

Understanding Early Formation of Punjabi Diaspora: Causes and Dispersions

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Using many untapped primary sources the present paper attempts to trace the early factors in overseas migration from Punjab and locate their varied destinations during this formative diasporic process, which later contributed to the emergence of a global Punjabi community. The paper begins by looking briefly at pre-colonial movements across the north-western borders as Punjab was closely connected to trade routes linking it with the Old Silk Road and west Asian countries. The paper then moves to discuss impacts on Punjab during the British colonial period. Colonial policies led to substantial changes in the socio-economic structure of the province. Coupled with frequent famines, plague, and new economic policies which increased debt of the Punjab peasantry, many Punjabis were forced to look for greener pastures abroad. The paper also discusses early beginnings of diaspora with the British exiling Punjabis overseas as 'political prisoners' and 'rebels'. The paper also highlights the rarely discussed early destinations of non-military Punjabi overseas migrants who wanted to better their fortunes and makes interesting comments on their experiences.

Section I: Early Movements across Borders

The story of the formation of the Punjabi Diaspora is quite engrossing. There is virtually no country in the world today where a substantial number of Punjabis are not settled and yet literature of their early movement still remains limited. Moreover, it is quite a modern phenomenon starting in the colonial period and contrasts and differs from the rest of Indian provinces in many crucial ways. Although going back to almost a century and a half, its origins and actual process of formation remains almost obscure. Five rivers (Punj-five aab –water) have contributed to the fertility of its central districts as well contributing to several trading posts across the region. Between Lahore, Multan and Thatta there was large scale trading of commodities as Thatta served an outlet for manufactured goods transported often by river-boats. Ranjit Singh, the Sikh ruler, especially encouraged commerce and the trading classes whose trade included silk and carpets from the Kashmir province.¹

Punjab being a trade route to the Middle East saw extensive movement of people from Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Iran, Iraq and other neighbouring countries involved in trade. The in and out-migration of traders, conquerors, and adventurers resulted in permanent settlement of various ethno-religious groups, diversifying the region's cultural heritage.² More recent studies by Levi and Markovits mentions Sindhis and Punjabi Khatri trading posts in Multan during the early Islamic incursion into India who received imperial

patronage, some of these traders had settled in places as far as Russian-occupied Islamic regions of Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. What is certain is that for many centuries prior to the colonial era there were colonies of South Asian merchants at various ports of the Indian Ocean and the China Sea staffed by Hindu and Muslim traders. Early evidence shows Hindu merchants' presence in the port of Siraf on the Persian shore of the Gulf from the ninth century onwards while it was the Sindhis who contributed in the growing diaspora of South Asian merchants from the fifteenth century onwards. The oldest continuous Indian commercial colony was in Masqat (now Muscat, capital of Oman), where Bhatias from the town of Thatta in Lower Sind developed extensive and deep commercial ties. Trade with the South East Asian region increased considerably in the second half of the nineteenth century. Many traders from South India as well as from Gujarat, Punjab and Sind were active participants in it.³

However, with the establishment of the colonial rule in Punjab, a systematic attempt to record movement of people from various provinces of India became part of the new style of administration.⁴ The unrest and uncertainty following the death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and increased Russian threat on the north-western border, led to the annexation of Punjab by the British. This action was preceded by two successive military campaigns against the Sikhs in 1845-1846 and 1848-1849. Punjab, being one of the last major regions to be incorporated into the British Empire, underwent dramatic changes during the phase of colonial rule.

The period of 1849 till the end of the colonial rule was very critical in the history of Punjab, not only in the political, social, economic and cultural sense, but also in the diasporic sense. Punjabi diasporic trend was affected by the push and pull factors prevalent at that time. These two factors worked together and led the genesis of Punjabi diaspora. According to Tatla:

‘The colonial history of migration is not only important in its own right, but it sheds considerable light on the characteristics of post-independence overseas settlement. Migration, no less than other aspect of the subcontinent’s history, displays elements of both new beginning and continuity with respect to the 1947 watershed.’⁵

Annexation of Punjab and Early Consequences

The Punjabi Diaspora’s unique formation was due to some peculiar features of this region. The ‘Non Regulated’ province experienced a different style of administration under the Board of Control, and overhauling of the older socio-economic structure ushered in drastic change. Annexation of Punjab by Lord Dalhousie, although resisted by many of his officers, was a major decision. The Punjab province till 1849 was a buffer state bordering with Afghanistan. After annexation British borders came directly in confrontation with Afghanistan’s war-like tribes, and this serious border crisis needed special attention. Although the decision to disband the Khalsa army was already taken and 50,000 soldiers

were sent back to their villages, it was later found to have been made rather hastily and this forced Dalhousie to reconsider it. As a result of the reconsideration, some of the old Khalsa army soldiers were re-employed at the North West frontier to tackle the situation. According to the British, Punjabis soldiers were well adapted in that climate and geography on this side of the border.⁶

In a society no one factor acts in isolation, factors are inter-connected which leads to a chain reaction and results of outcomes of different shades. This was the period when Punjabis directly came into contact with the British and the western world. The impacts of British policies changed the whole socio-economic structure of the Punjab in the later nineteenth and early twentieth century and forced many Punjabis to look for opportunities abroad.

Frequent Occurrence of Famines

The British government could not develop a definite policy about famine. Whenever famine occurred, a Famine Commission was appointed with no concrete results. No full and independent enquiries were undertaken to look into the causes of famines, nor were sufficient remedies proposed for preventing these famines or mitigating their effects when they did occur.⁷ Several cycles of famine and scarcity occurred; between 1858 and 1879 three famines occurred during the years 1860-61, 1868-70 and 1877-78. The last great famine of 1899-1900 was the 'severest' that India has ever known. In Punjab, out of thirty-one districts, twenty-eight were affected by famine. Of them severely affected were Hissar, Rohtak, Gurgaon, Karnal, Delhi, Ambala, Lahore, Shahpur, Gujrat, Jhelum, Ferozapore, Multan, Amritsar, Dera Gazi Khan and Mianwali tehsil of Bannu district.⁸ Conditions of scarcity and famine led to migration of people to areas of food, fodder and work. Under these circumstances internal and external migration was taking place.⁹ The emigration to build the Uganda Railways started under these circumstances. The port of Karachi appeared for the first time as an emigration port in the year 1897-98 when 330 emigrants were dispatched to Mombasa to work on the Uganda Railways. Till then it was not a legally permissible site for embarkation of indentured labourers. During three years, some 27,000 male labourers left Karachi for East Africa and the great bulk of these emigrants were from Punjab.¹⁰

Plague

From 1897 to 1947 the plague in India claimed more than ten million victims. Of these, 75 percent of the deaths occurred in just three provinces: Punjab, United Provinces and Bombay. In fact, Punjab was the worst affected province. During this period, the plague in Punjab claimed 3,475,066 lives. The death rate was 122.2 per mile. The effects of these epidemics were very marked in the densely populated districts of Amritsar, Gurdaspur, Jallundur and Sialkot.¹¹ The year 1907 was disastrous for Punjab. The breakout of plague claimed the death of 608,685 against 91,712 in 1906.¹² Lepel Griffin, Officiating Secretary to

Government of Punjab and its Dependencies, informed all Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners on 18th September, 1877, that serious riots took place at Delhi, Ambala and in the Rohtak district, in consequence of the high and increasing price of grain.¹³ After a period of two years, during which the incidence of plague was comparatively light, the province was once again visited with an epidemic of considerable severity in 1919 and there was an equally severe visitation in 1911, with the mortality in these two years being 135,483 and 175,345, respectively.¹⁴

The ensuing famine left many families no choice but to sell or transfer their lands at the first instance. Transferring of lands in the form of sales and mortgages, particularly by lower and intermediate land-owners was a regular occurrence during each famine. Land transfers (both sale and mortgages) showed an upward trend during these famine years and this led to impoverishment of the peasantry. Most of these land transfers increased land ownership in the hands of *Shahukars*.¹⁵ Under these circumstances many peasants resorted to emigration to escape their ordeal.

Major Changes in Economy

Citing authentic official records, Lala Lajpat Rai commented upon the negative economic impact of policies of the British. Although Sikh rule had fully recognised private property in land and despite the heavy taxation rate, the government gave back with one hand what it had taken with the other. The first effect of British occupation of the Punjab was on the level of assessment. In 1847-48 the land revenue of Punjab was \$820,000. Within three years of British annexation it went up to \$1,060,000.¹⁶

The most conspicuous force responsible for the collapse of peasant prosperity and the rise of money lending class was the general introduction of cash assessments, so changing the dependence on barter system to cash economy. Cash economy unleashed forces in society that were new and these in turn affected it profoundly. The peasant had no capital to start with and again and again had to knock at the door of the moneylenders. As Punjab came into contact with new market forces, more visible changes began to occur. As the value of the land increased, so did the problems of the peasants. Malcolm Darling argues that as prosperity increased, so did peasant debt. Substantiating his argument, he elaborates that at the beginning of British rule mortgages were rare and money-lenders were weak. But by 1874 over one million acres were under mortgage, and by 1891 there were nearly four million acres and it kept on increasing. Analyzing the causes of debt he further concludes that apart from the increase in the value of land and vicious business practices by money lenders, there were multiple reasons for debt. The small and divided landholdings and loss of cattle wealth due to regular occurrence of draught and disease were some other reasons for debt.¹⁷

The growth of indebtedness, land transfers, breakup of the village community and introduction of civil justice strengthened power of the money lending class. After 1857, law courts came to be manned by the '*Munsiffs*' and

majority of the cases belonged to the money lending caste. The money lenders' suits which stood at 31,687 in 1856 went on increasing progressively till 1878 when they reached 116,717, constituting nearly 50% of the entire litigation of the province.¹⁸ Actually the practice of farmers 'borrowing money' started immediately after British control of Jullundur *Doab* in 1846, but the process was slow. But it gained momentum as three famines broke out in sixties and seventies.¹⁹

According to Richard Fox, labour migration and international migration is likely to occur more where market forces controlled the rural economy. This was the case in central Punjab. The more debt was accumulated the greater was the likelihood that cultivators would turn to both labour migration and military service. This is exactly what occurred in colonial Punjab. He further elaborates that they used the remittances out of military services and labour migration abroad to protect the agrarian system based on household land ownership and family labour.²⁰ Paradoxically, on the other hand, according to Tatla, by 1904 Indian wheat exports to Great Britain exceeded those of Russia and the United States, and the Punjab provided a major part of the Indian food grain trade. The exports that left the Punjab brought cash and credit, making distant travel possible for Jat Sikh peasants. In the absence of any industrial enterprise, land was almost the only safe investment so the remittances out of military service and wages earned abroad were diverted towards land and land only.

Pressure on the soil was greater in the *Doab* area, especially in Jullundur due to high density of population and in Hoshiarpur due to greater density in cultivation area. There was hardly any room for extension of cultivation. The Nakodar and Phillaur areas were the most densely populated in Punjab. As mentioned above, land was minutely sub-divided, and many small proprietors were heavily in debt and involved in litigation. The only ray of hope was emigration, and it was becoming quite a common thing for men from *Doaba* region to migrate to Australia.²¹ The enterprising spirit of the Punjab people and their readiness to migrate solved some of the congestion problems. According to Census officials, 'for the enterprising spirit of man of the population and their readiness to emigrate, from the densely populated tracts, even to go beyond India, prevents any actual congestion.' They further elaborated that 'there can be little doubt that Jullundur, for example, would soon be hopelessly congested, but for the character of its population, which seek service in or out of India with equal readiness, while the Himalaya states could not support a rapidly increasing population which refuse to emigrate...'²²

By the decade 1891-1901, any possible extension of cultivation under the existing conditions had been practically exhausted. Colonisation (opening up of Canal Colonies) was too recent to afford much relief. The subsequent decade 1901-1911 was extremely harsh and unhealthy with epidemics of malaria, and plague causing abnormally high death rates.²³ The work on construction of canals in the wastelands of western districts of Punjab led to massive relocation of Punjabi farmers across various districts during the last decade of the 18th and the first decade of 19th centuries. But this could not resolve the problem. As mentioned above, here again as the value of land increased, much of the land

was going out of the hands of farmers towards money lenders. To curb this menace the British passed the Land Alienation Act (1900),²⁴ but it did not solve the problem of rural indebtedness. Other unpopular bills such as The Colonization Bill (1906) led to farmers' protests in some parts of the province resulting in the arrest of their leaders Ajit Singh and Lajpat Rai.²⁵ The situation was becoming alarming not only economically but also politically which in turn started influencing the military as well. Many secret societies of Sikhs in Lahore and Amritsar were very active.²⁶

To set things on the right track, other options opened up for the peasantry to survive, one being the old tradition of their military service. Regarding the military profession Brief (1978) explains that in general, the recruits were found in those parts of the province which were economically backwards and disadvantaged by the prevailing physical conditions. In the south-eastern districts, the single most important district in the area for recruitment was Rohtak, which supplied just under half of the total Jat recruits in 1897-98 and 1898-99. The conditions prevailing in the district were vividly portrayed in a report on the famine of 1877-78. Apart from the 1840s and 1850s, the district experienced a famine of varying intensity, at least once a decade, during the period 1800-1914. Brief also describe their attitude to army service as 'a kind of famine insurance policy.' The Jats of Rohtak tended to enter the army to ensure a regular income. He further noted that 'the nature of the army as a safety net against famine is testified by the refusal of soldiers to take their discharge at the time of famine'. But for central Punjab - Ferozpur, Jullundhur, Amritsar, Hoshiarpur and Ludhiana - which were major recruiting ground for the army, the energetic Jat population sought to increase their land and resources by securing non-agricultural sources of income. But military service was only acceptable if higher wages or greater profits were not available elsewhere. Brief asserted that 'the Sikh would go where he could earn most money.'²⁷ The military was not paying much compared with what the Punjabis needed to cope up with their economic situation. Given that pay was much less for domestic service, they preferred recruiting themselves for services overseas. For example, an Indian policeman in China could earn the equivalent of Rs 26 to 30 per month.²⁸ Punjabi emigration remained concerned with the social and economic need to recover, preserve or improve family living standard, prestige and honour of the family vis-a-vis other families.

Contemporary Newspapers

Contemporary newspapers from 1895-1900 contain editorial opinion pieces which were used to inform as well as encourage Punjabis and Sikhs in particular, to see how different communities of the world such as British and Muslim had grown and progressed by adopting new professions other than their own. From time to time they were encouraged to go to other islands, persuaded to reside over there, and make them their homes, expand their income and progress. Editors further asserted that 'Christians have not confined themselves to Europe only, they have accepted the world as their country and expanded themselves

and their religion, but the Sikhs have not made any property overseas, nor have expanded their religion. All this is possible only if they make themselves free'.²⁹

They further examined how the Sikhs who went overseas, spent a long time abroad, but came back and went back to their old villages, they were either killed by the thieves or bought the land of their brothers which many times resulted in ruins. But if they reside overseas, the wealth would stay with them.³⁰ So 'it was better for Sikhs to go wherever there are means of livelihood and resides.'³¹ They further reminded them that two things were required to venture out, one was the courage and second was the money, and both were not difficult for the Sikhs. The Sikhs who lived overseas and had money should not come back, they should stay there, buy land, expand trade.³² 'Only that nation can survive which is spread in every part of the world so the Sikhs should not take only Punjab as their land but where ever they are living they should take it as their own country'.³³ They also suggested that 'Sikhs should preach their religion in other parts of the world.'³⁴ They suggested that 'Those who come back stuck in the cycle of poverty again, so to get rid of poverty they should stay wherever they are.'³⁵ 'While staying over there, they should make new relations, those who come back after spending long time overseas, find that their childhood friend either died or forget them, or people meet them [as]foreigner, so they should better stay overseas.'³⁶ Frequent feedbacks from those who had already gone abroad spread the stories of possibilities of good fortunes abroad, gave hope to Punjabis to improve their economic conditions back home. Leaflets were printed advertising the advantages of emigration.³⁷ The activities of various shipping agents also spread news about opportunities available abroad.

Improved Means of Communication

Improved means of communication and consequent free movement between different parts of the province gave a boost to internal as well as external emigration processes. Between 1873 and 1903, Punjab's railroad expanded from 400 miles to cover 3000 and its system of irrigation canals grew from 2,744 miles to 16,893.³⁸ Ferozpur, Jullundur, Hoshiarpur districts were well connected as 488 miles of new railway lines were constructed in the province. The railway system was vastly improved with doubling of the line between Ambala and Lahore. During the 1911-1921 decade the mileage of metalled roads rose from 2,619 to 2,937. The Grand Trunk road ran without a break right through the province. The length of unmetalled road also rose from 20,857 to 22,106 miles.³⁹

When reports of job opportunities, favourable immigration policies, and reliable transportation routes reached the villages of central Punjab, family resources were commonly pooled to finance the trip abroad for one of the family members. And once one family member was established abroad, money remitted often helped finance emigration of the kinsmen or village-mates in classic chain migration fashion. In the period from 1880 to 1920, we can thus trace an ever changing series of destinations for Sikh emigrants.⁴⁰ In search for better opportunities, Punjabis were willing to travel anywhere to find

employment and improve their economic condition. They were found in large numbers in neighbouring areas such as Burma. Army service was usually short-term and thereafter few went into the reserves, for, as an officer lamented: ‘...they go off to Canada, the Argentine, all over the places; they are very restless.’ The Sikh would go wherever he could earn more money and, as the British discovered, they would enroll as watchmen in Singapore or Colombo and as labourers in British Columbia as happily as enlist in the native army.⁴¹

As reported ‘Self-satisfied Punjabis of old was generally giving way to a more adventurous type, not averse to travel’ There was a relative increase in migration from district to district. Later ‘A few adventurers’ spirits returned from Australia with substantial proof of the fact that money could be earned there, and since then it became quite the thing for the large family of brothers to be sent off. The cost of getting there was about Rs 200. The sugar plantations provided work for many of the emigrants; some traded as peddlers, nearly all return after spending five or six years there’. Uganda railways, as mentioned previously, had also drawn a few men.⁴² The Australian legislation of 1901, which introduced a ‘White-Only’ policy, ignited the adventurous spirit among the Punjabis to venture further in the new continent. Trans-Pacific steamer service operating between Vancouver and Hong Kong accelerated the emigration process so those who had not found work of their choice in South East Asia could now think of trying their luck in a new continent.

Independent and Enterprising attitude of the Punjabis

The evolution of Punjabi society and its peculiar characteristics of approaching challenges and to convert opportunities arising out of it in their favour is the result of over a thousand years of successive invasions of nomadic races from Central Asia. Their independent and self-willed approach to every situation lies in the backgrounds they have passed through. Their virtue in establishing society based on equal justice, joint ownership of the village, and respect for military prowess proved them to be legitimate master of their occupied land. The Punjab Aryans settled down to agriculture in village communities administered on tribal lines and felt proud in manual labour. The great mass of the tribes which took more readily to agriculture were called Jats, referred to as ‘peasants par excellence’ of Punjab.⁴³ Their enterprising and independent nature took them to various parts of the world. The Punjabi diaspora has become a culture itself now.

Their daredevil attitude, expressed in Punjabi language as ‘*vaiykhi Jau*’ (‘will see what happens’ attitude) which developed over years was also one of the reasons why they took such risky decisions to go to faraway lands about which they may have only just heard about or sometimes did not even hear about before. Under colonial rule, factors at home and the new restrictions imposed by the Australian and Cape Colony governments had the natural result of diverting many immigrants away from those colonies towards destinations such as America, Canada, Philippine and Uganda which they had earlier chosen frequently. In a correspondence between B. Kettlemeel, Chief Secretary to Government of Punjab and Its Dependencies to the Secretary, Government of

India, dated 15th February 1907, revealed that 'It was seen some times that people destined for some other destination, used to change their destination on their way for the better one. As happened in one of the cases that a party started for Fiji Island in emulation of retired police sergeant who had made a fortune by trading there, but changed their minds in consequence of the information casually given to them by a European doctor to the effect that British Columbia was the place in which to make money, and thereupon they proceeded to that country'.⁴⁴

Section II: Early Stages of Punjabi Diasporic Process

The Punjabi migration process from the beginning shows three dimensions rolling together. The Indian Diaspora had already begun after the abolition of slavery and by the time Punjab was annexed. At that time people from some areas of Punjab were going to the Caribbean Islands along with their Indian brothers. After the Anglo-Sikh Wars, political leaders who were deemed dangerous to East India Company rule were sent overseas. Due to result of the revolt of 1857, the security map of India was redrawn as the administration of India was formally taken over by Queen Victoria. The revolt of 1857 had wider consequences for the Punjabi population as well. Under various sentences they were sent overseas as 'convicts'. Later, along with other Indians, Punjabis went to the Caribbean where their experiences as labourers were not favourable.

Exiled Political Prisoners

The early beginnings of Punjabi Diaspora was not an auspicious or a rosy one. The situation after the annexation of Punjab had its negative effects on the higher-level leadership which led some of them to take refuge in far off places. Taking the precautionary measure to save the situation, important leaders who were deemed dangerous to the East India Company were sent outside Punjab. They were sent abroad either as exiles or prisoners. Among the leading individuals exiled, first was Maharani Jindan and then it was Maharaja Duleep Singh who was shipped to England in 1854.⁴⁵

Other Punjabi 'rebels' were less fortunate. The first Sikhs to land in the Strait Settlements were convicts, transported there by the British after the Anglo-Sikh wars of the 1840s.⁴⁶ The first Sikh convicts to arrive in Malaya were two political prisoners. Nihar Singh (popularly known as Bhai Maharaj Singh) and Kharak Singh, who were sentenced to exile for life for their part in the Anglo-Sikh wars against the British in the 1840s. They landed in the Strait-Settlements in 1850 and subsequently other classes of Sikh convicts also began to arrive in Malaya.⁴⁷ Many Sikh commanders were sent to Burma also. Almost two decades later due to the Kuka rebellion, Baba Ram Singh was sent to British Burma in March, 1872. Eleven others arrested along with Baba Ram Singh, were sent to different places with some imprisoned in Aden.⁴⁸ All communication was barred amongst them.⁴⁹

Revolt of 1857: Sending 'Rebels' Overseas

Just eight years had passed after of the annexation of Punjab when India witnessed another revolt in 1857. Although leaderless, Punjabis participated in this revolt as soldiers and civilians and it had a huge impact on Punjab which resulted in sending of Punjabi rebels overseas. On the whole the situation in Punjab was different from that which prevailed in the rest of India. Punjab was leaderless; Sher Singh Attariwala was living under surveillance in Calcutta. Bhai Maharaj Singh and Raja Dina Nath were dead. Bedi Bikram Singh was interned in his village, Una.⁵⁰

John Lawrence was in Rawalpindi when news came of the first outbreak in the Punjab at Ferozepur. In a circular R. Montgomery, the Judicial Commissioner of Punjab, directed the Chief Commissioner about enforcement of the provisions of Acts XI, XIV, XVI, and XVII of 1857 in Punjab.⁵¹ John Lawrence ordered Punjab to be sealed at either end. The soldiers who belonged to the 12th Regiment of Native Infantry mutinied at Jhansi.⁵² Village headmen who helped the 'rebels' were punished and the village itself was fined to pay 1000 rupees under Act X of 1858.⁵³ To ease the security situation a number of Punjabis, who participated in the revolt of 1857 as soldiers and as civilians, were sent out of Punjab and beyond the sea. On 21st May, 1858, in a circular from the Under-Secretary to Government of India to the Chief Commissioner of Punjab mentions that 'it had been determined to send all mutineers and 'rebels convicts' to Port Blair in the Andamans'.⁵⁴

Another letter from the Judicial Commissioner of Punjab to the Session Judge, Hissar, mentioned that through punishment of transportation beyond sea:

'it is hoped will prove a more effective deterrent from crime than imprisonment in the country and on that account the legislative en-ruled section 59 of the Indian Penal Code.'⁵⁵

Similarly, the Deputy Commissioner of Sirsa mentioned a list of nearly 24 convicts sentenced to sea transportation for crimes of rebellion, and another 64 sentenced to 10 years were sent to Ferozepore and Agra jails.⁵⁶ In another correspondence, some 27 government employees who helped the mutineers were sent beyond sea and some of them were sent to Andaman.⁵⁷ The Judicial Commissioner Punjab, in a letter on 9th November, 1858 to the Commissioner and Superintendent Lahore intimated that such persons, when dispatched from the jail of the Delhi division and from those of Rohtak and Jujjar in the Hissar division to be forwarded via Agra. But from all other districts within Punjab, all persons as well as the mutineers, henceforth were to be sent via Karachi.⁵⁸

Rules and Routes for Transportation of the Rebels

Rules and the Routes were framed with regards to the transportation of prisoners beyond the sea. Some of the rules were as follows: All prisoners in the Punjab and its dependencies under sentence to transportation used to be forwarded to

Karachi by river Steamers, the dispatch to be made early in the month of October. The Lahore Central Jail during the winter months was the first rendezvous for the prisoners from the Northern portion of the Punjab. Multan was the final rendezvous previous to embarkation by the Steamer.....To prevent any transportable prisoners remaining unnecessarily in a Punjab Jail, a dispatch of every available prisoner was made on the 1st of March, and by the end of that month the whole number used to be shipped off.⁵⁹

To secure future identification of the transported convicts, Dr. Dallas proposed that all convicts before transportation to the Andaman be tattooed in Alipur Jail. On 3rd January, 1874 A. M. Dallas, Inspector-General of Prisons, Punjab suggested to Secretary to the Government of Punjab that each province should have its convicts marked in a separate way, and each convict should have his own serial number. Thus for the Punjab, Ram Singh, no 3 on the list for 1874, would be marked P/3/74. This number should match with the descriptive roll.⁶⁰ It was later suggested that the labour of these prisoners was very profitable.⁶¹ From a correspondence between T.W Smyth, Registrar of the Chief Court of Punjab, to all the Commissioners on 5th February 1869 stated that in Andamans the number of prisoners would exceed by 1871 to 7,400.⁶²

Among the transported convicts there is the name of one Sikh commander, Karam Singh, who had been confined in Moulmein jail from 1861. Jowahar Singh, Lukha Singh, Brahma Singh were three Kuka prisoners who were kept in Kyouktan jail after the rebellions. After the completion of their term of imprisonment these Punjabis were not given opportunities to earn their livelihood in a respectable manner. Such persons were not admitted to government employment or received any government contracts.⁶³

Those who were sentenced to ten years, fourteen years or for life were sent to Andamans and Burma. Those who managed to return to India found it very difficult to fit in to their old community, and due to strict surveillance by the government, could not manage to lead a free life and decided to slip into the Straits to start a new life.⁶⁴ In 1882, Major Pitcher noted many who returned from Andamans proceeded further to other islands such as Mauritius to avoid punishments.⁶⁵ Some of the free 'rebels' started working as military personnel under petty chiefs. While requesting Sikhs for his army, Raja of Brook told the British how some 50 Punjab 'rebels' who were sent there by the British government from the Andaman Island had served under him. These 'rebels' received wages ranging from \$6 to \$10 monthly, and were given uniforms, accommodation, and equipment. Many others came to serve him but he requested for Sikhs only.⁶⁶

Section III: Moving towards various Plantation Areas

A comprehensive set of policies which had seen millions of Indians going abroad as Indentured labourers started to encompass Punjabis too. Shipping company agents sprang up in India, including Punjab, responding to white settlers' need for cheap labour in colonies as divergent as Fiji, Malaya, the West Indies and the African continent. So millions of Indians went abroad to

participate in the exploitation of raw material and plantation.⁶⁷ Indian overseas migration began with the export of indentured, contract or 'coolie' labour. Between August 1834 and May 1837, 7,239 men, 100 women, and 72 children; a total 7,411 indentured labourers left Calcutta for Mauritius.⁶⁸ The commencement of government regulated indentured migration to Mauritius, followed by the West Indies, the French colonies, Natal and Fiji, was in fact part of a rescue package for sugar plantations.⁶⁹

Interestingly, however, along with natives of other Indian provinces nearly 50 people immigrated to Mauritius from Punjab from 1847 till 1881. Another 72 immigrated to the West Indies during the same years. Demerara (also known as British Guyana) started receiving emigrants from 1838 and many men from Punjab migrated there; numbers are estimated around 559, the highest in comparison with other Caribbean countries. Trinidad received Indians from the year 1845; nearly 153 Punjabis went there between 1867-68 and 1881. In 1860 Natal⁷⁰ received labourers from India and among them were 37 men from Punjab in 1874-75, another 112 emigrants arrived in 1881.⁷¹

Guadeloupe started receiving emigrants from 1854 and from 1874-75 till 1881, nearly 92 people from Punjab emigrated. Although emigration to Surinam started late in 1873, only 2 persons from Punjab went there in 1878, and in 1880, 8 persons and in 1881 nearly 150 people migrated from the Calcutta port. People from Delhi, Ambala, Jalandur, Amritsar, Lahore, Peshawar, Ferozpur, and Gujarat migrated in this early phase. Most of the migration occurred in 1881 and reports from the Calcutta port suggest that operations for recruitment were extended further in a north westerly direction towards Punjab. The average percentage of recruitment in Punjab during the previous years was 1.16, but during 1881, the percentage of recruitment rose to 6.25 and in the process adding Punjab to the list above Central India and even Bengal. In this way Punjab contributed in increasing proportions. Nearly 762 persons went to various Caribbean countries and among them the highest number went to Demerara (British Guyana).⁷²

Fiji started receiving immigrants from 1879 and 3 persons from Punjab went along with other Indians and till 1881 it did not get any further migrant from this region.⁷³ Due to good crop conditions between 1881 and 1884, these were bad years for recruiting in the area nearer Calcutta, so some of the emigrants were taken from Punjab (especially Delhi) and the Central Provinces. In 1899, however, there was again a shortage of recruits for Fiji. From 1900 there was a great expansion in the sugar industry; recruitment for Fiji was extended to Punjab again in 1901. The Colonial Sugar Refining Company (C.S.R.) sent Thomas Hughes to draw more emigrants from Punjab and the Central Provinces and recruitment continued in 1902 with emigration agents receiving a large number of big, well-built men from Delhi and Rohtak. The highest proportion of Punjabis was registered in 1903.⁷⁴ A Calcutta port report shows that in 1903 nearly 182 people from Punjab emigrated which included 4 females. This was the second highest number after Trinidad, where 295 males and 34 females emigrated.⁷⁵

The recruitment agents had spread their activities in Punjab. The indentured agents were responsible for introducing an awareness of Fiji into Eastern Doaba. Wali Mohammad and Atta Mohammad (of Syed caste), residents of Karnana, Tahsil Nawanshahar, district Jullundur, Punjab had been sending Punjabis abroad, with nearly 45 or 46 men emigrating by a steamer. They used to take Rs. 35 as their commission from each individual and Rs 5 from the shipping company.⁷⁶ Another important reason for emigration were the earliest reports brought back by Punjabis who had been to Australia. The 'White Australia Policy' introduced in 1901 might have turned the flow towards Fiji. According to Gillion, the first free Punjabis immigrants to Fiji were perhaps the seventy who arrived from Noumea in 1904. A regular three-monthly service from Calcutta to Auckland brought more Indians.⁷⁷ In 1906 more than 107 Punjabis reached Fiji from the port of Calcutta.⁷⁸

Early Registration Depots

Data from the Registration Depots set up for recruitment of indentured labour from India also provide some indication of involvement of Punjabis, particularly from the southern districts of Punjab - now part of Haryana - in the indentured labour system during the latter part of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. We have reports and data that Punjabis were offering themselves for recruitment in the Registration Depots but were registering themselves as residents of different districts of Punjab. There is, however, a lack of clarity on how or from whom these Punjabis gained information about these Depots and how long they stayed there as temporary migrants before managing to get registered in the hope of being recruited. For instance, annual reports on emigration from the port of Calcutta shows that people originating from Delhi (57), Rohtak (42), Hissar (34), and Gurgaon (33) registered themselves in the districts of Kanpur, Agra and Mathura with view to recruitment to the colonies of Demerara, Trinidad, Jamaica, Natal, Fiji etc. During the years 1898-99 to 1907-08, the total number of emigrants leaving Indian ports were as follows: 2,735 from Calcutta, 599 from Bombay and 26,167 from Karachi, the latter recruited largely to work on the Uganda Railways.⁷⁹ Punjabis formed a considerable number of those emigrants and Tables 1-3 below provide some data on areas of their origin and colony destinations. Major Pitcher and Mr. Garierson's enquiry report of August 1883 also mentions emigration occurring from the Punjab Province itself. According to the proceedings of 1900 (July to December), the number of people from Punjab who were registering themselves from Kanpur, Mathura and Agra were 67, 56 and 33 respectively. During this period, people from Delhi, Gurgaon, Hissar and Rohtak registered more compared with other districts of Punjab and the total number was 250. Again in 1903, the Registration Depots in Bengal, United Province of Agra and Oudh registered people coming from Hissar (239), Rohtak (144), Delhi (96), Firozapore (83), Gurgaon (88) and smaller numbers from other districts of Punjab Province, making a total of 884 persons. In another report in 1903, a total of 952 people

registered, with 310 from Delhi, 196 from Firozpur, 73 from Hissar, 115 from Karnal and 258 from Rohtak.⁸⁰

In 1905 a total of 208 Punjabis registered: 85 from Alipore, 52 Agra, 41 from Kanpur and 30 from the other districts. In 1907 a total of 153 registered, 33 from Alipore, 20 Agra, 78 from Delhi and rest from the other districts. The 1907 reports show that 2.12% were registered in the Punjab province for the colonies of Demerara, Trinidad, Jamaica, Mauritius, Natal, Fiji, and Surinam. The year 1907 and 1908 shows 279 and 375 persons registered for Demerara (231) and Natal (114) and 30 for Surinam (Dutch) respectively. During the year 1908, most of the emigrants registered themselves from Delhi (63), Agra (19) and rest of the provinces.⁸¹

So there is clear evidence to suggest Punjabis, especially from southern districts of Punjab were involved in the Indentured Labour System. However, there is need for further research to examine whether Punjabis from central and northern districts were also involved in this system or their focus remained on getting recruitment in the military or as policemen in South-east Asian countries. Further it would be also interesting to know the religious background of communities that were involved in the Indentured Labour System.

Table 1: No of Emigrants Embarked for Various Colonies from Punjab 1882-88

Birth	24 Pargana			Patna			Shahabad			Saran			Total
	1879-80	1880-81	1881-82	1879-80	1880-81	1881-82	1879-80	1880-81	1881-82	1879-80	1880-81	1881-82	
Lahore	4	21	12		3			1					41
Kangra	1		1										2
Rohtak		6											6
Gurgaon		1	2										3
Jhehlam		1											1
Delhi		1	1										2
Jullandhur	2												2
Total	7	30	16		3			1					57

Source: Revenue and Agriculture, Emigration, August 1883, File no 5, Proceedings no. 9-15.

Table 2: No of Emigrants Embarked for Various Colonies from Punjab 1882-88

Year	Demerara	Trinidad	Natal	Surinam	Guadeloupe	Fiji	Mauritius	St Lucia	Grenada
1882	294	261	39	13	32	-	-		
1884	48	134	30	77	27	101	51		
1885	47	49	10	32	6	37	82	31	10
1886	24	20		3		5			
1888	18	11	2	1	1				
Total	431	475	81	126	66	143	133	31	10

Source: Leela Gujadhur Sarup, *Colonial Emigration 19th, 20th Centuries, Annual Reports, from the Port of Calcutta to the British & Foreign Colonies*, Aldrich International, Kolkata, 2006, Vol. II, pp.40-315 (Compiled)

Table 3: No of Emigrants from Punjab 1899-1908

Year	Demerara		Trinidad		Jamaica		Natal		Fiji		Surinam		Mauritius	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1899	84	8	32	5	4	0	3	2	6	0	4	0	-	-
1903	43	5	295	34	39	1	35	3	178	4	-	-	-	-
1905	103	3	16	3	12	3	70	2	25	4	-	-	11	6
1906	60	11	31	10	30	3	94	12	101	6	9	2	3	2
1907	13	1	7	1	16	-	13	1	22	4	6	2	2	1
1908	29	7	6	-	-	-	6	1	5	1	8	-	-	-
Total	332	35	387	53	101	7	221	21	337	19	27	4	16	9

Source: Revenue & Agriculture (Emigration), General Department (Emigration), Commerce & Industry (Emigration) *Annual Reports on Emigration, 1899, 1903, 1905, 1906, 1907, 1908*. (Compiled).

Unpleasant Early Experiences

Working overseas was not easy. The story of Punjabi diaspora is the story of the struggles Punjabis waged to get equal rights not only for themselves but for all. Wherever Punjabis went they fought for their due rights in far off places. In one incident in April 1903, a riot broke out in the Fiji depot in Calcutta after a few Punjabis complained about food. It was only with the intervention of the agent, Punjabis could be pacified but recruitment from Hissar and Karnal districts was stopped after that. On their arrival in Fiji, six Punjabis were promptly sent back to India.⁸² Punjabis were not considered ‘good indentured migrants’ in the Caribbean either because of their assertive nature.

The arrival of the 'unfamiliar type' in the West Indies was not welcomed. For instance, the Annual Report for Trinidad, 1902-3, mentioned that new migrants included people from Rohtak in the eastern Punjab (said to be good) and others from Ajmir in Rajasthan, including Rajputs, and Pathans, not used to manual labour and were classified as 'not desirable'. Two years later, Trinidad protested more strongly about these hard men from the borderlands of the Punjab:

'These are very objectionable as field labour.... many...absconded to the Spanish Main, some have had to be sent back to India having absolutely refused to work in the fields, and nearly all have been unruly and troublesome' ⁸³

Earlier experiences of the British made them quite conscious in employing Punjabis overseas. Their experience of employing one thousand young Punjabis in the Ceylon Public Works Department back in 1862 as Pioneer Corps of Sappers and Miners, proved a failure. On arrival in Ceylon the first batch of men refused to work on roads and to break stones and carry them but told the authorities that they were enlisted as soldiers not as manual labourers. After refusing to work many of them indeed left the Island and somehow managed to reach India. Ultimately all men who landed in Ceylon followed suit. This event certainly made British administrators extremely conscious of the effect which 'may exercise an injurious influence on the temper and behaviour of a valuable class of men'. When the demand started coming for Punjabi soldiers from different parts of the world, British government was anxious to avoid the reoccurrence of that event. Learning from its earlier experiments, Governor in Council asked for detailed information as to the conditions of service and pay.⁸⁴ Tinker also mentions the Governor, Sir Everard im Thurn, once commented that 'they had been soldiers or something of that sort' and unused to labour.⁸⁵

The Sikhs were a very unusual group in the Indian emigration: they were prepared to fight for their rights. The mass of poor labourers, mainly from Madras, and the traders and shopkeepers from Gujarat, who formed the bulk of the emigrants were not prepared or organised for struggle.⁸⁶ As immigration agencies started increasing their presence in Punjab, the ill effects of it were being felt on the Punjabis particularly on those who were being sent by these agents overseas. The situation in Labasa (Fiji) was the worst as immigrants were often beaten. These conditions were probably due to the bad local management of the C.S.R. A serious warning was given to the company by Governor (Sir George O'Brien) and the magistrate was asked in 1900 to inflict more severe sentences in future.⁸⁷ A major event occurred in Labasa after Punjabis acquired work there but were not treated properly. Here the Punjabis were misled by the recruiting agents and officials in India as they were promised Government work and would not have to do 'coolies' work or work as domestic servants. So when they were given work which was not promised and were not accustomed to, they refused to work. There started a scuffle between the Punjabis and the authorities. Due to police firing three of them were wounded. Nearly 55 to 57 Punjabis met Dr. Brough, Stipendiary Magistrate, Labasa and explained their conditions. The

group was brought to Suva, broken up and shifted to other plantations; they were not given field work.⁸⁸

The Colonial plantation owners needed docile type of people not the ones who demand their rightful rights. In 1907, the C.S.R Company asked the government to instruct the agent not to send Punjabis, discharged soldiers, or high-caste people who could read and write English, as these tended to give them trouble and spread dissatisfaction on the plantation. Furthermore, it was suggested that those obviously unsuitable for field labour should be put aside on arrival and sent back to India, and they even offered to pay their share of the cost. Following the first incident the agent was told not to send any more Punjabis, so in 1908 and in 1909 there were no registrations there. In another incident in 1913 five Pathans refused to work; said they had been promised to work as police men, not knowing what a shovel was.

However, with growing scarcity of recruits in north India the agents had to turn to Punjab again. In 1911, 1912, and 1913, greater number of recruits were from among those men who would normally have been employed in railway construction and irrigation projects.⁸⁹ One important reason of this considerable interest in migration from Punjabi towards Fiji was that it was perceived as a transit point for further migration.

Some Conclusions

This paper has tried to plug some important gaps in the formation of early Punjabi Diaspora. Existing studies are not detailed enough in terms of causes that led to the dispersal of Punjabis as colonial rule began to be established and consolidated in Punjab. Nor do these studies provide any details beyond citing one or two prominent rebels who were exiled by the new regime. Similarly, discussions are missing on role of Punjabis in the indentured labour system and their different destinations away from the well-established pattern of indenture labour migration for the rest of Indians. Why was there a Punjabi predominance in migration towards the South East Asian colonies? And how was this migration arranged?⁹⁰ The paper has also provided some examples of the varied experiences of reception of Punjabis in certain colonies and as pointed out they were far from welcomed - indeed they were increasingly labelled as 'undesirables' and 'troublesome' and not suitable to be indentured labourers. This sort of pattern and mindset continued until the closing decade of the nineteenth century when for the first time, Punjabi artisans and labourers were recruited through agencies for East African destinations. This paper has suggested the pro-active role of Punjab administration coupled with prevailing socio-economic conditions of Punjabi peasants that led to the distinct formation of Punjabi Diaspora.

Thus, the story of the formation of the Punjabi Diaspora is yet to be told in a holistic way to fully capture its many peculiarities. In particular there is no satisfactory record of migration in pre-British and even British period; early causes of migration are not properly accounted for. Nor do we know much about the different routes taken by Punjabis settling abroad. There is not enough

emphasis on how Punjabis faced a substantially different reception and showed resistance in areas of settlement compared with other Indians when migrating to earlier colonies and plantation locations in the late nineteenth century. This paper has tried to fill in some gaps in this information and has indicated how a more comprehensive account of the Punjabi Diaspora should draw upon different, as yet untapped, primary sources.

[**Acknowledgement:** Earlier version of the paper was presented at the National Seminar on ‘Punjab in the Mid-Nineteenth Century: Fall of the Sikh Empire and Transition in Polity and Socio-Cultural Milieu (1839-1849), March 15-16, 2018 at Sri Guru Gobind Singh College, Chandigarh. I am thankful to Dr Autar Singh Dhesi, Dr Darshan Singh Tatla for their encouragement and valuable suggestions and my sincere thanks to Dr Shinder S.Thandi for further editing the paper]

Notes

¹ Ravindra K. Sharma, “Development of Trade and Commerce under Maharaja Ranjit Singh,” in *Punjab History Conference*, Fifteenth Session, March 13-15, 1981, Punjab Historical Department, Punjabi University, Patiala, pp. 143-146.

² Scott Livi, “The Indian Caravan Trade”, in ‘The Age of Merchants’, in *The Encyclopaedia of Indian Diaspora*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2007, pp. 36-37.

³ Claude Markovits, *The Global World of Indian Merchants 1750-1947: Traders of Sind from Bukhara to Panama*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2000, pp. 10-12.

⁴ Joyce Pettigrew “Socio-Economic Background to the Emigration of Sikhs from Doaba,” in *Punjab Journal of Politics*, Vol. 1, No.1, October, 1977, G.N.D.U., Amritsar, p.48.

⁵ Darshan Singh Tatla, “Rural Roots of the Sikh Diaspora”, in Ian Talbot & Shinder Thandi, (ed), *People on the Move: Punjabi Colonial and Post-Colonial Immigration*, Oxford Press University, Oxford, 2004, pp. 36, 45.

⁶ Tan Tai Yong, *The Garrison State: The Military, Government and Society in Colonial Punjab, 1849-1947*, Sage Publications, New Delhi, 2005, pp. 35-36. See also Gopal Singh, *History of the Sikh people 1469-1978*, World Sikh University Press, New Delhi, 1955, p. 586. In the frontier guard about a thousand selected Sikh soldiers were recruited and a further ten percent Sikhs were also recruited in a 15,000 strong police force. Kushwant Singh, *History of the Sikhs, Vol II 1839-1964*. Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1966, pp. 90-91. The Guide Corps raised by Henry Lawrence in 1846 was increased in strength. Military Police Force consisting of 8000 men, largely Punjabi Muslims, was raised. The new units of the police and the army numbered over 50,000. It included troops of horses as well as infantry. The Guides were charged with guarding the chain of fortresses which were built to prevent tribal incursions

from the north-west and with maintaining peace in the Derajat. Foot constabulary was meant to guard treasuries and gaols and mounted police to patrol highways. See also, Major A.E. Barstow, *The Sikhs: An Entomology*, B.R. Publishing Corporation, Delhi, 1994, pp.75-76. Around 1851, Maharaja Gulab Singh of Kashmir established a corps of *Mazbhis*. Tan Tai Yong, *The Garrison State*, pp. 20, 36-38, 67-69. Ten regiments, five of cavalry and five of infantry were raised to form the Punjab Irregular Frontier Force. Later on, doors to the recruitment of Punjabis into the regular corps of the Bengal Army were also officially opened in 1851. New international developments such as the Russian advance on the north western side by the late nineteenth century made the British reevaluate the coming threat and create a powerful military force to face it. This made Punjab, to all intent and purpose, the 'Garrison' province of the Raj.

⁷Report of the Sixteenth Indian National Congress, Lahore, 1900, p.31.

⁸ Navtej Singh, 'Famine in Punjab,' Panjab University, Ph.D Thesis, 1986, pp. 53, 187, 302.

⁹ Ibid., pp. 359-360. During the famine of 1860-61 people of Ambala, Thanesar and Delhi districts were forced to migrate to the eastern Jamuna Canal where work was available in the fields. In Balbgarh pargana of the Delhi district, 10.5% percent of the total population migrated. In Hissar district, 21,405 persons migrated to various places. An estimated 120, 000 people migrated from the South-East region of the Punjab. During the 1877-78 famine, 918 persons migrated from Hazara district and migrants from Gurgaon district were around 700. The scarcity of 1883-84 forced the people of Karnal district to leave their homes.

¹⁰Statistics of British India from 1907-08 and the Proceeding years, Part V, Area, Population and Public Health, Calcutta, 1909, p. 27.

¹¹Sasha, "The colonial State and the Plague in the Punjab 1894-1947", in *Punjab History Conference*, 33rd Session, March 16-18, 2001, Patiala, 2002, p.192.

¹²Statistics of British India for the 1911-12 and the preceding Years, Part IV, Area, Population, and Public Health, Superintendent Government Printing, Calcutta, 1913, p. 45.

¹³ Principal Matters, Hissar Division, Vol 37, Circular no. 30/1/2

¹⁴Statistics of British India for the 1911-12, p. 45.

¹⁵Navtej Singh, 'Famine in Punjab,' p. 369.

¹⁶ Lala Laj Pat Rai, *England's Debt to India: A historical Narrative of Britain's Fiscal Policy in India*, B.W. Huebsch, New York, 1917, pp. 223-224.

¹⁷ Malcolm Lyall Darling, *Punjab Peasant Life*, Cosmo Publications, New Delhi, 1984, pp. 236, 253.

¹⁸ M. L. Seth, 'The Punjab Money-Lenders-His Growth and Decline under the British Rule, Unpublished Ph.D Thesis, Panjab University, Chandigarh, 1973, pp. 44-49.

¹⁹ Devender Lal, 'Social and Economic Changes in the District of Jullundur and Hoshiarpur 1846-1901', Unpublished Ph.D Thesis, Panjab University,

Chandigarh, 1973, pp. 184-195. In the Nawansher Tehsil of Jullundur district the percentage of area sold and mortgaged from 1862 to 1871 was 31 and 33 respectively. The total value of sales and mortgage were 88,873 and 241,979 respectively. Sale and mortgage in Hoshiarpur district from 1849 to 1879 was: Sale 31,248 acres - price 1,022,675. Mortgage 115,831- price 4,680,814. The total land sold and mortgaged for the payment of debt involved 73,397 bighas and was divided over various classes of peasant proprietors: Debt in simple bonds – Rajput, Jats, Arians and other classes 1,585,874; 1,585,874; 5,76350; 992,789 respectively. Debt on mortgage and sale deeds - 402,224; 1,164,786; 585,364; 480,327 respectively. Land sold and mortgaged in bighas - 11,207; 33,995; 15,171; 13,024 respectively.

²⁰ Richard G. Fox, *Lions of the Punjab: Culture in the Making*, Archives Publishers, New Delhi, 1987, p. 47.

²¹ Gazetteer Jullundhur, Part A, Punjab Government, Civil and Military Gazette Press, Lahore, 1904, pp. 52-53.191-192.

²² Census of India 1901, Vol. XVII, The Punjab, its Feudatories and the North West Frontier Province, by H.A. Rose, 1902, p. 15.

²³ Census of 1921, Vol. I, Panjab Part I, p. 34.

²⁴ Shyamala Bhatia, *Social Change and Politics in Punjab 1989-1910*, Enkay Publications Pvt Ltd, New Delhi, 1987, p. 233, 265. Land alienation prohibited the transfer of land from agricultural to non-agricultural castes. According to the Act, three main castes banned from acquiring land were Aroras, Baniyas and Khatri. See also Himandari Benerjee, *Agrarian Society of the Punjab 1849-1901*, Manohar, New Delhi, 1982, p. 92. The agriculturists belonging to the Lubana and Ramgarhias communities who were equally debarred from acquiring land under this act merit special attention.

²⁵ Home Department, Political, October, 1907, File no. 60-61, Calcutta Records. These protests also had their effects on the troops. By sensing danger, Herbert Risley, Secretary to Government of India, Home Department, wrote to the Chief Secretary to the Government of Punjab and others to 'keep a watch of all those activities relating to propaganda which is likely to affect the troops'.

²⁶ Home Department, August, 1907, no. 113. 'The Lahore Secret Society, Sri Gobind Lodge, hold secret meetings, recently moved its headquarters from Mul Chand's Inn to Bahi Mihan Singh's house near the Lahore gate for the purpose of greater secrecy. The society consisted mainly of police officers and railways servants. Anti-British vow was taken by 200 Sikhs at Guru Tegh Bahadur's Mausoleum about the middle of June. Sikhs were reported to have made 'seditious speeches' in Kangra and Lyallpur bazaars. In Lyallpur also large meetings of Sikh zamindars was reported on 6th July, called by Ram Chand at which it was agreed that they should encourage their relatives in the army to give trouble to their officers.' The authorities must have sensed uneasiness among Sikh soldiers, many of whom had relatives in the colony areas, so Governor-General Lord Minto vetoed the bill. The land tax and the water rates were reduced. Punjab leaders were released.

²⁷ D. Brief, 'The Punjab and Recruitment to the Indian Army 1846-1918', Unpublished M.Litt. Dissertation, St Antony College, Oxford, 1978, pp. 53-70.

²⁸ Native News Papers 1905, Vol. XVIII, no. 29. On 20th February 1905, Civil and Military News (Ludhiana) published a copy of a letter said to have been addressed by sepoy Ram Singh to the officer commanding the 210th Regiment to which he belonged. The writer alleged that of late it had become impossible for him to support himself with a small salary of Rs 9 a month. Lord Kitchener had ordered that parades should be held more frequently and that sepoys should be made to work hard compelled the latter to spend more on their food than they formally did. He further elaborated that during the last two months the writer has had to replace his worn boots at the cost of Rs 6, and to spend another Rs 5 on providing himself with a khaki suit. He adds that 'thirty sepoys of his regiment resigned service during one month, not because they were averse to serving government, but because their expenses exceeded their income. Several native numbers of another regiment stationed in the same cantonment had taken their discharge in such quick succession that it had been impossible to find recruits to fill the vacancies caused. Indeed, it was to be feared that the difficulty experienced in finding recruits for the army was likely to become still greater for outgoing sepoy would be certain to dissuade their friends and relations from entering military services'. See also, NNP 1906, Volume, XIX, No 3, *The Tribune*, 9th march 1906, 'There was no exaggeration in the statement that the native soldier was not able to buy grain and condiments enough to keep him in health for two pence a day, he finds himself a badly paid man in comparison with the mill-hand domestic servants. The difficulties experienced in finding recruits for the army would increase if nothing would be done to raise the pay of both the sepoy and the sowar. The sepoy constituted the cornerstone of the super structure of the army in India, and unless his position is made secure, the recruiting difficulties would by and by assume serious proposition.' For more details see Hardeep Kaur, 'The Punjabi Diaspora: As Military Personnel', in *Multiple Perspective on Indian/Punjabi Diaspora, identities, Locations, and Intersections*, edited by Manjit Inder Singh, Joga Singh, Publication Bureau, Panjabi University, Patiala, 2014, pp. 433-449.

²⁹ *KhalsaAkhbar*, 20th November, 1896, p.3.

³⁰ *KhalsaAkhbar*, 4th July, 1899, p.3.

³¹ *KhalsaAkhbar*, 4th August, 1899, p.3.

³² *KhalsaAkhbar*, 25th August, 1899, p. 3.

³³ *KhalsaAkhbar*, 20th April, 1900, p.3.

³⁴ *KhalsaAkhbar*, 4th October, 1895, p. 3.

³⁵ *KhalsaAkhbar*, 13th November, 1895, p.3.

³⁶ *KhalsaAkhbar*, 20th September, 1895, p.3.

³⁷ W.H. McLeod, *Punjabis in New Zealand: A History of Punjabi Migration 1890-1940*, Guru Nanak Dev. University, Amritsar, 1986, p. 70.

³⁸ Darshan Singh Tatla, "Rural Roots of the Sikh Diaspora", p. 73.

³⁹ Census Of India 1921, Vol. XV, Panjab and Delhi, Part I, by L. Middleton, M. Jacob, Lahore, 1923. p. 79.

⁴⁰ N. Gerald Barrier, Verne. A. Dusenbery, *The Sikh Diaspora: Migration and the Experience Beyond Punjab*, Chankya Publication, Delhi, 1989, p. 5.

⁴¹ D. Brief, 'The Punjab and Recruitment to the Indian Army 1846- 1918,' pp. 69-70.

⁴² Census of India, 1911, Vol. XIV, Punjab, Part I, p. 70.

⁴³ Hugh Kennedy Trevaskis, *The Land of the Five Rivers: An Economic History of the Punjab from the Earliest Times to the Year of Grace 1890*, Oxford University Press, Great Britain, 1928, pp. 86-100.

⁴⁴ Commerce & Industry, Emigration, February, 1907, Pro. No. 22.

⁴⁵ Gopal Singh, *History of the Sikh people 1469-1978*, pp. 575-76. She was banished to Banaras in 1848. From there she escaped to Nepal and sought asylum from the King on 29th April, 1849. The boy Duleep Singh spent his entire life in England as an English squire and landlord. He was brought up as prince of Queen Victoria's court. Later, after he married, the Maharaja and his family were given an estate (country Manor called Eleveden Hall) in Suffolk by the India Office.

⁴⁶ *The Indian Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 2002, Volume 27, p. 752. In 1786 the English East India Company acquired Penang (or Pinang) Island, off Malaya's north-west coast, from the Sultan of Kedah, Sir Stamford Raffles occupied Singapore Island off the Southern tip of the Peninsula in 1819, acquiring trading right in 1824. The British obtained Malacca from the Dutch in 1824, and thereafter governed the three major ports of the Strait of Malacca, which collectively were named the Straits-Settlements. The British colonial office took direct control in 1867. Strait-Settlements (Singapore- Penang- Malacca) had served as a dumping ground for Indian convicts sent there by the East Indian Company and later by the government of India itself until 1873.

⁴⁷ Kernail Singh Sandhu, "The Sikh Immigration into Malaya, during British Rule", in Ganda Singh, (ed.), *The Punjab, Past, Present*, Vol. X, Part I-II, Publication Bureau, Patiala, 1993, pp. 436-37.

⁴⁸ Home Department, Judicial, July, 1876, B, File no. 177/ 179.

⁴⁹ Home Department, Judicial, June, 1877, File no. 333-338.

⁵⁰ Khushwant Singh, *History of the Sikhs*, pp. 101-106.

⁵¹ Principal Matters, Hissar Division, Vol. 37, 1st August, 1857, Circular no. 78.

⁵² Ambala Division, Press listed, Military Department, December, 1858, File no. 1.

⁵³ Principal Matters, Hissar Division, April, 1858, Circular no. 1473.

⁵⁴ Principal Matters, Hissar Division, 21st May, 1858, Circular no. 41.

⁵⁵ Principal Matters, Hissar Division, May, 1863, Letter no. 1586.

⁵⁶ Principal Matters, Hissar Division. From Deputy Commissioner Sirsa to Commissioner Hissar, 29th May 1859, Letter no. 243.

⁵⁷Principal Matter, Hissar Division, 31st May, 1859, Letter no. 403.

⁵⁸ Principal Matter, Hissar Division, 9th November, 1858, Circular no. 108-4641.

⁵⁹Principal Matters, Hissar Division, R. N. Cust, Judicial Commissioner for Punjab, 10th September, 1863, leaf No. 295-300.

⁶⁰ Principal Matter, Hissar Division, 11th September, 1858, Letter no. 74/364.

⁶¹ Native Newspapers Punjab December 1869-70, Report on the Native Newspapers Punjab, N.W.F.P, Oudh, Central Provinces, The Ukhbar Banaras, 10th December, 1870, Banaras. p.69.

⁶² Principal Matters, Hissar Division, 5th February, 1869, Circular no. II. 627. Home Department, Judicial, March, 1877, B, File no. 105/109. In 1877 a proposal for the release of certain political prisoners, confined in British Burma, was made and the file contains list of some of the political prisoners who were arrested after the revolt of 1857. This included some of the names related with members of the ex-royal family. Prominent among them were, son of the last Mughal ruler, Bahadur Shah Zafar, Dewan Bukhat, captured during the seize of Delhi and sent to Rangoon with pension of 6000. Shah Abbas was arrested during seize of Delhi, sent at Rangoon with pension of 900. Kajuck Sultan remained in hiding until 1865, was located and sent to Rangoon, with pension at 900. The favourite wife of the Ex-King Bahadur Shah Zafar, was sent to Rangoon in 1858, for being one of the prime movers of the mutiny, with pension at 4800.

⁶³ Principal Matters, Hissar Division, 17th September, 1862. From R. H. Curt, Judicial Commissioner Punjab to all the Commissioners, Superintendent Lahore, Letter no 45, September, 1862, Circular no. 101, no. 4312.

⁶⁴ Principal Matters, Hissar Division, Vol. no. 37, Circular no. 101, 17th September, 1862.

⁶⁵Revenue and Agriculture Department, Emigration, 1883, File no. 5, Proceeding no. 9 -15.

⁶⁶Foreign Department, Political, March, 1876, A, no. 560-568. For details see Hardeep Kaur, 'The Punjabi Diaspora: Far East Connections', in *Critical Perspective on Indian/Punjabi Diaspora: Narratives of Migration in South East Asia and Far East*, Manjit Inder Singh, Tejinder Kaur, (Edited) Publication Bureau, Punjabi University, Patiala, 2015, pp. 141-157.

⁶⁷Darshan Singh Tatla, 'The Politics of Homeland: A Study of Ethnic Linkage and Political Mobilization amongst Sikhs in Britain and North America', Ph.D Thesis, University of Warwick, London, 1993, p. 77.

⁶⁸Geogheghan's Report, *Coolie Emigration from India 1874*, pp. 2-5.

⁶⁹Marina Carter, *Voices from Indenture: Experience of Indian migrants in the British Empire*, Leicester. University Press, London, 1996, p. 19.

⁷⁰C. Kondapi, *Indians Overseas 1838-1949*, p.21. The petition of the Natal planters to Governor Grey in 1859 led the emigration of Indian labour to the country under the Act XXXIII of 1860.

⁷¹Leela Gujadhur Sarup, *Colonial Emigration 19th, 20th Centuries: Annual Reports*, pp.19-370. (Compiled)

⁷² Ibid., p.347.

⁷³ Ibid., pp.19-370.

⁷⁴K. L. Gillion, *Fiji's Indian Migrants: A History to the End of Indenture in 1920*. Oxford University Press, London, 1962, pp. 47-48.

⁷⁵*Report on Emigration from the port of Calcutta, 1903, Revenue & Agriculture, Emigration*, p. 307.

⁷⁶Darshan Singh Tatla, 'The Politics of Homeland', p. 84.

⁷⁷K.L. Gillion, *Fiji's Indian Migrants*, pp. 131-132.

⁷⁸*Annual Report on Emigration from the port of Calcutta 1906, Commerce & Industry, Emigration*, p. 590.

⁷⁹*Statistics of British India for 1907-08, 1909 and the preceding Years*, Part V, Area, Population, and Public Health, Superintendent Government Printing Calcutta, 1909, pp.32-33, (Figures in Brackets indicates no. of Registration).

⁸⁰ Revenue & Agriculture (Emigration), General Department (Emigration), Commerce and Industry (Emigration) *Annual reports on Emigration, 1899, 1903, 1905, 1906, 1907, 1908*. (Compiled). (Figures in Brackets indicates no. of Registrations).

⁸¹Ibid. For Details See, Hardeep Kaur, "The Punjabi Diaspora: A Historical Perspective 1849-1980", Unpublished Thesis, Panjab University, Chandigarh, 2017.

⁸²K. L. Gillion, *Fiji's Indian Migrants*, pp. 47-48.

⁸³Darshan Singh Tatla, "Rural Roots of Sikh Diaspora," p. 53.

⁸⁴ Home Department, Police, May, 1874, A, no. 48-53.

⁸⁵ Hugh Tinker, *A New System of Slavery: The Export of Indian Labour Overseas 1830-1920*, Oxford University Press, London, 1974, pp. 58-59.

⁸⁶ Hugh Tinker, *Separate and Unequal: India and the Indians in the British Commonwealth*. C. Crust & Company, London, 1976, p. 29.

⁸⁷K.L. Gillion, *Fiji's Indian Migrant*, p. 115.

⁸⁸ Commerce & Industry, Emigration, September, 1907, File no. 90.

⁸⁹ K.L. Gillion, *Fiji's Indian Migrant*, pp. 48, 54.

⁹⁰ For details see Hardeep Kaur, 'The Punjabi Diaspora: As Military Personnel', in *Multiple Perspective on Indian/Punjabi Diaspora, identities, Locations, and Intersections*, edited by Manjit Inder Singh, Joga Singh, Publication Bureau, Panjabi University, Patiala, 2014, pp. 433-449.

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