CHAPTER I

THE PUNJAB: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The province of Punjab has always remained significant because of its strategic position. It was the most common entry point for outsiders from Central Asia. The invaders often used to enter into India via Punjab. The North West Frontier was considered important not only for political purpose but also for trade with Afghanistan and Central Asia.\textsuperscript{1} The Punjab under the British rule included the erstwhile kingdom of Lahore, the territories of East India Company between the rivers Satluj and Jamuna and the princely states.

The Punjab as an administrative unit was much larger than its geographical entity. ‘Punjab’ is a Persian term, a compound of two words ‘Punj’ and ‘ab’ meaning five rivers or waters. It refers to the country surrounded, watered and intersected by the five rivers namely Jehlam, Chenab, Ravi, Beas and Satluj from west to the east respectively. The territory of the Punjab spread between $27^0-39'$ and $35^0-21'$ north latitude and $69^0-35'$ and $78^0-35'$ east longitude. The Punjab had twenty four districts in 1849, twenty seven in 1850, Thirty three in 1858, Thirty two in 1862 and thirty one in 1884.\textsuperscript{2} This is only to add that as the administration of the Punjab was regulated by dividing the province into more districts.

The Sikh power rose in Punjab during the general confusion and anarchy which followed the invasions of Nadir Shah and the Ahmad Shah Abdali.\textsuperscript{3} In the years 1738-39, the Persian Monarch, Nadir Shah invaded India. He entered the province of Lahore and defeated its Mughal Governor, Zakriya Khan. Nadir Shah it is believed collected a huge sum of money amounting to two million rupees and confirmed Zakriya Khan in his former position before he resumed his next march to

\begin{itemize}
\item[H.A. Rose, A Glossary of Tribes and Castes of the Punjab and North West Frontier Province, Vol. I, Punjab Languages Department, Patiala, 1970 (Reprint), p.4.]
\item[Report on the Administration of the Punjab and its Dependencies for the year 1892-93, (Government Publication), p.1 (Hereafter P.A.R.).]
\item[Gulshan Lal Chopra, The Punjab as a Sovereign State (1799-1839) Vishveshvaranand Vedic Institute, Hoshiarpur, 1975, p. 1.]
\end{itemize}
confront the Mughal army. In the ensuing chaotic conditions the Sikhs retreated into hills but on his journey back home, Nadir Shah was obtrusively harassed by them.\(^4\) After the death of Zakriya Khan, the dispute between his sons Yahia Khan and Shah Nawaz Khan led to anarchy and it weakened the position of Mughal Governors of Lahore.

Shah Nawaz Khan invited Ahmad Shah Abdali to attack India and thus Abdali’s first invasion to India took place in 1747-48. He attacked India eight times upto 1767. During the earlier invasions of Ahmad Shah, the Sikhs appear to have scattered before the danger, only to re-form later when it was passed. The Sikhs started to consolidate their power after withdrawal of Ahmad Shah Abdali made the best of the opportunity started to consolidate in the form of bands. These gradually evolved into twelve great Sikh confederacies or misls. These were namely, Faizalpuria misl, Ahluwalia misl, Bhangi misl, Ramgarhia misl, Kanhaya misl, Shukarchakiya misl, Phulkian misl, Nakai misl, Dallewalia misl, Karor Singhia misl, Nishan Singhia misl and the Shahid misl.\(^5\)

**CONSOLIDATION OF PUNJAB UNDER MAHARAJA RANJIT SINGH**

“The Sikh kingdom of Punjab was consolidated and expanded by Maharaja Ranjit Singh who was born at Gujranwala in 1780. He inherited the territories of Shukarchakiya misl after the death of his father Mahan Singh Shukarchakiya, the chief of that misl. Ranjit Singh was married to Mehtab Kaur, daughter of Gurbaksh Singh and Sada Kaur of Kanhaiya misl, by this he got the power of Kanhaiya misl. After the death of his father Mahan Singh, his mother Raj Kaur, Dewan Lakhpat Rai and his mother-in-law Sada Kaur acted as the Triune Regency and ruled on behalf of Ranjit Singh, till he took the reign of power in his hands in 1797. Ranjit Singh married Raj Kaur, the daughter of Ram Singh, a Nakkai chief in 1798 and thus, made good relations with Nakkai misl.”\(^6\)

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In 1798, Shah Zaman during his fourth invasion of Punjab, occupied Lahore but soon after his withdrawal from Punjab, the Bhangi chiefs reoccupied Lahore fort. On July 7, 1799, Ranjit Singh attacked Lahore and Bhangi chiefs Mohr Singh and Sahib Singh fled on his arrival. Chet Singh closed the fort from inside but the prospect of starvation forced him to submit and Ranjit Singh captured Lahore.

Shah Zaman wrote to Ranjit Singh that on his way back to Afghanistan, his few guns fell in the river Jhelum and he found the river swollen with winter rains and was unable to take his guns back. Shah Zaman sought the help of Ranjit Singh in this matter. Ranjit Singh was also keen to make good diplomatic relations with Shah Zaman, therefore, he got the guns of Shah Zaman retrieved from Jhelum, who in return, recognized his claim over the territory of Lahore and in 1801, Ranjit Singh became the Maharaja of Lahore.

“Maharaja Ranjit Singh occupied Akalgarh in 1801 and Chiniot in 1802. In 1805, he wrested Amritsar from the Bhangis after defeating them in the battle of Lohgarh. In 1809, Ranjit Singh signed the treaty of Amritsar with the British which forbade him to attack the Cis-Sutlej states. He conquered Dallewalia territories in 1807, Karor Singhia territories in 1810 and Faizalpuria territories in 1811. He also conquered Muslim states of Kasur, Jhang and Bhawalpur in 1807, Akhnoor in 1808 and Khushab and Sahiwal in 1810. The hill states of Jasotra, Chamba and Basoli were annexed by him in 1808 and Jammu and Kangra in 1809. He invaded Multan seven times and annexed it to his kingdom in 1818. Kashmir was annexed in 1819 and Dera Ghazi Khan in 1820. He succeeded in capturing Dera Ismail Khan and Mankera in 1821. Peshawar was annexed by Maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1834.” Maharaja Ranjit Singh of Punjab died on June 27, 1839 at the age of fifty nine, leaving behind a vast empire.

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8 Khushwant Singh, op.cit, pp. 198-200.
9 Foreign Department (Secret Branch) 26 December 1846, Proceeding No.1043, National Archives of India New Delhi. (Hereafter N.A.I.).
POLITICAL CONDITIONS IN THE PUNJAB FOLLOWING THE DEMISE OF MAHARAJA RANJIT SINGH

Maharaja Ranjit Singh was succeeded by his son Kharak Singh.\textsuperscript{10} It is pertinent to state that a few days prior to his death, Ranjit Singh had summoned all his high officers and asked them to take oath of allegiance to his eldest son Kharak Singh and as a result Kharak Singh succeeded the throne of Lahore after the demise of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

Sher Singh, another son of Mahraja Ranjit Singh also claimed the throne of Lahore in June-July 1839. He approached British Viceroy Lord Auckland through correspondence but he could not get attention of the British in this matter and Lord Auckland on advice of Captain Wade, his Political Agent, made it clear that Kharak Singh was the ruler of the Punjab.\textsuperscript{11}

Kharak Singh was addicted to opium. His health began to decline soon afterwards and he fell ill in December 1839. After continued illness of about one year, he died on 5\textsuperscript{th} November 1840 at the young age of 39.\textsuperscript{12}

“Nao Nihal Singh, son of Kharak Singh claimed the throne of Lahore and when he was returning from the funeral pyre of his father and passing under a covered gate alongwith his friend Mian Udham Singh (son of Raja Gulab Singh), stones and tiles crashed down on them. Udham Singh died on the spot and Nao Nihal Singh’s skull was fractured and left arm broken, soon after he also died.”\textsuperscript{13}

Once again Sher Singh claimed the throne of Lahore. This time his succession was formally proclaimed on 9\textsuperscript{th} November 1840.\textsuperscript{14} Dhian Singh was in

\textsuperscript{10} Bikramjit Hasrat, \textit{Life and Times of Ranjit Singh}, V.V. Research Institute, Nabha, 1977, p. 216.

\textsuperscript{11} \textit{Foreign Department (Secret Branch) 26 December 1846, Proceeding No.1043}, N.A.I., New Delhi.

\textsuperscript{12} Bikramjit Hasrat, \textit{op.cit}, 1977, p. 216.


favour of Sher Singh because he knew it well that if Rani Chand Kaur, the mother of Nao-Nihal Singh became the sovereign of the Punjab, her supporters, the Sandhawalia Sardars would not allow him to be in any high position in Lahore Darbar.

Rani Chand Kaur also claimed the throne of Lahore. She declared that Nao Nihal Singh’s wife (Sahib Kaur Gilwali) was pregnant and on this basis she be accepted as ruler until her daughter-in-law delivered a child. As a consequence of her claim, she was supported by Sandhawalia Sardars and many other chiefs. In the event, if the wife of Nao Nihal Singh gave birth to a female child, then she desired to adopt Hira Singh as son.

With the efforts of Dhian Singh an agreement was drawn between Sher Singh and Chand Kaur by which Sher Singh was to retire to his jagir at Batala for eight months, but would leave behind his son Partap Singh. Rani Chand Kaur was to remain regent until the birth of the child by Nao Nihal Singh’s widow Sahib Kaur Gilwali. On November 1840, Chand Kaur was proclaimed the Rani of Lahore.

Chand Kaur exercised power under the designation of mai or mother. She appointed Attar Singh Sandhwalia her Prime Minister. Sher Singh was eager to occupy Lahore, therefore, he along with his supports reached at Lahore on 15th January 1841 and quietly took the possession of the Badshahi Masjid, where a large magazine stored by the troops of Gulab Singh (commander-in-chief of Sikh troops), fell into their hands.

Sher Singh sent an appeal to Chand Kaur and Gulab Singh to lay down their arms but Chand Kaur supported by Gulab Singh and Sandhawalia Sardars refused to make surrender. “On 16th January 1841, Sher Singh opened fire on the fort and found it difficult to occupy Lahore, so he sent an urgent summons to Dhian Singh,

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15 Foreign Department (Secret Branch) 26 December 1846, Proceeding No.1043, N.A.I., New Delhi.
17 Lepel H. Griffin, op. cit, p.331; C.H. Payne, A Short History of the Sikhs, New Delhi, p. 142.
18 Syed Muhammad Latif, op. cit, pp. 502-503.
who was in Jammu at that time. On the evening of 17th January 1841, Dhian Singh arrived and secured a ceasefire. Dhian Singh’s terms for peace required that Chand Kaur to renounce all claims to the throne, Sher Singh was to be Maharaja with Dhian Singh as Chief Minister. The terms being accepted by Chand Kaur, the fort was vacated by Gulab Singh’s army and occupied by Sher Singh on January 20, 1841.”

Dhian Singh, later on succeed to kill Chand Kaur on 11th June 1842 and by this Sandhawalalia Sardars became extremely hostile to Dhian Singh. On 15th September 1842, Ajit Singh killed Maharaja Sher Singh and Lehna Singh took the life of Pratap Singh, son of Sher Singh on same day. Dhian Singh was also killed by Sandhawalalia Sardars on same day i.e. 15th September 1842.

Hira Singh, son of Dhian Singh appealed to the army against Sandhawalalia Sardars and promised them large rewards. The army responded to his call and the citadel of Lahore was assaulted and Ajit Singh and Lehna Singh were killed. Thus, Hira Singh avenged the death of his father with the help of the army. Daleep Singh (son of Rani Jindan, wife of Ranjit Singh) was declared Maharaja and Hira Singh became his minister. Hira Singh raised the pay of common soldiers by two and half rupees per month to win the goodwill of Khalsa army and the troops realized that they were uncontrolled masters of the kingdom.

Hira Singh was under the influence of one Pandit Jalla, a Brahman tutor who used to neglect Rani Jindan and her brother Jawahir Singh. Rani Jindan wanted to get rid of Pandit Jalla as well as Hira Singh because she was keen to see her brother as Wazir. Hira Singh and Pandit Jalla were put to death on 21st December 1844 and Jawahar Singh Rani’s brother was nominated new Wazir. Jawahir Singh could not continue for long as minister because the murder of Peshora Singh, son of

19 Sita Ram Kohli, *op. cit*, p. 36.
21 J.D. Cunningham, *op. cit*, p. 232.
Maharaja Ranjit Singh, aroused the army against him and Jawahir Singh was killed on 21st September, 1845. After that Rani Jindan was declared regent of the state, Lal Singh was nominated executive minister and Tej Singh as commander-in-chief.

**FIRST ANGLO SIKH WAR (1845-1846)**

The British military preparations had increased rapidly during that time. The headquarters of Lord Gough, the Commander-in-Chief, were established at Ambala. In October 1844, the British force on the frontier was 17,000 infantry and 60 guns and another 10,000 troops were to be ready by the end of November. In January 1845, Sir John Littler (Major General) took over the command at Ferozepur with a garrison strength of 7,000. The total defence forces on the frontier amounted to 20,000 men and 60 guns.

“Another preparations included, the warlike flotilla. In February 1845, sixty boats built at Bombay were conveyed to the Indus to serve as a bridge of boats on the Sutlej. Each boat carried gun and the entire flotilla had the capacity of moving 6,000 troops across the sutlej in one trip.”

Its movement towards the fortified citadel of Ferozepur in June, with a separate Pontoon train, had the appearance of a warlike fleet. On its arrival at Ferozepur, it was taken over by military authorities and armed guards were placed around it.

Governor-General Lord Hardinge had brought Major Broadfoot as Political Agent on the Punjab Frontier. Major Broadfoot declared the Cis-Sutlej possession of Lahore to be under British rule. Sardar Lal Singh Adalti, a judge in Lahore service, crossed the Sutlej, at Talwandi in the Lahore territory for official duty. Major Broadfoot captured and humiliated the Sikh party.

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26 *Foreign Department (Secret Branch) 26 December 1846, Proceeding No.1043*, N.A.I., New Delhi.
On December 11, 1845, the Sikh army crossed the river Sutlej. Lal Singh and Tej Singh, the Sikh commanders were in treasonable communication with the British. Lal Singh (General commanding that division) sent a messenger to Captain Nicholson (Assistant Agent at Ferozepur) to know about further instructions. Captain Nicholson instructed him to stop Khalsa Army from any further aggression for two days so that he could get help from other British battalions. “First action of Anglo Sikh War was fought on 18th December 1845 in the battle of Mudki. The British were in weak position and the British battalions reeled before the Khalsa Army but Lal Singh fled at the beginning of the battle, therefore, brought defeat to the Khalsa Army. The British losses were deemed heavy in the battle of Mudki, General Sir Robert Sale (Major General, Quartermaster General of Queen’s troops) and Sir Joseph Megaskill (Major General of 3rd Infantry division) being amongst the 215 killed.”

Three days afterwards (On December 21, 1845) followed the toughly contested battle of Ferozeshah. The Governor-General ordered Major General John Littler to bring assistance from Ferozepur. John Littler left Ferozepur on December 21, 1845 with 5,000 infantry, 2 regiments of cavalry and 21 guns. The Governor-General also decided to take part in the battle as second in command to Lord Gough, the British commander-in-chief. John Littler joined the British force in the noon, raising its strength to 17,000 men and 69 guns as against the Sikh army, consisting of 12 battalions of infantry, 4 regiments of cavalry, 50 guns and about 15,000 irregular horses. Lal Singh conveyed the position of Khalsa Army through his emissary Shams-ud-din Khan who visited Major Broadfoot on 18th and 21st December 1845, for which Shams-ud-din Khan was rewarded with Rs. 5000 in cash and an annual pension of Rs. 2,500 after the conclusion of war.

Instead of going to the front, Lal Singh pretended to bring up the reserve force and he moved to Amritsar via Phillaur, while Tej Singh kept under his command about 10,000 Sikh soldier and did not allow them to attack the British

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27 Ibid.
forces. Lord Gough, the British Commander-in-Chief, himself led the right, the Governor General the centre and Sir John Littler the left wing of the assailing force. The Sikh army repulsed the British attack and had thrown the whole British army into disorder but the Sikh army lost that battle due to the betrayal of their commanders Lal Singh and Tej Singh. Among the dead from the British side were Major General Broadfoot and his assistant Captain Nicholson.

On January 28, 1846, the Sikhs were defeated at Aliwal. General Smith marched against the Sikhs and found the Sikhs posted in the low-land, close to the Sutlej. The Sikh leader, Ranjodh Singh fled across the river Sutlej, leaving his army leaderless and brought defeat to the Sikh army. In this battle 3500 Sikh soldiers were killed and 67 guns were lost, on the other side the British casualties numbered 589, with 15 killed.

The battle of Sabraon (last battle of first Anglo-Sikh War) was fought on 10th February 1846. Two days before the battle, Lal Singh again sent Shams-ud-din to Major Lawrence with details of its defensive plan. The weakest point in the Sikh line was its right flank where the loose sand made it impossible to build high parapets or place heavy guns there. On the evening of February 9, 1846, Hugh Gough marched out of Ferozepur and surrounded the Khalsa Army at Sabraon and the battle took place on February 10, 1846. The British forces found the defences weak as Lal Singh’s emissaries had reported. Tej Singh, the commander-in-chief of Khalsa Army fled to the river sutlej and damaged the bridge of boats over the river Sutlej. Sham Singh Attari (the Attari Chief) did not allow his men to lose heart, fought bravely and died in the battle field. Thus, the British victory at Sabraon ended the first Anglo Sikh War.

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30 B.S. Nijjar, *op.cit*, pp. 15-16.

THE TREATY OF BHAIROWAL AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE PUNJAB AFTER FIRST ANGLO-SIKH WAR

“The treaty of Lahore was signed on March 9, 1846, according to which the Sikhs had to accept unconditionally (i) surrender in full sovereignty of the territory, hill and plain, lying between the Sutlej and Beas rivers (ii) The payment of one and a half crore of rupees as indemnity for the expenses of the war (iii) The reduction of the Khalsa Army to 20,000 infantry and 12,000 cavalry (iv) The re-organization of the Sikh army upon the system, and according to regulations as to pay and allowances which were prevalent in the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. (v) The surrender of guns not captured in the campaign (iv) The control of the river Beas and Sutlej to the confluence of the Indus at Mithankot.”32

After the first Anglo-Sikh War, the area of Jalandhar Doab was annexed by the British. It weakened the position of Lahore Darbar because it was a rich portion of Punjab, giving large amount of land revenue to Lahore Darbar. The re-organization of Khalsa army and its reduction (20,000 infantry and 12,000 cavalry) made it difficult to recover its former military strength.33

Immediately after the signing of treaty of Lahore, the Lahore Government solicited the Governor-General Lord Hardinge, to leave a British force at Lahore for the protection of Maharaja Daleep Singh and the inhabitants of the city.34 The British agreed and another treaty of Lahore was concluded on 11th March 1846 by which the British had to remain at Lahore till the re-organisation of the Sikh army.

After the first Anglo-Sikh War, Rani Jindan became the regent of Maharaja Daleep Singh whereas Lal Singh was appointed Minister of the state and Tej Singh was re-instated as Commander-in-Chief of the forces. Maharaja Daleep Singh agreed to recognize Raja Gulab Singh as sovereign of such territories as might be made over to him. The Treaty of Amritsar was concluded between the British

33 Ibid., pp. 17-18.
34 Ibid., 18-20.
Government and Gulab Singh on 16th March 1846 by which Gulab Singh became the ruler of Jammu and Kashmir.35

“Treaty of Bhairowal was announced on 26th December 1846, by which, during the minority of Maharaja Daleep Singh, a British officer with a staff of assistants was appointed with full authority to direct and control all matters in every department of the state, which were to be carried on by a Council of Regency and its members to be fixed by the Governor-General. A British force was to remain at Lahore, at the expense of the Lahore Darbar and the British were to be at liberty to occupy any fort or position they thought advisable in the Sikh dominion. This treaty was to terminate on 4th September 1854, on Maharaja Daleep Singh attaining the age of 16 years.”36 Rani Jindan was deprived of all power and given an annual payment of Rs. 1,50,000. The British had almost realized their wishes.

Punjab was an important province for the British which they had been eyeing since long and ultimately they found an opportunity after the first Anglo-Sikh War (1845-46). Though the kingdom was not annexed, it was then onwards firmly controlled by the British. Lord Hardinge did not interfere with the internal administration but he established a powerful military protectorate in the Punjab. Jammu along with Kashmir was made separate kingdom as a counterpoise to Sikh state at Lahore. Gulab Singh was to play the role intended and would follow British advice in defending the Afghan frontier. The Governor General was determined to cripple the power of the Sikhs for further aggression by confiscating the tract of country known as the Jalandhar Doab, together with the adjacent hill tracts of Kangra, Nurpore and Nadoun. This tract of the Punjab was permanently retained as a portion of the British territory. John Lawrence was appointed the Commissioner of Jalandhar Doab and Henry Lawrence was appointed British Resident at Lahore as well as Political Agent to the Governor-General for the North-West Frontier.37

35 Foreign Department (Secret Branch) 26 December 1846, Proceeding No.1043, N.A.I., New Delhi.
36 Ibid., pp. 60-64.
37 Foreign Department (Secret Consultation) 23 March 1840, Proceeding No.49, N.A.I., New Delhi.
had to send all the information which came to his notice to British Government in connection with the developments in Punjab.

A Council of Regency of eight members under the control and guidance of British Resident (Henry Lawrence) was established to carry on the administration of the Lahore kingdom. The council of regency, consisted of eight members- Tej Singh, Sher Singh, Ranjodh Singh, Diwan Dina Nath, Fakir Nur-ud-Din, Attar Singh, Shamer Singh and Bhai Nidhan Singh.

Henry Lawrence was provided with an efficient establishment of assistants who were given full authority to direct and control all matters in every department of the state. Lord Hardinge the Governor General urged on Henry Lawrence the advisability of keeping a tight hand on all native officials, and making his own personality felt in every department of the government. The officers were asked to report freely to the Resident regarding the state of their districts and to make recommendations for reforms.

The Resident appointed a band of energetic assistants and advised them to act on their own responsibility with promptness and vigour so as to bring prosperity and peace in Punjab. He directed them to settle the country, make the people happy and to avoid rows. During the first few months of his office, the Resident laid down the principles upon which the administration of the Punjab was to be run. Next to Resident was Chief Assistant in the bureaucratic hierarchy. A.H. Cocks was the Chief Assistant and was posted at Lahore. Principal Assistant was next to Chief

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42 *Foreign Department (Secret Branch) 26 December 1846, Proceeding No.1043*, N.A.I., New Delhi.
Assistant. Major G.P. Lawrence and Major Macgregor were designated as Principal Assistants. Captain James Abbot was designated Assistant and Boundary Commissioner and was stationed at Huzara. The British officials received fixed pay. Resident got Rs. 5500 per month, Chief Assistant got Rs. 1600 per month. The Principal Assistants and the Assistant got Rs. 1500 per month each.43

Earlier during the Sikh rule the military organization had remained a priority with Maharaja Ranjit Singh. So the British realized that to preserve order and peace it was necessary to improve economy of the state. Thus agriculture was given preference so that income may increase from land revenue. “There was no uniform system of collecting land revenue in the province. Three methods of land revenue namely batai, zabt and kankut were employed. Some part of the land revenue was collected in cash. In those districts which were neither granted nor leased out, the local tax gatherers were called kardars. The kardar was officer in charge of a pargana, and was in fact the most important official in the sphere of local government.”44 He came into contact with people in their daily activities. He was a revenue collector and supervisor of land settlement, an accountant and treasurer, a judicial and executive head of the territory under his charge, an excise and customs officer and a general supervisor of the people on behalf of the government.45 Thus it was necessary that he had capabilities to blend with masses.

The following abstract prepared by Diwan Deena Nath in September 1847 show the amount of the land revenue obtained under various systems of collection, prevailing in the days of Ranjit Singh46.

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44 Sita Ram Kohli, op.cit, pp. 8-9.
46 N.M. Khilnani, British Power in the Punjab 1839-1858, op.cit, p. 106.
The Punjab: Historical Background

Table 1.1: Abstract of Land Revenue Prepared by Diwan Deena Nath in September 1847

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of Districts</th>
<th>Mode of collecting the Revenue</th>
<th>Amount of Revenue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Farmed out to Kardars</td>
<td>25,49,873</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Assessed, the engagement being made with the heads of villages</td>
<td>18,23,556</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>The revenue collected by division and appraisement of the crop</td>
<td>89,44,658</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>1,33,18,587</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The pay of *kardars* and other secondary officials was uncertain and precarious. During the interim period of anarchy and misrule which preceded the first Anglo-Sikh War, the *kardars* with held large sums of revenue and started squeezing the peasants. In their anxious desire to accumulate wealth, they employed all means within their reach to harry and plunder the cultivating class.\(^{47}\) Property in land was fully recognized and upheld, and the agriculturists were not oppressed as long as they paid their revenue.

After the treaty of Bhairowal, the British Resident had complete control over every affair of the state. He set out to reform the revenue department. Henry Lawrence retained the *kardars* as representatives of the Central Government in their respective districts but curtailed their powers and a strict supervision instituted over them.\(^{48}\) He directed them to send, within a period of ten days, the returns of income and expenditure of their districts.

Henry Lawrence issued orders forbidding strictly the *kardars* from meddling in the judicial affairs which were placed under the *adaltees* or judges. The *kardar* was still a magistrate and collector but the people were not free to appeal from his decisions to the *adaltees* of the Doab.\(^{49}\)


\(^{49}\) N.M. Khilnani, *British Power in Punjab (1839-1858)*, *op.cit*, p. 100.
“For judicial set-up Henry Lawrence called an assembly of 50 Sikh elders, soldiers and head of villages under the guidance of Sirdar Lehna Singh which stayed for some months at Lahore in the autumn of 1847 to frame a code of simple laws for the guidance of the Sikh people. The code was then placed before the Durbar and was made law. The final documents of civil and criminal law were drawn up by Saunders, the Assistant Commissioner of Hoshiarpur under instructions from John Lawrence.”

The Judicial administration fell into two categories: punishment of crimes (Criminal Justice) and resolution of disputes (Civil Justice). These code, civil and criminal, when carefully compiled were circulated among the adaltees appointed in every Doab of the Punjab.

Henry Lawrence, Resident of Lahore Darbar and Agent of Governor General in North West Frontier, remained in this position upto 21st August 1847. He was succeeded by his brother John Lawrence, who in addition to his job of Commissioner of Jullundhur Doab, performed the duties of Resident and Agent from 21st August to March 6th 1848. Fredrick Currie remained at the helm of affairs from 6th March 1848 to February 1849, when again Henry Lawrence came back to India and took over as Resident and agent at Lahore.

Henry Lawrence had to leave India due to his illness. On November 30, 1847, he left for England, accompanied by Lord Hardinge and John Lawrence replaced him at Lahore Darbar. Henry Lawrence was a cool headed person who was well acquainted with the nature of the people of Punjab. He handled every matter with utmost care and now he was replaced by his brother John Lawrence. John Lawrence became Resident at Lahore Darbar on 21st August, 1847. He had already achieved a summary settlement of the land in Kangra, Hoshiarpur and Jalandhar and hoped to employ the same in his new position.

51 J. Royal Roseberry III, *op.cit*, p. 17.
John Lawrence started the work of summary settlement in Lahore Darbar territories. In case of the frontier districts of Bannu, Huzara and Peshawar, it followed from the Governor General’s desire to place them under the direct administration of the British Political Assistants stationed there after the Treaty of Bhairowal. As for the summary settlement was concerned, Henry Lawrence was for the active co-operation of the Lahore Darbar and wanted it to be implemented through Darbar. But John Lawrence opined that the Darbar and its functionaries would never be co-operative as the very idea of summary settlement was against these people.\textsuperscript{54}

Under the sikh rule, the octroi and other duties was levied at many posts. As per new fiscal arrangements of John Lawrence, only three frontier lines were maintained, one along the Indus to tax the imports coming from the west; a second along the Beas and Sutlej for goods coming from the west; and the third along the base of the Himalyan Range to intercept goods coming from the Kingdom of Maharaja Gulab Singh.\textsuperscript{55}

\textbf{SECOND ANGLO SIKH WAR (1848-49) AND ANNEXATION OF THE PUNJAB}

Diwan Mulraj, son of Diwan Sawan Mal was Governor of Multan. He had signed an agreement with Lahore Darbar in August 1846, consenting to pay increased tribute of R. 19,68,000 for which his father Diwan Sawan Mal paid only Rs. 13,74,000 but Diwan Mul Raj found it difficult to pay increased tribute. “After the treaty of Bhairowal, the British abolished the old system of octroi duties in the Punjab and also rendered duty free a number of minor articles of trade. The Multani merchants also insisted that the new system of import and export be introduced in place of the old town and transit duties which were still levied in Multan. Diwan Mulraj came to Lahore in December 1847 for negotiation with John Lawrence. He asked that his tribute should be reduced and no appeals against his decisions should be entertained but John Lawrence refused to concede any of these demands. Diwan Mulraj gave


\textsuperscript{55} \textit{P.A.R. 1849-50 and 1850-51} (one volume), p. 113.
resignation from Governorship of Multan." On 19th April 1848, two British officials were Vans Agnew and Lieutenant Anderson were sent to Multan to control the affairs but were killed by the troops, while Mulraj was showing them the fort of Multan. Diwan Mulraj issued a proclamation calling upon all the Sikhs to rise against the British.

In June 1848, Sardar Sher Singh, son of Sardar Chatar Singh Attariwala, was sent with 5,000 Sikh troops to co-operate with Lieutenant Edwardes, assistant to the Resident and Lieutenant Lake, a district officer. Sher Singh was the head of Sikh troops, co-operating with Major General Whish in the siege operation at Multan. Chatar Singh Attariwala was Governor of Hazara and Captain James Abbot was appointed to advise the Sikh Governor in the execution of his duties. The conduct of captain James Abbot towards Chatar Singh was not good. Soon after the outbreak of Multan, Captain James Abbot was convinced that Chatar Singh was conspiring for the expulsion of the British from Punjab, therefore, he cut-off all personal communication with him. It was considered as disgrace by Sardar Chatar Singh. When Sher Singh came to know about the matter, he decided to join his father. Chatar Singh started negotiations with Amir of Kabul, Dost Muhammad Khan and offered him the valley of Peshawar. The Amir responded by seizing Peshawar and sending an Afghan contingent to join Chatar Singh.

In October 1848, the British army had crossed the river Sutlej, proceeding from Ferozepur across the Punjab at an angle to the Sikh line of march. It came up with Sher Singh at Ramnagar on November 22nd, 1848 but after various skirmishes, this battle between Lord Hugh Gough (British Commander-in-Chief) and Sher Singh remained undecided.

The battle of Chillianwala was fought on 13th January 1849. This was also an indecisive battle but the loss to British side was heavy, 602 men were killed and 1651 wounded. Chatar Singh had also joined his son Sher Singh in this battle. The

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56 Sita Ram Kohli (ed.), Trial of Diwan Mulraj, Languages Department Punjab, 1971, pp. 3-5.
57 A.D. Innes, Charles Gough, op.cit, pp. 146-149.
59 Khushwant Singh, op.cit, pp. 79-80.
Sikhs fired a salute of 21 guns and claimed it as their victory, a similar salute was fired at Attock, the Capital of Chatar Singh. Hugh Gough’s prestige suffered and he was replaced by Charles Napier. On 22nd January, 1849, Diwan Mulraj accepted his defeat and surrendered before Hugh Gough.

The decisive battle of Gujarat was fought on 21st February 1849. In this battle, the combined forces of Hugh Gough and General Whish defeated Sikh army and forced them to lay down arms. On March 29, 1849, the province of Punjab was finally annexed by the British.

British battalions were deployed in the Punjab to keep it under control. The Sikh army was overawed by the presence of the British battalions. Even during the rule of Maharaja Ranjit Singh the Sikh chieftains were always adverse to the policy of Europeanizing the Army and were extremely jealous of the favour he (Maharaja Ranjit Singh) extended to the Europeans in his service.

The British were prepared in advance to annex Punjab. They had made all the arrangements to merge Punjab into British territory. On 15th March 1849, the Secretary to the Government of India wrote a letter to Secretary to Government North-West Provinces mentioning that R. Montgomery, D. F. McLeod, E. Thornton and M. P. Edgeworth to know their willingness to join the offices and salaries assigned to them and to proceed without delay to Ludhiana, and on arrival report themselves to the Resident at Lahore, who would receive orders respecting the places at which they were to be employed. They were to be appointed Commissioners on a salary of Rs. 2750 per month. Deputy Commissioners were to be given Rs.1200 to Rs.1000 and Assistant Commissioners were to be given salary ranging from Rs.700 to Rs.500 per month. He wrote in the letter:

“As circumstances at present prevent a public declaration of the views of the government with respect to the Punjab, it would be a well to withhold the announcement of the changes consequent upon the vacancies which would now be

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61 *Foreign Department (Secret Branch), 31 March 1849, Proceeding No.285*, N.A.I., New Delhi.
occasioned until a proclamation was issued notifying the annexation of the Punjab.”

STRATEGY OF THE BRITISH AFTER ANNEXATION OF THE PUNJAB
As long as Maharaja Ranjit Singh remained alive, he was successful in protecting Punjab from the British as well as from the neighbouring states. He died in 1839 and the whole scenario changed completely. The death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh created consternation and dismay throughout the length and breadth of the kingdom. The grand army of Maharaja Ranjit Singh became a victim of the situation as his successors could not escape from the conspiracies of Lahore Darbar and it became a hub of conspiracies and bloodshed. The successors of Maharaja Ranjit Singh remained unable to provide political stability. Anarchy prevailed throughout the province and the economy of the Punjab was hit hard during that time.

The Punjab remained a disturbed area for long after the death of the great Maharaja because of political instability in the state. Maharaja Ranjit Singh did every possible effort to maintain peace and prosperity in the province. He consolidated Punjab by maintaining good diplomatic relations with the British and neighbouring states and the financial position of the province improved during his reign. Though he remained busy in military expeditions yet he paid attention to improvement of agriculture and land revenue. Economy of the Punjab flourished before annexation due to encouraging and favourable policy of Maharaja Ranjit Singh towards trade and commerce and due to peaceful atmosphere which he gave to the Punjab. However, his pre-occupation with the expansion of his kingdom and maintenance of peace left less time to improve the means of communication.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh kept a huge army during his reign which used to draw salary from the treasury of Sikh kingdom and remitted it to their homes. Trader and

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62 Ibid.
merchants, too had faith in the great Maharaja and it seems that the prosperity prevailed among common people during his reign.

Economy of the Punjab collapsed rapidly between these ten years (1839-1849) because the administrators of Punjab were busy in protecting the province from British power on the one hand and from internal disputes on the other. This period caused a great damage to the trade and commerce of the Punjab. The political instability in Punjab hampered the economic activities which directly correlated with the peace and prosperity of the region.

Another feature of that time was the increase in money-lending by the trading communities, especially banias. They took advantage of the new economic situation. Moneylender was fairly well established in towns and large villages before the annexation of Punjab but he was not so powerful under the Sikh rule as he subsequently became under the British.

It was only towards the close of Maharaja’s reign that financial prosperity of the province was focused. Taxation was an important subject of income for the state. Under Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the whole country was threaded with a network of preventive lines for taxation. These lines were dotted with innumerable posts for the collection of every kind of tax, direct and indirect. At the same set of stations, excise and customs taxes, town duties, transit duties, capitation imposts, were all levied. Merchants and traders were protected and it seems that the duties and taxes were not for the most part immoderate.\(^{65}\) The system was most even and uniform in the sense that it was all pervading and no class was exempted from it.

The changes in the economic structure started taking place under the British rule. Summary settlements were introduced in 1846 in the region of Jalandhar Doab. It was mainly the work of John Lawrence. Summary settlements were to be introduced for three years. The aim was to attempt a light assessment for this new acquisition. Earlier, the land revenue had been paid in kind but John Lawrence settled it for money rates. It became a popular measure among the British officials and shortly after the annexation, the districts which had not been assessed earlier

were put under summary settlements and later on these were replaced by regular settlements.\textsuperscript{66} In case of important Jagirs the Lawrences had differences e.g. Jagirs of misldars, religious chiefs like bedis and sodhis. John Lawrence wanted rental and one-fourth of assessment of the land. John Lawrence wanted that a liberal provision be accorded to every family and if, owing to this arrangement, the funds of any chiefs fell below than what they received under the Sikh rule, the difference was to be made good from the treasury. Lord Hardinge accepted his recommendations.\textsuperscript{67}

Administrative changes were also required in the Punjab. Henry Lawrence’s policy had been to introduce as few innovations as possible and to retain the spirit of the popular system, John Lawrence on the other hand had no faith in the Indian institutions and he was strongly convinced that the English methods of rule would alone bring peace and prosperity in the Punjab.\textsuperscript{68}

Meanwhile, the Governor-Generalship of Lord Hardinge was replaced by Lord Dalhousie who followed the policy of annexation. The second Anglo-Sikh War resulted in victory for the British in the successive battle of Multan. Lord Dalhousie decided to annex the province of Punjab to take full control over the territory. Maharaja Daleep Singh tendered the Governor-General the submission of himself and his chiefs and solicited the clemency of the British Government. Punjab was finally annexed by Lord Dalhousie by the proclamation of 29\textsuperscript{th} March 1849.

The occupation of Punjab was a challenge for the British Government because the resources of the country were to be developed. The region had been in turmoil for ten long years thus the economy had been shattered completely. To maintain peace in Punjab was not so easy because the British had to deal with the dacoits and thugs who were raving the countryside and they flourished during the years of anarchy succeeding Ranjit Singh. Apart from that there were fierce tribes on the North-West Front and these people were really difficult to keep under control. Trade and commerce was hit hard due to anarchy in the Punjab. The

\textsuperscript{68} \textit{P.A.R. 1849-50 and 1850-51} (one volume) pp. 94-95.
agriculture was mainstay of the people but as the situation stood it was in bad shape so agricultural prosperity was required. Agriculture was dependent either on monsoon or on the well irrigation, British wanted to bring it up on scientific lines. Work on the canals was introduced and soon accelerated. There was hardly any paved or metallic roads during the times of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Though there were some paved roads in hilly areas, they were meant only for military purpose. Transportation was in bad condition. In fact as the Punjab stood in March 1849, it was a serious challenge for the British to control it, rule it and to introduce progress and prosperity in the region. The glorious Punjab of Maharaja Ranjit Singh which he built up so lovingly was victim of treason and counter treason for a decade and everything required improvement. It could only be possible if the British could improve agriculture, trade, means of communication, administrative system judicial system, army recruitment and these could be only achieved through sound economic policies for Punjab was most significant to them as the Frontier province.