CONCLUSION

With the advent of the British rule in the Punjab, the Hindus and Muslims started drifting away from each other. The two communities had a long common history; however, they could not present themselves as a single political entity. Some scholars have attributed this change in the Hindu-Muslim relations to the British policy of 'divide and rule', and traced its origin in the scramble over the loaves and fishes that the government had at its disposal. But the real reason, as this study suggests, was the dawn of a new spirit of communal consciousness among the Punjab Muslims.

The separatist tendencies among the Hindus and Muslims of the Punjab had their origin in a movement of religious as well as national revivalism which took place during the second half of the nineteenth century. The Hindus and Muslims eulogised their ancient cultures. Gradually, the revivalist movements took a religious and communal form, and there arose a desire for communal supremacy. By the end of the nineteenth century, the divisions between Hindus and Muslims were deepened and their differences became more pronounced.

The differences between Hindus and Muslims of the Punjab were accentuated by economic factors, commercial competition and professional rivalry. The Muslims, who during the Mughal period formed a privileged class and occupied a leading position in the Punjab society, had been reduced to the level of common subjects under the Sikh rule. Their position was further lowered by the changes gradually brought about by the British rule. In the era of competition which started under the British rule, the Hindus, particularly those living in the towns, adapted themselves more

1 The major scholarly works supporting this outlook are M.N. Das, India under Morley and Minto: Politics behind Revolution, Repression and Reforms (London 1964); Ram Gopal, Indian Muslims: A Political History (1857-1947) (Bombay 1959); Rafiq Zakaria, Rise of Muslims in Indian Politics: An Analysis of Developments from 1885 to 1906 (Bombay 1970); and Tara Chand, Freedom Movement in India, Vol. III (New Delhi 1972).
readily to the new conditions and outpaced Muslims in the race for progress and prosperity. The Hindus, who were thrifty and businesslike, were more advanced than the Muslims in the educational, economic and political fields. They had moved ahead of the latter by taking to Western education and government employment. The Muslims generally did not possess thrift and enterprise and were not anxious to exploit the opportunities of advancement offered by the British. They did not eagerly take to Western education and culture, and deprived themselves of the opportunity of employment under government. Consequently, they lagged behind the Hindus in education, wealth and general well-being, and were politically placed in a disadvantageous position.

The Punjab Muslims grew apprehensive and resented the tenacity of Hindu domination in various spheres. The Muslims of the upper and educated classes developed a dislike of the Hindus; the latter were accused of exploiting and impoverishing the Muslims. The Muslim leaders strove hard to promote education among their co-religionists and demanded a good share in government services. However, it may be noted that the Muslim agitation against Hindu supremacy was conducted by the rich and middle classes, for the peasantry which formed the bulk of the Muslim population, had no such grievances. The Muslim middle class in the Punjab was not so strong as among the Hindus. The continued backwardness of Muslims in higher education and their failure to get high posts under government made them think exclusively in terms of their own community. This produced the urge for separate Muslim organisations.

It was the early perception of the birth of the feeling of Hindu supremacy which made the Punjab Muslims realise that they should depend for protection of their interests on the British, and should not make common cause in politics with the Hindus. The influence of leading men like Syed Ahmed Khan proved powerful enough to keep the community aloof from the new political movement and its formal expression, the Indian National Congress. The latter, by and large, was shunned and opposed by the Punjab Muslims. The Punjab Muslims generally rejected the overtures made to them by the Hindus.
to join in agitation against government. Till the end of the nineteenth century, generally speaking, the Muslims maintained an attitude of loyalty to the British government and concentrated their attention and energy upon education as the only way to progress and advancement of their backward community. In this policy they received some encouragement and sympathy from the British. This, however, proved to be a source of increased bitterness to the Hindus, who on the one hand, taunted the Muslims as flatterers, and on the other, accused the government of favouritism.

By the dawn of the twentieth century, the Punjab Muslims, however, began to feel that their dependence on loyalty to the British and keeping aloof from politics would not pay in the long run. They realised that the political agitation carried on by the Hindus had more effect on the government and commanded more attention. They began to feel that instead of adhering to their traditional policy to avoid politics and agitation, they should also agitate and bring their grievances to the notice of the government. Feeling their political weakness compared with the Hindus, they entertained fears of the future Hindus domination if the British left the government more and more to popular bodies and their representatives. The fears the Muslims entertained in relation to the Hindus greatly influenced the role they were to play in future politics. Hence, the Punjab Muslims preferred to organise themselves separately in order to protect and advance their political rights and interests. The first indication of political movement on the part of the Punjab Muslims was noticeable in the year 1906 when a political association, the Indian Muslim League, was established at Lahore. The idea behind its formation was to express the Muslim voice and opinion on public questions and to draw the attention of government for recognition of their rights and interests. The Punjab Muslims also participated in the Simla Deputation and helped in establishing the All-India Muslim League; in 1907 the Punjab Provincial Muslim League was established.
The genesis and growth of separatism among the Punjab Muslims reveals that the emergence of party politics among them on communal lines was not a mushroom growth. Neither it was the creation of any individual or group of individuals, nor it came into existence due to the British policy of 'divide and rule'. It was the inevitable result of the process that had set out in the late nineteenth century. The impact of Western thought and civilization led to an awakening of political consciousness. The accumulation of political consciousness inevitably led to the emergence of party politics among the Punjab Muslims. It may be noted that the tendency of the Muslims to organise on a communal basis was not just a reaction to threat to their power from Hindu revivalism, but it was also partly due to Muslim revivalism. Many Muslim writers and thinkers such as Khawaja Altaf Husain Hali and Dr. Muhammad Iqbal, and the Muslim anjumans such as the Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam and the Anjuman-i-Islamia helped in creating the spirit of Muslim revivalism.

After the formation of the Provincial Muslim League, the Punjab Muslims vigorously agitated for their betterment. They demanded separate and adequate representation on the legislative councils, municipal and district boards and the public services not only on the basis of their numerical strength but on the political importance of the community as well. The Hindus of the Punjab exerted to oppose the grant of separate communal representation to the Muslims under the Morley-Minto reforms. This opposition convinced the Muslims that their interests could be better promoted through communal solidarity and not through collaboration with the Hindus. The prospect of Morley-Minto reforms thus generated communal energy and tension in the Punjab.

The outburst of communal energy and mobilisation displayed by the Punjab Muslims during the years following the Morley-Minto reforms was absorbed in the pan-Islamic movement which emerged in 1911. Between 1911 and 1913, the Muslim feeling in the Punjab was greatly stirred by the affairs of Turkey and Persia, by the annulment of the partition of Bengal and by the fiasco over the
All these happenings created an anti-Christian feeling and drove a wedge between the Muslims and the British government. The Cawnpore Mosque episode further fanned Muslim resentment. Unrest in the Punjab was fostered by a sudden boom in Muslim journalism and the starting of a large number of papers. However, these events and the agitation for communal betterment created tension within the Muslim political circles. This led to the emergence of factions among the Punjab Muslims. Two groups among the Muslims began to emerge: the Old Party, a group of large landowners, and the Young Party, a group of middle class educated Muslims. While the former were reactionary and conservative in their political outlook, the latter were liberal and progressive. Political indifference of the Old Party, who enjoyed British support, was ridiculed by the Young Party Muslims. The latter got an opportunity of taking lead over the former in the press and on the platform. The emergence of the Young Party Muslims posed a threat not only to the existence of the Old Party but also to the established bonds of Muslim loyalty to the British government.

When after the outbreak of the First World War the Young Party Muslims moved towards the Congress to make an alliance with the Hindus over political reforms, the struggle between the two groups of the Punjab Muslims intensified. The Old Party Muslims, feeling mainly their political weakness compared with the Hindus, wished not to resort to agitation but to rely on government for protection and fair play. The Young Party Muslims, however, were no longer willing to pursue this policy of political inactivity. The struggle and rivalry between the two groups reached its climax in 1916 when a split occurred in the Punjab Muslim politics. In the beginning of that year, the Young Party Muslims succeeded in establishing a new Punjab Provincial Muslim League as a rival body to the old Punjab Provincial Muslim League. The old League was subsequently disaffiliated by the All-India Muslim League.

The Lucknow Pact which strengthened Muslim claims concerning separate representation and their political importance, gave stimulus to the Young Party Muslims in the Punjab. Henceforth the
Young Party Muslims stood for co-operation with other communities and for safeguarding political position of Muslims. They insisted that the first aim of the Muslims should be to force the British to yield power, while the Old Party maintained that the protection of communal interests was the paramount duty of Muslims. After the Home Rule agitation, the Young Party Muslims were successful in further gaining ground in the Punjab politics. The Old Party lost hold over the Muslim politics and was relegated to the back position.

The end of the First World War found the Muslims in a state of great excitement and unrest. The defeat of Turkey in the World War and the contemplated danger to the Khilafat and the Holy Places of Islam, brought religious reinforcements in the Punjab Muslim politics and made the Young Party more popular among the Muslims. The anxiety of the Punjab Muslims for the British government's attitude towards the Khilafat and the Holy Places was increased by the doubts which the Montagu-Chelmsford report had raised in the minds of Muslim politicians concerning government's sensitivity to their demands. The Young Party Muslims, who made increased manifestations on behalf of Turkey, felt that the termination of the War would mean the removal of the restrictions on agitation which had been necessary so long as it continued. Hence, they found a cause to agitate and attempted to bring pan-Islamic reinforcements in the Muslim politics. The interest for the Khilafat was revived and an attempt was made to connect religion with politics. The Young Party Muslims succeeded in obtaining adherence of the Ulama in order to put a seal of religion on their demands regarding the Khilafat and the Holy Places. The Ulama also wanted to enter politics due to religious reasons. The Ulama, with their power to arouse the fanaticism of the ignorant masses, now supported the Young Party Muslims. With the support of the Ulama, the potentialities of the Young Party further increased.