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Author(s): Kenneth W. Jones

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Communalism in the Punjab

THE ARYA SAMAJ CONTRIBUTION

KENNETH W. JONES

FEW features of modern South Asian history have received more comment than communalism, its impact on the development of nationalism and its threat to the continued existence of a secular Indian state. For many supporters of Indian nationalism, communalism was the result of British machinations, of a "divide and rule" policy used to impede and, finally, to frustrate the ambitions of those who desired a free, united India. For the proponents of Pakistan, communalism was not an issue, since they premised their actions on the concept of "two nations," one Hindu and one Islamic, which both sought to establish themselves as political entities. Their world was defined by religion and what others called communalism was nationalism in such a world. Communalism exists as a historic reality and a common though ambiguous and increasingly pejorative analytic concept.

In this study communalism is defined as a consciously-shared religious heritage which becomes the dominant form of identity for a given segment of society. In the South Asian experience, this identity has generally been expressed through a specific language with its own unique script.¹ Religion, language, and script are the basic triad of self-awareness to which are fused a reinterpreted history, coupled with a new conceptualization of the world and the position of the identity group in that world. Expression of this consciousness in demands for a state, a nation which would embody the unique qualities of the religious group, mark the transition from communalism to religious nationalism.

Religious identity has persisted into the post-independence world, a world now dominated by nation states. Present forms of communalism are opposed not only to the formal governmental structure under which they exist but also to the nationalism supporting that structure. Communalism possesses the potentiality of a new nationalism, a rival ideology that may divide or destroy the state. The recently successful drive for a Punjabi Subha in India and the continual tension between Singhalese and Tamils in Ceylon attest to the vitality of contemporary communalism.

Communalism is not new, but is part of traditional South Asian civilization, modified during the nineteenth century by the dual influences of modernization and Westernization. The self-conscious aspect of communalism was heightened by

Kenneth W. Jones is Assistant Professor of History at Kansas State University.

¹ For an alternate definition of communalism, see Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *Modern Islam in India* (Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1963), pp. 173-74. Another possible type of "communalism" can be seen in the rise of non-Brahman consciousness in Tamilnad during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. This might be termed "social communalism" to differentiate it from a religiously based identity. Communalism then would become a broader concept applicable to a wide variety of historical processes and situations.

new modes of communication, by the attitudes, institutions and methodology of Christian missionaries and, in part, by the dynamics of British administrative policies. The degree to which the British are responsible for the creation of a modernized communalism, the question of whether or not they practiced a policy of "divide and rule" is not at issue here. Instead, we will focus on the contribution of the Arya Samaj to the worsening of communal relations within a single British province, the Punjab, during the latter part of the nineteenth century. As a modernizing Hindu movement the Arya Samaj exemplifies non-British forces which affected the previous structure of inter-communal relations and established patterns of religious identity.²

Traditionally the Punjab³ has been an area of diversity unsurpassed in the remainder of the subcontinent. Three religious groups, Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs, three languages, Hindu, Urdu and Punjabi, each with its own script, coexisted in an uneasy balance.⁴ Muslims were most prevalent in the west, Hindus to the east, and Sikhs grouped roughly in the center, while a near balance existed with the number of Hindus and Sikhs almost equalling the number of Muslims.⁵ This population distribution, with its east-west division, gave no community a controlling position by weight of numbers or by advantageous distribution. No single group dominated politically, economically or socially, nor was there a single overriding social system.⁶ There were, instead, three separate but interconnected systems, one in each religious community. Each group possessed a complete social hierarchy, ranging from outcastes to religious and aristocratic elites.⁷ Added to this

² The British Punjab as an area of focus is particularly suited to the study of inter-communal relations in a colonial setting. Historical diversity and unique experience with British rule were combined with a series of reform-revival movements in each of the religious communities. The Arya Samaj represents such a response on the part of the Hindu community, and, while the Samaj was strong in the United Provinces and affected much of northern India, its leadership and ideological coloring were largely Punjabi. While an analysis of the Samaj will produce insights into part of the Punjab Hindu community, examination of the orthodox Hindu response, of both orthodox and reform movements in the Islamic and Sikh communities, will be needed before a total picture of nineteenth century Punjab can be created.

³ The Punjab referred to in this paper existed from 1858 to 1901 and includes both Delhi and the Trans-Indus tracts later incorporated in the North-West Frontier Province.

⁴ Traditionally the fusion of language, script and religion did not exist except for the Punjabi-Gurmukhi-Sikh triad and there Punjabi was utilized largely in sacred scriptures. Considerable ambiguity existed well into the twentieth century. Urdu was used widely by all communities even though strong emotional commitments to Punjabi and Hindi existed.

⁵ Taking the 1891 Census figures, we find in the western half of the province a Muslim population of 90% in the hills, and 82% on the plains. In the east, the Hindus were the majority community, over 94% in the hill tracts and 69% on the plains. In the central and submontaine districts there was a mixing of all three communities, 37% Hindu, 50% Muslim, and 12% Sikh. Over-all figures for the province were 12,915,643 Muslims, 10,237,100 Hindus, and 1,870,481 Sikhs. Government of India, *Census of India 1891, The Punjab and its Feudatories, Part I, The Report of the Census*, by E. D. Maclagan (Calcutta: Government Printing Office, 1892), p. 59.

⁶ The lack of a single dominant social system must not be overlooked. With the exceptions of the Punjab and possibly Bengal, the remainder of the subcontinent is characterized by dominant Hindu social systems, regionally differentiated, with one or more minority social structures. The minority systems tend to be incomplete, containing only scattered or limited sections of the social hierarchy. The Jains, Parsis or Muslims of the West Coast exemplify such incomplete systems, as do the Muslim communities of southern India.

⁷ The complexity of Punjab elites can be seen in Sir Lepel H. Griffin, *Chiefs and Families of Note in the Punjab* (Lahore: Government Printing, Punjab, 1940), volumes I and II, where he lists along with Rajas, Nawabs, Sardars, Khan Bahadurs, Maliks, Diwans, also purely religious families such as the Sodhis and Bedis.

diversity were past migrations and invasions which gave the province a history of continual change unparalleled in South Asia.

The traditional varieties of religious competition and conflict in the Punjab were several: a struggle for converts introduced by the two proselytizing religions, Islam and Sikhism; political rivalry between the aristocratic elites in each community; economic tensions where class and religious differences overlapped; and, periodic mob violence arising from points of tension inherent in the communal structure. The British annexation in 1849 ended one form of competition—that between the ruling aristocracies. No longer could a Nawab or Raja hope to make himself the paramount power of the province through war or intrigue; the only sphere of competition left for those who once ruled was the sterile quibbling over honors and precedence granted to each by the new political power, the British. Competition was limited to other, apparently less dangerous, spheres of activity.

Religious movements continued to develop freely and only felt the restricting hand of the government when they threatened or appeared to threaten the stability of the state. One such religious movement that directly challenged British rule was a *jihad*, or holy war, led by Saiyad Ahmad Shahid. Originally begun as an attempt to wrest the Punjab from Sikh rule, the war continued into the eighteen sixties against the newly organized British administration. While the fighting took place on the northwestern border of the Punjab, the *jihad* did not receive significant support from Punjabi Muslims but gained most of its strength from the hill tribesmen of the frontier with leadership and support from the Islamic communities of the Gangetic Plain and Bengal.⁸

The only Punjabi religious movement suppressed by the British during the nineteenth century was the Sikh revivalist and reform sect, the Namdharis. founded in the eighteen fifties by Balak Singh as a social reforming sect, it was not until Ram Singh assumed leadership in 1862 that it turned toward a course of potential conflict with the government. In that year Ram Singh prophesied the rebirth of Guru Gobind Singh and the establishment of a new Sikh dynasty to replace the British. Surprisingly enough, it was not this clearly political challenge of the Namdharis that produced government reaction but the results of their intense desire to protect cattle from slaughter. Veneration of the cow was characteristically a Hindu attitude and a long standing point of tension between Hindus and Muslims, who ate beef and sacrificed cows in certain religious ceremonies. The defense of kine became a major element in Namdhari ideology, and so strong was their belief that in 1871 Namdhari extremists murdered several Muslim butchers in the Amritsar and Ludhiana districts. This violent outbreak was followed in 1872 by an attempt to seize arms in the state of Malerkotla. The British responded to these acts with their own form of violence. Following the Malerkotla affair, 66 Namdharis were arrested and summarily blown from guns by the Deputy Commissioner of Ludhiana. Ram Singh was arrested and deported to Burma. Following this decisive action by the British the Namdhari movement subsided continuing to exist only as a shadow of its earlier self.⁹

⁸ Hafeez Malik, *Moslem Nationalism in India and Pakistan* (Washington, D. C.: Public Affairs Press, 1963), pp. 154-89.

⁹ Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, Vol. II (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), 132.

The effective suppression of both the followers of Saiyid Ahmad and those of Ram Singh, as well as the reestablishment of British power after the 1857 uprising, clearly demonstrated that direct challenges to existing authority were impossible. No religious movement commanded sufficient popular support to openly oppose the British and by the eighteen seventies religious nationalism was no longer a feasible goal. Competition between the religious communities could only proceed under the umbrella of British power and could not hope to challenge that power. Communal competition continued, as did communal violence but under new rules and an altered set of conditions.

Another feature of Punjab society was exemplified by the Namdhari movement, the pattern of casual and accidental violence arising from points of tension between the Muslim community on the one side and the Sikhs and Hindus on the other. Various forms of activity caused sporadic communal rioting. The greatest cause of such riots was the same as that which triggered the Namdhari clash with the British government, the issue of cow-killing. The sacrifice of cows at I'd, a major Muslim celebration, created periodic outbursts and, on occasion, the public sale or carrying of meat through a Hindu or Sikh section of town would produce violence. Religious festivals, particularly Holi or Muharram, were often marked by disorders and on those unlucky days when two festivals—one Muslim and one either Sikh or Hindu—would be celebrated, then rioting was almost inevitable. Hindu processions, playing music in front of a mosque, pipal trees cut to allow the passing of *taxis* on Muharram, a Brahman bull wandering into a Muslim procession, these and numerous other events created outbursts. Such occurrences, however, were accidental. They happened sporadically and seemed implicit in the nature of Punjab society.

Into this diverse province the British introduced a new element of communal conflict and competition—the Christian missionaries. In 1839 the missionaries established their first headquarters in the Punjab at Ludhiana.¹⁰ The Christian missionaries moved forward with each new British annexation. In 1846 mission stations were opened in Jullundur and in 1849 in Lahore. By the eightenn eighties a network of missions covered the Punjab, from Delhi north to Simla, from Ambala west to Peshawar, from Lahore south to Multan, and from Peshawar south along the border to Dera Ghazi Khan. The number of Christian converts rose rapidly from 3,912 in 1881 to over 19,000 a decade later, and by 1901 had reached nearly 38,000.¹¹ While numerically conversions were insignificant, they struck at two segments of the Hindu social structure—outcastes and upper caste students attending the newly established Christian schools. The former threatened Hindu society at its weakest point. Already lost were masses of outcastes who had converted to Islam and Sikhism. The latter caused the greatest public and private concern, as it

¹⁰ Punjab Government, *Gazetteer of the Ludhiana District 1888-89* (Calcutta: Calcutta Central Press Co., n.d.), pp. 74-76; and, Julius Richter, *A History of Missions in India*, trans. by Sydney H. Moore (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1908), p. 194.

¹¹ Government of India, *Census of India 1891, The Punjab and Its Feudatories, Part I, The Report of the Census*, by E. D. Maclagan (Calcutta: Government Printing Office, 1892), pp. xliv, 97, and *Census of India, 1911 Volume XIV, Punjab, Part I, Report*, by Pandit Harikishen Kaul (Lahore: Civil and Military Gazette Press, 1912), p. 129.

threatened the integrity of the rising Hindu elite. Western education was necessary for economic success, but carried with it the nightmare of potential conversion.

The missionaries brought both a new aggressiveness and new methods of action. They introduced the first printing press in the Punjab and along with it, the tract, the pamphlet, and the religious newspaper. Missionaries began preaching in the streets and bazaars and even took part in *shastrarths*, a form of traditional religious debate. They developed and maintained a widespread network of schools, orphanages, medical missions, and introduced the zenana mission designed to reach women and girls in the seclusion of their homes. The missionary, himself a disciplined, paid professional preacher, added a new dimension to religious propagation. In short, the Christian missionaries introduced Western institutions and methods of religious competitiveness. The success of these methods in converting Indians to Christianity, plus the close ties between missionaries and the government, created in the minds of many Indian religious leaders a deep fear of the "Christian threat," a fear which became one of the major motivating forces for religious revivalism throughout the Punjab.

It is into this province, traditionally the home of conflicting communities—communities which were just beginning to adjust to the new world created by British rule, by Christian missions, and by the impact of Western concepts—that the ideology of the Arya Samaj was introduced. Swami Dayanand, a wandering ascetic from central Kathiawar in western India, proclaimed a purified and revived form of traditional Hinduism. After various attempts to achieve reform by persuading other Brahmans to accept his ideas, he turned to the literate, semi-Westernized segment of the Hindu community, and here he found significant support. In 1875 he founded the Arya Samaj (Aryan Society) in Rajkot, Gujerat, as an organizational vehicle to promote his new Hinduism. The Arya Samaj met with limited success in Gujerat and Maharashtra—widespread support came only in the north, from the Punjab and the United Provinces. Swami Dayanand arrived in Lahore on April 19, 1877, and left the province 15 months later in July, 1878.¹² During this one trip he simplified and reorganized the basic tenets of the Samaj and founded nine local Samajes.¹³ He held public meetings, private discussions, and entered several *shastrarths* (public debates) with orthodox pandits and Christian missionaries. While he met with strong and, at times, violent opposition, it was almost solely from the forces of Hindu orthodoxy. Seldom did he criticize Islam or Sikhism, as his main targets, outside of Hinduism, were the Christian missionaries.¹⁴ Following this trip and up to his death in 1883 there was only the beginnings of organizational and proselytizing activity by the various Arya Samaj branches.

¹² Har Bilas Sarada, *The Life of Dayanand Saraswati, World Teacher* (Ajmer: Vedic Yantralaya, 1946), pp. 173–97. Contains a detailed description of Dayanand's Punjab tour.

¹³ Dayanand is often considered to have founded eleven Arya Samajes. The two additional branches are the Wazirabad Arya Samaj established prior to Dayanand's arrival in that city and the Jullundur Samaj which opened sometime after his second visit. Chhaju Bawa Singh, *The Life and Teachings of Swami Dayanand Saraswati* (Lahore: Addison Press, 1903), pp. 363–66.

¹⁴ Dayanand contributed to later anti-Islamic agitation when in 1880 he published *Gaukarunanidhi*, an emotional appeal for the protection of cattle, based on economic grounds rather than spiritual concepts. He, also, participated in the founding of a Gaurakshini Sabha, a society for the protection of cattle. This movement, however, received little, if any, organizational support from the Punjab Arya Samaj although individual Samajists were drawn into cow protection societies.

The years immediately following the death of Dayanand saw two major changes in the Samaj: one, the attraction to the movement of young Punjabis who were to lead and dominate it for the next three decades and, secondly, the development of a new interpretation of Dayanand. Three men played determinant roles in creating these new trends: Pandit Guru Datt, Pandit Lekh Ram, and Lala Munshi Ram (later known as Swami Shraddhanand). Pandit Guru Datt joined the Samaj in his native Multan on June 20, 1880.¹⁵ A brilliant student and writer, he dominated the small group of students at the Government College, Lahore, a group which included two future Samaj leaders, Lala Lajpat Rai and Lala Hans Raj.¹⁶ Between 1885 when he received his M.A. and his death in 1890, Guru Datt played an increasing role in the reinterpretation of Dayanand that began after his death. In his writings and public speeches Guru Datt stressed the religious nature of Dayanand's work; for him, Dayanand was not merely a reformer but a *rishi*, or saint, on par with the sages of ancient India, while the *Satyarth Prakash* (*The Light of Truth*), Dayanand's main polemical and ideological work, became a sacred text to be followed without question.¹⁷ In Guru Datt there was a growing emotionalism and an intense religious fervor. He turned his attention increasingly to the propagation of Arya Samaj tenets. In 1888, he founded an *Updeshak* class to train ministers and the following year began the *Vedic Magazine* as a vehicle for publicizing his views.¹⁸ Guru Datt's main contribution to the Samaj was ideological. His elaboration of the Aryan conceptualization of the past counteracted Western scholarly interpretation of the Vedic period as well as orthodox views of traditional Hinduism. In addition, he carried on Dayanand's struggle with Christian missionaries and criticized Sikh leaders and Sikh ideology. Guru Datt became the leader of a devoted and worshipful group who accepted him as their spiritual guide. These disciples—socially radical and religiously militant—soon began to press for changes in both the direction and methods of the Samaj.

The second figure in this group of radicals, Lala Munshi Ram, was born in Jullundur District in 1856.¹⁹ Young Munshi Ram came to Lahore in 1882 to study for the law examinations,²⁰ accepted Guru Datt's leadership and, in 1885, joined the Arya Samaj.²¹ Munshi Ram returned to Jullundur and became president of the local Arya Samaj. This Samaj provided him with a base of power and strength for the next two decades. Munshi Ram, like Guru Datt, was a religious militant and, as such, soon experimented with new methods to promote Samaj ideology. Under Munshi

¹⁵ A brief biography of Guru Datt's life can be found in Guru Datt, *Wisdom of the Rishis or Works of Pt. Gurudatta Vidyarthi M.A.* (Delhi: Sarvadeshik Pustakalaya, n.d.), pp. i-vi; a more extensive coverage is in Lajpat Rai, *Life and Works of Pandit Guru Dutta Vidyarthi M.A.* (Lahore: Virajanand Press, 1891), and *The Works of the Late Pandit Gurudatta Vidyarthi, M.A., with a Biographical Sketch* (Lahore: The Arya Printing, Publishing and Trading Co., Ltd., 1912).

¹⁶ See Guru Datt, *Wisdom of the Rishis*, p. iii, Guru Datt, *Life and Works*, p. 20, and Ruchi Ram Sahni, "Self Revelations of an Octogenarian" (Unpublished manuscript in the Punjab State Archives), p. 127, and M. R. Jambunathan, *Swami Shraddhanand* (Bombay: Vidya Bhavan, 1961), p. 94.

¹⁷ Guru Datt, *The Works of . . .*, pp. 29, 33; also, Jambunathan, *Swami Shraddhanand*, p. 94.

¹⁸ Guru Datt, *The Works of . . .*, pp. 34-35.

¹⁹ Jambunathan, *Swami Shraddhanand*, p. 3. This is an autobiography that was later edited and completed by M. R. Jambunathan. Numerous other biographies in a variety of languages have been written on Swami Shraddhanand. A note on his name: he was born Lala Munshi Ram and later went by Munshi Ram Jigyasu, Mahatma Munshi Ram and Swami Shraddhanand.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 41. He again went to Lahore to study law in 1885, see p. 62.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

Ram's leadership the Jullundur Samaj pioneered in missionary work. Money was collected through the sale of surplus grain, donated by each Arya household, *Nagar Kirtan* or street processions accompanied by devotional singing were instituted, and Aryas, including Munshi Ram, began to travel to the surrounding villages in search of converts.²² At the Hindu celebration of *Dusehra* the Jullundur Samaj publicly challenged the Christian missionaries with lectures and an open display of Samaj symbols. Munshi Ram reports that "Intense propaganda was carried on there on behalf of the Arya Samaj . . . Even the sons of Zamindars and Sowcars who were wasting their lives in vice were moved by our lectures. The two or three Hindu boys who were attending Christian lectures also came of their own accord to our camp. That year's Christian propaganda was a distinct failure."²³

In 1888-1889 Munshi Ram took two important steps toward more effective propagation of Arya Samaj ideology. He founded the *Sat Dharam Pracharak* (*Herald of the True Religion*), an Urdu weekly,²⁴ and toward the end of 1889 he started the Doab Updeshak Mandal (Doab Missionary Circle).²⁵ Munshi Ram also advocated the use of *shuddhi*—a form of traditional purification ceremony—to reconvert Hindus from Islam or Christianity.²⁶ The activities of both Guru Datt and Munshi Ram came increasingly into conflict with the more conservative members of the Samaj. The conservatives were primarily interested in the educational movement begun in 1883. By 1886 the Samaj had succeeded in opening a high school in Lahore and three years later college classes were added. This was the basis for the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic educational movement that spread throughout northern India and as far south as Maharashtra. Both "radicals" and "conservatives" participated in this movement, but gradually the Lala Hans Raj-Lajpat Rai faction gained control and the radicals found themselves gradually excluded from positions of leadership in educational affairs.

A third leader of this group of young radicals was Pandit Lekh Ram. Born in the village of Sayydpur in the district of Jhelum,²⁷ educated there and later in Rawalpindi, he did not share in the Western education that was typical of most Samaj leaders, nor did he travel to Lahore and partake of the new culture developing in that city. He became interested in the Arya Samaj while living in Peshawar and in 1880 traveled to Ajmere to meet Dayanand. Bold, aggressive, outspoken, Lekh Ram knew both Persian and Arabic which he used with deadly effect in his later career. Unlike Dayanand or Guru Datt, his prime opponent was not orthodox Hinduism or Christianity, but Islam. Growing up in a Muslim area and serving under Muslim officers in the police, Lekh Ram reacted by becoming self-consciously and militantly Hindu. From the beginning he entered into activities which were either directly or indirectly anti-Muslim. When he joined the Samaj in 1880 he took up three causes: (1) cow protection, (2) the advocacy of

²² *Ibid.*, pp. 78-79, 103-04, 112, 115.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 78.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 101.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 125.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 112.

²⁷ Rām Chandra Jāved, *Ārya Samaj ke Mahā Purush* (Jalandhar: Yūniversitī Pabliharz [1954]), p. 60. Jāved contains a short basic biography of Lekh Ram, as does *Balidān-Jayanti-Smriti-Granth* (Jalandhar: Ārya Pratīnidhī Sabhā Panjāb, 1962); for a somewhat longer and more detailed biography, see, Swāmī Shradhdhānand, *Dharmvir Pandit Lekh Rām, Jivan-Charitra* (Jalandhar: Ārya Pratīnidhī Sabhā Panjāb, n.d.)

Hindi as a medium of instruction for government schools and, (3) anti-Ahmadiya propaganda. In 1884 he left the police service in order to devote his full time to the Samaj,²⁸ and soon afterward he came into conflict with Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, founder of the Ahmadiyas.

The Ahmadiya movement has many close parallels with the Arya Samaj. It too was concerned with modernizing and reinterpreting a religious tradition, this time Islam, and it too became involved in serious competition with orthodox Islam, with the Christian missionaries and with a variety of reformist societies in all three religious communities. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad proclaimed himself both the Madhi of Islam and the Messiah of Christianity. He began to proselytize in 1879 but did not become prominent until the later eighteen eighties.²⁹ It was inevitable that an aggressive Islamic movement would clash severely with both Christians and Aryas, but the struggle that developed between Lekh Ram and Mirza Ghulam took a personal quality that went beyond ideological animosity. Their conflict took the form of a pamphlet war, a war maintained with increasing violence until Lekh Ram's death in 1897.³⁰ In 1885 Lekh Ram visited Qadian, the home of the Ahmadiya movement.³¹ Here he preached publicly against the Ahmadiyas and managed to found a branch of the Arya Samaj. In 1887 he accepted the editorship of the Urdu paper, the *Arya Gazette* published in Ferozepore.³² For two years he remained as editor and during this period became known throughout the Arya Samaj for his writings as a combative exponent of Arya tenets.

By 1888 the militant wing of the Arya Samaj intensified its criticism of the three great enemies: the "kernanis," "kuranis," and "puranis"—Christians, Muslims and orthodox Hindus.³³ In addition, there was considerable anti-Sikh agitation throughout the late eighteen eighties. Pandit Guru Datt chose the eleventh anniversary celebration of the Lahore Samaj to publicly attack Sikhism. His speech met with approval of the majority, but resulted in immediate loss of Sikh support for the Arya Samaj. Bhai Jawahi Singh, Vice President of the Lahore Samaj, Bhai Dit Singh Gyani and Bhai Maya Singh left and later joined the Singh Sabha movement.³⁴ Competition between the Arya Samaj and Singh Sabhas for the commitment of Sikh intellectuals developed and is reminiscent of the earlier struggle

²⁸ Shradhdhānand, *Dharmvir Pandit Lekh Rām*, pp. 24–25.

²⁹ Several accounts of the Ahmadiyas can be found in the following places: Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *Modern Islam in India*; J. N. Farquhar, *Modern Religious Movements in India* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1915), pp. 137–38; Stephan Fuchs, *Rebellious Prophets, A Study of Messianic Movements in Indian Religions* (London: Asia Publishing House, 1965), pp. 198–207; and, H. A. Walters, *The Ahmadiya Movement* (London: Humphrey Milford, 1918). A self-view is available in Hazrat Bas Hir-ud-din Mahmud Ahmad, *The Ahmadiyya Movement* (Lahore: Civil and Military Gazette Press, 1924) and a statement of basic Ahmadiya beliefs is given in Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, *The Kashf-ul-Ghiṭā* (Lahore: The Victoria Press, 1898), pp. 6–7.

³⁰ Lekh Ram published 32 works. A full list of these can be found in the *Arya Musafir*, I, No. 3, December 1898.

³¹ Shradhdhānand, *Dharmvir Pandit Lekh Rām*, pp. 30–31.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 35.

³³ John Morrison, *New Ideas in India during the Nineteenth Century, A Study of Social, Political, and Religious Developments* (Edinburgh: George A. Morton, 1906), p. 137.

³⁴ Bhagat Lakshman Singh, *Autobiography*, edited by Ganda Singh (Calcutta: Sikh Cultural Center, 1965), pp. 58 and 136; Khushwant Singh, *History*, Vol. II, 143–44.

between the Brahma Samaj and the Arya Samaj. In 1889 Radh Kishen, a prominent Arya, published *Granthophobia*, a highly critical review of Sikhism,³⁵ while Lekh Ram and Guru Datt continued these attacks, using the newspapers they controlled as effective means of expression. Street preaching, in which the Sikh Gurus were denounced as "illiterate, self-conceited and hypocritical," did much to embitter relations between Aryas and Sikhs.³⁶ Yet in the later years there was often close cooperation between Sikh and Arya organizations and the total picture of Sikh-Arya relations,³⁷ as with the problem of overall relations between Sikhs and Hindus, is still unclear; however, relations between Aryas and other groups were quite explicit.

The eighteen eighties saw a gradual worsening of relations between Hindus and Muslims, between Aryas and non-Aryas. Modern methods of communication and organization, coupled with rising literacy, created an increased potentiality for ideological debate. The printing press became a major weapon of religious controversy. Books, pamphlets, and periodicals appeared in a widening stream which carried in it the rising consciousness of communal identity. The Arya Samaj participated in this revolution of communications. Aryas founded a series of newspapers, as did their opponents. Samaj missionaries and volunteers proclaimed the new gospel in the cities and towns of the province. They preached in the bazaars and on street corners, marched with songs and banners throughout towns and cities, and publicly debated with their critics at religious fairs wherever they were held. Arya aggressiveness met with opposition from protective associations of Muslims, orthodox Hindus and Sikhs, as well as from aggressive sects, such as the Dev Samaj³⁸ and the Ahmadiyas.

During the period from 1889 to 1891 the Samaj, led by Munshi Ram, began to consider using a new type of institution, *shuddhi*, or purification. In its earliest forms *shuddhi* was aimed at reconverting Hindus from either Christianity or Islam. Later it was broadened to include the conversion of non-Hindus and even those whose ancestors had never been Hindus. Also, it was used as an institution for caste reform. Outcaste groups could, through *shuddhi*, be purified and raised to the level of the twice-born, or pure caste Hindus. Although earlier cases of *shuddhi* occurred,³⁹ it was not until 1891 that regular reports began to appear. At this time

³⁵ G. S. Chhabra, *The Advanced History of the Panjab*, Vol. II (Ludhiana: Parkash Brothers, 1962), 360; Government of India, *Selections from the Vernacular Newspapers Published in the Panjab, Received up to 6 January 1890*, Vol. III, 342; *Khair Khwah-i-Kashmir*, August 6, 1889, p. 366; *Khair Khawah-i-Kashmir*, September 1, 1889, p. 434; *Bharat Sudhar*, October 19, 1889.

³⁶ Ganga Singh, "The Origin of the Hindu-Sikh Tension in the Panjab," *Journal of Indian History*, XXXIX (April, 1961), 120-23, and Government of India, *Selections from the Vernacular Newspapers Published in the Panjab, Received up to 5th January 1889*, Vol. II, 340; *Aftab-i-Punjab*, December 14, 1888.

³⁷ *Tribune*, February 18, 1893, p. 4; April 8, 1893, p. 4. Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, Punjab, *Report Srimati Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, Punjab, for the Year 1896-1897* (n.p., n. pub., n.d.), p. 39.

³⁸ The Dev Samaj was founded in 1887 by an ex-Brahmo, Pandit Shiv Narain Agnihotri. For accounts of this movement, see, Farquhar, *Modern Religious Movements*, pp. 173-82; Chhaora, *Advanced History*, Vol. II, 361-62; P. V. Kanak, *Bhagwan Dev Atma* (Lahore: Dev Samaj Book Depot, 1942). Kanak's work is a biography of Pandit Agnihotri.

³⁹ Dayanand is usually credited with the first Arya Samaj reconversion. During his second visit to Amritsar he persuaded Khadasingh, a Christian convert, to abandon his new faith and join the Samaj. Sarda's version, however, makes no mention of a *shuddhi* ceremony, only that Khadasingh began "to preach Vedic Dharma." Har Bilas Sarda, *Life of Dayanand Saraswati*, pp. 196-97.

the institution was still new and no standard ceremony had been created.⁴⁰ Many of the more conservative leaders within the Samaj were reluctant to sponsor *shuddhis*, and many in the Samaj itself felt too insecure to challenge the orthodox community. By 1893, the Samaj showed a new confidence and dared in one *shuddhi* ceremony to have the newly purified Hindu distribute sweets which were accepted by all present.⁴¹ By this time the Samaj was cooperating with the Singh Sabhas in the performance of *shuddhi* ceremonies.⁴²

The growing militancy apparent in Samaj relations with other organizations was echoed by growing strain within the Arya Samaj, between those who advocated this militancy and those who were more concerned with education, who were less emotional and less religious about the whole Samaj program. In 1888 the two groups clashed over the presidency of the new Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College.⁴³ At this time the conservatives, led by Lala Sain Das, Lala Hans Raj and Lala Lajpat Rai, won—but the Guru Datt-Munshi Ram faction continued to advocate their own program. This internal competition subsided somewhat with the death of Guru Datt in 1890 but was revived again as Lala Munshi Ram took the position of leadership left vacant on Guru Datt's death. Tensions within the Samaj broke into an open struggle for power in 1893, with the conservative wing retaining control over the college movement, its organizational structure and physical assets, while the radicals, led by Lala Munshi Ram and Pandit Lekh Ram, captured the provincial organization, the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha of the Punjab, and a majority of the local Samaj branches.⁴⁴

With this split two important developments took place. First, the radical wing was freed to follow their own policies and was no longer restrained by the more conservative elements, elements now almost solely concerned with the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College movement. Second, the radicals, after deciding to end their support of the college, needed to find new avenues of activity. They came out of the contest with an organization but no cause to take up the energies and resources of that organization. As victors, they possessed an organization without a cause, resources without goals. The resulting vacuum was filled by *Ved Prachar*, the preaching of the Vedas, and missionary work replaced education as the major

⁴⁰ Initially the Samaj used Brahmans and traditional purification ceremonies, acting merely as sponsors for the *shuddhi* ceremony, but by 1893 the Arya Samaj had developed their own ceremony. They no longer utilized Brahmans, nor turned to the traditional forms of purification. A new self-confidence encouraged them to act solely on their own initiative and to legitimize their own actions. J. Reid Graham, "The Arya Samaj, As a Reformation in Hinduism with Special Reference to Caste" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1942), p. 464.

⁴¹ *Tribune*, February 18, 1893, p. 4.

⁴² Chhabra, *Advanced History*, p. 385. Chhabra mentions dissent between the Singh Sabha and the Arya Samaj over the question of *shuddhi*, but, unfortunately, gives no further details nor does he cite his sources.

⁴³ Ram Sharma, *Mahatma Hans Raj, Maker of Modern Punjab* (Lahore: Arya Pradeshak Pratinidhi Sabha, 1941), p. 53. See footnote 44, below, for additional references.

⁴⁴ A wide variety of views on this division of the Samaj are available. Some of the more comprehensive are: Lala Lajpat Rai, *Lajpat Rai Autobiographical Writings*, ed. by Vijaya Chandra Joshi (Delhi: University Publishers, 1965), pp. 46-72; Farquhar, *Modern Religious Movements in India*, p. 124; Sharma, *Mahatma Hans Raj*, pp. 57-68; Charles H. Heimsath, *Indian Nationalism and Hindu Social Reform* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964), pp. 295-96; Kenneth W. Jones, "The Arya Samaj in the Punjab: A Study of Social Reform and Religious Revivalism, 1877-1902" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, 1966), pp. 113-14, 116-18, 143-45, 171-78.

goal of the radicals. In June 1894 the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, now under radical control officially, decided to cease supporting the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College movement. A *Ved Prachar* committee and fund were begun.⁴⁵ The casual sending of *updeshaḥs* (missionaries) was now organized and put on a systematic basis. By 1895-96 the entire province, plus Sind and Baluchistan, had been divided into *Mandals* (Circles) with an officer-in-charge and paid ministers for each circle. Every *updeshaḥ* was expected to make a ten-month circuit of his *mandal*, visiting all towns and cities in it. The officer-in-charge reported to the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha which places were visited and when. It was the duty of the ministers to aid the local Samajes and particularly to be available to refute and hold public discussions with missionaries of other religions. Also, he was to aid in performing *shuddhi* ceremonies, since some of the smaller Samajes did not have the resources or confidence to engage in this activity.⁴⁶

This system was difficult to maintain, and the elaborate organizational structure created by Samaj planners was never fully translated into reality. Thirty full-time ministers were needed, plus extensive funds and supporting activities. While the ideal number of missionaries could not be found, the Samaj did provide a core of professionals whose effectiveness was augmented by considerable volunteer and part-time work. Money was collected for the Ved Prachar Fund, using the skill and sophistication developed previously in the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College movement. The radicals opened a central tract department to supply Arya missionaries with a wide variety of literature, adopting successfully the patterns of organization introduced by the Christian missions. Although few in number, the Samaj missionaries spread throughout the province. They toured branch societies, appeared at religious fairs, participated in public debates, and preached in bazaars and in the streets, providing an expertise and presence that greatly strengthened the entire sphere of Arya activities.⁴⁷

This emphasis on proselytizing resulted in the establishment of new branch samajes and in the rise of the number of *shuddhis* performed. With the division of the Arya Samaj the debate over *shuddhi* had ended and, after 1893, reconversion became one of the major activities of the radical wing. The Aryas were not alone in their desire to protect themselves from Christian and Islamic campaigns of conversion. Allies appeared from within the Sikh community. During the early eighties a *Shuddhi Sabha* had been founded in Lahore by both Sikhs and Aryas.⁴⁸ This organization, along with the Samaj and the Singh Sabhas, performed a growing number of purifications.⁴⁹ The Lahore *Tribune* reported two *shuddhis* in

⁴⁵ The Punjab Ved Prachar Fund received Rs. 11,000 in donations during the 1895-96 year. Ved Prachar funds were also started in Rajasthan, Bihar and Bengal. Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, Punjab, *Report of the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, Punjab, for the Year 1895-96*, p. 48.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 7-12, 34, 41-43; Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, Punjab, *Report of the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, Punjab, for the Year 1896-1897*, pp. 9-12; Jones, "The Arya Samaj in the Punjab," pp. 193-98.

⁴⁸ J. Reid Graham, "The Arya Samaj as a Reformation in Hinduism," p. 466.

⁴⁹ The first Singh Sabha was founded in Amritsar in 1873. The initial Sabha was largely concerned with defending Sikhism from Hindu and Christian criticism. In 1879 the Lahore Singh Sabha was organized with the goals of social reform, education and religious revivalism. The Singh Sabhas, which cooperated with the Samaj, were associated with the Lahore movement. See, Khushwant Singh, *History*, Vol. II, 141-44, or Chhabra, *Advanced History*, pp. 380-85.

1891 and two in 1892. The number rose slowly to nine in 1894, 14 in 1895, and then to 226 in 1896.⁵⁰ The sudden increase in 1896 grew out of the change from individual to group reconversions. The Shuddhi Sabha of Lahore purified several small groups, five in March, six in April, and nine in June. Then in August it took the radical step of purifying a family of over two-hundred outcaste Sikhs.⁵¹ Henceforth *shuddhi* functioned both as a weapon of conversion and a method of social reform. Because the Shuddhi Sabha and the Singh Sabhas were largely under Sikh control, the Arya Samaj lessened its cooperation with them. More and more the Samaj acted on its own in an attempt to insure that the reconverted would themselves become Samaj members.

Growing Samaj independence within the *shuddhi* movement contributed to rising Sikh self-consciousness. In 1900 the Arya Samaj purified a group of outcaste Rahtia Sikhs and as part of the ceremony shaved their heads and beards, transforming them into pure caste Hindus. Many in the Sikh community now saw Aryan reconversion as a direct threat, potentially as dangerous as Christian or Islamic conversion. Disillusionment with the Arya Samaj paralleled Sikh questioning of their identity vis-à-vis Hinduism.⁵² Beginning in 1897 letters appeared in the Lahore *Tribune* which raised the question of "Are Sikhs Hindus?" A public debate ensued which generated a series of books, pamphlets and letters supporting a wide variety of opinions on Sikh-Hindu relations. No consensus was reached, but by 1900 Sikhs were less and less willing to class themselves automatically with the Hindu community.⁵³

The *shuddhi* movement acted on relations between Hindus and Muslims, not to clarify overlapping identities, as with Hindus and Sikhs, but to reenforce existing communal separatism. The record of individual *shuddhis* illustrates a preponderance of reconversions from Islam. In 1893 thirteen were reconverted from Islam, two from Christianity.⁵⁴ As Samaj attention focused on the purification of outcastes a vast section of the Islamic community became available for proselytization and reconversion. The rising radicalism of the Samaj, plus its growing organizational

⁵⁰ Accounts of individual and group *shuddhis* have been taken from the Lahore *Tribune*. The *Selections from the Vernacular Newspapers of the Punjab* do not provide additional data either because the newspapers did not carry such information or, more likely, because it did not interest the British officials who determined the criteria of selection. The *Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, Punjab, Report for 1895-1896*, p. 27, states that Arya papers listed 15 reconversions during the year. This figure agrees closely with the number reported in the *Tribune* and indicates that the *Tribune* did report nearly all *shuddhis* as they occurred.

⁵¹ *Tribune*, April 8, 1896, p. 4; July 1, 1896, p. 4; September 2, 1896, p. 4.

⁵² *Tribune*, August 31, 1901, p. 1; Bhagat Lakshman Singh, *Autobiography*, p. 163.

⁵³ Evidence of tensions between Sikhs and Hindus comes from a wide variety of sources and still awaits a definite analysis. See the Lahore *Tribune* for January through March, 1897, and entire years of 1899-1900. A major contributor to this separatist movement was the civil suit over Dayal Singh Majithia's will in which the courts decided that there was no legal difference between Sikhs and Hindus. A reaction to this case produced the Tatyā Khalsa movement in 1900, *Tribune*, June 2, 1900, p. 3, and echoed in the press throughout the year. Publications of importance were *Risala Sat Prakash* by Bhai Jagat Singh, a Sikh Arya Samajist who drew a close analogy between the Arya Samaj and Sikh teachings, reviewed in the *Tribune*, February 7, 1899, pp. 3-4, and the pamphlet *Hum Hindu Nahin* by Bhai Kaha Singh of Nabha. See Bhagat Lakshman Singh, *Autobiography*, p. 137, and Khushwant Singh, *History*, Vol. II, 146-47. Additional tensions arose over the question of language. Sikhs and Hindus might both oppose Urdu, but still disagreed over which language should be utilized and in which script. See, *Tribune*, September 20, 1900, pp. 2-3.

⁵⁴ Lahore *Tribune* for 1897.

strength, combined to turn Arya against Muslim, and to reinforce existing communal divisions.

The Arya contributions to the worsening of inter-communal relations can be illustrated best by Pandit Lekh Ram's career as a militant defender of the new Aryan faith. Beginning with a strongly anti-Muslim bias, Lekh Ram made a career of his prejudice. During his life he wrote 32 books and pamphlets on religious subjects, many of which were violently critical of Islam.⁵⁵ Examples can be seen in his *Takzib-e-Burahin Ahmadiya (Refutation of the Ahmadiya Arguments)*; Volume I subtitled "A Gun-fire to break the flanks and tyranny of Mohammad's Islam." *Takzib-e-Burahin* was published in response to a book authored by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, and was the beginning of a lengthy pamphlet debate between the two religious leaders. Lekh Ram also wrote *Nuskha-e-Khabr-e-Ahmadiya (A Prescription for the Madness of Ahmadiyahs)*, *Radd-e-Khilaat-e-Islam (Rejection of the Islamic Robe of Honor)*, *Ibtal-e-Bashart Ahmadiya (Refutation of Ahmadiya Statements)*, and his most famous anti-Islamic work, *Jihad or the Basis of Mohammadi Religion*.⁵⁶ In *Jihad* Lekh Ram maintained that Islam was a religion of violence and tyranny, which engaged in holy war only as an excuse for the seizure of booty, women, children and slaves. He traced the rise of Islam throughout the world and particularly in India, seeing it as a bloody tale of slaughter and destruction.

The activities of Lekh Ram outraged all segments of the Muslim community—orthodox, Ahmadiya, and reform. He was threatened with law suits by Muslims from Bombay and Lahore, and was attacked in Muslim, Sikh and Christian newspapers. He was accused again and again of using insulting and vile language in referring to Islam. The threat of legal action and public criticisms of Lekh Ram did not intimidate him and in 1896 a court case lodged against him by several Muslims was dismissed.⁵⁷ There appeared no legal way of silencing his constant attacks, but one method did bring an end to his career, violence; on March 6, 1897, while staying in Lahore, Pandit Lekh Ram was assassinated.⁵⁸

The next few months saw the welling up of hatreds and fears usually hidden below the surface of normal life. Within three days of Lekh Ram's assassination, Lala Rala Ram, an Arya Samaj leader in Peshawar, was reported murdered.⁵⁹ Rumors spread throughout the province that all leading Aryas would be assassinated and that Muslims were conspiring to kill Sikh and Hindu leaders of the Shuddhi Sabha.⁶⁰ Reports from both the Hindu and Muslim communities exacerbated the tense situation. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, who had predicted that Lekh Ram would die a sudden death, was stated to be jubilant over the fulfillment of his prophecy.⁶¹

⁵⁵ See footnote 30.

⁵⁶ Pandit Lekh Ram, *Jihad, or the Basis of the Mohammedi Religion* (n.p., n. pub., 1892).

⁵⁷ Government of India, *Selections from the Vernacular Newspapers Published in the Punjab, Received up to 2nd January 1897*, Vol. X, 574, *Punjab*, September 22, 1896; Chaudhwin Sadhi, September 23, 1896.

⁵⁸ The assassin of Pandit Lekh Ram was never apprehended and so the crime remained open for a variety of interpretations, rumors, and theories.

⁵⁹ Government of India, *Selections from the Vernacular Newspapers Published in the Punjab*, Vol. XI, 182, *Bharat Sewak*, March 10, 1897. Lala Rala Ram was not murdered, but the report was believed at the time and only later was it known that he had merely received a beating.

⁶⁰ *Tribune*, March 13, 1897, p. 4.

⁶¹ Government of India, *Selections from the Vernacular Newspapers Published in the Punjab*, Vol. XI, 180-81, *Bharat Sudhar*, March 13, 1897. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad had first prophesied the death of Lekh Ram on February 20, 1886, and he repeated prophecy on February 20, 1893.

Rumors of impending Hindu revenge spread rapidly and were accompanied by instances of violence. On March 27, a Muslim meeting hall was burnt, Muslim editors were threatened and a growing number of poisoning cases reported, usually poisonings of Muslims by Hindu food vendors.⁶² Both communities urged their members to cut all economic relations with the opposing community.⁶³ There was a sudden rending of the social fabric by a deliberate move toward communal independence and self-sufficiency.

Within three months, the more violent passions had quieted and on the surface life returned once more to its normal channels. Yet the assassination was not forgotten. Rumors continued and in November, when Lekh Ram's assassin was supposedly arrested, signs of unrest returned in an aftershock to the earlier quake.⁶⁴ For the Samaj and particularly the radical section, Lekh Ram was a martyr.⁶⁵ He was the latest in a long list of Hindus who had fallen fighting the arch enemy, Islam. His memory was revered and his communal aggressiveness carefully maintained. The legacy of Pandit Lekh Ram left a permanent anti-Muslim bias in the Arya Samaj, a bias that was to find added justification in the coming years. The Arya-Muslim clashes of the eighteen eighties and eighteen nineties were seen, in retrospect, as forerunners of the Hindu-Muslim struggles of the twentieth century. The divisions within British India that were stimulated in part by Arya Samaj activity returned to legitimize Samaj attitudes underlying those same divisions. Because the Arya Samaj helped to set Hindus against Muslims, later Hindu-Muslim rivalry proved the correctness of Aryan attitudes. The spiral of growing communal tension had begun and once in existence tended to feed on itself.

The Arya Samaj contribution to this climate of communalism was immense and varied. The Samaj provided an ideology of militant Hinduism that had a wide appeal to Punjabi Hindus. As a minority community who, in the past, experienced Muslim and Sikh rule and who suffered from the effects of proselytization by Muslims, Sikhs, and Christians, Punjabi Hindus needed a new ideology to unify and defend their community. The aggressive stance of the Arya Samaj, its insistence on the unique and superior qualities of Hinduism, and its willingness to do battle for acceptance of these claims provided such an ideology. The Samaj differed sharply in these qualities from the syncretistic and overtly Western Brahma Samaj, a difference which accounts for the rapid decline of the Punjab Brahma Samaj after 1877.⁶⁶

Building on the techniques of Christian missionaries, of the Brahma Samaj, and on elements of traditional culture, the Arya Samaj added a new and extremely

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 295; *Sada-i-Hind*, April 12, 1897; *Paisa Akhbar*, April 19, 1897, p. 317; *Punjab Samachar*, May 8, 1897, p. 370.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 203; *Paisa Akhbar*, March 17, 1897; *Nazim-ul-Hind*, May 22, 1897, p. 423.

⁶⁴ *Tribune*, November 17, 1897, p. 4; November 27, 1897, p. 4.

⁶⁵ In the Samaj histories Pandit Lekh Ram was the second martyr to fall to the enemy, Islam, with Dayanand the first. See, *Balidan-Jayanti-Smriti-Granth* (Jalandhar: Arya Pratinidhi Sabha Panjab, 1962) which lists Samaj martyrs. The *Arya Musafir*, a monthly journal, was founded by Lala Munshi Ram in October 1898 in memory of Lekh Ram. This journal clearly attempted to continue the work of the late Pandit, both as to goals and methods. The *Arya Musafir* was primarily devoted to criticisms of other religious views in the strongest possible terms.

⁶⁶ Kenneth W. Jones, "The Bengali Elite in Post-Annexation Punjab" *The Indian Economic and Social History Review*, Vol. III, No. 4 (December 1966), 382-83.

significant dimension to the Hindu religion. Hinduism became a *pracharak-dharm*, a conversion religion. No longer did the Hindu community face threats of conversion empty handed. *Shuddhi* provided the capacity for defense and offense. Aryan efforts to proselytize, convert, educate and reform were supported by a variety of modern and traditional techniques. Contemporary forms of communications, sophisticated methods of fund raising and organization enabled the Samaj to effectively mobilize support for its programs. The Samaj stood boldly in defense of Hinduism, but only in its Aryan reinterpretation.

The initial Samaj impact on the Hindu community was divisive, pitting militant reformers against the orthodoxy. But with the increasing polarization of the Indian world between Hindus and Muslims, the Samaj moved closer to its past enemies. *Shuddhi* received tacit approval of the pandits, Samaj insistence on the glories of *Arya Bhasha* (Hindi) and *Ved Bhasha* (Sanskrit) was echoed by leading orthodox figures, while many of the reforms demanded by Aryas were in later years accepted. Writing in 1939, Ganga Prasad, a leading Arya, commented that, "Forty years ago the Arya Samaj was looked upon as a great defiler of the Hindu religion by bringing in an alloy from outside. Today the Arya Samajist is counted as a great defender of the faith."⁶⁷ With the blending of Aryas and orthodox, the forces of Hindu communalism possessed a modernized identity based on a reinterpreted tradition. This new consciousness possessed a variety of techniques to defend and maintain itself from external challenges. The concepts and forms that appealed to a defensive Hindu minority of the Punjab found acceptance throughout much of north India among both reform- and orthodox-minded Hindus who shared a similar Islamic past and Christian present.

While Arya Samaj ideology and techniques were exported from the Punjab, within that province communal identity was greatly strengthened by Samaj activities. By the eighteen nineties, the Punjab possessed an impressive array of societies, sects, and organizations—Hindu, Muslim, and Sikh—orthodox, heterodox and reform, each with its own ideology and program, each caught up in a struggle with one or more opponents. These organizations were fully equipped with newspapers, tracts and ministers to publicize their programs, to seek converts, and to condemn their opponents. Modern communications and organizational techniques had been widely accepted and, with this acceptance, came a hardening of religious divisions. Doctrinaire controversy rapidly increased throughout the province.

The three major communities exhibited a growing insistence on their "rights," such as the "right" to kill cows or to play music anywhere at any time. Activities in the past which had sporadically resulted in violence were now openly practiced and even flaunted before the opposing community. Offense was intended and was taken. Converts and reconverts represented victories over an opponent and each was celebrated with due publicity. This attitude of provocation and retaliation resulted in a steady rise in communal violence⁶⁸ and, by 1897, the divisions between Hindus and Muslims had hardened. Patterns of conflict became institutionalized; provoca-

⁶⁷ Ganga Prasad, *Swami Dayanand's Contribution to Hindu Solidarity* (Allahabad: Arya Samaj, Religious Renaissance Series No. 2, 1939), p. 119.

⁶⁸ The annual number of riots increased from 653 in 1891-92 to 855 in 1896-97. *Times of India*, Overland Edition, September 25, 1897, as quoted in John R. McLane, "The Development of Nationalist Ideas and Tactics and the Policies of the Government of India, 1897-1905" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of London, School of Oriental and African Studies, 1961), p. 62.

tion produced set responses. What had been implicit in the nature of Punjab society now became explicit. Tensions might increase or decrease, but beneath the surface fears, suspicions and hatreds remained. The existent divisions of Punjab society between religion, language, and script were deepened. By 1900 communalism became the dominant form of identity in the Punjab. This does not mean that one form of identity dominated a religious community, that all Hindus were Aryas, or all Muslims Ahmadiyahs, but that in one form or another religious identification tended to receive greater loyalty than any type of secular identity.⁶⁹ The resulting religious competition so pre-empted the consciousness and energy of Punjabs that external issues received little attention and little commitment. Religious identity dominated and Punjabis became lost in a world of their own creation, emerging only when an overriding national issue penetrated their communal consciousness.

⁶⁹ Norman G. Barrier has noted the weakness of nationalist commitment among Punjabi Hindus in his article, "The Arya Samaj and Congress Politics in the Punjab, 1894-1908," *The Journal of Asian Studies*, XXVI, No. 3 (May 1967), 363-79.