

THE MAKING OF THE HINDU-MUSLIM COMMUNAL INTERFACE IN JAMMU REGION
(1925-1947)

A Dissertation submitted to the University of Hyderabad in partial fulfillment of the degree of

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

In

HISTORY

by

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled “The Making of the Hindu-Muslim Communal Interface in Jammu Region (1925-1947)” submitted by Mimansa Sharma bearing Reg. No. 20SHHL04 in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Master of Philosophy in HISTORY is a bonafide work carried out by her under my supervision and guidance.

The thesis has not been submitted previously in part or in full to this or any other University or Institution for the award of any degree or diploma.

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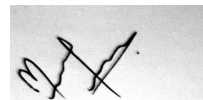
DECLARATION

I MIMANSA SHARMA hereby declare that this Dissertation entitled “**The Making of the Hindu-Muslim Communal Interface (1925-1947)**” submitted by me under the guidance and supervision of Dr. V.J. VARGHESE is a bonafide research work. I also declare that it has not been submitted previously part or in full to this University or any other University or Institution for the award of any degree or diploma.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincere gratitude to my supervisor Dr. V.J. Varghese, Department of History, University of Hyderabad without whose guidance and support this research would not have been possible. His insights and numerous discussions I had with him enriched my research journey. His unrelenting passion and dedication towards research provided me with the motivation to undertake the work and the kind words of encouragement and direction he provided contributed immensely in improving my skill set.

A note of thank you to the State Archives, Jammu and its staff who were co-operative during my time there. The staff was very helpful in providing me access to the repository.

I also want to thank my parents without whose support I would not have been able to begin the task of research in the first place. My mother taught me to be fearless and my father to be consistent, both the qualities which gave me strength to face the difficulties and persevere. My grandparents also led by example and have provided me with love and motivation to undertake difficult decisions independently.

Last, I want to extend my gratitude to my friends and colleagues. The Department worked as a support system throughout the research period, helping me through the rough patches and get back on my feet. They also provided me with a space where we could have stimulating discussion amongst ourselves. The friends provided a space for me to confide in and re-energise myself whenever I felt a lack of it. This support was crucial in remaining consistent during the work.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF MAPS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	8
1.1 Emergence of the Princely State of Jammu and Kashmir	9
1.2 Geographical Contours and Administrative Units	10
1.3 The Peculiarities of Demography	15
1.4 Princely States' Changing Relationship with British India	18
1.5 Popular Resistance and Dissent in the State	20
1.6 Literature Review	21
1.7 Sources and Methodology	28
1.8 Goal of the Study	31
1.9 Chapterisation	31
 CHAPTER 2: THE STATE AND THE PEOPLE: THE BACKGROUND	 33
2.1 The Politics and the Administration of the State: the Princely State and the British	33
2.2 The Socio- Economic Situation	37
2.3 Brewing of the chaos and expression of grievances	41
2.4 Events of Conflict that Added to the Flame (1931)	47
2.5 Events post-1931	51
2.6 State Response	59
2.7 Conclusion	66
 CHAPTER 3: MAKING OF THE PUBLIC DISCOURSE	 68
3.1 The Public Sphere	68
3.2 Organisations and Individuals	74
3.3 Expressions of Mobilisation and Propaganda	81
3.4 Outside Jammu and Kashmir: British India	87
3.5 Outside Jammu and Kashmir: Princely States and British India	92

3.6 Conclusion	97
CHAPTER 4: COMPETING ANXIETIES AND IDENTITIES	98
4.1 Language and Script	98
4.2 Conversion, Hindu Law of Inheritance and Cow Killing	104
4.3 Myth and Rumours	109
4.4 Towards the End: 1946-47	114
4.5 Conclusion	117
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION	118
BIBLIOGRAPHY	120

LIST OF MAPS

- | | |
|---|----|
| 1. Map showing princely state of Jammu and Kashmir (1861) | 14 |
| 2. Political Boundaries of Jammu and Kashmir (1946) | 15 |

Chapter 1

Introduction

This study is an attempt to look at the making of communal consciousness in the region of Jammu between 1925-1947. The region was part of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir¹ under the Dogra rulers, who established an independent state after the Treaty of Amritsar of 1846, during the period. The particular focus will be the years that ran parallel to Maharaja Hari Singh's reign i.e. 1925-1947, to understand the construction of communal consciousness and its manifold ways of expressions during these years. The study seeks to make sense of these developments in the specific context of the state and in the larger contexts and discourse of other princely states and that of the British India.

It is imperative to underline here that the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir, widely known as the Kashmir State in the subcontinent² often conflates Kashmir Valley with the entire state and as a result, the regional distinctions and peculiarities have received scant attention. It is only when the lens is shifted to look into the contours of polity, demography and geography that these internal variations become apparent and pave the path for contextualising the internal dynamics of the state. The internal political dynamism in the state led by non-state actors³ was effected by the religion and the ethnic group that Maharaja and his subjects belonged to i.e. he was a Dogra Hindu. It was also influenced by the ethnic groups and linguistic differences which existed in different regions of the state (i.e. The Dogras and the Kashmiris) and thus formed different communities with

¹ The princely state of Jammu and Kashmir included the regions of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. This study will specifically look into Jammu region. It will also have references to Kashmir as there are many linkages and overlapping between the two. Ladakh region though vital to the state will not form part of the scope of the study.

² Christopher Snedden, *Understanding Kashmir and Kashmiris* (London: C. Hurst & Co. Publishers Ltd., 2015), 1-3.

³ This includes the people, leaders and organisations which did not form part of the Government.

competing interests. The geographical factor, i.e. the valleys of Kashmir, the hilly areas and the plains of Jammu affected how the communities interacted with each other. Further, the political boundaries that were shared with neighbouring states also impacted the trade routes, transportation systems, accessibility and exchange of information. It is by taking these factors into account that the communal narratives which developed in Jammu region particularly will be explored.

1.1 Emergence of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir

The origin of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir under the Dogra rulers is a story interspersed with the British colonial state and its attempts of expansion and control. Dogras were the ethnic stock from Indo-Aryan descent centered in Jammu region who spoke Dogri.⁴ Since the rulers belonged to this community, the dynasty came to be called as Dogra. Before 1846, Jammu and Kashmir formed part of the Sikh Empire under Ranjit Singh; under this regime Gulab Singh⁵ was given the area as a hereditary feudatory with the title of Raja of Jammu.⁶ K.M. Pannikar's biography of Gulab Singh mentioned him to be the "most influential personage in the Sikh Empire and [that he] was its chief feudatory."⁷ After the Anglo-Sikh War, he was given the Kashmir valley by the British after a deed of sale of Rs. 75,00,000 under the Treaty of Amritsar which was signed on 16 March 1846 because the Governor General Hardinge did not want to keep an exposed area

⁴ Jyoti Bhusan Das Gupta. *Jammu and Kashmir* (The Hague: Martinus Nuhoff, 1968), 13-14.

⁵ Victor Jacquemont when visiting Lahore in 1831 commented that Gulab Singh was Ranjit Singh's "favourite and successor". Victor Jacquemont, *Letters from India 1829-1832*, trans. By Catherine Alison Philips (London: Macmillan, 1936), xxviii, 183. Quoted in Christopher Snedden, *Understanding Kashmir and Kashmiris*. (London: C.Hurst & Co. Publishers Ltd, 2015), 61.

⁶ The title of Maharaja was assumed by the Dogra rulers once they acquired an independent status in 1846 and continued till the last ruler, Maharaja Hari Singh. References to Maharaja Hari Singh in many contemporary sources use His Highness Maharaja Hari Singh as the *de facto* title.

⁷ K.M. Panikkar, *Gulab Singh* (London: Martin Hopkinson, 1930), 1.

Other biographies of Gulab Singh like Diwan Kirpal Singh, *Gulabnama*, Trans. Sukhdev Singh Charak (New Delhi: Light & Life Publishers, 1977)) and Satinder Singh Bawa, *The Jammu Fox: A Biography of Maharaja Gulab Singh of Kashmir, 1792-1857* (Netherlands: Southern Illinois University Press, 1974) talk about his rise from the ranks of a feudatory under Ranjit Singh to a Maharaja of the State of Jammu and Kashmir.

under the direct British rule.⁸ This was guided by Russophobia⁹ that perpetrated the British anxieties and the need for a buffer state.¹⁰ *Gulabnama*, the official biography of Maharaja Gulab Singh, however traced the rule through a solar-lineage (*suryavanshi*) and gave it a *divine kingship*,¹¹ thus providing longer and mythological legitimising claims to it.

1.2 Geographical Contours and Administrative Units:

The Indian Surveyor-General's map of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) was completed in 1861, titled "Jamoo, Kashmir and Adjacent Districts"; while it was limited in its scope, descriptions and accuracy because of the difficult terrain of Himalayas and mountain passes, it gave a detailed picture of the state.

The only road that connected Srinagar to the outside world followed the course of the Jhelum into the Kashmir valley. The connection between Jammu and Srinagar cities was through two routes i.e. "the only road within the state of Jammu and Kashmir, for example, which linked Jammu (the winter capital of the State) with Srinagar (the summer capital) involved the crossing of the Pir

⁸ Alistair Lamb, *Kashmir: A Disputed Legacy 1846-1991* (Hertfordshire: Roxford Books, 1991), 8.

⁹ Peter Hopkirk, *The Great Game: The Struggle for Empire in Central Asia* (New York: Kodansha America, Inc., 1992) and Edward Ingram, "Great Britain's Great Game: An Introduction", *The International History Review* 2, no. 2 (1980): 160- 171, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40105749>. As the British expanded and consolidated their power in the sub-continent in 19th Century, there also emerged a threat to the British empire from Russia which under the Tsars was attempting to expand its territorial influence in Central Asia. With Russia's expansion and control increasing, British were worried about their Empire in India getting under the control of Russia, leading to 'Russophobia'. This perceived threat prompted the British to engage in what came to be called "great game" (the term was popularised by Rudyard Kipling in his novel *Kim*) i.e. it effected its policy towards the North-west of the subcontinent. According to this, it was deemed necessary that buffer states be created in the North-west to protect the empire in India and this is what guided the Anglo-Afghan and Anglo-Punjab wars and the treaties that were henceforth signed.

¹⁰ "Under Ranjit Singh, with whom the British had a good relationship, Punjab provided one such buffer. Adjacent to Punjab on the west, Afghanistan possibly provided a second." In Snedden, *Understanding Kashmir and Kashmiris*, 37.

¹¹ Diwan Kirpa Ram, *Gulabnama*, p. 3-12.

Panjal range by means of the Banihal Pass, over 9,000 feet high and snowbound in winter.”¹² Thus, the socio-cultural homogeneity was difficult to attain since the contact was difficult which led to many differences between the two regions. However, “the easiest route between Jammu and Srinagar lay through the West (Pakistani) Punjab by way of Sialkot and Rawalpindi.”¹³ The contact through West (Pakistani) Punjab was more viable (since it did not involve traversing difficult terrain of Pir Panjal range). Also, the route through railway that connected the state to the outside world was between Sialkot (Punjab) and Jammu city, thus making contact for Jammu region to Punjab easier than to Srinagar.

The region of Jammu was in close proximity to Punjab and north western parts of the subcontinent and thus formed a nexus with each other through the channels of trade, conquest, familial relationships and religion.¹⁴ The city of Jammu itself laid between the cities of Lahore and Srinagar on roughly an equidistance. There were no rigid political or economic divisions or man-made barriers between Punjab and Jammu. In fact, as a result, the region of Jammu inherited a distinct, peculiar socio-economic formation, different than Kashmir region. The cultural divide between Jammu and Kashmir regions also thus remained different from each other. As a result, Jammu region found more affinity with the neighbouring Punjab and that was to have impact on the politics that played out in the region..This was also jettisoned by isolations and connections that the tough terrain and physiology of the territory produced.

After the political crisis that engulfed the state in 1947, the state’s territorial characteristic was affected. The area which now forms part of Pakistan administered Kashmir was largely carved out of the erstwhile Jammu region of the princely state,¹⁵ the only exceptions being the districts of

¹² Lamb, *Kashmir*, 11.

¹³ Lamb, *Kashmir*, 11.

¹⁴ Snedden, *Understanding Kashmir and Kashmiris*, 21.

¹⁵ Luv Puri, *Across the LoC: Inside India-Administered Jammu and Kashmir* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), 11.

Muzaffarabad and Neelum which formed part of the Kashmir region. According to the 1941 Census, in the erstwhile princely state, the Jammu province consisted of 5 districts, i.e. Jammu, Kathua, Udhampur, Reasi and Mirpur, while the two jagirs, namely, Poonch and Chenani were autonomous under the sovereignty of the Maharaja.¹⁶ The Kashmir province included Baramulla, Anantnag and Muzaffarabad districts and the Frontier province included Ladakh, Gilgit Agency, Astore, Gilgit (Leased).¹⁷

The *jagir* of Poonch which was located north of Jammu city was granted by the British to Dhyani Singh, brother of Gulab Singh after the Treaty of Amritsar with tremendous autonomy, which allowing it to remain as a territory in its own right with minimal influence of Punjab or Jammu-Kashmir Government. But this changed in 1935-36 when it came under Maharaja Hari Singh's control but the population of the area which was predominantly Muslim could never completely reconcile themselves with the change in command.¹⁸ During the raids that followed Indian independence in 1947, the population of this area played a central part in the riots.¹⁹

The geography and physiology of the state and the different regions influenced how they interacted with the outside world. This was a significant perimeter in how identities were formed and, interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships developed. Punjab being geographically close influenced the socio-political formation in Jammu region. Also, it was the administrative units from Jammu region which witnessed acute violence throughout Maharaja Hari Singh's reign (despite

¹⁶ Capt. R. G. Wregford, *Census of India 1941*, Volume XXII (Jammu: The Ranbir Govt. Press, 1943).

¹⁷ Wregford, *Census of India 1941*.

¹⁸ Lamb, *Kashmir*, 14.

¹⁹ Navnita Chadha Behera, *Demystifying Kashmir* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institute Press, 2006), 26.

Kashmir being more politically active in 1920s) and also later, in the backdrop of the British leaving the subcontinent witnessed *unofficial bifurcation*²⁰ in 1947.

²⁰ In 1947 when the British left, the subcontinent was divided into nation-states of India and Pakistan. The Princely States were given the choice of acceding to either India or Pakistan or remaining independent. In the case of Jammu and Kashmir, Maharaja Hari Singh decided to stay independent. The State soon saw major communal clashes and tribal raids leading to occupation of several parts of the State and mass migrations. It is at this juncture that Maharaja signed the Instrument of Accession with India to get aid from the Indian state. But by then, the areas which had come to be occupied by the tribal raiders could not be regained by the forces and the State remains bifurcated and contested till date.



Map 2. Political Boundaries of Jammu and Kashmir (1946)²²

1.3 The Peculiarities of Demography

According to the 1941 census,²³ the population of the Jammu region stood at 19,81,433 and 17,28,705 for the Kashmir region. The religious classification puts the percentage of Muslims at 93.45 percent in the Kashmir Valley, 61.35 percent in the Jammu region and 86.7 percent in the Frontier region (the population in Ladakh and Baltistan combined in 1941 came to around 200,000).²⁴

²² James M. Darley, *Political Subdivisions of India*, National Geographic Series 1:6 000 000 (National Geographic Society for the National Geographic Magazine, 1946).
<http://pahar.in/pahar/1946-political-subdivisions-of-india-by-national-geographic-jpg/>.

²³ Wregford, *Census of India 1941*.

²⁴ Puri, *Across the LoC*, 10.

Gulab Singh, the founder of the Dogra rule was a Hindu and ethnically²⁵ belonged to a group called Dogra which was also the dominant ethnic group in the Jammu region. Both the Hindu and Muslim population in the region predominantly identified themselves with the Dogras.²⁶

The language cultures (Dogri, Mirpuri, Poonchi etc) that came to dominate the Jammu region were influenced by Punjabi²⁷ language. In the case of Kashmir and Ladakh, Grierson²⁸ gave the view that they belonged to the Dardic system of language and not Indo-Aryan. However, recent studies have contested this claim and stated that Dardic languages are in essence not different from the Indo-Aryan group and are basically “aberrant IA (Indo-Aryan) hill languages.”²⁹ Thus the two regions differed drastically from each other linguistically and led to a relative isolation of the regions from each other due to issues of communication exchange. On the other hand, the closeness with Punjabi language in the case of Jammu region allowed it share more affinity with Punjab than Kashmir.

Prem Nath Bazaz (a contemporary Kashmiri Pandit leader) has noted that Rajputs were among the most privileged lot of Hindus under the Dogras as Dogra rulers were also Rajputs and the Rajputs were given more administrative, political and martial powers.³⁰ Alongside the Dogras, the educated

²⁵ The term “ethnically” to describe the Dogras has been borrowed from Christopher Snedden and Jyoti Bhusan Das Gupta. See Snedden, *Understanding Kashmir and Kashmiris* and Gupta. *Jammu and Kashmir*.

²⁶ Puri, *Across the LoC*, 12.

²⁷ Raymond Gordon Jr., ed., *Ethnologue: Languages of the World, 15th edition* (Dallas, Texas: SIL, 2005). Source: <http://www.ethnologue.com/> . Languages like Dogri, Pothwari Punjabi used in Jammu region are derived from Punjabi.

²⁸ G.R. Grierson, *Linguistic Survey of India, Volume IX, Part 1* (Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing, 1916), <https://dsal.uchicago.edu/books/lsi/lsi.php?volume=9-1&pages=843#page/4/mode/1up>

²⁹ Brad B. Kachru, “The Dying Linguistic Heritage of the Kashmiris: Kashmiri Literary Culture and Language,” in *The Valley of Kashmir: The Making and Unmaking of a Composite Culture*, ed. Aparna Rao (Delhi: Manohar, 2008), 314. Quoted in Kaul, Shonaleeka, *The Making of Early Kashmir: Landscape and Identity in the Rajatarangini* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2018).

³⁰ Prem Nath Bazaz, *Inside Kashmir* (New Delhi: Kashmir Pub. Co., 1941), 114.

upper-class Brahmins and '*sahukars*' also enjoyed favours from the State with Brahmins being considered the respected caste and *sahukars* being key to trade and credit in the state.³¹

Within the Dogras, however, there was also a hierarchy in play which was exploitative in nature. Mohita Bhatia, for example, states that there existed an exploitative relationship between the Dogra ruling classes and Dogra peasantry, lower castes and working classes in Jammu region, irrespective of their religion.³² In the Mirpur district, located north-west in the Jammu region (adjacent to Jammu district), the peasant class was mostly formed by the Muslim population who despite being a numerical majority had an unbalanced relationship with the Hindu moneylenders, *zamindars* etc., thus here the socio-economic hierarchy merged with religion.

Further, Rekha Chowdhary has highlighted how within the Muslims of Jammu region, there also existed a landed class of Muslim elites who had enjoyed significant clout with the Dogra rulers. Many also served in the Dogra administration, army, police and constable services and hence when compared with the Muslims of Kashmir had a better economic position.³³ At the same time, the Mirpuri Muslims from Jammu and Kashmir who could not get themselves enlisted in the J&K State Forces opted for Indian Army instead as 'Punjabi Muslamans' (Muslims) mostly in Punjab regiment.³⁴ Thus, the position of Muslims was also not uniform throughout the Jammu region.

When analysing the region for its 'communal' identities and characterisation, it thus becomes necessary to take these competing identities, internal divides and variegated priorities in mind. Some contexts at times allowed for the fluidity of the communal identities where they could co-exist at the same time whereas on others, they were in competition with each other.

³¹ Bazaz, *Inside Kashmir*, 114.

³² Mohita Bhatia, "Secularisation and Desecularisation in Jammu: Interrogating Canonical Approaches," in *Religion and Politics in Jammu and Kashmir*, ed. Reeta Chowdhary Tremblay and Mohita Bhatia (New Delhi: Routledge India, 2020), 75.

³³ Rekha Chowdhary, *Jammu and Kashmir: Politics of Identity and Separatism* (New Delhi: Routledge, 2016), 176.

³⁴ Snedden, *Understanding Kashmir and Kashmiris*, 89.

The differences were not only limited to communal identities, there also existed differences based on region. Not all Hindus were united at all times, neither were all Muslims. Kashmiri Muslims had a problem with Kashmiri Pandits, but at the same time had different goals than Jammu Muslims and vice-versa. Similarly, the Dogra Hindus and Muslims from Jammu region had communal issues with each other, but at the same time also had separate identity and goals from their Kashmir counterparts. Then, there also existed dissatisfaction from the Punjabis who had taken up majority of the jobs in the state administration, owing to the making of Urdu as the official language. Navanita Behera has in the same vein written that “Kashmiri Muslims complained that Kashmiri Pandits, the original inhabitants of Kashmir Valley, filled the ranks of the state administration, leaving the predominantly Muslim peasantry and the artisanal class at the lowest rung of the society. Kashmiri Pandits, in turn, grumbled that Dogra Rajputs formed the bulk of the army and that Punjabis had cornered up the top posts in the state bureaucracy.”³⁵

Thus, the state was a Muslim majority state in all regions. However, the mere majority did not lead to a homogeneous identity for them or for the Hindus of the state. There existed hierarchies based on class and caste, and differences based on region. This demographic specificity allowed for different interests and identities to form. Also, linguistic affinity to Punjab than Kashmir brought cultural proximity of Jammu region with Punjab.

1.4 The Princely States’ Changing Relationship with British India

On 8th February 1921, Chamber of Princes consisting of 108 rulers was brought into being by a Royal Proclamation in which the Viceroy was supposed to be the President and a Chancellor and a Vice-Chancellor were to be elected every year by the members of the Chamber.³⁶ In 1927, the Viceroy Lord Irwin on popular request by the princely states set up an enquiry to look into the relationship of the states with the sovereign powers of the British. A committee of 3 members with

³⁵ Behera, *Demystifying Kashmir*, 14-15.

³⁶ Gupta, *Jammu and Kashmir*, 8.

Sir Harcourt Butler as the Chairman, Professor W.S. Holdsworth and the Hon'ble S.C. Peel as members was appointed and a report was submitted on 14th February 1929. Titled as the Indian States Committee Report (1929), it asserted that the paramount supremacy of the British Government, developed gradually as a combination of conquest, treaty and usage which lay certain rights and obligations, need to be regarded.³⁷

The year 1927 also witnessed the formation of All-India States Peoples' Conference (AISPC) which supported integration of popular demands of the people of different princely states. Integration of princely states into the political tempo and current of the subcontinent at large gathered momentum since then, leading to the Congress resolution in 1938, in its Haripura session, that "it stood for the same political, social, and economic freedom in the states as is in the rest of India and consider [ed] the states as integral parts of India, which cannot be separated."³⁸ These changes were to guide how after 1920s, the princely states including Jammu and Kashmir were not just functioning as isolated entities but were increasingly getting integrated with the politics that was happening at the level of sub-continent, both with British India and other Princely States. This was to have implications on how the states functioned and the subjects of the states also viewed themselves as part of the nationalistic project and inter-state identification with their co-religionists not just in the state, but beyond. At the same time, it also points towards how the external forces were also increasing their interests in the state. In this context, the communal consciousness in the state was not just an isolated phenomenon limited to the territorial boundaries of the state, but also was intertwined with the politics of the sub-continent at large.

³⁷ Indian States Committee Report, (1929), n 5, Vol-II, 715-23, in Jyoti Das Gupta, *Jammu and Kashmir*, 9.

³⁸ Quoted in Urmila Phadnis, *Towards the Integration of Indian States, 1919–1947* (New Delhi: Asia House, 1968), 135-37.

1.5 Popular Resistance and Dissent in the State

The dissatisfaction against the Dogra rule was pervasive by the time Maharaja Hari Singh acceded to throne in 1925, finding expression of dissent and protest in the public sphere which was not merely an anti-state political dissent but also was expressed in day to day lives of people leading to communal ramifications. Christopher Snedden has pointed out three instances of resistances in the state against the Dogra rulers. The first point of contention was on determining who can qualify to be a 'State Subject'³⁹. With the replacement Persian with Urdu as the language to be used for administrative purposes, the dissatisfaction among the general population increased as it led to disqualification of several workers who used to work in the administration which was mostly a domain of the literate Hindus, majority of which were the Kashmiri Pandits. To make for the scanty availability of the population which was well- versed in Urdu, the new administrative changes made way for entry of Punjabis into the state as Punjab had in the last half of the 19th Century already had seen shifts to Urdu literacy and thus had readily available population which could work in Jammu and Kashmir and fill the vacuum. As early as 1910, an anti-Punjabi agitation took place in the state. Owing to the issues of jobs, education and status, the issue of 'State Subject' had to be revisited by Maharaja Hari Singh in 1927, according to which 4 classifications of 'State Subject' were made.⁴⁰ According to this categorisation, the Class 1 subjects comprised of all persons who had been residents of Jammu and Kashmir since before 1885, the Class 2 subjects referred to those who came to the State between 1885 and 1911, the Class 3 subjects were those who came after 1911 and before 31st January 1927 and finally, the Class 4 subjects included companies in the State.⁴¹ With the promulgation of this change, employment and property saw significant changes in how they were exercised and perused as this gave primacy of employment and property rights only to those

³⁹ The concept of 'State Subject' was introduced during the Dogra rule to establish who were the natives of the state and thus held the right to live and own immovable property in it.

⁴⁰ Manzoor Fazil, *Kashmir Government and Politics* (Srinagar: Gulshan Publishers, 1982), 131-3.

⁴¹ Fazil, *Kashmir Governemnt and Politics*, 131-3.

who were the 'State Subjects' of the state. The issues that erupted from this were to continue *long duree* and were a major contributing factor in the discontent that plagued the socio-political situation of the state.

After this, the other two major disruptions that bolted the state into major resistance and pushed for a change came with the crisis that developed in 1931 and the 1946 'Quit Kashmir Agitation' which shall be discussed in detail in the subsequent chapters. Both the incidents had significant repercussions on the administration of the state and impacted the popular discourse and mobilizations in the state as the former led to formation of the *Praja Sabha* (Legislative Assembly), where differences and grievances were aired, often bolstering the anti-state rhetoric.

1.6 Literature Review:

The study of various aspects of communalism and related themes has formed an integral part of the historiography of modern India, partly because of its continuing relevance in the contemporary geo-politics of South Asia. Bipan Chandra⁴² introduced 'Communalism' as a conceptual framework in 1984. In his theorisation, communalism developed in India through three stages starting in the last quarter of the 19th century with the development of the idea of communities as distinct from each other with distinct religious as well as political, social, economic and cultural interests. The second stage from the beginning of the twentieth century led to the *othering* of these interests but still remained slightly liberal in saying that despite these distinctions, there still existed some mutual goals of political freedom and economic development. The final stage he argues led to the realisation that the secular interests of the different religious groups were different and antagonistic to each other.⁴³

⁴² Bipan Chandra, "Fundamentalism and Communalism", in *The Writings of Bipan Chandra: The Making of Modern India: From Marx to Gandhi*. (Hyderabad: Orient BlackSwan, 2012), 476-477. The conception first emerged in Bipan Chandra, *Communalism in Modern India* (Delhi: Har-Anand Publications Pvt Ltd, 1984).

⁴³ Chandra, *Communalism in Modern India*.

Many scholars have looked into Communalism as a function of Partition *vis-a-vis* the elite politics with a focus on disjointing or overlapping categories of nationalism and communalism. David Page has focussed on the Morley-Minto reforms on people's consciousness and communal solidarity formation.⁴⁴ Ayesha Jalal⁴⁵ in her work has broken away from the earlier scholarship by not merely looking at the biographical figure of Jinnah, who was the most discussed historical figure in the history of Indian communalism. She has looked at the Pakistan demand and the role of Congress through a new lense whereby she vies that M.A. Jinnah's politics did not actually intended to create a separate Muslim homeland of Pakistan but it was an argument that he used as a "bargain" to get more rights for Muslims. While dealing with similar subject, Mushirul Hasan has diverged away from the personality of Jinnah and instead sought to look into the years even before 1930s to look at the consciousness and mobilisation which were developed over time and the sudden rise of Muslim League in the early twentieth century. He had also further sought to look into the incompetence of the Congress produced in challenging the Muslim League.⁴⁶ David Gilmartin⁴⁷ and Ian Talbot⁴⁸ sought to look into the political interactions and ramifications in the making of Pakistan, where while the former focused on the inter linkages and the interaction that the Islamic ideology and the British colonial state in producing Muslim aspirations and political action in Punjab, the latter looks at the nexus between Muslim League, the provincial political networks and socio-economic roots in North West and North East India. Ian Talbot in his other work gives a more detailed and expansive

⁴⁴ David Page, *Prelude to Partition: Indian Muslims and the Imperial System of Control, 1920–1932* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1982).

⁴⁵ Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesperson: Jinnah, the Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

⁴⁶ Mushirul Hasan, *India's Partition: Process, Strategy and Mobilisation* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1993).

⁴⁷ David Gilmartin, *Empire and Islam: Punjab and the Making of Pakistan* (London: Bloomsbury, 1988).

⁴⁸ Ian Talbot, *Provincial Politics and the Pakistan Movement: the Growth of the Muslim League in North-West and North-East India, 1937–47* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1988).

study covering a larger time period from 1849 to 1947, looking at colonial, League's and Unionist Party's role over time in envisaging and consolidating the Pakistan demand.⁴⁹

Farzana Shaikh⁵⁰ and Sara Ansari⁵¹ have sought to look at the community and local religious tropes in the periphery of the elite politics around Islam, with latter's scholarship looking specifically into the interaction of Sufi *pirs* in Sindh with the arrival of the British in 1843 changed the social- communal interactions in the region. Joya Chatterjee⁵² and Murshid Tazeem⁵³ have brought forward a focus on the Bengal side of the political dimensions, Hindu and Muslim discourse respectively, the shifting and overlapping lines between secular and communal, and the changing self-identification and solidarities that were developing in the run upto 1947. In the recent years, Faisal Devji⁵⁴ has furnished an intellectual history where he associates the making of Pakistan to be the result of the imagination of "Muslim Zion" which is based on the idea of a homeland for the Muslims and not just as a political expression. Rather than calling out the vagueness of the idea of Pakistan, Venkat Dhulipal⁵⁵ has brought out the concretized base for it which was developed and mobilized as the "new Medina" by focusing at the case of United Provinces. He has also highlighted the debate between Paul Brass⁵⁶ and Francis Robinson⁵⁷ in the

⁴⁹ Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj, 1849-1947* (New Delhi: Manohar, 1988).

⁵⁰ Farzana Shaikh, *Community and Consensus in Islam: Muslim Representation in Colonial India, 1860-1947*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

⁵¹ Sara Ansari, *Sufi Saints and State Power: Pirs of Sind, 1843-1947* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

⁵² Joya Chatterji, *Bengal Divided: Hindu Communalism and Partition, 1932-1947* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

⁵³ Murshid Tazeem, *The Sacred and the Secular: Bengal Muslim Discourses, 1871-1977* (Calcutta: Oxford University Press, 1995).

⁵⁴ Faisal Devji, *Muslim Zion: Pakistan as a Political Idea* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013).

⁵⁵ Venkat Dhulipal, *Creating a New Medina: State, Power, Islam and the Quest for Pakistan in Colonial North India* (New Delhi: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

⁵⁶ Paul Brass, *Language, Religion and Politics in North India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974).

case of U.P. Muslims. Brass saw the role that elite Muslims i.e. *ashraf* played through various symbolisms and myths to talk about the rights of the north Indian muslims.⁵⁸ On the other hand, Robinson propounded that the U.P. Muslims' consciousness and identity was not working in isolation, but also from interactions with Hindu revivalist movements and the politics of British India.⁵⁹

Gyanendra Pandey⁶⁰ and Shahid Amin's⁶¹ work has done an exposition of how colonial state formed the discourse on communalism and the ramifications it had for the populace. Gyanendra Pandey, for example, through study of conflict in Benaras shows how the pre-existing conditions were through the British methods of showcasing the conflict solidified and constructed communalism, i.e. the British reporting of the events of violence were interlinked with rioting and excitement among communal groups. Shahid Amin's work by focusing on the changing narratives of *Gazi Miyan* of Baharaich showed how through different contexts changing from 12th Century to the present-day has effected the memory of Gazi Miyan. For 19th and 20th Century, he looks at colonial narratives, nationalist narratives and communal narratives to show how his identity as a Sufi saint was crystallised in antagonistic communal terms where his image was transformed from being the nephew of Mahmud of Ghazni to saint to warrior-saint.

⁵⁷ Francis Robinson, *Islam and Muslim History in South Asia* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000).

⁵⁸ Brass, *Language, Religion and Politics*.

⁵⁹ Robinson, *Islam and Muslim History*.

⁶⁰ Gyanendra Pandey, *The Construction of Communalism in Colonial North India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1990).

⁶¹ Shahid Amin, *Conquest and Community: The Afterlife of Warrior Saint Ghazi Miyan* (New Delhi: Orient BlackSwan, 2015).

Works like Sandria Freitag,⁶² Peter van der Veer,⁶³ Tanika Sarkar,⁶⁴ Charu Gupta,⁶⁵ Sumathi Ramaswamy⁶⁶ etc. in their exploration of Hindu and Muslim revivalism, and the inter linkages of the binary of communalism and nationalism have thrown up new ways to investigate contours of communalism. Sandria Freitag in her work focuses on festivals and public possessions like Ramlila, Muharram possessions to underline how the consciousness developed.⁶⁷ Peter van der Veer has used ritualistic practices associated with cow killing, veiling of women as core points in the making of communal identity and consciousness.⁶⁸ Tanika Sarkar uses literature i.e. works of Bankimchandra's writings like *Anandmath*⁶⁹ while Charu Gupta uses iconography of mother rendered through cow (*gaumata*), nationhood (*bharatmata*) and language (*matri bhasha*).⁷⁰ Charu Gupta also uses gender and its role in making of the Hindu nationalism by relying not only on the sophisticated writings by reformist and revivalist organisations but also takes into account 'vulgar'

⁶² Sandria Freitag ed., *Collective Action and Community: Public Arenas and the Emergence of Communalism in North India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989).

⁶³ Peter van der Veer, *Religious Nationalism: Hindus and Muslims in India* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1994).

⁶⁴ Tanika Sarkar, "Imagining a Hindu Nation: Hindu and Muslim in Bankimchandra's Later Writings". *Economic and Political Weekly* 29, no. 39: 2553-2561 (1994), <https://www.epw.in/journal/1994/39/special-articles/imagining-hindu-nation-hindu-and-muslim-bankimchandra-s-later>. See also, Tanika Sarkar, *Hindu Wife, Hindu Nation: Community, Religion and Cultural Nationalism* (New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2001).

⁶⁵ Charu Gupta, *Sexuality, Obscenity, Community: Women, Muslims and the Hindu Public in Colonial India* (New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2001). See also, Charu Gupta, "The icon of Mother in Late Colonial North India: 'Bharat Mata', 'Matri Bhasha' and 'Gau Mata'." *Economic and Political Weekly* 36, no. 45: 4291-9 (2001). <https://www.epw.in/journal/2001/45/special-articles/icon-mother-late-colonial-north-india.html>.

⁶⁶ Sumathi Ramaswamy, "When a Language Becomes a Mother/Goddess: An Image Essay on Tamil" in *South Asian Visual Cultural Series*, no.1 (2008), ed. Christiane Brosius. See also, Sumathi Ramaswamy, *The Goddess and the Nation: Mapping Mother India* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010).

⁶⁷ Freitag ed., *Collective Action and Community*.

⁶⁸ Veer, *Religious Nationalism*

⁶⁹ Sarkar, "Imagining a Hindu Nation".

⁷⁰ Gupta, "The icon of Mother".

literature available through magazines, advertisements, sex manuals etc.⁷¹ Sumathi Ramaswamy in taking into account the iconography of the mother as ‘nation’ in talking about Tamalittay (the goddess personifying Tamil language) also looks into the intersection of gender, nation and religion.⁷² These works thus open up new ways of looking at cultural practices to talk about the development of communal consciousness and identity.

Most of the scholarship that has emerged on the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir looks into Kashmir as the focal point especially since the subsequent insurgency that has taken place in Kashmir post- 1947. While the study of the state is incomplete without taking into account Kashmir, there are new revelations when the lense is shifted to focus on Jammu region. In studying Jammu and Kashmir, one of the earliest attempts have been done by Jyoti Bhusan Das Gupta⁷³ to study the dynamics prevalent in the state before 1947 (when the State was not divided into Pakistan-administered Kashmir and India-administered Kashmir). Gupta in his work talks about the crisis in the state of Jammu and Kashmir by giving a background of the paramountcy by the British, the role of Indian National Congress and Muslim League leading upto the territorial dispute that emerged in 1947 and further, looks into the proceedings of United Nations Security Council and the Sino-Soviet impact in 1960s.⁷⁴ In doing so, the book connects the internal dynamics of the State and links it upto the international realm. The book however does not deal with the communal side of the story directly. Alistair Lamb has traced the origins of the Kashmir territorial dispute from the formation of the State under Maharaja Gulab Singh in 1846 and looked into “the processes of political evolution” in the State before 1947 and he has explored the issues in the State till 1990.⁷⁵ In taking the “Kashmir dispute” as its vantage point, Christopher Snedden’s work gives an account

⁷¹ Gupta, *Sexuality, Obscenity, Community*.

⁷² Ramaswamy, “When a Language Becomes a Mother/Goddess”.

⁷³ Gupta, *Jammu and Kashmir*.

⁷⁴ Gupta, *Jammu and Kashmir*.

⁷⁵ Lamb, *Kashmir*.

of the making of the State, “rule and misrule” by the Dogra rulers and the state’s evolution vis-a-vis geo-political factors.⁷⁶ His work also tries to make people of the state as a focal point.

Navnita Chadha Behera in “redefining the parameters” of studying Jammu and Kashmir has argued to engage with the state by not simply looking at it as a problem of communal antagonism between Hindus and Muslims generated because of Muslim-majority state being ruled by a Hindu king. Instead, she suggests that the state needs to be studied through “local dynamics of Kashmir politics” which includes internal differences within the communities and as a wider issue of politics played between multiple identities of region and ethnicity.⁷⁷ Further, Luv Puri has laid emphasis on looking beyond the Kashmir region in analysing the Jammu and Kashmir’s communal problem as Kashmiri-speaking population of the state was smaller than the non-Kashmiri speaking population and as a result of this, he has argued to look at the “complex social, economic and political factors” of the present day Pakistan-administered Jammu and Kashmir alongside “cultural diversity” of the State.⁷⁸ Anam Zakaria has also looked at Pakistan-administered Kashmir, especially the area around Line of Control today.⁷⁹ In doing so, she has brought out the human dimension of the State looking at how people of the state have been effected and engaged with the state pre-1947 and post-1947.

Ilyas Chatha has made a departure of looking at overarching narratives of elite politics and meta-narrative of Kashmir problems and has located the relationship that the state and violence shared by specifically focusing on the case of Muslim exodus which occurred from Jammu to Sialkot.⁸⁰

⁷⁶ Snedden, *Understanding Kashmir and Kashmiris*.

⁷⁷ Behera, *Demystifying Kashmir*.

⁷⁸ Puri, *Across the LoC*, 10.

⁷⁹ Anam Zakaria, *Between the Great Divide: A Journey into Pakistan-administered Kashmir* (New Delhi: HarperCollins India, 2018).

⁸⁰ Ilyas Chattha, “Escape From Violence: The 1947 Partition of India and the Migration of Kashmiri Muslim Refugees,” in *Refugees and the End of Empire: Imperial Collapse and Forced*

Mohita Bhatia's work is an ethnographic study of the state through Jammu region, specifically focusing on the Hindu population and the marginalised population within them as she argues that by departing from Kashmir-centric works, specific grievances vis-a-vis lived experience, citizenship and social relationships can be configured.⁸¹ At the same time, Barbara N. Ramusack⁸² in her work on Princely States has located the "current militant movement" in Kashmir in the policies of the rulers of Jammu and Kashmir in causing communal issues alongside communal groups in British India and indigenous groups of Jammu and Kashmir.

It is within this wide scholarship on communalism/nationalism and partition studies alongside the present-day conflicts in and about the state of Jammu and Kashmir, I am attempting an exploration with a specific regional level focus on Jammu region during 1925-1947 so that the specific geo-political factors of the state along with the factors from outside the state can help in unravelling the making and expression the communal discourse in the region. It will also look at how the politics in Jammu region was interacting with the developments in Kashmir simultaneously between 1925-1947.

1.7 Sources and Methodology:

In conducting this study, various kinds of sources have been used to understand the dynamics at work during the early half of the twentieth century in the region of Jammu. Colonial documents like Census reports, Enquiry Reports have been used alongside Princely States' official records. Both these sources have been studied keeping in view of their embedded biases in mind. Like colonial archive, the archives of the princely states were operating well within the framework of the colonial

Migration in the 20th Century, ed. Panikos Panayi and Pippa Verde (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 196-218.

⁸¹ Mohita Bhatia, "Beyond the 'Kashmir' Meta Narrative: Caste, Identities and the Politics of Conflict in Jammu and Kashmir," in *Kashmir: History, Politics, Representation*, ed. Chitralkha Zutshi (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 194-214.

⁸² Barbara N. Ramusack, *The Indian Princes and their States* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

archival practices. The modernist technologies of archiving and archaeology⁸³ both found their way into the princely states. Their power relations were defined such that the State became the producer, preserver and vanguard of the archive. As Ann Stoler (2002) has argued “what constitutes the archive, what form it takes, and what systems of classification signal at specific times are the very substance of colonial politics”.⁸⁴ The attempt was thus made to read the archive “against the grain”⁸⁵ as well as “along the grain.”⁸⁶ The files accessed from the Publicity Department of the State have been drawn upon in the study which have been imperative in revealing the changing nature of public sphere and freedom of expression through the parameters of proscription, classifications and cataloguing itself. The newspaper clippings available through the Publicity Department have also been an important source for looking into the various *voices* that were emerging within and outside State vis-a-vis communal issues that were topical.

Alongside this, the Jammu and Kashmir Praja Sabha /Legislative Assembly which began in 1934 and continued its biannual sessions till April 1947, have been used. The question and answer hour alongside the debates on various legislative issues illuminate the changing socio-political dynamic in the state and also the various directions the discourse in the State is taking, especially in debating the themes and problems which resonate with the people of the State. In expressing their opinions and replying to the answers, the members, nominated and elected give an insight into the anxieties

⁸³ Rai, *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects*, 307-372.

⁸⁴ Ann Laura Stoler, “Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance”, *Archival Science* 2, no. 1-2: 87-109 (2002), 92.

⁸⁵ Ranjit Guha, “The Prose of Counter- Insurgency,” in *Subaltern Studies II* (New Delhi:Oxford University Press, 1983). A pioneer of Subaltern School of History, Guha introduced the conception of reading the colonial archive “against the grain” wherein there is a reliance on “upside down” reading of the archive, looking at the silences and small gestures of refusal to find the voice of the *subaltern*.

⁸⁶ Anne Stoler has added to Guha’s proposition and has argued “If a notion of colonial ethnography starts from the premise that archival production is itself both a process and a powerful technology of rule, then we need not only to brush against the archive’s received categories. We need to read for its regularities, for its logic of recall, for its densities and distributions, for its consistencies of misinformation, omission, and mistake – along the archival grain”. Stoler, “Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance,” 100.

and fears that continued to determine the course of identity in the State and how far the communal/secular goals were a part of their discourse.

Other sources like memoirs, autobiographies, diaries are another set of sources which have been used for the study. Subjectivity, an implicit nature of these sources in itself allows an insight into the ideas of subjectivities and perceptions themselves, and the disparate narratives that are available from the region vis-a-vis the years of study. First step in studying them has been to look into the authorship and in looking at the embedded biases which are inherent in them. These biases and the acts of ‘self fashioning’⁸⁷ in themselves also allow to look at the factors that allowed the trajectory of the source material. Next, an analysis of the content of the source in relation to the context is allows to situate the source more vigorously. Thereafter, the role memory plays in such personal accounts which have been written at a different point in time than when the events have happened are underlined by feelings of nostalgia, hatred and sometimes are shaped by the collective memory⁸⁸ and narratives that derive from the years that followed.⁸⁹ Memory amnesia and the act of introspection⁹⁰ that the act of recall creates also defines how a personal narrative is structured. In doing so, they present “recalcitrant events and recalcitrant narratives”⁹¹ which forms an important of this historical enquiry.

⁸⁷ Anshu Malhotra and Siobhan Lambert-Hurley eds., *Speaking of the Self: Gender, Performance, and Autobiography in South Asia* (New Delhi: Zubaan, 2017).

⁸⁸ Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

⁸⁹ David Arnold and Stuart Blackburn eds., *Telling Lives in India: Biography, Autobiography, and Life History* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2004), 1-28.

⁹⁰ Paul Thompson and Joanna Bornat, “Memory and the Self,” in *The Voice of the Past: Oral History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 238-265. In discussing memory in the context of Oral Histories, they gave an insight into how memory functions and needs to be studied as a source of historical enquiry into past and what it reveals of the present.

⁹¹ Amin, *Conquest and Community*, 196.

1.8 Goal of the Study:

This study will look into the time period 1925-1947 in Jammu region to explore how the Hindu-Muslim communal interface was building. The political and communal consciousness in Jammu region will be traced in particular. It will also look at how Jammu region was interacting with the dominant anti-state narrative and dissent which was emanating from Kashmir region.

Further, the study also seeks to look into the encounters and flows of information that were produced with its interaction with the neighbouring Punjab (due to close proximity) and at the subcontinental level (i.e. with the British India and the Princely India) to gauge how the ‘external’ factors were influencing the local as well as getting influenced by the local. It will allow to see the region not in mere isolation of its own internal dynamics but as part of the bigger discourse of communalism in the subcontinent.

In doing this, it will look at how communal identity was formed, how the anxieties were expressed, how mobilisation took place and how this worked with an anti-state rhetoric. This discourses of the time will also allow to trace how the vocabulary of communalism, secularism and nationalism were also being used.

1.9 Chapterisation

This study has been divided into three chapters. The chapter titled “The State and the People: The Background” lays the foundation on how the State functioned in 1920s, the issues and grievances that plagued the subjects of the princely state and how that led to an eruption of violent events in 1931-32. It also then looks into how the State established a dialogue with the people of the state and what were the problems that it encountered in doing so.

The next chapter titled “Making of the Public Discourse” looks at what kind of public sphere was available in the State and how different interest groups negotiated and vied for the public sphere.. It focuses on several organisations and individuals from within the state and outside the state who

were actively involved in creating the Public discourse and creating a political and communal consciousness through different means of mobilisation and propaganda. It also locates the state within the larger context of British India and that of the princely states, apart from exploring how the paradigms of nationalism, democratisation, fundamental rights and the binary of 'Hindu States' versus 'Muslim States' was developing.

The third chapter is titled "Competing Identities and Anxieties" and delves on the various ways that regional and communal identities were merging and competing with each other. It also looks at the various kinds of anxieties that became palpable as controversies around language and script, cow killing, conversion and Hindu Law of Inheritance etc. became the center stage. It also looks into myths and rumours which had become pervasive, apart from looking briefly at how towards the end of Maharaja Hari Singh's reign and accession of the state and its unofficial bifurcation, the socio-political situation had changed.

Chapter 2

The State and the People: The Background

This chapter seeks to provide a background to how the *status quo* in the state vis-vis the relationship between the state and the people was shaping 1920s onwards. It will look into how the Maharaja Pratap Singh (1885-1925) and Maharaja Hari Singh (1925-1947) worked in the state, the role that British played in the state and the sovereignty that the state shared with the British to establish how that effected policy making and interventions in the state. Then, it will look into the decade of 1920s to give a background to public activity and grievances of the Muslims in the state (which emitted from the Kashmir region) which set the tone for expression of dissatisfaction. The chapter will then move to 1931-32 when both the regions begin to effect dissent and violence in the other leading to active response by the state to appease the subjects.

2.1 The Politics and the Administration of the State: the Princely State and the British

Before Maharaja Hari Singh i.e. the last ruler of the Dogra dynasty came to power, he was preceded by Maharaja Pratap Singh (1885- 1925) who was deemed to be a pre-cursor of many reforms in the state by some contemporaries like the journalist G.S. Raghavan. Raghavan credited him for establishing Agricultural Department, opening up of many schools and colleges, starting of local self government by opening Municipalities in Jammu and Srinagar, modernization of the legal infrastructure of the princely state by adopting the laws of the British India, etc.⁹² However, not all circles viewed him or the Dogra state to be reformist or benevolent. The British writings like Arthur Brinckman's *Wrongs of Cashmere* (1868), Robert Thorpe's *Kashmir Misgovernment* (1870) and Sir William Digby's *Condemned Unheard* (1890) throw light on the pitiable situation of people in Kashmir, though the conditions prevailing in other regions of the state like Jammu, Ladakh do

⁹² G.S. Raghavan, *The Warnings of Kashmir* (Allahabad: The Pioneer Press, 1931).

not find much mention in them.⁹³ In S.N. Gadru's *Kashmir Papers: British Intervention in Kashmir* (1973) where he compiles Arthur Brinckman, Robert Thorpe and Sir William Digby's works on Kashmir, he also highlights how 'slavery' and 'oppression' were rampant and how the British interventions were necessary for any change in the conditions of its people in the state.⁹⁴

Unlike other princely states which had a Resident as representative with the British, the Treaty of Amritsar (1846)⁹⁵ did not appoint a Resident in the state. In 1877, during Maharaja Ranbir Singh's rule, a Political Officer was appointed for criminal cases during the tourist season in Kashmir which was later turned into the Resident post.⁹⁶ As the British tried to establish more power in the state due to their distrust in the administrative competence of Maharaja Pratap Singh, a State Council was formed in 1889. The State Council divided different portfolios of administration i.e. the military department, foreign department, Revenue and Finance Department, and Judicial Department amongst the state officials and alongside them the role of Resident became dominant in the Council.⁹⁷ This was done under the pretext of the growing British fear of Russian expansion.⁹⁸ Christopher Snedden points out that the famine of 1877-79 had earlier also invited the attention of the British, about the Dogra 'regime's disorganisation and maladministration.'⁹⁹ Thus, the power and sovereignty over the internal administration of the state was increasingly tilting towards the British control. The State Council was partially diluted in 1905 when it gave some

⁹³ S.N. Gadru, *Kashmir Papers, British Intervention in Kashmir* (Srinagar: Forethought Literature Company, 1973).

⁹⁴ Gadru, *Kashmir Papers*.

⁹⁵ Treaty of Amritsar (1846) was signed with Maharaja Gulab Singh after the First Anglo-Punjab War which established the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir under the Dogra Rule.

⁹⁶ Raghavan, *The Warnings of Kashmir*, 18.

⁹⁷ Robert A. Huttenback, "The Emasculation of a Princely State: The Case of Kashmir." *Journal of Asian History* 7, no. 1: 1-29 (1973), 23. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41930070>.

⁹⁸ Gupta. *Jammu and Kashmir*, 27.

⁹⁹ Snedden, *Understanding Kashmir and Kashmiris* (London: C. Hurst & Co. Publishers Ltd., 2015), 125.

authority back to Maharaja Pratap Singh and was further ended in 1921.¹⁰⁰ However, the British influence over the administrative matters of the state remained significant after that as well. Wakefield, Chief Secretary to Raja Hari Singh (who acted as Senior and Foreign Minister in 1923), for example, played a key role in getting the request of Mulkh Raj Saraf of opening up the first non-government newspaper¹⁰¹ in the state approved.¹⁰² This decision was also influenced by Mr. B.J. Glancy, who at that time served as ICS Minister, in-charge of the Police and Finance Departments.¹⁰³ The powers thus remained shared between the British and the Maharaja. There existed both resistance and collaboration between the two at different points in time, thus making the question of sovereignty working at various levels in the princely state. The state in its paternalistic stylisation and as the face of the control and administration over the subjects held large sway over its subjects.

However, after Maharaja Hari Singh's accession to the throne, strains had started developing in the relationship between the British and the Maharaja, leading to attempts aimed at diluting the residency influence by the Maharaja. Maharaja Hari Singh's presence in the First Round Table Conference in 1930 was key in this changing dynamics of the state. As the representative of the Indian Princes at the Conference, his declaration of allegiance to the Crown was coincided with a stance of nationalistic and independent order and is an indication of the changing relationship between Maharaja and the British:

Allied by treaty with the British crown and within our territories as independent rulers, we have come with a full sense of responsibility to our state and all India. As the allies of the British, we stand solidly by the British connection. As Indian, we are loyal to the land of our

¹⁰⁰ Raghavan, *The Warnings of Kashmir*, 18.

¹⁰¹ Mulkh Raj Saraf, *50 Years as a Journalist* (Jammu: Raj Mahal Publishers, 1967). The permission for the first non- Government newspaper in the state was granted in 1924 and its first issue came out in 1925.

¹⁰² Saraf, *50 years as a Journalist*, 25.

¹⁰³ Saraf, *50 Years as a Journalist*, 26.

birth. We stand as solidly as the rest of our countrymen for our lands enjoyment of a position of honour and equality in the British commonwealth of nations.¹⁰⁴

Maharaja Hari Singh's career in the state began at the age of twenty as Commander-in-Chief of the state forces in 1915 and later in 1921, he undertook the role of Senior and Foreign Member of the Council. The story of his accession was also marred with controversy owing to the several claims to the throne since Maharaja Pratap Singh did not have a son of his own. Therefore, after the latter's death in 1925 when the seat fell vacant, it was Hari Singh, the son of Maharaja Pratap Singh's younger brother Raja Amar Singh who acceded to the throne. Another part of the state i.e. Poonch *jagir* which was a Muslim-majority area and became crucial in the 1947 tribal raids¹⁰⁵ was initially an independent feudatory state till 1936 under Raja Jagatdev Singh.¹⁰⁶ Raja Jagatdev Singh before losing control of Poonch enjoyed considerable power as indicated by his ownership of "his own small army, collected his own taxes and was entitled to a 13- gun salute."¹⁰⁷

At the time of his accession, Maharaja Hari Singh proclaimed that "my religion is justice,"¹⁰⁸ a proclamation that came to be referred to and tested multiple times in the subsequent decades as the state witnessed the intense unfolding of communal consciousness, acceleration of conflicts and accession to the independent India. The state with a Hindu king at the helm with a majority Muslim population thus required him to make a proclamation which was pointed to give reassurance to its subjects that the Maharaja's acts were in consonance with the welfare of the people, providing them justice, irrespective of their religion. The need to make an emphasis on it by itself also indicates the socio-political climate of the time in which it was necessary to make such a reassurance to the

¹⁰⁴ Quoted in S.P. Vaid, *Socio- Economic Roots of Unrest in Jammu and Kashmir (1931- 47)* (Jammu: Shyama Publications, 2006), 54.

¹⁰⁵ "While Poonch formally became an integral part of Jammu and Kashmir in 1935-36, its Muslim inhabitants (some 380,000 out of a total of 420,000) resented the change and never reconciled themselves to being subjects of that state, an attitude which was to be of great significance in 1947." Alistair Lamb, *Kashmir: A Disputed Legacy 1846- 1991* (Hertfordshire: Roxford Books, 1991), 14.

¹⁰⁶ Raja Jagatdev Singh belonged to the line of family which came from Dhyan Singh who was the brother of the 1st Maharaja of Dogra state, Maharaja Gulab Singh.

¹⁰⁷ Christopher Snedden, *Understanding Kashmir and Kashmiri*, 123.

¹⁰⁸ S.P. Vaid, *Socio- Economic Roots of Unrest in Jammu and Kashmir*, 59.

public brewing with discontent and was beginning to mobilise itself to demand rights. Shivnath, a prolific writer from the state describes how the formal coronation of Maharaja Hari Singh was a grand affair which lasted from 18th February to the 9th March of 1926, “with the city of Jammu decorated and illuminated, a magnificent colourful procession led by golden caparisoned elephants moving from Mubarak Mandi to Purani Mandi for the *raj-tilak* ceremony there on the 25th February and citizens crowding the bazaars enroute to watch the procession and another magnificent procession taken out when the maharaja returned from abroad with Maharani Tara Devi and Yuvaraj, heir apparent, Karan Singh born in France in March that year. The maharajas of Jammu and Kashmir were known to share their joys, sorrows and achievements with Jammuities.”¹⁰⁹ The long standing Dogra connection and allegiance that Maharaja and his family shared with the Jammu city is clearly brought out here. Not only this, other important events like birthdays and festivals were also known to have been celebrated with the city by Maharaja and in doing so, he could bring out his paternalistic power as well as show a level of solidarity to his subjects. This attitude of Maharaja Hari Singh throughout his reign was consistent with the growing expression of dissatisfaction of his subjects which was becoming public and the need to pacify the situation. The context necessitated that the Maharaja showcase himself as not merely an autocratic ruler who was unavailable for its subjects, but to project an image of a ruler who cared about the welfare of the people and was approachable.

2.2 The Socio- Economic Situation

The state that Maharaja Hari Singh came to ascend to in 1925 was rife with dissatisfaction and discontent of its subjects. The socio-economic situation, often tied with the communal factors was such that the tensions become palpable in 1920s itself, but only in Kashmir region i.e. before gaining sustained expressions in the 1930s and 1940s in both Kashmir and Jammu region. Before the vigorous mobilizations became rife in 1930s and 1940s, the context for it had already started making in 1920s. An analysis of the developments in Jammu region in 1930s-1940s can only be

¹⁰⁹ Shivnath, *Reminiscences of a Jammuite* (Jammu: Kashmir Times Publication, 2007), 11-12.

discerned if the decade of 1920s is looked at more closely to gauge what was brewing at the organisational and societal level.

On the economic front, “*begar* had been abolished in 1893, but in practice it persisted, particularly in remoter districts, right up to 1947.”¹¹⁰ *Begar*¹¹¹ had been an exploitative tool in the region since a long time¹¹² and under the Dogras also it continued. In 19th Century, as new areas in Kashmir and Ladakh were to be brought under the administration and thus required access to these parts (which were otherwise difficult to access because of the harsh mountainous terrain), *begar* was used to make new roads.¹¹³ Walter Ropert Lawrence who was the Settlement Commissioner of the state in 1895 wrote that within the system there existed some exemptions i.e. the urban population of Srinagar, Kashmiri Pandits (i.e. Hindus), “Sikhs, *Pirzadas*, Gujars and cultivators working on the land grants of officials.”¹¹⁴ Giving statistical estimations, he adds that:

at the very lowest computation.... out of a total population of 814,241, 350,000 persons are exempt from *begar* by rule, and another 50,000 are exempt by favour. It follows that the incidence of *begar* falls with the intense severity on the remaining 414, 241. It continued to be a reason for impoverishment and discontent among the public and an end to system remained a demand throughout the early 20th Century as well.¹¹⁵

Thus, a huge number of people were employed in the system as late as 1895. The continued effect on the subjects can be seen as demands for its removal continued in 1920s. While *begar* remained an issue in Kashmir and Ladakh regions more, the Jammu region was heavily affected by the revenue policies of the state resulting in the exploitation of the peasantry. The revenue system

¹¹⁰ Lamb, *Kashmir*, 84.

¹¹¹ *Begar* was a system employed by the state which was characterised by forced unpaid labour.

¹¹² P.N. K. Bamzai, *Cultural and Political History of Kashmir*, vol. 3 (New Delhi: M.D. Publications Pvt. Ltd., 1994), 671. The first reference to the system of *begar* comes from Kalhana's *Rajatrangini* (12th Century).

¹¹³ Lamb, *Kashmir*, 49.

¹¹⁴ Walter Lawrence, *The Valley of Kashmir* (London: Oxford University Press, 1895), 412.

¹¹⁵ Lawrence, *The Valley of Kashmir*, 412.

introduced by Walter Lawrence in 1889 which fixed 30% of the gross produce as the state's share of the revenue.¹¹⁶ However, "in practice, the rapacious state officials and landlords or *jagirdars* (those to whom the Maharaja had granted the revenue rights over tracts of land in the feudal manner), steadily eroded the peasants' entitlement."¹¹⁷ The peasantry was largely constituted by the Muslim population in Jammu region's areas of Mirpur, Kotli, Rajouri, Seri, with *zamindars*, *jagirdars* and *lambardars* coming from the minority Hindu population.¹¹⁸ Further, according to the 1921 Census,¹¹⁹ the literacy rate of Muslims in the state stood at 12 literates per 1000 and for Hindus stood at 70 literates per 1000.¹²⁰ The poor literacy rate contributed to lack of representation of them in the state services and added to the poor economic condition of the Muslims. Class and religion thus came to be intertwined with each other in the state.

On the other hand, G.S. Raghavan, writing in 1931, highlighted that the economic condition of Muslims of Jammu had suffered more compared to the Kashmiri counterparts owing to being educationally, agriculturally backward and due to lack of skill, while the Kashmiri counterparts are the ones getting Maharaja's support.¹²¹ This regional and religious differentiation of rights and condition and its representation is a trope that formed a big part of the discourses in circulation in the princely state during decades after 1920s.

Apart from the economic factors, socially too the Muslims faced exploitation. In his book "*The India We Served*" (1928), Walter Lawrence mentions that Muslims were taxed for basic ritual

¹¹⁶ Publicity Department, *A Handbook of Jammu and Kashmir* 3rd ed. (Jammu: The Ranbir Government Press, 1947), 29.

¹¹⁷ Lamb, *Kashmir*, 87.

¹¹⁸ Rekha Chowdhary, *Jammu and Kashmir: Politics of Identity and Separatism* (New Delhi: Routledge, 2016), 176.

¹¹⁹ Khan Bahadur Chaudhari Khushi Mohammed, "Kashmir" vol. Xxii, part 1, *Census of India* (Lahore: Mufid-i-am Press, 1923), 111.

¹²⁰ The 1921 Census excludes Arya from Hindus whose literacy rate stood at 45 per 1000 persons. Mohammed, *Census of India*, 111.

¹²¹ Raghavan, *The Warnings of Kashmir*.

events like formalisation of marriage and gravedigging.¹²² He also mentions that the prostitutes were taxed.¹²³ The marriage tax started at one rupee during Maharaja Gulab Singh and by Maharaja Ranbir Singh's reign was increased to "up to 3 to 8 rupees"¹²⁴ and it was only during Maharaj Pratap Singh's reign that it came to be abolished.¹²⁵ Additionally, cow killing was punishable with capital punishment in the state till 1934 when punishment was changed to imprisonment at first for 10 years and later 7 years.¹²⁶ As early as 1897, in Mirpur district (Jammu region) about 300 Muslims gathered to assert their right on cow slaughter with however no affirmative result.¹²⁷ In 1913, there emerged reports of cow-killing cases which Maharaja Pratap Singh worried would lead to destabilization in the state and thus an inquiry was made into it.¹²⁸ There was thus acute tension in the state over the issue of cow-killing within the two communities and an anxiety that was felt by the Maharaja. Another issue which captured the imagination of people was the Hindu law of inheritance, according to which on converting from Hinduism to Islam, the covert was dispossessed of his right on his ancestral property.¹²⁹ The sanction for this law was claimed to be derived from Hindu shastras. This practically led to discouragement of conversions in the state.

Thus, the socio-economic situation in the state as governed by Dogra rulers created disadvantages and dissatisfactions among its Muslim subjects. In this situation, the Muslims felt increasingly marginalised and there can also be seen merging of class issues with the communal issues, and regional differentiation as well.

¹²² Walter Lawrence, *The India We Served* (London: Cassell & Company Ltd., 1928), 134.

¹²³ Lawrence, *The India We Served*, 134.

¹²⁴ Shiraz Ahmad Dar and Younus Rashid Shah, "Prostitution, Traffic in Women and the Politics of Dogra Raj: The Case of Kashmir Valley (1846-1947)", *Journal of Society in Kashmir* 5:1-12 (2015), 4.

¹²⁵ Jyoti Bhusan Das Gupta, *Jammu and Kashmir* (The Hague: Martinus Nuhoff, 1968), 52.

¹²⁶ Lanb, *Kashmir*, 84.

¹²⁷ Mridu Rai, *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects* (London: Hurst & Co. 2004), 181.

¹²⁸ Rai, *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects*, 179.

¹²⁹ Gupta, *Jammu and Kashmir*, 53.

2.3 Brewing of the chaos and expression of grievances

There was developing in 1920s vocalisation of an anti-state dissent in Kashmir region which also provided a context for intensive communal mobilisation in the 1930s and 1940s in both Jammu and Kashmir region.. Several issues of grievances that the Muslims faced began to come in the public sphere and the state in turn also made attempts to control the situation.

In 1924, there erupted an agitation in the silk factory in Srinagar. There existed two silk factories (1 in Jammu, 1 in Srinagar) in the state which were run by the state. Thus, giving state monopoly over it. According to 1921 census, “the factories at Srinagar and Jammu employ over 56 per cent of the total number of persons engages in Textile Industries..... the largest proportion of the industrial establishments.”¹³⁰ Therefore, when the silk factory workers in Srinagar went on strike in 1924, it was a matter of grave concern for the state. It employed a big proportion of the population, including men, women and children.¹³¹ The state’s monopolisation on the silk production allowed it to fix low wages and working conditions sub-optimum.¹³² As a result, they gathered at Huzoori Bagh, Srinagar where in response, armed cavalry was deputed, leading to injury of several protesters, including women and children. Sheikh Abdullah later dubbed this protest as the “first protest march of its kind”¹³³ underlying how significant the instance was in anti-state rhetoric.

Then in 1925, a deputation of Muslims from Srinagar led by Sheikh Sadiq Hussain (who was a member of the Central Legislative Assembly) tried to get an audience at Lahore with B.J. Glancy who was the Finance and the Political Minister at the time. The aim of the deputation was to present the issues and grievances of the Kashmiri Muslims to the Minister.

¹³⁰ Census of India (1921), 178.

¹³¹ Census of India (1921) , 178-179.

¹³² Chowdhary, Jammu and Kashmir, 6.

¹³³ Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, *Flames of Chinar*, trans. Khushwant Singh (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 1995), 13.

Soon, another incident took place in 1925 in Srinagar which took form of dissent during the visit of Viceroy Lord Reading and his wife Lady Reading in October. On the arrival of the Viceroy and his party, several people assembled on the banks of the river through which their boat procession was to go through and waved black flags. Alongside this, a memorandum was also signed by prominent Kashmiri Muslims like Khwaja Saduddin Shawl, Khwaja Hasan Shah Naqshbandi, Mirwaiz of Kashmir, Ahmadullah Hamadani, Agha Syed Hussain Jalali, Mufti Sharifuddin etc. However, the Viceroy on receiving the memorandum passed it on to Maharaja Hari Singh and those who were involved in the signing the memorandum had to face consequences. Sheikh Abdulla recollects that as a result of this move, “Khwaja Saduddin Shawl was arrested and banished from the state. Khwaja Noor Shah Naqshbandi, son of Khwaja Hasan, was forced to resign from the post of *Tehsildar*. Agha Syed Hussain Jalali was removed from the post of *Zaildar* (Territory Officer), exiled from the state, and his *jagir* forfeited. Mirwaiz's name was removed from the list of *darbaris* and a strict warning was issued to him. The rest of the signatories, who submitted apologies, were mildly reprimanded.”¹³⁴ While this remained largely out of the confines of a mass struggle, the early shoots of discontent and dissent fermenting can be seen in the event.

Another issue that generated considerable discontent from the turn of the century was the issue of ‘State Subject’. There was a change in the court language from Persian to Urdu in 1889, which affected the employment prospects of Kashmiri Pandits in the state. This then led to the induction of a considerable number of Punjabis into the Services since they were versed in the language of Urdu. According to the pamphlet titled *Kashmir* published by General Secretary, All India states’ People’s Conference, Bombay (January 1939),¹³⁵ the first expression of the discontent against the state took form of resentment against the outsiders controlling ministerial services and privileges which ushered into the definition of a state Subject in 1927. The new definition created 4 categories

¹³⁴ Abdullah, *Flames of Chinar*, 14

¹³⁵ All India States’ People’s Conference, *Kashmir* (Bombay: January, 1939), S.no. 562, Basta no. 20, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

to define who was a state subject and who was not.¹³⁶ It included people who have been residents since before 1885, those who came between 1885 and 1911, those who came between 1911- 31st January 1927 and also included companies in the state.¹³⁷ This allowed to create job preferences, scholarship opportunities for the state subjects, although it managed to satisfy only a minuscule population of the educated middle class who were eligible for and sought government jobs.

The rising political temperature gained an unprecedented public visibility when the dissent came from a senior officer of Government of India who worked within the administration and resigned later, i.e. Sir Albion Banerjee (ICS) who acted as the Prime Minister and Foreign and Political Minister between 1927 and 1929. The time he spent in the state was marred with controversy due to his disagreements with Maharaja Hari Singh on administrative and policy matters which led to his resignation in March 1929. After the end of his service to the state, he expressed his views on the state to a representative of the Associated Press. In his statement, he criticized the discriminatory nature of the state against the Muslims and the poor conditions in which they were living:

J&K state is labouring under many disadvantages with a large Mohammeden population, absolutely illiterate, labouring under poverty and very low economic conditions of living in the villages and practically government like dumb- driven cattle.¹³⁸

He also criticised the lack of any space for hearing of grievances of the people in the state and the curbs which made expression of public opinion difficult:

There is no touch between the Government and the people, no suitable opportunity for the representative of their grievances and the administrative machinery itself requires

¹³⁶ Manzoor Fazil, *Kashmir Government and Politics* (Srinagar: Gulshan Publishers, 1982), 131-3.

¹³⁷ Manzoor Fazil, *Kashmir Government and Politics*, 131-3.

¹³⁸ All India States' People's Conference, *Kashmir* (Bombay: January, 1939), S.no. 562, Basta no. 20, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

overhauling from top to bottom to bring it up to modern conditions of efficiency. It has at present little or no sympathy with the people's wants and grievances.¹³⁹

There is hardly any public opinion in the state. As regards the Press, it is practically non-existent with the result that the Government is not benefitted to the extent that it should be by the impact of healthy criticism.¹⁴⁰

He further also acknowledged the superiority of Pandits and numerical strength of the Muslims but at the same time said that they both are suppressed.¹⁴¹ This then was not just a comment on the state of affairs of Kashmiri Muslims only, but the Kashmiri community as a whole, thus bringing to the light the Dogra regime's regional bias vis-a-vis Kashmiris as well as communal bias against Muslims in general. The criticism of the state was thus becoming more apparent not only through mass expression of people but from people who worked in the administration itself. Sir Albion's statement public statement in 1929 made to newspapers like *akhbar-i-aam* which was circulated in the subcontinent. The discontent of the people was finding its way into the discourse of the state and the subcontinent.

Maharaja Hari Singh after ascending to the throne in 1925 made attempts to appease his subjects. He seemed aware of the change in attitude and discontent among the masses. In 1928, a Press Communique by the state titled "Royal Magnanimity" mentions how the state is going to pardon Khwaja Hasam Shah Naqshabandi¹⁴² despite his "improper and disloyal allegations" against the state.¹⁴³ This incident reflects how the state was penalising and suppressing critique but at the same

¹³⁹ All India States' People's Conference, *Kashmir* (Bombay: January, 1939), S.no. 562, Basta no. 20, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

¹⁴⁰ All India States' People's Conference, *Kashmir* (Bombay: January, 1939), S.no. 562, Basta no. 20, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

¹⁴¹ *Akhbar-i-aam* (06-04-1929), S.no. 137, Basta No. 3, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

¹⁴² Khwaja Hasam Shah Naqshabandi was the leading memorialists in presenting the grievances to the Viceroy. In response to this, the state punished him by depriving him of his ancestral *jagir*.

¹⁴³ *Press Telegrams and Communiques for the year 1928 A.D.*, S.no. 917, Basta no. 33, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

time showing “magnanimity” as a means of winning over the faith of the subjects.¹⁴⁴ According to Press Communique (25 March 1928),¹⁴⁵ Maharaja also participated in the Eid celebrations at Jammu along with his Ministers and Personal Staff by going to *Idgah* where a guard of honour was mounted and remained there till the prayers stopped. The communique also mentions that *Namaz* prayers were offered for His Highness’ happiness and proprietary and the heir, and that Hindu population was also present in large numbers. According to the Publicity Department’s documents, this Press Communique was sent to various newspapers across India.¹⁴⁶ Since these were Maharaja’s early years of accession, he was trying to build an image of a liberal king of a Muslim-majority state, as can be inferred also from his declaration on accession that his “religion is justice.”¹⁴⁷ In doing so, the king was trying to paint himself as an impartial ruler and thus seeking legitimacy to the regime in a Muslim dominated state. There is a clear and deliberate attempt here by Maharaja of using the rhetoric of religion to dissociate himself from his identity as a Hindu king.

While the discontent was finding ground in the public sphere in the 1920s and first shoots of dissent were showing up, there also existed within the state some people who remained loyal to the state and showed their support. G.S. Raghavan writing in 1931 squarely blamed the British and their use of Divide and Rule in British India for the rise of communal tensions and goes on to say that “in Kashmir before the pernicious effects of the British Indian schisms had been felt, the relations between the Hindus and the Muslims were fraternal.”¹⁴⁸ He also went on to list some things that he said were being done by the Maharaja to “appease” the Mussalmans and discounted the Muslim

¹⁴⁴ Although it is not certain what exactly was immediate catalyst in Government’s decision and for “Royal Magnanimity” to prevail.

¹⁴⁵ *Press Telegrams and Communiques for the year 1928 A.D.*, S.no. 917, Basta no. 33, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

¹⁴⁶ *Press Telegrams and Communiques for the year 1928 A.D.*, S.no. 917, Basta no. 33, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

¹⁴⁷ *Collection of Cuttings from Various Newspapers, Relation to Kashmir State and Issue of Contradiction by the Kashmir Government*, S.no. 134, Basta no. 3, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

¹⁴⁸ Raghavan, *The Warnings of Kashmir*, 67.

dissatisfaction as a “false propaganda.”¹⁴⁹ In an article titled “Kashmir Riots: Futile Attempts to Subvert Government”, in the newspaper *Akhbar- I- Aam*, dated 08 August 1931, even the events pertaining to Silk Factory agitation of 1924 were dubbed as instigated by “malefactors” and “goondas” who were organising against the “Hindus and the Government”, i.e. a Government which was “organised and enlightened.”¹⁵⁰ Even the controversy stirred by Sir Albion Banerjee had rattled the state and the administration enough that it prompted people from the administration like Agha Syed Hussain, General Samander Khan, Colonel Ghulam Ali Shah, Mirza Ghulam Mustafa etc. to counter Banerjee’s claims and release a statement that said that “the Muslims of the state were leading a peaceful and fairly prosperous life.”¹⁵¹ Thus, the grievances in the state were being painted to show as an exaggeration on the part of the aggrieved or shown as emanating from outside forces (i.e. the British, “malefactors and “goondas” from outside the state etc.).

Therefore, it can be seen that the anti-state sentiment in the state was fermenting throughout the 1920 despite the limited space for expression. This was majorly seen in the Kashmir region and Jammu region during this period seems comparatively less volatile. However, as the years progressed, Jammu region also became a key area of dissent and witnessed communal riots and violence. In December 1930, All-India Kashmir Muslim Conference appointed a delegation which was headed by Nawab of Dacca to present a list of grievances to Maharaja Hari Singh, but an audience with the Maharaja was denied in February 1931. It was also the first time that Muslim delegates from Jammu joined in an open criticism of the state,¹⁵² one of the first incidents of explicit dissent by the Muslim subjects from Jammu region. These narratives of dissent and counter-dissent as were gaining ground did not merely remain anti-state in their expression. They also began to form a communal distinction between the Hindus and the Muslims as the grievances were different and in the case of Jammu Hindus, the dissent by Muslims was seen as an attack on

¹⁴⁹ Raghavan, *The Warnings of Kashmir*, 69.

¹⁵⁰ *Kashmir’s Situation (Akhbar-i-aam, 8th August 1931, “Kashmir Riots: Futile Attempts to Subvert the Government”)*, S.no. 2954, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

¹⁵¹ Abdullah, *Flames of Chinar*, 17.

¹⁵² Raghavan, *The Warnings of Kashmir*, 67.

their brethren of Dogra Hindu ruler.. A communal imagination can be seen as beginning to form already.

2.4 Events of Conflict that Added to the Flame (1931)

Continuing from the way things were panning out in 1920s, the year 1931 witnessed a massive shift in the way dissent, protest and discontent was expressed publically in the state. The decade of 1920s saw the rise of Mahatma Gandhi which shifted the resistance against the British from the elite to the mass population. This led to the development of protests on Gandhi's *ahimsa* which came out in the form of non-cooperation movement, Bardoli satyagraha, salt satyagraha (the Dandi march) and civil disobedience movement.¹⁵³ It also saw the rise of revolutionary leaders like Bhagat Singh, Chandrashekhar Azad, Sukhdev, Rajguru etc. who became symbols of resistance in the subcontinent through means of armed resistance and formation of secret societies.¹⁵⁴ This shift was palpable in the subcontinent while in Jammu region public dissent and political factions like Dogra Sabha, Youngmen's Muslim Assosiation etc. were beginning to form. The year 1931 was a year of acute destabilisation in both Jammu and Kashmir regions of the state where riots and violence became rampant.

¹⁵³ See Bipan Chandra, *India's Struggle for Independence 1857-1947* (New Delhi India: Viking, 1988); Shahid Amin, *Event, Metaphor, Memory: Chauri Chaura 1922-1992* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995); Shahid Amin, "Gandhi as Mahatma: Gorakhpur District Eastern UP, 1921-22", in Ranajit Guha (ed.), *Subaltern Studies III* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1984), 1-61; Sumit Sarkar, *Modern India 1885-1947* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989).

¹⁵⁴ Amit Kumar Gupta, "Defying Death: Nationalist Revolutionism in India, 1897-1938," *Social Scientist* 25, no. 9/10:3-27 (1997). <https://doi.org/10.2307/3517678>; Bipan Chandra, *India's Struggle for Independence 1857-1947* (New Delhi India: Viking, 1988); Kama Maclean, "The Portrait's Journey: The Image, Social Communication and Martyr-Making in Colonial India," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 70, no. 4: 1051-82 (2011). <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41349983>.

The denial of entry in the state in February 1931¹⁵⁵ of Nawab of Dacca who was heading a delegation to present a list of grievances to Maharaja Hari Singh which was joined by people from Jammu and members from Young Men's Muslim Association¹⁵⁶ like Mistri Yaqub Ali, Sardar Gauhar Rehman, Chaudhari Ghulam Abbas and Sheikh Abdul Hamid¹⁵⁷ etc. was an instance of significance in expression of dissatisfaction in Jammu. The Young Men's Muslim Association which was based in Jammu was also critical in issuing protest posters when it was rumoured that the Head Constable, Labho Ram had taken a copy of the *Quran* from the bag of a Muslim colleague and torn it off.¹⁵⁸ Sheikh Abdullah in his narration of this event talks about a young volunteer who was arrested while displaying a protest poster in a *mohalla* but was later released due to public pressure and in a meeting to celebrate it, he proclaimed that “[u]nless those who have desecrated the Quran are punished, we shall not rest. We will continue fighting until every Muslim is assured of his rights.”¹⁵⁹

In another incident on 29th April, 1931, after the Eid prayers, the police officer, Khem Chand is reported to have stopped the *Imam* from reading the *Khutba* in Jammu.¹⁶⁰ A mosque in Riasi district of Jammu region was reported to have been demolished by local Hindus with Maharaja's aide.¹⁶¹ A village of Dagore in Samba (Jammu region) came to limelight for Muslims not being allowed to prayer on certain pieces of land and there also emerged reports of tensions accruing to usage of water of a tank.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁵ Raghavan, *The Warnings of Kashmir*, 67.

¹⁵⁶ Youngmen's Muslim Association, founded by Chaudhary Ghulam Abbas in 1909 was based in Jammu and was critical in representing the issues of Muslim populace of the region.

¹⁵⁷ Abdullah, *Flames of Chinar*, 22.

¹⁵⁸ Abdullah, *Flames of Chinar*, 21.

¹⁵⁹ Abdullah, *Flames of Chinar*, 21.

¹⁶⁰ Abdullah, *Flames of Chinar*, 20- 21.

¹⁶¹ Lamb, *Kashmir*, 89.

¹⁶² S.no. 13110, *Jammu and Kashmir Assembly Debates (Official Report) (Volume IIIA)* (Jammu: The Ranbir Government Press, 1935), 78- 79. The tank issue was so pertinent that as late as 1935 in Praja Sabha debates, the reference to it was being made.

These reports on disruption of religious practices and shrines in Jammu region was to have a great impact in Kashmir with many meetings being held throughout June, inaugurating a time of acute tension, demonstrations and violence. This also coincided the time period when Maharaja was visiting Europe. On his return in June 1931, owing to the pervasive mood of instability, G.E.C. Wakefield, serving as Minister for Political Affairs, advised him to give audience to a delegation of Muslims from across the state.¹⁶³ On July 9, 1931, Maharaja aware of the brewing tensions issued a proclamation to neutralise the growing communal tensions. On the issue of representation in public service appointments, he proclaimed that it stems not from a discriminatory state policy but due to lack of efficacy of the people,¹⁶⁴ thus affectively negating the claims of grievances that were being made in the state.

As a result of the happenings in Jammu, the muslim sentiment in the state was running high and several public meetings were held across the state showing the dissatisfaction of the muslims. It was during one such meeting that a man named Abdul Qadeer came under state's radar. The man who was not from the state and was allegedly visiting the state as a cook accompanying a European military officer named Major Butt of the Yorkshire Regiment, ended up being an important figure in the annals of history of Jammu and Kashmir. He was tried for making the provocative speeches during a public gathering in Kashmir on 25th June 1931. In his speech, he said that:

The honour, respect and reverence of the holy Quran is more dear to the Muslims than the rulership of the world. They will never tolerate any interference in their religion or defilement of their holy book. The Government of Maharaja does not care for his subjects. It has no touch with the people nor any sympathy for the downtrodden. Oh Muslims arise! Time is near when you shall reply with stones against the bricks. I warn you that your representatives and memorials cannot come to your rescue, nor will these papers remove injustice and misery. Such things cannot solve the issue relating to the defilement of the

¹⁶³ Abdullah, *Flames of Chinar*, 21.

¹⁶⁴ Raghavan, *The Warnings of Kashmir*.

holy Quran. You must stand on your legs and fight against autocratic force. Even if you have no arms, continue your fight with sticks and stones.¹⁶⁵

It was in response to this speech that he was incarcerated where he invoked a call to the Muslims present at the meeting to oppose the state not through paper and deputations but by taking up arms and stones. He was tried under 124A¹⁶⁶ and 153A¹⁶⁷ of the Ranbir Penal Code for making ‘seditious’ speech against the state and for communal-divisive speech. During his trial which was held on 13th July, 1931, a number of people came to surround the Central Jail building in Srinagar in protest against his incarceration.. The people that had gathered came to be met with police baton, stones and firing leading to the death of around 22 people.¹⁶⁸ On the other end, there was also given a testimony by Brigadier Sutherland before Kashmir Enquiry Commission¹⁶⁹ providing a British narrative of the events where he stated that “he has sent two troops to the Central Jail on the 13th July” and on his arrival, he found “a number of brick bats and stones lying on the ground of the compound” and added that “the number of stones was very large and I can safely say that a large number of person must have thrown the stones.”¹⁷⁰ In fact when the report was published in *The Tribune*, the headline stated that the “behaviour of military was exemplary” and the sub-headline

¹⁶⁵ Quoted in S.P. Vaid, *Socio-Economic Roots of Unrest in Jammu and Kashmir (1931-1947)* (Jammu: Shyama Publications, 2006), 58.

¹⁶⁶ 124-A. Sedition. — Whoever by words, either spoken or written, or by signs, or by visible representation, or otherwise brings or attempts to bring into hatred or contempt, or excites or attempts to excite disaffection towards His Majesty, the Governor or the Government established by law in India or in Jammu and Kashmir state, shall be punished with imprisonment for life to which fine may be added, or with imprisonment which may extend to three years, to which fine may be added, or with fine.

¹⁶⁷ 153- A. Promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race, place of birth, residence, language etc., and doing acts, prejudicial to maintenance of harmony.

¹⁶⁸ Lamb, *Kashmir*, 89- 90.

¹⁶⁹ *Press Cuttings (The Tribune*, 28 August 1931), S. No. 3546, Basta No. 144, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu. Kashmir Enquiry Committee was appointed in the aftermath of the jail events by the Maharaja to look into the events that happened on the day of July 13th. The committee was headed Sir Barjor Dalal who was also the Chief Justice of the State High Court.

¹⁷⁰ *Press Cuttings (The Tribune*, 28 August 1931), S.no. 3546, Basta no. 144, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

stated that the “troops did not trouble the Mohammedans,”¹⁷¹ thus siding with the state’s version of the events. *Akhbar-i-am* (8th August, 1931), another newspaper of significance stated that “it was when the mob set fire to jail buildings and broke down the jail gate that the Police Officers ordered their man to open fire in self- defense.”¹⁷²

In the two different narratives that were publicised, the encounter between the army and state police with the Muslims gathered outside the jail, a communal narrative can be seen forming. Also, the state and the British narrative of events puts the blame on the people for the worsening of situation and the use of batons and arms by them. Further, it can be seen that the state was well-aware of the growing tensions in how it trampled on some sections of press from Lahore which according to it, had been making personal attacks on the Maharaja. It was with such an aim that *Inqilab*, a Lahore based newspaper came to be proscribed in the state.¹⁷³ In the subsequent months, more proscriptions followed: a pamphlet was issued from Lahore titled *Kashmiri Mussalmans*, a paper *Mazloom- i- Kashmiri* etc. were banned. The state was making clear attempts to neutralise the situation and saw the events of 1931 as communal in nature and thus tried to control it.

It was the events of 13th July Jail Incident which led to a vocal condemnation of the state and Maharaja, the signs of growing unease were visible in the Jammu region from the beginning of the year itself. It was not in vacuum or as a sudden disruption by one single event that boosted the dissent, but was fuelled by number of happenings that preceded the event and growing recognition of the state as being a Hindu state.. Prem Nath Bazaz (an active Kashmiri Pandit political actor and a close ally of Sheikh) went on to highlight that the agitation “in 1931 the Hindu Raj was the enemy which was to be overthrown.”¹⁷⁴

¹⁷¹ *Press Cuttings (The Tribune, 28 August 1931)*, S.no. 3546, Basta no. 144, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

¹⁷² *Kashmir’s Situation (Akhbar-i-aam, 8th August 1931, “Kashmir Riots: Futile Attempts to Subvert the Government”)*, S.no. 2954, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

¹⁷³ Raghavan- *The Warnings of Kashmir*, 67.

¹⁷⁴ Prem Nath Bazaz, *The History of Struggle for Freedom in Kashmir (New Delhi: Kashmir Publishing House, 1954)*, 237.

2.5 Events post-1931

The months following the trial of Abdul Qadeer and the jail incident threw open an unstable state of affairs in the state where the power dynamics can be seen as shifting away from the state and towards the people of the state. While the jail event happened in Kashmir, it was to have great impact in the Jammu region and the state's relationship with the outside world.

After the troublesome July, the Maharaja convened a meeting with Muslim representatives of Kashmir alongside some loyalists of the state in July.. The loyalist Muslims, who were mainly the Muslim *jagirdars*, pledged their loyalty to the state. However, as quoted by Mridu Rai, "the Resident suggested, the greatest difficulty the maharaja would have to face came not from the small Kashmiri Muslim elite but from the public disapproval of his policies freely expressed in British India and particularly in the Punjab,"¹⁷⁵ i.e. the discontent was no longer contained within the elite few but had reached down to the people from all sections of the society.

Punjab had a sizable population from Jammu and Kashmir which had migrated owing to reasons of employment and education. It was under such circumstances that Allama Iqbal, an important political figure and poet who was ethnically a Kashmiri Muslim but was born and raised in Punjab, came to organise All India meeting of Muslims at Shimla on 25th July 1931¹⁷⁶, which led to the formation of Kashmir Committee.¹⁷⁷ The Kashmir Committee in showing solidarity with Kashmir muslims announced 14th August to be celebrated as "Kashmir Day" throughout the 'Muhammedan centres in British India'¹⁷⁸ by organising of meetings and strikes as the situation in the state was viewed as an attack on the muslims of the state for which a joint effort needed to be put in the

¹⁷⁵ R/1/1/2064, CRR (Political Department). From the Resident in Kashmir, dated 3 August 1931, IOL. Cited in Rai, *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects*, 260.

¹⁷⁶ Amar Jahangir, Anbrin Khawaja, and Umer Yaqoob, "An Analytical Study of Iqbal's Connection with Kashmir," *Global Social Sciences Review* VII (II): 176-183 (2002). doi:[https://doi.org/10.31703/gssr.2022\(VII-II\).17](https://doi.org/10.31703/gssr.2022(VII-II).17)

¹⁷⁷ Abdullah, *Flames of Chinar*, 24- 25.

¹⁷⁸ R/1/1/2064, CRR (Political Department). From the Resident in Kashmir, dated 17 August 1931, IOL. Cited in Rai, *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects*, 260.

subcontinent to pressurise the maharaja.¹⁷⁹ Two rival Muslim sects from Punjab, i.e. *Ahmadiyyas* and *Ahrars* also got themselves entangled in this wave of politics and dissent which was encircling the state. The issue of Muslim discrimination and marginality in the state was thus gaining momentum as the populace of the state came in touch with the British India through which Kashmir issue was no longer an internal issue of the state but had garnered outside attention.

While *Ahmadiyyas* found more ground in the Kashmir region, it was the *Ahrars* who came to associate themselves closely with Jammu region. As early as November 1931, newspapers reported *ahrar jathas* entering the state through the Suchetgarh border.¹⁸⁰ Their movement along the borders of the state and reports of confrontation with the state came where they were regularly being arrested and/or denied entry into the state.¹⁸¹ It gave impetus to the Hindu-Muslim divide which was already spreading in the region. *The Zamindar* (published from Lahore) dated 7th November 1931 reported that a group of *ahrars* was attacked by the Dogras army, leaving 3 dead and 45 injured while they were trying to enter the state.¹⁸² References of camps of *Ahrars* being set up at Suchetgarh border (in Jammu region) are also found (*The Vir Bharat*, 7th November 1931)¹⁸³ alongside references of attacks by the *ahrar jathas* on the state cavalry in Jammu region near Ranbirsinghpura (*The Vir Bharat*, 9th November 1931).¹⁸⁴ The involvement and mobilisation conducted by *ahrars* in the state affairs posed a threat to the state. The inability of the state troops in handling the situation can also be seen in Maharaja's call for British help as the *ahrar* activity

¹⁷⁹ Jahangir, "An analytical Study".

¹⁸⁰ *Control over Kashmir Agitation* (*The Vir Bharat*, 7th November 1931), S.no 3561, Basta no. 44, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

¹⁸¹ *Control over Kashmir Agitation* (*The Vir Bharat*, 7th November 1931), S.no. 3561, Basta no. 44, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

¹⁸² *Control over Kashmir Agitation* (*The Zamindar*, 7th November 1931), S.no. 3561, Basta no. 44, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

¹⁸³ *Control over Kashmir Agitation* (*The Vir Bharat*, 7th November 1931), S.no. 3561, Basta no. 44, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

¹⁸⁴ *Control over Kashmir Agitation* (*The Vir Bharat*, 9th November 1931), S.no. 3561, Basta no. 44, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

increased post-July jail incident and on 4th November 1931, the British troops stationed themselves at Mirpur (Jammu region).¹⁸⁵

The demography in Jammu region which was dominated by Muslims numerically was overwhelmingly peasantry which was reeling under tax burden and the presence of *ahars* combined the economic factors with the communal in which the landlords and moneylenders who were mostly Hindus came under attack. The conflation of the two could be seen in the mobilisation that was happening in mosques as reported by the C.V. Salsbury in the Revenue Administration Report (1932), wherein the Hindus and the state administration was “being represented as identical.”¹⁸⁶ Although small in number, as reported by Mridu Rai, some instances of attacks on muslim landlords and creditors have also been reported wherever they were present in Jammu region.¹⁸⁷ Working for the state, these landlords and moneylenders represented as the immediate representatives of the state’s exploitation. Since the majority of the landlords and moneylenders belonged to the Hindu community, they also became symbols of Hindu oppression on the Muslims. Thus, they were being targeted, irrespective of their religion while the emphasis on religion was also not entirely missing.

Gauhar Rahman, a prominent member of Young Men’s Muslim Assosiation (Jammu) made press announcements against the Dogra revenue system.¹⁸⁸ Soon afterwards, a ‘No Land Revenue Movement’ or ‘Maliya Band Tahreek’ movement began in Mirpur and spread to Bhimber, Mendhar in Poonch and some parts of Rajouri in the Jammu region¹⁸⁹ which continued to spill over to January next year i.e. 1932 as could be seen from various newspaper reports by *The Daily Herald*,

¹⁸⁵ Sheikh, *Flames of Chinar*, 27.

¹⁸⁶ R/1/1/2279 (1), CRR, Report by C.V. Salusbury on the Revenue Administration of the Mirpur Tahsil, IOL.” Cited in Rai, *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects*, 264.

¹⁸⁷ Rai, *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects*, 265.

¹⁸⁸ Serena Hussain (ed.), *Society and Politics of Jammu and Kashmir* (Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021), 11.

¹⁸⁹ M. Y. Saraf, *Kashmiris Fight for Freedom. vol. 1.* (Lahore: Ferozesons, 1971). Quoted in Serena Hussain, *Society and Politics*, 1.1

The Eastern Times and *The Tribune*¹⁹⁰ about demonstrations, protests, raids and burning of villages by Hindus and Muslims. In one incidence reported in *The Eastern Times* (6th January 1932), protestors including children were beaten by the police for shouting *Allah-o- Akbar* in the Jammu city.¹⁹¹ The spill-over effect was such that the tension spread to the neighboring Punjab where in Lahore, according to *The Eastern Times* (1st January 1932), Hindus were reported to have stabbed Muslims in response to Jammu disturbances.¹⁹² Hindu Sewa Ashram¹⁹³ also came to form a 'Kashmir Hindu Defence Force' and offered the Kashmir state its help in crushing the muslim agitation.¹⁹⁴ While this was happening, the state decided to forcibly get revenue from peasants in Mirpur by sending collectors with armed men,¹⁹⁵ which soon led to a firing on Muslims as reported in *The Eastern Times* (25th January 1932).¹⁹⁶

Throughout the period of January-February 1932, several newspapers reported happenings of violence, plunder and displacement in Jammu region, especially the areas around Mirpur district. These reports showed that a discourse was forming on how the lootings, raiding and arson which

¹⁹⁰ *Kashmir's Situation*, S.no. 2954, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

¹⁹¹ *Kashmir's Situation (The Eastern Times*, 6th January 1932), S.no. 2954, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

¹⁹² *Kashmir Situation (The Eastern Times*, 1st January 1932), S.no. 2954 (1931), Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

The Easter Times dated 1st January, 1932 in a letter to the editor titled "The Lahore Riots" reported that:

"As Dogra tyranny in conjunction with the Rajput's oppression brought about catastrophe in Kashmir the local Hindus seem to follow suit. This example as is evident from the last weekend's happenings at Lahore when quite unawares the Hindu armed with knives and clubs are reported to have fallen on poor, innocent Muslims, stabbing a few, two of whom have unfortunately succumbed to their injuries."

¹⁹³ Indra Prakash, *A Review of the History Work of the Hindu Mahasabha and the Hindu Sangathan Movement* (New Delhi: The Akhil Bhartiya Hindu Mahasabha, 1938). Hindu Sewa Ashram was founded by Bhai Parmanand in Delhi "for training persons who would devote their lives to the Hindu Sangathan Movement".

¹⁹⁴ *Kashmir Situation (The Daily Herald*, 2nd October 1931), S.no. 2954, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

¹⁹⁵ "R/1/1/2245, CRR (Political Department), Extract from a demi-official letter from C.V. Salusbury, Officer on Special Duty, dated 5 February 1932, IOL." Cited in Rai, *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects: Islam, Rights, and the History of Kashmir*, 264.

¹⁹⁶ *Kashmir Situation (The Eastern Times*, 25th January 1932), S.no. 2954, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

were shown as not acts of irrational mob run amok but as planned activities. Reports of forced conversions were also available. The Hindu organisation's representatives like Dina Nath who was the secretary of Arya Samaj at Bhimber reported that

I reached Bhimber yesterday to organise relief. During these twenty- hours that I have been here I have met about a dozen refugees who were forcibly converted to Islam by the Mohammeden rebels and who have managed to escape, leaving behind their families in many cases. I am not giving the list because it would make my letter too long for a daily newspaper to publish. Only in the village Garun some 40 Hindu families have been made to accept Islam (*The Civil and Military Gazette*, 21st February 1932).¹⁹⁷

Similarly, a member of Working Committee of the All India Aryan League, Swami Ramanand Swami who stayed in the Jammu region between 10th February and 17th February gave an account of Bhimber, Mipur and conversions to Islam (*The Tribune*, 21st February 1932).¹⁹⁸ Thus, the Hindu organisations were emphasising on the conversions of Hindus to Islam in their narrative of events published in newspapers. On the other hand, some other newspapers made the opposite claim and in fact, called these reports an "exaggeration" (*The Civil and Military Gazette*, 13th February 1932) or an "anglo-Indian Press Propaganda" (*The Leader*, 17th February 1932).¹⁹⁹ While there existed two narratives on conversion, owing to the sensitivity of the issue and different allegiances of the people, organisations and press, the narrative of displacement was unequivocal. There were numerous displacements that occurred of both Hindus and Muslims in these affected areas which came under the Jammu region.²⁰⁰ Some people were moving from one village to another and also acted as

¹⁹⁷ *Kashmir Situation* (*The Civil and Military Gazette*, 21st February 1932), S.no. 2954, Basta no.118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

¹⁹⁸ *Kashmir Situation* (*The Tribune*, 21st February 1932), S.no. 2954, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

¹⁹⁹ *Kashmir Situation* (*The Leader*, 17th February 1932), S.no. 2954, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

²⁰⁰ *Kashmir Situation*, S.no. 2954, Basta no.118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

harbingers of incoming threat and some moved to areas in Punjab because of the geographical proximity. *The Statesmen* (5th February, 1932) reported that:

The worst sufferers of Pindi were *banias*. A *hindu* remarked corroborated by a Moslem, that when rioters were busy several Hindus were given refuge by Moslem householders. Witnesses from both communities put the marauders' numbers at 2,000 or more, which it is thought may mean 200 or so.

Kotla: suffered a little worse. Apparently some warning of what was coming was given some days before plundering began, and it is said that a *Maulvi* was preaching war on Hindus in the neighbouring village for some days before. On January 25 Hindus resolved to evacuate the village and seek refuge under the British Raj, as they put it, and they sent a few women and children to Jhelum on the following day. Evacuation and plundering on the days.

Sukhchainpur: a good deal more than an ordinary dacoity. The Hindu temple and practically all the 35 or more Hindu houses were completely gutted by fire, which in some houses is still smouldering, nearly a week after the raid.

The Moslem quarter is unscathed, despite its immediate proximity to the Hindu quarter, but many Moslem inhabitants appear to have moved to other villages. Those who stayed acquitted themselves of responsibility- blamed on outsiders.

One old Moslem's explanation deserves fuller repetition. He first suggested that the Hindus had fired their own houses to spite the Muslims. When he saw that this did not go down very well with his hearers he entered into a detailed account of how, after the shopkeepers had retired for the night, their store of matchboxes may have chafed each other until they caught fire from spontaneous combustion so to speak.²⁰¹

In response to these events, Hindus and Muslims outside the state tried to show their support through mass meetings as was the case of Hindus of Multan (*Hindustan Times*, 5th February 1932)²⁰², joint sit-down of Santan Dharam Youngmen's Association at Amritsar (*The Tribune*, 6th

²⁰¹ *Kashmir Situation* (*The Statesman*, 5th February 1932), S.no. 2954, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

²⁰² *Kashmir Situation* (*Hindustan Times*, 5th February 1932), S.no. 2954, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

February 1932),²⁰³ Hindu Mahasabha made calls for celebrating February 14 to be celebrated as All India Kashmir Hindu Sufferers' Day (*The Tribune*, 7th February 1932)²⁰⁴ and All India Aryan League sent its member Swami Ramanand Sanyasi to look into the matters occurring in the state (*The Tribune*, 21st February, 1932).²⁰⁵ Meanwhile, "a huge procession organised by local Muslims under the auspices of *Majhlis-i-Ahrar* at Amritsar to observe the memory of those Muslims, who have been martyred during the Mirpur disturbances."²⁰⁶ *The Sunday Times* (1st March 1932) also stated that in Punjab "... vile and wicked songs were openly sung by the bands of Muslim youth attacking His Highness the Maharaja of Kashmir and his government."²⁰⁷ The Punjab politics was deeply getting entrenched with both Hindu and Muslim politics of the state.

There were also reports of Hindus mobilizing themselves to attack Muslims through a concocted plan apart from excesses of the state, as this news piece in *The Eastern Times* (14th February, 1932) states:

Jhelum: Some Hindus of Mirpur tehsil (Kashmir) have come to Jhelum for purchasing arms and ammunition. Yesterday, a Hindu resident of Jhelum using his won license bought 100 cartridges from the shop of a Hindu merchant of arms with the Mirpur Hindus money, and handed them to the latter. Many other Hindus of Jhelum, it is understood, are similarly purchasing ammunition to supplying it to Mirpur Hindus.

Mirpur: Muslims from Kotli who have reached here stories of the atrocities of Dogra police perpetrated on Muslims. They allege that the Superintendent of Police lodged several wounded Muslims in the lock- up but when the matter was brought to the notice of Mr. Lawther, Inspector- General of Police and Mr Jordon, Finance Member, they ordered that

²⁰³ *Kashmir Situation (The Tribune*, 6th February 1932), S.no. 2954, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

²⁰⁴ *Kashmir Situation (The Tribune*, 7th February 1932), S.no. 2954, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

²⁰⁵ *Kashmir Situation (The Tribune*, 21st February 1932), S.no. 2954, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

²⁰⁶ *Kashmir Situation (The Tribune*, 21st February 1932), ..no. 2954, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

²⁰⁷ *The Prime Ministership in J&K (The Sunday Times*, 1st March 1932), S.no. 2949, Basta no.118, Publicity Department, state Archives, Jammu.

these people should be sent to hospitals, where the latter, it is alleged, are not being treated properly, the Doctors being all Hindus.²⁰⁸

Owing to these circumstances, several Muslims also had to move to take refuge in Jammu city and nearby Punjab towns (*The Civil and Military Gazette*, 18th February 1932). These events were to have lasting impact in the relationship of different communities amongst themselves. While the displaced were eventually re-settled and came back, Hindu and Muslims both, the fissures that were created at the time re-opened in 1947 when the state was engulfed with tribal attacks on Hindus²⁰⁹ and the Jammu Massacre of the Muslims.²¹⁰

2.6 State Response

As the state had been wary of press and there existed no internal freedom of press in the state, the only sources for circulation of information were through news media that entered the state from outside. The state's paranoia about the news medium is clear in how it used Publicity Department to scrutinise and sometimes ban the newspapers from entering the state,²¹¹ and within the state there existed only one non-government newspaper at this time i.e. *The Ranbir* of Mulkh Raj Saraf. After the violence and chaos that gripped the region, built on state's anxiety over news media and its ability to produce propaganda and for using it as agent of dissemination of information in general, it promulgated Regulation No. XIII, Jammu and Kashmir Emergency Powers in 1931. According to Regulation no. XIII, publication of false news intended to inflame emotions leading to turbulence was to be penalised and Sub- Clause V of Clause 4 of the Regulation invested powers

²⁰⁸ *Kashmir Situation (The Eastern Times*, 14th February 1932), S.no. 2954, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, state Archives, Jammu.

²⁰⁹ In 1947, after the British left, the state, especially the areas of Mirpur and Muzaffrabad faced acute violence from Muslim groups which were popularly deemed to be "Tribal raids".

²¹⁰ In 1947, the Jammu city witnessed killing of Muslims *en masse*.

²¹¹ *Correspondence regarding The Inquilab, Lahore*, S.no. 896 (22/-), Basta No. 33, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu. In 1931, the newspaper *Inquilab* was warned by the state and an apology was demanded for writing against the state. Eventually, its entry into the state was banned.

in First Class Magistrates to collect fines in response to dacoities and arson.²¹² Touted initially to be a short-term solution to control the growing feelings of disaffection for a short span of time till the situation is controlled, it was applied again in January 1932 when it was realised that the situation was still not stable.

One day after the 13th July incident, i.e. on 14th July 1931, the state appointed an enquiry committee called Srinagar Riot Enquiry Committee to look into the events of 13th July. Its members included the Chief Justice of the state High Court (Sir Barjor Dalal) as the the Chairman and Two other High court judges (B.R. Sawhney and Abdul Qayoom).²¹³ Initially, the commission also included non-official Hindu and Muslim members, but soon the non-official Muslim members withdrew because the “...Mohammadan public opinion did not desire that a representative Commission of officials and non-officials belonging to both the communities should function....”²¹⁴ The committee conducted interviews with 112 witnesses including G.E.C. Wakefield, Foreign and Political Minister, Jammu and Brigadier Sutherland, Army’s Chief of State.²¹⁵ The final report was published on 24th September 1931. Brigadier Sutherland’s recounted that “he has sent two troops to the Central Jail on the 13th July.”²¹⁶ When he arrived at the Jail compound, he found “a number of brick bats and stones lying on the ground of the compound.”²¹⁷ He also added that the “number of stones was very large and I can safely say that a large number of person must have thrown the stones.”²¹⁸ The British testimony here in talking of military presented its efforts as brave and just and nowhere was any mention of the excesses of the army, if any, referred to. Another witness

²¹² *Maharja of Kashmir*, S.no. 2953, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu. Several newspapers reported the promulgation of the Regulation XIII in 1931.

²¹³ Srinagar Riots Commission, 1.

²¹⁴ Srinagar Riots Commission, 1.

²¹⁵ Srinagar Riots Commission, 1.

²¹⁶ *Press Cutting (The Tribune*, 28th August 1931), S. no. 3546, Basta No. 144, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

²¹⁷ *Press Cutting (The Tribune*, 28th August 1931), S. no. 3546, Basta No. 144, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

²¹⁸ *Press Cutting (The Tribune*, 28th August 1931), S. no. 3546, Basta No. 144, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

deposed before the Commission, Dr. Ghulam Mohammad, BA, LLB who accompanied the counsel to the jail on the 13th to watch the case of Abdul Qadir stated that he “saw the people running away as soon as the firing started.” On further enquiry on how were people shot at the front if they were running away, he replied that only those who were left behind when the crowd was dispersing were shot. It is relevant in this case that the witness had received help from ‘All India Kashmir Conference’ while he studied law at London, thus was a sympathiser with the people.²¹⁹ On the other end, Sanatan Dharam Youngmen’s Association in its statement before the Enquiry Commission in August charged the Government with yielding to agitation and failing to enforce the law even when specific warning of the impending trouble had been given by responsible Hindu publicmen.²²⁰ However, the commission was boycotted by the Muslim community as Mr Barjor Dalal was seen as a stooge of the state and thus there existed no trust in the enquiry being conducted. There were produced contradictory narratives by the British and the muslims on how the situation on 13th of July went out of hand. In Sanatan Dharam Youngmen’s Assosiation’s case, there was dissatisfaction over creation of the committee itself for it was seen as bowing down to the muslim demands.

After the boycott and continuing tension and chaos in the state, another Commission was appointed on 12th November, 1931, which was headed by B.J. Glancy as the Chairman.. The aim was not only to discern the events of violence and protest, but also to investigate the general grievances of various communities in the state. A British ICS official, Glancy had been serving the state since 1920s and in 1931 was serving as an officer in the Political Department of the Government of India. His British identity convinced the people in the state that he will be a neutral observer and is versed with the situation beforehand because of his long presence in the state since 1920s, thus making his appointment largely acceptable. To balance the proportion and keep the representation fair, the Commission included “four non-official representatives of Hindus and Muslims of Jammu

²¹⁹ *Press Reports (The Tribune, 15th August 1931)*, S.no. 3544, Basta No. 144, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

²²⁰ *Press Reports (The Tribune, 15th August 1931)*, S.no. 3544, Basta No. 144, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

and Kashmir Provinces as members to inquire into the grievances, religious and secular, of different communities.”²²¹ Chaudhari Ghulam Abbas and Pandit Lok Nath Sharma were nominated from Jammu and their counterparts in Kashmir were Khwaja Ghulam Ahmad Ashai and Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz. The commission submitted its final report with recommendations on 22nd March, 1932. The recommendations were aimed at making the state more equitable in terms of job opportunities and education, uplifting the life of the peasants and increasing freedom of press, thus making a case for a just and inclusive welfare for the subjects of the state. Following this, a process of democratisation was also set in motion through establishment of a Legislative Assembly, albeit limited in its scope.²²² Religious rights were also honoured through redeployment of religious sites to the Muslims and Hindus which had earlier been in the possession of the state.²²³ On 10th April, 1932, the Glancy recommendations were passed through an order by the Maharaja.²²⁴ However, the recommendations of the Commission were not readily accepted by the Kashmiri Pandits and under the umbrella of ‘Yuvak Sabha’²²⁵ rose in agitation, ‘Roti Agitation’, as they dreaded losing their position in the state if the new recommendations by Glancy were implemented.²²⁶ The agitation was started by the leaders L. Kilam and Kashyap Bandhu.²²⁷ The community, in fact had been opposed to the very appointment of the Commission as well and Prem Nath Bazaz, a Kashmiri Pandit who stayed on the Commission as a result came under sharp attack by his own community.

²²¹ Publicity Department, *A Handbook of Jammu and Kashmir State* 3rd ed. (Jammu: The Ranbir Govt. Press, 1947), 34.

²²² All India State People’s Conference, *Kashmir*, S.no, 562, Basta no. 20, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu. Pamphlet titled “Kashmir” published by General Secretary, All India States’ People’s Conference, Bombay (January 1939). It had 75 members, out of which 42 were nominated and 33 were elected.

²²³ Rai, *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects*, 217.

²²⁴ Vaid, *Socio- Economic Roots*, 66.

²²⁵ Yuvak Sabha was an organisation of Kashmiri Pandit youth engaged in politics for welfare of the Kashmiri Pandit faction.

²²⁶ Bazaz, *The History of Struggle*, 164-165.

²²⁷ Yasir Bashir, “From Muslim Conference to National Conference: Sheikh Abdullah’s Quest for Secularism,” in Serena Hussain ed. *Society and Politics of Jammu and Kashmir* (Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021), 137.

In order to look into the events that had engulfed the state, another Commission was appointed under Mr. Leonard Middleton on 5th December, 1931, as the earlier committee under Sir Barjor Dalal which was published in September 1931 only looked at the July events and since then, the state had undergone several other instances of violence.. The Middleton Commission's role was to look into the various events that happened in Jammu and Kashmir regions in September 1931 in Kashmir and November 1931 in Jammu.²²⁸ The report carried accounts from 312 witnesses from Jammu. The report claimed that while in Kashmir, the violence was only partly communal in nature, it was entirely communal in Jammu region which started with mock funeral processions carried out by Muslims on 29th October and 1st November ("emboldened" by *Ahrar* support) and followed by public onslaught of various Hindu and Muslim community members. In his report, published on 29th February, 1932, Middleton talked about the beginning of suspicions and mobilisation:

The posters issued by Rajput and Hindu Associations show that members of those communities regarded the Muslim agitation as partly communal and in themselves increased communal feeling.²²⁹

Further, in detailing the riots that broke out and the Hindu-Muslim volunteers that made the situation tense in Jammu city, he talks about the various areas within the city which had become bastions of Hindus and Muslims:

The position in the disturbed centres just before the riot broke out was entirely without official control. A very large crowd of Mohammedans including armed volunteers was in the Ghazi camp and the Residency Road adjacent thereto and there was an equally large mob of Hindus in the neighbourhood of the City Chauk and Raghunath Bazar; a small

²²⁸ Report on an enquiry into disturbances in Kashmir in September 1931 and in Jammu and its environments in November 1931 conducted by Mr. L.Middleton, I.C.S. File No. 140-P, Digitized Public Records, Foreign and Political, Delhi: National Archives of India.
<https://indianculture.gov.in/archives/report-enquiry-disturbances-kashmir-september-1931-and-jammu-and-its-environments-november>

²²⁹ Report on an enquiry into disturbances in Kashmir in September 1931 and in Jammu and its environments in November 1931 conducted by Mr. L.Middleton, I.C.S. File No. 140-P, Digitized Public Records, Foreign and Political, Delhi: National Archives of India.
<https://indianculture.gov.in/archives/report-enquiry-disturbances-kashmir-september-1931-and-jammu-and-its-environments-november>

party of Musclemen volunteers was at the head of Urdu Bazar close to Has Mandi and there was a band of Hindu volunteers in Kanak Mandi.²³⁰

The report clearly put the blame on communal distrust and riot in the Jammu city as a result of what happened in Kashmir post-July Jail incident and emboldened by involvement of various organisations. The excited feelings were blamed to be on purely communal intentions and had nothing to do with demands of particular grievances like Kashmir.

Alongside the appointment of the Commissions, Maharaja also appointed a new Prime Minister in the early 1932, i.e. Colonel E.J.D. Colvin, who remained in office till 1936.²³¹ His ascent as the Prime Minister was to replace the Hindu Prime Minister Hari Krishan Kaul who was under constant criticism by the people of the state for his failure to bring the situation in the state under control. Maharaja's awareness of this and the tension in the state in general prompted his decision to use a British official as a neutral face of the Government.

After the violence had subsided and common people were trying to retrieve their life, the state had to provide some relief measures. In a bid to soothe the situation and show its paternalism in the state and to make up for the loss (although exact figures for the loss that was incurred is unavailable), the state took several measures to resettle both Hindus and Muslims. Even three years after the looting, arson and displacement that had gripped Mirpur, Bhimber, Kotli etc., the question remained relevant as can be seen that, during Praja Sabha's session of 11th April 1935 in response to a question on state's relief measures, Captain Kanwar Hira Singh (on behalf of the Hon'ble Prime Minister) declared that:

The survivors of persons who were killed in the Jammu riots in 1931 were given a relief of Rs 1,230 while those who were rendered destitute on account of loss of property were given

²³⁰ Report on an enquiry into disturbances in Kashmir in September 1931 and in Jammu and its environments in November 1931 conducted by Mr. L.Middleton, I.C.S. File No. 140-P, Digitized Public Records, Foreign and Political, Delhi: National Archives of India.
<https://indianculture.gov.in/archives/report-enquiry-disturbances-kashmir-september-1931-and-jammu-and-its-environments-november>

²³¹ Lamb, *Kashmir*, 91.

a sum of Rs 1,712-9-0 as relief to alleviate their distress. A sum of Rs 3,500 was advanced to two boot merchants of Jammu as loan free of interest repayable within 5 years to enable them to re-start their business.

As for Mirpur a sum of Rs 39, 935 was advanced as Taccavi loan to those who had suffered loss of property in the disturbances while those whose houses had been burnt were given various sums of money in cash besides timber from forests to enable them to rebuild their houses and to resettle in the places which they had deserted. Accurate figures are not yet available as the accounts are under compilation.²³²

As pointed out already, as recommended by Glancy Commission, the state also established *Praja Sabha* (Legislative Assembly) which was inaugurated on 17th October 1934 with Sir Barjor Dalal as the President at Srinagar. It had 75 members, out of which 42 were nominated and 33 were elected.²³³ The elected were based on the system of separate electorates wherein 21 seats were reserved for the Muslims, 10 for Hindus, and two for Sikhs. The number of elected seats were increased to 40 only in 193, with the distribution of Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs the same. The new additions were to include from *jagirdars*, *mufidars*, *mukkararidars*, landholders and pensioners.²³⁴ By 1944, one Hindu and one Muslim elected member was included as Ministers in the state which has been referred to as his attempt at ‘dyarchy’,²³⁵ which however lasted for only few months. On the other hand, the electorate throughout was guided by a narrow franchise of “men paying at least Rs 20 a year in land revenue or grazing taxes, thereby effectively leaving out large numbers of the poor.”²³⁶

The powers of the Praja Sabha was also limited. Gupta writes:

It could ask questions, move resolutions, introduce bills and discuss the state budget.

But any bill passed by the Praja Sabha could be sent back for reconsideration

²³² S.no. 13107, Jammu and Kashmir Assembly Debates, Volume III (Jammu: The Ranbir Government Press, 1935), 413- 414.

²³³ S.no, 562, Basta no. 20, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu. Pamphlet titled “Kashmir” published by General Secretary, All India States’ People’s Conference, Bombay (January 1939).

²³⁴ Jammu and Kashmir Act, 1939.

²³⁵ Lamb, *Kashmir*, 94. See also, Gupta, *Jammu and Kashmir*, 68.

²³⁶ Rai, *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects*, 274.

together with the amendments, if any, proposed by the Maharaja. Should the Praja Sabha refuse to pass a bill proposed by the Council of Ministers of the Maharaja's Government, the Maharaja was empowered to certify that such bills be passed in the interest of the state and, on his certification, these would become Acts. The Legislature had no power over the Privy Purse of the Maharaja, the organisation and control of the State Army, or the provisions of the Constitution.²³⁷

Further bills, effecting “public revenue, religious beliefs and observances and usage of any class of the subjects, maintenance and discipline of His Highness’ Privy Purse, State Department, Dharmarth Department, Rights granted to Illaqadars and Jagirdars, matters regarding Gilgit and Ladakh”²³⁸ were considered as Reserved Bills. As written in a pamphlet titled *Kashmir*, published by General Secretary, All India States’ People’s Conference, Bombay in 1939, the “Assembly is only a recommendatory body subservient to the control of the Council of Ministers.”²³⁹ At the same time, through Praja Sabha instituted an official channel and space for debating issues of socio-economic and political importance in the state between the state and the non-state actors.

Thus, the state made active attempts to engage with the political discourse and dissatisfactions, however failed to achieve the desired effect as will be seen in the years after 1931-32 where organisation and mobilisation became rampant and demands for power increased.

2.7 Conclusion:

The decades of 1920s were thus seminal in the making of political consciousness of the Muslims of the state who had begin to mobilise themselves, although the expression remained limited. The two regions of Jammu and Kashmir influenced activity at times based on the common identity of being a Hindu or Muslim. But the grievances were not only limited to communal identity but also merged class and regional issues at times. Thus, there co-existed fluid and rigid demarcations of communal identity which changed according to context. The beginning of 1930s gave rise to vigorous

²³⁷ Gupta, *Jammu and Kashmir*, 59.

²³⁸ S.no, 562, Basta no. 20, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu. Pamphlet titled “Kashmir” published by General Secretary, All India States’ People’s Conference, Bombay (January 1939).

²³⁹ S.no, 562, Basta no. 20, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu. Pamphlet titled “Kashmir” published by General Secretary, All India States’ People’s Conference, Bombay (January 1939).

anti-state as well as inter-communal dissent and violence. The power dynamics began to tilt away from the state and towards the people as can be seen in state's attempts at controlling the situation and trying to stylise itself as a paternal figure. Moreover, there can also be traced an emerging trend of Hindu and Muslim organisations from outside the state like Sanatan Dharam Youngmen's Assosiation, Hindu Mahasabha, Majhlis-i-Ahrar, Ahmaddiyas getting entangled with the issues of the state. Through this, they took part in providing support to their fellow communities, helped mobilise and also brought the state's issues to sub-continent's politics.

Chapter 3

Making of the Public Discourse

The chapter will look into the making of public discourse by first looking at how the public sphere was characterised and how was the path navigated through limited space for press, organisations, political parties to vocalise the dissatisfactions and mobilisations. Then, it will also explore how the public discourse which was developing outside the state interacted with the state's situation and was also in turn effected by it.

3.1 The Public Sphere

The “public sphere” in the Habermasian²⁴⁰ sense of a modern bourgeois class was not readily available in the state. The people who were getting effected and were participating in mobilisation had to negotiate with the state to create this space for expression within the state to use press and organise themselves.

In a letter addressed to the Editor of *The Eastern Times*,²⁴¹ the anonymous author draws out that:

²⁴⁰ “As a sphere between civil society and the state, in which critical public discussion of matters of general interest was institutionally guaranteed, the liberal public sphere took shape in the specific historical circumstances of a developing market economy. In its clash with the arcane and bureaucratic practices of the absolutist state, the emergent bourgeoisie gradually replaced a public sphere in which the ruler's power was merely represented before the people with a sphere in which state authority was publicly monitored through informed and critical discourse *by the people*.” Jurgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press (1991), xi.

²⁴¹ “In 1931 appeared.... Muslim daily in English, the Eastern Times. It was started by Ferozsons, a Lahore publishing house, and was edited in the beginning by the late Abdulla Yusaf Ali. It is recorded in the book on Mian Fazl-i-Husain by its author that the Eastern Times was the only newspaper in the Punjab which held high the cause of the Unionist Party...” S.M.A. Feroze, “The English Press in Colonial India”, *The Dawn* (September 18, 2017) <https://www.dawn.com/news/1358484>

There are two forces at work in Kashmir at present. Some say that the demands of the Muslims are hollow and try to show their hollowness. Some try to give their lawful cry the colour of a conspiracy to dethrone His Highness the Maharaja of Kashmir. The Muslims have given proofs by word and deed of our loyalty to the person and Throne of His Highness.²⁴²

The writer further adds how it is

.....difficult to bring our grievances to Maharaja because of practically all means of press, social association prohibited in the State.²⁴³

The letter mentioned above published on 18th February 1932 gives a glimpse into how various forces were at play in making the expressions of Muslims demands coloured and were being presented in the popular discourse. It also reflects the disappointment [of Muslims] of being painted as conspiring against the Maharaja for merely expressing their demands and disquiet. It also brings out the limitations presented by an inert and overt prohibition of press and mass association which arguably was not allowing them to present a counter to the propaganda against the politically active Muslims. There was thus a limited public space which was available for expression in the state, owing to the strict scrutiny and prohibitory laws. The space had to be constructed as the necessity for it became apparent with the rising tensions and violence in the state.

Since many people from the state went outside to pursue higher education and for seeking employment opportunities they came in contact with other ideas as well. Mulkh Raj Saraf, the man who hailed from Jammu region and was responsible for opening up of the first non-Government newspaper in the State in 1925, attended the Congress Session at Amritsar (1919) and also worked as a sub- editor in Lala Lajpat Rai's daily *Bande Matram*.²⁴⁴ The nationalist politics in the sub-continent as a whole and the socio-political situation in Punjab in particular influenced him greatly which enabled him to start his newspaper with a stated non-partisan stance. Sheikh Abdullah,

²⁴² *Kashmir's Situation* (*The Kashmir Times*, 18th February 1932), S.no. 2954, Basta No. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

²⁴³ *Kashmir's Situation* (*The Kashmir Times*, 18th February 1932), S.no. 2954, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

²⁴⁴ Mulkh Raj Saraf, *50 Years as a Journalist* (Raj Mahal Publishers: Jammu, 1967), 17.

founder of All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference²⁴⁵ and a leading figure in state, also due to his time spent in Aligarh Muslim University came in contact with the active Muslim politics at Aligarh, which was key in development of his political consciousness against the discrimination that was prevalent in his home state. In his autobiography, he stated that “Aligarh had become the nerve centre of Muslim unrest. Following the modernization of Turkey, the Khilafat movement had begun to wane. Despite their deep disappointment, Muslims aspired for independence as was evident from massive turnouts at political meetings. It was impossible for me to remain indifferent to this highly-charged emotional environment.”²⁴⁶

Despite the flow of new ideas and changing character of discourse in the state and in the subcontinent, the Publicity Department of the state was actively scrutinising press and made classifications based on the material content that was published in them leading to blacklisting of certain newspapers from time to time when a threat to the state and its functioning were apparent. In many instances, warnings were issued indicating the kind of material which was permissible to be written about. In 1931, a Press Communique was issued which asked the newspaper *Inqilab* to apologise for publishing a critique of the Government and its ministers, and was threatened to be proscribed otherwise which it eventually was (as the Publicity Department’s records show).²⁴⁷ In one of the pieces that rattled the Government, *The Inqilab* (5th October 1931) wrote:

Mr. P.K. Wattal²⁴⁸ is hopelessly bigoted. He is swayed by the Punjab Hindu Mahasabha of which his father-in law is the head, in his anti- Muslim policy. He has taken a vow that he will crush Mohammedans and at the rate he is proceeding against them, they will have to perform “hijrat”.

²⁴⁵ All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference was formed in 1932 under the aegis of Sheikh Abdullah after the Glancy Commission’s recommendations were accepted and allowed for formation of political parties and organisations,

²⁴⁶ Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, *Flames of Chinar*, trans. Khushwant Singh (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 1995), 9.

²⁴⁷ *Press Cuttings*, S.no. 896 (22/-), Basta No. 33, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

²⁴⁸ P.K. Wattal was a minister in Maharaja’s administration who was in-charge of the Industries Department.

He is working the Industry Department only to pamper the Hindu capitalists.²⁴⁹

In another instance in December 1931, the Punjab government have forfeited to His Majesty every copy of an Urdu pamphlet which was titled *Halat- i- Kashmir Mae Kashmir Ka Khuni Hafta*²⁵⁰ by Maulvi Mohammad Ali Kapur Zahuri of Nowshera Shaikhan and printed at Karimi Press (Lahore) “on the ground that it contains matter which brings or is intended to bring hatred or contempt, or excites or is intended to excite dissatisfaction towards the Government established by law in the State of Kashmir the printing and publication of the same being punishable under Section 3 of the Indian State Act.”²⁵¹ Further, *akhbar-i-kashmeer*, from Amritsar published a “Salgarah” (i.e. Anniversary) issue on the birthday of His Highness on 21st September 1932. But the State raised objection on one of the articles published therein entitled “*Betterment of Kashmir*” by Abdul Haq Dogra (Jammu), which carried detailed criticism of the J&K government and its policies and the deplorable state of affairs in the state.²⁵² Some of the criticisms presented that were considered objectionable were reported in the Publicity Department’s records alongside the page numbers in which they occurred:

- land tax expensive compared to income-should be reduced by half (page no. 47)
- Political struggle-Muslim dissatisfaction (page no. 24)
- Due to appointment of non-state subjects as officers-"Our money is wasted"- no officer is responsible to a higher authority and none of the latter can for an explanation from the former for shortage or loss (page no. 47)
- Inspire of many natural resources, soul- withering property (page no. 50)
- How can that State progress where education is still low (page no.50)
- Mischievous people from outside have usurped the rights of the State subject and have obtained State subject’s certificate by fabricated evidence (page no. 54)

²⁴⁹ *Press Cuttings*, S.no. 896 (22/-), Basta no. 33, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

²⁵⁰ Losely translated as “the situation of Kashmir in its bloody week”

²⁵¹ *The Tribune* (December 18, 1931),S.no. 2952, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

²⁵² S.no. 123, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

- Most of the Contractors are Punjabis²⁵³

There was, thus, a perpetual threat of proscription on criticism of Maharaja, his policies and his administration. It rendered a risk that various newspapers and pamphlets coming from outside the state had to take. In such an atmosphere of surveillance and constrain, it was difficult to get opinions heard without any fear of retribution from the State.

Seeing the rise in open dissent from the public, especially in the context of increasing violence, propaganda and riots in 1931, the State further promulgated Jammu and Kashmir Emergency Powers, Regulation no. XIII²⁵⁴ in the aftermath of 1931 which was later rescinded for a while to be applied again in January 1932, intended to stay in effect for 6 months (*The Daily Herald*, 18th January 1932).²⁵⁵ The regulation allowed penalisation of publication of *false news* and was extended to the whole of Jammu and Kashmir “to stop publication of false news intended to inflame public feelings and intensify present campaign of turbulence and agitation”.²⁵⁶ Further, sub-clause V of Clause 4 of Regulation invested in any First Class Magistrate in the Vizarats of Mirpur and Reasi (where open defiance of law by commission of dacoities and arson appeared to have been realised by the State) to impose fines, subject to the limit of Rs 10, 000 on any one village.²⁵⁷ ‘Wrongful assembling’ was also made punishable.

Publicity Department of the State was also active in monitoring how the narratives concerning the State were being produced, i.e. how the news and events regarding the affairs in the state were getting projected to the outside world. In a letter to the Editor, *The Civil and Military Gazette*, dated

²⁵³ S.no. 123, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

²⁵⁴ It was the Sedition Act.

²⁵⁵ *Collection of Cuttings from Various Newspapers, Relation of Kashmir State and Issue of Contradiction by the Kashmir Government (The Daily Herald, 18th January 1932)*, S.no. 134, Basta no. 3, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

²⁵⁶ *Maharaja of Kashmir (The Tribune, 27th January 1932)*, S.no. 2953, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

²⁵⁷ *Maharaja of Kashmir (The Tribune, 27th January 1932)*, S.no. 2953, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

3rd October 1931, the author Fazle Karim, Advocate and Secretary of Kashmir Committee²⁵⁸ at Lahore expressed how the reporting of the affairs in the Kashmir State was being controlled by the state and its propaganda, whereby "... the British Press until recently has been completely under the influence of the Kashmir state Publicity Department."²⁵⁹ He further adds that because of this influence "the British Press, not excluding the *London Times*, had come to believe that the present mass movement in Kashmir was directed against dethroning the present ruler or was in the nature of a conspiracy to throw the Government."²⁶⁰

The information then in the state through written media can be seen as flowing from two directions, first from the state and its organs & loyalists and the second from the non-state actors. The state with its elaborate administrative machinery throughout this time period made proclamations and announcements, published Press Communiques etc. to assert itself and in some cases, tried to improve its image (to forge an image of benevolent, welfare-oriented state), while at the same time became the 'guardian' of the information. The non-State actors i.e. the people and organisations which were not a part of the state and were engaged in the business of dissemination of information like newspaper organs of various organisations, pamphlets released by individuals and organisations etc. They were also not without their own biases. Many newspapers and magazines themselves were organs of organisations with specific communal inclinations or sympathies with the State. Based on such inclinations, there were several narratives of events available in the press and they became tools of mobilisation and propaganda.

The "public" in this discourse was not always representative of all sections of the population. The literacy rate and the access to information were limited. Also, women voices were almost

²⁵⁸ Kashmir Committee formed by All India Muslim Conference in the aftermath of July events in Kashmir to show solidarity.

²⁵⁹ *Kashmir's Situation (The Civil and Military Gazette, 3rd October 1931)*, S.no. 2954, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

²⁶⁰ *Kashmir's Situation (The Civil and Military Gazette, 3rd October 1931)*, S.no. 2954, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

completely unavailable in this and so are the voices of the Depressed Classes and the tribal population of the state missing. The establishment of Praja Sabha in 1934 did allow a limited scope for Depressed Classes and tribal population to be represented as they were included in the Sabha. While they can express their opinions, fears and anxieties in the Sabha, their voice was that of a minority and thus any meaningful change in their situation was difficult. Women, on the other hand, remained largely on the margins of this discourse, their fate in Praja Sabha being decided by an Assembly of men since women neither formed the part of the electorate, nor were they members of the Praja Sabha.²⁶¹

Thus, the study of the state and the public discourse that formed in it has to be looked through the prism of the public sphere and its scope that was in existence. It necessitates to think of the working of the politics in the state, especially the process of communalisation by keeping in mind this limitation.

3.2 Organisations and Individuals

As the subcontinent was going through waves of ‘reformist’ (Brahmo Samaj, Prathna Samaj, Aligarh movement etc.) and ‘revivalist’ (Arya Samaj, Deoband movement etc.) organisations and movements that came into being in 19th and 20th centuries addressing various issues of socio-political importance.²⁶² Similar organisations and movements were difficult to emerge in the limited public sphere in the state.

Dogra Sadar Sabha was one of the earliest organizations to be formed in the state. It was formed in 1904 in the Jammu region as an organization of the Dogras and the Pahadis of the state. The

²⁶¹ There existed a limited franchise which allowed only men paying more than Rs 20 a year in land revenue or grazing taxes to be given the right to vote in electing members to the Praja Sabha.

²⁶² Charles M. Heimsath, *Indian Nationalism and Hindu Social Reform, XIV* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1964).

founding members, i.e. Ram Nath Shastri and Dinoo Bhai Pant, were progressive writers who came to engage in the politics of the state actively,²⁶³ especially engaging in the social questions like:

1. Prohibition of juvenile delinquency, drinking and smoking
2. Women empowerment and promotion of girl child education
3. To check the menace of social and moral evils
4. Checking dowry, infant marriages and caste discrimination (especially with Harijans).²⁶⁴

While it had muslim members, the Sabha remained heavily dominated by the Hindu population.²⁶⁵ It was also for a while banned in 1929 for its support to the independence movement which was going on in British India.²⁶⁶ However, it was soon restored and continues to be an active organisation in the present-day Jammu city.

In the case of Kashmiri Pandits, Yuvak Sabha came into being in 1915, representing the Kashmiri Pandit community which was limited to the Hindu populace in its scope, but largely remained limited to Kashmiri Pandits.²⁶⁷ In 1931, after the recommendations of Glancy Committee were accepted, they started the 'Roti Agitation' since they were apprehensive about losing their status and access to state jobs.²⁶⁸

In the case of Muslims, in Kashmir region, several associations (*anjuman*) were formed like *Anjuman- Nusrat-ul- Islam* founded in 1905,²⁶⁹ followed by formation of *Anjuman- I- Hamdard Islam* (founded by Punjabi Muslims in the state) and in Jammu region, *Anjuman- I- Islamia* was

²⁶³ Mohita Bhatia, "Secularization and Descularization in Jammu: Interrogating the Canonical Approaches), in Reeta Chowdhari Tremblay, Mohita Bhatia (ed.), *Religion and Politics in India* (London: Routledge, 2020), 78.

²⁶⁴ <https://dograsadarsabha.com/history-of-dogra-sadar-sabha-jammu-and-kashmir/#history>

²⁶⁵ Alistair Lamb, *Kashmir: A Disputed Legacy 1846- 1991* (Hertfordshire: Roxford Books, 1991), 85.

²⁶⁶ <https://dograsadarsabha.com/history-of-dogra-sadar-sabha-jammu-and-kashmir/#history>

²⁶⁷ Lamb, *Kashmir*, 85.

²⁶⁸ Prem Nath Bazaz, *The History of Struggle for Freedom in Kashmir* (New Delhi: Kashmir Publishing House, 1954), 164-165.

²⁶⁹ Lamb, *Kashmir*, 85.

formed and these organisations concerned themselves with the religious affairs of the muslims. They were vocal whenever the religious practice of the muslims was trampled upon.²⁷⁰

The organisation *Young Men's Muslim Association* was formed in 1928 under Chaudhari Ghulam Abbas' aegis in Jammu. It played a significant role in mobilising new ideas and spreading the anti-state rhetoric in Jammu region.. Young men Muslim's Assosiation was crucial in organising the Muslims of Jammu region and could carve out a distinct space for Jammu muslims from their Kashmir counterparts.

In 1930 Sheikh Abdullah started his *Reading Room* which was essentially founded for exchange of progressive and political ideas amongst its literate elite in Fatehkadal, Kashmir. According to Sheikh Abdullah,

The Reading Room Party served as a rendezvous where we discussed national issues and amongst other thing, deplored the existing conditions. Gradually, a number of friends started dropping in to join in our discussions.²⁷¹

However, it did not limit itself to be only a discussion forum. As it gained following and clout, it started indulging in political activity with the goal of publishing the condition of Kashmir. It was done through different means, "letters were sent to the Urdu newspapers of Lahore and we also contacted Rajni Dutt, editor of the progressive journal, *Indian States*.²⁷²

Alongside writing letters, they also sent a memorandum signed by members of Reading Room Party "to the Regency Council which was invested with all powers while the Maharaja was away in England." Thus, the Reading Room Party became central to Kashmir region's political mobilisation while Young Men's Muslim Assosiation became central to Jammu region.

Prem Nath Bazaz realising the influence of youth in politics in the state also opened up *Kashmir Youth League* in 1936 which "believed in the equality of all people in the state and held that there

²⁷⁰ Lamb, *Kashmir*, 85.

²⁷¹ Abdullah, *Flames of Chinar*, 17-18.

²⁷² Abdullah, *Flames of Chinar*, 17-18.

was no distinction between young men or women on the basis of religious beliefs they professed.”²⁷³ In Jammu city, rising student politicians like Ved Bhasin and Balraj Puri alongside other young students came to form *Jammu Students Federation* which proclaimed to be “anti-colonial as well as anti- monarchical.”²⁷⁴ In another case, Budh Singh, a leading Kashmiri Sikh leader formed *Kissan Mazdoor Party* in Jammu²⁷⁵ which was to look into the poor state of the peasants in the state. Chaudhary Ghulam Abbas also came to support this Party.

The formation of such organisations in the state allowed for representation of people through a forum that could act as a pressure group. While being anti-state and meant for welfare of people, these organisations since were formed along communal lines, also were key in forming communal consciousness. Organisations like Jammu Students’ Federation, Sheikh’s National Conference also were impacted by the politics of the British India and Congress, thus they also toed the line with anti-colonial and secular politics.

On 25th July 1931, after the happenings of Abdul Qadeer’s trial and the violence that gripped Srinagar, an All India Kashmir Committee was formed in Shimla under the leadership of Allama Iqbal. It was formed to present the grievances of Kashmir to the Maharaja and support the Muslim brethren of Jammu and Kashmir.. However, the deputation which approached the Maharaja was declined by him so they resorted to contact the Political Department of the Government of India and the Viceroy, and since that also did not yield any satisfactory response, decision was made to contact the British Parliament.²⁷⁶ A decision was as a result made to observe 14th of August as Kashmir Day where Muslims from all over the sub-continent were to take out processions bearing black flags.²⁷⁷ Thus, Kashmir problem and the discrimination and marginalization that Muslims suffer in the state was losing its status as merely a local issue with repercussions only within the

²⁷³ Prem Nath Bazaz, *The History of Struggle for Freedom in Kashmir* (New Delhi: Kashmir Publishing House, 1954), 167.

²⁷⁴ Bhatia, *Secularisation*, 78.

²⁷⁵ Luv Puri, *Across the LoC: Inside India- Administered Jammu and Kashmir* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), 16.

²⁷⁶ G.S. Raghavan, *The Warnings of Kashmir* (Allahabad: The Pioneer Press, 1931).

²⁷⁷ Abdullah, *Flames of Chinar*, 25.

state. Instead, it was becoming an issue of mobilizing communal consciousness at an all-India level.

The appointment of Glancy Commission in 1932 by Maharaja Hari Singh to look into the grievances of the subjects of the state led to the making of a more active public sphere and public discourse became charged. One of the recommendations of the commission created space for making of political parties in the state alongside starting of a Legislative Assembly which made the former's role active and significant. The formation of All India Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference (1932) was done in the wake of these developments, as Sheikh Abdullah puts when a need for a "dynamic" party with "national interest" was felt.²⁷⁸ Sheikh Abdullah's this reminiscence regarding the formation of the party points to the fact that a nationalist idea was taking root, but was not working diametrically opposite to the idea of communalism. The two ideas worked in tandem and often overlapped in how the party functioned. At its inception itself, driven by nationalist concern, albeit initiated with a meeting of the Muslim representatives of the state, it also consulted leaders from Jammu region like Chaudhari Ghulam Abbas²⁷⁹, Mistri Yakub Ali, etc. Thus, the influence that Jammu leaders had in the state was important enough for them to be included in the initiation of the Party. It was not only proclaiming to represent and work for the Muslims of Kashmir region, but was also forming a united front with the Muslims of Jammu region. Further, echoing 'secular' and 'nationalist' paradigms over the 'communal' ones, Sheikh Abdullah in his Presidential address declared that:

We have repeatedly declared that the Kashmir movement is not communal; it is a platform to address the grievances of every section of people. We shall always be prepared to help our compatriots, Hindus and Sikhs. No progress is possible unless we learn to live in amity. For that, mutual respect for each other's legitimate rights is an important pre-condition. I repeat, Kashmir movement is not a communal movement.²⁸⁰

²⁷⁸ Abdullah, *Flames of Chinar*, 35.

²⁷⁹ Chaudhari Ghulam Abbas was in fact appointed as the General Secretary of All India Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference.

²⁸⁰ Abdullah, *Flames of Chinar*, 35.

This proclamation at the time of formation of Muslim Conference was also partly driven by the urge to characterise itself in nationalistic terms. It can be viewed as the result of the counter propaganda to the state and its loyalists who were painting the Muslim demands and grievances as generating from communal motivation. The Conference also got support from a limited section of Kashmiri Pandits represented by Prem Nath Bazaz,²⁸¹ however some section which identified formation of Kashmir Conference with Muslim communal identity stayed away from it (as is evident by the 1932 'Roti Agitation' by Yuvak Sabha of Kashmiri Pandits). More importantly, despite its claims, the Conference failed to convince the Dogra Hindus of Jammu region to join them in their anti-state stance.

A working committee of the All India Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference in March 1933 formed a sub-committee to unite Hindus and Muslims and in its second annual session held on 15th December 1933, Raja Muhammad Akbar Khan in his welcome address said that:

Let me remind my Hindu and Sikh brethren that we have lived harmoniously and brotherly throughout our history. In future, too, it is not possible to live in separation. It is in the nature of human beings that they occasionally fight with each other but it does not mean that they would remain divided for all times to come. The only way towards the overall welfare of all the communities is our natural understanding and unity. In these circumstances I would not hesitate to request you to come forward, forget the past and stand united in order to ensure an era of friendship, love and peace.²⁸²

There can be seen here a recognition of the conflict between Hindus and Muslims of the state that had engulfed both Kashmir and even more the Jammu region in 1931-32. But herein, there can also

²⁸¹ Bazaz, *The History of Struggle*, 164.

²⁸² The past being implied here is the rioting and conflict that occurred between 1931-1932 in the state.

Ashraf Wani, "The 'Popular Voice': Secular- Progressive Discourse in Kashmir (1932- 47)," *Indian Historical Review* 34, no.1: 249- 50, (2007). DOI: 10.1177/037698360703400110.

be seen an appeal for unity so that an anti-state front could be formed and an overall welfare of all the communities can be achieved.

Chaudhary Ghulam Abbas, a leader from Jammu became an important part of the Muslim Conference. There can be seen attempts on the part of some sections to reconcile the differences between the Jammu region and Kashmir region's leaders. In 1934, he represented the organisation in negotiating with the State on the implementation of the Glancy Commission's recommendation for which he was also arrested.²⁸³ In June 1939 when Sheikh Abdullah and his colleagues, who were then getting increasingly influenced by the Indian National Congress,²⁸⁴ attempted to 'secularise' the organisation and renamed it as National Conference. Under Nehru's influence, the name "Muslim Conference", Sheikh Abdullah came to realise was communal in nature and if he were to garner any support from Hindus, there will have to be a change in the name of the organisation. Chaudhary Ghulam Abbas and his supporters, on the other hand, who largely represented Muslims from Jammu region, broke away from the party. Subsequently in 1941 they revived Muslim Conference and came to associate it with the All India Muslim League's politics. Thus a regional element can also be seen as developing in how the religious game was being played out by the two organisations while at the same time their politics was getting integrated by the larger sub-continental politics through their allegiance with Indian National Congress and Muslim League. By 1945, the revived Muslim Conference under Chaudhary Ghulam Abbas issued a pamphlet titled "Azad Kashmir" (Free Kashmir) declared that "the Muslims in the Indian States will not submit to the Hindu majorities and they will struggle for independence and emancipation of the Muslims from Hindu dominance in India as well as in Indian States" and further added that "the

²⁸³ Jyoti Das Gupta, *Jammu and Kashmir* (The Hague: Martinus Nuhoff, 1968), 60. Being viewed as an enemy of the state, he was arrested along with some other members of Muslim Conference by the state.

²⁸⁴ By 1939, Congress had started providing its support in the anti-monarchical stance of princely states while considering the welfare of people as paramount. Sheikh Abdullah and Jawahar Lal Nehru had also met once in Lahore in 1937 by then.

Muslim Conference of Kashmir will fight to the last for creation of Pakistan.”²⁸⁵ Its alignment with Muslim League and demand for a separate space called “Pakistan” had thus become strong by 1945.

3.3 Expressions of Mobilisation and Propaganda

Mobilisation in the state revolved around various rhetorics over the course of two decades of 1930s and 1940s. Presence of various organisations, movements, dissent and state’s response to it determined how consciousness was shaped in these decades. Meanwhile, in British India INC-Muslim League politics was also becoming stronger and aimed at anti-colonial rhetoric vis a vis ‘communal’, ‘national’, ‘secular’ ideals.

While the National Conference identified itself with the secular-progressive ideals, especially after 1939 with growing influence of Indian National Congress and socialism, the use of religious tropes in mass mobilisation did not stop. The meetings of National Conference always began with recitation of Quran which Sheikh Abdullah proclaims in his autobiography that his way of recitation came to be liked by people.²⁸⁶ There was also usage of slogans like *Na 'ar-i- Takbir Allahho- Akbar (i.e. Allah is Great)*²⁸⁷ and several important meetings were held at religious shrines like the first meeting after the formation of All India Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference at the mosque Pather Masjid (Srinagar) in October 1933.²⁸⁸ Young Men’s Muslim Association was also accused in press of acting under the influence of Punjab Muslims and the graduates who have returned from Aligarh.²⁸⁹

A manifesto titled “Naya Kashmir” was introduced in 1944 by the National Conference after separating itself from Muslim Conference and proclaiming a secular politics with influences from

²⁸⁵ Quoted in Santosh Kaul, *Freedom Struggle in Jammu and Kashmir* (New Delhi: Anmol Publications, 1990), 154-155.

²⁸⁶ Abdullah, *Flames of Chinar*, 21.

²⁸⁷ Wani, *The ‘Popular Voice’*, 265.

²⁸⁸ Abdullah, *Flames of Chinar*, 150.

²⁸⁹ *Control over Kashmir agitation (The Hindu*, 9th November 1931), S.no. 3561, Basta no. 144, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

Indian National Congress. The manifesto reflects the vision that the Party held for the state with deployment of “the constitution” and “the New Economic Plan” which was for “the poor, against those who exploit them.”²⁹⁰ It emphasised on a Responsible Government with severe devolvement of the Maharaja’s powers and constitutional rights including freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly and meetings, and freedom of street processions and demonstrations. It mobilised people with a goal-centric world that was projected as awaiting them.

Meanwhile, the introduction of the emotive of “*Kashmiriyat*”²⁹¹ was powerful since the Maharaja represented the Dogra rule which was alien to the socio-culture milieu of the Kashmir region. In evoking *Kashmiriyat*, a cohesive understanding of ousting the Dogras could be seen. Alongside this, it also allowed to bring out the peculiar issues that muslims of valley were facing as opposed to the muslims of Jammu region and that of Kashmiri Pandits. As early as 1920s, fearing the competition that Kashmiri Pandits faced from the induction of Punjabis into the state administration, there were demands for defining who was a State Subject, alongside which a cry of ‘Kashmir for Kashmiris’ providing a backdrop in the making of the binary of Dogras and Kashmiris. On the other hand, a similar regional identity of Hindus and Muslims combined failed to develop in Jammu region. The Dogra Hindus remained outside the active anti-state rhetoric and mostly remained entangled in communal conflicts and differentiation.

Submitting memorandums, writing letters, sending letters to Punjab press, sending telegrams to the state were some of the methods that the people of the state and outside the state employed to get attention. These methods were however not only limited to those who were dissenting but the supporters as well. As can be seen that in the wake of the disturbances in 1931, several telegrams were sent to the Government by the loyalists i.e. Muslim *jagirdars*, *zaildars*, *lamberdars*

²⁹⁰ *New Kashmir* (Kashmir Bureau of Information: New Delhi, no date).

²⁹¹ The idea of “*Kashmiriyat*” was introduced by Sheikh Abdullah proclaiming the unity of Hindu and Muslims of Kashmir region through their cultural homogeneity.

dissociating themselves from the agitation by calling it an attempt of the Punjab Muslims.²⁹² As reported by *The Eastern Times* (23rd November 1931), afraid that the British troops left,²⁹³ the Muslims of Jammu region sent applications “to A.M. Jenkins Esq; the British officer on duty in Jammu, requesting him that the British troops should not leave the state territories unless the safety of the life and property of the Muslims is guaranteed by the British Government.”²⁹⁴ While the British troops were majorly stationed to stop the entry of *ahrrars* in the state, their presence as opposed to the presence of state troops gave some level of reassurance to Jammu region’s Muslims. State troops as representative of Maharaja and Hindu Dogras were seen with a lot of suspicion by them. In another instance, the Head of the Ahmadiyya Committee, Hazarat Mirza Bashir ud din Mahmud Ahmed in January 1932, for example, wrote to the Maharaja requesting him to pacify the situation in the state and warning him about the degrading impression of the state.²⁹⁵

The Press played a significant role in mobilisation of the masses and propaganda spreading while also being the source of dissemination of news and information. Both within the state and outside it, newspapers acted on behalf of the organisations that they represented or the leanings that they had. *The Eastern Times*, for example, got its support from the Unionist Party of Punjab and was more Muslim-oriented in its outlook. *Inquilab* and *Zamindar* publishing from Lahore formed part of the “Muslim Press” of Punjab.²⁹⁶ *The Vakil* was another newspaper which was started as “nationalist

²⁹² Press Communique (3rd September 1931), S.no. 897, -21/-, Basta no. 33, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

²⁹³ In October- November 1931, Maharaja on realising the incapability of his troops to control the situation in the state requested the British for help. This led to a great number of British presence, especially alongside Jammu-Punjab border as the threat of *ahrrars* entering the state was large.

²⁹⁴ *Kashmir’s Situation* (*The Eastern Times*, 23rd November 1931), S.no. 2954, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

²⁹⁵ *Press Reports, Riots in Kashmir* (*The Sunrise*, August 14, 1931), S.no. 3560, Basta no. 144, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

²⁹⁶ Khuram Shahzad, “The Evolution of Muslim Press in Punjab (From the Early Beginning to the 1947)”, *Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan* 56, no.2: 37-48 (July-December 2019), 45-46. http://pu.edu.pk/images/journal/history/PDF-FILES/4_56_2_19.pdf

Urdu Weekly of Kashmir²⁹⁷ which aimed at presenting the Kashmir's interests. There also existed newspapers like *Hamdard*, *Khidmat* which were official organs of the National Conference. Similarly, newspapers like *Martand*, *The Partap*, *Ranbir*, *Milap* and *Al Barq* were Hindu- leaning newspapers²⁹⁸ whose reportage was based on the countering allegations that were made on them by muslim organisations and the muslim community of the state. *The Pratap* (a Hindu leaning newspaper from Lahore) on 6th November 1931 accused *Inqilab* for relaying false information on massacre of Muslims in Jammu.²⁹⁹ Similarly, such communal rhetoric of unfair treatment and allegations from the Hindu side also came under criticism. In fact, Ahmadiyya's President Maulvi Ahmed Blah Sahib accused *Martand* (which was the official organ of *Santan Dharam Youngmen's Assosiation* of Kashmiri Hindus) of spreading hatred and playing a big role in mobilising Hindus against Muslims during 1931 conflict.³⁰⁰

In a letter to the Editor of *The Civil and Military Gazette* (3rd October 1931), Secretary of the Kashmir Committee, Fazle Karim from Lahore accused the British Press for being biased towards the state's Publicity Department's version of events:

.... the British Press until recently has been completely under the influence of the Kashmir State Publicly Department...

Following the lead of the State propaganda. The British Press. Not excluding the *London Times*, had come to believe that the present mass movement in Kashmir was directed against dethroning the present ruler or was in the nature of a conspiracy to throw the Government...

But the facts now having been brought to their notice, London newspapers now seem convinced that the Kashmir agitation is only a legitimate outcome of the condition of semi-slavery in which the Kashmir peasantry- preponderantly Muslim- have to live, and they have every right to make.

²⁹⁷ This is written on the letterhead of the newspaper.

²⁹⁸ Governor's Note to Deputy Chief Secretary (Political Department), 2nd February 1937, S.no. 958, Basta no. 34, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

²⁹⁹ *Control Over Kashmir Agitation* (*The Pratap*, 6th November 1931), S.no. 3561, Basta no. 144, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

³⁰⁰ *Meeting notes from Ahmaddiya community, 20th September 1942*, S.no. 570 (PR/M/325), Basta no. 20, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

While these accusations were being made of being prejudiced towards the state, another writer in the *The Leader* (17th February 1932) reflected the Hindu anxieties:

Great satisfaction is felt here about the Hindu members of the Assembly frankly placing before the Viceroy the exact situation here and for clearly demanding that the Maharaja should have fullest support of the Government in all measures his Highness chooses to adopt in suppressing the rebellion...

The Anglo- Indian Press has started a regular propaganda to make out that the reports have been exaggerated and that there have been no forcible conversions, no outrages on women, no forced marriages of Sikh and Hindu women with Muslims and that the loss of life has been small. Their objective is to disprove the pan-Islamic nature of the movement and to blame the State, forgetting that today the entire state machinery is under the scrutiny of Glancy Commission and the Middleton Enquiry.³⁰²

Thus, the Hindus can be seen as getting threatened by the reporting of Anglo-Indian press which they deemed to be favouring the Muslim propaganda and dismissing the issues of Hindus as 'exaggerations'. Both Hindu and Muslim camps were well aware of the role that press played in building narratives and the image outside the state. They were also aware of the propaganda and mobilisation that the press played part in. It is out of this awareness that they can be seen as being apprehensive about what was being published.

While there were newspapers with communal identifications, there were also newspapers and posters in the state which were anti-Maharaja with open criticism on his administration. These criticisms published in print allowed for dissemination of opinion against the state. In fact, it was

³⁰¹ *Kashmir's Situation* (*The Civil and Military Gazette*, 3rd October, 1931), S.no. 2954, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

³⁰² *Kashmir's Situation* (*The Leader*, 17th February, 1932), S.no. 2954, Basta No. 118, Publicity Department, Jammu.

reported that some posters were found threatening Maharaja's life.³⁰³ Slogans like "H.M.G Hari Singh must Go" were also introduced in the public domain to mobilise people against the Maharaja.³⁰⁴ The newspaper *Princely India*, for instance, offered such criticisms unequivocally:

"How can a prince who did not take life seriously and who was not trained in the art of administration and the grim school of experience, be expected to rule over an ancient kingdom...?" (*Princely India*, February 3, 1932)³⁰⁵

"... it is on the head of Raja Hari Kishen Kaul and his colleagues on the Cabinet that crime for the murder of thousands of helpless people and the spoliation of their properties should fall."

"The paper also demands abdication of its weakened ruler and the dismissal of whole coterie of the administrative machinery." (*Princely India*, 10th December, 1932)³⁰⁶

While some criticisms were heavily overt, some others were more insidious in how they were expressed, especially to be seen in the case of newspapers who were following the Hindu line and were lenient in their criticism of Maharaja:

Did they* listen to any protest, any appeals, or any of the remonstrances from the harassed and distracted Hindus, voiced in the daily columns of the Press through the length and breadth of British India? Surely something must be rotten in the administration of Kashmir..... It is evident throughout that the Kashmir Executive have shown total incapacity for enforcing law and order, even being armed with emergency powers. (*The Statesmen*, 31st January, 1932)³⁰⁷

³⁰³ *Control over Kashmir agitation* (*The Hindu*, 9th November 1931), S.no. 3561, Basta no. 144, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

³⁰⁴ *Maharaja of Kashmir* (*Princely India*, 3rd February, 1932), S.no. 2953, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

³⁰⁵ *Maharaja of Kashmir* (*Princely India*, 3rd February, 1932), S.no. 2953, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

³⁰⁶ *Maharaja of Kashmir* (*Princely India*, 10th December 1932), S.no. 2953, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

* "They" here refers to Maharaja and his advisers.

³⁰⁷ *The Prime ministership in J&K* (*The Statesmen*, 31st January, 1932), S.no. 2949, 37/5- 135, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

The “harassed and distracted” Hindus in this lamentation refers to the Hindus who had come under attack by Muslims in rioting and general hatred. Thus, the criticism is being given that despite several attempts of bringing the grievances into the notice of the Maharaja and his people, the bureaucracy and the executive have failed to help the Hindus of the state.

3.4 Outside Jammu and Kashmir: British India

As a princely state under the British paramountcy, the relationship of the state and the Maharaja with the British was complex. Technically the Maharaja was a sovereign, but in practice the sovereignty was hollow as it was to be shared with the British.³⁰⁸ The British Residents and various ICS Officers like Wakefield, Glancy, Colvin etc. were key in the decision-making of the state. The British presence came to acquire bigger significance once the communal discourse gathered momentum since by and large they came to be deemed as the neutral party with no allegiance to a particular community;³⁰⁹ although, this image was shaken soon as Sheikh Abdullah’s and National Conference’s proximity with Congress increased. This proximity allowed to see the British as the enemy as the rhetoric of anti-colonialism entered after getting in touch with the Congress. Maharaja Hari Singh’s own relationship with the British as highlighted by Alistair Lamb was fraught with suspicion:

Maharaja Sir Hari Singh was persuaded by some of his advisers that the immediate cause of the trouble was the encouragement given to Muslim agitators by his senior Minister, Wakefield, apparently acting as an agent of the Government of India. The Maharaja was convinced that the British were determined to punish him for his stand during the Round Table Conference in London in 1930 where, as we have seen, he had spoken out in a manner which was definitely not to the liking of the Political Department of the Government of India.³¹⁰

³⁰⁸ Butler Report submitted in 1929 looked into the notion of Paramountcy and declared the independence of the States dependent on British suzerainty.

³⁰⁹ *Kashmir’s Situation*, S.no. 2954, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

³¹⁰ Lamb, *Kashmir*, 90.

In 1927, the Congress formed the All- India States Peoples' Conference, in response to the political activities in the princely states and in an attempt to bridge the gap between British India and princely states. The politics at the level of the subcontinent itself in its bid for nationalist discourse imagined a larger India, much beyond the British India to include the princely states that existed in the subcontinent. In 1935, Congress in its Karachi Session of All India States People's Conference declared that "it would support the freedom movement of the people of the Princely States unlike the Muslim League, which supported the rulers of these states, including the Maharaja of Kashmir."³¹¹ As the affinity between Indian National Congress and Sheikh Abdullah grew through meetings and visitations leading to multiple exchanges of ideas, there increased an impetus to convert "Muslim Conference" to "National Conference" and secularise its politics. In 1937, Sheikh Abdullah met Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru for the first time in Lahore and accompanied him to North West Frontier Province where he came in contact with Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan.³¹² Two years later, National Conference was born and the relationship with Congress continued. In 1940, Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru also visited Kashmir as a guest of the National Conference.³¹³ The growing affinity also did not go unnoticed by the state and was cause for drift between Maharaja and the Congress, according to Sheikh.³¹⁴ Nehru again visited Kashmir to attend National Conference's annual session in 1945 where he was also accompanied by Abul Kalam Azad and Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and it was in this session held at Sopore that the resolution of right to self-determination by the Kashmiris was adopted.³¹⁵ On 20th June 1946 Jawahar Lal Nehru was briefly detained by the state authorities when he was visiting the state to meet Sheikh Abdullah in prison (who was imprisoned for his call for 'Quit Kashmir'),³¹⁶ leading to soaring of relationships between the state and Nehru. Muslim Conference under the leadership of Sheikh Abdullah was

³¹¹ Shakti Kak, 'Kashmir's Hero', *Frontline*, Vol. 26, No. 9 (25 April 2009), <https://frontline.thehindu.com/other/article30186767.ece>

³¹² Abdullah, *Flames of Chinar*, 49.

³¹³ Wani, *The 'Popular Voice'*, 258.

³¹⁴ Abdullah, *Flames of Chinar*, 64.

³¹⁵ Abdullah, *Flames of Chinar*, 65- 66.

³¹⁶ Lamb, *Kashmir*, 96.

however not the first party to make connections with Indian National Congress. Dogra Sabha based in Jammu in a letter addressed to the All India Congress Committee, Lahore declared itself to be the 'Congress Committee of the Jammu and Kashmir State'.³¹⁷ But Dogra Sabha could not garner as much support from Indian National Congress. The frequent meetings between Nehru and Sheikh Abdullah and exchange of idea generated a camaraderie which was based on anti-monarchical rhetoric. Dogra Sabha, on the other hand, remained an organ of Jammu Hindus with no concrete criticism of the state and the Maharaja.

The Socialist and Communist influence in the state was also palpable, but limited. Prominent Marxist B.P. L. Vedi visited the state to make an assessment of the situation in the state.³¹⁸ It was the Socialist element within the INC that played a key role in changing the outlook of Muslim Conference and making it National Conference, and to the promulgation of the 'Naya Kashmir' manifesto. Left parties like Communist Party of India, the Indian Communist Party, the Punjab Committee, and the Kisan Committee of Punjab supported the 'Quit Kashmir Movement'³¹⁹ which was started on 15th May 1946, while Congress was not supportive of it.³²⁰

It was not only the progressive-socialist waves of the British India that got enmeshed with the princely state's socio-political fabric. Muslim League, Arya Samaj, Hindu Mahasabha etc. also got involved in the affairs of the state.

Punjab political groups also played a key role in mobilising state of affairs in Jammu and Kashmir. A group of *Ahrars* participated in the call made by All India Kashmir Committee for 'Kashmir Day' and also sent *jathas* of some volunteers into the state to show support to the Muslims of the

³¹⁷ Rai, *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects*, 230.

³¹⁸ Manzoor Fazili, *Socialist Ideas and Movements in Kashmir (1919- 47)* (New Delhi: Eureka Publications, 1980).

³¹⁹ Quit Kashmir Movement was started by Sheikh Abdullah's National Conference (influenced by Gandhi's 1942 Quit India Movement). It was expressed as a final clarion call against the Maharaja to bring power in the hands of the people with a new constitution in place (of which Maharaja could remain as figurative head).

³²⁰ Wani, *The 'Popular Voice'*, 262.

state.³²¹ Steps to prevent their entry into the state were taken by the Government when *Ahrar jathas* were entering the state from Punjab through Ranbirsinghpura borders.³²² At the same time the Hindu communalist tendencies were also taking roots in the princely state. The Punjab wing of Arya Samaj which was founded in 1892, from where it entered the Jammu region, influenced the socio-political milieu through its four branches in Jammu. Since there were many Punjabi Hindus who had migrated to the state after the change of the official language from Persian to Urdu, they were associated actively with its activities. Through its open criticism of Muslims and the *shuddhi* movement,³²³ it got entangled and began to be strongly identified with the Hindu communal identity. In 1936, an Arya Samajist preacher was expelled from the state following the allegations that he was criticising Islam and attacking Quran (*Hindustan Times*, 9th May 1936).³²⁴ Further, Hindu Mahasabha and Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) had also entered the scene in 1931³²⁵ and played important role in mobilising the Hindu masses and were responsible for giving rise to the communal consciousness that was developing in the state. As a united front of Hindu communalists *Rashtriya Hindu Hiteshi Sammelan* i.e. a conference was organised at Lahore which received 300 delegates from all over the subcontinent in support of the *Hindu* state and the *Hindu* subjects of the state.³²⁶

³²¹ R.L. Handa, *History of Freedom Struggle in Princely States* (New Delhi: Central News Agency, 1968).

³²² *Control over Kashmir Agitation* (*The Vir Bharat*, 9th November, 1931), S.no. 3561, Basta no. 144, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

³²³ K.L. Tuteja, *Religion, Community and Nation: Hindu Consciousness and Nationalism in Colonial Punjab* (Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Studies, 2021), 121- 122. Dayanand Saraswati, the founder of Arya Samaj, introduced the plan of *Shuddhi* i.e. purification by reconverting those who had earlier converted to Christianity, Islam and even those who had never been Hindus in the first place.

³²⁴ *Correspondence with the Indo-British Press Agency* (*Hindustan Times*, 9th May 1936), S.no. 1069, Basta no. 40, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

³²⁵ Mridu Rai, *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects: Islam, Rights and the History of Kashmir* (Delhi: PermanentBlack, 2012).

³²⁶ *The Eastern Times* (7th January, 1932), S.no. 2952, Basta no.118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

On the other hand, the revived Muslim Conference led by the Jammu group of Chaudhary Abbas came to support and be supported by Muslim League when National Conference's affinity with INC was growing. This happened despite M.A. Jinnah's vocal reluctance to associate with the internal affairs of any princely state.³²⁷ During Jinnah's visit to the state in May 1944, he first went to Jammu and then later Kashmir and stayed in the state for 2 months during which he also came to attend Muslim Conference's annual session at Srinagar declaring them to be the sole representative of the Muslim aspirations in the state.³²⁸ Their affinity and alliance also came during the Sir Stafford Cripps' Mission to India in 1942 which gave hope for Muslim-majority areas and their rights. In fact, while the National Conference boycotted the elections to Legislative Assembly following the Quit Kashmir Movement, Jinnah encouraged Muslim League to participate in it.³²⁹ Hindu Mahasabha on the other hand unequivocally rejected the Cripps' Plan as it was against the self-determination of princely states because it viewed the whole of India as a united whole and thus "indivisible."³³⁰ The Muslim League on the other hand did not support the Quit Kashmir slogan which was started by Sheikh's National Conference in 1946. During the call for Quit Kashmir Movement, as described by Jyoti Bhushan Das Gupta:

Mr. Ghulam Abbas, its President, issued a statement from Lahore on 30 May 1946 in which he unequivocally declared that "the agitation had been started at the behest of the Hindu leaders" and that the "object was to restore the lost prestige of the Nationalists."

The Muslim League and its President, Mr. Jinnah, were of the opinion that the aim of the "quit Kashmir" agitation was to coerce the Maharaja into recognising the National Conference as representing the Muslim masses, in utter disregard of the fact of the real representative character of the Muslim Conference. Mr. Jinnah reiterated in a statement that

³²⁷ Lamb, *Kashmir*, 97.

³²⁸ Gupta, *Jammu and Kashmir*, 66.

³²⁹ Christopher Snedden, *Understanding Kashmir and Kashmiris* (London: C. Hurst & Co. Publishers Ltd., 2015), 133.

³³⁰ The Annual Register Office, *The Indian Annual Register, 1942, Vol. 1 and Vol. 2, January-December 1942* (Calcutta, 1942), Accession No. B-VI/ 181, A.R. No. 436, State Archives, Jammu.

"the Kashmir Muslims did not support the quit Kashmir movement," but his advice to the Maharaja was "to remove the grievances of his subjects."³³¹

The fissure between National Conference and Muslim Conference was thus not just a case of secular versus communal stance, but also vied for the representation of the Muslim world. It was also a rivalry for the representation within the context of the politics that had gripped the British India. It also allowed the new Muslim Conference to legitimise its presence in the state which otherwise had come to be dominated by the National Conference and justify its unique presence as the 'real and exclusive' spokesperson of the Muslim population of the state.

3.5 Outside Jammu and Kashmir: Princely States and British India

As has already been stated that Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir were deeply influenced by each other, while at the same time, other princely states were also brought into the discourse. The situation in 1931 in Jammu and Kashmir prompted a meeting of Muslim Youth League on 29th November, 1931, in which it was decided to form a committee "to protect the Muslim states or Muslim Ministers called Muslim State Defence Force" (*The Tribune*, 3rd December, 1931).³³² Similarly, several Hindu organisations in Lahore decided to jointly form "Hindu Defence Force or Hindu Kesari Dal whose members would train themselves under expert officers and keep themselves ready to render help to all Hindu organisations and community (*The Tribune*, 17th December, 1931)."³³³

Such a discourse of juxtaposing Hindu States vs Muslim States seems to be pervasive in the subcontinent and it was a result of not only the trouble in Jammu and Kashmir state but the otherwise changing nature of politics and communalisation in other princely states as well as the British India. Various factions and groups had emerged in 19th century which centered themselves

³³¹ Gupta, *Jammu and Kashmir*, 70.

³³² *The Tribune*, 3rd December 1931, S.no. 2952, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

³³³ *Kashmir's Situation* (*The Tribune*, 17th December, 1931), S.no. 2954, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

on the revivalist and reformist path, mostly targeting the groups and communities they represented. Then, there was also the emergence and growth of anti-colonial groups which tiptoed on the line of 'nationalism' and 'communalism'.

In an article published in *The Leader* (Lahore, 25th September 1931), titled "Kashmiri Moslems and Hyderabad Hindus," a comparison of the condition of the Hindus of the state of Hyderabad was attempted with the Muslims of Kashmir since Kashmir state was a Muslim-majority state with Hindu ruler at helm and Hyderabad was a Hindu-majority state with a Muslim ruler at the helm.³³⁴ The article laments that the condition of the Hindus in the state of Hyderabad was "pitiable", owing to educational backwardness, 90% scholarships that were reserved for the Muslims, lesser jobs and Urdu being the language of imparting education at *Usmania University* which was deemed to be aimed at killing "Hindu culture" and imposition of "Islamic culture on the Hindus of the State."³³⁵ Dr. B.S. Moonje³³⁶, a Hindu Mahasabha leader made a press statement in 1940 in which he compared "Hyderabad and Kashmere" in terms of their demography and majority-minority divide and declared that it was the Hindus who were making life in both the states "civilised, happy and prosperous."³³⁷ This also got interspersed with the rivalry that it held with Congress since he stated that "if the Congress supports the Muslim demand for Responsible Government in Kashmir, the same should happen in Hyderabad."³³⁸

These comparisons by interest groups often turned into threats; for example, the All India Hindu Mahasabha in August 1931 issued a warning to the Muslim agitators of the J & K state that if they

³³⁴ Hyderabad state was under Mir Osman Ali Khan of Asaf Jahi Dyansty which was formed in 1724. The state was a Hindu-majority area. According to the 1931 Census reports of Hyderabad state, Hindu population stood at 12, 176,727 and Muslim population stood at 1,534,666. On the other hand, according to the 1931 Census report of Jammu and Kashmir, the Hindu population stood at 736,222 and the Muslim population at 2,817,636.

³³⁵ *The Leader*, 25th September, 1931, S.no. 2952, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

³³⁶ Dr. B.S. Moonje was the President of the All India Hindu Mahasabha (1927- 1937).

³³⁷ S.no. 93, Basta no. 2, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

³³⁸ S. No. 93, Basta no. 2, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

don't stop their agitation then the organisation will transform the current situation into a "serious communal affair", citing that "no Muslim leader would forgive Hindus if they were to launch a similar agitation in respect of Hyderabad or Bhopal[#]."³³⁹ Both these states were named because they were Hindu-majority states with Muslim rulers. In making such statement, Hindu Mahasabha was also pandering to the Hindus and creating a fear of the "other" in their minds. In fact, it was also reported that "... a committee of inquiry consisting of three men toured two states, Bhopal and Hyderabad, to investigate the grievances of the Hindu subject of those states."³⁴⁰

Riyasati Hindu Hiteshi Sammelan i.e. a Conference for the welfare of Hindus was organised by a joint Hindu front of Hindu Mahasabha, Akhil Bhartiya Khatriya Sabha, Arya Samaj etc. at Bradlaugh Hall (Lahore) between 25th-27th December to show support for Maharaja of Kashmir. In his Presidential address in the Sammelan, Rao Gopal Singh Karwah³⁴¹ explicitly stated that the support being given was because Maharaja Hari Singh was a Hindu Raja and because a Hindu state was under attack.³⁴² Raja Narendra Nath³⁴³ was also present who expressed that the effects of the "Muslim agitation" will inevitably show up in the Muslim states of Hyderabad, Bhopal, Bhawalpur and Malerkotla.³⁴⁴ While Hyderabad and Bhopal were Hindu-majority areas with Muslim rulers³⁴⁵,

[#] The state of Bhopal in 1931 was under the Muslim ruler Nawab Hamidullah with a Hindu-majority population. According to the 1931 Census report of the state, the Hindu population stood at 581,470 and the Muslim population at 89,860.

³³⁹ *Riots in Kashmir (The Tribune, 11th August, 1931)*, S.no. 3560, Basta no. 114, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

³⁴⁰ *Kashmir's Situation (The Princely India, 27th January, 1932)*, S.no. 2954, Basta no.118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

³⁴¹ Rao Gopal Singh Karwah was the Raja of Karwah (Rajputana) who also acted as the President of Akhil Bharatiya Khatriya Mahasabha in 1924.

³⁴² S.no. 2953, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

³⁴³ Neeti Nair, "Partition and Minority Rights in Punjabi Hindu Debates, 1920-47," *Economic and Political Weekly*, XLVI, no. 52: 61-69 (2011).<https://www.epw.in/journal/2011/52/special-articles/partition-and-minority-rights-punjabi-hindu-debates-1920-47.html>. Raja Narendra Nath was a civil servant who was also a member of the Hindu Mahasabha and the Punjab Legislative Council.

³⁴⁴ *Anti- Kashmir Agitation (The Daily Herald, 26th August, 1931)*, S.no. 3556, Basta no. 144, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

³⁴⁵ Census of India, 1931.

Bhawalpur and Malerkotla were majority Muslim areas with Muslim rulers.³⁴⁶ J.A.O. Fitzpatrick, AGG, Punjab States in a letter in 1933 to Political Secretary wrote of Hindu Mahasabha trying to create chaos in Muslim states “as a counterblast to the events in Kashmir in 1931.”³⁴⁷ According to Ian Copeland, “Sabhite cadres targeted Malerkotla in 1935, Bhopal in 1937 and Rampur in 1939.”³⁴⁸

Looking at how the politics was playing out, Maharaja of Bikaner, Sir Ganga Singh,³⁴⁹ in a speech in November 1931 had also forewarned that the situation if not brought under control would create issues for Hindu subjects of Muslim rulers and will also lead general ill-will, thus the situation needs to be brought under control.³⁵⁰ There also emerged another line of argument in the subcontinent which appropriated the rhetoric of *nationalism*, *democratisation* and *fundamental rights* to express. Mr. B. Das, MLA who was the Chief Whip of the Nationalist Party³⁵¹ issued the following statement:

If it was a pure domestic trouble of the Kashmir State, the Indian public opinion would have not minded. But to Nationalist India, the mischievous activities of a few interested neighbours- specially pan-Asiatic Muslim agitators of the Punjab have caused serious anxieties, specially when the Round Table Conference is trying to evolve a federated

³⁴⁶ Ian Copeland, *State, Community and Neighbourhood in Princely North India, c. 1900-1950* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 27.

³⁴⁷ J.A.O. Fitzpatrick, AGG, Punjab States, to Pol. Sec., GOI, 14 June 1933, IOR, R/1/1/2433. Quoted in Copeland, *State, Community and Neighbourhood*, 93.

³⁴⁸ Copeland, *State, Community and Neighbourhood*, 93.

³⁴⁹ Manu Bhagwan, “Princely States and the Hindu Imaginary: Exploring the Cartography of Hindu Nationalism in Colonial India” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 67, no. 3: 881–915 (2008), 886. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20203428>. Bikaner was a rajputana state under Maharaja Ganga Singh Rathore (1888-1943) had a close alliance with the Hindu Mahasabha.

³⁵⁰ *Collection of Cuttings from Various Newspapers, Relation of Kashmir State and Issue of Contradiction by the Kashmir Government (Al Ahram, 26th November, 1931)*, S.no. 134, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

³⁵¹ David Denis Taylor, “Indian Politics and the Elections of 1937,” PhD Dissertation, (University of London, 1971), 105, 148. <https://eprints.soas.ac.uk/33670/1/11010433.pdf>. Earlier called, Congress National Party, National Party was a break-away from the Swarajist Party which was renamed as Nationalist Party in 1936 and had its presence mostly in Punjab.

Constitution for your future India. As a nationalist I fear almost similar recrudescence in states where either the Muslim or the Hindu population is in tremendous majority as it happens to be in Kashmir. It is so easy to start communal agitation!³⁵²

He then added that The Punjab Muslim Press and inspired agitators from the Punjab were doing a disservice to the people of Jammu and Kashmir. They.....

.....are not helping the creation of a Federated India nor are they helping the cause of Muslims. I must congratulate the Hindu members of the Assembly for keeping cool at great provocation when the Muslim legislators carried all sorts of propaganda and even waited in a deputation on the Political Secretary over domestic problems of Kashmir.³⁵³

This nationalist discourse was coloured by the communal underpinnings whereas there were also emerging more overt denunciations. Vijayaragavachariar³⁵⁴ and Dr. B.S. Moonje in a statement acknowledged the problem of lack of fundamental rights in Kashmir state, but in the same breadth added that it was not a Kashmir- specific problem, especially only plaguing the Muslims of Jammu and Kashmir, but a larger problem and the solution for which could be found in “consensus of opinion in bringing the problem prominently to the notice of Round Table Conference and Federal Structure Committee,”³⁵⁵ thus underplaying and negating the claims of Muslims of the state.

Thus, it was not in isolation that the communal outpouring of Jammu and Kashmir were working. It had linkages and was shaped in tandem with the general discourse of nationalism and communalism in the princely world and British India at large. It inflicted and re-oriented relations vis- a- vis rulers and subjects of the states and played a role in developing the political consciousness of the people. Published on 23rd February 1932 in *The Hindu*, a piece titled “The Lessons of Kashmir” forwarded the following conclusions:

³⁵² *Kashmir's Situation (The Tribune, 13th October, 1931)*, S.no. 2954, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

³⁵³ *Kashmir's Situation (The Tribune, 13th October, 1931)*, S.no. 2954, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

³⁵⁴ Vijayaragavachariar was an early career Congressman who later joined Hindu Mahasabha. He also acted as the President of All India Hindu Mahasabha at Kola in 1931.

³⁵⁵ *Riots in Kashmir (The Tribune, 11th August, 1931)*, S.no. 3560, Basta no. 114, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

The whole Kashmir episode is a tale of political chicanery and intrigue which ought to provide a valuable lesson not only to other Indian Princes. It is time they realised that their safety as well as their armaments or their alliances, but in the unflinching support of a contented and enlightened population. So long as their subjects are unenlightened or discontented, so long the princes would feel their position risky and subject to the whims and caprices of outside forces with interests to sustain which may not be identical with those of the States.³⁵⁶

Thus, the case of princely state also became a harbinger of warning to other princely states vis-a-vis the change in discourse that was occurring. The organisations and press played a key role in developing these ideas and integrated the public discourse of the state with the larger sub-continental politics.

3.6 Conclusion

The public discourse had to be negotiated in a limited space of expression. The state made attempts at provide a counter-narrative to the narrative of dissent which was being produced by press, organisations and individuals. However, the press and organisations were not without their biases and moved along communal lines. While there was usage of the vocabulary of nationalism and secularism in Kashmir region and organisations outside the princely state, a similar appropriation was missing from within Jammu region. Jammu region also failed to create a united regional Dogra front of Hindus and Muslims as was attempted in Kashmir through the trope of “Kashmiriyat”. Further, out of the public discourse which the princely state generated in the state and sub-continent, there emerged mobilisation which was based on creating the dichotomy of “Hindu states” and “Muslim states”.

³⁵⁶ *The Prime ministership in J&K (The Hindu, 23rd February, 1932), S.no. 2949, Basta no. 114, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.*

Ch- 4

Competing Anxieties and Identities

The anxieties and fears that people developed in 1930s and 1940s came interspersed with religious and regional anxieties often based on fact and fiction both. Several issues like language, script, cow- killing, conversion, inheritance rights etc. formed part of this discourse. This chapter will delve into these different issues to explore how communal discourse was being informed by these fears and anxieties. The fear that the other community would marginalise the other along with issues of discrimination in access to education, employment, medical services etc. and backwardness (*vis-a-vis* other communities) were palpable. The anxieties were not specific to any one community but ran through all different identities. These identities were not fixed in their demands and anxieties. At times, they shifted to include Sikhs with Hindus of the state, other times there emerged differentiation of region between Hindus from the valley and Hindus from Jammu. Similarly for Muslims of the state, there existed a separate Muslim identity from other religious groups in the state, a pan-islamic identity with outside the state and then a different identity of Jammu muslims and Kashmir muslims. There were negotiations that were happening at the level of engaging with state through requests, protests and dissent leading to competition between different identities and their anxieties and competition amongst these different identities as well.

4.1 Language and Script

The official language in the state during the period of study was Urdu and the script was Perso-Arabic. Before this, Persian was the official language. But as the communal discourse

progressed in the state, there emerged a demand for Hindi language and Devnagari script to be made official. This was keeping in view that the language and script had come to be associated with religion. Thus, fearing marginalisation and to compete with the Muslim demand for appeasing their grievances, Hindus in 1930s began a call for Hindi and Devnagari to be made official alongside Urdu and Perso-Arabic script.

The issue of language and script was not only limited to official usage of it, but to take it to the primary level of education. This was also in line with the sub-continental politics which was playing out through Hindi versus Urdu paradigm.³⁵⁷ B.S. Moonje's [President of All India Hindu Mahasabha (1927- 1937)]in a statement in a newspaper stated:

I have thus no hesitation in advising the Hindus to push forth their demand for making Hindi the court language of the state with all the vigour and vehemence they command. I am hopeful that the Hindu Mahasabha will tend its support to their legitimate demand. I wish them all success.³⁵⁸

B.S. Moonje's statement came through his comparison of Hyderabad with Kashmir where Urdu was *lingua franca* in Hyderabad [where the majority population was Hindus] because of the Muslim demand and thus he questioned why can't similar demand for Hindi made by Hindus of Kashmir not paid heed to.³⁵⁹ Similarly, in a letter written to *The Leader* (Lahore, 3rd October, 1931)

³⁵⁷ Christopher King, "The Hindi-Urdu Controversy of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh and Communal Consciousness", *Journal of South Asian Literature* 13, no. 1/4: 111-120 (1977/1978). <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40873494> ; Francesca Orsini, *The Hindi Public Sphere 1920-1940: Language and Literature in the Age of Nationalism* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2009); Francesca Orsini ed., *Before the Divide: Hindi and Urdu Literary Culture* (Hyderabad: OrientBlackswan, 2018).

During the colonial period in the subcontinent, there emerged standardisation of language and script in the public arena, especially *vis-a-vis* Hindi and Urdu in North India. John Borthwick Gilchrist, acting as a Professor of Hindustani at Ft. William College, Calcutta in early 19th Century identified language with script and religion. Over the 19th Century as the communal and nationalist discourse intensified, the association grew. Various organisations like Aligarh Muslim University, Nagari Pracharini Sabha, Hindu Mahasabha etc furthered the cause of religion with language and script, associating Urdu with Muslims and Hindi with Hindus. The press and schools also furthered this cause. This also helped in the nationalist discourse that was developing.

³⁵⁸ S.no. 93, Basta no. 2, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

³⁵⁹ S.no. 93, Basta no. 2, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

under the pseudonym “One Who Knows”, a contrast was made on how Urdu is forced upon the people of Hyderabad and in Kashmir state, Hindi is not even the court language and is not even encouraged by the state.³⁶⁰

Debate over introduction of Devanagari script alongside Perso- Arabic script was a point of contention in the Praja Sabha debates in the state as well. The scripts came to be associated with religion, i.e. Devanagari with Hindus and Perso-Arabic with Muslims. There was also a small minority of Sikhs who in response to these scripts wanted introduction of Gurmukhi. Thus, the relationship between script and religious identity was established.

In 1933, first *Hindi sahitya Sammelan* was organised at Divan Mandir, Jammu. In talking about the event, Om Goswami, a writer and a poet wrote that

श्री रमाकान्त जू के नितांत परिश्रम से आज दैव यह सुदिन दिखायो है |
हिंदी संसार हू कि मरु-भूमि में भी हिंदी साहित्य अंकुर जनायो है |

Translation:

“Due to the hard work of Mr. Ramakant Ji, this day has been arrived today,

Hindi literature has sprouted in the deserted land of Hindi.”³⁶¹

This was the first Hindi event that was organised in the state while organisations like *Arya Samaj*, *Sanatan Dharma Sabha*, *Brahman Sabha* continued endorsing it and there was a recognition of the lack of Hindi in the state as is pointed through “deserted land of Hindi.” It was during Gopalaswamy Ayyangar’s Prime Ministership (1937- 43) that an order was passed for official recognition of both the scripts, Devnagari and Perso-Arabic. This had repercussions on several

³⁶⁰ *Kashmir’s Situation* (*The Leader*, 3rd October 1931), S.no. 2954, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

³⁶¹ Ashok Jerath, *Jammu Kashmir mein Hindi Sahitya Ka Itihas* (Jammu: J&K Academy of Art, Culture and Language, 2002), 16- 17.

levels in the state i.e. “all teachers would now be forced to read Hindi³⁶² to be employed by the Education Department.”³⁶³

Wardha Scheme which was introduced in 1937 in the subcontinent laid out that mother tongue was supposed to be the method of teaching. This also effected the discourse in the state. Because of the pressure that was developing, an Education Re-organisation Committee was formed by the state which concluded that it was against the introduction of double script in the state (i.e. simultaneous use of both the scripts in the state). But since the demands for the change continued to pressurise the governemnt (which were expressed in Praja Sabha debates), double script came to be employed in 1941.³⁶⁴ As the debate grew, tensions increased and in 1939, 8 members of National Conference resigned from Praja Sabha demanding that double script should not be introduced.. However, the issue also brought out fissures within National Conference along religious lines. Prem Nath Bazaz, a prominent Kashmiri Hindu leader of National Conference along with Sh. Bansi Lal Suri who led the Jammu branch of National Conference and other Hindu members split from the Party .³⁶⁵

Magazine like *Usha*, *Bharti*, *Vasudha* which were published in the state also played an important role in advancing the cause of Hindi by publishing numerous articles and letters to editors in defence of Hindi and Devanagari usage in the state.³⁶⁶ *Vasudha* which was started after the organisation of *Punjab Prantiya Hindi Sammelan* (Punjab Provincial Hindi Conference) in 1933 in Jammu. In its first edition, the editorial demanded for giving the right status to Hindi and lamented that some Muslims are bitter about Hindi and have made the issue communal.³⁶⁷ In its May, 1941 edition, the magazine *Bharati's* editorial published that ever since the Governemnt has introduced

³⁶² In Devnagari script

³⁶³ Yasir Bashir, “From Muslim Conference to National Conference: Sheikh Abdullah’s Quest for Secularism” in Serena Hussain (ed.) *Society and Politics of Jammu and Kashmir* (Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021), 119- 140.

³⁶⁴ S.no. 13459, *Jammu and Kashmir Praja Sabha Debates*, Volume 6 (Jammu: The Ranbir Government Press, 1941)

³⁶⁵ Jerath, *Jammu Kashmir Mein*, 25.

³⁶⁶ Jerath, *Jammu Kashmir Mein*, 24- 26.

³⁶⁷ Jerath, *Jammu Kashmir Mein*, 26. Translated from Hindi.

Devanagari script in schools and given it the same status as Urdu, the Muslim brethren has been consistently protesting against it and asking the state to roll back the order.³⁶⁸

In one Question asked during Praja Sabha proceedings on 24th March, 1941, S.Mul Singh Khosla, a member of the Legislative Assembly asked “if books on religious instruction taught in Government schools? (For Hindu- Muslim)” to which the state representative Lt. Fazal Rahman’s response was that it was in some schools of Muslim boys and that recently some books had also been sanctioned for Hindus to be introduced next Baisakh wherever Hindi teachers were available.³⁶⁹ The religious texts were thus also formed part of the curriculum, with Hindi and Urdu texts being aligned with Hindus and Muslims. While the debate between Hindi/Urdu language and script was underway, the Sikh section also raised concerns about the usage of Punjabi.³⁷⁰ On 24th March 1941, during Legislative Business, a resolution was brought up by Sardar Kirpal Singh, a member of Legislative Assembly representing Sikhs made a request for inclusion of Punjabi to enable Sikh boys to study *Granth Sahib* (the religious text of Sikhs) in talking about the importance of such measure, he stated that:

.... ruin of a community was brought upon by ruining its culture. To him it appeared that by neglecting to make satisfactory arrangements for teaching Punjabi in schools, the Governemnt wanted to wipe out the Sikh community from the State.³⁷¹

Adding to the above argument by Sardar Kirpal Singh, Sardar Dhian Singh, another member of the Legislative Assembly added that:

... it was not correct to say that the Sikhs were included among the Hindus and that concessions given to the latter extended to the former as well. The Sikhs, said the Sardar, were considered a separate community by the British Government and quoting the Census

³⁶⁸ Jerath, *Jammu Kashmir Mein*, 24, 25. Translated from Hindi.

³⁶⁹ S.no. 13447; *Jammu and Kashmir Praja Sabha Debates*, Volume VI (Jammu: Ranbir Govt. Press).

³⁷⁰ S.no. 13447; *Jammu and Kashmir Praja Sabha Debates*, Volume VI (Jammu: Ranbir Govt. Press).

³⁷¹ S.no. 13447; *Jammu and Kashmir Praja Sabha Debates*, Volume VI (Jammu: Ranbir Govt. Press).

figure he said that in the State where the Sikhs numbered 50,000, it was necessary to treat them likewise and on this ground to treat Punjabi separate language like Hindi.³⁷²

Similarly, during Pt. Shiv Narayan Fotedar's Resolution discussion on 25th March 1941 reference to cultural preservation were made in demanding for an Assistant Inspector of schools who is well-versed in Hindi and Sanskrit:

... it is rather regretful to observe that the Hindi and Sanskrit education in the States which alone, I feel, if pushed forward with the tenacity of action and thoroughness of purpose, can help Hindus in the preservation and maintenance of their cultural, linguistic and religious interests. The rejuvenation of their ancient glorious past is immeasurably suffering for want of attention, guidance, supervision, direction and control.³⁷³

There was a clear association being made of language and script with religious communities, relegating Urdu to Muslims, Hindi to Hindus and thus a demand for Punjabi for Sikhs. The communal identity was thus being viewed as separate enough to evoke associations and basic tenets to be linked for a separation of identities. While the demands for Devanagiri were being made alongside Hindi, Dogri which was the major dialect used in Jammu began to employ Devanagiri as its script and Takri script saw a decline. Thus, standardisation and the sub-continent's discourse on association of Devanagiri with Hindus came to be seen as making an impact here.

Language as a marker and preserver for cultural paradigms of religious practice thus became a medium for easing the insecurity that was being felt. It was also deemed important as it had repercussions on employment as well, for example introduction of Devanagiri in school necessitated employment of teachers in Hindi and thus Hindus. This can be studied *vis-à-vis* the larger debate on language and script which was taking shape in British India with growing reification, codification and purification that began in late 19th Century.³⁷⁴

³⁷² S.no. 13447; *Jammu and Kashmir Praja Sabha Debates*, Volume VI (Jammu: Ranbir Govt. Press).

³⁷³ S.no. 13450; *Jammu and Kashmir Praja Sabha Debates*, Vol. VI (Jammu: Onkar Press).

³⁷⁴ See Charu Gupta, "The icon of Mother in Late Colonial North India: 'Bharat Mata', 'Matri Bhasha' and 'Gau Mata'", *Economic and Political Weekly* 36, no.45, 2001, 4291-9; Christopher

4.2 Conversion, Hindu Law of Inheritance and Cow Killing

Conversion of Hindus to Islam was a matter of concern and anxiety throughout this period. While there was presence of Arya Samaj which had developed the idea of *shuddhi* to re-convert those who had first converted to Islam, the evidence for anxiety related to it is unavailable. When the riots in Jammu region happened in 1932, it was reported on several occasions that alongside the looting and killing, conversion also formed part of the conflict. Hindu organisations like Arya Samaj, Hindu Mahasabha, Rashtriya Swayamsewak Dal who had already been playing the politics on conversion in sub-continent, by 1930 had begun to take interest in the affairs of the state and their discourse ran heavily on the idea of conversions. This was a key factor in inducing fear in Hindus against conversion and at the same allowed for these organisations to further their cause.

In *The Civil and Military Gazette* (21st February 1932), Dina Nath (Secretary, Arya Samaj, Bhimber) wrote to the Editor:

it has been stated in your columns that during the riots in the Kashmir State no Hindu has been converted to Islam. This is wrong on the very face of it. Under instructions from Mahatma Hans Raj, I reached Bhimber yesterday to organise relief. During these twenty- hours that I have been here I have met about a dozen refugees who were forcibly converted to Islam by the Mohammeden rebels and who have managed to escape, leaving behind their families in many cases. I am not giving the list because it would make my letter too long for a daily newspaper to publish. Only in the village Garun some 40 Hindu families have been made to accept Islam.

Dina Nath
Headmaster, G.S.A.S. High School,
Hafizabad
C/o the Secretary,
Arya Samaj, Bhimber.³⁷⁵

King, "The Hindi- Urdu Controversy of the North- Western Provinces and Oudh and Communal Consciousness," *Journal of South Asian Literature*, vol. 13, no. 1/4, 1977, 111- 20, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40873494> ; Paul Brass, *Language, religion and Politics in North India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974).

³⁷⁵ *Kashmir's Situation* (*The Civil and Military Gazette*, 21st February 1932), S.no. 2954, Basta no. 118, Publicity department, State Archives, Jammu.

While it is difficult to ascertain the facts, there was definitely a narrative of forced conversions in place in the state which fed into the fears of Hindus and also bolstered a strong narrative against the Muslims and in the end allowed for the growing animosity to fester.

Apart from allegation of the mass conversions that emerged during the riots of 1932, some incidents of conversion which worked at the personal level were also politicised. In 1942, a young Rajput widow from Gour (Akhnoor), Jammu region who was a teacher at Birpur was reported to have married a Muslim constable and converted. Soon the news spread all over the town and she was taken by some Rajput boys and confined in Choughan Fateh in Col. Samsar Singh's house (who was a retired Military Officer and a member of the Praja Sabha), as the Rajput boys cited that the marriage was a "bogus affair". This matter became increasingly political and Allah Rakha Sagar, a Muslim leader complained to the Governor that a Muslim girl had been taken away by the Rajputs. Soon, Muslim Conference got involved. The inter-communal conflict got grave and Section 144 CrPC (unlawful assembly of more than 4 people) was promulgated for 1 month in the city.³⁷⁶

Post-Glancy Commission, the issue of conversion got exacerbated. There were demands by the Muslims for change in the Hindu Law of Inheritance in the state which would render the converted losing rights on his inheritance. But it invited a lot of criticism from the Hindu circles. For this denial, *Hindu Shastra*, *Manu Smriti* as the basis were cited for loss of rights on change of religion or loss of caste since religious succession of property was linked with the following of the practice of *Shradh*.³⁷⁷ To this end, Kashmiri Pandits submitted a 76-page long type-written document drawing on Dalal Commission's report which talked about the *shastric* sanction of the basis of conversion and right of possession.³⁷⁸

³⁷⁶ *Alleged Forcible Removal of a woman by Hindu Rajputs at Jammu*, S.no. 579, Basta no. 20, PR/M/313, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

³⁷⁷ *Glancy Commission, Hindu Law*, S.no. 150, Basta no. 3, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

³⁷⁸ *Glancy Commission, Hindu Law*, S.no. 150, Basta no. 3, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

Several meetings were held protesting the new changes that were put forth by Glancy Committee leading to no longer a dispossession of property on conversion.. Meetings were held by *Arya Swarajya Sabha* at Lahore; at Delhi and at Srinagar by local people.³⁷⁹ *Zaffarwal Hindu Sabha* in its meeting called the demand “a flagrant attack on the Hindu Dharma”.³⁸⁰ All India Hindu Mahasabha’s Secretary Babu Padmaraj Jain also telegrammed State’s Prime Minister on 7th December 1931 registering his protest against the removal of Hindu Law of Inheritance. The matter took such significance that *Hindu Sahaik Sabha* resolved not to cooperate with Glancy Commission and made a call for withdrawal of all Hindu societies from the Commission.³⁸¹ *Hindu Yuvak Sabha*, Jammu sent the following telegram to the Prime Minister, Jammu and Kashmir following the call for boycott for which it mentioned that it,

..... resolves to non-cooperate with Glancy Commission and requests Hindu representative, Pt. Lok Nath and Premnath Bazaz immediately to retire from the Commission.³⁸²

On the other hand, in *The Civil and Military Gazette* (8 January 1932), letter to editor by Mohammad Ali (president, Ahmadiya Anjuman-i-Isha’at-i-Islam, Lahore) referenced to the Hindu from outside the state intervening in the affairs of the state³⁸³:

The Hindus, not only those residing in the State of Kashmir but the vast numbers living outside that State as well have taken strong objection to the reference to the Glancy Commission of the question of inheritance in the case of those who have renounced the Hindu religion.³⁸⁴

³⁷⁹ *Glancy Commission, Hindu Law*, S.no. 150, Basta no. 3, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

³⁸⁰ *Glancy Commission, Hindu Law*, S.no. 150, Basta no. 3, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

³⁸¹ *Glancy Commission, Hindu Law*, S.no. 150, Basta no. 3, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

³⁸² *Glancy Commission, Hindu Law (The Tribune, 14th December 1931)*, S.no. 150, Basta no. 3, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

³⁸³ *Collection of Cuttings from Various Newspapers (The Civil and Military Gazette, 8th January, 1932)*, S.no. 134, Basta no. 3, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

³⁸⁴ *Collection of Cuttings from Various Newspapers (The Civil and Military Gazette, 8th January, 1932)*, S.no. 134, Basta no. 3, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

He further alleged that the Hindus from British India are being hypocrite as similar rules have already been in existence there:

This contention may be excusable to some extent in the case of the Hindus of Kashmir, who being the co-religionists of the ruling dynasty, can think of their own religious freedom, and are perhaps yet ignorant of what religious freedom for all means. But in the case of the Hindus living in British India to support the contention of the Kashmir Hindus is quite incomprehensible, as they are fully aware that the rule laid down by the Hindu Shastras as to the exclusion from inheritance of those who have renounced The Hindu faith was made null over eighty years ago as being incompatible with the religious freedom to which the British Government was committed.³⁸⁵

Thus Muslim organisations like *Ahmadiyas* were criticising the Hindu groups and individuals from British India since the same law had been rendered null and void in 1850 through Act XXI on Religious Freedom.³⁸⁶ The politics and conflict between Hindu-Muslim organisations thus can be seen to be playing out in the case of Jammu and Kashmir. According to Act XXI:

So much of any law or usage now in force within the territories subject to the Government of the East India Company as inflicts on any person forfeiture of rights or property, or may be held in any way to impair or affect any right of inheritance, by reason of his or her renouncing, or having been excluded from the communion of any religion, or being deprived of caste, shall cease to be enforced as law in the courts of the East India Company and in the courts established by the Royal Charter within the territories.³⁸⁷

Sheikh Abdullah, on the other hand, took an alternative view whereby he stated that both religions penalise conversion, “but the archaic rules of the Hindus and the Muslim jurisprudence seriously

³⁸⁵ *Collection of Cuttings from Various Newspapers (The Civil and Military Gazette, 8th Jaunary, 1932), S.no. 134, Basta no. 3, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.*

³⁸⁶ *Collection of Cuttings from Various Newspapers (The Civil and Military Gazette, 8th Jaunary, 1932), S.no. 134, Basta no. 3, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.*

³⁸⁷ *Collection of Cuttings from Various Newspapers (The Civil and Military Gazette, 8th Jaunary, 1932), S.no. 134, Basta no. 3, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.*

conflict with the advanced view of the modern man, the sooner they be ignored the better.”³⁸⁸ Here an argument of modernity can be seen being made in the discourse of communal conflict.

In the case of cow killing, Mridu Rai cites an incident as early as 1913 where “rumours” about cow killing which state were being “fuelled by ‘religious sentiment’ and clearly reflected a growing desire among Muslims to ‘remove or to minimise the significance of the legal prohibition against cow- killing in the state .’”³⁸⁹ Cow killing was banned in the state and till 1920 was punishable with capital punishment and then later invited 10 years of imprisonment which was further reduced to 7 years.³⁹⁰ The controversy over cow-killing was resurrected when it was rumoured that Glancy Commission is considering lifting the ban of cow-killing in the state. Hindus of Hoshiarpur also protested against the impending threat that Hindu law of cow-protection will be repealed by the Glancy Commission.³⁹¹

In 1936, the Basohli (a town in Jammu region) conversion controversy of alleged forced conversion and kidnapping of a Hindu woman by a Muslim man, the matters deteriorated when cattle bones were found in the well and are reported to have nearly led to a communal riot in the town.³⁹² In 1937, while Maharaja was away in London, inter- communal rioting broke out in both Jammu and Kashmir regions because of the circulation of the rumour that soon the ban on cow slaughter is going to be uplifted by the state.³⁹³ On his return, the Maharaja made an address at the Praja Sabha

³⁸⁸ *Glancy Commision, Hindu Law*, S.no. 150, Basta no. 3, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

³⁸⁹ Mridu Rai, *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Kings* (London: Hurst &Co., 2004), 179.

³⁹⁰ Jyoti Das Gupta, *Jammu and Kashmir* (The Hague: Martinus Nuhoff, 1968), 53.

³⁹¹ *Abstracts of Vernacular Press Cuttings (Vir Bharat*, 24th December 1931), S.no. 895, Basta no.33, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

³⁹² *Alleged Kidnapping of a Hindu woman in Basohli Tehsil*, S.no. 927, Basta no. 34, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

³⁹³ *Message from His Highness the Maharaja Bahadur to Praja Sabha*, S.no. 89, Basta No. 2, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

assuring his Hindu state subjects that no changes in cow-slaughter ban have been taken up by the state.³⁹⁴

There was an agitation by the Hindus where a public meeting was held by *Hindu Sikh Naujawan*.³⁹⁵ The Hindus of the felt that their “religion was in danger”³⁹⁶ and their persistent anxiety of Maharaja appeasing the Muslims through his policies took stronger hold. All India Kashmir Committee held meeting at Hazrat Bal shrine at Srinagar asking for the ban to be lifted.³⁹⁷ Nawab Md. Ismail Khan, Secretary, All India Muslim Conference compared the situation of cow killing with idol worship in Hinduism:

How would the Hindus like the Muslim leaders to penalise idol worship, which is as odious, if not more, to the Muslims as is Cow killing to the Hindus?³⁹⁸

Thus, religious issue of contention of cow killing, conversion and debate over Hindu Law of Inheritance became important in the state. For the Muslims, it read as trampling of their rights and religious freedom. For the Hindus, it felt like a threat to their religion. Even a slight rumour on changes to cow killing and Hindu law of Inheritance was enough for Hindus to protest and agitate. They also viewed such attempts as appeasement policy of the state. This developed an anti-Muslim rhetoric for them. While it was difficult to mobilise people on these issues in British India, the communal organisations from British India took lead in doing so in Jammu and Kashmir.

4.3 Myth and Rumours

Myths and rumours are intrinsic in the history of modern India. Miracles and devotion which form part of local beliefs often get appropriated in making of myths. This can be seen in the case of *sati*

³⁹⁴ *Message from His Highness the Maharaja Bahadur to Praja Sabha*, S.no. 89, Basta No. 2, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

³⁹⁵ Mulkh Raj Saraf, *50 Years as a Journalist* (Raj Mahal Publishers: Jammu, 1967), 73.

³⁹⁶ *Message from His Highness the Maharaja Bahadur to Praja Sabha*, S.no. 89, Basta No. 2, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

³⁹⁷ *Glancy Commision, Hindu law*, S.no. 150, Basta no. 2, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

³⁹⁸ *Glancy Commission, Hindu Law*, S.no. 150, Basta no. 2, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

worship where a woman after she has immolated herself becomes divine and is thus worshipped subsequently being called a *sati mata*. Similarly, as Shahid Amin points out, myths and rumours have formed part of discourse on Gandhi as well.³⁹⁹ The myths, he argues are rooted in the pre-existing vocabulary of the people like the idea of *darshan*, miracle performance etc. which were used in seeing ‘Gandhi as Mahatma’, as someone to be worshiped and revered, bolstering the belief in their protest and agitation with his blessings. Similarly, David Hardiman, in his study of the trope of Devi shows how stories of Devi possessing people to expound the idea of vegetarianism, liquor prohibition and spreading Gandhi’s message was used.⁴⁰⁰

In the destablity that happened in 1931-32 in Jammu region, the myth of *Lal Badshah* stands out.. In Jammu region when the violence gripped post- jail incident of July,1931 in Kashmir, several reports of one Lal Badshah were made. The truth of the existence of such a leader although was never established, the fable of him was spreading in Jammu region and acted as a harbinger of terror for Hindus..

The Civil and Military Gazette (13th February 1932) talked about the claims that were being made that the local Muslims have been stylising themselves as ‘kings’ with each territory that is coming under their control and amongst these stylisations, one of them has declared itself as “Lal Badshah.”⁴⁰¹ Declarartion of one stylised name for such claims allowed for belief to take root more concretely as it made reference to a proper identification for the saviour for Muslims.

³⁹⁹ Shahid Amin, “Gandhi as Mahatma: Gorakhpur District, Eastern U.P., 1921-2” in Ranajit Guha ed. *Subaltern Studies III: Writings on South Asian History and Society* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1984).

⁴⁰⁰ David Hardiman, *The Coming of the Devi: Adivasi Assertion in Western India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1987).

⁴⁰¹ *Kashmir’s Situation* (*The Civil and Military Gazette*, 10th February 1932), S.no. 2954, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

Lal Badshah in these narratives was also credited with setting up an independent kingdom and massacring and looting Hindus in reports.⁴⁰² As Hindus flee from villages in January-February 1932 to save themselves from the Muslim attacks, they became messengers of spreading the myth of Lal Badshah. Muslims, on the other hand, were afraid of being chased away by Maharaja's and British army and facing retribution from them also flee from their villages. The idea of a Lal Badshah and several other local Muslims taking over territory allowed them to heed a sense of security in the face of the threat from military.

The Tribune (18th February 1932) in its report called Lal Badshah a Swarajist leader (which could have been a reference to Gandhi's idea of *swaraj*) and

....a fakir turned politician whose real name is Sain Dal. He is described as clothed in black and armed with revolver and sword, and reports here corroborate the rumour at Mirpur that he has collected his own land revenue. He has been known for some time, but the military are naturally anxious to make his closer acquaintance. Probably he is in league with the *Maulvi* who found people willing to pay revenue, but persuaded them not on the pretext of awaiting the result of negotiations with the durbar.⁴⁰³

There was thus an association of him being a "fakir" and links with "Maulvi", giving him a divine-like image, a messiah who can save the Muslims from the tyranny of the state. At the same time, he is also described as "clothed in black" and "armed" making him a figure with power who can make actual change in the condition of Muslims. At the same time, it also helped in making an image of him which could tender fear in Hindus' psyche. By mentioning that he's participating in collecting land revenue, there's also a declaration of sovereignty and autonomy as opposed to state's sovereignty. Mention of land revenue particularly is also significant since the main economic issue which plagued areas of Mirpur, Bhimbher, Kotli etc. in Jammu region was exuberant land revenue from peasants who were mostly derived from the Muslim community whereas the

⁴⁰² *Kashmir's Situation (The Civil and Military Gazette, 10th February, 1932), S.no. 2954, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.*

⁴⁰³ *Kashmir Situation (The Tribune, 18th February 1932), S.no. 2954, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.*

moneylenders and *zamindars* class predominantly comprised of the Hindu community. Thus, the idea of Lal Badshah becoming in-charge of land revenue points towards emancipation from the economic grievance of Muslims of Jammu region. This allowed for class-communal problem to be resolved through one rumour.

In September 1932 in Dhaki Acharijan, an area in Jammu city inhabited by Hindus and Muslims rumours spread that “Sh. Mohammed Iqbal of Mastgarh while passing through the area saw on a *chabuttra* near the house of Arora Brahman a leaf of Quran covered with filth. At the same time Wali Mohammad book binder happened to pass by who saw it, removed the filth and threw the leaf in Tawi River.”⁴⁰⁴ In another incident reports emerged that at Sheishan, Samba (Jammu region) “lower part of the leg of a pig about 8 inches long was found tied to the pulley by means of a thread.”⁴⁰⁵ Similarly, reports emerged that at Narwal, Jammu city “some ‘enemy of Islam’ has suspended a pig’s leg from the pulley.”⁴⁰⁶ Such rumours abound in Jammu city and intensified the communal antagonism. Such incidents were seen as threats and provocations from Hindus against the Muslims.

The principal of the Prince of Wales’ College, Jammu was accused of being an ‘Arya Samaji gentleman’ and the institution is accused of being Hindu in its outlook despite it being open for all caste, colour and creed. These accusations were made in a letter written anonymously by “One Who Knows” to the Editor of The Eastern Times stating that

“it is a fact that if any of the Muslim students of the third or forth year of the Jammu college does not show good results in his quarterly or half yearly examination, he is punished in the form of a partial reduction in the amount of his scholarship.

The punishment is very severe in consideration of the straightened circumstances of the poor parents.

⁴⁰⁴ *Collection of Cuttings from Various Newspapers*, S. No. 134, Basta no. 3, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

⁴⁰⁵ *Collection of Cuttings from Various Newspapers*, S.no. 134, Basta no. 3, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

⁴⁰⁶ *Collection of Cuttings from Various Newspapers*, S.no. 134, Basta no. 3, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

Now that a post of professor has fallen vacant in the Jammu college, a secret propaganda is going on to appoint a Hindu candidate who is no not other than the former professor holding the vacant post. As this gentleman was overzealous in his activities as a Congresswalla, the State was obliged to dispense with his services.”⁴⁰⁷

High Court of Jammu and Kashmir judgement on 28th September 1931 declared that *khutba* is not an essential part of religious service in Islam and has been banned because it was being used for political mobilisation. But soon the judgement was revised (Revision no. 80 of 1988 from Criminal Case no.: 44 of 1988) on 3rd October 1931 in Muslims of Jammu through Gouhar Rahman Khan (Secretary, *Youngmen’s Muslim Assosiation*, Jammu) v/s Sub- Inspector Khem Chand and B.J. Dalal declared that:

“The sermon or khutba is a worldly preparation for that faith. The two are inseparable as in every religion this life is but a progress to higher and better life.”⁴⁰⁸

And thus, he rendered the previous judgement null and void:

“I direct that the judgement of the Additional District Magistrate may be cancelled..... And I specifically rule that Khutba is part of the religious ritual or ceremony of the Mohammedans.”⁴⁰⁹

Alongside the rumours of *khutba* ban, there were also rumours of *Azan* being prohibited in the state.⁴¹⁰ There were also reports that the Maharaja “has dismissed from service his private Mohammedan employees like butlers and *khansamas*.”⁴¹¹

⁴⁰⁷ *Kashmir’s Situation (The Eastern Times, 31st January 1932)*, S.no. 2954, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

⁴⁰⁸ *Publication of Mis-statements in the Times of India, Bombay, regarding the Khutba and annual tax on goats in Kashmir, and issue of refutations by the Kashmir Government*, S.no. 900, Basta no. 33, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

⁴⁰⁹ *Publication of Mis-statements in the Times of India, Bombay, regarding the Khutba and annual tax on goats in Kashmir, and issue of refutations by the Kashmir Government*, S.no. 900, Basta no. 33, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

⁴¹⁰ *Communique issued by Publicity Officer (Srinagar) on the occasion of His Highness’ B’d day*, S.no. 2953, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

⁴¹¹ *Communique issued by Publicity Officer (Srinagar) on the occasion of His Highness’ B’d day*, S.no. 2953, Basta no. 118, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

Hindus had the news going around that Muslims of Jammu had their graves rigged up pre-emptively for their Hindu victims and that the *Young Men's Muslim Association*, Jammu has been collecting swords and other weapons since a long time.⁴¹² This fear gave rise to the idea that there existed a Muslim plan of Hindu annihilation. Because of Maharaja being a co-religionist of Hindus, it was feared by Muslims that Hindu miscreants will not be arrested and there's a targeted campaign against Muslims and they are being indiscriminately arrested.⁴¹³ In Ramban, Jammu region it was alleged that a Gurdwara was constructed close to a mosque to agitate Muslims.⁴¹⁴

Thus, rumours, whether they were found to be true or not, played a critical role in how the fears and anxieties of Hindus and Muslims were being played out. At a time when dissemination of information was slow and verification of facts even more difficult alongside state control on discourse, rumours give an insight into what were the issues of concern for people that gathered enough currency for them to be spread as rumours and lead to exacerbation of communal consciousness. The rumours were also religious in their overtones, making the communal expression more apparent. This also allowed organisations an opportunity to flame the emotions and feelings of the people. Since the rumours were on more personal tropes and rights, people found a great resonance with it.

4.4 Towards the End: 1946- 47

National Conference inspired by Gandhi's "Quit India" Movement launched in 1946 "Quit Kashmir Movement" which emphasised on Maharaja Hari Singh quitting and leaving the administration. It was launched on 15th May 1946. It instantly spread across both Jammu and Kashmir regions while the British India was also witnessing dynamic turn of events, coinciding with the Direct Action

⁴¹² *Control over Kashmir Agitation (The Pratap, 6th November 1931)*, S.no. 3561, Basta no. 144, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

⁴¹³ *Glancy Commission, Hindu Law*, S.no. 150, Basta no. 2, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

⁴¹⁴ *Apprehension of Hindu-Muslim Estrangement at Ramban*, S.no. 957, Basta no. 34, Publicity Department, State Archives, Jammu.

Day.⁴¹⁵ The movement also found support in Communist Party of India, the Indian Communist Party, the Punjab Committee and the Kisan Committee of Punjab.⁴¹⁶ The support came from anti-state stance alongside giving power to the people which resonated with them.

‘Quit Kashmir’ was while a call against the Dogra rule, it was deemed by loyalist like Lt. Col. Bhagwan Singh (Private Secretary to Maharaja Hari Singh) as aimed at

.. making the Dogra Ruler, a son of the soil, belonging to the State itself, quit the State or the Government, leaving the Kashmiris to govern not only the valley but the whole of the J&K state. If the Dogras’ of Jammu were according to Sheikh Abdullah foreigners in Kashmir, the Kashmiris could be nothing else in Jammu and the Sheikh while asking Dogras to quit Kashmir, should have applied “Quit Jammu” to himself.⁴¹⁷

Thus, with this an attempt was being made at conflating Maharaja’s Dogra identity with the Hindu Dogras of Jammu and project it as an issue of regional and religious differentiation than a bid to surpass the monarchy and establishment of a Responsible Government.

Following the launch of the movement, Pandit R.C. Kak, the Prime Minister put the state under Martial Law. Despite the opposition from the Party, the movement found resonance with some of the members of Muslim Conference which had otherwise come to split from National Conference participating in it. Mirwaiz Mohammed Yusuf Shah was one of the prominent members who participated in the demonstrations while Chaudhari Ghulam Abbas of Jammu was taken into custody fearing his participation.⁴¹⁸

⁴¹⁵ Yasmin. Khan *The Great Partition*. (United Kingdom: Yale University Press, 2008). In August, 1946, M.A. Jinnah made a call for Direct Action Day for 16th August 1946, according to which *hartal* was supposed to be conducted. However, it soon turned violent and bloody in Calcutta leading to riots.

⁴¹⁶ Aijaz Ashraf Wani, “The ‘Popular Voice’: Secular- Progressive Discourse in Kashmir (1932-47),” *Indian Historical Review* 34, no.1 (2007), 249- 50, DOI: 10.1177/037698360703400110

⁴¹⁷ Lt. Col. Bhagwan Singh, *Political Conspiracies of Kashmir* (Jammu: Light & Life Publishers, 1973), 36.

⁴¹⁸ Lamb, *Kashmir: A Disputed Legacy 1846- 1991* (Hertfordshire: Roxford Books, 1991), 95.

As the situation was intensifying, Maharaja declared fresh elections for Praja Sabha to be held in January 1947, for which only Muslim Conference contested in representing Muslims and on 19th July, 1947, the Muslim Conference passed a resolution on accession of Jammu and Kashmir to Pakistan.⁴¹⁹ Muslim Conference earlier in 1945 had passed the Azad Kashmir (Free Kashmir) manifesto in 1945 for a separate territorial homeland for the Muslims of Jammu and Kashmir.

Soon with the passing of the Indian Independence Act, 1947 by the Parliament of the United Kingdom, the British suzerainty over the Princely States discontinued and gave them the choice of either staying independent or joining India or Pakistan. Maharaja on August 14th, 1947 signed a Standstill Agreement but continuing from the unstable state of affairs in the state, soon the communal element found a hold of the territories towards the west of the state. Areas like Jammu, Bhimbher, Alibeg, Mirpur in Jammu region and Muzaffarabad in Kashmir region were gripped in intense violence. Several Muslims and Hindus as a result were forced to migrate, looted, got killed and women raped. When Maharaja realised that the state troops were incapable of controlling the situation, he called for help from the Indian Government. As a result, an Instrument of Accession was signed on 26th October, 1947 and soon help arrived. However, the state witnessed an unofficial bifurcation since the territories which had already come under the rebel groups was put as “Azad Kashmir” and came to form a different identity of its own leading to a number of political and social ramifications for the areas of the state. From being a Muslim majority region, owing to the displacement and mass killing, Jammu city became a Hindu- majority area.⁴²⁰ Other areas like Mirpur, Bhimber, Alibeg saw a complete disappearance of the Hindu population with a large majority of them moving to Jammu city and the neighbouring towns.. Thus, the communal saga *vis-a-vis* regional disruption sent the state down the path of violence, displacement and shifting identities.

⁴¹⁹ Lamb, *Kashmir*, 95.

⁴²⁰ According to 2001 Census, Hindus formed 86.02% and Muslims formed 5.68% in Jammu district.

4.5 Conclusion

The anxieties and fears both took religious and regional connotations. In case of Jammu region, class also got merged. There existed fear of being marginalised and being discriminated against. Rumours and myth played a key role in reinforcing these fears and were also used by propagandists for their gains. Language and script became a contentious issue with Hindi and Devanagari being associated with Hindus and Urdu and Perso-Arabic script being associated with Muslims. This also had repercussions on education curriculum. Further, prompted by conversion fears and threat of changing of Hindu Law of Inheritance prompted debates and brought out the fears in public. Similarly, cow killing was also a contentious issue and religious freedom became associated with it. Within this discourse of anxieties and debate, the politics of sub-continent also came to play huge role in mobilising for their own gains and were also responsible for discourse in the state.

Ch-5

Conclusion

The communal discourse in the state of Jammu and Kashmir was shaped by its internal political dynamics as well as factors (press, organisations and politics) from outside the state. Within the state, Muslims had many grievances which stemmed from economic as well as social reasons. In terms of economic reasons, for Jammu, revenue was the biggest issue. This led to conflation of class and communal identity in the region influenced the expression of the political discourse as well. Alongside this, issue of discrimination in education and employment also remained an underlying issue that shaped the politics in the state.

The public expression of such resentment began from Kashmir region in the 1920s but Jammu region witnessed more violence throughout the period of study and especially in the years 1931-1932 and 1947. In 1931, after the incident of Abdul Qadeer's imprisonment and the violence that followed in Kashmir, violence engulfed to the Jammu region. This went on intermittently in the Jammu region in November 1931 and January-February 1932. Meanwhile, state well-aware of these developments and resultant growing tensions tried to control the situation through appointment of different inquiry commissions like Barjor Dalal Commission, Glancy Commission and Middleton Commission. The making of these commissions themselves was also rife with controversy over membership of the commissions as well as the demands and grievances that were addressed.. The commissions included representation of Hindus and Muslims from both Jammu and Kashmir regions. The region specific issues of the two religious groups were thus also recognized by the state.

The discourse making and its circulation in Jammu region cannot be studied in isolation. It was heavily effected by what was happening in Kashmir region. The politics of Kashmir remained linked to Jammu region intrinsically. At the same, the geographical proximity to Punjab and

socio-cultural similarities with Punjab also rendered its impact on the region's communal consciousness and politics. It also bolstered the discourse in Punjab in turn at the same time. The political and communal consciousness which was developing in the sub-continent and princely states through various organisations, press and politics also had an effect on Jammu region while the former also used the issues of the state to further its own interests and agendas. This can be seen developing specially in the development of the polemical binary of 'Hindu states' and 'Muslim states'. The polemics of nationalism, secularism, fundamental rights, democracy etc. also got entangled into the state's political and communal consciousness. In fact, these were not used as diametrically opposite to each other, but this vocabulary was appropriated to advance the discourse of communalism.

Despite the limited space for expression, the various groups and organisations from within the state and outside the state had to find ways to work for mobilisation and propaganda. They had to negotiate with the state for creating a discourse in the public sphere. The use of rumour, religious tropes, myths allowed to navigate this and also personalised the issues of anti-state rhetoric for the common public in their imagination. The introduction of Praja Sabha in the state after Glancy Commission's recommendations allowed for another platform where views could be represented, albeit limited because of the narrow electorate and nominated members outweighing the elected members.

In Kashmir, Sheikh Abdullah introduced the idea of 'Kashmiriyat' which harked on the idea of a united Kashmir identity, bypassing the religious differentiation. It was based on the cultural and linguistic homogeneity that Kashmiri Hindus and Muslims shared with each other and was an attempt build a common front against the state. This took its fruition when the call for 'Quit Kashmir' was made in 1946. However, a similar united front of Hindus and Muslim did not happen in the Jammu region. This also partly stemmed from the identification of Hindu Dogras of Jammu region with the Hindu Dogra dynasty's rule and the Hindu Maharaja. Instead, Jammu Muslims at

several points in time shared an identity with the Muslims of Kashmir and Muslims from outside Kashmir in a pan-Islamic attempt which can also be seen as becoming intensified in 1940s after Muslim Conference was revived under Chaudhary Ghulam Abbas and other Muslims from Jammu region in opposition to Sheikh Abdullah's National Conference (which made secular claims of legitimacy under Congress' influence). The revived Muslim Conference also found support in Muslim League and M.A. Jinnah who also conferred Muslim Conference to be the sole representative of Muslim voice in the state.

As the Dogra Hindus of Jammu region identified with the state, their political consciousness was not developed on the lines of dissatisfaction and grievances against the state as was the case with Jammu Muslims. They did not participate in the anti-state rhetoric. Their political consciousness was hinged on communal lines which developed often as a counter-narrative against the Muslims protests and demand for rights as mobilizations from both sides gathered momentum. The fear of marginalisation and the apprehension that Maharaja might yield to the Muslim demands prompted them to develop antagonistic feelings against the Muslims as can be seen in the debates which were prompted on language, script, conversion, cow-killing etc. This also intertwined with the Hindu communal politics of the sub-continent. The organisations like Arya Samaj, Hindu Mahasbha etc pushed these agendas in the sub-continent and impacted the discourse in the region. They also used the politics of the state to further their communal discourse.

Thus, the communal interface that developed in Jammu region was complex in nature. It developed through multiple layers of discourses alongside class and regional factors. The effect that Punjab politics had also rendered it more vulnerable to violence through the proximity of interconnection of the regions. This was seen specifically in the months before the accession of the state to India with the signing of Instrument of Accession on 26th October, 1947 by Maharaja Hari Singh which left the region comparatively more tensed and divided, leading to violent riots and displacement than in the Kashmir region.

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The Making of the Hindu-Muslim Communal Interface in Jammu Region (1925-1947)

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Submission date: 28-Dec-2022 11:08AM (UTC+0530)

Submission ID: 1987033559

File name: FINAL_DRAFT_for_Plagirism_check.pdf (1.29M)

Word count: 31376

Character count: 161054

Chapter 1

Introduction

This study is an attempt to look at the making of communal consciousness in the region of Jammu between 1925-1947. The region was part ⁴ of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir under the Dogra rulers, who established an independent state after the Treaty of Amritsar of 1846, during the period. The particular focus will be the years that ran parallel to Maharaja Hari Singh's reign i.e. 1925-1947, to understand the construction of communal consciousness and its manifold ways of expressions during these years. The study seeks to make sense of these developments in the specific context of the state and in the larger contexts and discourse of other princely states and that of the British India.

It is imperative to underline ¹¹ here that the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir, widely known as the Kashmir State in the subcontinent often conflates Kashmir Valley with the entire state and as a result, the regional distinctions and peculiarities have received scant attention. It is only when the lens is shifted to look into the contours of polity, demography and geography that these internal variations become apparent and pave the path for contextualising ² the internal dynamics of the state. The internal political dynamism in the state led by non- state actors was effected by the religion and the ethnic group that Maharaja and his subjects belonged to i.e. he was a Dogra Hindu. It was also influenced by the ethnic groups and linguistic differences which existed in different regions of the state (i.e. The Dogras and the Kashmiris) and thus formed different communities with competing interests. The geographical factor, i.e. the valleys of Kashmir, the hilly areas and the plains of Jammu affected how the communities interacted with each other. Further, the political boundaries that were shared with neighbouring states also impacted the trade routes, transportation systems, accessibility and exchange of information. It is by taking these factors into account that the communal narratives which developed in Jammu region particularly will be explored.

1.1 Emergence of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir

The origin of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir under the Dogra rulers is a story interspersed with the British colonial state and its attempts of expansion and control. Dogras were the ethnic stock from Indo-Aryan descent centered in Jammu region who spoke Dogri. Since the rulers belonged to this community, the dynasty came to be called as Dogra. Before 1846, Jammu and Kashmir formed part of the Sikh Empire under Ranjit Singh; under this regime Gulab Singh was given the area as a hereditary feudatory with the title of Raja of Jammu. K.M. Pannikar's biography of Gulab Singh mentioned him to be the "most influential personage in the Sikh Empire and [that he] was its chief feudatory." After the Anglo-Sikh War, he was given the Kashmir valley by the British after a deed of sale of Rs. 75,00,000 under the Treaty of Amritsar which was signed on 16 March 1846 because the Governor General Hardinge did not want to keep an exposed area under the direct British rule. This was guided by Russophobia that perpetrated the British anxieties and the need for a buffer state. *Gulabnama*, the official biography of Maharaja Gulab Singh, however traced the rule through a solar-lineage (*suryavanshi*) and gave it a *divine kingship*, thus providing longer and mythological legitimising claims to it.

1.2 Geographical Contours and Administrative Units:

The Indian Surveyor-General's map of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) was completed in 1861, titled "Jamoo, Kashmir and Adjacent Districts"; while it was limited in its scope, descriptions and accuracy because of the difficult terrain of Himalayas and mountain passes, it gave a detailed picture of the state.

The only road that connected Srinagar to the outside world followed the course of the Jhelum into the Kashmir valley. The connection between Jammu and Srinagar cities was through two routes i.e. "the only road within the state of Jammu and Kashmir, for example, which linked Jammu (the winter capital of the State) with Srinagar (the summer capital) involved the crossing of the Pir Panjal range by means of the Banihal Pass, over 9,000 feet high and snowbound in winter." Thus,

the socio-cultural homogeneity was difficult to attain since the contact was difficult which led to many differences between the two regions. However, “the easiest route between Jammu and Srinagar lay through the West (Pakistani) Punjab by way of Sialkot and Rawalpindi.” The contact through West (Pakistani) Punjab was more viable (since it did not involve traversing difficult terrain of Pir Panjal range). Also, the route through railway that connected the state to the outside world was between Sialkot (Punjab) and Jammu city, thus making contact for Jammu region to Punjab easier than to Srinagar.

The region of Jammu was in close proximity to Punjab and north western parts of the subcontinent and thus formed a nexus with each other through the channels of trade, conquest, familial relationships and religion. The city of Jammu itself laid between the cities of Lahore and Srinagar on roughly an equidistance. There ⁴ were no rigid political or economic divisions or man-made barriers between Punjab and Jammu. In fact, as a result, the region of Jammu inherited a distinct, peculiar socio-economic formation, different than Kashmir region. The cultural divide between Jammu and Kashmir regions also thus remained different from each other. As a result, Jammu region found more affinity with the neighbouring Punjab and that was to have impact on the politics that played out in the region. This was also jettisoned by isolations and connections that the tough terrain and physiology of the territory produced.

After the political crisis that engulfed the state in 1947, the state’s territorial characteristic was affected. The area which now forms part of Pakistan administered Kashmir was largely carved out of the erstwhile Jammu region of the princely state, the only exceptions being the districts of Muzaffarabad and Neelum which formed part of the Kashmir region. According to the 1941 Census, in the erstwhile princely state, the Jammu province consisted of 5 districts, i.e. ¹ Jammu, Kathua, Udhampur, Reasi and Mirpur, while the two jagirs, namely, Poonch and Chenani were autonomous under the sovereignty of the Maharaja. The Kashmir province included Baramulla,

Anantnag and Muzaffarabad districts ² and the Frontier province included Ladakh, Gilgit Agency, Astore, Gilgit (Leased).

The *jagir* of Poonch which was located north of Jammu city was granted by the British to Dhyani Singh, brother of Gulab Singh after the Treaty of Amritsar with tremendous autonomy, which allowing it to remain as a territory in its own right with minimal influence of Punjab or Jammu-Kashmir Government. But this changed in 1935-36 when it came ¹ under Maharaja Hari Singh's control but the population of the area which was predominantly Muslim could never completely reconcile themselves with the change in command. During the raids that followed Indian independence in 1947, the population of this area played a central part in the riots.

The geography and physiology of the state and the different regions influenced how they interacted with the outside world. This was a significant perimeter in how identities were formed and, interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships developed. Punjab being geographically close influenced the socio-political formation in Jammu region. Also, it was the administrative units from Jammu region which witnessed acute violence throughout Maharaja Hari Singh's reign (despite Kashmir being more politically active in 1920s) and also later, in the backdrop of the British leaving the subcontinent witnessed *unofficial bifurcation* in 1947.



Map 1. Map showing princely state of Jammu and Kashmir (1861)



Map 2. Political Boundaries of Jammu and Kashmir (1946)

1.3 The Peculiarities of Demography

According to the 1941 census, the population of the Jammu region stood at 19,81,433 and 17,28,705 for the Kashmir region. The religious classification puts the percentage of Muslims at 93.45 percent in the Kashmir Valley, 61.35 percent in the Jammu region and 86.7 percent in the Frontier region (the population in Ladakh and Baltistan combined in 1941 came to around 200,000).

¹ Gulab Singh, the founder of the Dogra rule, was a Hindu and ethnically belonged to a group called Dogra, which was also the dominant ethnic group in the Jammu region. Both the Hindu and Muslim population in the region predominantly identified themselves with the Dogras.

The language cultures (Dogri, Mirpuri, Poonchi etc) that came to dominate the Jammu region were influenced by Punjabi language. In the case of Kashmir and Ladakh, Grierson gave the view that they belonged to the Dardic system of language and not Indo-Aryan. However, recent studies have contested this claim and stated that Dardic languages are in essence not different from the Indo-Aryan group and are basically “aberrant IA (Indo-Aryan) hill languages.” Thus the two regions differed drastically from each other linguistically and led to a relative isolation of the regions from each other due to issues of communication exchange. On the other hand, the closeness with Punjabi language in the case of Jammu region allowed it share more affinity with Punjab than Kashmir.

Prem Nath Bazaz (a contemporary Kashmiri Pandit leader) has noted that Rajputs were among the most privileged lot of Hindus under the Dogras as Dogra rulers were also Rajputs and the Rajputs were given more administrative, political and martial powers. Alongside the Dogras, the educated upper-class Brahmins and ‘*sahukars*’ also enjoyed favours from the State with Brahmins being considered the respected caste and *sahukars* being key to trade and credit in the state..

Within the Dogras, however, there was also a hierarchy in play which was exploitative in nature. Mohita Bhatia, for example, states that there existed an ²exploitative relationship between the Dogra ruling classes and Dogra peasantry, lower castes and working classes in Jammu region, irrespective of their religion. In the Mirpur district, located north-west in the Jammu region (adjacent to Jammu district), the peasant class was mostly formed by the Muslim population who despite being a numerical majority had an unbalanced relationship with the Hindu moneylenders, *zamindars* etc., thus here the socio-economic hierarchy merged with religion.

Further, Rekha Chowdhary has highlighted how within the Muslims of Jammu region, there also existed a landed class of Muslim elites who had enjoyed significant clout with the Dogra rulers. Many also served in the Dogra administration, army, police and constable services and hence when compared with ⁶the Muslims of Kashmir had a better economic position. ¹At the same time, the

4
Mirpuri Muslims from Jammu and Kashmir who could not get themselves enlisted in the J&K State Forces opted for Indian Army instead as 'Punjabi Muslamans' (Muslims) mostly in Punjab regiment. Thus, the position of Muslims was also not uniform throughout the Jammu region.

When analysing the region for its 'communal' identities and characterisation, it thus becomes necessary to take these competing identities, internal divides and variegated priorities in mind. Some contexts at times allowed for the fluidity of the communal identities where they could co-exist at the same time whereas on others, they were in competition with each other.

The differences were not only limited to communal identities, there also existed differences based on region. Not all Hindus were united at all times, neither were all Muslims. Kashmiri Muslims had a problem with Kashmiri Pandits, but at the same time had different goals than Jammu Muslims and vice-versa. Similarly, the Dogra Hindus and Muslims from Jammu region had communal issues with each other, but at the same time also had separate identity and goals from their Kashmir counterparts. Then, there also existed dissatisfaction from the Punjabis who had taken up majority of the jobs in the state administration, owing to the making of Urdu as the official language. Navanita Behera has in the same vein written that "Kashmiri Muslims complained that Kashmiri Pandits, the original inhabitants of Kashmir Valley, filled the ranks of the state administration, leaving the predominantly Muslim peasantry and the artisanal class at the lowest rung of the society. Kashmiri Pandits, in turn, grumbled that Dogra Rajputs formed the bulk of the army and that Punjabis had cornered up the top posts in the state bureaucracy."

Thus, the state was a Muslim majority state in all regions. However, the mere majority did not lead to a homogeneous identity for them or for the Hindus of the state. There existed hierarchies based on class and caste, and differences based on region. This demographic specificity allowed for different interests and identities to form. Also, linguistic affinity to Punjab than Kashmir brought cultural proximity of Jammu region with Punjab.

1.4 The Princely States' Changing Relationship with British India

On 8th February 1921, Chamber of Princes consisting of 108 rulers was brought into being by a Royal Proclamation in which the Viceroy was supposed to be the President and a Chancellor and a Vice-Chancellor were to be elected every year by the members of the Chamber. In 1927, the Viceroy Lord Irwin on popular request by the princely states set up an enquiry to look into the relationship of the states with the sovereign powers of the British. A committee of 3 members with Sir Harcourt Butler as the Chairman, Professor W.S. Holdsworth and the Hon'ble S.C. Peel as members was appointed and a report was submitted on 14th February 1929. Titled as the Indian States Committee Report (1929), it asserted that the paramount supremacy of the British Government, developed gradually as a combination of conquest, treaty and usage which lay certain rights and obligations, need to be regarded.

The year 1927 also witnessed the formation of All-India States Peoples' Conference (AISPC) which supported integration of popular demands of the people of different princely states. Integration of princely states into the political tempo and current of the subcontinent at large gathered momentum since then, leading to the Congress resolution in 1938, in its Haripura session, that "it stood for the same political, social, and economic freedom in the states as is in the rest of India and consider [ed] the states as integral parts of India, which cannot be separated." These changes were to guide how after 1920s, the princely states including Jammu and Kashmir were not just functioning as isolated entities but were increasingly getting integrated with the politics that was happening at the level of sub-continent, both with British India and other Princely States. This was to have implications on how the states functioned and the subjects of the states also viewed themselves as part of the nationalistic project and inter-state identification with their co-religionists not just in the state, but beyond. At the same time, it also points towards how the external forces were also increasing their interests in the state. In this context, the communal consciousness in the state was not just an isolated phenomenon limited to the territorial boundaries of the state, but also was intertwined with the politics of the sub-continent at large.

1.5 Popular Resistance and Dissent in the State

The dissatisfaction against the Dogra rule was pervasive by ¹ the time Maharaja Hari Singh acceded to throne in 1925, finding expression of dissent and protest in the public sphere which was not merely an anti-state political dissent but also was expressed in day to day lives of people leading to communal ramifications. Christopher Snedden has pointed out three instances of resistances in the state against the Dogra rulers. The first point of contention was on determining who can qualify to be a 'State Subject'. With the replacement Persian with Urdu as the language to be used for administrative purposes, the dissatisfaction among the general population increased as it led to disqualification of several workers who used to work in the administration which was mostly a domain of the literate Hindus, majority of which were the Kashmiri Pandits. To make for the scanty availability of the population which was well- versed in Urdu, the new administrative changes made way for entry of Punjabis into the state as Punjab had in the last half of the 19th Century already had seen shifts to Urdu literacy and thus had readily available population which could work in Jammu and Kashmir and fill the vacuum. ² As early as 1910, an anti-Punjabi agitation took place in the state. Owing to the issues of jobs, education and status, the issue of 'State Subject' had to be revisited by Maharaja Hari Singh in 1927, according to which 4 classifications of 'State Subject' were made. According to this categorisation, the Class 1 subjects comprised of all persons who had been residents of Jammu and Kashmir since before 1885, the Class 2 subjects referred to ² those who came to the State between 1885 and 1911, the Class 3 subjects were those who came after 1911 and before 31st January 1927 and finally, the Class 4 subjects included companies in the State. With the promulgation of this change, employment and property saw significant changes in how they were exercised and perused as this gave primacy of employment and property rights only to those who were the 'State Subjects' of the state. The issues that erupted from this were to continue *long duree*

and were a major contributing factor in the discontent that plagued the socio-political situation of the state.

After this, the other two major disruptions that bolted the state into major resistance and pushed for a change came with the crisis that developed in 1931 and the 1946 'Quit Kashmir Agitation' which shall be discussed in detail in the subsequent chapters. Both the incidents had significant repercussions on the administration of the state and impacted the popular discourse and mobilizations in the state as the former led to formation of the *Praja Sabha* (Legislative Assembly), where differences and grievances were aired, often bolstering the anti-state rhetoric.

1.6 Literature Review:

The study of various aspects of communalism and related themes has formed an integral part of the historiography of modern India, partly because of its continuing relevance in the contemporary geo-politics of South Asia. Bipan Chandra introduced 'Communalism' as a conceptual framework in 1984. In his theorisation, communalism developed in India through three stages starting ⁴ in the last quarter of the 19th century with the development of the idea of communities as distinct from each other with distinct religious as well as political, social, economic and cultural interests. The second stage from the beginning of the twentieth century led to the *othering* of these interests but still remained slightly liberal in saying that despite these distinctions, there still existed some mutual goals of political freedom and economic development. The final stage he argues led to the realisation that the secular interests of the different religious groups were different and antagonistic to each other.

Many scholars have looked into Communalism as a function of Partition *vis-a-vis* the elite politics with a focus on disjointing or overlapping categories of nationalism and communalism. David Page has focussed on the Morley-Minto reforms on people's consciousness and communal solidarity formation. Ayesha Jalal in her work has broken away from the earlier scholarship by not merely looking at the biographical figure of Jinnah, who was the most discussed historical figure in the

history of Indian communalism. She has looked at the Pakistan demand and the role of Congress through a new lense whereby she vies that M.A. Jinnah's politics did not actually intended to create a separate Muslim homeland of Pakistan but it was an argument that he used as a "bargain" to get more rights for Muslims. While dealing with similar subject, Mushirul Hasan has diverged away from the personality of Jinnah and instead sought to look into the years even before 1930s to look at the consciousness and mobilisation which were developed over time and the sudden rise of Muslim League in the early twentieth century. He had also further sought to look into the incompetence of the Congress produced in challenging the Muslim League. David Gilmartin and Ian Talbot sought to look into the political interactions and ramifications in the making of Pakistan, where while the former focused on the inter linkages and the interaction that the Islamic ideology and the British colonial state in producing Muslim aspirations and political action in Punjab, the latter looks at the nexus between Muslim League, the provincial political networks and socio-economic roots in North West and North East India. Ian Talbot in his other work gives a more detailed and expansive study covering a larger time period from 1849 to 1947, looking at colonial, League's and Unionist Party's role over time in envisaging and consolidating the Pakistan demand.

Farzana Shaikh and Sara Ansari have sought to look at the community and local religious tropes in the periphery of the elite politics around Islam, with latter's scholarship looking specifically into the interaction of Sufi *pirs* in Sindh with the arrival of the British in 1843 changed the social-communal interactions in the region. Joya Chatterjee and Murshid Tazeem have brought forward a focus on the Bengal side of the political dimensions, Hindu and Muslim discourse respectively, the shifting and overlapping lines between secular and communal, and the changing self-identification and solidarities that were developing in the run upto 1947. In the recent years, Faisal Devji has furnished an intellectual history where he associates the making of Pakistan to be the result of the imagination of "Muslim Zion" which is based on the idea of a homeland for the Muslims and not just as a political expression. Rather than calling out the vagueness of the idea of Pakistan, Venkat Dhulipal has brought out the concretized base for it which was developed and mobilized as the

“new Medina” by focusing at the case of United Provinces. He has also highlighted the debate between Paul Brass and Francis Robinson in the case of U.P. Muslims. Brass saw the role that elite Muslims i.e. *ashraf* played through various symbolisms and myths to talk about the rights of the north Indian muslims. On the other hand, Robinson propounded that the U.P. Muslims’ consciousness and identity was not working in isolation, but also from interactions with Hindu revivalist movements and the politics of British India.

Gyanendra Pandey and Shahid Amin’s work has done an exposition of how colonial state formed the discourse on communalism and the ramifications it had for the populace. Gyanendra Pandey, for example, through study of conflict in Benaras shows how the pre- existing conditions were through the British methods of showcasing the conflict solidified and constructed communalism, i.e. the British reporting of the events of violence were interlinked with rioting and excitement among communal groups. Shahid Amin’s work by focusing on the changing narratives of *Gazi Miyan* of Baharaich showed how through different contexts changing from 12th Century to the present-day has effected the memory of Gazi Miyan. For 19th and 20th Century, he looks at colonial narratives, nationalist narratives and communal narratives to show how his identity as a Sufi saint was crystallised in antagonistic communal terms where his image was transformed from being the nephew of Mahmud of Ghazni to saint to warrior-saint.

Works like Sandria Freitag, Peter van der Veer, Tanika Sarkar, Charu Gupta, Sumathi Ramaswamy etc. in their exploration of Hindu and Muslim revivalism, and the inter linkages of the binary of communalism and nationalism have thrown up new ways to investigate contours of communalism. Santra Freitag in her work focuses on festivals and public possessions like Ramlila, Muharram possessions to underline how the consciousness developed. Peter van der Veer has used ritualistic practices associated with cow killing, veiling of women as core points in the making of communal identity and consciousness. Tanika Sarkar uses literature i.e. works of Bankimchandra’s writings like *Anandmath* while Charu Gupta uses iconography of mother rendered through cow (*gaumata*),

nationhood (*bharatmata*) and language (*matri bhasha*). Charu Gupta also uses gender and its role in making of the Hindu nationalism by relying not only on the sophisticated writings by reformist and revivalist organisations but also takes into account ‘vulgar’ literature available through magazines, advertisements, sex manuals etc. Sumathi Ramaswamy in taking into account the iconography of the mother as ‘nation’ in talking about Tamilittay (the goddess personifying Tamil language) also looks into the intersection of gender, nation and religion. These works thus open up new ways of looking at cultural practices to talk about the development of communal consciousness and identity.

² Most of the scholarship that has emerged on the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir looks into Kashmir as the focal point especially since the subsequent insurgency that has taken place in Kashmir post- 1947. While the study of the state is incomplete without taking into account Kashmir, there are new revelations when the lense is shifted to focus on Jammu region. In studying ³ Jammu and Kashmir, one of the earliest attempts have been done ³ by Jyoti Bhusan Das Gupta to study the dynamics prevalent in the state before 1947 (when the State was not divided into Pakistan-administered Kashmir and India-administered Kashmir). Gupta in his work talks about the crisis in the state of Jammu and Kashmir by giving a background of the paramountcy by the British, the role of Indian National Congress and Muslim League leading upto the territorial dispute that emerged in 1947 and further, looks into the proceedings of ⁸ United Nations Security Council and the Sino-Soviet impact in 1960s. In doing so, the book connects the internal dynamics of the State and links it upto the international realm. The book however does not deal with the communal side of the story directly. Alistair Lamb has traced the origins of the Kashmir territorial dispute from the formation of the State under Maharaja Gulab Singh in 1846 and looked into “the processes of political evolution” in the State before 1947 and he has explored the issues in the State till 1990. In taking the “Kashmir dispute” as its vantage point, Christopher Snedden’s work gives an account of the making of the State, “rule and misrule” by the Dogra rulers and the state’s evolution vis-a-vis geo-political factors. His work also tries to make people of the state as a focal point.

Navnita Chadha Behera in “redefining the parameters” of studying Jammu and Kashmir has argued to engage with the state by not simply looking at it as a problem of communal antagonism between Hindus and Muslims generated because of Muslim-majority state being ruled by a Hindu king. Instead, she suggests that the state needs to be studied through “local dynamics of Kashmir politics” which includes internal differences within the communities and as a wider issue of politics played between multiple identities of region and ethnicity. Further, Luv Puri has laid emphasis on looking beyond the Kashmir region in analysing the Jammu and Kashmir’s communal problem as Kashmiri-speaking population of the state was smaller than the non-Kashmiri speaking population and as a result of this, he has argued to look at the “complex social, economic and political factors” of the present day Pakistan-administered Jammu and Kashmir alongside “cultural diversity” of the State. Anam Zakaria has also looked at Pakistan-administered Kashmir, especially the area around Line of Control today. In doing so, she has brought out the human dimension of the State looking at how people of the state have been affected and engaged with the state pre-1947 and post-1947.

Illyas Chatha has made a departure of looking at overarching narratives of elite politics and meta-narrative of Kashmir problems and has located the relationship that the state and violence shared by specifically focusing on the case of Muslim exodus which occurred from Jammu to Sialkot.

Mohita Bhatia’s work is an ethnographic study of the state through Jammu region, specifically focusing on the Hindu population and the marginalised population within them as she argues that by departing from Kashmir-centric works, specific grievances vis-a-vis lived experience, citizenship and social relationships can be configured. At the same time, Barbara N. Ramusack in her work on Princely States has located the “current militant movement” in Kashmir in the policies of the rulers of Jammu and Kashmir in causing communal issues alongside communal groups in British India and indigenous groups of Jammu and Kashmir.

It is within this wide scholarship on communalism/nationalism and partition studies alongside the present-day conflicts in and about ¹ the state of Jammu and Kashmir, I am attempting ^{an} exploration ^{with} a specific regional level focus on Jammu region during 1925-1947 so that the specific geo-political factors of the state along with the factors from outside the state can help in unravelling the making and expression the communal discourse in the region. It will also look at how the politics in Jammu region was interacting with the developments in Kashmir simultaneously between 1925-1947.

1.7 Sources and Methodology:

In conducting this study, various kinds of sources have been used to understand the dynamics at work during ⁴ the early half of the twentieth century in the region of Jammu. Colonial documents like Census reports, Enquiry Reports have been used alongside Princely States' official records. Both these sources have been studied keeping in view of their embedded biases in mind. Like colonial archive, the archives ⁹ of the princely states were operating well within the framework of the colonial archival practices. The modernist technologies of archiving and archaeology both found their way into the princely states. Their power relations were defined such that the State became the producer, preserver and vanguard of the archive. As Ann Stoler (2002) has argued "what constitutes the archive, what form it takes, and what systems of classification signal at specific times are the very substance of colonial politics". The attempt was thus made to read the archive "against the grain" as well as "along the grain." The files accessed from the Publicity Department of the State have been drawn upon in the study which have been imperative in revealing the changing nature of public sphere and freedom of expression through the parameters of proscription, classifications and cataloguing itself. The newspaper clippings available through the Publicity Department have also been an important source for looking into the various *voices* that were emerging within and outside State vis-a-vis communal issues that were topical.

Alongside this, ¹ the Jammu and Kashmir Praja Sabha /Legislative Assembly which began in 1934 and continued its biannual sessions till April 1947, have been used. The question and answer hour alongside the debates on various legislative issues illuminate the changing socio-political dynamic in the state and also the various directions the discourse in the State is taking, especially in debating the themes and problems which resonate with the people of the State. In expressing their opinions and replying to the answers, the members, nominated and elected give an insight into the anxieties and fears that continued to determine the course of identity in the State and how far the communal/secular goals were a part of their discourse.

Other sources like memoirs, autobiographies, diaries are another set of sources which have been used for the study. Subjectivity, an implicit nature of these sources in itself allows an insight into the ideas of subjectivities and perceptions themselves, and the disparate narratives that are available from the region vis-a-vis the years of study. First step in studying them has been to look into the authorship and in looking at the embedded biases which are inherent in them. These biases and the acts of 'self fashioning' in themselves also allow to look at the factors that allowed the trajectory of the source material. Next, an analysis of the content of the source in relation to the context is allows to situate the source more vigorously. Thereafter, the role memory plays in such personal accounts which have been written at a different point in time than when the events have happened are underlined by feelings of nostalgia, hatred and sometimes are shaped by the collective memory and narratives that derive from the years that followed. Memory amnesia and the act of introspection that the act of recall creates also defines how a personal narrative is structured. In doing so, they present "recalcitrant events and recalcitrant narratives" which forms an important of this historical enquiry.

1.8 Goal of the Study:

This study will look into the time period 1925-1947 in Jammu region to explore how the Hindu-Muslim communal interface was building. The political and communal consciousness in

Jammu region will be traced in particular. It will also look at how Jammu region was interacting with the dominant anti-state narrative and dissent which was emanating from Kashmir region.

Further, the study also seeks to look into the encounters and flows of information that were produced with its interaction with the neighbouring Punjab (due to close proximity) and at the subcontinental level (i.e. with the British India and the Princely India) to gauge how the 'external' factors were influencing the local as well as getting influenced by the local. It will allow to see the region not in mere isolation of its own internal dynamics but as part of the bigger discourse of communalism in the subcontinent.

In doing this, it will look at how communal identity was formed, how the anxieties were expressed, how mobilisation took place and how this worked with an anti-state rhetoric. This discourses of the time will also allow to trace how the vocabulary of communalism, secularism and nationalism were also being used.

1.9 Chapterisation

This study has been divided into three chapters. The chapter titled "The State and the People: The Background" lays the foundation on how the State functioned in 1920s, the issues and grievances that plagued the subjects of the princely state and how that led to an eruption of violent events in 1931-32. It also then looks into how the State established a dialogue with the people of the state and what were the problems that it encountered in doing so.

The next chapter titled "Making of the Public Discourse" looks at what kind of public sphere was available in the State and how different interest groups negotiated and vied for the public sphere.. It focuses on several organisations and individuals from within the state and outside the state who were actively involved in creating the Public discourse and creating a political and communal consciousness through different means of mobilisation and propaganda. It also locates the state within the larger context of British India and that of the princely states, apart from exploring how

the paradigms of nationalism, democratisation, fundamental rights and the binary of 'Hindu States' versus 'Muslim States' was developing.

The third chapter is titled "Competing Identities and Anxieties" and delves on the various ways that regional and communal identities were merging and competing with each other. It also looks at the various kinds of anxieties that became palpable as controversies around language and script, cow killing, conversion and Hindu Law of Inheritance etc. became the center stage. It also looks into myths and rumours which had become pervasive, apart from looking briefly at how towards ²the end of Maharaja Hari Singh's reign and accession of the state and its unofficial bifurcation, the socio-political situation had changed.

Chapter 2

The State and the People: The Background

This chapter seeks to provide a background to how the *status quo* in the state vis-vis the relationship between the state and the people was shaping 1920s onwards. It will look into how the ¹² Maharaja Pratap Singh (1885-1925) and Maharaja Hari Singh (1925-1947) worked in the state, the role that British played in the state and the sovereignty that the state shared with the British to establish how that effected policy making and interventions in the state. Then, it will look into the decade of 1920s to give a background to public activity and grievances of the Muslims in the state (which emitted from the Kashmir region) which set the tone for expression of dissatisfaction. The chapter will then move to 1931-32 when both the regions begin to effect dissent and violence in the other leading to active response by the state to appease the subjects.

¹ 2.1 The Politics and the Administration of the State: the Princely State and the British

Before Maharaja Hari Singh i.e. the last ruler of the Dogra dynasty came to power, he was preceded by Maharaja Pratap Singh (1885- 1925) who was deemed to be a pre-cursor of many reforms in the state by some contemporaries like the journalist G.S. Raghavan. Raghavan credited him for establishing Agricultural Department, opening up of many schools and colleges, starting ¹ of local self government by opening Municipalities in Jammu and Srinagar, modernization of the legal infrastructure of the princely state by adopting the laws of the British India, etc. However, not all circles viewed him or the Dogra state to be reformist or benevolent. The British writings like ¹⁵ Arthur Brinckman's *Wrongs of Cashmere* (1868), Robert Thorpe's *Kashmir Misgovernment* (1870) and Sir William Digby's *Condemned Unheard* (1890) throw light on the pitiable situation of people in Kashmir, though the conditions prevailing ² in other regions of the state like Jammu, Ladakh do not find much mention in them. In S.N. Gadru's *Kashmir Papers: British Intervention in Kashmir* (1973) where he compiles Arthur Brinckman, Robert Thorpe and Sir William Digby's works on

Kashmir, he also highlights how 'slavery' and 'oppression' were rampant and how the British interventions were necessary for any change in the conditions of its people in the state.

Unlike other princely states which had a Resident as representative with the British, the Treaty of Amritsar (1846) did not appoint a Resident in the state. In 1877, during Maharaja Ranbir Singh's rule, a Political Officer was appointed for criminal cases during the tourist season in Kashmir which was later turned into the Resident post. As the British tried to establish more power in the state due to their distrust in the administrative competence of ¹ Maharaja Pratap Singh, a State Council was formed in 1889. The State Council divided different portfolios of administration i.e. the military department, foreign department, Revenue and Finance Department, and Judicial Department amongst the state officials and alongside them the role of Resident became dominant in the Council. This was done under the pretext of the growing British fear of Russian expansion. Christopher Snedden points out that the famine of 1877-79 had earlier also invited the attention of the British, about the Dogra 'regime's disorganisation and maladministration.' Thus, the power and ⁸ sovereignty over the internal administration of the state was increasingly tilting towards the British control. The State Council was partially diluted in 1905 when it gave some authority back to Maharaja Pratap Singh and was further ended in 1921. However, the British influence over the administrative matters of the state remained significant after that as well. Wakefield, Chief Secretary to Raja Hari Singh (who acted as Senior and Foreign Minister in 1923), for example, played a key role in getting the request of Mulkh Raj Saraf of opening up the first non-government newspaper in the state approved. This decision was also influenced by Mr. B.J. Glancy, who at that time served as ICS Minister, in-charge of the Police and Finance Departments. The powers thus remained shared between the British and the Maharaja. There existed both resistance and collaboration between the two at different points in time, thus making the question of sovereignty working at various levels in the princely state. The state in its paternalistic stylisation and as the face of the control and administration over the subjects held large sway over its subjects.

However,¹ after Maharaja Hari Singh's accession to the throne, strains had started developing in the relationship between the British and the Maharaja, leading to attempts aimed at diluting the residency influence by the Maharaja. Maharaja Hari Singh's presence in the First Round Table Conference in 1930 was key in this changing dynamics of the state. As the representative of the Indian Princes at the Conference, his declaration of allegiance to the Crown was coincided with a stance of nationalistic and independent order and is an indication of the changing relationship between Maharaja and the British:

Allied by treaty with the British crown and within our territories as independent rulers, we have come with a full sense of responsibility to our state and all India. As the allies of the British, we stand solidly by the British connection. As Indian, we are loyal to the land of our birth. We stand as solidly as the rest of our countrymen for our lands enjoyment of a position of honour and equality in the British commonwealth of nations.

Maharaja Hari Singh's career in the state began at the age of twenty as² Commander-in-Chief of the state forces in 1915 and later in 1921, he undertook the role of Senior and Foreign Member of the Council. The story of his accession was also marred with controversy owing to the several claims to the throne since Maharaja Pratap Singh did not have a son of his own. Therefore, after the latter's death in 1925 when the seat fell vacant, it was² Hari Singh, the son of Maharaja Pratap Singh's younger brother Raja Amar Singh who acceded to the throne. Another part of the state i.e. Poonch *jagir* which was a Muslim-majority area and became crucial in the 1947 tribal raids was initially an independent feudatory state till 1936 under Raja Jagatdev Singh. Raja Jagatdev Singh before losing control of Poonch enjoyed considerable power as indicated by his ownership of "his own small army, collected his own taxes and was entitled to a 13- gun salute."

² At the time of his accession, Maharaja Hari Singh proclaimed that "my religion is justice," a proclamation that came to be referred to and tested multiple times in the subsequent decades as the state witnessed the intense unfolding of communal consciousness, acceleration of conflicts and

accession to the independent India. The state with a Hindu king at the helm with a majority Muslim population thus required him to make a proclamation which was pointed to give reassurance to its subjects that the Maharaja's acts were in consonance with the welfare of the people, providing them justice, irrespective of their religion. The need to make an emphasis on it by itself also indicates the socio-political climate of the time in which it was necessary to make such a reassurance to the public brewing with discontent and was beginning to mobilise itself to demand rights. Shivnath, a prolific writer from the state describes how the formal coronation of Maharaja Hari Singh was a grand affair which lasted from 18th February to the 9th March of 1926, "with the city of Jammu decorated and illuminated, a magnificent colourful procession led by golden caparisoned elephants moving from Mubarak Mandi to Purani Mandi for the *raj-tilak* ceremony there on the 25th February and citizens crowding the bazaars enroute to watch the procession and another magnificent procession taken out when the maharaja returned from abroad with Maharani Tara Devi and Yuvaraj, heir apparent, Karan Singh born in France in March that year. The maharajas of Jammu and Kashmir were known to share their joys, sorrows and achievements with Jammuites." The long standing Dogra connection and allegiance that Maharaja and his family shared with the Jammu city is clearly brought out here. Not only this, other important events like birthdays and festivals were also known to have been celebrated with the city by Maharaja and in doing so, he could bring out his paternalistic power as well as show a level of solidarity to his subjects. This attitude of Maharaja Hari Singh throughout his reign was consistent with the growing expression of dissatisfaction of his subjects which was becoming public and the need to pacify the situation. The context necessitated that the Maharaja showcase himself as not merely an autocratic ruler who was unavailable for its subjects, but to project an image of a ruler who cared about the welfare of the people and was approachable.

2.2 The Socio- Economic Situation

The state that Maharaja Hari Singh came to ascend to in 1925 was rife with dissatisfaction and discontent of its subjects. The socio-economic situation, often tied with the communal factors was

such that the tensions become palpable in 1920s itself, but only in Kashmir region i.e. before gaining sustained expressions in the 1930s and 1940s in both Kashmir and Jammu region.. Before the vigorous mobilizations became rife in 1930s and 1940s, the context for it had already started making in 1920s. An analysis of the developments in Jammu region in 1930s-1940s can only be discerned if the decade of 1920s is looked at more closely to gauge what was brewing at the organisational and societal level.

On the economic front, “*begar* had been abolished in 1893, but in practice it persisted, particularly in remoter districts, right up to 1947.” *Begar* had been an exploitative tool in the region since a long time and under the Dogras also it continued. In 19th Century, as new areas in Kashmir and Ladakh were to be brought under the administration and thus required access to these parts (which were otherwise difficult to access because of the harsh mountainous terrain), *begar* was used to make new roads. Walter Ropert Lawrence who was the Settlement Commissioner of the state in 1895 wrote that within the system there existed some exemptions i.e. the urban population of Srinagar, Kashmiri Pandits (i.e. Hindus), “Sikhs, *Pirzadas*, Gujars and cultivators working on the land grants of officials.” Giving statistical estimations, he adds that:

at the very lowest computation.... out of a total population of 814,241, 350,000 persons are exempt from *begar* by rule, and another 50,000 are exempt by favour. It follows that the incidence of *begar* falls with the intense severity on the remaining 414, 241. It continued to be a reason for impoverishment and discontent among the public and an end to system remained a demand throughout the early 20th Century as well.

Thus, a huge number of people were employed in the system as late as 1895. The continued effect on the subjects can be seen as demands for its removal continued in 1920s. While *begar* remained an issue in Kashmir and Ladakh regions more, the Jammu region was heavily affected by the revenue policies of the state resulting in the exploitation of the peasantry. The revenue system introduced by Walter Lawrence in 1889 which fixed 30% of the gross produce as the state's share

of the revenue. However, “in practice, the rapacious state officials and landlords or *jagirdars* (those to whom the Maharaja had granted the revenue rights over tracts of land in the feudal manner), steadily eroded the peasants’ entitlement.” The peasantry was largely constituted by the Muslim population in Jammu region’s areas of Mirpur, Kotli, Rajouri, Seri, with *zamindars*, *jagirdars* and *lambardars* coming from the minority Hindu population. Further, according to the 1921 Census, the literacy rate of Muslims in the state stood at 12 literates per 1000 and for Hindus stood at 70 literates per 1000. The poor literacy rate contributed to lack of representation of them in the state services and added to the poor economic condition of the Muslims. Class and religion thus came to be intertwined with each other in the state.

On the other hand, G.S. Raghavan, writing in 1931, highlighted that the economic condition of Muslims of Jammu had suffered more compared to the Kashmiri counterparts owing to being educationally, agriculturally backward and due to lack of skill, while the Kashmiri counterparts are the ones getting Maharaja’s support. This regional and religious differentiation of rights and condition and its representation is a trope that formed a big part of the discourses in circulation in the princely state during decades after 1920s.

Apart from the economic factors, socially too the Muslims faced exploitation. In his book “*The India We Served*” (1928), Walter Lawrence mentions that Muslims were taxed for basic ritual events like formalisation of marriage and gravedigging. He also mentions that the prostitutes were taxed. The marriage tax started at one rupee during Maharaja Gulab Singh and by Maharaja Ranbir Singh’s reign was increased to “up to 3 to 8 rupees) and it was only during Maharaj Pratap Singh’s reign that it came to be abolished. Additionally, cow killing was punishable with capital punishment in the state till 1934 when punishment was changed to imprisonment at first for 10 years and later 7 years. As early as 1897, in Mirpur district (Jammu region) about 300 Muslims gathered to assert their right on cow slaughter with however no affirmative result. In 1913, there emerged reports of cow-killing cases which Maharaja Pratap Singh worried would lead to destabilization in the state

and thus an inquiry was made into it. There was thus acute tension in the state over the issue of cow-killing within the two communities and an anxiety that was felt by the Maharaja. Another issue which captured the imagination of people was the Hindu law of inheritance, according to which on converting from Hinduism to Islam, the convert was dispossessed of his right on his ancestral property. The sanction for this law was claimed to be derived from Hindu shastras. This practically led to discouragement of conversions in the state.

Thus, the socio-economic situation in the state as governed by Dogra rulers created disadvantages and dissatisfactions among its Muslim subjects. In this situation, the Muslims felt increasingly marginalised and there can also be seen merging of class issues with the communal issues, and regional differentiation as well.

2.3 Brewing of the chaos and expression of grievances

There was developing in 1920s vocalisation of an anti-state dissent in Kashmir region which also provided a context for intensive communal mobilisation in the 1930s and 1940s in both Jammu and Kashmir region.. Several issues of grievances that the Muslims faced began to come in the public sphere and the state in turn also made attempts to control the situation.

In 1924, there erupted an agitation in the silk factory in Srinagar. There existed two silk factories (1 in Jammu, 1 in Srinagar) in the state which were run by the state. Thus, giving state monopoly over it. According to 1921 census, “the factories at Srinagar and Jammu employ over 56 per cent of the total number of persons engages in Textile Industries..... the largest proportion of the industrial establishments.” Therefore, when the silk factory workers in Srinagar went on strike in 1924, it was a matter of grave concern for the state. It employed a big proportion of the population, including men, women and children. The state’s monopolisation on the silk production allowed it to fix low wages and working conditions sub-optimum. As a result, they gathered at Huzoori Bagh, Srinagar where in response, armed cavalry was deputed, leading to injury of several protesters,

including women and children. Sheikh Abdullah later dubbed this protest as the “first protest march of its kind” underlying how significant the instance was in anti-state rhetoric.

Then in 1925, a deputation of Muslims from Srinagar led by Sheikh Sadiq Hussain (who was a member of the Central Legislative Assembly) tried to get an audience at Lahore with B.J. Glancy who was the Finance and the Political Minister at the time. The aim of the deputation was to present the issues and grievances of the Kashmiri Muslims to the Minister.

Soon, another incident took place in 1925 in Srinagar which took form of dissent during the visit of Viceroy Lord Reading and his wife Lady Reading in October. On the arrival of the Viceroy and his party, several people assembled on the banks of the river through which their boat procession was to go through and waved black flags. Alongside this, a memorandum was also signed by prominent Kashmiri Muslims like Khwaja Saduddin ¹Shawl, Khwaja Hasan Shah Naqshbandi, Mirwaiz of Kashmir, Ahmadullah Hamadani, Agha Syed Hussain Jalali, Mufti Sharifuddin etc. However, the Viceroy on receiving the memorandum passed it on to Maharaja Hari Singh and those who were involved in the signing the memorandum had to face consequences. Sheikh Abdulla recollects that as a result of this move, “Khwaja Saduddin Shawl was arrested and banished from the state. Khwaja Noor Shah Naqshbandi, son of Khwaja Hasan, was forced to resign from the post of *Tehsildar*. Agha Syed Hussain Jalali was removed from the post of *Zaildar* (Territory Officer), exiled from the state, and his *jagir* forfeited. Mirwaiz's name was removed from the list of *darbaris* and a strict warning was issued to him. The rest of the signatories, who submitted apologies, were mildly reprimanded.” While this remained largely out of the confines of a mass struggle, the early shoots of discontent and dissent fermenting can be seen in the event.

Another issue that generated considerable discontent from the turn of the century was the issue of ‘State Subject’. There was a change in the court language from Persian to Urdu in 1889, which affected the employment prospects of ⁶Kashmiri Pandits in the state. This then led to the induction of a considerable number of Punjabis into the Services since they were versed in the language of

Urdu. According to the pamphlet titled *Kashmir* published by ² General Secretary, All India states' People's Conference, Bombay (January 1939), the first expression of the discontent against the state took form of resentment against the outsiders controlling ministerial services and privileges which ushered into ⁴ the definition of a state Subject in 1927. The new definition created 4 categories to define who was a state subject and who was not. It included people who have been residents since before 1885, those who came between 1885 and 1911, those who came between 1911- 31st January 1927 and also included companies in the state. This allowed to create job preferences, scholarship opportunities for the state subjects, although it managed to satisfy only a minuscule population of the educated middle class who were eligible for and sought government jobs.

The rising political temperature gained an unprecedented public visibility when the dissent came from a senior officer of Government of India who worked within the administration and resigned later, i.e. Sir Albion Banerjee (ICS) who acted as the Prime Minister and Foreign and Political Minister between 1927 and 1929. The time he spent in the state was marred with controversy due to his disagreements with Maharaja Hari Singh on administrative and policy matters which led to his resignation in March 1929. After the end of his service to the state, he expressed his views on the state to a ⁶ representative of the Associated Press. In his statement, he criticized the discriminatory nature of the state against the Muslims and the poor conditions in which they were living:

J&K state is labouring under many disadvantages with a large Mohammeden population, absolutely illiterate, labouring under poverty and very low economic conditions of living in the villages and practically government like dumb- driven cattle.

He also criticised the lack of any space for hearing of grievances of the people in the state and the curbs which made expression of public opinion difficult:

There is no touch between the Government and the people, no suitable opportunity for the representative of their grievances and the administrative machinery itself requires overhauling from top to bottom to bring it up to modern conditions of efficiency. It has at present little or no sympathy with the people's wants and grievances.

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There is hardly any public opinion in the state. As regards the Press, it is practically non-existent with the result that the Government is not benefitted to the extent that it should be by the impact of healthy criticism.

He further also acknowledged the superiority of Pandits and numerical strength of the Muslims but at the same time said that they both are suppressed. This then was not just a comment on the state of affairs of Kashmiri Muslims only, but the Kashmiri community as a whole, thus bringing to the light the Dogra regime's regional bias vis-a-vis Kashmiris as well as communal bias against Muslims in general. The criticism of the state was thus becoming more apparent not only through mass expression of people but from people who worked in the administration itself. Sir Albion's statement public statement in 1929 made to newspapers like *akhbar-i-aam* which was circulated in the subcontinent. The discontent of the people was finding its way into the discourse of the state and the subcontinent.

Maharaja Hari Singh after ascending to the throne in 1925 made attempts to appease his subjects. He seemed aware of the change in attitude and discontent among the masses. In 1928, a Press Communique by the state titled "Royal Magnanimity" mentions how the state is going to pardon Khwaja Hasam Shah Naqshabandi despite his "improper and disloyal allegations" against the state. This incident reflects how the state was penalising and suppressing critique but at the same time showing "magnanimity" as a means of winning over the faith of the subjects. According to Press Communique (25 March 1928), Maharaja also participated in the Eid celebrations at Jammu along with his Ministers and Personal Staff by going to *Idgah* where a guard of honour was mounted and remained there till the prayers stopped. The communique also mentions that *Namaz* prayers were offered for His Highness' happiness and proprietary and the heir, and that Hindu population was also present in large numbers. According to the Publicity Department's documents, this Press Communique was sent to various newspapers across India. Since these were Maharaja's early years

of accession, he was trying to build an image of a liberal king of a Muslim-majority state, as can be inferred also from his declaration on accession that his “religion is justice.” In doing so, the king was trying to paint himself as an impartial ruler and thus seeking legitimacy to the regime in a Muslim dominated state. There is a clear and deliberate attempt here by Maharaja of using the rhetoric of religion to dissociate himself from his identity as a Hindu king.

While the discontent was finding ground in the public sphere in the 1920s and first shoots of dissent were showing up, there also existed within the state some people who remained loyal to the state and showed their support. G.S. Raghavan writing in 1931 squarely blamed the British and their use of Divide and Rule in British India for the rise of communal tensions and goes on to say that “in Kashmir before the pernicious effects of the British Indian schisms had been felt, the relations between the Hindus and the Muslims were fraternal.” He also went on to list some things that he said were being done by the Maharaja to “appease” the Mussalmans and discounted the Muslim dissatisfaction as a “false propaganda.” In an article titled “Kashmir Riots: Futile Attempts to Subvert Government”, in the newspaper *Akbhar- I- Aam*, dated 08 August 1931, even the events pertaining to Silk Factory agitation of 1924 were dubbed as instigated by “malefactors” and “*goondas*” who were organising against the “Hindus and the Government”, i.e. a Government which was “organised and enlightened.” Even the controversy stirred by Sir Albion Banerjee had rattled the state and the administration enough that it prompted people from the administration like Agha Syed Hussain, General Samander Khan, Colonel Ghulam Ali Shah, Mirza Ghulam Mustafa etc. to counter Banerjee’s claims and release a statement that said that “the Muslims of the state were leading a peaceful and fairly prosperous life.” Thus, the grievances in the state were being painted to show as an exaggeration on the part of the aggrieved or shown as emanating from outside forces (i.e. the British, “malefactors and “*goondas*” from outside the state etc.).

Therefore, it can be seen that the anti-state sentiment in the state was fermenting throughout the 1920 despite the limited space for expression. This was majorly seen in the Kashmir region and

Jammu region during this period seems comparatively less volatile. However, as the years progressed, Jammu region also became a key area of dissent and witnessed communal riots and violence. ¹ In December 1930, All-India Kashmir Muslim Conference appointed a delegation which was headed by Nawab of Dacca to present a list of grievances to Maharaja Hari Singh, but an audience with the Maharaja was denied in February 1931. It was also the first time that Muslim delegates from Jammu joined in an open criticism of the state, one of the first incidents of explicit dissent by the Muslim subjects from Jammu region. These narratives of dissent and counter-dissent as were gaining ground did not merely remain anti-state in their expression. They also began to form a communal distinction between the Hindus and the Muslims as the grievances were different and in the case of Jammu Hindus, the dissent by Muslims was seen as an attack on their brethren of Dogra Hindu ruler.. A communal imagination can be seen as beginning to form already.

2.4 Events of Conflict that Added to the Flame (1931)

Continuing from the way things were panning out in 1920s, the year 1931 witnessed a massive shift in the way dissent, protest and discontent was expressed publically in the state. The decade of 1920s saw the rise of Mahatma Gandhi which shifted the resistance against the British from the elite to the mass population. This led to the development of protests on Gandhi's *ahimsa* which came out in the form of non-cooperation movement, Bardoli satyagraha, salt satyagraha (the Dandi march) and civil disobedience movement. It also saw the rise of revolutionary leaders like Bhagat Singh, Chandrashekhar Azad, Sukhdev, Rajguru etc. who became symbols of resistance in the subcontinent through means of armed resistance and formation of secret societies. This shift was palpable in the subcontinent while in Jammu region public dissent and political factions like Dogra Sabha, Youngmen's Muslim Association etc. were beginning to form. The year 1931 was a year of

acute destabilisation in both Jammu and Kashmir regions of the state where riots and violence became rampant.

The denial of entry in the state in February 1931 of Nawab of Dacca who was heading a delegation to present a list of grievances to Maharaja Hari Singh which was joined by people from Jammu and members from ¹⁷ Young Men's Muslim Association like Mistri Yaqub Ali, Sardar Gauhar Rehman, Chaudhari Ghulam Abbas and Sheikh Abdul Hamid etc. was an instance of significance in expression of dissatisfaction in Jammu.. The Young Men's Muslim Association which was based in Jammu was also critical in issuing protest posters when it was rumoured that the Head Constable, Labho Ram had taken a copy of the *Quran* from the bag of a Muslim colleague and torn it off. Sheikh Abdullah in his narration of this event talks about a young volunteer who was arrested while displaying a protest poster in a *mohalla* but was later released due to public pressure and in a meeting to celebrate it, he proclaimed that "[u]nless those who have desecrated the Quran are punished, we shall not rest. We will continue fighting until every Muslim is assured of his rights."

In another incident on 29th April, 1931, after the Eid prayers, the police officer, Khem Chand is reported to have stopped the *Imam* from reading the *Khutba* in Jammu. A mosque in Riasi district of Jammu region was reported to have been demolished by local Hindus with Maharaja's aide. A village of Dagore in Samba (Jammu region) came to limelight for Muslims not being allowed to prayer on certain pieces of land and there also emerged reports of tensions accruing to usage of water of a tank.

These reports on disruption of religious practices and shrines in Jammu region was to have a great impact in Kashmir with many meetings being held throughout June, inaugurating a time of acute tension, demonstrations and violence. This also coincided the time period when Maharaja was visiting Europe. On his return in June 1931, owing to the pervasive mood of instability, G.E.C. Wakefield, serving as Minister for Political Affairs, advised him to give audience to a delegation of Muslims from across the state. On July 9, 1931, Maharaja aware of the brewing tensions issued a

proclamation to neutralise the growing communal tensions. On the issue of representation in public service appointments , he proclaimed that it stems not from a discriminatory state policy but due to lack of efficacy of the people, thus affectively negating the claims of grievances that were being made in the state.

As a result of the happenings in Jammu, the muslim sentiment in the state was running high and several public meetings were held across the state showing the dissatisfaction of the muslims. It was during one such meeting that a man named Abdul Qadeer came under state's radar. The man who was not from the state and was allegedly visiting the state as a cook accompanying a European military officer named Major Butt of the Yorkshire Regiment, ended up being an important figure in the annals of history of Jammu and Kashmir. He was tried for making the provocative speeches during a public gathering in Kashmir on 25th June 1931. In his speech, he said that:

The honour, respect and reverence of the holy Quran is more dear to the Muslims than the rulership of the world. They will never tolerate any interference in their religion or defilement of their holy book. The Government of Maharaja does not care for his subjects. It has no touch with the people nor any sympathy for the downtrodden. Oh Muslims arise! Time is near when you shall reply with stones against the bricks. I warn you that your representatives and memorials cannot come to your rescue, nor will these papers remove injustice and misery. Such things cannot solve the issue relating to the defilement of the holy Quran. You must stand on your legs and fight against autocratic force. Even if you have no arms, continue your fight with sticks and stones.

It was in response to this speech that he was incarcerated where he invoked a call to the muslims present at the meeting to oppose the state not through paper and deputations but by taking up arms and stones. He was tried under 124A and 153A of the Ranbir Penal Code for making 'seditious' speech against the state and for communal-divisive speech. During his trial which was held on 13th July, 1931, a number of people came to surround the Central Jail building in Srinagar in protest

against his incarceration.. The people that had gathered came to be met with police baton, stones and firing leading to the death of around 22 people. On the other end, there was also given a testimony by Brigadier Sutherland before Kashmir Enquiry Commission providing a British narrative of the events where he stated that “he has sent two troops to the Central Jail on the 13th July” and on his arrival, he found “a number of brick bats and stones lying on the ground of the compound” and added that “the number of stones was very large and I can safely say that a large number of person must have thrown the stones.” In fact when the report was published in *The Tribune*, the headline stated that the “behaviour of military was exemplary” and the sub-headline stated that the “troops did not trouble the Mohammedans,” thus siding with the state’s version of the events. *Akhbar-i-am* (8th August, 1931), another newspaper of significance stated that “it was when the mob set fire to jail buildings and broke down the jail gate that the Police Officers ordered their man to open fire in self- defense.”

In the two different narratives that were publicised, the encounter between the army and state police with the Muslims gathered outside the jail, a communal narrative can be seen forming. Also, the state and the British narrative of events puts the blame on the people for the worsening of situation and the use of batons and arms by them. Further, it can be seen that the state was well-aware of the growing tensions in how it trampled on some sections of press from Lahore which according to it, had been making personal attacks on the Maharaja. It was with such an aim that *Inqilab*, a Lahore based newspaper came to be proscribed in the state. In the subsequent months, more proscriptions followed: a pamphlet was issued from Lahore titled *Kashmiri Mussalmans*, a paper *Mazloom- i- Kashmiri* etc. were banned. The state was making clear attempts to neutralise the situation and saw the events of 1931 as communal in nature and thus tried to control it.

It was the events of 13th July Jail Incident which led to a vocal condemnation of the state and Maharaja, the signs of growing unease were visible in the Jammu region from the beginning of the year itself. It was not in vacuum or as a sudden disruption by one single event that boosted the

dissent, but was fuelled by number of happenings that preceded the event and growing recognition of the state as being a Hindu state.. Prem Nath Bazaz (an active Kashmiri Pandit political actor and a close ally of Sheikh) went on to highlight that the agitation “in 1931 the Hindu Raj was the enemy which was to be overthrown.”

2.5 Events post-1931

The months following the trial of Abdul Qadeer and the jail incident threw open an unstable state of affairs in the state where the power dynamics can be seen as shifting away from the state and towards the people of the state. While the jail event happened in Kashmir, it was to have great impact in the Jammu region ³ and the state's relationship with the outside world.

After the troublesome July, the Maharaja convened a meeting with Muslim representatives of Kashmir alongside some loyalists of the state in July.. The loyalist Muslims, who were mainly the Muslim *jagirdars*, pledged their loyalty to the state. However, as quoted by Mridu Rai, “the Resident suggested, the greatest difficulty the maharaja would have to face came not from the small Kashmiri Muslim elite but from the public disapproval of his policies freely expressed in British India and particularly in the Punjab,” i.e. the discontent was no longer contained within the elite few but had reached down to the people from all sections of the society.

Punjab had a sizeable population from Jammu and Kashmir which had migrated owing to reasons of employment and education. It was under such circumstances that Allama Iqbal, an important political figure and poet who was ethnically a Kashmiri Muslim but was born and raised in Punjab, came to organise All India meeting of Muslims at Shimla on 25th July 1931, which led to the formation of Kashmir Committee. The Kashmir Committee in showing solidarity with Kashmir muslims announced 14th August to be celebrated as “Kashmir Day” ⁴ throughout the ‘Muhammedan centres in British India’ by organising of meetings and strikes as the situation in the state was viewed as an attack on the muslims of the state for which a joint effort needed to be put in the subcontinent to pressurise the maharaja. Two rival Muslim sects from Punjab, i.e. Ahmadiyyas

and Ahrars also got themselves entangled in this wave of politics and dissent which was encircling the state. The issue of Muslim discrimination and marginality in the state was thus gaining momentum as the populace of the state came in touch with the British India through which Kashmir issue was no longer an internal issue of the state but had garnered outside attention.

While *Ahmadiyyas* found more ground in the Kashmir region, it was the *Ahrars* who came to associate themselves closely with Jammu region. As early as November 1931, newspapers reported *ahrar jathas* entering the state through the Suchetgarh border. Their movement along the borders of the state and reports of confrontation with the state came where they were regularly being arrested and/or denied entry into the state. It gave impetus to the Hindu-Muslim divide which was already spreading in the region. *The Zamindar* (published from Lahore) dated 7th November 1931 reported that a group of *ahrars* was attacked by the Dogras army, leaving 3 dead and 45 injured while they were trying to enter the state. References of camps of *Ahrars* being set up at Suchetgarh border (in Jammu region) are also found (*The Vir Bharat*, 7th November 1931) alongside references of attacks by the *ahrar jathas* on the state cavalry in Jammu region near Ranbirsinghpura (*The Vir Bharat*, 9th November 1931). The involvement and mobilisation conducted by *ahrars* in the state affairs posed a threat to the state. The inability of the state troops in handling the situation can also be seen in Maharaja's call for British help as the *ahrar* activity increased post-July jail incident and on 4th November 1931, the British troops stationed themselves at Mirpur (Jammu region).

The demography in Jammu region which was dominated by Muslims numerically was overwhelmingly peasantry which was reeling under tax burden and the presence of *ahrars* combined the economic factors with the communal in which the landlords and moneylenders who were mostly Hindus came under attack. The conflation of the two could be seen in the mobilisation that was happening in mosques as reported by the C.V. Salsbury in the Revenue Administration Report (1932), wherein the ⁴ *Hindus and the state administration* was "being represented as identical." Although small in number, as reported by Mridu Rai, some instances of attacks on muslim landlords and creditors have also been reported wherever they were present in Jammu

region. Working for the state, these landlords and moneylenders represented as the immediate representatives of the state's exploitation. Since the majority of the landlords and moneylenders belonged to the Hindu community, they also became symbols of Hindu oppression on the Muslims. Thus, they were being targeted, irrespective of their religion while the emphasis on religion was also not entirely missing.

Gauhar Rahman, a prominent member of Young Men's Muslim Association (Jammu) made press announcements against the Dogra revenue system. Soon afterwards, a 'No Land Revenue Movement' or 'Maliya Band Tahreek' movement began in Mirpur and spread to Bhimber, Mendhar in Poonch and some parts of Rajouri in the Jammu region which continued to spill over to January next year i.e. 1932 as could be seen from various newspaper reports by *The Daily Herald*, *The Eastern Times* and *The Tribune* about demonstrations, protests, raids and burning of villages by Hindus and Muslims. In one incidence reported in *The Eastern Times* (6th January 1932), protestors including children were beaten by the police for shouting *Allah-o- Akbar* in the Jammu city. The spill-over effect was such that the tension spread to the neighboring Punjab where in Lahore, according to *The Eastern Times* (1st January 1932), Hindus were reported to have stabbed Muslims in response to Jammu disturbances. Hindu Sewa Ashram also came to form a 'Kashmir Hindu Defence Force' and offered the Kashmir state its help in crushing the muslim agitation. While this was happening, the state decided to forcibly get revenue from peasants in Mirpur by sending collectors with armed men, which soon led to a firing on Muslims as reported in *The Eastern Times* (25th January 1932).

Throughout the period of January-February 1932, several newspapers reported happenings of violence, plunder and displacement in Jammu region, especially the areas around Mirpur district. These reports showed that a discourse was forming on how the lootings, raiding and arson which were shown as not acts of irrational mob run amok but as planned activities. Reports of forced conversions were also available. The Hindu organisation's representatives like Dina Nath who was the secretary of Arya Samaj at Bhimber reported that

I reached Bhimber yesterday to organise relief. During these twenty- hours that I have been here I have met about a dozen refugees who were forcibly converted to Islam by the Mohammaden rebels and who have managed to escape, leaving behind their families in many cases. I am not giving the list because it would make my letter too long for a daily newspaper to publish. Only in the village Garun some 40 Hindu families have been made to accept Islam (*The Civil and Military Gazette*, 21st February 1932).

Similarly, a member of Working Committee of the All India Aryan League, Swami Ramanand Swami who stayed in the Jammu region between 10th February and 17th February gave an account of Bhimber, Mipur and conversions to Islam (*The Tribune*, 21st February 1932). Thus, the Hindu organisations were emphasising on the conversions of Hindus to Islam in their narrative of events published in newspapers. On the other hand, some other newspapers made the opposite claim and in fact, called these reports an “exaggeration” (*The Civil and Military Gazette*, 13th February 1932) or an “anglo-Indian Press Propaganda” (*The Leader*, 17th February 1932). While there existed two narratives on conversion, owing to the sensitivity of the issue and different allegiances of the people, organisations and press, the narrative of displacement was unequivocal. There were numerous displacements that occurred of both Hindus and Muslims in these affected areas which came under the Jammu region. Some people were moving from one village to another and also acted as harbingers of incoming threat and some moved to areas in Punjab because of the geographical proximity. *The Statesmen* (5th February, 1932) reported that:

The worst sufferers of Pindi were *baniyas*. A *hindu* remarked corroborated by a Moslem, that when rioters were busy several Hindus were given refuge by Moslem householders. Witnesses from both communities put the marauders’ numbers at 2,000 or more, which it is thought may mean 200 or so.

Kotla: suffered a little worse. Apparently some warning of what was coming was given some days before plundering began, and it is said that a *Maulvi* was preaching war on Hindus in the neighbouring village for some days before. On January 25 Hindus resolved to evacuate the village and seek refuge under the British Raj, as they put it, and they sent a few women and children to Jhelum on the following day. Evacuation and plundering on the days.

Sukhchainpur: a good deal more than an ordinary dacoity. The Hindu temple and practically all the 35 or more Hindu houses were completely gutted by fire, which in some houses is still smouldering, nearly a week after the raid.

The Moslem quarter is unscathed, despite its immediate proximity to the Hindu quarter, but many Moslem inhabitants appear to have moved to other villages. Those who stayed acquitted themselves of responsibility- blamed on outsiders.

One old Moslem's explanation deserves fuller repetition. He first suggested that the Hindus had fired their own houses to spite the Muslims. When he saw that this did not go down very well with his hearers he entered into a detailed account of how, after the shopkeepers had retired for the night, their store of matchboxes may have chafed each other until they caught fire from spontaneous combustion so to speak.

In response to these events, Hindus and Muslims outside the state tried to show their support through mass meetings as was the case of Hindus of Multan (*Hindustan Times*, 5th February 1932), joint sit-down of Santan Dharam Youngmen's Association at Amritsar (*The Tribune*, 6th February 1932), Hindu Mahasabha made calls for celebrating February 14 to be celebrated as All India Kashmir Hindu Sufferers' Day (*The Tribune*, 7th February 1932) and All India Aryan League sent its member Swami Ramanand Sanyasi to look into the matters occurring in the state (*The Tribune*, 21st February, 1932). Meanwhile, "a huge procession organised by local Muslims under the auspices of *Majhlis-i-Ahrar* at Amritsar to observe the memory of those Muslims, who have been martyred during the Mirpur disturbances." *The Sunday Times* (1st March 1932) also stated that in Punjab "... vile and wicked songs were openly sung by the bands of Muslim youth attacking His Highness the Maharaja of Kashmir and his government." The Punjab politics was deeply getting entrenched with both Hindu and Muslim politics of the state.

There were also reports of Hindus mobilizing themselves to attack Muslims through a concocted plan apart from excesses of the state, as this news piece in *The Eastern Times* (14th February, 1932) states:

Jhelum: Some Hindus of Mirpur tehsil (Kashmir) have come to Jhelum for purchasing arms and ammunition. Yesterday, a Hindu resident of Jhelum using his won license bought 100 cartridges from the shop of a Hindu merchant of arms with the Mirpur Hndus money, and handed them to the latter. Many other Hindus of Jhelum, it is understood, are similarly purchasing ammunition to supplying it to Mirpur Hindus.

Mirpur: Muslims from Kotli who have reached here stories of the atrocities of Dogra police perpetrated on Muslims. They allege that the Superintendent of Police lodged several wounded Muslims in the lock- up but when the matter was brought to the notice of Mr. Lawther, Inspector- General of Police and Mr Jordon, Finance Member, they ordered that these people should sent to hospitals, where the latter, it is alleged, are not being treated properly, the Doctors being all Hindus.

Owing to these circumstances, several Muslims also had to move to take refuge in Jammu city and nearby Punjab towns (*The Civil and Military Gazette*, 18th February 1932). These events were to have lasting impact in the relationship of different communities amongst themselves. While the displaced were eventually re-settled and came back, Hindu and Muslims both, the fissures that were created at the time re-opened in 1947 when the state was engulfed with tribal attacks on Hindus and the Jammu Massacre of the Muslims.

2.5 State Response

As the state had been wary of press and there existed no internal freedom of press in the state, the only sources for circulation of information were through news media that entered the state from outside. The state's paranoia about the news medium is clear in how it used Publicity Department to scrutinise and sometimes ban the newspapers from entering the state, and within the state there existed only one non-government newspaper at this time i.e. *The Ranbir* of Mulkh Raj Saraf. After the violence and chaos that gripped the region, built on state's anxiety over news media and its ability to produce propaganda and for using it as agent of dissemination of information in general, it promulgated Regulation No. XIII, Jammu and Kashmir Emergency Powers in 1931.

According to Regulation no. XIII, publication of false news intended to inflame emotions leading to turbulence was to be penalised and Sub- Clause V of Clause 4 of the Regulation invested powers in First Class Magistrates to collect fines in response to dacoities and arson. Touted initially to be a short-term solution to control the growing feelings of disaffection for a short span of time till the situation is controlled, it was applied again in January 1932 when it was realised that the situation was still not stable.

One day after the 13th July incident, i.e. on 14th July 1931, the state appointed an enquiry committee called Srinagar Riot Enquiry Committee to look into the events of 13th July. Its members included ¹ the Chief Justice of the state High Court (Sir Barjor Dalal) as the Chairman and Two other High court judges (B.R. Sawhney and Abdul Qayoom). Initially, the commission also included non-official Hindu and Muslim members, but soon the non-official Muslim members withdrew because the “...Mohammadan public opinion did not desire that a representative Commission of officials and non-officials belonging to both the communities should function....” The committee conducted interviews with 112 witnesses including G.E.C. Wakefield, Foreign and Political Minister, Jammu and Brigadier Sutherland, Army’s Chief of State. The final report was published on 24th September 1931. Brigadier Sutherland’s recounted that “he has sent two troops to the Central Jail on the 13th July.” When he arrived at the Jail compound, he found “a number of brick bats and stones lying on the ground of the compound.” He also added that the “number of stones was very large and I can safely say that a large number of person must have thrown the stones.” The British testimony here in talking of military presented its efforts as brave and just and nowhere was any mention of the excesses of the army, if any, referred to. Another witness deposed before the Commission, Dr. Ghulam Mohammad, BA, LLB who accompanied the counsel to the jail on the 13th to watch the case of Abdul Qadir stated that he “saw the people running away as soon as the firing started.” On further enquiry on how were people shot at the front if they were running away, he replied that only those who were left behind when the crowd was dispersing were shot. It is relevant in this case that the witness had received help from ‘All India Kashmir Conference’ while

he studied law at London, thus was a sympathiser with the people. On the other end, Sanatan Dharam Youngmen's Association in its statement before the Enquiry Commission in August charged the Government with yielding to agitation and failing to enforce the law even when specific warning of the impending trouble had been given by responsible Hindu publicmen. However, the commission was boycotted by the Muslim community as Mr Barjor Dalal was seen as a stooge of the state and thus there existed no trust in the enquiry being conducted. There were produced contradictory narratives by the British and the muslims on how the situation on 13th of July went out of hand. In Sanatan Dharam Youngmen's Assosiation's case, there was dissatisfaction over creation of the committee itself for it was seen as bowing down to the muslim demands.

After the boycott and continuing tension and chaos in the state, another Commission was appointed on 12th November, 1931, which was headed by B.J. Glancy as the Chairman.. The aim was not only to discern the events of violence and protest, but also to investigate the general grievances of various communities in the state. A British ICS official, Glancy had been serving the state since 1920s and in 1931 was serving as an officer in ¹the Political Department of the Government of India.

His ²British identity convinced the people in the state that he will be a neutral observer and is versed with the situation beforehand because of his long presence in the state since 1920s, thus making his appointment largely acceptable. To balance the proportion and keep the representation fair, the Commission included "four non-official representatives of Hindus and Muslims of Jammu and Kashmir Provinces as members to inquire into the grievances, religious and secular, of different communities." Chaudhari ³Ghulam Abbas and Pandit Lok Nath Sharma were nominated from

Jammu and their counterparts in Kashmir were Khwaja Ghulam Ahmad Ashai and Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz. ⁴The commission submitted its final report with recommendations on 22nd March, 1932.

⁵The recommendations were aimed at making the state more equitable in terms of job opportunities and education, uplifting the life of the peasants and increasing freedom of press, thus making a case for a just and inclusive welfare for the subjects of the state. Following this, a process of democratisation was also set in motion through establishment of a Legislative Assembly, albeit

limited in its scope. . Religious rights were also honoured through redeployment of religious sites to the Muslims and Hindus which had earlier been in the possession of the state. On 10th April, 1932, the Glancy recommendations were passed through an order by the Maharaja. However, the ³ recommendations of the Commission were not readily accepted by the Kashmiri Pandits and under the umbrella of 'Yuvak Sabha' rose in agitation, 'Roti Agitation', as they dreaded losing their position in the state if the new recommendations by Glancy were implemented. The agitation was started by the leaders L. Kilam and Kashyap Bandhu. The community, in fact had been opposed to the very appointment of the Commission as well ² and Prem Nath Bazaz, a Kashmiri Pandit who stayed on the Commission as a result came under sharp attack by his own community.

In order to look into the events that had engulfed the state, another Commission was appointed under Mr. Leonard Middleton on 5th December, 1931, as the earlier committee under Sir Barjor Dalal which was published in September 1931 only looked at the July events and since then, the state had undergone several other instances of violence.. The Middleton Commission's role was to look into the various events that happened in Jammu and Kashmir regions in September 1931 in Kashmir and November 1931 in Jammu. The report carried accounts from 312 witnesses from Jammu. The report claimed that while in Kashmir, the violence was only partly communal in nature, it was entirely communal in Jammu region which started with mock funeral processions carried out by Muslims on 29th October and 1st November ("emboldened" by *Ahrar* support) and followed by public onslaught of various Hindu and Muslim community members. In his report, published on 29th February, 1932, Middleton talked about the beginning of suspicions and mobilisation:

The posters issued by Rajput and Hindu Associations show that members of those communities regarded the Muslim agitation as partly communal and in themselves increased communal feeling.

Further, in detailing the riots that broke out and the Hindu-Muslim volunteers that made the situation tense in Jammu city, he talks about the various areas within the city which had become bastions of Hindus and Muslims:

The position in the disturbed centres just before the riot broke out was entirely without official control. A very large crowd of Mohammedans including armed volunteers was in the Ghazi camp and the Residency Road adjacent thereto and there was an equally large mob of Hindus in the neighbourhood of the City Chauk and Raghunath Bazar; a small party of Musclemen volunteers was at the head of Urdu Bazar close to Has Mandi and there was a band of Hindu volunteers in Kanak Mandi.

The report clearly put the blame on communal distrust and riot in the Jammu city as a result of what happened in Kashmir post- July Jail incident and emboldened by involvement of various organisations. The excited feelings were blamed to be on purely communal intentions and had nothing to do with demands of particular grievances like Kashmir.

Alongside the appointment of the Commissions, Maharaja also appointed a new Prime Minister in the early 1932, i.e. Colonel E.J.D. Colvin, who remained in office till 1936. His ascent as the Prime Minister was to replace the Hindu Prime Minister Hari Krishan Kaul who was under constant criticism by the people of the state for his failure ² to bring the situation in the state under control.

Maharaja's awareness of this and the tension in the state in general prompted his decision to use a British official as a neutral face of the Government.

After the violence had subsided and common people were trying to retrieve their life, the state had to provide some relief measures. In a bid to soothe the situation and show its paternalism in the state and to make up for the loss (although exact figures for the loss that was incurred is unavailable), the state took several measures to resettle both Hindus and Muslims. Even three years after the looting, arson and displacement that had gripped Mirpur, Bhimber, Kotli etc., the question remained relevant as can be seen that, during Praja Sabha's session of 11th April 1935 in response to a question on state's relief measures, Captain Kanwar Hira Singh (on behalf of the Hon'ble Prime Minister) declared that:

The survivors of persons who were killed in the Jammu riots in 1931 were given a relief of Rs 1,230 while those who were rendered destitute on account of loss of property were given a sum of Rs 1,712-9-0 as relief to alleviate their distress. A sum of Rs 3,500 was advanced

to two boot merchants of Jammu as loan free of interest repayable within 5 years to enable them to re-start their business.

As for Mirpur a sum of Rs 39, 935 was advanced as Taccavi loan to those who had suffered loss of property in the disturbances while those whose houses had been burnt were given various sums of money in cash besides timber from forests to enable them to rebuild their houses and to resettle in the places which they had deserted. Accurate figures are not yet available as the accounts are under compilation.

As pointed out already, as recommended by Glancy Commission, the state also established *Praja Sabha* (Legislative Assembly) which was inaugurated on 17th October 1934 with Sir Barjor Dalal as the President at Srinagar. It had 75 members, out of which 42 were nominated and 33 were elected. The elected were based on the system of separate electorates wherein 21 seats were reserved for the Muslims, 10 for Hindus, and two for Sikhs. The number of elected seats were increased to 40 only in 193, with the distribution of Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs the same. The new additions were to include from *jagirdars*, *mufidars*, *mukkararidars*, landholders and pensioners. By 1944, one Hindu and one Muslim elected member was included as Ministers in the state which has been referred to as his attempt at 'dyarchy', which however lasted for only few months. On the other hand, the electorate throughout was guided by a narrow franchise of "men paying at least Rs 20 a year in land revenue or grazing taxes, thereby effectively leaving out large numbers of the poor."

The powers of the Praja Sabha was also limited. Gupta writes:

It could ask questions, move resolutions, introduce bills and discuss the state budget. But any bill passed by the Praja Sabha could be sent back for reconsideration together with the amendments, if any, proposed by the Maharaja. Should the Praja Sabha refuse to pass a bill proposed by the Council of Ministers of the Maharaja's Government, the Maharaja was empowered to certify that such bills be passed in the interest of the state and, on his certification, these would become Acts. The Legislature had no power over the Privy Purse of the Maharaja, the organisation and control of the State Army, or the provisions of the Constitution.

Further bills, effecting “public revenue, religious beliefs and observances and usage of any class of the subjects, maintenance and discipline of His Highness’ Privy Purse, State Department, Dharmarth Department, Rights granted to Illaqadars and Jagirdars, matters regarding Gilgit and Ladakh” were considered as Reserved Bills [means? What is its implication?]. As written in a pamphlet titled *Kashmir*, published by ² General Secretary, All India States’ People’s Conference, Bombay in 1939, the “Assembly is only a recommendatory body subservient to the control of the Council of Ministers.” At the same time, through Praja Sabha instituted an official channel and space for debating issues of socio-economic and political importance in the state ⁵ between the state and the non-state actors.

Thus, the state made active attempts to engage with the political discourse and dissatisfactions, however failed to achieve the desired effect as will be seen in the years after 1931-32 where organisation and mobilisation became rampant and demands for power increased.

2.7 Conclusion:

The decades of 1920s were thus seminal in the making of political consciousness of the Muslims of the state who had begin to mobilise themselves, although the expression remained limited. The two regions of Jammu and Kashmir influenced activity at times based on the common identity of being a Hindu or Muslim. But the grievances were not only limited to communal identity but also merged class and regional issues at times. Thus, there co-existed fluid and rigid demarcations of communal identity which changed according to context. The beginning of 1930s gave rise to vigorous anti-state as well as inter-communal dissent and violence. The power dynamics began to tilt away from the state and towards the people as can be seen in state’s attempts at controlling the situation and trying to stylise itself as a paternal figure. Moreover, there can also be traced an emerging trend of Hindu and Muslim organisations from outside the state like Sanatan Dharam Youngmen’s Assosiation, Hindu Mahasabha, Majhlis-i-Ahrar, Ahmaddiyas getting entangled with the issues of

the state. Through this, they took part in providing support to their fellow communities, helped mobilise and also brought the state's issues to sub-continent's politics.

Chapter 3

Making of the Public Discourse

The chapter will look into the making of public discourse by first looking at how the public sphere was characterised and how was the path navigated through limited space for press, organisations, political parties to vocalise the dissatisfactions and mobilisations. Then, it will also explore how the public discourse which was developing outside the state interacted with the state's situation and was also in turn effected by it.

3.1 The Public Sphere

The “public sphere” in the Habermasian sense of a modern bourgeois class was not readily available in the state. The people who were getting effected and were participating in mobilisation had to negotiate with the state to create this space for expression within the state to use press and organise themselves.

In a letter addressed to the Editor of *The Eastern Times*, the anonymous author draws out that:

There are two forces at work in Kashmir at present. Some say that the demands of the Muslims are hollow and try to show their hollowness. Some try to give their lawful cry the colour of a conspiracy to dethrone His Highness the Maharaja of Kashmir. The Muslims have given proofs by word and deed of our loyalty to the person and Throne of His Highness.

The writer further adds how it is

.....difficult to bring our grievances to Maharaja because of practically all means of press, social association prohibited in the State.

The letter mentioned above published on 18th February 1932 gives a glimpse into how various forces were at play in making the expressions of Muslims demands coloured and were being presented in the popular discourse. It also reflects the dissapointment [of Muslims] of being painted as conspiring against the Maharaja for merely expressing their deamnds and disquiet. It also

brings out the limitations presented by an inert and overt prohibition of press and mass association which arguably was not allowing them to present a counter to the propaganda against the politically active Muslims. There was thus a limited public space which was available for expression in the state, owing to the strict scrutiny and prohibitory laws. The space had to be constructed as the necessity for it became apparent with the rising tensions and violence in the state.

Since many people from the state went outside to pursue higher education and for seeking employment opportunities they came in contact with other ideas as well. Mulkh Raj Saraf, the man who hailed from Jammu region and was responsible for opening up of the first non-Government newspaper in the State in 1925, attended the Congress Session at Amritsar (1919) and also worked as a sub-editor in Lala Lajpat Rai's daily *Bande Matram*. The nationalist politics in the sub-continent as a whole and the socio-political situation in Punjab in particular influenced him greatly which enabled him to start his newspaper with a stated non-partisan stance. ⁴ Sheikh Abdullah, founder of All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference and a leading figure in state, also due to his time spent in Aligarh Muslim University came in contact with the active Muslim politics at Aligarh, which was key in development of his political consciousness against the discrimination that was prevalent in his home state. In his autobiography, he stated that "Aligarh had become the nerve centre of Muslim unrest. Following the modernization of Turkey, the Khilafat movement had begun to wane. Despite their deep disappointment, Muslims aspired for independence as was evident from massive turnouts at political meetings. It was impossible for me to remain indifferent to this highly-charged emotional environment."

Despite the flow of new ideas and changing character of discourse in the state and in the subcontinent, the Publicity Department of the state was actively scrutinising press and made classifications based on the material content that was published in them leading to blacklisting of certain newspapers from time to time when a threat to the state and its functioning were apparent. In many instances, warnings were issued indicating the kind of material which was permissible to be written about. In 1931, a Press Communique was issued which asked the newspaper *Inqilab* to

apologise for publishing a critique of the Government and its ministers, and was threatened to be proscribed otherwise which it eventually was (as the Publicity Department's records show). In one of the pieces that rattled the Government, *The Inquilab* (5th October 1931) wrote:

Mr. P.K. Wattal is hopelessly bigoted. He is swayed by the Punjab Hindu Mahasabha of which his father-in law is the head, in his anti- Muslim policy. He has taken a vow that he will crush Mohammedans and at the rate he is proceeding against them, they will have to perform "hijrat".

He is working the Industry Department only to pamper the Hindu capitalists.

In another instance in December 1931, the Punjab government have forfeited to His Majesty every copy of an Urdu pamphlet which was titled *Halat- i- Kashmir Mae Kashmir Ka Khuni Hafta* by Maulvi Mohammad Ali Kapur Zahuri of Nowshera Shaikhan and printed at Karimi Press (Lahore) "on the ground that it contains matter which brings or is intended to bring hatred or contempt, or excites or is intended to excite dissatisfaction towards the Government established by law in the State of Kashmir the printing and publication of the same being punishable under Section 3 of the Indian State Act." Further, *akhbar-i-kashmeer*, from Amritsar published a "Salgarah" (i.e. Anniversary) issue on the birthday of His Highness on 21st September 1932. But the State raised objection on one of the articles published therein entitled "*Betterment of Kashmir*" by Abdul Haq Dogra (Jammu), which carried detailed criticism of the J&K government and its policies and the deplorable state of affairs in the state. Some of the criticisms presented that were considered objectionable were reported in the Publicity Department's records alongside the page numbers in which they occurred:

- land tax expensive compared to income-should be reduced by half (page No. 47)
- Political struggle-Muslim dissatisfaction (page No. 24)
- Due to appointment of non-state subjects as officers-"Our money is wasted"- no officer is responsible to a higher authority and none of the latter can for an explanation from the former for shortage or loss (page no. 47)
- Inspire of many natural resources, soul- withering property (p. 50)

- How can that State progress where education is still low (p. 50)
- Mischievous people from outside have usurped the rights of the State subject and have obtained State subject's certificate by fabricated evidence (p. 54)
- Most of the Contractors are Punjabis

There was, thus, a perpetual threat of proscription on criticism of Maharaja, his policies and his administration. It rendered a risk that various newspapers and pamphlets coming from outside the state had to take. In such an atmosphere of surveillance and constrain, it was difficult to get opinions heard without any fear of retribution from the State.

Seeing the rise in open dissent from the public, especially in the context of increasing violence, propaganda and riots in 1931, the State further promulgated Jammu and Kashmir Emergency Powers, Regulation no. XIII in the aftermath of 1931 which was later rescinded for a while to be applied again in January 1932, intended to stay in effect for 6 months (*The Daily Herald*, 18th January 1932). The regulation allowed penalisation of publication of *false news* and was extended to the whole of Jammu and Kashmir "to stop publication of false news intended to inflame public feelings and intensify present campaign of turbulence and agitation". Further, sub-clause V of Clause 4 of Regulation invested in any First Class Magistrate in the Vizarats of Mirpur and Reasi (where open defiance of law by commission of dacoities and arson appeared to have been realised by the State) to impose fines, subject to the limit of Rs 10, 000 on any one village. 'Wrongful assembling' was also made punishable.

Publicity Department of the State was also active in monitoring how the narratives concerning the State were being produced, i.e. how the news and events regarding the affairs in the state were getting projected to the outside world. In a ¹letter to the Editor, *The Civil and Military Gazette*, dated 3rd October 1931, the author Fazle Karim, Advocate and Secretary of Kashmir Committee at Lahore expressed how the reporting of the affairs in the Kashmir State was being controlled by the state and its propaganda, whereby "... the British Press until recently has been completely under the

influence of the Kashmir state Publicity Department.” He further adds that because of this influence “the British Press, not excluding the *London Times*, had come to believe that the present mass movement in Kashmir was directed against dethroning the present ruler or was in the nature of a conspiracy to throw the Government.

The information then in the state through written media can be seen as flowing from two directions, first from the state and its organs & loyalists and the second from the non-state actors. The state with its elaborate administrative machinery throughout this time period made proclamations and announcements, published Press Communiques etc. to assert itself and in some cases, tried to improve its image (to forge an image of benevolent, welfare-oriented state), while at the same time became the ‘guardian’ of the information. The non-State actors i.e. the people and organisations which were not a part of the state and were engaged in the business of dissemination of information like newspaper organs of various organisations, pamphlets released by individuals and organisations etc. They were also not without their own biases. Many newspapers and magazines themselves were organs of organisations with specific communal inclinations or sympathies with the State. Based on such inclinations, there were several narratives of events available in the press and they became tools of mobilisation and propaganda.

The “public” in this discourse was not always representative of all sections of the population. The literacy rate and the access to information were limited. Also, women voices were almost completely unavailable in this and so are the voices of the Depressed Classes and the tribal population of the state missing. The establishment of Praja Sabha in 1934 did allow a limited scope for Depressed Classes and tribal population to be represented as they were included in the Sabha. While they can express their opinions, fears and anxieties in the Sabha, their voice was that of a minority and thus any meaningful change in their situation was difficult. Women, on the other hand, remained largely on the margins of this discourse, their fate in Praja Sabha being decided by

an Assembly of men since women neither formed the part of the electorate, nor were they members of the Praja Sabha.

Thus, the study of the state and the public discourse that formed in it has to be looked through the prism of the public sphere and its scope that was in existence. It necessitates to think of the working of the politics in the state, especially the process of communalisation by keeping in mind this limitation.

3.2 Organisations and Individuals

As the subcontinent was going through waves of ‘reformist’ (Brahmo Samaj, Prathna Samaj, Aligarh movement etc.) and ‘revivalist’ (Arya Samaj, Deoband movement etc.) organisations and movements that came into being in 19th and 20th centuries addressing various issues of socio-political importance. Similar organisations and movements were difficult to emerge in the limited public sphere in the state.

Dogra Sadar Sabha was one of the earliest organizations to be formed in the state. It was formed in 1904 in the Jammu region as an organization of the Dogras and the Pahadis of the state. The founding members, i.e. Ram Nath Shastri and Dinoo Bhai Pant, were progressive writers who came to engage in the politics of the state actively, especially engaging in the social questions like:

1. Prohibition of juvenile delinquency, drinking and smoking
2. Women empowerment and promotion of girl child education
3. To check the menace of social and moral evils
4. Checking dowry, infant marriages and caste discrimination (especially with Harijans).

While it had muslim members, the Sabha remained heavily dominated by the Hindu population. It was also for a while banned in 1929 for its support to the independence movement which was going on in British India. However, it was soon restored and continues to be an active organisation in the present-day Jammu city.

In the case of Kashmiri Pandits, Yuvak Sabha came into being in 1915, representing the Kashmiri Pandit community which was limited to the Hindu populace in its scope, but largely remained limited to Kashmiri Pandits. In 1931, after the recommendations of Glancy Committee were accepted, they started the 'Roti Agitation' since they were apprehensive about losing their status and access to state jobs.

In the case of Muslims, in Kashmir region, several associations (*anjuman*) were formed like *Anjuman- Nusrat-ul- Islam* founded in 1905, followed by formation of *Anjuman- I- Hamdard Islam* (founded by Punjabi Muslims in the state) and in Jammu region, *Anjuman- I- Islamia* was formed and these organisations concerned themselves with the religious affairs of the Muslims. They were vocal whenever the religious practice of the Muslims was trampled upon.

The organisation *Young Men's Muslim Association* was formed in 1928 under Chaudhari Ghulam Abbas' aegis in Jammu. It played a significant role in mobilising new ideas and spreading the anti-state rhetoric in Jammu region.. Young men Muslim's Association was crucial in organising the Muslims of Jammu region and could carve out a distinct space for Jammu Muslims from their Kashmir counterparts.

In 1930 Sheikh Abdullah started his *Reading Room* which was essentially founded for exchange of progressive and political ideas amongst its literate elite in Fatehkadal, Kashmir. According to Sheikh Abdullah,

The Reading Room Party served as a rendezvous where we discussed national issues and amongst other thing, deplored the existing conditions. Gradually, a number of friends started dropping in to join in our discussions.

However, it did not limit itself to be only a discussion forum. As it gained following and clout, it started indulging in political activity with the goal of publishing the condition of Kashmir. It was done through different means, "letters were sent to the Urdu newspapers of Lahore and we also contacted Rajni Dutt, editor of the progressive journal, *Indian States*.

Alongside writing letters, they also sent a memorandum signed by members of Reading Room Party “to the Regency Council which was invested with all powers while the Maharaja was away in England.” Thus, the Reading Room Party became central to Kashmir region’s political mobilisation while Young Men’s Muslim Association became central to Jammu region.

Prem Nath Bazaz realising the influence of youth in politics in the state also opened up *Kashmir Youth League* in 1936 which “believed in the equality of all people in the state and held that there was no distinction between young men or women on the basis of religious beliefs they professed.”

In Jammu city, rising student politicians like Ved Bhasin and Balraj Puri alongside other young students came to form *Jammu Students Federation* which proclaimed to be “anti- colonial as well as anti- monarchical.” In another case, Budh Singh, a leading Kashmiri Sikh leader formed *Kissan Mazdoor Party* in Jammu which was to look into the poor state of the peasants in the state. Chaudhary Ghulam Abbas also came to support this Party.

The formation of such organisations in the state allowed for representation of people through a forum that could act as a pressure group. While being anti-state and meant for welfare of people, these organisations since were formed along communal lines, also were key in forming communal consciousness. Organisations like Jammu Students’ Federation, Sheikh’s National Conference also were impacted by the politics of the British India and Congress, thus they also toed the line with anti-colonial and secular politics.

On 25th July 1931, after the happenings of Abdul Qadeer’s trial and the violence that gripped Srinagar, an All India Kashmir Committee was formed in Shimla under the leadership of Allama Iqbal. It was formed to present the grievances of Kashmir to the Maharaja and support the Muslim brethren of Jammu and Kashmir.. However, the deputation which approached the Maharaja was declined by him so they resorted to contact the Political Department of the Government of India and the Viceroy, and since that also did not yield any satisfactory response, decision was made to contact the British Parliament. A decision was as a result made to observe 14th of August as Kashmir Day where Muslims from all over the sub-continent were to take out processions bearing

black flags. Thus, Kashmir problem and the discrimination and marginalization that Muslims suffer in the state was losing its status as merely a local issue with repercussions only within the state. Instead, it was becoming an issue of mobilizing communal consciousness at an all-India level.

The appointment of Glancy Commission in 1932 by Maharaja Hari Singh to look into the grievances of the subjects of the state led to the making of a more active public sphere and public discourse became charged. One of the recommendations of the commission created space for making of political parties in the state alongside starting of a Legislative Assembly which made the former's role active and significant. The formation of All India Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference (1932) was done in the wake of these developments, as Sheikh Abdullah puts when a need for a "dynamic" party with "national interest" was felt. Sheikh Abdullah's this reminiscence regarding the formation of the party points to the fact that a nationalist idea was taking root, but was not working diametrically opposite to the idea of communalism. The two ideas worked in tandem and often overlapped in how the party functioned. At its inception itself, driven by nationalist concern, albeit initiated with a meeting of the Muslim representatives of the state, it also consulted leaders from Jammu region like Chaudhari Ghulam Abbas, Mistri Yakub Ali, etc. Thus, the influence that Jammu leaders had in the state was important enough for them to be included in the initiation of the Party. It was not only proclaiming to represent and work for the Muslims of Kashmir region, but was also forming a united front with the Muslims of Jammu region. Further, echoing 'secular' and 'nationalist' paradigms over the 'communal' ones, Sheikh Abdullah in his Presidential address declared that:

We have repeatedly declared that the Kashmir movement is not communal; it is a platform to address the grievances of every section of people. We shall always be prepared to help our compatriots, Hindus and Sikhs. No progress is possible unless we learn to live in amity. For that, mutual respect for each other's legitimate rights is an important pre-condition. I repeat, Kashmir movement is not a communal movement.

This proclamation at the time of formation of Muslim Conference was also partly driven by the urge to characterise itself in nationalistic terms. It can be viewed as the result of the counter propaganda to the state and its loyalists who were painting the Muslim demands and grievances as generating from communal motivation. The Conference also got support from a limited section of Kashmiri Pandits represented by Prem Nath Bazaz, however some section which identified formation of Kashmir Conference with Muslim communal identity stayed away from it (as is evident by the 1932 'Roti Agitation' by Yuvak Sabha of Kashmiri Pandits). More importantly, despite its claims, the Conference failed to convince the Dogra Hindus of Jammu region to join them in their anti-state stance.

A working committee of the All India Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference in March 1933 formed a sub-committee to unite Hindus and Muslims and in its second annual session held on 15th December 1933, Raja Muhammad Akbar Khan in his welcome address said that:

Let me remind my Hindu and Sikh brethren that we have lived harmoniously and brotherly throughout our history. In future, too, it is not possible to live in separation. It is in the nature of human beings that they occasionally fight with each other but it does not mean that they would remain divided for all times to come. The only way towards the overall welfare of all the communities is our natural understanding and unity. In these circumstances I would not hesitate to request you to come forward, forget the past and stand united in order to ensure an era of friendship, love and peace.

There can be seen here a recognition of the conflict between Hindus and Muslims of the state that had engulfed both Kashmir and even more the Jammu region in 1931-32. But herein, there can also be seen an appeal for unity so that an anti-state front could be formed and an overall welfare of all the communities can be achieved.

Chaudhary Ghulam Abbas, a leader from Jammu became an important part of the Muslim Conference. There can be seen attempts on the part of some sections to reconcile the differences between the Jammu region and Kashmir region's leaders. In 1934, he represented the organisation

in negotiating with the State on the implementation of the Glancy Commission's recommendation for which he was also arrested. In June 1939 when Sheikh Abdullah and his colleagues, who were then getting increasingly influenced by the Indian National Congress, attempted to 'secularise' the organisation and renamed it as National Conference. Under Nehru's influence, the name "Muslim Conference", Sheikh Abdullah came to realise was communal in nature and if he were to garner any support from Hindus, there will have to be a change in the name of the organisation. Chaudhary Ghulam Abbas and his supporters, on the other hand, who largely represented Muslims from Jammu region, broke away from the party. Subsequently in 1941 they revived Muslim Conference and came to associate it with the All India Muslim League's politics. Thus a regional element can also be seen as developing in how the religious game was being played out by the two organisations while at the same time their politics was getting integrated by the larger sub-continental politics through their allegiance with Indian National Congress and Muslim League. By 1945, the revived Muslim Conference under Chaudhary Ghulam Abbas issued a pamphlet titled "Azad Kashmir" (Free Kashmir) declared that "the Muslims in the Indian States will not submit to the Hindu majorities and they will struggle for independence and emancipation of the Muslims from Hindu dominance in India as well as in Indian States" and further added that "the Muslim Conference of Kashmir will fight to the last for creation of Pakistan." Its alignment with Muslim League and demand for a separate space called "Pakistan" had thus become strong by 1945.

3.3 Expressions of Mobilisation and Propaganda

Mobilisation in the state revolved around various rhetorics over the course of two decades of 1930s and 1940s. Presence of various organisations, movements, dissent and state's response to it determined how consciousness was shaped in these decades. Meanwhile, in British India INC-Muslim League politics was also becoming stronger and aimed at anti-colonial rhetoric vis a vis 'communal', 'national', 'secular' ideals.

While the National Conference identified itself with the secular-progressive ideals, especially after 1939 with growing influence of Indian National Congress and socialism, the use of religious tropes in mass mobilisation did not stop. The meetings of National Conference always began with recitation of Quran which Sheikh Abdullah proclaims in his autobiography that his way of recitation came to be liked by people. There was also usage of slogans like *Na 'ar-i- Takbir Allahho- Akbar (i.e. Allah is Great)* and several important meetings were held at religious shrines like the first meeting after the formation of All India Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference at the mosque Pather Masjid (Srinagar) in October 1933. Young Men's Muslim Association was also accused in press of acting under the influence of Punjab Muslims and the graduates who have returned from Aligarh.

A manifesto titled "Naya Kashmir" was introduced in 1944 by the National Conference after separating itself from Muslim Conference and proclaiming a secular politics with influences from Indian National Congress. The manifesto reflects the vision that the Party held for the state with deployment of "the constitution" and "the New Economic Plan" which was for "the poor, against those who exploit them." It emphasised on a Responsible Government with severe devolvement of the Maharaja's powers and constitutional rights including freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly and meetings, and freedom of street processions and demonstrations. It mobilised people with a goal-centric world that was projected as awaiting them.

Meanwhile, the introduction of the emotive of "*Kashmiriyat*" was powerful since the Maharaja represented the Dogra rule which was alien to the socio-culture milieu of the Kashmir region. In evoking *Kashmiriyat*, a cohesive understanding of ousting the Dogras could be seen. Alongside this, it also allowed to bring out the peculiar issues that muslims of valley were facing as opposed to the muslims of Jammu region and that of Kashmiri Pandits. As early as 1920s, fearing the competition that Kashmiri Pandits faced from the induction of Punjabis into the state administration, there were demands for defining who was a State Subject, alongside which a cry of 'Kashmir for Kashmiris'

providing a backdrop in the making of the binary of Dogras and Kashmiris. On the other hand, a similar regional identity of Hindus and Muslims combined failed to develop in Jammu region. The Dogra Hindus remained outside the active anti-state rhetoric and mostly remained entangled in communal conflicts and differentiation.

Submitting memorandums, writing letters, sending letters to Punjab press, sending telegrams to the state were some of the methods that the people of the state and outside the state employed to get attention. These methods were however not only limited to those who were dissenting but the supporters as well. As can be seen that in the wake of the disturbances in 1931, several telegrams were sent to the Government by the loyalists i.e. Muslim *jagirdars*, *zaildars*, *lamberdars* dissociating themselves from the agitation by calling it an attempt of the Punjab Muslims. As reported by *The Eastern Times* (23rd November 1931), afraid that the British troops left, the Muslims of Jammu region sent applications “to A.M. Jenkins Esq; the British officer on duty in Jammu, requesting him that the British troops should not leave the state territories unless the safety of the life and property of the Muslims is guaranteed by the British Government.” While the British troops were majorly stationed to stop the entry of *ahmars* in the state, their presence as opposed to the presence of state troops gave some level of reassurance to Jammu region’s Muslims. State troops as representative of Maharaja and Hindu Dogras were seen with a lot of suspicion by them. In another instance, the Head of the Ahmadiyya Committee, Hazarat Mirza Bashir ud din Mahmud Ahmed in January 1932, for example, wrote to the Maharaja requesting him to pacify the situation in the state and warning him about the degrading impression of the state.

The Press played a significant role in mobilisation of the masses and propaganda spreading while also being the source of dissemination of news and information. Both within the state and outside it, newspapers acted on behalf of the organisations that they represented or the leanings that they had. *The Eastern Times*, for example, got its support from the Unionist Party of Punjab and was more Muslim-oriented in its outlook. *Inquilab* and *Zamindar* publishing from Lahore formed part of the

“Muslim Press” of Punjab. *The Vakil* was another newspaper which was started as “nationalist Urdu Weekly of Kashmir” which aimed at presenting the Kashmir’s interests. There also existed newspapers like *Hamdard*, *Khidmat* which were official organs of the National Conference. Similarly, newspapers like *Martand*, *The Partap*, *Ranbir*, *Milap* and *AL Barq* were Hindu- leaning newspapers whose reportage was based on the countering allegations that were made on them by muslim organisations and the muslim community of the state. *The Pratap* (a Hindu leaning newspaper from Lahore) on 6th November 1931 accused *Inqilab* for relaying false information on massacre of Muslims in Jammu. Similarly, such communal rhetoric of unfair treatment and allegations from the Hindu side also came under criticism. In fact, Ahmadiyya’s President Maulvi Ahmed Blah Sahib accused *Martand* (which was the official organ of *Santan Dharam Youngmen’s Assosiation* of Kashmiri Hindus) of spreading hatred and playing a big role in mobilising Hindus against Muslims during 1931 conflict.

In a letter to the Editor of *The Civil and Military Gazette* (3rd October 1931), Secretary of the Kashmir Committee, Fazle Karim from Lahore accused the British Press for being biased towards the state’s Publicity Department’s version of events:

.... the British Press until recently has been completely under the influence of the Kashmir State Publicly Department...

Following the lead of the State propaganda. The British Press. Not excluding the *London Times*, had come to believe that the present mass movement in Kashmir was directed against dethroning the present ruler or was in the nature of a conspiracy to throw the Government...

But the facts now having been brought to their notice, London newspapers now seem convinced that the Kashmir agitation is only a legitimate outcome of the condition of semi-slavery in which the Kashmir peasantry- preponderantly Muslim- have to live, and they have every right to make.

FAZLE KARIM

Advocate, and Secretary, Lahore

Kashmir Committee, Lahore

While these accusations were being made of being prejudiced towards the state, another writer in the *The Leader* (17th February 1932) reflected the Hindu anxieties:

Great satisfaction is felt here about the Hindu members of the Assembly frankly placing before the Viceroy the exact situation here and for clearly demanding that the Maharaja should have fullest support of the Government in all measures his Highness chooses to adopt in suppressing the rebellion...

The Anglo- Indian Press has started a regular propaganda to make out that the reports have been exaggerated and that there have been no forcible conversions, no outrages on women, no forced marriages of Sikh and Hindu women with Muslims and that the loss of life has been small. Their objective is to disprove the pan-Islamic nature of the movement and to blame the State, forgetting that today the entire state machinery is under the scrutiny of Glancy Commission and the Middleton Enquiry.

Thus, the Hindus can be seen as getting threatened by the reporting of Anglo-Indian press which they deemed to be favouring the Muslim propaganda and dismissing the issues of Hindus as 'exaggerations'. Both Hindu and Muslim camps were well aware of the role that press played in building narratives and the image outside the state. They were also aware of the propaganda and mobilisation that the press played part in. It is out of this awareness that they can be seen as being apprehensive about what was being published.

While there were newspapers with communal identifications, there were also newspapers and posters in the state which were anti-Maharaja with open criticism on his administration. These criticisms published in print allowed for dissemination of opinion against the state. In fact, it was reported that some posters were found threatening Maharaja's life. Slogans like "H.M.G Hari Singh must Go" were also introduced in the public domain to mobilise people against the Maharaja. The newspaper *Princely India*, for instance, offered such criticisms unequivocally:

"How can a prince who did not take life seriously and who was not trained in the art of administration and the grim school of experience, be expected to rule over an ancient kingdom...?" (*Princely India*, February 3, 1932)

"... it is on the head of Raja Hari Kishen Kaul and his colleagues on the Cabinet that crime for the murder of thousands of helpless people and the spoliation of their properties should fall."

"The paper also demands abdication of its weakened ruler and the dismissal of whole coterie of the administrative machinery." (*Princely India*, 10th December, 1932)

While some criticisms were heavily overt, some others were more insidious in how they were expressed, especially to be seen in the case of newspapers who were following the Hindu line and were lenient in their criticism of Maharaja:

Did they* listen to any protest, any appeals, or any of the remonstrances from the harassed and distracted Hindus, voiced in the daily columns of the Press through the length and breadth of British India? Surely something must be rotten in the administration of Kashmir..... It is evident throughout that the Kashmir Executive have shown total incapacity for enforcing law and order, even being armed with emergency powers.

(*The Statesmen*, 31st January, 1932)

The "harassed and distracted" Hindus in this lamentation refers to the Hindus who had come under attack by Muslims in rioting and general hatred. Thus, the criticism is being given that despite several attempts of bringing the grievances into the notice of the Maharaja and his people, the bureaucracy and the executive have failed to help the Hindus of the state.

3.4 Outside Jammu and Kashmir: British India

* "They" here refers to Maharaja and his advisers.

As a princely state under the British paramountcy, the relationship of the state and the Maharaja with the British was complex. Technically the Maharaja was a sovereign, but in practice the sovereignty was hollow as it was to be shared with the British. The British Residents and various ICS Officers like Wakefield, Glancy, Colvin etc. were key in the decision-making of the state. The British presence came to acquire bigger significance once the communal discourse gathered momentum since by and large they came to be deemed as the neutral party with no allegiance to a particular community; although, this image was shaken soon as Sheikh Abdullah's and National Conference's proximity with Congress increased. This proximity allowed to see the British as the enemy as the rhetoric of anti-colonialism entered after getting in touch with the Congress. Maharaja Hari Singh's own relationship with the British as highlighted by Alistair Lamb was fraught with suspicion:

Maharaja Sir Hari Singh was persuaded by some of his advisers that the immediate cause of the trouble was the encouragement given to Muslim agitators by his senior Minister, Wakefield, apparently acting as an agent of the Government of India. The Maharaja was convinced that the British were determined to punish him for his stand during the Round Table Conference in London in 1930 where, as we have seen, he had spoken out in a manner which was definitely not to the liking of the Political Department of the Government of India.

In 1927, the Congress formed ⁹ the All- India States Peoples' Conference, in response to the political activities in the princely states and in an attempt to bridge the gap between British India and princely states. The politics at the level of the subcontinent itself in its bid for nationalist discourse imagined a larger India, much beyond the British India to include the princely states that existed in the subcontinent. In 1935, Congress in its Karachi ¹⁴ Session of All India States People's Conference declared that "it would support the freedom movement of the people of the Princely States unlike the Muslim League, which supported the rulers of these states, including the Maharaja of Kashmir." As the affinity between Indian National Congress and Sheikh Abdullah grew through meetings and

visitations leading to multiple exchanges of ideas, there increased an impetus to convert “Muslim Conference” to “National Conference” and secularise its politics. In 1937, Sheikh Abdullah met Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru for the first time in Lahore and accompanied him to North West Frontier Province where he came in contact with Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan. Two years later, National Conference was born and the relationship with Congress continued. In 1940, Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru also visited ⁵ Kashmir as a guest of the National Conference. The growing affinity also did not go unnoticed by the state and was cause for drift between Maharaja and the Congress, according to Sheikh. Nehru again visited Kashmir to attend National Conference’s annual session in 1945 where he was also accompanied by Abul Kalam Azad and Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and it was in this session held at Sopore ⁸ that the resolution of right to self-determination by the Kashmiris was adopted. On 20th June 1946 Jawahar Lal Nehru was briefly detained by the state authorities when he was visiting the state to meet Sheikh Abdullah in prison (who was imprisoned for his call for ‘Quit Kashmir’), leading to soaring of relationships between the state and Nehru. ¹ Muslim Conference under the leadership of Sheikh Abdullah was however not the first party to make connections with Indian National Congress. Dogra Sabha based in Jammu ⁴ in a letter addressed to the All India Congress Committee, Lahore declared itself to be the ‘Congress Committee of the Jammu and Kashmir State’. But Dogra Sabha could not garner as much support from Indian National Congress. The frequent meetings between Nehru and Sheikh Abdullah and exchange of idea generated a camaraderie which was based on anti-monarchical rhetoric. Dogra Sabha, on the other hand, remained an organ of Jammu Hindus with no concrete criticism of the state and the Maharaja.

The Socialist and Communist influence in the state was also palpable, but limited. Prominent Marxist B.P. L. Vedi visited the state to make an assessment of the situation in the state. It was the Socialist element within the INC that ¹¹ played a key role in changing the outlook of Muslim Conference and making it National Conference, and to the promulgation of the ‘Naya Kashmir’ manifesto. Left parties like ⁷ Communist Party of India, the Indian Communist Party, the Punjab

Committee, and the Kisan Committee of Punjab supported the 'Quit Kashmir Movement' which was started on 15th May 1946, while Congress was not supportive of it.

It was not only the progressive-socialist waves of the British India that got enmeshed with the princely state's socio-political fabric. Muslim League, Arya Samaj, Hindu Mahasabha etc. also got involved in the affairs of the state.

Punjab political groups also played a key role in mobilising state of affairs in Jammu and Kashmir.

A group of *Ahrars* participated in the call made by All India Kashmir Committee for 'Kashmir Day' and also sent *jathas* of some volunteers into the state to show support to the Muslims of the state.. Steps to prevent their entry into the state were taken by the Government when *Ahrar jathas*

were entering the state from Punjab through Ranbirsinghpura borders. At the same time the Hindu communalist tendencies were also taking roots in the princely state. The Punjab wing of Arya Samaj which was founded in 1892, from where it entered the Jammu region, influenced the socio-political milieu through its four branches in Jammu. Since there were many Punjabi Hindus who had migrated to the state after the change of the official language from Persian to Urdu, they were associated actively with its activities. Through its open criticism of Muslims and the *shuddhi* movement, it got entangled and began to be strongly identified with the Hindu communal identity. In 1936, an Arya Samajist preacher was expelled from the state following the allegations that he was criticising Islam and attacking Quran (*Hindustan Times*, 9th May 1936). Further, Hindu Mahasabha and Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) had also entered the scene in 1931 and played important role in mobilising the Hindu masses and were responsible for giving rise to the communal consciousness that was developing in the state. As a united front of Hindu communalists *Rashtriya Hindu Hiteshi Sammelan* i.e. a conference was organised at Lahore which received 300 delegates from all over the subcontinent in support of the Hindu state and the Hindu subjects of the state.

On the other hand, the revived Muslim Conference led by the Jammu group of Chaudhary Abbas came to support and be supported by Muslim League when National Conference's affinity with

INC was growing. This happened despite M.A. Jinnah's vocal reluctance to associate with the internal affairs of any princely state. During Jinnah's visit to the state in May 1944, he first went to Jammu and then later Kashmir and stayed in the state for 2 months during which he also came to attend Muslim Conference's annual session at Srinagar declaring them to be the sole representative of the Muslim aspirations in the state. Their affinity and alliance also came during the Sir Stafford Cripps' Mission to India in 1942 which gave hope for Muslim-majority areas and their rights. In fact, while the National Conference boycotted the elections to Legislative Assembly following the Quit Kashmir Movement, Jinnah encouraged Muslim League to participate in it. Hindu Mahasabha on the other hand unequivocally rejected the Cripps' Plan as it was against the self-determination of princely states because it viewed the whole of India as a united whole and thus "indivisible." The Muslim League on the other hand ³ did not support the Quit Kashmir slogan which was started by Sheikh's National Conference in 1946. During the call for Quit Kashmir Movement, as described by Jyoti Bhushan Das Gupta:

Mr. Ghulam Abbas, its President, issued a statement from Lahore on 30 May 1946 in which he unequivocally declared that "the agitation had been started at the behest of the Hindu leaders" and that the "object was to restore the lost prestige of the Nationalists."

The Muslim League and its President, Mr. Jinnah, were of the opinion that the aim of the "quit Kashmir" agitation was to coerce the Maharaja into recognising the National Conference as representing the Muslim masses, in utter disregard of the fact of the real representative character of the Muslim Conference. Mr. Jinnah reiterated in a statement that "the Kashmir Muslims did not support the quit Kashmir movement," but his advice to the Maharaja was "to remove the grievances of his subjects."

The fissure between National Conference and Muslim Conference was thus not just a case of secular versus communal stance, but also vied for the representation of the Muslim world. It was also a rivalry for the representation within the context of the politics that had gripped the British

India. It also allowed the new Muslim Conference to legitimise its presence in the state which otherwise had come to be dominated by the National Conference and justify its unique presence as the 'real and exclusive' spokesperson ¹ of the Muslim population of the state.

3.5 Outside Jammu and Kashmir: Princely States and British India

As has already been stated that Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir were deeply influenced by each other, while at the same time, other princely states were also brought into the discourse. The situation in 1931 in Jammu and Kashmir prompted a meeting of Muslim Youth League on 29th November, 1931, in which it was decided to form a committee "to protect the Muslim states or Muslim Ministers called Muslim State Defence Force" (*The Tribune*, 3rd December, 1931). Similarly, several Hindu organisations in Lahore decided to jointly form "Hindu Defence Force or Hindu Kesari Dal whose members would train themselves under expert officers and keep themselves ready to render help to all Hindu organisations and community (*The Tribune*, 17th December, 1931)."

Such a discourse of juxtaposing Hindu States vs Muslim States seems to be pervasive in the subcontinent and it was a result of not only the trouble in Jammu and Kashmir state but the otherwise changing nature of politics and communalisation in other princely states as well as the British India. Various factions and groups had emerged in 19th century which centered themselves on the revivalist and reformist path, mostly targeting the groups and communities they represented. Then, there was also the emergence and growth of anti-colonial groups which tiptoed on the line of 'nationalism' and 'communalism'.

In an article published in *The Leader* (Lahore, 25th September 1931), titled "Kashmiri Moslems and Hyderabad Hindus," a comparison of the condition of the Hindus of the state of Hyderabad was attempted with the Muslims of Kashmir since Kashmir state ¹⁰ was a Muslim-majority state with Hindu ruler at helm and Hyderabad was a Hindu-majority state with a Muslim ruler at the helm. The article laments that the condition of the Hindus in the state of Hyderabad was "pitiable", owing

to educational backwardness, 90% scholarships that were reserved for the Muslims, lesser jobs and Urdu being the language of imparting education at *Usmania University* which was deemed to be aimed at killing “Hindu culture” and imposition of “Islamic culture on the Hindus of the State.” Dr. B.S. Moonje, a Hindu Mahasabha leader made a press statement in 1940 in which he compared “Hyderabad and Kashmere” in terms of their demography and majority- minority divide and declared that it was the Hindus who were making life in both the states “civilised, happy and prosperous.” This also got interspersed with the rivalry that it held with Congress since he stated that “if the Congress supports the Muslim demand for Responsible Government in Kashmir, the same should happen in Hyderabad.”

These comparisons by interest groups often turned into threats; for example, the All India Hindu Mahasabha in August 1931 issued a warning to the Muslim agitators of the J & K state that if they don’t stop their agitation then the organisation will transform the current situation into a “serious communal affair”, citing that “no Muslim leader would forgive Hindus if they were to launch a similar agitation in respect of Hyderabad or Bhopal[#].” Both these states were named because they were Hindu-majority states with Muslim rulers. In making such statement, Hindu Mahasabha was also pandering to the Hindus and creating a fear of the “other” in their minds. In fact, it was also reported that “.... a committee of inquiry consisting of three men toured two states, Bhopal and Hyderabad, to investigate the grievances of the Hindu subject of those states.”

Riyasati Hindu Hiteshi Sammelan i.e. a Conference for the welfare of Hindus was organised by a joint Hindu front of Hindu Mahasabha, Akhil Bhartiya Khatriya Sabha, Arya Samaj etc. at Bradlaugh Hall (Lahore) between 25th-27th December to show support for Maharaja of Kashmir. In his Presidential address in the Sammelan, Rao Gopal Singh Karwah explicitly stated that the support being given was because Maharaja Hari Singh was a Hindu Raja and because a Hindu state

[#] The state of Bhopal in 1931 was under the Muslim ruler Nawab Hamidullah with a Hindu-majority population. According to the 1931 Census report of the state, the Hindu population stood at 581,470 and the Muslim population at 89,860.

was under attack. Raja Narendra Nath was also present who expressed that the effects of the “Muslim agitation” will inevitably show up in the Muslim states of Hyderabad, Bhopal, Bhawalpur and Malerkotla. While Hyderabad and Bhopal were Hindu-majority areas with Muslim rulers, Bhawalpur and Malerkotla were majority Muslim areas with Muslim rulers. J.A.O. Fritzpatrick, AGG, Punjab States in a letter in 1933 to Political Secretary wrote of Hindu Mahasabha trying to create chaos in Muslim states “as a counterblast to the events in Kashmir in 1931”. According to Ian Copeland, “Sabhite cadres targeted Malerkotla in 1935, Bhopal in 1937 and Rampur in 1939.” Looking at how the politics was playing out, Maharaja of Bikaner, Sir Ganga Singh, in a speech in November 1931 had also forewarned that the situation if not brought under control would create issues for Hindu subjects of Muslim rulers and will also lead general ill-will, thus the situation needs to be brought under control. There also emerged another line of argument in the subcontinent which appropriated the rhetoric of *nationalism*, *democratisation* and *fundamental rights* to express. Mr. B. Das, MLA who was the Chief Whip of the Nationalist Party issued the following statement:

If it was a pure domestic trouble of the Kashmir State, the Indian public opinion would have not minded. But to Nationalist India, the mischievous activities of a few interested neighbours- specially pan-Asiatic Muslim agitators of the Punjab have caused serious anxieties, specially when the Round Table Conference is trying to evolve a federated Constitution for your future India. As a nationalist I fear almost similar recrudescence in states where either the Muslim or the Hindu population is in tremendous majority as it happens to be in Kashmir. It is so easy to start communal agitation!

He then added that The Punjab Muslim Press and inspired agitators from the Punjab were doing a disservice to the people of Jammu and Kashmir. They.....

.....are not helping the creation of a Federated India nor are they helping the cause of Muslims. I must congratulate the Hindu members of the Assembly for keeping cool at great provocation when the Muslim legislators carried all sorts of propaganda and even waited in a deputation on the Political Secretary over domestic problems of Kashmir.

This nationalist discourse was coloured by the communal underpinnings whereas there were also emerging more overt denunciations. Vijayaragavachariar and Dr. B.S. Moonje in a statement acknowledged the problem of lack of fundamental rights in Kashmir state, but in the same breadth added that it was not a Kashmir- specific problem, especially only plaguing the Muslims ⁶ of Jammu and Kashmir, but a larger problem and the solution for which could be found in “consensus of opinion in bringing the problem prominently to the notice of Round Table Conference and Federal Structure Committee,” thus underplaying and negating the claims of Muslims of the state.

Thus, it was not in isolation that the communal outpouring of Jammu and Kashmir were working. It had linkages and was shaped in tandem with the general discourse of nationalism and communalism in the princely world and British India at large. It inflicted and re-oriented relations vis- a- vis rulers and subjects of the states and played a role in developing the political consciousness of the people. Published on 23rd February 1932 in *The Hindu*, a piece titled “The Lessons of Kashmir” forwarded the following conclusions:

The whole Kashmir episode is a tale of political chicanery and intrigue which ought to provide a valuable lesson not only to other Indian Princes. It is time they realised that their safety as well as their armaments or their alliances, but in the unflinching support of a contented and enlightened population. So long as their subjects are unenlightened or discontented, so long the princes would feel their position risky and subject to the whims and caprices of outside forces with interests to sustain which may not be identical with those of the States.

Thus, the case of princely state also became a harbinger of warning to other princely states vis-a-vis the change in discourse that was occurring. The organisations and press played a key role in developing these ideas and integrated the public discourse of the state with the larger sub-continental politics.

3.6 Conclusion

The public discourse had to be negotiated in a limited space of expression. The state made attempts at provide a counter-narrative to the narrative of dissent which was being produced by press, organisations and individuals. However, the press and organisations were not without their biases and moved along communal lines. While there was usage of the vocabulary of nationalism and secularism in Kashmir region and organisations outside the princely state, a similar appropriation was missing from within Jammu region. Jammu region also failed to create a united regional Dogra front of Hindus and Muslims as was attempted in Kashmir through the trope of “Kashmiriyat”. Further, out of the public discourse which the princely state generated in the state and sub-continent, there emerged mobilisation which was based on creating the dichotomy of “Hindu states” and “Muslim states”.

Ch- 4

Competing Anxieties and Identities

The anxieties and fears that people developed in 1930s and 1940s came interspersed with religious and regional anxieties often based on fact and fiction both. Several issues like language, script, cow- killing, conversion, inheritance rights etc. formed part of this discourse. This chapter will delve into these different issues to explore how communal discourse was being informed by these fears and anxieties. The fear that the other community would marginalise the other along with issues of discrimination in access to education, employment, medical services etc. and backwardness (*vis-a-vis* other communities) were palpable. The anxieties were not specific to any one community but ran through all different identities. These identities were not fixed in their demands and anxieties. At times, they shifted to include Sikhs with Hindus of the state, other times there emerged differentiation of region between Hindus from the valley and Hindus from Jammu. Similarly for Muslims of the state, there existed a separate Muslim identity from other religious groups in the state, a pan-islamic identity with outside the state and then a different identity of Jammu muslims and Kashmir muslims. There were negotiations that were happening at the level of engaging with state through requests, protests and dissent leading to competition between different identities and their anxieties and competition amongst these different identities as well.

4.1 Language and Script

¹² The official language in the state during the period of study was Urdu and the script was Perso-Arabic. Before this, Persian was the official language. But as the communal discourse progressed in the state, there emerged a demand for Hindi language and Devnagari script to be made official. This was keeping in view that the language and script had come to be associated with religion. Thus, fearing marginalisation and to compete with the Muslim demand for appeasing their

grievances, Hindus in 1930s began a call for Hindi and Devnagari to be made official alongside Urdu and Perso-Arabic script.

The issue of language and script was not only limited to official usage of it, but to take it to the primary level of education. This was also in line with the sub-continental politics which was playing out through Hindi versus Urdu paradigm. B.S. Moonje's [President of All India Hindu Mahasabha (1927- 1937)]in a statement in a newspaper stated:

I have thus no hesitation in advising the Hindus to push forth their demand for making Hindi the court language of the state with all the vigour and vehemence they command. I am hopeful that the Hindu Mahasabha will tend its support to their legitimate demand. I wish them all success.

B.S. Moonje's statement came through his comparison of Hyderabad with Kashmir where Urdu was *lingua franca* in Hyderabad [where the majority population was Hindus] because of the Muslim demand and thus he questioned why can't similar demand for Hindi made by Hindus of Kashmir not paid heed to. Similarly, in a letter written to *The Leader* (Lahore, 3rd October, 1931) under the pseudonym "One Who Knows", a contrast was made on how Urdu is forced upon the people of Hyderabad and in Kashmir state, Hindi is not even the court language and is not even encouraged by the state.

Debate over introduction of Devanagari script alongside Perso- Arabic script was a point of contention in the Praja Sabha debates in the state as well. The scripts came to be associated with religion, i.e. Devanagari with Hindus and Perso-Arabic with Muslims. There was also a small minority of Sikhs who in response to these scripts wanted introduction of Gurmukhi. Thus, the relationship between script and religious identity was established.

In 1933, first *Hindi sahitya Sammelan* was organised at Divan Mandir, Jammu. In talking about the event, Om Goswami, a writer and a poet wrote that

“श्री रमाकांत जी के नतिांत परशु राम से आज दै व यह सु दनि दखायो
है ।

हिंदी संसार हू कमिठू - भू ममि ' भी हिंदी साहित्य अं कु र जनायो
है ।”

Translation:

“Due to the hard work of Mr. Ramakant Ji, this day has been arrived today,

Hindi literature has sprouted in the deserted land of Hindi.”

This was the first Hindi event that was organised in the state while organisations like *Arya Samaj*, *Sanatan Dharma Sabha*, *Brahman Sabha* continued endorsing it and there was a recognition of the lack of Hindi in the state as is pointed through “deserted land of Hindi.” It was during Gopalaswamy Ayyangar’s Prime Ministership (1937- 43) that an order was passed for official recognition of both the scripts, Devnagari and Perso-Arabic. This had repercussions on several levels in the state i.e. “all teachers would now be forced to read Hindi to be employed by the Education Department.”

Wardha Scheme which was introduced in 1937 in the subcontinent laid out that mother tongue was supposed to be the method of teaching. This also effected the discourse in the state. Because of the pressure that was developing, an Education Re-organisation Committee was formed by the state which concluded that it was against ¹ the introduction of double script in the state (i.e. simultaneous use of both the scripts in the state). But since the demands for the change continued to pressurise the government (which were expressed in Praja Sabha debates), double script came to be employed in 1941. As the debate grew, tensions increased and in 1939, 8 members of National Conference resigned from Praja Sabha demanding that double script should not be introduced.. However, the

issue also brought out fissures within National Conference along religious lines. Prem Nath Bazaz, a prominent Kashmiri Hindu leader of National Conference along with Sh. Bansi Lal Suri who led the Jammu branch of National Conference and other Hindu members split from the Party .

Magazine like *Usha*, *Bharti*, *Vasudha* which were published in the state also played an important role in advancing the cause of Hindi by publishing numerous articles and letters to editors in defence of Hindi and Devanagari usage in the state. *Vasudha* which was started after the organisation of *Punjab Prantiya Hindi Sammelan* (Punjab Provincial Hindi Conference) in 1933 in Jammu. In its first edition, the editorial demanded for giving the right status to Hindi and lamented that some Muslims are bitter about Hindi and have made the issue communal. In its May, 1941 edition, the magazine *Bharati's* editorial published that ever since the Government has introduced Devanagari script in schools and given it the same status as Urdu, the Muslim brethren has been consistently protesting against it and asking the state to roll back the order.

In one Question asked during Praja Sabha proceedings on 24th March, 1941, S.Mul Singh Khosla, a member of the Legislative Assembly asked “if books on religious instruction taught in Government schools? (For Hindu- Muslim)” to which the state representative Lt. Fazal Rahman’s response was that it was in some schools of Muslim boys and that recently some books had also been sanctioned for Hindus to be introduced next Baisakh wherever Hindi teachers were available. The religious texts were thus also formed part of the curriculum, with Hindi and Urdu texts being aligned with Hindus and Muslims. While the debate between Hindi/Urdu language and script was underway, the Sikh section also raised concerns about the usage of Punjabi. On 24th March 1941, during Legislative Business, a resolution was brought up by Sardar Kirpal Singh, a member of Legislative Assembly representing Sikhs made a request for inclusion of Punjabi to enable Sikh boys to study *Granth Sahib* (the religious text of Sikhs) in talking about the importance of such measure, he stated that:

.... ruin of a community was brought upon by ruining its culture. To him it appeared that by neglecting to make satisfactory arrangements for teaching Punjabi in schools, the Governemnt wanted to wipe out the Sikh community from the State.

Adding to the above argument by Sardar Kirpal Singh, Sardar Dhian Singh, another member of the Legislative Assembly added that:

... it was not correct to say that the Sikhs were included among the Hindus and that concessions given to the latter extended to the former as well. The Sikhs, said the Sardar, were considered a separate community by the British Government and quoting the Census figure he said that in the State where the Sikhs numbered 50,000, it was necessary to treat them likewise and on this ground to treat Punjabi separate language like Hindi.

Similarly, during Pt. Shiv Narayan Fotedar's Resolution discussion on 25th March 1941 reference to cultural preservation were made in demanding for an Assistant Inspector of schools who is well-versed in Hindi and Sanskrit:

... it is rather regretful to observe that the Hindi and Sanskrit education in the States which alone, I feel, if pushed forward with the tenacity of action and thoroughness of purpose, can help Hindus in the preservation and maintenance of their cultural, linguistic and religious interests. The rejuvenation of their ancient glorious past is immeasurably suffering for want of attention, guidance, supervision, direction and control.

There was a clear association being made of language and script with religious communities, relegating Urdu to Muslims, Hindi to Hindus and thus a demand for Punjabi for Sikhs. The communal identity was thus being viewed as separate enough to evoke associations and basic tenets to be linked for a separation of identities. While the demands for Devanagiri were being made alongside Hindi, Dogri which was the major dialect used in Jammu began to employ Devanaigri as

its script and Takri script saw a decline. Thus, standardisation and the sub-continent's discourse on association of Devnagari with Hindus can be seen as making an impact here.

Language as a marker and preserver for cultural paradigms of religious practice thus became a medium for easing the insecurity that was being felt. It was also deemed important as it had repercussions on employment as well, for example introduction of Devanagiri in school necessitated employment of teachers in Hindi and thus Hindus. This can be studied *vis-à-vis* the larger debate on; language and script which was taking shape in British India with growing reification, codification and purification that began in late 19th Century.

4.2 Conversion, Hindu Law of Inheritance and Cow Killing

Conversion of Hindus to Islam was a matter of concern and anxiety throughout this period. While there was presence of Arya Samaj which had developed the idea of *shuddhi* to re-convert those who had first converted to Islam, the evidence for anxiety related to it is unavailable. When the riots in Jammu region happened in 1932, it was reported on several occasions that alongside the looting and killing, conversion also formed part of the conflict. Hindu organisations like Arya Samaj, Hindu Mahasabha, Rashtriya Swayamsewak Dal who had already been playing the politics on conversion in sub-continent, by 1930 had begun to take ¹ interest in the affairs of the state and their discourse ran heavily on the idea of conversions. This was a key factor in inducing fear in Hindus against conversion and at the same allowed for these organisations to further their cause.

In *The Civil and Military Gazette* (21st February 1932), Dina Nath (Secretary, Arya Samaj, Bhimber) wrote to the Editor:

it has been stated in your columns that during the riots in the Kashmir State no Hindu has been converted to Islam. This is wrong on the very face of it. Under instructions from Mahatma Hans Raj, I reached Bhimber yesterday to organise relief. During these twenty-hours that I have been here I have met about a dozen refugees who were forcibly converted to Islam by the Mohammedan rebels and who have managed to escape, leaving behind their families in many cases. I am not giving the list because it would make my letter too long for

a daily newspaper to publish. Only in the village Garun some 40 Hindu families have been made to accept Islam.

Dina Nath
Headmaster, G.S.A.S. High School,
Hafizabad
C/o the Secretary,
Arya Samaj, Bhimber.

While it is difficult to ascertain the facts, there was definitely a narrative of forced conversions in place in the state which fed into the fears of Hindus and also bolstered a strong narrative against the Muslims and in the end allowed for the growing animosity to fester.

Apart from allegation of the mass conversions that emerged during the riots of 1932, some incidents of conversion which worked at the personal level were also politicised. In 1942, a young Rajput widow from Gour (Akhnoor), Jammu region who was a teacher at Birpur was reported to have married a Muslim constable and converted. Soon the news spread all over the town and she was taken by some Rajput boys and confined in Choughan Fateh in Col. Samsar Singh's house (who was a retired Military Officer and a member of the Praja Sabha), as the Rajput boys cited that the marriage was a "bogus affair". This matter became increasingly political and Allah Rakha Sagar, a Muslim leader complained to the Governor that a Muslim girl had been taken away by the Rajputs. Soon, Muslim Conference got involved. The inter-communal conflict got grave and Section 144 CrPC (unlawful assembly of more than 4 people) was promulgated for 1 month in the city.

Post-Glancy Commission, the issue of conversion got exacerbated. There were demands by the Muslims for change in the Hindu Law of Inheritance in the state which would render the converted losing rights on his inheritance. But it invited a lot of criticism from the Hindu circles. For this denial, *Hindu Shastra*, *Manu Smriti* as the basis were cited for loss of rights on change of religion

or loss of caste since religious succession of property was linked with the following of the practice of *Shradh*. To this end, Kashmiri Pandits submitted a 76- page long type-written document drawing on Dalal Commission's report which talked about the *shastric* sanction of the basis of conversion and right of possession.

Several meetings were held protesting the new changes that were put forth by Glancy Committee leading to no longer a dispossession of property on conversion.. Meetings were held by *Arya Swarajya Sabha* at Lahore; at Delhi and at Srinagar by local people. *Zaffarwal Hindu Sabha* in its meeting called the demand "a flagrant attack on the Hindu Dharma". All India Hindu Mahasabha's Secretary Babu Padmaraj Jain also telegraphed State's Prime Minister on 7th December 1931 registering his protest against the removal of Hindu Law of Inheritance. The matter took such significance that *Hindu Sahaik Sabha* resolved not to cooperate with Glancy Commission and made a call for withdrawal of all Hindu societies from the Commission. *Hindu Yuvak Sabha*, Jammu sent the following ¹ telegram to the Prime Minister, Jammu and Kashmir following the call for boycott for which it mentioned that it,

..... resolves to non-cooperate with Glancy Commission and requests Hindu representative, Pt. Lok Nath and Premnath Bazaz immediately to retire from the Commission.

On the other hand, in *The Civil and Military Gazette* (8 January 1932), letter to editor by Mohammad Ali (president, Ahmadiya Anjuman-i-Isha'at-i-Islam, Lahore) referenced to the Hindu ¹ from outside the state intervening in the affairs of the state:

The Hindus, not only those residing in the State of Kashmir but the vast numbers living outside that State as well have taken strong objection to the reference to the Glancy Commission of the question of inheritance in the case of those who have renounced the Hindu religion.

He further alleged that the Hindus from British India are being hypocrite as similar rules have already been in existence there:

This contention may be excusable to some extent in the case of the Hindus of Kashmir, who being the co-religionists of the ruling dynasty, can think of their own religious freedom, and are perhaps yet ignorant of what religious freedom for all means. But in the case of the Hindus living in British India to support the contention of the Kashmir Hindus is quite incomprehensible, as they are fully aware that the rule laid down by the Hindu Shastras as to the exclusion from inheritance of those who have renounced The Hindu faith was made null over eighty years ago as being incompatible with the religious freedom to which the British Government was committed.

Thus Muslim organisations like Ahmadiyas were criticising the Hindu groups and individuals from British India since the same law had been rendered null and void in 1850 through Act XXI on Religious Freedom. The politics and conflict between Hindu-Muslim organisations thus can be seen to be playing out in the case of Jammu and Kashmir. According to Act XXI:

So much of any law or usage now in force within the territories subject to the Government of the East India Company as inflicts on any person forfeiture of rights or property, or may be held in any way to impair or affect any right of inheritance, by reason of his or her renouncing, or having been excluded from the communion of any religion, or being deprived of caste, shall cease to be enforced as law in the courts of the East India Company and in the courts established by the Royal Charter within the territories.

Sheikh Abdullah, on the other hand, took an alternative view whereby he stated that both religions penalise conversion, “but the archaic rules of the Hindus and the Muslim jurisprudence seriously conflict with the advanced view of the modern man, the sooner they be ignored the better.” Here an argument of modernity can be seen being made in the discourse of communal conflict.

In the case of cow killing, Mridu Rai cites an incident as early as 1913 where “rumours” about cow killing which state were being “fuelled by ‘religious sentiment’ and clearly reflected a growing desire among Muslims to ‘remove or to minimise the significance of the legal prohibition against cow- killing in the state .’” Cow killing was banned in the state and till 1920 was punishable with capital punishment and then later invited 10 years of imprisonment which was further reduced to 7 years. The controversy over cow-killing was resurrected when it was rumoured that Glancy

Commission is considering lifting the ban of cow-killing in the state. Hindus of Hoshiarpur also protested against the impending threat that Hindu law of cow-protection will be repealed by the Glancy Commission.

In 1936, the Basohli (a town in Jammu region) conversion controversy of alleged forced conversion and kidnapping of a Hindu woman by a Muslim man, the matters deteriorated when cattle bones were found in the well and are reported to have nearly led to a communal riot in the town. In 1937, while Maharaja was away in London, inter- communal rioting broke out in ² both Jammu and Kashmir regions because of the circulation of the rumour that soon the ban on cow slaughter is going to be uplifted by the state. On his return, the Maharaja made an address at the Praja Sabha assuring his Hindu state subjects that no changes in cow-slaughter ban have been taken up by the state.

There was an agitation by the Hindus where a public meeting was held by *Hindu Sikh Naujawan*. The Hindus of the felt that their “religion was in danger” and their persistent anxiety of Maharaja appeasing the Muslims through his policies took stronger hold. All India Kashmir Committee held meeting at Hazrat Bal shrine at Srinagar asking for the ban to be lifted. Nawab Md. Ismail Khan, Secretary, All India Muslim Conference compared the situation of cow killing with idol worship in Hinduism:

How would the Hindus like the Muslim leaders to penalise idol worship, which is as odious, if not more, to the Muslims as is Cow killing to the Hindus?

Thus, religious issue of contention of cow killing, conversion and debate over Hindu Law of Inheritance became important in the state. For the Muslims, it read as trampling of their rights and religious freedom. For the Hindus, it felt like a threat to their religion. Even a slight rumour on changes to cow killing and Hindu law of Inheritance was enough for Hindus to protest and agitate. They also viewed such attempts as appeasement policy of the state. This developed an anti-Muslim

rhetoric for them. While it was difficult to mobilise people on these issues in British India, the communal organisations from British India took lead in doing so in Jammu and Kashmir.

4.3 Myth and Rumours

Myths and rumours are intrinsic in the history of modern India. Miracles and devotion which form part of local beliefs often get appropriated in making of myths. This can be seen in the case of *sati* worship where a woman after she has immolated herself becomes divine and is thus worshipped subsequently being called a *sati mata*. Similarly, as Shahid Amin points out, myths and rumours have formed part of discourse on Gandhi as well. The myths, he argues are rooted in the pre-existing vocabulary of the people like the idea of *darshan*, miracle performance etc. which were used in seeing 'Gandhi as Mahatma', as someone to be worshiped and revered, bolstering the belief in their protest and agitation with his blessings. Similarly, David Hardiman, in his study of the trope of Devi shows how stories of Devi possessing people to expound the idea of vegetarianism, liquor prohibition and spreading Gandhi's message was used.

In the destability that happened in 1931-32 in Jammu region, the myth of *Lal Badshah* stands out.. In Jammu region when the violence gripped post- jail incident of July,1931 in Kashmir, several reports of one Lal Badshah were made. The truth of the existence of such a leader although was never established, the fable of him was spreading in Jammu region and acted as a harbinger of terror for Hindus..

The Civil and Military Gazette (13th February 1932) talked about the claims that were being made that the local Muslims have been stylising themselves as 'kings' with each territory that is coming under their control and amongst these stylisations, one of them has declared itself as "Lal Badshah." Declaration of one stylised name for such claims allowed for belief to take root more concretely as it made reference to a proper identification for the saviour for Muslims.

Lal Badshah in these narratives was also credited with setting up an independent kingdom and massacring and looting Hindus in reports. As Hindus flee from villages in January-February 1932

to save themselves from the Muslim attacks, they became messengers of spreading the myth of Lal Badshah. Muslims, on the other hand, were afraid of being chased away by Maharaja's and British army and facing retribution from them also flee from their villages. The idea of a Lal Badshah and several other local Muslims taking over territory allowed them to heed a sense of security in the face of the threat from military.

The Tribune (18th February 1932) in its report called Lal Badshah a Swarajist leader (which could have been a reference to Gandhi's idea of *swaraj*) and

....a fakir turned politician whose real name is Sain Dal. He is described as clothed in black and armed with revolver and sword, and reports here corroborate the rumour at Mirpur that he has collected his own land revenue. He has been known for some time, but the military are naturally anxious to make his closer acquaintance. Probably he is in league with the *Maulvi* who found people willing to pay revenue, but persuaded them not on the pretext of awaiting the result of negotiations with the durbar.

There was thus an association of him being a "fakir" and links with "Maulvi", giving him a divine-like image, a messiah who can save the Muslims from the tyranny of the state. At the same time, he is also described as "clothed in black" and "armed" making him a figure with power who can make actual change in the condition of Muslims. At the same time, it also helped in making an image of him which could tender fear in Hindus' psyche. By mentioning that he's participating in collecting land revenue, there's also a declaration of sovereignty and autonomy as opposed to state's sovereignty. Mention of land revenue particularly is also significant since the main economic issue which plagued areas of Mirpur, Bhimbher, Kotli etc. in Jammu region was exuberant land revenue from peasants who were mostly derived from the Muslim community whereas the moneylenders and *zamindars* class predominantly comprised of the Hindu community. Thus, the idea of Lal Badshah becoming in-charge of land revenue points towards emancipation from the economic grievance of Muslims of Jammu region. This allowed for class-communal problem to be resolved through one rumour.

In September 1932 in Dhaki Acharijan, an area in Jammu city inhabited by Hindus and Muslims rumours spread that “Sh. Mohammed Iqbal of Mastgarh while passing through the area saw on a *chabuttra* near the house of Arora Brahman a leaf of Quran covered with filth. At the same time Wali Mohammad book binder happened to pass by who saw it, removed the filth and threw the leaf in Tawi River.” In another incident reports emerged that at Sheishan, Samba (Jammu region) “lower part of the leg of a pig about 8 inches long was found tied to the pulley by means of a thread.” Similarly, reports emerged that at Narwal, Jammu city “some ‘enemy of Islam’ has suspended a pig’s leg from the pulley.” Such rumours abound in Jammu city and intensified the communal antagonism. Such incidents were seen as threats and provocations from Hindus against the Muslims.

The principal of the Prince of Wales’ College, Jammu was accused of being an ‘Arya Samaji gentleman’ and the institution is accused of being Hindu in its outlook despite it being open for all caste, colour and creed. These accusations were made in a letter written anonymously by “One Who Knows” to the Editor of The Eastern Times stating that

“it is a fact that if any of the Muslim students of the third or forth year of the Jammu college does not show good results in his quarterly or half yearly examination, he is punished in the form of a partial reduction in the amount of his scholarship.

The punishment is very severe in consideration of the straightened circumstances of the poor parents.

Now that a post of professor has fallen vacant in the Jammu college, a secret propaganda is going on to appoint a Hindu candidate who is no not other than the former professor holding the vacant post. As this gentleman was overzealous in his activities as a Congresswalla, the State was obliged to dispense with his services.”

High Court of Jammu and Kashmir judgement on 28th September 1931 declared that *khutba* is not an essential part of religious service in Islam and has been banned because it was being used for political mobilisation. But soon the judgement was revised (Revision no. 80 of 1988 from Criminal Case no.: 44 of 1988) on 3rd October 1931 in Muslims of Jammu through Gouhar Rahman Khan

(Secretary, *Youngmen's Muslim Assosiation*, Jammu) v/s Sub- Inspector Khem Chand and B.J.

Dalal declared that:

“The sermon or khutba is a worldly preparation for that faith. The two are inseparable as in every religion this life is but a progress to higher and better life.”

And thus, he rendered the previous judgement null and void:

“I direct that the judgement of the Additional District Magistrate may be cancelled.....
And I specifically rule that Khutba is part of the religious ritual or ceremony of the Mohammedans.”

Alongside the rumours of *khutba* ban, there were also rumours of *Azan* being prohibited in the state. There were also reports that the Maharaja “has dismissed from service his private Mohammedan employees like butlers and *khansamas*.”

Hindus had the news going around that Muslims of Jammu had their graves rigged up preemptively for their Hindu victims and that the *Young Men's Muslim Assosiation*, Jammu has been collecting swords and other weapons since a long time. This fear gave rise to the idea that there existed a Muslim plan of Hindu annihilation. Because of Maharaja being a co- religionist of Hindus, it was feared by Muslims that Hindu miscreants will not be arrested and there's a targeted campaign against Muslims and they are being indiscriminately arrested. In Ramban, Jammu region it was alleged that a Gurdwara was constructed close to a mosque to agitate Muslims.

Thus, rumours, whether they were found to be true or not, played a critical role in how the fears and anxieties of Hindus and Muslims were being played out. At a time when dissemination of information was slow and verification of facts even more difficult alongside state control on discourse, rumours give an insight into what were the issues of concern for people that gathered enough currency for them to be spread as rumours and lead to exacerbation of communal

consciousness. The rumours were also religious in their overtones, making the communal expression more apparent. This also allowed organisations an opportunity to flame the emotions and feelings of the people. Since the rumours were on more personal tropes and rights, people found a great resonance with it.

4.4 Towards the End: 1946- 47

National Conference inspired by Gandhi's "Quit India" Movement launched in 1946 "Quit Kashmir Movement" which emphasised on Maharaja Hari Singh quitting and leaving the administration. It was launched on 15th May 1946. It instantly spread across both Jammu and Kashmir regions while the British India was also witnessing dynamic turn of events, coinciding with the Direct Action Day. The movement also found support in ⁷ Communist Party of India, the Indian Communist Party, the Punjab Committee and the Kisan Committee of Punjab. The support came from anti-state stance alongside giving power to the people which resonated with them.

'Quit Kashmir' was while a call against the Dogra rule, it was deemed by loyalist like Lt. Col. Bhagwan Singh (Private Secretary to Maharaja Hari Singh) as aimed at

.. making the Dogra Ruler, a son of the soil, belonging to the State itself, quit the State or the Government, leaving the Kashmiris to govern not only the valley but the whole of the J&K state. If the Dogras' of Jammu were according to Sheikh Abdullah foreigners in Kashmir, the Kashmiris could be nothing else in Jammu and the Sheikh while asking Dogras to quit Kashmir, should have applied "Quit Jammu" to himself.

Thus, with this an attempt was being made at conflating Maharaja's Dogra identity with the Hindu Dogras of Jammu and project it as an issue of regional and religious differentiation than a bid to surpass the monarchy and establishment ¹ of a Responsible Government.

Following ⁵ the launch of the movement, Pandit R.C. Kak, the Prime Minister put the state under Martial Law. Despite the opposition from the Party, the movement found resonance with some of

the members of Muslim Conference which had otherwise come to split from National Conference participating in it. Mirwaiz Mohammed Yusuf Shah was one of the prominent members who participated in the demonstrations while Chaudhari Ghulam Abbas of Jammu was taken into custody fearing his participation.

As the situation was intensifying, Maharaja declared fresh elections for ¹ Praja Sabha to be held in January 1947, for which only Muslim Conference contested in representing Muslims and on 19th July, 1947, the Muslim Conference passed a resolution on accession of Jammu and Kashmir to Pakistan. Muslim Conference earlier in 1945 had passed the Azad Kashmir (Free Kashmir) ³ manifesto in 1945 for a separate territorial homeland for the Muslims of Jammu and Kashmir.

¹⁸ Soon with the passing of the Indian Independence Act, 1947 by the Parliament of the United Kingdom, the British suzerainty over the Princely States discontinued and gave them the choice of either staying independent or joining India or Pakistan. Maharaja on August 14th, 1947 signed a Standstill Agreement but continuing from the unstable state of affairs in the state, soon the communal element found a hold of the territories towards the west of the state. Areas like Jammu, Bhimbher, Alibeg, Mirpur in Jammu region and Muzaffarabad in Kashmir region were gripped in intense violence. Several Muslims and Hindus as a result were forced to migrate, looted, got killed and women raped. When Maharaja realised that the state troops were incapable of controlling the situation, he called for help from the Indian Government. As a result, an ⁵ Instrument of Accession was signed on 26th October, 1947 and soon help arrived. However, the state witnessed an unofficial bifurcation since the territories which had already come under the rebel groups was put as “Azad Kashmir” and came to form a different identity of its own leading to a number of political and social ramifications for the areas of the state. From being a Muslim majority region, owing to the displacement and mass killing, Jammu city became a Hindu- majority area. Other areas like Mirpur, Bhimber, Alibeg saw a complete disappearance of the Hindu population with a large majority of them moving to Jammu city and the neighbouring towns.. Thus, the communal saga vis-

a vis regional disruption sent the state down the path of violence, displacement and shifting identities.

4.5 Conclusion

The anxieties and fears both took religious and regional connotations. In case of Jammu region, class also got merged. There existed fear of being marginalised and being discriminated against. Rumours and myth played a key role in reinforcing these fears and were also used by propagandists for their gains. Language and script became a contentious issue with Hindi and Devanagari being associated with Hindus and Urdu and Perso-Arabic script being associated with Muslims. This also had repercussions on education curriculum. Further, prompted by conversion fears and threat of changing of Hindu Law of Inheritance prompted debates and brought out the fears in public. Similarly, cow killing was also a contentious issue and religious freedom became associated with it. Within this discourse of anxieties and debate, the politics of sub-continent also came to play huge role in mobilising for their own gains and were also responsible for discourse in the state.

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Conclusion

The communal discourse ¹ in the state of Jammu and Kashmir was shaped by its internal political dynamics as well as factors (press, organisations and politics) from outside the state. Within the state, Muslims had many grievances which stemmed from economic as well as social reasons. In terms of economic reasons, for Jammu, revenue was the biggest issue. This led to conflation of class and communal identity in the region influenced the expression of the political discourse as well. Alongside this, issue of discrimination in education and employment also remained an underlying issue that shaped the politics in the state.

The public expression of such resentment began from Kashmir region in the 1920s but Jammu region witnessed more violence throughout the period of study and especially in the years 1931-1932 and 1947. In 1931, after the incident of Abdul Qadeer's imprisonment and the violence that followed in Kashmir, violence engulfed to the Jammu region. This went on intermittently in the Jammu region in November 1931 and January-February 1932. Meanwhile, state well-aware of these developments and resultant growing tensions tried to control the situation through appointment of different inquiry commissions like Barjor Dalal Commission, Glancy Commission and Middleton Commission. The making of these commissions themselves was also rife with controversy over membership of the commissions as well as the demands and grievances that were addressed.. The commissions included representation of Hindus and Muslims from ² both Jammu and Kashmir regions. The region specific issues of the two religious groups were thus also recognized by the state.

The discourse making and its circulation in Jammu region cannot be studied in isolation. It was heavily effected by what was happening in Kashmir region. The politics of Kashmir remained linked to Jammu region intrinsically. At the same, the geographical proximity to Punjab and

socio-cultural similarities with Punjab also rendered its impact on the region's communal consciousness and politics. It also bolstered the discourse in Punjab in turn at the same time. The political and communal consciousness which was developing in the sub-continent and princely states through various organisations, press and politics also had an effect on Jammu region while the former also used the issues of the state to further its own interests and agendas. This can be seen developing specially in the development of the polemical binary of 'Hindu states' and 'Muslim states'. The polemics of nationalism, secularism, fundamental rights, democracy etc. also got entangled into the state's political and communal consciousness. In fact, these were not used as diametrically opposite to each other, but this vocabulary was appropriated to advance the discourse of communalism.

Despite the limited space for expression, the various groups and organisations from within the state and outside the state had to find ways to work for mobilisation and propaganda. They had to negotiate with the state for creating a discourse in the public sphere. The use of rumour, religious tropes, myths allowed to navigate this and also personalised the issues of anti-state rhetoric for the common public in their imagination. The introduction of Praja Sabha in the state after Glancy Commission's recommendations allowed for another platform where views could be represented, albeit limited because of the narrow electorate and nominated members outweighing the elected members.

In Kashmir, Sheikh Abdullah introduced the idea of 'Kashmiriyat' which harked on the idea of a united Kashmir identity, bypassing the religious differentiation. It was based on the cultural and linguistic homogeneity that Kashmiri Hindus and Muslims shared with each other and was an attempt build a common front against the state. This took its fruition when the call for 'Quit Kashmir' was made in 1946. However, a similar united front of Hindus and Muslim did not happen in the Jammu region. This also partly stemmed from the identification of Hindu Dogras of Jammu region with the Hindu Dogra dynasty's rule and the Hindu Maharaja. Instead, Jammu Muslims at

several points in time shared an identity with the Muslims of Kashmir and Muslims from outside Kashmir in a pan-Islamic attempt which can also be seen as becoming intensified in 1940s after Muslim Conference was revived under Chaudhary Ghulam Abbas and other Muslims from Jammu region in opposition to Sheikh Abdullah's National Conference (which made secular claims of legitimacy under Congress' influence). The revived Muslim Conference also found support in Muslim League and M.A. Jinnah who also conferred Muslim Conference to be the sole representative of Muslim voice in the state.

As the Dogra Hindus of Jammu region identified with the state, their political consciousness was not developed on the lines of dissatisfaction and grievances against the state as was the case with Jammu Muslims. They did not participate in the anti-state rhetoric. Their political consciousness was hinged on communal lines which developed often as a counter-narrative against the Muslims protests and demand for rights as mobilizations from both sides gathered momentum. The fear of marginalisation and the apprehension that Maharaja might yield to the Muslim demands prompted them to develop antagonistic feelings against the Muslims as can be seen in the debates which were prompted on language, script, conversion, cow-killing etc. This also intertwined with the Hindu communal politics of the sub-continent. The organisations like Arya Samaj, Hindu Mahasbha etc pushed these agendas in the sub-continent and impacted the discourse in the region. They also used the politics of the state to further their communal discourse.

Thus, the communal interface that developed in Jammu region was complex in nature. It developed through multiple layers of discourses alongside class and regional factors. The effect that Punjab politics had also rendered it more vulnerable to violence through the proximity of interconnection of the regions. This was seen specifically in the months before ⁵ the accession of the state to India with the signing of Instrument of Accession on 26th October, 1947 by Maharaja Hari Singh which left the region comparatively more tensed and divided, leading to violent riots and displacement than in the Kashmir region.

The Making of the Hindu-Muslim Communal Interface in Jammu Region (1925-1947)

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