Although the ages, Ladakh, one of the oldest polities in the Western Himalayas, has played a prominent part in Central Asian politics. To start with, it was used by the Indian and Tibetan invaders for establishing their colonies on either side of the Tarim basin. Leh, the capital of Ladakh was an important commercial entrepot, and the Central Asian trade route which linked Kashmir, Afghanistan and Persia with Kashgar, Tibet and China, passed through Ladakh. To-day, Ladakh's strategic importance has multiplied manifold in the context of India's present relations with Peking-ruled Tibet and the People's Republic of China. It is evident that this important Western Himalayan principality presents in itself a fascinating subject for serious study.

The second quarter of the nineteenth century was one of the most formative periods in the chequered history of Ladakh. It was during those fateful years that Ladakh became an object of frequent Dogra invasions and lost its independent existence. The country was dragged into war against its neighbours i.e. Baltistan and Tibet. In 1846, it became a part of the Jammu and Kashmir state of Maharaja Gulab Singh, while Lahul and Spiti — its two southern districts — were taken away and joined to the newly-acquired British territory of Kangra. Finally, in 1847-48, attempts were made to demarcate the boundaries of Ladakh. The present study deals with all these aspects of its history. In addition, there is a brief sketch of the administrative structure of the Ladakhi state and of some aspects of the social life of its people.
The Dogra invasions led by Wazir Zorawar Singh Kahluria are not less significant in Indian History. His conquest of Ladakh and Baltistan, added an area of about 40,000 square miles to the Sikh state and extended its boundaries in the north to their geographical limits. His invasion of Western Tibet, when he tried to extend the boundaries of the Sikh state to the other side of the Himalayas, is without parallel in Indian History. The reactions of the British Indian Government and of Nepal besides those of Tibet and China towards these invasions form an intricate, albeit interesting part of the same story. Despite their importance, these events, unlike those in the north-west of India (the first Afghan War and the annexation of Sindh), have received little attention on the part of historians; in fact they have not been a subject of serious and thorough study. The present thesis is a modest effort to fill up this gap. It thus makes an attempt at a study of the history of this obscure region, of which our knowledge is still so scanty.

By 1819, Maharaja Ranjit Singh had subdued almost all the small mountain states lying between the Sutlej and Kashmir. After establishing his sway in the hills in that year, the Maharaja conquered Kashmir and realised his customary tribute from the ruler of Ladakh also. This would explain why the year 1819 has been selected as the starting point of the period of this study. In 1846, Ladakh became a part of the Jammu and Kashmir state of Maharaja Gulab Singh, who recognised British supremacy. In the next two years, the British Indian Government made attempts to demarcate the boundaries of Ladakh; in 1848, all these attempts were abandoned.
The period after 1848 is relatively uneventful and lacks sufficient historical interest: hereafter Ladakh continued to be peacefully governed by a Thanadar (later known as Wazir-i-Wazarat), appointed by the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir until 1947, when, along with other parts of the state, it became a part of the Indian Union. Thus 1848 is a reasonably logical endpoint of this investigation.

So far as historical research is concerned, Ladakh is not an entirely uncultivated field. General Alexander Cunningham who visited Ladakh in 1846-47, was the first to write about it. His book (Ladakh, Physical, Statistical and Historical, London, 1854), gives a general account of Ladakh and includes a small chapter on its history. This account of the previous history of Ladakh begins with about 1580 A.D., and is said to be based upon a Ladakhi chronicle. But as Cunningham held—though wrongly—that prior to the 16th century, no native chronicles of Ladakh were extant, his account is quite brief and sketchy. Cunningham also gives a factual account of the Dogra invasions of Ladakh, which he says is mostly based upon the information supplied to him by Mehta Basti Ram—a trusted lieutenant of Wazir Zorawar Singh. Cunningham's Ladak, which also deals with the physical features of Ladakh and several social institutions of its people, though obsolete in some respects, is truly a model of scientific and patient enquiry, and has been drawn upon heavily.

Dr. Emil Schlagintweit, one of the three celebrated German brothers, who visited Ladakh in 1856, for the first time brought to public notice, the existence
of 'La-dvags rGyal-rabs' ('Royal Chronicle of Ladakh'), a document which dealt with the early history of Ladakh; in 1866, he published in Munich the text and translation of this document. Dr. Karl Marx, a Moravian missionary, who stayed in Ladakh for some years, not only further elaborated the researches of Dr. Schlagintweit, but also brought to light two other Ladakhi documents; later he translated all these documents in English. But in the field of Ladakhi history, invaluable pioneer work was done by Dr. A.H. Francke. He was also a Moravian missionary, and a versatile scholar, who spent some years in Lahul and Ladakh and carried detailed researches into the dialects, customs, folk-lore, ethnology and archaeology of Western Tibet. In 1909, on being commissioned by the Government of India, he carried out a detailed archaeological survey of Ladakh and produced a monumental work, (Antiquities of Indian Tibet, two parts, Calcutta, 1914-26). The first part of Francke's book gives the personal narrative of his adventures and researches while the second contains all inscriptions, 'La-dvags rGyal-rabs' ('Royal Chronicle of Ladakh), and other 'Minor Chronicles' (chronicles of Tibetan-speaking regions neighbouring Ladakh), which Francke collected during the course of his tour. Unfortunately, the Chronicles of Ladakh are limited in scope; like the Wamsavalis of many other mountain states, they are a happy amalgam of fable, fiction and fact, and are notoriously barren of details of any other interest than genealogical. In the light of the very scanty information contained in the Chronicles of Ladakh, and the one supplied by Tse-brtan of Khalatse,¹ Francke, in his Antiquities

¹When Dr. Francke made acquaintance with him (1899-1905), Tse-brtan, was an old man who in his younger days had done military service in the Dogra wars (1834-42).
of Indian Tibet, Part II, has re-edited Cunningham's account of the Dogra wars. But his narrative, like that of Cunningham, in some respect e.g. Dogra invasion of Western Tibet, and their final expedition to Ladakh, is quite brief and bristles with chronological mistakes.

Dr. Luciano Petech, an eminent Italian scholar, is one of the more recent in the line, who has made a thoroughly scientific study of the Royal Chronicles of Ladakh. But unfortunately, his work (A Study on the Chronicles of Ladakh, Indian Tibet, Calcutta, 1939), which is more comprehensive than the work of his predecessors in the field, closes with the Tibeto-Ladakhi-Mughal war (ca. 1681-84 A.D.). After him this field has not attracted any other serious student, and with the exception of two articles, also written by Dr. Petech, no addition has been made in the last quarter of a century to our knowledge of the history of Ladakh. In spite of their limited scope, this study has frequently drawn from all these sources, more particularly the contributions of Drs. Francke and Petech.

The second and the most important source on which this thesis is based, are the English manuscript records, available with the National Archives of India, New Delhi. These are the Secret and Political Proceedings and Consultations of the Foreign and Political Department of the Hon'ble East India Company's Government for the years 1819-1823, and 1834-1848. The Secret and Political despatches from the Government to the Court of Directors

\[1\] With the exception of first three chapters which deal with cosmology and mythology, the rest of this book was also published in the Indian Historical Quarterly, Vol. XV, No. 4, Supplement (December, 1939), pp. 39-189. I have consulted both the sources.
of the East-India Company also throw important side-light on the events discussed in this dissertation. The Parliamentary Papers and Debates, however, do not contain any reference to the events discussed herein.

The contemporary Persian, Urdu, and English newspapers and news-letters, also contain useful information; they are not only a mine of information on the political events, but often give excellent corroborative evidence.

Some contemporary Persian works also provide useful information. Most important of these are Umdat-ut-Tawarikh, Daftar III, and the Gulab Nama. Umdat-ut-Tawarikh was written by Lala Sohan Lal, Suri, the Akhbar Nawis or chronicler of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and has now been translated into English by Shri V. S. Suri. Gulab Nama was written by Dewan Kirpa Ram, Prime Minister of Maharajas Gulab Singh and Ranbir Singh, and published in Jammu in 1875.

A contemporary Chinese document, Hei-Tsang Tsou-Shu, (Tibetan Memorials and Reports), Volume I, which gives information about the Dogra-Tibetan war of 1841-42, has also been used in this study. While using such Chinese and Persian documents, which are full of overtones of hyperbolic panegyrics and reveal only one side of the shield, one has to be cautious.

1This book was compiled by Meng Pao, Imperial Resident at Lhasa from 1839 to 1844; English translation of the more important reports and memorials concerning the Dogra War appear in Himalayan Battleground: Sino-Indian Rivalry in Ladakh by Margaret W. Fisher, Leo E. Rose and Robert A. Huttenback (New York: London, 1963), Appendix, pp. 155-176. I have used this source.
The narratives and reports of European travellers form another important source. For this area they are a storehouse of information and have the distinct advantage of being written from acute personal observation of the authors and at a period under the review of this investigation. William Moorcroft, the veteran Himalayan explorer, stayed in Ladakh for about two years (1819-21), and wrote very detailed reports about this Himalayan kingdom and its inhabitants. His information about the trade of Ladakh and its relations with Kashmir, Delhi, Lhasa and China is both revealing and valuable. All this information we find scattered in various reports and despatches which Moorcroft submitted to the Indian Government. These despatches are now available in the National Archives of India. The book dealing with his travels also contains some of this information. The works of A. Gerard, Jacquemont, Vigne, Hugel and the near-contemporary works of Frederic Drew are too well-known to be evaluated here again. The accounts of Strachey and Dr. Thomson have also proved useful. The contemporary accounts of native travellers such as Mir Izzet Ullah, Ahmad Shah Naqshbandi and Gholam Hyder have been consulted, occasionally to advantage. Gazetteers of Kashmir, Ladakh, Jammu, Kangra district, and other State Gazetteers of the neighbouring areas also contain much additional information.

The present study deals principally with the political events. One chapter, however, has been devoted to the description of important social institutions of the Ladakhis. For this purpose the works of later travellers who visited this remote and fascinating little world after 1848 have been drawn upon. Social institutions
in an area hemmed in the sea of mountains do not change easily.

This thesis is divided into eight chapters. The first chapter is about physical features, natural resources, trade, and population. The second deals with important social institutions of the Ladakhis, religion and administrative structure as it was under the native rulers of Ladakh. The third highlights Ladakh's past history and her relations with the neighboring states. The fourth deals with the rise to power of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the Dogra Raja Gulab Singh of Jammu and the East India Company on the periphery of Ladakh, and the rival attempts of these powers to import shawl wool — the most lucrative article of trade in the region — into their respective spheres of influence. The fifth chapter is divided into four sections: the first and the second deal with the Dogra conquest of Ladakh and Baltistan, respectively; the third deals with Zorawar Singh's invasion of Western Tibet and the fourth with the final Dogra expeditionary force and signing of the peace treaty between the Dogras and the Tibetans. The sixth chapter contains a detailed study of the reactions and attitudes of the British Indian Government and Nepal towards these Dogra invasions; the seventh is about Raja Gulab Singh's becoming an independent ruler of Ladakh, Jammu and Kashmir under British supremacy and attempts of the British Indian Government to demarcate the boundaries of Ladakh. In the eighth an attempt has been made to draw certain conclusions from the facts and evidence adduced in the preceding seven chapters.

A word of explanation is necessary about the references and the bibliography. There is great paucity
of material on this remote region, and it has been exceedingly difficult to obtain it. Even to consult printed works, I had to travel considerable distances. It was impossible to check many references collected in the field: in all cases where possible, a careful effort has been made to avoid errors. The difficult circumstances under which this research had to be conducted is, however, I hope, accepted as an extenuating circumstance.

In drafting this thesis, I have made efforts to make it as interesting and readable as possible, for, I am aware that a work based on diverse sources as this, generally tends to be a drab, dull-reading narrative. Excerpts from contemporary records have been fitted into appropriate places to explain, correlate and sustain the general argument. A careful effort has also been made to avoid repetition and whenever such an occasion has arisen, only a passing mention is made to maintain the continuity of the account. Therefore, a certain point may not be found at an apt place simply because it has been placed at a more appropriate one. In spite of all my endeavours to produce a self-consistent study, I am acutely conscious of the imperfections of the result.

GIANDHARH:

NOVEMBER 15, 1967.

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