CHAPTER III

ASPECTS OF DISPLACEMENT AND RESETTLEMENT: AN OVERVIEW
August 15, 1947 marked the country's independence from the two hundred years old British rule. However, this day for many in the states of the Punjab and Bengal was a turning point in their lives as it signified the partition of the provinces and the consequent violence, fleeing from their original place of habitation, resettlement and rehabilitation into a new area. Thus, while millions were celebrating 'freedom', many in these provinces were caught up in the upheaval that the communal tangle brought into their lives.

The partitioning of the country was a very complex process as it inculcated the demarcation of boundaries. The creation of boundary immediately brought to the forefront the issue of 'our' and 'their' land. At one level, the boundary creation process could be largely seen as a politico-administrative measure, yet at another level it had more to do with its impact on the lives of the common people as the issue of 'minority' and 'majority' in terms of religious identity became the area of focus.

It was the process by which the Indo-Pakistan boundaries were created from June 3 to August 17, 1947, when the Radcliffe award defining the borders between India and Pakistan was announced that a turning point occurred in the two provinces of the Punjab and Bengal (Yong Tan and Kudaisya 2000:79). The plan to partition India and Pakistan in August 1947 is famously known as the Mountbatten plan of June, 3 named after the last British viceroy of India who came to divide and quit India and thus
free it from British domination (Das 1982:98). It must be pointed out here that Muslims did not want partition of the provinces of the Punjab and Bengal but Hindus and Sikhs vehemently demanded it. As Mountbatten aptly remarked, the Congress used the same argument for demanding the partition of the provinces as the Muslim league used for demanding the partition of India (Waseem 1996:205).

In fact the West Punjab Assembly representing Muslim majority districts voted against partition (99 to 27), while the East Punjab Assembly representing non-Muslim majority districts voted for it (50 to 22). Similarly, the members of the Bengal Assembly belonging to the Muslim majority districts rejected partition (106 to 35), while their counterparts from Hindu majority districts voted for it (58 to 21). This was followed by the formation of two boundary commissions one for the Punjab and the other for Bengal (Waseem 1996:206).

Cyril Radcliffe, considered an impartial man, arrived in India in July 1947 and undertook the task of creation of boundaries. He completed his project by August 1947. The creation of boundaries resulted in grave consequences in terms of communal tension and violence in the areas of the Punjab and Bengal.

The situation in the provinces of the Punjab and Bengal were different in their own respects. Boundary demarcation for the province of the Punjab was a more controversial and complicated decision as compared
to that for the province of Bengal because of the existence of three religious communities in the Punjab (Mansergh 1999:220) as compared to two in the province of Bengal. The intensity of feelings evoked and the consequent level of violence was much greater in the case of the Punjab compared to that in Bengal. A closely related phenomenon in the Punjab was the deep commitment with which religious minorities were persecuted and pushed across borders by religious majorities, ostensibly to put an end to religious diversity.

The difference between the political attitudes of the Punjabis and Bengalis vis-a-vis non-Muslims can be traced down to the fact that migration in the Punjab was near total in character, leaving hardly any trace of Hindus or Sikhs, while migration in Bengal was selective in nature, leaving a large Hindu minority in place. It was this stronger vision in the Punjab, of a society based exclusively on one's own religion that led to extreme cases of violence in the Punjab province (Waseem 1996:209-10). As the present study focuses on Hindu refugees in Delhi who came from the Punjab, the partition of the Punjab needs to be discussed.

THE PARTITION OF THE PUNJAB

The Punjab as it stood at the time of independence contained twenty-nine districts grouped into five divisions: Multan, Rawalpindi, Lahore, Jullundur and Ambala. The total population of the province was 28.4
million of which 16.2 million were Muslims and 12.2 million were Hindus and Sikhs (Das 1982:154).

Of the five divisions, Multan and Rawalpindi were predominantly Muslim with nine million Muslims as against two million Hindus and Sikhs. Lahore division was far more problematic with four million Muslims and three million Hindus and Sikhs. Jullundur and Ambala were predominantly Hindu and Sikh areas with three million Muslims as against seven million non-Muslims.

**Areas Covered in each of the Divisions of the Punjab** (Singh 1972:3)

**LAHORE DIVISION**
- Gujranwala, Sheikhupura, Sialkot, Gurdaspur, Lahore, Amritsar

**RAWALPINDI DIVISION**
- Gujarat, Lyallpur, Jhelum, Rawalpindi, Attock, Mianwali, Shahpur

**MULTAN DIVISION**
- Montgomery, Jhang, Multan, Muzafargarh, Dera Ghazi Khan.

**AMBALA DIVISION**
- Gurgaon, Rohtak, Karnal, Hissar, Ambala, Simla.

**JULLUNDUR DIVISION**
- Kangra, Hoshiarpur, Jullundur, Ludhiana Ferozepur.

Radcliffe's Boundary Commission was instructed to demarcate the boundaries of the two parts of the Punjab on the basis of ascertaining the contiguous majority areas of Muslims and non-Muslims. It was also instructed to take into account other factors in doing so. In this task, Radcliffe was assisted by four learned and experienced High Court Judges.
on his Punjab Commission. They were Justice Mehr Chand Mahajan, Teja Singh, Din Muhammad and Muhammad Munir (Das 1982:183). The Punjab Boundary Commission sat from July 21 to 31 1947, hearing evidence from the Muslim League, Congress, the Sikhs and others (Tinker 1977:699).

The Radcliffe Award gave to East Punjab the whole of Jullundur and Ambala divisions and the Amritsar district of the Lahore division together with a few tehsils of the Gurdaspur and Lahore districts. East Punjab obtained control over three of the five rivers of the United Punjab: the Beas, Sutlej and the upper waters of the Ravi. About thirty-eight percent of the area and forty-five percent of the population were assigned to East Punjab. West Punjab, on the other hand, obtained about sixty-two percent of the area and fifty-five percent of the population, together with a major share of the sources of the income of the United Province (Menon 1957:403).

It must be pointed out here that there was justification for awarding the two Muslim majority tehsils of Gurdaspur to India if the two Muslim majority tehsils of Ferozepur district were awarded to Pakistan or vice-versa. Gurdaspur was linked almost irretrievably with Amritsar by the upper Bari Doab system, but Ferozepur was equally vital to the canals of the Sutlej Valley Project, overwhelmingly in Pakistan. Alternatively, if Radcliffe had regarded the majority population argument as more important than the economic argument then he ought to have allocated
Gurdaspur minus its Hindu majority tehsil to Pakistan. In fact, Radcliffe’s solution was right overall, in relation to the greatest of the canal systems (the triple Canal Project) in preserving its unity within West Punjab (Tinker1977:696).

The Award of August 1947 led to a resettlement in which Muslims were established on one side of a line with Sikhs and Hindus on the other. This kind of boundary demarcation therefore tried to keep in mind factors other than just the economic argument. It helped to preserve the ‘unity’ between the different religious communities than would have been there had this situation not been kept in mind. Then, in all anticipation the degree of violence would have been much greater than it was now.

Thus while boundaries were created keeping in mind several factors, this still resulted in huge displacement of the population. In fact, powerful leaders like Sikandar Hyat Khan Tiwana, the premier of the Punjab and Unionist Party leader in the Punjab could well anticipate much in advance the kind of violence that the creation of Pakistan would entail.

To quote Moon (1964:97):

One day in October 1938, during a conversation with Sir Sikandar, I began talking to him rather enthusiastically about the merits of the Pakistan idea and suggested that after all it might be the best way of dealing with the communal problem. Sir Sikandar usually so calm and sauve, after listening for a few
Map III.1 The Partition of the Punjab

minutes turned upon me with indignation and took me to task in these words; 'How can you talk like this? You have been long enough in Western Punjab to know the Muslims there. Surely you can see that Pakistan would be an invitation to them to cut the throat of every Hindu bania.

The transformation of the Punjab in the year 1947 is of particular importance. First, the Punjab differed from the rest of India in that there were three – Hindu, Muslim and Sikh communities rather than two communities. Second, in 1947 the Punjab was to be the site of the most widespread massacres connected with partition. Third, during the 1937-1946 period the Punjab was noticeable as the province had great success at the level of provincial government. Fourth, it was the only province in which direct British rule did not have to be imposed. It is therefore important to understand the political situation in the Punjab from 1923 onwards when the Unionist Party was formed and which had a stronghold on the Punjab politics upto 1947, by which time Jinnah and the Muslim League had gained a stronghold in the Punjab politics. Since the state of the Punjab was now ‘controlled’ by the Muslim League, Jinnah tried to present himself as the sole spokesman of the Indian Muslims. This was the time when India was granted independence and the consequent partition of the Punjab took place.
The Unionist Party was organized in 1923 around the interests of the landowning rural classes and cut across religious lines. It was a provincial party based on a pro-rural agriculturist ideology and led by the landed leaders of rural society. It dominated the Punjab politics for almost a quarter of a century before 1947 (Gilmartin 1993:205). With the elections of 1937, the Unionist Party was successful as it won 101 seats out of 175 in the legislature, while the Congress won 35 seats and drew most of its support from the Hindu section of the urban areas. But this situation changed in favor of the Muslim League by the 1946 elections whereby the Muslim League won 75 seats, while the Unionist Party won only 20 and the Congress won 51 seats (Weiner 1968:441). It is interesting to note that the partition of India was not a serious item on the political agenda until 1937. But in 1947 it had become a political reality (Parekh 1985:303).

The League's prospects had greatly improved after the collapse of the Jinnah-Sikander Pact in April 1944. Its political strategy coupled with an intensive propaganda campaign along religious lines paid off. Informant UMMP 16 pointed out in the course of fieldwork:

...As children we did not understand the implications of the demonstrations conducted for demanding partition and we too would participate in the slogan shouting. A famous slogan of the time was: 'haq hamara Pakistan, lad kar lenge Pakistan, mar kar lenge Pakistan, Khizr Tiwana harami dana' (If Pakistan was not to be had on demand, we will have it by force).
The landlords and Pirs also overwhelmingly supported Jinnah and the intensive propaganda that accompanied the elections of 1945-46. This further set the Muslims and non-Muslims against one another (Hasan 1995:16) which only made the demand for the partition and creation of Pakistan more vociferous.

While in most cases the anticipation of partition was there, the consequent violence, as an aftermath of partition was not thought of. Most informants’ pointed out that while they knew that partition was going to take place, they never thought they would have to flee their homes. Thus migration before August 1947 was very limited. While people would hear of Hindu-Muslim conflicts taking place, they never thought that they would be affected so greatly by these. In fact, for centuries the Punjab had been invaded by different conquerors who became rulers. These invasions never displaced the local population, therefore, many thought that even if partition was to take place they would not be displaced for they thought that ‘Raj badalte hain, Praja nahi badalti’ (Kingdoms change but people do not). However they soon realized that partition was different in this respect because it ultimately led to massive displacement of the population.

Refugees in informal gatherings often refer to several aspects of their life in Pakistan. The nostalgia looms large on them about the partition days and a sense of pride overrides them because they visualize their success today as important. It was their attitude of hardwork, determination and
perseverance that helped them to achieve success even after facing so much of hardships. While remembering the pre-partition days, the aspects about which the refugees discuss are their homes in Pakistan in terms of its physical features, their common set of relatives and friends, the narration of tales of how they escaped from their original place of habitation and managed to reach India safely. In this process, they discuss the difficulties that they and others known to them underwent and how they managed to escape and rebuild their lives once in India. In fact while referring to these there is a sense of pride in their eyes, which is justified, for though they suffered their spirit remained as unshakable as the earth.

This chapter looks at some of the incidents and tales narrated by the informants as to their experience in moving out of their original place of habitation in Pakistan to India. Though the informants had different types of experiences, only some interesting and relevant ones are being reported here. It is these that are sociologically important and therefore relevant for our kind of study and will be dealt with in this chapter.

THE EXPERIENCE OF MOVEMENT FROM PAKISTAN TO INDIA FOR THE REFUGEES

A few cases in relation to the different aspects of experience of movement to India have been analyzed in this section. This has been followed by a brief mention and analysis of some of the important aspects related to the dimension of movement of the refugee population.
The movement from their homes in Pakistan to their arrival in India entailed a number of difficulties for the refugees. Many of them had life-threatening experiences. For most refugees even the thought of movement before August 1947 was inconceivable. In fact till the very last minute they did not realize that they would never be able to visit their homes in Pakistan again. Most refugees still want to go and see their homes in Pakistan at least once. Many of them packed their household items, left them behind and locked the house up so that once they would get back they would find their belongings safe. A few families even gave the keys of their homes to Muslim neighbours for safe-keeping till their return.

Very few families could move out prior to August 1947. These were those families and individuals whose foresight was sharper in that they could anticipate the level of disruption and displacement that would take place after August 1947 and they had the resources to move. It is important to mention here the case of one such family, who because of high level political connections could manage to reach India earlier than most other refugees.

INFORMANT UUMO 4

The informant pointed out that:

_We had shifted to Lyallpur from India in 1946 and had bought a big bungalow there. Khizar Hyat Khan Tiwana had appointed my father as his property estate manager at Sargoda. In March 1947, Tiwana asked my father to sell off the property. He even found a buyer for our_
property. To my knowledge even my father did not realize why Tiwana had suggested so. However, since the deal was a good one we sold off the property. In June 1947 Tiwana told my father to move to India with his family and even gave us his car and police escort. In India, we stayed at Tiwana's bungalow at Tilak Marg. Once riots erupted and people started moving in large numbers we realized we had moved forever.

This case clearly points out to the fact that some individuals and families could anticipate the level of violence and most political leaders were well aware of it. Had this family too, had no high level political connections, they too would have suffered the same fate as thousands of others. The aspect of moving forever was also something that most refugees said they did not realize till they saw that such large number of people had been displaced from their homes. The next two cases also present a similar picture.

INFORMANT MUFO 24

The experience of movement in the words of the informant were thus:

My father had been posted from Kasur district to Lahore around the first of August 1947 as a member of the three-member commission set up called the 'Special Tribunal' to try riot cases. However, since within about two weeks the situation had become worse he had to move to India. He came safely with the military. Since my father was staying in a posh government locality of Lahore there were no incidents of violence there.
I, in the meantime, was in Kasur with my sister and grandmother but since it was an all-female household my aunt advised us to move to stay on with my brother who was working in India. So we moved safely to India.

INFORMANT UUFP 15

We moved from our house at Jabbar to a refugee camp at Sacha Sauda, where we stayed for a month. There was a rich family with us who owned some trucks. It was in one such truck that we started moving to India. As night fell, we were looking for a place to rest. A Sikh walking on the road directed us towards an old house that had belonged to a British officer. On reaching the bungalow we encountered Muslim police. It was then that we realized that the man was actually a Muslim posing to be a Sikh. The police made us line up and threatened to kill us. The driver of one of the trucks took permission from the police to go out to relieve himself. It was then that he jumped into the river to cross over to the other side. This scared the Muslim police and they made us deposit all our belongings in exchange for our lives.

In case of informant MUFO 24, the informant's father was at a high level government job and therefore was given protection. They stayed in a good locality where enough security was available. The army also provided for their safe transfer to India. In the case of informant UUFP 15 however, it was the high class connections that played an important role in their evacuation. Thus, the economic (class) factor was predominant in saving their lives. However, at one juncture the Muslim police did catch hold of them but left them later when they got scared of the fact that their
activities might be reported. The informant reasoned that the police left them because in those days the rule was 'if you will kill our people, then we will kill yours'. Keeping this in mind one can say that the community feeling was very strongly engraved in the minds of the people.

The following case is that of an informant from a middle class locality whose family moved due to the fear of their daughter losing her honour.

INFORMANT MMFN 10

My father's senior at office, Liaquat Ali khan who later became the Prime Minister of Pakistan, kept telling my father before August 1947 to move to India. However my father paid no heed to his words. It was later when Muslims came and picked up a Hindu girl from our neighbourhood that my father decided it was time for us to move to India. This was on August 11, 1947.

It must be mentioned here that it is the control over the sexuality of women that works on the ideology of perceiving women as reproducers of the boundaries of ethnic and national groups. It is in this context that the recovery operations conducted after partition, to facilitate the return of abducted women to their families became important. From the very beginning the concern with abducted women went hand in hand with alarm at forcible conversions. It was viewed that, there was the loss of Hindus to Islam through such conversions in addition to the loss of territory. It was this double burden of abduction and conversion that was felt by the Hindu community. The recovery of one's women if not of land,
became a powerful assertion of Hindu manhood. However, concern like this was not evident with regard to the abduction of Hindu women by Hindu men and Muslim women by Muslim men, presumably because here no offense against community or religion had been committed, nor anyone's honour compromised! (Menon 1998:22).

INFORMANT MMFU 9

My husband was in the army and posted at Ferozepur. At the time of partition we had gone to Peshawar to meet our parents. In the train some Muslim ladies were travelling with me in the ladies compartment. They told me "Bibi, you are a Hindu. Are you not scared that we might kill you?" I replied: "It is your wish. I can do nothing if you decide to kill me". Inside I was terrified and really scared. Later after staying at Peshawar for sometime we moved to India along with the others.

This case brings forth the point that even though some people were on this side of the border, in a tense situation they went back to their ancestral homes. Therefore, for many there was no anticipation of the degree to which their life would get altered.

INFORMANT MUMO 5

We did not get to know that the situation had become so violent and massive that people would have to leave their homes. It was around nine at night when we were preparing dinner that we heard of our neighbours leaving the area. Since everyone was leaving we too decided to follow them. Thus till the very last minute we were carrying on our normal activities and did not know we had to leave.
INFORMANT UUFU 8

Although we had not planned about moving, we were the first ones from our area to move. This was so because one of our relatives who was in the military came with military trucks and men to evacuate us. They all stayed at our house for a night and the following morning we left for India. All our neighbours told us that we were leaving them behind unsafe, but what could we do?

Thus many people tried to help their relatives and friends in some way they could. People did all they could to help rescue those close to them but at the same time there were also situations where one’s safety was the predominant factor. In the latter situation where one could do nothing for others, was also described by some informants.

INFORMANT LLMM 23

My father was posted on military duty outside our hometown. The Muslims attacked and looted our house and we could not even raise an alarm for fear of being killed. We were rescued by the army and put into the train moving towards India. At one place the train stopped and my brother moved out to get some water. He was killed there. We carried his body in the train with us and then threw it into the river Sutlej later. Somehow we reached India and then had nowhere to go for it had been many years since we came to India. At the station we were mistaken for being Muslims because of our dress pattern. The Hindus at the station tried to threaten us thinking we were Muslims. However, it later turned out that one of these Hindus was my cousin and then we were taken good care of.
This case has highlighted trauma in its highest possible degree for they lost everything. Their house was looted and members of their family got killed in front of their eyes. They had some relatives in India but since for years they had been staying in a far away place and had a low economic status, the contact with relatives on this side had not been maintained. Thus illiteracy, low class and caste position made them most susceptible and vulnerable to the trauma and tragedy that partition brought about.

Most refugees had very traumatic experiences in terms of movement from Pakistan to India. While some of the refugees could move with less difficulty for they were interacting with kin and friends who helped them in this situation of crisis; for many others it was a ‘battle’ they had to fight alone. Only certain types of experiences have been presented here, but it must be pointed out that the experiences of many others too, reveal that they suffered immensely.

UNDERSTANDING THE NEED FOR PARTITION AND HINDU-MUSLIM RELATIONS FROM INFORMANTS’ PERSPECTIVE

Majority of the informants of this study when asked if there was a need for partition or was it avoidable or had it become inevitable pointed out that partition had its basis in the manner in which Hindu-Muslim relations existed at the socio-cultural level of everyday existence. Out of our informants, sixty-one percent pointed out that partition had become inevitable, twenty-two percent are of the view that it could have been
avoided, while seventeen percent could not formulate their opinion clearly. Those who hold the opinion that it was inevitable or could be avoided trace their formulation mainly to the nature of Hindu-Muslim relations. Secondly, some others also point out that the decision about partition was made really at the political level.

Those of the opinion that partition was inevitable point out that Hindu-Muslim interactions were on the surface cordial but deep inside there was discrimination maintained between members of the two communities. By and large, there was ill treatment meted out to the Muslims at the hands of the Hindus rather than the other way round. This critical view regarding the attitudes of co-religionists towards members of the ‘Other’ community suggests that the informants now try to understand partition and its related issues in a more rational and objective manner. When analyzing the reasons for partition they see their own treatment of the Muslims as an inegalitarian one. However, in the same breath they try to justify this by providing a stereotypical construction of the Muslim ‘image’. Thus the rationalization is that the Muslims deserved to be discriminated.

Therefore if one tries to understand the reasons for the partition of the country one may point out that there are broadly two perceptions. The first is that partition is the handiwork of the British. For the purpose of better governance the British used the ‘Divide and Rule’ policy which
created divisions between the Hindus and the Muslims. However, this is a view from above. The educated, from upper sections of society hold this view as a reason for partition along with the second one that cited by those at the bottom. The second reason as pointed out, is the manner in which Hindu-Muslim relations were carried out at the social level of everyday existence. In fact, the former and the latter are intertwined and to understand partition only in terms of one of these perspectives would be a fallacy. It is important to note here that one aspect only gave a sharper focus to the other, thus strengthening the need for partition.

The two-nation theory has often been upheld as the root cause of partition. According to this explanation, partition was inevitable because of inherent differences between the Hindus and the Muslims (Keller 1975: 18). But, it must be pointed out that there were remediable differences in terms of education and economic factors (inequality) and socio-cultural factors, which were innate (identity) and the factor of being a minority/majority group (power). That is unlike Keller thought, these are not separate factors, rather the two-nation theory subsumed all of them. In actuality the difference between these two religious communities was compounded because of all the three sets of factors.

It is generally perceived that the Muslims have all along been educationally less qualified on account of the fact that, in comparison to the Hindus they took to English education much later. True, the Hindus
were more educated than the Muslims, which resulted in Hindus taking to government jobs in larger numbers. Thus, they gained substantially more in terms of economic factors. The informants of this study repeatedly pointed out that the Hindus had always been better off as they were large landowners and moneylenders, while the Muslims worked as agricultural labourers on the lands of the Hindus.

Prasad (1999:101) citing the work of Aparna Basu (1974) has shown on the basis of official statistics that in Bengal and the Punjab where the bulk of Muslims were agriculturists they were backward. This educational and economic backwardness of the Muslims made them feel inferior to the Hindus. Over a period of time, they started demanding better educational and economic facilities as the consciousness arose among them that it was the superiority in terms of these factors that made the Hindus dominate in most aspects of life. This arousal of consciousness was the handiwork of some of the elite from among the Muslim community who could take advantage of better education and hence saw it as their task to bring about a reformation in ‘their’ Muslim community. The strongest intellectual and emotional support for Muslim nationalism was provided by Mohammad Iqbal (1877-1938), one of the greatest poet-philosophers produced by the Indian subcontinent. He dominated Muslim elite’s thinking in the first half of the twentieth century, just as Syed Ahmad Khan (1817-1898), had done in the second half of the nineteenth century.
From people's perspective the view was that the Hindus and the Muslims were always on cordial terms and there was brotherhood and prevalence of good relations between members of the two communities. In fact, according to them there was hardly any enmity or feeling of bitterness. However, this was mainly at the manifest level, for in the same vein, they also point out that there was not much of intermixing in terms of visiting each other's homes frequently. It was only on certain ceremonial occasions such as marriage or death that one visited the houses of the members of the 'Other' religious community. Again, even when such functions were attended to, there was a judicious selection of the kind of food items one could consume from their 'Other'. The informants of this work were Hindus and the stereotypical 'image' of a Muslim as constructed by them is 'poor, illiterate, dirty, too religious, fanatics, with little regard for the religion of the members of the 'Other' religious group'. In fact informant MMFU 9 even pointed out that 'Muslims eat religion, drink religion and sleep religion'. It is important to mention here that this image of Muslims is not only a version earlier to partition but they hold the same image of the Muslims even now.

Most of the informants of this study were very young around the time of partition and they point out that the elderly women were very particular about not intermixing and interdining with the Muslims. The older women would often take a bath even when touched by the shadow of a Muslim. In fact, most interactions between members of the two communities were mainly at the level of the menfolk. It must be pointed out that at public
places such as railway stations there was a mention on the water booths as 'drinking water for Muslims' and 'drinking water for Hindus'. The issue of 'jhataka' and 'halal' meat was also a contentious one in the context of Hindu-Muslim relations.

*Jhataka* meat is the meat of an animal killed with a single stroke as prescribed by the Hindu rituals, while *halal* meat is the meat when the animal is killed in several strokes and is viewed as the Muslim way of killing. Uprety (1980:146) points out that the Muslims objected to the *jhataka* meat partly because the animal was not killed according to Muslim rites, but mainly because the *jhataka* mode was an offering to the Hindu idol, Kali. The Hindus objected to buying meat from Muslims not only because it was *halal* meat but also because they feared it was mixed with beef.

Many informants try to reason that it was this issue that prevented them from interdining with the Muslims. The informants also pointed out that the Muslim religious identity was a strong factor, but the factor of economic class was also important for lesser interactions between the Hindus and the Muslims.

It should therefore be emphasized that the notion of good relations between the Hindus and the Muslims was a myth and what prevailed was a latent hostility. As pointed out earlier, most informants admitted the fact that partition had become inevitable because of the treatment that the
Hindus meted out to the Muslims. Most Muslims, when they visited the houses of Hindus were given separate chairs or made to sit on the floor but not beside oneself. Again, the utensils used when serving food to the Muslims were different and kept separately from those used by the members of the family. Most Hindus never ate at the house of the Muslims and in general Muslims gave a better treatment to Hindus than the other way round. A similar kind of a relation also prevailed between the higher and lower caste Hindus. Thus, it may be correct to point out that the Muslims particularly the lowly placed ones by caste and class were treated as Untouchables. Informant UUMO 4 recalled that:

*When my father's friends would come home to have food, they would tell my mother 'bhabhi, we have come to have food, please bring out our utensils'.*

This points out that even the Muslims were conscious of the fact that there was certain discrimination maintained against them. This attitude of discrimination over a period of time was crystallized into one of hostility and has contributed to the inevitability thesis about partition of the country.

Here it is pertinent to refer to the point raised by Furnivall (1948:308) that different racial groups with their own culture, ideas and ways of life may live together but separately within the same political unit, which he designated as 'plural society'. According to him, this coexistence is not voluntary, but is brought about through force (see Oommen, 2002:2).
However in the case of the Punjab though the groups were professing different religions, had different cultures and ways of life, they lived separately and at the same time mixed with each other in certain aspects of life. But the role of external force was absent; they coexisted together in a harmonious fashion.

While at the level of the community hostility had started to crystallize, at an individual level, many Hindus were helped by their Muslim friends. Informant UUFU 21 pointed out that...

On the morning of the day we left our house in Pakistan, my husband had gone to his office where his Muslim colleagues had advised him that we should leave for India as there was possibility of our house being put on fire. It was then that we decided to move.

In the same vein, informant MMFN 18 narrated an incident as follows:

Around August 15 when I went to the bank, a Muslim friend whose son I used to teach told me to either convert to Islam or else leave for India immediately. It was he who had later arranged for my air ticket to India from his own financial resources.

In fact at times the bond continued between those on either side of the border. In the words of informant MMMN 15:

Even after coming to India I kept very close contact with my teacher, Master Qureshi who was in Pakistan. Till about five or six years after partition we used to write to each other in Urdu. Then the Indian police asked me to discontinue this contact for they were suspicious of my intentions as I was a government servant.
Similarly informant UMMB 24 pointed out that:

*My Muslim servant who stayed back in Pakistan after partition wrote to us that even though his new masters were from the same religious group as his, their and his culture was not compatible and he longed so much to be with us.*

Thus, it was at the macro level of the community that one found incidents of open antagonism between the Hindus and the Muslims, but at the level of one to one individual relationships Hindus and Muslims had many interactions or close personal ties depending upon their caste and class status.

**GOVERNMENT MEASURES FOR SETTLING THE REFUGEES**

The government extensively worked for the benefit of the refugees by initiating a number of measures to ensure that proper settlement of the refugees could be achieved. As pointed out in chapter II the government started many of the programmes first in Delhi and then based on the experience of success of these measures, they were replicated in other parts of India. These fall in the category of rehabilitation programmes precisely because of the reason that they were not short lived as relief programmes are, but were aimed at providing for settlement on a long-term basis. Many of these programmes provided educational and training facilities that helped the refugees to earn a livelihood later. Relief measures on the other hand, are temporary, for a short duration to provide immediate support to cope with the existing problems. In the case of refugees from Pakistan the government took adequate measures for both their relief as well as
rehabilitation. The relief measures included the immediate provisions for food, clothing and shelter for the refugees.

To provide measures to rehabilitate the refugees in an organized manner, the government established on September 6, 1947, the Ministry of Rehabilitation with K C Neogy as Minister (Datta 2000:270). The programmes of urban rehabilitation consisted of providing a house or a plot to every displaced family in need of accommodation (see table III.1), arranging for employment, technical and vocational training, provision of educational facilities and assistance by way of loans to re-establish in business or industry (Mukherjee 1996:43).

The Ministry formulated a three-point plan to meet the situation. The three essential features of this plan were:

Firstly, to attempt to secure direct employment for those accustomed to service. Secondly, provision of facilities for technical and vocational training, particularly for younger people. This was to enable the refugees to equip themselves with new skills and earn an independent living. Besides, it was to serve to redress the imbalance created in certain sectors of the economy by the mass migration of Muslims to Pakistan. Thirdly, there was to be the grant of liberal financial aid to persons desirous of re-establishing themselves in business or industry. This was coupled with assistance in several other forms as, for example, the provision of business or industrial premises, special quotas of certain controlled commodities and licenses.
Table III.1 Refugee Settlements in Delhi, 1950

1. RAJENDRA NAGAR (old and New)
2. LAJPAT NAGAR
3. PATEL NAGAR (East and West)
4. KIGSWAY
5. KINGSWAY EXTENSION
6. JANGPURA (A, B and Extn.)
7. PURANA QILA
8. AZADPUR
9. JUNGPURA NEIGHBOURHOODS (A and B)
10. TEHRA SCHEME
11. MALKAGANJ
12. KOTLA FEROZESHAH
13. KALKAJI
14. NIZAMUDDIN VILLAGE
15. NIZAMUDDIN EXTN.
16. REGHARPURA
17. SHEIKH SARAI
18. SWADESH HARD BOARD SCHEME (Near Red fort)
19. MORI GATE SCHEME
20. TILAK NAGAR
21. MALVIA NAGAR
22. ANDHA MUGHAL
23. VIJAY NAGAR AND EXTN.
24. NARELA COLONY
25. SAROJINI MARKET
26. MOTI NAGAR
27. HUDSON LINES

Among the centres of training conducted by the Ministry of Rehabilitation a special mention needs to be made of the Nilokheri Polytechnic and the Arab ki Sarai Centre through which training was imparted in different crafts such as spinning, carpet making, job printing, button making etc. (Congress Committee Report 1951:96). In these training centres, stipend was also given to the trainees. Even for educational facilities, the government gave certain scholarships to the refugee children.

However most informants did not make use of these vocational training programmes. Most of them went in for general education for they valued and attached a greater prestige to education as such rather than vocational training. Many were however admitted into schools and colleges due to their status of being refugees. One measure of the government that was extensively made use of was that of accommodation and compensation against lost property.

Finally, a mention may also be made of the fact that not only did the government start extensive programmes to help the refugees but help also came from other sources. Non-refugee families from various parts of India extensively supplied relief material and non-governmental organizations too came forward to help. At the same time big business houses like Tatas and Birlas also provided help to rehabilitate the refugees.
The out-migration of Muslims at the time of partition from Delhi was 3.29 lakhs, while the in-migration of Hindus and Sikhs was 4.95 lakhs (Rao and Desai 1965:56). The Punjabis came mostly from urban areas in West Punjab. Of the total of 495,391 refugees, 470,386 had been city-dwellers and came mainly from Lahore, Rawalpindi, Multan, Shahpura, Gujranwala, Lyallpur and Sialkot (Datta 2000:276).

It must be pointed out that the refugees who came to Delhi at the time of partition were in such overwhelming numbers that it was like an invasion by this section of the population on Delhi. On the other hand, Muslim population had reduced much in numbers through migration to Pakistan as a result of the conditions created by partition. Hundreds of thousands of refugees thronged the city of Delhi. These 'refugees' could be seen as individuals who had opted to become citizens of a new India, who had made the choice under desperate conditions at the price of being uprooted from their homes in what had become Pakistan. Their numbers and sheer visibility led to they being given whatever shelter could be mustered and permitted to occupy the houses of 'evacuees'. (Vidal, Tarlo and Dupont 2000:21).

Vidal, Tarlo and Dupont (2000) have argued that 'refugees did not see themselves as refugees'. However, this formulation seems to be wrong for the immigrants did actually view themselves as 'refugees'. In fact, even
today, those who came to India at the time of partition refer to themselves as refugees. In this context an important fact that must be mentioned is that while they refer to themselves as refugees, their attitude is very unlike that of refugees. Most of them tried to avoid government help when they could manage through their own efforts. This is unlike the case of refugees who generally rely on government measures to a much greater extent than happened in the case of the Hindu Punjabi refugees. This aspect has its roots in the attitudes and psychological-moral makeup of Punjabis who attempt to be self-reliant and avoid charity. It is this aspect that made the case of Punjabi refugees a successful one whereby they resettled at a much faster pace.

Delhi is also different from most other places as no nativistic movement has emerged here. Weiner (1978) has pointed out that ‘sons of the soil’ movement in certain regions of India made the original inhabitants of these states demand that they be given the opportunity to reap economic benefits from their states. This had created obstacles to economic prosperity of the migrant groups in these states. However, in Delhi no section of its population has ever claimed exclusive beneficiary rights in terms of economic and other factors. The fact that Delhi was a Union Territory and not a state (usually with a linguistic identity) should have been an important factor. This, therefore, has led to all sections being given an equal opportunity. The absence of such a movement in Delhi could
therefore not curb the prosperity and success of the Hindu Punjabi refugees.

Partition transformed several places due to large-scale displacement and resettlement of refugees. In fact, Delhi itself transformed not only in physical terms but also in socio-cultural terms. While physically the city changed due to the fact that a large number of colonies came up to resettle these refugees, there was also the setting up of satellite townships such as Faridabad around Delhi.

Cities and towns transformed in varied ways. The first one was physical, due to the expansion or contraction which cities and towns experienced as a result of population movements and the changes imposed by the new boundaries. The second was the social and cultural transformation of the cities brought about by change in the composition of the city's inhabitants. Thirdly, the cities were also transformed in a metaphysical sense, as people were uprooted from places where they had been born and nurtured and where they had families, properties and associations. Places then existed only in memory and came to be embedded in the consciousness of the uprooted people (Yong tan and Kudaisya 2000:24).

A large number of refugees as pointed out in chapter II were attracted to Delhi for several reasons: the presence of kin and friends, the fact that it was a capital city, getting posted to Delhi, the fact that it was in close
proximity to Pakistan and that many rehabilitation programmes were initiated here. In fact, informants (23%) of this study had first settled in areas such as the Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh before they came to Delhi. Thus, for this group what took place was twice-migration. This twice-migration was mainly on account of the fact that Delhi provided much greater opportunities for resettling than were available at other places. Thus not only did the character of Delhi changed with the arrival of a large number of refugees but the arrival of refugees and their settlement here, changed their fate for they had to adapt in a different way than most other refugees settled elsewhere in India.

**RELATION BETWEEN THE LOCALS AND THE REFUGEES**

Due to the influx of refugees into Delhi at the time of partition, the percentage of the original inhabitants to the total population of Delhi was reduced much in numbers. However initially the locals were cooperative in receiving and welcoming the refugees by providing their help in the form of shelter, food, jobs and psychological-moral comfort. But gradually a situation of competition and rivalry crystallized at the economic level, when over a short period of time the refugee section started to become economically better off.

The economic prosperity of the refugees has its roots in the attitude towards work, an instinct for survival, hardwork and a determination to rebuild life once again. In fact, most of the refugees even took to the most
stigmatizing work. In this context, the ideas of 'good' and 'bad' work ceased to exist, rather what remained was the question of livelihood and survival. Most of these refugees even took up jobs such as selling groundnuts, cigarettes, working as assistants in shops, to setting up roadside shops on pavements etc. These jobs were often considered degrading and below one's dignity by the locals.

The character of the city also changed. As Gupta (1996:31) has pointed out, there was a 'Punjabi invasion' on the city of Delhi. Delhi today strongly reflects this Punjabi culture, so much so that it is often difficult to imagine a time when Delhi was not Punjabi. The cultural change of the city took place with the arrival of refugees from West Punjab. In fact most local residents in the beginning resented this Punjabi culture. As some of the informants noted, the locals referred to refugees being very 'advanced' and 'broad-minded' in a pejorative sense. In the beginning, these 'qualities' were not appreciated by the locals. However over a period of time, the success of Punjabi refugees in most aspects of life turned these qualities into those that came to be valued by the local inhabitants of Delhi.

Apart from the above-mentioned factors, a difference between the locals and refugees could also be seen in terms of their lifestyle. For example, the refugee women would wear 'salwar-kameez', while the local women mostly wore sarees. This was a contentious issue between the locals and the refugees.
As informant UMMN 13 pointed out that...

*Punjabi women would wear ‘salwar-kameez’. My sister too would wear it, but this was not liked by the local inhabitants in the neighbourhood.*

This dislike for a particular dress pattern was on two accounts – firstly, on the ground that this pattern of dress of the Punjabi refugees was similar to that of the Muslim dress of *sherwani*. Secondly, it was also a dress that symbolized gender equality to a much greater degree than that in the case of *sarees* that were worn by the local inhabitants.

Gradually over a period of time, this situation of resentment between the locals and the refugees has taken a reverse turn. Today, most socio-cultural and economic aspects of the life of the people in Delhi are influenced by Punjabi culture brought by the refugees from Pakistan. Most locals tried to adopt the food and dress patterns of the Punjabi refugees.

In the words of informant MUMO 5:

*There was a family from Uttar Pradesh in our neighbourhood. The girls of that family asked my sister to lend them her salwar-kameez. Even the food habits of the locals and the refugees differed. While, we refugees would have rotis on tandoor, the locals would prepare it differently. But what has happened today is that the locals have tried to change themselves in the direction of the Punjabi culture.*

On the other hand, one cannot deny the important role that the locals played in helping the refugee section to resettle in Delhi by providing
them help on a number of fronts as mentioned earlier. Thus an attitude of helpfulness and cooperation on the one hand and that of hostility and rivalry on the other were two sides of the relationship between the locals and the refugees.

At the time of partition people were caught up in the politics of hate and violence. It is therefore important to understand the feelings, experiences and hardships of the ordinary people who were caught up in this transfer of population due to partition. While religion was the dividing factor in the partition process, other aspects which significantly altered and affected the lives of people once they settled in Delhi, were the three dimensions of stratification: caste, class and power. Therefore the next three chapters will deal with these three dimensions in greater detail.