CHAPTER - I

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Punjab has played an important role in the Indian history from the days of Harappan civilizations to modern times. The expressions viz., 'the window of India' or 'the sword arm of India' may serve as indices to the region's importance.\(^1\) In the words of H.K. Trevaskis, "The importance of the Punjab in the history and economy of the Indian Sub-continent is out of all proportion to its population, its productive capacity, or even its size... It has been the arena of conflict between political systems for greater than itself, affording as it does the only practicable highway between the nomad breeding ground of Central Asia and fertile valley of the Ganges".\(^2\)

The important role played by physical factors in determining the social, economic and political life of a country can hardly be exaggerated. A brief description of the physical factors, as they influence the population is, therefore, necessary.

Generally speaking, the Punjab of the pre-partition days comprised of the present Punjab of Pakistan and such territories in India as Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh. It lies in the north-west of India and is a region of vast plains at the foot of the Himalayas... It lies roughly between the Jamuna river in the east and the Indus river in the west and takes its name, which means the 'Five Waters' from five rivers, which traverse it from north-east to south-west and unite to pour their waters into the Indus towards the extreme south-west corner of the province...

The great irrigation works on which the material prosperity of the Punjab so largely depended were also fed by them. Geographically, this fell into roughly four natural divisions - the Indo-Gangetic Plain, the Himalayan Area, the Sub-Himalayan Area and North-West Dry Area.

The soil is one of the world's greatest natural resources. The Punjab, barring the mountainous and parts of sub-mountainous tracts, was in the main a vast level plain of alluvial origin. It formed the part of a great Indo-Gangetic

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1. Five rivers, namely, Beas, Ravi, Satlej, Chenab and Jhelum.


plain with a gentle slope of about one foot per mile from east to west. In composition the soil was generally a sandy loam which was deficient in humus, but well supplied with essential mineral constituents. The soil of the riverain tracts contained much alluvial mud and generally a ploughing or two gave a splendid harvest.¹

The rainfall also exerted an immense influence on the agriculture of the province, particularly in the unirrigated tracts. What is important, however, in a study of the Punjab rainfall was not so much its amount as its irregularity, and since it was most uncertain, agriculture in the province was a highly speculative venture. Although more and more area was being brought under irrigation, the area depending entirely upon rainfall was still very large. Needless to say that any fluctuation in the seasonal rainfall brought misery or prosperity to large numbers of people. The finances of the Punjab were directly affected by the amount of rainfall that it received.²

The Punjab hills were relatively cool in the summer and were often cut off by snow during the winter months.

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2. Ibid., p. 3.
On the plains, the heat before the onset of the monsoon was intense reaching a peak of 110°F-120°F.¹ The monsoon rains fell most copiously in the mountainous Kangra and Simla regions but also well watered the central plains. In such areas as Hoshiarpur, Jullundur and Ludhiana, an average of 20" of rain fell during the months of July-September. The heavy precipitation and their alluvial soil made them the most fertile and hence densely populated part of the Punjab.²

The province used to be much larger in the nineteenth century, but in 1901, it was partitioned and a new province called North-West-Frontier-Province was carved out of it.

According to S.S. Thorburn, the Punjab, prior to 1901, could be seen mainly in the following parts:³

1. **The Central Plain**, comprised of nine central districts.⁴
   These nine districts had an area of 19,218 square miles.
   The population consisted of thirty seven lakhs of Muslims,

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2. Ibid.


4. These nine districts were, Gujranwala, Sialkot, Gurdaspur, Amritsar, Lahore, Hoshiarpur, Jullundur, Ferozpur and Ludhiana.
nine lakhs of Sikhs and twenty six lakhs of Hindus.

2. **The Eastern Punjab**, comprised of eight districts.\(^1\)

These districts covered an area of 25,622 square miles and had the population of thirty eight lakhs of Hindus, eleven lakhs of Muslims and one lakh of Sikhs.

3. **The Western Punjab**, also called as the home of the Muslim subjects of the Queen Empress. It comprised the whole of British Punjab between the meridian of Jhelum on the east and Trans-Indus frontier on the west, between the Himalayas on the north and the feudatory State of Bhawalpur on the south. The whole part covered an area of 61,792 square miles, or nearly two-thirds of the Punjab. The total population of this area was nearly six and a half millions.

Apart from these three main parts, there were two more divisions - the Southern Plain and the North Table-land comprising of nine\(^2\) and five\(^3\) districts respectively.\(^4\)

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1. These eight districts were, Kangra, Simla, Karnal, Ambala, Delhi, Rohtak, Gurgaon, Hissar cum Sirsa.
2. The nine districts were, Bannu, Dera Ismailkhan, Dera Ghazikhan, Gujrat, Shahpur, Jhang, Montgomery, Multan and Muzaffargarh.
3. The five districts were, Peshawar, Kohat, Hazara, Rawalpindi and Jhelum.
After 1901, the Punjab was left with only twenty seven districts. In 1904, two new districts Attock and Lyallpur were created. The province was administratively divided into two parts, the British territory and the Punjab States. The British territory was divided into twenty nine districts, each administered by a Deputy Commissioner, and these were grouped into five divisions, each incharge of a Commissioner. On the other hand, the Punjab states remained under the superintendentship of Deputy Commissioner.

The total population of Punjab in 1931 was 25,438,000.

1. The details of the five divisions are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AMBALA DIVISION</th>
<th>JULLUNDUR DIVISION</th>
<th>LAHORE DIVISION</th>
<th>RAWALPINDI DIVISION</th>
<th>MULTAN DIVISION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hissar</td>
<td>Kangra</td>
<td>Lahore</td>
<td>Gujrat</td>
<td>Montgomery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rohtak</td>
<td>Hoshiarpur</td>
<td>Amritsar</td>
<td>Shahpur</td>
<td>Lyallpur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gurgaon</td>
<td>Jullundur</td>
<td>Gurdaspur</td>
<td>Jhelum</td>
<td>Jhang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karnal</td>
<td>Ludhiana</td>
<td>Sialkot</td>
<td>Rawalpindi</td>
<td>Multan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambala</td>
<td>Perozpurl</td>
<td>Gujranwala</td>
<td>Attock</td>
<td>Muzaffargarh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simla</td>
<td>Sheikhupura</td>
<td>Mianwali</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dera Ghazi-Khan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census of India, 1921, Punjab and Delhi, Volume XV, Part I, p.4.


3. Ibid., p.3.
the Punjab according to the Census of 1921 was 1-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Area in Square Miles</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>136,905</td>
<td>25,101,060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Territory</td>
<td>99,846</td>
<td>20,685,024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab States</td>
<td>37,059</td>
<td>4,416,036</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Earlier, on March 29, 1849, the Punjab was annexed by the British. 2 It was by far an important acquisition: its strategic location, fertile land and brave people were assets of prime importance for the Imperial power. That is why the British treated this region as one of the most crucial areas of the empire. They were aware that their rule could be preserved only if they win the loyalty of the rural masses including the landed classes and the peasantry, which formed more than eighty per cent of the entire population of the province. To make them satisfied they were provided with canals, roads, railway lines etc., so that the agricultural production should be increased. This served a dual purpose.


On the one hand, the ruralites were happy and on the other hand, England was able to import raw material for its rapidly growing industries.¹

I. Social, Religious and Economic aspects of the Punjab Society:

The Punjab had a complex society consisting of Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs, numerically dominated by the Muslims, but almost balanced by Hindus and Sikhs, taken together. In 1911, out of the total population of the British territory, of the Punjab, the Muslims formed 54.8% per cent.²

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population Category</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total population</td>
<td>19,974,956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslims</td>
<td>10,955,721</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindus</td>
<td>6,722,455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikhs</td>
<td>2,093,804</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Until 1911, the Muslim population had been growing more rapidly than the Hindus and the Sikhs. The Census of 1921 indicated a considerable increase in the total population of the British territory. Likewise, the Muslim, Hindu and Sikh population also increased, leaving the Muslims in a clear

² Census of India, 1911, Punjab, Part I, pp.28-29.
majority again.¹

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>20,685,014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslims</td>
<td>12,955,141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindus</td>
<td>9,125,202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikhs</td>
<td>3,110,060</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The percentage of each community varied from one region to the other.

The Muslims were pre-dominant in seventeen districts¹, namely, Lahore, Gurdaspur, Sialkot, Gujranwala, Sheikhupura, Gujrat, Shahpur, Jhelum, Rawalpindi, Attock, Mianwali, Montgomery, Lyallpur, Jhang, Multan, Muzzaffargarh and Dera Ghazi-Khan. Their population varied between 91% in Attock and 51% in Gurdaspur. In Jullundur, Amritsar and Ferozpur districts, their numerical strength was greater than that of the communities of Hindus and Sikhs taken singly, their proportion being 47, 44, 45 per cent, respectively.²

Thus, Western Punjab was a stronghold of Muslims and their proportion decreased when one moved from west to east.

The Hindus were in a majority in the districts like Hissar, Gurdaspur, Rohtak, Karnal, Simla and Kangra. The proportion ranged between 91% in Kangra and 65% in Hissar,

¹. Census of India, 1921, Punjab and Delhi, Volume XV, Part I, pp.172-173.
³. Ibid.
while the two districts i.e. in Ambala and Hoshiarpur, they were more numerous, their proportion being 46% and 40%, respectively. 1

The Sikhs resided chiefly in Central Punjab. They did not have a clear majority in any of the districts except in Ludhiana. Here, they were more numerous than either the Hindus and the Muslims, their proportion being 47%. 2

The Muslim community was not basically an urbanised community. Because Muslims were a majority in the Western Punjab, it is, therefore, essential to discuss this area in detail. The population figures of Western Punjab were: 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>6,538,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Muslims</td>
<td>5,682,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindus</td>
<td>783,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikhs</td>
<td>73,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rather more than three lakhs were urban. As the Hindus and the Sikhs had the whole trade of the province in their hands, it was natural that they composed the bulk of urban population. Accordingly, it was found that quite two-thirds of the residents of the towns were Hindus. Of the whole population, ninety one

2. Ibid.
per cent was rural and of that population, ninety two per cent were Muslims.¹

The Punjab had always been a fertile ground for different faiths to grow and mature. In the sixteenth century, the Bhakti cult, which had originated in the south, manifested itself in the Punjab as a new religion, viz., Sikhism that possessed its own church, ideals and institutions. Again, the Arya Samaj, which was born in Maharashtra², found a happy home in the Punjab.³

By the twentieth century, all the major religions of the world - Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Christianity and Buddhism were well established in the Punjab. The first three were, however, predominant. Although the Muslims, the Hindus and the Sikhs, followers of Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism respectively, had been flourishing together in the Punjab, yet, the three had developed some religious differences among each other.

3. Infact, there were frequent conversions to Islam and Sikhism without any noticeable protest from the Hindus. The Arya Samaj movement grew as a reaction to challenge with the arrival of Swami Dayanand to the Punjab in 1877. See K.P. Karunakaran, Religion and Political Awakening in India (Meerut, 1969), pp.33-34.
The basic differences were that the Muslims had faith in Prophet Mohammed, the Hindus in the Idol Worship and the Sikhs in Guru Granth Sahib. The Hindus worshipped in the temples, the Muslims in Mosques and the Sikhs in the Gurudwaras. The Hindus and the Sikhs revered the cows and the Muslims slaughtered them. The Hindus and the Sikhs insisted on music at festivals and in their marriage processions, while music was prohibited near a Muslim place of worship. Such differences created basic rivalry among the three communities, which in the later stage helped in setting them apart. There was practically no eating together, little intimate social fellowship and no inter-marriage, especially between Muslims and Hindus. "Thousands of Hindus," remarked Mahatama Gandhi, "would rather die of thirst than drink water from a Mohammedan household." ¹

Now coming to the economic field, it is a well known fact that main occupation of the Punjabis had always been agriculture. The other occupations apart from farming were money lending, hotels and restaurants, furniture, building material, industry, transport, public administration and professional and liberal arts. Apart from these, there were

domestic servants, beggers and vagrants.

The agriculture had an overwhelming preponderance over other occupations. Since in almost the whole of the province, dependence on agriculture meant dependence on rains, when the rains failed, there was necessarily widespread distress involving a great majority of the people.

Muslims, being the inhabitants of the rural areas, were the chief participants of the farming occupation. About sixty per cent of the Punjab Muslims depended on agriculture for their livelihood. Although the Muslim peasantry formed the majority of the Muslim population, yet most of them were indebted to the moneylenders. No doubt this indebtedness was prevalent among other communities also, but with the Muslims, it was more common, especially in the Western Punjab, the Muslim majority area.

S.S. Thorburn had made a beautiful analysis of the indebtedness of Muslims and Hindus. He wrote, "The highest estimate gives the debts as 80% of the yearly income. Of Mohammedan tenants, 40% and of Hindu tenants 20% are in debt ..."  

The cause of difference between the numbers of the indebted among Muslims and Hindus, was to be found in the difference of the habits of each class.

(i) Muslims were mostly spendthrift, the Hindus were the reverse.

(ii) Muslims were nearly always uneducated, Hindus were always more or less educated.

(iii) Hindus usually avoided acts that would bring them within the reach of the criminal law, while Muslims supplied almost the whole criminal population; and so incurred the expenses which followed from being suspected by the police and being prosecuted.

(iv) Muslims had only one source of income, i.e. agriculture. Hindus, who owned and cultivated land, always combined moneylending and trade with agriculture.

(v) Hindus acquired land as payment for debts. Muslims generally borrowed money to buy land.

Hence a large area of the cultivated land had been passed to the moneylenders through sale and mortgages.

Writing about the peasantry of the Western Punjab, M.L. Darling observed, "The peasantry almost to a man, confess themselves the servants of the one true God and of Mohammed,

His Prophet, but in actual fact, they are the servants of landlord, moneylender and pir. All the way down the Indus from far Hazara in the north to Sind in the south, these three dominate man's fortunes; and though they are found in greater or less degree all over the province, nowhere are they so powerful."  

So it can be concluded that under the British Raj, the indebtedness of the agricultural classes increased to an unprecedented degree. As discussed earlier, after the annexation of the Punjab, the British policy was to develop the province as a producer of raw material for the industries of Britain. Thus, the British development strategy in the Punjab, which resulted in an increase in over-all production and trade activities, brought little solace to the small peasants; on the contrary, it worsened their condition and intensified their exploitation.

The British government by limiting the land revenue demand, gave the peasant a valuable proprietory right in land, a right which the British legal system held to be

3. Ibid., p.4.
transferable. The peasant proprietor was now able to offer the moneylender a valuable security for debts, at a time when the new legal system was prepared to enforce the claims of the moneylender to the untomost farthing. The Zamindars were rapidly falling into debt and losing their land to the moneylenders through sale and mortgage.1

As a result, the moneylenders became the dictators of the village. This transfer of land outside the agricultural community by sale and mortgage created agrarian discontent. In order to solve this problem, the Land Alienation Act was passed in 1900, which prohibited the alienation of land from agricultural to the non-agricultural classes. This Act also debarred a non agriculturist from holding the old mortgage for more than twenty years. At the end of this period the mortgage automatically lapsed without any payment on account of redemption, which meant that the nominal value of a debt secured in this way varied with the age of this mortgage.2

1. By the years 1874-75 and 1885-86, eighteen lakh acres of land had been alienated to the moneylenders through sales and mortgages. See J.S.Rakkar, _op.cit._, p.29.
Despite this measure, the condition of the peasantry, especially the Muslims, did not improve much. As regards other occupations, the Punjab Muslims proved to be a backward community. They were great failures in the fields of industry, trade and commerce. Hence again, the Hindus and the Sikhs dominated them.

However, the most powerful group in the Punjab was that of the government servants, which included Provincial Civil Servants, Judges, Deputy Collectors etc., who worked directly under the British rulers. Unlike the Muslims, who generally were handicapped by their poverty and attitude towards the western education, the Hindu commercial castes and Brahmins readily adapted to the new demands and tended to dominate the professional class employed in law, medicine and government service.

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1. The Act divided the population on the basis of agricultural and non-agricultural tribes. This contributed towards the promotion of communal politics in the province especially in the Western districts, where the landlords were invariably Hindus and the agriculturists mostly Muslims. See J.S. Rakkar, op.cit., p.45.

2. In the provincial capital of Lahore, the non-Muslims owned 108 registered factories out of 186. They paid eight times as much sales tax as the Muslim traders and owned seventy-five per cent of commerce and trade banks, commercial institutions, insurance companies and industrial concerns were mostly in their hands. See Kirpal Singh, Partition of the Punjab (Patiala, 1972), p.4.

3. Hindus and Muslims were almost equally represented in lower posts requiring minimum literacy and a pay of less than Rs.15/-, but Brahmins and commercial class monopolised the middle and upper salary range. See Ikram Ali Malik, op.cit., p.250.
The Muslim dissatisfaction at this disparity had been mounting since the revolt of 1857. A Muslim organisation, The Lahore Anjuman-i-Islamia, demanded in 1870 special posts for Muslims, but this demand had been put down by the British government. In 1876, The Delhi Anjuman-i-Islamia requested the government to pay attention to their demands, but again of no avail. The refusal to balance the Hindus and the Muslims generated a storm in the Muslim sections of the Punjab society.\(^1\)

The main cause of this under-representation was their backwardness in education, particularly in receiving the western education introduced by the British. The Muslim aversion to the European system of education kept them out of other new professions. They despised the English science of medicine and did not join medical colleges for training. In 1869, out of 104 students of medicine, there were 98 Hindus, 5 Englishmen and only one Muslim.\(^2\)

Under the Mughal and the Sikh rule, education was left to various religious authorities and it was mainly imparted on religious lines. So the Muslims could not adapt

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themselves to the new system of education introduced by the British. On the other hand, the Hindus had learnt the sense of adaptability during the long period of Muslim rule in India. Under the Muslim rulers, they not only learnt Persian and Urdu but produced eminent scholars and poets.

This way, the Hindus started learning the western system of education, without allowing any thought to enter in their minds that they were doing something offensive to their religion. On the other hand, the Muslims held themselves aloof from the western education from the fear that it would ultimately proselytise them to Christianity. Hence, the proportion of the literate Muslims was about twenty-three per cent, while that of the Hindu literates was about seventy-two per cent.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total literates</th>
<th>Hindu and Sikh literates</th>
<th>Muslim literates</th>
<th>Percentage of Muslims</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7,74,845</td>
<td>5,60,103</td>
<td>1,76,704</td>
<td>22.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The crux of what has been discussed above is that although the Muslims formed the majority in the Punjab, yet due to their being educationally backward, they lagged far behind other communities in the social, religious and economic fields. A small educated section of the community

did respond to the new challenges and they tried to discover solutions to these problems by opening colleges for the Muslim education and founding political associations.

II. Evolution of Muslim Politics:

The political enlightenment among the Muslims of the Punjab had found its way in their minds, gradually after the revolt of 1857. Their backwardness in the social and economic fields had precipitated an urge for the political upliftment. So it is relevant, at the first place, to find the causes which led to the growth of separatism among the Muslims. How did Syed Ahmad Khan's ideas affect the Muslim mind? How did the religious revivalism contribute to the Hindu-Muslim conflict? To what extent the British were responsible for this division? How did the emergence of Indian National Congress make the Punjab Muslims politically conscious? How did the formation of the Muslim league instil confidence in the minds of the Muslims? An attempt is made in the following pages to answer these questions.

For the sake of convenience, the period of Muslim political consciousness may be divided into two phases—

First Phase : 1857-1905
Second Phase : 1906-1918
First Phase, 1857-1900:

The severity and the harshness of the measures adopted by the foreign rulers in suppressing the revolt of 1857 left the Punjabis highly demoralised and depressed. But in an indirect manner, the unsuccessful revolt might be said to have contributed to the emergence of nationalism, may be the Hindus aspired for Hindu nationalism and the Muslims for the Muslim nationalism later on. On the other hand, this revolt had an effect on the British also. It made the British government realise that the only way to save the small number of Europeans from being overwhelmed by the united strength of the two communities (Hindus and Muslims) was to keep them apart.\(^1\) The British statesmen set themselves to the task of driving a wedge between them and greatly succeeded in their efforts.

The policy of 'Divide and Rule' or 'Divide et Impera'\(^2\) was practised by encouraging one community and suppressing the other. The Muslim community was the first to be penalised

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and later on, it was the turn of the Hindus to be treated in an indiscriminating way. The Hindu - Muslim problem may thus be regarded as a product of the post - mutiny period.

The dreadful events of 1857 brought in their wake even more disturbing happenings for the Muslims and awakened them from their sleep. Although the British did not clearly pursue a policy of religious interference, their education policy, introduction of English and missionary activities soon made the Muslims suspicious of the British intentions.

As discussed earlier, the Muslims, unlike the Hindus, did not respond enthusiastically to the British education system. This not only kept them away from the government jobs, but also impeded their progress. On the other hand, the Hindus were privileged due to their adopting the western system of education. This was most strongly shown, when the Hindus demanded the displacement of 'Urdu' with 'Hindi' from government offices.¹

The 'Hindi - Urdu' controversy arose in 1882 with a suggestion to Hunter Commission (1882) by the Hindus.

that the character of the court language should be changed from Persian to Devnagari. Although the replacement of Urdu by Hindi was not specifically mentioned, yet the intention was clear and the entire Muslim official world was perturbed over this demand.\(^1\) The demand came at a time when Muslims were losing employment in government services. They were being evicted from the ownership of the land and were denied other sources of livelihood.\(^2\)

Here, it is necessary to mention that the Hindu leaders came mainly from the urban areas and were mostly of the middle class origin, while those of Muslims were largely of rural origin. This was the time when Syed Ahmad Khan launched a violent campaign against the Hindus\(^3\) and the upper class Muslims followed his lead in their trial to dislodge Hindu middle class from their position of economic power and pre-eminence in service. This resulted in the rise of communal feelings among the middle and the upper classes in the later half of the nineteenth century.

The controversy over municipal elections in the Punjab further illustrates how the British contributed to the communal tension by creating new arenas of power and

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competition. Elections and control of municipal committees divided the Hindus and the Muslims. Before the granting of elections to the municipalities in 1884, opportunities for competition between Hindus and Muslims had been limited as the municipal posts were almost universally filled by nomination. After 1884, the franchise was extended, which resulted in further controversy between Hindus and Muslims.¹

The communal tension was comparatively more in the urban classes than the rural ones. The Hindus could easily put economic pressures on the indebted Muslims.² Not only this, clerks were appointed by Hindus and Muslims for door to door canvassing. The Hindus won a majority of contests because they composed the large middle class population in the central and eastern towns. In 96 reported elections, the Hindus won the majority of 72 committees, the Muslims a majority of 12 committees, the Sikhs a majority on one body and there were 11 committees which reflected Hindu - Muslim ties.³

Thus, election campaigns arouse communal tension in different towns. The elections occasioned such unrest

¹ Ikram Ali Malik, op.cit., p.257.
² Tarachand, op.cit., p.374.
³ Ibid., p.258.
that eventually the Punjab government set up separate electorates after 1886 so that the voters of a constituency could only vote for their co-religionists. The government also reserved seats for different communities. The separate electorates instead of minimising communal confrontation reinforced separatist tendencies. Hence, the system diminished the chances of political cooperation between Hindus and Muslims. Thus the British strategy shifted from impartiality to communal representation both in services and municipalities and this increased the gulf between the two communities.¹

The activities of the Christian missionaries had created, in the minds of the Punjab leaders, a fear of Christian threat. This fear contributed to religious revivalism throughout the Punjab, both among Hindus and Muslims. By the end of nineteenth century, these communities had developed their own associations in order to protect their religious interests.² Among the Hindus,

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the Arya Samaj, a revivalist movement emerged in eighteen seventies. This movement started under the dynamic leadership of Swami Dayanand and made an impact on the revival of Hindu society, which led to ugly demonstrations and collisions with the Muslims.¹

The Arya Samajists made critical remarks upon Islam, the Holy Prophet and other spiritual leaders of the Muslims. It was further alleged that, the 'Satya Prakash', the bible of Arya Samaj movement, was full of indecent remarks against Islam. The Hindus took out processions by beating the drums before the mosques, without caring that their noise disturbed the prayers.² All this accentuated the Hindu - Muslim antagonism in the Punjab.

The Muslims of the Punjab responded to a number of diverse pressures following the British rule by organising and joining associations, which tried to protect and strengthen the Muslim community. The conversions by the Christian missionaries, revivalist movements of the Hindus and the backwardness of the Muslim community, in receiving the western education, inspired them to organise themselves and this led to the formation of many Anjumans like Anjuman-i-

¹ Premvati Ghai, op.cit., p.29.
Himayat-i-Islam and Punjab-Anjuman-i-Islamia. These outfits later sprang up as powerful and influential Muslim organisations.¹

The efforts of the Anjumans to revive interests in Islam hindered the proselytising activities of Christian missionaries. The materially contributed towards the general awakening among the Punjab Muslims by the increased attention that was being paid to the educational needs of the community.

During the latter half of the nineteenth century, several enlightened Muslim leaders made it their mission in life to promote education among the Muslims and to agitate for the share of Muslims in the government services. The leader of the former movement was Syed Ahmad Khan, and of the latter, Ameer Ali. The fame of Syed Ahmad Khan had, however, overshadowed that of Ameer Ali.

Syed Ahmad Khan (1817-1898), who was the founder of Aligarh Movement endeavoured to reorganise the Muslim community both socially and economically. As the Muslims showed their disinterest towards the western education,

Syed Ahmad Khan, in 1871, took positive steps by appointing a committee to investigate the reasons of the Muslims' aversion to western education. It was gathered that the Muslims looked on education not as a means of improving their future, but as a curse which would bring them to future ruin.¹

In 1875, Syed Ahmad Khan gathered around him a body of influential Muslims and opened a high school for Muslim boys at Aligarh. Within three years, the school had raised to a second grade college. This 'Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College' at Aligarh gave instructions in Islam and encouraged the Muslim boys to visit the mosques regularly for prayers. Syed Ahmad Khan's efforts succeeded admirably and the boys of Muslim aristocracy from distant parts of the province began to seek admission in the Aligarh college.²

The Punjab Muslims also participated in the annual meetings of the Mohammedan Educational Congress, which was established by Syed Ahmad Khan in 1886.³ Two sessions

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¹ The Aligarh Institute Gazette, March 20, 1886, p.7.

² Previously, in the Punjab, the Muslim landlords and aristocrats considered it derogatory to their position to allow their children to associate with common people at the educational institutions. Ibid., January 2, 1886, p.15.

³ The Mohammedan Educational Congress was established to know the social, economic and political conditions of the Muslims all over the country. Aligarh was, no doubt, fixed as the centre place but the meetings were to be held at various places. Ibid., May 4, 1886, p.1.
of the congress were held at Lahore, one in 1888 and the other in 1898. These sessions created a sense of solidarity among the Muslims.¹

The basis of Syed Ahmad Khan's movement and its success was the idea that the Hindus and the Muslims were separate nations. Moreover, he laid emphasis that the bright future of the Muslim community lay in the cooperation with the government and not in siding with the Hindus. That is why, during the revolt of 1857, he chose to support the British. For his services, he won high praises and substantial material reward from the government. A Lieutenant General of the North-West-Frontier-Province said of him, "No man ever gave nobler proofs of conspicuous courage and loyalty to the British government than were given by him in 1857 ..."²³

Although in the beginning of his political career, Syed Ahmad Khan did speak something about Hindu-Muslim unity, but that was mere formality, because his hostility towards the Hindus seemed quite clear, when the Indian National Congress was found in 1885.³ At first Syed Ahmad

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1. Ram Gopal, _op.cit._, pp.32-34.
2. _Ibid._, p.45.
3. Indian _National Congress_ was established by A.O. Hume, a retired civilian. Of the seventy delegates attending the first session, only two were Muslims. _Ibid._, p.63; See also Nur Ahmad, _op.cit._, p.3.
Khan completely ignored the Congress and behaved as if nothing had happened. But in 1886, this neutrality was changed to active opposition to the Congress. He clearly told the Muslims that, if the Congress movement succeeded, it would mean the rule of the Hindu majority over the Muslim minority. Moreover, the Congress was an anti-British body.¹

Indeed, Syed Ahmad Khan's movement had fundamental differences with Congress. One well-known remark of his reflected this quite clearly. He had once asked whether after getting the seat of the government vacated by the British, the two nations² would be able to sit on the same seat and be entitled to equal rights. One of the two nations was bound to become the ruler and the other, the subject. Thus, he thought that the goal of democratic government was not a realistic one and that every step taken in that direction was wrong.³ Thus the principle goal of his movement was to arm the Muslims with the most needed weapon in their

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2. He considered the Hindus and Muslims as two nations. That is why he was called as the father of 'two nation theory'.

3. Nur Ahmad, op.cit., p.3.
battle of survival i.e. the modern education.\textsuperscript{1}

Syed Ameer Ali, who also considered the Muslims, a separate nation, too, had the least sympathy with the Congress programme. He declared, "we have sympathy with certain objectives of the Congress and we respect the leaders of this movement, but it is our firm opinion that the adoption of the entire programme of the Congress will definitely result in the political death of the Muslims".\textsuperscript{2}

Hence, by 1887, signs of political awareness among the Punjab Muslims began to appear. They had no proper organisation to rival the Congress, nor a leadership, which was solely interested in political problems. For everything, therefore, the Punjab Muslims looked to Syed Ahmad Khan for lead.

In 1888, Syed Ahmad Khan formed the \textbf{United Indian Patriotic Association}. The chief aim of this association was to persuade the British that the Congress demands were un-representative.\textsuperscript{3}

\begin{itemize}
  \item[1.] Nur Ahmad, \textit{op.cit.}, p.3.
  \item[2.] Ibid., p.4.
  \item[3.] Ram Gopal, \textit{op.cit.}, p.67.
\end{itemize}
Yet, notwithstanding the Muslim support, the British passed the Act of 1892. Though the Act did not provide for popular representation, it was a triumph for the Congress agitators. It met many of their demands such as, enlargement of Councils, discussion of financial statements and right of interpellation. The Muslims felt that the government had succumbed to pressure from the Congress. They realised that the time had come when the Muslims should unite politically for safeguarding their interests.¹

The government's attempt to nominate, under the Act, some prominent Congress leaders to the Imperial and Provincial Councils, further, strengthened their conviction. The resolution of holding simultaneous examinations in India and England for the Indian Civil Service, which was passed by the House of Commons in 1893, also convinced them for a better organisation. The Muslim political agitation actually increased during the last decade of nineteenth century, but it was anti-Congress and aimed at labelling the Hindus as seditious² and the Muslims as loyal³.

1. Ram Gopal, op.cit., p.82.
Syed Ahmad Khan died in 1898, but the two institutions founded by him, the Aligarh College and Mohammedan Educational Congress lived after him and led the renaissance of the Muslims. These institutions had sown the seeds of enlightenment in the Muslim mind. Moreover, the opposition of the Aligarh movement towards the Indian National Congress also precipitated Muslims' eagerness to have their own institutions in which they could do things according to their own will and passed resolutions for the betterment of their community.

These ideas, however, paved the way for the formation of the All India Muslim League, the sole Muslim organisation. Not only this, the emergence of the Indian National Congress also attributed for its formation, because with the formation of this so-called Hindu body\textsuperscript{1}, the Muslims got the motivation of forming theirs.

\textbf{Second Phase 1906-1918:}

The dawn of the twentieth century witnessed the growing urge of Muslims to attain power and position in the Punjab. They wanted that their majority should be

\textsuperscript{1} During the period, 1886-1906, the Muslim participation in the Congress was very less.
recognised by every one. To meet that end, a demand to form a political association was felt in all the quarters of the Muslim society. Although all the Muslim sections of the Punjab were unanimous in having a political association, yet there was a difference of opinion regarding the means to be adopted to achieve this end. The Muslims of the Punjab were divided into pro-Congress and pro-Aligarh ones. Pro-Congress Muslims were led by Muharram Ali Chishti and Sheikh Umar Baksh. Pro-Aligarh or anti-Congress Muslims were led by Mohammed Shafi and Shah Din.¹

These groups had differences about the nature of the political body, but were unanimous on three points. First, the political body should be loyal to the government; second, it should aim at protecting the Muslim interests; and third, it should prevent the community from joining the Congress.²

By the year 1905, the pro-Congress Muslims got additional impetus with the emergence of Fazl-i-Husain (1877-1936), who wanted the Muslims to be re-organised socially,

¹ Pro-Aligarh Muslims had further divisions as conservatives and liberals. Shafi and Shah Din belonged to the liberal group.
religiously and politically in a new way. He was convinced that the policy of Syed Ahmad Khan, now followed for a quarter of century, should be abandoned and a new policy of active participation in politics should be adopted.

With the emergence of Fazl-i-Husain, the rivalry between the pro-Congress and pro-Aligarh Muslims was intensified. The pro-Congress Muslims led by Fazl-i-Husain, endeavoured to establish a political association. This was done at a public meeting at Lahore held on March 30, 1906. Under the chairmanship of Maulvi Fazal-ud-din, the members resolved to form the All India Muslim League.\footnote{Azim Husain, Fazl-i-Husain, A Political Biography (Bombay,1946), p.96.} Since the promotors of the League were sympathetic to the Congress, the organisation was an attempt to improve relations with other communities and to cooperate with them in agitations over common grievances. Mohammed Shafi, however, refused to join this League.\footnote{J.S. Rakkar, op.cit., p.73.}

On the other hand, the growing strength of the Indian National Congress made the government realise that they could
hold India only by preventing the union of the two great communities, in the demand for Swaraj or self rule. The first step in this direction was taken by Lord Curzon by creating the new province of East Bengal and Assam where the Muslims were in a majority. The partition of the Bengal thus gave a great stimulus to the communalism in the Punjab and thus, the British tactics of 'Divide and Rule' was clearly revealed.

The Indian National Congress was now looking for further reforms, but the British Government paid no heed; rather it wanted to keep the Muslims on its side. It also welcomed the idea of the Muslims having an organisation of their own, which could be effectively used as a counterpoise to Congress. To give effect to this policy, the Muslims were a subject of discussion among the British officials in the summer of 1906 at Simla.

Principal Archibald of M.A.O. College of Aligarh, who was at Simla, called Mohsin-ul-Mulk (Student of Aligarh School of Thought) to collect the Muslims and a deputation

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2. Ibid., p.62.
to Simla should go so that the demands of their community be presented to the Viceroy. The deputation was, however, formed and waited on Lord Minto at Simla on October 1, 1906 and presented an address. It is interesting to note that among the total thirty six signatories, eight belonged to Punjab. All the Punjab delegates were pro-Aligarh Muslims. The pro-Congress Muslims did not participate in the deputation. The Muslim deputation marked the dawn of the new era. The demands of the deputation had the support of almost all pro-Aligarh Muslims of the Punjab. The Muslim deputation made the following demands:–

(i) Employment of a due proportion of the Muslims in the government.

(ii) Elimination of the competitive element in the recruitment to the services.

(iii) Muslims should be given seats on the bench of every High Court and Chief Court.


(iv) To the Municipalities, either community should be allowed severally to return its own representatives as the practice in many towns in the Punjab.

(v) The Muslims should have the university of their own, which should be the centre of their religious and intellectual life.¹

The Viceroy assured the Muslims that their rights and interests would be safeguarded properly.² Simla success was hailed as a great achievement. In the thirty eighth session of the Indian National Congress held at Cocanada, in December 1923, Maulana Mohammed Ali referring to the Muslim deputation of 1906 said that it was a Command Performance.³ The Muslims were happy on the very thought of extending the Aligarh politics to the whole of India and particularly in the Punjab.


2. The Tribune, October 2, 1906, p.6.

3. N.N. Mitra, The Indian Annual Register, 1923, Volume II, p.27.
So it can be concluded that the period discussed witnessed the growing popularity and influence of the Congress, the ever increasing concern of the Muslims to fight for their political and social interests and the overcautious attitude of the British government to perpetuate its rule over India. The partition of the Bengal and the historic meeting between Lord Minto, the Viceroy, and the Muslim deputation at Simla were mainly responsible for the formation of the All India Muslim League on December 30, 1906. The main objects of the All India Muslim League were:

(i) to protect and advance the interests of the Muslims;
(ii) to apprise the government of the needs and aspirations of the Muslims;
(iii) to make the Muslims of India loyal to the British government, and
(iv) to keep the Muslims free from any hostility to other communities.1

The inaugural session of the League was attended by prominent Punjab delegates. Among others, Mohammed Shafi and Fazl-i-Husain were appointed on the Provincial Committee.

1. S.S. Pirzada, Foundations of Pakistan, All India Muslim League Documents, 1906-1924, Volume I (Karachi, 1969), p.6.; see also Nur Ahmad, op.cit., p.5; see also Ram Gopal, op.cit., p.102.
of the League. Both pro-Congress and anti-Congress Muslims welcomed the idea of All India Muslim League.

By the end of 1906, although a Muslim association in the form of All India Muslim League was formed, yet the Punjab Muslims remained divided in pro-Congress and anti-Congress elements. Mohammed Shafi and Shah Din, the anti-Congress leaders controlled the Punjab Anjuman-i-Islamia and the Muslim Association. On the other hand, pro-Congress Muslims, especially Fazl-i-Husain controlled the Lahore Indian Muslim League and the Anjuman-i-Naib-Musulmanan-i-Lahore. Moreover, Mohammed Shafi and his group believed in collaboration with the British and preservation of Muslim rights. Fazl-i-Husain wanted to give a progressive image to the League and stood for cooperation with the Congress.

In spite of the differences between these two sections of Muslims, they were ready to cooperate with each other so

far as the interests of their community were concerned. Both welcomed the government of India's proposals of 1907 in conceding the principles of separate representation to the Muslims. The reform proposals, in fact, reopened the debate on Muslim political activities in the Punjab, stirred them into another round of communal mobilisation and brought these two groups closer to each other. This paved the way of forming the unity among the Muslims. They now vigorously attempted to interest Muslims in an energetic communal political organisation and intensified their efforts to establish a Provincial Muslim League in the Punjab as a branch of the All India Muslim League.

Hence the Lahore Muslim League of Fazl-i-Husain and the Muslim Association of Mohammed Shafi were brought under a single organisation - The Punjab Muslim League on December 1, 1907. Azim Husain writes, "Fazl-i-Husain decided to dissolve his organisation and affiliated with the new because he was anxious not to sow the seeds of discord among the Muslims of the Punjab".

2. J.S. Rakkar, op.cit., p.86.
After joining together, the leaders of the Muslim community started drawing the attention of the government to the vital importance of the adequate representation of the Muslims as the distinct community, on the Provincial and Imperial Legislative Councils, and Municipal and District Boards. At each stage of the Morley-Minto Reforms (1907-1909), the Punjab Muslim politicians played an important role in fighting to ensure the interests of their community and stressing the basic differences between the two communities, Hindus and Muslims.

At the Amritsar session of the Muslim League in 1908, Syed Ali Imam, the president of the session, pointed out the differences between the two communities in his presidential address.¹

These differences between the two communities could again be witnessed throughout the process of evolution of the Morley-Minto Reforms. To the great dislike of Hindus,

¹ According to Syed Ali Imam, "The true communities, from the truely social point of view, are as far apart today as they were a thousand years ago ... The methods of theological thoughts of the two communities were totally different ... The two communities have different notions of sovereignty ... It is clear, therefore, the two communities have nothing in common in their traditional religious, social and political conceptions." See A.M. Zaidi (ed.), op.cit., p.125.
the Punjab Muslims, during 1907 and 1909, agitated to convince the government of their claim of separate representation taking into account, both their proportion of the population and the community's political importance. The Punjab Muslims were, however, unsuccessful to persuade the British government to accept their all demands. Under the Morley-Minto Reforms, as they were finally framed, they were not granted separate electorates in the Provincial Legislative Council.¹

Following the Morley-Minto Reforms, the Punjab Muslims intensified their agitation to secure separate representation on the Provincial Legislative Council which had been denied to them under the Reforms.

The Muslim claims to separate electorates was followed by similar claims of the Hindus and the Sikhs. The Sikhs started demanding separate representation for their community. In the memorandum submitted to the government of India, they demanded reservation of seats and special Sikh electorates on the Provincial and Imperial Councils

¹. This was obviously due to the insistence of the Punjab government, who considered the province as politically and constitutionally less developed. See A.F. Salahuddin, 'The Origins of Communal Representation in India', Journal of Pakistan Historical Society, Volume XII, Part IV, October 1964, p.324.
and on all the Municipal and District Boards in the Punjab.¹ The Sikhs asserted that they were amongst most loyal and faithful British subjects and constituted the backbone of the government, both militarily and economically.²

While the Congress members were not so expressive,³ the Arya Samaj and other organisations claiming to speak for the Hindus, condemned the Morley-Minto Reforms as distinctly favourable to the Muslims.

All this paved way for further communal tension in the Punjab. Many farsighted and patriotic Muslims, both in and outside Punjab, showed their opposition to the forces of communalism. Prominent among them were Fazl-i-Husain, Mohammed Ali Jinnah, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and others. They called it an irreconcilable ulcer in India.⁴ The desire to cooperate with the Congress, however, gained ground after the outbreak of the First World War. It is

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¹ J.S. Rakkar, op.cit., p.129.
² The Khalsa Advocate, November 23, 1907, pp.1-2.
⁴ Premvati Ghai, op.cit., p.46; see also Nur Ahmad, op.cit., p.6.
important to note at this juncture that in 1914, the Muslims of the Punjab were once again divided between the old party of Shafi group and the young party of Fazl-i-Husain's group.¹

During the course of the First World War, the Muslims had their natural sympathy with Turkey.² This made the Muslims, especially, the young party, hostile towards the British. This motivated Mohammed Ali Jinnah all the more, who wanted a Congress-League Pact at all costs. On the other hand, Congress also showed such sympathy for Turkey.³

The Muslim League, under the presidency of Jinnah, adopted a resolution stressing the necessity of the Hindus and the Muslims joining hands to work for the national progress. Subsequently, the Congress and the League at their session held at Lucknow in 1916 adopted the Congress-League scheme of reforms.⁴ The principle issue of discussion was


2. The Sultan of Turkey also held the title of Caliph of Islam. Indian Muslims saw a danger to his position, when, while preparing a peace treaty, the European Powers were planning to divide the territories of Turkey. This was a threat to the position of Caliph, which the Muslims were unable to digest. See Gail Minault, The Khilafat Movement—Religious Symbolism and Political Mobilization in India (Delhi, 1982), p.1.

3. Many Congress leaders had helped for the collection of funds for Turkey. See Premvati Ghai, op.cit., p.47.

4. Ibid.; see also Nur Ahmad, op.cit., p.7.
separate electorates and the percentage of the Muslim representation on the Legislative Council. With the mutual consent, the Punjab Muslims agreed to have fifty per cent of representation for their population of 54.8%.1

The Lucknow Pact, the result of the joint deliberation between the Congress and the Muslim League2, was, therefore, welcomed by the young party Muslims of the Punjab. They denounced the policy of Mohammed Shafi as 'retrograde and reactionary' and announced the formation of the new Punjab Muslim League. The old Punjab Muslim League that was critical of the Lucknow Pact was disaffiliated by the All India Muslim League at the Lucknow session on December 28, 1916.3

The Lucknow Pact marked the beginning of the so-called Congress-League cooperation, which continued during the next few years. This also made the British government realise about the urgency of reforms.

1. Azim Husain, op.cit., p.57; see also Ram Gopal, op.cit., p.131.
2. A joint conference of the All India Congress Committee and the All India Muslim League was held at Lucknow on December 28, 1916. See The Tribune, December 29, 1916, p.5.
3. Ibid.
The question of reforms deepened the rift between the old party Muslims and the young party Muslims. Mohammed Shafi, after being disaffiliated from the All India Muslim League, tried to form an All India Muslim Association, but he was highly criticised for this act by all the sections of the Punjab. Among the Hindus, the Hindu Mahasabha was opposed to the system of separate electorates provided in by the Montford scheme of 1918.

Thus, the publication of the Montford scheme divided the Congress-League supporters into two sections in the Punjab. The Moderates viewed the scheme as an advancement and were in favour of accepting the same, while the Nationalists or Extremists were disappointed with it.

Inspite of the opposing factors, the Muslims of the Punjab were hopeful of getting the concessions which they had failed to get under the Morley-Minto Reforms.

Thus, it is clearly seen that at the outbreak of the year 1919, the Muslims of the Punjab had been struggling hard to get the proper share in the administration of the

1. Indu Joshi, op.cit., p.9.
2. In December, 1906, the Punjab Hindu Mahasabha was formed to safe guard the interests of the Hindus.
province. To achieve this end, there had been a struggle for leadership also. The young party under Fazl-i-Husain and the old party under Mohammed Shafi were the clear examples of this struggle. Moreover, the temporary scenes of the Hindu-Muslim unity were also witnessed during that time.

The present study is an attempt to trace the growth of the Muslim politics from 1919-1947 in the Punjab. In the forthcoming chapters, the Muslim aspiration for power and political supremacy in the Punjab would be discussed and how this struggle finally led to the partition of the Punjab would also be narrated.