

FROM COMMUNITARIANISM TO COMMUNALISM, COMMUNITARIAN IDENTITY IN LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY LAHORE: AN APPRAISAL[•]

This paper attempts to understand the communitarian sense of awakening in the city of Lahore, which surfaced in the nineteenth century. This communal tangle further transformed into communal bigotry. By the end of the nineteenth century, Lahore had started witnessing the burgeoning communal antagonisms in its colonial inspired cosmopolitanism. Though Muslims were in significant majority, they were deprived in many of the important civic affairs. On the contrary, Hindus were far less in number but having par excellence in many of the socio-economic realm, had upper hand in the civic affairs. Sikhs were the least in numbers in the three-main communities in the colonial Lahore. Every community had grabbed the colonial opportunities according to their socio-economic status; that status-according grabbing resulted into disequilibrium among the communities. At the same time, all the three-main communities had tried to draw their communitarian identity according to the colonial challenges posed by missionaries, interacting and amplifying by the subsequent tussles even among themselves. In that foreground, the retrospective genesis of religious antagonism was transformed into the communitarian and subsequent communal antagonism in the city of Lahore with all of its own peculiarities. Assassination of Lala Lekh Ram testifies that Lahore had entered into the communal antagonism, which sealed the future course up to the coming of partition. Thus, it is indeed important to study the maneuverings of all the three major communities in the city of Lahore while making their identical schemes. It is argued in this paper that identical maneuverings of the three-main communities led to its culmination in the form of active communalism instead of communitarian politics.

Key Words: Communalism, Communitarianism, Samaj, Sabhas, Anjuman, Lahore, Colonialism.

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Background of the Communal Situation

Study of the colonial situation in Lahore enables us to examine the communal positioning, which different communities were maneuvering. There were many changes in the local scene of Lahore. It had been a Muslims majority city throughout its medieval history. Despite that superiority in numbers, the Muslims of Lahore were not able to confront the non-Muslims in the domain of civic affairs. Lahore was considered as one of the leading commercial hub in whole of the north India. Thus, it had its phenomenal importance in commercial center, which were catering a wider area of central and urban Punjab. That situation was primarily the result of the hegemonic positioning of non-Muslims dated back to Sikhs rule.¹ Colonial inception did not broke that tendency and it's provided opportunities were grabbed by same dominant classes of non-Muslims in the city of Lahore. In that perspective, in which some particular classes had maximums of the opportunities in order to gain and maintain their financial supremacy in the city.

However, despite that one particular supremacy, there were other avenues where all three communities had gone through major transformations. Those transformations were according to the socio-political requirement bequeathed by their particular responsive demands. Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs; all three communities had showed peculiar tilts towards gaining their identifications in the public arena of late nineteenth century Lahore. Our major question is here to study the different efforts propounded by all three major communities in the city of Lahore while taking advantages, colonial modernity was providing to a vernacular setup. The starting theme would be describing the colonial offerings in Lahore with its ultimate and logical responses by the communities. The subsequent argument would rest with independent identification different communities were beholden. Then the supplementary study would be on results of those communitarian interactions with their ultimate impact on their own communities in respect of political strategies.

Transformations in the Old Patterns

The pro-active changes brought out by colonial power had started to alter social action-patterns in the city of Lahore.² Lahore as a capital city with its particular prominence had flourished impact in all the realms of provincial life. That particular prominence along with the subsequent transformation would be an important detriment for the future course of events.³ First element in this regard was the patron of administration, which is the pivotal column for the maintenance of any city. The composition of administration could suggest that which community would be the central controlling authority, which assisted the colonial authorities. Henry Lawrence, the first resident of Lahore, wanted not to introduce any change in the existing pattern of traditional system of administration. That situation was in favor of Muslims as by that time Muslims were the leading families in the city of Lahore despite all the havoc wrought by the Sikh rule. However, with coming of second residence, John Lawrence, situation started to change quite differently. It was a transitional time for the colonial rule in Lahore as all communities had repositioned accordingly. The time from 1860 to 1872 was the complete defined period in which British authorities had established their

colonial systems in Lahore. During that crucial period, colonial authorities incepted all the colonial dispensations i.e. police, judiciary, education etc.⁴

Colonial Economic Opportunities and Responses of Different Communities

Colonial situation had seen the rise in the economic activity all across the city. There had been a satisfactorily increase of income attributed partly to the improved management.⁵ Particularly with the start of the residential occupation by the colonial authorities in the city, the retail requirement went on rise. That situation was excellent opportunity of those communities in Lahore, which were already in that profession of trade and retail shops. To provide services to British community in the city many retails shop were opened by the local trader community. The majority of which was Khattris closely followed by Aroras. Both were Hindus caste with par excellence in that particular job. The increasing commercialization of and the importance of trade laid the foundations for the emergence of specific social groups in the Sikh rule-very particularly Hindus Baniyas-Khattris and Aroras. These communities had strong excellence in commercial entrepreneurships and corporate ventures. They had excellence in all those affairs in the Sikh rule in Lahore.⁶ They were developed into a strong capitalistic hegemonic class before the British annexation of the Punjab. Thus in the new rule, it was not difficult to grab new opportunities on the far higher a level. Out of them Khattris were traditional commercial class of merchant with strong traditional excellence. That community outfitted much and gained supremacy in local financial arena. They were often urban dwellers, bankers, major traders, and better shopkeepers and usually educated and were well positioned to get government positions.

While Brahmins was scattered all over the city with limited influence and sources. Except at the time of certain religious observance, Brahmins were not able to grab the situation as per the level of their brethren Khattris. Another Hindu group Kayasthas, in the city of Lahore, were in very low numbers. Because they were not the native and were originally from Bengal and migrated towards Punjab with the purpose of preaching Brahma Samaj. However, had found little recognition. They had held the clerical position throughout the Hindu community of Lahore with insignificant influence.⁷ Some Kyasthas were engaged in government services and a few were promoting the cultural activities in the city of Lahore. The cultural activities were the blend of western literary influences on the vernacular literature. All of their presence was of little influence. However, they had actively promoted cultural activities in the city of Lahore. Their presence in the city Lahore life was disproportionally high. As they were highly educated as compared to other communities of Lahore including fellow Hindus.⁸

On the other hand, Muslims were not able to activate themselves as per the level of the non-Muslims were getting at. Thus, despite all that developments, the share of Muslims was meagre. With the advent of British rule, however, they could not apprehend the situation for their own betterment. Sikh rule had left the Muslim majority of Lahore in dilapidate condition which hindered the medieval gradual progression of Muslims in Lahore. Muslim masses of Lahore were not able to transform themselves from that pathetic condition extended to them during the pre-colonial rule to the significant better situation. We see that very little

opportunities were availed by Muslims of Lahore despite their clear majority in the new favorable situation. Very few Muslims were engaged in betterment activities.

For instance, *Arain*, a Muslim clan associated with vegetables growing, had started to respond to this new change by growing new vegetable, such as potato, whose requirement was created in response to European community in Lahore. It was just a meagre substantiation on the side of Muslims while grabbing the opportunities. Thus, we see that Muslim of Lahore could not exhibit the tendency of expertise in capitalizing financial opportunities afforded by colonial inception in Lahore. In another interesting example in which a Muslim constructor had tried to provide, excellent services to the British construction plans. A Kashmiri Muslim Muhammad Sultan had various assignments of construction of government buildings in and around the city. Particularly for the construction of railway track, he had provided himself as main contractor-builder in British public works program. He had been the central figure for almost one and half decade. He had provided bricks for the construction of Mian Mir cantonment in 1850. He had contacted to large numbers of villagers for his the availability of bricks, lumber and labor as well. By the end of 1850 Sultan became the major contractor in this regard; sultan made himself over reached in his contracts and soon became defaulter of Maharaja of Kashmir.⁹ He did not seem to be well benefitted to the colonial situation. That example testify that Muslims as a class were not excellent enough to perform intelligently in the financial matters. If there is one exempted example, it had to see its ultimate collapse pertaining to the non-professionalism. On the other hand, a Hindu person from Khatri clan had not only made him avail of these emerging opportunities but also well maintained with that. His name was Mela Ram residing in the walled city of Lahore. Mela Ram did not extend himself beyond the safe limits. Thus, when he died in 1890 his wealth and status remained intact.¹⁰ It manifest the traditional excellence on the side of Commercial Classes of Hindus.

Social Mobility and Spread of Education in Lahore

During this time, Lahore had seen rise in its populations. It became the vibrant center of all the social mobility in the Punjab. During Sikh rule, by 1825, Lahore had a population of about 180,000, and Amritsar possibly 100,000. Overall, the 89,449, population increase in the district from 1855 to 1868 resulted due to the immigration of people. The main attraction that caused that huge social mobility was the opening of canal irrigated cultivable areas and by non-agriculturalist work opportunities available with the rail road, public works constructions of the Bari doab canal.¹¹ All those development had direct impact on the population rise in the provincial capital. Thus Lahore had seen a significant rise in its residential quarters. However, in the following decade, Lahore grew more slowly. In the period 1855-1868, Lahore had went through the slow transition as British reduced the size of their military force in the City. That was a testing times as old opportunities were dying down and the new colonial opportunities had introduced new socio-economic situation. In that newly emerged situation, old element of Lahore was starting to transformed. Such as the gradual disappearance of the courtiers, court tradesman, jewelers, who flourished in the city of Lahore during Sikh rule, had find little support under that new situation.¹² In that new situation,

Lahore had seen its best provincial rise as Punjabi all across the province had started to leave their traditional isolationisms and parochialism. They had started a new and wide mobility across the province and Lahore had become the natural destination for that social mobility. This effect was particularly noticeable in the capital city of Lahore.”¹³ Consequently, due to that social change Lahore had seen the establishment of various colleges and university in the followed period. It also helped to retain and aggrandize the dominant position of Lahore in the educational and intellectual life of Punjab. Lahore became the dominant center of higher education, and students from all over the province came to the city to acquire an education important for civil services, in medical profession, in legal field and education field. A medical institute was established in 1860 in Lahore to provide the best medical education in the whole of province and provide training in western medicine. For those who wanted to adopt legal profession, a Law College was established in 1870. American Presbyterian church of America had established Forman Christian College in 1866. Apart from those, governments or missionary’s institutes, three local venture also came into existence due to the reason, which would be the next part of our article. First was established by Arya Samajist of Lahore: the Dayananda Anglo-Vedic College was established in 1888; the Islamia College established by the Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam in 1892; and the Dayal Singh College, established by the Brahmo Samaj Chapter of Lahore. All those colleges were set up in order to inculcate not only their ideologies to the community bit also to strengthen their own communities in the onslaught of the foreign missionaries and local opposition as well. The profession of school teaching was dominated by the traditional literate sections like the Brahmans, the Ulama, the Khattris, and the Aroras.¹⁴

Table: Religious Composition in the City of Lahore from 1856 to 1941.

Census	Hindu	Muslim	Sikh	Jains	Christian	Parsis	Total
1868	39,693	70,974	3,520	n/a	n/a	n/a	114,187
1881	53,641	86,413	4,627	227	n/a	n/a	149,369
1891	62,077	102,280	7,306	339	4,697	132	176,854
1901	70,196	119,601	7,023	420	5,558	166	202,964
1911	77,267	129,301	12,877	467	8,463	198	228,714
1921	91,544	140,708	11,766	474	8,808	177	257,295
1931	139,124	249,315	23,477	791	16,875	n/a	429,747
1941	1,77,212	4,33,170	34,021	1094	21,495	n/a	6,71,659

The Early Communitarian Awareness in Colonial Lahore

The Religious tradition of the city of Lahore was dominated by the adherence of the Punjabi variants of Islam, Hinduism, and Sikhism. There had been a history of conflict and fluctuating relationship among all the three major communities in the city of Lahore. In colonial set up those fluctuating relationship had entered into modern phases. Thus, we see a new transformation in the wake of newly colonial inspired urban life and its peculiarities. The urban social formation in Lahore was internally fragmented and socially heterogeneous. The crucial relationship between cultural identity and class will contribute to our study of urban change in the city of Lahore that how certain socio-religious groups acquired metropolitan outlook by defining their communitarian identity. Emergence of specific socio-religious reform movements such as the Arya Samaj, Singh Sabhas, and Anjumans had led to an overall social and economic paradigmatic shift in the public arena of Lahore, which ultimately provided a vast space for communitarian contestation. That communitarian contestation transformed into the communal ideologies. Middle classes comprising intellectuals, professionals, and the commercial groups had tended to organize essentially around religious ideologies. The role of economic factors had also acted as catalysts in the process of class formation.

Hindu Community of Lahore and their search for a Strong platform

Hindus of Lahore were second in terms of numbers in the city of Lahore. However, their supremacy in terms of education and financial affairs had made them far stronger than Muslims. In the seventh decade of nineteenth century, Hindus were scattered in many groups and were not capable of having a strong platform where they could pronounce their political agenda and action. There were many such bodies, which were maneuvering to capture the Hindu community of Lahore to form any kind of collective voice. Many of such bodies were made by different Hindu communities project and protect their own interest rather than for the larger cause of Hindu communities in Lahore. For instance, *Khatris* of Lahore had founded *Sarin Sabha* for their social uplift in Lahore in 1882. Another organ The *Kayastha Sabhas* Lahore was established in 1883 with the main object of exclusive uplifting in their own ranks. The *Aroras* of Lahore has erected their community organization in the year 1890 named *Arora Bans Sabha* to protect their commercial credentials and they were traders of par excellence. The Kashmiri pundits of Lahore had formed an association in 1891 named *Brahmins Sabha*, with the major objective of bringing out harmony and unity among their scattered community. Aggarwall, a sub caste of *Banias*, had also founded their social body under the banner of *Aggarwall Sabha*, Lahore, in the year 1890. *Bhattia*, class of Rajput has also formed their community organization in Lahore in 1900 named *Bhatia Sabha* Lahore.¹⁵ All these bodies were primarily aimed at strengthening the cause of one particular community within the larger communitarian base of Lahore based Hindus. That was the time when the Hindus of Lahore thinking to develop some kind of common platform which could manifest the joint cause of their community. For that purpose, first such attempt was made in 1864, when certain Lahore based elite class Hindus had Lala Behari Lai, Pandit Bhanu Datta, Bassant Ram, Novin Chandra Rai and S.P. Bhatta Charjee had founded a reform organization named the Lahore *Sat Sabha* (Society of Truth).¹⁶ However, that Hindu Body could not get much recognition and soon disappeared. The *Brahmo*

Samjist in Lahore took the next step in the year 1866. It was Lahore chapter of *Brahmo Samaj*, founded by Lahore based Bengalis. Those Bengalis were highly educated but were ignorant of the vernacular demands of the Punjabi Hindus. They were equally unfamiliar to the homegrown Punjab Hindus. In the year 1872, they had established their own temple in the Anarakali Bazar to preach their teaching to the local Hindus. However, they had receive little attention even by their own brethren.¹⁷ Highly educated Bengalis Hindus who were unfamiliar to the homegrown Punjabi Hindu carried that monotheistic body. In 1879, at the sixteenth anniversary of the *Brahmo Samaj*, a congregation was arranged in *Brahma Mandir* Anarkali, Lahore. In that congregation, only 50 persons were present. It shows the negligible recognition they got in Lahore.¹⁸ In 1880, S N. Agnihotri (1850-1928) had established another extended organ of that fragile *Brahmo Samaj* in Lahore. The new body named Punjab central *Brahmo Samaj* was aimed at assimilating the *Barhmo* doctrine to the vernacular culture. However, this revised body soon disappeared.¹⁹

There were factors, which hindered the progress of the *Brahmo Samaj* in Lahore. The general approach and the total work gave the impression that it was inspired by alien ideologies. The orthodox Hindus looked it with disfavor. According to Lala Lajpat Rai, *Brahmo Smaj* ceased to be an affective shield for the protection of the Hindu community against the assaults of Christians.²⁰ The *Dev Samaj*, though quite different from the *Brahmo Samaj*, was still looked upon as a branch of the *Brahmo*. According to census of 1891, *Dev Dharm* sect which has arisen out of *Brahmo Samaj* was often looked on as a branch of the *Brahmo Samaj*.²¹ Thus, it also was not able to perpetuate in Lahore.

That was the time when Hindu community was passing through a transitional period. As there was no strong platform or party, where they can assembled to protect their cause. On the one side, they were facing the proselytizing activities, which were posing serious challenge to their community. They were in dire need of having a strong and single headed Hindu Solidity in the city of Lahore. By that time, mid of eighties, they had experimented with many *Samajs*. Such as *Dev Samaj*, *Brahmo Samaj*. After passing through all those experiments, Lahore based Hindus finally got a strong body which had fulfilled their desire articulate strongly. That happened in the form of *Arya Samaj* introduced and established by Dayanand Saraswati. In the summer of 1877 Dayanand Saraswati was invited by some Lahore based *Brahmo Samaj* members. A selected public gathering was organized in the building of Rattan Chan Dhariwal in Lahore. When Dayanand started his preaching, the owner of that building, an orthodox Hindu, did not allow him to do that propagation. Therefore, they acquired a *veranda* of a prominent Muslim Khan Bahdur Rahim Khan, in Old Anarkali. In that house the draft and scheme of *Arya Samaj* was effected. Then Dayanand resided in the *Kothi* of another Muslim Nawab Nawazish Ali outside Masti gate Lahore. It shows that Muslims of Lahore felt no hesitance to provide facilitation for their agenda and objective. Within two or three years Lahore chapter of *Arya Samaj* had eclipsed other Hindu bodies of Lahore. Rai Bahadur Mulraj became the first president of *Arya Samaj* Lahore branch. Then Lahore became the headquarter of that movement.²² Advent of *Arya Samaj* had set major trait of politics in colonial Lahore of late nineteenth century and remained the active pivot of affairs in the

city of Lahore.²³ Samaj served the bourgeoisie Hindus of Lahore as the training ground for their nationalistic aspirations.²⁴ Despite receiving reservations from the orthodox Hindu circles of Lahore,²⁵ it had gained significant acceptance from the Seasoned Hindus of Lahore. Among them were Guru Dat, Lala Munshi Ram, Lala Lajpat Rai, Lala Lajpat Rai, Bakshi Jaishi Ram, Lala Murli Dhar, Dayal Singh Majitha Lala Harkishan, Lala Lal Chand were prominent name.²⁶ Many students from Government College Lahore were also influenced by *Arya* philosophy and joined it enthusiastically. It shows that appeal of *Arya* philosophy had got much more recognition among the urban strata of educated and well off Hindus.²⁷ That was why by the mid of nineteenth century it had become the most important organ of the Hindu community in Lahore.

Sikhs of Lahore with their Identification Efforts

The Sikhs of Lahore were generally rural dwellers poured into the city. While the necessary level of awareness required for urban community complexion, was out of their reach. That rural dwelling character had landed them with weakest position in comparison with Hindus and to lesser extent with Muslims of Lahore. However, they had to extend some sort of reformatory efforts in order to gain some confined entity. During Sikh rule, they had enjoyed a lot in status and financial supremacy. However, because the majority of them was not living in urban area, they could not grab the opportunities provided by the colonial progress. Those colonial inspired situation could not force those rural dwellers of Sikhs community to stride in urban setup in the city of Lahore. A small pocket of Sikh could be able to be part of the new colonial setup and that was those decommissioned army of Sikh rule, which had taken commission in the British army. Those army soldiers had become the part of urban setup with confined garrison atmosphere. Due to that limited mobility, Sikh community could not harbor any urban transformation within their own communitarian betterment. That sort of different response by Sikh in large had made the small community living in the city of Lahore marginalized while taking advantage if the opportunities in education and other areas. Their lesser parsons in the urban center was the chief cause behind that socio-political fiasco, which resulted into the further confinement with subsequent marginalization. They were already having the hostile relationship with the Muslims. That hostility had become far more intense in that marginalized position within the city. Thus, that specific Socio-political circumstance had converted Sikhs in violent antagonism against Muslims.²⁸

The establishment of *Singh Sabha* in Lahore in 1879 could not be able to get sufficient success in transforming Sikhs into urban body with strong organization. Somehow, this reform body had eradicated Hindu practices among the Sikh by affiliating it with the *Khalsa Diwan*, Amritsar.²⁹ *Singh Sabha*, opened Guru Gobind Singh Boarding House at Lahore for the Sikh students and establishes a printing press in Lahore to start some newspapers.³⁰ Sikhs from rural surrounding of Lahore had shown tendency of getting stronger as compare to their other urban communities in Lahore. Due to their rural character, they had been influenced by socialist inclinations in their different political agendas. However, that was the case, which started in the early twentieth century. In 1873 a reformatory movement in the Sikhism was established named *Singh Sabha*. That movement could not garner sufficient support from the masses as it relied heavily on landed aristocracy.

That landed Aristocracy had its bases in the rural setup, which were out of Lahore. That was the reason that the Sikhs left in Lahore not only short in numbers but also lesser influential to form and represent as strong urban community. That situation remains up to the end of nineteenth century. Due to the same reason, Sikh were capable of forming any strong body in Lahore. In that perspective, they had to side with different Hindus Samajs. Part impressed with the agenda of *Arya Samajist* in Lahore, various prominent and Sikh had started to get close to Arya Samaj. Bhai Jawahir Singh, Bhai Dit Singh and other several other prominent Sikh had worked zealously for the establishment of D.A.V College in Lahore in 1886. However, that intimacy remained confined to certain educated and elite level. Large chunk of Sikh in Lahore could not get close to Arya Samajist or any other Hindu Body in Lahore. In fact, by that time Sikhs were also in search of locating their own separated identity. In the late nineteenth century, that particular inclination was gaining sufficient clarity to form their own identity in respect of their communitarian position.

Muslim Community Awareness

Muslims had been the largest community of Lahore since its medieval history. However, the treatment meted out towards them during Sikh rule had converted them into most wretched entity of Lahore. Despite that situation, there were some aristocratic Muslims families, which were safeguarding the interest of Muslims in the Lahore; those families had played the role of patron-client relationship, at one side with colonial authorities and on the other side with the Muslims of Lahore. Some notable from those aristocratic families had played leading roles in many of the political issue of Muslims in Lahore.

The first major Muslim society was the *Anjuman-i-Islamia*, Lahore, established in 1869 with the immediate concern of repairing and management of the Badshahi mosque and others mosques of Lahore. Barkat Ali Khan had tried to levy a small tax on food to accumulate sufficient money for the care of Badshahi mosque. However, his efforts had met with opposition by a section of people. Then he founded the *Anjuman-i-Islamia*.³¹ Most of the elite and aristocratic families of the Lahore joined it. The *Anjuman* also catered to the other needs and problems of the community, and, within a short time, became the most important and representative body of Muslims of Lahore. Thus in that foreground Muslims of Lahore had started to yield for a socio-cultural identity. That *Anjuman* was no more a body to supervise the specific affairs of Lahore bases Muslims. Rather it had converted into the identity for the community of Muslims in Lahore. It had become a symbol of solidarity for the Muslims in Lahore.³² In the initial phases, few Muslims lawyers and students from different colleges had joined it. However, they soon realized that this body was aristocratic in its temperament. Thus, they became dissatisfied over time. In that situation a need re-emerged to initiate a new body for Muslims community pertinent to the needs of middle class Muslims of Lahore. Thus another association; the *Anjuman-i-Himayat-e-Islam* (Society for the Defense of Islam) founded in 1884 and carried out their own reforms. It made English compulsory in *Anjuman* High Schools so that Muslims would acquire more government posts; stressed female education and. *Anjumans* also became platforms for countering anti-Muslims propaganda. Taking a lead from the *Arya*

Samajists, who quickly deployed new techniques of agitation and propaganda, Muslims too organized a system of street preaching.³³

Muslims of Lahore were aware that Hindu ascendancy in the public service was posing a serious threat to them because official posts were sources of power, which could be manipulated to support the communal claims. In that respect, Hindus were far more vigilant to acquire education. Thus, the field of competitiveness for jobs and control over municipalities became more intense between Muslims and Hindus. Muslim groups had become conscious of their educational backwardness and their diminishing share in positions of power, and this became a major source of concern. Muslim associations geared-up to strive for job opportunities for Muslims in Lahore. Muslims consequently, began to convert existing *Anjumans* into organs of reform and revival. The *Anjuman* built schools, started a newspaper. A few Muslim lawyers and college students from Lahore had joined the *Anjuman* but they soon became dissatisfied with the aristocratic inclinations and limited programme of the *Anjuman*.

Lahore Indian Association and Indian National Congress in Lahore

In that condition when all communities were possessing many numbers of *Sabhas*, *Samaj Anjumans*, there were two such associations, which were cosmopolitan in their very purpose. First was 'Lahore Political Association,' which was established by Lahore Bases Bengalis. Second was the nascent establishment of 'Indian National Congress.' Both parties got failures. It is an important question that why both such parties were not able to grab their attention in the city of Lahore. In the following, it would be substantiate to highlight and identify the reasons behind their failure.

The formation of the Lahore Indian Association in 1877 had initiated political mobilization among the urban groups in Lahore. It was an elite club aimed at providing political awareness to the elite class of Lahore and was established by a Bengali nationalist leader and intellectual Surendar Nath Banerjee. At that time there were some Bengalis living in Lahore, who became the forerunner of that political association. However, that association was not like an organized party. It was just an elite platform where any person with some political reservation can express his views. Some of the Brahmo, and Dev Samajist from Lahore were also part and parcel of that political association. Among them were Sardar Dyal Singh Majitha, Lala Harikishan Lal, Ram Dawarka Das were names of note. This organization could not get sufficient acknowledgment in Lahore and soon died its death.³⁴ Lahore Indian Association was aimed at creating secular body intending to include all the community members. However, due to the overwhelming interest of educated Bengali Hindus and indifferent response by the Muslims of elite class, it did not survive any significant time.

Indian Association Lahore was supposed to be a joint platform for both Hindu Muslims communities. Nevertheless, the creed change in Arya Samaj of Lahore had smashed that joint opposition. The new creed in Arya in the post Dayanad Death period was more harsh and critical towards the Muslims. They had smashed any chance of cooperation by attacking on the sensitive issue of Islam. Particularly Lala Lekh Ram had written extensively against Islam. His language and theme both were severely nefarious. Following the death of Dayananda In 1883, one

section of Arya Samaj increasingly assailed Muslims. The resulting controversy in Public meetings and the press hardened existing divisions and tended of conflict and distrust.³⁵ That situation was confined in the assumed bracket of Arya versus Muslim; rather that antagonism was across the communitarian board. Communitarian hostility was germinating from all the Hindus and Muslims corners whether they were from any particular sect or not. Any particular sect could be at forefront or could manifest lesser or higher level of hostility but the situation was generalized. As both communities were expressing their altogether concerns with almost same tone and language on each communal affair emerged in the mid-colonial Lahore. For instance, Hindu papers were making jokes of those Muslims who were against joining Congress in Punjab. As many leading Muslim from Punjab were considering congress as a press was making joke of the Muslims who were against the joining of congress because Sir Syed Ahmad Khan has spoken against it. Even Hindus of Lahore had declined to accept Congress. Particularly Arya Samajists were the main opponent of congress. The reason behind their opposition was that they considered Congress as the main threat to their own perpetuation in the city and Punjab.³⁶

Communitarian Interaction in Print and Street and Advent of Communalism

All those transformations in colonial Lahore resulted in the emergence of an urban culture of debate and contestation. In the following years, the streets of Lahore became dotted with preachers of Christian, Arya, Brahma, Sikh, and Muslim, commending their particular cause and condemning all others. With street preaching, Aryas began to exhibit a new sense of militancy. Particularly Aryas and Christian missionaries had selected the Anarkali Bazar as the center for their religious preaching.³⁷ This new environment produced "public-aware" individuals in each community. Lahore became in course of time the center of intellectual and religious life. It was a city of Public Library and Reading Rooms, of schools, and Colleges, of Clubs and Associations, of *Samajes* and *Sabhas*.³⁸ By the end of nineteenth century, Lahore had become a center of high degree of communal awareness. *Sabhas*, *Anjumans*, *Samajs* and educational institutes were became the centers for those public aware activities. Which resulted into the sharpening of communitarian identities in each communities. All that identical awareness would bound to interact with each other has all communities' were strong hostilities against each other. By the time of the second last decade of nineteenth century, Lahore had not yet seen any major sort of communal antagonism. However, there were many points where all the three major communities could have clash due to one or the other reason. However, all that was quite passive sort of schism.

That interaction in public arena in Lahore reveals the extent of communal identification. Three major communities had started to publish their own papers, which favor particular (religious) organizations. We come to know that there were fifteen Islamic-related newspapers, were published by the end of nineteenth century. All those newspapers had different orientations in terms of religion and ideology. Many of those papers were supportive of religious harmony while a few were taking advantage of any communal issue to propagate their own cause. There were thirty papers published by the side of Hindus including different Samajas i.e Arya Samaj, Dev Samaj and Brahma Samaj and orthodox Hindus. A group of young students, including Lala Lajpat Rai, Lala Hans Raj, Lala Shiv Nath, and

Pandit Guru Datta, responded and together started the Regenerator of Arya Varta, English Weekly and the official voice of the Lahore Samaj. Lala Hans Raj and Pandit Guru Datta jointly edited the Regenerator, which lasted for nearly two years. Newspapers and journals tended to have short unstable lives, but from this period on ward, the Arya Samaj always possessed several periodicals. As soon as one collapsed, another was founded. Lahore became and remained the center of Samaj publications, the point of dissemination of Aryan news and new ideological issues. Other towns produced their own publications in later years, but Lahore dominated. The need for papers paralleled the need for preacher.³⁹

In this field Sikh were the least advantageous community due to their lack of strength both in numbers and in financial matters. However, they were having published ten papers including weekly fortnightly. A deep and analytical assessment of all those newspapers is sufficient to tell us that those newspapers were involved in communitarian debates. Thus, we found many papers with ideological catering of their own communities. There were some papers, which were harboring the cause of harmonious relationship among all the communities. However, their circulation was not of significant level. Only those papers were far more popular which were spreading the ideological services, if not religious one. The press was therefore an important element in the struggles between rival communities or about tension within one community.⁴⁰ Thus, vernacular journalism became a major arena of public engagement, and generated a new public awareness, which had caused indirect communal antagonism.

Another point, of which non-Muslim Newspapers of the city were hostile to, was that the Muslims form the majority of the Lahore Police throughout of its colonial history. The City Inspector as well as the Kotwal of Anarkali, the Court Inspector and the Reader (Muharrir Peshi) of the District Superintendent were all Muslims. The number of Muslim Police employees in Lahore were three times that of the Hindus.⁴¹ For instance on the appointment of the new *Kotwal* of the city in the year 1895 had become the issue of newspapers as a food for their circulations. Which ultimately led the rise of communal antagonism. That *Kotwal* was a Muslims. At his appointment, Hindu quarters of the press were bitterly against this appointment and lamented that the appointed *kotwal* would be partisan while doing his duties. Their papers also blamed that the rise in the crimes in the city was because the police in Lahore was comprised in majority of Muslims. That is the reason that crimes against the Hindus, who were far richer as compare to Muslim. Those papers had circulated that theme that as the lower classes of Lahore were in majority of Muslims, this class difference led the Muslims to commit crimes against rich Hindus in Lahore.⁴² At another occasion when there was no raining, the Muslims of Lahore walled city pronounced the *Azan* at night in the hope that the calamity, which threatens the country, may be averted. The Hindus of that Mohalla also blow horns. This was done for the sake of the rain, but Muslims blamed that the object of the shell blowing was to drown the sound of the *Azan* and prevent its reaching the ears of the Hindus.⁴³ Hindus in all quarters were complainant that the police constables were used to have not only not-sufficiently exerted themselves for maintaining order, but many of them had been guilty of actually conniving at assaults. According to one newspaper of that time Rahbar-e-Hind, "The general belief in the Hindu populace of Lahore was that even

the so-called Muslim nationalists are 'Muslim first and Indian afterward. In addition, many of the Muslim constables are Muslim first and constables after. "Muslim press was also making hard comment on their rival papers on such communal issues. Such as according to one paper, 'a public meeting was held at Lahore last week with a view to condemning the existing Police arrangements and to express dissatisfaction at the increase of thefts. Hindus of good family like the Muslims Inspector, and there is no foundation for the allegation on the Muslim Kotwal posted in Lahore.⁴⁴ States that the Hindus of Lahore are determined to bring the new Kotwall into discredit.⁴⁵

That situation furtherer deteriorated due to above mentioned and discussed genesis. Arya Samajists were hell bent against the Muslims. They were not even sparing the sensitive religious issue of the Muslims to hit upon. Lala Lekh Ram, the famous Arya Samajist Preacher, had produced a range of article, pamphlets, books that extended harsh critique on the sensitive religious issue of Muslims.⁴⁶ His role had played amplifier while exacerbated the communal antagonisms in Lahore. In the year 1897, he was killed in mysterious circumstances. The assassination of Pandit Lekh Ram was the final, by the end of nineteenth century, significant and detrimental incident in Lahore, which sealed the course of communalism in Lahore.⁴⁷ Communal tension in Punjab reached a point not to be exceeded again until the emergence of partition in 1947.⁴⁸ Though, there were certain unconfirmed stories linked with his murder but on the whole that murder was considered as the major breach-line which had clearly demarcated Hindu and Muslim public-arena of Lahore.⁴⁹ The relation between the Hindus and Muslims at Lahore had become greatly strained due to the murder of Pandit Lekh Ram, Hindu money lender stated to bring their Muslims debtors into disgrace and to compel them to discharge their debt at once.⁵⁰

Conclusion

This paper has attempted to present the case that the communitarians' sense of awakening in the city of Lahore, which were resulted as responsive efforts by the communities, had transformed into communal bigotry. Communitarian awareness had soon found itself passing through the religious bigotry, thus entered into the form of communal antagonism quite easily in less than two decades. Thus, we see Lahore by the end of the nineteenth century engulfed into the severe level of communal antagonism because different communities, Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims, communal positions in which all the rival communities were taking part according to their respective capacity. The political needs of the Hindu middle class, which was gaining much financial and commercial value in the market of Lahore, had much backup for the emergence and working of *Arya Samajist* with their full utilization of the Hindu pace in Lahore. The gains on the side of Sikhs were only in terms of their identical efforts. They could not get much strength in terms of communalization in respect of their position in the city which was very weak. The Muslims of Lahore were scattered throughout the city, and by the end of the nineteenth century they had developed some *Anjumans*, initiated and controlled by the aristocratic houses of Lahore which had the least consideration for the lower-class Muslim. That situational difference had forced the lower class Muslims to remain in the format of crowd. Thus, we see the rise of burgeoning communalism, which was started as the communitarian identity. The advent of

print culture in Lahore was capitalized for communitarian purpose. In addition to that, much of such newspapers from all three sides had played their role in order to further aggrandize the communal antagonisms. The late nineteenth-century in Lahore had seen the rise of communalism and belligerent fragile condition of cosmopolitan atmosphere in its wake. That was the condition when all the educated parts of the city had played their role to further the communal cleavage. Non-communal parties like Lahore Indian Association and Indian National Congress could not gain much prominence in the city of Lahore due to their own indifferent outlook. In short, the communities in Lahore were seeking their own bodies to germinate on religious identity that urge had left not much space for the cosmopolitan culture to thrive in the public arena in Lahore. This communitarian approach eventually was transformed into the Two Nation Theory, which not only resulted into the partition of India in 1947 but also the division of the Punjab on communal basis.

Notes & References

¹ Rishi Singh had propounded that thesis in his book that how came that phenomenal transformation occurred in the city of Lahore during Sikh Rule. He stated that during that rule, Muslims elite classes started to transformed into poorer level. On the other hand, non-Muslim classes had gained hegemonic position by the coming of end of Sikh rule. That position remained up to the very end of colonial rule. See his book, Rishi Singh, *State Formation and the Establishment of Non-Muslim Hegemony: Post-Mughal 19th Century Punjab (1780-1839)* (Delhi: Sage, 2015).

² Ian Kerr, *The Punjab Province and the Lahore District: 1849-1872: A Case Study of British Colonial Rule and Social Change in India* (PhD diss. University of Minnesota 1975), 16.

³ *Ibid*, 27.

⁴ In the start, the old school was in favor of retaining the old patterns of rule in Punjab, but with the passage of Punjab laws act 1872, the Punjab school had successfully perpetuated its version of colonialism in Lahore and Punjab as well. It was also the complete integration of Lahore with the rest of India. Kerr, *Lahore*, 42-44.

⁵ Increase of income in Lahore district. - there had been a satisfactorily increase of income, which was attributed partly to the improved management and partly to an increased consumption consequent on the assemblage of native chiefs and gentlemen in January last on the occasion of the visit of royal highness the prince of Wales to Lahore. R.K. Kapur, M.A., *A history of the excise system in the Punjab (1846-1884)* (Delhi: Punjab Govt Record Office Publications, n.d.), 58.

⁶ The kingdom of Lahore under Ranjeet Singh (1780-1839) was the most powerful state known to the Punjab in its entire history. Its location on one of the most flourishing trade routes of the sub-continent facilitated new economic practices that gained momentum under British rule after 1849. The increasing commercialization of and the importance of trade laid the foundations for the emergence of specific social groups in the Sikh rule - very particularly Hindus Baniyas. Hindu Baniyas had strong excellence in commercial entrepreneurship and corporate ventures. They had excellence in all those affairs in the Sikh Shahi rule in Lahore.

⁷ *1881 census*, chapter iv, para. 114

⁸ Kerr, "*Lahore*", 74.

⁹ *Ibid*, 349.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, 352.

¹¹ *Ibid*, 55

¹² *Ibid*, 58

¹³ *Ibid*, 46.

¹⁴ Bhandari, 86.

¹⁵ Gurnek Singh, "*Social and Religious Reforms in the Punjab*" (PhD diss. Patiala University, 1979), 58.

¹⁶ In 1864, certain Lahore based elite class Hindus Lala Behari Lai Pandit Bhanu Datta, Bassant Ram, Novin Chandra Rai and S.P. Bhatta charjee had founded a reform organization named the Lahore Sat Sabha (Society of Truth). Bhandari, 166.

¹⁷ Lahore chapter of Brahma Samaj was established in 1866 and in 1872, they had erected their first temple in the center of Anarkali. Gurnek Singh 59

¹⁸ Lahore gazetteer 192

¹⁹ Gurnek Singh, “*Social and Religious Reforms in the Punjab*”(PhD diss.Patiala University,1979),63.

²⁰ Lala Lajpat Rai, *Arya Samaj*,(London: Longman Green and Co.,1915), 240-41.

²¹ The Punjab Census Report,p.180(1891)

²² Shiv kumar Gupta, *Arya Samaj and the Raj. (1875-1920)*(Delhi:Gitanjali Publishing House, 1991),14.

²³When Sir Syed Ahmad Khan visited Lahore and went to DAV college he said that his college is better than this DAV college but the spirit of organization exhibited by Hans Raj, principle of DAV was not with him in his Aligarh college.Shiv,33.

²⁴ There were some factors, which hindered the progress of the samaj. The general approach and the total work gave the impression that it was inspired by alien ideologies. The orthodox Hindus looked at it with disfavor. However Samaj by winning the sympathies of many educated people generated a strong force in the religious and social life of the Punjab. It condemned the caste-system. Gurnek Singh, “*Social and Religious Reforms in the Punjab*”(PhD diss.Patiala University,1979),66.

²⁵ The Bharat Sudhar,Lahore, 15 November 1890,

²⁶ Shive,91.

²⁷Shiv Kumar Gupta, *Arya Samaj and the Raj. (1875-1920)*(Delhi:Gita Anjali Publishing House, 1991),16.

²⁸ The original founder of the Sikh religion designed it an entirely new and proselytizing creed, which might absorb both Hindus and Muhammadans. Circumstances soon placed the Sikhs in violent antagonism to the Muhammadans, and they naturally more and more drew towards Hinduism. Gradually the boundary line between Hindu and Sikhs became ill defined. In fact Sikhs are held together not by religion but by political bond....Lahore political union is composed not of Sikh alone but of people of all creeds. An economist, *An officer of political experience in the Punjab The annexation of the Punjab* (Lahore: 1897),9.

²⁹ Harwinder Kaur, “*History in Popular Movements: British Punjab, 1849-1947.*” (PhD.diss.,Punjab University, Patiala,2012),22.

³⁰ Kaur, “*History in Popular Movements*,22.

³¹ Bhandari,19.

³² Ibid,220.

³³ Gursharan Singh,“*The Muslim Politics In Punjab(1919-1937)*”(PhDdiss.,The Punjab University,Patiala,1980),101.

³⁴ Imtiaz Husain Sabzwari, *Beeswein Sadi Mein Lahore ka almia*(Lahore:Sunflower Publications,2008),60.

³⁵ Gurnek Singh, “*Social and Religious Reforms in the Punjab*”(PhD diss. Patiala University,1979),131.

³⁶ The Aftab-i-Alamtab, Lahore, 23 October 1888,

³⁷ The Akhbar-e-Am (Lahore), dated 12th June 1894

³⁸ Bhandari, 98.

³⁹ Ibid, 169.

⁴⁰ Ibid,294

⁴¹ The Punjab Samachar, Lahore, 8 May 1897,Selections,P.204.

⁴² The Ghamkhar-i-Hind, Lahore, 27 July 1895, Selections,PNNR,,p,43

⁴³ The Rahbar-i-Bind,Lahore, 27 July 1896,Selections,p.464.

⁴⁴ The Mulla Dopiazza, Lahore, 27 July 1895,p,439.

⁴⁵ The Ghamkhar-i-Hind, Lahore, 27 July 1895, Selections,PNNR,,p,437.

⁴⁶ Lekh Ram born in the village of Sayyidpur, in Jehlum district in a Sarsut Brahmin family in 1858 and studied Urdu, Persian and Punjabi; joined Police service in 1875; learned Bhagwat-Gita and became devotee of Lord Krishna. Came under Arya Samaj influence in 1880; accepted Dayananda his Guru, left Police service in 1884; came to Lahore and became the Editor of the Arya Gazettee, Came in the conflict with the Muslims by writing a book Takzib-i-Barahin and written many pamphlets and articles. He was murdered in 1897.Gursharan Singh,“*The Muslim Politics In Punjab(1919-1937)*”(PhDdiss.,The Punjabi University,Patiala,1980),122.

⁴⁷ The late Pandit Lekh Ram was in the habit of criticizing Islam and abusing its founder in the foulest language. Another version of the story states that the assassination of Lekh Ram was due to certain private circumstances of a nature that generally result in the murder of young men. Certain Arya Samajist were offended at an improper act of a private character that got Pandit killed, there was not a single stain of blood on the clothes of the deceased, from which it is apparent that he must have been naked at the time. The Pandit lived several hours after he was stabbed, but his dying declaration was not recorded. The Chudhawin Sadi, Rawalpindi,15thMarch 1897, Selection,PNNR,p,201.

⁴⁸Zarina Salamat, *The Punjab in the 1920's: A case study of Muslims* (Karachi: Royal Book Company Karachi,1997),22.

⁴⁹The late Pandit Lekh Ram was in the habit of criticising Islam and abusing its founder in the foulest language. Another version of the story states that the assassination of Lekh Ram was due to certain private circumstances of a nature that generally result in the murder of young men. Certain Arya samajist were offended at an improper act of a private character that got Pandit killed, there was not a single stain of blood on the clothes of the deceased, from which it is apparent that he must have been naked at the time. The Pandit lived several hours after he was stabbed, but his dying declaration was not recorded.TheChudhawinSadi, Rawalpindi,15thMarch 1897,Selection,PNNR,p,201.

⁵⁰ The Paisa Akhbar, Lahore, 17 March 1897,Selection,PNNR,177.