PREFACE

The period which engulfs the decline of the Sikh power and the emergence of British Supremacy in the Punjab spans half a century. Though it is not a period of historical extravaganza, it is nevertheless full of events which had far reaching effects. No society can just be a spectator to the continuing presence of an alien race. More so, when the society is Indian, with its age-old panoramic past, and the alien race is British. The two diverse races came into contact. Each influenced the other. The British, the victors, had more impact on the Indians, than vice versa.

The objective of this study is to trace the process of British impact on Indian Society in the Ludhiana district of the Punjab. Ludhiana district was selected as it was here that the British first established their political agency.

The study attempts to analyse the composition of society prior to the advent of the British. It details the sequence of events leading to the establishment of the British Agency at Ludhiana. It describes the working of the British administration, citing their actions and their policies. It endeavours to point out the vulnerable aspects
of the population and qualifies the nature of British impact on those. Finally it concludes with a survey of how much of the British influence permeated in the society. What was the permanence of this impact? Was the change which occurred because of the British or in spite of the British?

The study also deals with questions such as how the British affected social change, what was their conscious role in it? How they helped to eradicate social evils, how changes in educational patterns metamorphosised values in life, how their revenue system affected rural areas and the like.

Unfortunately most of the records and documents on the basis of which this thesis has taken shape, some primarily from British sources and inevitably represent the British point of view. The circumstances of defeat and disruption prevented the Indian side of the story being recorded, and possibly those that existed suffered destruction during the Mutiny of 1857. Some papers which might have survived were hidden in family archives and not published for fear of consequences.

However, as far as possible, weightage has been given to this factor.

It must specifically be mentioned that certain documents and records even of the British Political Agency,
for the period 1816 - 1846, are not traceable. Only references are available in the "Press List of Old Records". Some isolated ones were located in National Archives, New Delhi.

I am particularly indebted to Dr. P. L. Mehra, Professor and Head of the Department of History, Panjab University, Chandigarh, who spared a lot of his time in giving me his valuable advice and guidance throughout the preparation of this work. My thanks are also due to Dr. B. N. Goswamy who together with Dr. Mehra helped me select this subject of study. I am grateful to the staff of the National Archives New Delhi, Punjab State Archives, Patiala, and the National Library, Calcutta who permitted me free access to the useful sources of information I referred to.

Special mention must be made of the full co-operation extended by Dr. Webster and Dr. MacCullum of Barring Christian College, Batala. It was there that I was given full access to microfilms and records of missionary work in the Punjab. I must also thank Mr. Parshotam Das who translated Persian documents for me in Patiala.

Sumir Chandhry
Chandigarh
April 15, 1974