In the present work, it is my endeavour to discuss the growth of the Muslim politics in the Punjab from 1919 to 1947. The study of this period forms an important and interesting subject of research for a variety of reasons.

The period from 1919 to 1947 marks an important phase in the history of the Punjab. At the close of the World War I in 1919, the Punjab was passing through a very critical period. The passage of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, the Rowlatt Bills and Jallianwala Bagh tragedy created anarchy in the province. On one hand, there was a show of the Hindu-Muslim unity and, on the other hand, communalism took roots because of the grant of the communal electorates under the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms. Side by side, the Khilafat Movement also shook the Muslims, not only of the Punjab, but of the whole of India.

The year 1947 was equally important in that it was the most crucial time not only for the Punjab but for the whole India. In this year, the Muslims, after a long struggle, succeeded in getting a separate nation
for themselves. Consequently, a great era of the Muslim politics, marked by a passion of power and supremacy that resulted in numerous communal clashes and showdowns, came to an end with 1947.

There have been many publications so far which have dealt with the different aspects of the Muslim politics, but their main drawback is that they do not deal exclusively with the Muslim politics in the Punjab.

Prem Raman Upreti's book, *Religion and Politics in the Punjab in the 1920s*, covers a limited period of study and also does not deal exclusively with the Muslims although it gives a detailed account of communalism in the Punjab and the riots that occurred during 1920s.

Satya M. Rai's *Legislative Politics and Freedom Struggle in the Punjab, Partition of the Punjab, Punjab Since Partition*, do not deal with the Muslims alone. Many of the aspects of Muslim politics are missing. *Legislative Politics and Freedom Struggle in the Punjab* highlights mostly those political problems that arose or were debated in the Legislative Council/Assembly.

Ian Talbot's *Punjab and the Raj* is certainly a work of high standard on the Punjab covering a very long period of study, i.e., 1849-1947. It explains
the attitude of the British Government towards the Punjab. The whole thesis revolves around the impact of the Britishers on the province; however, it does not deal exclusively with the Punjab Muslim politics. While studying all the communities together, the work touches the Punjab Muslims very marginally, especially prior to 1937, leaving behind many gaps.

Similarly, other books on the history of the Punjab like S.C. Mittal's *Freedom Movement in the Punjab*; S.L. Malhotra's *Gandhi, an Experiment with Communal Politics, From Civil Disobedience to Quit India Movement*, *Gandhi, Punjab and Partition*; David Gilmartin's *Empire and Islam*; no doubt deal with the Punjab politics but they are limited in their scope for some reason or the other.

There are many good publications dealing with the Indian Muslims as a whole that include a lot about the Punjab Muslims. They are Ram Gopal's *Indian Muslims, A Political History*, W.C. Smith's *Modern Islam in India*, K.K. Aziz's *Britain and Muslim India*, David Page's *Prelude to Partition*, P. Hardy's *The Muslims of British India*, Mushirul Hasan's *Nationalism and Communal Politics in India*, and so on. All these books cover the politics
of the Indian Muslims, but the details about the roles of the Punjab Muslim leaders like Fazl-i-Husain, Mohammed Shafi, Feroz Khan Noon, Dr. Kitchlew and others are missing. Also, a very little mention is made of the Unionist Party, the Ahrars and the Khaksars by way of their contribution to the Muslim politics.

This study on the Punjab Muslims attempts to bridge a gap in research relating to the Muslim politics and communalism in the province between 1919 - 1947. J.S. Rakkar's thesis Muslim Politics in the Punjab covers the period of 1906 - 1918. From this work, the investigator has drawn the inspiration to have an insight into the Muslim politics in the Punjab from 1919 onwards so as to widen the scope of such a study. Needless to say, an attempt has been made to assimilate the relevant knowledge from all angles of vision.

This work focuses on the study of a triangular conflict among the three principal communities of the Punjab, i.e. the Hindus, the Sikhs and the Muslims, with special reference to the Muslims. Many a time, the words 'two communities' have been used because, at that time, the Sikhs were in a minority. Hence, at many places, the word 'Hindus' is used for both the Hindus and the Sikhs.
The thesis is divided into six chapters. The first chapter presents the historical background, covering the period prior to 1919. Apart from dealing with the geographical, social, religious and economic features of the Punjab, it traces the origin of the Muslim politics as to what sort of influence Syed Ahmad Khan had on the Punjab Muslims, how did the Muslims form the All India Muslim League, how did various communities interact with each other and what was their attitude towards the British Government, etc.

The second chapter describes the Punjab Muslims' struggle for leadership during the period 1919 to 1923. While discussing the role of the Punjab leaders like Dr. Kitchlew, Mohammed Shafi, Fazl-i-Husain, among others, an emphasis has been laid on the role played by Fazl-i-Husain. This chapter mentions how Fazl-i-Husain reacted to the various events in the province like the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, the Khilafat and Non-cooperation Movements, the Rowlatt Satyagraha etc. The formation of the Unionist Party under Fazl-i-Husain's leadership, was also one of the important happenings and is discussed in detail.

The third chapter highlights the Muslims' struggle for political power during the period from 1924 to 1937.
Throughout this period, the Punjab Muslims struggled to attain political power through separate electorates. However, till 1937, they never thought in terms of a separate homeland for themselves.

The fourth chapter deals with the role of Sikander Hayat Khan in the Punjab politics from 1938 to 1942, till his death. His conflict with Jinnah is clearly focused here. Stress is laid on the attitude of Sikander Hayat Khan towards the Unionist Party, the Muslim League and the British Government.

The fifth chapter deals with the circumstances that finally led to the partition of the Punjab. The period chosen for this chapter is 1943 to 1947. The Punjab politics took a crucial turn when Jinnah emerged on the scene after the death of Fazl-i-Husain and Sikander Hayat Khan and popularized the 'two nation theory', that finally led to the partition of the Punjab.

The last and the sixth chapter concludes the study.

The present work tested the following hypotheses. First, Muslims and Hindus, having different educational, social, religious and economic backgrounds, had confrontations with each other on almost every point. Both
wanted to have their say in the administration of the province, which, from time to time, led to communal clashes and riots during 1919-1947, when finally the partition of the Punjab took place.

Second, the idea of a separate Muslim state acquired a firm shape only after 1940. Prior to it, the Muslim demand revolved round proper representation in the Punjab. Muslims wanted that their majority should be recognized and, accordingly, they should be given proper share in the administration of the province through separate electorates.

Third, Mohammed Ali Jinnah was the chief manipulator of the Punjab Muslim politics after 1937 when he concluded the Pact with Sikander Hayat Khan. His direct interference in the Punjab politics, over the issue of the Punjab, led to very strained relations between him and Khizr Hayat Khan who succeeded as Premier after Sikander Hayat Khan's death. The victory was Jinnah's who finally got the Punjab partitioned.

During my research period, I visited various libraries at Delhi and Rohtak, viz., the National Archives of India, the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, the Central Secretariat Library, the Indian Council of Social Sciences Research, the Indian Council
of Historical Research, the Sapru House and the Maharshi Dayanand University Library. In these libraries, I consulted Government records, private papers of Viceroyys and other leaders of various communities, A.I.C.C. papers, Hindu Mahasabha papers, doctoral theses available in microfilm or otherwise, journals and various other published and unpublished sources.