking at the present and is relevant in shaping the future of a collective.

It is imperative to note the transformative, participatory, and the existential potential of memory which continuously produces a meaning and perspective to the history and culture of a nation, culture, creed, or a collective. Memory's cross-temporal presence also serves a connection between a distant past and the unarrived future as it the collective experience is widely shaped by the recall of the memorable events highlighted through active reimagining and reconstruction of the past. Enabling an engagement with the past, memory and genuine recollection of the events also pave a way for the individual as well as the collective to embrace their own position vis-a-vis the politics or the social condition of the memory in a more informed way. Moreover, collective memory is the way it subverts the nationalist or the populist account of a trauma by recounting and focusing on the micro-narratives that played out at the individual level. Thereby assuring that a collective such as a nation does not neglect the entirety of truth when accounting for its existential or ethical standpoint by succumbing to the politics and prejudices evoked by those events.
Thus, the theory of collected cultural memory uses different aspects of communicative practices and implications of commemoration to constitute a significant step to contemplate past experiences and lessons which are to be learnt from the past and applied to the present. The present thesis paves the way for further work on other memorial works and commemorative practices, rituals, and other commemorative modalities in the field of memory studies and media studies.