CHAPTER - I

AGRAARIAN CONDITIONS OF PUNJAB

PART - I

AGRAARIAN CONDITIONS DURING THE COLONIAL RULE

With the annexation of Punjab on 29 March, 1849, the British reached the natural limits of colonial expansion in India. The coming of the British gave a new turn to the history of Punjab. It not only ushered an era of political stability after a long gap but new developmental activities were also taken up that were advantageous to colonial interests. The colonial rule brought improved roads and railways. The railways were built to facilitate the transportation of the troops to the North-West frontier. But, it also had social and economic impact. The British introduced a new legal system and organized the Police force. The Imperial Postal Department was established and linked with other provinces. Agricultural frontiers were extended. A uniform system of land revenue was set up. The long peaceful period of the British rule (1849-1947) provided the pre-conditions for modern agricultural growth in the Punjab.

After the annexation of the Sikh Kingdom, a Board of Administration was established in 1849 by Lord Dalhousie. The Board was given the power to communicate directly with Governor General. It consisted of three members. Henry Lawrence was appointed President and two other members John Lawrence and Charles Grenville Mansel worked as his colleagues.¹ Henry Lawrence was entrusted with matters connected with defence and relations with Sardars. John Lawrence dealt with the settlement of land and other fiscal matters. Charles Grenville Mansel was entrusted with the administration of justice and police. The Board was the final court of appeal with powers of life and death. It was also given the charge of excise, revenue and police. The Board of Administration was helped by the most experienced Englishmen from all over India. The Board of Administration gave top priority to the defence and peace. Disarmament was the first problem to which the Board gave proper attention. The Sikh military chiefs and

¹ Y.B. Mathur, British Administration of Punjab (1849-75), Surjeet Book Depot, Delhi, 1972, p. 7.
soldiers were called to Lahore and were given their arrears and discharged. Some of them who appeared promising were taken in the British army. \(^2\)

The protection of the North-West was the second important task before the Board of Administration. In 1847, when Henry Lawrence was the Resident at Lahore, he and his colleagues had come in close contact with the Frontier Chiefs and tribesmen. The sympathetic and tactful approach of Henry Lawrence had broken the policy of isolation of these fierce and freedom loving people. \(^3\) For the protection of the plains of the Punjab, ten Regiments consisting of five cavalry and five infantry were recruited. A Military Police Force consisting of 8,000 men was also raised. \(^4\)

The process of pacification in Punjab was, however, largely facilitated by the Judicial system. The chief motive of the Board of Administration was to avoid all technical hardships and simplify procedure and process. The Board also recognized the importance of native institutions and practices. It framed a concise code of Civil Laws, or rather Civil Procedure based on the native customs, traditions and the holy books of the principal communities. The procedure of justice was so simple that it soon became very popular among all the classes of the Punjab. \(^5\)

II

In 1847, John Lawrence had made summary settlement in the territory which were directly under the control of Darbar. This work was done by young officers, who had little knowledge about the local conditions. \(^6\) The settlement officers were directed to


\(^3\) Y.B. Mathur, *British Administration of Punjab*, p.16.


\(^6\) N.M. Khilnani, *The Punjab under the Lawrences*, pp.116-117.
evaluate the economic conditions, habits, customs and character of cultivators. The British Government settled the land revenue with the actual tiller of the soil as far as possible. It also assured the amount of the land revenue to the government. During the period of Ranjit Singh, the share of the government was at half of the produce. John Lawrence lowered the land revenue than the Sikh period. However, under the new system, the cultivators were directed to pay their land revenue in cash in place of kind.7

These settlements were welcomed by the cultivators only for two years, when the crops were good and the market price was favourable. After the annexation, the production from land had increased as more land was being cultivated than before. But soon, the market was flooded with the grains and the prices of the crops fell nearly by 50 percent. Under such circumstances, the peasantry wanted to pay land tax in grain. John Lawrence however, refused to change the current system.8

The early land revenue settlement of the Punjab under the British rule was actually an extension of the system of the North-Western Province. After the annexation of the Punjab, many of the settlement officers came from the North-West province. So, a ready made system was introduced in the Punjab. The British wanted to pacify this region and also secure the payment of the land revenue. They knew that the Sikhs were not only good soldiers but also good farmers. To achieve this objective, Mahalwari system was introduced in the Punjab in contrast to the Zamindari system in the Bombay and Madras presidency. Under this system, the whole village community was collectively assessed for land revenue. The proprietors were made jointly responsible for its payment according to their share of land.9

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The assessment was imposed in each case on the basis of average collections of the preceding years. Sometimes, a committee of village elders, middlemen, former sub-collectors or local revenue officials was formed. The assessment was then converted into cash at the market rates of the day. This settlement was known as the summary settlement. This system continued up to 1863. According to this settlement, the person found in cultivating possession was treated as the proprietor.11

From 1863 to 1871, regular settlements were carried out. A Land Revenue Act was passed in 1871. Later, this Act was amended and replaced by the Act of 1887. Under each settlement, which was initially for twenty years and subsequently forty, a fresh contract was signed between the Government and the proprietary body. It remained responsible for the whole revenue even though it was spilt up among individual owners. The head man and land owners could be detained in case of default.12 With these regular settlements, the Land Revenue System in the Punjab under the British began to take a definite shape. Up to the end of the nineteenth century, the Land Revenue and cesses together did not exceed forty percent of the net assets.13 However, the Land Revenue System of the British in the Punjab invited lot of debate among the British Officials. Some saying that higher land revenue demand is responsible for indebtedness of Punjab peasantry and other saying that land revenue demand under the British rule was much less than that was under the Sikh rule.14

11 S.S. Thorburn, Musalmans and Money lenders in the Punjab, pp. 46-47.
III

In 1849, only about one-fourth of the total area of the Punjab was under cultivation. About one-sixth to one-fifth was regularly irrigated. Inundation canals from rivers such as Chenab and Indus did exist.\(^{15}\) The British Government realizing the importance of the canal irrigation proceeded in a systematic manner and extended the water capacity of Punjab in two ways. It constructed the new canals and extended the old ones.\(^ {16}\) The state canals, though, the main source of irrigation, were supplemented by other irrigation facilities such as private canals, tanks and masonry wells.

The first major work for the expansion of irrigation work was Bari Doab Canal. This project was started in 1850 and fully completed by 1860-61.\(^ {17}\) Till the end of the nineteenth century, the Bari Doab Canal irrigated 8,61,301 acres and by 1945-46, it irrigated 1.5 million acres in Lahore, Gurdaspur and Amritsar.\(^ {18}\) The Western Jamuna Canal was remodeled in 1873 with its head work at Jajewala. It irrigated 990,826 acres of Karnal, Delhi, Rohtak, Hissar and Ambala by 1936-37. The Sirhind Canal was constructed to irrigate the area lying between the rivers Satluj and Ghaggar. This project started effective irrigation in 1885 with its headwork at Ropar. This canal irrigated about one million acres in the British India.\(^ {19}\)

The Lower Chenab was converted into a perennial canal in 1893. It irrigated the land of Gujranwala, Sheikhpura, Lyallpur and Jhung. The town of Lyallpur took its birth due to this canal. It irrigated annually 25 lakh acres. The Lower Chenab Canal was


perhaps the most extensive irrigation system built in India by the British. It irrigated 18,30,525 acres.\textsuperscript{20} The opening of the Lower Chenab was a turning point in the economic history of the Punjab. The Sidhnai Canal in Multan district was opened in 1886-1887 for the irrigation of the western parts of the Ravi –Sutlej watershed. This canal irrigated about 1,69,780 acres in 1900-01.\textsuperscript{21}

The Triple Canal Project was the largest irrigation project designed in India till 1905. The main object of this project was the irrigation of the area between Ravi and Satluj in the South-West of Lahore. Under this project, the surplus water of Jhelum was poured into Chenab and the water of Chenab into Ravi for the irrigation of Ganji Bar. The three other major irrigation works, the Satluj Valley Project, Haveli Project and Thal Project were undertaken after 1919 when irrigation became the transferred subject under the system of Dyarchy.\textsuperscript{22}

Besides the perennial canals, several inundation canals were taken off from the lower course of rivers Satluj, Ravi, Chenab, Indus and Ghaggar. These canals irrigated the area of Multan, Muzaffargarh, Jhang, Dera Ghazi Khan and Sirsa.\textsuperscript{23} The length of the main canals in the Punjab were 2810 miles and of the distributaries, 14,827 miles by 1936-37. Total land irrigated from all sources in 1936-37 in British India was 51,136,212 acres of which 15,604,907 acres or 30.7 percent lay in the Punjab.\textsuperscript{24}

Besides, the construction of new canals and the renovation of old ones, the colonization of the barren land of the Western Punjab was another important project of the British. According to Imran Ali, the main purpose of the British was to promote

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{20} Himadri Banerjee, \textit{Agrarian Society of the Punjab (1849-1901)}, p.23. Also see, Imran Ali, “Canal Colonization and Socio-Economic Change”, in Indu Banga (ed.), \textit{Five Centuries : Polity, Economy, Society and Culture (1500-1900)}, pp.347-349.
  \item \textsuperscript{21} Himadri Banerjee, \textit{Agrarian Society of the Punjab (1849-1901)}, p.22.
  \item \textsuperscript{23} Himadri Banerjee, \textit{Agrarian Society of the Punjab (1849-1901)}, p.23.
  \item \textsuperscript{24} B.S. Saini, \textit{The Social & Economic History of the Punjab (1901-1939)}, Ess Publications, Delhi, 1974, pp.215-218. Also see, Master Hari Singh, \textit{Agrarian Scene in British India}, pp.114-115.
\end{itemize}
agricultural development, expand the revenue base, secure the political support and facilitate the recruitment in the army.\textsuperscript{25}

The vast area of the Western Punjab had been lying waste for thousand of years due to lack of sufficient rainfall. Only semi-nomadic population known as \textit{Janglis} roamed and grazed the cattle. The British believed that \textit{Janglis} were not only less in number but also lacked the agricultural skills which were required for cultivating the cash crops.\textsuperscript{26} The hardy peasants from central districts of Punjab such as Jalandhar, Hoshiarpur, Gurdaspur and Ludhiana were selected and settled in these lands.\textsuperscript{27} Malcolm Darling observes that in the selection of colonists, Government had two main objects. Firstly, it wanted to decrease the pressure of population in the highly congested districts of the Central Punjab. Secondly, it was designed to establish villages, of a type superior in comfort and civilization to any thing which had previously existed in the Punjab.\textsuperscript{28}

The British established nine colonies in the Punjab. The first colonization project was Sidhnoi colony established in Multan district between 1886-1888. The next project was Sohag Para colony located in Montgomery district during the same period. Chunian colony was situated in Lahore district. The settlement took place in this colony between 1896-98 and 1904-1906.\textsuperscript{29}

The development of Chenab colony has achieved a unique place in the agrarian history of the modern Punjab. This was the biggest project. It covered area of over two million acres. The headquarter of this colony was Lyallpur.\textsuperscript{30} The Jhelum colony was established between 1902 and 1906 in Gujrat district. Lower Bari Doab colony was

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{28} Malcolm Darling, \textit{The Punjab Peasant in Prosperity and Debt}, p.116.
\end{thebibliography}
situated in Montgomery and Multan districts. It was colonized between 1905-1925. The other two projects were Upper Chenab colony in Gujrat district and Nili Bar colony in Montgomery and Multan districts. Nili Bar colony was the final phase of agricultural colonization in the Punjab. By the end of the British rule, the aggregate area of these colonies came to 10 million acres. Artificial water supply had played an important role in the agriculture of Punjab during the ancient and medieval time. But, according to M. Mufakharul Islam the Punjab became an Hydraulic society per excellence under the British rule. This was possible because of the combination of British capital, the engineering skill and labour force.

On the eve of the British rule in the Punjab, though large area was under wheat cultivation, yet it had a small external market due to the absence of modern means of communication. In the mid 1860s, an increase in the demand for the Punjab wheat opened a new era. Soon it claimed the area of inferior crops like Jowar and Bajra the Punjab came to be known as a country of wheat. More than one thousand samples of Indian wheat were tested in England under the direction of an agricultural expert, Forbes Watson. Some Indian samples were treated at a value equal to the better kinds of Australian and American wheat. The wheat from the Punjab was dry, so flour was good for baking. It was exported to London at the time of the year when supplies from other countries were not available. Soon it replaced American and Russian wheat in England. Many a times, the Punjab wheat was sent to Europe also. It was also exported to other parts of India. The Punjab produced 42 percent of the total Indian wheat output by the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

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35 Himmat Singh, *Green Revolutions Reconsidered*, p.31.
The process of commercialization of agriculture brought significant changes for the rural economy of the Punjab. It encouraged the process of substitution of inferior crops by the superior ones. To a large extent, wheat replaced jowar, bajra, and other crops in the large extent in the Central districts of Punjab and canal colonies. The cultivation of cotton increased during the American Civil War. Sugar-cane was often replaced by cotton as its demand increased. It is, however, also argued that the commercialization of agriculture brought little benefit to the peasantry. As the peasant had to pay land revenue in cash and on fixed time, he was forced to sell their produce at a low market price to the sahukars. The Commercialization of agriculture increased the indebtedness of the agriculturists.\(^{36}\)

**IV**

The Punjab was the most prosperous province in India under the colonial rule. But, it was also the most indebted state. More than 80 percent of the proprietors of the Punjab were in debt. The bulk of cultivators of Punjab were born in debt, lived in debt and died in debt.\(^{37}\)

The shift from kind to cash revenue payment was the major cause for the rural indebtedness. The peasant had to go to the moneylender for cash. After agriculture, money lending was the most popular occupation. The poor peasant, landless tenant, and agricultural labourer generally faced the shortage of money. They had to borrow money at harsh terms and conditions. For everything like the payment of land revenue and water rate, sinking a new well and for buying a cattle, they had to go to moneylenders. Near about 55,000 persons were dependent totally or in part upon money lending.\(^{38}\) Calvert

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estimated that there were about 40,000 money lenders in the province and their proportion was 1:100.\textsuperscript{39}

With the development of canal irrigation system and the commercialization of the agriculture, the prices of land started rising and the land became a marketable commodity. In certain cases, the price of land increased from Rs. 10 per acre in 1869-70 to Rs 451 per acre by 1938-1939. So, peasants could borrow more money against the land he had.\textsuperscript{40}

The continuous rise in the price of land changed the attitude of money lenders regarding the acquisition of land. Now, they were eager to accept land as a security for loans. As a result, there was a great increase in the number of mortgages. In 1876-77 near about 30,900 acres of land transferred through sale and mortgage which further increased to 1,200,000 acres by 1886-87.\textsuperscript{41} Small size of holding, losses of cattle from drought and disease, insecurity of crops and extravagant expenditure upon marriage and other social ceremonies were some of the other causes of indebtedness of peasant proprietors.\textsuperscript{42}

The widespread indebtedness led to displacement of peasantry from their ancestral holdings. According to an enquiry for the year 1887-88, it was found that out of 8,634 cases of alienations, at least 926 were due to the payment of the Government revenue. The transfer of lands raised a debate among contemporary British officials.\textsuperscript{43} A section of the British official were of the opinion that only the land owning tribes were the real foundation of the British rule and the backbone of the native part of the army. If they did not safeguard their interest they would not hesitate to revolt against the Raj. On

\textsuperscript{42} Malcolm Darling, \textit{The Punjab Peasant in Prosperity and Debt}, p. 222.
\textsuperscript{43} Himadri Banerjee, \textit{Agrarian Society of the Punjab (1849-1901)}, pp. 87-88.
the other side, the money lending castes contributed nothing to the stability of the British Empire in India.\textsuperscript{44}

In 1884, Thorburn, an officer in Dera Ismail Khan sent a detailed report on the indebtedness of the Muslim Zamindars of the frontier districts of the Punjab to Lahore. He claimed that eight percent of the cultivable land in Dera Ismail Khan had been transferred in the last five years to Hindu money lenders due to peasant extravagance and defects in the administrative systems. He viewed that the legislation was badly needed to avert future agrarian trouble in the province.\textsuperscript{45}

The Land Alienation Act was passed on October 19, 1900 to protect the agriculturists from the clutches of the moneylenders. It restricted the alienation of land to non-cultivating castes such as Khatri, Arora and Bania. They could not purchase agriculture land. It created serious discontentment among the non-cultivating castes. The Muslim peasants of the Western Punjab who were heavily indebted to the Hindu and the Sikh money lenders strongly favoured the Act.\textsuperscript{46}

Though, the land Alienation Act saved agricultural land from passing to the hand of non-agriculturists classes, yet it failed to solve the problem of indebtedness. There grew a new class of agriculturist money lenders. The main reason for indebtedness was the lack of co-operative movement and others sources of the credit.\textsuperscript{47} As per the Central Banking Enquiry Committee, the debt of British India in 1929 was Rs. 900 crores, out of

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{44} Bhagwan Josh, \textit{Communist Movement in Punjab (1926-47)}, Anupama Publications, Delhi, 1979, p.29. Also see, Mirdula Mukherjee, \textit{Colonializing Agriculture- The Myth of Punjab Exceptionalism}, p. 31 and Himadri Banerjee, \textit{Agrarian Society of the Punjab (1849-1901)}, p.88.
\item \textsuperscript{46} Bhagwan Josh, \textit{Communist Movement in Punjab (1926-47)}, pp. 33-34.
\item \textsuperscript{47} Malcom Darling, \textit{The Punjab Peasant in Prosperity and Debt}, pp. 198-199. Also see, Mirdula Mukherjee, \textit{Colonializing Agriculture-The Myth of Punjab Exceptionalism}, p. 44.
\end{itemize}
which the share of Punjab was Rs. 135 crores. The British Punjab contained 7 percent of the population of British India and her share of debt exceeded 15 percent of the total.\(^{48}\)

The Great Economic Depression from 1929 to 1933 took its toll everywhere. There was heavy fall in the prices of food grains in the period of Great Depression. It led to ruination of the peasantry. Small holders and tenants were virtually ruined and they were often unable to pay their land revenue. The wages of agricultural labours and the earnings of the members of a farmer’s family were already low.\(^{49}\)

Due to the world wide depression and slum in trade and consequent fall in prices of agricultural produce, the wages of all classes of labour declined. The fall was universal both in the urban and rural tracks. The percentages of increase or decrease in the wages of each class of labour in Lahore, Amritsar and Multan towns between 1927 and 1932 was :-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class of Labourers</th>
<th>Percentage of Increase or Decrease</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lahore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers in Iron and Hardware</td>
<td>-50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brass, copper and bell metal workers</td>
<td>-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpenters</td>
<td>-22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton weavers</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masons and builders</td>
<td>-28</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unskilled labourers</td>
<td>-47</td>
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From the above table it becomes clear that the decrease in wages was a general phenomenon everywhere except in the case of brass, copper and bell metal workers in Amritsar. The decrease was due to general depression in trade which had lowered the

\(^{48}\) Sukhdev Singh Sohal, "Extent of Rural Indebtedness in the Colonial Punjab (1901-1947)”, Proceedings of Punjab History Conference, Punjabi University, Patiala, March, 1996, p. 188.


\(^{50}\) Report of the Fifth Regular Wages Survey of the Punjab, December, 1932, Director of Land Records, Punjab, 6 September, 1933, p. 1.
financial position of the people leading to less demand for workers and hard competition owing to unemployment. The fall in the prices of food stuffs also did not help the workers as there was no work and hence no wages.\textsuperscript{51} Agriculture became a losing business. The abnormal fall in the prices of agricultural products made it difficult for the cultivators to pay land revenue and irrigation rates. There was general demand of the peasantry for reduction in land revenue and water rates.\textsuperscript{52}

The Punjab Legislative Assembly passed several resolutions to recommend thirty to fifty percent relaxation in land revenue. But the Government did not bother. The Cooperative Movement also failed to provide relief to the cultivators. Consequently, they had to go to the money lenders to borrow money and their indebtedness further increased. The Punjab Banking Enquiry Committee estimated that by 1929 the total debt of the peasantry of the Punjab had risen to 1,350 million rupees. Meanwhile, the agricultural prices had gone down and therefore debt was now at a much greater proportion to gross agricultural income. In 1921, debt was estimated at 900 million and the average annual gross agricultural income of the three years 1920-23 was Rs. 1,400 millions. The indebtedness led to the transfer of land from the agricultural class to the non-agriculturist moneylenders. Due to this miserable situation of the peasantry, many agriculturists turned into landless labourers.\textsuperscript{53}

In 1976, the National Commission on Agriculture while commenting on the situation of Indian agriculture in pre-independence period said, “There was a sharp contrast between the measures adopted by the Governments in the Western countries and those adopted by the Government of India to combat the effects of depression. In the Western countries, agricultural prices were raised by restricting the production and purchasing the surplus produce from the market and encouraging exports through bilateral agreements. Other economic, fiscal and monetary measures, such as investment-

\textsuperscript{51} Report of the Fifth Regular Wages Survey of the Punjab, December, 1932, Director of Land Records, Punjab, 6 September, 1933, p. 9.
\textsuperscript{52} M.S. Randhawa, A History of Agriculture in India, pp. 355-356.
planning for increasing output, income and employment and currency depreciation were taken. In India, very few measures were taken and they were very inadequate and came after a long time gap. No action was taken by the Government to support the prices of agricultural commodities, except the price of sugarcane. The Government did not take any measures to inject purchasing power into the economy. It could have done so through public works, liberal credits to individual’s for undertaking works of agricultural improvement, construction works etc. India was, perhaps the one country in the world in which the state did almost nothing to help the agriculturist through the crisis”.  

In fact, during the years of depression, large sections of the Punjab peasantry in general and small holders and tenants in particular were groining under the weight of indebtedness. They were unable to pay the high land revenue and water rates. The economic crisis of 1929 took the form of an agrarian crisis. The miseries of the peasantry increased and the 1930s became the years of active agrarian agitations. Therefore, the Communist Party suggested several principles of agrarian legislation. The Unionist Party which claimed to representing the interest of peasantry introduced three pro-agriculturists Bills in Punjab Legislative Assembly in 1938. The main motive of these Bills was to check the dishonest and fraudulent money lenders, to wave some of the loopholes in the Alienation of Land Act, 1900 and to protect the interest of the agriculturists from the malpractices of shopkeepers and brokers.

The Registration of Money Lending Bill was passed in 1938. Only registered and licensed money lenders could advance money. The license of the moneylenders was for a fixed period. The Punjab Alienation of Land (Second Amendment) Bill was also passed in 1938. All benami transfers were declared null and void, and entitled the original owners or their successors to recover their lands in some cases after paying compensation

55 Bhagwan Josh, Communist Movement in Punjab, pp. 142-143.
to the buyers. But there were some loopholes in this Bill. As a result, the Punjab Alienation of Land (Third amendment) Bill had to be introduced. Its aimed at protecting the agriculturist debtor from the agriculturist money lender by restricting the alienation of land from the debtor to the creditor.\textsuperscript{58}

Another Bill, the Punjab Restitution of Mortgaged Land Bill was also introduced in the same session to give relief to the indebted peasantry. The Bill provided for the restoration, without any compensation, of agricultural lands mortgaged prior to 8th June, 1901, if the mortgage had already derived from the land benefits amounting to twice the mortgage money. The mortgagee was to be given reasonable compensation in certain cases.\textsuperscript{59} Chaudhri Chhotu Ram also moved the Punjab Agricultural Produce Marketing Bill to protect the growers of agricultural commodities from various malpractices of shopkeepers and brokers. This Bill recommended the establishment of market committees and a market committee fund was created with certain defined functions and powers.\textsuperscript{60}

The introduction of all these Bills resulted in a wave of resentment and anger amongst the non-agriculturist members. They declared these Bills as anti non-agriculturist. These Bills raised a sharp controversy in the politics of the province. When the non-agriculturist money lenders and the commercial classes organized hartals and protested against the Bills, it divided the Congress. Dr. Satyapal wanted the members not to agitate against the Bills, on the other hand, Dr. Gopi Chand Bhargav encouraged them to join the protest.\textsuperscript{61} The Relief Indebtedness Act XII, 1940, was a radical measure. The

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problem of indebtedness was solved to a great extent by this Act. Debt Conciliation Board was established and the excessive load of compound interest was removed.\textsuperscript{62}

\section*{V}

It can still be argued that despite many hazarders and little benefit to the agriculturist class, the Punjabi peasant during the colonial period had become more market oriented. They were ready to take greater risks for higher profits. It can also be argued that long before the coming of the Green Revolution they had begun their transformation from risk-avoiding subsistence farming to profit maximizing produce for the market.\textsuperscript{63}

Christopher J. Baker remarked that there have not one but many ‘Green Revolutions’ in Punjab.\textsuperscript{64} The Punjab came to be known as a country of wheat in the second half of the Nineteenth Century. Indian wheat was recognized at a value equal to the better kinds of Australia and America.\textsuperscript{65} It is argued that the first Green Revolution occurred in the late-nineteenth century when the British colonial administration developed the famous canal colonies with the help of canals and an expansion of traditional brick well based irrigation system. Human skills, agricultural techniques, the expansion of credit and other extension systems created a substantial market oriented agriculture. Later on, Horticultural Society, Agricultural Department, Experimental Farms, Model Farms, Veterinary Hospitals, Takavi Loans Agencies, Agricultural Exhibitions, Agricultural Education and Agricultural Conferences were introduced for the development of agriculture.\textsuperscript{66}

The canal colonies were model of advance agronomic system. Individual grants allotted to some of the larger landowners such as Sardar Daljit Singh and Sardar Joginder

\textsuperscript{62} M.S. Randhawa, \textit{A History of Agriculture in India}, p. 263.

\textsuperscript{63} Himmat Singh, \textit{Green Revolutions Reconsidered}, p.10.


Singh on condition that they produced seeds, experimented with agricultural machinery and constructed a network of tube wells.\textsuperscript{67}

The establishment of the Government Agricultural and Research Institute, Lyallpur in 1907 was a milestone in the history of agricultural development in the Punjab. In the beginning, Lyallpur College was to survey and classify the various varieties of wheat grown in the Punjab. Under the leadership of Sir Albert Howard, the college classified as many as twenty five varieties of Punjab wheat. Later on, it released and recommended them for cultivation to the farmers such as Type-11, Type-14, Type-8A and Type 9D.\textsuperscript{68}

The Colonial Punjab increased the agricultural production by bringing more area under cultivation. Punjabi farmers purchased new implements for the improvement of cultivation. Sugarcane-crushers, persian wheels, ploughs, fodder cutter, harrows and drills became common among the agriculturists.\textsuperscript{69} In the same way, the introduction of new varieties of crops and better seeds, consolidation of holdings at some places and the production of powerful cattle breed changed the character of agriculture before independence. According to Sukhwant Singh, on the whole, the Punjab plains by 1947 were among the world’s greatest wheat, cotton and oil seeds producing areas.\textsuperscript{70}

\textbf{PART - II}

\textbf{AGARIAN CONDITIONS ON THE EVE OF GREEN REVOLUTION}

The new Viceroy, Lord Mountbatten announced the plan for the partition of the Punjab and Bengal on 3 June, 1947. According to this plan, “The Provincial Legislative Assemblies of Bengal and the Punjab, excluding European members, will be asked to meet in two parts, one representing the Muslim majority districts and the other the rest of

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{68} Khem Singh Gill, \textit{A Growing Agricultural Economy : Technological Changes, Constraints and Sustainability}, Oxford IBH, New Delhi, 1992, p.16
\end{thebibliography}
the province. For purpose of determining the population of the districts, the 1941 census figures will be taken as authoritative”. “The members of two parts of each Legislative Assembly sitting separately will be empowered to vote whether or not the province should be partitioned. If a simple majority of either side decides in favour of partition, division of the province will take place and arrangements will be made accordingly.71

This plan was accepted by the major political parties such as the Congress, the Muslim League and the Akalis. Under this plan, the two sections of Punjab Assembly, the Western and the Eastern met separately. The Eastern part of the Punjab voted in favour of the partition of the Punjab by 50 against 22 votes, while the Western part of the Punjab voted against the partition of the Punjab by 69 to 27 votes. The Western part of the Punjab decided to join the new Constituent Assembly of Pakistan and the Eastern part of Punjab wanted to join the existing Constituent Assembly.72 1947 was a year of triumph and tragedy for the people of India. It was triumph because the freedom, for which thousands had struggled and died, was achieved. It was tragedy, because the dream of freedom for a united India disappeared. A Boundary Commission was set up by the Governor General to demarcate the boundaries of the two parts of the Punjab and Bengal on the basis of the majority areas of Muslims and Non-Muslims. In Punjab, the Provisional boundaries were marked on the basis of the census of 1941.73

According to the announcement of the Governor General on 30 June, the Boundary Commissions were set up for both the Bengal and the Punjab. Sir Cyrill Radcliffe was appointed the Chairman of the two Boundary Commissions. Mr Justice Din Muhammad, Mr Justice Muhammad Munir, Mr Mehar Chand Mahajan and Mr Justice Teja Singh were other members of the Punjab Boundary Commission. It was believed that the Commission would give the report before 15 August, 1947.74

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The task of the Punjab Boundary Commission was more difficult than that of Bengal. It had to take care of the interests of the third community - the Sikhs. They were spread over the western districts of the Punjab. The Sikhs had both religious and economic links in this area. Lord Mountbatten said, “We have given careful consideration to the position of the Sikhs…….. But obviously any scheme of the partition of the Punjab was to inevitably split the community; but the exact degree of the split was left to the Boundary Commission on which they were naturally represented.”75 “The Boundary Commission was instructed to demarcate the boundaries of the two parts of the Punjab on the basis of ascertaining the contiguous majority areas of the Muslims and the Non-Muslims. In doing so it will also take into account other factors”.76 Prof. Kirpal Singh contends that the notional division of the Punjab described in the Indian Independence Act 1947, had been based on the district boundaries. It was not based on the Doabs or the geographical divisions marked by the rivers. The rivers of the Punjab did not fulfill the required conditions for the boundaries of two different states.77

Sir Redcliffe did not actually see the land which was going to be divided. The delegations of different communities arrived with maps, petitions, threats, arguments and bribes to meet Boundary Commission. The biggest problem was that the maps of each side were different.78 The Indian National Congress demanded the partition on the basis of strategic considerations, unity of the Sikh homeland, economic security and appropriate distribution of river water, irrigation system and canal colonies. Justice Mehar Chand Mahajan mainly argued the interpretation of the phrase “other factors” as given in his Majesty’s statement and as expressed by the Under Secretary of State for

India in the House of Commons on 14 July, 1947, “the primary basis of demarcation must be majority of the population. In certain cases, there may be factors which justify departure from the principle.” Justice Mehar Chand asked in his request that the boundary line should be near the river Ravi including Lahore for the East Punjab. Justice Teja Singh claimed that the boundary line for the East Punjab should be near the Chenab, including some parts of the districts Sheikhupura, Gujranwala, Montgomery and Lyallpur. He advocated that the Bari Doab, mainly the districts of Gurdaspur, Amritsar and Lahore had been referred by the historians and settlement officers as the “homeland for the Sikhs”. They owned more than two thirds of the area and paid more than two thirds of the land revenue of this area.

The total land revenue of this tract it was argued Rs. 55, 23,439. The Sikhs paid Rs. 33, 31, 591, the Muslims paid Rs. 15, 88,293 and the others paid Rs. 7,03,555. The total cultivated land in this area was 37,55,127 acres. The Sikhs cultivated 20,12,783 acres, the Muslims owned 11,24,207 acres and the others claimed 26,30,320 acres. Holy Shrines and many historical monuments of Sikhs also came under this region. Justice Mehar Chand Mahajan advocated that if the irrigation system was considered as a unit, the boundary line would be more suitable. Justice Teja Singh supported the arguments given by Justice Mehar Chand Mahajan in his report. He said, therefore, the districts of Lyallpur and Montgomery should be included because this area was colonized by the Sikhs of Ambala, Jalandhar and Amritsar. Justice Mohammad Munir and Justice Din Mohammad, however claimed that the boundary line should be drawn near about the river Satluj. Mr Din Mohammad argued that the fundamental principle advocated by the major political parties was on the basis of “contiguous Muslim majority areas”. Gujranwala, Sialkot, Sheikhupura, Lyallpur, Montgomery and Multan could not either in whole or in part be taken away from the West Punjab, because these districts were

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81 Satya, M. Rai, Partition of the Punjab, pp. 51-52.
82 Kirpal Singh, The Partition of the Punjab, pp.60-65. Also see, Satya, M. Rai, Partition of the Punjab, pp.52-53.
The Muslim representatives also demanded the Muslim majority tehsils from the non-Muslim majority districts such as tehsil Ferozpur, Zira, Nakodar, Jalandhar, Ajnala, Nawar Shahr, Phillaur, Rupar, Una, Garhshankar, Hoshiarpur, Dasuya, Thana Majitha. They argued that the district of Gurdaspur should go to West Punjab as it was Muslim majority area.\textsuperscript{84}

The biggest problem in the Punjab partition was the irrigation system. This had been built by the British, but largely by the efforts and hard work of the Sikh peasants. The irrigation system had changed the barren lands of the Punjab into the granary of India. The rivers which supplied the water to this irrigation systems were all in the East, but the land which they supplied water were all in the West.\textsuperscript{85}

The West Punjab argued that there were adjustment of specific loans ascribed to particular assets and hence the payment of loans would be the responsibility of the West Punjab Government against those assets. It was declared that the capitalization of profit was not proper and relevant. On the other hand, the East Punjab Government remarked that the East Punjab was entitled to the financial adjustments on the basis of the capitalized profit from the irrigation system of the united Punjab, because the Punjab Government had developed its irrigation system for commercial considerations. The cost of the constructions of this system was estimated to be Rs. 415,619,000. It was argued that this investment had earned Rs. 49,585,346 in 1936-37 and Rs. 66,305,466 in 1943-44. In this way, the public money spent on this irrigation system of the Punjab had been a profitable investment and the system was a value able asset of the united Punjab.\textsuperscript{86}

Sir Cyrill Redcliffe realized that an agreement for the control of the irrigation system in the Punjab was essential. It had to be a joint venture run by both the countries. It might prove fruitful in the coming years for the people of both countries. Mr. Jinnah told Redcliffe that he would rather have deserts in Pakistan than fertile fields watered by

\textsuperscript{83} Kirpal Singh, \textit{The Partition of the Punjab}, p.62.
\textsuperscript{84} Satya, M. Rai, \textit{Partition of the Punjab}, pp.53-54.
\textsuperscript{86} Kirpal Singh, \textit{The Partition of the Punjab}, p. 48.
courtesy of Hindus. Jawahar Lal Nehru told him that what India did with India’s rivers was India’s affair.\textsuperscript{87}

The last meeting of the Boundary Commission was held at Shimla, which was presided over by Sir Cyril Redcliffe. Regarding the demarcation of the boundary line, he remarked, “Gentlemen you have disagreed and, therefore, the duty falls on me to give the Award which I will do later on”.\textsuperscript{88} In the absence of any agreement, he announced the Award. In these circumstances, he cut a town off from its river, a village from its fields, a factory from its storage yard, a railway from its goods yard.\textsuperscript{89}

The Punjab Boundary Award was submitted to the Viceroy on 12 August, 1947. According to this Award, thirteen districts comprising the whole of Jalandhar and Ambala Divisions and the Amritsar district of the Lahore Division, Pathankot, Gurdaspur and Batala, the three tehsils of the Gurdaspur district and a part of the Kasur tehsil of the Lahore district were allocated to the East Punjab. The remaining 16 districts of the province went to the West Punjab.\textsuperscript{90}

The Award also divided the canal irrigation system of the Punjab. It was not possible to preserve the integrity of the system. Sir Redcliffe himself admitted this fact and said, “I have not found it possible to preserve undivided irrigation system of the Upper Bari Doab which extends from Madhopur in the Pathankot tehsil to the western borders of district of Lahore, although I have made small adjustments to the Lahore-Amritsar boundary to mitigate some of the consequences of this severance; nor can I see any means of preserving under one territorial jurisdiction the Mandi Hydro-electro scheme which supplies power in the districts of Kangra, Gurdaspur, Amritsar, Lahore, Jalandhar, Ludhiana, Ferozpur, Sheikhupura and Lyallpur”.\textsuperscript{91}

The Redcliffe Award disappointed all. The West Punjab criticized the Award for the loss of Gurdaspur district and the Ferozpur canal headworks. The Award deeply

\textsuperscript{91} \textit{Redcliffe Award}, Annexure A, Appendix Chapter VI, Para 11.
shocked East Punjab due to loss of Lahore, Nankana Sahib and the canal colonies of Sheikhupura, Lyallpur and Montgomery districts.\textsuperscript{92} On the eve of India’s Independence, the East Punjab falling into India was not economically very prosperous. It had all the features of economic backwardness such as traditional agriculture, inadequately developed transport and communications and under developed industries.\textsuperscript{93}

\textbf{II}

The partition left East Punjab a deficit area that was bound to affect its economy. The East Punjab had 13 districts and five princely states. It had 45 percent of the population and 33 percent of the area. It yielded only 30.1 percent of the income of the undivided Punjab. It had a population density of 120 square kilometer as compared with 100 in the West Punjab.\textsuperscript{94} The West Punjab had 16 districts which included 55 percent of population and 62 percent of the area. It gave about 69.9 percent of the income of the undivided Punjab. It also retained 70 percent of the canal-irrigated area. The famous canal colonies of Lyallpur, Montgomery and Sargodha known as granaries of India were left in the West Punjab.\textsuperscript{95}

Before Independence, 5.5 million hectares were irrigated by canals in the united Punjab. After the partition, the East Punjab was left with only 1.8 million hectares of canal irrigated area. The partition of the Punjab divided the rivers and the canals of the Punjab. A large amount of public investment in British India in irrigation facilities was done in West Punjab. With the help of these irrigation facilities, the undivided Punjab had become the major wheat and cotton producing area. The East Punjab was left with only three canal systems - the Upper Bari Doab, the Sirhind Canal and the Western Jamuna Canal. The

\textsuperscript{92} Redcliffe Award, Annexure A, Appendix Chapter VI, Para 11.
\textsuperscript{95} Rabindra Nath Ghosh, \textit{Agriculture in Economic Development with Special Reference to Punjab}, p.37.
East Punjab lost not only the major irrigation canals but also the fertile cotton and wheat producing areas to Pakistan.  

The Hindu and the Sikh migrant land holders left an area of 6,700,000 acres in West Pakistan out of which 4,300,000 acres were irrigated. Whereas, the East Punjab had only 4,700,000 acres available out of which only 1,300,000 acres were irrigated. The Indian Punjab inherited agriculturally less productive and food deficit part of the undivided Punjab. There were large gaps of quality and quantity between the land that was lost and that which was available. The total deficit of food grains in the East Punjab came to 35,000 tons at the time of partition. The Price of wheat rose from Rs. 12 to Rs. 18 per maund in 1948. The other food crops also became costly. This increased the hardships of unfortunate people.

The West Punjab had clear advantage over the East Punjab. The favourable position of the Western Punjab can be proved with a comparison of per capita incomes and land densities. The rural population of the West Punjab and the East Punjab in 1941 was 13.2 and 10.2 million respectively. The per capita GVP of the West Punjab was Rs. 66 compared to Rs. 47 of the East Punjab in 1941. Per capita cultivated area of the Western Punjab was 0.56 hectares in comparison to 0.53 hectares of the Eastern Punjab. In brief, on the eve of the Independence, the Western Punjab had a higher per capita and per hectare output, more land per capita, higher yields for many crops, a favorable

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cropping pattern, a greater proportion of cropped area under irrigation such as 65 percent vs 35 percent compared to the agricultural stagnation of the Eastern Punjab.\textsuperscript{101}

In nutshell, it can be said that East Punjab after partition started at a disadvantage. The agriculture was traditional in nature. Farming was the only way of life but migration of the population and resettlement badly affected the agriculture and the economy of the state. About 75 percent of the geographical area was cultivated in the Punjab. Out of total cultivated area, 80 percent was sown every year, leaving 20 percent as fallow. Only 40 percent of the cropped area was irrigated. The irrigation methods were slow, inefficient and inadequate. Only 13 percent of the net area sown was cropped more than once.\textsuperscript{102}

The people of the Eastern Punjab usually adopted mixed cropping on a large scale rather than sowing of pure crops. The wooden plough driven by bullock was the implement of the cultivation. Weeding, thrashing and harvesting were performed either manually or by bullock. The crop yields were low. Chemical fertilizers were little used by people of Eastern Punjab at the time of partition. The soil fertility was maintained by keeping the lands as fallow and to a limited extent by green manuring. The attitude of the farmers was actually to avoid risks rather than the maximization of production.\textsuperscript{103}

The means of transport in rural areas were dependent mainly on carts and animals. Metallic roads were almost non-existent in rural areas. The facilities of marketing and storage of the crops were less. The farmers of the East Punjab did not know the mechanization of farm operations. The holdings were fragmented and scattered. The agrarian structure was defective. A few middlemen existed between the state and the tiller of the soil. Tenure was insecure and rents were high. The Eastern Punjab also lacked agricultural education and research institutions. The agricultural condition of the East Punjab was backward, traditional and subsistence. It was now reduced to a deficit state importing 35,000 tons of food annually.\textsuperscript{104}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{102} Khem Singh Gill, \textit{A Growing Agricultural Economy : Technological Changes, Constraints and Sustainability}, p.13.
\textsuperscript{103} \textit{Ibid}, p.13.
\end{flushright}
However, if the West Punjab had advantages in physical resources, the East Punjab seemed to have advantage in human resources. The Sikhs, who by now had come to be known as the best farmers in India migrated to this part of Punjab from canal colonies in large numbers. The canal colonies of the West Punjab were developed in the districts of Lyallpur, Sargodha, Montgomery and Multan by the colonists, peasant proprietors and middle class farmers who originally belonged to the East Punjab. They returned to their ancestral villages from these colonies at the time of partition.\textsuperscript{105}

Malcolm Darling describes the qualities of the Sikh farmers in these words, “A colony could have hardly had better material, for Ludhiana, Jullundur and Amritsar represent the flower of Indian Agriculture. They are the home of the Jat Sikh, who has been described as the most desirable of colonists. It would be difficult to say which of the three has produced the best type: for industry and thrift, the Ludhiana Sikh is hard to beat, and the Sikh from Amritsar, though may be spent thrift and violent, is unsurpassed as a cultivator. Grit, skill in farming, and a fine physique are characteristics common to all, and in his new environment, the Jat Sikh has reached a point of development probably beyond anything else of the kind in India. In less than a generation he has made the wilderness blossom like the rose. It is as if the energy of the virgin soil of the Bar had passed into his veins and made him almost a part of the forces of nature which he has conquered”.\textsuperscript{106}

Kusum Nair, a journalist, toured all over India from 1958-1960 to evaluate the rule of human element in rural development. She has observed that the refugee farmers were more progressive and advanced in the techniques of cultivation to the farmers of the East Punjab.\textsuperscript{107} The Sikh farmers were more enterprising and accepted innovations. Sikhism had brought a social change in the existing society. The new faith advocated the dignity of labour and motivated its follower to earn their living by manual work.

\textsuperscript{105} M.S. Randhawa, \textit{Out of the Ashes}, pp.33-35.
\textsuperscript{106} Sir Malcolm Darling, \textit{The Punjab Peasant in Prosperity and Debt}, p.117.
Moreover, Sikhism declared agriculture as one of the best professions.\textsuperscript{108} So, all these qualities of the Punjabi farmers who came to East Punjab had advantage over the West Punjab and carried hope for the future.

III

The immediate problem after independence was to rehabilitate the people who came from Pakistan. The peasant proprietors of the canal colonies in the West Punjab returned to their original districts. To settle and accommodate other displaced persons, the Punjab Government established a special department to work exclusively for the relief and rehabilitation of the refugees. The Financial Commissioner was in charge of this department. He set up an office of the custodian of Evacuees property. It settled the claims of agricultural lands, residential property, shops, factories, banks, insurance companies, religious and cultural institutions.\textsuperscript{109} In the beginning the new Governments of the East Punjab and West Punjab were not sure about the nature of the migration whether the migrations were permanent or temporary. A Resettlement Department consisting of nearly 8,000 patwaris and rural officers under Tarlok Singh and M.S. Randhawa was established.\textsuperscript{110}

The Government took over the houses and the lands of the Muslim evacuees. The Hindus and Sikhs, who migrated to the East Punjab belonged to the rich peasantry, industrial and trading class. They had a greater urban element and a higher standard of living than the Muslims of the East Punjab. The Non-Muslim urban population left behind 154,000 houses in the West Punjab towns. On the other side, the Muslims of the East Punjab left 112,000 houses. The non-Muslims left 51,000 shops and business centers in the West Punjab, whereas the Muslims left only 17,000 only. It was difficult to adjust the claims.\textsuperscript{111}

\textsuperscript{110} Khushwant Singh, \textit{A History of the Sikhs}, p.283.
The refugees who were crossing the border were directed to proceed to specific districts in the East Punjab. Under the new arrangements, the refugee landholders of the Lahore and non-colonist from Montgomery districts of the West Punjab were directed to go to the Ferozepore district of the East Punjab. The landholders of the Rawalpindi, Sheikhupura and Gujranwala districts were instructed to proceed to Karnal district. The refugee landholders of the Multan district to Hissar district and the landholders of the Shahpur and Gujrat districts of the West Punjab were ordered to proceed to the Ambala district of the East Punjab. In the same way the agriculturalists of Jhang and Muzaffargarh districts were directed to proceed to Rohtak district of the East Punjab. The landholders of Dehra Ghazi Khan and Mianwali districts under the Government direction proceeded to Gurgaon district and agriculturalists of the Sialkot district of the West Punjab marched to Hoshiarpur, Amritsar and Gurdaspur districts of the East Punjab.\footnote{Kiipal Singh, Partition of the Punjab, p.150.}

In the beginning of September, 1947, the claims of land and property of the displaced persons were settled through a system of land allotments which later on came to be known as “temporary allotment”. It was based on an equal distribution of land such as 10 acres of land irrespective of land left by a particular person in Pakistan. No difference was made between a tenant and a landholder. Both were eligible for temporary allotment.\footnote{Khushwant Singh, A History of the Sikhs, p.284-285.}

After the temporary allotment, the refugees farmers were given financial assistance in the form of loans for purchase of food, seeds, bullocks and agricultural implements. The Government spent nearly Rs 2.21crores from September, 1947 to September, 1949. This temporary allotment made the landless happy but was obviously not acceptable to refugee landholders.\footnote{Satya, M. Rai, Partition of the Punjab, pp.119-120.}

The scheme of temporary allotments was an immediate measure of relief for the self-cultivators. But, it proved very useful for the displaced agriculturalists as well as the country. Almost, the whole evacuee land was taken up for cultivation except the un-
irrigated regions in Hissar and Gurgaon districts or land in sub-mountainous river-beds. The districts of the East Punjab had always been deficit in food. When, the displaced agriculturists cultivated this region, they turned it into a surplus area.\textsuperscript{115}

Soon, the Punjab Government realized that the migration was going to be permanent one. There was large difference between the fertility of land in the East Punjab and the West Punjab. It was therefore, essential to evaluate the different classes of land on the basis of a comparable unit of value. The unit used for land resettlement operations in the East Punjab and the East Punjab states were given the name of “Standard Acre”. Considering the diversity in soil, irrigation and rain fall in various districts of West Pakistan and of districts in East Punjab and PEPSU, the necessity of evolving a common measure was felt. To meet this demand, the Standard Acre was evolved which is a unit of value based on productivity of land. An acre of land which could yield 10-11 Maunds of wheat was given the value of “sixteen annas” and was termed a Standard Acre. The physical area of Standard Acre thus varies and all classes of land in all assessment circles were given a valuation in annas so that they could be measured easily in terms of Standard Acre. In the barani areas of Hissar district where the valuation of one acre was four annas, for ordinary acre when to make a Standard Acre. In ordinary canal irrigated tracts, where the value of an acre was sixteen annas as ordinary acre was the equivalent of a Standard Acre.\textsuperscript{116}

Meanwhile, the West Punjab and East Punjab Governments came to an agreement to prepare copies of revenue records in their possession for the use of each other to allot the lands to the migrants. The exchange of records was started by the end of November, 1948 and completed during winter. The united Punjab had the best system of land

\textsuperscript{115} Agriculture in Punjab, Punjab Public Relations Department, Chandigarh, 1977, pp.8-10. Also see, M.S. Randhawa, Out of the Ashes, pp.70-71.

\textsuperscript{116} According to Tarlok Singh, “A standard acre is, thus a unit of value and depending on the value of land in which the unit is translated, it represents a certain area. The standard acre, besides being useful in assessing the value of different classes of land and rights, has proved a remarkably convenient unit for purpose of calculation.” Tarlok Singh was young officer who was Director General of the Department of Rehabilitation in East Punjab after the partition. See, Tarlok Singh, Manual of Resettlement, No. p.14 See also , Satya, M. Rai, Partition of the Punjab, p.124.
records. As a result the process of verification of claims was completed, as early as April 1949.117

The final record showed that the displaced persons in the East Punjab could receive 24,48,830 standard acres against 39,35,131 standard acres abandoned in the West Punjab. The gap in the area was 14,86,301 standard acres. This gap could only be adjusted by applying some cut on the land to be allotted to displaced persons. Various suggestions came about the imposition of cuts. Ultimately a compromise formula of graded cuts was adopted which demanded sacrifice from all displaced landholders. The graded cut was less in the case of the small and the middle agriculturists. The cuts on big landholders were very heavy. The cut of 25 percent was applied to landholders of 10 acres and less. Whereas for the owner of 500 standard acres and more, the graded cut up to 95 percent was imposed.118

The scale of graded cuts adopted by the Government was as under :-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Rate of Cut</th>
<th>Net Allotment at maximum of grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Up to 10 standard acres</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>7 ½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>More than 10 but less than 30</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>More than 30 but less than 40</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>More than 40 but less than 60</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>36 ½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>More than 60 but less than 100</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>48 ½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>More than 100 but less than 150</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>More than 150 but less than 200</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>More than 200 but less than 250</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>78 ½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>More than 250 but less than 500</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>103 ½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>More than 500 but less than 1000</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>128 ½119</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The graded cut in landholdings proved a blessing for the economy of the East Punjab. There was considerable leveling down of land ownership at higher level. These

graded cuts provided the landholders incentive to become useful productive units. Moreover, the system of land distribution eventually ensured the process of land reforms and balanced distribution of landholdings. It was an important step towards imposition of ceiling on landholdings. The graded cut proved the unique agrarian feature of Punjab, which lent great dynamism to the process of agricultural modernization.\textsuperscript{120}

The partition of the Punjab also provided the greatest opportunity for schemes for agricultural development and rural renewal. Twenty-seven garden colonies for the cultivation of fruit plants were developed on an area of 20,000 acres. Loans were provided for the sinking of tube wells, purchase of tractors and other agricultural implements. Irrigation by means of tube wells, powered by electricity was promoted for the first time. The use of tractors for cultivation was also an innovation. In fact, modernization of agriculture in the Indian part of Punjab started in 1950 with the rehabilitation of refugees.\textsuperscript{121}

Soon the Punjabi refugee farmers with their hard work built as prosperous a state as they had left in the West Punjab. Within few years, the East Punjab changed from a deficit state to a surplus state. Ajit Parshad Jain, the Union Minister for Food and Agriculture visited Punjab in 1955 and appreciated, by saying “Punjab has been trampled by innumerable invaders, but nature has endowed its people with vigor and vitality. The courage with which Punjab has kicked its last wounds caused by partition has filled the rest of India with pride”.\textsuperscript{122} In spite of various setbacks, the newly born state of Punjab pursued its historical moorings towards agriculture. It reached its zenith with the famed Green Revolution which became synonymous with the state. The people who had crossed the border brought with them agricultural enterprise and tradition. These farmers played an important role in developing the agriculture in the East Punjab as well as some parts of Haryana, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.


\textsuperscript{121} M.S. Randhawa, \textit{Green Revolution – A Case Study of Punjab}, pp.31-32.

\textsuperscript{122} \textit{Address of Sh. Ajit Parshad Jain} at the foundation stone laying ceremony of Punjab Agriculture College at Ludhiana, September 23, 1955.