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# Politics and Religion in Colonial Punjab: A case study of Mianwali

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This article explores the dynamics of politics in colonial Mianwali in the twentieth century. It explains how religion played a central role as rhetoric for political mobilization. The support of the local elite to the British government was of cardinal importance for the establishment and the smooth functioning of administration in the colonial Punjab. The major task that the British administrators set for themselves after 1849 was to build an indigenous hierarchy by identifying and winning over local elite to effect and exercise the British control. Most of the landed elite were members of British patronized Unionist party. Like rest of the rural Punjab the politics in Mianwali had a strong pro-British orientation. The local landed elite worked as a bulwark as against various religio-political and nationalist movements particularly of Majlis-e-Ahrar. The Unionist Party dominated by the landed aristocrats was the sole political organization calling shots in the district until 1940. However, from 1943 onwards Muslim League won rural support in the district in 1945-46 elections and reduced Unionist Party to insignificance. I argue in this article that religion, a dominant ideology underpinning nationalism, provided an impetus for political shift from politics centered on the state agency towards the nationalist one.

## Introduction

The Punjab's significant position made it imperative for the British to devise a comprehensive strategic policy. Such a policy was not only hammered out but also put into effect because the British had trusted and tried allies, in the form of large landowners. They were extended state patronage, conferring on them the titles like Khan Bahadur, Nawab etc., making them *Zaildars*, *Lumberdars* and *Sufedposh* or granting them big chunks of lands. The rural elite reciprocated by helping the British in quelling any insurgency or providing them the recruits during wars, mostly fought for the advancement of the Imperial interests. The informal alliances among the rural magnates glued together to form the Unionist Party in 1923.<sup>1</sup> The Unionist Party emerged with an agricultural ideology with unequivocal support from the British. Under Land alienation act 1901, British government imposed a

fixed amount of land revenue within a stipulated time period which resulted in large scale of alienation and mortgage of land. This drove the Punjabi peasantry in the arms of moneylenders. Unionist party was established to safeguard the economic rights of zamindar class. Fazl-e- Hussain and Chhotu Ram created a progressive rural block from reactionary and backward landlords. The basic principle was to assist backward communities and to work for the economic uplift of the neglected rural areas, and to promote the ideology of inter-communal harmony<sup>2</sup>. The Party drew its strength mostly from the rural Punjab and they were lent support by the British authorities<sup>3</sup>. The 1919 reforms suggested the electoral division of the population along the lines of “agriculturalist” and “non-agriculturalist”. Only former could be the candidate for the rural constituencies. An increasingly large number of unionists associated with “agricultural tribes” dominated the legislative council from 1923 to 1947. The political rivals of Unionists criticized their claim to provincial leadership and their alleged link with the British administrative setup, in which tribal leaders i-e the rural magnates were seen as the representatives of rural population.<sup>4</sup> Unionist Party, comprising zamindars, lambardars, zaildars and sofedposh got elected primarily because of their own influence. They neither contested elections on a specific agenda of the party nor did they rely on the pecuniary resources of the party.<sup>5</sup> The restriction of property qualification reduced the franchise only to the landlords and Pir families whereas the commoners were just inconsequential in such electoral process.<sup>6</sup>

Like rest of the rural Punjab the politics in Mianwali had a strong pro-British orientation. The Unionist party was established in Mianwali in 1924. The foundations of the local politics were rested on the structure of the British rural administration.<sup>7</sup> The tribes in possession of big tracts of land were in ascendant position thus they had been favorably disposed to establish a strong nexus with the British through their leaders. The finances for the Party were provided by the ‘Nawab Ata Muhammad Khan of Kalabagh’, Syed Maratib Ali and many others. Plan for the re-organization of the party was devised at the district, tehsil, towns and city levels. A systematic district-wise campaign was launched to secure maximum seats for the party.<sup>8</sup> In the process of reorganization of Party; Fazl-e-Hussain’s prime consideration was to establish a nexus between the party and the religious personalities, political entities of substantial reckoning. The party was indirectly supported by the religious leaders. Most of the rural elite were the disciples of Sufis and sajjadanishins in the district; hence the presence of rural Pirs and SajjadaNishins provided religious legitimacy to the Unionists.<sup>9</sup>

Nawab Amir Muhammad Khan of Kalabagh and Ata Muhammad Khan joined the Unionist Party as loyal allies of British.<sup>10</sup> Nirwani and Lashari, the Baluch tribes of Bhakkar were politically active too.<sup>11</sup> Afzal Khan Dhandla, another leading zamindar of Bhakkar joined the Unionist Party. The Khawanins of Isa Khel dominated the politics of that tehsil. Khan Bahadur Saifullah Khan also held the position of Parliamentary Secretary in 1926.<sup>12</sup> Khan Bahadur Laddhu Khan of

“Darya Khan”, Amir Muhammad Khan from “NawanJandan”, Dost Muhammad Khan from “Piplan”, and Malik Muzaffar Khan of “Wan Bhachran” were quite zestful representatives of the Unionist Party.<sup>13</sup> The latter was conferred the title of Khan Sahib by the British in lieu of his war services for the government. He worked as an active recruitment agent in enlisting men in the British Army. All these tribal leaders had influence of their own in their respective constituencies and were elected not on a Party platform but through their power and authority which they wielded in the area. The ‘clan’ and ‘tribe’ had considerable significance in the demographic pattern of Mianwali District. The electoral division created by 1919 reforms, was along “agriculturist” and “non-agriculturist” lines therefore the politics was confined in the hands of leading landowning families who were not just the collaborators with the British administration but also mediators between the state and the people. According to 1919 reforms, in the villages along with the property qualification, political loyalty was also the criterion for anyone to be a voter. Consequently Jagirdars, Lambardars, Zaildars and SofedPoshes were enfranchised whereas the ordinary people were discarded in the whole process.<sup>14</sup> The power pattern in the district reflected quite evidently that the personalities had played a decisive role in winning the elections instead of any political agenda or party manifesto. Leaders of the Unionist Party deployed their traditional social and economic network to influence voters. Obviously the biradari and tribes played a vital role in mobilizing political support. Successful candidates had the unflinching support from the biradari or the tribal allegiance. Another factor which worked to the advantage of the Unionist candidates was their close affinity with the British government.

There was a creeping sense of nationalism in Mianwali in the second decade of the twentieth century that had been expressed through *Majlis-e-Ahrar-e Islam*. The foundations of the local politics rested on the structure of the British rural administration. The greatest challenge to the Unionist party’s rural power came from the Ahrar in Mianwali. British officials monitored their activities, as they might disrupt their local control and endanger army recruitment by introducing communalism into the countryside.<sup>15</sup> The political setting of Mianwali reflected, British influence was centralized and pervasive. Rural elite as British collaborators used all possible resources and coercive measures to alienate the masses from nationalist movements.<sup>16</sup> They opposed the nationalist and socialist stance of the Ahrars.<sup>17</sup> It is instructive to note that Mianwali where tribal identity was most domineering element and the structure of the tribal rural society of Mianwali was organized around the tribal and kinship networks however religion too had a significant role as a determinant of identity. People were more amenable to the religious movements. To rally them around a common cause of Islam was not a difficult task. So every self-assertion of leaders was in a religious idiom. Leaders always spoke in an Islamic messianic language for political or social mobilization. Ahrar leadership hailed from the urban middle classes and had their roots in masses. That movement was circumscribed to the cities only but its influence had

started creeping into the country side. Hence the soaring graph of its popularity was then perceived as a serious challenge to the British rule as the power of Ahrar rested in the religious leadership.<sup>18</sup> Ahrar tried to constitute a unified community of devout Muslims, so religion became a rallying ideology against economic and other forms of exploitations. *Majlis-e-Ahrar* mustered support mainly from Ulema, lower ranking maulvi, imam or *khateeb* of mosques (religious teachers at *madrassa*), traders, and shop keepers. Commercial communities responded more favorably to religio-political movements. For them piety and patronage of religion were significant markers of their identity and the social prominence they acquired in the town.<sup>19</sup> Within a changed socio-political context, religion assumed greater significance and was constructed as a central identity marker.<sup>20</sup> Dr. Nur Muhammad Khan, Hakim AbdurRehman Khan, Sher M. Zargar, Maulana Jalil Ahmed and Maulana Ramzan were the first ones joining *Majlis-e-Ahrar* and *Khaksar*. A large majority of Niazipathans of Musa Khel, identified with a tribe of Bai Niazi joined the ranks of Ahrar too. Maulana Abu Saad Ahmed, the founder of Deobandi *Khanqah Sirajia* also lent support to the *Ahrars*.<sup>21</sup>

*Majlis-i-Ahrar* fused the local religious communal identity with the national ideology of anti-imperialism. *Majlis-i-Ahrar* strongly contested the recruitment of Indians in the colonial army. *Ahrar's* politics became more intense, espoused unitary nationalism (freedom from British rule) and drew on religious authority to legitimize change<sup>22</sup>. This proved to be an effective instrument for political mobilization against British rule in India. The new ideological formation became the forerunner of anti-colonial nationalist struggle in Mianwali. These nationalist ideas were articulated in the movement to boycott military recruitment. The *Ahrar* movement posed a serious challenge to the loyalty of the rural elite. The rural intermediaries who were members of the Unionist Party extended their cooperation and support to the British war efforts. The largest recruitment in Punjab's National War Front was made by the local landlords, who not only encouraged army recruitment but forced their serfs to recruit in the army.<sup>23</sup> The Unionist zamindars in Mianwali served the British interest quite obsequiously during the Second World War, and many of them served as recruiting officers. Khan Saifullah Khan of Isa Khel was the assistant recruiting officer of the district.<sup>24</sup> Among non-officials, the most successful recruiters were Khan Sahib Malik Laddhu, Khan Sahib Malik Amir and his son Risaldar Malik Muzaffar Khan and Khan Bahadur Abdul Karim Khan of Isa Khel.<sup>25</sup> The title of Nawab was conferred on Malik Atta Muhammad Khan of Kalabagh in recognition of his generous contributions to war funds. The title of Khan Sahib was given to Malik Ameer Khan, Zaildar of Wan Bhachran, and Malik Laddhu, Zaildar of Kotla Jam, for their recruiting services.<sup>26</sup> Khan Rab Nawaz Khan of Musa Khel succeeded his father in Durbar in lieu of his recruiting services.<sup>27</sup> These rural magnates also contributed to the British Army by donating money and materials. In the first war loan of 1917, Rs. 1 lakh was contributed by Nawab Atta Muhammad Khan of Kalabagh and Rs. 3,000 by Khan Bahadur Muhammad Abdul Karim Khan of Isa Khel.<sup>28</sup> Malik Atta Muhammad

Khan of Kalabagh also paid for 30 British Cavalry Remounts.<sup>29</sup> In the second war loan of 1918, Nawab Atta Muhammad Khan contributed Rs 50,000 in the aeroplane fund.<sup>30</sup> Rs. 35,000 was specially contributed by the Nawab into the Imperial Indian Fund for the purchase of remounts.<sup>31</sup>

*Ahrar*'s religious leadership turned this agitation into a serious ideological challenge to the British authority. As a result of this agitation, Muslims formed their distinct religious identity which was linked to their commitment to Islam. This communal identity was expressed through public agitation.<sup>32</sup> Various public meetings were organized in Mianwali, Moch, Musa Khel, Kalabagh, Bhakar and Isa Khel in July 1939, and were addressed by the main ideologues of *Ahrar* such as Habib-ur-Rehman Ludhianvi, Atta Ullah Shah Bukhari, Qazi Ihsan Ahmed Shujaabadi, Maulana Gulsher and Abd-ur-Raheem Ajiz.<sup>33</sup> They condemned military recruitment and passed a resolution which stated that "Muslims would not enlist in the military." However, the centralized and pervasive British control curtailed these movements. The leaders of the tribes were colonial intermediaries whose interests were linked with the imperial system.<sup>34</sup> The hierarchical alliances between the colonial government and the local elites were influential and controlling. This impeded the rise of religious and national consciousness among the masses and it was restricted to a limited section of society, however the *Ahrar* must be given credit for shaking people out of their religious and political indifference and providing them a communal identity.

### **The emergence of Muslim League and the role of Islam**

This rural/urban wedge gave rise to the impression that the Muslim League represented urban Muslims and therefore had no influence over the rural masses.<sup>35</sup> David Gilmartin states, "The structural foundation of Unionist ideology was rooted not in the protection of class interests of landlords but in the logic of British colonial system itself."<sup>36</sup>

The Unionist Party had long dominated the district politics in the absence of a potential rival. Muslim League emerged on the political canvas of Mianwalilate in 1942.<sup>37</sup> The League had no political clout that could secure a political niche for it among the masses. It was imperative for the League to acquire a rural base to strengthen its position for the next election.<sup>38</sup> With the end of the Second World War in sight, the Unionist Party ceased to be a useful instrument of control to the British as the mode of politics shifted from the local to the national level.<sup>39</sup> Another factor which undermined the popularity of the Unionist Party was that war would provide a boon to dissipate the dawdling effects of agricultural depression. The Second World War contributed to the inflation and shortage of consumer goods in the Punjabi countryside.<sup>40</sup> The Unionist ideology was imbedded in the protection of the economic interest of peasants. Commonality of interests joined both the landlord and the tenant into a nexus, considered vital to the political success of the

existing dispensation.<sup>41</sup>The Unionists lost their credibility as they could not extend the desired benefits to the villagers. War at one level hastened the British withdrawal from India and at another level exalted the League's political status in all-India politics. The resurrected Muslim League risked the Unionist influence and power.<sup>42</sup> As political events revealed that the transfer of power would be made to the Congress and League jointly, the Punjabi landlords' interest in the Unionist Party collapsed and they started jumping the League's bandwagon. From the Punjab Daultanas and Khattars were the first to join the League.<sup>43</sup> The leading Pirs and SajjadaNishins also changed their loyalty and joined the League.

The process of the shifting of loyalties from the Unionist Party to the League is quite vividly seen in the district. Nawab Amir Muhammad Khan of Kalabagh was the first Unionist zamindar who joined the League.<sup>44</sup>It was reported that 7,000 members were enrolled in the Mianwali and Sargodha regions in 1944.<sup>45</sup> People in rural areas were more concerned with tribal and economic considerations than with politics. Local factional rivalries and feuds over property impeded the smooth running of political process. In Mianwali, the League was still struggling to acquire a strong base until the general elections of 1946. The Muslim League was gathering political strength in the district, and political meetings espousing the cause of the League had become the order of the day. The movement was inspired by Abdul Sattar Khan Niazi. The Muslim League's initial meetings were held at the residence of Muhammad Ameer Khan Sumbal, who was a local land owner and general secretary of the Muslim League and Maulana Hakim Muhammad Amir Ali Shah served as the secretary.<sup>46</sup>The most active and mobilized workers were Pir Shah Alam Shah, Akbar Khan (Khankikhel), Hakim Muhammad Azeem Khan (Khankikhel).<sup>47</sup>

The Muslim League's message to the people of Mianwali was simple. They were called upon to support Muhammad Ali Jinnah in his struggle for Pakistan in the name of Islam. Again Islam was used as political rhetoric in the face of lack of political consciousness in the district, and religious sentiments could easily be stirred. Religious festivals like Eid were used by the League to promote the social solidarity and political cohesion among Muslims.<sup>48</sup>To familiarize the people of the district with the Muslim League's ideology, a branch of the Muslim Students Federation was established by Abdul SattarNiazi.<sup>49</sup>The Muslim students became the symbol of Islamic consciousness and identity. The demand for Pakistan envisaged a Muslim society in which Islamic culture and tradition had the overarching position. Muslim students identified themselves with the mission of defending Islamic traditions, which facilitated them in disseminating their message.<sup>50</sup>The Federation enlightened the peasants and rural populace about the demand of Pakistan. Abdul Sattar Khan Niazi created a Pakistan rural propaganda committee and worked in it as its secretary. Habibullah Khan of Dhalla and Amanullah Khan (Sherman-khel) were proactive student leaders. They made their message widespread through propaganda pamphlets and approached village

officials.<sup>51</sup>The immediate practical influence of the federation on Mianwali was limited, yet it had a substantial role in the progressive advance of the Pakistan movement in the Punjab in its entirety.<sup>52</sup>A large political gathering was organized at Jamia Akbaria in Mianwali. The League's increasing popularity was owed to the services of the Muslim Student Federation.<sup>53</sup>

To counter the slowly growing influence of Muslim League, the Zamindara League was set up in districts of the Punjab to widen the Unionist's support base.<sup>54</sup> A Zamindara League was set up in Mianwali as well. Its function was carefully charted out from 1944 onwards. The rural elite of the district who were also the representatives of the Unionist Party launched a campaign to popularize the Unionist ideology. The local police was assigned the task to arrange gatherings of the Zamindara League. Khizar Tiwana paid a prompt visit to Mianwali in November 1945, and instructed the district's Zamindara League organizer that, "If any occasion arose, I would be given police help in convening meetings."<sup>55</sup> These campaigns were quite intensive and vigorous. M. Aslam Khan, the district organizer of the Mianwali Zamindara League addressed two meetings in a day and traveled by tonga to the villages surrounding Mianwali town. He organized meetings near the Jamia Masjid. The campaign's motive was to counter the League's growing influence in the district and to revitalize the sapping lot of the Unionist Party.<sup>56</sup> The Unionist Party had a prolonged control over the politics of the Punjab Muslim League which restricted the League from carrying out any effective canvassing in the countryside.

The 1946 election ushered in an era when the League was undergoing evolution. The League's primary task was to dispel the Unionist party's political influence.<sup>57</sup> Towards the mid 1940s, the elections had drawn near and the Muslim League's campaign also gained momentum. Till that time the League had got a foothold in the rural areas and its leaders embarked on an ideological confrontation with the Unionist Party.<sup>58</sup> The Muslim League's campaign was focused on commitment with the idea of Pakistan, identified with Islamic identity and religion as cultural foundation of the state's authority.<sup>59</sup> The Unionist Party was alleged to be a creation of the British whose power was embedded in the colonial structure, with no symbolic or even literal link with faith (Din). The process, through which the Pakistan Movement acquired political support, intensified the conflict between 'Din' and 'Dunya'.<sup>60</sup> The League emerged victorious as the result of a struggle not so much between two political systems as between two worlds—a world forged by colonialism and a world shaped by the Muslim community and its commitment to Islam. According to Gilmartin, "The demand for Pakistan was a demand less for the transformation of Punjabi society than for a new moral and ideological foundation for the State."<sup>61</sup>

Despite the League's religious appeals to rural masses, it still stood dissociated from the power structures. However, the ingress of the landlords and *pirs* in the

League changed the scenario. The Islamic propaganda helped link the secular leadership of the League with the landlords and *pirs* of the Punjab and kindled religious sentiments.<sup>62</sup> The most tenable reason for the League's broad political base in rural Punjab and its success in elections was the incorporation of factional leaders and *pirs* in the League's ranks.<sup>63</sup> The distinctive feature of the *pirs* lending their support to the League was that they stepped into the political scene willingly in 1945-46 with a view to expressing solidarity with the Muslim community.<sup>64</sup> During the 1946 elections, the *pirs* issued *fatwas* to their *murids* (followers) to vote for the League and mobilized rural voters through the *pir* and *murid* nexus.<sup>65</sup> In district Mianwali, a large majority of the population was composed of disciples of Sajjada Nishin of Sial Sharif, Khawaja Zia-ud-din Sialvi. Malik Muzaffar Khan of Wan Bhachran was a close ally of the colonial masters and was also awarded the title of Khan Bahadur. He was denounced by his *pir* as he was tied with the colonial administration and threatened him that he would cease to be the part of his *silsila*. Malik Muzaffar had to return his title and honorary designation in the British Army to avoid the displeasure of his *pir*.<sup>66</sup> The *pirs* marshaled their disciples and through the *pir-murid* network infused anti-government feelings among the masses.

In Mianwali, the political leadership was solely in the hands of the Khawanins of Isakhel. Khan Bahadur Saifullah Khan and Nawab Ghulam Qadir Khan were the members of the legislative assembly prior to the 1946 elections.<sup>67</sup> In the elections of 1946, Abdul Sattar Khan contested election from village Kundal, tehsil Isakhel as a Muslim League candidate against Khaliq Dad Khan of the Unionist Party from Mianwali south. Amir Abdullah Khan of Piplan contested as a Unionist candidate against Amir Abdullah Rokhri of Muslim League. Abdul Sattar Khan and Amir Abdullah Khan of Piplan were supported by Sial Sharif and they won the election and joined the Punjab Legislative Assembly.<sup>68</sup> The League moved from political insignificance in 1937 to a position of strength in 1946, securing 75 out of 86 Muslim seats, emerging as the single-largest party in the Punjab Legislative Assembly.<sup>69</sup> Hence, the Pakistan Movement shattered the ideological foundation on which the British government was linked with Punjabi society.<sup>70</sup>

## Conclusion

The British colonial powers considered it essential to build an indigenous hierarchy by winning over the local elite in order to exercise administrative control in Mianwali after 1849. The British identified their allies in the form of the zamindars who owned large tracts of land and integrated themselves under the political umbrella of the Unionist Party. The structure of Punjabi rural society was organized around kinship and tribal groups or *biradari* systems. The influence of these rural magnates embedded in rural society was crucial for the British political order, which was utilized to keep all nationalist movements in the district under



check. People in the district were politically inert; the movements with religious orientation could successfully galvanize them around a common cause rather than to invoke political consciousness. As a result *Majlis-e-Ahrar* mustered substantial popular support in the district. It relied on the mobilization of religious symbols and anti-colonial nationalism, which was articulated in communal politics consequently hardening the religious boundaries. The Unionist Party was the sole political party in the district. Unionist leaders deployed their traditional social and economic network to mobilize the voters in the elections of 1937. However the Unionist Party lost its credibility in rural society due to its failure to resolve economic distress of small zamindar and the rifts in the internal ranks after the Second World War (1939-1945). League, which had no political clout in the district till 1942, took advantage of this cleavage. Political loyalties were reevaluated and the Unionist stalwarts joined the League. The League's identification with Islamic ideology as cultural foundation of state authority helped it progress from political insignificance to the position of unassailable strength in the 1946 elections. Muslim discourse of religion came to be linked with the discourse of the nation-state.

## Notes and References

<sup>1</sup> Talbot, *Punjab and Raj*(Delhi; Manohar Publishers,1988 )P.80

<sup>2</sup> Azim, Hussain, *Fazl-e-Hussain, a political biography* (Bombay; Longmans, Green and co ltd,1946) pp.150,379 also see, Tahir, Kamran, *The unfolding crisis in Punjab, Mar-Aug1947 ;Key turning points & British responses*, journal of Punjab studies vol.14 Number.2 (U.S.A; University of California, Fall 2007) pp.187-188 Also see Ian Talbot, *Punjab and Raj* (Delhi; Manohar Publication,1988) p.4 See, Iftikhar, Haider Malik, *Sikandar Hayat Khan, a political biography 1892-1942*(Islamabad; National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, 1985) p.3

<sup>3</sup> Unionist Party's guiding principles were to be open to all communities, to work for the uplift of backward rural areas, to sponsor programmes & measures to protect the backward people of the Punjab, to attain dominion status within the British commonwealth by constitutional means. to demonstrate that Indians are capable of assuming increasing responsibilities of self-government; to provide equal opportunities for all, and to provide special government assistance to backward classes & rural areas. To check exploitation of economically backward classes by economically dominant classes. To encourage and undertake social measures such as literacy, education, suppression of corruption. To draw a cross communal support. see Iftikhar, Haider Malik, *Sikandar Hayat Khan, a political biography 1892-1942*(Islamabad; National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, 1985) pp.27-28

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, Pp.36-37

<sup>5</sup> Ashiq Batalwi , *Iqbal Ke Aakhri Do Saal*, P.280

<sup>6</sup> Talbot, *Punjab and Raj*, P.82 Amongst the leading Zamindars and Pir families were Tiwanas, Noons, Daultanas, Gurmanis, Shah Jiwana, Makhad and Gillani Pirs.

<sup>7</sup> M. Akbar. Khan .Sumbal, interviewed on 14 June 2008, 8.p.m

<sup>8</sup> Azim Hussain, *Fazl-e-Hussain , a political biography*, pp.340-341

<sup>9</sup> Gilmartin , *Empire and Islam*, p.113

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> M. Iqbal .Khan .Sumbal, interviewed on 25 June 2008, 10.30 a.m

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Talbot, *Punjab and Raj*, p.78

<sup>15</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj 1849-1947*, P.90

<sup>16</sup> In 1919, when Rowlatt Act was passed and a virulent anti-government agitation started throughout the province, an act of agitation was also demonstrated by a few railway employees at Kundian railway station. They disrupted the tele-communication system; the situation was soon controlled by deployment of troops at Kalabagh, Mianwali, Daud Khel, Kundian and Bhakkar to guard railway communication. This indicated that a slight attempt of commotion provoked such a serious response by the government. The disturbance also revealed a fact that the people involved in the act were based in other districts and had an adequate awareness about the political turmoil in the Punjab, whereas the natives were

politically inert and mostly ignorant. See *Record of the War Services Of Mianwali District*, D.J.Boyd, Esquire, I.C.S., Lahore, Civil & Military Gazette Press, 1922, Pp.5-6

<sup>17</sup>IftikharHaider Malik, *Sikandar Hayat Khan, a political biography*, p.61 Majlis-i-Ahrar-i-Islam was established in 1929 with the aim of creating an Islamic State within the Subcontinent that would manage its affairs in accordance with Islamic dictates of life. Its membership included people who lost hope in both congress and league and were radically opposed to British imperial politics in the sub-continent. The party was framed under the impact of the October Revolution in Russia (1917) and disseminated communist ideas. Members of Ahrar were from humble economic backwardness. Ahrar's point of views reflected Islamic fundamentalism. Syed Ataullah Shah Bukhari was the leader of Ahrar

<sup>18</sup>David Gilmartin, *Empire and Islam*, pp.97-98

<sup>19</sup>NandiniGooptu, *The politics of the Urban poor in early 20<sup>th</sup> C India* ( Cambridge;Cambridge University Press, 2001 ) p.262. Also seeSandria B. Freitag, *Collective action and Community: Public arenas and the emergence of communalism in north India* (Berkeley: University of California Press,1989)

<sup>20</sup>Ibid, P.14

<sup>21</sup>MaulanaMehboobIllahi, *Tuhfa-e-Sadia*, P.71

<sup>22</sup>TahirKamran, *Majlis-i-Ahrar-i-Islam: Religion, Socialism and agitation in action* (London, South Asian History and Culture,2013) Also seeSaminaAwan, *Political Islam in Colonial Punjab, Majlis-i-Ahrar 1929-1949* (London; Oxford University Press,2010)

<sup>23</sup>Tan Tai Yong, *The Garrison State* (New Delhi; Sage Publications, 2005) Talbot, *Punjab and Raj*, P.143

<sup>24</sup>*Record of the War Services Of Mianwali District*, D.J.Boyd,Esquire, I.C.S.,Lahore, Civil& Military Gazette Press, 1922, Pp.5-6

<sup>25</sup> Ibid

<sup>26</sup>SaadiaSumbal, *Defending the Empire: Analyzing Military Recruitment in Colonial Mianwali*, *The Historian* (ISSN: 2074-5672) Vol.8 No.1 January-June 2010,

<sup>27</sup> Ibid,

<sup>28</sup> Ibid, pp.7-8

<sup>29</sup>*The Punjab and the War*, M.S.Leigh O.B.E. , I. C. S, (Lahore:Government Printing Press, 1922) p.122

<sup>30</sup> Ibid,

<sup>31</sup> Ibid,

<sup>32</sup> David Gilmartin, *Empire and Islam* P.98

<sup>33</sup> Muhammad Umer, *Maulana Muhammad Gulsher*, P. 178

<sup>34</sup>The tribes in possession of big tracts of land were in ascendant position thus they had been favorably disposed to establish a strong nexus with the British through their leaders. Nawab Amir Muhammad Khan of Kalabagh and Ata Muhammad Khan joined the Unionist Party as loyal allies of British. Nirwani and Lashari, the

Baluch tribes of Bhakkar were politically active. Afzal Khan Dhandla, and another leading zamindar of Bhakkar joined the Unionist Party. The Khawanins of Isa Khel dominated the politics of the region. Khan Bahadur Saifullah Khan also held the position of Parliamentary Secretary in 1926. Khan Bahadur Laddhu Khan of Darya Khan, Amir Muhammad Khan from Nawan Jandan, Dost Muhammad Khan from Piplan, and Malik Muzaffar Khan of Wan Bhachran were quite zestful representatives of the Unionist Party. The latter was conferred the title of Khan Sahib by the British in lieu of his war services to the government. He worked as an active recruitment agent in enlisting men in the British Army. All these tribal leaders had influence of their own in their respective constituencies and were elected not on a Party platform but through their power and authority which they had on the people of the area. See Saadia Sumbal, (unpublished thesis) Tribal configuration of Mianwali district: A study in Colonial dispensation 1901-1947, 2008, P.98

<sup>35</sup> Ashiq Hussain Batalwi, *Iqbal Ke Aakhri do saal*, (Lahore; Sang-e-Meel Publications, 1989) p.47

<sup>36</sup> David Gilmartin, *Empire and Islam* (London; I.B. Tauris & co ltd) P.118 Also see Talbot, *Punjab and Raj*, P.81

<sup>37</sup> M. Akbar Khan, *Sumbal*, 11 June.2008, 7:30 pm

<sup>38</sup> Ashiq Batalwi, *Iqbal Ke Aakhri Do Saal*, pp.298-299

<sup>39</sup> Tahir Kamran, *Unfolding Crisis*, P.188

<sup>40</sup> Talbot, *Punjab and Raj*, pp.143-144

<sup>41</sup> Ibid, P.145

<sup>42</sup> Ibid, P.191

<sup>43</sup> Iftikhar Malik, *Sikandar Hayat Khan, a political biography*, p.95,97, See Muhammad Waseem, *Politics and the state in Pakistan*, P.69. Also see Shinder Singh Thandi, *Punjabi Identity in a global context*, (New Delhi; Oxford University press, 1999), p.255

<sup>43</sup> Muhammad Waseem, *Politics and the state in Pakistan*, P.69

<sup>43</sup> Shinder Singh Thandi, *Punjabi Identity in a global context*, (New Delhi; Oxford University press, 1999), p.255

Ibid, P.195

<sup>44</sup> Liaqat Niazi, *Tarikh-e-Mianwali*, P.207

<sup>45</sup> Ibid, P.160

<sup>46</sup> Ibid, P.209

<sup>47</sup> Ibid, P.224

<sup>48</sup> Ibid, pp.224-225

<sup>49</sup> Muslim Students Federation's main members Ibrahim Ali Chishti and Hameed Nizami had their genesis from Islamia College, Lahore and later associated themselves Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam. Muslim students identified themselves with the mission of defending Islamic traditions. See Iftikhar Malik, *Sikandar Hayat Khan, a political biography*, p.99 & Gilmartin, *Empire and Islam*, P.205

<sup>50</sup>Iftikhar Malik , *Sikandar Hayat Khan, a political biography*, p.99

<sup>51</sup>LiaqatNiazi , *Tarikh-e-Mianwali*, P.225

<sup>52</sup> David Gilmartin , *Empire and Islam*, P.206

<sup>53</sup>LiaqatNiazi , *Tarikh-e-Mianwali*, pp.224-225

<sup>54</sup>Azeem Hussain ,*Fazl-e-Hussain, a political biography*, p. 306 Zamindara League had been created on papers as early as October 1937. The primary aim was to protect the ‘legitimate interests’ of “the owners of land”, peasant, proprietors and tenants in the province. Local Unionist supporters were instructed to form Muslim League branches only after local Zamindara League branches had been successfully launched. Zamindara League was composed of Zamindarsof all communities. The Zamindara League workers have been allotted different areas of the tehsil. They keep close touch with influential people of the areas.

<sup>55</sup> Ian Talbot , *KhizarTiwana, The Punjab Unionist party and the Partition of India* (Surrey ; Curzon Press, 1996) pp.130-131

<sup>56</sup> Ibid,

<sup>57</sup> Talbot, *Punjab and Raj*, p.215

<sup>58</sup> David Gilmartin, *Empire and Islam*, P.189

<sup>59</sup> Ibid, pp.189-190

<sup>60</sup> Ibid,

<sup>61</sup> Ibid, P.212

<sup>62</sup>Waseem, *Politics and the State in Pakistan*, p.69

<sup>63</sup>Gilmartin, *Empire and Islam*, P.213 see Talbot ,*Punjab and Raj*, Pp 109-110.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid, Pp.215,217

<sup>65</sup> Talbot , *Punjab and Raj*, P.215

<sup>66</sup>LiaqatNiazi ,*Tarikh-e-Mianwali*, P.206

<sup>67</sup> Amir Abdullah Khan Rokhari, *Main AurMera Pakistan* (Lahore; Jang Publishers, 1989) P.62

<sup>68</sup>*Report on the General Elections to the Punjab Legislative Assembly (1945-46)* (Lahore ; Superintendent Government Printing Press, 1946)

<sup>69</sup>Tahir Kamran , *Unfolding Crisis*, pp.188-89

<sup>70</sup>Gilmartin , *Empire and Islam*, p.225