



# **Kashmir Economy Under The Dogras (1846-1885)**

**Dissertation**

**Submitted for the Award of the Degree of**

**Master of Philosophy**

*In*

**History**

*By*

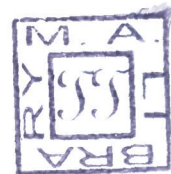
**Showkat Ahmad Naik**

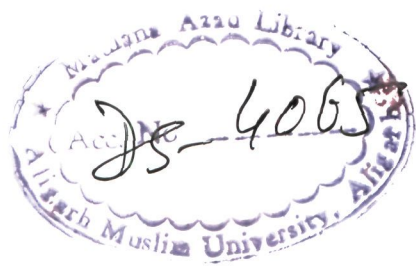
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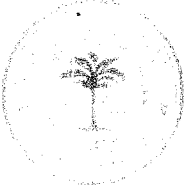


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## Certificate

*This is to certify that the Dissertation entitled "Kashmir Economy Under The Dogras (1846-1885)" by Mr. Showkat Ahmad Naik is the original research work of the candidate, and is suitable for submission for the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy in History.*

*Ruquia Hussain*

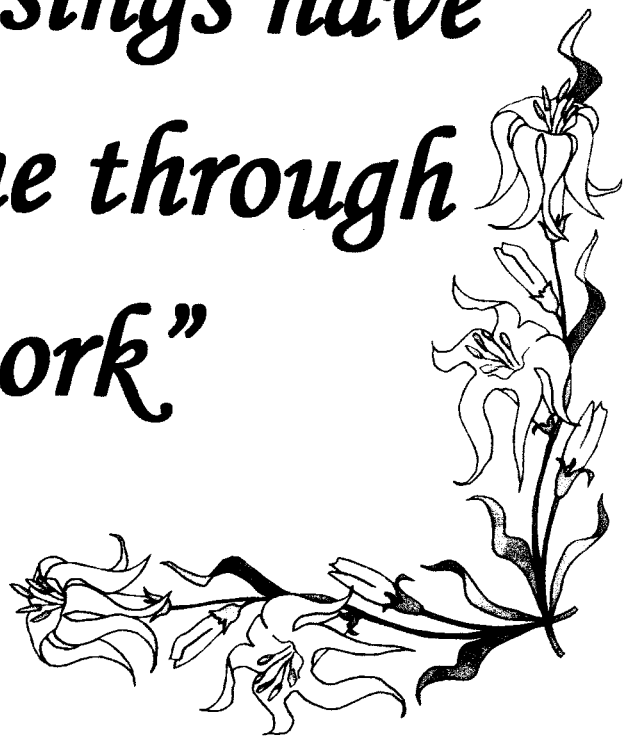
**Dr. Ruquia Kazim Hussain**

**(Supervisor)**



**DEDICATED**  
To  
*MY Parents*  
*And My Lone Sister*

*“Whose blessings have  
sustained me through  
this work”*





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Though the present work is ostensibly my lone accomplishment but not without the blessings of Almighty Allah and the supplications, appreciation, guidance, support and encouragement which gushed from different corners. First of all I would pay my humble and sincere gratitude to Almighty "Allah," the lord of the Alamin who created me among the Ashraful Mukhlukat with wisdom, caliber and enlightened me with knowledge, a great virtue.

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**Showkat Ahmad Naik**

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**Stages in the creation of the State of Jammu and Kashmir**  
**Source: Alastair Lamb, Kashmir A Disputed Legacy 1846-1990**

A decorative border with a repeating scalloped or wavy pattern, consisting of a black outer line and a white inner line, framing the entire page.

# *Introduction*

# *Introduction*

Who has not heard of the vale of Kashmir?  
With its roses the brightest that earth ever gave,  
Its temples and grottos and fountains as clear  
As the love lighted eyes that hang over their wave?  
Oh! To see it at sunset-when warm over the Lake,  
Its splendor at parting a summer eve throws,  
A last look of her mirror at night ere she goes!  
Like a bride full of blushes when lingering to take!<sup>1</sup>

Lalla Rook

Kashmir allured the attention of poets to express the idea of beauty and travelers to refresh and adventure and the rulers of native and distant lands desired to have sojourn and seat of power here. It was the part of what was known as the Princely state of 'Jammu and Kashmir' till partition and at present constitutes one of the regions of Jammu and Kashmir State of the Indian Union.

The present work is an endeavor to explore one of the prominent aspects of the history of Kashmir which has received the scanty attention of the historians and scholars till now. Though this period has remained the theme of numerous works of historians and scholars but majority of them are either biographical in character or have dealt with the social or political aspect. The economic sphere has not merited much attention.

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<sup>1</sup> The poem Lalla Rook is one of poem compiled by Thomas Moree in 1817 though he never visited Kashmir. C. F. Mridu Rai, *The Question of Religion in Kashmir, Sovereignty, Legitimacy and Rights (1846-1947)*, An unpublished Theses Submitted in The Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Columbia University, 2000, UMI, Proquest, p. 1

The notable works dealing with the economy of early Dogras include, *Agrarian system of Kashmir (1846-1889)* by R. L. Hangloo, *Socio-Economic History of Kashmir* by P. N. K. Bamzai, *The History of Kashmir in Political, Economic and Socio-Cultural Perspective(1846-1885)* by Dr. Parveen Akhtar, *Socio-Economic History of Kashmir peasantry*, *Kashmir- The land and its Management from Ancient to Modern times and Art and Artisans of Kashmir from Ancient to Modern Times* by D. N. Dhar, *From Kashmir to Frankfurt-A study of Arts and Crafts* by Abdul Ahad, *The History of Srinagar (1846-1947)* by Prof. M. I. Khan, *Trade and Commerce* by Ali Mohammad Dar, *Economy and Society of Kashmir (1885-1925)* by Dr. Parveez Ahmad etc. No doubt, the aforementioned works have explored the various facets of economy of Kashmir during the Dogra period and opened new vistas of research but these research studies have not studied the theme in totality and left enormous scope to undertake the research to exhume new facts regarding the economy of said period by adopting the tenets of modern historiography and research. Among all these books the work of R.L.Hangloo did provide a key to the new perspective by seriously undermining the traditional historiographical approach and replaced that with the progressive approach—a case for rewriting economic history of this region for the first time which raised many questions as the strength of the new approach.

In the present study attempt has been made to investigate the problem comprehensively, to trace the hidden facts regarding the economy of Kashmir by using the vast treasure of sources like archival material in the form of Persian records, *Majmui* reports (Administrative reports), old English records, reports on industries, trade, census reports and settlement reports. Moreover, travel accounts, contemporary vernacular sources-



Persian, Urdu and Kashmiri, English works, unpublished manuscripts, official Gazetteers and personnel records have also been kept within the purview while researching this aspect. The dairies and autobiographies and the secondary works were also utilized for the investigation of the economy of Kashmir of the period under review.

Before taking-up the main theme, it is pertinent to look at the overview of the foundation of the Princely state of Jammu and Kashmir by Dogras and its significance for Kashmir. The princely State of Jammu and Kashmir, the northern most part of Indian union was carved out by the Sikh feudatory and Dogra<sup>2</sup> Raja, Maharaja Gulab Singh through the Treaty of Amritsar in 1846. It constituted one of the 562 princely states of India. Its specificity was its large size and diverse characteristics than the rest of the princely states in pre-independent India. This marked a watershed in the history of Jammu and Kashmir with far reaching consequences. It sets in the dawn of modernization in the region characterized by continuity and change. It also witnessed the intrusion of new elements in socio-economic realm and the interference of British in the internal affairs of the state which culminated first, in the appointment of British official on special duty in 1852 and then British Resident in 1885. Thus it marked the colonial penetration in the internal affairs of state through the appointment of resident which in no way was postulated

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<sup>2</sup> There are numerous views regarding the origin of 'Dogras'. The term 'Dogra' is a geographical expression rather than ethical which refers to the inhabitants whether Hindus, Muslims, Brahman, Rajputs, Rathis or Girths of the hilly region between the river Chenab and river Sutlej. According to Lawrence 'Dogra' refers the country around Jammu and is conscription of two words '*Do* and *Girath*' which means two lakes. These two lakes are Siroensar and Mansar which lies in the hills a few miles to the east of Jammu which are taken as the center of Dogra country. Fedric Drew stated that the settlers that inhabited the hills that edge the Punjab formed the Dogra country. According to another Dogra is the corruption of Rajasthani word *Dugar* which means mountain. Messrs. Hutchison and Vogel stated that the ancient name of the principality of Jammu was Durgara and of this name the terms *Dugar* and Dogra in common use at the present time are derivation.

in the treaty of Amritsar.

The uninterrupted exploitation of the subjects by the Dogra Raj led to the emergence of political awakening among the masses which culminated in the freedom struggle in the twenties of the preceding century against the atrocities of Dogra Maharaja under the guidance and leadership of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, a young graduate of Aligarh Muslim University. The contemporary struggle and turmoil in Jammu and Kashmir State is also rooted in this period.

Gulab Singh had secured the Jammu province as a *Jagir* from Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the then Maharaja of Punjab, in recognition of his loyal services rendered to the Lahore court since 1809, when he joined the Sikh army as an ordinary trooper. This boon was conferred after the siege of Multan in 1819 and by the subjugation of the *bandit* chief, Mian Dedo, who controlled the hilly region around Jammu, by a *sanad* dated 4<sup>th</sup> *Ashad*, 1879 *Bikrami* (1820). Maharaja Ranjit Singh articulated “on this auspicious occasion with extreme joy and with heartfelt love, I grant to Raja Gulab Singh in recognition of his conscientious and loyal services, the *chakla* of Jammu.” Moreover, he was also allowed to maintain his own army.<sup>3</sup> In 1822, as reward for his services and after the conquest of Kishtawar and subjugation of Rampore, he was made hereditary Rajah of Jammu.<sup>4</sup> His two brothers, Suchet Singh and Dhyan Singh were also rewarded. Suchet Singh received Samba and Ramnagar with an annual allowance of one lakh of rupees and Dhyan Singh Bhimber and Kassouli with a yearly income of one and half lakh of

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<sup>3</sup> Diwan Kripa Ram, *Gulabnama-A History of Maharaja Gulab Singh Of Jammu and Kashmir* (Persian), English Translation by S. S. Charak and Anita C. Billawaria, Gulshan Books, Srinagar, 2005, pp 116-17. See also K. M. Panikar, *Gulab Singh (1792-1858)-Founder of Kashmir*, Gulshan Publishers, Srinagar, 1989, p. 32

<sup>4</sup> Robert A. Huttenback, ‘Gulab Singh and the Creation of the Dogra State of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh’, *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 20, No. 4, (August 1961), p. 478

rupees. Thus, Gulab Singh along with his brothers acquired considerable influence in Lahore court about which Claude Wade; a British agent deputed to the Lahore court gave a revealing view:

“They owe their present commanding position in the councils of their master to the personal favor and protection of His Majesty and have not lost no opportunity of using it to augment and strengthen their power. Aware that their community interests or good feelings between themselves and Sikhs they employ none but Dogras and other tribes of the mountains to manage and defend their country in the hills. ....and exercise more or less of influence in every department of the government.”<sup>5</sup>

Henceforth, Gulab Singh pursued a policy of consolidation and expansion. Under the command of his ablest general, Zorawar Singh, Ladakh was incorporated into Gulab Singh’s dominion in 1834. Baltistan and Western Tibet were brought under his sway in 1835 and 1842 respectively.

The death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh on 27<sup>th</sup> June 1839 was followed by anarchy, court intrigues and internecine strife in Lahore court and in other prominent political centers of Punjab. The Sikh soldiers grew turbulent in Kashmir and the result was the assassination of General Main Singh, the most popular and humane Sikh governor of Kashmir in 1841. To restore normalcy Prince Kanwar Pratab Singh, son of Sher Singh was instructed to precede Kashmir at the head of a strong contingent under the charge of Gulab Singh. Francis Younghusband, the British Resident in Kashmir stated that “from here Gulab Singh became the real master of Kashmir by placing his favorite person, Sheikh Ghulam Moi-ud-din as

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<sup>5</sup> Robert A. Huttenback, op. cit., p. 478-79

the governor of Kashmir, though till 1846 it nominally belonged to the Sikh rulers of Lahore.”<sup>6</sup> Moreover, the murder of Dhyani Singh, Gulab Singh’s younger brother in 1843,<sup>7</sup> infuriated Gulab Singh and created resentment against the Sikh community and he left Lahore court.

In 1845, the first Anglo-Sikh war commenced. Lahore Darbar in absence of any proficient leader desired the return of Gulab Singh to take over the reins of empire. Rani Jindan, widow of Late Maharaja Ranjit Singh through a letter dated 24<sup>th</sup> January 1846 solicited Gulab Singh to come here along with troops at his disposal and after arriving Lahore, he was installed as the Prime Minister of Punjab on 27<sup>th</sup> January 1846.<sup>8</sup> He reproached the Sikh leaders for entering the struggle against the British and tried to make a compromise with British. Thus, Gulab Singh assumed the role of an advisor and mediator. However, his role in the First-Anglo Sikh war has evoked bitter argument and debate among the scholars.<sup>9</sup> He sent a *marasla* of peace to the British through Lal Chuni Lal, in which he regretted the Sikh invasion and appealed for peace. Consequently, Gulab Singh received positive response from Sir Henry Lawrence, the British Resident at Lahore and the Treaty of Lahore was signed on 9<sup>th</sup> march 1846 which ended the first Anglo-Sikh war. Lahore authorities incapable of paying one crore rupees as war indemnity were forced to cede the territories between the river Beas and river Indus including Kashmir and

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<sup>6</sup> Youngusband, *Kashmir*, Gulshan Publishers, Srinagar, 1996. P. 163

<sup>7</sup> J. M. Honigberger, *Thirty-Five Years in the East*, Bangabasi Office, Calcutta, p 1905, p. 126

<sup>8</sup> Bawa Satinder Singh, ‘Raja Gulab Singh’s Role in the First-Anglo Sikh War,’ *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 1, 1971, p 40. For details see, Diwan Narsing Das, *Gulab Singh- Baneyi Riyasat-i-Jammu Wa Kashmir*(Urdu), Chaand Publishing House Jammu, 1965, pp. 177-178

<sup>9</sup> This debate centered round two views. A School of Punjab historian led by Jagmohan, Ganda Singh, and Khushwant Singh condemns the Jammu Raja’s conduct as perfidious and labeled him as Traitor. While as the pro-Dogra historians refuted the argument of Punjab historians. They postulated that he played a crucial role and prevented the complete annexation of Sikh state to British dominion. The prominent protagonists of this view included K. M. Panikar, Gwasha Lal Koul, Mohammad Aslam Khan and Hashmat Ali Khan Luckhnawi.

Hazara to the British ruler of India. Besides, it was stipulated that Raja Gulab Singh would be recognized as an independent sovereign of territories and hill districts situated eastward of the river Indus and westward of river Ravi which would be accomplished by a separate treaty between him and the English. After the six days of this truce a historic treaty, popularly known as the “Treaty of Amritsar” in the annals of history was concluded by Frederick Currie, Esquire and Brevet-Major Henry Montgomery Lawrence on the part of English and Gulab Singh in person on 16<sup>th</sup> March 1846. This Treaty transferred the territories situated eastward of the river Indus and westward of river Ravi to Gulab Singh and his male heirs for a paltry sum of three-quarters of a million sterling which actually was fixed one crore rupees except Kulu and Mandi for which 25 lakhs were remitted.<sup>10</sup> Hence, the historic event of foundation of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir was laid down with Maharaja Gulab Singh as its first Sovereign without sacrificing anything and peeling a blood drop which is prerequisite of almost every political revolution and achievement baring few exceptions. However, there is discrepancy among the historians and scholars whether this amount was paid for the sale of land and people or just for acquiring the control of this region.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, there is also a debate why the British after huge financial expenditure and human loss and hard toil transferred the territories which they acquired from Lahore Darbar as war compensation to the Dogra Raja for a paltry sum of seventy-five lakh rupees.

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<sup>10</sup> Robert A. Huttenback, op. cit., p. 488

<sup>11</sup> One group of historians led by M. L. Kapoor (*Kashmir Sold and Snatched*), K. M. Panikar (*Maharaja Gulab Singh 1792-1857*) and Prof. M. I. Khan (*Crisis of Kashmiri Muslims*) argued that it was sale on the part of British to Gulab Singh. The famous poet Dr. Iqbal also held that it was the sale. while U. K Zutshi (*Emergence of Political Awakening in Kashmir*), Dr. Abdul Ahad ( *Kashmir Was Never Sold to Maharaja Gulab Singh*, *The Kashmir Times( Daily)*, March 27, 1988) refuted the notion of sale of Kashmir to Maharaja Gulab Singh.

The prime reason for this transaction seems to be the disintegration and weakening of Sikh State of Punjab which had its sway even on Kashmir during the first half of nineteenth century and emerged as a formidable power in northern India. This becomes clear from the communication between Lord Harding, the Governor-General of India and the Queen, the head of Home government in Britain through a letter dated 18<sup>th</sup> February 1846, that is nearly three weeks prior to the rectification of the Treaty of Lahore of 9<sup>th</sup> March 1846. Harding writes, “it appears to him desirable, “to weaken the Sikh state which has proved itself too strong and to show all Asia that although the British government has not deemed it expedient to annex this immense land of Punjab, making Indus the British boundary, it has punished the treachery and violence of the Sikh nation and exhibit its power in a manner which cannot be misunderstood.” After the victory against Sikhs at Saboroan in another correspondence to the Queen dated 5<sup>th</sup> April 1847, Harding conveyed to her, “the military power of the Sikhs is forever annihilated. It can never be revived and there is no longer any external enemy whose fate would not be determined in one vigorous campaign.”<sup>12</sup>

At the same the East India Company had no intention to extend their dominion. Instead they desired to curb their powerful and aggressive neighbours. Even after crushing the Sikh power in Punjab, it was not annexed to the British dominion in India which was done three years later during the reign of Lord Dalhousie by the ‘doctrine of lapse’.

The remoteness of Kashmir from the British dominion and its inaccessibility also prompted them to hand over its control to Gulab

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<sup>12</sup> Hardings Private correspondence-Harding to the Queen dated 5<sup>th</sup> April 1847. In Bikrama Jit Hasrat, *Punjab Papers*(Edited)-*Selection from the Private Papers of Lord Auckland, Lord Ellenborough, Viscount Harding and Marquis of Dalhousie*(1836-1849), V. V. Research Institute Book Agency, Hosharpur Punjab, 1970, p. 118

Singh. The distance from Kashmir to Sulej, the then northern boundary of British empire in India was 300 miles of very difficult mountainous terrain, quite impracticable for five or six months.<sup>13</sup> Lord Harding wrote to a near relative, “to keep a British force 300 miles from any possibility of support would have been an undertaking that merited a strait-waistcoat and not a peerage. The transfer was the only alternative.”<sup>14</sup>

To curb the external aggression against the empire, it was imperative to bestow Kashmir to Gulab Singh. It was thought that Kashmir would act as a buffer state between British Empire and Afghanistan and Russia who were advancing to extend their dominions.<sup>15</sup>

The British East India Company after the success at Sobraon wanted to reward Gulab Singh for the tactic support they had received from him during the first Anglo-Sikh war.<sup>16</sup> Hence he was bestowed with the territories of Jammu and Kashmir including Ladakh for a paltry sum of 750,000 sterling pounds in ‘recognition of his services to the British Crown’.<sup>17</sup>

The East India Company besides other motives perhaps wanted the economic development and eradication of poverty of Kashmiri people.<sup>18</sup> Lord Harding on 21 December wrote to the Queen that Gulab Singh is in possession of the province of Kashmir, which is in such a state of poverty

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<sup>13</sup> Shakti Kak, ‘The Agrarian system of the Princely State of Jammu and Kashmir-A Study of Colonial Settlement Policies(1860-1905)’, In Waltraud Ernst and Biswamoy Pati, *India’s Princely States-People, Princes and Colonialism*(Ed.), Routledge, London, 2007, p. 69

<sup>14</sup> G. M. D Sufi, *Kashir- Being a History of Kashmir*, Vol. II, Light and Life Publishers, New Delhi, 1974, p. 770

<sup>15</sup> U. K. Zutshi, *Emergence of Political Awakening of Kashmir*, Manohar Publication, New Delhi, 1986, p. 32

<sup>16</sup> J. M. Honigberger, op.cit. p 127. See also Shakti Kak, *op. cit.* p. 69

<sup>17</sup> Shakti Kak, *op. cit.* p 69

<sup>18</sup> Bawa Satinder Singh, *The Jammu Fox (1792-1857)*, p. 166.

because of the plunder and oppression of the Sikhs from a long time. Under the Rajput prince it would make progressive improvement.<sup>19</sup>

This event had great historic significance and changed the course of entire history of the region. The sway of Dogra rule continued for more than a century which was shared by four rulers;

- Maharaja Gulab Singh(1846-1856)
- Maharaja Ranbir Singh(1857- 1885)
- Maharaja Pratap Singh(1885-1925)
- Maharaja Hari Singh (1925-1947)

The economy forms the backbone of any form of government and has a remarkable bearing on almost all the structures of society and determines the course of history of that region, as has been amply demonstrated by past civilizations. Kashmir since time immemorial has remained a self-sufficient economy<sup>20</sup> with agriculture as the predominant component of economy, which according to the census of 1891, engaged more the 75% of populace of Kashmir during the period of study and constituted the backbone and main source of income to the state to convene the expenses of administration and procure services for the state.

The agriculture of Kashmir during the period of our study was barely subsistent in nature where people were mainly concerned to make both ends meet. Rice being the staple food of people covered most of the cultivable land in a growing season. Whereas the other food crops like

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<sup>19</sup> Hardings Private correspondence-Harding to Queen, Camp Beas, 21 December, Bikrama Jit Hasrat, *Punjab Papers* (Edited), p.116

<sup>20</sup> Walter Ropar Lawrence, the settlement officer in Kashmir in 1889, stated that in normal years the food supply is ample for its inhabitants, for clothing the people have wool and a certain kind of locally produced cotton of fair quality. There is a wealth of fibers, ample timber and with single exception of salt there is no necessity of life which need be imported. W. R. Lawrence, *The Valley of Kashmir*, Gulshan Books (Second Edition), Srinagar, 2005, p. 383



maize, wheat, barley etc were also grown but only in quantities to satisfy their domestic demand. Among the cash crops cultivated saffron occupied the prime position as it was having a ready market in and outside the valley. Oil-seeds and pulses of numerous varieties were also important. Moreover, those associated with secondary sector (non-agrarian) evinced great interest in agriculture, to meet out their food requirement, and for procuring raw materials to keep wheel of their industries operative. Thus there was interdependency in the economy.

However, the oppressive nature of land revenue policy of Dogras and faulty system of collection of state's share combined with inadequate agricultural technology and total absence of pesticides and insecticides made the endeavors of the peasants futile. Their produce was insufficient and he was not in a position to satisfy his own requirements. Moreover, the chronic deterioration of agriculture owing to natural calamities and unsound and corrupt officials and the nature of relations among the cultivators, *jagidars*, and state often compelled the peasants either to migrate or to opt for secondary occupations (non-agrarian sector) simultaneously to satisfy his basic needs.

The non-agrarian economy which envisage all those sources and means of wealth and survival other than the agriculture, constituted a significant ingredient of the economy of Kashmir which supplemented agrarian economy of the state either directly or indirectly. The non-agrarian economy which incorporated the industrial sector, cottage manufactures, handicrafts, mineral wealth and their transaction, so called trade and commerce was source of survival to a substantial section of population and major contributor to the state exchequer. Since ancient times Kashmir was famous all over the world for its delicate and artistic

products. Francis Bernier who accompanied Aurangzeb to Kashmir in 17<sup>th</sup> century “said that it is due to certain properties in the water of that country (Kashmir)” Lawrence, the settlement officer in Kashmir in 1889, articulated that “every Kashmiri seems a weaver and the home spun cloth woven by the villagers were highly appreciated by many Europeans.”<sup>21</sup>

During the period of our study though the shawl industry encountered with many ups and downs, it was one of the major industries which enjoyed high esteem in the world market and fetched sufficient foreign exchange to the state at least until the break out of the Franco-German war of 1870. It had its market in France, U.K, U.S.A and other European countries. The *kharkhandars* (owners) gained hefty profits from this industry and it is said that they put milk in their *hukas* (Hubble bubble) instead of water. However, the *shalbafs* (weavers) groaned in poverty and hardly managed their basic requirements. At the turn of the century this industry got revived again and substantially contributed to the economy of the state and people. Even in contemporary times numerous families are associated with this profession and shawl is an important article of trade exported to various parts of India and foreign countries especially Europe.

Silk manufacturing and its allied sectors engaged a greater section of masses. The silk industry of Kashmir enjoyed reputation all over the world. In 1855 when the silk worm in almost all the silk producing countries became the victim of disease, the silk worms of Kashmir after a microscopic examination were declared disease free and were exported to other victimized countries to revive the sericulture. After the decline and sluggish growth of shawl industry in 1870 the silk industry provided

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<sup>21</sup> Lawrence, *The Valley of Kashmir*, p. 370

employment to a larger section of population and emerged as the major source of survival. However, in 1882, this industry owing to disease of silk worms suffered a great set back which caused decrease in its output. Due to the efforts of Sir Thomas Wardle-an eminent sericulturalist and president of the silk association of Great Britain and Ireland, the industry revived and contributed to the economy of the state till 1947 with a brief sluggish growth in 1932. Thus, the silk industry contributed substantially to the economy of Jammu and Kashmir during the nineteenth century and in the first half of the twenty century.

Moreover, carpet making, paper making, paper mashie, wood carving, *Namdah* and *Gabha* making, wood carving, embroidery, metal works and mineral extraction, provided employment to a large section of the population. The peasant had to depend on the people engaged in secondary sector to satisfy his basic necessities like tools, clothing, house hold articles etc. Thus, non-agrarian economy supplements and complements the agrarian economy of the state of Jammu and Kashmir.

Fruit cultivation formed the other means of economy of the populace of Kashmir Valley. Several travelers who visited the place during the period of our study demonstrated and recognized the essence of horticulture for the Kashmir economy both as food and a source of income. Among the fruits apple, almonds, walnut, apricots peas, and cherries were important. They were abundantly grown in the valley and formed the main ingredients of trade and commerce.

The strategic location of Kashmir and being the hub of numerous manufactures and artistic products offered sufficient vistas for trade and commerce but owing to poor means of communication and transport handicapped it was handicapped. In rural areas the exchange of articles of

daily uses for the constituted the main item of transactions at local level. Besides some luxury articles were also marketed here. The produce of shawl weavers, smiths and *namdhas*, carpets and cash crops were also the main items of export to Indian commercial centers and abroad.

The present work which is actually the economic analysis of Kashmir province during the second half of nineteenth century also traces the formation of the Princely state of Jammu and Kashmir by the Dogra Chief, Maharaja Gulab Singh. It has been organized into four chapters besides an introductory over view of the foundation of the Princely State of Jammu and Kashmir, economy of Kashmir Province and the conclusion.

In the first chapter the account of agriculture and horticulture and its allied spheres forms the prime concern.

The second chapter deals with the growth and development of industries and handicrafts.

The third chapter is devoted to the sources of the income of the state in the form of land revenue and numerous other taxes.

In the fourth chapter trade and commerce and other business transactions both within and outside Kashmir constitute the theme of discussion.

**Chapter-1**

*Agriculture and Horticulture of  
Kashmir from 1846-1885*

## *Agriculture and Horticulture of Kashmir from 1846-1885*

The valley of Kashmir has a unique topography<sup>1</sup> in the entire sub-continent which has bearing on every aspect of human life. With its fertile soils, moist and warm temperature and abundant water courses, Kashmiri populace has been since ancient time depended mainly on agriculture as the principle source of food and wealth.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the impoverished means of transport and communications which restricted the movement of goods and people also made the people to opt for agriculture. More than 75% population of Kashmir province in the second half of nineteenth century depended on agriculture for survival.<sup>3</sup> Even those who were engaged in secondary occupations evinced great interest in the agrarian sector for food and raw-materials. Thus agriculture assumed vital significance in the entire economy of Kashmir. Consequently, it was main the source of revenue to the state.

During the Dogra regime both food crops and cash crops were raised in Kashmir valley. Moreover, a variety of vegetables and fruits which were profitable were abundantly grown in Kashmir.<sup>4</sup> Besides, some products and crops in and around the lakes and upper reaches which grew naturally had great economic significance as it was a source of food and wealth to the common masses. This has been testified and acknowledged by both foreign as well as Indian travelers and political

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<sup>1</sup> The valley of Kashmir is bounded by mountains on all sides. The valley is plain with table lands called *kherwas*, Swampy lands and low hills and is watered by numerous perennial rivulets and rivers.

<sup>2</sup> W. Wakefield, *History of Kashmir and Kashmiris, The Happy valley* (First print 1879), Seema publication, Delhi, 1975, p.137

<sup>3</sup> *Ganganath Report* of 1944, Jammu and Kashmir Archives Repository, Srinagar, p. 73

<sup>4</sup> Diwan Kripa Ram, *Gulzar-i-Kashmir* (Persian), Kohinoor Publication, Lahore, 1870, p. 29

agents who visited the valley from time to time. They not only praised the crops of Kashmir but even described the methods which the peasants employed for raising the crops and also highlighted the sad plight of peasants on account of heavy taxation, government apathy and oppressive attitude of state officials. Thus agrarian economy of Kashmir was the concern of everybody.

### **Agriculture operations in Kashmir**

The agriculture operations of Kashmir are divergent to the rest of India. Generally, the agricultural operations in Kashmir commenced before or after the *nauroz* which is generally spring day for Muslims in Kashmir.<sup>5</sup> It coincides with 21 March of Christian calendar. The sowing of seeds of vegetables and ploughing of fields for rice crop in March marks the dawn of new agricultural season. Simultaneously, thereafter regular work was undertaken by the peasants to prepare their field for the crops.

In the valley of Kashmir during the period under study the year was divided into six seasons characterized by different agricultural activities.<sup>6</sup>

*Sonth (spring)*: It covers the months of April and May when the fields had been ploughed and manured for the autumn crops. The weather improves and the temperature starts to increase.<sup>7</sup> The seeds of rice were put in sacks and were kept under water in the running rivulets or pond for period of four days or more and were taken out of water after

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<sup>5</sup> W.R.Lawrence. *The Valley of Kashmir*, Gulshan Book, Srinagar, 2005(Edition), p. 325

<sup>6</sup> E. F Neve, *Beyond Pirpangal*, Gulshan Books, Srinagar, 2003(Edition), p. 59. See also Lawrence, op., p. 326. P.A. Kaul, *Geography of the Jammu & Kashmir state*, Iqbal publication, Lahore, 1987, p. 14

<sup>7</sup> Dr. A.R Bhat, *Human Resource Development and socio-economic development of Kashmir valley, A Geographical interpretation*, Dilpreet publishing House, New Delhi, p14.

germination.<sup>8</sup> Then, the seeds were sown in the nurseries and at some times scattered over the fields.<sup>9</sup> Silt accumulated in the ponds, at times called 'turf clod' was scattered over the agricultural fields. This improved the fertility of land. Manure in the form of heaps of cow-dung and grass collected during winter was carried to the fields by women in baskets.<sup>10</sup> The harvesting of spring crops commenced at the end of this season.

*Retkol* (summer): It corresponded with the months of June and July, when the seedlings of paddy were transplanted in the fields.<sup>11</sup> The temperature generally rose up to 30°C in July which helped the growth and maturity of cereal crops (rice and maize) and fruits.<sup>12</sup> In this season almonds were collected and the people also remain engaged in sowing and related activities of *krimiti* crops like vegetables. It also marked the harvesting season of wheat and barley.<sup>13</sup> At the close of this season weeding of rice, maize and cotton began.<sup>14</sup>

*Vehrat*: Vehrat usually covers the months of August and September. Weeding of rice, maize and other crops was under taken in this season. *Khushaba* was best method of weeding.<sup>15</sup> It involved putting the rice plants in the right places and pressing the soft mud around green seedlings. This was accomplished by expert and senior members of the

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<sup>8</sup> Younghusband, *Kashmir*, Surjeet Publications, Delhi, Reprinted, 2003, p. 105

<sup>9</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 332

<sup>10</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 326

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> B.R.Bhat op. cit., p. 21

<sup>13</sup> Younghusband, op.cit., p. 177

<sup>14</sup> E. F. Neve, *Beyond Pir Panjal*, P. 60

<sup>15</sup> W.R. Lawrence, *Provincial Gazetteer of Jammu and Kashmir*, Jay Kay Book House, Jammu, 1985, p. 49



family. It is also marked by adequate rainfall which benefitted the crops and land was ploughed and sown with rapeseeds.<sup>16</sup>

*Harud*: It corresponded with the autumn season and the months of October and November constituted the period of this season. The peasants remained engaged in the harvesting of rice, maize, millets, sesame and other autumn crops. Ploughing of fields and sowing seeds of spring crops like wheat, barley and rapeseed also commenced in this season.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, plucking of fruits like apple was also undertaken. Peasants were engaged in threshing and husking of rice and other crops.<sup>18</sup>

*Wandeh*: It covered the months of December and March. It is a period of severe cold. Agricultural activities came to a standstill and there was hardly any outdoor activity and people remain engaged in weaving blankets, mats of grass etc. and tended to their sheep and cattle.<sup>19</sup>

*Shishur*: This is actually the period of extreme cold. The month of January and February are the coldest months when the mercury remained below freezing point and rivulets and other water bodies got frozen and no agricultural activity could be under taken and the fields become infertile due to frost and snow.<sup>20</sup>

Physiography and climate to a greater extent determined the cropping pattern of a region. In the valley of Kashmir, cold conditions remained for greater part of the year which was a great handicap to the continuation of agricultural activities throughout the year. It did not permit intensive cropping in the valley. Thus, the system of cultivation

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> younghusband ,op.cit., p. 177

<sup>19</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 326

<sup>20</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 326

pattern was what is known as *Ekfasli* i.e. only one particular crop was grown in particular agriculture season.<sup>21</sup> There was no double harvest as in rest of India where the weather conditions favoured the growth of crops throughout the year.<sup>22</sup> However, there is an exception, after barley, rape, maize and millet harvests, pulses could be sown but rice and wheat did not permit the cultivation of second crop. Thus for most part of the year only one crop was grown.

During the Dogra regime there were three harvesting seasons in Kashmir namely, *Kharif*, *Krimiti* and *Rabi*. However, *krimiti* was not so prominent and included cultivation of vegetables and few commercial crops like cotton, saffron, tobacco etc. The following table highlights the Kharif, Krimiti and Rabi crops grown in Kashmir during the Dogra period.<sup>23</sup>

<b>Kharif Crops</b>	<b>Rabi Crops</b>	<b>Krimiti crops</b>
Rice	Wheat	Cotton
Maize	Tibet Barly	Saffron
Ganhar	Opium	Tobacco
Millet	Rape	Poppy
Buckwheat	Flax	Tilgogal
Pulses	Beans	Sarson
Chillies	Peas	

<sup>21</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 329

<sup>22</sup> Sir Recharad Temple, *Journals kept in Hyderabad, Kashmir, Sikkim and Nepal*, Vol. I, Cosmos Publication, New Delhi, 1977, p. 286

<sup>23</sup> A. Wingate, *Preliminary Report of Settlement Operation in Jammu and Kashmir (1887)*, Oriental Manuscript Library, Bemina ( Srinagar), p. 18. See also Lal Ganesh Lal, *Siyahat -I- Kashmir*, Tran..into English.by Vidya Sagar Suri, The Punjab government Record Office Publication, Monograph no. 4, p37. Lawrence, op.cit., p. 330

## Irrigation system in Kashmir during 1846-1885

Kashmir valley had an abundance of natural watercourses; therefore, artificial irrigation was not generally employed.<sup>24</sup> Thus, the crops grown in the valley of Kashmir exclusively depended on natural irrigation. The irrigation system applied for farming of numerous crops can conveniently be divided into two divisions floor irrigation and lift irrigation.

### a. Floor irrigation:

The province of Kashmir has innumerable streams and rivulets fed by snow. They formed the main source of irrigation.<sup>25</sup> Snow accumulated during winter in the upper mountains began to melt with the onset of spring and ensured a regular supply of water in the streams which rushed down the Jhelum,<sup>26</sup> the largest river of Kashmir. Least snowfall during the winter ensured low flow of water which directly had its bearing on the agriculture of the valley. At convenient points in the mountains temporary weir or projecting snags are erected on the streams and the water is thus taken from the main channel into a network of small ducts and eventually emptied themselves into the Jhelum in large swamps. Besides, the streams, (rivers) distributaries and tributaries called *Kuls* irrigated the vast catchment areas. The *Sandran* river with its source in Banihal mountain and Verinag spring irrigated the fields of Shahabad *pargana*.<sup>27</sup> The river Lidar (Lambudris) with its source in southern

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<sup>24</sup> Pandit Anand Koul, *Geography of Jammu and Kashmir State*, Iqbal publications, Lahore, 1987, P. 10

<sup>25</sup> Lawrence, *op.cit.*, p. 323

<sup>26</sup> The river Jhelum had its source in the Verinag spring in Shahabad *pargana*. Its flows through Anantnag, Pulmwama and Srinagar where it is joined by numerous streams & small rivers and leaves the valley near Baramullah.

<sup>27</sup> Hassan khuihami, *Tarikh-I-Hassan Vol-I* (Persian) tr. into Kachmiri by Prof. Shamus-Ud-Din Ahmad, Jammu and Kashmir Academy of art, culture and languages, Srinagar, 1998, p1 98

mountains of Lar pargana near the Amaranth cave irrigated the Duchhanpura pargana.<sup>28</sup> The *Vishau*, which originated from the Kausarnag Spring in the upper mountains before meeting the Jhelum at sangam, irrigated Devsar, Adwan, Kulgam and Anantnag parganas through its numerous rivulets.<sup>29</sup> The *parganas* of Ardvan and Zanipora were irrigated by Rambiarah and its tributaries and distributaries.<sup>30</sup> The Dood Ganga was the main source of irrigation to the fields which were situated between the parganas of Arigam and Nagam. Nala Puhri which had its source in Lolab mountains facilitated the irrigation to the fields of Zanagir paragana.<sup>31</sup> Moreover, Hassan Khuihami has mentioned a number of small rivers which had sufficient flow of water and were significant sources of irrigation in the valley.<sup>32</sup>

In the plains of Kashmir dams and canals<sup>33</sup> were constructed to facilitate regular supply of water to the fields. These were dug from the rivers and were taken to the areas where water supply was inadequate. The villagers who utilized the water of these canals lent their hand and resource for their construction. *Katha Kul, Tsonta Kul, the Nahari Mar and Rainawari cannal* were prominent.<sup>34</sup> The channels from these dams were taken over ravines and around the edges of the *kharewa* cliffs. The state looked after the irrigation and the peasants were subjected to pay a part of their produce for this to the state. However, in 1880 when the government tried to introduce fixed assessment, the responsibility to

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<sup>28</sup> Hassan Khuihami, op.cit., Vol. I, p. 199

<sup>29</sup> Hassan Khuihami, op.cit., Vol. I, pp. 199-200

<sup>30</sup> Hassan Khuihami, op.cit., Vol. I, p. 201

<sup>31</sup> Hassan khuihami, op.cit., Vol.I, p 204

<sup>32</sup> These include Bringi, Arahpati, Ramshi, Shidpur Nalah, Sonu kul, Nalah Shidpur .Amri , kishan ganga, Ahaj river, Harvan river, Amravati, Sandhar, and Nangal river.

<sup>33</sup> Lawrence, *Provincial Gazetteer of Jammu and Kashmir*, p. 46

<sup>34</sup> R. Temple, Vol. I, p. 288

look after and repair of dams was entrusted to the villagers.<sup>35</sup> A person from a village was appointed to watch the stream which irrigated their land and repair it with help of the village labourers. He was known as *Mirab*.<sup>36</sup> Rainfall also formed one of sources of irrigation especially for the dry land agriculture and fruit cultivation in the upper reaches and in the *Kerewas* which were devoid of running water through streams and rivulets.<sup>37</sup>

The springs which were found throughout the valley constituted another source of irrigation<sup>38</sup>. However, the water of the springs was utilized as means of irrigation only in less irrigated areas and was avoided in the areas where the stream was available because its water is usually cold and took much time to attain a certain degree of temperature required for the growth of rice. Besides, it was also devoid of fertile silt and instead, it is accompanied with scum which harms the cultivation. In north-west part tanks provide irrigation to the rice fields.<sup>39</sup>

#### **b. Lift irrigation**

Lift irrigation system (*Toulsag*) was another method employed during the Dogra period.<sup>40</sup> In and around Srinagar and the larger towns and villages this method was carried out on by means of a long pole acting as lever and working on a pivot upon a cross-piece resting on the two upright or on the forked branches of a tree. The short end of the

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 323

<sup>37</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 326

<sup>38</sup> Khuihami, *Tarikh -I- Hassan*, Vol-I, pp. 178 -197. The author who was contemporary of Dogras, has mentioned a list of fifty-seven springs, he has also mentioned the location, name and the areas which were irrigated by these springs. See also Ernest F. Neve, *Beyond Pir Panjal*, p. 56

<sup>39</sup> Lawrence, *Jammu and Kashmir*, p. 47

<sup>40</sup> Ernest F. Neve, *Things Seen in Kashmir*, Jay Kay Book House, 1993, p. 76. The author has depicted a farmer who takes out water from a well by lifting system.

pole carried a large stone as a counterpoise and on the long end like the line of fishing-rod hung a thick rope with an earthenware bucket attached. This was rapidly lowered into the river or well by pulling on the rope and dragging down the end of the pole. In this way water was taken out to irrigate the fields. It was mainly applied in garden cultivation and *Kerewas* as well as in *Khandi* areas where the rivulets and streams were absent. In Kashmiri language it is known as *tolivan* (*Dhenkli*).

### **Agricultural Technology**

During the period of our study, it is evident from the sources that the implements and tools employed by the peasants for agricultural operations were not much advanced. They were conventional and limited in number.<sup>41</sup> These were manufactured locally with no technological help from other areas. Moreover, the peasant did not receive any special training in the use of these implements. The technique came to him through observation from early childhood. Diwan Kirpa Ram, who was appointed the Prime minister of Kashmir in 1865, has furnished an elaborate account in his Persian work *Gulzari-i-Kashmir* concerning the agricultural technology employed at different stages in agricultural operations by the peasants.<sup>42</sup>

*Alboine* (Plough): Plough was a most important implement which a peasant had to rely upon and had great significance in the entire agricultural operation during the Dogra period. Plough was used in

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<sup>41</sup> Lawrence, Valley, p. 324

<sup>42</sup> Diwan Kripa Ram, *Gulzar-i-Kashmir*, pp 485 to 487. The author who was the wazir of Maharaja Ranbir Sing from 1865, has given name and use of eighteen implements and tools used by the peasants in cultivation of various crops.

tilling the field by employing a pair of oxen.<sup>43</sup> It was made of wood of different trees which include mulberry, apple, *pashi* and walnut.<sup>44</sup> However, the walnut being more durable was preferred and was mostly used for the purpose. It had an iron tip which in Kashmiri language is called *faal*.<sup>45</sup>

*Deanth*: It was made of wood log, slightly curved and has nails below like a tractor. It was approximately six feet long and three feet in girth. It was used to plough watered or wet land to uproot the weeds and dry leftovers in the field and to close the rat holes (*woderes*). It was driven by a pair of oxen. The ploughing through this was called *Heej*.<sup>46</sup> Even this is still prevalent in Kashmir, though on very small scale.

*Paahan*: It was made of wood with iron nail at front. It was used by farmer to control the pair of oxen while ploughing.<sup>47</sup>

*Haat*: It was leather stick with wooden handle used to control the oxen.<sup>8</sup>

*Mondala*: It was log of wood which was used to level the field and break the clods after the ploughing that might have remained earlier intact.<sup>48</sup> It was driven by a pair of oxen. The driver stands on it with purpose to enhance its weight, so as to break the hard clod. Even this method is still used by the peasants.

*Bail (Spade)*: Spade was made of wood, has narrow face and was tipped with iron. It was used to dig the corners of field that remained untilled

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<sup>43</sup> D.K. Ram, *Gulzar-i-Kashmir*, p. 485

<sup>44</sup> Hangloo, *Agrarian system of Kashmir*, p. 34

<sup>45</sup> D. K. Ram, *Guzzar-i-Kashmir*, p. 485

<sup>46</sup> D. K. Ram, *Gulzar-i-Kashmir*, p. 486. See also, R. L. Hangloo, 'Agricultural Technology in Kashmir (1600 to 1900)', *The Medieval History Journal*, 11/ 1/ 2008, p 76

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

by plough as well as turf clod and for arranging the field for irrigation.<sup>49</sup> After plough, it was mostly used by the peasant in his agricultural activities.

*Tongur* (Small Hoe): It was used for loosening the soil and uprooting the weeds of crops like cotton and maize.<sup>50</sup> It was also used in planting and weeding of vegetables.

*Phowrah (zun)*: Its structure resembles a small hoe but it is slightly bigger than the small hoe with long wooden handle.<sup>51</sup> It was used for breaking clod as well arranging the soil in rows and squares for sowing seeds and raising saffron.

*Yatfer or Yabchet* (Mallet): It was a wooden hammer with long handle. By this, the clods were disintegrated after the ploughing.<sup>52</sup>

*Yut* (Wicker Basket) and *Kanvot* (Knight Caps): Both these were used by the peasants for carrying manures.<sup>53</sup> *Yut* was made of soft branch of trees like *yeed* (willow tree) and *Bran* (a tree). Knight cap was made of old cloth like *pattoo* and *suthul* (Jute).

*Sickle (Duerut)*:- It was made of iron with wooden handle. Its shape resembles the new moon. It was generally used to cut down crops and grass.<sup>54</sup> R. L. Hongloo stated that it was a very important and integral implement in Kashmiri agriculture but certainly not 'imbued with any

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 325. See also D.K. Ram *Gulzar-i-Kashmir*, p. 486

<sup>51</sup> Charles Ellison Bates, *Gazetteer of Kashmir and its Adjacent Districts of Kistwar, Badrawar, Jammu, Naoshera, punch, and the Valley of the Kishen Ganga*, Gulshan Books, Srinagar, 2005(Reprint), p. 44

<sup>52</sup> D.K.Ram, *op.cit.*, p. 486

<sup>53</sup> Hangloo, *Agricultural Technology in Kashmir*, *op cit.*, p. 81

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.



community spirit' as understood by Marc Bloch in the case of medieval France.<sup>55</sup>

*Daniye Mund*: It was used for threshing (*chumbun*) of *shali* (paddy).<sup>56</sup> It was a huge plank set up against support, so that the edge rested on the ground and it slope downwards. Row of stood behind it. Each person seized a bundle of *shali*(paddy) called *Loov* raised it in both hands and struck it again and again on the broad smooth face of the plank (*mund*) till the grain is separated from the *Loov*.<sup>57</sup>

*Mazan*: It was like a broom but very long. Grass and other unwanted substances were separated from grain by this at the time of threshing.<sup>58</sup>

*Mazan* is still in use in the houses of the down trodden section of Kashmiri society.

*Feew* (Shovel): It was also used in preparing the field for cultivation.<sup>59</sup> Besides it was used for digging the corners of the field which has left the plough and it was also used to dig the holes along the field margins to plant the trees to protect it from the erosion during the floods and when the fields were watered for transplanting the seedlings.

*Treshul*: It was a three pointed implement which was utilized to collect the grain.<sup>60</sup> It shape resembles the *treshul*.

Mortar and Pestle: these two were used for husking of paddy which did not require any special training but was learned through observation and practice. However, during the 19th century beside pestle and Mortar,

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<sup>55</sup> Hangloo, *Agricultural Technology in Kashmir*, op.cit., p. 82

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Wingate, op.cit., p. 15

<sup>58</sup> D.K.Ram, *Gulzar-i-Kashmir*, p. 486

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

Jindra or husking machine which operated by water was also used for husking of *shali*.<sup>61</sup> During the last decade of 19<sup>th</sup> century the total number of these machines rose to six. These six were owned and managed by state. Besides these, there were three machines of this sort which were owned by local people and were free of government control.<sup>62</sup>

### **Production of Crops in the province of Kashmir**

The nineteenth century agriculture was dominated by the cultivation of food crops all over the world and India was in no way an exception. In the same fashion the agriculture in Kashmir was the dominated by food crop production with exception of cultivation of few commercial crops. Thus during the Dogra regime subsistence agriculture was practiced in Kashmir which was characterized by the cultivation of food and commercial crops to satisfy largely the local requirements, with divergent patterns.<sup>63</sup> This has been also testified by various travelers and persons who sojourned in the valley for different missions.

### **Food Crops**

Rice (*Daniye*): Rice was cultivated in the valley of Kashmir since ancient times. It has a vital significance as it was the staple food for Kashmir populace<sup>64</sup> and the main source of revenue to the state. At the

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<sup>61</sup> Maharaja Pratab Singh, *Dairy of an Inspection Tour to the Gilgit Road*, Civil and Military Gazette Press, Lahore, 1893, pp. 5-6

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>63</sup> D.K.Ram, *Gulzar-i-Kashmir*, p. 278. The author has mentioned the names and varieties of crops and fruits grown in Kashmir during Dogra period.

<sup>64</sup> Lal Ganesh Lal, *op.cit.*, p. 32. See also Neve, *Things Seen in Kashmir*, P. 59. The author wrote, looking down on the valley, from a height we saw hundreds of square miles of fields in terraced squares & crescents.

time of harvest the maharaja organized a feast called *ankut Jug*<sup>65</sup> to celebrate the harvest of crop. The cultivator on the other hand devoted most of his energy and time to rice cultivation. Lawrence recorded, “the cultivator spend his days in terracing the fields, expand great labour in digging out irrigation channels and spend his nights out in the fields in watching the flow of water and passed laborious days morning till evening like an amphibious animal in the wet and deep mud.” Its straw despite of poor nutritive value was generally used as fodder for cattle. Wakefield wrote “that even the wealth of an estate or parcel of land was calculated not by money value but the number of measures of rice it can produce.” Diwan Krishan Lal, in his ‘Account of Kashmir’, maintained that in 1848, 350,000 acres were under cultivation.<sup>66</sup> The total percentage of grass cultivated area under rice was 19.3%.<sup>67</sup> Thus it was a major source of revenue to the State.<sup>68</sup>

Rice was a *Kharif* crop. The ground was prepared for *shali* by ploughing the field from the middle of March and it lasted till the end of April or middle of May. Sowing commenced in May. The reaping started in October and lingered till November.<sup>69</sup> Lawrence witnessed two method of preparing soil for rice cultivation namely *Tao* and *Kenalu*. Under the first method the soil was ploughed dry and when the clods were perfectly free from moisture, irrigation was arranged and seeds were sown. It was assumed, that this method yielded best results. On the other hand under *kenalu* method, the soil was ploughed wet and

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<sup>65</sup> C. E. Bates, Op.cit, p-52

<sup>66</sup> C. F. Hangloo, *Agrarian system of Kashmir*(1846-1889), p. 17

<sup>67</sup> Ganganath Report, p. 75.

<sup>68</sup> Wakefield. Op.cit., p.137.

<sup>69</sup> A. Wingate, op.cit. p14. See also Robert Thorp, *Kashmir Oppressed*, (first published in 1870) Weis Publications, Srinagar, p. 68

when three ploughings were done and the soil was wet, seeds were sown.<sup>70</sup>

In Kashmir during the period of our study two methods of rice cultivation were in vogue.<sup>71</sup> Under the first method the seeds were sown densely in a small patch of land (*thajwan*) after two or three ploughings and clod breaking and when the seedlings attained a height of one feet, they were transplanted in the rest of the field.<sup>72</sup> Under the second method the seeds were sparsely broadcasted over the entire field. This way of cultivation in Kashmiri language is known as *Vaater*.<sup>73</sup> Weeding was under taken stage by stage for good harvest. It was known by a generic term *Khushaba*.<sup>74</sup> It commenced soon after sowing to protect the tender plants from deterioration and to ensure their smooth growth.

In Kashmir ninety-six varieties of rice were grown.<sup>75</sup> On the basis of colour, rice has generally two varieties-white and red. The white variety was considered superior and was esteemed as food. *Kanyun* and *Basmati* are best varieties of white rice.

Rice cultivation was practiced throughout the valley up to a height 7000 feet.<sup>76</sup> However, in the upper areas it was sown earlier than the normal sowing period because of the relatively colder climate.<sup>77</sup> In

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<sup>70</sup> Lawrence, Provincial Gazetteer of Jammu and Kashmir, p. 51.

<sup>71</sup> *Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh* (First Published 1890 by The Superintendent of Government Printing, Calcutta), Vivik Publication House, Delhi. 1974 (Reprint), p. 5.

<sup>72</sup> C.G. Bruce, *Kashmir*, A & G Black Ltd, London, 1915, p. 37

<sup>73</sup> In Kashmir this method was widely adopted in Dogra period and even in 20th century it existed in Kashmir.

<sup>74</sup> Ernest F. Neve, *Beyond Pir Panjal*, P. 56. The author who came in the eighties of nineteenth century, stated row of peasants may be seen standing in mud, bent down, scooping out all the adventitious plants and grasses and plastering mud round the stalks of the young rice plant. This goes day after day under a hot sun and the fields have to be carefully and completely weeded no less than four times a year. See also Lawrence, op. cit. p 331

<sup>75</sup> D.K. Ram, *Gulzari-i-Kashmir*, pp. 278-79

<sup>76</sup> E.F. Neve, *Beyond Pir Panjal*, P. 60

<sup>77</sup> Lawrence, Valley, p. 327

Kashmir certain areas produced a particular variety of rice. Telbal situated on the eastern bank of Dal Lake was famous for *chughut* which was very soft. Kasba Lal was known for *anzan*, Salora for *gudh krikum* and Nipur in Anantnag *wazarat* produced good rice.<sup>78</sup> However, in the early nineties of the nineteenth century, Nipur lost its importance as a great producer of *Shali*.

The yield of rice varied throughout the valley and it was greatly determined by the type of soil and supply of water. Weeding also influenced the yield.<sup>79</sup> The *wazarat* of Islamabad had the highest yield per acre of land. River Jhelum which originated in Shahabad *pargana* of this *wazarat* near Verinage flows through it, which enriched its soils every year and facilitated adequate and regular irrigation. It was supplemented by other small rivers and rivulets. The yield in valley varied between ten and sixty maunds per acre but twenty to forty maunds covered generally most of the rice lands. In the hilly areas the yield of rice was very low. It was owing to the mountainous soils in these areas which were deficient in fertility, and owing to cold climate as well insufficient irrigation facilities. Generally, twenty to twenty-four seers *pacca* per acre land were sown.<sup>80</sup> It was estimated that 1235,358 *kharwars*<sup>81</sup> or about 2500,000 maunds were annually produced in Kashmir during the Dogra rule.<sup>82</sup>

The price of *shali* was regulated by the state. In 1846, Maharaja Gulab Singh abolished the private sale of rice and made it a state monopoly. A series of *Shali* stores called *Kotas* were erected in Srinagar

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<sup>78</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, pp. 332-33

<sup>79</sup> Wingate, *op.cit.*, p. 15

<sup>80</sup> *Seer was a unit of weight during Dogra period and is still prevalent in Kashmir. It is equivalent to one Kilogram. See Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh, p. 59*

<sup>81</sup> *See Appendix No.5*

<sup>82</sup> *Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh, p. 60.*

and in the headquarters of other *parganas* to store grain and sell it at fixed price. Thus, the rationing of rice commenced in Kashmir for the first time in its history.<sup>83</sup> This hit hard peasantry who on account of the elimination of competition, had to sell it to only one customer i.e. the state, at the price fixed by the state. According to an estimate 12, 35,358 kharwars (2500,000 maunds ) were stored per annum in *Kotas* during Ranbir Singh period and about four lakh of kharwars were sold to shawl weavers at the rate of two *Chilki* rupee per *kharwar*.<sup>84</sup> For this purpose an officer called *Dagi-i-jinsi* was appointed who ensured grain collection and managed the transaction of whole business.<sup>85</sup> The rice was sold at the rate of 1¼ *chilki* rupees per *kharwar* of fifteen *trak kharwar* with minor fluctuation like in 1879 to 1½ *chilki* rupees.<sup>86</sup> However, the export of rice was prohibited since Gulab Singh's time.<sup>87</sup> It might have been done to suffice the local needs as on account of poor communication, it was difficult to import the rice from the plains as well to stop the scarcity of food supply in the valley.

Maize (*Makai*): Maize was another *kharif* crop grown in Kashmir.<sup>88</sup> After *shali* it was most widely grown crop in Kashmir. The total grass cultivated area under its cultivation was 29.5%.<sup>89</sup> It was sown in May-June after two or three ploughings.<sup>90</sup> Maize was grown on dry

<sup>83</sup> K.M.Panikar, *Gulab Singh (1792-1885), The founder of Kashmir*, Gulshan Publishers, Srinagar, 1989.p. 137.

<sup>84</sup> *Chilki* rupee replaced the *Hari Singhi* rupee introduced by Sikhs. *Chilki rupee* was introduced in Kashmir as medium of exchange by Maharaja Gulab Singh soon after he ascended the throne of Kashmir in 1846. It was equivalent to ten annas of imperial rupee. Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh, p. 60.

<sup>85</sup> Salig Ram Koul. *The Biography of Maharaja Gulab Singh, The founder of Jammu and Kashmir State (Urdu)*. Salig Ram Press, Srinagar, Kashmir, 1971, p. 140

<sup>86</sup> Wingate, op.cit., p.17

<sup>87</sup> Wingate, *Valley*, p. 16

<sup>88</sup> D.K.Ram. *Gulzar-i-Kashmir*, p. 284

<sup>89</sup> Ganganath Report, p.75

<sup>90</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, pp. 326-27

lands like low hills, *kerewas* (*plateaus*) and in the areas covered with peaty soils. In the upper areas (mountains) inhabited by Gujars, maize was the main crop. The yield per acre land was comparatively high here due to the local manure of buffaloes and cattle. Here eighteen seers were sown per acre of land.<sup>91</sup> According to Lawrence two varieties of maize were grown in Kashmir namely red and white. The latter being soft was considered superior. However, the *poonch* maize was another variety grown in the valley. It bore small grains and was cultivated in the western part of valley. Maize was used as food and its stalks provide fodder for cattle. During the Dogra period maize was prone to a number of diseases like *Rai* and *Sas*.<sup>92</sup> It was mainly due the non-availability of pesticides and chemical fertilizers. The yield varied from ten to fourteen maunds per acre of land. It was sold at the rate of two *chilki* rupees per *kharwars*, if in cobs and twelve *traks*, if the grain had been separated.<sup>93</sup> Maize was an important item of internal trade.

Wheat (*Kanek*): wheat was a spring crop in Kashmir. It was sown in October and reaped in June. It was cultivated without manures and weeding and was mainly grown on the dry lands of Kashmir.<sup>94</sup> The total area under its cultivation was 19.5%.<sup>95</sup> Twenty-seven seer of wheat were sown per acre of land and the average yield per acre was eight *kharwars*.<sup>96</sup> Its cultivation in Kashmir was confined to Dachanpura and Khaurpora *parganas*. However, wheat was also grown in other parts of Kashmir but relatively on small portion of land. The common variety of

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<sup>91</sup> Bates, op.cit., pp. 49-50. See also Hangloo, *Agrarian System of Kashmir*, p.19

<sup>92</sup> Lawrence, p. 337

<sup>93</sup> *Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh*, p. 62

<sup>94</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 342

<sup>95</sup> Ganganath Report, p. 75

<sup>96</sup> Hangloo, *Agrarian System of Kashmir*, p. 19

wheat grown in Kashmir was red wheat.<sup>97</sup> It mainly depended on rain for irrigation. Wheat in Kashmir was having less significance as food and was mainly used for bakeries. Its straws were not use fodder for animals as that of other crops and were allowed to rot in the fields.

The yield of wheat was not good in Kashmir compared to that of India. The average produce per acre land was seven mounds.<sup>98</sup> However, the *kherewa* of Pampore being exceptionally fertile produces twenty mounds per acre of land.<sup>99</sup> It was an important source of income to the state which levied two to six *chilki* rupees per *kharwar*.<sup>100</sup>

Barley (*Wishka*): It was a rabbi crop and was sown in October - November. The harvesting was done in June. The total area under its cultivation was 2.2%.<sup>101</sup> Lawrence lamented, Barley grown in Kashmir was inferior in quality and was not used as food crop on large but was mixed with wheat and was used for making floor.<sup>102</sup> In the areas with a height of 7000 feet, a particular type of barley known as *grim* or Tibet barley was cultivated.<sup>103</sup> Here it was the staple food of the people. It was also used as fodder for cattle.<sup>104</sup> The average yield of barley per acre of land was eight and a half mounds. The average yield of *grim* was about four mounds.<sup>105</sup> Twenty-four *seer* were sown per acre of land.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 342

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>99</sup> *Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh*, pp. 61-62

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>101</sup> *Ganganath Report*, p. 75

<sup>102</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 341

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>104</sup> Khuihami, *op.cit.*, Vol. I, p. 185

<sup>105</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 341

<sup>106</sup> Hangloo, *Agrarian System of Kashmir*, p. 19



Buck wheat (*Tromba*): Buck wheat was grown mainly in the hilly regions of valley<sup>107</sup>. It requires no regular irrigation and was benefitted by the timely rains. Two varieties i.e., *trombo* and another white pinkish colour of buckwheat were grown in Kashmir. The latter was cultivated as substitute to rice in the areas where the irrigation was inadequate. The seeds sown per acre of land were twenty–four seers and the average yield was six *kharwars* per acre.<sup>108</sup> Buck wheat was roasted and ground to flour and then baked in thick cakes mixed with walnut or apricot oil, which in this country was common use for the domestic and culinary purposes.<sup>109</sup>

Amranthus ( *Ganhar*): It was a *Kharif* crop and was sown in May after two or three ploughings. It was sown in rows in the cotton field or on the borders of maize plots. It was rain fed crop and does not require manure. Its minute grains are first parched and then eaten with milk or water especially in winter.<sup>110</sup> It was considered a warm and nourishing food. The Hindus eat it on the fast day and its stalks were used by washer men.

Pulses (*Dal*): Kashmir having a sufficient dry land in the form of *Kerewas* and low hills, a number of pulses were grown. The pulses were very significant and people cultivate them along with other crops.<sup>111</sup> These were grown on both irrigated and un-irrigated lands. In *khandi*

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<sup>107</sup> Lawrence, *Valley.*, p 338

<sup>108</sup> Hangloo, *Agrarian System of Kashmir*, p. 19

<sup>109</sup> H. G. Bellew, *Kashmir and Kashgar*, A Narrative of the journey of the embassy to Kashgar in 1873-74, (First Pub. 1875), Asian Educational Services New Delhi, 1989, p. 88

<sup>110</sup> Khuihami, op.cit., Vol. I, p. 184

<sup>111</sup> Khuihami, op.cit., Vol. I, p. 251

areas the pulses were grown on large scale.<sup>112</sup> The pulses grown in Kashmir during Gulab Singh's and Ranbir Singh's period were;

Mung (*Phalscolus Mungo*): Among the pulses *mung* was cultivated on large scale. It was a *kharif* crop and was entirely depend on rainfall for irrigation. It does not require regular irrigation and manures and was mainly cultivated on banger land.<sup>113</sup> It has two varieties, dim green and black.<sup>114</sup> Moreover, no weeding was under taken. The seeds sown per acre of land were twelve seers and the average production per acre of land was two and half mounds to three mounds.<sup>115</sup>

Mah: It was a *kharif* crop and the proceed that of *mung* in terms of cultivation. The seeds sown per acre of land were twelve seers and the average produce per acre was four mounds.<sup>116</sup> It was used as food by the people especially during the winter season when the green vegetables were rarely available due to snow.

Moth: Moth was sown in April mainly on barren part of rice fields. It mainly depends on rain for growth.<sup>117</sup> It was mainly used as fodder for animals<sup>118</sup> especially goat, sheep, cattle etc in winter.

Masur (*lentils*): It was a *kharif* crop. Its seeds were sown in April–May and ripened in September. It was mainly used during winter.<sup>119</sup> In 1864 it was one of the articles sent to Lahore exhibition. Twelve seers of

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<sup>112</sup> Dr A.R.Bhat, op.cit., p 136

<sup>113</sup> *Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh*, p. 6

<sup>114</sup> Khuihami, op.cit., Vol. I, p. 252

<sup>115</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 339. See also Hangloo, *Agrarian System*, p. 19

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>117</sup> *Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh*, p. 63

<sup>118</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p.339

<sup>119</sup> *Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh*, p. 63

seeds were sown per acre of land and the average outturn per acre of land was one and half *kharwars*.<sup>120</sup>

*Razma* (Beans): Beans were also cultivated in Kashmir during the Dogra period. Two types of beans, white and red were popular in Kashmir. However, it was mostly consumed domestically.<sup>121</sup> Twelve seers were sown per acre of land and the average yield was two and half *kharwars* per acre of land.<sup>122</sup>

*Mattar* (Peas): Peas were also grown throughout the valley.<sup>123</sup>

Produce of Floating Gardens (*Radh*): Floating Gardens are unique landscape of the water bodies of Kashmir which existed since long ago and are present even now. These are mainly located near the banks of lakes. These gardens were made by raft and reeds in which earth and weed are placed layer above layer till it became strong enough to bear sufficient weight.<sup>124</sup> The following passage from Moorcroft's travel account lucidly explains t how these gardens were formed.

The roots of aquatic plants growing in shallow water are divided about two feet under the water, so that they completely lose all connections with the bottom of the lake but retain their former situation in respect to each other. When thus detached from the soil, they are pressed into somewhat closer to each contact and formed into beds of circa two yards in breadth and of an indefinite length. The heads of sedges, reed and other plants of the floats are now cut off and laid upon its surface and covered with a thin coat of mud which at first intercepted

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<sup>120</sup> Hangloo, *Agrarian System of Kashmir*, p 19

<sup>121</sup> Ibid

<sup>122</sup> Hangloo, *Valley*, p. 19

<sup>123</sup> *Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh*, p. 63

<sup>124</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 344. For also Parveez Ahmad, *Economy and Society Kashmir- A Study in Change and Continuity (1885-1925)*, Oriental Publishing House, Srinagar, 2007, p. 120

in its descent, gradually sinks into mass of matted roots. The bead floats but kept in its place by a stake of willow driven through it at each end which admits of its rising or falling in accommodation to the rise or fall of the water.<sup>125</sup>

The size of the floating gardens varied greatly and these resembled the *chinampas* of old Mexico.<sup>126</sup> These are very fertile and support the growth of a number of crops with sufficient yield. However, during the period of our study mainly vegetables and some fruits were grown on these lands. The prominent produce of these gardens include melons, cucumbers, turnip, carrot, egg-plant, cabbages and numerous other vegetables.<sup>127</sup> However, being surrounded by water the products of these gardens were inferior in taste. The gardens too formed a vital source of revenue to the government.

The following table depicts the crops of Kashmir with the amount of seeds sown in per acre area, the yield per acre and the area under cultivation;<sup>128</sup>

Kashmiri name	English name	Seeds sown Per acre	Yield per Acre	Area under Cultivation
Dhan	Paddy	20-24 seers	15 kharwars	19.3%
Makai	Maize	18 seers	6 kharwars	29.5%

<sup>125</sup> William Moorcroft and George Treback, *Travels in Himalayan provinces of Hindustan and the Punjab in Ladakh and Kashmir* ( 1819-1825), Vol. II, Asian Education Service, New Delhi, 1989, pp.- 137-38

<sup>126</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 344

<sup>127</sup> John Martin Honigberger, *Thirty-Five Years in the East*, Bangasi Office, Calcutta, 1905, pp. 184-85. See also E. F Knight, *Where Three Empires Meet*, (III Edition) Longmans, Green and Co. London, 1893, p. 86

<sup>128</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, pp. 330 to 343. See also Bates, op. cit. pp. 50 to 53. Younghusband, op. cit., PP. 199 to 205

Kanak	Wheat	27 seers	2 kharwars	19.5%
Wishka	Barley	24 seers	4 kharwars	2.2%
Trombo	Buck wheat	24 seers	6 kharwars	Unkonown
Kung	Saffron	70 totals/sq.	.....	.....
Razma	Beans	12 seers	2 ½ kharwars	.....
Mung	.....	12 seers	2 ½ kharwars	.....
Masur	Lentils	12 seers	1 ½ kharwars	.....
Mah	.....	12 seers	4 maunds	.....

### Cash Crops

Kashmir has attained extensive fame for producing significant crops which had sufficient commercial value and fetched rich economic gains to the people associated with the cultivation of such crops as well as to the state. In Kashmir, a number of cash crops like cotton, tobacco, hopes, oil-seed saffron etc were also cultivated. These crops besides, satisfying the local requirements were exported outside the valley for procuring the money as well other products which were not accessible locally.

Cotton (*Kapas*): Cotton was used for making cloth and from its seeds oil was obtained. Cotton was cultivated on *kerewas* (*Wuder*) and the low lying areas of Kashmir. It was sown in May and was harvested in September-October.<sup>129</sup> Thirty-six seers were sown per acre of land and the yield was one and half *kharewa* per acre.<sup>130</sup> Initially, Maharaja

<sup>129</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 341

<sup>130</sup> Younghusband, *op.cit.*, p 202

Gulab Singh evinced little interest in cotton production but after 1850, he displayed special interest to promote and expand the various crops including cotton crop. During Maharaja Ranbir Singh's period, no stone was left unturned to promote the agriculture.

With the opening of Jhelum valley road, the import of cotton from India increased. This had an adverse effect on the cotton cultivation.<sup>131</sup> Being superior in quality it reduced the demand of native cotton and consequently the number of people associated with it dwindled.

Saffron (*Kung*): Saffron was the leading cash crop of Kashmir during the early Dogra period.<sup>132</sup> The saffron produced in Kashmir was of superior quality, not found elsewhere in the world and even surpassed that produced in Spain, Italy, Morocco, France and Sicily.<sup>133</sup> It was used as a condiment, pigment, flavor and medicine. Moreover, it was used for dying purposes as well. Saffron cultivation was confined to Pampore and twenty villages in its vicinity.<sup>134</sup> The major ones include Sonkrund, Litpura and Sambara, Avin, Ladu and Chandhar and Bara Odder. It was also cultivated in Kishtwar but of an inferior quality. Under Gulab Singh, Colonel Main Singh introduced its cultivation on the Damdu wadur in the Yech pargana and near Martand. Though the climate and soil in these areas resembled to that of Pampore, the experiment could not produce concrete results. The soil on which it was cultivated was composed of ferruginous clay.<sup>135</sup> The land on which the saffron is cultivated is squares of seven to eight feet and the depth

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<sup>131</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, P. 341

<sup>132</sup> Har Gopal Khasta, *Tarikh-I-Kashmir* (Urdu), City Book centre, Srinagar, 1994, P -30. See also Wakefield, op.cit., p. 140.

<sup>133</sup> R. Temple, Vol.- II, p 257

<sup>134</sup> Neve, *Things Seen in Kashmir*, p. 81

<sup>135</sup> *Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh*, pp. 54-55

around the square is three to seven *geras*.<sup>136</sup> These squares are called *kongwari* or *chamanking*. Each square is divided into a ridge and the ridge is set with bulbs five to six inch apart at a depth of ten to twelve inches.<sup>137</sup>

In each square seventy-two *tolas*<sup>138</sup> were planted. The preparation for its cultivation commenced in *savan* corresponding to July-August.<sup>139</sup> The land for the cultivation of saffron was neither given manure nor regular irrigation. However, the land with sufficient moisture yielded significant output. Plants sprouted in September and the plucking of saffron flowers commenced in *Asooj* and *Katik* (September-October).<sup>140</sup> After plucking the flower, it was consigned to sacks; their weight was estimated around twenty-four seers the cultivator took then to tax collector's house, who without opening it selects half as the government share.<sup>141</sup> Lawrence mentioned, "The methods of its cultivation was slow and if the European method of its cultivation was adopted, there would have been a bumper crop of saffron in Kashmir."

Lal Ganesh Lal, in his *Siyahat-i-kashmir*, a *Tesildar* at *Laudhana*, just after *Gulab Singh* took over, maintained that the annual produce of saffron in Kashmir was worth of 50,000 *Hari singhi* rupees and the general price of one seer of saffron was twenty rupees.<sup>142</sup> Dr *Elmslie*, a young *Scottist* doctor who came to Kashmir in 1864 wrote:<sup>143</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> It is a unit of measurement. It is equal to 2.5 inches.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.* In Kashmir '*waar*' is a patch of land which is generally meant for vegetables cultivation. It is generally fenced with branches of tree or by mud walls.

<sup>138</sup> It is a unit of measurement. One *tola* is approximately equal to 10gms (11.666gms).

<sup>139</sup> D.K. Ram, *Gulzar-i-Kahmir*, pp. 490-91

<sup>140</sup> Lal Ganesh Lal, *op.cit.*, P-27. See also *Neve*, *Thirty years in Kashmir*, p. 81

<sup>141</sup> D.K. Ram. *Gulzar-i-Kahmir*, See also *Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh*, p. 54

<sup>142</sup> Lal Ganesh Lal, *op.cit.*, p. 28

<sup>143</sup> *Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh*, p. 53

“Last year 1,330 *traks* of saffron were produced and of this quantity 693 *traks* were taken by the government. When the season is dry and warm, as many as 200 *traks* are produced. From six to eight annas or from nine pence to a shilling, is given for a *tola* weight or 180 grains of saffron”

In 1870 the yield of saffron in the valley was estimated at 200 *kharwars* (28,800lbs).<sup>144</sup> After the great famine of 1877-78 the cultivation of saffron was badly affected. Its production dwindled to a considerable extent. However, in spite of the great hard work of the government to rehabilitate the saffron cultivators, it could not be revived. Saffron worth of Rs 2100 was produced during the 1883 and 1884<sup>145</sup> when Kashmir had recovered from the famine conditions and the harvest of all crops was good.

Saffron was a vital product of trade. According to one estimate 1,600Ibl of saffron was exported annually to Ladakh.<sup>146</sup> The flavoring part was exported to Tibet and Ladakh while the rest was exported to the different trading centers of Hindustan like Amritsar, Ludhiana etc.<sup>147</sup>

Oilseeds: The cultivation of oilseeds had a special importance in Kashmir province during the period under review, as the people of Kashmir used vegetable oil in cooking instead of ghee which was generally utilized in rest of India. Oil obtained from the oil-seeds were also used in other purposes like lighting.<sup>148</sup> The principle oil-seed grown in Kashmir during the Dogras was rape. It has three principle varieties –

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<sup>144</sup> *Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh*, p. 54

<sup>145</sup> S. S. Charak, *Life and Times of Maharaja Ranbir Singh*, Jay Kay Book House, Jammu, p. 138

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>147</sup> D.K. Ram. *Gulzar-I-Kashmir*, p. 492

<sup>148</sup> Khuihami, *op.cit.*, I, p.187



*tilgoglu*, *taruz* and *shadji*.<sup>149</sup> The first variety was sown in September–October immediately after the harvest of paddy on dry lands and ripens in May–June. It was a rain fed crop .The second variety was sown in spring. It ripened in a short span of time and was harvested in the same season as *tilgoglu*. This variety yielded less oil compared to that of the former. The third variety was sown in the rice field when last watering was given to paddy before maturation.<sup>150</sup> It ripened in April–May. The average yield was three mounds or two-hundred and forty lbs.<sup>151</sup> However, its yield was very inadequate as compared to rest of the India and neighboring areas.<sup>152</sup>

Tobacco (*Tamak*): Tobacco was cultivated in many parts of Kashmir and was the source of income to greater section of population. It was sown in April and picketed up about the end of August.<sup>153</sup> Tobacco was mostly cultivated in Srinagar and its environs and in some small towns. It was also produced on the floating gardens of Dal Lake.<sup>154</sup> It was not grown by ordinary cultivators but was the monopoly of the gardener class of the city and the towns.<sup>155</sup> The superior variety was grown in Srinagar was known as *beware* (*Nicotiana tabacum*) and many people earned their living from it. It was source of revenue to the state and also constituted a significant item of trade. After the famine of 1877, its cultivation was badly affected and it was not use at large.<sup>156</sup> The cultivators left the valley due to the devastated situation created by the

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<sup>149</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p.339

<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

<sup>151</sup> Younghusband, *op.cit.*, p.173

<sup>152</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p 339

<sup>153</sup> Younghusband, *op.cit.*, p. 174

<sup>154</sup> Bellew, *op. cit.*, p. 68

<sup>155</sup> P.N.K.Bamzai, *Socio- Economic History of Kashmir*, Gulshan Books, Srinagar, 2007, p. 174

<sup>156</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 346

famine which lasted till the eighties and created insignificant prospects of tobacco in future.

*Til (Sesame)*: *Til* was a *kharif* crop and was cultivated widely throughout the valley. It was sown in April and was harvested immediately after rice harvest. It is a delicate crop and winds and heavy rains prove fatal to it. The land for this crop was ploughed five times and no manure was given. However, it required fertile soil and timely moderate rainfall for sufficient output. The average yield per acre of land was one and half maunds per acres<sup>157</sup>

### **The other products of economic importance**

*Chob-i-kisht*: It grew naturally in the hilly areas of Kashmir. It has medicinal significance and was economically very significant. At least ten thousand maunds were produced annually. The traders of Kashmir exported it to China through India.<sup>158</sup>

*Kur*: *Kur* was also naturally grown in Kashmir especially in the hilly areas of the valley. It was exported to India for trade.<sup>159</sup>

*Dorangari*: This plant grows naturally in Kashmir. It was mainly used for dyes.<sup>160</sup>

*Rudang (Madder)*: It was actually a plant and was economically significant. It grew naturally in Kashmir. It gets ripened in five years.

*Singarahs (water nut)*: *Singarah* grew naturally in the lakes of Kashmir.<sup>161</sup> It has a beautiful leaf, sometimes green, brown or red, with

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<sup>157</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 340

<sup>158</sup> D.K. Ram. *Gulzar-i-Kashmir*, p. 273. For detail see, E. F. Knight, *Where Three Empires Meet, where Three Empires Meet*, p. 63

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*

large widening stalks like chain. It was grounded into flour and bread was prepared out of it. Thus it constituted food of many people especially boatmen and the people dwelled on the margins of lakes.<sup>162</sup> The Hindus ate it on the fast day. It was also an item of trade as well and was also exported to India and other countries.<sup>163</sup> The lakes which yielded Singarah include, the famous Dal Lake. Wular and Mansbal. The Maharaja derived considerable revenue from it. Ganesh Lal who visited Kashmir during the initial period of Dogra rule stated that the government collected singaras worth of Rs 25, 000 were annually as revenues.<sup>164</sup>

*Kashniz* (Coriander): It was grown in Kashmir and was used as a spice and as a medicine.<sup>165</sup>

Red chilies: Red chilies were grown throughout the valley and were mostly used as spices.<sup>166</sup>

Honey (*Shehed*): Honey was produced in Kashmir and was used both as food as well as medicine.<sup>167</sup> In the sides of some houses in the villages there were circles with holes in the center in which bees were seen to be crowding. These were the Kashmiri hives. One hive gave six pounds of honey.<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

<sup>162</sup> Wakefield, op.cit., p. 155. See also D.K. Ram, *Gulzar-i-Kashmir* p 273, Bellew, op.cit., p. 68

<sup>163</sup> Richard Temple, *Journals kept in Hyderabad, Kashmir, Sikkim and Nepal*, vol. II, cosmos publication, 1977, p 55.

<sup>164</sup> Lal Ganesh Lal, op.cit., p. 37

<sup>165</sup> D.K. Ram, *Gulzar-i-Kashmir*, p. 273

<sup>166</sup> Ibid.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

<sup>168</sup> E. F. Neve, *Beyond Pir Panjal*, p 61. The author recorded the hives were merely earthenware cylinders about about two feet long and built on wall the outer end of the hive has central hole about an inch across or sometimes a series of small holes in a circle. The inner end has an earthenware lid fitted over it and sealed with clay. It opened when honey was extracted from.

Opium (Afyun): It was obtained from the poppy crop. When balls were immature; they were cut in the middle and white liquid was extracted out of it and then dried in the sun. In this way *afeen* was obtained. It was an important article of trade. It was exported to India and Ladakh.<sup>169</sup>

Charas (*Bang*): *Charas* was also produced in Kashmir. It grew naturally along

the banks of rivers, and on barren and waste lands. Its cultivation was also practiced on the rice fields. In 1846, the total income to the state from it was calculated Rs 11,500 as excise duty.<sup>170</sup>

*Krishun*: It was plant which grew abundantly in Kashmir and its leaves were used for rope making. However, it was mainly concentrated in present Ganderbal area.<sup>171</sup>

*Kots* (*Anchlandia costus*): It grew abundantly on the mountains of Kashmir at an elevation of 7,000 feet above the seal level.<sup>172</sup> Its leaves resembled the cabbage. It has large parsnip like roots which are aromatic. It matured in September. It was monopolized by the state government. The people brought it to Srinagar where from it was exported to the British province of Punjab. From Punjab it was exported Bombay whence it was exported to China where it used as burnt in temples for its fragrance. Four varieties of this plant were grown in Kashmir i.e. *Kot*, *Drankhar*, *pashkar* and *kor*.<sup>173</sup> The plant has several medicinal uses as it was used to cure ulcers, a hair wash and to cure

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<sup>169</sup> D.K. Ram, *Gulzar-i-Kashmir*, p. 274

<sup>170</sup> Lal Ganesh Lal, *op.cit.*, P. 37

<sup>171</sup> H. G. Bellew, *op. cit.*, p. 87

<sup>172</sup> Bates, *op.cit.*, p. 43

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*

cholera. In addition, it also acted as preservative of cloth against the ravages of moths and other vermin and insects.

Fumigatory. It is said that it was used to purify water in wells.<sup>174</sup>

Thus, it is evident that agriculture which engaged the largest portion of populace of Kashmir constituted the mainstay of economy & was major source of revenue to the state during the period under scrutiny. The agrarian economy being subsisting in nature was characterized by the predomination of food crops to satisfy the domestic requirements of food and allied needs of life. Besides, the cash crops also formed a major concern of the cultivator. Some products grew naturally and also augmented the economy of Kashmir. However, the yield, due to state apathy, corrupt officials, exorbitant exactions and absence of chemical fertilizers and pesticides was inadequate. The main force behind the whole agricultural process, the peasant was left with a meager portion of produce; which was not even sufficient to compensate his food requirement till the next harvest and he had to opt to wild products for survival. Moreover, the traditional technology was in operation to accomplish the agricultural operations.

### **Horticulture**

Kashmir with its salubrious climate and rich soils was ideal for horticulture. It grew fruits of various kinds since ancient times. Kalhana, in *Rajtarangni* mentioned that grapes grew abundantly in Kashmir besides other fruits. He has also referred to apples.<sup>175</sup> Even Alberuni referred to the existence of numerous fruits in Kashmir.<sup>176</sup> Mirza Haidar

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<sup>174</sup> Ibid.

<sup>175</sup> M. A Stein, Kalhana's *Rajtarangni*, Vol. 1, London, 1900, p. 42

<sup>176</sup> Bamzai, *op.cit.*, p 176

Dughlat in *Tarikh-i-Rashidi* articulated that “fruit is so plentiful that it is rarely bought and sold. The holder of a gardens and the man that has no garden are alike; for the gardens have no walls and it is not usual to hinder anyone from taking the fruit.”<sup>177</sup> Baron von Hugel, who sojourned in valley in the thirties of nineteenth century considered Kashmiri to be fruits superior to those of all other countries in both abundance and excellence.<sup>178</sup> Lawrence called Kashmir “a fruit country”.

During the Dogra period the fruit production in Kashmir was so enormous and plentiful that a large proportion of fruits fell to the ground and were either eaten by the cattle or rotted on the ground.<sup>179</sup> The fruits of Kashmir grown during the Dogra regime are peculiar in certain respects. These were delicious, sustained for longer time and had excellent flavor.<sup>180</sup> Thus, these were in greater demand. However, the major handicap to this industry during the early years of Dogra rule was the poor means of communication and transport system which restricted its quick transportation and consequently, a large quantity putrid in the orchards and affected the economy of people. The people had to take the fruits on their back over the steep and rough mountain passes across the high mountains to the plains in the south for sale.<sup>181</sup> But it was a cumbersome process and a substantial portion was left at home.

The fruit trees grew wild and were grafted when planted in fields and some were allowed to grow naturally without any manipulation through

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<sup>177</sup> Mirza Haider Dughlat, *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*, Edited and Translated by N. Elias and Denison Ross, Patan, 1973, p. 425

<sup>178</sup> *Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh*, p. 45. See also Bates, op. cit., p. 44

<sup>179</sup> Youngusband, who was appointed resident in Kashmir in 1889, expressed that such was yield of various fruits in Kashmir that many of these fruits deteriorated on the ground especially near the villages. See also E. F. Knight, op. cit, p. 19

<sup>180</sup> Saif-ud-Din, *Akhbarat*. Vol. III, 1950, f. 30. See also Knight, op. cit., p. 45

<sup>181</sup> Youngusband, op. cit., p. 177. See also Bellew, op.cit., p. 88

grafting and budding. The fruits in Kashmir grew and matured in succession. There was no particular season in which all the mature.<sup>182</sup>

From the economic point of view the horticulture in Kashmir was very significant. A considerable proportion of population was associated with this sector for their survival. Besides, constituting an important item of food, it was an important item in the internal and external trade of Kashmir. It also substantially contributed to the state treasury.

In Kashmir numerous varieties of fruits were grown during the period under review. Hassan Khiuhami, a contemporary of the first three Dogra rulers, has given a long list of thirty-two kinds of fruits which included the wild fruits as well.<sup>183</sup> However, Diwan Kripa Ram exceeds Hassan so far as the numbers of fruits are concerned.<sup>184</sup>

Apple (*Tsunt*): Apple the most popular and widely grown fruit even now-a-days was found throughout the valley during the Dogra period. Apple was a leading fruit of the valley so far as the area covered by its orchards are concerned and people associated with it for economic concerns.<sup>185</sup> Its trees grew in wild and were uprooted and planted in the orchards. During Ranbir Singh's period the states had established their own nurseries around Dal Lake. They also supplied to the people.<sup>186</sup>

During this period ninety-four varieties of apple were grown in Kashmir.<sup>187</sup> *Amri* was the most popular variety and was found in

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<sup>182</sup> Lawrence, op.cit., p. 348

<sup>183</sup> Khuihami, op.cit., Vol. I, p. 247-49

<sup>184</sup> D.K.Ram.op.cit., Vol. II, pp. 291-95

<sup>185</sup> D. K. Ram, op.cit., p. 294. See also Lawrence, p 350

<sup>186</sup> Younghusband, op.cit., p. 168-69

<sup>187</sup> Khuihami, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 247

Shopian *pargana*.<sup>188</sup> Its yield was highest of all the varieties produced in Kashmir. It was very delicious and was in great demand in and outside the valley. However, now-a-day, it is not grown on large scale and has been replaced by delicious *tsunt*. *Khuddu Sari* was next important variety after *amri*. *Trel* another variety was a small in size and was mostly grown in the neighborhood of present Sopore. *Trel* has three varieties i.e. *Nabadi*, *Jambsi* and *Sil trel*.<sup>189</sup> The first one was yellow in colour, *Jambsi* turned red and the third one is deep red in colour. Apple constituted an important item of trade and was mostly exported to Punjab where it had a flourishing market. During the autumn, strings of ponies heavily laden with apple and other fruits made their way down the chief road to India.<sup>190</sup>

Pear (*Tung*): Pears constitute an important fruit grown in Kashmir during the Dogra period.<sup>191</sup> It came to Kashmir from central Asia where it was found in large quantity.<sup>192</sup> However, it is not as highly esteemed as the apple. Three varieties i.e. *Nakh*, *Farash* and *Khar tang*, of this fruit were grown. The prominent was *Nakh*. Its size was large and it was very juicy. This variety remained for long time. Gosh bug, another variety ripened early. It was yellow in colour and sweet.<sup>193</sup> In the later period of Ranbir Singh's reign, pears brought from France were introduced.<sup>194</sup> But this variety could not flourish in Kashmir. Dr. Elmslie who was on medical mission in Kashmir in 1864-65, mentioned, that a species of pear with a thin skin called *Tanj*, was also

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<sup>188</sup> Hassan, op. cit. Vol. II, p. 978

<sup>189</sup> Lawrence, Valley, p. 349. See also younghusband, op. cit. p. 247

<sup>190</sup> A. Neve, op. cit. p. 70. see also Lawrence, Valley, p. 350. C. G. Bruce, op.cit., p. 80

<sup>191</sup> Khuihami. Op.cit., Vol. I, p. 247

<sup>192</sup> Khuihami, Vol. 1, op.cit., Vol. I, p. 979

<sup>193</sup> Khuihami, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 980

<sup>194</sup> Lawrence, Valley, p. 350



grown in Kashmir. It had several varieties. These included *tsok tanj*, *moder tanj*, *khar tanj* and *sihra tanj*.<sup>195</sup> The pears of Kashmir also grow in the wild.

Grapes: Grapes were grown in Kashmir since ancient times, about which Khalhana in Rajtarangni has talked a lot. From the Afghans up to the initial years of Dogras, they were in declining phase and were not grown on large scale. Even during the reign of Maharaja Gulab Singh grapes were not in flourishing conditions and the production was meager. It was Maharaja Ranbir Singh who gave impetus to this fruit by taking a number of measures to revive this fruit. He brought a small cutting of this plant from Bordeaux in France and planted them in a garden in the vicinity of *Chisma-shahi* over an area of fifteen hundred acres of land. Colonel Sir Aursanet brought to Kashmir two gardeners from Iran, Ashabat and Mirza Aakemeen. They along with them brought small cuttings from the garden of Jamshed Sheraz (Iran) and planted them in the vicinity of *Nishat Bagh* in a garden called *Bagh-i-Shirazi*, now-a-days, *Gufkar*, on the banks of Dal Lake. Both the gardeners were later appointed as government employee as a reward.<sup>196</sup> Moreover, 108410 cuttings were distributed among the people free of cost promote this fruit.<sup>197</sup> Owing to these endeavor it became a significant fruit of Kashmir and contributed substantially to state economy. Narsing Das stated that the people of Kashmir were provided education to train them in cultivation of grapes and rewards and gifts were given to the peasants in order to promote this fruit. This gave immense impetus to the growth of grapes in Kashmir. A large portion of

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<sup>195</sup> *Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh*, p. 45

<sup>196</sup> Diwan Narsingh Das Nargis, *Tarikh-i- Dogra Desh*( urdu), Chand Publishing House, Jammu, 1967,p. 681. See also Administrative Report for the year 1882-83, JAR, Jammu.

<sup>197</sup> Narsing Das, *Tarikh-i- Dogra Desh*, p. 682

it was used for making wine.<sup>198</sup> A wine factory was established at Gupkar and wine prepared in this factory. It was greatly admired at the *Calcutta exhibition* of 1883 where a separate stall was established for Kashmiri wine.<sup>199</sup> During the period under review eighteen varieties of grapes were grown in Kashmir.<sup>200</sup>

In 1870, the total production of grapes was 245 *kharwars*. However, in 1877 the production was 163 *kharwars* which shows a remarkable decline. In 1878 the total production dwindled to 160 *kharwars*.<sup>201</sup> The downward trend in the production might have been caused on account of natural calamities. However, in last quarter of the nineteenth century when Kashmir partially recovered from the famine the production of grapes again exhibited a slight increase. During the year 1882, the total yield was 163 *kharwars*. In the succeeding year (1883) the annual outturn of grapes was 160 *kharwars* and in 1884, it was 340 *kharwars*.<sup>202</sup>

Quince (*Bumtsunt*): Quince was also grown in the valley of Kashmir. Two varieties of it were generally popular in valley. The first was called *Mudur bamtsunt* and second one was called *Tsok bamtsunt*.<sup>203</sup> The former was delicious in taste and the later was sour in taste. It not only constituted the food item of Kashmir but was economically very significant. Its seed was exported to Punjab where it had a good

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<sup>198</sup> Wakefiel, op.cit.,p. 138

<sup>199</sup> Diwan Narsingh Das Nargis, *Tarikh-i- Dogra Desh*, p. 682-83

<sup>200</sup> Wakefiel, op. cit., p.138

<sup>201</sup> Diwan Anant Ram, *Majmui Report(urdu) for the year 1877-78*. Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, Jammu, pp. 96-97

<sup>202</sup> Administrative Report for the year 1882-83, Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, Jammu, P. 35.

<sup>203</sup> Khuihami, op.cit., Vol. I, p. 248

demand. It was mainly concentrated in the area around Dal lake and was simultaneously grown in apple orchards in other regions as well.<sup>204</sup>

Mulberry (*Tul*): Mulberry is a small round fruit. It has three varieties, red white and black.<sup>205</sup> It was an important article of food and was very significant for sericulture. Moreover, it had greater medicinal value. It was abundantly grown in Kashmir during the Dogra regime.<sup>206</sup> This fruit ripened in May. Numerous articles, furniture and parts of boats were made out of its wood.<sup>207</sup> The leaves of mulberry trees were used as fodder for cattle.

Cherry (*Gilas*): Cherries were grown in abundance in every part of the valley. Three varieties were found in the valley- sweet, sour and bitter.<sup>208</sup> They grew in the wild and no manure and water was provided.

Hops: The cultivation of hops in Kashmir was introduced by Maharaja Ranbir Singh in the 19<sup>th</sup> regal year (1876) of his reign. They were of good quality and even the owners of breweries were keen to acquire land in Kashmir for the cultivation of hops.<sup>209</sup> It was mainly concentrated in Dubgam region in the vicinity of Sopore. In 1893, eighty-three acres of land were under its cultivation. The government procured a sufficient income through tax from this fruit.<sup>210</sup> It was taken to the Muree and other breweries in India for making beer.<sup>211</sup> Burton-

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<sup>204</sup> Lawrence, Valley, p. 351

<sup>205</sup> Khuihami, op. cit., vol. I, p. 982. See also Bellew, op. cit., p. 88

<sup>206</sup> Younghusband, op. cit. p. 177. See also Bruce, op. cit., p. 81

<sup>207</sup> *Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh*, p. 46

<sup>208</sup> Khuihami, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 248

<sup>209</sup> Wakefield, op. cit., p. 139.

<sup>210</sup> *Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh*, p. 62

<sup>211</sup> Wakefield, op. cit., p. 139. See also E. F. Neve, *Beyond Pir Panjal*, p. 61

on-Trent one of the prominent factory where beer was prepared in large quantity another rival unit of Burton-on-Trent was at Marri.<sup>212</sup>

Walnut (*Doon*): Walnut trees were found in every nook and corner of Kashmir. They grew even in regions with an altitude of 5000 to 7000 feet.<sup>213</sup> It ripens circa middle of September. During the period of our study three varieties of walnut were common in Kashmir, *kagazi dun*, *burzul* and *vont dun*. The former breaks easily and had excellent kernel. It was the best of all the three varieties but its yield was low. *Burzul* stands half way between the earlier two categories so as hardness is concerned.<sup>214</sup> The third one had a hard cover and on breaking the kernel comes out in pieces.<sup>215</sup> Mr. Vingate stated the existence of five varieties of walnut. A mature walnut tree yielded about four thousand to six thousand nuts annually. Some of the trees even exceeded this yield.<sup>216</sup> Shahabad *pargana* was an important walnut producing area.<sup>217</sup>

Walnut was used as a food item by the people especially during winter because, it kept the body warm. Moreover, oil was extracted from it which was used for numerous purposes and it was highly esteemed by the natives. About 12,000 ass-loads of walnut-kernel were annually appropriated to the oil-press in Kashmir.<sup>218</sup> The hard shell of the walnut was used as fuel. The wood of the walnut tree which was dark in colour, was used for making furniture and other articles. The

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<sup>212</sup> Ibid.

<sup>213</sup> Younghusband, op.cit., p. 162 .See also Lawrence, *Jammu and Kashmir*, p. 62

<sup>214</sup> Lawrence, *Jammu and Kashmir*, Jay Kay Book House, Jammu, 1985, P. 62

<sup>215</sup> Younghusband, op.cit., p. 170-71. See also *Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh*, p. 46

<sup>216</sup> Bates, op.cit., p. 46

<sup>217</sup> R.Temple, op.cit., II, p. 78

<sup>218</sup> Bates, op.cit., p. 47

products made out of it included paper-machie boxes and gun stocks.<sup>219</sup>  
The barks were utilized to clean teeth.

It constituted a vital source of income to the state, which took half of the annual yield. But the owner also had to satisfy numerous officials by giving some share out of their produce. Thus the owner was left with a quarter of the produce. The government share was estimated when the fruit was on the tree. However, the governments share was either paid in cash or kind.<sup>220</sup>

Almon (*Badam*): After walnut, almond was next the prominent dry fruit grown in the valley during the Dogra period.<sup>221</sup> Two varieties of it were common in Kashmir. One was sweet and the other was bitter. Besides, an important article of trade, oil was also obtained from it. The unripened cover was also eaten and the kernel was used in *Kehwa*, a Kashmiri tea, sweets, and dishes.<sup>222</sup>

Besides, the aforementioned fruits the fruits given below were also grown in Kashmir during Gulab Singh's and Ranbir Singh's reign.<sup>223</sup>

Kashmiri name	English name
Anjir	Fig
Pista	Pistachio-nut
Warni	Filbert nut

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<sup>219</sup> Bates, op.cit., p. 46

<sup>220</sup> Ibid.

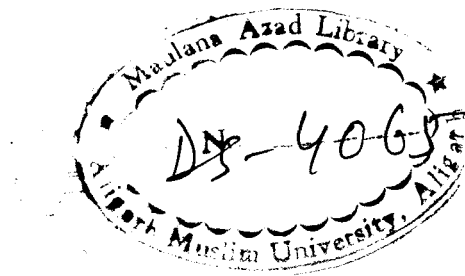
<sup>221</sup> Ernest F. Neve, *Beyond Pir Panjal*, P 18. The author who was on medical mission in Kashmir since 80's of 19<sup>th</sup> century and spend thirty years there wrote the in early spring sheets of white and pale pink almond blossom on the hillsides dip down into broad stretches of brilliant yellow mustard. The landscape is full of colour. See also Younghusband, op.cit., p. 171

<sup>222</sup> Hassan Khuihami. Op.cit., Vol-I, p.985

<sup>223</sup> Hassan Khuihami. Op.cit., Vol. I, pp. 247-49. See also D. K. Ram, *Gulzar-i-Kashmir*, pp. 191-95

Deen	Pomegranate
Kaw dach	Barberries
Aer	Currant
Alich	Cherry
Berieh	Vendor of grapes
Tchear	Apricot

Thus it can be concluded that during the second half of the nineteenth century horticulture was an important sector of economy. Many people were earning their living from this sector of economy. However, due the dearth of good roads and markets most of fruits perished in the orchards.



**Chapter-2**

*Non-Agrarian Economy of*

*Kashmir from 1846-1885*

# *Non-Agrarian Economy of Kashmir from*

*1846-1885*

Kashmir is renowned for its artistic skills and marvelous crafts since time immemorial. Bernier, Moorcroft, Vinge and other travelers who visited the place, have highly praised the artistic tastes of the people of Kashmir. Mirza Haider Dughlat, in his *Tarikh-i-Rashidi* recorded, in Kashmir one meets with all those arts and crafts which are in most cities uncommon.”<sup>1</sup> Francis Bernier, who visited Kashmir in 1665 during the early years of Aurangzeb’s reign<sup>2</sup>, stated that “it is due to the certain properties in the water of that country (Kashmir)”. Though the Kashmiris practiced myriad arts and crafts since ancient times, it was during the sultanate period that their artistic skill found their proper vent. The sultan Zain-ul Abadin<sup>3</sup> revived and introduced new arts and crafts from Central Asia. The Mughals immensely contributed to the development of non-agrarian sector of Kashmir especially, the shawl industry. Though the Afghans and Sikhs are known for their oppression but they still promoted the shawl industry.<sup>4</sup>

The Dogra period saw the climax and decline of many arts and crafts of Kashmir. H.W Bellew, who visited Kashmir in 1873-74, highlighted the artistic prowess of Kashmir in these words, “their shawls and

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<sup>1</sup> Mirza Haider Dughlat, op cit., p 434

<sup>2</sup> *Annual Administration Report of the Jammu and Kashmir for the 1939-1940*, Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, Srinagar, p. 20

<sup>3</sup> Zain-ul-Abadin also known as Bud Shah ( Great King) who ruled Kashmir from 1422 A.D. to 14 73 A.D. was great patron of art, architecture and letters. His rule is regarded as a glorious period in Kashmir history and is still revered by the people. He promoted different art and crafts in Kashmir and introduced new ones in Kashmir. It is said that whenever he heard that an artist and industrialist visited his dominion either for recreation or business motive he never permitted him to leave the kingdom unless he acquainted the native people with his skill or craft technology.

<sup>4</sup> Abdul Ahad, *Kashmir to Frankfurt-A study of Arts and Crafts*, Rima Publishing House, New Delhi, 1987, pp. 9-12



embroideries, their sliver work and paper-mache-painting, their stone engraving and wood carving, all alike exhibit proofs of wonderful delicacy and minute details but tell of no active expenditure of muscular force.”<sup>5</sup> Lawrence the settlement officer in Kashmir in 1889 said that “every Kashmir seems a weaver and the home spun cloth woven by the villagers were highly appreciated by many Europeans.”<sup>6</sup> It was during this period that the prominent Industries i.e., shawl and silk industries engaged large number of people and they became the major source of revenue for the state.

During the period under review both rural and urban crafts thrived and provided employment to a substantial section of population. Srinagar was the chief industrial centre of Kashmir province. However, the other areas were equally known for their own peculiar arts and crafts. Islamabad had good reputation as an embroidery centre, Kulgam was famous for lacquered woodwork, Bijbhera enjoyed fame for its excellent wood carving and Zainager and its environs were famous for soft woollen cloth.<sup>7</sup> The following table depicts the number of workers engaged in different occupation of Srinagar city of its total population which 118, 960 in the 80’s and 90’s of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>8</sup>

Occupation	No. of worker engaged.
Administration & Defence	10, 482
Agriculture & Live stock	3, 246
Personal & Household Service	11, 660

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<sup>5</sup> Bellew, op.cit., p. 63

<sup>6</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 370

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 241

Provisional-Sellers and Artificers	65, 395
Trade and Transport	8, 309
Learned & Artistic Professions	8, 371
Other occupations	11, 497

### Shawl Industry

The shawl manufacturing was one of the deep rooted industries of Jammu and Kashmir State. Kashmiri shawl without which no fashionable lady in nineteenth century deemed her wardrobe complete, enjoyed name and fame all over the world.<sup>9</sup> Although the manufacturing of woollen products existed in Kashmir since ancient times, it was Sultan Zain-ul-Abadin who revived and considerably developed it. He made elaborate arrangements to make it an industry of great importance. He provided weavers facilities necessary for the development of this craft.<sup>10</sup> In his *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*, Mirza Haider Dughlat has praised the sultan for his enthusiasm with which he popularized the Kashmiri handicrafts. Mirza Haider Dughlat also made special contribution to this industry. Nagh Bagh, a resident of Khuqand in the services of Mirza Haider Dughlat made a worthy contribution to this industry by his endeavors He introduced the texture of red and green spots in regular rows.<sup>11</sup>

Under the Mughals the industry made steady progress.<sup>12</sup> They set the industrial, commercial and production patterns of its *kharkhanas* creating

<sup>9</sup> W. Wakefield, op cit., p. 149. See also *Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh*, p 68

<sup>10</sup> Abdul Ahad, opcit., p. 10

<sup>11</sup> G. M. D. Sufi, opcit., Vol-II, p. 563

<sup>12</sup> Abul Fazal mentioned that woollen fabrics are made in high perfection especially shawls which are sent as valuable gifts to every clime. Abul Fazal, *Ain-I-Akbari* (Persian), Vol. II, English Translation by Colonel, H. S. Jarrett, Oriental Books Reprint Corporation, New Delhi, 1978, p 353. See also A. Mitra, *Notes on the Arts and Industries of Kashmir*, Pratap Singh Measum Library, Srinagar, p. 1

new social patterns among its craftsmen. In his *Tuzk-i-Jhangari*, Emperor Jahangir describes the shawl as one of his favorite item of dress. Thus the royal patronage made shawl a status and fashion symbol throughout the empire particularly on the occasion of imperial festivals. It became so popular that it is mentioned in the account of important imperial historians and travelers.<sup>13</sup>

In Afghan period this industry developed further and in 1796, shawls were sent to Europe. Afghan rulers of Kashmir through king Nadir Shah sent it to Constantinople. Later on during the governorship of Abdullah shawl was presented to Syed Yaheya of Baghdad who was on his visit to Kashmir. The sayyid have presented the shawl to the Khedive in Egypt who in turn presented it to Napoleon Bonaparte, when he was engaged in Egyptian campaign. Napoleon gave it to the future empress Josephine.<sup>14</sup> With this the Kashmiri shawl became popular in Europe and its demand increased in Europe and the merchants came to purchase more and more shawls in Kashmir. During the governorship of Dilram Khuli, the government commenced to put stamp on the shawls and one rupee was charged as tax.<sup>15</sup> Thus the Dagh-shawl department was established. During the reign of Ata Mohammad Khan, the last Afghan governors in Kashmir, there were 18000 shops and 45000 people were associated with this industry.<sup>16</sup>

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13 Even Bernier who accompanied with Aurangzeb to Kashmir in 1665, recorded that what is peculiar to Kashmir and staple commodity which promoted its trade and enhanced its wealth is the prodigious quantity of shawl which they manufactured and even provided employment to little children. Bernier Travel account, Seminar Library, Department of History, Aligarh Muslim University, pp. 401-403

14 Lawrence, Valley, p. 376

15 D.K. Ram, *Majmui Report Riyasat-i-Jammu-wa-Kashmir (1872-73)* (Urdu), Government Research Library, Srinagar pp. 32-33

16 Ibid.

During the Sikh period the shawl enjoyed uninterrupted state patronage. Owing to such patronage the shawl became the fashion of the day throughout the Punjab especially among the dancing girls of Lahore. The shawl trade was established with west Asia and Europe. Merchants from Uzbekistan, Turkistan, Turkey, Persia, British India and Europe frequently came to Kashmir to purchase the fabrics. Thus the shawl industry was flourishing.<sup>17</sup> In the twenties of nineteenth century the total trade of shawl goods amounted to thirty-five lakh rupees per annum. During the period of Diwan Kripa Ram (1827-1831), there were 22000 shops and the revenue from shawl trade was twelve lakh.<sup>18</sup> However, it reduced to a considerable extent during the period of last two Sikh governors, Sheikh Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din (1841-1845) and Sheikh Imam-ud-Din (1845-1846).<sup>19</sup> During period of Sheikh Gulam Mohi-ud-Din (1841-1845) the number of shops reduced to 4000.<sup>20</sup> But the condition of weavers was worse as they were subjected to heavy taxation. It is said that on account of the oppression the weavers cut down their fingers to escape from the weaving for their masters.

When Gulab Singh became the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir, the shawl trade began to revive. He reorganized the Dagh-Shawl department. In samvat 1907(1852) Pandit Raj Kak was appointed Daroga of Dagh-Shawl and he was given it on contract.<sup>21</sup> He remained on this post till 1865. The income from Dagh-Shawl to the state during 1846-1869 on average was seven lakh rupees per annum.<sup>22</sup> In 1846, the total number of

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<sup>17</sup> Sufi, op cit., p 568

<sup>18</sup> D. K. Ram, *Majmui Report*, pp. 34-35

<sup>19</sup> W. Moorcroft. Op cit. Vol. II, p. 194.

<sup>20</sup> D. K. Ram, *Majmui Report*, pp. 34-35

<sup>21</sup> D.K. Ram, *Majmui Report*, p. 35

<sup>22</sup> Annual Administration Report of the Jammu and Kashmir for the 1939-1940, Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, Srinagar, p 21. See also Mitra, op.cit., P. 2

looms were 7,000 and 17,000 weavers were working on them. In the same year there were 3,500 *kharkhandars* in valley who run the separate units of this prominent industry.<sup>23</sup> However, in 1847, due the migration of shawl weavers to Punjab the number of loom reduced to 6000 and that of the weavers to 15,000.<sup>24</sup>

But the condition of weavers was not good. The *shawlbaf* (*shawl weaver*) was required to pay Rs 47 as *baj* (tax) to the government annually.<sup>25</sup> Besides, they had to work from dawn to dusk but were given very low wages and were not allowed to change their master (*kharkhandar*) at will. In early 1847, the *kharkhandars* solicited the maharaja that there should be early numbering of workers, *nazarana* should be minimized, the time of workers should be fixed and that a settled *Ayeen* (regulation) should be framed for them.<sup>26</sup>

In June, 1847 emboldened by the demands of their *kharkhandars*, the worker in order to concede their demands, struck work and about four-thousand shawl weavers migrated to Lahore.<sup>27</sup> The *shalbafs* demanded the reduction of *baj*, *nazarana* and increase in wages. After noticing about the strike, Maharaja Gulab Singh appealed the weavers to restore their work and their demands would be given due consideration. Consequently, he organized an open *darbar* in July 1847 and enquired

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<sup>23</sup> D. N. Dhar, *Art and Artisans of Kashmir, Arts and Artisans of Kashmir From Ancient to Modern Times*, Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation and Bhavana Books and Prints, New Delhi, 1999, p. 45.

<sup>24</sup> Dhar, *Arts and Artisans of Kashmir*, p. 48

<sup>25</sup> R. Thorp, *Kashmir Misgovernment*, in S.N. Gadru, *Kashmir Papers*, Freethought Literature Company, Srinagar, p. 63.

<sup>26</sup> K. M. Panikar, *op cit.*, p. 138

<sup>27</sup> *Annual Administration Report of the Jammu and Kashmir for the 1939-1940*, Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, Srinagar, p 21. See also Mitra, *opcit.* p 2 and Diwan Narsing Das, *Tarikh-i-Dogra Desh*, pp. 229-30

into the grievances of workers.<sup>28</sup> Then he announced many new regulations<sup>29</sup> which are as follows;

1. Four *annas* were fixed as stipulated salary for each weaver.
2. *Baj* and other taxes which the weaver was subjected to pay were also reduced.
3. He abolished the system of indenture under which the shawl-weavers was not allowed to change their master. The *shawlbaf* was now no more bound to work under the same *kharkhandar* and he was allowed to change his master (*kharkhandar*) whenever he desired so.
4. Now the tax would be levied on prepared shawl according to its market price.
5. Maharaja also conceded the weavers would be paid on the basis of actual work on the loom.

However, these measures could not eliminate the grievances of shawl weavers. In 1854, the *shalbafs* again demonstrated and demanded rise in wages by the *kharkhandars*.

From 1850 the French agents began to come to Kashmir to deal directly with the manufactures.<sup>30</sup> As a result the shawl of Kashmir became more popular throughout Europe and trade flourished considerably. Larouosse, a French person, said “In spite of heavy duty levied by the French government, whatever its value, the trade flourished.”<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Diwan Narsingh Das, *Tarikh-i-Dogra Desh*, p. 130

<sup>30</sup> Lefebore, Olive, Gosselin, Brochard and Dauvergne are the names of French agents who came to Kashmir 1850 onwards to procure shawls for European people. Mitra, *op.cit.*, p. 2

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

In 1850, the annual output of shawl was worth of Rs 40 to 50 lakhs.<sup>32</sup> At the same time shawl industry engaged about 30,000 to 40,000 weavers. Besides, the other people connected with this industry include spinners and those engaged with collection and distribution of wool and with market operation. It was from this time that there was a great demand of shawls in France and other European countries. Lefebore, Olive, Gosselin, Brochard and Dauvergne were the French agents who came to Kashmir during the fifties of nineteenth century. They started purchasing shawls and sent them to their native country. In samvat 1914(1857) which was the concluding year of Maharaja Gulab Singh's rule there were 8000 shops of shawl weavers in Kashmir.<sup>33</sup> The export of shawl valued 23 lakh rupees per annum during Gulab Singh's and in initial period of Ranbir Singh.<sup>34</sup>

Maharaja Ranbir Singh was a man of reforms.<sup>35</sup> He strived to encourage the crafts and industries as a means of employment of his Kashmiri subjects. He tried to revive and reform the traditional crafts and introduced new industries.<sup>36</sup> Shawl industry reached to a great height, yet its decline also commenced in this period. It was the result of many factors like decline of external market after 1870's and famine of 1878. It is said that best shawl ever manufactured in Kashmir was during the Ranbir Singh's reign.<sup>37</sup> They were very excellent in texture, very soft in colour and of most celebrated and colorful design, of eastern style of decoration. The income from *Daghshawl* from Gulab Singh's reign till

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<sup>32</sup>. Sheikh Bashir Ahmad, *An Economic Study of Jammu and Kashmir State*, City Book Centre, Srinagar, 1998, p. 101

<sup>33</sup> D. K. Ram, *Majmui Report*, op.cit., p. 35

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> *Annual Administration Report of the Jammu and Kashmir state for the year 1939-40*, Jammu and Kashmir state Archives, Srinagar, p. 23

<sup>36</sup> Mitra, op.cit., p. 3. See also S. S. Charak, op.cit., p. 139

<sup>37</sup> Mitra, op.cit., pp. 2-3

1869 was seven lakh rupees per annum and the export of shawls exported valued on average 23 lakh rupees per annum.<sup>38</sup> The average export of shawl was between 25 and 28 lakhs of rupees between 1860 and 1870. However, in spite of this progress the weavers remained in sheer poverty. This has also been testified by Sir Richard Temple who lamented that shawl weavers formed a numerous and withal a miserable class, badly paid, badly nourished and badly housed and therefore physically and morally wretched.<sup>39</sup> In samvat 1922 (1866) there were 11000 shops and 27000 people were associated with this profession.<sup>40</sup>

In 1865, about 1200 to 1500 shawl weavers met the newly appointed governor (*wazir*) Diwan Kripa Ram, at Banihal when he was on his way to take up the charge of governor of Kashmir and complained him about their grievances and miserable conditions. They submitted a petition in this regard to governor. Their demand includes increase in the eight kharwars of *shali* provided to them every year. Secondly, they also demanded reduction in the price of *shali* sold to them which has already ordered by maharaja in 1863 but was not implemented. However, the governor assured them their complaints would be redressed after arriving Srinagar. The shawl weavers approached the governor after his arrival in capital and solicited for the redress of grievances, yet again they received the same response i.e. he would take notice of their complaints in few days. This process was repeated two or three times which infuriated the shalbafs. Consequently, they assembled at *Zaldagar* and proceeded in procession to the residence of Diwan Kripa Ram, with the intension of submitting a petition to the governor. Raj Kak Dhar, the then Daroga of

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Richard Temple, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 300

<sup>40</sup> D. K. Ram. *Majmui Report*, p. 35. See also Khuihami, op.cit., Vol. I, p. 449



*Dagshawl* informed the governor regarding the procession and conveyed him that protestors intend to kill him. On hearing this he ordered the troops to disperse the protestors. In the stampede that followed many jumped into the river and got drowned. Twenty eight drowned in the river *Kute Kul*. Some were imprisoned and many more were fined.<sup>41</sup> On this no action was taken immediately by the Maharaja who was at Jammu. However, after one and half a month when he became aware of the real intention of weavers, the maharaja reduced the price of *shali*. Next year (1867) the shawl weavers were allowed to purchase eleven kharwars of *shali* in a year.<sup>42</sup> In 1868 Ranbir Singh remitted Rs 11 from the tax.<sup>43</sup> Moreover, a court for shalbafs called *Darogh-i- shawl dag* was set up with idea of taking care of the grievances of shawl weavers and to punish them for erroneous activity. An officer with fifty sepoy under him was in charge of this court. In 1867, Ranbir Singh wrote the Punjab government for the appointment of an agent in London to organize the sale of Kashmiri shawls. The Lieutenant Governor of Punjab approved the Maharaja's proposal and after some time a shawl warehouse was established in New Street, London.<sup>44</sup> In 1868 a tax amounted Rs.30000 per annum was remitted on shawl weaver to promote shawl trade between Kashmir and India and Central Asia.<sup>45</sup> The decade of 70's of nineteenth century saw the decline of shawl industry. The defeat of France in the Franco- German war of 1870 was greater set back to the shawl industry of Kashmir. Prior to this the Kashmir shawl was the fashion in the aristocratic societies of Europe and there in France demand was great. France who was the main importer of Kashmir shawl and shared 80% of

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<sup>41</sup> Hussan Khuihami, Vol-II, p. 954

<sup>42</sup> Robert Thorp, *Kashmir Misgovernment*, In S. N. Gadru, Kashmir Papers (Edt.), op.cit., p. 65

<sup>43</sup> Hassan, Vol. I, p. 449

<sup>44</sup> *Persain Records*, File No. 399, Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, Jammu.

<sup>45</sup> *Persain Records*, File No. 433, 1868, Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, Jammu

shawl trade between Kashmir and Europe was now not in a position to purchase the Kashmiri shawl as she paid huge war indemnity.<sup>46</sup> Even the shawl industries of Amritsar, Jalalpur, Noor pur and Laudhana were badly affected and prices of shawls dwindled between 10 to 100 rupees.<sup>47</sup> In 1871 the number of shawl weavers dwindled from 27000 to 24000.<sup>48</sup> In 1872 there was clash between the Shia sect and Sunnis who were engaged in this industry, in which the Shias suffered badly. However, the disturbances were normalized and the maharaja gave three lakh rupees to the Shias as a relief who were the worst victims of the onslaught.<sup>49</sup> Maharaja Ranbir Singh tried to maintain the prosperity of shawl industry by lending some support to this industry. He purchased shawls worth of lakhs of rupees. The price of *shali* sold to the shalbafs was also reduced. Again in 1875 the tax on shawl weavers was reduced from rupees 35 to rupee 20. However, all these efforts failed when a devastating famine engulfed valley in 1877.<sup>50</sup> It destroyed the centuries old industry and the major revenue contributor to the government. A substantial number of populace associated with this industry perished during the famine and many other migrated to Amritsar, Lahore etc.<sup>51</sup> F. Henvey, Official on special Duty in Kashmir in 1878 stated, that that population of shawl weavers in Srinagar dwindled from 3,000 to 4,000.<sup>52</sup> After this the industry virtually lost its significance and the people associated with this once luminous industry opted other occupations. The maharaja in order to

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<sup>46</sup> Diwan Kripa Ram, *Majmui Report*, p. 28. Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 375

<sup>47</sup> Diwan Kripa Ram, *Majmui Report*, pp. 28-29

<sup>48</sup> Diwan Kripa Ram, *Majmui Report*, p. 36

<sup>49</sup> Gwasha Lal Kaul, *Kashmir Throughout Ages* (5000 B.C. To 1965 A.D), (7th edition), Chronicle Publishing House, Srinagar, 1963, p. 109.

<sup>50</sup> Abdul Ahad, *op cit.*, p. 44

<sup>51</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 224

<sup>52</sup> Shakti Kak, 'The Agrarian System of the Princely State of Jammu and Kashmir-A study of colonial Settlement Policies', in *India's Princely States-People, Princes and Colonialism*. Edt. by Waltaud Ernest and Biswamoy Pati, Routledge, London, 2007, p. 73

keep the wheel of this industry moving abolished poll tax on the shawl weavers in 1882. However, instead of this and other imposts on shawl weaving the export duty was retained and by 1882 it was raised to 25%. Thus, the industry for which Kashmir has attained name and fame from centuries took its lost breath during the 70's and early 80's of nineteenth century. It took long for this industry to regain its pristine glory. It was during the Swadeshi movement of 1905 this industry once again began to revive.

### Methods of shawl weaving

The shawl was manufactured from what is termed as *Pushm*<sup>53</sup> which was obtained from a goat that domiciled in western Tibet, Baltistan, Wardwan, Turfan and Ladakh. It was brought to Kashmir via Ladakh and was sold at four or five annas one seer.<sup>54</sup> However, the best wool was obtained from Turfan in Yarkhand and was sold in Srinagar as Tufrani *Pushm*.<sup>55</sup> It was exported to Britain and other countries of Europe.<sup>56</sup> The shawl manufactured in Kashmir were usually 3 ½ yard in length and 1 ½ in breadth.<sup>57</sup>

There were two methods of weaving shawl in Kashmir during the period of our study, hand-made and loom made. Each method employed a separate class of manufacturers.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> *Pushm* is the wool obtained from the goats which domiciled in mountains of Tibet, Ladakh, and Tian Shan Mountain. It is generally warm and has two kinds Pashm and Asli Tous. Pashmina is the term used for all textile fabric made from *pushm* wool.

<sup>54</sup> Wakefield, op.cit., p 143-44

<sup>55</sup> Mitra, op.cit., p. 3. See also Sufi p. 562

<sup>56</sup> Wakefield, op.cit., p. 148

<sup>57</sup> Sufi, op.cit., p. 562

<sup>58</sup> Robert Thorp, *Kashmir Misgovernment* ( first print 1870) in Arthur Brinckman & Robert Thorp, *Kashmir Oppressed*, Reprint, Weis Publication, Srinagar, 1996, p. 83. See also R. Temple, Vol-I, p. 299 and Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh, p. 69

desired colours under his superintendence before it was distributed among the *shalbafs* who worked under an *ustad* or overseer.<sup>63</sup> Robert Thorpe who visited Kashmir in 1865 stated that there were about one hundred *karkhandars* in Kashmir.<sup>64</sup> However, these lived only in the *wazarat* Sher-i-Khas (Srinagar) and *wazarat* Anantnag but houses or *kharkhans* in which the *shalbafs* worked were scattered all over the valley. Majority of them were concentrated in Sopore and Pampur.<sup>65</sup>

The *shalbafs* working in a particular unit were under the control of the master workman known as *Ustad*. There was one *ustad* for every 25 to 30 *shalbafs*.<sup>66</sup> At the end of the each month, the *ustad* presented to the *kharkhandar* an account of work performed by each *shalbafs* in the month under him and he was paid accordingly.<sup>67</sup> Generally, the salary realized by the *shalbafs* was three to five *chilki* rupees per month. This included the amount deducted by the government for rice, which was sold to the *shalbafs*. Robert Thorpe lamented, "This amount was not sufficient for the *shalbafs* to suffice the requirements of his family with any approach to comfort, even in so fertile country as Cashmere."

### **Types of shawl manufactured in Kashmir**

Diwan Kripa Ram in his *Majmui* report mentioned that five types of shawls were manufactured in Kashmir during the reign of first two rulers of Dogra dynasty.

*Kani-Shawl*: *Kani*-shawl was the popular and superior of all the types made in Kashmir. It was made on loom with *teley* (*tujis*) into pieces

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> R. Thorpe, op.cit., p. 83

<sup>65</sup> Thorpe, op.cit., p. 84

<sup>66</sup> Bates, op.cit., p. 53

<sup>67</sup> Thorp, op.cit., p. 84

which were subsequently joined together with an imperceptible stitch.<sup>68</sup> This takes much time and labour to complete one shawl. It was the most expensive of all types and its price range between Rs. 500 to Rs.1000.

*Amlikar Shawl:* *Amlikar* shawls were manufactured on large scale. These were made by needle<sup>69</sup> and have various beautiful and elaborated patterns and designs. They were cheaper than the *kani* shawl and their costs never exceeds 200 rupee.<sup>70</sup>

*Doori Shawl:* This variety of shawl was also prepared by needles. They were cheaper than the above two varieties.<sup>71</sup>

*Chikni* and *Karkunan* were the other two varieties of shawl manufactured in Kashmir during the early Dogra rule.<sup>72</sup>

## Silk industry

The genesis of silk industry in Kashmir is shrouded in mystery. N. G Mukerji, a Bengali silk expert who was entrusted with the charge of silk industry of Kashmir in 1871 by Ranbir Singh writes;

“No doubt before the Christian era some part of raw silk of Kashmir found its way to the west but nothing is known in Kashmir about the origin of its silk industry beyond the fact that it is very ancient and it is intimately connected with that of Bukhara , with which it has always had interchanged of seed and silk.”<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> D. K. Ram, *Majmui Report*, p. 55

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>70</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 377

<sup>71</sup> D. K. Ram, *Majmui Report*, p. 55

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>73</sup> C. F. Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 367

No doubt, the mulberry trees which are the main source of food for the silk worms (*poit kyum*) existed in Kashmir since ancient times. However, there are insignificant literary evidences to show when actually, the sericulture operations commenced in Kashmir. It was actually, the Sultan Bad Shah (Zain-ul-Abadin) who besides commencing new industries and crafts encouraged and promoted the existed crafts and industries by rendering the support they required. This industry was virtually introduced by Zain-ul-Abidin who is regarded as pioneer of industrial development of Kashmir.<sup>74</sup> Mirza Haider Dughlat maintained that “one meets with all the arts and crafts which are in most cities uncommon. This all is due to sultan Zain-ul Abadin.”<sup>75</sup> Thus the sultanate period was the progressive stage of silk industry in Kashmir.

During the sultanate period the wearing of silk cloth become popular among the upper section. The king on certain ceremonies like birth-days and occasions of joy and success distributed silken cloths as offering among the beloved and favourite ones. Thus the silk industry enjoyed royal patronage. To quote, Mirza Haider Dughlat, “Among the wonders of Kashmir are the large quantities of mulberry trees cultivated for their leaves from which silk is obtained.”<sup>76</sup>

Under the Mughals, the silk industry of Kashmir received due state patronage. Many steps were taken for the development of this industry. The preservation of mulberry trees become the prime concern of almost every one and the cattle were not allowed to eat the leaf of mulberry

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74 Khadmat, Urdu Newspaper from Srinagar, 19 January, 1950.

75 Marza Haider Dughlat, op.cit., p. 434

76 Mirza Haider Dughlat, op.cit., p. 425

trees. Moreover, the silk worms were imported from Gilgit and Tibet.<sup>77</sup>

The silk industry under Afghans who succeed the Mughals in 1753, could not register any progress due to their oppressive and exorbitant taxation policy. The Afghan period has been described by Lawrence as a period of “brutal tyranny, unrelieved by good works, chivalry or honour.”<sup>78</sup> This state of affairs had adverse impact on all industries of Kashmir. During the governorship of Haji Karim Dad, the Afghan Governor in Kashmir, the mulberry trees in Muisuma (Srinagar) were cut down to clear the field for horse racing which to a considerable extent affected the silk industry.

The silk industry remained in the backward stage till initial years of Sikh rule. Moorcroft, who arrived in Kashmir in 1822, recorded that “the quantity produced is insufficient for domestic consumption.”<sup>79</sup> However, the Sikhs promoted the silk industry and the production of silk increased to a considerable extent compared to the Afghan period. Vinge who visited Kashmir in 1835 maintained “the Korhar division of Kashmir produced the best variety of silk in valley.” This tempo of progress continued to the end of Sikh rule in 1846 when the maharaja Gulab Singh took over Kashmir in his own possession. During Sikh period the income to the state from the silk trade was one lakh rupees per annum.<sup>80</sup>

It seems that maharaja Gulab Singh was successful in maintaining the tempo of development achieved by this industry during Sikh period.

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<sup>77</sup> Abul Fazal, *Ain-i-Akbari English Translation* by Colonel H. S. Jarrett, Oriental Books Print Corporation, New Delhi, 1979. Vol. II, p 439

<sup>78</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 197

<sup>79</sup> William Moorcroft, *Travels in Himalayan Provinces of Hindustan and Punjab in Ladakh and Kashmir*, (1819-1826), Vol. I, Asian Educational Service, New Delhi, 1989. p. 156.

<sup>80</sup> Sufi, *op cit.*, pp. 574-75

Hakim Abdul Rahim was given the charge of this industry.<sup>81</sup> But the silk industry was not better organized during Gulab Singh's reign.<sup>82</sup> N.G. Mukerji writes in 1871, "Before 1869 the silk industry of Kashmir had existed in the unorganized and crude state in which it had probably existed for centuries from the days when Bactarian silk was exported to Damascus and other centers."<sup>83</sup>

Moreover, the paucity of sufficient statistical data thwarts us to determine the actual quality of seed production, rearing out-put and reeling out-put. But it is certain that industry remained in somehow better conditions during his rule which can be judged from the fact that in 1855 when a horrible silk-worm disease appeared in Europe and all the silk worms were affected.<sup>84</sup> European countries sent delegations to different parts of the world in search of seeds. Under this mission two Italian experts M. M. Orio and Consono came to Kashmir and according to a report they found 25000 ounces of silk-worms seeds in Kashmir. After the examination the seeds were declared disease free. A Frenchmen Desuignour Kelber; a prominent sericulturist has recorded in his book "Le Cocon de soie" about this event:

"In April 1860 M. M. Orio and Consono, Italian silkworm seed producers, embark for India. In May, they arrived in Calcutta, where through the good offices of the British Government, they are able to go to Kashmir and get from a very important Grainage 25000 ounces of seed. This seed is packed in thick wooden boxes for transport and is aerated

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<sup>81</sup> Pandit Anand Koul, *op.cit.*, p. 58

<sup>82</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 367

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>84</sup> Ismail, *op.cit.*, p. 29.



only during the nights. It reached Italy towards the end of November in a very good condition.”<sup>85</sup>

Thus it is evident that a region that could spare 25000 ounces of seed for foreigners must have reserved a substantial quantity for the local needs also.

Under Gulab Singh's rule silk became an important article of trade. It was exported to different parts of India in sufficient quantity. The government procured an income of one lakh rupees<sup>86</sup> as a tax from silk trade alone during the initial period of Gulab Singh's reign. Thus the silk industry was a vital source of revenue to the state. In 1846 the government collected Rs. 1, 00,000 as duty on silk from weavers.<sup>87</sup> In 1847-49, the total tax of Rs. 4000 in cash and 3,000 kharwars of cocoons were collected.<sup>88</sup>

Maharaja Ranbir Singh who ascended the throne of Jammu and Kashmir in 1857 devoted his attention and energy towards the economic prosperity in general and that of industries in particular. He placed this industry on a firm footing.<sup>89</sup> He made special efforts to popularize this industry all over the state. In 1869 he built 127 rearing houses in different parts of the valley for rearing silk worms and a department was set up for the development of silk business.<sup>90</sup> He set apart £ 30000 for the development of silk industry.<sup>91</sup> He made this industry a state monopoly in 1871.<sup>92</sup> Maharaja put the silk industry under the supervision of Babu Nilamber

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<sup>85</sup> C. F. Ismail, op.cit., p. 30

<sup>86</sup> Ganesh Lal, op.cit. p. 36

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Saif-ud-Din, *Akhabarat*, vol. III, 1850, F. No. 29

<sup>89</sup> *Annual Administration Report of the Jammu and Kashmir for the 1939-1940*, Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, Srinagar, p. 23

<sup>90</sup> D. K. Ram, *Majmui Report*, p. 56. See also Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 367

<sup>91</sup> Andrew Wilson *Abode of Snow*, pp. 364-65

<sup>92</sup> S. S. Charak, op.cit., p. 140

Mukerji, the chief judge of Kashmir.<sup>93</sup> He strived to make him acquainted with the breeding of the silk worms and the reeling of silk as persuaded in other countries where sericulture was in advanced stage. Owing to hard toil of Babu Nilamber Mukerji, the quality of silk improved significantly. It received appreciation from numerous sericulture experts of Europe, who spoke highly of the good quality of fiber.<sup>94</sup>

In 1859-60, the total yield of cocoon rearing was nineteen mounds.<sup>95</sup> Later 3,200,000 lbs were procured from the villagers or rearers for the sericulture department for a sum of Rs 600,000 (£ 40,000). This amount went to about thirty-five thousand villagers, giving them an average income of Rs 11. It was better as it was equivalent to the two months wages or income of a cultivator.<sup>96</sup>

In 1871 government sanctioned three lakh rupees for the development of silk industry in Kashmir.<sup>97</sup> Keeping in view the decline of shawl industry due Franco-German wars the development and reorganization of this industry was the need of hour. So in order to compensate the decline of shawl trade Maharaja diverted attention towards the improvement of silk industry. Besides, efforts were also made for the development of carpet industry. Reeling appliances and machinery were imported from Europe.<sup>98</sup> Consequently, Kashmiri populace associated with silk rearing become familiar with the technique of reeling, employed in Europe. This was first development of this kind. Moreover, maharaja in order to induce majority of population to sericulture, facilitated some amenities and incentives to the people. One gold and five silver medals were awarded

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<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> M. Ismail, op.cit., p. 33

<sup>95</sup> Parveen, Akhtar *History of Kashmir*, p. 194

<sup>96</sup> E. F. Neve, *Beyond Pirpanjal*, p. 58

<sup>97</sup> Bates, op.cit., pp. 61-62

<sup>98</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 367

by the maharaja annually to most successful sericulturists.<sup>99</sup> The rearers were exempted from *begar* (forced labour).

In 1871 the yield of silk was seventy *kharwars* (10,080 lbs) which was worth of two lakh rupees. Out of which nine thousand was reckoned as profit.<sup>100</sup> The revenue derived from it amounted to between 8,000 and 10,000 *chilki* rupees. In 1872, the production had increased to four-hundred *kharwars* (57, 600 lbs) and the revenue collected was 96,000 *chilki* rupees after deducting the 30,000 rupees for the cost of imported labour and improved establishments.<sup>101</sup> In 1873 the total silk production of Kashmir province was 516 *Kharwars*.<sup>102</sup> It was worth of 168221 *chilki* rupees and the total profit after the deduction of all the expenditure was 40156 *chilki* rupees.<sup>103</sup> It was sold at the rate of twenty *chilki* rupees a seer. In the same year silk factory at Srinagar provided employment about four hundred people.<sup>104</sup> Thus due to the progressive policy of state, the number of rearers and rearing output increased. In same year for first time a second output of silk was obtained in Kashmir. However, the experiment was made on small scale and was disturbed by cholera.<sup>105</sup> In 1874, three silk factories were established one at Cherapor in Anantnag wazarat, another at Haftchinar in wazarat Sher-i-khas (Srinagar) and third one was set up at Raghunathpur, in the vicinity of Nasim Bagh.<sup>106</sup> The spinning wheels in the Ragunathpura filature were working by water power.<sup>107</sup> The silk produced in these filatures was of good quality with

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<sup>99</sup> Bates, op.cit., p. 61

<sup>100</sup> Bellew, op cit., p. 84

<sup>101</sup> Bates, op.cit., p. 65

<sup>102</sup> D.Kripa Ram. *Majmui Report*, op.cit. pp. 56- 57.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Bellew, op.cit., p. 83

<sup>105</sup> Bates, op.cit., p.63

<sup>106</sup> Sufi, op.cit., pp. 575-76

<sup>107</sup> Bellew,op.cit., p 83. See also Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 368

fine and soft fiber. It was sent to London at the rate of twenty-three to twenty-four shillings a pound.<sup>108</sup>

Like the shawl industry this industry was also affected by the famine of 1877-78. Lawrence attributed its decline to the policies of Maharaja. He said the revival scheme of maharaja was not wise.<sup>109</sup>

*Kiram Kashas* (silk master) had become a privileged class of the society as he was exempted from the beggar.<sup>110</sup> With the passage of time these *Kiram Kashas* misused their power and consequently the common masses looked upon this industry with hatred and even the name of *Kiram Kash* itself become hateful to the villagers not involved in the silk industry.<sup>111</sup> Moreover, the industry was not organized on scientific basis. The supervision over the rearing houses scattered all over the valley was not proper and the cost of buildings and machinery was enormous.<sup>112</sup> The death blow to this industry was given by the disease *pebrine*.<sup>113</sup> It started first in India in 1875 and reached Kashmir in 1878. It affected the silk-worms and the industry almost wiped out. According to N. G. Mukerji, the disease broke out in Kashmir because some of the seeds imported from Europe were disease affected.<sup>114</sup> Unfortunately, there was none possessing knowledge to control the disease and it affected the industry very badly. Thus the silk industry which provided employment to a greater section of masses and contributed to state treasury directly or indirectly almost perished. Out of 127 rearing houses built in 1869, only

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<sup>108</sup> Bellew, op.cit., p. 83

<sup>109</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 368

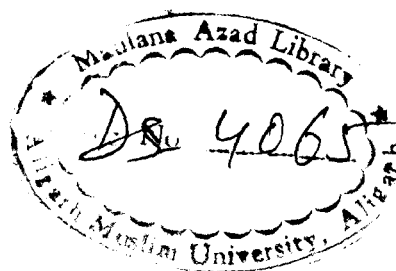
<sup>110</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 368

<sup>111</sup> M. Ismail, op.cit., p. 35

<sup>112</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, pp. 367-68

<sup>113</sup> *Pebrine* is the most dreadful disease of all the disease which attacks the silk worms.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.



two houses survived, one at Rangunathpura on the Shore of Dal Lake in Srinagar and another at Sherpura (Anantnag).

In 1881, government took some measures for reviving silk industry. Fresh eggs were imported from Japan. But the worms could not survive and the again all the efforts were in vain.<sup>115</sup> Thus there seemed no prospect for this industry and it was thought unwise to start this industry without an adequate planning and measures. So from 1882 to 1890, the state left the industry to the care of silk-worm rearers. Consequently, the quantity of seed diminished to a considerable extent.<sup>116</sup> Owing to the decline of this industry and less prospects in future the mulberry trees were cut down on large scale in Shehr-i-khas (Srinagar) and other regions of valley.<sup>117</sup> The loss would have been minimized, if government had kept a proper vigil over the industry, particularly when the government had given up the idea of re-establishing the industry in the state.

In 1889 the government made efforts for reorganization of silk industry as it was thought, it would ensure the economic prosperity to the state because the unemployment has increased owing to virtual decline of shawl industry.<sup>118</sup> Consequently, in 1890 beginning in this regard was made when Sir Thomas Wardle of Leek (England), an eminent sericulturalist and president of the silk association of Great Britain and Ireland devoted himself to the development of this industry in Kashmir. He entered into correspondence with British Resident of Kashmir in this regard. In a letter dated 6<sup>th</sup> January 1890 to the Resident,<sup>119</sup> Wardle suggested him to make an enquiry into the silk producing capacities of

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<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> M. Ismail, op.cit., p. 36

<sup>118</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 368

<sup>119</sup> M. Ismail, op.cit., P. 37

Kashmir and a possibility of establishing sericulture institutions on the lines established at Pauda and Montipelleer. In another letter dated 24<sup>th</sup> of June, 1890 Wardle showed keen interest in the future of Kashmir silk industry as he was cocksure from its physical features and salubrious climate that Kashmir could produce best silk.<sup>120</sup> In another letter dated 5<sup>th</sup> of December, 1890 Wardle wrote about the benefits which this industry could afford to India.<sup>121</sup> Thus owing to the efforts of Sir Thomas Wardle Sericulture Department was established in Kashmir in 1890 and responsibility it was entrusted to B.R. Mukerji.<sup>122</sup> Moreover, the services of sericulture experts of Bengal were secured for the microscopic examination of seed and at the same time the department was succeeded in producing disease free seed. In 1894 B.R. Mukerji was replaced by Lawrence to supervise the operations of this industry.<sup>123</sup> Lawrence opined that for the development, the industry should be left in private enterprise, but it was not accepted and Wardle's opinion prevailed and the industry again became a state monopoly.<sup>124</sup>

### **Carpet industry**

Carpet making was practiced in Kashmir since the sultan Zain-ul-Abdin with a period of sluggish growth in Afghan period.<sup>125</sup> He is said to have brought carpet weavers from Samarkand where it had already flourished to make people of Kashmir acquainted with this art. During the Sikh period carpets of good quality were produced which is evident that

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<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, pp. 368-69.

<sup>123</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, pp. 368-70. See also M. Ismail, *op.cit.*, p. 38

<sup>124</sup> Ismail, *Op.cit.*, p. 38

<sup>125</sup> S. K. Sharma and S. R. Bakshi, *Encyclopedia of Kashmir*, Vol-10, Anmol Publications PVT. Ltd, New Delhi, p. 62. For detail see N. K. Zutshi, *Sutan Zain-ul-Abidin of Kashmir*, Nupur Prakashan, Jammu, 1976, p. 202.

Moorcraft who remained in Kashmir from 1823-26 got a carpet made of shawl wool in 1823 and when this Kashmiri carpet was rolled in front of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, he was so much astonished with the magnificent design of carpet that he spontaneously rolled on the carpet and felt as he rolled on real Kashmir.<sup>126</sup>

With establishment of Dogra rule in Kashmir, efforts were made to put this industry on a firm basis.<sup>127</sup> According to the census report of 1891 in Srinagar alone there were 800 to 900 carpet weavers, besides a substantial number of them were also found in the outskirts of Srinagar and countryside. However, the carpet industry during Gulab Singh's reign could not register any extra ordinary progress. This was perhaps due to his engagement in the consolidation and expansion of his newly acquired state. Moreover, in order to fulfill Gulab Singh could not devote his attention for its development which required a hefty amount.

Maharaja Ranbir Singh who assumed the Maharajaship of Jammu and Kashmir in 1857 gave new impetus to this industry. Moreover, with penetration of European trade in the carpet trade proved a boon for the development of this industry. Ranbir Singh in order to improve this industry provided every sort of assistance to the European businessmen and firms who evinced interest in the carpet business due to insignificant prospects in shawl business after 1870. As a result this industry revived and prospered.<sup>128</sup> Moreover, the native shawl weavers who survived off the deadly famine of 1877-78 were encouraged to opt the carpet weaving. The Maharaja advanced loans to the *kharkhandars* of shawl industry to

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<sup>126</sup> P N K Bamzias, op.cit., p. 206

<sup>127</sup> Parveez Ahmad, op.cit., p. 160

<sup>128</sup> A. Mitra, op.cit., p. 9. See also Lawrence, *Valley*, op.cit., p. 377

install the looms for carpet weaving<sup>129</sup> when there was no scope for the shawl products in European market. Thus, it assimilated the people who were associated with shawl manufacturing. In this way it provided employment to a large section of workers. In 1876, when Mr. Chapman, European carpet trader arrived in Kashmir, he was given all state assistance for the improvement of this industry. Main Lal Din, an officer in charge of state workshops was directed by Maharaja to render him assistance he required.<sup>130</sup> However, he worked only two years but his contributed to the development of this industry was no less significant. He introduced new designs which improved the quality of carpets, though it failed to gratify the tastes of European. He was succeeded by a Frenchman Bigex who commenced manufacturing carpets for Bon-Marche, a firm in France. Later on his work was taken up by another Frenchman, Mon. H. Davergne. He was French shawl agent in Kashmir from 1865 to 1882. He was designer and dyer by profession.<sup>131</sup> Having experience of shawl trade and a deep knowledge of the European markets he was successful and greatly contributed to the development of carpet trade of Kashmir<sup>132</sup> The factory which he had established was a great success. It was purchased by Messer Mitchall and co. Mr. C. M. Hadow was another European associated with carpet trade. He started his own factory. More than 2,303 weavers were employed in these two factories. In 1890 Hadow sent Kashmiri carpets to Chicago world fair.<sup>133</sup> Their carpets were in great demand in Europe and America. Thus the carpet industry made rapid progress from 1870 to 1890 which continued till 1929-30 when the economic crisis started from Wall Street in U.S.A and affected

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<sup>129</sup> Dhar, *Arts and Artisans of Kashmir*, p. 52

<sup>130</sup> Bamzai, *op.cit.*, p. 270

<sup>131</sup> A. Mitra, *op.cit.*, p. 9. See also Dhar, *Arts and Artisans of Kashmir*, p. 53

<sup>132</sup> S.S. Charak, *op.cit.*, p. 142

<sup>133</sup> Bhan, *Report on Carpet Industry*, pp. 1-2. See also Dhar, *Arts and Artisans of Kashmir*, p. 53



almost all the economies of world. The production decreased and the trade came to standstill. Consequently, the demand of Kashmiri carpets in Europe and America fell down which had adverse effects on the carpet industry of Kashmir.<sup>134</sup> However, the industry later revived again and even at present times many people are associated with the carpet weaving for earning their both end meal especially in the rural areas where there is dearth of job and work. The raw materials i.e wool for manufacturing the carpets was produced locally. It was also imported from India via Banihal road. The carpet industry of Kashmir had stiff competition and rival in Amritsar, where after migrated Kashmiris had started manufacturing carpets in large number with considerable capital.<sup>135</sup>

### **Method of Carpet weaving**

The carpet was woven on loom in the same way as shawls were manufactured. The pattern and design was first prepared by an expert and committed to a piece of paper. It contained a series of hieroglyphics which indicate number and colours to be used.<sup>136</sup> It was dictated by an expert to the weavers. The weavers sitting on a low bench required threads of every required colour in double or triple folds wound up in balls hanging down from a string and with written key or *talim*, he tied the number of knot with woolen yarn of the colour as given in the script. The wrap threads, which are of cotton, were arranged in parallel order upright and pattern and fabric are produced of coloured woolen threads

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<sup>134</sup> Barker, *Report on the Cottage Textile Industry of Kashmir*, Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, Jammu, p. 75

<sup>135</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, pp. 377

<sup>136</sup> Doughty, *op.cit.*, p. 156

upon the warp.<sup>137</sup> The similar method as was employed in shawl weaving was applied in carpet manufacturing.

## Paper industry

The genesis of this industry in Kashmir dated back to 15<sup>th</sup> century. Paper making was one of the prominent industries of Dogra period.<sup>138</sup> It was mainly concentrated in Naushera and its vicinity. The other centre of this industry was at Hari Parbat fort, which was run by convicted labour.<sup>139</sup> Gandarbal was another place where the paper art thrived. Here water being abundantly available the mills worked by water power.<sup>140</sup>

The material from which paper was obtained constitutes the pulp, which was an assortment of rag and hemp.<sup>141</sup> The pulp was prepared in mills in Sindh valley and Dachigam Nalah from where it was taken to Srinagar for final manufacture. Besides, lime and soda were used with the pulp.<sup>142</sup> Then, the pulp was placed in stone troughs or baths and mixed with water. A layer of pulp was then extracted from this mixture of an ingenious mould constructed of fine grass stalks. Superfluous water was squeezed under the weight of boulders or couple of men. The sheet thus produced was then stuck on the mud wall and dried. Next the sheet was polished with a pumice stone and then its surface was glazed with rice water. Finally, a polishing with an onyx stone was given to it and then the

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<sup>137</sup> M. L. Kapur, *Social-Economic History of Jammu and Kashmir State( 1885 -1925)*, Anmol Publication, New Delhi, p. 137

<sup>138</sup> R. Temple, Vol. I, p. 299

<sup>139</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 380. See also *Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh*, p. 80

<sup>140</sup> Richard Temple, Vol. I, p. 300. See also Bellew, *op.cit.*, p. 87

<sup>141</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>142</sup> Sufi, Vol. II, p. 576

paper was ready for use. They were all handmade.<sup>143</sup> In Kashmir three kinds of papers were manufactured;

***Farmashi paper:*** Generally known as maharaja or royal was superior in quality in all varieties produced in Kashmir. It was highly glazed and made from a pulp contained sixteen parts of selected rags and two parts of hemp.<sup>144</sup>

***Dhamashti:*** It was made from a pulp contained 177 parts of rags and three parts of hemp.<sup>145</sup>

***Kalamdani:*** *Kalamdani* was the most widely used variety in Kashmir. It was made of pulp which was devoid of hemp.<sup>146</sup>

The paper produced in Kashmir was of superior quality. It surpassed native papers of India for its durability and excellent quality. At Lahore exhibition of 1864, it was declared the best quality of all the papers manufactured with indigenous technical know-how.<sup>147</sup> The paper manufactured in Kashmir was in great demand in India, as it was used in government offices to maintain records as well as for manuscripts. In 1848, Kashmir exported worth of Rs 15,000 to Punjab in spite of low production.<sup>148</sup>

During Maharaja Ranbir Singh's reign paper making received immense encouragement. The demand of paper amplified due to its large scale consumption in offices and other purposes both in state and abroad. Besides, the paper-mashie industry which also flourished in this period

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<sup>143</sup> Sufi, Vol. II, p. 577. See also temple, Vol-I, op.cit., p. 300

<sup>144</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 380

<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

<sup>147</sup> Bates, op.cit., p. 66. See also Temple Vol. II, p. 300

<sup>148</sup> Abdul Ahad, op.cit., p. 49

also consumed a sufficient amount of paper. In order to meet out the demand the units of the industry were even erected in parts of Jammu province as well.<sup>149</sup> Though a good quality of paper was produced but it could not flourish in all areas except in Jammu *wazarat*.<sup>150</sup>

In 1873, thirty-two units were in operation in Naushera and its environs. In each unit twelve persons were employed.<sup>151</sup> So this industry provided the means of survival to a quite significant number of people. In *samvat* 1931(1875), the papers manufactured in Srinagar became the monopoly of government. The production was now mostly for government use.<sup>152</sup> However, the surplus was sold to the merchants. The cost of the superior quality of paper manufactured in Kashmir during the Dogra period was about three rupees of twenty-four sheets.<sup>153</sup>

However, towards the end of Ranbir Singh's reign this industry showed the signs of decline. The reason was the introduction and use of machine made paper in government offices and in writing manuscripts.

### **Paper-Machie**

The art of moulding paper-pulp into articles of various shapes and sizes and painting designs upon them was introduced in Kashmir from Persia during the reign of sultan Zain-ul Abadin.<sup>154</sup> This art in Kashmir known as *Kumangiri* or *Karikalamdani* (Lacquer work) was one of the prominent industries of Dogra period as well.<sup>155</sup> It was also called *Kar-i-munaqqush*. The material utilized for preparing the articles through this

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<sup>149</sup> S.S. Charak, op.cit., p. 143

<sup>150</sup> D. K. Ram, *Majmui Report* ( 1872-73), p. 54

<sup>151</sup> Gazetteer of Kashmir, op.cit. ,p. 380

<sup>152</sup> Gwasha Lal Kaul, op cit., p. 111

<sup>153</sup> Thorton Edward, *Gazetteer of Countries*, Vol. I, London, 1891, p. 201

<sup>154</sup> D. N. Dhar, *Art and Artisans of Kashmir*, p. 50

<sup>155</sup> E. F. Knight, op.cit., p. 40

art was the paper manufactured in indigenous units which have been written upon.<sup>156</sup> Besides, soft and light wood, leather for superior pen cases, gold and silver leaves, glue and rice paste were other materials used in paper-machie.<sup>157</sup> However, Boden Powell says “the articles of this art is covered with a coating of white paint on the surface of which is a delicate patterns in various colours chiefly crimson, green and is drawn with fine brush and curved designs seen upon shawls are most commonly produced.”<sup>158</sup> This art was pursued by large number of Kashmiri people especially Shia muslims.<sup>159</sup>

Two designs of paper Mache were mostly widely prevalent in Kashmir during the Dogra period. These included flat and raised. The content of design was mainly taken from the Persian tradition or the natural environment in Kashmir especially its flora and fauna, peach and almond blossoms along with inter wined boughs and twigs with birds perched on them.

Brushes made of the hair of goat, pencils from the hairs in the fur of the cat, a sharp knife, a small cutting chisel and shell for mixing the colour, agate for smoothing the surface, Stone slab and muller constitute the tools and implements used for manufacturing articles through this art. The output of this art include articles such as tables, trays, tea-pots, picture frames, candle sticks etc were made. Even the ceiling walls were painted with paper-machie designs.<sup>160</sup> The articles produced by this

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<sup>156</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 378

<sup>157</sup> Moorcroft, *op.cit.*, p. 215

<sup>158</sup> Boden Powel, *Handbook of Manufactures and Arts of Punjab*, Vol-II, Printing Company, Lahore, 1872, p. 281.

<sup>159</sup> Sufi, *Vo. II*, *op.cit.*, p. 578

<sup>160</sup> Younghusband, *op.cit.* P. 214. See also Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 378

article were exported to Kabul annually. It was worth of rupees 10,000 and 20,000.<sup>161</sup>

Maharaja Ranbir Singh greatly patronized this industry. He presented paper-mashie coffee sets to his European friends which popularized them in European countries. In 1876, he remitted tax on paper-machie articles which boasted this craft in Kashmir.<sup>162</sup> In 1864 the paper-mashie articles were sent to Lahore exhibition. There these articles caught the attention of every one. Later in Delhi exhibition a table made by Safdar Mogal in 1877 received first prize with a silver medal and was purchase by Lahore Museum.<sup>163</sup> The income derived from this art was an important source of income to the state. However, during the concluding years of Ranbir Singh it was in somewhat decadent condition and suffered perhaps more than any other industry on account of foreign purchases,<sup>164</sup> though several shops now stock articles perhaps superior to that of European designs.

### **Metal works**

Kashmir has since long attained high reputation for the excellence of its metal works. Several travelers who visited Kashmir during the second half of the 19th century were highly impressed with the metal works of Kashmir. Wakefield, a medical officer in British Indian army who visited Kashmir in 1875 stated that “Kashmiris are ingenious in metal works, manufacturing good weapons, such as guns and swords and other articles. But their jewellery demands attention, the gold and silversmiths of Srinagar being very clever at their trade, producing admirable work, great

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<sup>161</sup> D. N. Dhar, *opcit.*, p. 52

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.* see also Mitra, *op.cit.*, p 11

<sup>163</sup> Mitra, *op.cit.* ,p. 11

<sup>164</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 378

quantities of which are now finding their way to Europe.”<sup>165</sup> E. F. Knight who visited Kashmir in April 1890 was highly impressed with metal works of Kashmir and he stated that metal-works of Kashmir were well known in Europe as well.<sup>166</sup>

### **Silver and gold works**

Kashmiris were genius in gold and silver works and produced admirable articles which were in great demand not only at home but also outside Kashmir.<sup>167</sup> Sir George Birwood has given impressions regarding the silver works of Kashmir. “Their elegant shapes and delicate tracery, graven through the gilding to the dead white silver below which softens the luster of the gold to a pearly radiance, gives a most charming effect to this refined and graceful work. It is an art to have been imported by Mogals, but influenced by the natural superiority of the people of Cashmere valley over all other Orientals in elaborating decorative details of good design, whether in metal work, hammered and cut or enameling or weaving.”<sup>168</sup>

The silver and gold works of Kashmir had genesis in historic period (ancient) but during the sultanate and Mughals eras it became exceedingly effective. This was actually an urban craft confined to the towns especially Sahar-i-khas, present Srinagar.<sup>169</sup> Lawrence was highly impressed with the artistic skills of goldsmiths and their beautiful products. He said “the silver work of Kashmir was extremely impressive and beautiful. The smiths possessed great prowess and could copy any design which may be given to him. They form beautiful patterns of chinar

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<sup>165</sup> Wakefield, op.cit., p. 149

<sup>166</sup> E. F. Knight, op.cit., p. 41

<sup>167</sup> Wakefield, op.cit., p 149

<sup>168</sup> C. F, A, Mitra, op.cit., p. 14

<sup>169</sup> *Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh*, p. 83

and lotus leaves.” The material i.e silver and gold for manufacturing articles was not available locally and was procured from Yarkhand. The smith then converted it into different articles with the help of poor and rude tools like hammer and chisel.<sup>170</sup> The *khars* (smiths) manufactured articles in both oriental and European designs.<sup>171</sup> The output ranged from jewelry to the article of daily use like trays, goblets, tea cups, jugs, napkin-rings, finger-bowls and scent holders.<sup>172</sup> The jewellery both in silver and gold was executed. These articles were sold at price four annas per *tola*.<sup>173</sup> The silver goods of this period possessed a peculiar feature of whiteness. It is owing to the practice of boiling the products in apricot juice.<sup>174</sup>

Although, this craft was confined to the towns of Kashmir only but it provided employment to a substantial section of society who by producing, trading or carrying the gold and silver articles from one place either for sale or export, managed their basic needs. Wakefield mentioned, this craft engaged five categories of people directly or indirectly-silversmith (*khar*), engraver (*naqash*), gilder (*zarkob*), polisher (*rashangor*) and cleaner (*chakqar*).<sup>175</sup> So it can be asserted with certainty that this craft was one of the vital constituent of Kashmir economy during the epoch under review.

The articles produced by silver smiths constituted an important item of both internal and foreign trade. Srinagar, Anantnag, Pattan etc were the

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<sup>170</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 378

<sup>171</sup> Bates, *op.cit.*, p. 69

<sup>172</sup> Wakefield, *Valley*, pp. 149-50

<sup>173</sup> *Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh*, p. 83

<sup>174</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 378

<sup>175</sup> Wakefield, *op.cit.*, pp.149-50



prominent centers where these articles were sold. Even these were sent to England.<sup>176</sup>

### Copper works

This craft was confined to the capital city of maharaja i.e. Sahar-i-khas. The copper smiths manufactured distinctive types of copperware and articles with poor and conventional technical know-how. Their tools resembled with implements and tools utilized by the silversmith which included hammer for beating in order to mould the metal and chisel to give shape and finish to the product.<sup>177</sup> The copper good with distinctive designs were manufactured in Kashmir. The production of the copper smiths was limited and confined to trays, candle sticks, bracelets in the shape of Chinese leaves. But the very beautiful work was the copper enamel. Besides, the indigenous patterns and designs the art of manufacturing was influenced by the Buddhist art of Tibet.<sup>178</sup> *Lassu* and *Subhananu* were the two prominent coppersmiths in Srinagar.<sup>179</sup>

### Iron works

In the second part of 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the industrial revolution had engulfed most countries of world and India too saw the rise of industrial growth, the iron industry in Kashmir was still confined to fabricate the articles of daily use and the weapons for the state armory. The major output of blacksmiths was the agricultural implements and articles like swords, knives etc.<sup>180</sup> Maharaja Ranbir Singh maintained a *Mistri-khana*

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<sup>176</sup> Ibid.

<sup>177</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 378. See also Kaumudi, *Kashmir-The cultural Heritage*, Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1952, p. 186

<sup>178</sup> Ibid., See also *Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh*, p. 83

<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

<sup>180</sup> Bates, op.cit., p. 69

or workshop where only military weapons and tools were manufactured.<sup>181</sup> So as the manufacturing of armaments is concerned only traditional weaponry like canons, guns and pistols constitute the major output of the blacksmiths of Kashmir.<sup>182</sup> The gun-smiths of Srinagar were highly skillful that there was little difference between armament made in Kashmir and that of English. Though the raw material for iron works was locally available but it was sporadic in quantity. The iron known as *bajour* iron available in Muzafarabad wazarat was main source of raw-material to the black smiths of Kashmir.<sup>183</sup> It was imported to Srinagar and was sold at the rate of two seers for a chilki rupee. Besides, the iron (faulad), a superior variety, was imported from Iran and steel was imported from Punjab. It was mainly used for manufacturing swords and knives.<sup>184</sup> Wood available locally was also used by blacksmiths in their products. The blacksmiths manufactured the articles in factory consisted of one room with one or two assistants. So this cannot be treated as large scale industry. This industry was confined to the northern quarter of capital and at the foot of Hari Parbat fort.<sup>185</sup> Zainagir in Bira *pargana* was another important center where weapons for state were manufactured. It was the only factory located outside the premises of capital. Here more than twenty men were employed.

However, the state exercised the considerable control over the craft and it was obligatory for them to fulfill the state's requirement. In 1848, Gulab Singh, in order to combat the undesired elements and subdue the rebels issued an *Irshad* for the blacksmiths to accelerate the production of

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<sup>181</sup> Mitra. Op.cit. p. 15

<sup>182</sup> Wakefield, op.cit., p. 149

<sup>183</sup> Lawrence, Valley, p. 373. See also Younghusband, op.cit., p. 217

<sup>184</sup> Bates, op.cit., pp. 69-70

<sup>185</sup> *Ibid.*

arms. Consequently, the blacksmiths in the Pather Masjid area of Sher-i-khas produced weapons on large scale. The production in 1852 was highest in the Gulab Singh's reign.<sup>186</sup>

In 1860, Maharaja Ranbir Singh, proclaimed that the workers and smiths associated with this industry were treated as state servants and six to eight *chilki* rupees were fixed as their wages.<sup>187</sup> Moreover, the raw-material was now supplied by the state and for manufacturing one rifle they were paid at the rate of thirty *chilki* rupees. In 1874, the total number of shops of blacksmiths manufacturing weapons rose to thirty and in each shop besides, the master four to five men were employed.<sup>188</sup>

The products of blacksmiths besides fulfilling the local needs were also sent out of the valley for trade. Jammu was significant in this respect. Moreover, the swords of Kashmir were illegally taken to Hazara, Peshawar, and Kabul. Amira and Usmana were the two firms in Kashmir dealing with weapons during the Dogra period.<sup>189</sup>

## Wood Carving

Wood carving is an old craft of Kashmir. This craft attained recognition during the medieval period and is said to have really introduced in Kashmir by sultan Zain-ul-Abdin. He invited experts from Gujarat who introduced special design of boats.<sup>190</sup> The raw-material i.e wood was available locally as Kashmir has a rich forest cover but walnut wood owing to its durability and natural-veined surface, was preferred for

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<sup>186</sup> Saif-ud-din, op.cit., Vol. II & V, 1848-1852, pp. 456-46

<sup>187</sup> Parveen Akhtar, History of Kashmir, p. 198

<sup>188</sup> Bates, op.cit., p. 69

<sup>189</sup> Lawrence, Valley, p. 373. See also Bates, op.cit., p. 69

<sup>190</sup> N. k. Zutshi, op.cit., p. 203

making articles of various types.<sup>191</sup> The wood was seasoned before being put to use, by exposing to various temperatures changing with season and time. It was this wood that was cut and polished and then carved into various articles like trays, tables, boxes etc.

The designs of wood carving were excellent and beautiful. Many designs of wood work were prevalent in Kashmir during the Dogra period like *Sosan*, *chinar*, *badam*, *dacchi* and *muzar posh*.<sup>192</sup> The *sosan* was motif for titles, the *china* meant a popular motif for wood carving, *dachi* was a design of bunch of grapes, *badam* was based on almond motif and *mazar posh* was raised relief of iris flower. Another design which is still prevalent in Kashmir was *khatambandi*.<sup>193</sup> This was mainly found in ceilings. It consisted of small pieces of carved wood fitted into frames in geometrical designs to form decorative ceilings for rooms. The perfect execution of this is found in Khanqah-i-Maullah mosque of Srinagar.<sup>194</sup> A few of the *Khatambandi* ceiling have been introduced in England. G. M. D Sufi maintained that, "Ceilings of the same construction were found in Samarkhan, Bhakhara, Persia, Istanbul and Morocco."<sup>195</sup> Many people from all over valley were engaged in this craft during early Dogra period.

Anantnag was an important centre of this craft and carpenters produced various types of articles to suffice different requirements of people.<sup>196</sup> These goods were traded in valley and were also sent to other parts of India and even to Europe.<sup>197</sup>

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<sup>191</sup> Kaumudi, op.cit., pp. 184-85

<sup>192</sup> Ibid.

<sup>193</sup> Lawrence, Valley, p. 379

<sup>194</sup> Sufi, op.cit., p. 586. See also Kuamudi, op cit., p. 185

<sup>195</sup> Sufi, op.cit., p. 586

<sup>196</sup> Ibid.

<sup>197</sup> Hassan, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 498.

## Leather works

Manufacturing of leather goods was one of the prosperous industries of Kashmir during the Dogra. It engaged substantial portion of Kashmiri populace. William Moorcroft century has highly praised the leather goods of Kashmir.<sup>198</sup> The classes of people engaged with this occupation were known as *Watals*.<sup>199</sup> The Srinagar city was the prominent center of manufacturing of leather goods and hub of trade in these goods.<sup>200</sup> The raw material was procured from countryside by *watals*. After collecting the skins the *watals* prepared them and then brought them to Srinagar where these skins were given the different shapes. The prominent leather articles manufactured in Kashmir included shoes, chapel, harness and bags. Lawrence maintained, the leather portmanteau and valise made in Srinagar stands on amount of rough usage which few English solid bags survive and the leather saddle manufactured in valley were more durable.<sup>201</sup>

## Village Manufactures

### Ghabhas

*Ghabha* is a carpet rug used for covering the floor and bed covers like carpets. The origin of this industry is shrouded in obscurity. A legend traced its genesis from Anantnag, the southernmost *wazarat* of Kashmir. According to this legend in Anantnag there lived a poor tailor known as

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<sup>198</sup> William Moorcroft, op.cit., pp. 213-14

<sup>199</sup> They formed one of the classes of Kashmiri society. They lived mostly in villages where they accomplished menial works. They used to get the skins from villages and took it to the capital city of Maharaja where these skins were manipulated into different articles by the same class of people. Fredric Drew, *Jammu and Kashmir Territories*, Capital Publishing House, New Delhi, 1997 (Reprinted), p. 181

<sup>200</sup> E. F. Knight, op.cit., p. 40

<sup>201</sup> Ibid

Lasya Tota, who is said to have first stitched together some old and worn out the dyed pieces of old *puttoo* in such a way as to form a floor sheet.<sup>202</sup> Another legend states that owing to the efforts of Abdul Rahman who came to Kashmir as refugee from Kabul during the reign of emperor Jahangir this industry made its appearance in Kashmir.<sup>203</sup> According to the Report of Economic Survey of Ghabha manufacture in Kashmir, 1938, the *ghabha* manufacturing is not more than hundred old. In initial period only coarse type of *ghabas* were manufactured and there was not much demand for them from well off class. The best felts were imported from central province of Yarkhand.<sup>204</sup> This industry did not need any special raw-material. Old or used blankets or new were used for manufacturing *ghabas* by stitching together and then the embroidery work with needled was done. There were different forms and patterns of *gabaha* like appliqué (Dal-Gabhas), embroidered, appliqué-cum-embroidered and printed.<sup>205</sup>

During the Maharaja Ranbir Singh reign *gabaha* making developed to considerable extent. He took many steps to encourage this industry. He invited experts like Muhammad Bhat, Rasul Magre and Nur Sheikh to Srinagar who were very expert in *Gabaha* making to prepare *shamianas*, *qanats* and *gabhas* for state use.<sup>206</sup>

The *Gabaha* industry thrived mainly in Islamabad *wazarat* and *ghabas* made here were famous throughout the valley. However, the printed *gabhas* was a specialty of Baramullah.<sup>207</sup>

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<sup>202</sup> M. Ganjoo, *The Textile Industries in Kashmir*, Delhi, 1945, p. 121

<sup>203</sup> Sufi, *op.cit.*, Vol. II, p. 571

<sup>204</sup> Barker, *op.cit.*, p. 75. See also Dr. Parveen Akhtar, *op.cit.*, p. 196

<sup>205</sup> Sufi, *op.cit.*, p. 570. See also Dhar, *Arts and Artisans*, *op.cit.*, p. 54

<sup>206</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>207</sup> *Ibid.* See also Mitra, *op.cit.*, p. 7

## Embroidery

This art was closely associated with shawl industry and other crafts like *gabha* and *namdha* making. It has made a very significant contribution to manufacture some of the most artistic and magnificent designs of shawl. It was extensively scattered craft of Kashmir but was least organized.<sup>208</sup> Like most of the crafts it was also the legacy of Bad-Shah (Zain-ul-Abadin). It was a part time occupation for some people as well as a permanent occupation for those who were not engaged in agriculture. However, after the 1870 from finest embroidery work on shawls, the embroiderers slowly descends to needle-work on silks, woolen and cotton textiles and to hook work on coarse stuffs and *namdhas*. Varied designs in embroidery were common during the early Dogra period. These were based natural scenery, flora and animal or insect life of Kashmir.<sup>209</sup>

## Basket-making

Many people in village were engaged with this occupation. Basket-making was a source of livelihood to a greater section of people. They made baskets for *kangri*<sup>210</sup> inside which a round mud pot was adjusted to keep charcoal to get warm during cold. Baskets were also made for agricultural purposes like carrying the manure and turfs to the fields. *Khilat (tukri)* was used to carry fruits especially apples. The superior *khilat* covered with leather were made in Srinagar.<sup>211</sup>

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<sup>208</sup> Sufi, Vol. II, op.cit., p. 569

<sup>209</sup> Ibid.

<sup>210</sup> It is a small insulated pot covered by a cover woven by the basket-maker. It contains charcoal and is held close to the body to warm during the cold season. Even at present this tradition is prevalent.

<sup>211</sup> Lawrence. Valley, p. 372

## Pottery Making

Due to the scarcity of metallic pots and low purchasing power of people especially in rural areas pots made of mud were widely used in Kashmir in nineteenth century. The potters were found both in villages and in Srinagar.<sup>212</sup> Thus they sufficed the requirements of both rural and urban population.<sup>213</sup> The potters (*kral*) made kitchen pots of various types, forms and sizes of daily use. The large pots were also made to store grains and other articles and cylindrical for bee-keeping. Moreover, another major output of potters was the inner part (*kundal*) of *kangri*. The ornamentation was seldom taken into consideration. The potters used sell their products in village and also had a ready market in city of Srinagar. In Srinagar the earthenware were made in Rainawari area<sup>214</sup> were known for excellence and sturdiness. However, Lawrence stated that pottery made in countryside (villages) was more durable to that of Sahar-i-khas.<sup>215</sup>

## Lapidaries

Lapidary work was practiced in Kashmir since long ago. The lapidary workers of Dogra period possessed great prowess and were proficient as seal cutters.<sup>216</sup> This was the ingenious art of Kashmir and had a peculiar style. It was unique in design and even these were superior to that of Europe.<sup>217</sup> In plain gold they made every imaginable article of jewelry and for making an article they charged at the rate of Rs. 20 a *tola* for the material and two *annas* for workmanship. They made bracelets and other

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<sup>212</sup> E. F. Knight, *op.cit.*, p. 40

<sup>213</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 273

<sup>214</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>215</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>216</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 379

<sup>217</sup> Bates, *op.cit.*, p. 69



ornaments of gold, silver, brass, copper and tin.<sup>218</sup> Lawrence held that “the people associated with this occupation were not prosperous but if they seek work in the territories of India they could earn high wages.”<sup>219</sup>

### **Mat Making**

This art was mostly practiced by the villagers. It was an indigenous art of Kashmir. The raw material used for making mats (*waggu*) was procured from lakes, ponds and swamps.<sup>220</sup> It was called ‘*pit*’, a sort of reed. These mats were used as floor covers and the boats were also roofed with mats. The villagers of Lasjan were the genius in this art.<sup>221</sup> It was a source of income to many people. They used to sell them in towns besides using for their own needs.

### **Soap Making**

Soap making was part-time economic activity of the people of Kashmir. During the period of our study two kinds of soaps were manufactured in Kashmir, one from animal fat known as *Safed sabun* ( white soap) and another from vegetable oil known as *Til sabun* (oil soap).<sup>222</sup> In 1850, two Kashmiris, Maqbool Shah and Gaffar Khan led by Kumeden Devi Singh approached the Maharaja Gulab Singh and offered him to pay an amount of Rs 1500 as against Rs. 900 paid by the manufacturers, if they would be entrusted with the monopoly of soap manufacturing. This offer was conceded by the maharaja and they enjoyed this monopoly till the nineties of the nineteenth century.<sup>223</sup>

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<sup>218</sup> Parveen Akhtar, *History of Kashmir*, p. 199

<sup>219</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 379

<sup>220</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 69

<sup>221</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>222</sup> D. K. Ram, *Gulzar-i-Kashmir*, p. 413. See also *Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh*, op.cit, p. 44

<sup>223</sup> Parveen Akhtar, *History of Kashmir*, p. 200. See also *Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh*, p. 84

## Organization of industries in the early Dogra Period

Baring few most of industries and handicraft units of Kashmir were controlled and managed by the master workman generally called *Ustad* (master craftsman) or *kharkhandar*.<sup>224</sup> He managed the cost of production either by his own capital or by capital provided by the dealer in advance.<sup>225</sup> The manufacturing unit was the workshop which consisted of one or two small rooms. In these establishments generally 10 to 20 workers were employed. However, in workshops of blacksmith, goldsmith, paper-machie etc besides master 2 to 3 workers were employed. The only exception is the shawl industry where the *kharkhandar* has employed more than 20 weavers and certain cases he employed 300 to 400 weavers.<sup>226</sup> The production was low contrary to the units of India and Europe where machines operated by electricity and coal replaced the old means of production on account of industrial revolution. In Kashmir the goods were mostly manufactured by hand with rude and old tools and implements. However, the local requirements were fulfilled by their produce and little room was left for the importation of products.

Shawl industry since the inception of Dogra rule was under the control of Dagh-shawl department which looked after the manufacturing unit through its officials, supervised raw material, dying, settled disputes among the workers, and levied the poll tax on weavers and impost on the

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<sup>224</sup> There were three kinds of Kharkhandars; nukdee, jammakharchi, and anantnagi. The first was man with sufficient means, who provided his own capital, purchased raw material and paid the wages. The production in such units was enough. Jamakharchi organized the production in the homes of the individual weavers. He arranged finances either from the government or from moneylenders. He produced goods on small scale. The third on inhabited in the Anantnag Wazarat and their produced was of inferior quality. See Dhar, op.cit, p. 45

<sup>225</sup> S. N. Gadru, op.cit., p. 62

<sup>226</sup> R. Thorpe, op.cit., p. 83. See also Dhar, *Arts and Artisans*, p. 45

manufactured articles.<sup>227</sup> In the early seventies of the nineteenth century silk industry was monopolized by government. Paper and carpet industries were also regulated by the state. Besides, a number of small workshops spread all over the valley were managed and operated by local people.

The marketing of products was a major obstacle confronted by the industries during the period under study. This was done by local dealers or independent master craftsman, agents of foreign business houses in Srinagar and dealers living outside state. They had no organized way of marketing their goods.<sup>228</sup>

Owing to the rough roads and absence of vehicular traffic and poor road linkage with rest of India and outer world the movements of goods was paralyzed.<sup>229</sup> The people took on their back a few amount of goods for sale which was a cumbersome process. Ponies and boats were other means of transport which again in any way was not favorable.

Workers, the main pillar for industrial development were subjected to various hardships. They had to work from dawn to dusk in small dark room without accessories and unhealthy conditions on very low wages not sufficient to suffice their basic requirements.<sup>230</sup> Even in the early years, they were not permitted to change their masters. There was total

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<sup>227</sup> Mitra, Op.cit., p. 3

<sup>228</sup> Due to the poor communication and self-sufficiency of people there was not elaborated market where the transaction of goods could take place. The producer was compelled to take out his product for sale by walking distant areas. No doubt, during this period Europeans and Punjabi traders began to purchase the goods of Kashmir for their native countries but their movement was confined to Srinagar only. As result many goods perished for the sake market which could have boasted the economy of people.

<sup>229</sup> Younghusband, op. cit., p. 177

<sup>230</sup> Marion Doughty, *A Foot Through the Kashmir Valley*, Ali Mohammad and Sons, Srinagar, Reprinted 2005. P 157

absence of division of labour. Moreover, there was no class consciousness among them and therefore, no organization.

Thus it can be said that during period of our study numerous arts and industries flourished in Kashmir with sufficient out-put keeping in view the technology which was employed in these unit and other constraints. This sphere of economy sufficed the needs to a greater section of population either directly or indirectly and also provided part-time employment to the people engaged in primary occupation i.e. agriculture and secondary as well i.e. traders and those arranged the means of transport. During the nineteenth century keeping in view the industrial pace of rest of India and world, Kashmir was industrially the least developed region in the sub-continent. The contribution during the nineteenth century and early part of twentieth century of manufacturing sector to the economy of state was 8.6% which was not satisfactory.<sup>231</sup> It was owing to the many factors like poor communication system, absence of modern machines, lack of energy sources like electricity, absence of viable entrepreneurial class, dearth and high cost of raw-materials and natural wrath<sup>232</sup> in the form of famines, droughts and earthquakes. The state's indifferent attitude towards the non-agrarian sector was responsible for the industrial backwardness of Kashmir. Moreover, the state's policy was not encouraging regarding these manufacturing units and the condition of working force either on account of heavy taxation or

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<sup>231</sup> *Techno-Economic Survey of Jammu and Kashmir*, National Council of Applied Economic Research, New Delhi, 1969, P. 76

<sup>232</sup> In 19<sup>th</sup> century, Kashmir was frequently visited by natural calamities which caused both human and material loss and also compelled the people including the skilled workers to migrate to the safe areas i.e., Punjab which had adverse repercussions for the economic growth of the province. In 19<sup>th</sup> century two disastrous flood one in 1858 and another in 1893, three famines i.e. 1831, 1864 and 1877-78 and one earthquake i.e. 1857 occurred in Kashmir. In all the above natural calamities in the absence of adequate relief measures common masses were worst hit.

oppression of kharkhandar was also pathetic which if had better could have proved better for industrial development.

## **Chapter-3**

# *State and Economy*

# *State and Economy*

## **Land Revenue System**

Since time immemorial agriculture was the predominant occupation of Kashmiri populace owing to the favorable climate, fertile soils and numerous other physical conditions. Moreover, Kashmir being a land locked region had poor communication linkage with rest of India and other neighboring countries with few narrow passages not suitable for vehicular traffic particularly during the second half of nineteenth century, had restricted the growth and prospects for non-agrarian sector. Most of the population practised different crops with varied procedures. According to the census of 1891 more than 75% people were engaged in agriculture for their survival. Thus, land produce was the major source of income to both people and state.

The Land produce levies what is known by a generic term 'land revenue' was the chief contributor to the state exchequer during the Dogra period. At different times rulers had devised varied procedures in the form of land revenue assessments with different rates to procure land revenue from the peasants, to meet out the expenses of administration and to procure the services for the state. The land revenue system of Dogra era is demarcated by two distinctive phases. 1. Pre- settlement period (1846-1887) which covered the reign of Maharaja Gulab Singh and Maharaja Ranbir Singh. This is the period of my study. 2. Post settlement period (1887-1947) which covered the period of Maharaja Pratap Singh and Maharaja Hari Singh. The first phase was marked by the unorganized revenue system characterized by the frequent change in revenue settlements and rough estimate of revenue without the proper

measurement of land. The second phase saw the commencement of regular settlement work in Kashmir and numerous rights were restored to the peasant although these could not alleviate the condition of a cultivator up to maximum.

### Land Revenue Assessments

Gulab Singh, the most prominent personality of nineteenth century and the founder of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir continued with the Sikh system of land revenue<sup>1</sup> with minor variations when he became the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir in 1846 through the treaty of Amritsar. He did not considered it imperative to revise the revenue system inherited from the Sikhs, when all the matters related to general administration & land revenue in particular were submitted to him for consideration at the very outset. This was partly due to his engagement in consolidating his newly acquired possessions and to restore peace in the region which was thwarted at the end of Sikh rule.<sup>2</sup> During Gulab Singh's period, the revenue was directly collected from the cultivators (*Assami*) twice a year after every harvest mostly in kind.<sup>3</sup> Diwan Kripa Ram, governor of Maharaja Ranbir Singh, in his *Majmui* report for the year 1873-74 mentioned that the initial method of land assessment devised by Gulab Singh was *Batai system*,<sup>4</sup> which literally means 'division'. It was

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<sup>1</sup> Diwan Kripa Ram, *Majmaui Report (Persian)* for the year 1872-73, Government Research Library, Srinagar, p. 18. See also A. Wingate, op. cit., p. 19

<sup>2</sup> When the administration of Kashmir was handed over to Gulab Singh, the turbulent hilly tribes of Hazara and Muzafarabad rose in revolt. To end this Maharaja directed his army to these regions but he could not subdue them and sought the help of British and requested them to exchange the territories of Hazara and Muzafarabad with some portion of territory lying in the plains of river Jhelum. As a result he signed a treaty with Lahore Darbar on 25<sup>th</sup> May 1847 and received the Sajapur and Pathankot in exchange for Hazara and Muzafarabad.

<sup>3</sup> Koul Salig Ram, op. cit., p. 225

<sup>4</sup> Diwan Kripa Ram, *Majmaui Report*, pp. 18-19



prevalent in Kashmir since Mughals. Under this system at the time of ripening of crop two or three *Shakdars* (state official) in each village and one *Sozwal* (state official) in every two or three village were deputed. Then crop was collected into heaps (*Gun*) which consisted of one hundred *kahru* (bundle of stacks) in both *Maraj* and *Kamraj*.<sup>5</sup> The estimate of the produce was made when the grain was in heaps & one-half was taken by government and one half was leaved for the zamindar (peasant).<sup>6</sup> Salig Ram Koul, biographer of Gulab Singh stated, “Although Gulab Singh knows that the *batia* system was irksome, unmanageable and expensive and to realize revenue in cash would be cheap and convenient, keeping in view the conditions of Kashmir and its people he adopted *batia* system for realizing states share.”

The British government & officials of the company after noticing the incompetence of state administration and deteriorated conditions of the people through the confidential dispatches of Saif-ud-din Kashmiri, a British sepoy in the court of Maharaja Gulab Singh & through the regular visits of British officials to the valley advised Gulab Singh to simplify the system of calculating & realizing land revenue.<sup>7</sup> In an *Arzie* (request) dated 26<sup>th</sup> December, 1846, the *chowkidars*, manufacturers, *pundits* and peasants of Kashmir solicited British government for justice against the

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<sup>5</sup> *Maraz* and *Kamaraj* are the conscriptions of Sanskrit words ‘*Madavrajya* and *Kramrajya*’ respectively. These stood for the two divisions of Kashmir valley which existed since ancient times. *Maraz* comprised the districts or areas both sides of Vitasta (Jhelum) above Srinagar (Northern part) and *Kamraj* comprised the areas on the both sides of Vitasta below Srinagar (southern part).

<sup>6</sup> Kripa Ram, *Majmaui Report*, p. 19

<sup>7</sup> Shakti Kak, *The Agrarian System of the Princely state of Jammu and Kashmir*, In Waltraud Ernest and Biswamoy Pati, *India’s Princely States- People, Princes and Colonialism*, Routledge, London, 2007, p. 70

oppression of Gulab Singh.<sup>8</sup> H. M. Lawrence, the resident at Lahore court deputed Lt RC Taylor, assistant to the resident, to make a thorough study of the problem & suggest improvements in the existing system. Hassan Khuihami, a contemporary Kashmiri historian stated about the Taylors visit to Kashmir;

“In 1847, Mr. Taylor Sahib came to Kashmir to inquire into the conditions in Kashmir and to suggest reforms in the Maharaja’s administration. For some time he studied local laws and revenue regulations. He called a general durbar in the Maisuma ground [Srinagar] and in a very loud voice he inquired “O you, the people of Kashmir are you happy with Maharaja’s rule or not.” Some of the people who had been tutored by Pandi Raj Kak Dhar, a government official, shouted back, yes, we are. When Taylor Sahib heard this, he felt disgusted with the character of the people of Kashmir and went back to [British] India.”<sup>9</sup>

After a thorough study, Taylor submitted his report and offered few suggestions to Maharaja Gulab Singh in order to alleviate the hardships of cultivators of the valley. On the eve of his departure in September, Taylor confessed, “I have heartbreaking feeling that there is much left to be done.” However, Taylors visit did not produce concrete and permanent results. Gulab Singh assured Taylor, that he would devote himself to ameliorate the condition of peasants. He also agreed to abolish state monopoly on rice and even assured the export of food grains to Punjab. He also allowed the payment of land revenue in cash. However, within few years through the manipulation of *pandits* (Hindus) and Dogra aristocracy which was mostly composed of Kashmiri *pandits* and *Punjabis*, the land

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<sup>8</sup> Foreign Department, F. No. 1125, dated 26 December, 1846, National Archives of India, New Delhi.

<sup>9</sup> Hassan Khuihami, *op.cit*, Vol. II, p. 939

revenue was again realized in kind.<sup>10</sup> It was however, laid down that no person would sell rice at a price higher than one rupee per kharwars. In 1849 and 1850 H.M. Lawrence, visited Kashmir.<sup>11</sup> He was deeply interested in improving the conditions of Kashmiri people. He assailed Gulab Singh for disregarding the assurances made to Taylor and exhorted him to work for economic improvement of his subjects. After Lawrence's departure Gulab Singh put the blame for the shortcomings of his administration on his officials. But initially less heed was paid. However, later on he issued orders by issuing *sanads* regarding the improvement of his administration. In 1851, Gulab Singh advised Ranbir Singh and other officials to treat with peasants in a lucid manner and leave with them a substantial portion of produce. In 1852, the valley of Kashmir was divided into seven divisions for the purpose of revenue assessment & collection.<sup>12</sup> However, in 1854 the work of assessment & collection was entrusted to military officers.<sup>13</sup> This could have been done to ensure the regular revenues to the state which often remain in arrears. The other motive was to pay the emoluments to the army out of these revenues. Saif-ud-Din Kashmiri articulated that "arrears during the Dogra period even passed on from generation to generation." In 1851, Rs. 30, 00,000 were in arrears because most of the peasants had left their fields despite the efforts of Ranbir Singh and Diwan Jawalajahi. In 1852 the arrears amounted to 15,000.<sup>14</sup> After collection of stipulated land revenue they used to submit a

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<sup>10</sup> M. y. Saraf, *Kashmiris Fight for Freedom*, Vol. I, Feroze Sons Ltd. Lahore, 2005, p. 290

<sup>11</sup> Bawa Satinder Singh, *op. cit.*, p 167

<sup>12</sup> B. S. Singh, *op.cit.*, p. 167

<sup>13</sup> Saif-ud-Din, *op. cit.*, Vol. 21-22, F. 8, Government Research Library, Srinagar. See also Hangloo, P. 50

<sup>14</sup> Y. Vaikuntham, *People's Movements in the Princely States* ( Edt.), Manohar, Delhi, 2004, p. 169

part of it to the royal treasury & kept rest for themselves. This system of assessment and collection continued till the end of Gulab Singh reign with *batia* as the method for taking the government's share.

Maharaja Ranbir Singh is generally labeled as generous and innovative ruler of Jammu and Kashmir State.<sup>15</sup> Sir R. Temple, a British official at Lahore, who visited Kashmir in, 1859 and 1872, has noted in his journal, "once Maharaja Ranbir Singh asked me, what were the conditions of Kashmir? And I replied him, as compared to other countries, if some heed would be paid for its improvement, it would become an unprecedented country." Then the Maharaja said that he was conscious of many defects and that as soon as he had leisure from the affairs of Jammu he would go to Kashmir to introduce several reforms. He also said the officials are corrupt and are not cooperative." The economy of Kashmir was in deplorable conditions when Maharaja Ranbir Singh ascended the *Gaddi* (throne) of Jammu And Kashmir State in 1857. Ranbir Singh, after assessing the economic conditions of the state which were better neither for the state nor for the peasant, adopted a myriad of reforms for its improvement. Agriculture being the predominant occupation of the people & the main source of revenue allured his attention first. It was inequitable and riddle with corrupt practice. Therefore, he under took a series of reforms in general administration and that of land revenue system in particular by issuing the *Dastur-ui-Amal* (regulations) in 1857.<sup>16</sup> The major recommendation of *Dastur-ul-Amal* pertaining to revenue included, revenue should be collected through *Kardar* without leaving any extortionate demands from the already impoverished peasantry. Secondly

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<sup>15</sup> Hassan, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 947

<sup>16</sup> Parveen Akhtar, *Life and Conditions of the people of Kashmir (1846-1885)*, An unpublished theses submitted to the Department of History, University of Kashmir, p. 426

the existing rates of different crops should be reduced and the extra charged money called *mobiya or malba* from the zamindar in the shape of tax on pattu, ghee and houses tax.<sup>17</sup> As a result, in 1859, Ranbir Singh parceled or farmed out the province of Kashmir and gave it on contract to *Kardars*<sup>18</sup>, who were the land revenue agents of state. The contract was for a period of one year and next year fresh contracts were entered with Kardar.<sup>19</sup> The *Kardar* was bestowed only with privilege of collection of revenue. Prof. Rattan Lal Hangloo stated that “the *kardar* not only dictated the method of assessment of his choice to the peasant but also the crop to be sown by them.”<sup>20</sup> The *kardar* in order to maximize output from the land and generate more revenues took many steps.

The *Kardar* divided his estate into three belts keeping in view the fertility of the land & sowed crops accordingly. The lower belt of land being superior in soil, irrigation and location, only rice cultivation was allowed. The middle belt being average, the *Kardar* allowed some rice to be grown & in the highest belt being less suitable in aforementioned respects, he allowed no rice cultivation at all. It was used for the cultivation of other crops.<sup>21</sup> It was the *Kardar*'s duty to get the maximum amount of grain as land revenue for the state. The state levied three-quarters of rice, maize, millets and buckwheat and nine-sixteen of oil-seeds, pulses and cotton as state's share.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> R. L. Hangloo, *Magnitude of Land Revenue Demand in Kashmir (1846-1900)*, *Social Scientist* (Jr), Vol. 12, June, 1984, p. 53

<sup>18</sup> Wingate, *op.cit.*, p. 19, see also Hassan, Vol. II, *op.cit.*, p. 953

<sup>19</sup> Wingate, *op.cit.*, p. 19

<sup>20</sup> Hangloo, *Agrarian System of Kashmir*, p. 51

<sup>21</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p 402

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

Moreover, the *Kardar* gave land to the cultivators on the basis of full unit family Known as *nafre*, at the rate of four acre's to each *nafre*, two acres to *nim nafre* (half family) & one acre to *pao-nafre* (bachelor).<sup>23</sup> It was thought that peasants would concentrate on the land granted to him which in turn would increase the production. Moreover, in order to watch the growth of crops a government official known as *shakdar* was deployed in each village and in case of large villages two or three *shakdars* were appointed, one to each threshing floor. This system continued till 1862 when a new system of assessment known as *chakladari* was introduced.<sup>24</sup> Under this system the agricultural land was divided into *chaklas*, one *chakla* consisted of three or four villages.<sup>25</sup> Each *Chakla* was put under a *Chakladar* for revenue collection for a period of three years. However, in 1863 it was renewed and continued till 1869. These *Chakladars* were like contractors.<sup>26</sup> At its introduction the average produce of previous five years was taken as base for the assessment. It was first introduced in the parganas of Shopian, Vihu and Bring.<sup>27</sup> The lands where the *chakladars* were not expecting much profit hold it as *Amani* (on trust) and on this type of land, the state took its share on the actual produce. The rate of land revenue was not preset on such lands. Diwan Kripa Ram maintained, it was successful to a great extent and the stipulated revenue was realized conveniently.<sup>28</sup> In 1865, the *pargana* system which prevalent in Kashmir since Mughals was abandoned and the state was divided into wazarts for

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> D. N. Dhar, *Kashmir-Land and its Management from Ancient to Modern Times*, Kanishka Publishers, New Delhi, 2004, p. 92

<sup>25</sup> Lawrence, , *Valley*, p. 403

<sup>26</sup> Ibid. See also S.S Charak, op.cit., p. 121

<sup>27</sup> D. K. Ram, op. cit., p.21

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

the purpose of administration. Kashmir province was divided in six wazarats.<sup>29</sup> In 1869, the contract was made with Mukkudams or with Zamindars and two traks came to be levied instead of four trakhs.<sup>30</sup>

In samvat 1927 (1871), maharaja abolished the Trakee.<sup>31</sup> In 1873, maharaja introduced ten year cash assessment with the cultivators.<sup>32</sup> This was known as *Assamiwar khewat*. The intermediaries like *sozawal* and *shakdar* were excluded and the assessment was directly made with the cultivator. The cultivator was now accountable for the improvement of land and to deposit the state's share in the royal treasury. It was actually a cash assessment with actual cultivator. Thus for the first time *Ryotwari* system was started in the Valley.<sup>33</sup> This reduced the burden of intermediaries on peasants and saved them from their oppression inflicted on them at several occasion while dealing with them. However; the state's share was either released in cash or kind.<sup>34</sup> Moreover, the land revenue demand was also reduced. Consequently, spectacular increase was noticed in the production especially in the *wazarat-i-Kamraj* and *Ajhamain pargana*.<sup>35</sup> However, this system did not bestow the occupancy rights to the cultivator. In 1875, the harvest was bad.<sup>36</sup> The state instead of giving relief to the cultivators levied two shares of crop as land revenue and left

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<sup>29</sup> These wazarats include Sher-i-Khas, Anantnag, Shopian, Pattan, Kamraj and Muzafarabad. Each Wazarat consisted of several tehsils and each pargana consisted of many parganas. D. R. Ram, *Majmui Report*, p 16.

<sup>30</sup> Wingate, op.cit. p .19

<sup>31</sup> Ibid

<sup>32</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 40

<sup>33</sup> D. K. Ram, *Majmui Report*, p. 21

<sup>34</sup> Wingate, op.cit., p.19

<sup>35</sup> Kripa Ram, op.cit., p. 21

<sup>36</sup> Wingate, op.cit., p. 16

one to the cultivator. Next year fresh contracts were entered either with *Mukdams*, *kardar* or cultivator and two traks per kharwars were again added to the assessment, besides an aggregate tax of Rs.9-12-0 per cent, if paid in cash or nine kharwars and twelve trak per hundred kharwars if paid in kind.<sup>37</sup> In 1877-78, due to the severe famine<sup>38</sup> the scarcity began and the contract broke down. This condition continued till 1880 when a new *Assamiwar khewat* assessment was again introduced in the valley. Here it was different to that of 1873. It was actually assessment on cultivator's holding but in practice it was on village. The basis for this assessment was taken the average produce of the previous two years i.e. 1877(S1934) and 1878(S1935). It was estimated in cash and never less than 30 per cent was added in order to guard the state loss.<sup>39</sup> The procedure for arriving at the assessment was that the gross produce was estimated in cash and half of the produce was preset as the government's share but was payable either in kind or cash. However, it rested with the *Hakim-i-Ala*<sup>40</sup> [Governor] to say year after year, how much assessment is made in cash and how much in kind. Every year an order came from Srinagar regarding this. Moreover, it was obligatory for the peasant to pay one-half of his produce as revenue and more than 30% was added as *abwabs* which was extra burden for the cultivator. The revenue collectors took land revenue in both

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<sup>37</sup> Wingate, op.cit., p.19

<sup>38</sup> This was the second famine during the Ranbir Singh's reign, but most devastated which Kashmir ever experienced, the previous occurred in 1864. At this time whole India was also in grip of famine. However, the famine of Kashmir was unique to the rest of India as the famine of India was caused due to the scarcity of rain while in Kashmir, it was due to the excessive rain. The rainfall continued three months with out any break, started in October which coincides with the commencement of harvesting season in Kashmir. The whole crop perished in the fields. This created havoc in Kashmir and many people died and many migrated to plains of Punjab. Jarnail Singh Dev, *Natural Calamities in Jammu and Kashmir*, Ariana Publishing House, New Delhi, p 52. See also Wingate, p16.

<sup>39</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 403

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, See also *Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh*, p. 107



cash and kind. According to Lawrence, it was full of drawbacks. The revenue collectors took land revenue in both cash and kind from the peasants. They paid the cash portion to the state but the payment in kind was not often recorded, it was shown as *baki* i.e. arrears in the name of cultivator. Thus the peasants even after paying their revenue were defaulters. In 1857, Maharaja Ranbir Singh ordered that all arrears, if not paid by *Nauroz* (New Year) day, may be charged interest at the rate of Rs. 2 in cash and two kharwars of rice for every hundred kharwars per month.<sup>41</sup>

The years 1881 and 1882 witnessed the good harvest and the assessment was thought too easy. It was raised by Rs 8-9-0 per cent and in place for a pony tax which was paid in money now might be paid in ponies. Moreover, in place of Rs 1-9-0 formally levied for fodder, the cultivator was now required to pay five kuras of rice straw per hundred threshed *kurus*.<sup>42</sup> In 1882, the auctioning of villages to highest bidder was introduced.<sup>43</sup> This system was designated as *Azad Boli* system. The bidders known *Mustajirs* after having a cursory look round the fields of a particular village promised a lump sum amount to be paid to the state. In turn they were entitled with right of collection of revenue from the peasants of that area or village. The bidder extracted as much revenue as feasible from the peasants without taking into consideration the conditions of the soil and production. They were very oppressive at the time of collection. Even during the bad harvest the bidders would extract all they could take out from the villagers. But they often failed to submit the

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<sup>41</sup> Y. Vaikuntham, op. cit., p. 169

<sup>42</sup> Wingate, op. cit., p. 20

<sup>43</sup> *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, vol. xv, New Delhi, 1908, See also Lawrence, op.cit., p. 405

stipulated revenue to the state. Even some of the bidders absconded without making payment of stipulated revenue to the state. E. F. Neve who has arrived in Kashmir during the same period as medical missionary stated “that after wringing all they (bidders) could from unhappy villagers, absconded without paying a single rupee to the state”.<sup>44</sup> As result no substantial enhancement was registered in the income of the state and it was immediately discontinued after registering a huge loss to the state. In 1885 *Khewat* system was resumed with exception of five *kurus* which are still taken.<sup>45</sup> Under this system, the assessment was made on the individual cultivator called *assami*. The *Assamiwar Khewat* system continued 1887 when the settlement work commenced under the supervision of Mr. A. Wingate, an English settlement officer.

A. Wingate has taken one village at random to depict how the *Assamiwar khewat* assessment was arrived;<sup>46</sup>

Crop	Gross produce in 16 trak kharwars			Govt. share after adding trak in 15 trak kharwars			Govt. sharecalculated in rupee at standard price			
	Kr.	Tr.	Man	Khs.	Trs.	Man	Rs.	A.	P	St. Price per Kr.
Sarson	0	6	0	0	3	0	1	8	0	@ Rs. 8 0 0
Tilgogal	4	13	0	2	6	2	21	11	6	“ “ 9 0 6
Kapas	3	0	1½	1	8	1/2	21	3	3	“ “ 14 0 0
Mung	1	5	1	0	12	1½	6	1	9	“ “ 7 14 0

<sup>44</sup> E. F. Neve, *Beyond Pir Panjal*, p. 54

<sup>45</sup> Wingate, *op. cit.*, p. 20

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

Shali	1,438	0	0	897	1	0	1,794	2	0	“	“	2	0	0
Total	1,447	8	2 ½	Total	1,844	10	6							

Wingate arrived Srinagar on 8<sup>th</sup> April 1887 with Lala Narsing Das, assistant settlement officer and four clerks,<sup>47</sup> all from Punjab to assist him in carrying out the settlement work in Kashmir. The measurement in Jammu province commenced in April, 1887 and in Kashmir it commenced in June 1887. However, the work of measurement was first completed in Kashmir in November 1887 and in Jammu it was accomplished in March 1888. Wingate was succeeded by Sir Walter Lawrence in 1889, as settlement officer in Kashmir to under take the assessment work in the remaining parts of valley. Here I would not deal the settlement operations of these officials and the assessment reports submitted by them to the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir as my period of study is only up to 1885.

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<sup>47</sup> Wingate, op. cit., p. 1

## Magnitude of land Revenue Demand in Kashmir from 1846-1885

The magnitude of land revenue demand was less oppressive in the reign of Maharaja Gulab Singh compared to his predecessors [Sikhs]. Under the Sikhs the land demand was exorbitant and cumbersome.<sup>48</sup> The Sikh rulers fixed the state's share generally at the rate of one-half of the *Kharif* crops and four traks per *kharwar*<sup>49</sup> but above this share the state levied a number of cesses.

The state under Maharaja Gulab Singh realized land revenue mostly in kind at the rate one of one-half of the produce. In addition to a half of produce as land revenue, the peasant had to pay 16 per cent (four *traks* per *kharwar*) of the produce as *trakee* and *abwabs*.<sup>50</sup> Thus the total demand amounted to two-third of the produce and only one-third was left with the peasants. It was out of the remaining 33%, the peasant had to meet the requirements of family, social and religious functions. Younghusband, who was the resident in Kashmir, described the economic conditions of Kashmir as;

“The government took from two-third to three-fourth of the produce of the land... one half was taken as regular government share and additional amounts taken as perquisites of various kinds, leaving one-third or even only a quarter with the cultivator. The whole system of assessment

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<sup>48</sup> Moorcroft who remained in Kashmir from 1823 to 1826 noted that one-sixteenth of the cultivable land was lying barren because many farmers unable to stand against the exorbitant taxation imposed by the Sikh rulers had quite their occupation. Even G. T. Vinge who visited Kashmir in 1835 furnished a similar description of Kashmir. Moorcraft and G. Trebeck, *Travels in India, Himalayan provinces of Hindustan and Punjab in Ladakh and Kashmir*(1819-1825), Asian Education Service, New Delhi, p. 124

<sup>49</sup> *Annual Administrative Report of Jammu and Kashmir State* (1939-40), JAR, Jammu, p. 40. See also Wingate, *op.cit.*, p. 18

<sup>50</sup> Diwan Kripa Ram, *Gulzar-i-Kashmir* (Persian), Kohinoor, Lahore, 1870, pp. 256-57. See also E. F. Knight, *Where Three Empires Meet*, p. 63

and collection was exceedingly complicated and workable only in the interest of officials and government held the monopoly on the sale of grains.”<sup>51</sup>

E. F Knight who visited Kashmir in 1890 stated that “the *assami* had to pay two-third of their crops to maharaja. But of the total produce of the country a smaller fraction less than two-third reaches the coffers of state and a very meager portion was left with cultivator while bulk is swallowed up by the grasping official middlemen who stand between the state and cultivator.”<sup>52</sup> However, minor concessions were made in respect to newly converted waste land into cultivation<sup>53</sup> and from these areas the peasants had to dispatch one-third of their harvest as government share. The objective was probably to encourage the peasants to bring more and more barren lands under cultivation because due to the oppressive taxation policy of Sikhs major portion of cultivable land in Kashmir remained out of cultivation for many years. This if brought under cultivation would ensure more revenues to the state. When Gulab Singh first time visited Kashmir after incorporated to his dominion, he gazed at the valley from a hill-top and said, “One part was mountain while one part under water while the remaining third was in the hand of *Jagirdars*.”<sup>54</sup> In early 1846, the total revenue receipts acquired from various items was Rs.24, 30,000. Out of this the total amount procured from peasants as land revenue was

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<sup>51</sup> Younghusband, op.cit., pp. 155-56

<sup>52</sup> E. F. Knight, p. 62

<sup>53</sup> Wingate, op.cit., p. 19

<sup>54</sup> Salig Ram Koul, *Maharaja Gulab Singh Bahadur, The Founder of Jammu and Kashmir State*, Salig Ram Press Kashmir, 1971, p 253. See also G. M. Sufi, *Kashir, Being a history of Kashmir from ancient times up to present*, Light and Life publishers, New Delhi, 1974, p.778

worth of Rs.12, 00,000.<sup>55</sup> At the close of first year rule of Maharaja Gulab Singh the total revenue of Kashmir province was Rs 84, 30,000 which was three times more than the revenue collected during the governorship of last Sikh governor sheikh Imam-ud-din's which was Rs 33, 92,000.<sup>56</sup> In 1847, the total land revenue of Kashmir province was estimated Rs 31, 93,000.<sup>57</sup> Saif-ud-din's Akhbarat provide ample and authentic information on the revenue receipts collected from the parganas of Kashmir during Gulab Singh's reign. In 1848, the revenue collection from different parganas of Kashmir was estimated as,<sup>58</sup>

Pargana	Revenue in kharwars
Kuihama	34,000
Kamraj, Krohin, Teligam, Khui and Narwa	32,000
Anantnag, Kathar, Martand, Deosar	1,37,000
And kharwarpora	
Ichh and Baldo	15,000
Machahama	39,000
Bira (Birwa)	52,000
Pakh	27,000
Shahabad	5,000

<sup>55</sup> Lal Ganesh Lal, op. cit., p. 39

<sup>56</sup> S. A. Rahman, *The Beautiful India, Jammu and Kashmir*, (Edt.), Reference Press, New Delhi, 2005, p. 84

<sup>57</sup> D.C. Sharma, *Kashmir, Agriculture and land Revenue system under Sikh*, Rima Publishing House, New Delhi, p. 46

<sup>58</sup> Saif-ud-din, op. cit., Vol. III, 1850, Government Research Library, Srinagar.

Paraspora	37, 0000
Shawara, Zainapur, Siur and Vihu	35, 0000
Total	1061000

In 1850, Mirza Saifuddin classified the charges which a peasant was required to pay into four categories:<sup>59</sup>

- The state share of revenue.
- *Rasum*.<sup>60</sup>
- Additional state collection.
- Taxes freely paid by cultivator himself.

However, certain classes were exempted from paying this revenue like *Pandits*, *Pirzads* and *Sayid* who had to pay only two *trak* per *kharwar* of the extra four *traks* levied by state, in cases where they cultivated the land. However, in case of *rabbi* and *krimiti* crops, all the classes of cultivators were taxed alike.<sup>61</sup> The state levied four *traks* and three *manwats* from both kharif and rabbi crops respectively.<sup>62</sup>

During the initial period of Ranbir Singh's reign the state took three-quarters of rice, maize millets and buckwheat. In case of cash crops like

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<sup>59</sup> C. Zutshi, *Community, State and Nation, Religion, Patriotism and Religious Identities in the Kashmir Valley (1880-1953)* An unpublished Dissertation submitted to the Graduate school of Arts and Science, Tufts University, 2000. UMI Proquest, p. 79

<sup>60</sup> *Rasum* was the revenue extracted by government officials associated with revenue collection from the peasants as their personal share. It was not having any state sanction and thus was an illegal tax.

<sup>61</sup> Wingate, op. cit., p. 18

<sup>62</sup> Saif-ud-din, op.cit., Vol. III, 1850

oil-seed, pulses and cotton, the state took nine-sixteenth as state's share.<sup>63</sup> In 1857, Maharaja Ranbir Singh reduced one trak on *Sarkasti* and two manwats on *piakasht* lands.<sup>64</sup> In 1861, the total land revenue collected from Kashmir province was Rs 15, 00,000.<sup>65</sup> In 1862, land revenue was estimated 962057 *chilki* rupees.<sup>66</sup> The extra *traks* per *kharwar* were remitted on all *pandits* and *pirzadas* in 1865.<sup>67</sup> This was mainly to cultivate the loyalty of these classes to ensure the smooth transition to a Dogra kingdom and its consolidation in much the same way as British needed either the adherence or quiescence of similar groups to ensure the emergence as colonial power in the late eighteenth century India.

T. D Forsyth, Officiating Secretary to the Punjab Government in 1863, recorded that collection of taxes in Kashmir was realized both in kind and cash. He enlisted the following taxes which a cultivator was to pay out of his produce.<sup>68</sup>

Government share	½ of the produce
Trakee	1 trakh per kharwar
Qunungo	1 manuwat per kharwar
Patwari	1 manuwat per kharwar
Zilladar or Chokidar	1 manuwat per kharwar

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<sup>63</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, pp. 402-403

<sup>64</sup> Kripa Ram, *Gulzari-i-Kashmir*, p. 210

<sup>65</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 235

<sup>66</sup> Kripa Ram, *Gulzari-i-Kashmir*, p. 210. See also *Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh*, p 104, Saraf, op. cit. p. 298

<sup>67</sup> Wingate, op. cit., p. 19

<sup>68</sup> *Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh*, p. 111



Russoom khidmutgari 6 traks per 100 kharwars

Khidmutgari .....

Religious grants to temples 7 traks per 100 kharwars

Robert thorp, who after coming to Kashmir in 1865-66 devoted himself to the cause of people of Kashmir up to his death in 1868. He registered the magnitude of revenue which a cultivator had to pay on both kharif and rabbi crops. Out of every 32 traks of each grain of the rabbi crops, the following portion was taken from the Zamindar (cultivator);<sup>69</sup>

Agency	Amount in traks	Amount in seers
Government share	20	0
Surgowal	0	1 ½
Shaqdar	0	1
Tarouzudar	0	¾
Hurkar	0	1 ½
Patwari	0	1 ½
Servant of Kardar	0	½
Total	20	6 ½

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<sup>69</sup> S. N. Gadru. *Kashmir Papers* (wrongs of Kashmir of A. Brinckman, Kashmir Misgovernment of R. Thorp and Condemned Unheard of W. Digby), Freethought Literature Company, Srinagar, 1973, p. 53

Out of every 32 traks of each grain of the kharif crops, the following portion was taken from the Zamindar (cultivator):<sup>70</sup>

Agency	Share in traks	Share in seers
Government share	21	2
Mundeer tax (temple)	0	2
Patwari	0	2
Hurkara	0	1
Shaqdar	0	1
Surgowal	0	1
Servants of kardar	0	$\frac{3}{4}$
Tarouzodar	0	1
Total	21	11 $\frac{3}{4}$

From the above tables it evident that a major portion of the cultivator's produce was taken as government's share and official share and he was left with a meager portion of produce in spite of his great toil in the fields.

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<sup>70</sup> S. N. Gadru, op. cit., p. 54

In samvat 1927 (1871) Maharaja remitted the trakee. In the same year the Government's share on different crops was estimated as;<sup>71</sup>

	<i>Chilki</i> Rupees
Value of government share of rice	9, 44,844
Revenue in cash	4, 96,741
Tabacco	40,840
Opium	1, 56,000
Saffron	34,656
Silk	50,000

The total land revenue in 1871 was Rs. 27, 75,990 excluding the revenue of *Jagirs* held by Raja Amar Singh and Raja Ram Singh and the revenue of 59.490 per annum from 57 villages of Shopian and Deosar *parganas*. The revenue of these villages was conferred upon Mian Rajputs of Jammu.<sup>72</sup> Froster, who was on a medical in Kashmir in 1873, stated that the revenue of Kashmir amounted between two to three hundred thousand pounds.<sup>73</sup> In 1874, the total revenue collected both in cash and kind on different crops and other products in the wazarats of Kashmir was Rs 3412034. Out of which the cesses on different occupations and products amounted Rs18507 and the rest constituted the land revenue and other

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<sup>71</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 236

<sup>72</sup> Saraf, op. cit., p. 298

<sup>73</sup> Bates, p. 100

exactions taken from the peasants produce.<sup>74</sup> The revenue collected from the wazarats was as;<sup>75</sup>

Wazarat	Revenue collected in Rupees
Shehr –khas (Srinagar)	545325
Anantnag	633667
Pattan	444112
Kamraj	612004
Muzafarabad	123664
Total	2358772

In 1875, the harvest was very poor but no reduction was made in land revenue demand. The state took its share as the one-half of the harvest. As a result only one share was left with peasantry.<sup>76</sup> In 1876 two *traks* per *kharwars* was again added to the assessment besides an aggregate tax of Rs.9-12-0, if paid in cash or 9 *kharwar*, 12 *traks* per hundred *kharwars*, if paid in kind.<sup>77</sup> Thus the total amounted to 28 *kharwars* and 12 *traks* per hundred *kharwars*. In 1877, owing to bad weather the taxation became excessive. The heavy rain fell continuously for three months which completely ruined the crops which had almost matured but were standing in the fields. As a result the villages were devastated and many people died of starvation and many people migrated to the plains of India. Thus,

<sup>74</sup> Hassan Khuihami, Vol. I, op. cit., p. 357

<sup>75</sup> Hassan Khuihami, Vol. I, op. cit., pp. 354-56.

<sup>76</sup> Wingate, op. cit., P. 19. See also Younghusband, op.cit., p. 162.

<sup>77</sup> Wingate, op. cit., p. 19. See also Hangloo, Magnitude of Land Revenue Demand in Kashmir (1846-1900), Social Scientist (Jr), Vol. 12, June, 1984, p. 54

distress and chaotic circumstances prevailed in the valley and all the economic activities come to standstill. F. Henvey, the official on special duty stated the population of Srinagar declined from 127,400 to 88,000<sup>78</sup> during this period. Under such circumstances the assessment work was delayed. Moreover, the harvest of summer crops especially wheat and barley was exceedingly poor.<sup>79</sup> The following year was also unfavorable and this situation lasted till 1880, when some normalcy restored in the valley. Maharaja strived a lot to alleviate the sufferings of people. In February, 1878 Maharaja Ranbir Singh by a proclamation abolished the *Trakee* altogether as measure of relief which involved about Rs 2,00,000.<sup>80</sup> Besides, he also ordered the import of grains from Punjab. But his efforts were greatly thwarted by his corrupt and unscrupulous officials. In addition owing to the poor transport and communication food grains abundantly available in the neighbouring province of Punjab was not imported at the time of need. In 1878, the Wingate estimated the total land revenue of Kashmir Rs 16,07,542. In 1880 under a new settlement the state share was accepted both in kind and cash.<sup>81</sup> The gross produce was premeditated and one-half was fixed as state's share. In 1885 Rs 8-9-0 per cent was remitted. Next year one seer per kharwars formally payable to *zalladars* was now to be paid to state who appointed the chokidars.<sup>82</sup> Besides, the above mentioned land revenue paid by the peasants, Lawrence maintained that every year the peasants in Kashmir paid a part of their produce and other products to the host of officials engaged

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<sup>78</sup> Shakti Kak, op. cit., p. 73

<sup>79</sup> Younghusband, op. cit., p. 180

<sup>80</sup> Annual Administrative Report Samvat 1936(1880) Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, Jammu.

<sup>81</sup> Younghusband, op.cit., p.162

<sup>82</sup> Wingate. op.cit., p. 20

directly or indirectly in revenue collection at various levels. These additional cesses have designed by Lawrence as *Rasum*.<sup>83</sup> The following table shows downward trend of revenue from 1880 onwards in Kashmir.<sup>84</sup>

Year	Actual Demand for 252 villages	Actual collection for 252 villages
1880	3, 88,613	3, 45,031
1881	3, 96,274	3, 51,547
1882	4, 23,440	3, 53,673
1883	4, 64,200	20, 44,389
1884	4, 69,701	4, 09,562
1885	4, 36,872	1, 97,841
1886	4, 41,357	2, 48,369
1887	4, 41,404	2, 48,369

The following table shows the comparison of land revenue collected during the different regimes who ruled Kashmir from 1585 till 1885.<sup>85</sup>

Period	Revenue of Kashmir in rupees
Mughals	12, 69,381
Pathans	unknown
Sikhs	13, 00,000

<sup>83</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 416

<sup>84</sup> Wingate, *op. cit.*, p. 31

<sup>85</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 238

## Dogras

1846	12, 00,000
1861	15, 00, 000
1871	27, 75,990
1887	16, 07, 542

Thus, it can be deduced that the land revenue system of Dogras especially that of Maharaja Gulab Singh and Maharaja Ranbir Singh was not better organized and there was total absence of settled land revenue system, one system followed the other, each being faulty and oppressive than the preceding. Moreover, the assessment and mode of collection was haphazard. Mr. Wingate, the settlement officer in Kashmir in 1887, stated it is very difficult to differentiate what is to be paid in kind and what paid in cash. While Francis Younghusband who was resident in Kashmir maintained that, “the whole system of assessment and collection was exceedingly complicated and workable only in interest of corrupt officials.” the demand of revenue was twice to that of British India. C. Zutshi pointed out, the British perceived the existing system as chaotic and fraudulent; they maintained the issuing grains at a fixed rate to the city population, collection of taxes in kind and corrupt revenue administration led to the problem in the agriculture sector. Moreover, the peasants were left with a meager portion of their produce due to exorbitant rate of state’s share and other levies. He had also to feed numerous officials and the city population which further added to the miseries of peasants. He was deprived of proprietary rights. So the peasants in spite of hard labour from dawn to dusk were beset with object poverty which often compelled them to migrate to other lands whenever any opportunity occurred.

## Proprietary Rights and Peasant during Pre-settlement period

The agrarian structure of Dogra's was feudal in character<sup>86</sup> which had a great bearing on the agrarian relations and proprietary right (*Haki Malikana*). Under this system the ruler was the sole claimant of land which was partly given out as grants and partly assigned to cultivator called *Assami* for a particular period as fixed by the prevailing settlement.<sup>87</sup> The transfer of Kashmir to Gulab Singh for the seventy-five Nank shahi rupees in 1846 through a historic truce signed at Amritsar had developed conviction in Dogra Maharaja that he had purchased Kashmir and he treats Kashmir his personal estate. He declared all land in his subjugated territories of Kashmir and frontier *Illaq*a like Gilgit and Ladakh belonged to him and the tillers (cultivator) of land were simply tenants at will.<sup>88</sup> However, the case of frontier areas was different where the source of ownership of land was conquest whereas in Kashmir it was 'purchase'. Even Maharaja Ranbir Singh, imbibed this notion, in the introductory part of the *Dastul-ul-Amal* sanctioned by him in *samvat* 1939(1883) for the guidance of his successors, he laid down, "the state has been created by my honored father, the late Maharaja Bahadur (Gulab Singh) which is confirmed by the treaty of 16<sup>th</sup> March 1846 in our possession, without any body else having any claim on it." This transformed the agrarian relation in Kashmir which ended the series of legally guaranteed rights and privileges enjoyed by the Kashmiri peasant

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<sup>86</sup> Mohammad Aslam, 'Land Reforms in Jammu and Kashmir', *Social Scientist*, Vol. 6, No. 4, November 1977, p. 59

<sup>87</sup> E. F. Neve, *Beyond the Pir Panjal*, p. 57. See also Shakti Kak, 'The Agrarian System of the Princely State of Jammu and Kashmir' in *India's Princely states-People, Princes and Colonialism*, Edt. By W. Ernst and B. Pati, Routledge, 2007, p.72

<sup>88</sup> F. M. Hassnain, *Encyclopedia of India-Jammu and Kashmir*, Vol. IX, Rima Publishing House, New Delhi, 1992, p. 73.



in previous regimes<sup>89</sup> which if nothing else, sufficed to instill 'confidence' and developed a sense of 'belongingness' to land in them. Thus, the Maharaja became the sole landlord and proprietor of all land in his newly acquired territory. This is first time in the history of Kashmir that peasant of Kashmir as well as frontier illaqa was deprived of proprietary rights which he enjoyed even during the ruthless and notorious rule of Afghans and Sikhs.<sup>90</sup> However, in rest of India the situation was quite contrary where different settlements were in operation. Even the case of Jammu province that too formed the part of maharajas dominion was dissimilar to that of Kashmir so far as the proprietary rights are concerned during the period of our study.<sup>91</sup> Here no doubt, in some parts the state is owner of land but in other areas the land was owned by private proprietors with all rights of montage, sale and transfer. Whereas, the case of Kashmir was totally different where the cultivator was mere an agricultural machine, possessing neither proprietary right nor occupancy right.<sup>92</sup> Even in Kashmir the discrimination was on the grounds of religion as well. In village dominated by Hindus, who formed the village aristocracy were landlord while the Muslims were the toiling sons of the soil.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Mushtaq A. Kaw, 'Land Rights in Rural Kashmir: A Study of Continuity and Change from Late Sixteenth to Late Nineteenth Centuries'. In the *Valley of Kashmir- in The Making and Unmaking of Composite Culture*, Edt. By Aparna Rao, p. 216

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>91</sup> Glancy Commission Report of 1931, Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, Srinagar. P 26. On 12, November on the order of Maharaja an Enquiry Commission was appointed to look into the grievances and complaints of people and report on them headed by a European officer, G. B Glancy. It included four other members two non-muslim and two muslim with one muslim and one non- muslim from Kashmir and one muslim and one non- muslim, each nominated by their respective communities.

<sup>92</sup> Wingate, *op. cit.*, p. 28. See also Glancy Commission Report of 1931, p. 27

<sup>93</sup> Malik Fazil Hussain, *Kashmir aur Dogra Raj [1846-1931]*(Urdu), Gulshan Publication, Srinagar, 1931, pp. 132-33

Even at the very outset in order to exercise his control, Maharaja Gulab Singh at first instance dispossessed the peasants of all those customary rights that they had enjoyed under the Mughals, Afghans and Sikhs.<sup>94</sup> Moreover, he confiscated all the Jagirs granted lavishly by the last Sikh governor of Kashmir and redistributed them among his favorites who too were denied of propriety right and were bestowed only the right to collect the revenue directly from all sources from the peasants. The question of propriety rights was more evident in Jagirs where the jagirdar who himself held the land for certain consideration from the Maharaja could evict the peasant when ever he wished so.<sup>95</sup> The *chakdar* no doubt, was privileged person above the level of common people and enjoyed the ownership over the holdings but were subjected to the payment of certain fee to the original owner i.e. the Maharaja. *Pattadars* who come into existence during the Maharaja Pratap Singh's period were merely assignee of land revenue.<sup>96</sup>

With the implementation of *Assamiwar Khewat* in 1873, the peasant no doubt, enjoyed the occupancy rights and was made responsible for payment of state's share directly but once he desist the payment of *milikana*, he was liable to eviction.<sup>97</sup> He was not allowed to sell or montage the land he cultivated. Thus it can be said that serfdom prevailed

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<sup>94</sup> Mushtaq A. Kaw, *op.cit.*, p. 218

<sup>95</sup> C. Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging-Islam, Regional Identity and the making of Kashmir*, Permanent Black, Delhi, 2003, pp. 71-72.

<sup>96</sup> Parveez Anmad, 'Agrarian Relations and Social Stratification in Kashmir (1885-1925)' *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, 62th Session Bhopal, 2001, pp. 552-53

<sup>97</sup> Besides the stipulated land revenue the occupant of land called *assami* with certain privileges except the transfer and sale of land was required to pay a part to the government. This amount was known as *Malikana*. Once he desisted this amount, land was snatched from him. Mirza Afzal Beg, *Land Reforms in Jammu and Kashmir*, in Verinder Grover, *The Story of Kashmir Yesterday and Today*, Deep and Deep Publications, New Delhi, 1995, p. 406. See also E. F. Neve, *Beyond Pir Panjal*, p. 57

in Kashmir during the pre-settlement period. It was on the recommendation of W. Lawrence, the officer of settlement operations in Kashmir in 1889 that during Maharaja Pratap Singh's reign, cultivator was redeemed from serfdom and was bestowed with some rights.<sup>98</sup>

Once Gulab Singh on his tour for inspection in valley, he met a lady who complained, "We are hereditary residents of Kashmir since long and we had built a *pakka* house, but a sepoy demolished the house saying he would build a house for himself on the spot." The Maharaja replied, "the land owner is some one else, the *Nizam (Hakim Ala)* or the *Hakim (kotwal)* who can built a house, he is only the owner of material (stone, bricks, wood, etc) and not of land."<sup>99</sup> Thus he was so much conscious about his propriety right over land in Kashmir that he not considers theoretically, even the residential lands outside the ambit of his dominion. Moreover, the people do not possess any right in waste land and the only right which the villager has in waste land was that he could plant trees on such lands and was the owner of the trees and not of land.<sup>100</sup> Thus it can be said that the people of Kashmir during the early Dogra period were deprived of all right on land and were mere tenant at will.

In 1931, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah assumed the leadership of the freedom struggle which was launched in late twenties of the twentieth century by the people commenced a non-violent agitation, beside against other things for the restoration of occupancy right of cultivators. As result the maharaja was compelled to set up a 'Commission of Enquiry' popularly known as Glancy Commission to enquire into the grievances

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<sup>98</sup> *Glancy Commission Report of 1931*, Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, Srinagar. P. 27

<sup>99</sup> Saif-ud-Din, op. cit., Vol. I, 1853, f 142

<sup>100</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 426

and complaints of people and suggest recommendation for their overhauling, on 12 November 1931. The commission besides other things, recommended restoration of occupancy rights to the people as well as the right to transfer and montage throughout the state and the diminution of *malikana*.<sup>101</sup>

### Land Revenue Functionaries

For the purpose of revenue assessment and collection of revenue from people a number of functionaries were appointed by the state. They accomplished these duties in their respective jurisdictions assigned to them by the imperial authority. In land revenue administration we find two categories of officials and functionaries. Firstly those appointed by the state and the second included the hereditary village officials as *Mukaddam*, *Patwari*, *Qunungo* and *Chowdri*. Besides assisting in the realization of government's share their role to a greater extent was to ensure peace and shape the socio-economic set up. At the apex of the whole revenue administration was *Hakim-i-Ala* or Governor. His revenue establishment in each province which entirely consisted of *pundits* was known as *Daftar-ul-Diwani*.<sup>102</sup> Here all the revenue accounts were kept, checked and audited. The Governor directly controlled the Assistant Governors, *Tehsildars* and other subordinate officers. He issued the order how much revenue to be levied in kind and how much to be in cash. Below him was a hierarchy of officials entrusted with the assessment work and revenue collection at different levels. Younghusband writing about the revenue officials in Kashmir remarked;

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<sup>101</sup> Glancy Commission Report of 1931, p. 52

<sup>102</sup> Lawrence, Valley, p. 401

“The whole country in fact, was still in the grip of officialdom and the officials were the remnants of bygone, ignorant and the destructive age, when dynasties and institutions and life itself were in daily danger, when nothing was fixed and lasting, when all was liable to change and at the risk of chance and each man had to make what he could while he could and when in consequences, a man of honesty and public spirit had no more chance of surviving than a baby would have in a battle.”<sup>103</sup>

Following were the officials engaged in revenue collection and assessment during the period of our study;

**Tehsildar:** Tehsildar was an important official of during Dogra period. He fixed the yearly assessments of crops and also supervised the accounts of *kardars* within his realm.<sup>104</sup> It was up to tehsildar to take final decision regarding the total produce of crops of a village.<sup>105</sup> He was assisted by a host of officials’ i.e. *Naib-tehsildar, Thandar, Kardar, Sozwal, Patwari* etc. Knight maintained ‘he enriched himself at the expenses of state and people.’<sup>106</sup>

**Naib-Tehsildar:** Naib-Tehsildar was in charge of group of villages called *Nayabat*. He maintained revenue record in his area. He was assisted by *Sadri Duftri & Khazanachi*.<sup>107</sup>

**Thandar:** *Thandar* was the chief officer of *Pargana*. He possessed both revenue & judicial powers. His chief duties included inspection

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<sup>103</sup> Younghusband, op. cit., p. 179

<sup>104</sup> Robert Thorp, *Kashmir Misgovernment* (first pub.1870), in Authur Brinckman and Robert Thorp, *Kashmir Oppressed*, Weis Publications, Srinagar, Reprint 1996, p. 65

<sup>105</sup> Hangloo, p. 69

<sup>106</sup> E. F. Knight, op.cit., p. 64

<sup>107</sup> Hangloo. op. ct., p 69

throughout his pargana to make reports about the crops & general matter to *tehsildar*. He had under him fifty sepoy called *Nizam Paltan*, who assisted him at the time of assessment and collection of revenue. <sup>108</sup>

***Kardar***: He had under him certain villages. He kept a strict account of crops. <sup>37</sup> His duty was to assess the standing crops and cause the government share of crops and to dispatch it to the government. <sup>109</sup> He reported to *thandar* when the matured. He also maintained the records of peasant holding. His pay was included in *Trakee*, but they used to charge an extra share for them at the time of harvest. In 1860, *Kardars* were replaced by *Chaladars*. <sup>110</sup>

***Patwari***: *Patwari* was a village accountant. He was usually a *pandith*. The office of *patwari* was hereditary. <sup>111</sup> He maintained the account of the zamindars of village & also of different crops belonging to it. <sup>39</sup> He kept three copies of records of the holdings of peasants, one for himself which was supposed near truth, one for *tehsildar* & another for peasant. The latter two records were made with a view convincing each of the excellent barging he had secured. However, the land records prepared by the *Patwari* exaggerated and lack continuity. They used to get salaries from the peasants. <sup>112</sup>

***Lambardar***: The office of *Lambardar* was introduced by Todar Mal. Each village has its own *lambardar* or *mukhdam* who was hereditary tax-collector of the village & was responsible to the *tehsildar* for the revenue

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<sup>108</sup> R. Thorpe, op., cit., p. 65

<sup>109</sup> *Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh*, P. 110

<sup>110</sup> Bates, op. cit., pp. 95-97

<sup>111</sup> *Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh*, P. 110. See also Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 465

<sup>112</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 400

of the villages and was supposed to keep 2% out of it for him as the reward for the services he rendered.<sup>113</sup> He also reported irregularities or thefts, collects collies & carriage & kept an account of the crops of the villages in collaboration with the *Patwari*. *Lambardar* also made necessary arrangement for officials & visitor's who entered his village.<sup>114</sup>

***Shaqdar***: Every village had *Saqdar* according to its size. Even some villages had four *Saqdars*. He used to watch the growth of crops & government share of the same.<sup>115</sup> He received eight *kharwars* of *Shali* from the state as his salary & also took as his prerequisite about twelve *kharwars* from the villages. However, they were not contented with their salary and often took bribes from the villagers.<sup>116</sup>

***Sozwal***: He was official over the *Saqdar* & was in charge of ten villages. His duty was to supervise *shaqdar* and reports it to *kardar*. He also extracts money from *shaqdar* under him.<sup>117</sup> He was usually a Pandit.

***Tarazodar***: In every village there was a *tarazodar*. The main duty of *tarazodar* was to weigh the share of state and zamindar. However, his measurement often exaggerated.<sup>118</sup>

### **Cesses other than Land Revenue**

The Dogras continued the tradition of their predecessors of levying impost on the various means of income of the people, to meet out the

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<sup>113</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 426. See also E. F. Knight, *op. cit.*, p. 64

<sup>114</sup> E. F. Knight, *op. cit.*, p. 64

<sup>115</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 426. See also Robert Thorp, *op. cit.*, p. 67

<sup>116</sup> F. Knight, *op. cit.*, p. 64. See also, *Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh*, p. 106

<sup>117</sup> *Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh*, p. 110. See also R. Thorpe, *op. cit.*, p. 67

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.* See also Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 411

expenses of the administration and procure services for the state. The taxation policy of Dogras was more or less similar to that followed by the Sikhs with slight manipulations. Many taxes levied by the Sikhs were continued during the Dogra period and some new taxes were also imposed. However, their taxation policy was comparatively less exorbitant. The taxation procedure of Dogras to a considerable extent resembled that of the present system which constituted numerous direct and indirect cesses, issue of permits and licenses, and state monopolies. The revenue procured was considerable and unprecedentedly heavy, when taken into consideration the rate at which it was levied and the amount left with people. Lawrence, the settlement officer appointed for Kashmir in 1889, stated that “except air and water every thing in Kashmir that was tangible was liable to tax.” John B. Ireland, An American who visited Kashmir in 1859, wrote that ‘on the birth of every lamb, the owner had to pay one anna as tax and on the birth of calf he had to pay four annas. Owner of a fishing boat was to pay four annas a day as tax. Walnut trees ten annas a year for the oil and if the crop failed, must be made up with ghee”<sup>119</sup> Such was the nature of taxation that even the prostitutes were required to submit a portion of their income to the government treasury as a state share.<sup>120</sup> On the marriage, a fee of three rupees was to be paid as tax. Even the butchers, bakers, carpenters, fishermen and coolies who were engaged to carry loads for travelers had to give up half of earnings as

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<sup>119</sup> C. Zutshi, *Community, State, and Nation, Religion, Patriotism and Religious Identities in Kashmir Valley(1880-1953)*, An unpublished Theses, Submitted to the Graduate School of Arts and Science, Tufts University, UMI Proquest, 2000,p. 79

<sup>120</sup> Younghusband, op. cit., p. 179



tax to the state.<sup>121</sup> However barbers and tailors were exempted. To quote Dr. Iqbal;<sup>122</sup>

*Dast muzad aw badasti deegran*

*Mahi doodash shasasti deegran*

[His earnings are at the disposal of others. The fish of his stream is for other's net.]

During Gulab Singh's period the office of grave drigger was also taxed and even the sale proceeds of houses were taxed at the rate of 5%.<sup>123</sup>

The Dogras levied the ceases directly on the people through their officials as well as by the farming system. Moreover, the people paid the levies both in cash and kind.<sup>124</sup>

The maharaja having sole claim and authority over the whole land of the state had monopolized certain products produced in the state especially those which fetched an adequate economic gain. Lawrence, the settlement officer in Kashmir recorded;

“When I started my settlement work, everything was taxed. Fruit trees, birch barks, violets, hides, silk, saffron, hemp, tobacco, water-nuts and

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<sup>121</sup> Younghusband, p. 179

<sup>122</sup> Sufi, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 799

<sup>123</sup> F. M. Hussnain, *Encyclopedia of India-Jammu and Kashmir*, Vol. IX(part II), Rima Publishing House, New Delhi, 1992, p. 74

<sup>124</sup> P. N. K. Bamzai, *Socio-economic History of Kashmir (1846-1925)*, Metropolitan Books Co. Ltd., New Delhi, 1987, p. 160

paper were treated as state monopolies and farmed out to *pundits* [Hindus].”<sup>125</sup>

The state’s share of these products was directly collected by the state through its officials. However, on certain occasions, these were farmed out to contractors. Sericulture, which was once the well-known occupation and means of survival of a greater populace of the state, became a government monopoly in the early seventies of nineteenth century.<sup>126</sup> Thus the major portion of income derived from it went to the state treasury. No doubt, a hefty workforce was employed in this sector but the fruits of their toil directly benefitted the state. During Gulab Singh’s time when it was mainly in public hands, the total duty derived from silk trade was Rs. 1, 00,000 annually.<sup>127</sup> Saffron, the most illustrious, expensive and economically lucrative crop was also state monopoly. The cultivator who devoted his maximum time in its cultivation was left with only half of the produce while state grabbed the rest and even at times, the government demand exceeded it.<sup>128</sup> Tea, salt and aromatic plant called *kuth* too was under the state control. Paper and tobacco were enlisted later.<sup>129</sup> The income derived from these was deposited in the state exchequer. Even the stones used for construction purposes too were under the state jurisdiction. However, it was farmed out to contractors in the form of license after paying a stipulated amount to the state.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> C. F Ajit Bhattacharjea, *Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah-Tragic Hero of Kashmir*, Lotus Collection, New Delhi, 2008, p. 13.

<sup>126</sup> Youngusband, p.178

<sup>127</sup> Ganesh Lal, op.cit., p. 37

<sup>128</sup> *Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh*, p. 113

<sup>129</sup> Younghusban, p. 178

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*

Apart from land revenue, the major contributor of income to the state was the shawl industry and its allied sectors. It was subjected to numerous taxes, levied at different levels. Firstly, the *pushm* (wool), the raw-material for making shawl imported from Tibet, Ladakh and Central Asian provinces of Yarkhan and Tufran was liable to tax in the form of import duty when it entered the premises of Kashmir. Secondly, the manufacturer (*kharkhandar*) for each weaver he employed had to pay a tax called *baj*.<sup>131</sup> During the period of Gulab Singh's reign, a *kharkhandar* had to submit Rs 48 as *baj* which continued till the initial period of Ranbir Singh. In addition, he imposed Rs 12 per annum, on every shop where shawls were manufactured and Rs. 60 on new shops.<sup>132</sup> However, in samvat 1924(1868), Maharaja remitted eleven rupees and now the *baj* was Rs 37. Due to fall in prices Maharaja again remitted seventeen rupees in samvat 1933(1877). In samvat 1934(1878), only eleven rupees were fixed as *baj* and in samvat 1935(1879), due to the famine and fall in prices which affected every aspect of economy of Kashmir in general and that of shawl industry in particular, was abolished altogether.<sup>133</sup> Instead, a custom duty of rupees twenty for exporting one hundred pieces of and eleven rupees were fixed as license fee which a merchant had to pay for selling hundred piece of shawl.<sup>134</sup> The shopkeepers dealing with shawl was also required to pay portion of his earning to the state. Besides, a separate duty on worked border of shawl was imposed. It was also made mandatory for *shalbaf* to purchase a certain *kharwars* of rice annually at the rate two

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<sup>131</sup> H. Khuihami, op. cit. Vol. I, p. 449. See also younghusband, p 179

<sup>132</sup> Hassan Khuihami, Vol. I, op. cit., pp. 447-50. See also F. M. Hussnain, op.cit., p. 73

<sup>133</sup> H. Khuihami, Vol. op.cit., p. 955

<sup>134</sup> H. Khuihami, op.cit, Vol. II, pp. 955-56.

rupees per *kharwar* which was one rupee higher than the market price.<sup>135</sup>

The taxes collected from Kashmir province on various items for the year 1846 are given below;<sup>136</sup>

Duties on Shawl looms	Rs. 8, 07,500
Border Makers	11,000
Sair Permits	14,000
Tuyufedars (Professionals)	1,10,000
The Mint	60,000
Produce of Dal Lake (MuBahru)	20,000
Silk	22,000
GrazingCattle (shakh shoomaree)	45,000
Waternuts	25,000
Honey	2,000
The Hill Rajas	60,000
Abkaree	11,500
Land Revenue	12, 00,000
Saffron	25,000
Jawahir Bazar	12,000
Tatol	Hari Singhi Rupees 24, 30,000

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<sup>135</sup> H. Khuihami, Vol-I, op.cit, pp. 449-50

<sup>136</sup> Laia Ganesh Lal, op., cit. p. 39

*Nawai* was tax on the boatman and it was farmed to Pandit Lachmanju for 1, 05,000.<sup>137</sup> They had to pay the tax even, if their boats remained unhired throughout the year. Saraf mentioned that even the boats used for dwelling were taxed. *Chob-furoshe* was a tax, levied on the timber and wood used as fuel. It was not collected directly but farmed out for Rs 1, 05,000.<sup>138</sup> *Zur-i-baj* was a license tax levied on trade. It was farmed out for Rs 91,000. The mint department where the coins were minted was also required to pay five rupees per hundred rupees coined to the government as tax. In 1846, the total duty collected from it was Rs. 6000. An amount of Rs 75,000 was collected annually at the royal mint for minting the *chilki* rupees.<sup>139</sup> *Chorna puzi* was tax on lime kilns. The amount acquired through it was Rs 25,000 annually.<sup>140</sup> A tax at the rate of fifty rupees per thousand baked bricks and two rupees per thousand on unbaked bricks was levied during the Dogra Period.<sup>141</sup> The taxes collected from the *wazarats* of Kashmir province from different articles in cash for the year 1874 were as;<sup>142</sup>

Wazarat	taxes collected in cash
Sher khas	13709
Pattan	6607
Kamraj	18206

<sup>137</sup> *Gazetteer Kashmir and Ladakh*, p. 114

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>139</sup> P. N. K. Bamzai, *op.cit.* p 160

<sup>140</sup> *Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh*, p. 115

<sup>141</sup> Saraf, *op.cit.*, p.286

<sup>142</sup> H. Khuihami, Vol-I *op.cit.* p. 355-56

During the reign of Gulab Singh in order to legalize and celebrate the marriage the people had to pay a tax. This was known as *zar-i-nikh*. It was levied at the rate of three rupees by the *Qazi* who deposited it to the state treasury. *Pandits*, however, were exempted from this tax. It was farmed out for a sum of 5,000 per annum.<sup>143</sup> Maharaja Ranbir Singh abolished this tax when he ascended the throne of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir in 1857.<sup>144</sup>

The peasants had to pay a tax for the maintenance of a charitable kitchen in the name of *Gadadharaj*. It was actually meant for the construction of a temple Gadadharaj opposite to Sherghadi palace but later on, it became a regular tax for running the free kitchen to feed the poor. It was also taken from Ladakh, the hilly regions and Gilgit. It brought about twelve thousand rupees annually to the government.<sup>145</sup> All the articles brought to Srinagar from different rural and urban areas had a pay tax. Generally, it was taken in cash at the rate of Rs 2 per thousand and on gold it was levied at the rate of Rs 2 per metal worth of Rs 1,000. Tax on copper, zinc, precious stones or metal wares amounted Rs 12,000.<sup>146</sup> In 1880, eight annas as court-fee was introduced.<sup>147</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> Mridu Rai, *Hindu Rulers, The Question of Religion in Kashmir; Sovereignty, Legitimacy and Rights (1846-1947)*, An unpublished these submitted to the Graduate School of Arts and Science, Columbia University, 2000. See also *Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh*, p.115

<sup>144</sup> *Annual Administration Report of the Jammu and Kashmir state for the year 1939-40*, Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, Srinagar, p. 23

<sup>145</sup> Saif-ud-din, op. cit., Vol. II, 1848

<sup>146</sup> Ganesh Lal, op. cit., p. 35

<sup>147</sup> Sufi, Vol. II, op. cit., p. 801

Besides, the aforementioned cesses the state took numerous taxes in kind. The peasants had to pay tax for the maintenance of sepoy's at the rate of four *traks* on every hundred *kharwars*. The people who possessed cattle had to pay a tax to the government in one form or another. For sheep and goat the owner had to pay one anna per head. A tax of thirteen rupees per hundred sheep known as *zar-i-choupan* was collected when the flock of sheep moved towards mountain pastures and remained there for whole summer.<sup>148</sup> For the realization of the taxes on sheep and goat, it was obligatory to hand over his flock to the government – appointed *chaupan* (shepherd). In 1871, the tax on sheep and goat was estimated Rs.107, 311.<sup>149</sup> The villages with land produce of 500 *kharwars* or more had to give an extra tax in the form of two or three sheep or goats, one pony and one *lio* (blanket). The half price of animals was refunded to the people.<sup>150</sup> For every milch cow one seer of ghee was taken annually as tax. In the honey producing region of Lar and Wardwen and other villages one-half during last years of Sikh rule and Gulab Singh's reign and later on two-thirds was taken as by *kardar* as government share. The total income acquired from it was Rs. 2,000.<sup>151</sup> Even the scavengers' could not spare. He had to offer annually a specified number of skins to the government whether any cattle died or not.<sup>152</sup> Moreover, butchers, bakers and boatmen were also required to pay a part of their earnings as tax with no return in the form of sufficient social service.<sup>153</sup> Even the naturally grown products were not

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<sup>148</sup> Lawrence, op.cit., p. 363

<sup>149</sup> Saraf, op.cit., p. 281

<sup>150</sup> Bamzai, op.cit., p. 162

<sup>151</sup> Ganesh Lal, op. cit. p.37, See also Bamzai, op.cit. p.162

<sup>152</sup> Saraf, op.cit., p. 288

<sup>153</sup> Lord Birdwood, *Kashmir*, International Affairs (Jr), Vol. 28, No. 3 (July 1952), pp. 300-303

spare and were brought into the ambit of taxation. The water produce i.e., the cultivation of vegetables and crops grown on floating gardens as well as the products which grows naturally in water were taxed during the period under review. *Singhara (Water nut)* and fish contributed a substantial amount of income to the state in the form of taxes. The reed used in thatching of houses and weaving of mats which grows naturally in Anchar lake contribute an annual income of 4000 *Chilki* rupees to the state in the form of taxes. From the owner of the walnut tree the government levied three-fourths leaving only one fourth to remunerate the owner.<sup>154</sup> It is said, Gulab Singh in 1850, for his lust for money imposed a 'capitation tax' on all the individuals of the village practicing any labour, trade, profession or employment at the rate of Rs. 1 to Rs. 2. It was collected daily basis. The income from these taxes amounted about one lakh and ten thousand which was realized through Muqqadam.<sup>155</sup>

The custom duties both on imports and exports formed a major source of income to the state which were levied at the custom posts established at strategic locations. The rate varied from article to article. On Jammu-Srinagar route the custom duty was levied at Deogal in Banihal pargana and Amoor in Shahabad paragana.<sup>156</sup> In 1846, at Deogal custom post the custom duty on different articles exported from Kashmir were levied at the following rates;<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>154</sup> Bates, op. cit., p. 48

<sup>155</sup> Mridu Rai, op.cit. p 69. See also Sufi, op.cit. Vol. II, p. 782

<sup>156</sup> Ganesh Lal, op.cit., pp. 22-24

<sup>157</sup> *ibid*



Article	Custom Duty
One piece of Shawl cloth	6 Annas
One seer of Saffron	4 Annas
One kharwar of Kuth	6 Annas
One kharwar of Silk	6 Rupees
One kharwars of Ghee	1 Re
One kharwar of Black Zeera	12 Annas
One kharwar of Bahee dana	2 Rupees
One kharwar of inkstand & white paper	2 Rupees
One trak of Charas( extracted hemp)	8 Annas
One kharwar of Banafsha	12 Annas
Apples per headload	4 Annas
Woolen Cloth per piece	2 Annas
Miscellaneous per head load	1 Re

In the same year the total cesses realized from the articles imported and exported from Kashmir was Rs 1, 02,000.<sup>158</sup> The average income from the custom department every year was one lakh rupees.<sup>159</sup> The following is given the revenue collected through custom duties:<sup>160</sup>

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<sup>158</sup> Ganesh Lal, op. cit., p. 34

<sup>159</sup> Sufi, Vol. II, op.cit., p. 782

<sup>160</sup> Younghusband, op. cit. p. 187<sup>160</sup> W. Wakefield, op. cit., p 149. See also *Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh*, p 68

Year	Kashmir province	Jammu and Kashmir state
1886	Rs 3, 99, 155	Rs 7, 62, 582
1887	Rs 4, 84, 235	Rs 8, 93, 438
A1888	Rs 5, 51, 102	Rs 10, 09, 647

The following table shows the custom duties levied on imports and exports between Kashmir and Ladakh.<sup>161</sup>

On imports	Rs.	A.	p.	On exports	Rs.	A.	p.
Cloth per mound	2	4	0	wool per mound	0	8	0
Saffron per mound	3	0	0	Tea per dama	1	0	0
Shawl per pair	0	8	0	Langa & siling			
Tobacco	0	4	0	Per piece	0	2	0
Ghee	0	4	0				

<sup>161</sup> Alexander Cunningham, *Ladakh-Physical, Statistical and Historical*, Sagar Publication, New Delhi, Repr. 1970, p. 248

**Chapter-4**

*Trade and Commerce*

*1846-1885*

# *Trade and Commerce of Kashmir 1846-1885*

## **Routes and Transport System**

The means of transport and communication is a significant prerequisite for the prosperity and economic development of a region. The sound system of transport breaks the isolation of different regions and develops close contact between villages and urban centers. It encourages trade by facilitating the quick and safe movement of goods. Agriculture, mineral wealth, and industrial resources are promoted and the effect of natural calamities like floods, earthquakes and famines are mitigated. Thus the means of transport and communications are the life-lines of a region.

During the period of my study traditional and poor means of transport were prevalent in Kashmir which in no way was beneficial for the quick and safe movement of goods. These were rough and rude in the higher altitudes, so men instead of animals were used as beast of burden.<sup>1</sup> Boats<sup>2</sup>, ponies, mules, horses, yak, asses, carts and coolies carried the goods and other freight to their destinations.<sup>3</sup> There was total absence of roads fit for wheeled carriage.<sup>4</sup> The main routes which connected Kashmir with India and Central Asia and through which the trade was carried include the following.

**Banihal Route:** This route connected Kashmir with Jammu and rest of India via Anantnag, Shahabad and Banihal. This route remained open for

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<sup>1</sup> Younghusband, op. cit., p. 177

<sup>2</sup> Drew, op. cit., p. 181

<sup>3</sup> Amar Singh Chohan, *Communication and Transport in the Princely State of Jammu and Kashmir (1846-1947)*, Radha Krishan Anand & Co, Jammu, 1998, P. 25. See also Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 23

<sup>4</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 230.

most of the year compared to other routes.<sup>5</sup> This route was commercially very significant because it connected Jammu and Kashmir with Amritsar, the prominent trading center of India and an important market for the goods of Kashmir. However, till 1890, it was not suitable for vehicular traffic and the goods were carried either on animal backs or by coolies. Fredric Drew who remained in Kashmir from 1862 to 1872 say, “horses can pass along it, though with some difficulty; the greater part of the carriage is done by men, or in the case of grains by pack-bullocks.”<sup>6</sup>

**Pir Panjal Route:** This route runs via Shopian over Pir Panjal range and Bhimber and reached Gujarat. It has been the favourite route of Mughals to reach Kashmir and the remnants of the old Mughal Sarais are still seen at every halting place. It remains closed in winter.<sup>7</sup> Being difficult, this route was not, however, much used for trading activities.

**Jhelum Valley route:** It runs along the river Jhelum from Baramullah to Kohala in Punjab.<sup>8</sup>

**Treaty High Road:** It is named after the commercial treaty signed between Maharaja Ranbir Singh and British in 1870. It connects Kashmir with Ladakh and from there through various routes with Central Asia. This route was very significant for both Kashmir and British India as most of the trade with Central Asia was carried through this route. It was supervised by the joint commissioner sitting at Leh whose permission was obligatory in order to travel through this route. However, this route

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<sup>5</sup> Hassan Khuihami, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 269

<sup>6</sup> Fredric Drew, op. cit., p. 140

<sup>7</sup> Lawrence, Valley, p. 383. See also Hassan, op. cit., Vol. II, p 269

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

was entirely maintained at the expenses of the Jammu and Kashmir state which paid some rupees yearly to the joint commissioner for its upkeep.<sup>9</sup>

Besides, the aforementioned main routes there were a number of routes and pathways which connect the *wazarats* and *parganas* with each other and with the capital Shehr-i-khas (Srinagar). Of these the prominent ones connect Srinagar with Islamabad, Verinag, Shahabad, Shopian, Ganderbal, Bandiporara, Baramullah, Pattan and Muzafarabad.<sup>10</sup> However, these routes were convenient for travel during the fair weather and in winter and rainy season it was very difficult to travel on these roads. Moreover, the rivers formed an important route for the moment of both freight and men. River Jhelum forms the largest water body of Kashmir and was very navigable from Khanable in Anantnag wazarat to Baramullah.<sup>11</sup> The different articles including rice from the rural areas were brought on the *ghats*<sup>12</sup> where from through boats these articles were taken to Srinagar and other areas.

### **Trade and Commerce**

Kashmir being the abode of marvelous crafts and industries offered good vistas for trade and commerce. Kashmir was self-sufficient in numerous products. Though agriculture represented the dominant sector of economy during the period under the review but it was supplemented and complemented by trade and commerce. During the spare time the cultivators engaged themselves in manufacturing goods either for domestic consumption or for sale in the local bazaars. The manufacturers and agriculturalists of the princely state sold their surplus produce in the

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<sup>9</sup> See Appendix no. 2

<sup>10</sup> *The Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Vol. XV, p. 134

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> *Ghat* is a place along the bank of river where the goods were loaded and unloaded. This was a sort of stop for both passenger boats and boats laden with freight.

local market to get the money and products of daily use which were not produced by him. But until the last decade of nineteenth century internal and external trade was impeded by absence of sophisticated network of local markets, bad roads<sup>13</sup> inadequate communication, absence of uniform weights and measures, and poor administrative and financial system.<sup>14</sup>

### **Internal trade**

Since long time, the trade accommodated both agriculturalists and merchants and was carried out through the *Barter* system.<sup>15</sup> Through this system the village traders exchanged their products in the local bazaars in the weekly '*haat*' and at annual gatherings which were either religious in nature or organized at special occasions of festivity or joy by the ruler. The merchants also took their products to distant areas for sale mainly paddy products, salt, tobacco, vegetables, *kangris* and paper. The cultivator who himself was the producer and consumer knew little about the large towns and cities and expected the dealer of goods or agent to come to his door.<sup>16</sup> These merchants carried mostly the goods of daily use like salt, edible oil, spices, threads, coarse cloth, agriculture implements, utensils and pots to the villages.<sup>17</sup> However, the movement of products was not confined to the local market, they flowed to the towns and from here to the cities. So there was brisk local trade in Kashmir during the period of our study. The articles manufactured in one town were traded in far off places. The *namdhas* and *ghabhas* the major products of Anantnag wazarat were taken to Shar-i-khas and from there to other *wazarats* and *parganas*. Articles made of *Pattoo* like *pattoo* curtain etc and pashmina

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<sup>13</sup> Trigonometric Survey of India, Office of Trigonometrical Branch, Survey of India, 1879. Ranbir Singh Library, Jammu, P. 32

<sup>14</sup> Hangloo, Agrarian System of Kashmir, p. 122

<sup>15</sup> Lawrence, *op. cit.*, p. 397

<sup>16</sup> Hunter, *op. cit.*, p. 569

<sup>17</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 387

were other important articles of internal trade. The pattu was sold 2 ½ or 3 yards per chilki rupee.<sup>18</sup> A pair of plain curtain with worked borders cost about Rs. 15 to Rs 18 and if the border was worked on all sides, the cost was Rs. 8 to Rs 10 more. The agricultural implements constitute another article of trade. The iron which was manipulated in various agricultural products and other products was procured from Muzafarabad wazarat. Then it was sold in Srinagar. Hides and skins out of which leather goods were made was an important component of trade between rural and urban areas. It was procured in countryside by class of people called *watals* and was taken to Srinagar where different goods were manufactured out of it and then these goods were taken to different parts of Kashmir for sale.

The merchants bought the saffron from the cultivator and sold either in Kashmir or outside Kashmir.<sup>19</sup> Besides, the articles imported from Punjab, central Asia and other areas also constituted the items of internal trade. The salt and cotton goods imported from Punjab were significant in this respect.

So far as the grain trade is concerned, it was the state monopoly. A. Wingate stated that, “there was no grain dealer in Srinagar.”<sup>20</sup> The state collected annually a certain quantity of grain in the form of land revenue and other cesses and stored it in the government stores established in every district headquarter. The grain was sold in small quantity not only to grain dealers but also to the common masses.<sup>21</sup> Rice sufficient for fifteen days consumption was sold at one time. Cunningham, who visited Kashmir in 1847 mentioned, “It is impossible to obtain so much as one

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<sup>18</sup> *Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh*, p. 78

<sup>19</sup> Bates, *op. cit.*, p. 44

<sup>20</sup> Wingate, *op. cit.*, p.17

<sup>21</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 23



rupee worth of wheat in city of Srinagar. Not more than six seers could be purchased at one time and this was considered hardship by the middle class people who had been accustomed of purchasing wheat in sufficient quantity.”<sup>22</sup> Until the government stock of grains was sold, the merchant was not permitted to deal with grain trade. Even if the merchants intended to so, they had to purchase the stock from government stores.<sup>23</sup>

In every village there was a merchant who dealt with articles of daily use, manufactured locally as well as imported from India, Ladakh and Central Asia. He was known by a generic term *Wani* or *Bakal* (*shopkeeper*). Lawrence mentioned *wani* used to have a trade of various goods amounting about Rs. 20 to Rs. 30.<sup>24</sup> The articles with which the *wani* dealt included salt, oil, spice, snuff, sugar, tea and European and Indian piece goods. When his stock was finished he replenished his stock from the nearest depot. The *wani* also lent money to people on interest at rate varying from 24 % to 36% under the system known as *Wad*.<sup>25</sup>

Zainakadal, Maharaj Gang, Maharaj Bazar, Present Amira Kadal were the prominent trading depots of wazarat Shehr-i-khas. Banihal, Shahabad, Anantnag, Bijbhera, Shopian (Harpora), Pattan, Khanihama, Spore, Kreri and Baramullah were the other worth mentioning trading centers of Kashmir. Baramullah had special significance as most of the import and export trade passed here.<sup>26</sup> These centers besides, dealing with general

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<sup>22</sup> C. f. Hangloo, p. 123

<sup>23</sup> Hangloo, *Agrarian System of Kashmir*, p. 123

<sup>24</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 387

<sup>25</sup> Under the *Wad*, *Wani* (Shopkeeper) lends money to the needy people and the borrower promised to pay this amount within a year in the form of blankets, ghee, apples, grains etc. No bond was signed by the borrower. Only the record of transaction was registered in the daily ledger of the *wani*. Lawrence, *op. cit.*, p. 5

<sup>26</sup> E. F. Neve, *Beyond Pir Panjal*, p 44. See also Ali Mohammad Dar, *Trade and Commerce During Dogra Rule (1846-1947)*, Om Publications, Faridabad, 1999, p. 51

items were known for certain manufactures for instance Anantnag was renowned for saddle cloth, and *ghabha* and Sopore for *pattu*.<sup>27</sup>

Thus it can be said that during the early Dogra period there was a brisk internal trade in Kashmir in spite of constraints of transport and communication which forms the prerequisite for development of trade and business. This was mainly due to the rural-urban interdependence, owing to the unprecedented increase in the volume of Kashmir's imports and exports, improvement of means of communication from the later part of Maharaja Ranbir Singh's reign. The penetration of Europeans in the economic affairs of Kashmir during the second half of the nineteenth century also augmented the internal trade of Kashmir. The following table depicts the prices of various articles in Kashmir during Gulab Singh's rule;<sup>28</sup>

Item	Price per Chilki Rupee
Maize	2 mounds (80kgs)
Millet	ditto
Barley	ditto
Unhusked rice	1 mound and 22 ½ seers
Groundnut	1 mound and 10 seers
Gram	1 ½ mound (24kgs)
Beans	1 mound <i>kham</i> (rough) (16kgs)
Ghee	12 ½ seers (5kgs)

<sup>27</sup> Ali Mohammad Dar, op. cit, p. 51

<sup>28</sup> Narsing Das, *Tariki-i-Dogra Desh*, p. 649

Mustard oil	30 seers (13kgs)
Honey	20 <i>seers kham</i> (8kgs)
Pomegranate-seeds	ditto
Wheat	50 <i>seer kham</i> (20kgs)
Cotton	1 mound <i>kham</i> (16kgs)
Wool	30 <i>seer kham</i> (12kgs)
Homespun cotton cloth	20 meters
Ginger	20 <i>seer kham</i> (8kgs)
Sliver	5 tola per rupee
Yarn	18 rupees tola
Sheep	6 to 8 annas
Lamb	5 annas
Cow	4 rupees

### **Interprovincial trade**

The princely state of Jammu and Kashmir consisted of three main divisions since Gulab Singh assumed the overlordship in A.D.1846, with distinct geographical set up, culture and even economy. The province of Jammu was bestowed to Jammu in A. D 1819, Ladakh was conquered by Gulab Singh's general Zorawar Singh in A. D. 1834 and Kashmir was transferred to Gulab Singh in A. D. 1846 through the treaty of Amritsar.

Jammu was the point of entry into Kashmir from British India while Ladakh assumed the same significance so far as the entry into Kashmir on northern side and central Asia is concerned. Kashmir valley occupied the central position of the state is equally significant for both. These provinces were interdependent to suffice their requirements of daily life. Thus the interprovincial trade had a good scope in the state of princely state of Jammu and Kashmir during the second half of nineteenth century. To garner the clear view of interdependence and internal provincial trade of these provinces it is pertinent to study them separately.

### **Trade between Jammu province and Kashmir province**

The trade with Jammu was carried through Banihal route via Anantnag, Shahabad, and Banihal. However, the route was rough and narrow and was unsuitable for vehicular traffic. Animals were mostly used to carry the articles to the destination. Even some times humans also accomplished this job. This all has great bearing on the trade between the two provinces.

The trade between the two was confined to the indigenously manufactured articles and agricultural products. Moreover, the imports from British India especially Punjab and central Asia also formed important constituent of trade between the two provinces. The exports from Kashmir to Jammu included rice, *charas*, seeds, fruits, wool and cotton cloth, hides, leather, *namdhas* and dyeing materials.<sup>29</sup> Saffron, the well known product of Kashmir was another important item of export from Kashmir to Jammu. The products of blacksmiths besides fulfilling

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<sup>29</sup> *Trade Report of Jammu and Kashmir, 1908-09*, Jammu and Kashmir Archives, Jammu, p. 30

the local needs were sent out of valley where their demand was very high. Jammu was significant in this respect.<sup>30</sup>

The main article of import from Jammu to Kashmir included silver which was actually imported from British India. Arms and ammunition were also imported from Jammu.<sup>31</sup>

### Trade between Kashmir and Ladakh

Ladakh was incorporated into Dogra dominion in 1834 by Gulab Singh's general Zorawar Singh and it became one of the provinces of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir in 1846. Ladakh was the entrepot to Kashmir from Central Asia and Chinese province of Ruthog and Changthang where the shawl wool was produced.<sup>32</sup> The central Asian merchandise were housed here and then supplied to Indian and Kashmiri merchants. Likewise most of the Central Asian traders received Kashmiri and Indian commodities here.<sup>33</sup> Thus Ladakh was strategically and commercially very important.

The trade with Ladakh was carried through the 'the Treaty High Road which ran from Srinagar to Leh and from there to Central Asia. The major import from Ladakh was *pushm* (shawl wool) which was the main raw material for shawl manufacturing. This greatly cemented the trade relations of Kashmir and Ladakh. The dried fruits like apricot and currant were the other important exports of Ladakh which found a ready market in Kashmir.<sup>34</sup> Even at present this trade still thrives. Cunningham who

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<sup>30</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 373

<sup>31</sup> Ali Mohammad, *op. cit.*, p. 55

<sup>32</sup> Alexander Cunningham, *Ladakh, Physical, Statistical and Historical*, Sagar Publications, New Delhi, p. 241

<sup>33</sup> Ali Mohammad Dar, *op. cit.*, p 116

<sup>34</sup> Bates, *op. cit.* p. 46

visited Kashmir and Ladakh in the 1849-50 writes that, "I have found them (apricot) in all bazaars in the hill states from Kashmir to Kashgar where they were sold two to two and half seer per rupee. Tea which was actually imported from China to Ladakh was exported to Indian territories and Kashmir. The gross annual import is said to have been 1,000 mounds.<sup>35</sup> A sufficient amount of salt was also imported from Ladakh,<sup>36</sup> but it was of inferior quality and was mostly used as fodder for animals. The following table depicts the imports to Kashmir from Ladakh.<sup>37</sup>

Year	Import
1867	Rs. 37,380
1868	15,415 md. 36 sr.
1869	Rs. 54735. 6
1870	Rs. 74355.9
1871	Rs. 93532.3
1872	Rs. 81, 111. 1

Shawl was the major item of export to Ladakh during Gulab Singh's and Ranbir Singh's reign.<sup>38</sup> Spices worth Rs.1, 000 were exported annually to Ladakh. From there greater portion of it was then exported to Yarkhand.<sup>39</sup> Saffron constituted a major item of export from Kashmir which was the only place where it grown in entire India in large quantities and good of a good quantity. The annual export of saffron to

<sup>35</sup> Chitrlekha Zutshi, *Languages of Belongings-Islam, Regional Identity and the Making of Kashmir*, Permanent Black, Delhi, 2003, p. 101

<sup>36</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 393

<sup>37</sup> Bates, op. cit., pp. 77-92

<sup>38</sup> C. Zutshi, *Languages*, op. cit., p. 201

<sup>39</sup> Alexander Cunningham, op.cit., pp. 246-47

Ladakh during the period under the study was 1,600 lbs. It was sold at the rate of twenty rupees a seer.<sup>40</sup>

Hides or dried skins constituted another item exported to Ladakh during the second half of nineteenth century.<sup>41</sup> Leather was used for manufacturing boot, bridles and trappings of horses. Tobacco was another item of export from Kashmir to Ladakh. Ghee, different types of cloths, ornaments and leather shoes were other imports from Kashmir.<sup>42</sup>

The following table shows the export of articles from Kashmir to Ladakh for 1867 to 1872.<sup>43</sup>

Year	Export
1867	Rs 23,242
1868	1,068 mounds 11sr.
1869	Rs. 29,403
1870	Rs.11, 1271. 7
1871	Rs. 53,515.12
1872	Rs. 38, 515 8 0

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<sup>40</sup> Bates, op. cit., pp. 43-44

<sup>41</sup> Alexander Cunningham, op. cit., pp 247-48

<sup>42</sup> Ibid. See also Hassan, op. cit, Vol. II, p. 505

<sup>43</sup> Bates, op. cit., pp. 77-91

## Trade with British India

Surrounded by lofty mountains and in the absence of roads adequate for vehicular traffic, the valley of Kashmir till the last decade of nineteenth century was difficult to access. However, in spite of communication constraints, the people of Kashmir since the remote past had developed trade relations with India.<sup>44</sup> The people with certain quantity of goods crossed the mountains barriers to sell them in the plains of India. The same trend continued in the second half of the nineteenth century. Besides, this trade there was trade by professional muleteers or *markabanas*.<sup>45</sup> They used to have their own ponies to transport the goods which they purchased for sale in valley.

The trade with British India consisted of articles and products manufactured in Kashmir as well as the articles imported to Kashmir from other regions especially Central Asia, Tibet, Ladakh and China. Thus the trade of Kashmir with British India was significant. Punjab, Amritsar and Jullundur were important centers which had good trade relation with Kashmir.

The administration of Kashmir during the concluding years of Sikh rule has turned from bad to worse which was characterized by ruthlessness, heavy and capricious taxation, oppressive system of *begar*, lavish distribution of rent free grant, and other evils. Gulab Singh immediately after his possession of Kashmir determined to exert his power through the length and breadth of Kashmir. He put down rebellious forces, restored calmness and made every effort to restore trade and commerce in all parts

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<sup>44</sup> P. N. K. Bamzai, *Kashmir and Central Asia*, p. 237

<sup>45</sup> Lawrence. Valley, p. 383



of the state. The result was immediately visible. Nicolson noted about this in his official diary on 19<sup>th</sup> November 1847:

“He had some conversation with a party of Kabul merchants taking tobacco and snuff to Kashmir where from they in turn brought *pattu* and *tosh*, which fetched very high prices in Kabul. They complained of oppressive duties in their own and Maharajah Gulab Singh’s territories but said that in Gulab Singh’s dominion their goods were protected whereas they frequently ran great risks from the plundering between Kabul and Peshawar.<sup>46</sup>”

Thus peace was ensured during Maharaja Gulab Singh’s reign and as a result, trade expanded. The trade of Kashmir with Punjab exhibited similar development. In winter when the agricultural operation came to standstill due to snow and cold, the people of Kashmir went to the Punjab with some product to sell them and in return they purchased the articles of their requirement. Some worked there as coolies as no economic activity was possible in Kashmir due to the cold climate. The people, after earning money, returned home with the goods of daily use in the beginning of spring.

Ranbir Singh’s reign ushered a new era in the history of trade of Kashmir. He adopted several measures to boost trade and to remove the hurdles affecting the flow of goods from the state to neighbouring regions. He improved the means of transport and communication. New pathways were constructed and old ones were repaired. It opened new markets for the products of Kashmir which earlier due to improper transport either perished or were locally sold at very low prices. Moreover, to regularize the custom duties, custom regulations were

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<sup>46</sup> Gwasha Lal Koul, op. cit., p. 102

compiled in the initial years of Ranbir Singh's reign. In 1859 these regulations were published, to make people acquainted with rate and procedure of levying the taxes. Moreover, a regular customs department was established.<sup>47</sup> This ensured uniform custom duties throughout the state.

Moreover, Ranbir Singh also reduced the taxes and custom duties from time to time. In 1864, a considerable reduction was made in the custom duties on the goods imported into Kashmir. The method of collection was simplified and a transit duty of 5% on goods conveyed via Srinagar was imposed in instead of the fiscal exactions which had led to the abandonment of trade route between British India, Tibet and eastern Turkistan.<sup>48</sup> All these measures led to a marked increase in the trade between Kashmir and the adjoining territories of British India. The following extract from the administrative report of Punjab for 1864-65 reveals;<sup>49</sup>

“The reduction of custom duties affected by His Highness last year had led to considerable increase in the trade with adjacent districts in the British territory. The trade with Sialkot was reported to have increased in value from Rs. 1,35, 000 to Rs. 1, 71, 00 per annum, that with Jallundur and Hosharpur to have more than doubled.”

The increase was more in cloth and saccharine products. Moreover, the trade with Gujarat also increased. The export of salt from India to

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<sup>47</sup> Charak, op. cit., p.45

<sup>48</sup> C. U. Aitchison, *A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads Related to India and Neighbouring Countries*, Vol. XII, Mittat Publication, Delhi, 1983, p. 6

<sup>49</sup> *Administrative Report of Punjab for 1864-65*, Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, Jammu, p. 32. See also Narsing Das, *Tarik-i-Dogra Desh*, p. 675

Kashmir exhibited a similar increase. The shawl wool and saffron exported to Kangra region showed an increase of Rs. 9000.<sup>50</sup>

In 1866, the duties levied on goods between Jammu and Kashmir were reduced from 30% and 50% to 8% on piece goods and 12% on *Khalliar*.<sup>51</sup> In 1867, Maharaja decided to impose duty at the rate of 5% on all imports from Punjab to Yarkhand, via Kashmir.<sup>52</sup> In 1868 for the promotion of trade and welfare of shawl weavers a duty of Rs 30000 was remitted on all imports and export from central Asia and India.<sup>53</sup> In 1869, the duty levied on goods between Jammu and Kashmir was reduced from 8% to 6 ½.<sup>54</sup> Towards the close of 1869, duties on merchandise passing to and from Turkistan were abolished in deference to the wishes of the British government.<sup>55</sup> The total exports from Kashmir to Punjab during 1869-70 amounted to 39240 maunds which was worth Rs, 685962.<sup>56</sup> However, the traders of Central Asia were not satisfied. They complained of the heavy exaction levied by officials at Leh. In 1870, for developing trade with eastern Turkistan, a commercial treaty was signed between the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir and British. Under its terms, the Maharaja reduced the duty on goods imported from Central Asia to British India via Kashmir. They consented to the appointment of joint commissioners at Ladakh, one nominated by the British Government and one by the Maharaja, with sufficient powers to arrange for the convenience of travelers on trade routes, to settle disputes and to exercise limited magisterial jurisdiction. In return the British agreed to abolish the

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<sup>50</sup> *Annual Administrative Report of Jammu and Kashmir for 1864-65*, Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, Jammu, p. 25

<sup>51</sup> Bates, p. 102

<sup>52</sup> Charak, op. cit., p. 146

<sup>53</sup> Persain Records, File no 433, 1868. Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, Jammu.

<sup>54</sup> Bates, op. cit., p. 102

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>56</sup> Ali Mohammad, op. cit., p 69

export duty on Kashmiri shawl and to refund the custom duties levied on all goods imported from British Indian territory to Kashmir, whether for consumption or for export to Central Asia.<sup>57</sup> In 1870-71 the exports from Kashmir to Punjab increased to 65682 maunds worth of rupees 544351.<sup>58</sup> In 1872, rules for giving effect to article nine of the commercial treaty of 1870 were promulgated which provided for the refund of duty on the goods intended for export beyond Kashmir, provided the goods are declared and sealed, for transmission by certain specific routes. In 1875 these rules were modified, so as to allow the refund duty on goods exported to Turkistan (Central Asia) levied at Leh (Ladakh).<sup>59</sup>

The Maharaja also ordered that the custom duty be collected only at the point of ingress of the state.<sup>60</sup> To encourage the internal and external trade, Maharaja built two commercial centers in Srinagar-one at Maharaj Gang and another at Maharaj

Bazar. He also ordered that commercial transaction should take place here.<sup>61</sup>

In May 1882, to channelize trade, three prominent merchants, Both Raj, Nand Shah and Samad Joo were appointed as controllers of trade in state.<sup>62</sup> Thus as a result commercial transaction between Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab cemented further and trade transactions between them during the same year amounted to about twenty lakh, out of which 13,50,000 from Kashmir and 6,50,000 from Jammu. The import from

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<sup>57</sup> C. U. Aitchison, op. cit., p.7. For details see also Narsing Das, *Tarik-i-Dogra Desh*, p. 673

<sup>58</sup> Ali Mohammad, op. cit., p. 69

<sup>59</sup> C. U. Aitchison, op. cit., p 7. See also the appendix

<sup>60</sup> S. S. Charak, op. cit., p. 147

<sup>61</sup> Hassan, op. cit. p. 851

<sup>62</sup> Chartak, op. cit., p. 147

Punjab into the state was worth Rs. 18, 50,000.<sup>63</sup> Thus the balance of trade was in favour of the state. In 1882-83 the total trade amounted to Rs. 2, 17, 67,085 including 1,31,80,320 by value of imports and 85,86,765 by the value of exports. In 1885-86, the total value of trade of Jammu and Kashmir State with Punjab was Rs. 89, 12,735. While the imports amounted to Rs.37, 77, 822 and the exports amounted to Rs. 51, 34, 913.<sup>64</sup>

In spite of these reforms and improvements in the condition of trade and commerce, agriculture and industry, the economic conditions of people could not exhibit any extraordinary improvement due to corruption and apathy of officials dealing with people. Francis Younghusband makes the following unsympathetic observation with reference to Ranbir Singh's reign.

“ The whole country, in fact, was still in the grip of grinding officials and the officials were the remnants of a by gone, ignorant and destructive age, when dynasties and institutions and life itself were in daily danger, when nothing was fixed and lasting, when all was liable to change and at the risk of chance and each man had to make what he could while he could and when, in consequence, a man of honesty and public spirit had no more chance of surviving than a baby would have in a battle.”<sup>65</sup>

### **Exports from Kashmir to Punjab**

During the early Dogra period which was dominated by the reign of Gulab Singh and his son Ranbir Singh the articles exported to Punjab included both agrarian and non-agrarian products. Three routes were

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<sup>63</sup> Bates, op. cit., p. 72

<sup>64</sup> M. L. Kapur, *Social and Economic History of Jammu and Kashmir State*, p. 338

<sup>65</sup> Younghusband, op. cit., p. 179

followed to take these goods to Punjab and other part of India. The first one was direct to Jammu via Islamabad, Shahabad and Banihal and from Jammu it leads to Punjab. It was the shortest and direct route from Kashmir to plains of British India via Banihal and Jammu.<sup>66</sup> The second runs over Pir Panjal and it reaches to Gujarat. It was followed since Mughal period. Jhelum valley route which runs along the river Jhelum from Baramullah to Kohala in Punjab.<sup>67</sup>

Medicinal plants which grew naturally in the mountainous regions constituted an important item of export from Kashmir to different parts of India. These plants were collected by the people during the summer seasons when they went to see their cattle and sheep. *Chob-i-kot* (saussurea Lappa), the leaves of gao zabban (*macrotomia benthami*) and leaves and seeds of *Hyoscyamus niger*, the henbane were largely exported to Punjab for trade.<sup>68</sup>

The seeds of quince (*bahidana*) were exported to Punjab<sup>69</sup> on large quantities. It fetched sufficient economic gains to the people of Kashmir. The Punjabi merchant purchased morels (*headder*) from the villagers in the hilly areas where it was abundantly available and then exported to Punjab.<sup>70</sup> Kashmir produced good quality of fibers but it was not the major item of export as in Punjab it was produced on large scale and was exported to Kashmir.

Fruits the most important and unique produce of Kashmir constituted an important item of export to Punjab. The inadequate roads and transport facilities though restricted mass export of fruits and diminished its

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<sup>66</sup> E. F. Neve, *Beyond Pir Panjal*, p. 27

<sup>67</sup> Lawrence, op. cit., p. 383

<sup>68</sup> D. K. Ram, *Gulzar-i-Kashmir*, op. cit., p. 273. See also Lawrence, op. cit. p 389.

<sup>69</sup> D. K. Ram, *Gulzar-i-Kashmir*, P. 275

<sup>70</sup> Ibid. See also Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 389.

demand but the people on their backs and ponies carried a sufficient quantity of fruits to Punjab for sale. Walnuts, from which oil was extracted was largely exported to India. Almonds and cherries were other important fruits exported British Indian territories. Apple and pears though in small magnitude were purchased by Punjab traders who send them later to their native state.<sup>71</sup> The annual export of the above fruits amounted to 90,000 mounds or 3210 tons. E. F. Neve stated the total annual export of apple, pears, and walnut was 100,000 mounds or about 3500 tons.<sup>72</sup>

Oil-seeds constituted another article of export.<sup>73</sup> However, its export was very meager. This was mainly because instead of ghee, the people in Kashmir used oil for cooking and lighting purposes. So there was great demand of oil-seeds in Kashmir which restricted its export. In 1887, when Lawrence arrived in Kashmir as settlement officer maintained, "If petroleum replaced vegetable oil as illuminant, the oil-seeds would be exported in large quantity." Saffron constitutes another export from Kashmir to Punjab where it was used for various purposes including as a flavoring and for *tilak* by Hindu women.<sup>74</sup>

Wool which was obtained from the sheep reared by people was used to produce a number of articles for domestic use as well for sale. The women in winter spun the wool and the men weaved it into the light excellent blanket which when completed, are manufactured into the *pattoo* or home spun cloth. Wool and Woolen goods like blanket formed out of wool formed an important article of export to India. In 1889 the

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<sup>71</sup> E. F. Neve, *Beyond Pir Panjal*, p. 44

<sup>72</sup> Younghusband, *op.cit.*, p 187, See also E. F. Neve, *Beyond Pir Panjal*, p. 44

<sup>73</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 389

<sup>74</sup> Khasta, *op.cit.*, p. 109

total export of woolen product to India was worth of Rs7, 17,721.<sup>75</sup> Europe and America were the main importers of carpets. Carpets of inferior quality with aniline dyes were manufactured in small factories were exported to India.<sup>76</sup>

Ghee which was mainly produced by people of mountainous areas also formed the important item of trade. The annual export was 720 tons. Potatoes grown in Kashmir also formed an important article of export. Hides and skins which were also important articles of internal trade were also exported to India and other areas. The total annual export of hides and skins from Kashmir was estimated 350 tons.<sup>77</sup>

Timber was abundantly available in Kashmir was exported to Punjab. Timber floated down the river Jhelum to Punjab. Besides sufficing the demand of fuel had great significance for the construction of railway tracks and furniture. The total export of timber from Kashmir was £350,000 in value.<sup>78</sup>

Silk constituted most important constituent of Kashmir's trade with British India. During the Gulab Singh's reign the income procured from the silk trade amounted to one lakh.<sup>79</sup>

Hops, which were utilized in brewing to beer bitter flavor, were exported to Muree

and other breweries in India.<sup>80</sup>

Export of articles from Kashmir to Punjab and other areas in 1862;<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 390. See also E. F. Neve, *Beyond Pir Panjal*, p. 44

<sup>76</sup> A. Mitra, *op.cit.*, p. 9

<sup>77</sup> Younghusband, *op.cit.*, p. 188

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.* See also Neve, *Beyond the Pir Panjal*, p. 44

<sup>79</sup> Lal Ganesh Lal, *op. cit.*, p. 36

<sup>80</sup> E. F. Neve, *Beyond Pir Panjal*, p. 61



Name of Article	value
Shawls	Rs 12, 00000
Woolen piece goods	Rs 40, 000
Chob-i-Khot (Medicinal Plant)	Rs 16, 500
Saffron	Rs 20, 000
Quince Seeds	Rs 5, 000
Fruits	Rs 15, 000
Raw Silk	Rs 7, 000
Paper	Rs 15, 000
Paper-Machie Articles	Rs 6, 000
Zirah Siyah (Carraway Seed)	Rs 3, 000
Spices	Rs 26, 000
Total	Rs 1416500

### **Imports from Punjab to Kashmir**

Kashmir being far away from the coast was deficient in salt production which was widely used by humans and animals. Contrary to Indian people Kashmiris consumed more salt. So salt was of great significance. Though some salt was imported from Ladakh but that could not suffice the local needs and was mainly used as food for animals. The major portion of salt was imported from India. Every effort was made to

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<sup>81</sup> Khasta, op.cit., p. 110

encourage this trade. The total annual import of salt from Punjab was 7000 tons.<sup>82</sup>

Sugar was imported into Kashmir from India on large scale.<sup>83</sup> In Kashmir sugar was regarded by agriculturalists as luxury item and people were fond of using it in their food and tea.<sup>84</sup> The internal production of sugar could suffice the local requirements.

The people of Kashmir harboured a special liking for tea. As a result there was a great demand of tea in Kashmir. Tea was mainly imported from India.<sup>85</sup>

Cotton piece goods constituted another import from India. Annually 900 to 1000 tons which costs £100,000 found its way into Kashmir. Lawrence mentioned that cotton piece goods were used mostly by the people of Srinagar city and towns. However, a small portion of it found its way to villages.<sup>86</sup>

Metals especially brass, iron, copper and other metals were imported from India.<sup>87</sup> But their import was limited because the people in Kashmir during the early Dogra period the metal utensils were not used for cooking. Instead the earthen pots were in use.

No doubt, Kashmir had rich iron ore deposits but it was mainly used for manufacturing agricultural implements. But iron was imported from India to

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<sup>82</sup> Lawrence, pp. 395-96

<sup>83</sup> E. F. Neve, *Beyond Pir Panjal*, p. 44

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 395. See also, E. F. Neve, *Beyond Pir Panjal*, p. 44

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

suffice the needs of state.<sup>88</sup>

The trade in snuff was carried in Kashmir. Every *Wani's* shop had a row of bottles containing snuff which was sold in small packets made of birch barks. It was imported from India. The best snuff was imported from Peshawar.<sup>89</sup>

Thus during the second half of the nineteenth century which corresponded to the era of Gulab Singh and his son Ranbir Singh, in spite of poor communication and natural constraints, a brisk trade relations developed between Kashmir and British India especially with the neighbouring state of Punjab in a myriad of articles. E. F. Neve who arrived in Kashmir on a medical mission in last quarter of the nineteenth century and spent thirty years in Kashmir figured the total value of annual imports and exports to the £420,000 and £400,000 respectively.<sup>90</sup>

List of articles imported from Punjab and other areas to Kashmir in 1862.<sup>91</sup>

Name of article	Worth of Rupees
English Cotton cloth	Rs.75, 000
Brocades etc.	40,000
Blanket and Namdhas	5,000
Pearls	- -
Tea	25,000
Salt	2 lakh
Sugar	27, 000

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<sup>88</sup> Lawrence, op. cit., p. 395

<sup>89</sup> Ibid

<sup>90</sup> E. F. Neve, op. cit., p. 44

<sup>91</sup> Khasta, op. cit., p. 110

Oil	3,000
Spices and Medicine	50,000
Sugar candy	3,000
Fruits (Afghanistan)	7, 000

### **Trade between Kashmir and Central Asia**

Kashmir and central Asia had trading affiliation since time immemorial. Before the discovery of sea route to Europe all the trade routes connecting Eastern Europe and countries of middle and Far East lay across this region.<sup>92</sup> The commercial ties with Central Asia have a great significance for the economic prosperity of Kashmir. Not only was the pashmina or shawl wool imported but it provided ready markets where the products of Kashmir were sold.<sup>93</sup> Trade between Kashmir and Central Asia was carried through the Treaty High Way road.

The means of transporting the articles from the source to the destination were varied and time consuming and not adequate for the transportation of perishable goods. Coolies, ponies, mules and horses, yaks and asses were the vital means of transport. However, these means of transport were not applicable for all the seasons. The movement of goods in bad weather came to a halt which paralyzed the trade and commerce.

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<sup>92</sup> P. N. K. Bamzai, Kashmir and Central Asia, Light and Life Publishers, New Delhi, 1980, p. 22

<sup>93</sup> Bates, op. cit., pp. 90-91

## Imports into Kashmir from Central Asia

The imports from Central Asia were numerous and varied. Many goods were directly imported to Kashmir from central Asia and many exported to India also were exchanged in Kashmir. The sources furnished us a long list of articles imported into Kashmir from central Asia during the period of our study.

**Shawl wool** (*pushm*): Shawl wool actually obtained from the wild goat was the basic raw material for manufacturing shawl. Shawl industry being one of prominent industries of Kashmir was in need of *pushm* for manufacturing shawl. It was imported into Kashmir from Tibet, Turfan and Kharasan in central Asia via Ladakh and Yarkhand by the caravans.<sup>94</sup> The shawl wool of Turfan in Yarkhand was superior.<sup>95</sup> It was brought to Kashmir by caravans through Kashgar, Yarkhand and Leh route. The total annual import from these provinces was eight hundred loads.<sup>96</sup> From Kashmir it passed on to the various cities of India- Amritsar, Lahore and Ludhiana.<sup>97</sup> This trade had great significance for the economy of Kashmir as many people earned their livelihood in its processing in order to make it fit for shawl weaving. And many more were associated with the manufacture of shawl and its trade. The Kharkhandars became so affluent that they put milk in their *huqas* (*Hubble bubble*) instead of water. The annual yield from shawl manufacturing and trade to the state was thirty-five lakh of rupees.<sup>98</sup> Thus, it is very apt to conclude that shawl manufacturing and shawl trade with Central Asia was good contributor to the economy of Jammu and Kashmir state.

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<sup>94</sup> Hassan, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 403

<sup>95</sup> Mitra, op. cit., p. 3. See also Hassan, op. cit., p. 403

<sup>96</sup> Bamzai, Kashmir and Central Asia, p. 30

<sup>97</sup> Ibid. See also Lawrence, Valley, p. 376

<sup>98</sup> Bamzai, Kashmir and Central Asia, p. 31

**Tea:** Tea was widely in Kashmir. It was mainly owing to the cold climatic conditions. Till the end of nineteenth century China and Japan were the leading producers of tea especially in Asia. So most of the tea was imported to Kashmir from China via Ladakh and Tibet.<sup>99</sup> Even this thrived between India and China. W.H. Bellew who on his way to Kashgar from Kashmir in 1873, writes;<sup>100</sup> “We met some small parties of coolies carrying tea on its way to Srinagar. The loads were packed in oblong bundles sewed up in sheepskins and were carried on the back in a sort of wooden saddle, worn like a knapsack.”

**Namdhas:** Though the *namdhas* were produced in Kashmir but it could not suffice the needs of people and their quality was also inferior. The *namdhas* manufactured in the cities of Kashgar and Yarkhand were the major import into Kashmir. In Kashmir the *namdhas* of Yarkhand were embroidered before being exported. As a result these fetched more prices.<sup>101</sup> This trade assumed greater significance whereas the shawl industry showed signs of decline, with the outbreak of Franco-Germans war in 1870.

**Carpets:** Though the carpet industry was well established in Kashmir, it could not suffice the needs of Kashmiri people. The carpets were also imported from Yarkhand to Kashmir and Indian cities via Kashmir.<sup>102</sup> These were superior in quality compared to that of Kashmir.

**Ponies:** In the absence of motor vehicles as means of transport the movement of goods and people the animals like horse, ponies, and yaks were used as means of transport. The ponies carried the loads and articles

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<sup>99</sup> E. F Knight, op. cit., p. 12. See also E. F. Neve, op. cit., p. 44

<sup>100</sup> Bellew, op.cit., p. 100

<sup>101</sup> Bamzai, Kashmir and Central Asia, p. 31

<sup>102</sup> Bamzai, Kashmir and Central Asia, p. 32

for sale or consumption. Ponies were imported from Yarkhand in large herds.<sup>103</sup> There was a market in Srinagar called Yarkhand *Sarai* where the sale of imported ponies took place.

**Silver:** Silver which served the raw material for fabricating different articles of daily use and ornaments was imported from central Asia via Yarkhand.<sup>104</sup>

The other imports from Central Asia included *charas*, velvets, coarse silk, gold, turquoise, musk, tobacco, *chini*, coral musk, *taisin*, *mamira*, salt, blankets, furs like *kahruba*, *mumira* and *chobi-chuni*.<sup>105</sup>

### Exports from Kashmir to Central Asia

**Shawl:** Shawl was used as a body covering, scarf or turban as well as attire of kings, queens and nobles. It was one of the leading exports to Punjab and Central Asia.<sup>106</sup> Like in western countries, shawl was popular and used by the affluent sections of society in Central Asia.<sup>107</sup> Moorcroft, who visited Kashmir in the twenties of nineteenth century mentioned, that the merchants of Turkistan, Kabul and Persia getting shawl goods manufactured in Kashmir in conformity with the requirements of their customers at home. In Bokhara the Kashmiri shawl was used in *khilats* and presents to Russian authorities in Central Asia.<sup>108</sup> This enhanced the demand of shawl. The Tibetan traders exchanged their raw wool for manufactured shawls and sold them in various markets of Central Asia

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<sup>103</sup> Bamzai, Kashmir and Central Asia, p. 33

<sup>104</sup> Sufi, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 584

<sup>105</sup> Ali Mohammad, op. cit., p.118. See also Bamzai, Kashmir and Central Asia, pp. 31-32

<sup>106</sup> Hassan, op. cit., Vol. p 497.

<sup>107</sup> K. Warikoo, *Central Asia and Kashmir*, Gian Publishing House, New Delhi, 1989, p. 62.

<sup>108</sup> K. Warikoo, op. cit., p. 65

where from these were carried to Peking (China) and other cities of Central Asian countries.

Maharaja Ranbir Singh took many special steps to encourage shawl trade with Central Asia. In 1865 when the emissaries arrived at Tashkent they stressed the importance of friendly relations for the promotion of Kashmir's trade with region. The authorities responded favourably to the envoy of the maharaja and instruction were issued to discuss related to the development of bilateral trade. However, the trade in shawl with Central Asia reduced after 1877 when China occupied eastern Turkistan.<sup>109</sup>

Moreover, the shawl was also an important item of trade with Europe especially in nineteenth century as it was very much in as a fashion. European trade was dominated by France with total percentage of 80% followed by America 10%, Italy 5%, Germany 1% and Great Britain 1%.<sup>110</sup>

**Saffron:** Saffron was used as an emollient and incense, by the Chinese and Tibetan monks in large quantities in their daily prayers. It was an important article of trade next to shawl between Kashmir and Central Asia.<sup>111</sup> From Kashgar, saffron was sent to Persia and even to Greece which increased the demand of saffron.<sup>112</sup> The trade in saffron yielded a sufficient income to both state and people.

**Kuth (Aromatic costus):** Kuth which grows on the mountains of Kashmir at an elevation of 7,000 feet was exported to China via Punjab and

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<sup>109</sup> K. Warikoo, op. cit., p. 100

<sup>110</sup> Bates, op. cit., p. 58

<sup>111</sup> Hassan, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 403

<sup>112</sup> Bamzai, *Kashmir and Central Asia*, p. 33



Bombay, where it was burnt in temples for fragrances.<sup>113</sup> It was used as the chief ingredient in various incenses and medicines. In 1864 Jammu and Kashmir State obtained nearly 90,000 from the sale of this root.<sup>114</sup> The walnut oil was exported to Tibet which brings a considerable profit to the people.<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> Bates, op. cit., p. 43

<sup>114</sup> Bamzai, *Kashmir and Central Asia*, p. 34

<sup>115</sup> Bates, op. cit., p. 47

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# *Conclusion*

## *Conclusion*

Kashmir and Jammu regions formed two separate entities with their distinct socio-economic and political structures till mid nineteenth century. In 1846 they were blended into what was known as the 'Princely State of Jammu and Kashmir' by a truce which was concluded at a place more than 300 miles away and without the inclusion of a single Kashmiri native by two factions representing the British colonialists and the Jammu dominion respectively; total strangers to Kashmir. Some historians consider it to be the sale of Kashmir which not only relocated the political masters but also facilitated numerous transformations in economic, social and cultural realms as well. It has a special significance in the annals of the history of Kashmir.

The transfer of Kashmir to Raja Gulab Singh of Jammu in 1846 entailed among other things, the improvement of the deteriorated economic affairs of the valley. However, in spite of some measures of improvement in both agrarian and non-agrarian economy like the introduction of rationing system to ensure a regular supply of grains to the people and reduction in *nazarana*, a tax levied on shawl weavers, and endorsement of change of master, no extraordinary progress was reported and achieved. Thus he continued the legacy of the Sikhs with slight manipulations. It was also partly due to his policy of consolidation and subduing the undesired elements who always thwarted the tranquility in his dominion and threatened his existence in the newly acquired 'Valley' that he could not concentrate on the administration of Kashmir.

Maharaja Ranbir Singh was to some extent more enlightened than his father, Gulab Singh. At the very outset he introduced some measures to refurbish the economic condition of state in general and that of his

subjects in particular by reducing the land revenue and by abolishing certain cesses, besides improving the means of communication and infrastructure like roads. He also tried his best to reduce the severity of natural calamities by adopting a number of measures like importing food grains from Punjab.

Though the new maharaja intended to set things right, no concrete result was achieved on account of apathy of corrupt officials and of the Dogra bureaucracy dominated by Kashmiri *Pandits* and Punjabis.

Like the preceding regimes economy formed the backbone of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir to support all its administrative structures. The economy of state in general and that of Kashmir valley in particular incorporated all the components which characterized modern economies, though with slight difference. Agriculture, horticulture, industries and handicraft, trade and commerce, taxation system, mineral wealth and pastoralism all existed in Kashmir during the period of my study and have been dealt in detail. Mineral wealth and pastoralism though could not get a thorough treatment due to paucity of sources.

Agriculture, the long standing occupation of masses and a vital source of food formed the predominant sector and mainstay of the economy of Kashmir in nineteenth century as is the case even today. The census report of 1891 revealed that 75% of population of Kashmir during the second half of the nineteenth century earned their living by practicing agriculture. The Ganganath Report of 1944 exceeds the above figure. Both food and commercial crops formed the main concern of the cultivator. However, the predominance of food crops remained the important feature.

Rice being the chief food of people occupied most of the cultivable land in a growing season. It was grown up to an altitude of 7000 feet. The rest of the food crops which include wheat, barley and maize were also grown in the valley over a significant portion of land. Pulses of numerous types constituted the dry lands agriculture in Kashmir, to satisfy the other requirements of the populace. Commercial crops like oil-seeds, cotton, saffron, tobacco, and indigo apart from satisfying the local requirements were also cultivated for market in Kashmir valley during the nineteenth century. Besides, some products which grew in the wild also augmented the economy of Kashmir.

However, in spite of rich soils and availability of plenty of water for irrigation, the production was not satisfactory. Now the question arises what actually contributed towards the low production. This was due to the apathy of the state to this sector of economy and corrupt officials as Ranbir Singh himself confessed when he told Richard Temple that the 'official are corrupt and thwarted any improvement.' Moreover, traditional agricultural technology was the chief constraint in the development of agriculture. The absence of chemical fertilizers and pesticides and the use of cow-dung and rotten grass as manure could not sustain the fertility of land for greater time and did not support the cultivation of successive crops. The peasants who were supposed to be in the fields were sent to carry the loads of food stuffs and other requirements for the troops engaged in subduing the rebels and guarding the frontier areas, where from only few returned back. This caused periodic migration of peasants from Kashmir in pursuit of earning which led to the scarcity of agricultural labour and on other hand played a vital rule in the emergence of wage labourers. Had this forced labour (*begar*) undertaken in any other season it would have least repercussions on the

agrarian production. The natural calamities before which the government was helpless always handicapped the progress of agrarian sector and forced the peasants to migrate to other regions which further augmented dearth of agriculture labour.

Above all the Kashmiri peasant contrary to his counterpart in Jammu groaned under the heavy taxation and was discriminated by denying proprietary rights during the second half of nineteenth century which he retained even during the oppressive Afghan and Sikh regimes as well. The ruler had the claim over the whole land and the cultivator could be evicted at any moment on any ground. He was left with only one-third of the produce and out of which he had to manage all his expenses which was not possible and he had to live for most part of the year on aquatic products and wild fruits. As a result no surplus was left which could have been invested for the improvement of agriculture and for the development of other sectors like industries and trade, which were suitable alternatives to gear up the economic prosperity of a region which produced fruits and natural products in abundance.

The collection of land revenue was haphazard and ruthless. It was a period when no permanent assessment was implemented and there were frequent changes in the assessment whenever the state desired. One system followed the other which was in no way better than the preceding one. The frequent change in land revenue assessments failed to bring substantial change and transformation in the economic relations of classes associated with agriculture and land revenue administration and the prosperity of peasants was totally thwarted. The long chain of revenue officials were frequently transferred or dismissed. So they were quick to fill their pockets during their tenure and had no concern for cultivator's

prosperity and acceleration of yield. However in 1887 regular settlement work commenced under the guidance and leadership of A. Wingate who was succeeded by W. R. Lawrence in 1889 and both of them recommended besides the other things, restoration of propriety rights to the cultivator. But all their recommendation could not allure the due contemplation of the authorities and again in 1931 the Glancy Commission vehemently stressed the reinstatement of propriety rights. If a foresighted policy towards peasants, and adequate measures to ensure fair administration and reduce the severity of natural calamities would have been adopted by the Dogra Maharajas, the state of affairs would have been different.

Kashmir since ancient times but more particularly from the reign of Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin and Mirza Haider Dughlat has attained a high reputation as a center of marvelous arts and craft, in spite of primitive technical know-how. About Zain-ul-Abidin it is said that whenever he heard that an artist from central Asia visited Kashmir, he called him to his court and asked him to make the people of his dominion acquainted with art and did not permit him to leave the Valley until he completely taught the art to the people. Mughals who succeeded the Sultans not only maintained the tempo of progress of arts and crafts and industries but even raised them higher and introduced new ones. Afghan and Sikh periods which intervene the medieval and modern period in Kashmir were notorious for the economic exploitation of Kashmir.

Silk industry was one of the prominent industries of this period. It provided employment to the greater section of population and also generated a heavy income in the form of taxes to the state. Other crafts like carpet making, paper-machie, metal works, wood works and *namdha*

and *ghabha* making flourished during the period under review, but shawl industry which assimilated a large number of people and was a major contributor of income to the state saw decline after 1870. During Ranbir Singh's reign the best shawls were produced in Kashmir. But on account of low wages, exorbitant taxation and unhealthy conditions in workshops this occupation was in no way a better option of livelihood. In 1870 on account of Franco-German wars and later in 1877-78 on account of famine, this industry collapsed. The shawl weavers never strived to revive this industry. They either migrated to Punjab or opted for other occupations in spite of Maharaja Ranbir Singh's efforts to render miscellaneous assistance.

Carpet industry during the reign of Gulab Singh and early years of Ranbir Singh was not much renowned but after the collapse of the shawl industry and involvement of European businessmen in the carpet trade it assumed prominence. The shawl weavers were encouraged to take up this profession which for them was not too intricate. European firms were established in Srinagar and its environs. It became the second important industry of the state after the silk industry in terms of the number of workers employed and the income it generated.

This period also witnessed the penetration of European firms and traders in the economic affairs of Kashmir especially its trade and commerce which caused great transformation in the economy of Kashmir. It expanded and exposed the Kashmiri products to the western civilizations and accelerated their demand and consequently expanded the trade. It also led to the transmission of European technology in the manufacturing sector of Kashmir, which amplified production. However, on the other hand it made the economy of Kashmir, especially the



secondary sector subservient to European markets. Consequently, decline of certain industries set in due to the plummet of demand of Kashmiri goods in Europe because of various factors like competition from the machine made merchandise either from British Indian territories or from European nations.

However, owing to the state machinery and other factors, the industries during the period under review were subjected to certain constraints which hindered their growth and expansion. Firstly, most of the industries were unorganized and backward. The manufacturing unit or work shop consisted of two or three rooms and even sometimes one room in the case of metal works. They were devoid of adequate facilities for work. For most industries the raw-material was imported from Central Asia and other parts of India which in the absence of adequate means of transport was a cumbersome process. Hence, the raw-material became expensive. Consequently, the production was low, contrary to that of India and other countries. Generally the goods were manufactured by hand, except in the case of the shawl industry where looms were operated. The condition of workers in these units was deplorable on account of low wages and heavy taxation which often compelled them to borrow money from moneylender on interest under *Wad*.

The trade and commerce both internal and external was brisk in terms of both exports and imports. Barter system was dominant mode of business transactions especially in internal trade but money transactions were also being increasingly used. The means of transportation which is prerequisite for the brisk trade and commerce especially with regard to external trade of Kashmir were traditional and poor, which restricted the quick and safe movement of goods. It was because of this, the fruits

which were abundantly grown and formed an important item of export, mostly perished in the orchards and houses of owners; otherwise they could have fetched a sufficient income. No doubt, during the later stage of Ranbir Singh's reign, telegraph, postal system and roads received a fillip but the famine of 1877-78 and heavy custom duties at different posts, on both imports and exports thwarted all his efforts and it was only after the turn of the century that trade and commerce flourished by leaps and bounds.

Thus, it can be concluded that the economy of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir, particularly of the 'Valley of Kashmir' during the second half of nineteenth century though possessed of all those ingredients which characterized modern economies was not at par with those of the neighbouring regions and countries. It retained most features of medieval economy characterized by sluggish growth, low per capita income and was unorganized and was subjected to various constraints owing to natural calamities, official hegemony, apathy of state authorities and heavy taxation.



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*Appendix*

## *Appendix-1*

### **Treaty of Amritsar**

Treaty between the British Government on the one part and Maharaja Gulab Singh of Jammu on the other, concluded on the part of the British Government by Frederick Currie, Esquire, and Brevet-Major Henry Montgomery Lawrence, acting under the orders of the right honorable Sir Henry Hardinge, G.C.B one of Her Britannic Majesty's most Hon'ble Privy Council, Governor General, appointed by the Hon'ble , Company to direct and control all their affairs in the East Indies, and by Maharaja Gulab Singh in person,- 1846.

#### Article 1

The British Government transfers and makes over for ever, in independent possession to Maharaja Gulab Singh and the heirs male of his body all the hilly and 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 9<sup>th</sup> March 1846.

#### Article 2

The eastern boundary of the tract transferred by the foregoing Article to Maharaja Gulab Singh shall be laid down by Commissioners appointed by the British Government and Maharaja Gulab Singh respectively for that purpose, and shall be defined by a separate Engagement after survey.

#### Article 3

In consideration of the transfer made to him and his heirs by the provisions of the foregoing Articles, Maharaja Gulab Singh will pay to the British Government the sum of seventy-five lakhs of Rupees (Nanukshahee), fifty lakh to be paid on ratification of this Treaty and twenty- five lakhs on or before the first October of the current year, A.D. 1846.

#### Article 4

The limits of the territories of Maharaja Gulab Singh shall not be at any time changed without the concurrence of the British Government.

#### Article 5

Maharaja Gulab Singh will refer to the arbitration of the British Government any disputes or questions that may arise between himself and the Government of Lahore or any other neighbouring State, and will abide by the decision of the British Government.

#### Article 6

Maharaja Gulab Singh engages for himself and heirs to join, with the whole of his Military Force, the British troops, when employed within the hills or in the territories adjoining his possession.

#### Article 7

Maharaja Gulab Singh engages never to take or retain in his service, any British subject, nor the subject of any European or American State, without the consent of the British Government.

#### Article 8

Maharaja Gulab Singh engages to respect, in regard to the territory transferred to him, the provisions of the articles V, VI, and VII of the separate Engagement between the British Government and the Lahore Durbar, dated March 11<sup>th</sup>, 1846.

#### Article 9

The British Government will give its aid to Maharaja Gulab Singh in protecting his territories from external enemies.

#### Article 10

Maharaja Gulab Singh acknowledges the supremacy of the British Government, and will in token of such supremacy present annually to the British Government one horse, twelve perfect shawl goats of approved breed (six male and six female), and three pairs of Kashmiri shawls.

Done at Amritsar, the sixteenth day of March, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and forty six, corresponding with the seventeenth day of Rubbee-ool-awal 1262 Hijree.

F. Currie.

H. Hardinge.

H.M. Lawrence.

By order of the Right Hon'ble the Governor-General of India.

F. Currie,

Secretary to the Government of India,

with the Governor-General.

Source: C. U. Aitchison, A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads Relating to India and Neighbouring Countries, Vol. XII.

## Appendix-2

Commercial Treaty between the British Government and the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir, his heirs and successors, executed on the one part by Thomas Douglas Forsyth, C. B., in virtue of full powers vested in him by His Excellency the Right Hon'ble Richard Southwell Bourke, Earl of Mayo, Viscount Mayo of Monycrower, Baron Naas of Naas, K. P., G.M.S.I., P.C., etc., Viceroy and Governor-General of India and on the other part by His Highness Maharaja Ranbir Singh in person.

Article 1 .-with of consent of the Maharaja, officers of the British Government will be appointed to survey the trade-route through the Maharaja's territories from the British frontier of Lahoul to the territories of the Ruler of Yarkand, including the route via the Changchenmo Valley. The Maharaja will depute an officer of his Government to accompany the surveyors, and will render them all the assistance in his power. A map of the routes surveyed will be made, an attested copy of which will be given to the Maharaja.

Article 2. Whichever route towards the Changchenmo Valley shall, after examination and survey as above, be declared by the British Government to be the best suited for the development of trade with Central Asia, shall be declared by the Maharaja to be a free highway in perpetuity and at all times for all travelers and traders.

Article 3. For the supervision and maintenance of the road in its entire length though the Maharaja's territories, the regulation of traffic on the free highway describes in article 2.,the enforcement of regulation that may hereafter be agreed upon, and the settlement of disputes between carriers, traders, travellers or others using that road, in which either of the parties or both of them are subjects of the British Government or of any foreign State, two Commissioners shall be annually appointed , one by the British Government and one by the Maharaja. In the discharge of their duties, and as regards the period of their residence, the Commissioners shall be guided by such rules as are now separately framed and may from time to time hereafter be laid down by the joint authority of the British Government and the Maharaja.

Article 4.The jurisdiction of the Commissioners shall be defined by a line on each side of the road at a maximum width of the two statute *kos*, except where it may be deemed by the Commissioners necessary to include a wider extent for grazing grounds. Within this maximum width, the surveyors appointed under article 1 . shall demarcate and map the limits of jurisdiction which may be decided by the Commissioners as most suitable, including grazing grounds; and the jurisdiction of the Commissioners shall not extend beyond the limits so demarcated. The land included within these limits shall remain in the Maharaja's independent possession; and, subject to the stipulations contained in this treaty, the Maharaja shall continue to possess the same rights of full sovereignty therein as in any other part of his territories , which rights shall not be interfered with in any by the Joint Commissioners.

Article 5. The Maharaja agrees to give all possible assistance in enforcing the decisions of the Commissioners, and in preventing the breach or evasion of the Regulations established under article 3.

Article 6. The Maharaja agrees that any person, whether a subject of the British Government, or of the Maharaja, or of the Ruler of Yarkand, or of any foreign State, may settle at any place

within the jurisdiction of the Joint Commissioners, and may provide, keep, and maintain, and let for hire at different stages, the means of carriage and transport for the purposes of trade.

Article 7. The two Commissioners shall be empowered to establish supply depots, and to authorize other persons to establish supply depots at such places on the road as may appear to them suitable; to fix the rates at which provisions shall be sold to traders, carriers, settlers, and others, and to fix the rent to be charged for the use of any rest-houses or serais that may be established on the road. The officers of the British Government in Kulla, &c., and the officers of the Maharaja in Ladakh, shall be instructed to use their best endeavours to supply provisions on the indent of the Commissioners at market rates.

Article 8. The Maharaja agrees to levy no transit duty whatever on the aforesaid highway; and the Maharaja further agrees to abolish all transit duties levied within his territories on goods transmitted in bond through His Highness' territories from Central Asia to India, and vice versa, on which bulk may not be broken within the territories of His Highness. On goods imported into or exported from, His Highness' territory, whether by the aforesaid free highway or by any other route, the Maharaja may levy such import or export duties as he may think fit.

Article 9.- The British Government agree to levy no duty on goods transmitted in bond through British India to Central Asia, or to the territories of His Highness the Maharaja. The British Government further agrees to abolish the export duties now levied on shawls and other textile fabrics manufactured in the territories of the Maharaja, and exported to countries beyond the limits of British India.

Article 10.- This Treaty, consisting of ten Articles, has this day been concluded by Thomas Douglas Forsyth, C.B., in virtue of the full powers vested in him by His Excellency the Right Hon'ble Richard Southwell Bourke, Earl of Mayo, Viscount Mayo of Moneycrower, Baron Nass of Nass, K.P., &C., Viceroy and Governor-General of India, on the part of the British Government, and by Maharaja Ranbir Singh, aforesaid; and it is agreed that a copy of this Treaty, duly ratified by His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General of India, shall be delivered to the Maharaja on or before the 7<sup>th</sup> September, 1870.

Signed, sealed, and exchanged on the second day of May in the years 1870 A.D., corresponding with the first day of Bysak Soode Sumbut 1927.

(Signed) MAHARAJ RANBIR SINGH.

(Signed) T. D. FORSYTH.

MAYO. (Seal).

Source: C. U. Aitchison, A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads Relating to India and Neighbouring Countries, Vol. XII.

### Appendix-3

#### Translation of an *Arzie* from the Chowdries, Manufacturers, pundits and Inhabitants of Kashmir to the British Government.

God be praised that He has appointed kings to do justice and this cannot be done by any other but you. It is well known that under your government in every city the people live peace without prejudice for or against their religion and without distinction from this cause your rule has extended from England even to Hindustan. People of other countries who heard of the manner in which you administer justice desire your government. We ourselves are very unfortunate in that our country has come under your power. The entire world knows that we are not employed by any one but work with our own hands for our livelihood. Although the former kings were very kind towards us, yet the deceased Sheikh treated us more like sons, after his death his son also behaved in the same way towards us. But the English by giving this country to Raja Gulab Singh are oppressing us, his tyranny is so well known, that it needs no explanation and his ancient subjects are witnesses to it.

In giving over the country to Raja Gulab Singh, who fears no God, you are oppressing us and so breaking your own rule which is based on justice. Because you are doers of justice and cherishers of your subjects. We beseech you not to oppress us in this way but to place over us any one but not Gulab Singh. We will not disobey your orders but if it be that we are to have him, we shall all run away both small and great, subscribed by the seals of two hundred and seventy-five persons.

(True Translation)

Sd./- John Lawrence

Commander and Superintendent,

Jullunder Doab, On Duty at Lahore.

Foreign Department, 26 December 1846, No. 1125, NAI.

## Appendix-4

### An Arzie from the Hill Chiefs to the British

It is known to the entire world that the Chokliane kings gave our ancestors titles and were very kind of them and they lived in peace. After the time of these kings, all the Jagirs were resumed which straitened them much when the deceased Sheikh became ruler of the country he showed them great kindness and administered justice. After his death his son and successor, Imam-ud-Din showed us double that kindness.

When we heard the news of this country being about to be governed by the English we rejoiced greatly and thought they would show us the same kindness as they had shown to others. But hearing that the country made over to Maharaja Gulab Singh caused us great sorrow, as we know well that he oppressed the people greatly over whom he ruled formerly, dethroning some kings, and imprisoning others without any cause whatever. Through this fear we opposed him; nevertheless we are not unwilling to be in subjection to you, we hope you will not give this country to Raja Gulab Singh but to any other person whom you may think fit and we will obey him but if you give it to him, the people will all run away and for us there is no other remedy besides fighting with him.

(True translation)

Sd./- John Lawrence

Commander and superintendent,

Jullundar, Doab, on duty at Lahore.

Foreign Department, 1847, No. 1125, NAI.



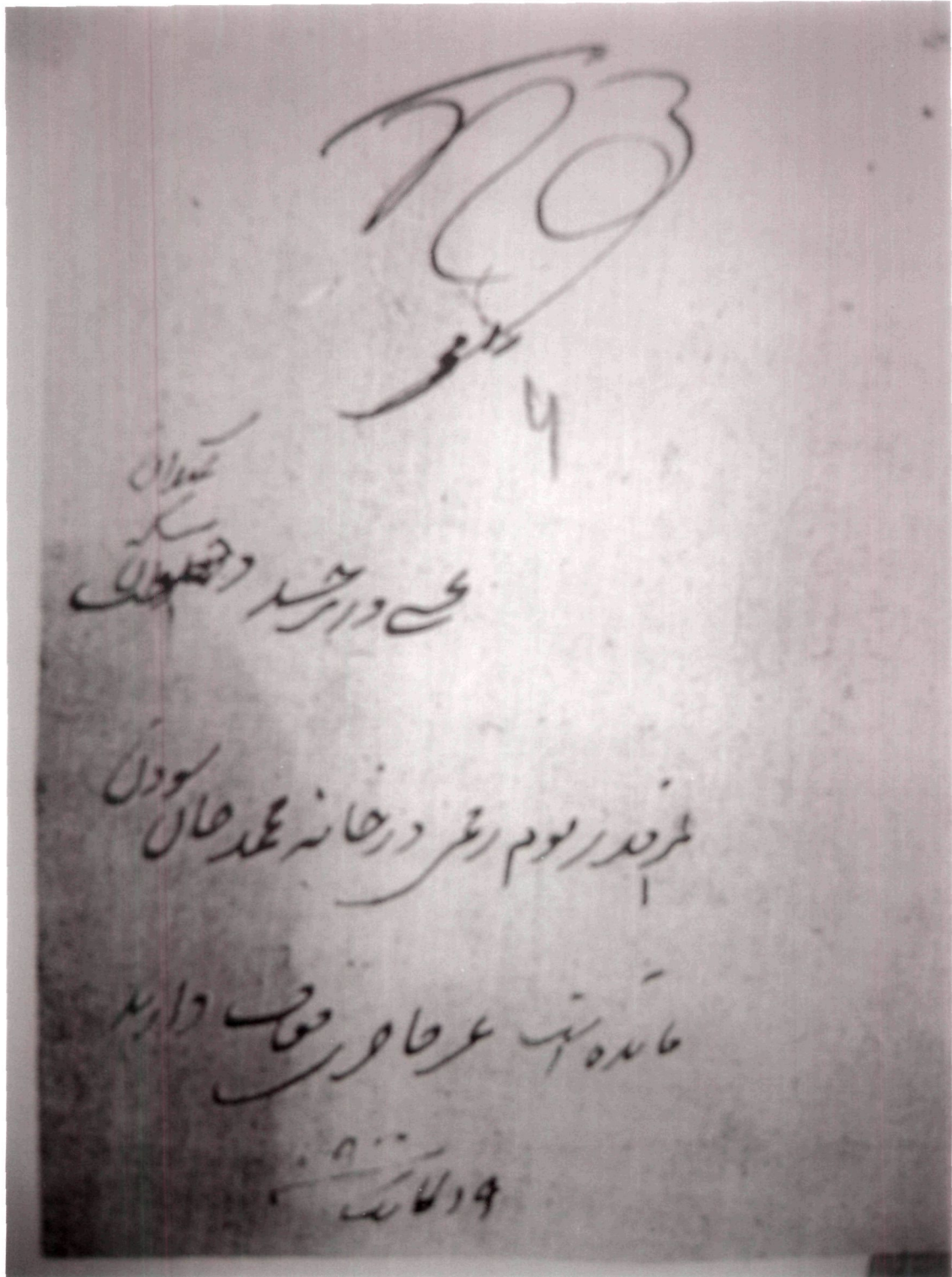
## Appendix-5

### Weights and Measures

<b>Kashmiri Weights and Measures</b>	<b>Modern Weights and Measures</b>
1 Pao =	250 gms.
4 Poa = 1 Seer	1 kg (960gm)
5 Seers = 1 Trak	5 kgs
1 Manwata = 1/4 Trak	1 kg 250gms.
16 Traks = 1 Kharwar	80kgs

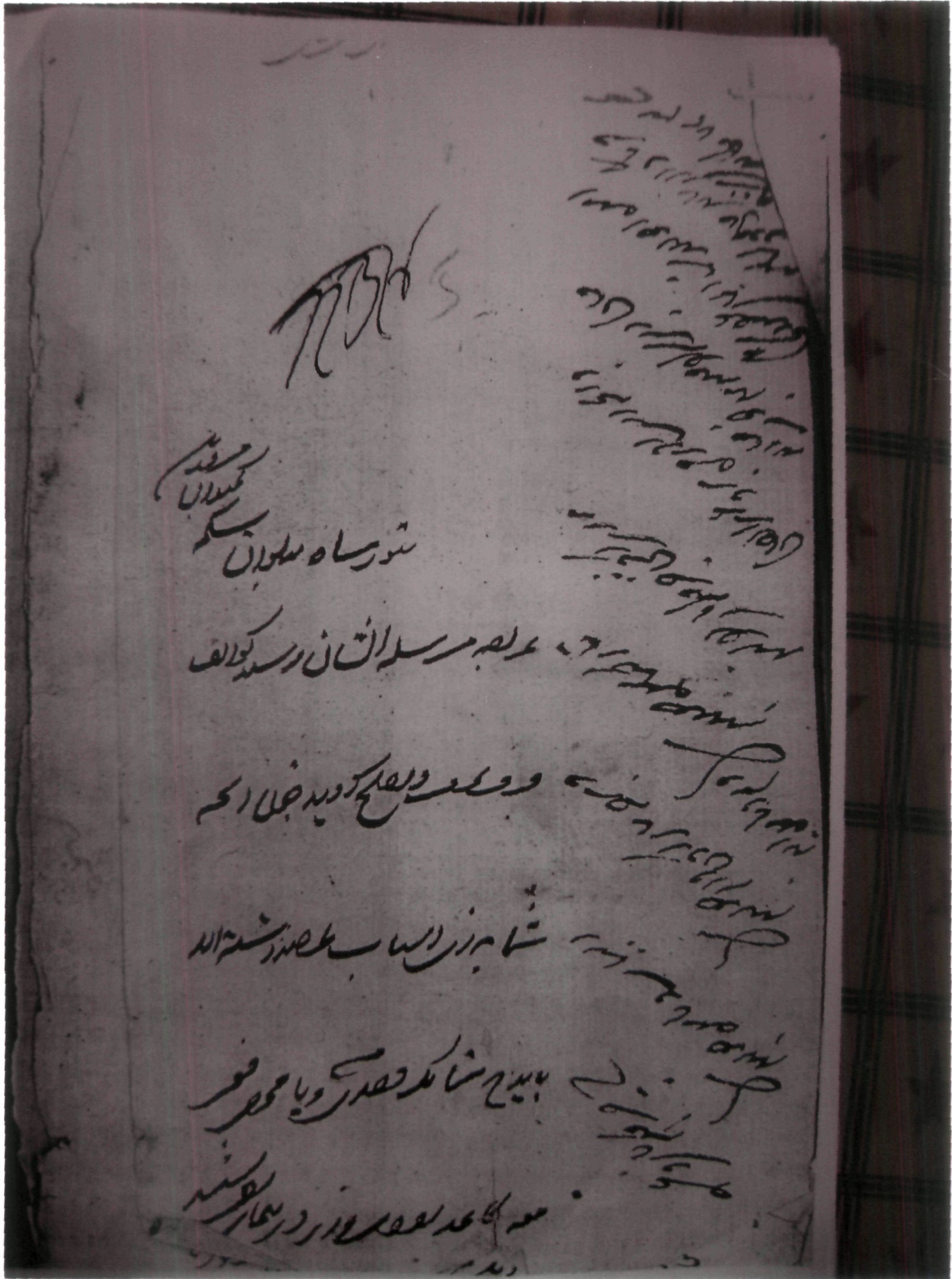
Source; Bates, Gazetteer of Kashmir, Bamzia, Socio- Economic History of Kashmir

Appendix-6



Sanad issued by Maharaja Gulab Singh in 1847  
Source: Jammu and Kashmir State archives, Jammu.

Appendix-7



Sanad issued by Maharaja Gulab Singh in 1847  
Source: Jammu and Kashmir State archives, Jammu.



## Appendix-8

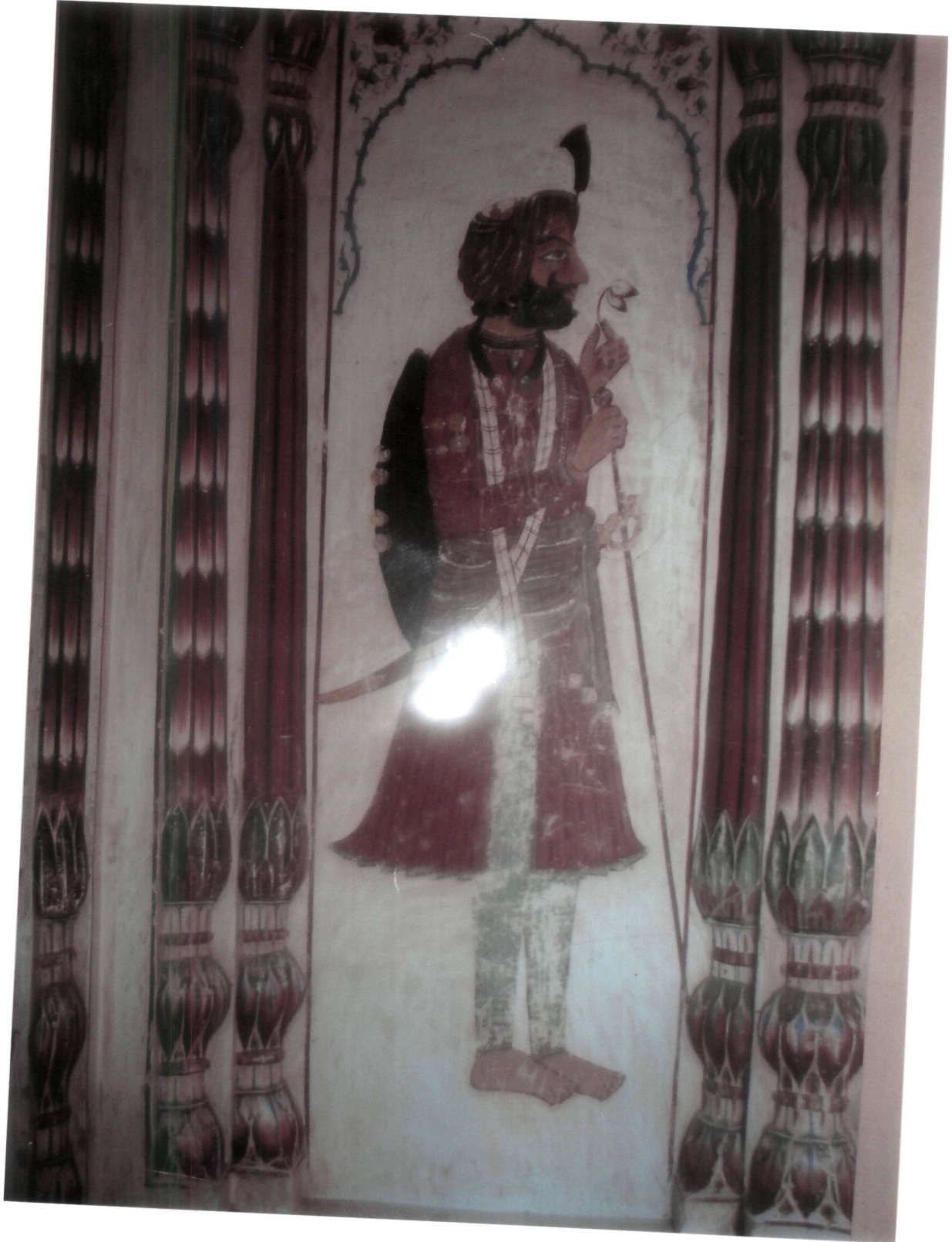
Jammu January 8<sup>th</sup> 1868

My dear Sir,

In these days His Highness the Maharajah is pleased to make a proper arrangement in the shawl affairs with the view of increasing the welfare and happiness of the shawl manufacturing class in the lovely Valley of Cashmere, and has liberally exempted the sum of Rs 300000 three hundred thousand to them year by year & previous to this there was a usual tax of 30 or thirty percent on the goods unopened arriving from Turkestan through His Highness's dominion to the British Territory, but now His Highness has with his own pleasure reduced the aforesaid tax to only 5 percent for the purpose of promoting and improving trade in general and long since there was a kind of tax under the term of *Nuger* (or present) of Rs 5 in each and a *Nundah* (ruy) piece on each caravan & in the last hot season Mr Grayley has caused to fix the said present on 50 fifty pomeys, but the same has at present been remitted entirely. H. H. the Maharajah and at this month two translations, one of the proclamation

Letter from Diwan Kirpa Ram to N. Elphinstone regarding the remission of tax on shawl weavers and shawl trades Dated 1868  
Source: Jammu and Kashmir State archives, Jammu.

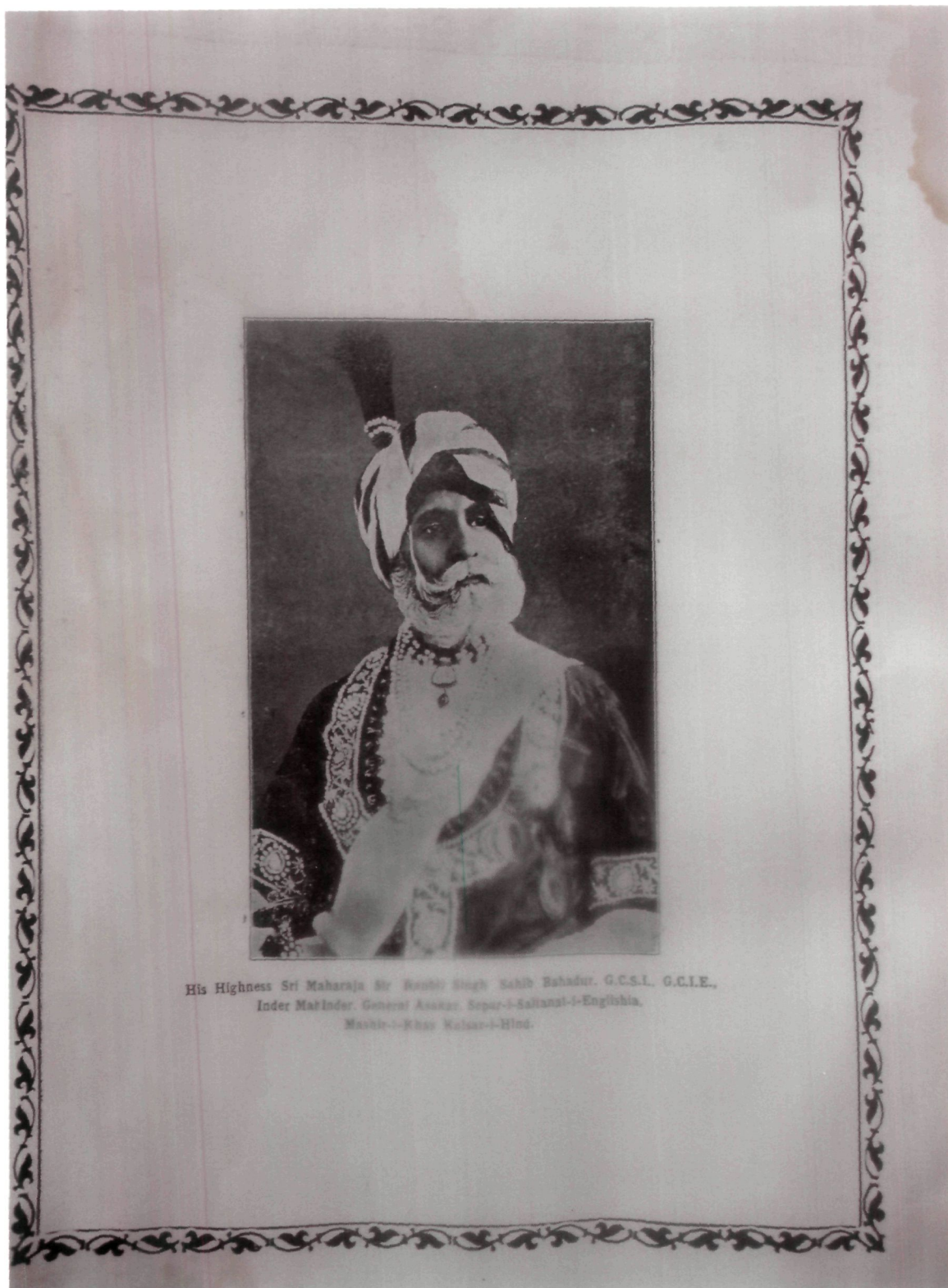
**Appendix-10**



**Maharaja Gulab Singh**  
**Source: Government Dogra Art Museum, Jammu**

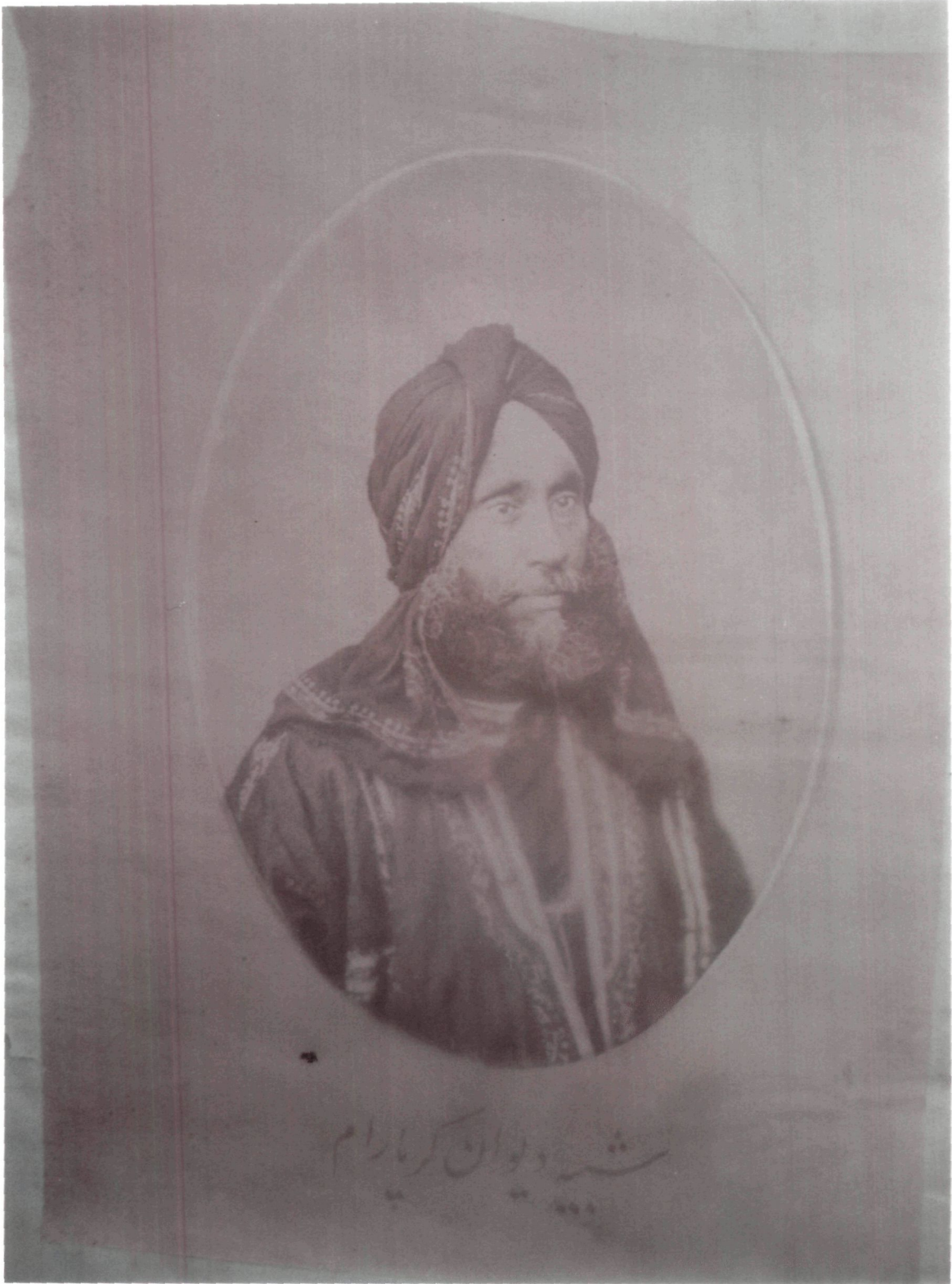


## Appendix-11



**Maharaja Ranbir Singh**  
Source: Government Dogra Art Museum, Jammu

**Appendix-12**



**Diwan Kirpa Ram**  
**Source: Government Dogra Art Museum, Jammu**