

**BRITISH INTERVENTION IN JAMMU WITH SPECIAL
REFERENCE TO AGRARIAN REFORMS DURING
DOGRA PERIOD 1846-1947A.D.**

Thesis Submitted for the Award of the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in History

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**This Thesis is Dedicated to my
Parents and my siblings.**

Acknowledgement

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Vasundhra

III

DECLARATION

I, hereby declared that the presented work in the thesis entitled “British Intervention in Jammu with Special Reference to Agrarian Reforms during Dogra Period 1846-1947A.D.” in fulfilment of degree of **Doctor of Philosophy (Ph. D.)** is outcome of research work carried out by me under the supervision Dr. Mohd. Ashraf Dar, working as Assistant Professor, in History of Lovely Professional University, Punjab, India. In keeping with general practice of reporting scientific observations, due acknowledgements have been made whenever work described here has been based on findings of other investigator. This work has not been submitted in part or full to any other University or Institute for the award of any degree.

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IV

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the work reported in the Ph. D. thesis entitled “British Intervention in Jammu with Special Reference to Agrarian Reforms during Dogra Period 1846-1947A.D.” submitted in fulfillment of the requirement for the reward of degree of **Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)** in the History, is a research work carried out by Vasundhra, 11919651, is bonafide record of her original work carried out under my supervision and that no part of thesis has been submitted for any other degree, diploma or equivalent course.



Name of supervisor: Dr. Mohd. Ashraf Dar

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University: Lovely Professional University Punjab, India

List of Abbreviations

AR: Agriculture Report

AHJKS: A Handbook of Jammu and Kashmir State

AARJKS: Annual Administrative Report of Jammu and Kashmir State

AR: Assessment Report

ARAT: Assessment Report of Akhnoor Tehsil

ARM: Assessment Report of Mendhar

ARJK Administrative Report of Jammu and Kashmir

ARRSP: Assessment Report of R.S. Pura Tehsil

ARMT: Assessment Report of the Maidani Tract

ARMTJP: Assessment Report of the Maidani Tract of the Jammu Tehsil of the Jammu Province

ARMTJT: Assessment Report of the Maidani Tract of the Jammu Tehsil of the Jammu Tehsil

ARKTJP: Assessment Report of the Kandi Tract of the Jammu Tehsil of the Jammu Province

ARS: Assessment Report of Samba

FD: Foreign Department

GKL: Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh

ID: Irrigation Division

LR: Land Records

NAI: National Archives of India

IR: Irrigation Records

OER: Old English Records

PSJK: Princely State of Jammu and Kashmir

PRSOKJ: Preliminary Report of Settlement Operations in Kashmir and Jammu

PWD: Public Works Department

RR: Revenue Records

SARJ: State Archives Repository Jammu

SOKJ: Settlements Operations in Kashmir and Jammu

VI

Glossary

Abi	:	Irrigated land.
Abwab	:	Extra demand imposing on the cultivators other than the State share.
Adalat -ul- Alia	:	High court.
Amin	:	A revenue officer charged with revenue collection.
Anna	:	one-sixteen part of rupee.
Assami	:	A superior tenant Assamiwar
Khewat	:	An assessment on holdings.
Baki	:	Arrears due in the
Bania	:	Village money- lender.
Begar	:	Forced Labor.
Bugghi	:	A four wheeled carriage drawn by horses.
Bughikhana	:	A garage for bughhis.
Bund	:	Embankment.
Chakdars	:	Cultivators who acquire land by 1 year's cultivation.
Chakla	:	A circle.
Chowkidar	:	Watchman.
Chhange	:	A kind of beer made of corn.
Chikandoz	:	Embroiders.
Chilki	:	Local currency of Kashmir State.
Chungi	:	Octroi.

VII

Daftar- I <u>Diwani</u>	:	Civil Department.
Daftar- I-Nizamat	:	Criminal Department.
Dal	:	Natural Water enclosure, lake.
Darbar	:	King's Court: also State Govt. viz. Maharaja with his Ministry.
Dastur-ul- Amal	:	Regulations
Do fasli	:	Land yielding two crops in each agricultural year.
Doonga	:	A large boat.
Ekfasli	:	Land yielding one crop in each agricultural year.
Farman	:	Written, edict issued by Mughal emperor under his Personal seal from the state.
Gaddi	:	Throne.
Ghee	:	Clarified butter.
Hakim	:	Native Doctor
Hakim- i- Ala	:	Province Governors.
Harkara	:	Message-bearer, Government functionary.
Hop	:	the plant from whose flowers, beer or ale is brewed.
Hundi	:	Promissory note.
Illaqa	:	Territory.
Iqta	:	A governorship, literally a piece of land.
Irshad	:	The Royal Assignment.
IzadBoli	:	Auction.
Jagir	:	Land endowment.

VIII

Jagirdar	:	Holder of a Jagir.
Kacharai	:	Grazing fee.
Kadal	:	Bridge.
Kankut	:	Estimation of land revenue.
Kardar	:	Collector of State dues.
Karewa	:	Table land.
Karkhanas	:	Royal factories or enterprises for producing or collecting commodities required by the State.
Karori	:	Revenue official.
Kashtkar	:	A cultivator.
Kesar	:	Saffron.
Khalisa Land	:	Land held and managed by the state.
Khankah	:	A house of mystics or Sufi saints.
Kharif	:	The autumnal crop.
Kharwar	:	A measure of land equal to four acres, also a measure of weight equal to approx. 177 lbs.
Khiraj	:	Tax; especially land revenue.
Kotwal	:	City police officer.
Lumberdar	:	A village headman.
Mahalat	:	The palace.
Malia	:	Land revenue.
Malkiat- i- Sarkar	:	Ownership of the Government.
Malkiat- i-Zamindar	:	Ownership of the cultivator.

IX

Mansab	:	Military rank conferred by the Mughal government.
Modikhana	:	A Department which used to supply commodities for the kitchen for the Maharaja.
Mufti	:	Exemption.
Mujawaza	:	The system of annually settling demand of revenue in kind.
Muqaddam	:	Village headman; literally the first or senior man.
Mustafir	:	A bidder.
Naib	:	Deputy or Assistant.
Nazarnama	:	A kind of tribute.
Nishat	:	A sub- division of Tehsil.
Padshah	:	A king.
Pahi	:	A non-resident cultivator, temporary cultivator.
Pai	:	A twelfth part of an anna.
Paibaqi	:	Land reserved for allotment in Jagir.
Paisa	:	Copper coin of Sur dynasty.
Pargana	:	Administrative division introduced by Mughals.
Parwana	:	A written pass.
Pashmina	:	A kind of wool.
Patal	:	Village headman.
Patta	:	A written grant.
Pattu	:	Coarse woolen cloth.
Patwari	:	Village accountant.
Peshkash	:	Tribute from subordinate ruler.

X

Rabi	:	Spring crops.
Rahdari	:	Protection money paid by travelers.
Rai	:	A Hindu chief, usually one having his own territory and army.
Rasum	:	Extra demand by the revenue functionaries other than State share of revenue.
Ryotwari	:	It was a settlement made directly with the cultivators.
Sahakar	:	Money lender.
Samvat	:	Hindu year.
Sarkar	:	A named territorial and administrative unit between the pargana and province.
Sarkisht	:	Lands near to the habitation which is more productive.
Sazawal	:	A revenue officer.
Shali	:	Unhusked rice.
Shaqdar	:	A crop watchman.
Taccavi	:	Advance of money for sowing or extending cultivation.
Tambol	:	A money gift received or
Tehsil	:	A sub- division of a district.
Tehsildar	:	Official incharge of a Tehsil.
Teli	:	Oil pressers.
Toshakhana	:	A department of State where
Trak	:	A measure of weight equal to 6 seers.

XI

Usta	:	Master crafts man, teacher.
Wadh	:	Advance system.
Waquf	:	Religious grant (Muslim).
Wazarat	:	District.
Wazir-i- Wazarat	:	Deputy Commissioner.
Wuzara-i-Ala	:	Provincial Governors
Zamindar	:	Landholder.
Zari Chaupan	:	Tax on sheep and goats.
Zubt/zabti	:	System of assessment based on measurement.

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Abstract

It is important to mention that the fundamental tenets of this thesis are based on Agriculture /agrarian reforms and the sequence of actions taken by Dogra rulers, in the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir in general, and in Jammu in particular. Agriculture has historically been a significant driver of economic development, making it crucial to comprehend its importance. The Dogra rulers focus on agriculture led to increased productivity and economic growth in Jammu and Kashmir. Understanding the significance of agriculture in economic development can help policymakers make informed decisions about investing in this sector.

In Kashmir, the phrase “*Land to Tiller*” is often used to talk about changes to the way farms are run. In contrast to Kashmir, where they happened after the accession, agrarian reforms were not only implemented in Kashmir but also in Jammu province during the Dogra rule. Although the reforms are very different, the former case focuses more on the “transfer of land”, while the latter case focuses more on the “transformation of the land”. This work looks at how history changed under the Dogra’s and how the British sometimes interfered in the province of Jammu. Irrigation and the increase in the amount of land used for farming are the two main ways to measure the change. During the Dogra rule, agrarian reforms were carried out in both Kashmir and Jammu provinces. They had different goals and ways of being carried out, but both aimed to improve the agricultural sector. The study examines the impact of these reforms on irrigation and the expansion of ploughed land as indicators of transformation in the region. Therefore, this study is focused to historicize the agrarian reforms and changes introduced in the agriculture during Dogra rule. It highlights, the social, economic, and political underpinnings that resulted into the execution of these changes, as well as the effects those reforms had on the local community. In

addition, the work throws insight on the impact that British policies in reshaping and redefining agrarian relations in the region. The time period for the selected study is chosen as 1846-1947, because of the following reasons. To begin with the princely State of Jammu and Kashmir has been reigned by the different ruling dynasties over the periods. Prior to Dogra rule Jammu and Kashmir was not an administrative Centre, as it was always ruled from outside. Mughals Ruled (1586-1753), it from Agra, which came to an end in 1753 then comes Afghans who manage to control the region of Kashmir from Kabul and Sikhs ruled it from Lahore. However, Dogra rule marks the critical pause in terms of dynamic change in arrangement of power initiated by the British India. What changes critically at the same time when Jammu and Kashmir becomes single political entity under Dogras.

The Dogra's lead a new phase in Jammu and Kashmir history for a number of reasons. Even though, knowing its strategic importance to their domains, the previous rulers of the State had ruled this part through subordinates while remaining primarily involved with the apprehensions of the larger empires. More specifically, the emphasis in this work has been placed on land reforms in agriculture and irrigation edifices, settlement operations, and revenue administration under the rulers of the royal Dogra dynasty, whose rule lasted for 101 years, or from 1846 to 1947 A.D. The key focus of this work has been placed on land reforms in agriculture and irrigation systems, settlement operations, and revenue administration. Its purpose is to bring attention to British intervention in the region, which is widely seen as a defining moment in the history of the area. This work is conducted in isolation, particularly in the Jammu region, and the researcher aims to shed light on various facets of socioeconomic development, with a particular focus on agrarian reforms. The agrarian and economic history of the Jammu region, which has not been studied in great depth to this point, is the primary focus of this project. On the other hand, at

the same time, there has been an emphasis placed on the intervention of British in the whole princely state of Jammu and Kashmir, and we can say with some certainty that it was not particularly productive. The true evolution, or we can say that the birth of modernism in the agrarian structure took on a new shape during the rule of Maharaja Pratap Singh in the year 1885. This occurred during the time that Maharaja Pratap Singh was in power. Prior to the year 1885, the rulers of the land made a variety of actions to better the lives of the peasants and other people of the area, but they were unsuccessful due to a lack of resources, a lack of technical understanding, and corrupt revenue staff members. The findings of this study will give young researchers more reason to believe they can make significant contributions to this field of study. This research will produce new knowledge and bring to light fresh insights concerning the Agro economy of the Jammu region, which has not been researched to the same extent as other regions. This research will have a significant positive impact on society and will inspire younger, more enthusiastic scholars to investigate this topic further and uncover fresh insights. The purpose of this study is to delve further into the Agro economy of the Jammu region, which has not been studied to its full potential, and to uncover fresh insights that have the potential to have a positive effect on society. This research has the potential to instill a sense of curiosity in young researchers, encouraging them to go deeper into their studies and contribute to the expansion of existing knowledge in their respective fields.

Keywords: *Agrarian System, Dogra Rulers, Economic Growth and Settlement Operations, occupancy rights.*

Introduction

This study is focused to historicize the agrarian reforms and changes introduced in the agriculture during Dogra rule. It highlights, the social, economic and political underpinnings that resulted into the execution of these changes, as well as the effects those reforms had on the local community. In addition, the work throws insight on the impact that British policies in reshaping and redefining agrarian relations in the region. The time period for the selected study is chosen as 1846-1947, because of the following reasons. To begin with the princely State of Jammu and Kashmir has been reigned by the different ruling dynasties over the periods. Prior to Dogra rule Jammu and Kashmir was not an administrative Centre, as it was always ruled from outside. Mughals Ruled (1586-1753), it from Agra, which came to an end in 1753 then comes Afghans who manage to control the region of Kashmir from Kabul and Sikhs ruled it from Lahore. However, Dogra rule marks the critical pause in terms of dynamic change in arrangement of power initiated by the British India. What changes critically at the same time when Jammu and Kashmir become single political entity under Dogras.

The Dogras lead a new phase in Jammu and Kashmir history for a number of reasons. Even though, knowing its strategic importance to their domains, the previous rulers of the State had ruled this part through subordinates while remaining primarily involved with the apprehensions of the larger empires. More specifically, the emphasis in this work has been placed on land reforms in agriculture and irrigation edifices, settlement operations, and revenue administration under the rulers of the royal Dogra dynasty, whose rule lasted for 101 years, or from 1846 to 1947 A.D. The key focus of this work has been placed on land reforms in agriculture and irrigation systems,

settlement operations, and revenue administration. Its purpose is to bring attention to British intervention in the region, which is widely seen as a defining moment in the history of the area. This work is conducted in isolation, particularly in the Jammu region, and the researcher aims to shed light on various facets of socioeconomic development, with a particular focus on agrarian reforms. The agrarian and economic history of the Jammu region, which has not been studied in great depth to this point, is the primary focus of this project. On the other hand, at the same time, there has been an emphasis placed on the intervention of British in the whole princely state of Jammu and Kashmir, and we can say with some certainty that it was not particularly productive. The true evolution, or we can say that the birth of modernism in the agrarian structure took on a new shape during the rule of Maharaja Pratap Singh in the year 1885. It was happened during the time the reign of Maharaja Pratap Singh, when was in power. Prior to the year 1885, the rulers of the land made a variety of actions to better the lives of the peasants and other people of the area, but they were unsuccessful due to a lack of resources, a lack of technical understanding, and corrupt revenue staff members. The findings of this study will give young researchers more reason to believe they can make significant contributions to this field of study. This research will produce new knowledge and bring to light fresh insights concerning the agro-economy of the Jammu region, which has not been researched to the same extent as other regions. This research will inspire enthusiastic scholars to investigate this topic further and uncover fresh insights. The purpose of this study is to delve further into the agro- economy of the Jammu region, which has not been studied to its full potential, and to uncover fresh insights that have the potential to have a positive effect on society. This research has the potential to instill a sense of curiosity in young researchers, encouraging them to go deeper into their studies and contribute to the expansion of existing knowledge in their respective fields.

It is important to provide a brief history of J&K before demonstrating how the British intervention in Jammu during the “Dogra Period” in the “*Sadar-i-Riyasat*” or ‘Princely State of Jammu and Kashmir’ affected the agrarian reforms. This is because the “Dogra Period” took place in the “Princely State of Jammu and Kashmir.” As is common knowledge, Jammu and Kashmir are renowned for their extensive history, multifaceted culture, snow-capped mountains, mesmerizing views of gardens and lakes, and parched Himalayan plateaus. The first ruler of the Dogra dynasty, Maharaja Gulab Singh, began their rule in 1846, and it was continued by his successors until 1947 AD, which is 101 years just after the end of the first Anglo-Sikh war, that was clashed between the British forces and the Sikh rulers of Punjab in 1845–46 A.D. If Jammu got its own identity, the credit goes to the first ruler of the Dogra dynasty, and the name of that first ruler is at the conclusion of the conflict, the Punjab army was beaten, and as a result, they were compelled to sign the “Treaty of Lahore,” which was finalized on March 9, 1846 AD. In accordance with the terms of this treaty, the Lahore durbar was obligated to hand up to the English control of all of the lands that are located to the west of the Indus and to the east of the Beas River, including Hazara and Kashmir. Seven days after the Lahore treaty was signed, on March 16, 1846 AD, another treaty was signed, which came to be known as the “Treaty of Amritsar” or the ‘Amritsar Agreement’ or the “Sale-Deed of Kashmir.” This treaty was signed between the Maharaja of Amritsar, Gulab Singh, and the British officer, Sir Henry Lawrance.¹ In accordance with the stipulations of the treaty, the firm given to Raja Gulab Singh the state of Jammu and Kashmir as an independent property that would remain so permanently. Raja Gulab Singh was required to make a payment of Rs 75 lakhs (*Nanakshahi*).² In accordance with Article III of the

¹ Bhattacharjee, Ajit, “*Kashmir the Wounded Valley*” (New Delhi: UBS Publishers Distributors Ltd, New Delhi, 1994), p. 52.

² Article VI of treaty of Amritsar in Kirpa Ram, *Gulab Nama*, trans. Sukhdev Singh Charak (New Delhi: Light and Life Publishers, 1977), p. 336.

document titled 'Amritsar Agreement'. As a direct consequence of this contract, Gulab Singh was given ownership over approximately 84.47 square miles of land and 2.5 million people. Even though the treaty made Gulab Singh the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir, the actual possession of Kashmir was not taken over until after the defeat of the last Sikh Administrator, Sheikh-Imam-ud-din, who was unwilling to surrender the province. This took place only after Gulab Singh was successful in his battle against Sheikh-Imam-ud-din. Only after the British commander intervened in the situation did Sheikh Imam-ud-din come to Lahore with Sikh soldiers, and finally the state was under the hands of Dogra ruler Gulab Singh. Seeing this, Gulab Singh asked Sir Henry Lawrence to step in and help resolve the conflict. British assured maharaja of full assistance from any external threat to his territories³. Last but not the least maharaja had to accept the authority of British and maharaja was supposed to present annually one horse, three shawls of Kashmir and twelve goats to British government⁴. In this way Gulab Singh "became the master of the valley as a result of treaty of Amritsar (1846)"⁵ with subordinate position. Though the treaty was vehemently criticized by Captain Joseph Davy Cunningham when he writes "transaction scarcely seems worthy of the British name and greatness."⁶ Gulab Singh along with Col. Lawrence entered Srinagar on 9th of November 1846⁷. Arrival of Gulab Singh in Kashmir has been partially described by Lawrence "as by no means displeasing to the inhabitants of the province who were loud in their complaints of the tyranny of Sheikh Imam-ud-Din"⁸. However, in actual sense Kashmiris did not favor either of the sides. Commenting on this incident the writer of Calcutta Review rightly

³ Ram, *Gulab Nama*, p. 337.

⁴ Ram, *Gulab Nama*, 337.

⁵ Treaty was signed between British and Maharaja Gulab Singh. P.N.K. Bamzai, (1966) "*Kashmir, and Power Politics from Lake Success to Tashkent*", Metropolitan Book Co, New Delhi, p. 29.

⁶ Quoted in Cunningham, Joseph Davy (1849) "*A History of the Sikhs from the Origin of the Nation to the Battles of the Sutlej*", John Murray Albarmale Street, London , p. 332.

⁷ Sufi, G.M.D. (1996), "*Kashir: A History of Kashmir*", Capital Publishing House, New Delhi, p. 764.

⁸ Imam ud din was the then governor of Kashmir, who was appointed by Sikhs, the early rulers. Sufi, p. 774.

expressed that “not a single Kashmiri took up arms on either side. To the Kashmiris both armies were alike odious, for they disturbed the peace of the valley, destroyed trade, and made rice dear. Moreover, they felt certain that whoever the conqueror might be, the sheikh or the maharaja, their faith would be the same, viz, to squeeze to the utmost possible extent.”⁹

Gulab Singh is credited with many significant accomplishments, one of which is the union of three regions of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. The major effort done by the first monarch provided the groundwork for a restructured form of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. It was the Maharaja Gulab Singh who was responsible for the subjugation of each individual territory, which included Jammu, Poonch, Ram Nagar, Basholi, Bhaderwah, Kishtwar, Bhimber, Rajouri, Kharmang, Kiris, Khaplu, Yasin, Hunza, Astor Gilgit, Nagar, and Punial. According to Bamzai

“Maharaja Gulab Singh is the only Indian ruler to have carved out a state during the 19th century out of the wreckage of the great kingdoms of Sikhs. Moreover, he is the only Indian ruler to have extended the frontiers of Indian to their natural boundary.”¹⁰

Regarding him, we even encounter some good comments from his adversaries. In this context example may be given of Soft. He writes:

“Gulab Singh was unquestionably a remarkable figure in the history of Northern India during the first half of the 19th century. He was a distinguished soldier and a diplomat and knew the statecraft of his days exceedingly well”.¹¹

After the demise of Maharaja Gulab Singh in 1857 AD, the later Dogra rulers presented a constructive attitude and rested prodigious stress to progresses in the princely state of Jammu and

⁹ *The Calcutta Review*, (1847), Vol. 8, Sanders Cones and Co, Calcutta, pp.252-53.

¹⁰ K.M. Panikkar, “*Gulab Singh- The Founder of Kashmir 1792-1858*” (London: Preface Martin Hopkinson Ltd.1930),.

¹¹Panikkar “*Gulab Singh- The Founder of Kashmir 1792-1858*.”

Kashmir. Maharaja Ranbir Singh (1857-1885AD), Maharaja Pratap Singh (1885-1925AD), Maharaja Hari Singh (1925- 1949AD), Karan Singh (1949-1952AD), Karan Singh as *Sadar-i-Riyasat*, (1952- 1965AD), and as Governor, (1965-67AD).

Ranbir Singh took the throne in 1857 and ruled the state for 40 years. During his time in power, the state is said to have really modernized and grown. Ranbir Singh was known for his progressive policies, such as the establishment of a modern judicial system and the construction of roads and bridges to improve transportation. He also supported education and cultural activities, which contributed to the overall development of the state. The first and most important thing he did was build and improve roads that connected all parts of India. During Ranbir Singh's rule, Sir Walter Lawrence set up a land tax system in the state that was based on science. This was the first thing he ever did. People call the Valley Cart Road and Banihal Cart Road, which were built, 'Jhelum.' These were two of the best roads in the country.

During his rule, a water tank was constructed at Harwan and an electricity-generating project was set up at Mohra. These accomplishments show that he was committed to improving infrastructure and bringing modern amenities to his people. His legacy in these areas still benefits the region today. All over the state, a way to talk to each other was set up. After a series of changes and reforms, the state's name and reputation quickly spread around the world due to its beautiful weather and breath-taking views. His vision for modernizing infrastructure and amenities was not limited to just the state but also extended to the neighboring regions, which helped in boosting the economy and creating job opportunities. His efforts in promoting tourism also played a significant role in putting the state on the global map as a popular tourist destination. Europeans were the first to start visiting the valley. People have said correctly that it was a time when tourism was encouraged. Many Britishers tried to borrow land in the valley to build houses because they wanted

to set up their colony, but the Maharaja turned them down and built houseboats in the valley instead. The houseboats became a popular attraction for tourists, and soon the valley was frequented by visitors from all over the world.

When Maharaja Pratap Singh took the throne in 1885, changes were made to the way land was used. A lot of attention is paid to irrigation work, and during Maharaja Pratap Singh's rule, many canals were built. A separate irrigation department was established in 1923. This department paid a lot of attention to the growth of Jammu and didn't do much in Kashmir. From 1931 to 1940, the last decade of the 20th century, canals like the Zagir-Canal and the Martand Canal were repaired, and new canals were built along the Jhelum and Lidder rivers. In a nutshell, we can say that the land settlement of 1883 not only solved the problem of getting money, but also helped by giving some of the land to farmers who did not have any land. The department of irrigation's focus on Jammu led to neglect of Kashmir until the construction of canals like the Zagir-Canal and Martand Canal from 1931 to 1940, which were built along the Jhelum and Lidder rivers. As a result, the land settlement of 1883 not only provided financial relief but also allocated land to farmers who previously had none.

After Ranbir Singh's death, the British appointed a resident in the state in 1885, and in 1889, the maharaja's administrative duties were given to the state council. The Maharaja was reduced to the role of nominal head of state, while the British resident ruled in practice. As a result of a shift in the balance of power, bureaucratic officials from Punjab and Bengal were assigned to administrative positions such as revenue, forest, finance, and police. With this authority, the colonial government may intervene in the state's governance. Most of these officers labored

diligently and delivered significant improvement to all these agencies. 'In these circumstances, the people of Kashmir achieved substantial progress towards wealth,' argues Mohammed Saleem.¹²

Yet, as the scholarship in Kashmir frequently claims, this was not the case. There was a positive influence, which is unavoidable, but it did not completely transform people's lives as some exaggerate the effects of such initiatives to be. The impact of these initiatives was limited by the complex political and social realities of the region, which have long been shaped by conflict and instability. Nevertheless, they did provide some much-needed support and resources for local communities and should be recognized as such. Because much of the information accessible on this time period comes from colonial sources, it is necessary to treat and analyze them with caution. Colonial intervention (via missionaries) influenced administrative reform, hospital construction, modern education and agriculture land settlement, army reorganization, and medical facilities. It is important to recognize that colonial interference had both positive and negative repercussions in the region, and that the impact of these initiatives varied depending on the specific context in which they were implemented. Additionally, it is crucial to seek out and incorporate perspectives from local communities in order to gain a more complete understanding of the long-term consequences of colonialism in the region.

The impact of colonial interference, though, cannot be generalized for the reason that India's parts under British rule were 'varied political, economic, and social patterns,' and thus perceptions grown from evaluating situations in one place cannot be functional comprehensively to other places. Therefore, a nuanced approach is required to fully comprehend the impact of colonialism on India and its people, considering the diverse experiences and perspectives of those

¹² Mohammad, Saleem Khan, "*The History of Modern Kashmir*", (Srinagar: Gulshan Books, Srinagar, 2009). p. 47.

who were affected by it. Furthermore, it is important to recognize that the legacy of colonialism continues to shape contemporary India, and efforts must be made to address its ongoing effects on society and culture.

Review of Literature

The history of agrarian reforms under the Dogra's has not been adequately documented by historians, despite the abundance of literature on Jammu and Kashmir. Since India and Pakistan's Independence, the formerly princely state's strategic location has been a source of conflict between the two countries. Most of the research focuses on the political history of the region, while other research fields are neglected. This study is trying to bridge the gap and understand how the agrarian reforms in pre-partition period shape the history agriculture in Jammu and Kashmir. Land transformations in post-independence Jammu and Kashmir have been the subject of some research, although a full literature and understanding of the issue are lacking or vague in nature, leaving a vast amount of room for further study.

M.L. Kapur in his book "*History of Jammu & Kashmir- The Making of the State*" 2005¹³ The author examines Jammu and Kashmir from a political and geographical standpoint. Tibet and China form Jammu and Kashmir northern and eastern borders, respectively, while the Indian states of Punjab and the Northwest Frontier Provinces make up J&K's southern and western neighbors. China and Russian Turkistan form Jammu and Kashmir northern border. The two regions of Jammu and Kashmir, as well as the boundary territories of Ladakh and Gilgit, which are characterized by high, arid mountains and many mountain passes, together cover almost three-quarters of the entire land area of the state. The fact that these three divisions operated politically

¹³ M.L. Kapur, "*History of Jammu & Kashmir- The Making of the State*", (Srinagar: Gulshan Publishers, 2001).

independently of one another before to the year 1846 A.D. is the single most significant fact to keep in mind.

A.K. Kaul, “*Studies in Geography of Jammu and Kashmir*” 2014¹⁴ The author highlights the general history of Jammu and Kashmir since the ‘treaty of Amritsar and afterwards. By signing the Treaty of Amritsar shortly after the end of the first Anglo-Sikh War, Jammu and Kashmir established its own identity. There was no state like Jammu and Kashmir in the early nineteenth century, according to the study of modern history of the Indian subcontinent. Gulab Singh, by his sagacity and statesmanship, led the political changes during this period in 1846, and he succeeded in integrating Jammu, Kashmir, and Ladakh into a single unit. Even though the contract established Gulab Singh as Maharaja, the actual possession of Kashmir was only obtained after defeating the last Sikh Governor, Sheikh-Imam-ud-din. Gulab Singh requested that Sir Henry Lawrence interfere in the case after seeing this, and it was only after the British commander intervened that Sheikh Imam-ud-din returned to Lahore with Sikh forces.

S. Anoop Singh Sodhi, “*Kashmir and the Sikhs -An Insight*” 2007¹⁵ The author discusses the rule of Dogras. After the untimely demise of Ranjit Singh and Sikh lose their forces under Britishers, Gulab Singh became the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir as per “Treaty of Amritsar” or “Amritsar-Agreement”. Gulab Singh banned cow- slaughtering, also various temples were set up in Jammu & Srinagar. After a rule of 11years, when Gulab Singh died. His son Ranbir Singh ascended the throne in 1857-1885, he set up 3 new departments (Civil, Military & Revenue) and set up Ranbir Penal Code (RPC) to assure justice to people. He also opened a big library in Jammu and establish a publication center in Srinagar as well. After his death, Maharaja Pratap Singh taken

¹⁴ A.K. Kaul, “*Studies in Geography of Jammu and Kashmir*”, (New Delhi: Rawat Publishing House, 2014).

¹⁵ Anoop Singh, Sodhi, “*Kashmir and the Sikhs -An Insight*”, (Srinagar: Gulshan Publishers, 2007).

the charge, and set up various departments like Accounts, public works like transportation, communication, police, and forest for the betterment of the people. In 1925, when Maharaja Hari Singh ascended on the throne, he took several reforms especially in the field of education, he made compulsory education for boys and girls and introduce laws related to prohibiting Child marriage and threw the doors of worship for low caste people. During his reign, the instrument of accession of J&K to the newly independent Indian Union in 1947.

N. S. Gupta and Amarjit Singh “*Agricultural Development of States in India, Vol I Jammu and Kashmir*” 1979¹⁶. The author is more interested in the general analysis of agriculture and various developmental techniques since independence in Jammu and Kashmir. A brief history of Dogra-era agriculture is provided in this text, although no in-depth analysis is provided. This text also lacks the historicity of Agriculture in the region.

Mohd Afzal Beg “*On the way to Golden Harvests: Agricultural Reforms in Jammu and Kashmir*” 1995¹⁷ provides the detailed study agrarian reforms in Jammu and Kashmir. The author is mainly interested in the general documentation of land reforms (particularly the three phases) and land reforms acts its various provisions. This book skips the historical background of the agricultural reforms in the state and its affect on agriculture over the years. The author is mainly focused on the success story of the land reforms of his own National Conference govt, as he served as the revenue minister of the State.

Dr. Sukhdev Singh Charak, “*Historiography on Jammu*” 1997¹⁸ the author traced the history of Jammu through various texts and argued that the history of Jammu seems to have

¹⁶ N.S. Gupta, and Amarjit Singh, “*Agricultural Development of States in India, Vol I Jammu and Kashmir*”, (New Delhi: Seema Publishers, 1979).

¹⁷ Mohd Afzal, Baig, “*On the way to Golden Harvests: Agricultural Reforms in Jammu and Kashmir*”, in S.K Sharma and S.R Bakshi (eds). *Encyclopedia of Kashmir*, Vol 10, (New Delhi: Anmol Publication, 1995).

¹⁸ Sukhdev Singh, Charak, (1997), “*Historiography on Jammu*”, (Srinagar: Gulshan Publishers, 1997.)

changed, and this change can be traced back to 1847, when Ganeshdas Badhera put together the Persian work *Rajdarshini* and G.C. Smith published *History of the Reigning Family of Lahore*. These two works changed Jammu's history in a significant way because they gave a new view of the area's past and how it related to neighboring territories. The *Gulshan-i-Ibrahimi* or *Tarikh-i-Ferishta* by Jammu Muhammad Qasim Ferishta is preferred over all other Indo-Persian histories from the perspective of subsequent events. The works by Ganeshdas Badhera and G.C. Smiths were instrumental in changing the historical narrative of Jammu and its surrounding regions, as they provided a fresh perspective on the area's past and its relationship with neighboring territories. The *Gulshan-i-Ibrahimi* or *Tarikh-i-Ferishta* by Jammu Muhammad Qasim Ferishta is still considered the most reliable source for understanding subsequent events in the region. The extensive *Umdat ut-Tawarikh*, penned by Sohan Lal Suri, the court diarist of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, is an outlier and one of his greatest works. It has a very broad scope and is composed of five volumes with more than 1000 folio pages that were published between 1885 and 1889. The political history of Jammu is also contained in its first section. The writings concerning Ranjit Singh's passing in 1839 referenced the oldest event in Jammu's history. From July 1845 to March 1846, Gulab Singh played a significant role in the first Anglo-Sikh War. The main official perspective and reports to the government on these events and the role of Gulab Singh are found in Governor-General Harding's papers, which also show the typical attitude of British people towards the Raja of Dogra. These documents shed light on the power dynamics between the British and the local rulers, as well as the impact of colonialism on Jammu and its people. They provide valuable insights into the political, social, and economic changes that took place in the region during this period.

Sat Prakash Suri and Dr. Gurdev Singh, “*Dreams and Reality*” 2016,¹⁹ The author analyses every Dogra emperor who ruled between 1846 and 1947. They said that the reign of Maharaja Ranbir saw the economy of the princely state flourish. Maharaja Pratap Singh continued the reforms in the state that his forebears had started, despite continuing to be involved in conspiracies that were purposefully set up by Britishers. With his accession to the throne of Jammu and Kashmir on September 23, 1925, Maharaja Hari Singh modernized the realm. The author's analysis of the Dogra emperors provides a comprehensive understanding of the political and economic developments in the state during their reigns. It highlights how each ruler contributed to the growth and modernization of Jammu and Kashmir, despite facing challenges such as British conspiracies. People from all over the country and the world began to travel to the valley during his rule. He also proposed a number of measures to reshape the state. One such publication that briefly discusses the history of Dogra monarchs is that of Prof. M.L. Kapur. Even Waltraud Ernst, Biswamoy Pati, offers a number of fresh perspectives on the social improvements that took place in the princely realms throughout the colonial era. He embodies the positive outlook on life and took a chance to improve the lives of the most vulnerable members of society—a legacy he inherited from his forebears. Overall, his proposals and actions demonstrate a commitment to social justice and progress, which align with his family's values. His efforts have left a lasting impact on the state and its people. His work has inspired many to follow in his footsteps and continue the fight for social justice, and his legacy serves as a reminder that even in the face of adversity, positive change is possible.

¹⁹ Sat Prakash Suri and, Dr. Gurdev Singh , “*Dreams and Reality*”, (Jammu: Highbrow Publications,2005).

Dr. Sukhdev Singh Charak, *“Life and Times of Maharaja Ranbir Singh (1830-1885A.D.)”*, 1985²⁰

In this book, the author discusses the agricultural system as well as the economic changes that Maharaja Ranbir Singh implemented throughout his twenty-eight-year reign and sheds light on both topics. The book offers a full overview of the socio-economic circumstances that were prevalent in the state of Jammu and Kashmir during that time period and how these changes influenced the lives of the people who lived there at the time. In addition to this, it sheds light on the role that Maharaja Ranbir Singh played in sculpting the political environment of the area. In addition to that, he spoke about the connection that Maharaja Ranbir Singh had with the British. We learned about the agricultural reforms that were taking place in Jammu as well as the British interference in the region. The book also delves into the impact of these socio-economic changes on the cultural and religious fabric of the region, including the rise of communal tensions and conflicts. Furthermore, it highlights the resistance movements that emerged in response to these changes, such as the ‘Kashmiri Pandit movement for land rights and the Muslim Conference’s demand for self-rule.’

A.R. Khan, Translated the *“History of Jammu” (Tarikh-i-Jammu)*, 2015²¹ In the second chapter, the author looked at how Maharaja Gulab Singh ruled Kashmir after he took it over. The author also emphasized the exemplary characteristics that Maharaja Gulab Singh had. In addition to this, he focused on the state administration of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir following the death of Maharaja Gulab Singh, which was between the years 1857 and 1947. The author’s analysis of the state administration during this period provides insight into the political and social changes that occurred in Jammu and Kashmir. Overall, the second chapter serves as a

²⁰ Dr. Sukhdev Singh, Charak, *“Life and Times of Maharaja Ranbir Singh (1830-1885A.D.)”*, (Jammu: Jay Book House,).

²¹ A.R. Khan, Translated the *“History of Jammu” (Tarikh-i-Jammu)*, (Srinagar: City Book Centre Srinagar, 2015).

comprehensive examination of the region's history during a critical period. The author provided a detailed analysis of the political and social factors that influenced the state administration during this period. Furthermore, he examined the impact of British colonialism on the region and its people, highlighting the challenges faced by the princely state in maintaining its autonomy and sovereignty.

M.L. Kapur, "*Social and Economic History of J&K State (1885-1925A.D.)*" 1992²² During the time of Maharaja Pratap Singh, the author paid more attention to the political and economic situation in the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir. The most important things learned from the study have been talked about in terms of agriculture, gardening, and irrigation, in that order. The author's research showed that agriculture and horticulture were the main ways for people in Jammu and Kashmir to make money. The study also showed that irrigation systems in the area need to be fixed so that more crops can be grown. Furthermore, the author suggests that the government should invest in modernizing agricultural and horticultural practices to increase their productivity and profitability. This would not only benefit the local economy but also improve the standard of living for the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Chitrallekha Zutshi wrote two books which seem to be very important in this regard. One "*Languages of Belonging: Islam Regional Identity and Making of Kashmir*" 2003²³ and the other "*Kashmir's Contested Pasts: Narratives, Sacred Geographies, and the Historical Imagination*", principally emphasises on the pre-independence phase. These works study the determining of the

²² M.L. Kapur. (1992), "*Social and Economic History of J&K State (1885-1925A.D.)*", (New Delhi: Anmol Publications, 1992).

²³ Chitrallekha, Zutshi, "*Languages of Belonging: Islam, Religion, Identity and the Making of Kashmir*", (New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2003). The author, as it appears from her writings, has been largely influenced by post-modernist philosophy. She has deconstructed almost all the previous historical writings on Kashmir and each time comes up with new arguments. In doing so, she has been successful in studying facts in the new changing context of socio-political and economic structures of not only of Kashmir but even of South Asian history.

Kashmiri identity, role of religion in the socio-economic histories and in the political as well as freedom struggle. In these pioneering works, she discusses that the Kashmir predicaments are not around the politics of India and Pakistan, or essentially the actual transfer of power but about the cultural/religious identity and belonging. In her book “*Languages of Belonging*,” the author tries to explore the emergence of Kashmiri identities over the centuries starting from the medieval period, with the mystics like Lal Ded and Nund Rishi, the coming of Mughals, Afghans, Sikh and finally Dogras. She traces the history of continuing tensions between the different religious communities and regional languages of belonging, within the specific context of Dogras, their colonial Masters, and the emergence of newly educated Kashmiri Muslims. She held that only if these languages are understood historically, we will be able to understand the current crisis and its history successfully.

K.M. Panikkar, “*Gulab Singh (1792-1858) – Founder of Kashmir*” 1930²⁴ The author refers to the comprehensive historical documentation that Maharaja Gulab Singh prepared. We are provided with further information on the Treaty of Amritsar, as well as the formation of the States of Jammu and Kashmir and the manner in which he oversees his administration. Because of this, the state that was founded was different from the other states that were already a part of India; it had complete autonomy over its own internal affairs. The British government did not exert any influence or control on the administration, and they did not designate a resident. The fact that Maharaja Gulab Singh paid the British government a sum of 75 lakhs as part of the treaty, which gave him complete control over the region, further strengthened this autonomy. This allowed him

²⁴ K. M. Panikkar, “*Gulab Singh (1792-1858) Founder of Kashmir*”, (New Delhi: L.G Publishers Distributors, 1930).

to maintain his own army, mint his own currency, and have his own flag, making Jammu and Kashmir a truly independent state.

Mridu Rai, *“Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects”* 2004²⁵ Henry Lawrence, who is said to be an agent for the Governor-General of Punjab, came to Kashmir in 1846 and organized it such that the French traveler Victor Jacquemont’s assessment of it as an ugly painting in a magnificent frame could be used to determine its quality. Seven days after the Lahore treaty was signed, Maharaja Gulab Singh and the British commander Sir Henry Lawrence signed another pact that became generally known as the ‘Sale-Deed of Kashmir.’ With the creation of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir in the Indian subcontinent on March 16, 1846, a treaty entered into force. Gulab Singh played a significant part in the events of the Punjab background, which makes it difficult to define the formation of Jammu and Kashmir. Through this arrangement, he and the successors of his mailings became the only autonomous owners of the whole hilly region for all time. Gulab Singh agreed to pay the British government, in exchange for the vast region, including Kashmir.

Dr. Sukhdev Singh Charak translated the Persian & annotated *“Gulab Nama”* which was originally written by Diwan Kirpa Ram – *A History of Maharaja Gulab Singh of Jammu and Kashmir*,²⁶ The first biography of Maharaja Gulab Singh, *Gulab Nama*, was written in the 1800s by Diwan Kirpa Ram and published in Persian. Dr. Sukhdev Singh Charak translated and commented on it in English later. *Gulab Nama* provides a detailed account of the life and achievements of Maharaja Gulab Singh, who was the founder of the Dogra dynasty and the first ruler of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir. The translation and commentary by Dr. Sukhdev

²⁵ Mridu Rai, *“Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects: Islam, Rights, and the History of Kashmir”*, (New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2003).

²⁶ Dewan Kirpa Ram, *“Gulab Nama”*, trans. by Dr. Sukhdev Singh Charak, (New Delhi: Light and Life Publishers, 1977).

Singh Charak makes this historical document accessible to a wider audience and shed light on the cultural and political context in which it was written. According to K.M. Panikkar, *Gulab Nama* is a well-known, reliable historical source that gives background information on the reign of Maharaja Gulab Singh. This book also includes a comprehensive examination of the Maharaja's horoscope. We are provided with a comprehensive historical backdrop of Maharaja Gulab Singh's reign from his childhood up until 1857 A.D. Overall, *Gulab Nama* is a valuable resource for scholars and historians interested in the history of Jammu and Kashmir. It sheds light on the political, social, and cultural aspects of the region during Maharaja Gulab Singh's reign.

Fredric Drew, "*The Jummoo and Kashmir Territories*" 1875²⁷ Fredric Drew wrote on the history of Jammu under the reign of Raja Ranjit Dev in the middle of the 18th century. He analyses the personality of Gulab Singh and his accomplishments in a very engaging manner. When recalling distant locations such as Ladakh, Baltistan, Kashmir, and Jammu, certain concerns arise in his mind: how did all these territories come to be ruled by one individual? Drew's work provides valuable insights into the political and social landscape of Jammu and Kashmir during the 18th century. His analysis of Gulab Singh rises to power sheds light on the complex dynamics of regional politics. He responds that the solution may be found in the history of a single guy, the one who became emperor of a state by exercising the abilities of a soldier with remarkable endurance. Drew examines every aspect of Maharaja Gulab Singh's personality. His short notes on the history of the system's main components were beneficial and greatly expanded the existing body of information. Drew's analysis of Maharaja Gulab Singh's personality sheds light on how he was able to exercise his abilities as a soldier with remarkable endurance and become the emperor of a state that ruled over territories such as Ladakh, Baltistan, Kashmir, and Jammu. Drew's short notes

²⁷ Fredric Drew, "*The Jummoo and Kashmir Territories*", (London: Edward Stanford Publishers, 1875).

on the history of the system's main components provide valuable insights into the historical context that allowed for such a consolidation of power.

Mohd. Ashraf Wani "*State Economy and Policies of Jammu and Kashmir during Dogra regime with Special Reference to Agriculture*" 2019²⁸ The author emphasized the agricultural sector from 1846 to 1947 A.D. From 1885 onwards, however, irrigation construction receives significant attention, and under the reign of Maharaja Pratap Singh, several canals are constructed. In 1923, a separate department of irrigation was established, and it devoted significant resources to the development of Jammu while doing little work in Kashmir. In the fourth decade of the 20th century, between 1931 and 1940, canals such as the Zagir Canal and Martand Canal were renovated, and additional canals supplied by the Jhelum and Lidder rivers were built. In a word, we can say that the land settlement of 1883 not only addressed the problem of tax collection but also proved advantageous by expanding the land area by allotting a portion of it to landless agriculturalists. The establishment of a separate department of irrigation in 1923 led to the development of Jammu through the construction of several canals, while Kashmir received little attention. The renovation and construction of canals continued in the 1930s, expanding the land area and benefiting landless agriculturalists.

R.L. Hangloo "*Agrarian System of Kashmir (1846-1889A.D.)*" 1997²⁹ The author has very efficiently traced out the tradition of granting the land and its revenue to persons of repute as well as persons in service by the respective rulers from ancient times down to Sikhs. During the Dogra period, the ruler granted Jagirs to the individuals who either belonged to the royal family or who

²⁸ Mohd. Ashraf Wani, "*State Economy and Policies of Jammu and Kashmir during Dogra regime with Special Reference to Agriculture*", (IJSRR 2019, 8(1), 3160-3170).

²⁹ R.L. Hangloo, "*Agrarian System of Kashmir (1846-1889A.D.)*", (New Delhi: Commonwealth Publishers; reprint edition 1997).

rendered political service to him. Except for these Jagirs, there were also some jurisdictional Jagirs in the State namely Poonch, Chenani, Basholi, and Bhadarwah. These Jagirs were independent in nature but these Jagirs also served the same purpose. i.e., to provide a safeguard the sovereignty to the State. The Jagirdars rendered a lot of services to the ruler. These Jagirdars sometimes rendered both, civil and military services and sometimes only civil services to the ruler. The Jagirsystem acted as a supportive structure to keep intact the peripheral areas by maintaining law and order there and to ensure a regular supply of revenue to the State.

Manju Sharma's work, "Agrarian System of Jammu Region: A Study of the Evolution of the Land Revenue System, 1995"³⁰, The book begins with a detailed introduction, setting the context and objectives of the study. Sharma establishes the importance of the agrarian system in shaping the socio-economic landscape of Jammu and highlights the significance of understanding the evolution of the land revenue system. In subsequent chapters, Sharma delves into the historical trajectory of the land revenue system in Jammu. The author explores pre-colonial land revenue practices and their subsequent transformation under British rule. Through a detailed examination of archival records, official documents, and historical manuscripts, Sharma analyzes the introduction of land settlements, changes in revenue collection methods, and modifications in land tenure systems. The socio-economic implications of these reforms for the peasantry are carefully examined, along with the interplay of power dynamics between the British administration, the Dogra rulers, and the rural population. Sharma's book is a commendable contribution to the field of agrarian studies. The author's research is extensive, and the utilization of primary sources enriches the analysis. The book effectively addresses the gap in existing literature by focusing specifically on the evolution of the land revenue system in Jammu. It highlights the socio-economic implications of British intervention and subsequent reforms during the Dogra period.

Majid Hussain's book, "*Systematic Geography of Jammu & Kashmir*" 2001³¹, traced in a very organized way the picture of how the weather is in the Jammu division. From the point of view of climate, the Jammu Division is divided into two parts: the plain region, lying to the south of the Shivalik's, and another one, the mountainous region, stretching over the middle and the Greater Himalayas in the districts of Doda, Rajouri, Poonch, and Udhampur. The climate of the Plain region and the Middle Himalayas, including the Pir-Panjal, is characterised by a rhythm of seasons that is caused by the reversal of winds in the form of the southwest and northeast monsoons. The reversal of pressure takes place regularly, twice in the course of a year. The mean monthly temperature in Jammu city reads well above 20 °C, with the annual range of temperature being about 17°C. In the plains and lower reaches of the Himalayas, the temperature starts rising in the month of March. All the towns lying to the south of the Shivalik's (Akhnoor, Hiranagar, Kathua, Samba, etc.) observe intense tropical heat in the months of May and June. During summer, in the city of Jammu, a cool wind descends from the Shivalik's at night, which is locally known as 'dadu'. This cool local wind has a salubrious influence on the health of the people, enhancing their efficiency and vitality. The dadu wind also provides relief from the scorching heat during the day, making it a pleasant time to explore the city's many temples and markets.

³⁰ Manju Sharma, "*Agrarian System of Jammu Region: A Study of the Evolution of the Land Revenue System*", (Jammu: Aay Emm Publications, 1995)

³¹ Majid Hussain, "*Systematic Geography of Jammu & Kashmir*", (New Delhi: Rawat Publishers, 2001).

In the mountainous areas, the Pir-Panjal Range of the Lower Himalayas, the snow-covered peaks of the Greater Himalayas, and the rugged topography and aspect of a slope have a confluence on the temperature and precipitation. The orientation of the valleys, whether they are longitudinal or transverse, also significantly influences the general weather conditions. Because of these factors, Ramban town, situated on the right bank of Chenab and surrounded by barren, dark- coloured rocks, records a higher temperature than that of Batote, though both are located within a crow's-fly distance of about 25 kilometres from each other. The Upper Chenab region stretches over the Greater Himalayas. The meteorological stations of Bhandarwah and Kishtwar are situated in this region and record very low temperatures (-15°C) in the winter season. In the lower and upper Himalayas of the Jammu division, rainfall recording stations are at Banihal, Batote, Ramban, Bhandarwah, Doda, Kishtwar, Poonch, Rajouri, Reasi, etc. Being situated at high altitudes, the winters at all these stations are severe, and they record light to heavy snow in the months of December, January, and February. The presence of lofty mountain ranges prevents the penetration of warm winds from scorching the plains of the south. The months of March to May are pleasantly warm in the mountainous region of the Jammu region. The monsoon season brings heavy rainfall to the region from June to September, causing landslides and flash floods in some areas. The summer months from June to August are ideal for trekking and mountaineering in the Himalayas, attracting adventure enthusiasts from all over the world.

The effects of the Dogra's agrarian reforms on the economy and society of the state have not yet been looked at. Thus, the goal of the current study is to close this gap and is the first attempt to analyze the agrarian reforms in an objective manner. Additionally, this study aims to draw

attention to institutional changes that are essential for the socioeconomic advancement of the populace. The study will examine the impact of the agrarian reforms on the distribution of land ownership, productivity. It will also explore how these reforms influenced social relations, political power structures, and economic development in the region.

The British intervention in Jammu during the Dogra period significantly shaped the region's agrarian system. This critical review evaluates the literature on this subject, analyzing the primary sources, socio-economic analysis, critical perspectives, and comprehensiveness of the existing research. By identifying limitations and suggesting future research directions, this review aims to contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the British intervention and its effects on agrarian reforms in Jammu.

The reviewed literature encompasses various scholarly works that have examined British intervention and agrarian reforms in Jammu during the Dogra period. While these works provide valuable insights, they also exhibit certain limitations that need to be addressed.

One key limitation is the reliance on secondary sources, which affects the depth and authenticity of the analysis. Although the scarcity of primary sources poses a challenge, future research should aim to incorporate a wider range of primary materials, such as official records, correspondence, and indigenous accounts. This would provide a more robust foundation for understanding the British impact on agrarian reforms in Jammu.

Another area requiring more attention is the socio-economic analysis of the reforms. While the reviewed works touch on the consequences of British intervention, they often overlook the perspectives and experiences of the peasants and marginalized communities. A more comprehensive analysis would involve examining the lived realities of those directly affected by the reforms and exploring the social inequalities that emerged as a result. Incorporating oral histories, testimonies, and local narratives could enrich the socio-economic analysis and provide a more inclusive understanding of the reforms' impact.

Furthermore, the literature could benefit from a more critical examination of the underlying motives and intentions behind British agrarian reforms. While the reviewed works acknowledge the British objective of revenue generation and modernization, they tend to present these reforms as inherently beneficial or necessary for progress. A critical analysis would delve into the power dynamics between the British administration, the Dogra rulers, and the rural population, shedding light on the exploitative aspects and potential resistance to these reforms.

Additionally, the focus on land settlements, revenue administration, and irrigation projects within the literature is commendable. However, other dimensions such as agricultural credit systems, marketing mechanisms, and the impact of global economic forces on the agrarian economy deserve further exploration. A more holistic approach to studying agrarian reforms would provide a comprehensive understanding of the socio-economic transformation during the Dogra period.

Research Objectives

In the light of the above observations, the present attempt has been designed for the study is mentioned below:

1. To study the geographical structure of Jammu region.
2. To understand the Historical background of Jammu and the formation of Princely State of Jammu and Kashmir.
3. To analyze the agrarian system and agrarian reform policies introduced by Dogra Rulers in Jammu.
4. To examine the impact of agrarian reform in the socio-economic condition of the Jammu region.

Research Methodology

This study counts as historical research because both the research study and the way it is conducted are based on the past. In line with the way historical research is done, this research uses both first-hand and second-hand sources of information that are relevant to the research problem. Primary sources include Government Reports, Census Reports, Foreign Reports, General Reports on the Administration of Jammu and Kashmir under Dogra's, Reports on the progress of agriculture, State Gazetteers, settlement reports, irrigation records, Newspapers, and Journals, assessment reports, revenue records. The secondary sources used in this research include books, articles, and other scholarly works that provide a historical context for the research problem. By using both primary and secondary sources, this study provides a comprehensive understanding of the historical events and processes that have shaped the research problem. This approach ensures that the research is grounded in accurate and reliable information and allows for a deeper analysis of the research problem. Additionally, the use of primary sources allows for a more nuanced understanding of the perspectives and experiences of those who lived through the historical events being studied.

Significance of the Study

Major works pertaining to the state of Jammu and Kashmir have mostly focused upon conflict related issues, so other areas, particularly the agrarian reforms under the Dogras, have not really been looked upon by historians the way they should have been. This research is significant because the agrarian reforms under the Dogras played a crucial role in shaping the socio-economic structure of Jammu and Kashmir and understanding them can provide valuable insights into the region's history and development. There are some recent works on agricultural and land reforms, but the authors are primarily concerned with the post-partition era. Therefore, there is a need for more research that delves into the pre-partition era and sheds light on the impact of these reforms on the lives of people in Jammu and Kashmir. Such research can also help in understanding the

contemporary agrarian issues faced by the region and provide a historical perspective to policymakers. By examining the pre-partition era agrarian reforms under the Dogras, this research can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the historical and contemporary agrarian issues faced by Jammu and Kashmir. Additionally, it can provide policymakers with insights into how these reforms have shaped the socio-economic structure of the region and inform future policy decisions. This work provides new insights on the subject and tries to understand and recollect the histories of agrarian reforms under the Dogra regime and their impact on the later stages of the history of Jammu and Kashmir. It is under such realities that this study becomes very important to research.

Chapterization

The current work aims to comprehend the actions taken during the Dogra era (1846–1947). Details on a geo-historical scenario, an agrarian system, reform policies under the Dogra's, new land settlement operations under British officers, and their effects on society and the economy were all included in the research work. This thesis is divided into five detailed chapters with an introduction in the beginning and summary at the end. The first chapter introduces the research topic, while the second chapter delves into the geo-historical scenario of the Dogra era. The remaining chapters cover different aspects of the agrarian system, reform policies, and land settlement operations under British officers.

The research work, starts with the detailed introduction to the research work, a review of the literature of relevant books, the research objectives, the research methods, and the importance of the study in relation to other studies.

Chapter I – In this chapter, an attempt has been made to trace the geographical profile of Jammu in general terms. This has been followed by an attempt at a theoretical approach. In its most basic form, it can be divided into sub-categories. In this section, I'll try to explain all of the different aspects that are associated with geography such as topography, physiography, agriculture etc.

Chapter II- The main theme of this chapter focuses on the historical context of Jammu, including the establishment of princely State of Jammu and Kashmir. It further examines the British policies towards the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir.

Chapter III – In the first part of this chapter, I gave a brief historical overview of how Jammu's revenue administration has changed over time. In this section, we talk about how the agrarian system worked and what were the reforms introduced from 1846 to 1947, when Maharaja Gulab Singh and his successors were in charge. Because the situation in Jammu province was significantly improved in comparison to that in the other parts of the princely state, he paid less attention to the process of improving the administration. The agrarian system, the regulations for revenue officials, the management of land records, and the preparation of documents were all finished during the reign of Maharaja Ranbir Singh and his successors. It also speaks about the main reasons why Dogras and British people wanted to change the way land was used in Jammu. It talks about things like how crop production grew, how new policies affected land settlement, how irrigation improved, how canals were built, and how the community reacted to the changes. During the reign of Maharaja Pratap Singh, Andrew Wingate, who was the first settlement officer in Jammu and Kashmir, and Sir Walter Ropar Lawrence led the way in putting in place the new reforms. In Jammu and Kashmir's history as an agrarian society, this time marks the start of the rise of modernism. In the Jammu region, different settlement officers were appointed for various tehsils. The time of Maharaja Pratap Singh (1885–1925) was the beginning of direct British intervention in India. In Jammu, progress started in 1916 with land settlement and the establishment of the agriculture department. The major development in the agrarian sector

occurred during the rule of Maharaja Hari Singh. The period from 1925 onwards witnesses the impressive changes in agriculture and its allied areas made by Maharaja Hari Singh.

Chapter IV –. The Chapter highlights the impact on society and economy after the implementation of reforms in the agrarian sector during the Dogra Raj with special reference to the Colonial Era from the times of Maharaja Gulab Singh to the last ruler, Maharaja Hari Singh. From 1846-1947, many changes were made across the princely state in general and Jammu in particular.

The last section of the thesis summarized the main findings which have been discussed in the above-mentioned chapters. It is followed by a glossary, and a detailed bibliography and list of publications.

Chapter – I

Geographical Profile of Jammu Region

In any area or country, the structure of the agriculture sector is important, just as it was for other industries. Therefore, in order to gain an understanding of the essential factor, we need to focus our attention on the geographical conditions of the area in relation to its historical progression. In the context of Indian history, the territory of princely State of Jammu and Kashmir holds a significant position. The region's unique topography, which includes the Himalayan Mountain range and several rivers, has played a crucial role in shaping its agricultural practices. Additionally, the state's diverse cultural and religious influences have also contributed to the development of its agriculture sector.³¹ It was one of the largest princely states of the Indian Union. It has been identified with a multitude of names in the course of history. The Chinese called it *Shie-in* and *Kia-shi-lo*, the Tibetans named it *Kachal*, while the Dards called it *Kashrat*, and the Greeks called it *Kaspeiris*.³² Because of the wide range of climates that can be found throughout the state, the physical make-up of the entire territory, which is now a union territory, is entirely distinct. In a broader sense, the physical features of any place on Earth not only tell us about the political situation of the people who live there, but they also affect their social and economic standing. In a similar way, the province of Jammu in the Jammu and Kashmir region is important

³¹ On 5th of August 2019, Jammu and Kashmir was divided into two Union Territories scrapping its special status Article 370. Source [India Code](#), Retrieved on 13-02-2023.

³² S.A. Qazi, "*Geography of India with Special reference to J&K, Part-II Systematic Geography of Jammu and Kashmir*", (APH Publishing House, 2011), p.205.

to India, not only because of its historical importance but also because of its geographical importance. The province of Jammu is at the base of the Himalayas. It is known for having a lot of different kinds of plants and animals, including some that are rare or on the verge of extinction. Also, the area grows a lot of fruits like apples, cherries, and apricots, which help India's agricultural economy in a big way. Also, Jammu is home to a number of important pilgrimage sites, such as the Vaishno Devi temple, which is visited by millions of people every year and is a big part of the tourism industry in the area. The province also has borders with Pakistan and China, which makes it important for India's security on a strategic level.

1.1 Location and Boundaries

The princely state of Jammu and Kashmir extended its boundaries from 32°17' to 36°58' north latitude, and from 73°26' to 80°30'³³ east longitude. As per the census report of 1891, the area covers 80,900 square miles with a population of 25,34,952.³⁴ However, with the passage of time, the area has been increased, i.e., 84,741³⁵ square miles and considered as the largest state of India.³⁶ In 1947, the total area of Jammu and Kashmir was 2,22,236 square kilometers. On the northern side, it is surrounded by Chinese and Russian Turkistan, on the eastern side the area was captured by the Chinese Tibet, on the south by Punjab and on the west by the north-western province of India respectively.³⁷ The province of Jammu lies between the latitude 32°20' and 33°10', longitude 74°45' and 75°55'. On the northern side, it is bounded by the Chenab River and Badrawar (now Bhaderwah), whereas on the southern side it is linked with Punjab, on the eastern

³³ Detailed Coordinates on Google [Map \(https://www.google.com/maps/place/Jammu+and+Kashmir/ Retrieved on 13-02-2023\)](https://www.google.com/maps/place/Jammu+and+Kashmir/)

³⁴ Rai Bahadur Pandit Bhag Ram, (1941). "*Census Report of India 1891*, Vol. XXVIII of J&K", Lahore, 1893

³⁵ *Census Report of India, 1941* Vol. XXII Jammu and Kashmir State.

³⁶ "*Handbook of Jammu and Kashmir State*", 3rd Edn., (Jammu: Ranbir Government Press, 1947); (See also *Census Report of India, 1941* Vol. XXII Jammu and Kashmir State)

³⁷ M.L. Kapur, "*Jammu and Kashmir State (The Making of The State)*", (Kashmir History Publications,1980) p.1

side it is allocated with the hill state of Chamba, and from western side it connected by the Punjab and the Naoshera (now Nowshera).³⁸

1.2 Area

The total area of Jammu province in 1931 was 12,378 square miles. The Census Report of 1941 clearly indicates that there will be no specific changes in the area. The districts and Jagirs fall in this area were categorized below in details: -³⁹

Table 1.1 District wise Area of Jammu in 1941⁴⁰

S.no.	District	Area in square miles
1	Jammu	1,147
2	Kathua	1,023
3	Udhampur including Bhaderwah Jagir	5,070
4	Reasi	1,789
5	Mirpur	1,627
6	Chenani Jagir	95
7	Poonch Jagir	1,627

³⁸ Charles Ellison Bates, *A Gazetteer of Kashmir and the Adjoining Districts of Kishtwar, Badarwah, Jammu, Naoshera, Punch and valley of Kishanganga, Jammu*, (Calcutta, 1873), p.12

³⁹ *Census Report of India*, (1941). p.72

⁴⁰ *Census Reports of India*, (1941). Vol. XXII, Jammu & Kashmir, prepared by Capt. R.G. Wreford (Census Commissioner, J&K state), Part – I & II, (Jammu: Ranbir Government Press, 1943), p.72

1.3. Natural Division

Geographically, the region of Jammu is further divided into two natural divisions namely (a) the Sub-montane and Semi- mountainous tract (b) The Outer Hills. It was first adopted in 1911 for the purpose of preparing a census report.

1. The sub-montane and semi-mountainous tracts comprises of the plains bordering the Punjab and the broken Kandi country skirting the ranges of Himalayas.⁴¹ Some of the rivers namely Ravi, Chenab and Jhelum were perennial streams that flows through the southern plain area which share borders with several districts of Punjab. The tehsils of Kathua and Jasmargarh of Kathua district, the entire Jammu district, and the tehsils of Bhimber and Mirpur of the Mirpur district was divided into administrative units. The Jammu region of Jammu and Kashmir formed a part of it. On the northern side, it consists of foothills, popularly called as “*Kandi Ilaqas*”⁴² or “parched portion”.⁴³ Its rise to a height of about 2,000 feet and most portions was stony and arid in nature. Their thirst for the water which cannot reach them creates a lot of difficulties for them. Those areas who fall under the Kandi tract faced a lot of difficulties. The process of cultivation is meagre and scattered, because for the growth of crops they must rely on timely rains. In the year 1931, the area covers 2,609 square miles and its population consists of 8,14,028 as per the census report of 1941.⁴⁴
2. The Outer Hills consisted of the Basholi tehsil of the Kathua district, the whole districts of Reasi and Udhampur, the Kotli tehsil of the Mirpur district and the entire Jagirs of Poonch and Bhaderwah. Most part of this region is located on the low-lying hills from the southern portion of Pir-Panjal range which separates the region of Jammu from Kashmir. A major portion of

⁴¹ “A Handbook of Jammu and Kashmir State”, 3rd Edn. (Jammu: Ranbir Government Press, 1947) p.1

⁴² *Kandi* is a term used for dry areas where the scarcity of water is seen.

⁴³ *Census Report of India*, (1941). p.1

⁴⁴ *Census Report of India*, p.1

this region located at an altitude between 2,000 feet to 4,000 feet.⁴⁵ Although the Bhaderwah hills reached heights of 5,540 feet whereas Kishtwar covers 5,366 feet above sea level. But in the Udhampur district and some adjoining areas, the hills become mountains and reached an altitude of 15,000 feet. The main river of this region is Chenab which enters the district of Udhampur from the state of Chamba and the Great Himalayan ranges to the east and continues through the districts of Reasi and the tehsil of Akhnoor of the Jammu district and at the end it reached the Punjab near Sialkot.⁴⁶ Even the foothills of Shiwaliks and the middle mountains covers the entire division of Outer Hills. At the end of Punjab border, it extends from the area of Domel at the sharp bend in the Jhelum River, where it merges with Kishan ganga.⁴⁷ Jammu Hill, which rises gently from the Punjab plains and acquires an elevation of approximately 600 meters, is the smaller portion of Shiwaliks hills. It ends abruptly inward in a steep escarpment. It extends from the range of the Mid-Himalayan Range to the middle mountains of the Pir-Panjal range. Initially it covered the northern portion of Basholi between 12 and 15 kilometers and ran through Ramnagar, Reasi, Rajouri, then followed a general northwestern direction towards Muzaffarabad in Kashmir.⁴⁸ In this region, the average height is between 8,000 and 10,000 feet, with some peaks reaching 14,000 to 15,000 feet.

1.4 Climate

The climate of the Jammu province is also varied from other areas of the State. Basically, the climate of Jammu region is divided into types.⁴⁹ The region which falls in plain areas same

⁴⁵ S.S. Sooden, "*Jammu under the Reign of Maharaja Hari Singh*", (Jammu: Vinod Publishers & Distributors, 1999), p.5

⁴⁶ *Census Report of India*, (1941). p.1 (See also *Handbook of Jammu and Kashmir State*, 1947)

⁴⁷ *Census Report of India*, p.5

⁴⁸ *Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh*, Intelligence Department, Calcutta, (Reprint) (Vivek Publishing House, 1947) p.394.

⁴⁹ Jasbir Singh, "*The Economy of Jammu and Kashmir*", (Jammu: Radha Krishan Anand Publishing House, 2004), p.4

share climatic conditions with Punjab. Due to its proximity, Tropical heat is experienced in the sub-montane and semi-mountainous tract. In Kishtwar and Bhandarwah have a more salubrious climate.⁵⁰ Whereas other parts of the Jammu region experience higher elevation, have cooler climatic conditions. It can be said that these areas share the intermediate climatic conditions between the sub-tropical and temperate zone of the Kashmir valley. Doda, Udhampur, Poonch and Rajouri have experienced such types of climates.⁵¹ The Jammu district of Jammu and Kashmir state experiences the annual rainfall nearly 45 inches whereas the Reasi and the Poonch received higher amount of rainfall i.e., 60 inches annually.⁵²

Table 1.2: Duration of seasons in Jammu province were mentioned below:

S.no.	Seasons	Date & Month
1	Spring	15 March to 15 May
2	Summer	15 May to 15 July
3	Rainy	15 July to 15 September
4	Autumns	15 September to 15 November
5	Winter	15 November to 15 January, and
6	Extreme Winter	15 January to 15 March

⁵⁰ *A Handbook of Jammu and Kashmir State*, (1944). p.3

⁵¹ Jasbir Singh, p.4

⁵² *"A Handbook of Jammu and Kashmir State"*, (1947). p.3

1.5 Administrative Divisions of Jammu

Main Division	1891		1921	
	District	Tehsil	District	Tehsil
Jammu Province	Jammu	1. Jammu Khas 2. SriRanbirsingh Pura 3. Samba	Jammu	1. Jammu Khas 2. Sri Ranbirsingh Pura 3. Samba 4. Akhnoor
	Jasrota	1. Kathua 2. Jasmergarh 3. Basholi	Kathua	1. 1. Kathua 2. Jasmergarh 3. Basholi
	Udhampur	1. Udhampur 2. Ramban 3. Kishtwar 4. Padar	Udhampur	1. Udhampur 2. Ramban 3. Kishtwar 4. Ramnagar
	Reasi	1. Reasi 2. Akhnoor 3. Parat	Reasi	1. Reasi 2. Rampur- Rajouri
	Bhimber	1. Bhimber 2. Mirpur 3. Kotli 4. Rampur-Rajouri 5. W. Nowshera	Mirpur	1. Bhimber 2. Mirpur 3. Kotli

Source: M.L. Kapur, "Social and Economic History of Jammu and Kashmir State" pp.421-422

1.6 Rainfall

The northernmost area of India, Jammu is noted for its hot, humid summers and chilly, dry winters. The region has a monsoon climate, with most precipitation falling during the monsoon season. The Jammu district receives almost 45 inches of precipitation annually, while Kashmir Valley receives between 30 and 35 inches. Each year, Reasi and Poonch receive more than 60 inches.⁵³ In the last ten years, Jammu has seen an average of 37.06 inches of rain per year. This number ranges from 62.84 inches in 1917 to 21.49 inches in 1920.⁵⁴ Rainfall, on the other hand, falls in a very random way, which is why canal irrigation was put in place in an area where the average rainfall is so high. When there are more rains than usual, it is even more important for the people in charge of the canals to be careful not to hurt the crops by over-irrigating them. The average Kharif rainfall is 28.80 inches, and the average Rabi harvest rainfall is 8.26 inches. However, the Kharif rainfall in 1920 was only 15 inches, and the Rabi rainfall in 1910 was only 1.45 inches. On the other hand, the kharif rain was 55.49 in 1917 and 15.34 in 1911.⁵⁵ However, if we examine the reports of Kandi tract, the following details in relation to rainfall covering the average annual rainfall of the tehsil and the adjoining tehsils of Akhnoor, Samba, Ramnagar, Udhampur and Reasi: -⁵⁶

⁵³ *"A Handbook of Jammu and Kashmir State"*, 1947, p.3

⁵⁴ *"Assessment Report of the Maidani Tract of the Jammu Tehsil of Jammu Province of 1923"*, (Pioneer Press Allahabad 1925), p.5

⁵⁵ ARMTJP, p.5

⁵⁶ *"Assessment Report of the Kandi Tract of the Jammu Tehsil of the Jammu Province, (1981)"*, p.4

Table 1.3: Statement of Rainfall

Statement of Rainfall:—

Year.	Jammu.		Domana of Jammu.		Samba.		Akhnur.		Kissi.		Udhampur.		Ramnagar	
	Kharif.	Rabi.	Kharif.	Rabi.	Kharif.	Rabi.	Kharif.	Rabi.	Kharif.	Rabi.	Kharif.	Rabi.	Kharif.	Rabi.
1910-11	30.24	1.45	...	...	...	...	37.86	17.86	63.89	36.15	...	..	...	...
1911-12	16.19	15.34	..	...	...	...	24.32	9.9	29.29	21.38	...	...	...	...
1912-13	18.04	8.38	...	...	...	...	30.6	6.84	39.47	14.17	...	...	...	...
1913-14	23.59	6.56	...	...	...	...	32.44	11.03	56.58	21.21	...	...	...	...
1914-15	37.86	12.98	44.6	11.2	...	...	43.41	16.3	61.86	24.09	...	...	60.26	29.98
1915-16	17.43	9.66	20.3	2.4	...	...	33.73	4.69	29.04	10.08	39.31	7.29	45.93	9.31
1916-17	43.86	3.05	38.0	2.9	55.02	10.29	44.83	4.75	58.35	13.43	63.28	11.48	66.55	22.72
1917-18	55.49	7.35	50.2	15.15	68.43	16.47	54.02	13.39	75.03	22.75	17.75	24.47	67.37	26.28
1918-19	19.15	10.44	16.2	9.15	17.82	10.56	15.24	10.94	22.95	22.4	41.9	16.53	18.58	17.37
1919-20	39.97	9.16	40.9	6.4	34.3	10.15	40.81	11.36	59.39	18.36	24.6	16.18	41.27	17.76
1920-21	15	6.49	15.05	2.05	18.45	2.83	19.54	4.68	26.86	6.97	50.89	8.6	27.46	12.55
1921-22	18.17	3.72	15.55	5.50	29.03	6.37	35.59	7.8	42.7	11.48	55.38	15.46	64.93	12.26
1922-23	22.04	14.25	22.50	10.75	25.77	15.2	35.35	15.03	62.88	21.66	48.22	22.8	60.65	20.04
1923-24	29.11	12.13	24.20	8.40	28.75	8.07	40.31	11.41	50.2	16.76	4.41	16.45	53.94	21.51
Total ...	356.14	120.96	287.50	74.90	277.59	79.94	517.85	145.98	678.39	261.49	345.74	139.26	506.94	189.76
Average per year.	27.58	8.64	28.75	7.49	34.7	9.99	36.99	10.43	48.46	18.68	38.41	15.47	50.69	18.98

Source: Assessment Report of the Kandi Tract of the Jammu Tehsil of the Jammu Province, 1981

From 1910 to the present, this tahsil has had less rain on average than Akhnoor and Samba Tahsils, which are similar to this one in most ways. There is a clear lack of food, especially during the Kharif harvest. There is much less rain here than in the neighboring Reasi, Udhampur, and Ramnagar tahsils. But because they are hilly tahsils and are very different in other ways from the Ilaqas in the report, a comparison of the lack of rain is not very useful. This tahsil only has 119 acres of land that can be watered. The only thing that grows in the area in question is rain. If it rains often and at the right time, the harvest will be good. If the situation is different, production is bad. During Kharif harvests, it rains more often than during Rabi, which is a good thing.⁵⁷

⁵⁷ Chaudhari Chattar Singh, "Assessment Report of the Kandi Tract of the Jammu Tehsil of the Jammu Province", 1981, p.6

1.6 Rivers

There are certain rivers and lakes that flow in the states of Jammu and Kashmir. The Chenab, Ravi, Ujh, Tawi, Poonch, Neeru river and Marusudar were some of the significant rivers that run across the Jammu. Throughout the year, the Chenab and the Ravi were the only two rivers who carried larger amount of water than the rest of other rivers.⁵⁸ The details of the rivers are: -

1. Chenab River

This river is formed of two principal feeders, the Chandra, and the Bhaga, whence it derives its Sanskrit name of Chandra-Bhaga, by which it is usually known in the upper part of its course.⁵⁹ The ancient name of the Chenab River was known as Asikni, a Sanskrit term mentioned in the Rigveda (VIII.20.25, X.75.5). It signifies that it consists of dark-colored waters. Whereas the later form of Asikni was *Iskamati*, also a Sanskrit term but the Greek Historians called it as Akesiens and Latinized into *Acesines*.⁶⁰ Ptolemy calls it Sandabal whereas Forster mention the river under the name of the Chiunaun.⁶¹ Vigne prefers to derive its present appellation of Chenab from Chand-ab or “*water of the moon*” rather than from *Chin-ab* or “*the water of China*”, in as much as it does not flow from any part of the Chinese territories.

It is rising on the opposite side of the Baralacha pass, in the north lat. 32° - 45' east long. 77° 22' from the elevation of 16,500 feet above the sea level, they effect a junction at Tandi. From Tandi the Chenab pursues a north-westerly direction to a point 5 miles north of Kishtwar; it then makes a bend 20 miles due south; then sweeps suddenly round to the west, flowing in that direction by a very tortuous course until a few miles north of Reasi, when it adopts a south-westerly course to Akhnoor, at the foot of the hills, a total distance from Kishtwar of about 150 miles. From

⁵⁸ S.S. Sooden, p.8-9

⁵⁹ *Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh*, (1890), For Political & Military reference, p.262

⁶⁰ Chenab [River](#), p.1

⁶¹ *Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh*, (1890), For Political & Military Reference, Calcutta p.262

Akhnoor to Mithankot, the river flows south-south and west for 570 miles. From its source to where it meets the Indus, the river is 950 miles long.⁶²

Breadth and Depth: Just above the junction of the Wardwan stream it is only 60 ft wide: at Kishtwar it is 25m wide. At Akhnoor, the stream divides into many channels. At Ramban the river is as wide as the Sutlej at Rampur. At Reasi the Chenab is about 200 yards wide. At Khiderpur above Akhnoor, between 300 and 400 feet. Just below Akhnoor it spreads out into a wide river, 1500 to 2,000 feet broad. At Khiderpur, above Akhnoor it is from 8 to 10 feet deep in the cold weather, and the river rises about 26 feet. At Akhnoor, a gauge is kept by the British Forest Department. The gauge registers of the year 1884⁶³ showed the following to be average height of the river, which may be relied on in each month in the year:

Table 1.4: Average Height of Chenab River – Month wise

January	0.7
February	1.0
March	2.5
April	3.5
May	6.0
June	8.0
July	9.0
August	10.10

⁶² GKL, p.263

⁶³ GKL, p.263

September	7.5
October 1 st to 15 th	2.5
„ 15 th to 31 st	1.75
November	1.5
December	9.0

Source: Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh, p.263

Tributaries: During its course through the Kashmir territories of Kishtwar, Bhandarwah and Jammu, the Chenab receives many affluents the principal of which commencing from the east and following the river between the Chamba boundary and Kishtwar, are the Ooniar and the Shendi streams, and the Bhutna and the Maru Wardwan Rivers.

2. Ravi River

This river serves as the dividing line between the Jammu Division of Himachal Pradesh, which includes the Chamba district, and the Gurdaspur district of Punjab, which includes Gurdaspur. Its higher springs rise at the intersection of the Dhauladhar and Lahul ranges in Himachal Pradesh, which is at an elevation of not less than 4, 8777 m (16,000 ft). The river emerges from the Mountains at Basholi, then follows a path that brings it close to the Kathua, and then enters the plains of Punjab. The whole distance traveled by the river, from its beginning all the way to where it meets the Chenab, is 1,014 kilometers (830 miles).⁶⁴ The lowest rate that can be determined for this system during the winter months is 2,700 cubic feet per second. The Ravi can be crossed at any time during the winter season; nevertheless, the bed is full of quicksands.

On the river's right bank is where the significant Ujh tributary flows into it. During the summer's sporadic rainstorms, the Basantar, Bein, Bhini, and Seawa rivers all contribute some of the water

⁶⁴ Ali Mohammad Mir, "Geography of Jammu: A Regional Analysis", p.18

from their systems to the Ravi. The streams and torrents are responsible for the erosion and flooding of vast areas of land. It is the same river that was known as Hydraotis in Greek, Iravati in the Puranas, and Parushni in Vedic literature.⁶⁵

3. Ujh River

In the Puranas, the Utsa River is the same as the Ujh. It is a typical Shiwaliks stream and is in the mountains of the Basantgarh range. It starts at an altitude of 3,962 m (13,000 feet)⁶⁶ in the Seuj Dhar of the middle mountains at 32°45'N and 75°35'E. It drains the Siwalik Hills of Ramnagar, Billawar, and Kathua in the summer, when the monsoon rains fill these small valleys. It also helps move wood from higher elevations. Initially, the river flows west, but then it moves south and stays that way until Bhini joins it on the left bank. After going in a south-westerly direction, the river splits into several channels a little way below Jasrota. These channels connect with Ravi and become one.⁶⁷ Before it gets to the plains, it passes through hills for about 50 miles (80 km). It is the river that never stops moving. during the summer monsoons, the area is likely to flood.

4. Tawi River

As the name implies, the Tawi is found in the Seojdhar range, which is to the north-east of Ramnagar. In its upper course, the river drains the Dudu Valley, which extends 64 km (40 miles) from Chennani far into the far east. For roughly 42 km (26 miles), it runs north-westerly toward Chennani. The river here foams along huge pebbles. It collides with numerous rivulets and Nalas along the way as it flows toward Chennani, the most significant of which are Lamber Khata, Phiroz Pachound Lati, and Tarkund. A deep valley is traversed for about 24 km (15 miles) south-west of

⁶⁵ Manju Sharma, *"Agrarian System of Jammu Region"*, (Jammu: AAY EMM Publications, 1993), p.4

⁶⁶ Quarter Master Journal in India, (1974), *"Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh"*, Delhi, p.387; See also Ali Mohammad Mir, *"Geography of Jammu: Regional Analysis"*, p.18

⁶⁷ Ali Mohammad Mir, *"Geography of Jammu: Regional Analysis"*, (New Delhi: Dilpreet Publishing House, 2002), pp.18-19.

Chenani.⁶⁸ The river emerges into a more open valley around Udhampur, where it flows for about 16 km (10 miles) in a southerly direction. It encounters a group of hills that it pierces before taking a westerly turn after receiving the Burmin, Sulah Khad, and Duddar Nala on the right side and the Ramnagar Wali Khad on the left bank. The river again cuts through a different set of hills as it flows westward before arriving at the town of Jammu, which is located on its right bank.

In Jammu, the Tawi finally left the hills that overhung it, ending in a line of cliffs facing the river. 29 km (18 miles) west of Jammu town, it traverses the open plain and merges with one of the Chenab rivers bifurcating channels. The river forms several gravel bars after passing Jammu town. In addition, Tawi Island has been formed.⁶⁹ The length of the Tawi, from source to confluence with the Chenab, is approximately 112 km (70 miles).⁷⁰ When the water levels are at their lowest, the Tawi is typically around 90 meters (100 yards) wide and fordable, but during rainy seasons it is vulnerable to freshets, when the river rises abruptly and becomes a powerful torrent about 273 meters (300 yards) in breadth.⁷¹ According to Vigne⁷², the word '*Tawi*' (Tawi) means 'a torrent'. In Jammu region many rivers stand the name Tawi, and these are notable by putting the tag of the area they flow over as prefix. Such examples are Punch Tawi, Minawar Tawi and Jammu Tawi etc.

5. Poonch River

The Poonch River is a tributary of the Jhelum River that flows through the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir as well as the Pakistani state of Azad Jammu and Kashmir. Other names

⁶⁸ Mir, "*Geography of Jammu: Regional Analysis*", p.19

⁶⁹ Mir, "*Geography of Jammu: Regional Analysis*", p.19

⁷⁰ C.E., Bates, "*A Gazetteer of Kashmir*", (1980),p.213

⁷¹ Mir, "*Geography of Jammu: Regional Analysis*", p.19, See also A.N. Raina, "*Geography of Jammu and Kashmir*", (New Delhi: First Edn. 1971), p.29

⁷² Mir, "*Geography of Jammu: A Regional Analysis*", p.19

for this river include the Punch River, Punch Tohi, and Tohi of Punch.⁷³ According to George Buhler,

*“The earliest form of the word Tohi was originally written as Taushi. This form of the word may be found in the Rajtarangini and the Nilamatapurana. In the more recent work, Apaga, also known as Aik Nala of Sialkot, is mentioned with Tau and Chandrabhaga. The name most likely originates from the Sanskrit word tura, which can be translated as ‘cold’ or ‘snow’.”*⁷⁴

The Chitta – Pani (white water) rivulet, the key tributary of the Punch River taking its rise on the western slants of the Pir- Panjal range, between *Chitta Pani* and Pir Panjal passes. It is originating in the Pir Panjal Mountains and passing through Poonch and Kotli, it enters Mirpur Tehsil at Parot and finally joins the Jhelum at Jangwan (Pakistan). It is also called Punch Tohli. It drains a large area of mountain country to the north and west of the region lying between the Chenab and the Jhelum.⁷⁵ After that, the stream travels in a westerly and north-westerly direction until it reaches the point where it meets the Mandi stream on its right bank at the most western part of the Punch valley. On the right bank, just below Punch Town, the *Bitarh* River flows into it and joins it. The Punch Valley is a beautiful region located in the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir. The streams and rivers in this region are a major source of water for irrigation and other agricultural activities. When it emerges from the Punch Valley, it meets the Swan stream, which is coming from the northwest, and it is at this point that the river begins to flow in a southern direction. After the waters of the Mendhar River are deposited onto the left bank of the river, the river continues to flow in a direction that is south-westerly until it reaches the Vitasta (Jhelum) near Tangrot. The Punch Valley is also known for its rich cultural heritage and historical significance, with several ancient temples and shrines located in the region. The valley is popular

⁷³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poonch_River, retrieved on 25 Mar 2023.

⁷⁴ G. Buhler, “*Detailed Report of a Tour in Search of Sanskrit Mss. made in Kashmir, Rajputana, and Central India*” (Bombay & London Trübner & Co: Society’s Library Town Hall, 1877), p.3.

⁷⁵ Mir, “*Geography of Jammu: A Regional Analysis*”, p.18

destination for tourists who are interested in exploring the natural beauty and cultural heritage of Jammu and Kashmir.⁷⁶

6. Neeru River

The Neeru river, also known as the Neru river, that flows into the Chenab River. It begins its journey at the Sonabain Asharani Glacier in the Bhaderwah district and meets the Chenab River in Pul Doda in the Doda district. On the bank of this river in Bhaderwah we learn to know about the temple which is dedicated to Gupt Ganga. However, the Sonabain Glacier in Bhaderwah is the source of the Neeru river. After passing through the Bhaderwah valley, the Neeru river eventually meets up with the Chenab River at Pul Doda.⁷⁷

7. Marusudar River

The Marusudar River, commonly known as the *Maru Sudar River*. It is the river that contributes the most water to the Chenab River, and it is 133 kilometers (83 miles) long. The Nunkun glacier in the Warwan Valley is the source of the Marusudar river, which eventually flows into the Chenab River at Bhandarkoot in the Kishtwar district.⁷⁸

1.7 Classification and Types of Soils

The state of Jammu and Kashmir forms a transition; climatic region between the wet monsoon of the Jammu plain near the Punjab and the dry arid Tibet.⁷⁹ Soil is a thin layer on the surface of the earth that is composed of mineral particles, decayed organic matter, and moisture. Various nomenclatures were used by cultivators to identify soils, which varied from hillside to hillside and even village to village. Even land records have classified soils based on texture,

⁷⁶ Mir, “*Geography of Jammu: Regional Analysis*”, p.18

⁷⁷ <https://doda.nic.in/places-of-interest/> retrieved on 29 Mar 2023 See also Manju Sharma, “*Agrarian System of Jammu Region*”, (Jammu: AAY EMM Publications, 1993), p.4

⁷⁸ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marusudar_River retrieved on 29 Mar 2023

⁷⁹ A.R. Raina, “*Geography of Jammu and Kashmir*”, (National Book Trust of India, 1977) p.56

structure, and color. Throughout the state, a wide variety of soils, both residual and alluvial, were found due to the prevailing geo-ecological conditions. As there was variation in soil under cultivation,⁸⁰ the classification of land helped in determining the use and non-use of land. The Land of the Jammu region was broadly classified as cultivable and the uncultivated land. The land which was cultivated is identified as *Ekfasli* and *Dofasli*.⁸¹ The field where only one single crop is yielded every year is called as *Ekfasli*⁸² and usually located at a distance from their homes. Whereas *Dofasli*⁸³ land grows two crops in a same year. Mostly *Dofasli* land located near the houses in the village especially where huge manure was available. In addition to this, it was grown near the houses so that one can keep a check on the crops. However, there were some other lands that fall under this cultivation category. Some of them were *Rakh* or *Shamlat*, Bari or Ghram land and *Maliari*. The land which was reserved for grazing is called *Rakh*. In Kandi tracts, Bari or Ghram land was mostly seen. The land where vegetables were grown exclusively were located near the wells.⁸⁴ As per the Assessment reports of Jammu province,⁸⁵ all land which was cultivated it was because of the availability of irrigation and mainly divided into two parts:

⁸⁰ Shawita Sharma, “Agrarian System of Jammu and Kashmir State (1846-1947)” (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis), (University of Jammu, 2018), p.20-21 (See Also Agrarian system of Jammu Region under Sikhs by Manju Sharma, 1993)

⁸¹ A. Anderson, “Settlement Report of Kangra”, (1897). p.18.

⁸² It means that only a single crop was grown every year.

⁸³ Dual crops were grown in a single year.

⁸⁴ Assessment Report of Mendhar, (1904). p.10-11.

⁸⁵ ARMTJP, 1924, p.4

Table 1.5: Classification of Land - Irrigated and Unirrigated Land for different sources

Irrigated Land	Unirrigated Land
1. Chahi	1. Sailaba
2. Nahri	2. Hail
3. Abi	3. Gora
	4. Warhali I
	5. Warhali II
	6. Rakkar (Thangar)

Source: Assessment Report of the Maidani Tract of the Jammu Tehsil of the Jammu province.

Irrigated land:

It comprises of three forms namely *Chahi*, *Nahri* and *Abi land*. Such type of land was seen in the tehsils of Kathua, Bhandarwah, Kishtwar valley, Rajouri, Poonch and Jammu district. The chahi land was regularly irrigated through wells and mostly they were close to the village. The chahi included other irrigated land also and they were *Rehat*, *Chalahr* and *Dhiunklee*.⁸⁶ The land which was irrigated by Kuhls are called as Nahri land and it was found in the tehsils of Kathua, Samba, and Ranbir Singh Pura and in Akhnoor. In Akhnoor, they receive irrigation facilities through the Pratap Canal and Ranbir Canal.⁸⁷ The land of Abi irrigated through springs or perennial streams or by Kuhls taking off from these springs or streams. It was irrigated by other means called Chatta. The half-irrigated land such as Sailaba and Chhamb were fall in this category. Due to the

⁸⁶ The water that needed to be pumped up came up in a vassal that was suspended from a long arm of a lever of the balance kind, and the weight of the vassal was overcome by the weight of a block of hard earth or stone that was piled on the other hand of the lever. This was a simple and ingenious device that was used in the area. This apparatus required a significant amount of manual labour and could only irrigate a very small area of land. However, it was an important development in irrigation technology and allowed for more efficient use of water resources. Over time, improvements were made to this device, leading to the development of more sophisticated irrigation systems. See *Assessment Report of Akhnoor & R.S. Pura Tehsil of 1916*.

⁸⁷ *Assessment Report of Samba Tehsil, (1914)*. p.11 (See Also *Assessment Report of Akhnoor Tehsil, (1916)*. p.6 & *ARMT, (1924)*. p.4

vicinity of river or stream, this type of land was flooded or kept moist and got the benefit of irrigation.⁸⁸

This type of land was further classified into three parts:

- a) **Abi I:** On this land, paddy(rice) was grown regularly.
- b) **Abi II:** Paddy(rice) was grown occasionally not on regular basis.
- c) **Abi III:** In this land, other crops were produced rather than rice.

Unirrigated land:

The second type of land is known as Barani land, and it differs from the first in that it is remote from the villages and has never been irrigated or fertilized. The cultivation of this kind of land was wholly dependent on the precipitation that it received. The Kandi tract is an example of something that fits into this category. This category accounted for the vast majority of the land in the hamlets. There were two distinct types of land in the Barani region: *Maira* and *Rohee*. The *Rohee* was characterized by its low elevation and stiff clay soil. The *Rohee Khas* and *Rohee Mustee* were the two distinct types of dry land that made up this area. The *Rohee Khas* soil was superior to the others because it was composed of a loose kind of group that was able to readily absorb water. On the other hand, the *Rohee Mustee* soil was a mixture of sandy soil and was not as good as the *Rohee Khas*. The *Maira* was the second type of land that the Barani possessed. It came in two different varieties: a superior one with an uneven surface and a combination of sand and stone, and a superior one that was of a good quality. This type of land required very little irrigation, but it had a high risk of becoming parched due to the winds that blew through it. *Jhangar* Land was another name for *Rakar* at one point. This barren, stony, and hilly Barani land was in poor condition. It was a poor quality of land that only produced a harvest once every three or four years.

⁸⁸ S.D.S Charak, "*History and Culture of the Himalayan States*", Vol. IX, (Jammu: Jay Kay Book House, 2002), p.7.

Rainfall was essential to the survival of *Haili* land. This was productive agricultural land. The soil in *Warhali* I was soft and loamy, and it only produced one harvest per year. *Warhali* II was a fertile piece of land that produced a harvest once every two years. This land was generally stony and was located on the outskirts of the villages where they were founded. In most cases, Gora Land was established in close proximity to existing villages and towns. *Maira*, I was a good unirrigated land and was further divided into two parts: *Maira Uparla* and *Maira Khalka*, with the former being relatively more highly situated to some extent than the latter. In the Samba region, we get two more classifications of land, *Maira* I and *Maira* II. *Maira* II was a substandard land that was not irrigated and contained a greater number of admixtures of sand and stone. It was generally lacking in consistency. In the Tehsil of Akhnoor, we come across another unirrigated land known as *Kheri* land. This land was the worst and driest of all of them, and it was only cultivated during the wetter seasons.

Even though the land was available in each of the categories, it was not cultivated; rather, it was utilized for the purpose of cultivating grass for animals, such as in Banjar Jadid, Banjar *Kadim*, *Ghair Mumkin*, *Kullur*, and *Arak*. This suggests that the local economy is heavily reliant on animal husbandry and that the cultivation of crops for human consumption may not be as profitable or feasible in these areas. It also highlights the importance of grazing land for the livelihoods of local communities. The uncultivated land in the mountainous region was divided into five categories according to its topography. These were *Kap Mumkin*, *Kap Gair Mumkin*, *Chiran Mumkin*, *Chiran Gair Mumkin*, *Banner Kap*, and *Gair Mumkin*. The categorization of the uncultivated land in the mountainous region helped in determining the suitability of the land for cultivation and grazing. This information was crucial for the local farmers and herders to make informed decisions about land use. The land of the *Gair Mumkin* consisted solely of various

features such as roads, riverbeds, jungles, burial grounds, buildings, and so on. In addition, significant portions of the land in the region were uncultivated. These lands were either hidden from view by thickets and federally protected bushes, or they were overrun by uncontrolled wild vegetation. These kinds of lands have been regarded as public property, also known as *Gana-Sampiti*, ever since ancient times. The *Gair Mumkin* region has been a subject of interest for researchers and conservationists due to its unique flora and fauna. Efforts have been made to preserve the natural beauty of the region while also promoting sustainable development practises to benefit local communities. In extremely unusual circumstances, a farmer might receive a parcel of land of this type to use for agricultural purposes. The permission to do so was granted by officials of the government, but only under certain conditions. After receiving permission to cultivate these lands, the government was entitled to a share of one-fourth of the total output for each of the first five years of production on these lands. Land of this type that was cultivated came to be known as *Nautor* land. It was given under two different circumstances, namely, with and without permission. The government's share of the output was reduced to one-fifth after the first five years. However, those who cultivated *Nautor* land without permission were subject to fines and penalties.

Types of Soil:

The soils of the Jammu Division are made by how the climate, landforms, and rocks of the area interact with each other. Geolithology also plays a role. Young soils can be found on the slopes of mountains, which have cooler temperatures and a shorter growing season than lower altitudes. These young soils are typically less fertile and have lower organic matter content compared to older soils found in the plains. However, they can still support a variety of vegetation and are important for maintaining biodiversity in the region. This is due to the fact that low

temperatures slow down the weathering process, which in turn limits the range of processes that can take place (physically, chemically, and biologically). These types of soil are typically found at greater elevations. In contrast, older soils are found in lower elevations where the temperatures are warmer, and the growing season is longer. These soils have undergone more weathering and have a greater range of processes that can take place, resulting in a more complex soil structure.⁸⁹ However, as one moves up in elevation, both the depth of the soil cover and the level of soil fertility decrease. This is because higher elevations have less rainfall. As a consequence of this, under the current environmental conditions, thick soil coverings can only be found in the valley bottoms and terraces; everywhere else, only a veneer of calcareous and arenaceous cover can be seen. This can have a significant impact on the types of vegetation that can grow at higher elevations, as well as the wildlife that depends on those plants for food and habitat. In addition, human activities such as agriculture and development may be limited in these areas due to the thin soil cover and lower fertility. This is due to the fact that the valley bottoms and terraces are the only areas that have been exposed to water. Alluvial soil, glacial soil, and residual soil are just some of the many types of soil that can be found in the Jammu Division. The hilly and mountainous regions of the division are covered with residual soils, whereas the alluvial soils are restricted to the most southern part of the division, which is comprised of the foothill plains. Furthermore, the alluvial soils found in the southern part of Jammu Division are highly fertile and suitable for agriculture, making it an important region for food production. However, these areas are also prone to flooding during monsoon season, which can cause significant damage to crop and infrastructure.⁹⁰ The most fertile soil cover can be found in the tehsils of Ranbirsinghpura and Bishnah, both of which can be found to the southwest of these pasture beds. Because of this, the area is great for farming, and there is a

⁸⁹ Ali Mohammad Mir, *“Geography of Jammu: A Regional Analysis”*, p.28

⁹⁰ Mir *“Geography of Jammu: A Regional Analysis”*, p.28

thriving farming community in the area. The fertile soil cover also supports a variety of crops, including wheat, rice, and sugarcane. It is only possible to find soil in the form of narrow strips and terraces that run alongside the valleys in between. The farmers in this region use traditional methods of farming and irrigation that have been passed down through generations. However, due to the increasing population and urbanization, there is a growing concern about the sustainability of these farming practices and the need for modernization. It is not unusual to come across sandy hills that have rocks strewn about them in a random pattern. In general, the presence of shallow soils is an essential factor that plays a significant role in determining whether or not the soil resources of the Shiwaliks can be successfully formed. This is because deeper layers of the soil can be reached by more water and air when the soil is shallower.⁹¹

1. Bhabar Soils

There is a narrow strip in the foothills of the Siwalik Mountains that runs from east to west and includes the tahsils of Kathua, Hiranagar, Samba, Bishnah, Ranbirsinghpura, and Akhnoor, in addition to the southern portions of Jammu. This strip contains soils that are characteristic of the Bhabar region. The Bhabar region is known for its porous and rocky soil, which allows for good drainage. This area is also prone to flash floods during the monsoon season due to the high permeability of the soil. The formation of the soils in this region can be attributed to the small stones and gravels that are part of the alluvium. This alluvium was moved by machinery from the neighboring Siwalik and Himalayan peaks where it originally formed. The response of these soils can be described as falling somewhere between an alkaline and an acidic scale. Flash floods during the monsoon season can cause significant damage to the soil and surrounding infrastructure. It is important to take the necessary precautions and prepare for such events in order to form their

⁹¹ Mir “*Geography of Jammu: A Regional Analysis*”, p.29

impact on the area. The percentage of nitrogen in these soils is between 0.05 and 0.06 percent, and the organic matter content ranges from 0.5 to 0.9 percent. As a direct consequence of this, these soils typically lack an adequate amount of humus. The value of the PH can range anywhere from 5 to 82, which is fairly comparable to the typical range. In general, these soils are fertile; however, because of the various textures, there may be some variations in the fertility (sand particles and organic matter). It is important to note that the fertility of these soils can be improved through the addition of organic matter, such as compost or manure. Additionally, proper crop rotation and management practices can help maintain and enhance soil fertility over time.⁹²

2. Brown, Red and Yellow Soils (Palehunmults)

The majority of the colors that can be seen in these soils are the result of the various forms, amounts of water, and concentrations of iron oxides. The presence of organic matter, minerals, and other elements can also contribute to the color of the soil. Soil color can be used to determine soil type and its potential uses. Within this division, this particular soil formation is the largest and most extensive of all of them. It encompasses a portion of northern Samba along with the tahsils of Basholi, Bilaur, Ramnagar, Chenani, Udampur, Reasi, Sunderbani, Kalakote, Naoshera, Rajouri, and Mendhar Haveli. This soil formation is known as the Shiwaliks and is characterized by its brownish red to yellowish-brown color due to the presence of iron oxide. The organic matter content in this soil formation is also relatively high, making it suitable for agriculture and forestry. Jammu and Akhnoor are the two regions that make up the Siwalik hills. The Siwalik hills are a significant part of the Himalayan range and are composed of sedimentary rocks. The soil in this region is generally fertile and suitable for agriculture, with crops such as wheat, maize, and rice being commonly grown.⁹³ They travel from the southeast to the northwest. Only sedimentary river

⁹² Mir, *Geography of Jammu: A Regional Analysis*, p.29

⁹³ Mir, *Geography of Jammu: A Regional Analysis*, p.29

deposits dating back to the Tertiary, and most of those deposits coming from the Upper Tertiary, make up the Shiwalik Mountains. The Shiwalik Mountains are also known as the Outer Himalayas, and they span across Pakistan, India, Nepal, and Bhutan. The mountains have a rich biodiversity and are home to several endangered species such as the Bengal tiger and Indian rhinoceros. The sandstones in these mountain ranges provide evidence that they are composed of unsorted fragments of rock that originated from gneiss, which is composed of a wide variety of minerals. The sandstone that makes up the soil cover is extremely porous and has only partially crystallized, making it a very brittle substance. It has been known to frequent beds of clay, sand, and conglomerate, all of which it has eroded. The mountain ranges are also a source of several important rivers that provide water for irrigation and other purposes. The diverse flora and fauna of these mountains also attract a large number of tourists every year, making them an important source of revenue for the local economy. The only places that contain soil are narrow strips and terraces that are interspersed between the valleys. A sandy hill that is covered in rocks is a common sight in this area. Overall, the fact that the Shiwalik Mountains have shallow soil is a significant factor in the degree to which one can make effective use of the available soil resources. Despite the limited soil resources, the people living in the Shiwalik Mountains have developed various farming techniques such as terrace farming and crop rotation to make the most out of their land. Additionally, the mountains also serve as a source of medicinal plants and herbs, which are used by both locals and tourists alike.⁹⁴

⁹⁴ J. Singh, "*An Agricultural Geography of Haryana*", Kurukshetra, 1976, p.462; See also Mir, *Geography of Jammu: A Regional Analysis*, p.30

3. Mountain Meadow Soils (Cryoborolls)

This particular type of soil can be found in only a few areas in the north, east, and south of the Kishtwar tahsil, as well as in a few scattered pockets all the way along the Pir-Panjial range. Other areas in the Kishtwar tahsil lack it entirely. In addition, there is a single tiny patch in the southern part of the Jammu Division that encompasses some territory in the tahsils of Basholi and Ramnagar. This soil type is highly fertile and suitable for agriculture, especially for growing fruits like apples and cherries. However, its limited distribution makes it a valuable but rare resource for the local farmers. This patch is located in the Ramnagar District. The unique characteristics of this soil type make it highly suitable for agriculture, and it is known to support the growth of a variety of crops such as maize, wheat, and barley. However, due to its limited distribution and the challenges of accessing some of the areas where it is found, its use in farming is somewhat restricted.⁹⁵ Most mountain meadow soils are found on steep mountain slopes. These soils are characterized by their high organic matter content and good water retention capacity, making them ideal for supporting a variety of plant and animal life. However, their steep slopes can also make them vulnerable to erosion and landslides. Numerous environmental factors, such as the climate—particularly the fact that temperatures decrease with altitude—and slow weathering, contributed to the formation of these soils. These environmental factors were responsible for the formation of the mountain meadow soils. All of these different elements contribute to the formation of the soil in mountain meadows. Additionally, the vegetation in mountain meadows plays a crucial role in maintaining soil stability by preventing erosion and providing organic matter that enhances soil fertility. Therefore, conservation efforts should focus on preserving the natural vegetation cover in mountain meadows to maintain healthy soils and prevent landslides. The presence of a sizeable quantity of organic matter that is easily accessible in the soil as a result of the presence of forests

⁹⁵ Mir, *Geography of Jammu: A Regional Analysis*, p.30

and other types of flora has a significant impact on the qualities of the soil. The abundance of organic matter has a significant impact on these qualities. The soil around here is made up of a variety of different things, including shingle, stones, and red loam. Soils that are typical of meadows are frequently found in shady, moist areas or in close proximity to nalas. The soils have a highly developed profile, despite the fact that their depth is relatively shallow. The organic matter in the soil plays a crucial role in its fertility and ability to support plant growth. The presence of diverse components in the soil, such as shingle and stones, can also affect its water-holding capacity and drainage.⁹⁶

4. Submontane Soils (Hapludalfs)

In the most northern areas of Jammu Division, covering almost the entire Pir-Panjal region, there is a kind of soil known as submontane. This type of soil is primarily found in the tahsils of Kishtwar, Bhadarwah, and Doda, as well as in the northern portions of Ramban, Gul, and Budhal, and in the eastern areas of Mendhar and Haveli tahsils. All of these locations receive a low amount of monsoonal rainfall. There is a wide range of fertility in these soils, which have a coarse texture. The organic status is very close to being low⁹⁷. The higher elevations of the Pir-Panjal and Great Himalayan ranges are home to the majority of these rocky wastelands that make up the soil.

5. Glacial and External Soils

Such kind of terrain consists of the higher slopes of mountain ranges that are always snow-covered and has been grouped together to describe it. Because they are only found in the eastern and north-eastern regions of Kishtwar tahsil, which cover a very tiny area of the Division, the distribution of this type of soil is not very significant in the Division. This is due to the fact that

⁹⁶ Mir, *Geography of Jammu: A Regional Analysis*, p. 30

⁹⁷ Mir, *Geography of Jammu: A Regional Analysis*, p.30

these areas are the only ones in which they are found. These soils have very low levels of both organic matter and nitrogen in their composition.⁹⁸

1.8 Agriculture and Its Production

Agriculture is the primary source of income for most people living in the Jammu and Kashmir State, just as it is across the rest of India. As a result, the rural population is significantly larger than the urban population. On the Indian side of the cease-fire line, there is a total land area of 138,123 square kilometers, of which 137,818 square kilometers are rural and just 305.4 square kilometers are urban. The proportion of people living in rural areas to the overall population in 1971 was 81.41 percent, according to the census.⁹⁹ In Jammu and Kashmir, the method of agricultural production typically differed from one region to the next due to the wide range of climatic conditions, types of soil, and methods of irrigation and agricultural practice found there. In the Jammu region, two crops were typically cultivated in a single year: the Rabi crop was grown in the winter, and the Kharif crop was grown in the summer. Because of this, the method of agriculture was known as Dofasli, which means that the land produced two crops in a single year. The Rabi crop, which is primarily composed of wheat and barley, was planted between the middle of September and the middle of January. They were gathered in the months of April and May in the lower lying areas, and in the months of July and August in the higher lying areas. The Kharif crops, which included rice, maize, and millet, were planted between the middle of March and the middle of July, and they were harvested between the middle of August and the middle of November.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ Mir, *Geography of Jammu: A Regional Analysis*, p. 30

⁹⁹ Pandit Anand Koul, "*Geography of the Jammu and Kashmir State*" Updated by P. N. K Bamzai, (New Delhi: Light and Life Publishers, 1978), p. 27; See also Census of India 1971.

¹⁰⁰ Shailender Singh Jamwal, "*Settlements Operations in Kashmir and Jammu*", (Jammu: Saksham Books International, 2013), p.12

The number of cultivators included the state, including agricultural laborers, accounts for 67.83 percent of the total number of workers in the state. There are a total of 6,749 communities dispersed across this huge rural territory. As we are conducting our research on the agricultural practices that are carried out inside the state, there is one more geographical factor that needs to be considered. Just 28,522 square kilometers, or one sixth of its total size, are suitable for agricultural use, making the total landmass of the country 138,123 square kilometers. The remaining land is covered by mountains, and features like forests, lakes, and glaciers. This provides one explanation for the state's relatively low population density. More than ten percent of the land that is suitable for cultivation is currently left fallow.¹⁰¹ With the passage of time, more and better irrigation systems are built, these areas are being gradually cultivated. The Jammu region contains nine tenths of this fallow land, while Kashmir has the remaining one tenth.

The Principal Crops in the Jammu Area:

The majority of the cultivated land in the state was used for the production of food grains, most notably cereals; however, the greatest amount of land was devoted to the production of wheat and rice. The most important crops grown during the Kharif season are rice, maize, saffron, and pulses. The most important crops grown during the Rabi season are wheat, barley, Tibet barley, opium, poppy, and flax.¹⁰²

1. Rice (*Oryza Sativa*)

Rice was the most important crop, and different kinds of rice were grown all over the Jammu region when there were good ways to water the crops. The main crop was rice. Some of the most

¹⁰¹ Koul, "*Geography of the Jammu and Kashmir State*" Updated by P. N. K Bamzai, pp. 27-28

¹⁰² Jamwal, "*Settlements Operations in Kashmir and Jammu*", p.13

significant rice-growing regions included Bhandarwah and Kathua, as well as the lower slopes of Chenab, Udhampur, Kishtwar, and Reasi. One of the fifty different varieties of rice was only available in Ranbirsinghpura, Jammu, but they were all inferior to basmati in terms of quality.¹⁰³

2. Wheat (*Triticum*)

In the Jammu region, a lot of the alluvial lands that were good for farming were used to grow wheat on a large scale. Among the most significant wheat-growing regions were Jammu, Ranbirsinghpura, Samba, Kathua, Udhampur, and Rajouri.¹⁰⁴

3. Maize (*Zea mays*)

Most of the people who lived in the mountainous parts of the Jammu region got the majority of their food from maize. In the Jammu region, it was possible to cultivate white maize, yellow maize, and red maize. All three varieties of maize are known as 'maize.' On the other hand, people who lived in the lower parts of the region preferred the white variant, whereas those who lived in the higher parts of the region preferred the yellow variant. The districts of Udhampur, Doda, Rajouri, and Poonch in the Jammu region were some of the most productive maize-growing areas in the country.¹⁰⁵

4. Barley (*Hordeum vulgare*)

Barley was cultivated in the arid and mountainous regions of Jammu region¹⁰⁹. Doda, Kathua, Jammu, and Udhampur were the four districts that were responsible for its cultivation.¹⁰⁶

5. Oilseeds (*Brassica napus*)

In Jammu region, oil seeds were grown in certain alluvial tracts in the higher altitude of the outer plain. The principal oilseeds included rape, lin seed, til and mustard, While the oil obtained

¹⁰³ SOKJ, p.13. See also, "*Geography of Jammu and Kashmir*" by Pandit Anand Koul

¹⁰⁴ SOKJ, p.13

¹⁰⁵ SOKJ, p.13

¹⁰⁶ SOKJ, p.13

from rape was mostly used for lighting and that obtained from linseed was used for eating purposes. Mustard was also grown for extraction of oil.¹⁰⁷

6. Pulses (Fabaceae or Leguminosae)

The most important varieties of pulses that were cultivated were mung, moth, mash, and rajmash. In comparison to Kashmir, most of the pulses that were grown in Jammu were groin. Peas, gram, and white beans were among the crops that were grown on occasion.¹⁰⁸

7. Saffron (*Crocus sativus*)

In Jammu region, saffron was cultivated in Kishtwar only. Sugarcane, tobacco, chillis, vegetables and potatoes were also grown in Jammu region.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ SOKJ, p.13

¹⁰⁸ SOKJ, p.13

¹⁰⁹ SOKJ, p.13

Chapter – II History of Jammu Region

“Beauteous and Bright is the land of the Duggar,

Sweet its speech and lore;

It’s a treasure, brethren,

Mine of diamonds and gold.”¹¹⁰

– Raghunath Singh

It is difficult to piece together a chronological account of the history of Jammu region. The late G.M. Ishrat made the insightful observation that it is a blight on the Jammu region that we were unable to find a Kalhana in the past who was able to write about the valiant deeds of the heroes of the land. This was a problem that plagued the region for a long time. Despite the lack of a comprehensive historical account, there are still various sources and artifacts that provide glimpses into the past of this area. Archaeological excavations, ancient inscriptions, and oral traditions passed down through generations all contribute to our understanding of the history of the region.¹¹¹ Second, during the past 5,000 years, this area has undergone a great deal of transformation. Even so, it is not hard to trace the ancient influence of the epic era and the Buddhist era throughout the entire region. Both of these eras had a significant impact on the area. The epic era is marked by the presence of many ancient temples and ruins, while the Buddhist era is evident in the numerous monasteries and pagodas that dot the landscape. These historical influences have made this area a popular destination for tourists interested in exploring the rich cultural heritage of the region.¹¹² At the time of the death of King Dashrath, we discover that his sons Bharata and Shatrugun had gone to the house of their maternal uncle, which belonged to Yudhajit of Kakey

¹¹⁰ Somnath Wakhlu, *“The Heritage of Jammu and Kashmir – Art Architecture History and Culture of the Region”*, (Gyan Publishing House, 1998), p.23.

¹¹¹ Pathik, p.59- 60

¹¹² Pathik

Desh. Based on this information, the time of the Ramayana had a big effect on the area. There are a lot of different ideas floating around about where the name Jammu came from? Some believe that it originated from the name of a ruler named Jambu Lochan who ruled the region, while others suggest that it comes from the Sanskrit word “*Jambo*” which means a type of fruit found in abundance in the area. A Historical document named “*Taushi- Shatkam*”, which was written by Kedarnath Shastri,

*“Princes- Jambu and Bahu – says the legend,
Migrating in hoary past from Avadh to Dogra Land,
Settled here and founded on the Taushi bank,
Cities Jambu and Bahu after their names”.*¹¹³

Regardless of its origin, Jammu has a rich history and cultural heritage that is worth exploring. Jammu is the name of both the entire region and the capital of the city. The word ‘Jammu’ refers to a branch of the Brahman religion that moved to the area from Kashmir and established a settlement there. The settlement of Jammu became an important center of the Brahman religion during the time of the Ramayana, which further solidified its significance in the region. The various theories about the origin of the name Jammu suggest that it has a rich and complex history that is deeply intertwined with the religious and cultural traditions of the area. Jammu Marg is the name that eventually stuck for this location. In the verse that is presented here from the Mahabharata, there is a mention of the location that has been uncovered.

*“Jambumarbam Samavishya
Devish Pitrasevitan
Ashwamedham mavaproti
Sarvakam Semenvita”*¹¹⁴

¹¹³ Kedarnath Shastri, “*Taushi-Shatkam*” Dharmarth Trust Research & Publication Branch, Jammu, J&K, (1966) p.15

¹¹⁴ Pathik

According to this verse, the pilgrim who visits Jambu marga, the place of gods and saints and ancestors is bestowed with fruits of Ashvamedha Yagya, and all his wishes are fulfilled.

In ancient times, Jambu, or the Jambuprastha was considered a place of learning and place of pilgrimages. However, it is very uncertain that no historical reference has been found in any of the old monuments regarding the same.

Jyoteeshwar Pathik¹¹⁵ in his work, “*The Glimpses of Jammu and Kashmir*” mentions that

“.... the region was probably situated at old Purmandal which is located on the banks of the Devak River, which is a tributary of the Ujh river.’ However, to understand the origination of a word, every person tries to trace its existence in a different manner”.

Walter Hamilton work’s “*Description of Hindustan*” discusses the origin of Jammu in a distinct way. He wrote, “it is the ancient Hindu mythological poem which is used to designate India (*Jambhu Dwipa*).”¹¹⁶ The word “*Jambhu Dwipa*” itself signifies a combination of words i.e., *JAMBU* and *DWIPA* which means an island. Those who were in favor of this theory believe that the place is surrounded by water. It might be possible that the ocean may be at one time have reached the base of these mountains, forming the high table lands into islands. Likewise, the Chinese Traveler, Hiuen Tsang describes the Pamir Valley as the centre point of Jambu Dwipa. Whereas another place named Nalanda Temple near the Gaya Ji is described as the most magnificent establishment of the *Jambu Dwipa*.¹¹⁷

Some people believe that the city was given its name, Jammu, after Jamawant, a warrior in Rama’s array who was said to have performed penance in a cave close to the Peer-Kho. This is one of the many theories that may have developed as time has passed.¹¹⁸ The cave on the bank of

¹¹⁵ Pathik

¹¹⁶ Walter Hamilton, “*A Geographical, Statistical, and Historical Description of Hindostan*”, Vol. I, (London: John Murrey Albemarle Street, 1820), p.499

¹¹⁷ Jyoteeshwar Pathik, “*Cultural Heritage of the Dogras*”, 1st Edn., Life and Light Publishers, 1980, p.1

¹¹⁸ Along the banks of the Tawi River, it is one of the oldest Shiva temples in the Jammu area. It was built in the fifteenth century during the reign of Ajaib Dev. Every year on Shivratri, a big fair has been organized.

the Tawi below the city. The more acceptable theory was that King Jambulochan had founded the city, but the place gets importance during the fourteenth century.¹¹⁹ Somnath Wakhlu in his work, “The Rich Heritage of Jammu and Kashmir describes the origin of Jammu in a poetic form.

*“A land where a goat and lion
Drinking water together from a pond
Astonished the king who was
In pursuit of the hunt.
He cleared and converted the forest
Into his kingdom called "Jambhu”¹²⁰*

It is said that Raja Maldev made history when he brought up from the stream below a massive, heavy stone that weighed approximately half a ton. This feat of strength and determination is still celebrated in local folklore and has become a symbol of Raja Maldev’s power and influence in the region. The stone itself is now a popular tourist attraction and draws visitors from all over the world. This accomplishment is credited with making history. The significance of the stone increased to the same level as that of the well-known stone that was utilized in the coronation ceremony of Scottish kings and queens. The stone was used as a throne by Raja Maldev and his successors, and it became a symbol of power and authority in the region. Today, the stone is still preserved and attracts tourists from all over the world who come to see this historic artefact.¹²¹

After the stone was placed close to the Purani Mandi, he sat on the throne that had been prepared for him. Everyone knows that he built the buildings in Purani Mandi. The bravery that

¹¹⁹ Pathik, p.2

¹²⁰ Wakhlu, p.101

¹²¹ Pathik, p.2

he displayed in front of those people left quite an impression on them. This is how the people get their first real king, and after that, many more kings live in Purani Mandi. The people of Purani Mandi were grateful to have a king who cared about their welfare and worked hard to improve their living conditions. His legacy continued to inspire future generations of leaders who followed in his footsteps.¹²²

On the right bank of the Tawi River is where the lower hills meet the river, which is where the city of Jammu can be found. It is built on three terraces that rise one after another, with the highest terrace being where Jammu is located, with its orientation towards the north. Jammu is known for its long history and cultural heritage. There are many temples and shrines in and around the city that show off this. The city is also a popular place for tourists to visit, and people come from all over the world to see it.¹²³ The Chenab Mountain range formed its western boundary, while the Ladha Mountain range stood between the Tawi and the Chenab on the northern side. Chenani, Bandhralta, Mankot, and Jasrota are the four states that make up the eastern region, and the plains make up the southern region. The region is known for its diverse topography, which includes mountains, valleys, and plains. It is also home to several rivers, including the Tawi and Chenab, which are vital sources of water for the local population. The region was occupied by numerous subordinates, the majority of which were governed by the Jamwal family's various branches as part of their subordination to Jammu.¹²⁴ The locations were Reasi, Bhoti, Samba, and Dalpatpur, whereas Akhnoor to the west of the Chenab seems to have been ruled in a similar way. Jammu holds suzerainty over all the states in the outer hills to the east as far as the Ravi and over

¹²² J. Hutchison & J. P. H Vogel, "*History of the Jammu State*", 2015, p.113

¹²³ Hutchison & Vogel, p.114

¹²⁴ Hutchison & Vogel, "*History of Jammu State*" edited by M.A. Khan, (Zehra Publishing House, 2015),p.1

Kishtwar and Bhaderwah in the Chenab valley.¹²⁵ The real name of the state is Durgara,¹²⁶ and as per tradition, the capital was at Bahu, where the ancient fort and a small town exist. The fort and the town of bahu stand east of Jammu and on the left bank of the Tawi and overlook that river. The appearance of the Fort still bears great strength and was famous since that time.¹²⁷ Till the early part of the tenth century, the exact chronology of the Jammu region is hardly found especially when it is considered under the name of Durgara. The source established the fact that the state which existed at that time was ruled by its own chief, called the “lord of Durgara”.

The first historical reference regarding the existences of Jammu was found in the *Malfuzat -i- Timuri* which is linked with the Timur’s invasion of India in A.D. 1389-9. On his way back to the Indus, he carried out a war against Hindus who were living in outer hilly areas. Although the name of the ruler of Jammu was not mentioned in any text but it is believed that Raja Bhim Dev might be in power. A few years later, in 1417 A.D., the existence of Jammu Pradesh is found in *Tarikh-i-Kashmir-i-Azmi*.¹²⁸ Even *Tarikh-i-Mubarikshahi* is another reference which talks about Jammu. It contains the names of Raja of Jammu. In the past, Jammu was occupied by war for a long time. The two sons of Kapur Dev (1530-71) fell out and established separate principalities in Bahu and Jammu. During the reign of Hari Dev (1652-88), they once again united. A Mughal expedition led by Hari Dev ended in his death in the Deccan. During Dhruv Dev (1703-42), the

¹²⁵ Hutchison & Vogel

¹²⁶ Copperplates found in Chamba with writing on them show that the name Durgara was used for the state of Jammu a long time ago. Over time, this name evolved into Duggar and Dogra. There have been a few different hypotheses put forward regarding where the name of the state came from prior to the discovery of the name on copperplates. In analogy with Trigarta or Kangra, one of these was known as Dugarta or Dvigarta, which literally translates to "the tract between two rivers," in this case the Ravi and the Chenab. Some people believe that the name of the country comes from two holy lakes called Surinsar and Mansar, and that the country used to centre itself around these lakes. These potential origins of the name can no longer be considered anything other than pure speculation. The name Durgara most likely originates from a tribal designation, much like Gurjara, which was the ancestor of the modern name "Gujar." However, the use of these words is relatively new and dates back to only the time when the tract became subject to the supremacy of Jammu. At the present time, the names Duggar and Dogra are thought of as referring to the entirety of the region that is located in the hills that are located between the Ravi and the Chenab.

¹²⁷ Hutchison & Vogel

¹²⁸ Hutchinson & Vogel, p.23

Bahu attacked and sacked Jammu seven times. As a result, Jammu had a small population and people lived in temporary huts.¹²⁹

Jammu's prosperity, power, and grandeur can be attributed to Raja Ranjit Dev, who held the charge as an emperor of Jammu after the death of his father. In 1733A.D., the first Dogra state in Jammu was established by Raja Ranjit Dev. It was based on the principles of justice, humanitarianism, and secularism. He was true to his words and excelled in horse riding and the military arts. He was renowned through the northern India, because of his bravery, courage and love and peace maker.¹³⁰ It is believed that the first half of the eighteenth century is the golden period in the history of Jammu state. In his praise, Hugel writes, -

*“The prosperity of Jammu was at its height under
Ranjit Dev, whose mild government extended equal
protection to Hindus and Mohammedans while the
Punjab was overrun by the horrors of war.”¹³¹*

Creation of Princely State of Jammu and Kashmir

Jammu and Kashmir have always been connected to neighboring regions, including China, Tibet, and Afghanistan, as well as their political systems, commercial networks, and intellectual traditions. The region's strategic location and cultural diversity have contributed to its complex history of political and social dynamics. Kashmir has been a site of conflict and contestation for centuries, with various empires, kingdoms, and nation-states vying for control over its resources and people. The English East India Company established a new state in 1846 by consolidating the

¹²⁹ Pathik, p.103-104

¹³⁰ Pathik

¹³¹ Pathik, p.103

territories of Kashmir, Jammu, Ladakh, Gilgit, and Baltistan under the authority of a single maharaja named Poonch. The merging of the majority of these regions was primarily motivated by the geopolitical goals that the United Kingdom sought to achieve through the consolidation of its colonies. The British colonial rule in Kashmir lasted until 1947, when India and Pakistan gained independence, leading to the partition of the subcontinent and the creation of two new states. The partition resulted in a territorial dispute between India and Pakistan over the region, which has since been a source of conflict between the two countries.¹³²

Prior to the coming of Dogra rule in Jammu and Kashmir, the region was not established as administrative center, for different ruling dynasties as it was always ruled from the regions outside State. For example, Mughals Ruled (1586-1753), it from the than Capital Agra, till 1753. Mughal rule was followed by the Afghans who were able to control the region from Kabul, and Sikhs ruled it from Lahore. The formation of Jammu and Kashmir State as single political entity under the treaty of Amritsar March 1846, led to the foundation of Dogra Regime by Gulab Singh (1792-1857) which lasted up till 1947.¹³³ In his early career he was appointed as *Jagirdar*, later moved to Lahore in 1809 and taken as commander of small force by Sikh ruler Ranjit Singh. It was the time when Ranjit Singh signed the famous treaty with Britisher at Amritsar. Henceforth he launched several campaigns against the Afghans where Gulab Singh showed his fearless military abilities.¹³⁴ For his meritorious military abilities and leadership skills he got Jalandhar as

¹³² Bamzai, “*Cultural and Political History of Kashmir*”, p.698.

¹³³ Gulab Singh, a Dogra Rajput, was conferred the territory of Kashmir by the British under the terms of a treaty known as the Treaty of Amritsar. This treaty was signed between the British and Gulab Singh on March 16, 1846, following the British victory over the Sikhs, a victory in which Gulab Singh had played a pivotal role. All of the hilly or mountainous region that was part of the territories that were ceded to the British Government by the Lahore state in accordance with the provisions of the Treaty of Lahore, dated March 9, 1846, is transferred and made over to Maharaja Gulab Singh by the British Government, and he is granted independent possession of it forever. This region is located east of the river Indus and west of the river Ravi.

¹³⁴ P. N. K. Bamzai, “*Cultural and Political History of Kashmir*”, *Volume III*, (New Delhi: MD. Publishers, 1994), PP 657-660.

an additional Jagir and emerged as one of the trusted commanders of Ranjit Singh. Mian Dido ruled Jammu principality, posed great challenge to Sikh Rule. Gulab Singh with the help of his Dogra followers attacked the Sikh military garrison in Jammu fort. He successfully drove him out in a campaign of Sikh army led by Gulab Singh. In the subsequent years he led the campaigns in Kishtwar and Ladakh.¹³⁵ All these great services to the Lahore Government, he was rewarded by the Maharaja with the grant to him and his successors of the territory of Jammu, with the hereditary title of Raja. Once he installed in Jammu, he spends maximum time there, extends his authority over other principalities in the adjoining areas, and eventually to Ladakh.

The subjugation of Ladakh and Baltistan by Gulab Singh nonetheless looked upon with disfavor by the British took the limits of the Gulab Singh up to the Tibetan frontiers. The British had been ineffective to check him but when in 1841 Raja sent his armies into Tibet, it caused a stir in Calcutta and the British Indian Government looked uneasily on the growing power and status of the Dogra chief.¹³⁶ In 1846 with the treaty of the 'Treaty of Amritsar', Gulab Singh was made the absolute chief of Jammu and Kashmir State. The reason why British choose Gulab Singh for this because; It appeared to the British that the hope of plunder and extension of their domain under the ages of Dogra rulers was higher.

It was an attempt of British to control their dominant neighbors, and they believed they would do it better by depriving the Sikhs of the hilly state, and by passing it over to a ruler of a different caste i.e., Dogra's. British create an alternative to the Sikhs which proved helpful for them. It was strategy of the British to downsize the Sikh kingdom by assigning tracts from it to a trusted ally.

¹³⁵ Bamzai, *Cultural and Political History of Kashmir*, p.667

¹³⁶ Bamzai, *Cultural and Political History of Kashmir*, p.667

Historical Map of Dogra Dynasty of Jammu and Kashmir



Source: *Travel the Himalayas*, <https://travelthehimalayas.com/kiki/2019/10/11/historical-map-of-the-dogra-kingdom-of-jammu-and-kashmir>

According to clause I of the treaty, the British Government “transfers and makes over forever in independent possession to Maharaja Gulab Singh and the heirs male of his body all the hilly or mountainous country with its dependencies situated to the eastward of the River Indus and westward of the River Ravi including Chamba and excluding Lahul, being part of the territories ceded to the British Government by the Lahore State according to the provisions of Article IV of the Treaty of Lahore, dated 9th March 1846”¹³⁷.

After the year 1846, a significant number of Europeans started to travel to Kashmir, and the Maharaja Gulab Singh welcomed and cared for them during their stay. Due to the growing number of tourists visiting Kashmir, on January 14, 1852, the British government put Major MacGregor in charge of keeping an eye on tourists in the area and asked the Maharaja to accept this arrangement. Major MacGregor’s appointment was part of the British government's strategy to establish control over the region, and they saw tourism as a way to achieve this goal. Because the Maharaja agreed to this plan, the British were able to gain more power in Kashmir.¹³⁸ Henry Lawrence and Lord Dalhousie, who was serving as Governor General of India at the time, were the ones who came up with the idea. This is because the officer who was assigned was not a ranking officer. Col. Nicholson took over as the commanding officer after Major MacGregor. At first, it was the Maharaja himself who extended an invitation to the Europeans to visit Kashmir. But no sooner had they began their work when the Maharaja started getting irritated with them.¹³⁹ The Anglo-Indian press, as well as interested individuals and Punjab government officials, kept the residency issue alive over the course of the next two to three decades. This was especially true in the later decades. It was argued that Kashmir was in fact a part of Punjab and that it was a

¹³⁷ Bamzai, *Cultural and Political History of Kashmir*, p 668.

¹³⁸ M.L. Kapur, pp. 31-36.

¹³⁹ F.M Hassnain., *British Policy Towards Kashmir*, p.30.

location of utmost significance to the safety of India's northwestern frontier. The issue of residency was also seen as a way to prevent the migration of non-Punjabis into the region, which was viewed as a threat to the Punjabi identity and culture. Despite these efforts, however, the question of residency remained unresolved for many years.¹⁴⁰

Gulab Singh's son, Maharaja Ranbir Singh, took over as ruler after his father's death. It was drilled into him to be honest with his subjects, just as his father had been, and to show proper deference to the supreme power. He listened to what his father told him and worked with the British to help them reach their goals. Under his rule, infrastructure, and education in the state of Jammu and Kashmir got a lot better. It is important to understand why Ranbir Singh was so submissive to the British. It's possible that Ranbir Singh's actions were influenced not only by the political environment of the time, but also by his desire to keep his power and status for himself. It's possible that Ranbir Singh's conviction in the value of working with the British was given a boost by the recognition that they bestowed upon him from the British Empire. It is possible that he saw it as a way to secure his position and maintain his power in a political landscape that is rapidly changing. Furthermore, Ranbir Singh may have also believed that aligning with the British would bring economic benefits to his kingdom and people. He may have seen it as a way to modernize and develop his region, which would ultimately benefit him as a ruler.¹⁴¹

From their letters to each other, it seems that the political department had been patiently waiting for Ranbir Singh's death for a long time so that they could have more power over the state. They thought it would be easier to make this change when a new king or queen was in charge. So, in 1884, Lord Ripon wrote a letter to the Secretary of State in which he said that the British 'did

¹⁴⁰ Lawrence, *The Valley of Kashmir*, p.202.

¹⁴¹ F.M Hassnain., *British Policy Towards Kashmir*, p.30.

not use the procedure before because they thought that a good chance would come up when a new succession took place.¹⁴² This suggests that the British were actively involved in manipulating the succession process in order to gain more power and control over the state and were willing to wait for the right opportunity to present itself. It also highlights the extent to which colonial powers were willing to interfere in the affairs of other nations for their own gain. The Officer on Special Duty wrote to the Indian Government about the state of the administration in Kashmir and the necessary steps to be taken at the death of the Maharaja. Reforms and putting Maharaja Pratap Singh on the gaddi were two of the steps that had to be taken. The Indian Government responded positively to the officer on special duty's letter. Taking calculated steps in anticipation of the death of the Maharaja, the officer on special duty took these steps. The reforms implemented by the Indian government helped stabilize the administration in Kashmir. The Officer on Special Duty's foresight and actions played a crucial role in ensuring a smooth transition of power after the Maharaja's death.¹⁴³

In 1885, Pratap Singh ascended the throne. When Pratap Singh was offered the position of chief, it came with the stipulation that he appoint a political figure who resides in Kashmir. The status of the officer on special duty would be elevated to that of the resident political officer in the state. Pratap Singh agreed to the stipulation and appointed a resident political officer, which marked the beginning of the direct involvement of British India in the state's affairs. This move would eventually lead to the erosion of the state's autonomy and its eventual accession to India in 1947.¹⁴⁴ Sir Oliver St. John, the officer on special duty, was the one to break the news to the new

¹⁴² The Secretary of State for India to the Government of India, dated May 23, 1884'. Reproduced in M. K. Tengetal, *Kashmir Constitutional History and Documents*, (New Delhi: Shoba Publishers, 1977).

¹⁴³ Christopher Snedden, *Understanding Kashmir and Kashmiris*, (London: Sterling Publication), p. 89.

¹⁴⁴ Robert A. Huttenback, *Kashmir and the British Raj 1847-1947*, (Karachi: Sang e Mall Publishers, 2004), p. 60

Maharaja that the government of India had determined that the current state of affairs in the state was unsatisfactory and had made the decision to elevate the status of the officer on special duty to that of the resident political officer in the state. This decision marked the beginning of direct British intervention in the internal affairs of the state, which would ultimately lead to the erosion of its autonomy and independence. Despite this, Pratap Singh continued to rule with relative stability and prosperity until his death in 1925.¹⁴⁵

The newly appointed Maharaja made a number of important policy changes shortly after ascended on the throne, however, the British were unimpressed with these moves, and they made every effort to reduce his sway over the state. His efforts were thwarted, obstructed, and even opposed, which ultimately resulted in the reforms that he had initiated becoming ineffective and being scrapped altogether. The Maharaja's attempts to modernize and reform the state was met with resistance from the British, who wanted to maintain their control over the region. Despite his best efforts, he was unable to overcome their opposition and his reforms were ultimately unsuccessful. The Resident, Mr. T.C. Plowden, even resorted to defaming the Maharaja and accusing him of poor administration on an ongoing basis. His position was taken over by Colonel R. Perry Nisbat, who was a member of the opposition movement to the Maharaja. The opposition movement to the Maharaja gained momentum, and they started to criticize his policies and administration openly. The Maharaja's attempts to regain control were unsuccessful, and he eventually had to accept the British dominance over his state.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁵ A.N. Sapru, *The Building of the Jammu and Kashmir State Being the Achievement of Maharaja Gulab Singh*, Monograph No 12, Punjab Government Records, 1931, p.62, mention in Christopher Snedden, *Understanding Kashmir and Kashmiri*, p 117-19.

¹⁴⁶ F.M Hassnain., *British Policy Towards Kashmir*, p.39.

Chapter – III
Agrarian System and Reform Policies in Jammu under the Dogra's
(1846–1947)

The fact that the British ruled Jammu and Kashmir and put the Dogra's in charge caused these cracks and changes. This also describes how colonial intervention in the princely Jammu and Kashmir state under the Dogra's led to discord and new ways of speaking among the region's farmers. The main focus of the discussion is on the Jammu region, but the other regions of the state are also brought up when information or materials from those regions are needed. How and when the Dogra rulers collected land taxes, as well as the proposed settlement. The policies of the British government are dissected in this chapter. There has been speculation that the British administrators' settlement guidelines served as the inspiration for the creation of policies governing lease terms, occupancy rights, and organized ways of calculating and collecting revenue. Efforts were made to bring previously uncultivated land under cultivation, and cultivators were granted occupancy rights in exchange for payment of the required taxes. Apart from the Settlement assessments the history of canal irrigation is also discussed at the end.

During the British Raj, the Dogra and Sikh rulers had distributed these jagirs. The British intervention policies established new power structures, which left the pre-existing exploitative conditions in place. These new power structures were established through land settlements and other administrative decisions. The generation of revenue was the primary objective of the colonial administration, and the interventions that were made in state administration as well as the system of tax assessment and collection were designed to ensure that this objective was met. This section starts off with an examination of the method of revenue collection exercised by the Dogra rulers, then moves on to a description of the land revenue practices of earlier times, and finally concludes

with an analysis of the settlement policies of the British and the impact those policies have had on society in general.

People in the state of Jammu and Kashmir have lived through times when they were cut off from both the east and west. This was because of the geographic and strategic location as well as the way the rulers of both the east and west acted politically. This made the state's development very slow until the end of the 19th century. Since the time immemorial the State has witnessed the different ruling dynasties and rulers who had eventually reshaped and redefined the history of the region both strategically and politically. The economy of the state was largely based on agriculture, which contributed almost 95% of the States revenue. Before the commencement of the Dogra rule, the people of Jammu and Kashmir had lived under many different rulers and dynasties. The region's history is rich and complex, with influences from Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam. The arrival of the Dogra's in the 19th century marked a significant turning point in the region's political and cultural landscape. In addition, they had gone through many different stages of constructing a state and accumulating wealth. Throughout the centuries, the practice of rewarding certain families with land grants in exchange for their continued allegiance and support was maintained.¹⁴⁷ The Dogra's also introduced new administrative systems and infrastructure, including roads, schools, and hospitals. Today, the region remains a unique blend of diverse cultures and traditions. The rulers accumulated wealth by imposing a variety of taxes on the general public and amassing revenue from cultivators through the sale of land. For the early mediaeval period, there is not much information available regarding the total amount of revenue collected from land sales. During the

¹⁴⁷ M.S. Khan, *The History of Jammu and Kashmir: 1885–1925*, (Kashmir: Gulshan Publishers, 2002), p. 64.

reign of the Mughals in Kashmir, a distinct pattern of land taxes, which are also referred to as *nasaq*, appears to have developed.¹⁴⁸

All the ruling dynasties had initiated some sort of reforms in agriculture in order to cater the need of States income at large.¹⁴⁹ The establishment of Mughal rule in Kashmir was an important event because it resulted in significant shifts in the economic relationships that existed between the various subgroups that comprised the agricultural community. In addition to this, they introduced a new method of revenue collection that was both more effective and less predatory than the one that had been in place previously. The Mughal rulers made significant adjustments to the way that land in Kashmir was taxed.¹⁵⁰ The implementation of these reforms resulted in an expansion of Kashmir's economy as well as an improvement in the general standard of living enjoyed by the region's people. In 1589, Emperor Akbar sent out a group of five people to figure out 'the pattern of land revenue assessment and the nature and amount of collection.'¹⁵¹ This was done in an effort to preserve the state's economic and political equilibrium. Under Mughal rule, there were two types of land revenue known as *Khiraj: Mukassimah Khiraj* (a share of actual produce paid by cultivators) and *Wazifa Khiraj* (fixed money rate paid once a year, determined by the land measurement and average produce). *Khiraj* was a significant source of revenue for the Mughal Empire, and it was collected by officials known as *Amils* who were responsible for assessing and collecting taxes from the cultivators.¹⁵²

¹⁴⁸ Various forms of *nasaq* prevailed in Berar, Bengal and Kashmir. See more details: Irfan Habib, *The Agrarian System of Mughal India, 1556–1707*, (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 258.

¹⁴⁹ Hangloo, R.L, *The Agrarian System of Kashmir (1846-1889)*, (New Delhi: Commonwealth Publishers, 1995, pp., 4-6.

¹⁵⁰ Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari* (Persian) English tr. by Colonel H. S. Jarret, 3 Vols. Vol. I, (London: Sterling Publishers, 1978.), p., 347.

¹⁵¹ Irfan Habib, *The Agrarian System of Mughal India, 1556–1707*, p. 123.

¹⁵² Frederic Drew, *The Jammoo and Kashmir Territories*, (New Delhi: Light life Publishers, 1971), pp, 4-5.

In Jammu region the areas which came under Mughals, the cash revenue assessed by the collectors which remained in force, under Sikh rule till the introduction of land settlement and propriety rights by the Dogra rulers. In the areas like Rajori, Noushera where the local Jaral and Chib rajas acted as feudatories under Mughals.¹⁵³

Because of the geographical connectedness with Punjab, Jammu witnessed some kind of similar agrarian pattern to that of Punjab during Sikh rule. In the areas like, Reasi, Jammu, Rajori local feudatories who pay homage to Sikh rule of Punjab send regular taxes and tributes to the Maharaja of Punjab for long period. But this system was not uniform across the Jammu region. The areas like Kishtwar, Bhaderwah, Basholi, where the Sikh authority was not felt, the local chieftains not adopted any regular assessment pattern of revenue collection.¹⁵⁴

As a result, a comprehensive report was written about the characteristics of land, including its classification, production, and appropriation. The report also included recommendations for improvements in the revenue system, such as the introduction of a uniform system of measurement and the appointment of qualified officials to oversee revenue collection. This report served as a valuable resource for future administrations in maintaining a stable economy. According to Hangloo's argument, 'the new estimation of land and its income, performed out by these functionaries, made it extremely hard for the corrupt government officials to continue their practice of robbing both the state and the peasants of their due shares.'¹⁵⁵ This assessment was carried out by the officials who were responsible for carrying out the new assessment of land and its revenues. *Patwari, Tahsildar, Amil, Fotedar, Munsif, Qanungo, Chaudhri*, and several other positions were invented by the Mughals in order to completely reorganize the revenue administration *Patwari*,

¹⁵³ M. Fazli, Manzoor, *Cultural Glimpses of Kashmir*, (Srinagar: Gulshan Publ. 2002), p. 67.

¹⁵⁴ *Assessment Report of Jammu and Kashmir*, 1891, Jammu and Kashmir, State Archives Jammu, p.19.

¹⁵⁵ R.L. Hangloo, *The State in Medieval Kashmir*, p. 112.

Tahsildar, Amil, Fotedar, Munsif, and Dewan were among the other positions invented by the Mughals.¹⁵⁶ The creation of various positions by the Mughals helped in the complete reorganization of the revenue administration. These officials were responsible for carrying out the new assessment of land and its revenues which made it difficult for corrupt government officials to continue their malpractices.

The Mughal rule was responsible for a number of social and cultural shifts in Kashmir. These shifts occurred because the new rulers had an effect on the local traditions and customs. However, before the Mughal rule could accomplish its political and economic goals, the centre began to show signs of decay. As a consequence of this, their control over the valley started to weaken, and in the year 1753, the rulers of Afghanistan eventually took control of the valley. Practices associated with agriculture, villages, and production contributed to the revenue that was generated. Some examples of these activities include wood carving, weaving woollen cloth, papier mache, basket making, silver and copper work, making carpets and shawls, and the production of leather and furs. These activities were not only a source of income but also helped to sustain the local economy and preserve traditional skills and crafts.¹⁵⁷ They were often passed down from generation to generation and played an important role in the cultural identity of the community. The majority of these businesses were located in Srinagar and the surrounding areas. In particular, the export of shawls and carpets was a significant source of revenue for the rulers, who collected taxes on all of these economic activities as well as on the import and export of a wide variety of commodities. The shawls and carpets produced in Srinagar were highly sought after by wealthy individuals and royalty throughout the world, leading to a thriving export industry.¹⁵⁸ However, with the decline

¹⁵⁶ R.L. Hangloo, *The State in Medieval Kashmir*, p. 115.

¹⁵⁷ P.N.K. Bamzai, *Socio-Economic History of Kashmir* (1846–1925), (New Delhi: Metropolitan, 1988), p. 124.

¹⁵⁸ Chitralekha Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging – Islam, Regional Identity, and the Making of Kashmir*, (Delhi: Permanent Black, 2003.)

of traditional crafts and the rise of modern industries, many of these businesses have struggled to survive in recent years. However, a significant portion of the revenue came from land taxes, which could be paid in either cash or kind. As a result, it was essential to promote thriving and varied agricultural operations, such as the cultivation of grains and fruits.

Dogra Rule (1846-1947)

Because of its mountainous and undulating terrain, as well as the microlevel variations in climate, precipitation, and soils, the state of Jammu and Kashmir has a greater variability in its farming system, crop variations, and crop diversification. This is due to the fact that the state is home to a wide range of cropping options. The diverse range of crops grown in Jammu and Kashmir includes rice, maize, wheat, pulses, oilseeds, fruits, and vegetables. The state's agriculture sector also contributes significantly to its economy and provides employment opportunities for a large number of people. The Jammu plain is rich in a variety of different crops, including wheat, maize, pulses, fodder, and oil seeds. Wheat, which serves as the primary source of nutrition in the Jammu region, is cultivated on 21% of the total agricultural land in the state.¹⁵⁹ On the other hand, the Valley of Kashmir is famous for the cultivation of saffron, paddy, maize, and orchards, in addition to paddy and maize. Rice produced the highest yield per acre in the Kashmir valley compared to any other crop grown in the valley at the time. In comparison, the same area planted with 27 sheaves of wheat produced only two *Kharwars* of *shali* (unhusked rice) per acre, but the same area planted with 22–24 sheaves of *shali* produced 15 *Kharwars* of *shali* per acre. Rice was the most important crop among food grains during the Sikh period and continued to be the most

¹⁵⁹ N.S. Gupta and Amarjit Singh, *Agricultural Development states in India, Vol.1: Jammu and Kashmir*, (New Delhi: Seema Publications, 1979), pp. 172-173.

valuable crop during the early Dogra period as well.¹⁶⁰ As a result, rice accounted for three-fourths of the cultivated area during that time. As a result, during the Dogra period, the predominant focus of the state's cropping pattern was on producing food for subsistence. This focus on rice production continued even after the Dogra period, with the government implementing policies to increase rice cultivation and improve yields. Today, rice remains a staple crop in the Kashmir valley and is an important part of the local economy.¹⁶¹

The reign of Maharaja Gulab Singh makes significant change in the political history of Jammu and Kashmir. The region became a single political entity under the aegis of Dogra who were the local rulers of Jammu. The Dogra's makes the fundamental difference to their predecessors as they started their rule by making Jammu and Kashmir administrative centers. During the reign of Gulab Singh, the process of land assessment in kind was similar to that of Sikh rule, but some concessions were made for the large area lying waste, and newly broken tracts of land which the State tries to reclaim. In the year 1849, the land was measured, and a cash for land revenue was established. In the year 1853, there was a loosening of the restrictions placed on the valuation of uncultivated lands that had only recently been brought under cultivation.¹⁶² These changes in land measurement and revenue collection had significant impacts on the economy and settlement patterns of the region. The loosening of restrictions on uncultivated lands likely encouraged further expansion and development of agricultural lands. The percentage of the produce that would go to the state was decided upon and set at 50%. However, none of the

¹⁶⁰ Charles Ellison Bates, *A Gazetteer of Kashmir and the adjacent Districts of Kishtwar, Badrawah, Jammu, Naoshera, Punch, and the Valley of Kishenganga* (Calcutta. -Office of the superintendent of Government Printing, 1873; New Delhi: Light and Life, 1980), p.55.

¹⁶¹ R.L. Hangloo, *Agrarian System of Kashmir*, p., 34.

¹⁶² A. Wingate, p., 9.

aforementioned reforms were successful in winning over the Maharaja, and as a result, they were all scrapped.

Because land was the state's main source of income, Maharaja Ranbir Singh was very interested in agrarian reforms and the reorganization of the land revenue administration. He started some reforms, which changed over the course of his rule, and he tried to make sure that land taxes were always the same amount. Maharaja Ranbir Singh's efforts towards agrarian reforms and revenue administration were aimed at ensuring stability and consistency in the state's income. His commitment to these reforms remained steadfast throughout his reign, and he made significant progress towards achieving his goals. The *Kardars* (land agent in the state) planned for annual cultivation of the land. The *Kardar* further divided his charge and tries to maximize revenue for the administration. This system does not last long and in 1860 it was discontinued.¹⁶³ In 1869, the state adopted a new system called the *Chakladari* system, in which a cluster of villages was allotted to the *Chakladars*. As “*amani*” (on trust) was the method by which the state collected its share from the villagers in this regard, these *Chakladars* were actually some sort of speculative contractor who did not anticipate large profits from the land. In 1880, new assessment system was introduced known as “cash assessment”. This system was called *Assamiwar Khewat*, and it was once again a way to figure out how much revenue someone had. This estimation was made-up to be grounded on the average of the three preceding years' collections in each village.¹⁶⁴

In the year 1882, a method known as the *Izadboli* system was first implemented with the purpose of auctioning off villages to whoever had the highest bid. The potential buyers showed very little interest in learning about the cultivator's financial capabilities to make revenue

¹⁶³ Frederic Drew, *The Jammoo and Kashmir Territories*, p., 21.

¹⁶⁴ W. Lawrence, *Provincial Gazetteers of Kashmir and Jammu*, (New Delhi, reprint, 1985), pp., 67-71.

payments. The method used to assess the condition of the cultivated lands was called *nazardid*, which literally translates to ‘eye-survey.’ Following this, the portion of the government allotment was awarded to the Pandit contractor with the highest bid.¹⁶⁵ But the most significant flaw in the system was the fact that most of these bidders left the village as soon as they had extracted the maximum amount of money from the locals without paying the government even a single rupee if they anticipated that the goods they had purchased would not be of high quality.

Following the reign of the Mughals, subsequent rulers such as the Afghans, Sikhs, and Dogra’s all continued, with some minor modifications, the practice of land grants and the previous method of generating revenue. These land grants were given to nobles and officials in exchange for their loyalty and service to the ruling power. However, this system eventually led to the concentration of wealth and power in the hands of a few elites, exacerbating social and economic inequalities. From the start to the end of the Dogra Rule, there were a number of assessments and settlements in the revenue system and agrarian structure. The main goal of these seemed to be to make it easier to take money from agriculture and to get as much money as possible from land.

During the time of the Sikhs and the early days of Dogra rule, the *Kankut* (*Kankut* means appraisalment of the standing crop) decided how much money would be made. During the time of Maharaja Gulab Singh, this system was replaced by *Batai*, which was used in northern India. In this system, the government has taken a certain amount of the Kharif’s produce.¹⁶⁶ The *Batai* system was a form of revenue collection where the government took a fixed percentage of the crop produce as tax, regardless of the amount harvested. This system was widely used in northern India during the time of Maharaja Gulab Singh. The only difference between this system and the one

¹⁶⁵ W. Lawrence, *Provincial Gazetteers of Kashmir and Jammu*, p., 405.

¹⁶⁶ R.L. Hangloo, *Agrarian System in Kashmir*, p., 27.

used in Northern India was that in Jammu and Kashmir State, the state's share was estimated when the grain was still in sheaves instead of after it had been threshed.¹⁶⁷ *Jagirs* were granted by the Dogra rulers to influential and obedient families in exchange for services rendered to the state, to religious trusts and institutions, and for the fulfilment of political obligations. These land grants were often accompanied by administrative and judicial powers, making the *jagirdars* (land grant holders) powerful figures in their respective regions. However, the system of jagirs was gradually abolished during the British Raj as part of their land revenue policies.¹⁶⁸

The official documents make it clear that the revenue administration was asked to set a minimum 20-year period for the improvement and development of certain tracts in the state, regardless of when they were first settled. Thus, Maharaja Pratap Singh made it clear in an order that no term less than 10 years would be considered for Kashmir and 20 years would be held for Jammu.¹⁶⁹ This was deemed crucial because people were being harassed and agricultural modifications were being discouraged due to the short duration of settlements. Reasi, the settlement officer, agreed that the local conditions and the health of the people would have a significant impact on how long the settlement would last. He mentioned that all of Jammu province had been populated (barring a few tehsils). In populated tehsils, the cultivation margin had not been particularly high.¹⁷⁰

Despite the state's dire need to reform its land revenue system, no action was taken to enhance the farmers' ability to grow food or their quality of life off the land. The state government didn't

¹⁶⁷ Mushtaq Ahmad Kaw, *The Agrarian System of Kashmir, 1586-1819*, (Srinagar: Aiman Publications, 2001), p., 23.

¹⁶⁸ Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging*, pp. 70-71.

¹⁶⁹ Mohammad, Khushi, *Report on Kind revenue in Tehsil Ladakh*, (Srinagar: Kashmir Central Jail Press, Srinagar, 1925), pp.,88-89.

¹⁷⁰ Andrew Wingate, "*Preliminary Report of Settlement Operations in Kashmir and Jammu, Preliminary Report of Settlement Operations in Jammu and Kashmir State*", (London: A.H.M Stationary Office, 1888), pp. 526-27.

do anything to encourage the farmers to grow more than what they needed to live. The Governor and the Diwan-i-Mal of the valley both confirmed that by the end of 1883, more than 2,780,000 Ghumaon had settled on land in 582 villages across Kashmir. And in Jammu, Akhnoor, Reasi, Rajori, and Mirpur, the assessment reports were started in the same year, but expanding beyond the initial 54 villages was challenging due to differences in revenue and agrarian functions. However, subsequent land settlement operations were carried out in the state, in part because of the British influence on the state's administration and in part because of the encouragement provided by neighboring states such as Punjab.¹⁷¹

British Intervention and the New land Settlements

The British government in India tried to get involved in the internal affairs of the state of Jammu and Kashmir by attempting to take control its administrative affairs. Nevertheless, the land, which held the most significance in their policy, needed modification. The British government's involvement in Jammu and Kashmir was mainly driven by their strategic interests in the region, particularly the protection of their trade routes, and to check the Russian threat. The British officials who travelled to the state presented a very disheartening picture of the plight of the local population in both their notes and their works during their time there. The British officials also reported on the poor economic conditions of the state, which they attributed to the oppressive taxation policies of the ruling Maharaja. This information was used by the British government to justify their attempts to intervene in the affairs of Jammu and Kashmir. As a result, it became abundantly clear that the government of the United Kingdom ought to investigate the situation. As a direct consequence of this, the state government was compelled to secure the services of British

¹⁷¹ A. Wingate, PRSOKJ, p., 39.

officials in order to enhance the state's agricultural conditions. The officials were tasked with developing and implementing policies that would improve the agricultural sector and the lives of the people in the state. This move proved to be a turning point in the history of the state, as it led to significant improvements in agriculture and the overall standard of living. The government's decision to bring in British officials was a wise one, as they brought with them a wealth of knowledge and experience that proved invaluable in the development of the state's agricultural sector. Thanks to their efforts, the state was able to increase its crop yields and improve the quality of its produce, which in turn led to increased economic growth and prosperity for its citizens.

Mr. Andrew Wingate was appointed as the Settlement Commissioner in 1887 so that he could provide recommendations after conducting a survey of the land. In his role as the state's first Settlement Commissioner, he offered an alternative to the state's traditional land distribution system, describing it as archaic. Wingate's alternative was to use a survey-based system that would ensure fair distribution of land to settlers, which he believed would promote development and growth in the state. His recommendations were eventually implemented, leading to significant changes in land distribution and settlement patterns.¹⁷²

The system that is currently in place is not adequate to generate extra revenue. It had resulted in the creation of a nomadic peasantry that had no interest in cultivating the land. As a result, the government needs to implement new policies and strategies to encourage agricultural productivity and provide incentives for farmers to stay in one place and invest in their land. This could potentially lead to increased revenue generation and a more stable rural population. Therefore, in

¹⁷² Andrew Wingate became first settlement officer of the State. In the year 1887, Maharaja Pratap Singh made him a revenue officer in spite of his extensive training and experience. His report was the first comprehensive and reliable survey of the state, and it was based on his research into the financial structures and working conditions of the state's cultivators. For more details, A. Wingate, PRSOKJ.

order to replenish revenue and to convert an ungrateful and wasteful collection.¹⁷³ In order to develop the peasantry into a happy and prosperous community, it was necessary for the peasants to be granted an interest in the land that they farmed. Wingate argued that in order to accomplish this goal, it was necessary to set the state demand at a reasonable amount for a period of ten years and to establish a system of accounts that would limit the Tehsildars' powers to those related to revenue collection.¹⁷⁴ Wingate recommended a provision in the settlement rules that would declare the state to be the estate's ultimate proprietor while also granting the right of occupancy to anyone who was listed as an occupant at the time the land was settled in *Jamabandi* (assessment).¹⁷⁵ This recommendation was aimed at ensuring that the state had ultimate control over the land while also protecting the rights of the current occupants. It was a way to balance the interests of both parties and prevent any future disputes over land ownership. It is critical to keep in mind that Wingate's arguments were constructed with the intention of bolstering the authority of the state by laying the foundation for a peasantry that was willing to pay land revenue and willing to defend their lands against encroachments. Furthermore, Wingate's recommendation was a crucial step towards establishing a stable system of land tenure in Jammu and Kashmir, which would promote agricultural development and economic growth. It was also an attempt to create a legal framework that would facilitate the transfer of land ownership from the state to private individuals in the future.

He was in charge of making the first villages in the tehsils of Lal and Pakh, and he thought that the peasants were bound by the chains of extreme poverty and slavery. To alleviate their suffering, he implemented various agricultural reforms and introduced new farming techniques. His efforts

¹⁷³ A. Wingate, PRSOKJ, p., 59.

¹⁷⁴ A. Wingate, PRSOKJ, p., 66.

¹⁷⁵ A. Wingate, PRSOKJ, p., 76.

resulted in increased crop yields and improved living conditions for the villagers. In the preliminary report that he handed over to the government of Maharaja Pratap Singh in 1888, he made some very helpful recommendations regarding the improvement of agrarian conditions as well as the settlement of revenue issues. In the report, he made the suggestion that the state ought to be acknowledged as the owner of the land, but that the individuals who were entered as ‘occupants in the settlement *Jamabandi*’ ought to be granted occupancy rights.¹⁷⁶ His recommendations were well-received by the government and were later implemented, leading to a significant improvement in the overall agricultural output of the region. As a result of his efforts, he became known as a pioneer in the field of agriculture and his methods were widely adopted by other regions as well.

In 1890, Walter Lawrence succeeded Wingate as Settlement Commissioner and continued the practices begun by his predecessor. During the course of his work, he was assisted by Lala Nar Singh Das, Saiyed Alam Shah, and H. L. Revelt, all of whom were natives of the Indian state of Punjab. Because of the laudable work he accomplished in Kashmir, he is still held in high esteem throughout the region. By travelling to each and every village in the state’s several tehsils, he and his assistants were able to successfully complete the settlement work that was assigned to them.¹⁷⁷ Anyone who agreed to cover the fixed assessment on the domains listed in his or her name at the time of estimation or when the assessments were distributed was granted permanent hereditary

¹⁷⁶ *Note of Assessment Report of the Lal, Phak Tehsil*, 1889, Jammu and Kashmir State Archives Repository Jammu.

¹⁷⁷ ‘When I went to Kashmir for the first time in 1889, I found that the people there were sad, desperate, and suspicious. They had been led to believe, over the course of many years, that they were slaves who possessed no rights and a number of impairments. This cult was known as the *Zulumparast*, which translates to “worshippers of tyranny,” and they were given access to every facility. The people had been put down, and the system of government had taken away all of their hearts. But I was determined to change this story, so I started working to teach the local people about their rights and give them the tools they needed to stand up to oppression. Over time, I saw their minds change as they started to believe in themselves and their abilities. This made them a more hopeful and optimistic group of people. more details see, W. Lawrence, Kashmir, pp., 2-3.

occupancy rights under the Lawrence Settlement.¹⁷⁸ The tenant would be safe as long as the assessment was paid. This system of permanent hereditary occupancy rights brought stability to the region and encouraged the tenants to invest in their land, leading to an increase in agricultural productivity and overall economic growth. However, it also perpetuated inequalities as only those who could afford to pay the fixed assessment were granted these rights, leaving many poor tenants vulnerable to eviction. The right to occupy the property, however, could not be sold or mortgaged. He went into detail about how allowing farmers to alienate their land would lead to the rise of a new class of middlemen who would use their newfound power to acquire farmland for themselves and wealthy city dwellers. His settlement only included productive farmland occupied by *Assamis* (tenants with permanent hereditary occupancy rights), while unproductive farmland and fallow fields were recorded as *Khalisa* (state land).¹⁷⁹ Ten percent of the unused land, however, was set aside for common village purposes like grazing. In addition, the revenue assessment was set in stone for a full decade, and it could be paid in full or in part with goods and services from the village. The settlement also ensured that the tenants had the right to sell their produce in any market they chose, and not just to the middlemen appointed by the government. This helped to break the monopoly of the middlemen and gave more power to the farmers.

The Lawrence settlement introduced several significant reforms to Jammu and Kashmir's agricultural practices, which in turn provided the locals with a sense of safety for the first time in their history. Along the same lines as his predecessor,

I. Lawrence was a staunch advocate for granting hereditary occupancy rights to all individuals on land at the time of assessment or when assessment was distributed. On the other hand, he did

¹⁷⁸ W.R. Lawrence., *The Kashmir Gazetteer*, Vol. I. Shubhi Publication Delhi, 1999, pp., 17-18.

¹⁷⁹ W.R. Lawrence., *The Kashmir Gazetteer*, Vol. I. Shubhi Publication Delhi, 1999, p., 34.

not imply in any way that the right granted included the ability to sell or mortgage the property. The reason for this was that if such a right were given to the cultivator, who was not completely familiar with the value of land, he could be cheated by officials and individuals who were grabbing land illegally if it were given to him. This reform was a significant step towards improving the economic condition of the locals, as it gave them a sense of security and stability in their land ownership. However, this right was limited to occupancy and did not include the right to sell or mortgage the property, which prevented exploitation of the cultivators by dishonest officials and individuals.¹⁸⁰

II. Because Lawrence did not want to restrict the actions of the state for an indefinitely long period of time, the state demand was established for a period of ten years; after that period of time, the size of the state's portion was open for negotiation. This approach ensured that the state could benefit from the increased revenue generated by the cultivators, while also allowing for flexibility in case of changes in the economic or political climate. Additionally, this system incentivized the cultivators to improve their land and increase productivity, as they would directly benefit from any increase in revenue.¹⁸¹

III. Despite the fact that Lawrence was in favour of a cash-only assessment, the officials' opposition resulted in the land revenue being fixed in a manner that included both cash and in-kind contributions. Furthermore, the miscellaneous taxes that were retrieved from the peasantry independently on walnut trees, forests, and livestock were also included in land revenue, with the exception of the pony and the sheep. These taxes were collected on walnut trees, forests, and livestock. This system of taxation had a significant impact on the rural economy, as it resulted in

¹⁸⁰ *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, vol. xv, New Delhi, 1908, See also, W. Lawrence, Kashmir, p., 405.

¹⁸¹ W. Lawrence, *Kashmir*, p., 433.

a decrease in the number of livestock and trees. Additionally, it led to an increase in the cultivation of crops that were more profitable, such as opium.¹⁸²

IV. Because of the region's diverse topography, climate, and irrigation practices, among other factors, it was impossible to levy a single tax rate across the entire state of Jammu. Lawrence subdivided the valley into a number of different assessment circles, keeping in mind all of these different factors. In each circle, estimates of the average yield were obtained by conducting crop-cutting experiments for a variety of crops. Then, gross estimates for each circle were worked out based on the prices that were currently in effect. Rates for each circle were worked out.¹⁸³

V. The intermediary class was eliminated, and farmers were required to make payments directly to the state. Additionally, the forces known as *Nizamat Paltan*, which had been responsible for acquiring the state's portion of the harvest, were disbanded.¹⁸⁴

In the annals of Jammu and Kashmir's agricultural past, this land revenue settlements stand out as a significant turning point. Not only did it foster a sense of community among the farmers, but it also freed them from the serfdom to which they had been subjected prior to the settlement. A stable peasantry that contributed to the government's revenue was able to emerge in Kashmir within a few years of the settlement.

The establishment of the Jagir committee in the 1890s, which was tasked with defining the privileges of *Jagirdars* and their relationships with cultivators, was another significant step forward in the evolution of the agrarian system. In the years 1896 and 1897, Captain J. L. Kaye, who was serving as settlement commissioner of Jammu, at the time, began the process of settling

¹⁸² W. Lawrence, *Kashmir*, p., 436.

¹⁸³ W. Lawrence, *Kashmir*, p., 437.

¹⁸⁴ W. Lawrence, *Kashmir*, p., 438.

disputes in *Jagirs* in an effort to correct the flaws that had become ingrained in the state's *Jagirdari* system.¹⁸⁵ In his report, the Settlement Officer suggested the active interference of the state in Jagir holdings, as well as specifying the status of the Jagirdar and tenants on these holdings. This was done in conjunction with the proposal of the active interference of the state. As a consequence of this, land deeds known as *Sanads* (land deed) were issued for each jagir. These *Sanads* detailed the exact area and value of the jagir, as well as the term and the terms and conditions under which the grant had been made. According to the findings of the report, *jagirdars* were not given any proprietary rights and were considered to be nothing more than assignees of revenue. The people who lived on *Jagir* land were just as much a part of the *Darbar* and had the same right to protection as any of the other people who were subject to it. The report argued that there was no way that the Jagirdar could be the tenant; however, in the eyes of the *Darbar*, the Jagirdar only serves as the collector or assignee of revenue. In addition, the report argued that just as the *Darbar* could not be its own tenants in *Khalisa* villages, the *jagirdar* also could not claim occupancy rights that were the peasant's due to the fact that they were not the rightful owner of the land. According to the findings of this report, the Jagirdar did not have the authority to collect cesses or to demand that the villagers pay for items of personal expenditure that were purely for the *Jagirdar's* own use. It was also argued that the Jagirdar had no legal claim to the wastelands that they had included in their initial grant throughout the years. This was one of the arguments.¹⁸⁶

A modification was made to the settlement in 1898, and it was finally finalized in 1905 with some difficulty. This occurred near the end of the term of the agreement. The order that had previously been established was not significantly altered by the revision in any way. The

¹⁸⁵ Chitralekha Zutshi, *British Intervention in a Princely State: The case study of Jammu and Kashmir in the Late Nineteenth century and Early Twentieth Countries*. Presented at the Eighteenth Conference on Modern South Asian Studies Penal; History of the Indian Princely State, p.8.

¹⁸⁶ Chitralekha Zutshi, *British Intervention in a Princely State*, p.,9.

modification was likely made to address some issues that had arisen during the implementation of the settlement.¹⁸⁷ Despite the difficulties faced during the finalization process, the settlement remained largely unchanged and continued to govern the affected parties for many years to come. It would then be possible to know the yield of each field as well as the monetary value of the yield with a great deal more precision, and this could be done because more reliable statistics are now available. Because of this, the percentage of this monetary value that the state government was required to take was finally determined. In formal terms, the state took half of the yield, excluding the benefits that were provided to local officials. This settlement was a significant milestone in the history of agriculture in the region, as it brought much-needed stability to the industry. It also allowed for greater transparency and accountability in the distribution of profits, which helped to reduce tensions between different stakeholders. However, at this point in time, it was decided to take only thirty percent of the total profit, which would be paid out in cash. As a result of this, every occupant received a book that contained information about the land he owned, including its size and the rate that he was required to pay.¹⁸⁸ The new areas of land that were put into use for agricultural purposes during the time period covered by this settlement were evaluated and recorded. Because of this, the amount of money brought in increased from 13.4 lakhs to 38.91 lakhs in 1905 and then to 53.18 lakhs in 1925–1926.¹⁸⁹ This significant increase in revenue was a result of the settlement's successful implementation of new agricultural techniques and improved irrigation systems. These developments allowed for greater crop yields and increased profits for the settlement. The implementation of this methodical settlement, the foundations of which were laid by Mr. Wingate and Lawrence, was responsible for the phenomenal increase in revenue, which

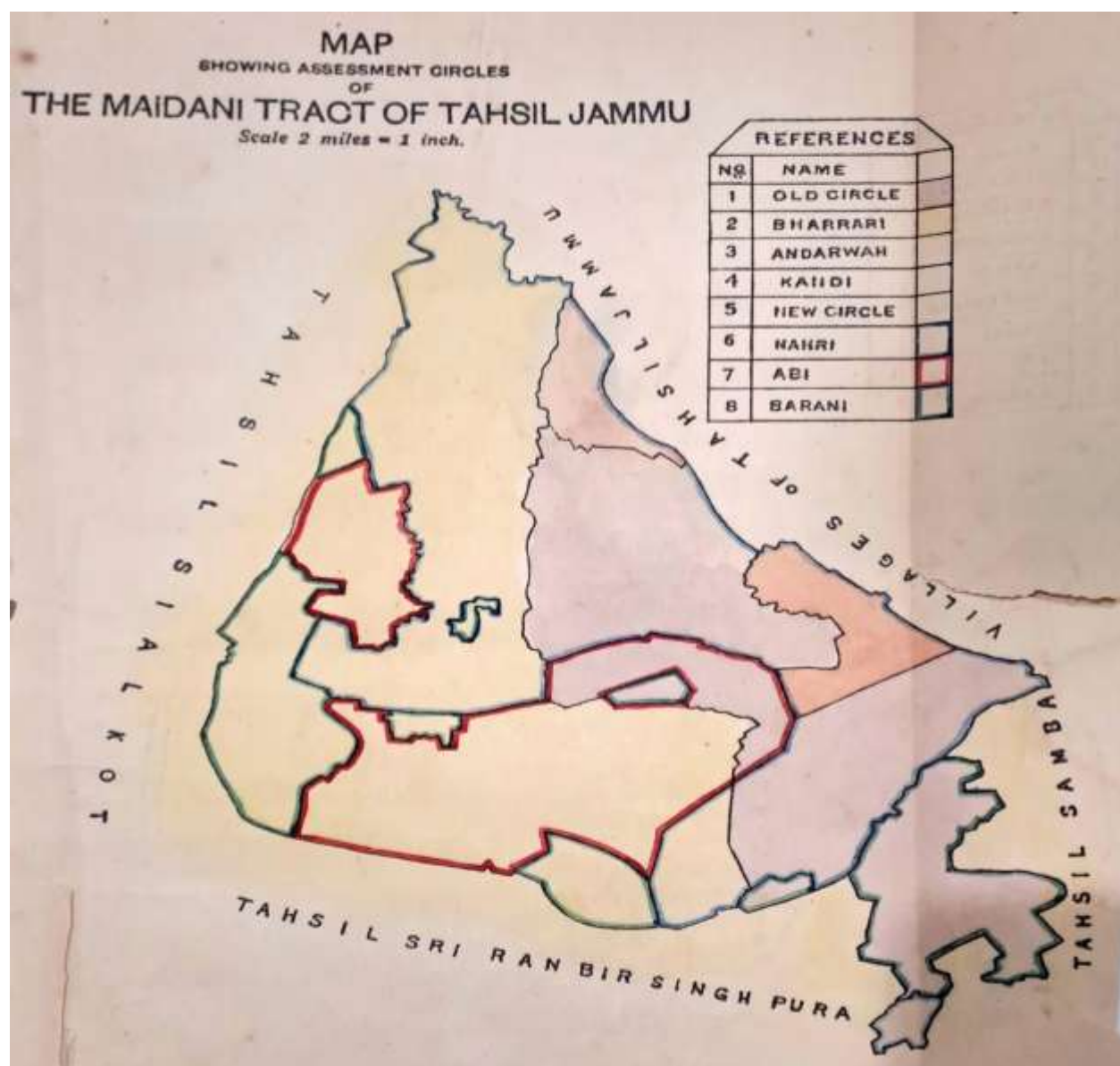
¹⁸⁷ Bhawani Dass, *Note on Review of assessment Report of Six (6) tehsils of Kashmir Valley*, 1906, pp.8-9.

¹⁸⁸ F. Younghusband, *Kashmir*, (Edinburg: Edinburg Publishers, 1909), p., 109.

¹⁸⁹ F. Younghusband, *Kashmir*, p., 113.

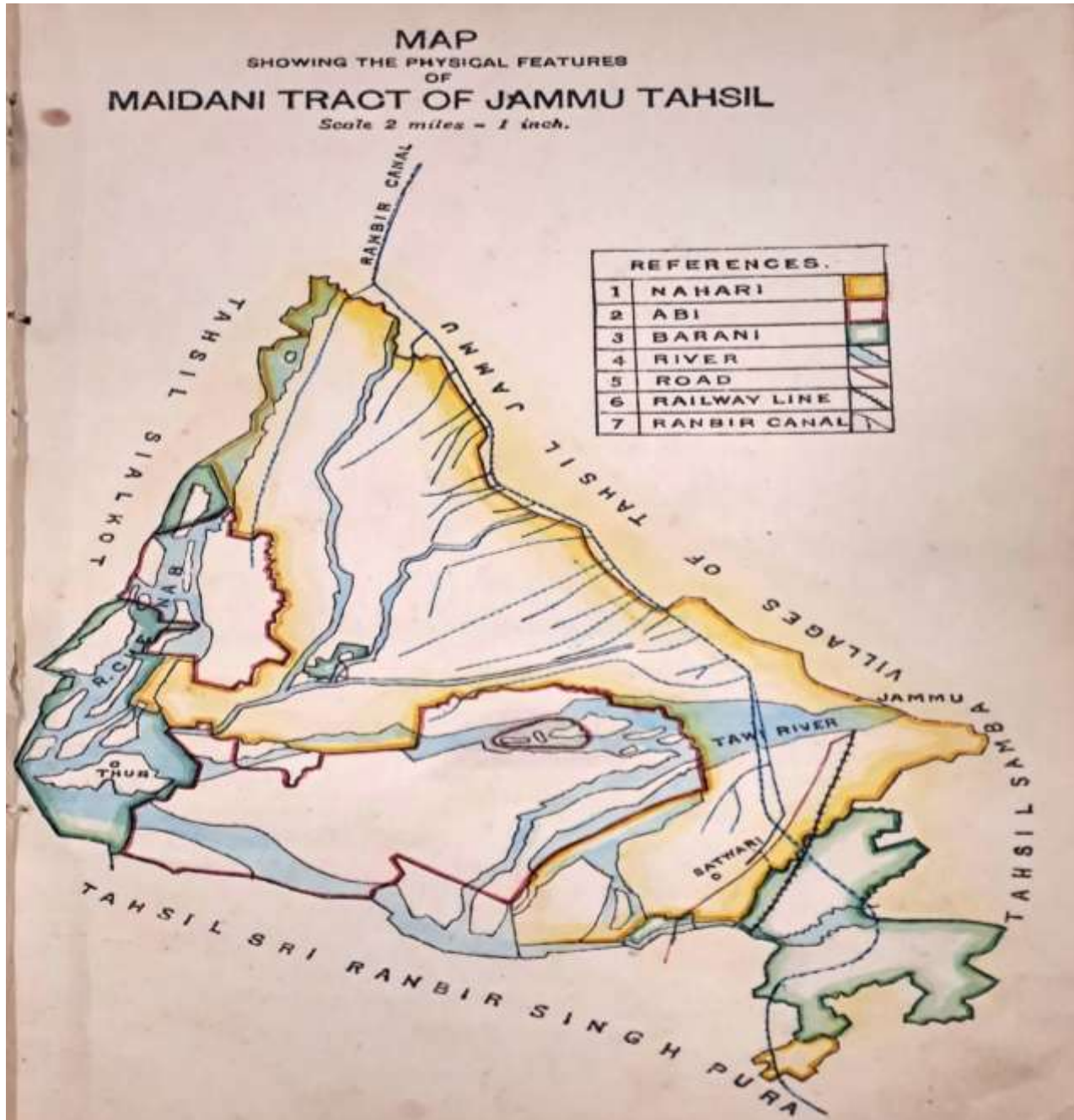
was brought about as a result of the fact that the agriculture of the valley was given a secure footing. The success of the settlement also attracted new settlers, which led to an increase in population and the establishment of new businesses, further contributing to the economic growth of the region.¹⁹⁰

Map 1. Assessment Circle of Maidani Area of Jammu



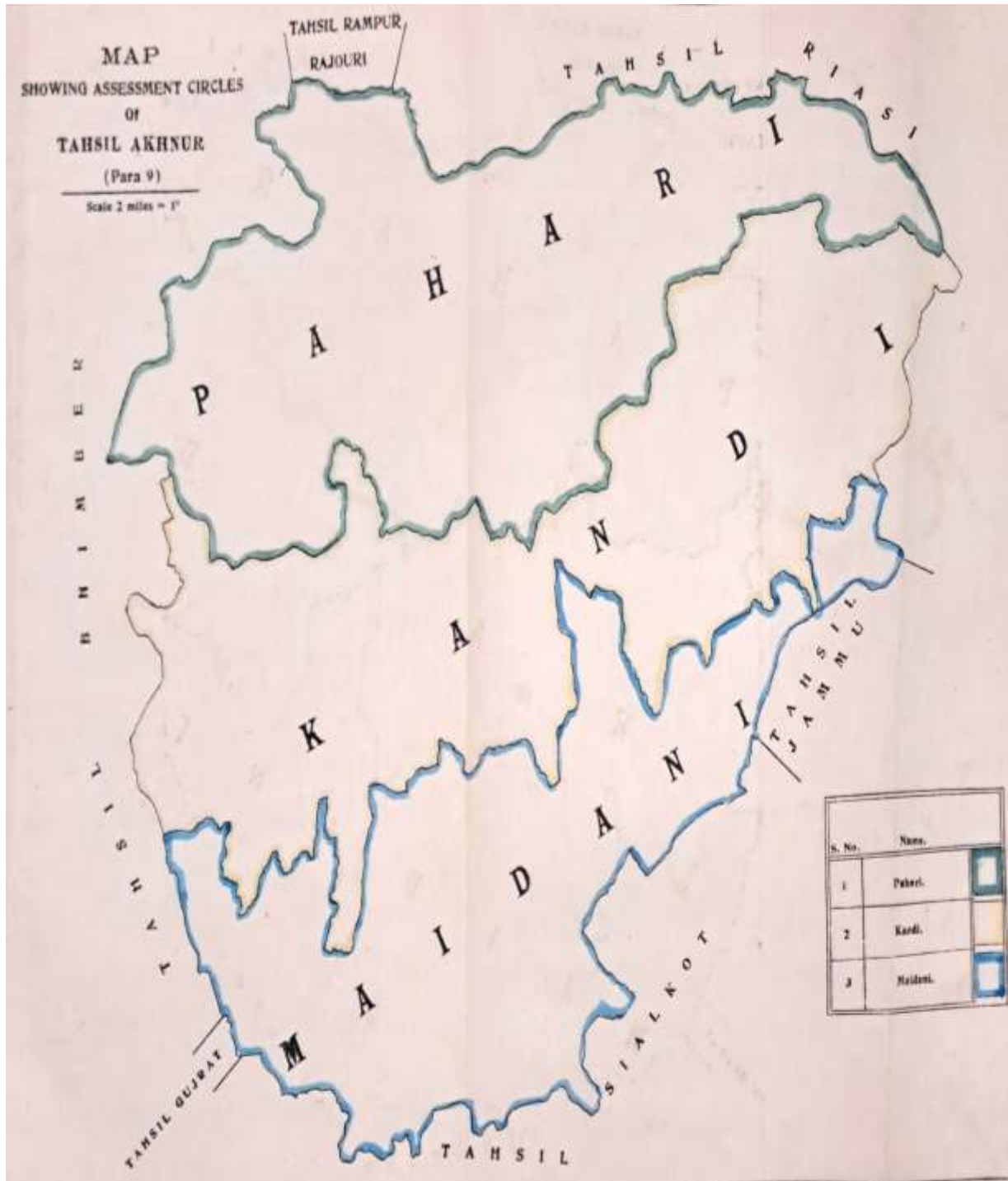
Source: Assessment Report of Maidani Tract of Jammu Province, 1925, SAR Jammu.

Map 2. Physical Features of Maidani Area of Jammu



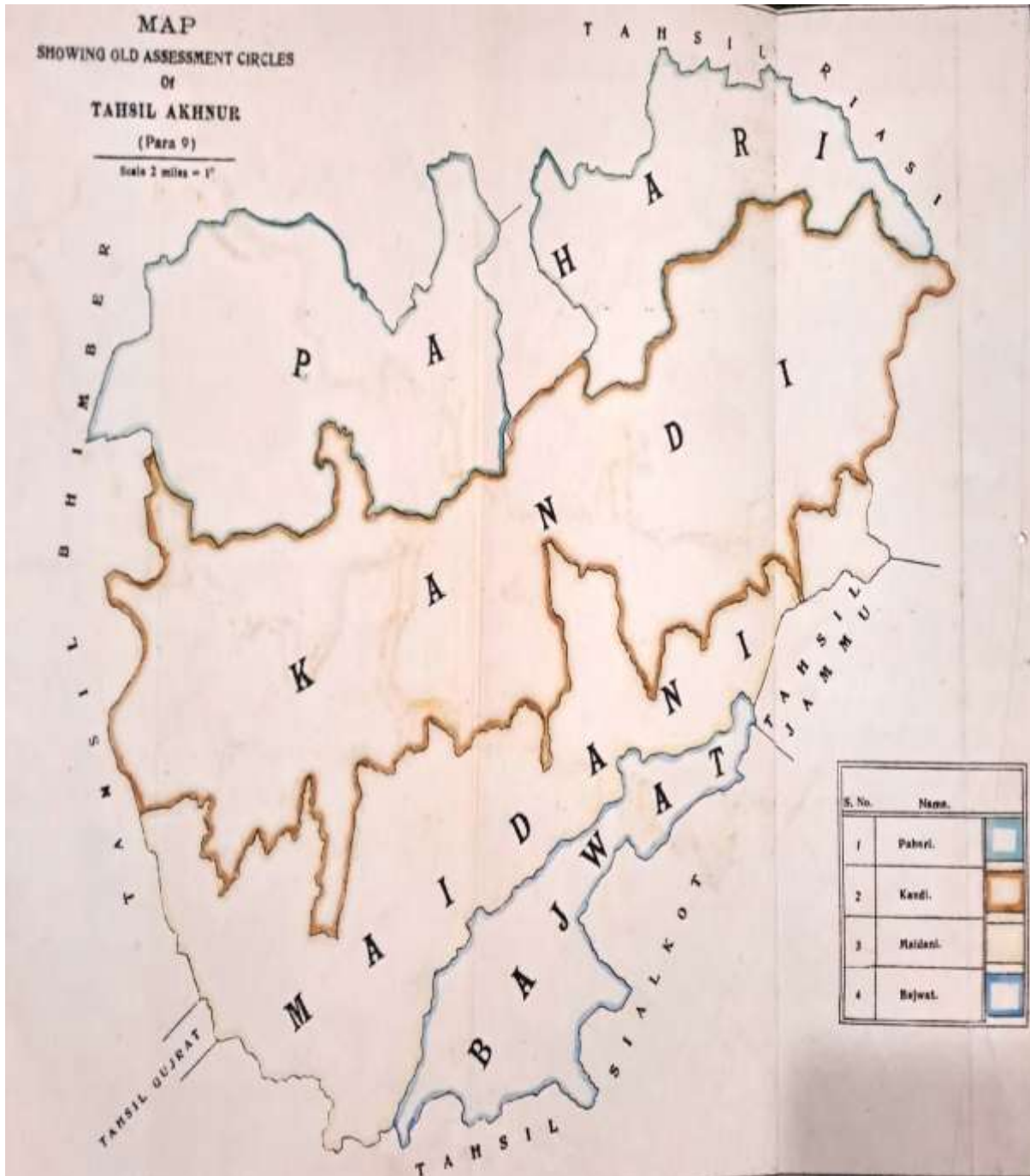
Source: Assessment Report of Maidani Tract of Jammu Province, 1925, SAR Jammu.

Map 3. Assessment Circle of Akhnoor Tehsil of Jammu



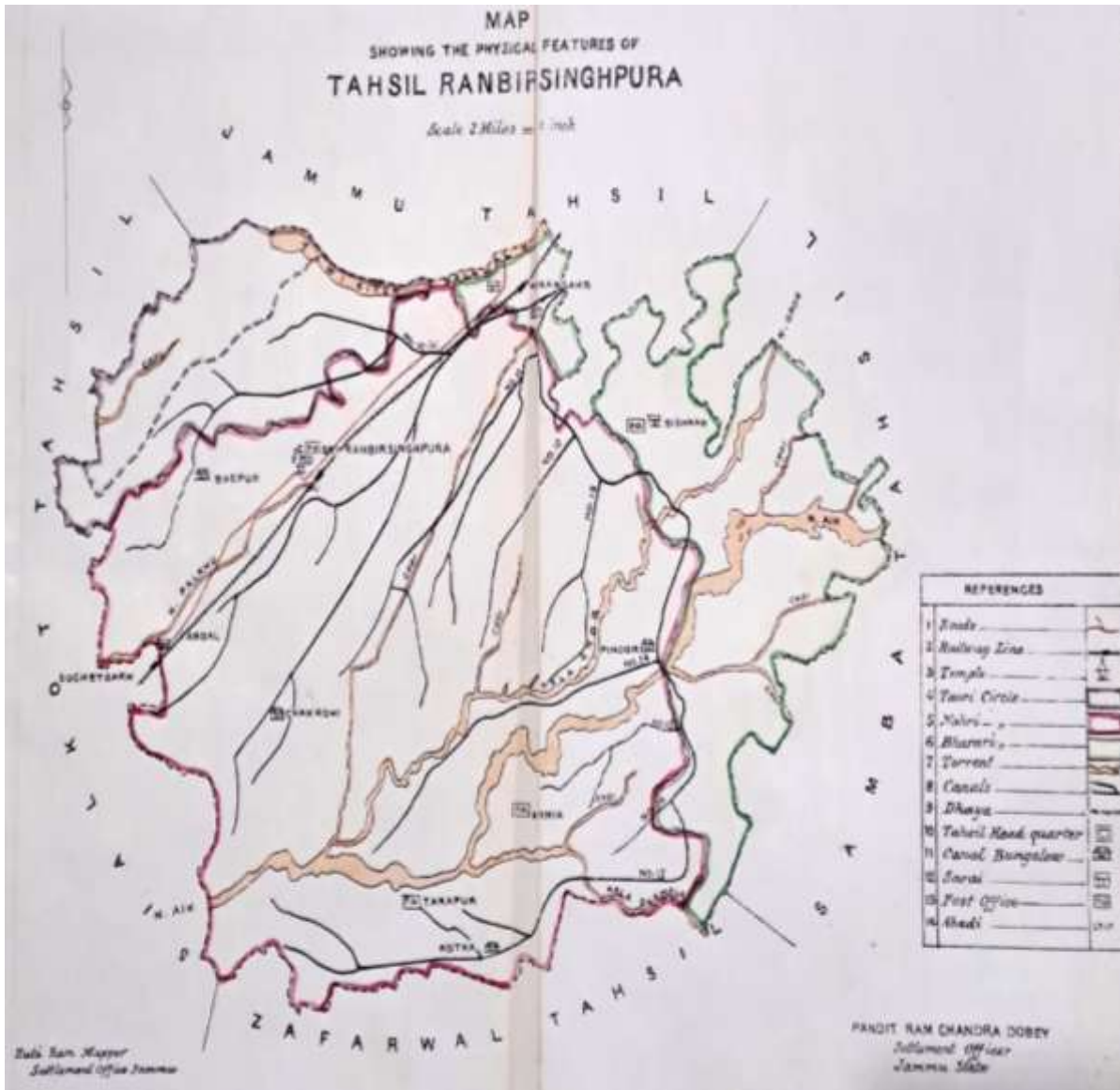
Source: Assessment Report of Akhnoor Tehsil of Jammu Province, SAR Jammu.

Map 3.1 Assessment Circle of Akhnoor Tehsil of Jammu (Increment of one circle)



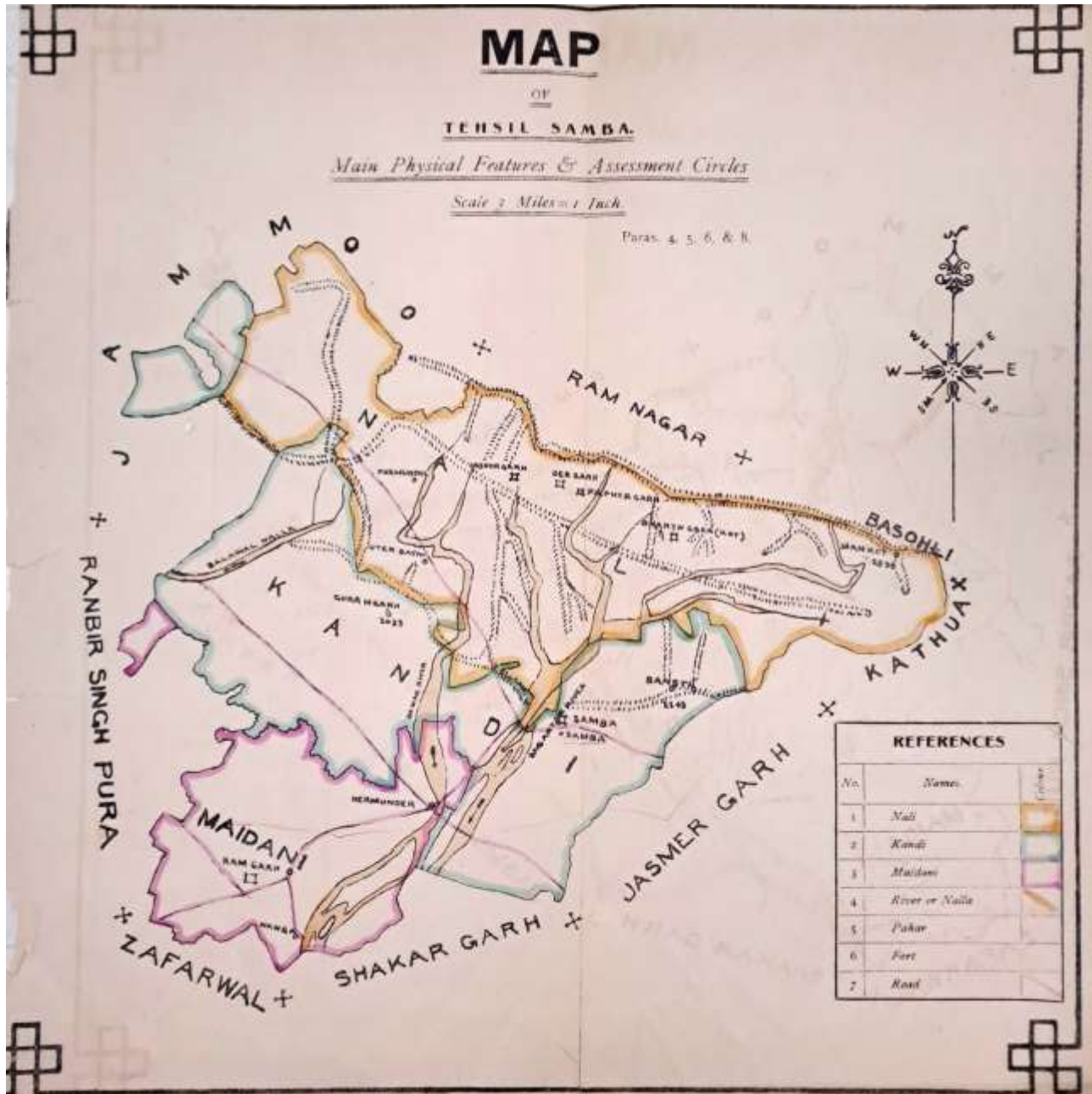
Source: Assessment Report of Akhnoor Tehsil of Jammu Province, SAR Jammu.

Map 4. Physical Features of Ranbir Singh Pura of Jammu Province



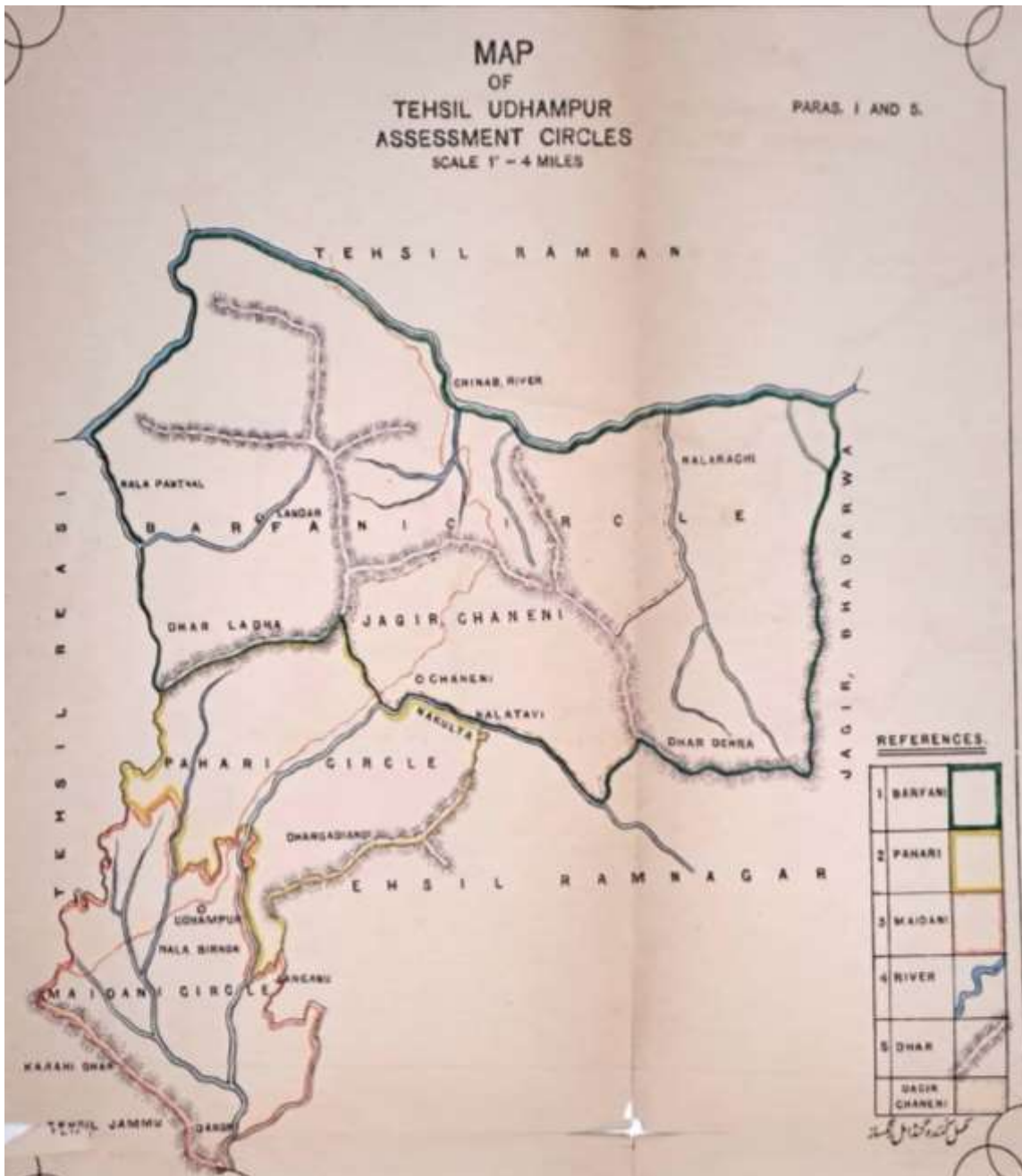
Source: Assessment Report of Ranbir Singh Pura Tehsil of Jammu Province, SAR Jammu.

Map 5. Main Physical Features and Assessment Circle of Samba Tehsil of Jammu Province



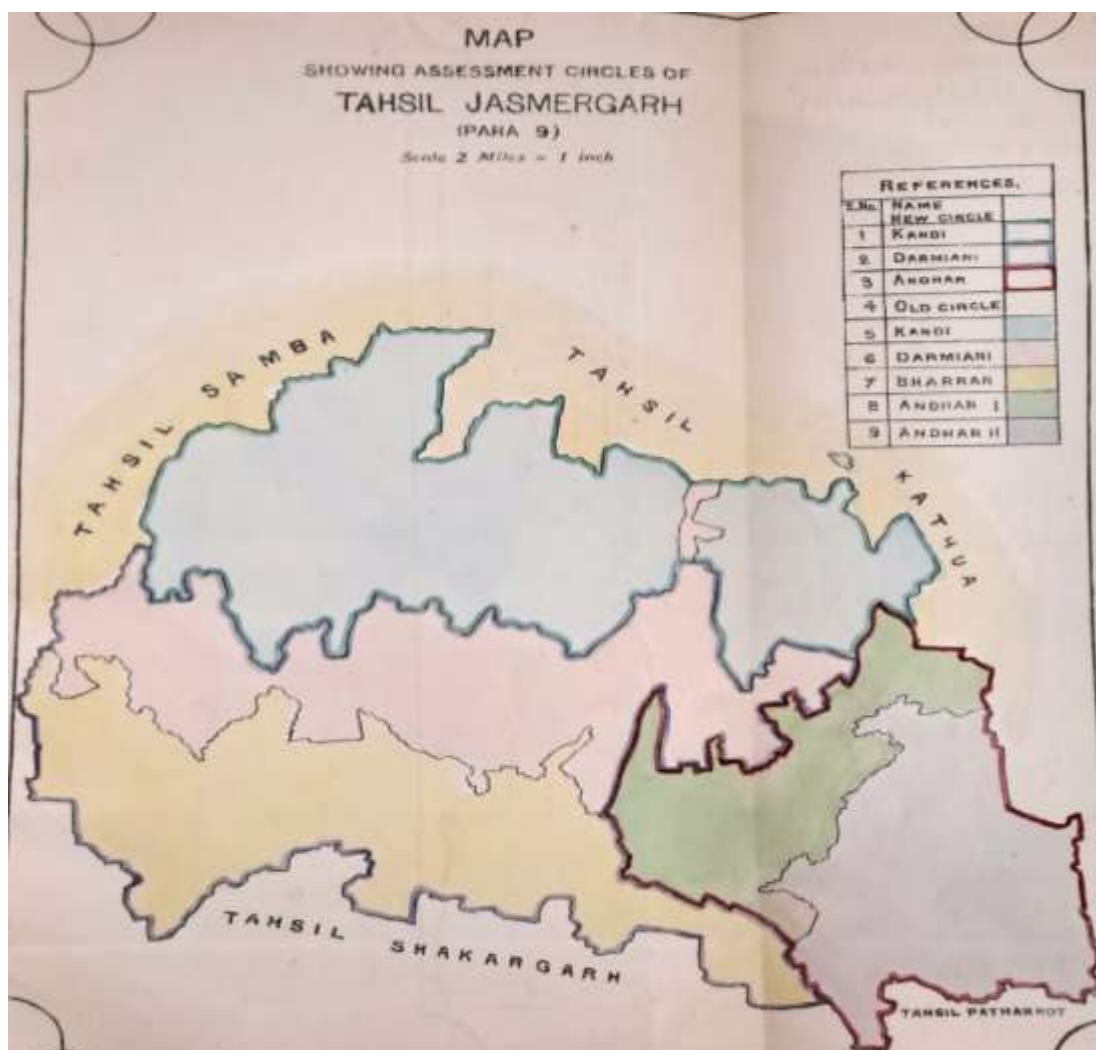
Source: Assessment Report of Samba Tehsil of Jammu Province, SAR Jammu.

Map 6. Assessment Circles of Udhampur Tehsil



Source: Assessment Report of Udhampur Tehsil, SAR Jammu.

Map 7 Assessment Circle of Jasmergarh Tehsil of Kathua



Source: Assessment Report of Jasmergarh Tehsil, SAR Jammu.

Irrigation System and transformation in Agriculture

Because of its location at the intersection of subtropical and subtemperate latitudes, the state of Jammu and Kashmir is distinguished by the presence of a highly variable landscape and elevation. As a direct result of this, the mean monthly and annual temperature ranges that it experiences are among the most extreme. Both the pattern of how the precipitation is distributed

and the total amount that is received is highly erratic. Because of the searing heat in the plains of Jammu Division, the unpredictability of the behavior of the monsoon season in Kashmir, and the arid climate of Ladakh Division, the farmers are forced to irrigate their kharif and rabi crops on a regular basis in order to get a good return on their agricultural investment. Because Ladakh has such a dry climate, growing crops there without the assistance of irrigation is nearly impossible.

The irrigation infrastructure of a region directly influences its farmers economies. Even in the state of Jammu and Kashmir, irrigation infrastructure has been a big part of how agriculture works and how it grows and develops. In fact, both the government and the people had a stake in the development of agriculture, and neither could ignore the need to improve and expand irrigation facilities. However, due to a lack of proper maintenance and outdated technology, the irrigation facilities in Jammu and Kashmir have not been able to keep up with the increasing demand for water, resulting in reduced crop yields and financial losses for farmers. Therefore, there is a pressing need for the modernization and improvement of irrigation facilities in the region. Irrigation is also a very important factor because it is one of the ways to measure the growth of an area or state's agricultural economy.¹⁹⁰ Because the weather is different in the three parts of the state, the sources of irrigation and how they were used were also different. Most of the state could grow crops without having to worry about not having enough water because it rained a lot and in the same places. But the unpredictable and seasonal nature of rain sometimes makes things difficult. In spite of the fact that the majority of the state is hilly and only a very tiny portion of the available land is cultivated, the state's economy has stayed in an agrarian state for the entirety of the time period covered by this study. The fundamental structure of agricultural output was largely controlled by the different types of soils that were present and the degree to which irrigation was

¹⁹⁰ *Annual Administrative Report of Jammu and Kashmir State, 1925-26*, Jammu and Kashmir SAR, Jammu, pp., 27-30.

¹⁹¹ E. F. Neve, *Beyond Pir Panjal*, (Srinagar: Gulshan Books, 2003 (edition), p., 30.

easily accessible. The patterns of cropping used for staple foods adhered to the natural conditions of each individual location as well. The pattern of the crops grown naturally differed from one place to the next. As a direct consequence of this, different types of crops were cultivated in accordance with the climatic conditions of the various locations.

Table 4.1 Area Sown under different crops

Crops	Year					
	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938	1939
Rice	459	477	521	528	512	445
Wheat	578	524	587	587	528	205
Barley	68	67	68	65	63	54
Bajra	113	114	108	108	107	48
Maize	607	642	792	757	750	355
Other food grains including pulses and millets	258	263	279	282	259	127
Oilseeds	100	119	138	103	133	66
Sugarcane	14	7	9	15	12	2
Total area cropped	2345	2340	2627	2601	2497	1593
Area cropped more than once	422	350	388	370	366	337
Net area Cropped	1923	1900	2239	2231	2131	1556

Canal Irrigation in Jammu Region

The Chenab, Ravi, Tawi, Ujh, Basantar, Poonch, Toshi, and Neru rivers, in addition to their tributaries, are among the perennial waterways that drain the Jammu Division. Not only are these rivers a source of water for irrigation and the generation of hydropower, but they also provide a home to a diverse collection of aquatic life. Because of this, Jammu Division has emerged as a significant ecological hotspot in the surrounding region. In addition, the picturesque beauty of these rivers draws tourists from all over the world, who then make significant contributions to the economy of the surrounding area. With the exception of the Chenab, Ravi, and Tawi rivers, the rest of these rivers are hill torrents that release a relatively low volume of water during the summer and winter months. The water from these rivers has been put to use for agricultural purposes and the generation of hydroelectric power wherever it was feasible to do so. The sustainable use of these rivers has helped to improve the livelihoods of the local communities and has also provided opportunities for ecotourism. However, there is a need for continued efforts to ensure the preservation of these rivers and their ecosystems for future generations. The region is also home to several religious sites and historical landmarks that attract tourists from all over the world. The region is genre-wise divided into three broad categories, namely the plains, the *Kandi* hills, and the tehsils, such as Kathua, Mirpur, Samba, R.S. Pura, Jammu, Akhnoor, and Jasrota and the outer hills or the semi-mountainous tracts. From the perspective of vegetation and cultivation, the region is divided into these three broad categories. The plains are fertile and suitable for agriculture, while the Kandi hills have a more rugged terrain and are covered with forests. The tehsils are a mix of both, with some areas being highly fertile and others having a hillier terrain.¹⁹²

When there is insufficient water in the soil, all of the labor that goes into farming is for naught because it is impossible for seedlings to grow. Irregular rainfall patterns persist throughout the year

in Jammu because of the region's geographical location. As a result, irrigation is an essential method for ensuring that agricultural fields have a sufficient supply of water to meet their needs farmers in Jammu heavily rely on irrigation to supplement the inconsistent rainfall patterns, which can significantly impact crop yields and ultimately their livelihoods.¹⁹³ Implementing effective irrigation systems and techniques can help farmers mitigate the risks associated with water scarcity and improve their chances of a successful harvest. The tropical heat that prevails in the Punjab plains also makes its way to Jammu. Because of the south-west monsoon, this area sees two distinct periods of precipitation each year. However, the amount and timing of rainfall can vary greatly, leading to unpredictable crop yields and making it difficult for farmers to plan their harvests. Additionally, the irregular rainfall patterns can also lead to soil erosion and other environmental challenges.¹⁹⁴

The canals and distributaries that grew from them served to irrigate some of the land in the Jammu region. Even by the time the 19th century ended, the canal irrigation system was insignificant and just as inefficient as it had been throughout the entire century. Villagers who lived near the ends of some of the streams that fed into the Ranbir Canal often complained that they didn't get enough irrigation compared to those who lived higher up the streams.¹⁹⁵ The Pratap Canal, which irrigated agricultural land lying more towards the west of the Chenab River, was begun in 1900 as a crop failure relief project and completed in 1905. The Pratap Canal has a total length of 36 kilometers, and it begins its journey on the right bank of the mighty Chenab River at Akhnoor. It has commanded over approximately 20,000 acres of land in the Akhnoor Tehsil. Rice,

¹⁹² *The Imperial Gazetteer of India*, 1907, Vol, V, pp., 107-9.

¹⁹³ Pandit Anand Koul, *Geography of Jammu and Kashmir State*, (Lahore: Kitaab Mahal, 1925), p 16.

¹⁹⁴ Pandit Anand Koul, *Geography of Jammu and Kashmir State*, p. 25.

wheat, oilseeds, orchards, fodder, and vegetables in the command area can all benefit from the water that it provides. It is considered to be one of the oldest canals in the area. The construction of the canal was an extremely important step in the process of reshaping the region's agricultural landscape, and it also made a significant contribution to the expansion of the local economy.¹⁹⁶ On the other hand, the majority of agricultural land more east of the Chenab River (i.e., R.S. Pura tehsils; Jammu; Samba,) was devoid of a reliable and regular irrigation facility. Even though there were 15 water courses that were diverted from the Tawi and Chenab rivers, respectively, these did not guarantee a consistent supply of water to agriculturalists throughout the year.¹⁹⁷ This led to the development of the Ranbir Canal, which was constructed between 1900 and 1920 and provided a regular source of irrigation to the eastern region of Jammu and Kashmir. The canal helped to increase agricultural productivity and improve the economic conditions of farmers in the area. A water channel known as the Jogi Gate Canal provided farmers located in the vicinity of Jammu city with access to water that was drawn from the river Tawi at that time. In reality, it was a relatively insignificant minor, measuring approximately 5.5 miles in length and having a mean discharge of approximately 10 cusecs. Despite its relatively small size, the Jogi Gate Canal played a significant role in providing water to farmers in the Jammu region, particularly during times of drought.¹⁹⁸ The canal was later expanded and modernized to meet the growing demand for irrigation water in the area. Public works department was responsible for its construction. In the Jammu tehsil, the Jogi Gate canal and all of these other waterways only served a very small portion of the land used for agricultural purposes. Farmers relied solely on precipitation and a few wells in the tehsils of R.S. Pura and Samba, both of which had flatter terrain and were consequently

¹⁹⁵ ARRSP, 1916, p.15.

¹⁹⁶ File no. 406/30/I, *Jammu and Kashmir, Report on Irrigation Department of 1924*, Jammu and Kashmir, State Archives Repository Jammu.

¹⁹⁷ *A Handbook of Jammu and Kashmir State*, (Jammu: Ranbir Press, 1928), Jammu and Kashmir, State Archives Repository Jammu, p., 17.

better suited for agricultural pursuits. In general, the state of agriculture in these regions was very poor. Despite the limited water supply, some farmers in Jammu tehsil managed to cultivate crops by using traditional irrigation methods such as furrows and basins. However, the yield was not sufficient to meet the demand of the growing population, leading to food scarcity and poverty in the region.¹⁹⁹

Because of this, irrigating cropland in Jammu, R.S. Pura, and Samba has long been recognized as requiring a canal to be constructed from the river Chenab. A canal known as the Shahi Canal was initiated in approximately 1873 (during the reign of Maharaja Ranbir Singh, which lasted from 1856 until 1885) from the village of Akhnoor, which was located on the left bank of the Chenab River. To the level of *Bhagiari Khad*, it was dug up (about midway between Jammu and Akhnoor).²⁰⁰ The Shahi Canal provides irrigation to over 30,000 hectares of farmland in the region. However, the canal has faced challenges such as siltation and waterlogging, which have impacted its efficiency and effectiveness. Additionally, a head regulator was constructed. The water that was released into this canal, however, did not make it all the way to *Bhagiari Khad*. After further investigation, it was determined that the incorrect levelling was the root cause of its failure. This project was scrapped without completion. A second attempt was made a few years later to bring water from the river Chenab, and this time it resulted in the construction of the so-called Rajpura Canal. The Rajpura Canal became a major source of irrigation for the surrounding areas and helped to increase agricultural productivity. It remains an important landmark in the region's history and development. In search of the same, digging was carried out all the way up to Hazoori Bagh, which was the Maharaja's Garden in Jammu City at the time (now lost under urbanization).²⁰¹ But even after water from the Chenab River was diverted into it, the flow of water

¹⁹⁸ *Jammu and Kashmir Administrative Report, 1910-11*, Jammu and Kashmir, State Archives Repository Jammu., pp. 3-5.

¹⁹⁹ ARRSP, 1916, p. 19.

was never observed to be consistent. The problem was caused by improper levelling of the surface. This plan, too, was scrapped in the end. Despite the efforts made to find a solution, the issue of inconsistent water flow in *Hazoori Bagh* remained unresolved. As a result, the plan to use it as a source of water supply was abandoned, leaving the search for a reliable source of water ongoing.²⁰²

On the other hand, during the reign of Maharaja Pratap Singh, a significant amount of focus was placed on the upkeep and expansion of the canal system. Because of this, the Ranbir Canal was put to its intended use, which resulted in a significant improvement to the Tehsil of Jammu's environment. There was an increase in interest in the land after the construction of the Ranbir Canal in the Ranbir Singh Pura Tehsil.²⁰³ Additionally, the fact that it was easy to reach from both Jammu and Sialkot was an advantage of the location. Another thing that occurred as a result of the construction of the canals was that it became more difficult to sell land in certain locations. The improved irrigation system led to an increase in agricultural productivity, which boosted the local economy. However, some farmers who had previously owned land that was not irrigated by the canal found it challenging to sell their property due to its less desirable location. The Ranbir Canal has provided irrigation to a number of villages that had not previously had access to such services. However, on occasion, it brought with it sand that had been drawn from the Chenab.

Therefore, the Ranbir Canal turned out to be a truly transformative project. The canal not only laid the groundwork for the dramatic transformation of the farming sector of the vast agricultural strip in its drainage network, but it also changed the face of Jammu city and the R.S Pura area.

²⁰⁰ W. R. Lawrence, *Provincial Gazetteers of Kashmir and Jammu*, (New Delhi: Shubi Publications reprint, 1985), pp. 78-9.

²⁰¹ M.S. Khan, *The History of Jammu and Kashmir: 1885–1925*, (Kashmir: Gulshan Publishers, 2002), p. 64.

²⁰² AARJKS, 1907-8, Jammu and Kashmir, SAR, Jammu, p. 6.

There were direct benefits derived from this project. The Ranbir Canal project facilitated irrigation and enabled farmers to grow multiple crops in a year, leading to an increase in agricultural productivity and income. Additionally, the canal provided a source of drinking water to the people of Jammu city and surrounding areas, improving their quality of life.

Agriculturalists who had been planting low-quality crops such as *millet* and *chari* have shifted their attention to higher-value crops such as rice and sugarcane. This shift has not only increased their income but also improved their standard of living. However, this change has also brought about new challenges such as the need for more water and better irrigation systems. The Ranbir Canal is largely responsible for the successful cultivation of R.S. Pura's world-famous basmati rice. Additionally, fruit and vegetable cultivation in its catchment area received a boost, which led to a significant reduction in the amount of produce imported from the neighboring state of Punjab. During those times, this canal was responsible for irrigating 108360 acres of cultivable land at a rate of 150 acres per cusec. The shift towards higher-value crops and the success of the Ranbir Canal in cultivating basmati rice and boosting fruit and vegetable cultivation has led to a significant increase in the income of farmers in R.S. Pura. This has also contributed to the overall economic development of the region, making it a hub for agricultural production.²⁰⁴

Along all 17 of the Ranbir Canal System's branches, there is now a well-maintained cart road that spans 274 kilometers. This was made possible by the Ranbir Canal System. The movement of both people and goods within the region that it served was facilitated as a result of this improvement. It was a significant factor that helped usher in a period of faster economic growth

²⁰³ ARRSP, 1916, p.15.

throughout the region. The expensive steam power that had been used in the past to lift water from the Tawi River for the residents of what was then Jammu City, which was located on a higher plateau, was replaced with generation of hydroelectricity from Ranbir Canal in Jammu City.²⁰⁵ In addition to this, it enhanced the city's electric supply system and provided a significant impetus for the development of agriculturally based small-scale enterprises in and around Jammu city. The ice-cold glacier water that was carried by the Ranbir Canal as it passed through Jammu city added to the city's beauty and splendor as it passed through the city. It has developed into an extremely valuable cultural heritage asset for the Jammu region.

Another important canal in the Jammu region was built in the Kathua area. It was called the Basantpur Canal. The canal was built during the Dogra rule in the 20th century and is still in use today for irrigation purposes. It has been very important for improving agriculture and the economy of the area as a whole. It was built around 1916 so that the 12571 acres of land nearby could get water. The Basantpur Canal is considered a significant landmark in the region, and it has played a vital role in the development of agriculture and irrigation systems. The canal's construction was a remarkable feat of engineering during its time, and it continues to serve as an essential source of water for the local farmers. The Basantpur Canal has also been a major source of drinking water for the people living in the nearby villages. The canal has not only helped in increasing the crop yield but has also contributed to the overall development of the region by providing employment opportunities to the locals.²⁰⁶ When it first started operating in 1922 or 1923, the canal was of tremendous assistance to the farmers, helping them achieve higher levels

²⁰⁴ File no. 75/1/4, Copy of letter no. 7133, of 1927, Jammu Irrigation Division, Jammu and Kashmir, SAR, Jammu.

²⁰⁵ File no. 75/1/4, Copy of letter no. 7133.

of both productivity and production. However, over time, the canal faced challenges such as water scarcity and maintenance issues, which affected its efficiency and effectiveness in supporting agriculture. Despite these challenges, the canal remains an important part of the region's history and legacy.²⁰⁷

The irrigation provided by the Tawi *Kuhl* was also very beneficial because it brought with it silt that was rich in nutrients and had a reddish color.²⁰⁸ This silt helped to renew the soil. However, the unpredictable flash floods caused by this stream frequently obliterated the heads of the *Kuhls*, and it was difficult for the Zamindars to repair them. Despite the benefits of the irrigation provided by the Tawi *Kuhl*, the frequent flash floods caused by this stream made it challenging for the Zamindars to maintain and repair them. As a result, they had to constantly invest time and resources in repairing the damages caused by these floods. Hill Torrents and *Kuhls*, in addition to the main rivers, formed an important source of water supply for irrigation. *Kuhls* are a type of hill torrent. Snow was the source of their nourishment. The snow had to melt first, but once it did, the torrents moved quickly from one village to the next. The cultivators built makeshift weirs and spurs that projected into the torrents at strategic points where it was convenient to do so. Every community that relied on a particular canal, weir, or dam for their irrigation needs was required to contribute to the building and maintenance of that water management feature.²⁰⁹ The availability of canal water for the villages in the Jammu province that previously received irrigation from *Kuhls*

²⁰⁶ File no. 13/3293/P, *The Public work department, of Jammu and Kashmir, 1916*, Jammu and Kashmir, SAR, Jammu.

²⁰⁷ File no. 19/6526/P, *The Public work department, of Jammu and Kashmir, 1924*, Jammu and Kashmir, SAR, Jammu.

²⁰⁸ ARMTJP (1923), p. 2.

drawn from the Ravi and Chenab rivers was still insufficient, and it was not at the level that these villages had become accustomed to having. The shortage of water was worsened by the fact that the glaciers in the region were melting faster than ever before due to climate change. This made it difficult for the cultivators to rely on traditional methods of irrigation and forced them to explore alternative solutions.²¹⁰ In Akhnoor tehsil of Jammu region these *Kuhls* irrigated large tract of land. The areas like Bhalwal Bharath, Pragpur, Najwal, Chani Thana, and Bela Jamana, which comprise almost 1500 acres of the land.²¹¹

The springs provided an additional significant supplementary source of irrigation in the hilly regions. Some of these, particularly in Kashmir, provided excellent water supplies. The use of springs for irrigation has been a traditional practice in these regions for centuries. The water from the springs is considered to be pure and mineral-rich, making it ideal for agriculture. Other areas lacked such resources. However, there were two drawbacks associated with the spring water. To begin, the temperature was never above freezing. Second, it did not bring with it any of the silts that are typically brought by mountain streams, which are used for fertilization.²¹² Despite the drawbacks of the spring water, it was still a valuable resource for the area. However, other regions had access to more diverse resources that could be used for both irrigation and fertilization. Instead, it contained scum that was detrimental to the process of growing rice in that area. In this hilly country, the number of wells and tanks used for irrigation formed a negligible quantity. This was due to the terrain. Only in the plains, at a depth of several feet below the surface, were these found

²⁰⁹ *Assessment Report of Rampur-Rajouri*, 1906, p. 8.

²¹⁰ ARMTJT 1925, p. 23.

²¹¹ ARAT, 1911, p.10.

²¹² *Assessment Report of Ramnagar*, 1912, p11; See also *Assessment Report of Jasmergarh*, 1924, pp. 9-10.

in any appreciable number. The state of the wells in the lowlands was also quite precarious.²¹³ In spite of this, these wells dried up during the drought, which occurred at a time when there was an extreme demand for water due to irrigation. The lack of water sources and the difficult terrain made it challenging for farmers to sustain their crops during the drought. As a result, many had to resort to alternative methods of irrigation or risk losing their livelihoods. As a consequence of this, in spite of the fact that the state government dug a number of wells, particularly in the Ranbir Singh Pura, Samba, and Jasmergarh Tehsils of the Jammu province, the proportion of land that was irrigated by means of these wells gradually decreased.²¹⁴ The situation was exacerbated by the fact that the drought lasted for several years, causing many farmers to abandon their land and migrate to other areas in search of work. The long-term effects of this drought were felt for years, as many farmers struggled to recover from the loss of their crops and livelihoods.

It's important to remember that the state's investment in irrigation infrastructure was a risky move that paid off big time for the agricultural economy and way of life in the canal regions. Irrigation helped farmers grow more crops in the affected areas because it let them use land that would have been left unworked otherwise. This meant that irrigated lands had more crop security and higher yields per acre than lands without irrigation. It also facilitated the spread of novel seed varieties among farmers. In addition, irrigation allowed for a more efficient use of water resources, as it enabled farmers to control the amount of water used and reduce wastage. This investment in irrigation infrastructure not only boosted agricultural productivity but also contributed to the overall economic growth of the region.

²¹³ *Note on Assessment Report of Mirpur, 1901-02.*

²¹⁴ ARRSP, 1916, p. 16.

Irrigation served a dual purpose, protecting areas whose agriculture was dependent on rain but which regularly experienced food shortages due to insufficient precipitation while also contributing to greater overall food production by increasing yield per acre and expanding arable land. Furthermore, the increase in agricultural productivity and economic growth led to job creation and improved living standards for the local population. Additionally, the surplus food production allowed for trade with neighboring regions, further stimulating economic development. The artificial irrigation brought about a dramatic change in the cropping pattern of the previously unirrigated lands, with a subsequent shift from Rabi to Kharif crops, which had a significant effect on the diets of the local population. Overall, irrigation played a crucial role in transforming the agricultural landscape and improving the livelihoods of communities in arid and semi-arid regions. However, it also posed challenges such as water scarcity, soil salinization, and environmental degradation, which required sustainable management practices to ensure long-term benefits.

In 1950-51, the State's total irrigated area amounted to 261 hectares, with canals accounting for 244 hectares, tanks for 3,000 hectares, tube wells for 3,000 hectares, and other sources for 11 hectares. This indicates significant improvements in canal irrigation, resulting in a majority of cultivated land being irrigated. It is worth mentioning that while the state's political geography changed after 1947, with a significant portion falling under Pakistani control, the division had a minimal impact on the irrigated area compared to Punjab. In fact, the net irrigated area percentage increased from 30.4% to 41.1%. Out of approximately 232 thousand hectares of cropped area occupied by Pakistan, only 40 thousand hectares were irrigated. Canals dominated the irrigation pattern in the valley, with Zamindari Kuhls accounting for about 86% of the total cropped area's irrigation in 1949-50. The following table illustrates the area irrigated from different sources in the state during the 1930s.

Table 4.1 Land area Irrigated from different sources

Year	Govt. Canals	Private Canals	Tanks	Wells	Others	Total	%age of irrigated area to the cropped area
1934-35	72.8	219.3	2.4	2.8	8.0	305	32.1
1935-36	81.7	219.3	2.4	2.8	8.0	313.0	33.0
1936-37	50.1	262.6	2.4	2.8	8.0	324.7	30.6
1937-38	46.5	254.5	2.0	2.8	8.0	312.6	29.7
1938-39	47.7	246.8	2.4	2.8	8.0	307.3	30.4

Source: N.S. Gupta and Amarjit Singh, Agricultural Development in States of India: Jammu and Kashmir, Vol. I, p.69

It is important to note that although the development of irrigation infrastructure in the state was a costly endeavor, its impact on the agrarian economy and society of the canal areas was tremendous. The introduction of irrigation brought dynamism to crop production in these areas by enabling cultivation in previously uncultivated regions. It resulted in higher yields per acre compared to un-irrigated lands, even without the use of new seeds, and provided greater crop security. Additionally, irrigation created conditions that allowed new seed varieties to gain popularity among farmers.

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Table 4.2 Area irrigated during the year from 1938-39 & 1949-50

Source	Area (acres) (1938-39)	Percentage of total area (1938-39)	Area (acres) (1949-50)	Percentage of total area (1949-50)
Govt. Canal	96	52.2	70	34.1
Private Canal	71	38.6	74	36.1
Tanks	71	38.6	74	36.1
Wells	2	1.1	1	0.5
Other Sources	15	8.1	60	29.3
Total	184	100.0	205	100

Source: Digest of Statistics, Planning and Statistics Secretariat, 1952, Jammu: Ranbir Govt. Press

Table 4.3 Crops Irrigated in the same year

Crops	Area (acres) (1938-39)	Percentage of total area (1938-39)	Area (acres) (1949-50)	Percentage of total area (1949-50)
Rice	107	44.0	100	48.5
Wheat	67	27.6	44	21.4
Barley	9	3.7	12	5.8
Jowar	1	0.4	12	0.0
Bajra	1	0.4	6	3.0
Maize	16	6.6	17	8.3
Other cereals and Pulses	16	6.6	20	9.7
Sugarcane	3	1.2	1	0.4
Other food crops	9	3.8	2	1.0
Cotton	3	1.2	1	0.4
Other non-food crops	11	4.5	3	1.5
Total	243	100.0	206	100

Source: Digest of Statistics, Planning and Statistics Secretariat, 1952, Jammu: Ranbir Govt. Press

Table 4. Crops sown from 1939-49 & 1949-50

Crops Sown	Area (acres) (1938-39)	Percentage of total area (1938- 39)	Area (acres) (1949-50)	Percentage of total area (1949-50)
Land under Rice	146	11.8	114	14.1
Land under Wheat	392	31.6	158	19.6
Land under Barley	46	3.8	45	5.6
Land under Jowar	46	3.8	1	0.1
Land under Bajra	104	8.4	48	6.0
Land under Maize	293	23.6	198	24.6
Other foodgrains including pulses	158	12.7	100	12.4
Oilseeds	36	3.0	17	2.1
Condiments and Spices	3	0.2	1	0.1
Sugar	7	0.6	2	0.2
Fibres	26	2.1	5	0.6
Dyes and Tanning Materials	--	0.0	--	--
Drugs and narcotics	3	0.2	1	0.1

Fodder Crops	20	1.6	4	0.5
Fruits & Vegetables including root crops	5	0.4	4	0.5
Miscellaneous crops	1	0.0	108	13.5
Total area sown	1,240	100.0	806	100.0
Area sown more than once	285	--	75	--
Net sown area	955	--	731	--

Source: Digest of Statistics, Planning and Statistics Secretariat, 1952, Jammu: Ranbir Govt. Press

In March of 1846, the Dogra Raja of Jammu and the British signed the Treaty of Amritsar in the city of Amritsar. This marked the beginning of Jammu and Kashmir's existence as a separate princely state. By stationing their officials throughout the state, the British were able to establish their dominance over the political and economic administration of the state. The treaty also granted the British control over the vital trade routes of Jammu and Kashmir, which proved to be a significant factor in the region's economic development. This led to resentment among the local population, which felt exploited by the British. In point of fact, shortly after establishing the residency in 1885, the British government began to meddle directly in the day-to-day operations of the princely state.

Restructuring the land revenue system by reorganizing the pattern of land ownership, land use, and the system of revenue assessment and payment was one of the primary areas of intervention. This was one of the most important areas of the intervention. As a result, the local population felt that their autonomy and control over their land had been taken away, leading to a growing sense of resentment towards the British government. This ultimately contributed to the rise of nationalist movements and calls for independence in the region. The British also introduced new laws and regulations that impacted the social and economic fabric of the state, such as the introduction of modern education and the abolition of slavery. These changes led to a significant transformation in the traditional way of life in Jammu and Kashmir. People believe that the objective of reorganizing who owned what land could not be fully accomplished because the Treaty of Amritsar, which Maharaja Gulab Singh signed with the British, included a clause that said the jagirs and land grants that the Sikh rulers had given out would still be valid. This clause prevented the goal of reorganizing who owned what land from being fully realized. Additionally, the Dogra rulers continued the practice of bestowing jagirs of varying kinds. The colonial administrators were powerless to alter the pattern of these estates in any way, so they were forced to make peace with the system as it existed at the time. In addition to this, they concluded that the layers of revenue officials could not be eliminated. The modifications that were made brought about more specificity with regard to the mode and method of payment that was given to these officials, as well as their duties. Despite the inability of the colonial administrators to change the system, the Dogra ruler's practice of granting jagirs continued throughout the centuries. The payments made to revenue officials, as well as their responsibilities, were, however, subject to some modification at the hands of the colonial administrators.

Measurements and evaluations of the princely state's land revenue were carried out between the years 1889 and 1899. In 1901 and 1902, adjustments were made to this method. The new method of valuation that the British recommended took into account occupancy rights, the length of the lease, the payment of taxes in cash, and the established framework that was to be used to collect duties. Tenancy rights were perpetual and could be passed down from one generation to the next, but they could not be sold under any circumstances as long as taxes were paid. The only way for them to accomplish their goals of increasing farming and money was for the taxes to be paid in cash. This new method was implemented in other parts of British India, and it resulted in an increase in the amount of land under cultivation and a rise in revenue collection. However, it also led to the displacement of many indigenous people, who were unable to pay the taxes in cash and lost their land as a result. A class of settled 'peasants' was created thanks to hereditary occupancy rights, whereas at the same time, the old-style landowning elite, who had occupied land for quite a few generations, was still maintained. The British colonial government also introduced new technologies and crops, such as the cultivation of opium, which further transformed the agricultural landscape and economy of India. These changes had long-lasting effects on Indian society and continue to shape the country's agricultural practices today. The distribution of new jagirs resulted in the emergence of a new group of *jagirdars* who ready associates of the British institutions were as well as devoted to the new rulers who had granted them jagirs. While these *jagirdars* were willing to acknowledge the Dogra's and the British as having legitimate authority, the ordinary cultivators were not.

In their case, the new assessment did not result in a reduction in the need for revenue from the sale of land; in fact, the assessment rates increased. Land relations were also characterized by a sense of impermanence because the state retained the authority to revoke a person's cultivation

privileges in the event that the required revenue or tax was not paid. The requirement that the tax be paid in cash added another layer of complexity to the challenges that the cultivators were already contending with; as a result, they were compelled to sell their crops immediately following harvest, even though the prices of grains were depressed at the time. The combination of increased assessment rates and the impermanence of land relations due to the state's authority to revoke cultivation privileges made it difficult for cultivators to generate revenue. This was compounded by the requirement to pay taxes in cash, which forced them to sell their crops at depressed prices immediately after harvest.

Because the maharaja thought that the market should decide how much grain should cost, he couldn't buy and sell grain on the market because he didn't live there. He also thought that the market should determine grain prices. As a direct consequence of this, there have been periodic famines and food shortages, which have made the crisis even more severe. Despite his belief in the market setting grain prices, the periodic famines and food shortages that occurred during his residency made it clear that intervention was necessary to ensure food security for the people. Thus, his adherence to this belief ultimately had negative consequences for the population. However, the fundamental aspects of economic exploitation and social oppression remained the same, despite the fact that certain aspects of the established order in the state were shaken up as a consequence of trends that emerged as a consequence of these settlement policies implemented by the British. These trends came into being as a result of the British implementing these settlement policies. The British also implemented policies that resulted in the displacement of indigenous communities and the destruction of their traditional ways of life, further exacerbating the negative impact on the population. These actions were justified under the guise of modernization and progress, but ultimately had devastating consequences for those affected. In fact, the exploitation

that was at the heart of the formation of the old state was only exacerbated by the British settlement policies, which consisted of only small tweaks to a structure that had been put in place a few hundred years earlier. This structure had been in place for a long time before the British arrived.

The Dogra rulers in the State of Jammu and Kashmir started these agrarian reforms when they took over in the 19th century. The reforms aimed to increase agricultural productivity and revenue collection, and they involved measures such as the introduction of new crops, irrigation systems, and land surveys. The Dogra rulers also established a system of tenancy that allowed peasants to lease land from the state at fixed rates. At the time, the peasantry class was under stress because of the unplanned tax structure under Mughal, Afghan, and Sikh rule, respectively. Also, the Dogra rulers wanted to prove their power and legitimacy to the local people by putting these reforms into place. These reforms were meant to improve the peasant's economic situation and make them less dependent on the feudal system. The state was not ruled as a single political structure until the Dogra rule. The local chieftains were in charge of regions like Poonch, Rajori, Mirpur, Bhaderwah, and Kishtwar. The Dogra rulers were successful in centralizing the administration of the state and reducing the power of these local chieftains. However, this also led to resentment among some of these chieftains who felt that their autonomy was being threatened. The Dogra's bring all of them under a single political umbrella with some sort of regional autonomy. This consolidation of power allowed the Dogra's to centralize their rule and strengthen their hold over the region. However, it also led to tensions between the different regions and communities, as they struggled to maintain their autonomy within the larger state structure. British intervention in the State during Dogra rule played important role in the introduction of various agrarian reforms. The Residency was able to get the Maharaja to agree to a land settlement in the Valley of Kashmir almost as soon as it was established. In the year 1887, A. Wingate was given

the responsibility of carrying out this important assignment. At this point, it starts to become clear how important it is for the British to understand how Jammu and Kashmir economy works. The land settlement in the Valley of Kashmir was crucial for the British to establish their control over the region's resources and revenues. Understanding the local economy would enable them to exploit it for their own benefit and maintain their hold on the region. Wingate presented a compelling case in support of granting tenancy rights to Kashmiri farmers, continuing the practice of the colonial administration in British India during the second half of the nineteenth century. In doing so, he followed a long-standing tradition. According to him, the fact that there was a group of officials upended between the state and the cultivators was what caused the land revenue system that was in place in the Valley to result in an empty treasury for the state. Wingate's argument was that granting tenancy rights to Kashmiri peasants would lead to increased revenue for the state, as the peasants would be more invested in their land and therefore more productive. He believed that understanding the local economy and working with the peasants rather than against them was crucial for the success of British rule in Kashmir. In addition to this, it resulted in the creation of a nomadic peasantry that had no interest in agricultural practices. Therefore, in order to reload revenue and to transform a peasantry that was malcontent and sparing into one that was content and thriving, the peasants who farmed the land needed to be given an interest in the land they farmed. It was necessary, according to Wingate's argument, to fix the state demand at a fair sum for a term of years and to set up a system of sources that would contain the powers of the tehsildars for revenue collection. This would allow for the achievement of this goal. Wingate's argument proposes that setting the state claim at a fair sum for a term of years and setting up a system of sources that would contain the controls of the tehsildars for tax collection would not only reload revenue but also give the peasants an interest in the land they farmed, transforming them from

discontented and frugal to content and thriving. This approach was deemed necessary to address the creation of a nomadic peasantry that had no interest in agricultural practices.

Chapter – IV

Socio-Economic Condition in Jammu after Agrarian Reforms

The formation of Jammu and Kashmir State as single political entity under the treaty of Amritsar March 1846, led to the foundation of Dogra Regime by Gulab Singh (1792-1857) which lasted up till 1947. In his early career he was appointed as *Jagirdar*, later moved to Lahore in 1809 and taken as commander of small force by Sikh ruler Ranjit Singh. It was the time when Ranjit Singh signed the treaty of Amritsar. Henceforth he launched several campaigns against the Afghans where Gulab Singh showed his fearless military abilities²¹⁵. For his meritorious military abilities and leadership skills he got Jallhander as an additional Jagir and emerged as one of the trusted commanders of Ranjit Singh. Mian Dido ruled Jammu principality, posed great challenge to Sikh Rule. Gulab Singh with the help of his Dogra followers attacked the Sikh military garrison in Jammu fort. He successfully drove him out in a campaign of Sikh army led by Gulab Singh. In the subsequent years he led the campaigns in Kishtwar and Ladakh²¹⁶. All these great services to the Lahore Government, he was rewarded by the Maharaja with the grant to him and his successors of the territory of Jammu, with the hereditary title of Raja. Once he was installed in Jammu, he spent maximum time there, extends his authority over other principalities in the adjoining areas, and eventually to Ladakh.

The subjugation of Ladakh and Baltistan by Gulab Singh nonetheless looked upon with disfavor by the British took the limits of the Gulab Singh up to the Tibetan frontiers. The British had been ineffective to check him but when in 1841 Raja sent his armies into Tibet, it caused a stir

²¹⁵ Bamzai, P.N.K, “*Cultural and Political History of Kashmir*”, Volume III, (New Delhi: M. D. Publishers, 1994), pp. 657-660.

in Calcutta and the British Indian Government looked uneasily on the growing power and status of the Dogra chief²¹⁷. In 1846 with the treaty of the ‘treaty of Amritsar’, Gulab Singh was made the absolute chief of Jammu and Kashmir State. The reason why British choose Gulab Singh for this because; It appeared to the British that the hope of plunder and extension of their domain to the northern reaches under the ages of Dogra rulers was higher, to that of Sikhs.

It was an attempt of Britishers to control their dominant neighbors, and they believed they would do it better by depriving the Sikhs of the hilly state, and by passing it over to a ruler of a different caste i.e., Dogra’s. British create an alternative to the Sikhs which proved helpful for them. It was strategy of the British to downsize the Sikh kingdom by assigning tracts from it to a trusted ally.

According to clause I of the treaty, the British Government “transfers and makes over forever in independent possession to Maharaja Gulab Singh and the heirs male of his body all the hilly or mountainous country with its dependencies situated to the eastward of the River Indus and westward of the River Ravi including Chamba and excluding Lahul, being part of the territories ceded to the British Government by the Lahore State according to the provisions of Article IV of the Treaty of Lahore, dated 9th March 1846”²¹⁸. Prior to the coming of Dogra rule in Jammu and Kashmir, the region was not established as administrative centre, for different ruling dynasties; as it was always ruled from the regions outside State. For example, Mughals Ruled (1586-1753), it was always ruled from the than Capital Agra, till 1753. Mughal rule was followed by the Afghans who were able to control the region from Kabul, and Sikhs ruled it from Lahore.

²¹⁷ Bamzai, *Cultural and Political History of Kashmir*, p., 667.

²¹⁸ Bamzai, *Cultural and Political History of Kashmir*, p., 668.

The vast majority of India's population is very concerned about agrarian reforms, the land structure, land tenure laws, and changes in arable land policy. Before independence India witnessed number of reforms in agricultural sector, because agriculture used to generate huge sum of revenue for the State. The hitherto Jammu and Kashmir State also witnessed the agrarian with the advent of Dogra's. The most important part of the government in each province is the part that deals with assessing and collecting land revenue, as well as the many other land-related issues. Land is not only how most Indians make a living, but it is also important to their culture and feelings. Therefore, any changes in land policies or reforms can have a significant impact on the social and economic fabric of the country. Even though other industries are growing, agriculture is still the most important, and most of the people who work on farms own or rent the land on which they work. So, land income and management are very important from a social, political, and economic point of view, not just because they have to do with money.

In the national and international initiatives intended to promote agricultural development and uphold social, political, and economic stability, the agrarian reforms have drawn more attention and recognition. However, the nature and extent of these reforms varied from place to place and over time, defying any kind of generalization about the connection between the administrative demands and the various agrarian reform models. In some countries, the agrarian reforms were successful in redistributing land and improving the livelihoods of small farmers, while in others, they faced resistance from large landowners and failed to achieve their goals.

²¹⁸ Bamzai, *Cultural and Political History of Kashmir*, p., 668.

Despite these challenges, agrarian reforms remain an important tool for promoting social justice and sustainable development in rural areas. The scope of these reforms has been greatly expanded in the western world; in this region of the world, people have different aspirations and objectives.²¹⁹ As the state economy was heavily dependent on the agricultural sector, the main goal was to maximize revenue generation. The proponents of agrarian reform, however, do not assert that they are a panacea for all the problems with the agrarian system that predominated in this area. The hope, however, is in changing farming practices to increase production and productivity. Thus, agrarian reforms are seen as a part of the process of society's overall transformation, and they are essential to this process. Furthermore, the agrarian reform aims to address issues of landlessness, tenancy, and unequal distribution of resources among farmers, which have been persistent problems in the state. By implementing these reforms, the government hopes to create a more equitable and sustainable agricultural system that benefits all stakeholders involved.²²⁰

In India, during colonial rule the British officials began historical research into existing agricultural laws. Under colonial control, Indian rural society saw substantial transformations. The British official research into existing agricultural laws was aimed at better understanding the Indian rural society's dynamics and how they could be altered to serve colonial interests. The transformations that occurred in Indian rural society under colonial control were likely to have significant and long-lasting effects on the country's social, political, and economic development.²²¹

²¹⁹ L. J. Walinsky, (ed.) *"The Selected papers of Wolf Ladejinsky -Agrarian Reform as Unfinished Business"* (New York: O U P, 1977), p., 354.

²²⁰ P. N. Raup, *"The Contribution of land Reforms to Agricultural Development: An Analytical Framework"*, *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, Vol. XII, (Oct, 1963). pp., 1-21.

²²¹ T. Bergmann, *Agrarian Reform in India: With Special Reference to Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and West Bengal*, (Michigan: Agricole Pub. Academy, 1984) p., 39.

Before the commencement of Dogra rule, Jammu and Kashmir came under different ruling dynasties that could not make a lasting impact on agriculture or initiate any reforms in this sector. The state became a single political entity with the coming of Dogra rule in the mid-19th century. Yet, it should be noted that there are still very few comprehensive literatures that cover the principles and practices of agriculture in India or in the many provinces and states. Literature carrying the findings of thorough studies of agriculture is still very uncommon in Jammu, save from official papers like those of the Department of Agriculture or the Land Revenue Commission, settlement reports, assessment reports, and revenue records for Jammu. This lack of comprehensive literature on agriculture in India and Jammu can pose a challenge for farmers who are seeking to improve their farming techniques and yields. It is important for researchers and experts to produce more accessible and practical resources that can benefit the agricultural sector in these regions. The Jammu region's agrarian reforms under Dogra rule offer vast opportunities for study and analysis. Like all of India's major provinces, Jammu has a significant portion of agricultural land. So, the issues alone may be analyzed apart from the problems of the rest of India. This makes sense given that Jammu has been a textbook example of the misery brought on by pre-independence exploitative agriculture practices as well as sometimes occurring severe natural calamities. Certainly, a lot of issues remain unresolved in relation to the Jammu agrarian research. Hence, a researcher has a broad list of ongoing research problems.

²²¹ T. Bergmann, *Agrarian Reform in India: With Special Reference to Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and West Bengal*, (Michigan: Agricole Pub. Academy, 1984) p., 39.

Jammu had a completely agricultural economy, just like any other agricultural society, and agriculture was the main way for 87.5% of the region's people to make a living.²²² The agrarian system in the Jammu region in the 19th century is hard to study historically because there aren't many sources and they're hard to get to. However, some historians have managed to gather information from the available sources, such as colonial reports, land revenue records, and the personal diaries of travelers who visited the region during that time. Additionally, oral traditions and folklore have also been used to reconstruct the agrarian system in the Jammu region. The majority of the information we have about Jammu's economy comes from colonial records and settlement reports, particularly those kept by the British government, which mediated affairs from Punjab before settling residents in the state in the late 19th century.

The geological evolution, early history, geographic, political, cultural, and economic changes that the valley of Kashmir went through in the past are well known. However, the early history of the Jammu province is a mystery because there isn't a single record of what happened before the 18th century that could shed some light on what happened. Because there aren't many historical records, it's hard for historians to fully understand the region's pre-colonial past. This has led to a lot of speculation and debate among historians. Nevertheless, archaeological evidence suggests that the Jammu region has a rich cultural heritage dating back thousands of years. In the 12th century, Rajputs in the province of Jammu set up separate estates and principalities, such as Jammu, Kishtwar, Bhandarwah, Basohli, Reasi, etc., which they ruled as independent monarchs.²²³ Until Raja Ranjit Dev, son of Dhruv Dev, proclaimed himself ruler of the principality of Jammu in 1730 A.D., very little was known about the successive regimes that ruled the different regions

²²² Ganga Nath, Report, on Agriculture 1897, *Jammu and Kashmir, SAR, Jammu*, p.,15.

²²³ Wali Mohd Aseer Kishtwari, *Focus on Jammu and Kashmir*, (Jammu: Crescent House Publication, 2003), pp., 215-19.

of the province from time to time, with the exception of the fact that Raja Jamboo Lochan, who lived in the 9th century A.D., founded the city of Jammu. Based on what we know now, Agnivarna, the first Raja of the Dogra dynasty, is thought to have settled near Kathua at a place called Parol. His son later grew his power to include the area west of Jammu Tawi. Bahu Lochana and Jamboo Lochana, two sons of the fifth Raja Agnigarbha, are said to have built the Bahu Fort and the town of Jammu, respectively. There were four more Rajas in succession.²²⁴ However, when Sikh rule was established in Punjab, Maharaja Ranjit Singh annexed his lands, including Jammu and all other neighboring regions. In the court of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in Lahore, Mian Kishore Singh, a direct descendant of Raja Dhruv Dev, held a prominent and prestigious position. The annexation of Jammu and its neighboring regions by Maharaja Ranjit Singh marked the end of the reign of the Rajas in the area. Despite this, Mian Kishore Singh, a descendant of one of the Rajas, was able to maintain his status in the court of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in Lahore. In his teens, his son Gulab Singh enlisted in Ranjit Singh's army and eventually rose to the rank of accredited lieutenant. In his early career Gulab Singh made the rank of *Jagirdar* and subsequently moved to Lahore in 1809 where he was appointed as commander of a small Sikh army under Ranjit Singh. Ranjit Singh launched several campaigns against the Afghans subsequently where in Gulab Singh demonstrated his military abilities.²²⁵ For his military skills and leadership, he got Jalandhar as an additional *Jagir* and emerged as one of the trusted commanders of Ranjit Singh. Mian Dido ruled Jammu principality, posed a great challenge to Sikh Rule. Gulab Singh with the help of his Dogra followers attacked his military garrison in Jammu fort and successfully drove him out.

²²⁴ B. M. C. Ellison, *A Gazetteer of Kashmir and the Adjoining Districts of Kishtwar, Badarwah, Jammu, Naoshera, Punch and valley of Kishanganga*, Jammu 1873, p., 19.

²²⁵ P.N.K. Bamzai, *Cultural and Political History of Kashmir*, pp., 657-660.

Subsequently, Gulab Singh led campaigns in Kishtwar and Ladakh.²²⁶ For these services to the Sikh Government, he was rewarded with the title of Maharaja and was granted the territory of Jammu. Once installed in Jammu, he consolidated and extended his authority over other principalities in adjoining areas, and eventually to Ladakh.²²⁷ The subjugation of Ladakh and Baltistan by Gulab Singh was nonetheless looked upon with disfavor by the British authorities. They had been unable to check him, but when in 1841 he sent his armies to Tibet, it caused a stir in Calcutta, and the British Indian Government became uneasy with the growing power and status of the Dogra chief. The British authorities were concerned about the potential threat that Gulab Singh's growing power and status could pose to their own interests in the region. As a result, they kept a close eye on his actions and movements. The British wanted to extend their territorial control in the northern reaches of the Indian subcontinent, and this wasn't possible without dealing effectively with Sikh power in Punjab. They sought alternatives to Sikh rule in order to achieve their objectives. This was possible only by joining hands with non-Sikh nobles. Gulab Singh played an important role in the Sikh court of Lahore. Gulab Singh's alliance with the British helped him become the ruler of Jammu and Kashmir, which became a princely state under British suzerainty. This move weakened the Sikh Empire and paved the way for British control over Punjab. The British saw in him a promising collaborator who would help them achieve their political ends. Pursuant to this, they signed a treaty with Gulab Singh, which is known as the Treaty of Amritsar. In 1846, with the Treaty of Amritsar, Gulab Singh was made the absolute ruler of Jammu and Kashmir. The British hoped to extend their political hegemony through the agency of Dogra rulers.²²⁸

²²⁶ Bamzai, *Cultural and Political History of Kashmir*, p., 662.

²²⁷ Bamzai, *Cultural and Political History of Kashmir*, p., 664.

²²⁸ Bamzai, *Cultural and Political History of Kashmir*, pp., 667-668.

Maharaja's military prowess and political acumen led him to become the founder of the Dogra dynasty and the first Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir. He established a strong and prosperous kingdom that lasted until India's independence in 1947.²²⁹ Under his leadership, Jammu and Kashmir saw significant growth and development, including the changes in existing systems of administration. His legacy continues to shape the region's history and politics to this day.

Gulab Singh accepted that the way the government was run was wrong and made small changes here and there to help him reach his own goals. His changes were put into effect right away. They were meant to end the beggar system and start rationing in the Kashmir valley. The shawl industry was organized, and a solid foundation for taxation was established. Under his rule, Gulab Singh was able to bring stability and prosperity to the region, which had previously been plagued by lawlessness and economic hardship. His efforts laid the foundation for the development of modern-day Jammu and Kashmir.²³⁰

Maharaja Gulab didn't want to rebuild Jammu, Kashmir, Baltistan, or Ladakh, nor did he have the will to do so. He thought of his purchase of Kashmir as an investment, and he was determined to make a lot of money from it.²³¹ He took away unregistered and tax-free jagirs,

²²⁹ Robert A Huttenback, "Kashmir as an imperial factor during the reign of Gulab Singh" (1846 1857), *Journal of Asian History*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (1968), pp. 77-108.

²³⁰ After Maharaja Ranjit Singh died, the Sikh government fell apart, and his successor, Kharak Singh, was not a strong leader. Sikh kings ruled for a very long time, but they were unable to provide their nation with an effective government. The situation of the people did not improve when the Sikhs were in charge, and the last five years of their rule were terrible for the people because the central government lost control. The governor and the military commander's petty disputes and intrigues gave the officials license to oppress the common people and quickly amass wealth. As a result, the people became disillusioned with the Sikh administration and began to look for alternative leadership. This eventually led to the annexation of Punjab by the British in 1849. The annexation of Punjab by the British marked the end of Sikh rule in the region, and it also brought about significant changes in the political, social, and economic landscape of Punjab. The British implemented various reforms that aimed to modernize the region and bring it into line with other parts of India under their control, for more details see, K.M. Panikkar, *Gulab Singh: Founder of Kashmir*, Martin Hope Kinson, 1930, pp., 108-119.

²³¹ Assessment report on *Jammu & Kashmir State*, 3rd December 1874, File. No .25/C/38, (State Archives Jammu). The document shows that Maharaja didn't want to carry out the reforms in a large and comprehensive manner, but to make changes wherever necessary in order to maximize the revenue to support the military campaigns. His legacy of changes in the fields of administration and agriculture is seen in the policies and functioning of his successors in later

including some that belonged to Hindu and Muslim priests. This gave the government the chance to collect an extra 200,000 *kharwars* per year.²³² Peasants in Jammu were not subject to the new law. Because the Dogra kings regarded it as their home territory and Kashmir as the conquered territory, they were still able to exercise their landownership rights. The Kashmiri people felt they were being treated as second-class citizens in their own country due to the disparity in land rights between Jammu and Kashmir. Political movements and demands for more independence and autonomy were eventually sparked by this resentment.²³³

The seized privileges were supposed by the Maharaja, who partially transferred them to a new category of conduits, generally Hindu Rajputs known as *Jagirdars*, *Muafidars* (tax-free landowners), and *Pattadars* (lease receivers of pieces of land). The system of *jagirdars*, *muafidars*, and *pattadars* was a way for the Maharaja to maintain control over the land and its people while also rewarding loyal subjects. This system was common in many parts of India during the time of the Maharajas. The *jagirdars*, *muafidars*, and *pattadars* were responsible for collecting taxes, maintaining law and order, and providing military service to the Maharaja.²³⁴ They were also expected to support the local community by building schools, hospitals, and other infrastructure. The Maharaja's control over Jammu, Bhandarwah, and Kishtwar before the treaty of Amritsar was limited due to the lack of comprehensive agrarian reforms during his brief ruling period. However, after the treaty was signed, he became the sole ruler of Jammu and Kashmir, unifying the state into a single political entity.

stages of the history of Dogra rule. This suggests that Maharaja had a pragmatic approach towards reforms and prioritized the military campaigns over comprehensive changes. However, his influence on the subsequent rulers indicates that his policies had a lasting impact on the governance of the Dogra rule.

²³² F.M. Hassnain, *British Policy towards Kashmir (1846-1921)*, (New Delhi: Sterling Publication, Pvt. Ltd. 1974), pp. 35-38.

²³³ Mushtaq Ahmad Kaw, *The Agrarian System of Kashmir, 1586-1819*, (Srinagar: Aiman Publications, 2001), p. 123.

²³⁴ Mushtaq Ahmad Kaw, *Land Rights in Rural Kashmir: A case study in continuity and change from late sixteen to late twentieth centuries*, *op. cit.*, p, 218; Indu Banga, *Agrarian System of the Sikhs*, (New Delhi: Sterling Publications, 1978), p., 206.

The Maharaja Gulab Singh Affair and the Jagir Question

Landowners, chief tenants, sub tenants, and non-agrarian workers made up Jammu's agrarian structure, or hierarchy. By class, we mean a group of individuals holding a particular position within the production system.²³⁵ The types of services provided during the production process and the nature of land ownership and control were used to further divide classes. Even fundamentally, renters, farmers, cultivators, sharecroppers, and other workers formed distinct groups. Because classes were, in theory and to some extent, distinct entities only as conceptual categories, they were not divided into water tight compartments.²³⁶ An owner and a tenant may be the same person. Landowners and their dependents were compelled to maintain reciprocal relationships during the production process through a type of vertical solidarity.

From the beginning to the end of the Dogra Raj, a series of assessments and settlements were conducted, but their primary purpose appeared to be the regularization of agricultural extraction and the maximization of land use. In Sikh times and during the beginning of Dogra rule, the *Kankut* (means appraisalment of the standing crop) determined the revenue.²³⁷ During the reign of Maharaja Gulab Singh, this system was replaced by the prevalent *Batai* system in northern India. In this system, the state has taken a specific portion of the Kharif harvest. The only difference between this system and the one prevalent in Northern India was that in Jammu and Kashmir State,

²³⁵ *Administrative Report of Jammu and Kashmir, 1892-93*, p., 117.

²³⁶ ARJK, 1892-93, p., 123.

²³⁷ Mohammad, Khushi, *Report on Kind revenue in Tehsil Ladakh*, (Srinagar: Kashmir Central Jail Press, 1925), p., 12.

the state's share was estimated when the grain was still in sheaves, rather than after it had been threshed.²³⁸

Maharaja Gulab Singh faced the issue of *Jagirdari* in his kingdom, with 3,115 jagirs granted in Dharmarth and numerous alienations. He remarked that he had received nothing in return for his investment, as most of the area was under hills and mountains and unfit for cultivation. He could not believe he would be able to make up the loss and earn the profit from his investment. Gulab Singh implemented several reforms to tackle the *jagirdari* issue, including the introduction of a new system of land revenue collection and the establishment of a centralized administration. Despite facing initial resistance from the *jagirdars*, these reforms eventually helped to stabilize the economy of his kingdom.²³⁹ It is pertinent to mention that the Maharaja introduces the system of checks and balances in place for the revenue collection process, so he established new revenue administrative units in Jammu, particularly in the Purmandal Tehsil and the areas that surrounded it.²⁴⁰ He implements stringent measures to deal with the misappropriation of revenue by the people in charge of collecting revenue. These measures included conducting regular assessments and audits of revenue collection, in addition to imposing severe punishments on individuals who were found guilty of embezzling funds. The Maharaja's efforts to improve revenue administration were widely praised, and they contributed to the system's increased

²³⁸ Mohammad, Khushi, *Report on Kind revenue in Tehsil Ladakh*, p. 13.

²³⁹ File no. 112/D/R, *Revenue Record*, 66-70, 31 March, 1848, Jammu and Kashmir, SAR, Jammu.

²⁴⁰ *File No.1 of 1873, (Old English Records)*, Jammu and Kashmir, State Archives Jammu. In the year 1852 A.D., Maharaja Gulab Singh split the whole valley into seven parts for administrative reasons and tried to follow British law. The seven parts were named Jammu, Kashmir, Ladakh, Gilgit, Baltistan, Poonch and Mirpur. This administrative division continued until the state of Jammu and Kashmir acceded to India in 1947. However, due to the incompetence and illiteracy of the Kashmiri population, this endeavour was unsuccessful. Gulab Singh appears to have been persuaded that it was necessary to adopt the British legal system after the people of Punjab were provided with the immediate relief that was provided by the regular settlements. Despite the failure of the attempt to follow British law, Gulab Singh continued to modernize Kashmir by introducing various reforms such as a new system of revenue collection and improvements in infrastructure. These efforts laid the foundation for the modernization of Kashmir under his successors. Baden Powell, *Land System of British India*, Low Price Publication, New Delhi, (reprint) 1990, pp., 532-34.

efficiency and transparency.²⁴¹ During the Dogra rule, a number of villages were partly or wholly granted to *Jagirdars* in lieu of the service rendered to the Maharaja or his predecessors, from which they received land revenue. Some of these jagirs were in kind, others in cash; some were in perpetuity, others at the pleasure of the ruler. The *jagirdars* were responsible for collecting the revenue from the peasants and maintaining law and order in their respective jagirs. They were also expected to provide military support to the Maharaja during times of war or unrest.²⁴²

In the year 1852 A.D., Maharaja Gulab Singh split the whole valley into seven parts for administrative reasons and tried to follow British law. On similar pattern small revenue units were established in Jammu region as well. However, due to the incompetence and illiteracy of the Kashmiri population, this endeavor was unsuccessful. Gulab Singh appears to have been persuaded that it was necessary to adopt the British legal system after the people of Punjab were provided with the immediate relief that was provided by the regular settlements. Despite the unsuccessful attempt, Gulab Singh continued to implement administrative reforms in Kashmir, including the establishment of a centralised system of revenue collection and the construction of roads and bridges to improve communication within the region. These efforts laid the foundation for modern-day Jammu and Kashmir.²⁴³ In 1852, the state was divided into three provinces for administrative purpose;²⁴⁴ the frontier district of Ladakh and Gilgit; Kashmir province (including the districts of Anantnag, Baramullah, and Muzafarabad); and Jammu province (districts of Mirpur, Reasi, Jammu, Udhampur, and Kathua). It also includes Guro Hunza and Jammu's adjacent territories. The two provinces of Jammu and Kashmir were run by *wazir-wazarat*, who were ministers who

²⁴¹ File no. E/1644/29, Nov 1877, *Settlement Report Jammu and Kashmir SAR*, Jammu.

²⁴² Michael Brecher, *Kashmir in Transition: Social Reform and the Political Future*, International Journal, Vol. 8, No. 2 (Spring, 1953), p. 107.

²⁴³ File no. 25/C/38, *Administrative Report 1891*, Jammu and Kashmir SAR, Jammu.

²⁴⁴ W.R. Lawrence, *Provincial Gazetteers of Kashmir and Jammu*, New Delhi: Rima publishing house, 1985), p.2.

worked at the Maharaja's court. The *wazir-wazarat* were responsible for the administration of the provinces, including collecting taxes and maintaining law and order. They also had the power to appoint officials and judges within their jurisdiction.²⁴⁵ Jammu region except the Poonch principality which remained independent till the later Dogra rulers held the control, were generally inspected and supervise by the Maharaja himself. ²⁴⁶ But he was able to improve the lives of peasants by putting rules in place for assessing and collecting taxes. This allowed him to improve the situation of the peasants. But the failure of these attempts can most likely be attributed to the arbitrariness followed by the revenue staff, which met their favored needs. This was the case because these decisions met the needs of the revenue staff.

The prosperity and contentment of the people were wholly reliant on the agricultural sector, which had a significant impact both on the people's inherent nature and on their ability to advance.²⁴⁷ Under Gulab Singh, the land revenue was of great significance and was his main source of income. In every village, *Zailadars* signed off on the income from the land and paid a cess equal to 1/2% of the gross income from the land. They had full freedom to extort as much as they could. When Gulab Singh was in power, the revenue from the land he owned was of critical importance and served as his primary source of income. *Zailadars* lived in every village and were responsible for collecting land revenue, for which they were required to pay a cess equal to 1/2 percent of the total output of the land. They were allowed complete leeway to extort as much money as they possibly could.²⁴⁸ It was waste land that the ruler wanted to be reclaimed as soon as possible, so

²⁴⁵ File No.1 of 1873, (Old English Records), Jammu and Kashmir SAR, Jammu.

²⁴⁶ K.M. Panikkar, *The Founding of Kashmir State*, (New Delhi: Martin Hope Kinson, 1953), p. 102-3.

²⁴⁷ Saligram Kaul, *The Biography of Gulab Singh*, (Srinagar: Saligram press, Srinagar, 1923), p. 229.

²⁴⁸ Wingate, *A Preliminary Report of Settlement operation in Kashmir and Jammu*, London: H. M. stationary office, 1888), p. 56. Andrew Wingate was named the Settlement Commissioner in 1887. His job was to look at the land in Kashmir and make suggestions based on what he saw. He called the state's land system "Ryotwari in Ruins" and argued that Kashmiri peasants should have the right to live there. He argued that the land revenue system in place in the Valley had left the coffers of the state empty due to a class of officials between the state and the peasantry.

Maharaja Gulab Singh accepted some slight relaxations that were made in regard to the newly-broken land (*nau-tor*), which were made for large areas. Because His Highness enjoyed horses so much, a certain number of grass rakes were set aside for the cultivation of land.²⁴⁹ Due to the fact that there were still possibilities for increasing control over the revenue, Maharaja Gulab Singh worked to improve the Land Department. He also introduced new policies and regulations to ensure efficient management of the reclaimed land and to maximize revenue generation from it. The Land Department under his leadership became a model for other states in the region.²⁵⁰

The agricultural system of Jammu and Kashmir did not undergo any perceptible transformations as a result of the reign of Maharaja Gulab Singh. He adhered to the Sikh protocol, which stipulated that the state be given fifty percent of the Kharif harvest in addition to four *traks* for each *Kharwar*. The rabi crop was subject to a tax that was equal to one-half of the share of the output as well as three *traks* every *Kharwar*.²⁵¹ This was in addition to a number of additional cesses. In actuality, the farmers were required to hand over to the state in the form of numerous taxes a sum that was much more than the allotted portion of the overall production. These levies consist of the *nazarana*, which is collected four times a year, and the *tambol*, which is collected when a marriage takes place. Around the year 1850, a British spy working in the court of the Maharaja named Mirza Saifuddin categorized these fees into four main categories. These categories were as follows: state share income, *rasum*,²⁵² extra state taxes, and taxes voluntarily

Wingate's recommendations were not implemented at the time, but his report became an important reference for later land reforms in Kashmir. His advocacy for granting occupancy rights to peasants was seen as a precursor to the land reforms introduced by Sheikh Abdullah in the 1950s.

²⁴⁹ *Administrative report of Jammu and Kashmir State*, Jammu and Kashmir SAR, Jammu, (1885-87) Also see, Sukhdev Singh Charak, *Life and times of Maharaja Ranbir Singh*, (New Delhi: Jay Kay Book House, 1985), p. 126.

²⁵⁰ Wingate, PRSOKJ, p.32.

²⁵¹ The scale of weight that the government used to collect their allotment of grain was 6 *seers* = 1 *trak* = 1 *kharwar*; for additional information on this topic, see Thorpe's book *Kashmir Misgovernment*, page 33.

²⁵² The *rasum* was essentially a portion of the money that was taken from each village by the official in charge of collecting it as their personal share.

paid by the farmers. Yet, the method of levying taxes was not standard across the board; rather, it showed a great deal of variety. In the event that they farmed the land, Kashmiri *Pandits* (Brahmins), *Saiyds*, and *Peerzadas* were required to pay an additional four *traks* on top of the one *trak* per *Kharwar* that they were already required to give the state.²⁵³ The agricultural reforms that were implemented during this time period did not significantly alter the destiny and position of farmers, who were subjected to an incredible amount of pressure from a variety of organizations.

The Modus Operandi of Ranbir Singh and the Agrarian system of Jammu (1858-1884)

Soon after ascending to the throne, Maharaja Ranbir Singh conducted a number of experiments to improve the revenue assessment and reduce the tax burden on cultivators.²⁵⁴ The state's system of land tenure and taxation was inequitable and rife with corrupt practices; the system of revenue collection was so ruthless that agriculturalists preferred to abandon cultivable land rather than face the rigors of tax payment. These factors contributed to widespread poverty and a decline in agricultural productivity, exacerbating the already dire economic conditions in the region. As a result, many people were forced to migrate to urban areas in search of work and better living conditions. The condition of the peasants in Kashmir valley was difficult as compared to Jammu. In Jammu region the topography allowed peasants and cultivators to earn the alternate means of livelihood, while in Kashmir at that time agriculture was the main occupation.²⁵⁵ Amid of such situation Ranbir Singh ascended the throne and Succeeded Gulab Singh as the Ruler of Jammu and Kashmir. Maharaja faced various challenges and the taxation was one of them.

²⁵³ Wingate, *A Preliminary Report of Settlement Activities in Kashmir and Jammu*, p., 38.

²⁵⁴ Gwasha Lal Kaul, *Kashmir through the Ages*, (Srinagar: Chronicle Publ. House, 1963), p., 107.

²⁵⁵ File no. A/56/D, *Foreign Dept, (K. W) Secret E, March 1883, Consult. 86*, NAI, New Delhi.

Land tax reforms in *Ranbir* the most significant concession, which had far-reaching effects on the rural and urban populations of the valley, was the abolition of the obnoxious (unacceptable) *Takkee tax*, which had been imposed during Afghan rule and continued afterward. Instead of four *traks*, the peasants were required to pay two types of taxes: the legal *koul* and the illegal *rasum*. The land tax reforms in *Ranbir* aimed to alleviate the burden on the rural and urban populations by abolishing the *Takkee tax*, which had been a source of discontent for many years. The introduction of two types of taxes, legal *koul* and illegal *rasum*, was expected to bring some relief to the peasants.²⁵⁶

However, under the Maharaja, the demand for land revenue remains relatively unchanged. In the state, revenues were collected in cash, while elsewhere they were collected in kind. Unknown numbers of subordinate state officials preyed on farmers without oversight for years.²⁵⁷ In normal years, the government's share of the harvest was nominally fifty percent, but the cultivator had to pay a substantial amount in cesses and taxes for his portion. The officials of the state observe the cultivator from the time of sowing until the ripening of crops; prior to this, a rough estimate of probable yield is made, and the share ultimately taken is rarely less than half of this.²⁵⁸ In order to pacify the cultivators Maharaja has initiated some agrarian reforms in order to bring some relief to the producers.

In 1859, the whole state was split up among *kardars* (people who had a lot of power and land grants). It was the responsibility of the *kardars* to acquire as much grain as possible for the state. The *kardar* compartmentalized his load into two additional belts. In the lowest belt, he

²⁵⁶ File NO. 432 of 1871, Report of *Revenue Department*, Jammu and Kashmir, SAR, Jammu.

²⁵⁷ Walter Lawrence, *Valley of Kashmir*, pp., 400-401, see also *Jammu and Kashmir Administration Report*, 1923-24, p., 47.

²⁵⁸ Walter Lawrence, *Valley of Kashmir*, p., 403.

permitted rice cultivation, and in the highest belt, he prohibited rice cultivation. His objective was to acquire as much grain as possible for the state. The *kardar*'s strategy ensured that rice cultivation was done only in the areas where it was most suitable, while the prohibited areas were used for other crops, thus maximizing overall grain production. This system also helped in preventing crop failures and ensuring food security for the state. In the Jammu region, the areas now known as Ranbir Singh Pura and the present-day Akhnoor belt were chosen for the cultivation of rice.²⁵⁹ Land was allocated by the *kardars* to farmers on the basis of family size, with each “*nafre*” (Family) receiving four irrigated acres, each “*nim nafre*” (Half family) receiving two acres each and “*pao nafre*,” (single person), which was a bachelor, receiving only one and a half. This was done so that farmers could engage in intensive cultivation.²⁶⁰

The goal of every *kardar* was to amass as much wealth as possible. As a result, the *kardar* not only told the peasants what kind of crop they had to plant based on his preferred method of evaluation, but also what kind of evaluation method he would use. This system allowed the *kardar* to manipulate the market and ensure that he would be able to buy the crops at a low price, further increasing his wealth. The peasants had little choice but to comply with the *kardar*'s demands in order to survive.²⁶¹ Under the new system, rice, corn, millets, and buckwheat each made up three-quarters of the government's claim. Oilseeds, pulses, and cotton each made up nine-sixteenths. Through the year 1860, this continued. The rest was divided among the corrupt officials and the men of *Nizamat-Palton*.²⁶² This system of distribution of crops by the government seemed to favour certain crops over others, leading to a potential imbalance in the agricultural sector.

²⁵⁹ *Jammu and Kashmir Administrative Report*, 1923-24, pp., 61-63.

²⁶⁰ Walter Lawrence, *Valley of Kashmir*, p., 405.

²⁶¹ Walter Lawrence, *Valley of Kashmir*, p., 411.

²⁶² The *Nizamat-Palton* was tasked with the responsibility of compelling the farmers to tend to their fields, and as harvest time approached, they moved from village to village in order to retrieve the state's rightful possessions. The

Additionally, the corrupt officials and men of *Nizamat-Paltan* taking a share of the crops only added to the already existing issues in the distribution process.²⁶³ Maharaja divided agriculture lands into *chaklas*, each containing several *kardarships* and formed the collection of revenue in each *chakla* to the *chakldar*. Three to four villages formed one *chakla*, did not expect a large profit from the land. In this *chakladari* system of assessment, the average collections of five years prior to *chakladari* system were taken as the base. This system of assessment was first introduced for three years; later on in the year 1863, the completion of the first term assessment was renewed. Some slight enhancement in revenues took place at this time and system remained in vogue till 1873.²⁶⁴ In Jammu, Poonch, Basholi, Mirpur tehsils these *chaklas* were from the families who had worked in the administration, and played important role in revenue collection. In 1875, Mirpur and Kotli tehsils collected revenue which increased up 20 percent in subsequent years because of the efficiency in the collection methods. The distribution of land resulted the increase in production and productivity.²⁶⁵

An attempt was made in A.D. 1873–1874 to introduce a three-year *Raiyatwari* Settlement, which was a direct assessment with cultivators without the use of middlemen and a cash assessment. A suitable reduction in land revenue was also made, benefiting over three lakh cultivators in the valley.²⁶⁶ Due to contracts, the Maharaja also remitted approximately six lakh rupees. On their recommendation, the peasants were excluded from the payment of land revenue in cash in A.D. 1873, reverting to the *Amani* system, (payment of land tax in kind). In A.D. 1875,

Nizamat-Paltan was an important part of the region's agricultural system because they made sure that crops were grown and harvested correctly. Their efforts helped to ensure that the state had a steady supply of food and resources throughout the year. File no. 12/R/51, *Revenue Report* of Jammu and Kashmir of July 1874, Jammu and Kashmir, state Archives Jammu.

²⁶³ Walter Lawrence, *Valley of Kashmir*, pp., 411-12.

²⁶⁴ *Foreign Dept, Secret E, Consult. 239, January 1883*, NAI, New Delhi.

²⁶⁵ Walter Lawrence, *Assessment Report of Pratap Singh Pora Tehsil, Jammu*, Jammu and Kashmir SAR, Jammu.

²⁶⁶ Wingate, PRSOKJ, p., 55.

when the harvest was favorable, the state took two shares of the produce and left the cultivators with only one.²⁶⁷ This system was widely used in Jammu Tehsil and Purmandal tehsils respectively. Jammu remains the hotbed of these changes because of its location and as an administrative centre.²⁶⁸ The famine hit in 1877 AD, new contracts failed, and taxation was done entirely in kind. It was a particularly dry year, and the Maharaja sent the people of drought-stricken areas a total of about seven lakh rupees to help them get by. But the great famine of AD 1877–1879 made it impossible to keep using this system. It was easy to feel compassion for the Kashmiri boatswain.²⁶⁹ According to Younghusband, the decline of agriculture and widespread poverty began in the 1960s. If they had been living anywhere else, starvation and famine would have been the norm. Maharaja Ranbir Singh only returned about one *trak* of the *rasum* he had imposed. Further a cessation of treatment occurred that year. By proclamation, the *traki* tax on *shali* was finally eliminated in February 1878 A.D.²⁷⁰

Finally, in A.D. 1880, a new *Assamiwar khewat* was created, based on estimates of annual cash collections, but tax payments were expected to be made in kind or cash, depending on the availability of the cultivable. was made based on year-end collection estimates in cash, but revenue demand was either in kind or cash as the cultivable was able.²⁷¹ This assessment, known as a cash assessment, was supposed to be based on the average of collections over the previous three years. Although it was the responsibility of the *Hakim-i-Ala*, the Tehsildars had complete discretion over how much revenue would be collected in cash and how much in kind.²⁷²

²⁶⁷ Wingate, PRSOKJ, p., 57.

²⁶⁸ *Administrative Report of Jammu and Kashmir, 1878, Jammu*, p., 5-6.

²⁶⁹ Lawrence, *Valley of Kashmir*, p., 411.

²⁷⁰ F.E. Younghusband, *Kashmir*, (London: CreateSpace Independent Publishing, 1921). pp., 191-92.

²⁷¹ Wingate, PRSOKJ, p., 60.

²⁷² *Foreign Dept, (K W) Secret E, March 1883, Consult. 295-326, NAI, New Delhi.*

Under this system, the revenue was collected by *lambardars* and *patwaris*, who extracted additional taxes from cultivators. The villagers used to sell their sheep and cattle to pay the tax. The *assamiwar khewat* was especially harmful to the poor peasants. The weak were harmed by the arbitrary powers granted to *tehsildars* by the system for implementing the land revenue system in terms of cash and kind. This resulted in a double loss for both the cultivators and the government.²⁷³ The system also led to a decrease in agricultural productivity as farmers were forced to sell their livestock instead of using them for ploughing and transportation. Additionally, the burden of the tax fell disproportionately on certain communities, leading to social and economic inequality.

At the start of 1883, all *wazarats* (districts) reassessed land when landowners asked them to. In Jammu region Bhandarwah, Kishtwar, Bhandoli, Bhimber, Kotli the land reassessment was done according to the produce. After 12 years, there was a new land settlement, which showed that many zamindars had added a lot of empty land to their holdings without paying tax.²⁷⁴ However, the Maharaja remitted all revenue arrears on these for the previous twelve years. A settlement department was added to all district offices, and new *khewats* were issued to all landowners, with newly broken tracts added and river-eroded tracts subtracted. District officers (*wazir wazarat*) oversaw this settlement and land tax assessment work personally.²⁷⁵

There were numerous contraventions within the land revenue system. It was customary for the state to distribute a certain amount of grain for seed to each village. But these grains never reached the farmers; instead, they were distributed annually as arrears to the villagers' homes. The

²⁷³ Lawrence, *Valley of Kashmir*, p., 404.

²⁷⁴ Bates, Charles Ellison, *A Gazetteer of Kashmir and the Adjoining Tehsils Kishtwar, Bhandarwah, Kotli and Jammu of*, 1873, (Jammu: Ranbir Press 1901). p., 12.

²⁷⁵ Lawrence, *The Kashmir Gazetteer*, Vol. I, p., 34.

tehsildar had the authority to determine, on an annual basis, how much revenue demand should be in arrears. As the poor were unable to pay the revenue, the majority of tehsildars, in collaboration with the headmen and against illegal gratifications, entered even the walled village. The practice of slavery or forced labor, which had practically bankrupted the nation, was a further grave flaw of the previous taxation system.

So, it's clear that the Dogra's, especially Maharaja Gulab Singh and Maharaja Ranbir Singh, didn't have a set system for getting money from their land. Each successive system was more flawed and severe than its predecessor. The lack of a proper system for revenue collection resulted in widespread corruption and exploitation of the peasants. In addition, the assessment and collection methods were random. Andrew Wingate, the settlement officer in Kashmir in 1887, remarked that it was exceptionally difficult to distinguish between in-kind and cash payments. While Francis Younghusband, a resident of Kashmir, oversaw the entire system of taxation and collection, it was extraordinarily complex and functional due to his enthusiasm for corrupt practices.²⁷⁶ The corrupt practices of the tax collection system in Kashmir led to a great deal of suffering and impoverishment among the local population. The exploitation of the people by those in power resulted in a vicious cycle of poverty and oppression that was difficult to break.

Gulab Singh, who was king from 1846 to 1853, and Ranbir Singh, who was king from 1853 to 1885, both did everything they could to keep these classes loyal to the British. In the sameway that the British needed the support or silence of similar groups in India in the late 1700s in order to become colonial powers, it was easy for Kashmir to become a Dogra kingdom. The Dograkings also introduced several reforms that aimed to modernize the state, such as establishing a

²⁷⁶ File No. 12/E/R, 1879, (Old English Records) Jammu and Kashmir, SAR, Jammu, pp., 1-3.

postal system and introducing new crops. However, these reforms were primarily for the benefit of the ruling class and did not address the grievances of the common people. Once they were in charge, though, Kashmiri revenue administrators had to share their jobs with Dogras and other Hindus from British India who were brought in just to fill those jobs. During the later decades of the 19th century, this trend kept going as the British continued to gain more power in Kashmir. However, the old class of local officials managed the revenue administration all the way up until the very end of the 1800s, which caused the British a great deal of annoyance. The British eventually succeeded in replacing the old class of local officials with their own appointees, which led to further resentment and resistance from the Kashmiri population. This contributed to the growing tensions and eventual conflict between the British and Kashmiri nationalists in the early twentieth century. The state experienced a terrible famine in 1879–1880 that led to starvation and extreme poverty and revealed the deplorable state of the peasantry. To escape the conditions in the state, residents of Jammu's Akhnoor tehsil moved to Punjab and the areas nearby. The famine was caused by a combination of factors, including drought, crop failure, and British colonial policies that prioritized the export of grain over local consumption. Despite efforts to provide relief, the famine had long-lasting effects on the region's economy and society. The situation of the farmers in Kashmir was not all that different; they were already under stress from the corrupt practises and disarray in the tax collection system when famine struck hard. The impact of the famine was devastating, leading to widespread starvation, disease, and death. The migration of people from Jammu's Akhnoor tehsil to Punjab and nearby areas was a desperate attempt to survive and find better living conditions.²⁷⁷

²⁷⁷ File no. 1891/R/nos. 295-326, Letter from Lawrence, Settlement officer to Colonel R.P. Nisbet, revenue officer in Punjab, Dec 2, 1889, Foreign Department, NAI.

Maharaja Pratap Singh's New Land Settlement, (1885–1925).

The selection of a British resident to serve in Kashmir was an essential step that had to be taken in advance of the introduction of comprehensive reforms in the Dogra State. Regardless of the political manoeuvres and intrigues that the British were involved in when they installed Pratap Singh as the ruler of the state, the Muslim subjects of Kashmir found that the British intervention was a blessing in disguise for them. In 1885, throughout Pratap Singh's reign, the British set up permanent residence in Jammu and Kashmir. At that time, the British Resident comprised, controlled, and were supposed to head the Council of Royal Court, which was the vehicle through which the British exerted their proactive control over the Dogra administration.²⁷⁸ As a result of this, the Dogra administration felt compelled by the British to undergo reform measures in land development control under the auspices of their two experienced settlement officers, Andrew Wingate, and Walter Roper Lawrence. The British Resident also had a say in the appointment of high officials in the Dogra administration, which further strengthened their control over the region. This marked the beginning of a new era in the history of Jammu and Kashmir, where British influence played a significant role in shaping its political and administrative landscape. The British Resident's control over the Dogra administration led to a shift in power dynamics, where the British played a significant role in shaping the political and administrative landscape of Jammu and Kashmir. This period marked the beginning of a new era in the region, where reform measures were implemented under the guidance of experienced settlement officers, Andrew Wingate and Walter Roper Lawrence.

²⁷⁸ P. N. Bazaz, *The History of Freedom in Kashmir*, pp., 130-33.

Maharaja Pratap Singh established a new land revenue settlement in Jammu and Kashmir, that was similar to the economic system of other parts of the Indian subcontinent. Andrew Wingate described the system as “ryotwari in ruins”. When the resident was in the state during the reign of Maharaja Pratap Singh, the British Indian Government had greater control over the Dogra administration. The British government tried to convince the Maharaja to fix and update the state’s broken and out-of-date tax system.²⁷⁹ The Maharaja was persuaded to give the job of settling land in the state to an English officer. In 1887 A.D., Andrew Wingate was given the responsibility of introducing regular settlement in the state. On January 17, 1887, Andrew Wingate joined as a settlement officer.²⁸⁰ The state had previously struggled with corruption and inefficiency, so Wingate’s appointment as a settlement officer was significant because it signaled the start of a new era in land management and revenue collection. His expertise and impartiality helped to streamline the process and ensure that landowners received fair compensation for their holdings. For the Dogra State to make a lot of changes, they had to appoint new officer and introduce many changes. The introduction of a lighter revenue assessment to be collected in lieu of cash; the abolition of the revenue-farming system; the end of state monopolies; and the modification of existing taxes and duties.²⁸¹ Most important of all these changes were the introduction of new land settlements in the State.

To understand the new land settlement, you need to know how the peasants in the valley lived. Kashmiris were poor for the first time in their history before the Dogra’s took over. Their situation is described in a number of reliable sources and travelogues from that time. In addition to losing land ownership rights, the peasants also lost occupancy rights. As stated previously, only

²⁷⁹ Wingate, PRSOKJ, pp., 1-3.

²⁸⁰ File No. D/12/E, 1886, (Old English Records) Jammu and Kashmir, SAR, Jammu, p., 1.

²⁸¹ *Jammu and Kashmir State Handbook*, British Empire Exhibition (Jammu: Ranbir Press, 1924), p., 14.

the property rights of Kashmiri peasants were confiscated. The new law did not apply to the peasants of Jammu because the Dogra rulers had always considered Jammu to be their home and Kashmir to be the land they had acquired.²⁸² The social stratification played important role in the agricultural workforce in Jammu region.

Within the cultivating classes, stratification was primarily based on the ownership of economic resources and the land beneath them. On the basis of the available data, we could only classify the peasantry into three broad categories: peasant proprietor, tenant, and landless labourer. The caste dominated the organization of agriculture at the base level. The caste of the peasant inhabitants also provides insight into the type of peasant, i.e., whether they were settlers brought in by princes or the original, indigenous people. The majority of the villagers in Jammu province belonged to the cultivating class, which included numerous tribes such as the Sarkar, *Thakkars*, *Jat Lobana*, *Bagal Charak*, *Brahman*, *Gujjar*, *Rajputs*, *Salaria*, *Syed*, *Katal*, and *Manhas*, among others. The *Thakkars* were the most prominent cultivators in the hills. Brahmans and *Charaks* also owned a substantial amount of land. The diversity of the tribes in the cultivating class highlights the heterogeneous nature of peasant communities in Jammu province. The dominance of *Thakkars* in hill agriculture and the ownership of land by Brahmans and *Charaks* suggest that social stratification existed within the peasant class.²⁸³

Most of the people who lived in Akhnoor Tehsil in Jammu Region were skilled farmers from the Gujjar, Brahman, and Jat tribes. The Brahmans, who constituted 29% of the total cultivating tribe of the Udampur Tehsil, along with the *Takkars* (10%), *Meghs* (8%) and other

²⁸² Edward Frederick Knight, *where three Empires Meet, Travel in Kashmir Tibet and Gilgit*, (Srinagar: Gulshan Books, 2007), p., 29.

²⁸³ R.C. Dubey., ARS, (Lahore: Govt. Press, 1914), p., 27.

scheduled castes, were the most diligent cultivators and the best landowners.²⁸⁴ Villagers of the Tehsil. Infrequently did the Rajputs of Udampur Tehsil cultivate their own land, despite controlling the majority of the tehsil. The statement is supported by the fact that there was a social taboo against higher caste people ploughing, which necessitated a large number of agricultural laborer's for ploughing and performing other agricultural services, leaving the rest of the cultivation process to the peasant.²⁸⁵ The social taboo against higher caste people ploughing necessitated a large number of agricultural laborer's for ploughing and performing other agricultural services, leaving the rest of the cultivation process to the peasant. This led to a significant economic burden on the peasants, as they had to pay high wages to these laborer's. This economic burden on the peasants often resulted in them being unable to afford basic necessities, leading to a cycle of poverty and debt. Additionally, this system perpetuated the caste hierarchy and limited social mobility for those in lower castes.

In the Ramnagar Tehsil of the Udampur District, neither the *Thakkars* nor the Brahmins were good farmers. The *Thakkars* were not born farmers, but they may do other farm work. But *Meghs* and people from scheduled castes were the best farmers when the Begar system didn't make them suffer. In hilly regions, the Gaddis, like the Gujjars, typically focused more on livestock than on land. Most of the land, though, was farmed by the *Malguzars* themselves.²⁸⁶

W.R. Lawrence, and Andrew Wingate's Locum Tenens

In 1893 A.D., Andrew Wingate began his work in Jammu, and later he moved to Kashmir and submitted his report. In his report to the government, he suggested several ways in which the

²⁸⁴ ARAT (Jammu: Ranbir Govt. Press, 1931), p., 11.

²⁸⁵ ARAT, p., 15.

²⁸⁶ *Review of the Assessment Report of Udampur Tehsil* by Walter. S. Talbot (Settlement Commissioner), Jammu and Kashmir State, Ranbir Printing Press, Jammu, 1911, p., 4.

land revenue assessment could be improved. Wingate began his colonization efforts in the state. Prior to his 19-year tenure as a revenue officer for the Bombay government, he was employed by the Maharaja government, and his reports occasionally included the most horrifying statements regarding the condition of the peasantry in the state.²⁸⁷ In the Jammu region, more particularly in Jammu and its adjoining areas, tax collection was done in a brutish manner, and corruption and extortion were the order of the day. Wingate's experience as a revenue officer gave him a unique perspective on the issues faced by the peasantry in the state, and his suggestions for improving land revenue assessment were based on this knowledge. His colonization efforts were likely motivated by a desire to improve the lives of those living in the region, who were suffering under corrupt and brutal tax collection practices.²⁸⁸

In his report, Andrew Wingate made a strong case for giving the peasants the more rights. Because there was a class of officials between the state and the peasants, the land tax system in the Jammu had left the coffers empty. Also, it turned people into wandering peasants who didn't want to work the land. So, to bring in more money and turn an unhappy and wasteful peasantry into a happy, thriving community, the peasants had to be given a stake in the land they worked, the state demand had to be set at a fair amount for a certain number of years, and a system of accounts had to be put in place that would keep track of everything.²⁸⁹ Andrew Wingate's report suggested that in order to improve the economic conditions of the peasants in both Jammu and Kashmir, should be given ownership of the land they work on, a fair tax system should be implemented and a proper accounting system should be established. This would not only bring in more revenue but also turn the unhappy and wandering peasants into a thriving community.²⁹⁰

²⁸⁷ U. K Zutshi, *Emergence of Political Awakening in Kashmir*, (Delhi: Manohar Publications 1986), p., 130.

²⁸⁸ Wingate, PRSOKJ, p., 40.

²⁸⁹ Wingate, PRSOKJ, p., 43.

²⁹⁰ Wingate, PRSOKJ, p., 47.

During the first regular settlement operations, cultivators were granted occupancy rights on undisputed lands. Maharaja Pratap Singh passed a regulation in 1894 A.D., known as “Pratap Code”, in favor of the Dogra peasants of Jammu region, under which they were approved waste land with full rights of proprietorship on very moderate terms, i.e., (a) free of revenue for the first five years, (b) after five years, at half revenue rates, and (c) total exemption from Begar.²⁹¹ The Pratap Code was a significant step towards the development of agriculture in the region, as it encouraged the cultivation of waste land. This regulation helped to increase agricultural production and improve the economic conditions of the Dogra Rajput’s. The Pratap Code was a landmark legislation that aimed to promote agricultural development in the region by granting ownership rights to cultivators on waste land. The Code proved to be a boon for the Dogra Rajput’s, who were able to increase their agricultural production and improve their economic conditions.

Wingate said that the peasants should own the land and have the right to live there permanently. He also recommended that they be given collective occupancy rights over the village’s graveyards, ponds, and other lands that had been entered into the village’s accounts. All cultivable waste land would be assessed and entered in the name of any cultivator agreeing to pay the assessment on it.²⁹² Wingate’s proposals were aimed at empowering the peasants and improving their economic status. By giving them ownership and occupancy rights, they would have a stake in the land and be motivated to work harder to improve their livelihoods.

Andrew Wingate was replaced in 1889. A. Wingate first appointed Lawrence to the position of assistant settlement officer in A.D. 1889.²⁹³ Under Lawrence’s guidance, the settlement officer’s office became more efficient and productive, leading to his eventual promotion to the

²⁹¹ *Administrative Report- 1937-38*, pp. 22-23; see, AHJKS, 1945, pp., 28-29.

²⁹² Wingate, PRSOKJ, p., 61.

²⁹³ Wingate, *Proposed Settlement Rules for Kashmir*, (Lahore: W. Ball & CO., 1889), p., 18.

position of settlement officer. Lawrence continued to serve in this role for many years, making significant contributions to the agricultural development of the region.²⁹⁴ Lawrence acknowledged the *Mirasdars*'²⁹⁵ dominant rights in his settlement, but he discovered that it was extremely difficult to exclude *Assami*'s²⁹⁶ with *Mirasdar* rights from new land tenants. Lawrence, therefore, entered all the wastelands. The farmers had to pay yearly taxes because they were *Mirasdari*, or true landowners. Farmers who failed to pay the tax were fined, and their farms were put up for auction, regardless of whether it was due to hunger or tragedy. After 30 years, the Ryotwari system, which is much friendlier, took the place of the *Mirasdar* system. or old fallow land, which was neither cultivated nor under the occupancy of any peasant, and recorded them as *Khalisa*, i.e., state-owned land.²⁹⁷

Lawrence, on the other hand, didn't think it was important to mark grazing areas in each village because the mountains were where the cattle naturally grazed and there was plenty of food for them. The only rule that was followed when assigning wastelands for grazing was that up to 10% of the cultivable area recorded at overview had to be set aside for village use.²⁹⁸ In Poonch principality, especially in the Kotli and Mirpur tehsils of the Jammu region, where people used to pay grazing tax to the state, people faced severe difficulties with these new land settlements.²⁹⁹

²⁹⁴ *Annual Administrative Report of the Jammu and Kashmir State*, (Samvat 1995-96) p., 25.

²⁹⁵ The farmers had to pay yearly taxes because they were *Mirasdari*, or true landowners. Farmers who failed to pay the tax were fined and their farms were put up for auction, regardless of whether it was due to hunger or tragedy. After 30 years, the Ryotwari system, which is much friendlier, took the place of the *Mirasdar* system, for more details see, P. J. Thomas and B. Natarajan, "*Economic Depression in the Madras Presidency (1825-54)*", *The Economic History Review*, Nov. 1936, Vol. 7, No. 1 (Nov., 1936), pp. 67-75 Published by: Wiley on behalf of the Economic History Society Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2590736>.

²⁹⁶ Tenants possessing permanent hereditary occupancy rights, the *assami* may be defined as man recognized by the State as the lawful occupant of land in Kashmir, *Foreign Department (Secret E), Feb, 1895, Consult. No. 13-19*, NAI, New Delhi.

²⁹⁷ Walter. R Lawrence, *The Kashmir Gazetteer*, Vol. I. (Delhi: Shubhi Publication, 1999), p. 430.

²⁹⁸ Lawrence, *Valley of Kashmir*, p. 431. In Ramnagar, Basholi, Kotli and Mirpur tehsils of Jammu province almost all lands were owned by state, but the land holders were *Malguzars*. They could sell and mortgage their land. File no. D/67/R, *Settlement Report*, of 1934, Jammu and Kashmir SAR, Jammu, p., 67.

²⁹⁹ *Settlement Report, 1934*, p., 69.

The Lawrence Settlement Report stated that everyone who agreed to pay the assessment set on the fields entered in his or her name in the settlement papers at the time of assessment was affected was settled permanent hereditary occupancy rights.³⁰⁰ Such an occupant could not be subject to eviction as long as the assessment was paid. However, neither a sale nor a mortgage could transfer the occupancy rights. But the settlement also gave people with special rights, like the Kashmiri Pandit *Chakdars*, the status of *assamis* and the right to live on their land forever.³⁰¹

In Jammu province's Basholi and Samba tehsils, people with special rights were given the right to live there. In 1894, the Maharaja and the council enacted the Pratap Code in favor of the Dogra Rajput's, granting them full ownership rights on waste lands on very reasonable terms, i.e., free of revenue for five years, after which only half revenue was applicable.³⁰² This move by the Maharaja and the council led to a significant increase in the population of Dogra Rajput's in these areas and helped in their economic growth. However, it also resulted in the displacement of many indigenous people who were living on these lands for generations.³⁰³ Lawrence's decision to accept some revenue in kind and some in cash served as an example of the administration's opposition to a cash settlement for the Jammu region which provide the clash of interest between administration and the peasants.³⁰⁴ The administration's opposition to a cash settlement for the Jammu region was exemplified by Lawrence's decision to accept revenue partially in kind and partially in cash.³⁰⁵ Officials and people with power in this area fought hard against a crop tax for two reasons. To begin with, it was clear that the cash settlement would stop tax collectors from

³⁰⁰ Walter. R Lawrence, *The Kashmir Gazetteer, Vol. II.* p., 439.

³⁰¹ *Settlement Report, 1934*, p., 84.

³⁰² N.N. Raina, *Kashmir Politics and Imperialist Manoeuvres: 1846-1980*, (New Delhi: Patriot Publisher, 1988), p., 54.

³⁰³ *Jammu and Kashmir State Handbook, British Empire Exhibition 1924*, p., 14, (Jammu: Ranbir Press, 1959).

³⁰⁴ G.L. Kaul, *Kashmir through the ages*, (Srinagar: Chronicle Publishing House, 1963), p., 117.

³⁰⁵ P. N. K Bamzai, *History of Kashmir*, p., 189.

making a lot of money off of the sale of grains, which they would have gotten from the peasants in kind.³⁰⁶ The supply of grains to the Jammu and the Kashmir was more important, and this could not be done without a lot of money from *shali* from the farmers. Despite the fact that the state was losing a substantial amount of revenue by accepting a cash-and-kinds settlement.³⁰⁷

As settlement officers, Andrew Wintage and Lawrence made changes to the state, especially in the Jammu region. The peasants and cultivators who faced a lot of difficulties and an excessive tax burden got some relief. For example, in tehsils like Kotli, Bhimber, Mirpur, Bisoli, and Bhaderwah, these agrarian reforms resulted in an increase in production and productivity under Dogra rule. The goal of these reforms was to improve the region's economy as a whole, and they also helped lessen the anger of the local people towards the Dogra rulers. However, these reforms were not enough to address all the grievances of the people, and there were still many challenges that needed to be addressed. But this area of research needs a separate case study to get into the greater details. Since Jammu is closer to Punjab in terms of geography, the British interference in any branch of administration was witnessed in Jammu much earlier than Kashmir. Revenue settlements under Maharaja Pratap Singh were one of the great initiatives to begin with. Additionally, the revenue settlements brought about significant changes in the agrarian structure of Jammu and Kashmir, leading to the emergence of a new class of landlords who were given ownership rights over the land. This further exacerbated the already existing socio-economic disparities in the region. Jammu witnessed these changes, though not in every tehsil with the same intensity as Jammu and its adjoining areas. Apart from the revenue settlement the English officers

³⁰⁶ ARJK, 1890-91, p., 47.

³⁰⁷ Lawrence, *Valley of Kashmir*, p., 439.

focused on the distribution of water to villages to support the irrigation system particularly in Jammu's R S Pura area.

Share of water to the village, the services of a canal officer are sought for one or two seasons to examine the available supply of water, the already existing channels, irrigation, and the means of expanding water distribution. In his proposals, he also showed and mapped out the existing channels, both used and disused, and the distribution of water to the fields, thereby determining the share of each village from each river or stream. Distribution of water to the village. For one or two seasons, the services of a canal officer are required to examine the available water supply, the existing channels, irrigation, and the means of expanding water distribution. In his proposals, he also depicted and traced the existing networks, both in use and in disuse, as well as the distribution of water to the fields, thereby determining the proportion of water allocated to each village from each river or stream.

In Jammu province, the state's ownership rights were absolute, as it held property rights over the majority of the province. In the tehsils of Mirpur, Ramnagar, and Basholi, the state owned nearly all of the land. The state-owned 86.1 percent of Kotli, 45.0 percent of Samba, 45.9 percent of the Mirpur Tehsil, 48.7 percent Kandi tract of Jammu Tehsil, 442.2 percent of Jasmengarh, 20.7 percent of Akhnoor, 12.0 percent of the *Maidaini* tract of Jammu Tehsil, and 94.6 percent of Ranbir Singh Pura.³⁰⁸ This concentration of land ownership in the hands of the state led to a lack of private property rights and limited opportunities for economic growth and development for the

³⁰⁸*Assessment Reports-* Kotli Tehsil, 1904, p.16; Samba Tehsil, 1914, p. 26; Kandi tracts of Jammu Tehsil, 1961(Samvat), p. 20; Jasmengarh Tehsil, 1924, p.11; Maidaini tract of Jammu Tehsil, 1925, pp. 30-31; Ranbir Singh Pura, 1916, p., 19.

local population. Additionally, this contributed to a sense of resentment towards the state among the people of Jammu province.

The ruler owned a large portion of *Khalisa* land known as *Assami* or *Malguzars*, who had to pay revenue directly to the state in the form of *Malikana*. The amount of *Malikana* varied depending on the productivity of the soil and availability of water, the strength of the proprietors, the proportions of tenants, and the disposition of the local administrator. The system of *Malikana* was prevalent during the Mughal era and continued even during the British Raj. The revenue collected through *Malikana* was used for the maintenance of the state and its administration.³⁰⁹ In Ramnagar, Basholi, and Mirpur Tehsils of Jammu Province, almost all land was state-owned, but *Malguzars* were the landowners.³¹⁰ They were permitted to sell and mortgage land. In other areas of Jammu province, the government owned a portion of the land and had numerous occupancy tenants in addition to tenants-at-will. Tenants with either occupancy rights or rights as tenants-at-law were given rights to cultivate the remaining lands over which the people had proprietary rights.

However, land was also traditionally associated with particular families. In the tehsils of Samba and Basholi, for instance, some privileged individuals were granted property rights. The continued possession of land by a single family for multiple generations despite changes in rulers and ruling dynasties in the region lends support to the notion that individuals or families had permanent proprietary or ownership rights over their landed property and that these rights were hereditary and transferable. Even if the state could compel the peasant to cultivate the land, the peasant's property rights remained intact.³¹¹ He was permitted to alienate in any way. He could

³⁰⁹ Lawrence, Walter Roper, *Kashmir*, p., 428.

³¹⁰ B.K. Sinha, and Pushpendra (ed.) *Land Reforms in India: An unfinished Agenda*, Vol. V, (New Delhi: Sage Publications 1998), pp., 139-169.

³¹¹ AHJKS, 1945, p.,14.

sell, buy, transfer, or inherit the property. But some owners, particularly those of the Rajput class, for whom agriculture was either impossible or unattractive, did not hesitate to sell their occupancy rights to Gujjar or Arian tenants when they entered the army or the Jammu Court. However, it is important to remember that occupancy tenants held the large area of 8,417 acres, which includes 2,390 acres of state-owned land. The *Malikana* were essentially *Malguzars*, and occupancy tenants who paid land taxes also farmed this land.³¹² The alternative term for the cultivating class was zamindar, which was essentially a cultivating class. During the Mughal era in India, the term “zamindar” was used to describe a village’s former owner.

But in most of tehsils of Jammu Province, agricultural debt was high and growing quickly. This was despite the fact that land was not being transferred in such large quantities. So, he asked the state government to look into what was going on and set up a committee to look into it. He also suggested a number of things that should be done to make the ban work better. One of these suggestions is to try out the Land Alienation Regulation in Jammu Province's tehsils of Mirpur, Bhimber, and Sri Ranbir Singh Pura for three years. On April 26, 1915, Maharaja Pratap Singh gave his blessing to the regulations that were written up.³¹³ The goal of the Land Alienation Regulation was to keep land from being sold by its original owners to outsiders, especially non-farmers, in order to protect the interests of the local people. The regulation was considered a significant step towards protecting the rights of the people and preserving their cultural identity.

In spite of this, the Hindu residents of Mirpur and Bhimber Tehsils presented Maharaja Pratap Singh with a petition requesting that the regulation be overturned. They believed that the rule had contributed to people’s feelings of unhappiness and had negatively affected the Hindu

³¹² Pandit Bhag Ram, *Annual Administrative Report of Jammu and Kashmir*, 1889-90, (Jammu: Ranbir Press, 1992). P., 23.

³¹³ File no. *Revenue Department*, 167/321/N-152-B, 1936-37, Jammu and Kashmir, SAR, Jammu, pp., 233-234.

population.³¹⁴ They claimed that it was an infringement on the unrestricted right to possess something as well as an attempt to safeguard the interests of one class at the expense of other classes. They also stated that putting restrictions on one's ability to own something was a step in the wrong direction for the progression of society. They also gave certain reasons for the failure of the regulation in their respective tehsils, such as the essence that the harvests in the state were almost always dependent upon sufficient rainfall, and in the absence of an adequate rainfall or artificial irrigation, the farmers had to work harder to achieve for money-lending in order to make a living. Second, they brought up the fact that the farmers were concerned about the value of their land decreasing as a result of the restriction that prevented land from being sold to people who did not work the land for agricultural purposes. Because agriculture was the primary means by which the people of the state support themselves, they needed the assistance of both labour and capital in order to improve it. However, this was not possible due to the fact that moneylenders no longer lend money without requiring some form of collateral (usually it was land).³¹⁵ The statement substantiated the fact that there was less potential for commercial activities because the regulation also prevented rentiers from land acquisition for the construction of a corporate entity or factory. Additionally, the statement backs up the fact that there was less potential for profit from commercial operations.

Maharaja Hari Singh paid extraordinary attention to modernizing the agriculture sector with his decree of the 'Agriculturist's Relief Act' 1925. This act allowed a borrower to bring his lenders before a court of law for a settlement, and it was Maharaja Hari Singh's contribution to the reform of agriculture. The Agriculturists Relief Act was a revolutionary step towards empowering

³¹⁴ *Assessment Reports*- Mirpur Tehsil, 1904.

³¹⁵ P. N. K. Bamzai. *A History of Kashmir*, p., 687.

farmers and ensuring their financial stability. This act played a crucial role in improving the socio-economic conditions of the farming community in Jammu and Kashmir.³¹⁶ Peasants and rural laborer's were liberated from the egomania of money creditors and lenders thanks to the Agriculturist's Relief Act. The next in a series of statements is that "The Land Alienation Act" has prohibited the transfer of agricultural land to individuals who are not engaged in agriculture. Apart from that, the agriculturists were given the privilege of property ownership as well as freedom from the taxes and levies that *Nazrana* and *Malikana* imposed. These legislative measures have helped to safeguard the interests of the farming community and promote agricultural development in the region. As a result, farmers were able to improve their livelihoods and contribute to the overall economic growth of Jammu and Kashmir. The administration of the state supported the provision of loans for the rehabilitation of agricultural lands, livestock, and the economy of rural areas by simplifying the application process and allowing for monthly payments. The rural populace and peasants who lacked property were urged to reside on Khalsa land with ownership rights, and they were given permission to do so. In addition to being a watershed moment, the passage of "The *Kahcharai* Act" levelled the playing field with regard to the application of the *Kahcharai* tax. The *Kahcharai* Act was a significant step towards reducing poverty and inequality in Jammu and Kashmir. It also helped to promote sustainable agriculture and rural development by providing support to farmers and peasants. In addition to this, it exempted owners of livestock for certain animals, depending on the number of animals and their ages.³¹⁷ With the purpose of enhancing the quality of the livestock, a large number of bulls of *Sindhi* and *Dhani* breeds were dispersed among a chosen group of farmers in a number of different locations. Forty more years have been added to the time frame of the land settlement. The practice of *bégar*, sometimes known

³¹⁶ *Land Revenue Regulation 1926* (Regulation 1), Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, Jammu, pp., 18-19.

³¹⁷ D. N. Dhar, *Kashmir-The Land and Its Management From Ancient Times to Modern Times*, p., 130.

as forced labor, was fully eradicated. The operations of the Agricultural Department, which were first limited to just the Kashmir Province, were gradually expanded to Jammu and the other northern parts. Initially, the Agriculture Department's operations were only confined to the Kashmir Province. As the operations of the Agricultural Department expanded, it played a crucial role in the successful implementation of the land settlement program.³¹⁸ The department provided technical assistance and training to farmers, which led to an increase in agricultural productivity and improved the standard of living for many rural communities. Moreover, the Agricultural Department also introduced new farming techniques and crop varieties that were better suited to the local climate and soil conditions. This helped to diversify the agricultural sector and reduce dependence on traditional crops like rice and wheat.

For Hari Singh, 'Justice is my religion,' he said at the Raj Tilak ceremony. 'He wanted to win the support of the people' by improving their lot after he and the British got into a fight soon after he became king in 1925. Hari Singh was a popular king who worked towards the betterment of his people by introducing several reforms such as land reforms, free education, and healthcare. He also played a significant role in the integration of Jammu and Kashmir with India after independence.³¹⁹ His travels through Western Europe left him admiring the progress made in both the agricultural and non-agricultural sectors of the region's economy. He launched the reform initiative, commonly referred to as "Hari Singh's blessing," in many fields, including medicine, agriculture, and teaching. From an agricultural standpoint, all undeveloped land close to settlements that was not yet entered as *khalisa* was *Shamalat Deh*. The villagers were all granted permission to use the land for a variety of activities. In addition, in some towns, the land of a

³¹⁸ D. N. Dhar, *Kashmir-The Land and Its Management*, p.,139.

³¹⁹ P. N. K. Bamzai. *A History of Kashmir*, p., 540.

deceased landowner who left no heirs was declared to be *Shamalat Deh*.³²⁰ This initiative had a significant impact on the rural economy, as it allowed villagers to cultivate more land and increase their income. It also helped to address the issue of landlessness among the rural population. The Maharaja passed the Agriculturist Relief Act in 1925 to prevent farmers from being exploited by predatory lenders charging exorbitant interest rates. A creditor could be sued by a debtor under this law in an effort to resolve outstanding debts. In some cases, the court may rule that the added interest should not be considered. The Agriculturist Relief Act also provided relief to farmers who were struggling to pay off their debts by allowing them to repay their loans over a longer period of time. This helped to reduce the burden of debt on farmers and allowed them to focus on improving their agricultural practices. It also stipulated that the combined interest could not be more than half of the initial investment. In addition, agricultural associations with the purpose of advancing agricultural practices were established. These associations provided a platform for farmers to share knowledge and expertise, and to collectively advocate for policies that would benefit the agricultural industry. As a result, agricultural productivity and efficiency improved significantly.

The Land Alienation Act of 1933 was signed into law, which was another important step taken to help the peasantry. This Act made it illegal for owners to sell more than one-fourth (25 percent) of their holdings for at least the first ten years, which was something that the Glancy Commission of 1932 had already suggested. The Land Alienation Act of 1933 was a very important law that protected the rights of peasants and stopped landowners from taking advantage of them.³²¹ This act ensured that the land remained in the hands of the farmers and prevented it

³²⁰ Modern Jammu and Kashmir State 1925-142, Accounts from the Annual Administrative Reports, Jammu and Kashmir, SAR, Jammu, p., 34.

³²¹ G.H. Khan, *Freedom Movement in Kashmir* (1931-1940), (New Delhi, Light and Life Publishers, 1980), pp., 339-351.

from being sold to wealthy landlords or corporations. It was done for the most part to monitor the transfer of land from the impoverished peasantry to the well-to-do people, as there were fears that the peasants, by selling all of their land, could make their situation much worse than it had been in the past if there were no such monitors. This was the primary reason why it was done. The peasants' interests were protected in this way, which was very beneficial. The act also aimed to promote stability and prevent social unrest by maintaining a balance of land ownership among the population. It was seen as a way to ensure that the rural areas remained productive and prosperous, which was crucial for the overall development of the country.

In addition to this, the 'All-Jammu and Kashmir Village Upliftment Association' was established in 1936 with the goal of eradicating educational, industrial, and economic backwardness among the peasant population.³²² These associations played a crucial role in the development of agriculture and rural areas, as well as in the empowerment of the rural population. They provided education, training, and support to farmers, helping them adopt modern agricultural practices and improve their livelihoods. This association was established in Jammu and Kashmir. The most significant action that was taken for the peasants' welfare was the development of cooperative organizations, which enabled the peasants to get loans at very low interest rates.

Alternatively, the court may order instalment payments based on the debtor's ability to make them. By taking these steps, we were able to liberate the peasant and other debtors from *Suhakar's* (moneylenders) Therefore, declarations were issued declaring agricultural property, livestock, agricultural equipment, seeds, etc. to be exempt from judicial attachment in order to satisfy redemption decrees.³²³ Overall, these measures aimed to promote sustainable agricultural

³²² G.H. Khan, *Freedom Movement in Kashmir*, pp.,35-37.

³²³ *Land Revenue Regulation 1926*, p., 41.

practices and alleviate the financial burden on farmers, while also protecting their assets from being seized by moneylenders. This helped to create a more equitable system for rural communities and support the growth of the agricultural sector.

The history of land ownership in the state was not homogenous across the under Dogra Rule. “In Kashmir, the land [belonged] to the Ruler, and the cultivators [were] his servants”.³²⁴ The Dogra rulers claimed ownership of land in Jammu through hereditary means, in Ladakh and Baltistan through expansionism, and in Kashmir through ‘transaction’ according to the treaty of Amritsar of March 16, 1846, when their founder, Maharaja Gulab Singh, bought Kashmir from the British for 75 lakh rupees.³²⁵ Under Dogra rule, the land in Kashmir was treated as a commodity to be bought and sold, with little regard for the rights of the people who lived on it. This system of land ownership contributed to the deep-seated grievances that ultimately led to the political mobilization of Muslims in State in the beginning of 20th century.

During the nineteenth century and the early part of the twentieth century, agriculture was the primary contributor to economy of Jammu and Kashmir. During this period, almost 95% of the population was actively working in this industry, which was also the primary source of revenue for the state.³²⁶ As a result, the agricultural sector of the economy has been a topic of discussion since it has a wide range of implications for Kashmiri society as a whole. When it comes to the history of Kashmir, this time period is also quite important because of the agricultural reforms that took place during this era. The Dogra Maharaja’s agricultural policy had one primary objective, which was to increase the amount of money in the Treasury of the government.³²⁷ While the policy

³²⁴ *Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh* (1890), Jammu and Kashmir, SAR, Jammu, p., 104.

³²⁵ P. N. Bazaz, *The history of freedom in Kashmir*, p. 123.

³²⁶ Ganganath Report, 1944, Jammu and Kashmir SAR, Jammu, p 30.

³²⁷ Ganganath Report, 1944, Jammu and Kashmir SAR, Jammu, p 30.

evolved through time, this primary objective remained the same. The influence of the British, which began during the reign of Gulab Singh, was another key factor that at various periods and places exerted pressure on the Dogra dynasty to modify the agricultural system of Kashmir.

Soon after the British gave Gulab Singh control of Kashmir, they put pressure on him to improve the lives of the native people and suggested that he put British people in charge of his territory. Nevertheless, the Maharaja refused this offer and instead let Mirza Saif-ud-Din, a Kashmiri, stand for the English at his court rather than the English themselves. In the year 1847, Lieutenant R. C. Taylor was sent to Kashmir in order to investigate the issues that the people of Kashmir were facing. Upon his return, he made numerous recommendations to Gulab Singh in order to improve the situation of the people. H. M. Lawrence, a British resident who was stationed in Lahore, travelled to Kashmir in the years 1849–1850. While there, he criticized the Maharaja for ignoring the guarantees that had been provided to Taylor, and he urged the Maharaja to strive for the economic improvement of the people. In the year 1852, the Brits once again brought up the subject of the employment of locals in Kashmir to keep an eye on the ineffective government there. Lawrence's recommendations included the establishment of a legislative council, the abolition of internal customs duties, and the appointment of more local officials to improve governance. These suggestions were aimed at promoting economic growth and ensuring better administration in Kashmir. During the reign of Maharaja Ranbir Singh, the British government often levelled allegations of poor administration against the maharaja. As a direct consequence of the event that occurred in 1872, the 'Official on Special Duty' was given his position in Kashmir. Oliver St. John, who was the 'Officer on Special Duty' in Kashmir at the time, made these remarks in his speech during the *dastarbandi* (coronation) of Maharaja Pratap Singh in September 1885: "When it comes to making the necessary advancements for the general welfare of its population, the state

of Jammu and Kashmir has fallen significantly behind India's majority states".³²⁸ The Officer on Special Duty suggested that the state of Jammu and Kashmir should adopt measures to improve its administration and economy in order to catch up with other Indian states. These recommendations were made during the coronation of Maharaja Pratap Singh in September 1885. In the year 1889, the Maharaja was removed from power, and his responsibilities were given to the state council. Lawrence was given the position of settlement officer in Kashmir, which was commanded by Amar Singh. Again, after the event that occurred at the central prison in 1931, the British representative in Kashmir urged the Maharaja that an English officer be appointed in Kashmir to monitor the region. As a result, Colonel Francis Younghusband was appointed as the British representative in Kashmir in 1931. He played a significant role in the development of tourism and infrastructure in the region.³²⁹

Gulab Singh was unable to completely alter the way the Sikhs had established the agrarian system after seizing control of Kashmir. Some minor adjustments were made, but they did not have a significant impact. He immediately claimed to be the sole owner of all lands in Kashmir because he believed he had bought Kashmir for 75 lakh rupees from the British. He thus stripped the peasants of the ownership rights they had previously enjoyed under the Sikh and Afghan regimes. His subjects therefore held the land as renters, and as such, they were obligated to pay the state *Haq-i-Malikan* as land revenue. They lost the right to occupy the land if they stopped paying the *Haq-i-Malikan*. He seized the jagirs that had been generously given during the Sikh rule, particularly by the previous Sikh governor, Sheikh Ghulam Moin-un-Din. This led to widespread discontent among the peasants, who were already struggling to make ends meet due to

³²⁸ R. L. Hangloo, *Agrarian System of Kashmir*, (New Delhi: Commonwealth Publication, 1995). P. 85.

³²⁹ Mirza Mohammad Afzal Beg, *On The Way to Golden Harvest-Agricultural Reforms in Kashmir*, (Jammu: Ranbir Government Press, 1951). pp. 9-12.

the high taxes imposed by the state. The situation was further exacerbated by the fact that the revenue officials were often corrupt and demanded bribes from the peasants in exchange for lower taxes.³³⁰

It would appear that Maharaja Ranbir Singh was more ingenious than his father ever was. In 1857, when the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir State took over the Gaddi, economy was in a terrible state. Under the leadership of Maharaja Ranbir Singh, the state's economy was revived by introducing various reforms such as the establishment of a state bank, improved irrigation facilities, and encouraging silk production. His efforts led to significant growth in agriculture and trade, which helped in the overall development of the region. Ranbir Singh decided to make a number of changes to the state's economy after looking at how it was doing right now. When he issued the Dastur-i-Amal, which was an order for *Kardar* to collect taxes, he did not make any unfair demands on the peasants, who were already poor. Second, the rates that are currently in place for the various crops were going to be lowered, as well as the extra charge of money from the zamindars, which is known as *mobiya* or *malba*, in the form of a tax on *pattu* and *ghee*, and also the house tax was going to be lowered. Ranbir Singh's changes included fair tax collection and lowering rates for crops and extra charges from zamindars, which helped the poor peasants. Additionally, he also lowered the house tax to promote overall economic development in the region.³³¹

With Pratap Singh rise to power as ruler of the princely Jammu and Kashmir state in 1885, significant changes took place in the state's agrarian structure in general and in Kashmir in particular. This had to happen because the British got involved in Jammu and Kashmir's politics

³³⁰ S. A. Naik, *Land Reform Measures in Kashmir During Dogra Rule*, Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, 2011, Vol. 72, PART-I (2011), pp. 587-603.

³³¹ Land Revenue Regulation 1923 (Regulation 1), Jammu and Kashmir, SAR, Jammu, p. 18.

after 1885, when a British resident was put in Kashmir. The land revenue settlements were a watershed moment in Jammu and Kashmir agrarian history. It not only gave the cultivators a sense of belonging, but it also freed them from the serfdom they had been subjected to prior to the settlement. Within a few years of the settlement, Kashmir had developed a stable, revenue-generating peasantry. According to Lawrence, the peasants paid their revenue on time, and the tehsil *chaprasi* (revenue clerk) rarely visited the village to collect it. Despite the presence of cholera in 1892 and the disastrous floods of 1893, there was no significant decrease in land revenue. This shows that the settlement had a positive impact on the economic and social conditions of the peasants in Kashmir, leading to a more stable and prosperous society.³³² However, it is important to note that this success was not without its challenges, as natural disasters and disease outbreaks still posed a threat to the region. Officials couldn't blackmail the peasants because the revenue was now fixed and couldn't be manipulated. The peasantry was also exempted from the extra cesses (*Rasum* princely state of Jammu and Kashmir in 1885, drastic changes occurred in the state's agrarian system in general and Kashmir in particular). This was unavoidable as a result of the British's direct intervention in the affairs of Jammu and Kashmir after 1885, when a British resident was appointed in Kashmir. The land revenue settlements were a watershed moment in Jammu and Kashmir's agrarian history. It not only gave the cultivators a sense of belonging, but it also freed them from the serfdom they had been subjected to prior to the settlement. Within a few years of the agreement, a stable, revenue-paying peasantry had emerged in Kashmir. According to Lawrence, the peasants paid their revenue on time, and the tehsil *chaprasi* (revenue clerk) rarely visited the village to collect it. Despite the presence of cholera in 1892 and the disastrous floods of 1893, there was no significant decrease in land revenue. Officials

³³² J.L.K. Jalali, *Economics of Food Grains in Kashmir*, (Lahore: Mercantile Press, 1931), pp. 107-8.

couldn't blackmail the peasants because the revenue was now fixed and couldn't be manipulated. The peasant was also relieved of the additional cesses (*Rasum*) that he had to pay to a slew of officials involved in revenue collection or *Jagirdars*.³³³ People's standard of living has also improved significantly. This indicates that the revenue system was reformed and made more transparent, leading to a fairer distribution of resources. As a result, the peasants were able to keep more of their earnings and invest in their own livelihoods, contributing to the overall growth of the economy.

The Agriculture Department was established in Jammu in 1902. Its goal was to assist farmers by introducing scientific methods, implementing them, and improving seeds and fertilizers. The Pratap Model Farm was established near the Shalmar Garden in Kashmir, in 1906 under the auspices of the Agricultural Department to popularize the use of better seeds and agricultural appliances, as well as introduce improvements in the mode of cultivation. W. S. Talbot was appointed Settlement Commissioner of Jammu and Kashmir in 1911 and served in that capacity until 1917. Settlement operations were primarily carried out under his supervision in the Jammu region, including Udhampur, Ramban, Kishtwar, Reasi, Ramnagar, Basholi, and Samba tehsils in Jammu province, and Kargil tehsil in Ladakh. M. Stow succeeded Talbot in 1917 A.D. The price of food grains increased significantly in 1920–21 as a result of the First World War, resulting in a severe scarcity of food grains in Kashmir. During his tenure, Talbot implemented various measures to improve land revenue administration and land surveys in the region. However, the scarcity of food grains in Kashmir in 1920-21 was a major challenge faced by the region during that time.

³³³ Justice H. Imtiyaz Hussain, *Land Laws in Jammu and Kashmir* (Revenue Manual), Vol. 1, (Srinagar: Law Journal Publication, 2007). p., 60.

Hari Singh initiated number of agrarian reforms across the state. Because of these reforms, farmers in Kashmir no longer had to pay bondage to the state or landlords, making them a watershed moment in the region's agrarian history. The reforms also allowed for the redistribution of land, which led to a significant increase in the number of landowners and a more equitable distribution of resources. This helped to improve the economic and social conditions of many rural communities in Kashmir. In 1933, those who had occupied land under the *assami* right prior to the enforcement of Lawrence's settlement were granted *milkiyat* rights (property rights), including the right of sale and mortgage, and *Hak-i-Malikan* (proprietary dues) and other levies, such as *Nazrana* to the Maharaja, were abolished. The reforms brought about a significant change in the power dynamics of the region, as the farmers were no longer at the mercy of their landlords or the state. Additionally, it paved the way for a more sustainable and prosperous future for agriculture in Kashmir. The Dogra regime was the first to recognize the peasant (*zamindar*) as a legitimate landowner. However, not all land categories saw a restoration of these rights. Lands owned by *Jagirdars* were largely ignored. The Alienation and Right of Prior Purchase Act was enacted in 1933 to prevent the sale and mortgage of agricultural land to people who had no experience farming. For the first decade after enactment, this law prohibited the landowner from selling more than a quarter of his holdings to outside parties. The Agriculturists and Improvement Act was enacted in 1933 with Maharaja approval coming a year later on May 14, 1936. For the peasant's, it was a huge relief. The law mandated that farmers be allowed to take out loans for agricultural purposes like land development and the furtherance of other agricultural endeavors. These should be paid back in manageable chunks. The act also established the Agricultural Credit Department to oversee the distribution of credit and provide guidance to farmers. This helped improve the overall productivity of agriculture in the region. These agrarian reforms proved to be effective for

both production and productivity, and also had profound impact on the post-independence land reforms in the State.

Conclusion

The Treaty of Amritsar, which was signed in 1846, made Jammu and Kashmir one country. The British India Government established the feudatory state in order to fulfil an immediate imperial requirement. This requirement was to reduce the power of the Sikhs by driving a wedge between their two primary factions, the Sikh, and the Dogra. During the time that the Dogra ruled Kashmir, the most important event in the region's history was the period of transition from the mediaeval to the modern era (1846–1947). It was during this time that the fundamentals of the agrarian system in Kashmir went through a period of profound transformation. The Dogra rulers also introduced new technologies and modern administrative systems, which helped in the development of the region. However, their rule was marked by oppression and exploitation of the local population, leading to widespread discontent and eventual demands for independence.

Before the coming of Dogra's, the State was ruled by different dynasties over the period of time. Every ruling dynasty comes up with their own set of agrarian structure that was operational in the region. After the commencement of Dogra rule, the life of the peasant class in terms of material possessions was not particularly good enough to reckon with. In the province of Jammu, the main crops were primarily of wheat, maize, cereals; in the region of Kashmir, it was rice, wheat, to some extent other variety of food grain as well. and in Ladakh, it was barley. In regions where rice production was limited, maize was also a prevalent crop. The fact that the peasant had very little to offer his family to ensure their continued existence was brought up in the chapter before this one, so it should come as no surprise. In Kashmir, the poor peasants were forced to subsist on the local fruits and vegetables. The same was true for the people who lived in Ladakh, whereas the farmers in Jammu were able to make a living off of a greater variety of crops, which made life

easier for them. Because the majority of the milk was used to make ghee, even the common people only drank a very small portion of it. They gave the moneylender the ghee in the hopes that he will lower their interest rates on the loans they had taken out. The common people of Kashmir favoured salty vegetables and drank salty tea twice or three times a day, which led to a higher consumption of salt and tea in that region, despite the fact that both of these goods were relatively expensive. They were so poor that the only utensils they could afford were made of clay or inexpensive metals.

Agricultural structure underwent the dramatic change with the introduction of the agrarian reforms by the Dogra's, including the tenancy reforms, changes in revenue collection and administration, occupancy rights to the cultivators, new settlements reforms and introduction of irrigation. Baden-Powell made a very insightful remark about the significance of land revenue in any government when he stated, "to assess and collect land revenue has been the chief care of all past governments for many centuries."³³⁴ This is a very accurate description of the function of land revenue in any government. In exchange for the protection, they provided to the cultivators, the rulers made it a practise to receive a portion of the agricultural produce grown by the people they protected. In essence, the ruler was the recipient of the share because it had been voluntarily donated. The disparity in the geographical characteristics of the three areas played an extremely important part in determining how each region's revenue system was structured. It is likely that the land revenue system that was in place prior to the establishment of Dogra rule was identical to the one that had been in place in the Sikh Empire.

Under the Dogra Rule, there were a number of taxations and settlements. The main goal of these seemed to be to make farming more organized and to get as much money as possible from the land. During the time of the Sikhs and the early days of Dogra rule, the *Kankut* was in charge

of setting the tax rate. During the time of Maharaja Gulab Singh, this system was replaced by *Batai*, which was used in Northern India. In this system, the government took a set amount of the Kharif harvest.

The land reforms and the reorganization of the land revenue administration were areas that held a great deal of interest for Maharaja Ranbir Singh. In the year 1859, he came to an agreement with the Kardars, who were powerful land agents, in which the land was divided up and given to each of them. This agreement proved to be a turning point in the history of Jammu and Kashmir, as it helped to stabilize the revenue system and brought about an increase in agricultural production. The Maharaja's interest in land reforms continued throughout his reign, leading to further improvements in the administration of land revenue. The Kardars subdivided the territory under their control into three belts: the lowest belt permitted rice cultivation; the middle belt permitted some rice cultivation; and the highest belt permitted no rice cultivation at all. The *Kardarids* divided the land that comprised their estates according to the *Nafree* system. This system involved each family unit receiving an allocation of four acres, the *Nim-Nafree* receiving two acres, and the *Pao-Nafree* receiving one and a half acres of irrigated land. In this scenario, the peasants barely produced enough because they were aware that any surplus would be consumed by officials from the state. The *Nafree* system ensured that each family unit had a fixed allocation of irrigated land, but the state officials consumed any surplus produced by the peasants, leaving them with barely enough to survive. This created a disincentive for the peasants to produce more than what was necessary for their own subsistence.

³³⁴ Baden Powell, *Land System of British India*, (New Delhi: Rupa Publications, reprint) 1990, p.3.

In the year 1873, there was an effort made to initiate a Raiyatwari settlement that would last for three years. This would have been an easy evaluation with the farmers because there would have been no middlemen. However, the effort was ultimately unsuccessful due to resistance from the landlords, who feared losing their power and influence over the farmers. This setback would delay progress towards a more equitable agricultural system for many years to come. Additionally, the Maharaja paid some contractors the overdue amount of 6 lakh rupees. When the harvest in 1875 was successful, the state took two shares of the produce for itself while leaving one share for the cultivators. However, in the wake of Kashmir's Great Famine of 1877–1879, which claimed the lives of approximately one-third of the region's total population, this system was finally put out of use. In the year 1877, no new contracts were executed, and the state's share was only collected in the form of goods and services. This resulted in confusion and mayhem, which ultimately led to the demise of the recently implemented settlement system. The Great Famine of 1877-1879 had a devastating impact on the region, and the state's inability to collect their share of the produce worsened the situation. The confusion and mayhem that ensued ultimately led to the abandonment of the settlement system, which had been implemented only recently.

The British government in India tried several times to get involved in Jammu and Kashmir's internal affairs, but their main goal was to own land. When British officials went to the state, they saw for themselves how hard life was for the peasants there. It was abundantly clear that the government of the United Kingdom ought to investigate the situation. Because of this, the government of the state had to work with British officials to improve the state's farming conditions. The British government was interested in Jammu and Kashmir's agricultural sector, but it wasn't all about helping people. They also saw it as a way to make more money from the area. Despite this, the collaboration between the state government and British officials did lead to some improvements in the lives of local farmers.

In 1887, Mr. Andrew Wingate was hired as the Settlement Commissioner to survey the land and make suggestions. He described the land system of the state as "Ryotwari in Ruins" and made a strong argument in favor of granting occupancy rights to Kashmiri peasants. Wingate argued that the land revenue system in place in the Valley had left the coffers of the state empty and created an itinerant peasantry with no interest in cultivating the land. To replenish revenue and convert a discontented and thriftless peasantry into a contented, thriving community, peasants had to be given an interest in the land they cultivated. Wingate's suggestions were initially ignored by the government, but they eventually led to the introduction of the Land Alienation Act in 1901, which granted occupancy rights to Kashmiri peasants and prohibited the transfer of land to non-agriculturists. This marked a significant shift in land policy in the state and helped to improve the economic condition of Kashmiri peasants. Wingate suggested adding a rule to the settlement rules that would make the state the ultimate owner of the property and give the right to live there to anyone who was living there at the time the land was settled (assessed). It is very important to keep in mind that Wingate's arguments were developed with the intention of bolstering the authority of the state by laying the foundation for a peasantry that was willing to pay land revenue and willing to defend their lands against encroachments.

When Andrew Wingate left as Settlement Commissioner in 1890, Walter Lawrence took over. When he settled the land in the valley, he used the same ideas as Wingate. According to the Lawrence Settlement, everyone who agreed to pay the fixed assessment on the fields listed in their name in the settlement papers got permanent, hereditary occupancy rights. However, the right to occupancy was not alienable by sale or mortgage. The settlement only entered cultivated land under the occupation of the *Assamis*, while waste and fallow lands were recorded as *Khalisa*, or state land. 10% of this waste land was to be left for collective village usage, such as grazing.

The revenue assessment was fixed for a period of ten years and was to be paid partly in cash and partly in kind, depending on the produce of the village. The British colonial government implemented this settlement in order to establish control over land and revenue. This system was also used to create a class of intermediaries between the government and the peasants, who were responsible for collecting revenue from the villagers.

The period from 1930 to 1939 saw drastic changes in the agrarian system in Jammu and Kashmir. This was due to the birth of political consciousness in Kashmir and the pressure from the All India Congress, the Muslim League, and the Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference. These changes led to the formation of peasant organizations that demanded land reforms and better working conditions for farmers. The agrarian reforms introduced by the government during this period helped to improve the economic condition of the farmers in Kashmir. These changes resulted in the formation of peasant unions and the demand for land reforms. The political awakening also led to the rise of leaders like Sheikh Abdullah, who played a crucial role in shaping the future of Kashmir. The Maharaja had no other alternative but to make effective changes in the agrarian sector. These changes included the abolition of *Begar* (forced labor), a reduction in rent rates, and the introduction of tenancy laws. These changes brought about significant improvements in the lives of Kashmiri peasants and helped lay the foundation for future agrarian reforms. The first measure undertaken was the order of the Maharaja, which conferred upon the peasants the proprietary rights to land. Taxes like *Nazrana* and *Malikana* were abolished, and an Agricultural Relief Act was passed in 1926–27, freeing agriculturalists from the clutches of moneylenders and protecting them from usurious rates of interest. This Act also affirmed the State Subjects Ordinance of 1925. These measures brought about a significant improvement in the economic conditions of the peasants, and the agricultural sector witnessed a boost in productivity. The Maharaja's efforts towards agrarian reform were widely appreciated by the people and helped in consolidating his position as a popular ruler.

The economic situation of cultivators got better after the new land and revenue policies were put in place. The maximum share of revenue that the state could take was set at 30 percent of the gross production, and cultivators were sometimes given breaks. Maharaja also passed the Agriculturist Relief Act and the Right of Prior Purchase Act, which protected the cultivators from the clutches of moneylenders who charged high rates of interest. These policies were very important for helping farmers with their money and making them more money. Because of this, agriculture did well, and farmers were able to invest in better tools and technology, which led to more growth and productivity. Co-operative societies and a system of food control departments were set up to protect poor farmers from capitalists and moneylenders and let them get the things they needed from their society at first and from their own money in the long run. The Kar-i-Sarkar Bill in 1935 prohibited any kind of Begar and made specific mention of the groups taken for carriage as coolies, who would be paid remuneration. These policies and acts implemented by the Maharaja not only protected the cultivators but also helped improve their standard of living. The *Kar-i-Sarkar* Bill was a significant step towards ending forced labor and ensuring fair compensation for laborers. The implementation of co-operative societies and food control departments, along with the *Kar-i-Sarkar* Bill, were crucial in safeguarding the rights of poor farmers and laborers and improving their economic conditions. These policies not only prohibited forced labor but also ensured that workers were paid fairly for their services.

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- **Details of Publications in Journals**

1. Mapping the Historical Development of Ranbir Canal In Jammu: An Overview, published in Shodhak: A Journal of Historical Research, UGC CARE Group- 1, ISSN: 0302-9832, IF=7.75, Volume 53, Issue 01, No.2 Jan- April 2023.
2. Examining the Economic Reform Policies of Maharaja Ranbir Singh (1856-1885 CE), published in Journal of the Oriental Institute, UGC CARE Group – I, ISSN: 0030-5324, Volume 72, Issue 02, No.5, April- June, 2023.
3. Analysis of the Economic Policy enacted under Maharaja Ranbir Singh (1856-1885 CE), Accepted in Q1 Journal, Accepted Manuscript Id: SHPS-D-23-00111, Studies in History and Philosophy of Science indexed in SCOPUS & SSCI, having ISSN: 0039-3681, IF= 1.347, Cite Score: 1.5.

- **Details of Publications in Seminar Proceedings**

1. Paper Published in a Conference Proceedings entitled as “Life and Legacy of Maharaja Gulab Singh” on the topic “Aspiration becomes Reality: A Step of Gulab Singh from Raja to Maharaja towards sitting on the enthronement of Jammu & Kashmir”, 2022 Published by Saksham Books International, 999/A, New Rohtak Road, New Delhi.
2. Paper published in a Conference Proceedings entitled as “Law and Agriculture – National and International Perspectives” on the topic “A Study on the genesis of the Agriculture Relief Policy Act under the rule of Maharaja Hari Singh” Published by VIT School of Law, at Chennai, - 600127, Tamil Nadu, India.

- **List of Conferences and Seminars:**

1. One day National Seminar on Law and Agriculture organized by VIT School of Law, Vellore Institute of Technology Chennai Campus on 9th April 2022 and presented a paper related to the theme of research work. The topic is – A Study on the genesis of the Agriculture Relief Policy Act under the rule of Maharaja Hari Singh.
2. Two-day National Seminar on Maharaja Ranbir Singh and the Making of the Princely State of Jammu and Kashmir jointly organized by Department of History, University of Jammu, Maharaja Gulab Singh Research Centre, Jammu & NIIT, New Delhi on the 26 and 27th of April 2022 and presented a research paper related to the main theme of research work. The topic is – Development of Economic Structure under Maharaja Ranbir Singh (1856-1885 CE).
3. Three- Days National Seminar on “Revisiting the Life and Legacy of Maharaja Gulab Singh was held on the 15th – 17th June 2022, which was organized by the Indian Council of Historical

Research (ICHR), New Delhi in collaboration with Department of History, University of Jammu, Jammu & Kashmir Study Centre, New Delhi, and Maharaja Gulab Singh Research Center, Jammu. The topic is – A Step of Gulab Singh from Raja to Maharaja towards sitting on the enthronement of Jammu & Kashmir.

4. International Conference on India Land & Development Conference on the Theme Global Pulls on Local Lands: Southern Perspective from 7-9th Dec. 2022 at Azim Premji University.
5. International Conference on Sustainable Development Goals in SAARC Countries: Key Issues, Opportunities & Challenges jointly organized by Phaltan Education Society's Mudhaji College, Phaltan, Department of Geography in collaboration with Shivaji University, Kolhapur, Pangaea Geographical Association, India, Shivaji Vidyapeeth Bhoogol Shikshak Sangh, Kolhapur & Global Foundation India on 21st April 2023. The topic is – Structural Analysis on Jammu's Evolving Irrigation Technology During Post-British Period.