CHAPTER I

HISTORY OF HIMACHAL PRADESH

The word Himachal derives its origin from two Hindi words, ‘Him’ and ‘Achal’ meaning ‘Snow’ and ‘Lap’ respectively. Thus Himachal Pradesh stands for the region which lies in the slopes and foot-hills of snow i.e. the Himalayas.\(^1\) It is situated on the western side of the mountain range. Himachal Pradesh is a mosaic of mountain ranges, hills and valleys. Throughout there is a gradual increase in elevation from south to north and west to east. The altitude varies from 350 meters to 700 meters above the sea level.

Physiographically, the territory can be divided into three zones: Outer Himalaya or the Shiwaliks; Inner Himalayan or the Mid mountain zone and the Greater Himalayan or the Alpine Zone. The area stretching from Kashmir to Himachal Pradesh is one of the most complicated geological regions of the Himalayas. The region falls into four broad stratigraphical zones.\(^2\)

1) Outer or Sub-Himalayan Zone;

2) Lower Himalayan Zone;

3) Higher Himalayan Zone;

4) Tibetan or Tethys Himalayan Zone.

The Outer or Sub-Himalayan zone is also known as the Shiwaliks or the Foot hill zone (the Punjab Himalaya) which consists predominantly of tertiary formations, extending from North-West to South-East. The Shiwalik chain is the widest in the valley of the Beas. On palaontolgoical grounds


these are sub-divided into three main groups: a) Upper, b) Middle c) Lower or Nahan region.3

The Lower Himalayan zone lies between the main ‘Boundary Thrust’ and the ‘Central Himalayan Thrust.’ Most of the part of this zone is composed of granite and other crystalline rocks of non fossiliferrous sediments. The Krol belt stretching from Shimla region towards the East, continuing almost throughout the Garhwal and Kumaon, Himalaya mountain separates this region from the Shiwalik system.4 The Higher Himalayan zone can be recognized only in the eastern part of the region, covering the southern part of the Spiti region. The Tibetan (Spiti) or Tethys Himalayan zone covers the Spiti Valley.

The different mountain ranges in Himachal Pradesh

The Southern range consists of low hills of the Shiwaliks. They maintain almost a regular course from the river Ravi to the Yamuna, in the south region. Dhauladhar or “the White range” is the most majestic and striking feature of the Himachal mountain scape. It branches off from the Great Himalayan range near Badrinath. It is intercepted by the river Sutlej at Rampur Bashahr and by Beas at Larji and by Ravi in south-west of Chamba. The average elevation of Dhauladhar is about 4550 meters to an altitude of 3,600 meters above the Kangra valley. 5

The Pir Panjal range bifurcates river Chenab on one side and river Beas and Ravi on the other. The Great Himalayan range (5000-6000 meters) runs along the eastern boundary and is cut across by the defile of the Sutlej. This range separates the drainage of Spiti from that of river Beas. There are certain famous passes across this range, such as Kangla (5,512 meters) and Kunzam (4,551 meters). The Zanskar range is the

5 Ibid, pp 5-6.
eastern most range which separates Spiti and Kashmir from Tibet. It has peaks well above an altitude of 6500 meters. There are many glaciers over the Zanskar range and the Great Himalayan range.6

Rivers of Himachal Pradesh

Five rivers flow through Himachal Pradesh. The eastern most river is Yamuna which rises from Yamunotri in the Garhwal range of the Himalayas and forms the states eastern boundary with Uttrakhand.

The Sutlej, the largest among the five rivers of Himachal Pradesh, originates beyond the Indian borders on the southern slopes of Kailash mountains. After flowing about 320 kilometers from Rakastal, it enters the eastern parts of Himachal Pradesh at Shipki (altitude 6,608 meters). At the Great Himalayas, crossing the Sutlej, receives the Spiti river from the north-west, in Kinnaur, it is joined by Baspa hills. Flowing through Kinnaur, Shimla and Bilaspur district, it leaves Himachal Pradesh to enter the plains of Punjab at Bhakhra, where one of the world’s largest dams has been constructed.7

Beas river, which forms the world famous valleys of Kullu and Kangra, rises from the 3,978 meters high Rohtang pass. The main course of this river is southward to Larji and then to the west. Its main tributaries in the east are Parbati, Spin and Malanala8. Ravi river rises from Bara-Banghal branch of Dhauladhar. It first flows westward through a trough separating the Pir Panjal from Dhauladhar ranges and then southward, cutting a deep gorge through the latter range.9

Fifth River is Chenab or Chandrabhaga. The ‘Chandra’ and and ‘Bhaga’ streams rise on the opposite sides of the Baralacha pass at an

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6 Ibid, pp 7-8.
9 Ibid, p 5.
elevation of 4,891 meters. These rivulets unite at Tandi (2,286 meters) to form one river of great volume.

Flora and Fauna

Himachal Pradesh is situated in the north between 30° and 22°20’N to 33° and 12°44’ N latitude and 75°0 and 47°55” E to 79°0 and 04°20” E longitude. It shares its border with the states of Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, Haryana and Uttaranchal Pradesh. On the northeast it also shares boundaries with Tibet and China.

The state is situated in sub-tropical latitudes but on high altitudes its geographical features and snow-covered peaks make its climate resemble that of mountainous and continental parts of the temperate altitudes. The climate in general in Himachal Pradesh has shorter summer and it has a higher precipitation and colder and more prolonged winter. Though climatic conditions of the state vary from hot and sub-tropical humidity to temperate, Cold Alpine and glacial but it remains comparatively colder to the plains throughout the year. Geographical set up of the state has produced a lot of rare flora and fauna as well. It has a great treasure of natural wealth, with the flora ranging from lush green pastures to Evergreen Conifers. Here we come across every type of West Himalayan Meadows and high level Birch and Rhododendrons down to Tropical Scrub and Bamboo Forests on the low foothills. The state holds one of the largest forest areas in terms of percentage i.e. 48% of total area of the state. The area is classified as under:

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10 Ibid, pp 5-6
12 The North Temperate Zone, between the Arctic Circle and the Tropic of Cancer, or the South Temperate Zone, between the Antarctic Circle and the Tropic of Capricorn.
1. Reserved Forests: 1,918 kms
2. Demarcated Protected Forests: 6,886 kms
3. Undemarcated Protected Forests: 15,823 kms
4. Unclassified Forests: 868 kms
5. Other Forests: 203 kms
6. Forests not under control of the Forest Department: 1,070 kms

Total: 26,768 kms

There are three Climatic Altitudinal Zones of natural vegetation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vegetation zone</th>
<th>Altitude in metres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(i) Tropical and Sub Tropical</td>
<td>300-1525</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Temperate</td>
<td>1525-3650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) Alpine</td>
<td>3650-4650</td>
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</tbody>
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The Vegetation of the state includes:

(a) The Conifers e.g. Deodars, Pines Chir, Spruce, Fir etc.

(b) The Deciduous forests like Sal, Ban Mohru, Maple, Walnut, Poplar, and Shisham etc. The General sequence of forests altitude wise is Sal, Chir, Deodar, and Kail. Deciduous species grow in small pockets in suitable sites.

The state of Himachal Pradesh has a variety of fauna as well. The altitude has a bearing on the distribution of various kinds of fauna, leading

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to the different altitudinal belts or zones in this respect. It is said that Tigers were plentiful earlier but during first half of the 20th century, hunting made them almost extinct. Very rarely they can be spotted at the height of 2,438 meters.

The Leopard or Panther is common animal and it sometimes cause nuisance in inhabited areas; other species of wild animals include Hyena, Jackal, Yellow Jungle Cat and Fox, the Sambhar, Chital, Parking Deer, Ibex, Porcupine, Civet-Cats, Monkeys, Wild Boars which are found in tropical tracts. Serow and Kastura are found in higher hills. The Black Bear wanders from higher forests to the lower ones, where it spends the winter.16

Birds like Hares, Jungle fowls, Patridge, Chakura, and Quails are plentiful in lower hills. The Kolsa (Black Pheasant) is also found in these hills. The Monal needs a special mention here. It is not just a rare and beautiful species but has been declared the state bird also. This too is found between lower mountain reaches.

Though the wild life plays no major role in the economy, it forms a major part of eco-tourism. That is the reason why the state government has established a number of Wild Life Sanctuaries and National Parks to protect and promote wild life. Strict laws have been made and enforced to stop the poaching of these animals.

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In the northern quarter is divine Himalaya,
The lord of mountains

...........there demigods rest in the shade of clouds,
Which spread like a girdle below peaks,
but when the rain disturbs them,
they fly to the sunlit summits........\(^{17}\)

The history of Himachal Pradesh goes back to the earliest dawn of human civilization. There is little doubt that two million years ago there was habitation in the Himachal foothills, the regions known as the Bangar ga-Beas valley of Kangra, Sirsa-Sutlej valley of Nalagharh – Bilaspur and Markanda and Sirmur valley. Ancient human existence here is testified by availability of large stone tools like pebbles, choppers, hand-axes, and flakes, which are found embodied in the fan-shaped boulders and gravels in the Shiwalik foothills. The readily available river water natural vegetation and animal life created a suitable habitat for early human settlement in these regions.18

Himachal Pradesh was settled by series of immigration from all the surrounding areas, but principally from northern plains and Central Asia. The first immigration to Himachal Pradesh happened because of the people who came to inhabit the Indus Valley. The Indus Valley Civilisation is generally believed to have flourished between 3000 and 1750 B.C. This civilization covered an enormous area from the Arabian Sea to the Gangetic valley in the east. In the north and east it covered the whole of Punjab as far as the Himalayan foothills, and in the south Rajasthan and Gujrat. In prehistoric times, outside the Indus valley, the Indo-Gangetic plain was inhabited by Proto-Australoid or, say, Munda-speaking Kolarian people. When the people of the Indus valley spread through the Gangetic plains, they pushed forward the Kolarian people. The latter moved to the forests and valleys where they could live peacefully and preserve their way of life. Thus they fled to the Himachal valleys. In the Vedas they were called Dasas, Dasuyas, Nishadas etc. In the post Vedic literature they were mentioned as Kinnaras, Yakshas and Nagas. They lived in groups and had

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their own language and indigenous beliefs. Possibly the Kolis, Hali, Dums and Chanals of the Western Himalayas, and Chamangs and Damangs of Kinnaur, Lahul and Spiti are decedents of this race. They form the lower strata of society. These people are mainly artisans and work as cobblers, basket makers, iron smiths, carpenters, weavers, drummers and tailors.¹⁹

Second group of people were of Aryan origin. They were known as Khashas. The Khashas originally are from an Aryan tribe of Central Asia which entered Western Himalayas through the north-west even before the hymns of Rigveda were composed. Khasha people were without any caste and class distinction. But with the passage of time and under alien influence they split into numerous sub sections and clans. Kanet is one among such section. They are identified with the Kunidas or Kulindas of ancient sankrit classics. They are of mixed race and have sprung from the Khasha, who even before the coming of the Aryans into the plains of India occupied the whole sub-Himalayan tract from the Indus to Brahmaputra. Kanet, and the Rao also sprang from Khashas, but according to Alexander Cunningham the Raos are a branch of Kanet²⁰.

According to Mahabharata (1000 B.C.), the Himalayan region, now forming the state of Himachal Pradesh was divided into number of small republics, which were called ‘Janapadas’.²¹ The Janapadas were both political and cultural units. Later they became territorial units also.

Some of the important tribal republics of Himachal Pradesh were Audumabars, the Trigarttas, the Kulutas and Kulinda or Kunindas. The Panini literature, which was written sometimes between seventh century B.C. and fourth century A.D., refers to the prosperous kingdoms of Trigartta (Kangra), Kulind (Sirmour) Kullut (kullu), Yugandhara (Bilaspur)

²¹ Singh, Mian Goverdhan, 1994, op.cit., p 51
and Nalagarh, Gabdika (Chamba) and Audumbara (Pathankot). Thus, it is clear that by the first century B.C. the present territory of Himachal Pradesh had been divided into more than 100 principalities and feudal territories. It is also known that the mighty rulers of Maurya and Kushan dynasties also had a hold on these areas for short periods. 22

These Republican states, which flourished up to the time of the Guptas and of whom we know from Panini, the Puranas, Buddhist literature, Kautilya, Greek accounts and coins, disappeared in the 5th century A.D. During the Gupta period, the Kachhagupta, younger brother of Samundragupta, is stated to have conquered the territories leading to the door of Kashmir which may mean the areas of Kangra, Chamba and Jammu.23 It is suggested that Chandragupta brought under his sway the whole of ancient Himachal Pradesh. The emperor Chandragupta also received military assistance from some of the hill Chiefs; this is known from the Salari rock inscription of Kullu. 24

During the period of Skandagupta (455-67 A.D.), the Hun invasion expedited the decline and the downfall of the Guptas. It created political uncertainty in the hill region and resulted in rise of a number of local rulers and growth of small principalities. It was probably during this time that a number of hill states managed to delink themselves politically from the plains of northern India. 25

Up to the 3rd and 4th century A.D., the hill states of Himachal Pradesh followed a republican system of government. They used to have a central assembly and an elected head26, but the Guptas imposed the

24 Ibid, p 45.
25 Gazetteer of the Chamba State, 1904, op.cit. p 77.
26 Singh Mian Goverdhan, 1994, op.cit., pp 49-50
monarchial system of government. The hill states followed in the footsteps of their overlords, and with passage of time the powerful chiefs adopted the monarchial system of government for their areas also. During the 3rd and 4th century we find that the Audumbaras and Kunindas totally disappeared from the scene and new dynasties in Kullu, Chamba, Bashahr and Sirmur region came into existence. 27

After the collapse of the imperial Gupta and before the rise of Harsha, northern India again became a congeries of small state. In the Himalayan region, between Ravi and Yamuna, a new groups of petty chiefs known as Ranas and the Thakurs emerged. They claimed to be Kshatriyas. This period is known as the ‘Apthakuri’ or ‘Apthakurai’ while the territory of a Rana was called ‘Rahun’ and of a Thakur, ‘Thakuri’ or ‘Thakurai’.28 The name Thakur means ‘Lord’ and originally many petty chieftains even those chiefs who rose from the lower classes or were immigrant from outside or came from the northern plains, took on the suffix.

These Ranas and Thakurs exercised authority either as independent rulers or under the suzerainty of a paramount power. Their principalities were small in size and their boundaries were liable to constant change, as each ruler gained ascendency over other or yielded to superior force. Thus with the exception of Kangra and Kullu, this whole region was divided into several Thakurais and Rahuns. In Chamba region alone, there were more than 100 petty chiefs.29

Himachal Pradesh, during the rule of Harshavardhana seems to have enjoyed the era of peace and prosperity. The Rajatarangini and Hiuen Tsang’s accounts tell us that he succeeded in giving good administration to this region. He succeeded in establishing a unified empire in North India.

28 Ibid, p68.
29 Gazetteer of the Kangra district; Kullu, Lahul and Spiti, 1897, 1994 (reprint), New Delhi, India Publishing House, p 17.
He appointed provincial governors and ruled through them. Samundrasena was probably one of his Chief, appointed in Kullu.  

After the decline of Pratihara Empire many small feudatories came up in Rajasthan and Ganga-Jamuna Doab (Rajput State). They continued to fight among themselves for supremacy. Some of the Rajput rulers, who could not face the power of their rivals in the plains, turned their way to the north and with their followers penetrated into the central and western Himalayan valley and founded a number of states in the hills in the 10th and 11th centuries.  

In 1009 A.D. Mahmud of Ghazni attacked the fort of Nagarkot in Kangra and seized control of the treasury. The vast treasures were carried by him and he left behind his own grandson to control the fort which probably he held till 1043 A.D. In 12th century A.D. due to the conquest of Delhi by Muslim invaders, there was a series of migration to Himalayan foothills from the plains. Those who came were the Chauhans, Chandels, Tomars, Panwars, and Sens, who founded many small principalities in the Himachal hills. The overwhelming majority of Rajput and Brahmin refugees further migrated after the conquest of Delhi, Benaras and Bengal by Muslims.  

In the Sultanate period we come across two invasions into the hills led by Tughluq Sultans. Mohammad Tughluq and Feroz Tughluq both invaded the land. The Nagarkot expedition was led personally by Sultan Mohammad Tughluq in 1338 A.D. He displayed great religious tolerance on the occasion and according to Sirat-i- Firozshahi spared the temple of Jawalamukhi. In 1361, Ferozshah attacked the Nagarkot but was not

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31 Gazetteer of the Kangra District; Kullu, Lahul and Spiti, 1897, 1994 (reprint), op. cit., p 17.
able to conquer it and accepted the Raja’s submission and made peace with him.\(^{34}\)

At the time of Timur’s invasion of India, he had heard of Nagarkot and wished to capture it, but did not seem to have penetrated so far into the interiors of the Hills. At that time Meghchand (1390-1405) was the ruling chief of Kangra. Timur’s march to the hill region was strongly opposed. He fought many battles and captured eight forts but it seems did not fight the ruler of Nagarkot, as there is no mention of it in his invasions. During Babur’s invasion, Daulat Khan, the Governor of Punjab, and his son Ghazi Khan, took refuge in the forest below Kangra. Babur captured the fort and made Daulat Khan prisoner. Babur, however, does not seem to have fought the Raja of Kangra. In 1526 A.D., Babur defeated and killed Ibrahim Lodhi and established the Mughal rule in India which considerably changed the position of the hill states of Himachal.\(^{35}\)

The impact of the Muslim rule, especially of the Mughal Empire, on the formation of later hill states can hardly be underestimated. For nearly two hundred years from the time of subjugation of the area by Akbar (1556-1605 A.D), the hill chiefs became tributaries of the Mughal Empire. But imperial authority sat very lightly on them. Their prerogative was seldom questioned and there was no interference in their internal affairs. Throughout the entire period of Mughal supremacy, the chiefs seem to have experienced liberal and even generous treatment. They were left very much to themselves in the governance of their principalities, and were allowed to function independently. They built forts, waged wars on one another without any intimation to the emperor and sometimes even asked and received assistance in men and arms for this purpose from Mughal Viceroy.\(^{36}\)

\(^{34}\) Ibid, p 81.  
\(^{35}\) Ibid, p 84.  
Each chief, on his accession, had to acknowledge the supremacy of the Mughal Emperor by payment of the fee of investitures, after which he received a Kharitah (patent of installation) with a ‘Khilat’ or ‘Dress of Honour’ and other gift from the Imperial Court. A yearly tribute called ‘Nazarana’ or ‘Peshkash’, was expected from the states and this amounted to four lakh rupees in case of Kangra region, during the reign of Shahjahan. The chiefs were addressed as Zamindars, the title of Raja being conferred as a personal distinction.37

Some of the chiefs gained a high place in imperial favour, and were granted ‘Mansab’38 or military ranks in the army, and also found promotion to important posts in the Mughal administration. Raja Jagat Singh of Nurpur, who in 1645 A.D. was sent by Shahjahan with a force of 14,000 Rajputs, raised in his own territory and paid by the emperor, was sent against the Uzbeks of Balk and Badakhan39

During the reign of Aurangzeb, when the foundation of Mughal Empire started rocking under the pressure of Marathas, Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth Guru of the Sikhs, made an effort to unite these warring hills states and fortify the strategic location of these hills with persuasion and force.40

After the death of Aurangzeb, the Mughal Empire in India was on the decline and it was at this time that Ahmad Shah Durani, Nadir Shah, and Ahmed Shah Abdali with their invasions dealt a serious blow to the dying Mughal Empire. At this juncture, Gurkhas, Sikhs and Marathas were emerging as strong power center on the political horizon of India. Many Nawabs and Kings in different parts of India had declared their independence. Raja Sansar Chand on becoming a ruler of Kangra in 1775

38 Mansabdar system was a system of ranking introduced by Akbar, the Mughal emperor of India. This system was introduced to strengthen the Army. Under this system, every officer was assigned a rank (mansab).
A.D. made ambitious plans of regaining control over Kangra Fort, which he did in 1786 A.D. He also conquered parts of Mandi, Suket and Chamba and made plans to annex parts of Punjab, which was ruled by Maharaja Ranjit Singh but was thwarted. Facing failure on this front, he annexed parts of Kahloor. By this act many hill chiefs and the ruler of Kahloor invited the Gurkhas who were emerging as a new power center in the second half of eighteenth century. The Gurkhas conquered the whole of the western Himalayas by 1805 A.D. 42

People, however, soon got tired of the harsh and tyrannical rule of the Gurkhas. They united themselves and took a stand against them. Raja Sansar Chand fought a tough battle with the Gurkhas from inside the Kangra Fort, for about four years, during which the economy of Kangra was completely shattered. In 1809, he, with the help of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, defeated the Gurkhas and drove them back to east of Sutlej river. For this help Ranjit Singh was given 66 villages in Kangra. Sardar Des Singh Majhithia, who had played a prominent part in this victory, was appointed the Qiladar of the fort as well as the Nizam (Governor) of Kangra and the adjoining hill states.

It was Sansar Chand’s unwise policy which brought the final subversion not only of his own state but also of all the adjoining hill states of Nurpur, Jaswan Siba, Suket, Mandi, Chamba, Kullu, Hamirpur (Guler), Dataripur which were all annexed to Lahore Darbar by organized Sikh forces. 43 After getting hold of the Kangra Fort, Maharaja Ranjit Singh proceeded to conquer other hill states and annexed many of the Himachal principalities. In 1842, General Zorawar Singh conquered the area of Lahul-Spiti and reached up to Ladakh. 44

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41 On the decline of Mughal Empire, the Gurkhas of Nepal having made themselves master of whole of the Nepal, conceived an ambitious military programme of bringing the entire Western Himalayas under their sway.
44 Hutchison J. and Vogel, J., op.cit., p 121.
After the defeat of the Gurkhas by the East India Company, the principalities of many hill chiefs were approved and confirmed by the Company. The chiefs whose states were approved and confirmed included Sirmur, Bilaspur, Hindur, Jabbal, Bhagat Keonthal, Kothai, Baghal and Bushehr. The British granted ‘Sanads’ to the Chiefs of Shimla Hills in perpetuity, from generation to generation and with all internal rights.\(^{45}\)

The important condition laid down in the ‘Sanads’\(^{46}\) pertained to the issue of ‘Begar’.\(^{47}\) Out of twenty states, sixteen were asked to supply Begarees\(^{48}\) to the British Government. The number of these begarees differed, the highest being hundred and the lowest five. The chief also had to pay the ‘Nazrana’ or ‘Peshkash’ in cash. The British government also kept the right to overthrow any heir from his throne if he was found to be a defaulter in the fulfillment of the obligations laid down in Sanads. It was also necessary for the new chief of any state to get the recognition from the British Government. No Raja or Chief was given the right to settle conflict with any other Raja. They were required to seek arbitration of British Court.\(^{49}\)

In 1845, after the Anglo-Sikh war, the British took over the territories of Kangra, Guler, Jaswan, Datarpur, Nurpur, Suket, Mandi, Kullu, and Lahul-Spiti and Raja Gulab Singh was recognized as an independent ruler, both by the Sikhs and by British by the treaty concluded at Amritsar in 1846. The entire hill area lying between the Sutlej and Yamuna river, with the exception of Kullu and Mandi, was awarded to him for his services rendered to the British during the Anglo-Sikh war. In 1848, all the rulers of this area tried to liberate their territories with the help of Sikhs, but were defeated and the rebel rulers were killed.\(^{50}\)

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\(^{45}\) Singh, Mian Goverdhan, 1994, op.cit, p 321.
\(^{46}\) The British granted sanads to the chiefs of the Shimla hills to confer lands upon their legitimate chiefs in perpetuity, ‘from generation to generation and with all internal rights’. In lieu of these grants, the rajas of the Shimla region were required to fulfill some obligations and conditions.
\(^{47}\) ‘Begar’ or forced labour is a practice of rendering free service without question by the people.
\(^{48}\) Begarees were the forced labour provided by the chiefs of Shimla Hill States.
During the First World War, some youths in the hills took part in activities of the Gadhar Party (1914-15), which advocated direct military and violent action against the British to throw them out of India. To neutralize or at least to isolate any mass movement or national upsurge, the British government devised a way where by it could always keep the Feudal Chiefs on its side. A chamber of princes consisting of 120 members was created as deliberative, consultative and advisory body on Feb. 8, 1921. The Shimla Hill states were represented by the six rulers, of which five were members in their own right. While sixth was the elected representative of Chamba, Mandi, Suket, Bilaspur and Sirmur.

In 1939 at the session of All India State People's conference held at Ludhiana, it was decided to form Praja Mandals in the hill states to devote special attention to these areas. This was setup with the effort of people like Bhagmal of Jubbal and Y.S. Parmar of Sirmur, with its headquarters at Shimla.

In 1948, Himachal Pradesh was constituted as an administrative unit comprising thirty princely states governed by a Chief Commissioner as the representative of government of India. Himachal Pradesh was given the status of Part 'C' state. The state had tremendous problems. Agrarian laws were primitive and varied from place to place. Agriculture was primitive managed, the state was food deficit, and medical facilities were poor. Literacy was as low as 7 percent. Leadership of the state was confronted with a challenge to meet these vexing problems.

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51 The Ghadar Party was an organization founded by Indians of the United States and Canada in June, 1913 with the aim to liberate India from British rule. It was also known as the Hindi Association of the Pacific Coast.
52 Singh, Mian Goverdhan, 1994, op.cit. p 147.
54 Under the Constitution that came into force on January 26, 1950, there were three kinds of states — nine Part A states, eight Part B states and ten Part C states. Part A states were former governor’s provinces in British India. Part B states were the former princely states. Part C states included a few princely states as well as former provinces governed by chief commissioners.
The leaders of Himachal Pradesh realized the intention of the protagonists of Maha Punjab. To foil their design, the state leadership decided to raise the demand of ‘Vishal Himachal’ more vigorously and decided to work with the hill people of Punjab. The Himachal Pradesh Congress Committee in its memorandum demanded the merger of Kullu and Kangra with Himachal Pradesh.\textsuperscript{55}

On November 1, 1956, Himachal Pradesh became a Union Territory under an Administrator, designated as Lieutenant Governor. A Territorial Council was given in place of an assembly for administering certain transferred subjects but with more restricted power and function. In 1963, the Central Government introduced a Bill (14th Amendment of the Constitution in the Parliament) to provide Himachal Pradesh with a democratic apparatus. Under this, Himachal Pradesh was given a Legislative Assembly and a Council of Ministers. It was also proposed that the Administrator will preside over the meetings of the Cabinet instead of the Chief Minister.\textsuperscript{56}

The hill people got an opportunity to realize their aspiration of ‘Vishal Himachal’, when in 1965 the Union government decided to reconsider the demand for the Punjabi Suba on linguistic basis. The Union government constituted a Cabinet Committee and a Parliamentary Committee to go into the whole matter so that an amicable solution to the problem could be arrived at and the people of Punjab Hills who had been wanting for many years to join Himachal Pradesh could realize their hopes.

Dr. Y.S. Parmar submitted a memorandum to Sardar Hukam Singh, who was heading the Parliamentary Committee. He emphasized that in the event of redistribution of states on linguistic basis, the hilly areas comprising the district of Kangra, Kullu, Lahul and Spiti, Tehsil Pathankot

Map showing Administrative Divisions - 1971, Himachal Pradesh
part of Gurdaspur district, Tehsil Kalka of Ambala district, Nalagarh sub division of Morni Hills, should be integrated with Himachal Pradesh.\textsuperscript{57} The Parliament passed the Punjab Reorganization Act of 1966. As a result of this Act, the hill areas of Punjab were merged with the Union Territory of Himachal Pradesh.

In view of the progress made by Himachal Pradesh in various fields, on 3\textsuperscript{rd} July, 1970, the then Prime Minister made a declaration in the Parliament that Himachal Pradesh would be given statehood. With this declaration the stage had been set for the introduction of a necessary legislation in this regard. On, December 18, 1970, the state of Himachal Pradesh Act (Act No. 53) was passed and a new state was inaugurated by Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India on Jan 25, 1971.\textsuperscript{58}

**KULLU DISTRICT**

The name Kullu has been identified with Kulluta, this name occurs in Vishnu Purana and Ramayana. A. Cunningham was the first historian to write about the origin of the said name, after deciphering an ancient coin bearing the name of one of the early Rajas. He assigned it on palaeographic grounds to the first or the second century of the Christian era. The inscription on the coin runs as follows:-

"\textit{Rajna Kolutasya a Virayasaasya}" – meant the coin of Virayasa, King of Kuluta. The name Kuluta is also mentioned in the Mahabharata in the list of countries lying to the north of India. The Markandeya Purana and Brihat Sanhita also refer to it among the tract situated in the North West of India. In the Rajatarangini it is mentioned only once as a separate state.\textsuperscript{59}

\textsuperscript{57} Ibid, p 67
\textsuperscript{58} Ibid, p 71
\textsuperscript{59} Kangra District Gazetteer: Kullu and Seraj, 1967, 2003 (reprint), Published by Himachal Academy of Arts, Culture and Language, p 1.
Hiuen Tsang visited India between A.D. 629 and 645 and described the state of Kiu-lu-to as situated 700 Li i.e. about 187 kilometers to the northeast of Jalandhar in Punjab which exactly corresponds with the position of Kuluta i.e. present day Kullu.60

Kullu district forms the eastern part of Central Himachal Pradesh. It is surrounded by Lahul and Spiti district from north to east by Shimla and Kinnaur districts from the south and southeast. The district in its present form lies between 76° 55' and 77° 50' north latitude and 31° 21' and 32°25' east longitude. 61

The total area of the district is 5,503 square kilometers and its population is 3,79,865 (2001 census). The decadal growth rate is worked out to be +77,443. The density of population comes to about 60 people per square kilometer. This population is scattered and dispersed in 194 inhabited census villages and four towns namely, Kullu, Manali, Bhuntar and Banjar.62

In a marked contrast to the other districts in Himachal Pradesh, Kullu district is characterized by a varied topographical diversity. The altitude ranges from less than 1,220 meters above the sea level in the Kullu valley to over 6000 meters in the Great Himalayan ranges in the northeast. The northern boundary lies along the crest of Mid-Himalaya which runs from (apex of the salient) in a south-easterly direction. The range also separates Kullu district from Lahul valley and has an elevation of about 5,500 meters above sea level, with two prominent passes. The Rohtang pass at an altitude of 3,980 meters and the Hamta pass at a height of about 4,270 meters.63

60 Ibid, p 3.
On the eastern side is the Great Himalayan range, which separates the catchment's area of the Beas from those of the Spiti and the Sutlej rivers. Some of the peaks of this range are over 6,100 meters above sea level. The only important pass on this side is the most difficult one, at the head of the Parbati River, is the Pin Parbati Pass (4,804 meters).

In the southern side of the district follows the Sutlej river. East of the Sutlej in this section is the territorial jurisdiction of erstwhile Rampur Bushahr, now a sub division forming part of Shimla district. The western boundaries of the district are somewhat complicated from the north: a high range runs southwards connecting the northern high mountain with the Outer Himalayas. This range continues with diminishing elevation till the Beas, turning west from Aut. The boundary runs along the crest which has six passes, four of which lead to the Bara Banghal and remaining two to the Mandi district.64

The western or Bara Banghal range gives off numerous spurs which divide the main tributaries of the Beas from each other. The southern branch after throwing off a ridge 15000 feet high ended in an escarpment65 which stood opposite Naggarata height of 10,000 feet. A longer spur ran down the left bank of the Sarvari (river) to Sultanpur. 66

The mid-Himalaya on the north put a long limb, some 30 miles in length from a point east of Hamta Pass. The spur moved south-west dividing the Beas from valley of the Malana and Parbati and ends in a bluff 2500 meters high crowned by the temple of Bijli Mahadev at the junction of the Parbati and Beas. The eastern line of mid Himalaya rising in several places to over 21,000 feet forms the watershed of the Parbati, Sainj and Tirthan rivers. One long spur went westward between the two former streams and ended sharply at Bhuntar with a branch dividing the Hurla

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65 Escarpment : Long steep slope at the edge of plateau.
66 Gazetteer of the Kangra District; Kullu, Lahul and Spiti, 1897, 1994 (reprint), op. cit., p 6.
HIMACHAL PRADESH
DISTRICT KULLU

BOUNDARY, DISTRICT........................
TAHSIL/SUB-TAHSIL ...
C. D. BLOCK.................
DISTRICT HEADQUARTERS ..........
TAHSIL/SUB-TAHSIL HEADQUARTERS...............................
NATIONAL HIGHWAY ........................
STATE HIGHWAY ..............................
IMPORTANT METALLED ROAD. ...
RIVER AND KHAD............................
IMPORTANT VILLAGE HAVING 1000 AND ABOVE POPULATION.. WITH NAME
URBAN AREA WITH POPULATION SIZE-CLASS IV AND VI
POST AND TELEGRAPH OFFICE, DEGREE COLLEGE AND TECHNICAL INSTITUTION........*
CIRCUIT HOUSE, REST HOUSE AND TOURIST LODGE'

1. Boundary shown is updated upto 1st October, 1989.
2. C. D. Block boundary excludes Statutory Towns.

Based upon Survey of India map with the permission of the Surveyor General of India.
(C) Government of India Copyright, 1998.
from the Junction of the eastern and Jolori ranges. The peak of Srikandh (17,000 feet) gives rise to a branch of the Tirthan, and to the Kurpan River of outer Seraj. The Srikandh or Jalori ranges have two passes, the Bashleo (10,750 feet) and Jolori (10,000 feet) connecting inner and outer Seraj. 67

Beas was the principal river of Kullu state. The river originates in Snowy Mountains of Kullu at Rohtang Pass. The main course of river is southward to Larji, from where it takes a westward turn, piercing through an offshoot of the Dhauladhar range. Its tributaries on east bank spread out in the shape of a fan based on the length of river between Bhuntar and Larji. On the right or west bank the main affluent are the Solang, Manalsu, Sujan, Phojal Nallaha and the Sarvari. On the east at Bhuntar (6 miles below Kullu), the Parbati river joins in, which at its junction was as large as the Beas. Another tributary named Malana Nullah, joins the north bank of the Parbati at Jehri. The main direction is first northwest and then southwest.68

The Tirthan stream joins the Sainj river, a little above the confluence of the latter with the Beas. Starting from the southern flank of Shupa Kuni, the Tirthan first follows a southwesterly course then westerly and northwesterly. Its main tributary coming from Srikandh joins the left bank at Bandal. Another affluent flows northwards from the Jolori pass through Banjar and the third one at Manglor along the western boundary of Seraj. In outer Seraj, the Kurpan flows south-west from Srikandh in a narrow valley turning south by Nirmand, before it join Satluj.69

In winter the water in the river Beas and its tributaries is minimal. The water starts increasing after the month of February every year. In July and August, the volume of water rises to such a high mark that it generally causes floods.

The district has a mountainous terrain with valleys, ridges and peaks; as such the climate of different parts of the district depends largely on the elevation. The climate of low altitude areas of the district near the southwestern border is somewhat similar to the adjoining plains of the Punjab. The cold season is extremely bracing. The year is divided into four seasons. November to March is the winter season, the next three months April to June form summer season, the following period lasting up to the middle of September is the southwest monsoon. September and October form the post monsoon or transaction period.70

Natural water springs are a common feature in the hills. Kullu district abounds with water springs which provide good drinking water. In addition, the district has hot water springs. The hot water springs exist at Kalath, Vashisht, Kasol, Manikaran and Khirganga. Many attribute medicinal values to this hot water.71

**Flora and Fauna**

Like other hill tracts, with diversity in elevation, Kullu provides a variety of vegetation which extends up to about 4,270 meters on the southern and western slopes and about 3,650 meters on the northern and eastern slopes. Kullu has a fascinating flora with a variety of vegetation types ranging between the sub tropical and the high alpine.

The Conifers form the most important flora. The Chir, Pine, the Deodars, the Kail or the Blue Pine, Spruce and the Fir are the main trees in these forests.

The Conservator of forests, with three divisions under his charge is responsible for protection and management of forests on scientific lines. The district is divided into three forest divisions of Kullu, Seraj and Parbati. Reserved forests are situated at places remote from habitation and consist of small Deodar covered terrain the vicinity of the villages. Protected Forests

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70 Ibid, p 15.
71 Ibid, p 16.
Class I are situated within the zone of village habitations and are scattered all over the tract. These forests are generally surrounded by cultivations. Protected forests Class II and III are situated above those of Class I and are, therefore, remote. Then there are Undemarcated Protected forests, including wastelands, not recorded in the Land Revenue Settlement as private property. These provide timber to the villages.

The basin of the upper Beas is very favorably situated for sheltering many kinds of wildlife, which is usually found in temperate climate. A large flock of migratory birds are induced to remain in the valley by the availability of abundant food, crops, vegetation, water and shelter provided by the ranges of mountains.


The birds are both resident and migratory. Main species of birds are Chakor, Duck, Teal, Wood-cock, Snipe and Pigeons. Monal is a very important bird as it is a state bird. Wood peckers, Tree-creepers and Nuthatches are found in every forest. Magpies, Hoopoes, Mynahs, Bulbul, Crows, Sparrows, Cuckoos, Night-jars, and Owls etc come and go according to the weather.

**HISTORY OF DISTRICT KULLU**

The state of Kullu, in the ancient times, was considered as one of the largest and prosperous princely states in the Northern India. In the north it was bound by Ladakh, in the east by Tibet, in the south by Sutlej river and Bushahr state, and in the west by the states of Suket, Mandi, Bara-Banghal and Chamba. 

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The total area of the state was 6,607 square miles but in the past it was increased to as much as 10,000 square miles, as a result of annexation of certain territories from the neighboring states.

The state included the upper Beas valley, from the Rohtang pass to Bajaura, together with Lahul and portion of the Sutlej valley, and was divided into seven Waziris or principalities. 73

1) Waziri Parol, or Kullu proper: It comprises of the main Beas valley from the Rohtang pass to the Phojal nullah; the Malana valley and also to right side of the Malana nullah to its junction with the Beas.

2) Waziri Rupi: It consists of the tract between Parbati and Sainj nullahs on the left bank of the Beas including the whole of the upper Parbati valley tract known as Kanawar.

3) Waziri Seraj: It includes the Southern portion of the state divided into outer and inner Seraj by the Jolori Range.

4) Waziri Lag-Maharaja: The territory to the right bank of the Sarvari nullah up to Sultanpur and of the Beas from there to Bajaura.

5) Waziri Lag-Sari: It comprised of the tract between the Phojal and Sarvari nullah on the right bank of the Beas.

6) Waziri Bangahal: It includes a portion of Chhota Bangahal.

7) Waziri Lahul: It was the tract later on called the British Lahul. 74

Kullu’s history dates back to the ancient period, dating probably from the dawn of the Christian era preceded by a period of rule by barons75 who were either independent or under the nominal authority of a larger power.

73 Ibid, p 418.
75 Barons were the members of the lowest order of British nobility; powerful businessmen etc.
The legends place the history still further back to the time of the Pandavas.

1) **Reference in Scriptures:** - The name of Kuluta occurs in Mahabharata in Book VI Canto IX, and in Markandeya Purana Canto, 55 Slokas 48-52 and in Brihat Samhita, Chapter 14, Slokas 29-30.76

2) **Reference in Literature:** - Kalhan in his Rajatarangni-Book II, Slokas 435-36 mentions that Kullu was a separate state. Banabhatt in his famous book 'Kadambari' recognizes Kullu as a separate state. He mentions that one Tarapida, King of Ujjayini, conquered Kullu. There is nothing to corroborate the claims in Rajatarangni or Kadambari, but it is, of course established that Kullu was a separate state and ruled by its own kings.77

3) **According to folklore of Kullu Tandi,** also called a demon who settled to the south of Rohtang Pass, with his sister Hidimba, Bhimsen, one of the Pandava brothers, came to Kullu and married Hidimba. Tandi was enraged and fought with Bhima but was killed. Ghatotkach, the offspring of this marriage, was the ferocious warrior of the Mahabharata married the daughter of Tandi. Their sons were Bhot and Makar. Bhot who seems to have been a Hindu, separated from them because he ate cow's flesh. He fled to a spot somewhere to the south of Sultanpur and there he founded two villages called Makraha and Kullu, which after him obtained the name of Makarsa, by which it was known till a recent period. The old capital of the Rajas at Naggar was referred to as Moorcraft, when he visited Kullu in 1820.78

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76 Janartha, T.C., 2000, op.cit., p 7
78 Ibid, p 11.
Rock Inscriptions:

Little is known about the kings who succeeded King Virayasasya. The next plausible account of the kings of Kullu, (though can’t be narrated in sequence), has been gathered from the rock inscription at Salanu. The rock inscription finds a mention in Archaeological Survey of India’s, Annual Report 1907-08. This rock has also been described by Hira Nand in his book “Historical Documents of Kullu”. The rock inscription records the foundation of a town named Sahpuri, probably the present village Salari now in Mandi district.79

Inscriptions regarding Kullu are also found on coins, copper plates, epigraphic and iritic slabs. All these are very useful sources of information for history of Kullu. Only in some areas of Kullu are archaeological remains to be found. This includes the temple of Naggar, Bijli Mahadev and above all Bahseshar Mahadev of Hat. There is also the rock inscription of Salri near Salanu, which belongs probably to the 4th or 5th century A.D.80

In the Vansavali, referred by Hiranand Shastri, some 88 names of the Rajas51 have been mentioned, out of which 73 names are that of the ruler of Pal line of Rajas and 15 are that of Singh dynasty. Singh dynasty was founded in 1500 A.D. and ended in 1840 with the capture of the state by the Sikhs. In other words, the dynasty ruled for 340 years, or on an average each ruler ruled for about two decades.82 This is same as in the Chamba ruling line and other royal families in the hills. The average reign was of 20 years.83

But Captain Harcourt has pointed out that there were several breaks in the succession, when the Kullu royal line was removed from power and

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81 Ibid, p 420.
82 Gazetteer of the Chamba State, 1904, op.cit., p 70.
83 Gazetteer of the Kangra District; Kullu, Lahul and Spiti, 1897, 1994 (reprint), op.cit., pp 113-114.
the state was subjected to alien rule. Such a break in the continuity of the line took place in the early centuries, when Kullu is said to have been under the domain of Chamba for six reigns of which five names are entirely omitted from the Vansavali. Pal dynasty ruled for 340 years, or on an average each ruler ruled for about two decades. Indeed Captain Harcourt states that 12 names were thus dropped and that the total number of Pal Rajas was 85, with 15 of the Singh dynasty. So the state came into existence in the 1st Century A.D. or before that.

**Pal Dynasty**

The legendary history of the district preserves the names of a long line of princes who successively ruled in Kullu. Behangamani Pal, the founder of Pal dynasty, was the first ruler of Kullu. When Behangamani arrived in Kullu from Prayag, the territory was divided among petty chiefs. He came to Manikaran but was driven out from there. He subsequently took shelter at Jagatsukh and succeeded in conquering a considerable portion of Kullu proper. The people of the valley accepted him as a Raja and he formed a kingdom after killing many of the Ranas and Thakurs.

Pachch Pal who was next in succession, continued to contest with local Ranas and Thakurs and ultimately forced many of them to pay tribute. Pachch Pal was followed by Bihang Pal and Durhin Pal but nothing is known about the events of their rule. Svarg Pal was next in succession. Next in the line of succession were Sakti Pal, Mahinder Pal, Om Pal, and Rajendar Pal. Rajendar Pal was succeeded by his son Basuda Pal. He is believed to have enlarged the boundaries by subduing Naggar.

In the reign of Uttam Pal the 12th ruler, the seat of government was transferred to Naggar. Before the Jagatsukh used to be the capital of the

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85 Janartha, T.C., 2000, op.cit., p 47.
state from where the early Rajas ruled for twelve generations.\textsuperscript{87} Nothing is known about the next succeeding Rajas i.e. Dvij Pal, Chakar Pal, Kran Pal, Suraj Pal, and Raksh Pal.

From early period, the Tibetans were in the habit of making invasions into Kullu and their leader was called Spiti Thakur by Kullu people. In the time of early Pal Rajas, Spiti was ruled by Hindu kings and in Rudra Pal’s reign, 18\textsuperscript{th} of the line, Rajender Sen of Spiti invaded Kullu\textsuperscript{88} and subdued it, and a tribute of 6 annas\textsuperscript{89} in the rupee of land revenue seems to have been paid during the reigns of Rudra Pal and his successor.

Raja Rudra Pal was succeeded by Hamir Pal. Parsidhi Pal (20\textsuperscript{th} Raja) succeeded his father after his death. He defeated Chet Sen, Raja of Spiti in the battle near Rohtang pass. It was probably about 600 A.D that a Tibetan chief from Gyamurror in Ladakh overthrew the Hindu raja of Spiti and established Tibetan rule there\textsuperscript{90}. The chronicle records that he gave three Spiti villages to Sansar Pal (24\textsuperscript{th} Raja of Kullu) for assisting him against Raja of Spiti.\textsuperscript{91}

In the reign of Sridattesvar Pal the 31\textsuperscript{st} Raja, the Chamba state whose capital was then Brahaur was expanding eastward, and under Meru Verman, Raja of Chamba, they attacked Kullu state. The Kullu Raja, his son and one grandson was killed and other grandson Sital Pal fled to Bashahr, where the family seems to have remained for sometime as Sital Pal and five of his descendants never reigned and probably were all the time at the Bashahr court. Meantime Kullu state remained under the rule of Chamba until Sri Jaresvar Pal about 780 A.D., with the help of Bushahr and was assisted by the distraction caused by the Tibetan invasion of Chamba, in re-establishing the dynasty.\textsuperscript{92}

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{87} Ibid., p 29.
  \item \textsuperscript{88} Hutchison, J. and J. P. Vogel, 1982, op.cit., p 435.
  \item \textsuperscript{89} 1 anna equals to 6 paisa.
  \item \textsuperscript{90} Hutchison, J. and J. P. Vogel, 1982, op.cit., p 437.
  \item \textsuperscript{91} Punjab State Gazetteers 1910, op.cit., p 22.
  \item \textsuperscript{92} Hutchison, J. and J. P. Vogel, 1982, op.cit., p 435.
\end{itemize}
At the time of 43rd Raja Bhup Pal (about 900 A.D), Kullu was conquered by Suket and made to pay tribute. His son continued to pay the tribute, and when the next Raja Hast Pal in conspiracy with the brother of Raja of Suket, rebelled, both of them were killed in battle at Jiuri on the Sutlej, and Suket invaded Kullu and took possession of the state, allotting only small Jagirs to Hast Pal’s son. There was then pause for three generations, until a minority occurred in the Suket line and Surat Pal of Kullu assumed independence.93

Narendar Pal (60th Raja) was conquered by Banghal and Kullu remained subject to that state for ten years. Paying of tribute continued until the reign of Indar Pal, the 64th Raja. A more serious affair was the war with Suket. In Keral Pal’s time (67th Raja), the Raja of Suket, Mandan Sen, after a severe struggle conquered Kullu, as far as up to Katrain. He also built the fort in Khokhan Kothi, which he named Madanpur.94

The 72nd Raja Udhran Pal is noticeable for the fact that he is the first of the line whose date, 1418-28 A.D has been ascertained. The information comes from two inscriptions on his mask Hidimba Devi at Dhungri and on the Sandhya temple at Jagatsukh.95

Kelas Pal the successor of Udhran Pal, who probably ruled till A.D 1450, was the last of the Pal dynasty and after him there was a long break of about half a century. It is permissible to guess that Kelas Pal was driven out by a combined revolt of the Ranas and Thakurs and that he retired to Haridwar to wait for a favorable opportunity for returning to his dominions which did not occur till the time of his second and third descendent.96

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95 Ibid. p 9.
Singh Dynasty

The first solid ground in the history of the Kullu state appears to be touched about the middle of the 15th century in the reign of Raja Sidh Singh, whom tradition places 74th in descent from Behangamani Pal. From Sidh Singh onwards, the ruler of Kullu state added the suffix ‘Singh’ to their names. The date of accession can be fixed at 1500 A.D. on the basis of an inscription on the mask of Vishnu at Sajla in Kothi Barsarya.\(^9^7\)

The date of Sidh Singh can be approximately fixed by calculation from the reign of Jagat Singh, sixth in descent from him who was a contemporary with Shahjahan and Auranzeb. A series of letters are still addressed to him by these monarchs under the title of “Zamindar of Kullu” which, show year 1640 and 1680. Sidh Singh had to fight against several local Ranas and Thakurs during his reign. Tibetans were driven out of Kullu in 1530 A.D.

Sidh Singh having made himself master of all Kullu Parol died probably in 1532 A.D. and was succeeded by his son Bahadur Singh who is said to have overthrown many petty Thakurs and annexed their dominions and in this way Waziri Rupi and more than one third of inner Seraj area along the upper slopes of the Jalori Ridge were conquered.\(^9^8\) Bahadur Singh was succeeded by Pratap Singh in 1559 A.D.

The second period begins with the overthrow of the kingdom of Lag by Raja Jagat Singh of Kullu, a contemporary of Shahjahan and Auranzeb. He was the most notable ruler of the Kullu state and ruled from 1640 to 1680 A.D. He was also successful in conquering some part of the Outer Seraj in Kullu also. Jagat Singh transferred his capital from Naggar to Sultanpur in about 1660 A.D.\(^9^9\) At Sultanpur he made a palace for himself and a temple for the reigning deity Raghunathji where he installed an image of Rama.

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\(^9^7\) Final Settlement Report of the Kulu Sub Division, District Kangra, 1913, op.cit., p 10.
\(^9^8\) Gazetteers of the Kangra District 1883-84, 1994 (reprint), Part-I, New Delhi, Indus Publishing House, p 40.
During the reign of Man Singh from 1688 to 1719 A.D. Kullu reached the zenith of its power. Man Singh seems to have always fighting. He is said to have taken from Mandi the famous salt mines of Komadh and Drang. He completed the conquest of Outer Seraj by taking Pandrabis from Bashahr, and built three forts in that Kothi. He was at last surprised and killed by the Komarsen raja into whose state he had been enticed unguarded and was then set by Bashahr and killed.

Raj Singh came to the throne in 1719 A.D. His reign seems to have been uneventful. He was succeeded by Raja Ja; Singh. The decline of Kullu state started in the time of Jai Singh. It is believed that he went to Ramdarbar in to the worship of Raghunathji till his death.\(^{100}\)

The affairs of the state were left in the hands of his brother Tedhi Singh. When Tedhi Singh assumed power, the people refused to acknowledge him in the exception that Jai Singh would return. Tedhi Singh employed a band of wondering Bairagis (Hindu ascetics) as a body guard in his service and used them to murder many of his opponents. Tedhi Singh died in 1767 A.D without a legitimate heir. Pritam Singh one of his illegitimate offspring was recognized as the Raja. He invaded Mandi and recovered the forts of Deogarh, Mostpur, Sari and Amargarh but Mandi state once again took its entire fort back in the reign of Bikram Singh.\(^{101}\)

Subsequently, however the kingdom of Kangra under Sansar Chand emerged as a dominant power over a large part of the hill area furthermore towards the closing years of the 18th century; the Gurkhas invaded the Himachal hills and established control in the territory up to the Sutlej river. Because of emergence of these two powers, the Raja of Kullu had to pay a tribute to Gurkhas for the Shangri area and the Raja Sansar Chand of Kangra for Kullu area.\(^{102}\)

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\(^{100}\) Ibid., p 32.
\(^{101}\) Ibid, p 33.
In 1806, the Gurkhas with the aid of some other hill chiefs, invaded Kangra and forced Sansar Chand to seek the help of Maharaja Ranjit Singh to become the overlord of many of the hill states including Kullu. It was ultimately the British who intervened which resulted in establishing control over the hill states and on Shimla region by Sansar Chand.103

Kullu state however remained under Sikh control. The last ruler of Kullu was Ajit Singh who was deposed by the Sikhs in 1840. In 1846 the Sikhs too were defeated by the British and were compelled to cede the territory of the Jalandhar Doab along with Kullu to the state of the Kangra area.104

After the establishment of British control, Kullu became a sub-division of Kangra district comprising the upper Beas valley, Rupi, Seraj, Lahul and Spiti. After the first Anglo-Sikh war (1845), the territory between the Sutlej and Ravi was ceded to the British by the treaty of 9th March 1846, to be administered along with Lahul and Spiti as a Tehsil of Kangra district.105

The Raja of Kullu and his successors had to remain content with the allocation of a Jagir. The Waziri of Rupi within the British administered territory of Kullu was granted to Raja for this purpose.106

In 1852 when Gyan Singh became the ruler, his title was changed to Rai. While continuing the Jagir, all political powers were snatched from the Rai along with his right to fell and sell timber in the Jagir granted to him.107

At the time of the revolt of 1857, Major Hay had to tackle a serious law and order situation. In Kullu when Pratap Singh, claiming to be the son

103 Gazetteers of the Kangra District 1883-84, 1994 (reprint), op.cit., p 42.
105 Ibid., p 37.
of Kishan Singh, organized the revolt against the British affirming his claims to the Rupi-Jagir, Major Hay arrested him. It appeared that most of the Negis of Seraj had supported him for a dual purpose, firstly to oppose the British Raj and secondly to humiliate Rā: Gyan Singh. Partap Singh and four others were hanged in Dharamshala jail.\textsuperscript{108}

Gyan Singh died in 1869, and the Jagir passed to his son Dalip Singh on his attaining majority in 1883. He too enjoyed his possessions only for few years and died in 1892 due to an attack of small pox. Megh Singh continued to hold the Jagir. He was succeeded by his son, Rai Bhagwant Singh. The present descendent Maheshwar Singh is the representative of the Kullu Rajas. He is still shown the traditional reverence by the Kullu people, especially during the Kullu Dushehra festival celebration.\textsuperscript{109}

After the revolt of 1857, the Kullu state was united with the district of Kangra. However, for administrative purposes, it was treated as sub division of Kangra and an Assistant Commissioner was posted to look after its affairs. It was to function under the overall supervision of Deputy Commissioner of Kangra at Dharamsala. The revenue powers of the Assistant Commissioner were those of a Collector.\textsuperscript{110}

The first Assistant Commissioner of Kullu was Major Hay, at Naggar. The sub-division became increasingly popular with the British officers and quite a few of them settled there after their retirement from active service. In 1867, Kullu area along with Lahul and Spiti was separated from the Kangra district and was placed in the charge of the \textit{Agent}, looking after the Western Himalayan Native States. The area was important as it was producing good wool. It appears that for administrative purposes Kullu and Seraj were treated as two separate units. Kullu was under the charge of

\textsuperscript{108} Janartha, T.C., 2000, op.cit., p 77.
\textsuperscript{109} Ibid., p 79.
\textsuperscript{110} Gazetteers of the Kangra District 1883-84, 1994 (reprint), op.cit., p 116.
Tehsildar and the work in Seraj was looked after by a Naib Tehsildar. Between 1853 to 1917 as many 44 Assistant Commissioners worked in Kullu.\textsuperscript{111}

A major change in administrative set up of Kullu division was effected when on June 30\textsuperscript{th}, 1960 Lahul and Spiti tehsils were detached from Kullu sub-division and a separate district of Lahul and Spiti was formed. Kullu was upgraded as a district in 1963. Under the Punjab State Reorganization Act, 1966, the Kullu district along with other adjoining hill areas of the composite Punjab state were integrated and merged with the state of Himachal Pradesh. This foregoing administrative set up continues till today.\textsuperscript{112}

\textsuperscript{111} Final Settlement Report of the Kulu Sub Division, District Kangra, 1913, op.cit., p 17.