CHAPTER II

OBJECTIVE, METHODOLOGY AND AREA OF FIELDWORK
The partition of India that took place in 1947 marked both a culmination and a new beginning of the divide between the Hindus and the Muslims. While the consolidation of political power by both groups was the main objective, the quest for the maintenance of their identity gave rise to the two-nation theory, which resulted in the creation of Pakistan, the Muslim state and the Indian union, a Hindu majority state.

The decision to partition was a political one and hence the boundaries created were political too. While this decision was an act of political will for political power, it must be pointed out here that the expression of 'political will' to create Pakistan was confined to the ideologues of the Muslim League, scattered in various regions of the undivided country. In contrast, the Muslims associated with the Congress had a different view. Therefore, it needs to be examined as to what was the will and aspirations of the common people on both sides of the border and what happened to the vast majority as a result of the act of partition. The focal point is, what were the social and political conditions at that time and how far were the lives of ordinary people affected; how 1947 marked a significant change in the lives of many.

It was the communal frenzy and violence, which marked this period that caused Hindus to move across into the Indian side of the border and the Muslims to move across to Pakistan. While people belonging to different socio-economic groups moved into and settled in India, it is pertinent to
analyze the consequences of this moving in terms of the three dimensions of stratification – caste, class and power. It is important in this context to understand whether or not in terms of these dimensions of stratification, partition had a differential impact on the people. Several studies (Khosla 1950; Saksena 1961; Rao 1967; Keller 1975; Butalia 1998) have been carried out to analyze the experience of people whose lives were disrupted due to partition. These studies have, however failed to analyze the differential experiences the refugees had due to different life conditions to which they were subjected to and how these life conditions changed for the refugees. Hence the need for such a study. The important point of this work is that while it is a study of refugees, it focuses on units such as the caste, class and groups that wield power.

While this study will focus on the partition refugees, for a better understanding it is important to first explain some of the basic orientations that guide this work. These have therefore been dealt with in this chapter.

HISTORICAL ASPECT OF PARTITION

If one looks at the historical background of partition, one finds that the withdrawal of the British from the territory of India marked a significant event in South Asian history. The partition of India brought to the forefront the great divide between the two major religious communities – the Hindus and the Muslims – in the Indian subcontinent. It was the growth of religious nationalism that led to the creation of Pakistan. For an
understanding of its growth one has to look at the historical events that helped shape it. Thus, it is important to analyze in this chapter the historical account of the rise of religious nationalism in India, beginning from the early twentieth century, with the partition of Bengal (1905) to the period upto 1947, when the partition of India took place.

The community consciousness has been present among the Hindus and the Muslims from way back in the historical period. The awareness about the divide had come early on and the Hindus and Muslims had become conscious of their separate identities before the era of modern political awakening brought in by the British rule. Thus as Peter Van deer Veer (1996:20) points out that it would be wrong to see the 'foreign hand' as the only explanation of the origin of religious nationalism. One can say that the British rule only gave a concrete political shape to the age-old conflicts between the Hindu and the Muslim communities.

The emergence of Hindu and Muslim nationalism was a result of several factors: the economic divide between sections of the two communities; the intellectual and emotional environment of the Muslim elite in the second half of the nineteenth and early decades of the twentieth century; the rising tide of Hindu revivalism and nationalism during the same period; the ethos of Indian nationalism and also the British policy of playing off one community against the other (Prasad 1999:92).
Thus while early on the communities had realized that there were certain divisions that existed among them, these were gradually given shape in the political sphere and greater political participation by the members of the two communities took place to advance the cause of their communities.

Going back to the historical political antecedents one finds that it was the establishment of the Mohammedan Anglo Oriental College in 1875 which produced many important leaders of India's Muslim community. It was a section of the Muslims from amongst those leaders who formed the Muslim League in 1906. Even as both the Indian National Congress, primarily viewed as a Hindu organization and the Muslim League were in pursuit of self-government in India, the differences between the Hindus and the Muslims widened.

The partition of Bengal in 1905 into East and West Bengal led to divisions among the Hindus and Muslims and resulted in the formation of the Muslim League in 1906. The first major achievement of the League was to make the British concede to its demand for separate electorates for Muslims through the Government of India Act of 1909, popularly known as the Minto-Morley Reforms. This gave rise to the growth of centrifugal forces not only between the Hindus and the Muslims but also among Muslims of different classes as this demand was vested to only some Muslims, at first only a small minority of propertied Muslims (Hardy 1972:148). Thus this
Act undid the process of unification and amalgamation among Hindus and Muslims which had been going on for centuries.

However, during the period between 1911 to 1922 there was an atmosphere of friendship between the Congress and the Muslim League. Muslims were disillusioned with the British because of the annulment of the Partition of Bengal in 1911 and the British attitude to Turkey during World War I (1914-1918). At the Lucknow session held in 1916 both the Congress and the Muslim League signed the Lucknow Pact and passed resolutions for a joint programme of constitutional reforms. They reached an agreement to cooperate in the political field on the basis of a common programme.

For sometime after the signing of the Lucknow Pact, the Hindus and the Muslims cooperated with each other and worked together in the Anti-Rowlatt agitation (1919), Khilafat and Non Cooperation Movement (1920-1922). However due to the withdrawal of the Non-Cooperation Movement by Mahatma Gandhi because of the Chauri-Chaura incident in 1922 once again a divide was created between the Hindus and the Muslims. Thus a period of Hindu-Muslim unity beginning with the Lucknow Pact of 1916 came to an end and there was an increase in communal riots in succeeding years all over India (Nene and Barde 1947:67).

The Aligarh movement started by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was opposed to the idea of Muslims participating in politics. It was only with the
Partition of Bengal in 1905, which gave Muslims a province in which they had an overwhelming majority that they began to be aware of the importance of political power.

The centrifugal tendency was reinforced by the incorporation of separate electorates and reserved seats in the reforms enacted through the Government of India Act of 1919. Separate electorates were first conceded to Muslims in the Minto-Morley reforms and later extended to Sikhs and others by the Lord Southborough Committee on franchise. This practice of recognizing separate constituencies for some communities and separate interests was to atomize the political world into smaller particles. Thus the building blocks of constitutional politics provided a number of foci for centrifugal tendencies. They fostered communal politics and mutually conflicting groupings based on vested interests. The fact that the Muslims and the Sikhs were granted separate electorates and the reservation of seats on the basis of caste affiliation encouraged caste political formations at the expense of Indian nationalism. All this created further divisiveness (Samad 1995:15).

Communal riots and bloodshed marked the political atmosphere in the country around 1928-1929. At this time there was the appointment of the Simon Commission in accordance with the Government of India Act of 1919 to inquire into the working of the Act and propose reforms. However the all-white composition of the Commission caused great moral outrage
among Indians. Thus the Indian leaders were asked to produce their recommendation for a new constitution under the chairmanship of Motilal Nehru (Nene and Barde 1947:131). However, instead of reviving the Hindu-Muslim alliance, the Nehru Report of 1928 polarized relations between the two communities, as Jinnah’s earlier demands, elaborated in the Delhi Proposal of 1927 were only partially met. His view that a third of the seats in the central legislature should be reserved for Muslims was rejected. The differences between the Congress and the non-Congress Muslims essentially revolved around two major issues – the nature of the central government and the electorate. The Nehru Report of 1928 recommended a unitary structure at the centre and the replacement of the separate electorates by weightages for minorities with joint electorates and reserved seats. Thus the ultimate implication of the report was to take back all the concessions that the Muslims had gained since 1909 without giving anything in return. Consequently, the Muslim opinion rallied around the All-India Muslim Conference, an organization articulating the interests of the regional parties that had emerged under dyarchy. The Conference demanded the retention of separate electorates and a federal centre with residuary powers vested in the provinces. Thus only a handful of Muslims were members of or supported the centralist parties. Neither the Congress nor the Muslim League could claim to have a substantial following among the Muslims. The devolution of power to the provinces reinforced strong
sub-nationalist groupings that were keen to consolidate and expand provincial autonomy (Samad 1995:20-28).

Again, one finds that reforms introduced through the Government of India Act of 1935, reconfirmed and consolidated the centrifugal developments initiated explicitly or implicitly by the reforms of 1919. Through this Act there was to be a bicameral federal legislature in which the states were given disproportionate weightage. Moreover, the representatives of the states were not to be elected by the people but appointed directly by the rulers (Chandra 1990:251). Thus the consequence of the constitutional advance from the reforms of 1919 to the India Act of 1935 encouraged in the Muslim majority provinces powerful centrifugal forces based on community and regional identity. The breakup of the Hindu-Muslim alliance was due to the use of religious and cultural symbols to mobilize the respective communities.

However Muslims under the leadership of Jinnah began to organize themselves into a strong force in politics. They received the support of the British government and demanded the creation of Pakistan. In his Presidential address to the League in 1940, M A Jinnah propounded his two-nation theory which became the basis for the demand for Pakistan. Islam and Hinduism, Jinnah declared, were far more than religions in the strict sense of the word; they were two distinct social orders, two different civilizations based mainly on conflicting ideas and conceptions. Each had
its own religious philosophy, social customs, legal system, literature and sources of history. According to him, it was 'a dream' that the Hindus and the Muslims could ever evolve a common nationality and to yoke together two such nations under a 'single state' could only lead to disaster (Smith 1963:142). Jinnah did not put forward clearly the nature of the new state to be created. Consequently, this ambiguity allowed the coexistence of both the Punjabi (where language was put to the backseat and religion became the dividing factor) and the Bengali (where religion was put to the backseat and language was seen as a uniting factor) interpretations which were popular rallying calls in their respective provinces. This explained Jinnah's demand that Pakistan had first to be conceded in principle before it was precisely defined (Samad 1995:67).

One finds that there was the creation of religious nationalism around the two major religious communities - the Hindus and the Muslims - during the period of the British rule. Religious nationalism that was strongly encouraged during this period ultimately led to the partition of India and the creation of Pakistan, the Muslim state.

Though the boundary making process was a complex and problematic exercise, it was completed in less than two months. The newly created borders were a source of several problems one such being that of 'refugees' (Yong Tan and Kudaisya 2000:78).
OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

A good research work is impossible without a proper methodological perspective. For a researcher to arrive at relevant facts from meaningful research findings, the proper choice of methodological orientation is crucial. In this work, the important link between macro and micro (Knorr-Cetina and Cicourel 1981:259) dimension is crucial. On the one hand there is an opposition between macro and micro perspectives (between sociologies of large-scale social structures and of interaction respectively), on the other there is a close interrelationship between these two aspects. While the two levels cannot be reduced to one, the element of borrowing and sharing between the macro and the micro is crucial in this work.

The macro-structure (social systems) is a function of the microstructure (lifeworld) and it is an analysis of this interrelationship between the social system and lifeworld that this work is trying to understand (see below). The first and foremost objective of the study is to understand the caste, class and power structures of the refugees. In this work, the three dimensions of caste, class and power have therefore been understood in terms of lifeworlds and social systems. It intends to understand how people's everyday interactions and assumptions with regard to caste, class and power have an impact on how these three dimensions function in the society.
The second objective of the study is to analyze the situation of refugees when they arrived in India and to determine the factors that influenced their change and mobility. With change in the social and material conditions of people, there comes about a change in the social ranking also. Because of displacement and resettlement people lost land, other assets, jobs and businesses. Quite a few of them had also become instant urban dwellers. These conditions led to certain short and long term consequences that required analysis and interpretation. Thus, it was both problems of social adjustment and cultural assimilation of displaced people into the new areas, which brings us to the third objective of the study, to understand the problems, possibilities and degree of integration of the refugees into the new society.

In this connection, it would be useful to postulate a typology of the degree to which refugees have been integrated into the new society. Firstly, the refugees may be classified on the basis of having assimilated themselves into the new society. Assimilation refers to the process whereby the refugees become indistinguishably integrated into the host society. According to Lundberg (1968) assimilation is the process of mutual adjustment, through which culturally different groups gradually obliterate their differences to the point where they are no longer regarded as socially significant or observable (Singh 1997:26).
The second category could be those who adapted; adaptation refers to a process of adjustment. Thus the overt expressions of hostility are avoided and certain compensatory advantages—economic, social or psychological—are gained by both sides, while leaving the source of conflict unresolved (Mitchell 1979:3).

Finally, one may consider a third condition, which could be that of alienation, whereby the refugees may have been unable to come to terms with their new environment and thus do not feel as a part of the new society.

The methodological framework within which the data has been collected and analyzed in this work is phenomenology and intersubjectivity, thus falling in the realm of interpretative social science. For the phenomenologist, society cannot be studied separately from the individuals who comprise it, neither can the individuals be understood without reference to society, for it is the interaction of people that produces both the group and the awareness of self in the individuals (McNeill and Townley 1981:45).

This study involves the understanding of the everyday interaction of individuals in society. It is through this interaction that individuals arrive at an understanding and formulation of common perceptions and meanings and thus understand the social systems (caste, class, and power) that exist in society. Thus this work takes into account peoples' views on
how caste, class and power systems function in their society. This type of subjects’ assessment of the functioning and operation of their social systems is important for it may provide an insight into the criteria in terms of which people make social divisions in their society. It may also help to locate new social classes, castes or power groups that are on the move. Further, it may help to identify the perceived barriers to channels of social mobility. Lastly, it may reveal the friction and conflicts between different social layers (Bopegamage and Veeraraghavan 1967:9).

Thus interpretative approach holds that human action has little inherent meaning. It acquires meaning among people who share a meaning system that permits them to interpret it as socially relevant. Further, for interpretative researchers social reality is based on people’s definitions of it. A person’s definition of a situation tells him or her how to assign meaning in constantly shifting situations (Neuman 1994:69).

Since this study is of a qualitative nature it must be pointed out at the outset that statistical figures and quantitative data are only of a minor significance here. Rather, it is the diverse experiences of informants, which is of relevance. This work is a life-history kind of study and has been presented in a narrative style.

Since the study also aims to understand how belonging to different strata in society made people experience partition differently, it necessitates the use of the comparative method. Through the use of this method a
comparison has been drawn of the experience of partition and resettlement of the different caste, class and power groups among the refugees from Pakistan.

This study is intended to be a contribution to the field of stratification and migration, by analyzing the interrelationship between the dimensions of stratification and the process of migration. The study intends to unfold that stratification systems may play a vital role not just in stable societies but also for migrant groups moving into new communities. These systems may help to determine the degree and manner integration or the lack of it for the refugees into the host society.

UNDERSTANDING THE INTERRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE LIFEWORLD AND THE SOCIAL SYSTEM

The interrelationship between the lifeworld and the social system is one of the key areas in this research work as noted above. The study aims to understand the lifeworlds and social systems of the Hindu Punjabi refugees in terms of the dimensions of caste, class and power.

The term 'lifeworld' refers to the 'taken-for-granted' stream of everyday routine, interactions and events that are seen not only as the source of individual experience but also give shape to groups and societies (Schutz 1976). Thus Schutz's contention was that people must have similar stocks of knowledge to share meanings (Altheide 1977:137). According to
Habermas (1987) we live in a lifeworld in which we coordinate our actions through communication. The lifeworld guarantees the unity of the objective world and the intersubjectivity between its members (for action coordination) thus promoting the process of understanding and consensus. According to Habermas, lifeworld consists of the set of background assumptions and stocks of knowledge that communicative action or interaction presupposes (Turner 1995:202). Thus lifeworld comprises that vast stock of taken-for-granted definitions and understandings of the world that give coherence and direction to our everyday actions and interactions (Pusey 1987:58).

Also operating in any society are 'social systems'. The concept of social system as propounded by Talcott Parsons (1951) is a plurality of individual actors interacting with each other in a situation that has at least a physical or environmental aspect. Actors who are motivated in terms of a tendency to the optimization of gratification and whose relations to their situations, including each other, are defined and mediated in terms of a system of culturally structured and shared symbols. Its major structural units are considered to be collectivities or roles and the major patterns linking these units are values and norms. Habermas points to a more basic division between two major dimensions of modern society, namely, the system and the lifeworld. He argues that the system and lifeworld each have a distinctive operating logic and in the context of modern society may not be integrated successfully at all. Habermas argues that our values and
belief systems depend on communicative reason and in this way constitute
our lifeworld, while the system has its basis in instrumental reason. Thus
Habermas is critical of Parsons who views the existence of society in terms
of differentiation into subsystems while he himself views the development
of modern society as depending on the uncoupling of the system and lifeworld.

It is this relationship between the lifeworld and the social system that
becomes a crucial focal point of this study. The relationship shared by the
lifeworld through emphasis on communicative reason influences the
manner in which the social systems exist, even though it has been pointed
out that it is instrumental reason that is the logic for the existence of the
social systems. With the process of modernity there is the uncoupling of
the lifeworld and the social systems. In actuality, there is a shared
consensus between the lifeworld and the social system and to see these
two, as differentiated parts of a society would not be correct.

Since the lifeworld comes about through the basis of communicative
action it results in a shared set of beliefs and values. It is thus through the
process of intersubjectivity at the interpersonal or micro level that there is
an impact at the level of social systems. Similarly the macro level social
systems too exert an influence on the shaping of the lifeworld. It is this give
and take relationship between the lifeworld and the social system that is
important from the point of view of this research work. Therefore, in this
work the three dimensions of caste, class and power will be understood in terms of interrelationship between the lifeworlds and the social systems.

**WHY FOCUS ON HINDU PUNJABIS?**

The partition of the Punjab was a much more difficult question as compared with the partition of Bengal because of the communal problem. It was the existence of the three communities – Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs – that made the Punjab situation a more complex one. According to the census of 1941, the Sikhs comprised about thirteen percent of the total population followed by Hindus who comprised thirty percent and then the Muslims with the largest, that is, fifty-seven percent of the total population (Kapur 2000:62). In the face of the Pakistan demand getting stronger, the idea of partition of the Punjab began to weigh heavily on the mind of the Sikhs. In the prospect of partition there were Sikh demands for ‘Azad Punjab’, ‘Khalistan’, ‘Sikhistan’ or a ‘Sikh state’ articulated in the 1940s in response essentially to the Pakistan scheme of the Muslim League.

While both the Hindus as well as the Sikhs experienced displacement in large numbers as a result of partition, the focus of this study is on the Hindu Punjabi refugees settled in Delhi.

It must be emphasized that the Sikhs are not included within the scope of this work due to the fact that they experienced different politico-historical events since the pre-independence days. Looking back at these
events one finds that a section of the Sikhs had been demanding a separate homeland for themselves. Oren (1974:413) points out that in early 1943, Master Tara Singh, the leader of the Sikh party, Akali Dal, had attacked the Hindu Punjabis for trying to include Sikhs in the category of Hindus. Further, he added that the Sikhs did not wish to be dominated by the Muslims or absorbed by the Hindus. However with independence Sikhs were only granted a minority community status.

The movement for 'Khalistan' did not subside. The 1984 anti-Sikh riots and the fact that the movement took a militant form, may have given a section of the Sikhs a sense of collective alienation. Although the demand for a separate homeland for the Sikhs has subsided, these events have led this section to create a strong identity for itself, separate from that of the Hindu community. The Sikh case is qualitatively different from that of the Hindus because a section of the former demanded and led a movement for a separate sovereign state based on their specific religious identity. Moreover, in the case of the Sikhs, the strong physical indicators of identity (that is the 5 K's) are manifest. In fact it is often casually mentioned by both the Sikhs and the Hindus alike that the Sikhs were greater sufferers in the process of partition and its subsequent events due to the visible aspects of difference. Further while the Hindu Punjabis were migrating to a polity dominated by co-religionists, the Sikhs from West Punjab came to a polity where they were a minority community. Hence, their case requires a separate study and cannot be accommodated within the framework of this
work, which focuses on assimilation, adaptation and alienation. Therefore this study focuses only on the Hindu Punjabi refugees.

**AREA OF FIELDWORK: WHY DELHI?**

The area of fieldwork for this study is Delhi. Large number of people from West Punjab migrated and settled in different parts of India, like Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, East Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Bengal, Rajasthan etc. (Saksena 1961:2). Delhi itself experienced the arrival of a large number of migrants from West Pakistan due to partition. In fact the statistics on Delhi (see table II.1) show that the population of Delhi increased substantially during the decade 1941-1951. During this decade the population of Delhi increased by about ninety percent which was largely due to large-scale influx of refugee population from Pakistan.

Table II.1 shows that the population of Delhi has shown an increase since the turn of the century. The growth of population during the decade ending 1941 was a little over forty-four percent. The partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947 brought an influx of refugees into Delhi. The census figures show that by the end of the decade, in 1951, the population of Delhi had increased by ninety percent, the highest for any decade during the period 1901-2001. After 1951 the growth rate of Delhi’s population is stabilized at little over fifty percent. This study, therefore, focuses its attention on the Hindu Punjabi refugees who came to Delhi during the decade 1941 to 1951.
This section of the population can be categorized into two groups – first, those who came during the period 1941 to 1946, that is, before the partition took place and second, those who came between 1947 to 1951, after the partition had occurred. This classification is necessary in order to understand whether the time frame/period of migration, made the experience of migration and resettlement into a new area, also important.

If one looks at the statistical figures for the trends of urbanization in Delhi for the period 1901-2001 (see table II.2) one finds that while comparing the decadal growth rate of urban population since 1901 it is seen that the urban population which recorded a growth of 11.13 percent during the decade 1901-11 rose to 27.94 percent during the decade 1911-21. The urban population has shown an all-time high growth of around 106.58 percent between the period 1941-51. This high growth in urban population during this period suggests that a majority of such migrants settled in urban areas of Delhi. In the subsequent decades the increase in urban population has been much lower. While analyzing the average annual growth rate of urban population in Delhi, it is evident that from 1911-1951 the same has shown increasing trends where it has risen from 1.1 percent to 7.3 percent. The reason for abnormal increase in annual growth rate of urban population of Delhi between 1941 and 1951 is attributed to large-scale immigration of people after partition of the country. Again, in subsequent decades the annual average growth rate has declined as seen from the figures.
Table II.1: Decadal Variation in the Population of Delhi since 1901

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Decade variation</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>4,05,819</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>4,13,851</td>
<td>+ 8,032</td>
<td>+ 1.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>4,88,452</td>
<td>+ 74,601</td>
<td>+ 18.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>6,36,246</td>
<td>+ 1,47,794</td>
<td>+ 30.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>9,17,939</td>
<td>+ 2,81,693</td>
<td>+ 44.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>17,44,072</td>
<td>+ 8,26,133</td>
<td>+ 90.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>26,58,612</td>
<td>+ 9,14,540</td>
<td>+ 52.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>40,65,698</td>
<td>+ 14,07,086</td>
<td>+ 52.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>62,20,406</td>
<td>+ 21,54,708</td>
<td>+ 53.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>94,20,644</td>
<td>+ 32,00,238</td>
<td>+ 51.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>1,37,82,976</td>
<td>+ 43,62,332</td>
<td>+ 46.30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table II.2: Trends of Urbanization in Delhi: 1901-2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Total Urban Population</th>
<th>Decennial Growth</th>
<th>Annual Average Growth Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Absolute Number</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>4,05,819</td>
<td>2,14,115</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>4,13,851</td>
<td>2,37,944</td>
<td>+ 23,829</td>
<td>+ 11.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>4,88,452</td>
<td>3,04,420</td>
<td>+ 66,476</td>
<td>+ 27.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>6,36,246</td>
<td>4,47,442</td>
<td>+ 1,43,022</td>
<td>+ 46.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>9,17,939</td>
<td>6,95,686</td>
<td>+ 2,48,244</td>
<td>+ 55.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>17,44,072</td>
<td>14,37,134</td>
<td>+ 7,41,448</td>
<td>+ 106.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>26,58,612</td>
<td>23,59,408</td>
<td>+ 9,22,274</td>
<td>+ 64.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>40,65,698</td>
<td>36,47,023</td>
<td>+ 12,87,615</td>
<td>+ 54.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>62,20,406</td>
<td>57,68,200</td>
<td>+ 21,21,177</td>
<td>+ 58.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>94,20,644</td>
<td>84,71,625</td>
<td>+ 27,03,425</td>
<td>+ 46.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>1,37,82,976</td>
<td>1,28,19,761</td>
<td>+ 43,48,136</td>
<td>+ 51.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, one finds that it was the decade 1941-1951 that marked a demographic change for the city of Delhi. In fact according to census figures of 2001 the population of Delhi is 1,37,82,976 that comprises of 75,70,890 males and 62,12,086 females. The substantial demographic change of Delhi during the decade 1941-51 was mainly on account of the partition of the country and the consequent influx of refugees.

Delhi being the National Capital Territory (NCT) and the seat of the Union government attracted many refugees. In addition, it was in close proximity to West Pakistan and hence refugees came in large numbers to Delhi. Moreover, most of the refugees had relatives or friends in Delhi and in a situation where they had left everything behind, it was natural to look for some kind of psychological-moral support of relatives and friends. Hence many came to stay with their relatives and friends here. There were also many who got posted to Delhi and many more came because Delhi they thought provided them with better job opportunities. In fact many of the government’s rehabilitation programmes such as vocational training, educational programmes etc. were first started in Delhi and then carried to other parts of India (Rao 1967:65). Thus from a centre of Islamic culture with a large number of Islamic structures, Delhi became a city of refugees. This led to significant alterations in the social and cultural profiles of the city, hence it was important to focus on Delhi and how it provided an avenue for refugees to resettle and rehabilitate within its confines.
Today the NCT of Delhi comprises of nine districts – North-West district, North district, North-East district, East district, New Delhi district, Central district, West district, South West district and South district (see Map II.1).

From within the NCT, informants have been selected from three areas/localities. The selection of localities is based on the classification of areas into three: an upper/affluent class locality, a middle class locality and a lower class locality or a slum area. In accordance with this classification, the three areas that were selected were Greater Kailash that represents the upper; Kalkaji, the middle class locality and Tilak Nagar, the lower income area. Both Greater Kailash and Kalkaji fall in the South district while Tilak Nagar falls in the West district (see Map II.1). While this classification is based on the class group predominantly residing in these localities, elements of other class groups are also present in each of these areas. Thus no locality is strictly speaking upper or lower class. In fact, elements of upper, middle and lower class are present in varying proportions in each of these three areas.

It must be pointed out that while the selection of areas based on such a classification provided important data with regard to the class factor, it was also a source of data collection for other factors such as caste and power since all these dimensions are interrelated and cut across one another.
Map II.1 Various Districts in the NCT of Delhi

While refugee settlements were set up in various parts of Delhi (see chapter III) the areas selected for this study are not strictly speaking refugee settlements. While Kalkaji and Tilak Nagar figure in the list of areas of refugee settlements in Delhi until 1950, Greater Kailash is not one such colony, but it houses many refugee families. This points out to the fact that no refugee colony was established exclusively for the affluent category. Greater Kailash is a colony of those refugees who were either affluent before they came or those who became affluent after arrival and then moved into the colony. In fact, Datta (2000:275) points out that as the refugee colonies expand, their well-to-do inhabitants move out to healthier and more select localities such as Golf Links, Vasant Vihar, Greater Kailash, Ring Road, New Friends Colony and Defence Colony.

The selection of these areas was a matter of both subjective as well as objective dimensions. Firstly, these areas house a large number of refugee families and secondly, from the researcher's point of view there was an easy access to these areas.

The selection of Greater Kailash as a locality for study was important as it represents that section of the population who were affluent and also those who experienced considerable upward social mobility in their life and hence moved out on their own into this area which came up in the 1960s. This area is one, which today represents an upper class section of Delhi. In
both the other two research sites of this work, allotments were made based on the refugee status which was unlike the case in Greater Kailash.

In Kalkaji large-scale allotments were made to the refugee population. However, Kalkaji today is unlike what it was many years ago when allotments were made. This difference is mainly on account of the rising cost of land in this part of Delhi that has led to the perception that many of the families in this area fall in a better economic class. Most refugee families in this area came from camps. They had been allotted land in Kalkaji when they had been staying in camps; in fact, many of the informants from this area had come from Purana Qila camp. Therefore, their case provides a different perspective to our research as compared to those in Greater Kailash, most of who never stayed in camps. Many of the refugee residents of Greater Kailash stayed mainly with relatives or on their own, but without government help, before settling down in their present locality.

The study of the third area, Tilak Nagar helped to understand the case of refugees from a third perspective, that of those who generally belong to the lower income group. In Tilak Nagar fieldwork was done extensively in the slum area. This is an area inhabited by people from the lowest caste and class group. They are an important section to be studied for their outlook and experiences are different from those belonging to the other two sections of society. The position a social category occupies in terms of any
of the dimensions of stratification has an important bearing on its perceptions and experiences of events. Therefore, it is important to give a brief description of the three dimensions of stratification that is caste, class and power around which this work is developed.

**UNDERSTANDING KEY CONCEPTS OF THE STUDY**

**Caste**

The term 'caste' is often used to denote large-scale kinship groups that are hierarchically organized within a rigid system of stratification. In such a system a person's social position is determined by birth and marital connection outside one's caste is prohibited. Early Hindu classics describe a society as divided into four varnas: Brahmin (poet-priest), Kshatriya (warrior-chief), Vaishya (traders) and Shudras (menials-servants). The 'Untouchables' are outside this classification. These categories are ranked with the Brahmins at the top followed by Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras.

Such a ranking of caste groups in terms of the model of pure and impure (Ghurye 1961; Dumont 1988) provides a ritual ranking and refers only to the broad categories of society. However, the study of local caste structures have revealed that the caste system is a dynamic one, because often castes are able to change their rankings in the caste hierarchy by acquiring economic and political power (Srinivas 1987:30), even though
this process may take a long period of time. Additionally, the influence of external forces of change on the caste system rule out the possibility of it remaining merely homo-hierarchichus (Sharma 1994:2).

Despite the universality of the Brahmin, India cannot be said to possess a single caste system, but a number of regional systems (Gough 1960:11). The manner in which the caste system operates among Hindu Punjabis is quite unique and interesting. Among the Hindu population of the Punjab, Brahmins do not hold a prominent position. In the rural areas, it is the peasant castes (such as, the Jats who are mostly Sikhs), who are the dominant caste (Jats are Shudras who are above the pollution line, while there is also another category of Shudras who fall below the pollution line). In the urban areas it is the non-agriculturist castes such as the Kshatriyas and Vaishyas who are the socially and politically important caste groups (Narang 1982:120). In fact one of the important reasons for the dominant position of these middle ranking castes of the ritual hierarchy is that they were the most advanced in urbanization and literacy (Brass 1975:308-9).

Ibbetson (1916) had classified the Punjab castes according to their occupational structure into the land owning and agricultural castes, which are the Jats and Rajputs. The second category are the professional and mercantile castes such as the Brahmins, Khatris and Vaishyas and lastly are the menials and artisans which includes the scavengers, weavers,
leather workers, potters, carpenters, washermen and the like. Many of these caste-occupational groups came to Delhi after partition, and there could be instances of these groups abandoning their hereditary occupations and acquiring diverse occupational skills as they got opportunity for economic change and prosperity. Therefore the question of congruence/incongruence between a caste group and its hereditary occupation has been researched and analyzed in this work.

The different caste groups had to be studied to understand as to what extent belonging to different caste groups meant a different experience of partition and the process of resettlement. For example, the Rehabilitation Ministry had set up special relief plans for the 'Harijan refugees' and created a separate section for their implementation in February 1948. This section was abolished in June 1949 and its work transferred to a Displaced Harijan Rehabilitation Board established under the aegis of the All India Harijan Sewak Sangh (Rao 1967:81). Thus it was important to understand whether this section of the population did or did not benefit from government measures. This also helped in drawing up a comparative picture of whether a similar kind of rehabilitation work was done for the upper castes. It further helped to understand whether the process of resettling in a new environment has retained the caste identity as a vital factor or other identities and interests have overridden the caste identity.
Class

Class in the broader sense refers to the position that individuals occupy in the economic sphere. In fact Marx describes class in terms of ownership or non-ownership of the means of production/property (Giddens 1973:27). Marx's definition cannot be strictly applied to the case of refugees in Delhi, as in urban areas property is only one of the factors for determining the class position of individuals. The occupational position and the concomitant income that provides an easier access to material goods and services that help one to have a certain lifestyle, become important. In this connection Weber's formulation is significant and can be applied to this study to a certain extent. Weber (1992:458) describes class as a group of individuals who share a similar position in the market situation. Weber also puts forward the notion of 'status groups', which are normally 'communities' and built upon criteria of grouping other than those stemming from strictly market situation, and thus connotes those involved in consumption, in the form of specific 'styles of life' (Giddens 1973:43). In this work for analyzing the class position of refugees, property, occupation, income, education and lifestyle are considered to be important criteria.

It may be pointed out that in trying to understand the degree of change in class position of refugees, the important point is that success can be of different kind. For many of the refugees it was the case of a changed lifestyle. While earlier there was more emphasis on extended
families and joint holding of property, with movement into new areas and
the disruption of family trading activities, there emerged a situation
wherein some have retained trading activities, others have got into the
service sector and for many there came about a greater awareness of the
need for education. In fact all this resulted in a change in the consumption
patterns of the refugees thus leading to a changed social and cultural
lifestyle for them and this has been inquired into in the work.

To arrive at an understanding of the above-mentioned area of study,
it was important to take into account the everyday judgements made by
people about occupations and investigate how people perceive and evaluate
occupation and lifestyle. Therefore, it is important to understand peoples' images of society (Coxon and Davies 1986:2).

Thus the work tries to study how the class structure has crystallized
among the refugees after partition and whether there has been a change in
the class position of individuals and families due to the conditions created
by partition. On the other hand, it also tries to understand whether class
can facilitate easier access to certain opportunities and privileges.

**Power**

Power refers to the capacity to influence others in society. According
to Weber (1948:32), it is 'the probability that one actor within a social
relationship will be in a position to carry out his will despite resistance'.
Thus power is different from coercion as the latter has a dimension of illegitimacy attached to it. There are differences in the way power is distributed amongst individuals, groups or other units. Power may be relatively concentrated or diffused and the share of power held by different individuals, strata or classes may be relatively greater or smaller (Sills 1972).

The aspect of power has assumed great importance because of the concept of universal adult franchise. The power elite is the product of the political process of the society. It includes those individuals who participate in the process of formulating policy and decision making. Their power depends either on their ability to take decisions or on actual participation in the decision-making process itself (Pareto 1963; Mosca 1939; Mills 1963). Thus an inquiry into the formation of power elite among those with refugee background had to be made. Further, it also had to be analyzed whether Hindu Punjabi refugees have been able to assert themselves in the political context.

Power is not confined to the political sphere, but is also essential to the economic and cultural sphere. It is in this context that an examination of the perception of informants about elite in society becomes relevant. There are various ways to mark social status, one such being that of membership of clubs. Membership of a club is generally a mark of social status and may be sought after by people who are or aspire to be socially
significant and exert an influence in society. Further, it also had to be analyzed whether a particular caste group is preponderant among Hindu Punjabi refugees and does that preponderance prove to be an asset in asserting themselves in the political context.

Keeping these considerations in mind the study also analyzed the refugees' present status with regard to power which helped to arrive at an understanding of the degree of power exercised by them, and whether they are an influential power group.

CLASSIFICATION OF INFORMANTS

In order to understand the diverse experiences of the informants of this work it was essential that information was gathered from the informants across their varied socio-economic backgrounds. Since the study is of a qualitative nature, the views expressed by the informants had to be collected and presented in a form to bring out a comparative dimension. Thus the classification of informants has been undertaken in terms of four dimensions, that of, caste, class, gender and occupation.

The Brahminical model has been used here, whereby the Brahmins are being considered as the upper caste, the Kshatriyas and Vaishyas have been clubbed in the middle caste. The Shudras in our study are 'the Untouchables' who form the lower caste. This is so because the clean caste Shudras such as cultivators and artisans are mainly present in rural areas,
while the so-called 'Untouchables' can be located in urban settings. These caste groups have been denoted by the following terms:

U - Upper Caste (Brahmins)
M - Middle Caste (Kshatriyas and Vaishyas)
L - Lower Caste (Untouchables)

The second dimension is that of class. Broadly, three class groups have been identified among the informants of this study. This is based on the classification of informants according to their locality of residence. Those in the affluent locality were considered to be the upper class, those in the middle class locality as the middle class and the ones in the slum locality as the lower class. The following terms have been used to denote these class groups:

U - Upper Class
M - Middle Class
L - Lower Class

Another criterion used to classify informants was that of gender identity, that is, in terms of males or females. This is important for informants may perceive their social systems and society accordingly, based on their gender identity. These have been denoted as thus:

M - Male
F - Female

Another criterion that has been used to provide a classification of informants is that of the occupation pursued by them. Here the placement of informants into different occupational groups has been denoted as follows:
P – Professional/Academician
B – Businessman
O – Officer
N – Non-Officer
F – Farmer/Landlord
W – Worker
M – Menial Worker
U – Unspecified (also includes housewives)

It is important to point out that in order to keep the classification simple, no distinction has been made between those who are already in service and those who lead a retired life. Lastly, it needs to be pointed out that each informant has been accorded a number mentioned as the last figure on the classification list. This number is based on the class/locality and is being used to distinguish between informants who have the rest of the criterion in common.

**EXPERIENCE OF CONDUCTING FIELDWORK**

Before moving into the field it was important to understand and prepare oneself for fieldwork so that proper, useful and meaningful research work could be done. The first step therefore involved the preparation of the broad outline about which information had to be collected from the informants. For a study of such a kind where an understanding of the life-history of individuals is needed, it is important to explore various aspects of a person's life – the various incidents that have occurred not only in the recent past and their views about their present
situation, but also of incidents as they occurred at the time of partition more than fifty years ago.

This kind of research work, therefore, had to make adequate use of the researcher's ability to make the informants remember incidents as they occurred so long ago. Some of the incidents had been vanished from memory, the sequence of some of the incidents and events were haphazard and many times the informants took quite a long time to remember some of these. They were also incidents that covered all kinds of emotions of informants from fear to anxiety, to happiness, to relief, to an extreme sense of psychological trauma and helplessness. In order to understand such varied emotions of individuals a survey method was considered an inadequate one, for it would have failed to account for such psychological states of mind. Therefore, for this research work it was thought that a study of life-history of informants would help to arrive at rich qualitative data.

First a 'pilot study' was conducted whereby two to three informants from each of the areas were contacted. The 'pilot study' was important for it helped to understand whether the kind of study that the researcher was planning to undertake could be accomplished through fieldwork conducted in this manner.

In any study the selection of the sample size is very important. If the sample is too small or drawn from a single social category it will not be a
representative one. As this study had to focus on collecting qualitative data about the partition experience and its impact on the people, in-depth information was required from the informants. This could not be collected through administering an interview schedule or questionnaire. Therefore, about twenty-five informants were selected from each of the areas adding up to a total of seventy-five from the three areas of study. This sample size was deemed to be adequate enough for a qualitative study of the present kind. The informants from a particular age group had to be selected as the partition occurred more than half-a-century ago. In this case the snowballing technique was used to contact informants. The initial informants were approached, either through personal contacts (as the researcher herself has a background of belonging to one such family that had migrated to India at the time of partition) or by establishing one crucial link that then became an influential key to contact other informants for the study.

While the set of questions were set sequentially in accordance with the kind of information that had to be collected, it must be mentioned that in all cases the sequence of questions was not followed. Also, certain information was extracted during long discussions. In this case a personal relation and rapport was established between the researcher and the informant and the entire information could be collected only over a number of sessions. Since there was the sharing of information about certain very intimate and deeply felt incidents, many times the researcher had to allow
the informant to just keep talking, without interrupting the informants' thought pattern at a particular point of time. During fieldwork it was important that the informants were made to feel at ease. On the researcher's part it was important to keep in mind the fact that academic language differs considerably from the language of everyday life. Therefore all along the choice of words used to extract information was very important.

The experience of conducting fieldwork in a slum area is unlike that in a middle or upper class locality. In the latter areas informants were contacted through the snowball technique. In the slum area of Tilak Nagar it was necessary to establish contact through a local level political worker residing in the area who was generally referred to as 'Pradhan'.

In a slum area the experience of conducting fieldwork is different as compared to the other areas for several reasons. Firstly, the presence of a stranger in the area is immediately noticeable, but this also had its advantages as within a few days the researcher was well known in the area and when the researcher was seen interacting freely with some, many others were willing to talk openly. In fact, most of the times the discussions and narrations were not conducted in one to one sessions, rather in groups unlike in the other two areas of study. This had its advantages because many times group interviews can lead to healthy discussions where everyone participated openly and contrasting experiences of different individuals could be articulated in this manner.
This is in contrast to what happened in the upper and middle class localities where informants were met at home with prior appointment. Here again there were mixed groups of men and women informants. In many of the cases where women were interviewed it was often seen that men tried to guide them on what to speak, yet there were also cases where both men and women sat together to jointly provide a better perspective. At times, it was also difficult to gain the confidence of the informants, but this problem was overcome to a large extent because of the fact that firstly, the informants were contacted through certain known people and secondly, by the fact that over two to three meetings the informants gained confidence in the researcher's intentions. Thus while there were cases of non co-operation, majority did co-operate.

Finally, it must be pointed out that during fieldwork, especially so in the slum area, a constant question asked of the researcher was whether the government would do something for the 'refugees'? In spite of endless endeavors to explain the purpose of the study, the response came in the false hope that the researcher was here to recommend their case to the government. This naturally raised in the researcher's mind a moral-ethical issue with regard to fieldwork. However, this was short lived as the researcher over a period of time was convinced that even if one could understand and analyze truthfully the case of these 'refugee' people it would address their concerns to a certain extent which the policy maker can profitably utilize.