
Socio-Economic and Political Complexities, A Historical Survey: The British Punjab

_____ Maqbool Ahmad Awan

Abstract

The article aims at providing a historical survey of the Punjab province during the British Raj. Apart from discussing the geographical importance, social-economic conditions of the province, it also gives a bird's eye view of the political consciousness of the Punjab landed elite and basic information of various ruling dynasties and their impact on history and the politics of the Punjab, which welcomed all other civilizations and cultures that had a considerable influence upon its economic, social and political landscape. Along with focusing on pin pointing socio-economic, political complexities of the British Punjab and the political status of various communities including the Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs, it summarizes various reforms which were introduced by the British in the province to improve the condition of the people of the Punjab. The canal colonies, "Land Alienation Act" and their impacts on the Punjab population have been brought to light. The evolutionary political consciousness of the Punjab's landed aristocracy which contributed in war efforts during the World War-I and their loyalties with the British Raj because of various families of the Punjab landed elite were awarded and rewarded by it for their loyalties and services have been highlighted. It also sums up the Punjabi tribal chiefs'

collaborative relationship with the British, which was a unique two-way process, rather than, as it is often elaborated, a top-down one way relationship for the economic amelioration of the Punjab. It covers the political and constitutional developments in the British Punjab particularly in the early 20th century.

Introduction

The word 'Punjab' derives its appellation from possibly two words which belong originally to Persian language, *Panj* means five and *Aab* means water. This name was rightly given to the Punjab area possibly in an era when this region developed close ties with Persia. Thus, the province is meaningfully called the land of five rivers or five waters. These rivers are the Jhelum, the Ravi, the Beas, the Sutlej and the Chenab. The Punjab also the vast fertile region located in the North-West of the South Asian sub-continent.¹

For the first time, perhaps, the word 'Punjab' was discussed in the book '*Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*'² written by Abbas Khan Sarwani in which he mentions Sher Shah Suri with the title of '*Sher Khan of Punjab*'.³ Again, the name became a topic of discussion in '*Ain-i-Akbari*'.⁴ In its first volume, Abul Fazal (1551-1602) penned down that the Punjab's territorial division was originally based on two provinces of Lahore and Multan. Likewise, in the second volume of '*Ain-i-Akbari*', the word "Punjab" is written over there as title of the chapter. Besides this, the Mughal King Jahangir, in his autobiography, '*Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*' has also mentioned the word "Punjab".⁵ The Punjab remained a cradle of the Indus Valley Civilization which was one of the oldest civilizations of the world. Because of its geo-strategic position, vast economic resources and indefatigable manpower, Punjab had occupied distinguished place in the sub-continent since the ancient period.⁶ Historically, before the Mughal rule, the Punjab was also known as '*Panjnad*' such as the land of five waters and finally, during that period, this region was known as 'Punjab'.⁷

The Punjab province lies between 27° 39' and 35° 2' North Latitude and 69° 35' and 78° 35' East Longitude (Greenwich).⁸

Along the Northern border of the Punjab, Himalayan range divides it from Chinese Tibet and Kashmir. To its west and North-West lies Afghanistan, from which it is separated on the west by the Suleiman Mountains and on the North-West by the ranges which run from the Eastern extremity of Safed Koh North-East to join the Himalayas and South-West to meet the Suleimans. To its South lie Sindh, Rajputana and the Muttra District of the United Provinces, while on the East, the rivers Jumna and Tons separate it from the same province, and on the North-East a mighty Himalayan range shuts it off from Chinese Tartary.⁹

Excluding salt range, the Punjab is a vast plain made up of alluvial soil deposited by its famous five rivers. The plain of the Punjab is divided by its rivers into five extensive natural sections known as *Doab*; which means a land lying in the bifurcation above the confluence of two rivers. The land between the Ravi and the Beas is named as *Bari Doab*; that between the Chenab and Ravi is known as *Rachna Doab*. Similarly, the land between the Chenab and Jhelum is called *Chaj Doab*. The *Doab* between the Indus and Jhelum is known as *Sindh Sagar Doab* and the *Doab* between the Beas and the Sutlej is called *Jalendhar Doab*.¹⁰ The area of the Punjab is famous for its plenty of water and fertility of land which contributes to yield good crops for agro-based economy of the Punjab.

The Punjab, the land of five rivers, has patronized one of the earliest known human civilizations which has left its imprint on posterity through the ages. It had, until recent times, retained a geographical unity which distinguished Punjab from the neighbouring countries and the rest of India. It is shaped like a scalene triangle balanced on its sharpest angle.¹¹ The geographical unity of the Punjab, with all its geological and climatic variations, had been matched by a similar political unity. Simultaneously, because of its strategic location in South Asia, the Punjab has also remained a focal point for a continuum of dissensions and feuds involving ethnic and political forces beyond its borders.¹²

Since the ancient times, the Punjab has been given immense significance because of its geo-strategic importance and geo-

political location. Foreign invaders, from earliest time till the British annexation of Punjab in 1849, made their way into the sub-continent through the Punjab which worked as a natural gateway to India, a feted battle field and the first home for all the conquerors that arrived for imperialistic designs in the sub-continent.¹³ However, the people of the Punjab displayed stern resistance to those invaders who entered in the sub-continent from the north-western region before moving towards other expeditions inside and outside of the sub-continent. The Punjab was also considered as the heart land of India on which the destiny of whole India used to depend because the destiny of the Punjab had always been considered the destiny of the sub-continent. Once, the Punjab was vanquished, ultimately, the subjugation of the rest of the sub-continent was inevitable. These foreign incursions on the Punjab added to its socio-ethnic multiplicity as well. A fertile region with men of strong physique, the Punjab was a rich source of both wealth and manpower for the conquerors.¹⁴

Punjab under Various Ruling Dynasties

The Punjab was one of the largest provinces of the 'United India' with a huge population and vast territorial units. However, the Punjab had remained under foreign rule for many centuries; further, it also proved its significance in the fields of economic, socio-political, cultural, psychological and intellectual life of this region. The Punjab also enjoyed significant and very unique identity because of its political and administrative set up as compared to other provinces of India. The basic characteristics and the behaviour of the society played a vital role to change the course of its socio- political history. The customs and traditions as well as the financial and economic needs of the inhabitants of this specific region are closely related to its history. It was generally observed that eminent colonialism was related to the British. However, historically speaking, it had deep rooted links with the Aryans, Persians, Greeks and Central Asian imperialism.

The Punjab's history can be found in the era of invasion of the Aryans. They entered the Punjab province around 2000 B.C; emigration towards the regions of the *Jamna* and the *Gangas*, around 1500 B.C. At this place, they gradually established their colonies and Kingdoms when Buddhism spread in India; it had its repercussions on the Punjab as well. Numerous Buddhist monasteries and pillars were built by Ashoka and Kanishka who ruled over the Punjab from 264 to 227 B.C. and 78 A.D. to 123 A.D. One hypothesis is that the arrival of Aryans is directly linked with Central Asia. However, the second opinion is that they came from Southern Russia or Austria Hungary. Another point of view is that they came from Arctic region. According to another group of scholars, the Aryans originally lived in India and did not come from outside. Generally, the accepted view is that the Aryans came in sub-continent from outside.¹⁵

Max Duncker, the eminent German scholar, is of the opinion that Aryans must have descended into the valley of Indus about the year 2,000 B.C. viz: About the time when the kingdom of Elam was predominant in the valley of the Euphrates and Tigris, when Assyria still stood under the dominion of Babylon and the kingdom of Memphis was ruled by the Hyksos.¹⁶

The Punjab became the central point of the Aryan settlement. It was in the Aryans period that Hindu religion was evolved and sages like Manu wrote its *Dharma Shastra*. They flourished their culture and strongly believed in their 'Caste-System' which was consisting of '*Brahman*', '*Khastriya*', '*Vaishya*' and '*Shudras*'.¹⁷ The caste system of Hindu society was an instrument of Aryans civilization by which the new people, as a whole, were conferred upon a status in the Aryans society.

Although, Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Egyptian and Tartars had long lasting impacts and effects on Punjab, however, these Civilizations had developed close ties with the Persian Empire. The sub-continent remained the territory where frequent invasions had been done by the foreigners for its immense wealth. During the reign of Bimbisara in 6th century, B.C. Cyrus, the ruler of Persia, invaded the North-Western part of the sub-continent

and conquered the region in between the Kabul River and the Indus River. The Persian domination in the sub-continent was further extended by Darius-I (522-486 B.C.). He annexed Gandhara (North-West Punjab) and conquered the Indus Valley. The accounts recorded by Herodotus (483-425 B.C.) lead to the supposition that the areas occupied by Darius included Lahore, Gujrat and Multan and these areas were considered the most populated and civilized areas of the Punjab.¹⁸

The first European who attacked the Punjab via Chitral and Swat was Alexander the Great of Macedonia in 326 B.C.¹⁹ He defeated Poros, the ruler of the tract between the Jhelum and the Chenab, while many other rulers and chieftains had submitted or, later on, tendered their allegiance to him.²⁰ Alexander marched towards the Beas and he had followed a policy of conciliation towards the local rulers; he fought only against those who refused to acknowledge his supremacy.²¹ The Greek attacks left the deep impacts on art, culture, literature and its renowned style was recognized as *Gandhara Art*.²² The Greeks invaded the Punjab at different times and they were followed by the Bactrians.²³ The Greek settlements improved the social, cultural and political life of the Punjab. Alexander's invasion paved the way for political unity in the sub-continent. In Greek period, lands and sea-routes were developed and geographical knowledge was increased in the Punjab province.

Muhammad Bin Qasim (712 A.D.) was the first Muslim soldier under Umayyad's Dynasty who established Muslim rule in the region of Punjab.²⁴ Later on, Mahmud of Ghazni (971-1030 A.D.) invaded the Punjab province seventeen times and defeated Hindu Raja Jaipal in 1001 A.D. Muhammad Ghori also attacked the Punjab and captured it in 1186 A.D. Further, he strengthened his rule by defeating the ruler of Ajmer Prithivi Raj. After the death of Muhammad Ghori in July 1206 A.D, Qutubuddin Aibak (1206-1210 A.D.) declared himself as an independent and sovereign ruler of India. However, the epoch from 1206-1526 A.D. is known as the Sultanate of Delhi period of India, which comprised of five important dynasties; Slaves Dynasty, (1206-

1290 A.D.), Khalji Dynasty, (1290-1320 A.D.), Tughluq Dynasty, (1320-1414 A.D.), Syed Dynasty, (1414-1451 A.D.), Lodhi Dynasty, (1451-1526 A.D.) which ruled India.²⁵

In 1526, the Mughal rule was established by Zaheer-ud-Din Babar (1483-1530) in India after the defeat of Ibrahim Lodhi in the battle of Panipat. Under the rule of Mughal Empire, the Punjab observed a long period of peace, good governance and religious harmony. This Mughal rule remained for almost two hundred years in India in which Mughal Forts, Mosques, Mausoleums, *Serais* and Gardens were built in various parts of the Punjab.²⁶ After the death of Aurangzeb Alamgir in 1707 A.D, the Mughal Empire started to face its decline in India. Later on, Ahmad Shah Abdali (1722-1772 A.D.) launched many attacks and crushed the Marhattas in Punjab. This penetration of Ahmad Shah Abdali in the Mughal regime not only weakened their grip on the Punjab administration but also catalyzed the downfall of Mughal Empire.²⁷

Later on, the power in the Punjab province first shifted from the Mughals to the Abdalis and then to the Sikhs. Sikhs also emerged into power in the Punjab and general chaos and anarchy prevailed in the province. During this period, Ahmad Shah Abdali and Nadir Shah (1688-1747) invaded the Punjab and it started the process of political disintegration followed by the death of Aurangzeb (1618-1707). Foreign invasions brought disharmony and chaos to destabilize indigenous rule which never succeeded to provide the opportunity of social peace and harmony in Punjab. Therefore, Mughal Empire demonstrated some weaknesses and the land of five rivers prompted the action of Ranjit Singh (1799-1838 A.D.) who successfully established the Sikh Empire in Punjab.²⁸

In 1772, Ahmad Shah Abdali died and Punjab experienced a weak rule of Afghans which brought the province under the domination of the Sikhs. Ranjit Singh established his rule in Lahore in 1799, turned Punjab into a dominant state with complete Sikh political supremacy and later on, he occupied Multan, Peshawar and also Kashmir. His efforts to unite the Sikh

community on one platform were massively damaged by disgruntled political elements of the Punjab.²⁹ Ranjit Singh mostly relied on the loyal support of the landed aristocracy of the Punjab and gave them significant political status in the province.³⁰

In South Asia, the Delhi Sultans and the Mughals, particularly Akbar the Great (1542-1605) with his Mansabdari system, developed very close relations with the feudal class and distributed vast tracts of land among his warriors and loyal courtiers in order to wield the political influence of landed elite in the Punjab.³¹ The Sikhs also followed his policy of conciliation with the land lords of the Punjab in order to solidify their rule in Punjab. The Sikhs received a massive support from martial races of the Punjabi rural class. Historically, landed aristocracy remained supportive and loyal to Ranjit Singh who resorted to fair and unfair means to bring the Punjabi chieftains under his political grip.³²

Ranjit Singh inculcated the consciousness of regional nationalism in the Punjab to forge a unified kingdom.³³ However, he was the only ruler among the Punjabi political elite who could formulate a reasonable and powerful united kingdom in the Punjab. However, his death dealt a death blow to all his ambitions regarding the Sikh rule in the Punjab. Finally, the demise of Ranjit Singh on 27th June 1839 brought the downfall of the Sikh Empire and later on, Punjab was occupied by the British East India Company.³⁴ The Khattars of Wah, District Attock in the Punjab, the Khans of Kasur, the Noons of Shahpur, the Tiwanas of Khushab (Shahpur) and the Mamdots of Eastern Punjab, were either tempted or forced to support the Maharaja. However, the Muslim urban families also enjoyed esteemed positions in the court of Maharaja during the Sikh rule in Punjab.³⁵

British Raj and the Punjab

The British also used the policy of close association with the local chieftains and utilized the channel of feudal political elite to pursue their political interests in the sub-continent. They preferred the landlords and *lambardars* (Village heads) in order to prolong and strengthen their rule in Punjab as this policy of

allegiance with the landed aristocracy was also adopted during Sikh rule in Punjab. Chiefs and landlords were invested with the magisterial powers in their respective states. British thought that diplomatic stroke of policy would have turned landed elite from foes to friends.³⁶ The British also patronized the middle class of Indians, who ambitiously copied the British customs, traditions and manners. The British thought that middle class could also be proved as a potential asset in India for their political interests. However, industrial developments and modern innovations brought the decline of feudal system and reshuffled the entire social structure of the West which did not use to exist in the sub-continent in the 19th century.³⁷

Sikh rule collapsed because of factional disputes, mutual jealousies and internecine wars. After the first Anglo Sikh War (1845-1846), Sir Henry Lawrence (1806-1857), the British resident at Lahore *Durbar*, suggested the Sikh rulers to bring about certain social reforms, but these reforms were not sufficient to improve the unhappy and miserable state of affairs of Muslims masses in the Punjab. Subsequently, the British annexed the Punjab which brought a sigh of relief among the Muslims and they felt that religious freedom would be granted to them by the British.³⁸ On 14th March 1849, Punjab became a province of the British Indian Empire and Lord Dalhousie (1848-1956) ordered for the annexation of Punjab to the British India. The Punjab was formally annexed by a proclamation on 29th March, 1849. Lord Dalhousie held a special meeting at Lahore in which almost all major Sikh Chiefs alongwith Maharaja Dalip Singh (1838-1893) participated. On that day, the British proclaimed the Punjab as a part of the British Raj in India.³⁹ On 5th April, 1849, an agreement was signed between East India Company and Sikh Regency which was rectified by the British Governor General. The British also demanded Maharaja Dalip Singh of Lahore to hand over *Koh-i-Noor* to the Queen Victoria of England (1819-1901).⁴⁰ Thus, the Punjab which had remained the tempting lure of succession for invaders for many centuries, ultimately, passed into the possession of Queen Victoria. The British Government was extremely eager

to make Punjab annexation because of its economic as well as political aspects.⁴¹

Socio-Economic Conditions of the British Punjab

The Punjab with its fertile land, comprising 87 to 90% rural population, depended upon the agriculture.⁴² The cotton of the Punjab was one of the chief attractions for the British who envisaged it in the land of five rivers. British considered the Punjab as a favourable market for the consumption of their goods as well. The Punjab also offered vast opportunities of employment for a large number of British civilians and also provided facilities of comprehensive mountainous training grounds and cantonments for special training of the British troops.⁴³

The rural population of the Punjab province was round about 85% where Rajputs, Jats and Arrains were considered the noble tribes of the Punjab. All these tribes had strong socio-cultural and mutual relations without any discrimination of their religious beliefs. On the other hand, in the South-Eastern region of the Punjab, life was entirely different because of uncertain conditions of rainfall and the shortage of other necessary resources for agricultural development. It was because of these factors that a large part of land of Punjab was uncultivated. In fact, it was considered that the Punjab was a home of the Muslims because 83% of population of the province was Muslim. The real settlers of Punjab region were migratory tribes who moved from one place to another in search of better livelihood. In this region, the population of Punjab was scattered and needed protection of the feudal lords who were the owners of the lands. Tiwanas, Noons, Daualtanas, Momdots, Lagharies, Mazaries, Qureshies, Gardezies, Gilanies, Kharals, Sials, and Rajas were the Muslim landlords of the Punjab.⁴⁴

During the British Raj, Punjabi landlords were dominant in the politics of the Punjab because these landed families possessed massive part of the agricultural land of this province. For example, in 1893 the Tiwanas of Khushab had 15,000 acres of estate at *Kalra* which with the passage of time increased to 30,000

acres. In 1908, the Nawabs of Mamdot's estate in the Ferozpur District were over 60,000 acres.⁴⁵ In 1910, the Dultanas of Multan had about 20,000 acres of land at *Ludden*. This data proves that the landlords, whether they were Muslims or Hindus were big land holders. Some of the Punjabi landlords made their family alliances with one another just like Tiwanas and Noons. These landlords intermarried mainly with the neighbouring tribes, Tiwanas and Noons; they did not have widespread *biradri* links like Khattar tribe of Wah.⁴⁶

Immediately, after the conquest of the Punjab province, the British conducted a new revenue assessment of land, which was neglected by the previous regimes in the Punjab. In the past, peasants suffered while land owners enjoyed immense fruits of revenue assessment. Indeed, during the era of Lawrence brothers in the Punjab, it underwent through reformatory phase in many socio-economic fields of the province.⁴⁷ In February 1853, John Lawrence (1811-1879) was appointed as the Chief Commissioner in the Punjab province. A Judicial Commissioner as well as a Financial Commissioner was also appointed to support him in the new administration of the company in the province. Lawrence reformatory measures proved very beneficial for the peasants and did not favour the landed elite.⁴⁸ British also paid special attention to extend the means of communication and the re-construction of canal system in order to ameliorate the agro-based economy of the Punjab. The development of roads like Grand Trunk Road (G.T Road) proved a landmark in the history of the sub-continent.⁴⁹ Meanwhile, the British rule also introduced the famous department in the Punjab, which was known as Punjab Public Works Department. Captain Napier (1786-1860) took very special measures to organize this department which was replaced by the military board in 1854-1855.⁵⁰

The British, even after the war of independence in 1857, continued the policy of institutional reforms and social development of the Punjab province. They introduced reforms for social improvement and facilitated the masses of the Punjab with the educational institutions like the Government College Lahore

which was established in 1864. Meanwhile, Punjab Chief Court was also established in 1865, at Lahore. Further, in 1866, Punjab Chiefs' College was founded in Lahore. The first Tenancy Act was introduced in 1868 in order to define the rights of both the landlords and the tenants.⁵¹ Later on, Sardar Shaukat Hayat Khan (1915-1998), the son of Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan, credited his grandfather Muhammad Hayat Khan as the main driving force behind the promulgation of Tenancy Act of 1868. Thus, the landed elite not only remained loyal to the British but also worked for the welfare of the masses of the Punjab.⁵² The University of Punjab, Punjab Public Library and Lahore Veterinary School were established in 1882 respectively.⁵³ At this juncture, the educated Muslim population started sending their children to Aligarh College in small numbers. Hindus were in the favour of Western style education in the institutions of the Punjab. The *Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam* was also established in 1884 to promote the modern education and to remove the educational backwardness of the Muslims in the Punjab province. Many well-known personalities contributed financially for the ambitious plan of *Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam*. Further, the *Anjuman* also worked for the social amelioration, uplift and welfare of the Muslims in the Punjab province. Meanwhile, at Amritsar, *Khalsa* College was also established in 1892 to educate the Sikh community of the Punjab. Moreover, education institutions were growing in the urbanized population of the Punjab. However, the political institutions did not achieve development in the Punjab as compared to that of other provinces of India in the last quarter of the 19th century.⁵⁴

The British Government decided to improve the economy, prosperity and welfare of the people of the Punjab and introduced the canal colonies project in order to change the barren land into fertile land. The British wanted to irrigate the land of the Punjab with the canal water which was fed by the rivers; the Jhelum, the Chenab and the Ravi. Firstly, the upper *Bari Doab* canal was dug out. It irrigated the fertile and densely populated districts of Amritsar and Lahore. The lower Jhelum and Chenab canal system followed in the 1880s.⁵⁵ It was estimated that this experiment

ushered a new era of progress and prosperity in the socio-economic history of Punjab. Millions of Punjabis were settled in the canal colonies by the British to develop agricultural and other infrastructure in the canal colonies of the Punjab. In this regard, Imran Ali argued that canal colonies contributed for the development goals, economic stability and political loyalty of the Punjab for the British. The Punjab administration allotted huge bulk of land to the 'Martial Races' and 'Landed Elite' in Punjab.⁵⁶ The experiment of canal colonies was successful and the opening of the lower Chenab in 1892 became the landmark in the economic history of the province. Under this project, the total irrigated area was almost 10 million acres. The lower Jehlum and Chanab canal system was also introduced to cultivate many thousand acres of land. As a result, it irrigated the limitless waste and scrub land of District Shahpur, Jhang and Lyllpur.⁵⁷

The agricultural development in the Punjab was totally dependent on the canal system which was introduced by the British. Though, the other regions of India especially Deccan and United Provinces also got benefits from such irrigation system, yet the effects of this canal system on Punjab were wonderfully positive and fruitful for the agro-based economy of the Punjab. In 1909, the British Government allotted all available land to the people of these colonies to increase the development of the Punjab region. Further, British administration created a splendid irrigational system in the form of canal colonies and demonstrated great feats of engineering in construction work of canal.⁵⁸

Till 1939, the 47% agriculture land of the Punjab was irrigated by the canal water.⁵⁹ Six million acres barren and uncultivated land of the south-west Punjab was made fertile through this canal system. Another purpose of making colonies was to minimize the population pressure of the Punjab. A large number of different agriculture tribes migrated from many districts of the Punjab and settled in the colonies of lower Chenab. About 10 lac Punjabi agriculturalists settled down near the canal colonies. These settlers regularly sent some share of their earnings to their native lands. Hence, many markets were developed

where agricultural products were supplied and employment opportunities were created in the Punjab by the canal colonies.⁶⁰

However, the canal system was completed in 1917. The Punjab also became the main recruiting centre for the Indian army. By establishing the canal colonies, peoples were motivated to join army. The British introduced a policy for the Sikh and the Jats that every ex-soldier would be given huge chunk of land. In the lower *Bari Doab* canal, a lot of agricultural land was distributed among the British soldiers.⁶¹ Because of the cheap rates of the land in the Punjab, it was possible for the British to make vast farms for the breeding of cattle and horses for the army. So, more than 200,000 acres land was specified in the district of Shahpur to achieve this objective. During the World War-I, a great amount of wheat, flour and large number of horses and mules were sent for the soldiers by the District Layllpur.⁶² Besides this, remount depots were established in the District Shahpur. Canal colonies provided horses, soldiers and other raw material for the British military operations in World War-I (1914-1918).⁶³ At the end of World War-I, over 420,000 acres of canal colony land were distributed to 6000 commissioned and non-commissioned army officers who had participated in the war and remained loyal to the British.⁶⁴

The British Government made very careful inquiry about the expropriation of land by the moneylenders in 1888 in the Punjab province.⁶⁵ The British mostly depended upon the Punjabi landlords in socio-political affairs of the Punjab province and the Punjab Land Alienation Act of 1900 was in fact the recognition of the importance of Punjabi landlords and their political relations with the British administration in India. The basic purpose behind this act was to stop the permanent alienation of agricultural land by the non-agricultural classes. This act divided the population into agriculturalist as well as non-agriculturalist tribes.⁶⁶ According to Land Alienation Act of 1900, moneylenders could not expropriate to the agricultural owners. The main provisions of this Act were very simple and were related to the agricultural land. All the mortgages of the land by agriculturalists who

favoured the non-agriculturalists were considered illegal. Further, land could not be leased for more than 5 years.⁶⁷ However, urban bourgeoisie class opposed the Land Alienation Act of 1900, because they considered peasant class their legitimate prey. Some critics argued that Land Alienation Act widened the gulf between the urban and the rural class. Moreover, this was based on misunderstanding because trading class was also living in villages as well as in towns.⁶⁸ The Land Alienation Act permitted to the same agricultural tribes that were living in the same districts. In spite of various sincere efforts of the British Government, the Alienation of the land could not be finished. With the passage of time, moneylenders discovered various methods and loopholes in the Land Alienation Act. The moneylenders appointed their agents in different villages, who belonged to agriculturist tribes and debtors were suggested to transfer the land in the name of moneylenders, which is called *benami* transaction.⁶⁹ However, in 1937, Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan's Ministry abridged some loopholes in Land Alienation Act and introduced some legislations.

To sum up, this act was based on the cleavages between the urban and the rural areas. The British Government received once again massive support of the rural elites by introducing it. According to Zafrullah Khan, this Act was purely an economic measure which was designed to protect all the agricultural communities; Muslims and non-Muslims were against the exploitation of the moneylenders.⁷⁰ Hafeez Malik also argued that the Land Alienation Act emancipated peasantry, however, it divided the Muslims and the Hindus into two opposing the rural as well as the urban classes.⁷¹ By and large, Muslims appreciated the Land Alienation Act and recognized it as the protection of the Muslim peasants from the Hindu moneylenders and traders.⁷² Later on, it was also recognized that the Land Alienation Act was a successful maneuvering of the British administration for the protection of the rural and traditional landed aristocracy. At later stages, the agricultural tribes were permitted to stand as candidates for rural constituencies which gave birth to Punjab

National Unionist Party based on the dominant agrarian alliances among the agricultural tribes of the Punjab.⁷³ Gradually, the British Government covered the Punjab with the institutions of modern civilization; roads were made in every direction, canals were projected or constructed, schools, dispensaries and jails were erected in every district. Moreover, the British also introduced a uniform code of civil and criminal law procedure. The currency was reformed, taxation on trade was removed and a system of regular settlements was commenced to meet all the needs of the Punjabi people.⁷⁴

The British introduced a very curious fascination for the landlords of the Punjab and the Sikh landlords were given back their lands.⁷⁵ Punjabi landlords proved very helpful for the British administration in the Punjab. They also assisted the British for recapturing Delhi and to quell any uprising in any part of the sub-continent. The Punjabi feudal extended their full support at every critical juncture to reinforce the British rule in India. The Hindu moneylenders also assisted the British to recapture lost grounds in India.⁷⁶

Political Consciousness and Landed Elite of the Punjab

The Punjabi chiefs and the landlords remained loyal to the British rulers and their loyalty made the British administration more powerful in the provincial politics of the Punjab and it prompted the British to facilitate the growth of a political entity like the Unionist Party as well as leaders like Sir Fazl-i-Husain, Sir Chhotu Ram and Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan, Malik Khizr Hayat Tiwana etc. However, lack of educational and political institutions crippled the peasants who depended severely on landed aristocracy of the Punjab. Consequently, the evolution of the political consciousness among common Punjabis was hindered by the economic deterioration of the common man in the Punjab. So, the province remained localized, it did not contribute significantly in the political affairs of the sub-continent for a long time. From the annexation of the Punjab in 1849 to the war of independence of 1857, the Punjab proved itself a tower of strength to India and

remained supportive for the British Government to supply military recruits without realizing and capitalizing its political significance to a large extent.⁷⁷ In religious perspective, Buddhism, Islamism, Sikhism and Hinduism had dominated the social life of the Punjab province for many centuries and none religion could establish a decisive influence on the lives of the Punjabi people.⁷⁸ The British also upheld the village traditions of the Punjab in civil as well as in administrative matters.⁷⁹ It was also a fact that demarcation between the urban and the rural class in the Punjab deterred the maturity of common political consciousness in the Punjab province.

Some political activities emerged on the urban centre of the Punjab and Surendranath Banerjee (1848-1925) founded the Lahore Indian association in 1877 which was the first political organization of Punjab. Later on, Allan Octavian Hume (A.O. Hume 1829-1912), established Indian National Congress on 28th December 1885 to organize the political activities and to develop political consciousness in Indian population.⁸⁰ In the 20th century, the political history of the Punjab observed a new turn and transformation because of the partition of Bengal in 1905, and some reforms and the policies of Lord Curzon (1859-1925) provided new dimensions to communal relations. As the partition of Bengal alienated the Hindus, they agitated against the partition which made the Muslims to realize that a Muslim political organization was indispensable to safeguard their interests in the sub-continent. As a result, All India Muslim League was established on 30th December 1906 in Dacca.⁸¹

The Punjab also experienced some political upsurges and some extremist groups started nationalist activities to challenge the British rulers. Some Sikh political groups and enthusiastic youth started a struggle against the British rulers in the Punjab for the political rights. Later on, in 1913, a clever young Punjabi, Har Dayal (1884-1939), left a post of Professor at the University of California and devoted himself for revolutionary spirit in the Indian politics. Har Dayal managed to wield all the local Indian clubs and societies in order to form a Hindu association of Pacific

Cost and named it Ghadr or Mutiny (Ghadr Party or Ghadr Movement).⁸² This Ghadr politics started and developed very strange inter-continental links which worried the British ruler of India. Urban rebels and supporters of Ghadr politics started developing roots in the Punjabi masses as well. As a matter of fact, some ring leaders were counting a big supply of ammunition from Germany whose non-arrival put their plans out of gear.⁸³ Ghadr politics lost its momentum in a year but at the same time it gave rise to a new phase of turmoil in which young elements challenged the British administration. It was also noticed that Multan division experienced some serious troubles and rebellious activities were observed in Jhang and Muzaffargarh Districts of Punjab as well. The resentment of people against the British rule was not confined to any religious group but it was substantially supported by all religious communities of the Punjab; Hindu, Muslims and Sikhs.⁸⁴

However, the British considered that the Muslims were responsible for the rebellious activities in the Punjab and it was considered by the British administration that assailants were Muhammadans who victimized the Hindu shopkeeper classes.⁸⁵ Moreover, the British handled the rebellious politics in the Punjab sagaciously and adopted the policy of moderation. The British press followed a very cool and conservative policy in its editorials. The *Zamindar*, a newspaper of Lahore by Zafar Ali Khan (1873-1956) got matchless popularity and enjoyed unprecedented circulation during war but it was banned by the British authorities. In 1915, the British tried to circumscribe the press freedom to a large extent, however, the *Haq* newspaper continued to put forward its various view- points about the provincial and the national matters. These newspapers created great awareness among the Punjabi public and intelligentsia to alarm the British officials who banned all newspapers in order to control the sword-arm of India.

However, the Punjab also contributed significantly to the British army during the World War-I in 1914. The Punjabi soldiers rendered matchless services to defend the British against the Central Powers. The Punjab also contributed and extended a

huge amount of monetary funds, loans, manpower and material at this critical juncture of the British history. The Pathan villagers, the Punjabi villagers including Punjabi landed aristocracy, commissioned officers and soldiers became united to support the British with ammunition, man power and all other raw material in difficult days of the Raj particularly during the World War-I.⁸⁶ It was also a fact that the Punjab provided half of the Indian soldiers in the British army during the World War-I.⁸⁷ The British recruited men from various areas of Punjab in the army and Pir Ghulam Abbas Shah of *Makhad* advised many of his followers in Western Punjab to fight for the British Empire and enlisted almost 4000 men for the British army.⁸⁸ After the end of World War-I, the Attock District received almost 63 distinctions and a lot of people were given the squares of land by the British. Sardar Aslam Hayat Khan, brother of Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan (belonged to Hayat family of Wah, Attock, district of Punjab) received almost five squares of land as a reward of appreciation for his loyal services in the war efforts. Sir Sikandar Hayat himself participated actively in war efforts and received some distinctions from the British. Several other members of the Wah family also got similar favours and awards from the British Government.⁸⁹

Besides these rewards, Jallianwala Bagh tragedy (Amritsar Massacre of April 1919) brought on certain grave changes in the politics of the sub-continent and the Punjabi politicians including Pandit Bhuj Datt, Saif-ud-Din Kichlew (1888-1963), Mazhar Ali Azhar (1895-1974), Goadha Das and Raja Ghazanfar Ali (1895-1963) were put behind the bars. As a result of imprisonment of famous politicians of Punjab, a political vacuum facilitated the emergence of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (1869-1948) as a famous leader, which proved a very opportunistic development.⁹⁰ In the meantime, Fazl-i-Husain (1877-1936) who participated actively in the Punjab politics during the World War-I raised a voice against the provincial policy of the Governor of Punjab Sir Michael O'Dwyer (1913-1919). While, Punjab Provincial Conference, held its session in October 1917, he deplored the plight of Punjab and remarked that British

Government has subjected the province of Punjab to the possible treatment. In his later years, Fazl-i-Husain demonstrated political dynamism and wielded significant political influence on the Viceroys. Fazl-i-Husain was regarded as a competent Punjabi leader inspite of all communal dissensions. After realizing the political backwardness of Punjab, Mian Fazl-i-Husain founded the Punjab National Unionist Party in 1923, as a most influential political organization of the Punjab which had strong roots in different communities of the Punjab.⁹¹

However, in the early part of 20th century, the politics of the Punjab was revolving around few personalities and the Unionist Party maintained political balance among different communal groups in Punjab sagaciously. The fascinating and captivating personalities; like Sir Fazl-i-Husain, Sir Chhotu Ram, Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan and Malik Khizr Hayat Tiwana helped to contribute towards balancing act of Unionist Party in the Punjab politics.⁹² These Punjabi chiefs and landlords remained loyal to the British rulers who made the British administration powerful in provincial politics of the Punjab, which prompted the British to facilitate the growth of a political entity like the Unionist Party. The Unionist Party was the most influential political organization of Punjab which had strong roots in different communities of the Punjab. . Later on, Unionist Party ruled the Punjab until just before the partition of India.

Conclusion

The Punjab remained cradle of the Indus Valley Civilization which was one of the oldest civilizations of the world. Because of its geo-strategic position, vast economic resources and indefatigable manpower, Punjab had occupied a distinguish place in the sub-continent and has experienced unlimited changes and interventions in its origin, identity, administrative setup and its socio-economic political conditions. Since it had been remained attractive place for foreigners, invaders and assailants because of its rich culture, resources and suitable climate. The Punjab population had a hybrid character, ethnically, politically and

religiously. Punjab is also regarded the cradle of mystics, Sufis of different schools of thought and it also welcomed all the other civilizations and culture which greatly enhanced its beauty. As the area being attacked and governed by different dynasties and powers so its confinements had been expanded and shrunk with the passage of time.

The British Government considered Punjab as a favourable market for the consumption of their goods and they were extremely eager to make the Punjab annexation because of its economic as well as political objectives. For these purposes, the British Government decided to improve the economy, prosperity and welfare of the people of the Punjab and introduced the canal colonies project in order to transform the barren land into fertile land. The British Government wanted to irrigate the land of the Punjab from the canal water which was fed by the rivers; the Jhelum, the Chenab and the Ravi. The experiment of the canal colonies was successful and the opening of the lower Chenab in 1892 became the landmark in the economic history of the province. The agriculture development in the Punjab was totally dependent upon the canal system which was introduced by the British. The Punjab also offered vast opportunities of employment for a large number of the British civilians and also provided facilities of comprehensive mountainous training grounds and cantonments for special training of the British troops. The British, even after the war of independence in 1857, continued the policy of institutional reforms and social development of Punjab province. They introduced reforms for social amelioration and facilitated the masses of Punjab with educational institutions.

The British mostly depended upon the Punjabi landlords in socio-political affairs of the Punjab province and the Punjab Land Alienation Act of 1900 was in fact the recognition of the importance of the Punjabi landlords and their political relations with the British administration in India. The British sorted to develop close ties with the local influential leaders and for this purpose they not only encouraged the feudal political leaders but also provided protection and facilitated the local communities.

However, the British solved political problems wisely through constitutional provisions and time to time reforms packages were introduced in the shape of Government of India Acts. Gradually, the British Government covered the Punjab with the institutions of modern civilization; roads were made in every direction, canals were projected or constructed, schools, dispensaries and jails were erected in every district. The Punjabi chiefs and landlords remained loyal to the British rulers who made the British administration powerful in provincial politics of Punjab, which prompted the British to facilitate the growth of a political entity like the Unionist Party.

In the early part of 20th century, the politics of the Punjab was revolving around a few personalities and the Unionist Party maintained the political balance among different communal groups in the Punjab sagaciously. The Unionist Party was the most influential political organization of Punjab which had strong roots in different communities of the Punjab. It also ruled Punjab until just before the partition of India. The British utilized their administrative skills shrewdly and wisely, thus, exploited the skills of local landed elite for the longevity of its rule. Through the policy of expansionism and forward diplomacy, the British engaged the local landlords not only in administrative set up, but also extended maximum rewards and awards for the loyalties and services of the landed aristocracy of colonial Punjab. This landed political elite helped the British collaboratively in order to develop economy, political harmony and social amelioration of the British Punjab.

Notes and References

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 3. The name of a fellow Sher Khan of Punjab is mentioned in the book *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi* which was written on the life of *Sher Shah Suri*. See also Abdul Hafeez Quarashi, 73.
 4. The '*Ain-i-Akbari*', is also known as the 'Constitution of Akbar', records comprehensive 16th century details related to the administration of Akbar the great, was composed by his vizir; Abul Fazal (1551-1602). He wrote that Punjab had the division of two provinces; Multan and Lahore. Abul Fazal was also the writer of '*Akbarnama*' which was considered the official history of Akbar's rule. For further details, see Gulshan Lal Chopra, *The Punjab as a sovereign state*, 77. Also see, *Al-Biruni, Lahore, 1977*. Azam Chaudary., 24. For detailed study, see Syed Muhammad Latif, *History of the Punjab from the Remotest Antiquity to the Present Time* (Lahore: 1891). For further detail, see A.H. Dani, 23.
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 7. Steinbach., 2. For details see, Hari Ram Gupta, *Later Mughal History of the Punjab* (Lahore: 1976), 1.
 8. Fr. Leo, O. M. Cap, *The Capuchin Mission in the Punjab:* (Manglore: J. M. Saures, Codialbail Press, 1910) 1. Also see, A. H. Dani, 26-27. See Azam Chaudhary., 14. For details see B. S. Nijjar, Vol.-I, 1-2.

9. Ibid. 1. For further details, see A.H. Dani, 12. See Azam Ch. 14. For details, see Saif-ur-Rehman Dar, *Taxila*, (Lahore: 1977). Also see, Steinbach., 1-2.
10. Steinbach, 1-2. For details, see Azam Chaudhary., 13. Also see Pindi Das Lala, *Punjab Main Pehla Marshal Law* (Lahore: 1996), 13.
11. Khushwant Singh, 3.
12. I.H. Malik, *Sikandar Hayat Khan: A Political Biography* (Islamabad: NIHCR, 1985), 13.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
15. Fr. LEO, O.M. Cap, 37-38. Also see, A. H. Dani, 46. For details, see S. M. Latif., 23.
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17. The exact origin of the caste system can be derived from the following facts; the first cause was the difference of race; the ordinary names for the caste proved that '*Jati*' meant race and '*Varna*' referred to colour. The Aryans came from a colder climate; were lighter in colour than the original inhabitants of Indra, whom they called; 'The Black Skin'. In the Vedas, there were only two castes; the Aryans and the Dasyus. The Aryans, belonged to Central Asia, invaded India. They applied the name Dasyus to the original inhabitants whom they sought to dispossess of their lands. For details, see Fr. Leo, O. M. Cap, 52-56. For further details see also R. Shehab, *History of Pakistan* (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications 1989), 18.
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22. A.L. Basham, *The Wonder That Was India: A Survey of the History and Culture of the Indian Sub-Continent before the Coming of the Muslims* (Karachi: Royal Book Company, 2004), 131-135. Also see A. H. Dani, 99 and S. M. Latif, 72-73. For further details, see F.N, Bajwa, *Pakistan: A Historical and Contemporary Look, revised ed.* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2002), 12.
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29. Fr. LEO, O.M. Cap., 17.
30. G.S. Chabra, *The Advance History of the Punjab, Vol. II* (Ludhiana: n.d), 294.
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33. Ikram Ali Malik, *A Book of Readings on the History of the Punjab, 1799-1947* (Lahore: Research Society of Pakistan, University of the Punjab, 1985), 1.
34. N.M. Khilnani., 15-16.
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36. Krishna Kapur, *A History of the Development of the Judiciary in the Punjab 1884-1926* (Lahore: 1928), 26-27.
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49. The Punjab is considered as the gateway of India. The Grand Trunk Road (G.T. Road) which is one of the oldest and the longest road of South Asia. This road has linked the eastern and western areas of the Indian sub-continent. It is also a source of transportation from Central Asia to South Asia. For detailed study, see K. M. Sarkar, *The Grand Trunk Road: 1849-1880* (Lahore: 1926).
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52. I.H. Malik., 16.
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63. Ibid.
64. Ian Talbot, *Khizr Tiwana.*, 25.
65. B.S. Nijjar., Vol.-I, 169.
66. The word 'agriculturist' means a person who holds agricultural land; cultivates this land and grows crops in it.

This land may be his ownership or of his ancestors. The person who cultivates the land is also considered as an owner of the land. The cultivator can be as a hereditary tenant or as an occupancy tenant in any estate or in any region. The major agricultural tribes of Punjab were Arains, Jats, Gujars, Rajputs, Syeds, Kamboh, Qureshis and Sheikhs etc. For details see, David Gilmarton, Religious Leadership and the Pakistan Movement in the Punjab, *Modern Asian Studies* (March, 1979). For detailed study, see H.A. Rose, *Glossary of the Tribes and Castes of the Punjab and N.W.F Province*, Vol-II, Based on the Census Report for the Punjab, 1883, by Denzil Ibbetson, and the Census Report for the Punjab, 1892, by Mr. E.D. Maclagan, (Lahore: Civil and Military Gazette, 1911), 312-317.

67. B.S. Nijjar., 171. For details see, Calvert, *The Wealth and Welfare of the Punjab*, 265-266.
68. Ibid. 173.
69. *Benami* is a Persian word which means 'without name' or 'no name'. This word is commonly used to define a transaction of land in which the real beneficiary is not the one on whose name the property is purchased. In simple words, the *benami* transaction is any transaction in which property is transferred to one person for a consideration paid by another person. As a result, the person in whose name the property is purchased is just a mask of the real beneficiary. Thus, officially, it remained in the agriculturist list but factually it felt a prey to the moneylenders.
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73. Ibid.
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92. I.H. Malik., 21.

Socioeconomics (also known as social economics) is the social science that studies how economic activity affects and is shaped by social processes. In general it analyzes how modern societies progress, stagnate, or regress because of their local or regional economy, or the global economy. Societies are divided into 3 groups: social, cultural and economic. It also refers to the ways that social and economic factors influence the environment. Political economy - Political economy - Historical development: Political economy is a very old subject of intellectual inquiry but a relatively young academic discipline. The analysis of political economy (in terms of the nature of state and market relations), both in practical terms and as moral philosophy, has been traced to Greek philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle as well as to the Scholastics and those who propounded a philosophy based on natural law. A critical development in the intellectual inquiry of political economy was the prominence in the 16th to the 18th century of the merc Economic Organisation i. The Agikuyu grew crops such as millet, sorghum, arrow roots and yams. They traded with their neighbours such as the Maasai and the Akamba. They smelted iron for making hoes and axes and also weaved and practiced basketry as well as pottery. i. The Agikuyu hunted and gathered to substitute their diet. The Kikuyu community was decentralised and it had the institution of the Muramati (clan leader). Muramati co-ordinated all the activities of the sub-clan. i. There were warriors who defended the community. The Kikuyu had a council of elders (KIAMA) which maintained law and order and made final decisions. It presided over religious functions. Cases were handled by Kiama composed of individual who acted as judges.