CHAPTER – I

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY: EMIGRATION ABROAD

SECTION – I

DESTINATIONS

Migration from colonial Punjab is considered to have started with the unique form of migration abroad, soldiers’ and policemen’s eastward movements in the 1860s. Although migration streams moved not only eastward but also westward, the thesis is mainly concerned with the eastward movements including movements which spread from Southeast Asia or the Far East to destinations in the Southern Hemisphere.

Migration of soldiers/policemen from Punjab probably started when Sikh police were posted to Hongkong in 1867, to Singapore in 1881 and to Tientsin in 1896. The Census volumes did not have detailed information about Punjabis abroad; however, the 1911 and 1921 volumes had some information about the issue. The destinations in Southeast Asia and the Far East documented in those Censuses were the Straits Settlements, Hongkong, Johore, Federated Malay States, and Unfederated Malay States. However, all the destinations from Punjab in Southeast Asia and the Far East were not enumerated there. At least it is necessary to add Thailand or Siam, the Philippines, and Burma, the latter being part of British India, to the list of destinations in Southeast Asia

and the Far East.²

The destinations in Southeast Asia and the Far East were meaningful in the history of Punjabi diaspora not only because they formed the earliest days of the history but also because some of those destinations are considered to have played a role as stepping stones for Punjabis to proceed to Australia or North America.

In later days, South East Asia became Punjabis’ second-best option along with Fiji after ‘El Dorado’ countries as Australia, Canada and the USA introduced restrictive immigration policies to exclude Indians.

The first ‘El Dorado’ for Punjabis was Australia in the context of the eastward movement from colonial Punjab, which contrasted with the earlier Punjabi migration in the sense that the migrants did not seek employment in the military/police service any more. McLeod supposed a stream of labour migration to Australia started some time during the 1880s from Punjabis in Hongkong. However, it is possible to believe that migration to Australia had started earlier: according to the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs of Australia, Punjabis, mainly Sikhs and Muslims, participated in the second wave of Indian migration to Australia from 1860 to 1901. The Gazetteer of Jullundur District wrote in 1904, “Some six or seven years ago a few adventurous spirits returned from Australia with substantial proof of the fact that the money could be earned there, …”³ This means that those ‘adventurous spirits’ came

² Census of India, Punjab, Part 1, 1911, p 70; Census of India, Punjab, 1921, pp. 149, 160-161; Censuses of India, Burma, 1891; 1901; 1911; 1921; 1931. Also see Satoh H., Thai no indo-jin shakai: tohnan ajia to indo no deai [in Japanese] (Indian Community in Thailand: Indian Encounter with Southeast Asia), Institute of Developing Economy, Tokyo, 1995. Also see Graphs 1-1 and 1-3, and Appendix Tables 1 and 3.

³ Punjab District Gazetteers, Volume XIV A: Jullundur District, 1904, Civil and Military Gazette
home in the late 1890s. The evidence seemed to show that Punjabi migration to Australia became quite popular by the 1890s.

Australia decided to close her doors by 1901. Although the Census of 1891 was silent about Australia as a destination for Punjabis, the Census of 1901 for the first time wrote about it as a popular destination for Punjabi migrants. The Australian government restricted non-European immigrants with the introduction of the Immigration Restriction Act 1901, which defined a prohibited immigrant as any person who failed to pass the dictation test in any European language.

If the observation by the Census writers can be trusted and the volume of migration to Australia was not recognizable enough before the 1890s, it was probably a decade or less than a decade during which period remittances from migrants in Australia were noticeable and active. However, it was still a long enough period for Punjabis to learn that they could earn more money in a relatively short period in the White Dominion countries.

Fiji and New Zealand also emerged as the destinations for migration. Although migration by non-indentured migrants started with the beginning of the twentieth century when Sikh policemen were brought, it became popular when Punjabis began

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4 Census of India, Punjab, Part 2, 1891, pp. 285-286; Census of India, Punjab and North-West Frontier Province, Part 1, 1901, p.81


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seeking any second-best destination between post-World-War-I period and 1930 after restrictive immigration policies in Australia and North America had been already introduced. Fiji had also served as a stepping-stone for those who hope to migrate to North America and New Zealand before the post-World-War-I period. In that sense, Fiji was similar to Southeast Asian destinations in its character.

New Zealand was the last 'El Dorado' for Punjabis after migration to the USA was restricted before India's independence. Although Punjabi migration to the Dominion had already started as late as 1890 when some of Punjabi migrants moved from Australia to New Zealand, it became popular only after the door of the USA was closed; migration was the most active between 1912 and 1920.

In North America, both Canada and the USA attracted Punjabis soon after the door of Australia was closed at the beginning of the twentieth century. Migration to Canada was followed by migration to the USA. Migration to North America probably produced the largest volume of migration streams for about five years in the late 1900s. [See SECTION 7: Graph 1-2] However, such influx had to end due to restrictive immigration policies adopted by both Canadian and US governments, which seemed to target Indians.

Migration to Latin America was probably a result of the USA's restrictive

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8 ibid.

9 See Table 1-2 in Section 7. Also see Extract from Annual Report of the United States Commissioner-General of Immigration, 1909-10, pp.148-149, in Commerce and Industry/June 1911/Pros. No.98/Part B/Panjab State Archives, Chandigarh (hereafter PSAC).
immigration policy which attempted to exclude Indians. It is confirmed that Punjabis reached the following destinations in Latin America, seeking their ‘El Dorado’ in the early 1910s: Brazil, the Argentine, Panama and Mexico. Unfortunately neither attempt ended with much success.10

Although Punjabi migrants’ destinations were not limited within the boundary of the British Empire, it is no doubt that being part of the British territory enabled Punjabis to find opportunities to work abroad, as we will see in the next section.

SECTION – II
MIGRANTS AS SUBJECTS OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE

The fact that India was part of the British Empire was a prerequisite of Punjabi migration. It is true that the Government of India never encouraged migration from Punjab excluding cases of small number of indentured labourers; however, their role in producing streams of emigrants was important in the sense that the Empire’s needs to stabilize their colonies and territories produced a demand for groups of Punjabis with military tradition in the beginning of the history of migration from Colonial Punjab.

The Government of India basically stuck to the principle of the laissez-fair attitude regarding ‘volunteer travellers’. The term appeared when the Government needed to decide whether or not they should protect those people who wanted to enlist in the military/police service outside the boundary of India as ‘emigrants’ as defined in Indian Emigration Act 1883 that regulated the indentured labour system. Emigration’

10 Commerce and Industry/May 1913; Pros no.10, Pros. nos. 1-101/Part A/PSAC. The view of desirable migrants by the Government of Argentine was arbitrary. They accepted Ottoman subjects and Syrians, who were not from Europe, without restriction.
meant in the act the departure by sea out of British India of a native of India under an 
agreement to labour for hire. The British judged that policemen did not go to labour 
for hire in the meaning of this act, which act was supposed to protect coolies. In 1894, 
an unofficial memo addressed to the Military Department by the Emigration Branch 
wrote, “They are a much more enterprising and energetic lot than the ordinary coolie, in 
whose interest Emigration Act was originally framed, and are quite able to take care of 
themselves.” This judgement was based on the precedent in 1891 when the 
Government of India needed to define the status of policemen and artisans who were 
sent to Zanzibar for the East Africa Company. They considered that the work done by 
policemen and artisans was different from the labour done by coolies and Emigration 
Act should not be applied to regulate the movement of policemen and artisans. For the 
Government of India, the emigrants who did not fit the definition given Emigration Act 
were considered to be ‘voluntary travellers’.

Although the Indian Government welcomed remittances from ‘voluntary 
travellers’ working abroad, the Government was in principle indifferent to ‘voluntary 
travellers’ unless they caused any ‘trouble’ in their destinations. Even when various 
host dominions or colonies pressed the government to control the migration stream, the 
Government refused to control emigration and the officials only made a minimum effort 
to inform potential migrants that particular destinations were inhospitable to Indian 
immigrants.

11 Revenue and Agriculture/Emigration /January 1891/Pros. nos.33-38/Part A/National Archives of 
India, New Delhi (hereafter NAI).
12 Revenue and Agriculture/Emigration/March 1895/Pros. nos. 7-8/Part A/ NAI
13 Revenue and Agriculture/Emigration/January 1891/Pros. nos.33-38/Part A/NAI
The idea behind the laissez-faire attitude of the government was the principle that 'there should be complete freedom for all British subjects to transfer themselves from one part of His Majesty's dominion to another.'\textsuperscript{14} In his note of the 1\textsuperscript{st} May 1909, an official called Harvey wrote the following passage regarding the policy to control migration from India to the dominions:

"we have refused consistently to entertain any policy of controlling free emigration from India while disseminating widely information as to the travails and difficulties which emigrants to certain countries are likely to encounter. ... Any departure from it, especially in the direction of giving something for nothing would be firstly looked on by the Indian people as a betrayal of their cause."

The British were probably hesitant to publicize that there were double-standards in the so-called principle of free movement within the boundary of the Empire.

The Indian Government's indifference to 'voluntary travellers', however, frustrated district officers in the districts sending migrants abroad, who were in the position to observe potential migrants' ambition to migrate abroad to improve their financial condition, because district officers felt that the Government was irresponsible in not providing them with the detailed information regarding possibility the risk of migration to particular destinations.

The Deputy Commissioner of Feorezepore District, B.Smith expressed his frustration in 1913 in his correspondence with the Commissioner of the Jullundur Division:

I would once again take this opportunity to mention how very unsatisfactory is the present state of things with regard to Sikh emigration. Those who got out to foreign countries nearly always do well and amass

\textsuperscript{14} Commerce and Industry/Emigration/July 1913/Pros. 1-3/Part A/NAI
fortunes which they spend here. There are plenty ready and anxious to go, and there is plenty of work to be done by them, but the District Officer is given no information as to where employment is procurable or desirable, and he cannot help the would-be emigrants, ...\textsuperscript{15}

His counterpart in Hoshiarpur District, E. Barton, also shared Smith's frustration; he wrote in the correspondence to the Under Secretary to the Government of India:

\ldots with this district so over-populated and other districts more so, and emigration being popular and often profitable to those that go, I do think that some Government agency should tell district officers \textit{which} countries are open, and likely to be successful—\textit{which} are doubtful—\textit{and} which should not be granted passports to. But Government leaves us in the dark and we cannot possibly know, yet we ought to know and ought to be able to help these people with advice as to the country to go to, \&c. So will Commissioner refer it to Government? It is hard to refuse these people when they may be good emigrants and that country may need them, yet we, District Officers, know nothing and are kept entirely ignorant of this subject which I think is not right. We ought to know but have no means of knowing.\textsuperscript{16}

The Government of India finally provided deputy commissioners with 'the list of countries to which (Indian) emigration is either prohibited or discouraged' only after receiving the above request from the Deputy Commissioner of Hoshiarpur District.\textsuperscript{17}

Although the Indian Government basically neither encouraged nor discouraged
migration abroad from India, their adherence to the principle that free movement within the boundary of the British Empire should be guaranteed to all the British subjects was a prerequisite of Punjabi migration.

SECTION – III

LETTERS AND 'WORD OF MOUTH AS INFORMATION SOURCE

For both successful and unsuccessful migrants, information about working abroad from someone they directly knew was most important in prompting them to leave their home villages. The most trustworthy information source was usually letters from relatives and friends who had already migrated and started to earn enough money to remit home. Such letters could attract agriculturists even if they had no information about their destinations at all. The Tribune, dated the 13 October, 1906, described a group of intending migrants from Jullundur District on the way to the British Columbia:

Considerable bodies of these men, particularly Sikhs, have passed Allahabad lately on their way to Calcutta. One party of them when questioned stated that they came from Jullundur district. They were going to a new country, but they had only the vaguest notion where or what it was, though they knew there was a town called Victoria, and they recognized British Columbia when asked if that was the name of the country. They had been told they would be at sea for five or six weeks. All these men were free emigrants and had not been recruited by any agency. Their bhais had written that it was an achcha mulk, and advised them to come, and they were paying their own passages. 18

When migrants to the Argentine found that they could not earn as much as they had expected in the country, they sent letters to their relatives and friends in Canada to

18 The Tribune, 13 October, 1906.
enquire if they could join them in Canada and as to the route and steamship company by which they could go to Vancouver.\textsuperscript{19}

In addition to letters from direct friends, relatives, and acquaintances, the power of ‘word of mouth’ among a wider circle of people than people they directly knew could not be ignored in making people move either. When the Government of India investigated whether any particular agents were working behind the rush to Canada from India in 1907, the Colonial Secretary to Hongkong provided the following information: “It would appear that in or about the year 1904, reports were circulated in the Colony regarding the fortunes that were being made by Indians who had emigrated to Canada; and others, chiefly old soldiers began to follow.”\textsuperscript{20} It this can be trusted, the reports circulated among Indians in Hongkong could be a factor to produce migration streams from Hongkong to Canada.\textsuperscript{21}

\textbf{SECTION – IV}

\textbf{STEAMER COMPANIES}

Steamer companies played a significant role in directly promoting migration

\textsuperscript{19} Commerce and Industry/May 1913/Pros. no. 65/Part A/PSAC
\textsuperscript{20} Commerce and Industry/Emigration/May 1907/Pros. no.28/F. no.112 of 1906/NAI.
abroad. In the case of migration to Canada, Johnston considered that the Hongkong agents of the Canadian Pacific Railway started migration from Hongkong to Canada because the company was “seeking to replace steerage traffic lost after the Canadian government had raised the head tax on Chinese immigrants”. Although Fiji was considered to work as a stepping-stone to Canada, the steamship agents in Fiji were also suspected to operate to encourage Indian migration from Fiji to Canada, even when they knew that migrants might fail to enter their destinations.

The steamship company whose steamers ran between Calcutta and Vancouver via Hongkong was not keen to provide the accurate information regarding immigration restrictions by the Government of Canada. I reproduce below the contents of a poster distributed in India by an agent of the steamship company:

For Hindus going to Canada:
Hindus who desire to go to Canada can have full information from the Company’s agents for Canadian Pacific Railway's Royal Mail Steamship Line, No. 8, Clive Street, Calcutta. All passengers are examined at Vancouver by the Immigration Medical Officer. Those who are physically weak or sick are sent back in the same steamer to India. To remove their difficulties the aforesaid Company has managed that passengers are examined here at Calcutta, and those who are rejected are not allowed to go into the ship at all. The men rejected by the medical officer will be given back their full money. Passenger sailing for Vancouver while in Hongkong waiting for another ship must manage themselves about their food and lodging. Every steerage passenger must have with him at least Rs. 50 ($6.6) coins of India, to show to the immigration officer, so that he can satisfy himself that the immigrant is not a beggar.

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22 H. Johnston, *The Voyage of the Komagata Maru: The Sikh Challenge to Canada's Colour Bar*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1979, p.2

23 Commerce and Industry/Emigration/July 1908/Pros. no.6/F. no. 4 of 1908/NAI.

24 *ibid.*
From Calcutta to Hongkong, with food, Rs. 45; from Hongkong to Vancouver 156 rupees 4 annas.

While the company provided a service of medical check-up in Calcutta so that sick or weak people would not have to buy a ticket to Vancouver in vain, the information about the minimum amount of cash to be carried by a person was wrong, which was actually $25 dollars then. It is unclear whether it was only a mistake or the company intentionally provided misinformation; however, the company did not refund migrants’ money when they were rejected by immigration officers in Vancouver on the ground that individual possession was inadequate.25 In the case of Indian migration between Fiji and Canada, after the Canadian Government introduced the restrictive immigration regulation in which migrants had to be “coming to Canada … by a continuous journey, and on through tickets purchased before leaving the country of their birth or citizenship”, the Australian Steamship Company was suspected to make a profit from those who were rejected to enter Canada by not letting migrants know the possibility of being rejected by immigration officers.26

The role of steamer companies was thus significant in Punjabi migration not only in the sense that they encouraged migration but also in the sense that they produced a stream of ‘unsuccessful’ migrants.

SECTION – V
MIGRATION AGENTS

Once Punjabis learnt that migration abroad for a relatively short period was often profitable; the operations of migration agents began. They usually operated in

25 Commerce and Industry/Emigration/July 1908/Pros. no.6/F. no.4 of 1908/NAI
26 Ibid.
both in India and prospective migrants' destinations. There was even a case in which such agents working in a third country lured unfortunate Punjabis.

An agent called Devi Chand was known to be responsible for inducing migrants from India to Canada; he used to be active as a migration agent also in Australia, from which place he had been expelled. He was believed to write letters to invite working men from India to Canada; he met boats on arrival or met people in the streets to obtain two to ten dollars on promise of securing employment.\(^\text{27}\) According to another source, it was found that he and his partner remitted money to India to encourage migration from India after the individual possession of a migrant was increased up to $200 from $25.\(^\text{28}\) They were also cases in which agents in Punjab and in a third country lured migrants into countries where they could not expect such high wages as was expected in Canada or USA. Such agents even chartered a steamship for unfortunate intending migrants. An example of such operations was found in Canada in 1912 in the letter cited below. The Deputy Minister of the Interior at Ottawa reported as follows:\(^\text{29}\):

\[\ldots\text{I am given to understand that Dr. Sunder Singh, has been instrumental in inducing a large number of Hindus to migrate to the Argentine Republic and Mexico, on the promise of good wages and lots of work.}\]

\(^{27}\) Commerce and Industry/Emigration/May 1907/Pros. no. 16/F. no. 112 of 1906/Page 443/NAI. Hugh Johnston estimated that Devi Chand had been responsible for no more than five percent of the total Punjabi migration to North America. [See, Hugh Johnston (1990), \textit{op. cit.}, p.297.]

\(^{28}\) P. X. Telegram, from Secretary of State to Viceroy dated London, 15\(^{\text{th}}\) December 1910 at 12 midnight, received 16\(^{\text{th}}\) December 1910, at 6 A.M., Punjab Government Circular, 1911, B/15581, Panjab State Archives, Patiala (hereafter PSAP)

\(^{29}\) From Mr. W.C. Hopkinson, the Deputy Minister of the Interior, Ottawa to the Government of India, 8\(^{\text{th}}\) July 1912, Commerce and Industry/May 1913/Pros. no.65/PSAC. See also A letter, From G.M Rajput, Esquire, Passenger Agent, Ranee Bazaar, Jullundur City, to The British Indian Steam Navigation Company, Limited, Bombay, dated 5 June 1912, Pros. no.46, \textit{ibid.}
conditions are not as represented in these two places, with the result that a large number of Hindus are unable to find work and are anxious to come to Canada. The majority of these men sailed from Hong Kong on boats belonging to a steamship company with whom Sunder Singh has been able to make special arrangements.

In the 1910s when migration to North America was virtually impossible, there were many cases of this sort of frauds targeting potential Punjabi migrants. Latin America was the favourite destinations for those fraudulent migration agents.30

Rosy stories about migration to a particular destination were often spread when migration agents were active although there is no evidence to show that those agents were directly responsible for circulation of such rumours. In migration to the Argentine someone used newspapers to advertise how lucrative migration to the country was. For example, the following letter to the Editor of the Tribune, dated the 6th May 1912, which attracted the official attention.

SIR, --I have to thank you for publishing my previous letter in your

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30 K.L.Gillon wrote that Punjabi migration to Fiji in the decade before World War I was also typically organized by migration agents. He cited the following letter addressed to the Deputy Commissioner of Jullundur District by forty-six migrants in 1914. “We all the Punjabis now residing in Fiji Islands left our country on the inducement and representations of Wali Mohamed and Atta Mohamed, castes Sayed, residents of Karnana, Tahsil Nawanshar, District Jullundur, Punjab. They have been sending our people during the last 5 years and on each steamer 45 or 46 men are being emigrated while they take Rs.35 as their commission for each individual and Rs.5 from the Shipping company—we were made to understand that in Fiji we can get work on daily wages at five shillings but regret to say that even 2/- can be hardly earned—the people have been suffering much. We had no previous experience of such tricks and they are deceiving to the people and are also against the law. We all paid Rs.325 as commission to them. We therefore request that enquiries be made and action to be taken to stop further emigration. If possible the money be refunded to us. The undermentioned 46 men were sent by them.” K.L.Gillon, Fiji’s Indian Migrants: A History to the End of Indenture in 1920, Oxford University Press, 1972 (First published 1962), pp.131-132.
esteemed paper about Argentina as an agricultural country and a country for immigration; it has attracted the attention of the Indians. Many a young man have already come here. On the 27th of last month 59 Sikhs arrived here by the Italian ship "Savoia." Most of these men are young and sturdy and were immediately provided with work by the Central Argentine Railway Company. All the Railway Companies of Argentine Republic require some twenty thousand men shortly for constructing important new lines. The Companies also required drivers and firemen. The demand for workmen is still greater than they supply. The building trade especially has felt the scarcity of labour. According to the official reports, Buenos Aires alone are wanted some three thousand men where the agriculturists are offering $4 and $5 per day with board. The Commissary of Bahia Blanca states that at Immigrants' Hotel requisitions for about 1,000 peons have been received, the wages offering being $5 to $6 per day besides their food. More threshers and reapers are wanted. Carters are scarce at $8 per diem.

On the 8th of the last month I had an interview with the Minister of Agriculture. He assured me that the Hindus will be received in Argentine Republic with open arms. ...31

This letter was supposed to have been written by a man named N. A. Farias living in Buenos Aires. The above citation obviously included misinformation about the Argentine governments' attitude toward Indians, which never welcomed Indian immigrants, and about the expected wages from employment in the country, which was far more than Indian migrants could actually expect to earn. It was not confirmed who wrote the letter. However, the writer succeeded to cause a rumour about positive image of migration to the Argentine. The Protector of Emigrants at Bombay wrote to the Deputy Commissioner at Jullundur District regarding a group of men who had

31 The Tribune, dated 8 May 1912, cited in Commerce and Industry/May 1913/Pros.no.30/PSAC.
mentioned the letter in the Tribune:\textsuperscript{32}

I am afraid that some one having an ulterior motive is interested in spreading rumours in the Punjab about the advantages of going to other countries. Dozens of Punjabis come to me weekly, stating that they want to go to Brazil or the Argentine Republic as they have heard such favourable reports about these countries: one party of men referred me to a letter to the Editor of the “Tribune” published on the 6\textsuperscript{th} ultimo, in which the prospects were described in the most glowing terms.

However, neither the Protector of Emigrants at Bombay nor district officers in Punjab could find evidence showing that recruiters were responsible for spreading rumours about Latin America.

Interestingly, rumours that the restriction on immigration into Canada had been removed or rendered of no effect started and became prevalent in Hong Kong, Shanghai, Singapore, Japan, Manila, and India, towards the end of the year 1913 before Gurdit Singh’s operation with Komagata Maru.\textsuperscript{33} Although there is no evidence that he spread the rumours to find passengers for Komagata Maru, circulation of rumours about the destination was similar to the situations where agents encouraging migration to Latin America were working.

Punjabi migration to Australia and North America was active only for some years in the 1890s and in the 1900s respectively. However, those migrants' success story was impressive enough for Punjabis, which enabled migration agents to run their business.

\textsuperscript{32} Commerce and Industry/May 1913/Pros.no.43/PSAC.

\textsuperscript{33} Reports of the Committee appointed to enquire into circumstances connected with the voyage of the “Komagata Maru” to British Columbia, its return to British India, the riot at Budge Budge and the subsequent arrest of those concerned, Home/Political / March 1915/Pros. nos.1-13/Part A/NAI.
SECTION – VI

NATURE OF WORK

It is possible to classify migrants' work in their destinations into the three categories; military/police service; commercial activity; unskilled work.

As I already wrote in the beginning of this chapter, the earliest form of migration from Punjab to Southeast Asia and the Far East was mostly soldiers'/policemen's migration; in many cases the colonial power in Burma and/or other colonies preferred to recruit Punjabis for their forces, whose better wages than in the native army resulted in attracting caste groups with so-called military tradition including Jats and Pathans. In migration to Fiji, too, the earliest free migrants were policemen brought from Shanghai and Hongkong.  

Taking military/police service abroad became so popular among them that some of them proceeded even to Sumatra and Borneo under the Dutch power and Macao under the Portuguese power to enlist in their military or police forces. When more than two hundred Sikhs applied for the permission to proceed to Sumatra, Borneo and Siam in the Straits Settlements in order to obtain employment as soldiers/policemen in 1894, the Military Department expressed their concern about shortage of good soldiers in the native forces and about such good soldiers enlisting in foreign forces. The following was correspondence between the Revenue and Agriculture Department, which was in charge of issues of emigration and the Military Department.

There would be great objection, from a military point of view, to the

34 Gajraj Singh, op.cit., p.28.
35 Revenue and Agriculture/Emigration/March 1895/Pros. no.7-8/Part A/NAI., Pros.no.7
emigration to the Straits of a large number of Sikhs or other fighting classes of India for enlistment under any foreign flag, either as soldiers or policemen. Probably the increase of pay proposed to be given to our Native Infantry will check the outflow of good men, ...\(^\text{36}\)

It is well known that excellent recruits can be obtained in any number in the Punjab for services out of India, as the pay and conditions of service are so much better in nearly every case than in our own native army, and, until we increase the pay of the sepoy, I fancy any rules or regulations that may be framed will have but little effect in stopping the outward flow of our best material. Moreover, I think, we could not in justice prevent men going to either the Dutch or France possessions in search of a livelihood, if they cannot get suitable employment within our own territories.

It is of course undesirable that they should enlist as soldiers under a foreign flag, and penalties they would incur in case of war might be explained to men applying for certificates, but, in time of peace, men obtaining employment abroad probably save a considerable portion of their pay, or remit it to their relatives in India; after having saved a certain amount, eventually return to this country. Very few, I should say, willingly remain away more than five or six years. We cannot prevent Englishmen enlisting under a foreign flag if they desire to do so. I believe the army of the United States contains a considerable number of ex-British soldiers, and I do not see how we can prohibit Sikhs or Punjabis from doing so either.\(^\text{37}\)

Enlistment in the military/police service out of India became thus popular enough by the turn of century, for the Indian Government to consider if a pay increase in their native army was necessary.

Despite the popularity of enlistment in the military/police service outside India, demand for such employment was usually limited. Those who failed to enlist in

\(^{36}\) Pros.8, in *ibid.*

\(^{37}\) Revenue and Agriculture/Emigration/March 1895/Pros. nos. 7-8/Part A/NAI.
military/police forces often tried to find similar nature of a job such as those of watchmen.

Migration abroad of Punjabi commercial community and/or Punjabis who were engaged in commercial activity in their destinations is yet to be adequately documented except for a few studies. In Southeast Asia, it is known that commercial communities or those who were active in business increased from the 1920s onwards. It is confirmed that Punjabi community was active in commercial activity in Malaya and Thailand. In Thailand, they were initially textile retailers and later in import business.38

Punjabi migrants’ commercial activity was not confined to Southeast Asia. In Australia and New Zealand, hawking was the earliest option for Punjabis; peddlers were also among the earliest immigrants to Britain, who migrated after World War I.39

In terms of unskilled work, in Canada they took employment in lumber mills, saw mills, cement factories, shingle mills; they worked on railway construction or railway maintenance gangs; they were also employed in cutting wood, in clearing land, on fruit ranches, on cattle farms, and in salmon canneries.40 In New Zealand, although they were employed in coal mines and as railway construction labourers, they preferred rural labour; they were employed as flax-workers, ditch-diggers, scrub-cutters and so on.41 In the Argentine, they were employed by railway companies and on sugar fields.42

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40 Johnston (1979), *op.cit.*, p.2. H. Johnston (1990), *op.cit.*, p.301. Also see Commerce and Industry/Emigration/May 1907/Pros. nos: 16/F. no. 112 of 1906/NAI.
41 McLeod, *op.cit.*, pp.58-59, 79-80. One of the reasons why Punjabis preferred rural labour in the
In Fiji, too, they were employed by sugar-cane growers.  

SECTION - VII

TRENDS AND FLUCTUATIONS

As for the information about earlier migration streams, as far as we can find from Censuses of 1881 and 1891, Punjabi migration abroad became increasingly popular; the volume of migrants was probably expanding over the two decades. Especially after they learnt that Australia was their ‘El Dorado’ where they could make a fortune in a relatively short period, migration abroad became a popular option for agriculturists to improve their financial status.

The total volume of Punjabi emigrants abroad during the colonial period is unknown; Census volumes provided only incomplete data regarding the number of the Punjabis enumerated abroad in the 1900s and in the 1910s; the figure was 12,451 in the 1900s and that in the 1910s was 18,487. These figures exclude Punjabis in Burma and the White Dominion countries and the USA. [Graph 1-1 in the next page]

The number of Punjabis enumerated in Southeast Asia and the Far East including Burma was at least about 16,554 souls between 1900 and 1910. As to the South Pacific destinations, only the figure about Fiji is available, which is 809.

period between 1912 and 1920 was that they wanted New Zealanders to be unaware of Punjabis’ presence. That was the very reason why they avoided hawking which was a common option among earlier migrants. Being a hawker tended to attract peoples’ attention; Punjabis considered that the visibility in hawking in Australia was a cause of introduction of restrictive immigration policy in the country.

42 Commerce and Industry/May 1913/Pros. nos. 1-101/PSAC, Pros.no.72
43 Gajraj Singh, op.cit., p.34
44 Census of India, Punjab, Part 1, 1911.p 70; Census of India, Punjab and Delhi, Part 1, 1921, pp. 142.
The volume of migration to Canada was about 5,000 souls [Graph 1-2]. According to Dusenbery, a similar number of legal immigrants arrived in the USA between 1902 and 1910. Since half of the immigrants who entered Canada moved to the USA by

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Graph 1-1: Punjabis Enumerated in Other Countries during 1900-1910 in Census

- Ceylon, 983
- Straits Settlements, 985
- Johore, 195
- Hongkong, 1,197
- Federated Malay States, 7,574
- Uganda, 341
- Fiji, 809

Source: Census of India, Punjab, Part 1, 1911, p 70. See also Appendix Table 1

---

1. Countries where the number of Punjabis enumerated was less than 100 souls are not included in the graph. 2. Panjabis who embarked from Calcutta during 1900-1910: 4,581 persons. 3. Panjabis serving in the Army outside India on 1-5-1911: 2,218 persons. 4. The figures of Panjabis residing in the British Isles, other European countries, North America, South Africa and Australia are not available. 5. Sikh population of British Burma in 1911 was 6,603. 6. Punjabi population of Burma in 1911 was 26,100, 22,983 males and 3,117 females, and Punjabi emigrants enumerated in 1911 were 24,243 persons. The gap between the figure of Punjabi population and that of emigrants can be probably explained by the number of children born to Punjabi parents. 7. Information about Burma is supplemented by Census of India, Burma, 1911.

---

by 1910. In addition to the volume of migrants who were able to enter either Canada or the USA, at least 1,000 prospective migrants who reached USA in 1910 were rejected their entry in San Francisco; the number of rejected migrants was probably larger than this since there were migrants who were waiting for their steamer which was bound for North America, which would be destined to be rejected by immigration officers.

In the next decade, the number of Punjabis enumerated in Southeast Asia and the Far East including Burma between 1911-1921 was at least 17,054. In the South Pacific area in 1911-1921, Punjabis in Fiji shrank to 449 [Graph 1-3].


---

1 Commerce and Industry/Emigration/May 1909/Pros. no.13/F. no. 8/NAI
2 Punjab Government Circular/1910/B/15587/PSAP
3 For 1904-1905 to 1905-1906, the 12 months ending June 30; for the period 1907-1908 to 1913-1914, the 12 months ending March 31. Johnston (1990), *op. cit.*, p.296. According to him, Punjabi migration to Canada had started in 1903, citing T.R.E.Mclnnes to Frank Oliver, Minister of the Interior, October 2, 1907, Borden Papers, Public Archives of Canada.
In the next decade, the number of Punjabis enumerated in Southeast Asia and the Far East including Burma between 1911-1921 was at least 17,054. In the South Pacific area in 1911-1921, Punjabis in Fiji shrank to 449 [Graph 1-3].

[Graph 1-3: Punjabis Enumerated Outside British India during 1911-1921 in Census]

One of the reasons was that part of them moved to New Zealand where they could expect higher wages; another reason was probably that some of them went home to Punjab. In New Zealand, Punjabi migrants who came directly from India started to

---

50 Countries where the number of Punjabis enumerated was less than 100 souls are not included in the graph. 2. 1,032 emigrants from the Punjab were reported as having embarked at Calcutta during the decade 1911-1920. 3. Unfederated Malaya States: Johore, Kedah, Kelantan, Trengganu and Brunei. 4. Sikh population in Burma in 1921 was 4,823. Males were 3,704 and females were 1,139. 5. Punjabi emigrants enumerated in Burma in 1921 was 20,938. [Figures on Burma are from Census of India, Burma, 1921, p. 149.]
increase after World War I until the Dominion restricted migration from India in 1921. McLeod reported that about 200 Punjabis arrived in New Zealand between 1912 and 1921.\(^{51}\)

Despite its incompleteness in enumerating all the destinations of Punjabi migration in Censuses, one of the advantages of the data was that it clearly showed that 'voluntary travellers' migration from Colonial Punjab was basically male dominated. Census of Punjab, 1921, Part 1 vividly indicates the tendency. The following graphs were based on the census figures in the selected destinations in Southeast Asia, the Far East, Africa and the South Pacific destinations.

Graph 1-4: Proportion of Males and Females among Punjabi Migrants in the Selected Destinations in 1911-1921

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\(^{51}\) McLeod, *op.cit.*, p. 60.
In terms of migration to North America, given that both Canada and USA restricted migration from India by 1910, the Punjabi population in the area probably shrank during 1910s because Punjabi migrants’ initial purpose to stay abroad was usually to save as much money as they could in roughly five years and go home with the savings.

The USA’s image of an ‘El Dorado’ stayed with Punjabis even after both Canada and the USA closed their doors. Some people found a loophole to enter the USA through the Philippines soon after the USA restricted migration flow from India. Since the spring of 1911 there had been a gradually increasing number of Indians arriving in Manila from Hongkong, with the object of proceeding to the USA, finding that they could enter the USA after being resident in the Philippines by staying there for six
was found out and checked in 1912. The exact volume of those people who managed to enter the USA through this route is unknown; however, at least 200 Punjabis seemed to succeed in entering the USA.

Although the number of rejected migrants to North America is unknown, at least 100 people who tried to enter through the route via Manila failed to enter the USA. We cannot forget about the 380 passengers of Komagata Maru, either.

It is known that migration to Latin America took place especially during the early 1910s; however, the volume of such migrants cannot be estimated. In the case of migration to the Argentine, more than 300 Punjabis migrated to the country for a year or so.

About the Punjabi eastward movement from 1920 onwards, it is only known that migration to their second-best destinations, Southeast Asia and Fiji, continued. Even Fiji, however, restricted migration in 1930. This left Southeast Asia as the only prospective destination.

Although there are too many gaps in the figures of Punjabis’ eastward movement to examine the trends in migration streams, one of the most important factors to affect the volume of Punjabi migration excluding push factors in the Punjab was

52 Commerce and Industry/Emigration/September 1913/Pros. nos. 16-18/Part A and December 1913/Pros. nos. 26 & 27/Part A, NAI
53 Report of the Committee appointed to enquire into circumstances connected with the voyage of the “Komagata Maru” to British Columbia, its return to British India, the riot at Budge Budge and the subsequent arrest of those concerned, Home/Political/March 1915/Pros. nos.1-13/Part A/NAI.
54 Commerce and Industry/Nov 1911/Pros. nos.40-42/Part B/PSAC; Commerce and Industry/May 1913/Pros.nos.1-101/Part A/PSAC; Commerce and Industry/July 1913/Pros.nos.175-226/Part A/PSAC.
55 The figures for Sikhs in Burma are available. [Appendix, Table 4]
probably the immigration restrictive policies introduced by the white Dominions and the USA which were the most preferred destinations for Punjabis. The immigration policy in those countries was closely related with racism in those countries since they targeted only the coloured migrants.

SECTION - VIII

THE TYPICAL EMIGRANTS AND OTHERS

i) THE TYPICAL EMIGRANTS OR VISIBLE MIGRANTS

The typical Punjabi emigrants were considered Jat Sikh males mainly from three eastern tahsils in Doaba--the Phillour and Nawanshahr tahsils in Jullundur District and Garhshankar Tahsil in Hoshiarpur District--who were either unmarried or married leaving their families behind.

Dominance of Jat Sikhs in migration streams can be partially explained by the fact that Jat Hindus and Jat Sikhs were important agriculturist castes in the Central Punjab. Within Doaba, more Jats lived in the eastern tahsils than the western tahsils in proportion [Table 1-1].
### Table 1-1: The Jat Population and Religious Identity in Percentage in the Jullundur and Hoshiarpur Districts (1901)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Tahsil</th>
<th>Muslims</th>
<th>Hindus</th>
<th>Sikhs</th>
<th>Total Jats</th>
<th>Percentage of the Jats to the Total Population^56</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jullundur</td>
<td>Nawanshahr</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>48,304</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phillour</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>51,474</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nakodar</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>33,494</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jullundur</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>51,474</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>District Total</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>184,744</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoshiarpur</td>
<td>Hoshiarpur</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>38,923</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dasuya</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>22,712</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Una</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>24,070</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Garhshanakar</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>66,897</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>District Total</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>152,602</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^56 In the *Settlement Report of Jullundur District, 1880-86*, about 37 percent of agricultural tribes were Jats (See, p.49). In *Settlement Report of Jullundur District, 1913-1917*, the area cultivated by Jats in Jullundur Tahsil was 41 percent; in Nakodar 37 percent; in Phillour 59 percent; in Nawanshahr 46 percent (See, p.6). As for Hoshiarpur District, *Settlement Report of Hoshiarpur District, 1879-84*, wrote: “...the majority of the Sikhs are to be found in tahsil Garhshanakar; and this is especially the case in the police jurisdiction of Mahlpur, which is almost composed of villages, owned by Jat Sikhs, who are, for industry, manly bearing, and general prosperity, the best class in the district.” (See, p.34) Mahlpur is also the name of the village which was known for migration abroad, as we will see in Chapter 4.

The typical Punjabi migrants were visible in the contemporary official documents and their success was well documented in the report of the Punjab Banking Enquiry Committee in 1929-1930:

*Chairman.—Are there any indications that saving is increasing?—Of Course; there are many zemindars who went to Canada and other foreign countries; they have brought a lot of money here. Most of our savings*
deposits are from these people and our saving bank deposits have increased considerably.

Could you give us any idea of the number of returned emigrants who are dealing with you as depositors?—I think I must have got about 700 accounts of these people.

All from Jullundur District?—Yes.

None from Hoshiarpur?—Very few from Hoshiarpur because it is a long distance off.

Is a certain amount of money remitted through you from abroad every year by emigrants?—Most of it comes here through us.

Can you give us any idea of the amount that passes through your hands that is remitted from foreign countries through you?—The daily average is about Rs. 5,000.

Coming from those countries?—Yes; they may not return themselves, but they send to their people here. These drafts are drawn on us, and most of these people put the money in their saving bank accounts.

The whole of that comes from emigrants?—Yes; it comes from Canada, Australia and other countries.

Are they mostly rural classes?—Yes.

Do you think that whole of this business passes through your hands?—Yes.

What part of that would be for Hoshiarpur; a considerable part of this Rs. 5,000, I think?—It is for two districts, Hoshiarpur and Jullundur, and some also for Ludhiana only in case they draw by mistake us, but that is not appreciable.

What is the largest amount that has been brought back by returned emigrants within your knowledge?—I remember one man brought about Rs.25,000; another man brought about Rs.50,000, which is the highest figure, though the latter told me that he had about Rs.1,00,000 left there.

[Oral evidence of Mr. G. S. Butalia, Agent, Imperial Bank of India, Jullundur City] 57

Annual remittances from emigrants in foreign countries to the Jullundur and

Hoshiarpur districts through this branch amounted to more than a million rupees. The same report did not mention similar description regarding emigrants' remittances or returned migrants' savings in other districts of Punjab. It is possible to assume three situations to explain why nothing was reported in terms of the other districts; first, amount of remittances from emigrants in foreign countries or of returned migrants' savings were insignificant and tended to be ignored; secondly, almost no emigrants were sent from the area; the committee automatically connected the issue of emigration abroad only with two districts, Jullundur and Hoshiarpur, having a fixed notion about which districts sent emigrant senders. However, visibility of emigrants from two districts is obvious in this report.

The view that one of the reasons of visibility of migrants from the eastern tahsils was connected with their successful migration is also supported by the Assessment Reports prepared by district officers in Jullundur District published in the mid-1910s [Table 1-2 in the next page]. If we compared to the eastern tahsils, i.e., the Nawanshahr and Phillour tahsils, with the western tahsils, i.e., the Nakodar and Julludur tahsils, there was no great difference in the number of migrants; however, the average remittances per person in the eastern tahsils was more than double of the western tahsils. Dominance of the migrants from the eastern tahsils migration streams could have been exaggerated by the fact that migrants from the tahsils were financially more successful than their counterpart in the western tahsils.

Another factor to explain the visibility of the typical emigrants is that they predominated in the migration stream to the white Dominions and the USA. In Garhshankar Tahsil, it was known that about 70 percent of emigrants abroad from the tahsil were in the USA in 1914 [Graph 1-5.]

36
### Table 1-2: Emigrants abroad from Jullundur District and their remittances in 1914-15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tahsil</th>
<th>Assessment Circle</th>
<th>Number of emigrants abroad</th>
<th>Remittances from emigrants abroad (Rs.)</th>
<th>Average amount of remittances per person (Rs.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nawanshahr</td>
<td>Dhak</td>
<td>1,019</td>
<td>Over 200,000</td>
<td>Over 196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Retli</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>82,000</td>
<td>497</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dhaia Bet</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>42,000</td>
<td>618</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bet</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>*n.d.</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>1,253</td>
<td>Over 324,000</td>
<td>Over 259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phillour</td>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>925</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dona</td>
<td>560</td>
<td>*n.d.</td>
<td>*n.d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>950</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nakodar</td>
<td>Manjiki</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>*n.d.</td>
<td>*n.d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>820</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>3,948</td>
<td>Over 674,000</td>
<td>Over 171</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


*n.d.—the datum was unavailable in the reports.

According to *The Ghadr Directory* which included profiles of emigrants abroad who participated in the Ghadr movement, the vast majority of the emigrants to North America whose original districts were confirmed in the *Directory* were from the Central Punjab, being composed of three parts, Doaba, Malwa and Manjha. About 70 percent of the samples found in North America were from Doaba. 58

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58 *The Ghadr Directory—Containing the names of persons who have taken part in the Ghadr Movement in America, Europe, Africa and Afghanistan as well as in India*, Publication Bureau,
stronger connection with so-called rich countries are obvious from those two sources.  

![Graph 1-5 Emigrants from Garhshankar Tahsil](image)

Source: *Assessment Report of Garhshankar Tahsil*, 1914, p.19. See also Appendix Table 6

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Punjabi University, Patiala, 1997 (Originally printed by Government India Press, 1934).

59 According to K.L. Gillon, migration to Fiji was also dominated by Doabis, especially from Nawanshahr and Phillour tahsils. In the earlier stage, those migrants migrated to Fiji believing that they would be able to reach North America finally through Fiji. K.L. Gillon, *Fiji's Indian Migrants: A History to the End of Indenture in 1920*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1972 (first published 1962), p.131.

60 The information was based on the note made by the Deputy Commissioner in the course of his village inspections.
Table 1-3: Distribution of original districts of emigrants to North America

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District/State</th>
<th>Number of Emigrants</th>
<th>% of the volume of emigrants from each area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jullundur Doaba</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoshiarpur</td>
<td>63</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kapurthala</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Subtotal)</td>
<td>(139)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ludhiana Malwa</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ferozepore</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patiala</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Subtotal)</td>
<td>(30)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amritsar Manjha</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lahore</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Subtotal)</td>
<td>(27)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The image of the typical Punjabi migrants was often rather related with successful migration to ‘El Dorado’ countries, which image was established during the Colonial period mainly through migration to those countries. It is possible that the typical image of Punjabi migrants as Jat Sikhs from Doaba might be stressed because they participated rather in migration to relatively rich countries where more chances to financially succeed could be expected.

ii) MIGRANTS WITH DIVERSE SETTINGS

a) MIGRANTS FROM MANJHA AND MALWA

Migrants from Manjha and Malwa were considered to be dominant in the streams of migrants to Southeast Asia and the Far East who were seeking employment in the military/police service and in the earlier migration streams to the ‘El Dorado’
countries; the shift of Punjabi migrants’ such destinations from Southeast Asia and the Far East to the South Pacific and North America, entailed the shift of migrants’ origin in the Punjab, that is to say, from migration streams dominated by people from Manjha and Malwa to those by migrants form Doaba.

One explanation about the dominance of migrants from Manjha and Malwa in soldiers’/policemen’s migration or earlier migration flows from the Punjab is that the British preferred Jats from Manjha and Malwa to those from Doaba as soldiers.61

Among Ghadrites listed in *The Ghadr Directory* who were active in Southeast Asia and the Far East or who had been active there, those who were from Manjha and Malwa were more dominant than those from Doaba: 73 percent of the sample was from Manjha and Malwa and only 11 percent of the sample was from Doaba. [Table 1-4]

Table 1-4: Distribution of the native districts of emigrants to Southeast Asia and to the Far East.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District/State</th>
<th>Number of Emigrants</th>
<th>% of the volume of emigrants from each area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jullundur</td>
<td>Doaba</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoshiarpur</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kapurthala</td>
<td>(Subtotal)</td>
<td>(14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ludhiana</td>
<td>Malwa</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ferozepore</td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patiala</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nabha</td>
<td>(Subtotal)</td>
<td>(33)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amritsar</td>
<td>Manjha</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lahore</td>
<td></td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

61 A. H. Bingley, *The Sikhs*, National Book Shop, Delhi, 1985 (Originally compiled under the orders of the Government of India and printed at the Government Central Printing Office, Simla, India, 1899), p.63. According to the British view, Doaba Sikhs were considered to be ‘inferior’ as soldiers, compared to their counterparts in Manjha and Malwa.
Punjabi emigrants enumerated in Burma in 1911 and 1921 also had larger volume of those who were from Manjha and Malwa, especially Manjha among migrants whose original district was confirmed.[Table 1-5]

In the overall picture of Punjabi migration to the South Pacific area and North America, the proportion of migrants from Manjha and Malawa was probably smaller than those from Doaba, judging from the pattern of migration to

Table 1-5: Number of Punjabi emigrants enumerated in Burma from different districts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Districts /State</th>
<th>Punjabi emigrants enumerated in Burma</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jullundur</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ludhiana</td>
<td>336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patiala</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amritsar</td>
<td>1,49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lahore</td>
<td>650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jhelum</td>
<td>389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rawalpindi</td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gujrat</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unspecified</td>
<td>20,733</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census of India, Punjab, 1911, Part I, p.76. Census of India, Punjab and Delhi, 1921, Part I, p.149.
North America and New Zealand; however, migrants from Manjha and Malwa were relatively high among the earliest migrants in the migration flows. Given that Hongkong was an important stepping stone to initiate Punjabi migration to North America, the proportion of those who were from Manjha and Malwa was possibly higher among the earliest migration stream to North America. Dominance of migrants from Manjha and Malwa among the passengers of Komagata-Maru also supports the assumption that more migrants from Manjha and Malwa were included among the earliest migrants to North America, since most of the passengers embarked at Hongkong.

The fact that people from Manjha and Malwa were dominant in the migration streams to Southeast Asia and the Far East and they participated in migration to the South Pacific area and North America on a smaller scale than people from Doaba pose a question about why the former participated in migration to the white Dominion countries and the USA less frequently than Doabis. Or I may need to rather ask a question about why Doabis were less interested in migration to Southeast Asia and the Far East and more interested in the Dominion countries and the USA. In order to answer the question, we need to examine push factors in Doaba in the next chapter.

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62 McLeod, op.cit., pp.13, 56, and 60.
63 About 75 percent of the passengers of Komagata Maru was from Manjha and Malwa; most of the passengers embarked at Hongkong. Report of the Committee appointed to enquire into circumstances connected with the voyage of the “Komagata Maru” to British Columbia, its return to British India, the riot at Budge Budge and the subsequent arrest of those concerned, Home/Political/March 1915/Pros.nos.1-13/Part A/NAI
b) MIGRANTS FROM THE WESTERN DISTRICTS

Although migrants from the western districts have attracted less attention than those from the central districts and adjacent districts, they were also part of the streams of migration abroad during the colonial period. They were known to migrate to Southeast Asia. Migration to the South Pacific area and North America was probably very small. 64

Part of the migration from the western districts to Southeast Asia was from the Rawalpindi and Jhelum districts which provided a large number of soldiers for the Indian Army. From the former district, Kitchen reported that volunteers were easily available for service in every part of the world. 65 It is also confirmed that those from Rawalpindi and Jhelum were enumerated in Burma in 1911 and 1921. [Table 1-5] In the case of these migrants, the fact that they were from the districts which constituted the recruitment ground for the British army was a significant factor in their migration, just as Jats from Manjha and Malwa were attracted by employment in the military/police forces abroad.

In the case of migration to Siam or Thailand, the study done by Satoh reported that migrants from Sialkot and Gujranwala were dominant, and that they were mainly from the commercial community. 66 Among the migrants who engaged in commercial activity, those from the western districts seemed to be the important part of the migration streams.

64 Ibid. Those who were from the western districts were included among the passengers of Komagata Maru.
As I stated above, migration to the white Dominions and the USA from the western districts was considered to be rare. However, it is confirmed that people from the districts of Attock, Rawalpindi, Gujrat, and Gurdaspur migrated to Australia. On the other hand, there is only scanty evidence to show that they migrated or attempted to migrate to North America. Migration from the western districts also shared a feature with migration from Manjha and Malwa: the former also included districts where soldiers were heavily recruited.

c) RELIGIOUS AND CASTE IDENTITY

As for the religious identity of Punjabi migrants, it has been well-known that Sikhs were the most important religious community; however, Punjabi Muslims and Hindus also participated in migration. Sandhu confirmed that Punjabi Muslims and Hindus from the central districts were part of Punjabi migrants in Malaya. In migration to Australia, New Zealand and North America, too, both Muslims and Hindus were among the migration streams.

67 Assessment Report: Attock Tahsil (Rawalpindi District)*, 1904, p.28; Gujar Khan Tahsil (Rawalpindi District), 1905, p.36; Kharian Tahsil (Gujrat District), 1914, p.13; Batala Tahsil (Gurdaspur District), 1909, p.17. *Attock Tahsil belonged to Rawalpindi District in 1904 and was transferred to Attock District later.

68 Reports of the Committee appointed to enquire into circumstances connected with the voyage of the "Komagata Maru" to British Columbia, its return to British India, the riot at Budge Budge and the subsequent arrest of those concerned, Home/Political/March 1915/Pros. nos.1-13/Part A/NAI.

69 Sandhu, op.cit., p.129.

Table 1-6: Religious identity among the Ghadrites who had migrated to North America

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religious identity</th>
<th>Persons</th>
<th>Religious identity</th>
<th>Persons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sikh</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindu</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslims</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


As for caste identity, Jats were dominant caste in migration streams. As far as we judge from the samples from Ghadrites, migrants to North America included small number of various other castes as well: Rajputs; Brahmans; Kumhars; Khatris; Carpenters; Goldsmiths; Barbers. [Table 1-7] In migration to Siam or Thailand, Arora predominated in the migrants’ stream.\(^{71}\)

Table 1-7: Caste Distribution among Ghadrites who emigrated to North America

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Caste</th>
<th>Persons</th>
<th>Caste</th>
<th>Persons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jat</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>Carpenter</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajput</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Goldsmith</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brahman</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Barber</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kumhar</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Caste Unknown</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khatri</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>197</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


\(^{71}\) Satoh, *op. cit.*, p.42.
The diversity of the background of Punjabi migrants not only tells us that Jat Sikhs from Doaba, however dominant and visible they were in migration streams, were only part of the picture of Punjabi migration but also poses a question what made Jat Sikhs from Doaba typical migrants. Dominance of Doabis in Punjabi migrants' streams to the white Dominions and the USA, migration to which destinations seemed generally more profitable than migration to Southeast Asia and the Far East, will also need an explanation.

iii) FAILURE IN MIGRATION AND INVISIBLE MIGRANTS

Financially unsuccessful migrants were usually almost invisible or less noticeable than successful migrants in the history of Punjabi diaspora. There were two categories of unsuccessful migrants. In the first category, migrants failed to earn as much as they had expected before migration. In the second category, they failed to secure employment at all either because there were no opportunities in their destination or because their destination refused their entry. Failure in migration abroad could cause serious financial damage to the family who attempted to send a member as a migrant.

As for the first category of unsuccessful migrants, they were often migrants induced by misinformation about expected wages. Migration agents typically provided them with the wrong information in those cases. It is confirmed that they were active among migrants to Fiji and Argentine. In Argentine, the daily wage that they could earn was 3-5 rupees. The advertisement about migration to the Argentine taking the form of a letter from a reader residing in Argentine to the Editor of The Tribune wrote that the...

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72 Pros.no.92, in Commerce and Industry/May 1913/Pros.nos.1-101/Part A/PSAC.
daily wage was from $4 to $5 with board in the Argentine.\textsuperscript{73} Although it is unclear whether the dollar was Canadian or American, the gap between the reality and the fantasy described in the advertisement was obvious.

The second category of unsuccessful migrants were those who failed in their attempt because there was not enough demand for Punjabi migrants or because of the restrictive immigration policy, including the colour bar. In the case of migration to Argentine, the Punjab Government reported that some migrants from Ferozepore failed to find employment; they finally even had to ask their families to remit money for their return journey to India. The amount of the cash that an intending migrant from Hoshiarpur carried with him was 500-600 rupees; if this was true for migrants from Ferozepore District as well, then they needed to mortgage 3.3-4.0 acres of land to borrow the amount of money needed before embarking on migration.\textsuperscript{74} The average amount of money remitted from Punjab to those unsuccessful migrants was Rs.300, which was equal to about 2.0 acres of land if they had to mortgage land.

The above case may sound as an extreme case. However, the number of migrants rejected by the USA was not small enough to ignore. The \textit{Pioneer} in 1910 wrote that about a thousand Punjabis had failed to enter the USA; the actual total number of the rejected migrants by the USA was larger than this.\textsuperscript{75} Those who failed to

\textsuperscript{73} Citation from \textit{The Tribune}, dated 8 May 1912, Pros. no.30 in \textit{ibid}.

\textsuperscript{74} From Deputy Commissioner, Hoshiarpur, to the Commissioner, Jullundur Division, dated 13\textsuperscript{th} November 1912, Pros. no.84, in Commerce and Industry/ May 1913/Pros.Nos.1-101/Part A/PSAC. Mortgage money per acre in 1910-11 in Moga Tahsil in Ferozepore District was approximately Rs.150. \textit{District Gazetteers of Ferozepore District}, 1914, Part B, Table 21.

\textsuperscript{75} \textit{The Pioneer}, 28\textsuperscript{th} August 1910, quoted in the Circular from the Hon’ble Mr. H. P. Tollinton, Chief Secretary Government, Punjab and its Dependencies to All Commissioners, Deputy Commissioners
enter the USA probably raised the funds for travel abroad by mortgaging their precious landed property. What they gained from the attempt at emigration was only the burden of mortgage debt to repay. The 'emigration fever' could thus be a contributory factor in the increase of mortgage debt and it could even have a negative effect on the rural economy. In the case of migrants to Canada, in 1906 a group of migrants from Jullundur carried 100-200 rupees and migrants from Hoshiarpur were known to carry about Rs.300. The travel from Calcutta via Hongkong to Vancouver cost about Rs.200 in 1908. The *Pioneer* included no mention about how much the travel from Calcutta via Hongkong to San Francisco cost in rupees; however, it is presumed that a similar amount of money was needed for the travel. Since the size of land that agriculturists needed to mortgage to raise the money was reducing thanks to the increasing land value, agriculturists in migrant-sending assessment circles needed less than one acre of land in 1910. Thus, however, did not mean that they could afford to lose the money for nothing.

There is also a piece of evidence to show that the number of unsuccessful migrants among Doabis could have been larger than we have estimated. In 1908 the monthly average saving among over 1,000 Punjabi migrants in Canada was 35 dollars,
which was equal to about 70 rupees. If this estimate was correct, an emigrant possibly saved 840 rupees by working one year in Canada. Compared to the amount of migrants’ savings in Canada, the average amount of annual remittances to Jullundur District from a migrant in the mid 1910s was often much smaller. While Phillour Tahsil was known for actively sending migrants to the white Dominion countries, the average remittances among migrants abroad from the tahsil was Rs.216. The gap between the average remittances from migrants abroad and the average savings among migrants in Canada seems to show either that the proportion of unsuccessful migrants among Doabi migrants was significantly large or that migrants remitted only part of their savings home and they brought the remainder with them when they returned to their villages.

Looking at the average amount of remittances to different parts of Jullundur District, while migrants sent more than Rs.600 per year in some areas, their counterparts in other areas sent only about Rs.60 a year in the mid-1910s. The figures also indicate that the differences in remittances among migrants could have been large and there was also the possibility that many migrants who failed to send remittances. In the same period, the annual net profit per square of an agriculturist owning land in the Canal Colonies was estimated to be 250-300 rupees. The average annual remittances from a migrant abroad could be lower than the annual income of the colonists assuming that they had at least one square of land; migration abroad could be in some cases much less...

79 Annex 8, Correspondence from Colonel Swayne to Officer Administering Government, British Honduras, 20th December 1908, in Commerce and Industry/Emigration/May 1909/Pros. no.13/F. no. 8/NAI. As to the rate of Canadian dollars, $25.00 was about Rs.50 in 1908. [Commerce and Industry/Emigration/July 1908/Pros.no.6/F.no.4 of 1908/NAI]

profitable than inland migration for the family members who stayed behind,

The proportion of failed migrants was unknown; however, it was not misfortune only for a small number of migrants and their families, remembering that in migration to USA, at least about 1,000 prospective migrants failed to enter the destination due to the restrictive immigration policy in 1910. For the families of such unsuccessful migrants, what the family could gain from their migration project was only mortgage debt.

The typical image of Punjabi migrant as a Jat Sikh male from Doaba was real; however, it represented only part of the reality of Punjabi migration, not the overall picture of the reality. They were the most visible migrants not only because they were dominant among migration streams to the white Dominions and the USA but also because they were dominant among financially successful migrants abroad, which probably attracted the attention of the British officials.

The issue of the origins of emigrants is closely connected with that of the types of emigrants. The identified pioneer-emigrant group from Malwa and Manjha was more associated with migration to Southeast Asia and the Far East where emigrants tried to secure employment in the military/police forces. Despite their participation in the migration to the South Pacific destinations and to North America, it is confirmed that they were outnumbered by migrants from Doaba in the migration stream to North America and to New Zealand. The shift of the origins took place as the nature of migration changed from migration of soldiers/policemen to labour migration.

Migrants who engaged in commercial activity, to which less attention has been given, were also part of Punjabi migration. This type of migrants seemed to have a stronger connection with Southeast Asia and their major group was probably from the western portion of the undivided Punjab, the present Pakistan territory. In Australia and
New Zealand, too, Punjabi migrants often engaged in peddling. The role played by the migrants who engaged in commercial activity in the history of Punjabi Diaspora could be more important than the current studies on Punjabi diaspora show.

Unsuccessful emigrants also belonged to a category of atypical migrants. It includes migrants who were rejected by the destinations or who stayed unemployed there without being able to send money home and who were dissatisfied with what they could earn in their destinations. Probably the gap between the successful group and the unsuccessful group in the fruits of migration was significant. In the case of unsuccessful group, their attempt have to negative effects on the rural economy. Migration abroad was not always a safe investment for Punjabi agriculturists. Doabi migrants as the typical migrants abroad could be rather a reflection of financially successful migrants.

SECTION - IX

SUMMARY

Punjabis’ eastward movement across the Pacific Ocean virtually started with their enlistment in the military/police forces in other British colonies. It was basically movement within the British Empire although Punjabis sometimes went to such destinations as the USA beyond the boundary of the Empire. Although the colonial state never directly encouraged migration of ‘voluntary travellers’ from Punjab, their indirect role in producing migration streams was significant. Firstly, their demand for soldiers/policemen to maintain and protect the Empire provided Punjabis with chances and information about working abroad, which initiated Punjabi migration abroad. Secondly, the British Empire was supposed to guarantee the voluntary travellers’ right
to move freely within the boundary of the Empire, even though when the white dominion countries refused to accept the principle, the British government was unwilling and unable to do anything about it. Migration from Colonial Punjab was a basically by-product of the British rule in India.

One of the crucial moments in the history of Punjabi migration abroad was 'discovery' of Australia where Punjabis learnt that they could save money more quickly as higher wages could be expected in the white Dominions than in Southeast Asia and the Far East. It was significant that the belief that migration abroad could be profitable even by leaving their original villages for such a short period as five years was established some time during the 1890s, which was probably a prerequisite for Punjabi migration to North America in the late 1900s. Migration to Australia and North America was a decisive factor for Punjabis to establish their 'tradition' of migration abroad especially in Doaba.

In addition to the factor of the wide difference between expected wages in the white dominion countries and the USA and those in India, which was the primary pull factor, steamers companies’ advertisement and migration agents’ operations are also to some extent responsible for encouraging Punjabis to produce a stream of migrants. Encouragement by steamers companies and migration agents was, however, secondary factor as a pull factor because it could encourage people to migrate only when Punjabis shared a belief that migration abroad could be profitable even when they stayed for such a short period as five years.

Despite unfavourable conditions in the work available for Punjabi migrants, the primary pull factor could have attracted more migrants, unless their 'El Dorado' countries had introduced restrictive immigration policy which excluded Indians. As far
as migration from colonial Punjab was concerned, one of the most important factors to
decide level of migration was restrictive immigration policy introduced by host
countries.

Within Punjab, especially within Central Punjab, Doabis were most attracted by
the 'El Dorado' countries, which was probably why they were considered to be 'typical'
migrants and are known as successful migrants in the British documents. Part of Doabi
migrants' success was real and remarkable. However, it is also true that they were only
the most visible migrants. Their visibility was in part real and in part a result of the
necessity of more research on migrants in different categories including migration of
commercial community from western districts.