COMMUNAL POLITICS IN PUNJAB
(1925-1947)

BY

Samina Yasmeen

Supervised by

Dr. Azra Asghar Ali
Ph.D Dissertation 2006

BAHAUDDIN ZAKARIYA UNIVERSITY
MULTAN
DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my individual effort, and it has not been submitted concurrently to any other university, for any other degree.

Samina Yasmeen
Thesis submitted for obtaining the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the department of Pakistan Studies, Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan.

Submitted for approval  Samina Yasmeen

Dr. Azra Asghar Ali  Supervisor
Chairperson, Department of Pakistan Studies

Internal Examiner

External Examiner

Department of Pakistan Studies  
Bahauddin Zakariya University Multan  
2006
DEDICATION

I dedicate this humble effort and study to my late father Chaudhary Abdul Karim and my mother Fatima Begum who inspired me to higher ideals of life.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In the process of sifting material, researching and preparing this thesis, I am indeed indebted to a galaxy of individuals of whose support and encouragement was a constant source of strength for me. I owe special thanks to the department of Pakistan Studies, Allama Iqbal Open University for extending its fullest support in the course of my work. I am especially indebted to Dr. Azra Asghar Ali whose able guidance and vision kept me on the right track while shaping the study. My words cannot express the enormity of her contribution. I immensely benefited from my brother, Rashed Moeen’s experience who encouraged me throughout my entire project and suggested improvements in the manuscript. I was also blessed with unflinching support and encouragement of my husband Amin ul Haq who stood by my side in grappling the material and reducing it to presentable shape.

I owe special thanks to my brothers, Khalid Abdul Hafeez, Sajid Abdul Saeed, Amjid Jamil and Wajid Ali for their sustained encouragement, valuable suggestions and frank opinion.
# ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AIML</td>
<td>All India Muslim League</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UP</td>
<td>Utter Pradesh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PML</td>
<td>Provincial Muslim League</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPMA</td>
<td>Punjab Provincial Muslim Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INC</td>
<td>Indian National Congress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAO</td>
<td>Mohammedan Anglo Oriental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MLC</td>
<td>Muslim League Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIMC</td>
<td>All India Muslim Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIKC</td>
<td>All India Khilafat Conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSS</td>
<td>Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SGPC</td>
<td>Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhek Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPP</td>
<td>Notes on Punjab Press</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IOR</td>
<td>India Office Record</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF TABLES

1. Punjab's manpower contribution to the Indian army during 1st World War

2. Urban rural population of Punjab during 1881 – 1921

3. Emergence of political parties in Punjab during the years 1877 – 1923

4. Types of constituencies in the Punjab Legislative Council, 1920

5. Religion-wise composition of Punjab in 1921

6. Literacy level of major religious communities of Punjab, 1921

7. Punjab Legislative Assembly, Election, 1946 Election results
CONTENTS

ABSTRACT--------------------------------------------------------------------- viii

INTRODUCTION---------------------------------------------------------------1

- CHAPTER 1: TRENDS IN PUNJAB POLITICS-------------------------------10
- CHAPTER 2: GROWTH OF COMMUNITY CONSCIOUSNESS-----------------49
- CHAPTER 3: POLITICS OF UNIONISM---------------------------------96
- CHAPTER 4: SEARCH FOR SEPARATE SPACE---------------------------136
- CHAPTER 5: PARTING OF THE WAYS---------------------------------170

CONCLUSION---------------------------------------------------------------206

BIBLIOGRAPHY-------------------------------------------------------------210
ABSTRACT

The beginning of 20th century heralded a fervent phenomenon of nationalist activities in South Asia, however its intensity was comparatively slow in Punjab due to its socio economic backwardness. Consequently anti-imperialist movement remained confined to the higher echelons of the society. Meanwhile, the absence of strong national consciousness, organized political forums and movements, the communal groups exploited the situation and instead of channelising the energies of masses against imperialist occupation, diverted them to communal issues such as job distribution on communal basis etc. Resultantly, the people of Punjab lacked the vision to comprehend the imperial designs and failed in forging a united front to liberate themselves from the yoke of foreign masters. Rather communal outlook consumed their energies and consequently transformed the Province as an epicenter communal hatred and bigotry.

Given the historical perspective of the communal division in Punjab and its consequent impact on the politics, the underlying objective of this paper is to analyze the political developments in Punjab from 1925-1947 to take stock of the impact of various reforms brought by the British Government and examine the role of different political parties in fuelling communal hatred for their narrow vested interests. The paper also brings to fore the persistent and sustained struggle launched by All India Muslim League in achieving due share of Punjab’s territory for the Muslims.
INTRODUCTION

Punjab has been the bedrock of religious movements in the 19th and 20th century. The Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs were the key players in this game of communal politics and movements. Each group endeavoured to win over the British support to promote its communal agenda. The study encompasses the issue of communal politics in Punjab covering the period from 1925 till the partition of the sub-continent in 1947. This period witnessed the changes at an unprecedented pace, resulting into making their particular course of action lucid for each group. It changed the provincial scene on politico-religious and socio-economic fronts, which ultimately developed anti-British feelings in the communities. The movements like the non-cooperation, the Khilafat, the Singh Sabha and the Arya Samaj\(^1\) amply proved this anti-British mind-set. These movements significantly changed the overall communal milieu in the province. An effort has been made to analyse the factors and circumstances causing major changes in the communal politics in Punjab that eventually had strong impact on the national political scene as well.

It is worth mentioning that all the major groups i.e. the Hindus, the Muslims, the Sikhs and the British got an opportunity to rule the land, and left long-lasting impact on the culture, civilization, history and way of life of the people. The province was not only affected by the political and social changes happening around it, but it also played an important role in shaping the destiny of whole of the Subcontinent. It is rightly said that the Punjab was the communal experience of India in miniature; hence development of many other communal identities can be traced back to Punjab as well. This also leads to the

assumption that British policy in Punjab was not the only factor responsible for rising political consciousness in the Province.

It is an established fact that Socio-economic, politico-religious and historical factors play an important role in the formation of ethnic and communal identity of any segment of the society. The new emerging socio-economic factors also help shaping new mosaic of a particular group, as historical factor remains constant. The ideas connected with the formative stage also affect the subsequent growth of ethnic identities and the collective behaviour of their members. In this context, the Sikhs in the Punjab began to differentiate themselves from the Hindus in the last quarter of the 19th century under the impact of the Singh Sabha Movement, which was aimed at restoring Sikhism to “its pristine purity”. The Sikhs' attempts to establish themselves as a separate communal group was opposed by the Hindus, particularly the leaders of the Arya Samaj Movement, who were adamant not to accept Sikhs as a separate ethnic group and hence, launched a concerted campaign to establish that the Sikhs were an integral part of Hindu community.

The Sikhs, gained prominence in Punjab and were successful in distinguishing themselves from Hindus as a result of the Gurudwara Reform Movement (1920-25). This movement had exclusively been launched to liberate the Sikh shrines from the control of Hindu mahants (priests), who were also enjoying the support of the British administration. Due to its anti-imperial character, the national leaders also extended their support to the Sikh agitation and provided legitimacy by mixing of religion and politics by the Sikh community. The Gurudwara Reforms Movement resulted in the formation of two new religious and political organizations of the Sikhs i.e. Shiromani

---

Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC) to look after the religious affairs of the Sikhs and Shiromani Akali Dal to protect the political interests of the community.

The British administration introduced separate electorates during 1920s granted special political concessions to different communities on communal basis. These developments provided momentum to the idea of separate Sikh identity and they started demanding representation in the Provincial Legislature and reserved quota in the services on communal basis. The Hindu organizations opposed these demands of the Sikhs that led to sharp communal polarization amongst religious communities and laid the foundation of their future conflict.

In addition to Hindu and Sikh confrontation on the basis of religion, culture, language and political support, the other preponderate group in the communal politics was that of Muslims who in the later part of 19th century also identified themselves as a strong communal group on the basis of their religio-political and historical identities. The Hindus, on the one hand did not accept the political rights of the Muslims, and on the other, the Sikhs were also in a state of despair about the nature of their relationship with the Muslims. The start of the 20th century saw rising communal tension amongst religious communities and each community strived hard to win the support of the British policymakers to achieve their respective goals.

The province of Punjab, which was later termed as the corner stone of Pakistan, held a unique position amongst all the Muslim majority provinces of British India. Its significance was not only due to its geographical location and rich agricultural resources but also for the odds faced here by All India Muslim League (AIML). Among all the Muslim majority provinces of India, the Punjab

---

was the one and only where AIML was unable to form its ministry and the province remained under the rule of Unionists till March 2, 1947. Even after the resignation of the Unionist government, Muslim League could not form government in the province because of enforcement of governor rule under Article 93 of the Government of India Act 1935. These developments raise some pertinent questions; What were the motives and objectives of politicians having divergent religious ideologies to join hands under the leadership of Unionist Party? How far the communal harmony generated by the Unionist Party succeeded in resolving the political problem of the province and why British policy failed in containing the growth of communalism and why this province became the hub of communal activities? One possible explanation can be that the urban areas, which were sort of open arenas for all social groups, could not be totally controlled and guided through governmental means. Urbanization along with the unleashing of new economic forces and electoral politics resulted in the sharpening of communal consciousness. However, this argument leads to another set of problems. For instance, was the communal consciousness a result of urbanization? The convenient argument here is that colonial urbanization along with electoral politics introduced enumeration, the factor that became responsible for the creation of communalism. Thus, the British were blamed for the worsening of the communal tension. The crucial point, which is often missed by historians, is the genesis of the civil society

---

4 Since its inception in 1923, the Unionist Party remained a majority party in Provincial Legislatures as is evident from the results of 1923 to 1937 elections. But in 1946 elections it could win only thirteen Muslim seats. S. Qalb-i-Abid, *Muslim Politics in the Punjab 1921-1947*, p.298. While the Congress captured 51 and the Panthak Sikhs won 23 seats, Muslim League emerged as the single largest party with 73 Muslim seats. In order to offset Pakistan demand by Muslim League, Congress and Akalis decided to keep the Muslim League out of power by supporting the Unionist Party. However the minority Government could not handle the situation, despite the support of British administration. Khizer Hayat, the Unionist Premier of the Punjab, eventually succumbed to the League's pressure and submitted his resignation to the Governor on March 2, 1947.

institutions. The main flaw of this argument is that it neglects religious identity as a factor, which predates emergence of nationalism. While concerning that nationalism was "imagined" with the advent of the British, they hastily conclude that religious identity was also contrived by the enumeration. Considering the factors the religious consciousness in pre-colonial India was localized, a few additional factors have to be kept in mind. There was a common awareness of a separate Muslim identity, which forced the British, to use this category in the process of enumeration. Islam, unlike Hinduism, emerged as a unified code of life at a single geographical location. The new intellectual developments in Islamic thought were based on the axiom of the pristine period. Hinduism on the contrary never emerged as a focal point in such a manner. The British classification brought racially, ethnically and even religiously different groups together.

While carrying out studies on Punjab, due weightage is often not given to revivalist movements of Sikh religion. For instance the Nirankari sect, led by Dyal Das in the first half of the nineteenth century inculcated a sense of separateness of Sikhs from the Hindus. In the later half of the century a Sikh millenarian sect, the kukas, launched a movement for the protection of their religious symbols and struggled for the re-emergence of Sikh religion. They killed the Muslim butchers in Amritsar and Raikot for slaughtering cows. Though the immediate cause of these killings may be attributed to slaughtering of cows yet the Sikh Muslim animosity dates back to Mughal rule in eighteenth century and if a traditional opponent had to be identified by Sikhs it was going

---

6 Ibid; p.40
to be a Muslim. The failure of the revivalist efforts led to the emergence of Singh Sabha Movement in 1870s, which though benign towards the British rule, stressed on the protection of Sikh religion. Many historians, while elaborating communal consciousness have described religious organizations in negative terms, development of civil society organizations like the community educational institutions; literary forums and other such organizations are grouped as ‘communal’ not the ‘nationalist’. The main reason for the formation of these social forums was not an accidental happening, but can be traced back to its historical, religious and cultural perspectives.

The period under review saw rising communal dissension in the province and each group had very strong identity, manifested through language, religion, culture and politics. Meanwhile British support to a particular group was inconsistent towards any of the communal groups, though each group was at confrontation with other in a race to win the British support.

In order to augment and authenticate the dissertation, literature review of significant studies, reports and books in the area of communal politics in Punjab was carried out by using both types of data and information obtained from primary as well as secondary sources. In addition, the original sources in the form of legislative debates, newspapers of each community as well as archives available in Pakistan were also used. In the absence of any quantitative information, some open-ended interviews were also conducted with the scholars well conversant with the communal politics in Punjab. The result of this study may be of interest to academicians the research scholars, students of comparative politics and general readers.

---

Communal politics during the period underwent changes due to the efforts of individuals and different socio-political organizations besides racial interactions dominated by religious sentiments. A number of historians and researchers have carried out in-depth studies on different facets of communalism in Punjab. Among these, David Gilmartin in his book "Empire and Islam: Punjab and the Making of Pakistan" while elaborating the close rapport between the ideology of the British colonial power and the Muslim politics in Punjab has examined the British attempts to build an indigenous hierarchical ideology of the state authority by appealing directly to the political primacy of local Punjabi identities. I.A. Talbot in his book "Punjab and the Raj 1847-1947" has emphasized on the importance of local support for British strategic interests and its reputation for political loyalty to the Raj. In another study, "Khizr Tiwana ; The Punjab Unionist Party and the Partition of India" Talbot has elaborated that the cooperation between the big land lords and the British rulers was primarily motivated by the Punjab's emergence as the sword arm of India. Raghuvendra Tanwar in his work entitled "Politics of Sharing Power" has traced back the creation of Unionist Party and revealed that "The Unionist Party was in fact born at the top by an elite group to promote its own interests as its founder had earlier formed Muslim League in 1906 and Mohammadon Rural Party in 1921 as well. S. Qalb-i-Abid in his book, "Muslim Politics in the Punjab, 1921-27" has taken stock of various communities living in the Punjab with special reference to growth of communalism and highlighted that how Muslims improved their position despite opposition from other two communities. The writer has also elaborated several reforms introduced by the government during the period and inter-communal relationship. Zarina Salamat in her book, "The Punjab in 1920s' - A case study of Muslims" has elaborated characteristics of various communal
groups, effects of World War-1, British policies to pacify these communal tendencies and self-awareness amongst these groups with special reference to Muslims.

The study is divided into five chapters. Chapter one overviews the background of the issue of communal relations particularly those of the Hindus, the Muslims and the Sikhs with the British. It highlights the irritants affecting Sikh-Muslim relationship and contradictory attitude of both communities towards various facets of civil life. It discusses in detail, the differences in their cultures, civilizations, social habits, traditions and the way of thinking. The chapter also highlights the role played by the Hindus in developing cordial relationship between the Muslims and the Sikhs. The chapter also examines the impact of Khilafat movement on politico-religious situation in the province and different concessions granted by the British to involve the people in the political mainstream.

Chapter two, "Growth of Community Consciousness" traces out the causes and factors that contributed in the growth of communal consciousness amongst religious communities and how far these factors played their role in shaping the communal consciousness.

Chapter three, "Politics of Unionism", deals with the aims, objectives and functioning of the Unionist Party which ruled the state successfully for over two decades. An effort has been made to study the role of British in creation and subsequent functioning of the party and its impact on the political developments of the province.

Chapter four, "Search for Separate Space", discusses in detail, the efforts made by the Muslims and the Sikhs to have separate political, economic, cultural and socio-religious space for their communities. The chapter highlights that idea of separate identity had penetrated in the minds of the leaders
representing different communities, however, by this stage they were willing to live together but were more interested securing their socio-political and religious interests.

Chapter five, "Parting of the Ways", deals with that phase of communal relations, when emerging new realities had made the communities realize that separation was the only cause left to wriggle out the communal tangle. It also discusses the factors that caused the failure of the politics of Unionism.
CHAPTER - 1
TRENDS IN PUNJAB POLITICS

The most remarkable feature in the topography of the Punjab is found in its rivers. These rivers flow from the Himalayas, descend into the plains of the Punjab, fertilize the soil and continue their course to the south, until after their confluence the amalgamated waters fall into the sea. These rivers run between the Indus and the Jamna.¹ These rivers, eastwards from the Indus, are the Jhelum, the Chenab, the Ravi, the Bias and the Sutlej. “The word ‘Punj-ab’² literally means five waters or five rivers”.³ With reference to the name of province it is however, to be observed that there are in fact six rivers instead of five,⁴ but as the Indus was considered the boundary to the far west, the ancients seem to have disregarded it while giving the country its present name.⁵ These rivers running through the land for centuries, and changing their course continuously, made the land fertile. A fertile land with supporting weathers and plenty of water became a resource rich area. Moreover, the land was the gateway to India. Thus, the Punjabis, therefore, were the people who had to bear the brunt of the invader’s attacks. In pre-historic times, it was presumably, the Punjab that was first invaded by

² ‘Punj’ and ‘ab’ are two separate words in Persian. ‘Punj’ means five, whereas ‘ab’ means water. See the Persian-English Dictionary (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Limited, 1892), pp.1, 256
⁴ Six rivers flowing through Punjab are the Indus, the Jhelum, the Chenab, the Ravi, the Sutlej and the Bias. Although Indus runs through Punjab, yet it was making the boundary of province, therefore, it might have been neglected while naming the land. But interesting to see here is that now the Bias, almost, does not flow through Pakistani Punjab. Thus leaving the today’s Punjab a land of five rivers, very much according to the name. The Indus is now included in the five rivers, making the land ‘Punj-ab’.
⁶ Ibid; p.1
the Aryans from their camping ground beyond the snowy ranges of Himalayas. The Brahmins, the Rajputs and the Bannias of the Hindu race are commonly regarded as the descendents of Aryans. Alexander from Greek also invaded Punjab. In India it was the Punjab and Sindh where, the armies of Islam obtained their footings, under Mohammad Bin Qasim. The Punjab is also the birthplace of Sikh religion whose followers were able to establish a state of their own under the able leadership of Maharaja Ranjit Singh who was able to extend the boundaries of Punjab to NWFP and Kashmir. After his death intrigues and internecine fightings weakened the state to the extent that it finally surrendered to the British rule after the Anglo-Sikh war of 1845-46.

The British started their occupation drive of India from the eastern lands of the Sub-continent. If we look at the map, the Punjab lies close to the western and northern borders of India. Principally for that reason, the Punjab was one of the last regions of India to be annexed by the British. They were also aware that Punjab was an old and distinct society that had been greatly influenced by its geographical location and had a turbulent

---

6 Muhammad Bin Qasim entered the Indian land through Balochistan, conquered Sindh and reached Multan. He managed to keep the occupied territories under full control. Even Muslims under his command were planning to invade Kashmir, but he has to go back because of the orders of the new caliph. But it is clear in history that armies in Islam managed to have their footings in Punjab, under Bin Qasim.

7 Muslim armies entered in India through Balochistan and Sindh; from there they marched towards north, and under the leadership of Muhammad bin Qasim reached up to Multan. They hold full control of the occupied lands and were planning to move forward to Kashmir, when Bin Qasim was ordered to go back to the centre of Khilafat. But even before the departure of Bin Qasim, Muslim forces had firm hold over the territories of Punjab up to Multan.

8 Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, born in 1469, in Talwandi, now called Nanka Sahib in Pakistan. This place is near Lahore. The Sikhism developed and flourished in the Punjab.


10 Punjab being a last region to be annexed by the British was not due to strong political or defensive system of the province; rather it was a blessing of its location. British with its formidable naval power started their occupation of India from the Northeastern side of the land. They captured the resource rich Bengal first then moved towards the South and the West. Punjab was therefore, was one of the furthers regions from the springboard of Bengal. For this reason, Punjab's annexation to the British India came in, as late as, March 1849.
history. Realizing this situation well, they planned to develop the province as a model of prosperity and agricultural stability.\(^\text{11}\) To achieve the goal of stability and prosperity, the British depended on the rural nature of the province and aimed at communal harmony among the big three communities of the province, i.e., the Muslims, the Hindus and the Sikhs.\(^\text{12}\) They improved irrigation system and set up canal colonies.\(^\text{13}\) They created new rural elite by supporting the people who had extended support to the British during the annexation of the province. They richly awarded those who had helped them in their darkest hour.\(^\text{14}\) Their help, during the East India Company’s crisis in general and during the Second Sikh War (1849) and in the events of 1857 in particular, did not go unrewarded.\(^\text{15}\) As the new elite came from different religious communities, so British formulated a policy of inter-communal political cooperation for protection of their vested interests. The British helped new elites in rising to the new position of authority in the new setup and consequently won the support of the Punjab Chiefs that was crucial for the British to safeguard their Raj in the province.

The British had fully realized Punjab’s potential to produce military manpower. So with the support of the local landlords, British managed the martial races of the Punjab to join the British Indian Army.\(^\text{16}\) Towards the end of nineteenth century, the province emerged as the major recruiting area

---


\(^{12}\) In the Punjab there were two types of divide. One was the urban-rural divide, whereas the second division was among various religious communities.

\(^{13}\) These colonies were developed to absorb the surplus population of crowded districts of Central Punjab, with the objective of revenue generation.


\(^{15}\) British rewards for their ‘helpers’ were not merely rewards but were also an investment to keep the sympathizers, to the British Raj, stick to their side in future.

for the British Army.\footnote{S. C. Mittal, *Freedom Movement in Punjab* (Delhi: Concept Publishing Company, 1977), p.71} "The Punjab had during the war enlisted over 300,000 men, of whom 300,000 were combatants."\footnote{Report on the Punjab Disturbances April 1919, IOR L/P&S/20 F205} At the end of the First World War, almost three fifth of the British Indian Army recruits were drawn from the province.\footnote{Source: Dr. S. D. Pradhan, *Punjab's Manpower Contribution to the Indian Army During the First World War* in Punjab Revisited compiled by Ahmad Saleem (Lahore: Gautam Publishers, n.d.), p.450} The following table depicts that the Punjab's contribution to British Indian Armed forces was highest in proportion to population as well as in number.

### Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Population, in millions</th>
<th>Number of recruits, in thousands</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N.W.F.P.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Provinces</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bombay</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bengal</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bihar &amp; Orissa</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madras</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Provinces</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assam</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burma</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ajmer</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native States under Government of India</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The recruitment in the army was open to all communities, however the Muslim Rajputs, the Sikh Jats and the Hindu Dogras, jointly willing to fight for the British, dominated the British Indian Army.\footnote{C. Dewey, "The Rural Roots of Pakistani Militarism", in D.A. Low, ed., *The Political Inheritance of Pakistan* (London: Heinemann, 1991), p.264} These soldiers from Punjab fought as far as the mud of Flanders, the deserts of Arabia and in the bushes of East Africa. They won over two thousand medals and awards, including three Victoria Crosse.\footnote{I. A. Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj, 1849-1947* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1988), p.45} The Punjab's participation in the
British war effort was not only in terms of manpower supply; it contributed economically as well, as was noted in a report that says: "The province made a response unequalled by any other part if India, to the appeal for recruits, and had subscribed too freely to the war loans that the province ranked third in the general list of contributors."\(^{22}\)

To secure rural stability, the British associated the leaders of the agriculturist tribes with the political life and processes. They pursued a policy to use the resources of the Punjab to reward the agriculturist population. A framework of political representation was established to institutionalize the division between the agriculturist and non-agriculturist populations. In addition to these actions, they encouraged the rural elites to get into administrative system and offered them the post of zaildar. Posts were also reserved for the agriculturists in the official ranks of the local administration.\(^{23}\)

The British introduced comprehensive irrigation projects in the southwestern Punjab, where they developed nine canal colonies. The creation of these colonies coincided with the Punjab's emergence as the sword-arm\(^{24}\) of India.\(^{25}\) The British rewarded ex-servicemen with lucrative grants of land in these canal colonies. Approximately, a million of Punjabis migrated to these canal colonies, which were inhabited rapidly and in return converted the province into a major exporting zone of wheat and cotton.

\(^{22}\) Report on the Punjab Disturbances April 1919, IOR L/P&S/20 F205


\(^{24}\) Lord Roberts, who served as the Commander in Chief of the Indian Army, from 1885 to 1893, enunciated the theory of martial races. The theory considered the Punjabis as martial race. Therefore even before the First World War Punjabi soldiers formed the bulk of Indian Army.

Moreover, these colonies also became a source of revenue generation for the British government.\textsuperscript{26}

Towards the end of nineteenth century, the British started to introduce political reforms in British India. They also decided to bring forward their allied landlord community in the political front. As a result S.N Banerjee\textsuperscript{27} founded the first political association in Punjab in the year 1877.\textsuperscript{28} The association, named as Lahore Indian Association,\textsuperscript{29} provided a common platform to all communities of the province. It included some of the prominent leaders from different communities, such as Dyal Singh\textsuperscript{30} and Barkat Ali Khan.\textsuperscript{31} The Lahore Indian Association cooperated in the establishment of the Punjab branch of Indian National Congress in 1885.\textsuperscript{32} However, by that time, differences among different communities were quite discernable.

Hindu revivalist movements,\textsuperscript{33} like Brahmo Samaj\textsuperscript{34} and Arya Samaj,\textsuperscript{35} were the major contributors in generating ill feelings amongst

\textsuperscript{27} Surendranath Banerjee (1848-1925) was involved actively in students associations. He formed Indian Association in 1876, with the objective of organizing public agitations to seek redressal of grievances. He stressed the need for Hindu-Muslim unity as a pre-requisite to the attainment of swaraj.
\textsuperscript{29} Lahore Indian Association, established in 1877, was provincial branch of Indian Association founded a year before by Surendranath Banerjee.
\textsuperscript{30} Sardar Dyal Singh was the founder of Dyal Singh College, Dyal Singh Library and The Tribune. He was the President of Lahore Indian Association.
\textsuperscript{31} Khan Barkat Ali Khan belonged to a Pathan Family of Shahjahanpur. He served British as Thanedar, Tehsildar and Extra Assistant Commissioner. During his services he was given the responsibility to settle disputes among religious communities. After retirement his main field of activity involved Anjuman-i-Islamiyah. He was also Vice-President of the Lahore Indian Association.
\textsuperscript{32} Hassan, ed., *Nationalism and Communal Politics in India* (Delhi: Manohar Publications, 1979), p.238
\textsuperscript{33} The reason for launching these movements was the thinking that Muslim, Sikh and Christian onslaught had posed serious threat to the position of Hindus. Therefore they launched such movements to consolidate their position.
\textsuperscript{34} Raja Ram Mohan Roy founded Brahmo Samaj in 1828. Over the period of time, it split in three branches. Of these branches, the "Adhi Samaj" soon became indistinguishable from Hinduism and faded away, 'Nav Vidhan' also faced the same fate; however the 'Sadharan Samaj' showed vitality and made some headway.
\textsuperscript{35} Arya Samaj (the society of Aryans) was a Hindu revivalist movement. It was founded by Sawani Dayanand Saraswati, a Brahma of Kathiawar. The Movement was founded in Bombay but it could not
religious communities. Unlike Congress which claimed to be the harbinger of all the communities, Arya Samaj’s activities were mainly focused on to safeguarding the communal interests of the Hindus only. As a result a large segment of Hindu community developed antipathy towards Congress for endeavouring to win the Muslims support as well. Similarly, the Muslims of the Punjab, following the footsteps of the Muslims of rest of India, became quite conscious of their identity and started exerting themselves as a separate and distinct community and founded several associations to promote their interests. The first among these associations founded in 1869, which focused its attention to safeguard socio-economic and political interests of Muslim and also maintained mosques and voiced its opinion on various issues. Confronting the community another important Muslim organization, Anjuman Himayat-i-Islam was founded in 1884, with the avowed objectives to:

- Impart education to the Muslims
- Improve the social and intellectual conditions of the Muslim community
- Respond to the attacks against Islam

And

flourish there. However in the latter years of Dayanand’s life, Punjab became the center of his activities. He was a religious reformer. He opined that it was the advent of meat eating (Muslims) and wine drinking (British) foreigners—the slaughterers of Kine and other animals that brought trouble and sufferings upon the Aryans. His cry was ‘Arya for the Aryans’.


36 Throughout their history in India, Muslims had faced various Hindu attempts to abolish their separate identity, but they successfully coped with such efforts.


38 Non Muslims, particularly Hindus, on occasions had attacked Islam to disgrace it and to proselyte Muslims back to Hinduism. But such efforts had created resentment among Muslims and they faced them with more zeal and vigor.
• To advocate loyalty to the British Raj.\textsuperscript{39}

In the last quarter of nineteenth century, the British provided the Punjab with an opportunity to elect some members of its municipal committees. Holding of elections to these committees resulted in communal conflict in many areas.\textsuperscript{40} In the meanwhile, the Hindu majority in the local self-Government bodies at all India level not only gave rise to communal tension but also intensification of demand by the Muslims for separate communal electorates.

In the British India, the Muslim representation in the official services was already drastically negligible but by the 1880’s, their representation had almost been eliminated.\textsuperscript{41} In 1895, an official inquiry revealed that for a long period, the Hindu officers had been deliberately preventing the qualified Muslims from getting high-ranking jobs.\textsuperscript{42} It was growing consciousness among the Muslims that they might not be able to compete privileged Hindu community; therefore, they demanded a share in jobs for the Muslim community on account of population percentage in the Punjab.\textsuperscript{43} Annoyed by the demand of the Muslims, the Hindus dubbed the Muslims as greedy job seekers and also questioned the inabilities and even chided that they should stop behaving like children and should fight like men.\textsuperscript{44}

\textsuperscript{39} S. Qalb-i-Abid, Op. Cit. p.11
\textsuperscript{40} N.G. Barrier, \textit{Muslim Politics in the Punjab, 1870-90,' Punjab: Past and Present}, Vol. VI, No. 2, April 1971, p.91
\textsuperscript{41} Muslims had ruled over India for a long period. British had taken power from them, therefore psychologically they were perceived as a potential threat to the British rule. This fact coincided with the hate, among Muslim, for adapting to the new circumstances. They did not come forward to learn English language, which was the official language of the British India. For these reasons Muslims lagged behind other communities in getting jobs.
\textsuperscript{43} Mushirul Hassan, ed., \textit{Nationalism and Communal Politics in India} (Delhi: Manohar Publications, 1979), pp.35-36.
\textsuperscript{44} The Tribune, December 15, 1886.
The feelings of deprivation led some prominent Punjabi Muslims, such as Justice Shah Din, to think about the establishment of a central political organization for the Muslims, much early than the creation of All India Muslim League in December 1906. Interesting, Mian Fazl-i-Husain a noted Muslim leader, had founded a Muslim association, named as The Muslim League in February 1906 but Fazl-i-Husain’s Muslim League could not gain foothold among the Muslims as its leader. Mian Fazl-i-Husain had joined Congress in 1905, and he was still a member of the Congress at the time of launching his Muslim League.

In order to check the influence of Indian political parties, British sponsored the Association of the Landed Aristocracy of the Punjab and helped in formation of Punjab’s first multi-communal rural political association was formed in 1907 by Sardar Partap Singh Alhuwalia which was latter renamed as the Punjab Chief’s Association. It was a conservative and loyalist organization, serving equally well the interests of the British as well as the landlords of the province. Punjab Chief’s Association limited the Congress’ influence on the provincial political horizon, as well as it reduced communal tensions in the provincial countryside, which had dominated political life in the towns of the Punjab from the 1880s onwards. During the First World War, landlords under this association not only assisted in raising large number of recruits for the British forces, but also helped to

---

45 S. M. Ikram, Modern Muslim India and the Birth of Pakistan (Lahore: Institute of Islamic Culture, 1995), p.216
46 Bashir Ahmed, Justice Shah Din (Lahore: Sh. Mohammad Ashraf, 1962), p.344
49 Ian Talbot, Provincial Political Parties and the Pakistan Movement (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1990), p.84
50 Ibid; p.84
51 Ibid; p.84
limit the impact of two very important movements, i.e., Sikh Ghadr Movement founded by Har Dyal Singh, and the Khilafat Movement launched by Ali brothers i.e Maulana Mohammad Ali Johar and Maulana Shoukat Ali. The disturbances in 1919 that resulted in the brutal Jallianwala Bagh massacre in Amritsar were in fact limited to only a handful of the province’s towns and had least impact on the rural areas. However, in urban areas, tension among various communities continued to increase and at times tensions rose so high that nationalist leaders had to intervene for reconciliation.

The Punjab was less advanced and was given a Legislative Council as late as 1897 as British treated it basically a military province. Political awareness in Punjab started with the introduction of political parties and award of a Legislative Council in the province. The passage of Montague-Chelmsford Reforms of 1919 increased the franchise and transferred control of certain subjects to provincial administration and maintained that at least seventy per cent of the seats in the provincial legislature would be elected and not more than twenty per cent could be nominated. Due to enlargement of legislatures in eight provinces, the Punjab Legislature reached to a total of ninety-three members. This figure included seventy-one elected and twenty-two nominated members of the Legislative Council. The

---

52 Ghadr Movement or Ghadr Party was launched by Lala Har Dyal in 1913. It was the first secular, democratic and revolutionary upsurge aimed at liberating India from the British. Although it included Muslims and Hindus, the Sikhs were in majority. For the Sikh community it was the end of their long saga of unquestioned support to the British Raj. For the genesis, activities and propaganda, see R. C. Majumdar, History of The Freedom Movement in India (Calcutta: Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyay, 1963) Vol. 2, p.387-397
54 Satya M. Ram, *Punjabi Heroic Traditions 1900-1947 (nd, np)* p.116
57 Ibid; p.32
Montague-Chelmsford Reforms proved to be a watershed in sharpening political consciousness, and for advancing political process in the province, as it not only enlarged the legislature but also increased the elected element of the legislature. The number of elected members was increased to a nine times greater than that of what was given in the Minto-Morley Reforms. The Muslims of the province being a majority community got fifty per cent representation in legislature in accordance with the Lucknow Pact. The nature of communal relations in the Punjab cannot be gauged exclusively from the religious trends. It consisted of a wider, complex network of social, political and economic relations. For instance, the issue of boycott of shops of a rival community had economic, religious and social causes at the same time. Thus, it is clear that the communal relations were the result of the interplay of different forces and motives for a specific act by a religious community.

The year 1906 was of extreme importance in the chronology of Muslim separatism in South Asia. That was the year when a separate Muslim political organization, the All India Muslim League (AIML) was formed at Dacca. Since the Punjab was an area inhabited by communities having different religions, cultures, traditions and different sources, the interests of these groups also varied. So the natural out come of this situation was that each one of these groups needed a separate political organization to convey their demands to the government. Muslim backwardness in the Punjab was, in the view of the leaders like Sir Muhammad Shafi, definitely

---

60 Zarina Salamat, p.141
caused by the absence of such an organization. Thus, a branch of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League was established in 1907. One of the key aims of the new organization was to safeguard the political interests of the Muslim community of the Punjab. In its first annual session, it had on its agenda issues like job quotas for the Muslims, and development of the Islamic literature to promote national spirit among Muslim community.

The first annual session of the Muslim League vehemently supported the issue of separate electorates and argued that in case joint electorates were imposed, the Muslims would be under represented in major cities of the Punjab. The session was unanimous in supporting the Land Alienation Act (1901), an issue of direct concern to the urban Hindus; the money lending and the professional classes, mainly composed of Hindus, challenged the Act as invidious. Punjabi language, however it was argued, was being given ‘undue importance’—a direct attack on Sikh sensibilities on the issues.

The Punjab Muslim League’s demand for separate electorates for Muslims was not ill founded as the the electoral contest essentially was on communal lines. The complaints of Muslim under-representation or the split of Muslim vote were galore. The problem of under representation of the Muslims in the Muslim-majority area had created the same kind of protectionism, seen at play in Muslim-minority provinces like the U.P. Thus, the attempts to bring the Congress and the Muslim League closer at the central level by politicians like Muhammad Ali Jinnah were viewed with

---

64 Ibid; p.268
65 Ibid; p.274
66 Report on Punjab Disturbances, P.3
67 Ibid; p.281
68 Ibid; pp.294-95
suspicion and unease by the Punjab's loyalist politicians like Sir Mohammad Shafi.

In that context, the Lucknow Pact of 1916 proved to be a turning point and caused split in Provincial Muslim League and the AIML. The provincial chapter openly accused the central body of leaving the path of moderation and indeed dubbed it as the 'Lucknow League', thus, contesting its claim of representing all the Muslims in India.  

By 1918, the disenchanted Muslims in the province formed the Punjab Provincial Muslim Association. The new organization was different form of All India Muslim League because it wanted the Muslims, in their capacity as a separate community, to get government jobs and political appointments, something the later was not doing. But the Muslim demand for special or separate political representation was not gone uncontested. A strong segment of Hindus not only opposed the Muslims demands but in order to counter Muslim demands founded Punjab Hindu Sabha on December 16, 1906 at Lahore. The organization from the very beginning adopted communal line and opposed the Muslim demand for separate representation by rejecting the Muslim claims of historic and political importance. Secondly, it also rejected the Land Alienation Act and questioned the policy of giving job quotas to the Muslims. These along with other demands like imposition of Hindi, Practice of Ayurvedic system of medicine, protection of cow and need to write history of 'Hindu Period' were more forcefully stated in the October 1909 Hindu Conference organized by the Sabha.

---

69 Ibid; p.312
70 Ibid; p.371
71 Ibid; pp.344-345
In the Punjab, even the Indian National Congress acted like a Hindu body for all practical purposes. The members of Hindu Sabha often used the district branch offices of Congress for their propaganda. In fact, in a statement of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee in June 1909, there were the echoes of the demands by the Hindu Sabha. It demanded that in case religion is the basis of representation in the province, they must have equivalent representation to the Muslims. The same year, the Hindu Sabha presented a memorandum to the Viceroy, which, in addition to all the above-mentioned demands, rejected the Muslim claims of separate identity. It argued that the local Muslims were descendents of the Hindus. Furthermore, it stated in no uncertain terms that the original inhabitants of India were Hindus.

In the meanwhile new trends were emerging in the Punjab to socially boycott other communities; particularly the Muslims were getting agitated over the establishment of shops of jhatka (non-kosher) meat in mixed localities. The Hindus, traditionally, had no objection to eating ‘halal’ meat prepared by the Muslims, and now their insistence of having separate meat shops for the Hindus had a definite communal ring to it.

The Muslims responded to these moves by opening their own shops of the commodities that were traditionally considered to be reserved for the Hindus. Similarly names of shops like ‘Hindu Tailor Master’ were pointer towards the future. To add hatred, were the reports that the Muslims and the

---

73 Ibid; p.445
74 Malik, A Book of Reading, p.346
75 Ibid; pp.358-359
76 Ibid; p.366
77 Ibid; 373
Hindus disagreed on the usage of shared resources like well water in common localities.\textsuperscript{78}

Thus, what we had in the Punjab in the early years of the twentieth century were communities struggling to define their separate place in the colonial scheme of things. The quest for securing concessions for one's community and increased mobilization of individuals were changing the concepts of time and space of isolated communities. New and wider communal identities, which went beyond the immediate kinship and locale, were taking shape. No wonder, communal relations on the eve of the greatest episode of Hindu-Muslim cooperation, Khilafat and Non-Cooperation Movement, were in a state of flux.

It would be expedient to explore briefly the nature of inter-communal relations just before the Khilafat Movement and the Non-Cooperation Movement. The 1916 Lucknow Pact though an important step towards communal understanding had deeply divided the Muslims. Contemporary commentators on the Muslim affairs saw three clear divisions in the community between:

1) Those who opposed any reforms
2) Those who strived for the Muslim rights only

And

3) Those who supported the 1916 Pact with certain reservations.\textsuperscript{79}

Between the later two, there was a war of words regarding the "Muslim first" or "Indian first" issue. For instance 'Vakil', a Muslim paper had to say:

\textsuperscript{78} Ibid; pp.377-379
\textsuperscript{79} The Punjab, 1918, Selection from the Native Newspapers published in 1918-1920, NDC.
“Mohammedans are nationalists in true sense of the word, but they cannot forget that their interests are all embracing. They have to live in India, but have also kept their eye on affairs in the whole world, for they as compared to other Indian communities are more deeply connected with it.”

Thus, it was not surprising that All India Muslim League statements criticizing the Muslims first and Indians afterwards did not go unchallenged. There was a definite sense of persecution among the Muslims, many of whom openly said that if they were unjustly treated under the British rule what will be their status under ‘Home Rule’. They were convinced that the Muslim culture would be threatened in such a case. This fear was reinforced by the decline of the Muslim political power in the subcontinent, as one paper noted:

“... our authority was paramount in India half a century ago... but what is left of us now? We are destitute of authority and education and have no aptitude for trade. We are alien to industries and arts, agricultural estates have passed out of our hands, and we have lost our character....”

But that was not all. It was feared that the Muslims would endure the same fate as the Muslims of Spain, Portugal and Sicily, if the situation was not rectified. The Muslim insecurity was finding expression in different forms throughout the province. The urge to define a religious sphere distinct from other communities was only one manifestation of this fear. There were demands ranging from the establishment of a ‘waqf’ department to the

---

80 Vakil, 19 December 1917.
81 Ibid;
82 Rain Magazine, December 1917.
83 Al-Munir, 1 September 1918.
84 Ibid;
85 Paisa Akhbar, 10 October 1918.
demands by students to say ‘azan’ and prayers in congregation.\textsuperscript{86} This attitude was reinforced by the perceived Hinduising tendencies of the Congress. As one Lahore based Muslim newspaper highlighted the Hindu point of view:

"Swaraj means that we should prefer India and its politics to our religion and nationality. And what constitutes Indian politics? It implies humbly bowing our heads before the majority, reposing unbounded faith in educational ability and the divine authority of the sacred Brahmins, promoting the cause of Hindus, the national language (of Hindus), by putting aside our own civilization and progress, and merging our existence in that of Indian people.”\textsuperscript{87}

The paper went on to describe the competition between the two religious groups for official patronage as an “educated” and “civilized riot”. In these circumstances the warnings, that the Muslims in their enthusiasm for unity, should not blind themselves to community’s special interests came as no surprise.\textsuperscript{88}

For the Hindus however, this real or imagined sense of persecution was no less. As Hindus were in minority in the Punjab, therefore, Punjab was a fertile ground for Hindu communalism and Hindu organizations. According to some Hindu estimates 7,000, Hindus converted to Islam annually in the Punjab.\textsuperscript{89} In a system where numbers were becoming increasingly important this was perceived to be a substantial loss.

These concerns were guided, as much by a sense of competition with the Muslims as they were by the quest for a broad Hindu identity. While criticizing conversions of the Hindus, there was an indirect admission that

\textsuperscript{86} Paisa Akhbar, 1918, 30 January 1918.
\textsuperscript{87} Aflab, 1918, 10 January 1918.
\textsuperscript{88} Municipal Gazette, 5&12 March 1918.
\textsuperscript{89} Arorbans Gazette, 24 January 1918.
the cause was the stratification in Hindu society.\textsuperscript{90} There was a feeling that the Hindus, as a community, had become ‘lifeless’. The Muslim ‘sense of nationality’ was cited as an example, who allegedly ‘exaggerated’ the accesses against them. The Hindu leaders were admonished for taking up politics while neglecting national feelings of the Hindus.\textsuperscript{91}

These attempts of redefining and outlining the Hindu sphere were coeval with attempt to create the myth of a ‘golden past’. The teachings of Dayanand were propagated emphasizing that Indian golden past was not the period when the Hindus were forcibly subjected to Islam i.e., during the Muslim rule. The golden era period existed in the Vedic past when the ‘Aryans held sovereign control over India’.\textsuperscript{92} The natural corollary to this historicist premise was that the Aryans would never have declined if they had followed their ‘true religion’.\textsuperscript{93}

These contradictions and tensions were exhibited in every day life of common Punjabi as well. For instance, a cricket match between MAO Club (Aligarh) and Hindu Sports Club (Amritsar) turned into a Hindu-Muslim issue.\textsuperscript{94} In every day communication, attempts were made to sideline Urdu. At the same time cow protection had assumed a peculiar symbolic significance as one paper noted, it was no longer a “religious question” but a “grave political and administrative problem”.\textsuperscript{95}

Muslims were not the only victim of Hindu animosity, Arya Samajists were making hectic efforts to bracket Sikhs as a branch of Hinduism. Sikh’s resentments against this move finally found expression in the publication of

\textsuperscript{90} Ibid;
\textsuperscript{91} Bulletin, 1 February 1918.
\textsuperscript{92} Arya Gazette, Rishibodh no.7 March 1918.
\textsuperscript{93} Milap, January 1918.
\textsuperscript{94} Vakil, 10 April 1918.
\textsuperscript{95} Punjab Chronicle, 19 January 1918.
a booklet by Kahan Singh, the Chief Minister of Nabha, with self-explaining title ‘Hum Hindu Nahin Hain’ (we are not Hindus). The Sikhs were further alienated from the Hindus due to the attempts by Arya Samaj to cultivate Sikh Jats and launching a vicious propaganda, that Granth was a collection of sayings of saints and fakirs with very few original quotes from the real Sikh gurus. Sikh leaders realized soon that for Dayanand, Granth was a book of ‘secondary importance’ and gurus were ‘men of little learning’. Thus, the Sikhs along with the Christians and the Muslims demanded the suppression of Arya propaganda hurting the feelings of all the three communities. These attempts for defining a distinct religious identity accompanied the demand for a separate political representation, a demand opposed by the Muslim press as it would bolster Hindus in an indirect way, was vaguely pointing towards the events to come.

The Sikh-Muslim confrontation was not restricted to the political arena only rather it found expression in every day life as well. One such instance was the protest against Jadunath Sircar’s historical account of Emperor Aurangzeb’s reign (1658-1707) in the university syllabus. It was alleged that it contained disparaging remarks concerning the Sikh gurus. Ultimately, the book was removed from the syllabus. An equally important, though unrelated development was the attack on Bhai Arjan Singh, religious guide of the Maharanjas of Patiala, Farid Kot and Jind, for his alleged blasphemy against Lord Krishen in his poem ‘Krishna Bhano’. These developments reflect the fragile nature of relationship

---

97 Ibid; p.139
98 Loyai Gazette, 9 June 1918.
99 Vakil, 20 July 1918.
100 Desh, 9 February.
101 Itihad, 25 January 1918.
between three major communities—the Hindus, the Muslims and the Sikhs. Although the Khilafat and Non-Cooperation Movements (March 1920) attempted to bring disparate communities together, the unity in their ranks even at the height of these movements remained superficial.

Two important developments, the Jallianwala Bagh massacre by the imperial machinery in 1914 and the pro Khilafat sentiments brought about significant changes not only in Punjab but had its bearing on national political scene as well. The sheer magnitude of Jallianwala Bagh tragedy resulted in the killings of innocent people and helped different communities to move closer to face the British juggernaut. Consequently, union between the Hindus and the Muslims was very much in evidence during the Lahore strike that followed the tragedy. At the same time the defeat of Turkey in the First World War and plans of the Allied forces to divide the Turkish territories had aroused the Muslims sentiments in India. In order to express their solidarity with Turkish people and they launched a concerted campaign for the restoration of Khilafat, the Muslim leaders in India gave institutional shape to the pro-Khilafat sentiments by forming the Khilafat Committee in March 1919. Six months later, the Muslim League Council also organized an All India Muslim Conference at Lucknow. The most important feature of this meeting was the formation of All India Khilafat Committee and decision to observe October 17, 1919 as the Khilafat Day. Hindu-Muslim amity was quite discernable even the Hindu extremist leaders like Swami Shranddanand attended the Delhi meeting of All India Khilafat Committee.

In Punjab, the communal unity touched to new heights when Hindu leaders were allowed to visit the Badshahi Mosque. Local press reported

102 Paisa Akhbar, 15 April 1919.
103 Paigham-i-Sulah, 10 September 1919.
with a degree of pride the same year, that there were no disturbances on Bakr Eid, an occasion on which riots were common on the issue of cow slaughtering. This new found spirit of unity also raised expectations. As ‘Siyasat’ while countering the Hindu objections to the building of mosque in an Amritsar locality, wrote:

“Our Hindu brothers’ objection is that there is a temple close to the site and the construction of the proposed mosque therefore calculated to wound their religious susceptibilities. We fail, however, to understand the reason for the conduct, when they are willing enough to raise shouts of Allah-ho-Akbar, to grieve with Mohammedan brothers on the Khilafat Day, to wear Fez and work as volunteers with the tazia processions, and to offer water, sherbet and... like the Mohammedans on such occasions- may drink out of the same glass with them. Have not the Mohammedans, who can utter the cries of “Sri Ram Chandar” and ‘Maharani Sita’ and render every service (including the carrying of jhankis) to their Hindu brothers during the Dossdra, the right to build a mosque near a temple, having common walls.”

However, voices were raised to warn the Muslims against these trends and a segment of the Muslim society feared that the imitational politics, would take away the ‘communal’ as well as ‘religious’ rights of the Muslims. The ‘struggle for education’ was replaced by ‘political cries’ and the Muslims were giving up their ‘communal sentiments’. But the emerging political climate was strongly in favour of evolving a joint strategy. Consequently, the Congress, the All India Muslim League, the All India Khilafat Conference, the Jamiat Ulema-i-Hind held their sessions at Amritsar. To pave the way for Hindu Muslim alliance, even hard-line Hindu leaders like Lajpat Rai started supporting the Khilafat cause. Hakim Ajmal Khan, in his presidential speech at the Muslim League session, went to the

104 Siyasat, 27 October 1919.
105 Paisa Akhbar, 9 October 1919.
extent of proposing abandonment of cow sacrifice to appease the Hindus. This was followed by a formal resolution – a move seen to have more “social significance” than political by Hindu commentators as increased social interaction was more long lasting than the political alliance.\(^{106}\)

But this new found Hindu-Muslim rapprochement was viewed with a degree of cynicism in some quarters and it was feared that the unity was but a ‘passing phase’. Unity, one magazine argued, must be “on terms of equality and not based on the supposed or real political superiority or importance of the one and the inferiority of the other”\(^{107}\). An article published on March 26, 1920 in ‘Watan’ titled “The Cow” criticized the All India Muslim League resolution and attributed the Hindu-Muslim unity to the brutal actions of “Dyer and Dwyer”. The author saw in the moves a sinister plot to make Muslims “destroy their own religion”.\(^{108}\)

The events in India, however, were moved in a fast face during Bengal Khilafat Conference held in Calcutta in February 1920. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad eloquently drew a distinction between those non-Muslims (like the British) who had invaded Muslim territory and those who were at peace with them (like the Hindus). While he favoured friendship with the later, the former were not to be trusted. This was the basis of the Tark-i-Muwalat (literally means end of friendship) or the Non-Cooperation Movement.\(^{109}\)

On March 19, 1920 another Khilafat Day was observed. It was followed by the announcement of launching a four-stage programme of non-

\(^{106}\) Ibid;
\(^{107}\) Vedia Magazine, May 1920.
\(^{108}\) Watan, 26 March 1920.
cooperation with the government. The first stage was to be the giving up of the titles awarded by the British; the second, withdrawal from the government services; the third, resignations from the military and the police, and; fourth stage, non-payment of taxes. However, bringing the Hindus into the mainstream still required something more than the Khilafat issue. So Lajpat Rai, a renowned Hindu leader advocated the Punjab atrocities in the campaign agenda.\textsuperscript{110} It was this blending of Khilafat with the Punjab issue along with promises of strict non-violence, which won the Hindus’ support for the Khilafat cause.

For the political elite, the movement was a tool to mobilize the masses against the government. In this respect, Maulana Shaukat Ali’s departure from the traditional theocratic position is interesting. For instance, in a speech in Surat he voiced, that \textit{Imam} Gandhi had appeared in the place of Imam Mehdi. These assertions did not go well in the Punjab where a Muslim newspaper was quick to point out that Gandhi cannot be an \textit{Imam} because of his religion. So even at the height of the Hindu-Muslim rapprochement, the attempts to blur the religious differences were fiercely resisted.\textsuperscript{111}

Even within Congress, there were strong dissenting voices against the movement of non-cooperation. It was only with the support of Gandhi and a last minute switch over by Motilal Nehru which won the day for the proponents of the Khilafat Movement at the special conference in September 1920 against the alliance of Lajpat Rai, Madan Malviya and other Hindu leaders. This victory paved the way for the inclusion of religious groups from Punjab like the Sikh League. Punjabi countryside at that time was

\textsuperscript{110} Qurashi, \textit{Pan-Islam in British Indian Politics}, p.269
\textsuperscript{111} Paisa Akhabar, 12 November 1920.
brewing with discontent as the disbanded soldiery was returning home to face crop failure, plague and diseases.\footnote{urashi, Op.cit, p.269}

Hindu leadership realized that these alliances were transitory and ephemeral in nature and the cause of unity amongst different communal groups was not a new-found confidence in Indian nationalism rather it was purely religious as far as the Muslims were concerned. So the sense of distinctiveness among religious communities was still something to be countered. For instance, Lajpat Rai wrote on March 12, 1921 that: “It is necessary that in order to obtain Sawaraj, they (people) should rise above the idea of separate nationality… We should form one nation in India abandoning all ideas of our being separate nationalities”.\footnote{Bande Matram, 12 March 1921.}

Such calls in fact were need of the hour, as even in the era of supposed communal harmony, tension was still prevalent all around particularly in Punjab where reportedly in Gurdaspur, Muslims were not allowed to say \textit{azan} in some areas.\footnote{Siyasat, 18 February 1921.} While the resolution by Lahore Municipality against cow- sacrifice was seen to have done more harm to communal unity than good.\footnote{Ar-Rai, 25 February 1921.} The fragility of the communal amity can be gauged from the following excerpt?

“... While Hindus are supporting the Khilafat on its merits as a cause, just and fair, they expect that the Mohammedans will also deal with question of cow protection on its merits... Khilafat may win or Khilafat may fail, the cow question may remain open till it is settled to the satisfaction of the Hindus.”\footnote{Liberal, 25 May 1921.}
In these circumstances, Mopilla rebellion of 1921-22 in the Malabar region radically changed that drift of events. The attacks on the Hindus convinced their co-religionists on the All India level that the threat of pan-Islamism was real and looming large on their heads. Although it can be said that Mopilla revolt had "no widespread communal repercussions", yet politically it had adversely affected the tone and tenor of the Non-Cooperation Movement.

By the end of 1921, there was mounting tension between the government and the activists of Non-Cooperation movement and it was fast moving towards confrontation. Ghandhi threatened the Government to launch mass Civil Disobedience Movement from February 1, 1922. However, the murder of the entire police station staff in Chaura Chori on February 6, 1922 changed the whole scenario as the Working Committee of the Congress in its meeting held on February 11 suspended the Non-Cooperation Movement until stricter control could be imposed on volunteers. The withdrawal of Congress from the movement had devastating impact on the movement and Jamiat Ulema-i-Hind in its March session criticized Gandhi and demanded that the Khilafat Movement's leadership should be handed over to the Muslim League. Prominent All India Khilafat Conference leaders like M. A. Ansari and Ajmal Khan tried to maintain the Congress-Khilafat alliance.

Keeping in view the distribution of the province, the distribution of rural and urban population is given in following table:-

---

117 Qurashi, Op.cit, p.421
118 Punjab's population was pre-dominantly rural; moreover it was cut across into different communities. Although Muslims were in majority, but the combined Sikh and Hindu community was falling very close to the Muslim percentage. Therefore, as excluding Muslims from consideration of any future set up was not possible, considering only a Muslim dominated Punjab was also not looking much workable. Here, came in the rural nature of province, to rescue the British in this troubled province.
the British decided to establish an organized political party in the Punjab, to promote and protect their interests in provincial politics. Their rapport and friendship with the rural elite of the province helped them in achieving their desired goal and paved the way for creation of the Unionist Party.\textsuperscript{119} The party’s success in the province depended on a careful balancing of the interests of Hindu Jats and Muslim landlords. The British in this regard were more than willing to help.

The brain behind the formation of Unionist party was a lawyer Mian Fazl-i-Husain, who had been earlier involved in the activities of the Punjab Congress and later Punjab Muslim League. He was of the view that the special political arithmetic of Punjab, demanded inter-communal cooperation, as no single community commanded an absolute majority in the province.\textsuperscript{120} Although Muslims were a majority community in the province, yet under the Congress League Scheme of Reforms, known as Lucknow Pact of 1916, they had sacrificed their majority position in the Punjab Legislature to secure weightage for the Muslim-minority areas. As the sub clause 4 of the clause 1, regarding the provincial legislative councils, speaks, “Adequate provisions should be made for the representation of the important

\begin{table}
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
Year of Census & Urban Population of Punjab in % & Rural Population of Punjab in % \\
\hline
1881 & 11.9 & 88.1 \\
1891 & 10.7 & 89.3 \\
1901 & 10.6 & 89.4 \\
1911 & 9.8 & 90.2 \\
1921 & 10.3 & 89.7 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}

\textsuperscript{119} Raghuvendra Tanwar in \textit{Politics of Sharing Power} (New Delhi: Manohar Publishers, 1999) comments on p.53, about the creation of Unionist Party that “The Unionist Party was in fact born at the top and had little to do in its origin with the ‘Pains of labour’ and the ground realities”.

minorities by elections, and the Muslims should be represented through special electorates on the Provincial Legislative Councils in the following proportions:

Punjab—  one half of the elected Indian members
U.P-----30 per cent
Bengal---40 per cent
Bihar-----25 per cent
C.P--------15 per cent
Madras----15 per cent
Bombay---one-third"

Consequently, he founded the Unionist Party\footnote{Before founding Punjab Nationalist Unionist Party in 1923, Mian Fazl-i-Husain had also founded Muslim League in Feb, 1906, nine months before the All India Muslim League’s inception and also Mohammedan Rural Party in 1921. [Raghuvendra Tanwar ‘Politics of Sharing Power’ p.28} in 1923, which since its inception dominated the provincial scene till 1946. The Unionist Party was different from other political parties functioning in British India, as it was composed of different and in principle, belligerent communities. Throughout its tenure, it functioned more as a loose coalition of the Muslims, the Hindus and the Sikh landowners and cultivators, than as a political party in the modern sense. It mainly mustered support from big landlords and peasants and appealed to the Hindus of Eastern Punjab and Muslims and Sikhs of Southern and Western Punjab alike. Muslim landlords dominated the party but some rural Hindus and Sikhs also played significant and important role in its development particularly Chaudhary Chhotu Ram’s\footnote{Sir Chottu Ram originally contributed to the Arya Samaj creed, he joined Indian National Congress in 1916 but resigned in 1921 because of conflict over the issue of Non-Cooperation Movement. Then he founded Unionist Party with Mian Fazl-i-Husain in 1923.} oratory provided a populist appeal to the party’s platform.\footnote{Waheed Ahmad, ed., Diary and Notes of Mian Fazl-i-Husain (Lahore: Research Society of Pakistan, 1977), p.188} However in 1920’s, parties and movements seeking greater religious identification in politics strongly attacked the dominance of agriculturist
tribes in politics\textsuperscript{124} keeping Unionists under assault from Sikhs, involved in Gurdwara Reform Movement,\textsuperscript{125} Hindu Sabha leaders and the Muslims of the Ahrars.\textsuperscript{126}

In early 1920’s, emerging socio-political changes awakened the Sikh community organized themselves to protect and promote their political rights and formed a political party Akali Dal\textsuperscript{127} \textit{which was} in fact the outcome of the Gurdwara Reform Movement of 1920s. The Akalis were radical Sikhs who had started a movement to wrest control of the Sikh temples or Gurdwaras from Hindu priests.\textsuperscript{128} The Akali Dal, since its inception, emphasized the need to maintain distinct socio-cultural identity of the Sikhs and to protect the interests of the community.

Akali politics witnessed distinct changes since its formation in 1925 till 1947. In the beginning, the major demand of the Akalis was related to communal representation and weightage for the Sikhs in the Punjab and Central Legislatures. The Akalis expressed their dissatisfaction with the Nehru Report\textsuperscript{129}, but after having assurances of fulfilling Sikh demands from prominent Hindu leaders in December 1929,\textsuperscript{130} a close collaboration began between the Akali Dal and the Congress. The first expression of this collaboration came in early 1930’s, when the Akali Dal joined the Congress

\textsuperscript{125} P.N Chopra, Encyclopedia of India (Delhi: Agam Prakashan, 1988), p.156
\textsuperscript{126} Ifthikhar Haider Malik, Sikander Hayat Khan, A Political Biography (Islamabad: National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, 1985), p.55
\textsuperscript{128} Patrick French, Liberty or Death: India’s Journey to Independence and Division (London: Harper Collins Publishers, 1997), p.331
\textsuperscript{130} To appease Sikhs, Indian National Congress held its 44\textsuperscript{th} Annual session in Lahore, from 29 to 31 December 1929. Source: K. K. Aziz, A Chronology of Muslim India 1700-1947 (Lahore: Ferozsons Pvt. Ltd., 1977), p.258.
sponsored 'Civil Disobedience Movement'. Despite their close collaboration, the Akalis continued to maintain their separate identity and in the first session of the Round Table Conference in 1930, demanded thirty per cent representation for the Sikhs in the Punjab Legislature and administration.

An All Parties Sikh Conference held in July 1932, rejected the Communal Award of 1932, following the decision of Congress. The emergence of Muslim separatism and Muslim League's demand for a separate homeland for Muslims further increased the cooperation between the Akali Dal and the Congress.

Since its inception, the provincial Muslim League faced difficulties due to strong differences with its Central leadership and parent organization besides domination of Muslim leaders in Unionist Party, made it difficult for the Muslim League to make headway in the Punjab. The Unionist party at the same time was also not free of problems arising out of the special arithmetic of the province and existence of stratification on communal lines. Some reforms introduced by Mian Fazl-i-Husain, benefiting the Muslims,

---

131 K.L. Tuteja, Sikh Politics in the Punjab, p.149-150
132 Round Table Conference opened in London in Nov.1930. The Conference regarded it certainly possible that India might break up into a Muslim and a Hindu India, and latter in to a number of states.
133 The demand did not seem legitimate. Sikh demand for representation in Punjab Legislature and provincial services was for thirty per cent share, while in the same years, Muslims were concerned over, over representation of Sikhs in regard to their population percentage in the province. In a letter to Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan, dated April, 27, 1933, Sir Fazl-i-Husain noted that Sikhs form just thirteen per cent of population of the province while they represent eighteen per cent in legislature and nineteen per cent in services, whereas Muslims, forming 66 per cent of population, occupied only 51 per cent representation, both in legislature and services.
Source: Dr. Waheed Ahmad, ed., Letters of Mian Fazl-i-Husain (Lahore: Research Society of Pakistan, 1976), p.263
136 Unionist Party not only had a strong control over Punjab, but its leader Mian Fazl-i-Husain with the support of Mian Muhammad Shafi formed All India Muslim Conference to represent the Muslim majority areas' interest. They used this organization as a springboard to challenge All India Muslim League at all India level. This shows the degree that how much the situation in Punjab was unfavorable for Muslim League.
portended a threat to the Hindu interests, who were dominating the services, education, professions and local government institutions. Hindus took these reforms as an assault on their traditional hold. As a result the first reforms council was divided on purely communal lines. The Hindu members of the council started a movement to oust the Muslim Minister of the Province. The pro-Hindu press voiced Hindu grievances strongly as is evident from the following:

“The situation created by the strained relations between Hindus and the Muslims had given a fresh impetus to the pro-Hindu press in its campaign against Husain [Minister of the Punjab]. The Daily ‘Desh’ wrote on 8 June 1923: ‘the policy of Mian Fazl-i-Husain is based on injustice and inequality. The same paper in its issue of July 15 accused Fazl-i-Husain of ‘relegating the Punjab Hindus to an insignificant position’. Another Hindu Daily ‘Milap’, pledged for a Hindu-Sikh-Christian unity against Fazl-i-Husain so that ‘the government should realize that showing favour to Muslims is not the best policy’. The Milap alleged that the local government in the Punjab was in fact a Muslim rule in the province. It warned the Muslims of the Punjab of the consequences of supporting Fazl-i-Husain and threatened the minister with dire consequences. The paper also criticized the Khilafat and the Congress Party for not passing resolutions against Fazl-i-Husain. The Akash Bani blamed both Fazl-i-Husain and Sir Syed for ‘alienating’ Muslims from Hindus. It warned the Muslims that they would not be able to get away with this policy; and that a foreign government was not in a position to take the side of the Muslims for long. The paper charged that the Muslims had a mission to crush Hindus...."
administrative brilliance as it pretended to give a lot, but it gave only to those who already had been chosen to act as administrative intermediaries for the colonial regime and that was the urban and rural elites. Thus, the Act was essentially only a part of a pre-planned political-cum-administrative step. It was, therefore, obvious, and not a coincidence that the first Legislative Council, elected under the provisions of this Act, was almost an assembly of rural and urban elites. The Legislature was pre-dominantly rural because while distributing the seats between urban and rural, government had shown its bias in favour of rural interests. Out of 64 general constituencies, 51 were given to the Punjab’s rural areas. Only 15 out of elected members could have been regarded as town’s men, and even 10 of them were landowners. Muslims had 35 members, and as it is noted above, the members had come from the elites; they joined together to form the ‘Rural Block’, later renamed as the Punjab National Unionist Party. Rural block, the steel frame of the Unionist Party, was the brainchild of the barrister Fazl-i-Husain. The Block was initially together only in a sense that most of them were from rural Punjab and had common vested interests, chiefly the preservation of the existing economic and political power structure in rural Punjab. In a ‘loyal council’, British wanted a group or a party to further their interests. Therefore, the Rural Block and later the Unionist Party enjoyed the support and the goodwill of the British

142 Ibid; p.33
143 Azim Husain, Mian Fazl-i-Husain, A Political Biography (Bombay: Longmans, 1946), p.125
144 Raghuvendra Tanwar, Op. Cit. p.26
145 Raghuvendra Tanwar in Politics of Sharing Power, p.43 cites that “the Council that was constituted was in keeping with what the British rulers had expected, loyal and obedient".
administration. This support was generously provided, partly to establish a loyal, effective and influential buffer between the administration and the masses, and also to keep the peasantry of rural Punjab within satisfied control, because a large section of the British Indian Army was recruited from the Punjab. Besides these objectives, British needed to keep the Punjab, the sword arm of India, away from the deep penetration of political parties functioning at all India level. It was for the policies of the Unionist Party under patronage of the British Government that the Congress and AIML could not become popular in the province, even as late as 1937. The Muslim League’s influence in the Punjab was so limited that it encountered great difficulty even in finding candidates who were willing to oppose the Unionists.

However, the Muslim League and the Congress’ prominent leaders addressed mass rallies during the elections 1937 campaigns, while the Unionist Party adopted a low-key approach. They did not formally contest election from party’s platform. They were not much active in the campaign because they were confident that the officials of the government were working for them. As stated above, Unionists did not contest elections

---

146 British needed communal harmony in the province and The Unionist Party was the flag bearer of the same. Therefore British facilitated Unionists’ victory in elections. In formation of constituencies, in awarding fiefs and even in appointing presiding officers for elections, British facilitated the Unionists to win over the support of masses. Sir Firoz Khan Noon in his book, From Memory (Islamabad: National Book Foundation, 1993), on page 39 has noted that “Patwari, the Station House Officer and the Tehsildar exercised great influence over the farmer’s vote in their areas”.

147 As it has been noted above, Punjab was predominantly rural; therefore, it was considered that if peasantry could be controlled safely, the province would remain under complete control.

148 Shahabuddin in a letter, dated January 23, 1936, to Mian Fazl-i-Husain stated the following, as the objectives of Unionist Party; “To provide equal facilities and opportunities to the backward classes and areas, to infuse the spirit of mutual goodwill, cooperation and tolerance and thus to prevent the creation, and settle amicably, when created, all religious, communal or social differences and disputes”. Source: Dr. Waheed Ahmad, ed., Letters of Mian Fazl-i-Husain (Lahore: Research Society of Pakistan, 1976), pp.484-485

150 Civil and Military Gazette, Oct.14, 1936
formally; it was only after the elections that they joined the Unionist Assembly Party. After the 1937 election, non-party members announced their allegiance to Unionist Assembly Party. At the final count, the Unionist Party managed to have 99 members out of the house of 175, while Muslim League had succeeded on two seats. Realizing the vital position of the Punjab for the cause of Indian Muslims, Jinnah tried to establish foothold of the Muslim League in the province. He tried to gain the backing of the leading Muslim politicians of all the Muslim majority provinces, especially the Punjab. On the other hand, Unionists under the leadership of Sikandar Hayat were keen to stop the increasing influence of Congress in the province. This convergence of interests led to the Sikandar-Jinnah Pact of October 1937. According to the pact, Sikandar Hayat agreed to advise all the Muslim members of the Unionist Party to join the League. They were to form Punjab Muslim League Assembly Party, which had to obey the rules and regulations of the central and provincial parliamentary boards of the League.¹⁵¹ Some Unionist leaders criticized Sikandar Hayat for agreeing to the Pact, as from their point of view, it was aimed at enhancing the League’s prestige in the Province.¹⁵² But Sikandar joined League merely to strengthen his ministry in the face of the threat from the Congress’ ‘Mass Contact Movement’, which was launched in Punjab in April 1937.¹⁵³ As a quid pro quo Jinnah accepted Sikandar as the leader of the Punjab Muslim League.

Sikandar-Jinnah Pact did not abolish the rivalry between Muslim League and the Unionist Muslims. Sikandar Hayat wanted complete powers in his hands, while senior leaders of Punjab Muslim League opposed him.

¹⁵¹ Ian Talbot, Op.Cit.p.89
¹⁵² S. Zaheer, Light on the League-Unionist Conflict (Bombay: n.p., 1944), p.19
Sikandar wanted to have a grip on the finances of League through his men, while Allama Iqbal and other senior leaders termed it as a plan to capture the League and then kill it. Dr. Iqbal was not ready to take the responsibility of handing over the League to Sikandar Hayat and his colleagues; rather his considered opinion was that the Pact had damaged the prestige of the League in the Punjab.\textsuperscript{154}

Unionist Party under leadership of Mian Fazl-i-Husain and Sikandar Hayat had succeeded in winning the support of Sikh landowners who strengthened the Party to achieve the goal of communal harmony but after the passage of Lahore Resolution by Muslim League in 1940, the Khalsas had the second thoughts. The announcement of the Cripps Mission\textsuperscript{155} further increased their uneasiness and with the intention to counter the Muslims, they began to raise the cry of Khalistan. But by that time the Sikhs had come out of the Congress’ fold. Therefore, this situation demanded a Sikh-Unionist rapprochement.\textsuperscript{156} In July 1942 an All India Akali Conference was held at Vahila Kalan in Lyallpur district, in which a resolution demanding readjustment of the boundaries of Punjab was passed in the Conference. Besides this, in June 1943, the Working Committee of Shiromani Akali Dal demanded the establishment of ‘Azad Punjab’.\textsuperscript{157} This new position of Sikhs further developed differences among various communities of the Province.

The leader of Unionists, Sikandar Hayat, despite entering in a pact with Muslim League, wanted communal harmony in the province to support the British in securing recruits for their war efforts, as the Second World

\textsuperscript{154} Letter from Allama Iqbal to Jinnah on November, 10, 1937, quoted in Shameem Hussain Kadri, Creation of Pakistan (Rawalpindi: Army Book Club, 1982), pp.122-123
\textsuperscript{155} Parshotam Mehra, A Dictionary of Modern Indian History 1707-1947 (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1985), pp. 74-76
\textsuperscript{156} S. Qalb-i-Abid, Op. Cit. p.252
\textsuperscript{157} Gurbachen Singh and Lal Singh Gaini, The Ideal of the Sikh State (Lahore: Lahore Book Shop, 1946), p.10
War was being waged at that time. Akali leaders, such as Sampurang Singh, had linked their support, for the British war effort, with the Congress demand for independence. Considering the importance of Sikhs for recruitment, Sikandar Hayat attempted to remedy the situation by publicly stressing that enlistment for war was in vital political interests of the Sikhs. Master Tara Singh, the leader of the Akalis, agreed with Sikandar's view, and quit Congress in September 1940. This decision of Akalis antagonized Congress. Strained relations between Hindus and Sikh communities further deteriorated after Raj Gopal Acharya Proposal, which proved to be a wedge for separating Sikhs from Hindus. The proposal provided a chance for the establishment of a Muslim state in north-west and east of India. However, this rift between Akalis and Congress was a blessing for Sikandar Hayat. It provided Sikhs and Unionists with an opportunity to enter in an alliance. In June 1942, Sikandar Hayat entered in an agreement with Baldev Singh who owed his seat in the Unionist coalition to the backing he received from the Akali Dal. The Sikandar-Baldev Pact was mainly concerned with social and religious issues, however still it included an important political clause as well. The clause was about the increase in Sikh representation in those departments in which it fell below the fixed communal proportion of twenty per cent. Muslim League

---

158 S. Oren, The Sikhs, Congress and the Unionists, p.405
160 Raj Gopal Acharia Formula, also known as 'C.R. Formula' was mooted in July 1944, to break the Congress- League impasse. The Formula had provision about giving Muslims a separate state in their majority areas. As the Formula neglected the Sikh community's future, they were concerned over it.


162 Baldev Singh officially entered the Government as the leader of the United Punjab Party which had some Muslim and Hindu members alongside the Sikh majority.


164 Civil and Military Gazette, June 5, 1942
considered this clause as discriminatory against the Muslims of the province. The Muslim League’s anxiety was also heightened with the Akalis’ cry for ‘Azad Punjab’.\textsuperscript{165} However, it became evident from the proceedings of the Simla Conference of 1945 that the Akalis had no problem with the Congress’ demand for independence as such.\textsuperscript{166} In this environment, major sources of conflict and causes of antagonism between Hindus and the Muslims were:

1) Music playing before mosques
2) Cow slaughtering
3) Proselytization
4) Exclusiveness of Hindu religion and defilement of sacred religious symbols and
5) Anti-Islam literature.\textsuperscript{167}

The above mentioned issues kept Hindu-Muslim tension alive, and gave rise to violence on several occasions. During the Khilafat Movement, the zenith of Hindu-Muslim unity, “Muslims had not only voluntarily reduced cow slaughtering but even accepted in principal to give it up in deference to Hindu sentiments”.\textsuperscript{168}

\textsuperscript{165} Akali’s demand for Azad Punjab was with the readjustment of boundaries of Punjab. They wanted the exclusion of those areas where Sikhs were much behind in number, so that in the proposed Azad Punjab their position should be consolidated. In a memorandum handed over to Sir Stafford Cripps on March 31, 1942, on behalf of Sikh All Parties Committee, Amritsar, Sikhs uttered that “from the boundary of Delhi to the bank of the Ravi River the population is divided as under: Moslems 4,505,000 Sikhs and other non-Muslims 7,646,000” The memorandum continued as “from the Delhi boundary to the bank of the Jhelum River, excluding Multan and Jhang districts the population figures are:- Moslems 8,288,000 Sikhs and other non-Muslims 9,348,000”

\textsuperscript{166} S. Qalb-i-Abid, Op. Cit. p.295

\textsuperscript{167} Ibid; p. 295.

\textsuperscript{168} Ibid; p. 295.
However, this settlement did not last long and the issues revived in 1923 due to antagonism created by the renewed vigor of Arya Samaj. Even the most compromising Hindu leader Ghandi refused to compromise over the issue while asking the Hindus to sacrifice their lives for the ‘gao mata’.169 The second primary cause of antagonism was playing of music near the mosques. Muslims maintained that music playing disturbed the environments of mosques. While for Hindus it was religious act. The music processions were known as ‘nagar kirtan’.170 Conversion of non-Hindus to Hindus, vigorously pursued by the Arya Samaj through Shuddhi and Sangathan Movements,171 was another important cause of antagonism. In this context, census of 1911 and 1921 revealed that Hindus had the lowest rate of growth as compared to other communities in the Punjab.172 During this decade, Sikhs and Muslims had multiplied, whereas Hindus’ population growth rate had declined per thousand from 36.28 in 1911 to 20.66 in 1921.173 This decrease in population proportion alarmed Hindus who launched a campaign to consolidate and increase their numbers through proselytization. To continue these moves, Muslims formed organizations with the name of Tabligh and Tanzim. Hindus considered Muslims as untouchables. Commenting over this issue, prominent Muslim paper ‘Zamindar’ 2, 3 July 1926 wrote: “The real cause of communal riots is the hostile and selfish mentality of Hindus which appeared in the form of ‘Chhut’ urging them to socially boycott other communities”.174 Another

169 Ibid; p.209
170 Ibid; p.295
171 Sharif al-Mujahid in his chapter on Communal Riots, in A History of the Freedom Movement Vol.4, notes that Shuddhi and Sangathan were anti Muslim movements. These movements expressed the Hindu extremists’ desire and determination to make India ‘safe’ for Hinduism
173 Ibid; p.210
174 Ibid; p.210
cause of conflict between Hindus and Muslims was publication of anti-Islam literature. In this regard, Ghazi Illmudin Shaheed episode,\textsuperscript{175} kept alive an atmosphere of fear and suspicion, which was harmful to the cause of peace between these two communities.

Although the Sikhs had reservations against Muslims, convivial relations between Sikhs and Muslims of the Punjab under British were not as strained as between Hindus and Muslims of the province. Clashes of interest were mainly of political and economic in nature, however, these fluctuated from one extreme to another. On the issue of ownership and possession of Shaheed Ganj Mosque, the relationship between both communities experienced one of the highest tense points. Referring to the mosque issue, Chaudhary Chhotu Ram in a letter to sir Fazl-i-Hussain wrote “They [the Sikhs]\textsuperscript{176} are very cunning, troublesome and in with the Hindus; the whole lot of them”.\textsuperscript{177} The strained relations of Sikhs and Muslim communities also had a ‘behind the curtain’ role of Hindus. Chaudhary Chhotu Ram, a prominent Unionist leader commented that

“The position is that Sikhs are mere puppets in the hands of Hindus, and Hindus are most unwilling to see the composition of

\textsuperscript{175} Rajpal, a Hindu bookseller in Lahore had given grave offence to the Muslims by publishing a pamphlet entitled “Rangila Rasool”. He was twice attempted to murder by unidentified men but he escaped. He therefore was provided police protection. There was a serious resentment among Muslims over the affair. On April 6, 1929, Illmudin, a teenager from Lahore succeeded to kill Rajpal. Muslim community appreciated Illmudin’s action. Muhammad Ali Jinnah pleaded his case in the court, but he was sentenced to death on Oct 31, 1929. After the execution of sentence almost all prominent Muslim leaders including Mian Fazl-i-Husain met Governor twice on Nov.4 and 7. To demand the handing over of the body of martyr for public burial. This demand was so strong that Illmudin’s corpse was returned to Muslims for burial in Lahore on Nov.14, 1924.


\textsuperscript{176} Emphasis added 182: Letter by Sir Chottu Ram to Sir Fazl-i-Husain, dated July 20, 1935, referring to the Shaheed Ganj Mosque issue, in Dr. Waheed Ahmad, ed., Letters of Mian Fazl-i-Husain (Lahore: Research Society of Pakistan, 1976), p.411

\textsuperscript{177} Letter by Sir Chottu Ram to Sir Fazl-i-Husain, dated July 20, 1935, referring to Shaheed Ganj Mosque issue, in Dr. Waheed Ahmad, ed., Letters of Mian Fazl-i-Husain (Lahore: Research Society of Pakistan, 1976), p.411
the difference which may keep Sikhs aloof from Muslims. They want the Sikhs to fight for them against the Muslims”.178

The Sikhs were the rulers of the Punjab before its annexation to the British India. Thus they had a wish to come back in power in the province after the British withdrawal. Therefore, to counter the Muslim demand of Pakistan, they demanded 'Azad Punjab', but they could not pursue this demand politically well. Moving towards this crucial period for decision-making about the fate of sub continent, they threw their weight to the side of Hindus and could not maintain and demonstrate their distinct position in Punjab, resultanty the slogan of Azad Punjab find no place among the British decision-making circles.

CHAPTER - 2

GROWTH OF COMMUNITY CONSCIOUSNESS

Khilafat Movement, the zenith of Hindu-Muslim unity, successfully drew two communities closer to each other, but the collapse of the movement again opened up an unending chapter of communal conflicts. Khilafat Movement was basically supportive of the Muslim cause, yet the Hindus, the majority community in India also participated in it and took charge of it, though for their own political gains. In the bargain, they obtained certain concessions from Muslims as well including Muslim volunteers abandoning the cow slaughtering and also got an opportunity to lead the Muslims in their testing time. This was really an achievement for them, both politically as well as psychologically, as they were leading the Muslims their old masters. Yet the tree of communal harmony could not flourish beyond the Khilafat Movement, as the harmony between the two communities was not deep-rooted, it soon evaporated into the oblivion.¹ Khilafat issue had brought two communities closer to each other, yet the demise of the movement and the way it ended, soared the communal consciousness, thus bringing the enmity in the backyard to the forefronts of communal politics.² Muslims termed the Hindu attitudes as a betrayal, while Hindus blamed the Muslims lacking sincerity of purpose. Consequently these vocal encounters had spiraling effect to the growth of communal consciousness and the degree of community consciousness and hostility towards other communities became intense with the passage of time.³

¹ Y.B. Mathur, Growth of Muslim Politics in India (Lahore:Book Traders, 1980)p. 165. Throughout 1924, the year after collapse of Khilafat movement the country was convulsed by a series of communal riots.
² Ibid., p.165
³ Hassan Masood, Communal relations in British Punjab, ph.D dissertation, unpublished chapter no. 5, QAU Islamabad.n.d
Hinduism and Islam are not just two religions but they are also two completely divergent social systems and both are antithesis to each other. Al-Biruni, a Muslim tourist, in his book Kitab-ul-Hind, observed that the Hindus were different from the Muslims in all matters and usage. Inspite of living together for over a thousand years, they were unable to bridge the gulf among them; rather the differences kept on increasing. Armed conflicts between Hindus and Muslims, starting from the war between Bin Qasim and Raja Dahir in 712, down to the 20th century, run in thousands. The rivalry between two religions was not confined to the struggle for political supremacy alone, but was also manifested in day-to-day clash of two social orders.

Relationship between different communities of the Punjab entered a new phase after the annexation of province with the British India. British' desire to develop a nation out of various communities of India could not succeed, rather the communal differences were heightened in the wake of economic disparity and political inequality generated and promoted during the British era. British introduced the system of representative government, which was based on the principle of majority. The system further reinforced consciousness of separateness amongst three major communities, the Hindus, the Muslims and the Sikhs. Down from the local, up to the central government, every community aspired to exert their representative significance to their advantage. It did not require much evidence to support

---

6 Saeeduddin Ahmad Dar, Ideology of Pakistan (Islamabad: National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, 1998), p.4
7 The divide between the two communities was “tangible and real. It was a product of the inevitability of circumstances to go unnoticed; and it had its roots less in religious differences and more in the differing circumstances of class, profession, calling, and means of livelihood, status and perceptions.” Aitzaz Ahsan, The Indus Saga and the making of Pakissan (Karachi, OUP,1996), p.262
the theory that representative institutions enhanced and strengthened communal consciousness⁸, which was already visible and prevalent in the long history of relationship among different communities. Muslim invasions of India started with the advent of Mohammad Bin Qasim in the early eighth century and continued till the eighteenth century, when Ahmed Shah Abdali made his last assault. As the Hindus were dominant inhabitants of India, they resisted the invasions which took the shape of conflicts between the Hindus and the Muslims. The wars, in the history of Muslim rule in India, can be divided into two kinds, first, the wars by the Muslim invaders for establishing and extending their rule — the Hindus having their rule in certain parts of India were the target; and the second, wars of Muslim emperors against the newly establishing Muslim rulers who were in a position to challenge the sitting emperors, as well as against the rebel governors who had pronounced their independence from the central authority. The first category can be termed as the Muslim versus Hindu, while the second category as the Muslim versus Muslim, in which Hindus were participating from both sides. In fact, all the Muslim invaders after the Ghoris invaded a Muslim Kingdom in India and fought and defeated a Muslim ruler to establish their rule. Taimur and Nadir Shah's invasions were not, at all against the Hindus. While Babar, the founder of the Mughal Empire in India had to fight and defeat a Muslim king Ibrahim Lodhi,¹⁰ for establishing his empire. Humayun, son of Babar lost his empire to Sher Shah,¹¹ a Muslim, after the death of whom, he could regain it.¹² Akbar had to

---

⁹ Muhammad Munawwar, Dimensions of Pakistan Movement (Lahore: Institute of Islamic Culture, 1987), p.256
¹¹ Ibid, pp21-22
¹² Ibid, p27
fight several Muslim rulers to expand and strengthen his empire. History also reveals that much of the resources of the Mughal emperors were consumed in fighting and suppressing the revolting governors, mostly the Muslims.

Many scholars interpret the wars between Aurangzeb and Shivaji as non-religious as these wars were not fought between exclusively Muslim or Hindu armies and both communities were part of war from both sides. Aurangzeb employed Hindu generals to fight against Shivaji, while Shivaji on the other side, also had employed a number of Muslim military officers.

“Some of them held important positions like the generals Siddi Hullal and Nur Khan. In Sivaji’s navy, there were at least three Muslim admirals Siddi Sambal, Siddi Misri and Daulat Khan”.

The history of India from Qutbuddin Aibak’s Sultanate in 1206 down to the arrival of British shows that it was not a period of continuous conflicts and wars between the Hindus on one side, and the Muslims on the other. The record of history displays that during this period, Muslims fought against Muslims more than they fought against Hindus. Thus, it is misconception that during the earlier centuries preceding the British arrival, Muslims were engaged in wars against Hindus as a rival community. This view was presented and highlighted by the Hindu press and opportunistic hawks in the Hindu leadership that Muslims, the invaders, were oppressing Hindus in all the hours of history since their first invasion of the sub-continent by Muhammad bin Qasim. On the contrary, that even after the advent of British, Hindus along with Muslims collectively rallied around Bahadur Shah Zafar and revolted against foreign invaders for the restoration of his

---

14 Aitzaz Ahsan, op.,cit, p.87
kinship, knowing fully well that the struggle was aimed at the re-establishment of the Muslim emperor.

Till that time there were no signs of mutual distrust between the two major communities, rather there were echoes of a common nationhood. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan regarded the Hindus and the Muslims as two eyes of a maiden where if one eye was injured, the beauty of maiden would suffer. In 1885, speaking to a gathering at Gurdaspur, Sir Syed said:

From the oldest times, the word nation is applied to the inhabitants of one country, though they differ in some peculiarities, which are characteristics of their own. Hindu and Mohammedan brethren, do you people have any country other than Hindustan? Do you not inhabit the same land? Are you not burnt and buried in the same soil? Do you not tread the same ground, and live upon the same soil? Remember that the word “Hindu” and “Mohammedan” are only meant for religious distinction, otherwise all persons, whether Hindu, Mohammedan, or Christian, who reside in this country belong to one and the same nation. They must each and all unite for the good of the country, which is common to all.\(^{15}\)

On another occasion, he spoke on the same topic in Lahore, and said:

When I include both Hindus and Mohammedans because that is the only meaning, which I can attach to it. With me it is not so much worth considering what is their religious faith, because we do not see any thing of it. What do we see is that we inhabit the same land, are subject to the rule of the same government, the fountains of benefits for all are the same and the pangs of famine also we suffer equally. These are the different grounds upon which I call both these races, which inhibit India by one word, i.e. Hindu, mean to say that they are the inhabitants of Hindustan.\(^{16}\)

Sir Shafaat Ahmad Khan, while concluding his foreword to Atulananda Chakrawarti’s Hindus and Musalmans of India,\(^{17}\) opines that:

\(^{15}\) *Ibid*, p.79


In almost every sphere of our national activity, there was greater solidarity and rapport between the two communities [Hindus and Muslims]¹⁸ than is generally supposed. The history of Indian culture shows continuous reciprocity of feelings and solidarity and sentiment between the masses no less than the classes of the two communities.... This understanding, which purified the tastes and instincts of the aristocracy and the populace, has penetrated and refined the whole nation. Whatever our political differences may be...the fact remains that in the temper of their intellect, their traditions of life, their habits, and the circle of their thought, there is a powerful tradition of unity, which has been forged in the fires and chills of nearly a thousand years of a chequered period, and is indestructible and immortal.¹⁹

No doubt that the Muslims and the Hindus were living together in India for over a thousand years. In the earlier centuries, the goal of both was to subjugate the other, but once the Muslims dominated the Hindus completely and succeeded in establishing their firm control, both the communities started living relatively peacefully, particularly under Mughal reign.²⁰ Of course, one may question Sir Shafaat’s remarks regarding both communities that;

"In their traditions of life, their habits, and the circle of their thought, there is a powerful tradition of unity", but if one goes through the remarks of Mughal Emperors like Baber and Prince Dara Shekoh, one finds that Sir Shafaat was not making a fictitious account of history, however, a little exaggeration may be there. Indicating the interwoven traditions and practices in social life of both communities, Emperor Baber described them as “Hindustani ways”, in which both Hindu and Muslim traits were found freely mixed up.²¹ Prince Dara Shekoh compared

¹⁸ Emphasis added.
²⁰ Rajendra Prasad, op.cit, p.86
²¹ Ibid, p.80
the two communities to two confluent rivers,\textsuperscript{22} and termed them as "Majma-ul-Bahrain".\textsuperscript{23}

The Muslims and the Hindus along with other communities lived in India, particularly in the Punjab, since long. But did their staying together; developing and adopting "Hindustani ways" really transformed them into one nation? A number of scholars are of the view that although India was one unit geographically, yet its people cannot be called one nation. And in the making of states and nations, it is the people that are more important and not the geography. "The living spirit of man cannot be enslaved", in the words of Renan, "by the course of rivers or the direction of mountain ranges".\textsuperscript{24}

This view is of course in contrast to the dictates of geography of India, which tell us that from the Suleman Ranges in the west to the hills of Assam in the east, and from the mighty Himalayas in the north to the ocean in the south, India is one geographical unity.\textsuperscript{25} But Renan built on that "the land provides a substratum, the field of battle and work; man provides a soul; man is everything in the formation of that sacred thing which is called people [a nation].\textsuperscript{26} Nothing of material nature suffices for it\textsuperscript{27}". F. K. Khan Durrani, in his book, The Meaning of Pakistan, has quoted Prof. Sidwick, who opines that:

What is really essential to the modern conception of a...nation is merely that the persons comprising it should have, generally speaking, a consciousness of belonging to one another, of being member of one body over and above

\textsuperscript{22} Ibid, p.80
\textsuperscript{23} Majma is a Persian word, which means 'a place of assembly'. Bahrain is also a Persian word, which means 'the two seas'.
\textsuperscript{25} Rajendra Prasad, Op. Cit., p.8
\textsuperscript{27} Emphasis added
\textsuperscript{27} Rajendra Prasad, Op. Cit., p.8
what they derive from the fact of being under one government, so that if their government were destroyed by war or revolution, they would still tend to hold firmly together. When they have this consciousness, we regard them as forming a “nation”, whatever else they lack.\textsuperscript{28}

According to Lord Bryce nationality is

“an aggregate of men drawn together and linked together by certain sentiments...the chief among these are racial...and religious sentiments...”\textsuperscript{29}

He indicates as well that sense of community is also created by the use of common language, the possession of a common literature, the recollection of common achievements or sufferings in the past, the existence of common customs and habit of thought, common ideals and aspirations.\textsuperscript{30} In some cases all of the above mentioned factors are present to form a nation, while it is possible that in some cases, a few of them may be absent. But the principle here is that the more of these links, the stronger would be the sentiment of unity. Lord Bryce comes to the conclusion that “in each case, the test is not merely that how many links there are, but how strong each particular link is”.\textsuperscript{31}

One might conclude that although nationality depends upon geography, history and race etc., yet it is the consciousness upon which it finally depends. Dr. Ambedkar writes:

“It is a feeling of consciousness of a kind which binds together those who have it so strongly that it overrides all differences arising out of

\textsuperscript{28} Ibid, p.8.
\textsuperscript{30} In case of Hindu-Muslim, sense of one community was non-existent, if one views it in the light of Bryce’s factors. Both did not have common language or literatures, achievements of one were on the cost of other, and there existed no common customs. On the contrary, ideals and aspirations of one were clashing with those of the others. The same was with the Sikh-Muslim case, though not with that degree of intensity, which was there in case of Hindu-Muslim relations.
\textsuperscript{31} F.K.Khan Durrani, Op. Cit., p.6
\textsuperscript{31} Rajendra Prasad, Op. Cit., pp.8-9
economic conflict or social gradations and on the other hand serves them from those who are not of that kind”.  

In the light of historical facts, many historians like F. K. Durrani, concluded, that there is no nation of different communities in India, but also he rules out any chance of being so in future. He concluded;

there is absolutely no group consciousness or consciousness of kind between the Hindus and the Muslims [of being a part of one whole]. They cannot sit together at the same dining table; they cannot intermarry. The food of one is abomination to the other. The Hindu gets even polluted by the Muslman’s touch. There are no social contracts between them to make possible the birth of a common group consciousness. It is indeed, psychologically impossible for the two groups to combine to form a single united whole.

Although the religious concepts, beliefs and practices of both the Hindus and the Muslims were and are irreconcilable, yet under the Mughal emperors, they had lived peacefully, side by side, but devoid of any common national sentiments. They, in spite of long association and sympathetic interaction, remained separate entities. They flowed like two streams, side by side but did not intermix. They were lacking one national sentiment or one consciousness, thus, they reacted differently in different situations in their common history. As they could not forge one nation, time took them far away from each other, where both developed their own national sentiments, which then made them more cohesive in their internal feelings and prompted them to serve the same with other communities.

No definite point can be marked from where these sentiments of Hindu, Sikh and Muslim nationalism started to grow. As the Punjab was a part of the whole of the British India, the factors or events outside the

33 F. K. Khan Durrani was a great visionary. He has carried out analysis of communal relations, in his work “The Meaning of Pakistan” and “Future of Islam in India”, and has overruled any chances of emergence of one united community out of different religious communities.
34 Emphasis added.
Punjab, but in the British India, were having their impact in the province.\textsuperscript{36} All the wrongs and the goods done by one community or the other, or by the government, in the vast lands of British India, had direct bearings on the Punjab. It can be said that the piano keys played in Calcutta, were producing echoes in Lahore, and the strings vibrating in Bombay were producing the sounds of music in Jhang or in Rawalpindi as well.

The factors or events which contributed in developing separate Muslim national sentiments involve: the economic rivalry between the Hindus and the Muslims; the ruin of Muslim Industry of Bengal; the permanent settlement of Bengal which pulled the Muslims down from the position of command in the economic field; stoppage of grants to Muslim education system which left Muslims behind the Hindus in education, thus leading to a Hindu monopoly in the services.\textsuperscript{37} These damages inflicted by British were not the only aspect, which prompted the Muslims to grow distinctiveness, but were also augmented by the intense and more harming actions by the Hindus, causing distrust and political rivalry between the two communities. There were strong feelings of Muslim community that following the freedom struggle of 1857, the Hindus betrayed the Muslims and became informers to the British, thus inviting the wrath of British authorities to fall upon the Muslims. It not only resulted in the massacre of the Muslims by the Hindus but they also took over their properties and handed over the orphaned Muslim children to the Christian missionaries. Hindus, besides started agitation against Urdu demanding its replacement by

\textsuperscript{36} Different communities living in Punjab had strong bonds to their communal kins in other parts of India. Hindus a minority in the province, had strong links with Hindus in other provinces of British India, and Muslims' links with other Muslims were even not respecting the boundaries of British India. That is why the Muslims of Punjab were active in Khilafat Movement. In this situation every development, important for one community, irrespective of the boundaries of the province, was to make its impact on the related community living in Punjab.

\textsuperscript{37} Rajendra Prasad, Op. Cit., pp-16-17
'Brijbhasha', "Even Mr. Gandhi... [said]" unashamedly that 'all those words must be expunged from Hindustan, which remind the Hindus, of the Muslims having once ruled over the country — and naturally also of their presence in it'. The interests of Hindus in their historical past, their pride in pre-Muslim period, and their wars against Muslim invaders, the absence of this had prevented the hatred of the Hindus against the Muslims and finally the movement against cow killing was directed against the Muslims.

All these happenings in and around the Punjab had direct bearings on the Punjabi communities. Like inhabitants of other parts of India, Punjabis also started abandoning peaceful coexistence which flourished for centuries under the Mughal rulers. The mistrust of 1857, between the Hindus and the Muslims was then never reversed, with a little exception of Khilafat Movement period which proved to be short lived, although during the Movement both communities came closer to each other. But after the failure of the movement both communities started drifting from the path of reconciliation and rapprochement and peaceful coexistence of the past became a part of the history and in the coming years the venom of community consciousness drove the two major communities of the province to the point of no return.

The mid 20s saw the worsening of the communal relations as both the Hindus and the Muslims were unwilling to give each other any space in the political, cultural or economic fields, be it the issue of cow slaughtering or the securing of jobs for their communities. Proselytizing was another

---

38 Ibid., p.17  
40 British had deliberately played their role in bringing forth the differences of one community with the other. Their motive was to weaken the unity and resistance against their government.  
41 Rajendra Prasad, Op. Cit., p.17
major factor in widening the gulf among the communities. The conversion efforts were swiftly replacing the attempts to forge unity among them. In particular the Hindu movements like Shuddhi and Sangathan, which attempted to convert the Muslims into Hinduism were instrumental in sharpening communal identities and consciousness. The failure of Khilafat Movement not only undermined the spirit of unity during Khilafat days but also aroused communal passions sometimes leading to violent turn of events.

The activities of newly formed Shuddhi Movement, working under the guidance of Swami Shardhanand, in the neighboring province U.P, heightened communal tensions in the Punjab. The aim of this movement was to bring the converts to other religions back to original fold of Hinduism. Out of the Shuddhi political philosophy developed the Sanghathan Movement which claimed to be an organization working for India’s freedom but in reality it had the objective of “strengthening of internal organization of the Hindu community”. These developments were not happening in isolation but had linkage with the reorganization of Hindu Sabha, which took keen interest in the Sanghathan work. In order to counter the moves of Shuddhi and Sangthen, the Muslims formed an organization known as Tanzim (organization).

Towards the end of 1922, serious riots were witnessed in Multan in which Hindu places of worship were desecrated and they suffered heavy financial loses. This ignited chain of communal riots that continued for several years to come, and which did not remain confined to the Punjab only. The Shuddhi campaign was launched shortly after the Multan riots. In

---

43 Supplement to the Punjab Police Secret Abstract of Intelligence, September 10, 1927, vol. xlix, no.35, p.381
the Punjab, Shuddhi campaign was controlled by: (a) The Arya Pritinidhi Sabha, Hoshiarpur; (b) The Dayanand Dalit Udhar Sabha, Lahore and (c) The Dayanand Dalit Udhar Sabha, Hoshiarpur. The Pritinidhi Sabhas were the governing bodies of two sections of the Arya Samaj. In addition, the Arya Samaj also controlled two Udhar Sabahs. The Muslims formed the Central Jamiat-i-Tabligh-ul-Islam in 1923 at Ambala, which had no match to the organizational capabilities of Shuddhi. The organization had an agenda which apart from opposition to Shuddhi, included propagation of Tabligh (preach), discouraging of debt payments to Hindu money lenders and encouraging wealthy Muslims to give loans to promote trade among the Muslims and the protection of the Muslim interests.45

With the soaring of communal trends, All India National Congress confronted decline in political support in the mid 1920s, in the Punjab. Congress’ policy of winning support of both the Hindus and the Muslims was increasingly coming under attack from the new more assertive Hindu communalists. Parma Nomd, one of the principal preachers of the Shuddhi Movement while commenting on Congress stated that:

The Congress had just now no programme to save demoralized Hindus by making appeals in the name of swaraj. It is nothing but sheer talk of the Hindu movement as being communal.... One who advises the Hindus to surrender is neither a friend of the Hindus nor of the country. The policy of self-surrender to win an alliance with Mohammedans would be suicidal and a sign of weakness on the part of the Hindus and they will be required not with love but with contempt. It is our misfortune that the so-called Swaraj Party is in possession of the Congress and that this party is dominated by persons who though, Hindus by name are, if not inimical to, quite indifferent to Hindu interests.46

46 The Tribune, Oct.31, 1925, Note on Punjab Press
Punjab Administration Report for the year 1923-24 noticed these radical trends in the Hindu politics. The Hindu press also played a significant role in soaring these trends by giving their echoes in such a way that aroused the feelings of community consciousness. The Hindu press gave new spin to these trends. The Hindu paper ‘Milap’ reproduced the definition of Shuddhi in the Report, which read it as a movement to convert the Muslims to Hinduism. ‘Milap’ strongly criticized the definition of Shuddhi, contained in the Punjab Administration Report. The paper also blasted the definition of Sangathan as committee formed with the object of “Shuddhising” the Muslims.\textsuperscript{47} ‘The Tribune’ termed this report as a depiction of “Fazil-i-Husain mentality”,\textsuperscript{48} and published the statement of the Punjab Provincial Hindu Sabha’s Secretary General, who, while rejecting the definition of Shuddhi and Sangathan, as defined in the Report,\textsuperscript{49} said:

The Shuddhi Movement is conceived more in the spirit of reclaiming those who have abandoned the fold of Hinduism than of making inroads upon other faiths.... Sangathan is not a committee; it is an idea, a spirit, a movement, which is propagated by a big ‘committee’, the Hindu Mahasbha with all its ramifications in India. It is a Sanskrit word meaning binding together or consolidation...it is essentially a creed of self defense, and to say that it is formed for the object of converting Mohammedans as is, and to take action against them, as if the antagonism with the Mohammedans were its primary aim and object, is a travesty and a monstrous misinterpretation.\textsuperscript{50}

This explanation by the Hindu Sabha, about the Shuddhi and Sangathan, could not remove the Muslim’s doubts about the organization

\textsuperscript{47} Milap, June 27, 1925, NPP.
\textsuperscript{48} The Tribune, June 28, 1925, NPP
\textsuperscript{49} Punjab Administration Report
\textsuperscript{50} The Tribune, July 2, 1925, NPP
and they viewed the said ‘spirit of reclaiming’ with suspicion. Zafar Ali Khan in his paper noted that “The new standard bearer of a “united nationality” want to absorb the Muslims “by converting them to Hinduism”. This impression was then reinforced with the implication of highly inflammatory articles calling for purifying the Muslims and establishment of “Hindu Sawaraj”.

At this juncture of history many Hindu groups were openly calling for a hostile policy towards the Muslims. Hindu paper ‘Sudarshan Chakkar’ envisioned a time when Aryas, Santanists, Sikhs, Jains and Buddhists “will put aside their mutual differences to make common cause” to counter the Muslims. The principle of chhut was given value, by the same paper, as the defender or the shield, which had prevented the Hindus from going to oblivion by the regular onslaught of the Muslims. This however, an interesting explanation of Hindu social custom, was not without impact, and its impact was radically transforming the nature of communal relations in the Punjab. From 1922 onwards no year passed without a serious communal riot in the Punjab. As noted above, in the year 1922 Multan witnessed violence during the Muharram. Although the casualty list was comparatively small, a great deal of damage was done to property. Violence was followed by a new trend — social boycott of both communities of each other. It was ironic that the leaders of these communal riots were those who were at the forefront of the Khilafat Movement, in the recent past. In 1923, a sharp increase emerged in the instances of communal boycotts between the two communities, for instance, Muslims in

51 Zamindar, May 16, 1925, NPP
52 Milap, May 15, 1925, NPP.
53 Sudharshan Chakkar, Oct 28, 1925, NPP.
Amritsar opened up their own shops to boycott the Hindu traders while in Jhelum, the Muslim butchers were boycotted by the Hindus. The boycott movement launched at Amritsar also spread to Lahore by June, the same year.\(^ {57} \)

During the first two months of 1924, the Akali activism overshadowed the tension prevalent in the Hindu-Muslim relations, but it resurfaced in March with a riot at Chiniot during Hindus’ Holī festival. The issue, igniting the riots was playing of music drums in front of a mosque\(^ {58} \). The situation deteriorated to the extent that by 1925, many religious processions during the Hindu festivals, like Dusṣera, had to be cancelled. The Hindu press did not miss the opportunity to spread the communal venom, by indicating and propagating that such restrictions were not even placed during Islamic rule.\(^ {59} \)

In 1925, communal tension was heightened by the celebrations of the death anniversaries of anti-Muslim personalities, like Shivaji and Banda Bairagi, by Hindu Sabha. The possible explanation for celebrating these days could be the promotion of ill will towards Muslims, as well as arouse the sentiments of the community against the Muslims. The communal identities had become so much important that when Lajpat Rai and Saif-ud-Din Kitchlu were asked to abandon the membership of their respective communal organizations during the session of provincial political conferences, both preferred to quit the provincial Congress.\(^ {60} \)

The year 1926, apart from the minor Hindu-Muslim skirmishes, witnessed a major Muslim-Sikh riot in Rawalpindi. The Hindu-Muslim

---

\(^ {56} \) Ibid., p.383
\(^ {57} \) Ibid., p.384
\(^ {58} \) Milap, September 29, 1925, NPP.
\(^ {59} \) Ibid.,
relations became more tense in 1926 with the murder of Swami Sharanand, the founder of Shuddhi Movement, by a Muslim at Delhi\textsuperscript{61}. The murder radicalized the Hindus even further, and thus more funds were generated for the Shuddhi campaign\textsuperscript{62}.

The Muslim sentiments were strongly hurt with the publication and circulation of anti-Islam literature by the Hindu extremists. The situation was deteriorated with the acquittal of Rajpal, a Hindu publisher of 'Rangila Rasul' pamphlet on May 4, 1927. Being intensely aggrieved the Muslim press criticized Hindu judges of the high court, as a result, the editor and the proprietor of a Muslim newspaper, \textit{Muslim Outlook}, were sentenced\textsuperscript{63} for the contempt of court\textsuperscript{64}.

The decade of 1920’s witnessed the worsening of communal relations to the extent that the Hindus and the Muslims were not willing to accommodate each other even in the cultural, economic and political spheres. An indicator of the intensity of the spirit of rivalry between two communities, could be the speech of Allama Iqbal, which he made in Punjab Legislative Council in 1927. While pointing towards the introduction of fictitious roll numbers by the Punjab University, he informed the House:

> With all that [fictitious roll number system]\textsuperscript{65} both Hindus and Muslim candidates leave certain marks in their examination papers to indicate to the examiner the candidate’s caste or creed. Only the other day, I was reading the L.L.B. examination papers. I found the number ‘786’ which is the numerical value of an Arabic formula\textsuperscript{66} and on the other I found ‘om’ marks

\textsuperscript{61} K. K. Aziz, Op.Cit, p.238  
\textsuperscript{62} Punjab Police Secret Abstract of Intelligence, Sep.10, 1927, vol. xlix, no.35, pp.386-7  
\textsuperscript{63} On June 14, 1927, Muslim Outlook carried an editorial on the Punjab High Court Judgment, regarding the blasphemy case. [Source: K. K. Aziz, p.241]  
\textsuperscript{64} Punjab Police Secret Abstract of Intelligence, Sep.10, 1927, Vol. xlix, no.35, p.388  
\textsuperscript{65} Emphasis added  
\textsuperscript{66} The Arabic formula, indicated here is translated in English as “In the Name of Allah, the Merciful, the Gracious”, and the sum of the value of its Arabic alphabets is 786.
meant to invoke the blessing of God as well as to reveal to the examiner the community of the candidate.  

In this context following main reasons could be attributed towards the growth of communal consciousness i.e. historical enmity, role of press, race for political supremacy, economic factor, literacy, psychological hatred, Hindu attitude, issue of cow slaughtering, mistrust, language and literature, British education, Hindu radical movements, anti-Islam literature, failure of moderates, representative institutions, Gurdwara Reforms Movement, Christian missionaries, and last but not the least the British policy.

India originally the land of Hindus faced many invasions, yet Hinduism succeeded in absorbing the invaders into its own fold. On the contrary, the Muslims not only maintained their identity but also succeeded in establishing their rule over the land for centuries. In response, Hindus did their best to overthrow Muslim rule. Qutab-ud-Din, who inaugurated Muslim rule in Northern India in 1206, reported to Sultan Alau-ud-Din Khilji that “if the Hindus do not find a mighty sovereign at their head, nor behold crowds of horse and foot with drawn swords and arrows threatening their lives and property, they fail in their allegiance, refuse payment of revenue and excite a hundred tumults and revolts.” Sultan Khilji was himself convinced that “the Hindus will never be submissive and obedient to the Musalmans.” For these reasons Muslim rulers were suspicious of the Hindus that they might revolt against them and can overthrow their rule. On the other hand Hindus also

---


68 Hindus were unable to make the Muslims meet the same fate, as those of the invaders before Muslims. But they never gave up their efforts and even during the religiously liberal rule of Mughals, they made efforts to subjugate the Muslim empire, through Shiviji and also through Marhata power.

69 Dr. Baddha Prakash, People’s Struggle Against Political Tyranny, in Punjab Revisited, Op. Cit., p.203
did their best to overthrow Muslim rule. Regarding the Hindu struggle against the Muslims, Dr. Baddha Prakash in his paper People's Struggle Against Political Tyranny, has noted:

"There was a perpetual struggle between the ruling aristocracy [Muslims] ... and the common people, mostly Hindus.... It is wrong to suppose that the people meekly submitted to the tyranny of the rulers in the political, economic and religious spheres. Again and again, they rose and struggled to overthrow it".71

During the Mughal period, however, when the Muslim rulers established their strong foothold, they treated their subjects including Hindus equally, as a result the differences between the two communities remained at low ebb but it could not be completely wiped out from the minds of both communities. Consequently, during the second decade of twentieth century, when other factors were also at work, this enmity resurfaced to play its part in widening the gulf between the two communities.

Media also played a significant role in spreading communalism, as the press was itself divided on communal lines — pro-Hindu, pro-Muslim and pro-Sikh72. All communities had their own newspapers, which used to give spin to the events according to their own communal interpretations. For instance, the reporting of the clashes of August 1946 in Calcutta were deliberately played up by biased anti-Muslim Calcutta press and an effort was made to spread false stories to enhance the Hindu desire to take revenge in Hindu majority areas73. They succeeded in their mission and in Bihar, Hindu leaders led huge processions shouting

---

70 Ibid, p.203
71 Ibid, p.228
72 Even the names of many papers were describing their communal affinities, like Brahman Samachar, Sanatan Dharam Parcharak, Akali, Khalsa Samachar and Muslim Outlook.
provocative slogans like ‘khun ka badla khun’74, jinnah ko goli maro75, ‘Pakistan ko qabristan bana do’76, etc77.

Although Muslims were in majority in Punjab, yet they were lagging behind the Hindus in terms of education, business, trade and government jobs. Moreover, majority of Hindu population was concentrated in urban areas while Muslim community had strong pockets in rural areas. As Hindus were dominating in urban areas with all the resources at their disposal, they wanted to have political supremacy as well. But it was not achievable for them due to overall Muslim majority in the province, thus causing a tug of war between the communities.

Being the subjects of the British government in the province, all communities were in competition with each other to gain economic prosperity. An important arena for the competition among three major communities of the province was acquisition of government jobs. Muslims in spite of being in majority got a very little share and well represented only in the police force of the Punjab78. Hindus being far ahead in education advocated that government services, even those of clerks and patwaris, should only be awarded on competition basis79. Muslims realized the inherent danger of competition at that stage, and demanded that jobs should be awarded on the basis of numerical strength

---

73 Tuker, While Memory Serves, p.176
74 It means, “Blood in revenge of Blood”.
75 It means, “shoot down Jinnah”.
76 It means “Turn Pakistan into a graveyard”.
79 S. Qalb-i-Abid, Op.Cit, p.10
in the province\textsuperscript{80}. Having this stance Muslims were termed as ‘greedy job seekers’ by the Hindus\textsuperscript{81}.

Beside allocation of job quota, another area of clash of interest was agricultural versus non-agricultural classes. Antipathy between the Muslims and the Hindus was clearly visible as the majority of agricultural class was Muslims, while the Hindus formed the bulk of non-agricultural class of the province. However, this clash of interests was more economic than religious\textsuperscript{82}. Its expression was visible when Punjab government proposed Punjab Land Alienation Act\textsuperscript{83}, as the Bill was strongly opposed by Hindu moneylenders\textsuperscript{84} who considered it as an assault on their economic interests.

In the beginning of the twentieth century the proportion of ‘educated’ Muslims in Punjab was one in sixty nine as a result visible unbalanced growth placed the majority community on a defensive, whereas minority community was in driving position.

Inspite of the formation of Mohammedan Educational Conference\textsuperscript{85} by Syed Ahmed Khan in 1886 in which the Muslims from Punjab were leading participants and later role played by Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam to impart education to the Muslim community, the situation could not remarkably improved.

During the period from 1903 to 1913, Punjab University awarded two thousand and sixty seven degrees, out of which Muslims representation

\textsuperscript{80} Ibid, p.10
\textsuperscript{81} Ibid, p.10
\textsuperscript{82} Jagtar Singh, Op. Cit., p.464
\textsuperscript{83} Land Alienation Act intended to check the transfer of land from agriculturalists to the non-agriculturalists.
\textsuperscript{84} S. Qalb-i-Abid, Op. Cit, p.9
\textsuperscript{85} Originially the name of the organization was Mohammadan Educational Congress, but then it was renamed as Mohammadan Educational Conference. S. Qalb-i-Abid, Op. Cit., p.12
was only four hundred and thirty two. This figure shows that the Muslim proportion of receiving higher education was about twenty per cent. But after the Muslim efforts to educate themselves, literacy itself became an area of competition among the communities of the Punjab. When Muslim minister of the province, Sir Fazl-i-Husain, on viewing the small intake of Muslims in colleges, reserved seats for the Muslims in two big colleges of the province, which was highly criticized by the Hindus.

The Hindus formed only thirty one per cent of the total population of the province, but they dominated in the services because of their better literacy rate. But when Muslims made an attempt to join the race, Hindus thought it as a threat to their community’s dominance and described the fixation of quota system introduced by Fazl-i-Husain as a “Policy...to crush Hindus and...striking at the roots of Hindus and repealing their rights and interests in the province.”

The drive for literacy also augmented the publication of books on Hinduism, Islam and Sikhism by their followers. Besides, Allama Iqbal’s poetry which infused a new sense of determination and pride in Muslims, several Hindu and Sikh writers came forward to protect their religious point of view. A notable among them was a pamphlet; “Hum Hindu Naheen Hain” by Giani Gian Singh. It also gave rise to enhanced role

---

86 S. Qalb-i-Abid, Op. Cit., p.73
87 Ibid, p.73
88 The point here to note is that: “the recruitment of the public services on communal lines was not Fazl-i-Hussain’s innovation: it began long before the Montague Chelmsford Reforms.”
89 S. Qalb-i-Abid, Op. Cit., p.72
91 It means, “we are not Hindus”.
of press; therefore, over a dozen newspapers were in circulation by the turn of the twentieth century in the province.

Hindus considered Muslims not worthy for friendship, as they believe that Muslims, who had plundered their lands, snatched their government and proselytized their fellow religionists to their own faith. Similarly, Muslims also remained conscious of Hindu cynicism throughout history. This action-reaction phenomenon, and subsequently, the reshuffling of position in society, had created deep psychological hatred among the members of both communities. With the British success in establishing their rule in India, Muslims ceased to be the governing class. On the one hand, it was quiet perturbing psychologically for them that they “found their prestige gone, their laws replaced, their language shelved and their education shorn of its monetary value”, while on the other hand, the Hindus — their long time subjects, were reaping the benefits of the new situation and had got an edge over Muslims in every sphere of life.

With the advent of British and the fall of Muslim power in India, there was a sea change in Hindu attitude towards Muslims. Particularly with the collapse of Khilafat Movement, the policy enunciated in 1907 and 1915 of looking after the Hindu interests without harming the interest of other communities was abandoned. They evolved a new ideology that “India was the holy land of the Hindus, and that the Hindus were a nation in their

---

91 Ibid, p.14
95 In 1907, Punjab Hindu Sabha was founded and “the statement of its aims and objects ran: The Sabha is not a sectarian nor a denominational but an all embracing movement, and while meaning no offence to any other movement, whether Hindu or non-Hindu, it aims to be ardent and watchful in safeguarding the interest of the entire Hindu community in all aspects”, [Source: F. K. Khan Durrani, Op. Cit., p.62]
96 In 1915, while presiding over the first session of All India Hindu Mahasabha, Sir Mohendra Nandi of Cossimbazar, said “if, therefore, we make efforts to set our house in order or hold close together the scattered units of our faith, it cannot imply a menace to any other community or faith”. [Source: F. K. Khan Durrani, Op.Cit., p.62]
own right in which Muslims, Christians and Parsis had no place and that the political goal of the Hindus was Hindu Raj’.

At that time of history, Hindu leaders like Lala Hardayal were writing materials full of communal venom. In 1925, Lala Hardayal’s writing “Mere Vichar”, was published all over the country by the Hindu press. He reiterated that “The state should belong to the Hindus and the Mohammedans may live there. But the state cannot be a Muslim state nor can it be a jointly Hindu-Muslim administered state…. To attain swaraj, we [Hindus] do not need the Muslim assistance nor is it our desire to establish a joint rule…”.

In “Mere Vichar”, Lala Hardayal went on to the extent that “The future of the Hindu race of Hindustan and the Punjab rests on these four pillars: (1) the Hindu Sanghthan (2) Hindu Raj (3) Shuddhi of the Muslims and (4) the conquest and Shuddhi of Afghanistan and the frontiers”.

The Congress’ success in 1937 elections and the subsequent attitude of its leaders also played a significant role in increasing apprehensions of the Muslims. Soon after the 1937 election result, the then Congress president, Subhas Chandra Bose declared that

“Party dictatorship should be the slogan of the Congress and the idea of cooperation and coalition with other parties must be given up”.

Nehru went a step further than his president and announced that

---

98 Ibid, p.19
99 Emphasis added
100 Rajendra Prasad, Op. Cit., p.19
101 Ibid, p.19
“there were only two parties in the country — the Congress and the government — and others had to line up”\textsuperscript{103}.

Such attitude of the Congress leaders sent a shock wave in Muslim rank, and generated a strong desire that if they do not organize and defend themselves, they would become the victim of Hindu highhandedness. This attitude of Hindus urged the Muslims even to think about partition of the country. Consequently, Chaudhary Rehmat Ali wrote his popular pamphlet ‘Now or Never’\textsuperscript{104}, which could be called as a response to Hindu’s hostile attitude towards other communities in the Punjab, and also in other parts of India. In this regard Lawrence Ziring noted:

\begin{quote}
...the greatest Muslim enthusiasm for an independent Pakistan came not from the people residing in those regions that would ultimately form the new state’s territories, but from those Muslims living in the northern and eastern stretch of Hindu majority provinces. The Muslim League proved to be the organizational expression of this latter group and its battle cry “Islam in Danger” rallied both the fearful and the sentimental.\textsuperscript{105}
\end{quote}

Although the Muslims were more threatened by the Hindu attitude outside the Punjab, yet there was no mechanism to prevent its impact upon the Muslims of the province. Although there were many theological, philosophical and cultural differences between Islam and Hinduism, but no issue divided the adherents of the two religions like the cow protection debate. For Hindu revivalists, cow protection was one of the core issues in their attempts to reincarnate the Vedic faith in its pure

\textsuperscript{103} Ibid, p.9


\textsuperscript{105} Lawrence Ziring, Ralph Braibanti & W. Howard Wriggins ed., \textit{Pakistan: The Long View} (Durham, Duke University Center for Commonwealth & Comparative Studies, 1977)
form. In order to protect and promote the sacredness of the cow, Swami Dayanand played a major role in founding Guraksha Sabha. The issue was so important even with the Arya Samaj hierarchy that it split the advocates of cow protection and vegetarianism from non-vegetarian Aryan. Why the issue assumed such great importance is difficult to explain. It was so perhaps, because it was at the same time, linked to the worship of the cow as a deity, abhorrence for meat eating and the manifestation of the Hindu preference for non-violence against animals. Cow protection became the defense of spiritual and social psyche of Hindus. And obviously, the target of this movement had to be the Muslims as they were meat eaters. The theological debate on the issue was entangled in the second decade of twentieth century. This was evident from the Punjab Chronicle of 1918 which states that:

Leaving aside the question whether the ancient Aryan settlers of India reverenced the cow or not, it cannot be denied at present moment that vast millions of Hindus of India look upon the cow as a sacred being and invest her with a respect and sanctity which is only accorded to gods and goddesses.

It appears that the reasons why the Hindus stressed on cow protection were not historic but were more emotional in nature. The paper also warned that ignoring the Hindu feelings in this regard would be dangerous rather it also went on to link the whole issue of cow protection to a Hindu-Muslim

---

109 Hindu attitude on non-violence against animals was ironic, as they were prepared for violence against human beings, to achieve non-violence for animals.
110 Although British were also meat eaters, but all the Hindu energies, to stop cow killing were directed against Muslims, while sparing British altogether on this issue.
111 Punjab Chronicle, January 19, 1918, NPP.
entente. Thus it seemed that any peaceful settlement between the two communities had to be preceded by an amicable handling of the issue.

The difference between the Hindus and Musalmans on this question, which becomes dangerously acute every year at the time of ‘Bakr-Eid’ is no longer a religious question. In recent years it has become a grave political and administrative problem for political reforms and government officials alike.\(^{112}\)

Although during the Khilafat Movement both communities came closer to each other, however the symbolic importance of cow protection did not go into oblivion. In fact it was one issue that was used to unite the two communities. The Hindus expected the Muslims to end the ‘improper emphasis on the sacrifice of Kine’ and promotion of sacrifice as a ‘national right’ in return for the ‘practical union’ between the two communities.\(^{113}\)

During this period Muslims also tried to come up with theological justifications for a compromise. From Muslim quarters, alternatives to the cow sacrifice were indicated. For instance, editor Ahli Sunnat Jama’at, Hakim Abuturab M. Abdul Haq, advocated that it was lawful to sacrifice sheep in place of goats and cows.\(^{114}\) But the most significant and perhaps the most influential assertion of this reconciliatory spirit of Muslims was evident in the All India Muslim League’s resolution of 1919\(^{115}\) urging their community to abandon cow sacrifice at Hindu sacred places. Hindu commentators welcomed the Resolution, as A. L. Roy opined:

\(^{112}\) Ibid,

\(^{113}\) Desh, September. 14, 1919, NPP

\(^{114}\) Aftab, December.12, 1919, NPP

\(^{115}\) It was twelfth session of AJML, held in Amritsar on Dec. 29-31, 1919. On the cow issue, ‘Muslim League advised Muslams of India on the occasion of Bakr-id festival, to substitute, as far as possible, the sacrifice of other animals in place of cows’. [Source: A. M. Zaidi, ed., Evolution of Muslim Political Thought—1917-1925 (Michiko & Panjathan), vol. 2, p.217
...the resolution will be hailed by lovers of Hindu Mohammedan amity, which I use as a better word than unity, as having more a social significance than political one. For such amity can be placed on a sound and sure footing only when the members of the two communities enter into each other’s feelings in matters which come home in their daily life, especially on the religious side on which both are keen; political interests are too shifting, sometimes too superficial to afford to such a basis.\footnote{\textit{Tribune}, January 6, 1920, NPP}

However, the spirit of All India Muslim League’s resolution and the optimism of A. L. Roy were not shared by all the influential members of their respective communities. The Muslim press viewed this move cynically and it was termed as a conspiracy to make the Muslims destroy their own religion. Parallels were drawn between emperor Akbar’s move to stop cow-sacrifice and the recent moves\footnote{\textit{Watan}, March, 26, 1920, NPP}. The Hindus, too, were fearful that the spirit was only a passing phase as it was a quid pro quo by the Muslims for the concessions awarded to them by Hindus, on separate electorates\footnote{\textit{Vedia Magazine}, May, 1920 NPP}.

The Hindus were not willing to give any space on the issue. It was evident even at the height of the Khilafat Movement, as one Hindu paper then wrote:

"Khilafat may win or Khilafat may fail, the cow question will remain open till it is settled to the satisfaction of the Hindus"\footnote{\textit{Tribune}, January 6, 1920, NPP}.

During the peaceful days of the Hindu-Muslim unity, the Muslims had not only voluntarily reduced cow slaughtering but had even accepted it in principle, in deference to the Hindu sentiments. However, the issue revived in 1923 due to antagonism created by the renewed vigor of Arya
Samaj. Although the movement got momentum under Samajists, yet the cow cause was not just the cause of Arya Samaj, but it was of all the Hindus — hawks and moderates alike. Even Gandhi was unwilling to compromise over it as he advised Hindus to sacrifice their lives for ‘gow mata’\textsuperscript{120}. During the Khilafat Movement, Hindu leadership made cow protection a litmus test for Hindu-Muslim cooperation. Although the British also slaughtered cow, the Hindus focused on the Muslims only. Gandhi clearly argued that the responsibility for the protection of kine should be placed on the Muslims. For the government, the only Hindu advice was to reconsider its policy on slaughter of cows in cantonments for economic reasons\textsuperscript{121}.

The Sikh behaviour on the cow debate was interesting. While the Kukas earlier had made an issue out of cow slaughter, something that was of little importance in the Sikh theology, Akalis changed all that. A Gurmukhi newspaper Akali, noted :-

\begin{quote}
The question of cow protection is not as important for the Sikhs as it is for Hindus, because reverence for the cow is not enjoined by the Sikh religion. There exist 240 million Hindus who need no help from the Sikhs in regard to the question of cow protection. So long as the Hindus were a governed race the Sikhs helped them but it is now unwise for the latter to quarrel with another sister community to champion the cause of Hindus\textsuperscript{122}.
\end{quote}

In this way, Akalis not only used the issue to give good message to the Muslim community but also used it as an opportunity to assert their distinctness from the Hindus, by not supporting an essentially the Hindu

\textsuperscript{119} Liberal, May, 25,1921, Punjab Press Abstracts. Ibid. p.210
\textsuperscript{120} Zarina Salamat,OP.Cit, p.208
\textsuperscript{121} Partab, September. 7, 1921, Punjab Press Abstract.
\textsuperscript{122} Akali, Sep. 20 1925, note on the Punjab Press (1925)
cause. However, the issue remained important for the Hindus and the Muslims both. The tragic dimension added to it was the use of cow slaughter as a means to instigate Hindus. The incidents of throwing beef into Hindu temples aroused Hindu community all over the Punjab\textsuperscript{123}. Zamindar, a Muslim paper from the Punjab, noted that in 1924, the Hindus of six towns passed resolution against cow killing. With the collapse of the Khilafat Movement, the consensus, developed on the issue of cow protection also collapsed.

When British needed support from local population to establish their foothold in India, they found Hindus more than willing. In the words of Achyut Patwardhan and Asoke Mehta, “it was with the help of Hindus that the English overwhelmed the Mohammedan’s power”\textsuperscript{124}. As a result of the Hindus’ help to British, Muslims were always suspicious and distrustful of Hindus. However, after receiving serious excesses under the Rowlatt Act\textsuperscript{125} and being the victim of tragedy of Jallianwala Bagh\textsuperscript{126}, both communities were ready to join hands for massive agitation. Khilafat question gave a new dimension to the explosive situation prevailing in the Punjab. The Khilafat Movement was unique for two reasons; 1) that it ushered a new technique of agitation, and 2) that it spearheaded a rapprochement between communities\textsuperscript{127}. But the collapse of the same movement sowed mistrust between both communities. The Muslims thought that it was Gandhian call to halt the movement that caused the collapse of it, while Congress’ point of view was that the support of the movement was stopped in response to not abiding the principle of non-violence. Both communities again started to

\textsuperscript{123} Sanat Samachar, Nov. 3, 1925
\textsuperscript{124} S. Rehman, Op. Cit., p.56
\textsuperscript{125} Zarina Salamat, Op. Cit., p.208
\textsuperscript{126} S.Qatl-i-Abid, Op. Cit., p.9
\textsuperscript{127} Zarina Salamat, Op. Cit., p.53
view each other with suspicion, stronger than the earlier one, resulting in the strengthening of intra-communal sentiments.

Finally, during the twenty-seven months of Congress ministries in U.P, Behar, C.P and other Hindu majority provinces, numerous instances of persecution against the Muslims were witnessed\textsuperscript{128}. For the Muslims, the Congress rule “represented a nightmare of harassment, persecution, suppression, discrimination in the various fields — administrative, social, cultural, political, economic and educational”\textsuperscript{129}. All these were grave threats for the Muslims if they had to live with the Hindus after the British withdrawal from India.

In 1916, the Muslim League and the Congress agreed to the principle of separate electorates for separate communities. The Hindus considered this a great success of the Muslims as their right of being a separate community was accepted by the Hindus. Although in their majority provinces, the Muslims had to sacrifice, yet the Scheme, or more commonly known as Lucknow Pact, gave a legitimate claim to the Muslims of being a separate community, thus paving the way for the Muslim League to carry out struggle to win the Muslim seats only. Resultantly, in 1946 election the Muslim League was able to get seventy-six out of eighty three the Muslim seats of Punjab, in contrast to capturing only one seat in 1937 elections.

The conflict of language in the Punjab was the result of Arya Samaj’s attempts to replace Urdu with Hindi as the official vernacular of the Province as they associated Urdu with Muslim dominance. The movement to replace Urdu soon turned into a three-way conflict with the Sikh’s entry

\textsuperscript{128} S. Rehman, Op. Cit., p.61
\textsuperscript{129} M. A. H. Ispahani, Factors Leading to the Partition of India, (paper presented at the study conference on partition of India 1947, at University of London, held on July 17-22,1967. It was published by Forward Publications Trust Karachi), p.15
who started advocating the cause of Punjabi language written in Gurumukhi script. In Punjab, the Hindus and the Muslims gave up their mother tongue for Hindi and Urdu respectively, but the Sikhs, whose religious language was Punjabi, were not willing to follow suit of the other big communities of the province. They offered Hindus that if they accept Punjabi as the medium of instruction and examination up to the matriculation stage, in the province, they would agree to change the script of Punjabi to Devnagri along with Gurumukhi. The Hindus did not accept the offer and the Sikh leader Master Tara Singh declared,

"The demand for a linguistic state was just a cloak for an autonomous Sikh state which would safeguard the Sikhs’ religion, their culture, traditions, history and the Punjabi language."

In the Punjab, the leading newspapers owned by Hindus, like "Desh", "Pratap" or "Shanti", were in Urdu and still Hindu press insisted on using Devanagri script. The best illustration of this contradiction, as Paul Brass noted, was the case of Lajpat Rai, who did not know the Hindi alphabet but still insisted on using Hindi language. This demand of Hindus could be attributed to narrow communalism only, as Hindi was not the native language of the Punjabi Hindus.

Language played an important role in strengthening communal identities, which was evident in the literary trends of the 1920’s. The Punjabi literary tradition despite its rich common heritage was transforming on communal lines. A great Muslim poet from Punjab, Allama Iqbal though never wrote in his mother tongue, yet provided inspiration to a generation of

---

130 Brass, Language, Religion and Politics in North India, p.287-288
132 Ibid, p.218
133 Brass, Op. Cit., p. 287
the Muslim nationalists. He was not an advocate of competition among communities, but he was of the view that individual Muslims should be of an ideal nature. He opined;

"our modern ulema do not see that the fate of the people does not depend so much on organization as on the worth of the individual man"\textsuperscript{134}. Iqbal opposed tribalism and regionalism, and wanted Punjabi peasants to "break all the idols of tribe and caste"\textsuperscript{135}.

He was neither the advocate of "oppositional communalism", in the apt phrase of David Gilmartin, nor a prophet of territorial nationalism\textsuperscript{136}. Despite that, his Islamic message with Islamic ideals in multi-communal situation in the Punjab had a definite impact on shaping the Muslim consciousness.

A prominent Sikh writer Bhai Vir Singh was famous for his "preservation and propagation of the Sikh traditions and ideals"\textsuperscript{137}. He had deep understanding of all the religions embedded in the Punjab, still he was not advocating religious syncretism and insisted that, for grasping different religions, the points of uniqueness, not similarity, must be studied\textsuperscript{138}. Vir Singh was not critical of other religions but his writings were instrumental in shaping separate Sikh consciousness as being an orthodox Sikh, his writings adhered strictly to Sikh religious views throughout his philosophy\textsuperscript{139}.

\textsuperscript{136} Ibid, p.116
\textsuperscript{138} Harbans Singh, Makers of Indian Literature: Bahi Vir Singh, (New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1971), p.41
\textsuperscript{139} Sant Singh Sekhon & Kartar Singh Duggal, Op.Cit., p.110
Vir Singh’s famous poem Rana Surata Singha, written shortly after Kahn Singh’s essay, “Hum Hindu Nahin Hain,” was an attempt to distinguish Sikhism from Hinduism. His writings, from narratives of gurus’ lives to commentary on the Granth, and from epic to historical fiction were geared to propagate Sikh ideals. Vir Singh stressed on the originality of Sikhism, by presenting the “moral, social and martial traditions of the religion”\textsuperscript{140}.

The issue of language was segregating the communities of Punjab and Sikhs were the only group, which opted for their native language, but it was not only for ethnic reasons but it had also roots embedded in their religion. Muslims were supportive of Urdu, while interestingly Hindus writers wrote against Urdu in the very language they were opposed to. Although it would be unfair to term Iqbal or Vir Singh as communalists, yet their writings played important role in sharpening the communal identities in the province.

The acquisition of the British education also played its role, though indirectly, in strengthening communal consciousness. It provided different communities with leaders who were great interpreters of the British legal system and who were capable of leading their communities towards the destinies set by their interpretations. These interpretations were, for the most part clashing with the interests of other communities. Thus, as it became zero sum game, the communities moved ahead to the collusion course; strengthening their intra communal consciousness.

Hindu organizations like Arya Samaj and Hindu Mahasabha, and Hindu radical movements like Shuddhi and Sanghathan played a vital role in arousing the communal sentiments and generating a chain reaction of communalism in the Punjab.

Arya Samaj set up gurukals (religious seminaries), with chelas (pupils) who had to go through a study of sixteen years before deputing them to propagate Arya doctrines. According to an article published in ‘The London Times’ in 1910, “The chelas after 16 years of this religious training at the hands of their gurus are to be sent out as missionaries to propagate the Arya doctrines throughout India”\(^{141}\). Regarding their impact, the article noted: “The influence of these institutions in moulding the Indian character and opinion in the future cannot fail to be considerable”\(^{142}\). Even as early as 1910, it was noted that Aryan propaganda was the cause of “the growing antagonism between the Hindus and the Mohammedans”\(^{143}\). The Muslims were convinced that Arya Samaj’s propaganda was animated with hostility towards Islam, even more than towards British rule.

Shuddhi and Sanghathan Movements also provided much venom to the relationship of the Hindus and the Muslims. Although through Shuddhi, there were few conversions from the Muslims, but the Muslim community became suspicious and considered that these two — Shuddhi and Sanghathan — “were but new weapons to fight the Muslims”\(^{144}\). The suspicion then remained unchanged and the Muslims at their own part started Tanzeem and Tabligh movements to counter the Hindu onslaughts\(^{145}\).

\(^{142}\) Ibid, p.428
\(^{143}\) Ibid, p.428
\(^{144}\) S. Rehman, Op. Cit., p.69
\(^{145}\) Ibid, p.69
Thus, the Hindu radical movements indirectly, by provoking reaction, strengthened intra communal consciousness among the Muslims.

Anti-Islam literature provided by the Hindus resulted in strong intra-communal sentiments and increased the simmering tension between the two communities. Consequently during 1927, a number of murderous attempts were carried out by members of one community against the other. Most serious of these outrages were caused by publication of two provocative pamphlets Rangila Rasul and Risala Vartman\textsuperscript{146}, against the Holy Prophet (SAW), causing breaking out of riots in the province.

Again in 1931, when a Hindu police constable in Jammu insulted Holy Quran,\textsuperscript{147} causing agitation which expanded so rapidly and widely that the sheer number of those arrested embarrassed the jail department and forced the opening of special jail camps\textsuperscript{148}. For this agitation, volunteers and funds came from practically all parts of the province.

With the growth of communal sentiment among the masses, people wanted their leaders to become radical on their communal stance and the radical leaders in turn, led the communities to radical stance in dealing with other communities. In most cases, events led the leaders to proselyte from moderate to radical stance, as was the case of Swami Sharddhananand, who once had the confidence and esteem of the Muslims to such an extant that “they invited him to deliver an address at Jamia Masjid of Dehli”\textsuperscript{149}. But after the Moplah uprising and subsequently releasing from jail, the same Swami Sharddanand launched the Shuddhi Movement\textsuperscript{150}.

\textsuperscript{146} Tara Chand, History of The Freedom Movement, Vol.4, p.105
\textsuperscript{147} David Gilmartin, Op. Cit., p.96
\textsuperscript{148} Ibid, p.97
\textsuperscript{149} Rajendra Prasad, Op. Cit., p.123
\textsuperscript{150} Ibid, p.123
It is observed that in some cases when the leaders took radical positions, they were only then recognized as the true representatives of their community, as was the case of Muslim League’s leadership in the Punjab, which was deprived of public support before 1940 Resolution. Its attitude of compromise and rapprochement with the Hindus was not taken favourably by the Muslim masses, but as it settled down on nothing less than partition, it became the sole representative of the Muslim opinion in the province, by capturing seventy three Muslim seats out of a total of eighty six, in 1946 elections, in contrast to winning only one seat in previous verdict.

The Punjab was given a Legislative Council in 1897, consisted of nine members and Lieutenant Governor nominated all. Later on in 1909 Minto-Morley reforms introduced a council of twenty-four members out of which five were elected. The next in the series of reforms was Montague–Chelmsford reforms, introduced in 1919, which recommended that at least seventy percent of the seats in provincial legislature would be elected. Besides, enlargement of councils was also announced which was taken seriously by all three communities.

The political process started in 1897 did not stop with the reforms of 1919, but other steps like the Round Table Conferences 1930-1932 and Government of India Act 1935, further enhanced the representation of local people in the Legislative Assembly. These developments transferred some powers to the local people.

---

152 Ibid, p.298
153 Ibid, p.345
154 Ibid, p.4
155 Ibid, p.4
156 Ibid, p.32
157 Ibid, p.32
"The coming of reforms and the anticipation of what may follow then, had given new point to Hindu-Moslem competition"\textsuperscript{159}.

At the same time the series of reforms worked indirectly in further alienating the local communities from each other. In Sir Syed’s view, for the whole of India, a Hindu majority country, the Hindu – Muslim relationship was "a game of dice in which one man had four dice and the other only one"\textsuperscript{160}. Thus there was a feeling, at all India level, among the Muslims that they will never be able to win such a game. In Punjab on the other hand, the Hindus and the Sikhs were in minority, so they demanded more representation in Legislative Council than their population percentage leading to aggravation of communal sentiments. In the meanwhile, Congress won sizable seats in Hindu majority provinces in 1937 elections and the tone and the content of the speeches of their members showed a sea change\textsuperscript{161}. Muslims feared that:

"the arithmetic of democracy would assure the Hindus a commanding position from which to ensure that their distinctive tradition dominated that of the Muslims"\textsuperscript{162}.

And they considered that if they were to remain a permanent minority in India it would seriously hurt their interests in the long run.

The working of Legislative Council, 1897-1936 and the Legislative Assembly, 1937-1947, of Punjab, further amplified the confrontation among the communities, as one of the main issues that were discussed there was


\textsuperscript{162}Wyne A. Wilcon, The Wellsprings of Pakistan, Pakistan: The Long View, Op. Cit., p.332
"representation of the various religious communities in municipal bodies, legislative organs, services and educational institutions"\textsuperscript{163}.

In order to reinvigorate the identity of the Sikh community, the Sikhs launched Singh Sabha Movement in 1880s and tried to blend a pro-British approach with attempts to distinguish Sikhism from Hinduism. The Lahore branch of the Singh Sabha Movement came up with a rejuvenated Sikh tradition — Tat Khalsa, cleared of Hindu influence\textsuperscript{164}. This tradition dominated the Sikh thinking for the next few decades. One of the offshoots of the Singh Sabha Movement was Chief Khalsa Dewan, founded in 1902, which furthered the cause of separate Sikh identity. Later on in 1919 Central Sikh League was founded to defend panthic interests and struggle for the attainment of swaraj.\textsuperscript{165}

The biggest challenge, faced by the Sikh community, at that time was the control of gurdwaras. The Sikh holy places, gurdwaras were not governed by any set rules and were usually under the control of mahants. These mahants or the udasis\textsuperscript{166} were "as much Hindus as they were the Sikhs"\textsuperscript{167}, and attracted the Hindu worshippers to gurdwara premises by installing images of the Hindu deities. The attempts to stop these practices by legislation seldom bore fruit and Sikh public opinion favoured a forceful occupation of the gurdwaras. Therefore in 1920, the Sikh groups took control of the Golden Temple, Akal Takht and a few other important gurdwaras. A hukumnama\textsuperscript{168} was issued from Akal Takht for the summoning

\textsuperscript{163} Satya M. Rai, Op. Cit., p.532
\textsuperscript{164} N. Gearld Barrier, "The Singh Sabha Movement 1875-1925" in Harish K. Puri & Paramjot S. Judge, \textit{Social and Political Movements}, p.65
\textsuperscript{166} Anup Chand Kapur, Op. Cit., p.18
\textsuperscript{167} Singh, \textit{A History of The Sikhs}, p.195
\textsuperscript{168} It is a Punjabi word, which means, "order".
of a general assembly of all the Sikhs on November 15, 1920 to deliberate upon the formation of the central religious body for gurdwara management. The British government tried to intervene by forming a provisional committee for management, consisting of loyalist Sikhs, but it was not acceptable to the Sikh community meeting at Akal Takhat and a new organization, with one hundred and seventy five members, named as Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee was formed, in 1920, to supervise Gurdwara management. But the radicals did not remain content with it and another Sikh body, Shiromani Akali Dal was formed with the objective of taking back the control of gurdwaras by force and a gurumukhi newspaper ‘Akali’ was started to propagate action plan. Akalis worked in collaboration with Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee and organized jathas to occupy gurdwaras.

In February 1921, the attempts by an Akali jatha to overtake Nankana Sahib resulted in a tragedy. A mahant, Narian Das and his mercenaries murdered one hundred and thirty two members of the Sikh jatha and burnt them. This massacre of Sikhs shifted the control of gurdwara agitation from the hands of moderate Sikh leadership to the radicals, like Baba Kharak Singh, Mehtab Singh, Teja Singh and Master Tara Singh. The government, on realizing the gravity of situation introduced a Bill to setup a Board of Commissioners to manage the gurdwaras in March 1921. Irrespective of the fact that the Sikh community largely ignored the Sikh Gurdwaras and the Shrines Act of 1922; the legislation itself evoked much heated debate on Hindu-Sikh relations. The argument on the basis of which the government interfered in the matter was that Shiromani Gurdwara

---

170 Ibid, p.19
171 Ibid, p.20
172 Ibid, p.20
Prabandhak Committee did not represent all the sects of the Sikhs. The members of the Sikh community countered this argument by arguing that there were no sects in Sikhism and even if there were any sects, gurdwaras were to be controlled by the community and not by the individual\textsuperscript{173} sects. This was a great step towards asserting a separate Sikh identity by closing the doors for sectarian divide within the panth. This step also made it difficult for the Hindus to have any claim on the gurdwaras without formally converting to Sikhism.

The Hindus realized the dangers inherent in this position as a Hindu paper ‘Brahaman Samachar’ noted: “gurdwara movement is intended, in the first place, to oust all mahants who do not wear long hair and are Brahmin or Khatri by caste and to replace them by Keshdharis”\textsuperscript{174}. The second objective according to the paper was to remove all images of Hindu gods from the gurudwaras”. The paper lamented that “gurudwaras, regarded as the common sacred place of Hindus and Sikhs were now going to be imbued with the neo Sikh spirit”\textsuperscript{175}.

The Sikh position stated in the Gurmukhi language mouthpiece of the movement, ‘Akali,’ that the Sikhs would not accept a managing committee not consisting of their co-religionists elected by the panth. It went on to say that Sikhs would never tolerate that these places should be “made over to non-Sikhs in accordance with the wishes of a Christian government”\textsuperscript{176}. Hindus obviously were greatly alarmed by this stance, as there was a feeling that since a gurudwara was not clearly defined in the Bill, the managing

\textsuperscript{173} Sikh, March 24, 1921, PPA
\textsuperscript{174} Brahman Samachar, March 09, 1921, PPA
\textsuperscript{175} Ibid,
\textsuperscript{176} Akali, April 04, 1921, PPA
committee dominated by the Sikhs can declare any controversial temple to be a gurudwa.¹⁷⁷

The hardliner Hindus however proposed strict measures. One Hindu newspaper proposed boycott of the Sikh gurdwaras and establishment of new temples where scripture would be recited. It also proposed that legal action should be taken for the possession of gurdwaras, which were in possession of the Hindus and were built by their money. The Congress tried to exploit the religious sentiment for its non-cooperation agenda, but the Akalis never allowed the leadership of the movement to pass in the hands of the Hindus. At the same time, they considered non-violence only as a tactic and considered that non-cooperation was limited in scope.¹⁷⁸

The government was seriously perturbed by the sympathies for Akali cause in the armed forces; therefore it started negotiations with Sikhs in 1924. Consequently, the Sikh Gurdwara Act of 1925 was passed and all the Akali prisoners were released. The Hindu press was not particularly happy about the proposed bill. A Hindu paper ‘Sanatan Dharam Parcharak’ remarked that it heralded the beginning of “Akali rule” in the province. The contributors to the paper termed it as a “cup of poison” for the udasis and “suicidal” for the “Hindu Sikhs”.¹⁷⁹ The Hindus reminded the government that Akalis had insulted the Hindu gods by forcibly taking possession of certain gurdwaras. It also warned that no law could end disputes until it satisfies all sects of the Sikhs and the Hindus as well.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁷ Tribune, April 05, 1921, PPA
¹⁷⁹ Sanatan Dharam Parcharak, Feb. 16, 1925, NPP
¹⁸⁰ The Hindu, February 16-20, 1925, NPP.
councilors were asked to safeguard the right of their community in the Bill\textsuperscript{181}.

However, for the Sikhs, the Hindu sensibilities on the issue mattered the least but the major Sikh objection to the proposed Bill was the absence of a clear definition of Sikhs. The Sikh press expressed the fear that in absence of a clear definition "staunch Arya Hindus" may "rob a baptized Sikh of his rights"\textsuperscript{182}. However the final draft of the Bill defined a Sikh as a person "who believed in ten gurus and the Granth Sahib and was not a patit [apostate]"\textsuperscript{183}.

The definition debate ended all chances of blurring the Sikh-Hindu theological differences. Hindu press considered it to be "very dangerous" for the Sikh sects and the Hindus\textsuperscript{184}. The Hindus demanded to change the definition and the alternative suggestion was to have a general statement like: "I believe in ten gurus, Granth Sahib and its principles"\textsuperscript{185}. This was yet another attempt to blur the differences between the Hindu and Sikh theology, which could not achieve success. The Gurdwara Reforms movement went a long way in establishing a separate Sikh communitarian identity and played a key role in isolating the Sikhs from the Hindus and in giving them a separate consciousness. Though the movement was ostensibly religious but it had political consequences as well. The local Hindu support for the Udasis widened the gulf between the Sikhs and the Hindus. Khushwant Singh has noted that it was the "most significant outcome of the four years of gurdwara agitation"\textsuperscript{186}.

\textsuperscript{181} Sudharshan, March 11, 1925, NPP
\textsuperscript{182} Kirpan Bahadur, April 29, 1925, NPP.
\textsuperscript{183} Singh, \textit{A History of The Sikhs}, p.212
\textsuperscript{184} Sudharshan, May 06, 1925, NPP
\textsuperscript{185} Milap, May 04, 1925, NPP
\textsuperscript{186} Singh, \textit{A History of The Sikhs}, p.212
When East India Company became political power in India, it did not allow the missionaries to preach here, apprehending the local people’s sensibilities. However, in 1813\textsuperscript{187}, Company granted permission to the missionaries. As a result, there came a flood of Christian missionaries, with intention to proselyte Indian people to the fold of Christianity. In 1839, a German missionary Carl P Fander came to India with the belief that in India, “the Muslim aristocracy, ulema and common people were in a state of decline and doubting their religion”\textsuperscript{188}, therefore he anticipated their easy conversion to Christianity.

As the missionaries had the patronization of government, therefore fearing the followers proselytization, Muslim and Hindu religious leaders bent on to resist the Christian onslaught, and launched a concerted campaign and organized a number of religious organizations to preserve their religious identity and faith. A society which was not as religious under Mughals, started again to be divided strictly on religious basis, as a response to the activities of Christian missionaries. According to the Hindu religion there was no sanction for conversion and, hence, when the Shuddhi Movement first started, a surprise was created everywhere\textsuperscript{189}. But why really the Hindus thought of Shuddhi? This too can be attributed to be a reaction to the activities of Christian missionaries, as was the Tablígh — a reaction to both.

As far as the British policy of ‘divide and rule’ in India was concerned, it is suffice to quote W.M. Torrens that “Hindustan could never have been subdued but by the help of her own children”\textsuperscript{190}. The policy was originally of the East India Company’s, but the successor British government in India also gave due importance to the policy. Lord

\textsuperscript{187} Mubarak Ali, Religious Debates, Dawn Magazine, Islamabad, March. 23, 2003, p.6
\textsuperscript{188} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{189} S. Rehman, Op. Cit., p. 69
\textsuperscript{190} Rajindra Prashad, Op. Cit., p. 88
Birkenhead, the secretary of state in 1920's was fully conscious of the value of communal antagonism in India, in the favour of British government. Therefore, he communicated his advice to the Viceroy Lord Reading,

"The more it is made obvious that these antagonisms are profound, and affect immense and irreconcilable sections of the population, the more conspicuously is the fact illustrated that we, and we alone, can play the part of composer".191

Edward Thompson wrote in his Enlist India for Freedom that:

There is no question that in former times we frankly practiced divide and rule method in India. From Warren Hustings' time onwards, men made no bones of the pleasure the Hindu-Muslim conflict gave them; even such men as Elphinstone, Malcolm and Metcalfe admitted its value to the British.192

British throughout their rule tried to disintegrate Indian society on permanent terms. "Divisions on the basis of religion, occupation and service were made. Every possible cross division was introduced".193 In the Punjab a clear division was rural versus urban. British played an important role in promoting rural Punjab and patronized them to form a party of their own in the name of Unionist Party. Some scholars also pointed out the role of British administration in communal riots. As Rajendra Prashad noted:

If the history of the communal riots...is studied without prejudice, it will be found that these riots show a knack of appearing at critical moments in the political history of the country. We find them occurring whenever the demand for transfer of power from the British to Indian hands has become insistent and strong and whenever the two major communities of

191 Ibid, p.129
192 Ibid, p.135
193 Ibid, p.137
India have shown unity of purpose and action. We have seen that there was a concordat between the Congress and the League in December 1916, followed by an intensive agitation for Home Rule in 1917. Towards the latter part of 1917 there occurred serious riots....\textsuperscript{194}

The incident of Jallianwala Bagh, Khilafat Movement and Congress’ Non-cooperation Movement brought two communities closer and in such a position that “in the words of Lord Lloyd, “with in an ace of succeeding”\textsuperscript{195}. The British Viceroy was “puzzled and perplexed”\textsuperscript{196}, over the situation. Hindu Muslim riots re-appeared in 1922 in Multan to rescue the British. In fact British were, “by a variety of techniques and methods and devices, making the leadership of the Hindus and the Muslims dance like marionettes...”\textsuperscript{197}

British also helped Sikh consciousness to grow. The governor general Lord Dalhousie visited the Punjab after annexation and noted that Sikhs were “gradually relapsing into Hinduism, and even when they continue Sikhs, they were yearly Hindufied more and more...”\textsuperscript{198}. Perceiving the threat for them, the British administration of the Punjab was directed to take steps to reverse the trend.

“The British rulers were keenly interested in cultivating Sikh separatism specially to form a loyal army of the natives”\textsuperscript{199}.

The British used the Sikhs in army to incorporate the separate Sikh consciousness among the community. A secret memorandum prepared in

\textsuperscript{194} Ibid, p.124
\textsuperscript{195} Ibid. p.166
\textsuperscript{196} Ibid, p.166
\textsuperscript{197} Lal Bahadur, Struggle For Pakistan, p. 312
\textsuperscript{198} Anup Chand Kapur, Op. Cit., p. 207
\textsuperscript{199} Ibid, p.207
1911 by D. Petrie, Assistant Director Criminal Intelligence, regarding the program to forge the Sikhs as a separate nation, stated:

At the present time one of the principal agencies for the preservation of Sikh religion has been the practice of military officers commanding Sikh regiments to send Sikh recruits to receive Sikh baptism accordingly to the rites prescribed by Guru Gobind Singh. Soldiers too are required to adhere strictly to Sikh customs and ceremonies and every endeavour has been made to preserve them from the contagion of idolatry. Sikhs in the Indian Army have been studiously nationalized or encouraged to regard themselves as a totally distinct and separate nation [and] their national pride has been fostered by every available means....

For the growth of Sikh consciousness, British took many other steps as well. They engaged Dr. Ernest Trump in 1869, to translate Guru Granth and to prove that the theology of Sikhism was different from that of Hinduism. Max Arthur Macaliffe not only drew a sharp distinction between Sikhism and Hinduism but also warned the Sikhs that Hinduism "was like a 'boa constrictor' of the Indian forests, which winds its opponents...and finally causes it to disappear in its capacious interior." Joseph Devey Cunningham also, through his work, A history of the Sikhs from the Origin of the Nation to the Battle of Sutlej, written in 1849, projected the idea of Sikh nationhood. Thus, it is evident that there were efforts by British to create a religious consciousness among the Sikhs and snap the unbiblical cord, which was binding the Sikhs and the Hindus.

---

CHAPTER - 3
POLITICS OF UNIONISM

The history of the Punjab is replete with invasions and conquests by foreigners. Years before Christ, the Punjab witnessed Alexander the Great, and the list of invaders continued till the mid nineteenth century, with the advent of the British. The enormous richness attracted the large number of invaders. Mughals were the rulers of the India and the province of Punjab was under the Sikhs. How were these powers weakened and the British took over? Karl Marx describes in his words in 'The Tribune':-

"The paramount power of the great Mughals was broken by the British Viceroy. The Marhattas broke the power of the Viceroy. The power of the Marhattas was broken by the Afghans, and while all were struggling against all, the Briton rushed in and were enabled to subdue them all".

At that point of history, while British were making a history of conquests in India, they were also losing ground in American colonies. Why really did they succeed in one and failed in another, at the same time? The most striking reason, among others, could be that the Americans were united in their war against the colonialism, while on the other hand, the sons of India, apart from having a history of being accustomed to be ruled by others, were not united and were in fact at daggers drawn against each others. The British expertly used the Indian tradition of internal squabbles and intrigues to their favour. All the victories, beginning from

---
1 Budha Parkash, "Political and Social Movements in Ancient Punjab (Lahore:Aziz Publishers, 1976), pp.164-178
4 British had occupied American lands, but when they were advancing in India they were receding in America
5 Humayun Mirza, From Plasty to Pakistan (Lahore: Ferozsons Pvt. Ltd., 1999), p.329
the Palasy in 1757 to successfully crushing the war of Independence in 1857, owe their mark to the skillful use of “divide and rule” policy of the British. The technique or the method, originally used by the East India Company, was then utilized by the successor British Indian Government. Placing one prince against the other, one community against the other, one interest group against the other, one religion against the other, one race against the other and one state against the other, was masterly done to prevent any chances of Indian people to become one whole against the British masters. It was meticulously carried out as the British had recently experienced the consequences of not doing that in their American colonies. The history witnessed use of the policy of divide and rule in the whole of British Indian Empire, and the province of Punjab was no exception. It had the peculiar religion wise break down, which helped the British to utilise the natural division to their advantage. Promotion of Punjab National Unionist Party under the British auspices further helped them to achieve their goal.

A glance over the map of Punjab and northern India shows an interesting feature, that of the five rivers flowing through the province like five fingers of a hand. In the high mountains, the fingers are separated and as we travel downwards, they join each other in the southern Punjab and form a wrist, which then flows into Sindh, the adjoining province. The politics of the Punjab was very much analogue to the physical feature of rivers' course. On the atlas pages the rivers confluence to form one---under the dictates of altitude, depression of land and other topographical features, while on the pages of history, three major

8 Christine Osborne, Pakistan (New York: Longman, 1983), p.29
9 Rivers Sutlej, Bias, Ravi, Chenab and Jehlem combine in their course and then join Indus, to form one whole while flowing towards the Arabian Sea
communities\textsuperscript{10} of the province joined hands and to a great extent confluenced to the Punjab National Unionist Party. Despite divide and rule policy of the British in rest of India, unionism was not only developed but also dominated the politics of the province for over two decades.

Keeping in view the ruralities’ potential as army recruits, the British started patronizing rural population and not only developed canal colonies but also awarded large jagirs to people loyal to them. The reasons behind the promotion of rural people could be traced out from the following extract:

A variety of considerations, some internal some external, combined to induce the British to look to the villages. Indian administrative circumstances served to revert their attention firmly on the village. It was here too that a handful of alien rulers could find some semblance of mass support, some token of acquiescence or goodwill and some cultural traits that struck a responsive chord in Victorian hearts. By contrast the British were administratively less concerned with the towns, the urban areas did not appear to provide a mass base, or an easily satisfied class ready to extend loyalty. And culturally the towns were entirely alien, striking no spark in the British imagination, and perhaps arousing considerable offence at times.\textsuperscript{11}

Moreover, the identity of province of being the sword arm of India was mainly dependent upon the recruits coming from rural areas of the province and again agriculturist tribes were in reality, producing the machomen for the British Indian Army. The fact that army was very largely recruited from landholding tribes seemed to be a further assurance that courage and character were agricultural monopolies.\textsuperscript{12} It was almost as if Punjab society was village society

\textsuperscript{10} They were Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs
\textsuperscript{12} It was not only about courage and character of Punjabis that helped them in fighting but they were also physically fit for the purpose. Umar Hayat, father of the last premier of united Punjab encapsulated this
and it was assumed that the political forces that prevailed within village must necessarily prevail within the province.\textsuperscript{13} Besides the fiscal dynamics of the government were directly related to the rural subjects of the province. Van den Dungen has noted that:

\begin{quote}
An administration dependent very largely on the payment of land revenue\textsuperscript{14} by numerous small landed proprietors must take particular care of its revenue payers, so that much of the time, the thoughts and energies of its servants must be centred on the village rather than the town. The British officers were brought into closer contact with the village and acquired a more intimate knowledge of village society.\textsuperscript{15}
\end{quote}

Another aspect of British patronage of the rural people was psychological as in towns, relatively educated and rich people did not use to offer the respect to the rulers, which the rural subjects were always prepared to offer. Furthermore, “it was comparatively easy to satisfy the needs of landholders, wanting little but tolerable”\textsuperscript{16}. On the other hand towns’ demands were high and their proportion of revenue generation was comparatively low.

Although the British had started supporting the agriculturalist classes from the very start of their rule in the province, uplift of those classes naturally demanded time. With the British actions in support of agriculturist tribes, the marketable value of land ensued. Therefore, agricultural indebtedness became possible on hitherto unknown scale. As the land had become valuable and transferable, indebtedness assumed unprecedented forms. Moneylender classes

argument in the Council of State, in March 1922, in these words: \textquotedblleft If a cart horse is put in a race it will not do and similarly if a race horse is put on to a cart, it cannot pull cart. If a person is weak, he is unable to stand the cold and dies; the theory of the \textquoteleft survival\textquoteright of the fittest is correct. There are some places where there are people with limbs like our fingers. How on earth can they fight\textquoteright?\textquoteright Source for the text of speech: Ian Talbot, Op.Cit., (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 53

14 Ibid, p.172
16 Ibid, p. 172
were offering the land on compound interest, which in the most cases soared so high that landowners were unable to repay it. And the only option they were left to wipe the slate clean, was the transfer of land to the party they owe. During the last three decades of nineteenth century such transfers of lands assumed even more serious proportions. In many cases Hindu traders and moneylenders were prominent among the aliens. The agricultural indebtedness was unknown even in the early 1860s\textsuperscript{17} but once it started, the scale during the last third of the century was alarming. This destabilizing situation was keenly observed by the British as noted by Dungen:

At the heart of the Punjab political tradition laid the desire to create and preserve a stable rural base. A study of British attitudes to voluntary land transfer thus illuminates the major problem of political authority in the Punjab as ensured by the British in the nineteenth century. The story began in a sense, with Brandreth. In his revenue report for 1868-9 Brandreth\textsuperscript{18}...stressed the political danger of the voluntary transfer of land from hereditary landholders to the Hindu trading castes.\textsuperscript{19}

Although the consequences of this development were revolutionary yet there existed no mechanism to check it. Even "the British civil courts provided the moneylenders of the province with regular facilities of a kind hitherto quite unknown, for enforcing the payment of debts".\textsuperscript{20} But once the problem was identified, the British authorities were keen to solve it.

It was feared that the expropriation of land owning tribes by moneylenders would create a discontented agricultural class, which would be ready for violence against the moneylenders, and at the least not averse to political change. Agrarian

\textsuperscript{18} He was Commissioner Multan Division then
\textsuperscript{19} Van den Dungen, Op.Cit., p.31
\textsuperscript{20} Ibid, p.34
discontent, many officers believed, could easily turn into hatred for the
government, which encouraged expropriation by the authority, which its civil
courts gave to the moneylenders. In some parts of the country officers already
perceived various symptoms of agrarian discontent; in other parts they felt that if
nothing was done the growth of such discontent was inevitable.... One officer
remembering one of the causes of the mutiny stressed that events that make the
agriculturist population dissatisfied also make the army dissatisfied. There was
however, general anxiety lest one day a crisis should come and the executive be
weakened, perhaps through a threat from outside and the whole fabric of British
order and power in countryside collapse.21

The problem therefore, in the British eyes was not just of the survival of the
landowner classes but it was in fact of the loyal subjects of the British
government. It was these agriculturist tribes from where the British were getting
the revenue, military recruitments and political support that was as necessary and
vital for their rule as is the air, water and food for living. In the words of
Ibbetson,22 a British Indian civil servant,

"...political considerations outweighed everything else in
India. In England popular discontent meant only change of
Ministers and an alteration of the law; in India it meant
disloyalty".23

In late 1880's, there were far more officers, than were in 1870's, who
believed that the land alienation process involved "... grave political danger or
evils".24 And this danger or evil was, in fact, the threat to the very existence of the
British Government, in case if they not only lose the support of agriculturalist

21 Ibid, pp.169-170
22 Ibid, pp.160-171
24 Ibid, p.168
tribes but also invite their wrath upon them for not tackling issue in their favour. Thus “conscious of their isolation and their numerical inferiority, the British were induced to think in terms of mass support for their rule”\textsuperscript{25} And this support was far easier to come from the rural Punjab, and not from the urban section of the province.

The landowners, various officers pointed out, represented a political force in the country, and were being displaced by moneylenders, men of no political significance. The land owning tribes were the foundation of British rule; they had a vast superiority in numbers; they supplied the manpower for the native army; they were the hereditary proprietors of the soil; they were, in many cases warlike with traditions and a history; they were sturdy, courageous and independent; and if discontented and given an opportunity they would fight. They were, as Throburn\textsuperscript{26} put it in 1886,

‘the people of India’; and two years before, writing about the western Punjab, he had even apprehended that a hostile agrarian movement might take up a cry dear to liberal sentiment, that of ‘the land for the people’. On the other hand, the trading castes contributed nothing to the stability of the state and little to its revenues. Their numbers were insignificant and they were feeble in spirit and physique. They were both feared and despised by the landowners whose social inferiors they had often been before British rule. Far from being able to fight, the trading castes required protection, so that they were a source of weakness rather than strength in time of danger. And in any case, their loyalty to Government was only doubtful.\textsuperscript{27}

The British, after the careful analysis of the whole affair, decided to tackle the issue and formulated the Land Alienation Act to check the alienation of land

\textsuperscript{25} Ibid, p.171
\textsuperscript{26} British Indian Civil Servants and also Financial Commissioner of Punjab. He wrote books on Punjab as The Punjab in Peace And War and Asiatic Neighbours’, etc.
\textsuperscript{27} Van den Dungen, Op.Cit., p.169
from agricultural to non-agricultural tribes, thereby blocking the change, which was to affect the political condition in the province. Punjab Land Alienation Act was a big favour of British to the land owning classes. But this favour was not the end of the process. It was in fact a beginning of new political era. The patronage went on, as M. F. O’Dwyer,\textsuperscript{28} said :-

“throughout my term in office, I did what I could to further the interest of rural masses, whom I regarded as the basis of stability and prosperity of the province”.\textsuperscript{29} “the races that count were…the races that can fight”. Even\textsuperscript{30} at the time of debate over the Reforms Scheme,\textsuperscript{31} Dwyer was against :-

“the transfer of such wide powers to a small class of politicians, mainly urban, who were not in any sense either representative of the rural masses or sympathetic to their needs and interests”.\textsuperscript{32}

O’ Dwyer’s voice did not go into oblivion and the council proposed by Montague-Chelmsford Reforms was highly biased in favour of land owning classes. Out of sixty-four general seats, fifty-one were allocated to the rural areas of the Punjab. And the four,\textsuperscript{33} out of seven special seats were also reserved for the landholders of the province. As the result of election demonstrated,\textsuperscript{34} the government achieved what it desired. Partly for the All India Congress’ inactiveness and partly for the zeal of landholders, combined with the favour of rulers bestowed upon them, the Legislative Council formed as a result of December 1920 elections\textsuperscript{35} was highly rural in character. “Of 71 elected members,

\textsuperscript{28} M. F. O’ Dwyer was Governor of Punjab. He was also author of \textit{India As I knew it}.
\textsuperscript{29} M. O’ Dwyer, \textit{India As I Knew It 1885-1925} (London: 1926), p.171
\textsuperscript{30} Ibid, p. 417
\textsuperscript{31} It refers to Montague-Chelmsford Reforms of 1919
\textsuperscript{32} M. O’ Dwyer, Op. Cit., p.99
\textsuperscript{33} S. Qulb-i-Abid, Op. Cit., p.33
\textsuperscript{34} Ibid, p.33
\textsuperscript{35} Ibid, p. 33
there were only 15 elected members who could be regarded as townsmen, and even of these 15, 10 were landowners".\textsuperscript{36}

Muslims formed the largest group of thirty-five members in the Legislative Council. Among the other groups, the non-Muslim group captured twenty-one, of which thirteen were rural. The Sikhs got twelve seats, of which eleven were rural. Therefore, the results dictated a coalition of various groups with the dominance of Muslims. The Lieutenant Governor of Punjab Maclagan,\textsuperscript{37} appointed Fazl-i-Husain and Harkishan Lal\textsuperscript{38} as ministers. These appointments and cordial relationship of government with the rural members laid down the foundation of an alliance, which was to continue for the next two decades to dominate the politics of the province. The Council formed under the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms, and subsequent appointment of ministers brought new politicians like Mian Fazl-i-Husain to the forefront of political horizon of the province. Mian Fazl-i-Husain, a lawyer was a former member of Congress and had left the party on the issue of Non-Cooperation.\textsuperscript{39} Just after the inception of Council he was quick to read that the power lied with the rural Muslim members.\textsuperscript{40} But still the newly formed Council dictated an alliance of Muslims with the non-Muslim members of the Council.

On realizing this, Mian Fazl-i-Husain formed an alliance of the Muslim members who were representatives of countryside of the province. This alliance was known as the Rural Block.\textsuperscript{41} Soon this group transcended from the religious boundary of Muslim-hood and absorbed rural Hindus and Sikhs as well.

\textsuperscript{36} S. Qalb-i-Abid, Op. Cit., p.33
\textsuperscript{37} Sir Edward D. Maclagan was Governor of the Punjab from 1919 to 1924
\textsuperscript{38} He was ex-Congress leader. He was appointed minister in the Punjab after 1920 elections.
\textsuperscript{39} It was Congress' movement launched in 1920.
\textsuperscript{40} Azim Husain, "Fazl-i-Husain: A Political Biography" (Bombay: Longmans, 1946), p.151
\textsuperscript{41} "Rural Bloc was the brain child of ... Sir Fazl-i-Husain" Raguven德拉 Tanwar, Op. Cit., P.52
According to Azim Husain\textsuperscript{42} the main purpose of this multi-communal alliance was to help “backward areas, backward classes and backward communities”.\textsuperscript{43}

For the Unionist leaders, the aims and objectives of the party were the uplifting of the rural backward classes, as demonstrated the letter of Shahabud-Din\textsuperscript{44} to Mian Fazl-i-Husain, which listed the objectives of the party as following:

1. To develop national self-respect lawfully and constitutionally;
2. To provide equal facilities and opportunities to the backward classes and areas;
3. To promote and protect the interests of the masses without undue encroachment on the interests of capitalists, big land holders and moneylenders;
4. To reconstruct and reorganize the agricultural and industrial life of the province economically and commercially;
5. To effect rural uplift by infusing the real and enlightened spirit of the village community and making every village a unit of true social and national life;
6. i) To secure purity of administration and reduce its cost consistently with efficiency;
   ii) To distribute fairly and equitably the burden of taxation;
   iii) To secure funds for promoting and developing beneficial activities;
7. i) To preserve and protect the religious, cultural\textsuperscript{45} and social integrity of each community;

\textsuperscript{42} Azim Husain was son of Mian Fazl-i-Husain
\textsuperscript{43} Azim Husain, Op. Cit., p.151
\textsuperscript{44} Sir Shahab-ud-Din occupied important position in the Unionist Party. He worked as President Legislative Council Punjab, and speaker of Punjab Legislative Assembly. He also held the portfolio of education in Punjab Government, 1936-7
\textsuperscript{45} Sic.
ii) To treat all communities alike and to see that no community dominates the other community; and

iii) To infuse the spirit of mutual goodwill, co-operation and tolerance and thus to prevent the creation, and to settle amicably, when created, all religious, communal or social differences and disputes; and

8. To work out the Reforms, despite their being unsatisfactory and imperfect, and to make strenuous efforts to obtain good results from them.  

There were different views regarding the establishment of the Unionist Party. It has been argued that Mian Fazl-i-Husain’s intention in founding the party was to use it as a tool to uplift the lot of the overwhelming rural population of the province, which was not able to compete with the educated towns. One argument regarding Fazl-i-Husain’s intentions for establishing the party maintains that he established it deliberately on non-communal basis so that he could maintain himself as a Punjab leader, however, the arithmetic of the province certainly had its role in this regard. The Muslims of Punjab were not in a position to rule the province independent of the support of the other communities, since in the Punjab, the Muslim population only marginally exceeded the Hindu and the Sikh populations combined.

It has to be conceded that the political situation in the Punjab was very special and needed special treatment. Until the programme of partitioning the province on communal lines was accepted, it was

---

47 Ibid, p.485-86
inconceivable that a communal government in the Punjab could be instituted\textsuperscript{48} and enabled to enjoy stability.\textsuperscript{49}

Therefore, apprehending the Punjab situation and the danger of things going out of control if the urban classes were given the lead in provincial politics, British decided to institutionalise agricultural and non-agricultural tribes division, and considered this factor in the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms. Even before 1919 Reforms, the division of agricultural and non-agricultural was formalized in the Punjab Land Alienation Act. David Gilmartin pointed out that;

"At the heart of the Land Alienation Act, lay a defence of a structure of rural power based on landed patronage and the 'Tribal' structure of the British Administration".\textsuperscript{50}

British, in the Punjab, did not promote division of population on the basis of religion. As their reports on the subject indicated that the Land Alienation Act was not about the "question of Moslem versus Sikh and Hindu, but a question of rural versus urban".\textsuperscript{51} They were not hesitant in their official correspondence, to claim that they were the people who had "invented" the policy of promoting agricultural tribes.\textsuperscript{52}

It was under this necessity of the British that Unionist ideology was carved out.\textsuperscript{53} The National Unionist Party, established in 1923\textsuperscript{54}, was essentially a defence of the tribal categorization propounded by the British. It was for these reasons, that opponents of the Land Alienation Act and the

\textsuperscript{48} Although Muslim League got majority seats in Punjab in 1946 elections, but for the demographic and highly charged communal atmosphere, it was not given the right to form her ministry in the province
\textsuperscript{50} David Gilmartin, , Op. Cit., p. 28
\textsuperscript{51} Punjab Land Alienation Papers, N.D.C, P.06
\textsuperscript{52} Ibid, p. 27
\textsuperscript{53} British had highlighted rural urban divide in the province. To fulfill their need of a peaceful Punjab they carved out ideology of unionism
\textsuperscript{54} Jan Talbot, Op. Cit., p. p.82
Unionist Party alleged that, "Land Alienation Act is to them what the Vedas and Holy Quran are to the Hindus and the Musalmans" respectively. On the contrary, the Unionists projected themselves as "non-communal, non-tribal and non-residential" organization working for the "uplift of the poor and the weak". Before launching the party, its founder Mian Fazal-i-Hussain said in the Punjab Legislative Council: "The principle that I stand by is the principal of helping the backward community irrespective of their religion, be they Muslims, Hindus or Sikhs."

Despite these claims, Mian Fazl-i-Husain, the founder of the party, had clear leaning to the Muslim community's interests, and as a minister, he took many steps for the uplift of the Muslims of the province. This position was severely criticised by other communities' non-unionist politicians. Unionist leaders of other communities were not much vocal about such developments as for them the main objective was the defence of the zamindars, an interest which was equally shared by Mian Fazl-i-Husain. Choudhary Chhotu Ram, the co-founder of the party, despite his initial leaning towards Arya Samaj, was soon swayed by the passion to defend his own agriculturist class. According to Talbot, Choudhary Chhotu Ram stood for "ruralist populism", to unite the agriculturalists against the moneylenders.

In fact the multi-communal alliance of the Unionists was about the protection of the interests of a class. Gilmartin pointed out that "At the heart

---
55 Vedas is holy book for Hindus  
56 Quran is holy book of Muslims  
57 Raja Narendra Nath, quoted in David Gilmartin, Empire and Islam, Op. Ch., p.115  
61 Ian Talbot, Op. Cit., p.58
of the Unionist position, was the desire to establish political control over the forces of the market”\textsuperscript{62}. Mian Fazl-i-Husain and Chaudhary Chhotu Ram shared the point to protect the interests of the rural classes, but they were different at some points as well. Chhotu Ram made no bones about class biases\textsuperscript{63} and he took lead in the Legislature Council to counter rural indebtedness, essentially a rural cause. While Mian Fazl-i-Husain, apart from defending the interests of rural classes of Muslims and non-Muslims alike, was also bent upon winning the hearts of Muslim community living in the towns. His desire to be a recognised leader of the Muslims could not go into oblivion, despite his unionist politics.\textsuperscript{64} But he faced staunch opposition for his acts of uplifting the Muslim community. Ultimately the stronger political currents were bound to overtake events in the province. The attempt to blend elements that were essentially incompatible was not the only flaw in the unionist strategy. The other major drawback was the dependency of the unionists on the local kinship networks, governmental support and the support of influential personalities, rather than developing a popular base.\textsuperscript{65}

Among other influential personalities, Unionists also made hectic efforts to convince ‘pirs’\textsuperscript{66} to join hands with them. The influence and importance of pirs in the political life of Punjab was not the Unionist’s invention. Pirs’ inclination towards Government had been common in the past. A report in 1919 highlights it as “... the pirs of the chief Mohammadan shrines in the Punjab assembled at Lahore, and expressed their sense of

\textsuperscript{62} David Gilmartin, Op. Cit., p.125
\textsuperscript{63} H.L. Agnihotri and Shiva N. Malik, Op. Cit., p.68
\textsuperscript{64} In a note in his diary dated Nov. 12, 1901, Fazl-I-Husain described his ambition ‘to be the recognized leader of the Indian Muslims and sit in the House of Commons as the Right Honorable Gentleman from the Punjab’. Source: Waheed Ahmad, \textit{Letters of Mian Fazl-I-Husain} (Lahore: Research Society of Pakistan, 1978), p.6
\textsuperscript{65} The only exception was Choudhary Chhotu Ram’s Zamindara League.
\textsuperscript{66} Pir means saint
loyalty to Government and their condemnation of the recent disturbances." Mushtaq Ahmed Gurmani’s letter to Mian Fazl-i-Husain reveals the keenness of Unionists to seek the support of pirs. Regarding the strategy formulation for election 1937, Gurmani wrote:

“İ am in full agreement with your suggestion that a statement should be issued from important pirs of the province in support of the Unionist Party. Ahmad Yar showed me your note yesterday and I gave him a list of the pirs who have influence in various districts. I am enclosing a copy of that list for your perusal. In my opinion the following pirs should be approached to issue the statement.”

1. Dewan Sahib of Pakpattan
2. Sajjada Nashin Sahib of Mahar Sharif (Bahawalpur State)
3. Sajjada Nashin Sahib of Taunsa Sharif (Dera Ghazi Khan)
4. Sajjada Nashin Sahib of Sial Sharif, Distt. Shahpur
5. Khawaja Ghulam Nizam-ud-Din Sahib of Taunsa Sharif
6. Pir Sahib of Golra Sharif, District Rawalpindi
8. Pir Lal Badshah of Mukhand (Dist. Attock)
9. Sajjada Nashin Sahib of Sultan Bahu (Dist. Jhang)
10. Pir Sahib of Pir Kot (Dist. Jhang)
11. Khan Bahadar Mukhdum Murid Hussain Qurashi of Multan
12. Khan Bahadur Makhdum Saddar-ud-Din Shah Sahib Gilani of Multan
13. Pir Mohammad Hussain Shah Sahib of Sher Garh

67 Report on the Punjab Disturbances, 1919, IOR L/P&S/ 20 F 205
68 It was not just 1937 elections that Unionists approached pirs, but they did it in 1923, 1937 and also in 1946. Though in the last case they could not succeed in securing their support.
69 Emphasis Added
15. Pir Sahib of Maira Sharif, District Rawalpindi.\textsuperscript{70}

In his letter Gurmani further noted :-

It would be a good thing if we could also have the signatures of the sajjada Nashin sahib of Ajmer, Sajjada Nashin sahib of Piran Kaliar, District Saharanpur (UP) and Khawaja Hassan Nizami Sahib of Dehlī.\textsuperscript{71} I would also suggest that other Pirs and Sajjada Nashins who have local influence in districts and the constituencies should be approached for support.\textsuperscript{72}

The contents of the letter indicate that how careful the top brass of Unionists was in securing the support of pirs. It is also to be noted here that it was not only the pirs of Punjab whose support was sought, but also the Pirs from outside the province were approached to influence the voters in Punjab. Although the Unionist strategy of getting support from influential personalities helped them, yet the cross-communal alliance of Unionists faced staunch opposition from hardliner belonging to all the three major communities of Punjab. Unionists heavily relied upon the categories created by the Land Alienation Act but for the communitarian activists the whole notion of politics based on tribalism was challenging and revolting. Because for them “claims to political leadership” as Gilmartin put it, “had to be based on religion or political principles”.\textsuperscript{73} Mian Fazl-i-Husain, did not share the views of communitarian politicians. In a speech he tried to counter ‘Indian first, or Muslim first’ debate. He said:-

\textsuperscript{70} Waheed Ahmad, Op.Cit.,p.24
\textsuperscript{71} It is to be noted here that Ajmer, Delhi and Piran Kaliar were outside Punjab, but even their cooperation was considered worth helping. This strengthens view outside forces had also their impact on situation in Punjab.
\textsuperscript{72} Waheed Ahmad, Op. Cit.,p.34
\textsuperscript{73} David Gilmartin , Op. Cit., p.37
“I am a Muhammadan and an Indian at one and the same time. I am one indivisible entity and I can’t be one thing at one time and another one later on.”

But the hardliner Hindus did not agree with the thinking of Mian Fazl-i-Husain, of being a Muslim and Indian at the same time, and they saw him as a Muslim communalist. His appointment as education Minister in the Punjab and his success in getting Lal Chand, a rural Hindu as a minister, alarmed many Hindus. The Mahasabhitès Hindus launched a well organized campaign against Lal Chand and finally succeeded to force him to resign. Urban Hindus also launched campaign against Fazl-i-Husain for his reforms programme as minister regarding the improvement of the educational condition of the Muslim community by offering scholarships and special quotas for them. But as education was vital factor in securing British employment, Husain’s attempts to award the Muslims their due share, brought him in direct confrontation with urban Hindus.

The origin and working of Punjab National Unionist Party can be traced to circumstances under which the British rulers initiated a search for loyal, influential and ‘respectful’ people to support the government, particularly in the rural Punjab, thereby giving it credibility and an extended lease of life. British were afraid of the revolt of native people particularly if it was to coincide with difficulties for British at international scene. As Punjab was the recruiting ground for the British Indian Army and Punjabi soldiers were very good fighters, British wanted to hold them, not through coercion but through persuasion, so that whenever a need arises to act militarily, they could have Punjab’s soldiers at their disposal. British not only were in need of army raised from Punjab for dealing

74 Azim Husain, Op. Cit., p.90
75 LalChand after 1923 elections found guilty of electoral malpractice and was unseated from Council, with in less than six months.
77 Raghuvendra Tanwar., Op. Cit., p.19
with revolts within the geographic boundaries of British India but also needed them to successfully cope with unforeseen circumstances abroad. And as it was envisioned, the Punjab had not let their expectations down as was evident during the First World War. At the same time they were cautious that if the people of the Punjab don’t satisfied with their government then soldiers from the Punjab, which made the bulk of British Indian Army,\textsuperscript{78} could also rise up against government in such case, to make the bad situation a worse.

Anticipating all these dangers, which could become a serious threat to the British set up in India and also for that matter in the Punjab, the British decided to tackle Punjab differently. They knew that it was countryside of province and its inhabitants who contributed their blood for British Indian Army, they rightly concluded that, “Contented rural aristocracy and peasantry was surest way to sustain the loyalty of Indian Army”\textsuperscript{79}. Like Kohinoor Diamond as a part of the British Crown, the Punjab held the same position in the British empire, for not only being supportive to hold grip on the British India, but also upon the extended empire. The military recruited from Punjab was a key to hold control over other British colonies as well. Moreover, the province was also generating a good deal of revenues and because of its rural character, was not posing serious problems for the British administration. For them the province was “critical pillar of British Empire”,\textsuperscript{80} and they were rightly concerned that if this critical pillar became unstable, it will not only jolt, but could also cause, the fall of whole empire. Ian Talbot states that the British tried to create stability in Punjab :-

First by associating the natural leaders of the agricultural tribes with their executive authorities; second by ensuring that the rural leaders

\textsuperscript{78} At out break of First World War, total strength of Indian Army was 152,496, which included about 100,000 Punjabis. During war about 45 per cent of total new recruits came from Punjab.

\textsuperscript{79} Raghuvendra Tanwar, Op. Cit., p.19

\textsuperscript{80} Ibid, p.19
politically control the economic forces, set in by the colonial encouragement of a market oriented culture; third by using the resources which this provided to reward the agriculturist population rather stimulate industrial development\(^8\), fourth by establishing a framework of political representation which institutionalised the division between the ‘agriculturist ‘and ‘non agriculturist’ population.\(^2\)

Distribution of agricultural land was much disproportionate in the Punjab. Figures of 1924\(^3\) show that over fifty eight per cent of cultivators held less than five acres of land while on the other hand forty five per cent of agricultural land of the Punjab was owned by only 8.1 percent of population. The feudal, social, economic, cultural and political nature of rural Punjab was rooted in this marked disproportionate distribution of land.\(^4\) Although the province was a great producer of wheat and cotton,\(^5\) and per capita agricultural out put per annum had increased by forty five percent between the forty years of 1881-1921\(^6\), ninety eight percent of province’s peasantry was in debt.\(^7\) Significantly, it was not only the peasantry with small land holdings, which owed money but a number of big feudal were also victim of this vicious debt circle. The situation of Punjab peasantry viz a viz money lending had reached to an alarming proportion. All India average ratio of money lenders to population was 1:367 but in Punjab it was 1:100.\(^8\) Although the population of the province was only one tenth of Indian

\(^8\) Although British promoted industrial development in other parts of India; Punjab was deliberately Kept out of process, so that the rural character of the province remains unchanged.
\(^2\) Raghuvendra Tanwar, Op. Cit., p.19
\(^3\) Ibid, p.22
\(^4\) Ibid, p.21
\(^5\) “In 1921 the province produced one third of India’s wheat and one third of its cotton”.
Source: Ian Talbot, “Punjab and The Raj”, p.39
\(^6\) Ian Talbot, , Op. Cit., p.39
\(^7\) Raghuvendra Tanwar, Op. Cit., p.23
\(^8\) That one moneylender for three hundred and sixty seven persons was all India average, while in Punjab there was one money lender for one hundred people
population, one fifth of all the money lenders in India were found in Punjab.\textsuperscript{89} In the years 1917-18 while the North West Railway earned Rs 76.4 millions, the major irrigation works earned Rs 26.7 million; the moneylenders of Punjab earned Rs 50 million.\textsuperscript{90} The problem was analogue to a quagmire for the landed classes of the province. The money lending classes were becoming rich and the landholders were fast turning into poor. This financial tilt in favour of non-agricultural classes was to have its impact upon the socio-economic structure of the province. To come out of the debt trap, peasants had finally to transfer their lands to the money lenders, resultantly, the land was slipping out of the peasant’s hands”.\textsuperscript{91} This situation provided the Unionist Party an issue, which not only helped in its creation but also supplied political oxygen to the party throughout the coming years. The situation was posing a serious threat to the rural system of the province and S. S Thorburn, deputy commissioner of Dera Ghazi Khan,\textsuperscript{92} in his book “Mussulmans and Money Lenders in Punjab” warned of unrest, which could follow the transfers of land on large scale.

The British initially considered that the peasantry, which was in debt, was not able to invest capital in agriculture; thereby the agricultural production of the province may not flourish. And it was considered that with the transfer of land to the rich money lending classes, who were able to spare money to be invested in agricultural sector, the agricultural production of the province would boost up to the new heights. But contrary to the expectations, the development in the sector did not take place, because the new owners, despite having capital, did not invest it in agricultural sector. To make the situation worst, they contended to give acquired land on rent to the already defaulted peasantry. Therefore, government’s

\textsuperscript{89} Raghuvendra Tanwar, Op. Cit., p.24
\textsuperscript{90} Ibid, p.24
\textsuperscript{91} Ibid, p.25
\textsuperscript{92} Ibid, p.25
expectations of a likely boost received setback, while on the other hand, “discontentment on an extensive scale in the peasantry worried the government mainly because of the fall-out that such a situation was likely to have on the most sensitive and important institution of the British power in India, the British Indian Army.” 93 As noted above, the large scale recruits of British Indian Army depended upon the peasant classes of the Punjab, an unhappy peasantry meant an important section of the army being discontented, 94 while the British also had to face difficulties in finding new recruits. Therefore, to check the situation and to keep peasants and landowning classes satisfied, the British administration passed the Punjab Land Alienation Act in 1901.

The agriculturist classes welcomed the Act, but it faced opposition from non-agriculturists who claimed that the Act was framed by government to safeguard its good image among the rural population, so that it could not only satisfy the existing forces drawn from Punjab, but also to maintain the ability to suck more recruits from the province. They termed it as a government’s tool to create loyal and grateful subjects. The opponents also termed it a sinister action aimed at dividing urban and rural, so that there could also be a check upon the spread of nationalistic ideas into the countryside of the province. 95 “Lord Rivaz, 96 however, left little doubt as to the motives of the bill when he introduced it in September 1899, saying that it was for those ‘who furnish the flower of the native army’ 97.”

The British very tactfully used different mutually opposing concepts to successfully rule the Punjab like policy of divide and rule and unification of

---

93 Ibid, p.25
94 Ibid, p.25
95 Ibid, p.26
96 Ibid, p.26
certain elements; posed threats and offered honours; put pressures and rewarded symbolically; punished economically and politically and rewarded in these very terms; applied brute power and demonstrated flexibility; tactfully persuaded and directly coerced and applied check on political processes and gradually extended political reforms. They introduced Minto-Morley Reforms in 1909, and within a short decade also launched the Reforms Act of 1919, but these reforms, "in fact were meant for those," who had already been chosen to act as intermediaries for the colonial regime — the elite both rural and urban. Like the Alienation of Land Act 1901, the Reforms Act of 1919 too was essentially only a part of a pre-planned political-cum administrative step. It was therefore, no coincidence that the first Legislative Council (elected 1920) that was constituted as per provisions of the Act of 1919 was almost totally an assembly of rural and urban elite. It was also not surprising that from within its members was formed the Rural Block, which was later renamed as the Punjab National Unionist Party." 98

The birth of Unionist Party though was a tool to implement British policy, yet it would be not fair to ignore the contribution of those people who had joined the party with the belief that it will stand for the development of rural masses and would play its role for equitable distribution of monetary resources. They were also optimistic that not only the party would deal with the debt problem but would also take steps to achieve rightful share in services and educational institutions for rural youth. It was propagation of these issues that enabled Unionist rural elites to win over the support of common peasantry who joined the party with the hope that their problems would be resolved.

Besides, at that hour of history, political awakening was on the rise among peasantry of Punjab. Following First World War, a large number of soldiers had

98 Ibid, p.26
returned back to Punjab with enlightened vision and by learning new concepts through their interaction with other people. Moreover, they were also paid well during war, thus, they had gained strength socially as well as economically. So they generated the new ideas among the poor masses who started aspiring for a future free from exploitation, debt and insecurity. And at the same time when peasantry was seeking for leadership, the Unionists made their debut, with great promises to resolve the problems of poor peasants. So, the peasantry readily joined hands with big land owners and influential people. However, some leading analysts considered this union of very big and very small landowners, as an unholy alliance. One of them noted, “The irony is that even for its emancipation, the poor peasantry of Punjab had no other option than to follow the very people who in the first place were the cause of their plight”. Although the big land holders were the cause of plight of common peasantry and Government also, yet no one was snatching their source of income except the moneylenders, whom they perceived as the greatest threat. They were also not happy with the government policies, but were not powerful enough to stand at their own against all these tyrannies. And the Hobson’s choice for them was to join the struggle initiated by the feudals who shared many of their problems. Therefore, the well calculated and well considered choice for them was to join the feudals. During this period when a large number of political parties emerged in Punjab as a result of growing awareness of socio-economic rights and sense of deprivation, however the Unionist Party differed from all those in terms of scope and objectives. It cut

---

99 Although party was formally launched in 1923, yet from 1921 to 1923 it was in the process of formation.
100 Raguvendra Tanwar Op.Cit, on page 27 has regarded the feudal as the very cause of peasants plight
101 Raguvendra Tanwar, Op. Cit., p.27
across classes and communities, while all the others had class or communal bias.\textsuperscript{102}

Table III

Emergence of Political Parties in Punjab during years 1877-1923\textsuperscript{103}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political Party/ Organization</th>
<th>Year of Foundation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lahore India Association</td>
<td>1877</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian National Congress (Punjab Branch)</td>
<td>1885</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Khalsa Dewan</td>
<td>1902</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim League by Fazl-I-Husain</td>
<td>1906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim Association</td>
<td>1907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All India Muslim League (Punjab Branch)</td>
<td>1907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab Hindu Sabha</td>
<td>1907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Sikh League</td>
<td>1920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mohammadan Rural Party</td>
<td>1921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communist Party</td>
<td>1921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swarajya Party</td>
<td>1922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unionist Party</td>
<td>1923</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unionist Party had however limited it to the rural areas only,\textsuperscript{104} and this basic approach made it “an ideal instrument for the British to isolate the rural population from other streams”.\textsuperscript{105} There was also another role of Party, which served the British interest and it was of working as a glass wall to prevent the ideas of nationalism,\textsuperscript{106} which were gaining popularity among the masses of India as a whole, at that time. British, to keep intact their sword arm, wanted to stop the

\textsuperscript{102} Except Unionist Party, all other parties originating in Punjab during this period were either communal or a class based party, while Unionist Party included people from all notable communities and classes.

\textsuperscript{103} Y. C. Yadav, \textit{Elections in Punjab} (Delhi, 1987), p. 132

\textsuperscript{104} Unionist Party’s limitation was its rural nature. However certain urban leaders also joined the party

\textsuperscript{105} Ian Talbot, p.52

\textsuperscript{106} Here nationalism stands for Indian nationalism, and not the Punjabi nationalism
infiltration of nationalistic ideas, and to a great extent they succeeded in doing so with the help of Unionist Party in the Punjab. It was the influence of Unionist Party, which delayed Indian National Congress and Muslim League to win-over the support of people of the province.\textsuperscript{107}

To institutionalise the rural-urban divide, which was the basis of politics of Unionist Party, the British administration heavily supported the rural classes. The following table demonstrates the predominant rural character of the Legislative Assembly.

\textbf{Table IV}

\textbf{Types of Constituencies in Punjab Legislative Council, 1920}\textsuperscript{108}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designation of Constituency</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Muslims</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindus</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikhs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This division of seats into communal, rural and urban categories further bolstered the division that were already cutting across the Punjab society in many ways. Moreover, the enrolment of voters was so highly limited that just about three per cent of the adult population of the state was given the right to cast a vote. The following criterion was set to be eligible to cast vote.\textsuperscript{109}

\textsuperscript{107} Even as late as 1937 elections, Muslim League and Congress could not achieve success on a fair number of seats in Legislative Assembly

\textsuperscript{108} Raghuvedra Tanwar, \textit{Op.Cit.}, p.29

\textsuperscript{109} Ibid, p.29
Property/ Status/ Qualification of Punjab Legislative Council Voters, 1920

Rural Constituencies:
1) Owner/ Tenant/ Lease of land assessed to land revenue not less than Rs. 27. per annum
2) Zaildar/ Safedposh/ Lamberdar.
3) Income tax payee.
4) Retired (Pensioned/ discharged) officer/ O. R. of her Majesty’s regular forces.

Urban Constituencies:
1) Owner/ Tenant of immovable property not being land, assessed to land revenue but including any building, etc., on it of the value of not less than Rs. 4000 or of rental value of not less than Rs. 96. per annum
2) Payee of Municipal or Cantonment tax amounting to not less than Rs. 50. per annum
3) Income tax payee.
4) Retired (Pensioned/ discharged) officer/ N. C. O., soldier of her Majesty’s regular forces.
5) Possessing the qualification of a rural voter.

Special Constituencies:
1) Landholders constituency.
2) Punjab University Constituency, Fellow/ Honorary Fellow/ Graduate of the University of not less than seven year standing.
3) Industries Constituency, owner or representative/ partner of a factory in Punjab or corporation with a paid up capital of Rs. 25,000.
4) Member of the Chamber of Commerce in Punjab.

Origin of Unionist Party can also be traced out in the special character of the Punjab society. Ian Talbot has suggested that the Punjab society had “two overriding characteristics...its rural nature and co-existence of vigorous Muslim, Hindu and Sikh Communities”. David Ludden had pointed out “the peasant societies are influenced by four types of networks- kinship, religion, and state and

110 Ibid, p.30
111 Ibid, p.29
112 Raghuvendra Tanwar, Op. Cit., p.29
market interactions”.¹¹³ This principle can also be applicable to the Punjab society whose division was not just the result of the attitudes and policies of the British alone but there were other important factors also at work. While religion divided Punjab society into three major groups, tribal or caste bonds tied it as well, producing affinity and affiliation among the members of society belonging to different religious communities. In political development of the Punjab these ties played important role. Moreover, market interaction of same class, rural, also provided a cohesive force to bind rural society under one party. Common cultural legacies and same type of profession were two important bonds to help people to transgress barriers of religion and caste.¹¹⁴ Communities had cultural links spread over period of centuries and that phenomenon was not easily erasable. In addition, the impact of print media was limited in rural areas and therefore, it took very long for cultural links to fade away, contrary to the urban centres. Therefore, inter-communal and cross religious politics of founding leaders of Unionist Party achieved the expected response in rural Punjab. It was then considered that despite communal division a secular approach to politics could be successful because

“...among agrarian communities the cultural and social bond that developed from the ownership of land often overshadowed the differences that emerged from belonging to different communities”.¹¹⁵

It was not just some immaterial force, which provided the basis for Unionist politics but was also the economic dependency upon the political circumstances, which provided cohesive power. In fact the rural people had a
sense of belonging to “common stock”.¹¹⁶ They were well aware of the fact that they belong to the same stock, not only in terms of culture but also and more importantly, in terms of economic activity. Although small peasants and big feudals were far apart in terms of their holdings but they were at the same time closer to each other in terms of their source of income. It was clear to all peasants and feudals that circumstances affecting one will have its impact upon the other as well.¹¹⁷ This thinking brought them closer to each other. Punjab’s population arithmetic¹¹⁸ was not in support of any single community. The Rural Block emerged out of the 1920 election was in fact a further division among the majority community into agricultural and non-agricultural members. Holding the rural members of Muslim community on one platform was in a way, creating division among Muslims, thus weakening the community further, which was already not able to demonstrate simple majority. However, Mian Fazl-i-Husain, the founder of Rural Block was realistic to recognise that Muslims cannot hold power in the province if they were to be united on purely communal basis. The religious composition of the province was dictating for a complete and cross-communal set-up to work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Actual number of adherents</th>
<th>Number per thousand of population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Muslims</td>
<td>12,955,144</td>
<td>506</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindus</td>
<td>9,125,202</td>
<td>357</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹¹⁶ Raghuvendra Tanwar, Op. Cit., p.32
¹¹⁷ These were the political and economic circumstances of the province
¹¹⁸ Muslims were just above fifty percent and were thus not in a commanding position, where as Hindus and Sikhs combined were able to launch a formidable opposition.
The Muslims, according to the statistics in the table above, were just over fifty per cent, while the Hindus and the Sikhs were 35.7 and 12.1 per cent respectively. Moreover the Lucknow Pact had restricted the Muslim seats\textsuperscript{120} in the Punjab Legislative Council to a half of the total. Now after dividing the total of fifty percent of the Muslim members in rural and urban, the proponents of Rural Block, a majority group in the Legislature needed other members as well. These members were to come from the rural members of the Hindu and the Sikh communities. The amalgam of these communities under the banner of uplift of rural areas paved the way for launching the Unionist Party.

Before 1920 elections, Gandhi gave a call for non-cooperation to the British government but his call had negative impact in Punjab where two prominent leaders of the Punjab Congress, i.e. Mian Fazl-i- Husain and Chaudhary Chottu Ram left the Party. Mian Fazal-i-Husain left Congress on the grounds that the call for non-cooperation was harmful for the Muslims of the province; whereas Chottu Ram opined that the call was disadvantageous to the masses. He opined that as the peasantry of the Punjab was economically weak and was unable to confront the government. Both politicians after quitting the Congress, formed a new political party as they felt that Congress was working as only a Hindu organization, while the Muslim League was only the organization of urban Muslim elites. The Muslim League’s urban character\textsuperscript{121} in the province in 1920s, in Punjab, appeared

\textsuperscript{120} The Congress-League Scheme of Reforms, also known as Lucknow Pact of 1916, had limited the representation of Muslims in Punjab Legislative to one half of the elected members of the Council. Source: [G. Allana, Ed., "Pakistan Movement Historical Documents (Lahore: Islamic Book Service, 1976), p.26]

\textsuperscript{121} Muslim League in 1920’s and even in 1950’s was limited to a few urban pockets of Punjab. It was not popular even among masses.
to have worked as a subconscious motivating factor, which gave the Unionist Party its totally pro-rural base.

The Congress withdrew from elections as it was launching non-cooperation movement whereas the Muslim League was unable to move masses thus the Legislative Council elected, a "loyal and obedient"\textsuperscript{122} one for the British. As Mian Fazl-i-Husain\textsuperscript{123} was the most influential member of the newly formed Council, therefore, British not only appointed him as minister, but the choice of second minister was also left with him by the governor, Edward MacIagan.\textsuperscript{124} It was an act to strengthen the position of Fazal-i-Husain and show other members that the British government trusted him. Fazl-i-Husain's political clout with administration and his influence enabled him to bring together thirty-five Muslim members to form Rural Block. The manner in which Fazl-i-Husain attempted to form a vaguely defined coalition to operate on the floor of the Council with common objectives was not a chance attempt, but a well-calculated political strategy.\textsuperscript{125} After securing the trust of the British administration and Muslim members of the Council his (Mian Fazl-i-Husain)\textsuperscript{126} shrewd political foresight made him realize that this support could not suffice if a worthwhile political organization was to be erected in the state. The search for broader credibility, social acceptance and perhaps the requirements of real politik prompted him to start the process of associating Hindus and Sikhs with the 'Rural Block'. This process of assimilation was initiated in the Legislative Council itself when Muslim members of the Rural Block and Hindu and Sikh members from rural

\textsuperscript{122} Firoz Khan Noon, "From Memory" (Lahore: 1969), p.45
\textsuperscript{123} Raghuvendra Tanwar, Op. Cit., p.43
\textsuperscript{124} Ibid, p.43
\textsuperscript{125} Ibid, p.43
\textsuperscript{126} Bracket and words in it have been added to clarify that was the person.
Punjab began pursuing issues and participating in debates in the Council in a united manner.\footnote{127}

This adoption of unified approach on common problems concerning the uplift of rural areas, irrespective of communal affinities led to the birth of Unionist Party. However officially, Punjab National Unionist Party replaced the name of Rural Block only after the Council elections of 1923. Yet practically, the alliance of common, political and economic interest between rural Muslims, rural Hindus and the Sikh members of the Council had come into existence in 1922. As the rural members of the three communities were practically in alliance in 1922,\footnote{128} they contested the election of 1923 on common grounds, though not formally. Common views were presented, a joint manifesto was released and even votes were sought for candidates on party basis.\footnote{129} The election manifesto issued by Mian Fazl-i-Husain for 1923 elections of the Punjab Legislative Council, was revealing the fact that his party, Rural Block by then had formally shed her predominantly Muslim character and had adopted a secular and economy based approach. Some of the important points of the manifesto were as under:

1. To attain dominion status within the British Commonwealth of Nations by constitutional means at an early date.

2. To demonstrate by a statement like working of reforms, that given suitable opportunities and reasonable facilities, Indians are capable to shoulder the responsibilities of self-government.

\footnotetext[127]{Raghuvendra Tanwar, Op. Cit., p.45}
\footnotetext[128]{Ibid, p.46}
\footnotetext[129]{Ibid, p.46}
3. To prove that constructive efforts if directed in a spirit of goodwill and earnestness to the working of reforms can produce results of greater benefit to the community than a case of disdainfulness and destructive criticism.

4. To provide equal opportunities of advance to all and to direct in an increasing measure, the beneficent activities to backward classes and areas with a view to enable them to make good the leeway produced by an ill-conceived or inadvertent policy of neglect in the past.

5. To secure a fair distribution of the burden of provincial taxes between agricultural and other classes.

6. To secure a just and fair representation of all classes and communities in the public services of the province.

7. To check the exploitation of economically backward classes by economically dominant classes.

8. To promote indigenous industries and to encourage the use of Swadeshi\textsuperscript{130} articles.

9. To banish illiteracy from the province.

10. To encourage a policy of decentralization.

11. To encourage the growth of local self-governing institution.

12. To diminish litigation.

13. To secure economy in the administration.

14. To suppress corruption and bribery.

15. To promote temperance.

\textsuperscript{130} Swadeshi means local.
16. To preserve intact the Punjab Land Alienation Act as a measure of protection to backward classes.\textsuperscript{131}

Not only the election manifesto was indicating the secular nature but the presence of Chaudhary Chottu Ram as close associate of Mian Fazl-i-Husain, was reflecting the non-communal nature of the Party. The position that Chaudhary Chottu Ram enjoyed in the political hierarchy also enhanced its acceptability and appeal for the people of the Punjab. The political programme and ideology of party at the launching of the party stated:

"...the new party would improve the condition of the peasantry, backward classes and backward communities living in rural Punjab. It would stand against the exploitation of moneylenders and strive to improve the life in rural areas by opening rural dispensaries, primary schools, high schools, cooperative societies, punchayati system and small committees."\textsuperscript{132}

Although the Unionist party was primarily a rural party, yet its president Mian Fazl-i-Hussain while explaining the objectives of the party declared that the party was not anti-urban. He elaborated:

It was not their intention or objective to pull back the urban areas but to improve the condition of the rural areas and bring them at par with the urban areas. It was never intended to stop urban progress. It could not be anti-urban, merely because it was their policy that when there was little money for development activity and there were two rival schemes, one for urban progress and the other to take the first step towards development in rural areas, a preference was to be shown to the rural scheme. No urban area could remain to be bad. Neglect of one was bound to show on the other, as they are interdependent.\textsuperscript{133}

\textsuperscript{131} Raghuvendra Tanwar, Op. Cit., pp.46-47
\textsuperscript{132} Azim Husain, Op. Cit., p.153
\textsuperscript{133} Raghuvendra Tanwar, Op. Cit., p.50
### Table VI

**Literacy Level of Major Religious Communities of Punjab, 1921**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Punjab/Districts of Punjab</th>
<th>Hindu Males</th>
<th>Hindu Females</th>
<th>Muslim Males</th>
<th>Muslim Females</th>
<th>Sikh Males</th>
<th>Sikh Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hisar</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rohtak</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>347</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gurgaon</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karnal</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jullundur</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ludhiana</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ferozpur</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lahore</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amritsar</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gujranwala</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shiekhupura</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simla</td>
<td>441</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>498</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kangra</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambala</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoshiarpur</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gurdaspur</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sialkot</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gujrat</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>323</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

141 Raghuvendra Tanwar, Op. Cit., p.35
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>413</th>
<th>62</th>
<th>54</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>449</th>
<th>79</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rawalpindi</td>
<td>359</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>438</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attock</td>
<td>403</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>413</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montgomery</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shahpur</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mianwali</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lyalpur</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jhang</td>
<td>412</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>404</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multan</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muzaffargarh</td>
<td>312</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dera Ghazi Khan</td>
<td>378</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The basic philosophy of the Unionist Party was creating and maintaining communal harmony in the province. Its avowed aim was not only to prevent confrontation among various communities but also to promote interaction and solidarity among them. Although foundation of Unionist party was primarily laid for the betterment of rural areas of the province yet its leadership was fully aware that arousal of religious sentiments and communal confrontation could adversely affect its political agenda. So they made every effort to create congenial environment among different religious communities; in fact it was their political compulsion as well. The leadership of the party was aware of the fact that the politics of unionism was directly proportional to the communal harmony, i.e. the more the communal harmony the better would be the chances of flourishing the politics of unionism.\(^\text{142}\)

---

\(^{142}\) Communal harmony was the most important factor for the unionist politics. Because in a highly biased
The Punjab Unionist Party formally set up in 1923, after having won the consecutive elections of 1923 and 1937, had to face humiliating defeat in 1946 elections as is shown in the following table:-

**Table VII**

**Punjab Legislative Assembly, 1946 Election Results**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political Party</th>
<th>Seats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Muslim League</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congress</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unionist Party</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akali Dal</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independents</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The defeat in 1946 election could not bring any significant change in the policies of Unionist Party, however it had to make certain adjustments to meet out the emerging challenges. But fast changing development outside the province of Punjab, have had their impact on the politics of the Punjab. One important development was the increased role of press which helped people coming closer to each other and becoming aware of the problems of their co-religionists at all India level. With the courtesy of press, all the events were made known to the Punjabi Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus alike. If these events were to be presented without bias even then they were able to make their impact but to add fuel to it, communal press presented all events in highly biased fashion. As a result the communalism, which in fact had never gone into oblivion, resurfaced and grew rapidly. Unionists, the flag bearer of communal harmony for two decades, attempted to bridge the gap but things were slipping gradually out of their hands.

---

143 Raghuvendra Tanwar, Op. Cit., p.183
Another important factor was the role of Congress ministries in some provinces of India formed after 1937 elections. Although these ministries resigned in 1939 but their anti-minorities role opened up a new and unending chapter of hostilities among different communities at all India level including Punjab. Even Sikander Hayat, in his private conversation with H.D.Craik, the Government of Punjab, repeatedly expressed his conviction that the "Congress Governments have gradually oppressed the Muslim minorities in their charge."145

At this critical juncture, even international environment was not favourable for the British who were facing humiliation in the hands of Japanese troops in 1942 while Japanese had also captured Singapore, which in Churchill’s words was "the worst disaster and largest capitulation in British history"146. On domestic scene, Congress launched Quit India Movement in August which forced the British to deploy fifty-seven battalions of troops to quell the greatest threat to their rule, since the revolt of 1857.147 In the meanwhile, Cripps Mission, through the principle of provincial option,149 encouraged the idea of Pakistan, which went in favour of the Muslim League which used this edge skilfully in her subsequent dealings with the Unionist Party. Moreover, Muslim League’s importance had also enhanced manifold after the resignation of the Congress Ministries in October 1939. In this context, Sikandar Hayat’s public declaration in 1941, in favour of Lahore Resolution, left the Sikh and Hindu Unionists in

144 H.D.Craik to Lord Linthgow, October 29, 1939, IOR R/3/1/61
145 H.D.Craik to Lord Linthgow, October 29, 1939, IOR R/3/1/61
146 Ian Talbot, OP.Cit., p.114
147 Ibid. p.114
149 The provincial option stated that any province of British India can refuse to join the proposed union, if it wants to do so. Moreover non-accending provinces may join each other to form a union.
150 Ian Talbot, Cit., p.116
151 Ibid. p.117
skepticism.\textsuperscript{150} It enabled the Akalis in Sikhs and Congress in Hindus to propagate that Unionism was in fact aimed at to serve the interests of Muslims only.

The Unionists supported British whole-heartedly during the war yet they could not reap its benefits and ironically their support for War effort went in favour of their opponents. The Muslim masses considered Unionist support to the British war effort as if the unionists were "willing to supper with the devil".\textsuperscript{151} On commercial front, Unionists were again on the losing side as, "...it was Hindu and Sikh commercial classes who were reaping profits from the war, whilst the Unionists' traditional supporters suffered".\textsuperscript{152} Inflation was on the rise during the War years and the Punjab, which was an exporter of food grains, was reported of being short in the very commodity it was exporting.\textsuperscript{153} But as the Unionist government was tied up to the support the war efforts, it could not take adequate remedial steps to improve the situation. It provided the Muslim League, in the words of Talbot, "with a useful stick to beat the Government".\textsuperscript{154}

With the end of War and with the failure to control communalism, the Unionist Party lost its usefulness to the British. Thus, in July 1945 the Punjab Unionist premier Khizer Tiwana felt betrayed by his fellow soldier Wavell.\textsuperscript{155} By this stage "the British shared with the Muslim League and the Congress high commands, the belief that the special pleading of regional interests as represented by the Unionists should not be allowed to stand in the way of an All India

\textsuperscript{150} Ibid. p. 118
\textsuperscript{151} Ibid. p. 118
\textsuperscript{152} Shortage of food grains was reported in thirteen districts of Punjab. While fuel shortage was reported in ten, sugar in six and salt in four districts of province.
\textsuperscript{153} Ian Talbot, \textit{OP.Cit.} p.136
settlement”. Unionists, in a highly charged communal atmosphere, also lost their traditional constituency of ‘pirs’. In 1945, at the time of Urs of Baba Farid, ‘shrine gates’ of paradise’ proved the ‘doors of hell’ for the Party. Sajjada Nasheens assembled on the occasion refused to sign Unionists’ election manifesto. In past, pirs and Sajjada Nasheens used to sign the document. But this time after the refusal from Baba Farid Shrine, “the Unionists had little more luck with the pirs elsewhere”.  

Things were rapidly going out of the hands of the Unionists.

"Whilst the Muslim League was eroding the Unionist positions in the west Punjab, the Congress made major advances in the east" \textsuperscript{161}

Ian Talbot depicted it, in the way that “the Unionist Party was disintegrating like a mud fort in a monsoon”. \textsuperscript{162} The election results announced on February 24, 1946, confirmed that all India parties had squeezed out the Unionists. \textsuperscript{163} Although the Unionists managed to hold on to government till March 2, 1947, \textsuperscript{164} yet the politics of Unionism had been buried in the ballot boxes of 1946 elections. The Punjab by then, 

“had in fact been converted into a kind of ‘boiling pot’ of caste, communal, ethnic, regionalist and most importantly feudalistic politics”. \textsuperscript{165}

\textsuperscript{156} Viscount Wavell was Governor General of India from October 20, 1943 to March 22, 1947.
\textsuperscript{157} Ian Talbot, OP.Cit. p.136
\textsuperscript{158} Urs stands for religious assembly and celebrations
\textsuperscript{159} Shrine of Baba Farid is located in PakPattan, a town near Montgomery
\textsuperscript{160} Sajjada Nasheen stands for a person who accounts for religious activities after death of a saint
\textsuperscript{161} Ian Talbot, OP.Cit. p.175
\textsuperscript{162} Ibid, p.171
\textsuperscript{163} Ibid, p.171
\textsuperscript{164} Ibid, p.196
\textsuperscript{165} Raghuvendra Tanwar, OP.Cit, p.8
CHAPTER- 4
SEARCH FOR SEPARATE SPACE

Before the British occupation of the sub-continent, the Muslims ruled the land for centuries and successfully managed the Hindu majority community. The Hindus, on the other hand, were also comfortable and contented due to just and fair policies of the Muslim rulers of the sub-continent. But with the occupation of Delhi by the British, the Muslim status was badly affected. Being dislodged from the position of authority and finding themselves as a minority, subjected both to the British wrath and the highhandedness of Hindus, the Muslims were finding themselves in troubled waters.

"There was a strain in Indian Muslim attitudes which gave the communal division a peculiar political importance and objective.... From its earliest days, Islam had been a conquering and proselytizing faith. Its tradition in India was one of conquest and empire. The tides and currents of invasion and warfare had flowed to and fro, and great Hindu Kingdoms had risen in the wake of periodic Muslim retreats, up to the time of the Marhatta Empire.... But for many hundreds of years, no Hindu raj had lorded it over Muslims either in all-India or in the great basins of the Indus and the Ganges."

Being stepped down from the position of the rulers to the status of subject marginalized by the Hindu majority, it had become difficult for the Muslims to make adjustments and cope with the emerging

---

1 Since the invasions of the land by Muhammad bin Qasim in 711, Sabuktigin in 977 and Sultan Mahmood of Ghazni in 999, the Muslims gradually strengthened their hold over it. They became the rulers of the land and there was no serious challenge to their rule till the British arrival on the political horizon of India.
situation. Psychologically, the Sikhs in the province of Punjab were passing through the same state of abandonment as Muslims at all India level. Although numerically they stood at number three in Punjab but their recently ended rule over the province had filled in a sense of pride in them. In Hudson’s words: “Pride is less easily sacrificed than even major material interests.” In their folk memory, the Sikhs had been the rulers of the province and not the subjects; the same was the case of the Muslims at national level.

Events of 1857 and the later decades had made both the Muslims and the Sikhs realized that regaining of their lost glory was not an easily achievable objective. They had also learnt from 1857 war of independence that cooperative rather than confrontational policy could be best suited to achieve their objectives. But at the same time, Muslims were conscious of the fact that retreat of British meant domination majority Hindus. Therefore, at all India level a search for separate space began as early as the year 1906, when a delegation of prominent Muslims led by Aga Khan, met Viceroy. The motive of this meeting, as it was evident from its address, was that;

“...the position accorded to Muslim community in any kind of representation, direct or indirect, and in all other ways affecting their status and influence, should be commensurate not merely with their numerical strength but also with their political importance....”

---

4 Ibid. p. 4
5 After realizing the reforms programme is under consideration, Muslims made this move to safeguard their interests. See John Keay India- A History,(London:Harper Collins Publishers, 2002),.468
6 Elliot Gilbert, 4th Earl of Minto, commonly known as Lord Minto was Viceroy at that time. To know the names of British Viceroy and their tenure, see John Keay,Op.Cit, p. 460
7 Syed Razi Wasti, Muslim Struggle for Freedom in British India (Lahore: Book Traders, 1993), p. 96
Punjab was lagging behind in constitutional reforms as compared to eastern provinces. Here Legislative Council was formed. As a result emancipation of political rights was not as discernable in Punjab as were evident in Bengal or other provinces. The other important factor, in this regard, was the demographic factor. Unlike the rest of India where a trinity was at work, with the British at the apex and the Hindus and the Muslims forming the other two angles, the Punjab was experiencing a square of power struggle. In addition to the British, the Muslims and the Hindus, the Sikh factor was transforming the trilogy into a square⁸.

After the introduction of Legislative Council and consequent ‘devolution’ of powers, the Muslims in the British Punjab were sharing power with the Hindus and the Sikhs. The philosophy of Unionism, a tool of the British to safeguard the province from political upheavals, was operative in the province to create congenial atmosphere amongst different communities. Another very important factor, blocking the segregation among the communities of the Punjab, was the absence of threat to be overpowered or dominated by any other community. It was for this reason that a person who later challenged the idea of Indian nationalism, was initially “contributing to the symphony of ‘patriotic’ music with his impartial paean of glorious India, Sare Jahan se acha Hindustan hamara”⁹.

Political consciousness started developing amongst Indians with the start of granting political rights by the British. In this context, “the

---

⁸ Ghulam Hyder, *Pakistan; Some Notes* (Peshwar: ghulam Hyder, 1999), p.25
Council memberships were substantially enlarged through Minto-Morley Reforms\textsuperscript{10}, and the principle of election of the unofficial members was conceded"\textsuperscript{11} It alarmed many Muslim leaders. It was felt that by elections, the Muslim representation would be less than their number and importance. The Congress, the only established political party by then, "was non-communal only in name, as men like Gokhale, Surendrenath Banerjee and Tilak – all Hindus were its leaders."\textsuperscript{12}

The Muslims were politically stirred with the argument of the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms\textsuperscript{13} However, the enlarged opportunities thereafter were, taken seriously by all the three communities\textsuperscript{14} of the Punjab. Mian Fazl-i-Hussain’s efforts to uplift the Muslim community helped it to come at par with other communities of the province.\textsuperscript{15} A Significant development of this period was that the Sikhs had reorganized themselves by liberating their Gurdwaras from the Hindu mahants, thereby establishing themselves as a distinct community.\textsuperscript{16} The Montague-Chelmsford Reforms granted trends of communal politics and the contours of future politics based on separate space for each community started taking a concrete shape as under these reforms

\textsuperscript{10} Towards the end of 1905, liberals came into powering London. They appointed Lord Minto as viceroy of India while John Morley, a liberal scholar was appointed as the secretary of state for India. Since then a programme of reforms was under consideration, which did materialize in the form of Minto-Morley reforms in 1909. John Keay, Op.Cit, p.468

\textsuperscript{11} H V Hudson, Op. Cit. p. 13

\textsuperscript{12} Ibid. p. 14

\textsuperscript{13} Montague-Chelmsford or Mont-Ford Reforms were introduced in 1919. John Keay has given a chronology of the British concessions/reforms in his book "A History of India" (London: HarperCollins Publishers, 2000), p. 478

\textsuperscript{14} H V Hudson, Op. Cit. p. 19

\textsuperscript{15} Sir Syed Ahmad Khan’s efforts created a stir among the Muslims of India. But in fact the uplift of Punjab’s Muslims was a result of the efforts of Mian Fazl-i-Hussain, which he made as the minister of Punjab.

\textsuperscript{16} Hinduism had absorbed many religions in its fold over the time. Sikhism was also under attack over the centuries. As Hindu priests had virtually taken over important Sikh gurdwaras.
“separate electorates were continued, and the introduction of ministerial responsibilities set the two communities at each other’s throat.”

In its annual session, All India Muslim League held in December 1930, Dr. Iqbal delivered his famous address, which could rightly be termed as a turning point not only in the history of the Punjab, but in the history of India as well. He challenged the idea of Indian nationalism intellectually and pointed out that a common and united Indian nation might have emerged “if the teachings of Kabir and the Divine faith of Akbar had seized the imagination of the masses of this country” but it could not happen. On the contrary, he noted that:

“Experience, however shows that the various caste and religious units in India have shown no inclination to sink their respective individualities in a larger whole. Each group is intensely jealous of its collective existence.”

Iqbal’s analysis of the communal relations stressed that inhabitants of India cannot; “afford to part with the monopolies, which circumstances have placed in our hands and conceal our egoism under the cloak of a nationalism, outwardly stimulating a large-hearted patriotism, but inwardly as narrow-minded as a caste or a tribe.”

Dr. Iqbal’s stance of communalism was in fact in much contrast to the narrow concept of communalism, which gets its inspiration from the ill feelings towards other communal groups. In fact his brand of

18 This was 21st session of Muslim League and was held at Allahabad.
19 Bhagat Kabir and Mughal King Akbar had made efforts to unite all the religions of India into one common religion.
20 A R Tariq, Op.Cit.p.9
21 Ibid, p. 9
22 Ibid, p. 10
communalism was based on the principle that "each group is entitled to freely develop on its own lines." He opined that there is a Muslim India within India, because to him India represented a continent of human groups and its units were not territorial as were in case of European countries. Based on this principle, he declared that:

I would like to see the Punjab, NorthWest Frontier Province, Sindh and Baluchistan amalgamated into a single state. Self-government within the British Empire or without the British Empire; the formation of a consolidated North-West Indian Muslim state appears to me to be the final destiny of the Muslims, at least of North-West India.

Being a Punjabi Muslim having a deep understanding of his native province’s politics, he was aware of the after effects of the creation of such a state. Therefore, he was not hesitant to add that: "Exclusion of Ambala division and perhaps of some districts where non-Muslims predominate will make it less extensive and more Muslim in population." He also viewed certain exceptions to some provisions of the Lucknow Pact and stressed that if territorial redistribution was not accepted, the Muslims of the Punjab would not be satisfied with a "less than clear majority" in the provincial council. Hindu newspapers termed it as a "recipe for permanently involving India in civil war." It also labelled this address as a "deadly poison for the peace of

---

23 Ibid, p.10.
24 Ibid. pp. 11-12
25 Ambala division was predominantly Hindu territory
26 Ibid. p. 12
27 Ibid. p. 23-24
28 Kesar, January 1, 1931, NPP
India."\(^{29}\) Reaction from the Muslim press however; was favourable one, as one paper noted that:

"Dr. Iqbal rejects the idea of Hindu-Muslim unity, so far considered to be indispensable for the freedom of India. Not Hindu-Muslim unity, but Hindu-Muslim adjustment is the only key to the situation."\(^{30}\)

Allama Iqbal’s Allahabad address radically transformed the nature of communal relations. In the post Allahabad era, the Muslims abandoned to regard themselves as a minority. Iqbal had advocated that the problem in India was an ‘international’ one, in nature.\(^{31}\) He opined thus, that nations need settlement and not just appeasement of one nation by the other. From the Hindu point of view, Iqbal’s address was a destabilizing factor for the Hindu-Muslim relations.

There is hardly a Hindu who has not spurt venom against the address. The thing is that the address is first successful attack on the Hindu conception\(^{32}\) of ‘nationality’ or the establishment of Hindu Raj in India. Sir Muhammad\(^{33}\) has removed the mask from the secret and hideous moves employed to set up a purely Hindu Raj in India and impose Hindu rule on all non-Hindus, especially the Mussalmans. He does not want to wrest country of the Hindus from them and make it over to the Mussalmans. The Hindu community cannot meet Sir Muhammad’s argument and is atoning for its helplessness by using abusive language for him”.\(^{34}\)

Although the comment of the paper was biased in terms of communal attachments, yet it pointed out that Dr. Iqbal, for the first

\(^{29}\) Bande Matram, December 31, 1930, NPP
\(^{30}\) Light, January 1, 1931, NPP
\(^{31}\) A R Tariq, Op. Cit. p. 28
\(^{32}\) The Hindu conception of nationality was based on geography.
\(^{33}\) Reference to Dr. Muhammad Iqbal.
\(^{34}\) Inqilab, January 15, 1931, NPP
time in the history of the Hindu Muslim relations, had questioned the very conception of Indian nationalism, in such a systematic and ordered way. Iqbal fully understood the repercussions\(^{35}\) of his proposal on the nature of communal relations, particularly in the Punjab. Therefore, he suggested partition of the province on communal lines.

"In the early 1930s, such talk of a separate state, or states, for the Muslims of the subcontinent seemed a far-fetched idea. But the vision was prophetic. However, while the visionary was looking ahead, the Muslim community itself was not. It was not yet prepared for a parting of the ways. That stage may not, in fact, have been reached at all, had Congress shown greater accommodation to the League’s claim of representing Muslims. The Congress displayed unnecessary impatience in its lack of accommodation vis-à-vis the League.\(^{36}\)

Whether Iqbal’s conception was of a Muslim state within or separate from India, is not as important, as is the fact that he asserted with forceful argument for the first time in history, that Muslims were a separate nation in the continent of nations of India. He gave a radical shift to the terminology. It was from ‘communal unity’ to ‘communal settlement’ between two equal parties — two nations. The idea presented by him was forceful and had a momentum in itself. What it needed was a name and an implementation plan. Although the implementation did take place, yet the name emerged much earlier. Rahmat Ali Chaudhary, a student at Cambridge, hailing from the Punjab came up with the name "Pakistan".\(^{37}\) The word Pakistan was carved out by him and was made public through his famous pamphlet

\(^{35}\) The process once started was to become uncontrollable in future; the reversal was not possible.


\(^{37}\) Chaudhary Rehmat Ali was also a son of the Punjab, like Dr. Iqbal.
which was well argued with a title: “Now or Never: Are we live or perish forever?”

Though press at that time was not able to give due importance to the pamphlet, yet it outlined the genesis of modern day Pakistan. Rehmat Ali was outspoken in his attack on Indian nationalism. He pleaded for thirty million Muslims living in the areas of Pakistan who were being sacrificed on the alter of Hindu nationalism.

Rehmat Ali’s works depict first forceful assertion of what later came to be known as the two-nation theory. He wrote:

In the five northern provinces of India out of a total population of about forty millions, we the Muslims constitute about thirty millions. Our religion, culture, history, tradition, economic system, laws of inheritance, accession and marriage are basically and fundamentally different from those of the people living in the rest of India. These differences are not confined to the broad basic principles — far from it they extend to the minutest details of our lives. We do not inter-dine; we do not inter-marry. Our national customs and calendars, even our diet and dress are different.

Rehmat Ali’s strong and forceful arguments and commitment to the cause were having far reaching impact. He was sharp enough to understand that constitutional safeguards could not provide much relief

---


39 Approximate Muslim population of Punjab, Sind, NWFP, Baluchistan and Kashmir combined, at that time.


41 Seventy five per cent

42 Ibid. p. 6
to the Muslims, therefore, he declared that constitutional safeguards, being offered to the Muslims could never be a substitute for the "loss of separate nationality."  

Advent of the decade of 1930s was witnessing radical changes in communal relations. The old and convenient myths regarding Indian nationhood were increasingly being challenged and paradigm shift in thinking was ultimately rephrasing the communal relations in the province Allama Iqbal not only internationalizing the problem of Muslims nationalism but also introduced a new avenue for the Muslims, urging them to quit the previously adopted apologetic mould, regarding their rights. Chaudhary Rehmat Ali's proposal, though neglected in early days, was instrumental in providing the physical space against Indian nationalism. His carving out the name Pakistan provided extra impetus to the Muslim nationalists. Both these Muslim Punjabis came up with the idea to link the destiny of Punjabi Muslims with the Muslims of Sindh, Baluchistan, NWFP and Kashmir. This was a critical shift in the history of the Punjab and for that matter of India, as the focus of thinking was shifting from communal alliance on provincial level to a Muslim alliance at national level. The address of Dr. Iqbal and works of Chaudhary Rehmat Ali acted as catalysts to the development of Muslim nationalism and proved catastrophic for the mythical Indian nationalism.

In 1925, Lord Birkenhead challenged the people of India to produce a consensus constitution. This was a well-calculated move on

---

43 Ibid. p. 8
44 He carved out the name in 1933.
45 Secretary of State for India
46 The historical legacies of hatred among different communities had resurfaced after the collapse of
the part of the British, as they were well aware of the fact that due to intense communal affiliations, any agreed constitution was unlikely. Considering that Indians were unable to produce a consensus constitution, the British felt themselves provided with a carte blanche to impose a constitution on the Indians. Thus, in November 1927 Stanley Baldwin,\(^47\) appointed an all white commission, headed by Sir John Simon to review the Constitution.\(^48\) Many Indian politicians challenged the composition of the commission and All India Muslim League got split over the issue while Muhammad Ali Jinnah supported it, Tej Bahadur Sapru condemned \(^49\) the composition of the Commission. Leading Muslim League leaders from Punjab, particularly Sir Shafi decided to cooperate with the commission as reflect that if the Muslims did not cooperate with the Commission, they would be on the losing end.\(^30\) He opined that:

"I consciously feel that if the full case of the Muslims is not placed before the Simon Commission at this critical juncture, when the Labour Government is in the saddle\(^51\), my nation will suffer for decades to come."\(^52\)

All India Congress also opposed the Simon Commission and greeted its members with a general strike when they landed in Bombay

---

\(^47\) The then prime minister
\(^49\) Ibid, p.202
\(^50\) Ibid. p. 203
\(^51\) It was Labour Government in London which introduced reforms for British India starting from Minto-Morley Reforms.
in February 1928.\textsuperscript{53} The working committee of Congress attempted to achieve a consensus on constitutional documents by organizing an all parties’ conference in February\textsuperscript{54} and again in May the same year.\textsuperscript{55} To break the stalemate on communal issues, Congress formed a special committee under the chairmanship of Moti Lal Nehru in May 1928.\textsuperscript{56}

The report of this committee, popularly known as ‘Nehru Report’ proposed joint electorates instead of separate electorates\textsuperscript{57} which was a complete departure from the already agreed terms of Lucknow Pact of 1916. It was a disturbing development for the Muslims, however a handful of Muslim politicians were willing to accept the proposal, provided some concessions which included the representation in Punjab and Bengal in accordance with the population percentage,\textsuperscript{58} reforms in NWFP and Baluchistan apart from the separation of Sindh from Bombay. In addition, one-third representation of the Muslims was also demanded in the Central Legislature, against 25 per cent seats recommended by the Nehru Report.\textsuperscript{59}

The stance of Congress was crystal clear on these issues. It not only rejected separate electorate but also refused to accept reservation of seats in the Punjab and Bengal. As impasse was not broken, Jinnah tried to convince Congress at all parties’ convention held in December

\textsuperscript{53} The Commission consisted of seven members of British Parliament, paid two prolonged visits to India; The first from Feb 3 to March 31, 1928 and the second from Oct. 11, 1928 to April 13, 1929.

\textsuperscript{54} I H Qureshi, Op. Cit. p. 200

\textsuperscript{55} K K Aziz, \textit{A Chronology of Muslim India – 1700-1947} (Lahore: Ferozsons Ltd., 1997), p. 248


\textsuperscript{58} I H Qureshi, \textit{Op. Cit.} p. 200

\textsuperscript{59} Dr. Muhammad Arif, \textit{Op. Cit.} p.112
1928, to reconsider Nehru Report,\textsuperscript{60} but he could not succeed. David Page has termed Nehru Report as "the end of the road for Hindu-Muslim unity".\textsuperscript{61} From that point onwards, communal relations in Punjab and in India, could not remain the same as these were in old times — fighting with each other but still living together. Thus, the efforts of the Nehru Committee to close the communal breach had, in fact, widened it immensely, and as it turned out later, permanently\textsuperscript{62}. Jinnah, as a reaction to Nehru Report came up with his Fourteen Points\textsuperscript{63} which could be termed as 'the charter of the Muslim quest for separate identity.' The Punjab with its highly communal character was much prone to these changes. The immediate impact of these quick developments was the unification of the Shafi and Jinnah factions of All India Muslim League in March 1929.\textsuperscript{64} Referring to the demands by the Muslims for separate electorates, higher weightage in provincial and central governments as well as in civil services, Stanley Wolpert writes that "It was not yet Pakistan, but almost its early embryo, within a weak federal womb."\textsuperscript{65}

The years 1928 and 1929 witnessed more political upheaval. On the one side were the activities in constitutional arena; on the other was the revival of the terrorist activities. The Punjab became the staging ground of such activities. In December 1928, Bhagat Singh\textsuperscript{66} and his companions shot dead a British officer and also carried out an attack on

\textsuperscript{60} S. Qalb-I-Abid, \textit{Op. Cit.} p. 40
\textsuperscript{61} David Page, \textit{Op. Cit.} p.162
\textsuperscript{62} Dr. Muhammad Arif, "Journey to Freedom" (Lahore: Progressive Publishers, 1991), p.119
\textsuperscript{64} It was quite natural that in face of highhandedness of Hindus, demonstrated in the Nehru Report, the Muslim League factions abolished the differences.
\textsuperscript{65} Stanley Wolpert, "Jinnah of Pakistan" (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1989), p.103
\textsuperscript{66} \textit{Ibid.} p. 151
the Central Assembly in April in 1929. The case is known as Lahore Conspiracy Case. Bhagat Singh and his companions were hanged in March 1931. These terrorist activities or showdown convinced British government that India needed much more than Simon Commission. Therefore, in October 1929, Lord Irwin announced the setting up of a Round Table Conference.

The first session of Round Table Conference was held in London from November 12, 1930 to January 19, 1931. Congress, the most important political party of India, however did not participate because they had launched non-cooperation movement in January 1930. However, Hindu liberals like Sapru and Jayakar and hardliners like B. S. Moonje represented the Hindu community. Aga Khan, M. A. Jinnah, Sir Shafi and Maulana Muhammad Ali represented the Muslims, whereas Sampuren Singh and Ujjal Singh represented the Sikh community. Status of princely states and safeguards for minorities in the future constitution were the two important questions raised in this Session. The Conference paved the way for a federation of princely states and British Indian provinces. On the question of safeguards, the Muslims made it clear that their community would not accept any constitution without safeguards.

---


68 The then Viceroy

69 It was the first session of the Round Table Conference and not the First Round Table Conference as many authors write it mistakenly.


The acceptance of the principle of federalism was an important achievement for the Muslims of the Punjab and Bengal because it made possible for them to envision autonomous provinces within the federation. But as the Muslim majority in both, the Punjab and Bengal was marginal, they demanded constitutional safeguards as well. While the Hindus were willing to offer constitutional safeguards to the Muslims of minority provinces, they were unwilling to offer it to the Muslims of Muslim majority provinces — that is Punjab and Bengal. To make the headway Sir Shafi proposed that Muslims do not insist on 56 per cent and they agree to have 49 per cent seats of the Punjab provincial legislative council through electorates, while having the right to contest two per cent special seats. The Hindus felt that it was perhaps the best possible option to prevent the deadlock; therefore, they did not offer “uncompromising opposition to the proposal.”

But the deadlock persisted as the Sikhs were not prepared to accept less than 24 per cent representation, which would leave only 27 per cent for the Hindus — a ridiculously low percentage for a community that constituted 32 per cent of the population.” Therefore, the Shafi proposal met a failure. Failure of the RTCs (Round Table Conferences) in reaching at any conclusion marked the beginning of a new era in Indian and Punjab politics. In the pre-RTC period members of the Muslim community :-

“used to demonstrate their broad-mind outlook by joining the Muslim League, the Congress and the Khilafat Committee, all at one time. The Round Table Conference

71 Sir Shafi was the most important leader of Muslim League from Punjab.
74 Muslim population in the Punjab was fifty six per cent of the total.
75 Tribune, January 17, 1931, RNPP
76 Ibid.
and the private discussions in London ended this situation for ever."\textsuperscript{77}

The Punjab's communal problem was not confined to Hindu-Muslim affair only rather the Sikh factor was making it a complex triangle. The Sikh reaction to the Muslim demands was very aggressive. One Sikh paper demanded that either the Muslim majority areas be detached from the Punjab or central Punjab be made a separate province if representation was to be given on communal lines.\textsuperscript{78} By March 1931, the Gurumukhi language paper, Akali was demanding 30 per cent representation for the Sikhs,\textsuperscript{79} which was in fact 6 per cent more than the actual population of the community in the province. The Sikh paper went to the extent of declaring that the Sikh community will never tolerate the "rule of the Muslims and will strain every effort to destroy such a rule."\textsuperscript{80} For the Muslims the invention of the Sikh problem owed its origin with the Hindus. A Muslim paper noted that:

"The 'Sikh problem' is only an invention of the Hindu mind. It is one of the cleverest tricks ever devised in the history of India to deprive the Mussalmans of their political power."\textsuperscript{81}

Realizing the debacle and impasse, the government ultimately decided to bring Congress in the Round Table Conference. Therefore, in March 1931, an agreement was reached between Gandhi and Lord Irwin.\textsuperscript{82} Known as Gandhi-Irwin Pact,\textsuperscript{83} under this pact government

\textsuperscript{77} Zafar Imam, Ed. The Musulmaans of the Subcontinent (Lahore: Vanguard Books, 1980), p.41
\textsuperscript{78} Mauji January 19, 1931, RNPP
\textsuperscript{79} Akali-e Pardesi, April 23, 1931, RNPP
\textsuperscript{80} Akali-e Pardesi, April 23, 1931, RNPP
\textsuperscript{81} Muslim Outlook, April 22, 1931, RNPP
\textsuperscript{82} I H Qureshi, Op. Cit. p. 203
\textsuperscript{83} John Keay, Op. Cit. p.488
succeeded to convince Congress to announce discontinuation of the non-cooperation movement and to attend the second session of the Conference. The Muslims did not view this pact as a good development and a Muslim paper while describing it as an ‘Anglo-Hindu peace’ wrote:

“Muslim India now stands at the crossroads. There is the road to eternal servility. There is the road to honourable existence. They have not one more moment to lose. The time for action has come. They must either live or die. The hour of decision has come. The Mussalmans must now have a definite yes or no.”

The second session of Round Table Conference continued from September 7, 1931 to December 1, 1931.\(^\text{85}\) New arrivals included Gandhi, Dr. Iqbal and Madan Mohan Malaviya. This session was important in a sense that it decided on matters like provincial status for NWFP and Sindh, yet the question of minority rights and federal structure remained unresolved. Gandhi pleaded that communal disputes should be put aside and the formulation of constitution should be continued. All the leading minority communities’ representatives, including the Muslims, the Depressed Classes, the Indian Christians, the Anglo-Indians and the resident British Community took counsel together and as a counter to Congress’ scheme of eroding separate electorates, announced a joint statement supporting separate electorates.\(^\text{86}\) Gandhi’s claim that Congress represents all groups of India was not accepted to many participants of the Conference.

---

\(^{84}\) Light, March 8, 1931, RNPP


\(^{86}\) Dr. Muhammad Arif, Op. Cit. p.146
Parleys were held between Gandhi and the Muslim delegates. Iqbal in one of his statements recalled what exactly transpired during those parleys. He stated that Aga Khan even offered to be Gandhi’s camp follower in the political struggle against the British, if he agreed to the Muslim demands. Gandhi expressed his dubious willingness to accept the Muslim demands in his personal capacity and not giving any guarantee that his party will also accept these demands. \(^\text{87}\) Secondly, he demanded that the Muslims should oppose the right of separate electorates for the ‘untouchables’. \(^\text{88}\) These conditions of Gandhi were not favourable of the Muslims, therefore, negotiations led to nowhere and on his return to India, Gandhi resumed Non-Cooperation Movement.

Anticipating the outcome, during the course of second session of Round Table Conference, the British had made it clear that if delegates do not reach a compromise on communal matters, they would be forced to make a provisional arrangement. After the failure of the session it was expected that British would come out with certain package of their own. Therefore, media run by the Muslims pleaded for maintaining separate electorates for the Muslims. They also cited the example of Ceylon where the end of separate Muslim representation had witnessed a decline in the Muslim representation. \(^\text{89}\) It also referred to the case of Malik Barkat Ali who lost the election to Punjab University Senate while his opponent Rao Bahadur P. N. Dutt, despite being a titleholder and a member of bureaucracy, won because communal feelings among

\(^{87}\) Gandhi wanted to get concessions from the Muslims but for the quid pro quo he put the condition of approval of party, which was possible only after the return to India.

\(^{88}\) A R Tariq, Op. Cit. p. 213

\(^{89}\) Eastern Times, April 1, 1932, RNPP
the Hindus members overcame their ‘democratic sentiments.’90 However, the Hindus and the Sikhs were united and firm in their opposition to the Muslim majority in the Punjab Council. Master Tara Singh reportedly took a vow before the Akal Takht that he would rebel against the government if the Muslims were granted a majority in the Punjab Legislature.91

The British government according to its pronouncements, announced Communal Award in August 1932.92 It gave Muslims 48.8 per cent, while Sikhs were offered 18 per cent representation in the Council. Although the Muslim representation was far less than population percentage of 57, in Punjab, the Muslim population was 16,217,242 out of the total population of 28,418,819,93 yet they were compensated by allowing to compete on ten special seats, reserved for landlords, university and labour. The Hindu press apprehended that more than half of those reserved seats would go to the Muslims, making them the majority as per their demand.94

The Muslim media, although satisfied with the arrangement, emphasized that what they were given was still short of what they deserved. They argued that still the Muslim members would require the support of non-Muslim member of the Council to have a working majority.95 The Sikhs were much disappointed of the Award.96 Khalsa Review commented:

---

90 Eastern Times, April 2, 1932, RNPP
91 Inqilab, April 13, 1932, RNPP
93 Statement by the Cabinet Delegation IOR R/3/135.
94 Herald, August 18, 1932, RNPP
95 Eastern Times, August 17, 18 & 19, 1932, RNPP
96 Their demand was 27 to 30 per cent.
“There is nothing left for us now but to raise a standard of wholesome agitation and protest against this partisan Award which reduces us to a state of utter subservience to a community whose record of tyrannies are written in letters of blood.”

Towards the end of 1932, third session of RTC was held but because of absence of Congress it turned out to be a non-event. This session built upon the work already done and finalizing the details, as new initiatives could not be started without the participation of an as important stakeholder as Congress.

The proposals arising out of the three sessions were published as a white paper in March 1933. After its approval from the parliament, a Joint Select Committee was setup to make recommendations on the basis of which a Bill was to be drafted. It was finally on the basis of the report of the Committee that a Bill was introduced in the parliament, which after its approval became Government of India Act 1935. This Act did not alter separate electorate for the Muslims; neither had it changed the communal distribution of seats already laid out in the Communal Award.

After enactment of the new Act, the debate on governor’s power to intervene to protect the minorities of his province started. The Sikhs and the Hindus were against such powers to be given to the governor. While favouring this, Muslim correspondent of the Civil and Military Gazette commented over the issue in following words:

---

97 Sikhs were given representation less than their population percentage.
98 Khalsa Review, August 18, 1932, RNP
101 Dr. Sachin Sen, Birth of Pakistan (Lahore: Book Traders, 1978), p. 114
102 Just ee Syed Shameem Hussain Kadri (Lahore: Army Book Club, 1983), p. 73
"Within reasonable limits, Muslims are prepared to turn the future, but they refuse to allow any safeguards which exist for their protection, to be destroyed at this stage. Though they will only be too glad if the occasion for the use of these safeguards never arises and they became a dead letter through disuse."\textsuperscript{103}

These constitutional battles for the Punjab were a part of a total war waged by each community on all India level to increase her power. However, by the end of 1930s the center of gravity was increasingly shifting towards the provinces. The Punjab being the home of different communities was the key province for the competition of power. The deep communal divide which was revealed by the constitutional debates forewarned about the future. David Page, a renowned writer, felt that by then it was provincial politics, which was revamping the political trends of Indian politics. He has described the state of the Muslim politics in these words:-

"By the end of the 1930s all India Muslim politics had become in essence the sum of the politics of Muslims provincialism, and the all Indian Muslim politicians without a provincial base had either to withdraw from politics or submit to these forces."\textsuperscript{104}

The decade of 1930s witnessed great changes in the Hindu-Muslim relations.\textsuperscript{105} Not only large scale communal riots took place, the demands for partition on communal lines along with debates on constitutional rights for each community gained momentum. Due to the

\textsuperscript{103} Civil and Military Gazette, May 23, 1937
\textsuperscript{104} David Page, \textit{Prelude to Partition}, p. 260
\textsuperscript{105} Dr. Muhammad Arif has named one chapter of his book as \textit{The Decisive Decade -- 1929-1939}, Dr. Muhammad Arif, Op.Cit.
execution of Bhagat Singh, Raj Guru and Sukh Dev in 1931, however, communal sentiments were subsided temporarily. Even those who were opposing such activities were shaken by their execution. Zamindar, a Muslim paper noted:

"It is gratifying to note that those who were bitterly opposed to the line of action adopted by Sardar Bhagat Sigh and his companions have been moved by their sacrifice."

Though there were no adverse comments on the sacrifice of Bhagat Singh and his companions, the revolutionary movement itself soon became the target of criticism. It was alleged that the Revolutionary Party, following the lines of Congress, Mahasabha and Nawjawan Sabha, wanted to establish Hindu rule in India. Thus, soon communal antagonism was revived. The Hindu Youth Conference held in 1931 drew the ireful response from the Muslim press. Hindu hardliners like B. S. Moonji publicly categorized three enemies of the Hindus i.e., the British, the Muslims, and the Hindu pundits. The participants were advised to "follow the footsteps of Banda Bairagi and not allow the Mussalmans to erect mosques on thoroughfares." Muslim papers commented that such hard line views were not restricted to a few fanatics but the 'infection' had spread in the whole Hindu community. On the other hand, the Hindus had their own grievances.

---

107 Zamindar, March 25 & 26, 1931, RNPP
108 Light, April 8, 1931, RNPP
110 B. S. Moonji was a Hindu Mahasabhitte hardliner.
111 Zamindar, May 14 & 15, 1931, NPP
112 Zamindar, May 14 & 15, 1931, NPP
The murder of another Hindu author at Calcutta113 by the Muslims, for alleged blasphemy in one of his books gave the Hindu hard liners another opportunity to spread hatred against the Muslims. Complaining the Muslims' thinking, a Hindus newspaper opined that the Muslims were "thinking of establishing Islamic rule" and wanted to "make it difficult for the Hindus to live in the Punjab."114

In such communal enriched environment, the news of the Hindu-Muslim riots in Sikandarabad, where the Hindus suffered at the hands of the Muslims, came as a useful weapon to be used by the Hindu hardliners. Both parties accused each other of initiating and committing major crimes. The clash was between the Muslim landlord and the Hindu moneylender. After the incident, the Hindus strongly complained that lives and property of the Hindus in the Punjab villages was not safe. Describing the impact of incident, one Hindu paper noted:

Accounts of Sikandarabad riot shared to what extent the Mussalmans of the Punjab are prepared to commit murder and bloodshed. The Hindus of this place are so harassed that they are thinking of leaving it through fear. In the neighbouring districts of Jhang, Muzaffargarh and Mianwali, the Mussalmans have driven the Hindus into a tight corner and their lives have become burdensome. Muslim preachers go about preaching against the Hindus in the villages. Venom is being spurted against the sahukars115 and shopkeepers. There are police stations in the villages, but almost the whole police staff is Muslim.116

---

113 Bhola Nath Sen was murdered for his blasphemous write up.
114 Prakash, May 24, NPP
115 Sahukar means money lenders
116 The Hindu, July 13, 1931, NPP
In 1931 a Hindu police constable desecrated the Holy Quran in Kashmir which led to large scale disturbances throughout the state. Ma’lis-i-Ahrar, organized mainly by urban Muslims and the ulema, termed the defense of Kashmiri Muslims as the defense of Islam and sent people to support Muslims physically against the Hindu Maharaja. The Hindus considered it a great conspiracy of the Muslims to destabilize the Hindu Raja. The Hindu press noted that “under the cover of Muslim rights, a mentality is developing, the sole aim of which is to injure the Hindus.” Another paper wrote that “Kashmir is a Hindu state” and certain “mischievous Muslim agitators” from the Punjab are “responsible for the agitation.” The Tribune went even further and stated that:

At the bottom of this engineered agitation there are two sinister ideas. One is to divert attention from the burning issues of India’s constitutional deliverance. The other is to further the professed aim of Iqbal school to have a chain of provinces and states under Muslim Raj in the North-west India.

Considering the strength of agitation and the support of the Punjabi Muslims, Hindu papers demanded that there should be no attempt to communalize the administration of Kashmir, or politically empowering of communal majority. They argued that if such developments take place in Kashmir, Hindu India could not stay aloof

---

118 Milap, July 16, 1931, RNPP
119 Pratap, July 13, 1931, RNPP
120 At that epoch of history, sessions of Round Table Conference were also being conducted.
121 Tribune, August 8, 1931, NPP
and would be bound to intervene as being an all out majority in the country.\textsuperscript{122}

In the early 1932, the \textit{Ahrar} Movement started losing momentum, yet the religious emotional idealism initiated by it could not be curbed.\textsuperscript{123} Ahrar movement had radical impact upon communal relations in the Punjab. In December 1931, Hindu-Muslim riot broke out in Lahore\textsuperscript{124} for which Ahrars were held responsible, by the Hindu press, while the Muslim press linked the beginning of riots to the Mahasabhite mentality of the Hindus. These attacks and counter attacks were having spiraling effect on the deteriorating communal relations in the province. The following extract from a Muslim paper depicts the communally charged atmosphere of the province at the time. Anything done to injure the cause of minority is called nationalism, in the Hindu lexicon. If you want to be a nationalist sell your eman\textsuperscript{125} at the hands of Gandhi, live on the Congress stipends, revolt against your religion, crucify the interest of your community, wear Khuddar\textsuperscript{126} and delude the world with the false name of ‘nationalist.’ If you cannot do so, you are a traitor, communalist, Tory and what not. The nationalism of a Hindu is to aggrandize his community but the same ‘ism’ with a Muslim means self aggrandizement, treason with the community and support to the abominable Congress’ cause to exploit the Muslims with the aid of British bayonets.\textsuperscript{127}

\textsuperscript{122} Tribune, November 19, 1931, NPP
Wilfred Cantwell Smith, “Modern Islam in India: Social Analysis” (New Delhi: Usha
Publications, 1985), p. 271
\textsuperscript{124} K K Aziz, Op.Cit p. 275
\textsuperscript{125} Eman means Faith
\textsuperscript{126} Khuddar is a form of cloth.
\textsuperscript{127} Muslim Advocate, January 9, 1933, NPP
Ironically the Hindus, the most advanced and industrious community of the Punjab, believed that they were confronted with a majority, which was "lay" because it has been "spoon-fed, slow to change, ego-centric and educationally backward". It is a fact that Muslims were backward both in economic and educational fields. For that very reason they demanded separate communal representation even in higher services but such Muslim demands were termed as "monstrously iniquitous" by the Hindus. So at the issuance of a resolution in 1934 by the Home Department, regarding the representation of the Muslims and other minorities in the services, Hindu press was quick to criticize it. Targeting the Muslims directly, Hindu papers named Iqbal and Haji Rahim Bakhsh, and wondered whether they were willing to pay taxes in the same proportion in which they demanded representation in the services.

The atmosphere was so highly charged in the Punjab that it facilitated moots from both sides for partitioning the province on communal lines. The Hindus wanted to divide the province in such a way that the majority of the Muslims could be neutralized. The Eastern Times was severely critical of a proposal from Mahasabhite Hincus to detach some Eastern districts from the Punjab and form a new province with Delhi as its capital. The Hindus, of course were

---

128 Eastern Times, May 18, 1933, NPP
129 The Tribune, November 9, 1933, NPP
Both were active in demanding separate communal representation for the Muslims in all tiers of services.
131 Milap, July 10, 1934, NPP
132 They wanted to separate Dera Jats from Punjab so that percentage of Muslims in the province could be reduced.
133 Eastern Districts of the Punjab were having a majority of non-Muslims.
134 Eastern Times, December 22, 1932, RNPP
‘blaming’ the Muslims for conspiring to establish ‘Pakistan’. An interesting proposal, however mooted by the daily Herald, surfaced in 1935. The paper concluded that the solution to the communal problem lied in the partitioning of the province. However, it proposed that Muslim majority districts of Derajats should be inducted in NWFP and the rest of province should be given to the Hindus and the Sikhs. The Muslim reaction to this merciless proposal was quite harsh. A Muslim paper made it vividly clear that either the

“whole of India will split up in hundreds of parts” or the Punjab will remain intact and “Hindus will have reluctantly to accept Muslim majority”.

Conspiracy theories were so much in vogue that even the ordinary statement of Sir Sikandar Hayat urging various groups in the province to work together, was questioned for having communal underpinnings. The Tribune stressed that in the same statement, Sir Sikandar appealed the Muslims to unite and this was itself defeating the purpose of statement. It further argued that:-

“If the communal problem in the Punjab and in India is ever to be solved, it can only be on the basis of the different communities splitting up into sections for political purposes. To do otherwise meant that Sir Sikandar was giving a message to Hindus and Sikhs to be prepared to be ruled by a solid Muslim majority in the province.”

Thus, 1930s suspicion had completely altered the trust of the early 1920s. Although not having clear demarcation of geographical boundaries,

---

135 Ibid. June 14, 1933, RNPP
136 Herald, January 15, 1933, RNPP
137 Inqilab, January 17, 1935, RNPP
138 Tribune, June 1, 1935, RNPP
both parties—the Hindus and the Muslims, were advocating partition. A real social divide had taken place as a vanguard of physical divide, which was to follow. Communitarian press was even hindering cooperation with the ‘enemy’ community at the time of trial. The Muslims were advised by the press not to cooperate with the Quetta Relief Committee, working for the 1935 earthquake victims, labeling Congress as the “unrepresentative of the community.”

Although they never came as closer to each other to be regarded as a single nation, Khilafat Movement however, had created some thing like an Indian nationalist bond between the Hindus and the Muslims. But the failure of movement proved to be a watershed for aggressive communalism. At this hour of trial, the Muslims were in very odd position. They were disunited and disorganized. Maulana Maududi opined :-

Despondency prevailed among Muslims during 1924-1937, plunging them into a grave crisis. With the failure of Khilafat Movement, communal riots had erupted. The Muslims themselves had fallen prey to dissensions and discords. They had neither a genuine leader who could be relied upon, nor they had any vision of a definite goal to pursue. They were fighting among themselves. On the other hand the Hindus under the leadership of Gandhiji had organized themselves and exploited the situation against the Muslims. Gandhiji was guarding their interests and the Congress designs became apparent. The Muslims had reposed their confidence in Gandhiji but he betrayed their trust. Therefore the faith that Muslims had in his impartiality and fairness was totally smashed and his hypocrisy still exposed.

139 The committee was set up by Congress.
140 Eastern Times, July 2, 1935, RNPP
141 The period between fall of Khilafat Movement and elections 1937
In this gloomy period, there was practically no representative voice of the Muslims. All India Muslim League had split into two factions. M. A. Jinnah, leader of League, became so desperate that he quit India to settle in England. In the mean time, there was a growth of regional Muslim parties like Ahrar-i-Islam,\textsuperscript{143} the Khaksar\textsuperscript{144} and the Khudai Khidmatgar.\textsuperscript{145} Of these, activities of Khaksars had grown to such an extent that the Government considered notifying it as an unlawful association in the Punjab.\textsuperscript{146} Although these parties further weakened the already fragile position of League, yet they infused a spirit and pride of Muslim-hood in the community. They also provided experience of political organization and agitation of their own. Unlike Khilafat Movement, this time the Muslims were themselves masters of their fate. The League in turn successfully utilized the spirit and experience of these regional parties in the later years.

Apart from these parties some individual personalities also worked to infuse the spirit among Muslims. Maulana Maududi was a notable among those who gave intellectual leadership to the Muslims. As the Congress was propagating the slogans of Indian nationalism, socialism and atheism, Maulana Maududi was keen to know and describe the outcome of it for the Muslims of subcontinent. He opined that:

"We cannot support the nationalists in their struggle for freedom because it was more accused than the slavery of the English people...."\textsuperscript{147}

Despite his later leanings towards Congress, he pointed out that the Congress' claim for democracy and Indian nationalism were poisonous for

\textsuperscript{142} Ahrar means independent
\textsuperscript{143} Khaksar stands for humble
\textsuperscript{144} Khudai Khidmatgar stands for volunteer servants
\textsuperscript{145} The Khaksar Movement in India, Reuter message, dated June 7, 1941, IOR L/1/1/626
\textsuperscript{147} Syed Mohammad Zulqurnain Zaidi, \textit{Op. Cit.}
the Muslim, as these referred towards a united democratic India where the Muslims will always remain subjected to the Hindu majority rule.

"The rule of democracy as conceived and practiced by the Indian National Congress would forever give three votes to the Hindus and only one vote to the Muslims."\(^{148}\)

He considered that a combination of democracy and Indian nationalism was not workable in Indian case. He opined that:

"Hindu nationalism and Indian nationalism should not be merged together. A democratic system in which two nations of different complexions are united together, will obviously lead to the assertion of hegemony by the bigger nation over the smaller one. The bigger nation will be self-determined while the smaller will be helpless."\(^{149}\)

As far as the Muslim nation was concerned they should have political power because without political power no society could keep itself intact. All political and religious leaders of Muslims had failed to understand the real problems of the Muslims.

"Those who were Muslims and wanted to remain Muslims should give up the idea of nationalism. They must disassociate themselves from the movement which wanted to dissolve Islamic nationalism into territorial nationalism…."\(^{150}\)

Maulana Maududi not only identified the problem but also proposed certain alternatives to meet the challenges. He proposed that to produce a democratic state on sound footings in India, an international federation or a state of federated nations should be established or autonomous states should be demarcated within India, for different nations. He also identified certain

---

\(^{148}\) Ibid. p. 379  
\(^{149}\) Ibid. pp. 379-380  
\(^{150}\) Ibid. p. 380
areas, which should be given to the Muslims under this scheme. Moreover, if both earlier options\textsuperscript{151} were not applicable then there should be separate national federal states, one for the Hindus and the other for the Muslims. In the last of mentioned options, he had roughly recommended nation state for the Muslims of India. This was along the same lines, which were lately followed by the Muslim League in Pakistan Resolution, though in a round about way.\textsuperscript{152} Maulana Maududi stressed the urgency and necessity of organizing the Muslims into a political power so that they could assume and maintain a character of a distinct nation. He exposed the games being played by the Congress to besool the Muslim masses. He also criticized the ulama and other Muslim leaders who were in support of Congress, for their short sightedness.\textsuperscript{153}

Lahore Resolution of 1940 had a striking similarity with the proposals adumbrated by Maulana Maududi in his writings of 1939.\textsuperscript{154} Therefore, it could be argued that in building the Muslim mind so clear about their destination, Maududi might had a some what indirect role. His writings could have influenced the people, which were responsible for drafting the resolution. Although, instead of appreciating the resolution, he adopted very hostile attitude towards it, yet his indirect involvement in the process of search for a separate space, is not negligible.

In the words of Maulana, the choice for the Muslims at that fateful and critical juncture of history was not between life and liberty, but it was between suicide and death. He was fearful for the Muslims of that stage

\textsuperscript{151} Options were: a) State of federated nations, b) Autonomous states within India for different nations and c) Separate national federal states for Hindus and Muslims.

\textsuperscript{152} He outlined these options in 1939.

\textsuperscript{153} Syed Mohammad Zulqarnain Zaidi, Op. Cit. p. 381

\textsuperscript{154} Ibid, p. 382
which Sir Syed Ahmad had foreseen eight decades back. The scenario imagined by Sir Syed is worth quoting, as he said:

Suppose the British and all their forces leave India lock, stock and barrel, taking away with them all their guns and ammunition and advanced weapons of war, who will then rule India? Will the Hindus and the Muslims occupy the seat of authority on an equal footage? Not at all. It will be unavoidable that the one should overpower the other.\textsuperscript{155} ....

Sir Syed’s fears, then presented by Maulana Maududi were fast becoming reality as Jawaharlal Nehru was then declaring:

"Those political or cultural institutions that stand in the way of proposed change should be obliterated."\textsuperscript{156} He was also quick to force that "When the majority decides to change the social order, it is not necessary that it should consult the minority."\textsuperscript{157}

The Hindus in the province wanted to keep the Punjab and India intact. They wanted the British to leave India. As the British had started the process of ‘democratization’, they were sure to be the masters of land once the British quit it. They had a long-standing wish to over-power the Muslims and then reconvert them back to the fold of Hinduism.\textsuperscript{158} From the Muslim point of view, a democratic India without the presence of British was a horrible scene to imagine. They were well aware of the Hindu minds. They considered rightly that the process set by British would continue even after their departure. The Muslim leaders thought that then they will be on mercy of the Hindus. Although they were a majority in the Punjab yet their number

\textsuperscript{155} Ibid, p. 388
\textsuperscript{156} Ibid, p.388
\textsuperscript{157} Ibid, p.388
\textsuperscript{158} Beverly Nichols, \textit{Verdict on India} (Lahore: Book Traders, nd),n.p.
was not much more than the combined opposition of the Hindus and the Sikhs. Therefore, a feeling had developed that if Punjab remained united and independence is awarded to India, there could be no functional majority of Muslims even in this province. Moreover, the Muslim government of the province would also have to face the government of the Hindus in Center. Thinking was therefore, developing fast among the Muslim masses that an independent, democratic and united India was very dangerous to the interests of the community in the future. Hindu high-handedness, the hate based statements of their leaders and particularly the working\textsuperscript{159} of Congress ministries pushed the Muslims to search for alternatives. Search for separate space was exclusively Muslim drive but the Hindus, through their attitude towards Muslims, provided the propulsive power for it. Jawahar Lal Nehru, in his book noted that the essential spirit of Hinduism is “to live and let live”:\textsuperscript{160} The Muslims wanted to coexist with the Hindus but their bad experiences gave them many hard lessons. They learnt that practically ‘to live and let live’ was non-existent in Hinduism. The genuine fear of Hindu domination had pushed the Muslims to look for safeguards, and eventually to search for separate space. Having witnessed the Hindu attitude during the functioning of the Congress ministries, the Muslims believed that their real fight was against the Hindus. Cognizant of the fact that only forty five million British had practically swallowed the whole world by becoming powerful, they feared that:

“if these 22 crore Hindus, who are equally advanced in learning, intelligence and wealth as in number, if they become powerful,

\textsuperscript{159} In the working of Congress ministries there were many irritants for Muslims, like the compulsion of signing Bande Matram. “When Quaid-i-Azam protested against this song in a written communication to Nehru, the latter replied that ‘popular songs are not made to order, nor can they be successfully imposed, they grow out of public sentiments’. I H Qureshi, Op. Cit., p. 210

\textsuperscript{160} Jawahar Lal Nehru
then they will swallow Muslim India and gradually even Egypt, Turkey, Kabul, Mecca, Medina and other Muslim principalities....”\textsuperscript{161}

\textsuperscript{161} Dr. B R Ambedkar, “Pakistan or the Partition of India”, (Lahore: Book Traders, 1976), p.265
CHAPTER - 5

PARTING OF THE WAYS

Muslims in India succeeded in prospering and maintaining a separate and distinct identity and survived continued attempts of the Hindus to absorb them into the religious fold of Hinduism. Before Islam every religion that entered India was engulfed by Hinduism due to its flexibility to reshape itself and accommodate the new religion into it, ultimately diminishing the true identity of that religion. But Islam and its followers did not meet the same fate because of strong and unstinted belief system of Islam as well as the politically dominant position of Muslims enjoyed in India over the centuries\(^1\). Due to the status enjoyed by the Muslims as rulers and their policies based on justice kept the relationship between the Hindus and the Muslims as cordial. However, with the end of the Mughal rule\(^2\) and the dominance of the British on the Indian political landscape, the relations between two communities fell apart and in the process a situation developed even in one of the most ‘calm’ provinces of India\(^3\), the Punjab, which has been depicted in ‘Freedom at Midnight’ as:

It was a conclusion, the sudden, shattering collapse of a society. One act provoked another, one horror fed

\(^1\) Muslims entered the subcontinent as victorious nation and they remained rulers till the arrival of the British

\(^2\) Although the Mughal rule formally ended in 1857, however, a few decades after the death of last great Mughal emperor Aurangzeb, the Mughals began losing grip over the affairs of the state.

\(^3\) While the other provinces of India were facing communal competition and fights, the Punjab under the Unionist party was relatively calm.
another, each slaughter begot its successor, each riot its imitator, each atrocity its counterpart, until like slow-motion images of a building disintegrated under the impact of an explosion, the walls of Punjab society crumbled upon each other.  

But this ‘societal conflict and religious conflict’ was not a sudden and spontaneous phenomenon. Its roots, infact dates back to antipathy of centuries which could not die down even during the period of homogeneity and coexistence, although Muslims’ rule had mellowed it to a great extent. The advent of the British as the ruler of India and their subsequent introduction of political reforms aroused, political consciousness among the local communities which became unmanageable with the passage of time and the situation reached to a point of no-return and a split became the only feasible option.

In the wake of rising communal consciousness, India became the battlefield of communalists but the Punjab was a relatively peaceful province under the Unionists. However, fast changing developments at national level started disturbing the political equilibrium in the Punjab as well where the Unionists started negotiations with All India Muslim League, hitherto labelled and opposed by the Unionist Party because of its communal nature. But the non-communal structure of the Unionist Party had become a major obstacle in the way of the Unionist-Muslim League understanding. In fact the tussle with Ahrars in the mid 1930’s also “stemmed from the fact that the Unionists refused to separate the socio-political interests

---

of different religious groups in the Punjab". But it is a fact, endorsed by many historians that the Unionist programme and its verbal pronouncements were not in harmony with each other. The Unionists, along with promoting the interests of all communities, focused to improve the conditions of the Muslims in the province particularly in the field of education, economics and services. Thus, the Unionist attempts to uplift the Muslims, while maintaining the verbal commitment to a non-communal policy was bound to backfire.

Following the displacement of Mian Fazl-i-Hussain from the political scene in Punjab, this dichotomy became more conspicuous. Sardar Sikandar Hayat Khan had become the premier of the Punjab, on non-communal platform, formed a cross-communal cabinet while advocating the Punjabi cause. But at the same time, he tried to cultivate All-India Muslim League. The net result was that the Unionist alliance, a prime factor maintaining political equilibrium in the province, faced a serious set back and an anarchical situation prevailed throughout the province. Sikander-Jinnah Pact, which was then termed as the "shining hour of Sikander's political career, proved to be the beginning of an end of the Unionist Party."

During the decades of Unionist's rule in Punjab, provincial All India Muslim League was not effective enough to hold its ground. Therefore, Mian Fazl-i-Hussain and other Unionist leaders faced strong resistance from the Hindus and the impact of the policies of

---

5 Ifikhar Malik, Op.Cit p. 35
6 Main Fazl-i-Hussain during his Ministry took special measures to uplift the Muslim community of the province. He fixed quotas for the Muslims in services and colleges.
Miar. Fazl-i-Hussain invited criticism by Mahasbha as well.\(^8\) Communalist Hindus said that “Chottu Ram\(^9\) is in fact a Muslim at the heart”.\(^10\) Another paper wrote that: “By selecting Chaudhary Chottu Ram, Sir Malcolm Hailey\(^11\) has made a great mistake …Chottu Ram will be a puppet in the hands of Fazl-i-Hussain”.\(^12\)

But despite strong Hindu criticism, the Unionists managed to run their affairs smoothly. In the mid 1930s, however, the stakes of the Unionists seemed to be even higher. The elections held under 1935 Act gave the Unionists a big majority. The new Ministry which sworn in on 1937 had the support of one hundred and twenty members in a house of one hundred and seventy five.\(^13\) This was a phenomenal success for Sikandar Hayat, who in the preceding years had not only made his position stronger than the founder of the party, but also had managed to contest elections without any split in the party despite tacit competition for the leadership in the party.\(^14\) Sardar Sikandar Hayat also managed to get support of minority leaders like Sunder Singh Majitha of the Khalsa Party and of Chaudhary Chottu Ram, the co-founder of the Unionist Party and representative of agriculturist Hindus. In fact, such was his commitment that attempts by Hindu and Sikh leaders to break ranks with the Unionists evoked a sharp rebuke from him.\(^15\) But in the following years, he could not keep the power of unionists intact and Chaudhary Chottu Ram was the only major

---

\(^{8}\) Zarina Salamat, Op.Cit p.157  
\(^{9}\) A prominent leader in the Unionist Party  
\(^{10}\) Haryana Tilak, a Hindu Paper quoted by S. Qalb-i-Abid, Op.Cit p.84  
\(^{11}\) The then Governor of the Punjab  
\(^{13}\) Qalb-I-Abid, Op. Cit P.189  
\(^{14}\) Ibid., pp.180-182  
\(^{15}\) Agriloctri & Malik, *A Profile in Courage*, pp. 30-31
non-Muslim leader which did not desert the party till his death in 1945. He was instrumental in the passage of legislation like registration of money lenders Act, in 1938, which was aimed at uplifting the land holders — the prime constituency of the Unionists. However, such efforts had their reactions in the Hindus, as they were the community whose interests were being threatened by such legislation. Chottu Ram was criticized by the Hindu press which dubbed him as a ‘bania hater’.\textsuperscript{16}

As the Unionists were a binding force in the Punjab, it is important to note that what kind of thinking was the guiding principle for the unionist leaders.

The most prominent non-Muslim leader in the Unionist party, Chaudhary Chottu Ram’s alliance with the pre-dominantly Muslim party, was not based on any principle of secularism. His address to the Punjab Merchants Association in 1940 gave some insight into the mindset that was at play in the Unionist ranks. He said :-

It is true that distinction between urban population and rural population, which is more or less identical with the distinction between commercial classes and agricultural classes has come into existence. But no body can deny that this distinction proceeds upon a well organized difference between two sets of economic interests, nor can any reasonable person deny that line of economic division is twenty times better than a distinction between one section of a community and another on the basis of religious belief. In fact, I will even go to the extent of suggesting that economic

\textsuperscript{16} Ibid, p. 34
interest as a basis for the formation of parties provides a truer and healthier principle of party grouping in the present circumstances in the country than any other principle that I can conceive of.¹⁷

The argument is identical to that of the Congress line of the primacy of economic interests in national life. The Muslim nationalist perspective on that issue had already been stated by Dr. Mohammad Iqbal, who declared very clearly that culture and not only economics, holds key importance in the life of a nation.¹⁸ The Unionist alliance was not only in economic fields but also narrowly based on class interests. Mian Fazl-i-Hussain’s dream of creation of a ‘non-communal, non-tribal and non-residential,’¹⁹ party realized only limited success. At the pinnacle of Unionist power, the most prominent non-Muslim Unionists were allied with the Muslims dominated party only because of narrow class interests. In the new circumstances, the forces of religious nationalism increasingly attacked these narrow class interests. Chottu Ram, at another occasion, stated his point of view on religion and politics. He opined that, “religion must be divorced from politics, and political organization must proceed on the basis of economic interests”.²⁰ In the same speech, he admitted that he started his political career as a ‘communalist’ but later on his “class interest proved so strong and overpowering” that they “completely submerged” his

---

¹⁷ Ibid, p. 36
¹⁸ Letters of Iqbal to Jinnah (Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1942), p.14, NDC. nd
²⁰ Agnihotri & Malik Op.Cit p. 66
communalism. Unfortunately, for him, all his co-religionists and the followers of the other communities in the province did not share this overpowering of ‘communalist tendencies’.

The Hindu thought in the Punjab in the late 1920s moved fast towards militancy. Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh founded in 1925, had its branches in many districts of the Punjab by 1938. In the same year, Dr Moonje, a hard-line Hindu leader came to Lahore to bring together various Hindu semi-military organizations. By the year 1940, the enrolment had risen to one thousand. But even more disturbing was the fact that propaganda parties were being sent to rural areas for enrolment of volunteers. RSS’ ideology was based on the belief that whole of India was the land of the Hindus and the Muslims were foreigners and intruders.

Communal currents had tightly gripped the Hindu community in the province but Chottu Ram was neglecting them. As the things moved, it was only a matter of time before religious sentiments overtook “class interests”, and with the growing consciousness among the Muslims and a strengthened Pakistan movement put Chottu Ram’s loyalty with the Unionists’ cause under serious strain. Changed circumstances made him declare: “In any matter related with Hinduism, I yield to none in my loyalty to Hinduism”. In an earlier article on the demand of Pakistan, he wrote: “If Muslim minorities can not tolerate the rule of non-Muslim

---

21 Ibid, p. 68
22 Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh, (Lahore: n.p, 1948)
23 Ibid.,
24 Ibid.
25 Agnihotri & Malik Op.Cit p. 56
majorities, how can Muslim majorities expect non-Muslim minorities to develop a love for the rule of Muslim majorities?\textsuperscript{26}

After the official announcement of 1935 Act, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, leader of All India Muslim League toured Punjab, on the invitation of Dr. Muhammad Iqbal who had asked him to build a broad Muslim coalition to contest the upcoming elections. While keeping him updated on the situation in the province, Iqbal also suggested him the following in a letter:-

Sir Sikandar Hayat left Lahore a day or two before. I think he will meet you in Bombay and have a talk with you about certain matters of importance. Daultana saw me yesterday. He told me that Muslim members of the Unionist Party are prepared to accept the following declaration: ‘that in all matters specific to the Muslim community as an all India minority, they will be bound by the decision of the League and will never make any party with any non-Muslim group in the provincial assembly,’ provided the League (provincial) makes the following declaration: ‘that those returned to the provincial assembly on League ticket will cooperate with that party and group that has the largest number of Muslims.’ Please let me know at your earliest convenience what you think of this proposal. Also let me know the result of your talks with Sir Sikandar Hayat. If

\textsuperscript{26} Ibid, p. 55
you succeed in convincing him, he may come to our side.\textsuperscript{27}

The suggestion, the content of the letter and its tone depicts that during this period Iqbal was working hard to carve out an alliance of the Muslim leaders. However, the Unionist Muslims did not share the keenness with Iqbal. In fact the Unionists, conscious of their strong position, were confident of winning the elections without the support of the Muslim League.\textsuperscript{28} They were not wrong in their calculations and were able to achieve an overwhelming victory in the elections. But the new situation on All India level in the wake of elections portrayed a worrisome scenario for the Unionists. Congress rule in seven provinces and its attempts to crush the Muslim League and all other Muslim voices through ‘mass contact’ campaign created a bleak scenario which sent a stir among the Muslim Unionists. The Unionists were anticipating a crisis for identity. The frustration of the Unionist leadership is evident in the statement by Ahmad Yar Khan Daultana “The creeds of the Unionist Party and of Congress are identical with the only difference of the constructive and destructive method of working”.\textsuperscript{29}

As the Congress was directly challenging the Unionists in the Punjab, the Unionists became very cautious. The fear that small Hindu groups of the Unionist party may defect the party, or some Muslim leaders of the Party may join the Congress, created apprehensions

\textsuperscript{27} Letters of Iqbal to Jinnah Op.Cit p. 11
\textsuperscript{28} Iftikhar Malik, Op.Cit, p. 48
\textsuperscript{29} Civil and Military Gazette, May 23, 1937
among the Unionists. The Unionists were then in the most testing time since the inception of the party as efforts to forge an alliance with the Muslim League would have meant breaking ranks with the non-Muslims. On the other side, struggling against the Congress on a purely non-communal platform would require an end to the class based ideology, which was at the root cause of Unionism. It was not possible to maintain Unionist Party as an alliance of the land holders and yet counter successfully Congress’ mass contact campaign. By now Unionists began to realize that they need the support of League to prevent the Congress onslaught. This was an urgent need, as the articulate urban Hindu class and the Punjab press dominated by this class was strongly pro-Congress in their orientation. Thus, the Unionist leadership was facing crucial and urgent choices. They were at the sloppy crossroads, where opting a way was necessary and immediate. They either had to build a genuinely cross communal alliance which protected the interests of all classes or they had to form a strong Muslim block. However, they remained unable to make quick and final choice, thus creating difficulty for the survival of the Party. Their class biases restricted their political vision and ultimately it led to their collapse. The Congress leaders were not allowing them time, as one leader said: “It appears to me that there is no minority problem in India. The only minority community in India is that of supporters of government, belonging to all communities, but who want British supremacy in their own interests”.


\(^{31}\) Civil and Military Gazette, May 23, 1937
The challenge was real and the basis of challenge was solid. The Unionists needed a partner at the centre to counter the Congress’ march. Efforts to conclude Sikandar-Jinnah Pact were attempts to maintain Unionists hold on power in the Punjab and to check the Congress onslaught. The Unionists thus, started their efforts to reach some understanding with the Muslim League. For instance, Chief Parliamentary Secretary of the Punjab, Ahmad Yar Khan Daultana supported the League while drawing a line between ‘All India’ and ‘provincial’ problems. He argued that their differences with League were only on the question of breaking a non communal alliance in the province. He added that Unionists supported Jinnah and the League on ‘All India’ level with regard to the problems faced by the Muslims.32

The new political climate was pushing Unionists to enter in a dichotomy: joining a communal party at the centre while maintaining non-communal postures at the provincial levels. This contradiction was bound to create problems for Unionists in future. The Pact was not in the form of a legal document but a statement by Sikandar Hayat read at League Council meeting in 1937,33 in the presence of Jinnah who agreed to its text.34

The Pact suggested that the Unionists acknowledge the supremacy of the Muslim League, at least in matters related to the Muslim interests, and agreed that both the Unionists and the Muslim

32 Ibid, pp. 498-9
33 Ibid, p. 511
Leaguers would act jointly in any forthcoming elections or by-elections. This was reinforced by a statement made by Sardar Sikandar Hayat in which he strongly advised the Muslim Unionists to work closely with the League. It was not a merger but the reshaping of the situation, which favoured the League as its weightage was being increased. Although the Unionist Party tried its best to maintain the cross-communal appearance of their alliance, it was coming under increasing attack. Hindu leaders were asking to the Unionists on what basis the Muslim Unionists can ask their Hindu fellows not to join the Congress while they have joined the League. Sikander-Jinnah Pact, thus devoid the Unionists of their claim of being a non-communal alliance. Although at that stage, some non-Muslim Unionists like Chottu Ram were of the view that fear of the Congress domination was more than the fear of Muslim aggression and tried to allay Hindu fears by arguing that the League cannot run the province without non-Muslim co-operation but the damage was done. Although the Pact was not guided by any ideological shift towards the Muslims, it was the fact that every passing moment was taking away the Unionists strength.

Ahrar movement supporting the cause of Kashmiri Muslims, and Shaheed Ganj Mosque campaign, radicalized the Muslim politics in the province. It was not possible for the Unionist leadership to ignore the growing communal sentiments amongst Muslims. The

38 Emerson to Lord Linlithgow Oct.21,1937, IOR/3/1/2
39 Ibid, p. 521
40 Emerson to Lord Linlithgow, Dec 18, 1937, IOR R/3/1/2
support that Ahrars mustered on the Shaheed Ganj issue and the resultant pressure on the Unionist government in the Punjab had shaken the confidence of the Unionist leadership, and there were visible dissensions in the party ranks. The Ahrars made an important contribution in sharpening the Muslim consciousness in the rural as well as urban areas of the province.41 The rural-urban barrier that was tactfully erected and masterly protected by the British and the Unionists was no more there. Communitarians started multiplying in urban as well as in rural areas. The Muslims, in face of Congress threat became much protective. The Muslim anger against the Congress is evident in the following excerpt from a letter published in Civil and Military Gazette :-

So long as the Congress shuts its eyes and sees no Hindu-Muslim question, nothing can happen. The treatment meted out to the depressed classes is before us. The Muslmans cannot commit suicide by joining the Congress — a purely communal Hindu body .... Now that the Musalmans are about to organize themselves, the Congress has started the nefarious game of causing disruption amongst them. Every move by the Congress has a sinister meaning for the Musalmans42.

With the increasing efforts by the Congress to get hold of the Punjab, the resistance to it was also increasing. The Congress’ brand of nationalism was being questioned. The symbols flaunted by the Congress as ‘national’ were being attacked. For instance, Civil and

41 Emerson to Lord Linlithgow, Jan 11,1938, IOR R/3/1/59
42 Civil and Military Gazette, May 22, 1937
Military Gazette in its editorial comment questioned the parading of the Congress flag as the flag of India. It argued that since “it is not the flag of the millions of Muslims and other communities, it is a misuse of the term to call it a national flag.” This perception helped “intensifying communal feeling generally and Muslim determination not to tolerate Hindu domination in particular.” Despite Sikandar Jinnah Pact, the Unionists were hell bent upon preventing both the Congress and the Muslim League to increase their influence in the province because the increase of their influence meant a decrease in Unionist political support.

To prevent the Muslim League to get space to manoeuvre, Sikandar Hayat wanted that 1938 session of the Muslim League should not be held at Lahore, despite the wishes of Dr.Iqbal to do so. Sikandar Hayat warned Jinnah that a communal riot may erupt in the province because of the Shaheed Gunj issue. But the fact was that the Unionist government was more interested to safeguard its support. Unionists’ discomfort with the rising sentiments of communalism was matched by its disliking for the Congress’ brand of nationalism. The Unionists wanted to maintain their maximum autonomy in the province as, Sikandar Hayat opposed to convene a constituent assembly for settling the communal and minority problems. For negotiating the communal rights he wanted that the powers should be entrusted to a few leaders instead of debating the issue in the assembly.

---

43 Civil and Military Gazette, May 23, 1937
44 Cr.a.k to Linlithgow, June 12, 1939 IOR R/3/1/61
46 Civil and Military Gazette, December 17, 1939
Sikandar Hayat’s scheme of Indian Federation, made public in 1939, he proposed the creation of an “All-India Federation on regional basis,” which was to be demarcated into seven zones. The Punjab was in the zone seven, which included Punjab, Sind, NWFP, Kashmir, Punjab States, Balochistan, Bikaner and Jaisalmer. It was proposed that each zone should have its legislature and the representatives of various regional legislatures were to constitute the federal assembly. The zonal Scheme was not a declaration of secession from India but it certainly was an important milestone, as the most prominent Muslim leader of the most important Muslim majority province of India – the Punjab, propounded it.

The Muslim League was rapidly moving towards radical solutions by then. In the 1939 session of the League at Patna a resolution was adopted which opposed the scheme of federation in the 1935 Act. The reason given was that the “scheme has utterly failed to safeguard even the elementary rights of the Muslim minorities in various provinces.” By October 22, 1939 the Working Committee of the League made its position even more clearer: “The opposition of the Muslim League is not merely to the ‘details’ of the plans embodied in the Act of 1935 and the reconsideration therefore, but their demand is that entire problem of India’s future constitution should be wholly examined and revised ‘de novo’.”

Although Sikandar Hayat’s Zonal Scheme was not ‘communal’ in the strict sense of the word yet its close resemblance to Iqbal’s ideas and Chaudhary Rehmat Ali’s Pakistan scheme could not be

---

49 Ibid, p. 216
missed. Sikandar Hayat, as a member of the League Working Committee, was certainly the guiding force behind the proposals for reviewing the 1935 Act. However the suggestion for re-organizing the Indian federation with greater provincial autonomy was bound to be used in a different manner by the Muslim nationalists\textsuperscript{50}.

However, the situation was still very gloomy. Sikandar Hayat urged Jinnah to adopt a "constructive approach" in early 1940\textsuperscript{51}. Obviously, he realized that the plans for having maximum autonomy could not be materialized unless a concrete scheme is given by the League. Thus in a confidential telegram to Sikandar Hayat, Liaquat Ali Khan tried to allay his fears. The telegram apart from asserting that Muslims are a "nation" and "not a minority in the ordinary sense of the word" also stated: "Those zones which are composed of majority of Mussalmans in the physical map of India should be constituted into Independent Dominions in direct relationship with Great Britain."\textsuperscript{52} It appears that by that time Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan was also convinced of the idea of creating some sort of separate state or region for the Muslims. Ikrar Ali Malik in his book has published a preliminary draft of the 1940 Resolution, which he opines was presented by Sikandar Hayat Khan as it closely resembles to his Zonal Scheme\textsuperscript{53}. The preliminary draft, apart from stating that the constitutional plan be recognized as de novo, warned that no new plan

\textsuperscript{50} Ibid, p. 218
\textsuperscript{51} Ibid, p. 250
\textsuperscript{52} Ibid, p. 230
\textsuperscript{53} Ibid, pp. 280-3
will be acceptable unless “the units are completely autonomous and
sovereign”\textsuperscript{54}. The document noted:

Contiguous units are demarcated into regions which will
be so constituted that provinces in which the Muslims are
numerically in majority as in the North-Western and
Eastern zones of India are grouped in regions, in such a
manner as not to reduce the Muslims to a state of equality
or minority therein\textsuperscript{55}.

In addition, the draft also envisioned giving residuary powers to
the units\textsuperscript{56}. But Sikandar Hayat’s inspiration came not from the new
ideas of Muslim nationhood which had gripped the Punjab. He was
still talking in terms of a non-communal and an autonomous Punjab.
For instance, while explaining the Lahore Resolution he said :-

We do not ask for freedom that there may be Muslim Raj here
and Hindu \textit{Raj} elsewhere. If that is what Pakistan means in the
Punjab, then I will have nothing to do with it.... If you want
real freedom for the Punjab that is to say a Punjab in which
every community will have its due share in the economic and
administrative fields as partners in a common, then that Punjab
will not be Pakistan, but Punjab, land of five rivers\textsuperscript{57}.

Unfortunately, for Sikandar Hayat a demarcation of region
where the Muslims were in majority was the main point in the 1940
Resolution. Perhaps he was coming across with the fundamental
contradictions of the Unionist position, for the first time. But it was a

\textsuperscript{54} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{55} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{56} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{57} Ifikhar Malik, Op.Cit, p. 179
belated realization. Pakistan was exactly what he was denying it to be. The new state was to be a Muslim dominated country with adequate safeguards for the minorities. The 1940 Resolution had changed the nature of relationship between different religious communities. It was no longer the issue of harmonious relations between communities sharing a territory. It was now a nation asking for self-determination. The minorities in the Punjab had to negotiate with the Punjabi Muslims as a part of a wider religious grouping. Although Unionism remained important in the Punjab for yet another six years, a Muslim state centered in the province was becoming the aspiration and goal of more and more Muslims. The stages of living together and searching for separate space were over.

With the growing consciousness of self-community at all India level, the Unionists’ grip in the Punjab began to lose. In lessening the Unionists hold on Punjab and enhancing the influence of the Muslim League in the province of Punjab, Dr. Iqbal “played a conspicuous part though it was not revealed at that time”\textsuperscript{58}. In order to consolidate the influence of the Muslim League in the Punjab, Iqbal convinced Jinnah for a separate federation of the Muslim provinces as early as 1937. He stressed that to secure the future of the Muslims of India, it is an imperative that the country should be redistributed in a way that one or more Muslim states with absolute majorities could be coined. Dr. Iqbal not only provided the philosophical foundations, but he “also took effective steps to realize this objective”.\textsuperscript{59} Since 1936, he had been unceasingly persuading the Muslim Unionists to join the


\textsuperscript{59} Ibid.
Muslim League. In a letter to Jinnah he wrote that the Muslim members of the Unionist Party were prepared to declare that: “In all matters specific to the Muslim Community as an all-India minority, they will be bound by the decision of the League”⁶⁰. In bringing the Muslim members of Unionist Party closer to the Muslim League, he played an important role. It was made possible only through his efforts that in 1937 he could inform Jinnah that “a strong contingent from the Punjab is expected to attend Lucknow session of the League. The Unionist Muslims were also making preparations to attend under the leadership of Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan”.⁶¹

Unionist Party which by then had been the stanch opponent to the growth of the Muslim League’s influence in the province now began to come closer to it. The primary reason for this rapprochement was the common threat; a threat of extinction. Iqbal in one of his statements quoted Maulana Roomi, who said: “Common sentiments are preferable to a common language”.⁶² The bond between different communities which formed the Unionist Party was the common interest. Now that interest began to fade while the Muslims began realizing that their fate was linked with that of the other Muslims, living in different parts of India.

On the part of Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan, joining hands with all India Muslim League was not an easy decision, particularly at a time when the Unionists were enjoying a solid majority of 119 members in

---

a house of 175.  

Once the hands were joined and the Muslim members of the Unionist Party were made subject to the discipline of the Muslim League, an irreversible process began, where the strength and influence of the Muslim League began to grow in the province with each passing day. Atrocities of the Congress Ministries in other provinces and objections of non-Muslims Unionist on their Muslim premier helped the Muslim League to gain popular support in the province. At some points, Sir Sikandar objected the policy of the League particularly he put his objections on Lahore Resolution of 1940. However, he was cognizant of the fact that he had crossed the Rubicon. He did not want to take risk of his political career by quitting its alliance with the Muslim League, as it appeared to him very difficult to wean his followers away from the League camp...."  

The 1946 elections proved to be turning point in the history of the Punjab. Muslim League secured seventy three seats in the Punjab Provincial Legislative Assembly, out of a total of eighty five constituencies where it contested. Whereas out of ninety-nine candidates the Unionist Party could bag only nineteen seats. "The Muslim League polled 75.26 per cent votes whereas the Unionist Party polled only 26.61 per cent votes". It was in total contrast with the 1937 results when the Muslim League was able to win only two seats in the Punjab Legislature. The relative strength in Provincial Legislative Assembly was as follows:  

---

63 Dr. Kirpal Singh, Op.Cit, p. xvii  
64 Ibid, p. xvii  
65 Ibid, p. xix  
66 H.W. Emerson to Llandrindod, Feb 22, 1937, IOR R/3/1/1  
67 Press Information Bureau Services No. 22, dated March 05, 1946, pp. 5, 10 & 12
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Seats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Muslim League</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unionist Party</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congress</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akalis</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independents</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Despite the landslide victory of the Muslim League in 1946 elections, Sir Khizar Hayat formed a coalition ministry with the support of the Akalis and the Congress but this had a reverse effect. The Muslim masses became more firm in their belief that the Congress did not want to give political space to the Muslim League, which they believed was the only representative party of the Muslims of India. Had Sir Khizar not formed the ministry with the help of the Congress, and the League leaders would have been left with some hope of office, they would have their stakes in going along with the other parties. But the Congress was jumping in, merely to block the Muslim League’s coming into power, left very unpleasant marks on the conscious of the League’s Leaders. The results of 1946 elections had made it aptly clear that the Muslims of the Punjab were firm in their support for the Muslim League and were aspiring to establish Pakistan, with the Punjab as a part of it.

The Sikh and the Hindus of the province feared that if Pakistan was established with the Punjab as one of its provinces, they would become a voiceless minority of the Punjab. Therefore, they demanded the creation of a Sikh-Hindu province. The fear of the Sikh and the
Hindu communities was evident in the following excerpt from ‘A case for a New Sikh-Hindu province in the Punjab’:\n
If this demand is not conceded, it will mean the ruin of the Hindu martial as well as commercial classes under the permanent domination of those who believe in their being a separate nation. Similarly the Sikh, 95 percent of whose world population resides in the Punjab will become politically extinct. A people who, not hundred years ago, were the rulers of this land would become subservient to those who they had conquered and ruled. This is unjust, unfair and preposterous and shall not be permitted. Therefore, by the right of self determination, by the right of majority and by the inherent rights of a culturally homogenous people to live their own life, the division of the Punjab is absolutely essential.\n
While the new contours of inter-communal relationship were emerging, the Sikhs decided to make alliance with the Hindus. The Muslim League’s resolution passed in Bombay also made some impact in bringing the Sikhs into closer relationship with the Congress in the Punjab. The conviction that prevented the Sikhs to join the Muslims can be understood from the Sikh psyche. The Sikhs perhaps could not forget the bad memories of their enmity with the Mughal rulers during 18th century. Referring to the Muslim rule of 18th centuries, in all Gurdwaras, the Sikhs “repeat the prayer, ‘Hail all

69 E.M.Jenkins to Lord Wavell, August 3, 1946, IOR R/3/1/135
70 Ibid.
those who were tortured to death by removing their skins from their bodies”.

Despite aligning with the Hindus, the Sikhs also tried to assert their separate identity. Master Tara Singh, in his letter to Sir Stafford Cripps advocated for the Sikh province, while using all psychological tactics. It was during the World War years, when he wrote:-

You cannot refuse to give a child half a loaf of bread on the ground that he cannot digest the full loaf. The Sikhs certainly cannot dominate in any decently large portion of the country and hence they do not demand domination. But a big province, much bigger than many of the existing provinces, in area, population and wealth can certainly be carved out in which the Sikhs are dominated by no single community. We do not want domination, we cannot have it. This does not mean that we should not be given protection which we can have. If you can separate provinces from India for the domination of the Muslims, why you refuse to separate a big area for the protection of the Sikhs from the rule of a single community.

Using the psychological tactics, against the British who were engaged in World War at that time, and badly needed Indian soldiers, Master Tara Singh said: “I may let you know that it is being talked everywhere among the Sikhs that they are between two fires. They are to have Japanistan in case of defeat and Pakistan in case of victory.

---

71 Dr. Kirpal Singh, Op.Cit, p. xxii
You can well imagine what effect this frame of mind can have upon the Sikh morale.”

Parting of the ways had its intellectual, social, ideological, geographic, demographic, cultural and historical roots. Quaid-i-Azam once said that the foundations of Pakistan were laid “on the very day when the first Indian had embraced Islam.” It was indeed consistently hostile attitude of the Hindus which accentuated and shaped the contours of our national identity. Cultural values, religious beliefs and practices of the Muslims kept alive a strong sense of national identity among the Muslims of the Punjab.

Next to the Quran and Hadith, study of history played a major role in shaping the national identity of the Muslims. The Muslims could not break their relationship with their past and their co-believers in other lands outside India. This kept the Muslims of India separate from the other Indian communities. The study of history gave them an awareness of their rise and fall, which helped them in improving their present and working for a bright tomorrow. Islamic faith provided strength to vitalise the political struggle of the Muslim. The view of Muhammad Ali Jinnah, in this regard is noteworthy. He opined that “The demand for a separate homeland did not comprise the concept of mere territory but rather it signified the feeling that the Muslims should have a region where they could preserve their religion and cultural values”.

---

73 Ibid., 3.10
74 Speech at a lunch hosted by Dr. Zia-ud-Din Ahmad, Vice Chancellor, Muslim University Aligarh, dated March 08, 1944, “Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah”, collected and edited by Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad Vol. II, p.2
75 Dr. Waheed Quraishi, Op.Cit, pp. 4-5
76 Ibid, p. 8
Parting of the ways' stage came after the failure of the Muslim in having separate space for them in the political field. M A Jinnah, who was the champion of the Hindu-Muslim alliance, and had played vital role in concluding Lucknow Pact of 1916, did not change his views overnight. It was the frustrations and desperations of decades that helped him, Dr. Iqbal and other Muslim leaders to change their views. Iqbal who was a great flag bearer of Indian nationality in his early age, in his poem Makhzan in 1905, is found to be mixing the minarets' call with the ringing of temple bells. He said:

You think that God is in the idols
Come let us inscribe the word Hindustan
On the forehead of this idol
And recall the songs forgotten.77

This was an age of Iqbal where he was supporter of eradication of communal differences to pave the way to Indian common nationalism. "Although he disdained idol worship, practiced by the Hincus, he welcomed the idol of motherland, only because it seemed to hold the promise of uniting the diverse people into a single nation. But after Iqbal's study of western nationalism, and having new experiences, the 'good old days' were washed away from his memory. He deeply studied western nationalism and discerned all its meanings embodied in the creed of Indian National Congress. He himself admits that :-

Writings of the Western authors made it clear to me that the imperialistic designs of the west are aimed at the disruption of the unity of Islam and there could be no

---

77 Ibid. pp. 14-15
better device than the propagation of the European nationalism towards this end. 78

In an interview with the Bombay Chronicle in 1931, Iqbal admitted that during his youth days he held nationalistic views, which were changed subsequently. He said:

There is no doubt that my ideas about nationalism have undergone a definite change. In my college days I was a zealous nationalist, which I am not now. The change is due to mature thinking. It is unfortunate that my later writings are all in Persian, which is little understood in this country. 79

By the year 1932, Dr. Iqbal had arrived at the conclusion that "demand for a separate country was the only possible solution to the problem of the Indian Muslim". 80 It is important that parting of the ways should not be mixed with exclusion from a bigger whole. In fact the Muslims of the Punjab and other parts of the country never became part of any bigger Indian nationality. All along the Muslim history in the Indian lands, the Muslims remained conscious of their distinctness.

But it is also a reality that this consciousness of distinctness hardly formed full expression on political forums. One possible explanation for the absence of political expression of separateness could be the status that the Muslims enjoyed in India till the advent of the British in India and till the occupation of the Punjab by the Sikhs. But once they realized that not only their status has been lost, but their

79 Ibid.
80 Dr. waheed Quraishi, Op.Cit, p. 64
separateness is also under threat, they quickly reverted to handle the situation politically. However, on the philosophical field, developing of the two nation theory’s foundations started since 1890. In the development of the philosophical foundation, following efforts are listed by Dr. Waheed Quraishi, as important ones: 81

1. Article by Abdul Haleem Sharar, in the Journal “Tahzeeb” (1890)
2. Article by Theodore Morrison (1899)
3. The Map furnished by L.F in ‘Delhi Express’ (1914)
4. Lecture of Chaudhary Rahmat Ali, in Bazm-e-Shibli (1915)
5. The proposal of Khairi Brothers, in the Socialist International held at Stockholm. (1917)
6. Letter of Abdul Qadir Badaoni, to Gandhi (1920)
7. Statement of Maulana Hasrat Mohani (1921 & 1924)
9. Article by ‘Bhai Perma Nand,’ in ‘Ayra Samaj’ (1923)
10. Statement of Sardar Gul Khan (1923 – 1924)
11. Article by Lala Lajpat Rai, in “Tribune”. (1924)
12. Statements of Maulana Muhammad Ali (1925)
13. Writing of Archibold (July 1925)
15. Article by the resident representative of ‘The Times’ in India (March 1928)
16. Article by Sir Aga Khan in All Parties Conference (1928).
17. Article by Sir Aga Khan, in ‘The Times’ (October 12-13 1928)

81 Ibid, p. 102
18. Speech made by Sir Aga Khan at All Parties Conference held at Delhi (Jan 01, 1929)

19. Article in the 'Empire Review' (December 19, 1928)

Although the sense of separateness — in philosophical and psychical terms — was present, however, the idea was not used in political context. The concept was restricted only to social, religious and other spheres. Until the year 1933, "this awareness had come to a section of educated class only".82 Even in 1937 elections, the masses and majority of the Muslims in the Punjab were not aware of the danger of extinction from the political scene. Although Chaudhary Rehman Ali's pamphlet 'Now or Never' and Iqbal's presidential address at Allahabad were well known, however, the Muslims in Punjab voted in favour of non-communal party — the Unionist Party. The Muslim League, a Muslim nationalist party could succeed only in winning one seat in the Punjab, which was an expression that the Muslims as a community in Punjab were not in favour of any parting of the ways from the other communities. It was the result of 1937 elections and role of the Congress Ministries which forced the Muslims to change their stance. The Congress not only refused to include the Muslim League in its ministries but also launched a massive campaign to erode the support of Muslim Leaders. This not only threatened the position of the Muslim League, but also the Unionist Party in the province of Punjab where Sir Sikandar joined hands with the Muslim League. By the beginning of 1940, the Muslims got realized that Act of 1935 will destroy their national

82 Ibid., p. 101
Working Committee of Muslim League took certain steps after its annual session of 1938, which were approved in the opening paragraph of the Lahore Resolution of 1940. Before the 1940 session of Muslim League, Quaid-i-Azam wrote an article elaborating the decisions taken after 1938 annual session, with respect to 1935 Act. After highlighting the dangers inherent in 1935 Act, to rectify the situation, he wrote:

What is remedy? The British people must realize that unqualified western democracy is totally unsuited for India and attempts to import it must cease. In India it must be accepted that party government is not suitable and that all governments, central or provincial, must be governments that represent all sections of the people. In this connection All India Muslim League has laid down the following broad principles:

1. The British government should review and revise the entire problem of India’s future constitution denovo in the light of the experience gained by the working of the present provincial constitutions and developments that have taken place since 1939 or which may take place hereafter.

2. While the Muslim League stands for a free India, it is irrevocably opposed to any federal

---

83 Ibid, pp. 144-5
84 Time and Tide, dated January 19, 1940
objective which must necessarily result in majority community rule, under the guise of democracy and a parliamentary system of government.

3. No declaration regarding the constitutional advancement for India should be made without the consent and approval of the All-India Muslim League, nor can any constitution be framed and finally adopted by His Majesty's Government and British parliament without such consent and approval.

To conclude, a constitution must be evolved that recognizes that there are in India, two nations who both must share the governance of this common motherland.  

The year 1928 was particularly very important with regard to the future of communal relations. Nehru Report worked as a decisive and permanent wedge between the Hindus and the Muslims. Although Muslims still tried not to part their ways, but rigid stance of the Congress and its inflexible behavior sparked a new thought among the Muslims. Nehru Report not only rejected separate electorates on the ground that it makes majority independent of the minority will. Regarding the question of reservation of seats on the basic of population, the Report noted that “general reservation of seats for any

---


community ... is a full recognition of communalism and differs little from communal electorate".\textsuperscript{87} Weightage, which was agreed in the Lucknow Pact, was disallowed stating that: "Such representation is only possible in separate electorates and has no place in joint or mixed electorates."\textsuperscript{88} The report was openly bias towards the Muslims as it recommended that "The Muslims are a little less than one-fifth of the total population of British India and they cannot be allowed reservation over and above that proportion in the Central Legislature".\textsuperscript{89}

The report was in fact aimed at pushing the Muslims to the wall. They were given no space for manoeuvering. Therefore, the Muslim reaction to the Report was highly unfavourable. "The Nehru Report was the last straw for the Congress-Muslim relationship."\textsuperscript{90} Reservation of seats and separate electorates, which were denied to the Muslims in the Report, "were insisted by the Muslims as the absolute minimum which could be accepted".\textsuperscript{91}

Sir Shafi, the leader of the Punjab Muslim League and Maulana Shaukat Ali, a famous Khilafatist figure were very severe in their critique. Maulana Shaukat Ali, in his lucid style depicted the situation in these words: "As a young man I had been a keen owner of greyhounds, but had never seen greyhounds deal with a hare as the Hindus proposed to deal with the Muslims".\textsuperscript{92}

\textsuperscript{87} Nehru Report, p. 38, quoted by Dr. Waheed-uz-Zaman, Op.Cit., p.41
\textsuperscript{88} Nehru Report, p. 52, quoted by Dr. Waheed-uz-Zaman, Op.Cit., p. 42
\textsuperscript{89} Nehru Report, p. 54, quoted by Dr. Waheed-uz-Zaman, Op.Cit., p. 42
\textsuperscript{91} Dr. Waheed-uz-Zaman, Op.cit, p.44
In an All Parties Conference, held at Calcutta in December 1928, Jinnah pleaded for amendments in the Report. But all of his amendments were rejected. “This was the end of the efforts at rapprochement”\(^{93}\) or in effect ‘the beginning of an end’. Quaid-i-Azam’s brief but comprehensive reaction to the inflexible attitude of the Hindus was: “This is the parting of the ways.”\(^{94}\)

Failure of the Round Table Conference sessions also hardened the Muslim in their stance of parting their way from the Hindus and the Sikh communities. In an address to the students of Aligarh University, in 1938, Jinnah said: “I received the shock of my life at the meetings of the Round Table Conference. In the face of danger, the Hindu sentiments, the Hindu mind, the Hindu attitude led me to the conclusion that there was no hope of unity”\(^{95}\).

It is important to note that in Nehru Report and later in Round Table Conference sessions, the Congress tried to reverse the spirit of 1916 Lucknow Pact. The rolling back of Lucknow Pact was in fact a great error. The Pact was indeed “greatest beacon light in the constitutional history of the country”.\(^{96}\) Efforts for the reversal were the greatest mistake committed by Congress.

Last nail in the coffin of search for a separate space’ stage was the Congress’s refusal to the Muslim League in forming ministries in 1937. Although in Punjab, Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan had set a precedent by inviting the leader of the Hindu Mahasbha to nominate

---

93 Dr. Waheed-uz-Zaman, Op.Cit, p.50
95 Jamil-ad-Din Ahmad, Ed.Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah (Lahore: 1960), Vol. 1, p. 39
one minister. "The experiment succeeded so well that communal tension in the Punjab during those years was less serious than almost every other province".\textsuperscript{97} Congress' solo flight was criticized not only by other quarters but also by some ex-Congressites. One such leader said: "The Congress committed an error of judgment in omitting to take the League members into cabinet of Hindu-majority provinces...."\textsuperscript{98} Another ex Congressite leader B.M. Chaudhuri has written in his book that "If the Congress wanted to placate the League, the best moment for doing it was the year 1937 when the Congress was strong and accepted office and when the League was weak and willing to cooperate".\textsuperscript{99}

Even foreign commentators, having knowledge of Indian conditions were not lagging behind in criticizing Congress' non cooperative attitude. As Sir Percival Griffiths has noted: "Except for a few cranks, nobody in India took the Pakistan idea seriously until after the inauguration of provincial autonomy; and it is undoubtedly true that the real creators of the demand for Pakistan were the Congress high command. If they had been prepared to abate their claims to be the sole spokesman for India and had tried to allay the Muslim fears slightly, Pakistan might never have come to birth".\textsuperscript{100}

It was therefore, the Congress attitude towards Muslims which had its impact on situation in Punjab which also became hub of communal politics. Unionists of yesterday found their only refuge in the shelter of the League and premier Khizr's giving way to the

\textsuperscript{98} V. B. Kulkarni, Is Pakistan Necessary? (Bombay: 1944), p. 31
\textsuperscript{99} B. M. Chaudhuri, Muslim Politics in India (Calcutta: 1946), p. 51
\textsuperscript{100} P. J. Griffiths, The British Impact on India (London: 1952), p. 342
League was termed by the Secretary of State for India, as a "satisfactory development" and "an exposure of the real situation". On March 2, 1947, premier Khizr submitted the resignation of his cabinet saying, "It is now incumbent on me to leave the field clear for the Muslim League..." However, in his meeting with the Governor, Khizr said to him that "The outlook for Mamdot to form a Muslim League ministry in the Punjab was very bleak". On the resignation of Khizr Hayat and likelihood of the Muslim League ministry formation, the Muslims were jubilant, whereas' non-Muslims especially Sikhs were correspondingly exasperated ..." The Congress and the Sikhs were united to block the Muslim League rule. The assessment of the Governor of the Punjab was that the situation was grave and without coalition, communal trouble on a large scale seemed inevitable. He therefore, asked Mamdot to convince him of firm majority before he can consider him for the Punjab premiership. The situation was significantly changed in the province. In Lahore, District Magistrate imposed curfew in the night between 4-5 March and "banned meetings, processions and gathering of five or more persons". As a result, the Governor of Punjab proclaimed Section 93 of the Indian Act 1935 on March 5, 1947. The League representing the voice of the Muslims declared that "The attainment of the goal of a complete sovereign Pakistan remained the

101 Private and Secret letter from the Secretary of State for India to the Viceroy, February 27, 1947, IOR R/3/1/89
102 Punjab Ministry Resigns, Hindustan Times, New Delhi, March 3, 1947, IOR R/3/1/89
103 Letter from the Governor of Punjab to the Viceroy, March 3, 1947, IOR R/3/1/89
104 Telegram from Governor of Punjab to Viceroy, March 5, 1947, IOR R/3/1/89
105 Telegram from Governor of Punjab to the Viceroy, March 5, 1947. IOR R/3/1/89
106 Telegram for Governor Punjab to the Viceroy, March 5, 1947 IOR R/3/1/89
107 Proclamation by Governor E.M. Jenkins, March 5, 1947, IOR R/3/1/89
unalterable objective of the Muslims in India, for the achievement of which they will, if necessary, employ every means in their power, and consider no sacrifice or suffering too great.”¹⁰⁸

CONCLUSION

History of communal politics in Punjab is replete with unique phenomenon of consolidation and dissension and has different connotation of the developments taking place inside the province as well as at national and international level. Gandhi's unilateral withdrawal from the Khilafat Movement caused a considerable setback to Hindu-Muslim consolidation efforts at national level, however it had no significant impact on political situation in the Punjab where a large segment of the Muslims, Hindus and the Sikhs, under the umbrella of Unionist Party, succeeded in preventing the province to be engulfed by communal parties in the short run. However, in the long run the fast changing developments and mass movements at national level have had a significant impact on the thinking and approach of general masses as well as political cadres in the province, leading to the failure of Unionist Party to keep its political hold for a long duration. Consequently, national parties succeeded in establishing and consolidating their foothold in the province.

Roots of communalism in Punjab in the social context can be traced back to the time when the British in their policies used this phenomenon to strengthen their foothold in the province. Introduction of the British social and economic reforms during their prolonged occupation transformed the social behaviour in the province. Traditional Punjab society was primarily a rural society, so the British ruling elite developed close relations with the land lords, who also proved themselves loyal and powerful allies of the government.

British Government took many steps to ensure the loyalty of the agriculturist and Land Alienation Act of 1901 was a major step in that direction, which separated the agricultural and non-agricultural tribes at one hand and created gulf in the society on the other. Under this Act, traders and other classes were banned from buying lands from the
agriculturist tribes. Moreover, rapid progress brought about by the British transportation and irrigation system in the province had turned the Punjab into a granary of the subcontinent. It provided further impetus to cooperation of the rural elite with the British. This active support of rural masses became crucial for the British rule and the Punjab became the "sword arm" of the British India. Significantly, during World Wars I and II, a large chunk of Indian Army was recruited from the Punjab granting it a role of importance out of proportion to its size and population. All these developments had profound impact on socio-political and economic life of the province.

In political arena, the most distinct aspect of the province was the existence of three powerful religious communities i.e., the Muslims, the Hindus and the Sikhs. Their numerical and economic strength had strong bearing on political environment of the province. According to Census Report of 1921, the Muslims constituted about 55% of the population in Punjab, apparently having a narrow majority collectively over the Sikhs and Hindus and were pre-dominant in the rural areas. It was the only province where the majority community had been granted the right of self determination. This was a main consideration of the British in granting this special treatment to the majority community was their narrow majority and economic backwardness. Hindus and Sikhs of nearly the same size balanced the proportion of Muslims and opposed the communal representation and reservation of seats, which had been granted by the Communal Award to the Muslims because it gave them a statutory majority of 51% in Legislatures. The Hindus who were about 30% contested that there should not be any reservation of seats for the majority community. A minority community should not be given larger representation in terms of their population and weightage should not be given to one minority at the cost of another minority. The Sikhs who were about 13% demanded that they must have substantial advantage as enjoyed by the Muslims in other provinces where they were in minority. Moreover, the Muslims' representation must be less than
50% so that no one community should be able to rule over the other. In fact, communities in the Punjab were so distributed that their individual claims were mutually antagonistic and no practically workable solution was in sight to resolve issue. The Nehru report also stated that these circumstances in the Punjab defied attempts of a satisfactory adjustment. In this scenario, the regional distribution of religious population was a major cause of communal violence.

The British rule consolidated communal and tribal institutions which the educa classes systematically institutionalized in the process. Besides, community newspap and municipal elections also played their role, which were instrumental in activating socio-religious organizations on communal lines. Middle classes failed to transcend situation and were by and large divided on communal consideration. In order to ens communal solidarity, the middle classes readily joined socio-religious movement. Among the Hindus, Arya Samaj, Brahmo Samaj, Dev Samaj took the task of religious and cultural awakening. The Muslim educated middle class in association with traditional intellectual and landed aristocracy participated in different socio-religious reformations for the welfare and consolidation of the community. Among the Sik Singh Sabha movement and Shiromani Gurudwara Prabhandak committee responded to socio-religious reformations.

The communal as well as economic conflict between various groups in the province developed a complex political situation, which was exploited equally by the Unionists as well as the British authorities. While the Unionist Party concentrated on the welfare of the middle class agriculturists mainly the Muslims, the Congress was more inclined towards the betterment of non-agriculturists upper and middle classes. Some historians are of the view that the Unionist Party, which apparently stood for unity among various religious groups, in fact, helped in creating dissensions and communal bickering. An assembly member Mr Abdul Aziz stated on the floor of the
House, in March 1943 that "their (Unionists) discriminating treatment between urbanites and ruralites, unionists and anti-unionists, agriculturists and non-agriculturists, and so on, is mainly responsible for sowing the seed for discord and hatred among various communities."1

During the 20th century, most of the inhabitants of the sub-continent developed an earnest desire to manage their own affairs independently and start venting out their sentiments that the British should leave their country. But the mutual distrust of the Hindus and the Muslims, two major communities, was articulated in the antagonistic concepts of nationalism. While the Indian National Congress generally represented the Hindus, the later was embodied in the All India Muslim League. Meanwhile, the economic interests of the two communities also played a significant role in determining the political future of the sub-continent. The Unionists followed a policy of collaboration with the British throughout their tenure and took every step to suppress the anti-British sentiments in the province under the garb of maintaining law and order. The opposition parties including the Congress on the other hand could be seen confronting the British.

All the national and regional parties were of the view that Punjab held the key to the future of India but in 1946 the Muslim League won 79 out of 86 Muslim seats and emerged as the single largest party in the assembly. It demoralized the Congress and boosted the morale of the Muslim League. A number of historians consider that the Punjab assembly was the key to the unity of India. However, the failure of the Union Party was a major cause which paved the way for the partition of the Punjab.

---

1 Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates, Vol.xxi, p.205
Bibliography

Unpublished Government Documents

- Craik to Linlithgow, June 12, 1939 IOR R/3/1/61
- Emerson to Linlithgow, Jan 11, 1938, IOR R/3/1/59
- Emerson to Lord Linlithgow, Oct. 21, 1937, IOR R/3/1/2
- Emerson to Lord Linlithgow, December 18, 1937, IOR R/3/1/2
- Emerson to Lord Linlithgow, Feb.22, 1937, IOR R/3/1/1
- E.M.Jenkins to Lord Wavell, August 3, 1946, IOR R/3/1/135
- H.D.Craik to Lord Linlithgow, October 29, 1939, IOR R/3/1/61
- Letter for the Governor of Punjab to the Viceroy, March 3, 1947, IOR R/3/1/89
- Press Information Bureau Services No. 22, dated March 05, 1946,
- Private and Secret letter for the Secretary of State for India to the Viceroy, Feb. 27, 1947, IOR R/3/1/89
- Proceeding of the “Government of Punjab” in the Home Department, Judicial Branch, 1875-1915.
- Proceeding of the “Government of Punjab” in the Home Department, Public Branch, 1875-1915.
- Proceeding of the “Government of Punjab” in the Home Department, Education Branch, 1875-1915.
- Proceeding of the “Government of Punjab” in the Home Department, Political Branch, 1875-1915.
- Proceeding of the “Government of Punjab” in the Home Department Revenue, Agriculture and Irrigation Branch, 1875-1915.
- Proceeding of the “Government of Punjab” in the Home Department, District Boards and Municipalities, 1875-1915.
- Proceeding of the “Government of India” in the Home Department, Judicial Branch, 1882-1920.
- Proceeding of the “Government of India” in the Home Department, Police Branch, 1890-1920.
- Proceeding of the “Government of India” in the Home Department, Political Branch, 1890-1920.
- Proceeding of the “Government of India” in the Home Department, Public Branch, 1890-1920.
- Proceeding of the “Government of India” in the Home Department, Foreign Branch, 1900-1915.
- Proclamation by Governor E. M. Jenkins, March 5, 1947, IOR R/3/1/89
• Punjab Ministry Resigns, Hindustan Times New Delhi, March 3, 1947, IOR R/3/1/89
• Report on the Punjab Disturbances April 1919, IOR L/P&S/20 F 205
• Selection from the Vernacular Newspapers published in the Punjab, 1900-1915.
• Statement of the Cabinet Delegation IOR R/3/1/135.
• Supplement to the Punjab Police Secret Abstract of intelligence, September 10, 1927, Vol. xlix, no. 35.
• The Khaksar Movement in India, Reuter Message, dated June 7, 1941, IOR L/1/1/626
• Telegram from Governor of Punjab to Viceroy March 5, 1947, IOR R/3/1/89

Non-Official Unpublished Materials


Published Materials

Government Publications

• Government of Punjab: Punjab Administration Reports, 1880-1900.

Pamphlets


BOOKS

• Ahmad, Jamil-ud-Din. The Congress in Office 1937- 1939, Karachi: Pakistan Historical Society, nd.
• Ambedkar, B R Dr, _Pakistan or The Partition of India_, Lahore: Book Traders, 1976.
• Aziz K.K., _A Chronology of Muslim India 1700-1947_, Lahore: Ferozsons Pvt Ltd.1977.
• Bell, Evens. _Annexation of the Punjab and the Maharaja Duleep Singh_, Lahore: Al-Biruni, 1882.
• Chaudhuri, B.M., _Muslim Politics in India_, Calcutta: n.p.1946.
• Dar, Saeed ud Din, _Ideology of Pakistan_, Islamabad: National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, 1998.
• Dobbin, Christine, ed, _Basic Documents in the Development of Modern India and Pakistan, 1835-1947_, n.p. n.d
• Nichols Deverly, *Verdict on India*, Lahore: Book Traders, n.d.
• Oren, S. *The Sikhs: Congress and the Unionists*, n.d.
• Prakash Baddha Dr. People's Struggle Against Political Tyranny, n.d.

**News Papers/Magazines**

• Aftab
• Akali
• Akash Bani
• Al-Islah
• Ar-Raj
• Bande Matrum
• Easter Times
• Herald
• Inqilab (Lahore).
• Ittihad-Desh
• Kesari
• Liberal
• Light
• Milap
• Muslim Advocates
• Muslim outlook
• Paigham-e-Sulah
• Paisa Akhbar (Lahore).
• Pratap
• Punjab Chronicle
• Sant Samachar
• Shanti
• Siyasat
• Sudhashan Chakkar
• The Civil and Military Gazette (Lahore).
• The Times (London).
• The Tribune
• Times and Tide
• Tuker
• Vakil.
• Vedia
• Watan
• Zimindar
• The Daily Desh