

**The Emergence and Liquidation of
the Sikh Principalities in the
South-eastern Punjab
(1708-1849)**

*Dissertation submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University
in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the award of the degree of*

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

ASHOK KUMAR

**Centre for Historical Studies
School of Social Sciences
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi - 110067
2001**



जवाहरलाल नेहरू विश्वविद्यालय
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI-110067


Centre for Historical Studies
School of Social Sciences

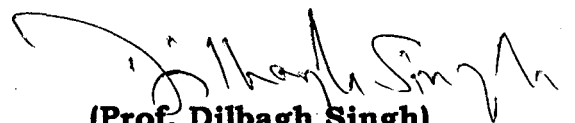
Dated : 20/07/2001

CERTIFICATE

Certified that the dissertation entitled "**The Emergence and Liquidation of the Sikh Principalities in the South-eastern Punjab (1708-1849)**" submitted by **Ashok Kumar** in partial fulfilment for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy is his original work. This dissertation has not been submitted for any other degree to this university or to any other university to the best of our knowledge.

We recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiner for evaluation.


(Prof. Dilbagh Singh)
Chairperson


(Prof. Dilbagh Singh)
Supervisor

*To
My Parents
&
Gurus*

CONTENTS

Acknowledgement	Page No.
Introduction	1-14
Chapter - I <i>Early Sikhism and the Ascendancy of the Sikhs (1708-1764)</i>	15-42
Chapter - II <i>Struggle for Control (1764-1808)</i>	43-71
Chapter - III <i>The British Intervention and Supremacy Over the Sikh Principalities (1808-1849)</i>	72-107
Conclusion	108-114
Appendix - I	115-116
Appendix - II	117
Appendix - III	118
Appendix - IV	119-120
Appendix - V	121-122
Bibliography	123-130

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This dissertation would not have been possible without the enormous help and encouragement that I received from various quarters. I am indebted to Prof. Dilbagh Singh for supervising my work. My thanks are also due to Prof. Harbans Mukhia, who took time off from his busy schedule to help me whenever needed.

Among other scholars who helped me with a lot of discussion on the subject are Prof. Pritpal Singh Kapoor and Prof. Parm Bakshish Singh of the Punjabi University, Patiala. Thanks are also due to seniors and friends namely Rabi Ranjan Sen, Rais-ur-Rehman, Ravikant Mishra, Aman Sharma and Burton Cleetus.

I am grateful to the staff JNU Library, National Archives, National Museum, ICHR and Bhai Vir Singh Libraries, New Delhi, the Punjab State Archives, and Punjabi University Library, Patiala, Haryana State Archives, and Punjab University Library, Chandigarh. I am also thankful to Mr. Vijay & Sudhir who typed my dissertation.

Finally, I must thank the Indian Council for Historical Research (ICHR) which provided me with the grant for this research.

Ashok Kumar

Introduction

The purpose of this dissertation is to comprehend the politics, society and economy of the South-eastern Punjab from 1708 to 1849 on the basis of contemporary and near contemporary sources. The region under study holds a special significance in Indian history. It was the South-eastern region of Punjab that provided a gateway for interlocational clashes and confrontation. As an entry point to Delhi, the seat of power in India, it served as a buffer region as well as an area of vulnerability for itself. It was bound to be affected by the growing power and spread of Sikhism.

As far as the writing of history on this region is concerned, most of the works deal either with a general history of the Sikh Chiefs and their interactions / conflicts with other powers or they just give passing references to certain incidents. Moreover, the existing corpus of literature concerned more with the political developments than any other aspect. That is why, it becomes extremely important to have a look into economic and societal aspects, also, for the purpose of understanding political dynamism. The broad objective of this research is to find out a comprehensive view on the influence of the Sikh Gurus on the local populace and the gradual growth of Sikhism and the Sikh authority followed by the liquidation of the regional powers (the Sikh Principalities) under the British empire, in all its political, economic and social aspects.

The traditional rivalry of the Sikhs with the Mughal authorities made it more important for the Sikhs to make inroads into the territories south east of the Sutlej to give the coup de grace to the already declining Mughal empire and establish their on rule. A continuous bid to hold influence over this area can be traced back to Banda Bahadur's movement towards Sirhind, the headquarters of Mughal Sarkar in the area between the river Sutlej and Delhi.

With the gradual disintegration of the Mughal empire, several small principalities, the Mughal governors / Faujdars, the Durranis, the Rohillas, the Maratha as well as the British East India Company also got involved there in an attempt to seize power. The series of contests could come to a halt only with the integration of this region into the British empire. Invasions and continuous warfare in the great battlefields that lie in this region affected agriculture, commerce, industry, trade, etc., and also indirectly affected the society in many ways. It would be one of the concerns of this dissertation to look into the nuance of economic considerations behind these political tussels.

To define the South-eastern region of the Punjab or the present Haryana collectively would mean the area from the Jamuna in the east, Shivalik hills in the north-east, Ambala in the north, Punjab in north-west, Thar desert in south-west, and Aravali hills in South.

The present state of Punjab consists of Majha, Malwa and Doab. Similarly the region South-east of Sutlej also consists of three more or

less distinct geographical units.¹ These are Kurukshetra, Haryana and Bhattiana. The Area lying between 29° 30' northern latitude and 30° northern latitude and between 70°20' eastern and 77° eastern longitudes is Kurukshetra. It mostly consists of the areas of old Karnal district and Jind state. Haryana, the area of the state which mostly lies between the latitudes of 29°30' and 30° north is geographically Haryana proper. Hansi, Fatehabad, Hissar Tehsil and Bhiwani district, parts of Rohtak district and some Southern part of former Jind and Patiala states constitute this division. The Jamuna belt in the east, the Ghaggar valley in north-west, the Bangar tract in west, south-west and south and Kurukshetra in the north form the boundaries of Haryana. The third division which lies west of Fatehabad and Bhattu is known as Bhattiana after the name of Bhatti Rajputs. The present Haryana has only a part of Bhattiana which spreads over the Sirsa district and some parts in western Hissar.²

Though the present Haryana state is separated from the present day Punjab (lying south of Sutlej) it is difficult to look at them as two separate entities as both, despite variations, presents a broad homogeneity, geographically and historically, and both were part of Sirhind Sarkar of Suba-i-Delhi.³ Due to the above reason it is

¹ Sukhdev Singh Chib, *The Beautiful India: Haryana* (New Delhi, Rohtak, 1977), p.30

² Ibid, p. 30.

³ S. Nurul Hasan, "Presidential Address", *Punjab History Congress Proceedings* (Patiala, 1965), p. 74.

practically difficult to restrict oneself upto Ambala (which creates the present day boundary between the two), to study the political developments that shaped the history of South-eastern region of the Punjab. Also, Patiala state (now in Punjab) played very crucial role since the time of establishment of the Sikh principalities in 1764 in the politics of this region. Being the descendents of the same lineage, Jind, Nabha, Patiala and Kaithal Chiefs helped each other against their common enemy and were also the most powerful Chiefs in the territories lying south of the Sutlej.

Coming to the strategic and military importance of the region south-east of Sutlej one could say without doubt that this area owing to its very position bore the brunt of every important campaign in Northern India, but received little mention except as an appurtenance of Sirhind.⁴ Whole of the South-eastern region lying over river Sutlej is strategically important. But within this region Ambala, Karnal, Panipat, Hissar, Kurukshetra, etc. were of more strategic importance. For instance, Ambala was the central spot through or near which every hoard of invaders was bound to pass on the way to the battleground of India at Panipat, with Delhi as its ultimate goal.⁵ Also, these places lie on the important trade routes. Both these factors

⁴ *The Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Vol.V (Oxford Press, 1908), p 278.

⁵ Griffin and Massy, *The Chiefs and Families of note in the Punjab*, Vol.I (Punjab, 1940), p.58; *Punjab district Gazetteers*, Vol.VII, Part A, Ambala District (Punjab, 1925), p.21.

made this area important for all those who wanted to rule northern India.

Another important point to be noted is that this area is considered as the "Corridor" leading to the imperial capital, Delhi and the Gangetic Doab. The three passages or *paths* lying in this region were strategically important and thereby played a crucial role in shaping the history of whole of northern India namely Sonapat, Panipat, and Karnal. From these three places there were three basic passages to the Gangetic Doab and hence whoever controlled these regions could control the northern India. In addition to these three, there was Buria Ghat for crossing over the Jamuna into the territories of Nawab Wazir. Also, the fate of the dynasties and emperors was decided in the battlegrounds of this area such as Panipat, Karnal, Kurukshetra etc. Whether it was the rule of the Afghans or the Mughals, this region continued to occupy a crucial position in the domains of the Delhi sovereigns. Dr. Fauja Singh says, "whatever political tangible happened at Delhi, Punjab nobles had their role to play. With a few exception, all political revolutions or important changes occurred only with the aides of the Punjab nobles, in one form or the other."

Coming to the politico-geographical importance under the Mughals we find that this area between the Sutlej and the Jamuna

had been bifurcated by the Mughals. The southern and the eastern parts of this area were included in the metropolitan province of Delhi.⁶ The northern part of the land was included in the Sirhind Sarkar with Kurukshetra as its Southern-most boundary with Thanesar and Kaithal as its Parganas.⁷

As most of the Sikh principalities of this region have had their genesis in the erstwhile Sarkar of Sirhind, it now becomes imperative to see the strategic and political importance of Sirhind during the Mughal period there after. Since Babur's time, we find evidence of the importance that was attached to this Sarkar.⁸ It was considered as the gateway to Delhi and 'Head of Hindustan. Fall of Sirhind meant the fall of Delhi and change of the dynasty and rulers. The Mughal Emperor Akbar attached great importance to this place for the security and stability of the nascent Mughal Empire and for the purposes of suppressing local rebels in the Punjab.⁹ The fertile land also made this Sarkar a preferred Jagir for the Mughal Jagirdars and nobles. However, Humanyun made fatal mistake of minimising or rather ignoring the politico-military importance of this militarily very vital region.¹⁰ Sher Shah Suri too realised its importance and

⁶ T.S. Shejwalkar, *Panipat : 1761* (Poona, 1946), p.5.

⁷ BalKrishna Muztar, *Kurukshetra : Political. and Cultural History* (New.Delhi., 1978) p.75.

⁸ Beveridge, Annette Susannah, *Babur Nama*, English trans. of *Tuzak-i-Baburi*, p.383.

⁹ Fauja Singh (ed.), *Sirhind through the Ages* (Patiala, 1972), p. 22.

¹⁰ *ibid*, p.24.

considered Delhi safe only if the hinterland of Sirhind was secure in his hands. When Humanyun was defeated and chased by Sher Shah, the former asked the latter to consider Sirhind as the boundary between the two and Lahore with himself.¹¹ After that it continued as a prosperous and more or less peaceful territory under the Mughals till Aurangzeb's reign.

For the Sikhs, Sirhind was a cursed place because two sons of Guru Gobind Singh were killed there and, therefore, they wanted to remove this symbol of injustice and oppression. Therefore, Banda attacked the city and razed it to the ground in 1710.

To begin with the contemporary and near contemporary sources in English about the Sikhs one could say that the objective behind the writing of such sources was to acquire the knowledge about the strengths and weaknesses of the different Sikh Chiefs, who were fighting for supremacy in the region south-east of Sutlej. As a matter of fact, company's future course of action largely depended upon these reports of accounts.

The *Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, being letters exchanged between the company's officials and Indian rulers and Chieftains, gives minute details and throw considerable light on the positions, especially, of the Sikhs, the Afghans, the Mughal Emperor, the Maratha, the Rohillas and other notable political chiefs. Such

¹¹ Beveridge A.S; Gulbadan Begum, *Humanyunama*; English trans. p.144.

correspondence also highlights their mutual relationship and the interest and attitude of the English towards the problems particularly created by the activities of the Durrani and the Chiefs in the Punjab Suba, Multan Suba as well as region south of Sutlej and Ganga-Jamuna Doab which was part of Suba Delhi during the second half of the 18th century.

Another important source of information about the position and activities of the Sikh Chiefs of the region south-east of Sutlej is documented in the *Foreign Department/Secret Proceedings* in the National Archives of India. These documents contains the letters exchanged between the Governor Generals and various British political officers in India on the one side and between the former and the Select Committee of the Board of Directors in London on the other. The proceedings point out that the Sikh Chiefs had created panic around Delhi territories and for this reason the Mughal emperor tried to secure the help of the British. These documents also point out about the changing policies of the British towards the region South of Sutlej and the attitudes of the Sikh Chiefs.

Foreign accounts of the early period on the Sikhs are those of George Foster¹² who forecasted that the Sikhs would replace the

¹² George Forster, *A Journey from Bengal to England through North India, Kashmir, Afghanistan and Persia into Russia, 1783-84*, In two Vols. (London, 1798).

Afghan Supremacy in northern India; W. Francklin¹³ also wrote two books. Both these works, contains references to the Sikh Chiefs and their states. They also refer to their customs, resources and relations with the Mughals, the Maratha and with George Thomas an Irish Adventurer. Franklin's observations are largely based on those remains made by Thomas.

Coming to the Persian Primary Sources, we come across Khafi Khan's¹⁴ work supplies information about Guru Gobind Singh and Banda Bahadur. Sohan Lal Suri's¹⁵ work covers the period from the foundation of the Sikh religion to the annexation of the Punjab by the British in 1849 with references being made about the Sikh Chiefs south of Sutlej.

The mention of Rattan Singh Bhangu's¹⁶ work is an important as it covers some aspects of the history of the Sikhs and the country they ruled from 1469 to 1768. This book is one of the most useful sources on the Sikh struggle during the 18th century.

Among the secondary sources of considerable importance, Malcolm's¹⁷ work is the first informative publication on the history,

¹³ William Francklin, *Military Memoirs of George Thomas (Picadilly, 1805); The History of the reign of Shah Alam (London, 1798).*

¹⁴ Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab (Calcutta, 1874).*

¹⁵ Sohan Lal Suri, *Umdat-ut-Twarikh (Lahore, 1885-89).*

¹⁶ Bhai Vir Singh (ed.), *Rattan Singh Bhangu's Prachin Panth Prakash, Amritsar, 1914.*

¹⁷ Malcolm, *Sketch of the Sikhs (Chandigarh, 1981, Reprint).*

religion and manners of the Sikhs; Henry T.Princep's¹⁸ work gives an account of the religion, laws and customs of the Sikhs. These books denotes the serious attempt made by the British on the Punjab history. The next attempt to write about the Sikhs was made by J.D.Cunningham in his book entitled, "The History of the Sikhs",in which he gives the history of Punjab from the early period to the First Anglo-Sikh war.

Another important contribution on the history of the Punjab is made by Sir Henry Lepel Griffin¹⁹. The first deals with the cis-Sutlej Sikh Chiefs and other Chieftains in the region while the other gives an account of Ranjit Singh's campaign in the region south of Sutlej and his relationship with the Sikh chiefs. Like other British writers, Griffin has justified the British expansion in the region south-east of Sutlej and the establishment of their supremacy.

Another important writing on the history of Punjab is Mohammad Latif's²⁰. This book covers the history of the Punjab from the earlier times to the last decade of 19th century. He corroborates the British point of view on many subjects. Works by H.G. Keene²¹

¹⁸ Henry T. Princep, *Origin of the Sikh Power in Punjab and Political life of Maharaja Ranjit Singh* (Patiala, 1970, Revised)

¹⁹ Griffin, *Ruler of India: Ranjit Singh* (Jullandhar, 1967); and *The Rajas of the Punjab* (Patiala, 1970, Reprint).

²⁰ Syad Mh. Latif, *Maharaja Ranjit Singh* (Delhi, 1997, Reprint)

²¹ H.G.Keene, *Hindustan Under Free Lances (1770-1820): sketch of military adventure in Hindustan during the period immediately proceeding British occupation* (London, 1907) and *The fall of Mughal empire of Hindustan* (London reprint, 1887).

throw light on the military adventurers in the region as well as the gradual disappearance of the Mughal authority leading to the British occupation.

There are also a number of other secondary sources in English, Gurumukhi and Persian languages telling us about the history of the Sikhs and providing references to the political developments in the region south of Sutlej. They are more or less an account of expansion of the Sikhs in the region.²² References dealing with the later phase of the British relations with the Sikh chiefs, south of Sutlej are found in a number of works.²³

There are also certain books on the history of Haryana which relate to this dissertation. But they either deal with a part of it²⁴ or they provide an overlapping view.²⁵

Keeping in mind the available source material the purpose of this research would be to provide an account of the emergence of the Sikh principalities, the political struggle among different powers for supremacy and sovereignty in the region and the liquidation of some

²² Surjit Singh Gandhi, *Sikhs in the 18th Century*, (Amritsar, 1999) and *Struggle of the Sikhs for Sovereignty*, (Delhi, 1980); Hari Ram Gupta, *Cis-Sutlej States*, Vol.II, (Lahore, 1944); N.K.Sinha, *Rise of the Sikh Power* (Calcutta, 1960).

²³ Andrew J. Major, *Return to Empire: Punjab Under the Sikhs and British in the mid 19th century*, (New Delhi, 1996); K.C.Khanna, *Sikh Leadership and Some Aspects of Anglo-Sikh relations* (Patiala, 1983); Syed Mohd. Latif, *Maharaja Ranjit Singh - The Man of Destiny* (Delhi, 1999); Sir Lepel Griffin, *The Raja's of Punjab* (Patiala, 1970); R.R.Sethi, *The Mighty and Shrewd Maharaja - Ranjit Singh Relations with other powers* (Delhi, 1960).

²⁴ M.M.Juneja, *History of Hissar: from inception to Independence 1354-1947*, (Hissar, Haryana, 1989).

²⁵ Buddha Prakash, *Haryana Through the Ages* (Kurukshetra, 1971); S.C.Mittal, *Haryana: A Historical Perspective* (New Delhi, 1986).

after their merger in the British empire. In addition to the political circumstances, it would be imperative to see the social and economic conditions of the time. Although it deals with a large span of time, the focus would be on the development of the region in the capacity of being the corridor to the plains of Hindustan.

Also, the region south of Sutlej was invaded and plundered by various invaders and adventurers. The first successful foreign adventurer was George Thomas, an Irish who settled himself in this region at the expense of the Sikh chiefs and other Chieftains and established his authority over the large tract of Haryana from 1797-1802 A.D.²⁶

It would be an interesting area of study to investigate as to how one individual adventurer succeeded to rise to the position of the ruler in a foreign land. Such enquiry would not only provide an insight into an individual's interests and acumen but also to the weaknesses of the regional polity and economy.

Amongst the several principalities that existed in the region south east of Sutlej, the Sikh Chief of Jind and Patiala, belonging to one ancestor Chaudhri Paul, came to be called the Phulkian Misl. They alongwith Bhai's of Kaithal, at a latter stage, had been following a policy of aligning themselves with, those forces that established

²⁶ M.M.Juneja, *History of Hissar*, (Hissar, 1989) p.60.

their way over Delhi, be it Nadir Shah, Ahmad Shah Abdali or the Peshwa or any body.²⁷

The first chapter of the dissertation, *The Early Sikhism and the Ascendancy of the Sikhs* (1708-1764) deals with the spread of Sikhism under the Sikh Gurus its influence on the polity, economy and society of the region south-east of Sutlej, the early Sikh settlers, the expeditions of Banda Bahadur who started his conquests from this region (Kharkhoda, Kunjpura etc.), and the interventions by the Sikhs and other powers such as Nadir Shah and Durranis after the campaigns of Banda Bahadur.

The second chapter, *The Struggle for Control* (1764-1808) would look into the contestation and confrontation among the different powers for gaining control over the area. The creation of the new military aristocracy (the Sikh chiefs) which displaced the old ruling families of the Hindus as well as the Muslims would also be dealt with. It includes the military campaigns and the rule of the Irish adventurer alongwith the military adventurers of the Maratha, the Mughal officials, the Rohillas, the Muslim and the Sikh Chiefs. The British policy during the period would also be reflected. Also, the social and economic condition and influence of all these political processes would be analysed.

²⁷ *Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, Vol.VIII, p.60.

The third chapter, '*British Intervention and Supremacy over the Sikh Principalities (1808-1849)*' studies the role and objective of the British East India Company in acquiring the absolute control over the Sikh States south-east of Sutlej and shift in its earlier policy of non-intervention. It analyses the British interests and policies towards these principalities, British relations with Ranjit Singh vis-a-vis the Sikh Chiefs of this region and the annexation of their country to the British empire. Social and economic changes brought about during his period by the British authorities are also dealt with in this chapter. This chapter also looks into the role played by the Muslim Chiefs, such as of Kunjpura, etc. in the established of the British paramountcy.

Chapter -i

*Early Sikhism and the Ascendancy of the Sikhs
(1708-1764)*

The presence of Sikhism in the region of South-east of Sutlej is as old as Sikhism itself. Almost all the Sikh Gurus visited this region from time to time and attracted the people of this area to the new religion. However, it was only during the beginning of the 18th century that we found more and more inhabitants started embracing Sikhism. When Banda Bahadur started his expeditions against what he perceived as the oppressive Mughals, it was this region that became his spring board. After Banda, Sikhism had to face the onslaught of the powerful governors such as Abdus Samad Khan, Zakariya Khan, etc. It was this suppression that made them more determined. The Afghan invasions and Marathas inroads gave them the opportunity to become the masters of the region after a long struggle of about half a century.

According to the traditions, Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, visited Kurushetra in 1504 on the occasion of Solar-eclipse and there he addressed the huge gathering assembled on this auspicious day.¹ The impact of the Guru's visit was certainly to be felt and those who got inspired built a Gurudwara in his memory there.

¹ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-i-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol.1 (2nd Ed., Amritsar), p.174; Khazan Singh, *History and Philosophy of the Sikh religion*. Vol.1 (Lahore 1914), p.76.

On his way to Delhi Guru Nanak also met Sufis at Panipat.² There were some other important Sufi seats in the region during Guru Nanak's period like Hansi, Karnal, etc. which lie on the important trade route too. This region was, therefore, always prone to the new developments.³ After a journey of about four years, Guru Nanak and Mardana reached Sultanpur passing through Jind and Kaithal. In July 1507,⁴ Nanak stayed at Sirsa too.⁵

The next Guru to visit Kurukhetra was Guru Amar Das, who stayed there for many days and attracted large crowds to his Sangats. He recited the *Banis* there and impressed the masses with simplicity. This must have made deep impact on many people who subsequently became his followers.⁶

The sixth and the seventh Guru, namely, Guru Hargobind and Guru Har Rai also visited Kurushetra (Thanesar) but at different times. They also preached their faith to the ready-made gathering assembled on the occasion of solar-eclipse. In commemoration of their visits two Gurudwaras were founded.⁷ The 8th Guru, Guru Hari Kishan, also stopped at Ambala, Panjo Khara, Karnal, Panipat, etc. on

² Balwant Singh Anand, *Guru Nanak: His life was his message* (N.D., 1983), p.81.

³ Harbans Singh, *Guru Nanak and origin of the Sikh faith* (Patiala, 1969), p.111.

⁴ Khazan Singh, *History and Philosophy*-----, p.89; Surjit Singh Bal, *Life of Guru Nanak* (Reprint Chandigarh, 1984).

⁵ Ibid, According to *Twarikh Khalsa*, Guru Nanak stayed at Sirsa for four months and eleven days which was then a big religious centre.

⁶ Santokh Singh, *Suraj Prakash* (ed. Bhai Vir Singh), Amritsar, 1926-37, Raj II, Ansu, 47.

⁷ *ibid.*

his way to Delhi.⁸ The ninth Guru, Guru Tegh Bahadur, also visited Kurukshetra's sacred pond in 1651 and on the way stayed at Kaithal, Pehowa, Burna, Karankheda etc.⁹ At Kaithal the Guru delivered some learned discourses on various aspects of Sikhism; at Pehowa, he visited the shrines of his predecessors – Guru Nanak, Amar Das and Guru Hargobind.¹⁰ Infact Guru Tegh Bahadur roamed the country from Hansi to Sutlej and subsisted by plunder from 1664 to 1673.¹¹ He was a great traveller and extensively toured the Malwa and Bangar region.¹² Passing through the towns of longstanding sanctity in the Sikh faith, he reached Dhamdhan near Jind, where people from far-off places gathered to celebrate the Diwali festival.¹³ From there he was brought to Delhi by Alam Khan Ruhila in November, 1665. In 1673, he again visited the Bangar Region.¹⁴ This area was backward and people there lived in poverty, misery, ignorance and fear.¹⁵ He helped the people in solving their economic problems by digging wells, planting trees, procuring cows for them. Thus he identified himself with the common man. His tours produced the awakening among the

⁸ Trilochan Singh, *Life of Guru Hari Krishan – A biography and history* (Delhi, 1981) p121; Harbans Singh, *Guru Tegh Bahadur* (Jullundhur, 1982) p45.

⁹ Ranbir Singh, *Guru Tegh Bahadur: Divine Poet, Saviour and Martyr* (N.D., 1975) p31. O.P. Ralhan (ed.) *The Great Gurus of the Sikhs Series* (N.D., 1998), p60.

¹⁰ Santokh Singh, *Suraj Prakash*, p.62.

¹¹ Griffin and Massy, *The Chief and Families of Note in the Punjab* (Punjab, 1940), vol. I, p53; *Punjab district Gazeetteer*. Vol VII, Part A, Ambala district (Punjab 1925) p23.

¹² Sohan Lal Suri, *Umdat-ut-Tawarika*, Daftar I (Lahore, 1885-89), p.48.

¹³ Harbans Singh, *Guru Tegh Bahadur*, p.55-64.

¹⁴ *ibid*, p86.

¹⁵ Pritam Singh Gill, *Guru Tegh Bahadur- The Unique Martyr* (Jullundhur, 1975), p54.

people to live economically and socially a better life. All this upset the Mughal emperor, Aurangzeb.¹⁶

In the Bangar region, there were families which had professed the Sikh faith since the days of Guru Arjun. The sixth Guru, Guru Hargobind, had fought battles in this territory against the Mughal forces with the aid of his local followers. This area was called the jungle or waste country.¹⁷ The tradition also attributes the visit of Guru Gobind Singh to Kurushetra in 1702 A.D. on the occasion of Solar eclipse.¹⁸

It is interesting to note that most of the Gurus went to Kurukshetra (Thanesar) on the auspicious occasion of solar-eclipse to preach their faith. The visits of several Gurus, thus, made Kurukshetra an important religious place for the Sikhs. Also, the area around Kurukshetra came under the influence of Sikhism. According to Fauja Singh, Aurangzeb ordered the demolition of Gurudwara at Buria in Sirhind Sarkar, and a mosque was raised on its site.¹⁹ In the later century, the Marathas also recognized the religious importance of Kurukshetra and whenever they invaded this area, they too went there as pilgrims.

¹⁶ *ibid*, p59; Harbans Singh, *Guru Tegh Bahadur*, p93.

¹⁷ Harbans Singh, *Guru Tegh Bahadur*, p.92.

¹⁸ Bhagat Laxman Singh, *Rashtar vir Guru Gobind Singh* (Ludhiana, 1964) p96.

¹⁹ Fauja Singh (ed.), *Sirhind through the Ages* (Patiala, 1972), p94.

After the death of Aurangzeb, fissiparous tendencies raised their head on almost all fronts and the mighty Mughal empire began to decline. The result was chaos and confusion on all sides which the people of this area welcomed. The local officials were rendered helpless and the local people declared themselves independent of the Mughal control.²⁰ The situation improved for them with the advent of Banda Bahadur in 1709.

According to Ratan Singh Bhangu, Banda was charged by Guru Gobind Singh to avenge the murder of his sons and other Sikhs.²¹ Hukamnamae issued by Guru Gobind Singh to the Sikhs before his departure towards south for securing orders for crushing the ruthless Mughal officials also confirms that the Guru wanted to take revenge and asked the Sikhs to be fully armed on his return to Anandpur.²²

Before dealing with the exploits of Banda, it is imperative to see the object of Banda's movement. There is a view that in 1708 Guru got disappointed with Mughal emperor Bahadur Shah and decided to send Banda to the Punjab with a view to mobilizing forces to launch an offensive, and after sometime he himself had to join the campaign. From this it become evident that the Guru himself had started

²⁰ Balkrishna Muztar, *Kurushetra: Political and Cultural History* (Delhi, 1978), p.84.

²¹ Bhai Vir Singh (ed.), Ratan Singh Bhangu, *Prachin Panth Prakash* (Amritsar, 1914), p80.

²² Ganda Singh (ed.), *Hukamnamae* (Patiala, 1967) pp.186-189.

thinking of a long-drawn struggle in this region and to establish the Khalsa Raj.

The first and foremost challenge that Banda faced on reaching north was finances because campaigns needed finances which could be mobilized either by destroying the existing feudal classes or by plundering etc. So, Banda restored to both the things to perform the duty assigned by his mentor.

Banda Bahadur first appeared at Kharkhoda, about thirty kilometre west of Delhi.²³ To mobilize and capitalize upon the potential revolutionary strength of the peasantry, the Khalsa under his leadership passed a resolution, known as Gurmatta. In this resolution protection was ensured to anyone threatened by thieves, decoits or in any way subjected to injustice or ill-treatment.²⁴ The Zamindars of Bangar and Malwa territory promptly put their trust in Banda and accepted him as their leader.²⁵ He also issued letters to the Sikhs of Majha and Doaba wherein he promised to punish the

²³ Muzzaffar Alam, "The Sikh uprisings under Banda Bahadur", in proceedings of the *Indian History Congress*, vol I, 39th session (Hyderabad 1978) p509; Ganda Singh, *Banda Singh Bahadur*, p26; Gian Singh, *Shamsher Khalsa*, (Reprint Patiala, 1970) p5.

²⁴ S.S Gandhi, *Sikh in the 18th century* (Delhi, 1999) p72; Sohan Singh, *Banda the Brave* (Lahore, 1915) p30.

²⁵ M. Alam, 'The Sikh uprisings....', p509; Ganda Singh, *Banda Singh Bahadur*, p27.

regional tyrants particularly Wazir Khan and protection to the peasantry.²⁶

After having requisite strength, Banda launched campaigns against decoits of the region who were creating problems for the whole population.²⁷ He also tried to protect the villages against the oppression of the ruling elite.²⁸

It is worth noting here that when Banda started his campaign against Sirhind, it was one of the strongest Sarkars of Delhi Suba, unlike other Subas and Sarkars where Mughal authority had eroded. So, it was an extremely difficult task for him to start struggle against Sirhind with the small army he had at his command. This made him move cautiously and strategically. Thus, he followed a circuitous route in the eastern direction to reach Sirhind.²⁹ The first target against the Mughal government was Sonipat³⁰ which was an old and rich town. The victory enhanced the morale of Banda's army. In October, Kaithal was attacked and the imperial treasury was looted.³¹ Banda distributed the treasury among his soldiers and augmented his

²⁶ Gian Singh, *Twarikh-i-Guru Khalsa*, p6; Ganda Singh, *Banda*-----, p25; Gurbux Singh's Article "Futuhah Namah-i-Samadi; on the nature of Sikh revolt under Banda, proceedings *Punjab History Conference*, 8th Sesson, Dept. of Punjab Historical Studies, Punjabi University (Patiala, 1973), p52; Ratan Singh Bhangu, *Prachin Panth Prakash*, p83.

²⁷ Inderjit Singh, 'The Sikhs and Indian economy', in *Journal of Sikh studies*, Dept. of Guru Nanak studies, (Amritsar, 1974) p54.

²⁸ Ratan Singh Bhangu, *Prachin*-----, p95.

²⁹ Ganda Singh, *Banda*-----, p36.

³⁰ J.N. Sarkar (ed.) William Irvine, *Later Mughals*, Vol.I, (N.D., 1971) p94.

³¹ H.R. Gupta, *Studies in the later Mughals history of the Punjab*, p46. Ganda Singh, *Banda*-----, p33.

TH-9197 21



forces further with the new addition of weapons and horses that came to his hand.³² Banda's next target was Thanesar, where the Mughal officials opposed Banda but they were overpowered. Banda plundered the town, put its Muslim inhabitants to the sword³³ and appointed his trusted men to administer it.

Banda, before actually starting the battle against the Mughal officials had collected a large army to the tune of several thousand armed men. When Banda reached this region on his way to Sirhind, thousands of Sikhs flocked to him from all quarters. Bhai Fateh Singh - a descendent of Bhai Bhagtu - Karam Singh and Dharam Singh and Chuhar Singh were among the first who joined him with men and money. Chaudhri Ram Singh and Tilok Singh of the Phulkian family liberally contributed to his resources,³⁴ and in a few months the whole peasantry was up in arms.³⁵ Banda also had with him twenty five chosen disciples sent by Guru Gobind Singh to accompany him to the North. Among them were Baba Binod Singh and Kahan Singh, the descendents of Guru Augad, and Baj Singh, a descendent of Guru Amar Das.³⁶

³² Paira Singh Data, *Banda Singh Bahadur* (Delhi, 1995), p37; G.C. Narang, *Transformation of Sikhism* (Lahore, 1912) p104-05; Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab -ul-tubab* (trans.) Elliot and Dowson Vol II (Allahabad, 1964), p652.

³³ Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab-----*, p.632.

³⁴ K.S. Narang & Hari Ram Gupta: *History of the Punjab: 1800-1858* (N.D., 1969) p199.

³⁵ S.S. Gandhi, *Struggle of the Sikhs for sovereignty* (Delhi, 1980), p27.

³⁶ Narang and Gupta, *History-----*, p198

The army which assembled under the command of Banda can be broadly classified under three classes of persons. First comprised the true and loyal Sikhs, who had rallied around Banda in a spirit of devotion and self-sacrifice to carry on the crusade against the enemies of their religion. The second class consisted of mercenaries who had been recruited and sent on to Banda by such chieftains, as Ram Singh and Tilok Singh of the Phool family who were not sure of the success of the new movement and didn't like to run the risk of losing court favour and their possessions, and hence couldn't venture to join personally the army of Banda. The third class was entirely composed of the irregulars who were professional robbers and decoits, men of reckless daring, who hailed the movement as a golden opportunity offering prospects of plundering cities and towns instead of solitary wayfarers or caravans of merchants.³⁷ The people were attracted towards Banda for the reason that he promised land to the landless and loot to everyone. Moreover, "those who asked for sons he blessed with sons; to those who asked for milch cattle. If any one came stricken with pain, he prayed for him and removed his suffering"³⁸

Banda's next destination was Samana, where he put to death Jalal-ud-din, the executioner of Guru Tegh Bahadur. From there, he

³⁷ G.C. Narang, *Transformation of -----*, pp.104-05.

³⁸ Ratan Singh Bhangu, *Prachin-----*, p94.

proceeded towards Sadhaura. On the way he punished the Mughal officials of Ghuram, Thaska, Kunjpura, Shahabad, Mustafabad, Ambala and Kapuri.³⁹ From all these raids Banda amassed enormous wealth which he distributed among his followers equally. He also got a large number of arms and ammunition from Mustafabad.⁴⁰ At Sadhaura, Banda fought his first closely contested battle with the Mughal governor, Usman Khan, whose rule was very oppressive and defeated the latter. At Sadhaura, Banda abolished Zamindari because the Mughal governor used to levy four times higher land revenue on the non-Muslims.⁴¹

From Sadhaura, the Sikhs marched towards Mukhlisipur which was easily captured and renamed as 'Lohgarh'. Although these victories were small, they served the purpose of encouraging the followers of Banda and attracted thousands to his flag by the time he advanced upon Sirhind. Also, these battles brought to Banda resources that were necessary to get victory over Sirhind. Thus, by April 1710, Banda swept away most of the Mughal officials from the territories south of Sutlej⁴² and had become the virtual master of the

³⁹ The Maharaja Ranjit Singh, *Centenary Vol.* (Cawnpore, 1940), p72. G.C. Narang, *Transformation-----*, p105, S.S. Gandhi, *Struggle of the Sikhs---*, p28; Paira Singh Data, *Banda-----*, pp37-38.

⁴⁰ Ganda Singh, *Banda Singh Bahadur*, pp35-38.

⁴¹ Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, *A Short history of the Sikhs* (Bombay, 1950) pp87-88.

⁴² Fauja Singh (ed), *Sirhind through-----*. p102.

territories between Jamuna and Sutlej yielding an annual revenue of thirty-six lakhs of Rupees.⁴³

In spite of the consistent victories gained by Banda and the resources he gathered, victory over Sirhind was the most difficult task. In the eyes of the Sikhs, Sirhind was the most accursed place. It was there that Guru Gobind Singh's two sons were brutally murdered. In May 1710, the battle was fought between Wazir Khan, Faujdar of Sirhind and Banda's army where the latter got victorious on the plains of Chappar-Chiriti, a place ten miles from the city of Sirhind.⁴⁴

After the conquest and sack of Sirhind, Banda gave the newly conquered territory to his followers to administer. He appointed Baj Singh to govern Sirhind and Ali Singh of Salaudi as his deputy. Fateh Singh was given the responsibility of Samana and its adjoining areas. Baba Binod Singh and Ram Singh, a brother of Baj Singh, were sent to administer Thanesar, Karnal and Panipat jointly. All the Mughal officials of the twenty-eight parganas of Sirhind were replaced and most of the country between the Sutlej and the Jamuna passed into the hands of the Sikhs.⁴⁵ However, Banda never intended to force or impose his faith on others, which is evident by the fact that he

⁴³ S.S. Gandhi, *Struggle of the Sikhs for sovereignty*, p34.

⁴⁴ The Maharaja Ranjit Singh, *Centenary Vol*, p72; Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab*-----, p 414; Fauja Singh (ed), *Sirhind*-----, p81.

⁴⁵ Khafi Khan, *Muntkhab*-----, pp652-54; Narang and Gupta, *History of the Punjab*, p201; G.C. Narang, *Transformation of*-----, p107. G.C. Narang, *Glorious History of Sikhism*, 6th ed. (N.D., 1972) p141, Ganda Singh, *Banda*-----, p61.

allowed the Muslims of his army to read Khutba-i-namaz, signifying freedom of worship.

The occupation of Sirhind by the Sikhs gave them the opportunity to move towards Delhi and Haryana region.

Encouraged by the success in the region south of Sutlej and other areas, Banda crossed Jamuna, punished and plundered the people of Gangetic Doab in July 1710. After this he moved to Jullundhur and Bari Doeb to help the Sikhs against the Mughal Faujdar of Jullundhur. From this expedition, he got the territories of this area except Lahore and appointed his officials to control the affairs of the government.⁴⁶

Another great achievement ascribed to Banda was the establishment of Thanas from village to district level. The appointment of the Thanedars was made by him only and they were directly accountable to him. Prominent among these Thanas were of Rampur, Nanota, Jhujhana Bakaur, Sadhaura, Karana, Buria and Thanesar.⁴⁷

All the above developments infuriated the Mughal emperor, Bahadur Shah who could no longer tolerate this disturbed state of affairs in the frontier province of his empire. Therefore, on 26th October 1710, he deputed Firoz Khan Mewati and Rustam Ali Khan against the Sikhs.⁴⁸ They defeated the Sikhs between Indri and Karnal

⁴⁶ Khafi Khan, *Muntkhab*-----, P.660.

⁴⁷ *ibid*, p414.

⁴⁸ J.N. Sarkar (ed.), William Irvine's, *Later Mughals*, Vol.II (N.D. 1971), p.107.

and sent one hundred heads to the emperor to mark their victory. This pleased the emperor who made Firoz Khan the Faujdar of Sirhind in reward.⁴⁹ The next marches were to Sarai Smalkha, Panipat, Gharonda, Karnal and Thanesar. Near Thanesar at village Amingarh although the Sikhs put up combined resistance under the leadership of Binod Singh and Ram Singh, they got defeated. After clearing Thanesar, the Mughal army under Firoz Khan reached Shahabad.⁵⁰

Bahadur Shah also issued instruction to the Faujdars to destroy the Thanas established by Banda Bahadur and re-establish the imperial posts and to restore the forts of Shahabad, Mustafabad, Sadhaura and other places.⁵¹ It was the same emperor during whose reign the Sikhs were actively persecuted and a royal edict was issued on the 29th of Shawwal in the fourth regnal year, Dec. 10, 1710, to kill the disciples of Nanak (the Sikhs) wherever they were found.⁵²

On 25th November 1710, Bahadur Shah left Thanesar, through Shahabad and Ankala reached Sadhaura to set Punjab in order. The arrival of the Imperial troops under Bahadur Shah had once more

⁴⁹ *ibid.*

⁵⁰ G.C. Narang, *Transformation of Sikhism*, pp109-10; S.S. Gandhi, *Struggle of the Sikhs*, p42.

⁵¹ Khafi Khan, *Muntkhab-ul-Lubab*, p.423.

⁵² Ganda Singh (ed.), 'Early European Accounts of the Sikhs, and History of origin and progress of the Sikhs' *Indian Studies: Past and Present*, Vol.2, (New Delhi, 1974), p.215.

inspired the demoralized Mughal army with courage.⁵³ Banda took up his position in the fort of Lohgarh. Bahadur Shah laid seige in Dec 1710 but Banda fled to hilly track in Gurdaspur district. Emperor died in Feb 1712 and was succeeded by Jahandar Shah, who was overthrown by Farrukh Siyar in Jan 1713. The new ruler appointed Abdus Samad Khan as the Subedar of Punjab in Feb 1713 with the definite instructions to subdue the Sikhs.⁵⁴ The subedar captured Sadhaura and Lohgarh in Oct 1713. In 1715, Banda was captured after a stiff resistance at Gurdas Nangal and on 29th Feb, 1716, he and his followers were put to death.⁵⁵

Banda's contribution in rousing the Sikhs and paving the way for Sikh rule cannot be overestimated. It was Banda who had given practical shape to the principles enunciated by the Gurus. Guru Gobind Singh had destroyed the awe inspired by the Mughal despotism, Banda completely broke the charm of its invincibility. Whereas the Guru's possessions had not even extended much beyond the confines of the hills, the whole country from Lahore to Panipat lay at least for a short period practically at Banda's feet.⁵⁶ Dr. Ganda Singh says that "It was through him that the path of the conquest and freedom was discovered by the people of the Punjab. He was the first

⁵³ G.C. Narang, *Transformation of Sikhism*, pp109-10; S.S. Gandhi, *Struggle of the Sikhs*, p42.

⁵⁴ *The Maharaja Ranjit Singh, Centenary Vol.* p73.

⁵⁵ Balakrishnan Muztar, *However gave March 15, 1716 as the date of Banda's death* (Muztar, *Kurukshetra*, p.85).

⁵⁶ G.C. Narang, p118.

man to deal a severe blow at the intolerant rule of the Mughals in Punjab and to break the first Sod in the conquest of that province by the Sikhs".⁵⁷

Scholars have painted out that Banda never had the same whole-hearted support of the Sikhs after the conquest of Sirhind and also developed differences with one of his generals, namely Binod Singh, which demoralized the Sikh soldiers. These factors, in addition to the superior military resources of the Mughal forces, were the reasons of Banda's failure. On the basis of contemporary Persian chroniclers, Muzzaffar Alam says that Banda had strong following in the region south of river Sutlej i.e. Delhi Suba and the parganas forming Chakla Sirhind next to the northern districts of Bari Doab.⁵⁸ But around 1710, the Zamindars of Ambala, Kharkhoda and Karnal had all begun to help the Mughals in their hunt of the Sikhs.⁵⁹

From the contemporary sources, it seems that during Banda's period, trade and agriculture were in good condition. He was supported by the Zamindars and Cultivators but the traders came into conflict with him and sided with the Mughals because Banda's raids disturbed the trade-route passing through the province he controlled⁶⁰ which the trading community did not like.

⁵⁷ Narang and Gupta, *Transformation of Sikhism*-----, p208.

⁵⁸ M. Alam, '*The Sikh uprisings*-----', p.509.

⁵⁹ *ibid*, p514.

⁶⁰ *ibid*, p516.

It can be said that the areas which were first exploited by Banda Bahadur later on became the Sikh principalities in the second half of the 18th century such as Kaithal, Thanesar, Shahabad, Ambala, Buria etc. Thus, Banda should be given credit for paving the way for the Sikh chiefs to establish their chiefdoms. On the one hand, Banda's movement exposed the incapability of the Mughals and, on the other hand discontentment of the masses in general and peasantry in particular.

The period from the death of Banda till the establishment of Sikh principalities under Sikh chiefs belonging to different *Misls* recorded the bitter struggle between the declining power of the Mughals, the rising power of the Khalsa, the Marathas and the Durranis. The decade that followed the death of Banda was most disastrous to the Sikhs when the emperor was hell bent upon exterminating the Sikhs. To be a Sikh was to be already among the dead. Prices were laid on their heads⁶¹ and some became clean-shaven, while the others retreated to inaccessible hill tracts and jungles to the south of the Sutlej.⁶²

These developments raised the morale of the Mughal officials. They revived their atrocities on the people of this region to bring them

⁶¹ G.C. Narang, *Transformation of Sikhism*, p123.

⁶² Froster, G., *A Journey from Bengal to England through North India, Kashmir, Afganistan and Persia into Russia, 1783-1784*, Vol. I (London, 1798); p271; Payne, C.H., *A Short history of the Sikhs*, London, p110.

under their control. From 1716 to 1724, the Sikhs were crushed under the powerful hand of Abdus Samad Khan. But in 1725, they began to make their appearance again in the plains of the Punjab. In 1726, the Emperor appointed Zakariya Khan as the new governor of Punjab. In 1730-31, the Sikhs plundered the treasure and resorted to highway robberies. In 1733, an effort was made to crush the Sikhs by concessions and bribes. On the recommendation of the governor, the government of Delhi granted a jagir of Rs. 1,00,000 and title of Nawab to the Sikhs. No one, however, came forward to accept the title and the robe of honour.⁶³ Finally, Kapur Singh was bestowed with the title and robes of honour.⁶⁴ Thus, after a short span of time, the whole region once again came under Mughal control.

From 1738 to 1748, the Sikhs reappeared and became a power of reckon with. The invasion of Nadir Shah in 1739 and the weakness of Lahore government proved most favorable to the enterprise of the Sikhs. Nadir Shah plundered Kurukshetra, Karnal, Shahabad, etc. in Feb 1739. Despite the sincere efforts made by the imperial forces to check him at Karnal⁶⁵ under the command of Muhammad Shah, the Mughal emperor, they could not stop him.⁶⁶ The weak Mughal officials

⁶³ Narang and Gupta, p214.

⁶⁴ G.S. Narang, *Transformation of Sikhism*, p125.

⁶⁵ Major C.H. Buck, *The annals of Karnal* (Lahore, 1914), p6; Fauja Singh (ed) *Sirhind through-----*, p107. James Fraser, *The history of Nadir Shah* (London, 1742, 2nd ed.) p.152.

⁶⁶ H.R. Gupta, *Studies in the later Mughal history of the Punjab*, pp.31-32. Griffin and Massy, Vol I, p9.

after Nadir Shah's retreat couldn't subdue the Sikhs. Another important point to be noted here is that the Pathans who came with Nadir Shah as military adventurers, settled themselves in Rohtak area which was then no-man's land. Thereafter, they subsisted as military servants of the Delhi emperors.⁶⁷ But soon after, this area passed into the hands of Marathas after the treaty of 1752 between Mughal court and the Marathas.⁶⁸ This treaty gave a legal foothold to the Marathas in north India particularly in Delhi and Haryana region. However, on 23 April 1752, the Mughal emperor ceded this region to the Durranis breaking the promise of the treaty of 1752. After a period of about two years, the next emperor, Alamgir II, vide a royal farman dated 25th Oct 1754, again surrendered this area to the Marathas.⁶⁹

To make the picture more clear, it is necessary to have a more detailed study of the developments that occurred from 1748 onwards. The Marathas appointed their officials to govern this area but after some time, Nizabat Khan (a freebooter) attacked the area and drove away the Maratha governor. Nizabat Khan now became the independent ruler of the extensive area around Kurukshetra. His rule didn't last long when Adina Beg, the governor of Punjab, captured the region.⁷⁰ Adina Beg, after capturing the area in 1752, wrote to the

⁶⁷ *Punjab State Gazeetteers*, Vol.IIIA, Dujana State (Lahore, 1908), p.2.

⁶⁸ Buddha Prakash, *Haryana through the Ages* (Kurukshetra, 1971) p69.

⁶⁹ *ibid*, pp70-71.

⁷⁰ H.R. Gupta, *Studies in-----*, pp81-83.

Delhi that “the Zamindars of his region are refractory and require force to keep them in order. If you intend to come here bring with you a large army and abundant war material; otherwise your coming would be inadvisable leave this territory to me”. The Wazir accepted the proposal and the region became a part of the kingdom of Adina Beg.⁷¹ Malcolm believes that in 1752 Adina Beg was not interested in reducing the Sikhs altogether and rather entered into a secret understanding with them, which indirectly helped them in gaining further strength.⁷²

Meanwhile, Afghan invasions under Ahmed Shah Abdali had started from 1748 onwards. This gave the Sikhs another opportunity to become the rulers of this area by destabilising the already decaying Mughal rule. In 1751, Abdali conquered Punjab and appointed Mir Mannu as the first Afghan governor of the Punjab, who first of all withdrew the Jagir which was granted to the Sikhs in 1749. He then sent a large army under Sadiq Beg Khan, the governor of Sirhind and Adina Beg to crush the Sikhs.

Towards the middle of the eighteenth century Haryana thus slipped away from the administrative control of the rulers of the Delhi. It was mostly parceled out among the local chiefs and was also subjected to some extent to the encroachment of the neighbouring

⁷¹ Buddha Prakash, *Harayana through-----*, p72.

⁷² Malcom, John, *Sketch of the Sikhs* (London, 1812) p92.

powers. Kamgar Khan Baluch, the governor of Farrukhnagar held a vast territory comprising the whole of the districts of Rohtak and Hissar, parts of Gurgaon, Jind and Patiala; Najabat Khan Ruhela held parts of Kurukshetra and Karnal (which included, Indri, Ajimabad, Pipli and Shahbad. Muhammad Amin and Hasan Khan took position of Fatehabad, Ranja and Sirsa, Bahadur Khan was granted the jagir of Bahadurgarh. Other minor chiefs of Haryana Asadulla Khan and Hasan Ali Khan (brother and nephew of Kamgar Khan) were the rulers of Tauru and Jhajjar respectively.⁷³ In 1755 Qutub Khan seized Sirhind after plundering the areas of Sonipat, Panipat and Karnal and defeating the Imperial forces of Karnal when his Jagirs were given to the Marathas by Wazir Imad-ul-mulk. But Adina Beg defeated Qutub Khan and took over the administration of Sirhind and its dependencies and brought under control Shahabad, Ghuram, Thanesar and Mustafabad. Seeing this and knowing the military weakness of the Mughals Delhi Emperor confirmed Adina Beg as the governor of these territories.

In 1756, Abdali in his fourth attack captured Delhi and Lahore and appointed Adina Beg now as the governor of Punjab but a sizeable region of Haryana was placed under the charge of Abdus Samad Khan,⁷⁴ who was made governor of Sirhind, Najib-ud-daula as

⁷³ H.A. Phadke, *Haryana : Ancient and Medieval* (Delhi, 1999), p.174.

⁷⁴ Buddha Prakash, *Haryana through-----*, pp.72-73.

Mir Bakshi by Abdali. By now the Marathas also planned the recovery of Gangetic Doab. The Wazir Imad intended on putting the Maratha against Najib whom the emperor also desired to get rid of. By Sept. Najib succumbed himself to Marathas and resigned from the office of Mir Bakshi. Now, the Marathas were left supreme in the capital.⁷⁵ Next, the Marathas entered the region South-east of Sutlej and collected revenues and plundered the territories of Karnal, Taraori, etc.⁷⁶ The period that followed the annexation of Sirhind to Abdali's kingdom in 1757 was marked by the witness of another turbulent phase.

In 1758, Adina Beg threw off his allegiance to Abdali and made an alliance with the Sikhs and also invited the Marathas to invade Punjab. The combined army overran East Punjab ousted Abdus Samad⁷⁷ and reached Lahore in March 1758. Timur Khan, son of Abdali and his deputy were defeated but the Marathas didn't wish to remain in Punjab. Therefore, in April 1758, they gave the province of Punjab (Lahore) to Adina Beg in lieu of an annual tribute of Rupees seventy five lakhs⁷⁸ after releasing the Punjab from the hold of Afghans. This shows that Adina Beg successfully held the balance between the Delhi Emperor, Ahmed Shah, the Sikhs and the

⁷⁵ Phadke, H.A., *Haryana*-----, p.181.

⁷⁶ *ibid*, p.182.

⁷⁷ Fauja Singh (ed), *Sirhind through*-----, p109.

⁷⁸ Narang and Gupta, *History of the Punjab*-----, p234.

Marathas. He was always ready to intrigue with any power that appeared likely to prove useful to him.

The supremacy and ascendancy of the Marathas in this region was alarming to the Mughals and some Rajput and other chiefs. The Afghan chief Najib-ud-daulah and Mughal emperor invited Abdali, who himself was thinking of invading India at that point of time to take revenge from the Marathas, the Sikhs and Adina Beg for the defeat inflicted by them upon his son. In Oct 1759, Abdali once again invaded India for the fifth time. He defeated the Marathas at Tarori in Dec 1759.⁷⁹ The next whole year (1760) was spent by Abdali in his campaign against the Jats, the Marathas and in negotiations with Nawab Shuja-ud-daula and others.⁸⁰ The Marathas fought against Abdali in the third battle of Punjab in 1761 but were defeated.

The period between 1758 and 1761 was the most favourable period for the Sikhs to consolidate themselves, and, infact many chiefs such as Baghel Singh etc strengthened their position in the region around Karnal. After the third battle of Panipat, in the absence of any regular govt. on the part of the Durrani or the Mughals.⁸¹ The Sikhs alone were left to fight the issue out with the Durrani in Sirhind region and with the Mughals in the Suba of Delhi. Whereas

⁷⁹ Buddha Prakash, *Haryana through-----*, p.75.

⁸⁰ Fauja Singh (ed), *Sirhind through-----*, p.110.

⁸¹ H.L.O. Garrett (ed.), *Cunningham's, A history of the Sikhs from the origin of the nation to the battles of the Sutlej*, (Delhi, 1955), pp90-91.

the Maratha power vanished for time being. Also, the Sikhs were now far more strong and far more well organized than they had been in the days of Zakariya Khan.

However, from 1752 to 1761, it was a four cornered contest in which the Durrani, the Marathas, the Sikhs and the Mughals took part. The three years that followed the third battle of Panipat saw a contest between the Sikhs, Afghans and Mughals because Abdali after plundering Delhi in 1761, appointed Najib-ud-daula as the defacto ruler of Delhi. He kept in his possession the region south of Panipat.⁸² Whereas Zain Khan, the governor of Sirhind was given the charge of the areas northward of Panipat such as Karnal, Thanesar, Ambala and Jind.⁸³ The remaining portion of the region south of Sutlej continued to be a part of the Mughal kingdom.

Zain Khan followed a ruthless policy of persecution of Sirhind which had become troubled spot on account of Sikh inroads.⁸⁴ On account of Zain Khan's intolerant administration and his active assistance to Ahmed Shah Abdali during the wholesale massacre of 1762,⁸⁵ the Sikhs became furious against him. In 1764, the Sikh sardars for the accomplishment of their mission, took united action

⁸² S.C. Mittal, *Haryana: A historical perspective* (N.D., 1986), p1. W. Franklin, *The history of the reign of Shah Alam* (Allahabad, 1915), p17.

⁸³ Ganda Singh, *Ahmad Shah Durrani* (Bombay, 1959), p288. H.R. Gupta, *Studies in---*, p186.

⁸⁴ Bakhtmal Khalsanama (Ms.) f. 48 (cited in Teja Singh, Ganda Singh, *A short history of the Sikhs*), p168.

⁸⁵ *ibid*, p269.

under the leadership of Jassa Singh Ahluwalia and others for the establishment of their territorial rule in specified regions⁸⁶ and to punish Zain Khan, who tried to defend his territories but in vain and was killed. This made the Sikhs the master of all the territories as far south as Panipat.⁸⁷ It has been argued that there was no recognized leader of the Sikhs in the first half of the 18th century.⁸⁸

After subduing Sirhind in 1764, the Sikh chiefs who commanded different Misls at once dispersed in various directions and, proportionate to their strength, seized what fell in the way of each. The chiefs left behind their followers in each village that was subdued. A village that had been marked down by one Sikh, was not claimed by another, who came later, however prominent a sardar he might be. It was this area territory where Banda Bahadur had set up his supremacy and so did the Misls after him now.⁸⁹

The Misls divided the areas among themselves. Mehar Singh of Nishanwalia Misl seized the parganas of Ambala, Shahabad.⁹⁰ Sahib Singh and Gurdip Singh of the Dallewalia Misl took possession of Ladwa, Indri and Babain; another chief Mit Singh alongwith his two nephews Bhag Singh and Bhanga Singh of the same Misl took

⁸⁶ J.C. Dua, *18th Century Punjab* (N.D., 1992), p8.

⁸⁷ Griffin and Massy, Vol I, p10; *Journal of Haryana studies*, Vol III (Kurukshetra, 1991), p21.

⁸⁸ *ibid*, Vol I, p53.

⁸⁹ Sohan Singh Sheetal, *Rise of the Sikh power in the Punjab* (Jullundhar, 1970) pp6-7.

⁹⁰ *ibid*; Henry T. Princep, *Origin of the Sikh power in Punjab* (Reprint, Patiala, 1970) p24; Griffin and Massy, Vol I, p10.

possession of Mustafabad, Chaupar, Pehowa, Thanesar and Siabla;⁹¹ Bhai Gurbax Singh, the Phulkhian Sardar of Bhuchauki, captured the region around Kaithal; Kanal, Panipat, Safidon, Jind and Sirhind were also occupied by the chief of the same Misl, namely, Raja Gopal Singh, who, however, was not yet strong enough to hold all these places.⁹² Buria, Jagadhri were occupied by the Bhangi Misl.⁹³ Misl Karorasinghian took possession of Sadhaura, Kalsia (Chhichrauli) Dhanaura, Radaur, Beri, Chhalaudi etc.; Misl shaheedan occupied Tangaur, Tarori, Jadauli and others.⁹⁴

From the accounts given by different scholars it become clear that the Sikhs of south-east Punjab such as Sardar Baghel Singh of Chaludhi, Ala Singh of Patiala and Jind Chief, etc. gathered enough strength even before 1764 and played very important role alongwith the Sikhs of the trans-Sutlej in demolishing the last symbol of Mughal sovereignty in the region i.e. Zain Khan of Sirhind Sarkar. These Sikh sardars of the region south of river Sutlej perpetually overran the territories of Hissar and north of Delhi even since the Marathas reached north India in 1737 A.D.⁹⁵ In 1755, Gajpat Singh of Phool family conquered the imperial pargana of Jind and Safidon and overran Panipat and Karnal but was not strong enough to hold

⁹¹ *ibid.*

⁹² Griffin and Massay, *Vol.I*, p10, Henry T. Princep, *Origin of the*—, p25.

⁹³ Griffin, *Rajas of the Punjab* (Patiala, 1970, Reprint), p 46.

⁹⁴ Sohan Singh Sheetal, *Rise of the Sikh Power*, p7.

⁹⁵ *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Vol XXI, p 331-332.

them.⁹⁶ In the same way Bhai Desa Singh of Phool family captured Kaithal from Afghan in 1760.⁹⁷ This makes one thing clear that the Phulkian Misl alongwith chiefs like Bhaghel Singh established themselves in the region south of Sutlej before 1764. Whereas other Misls occupied the territories in this region only after 1764.

In retrospect, one must accept that the Afghan and the Maratha interference in the region greatly influenced the history of Punjab in more than one way. The Marathas by taking the reigns of this area into their hands removed the existing control of the Mughals and made them nominal sovereigns. At the same time, they themselves were not that much interested in establishing and ruling this part of the country and thereby left this area to the invasions of Durrani and plundering raids of the Sikhs. On the contrary, the Durrani by defeating Mughals and then the Marathas, paved the way for the rise of the Sikh power which otherwise would not have happened. Also, the incessant invasions by the Durrani greatly made favourable chaotic condition for the Sikhs to flourish.

The economic condition of the region during the period that followed Banda's death was miserable. The invasions by Durrani and constant state of warfare made people feel that "they need nothing

⁹⁶ *Punjab states Gazeeteeer, Phulkian states: Patiala, Nabha and Jind*, Vol XVII A, (Lahore, 1909), p215; *Imperial Gazeetter of India, provincial series, Punjab*, Vol II (Calcutta, 1908), p312.

⁹⁷ Griffin and Massy, *The Chiefs and Families*-----, Vol.I, p.26.

more than to eat and drink and the rest is Ahmad Shah's".⁹⁸ The masses were sick of daily marauding inflicted on them. They needed a ruler who could guarantee the security of their lives and property. The constant stream of invasions by the Marathas, the Durrani's, thus, affected the economy adversely. Each single invasion by Abdali inflicted great loss on the economy of this region and in this way the significant wealth of the region drained away to the far off places such as Afghanistan. Besides this, invasions led to the decline of agricultural production and a good deal of land has left uncultivated, because people made up their minds to cultivate only that much land which was just sufficient for subsistence. Commerce and Industries also got affected because of these invasions. The sense of insecurity and anarchical conditions impeded the growth of trade in terms of quantum and quality.⁹⁹

Another important observation which needs to be mentioned here was the role of Muslim chiefs such as of Pinjore and Kunjpura,¹⁰⁰ who supported the Mughals as well as the Durrani's as their co-religionists. They always helped the invaders during their campaigns. Infact, they wanted to extinguish Sikh and Maratha control from this region.

⁹⁸ N.K. Sinha, *Rise of the Sikh power* (Calcutta, 1936), p202.

⁹⁹ S.S. Gandhi, *Sikhism in the 18th century*, p312.

¹⁰⁰ T.S. Shejwalkar, *Panipat: 1761* (Poona, 1946), p56.

To conclude, it could be said that from the days of Guru Nanak, Sikhism influenced this region culturally and socially. But the military and political activities of the Sikhs in the region began only with the time of Guru Har Gobind who made Bangar and neighbouring areas the centre for his recruits. From the period of Gurus (more specifically since the time of Guru Gobind Singh) till 1764 A.D, the aim of the Sikhs was to demolish the Mughal administrative structure which symbolized oppression and injustice. The establishment of the estates by Chiefs such as Baghel Singh even before 1764 in the vicinity of Delhi was not guided by the motives of plunder.

Chapter -ii

Struggle for Control (1764-1808)

The political vacuum created by the Mughals and the Marathas after the third Battle of Panipat in the Region South-east of Sutlej was adequately filled by the Sikh Chiefs in 1764 A.D. Now they became so powerful that they appeared on the scene of Delhi and had only to deal with the leading Amirs of waning Mughal Empire and the Afghans for the next two decades until Mahadji Scindhia took reigns of Delhi in 1784. With Mahadji at Delhi there began further contestations among the different powers which included the old as well as the new entrants such as the British and the foreign adventures like George Thomas.

In the aftermath of acquiring territories, the Sikh Chiefs in the South-eastern Region of Punjab established themselves with their headquarters by the year 1767 A.D. Other than the territories of the Sikh Chiefs, we find there the territories belonging to the Muslim Chieftains such as Nawab of Kunjpura (near Karnal) who had his tracts in the Parganas of Thanesar, Shahabad, Buria, Karnal, Indri alongwith the parganas of Bidauli, Subhar, Azamabad etc.¹ This was perhaps the most important reason which made the Nawabs of Kunjpura often hostile to the Sikh Chiefs of Ladwa, Buria, Thanesar, Kaithal etc. Also, the Nawab of Kunjpura, Najbat Khan assisted Nadir

¹ Nawab Mohammad Ibrahim Ali Khan, *History of Kunjpura State (Lahore)*, pp.21-31.

Shah in 1739 in his conquest of Delhi.² In the later period, the Nawabs that succeeded Najbat Khan also assisted the Mughals, Durrains and the Marathas (in 1780's) against the Sikh Chieftains. Nawab Najbat Khan also fought against the Marathas in concert with Najib-ud-daula and Shuja-ud-daula and routed the Marathas at several places but when the Marathas became the dictator in this region and the matter became serious so as to necessitate a recall of Abdali, it was Jamal Khan, the son of Najbat Khan, whom Najib-ud-daula sent to Persia to invite Abdali.

In the third Battle of Panipat, the next Nawab, Daler Khan, played a very crucial role in the victory of the Durrans and in lieu got the approval of his possessions from Abdali as well as Mughal Emperor Shah Alam through the royal farman/Sanads addressed to the officials and subjects.³

Another thing that deserves attention is that the Sikh Chiefs of the region South-east of Sutlej remained the vassals of the Mughal emperor and paid tribute. For instance, the Raja of Jind in 1772 obtained an imperial *farman* which gave him the title of Raja. These Sikh Chiefs of the region used to call themselves the *Malguzars* or the revenue payers into the royal treasury.⁴ In addition to the revenue,

² Ibid., p.9; Griffin and Massy, *Chiefs and families of note in the Punjab*, vol.I (Punjab, 1940), p.16.

³ Ibid., pp.32-35.

⁴ Sir Lepel Griffin, *Ranjit Singh* (Delhi, Jullundhur, Reprint, 1967), p.20.

they were obliged to pay tributes. Previously they had been merely rural notable. The reason for attaching themselves as feudal retainers or vassals to the great houses such as the Mughals (who still had nominal authority) was the consideration to save themselves from absorption by any other power. In the early years of the 19th century when Maratha deputy in North India, Perron and George Thomas were sharing the sovereignty in this area, the Sikh Chiefs invited the British to help them from absorption.⁵

The struggle for survival and supremacy continued between the Mughals and the Sikh Chiefs In spite of their Lord and vassals relationship. Since 1766, the Sikhs raided and plundered the area of Panipat, Sonapat, Karnal, etc. many times which was in complete anarchy and political confusion after the disaster of Panipat in 1761 and had become the exploiting ground for all.

In Jan. 1772, Shah Alam was brought back to Delhi by Mahadji Scindhia but had to go back to the Deccan the same year because of hostilities with other powers there. During Shah Alam's reign the real authority at Delhi was Najaf Khan, who was given the Parganas of Hansi and Hissar. After consolidating his power Najaf Khan resolved to occupy the neighbouring territories and hence attacked Karnal, Jind, Shahabad, Thanesar and Ambala which were under the

⁵ Gopal Singh, *History of the Sikh People* (1469-1978), pp.444, 445.

Suzerainty of the Sikh Chiefs.⁶ In Oct. 1772, the Maratha Chief, Janko Rao marched against the Sikh Chiefs because they had defeated Mughal Ali Khan in April-May 1772, which was a great offence. He marched from Delhi via Panipat and Karnal territories. In 1774, the Sikh Chiefs after usurping Karnal, Panipat and Sirhind, plundered and burnt Shahdara and were preparing to March towards Indri.⁷

In 1774, the Sikhs under the leadership of Amar Singh of Patiala Captured Hissar from the Bhatti Chief. The Sikh Chief also took possession of Fatehabad and Sirsa.⁸ Seeing all this, Najaf Khan launched an expedition to oust the Sikh Chiefs and recovered Karnal and parts of Rohtak from the Sikhs. The same year, the Emperor tried to follow a conciliatory policy and offered Jagir to the Sikhs but this plan couldn't get materialised because Abdul Ahad Khan appointed Samru as the governor of Sonapat and Panipat districts and was thought as the best person to punish the Sikhs. Samru was also authorised to possess whatever territory he could wrest from the Sikh Chiefs and in particular from Gajpat Singh of Jind, whose territory lay quite adjacent to the districts under his charge.⁹ Samru was also authorised to possess. Whatever places he could wrest from Kuchait

⁶ S.C. Mittal, *Haryana : A Historical Perspective* (N.D., 1986), p.8.

⁷ 1184, "Extracts from news", July 27, 1774, *Calander of Persian Correspondence* (C.P.C.), Vol.4, 1772-75, p.214.

⁸ Griffin, *The Rajas of the Punjab* (Lahore, 1870), p.42.

⁹ H.R. Gupta, *Cis-Sutlej States*, Vol.II (Lahore, 1944), p.53.

Singh, the Sikh Faujdar of Karnal.¹⁰ In 1775, Zabita Khan disobeyed the Emperor Shah Alam II and provoked the Sikh Chiefs to plunder crown-lands around Delhi.¹¹ Thus, Mughal emperor thought of buying the Sikh Chiefs by giving them Rs. 50,000. But the Sikh Chiefs could not be relied upon and the proposal was soon given up.¹²

The third quarter of the 18th century saw complete anarchy in the area neighbouring Sonapat, Panipat and Karnal. It formed a sort of no-man's land between the Sikh states and the Mughal-Maratha Power, coveted by both protected by none. It fell a victim to every freebooter/adventurer who happened to come that way.¹³ In 1775, the Delhi government made an attempt under Rahim Dad Khan Rohilla to recover Jind; but the Phulkian Chiefs combindly resisted the attack. Soon after, the confederacy of the Sikh Chiefs of Jind, Patiala, Kaithal, etc. invaded Rohtak but the Mughal power was strong enough to compel them to give up most of their conquests.¹⁴ This shows that there was a continuous bid to weaken each other on the part of the Mughals and the Sikh Chiefs during this period. The reason why Patiala sided with Jind Raja was that, by 1774, Amar Singh of Patiala

¹⁰ Brajendra Nath Banerji, *Begam Samru* (Calcutta, 1925), p.54. John Lall, *Begam Samru : Fading portrait in a gilded Frame* (N.D., 1997), p.43.

¹¹ 1733, 'From Mir Murtaza Khan', dated April 30, 1775, C.P.C., IV, 1772-75, p.301.

¹² 2033, 'The King to Murtaza Khan', Nov.1775, C.P.C., IV, 1772-75, p.355.

¹³ *Imperial Gazetteer of India, Provincial Series, Punjab*, Vol.I (Calcutta, 1908), p.303; H.R. Gupta, *Cis-Sutlej States*, p.46.

¹⁴ *Imperial Gazeetter of India, Provincial Series, Punjab*, Vol. II (Calcutta, 1908), p.312; *Punjab States Gazeetter, Phulkian States: Patiala, Jind and Nabha*, Vol.XVIA, p.312, (Lahore 1909), p.215.

had become master of the whole of the Hansi, Hissar and Sirsa territories and he feared that after subduing Jind, the Mughals would next turn to him.

In 1777, A.D. Najaf Khan marched against the Sikh states and Zabita Khan who had formed a confederacy with the Sikh chiefs. The battle was fought between the two parties at Panipat in which Najaf Khan emerged victorious and the Sikh Chiefs relinquished their conquests in Karnal and its neighbourhood. Also a treaty was concluded, whereby Hansi, Hissar and Rohtak were restored to the Mughals and Fatehabad and Rania remained with Patiala.¹⁵ This way, some of the areas of this region came under the administrative control of Delhi.

In 1778, Najaf Khan again had to face the Sikh rebellion. The Sikh Chiefs unitedly defeated the governor of Sirhind. At this juncture Emperor Shah Alam deputed Abdul Ahmad Khan alongwith the Prince to chastise the Sikh Chiefs. They marched towards Karnal in June 1779 with an army of 20,000 troops.¹⁶ Bhai Desu Singh, the Chief of Kaithal and Jind Chief came to meet them at Karnal and were asked to pay tribute and the former was arrested for extorting money. Therefore, in Sept. 1779, the Sikh Chiefs of this area formed a confederacy with the Trans-Sutlej chiefs such as Jai Singh Kanhaiya

¹⁵ Buddha Prakash, *Haryana Through the Ages* (Kurukshetra, 1971), p.83.

¹⁶ S.C. Mittal, *Haryana...* P.9; Griffin and Massay, *The Chiefs and Families of note...*, Vol.I, p.11.

and the combined forces defeated Abdul Ahmad Khan. But Sardar Baghel Singh of Chalaudhi, Gajpal Singh of Jind, Amar Singh of Patiala, Rai Singh of Baria, Bhanga Singh and Bhag Singh of Thanesar etc. joined the imperial forces and fought against the other Sikh Chiefs.¹⁷ Thanesar Chiefs also invited Ambala and Shahabad Chiefs which they didn't accept.¹⁸ As a matter of fact, the Sikh Chiefs accompanied the imperial troops with the intention to gain financially, which was promised by the Imperial General rather than any other consideration.

Next, Mirza Shafi was deputed against the Sikhs in Sonapat-Panipat districts who wrested the territories from the Sikhs in 1780-81. He marched to Buria and also conquered Mustafabad and Sadhaura. He made a written agreement also with the Jind Chief, Gajpat Singh. But soon after the Sikh Chief of Thanesar and Buria again reoccupied their possessions. Thus, this area until Mahadji's advent to Delhi saw the rivalries and hostilities between the Mughals/Rohillas and the Sikh Chiefs. Simaltenously rivalries were going on amongst the Sikh states such as Kaithal against Patiala and Jind, Baghel Singh against Jind Chief, Jind Chief against Kaithal Chief and so on.

¹⁷ N.K. Sinha, *Rise of the Sikh Power* (Calcutta 1960 third print), p.87.

¹⁸ H.R. Gupta, *Cis-Sutlej States*, Vol.II, p.83.

In the period that preceded the rise of Ranjit Singh, the Sikh Chiefs heading different *Misls* in the trans-Sutlej area were also hostile to each other, and, in 1777, the Chiefs of Kanhiya, Sukerchakiya, Ahluwalia and Bhangi *Misls* formed a coalition and drove the Ramgarhia Sardar¹⁹ who had greatly enhanced his power after Durrani's last Invasion in 1767. After the defeat, Ramgarhia Chief came to the area south of Sutlej and, with the help of Amar Singh of Patiala, established himself in a small territory near Sirsa in Hissar.²⁰ From that place, he extended his ravages upto the walls of Delhi. This development pointed out one thing that the inflow to the Region South-eastern of Sutlej which was started in 1764 A.D. continued during this period too. Another interesting thing to be mentioned here is that the Sikh Chiefs of Trans-Sutlej area often helped the Sikh Chiefs of the Cis-Sutlej Region and vice-versa against one another and against the Mughal governors.

Najaf Khan's death in 1782 led to a period of uncertainty, anarchy confusion and intrigues at Mughal Court. This brought Mahadji Scindhia again to Delhi in Oct. 1784, soon he became Supreme authority at Delhi. He was bestowed upon the administration of the Subas of Delhi and Agra by the Mughal

¹⁹ H.L.O. Garrett (ed.) *Cunningham's history of the Sikhs* (Oxford University Press, 1918), p.117.

²⁰ K.S. Narang & H.R. Gupta, *History of the Punjab* (N.D., 1969), p.251.

emperor. Mahadji gave this responsibility of administering Delhi *Suba* to Ambaji Ingle and later appointed him as the Faujdar of Sonapat.²¹

With Mahadji's ascendancy at Mughal court, the politics of the Region South-east of Sutlej took a new turn. The British interest also grew deeper in the affairs of Mughal Court. Now Mahadji could have an easy walk over the imperial game only if the British remained friendly. The presence of David Anderson who had deep friendship with Mahadji ensured this. As a matter of policy, Warren Hastings strongly opposed Maratha penetration Delhi.²²

At Delhi, Mahadji followed the policy of diverting the energy of the Sikh Chiefs and put a stop to their incursions by taking some of them into Maratha Service. It is to be remembered that in 1783 A.D. Baghel Singh and other Chiefs crossed the Ganges and plundered the country²³ which curbed the regular administration of Mahadji. Thus, he had offered to take 5,000 of them into his service. But this could not materialise because the Sikh Chiefs were eager to have friendship with the British rather than the Marathas.²⁴ The above opinion is evident from the letter written by Gurdit Singh and Man Singh to Colonel Cumming dated 14th May, 1785 which stated that, "Marathas

²¹ S.C. Mittal, *Haryana...*, p.11.

²² Govind Sakharam Sardesai, *History of the Marathas*, Vol.III (Bombay 1948), p.14.

²³ H.L.O. Garrett (ed.), *Cunningham's history of the Sikhs* (Oxford University Press, 1918), p.105.

²⁴ J.N. Sarkar, *English Records of Maratha History, Poona Residency Correspondence*, Vol.I (Bombay, 1936), p.19.

(Pateel) makes this negotiation and engagement with us. That being united together we should attack the country of English Gentlemen and of the Nawab Wazir, and that before upon the same advice we had plundered Chandausi. As the Nawab Wazir is our neighbour and you gentlemen are men of truth and are steadfast to your engagements and this stranger having become strong in this country will injure the whole world, if you gentlemen should be desirous of friendship, the Chiefs of Khalsa are not separated from you, they wish for mutual connection."²⁵

On the contrary, the British replied that as a proof of the friendship on the part of the Sikh Chiefs no raids were to be carried out against the country of Nawab Wazir. This makes the fact clear that the Sikh Chiefs wanted to come closer to the British since 1780's but the British didn't encourage them. However, the Marathas were desperate to make peace with the Sikhs. As far as relations of Sikh Chiefs with Mughal Emperor are concerned, from the calender of Persian correspondence it is quite evident that the Sikh Chiefs were always ready in their allegiance to the Mughal emperor and the latter also sought their help, though with all the precautions, on several occasions either out of fear or for helping him and the English against the Rohillas.²⁶

²⁵ Ibid., p.23.

²⁶ C.P.C., ii, 1767-69, Persian Correspondence, June 1767, p.279.

When Mahadji failed in his attempt to woo the Sikhs, he won over the celebrated Begam Samru²⁷ and added several parganas to her Jagir, some to the west of the Jamuna in Sonapat-Panipat area with a view to use her as a check upon the Sikhs.²⁸

Another reason which made the Sikh Chiefs reluctant to ally themselves with the Marathas was that the latter wanted to perpetuate their rule in the name of Mughals. But the Sikhs never hesitated to take help from the Marathas as and when it was necessary. The Maratha leaders such as Dhara Rao and Amba Rao also tried their fortunes in the country north of Jamuna. Dhara Rao was joined on his March by two Chiefs Baghel Singh and Karan Singh of Shahabad.²⁹ But the latter was subdued by Sardar Baghel Singh at Karnal in 1786 and could not make much by his expedition.³⁰

In 1786, Diwan of Patiala, Nanu Mal, asked for help from the Maratha governor to check the incursions of the rebel Sikh Chiefs. Sardar Baghel Singh, knowing it well that it was impossible for him to

²⁷ Begam Samru ruled over a small principality of Sardhana in the east of Jamuna and was very influential in the Mughal Court at Delhi in the 1780's. Begum also had Jagir in the Region west of Jamuna. George Thomas worked under her and fought battles against the Sikhs.

²⁸ James Anderson to Warren Hastings, Sindhia's Camp at Dig, 1st Feb., 1785, *Imperial Records, Secret proceedings*, 19th Feb., 1785, p.491-505; Laster Hutchinson, *European freebooters in Mughal India* (New York, 1964).

²⁹ Ganda Singh (ed.), 'Early European Accounts of the Sikhs, and History of Origin and Progress of the Sikhs' in *Indian Studies: Past and Present*, Vol.III, No.2 (New Delhi, 1974), p.239.

³⁰ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-i-Guru Khalsa* (Sialkot, 1884), p.706.

challenge the Marathas, joined the Marathas in their campaign against the rebel Sikh chiefs. Bhai Lal Singh of Kaithal also joined them and accepted the Maratha paramountcy. The Marathas drove away the enemy and returned to Karnal. About Baghel Singh it could be said that he allied himself with all prospective subjugators of his countrymen and played a very unenviable part in the history of Sikh States South of Sutlej.³¹

In 1787, Ambaji Ingle himself invaded the region South-east of River Sutlej with a view to subdue it, if possible. He was joined by Baghel Singh. Ambaji also wanted other Chiefs like Karam Singh of Shahabad and Gurdit Singh of Ladwa into his service. He reached Panipat³² with the object to enable Ghulam Qadir Khan to comply with the wishes of Scindhia who became very powerful and important at Delhi³³ and to stop the incursions of the Sikhs into Doab and crown lands. Some of the Sikh Chiefs accepted the role of peaceful feudatories under the Marathas i.e. they undertook the fiscal management of certain parganas in the Doab allotted to them for the maintenance of their contingents.

In 1790, Rane Khan, the Maratha General reached upto Patiala. On the way he halted at Thanesar where Kaithal Chief, Bhai Lal Singh

³¹ N.K. Sinha, *Rise of the Sikh Power* (Calcutta, 1960), p.91.

³² W. Francklin, *Military Memoirs of George Thomas* (Picadilly, 1805), p.266.

³³ J.N. Sarkar, *Records of Maratha history...* p.259.

sent gifts to him. But Thanesar Chiefs refused to comply with the demand of large sum of tribute. In 1794, Nana Rao was sent across the Jamuna to subdue the Sikhs states and to secure Nazrana. The Chiefs of Jind and Kaithal sent tributes but Sahib Kaur, Sister of Raja of Patiala did not agree to any such demand, and with the aid of chiefs of Thanesar and others raised the banner of revolt against the Marathas.

The death of Mahadji in 1794 was a severe blow to the Maratha designs in this region. Under Mahadji's successor, Daulat Rao Sindhia, De Boigne and after him, Perron, managed the Maratha affairs in the Delhi and neighbouring areas. Their regularly trained, well-disciplined army greatly checked the Sikh Chiefs and their inroads.³⁴

We come to know the British point of view regarding the Sikh Chiefs for the First time in 1786. According to which "Sikhs are nothing more than a number of petty plunderers. Their sole object is to lay waste and destroy, and they possess no means and no resources by which they might attempt a permanent conquest." The above view was observed in Anderson's report dated 13th Nov. 1786.³⁵

³⁴ N.K. Sinha, *Rise of the Sikh Power*, p.94.

³⁵ M.L. Ahluwalia, *British Foreign Policy Series* (New Delhi, 1982), p. LII.

On the other hand, in the MacPerson's minutes, the Governor-General accepted that the Sikhs may become in time a formidable force.³⁶

Although the raids by the Sikh Chiefs alarmed the British government as early as 1784, the authorities welcomed such raids, as they were stalling the consolidation of the power of Scindhia in this region. These raids were checked later on by the Maratha deputy in North India, Perron and Irish adventure, George Thomas.

The Presence of the Sikhs in the Doab disturbed Major James Browne plans who had aimed at Seizing the Imperial capital for the British. The Marathas' offer to take the refractory Sikh Chiefs into their service and Scindhia's treaty with the Sikh Chiefs in 1785 further disturbed the British authorities.³⁷

The Governor-General, Warren Hastings was opposed to the Sikh Chiefs and to their alliance with the emperor. Therefore, he himself took pain to form an alliance with the emperor against the Sikhs in 1784 because the Governor-General considered the dominions of the emperor as a barrier betwixt the Sikh states and the Nawab Wazir, their ally.³⁸ The Maratha agent at Delhi, Hingne, However, pointed out the possible danger that could arouse because of an alliance between the emperor and the Sikhs and the emperor

³⁶ George W. Forrest, *Selections from the letters, Despatches and other state papers preserved in the Foreign Dept. Govt. of India (1772-1785)*, p.17-20.

³⁷ H.R. Gupta, *Cis-Sutlej States*, Vol.II, p.158 : J.N. Sarkar, *Records of Maratha*, p.25.

³⁸ W. Francklin, *Shah Alam* (Allahabad, 1951), p.115, 116.

and the Sikhs and the British with the emperor. Hingne, thus, wrote to Nana Fadnis to pressurise Mahadji to see that the emperor would not make any kind of peace with any these powers, which might lead to the loss of Maratha influence in Northern India.³⁹

The British plans were shattered in 1784 by Afrasiyab and the Maratha Agent, Hingne. The emperor now was left with the only hope i.e. Mahadji Sindhia. The above discussion makes one more thing clear that the British were going very-very diplomatically and were not forming any alliance (neither offensive nor defensive) with the Sikh Chiefs which they suggested,⁴⁰ until the real designs of Mahadji shall be ascertained to have an hostile tendency which the Sikh Chiefs wrongly stated.

The study of the region south-east of Sutlej would be incomplete without analysing the role of foreign adventures who like indigenous invaders, raiders and adventures, established themselves in the region. Since the third battle of Panipat, there began a rapid race of armaments among nearly all the Indian powers, each

³⁹ H.R. Gupta, *Cis-Sutlej States*, p.161; George W. Forrest, *Selections from the letters...* p.17-20.

⁴⁰ Mian Basir Ahmad Farooqi, *British relations with the Cis-Sutlej States* (Punjab, 1941), p.1; Cumming to the Governor-General, 11th Apr; 1785, *Imperial records, Secret Proceedings*, 26th Apr; 1785.

employing according to his means and opportunity, one or more European captains who came in numbers to seek rapid fortunes in this land. During the later half of the 18th Century Portugese, French, Italian, British, German and other nationals of Europe rushed to India and helped to shape the future politics of India. The prominent few among them were De Boigne, Perron, Walter Reinhardt, George Thomas, Skinner, Bourquin etc.

George Thomas was the First successful foreign adventurer in the area South-east of Sutlej. His career was marked by brilliancy. He came to Madras in 1780, but came to prominence during the later period under Begum Samru and later under Appa Khande Rao, the Maratha General. In 1789, he commanded the troops that saved the emperor from the cruel hands of Najaf Quli Khan.⁴¹ Towards the end of 1792, Thomas left for his periodic expeditions against the Sikh Chiefs when his enemies intrigued and he had to leave Begum Samru. It was during his charge of the areas raided by the Sikh Chiefs that Thomas first fought against the Sikhs.⁴² These areas were assigned by the emperor to Begam Samru as Jagir.

After Begum Samru, Thomas joined Appa Khande Rao in 1793. In March-July, 1794, he occupied Jhajjhar, looted Bahadurgarh and marched towards Pataudi. All these territories later on were included

⁴¹ C. Grey (ed.), H.L.O. Garrett, *European Adventurers in Northern India* (Lahore, 1929), p.38.

⁴² H.R. Gupta, *Cis-Sutlej States*, p.270.

in his Jagir.⁴³ In 1795, the Chiefs under Karam Singh raided Marathas territories in Doab. Appa Khande Rao sent Thomas to check them. By now his contingents were raised and the parganas of Panipat, Sonapat and Karnal were given to him for his maintenance.

During the next whole year, he remained busy in fighting the Sikh Chiefs who created trouble continuously on both the banks of Jamuna. Meanwhile, Begum raided his territories. Thomas also assisted Appa Khande Rao when his troops mutinied and held him a sort of prisoner in the fort of Kotputli. For this service Appa adopted him as his son and added troops and four parganas of Jygur, Beri, Mandothi and Phatoda worth Rs. 1,50,000 annually.⁴⁴ While in Maratha employment, Thomas defeated a party of the Sikh Chiefs at Karnal.⁴⁵ Thomas' future once again went into obscurity on 25th June 1797, when Appa Khande Rao was drowned in the river Jamuna.

It is to be noted that in Feb. 1797, Perron succeeded De Boigne as Sindhia's deputy of north Indian affairs.⁴⁶ Soon he conceived the idea of establishing himself in the region south-east of Sutlej and had only to deal with Thomas who had suddenly become powerful and

⁴³ S.C. Mittal, *Haryana : A historical perspective*, p.17.

⁴⁴ J.B. Fraser, *Memoirs of Col. Skinner*, Vol.I (London 1851), p.204.

⁴⁵ H.L.O. Garrett (ed.), *Cunningham's history of the Sikhs*, p.110.

⁴⁶ H.G. Keene, *The Fall of the Mughal empire of Hindustan* (London, 1928), p.47. Perron is said to have contemplated establishing his own kingdom and to have concluded an agreement with Ranjit Singh for a joint enterprise against Peshawar. See Resident at Delhi to Ochterlony, 5th July 1814.

placed the Sikh Chiefs of the region on the defensive and forced them to pay tribute.

Thomas next accepted commission from Ambaji Ingle to assist Col. Southland in an attack on Udaipur. But Col. quitte Thomas half way to carry out the expedition unaided.⁴⁷ But inspite of Thomas' loyalty to Ambaji, he was rewarded by his master other way i.e. by inciting Sindhia's General, Perron to invade Jhajjhar in Thomas absence.⁴⁸

After a series of successful expeditions against Jaipur, Bikaner and helping Bapu Sindhia against the Kohillas, Thomas pursued his long cherished object of establishing an independent principality. He fixed himself in the tract called Haryana in 1798 A.D., which from its peculiar position and nature as well as the disturbed character of the times, had hiterto fallen prey to every invader or adventurer of the age, yet could hardly be said to belong to any, and thus appeared best suited to his purpose.⁴⁹ He established his headquarter at Hansi. In the last quarter of the 18th century Haryana was no man's land because the famine of 1783 has devastated the whole area.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ C. Grey (ed.), H.L.O. Garrett, *European Adventurers in Northern India*, p.47.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ Fraser, *Memoirs of Col. Skinner*, Vol.I, p.206.

⁵⁰ *Imperial Gazetteer of India, Provincial series, Punjab*, Vol.XIII, p.146.

Having recruited his army and replenished his stores, he marched and commenced the enterprise by attacking the town and fort of Kanhoree (few miles from Rohtak), whose inhabitants were notorious thieves.⁵¹ Then he marched towards Karnal. In 1798 itself, Thomas attacked Jind but was opposed by the combined forces of the chiefs of Kaithal, Ladwa and Thanesar and a peace treaty was concluded with the restoration of status quo.⁵²

In Jan. 1800, Thomas attacked Patiala at the request of princess, Sahib Kaur. Thereafter, a treaty was concluded in 1800 whereby Thomas gained some territories from Kaithal and Jind states.⁵³ It is believed that Thomas made peace with the Sikh Chiefs at that point of time because he was anxious to secure their support against the Marathas.⁵⁴

In the middle of 1801, Thomas again moved towards Jind. On the way he invaded Kaithal State. The Phulkian chiefs being harassed by periodical depredations of George Thomas, involved the aid of Perron, the Maratha deputy at Delhi and for this a delegation comprising of chiefs of Jind, Kaithal, Diwan of Patiala arrived at Delhi to solicit Maratha aid against Thomas. Perron too wanted such an

therefore, in Sept. 1801, he readily sent Major Bourquin to attack Thomas. Bourquin was joined by the contingents of Jind, Ladwa, Thanesar, Kaithal, Jodh Singh of Kalsia (Chhichrauli) and Begum Samru etc.⁵⁵

In Dec. 1801, Thomas finally surrendered himself to the Maratha General Bourquin. Col. James Skinner put Thomas' activities in the following words "he was determined to attack the Sikhs and take their country from them. He marched as far as the Sutlej river, beat them whenever he met them, and made collection from their country; but he could make good no footing, nor could he take any of their large forts. He returned to Hansi, by the way of Sirhind, Karnal and Panipat. The Sikhs had assembled at Thanesar, and were very near cutting him to pieces; but he made his retreat good by some manoeuvre and false promise."⁵⁶

It is really interesting to note that Thomas' favourite schemes were the conquest of the Punjab, and of the countries extending down the Indus. For this he had approached Lord Wellesley through Captain White of the British service for aid. His intentions were not selfish; on the contrary, he desired but to be the instrument of conquest for his country (Britain). He said "I have nothing in view by this plan but the welfare of my king and my country; and don't wish

⁵⁵ *ibid.*, p.314; C. Grey (ed.), H.L.O. Garrett, *European Adventures...* p.43.

⁵⁶ Fraser, *Memoirs of Col. Skinner*, Vol.I, p.215.

to see my conquests fall to those at enmity with the British."⁵⁷ This shows that Thomas did not want to see the ascendancy of the French and the Marathas. In this way Thomas was the predecessor of the British in the region South-east of Sutlej.

A flashback on the incident of the past would make the picture a clearer one. In 1801, Perron resumed all these Jagirs or estates belonging to the Sikh Chiefs in the region South-east of Sutlej, however nominally. But the rising power of George Thomas made Perron uneasy. Thus, a situation arose where only one could remain supreme and the other had to go. At last, it was Thomas who was subdued as he had limited resources as compared to the Maratha deputy.⁵⁸

Perron did not want to loose his hold over his area but the continous pressure from Scindhia to recall him to Deccan made Perron to think of some temporary arrangement. So, Perron repeatedly offered to Thomas to join Maratha Services and invited the latter to act as commander of his private forces against their common enemies. But Thomas always refused to serve under Perron, whom Thomas considered as the natural enemy of the English because Perron belongd to France, a nation in hostility to Britain. Also, Thomas had a fear that Perron would always be prepared to

⁵⁷ *ibid.*, p.238.

⁵⁸ Francklin, *Military memoirs of George Thomas*, p.298.

misinterpret his actions.⁵⁹ Although both of them met at Bahadurgarh on 10th Oct. 1801 with the above considerations, the result was not encouraging.

In 1799, Perron is said to have placed local Muslim chiefs such as Gulsher Khan of Kunjpura against the Sikhs⁶⁰ and also against the Irish adventurer George Thomas.⁶¹ The Nawabs of Kunjpura earlier too helped the Prince and Marathas in their campaigns in this region and in lieu of their services and sacrifices were rewarded by bestowing upon them the revenue rights of some of the villages.⁶²

After politically annihilating Thomas, Bourquin (the General sent by Perron to crush Thomas) made a progress through the territories belonging to the Sikh Chiefs to levy contributions. Also, Bourquin, dreamt of a dominion reaching to the Afghan hills, and of becoming as independent of Sindhia as that Chief was of the Peshwa.⁶³ Now the Maratha paramountcy was at its zenith and the Sikh Chiefs of the area were subjected to heavy taxation.⁶⁴

⁵⁹ Fraser, *Memoirs of Col. Skinner*, Vol.I, p.210-211.

⁶⁰ H.R. Gupta, *Cis-Sutlej States*, p.277.

⁶¹ Nawab Mohammad Ibrahim Ali Khan, *History of Kunjpura State*, Lahore, p.13.

⁶² *ibid.*, pp.36-38.

⁶³ Malcolm, *A Sketch of the Sikhs* (London, 1812), p.106.

⁶⁴ *Punjab States Gazeetter, Phulkian States*, Vol.XVIIA, p.342.

With the Anglo-Maratha war in Sep. 1803, Lord Lake marched towards Delhi to overthrow the Maratha power and dispersed the Sikhs. The Sikh Chiefs soon showed their allegiance to the British. Bhai Lal Singh of Kaithal, Bhag Singh of Jind and later Bhanga Singh of Thanesar helped the British against the Marathas.⁶⁵ For their valuable services, the chiefs were rewarded. Bhag Singh of Jind received thanks from Lord Lake for attacking and killing Ika Rao, a Maratha Commander who had taken up a position between Delhi and Panipat; Sher Singh of Buria fell in action with Col. Burn and the conduct of Gurdit Singh of Ladwa induced the British to deprive him of his villages in the Doab and the township of Karnal.⁶⁶ The fall of Karnal put an end to all Sikh invasions in the territories dying towards the southward and eastward direction of one city.⁶⁷

With the battle of Delhi (1803), the Maratha dominance came to an end in North India and the British Power began to rise.⁶⁸ Daulat Rao Sindhia, on Dec. 30, 1803, ceded the region South-east of Sutlej to the British through the treaty of Surji Anjangaon. The British kept Sonapat, Panipat, Samalkha, Gannaur, Indri etc. directly under their control and rest of the territories were retained by the former chiefs both Muslims and the Sikhs. Lord Lake in 1803, assigned to Bhanga

⁶⁵ William Lee - Warner, *The Protected princes in India* (London, New York, 1894), p.80.

⁶⁶ H.L.O., Garrett (ed.), *Cunningham's A history of the Sikhs*, p.114.

⁶⁷ Major C.H. Buck, *The Annals of Karnal* (Punjab, 1914), p.7.

⁶⁸ Bikramjit Hasrat, *Life and times of Ranjit Singh* (Punjab, 1997), p.32.

Singh of Thanesar, territories east of Jamuna in exchange of territories west of Jamuna.⁶⁹

In total, the British got twelve districts west of River Jamuna from Perron in addition to the twenty-seven districts formerly assigned to General De Boigne, seven fiefs (Jagirs) which he had resumed from their former owners; four large estates (Talukas) in Delhi territory and Suba of Saharanpur worth revenue £ 400,000 per annum.⁷⁰

The British rule marked the end of the period of great anarchy. The period from 1761-1803 in Persian Chronicles was called as the '*Gardi Ka_Waqt*'.⁷¹ It ended with the emergence of a new power - the East India Company.

From the correspondence between the British authorities we came to know that as early as 1803, the British authorities thought of reducing Sindhia's power on the north-west frontier of Hindustan to be an important object in proportion to the probability of a war with France. The letter received by Lord Wellesley on 6th July 1803 from the ministry of England substantiated the above point.⁷² In addition to this, the proclamation warning issued by the Governor-General on 20th Aug., 1803 to the British and half-British officers not to fight

⁶⁹ *Extracts from Reports on the settlement of the Parganas formerly comprised in the Thanesar district* (Lahore), p.58.

⁷⁰ H.G. Keene, *Hindustan under free Lances* (London, 1907), p.119.

⁷¹ John Lall, *Begum Samru*, p.75.

⁷² H.G. Keene, *The fall of Mughal empire of Hindustan* (Reprint London 1887), p.253.

against the British with the promise of secured future after the conquest to most, if not all, was proved fatal to the fortunes of the Maratha power. This greatly affected the strength of Perron's army because he lost efficient officers like two Skinner Brothers, Scott, Birch etc.⁷³

In 1804, Lord Cornwallis had been sent out expressly to reverse the policy of Lord Wellesley i.e. withdrawal from all the territories recently acquired west of the Jamuna. And as that territory had to be disposed of, it was natural that petty chieftains who had done service in the past for the British or who abstained, should be rewarded. Therefore, whole of the tract was parcelled out between the Sikh Chiefs and others like Nawab of Kunjpura.⁷⁴

The policy of non-interference west of Jamuna didn't last for long. Infact, the end of the Maratha dominance placed Ranjit Singh face to face with the British who believed that in this area they were the legitimate successors of the Marathas. Holkar's irruption into the Punjab in 1805 to seek support from the Sikh Chiefs of South-east Region and Maharaja Ranjit Singh involved the active intervention of the British.⁷⁵

⁷³ *ibid.*, p.255-256.

⁷⁴ Griffin and Massy, *The Chiefs and Families of Note...*, Vol.I (Punjab, 1940), p.12.

⁷⁵ J. Ballie Fraser, *Memoirs of Col. Skinner*, Vol.II (London, 1851), p.86, 87.

Lord Lake came to Patiala pursuing the Maratha Chief, Holkar and there received the promises of co-operation from the Sikh Chiefs. Lord Lake was accompanied by Abdus Samad Khan, the Nawab of Dujana and as a reward he received the large tracts in Rohtak district.⁷⁶ Bhag Singh, the ruler of Jind and maternal uncle of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, was sent to persuade the latter not to help Holkar.⁷⁷ According to Sohan Lal Suri the news of the success on the part of British was conveyed to General Lake through Fateh Singh Ahluwalia and Jind Chief. In 1806, the British established military station at Karnal on the request of Nawab of Kunjpura.⁷⁸

In 1806, Sir George Barlow succeeded Lord Cornwallis. His views were entirely reverse to defensive alliances and subsidiary forces, and to all sorts of interference into the states west of Jamuna.⁷⁹ The new Governor-General differed very widely from the opinions entertained by the commander-in-chief, Lord Lake.

By 1806, the Maharaja also felt strong enough to launch the first of several expeditions against the Sikh chiefs south of Sutlej believing that he might safely bring them within his political orbit without antagonising the British.⁸⁰ He raided this region twice more in

⁷⁶ *Punjab State Gazetteers*, Vol.VIIA, Dujana State (Lahore, 1909), p.2.

⁷⁷ Bhagat Singh, *Maharaja Ranjit Singh and Histories* (Delhi, 1990), p.123; S.S. Gandhi, *Sikhs in the 18th C.* (Amritsar, 1999), p.512.

⁷⁸ Nawab Mh. Ibrahim Ali Khan, *History of Kunjpura State*, p.13; Major C.H. Buck, *The Annals of Karnal* (Lahore, 1914), p.7.

⁷⁹ J. Baillie Fraser, *Memoirs...* Vol.II, p.94.

⁸⁰ Andrew, J. Major, *Return to Empire* (N.D., 1996), p.18.

1807 and 1808 with an intention to swallow it⁸¹ where the Sikh Chiefs were found in continuous warfare and rivalries against each other. Ranjit Singh's incursions made it clear that either of the two (British or Maharaja) must be the master of this tract.

The main feature of the period from 1764-1809 was that this period was marked by the displacement of the traditional and mainly Muslim, rural elites with the mere rural notables (the Sikh Chiefs). The advent of the British at Delhi court in prominence also led to the introduction of some new elements into the ranks of ruling class as the feudatories of the British. The elements promoted by the British were mainly Muslims and the European adventures such as Abdus Samad Khan and Col. Skinner who helped them in their expeditions. The British gave the whole territory taken from George Thomas for management to these adventures who thereby ascended in the political hierarchy which otherwise would be impossible for them.

The economy of the region during the period was in poor state because of the continuous internecine warfare among the different powers that wanted to establish themselves. Agriculture, performed without satisfaction. The areas of Kaithal, Pehowa, Hansi etc. were waste land and there was little or no cultivation.⁸² The Famine of 1783, "*Chalisa*", ruined many parts of the South-eastern Region such

⁸¹ *Punjab district Gazetteer*, Vol.VII, Part A, Ambala district (Punjab, 1925), p.24.

⁸² *ibid.*, p.364-371.

as Hansi, Hisar. This led to the retirement of the Sikhs from there and hence the area was depopulated.⁸³

The British assigned the territories as gifts mainly to soldiers, on the condition of settling and tilling the soil.⁸⁴ The problem of water was the main problem in this region and thus less cultivation which in turn force the people of this area to prey on plundering etc.

An open trade with this country from every part of Hindoostan has long since ceased, but petty merchants by applying for passports boundaries, this means still continuing a trifling commercial intercourse.⁸⁵ Such a low state of trade owe much to the insecurity of merchants going backwards and forwards through the territories of so many independent chiefs.⁸⁶ Inter-state trade was encouraged as it added to the custom-duties of every state through which the carvans passed. Hansi was the main halting point for the goods going to Rajputana likewise Thanesar, Karnal for Doab and Kaithal, Jind and Rohtak to Delhi. The Carvans were never molested on the way and were given certain privileges.⁸⁷ After the plunder of Lahore by Zaman Shah, small settlements like Jagadhri developed into flourishing centres of trade and Banking.⁸⁸ Therefore, one could presume that the

⁸³ P.J. Pagan, *Gazetteer. of Hissar district* (Lahore, 1893), p.38; *Imperial Gaz. of India Provincial Series, Punjab*, Vol.XIII, p.146.

⁸⁴ Major Archer, *Tours in upper India*, p.372.

⁸⁵ Ganda Singh (ed.), in *Indian Studies: Past and Present*, Vol.III, No.2 (N.D., 1974), p.242.

⁸⁶ *ibid.*, No.4, p.557.

⁸⁷ Gopal Singh, *History of the Sikh People*, p.422-43.

⁸⁸ *ibid.*

conditions of the people other than the cultivators was of considerable comfort.

Coming of the British as paramount power at Delhi in 1803, led to the decreasement of troops and consequently the Jagirs of the military officers. This forced these officers of European origin to involve themselves in trade. For instance, James Skinner from 1806-1808 became trader until Mr. Seton, then resident at Delhi took him into the British services.⁸⁹

H.R. Gupta, pointing out to the agriculture and trade observes that "the cultivators and traders had neither protection against an outside enemy nor security from voracious officials who deprived them of their last pice in order to gratify their greedy masters."⁹⁰

It is to be noted that the peasantry which was liberated and empowered by Banda Bahadur from the oppressive rule of the Mughals in the second decade of the 18th century had again fallen prey to freebooters and invaders during the rule of the Sikh Chiefs.

The changing permutations and combinations among different powers involved for supremacy in the region South-east of Sutlej with the Sikh made one believe that the Sikh Chiefs believed in the principle that there is no permanent friend and foe but the permanent interests which could be accomplished by siding with the strongest power of the day.

⁸⁹ Fraser, *Memoirs of Col. Skinner*, Vol.II, (London 1851), p.102.

⁹⁰ H.R. Gupta, *Cis-Sutlej States*, p.15.

Chapter -iii

*The British Intervention and Supremacy over the
Sikh Principalities (1808-1849)*

After the Battle of Patparganj (1803), the British had become the immediate neighbours of the Sikh Chiefs in the region South-East of Sutlej. Partly by compulsions and partly by their own needs, the rulers of this area had sought an intimate relationship with the British. When Maharaja Ranjit Singh started his military intervention in this region (though at the request of some chieftans such as Jind, Nabha, etc.), the rulers of these states South-of-Sutlej sought intervention and protection of the British government.

During 1806-07, Maharaja Ranjit Singh led two campaigns in the region South-east of River Sutlej and he exacted *Nazrana* from the many Sikh Chiefs of the area. Ranjit Singh's aggressions had begun to excite apprehensions in the minds of the Sikh Chiefs of Malwa and Sirhind. This forced them to search frantically for assistance to ward off any possible attack or Maharaja's future moves. But In spite of the common danger, they couldn't sink their mutual differences and jealousies so as to offer a combined resistance. The only alternative was to appeal to the British Govt. for military assistance.¹

The consistent fear bound these chiefs to lead a formal deputation consisting of the Chiefs of Kaithal, Radour, Jind, Jagadhri

¹ Monckton to Seton, August 4, 1807; *Pol. Cons.*, August 4, 1807, No. 84.

and Diwan of Patiala, to proceed to Delhi to meet A. Seton (Resident at Delhi) in March 1808, to ask from the British for Protection.²

These chiefs projected their loyalty to every succeeding power in Delhi, and sought protection of the British.³ In further explanation of the object of their visit, they added that they might virtually be considered as representing all the Sikh Chieftains of this side of Sutlej, viz. Saheb Singh of Patiala, Bhag Singh of Jind, Bhai Lal Singh of Kaithal, Jaswant Singh of Nabha, Jodh Singh of Chhichrauli (near Buria), Sardar Bhangra Singh of Thanesar and Karam Singh of Shahabad.⁴ They persuaded Seton that all these Sikh Chiefs (with the exception perhaps, of Gurdit Singh of Ladwa) would be happy to see a British military force advance to the Sutlej, for the avowed purpose of protecting them.⁵

But any clear assurance of help to the chiefs involved an important matter of policy and any decision in this respect lay beyond the power of the resident. Mr. Seton only told these chiefs that the British govt. was not having any dispute with Ranjit Singh and their anxiety or uneasiness was ill-founded as the Maharaja seemed to

² Syed Muhammad Latif, *History of the Punjab* (Calcutta, 1891), p.372; Khushwaqt Rai, *Reign of Ranjit Singh* (Chandigarh, 1980), p.31; Gopal Singh, *History of the Sikh People*, p.459; S.R. Bakshi, *History of Punjab* (1991), p.24.

³ Sir Lepel Griffin, *The Ruler of India - Ranjit Singh* (Reprint Delhi, 1967), p.173.

⁴ From Seton to Edmonstone, 7 March 1808, *Foreign Deptt. Sec. Cons.* 21 March, 1808, No.3; M.L. Ahluwalia (ed.), *British India's Foreign Policy Series, Select documents relating to Maharaja Ranjit Singh's negotiations with the British envoy Charles Metcalfe (1808-09) and British Mission to Sind, Afganistan and Persia (N.D., 1982)*, p.20; Griffin, *Raja of Punjab*, p.92.

⁵ M.L. Ahluwalia, (ed.) *British India's-----*, p.12.

have no ambitions in their territories.⁶ While giving such view Mr. Seton was perhaps guided by two considerations. First, the British government was following a neutral and non-interfering policy towards the Indian States. Second, alarming reports of French intrusions to invade Persia and then India were coming.⁷ It put them off with an evasive answer.⁸ Disappointed and solely discouraged, these chiefs on their return from Delhi at once went to Lahore to woo the Maharaja who had full information of their treacherous conduct at Delhi.⁹ Those whom Metcalfe found hovering around the Maharaja in Jan 1809 were Raja Bhag Singh of Jind, Bhai Lal Singh of Kaithal, Sardar Gurdit Singh of Ladwa, while the Raja of Patiala, Chiefs of Basia, Thanesar and others had sent their vakils.¹⁰ From this one might conclude that these chiefs continuously played the game of duplicity. There is another view that when Ranjit Singh came to know about this mission, he felt disquieted, dispatched agents to call upon the chiefs who composed it, to Lahore.¹¹

In addition to this, Maharaja Ranjit Singh told that he had repeatedly received letters and representations from Ratan Kaur widow of late Tara Singh from Raja Bhag Singh, Bhai Lal Singh, Bhai

⁶ Bhagat Singh, *Maharaja Ranjit Singh and his times* (Delhi, 1990), pp.128-29.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Bikramjit Hasrat, *Life and Times of Ranjit Singh* (Punjab, 1997), p.75.

⁹ Metcalfe despatch dated 2 Oct., 1808.

¹⁰ Ibid., N.K. Sinha, *Ranjit Singh* (Calcutta, 1951), p.26, Octerlouw to Govt. 9 February 1809.

¹¹ H.T. Princep, *Origin of the Sikh Power in Punjab* (Reprint Patiala, 1970), p.46.

Cheyne Singh and Raja Jaswant Singh. He was led to believe that the British govt. was making preparations for war. He added that "I know not what those persons may have written to your lordship, but they repeatedly write to me that as yet they have by the greatest efforts on their part succeeded in delaying the March of the British troops."¹² However, Kharita written from G.G. to the Maharaja of Lahore and Letter written by Edmonstone to Metcalfe proves that at that point of time i.e., July 1808, the British wanted cordial relations with the Maharaja and were interested in removing the suspicions generated by the chiefs of the region South of Sutlej.¹³ Whatever their aim might be in playing the double game, the fact of the matter was that these chiefs, by visiting the Resident at Delhi again, and again showed to the Maharaja Ranjit Singh that they were close to the British and were instrumental in stopping the British govt. from attacking the Maharaja.

Pending these transactions, the British authorities were alarmed by the danger of a possible invasion of India by Franco-Russian collaboration from the north, in the wake of political developments in Europe in the early 19th century, i.e., the Treaty of

¹² Translation of Kharita from Maharaja Ranjit Singh to the Governor-General received on 6 July 1808; M.L. Ahluwalia (ed.), *British India's.....*, p.103.

¹³ Kharita from Governor-General to the Maharaja of Lahore, dated 11 July 1808 and from Edmonstone to Metcalfe, 11 July, 1808; M.L. Ahluwalia (ed.), *British India's.....*, pp.104-107.

Tilsit (1807).¹⁴ After Tilsit, Nepelean incessantly pressed the Czar for a joint expedition against the English in India with the object of subverting their domain and destroying the source of their commercial prosperity. Lord Minto, therefore, determined to send missions to ascertain the condition of the countries intervening, and the feelings of the rulers, chief and the people and the mode in which their power might be advantageously combined in any system of defensive arrangement against the invading enemy. Now Charles Metcalfe was selected as an envoy on this occasion to negotiate with Maharaja Ranjit Singh.¹⁵

The British till Sept./Oct. 1808 wanted to strengthen their relations with Ranjit Singh, whom they perceived as important in keeping the Nepelean - Russian alliance at bay. With this in mind the English opened negotiations with the Maharaja, who was not very enthusiastic about the talks. At the same time, the chiefs desperately wanted protection. But because of French menia, the British had to follow a compromising policy with Maharaja Ranjit Singh, who they feared would join the opposite camp in case of invasion from westward to fulfill his cherished dream of subjugating the chiefs South of Sutlej.¹⁶

¹⁴ K.N. Pannikar, *British Diplomacy in North India* (New Delhi, 1968), p.102.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ M.L. Ahluwalia (ed.), *British India's.....*, p.177.

Ranjit Singh crossed the River Sutlej in Oct. 1808 for the third time, the British envoy got the opportunity to see him. While the negotiations were going on, Metcalfe had to see all the expeditions of Ranjit Singh as a mere spectator as he had to take instructions from Calcutta regarding the further proceedings of the negotiations.¹⁷ Ranjit Singh remained in the South-Eastern Region for about a month and continued with his conquests, he seized Shahabad and Ambala in Oct. 1808. On his way back to Lahore, he stationed himself at Shahabad,¹⁸ a central position with reference to his purposes, and at that place received the submission of the chiefs of the vicinity. The chiefs of Jagadhri, Buria, Radaur, Kalsia and Ambala attended the Raja at Shahabad and paid their contributions according to their means. These chiefs occupied the country on the Banks of Jamuna, Southwards to the northern most boundary of the British. The space between their possessions and the frontier of Karnal was occupied by the territories of Gurdit Singh of Ladwa and the Nawab of Kunjpura.¹⁹ In this way, Maharaja Ranjit Singh had virtually established a *defacto* suzerainty of the Lahore govt. over the entire Sikh country.²⁰ It is interesting to mention here that those who attended the Maharaja

¹⁷ William Lee - Warner, *The Protected Princes of India* (London, New York, 1894), p.82.

¹⁸ Sir Lepel Griffin, *Ranjit Singh*, p.178.

¹⁹ M.L. Ahluwalia (ed.), *British India's....*, p.316.

²⁰ Bikramjit Hasrat, *Life and Times.....*, p.74; S.R. Bakshi, *History of Punjab*, pp.68-69.

during the expedition, namely Gurdit Singh of Ladwa, Bhag Singh and Jaswant Singh have for the present escaped from contributions.²¹

Moreover, his sovereignty was acknowledged by all the Sikh Chiefs South of the Sutlej with two exceptions, Raja Sahib Singh of Patiala and Sardar Bhanga Singh of Thanesar. He also summoned the Nawab of Kunjpura to pay tribute/attendance but the Nawab gave a spirited and decisive refusal. It appears that the Nawab took advantage of his vicinity to the British station of Karnal to speak boldly as if he was completely under the protection of the British govt.²²

In the beginning, the Maharaja was not inclined to accept the proposals made by Metcalfe because he viewed the mission with jealousy thinking that it would put obstacle in his plans and was determined to dismiss it as soon as possible.²³ On the other hand, the letter written by Bhanga Singh of Thanesar to A. Seton made it clear that the Sikh Chiefs believed that sending an envoy (Metcalfe) to Ranjit Singh was tantamount to a sacrifice of the interests of the Sikh Sardars between the Jamuna and the Sutlej.²⁴ But when clarified by Metcalfe, Maharaja showed his eagerness and willingness to conclude

²¹ Metcalfe to Edmonstone, dated 8 Dec. 1808, *Foreign Deptt. Sec. Cons*, 12 Dec. 1808, no.27-33; M.L. Ahluwalia (ed.), *British India's.....*, p.316.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ Metcalfe to Edmonstone, dated 29 Sept. 1808, *Compleasum*; M.L. Ahluwalia (ed.), *British India's.....*, p.170.

²⁴ Seton to Edmonstone, dated, Dec. 1808, Delhi, No.12, *Foreign Deptt. Sec. Cons*. 26th Dec., 1808, Nos. 12-20.

the treaty that too on his own terms and conditions, the most important of them being an explicit sanction of the British govt. to the extension of his territories across the Sutlej. This Maharaja Ranjit Singh had clearly stated in the memorandum sent by him in April-May, 1808 to the Governor-General through Capt. Mathews. The memorandum asked that the British should, "recognise his authority over the entire country on this (Western) side of River Jamuna, with the exceptions of the stations occupied by the English, when even with his own Realm, his mother-in-law, his principal wife Mehtab Kaur, his Chief ally Fateh Singh Ahluwalia, were all the time manoeuvring against Ranjit Singh and had secretly sounded that in case Ranjit Singh would opt for war against the British, they would join the British.²⁵ It might be worth noting here that as early as March, 1808, it became mandatory for the British to give protection to the Chiefs of South-Eastern region which is evident from the letter written by A. Seton to N.B. Edmonstone dated 4 march 1808.²⁶

Soon after the Napoleonic danger had gone away, the British authorities found themselves determined to prevent Ranjit Singh from further invading and conquering the chiefdoms of the region South-East of Sutlej because it would make the British territories coterminous with that of Ranjit Singh and would thereby subject its

²⁵ *Sec. Cons.* Dated 11 July, 1808, N.15; Text, p.104.

²⁶ Seton to Edmonstone, 4 March 1808, *Foreign Deptt. Sec. Cons.* 21st March 1808, N.30

Northern frontiers to a "Chronic state of invasion and disturbance."²⁷ In Addition to his, the British apprehended that the presence of Maharaja in the vicinity of Delhi or British territories would disturb the Balance of power, peace and security of the region between South of Sutlej and North of River Narmada.²⁸ The correspondence between the British authorities, confirms that by this time, a policy of active involvement if not of active interference in the affairs of Cis-Sutlej States had been resolved upon by the Governor-General in-Council. It was realised by the authorities the British interests could best be promoted by the reduction, if not the entire subversion, of Ranjit Singh's power.²⁹ Moreover, the British were convinced that Ranjit Singh's aggressive militarism would disturb the security of the British possessions.³⁰ In such a situation it was greatly advantageous to depart from the principle of the limitation of the Company's frontier at Jamuna.

In Nov., 1808, the British government decided to afford open and immediate protection to the chiefs of States South of Sutlej and employ a military force for that purpose under Col. David Ochterlony.³¹

²⁷ Griffin, *The Rajas of Punjab*. pp.118-20.

²⁸ Griffin, *The Rajas of Punjab*. pp.118-20.

²⁹ Griffin, *The Rajas of Punjab*. pp.118-20.

³⁰ Griffin, *The Rajas of Punjab*. pp.118-20.

³¹ Griffin, *The Rajas of Punjab*. pp.118-20.

The advancement of a military force towards Sutlej was viewed by the chiefs with satisfaction, as the means of emancipation.³²

In lieu of the protection granted to the chiefs of this region, the British asked for reciprocal benefits such as introducing British troops freely into their territory, aid and advantages and resources of the country in the prosecution of any military arrangement and operation which might become necessary in the future.³³ This informal proclamation/protection was issued on Feb.9, 1809³⁴ declaring the states South of Sutlej to be under British protection.

Ranjit Singh quickly reacted to these moves as he was convinced the extension of British authority to the Chiefs South of Sutlej would Shatter his dream of Sikh/Khalsa Empire. He then tried to win over these chiefs to his side and told them the British malacious intension of establishing protectorate in this region.³⁵ It couldn't be that the Sikh Chiefs of South - eastern Region were entirely unaware of the imperialistic designs of the British, but at the moment they were more certainly aware of and not a little alarmed by, the ambitious designs of the man of their own community. Under the

³² M.L. Ahluwalia (ed.), *British India's.....*, p.346; R.R. Sethi, *The mighty and Shrewd Maharaja*, p.8.

³³ Edmonstone to Seton, December 26, 1808. *PGR II*, p.4,13; Edmonstone to Ochterlony, Dec. 29, 1808.

³⁴ R.R. Sethi, *The Mighty and.....*, p.8.

³⁵ Seton to Edmonstone, Jan 18, 1809, *PGR II*, p.31.

circumstances they expediently chose a lesser evil by seeking the British protection.³⁶

Towards the end of 1808, Lt. Col. Ochterlony, Garrison commander at Allahabad, who had already worked as the Resident of Delhi and had intimate knowledge of the problems and politics of the South-eastern Punjab region, was asked to command the British troops to river Sutlej, and he proceeded immediately. He was asked to harness the military resources of the chiefs who were asking protection against the Ruler of Lahore.³⁷ On Ochterlony's contingents crossing the Jamuna River the chiefs of Buria and Kalsia assured co-operation to the British. On the other hand the Maharaja also ordered his forces to reach Phillaur on the Bank of River Sutlej to face the much expected British attack. Metcalfe reported to his govt. that the Maharaja's military preparations were in full swing and he would cross the Sutlej to oppose Ochterlony. But nothing of that sort happened for the fortunes of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. At this Juncture, Raja Bhag Singh of Jind assumed the role of a mediator. He told Ochterlony that the Maharaja wanted to avoid war.³⁸

Ochterlony, who was simultaneously in constant touch with the chiefs, urged the govt. to finalize the arrangements with these states.

³⁶ A.C. Arora, *British Policy towards the Punjab States* (Jullandhar, 1982), p.3.

³⁷ Bhagat Singh, *Maharaja Ranjit Singh*, p.134.

³⁸ M.L. Ahluwalia (ed.), *British India's.....*, p.418, Notes of a conversation that took place on the 4th Feb. 1809 between David Ochterlony, Raja Bhag Singh of Jind and Gurbaksh Singh a confidential servant of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, no.40.

In view of Ranjit Singh's procrastinations in concluding the treaty, the proposal sent by Ochterlony was readily accepted by the govt. and he was instructed to issue a proclamation to the chiefs South of River Sutlej defining their future relationship with the British power,³⁹ with some amendments and suggestions to the informal protection declared on the 9th Feb., 1809. The formal announcement was made on May 2, 1809.⁴⁰

Thus, in 1809, the principalities of Jind, Kalsia, Buria, Ambala and Kunjpura etc. had been rescued by the British Power from the grasp of Ranjit Singh.⁴¹ One must note that even before the South-eastern Punjab's Sikh states were taken under the British protection by Minto's govt., the petty Muslim Chieftains of Pataudi, Lahore, Dujana, Jhajjar, Dadri, Bhadurgarh and Ballabgarh had already been brought under the British protection.⁴² The founders of these small states were originally Jagirdars of the Mughal empire. They had sided with the British against the Marathas in 1803 and, in recognition of the services rendered by them, their estates were confirmed to them by the British govt. on the condition of fidelity and military service by the Sanad of 1806,⁴³ issued by Lord Lake.

³⁹ K.N. Pannikar, *British Diplomacy in Northern India*, p.104.

⁴⁰ See Appendix A.

⁴¹ William Lee-Warner, *The Protected Princes.....*, p.134.

⁴² A.C. Arora, *British Policy.....*, p.5.

⁴³ See Appendix B.

The British left these protected states absolute in their own territories, exempting them from tribute, but requiring assistance and co-operation in the defence of their own country.⁴⁴ The declaration became the Charter of Rights for the Chiefs and was a sort of defensive alliance wherein British in lieu of protection, required assistance from the chiefs in case of Invasion or disorder.⁴⁵ Apart from this, the chiefs were not forced to maintain a certain minimum level of troops strength in order to assist the British army in military campaigns. Thus, according to the terms of the treaty the chiefs had clinched a favourable deal, with all benefits at a very little price.

It is interesting to take a note that there was neither any treaty nor any written engagement between the British govt. and the States which came under protectorate. The Protection Proclamation was a unilateral action on the part of the British govt. and not an outcome of mutual negotiations and settlement.⁴⁶ In reality, the govt. didn't want to establish a very intimate relationship with these states⁴⁷ but to establish an autonomous and loyal confederacy of the chiefs who would be helped to the protecting power in difficult times.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ C.U. Aitchison; *A collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads*, Vol.I (Calcutta, 1931), pp.156-157; Mian Bashir Ahmed Farooqui, *British relations with the cis-Sutlej States* (Lahore, 1942), p.27; Griffin, *Ranjit Singh*, p.125.

⁴⁵ Mian Bashir Ahmed Farooqui, *British Relations with.....*, p.81.

⁴⁶ K.N. Pannikar, *The British Diplomacy.....*, p.105.

⁴⁷ Edmonstone to Ochterlony, Apr. 10, 1809.

⁴⁸ A.C. Arora, *British Policy Towards.....*, p.4.

Meanwhile, Charles Metcalfe had met Ranjit Singh at Amritsar on Dec. 12, 1808 and told him the British demand of withdrawing from the region south of Sutlej and restoring all the territories seized by him during his third campaign, to the real owners.⁴⁹

Metcalfe also handed over to Ranjit Singh a letter from the Governor-General that, "His Lordship has learned with great surprise and concern that the Maharaja aims at the subjugation of chiefs who have long been considered under the protection of the power ruling in the north of Hindustan.... By the issue of a war with the Marathas⁵⁰ the British government became possessed of the power and rights formerly exercised by that nation. ... In an early period of that contest a communication was received by the late Lord Lake which proposed to fix the Sutlej as the boundary between the British government and his. ... It is hereby declared that the British government cannot consent that these chiefs should be subjugated by the Maharaja and it is hereby announced that these chiefs according to established custom, are and will remain under the protection of the British government... The British government cannot acknowledge any right in the Maharaja, to any territories that he may have taken possession of, situated between the Sutlej and the Jamuna since the first reference of this question to the British government. The Governor-

⁴⁹ Bhagat Singh, *Maharaja Ranjit Singh*, p.134; S.R. Bakshi, *History of Punjab*, p.30; R.R. Sethi, *The Mighty and Shrewd.....*, p.7.

⁵⁰ Griffin, *Ranjit Singh*, p.178.

General expects that the Maharaja will restore all the places that he has taken possession since that period to the former possessors and will confine his army to the right bank to the Sutlej. In expressing these sentiment the British government is desirous of maintaining the most amicable relations with his government".⁵¹ Ranjit Singh was not immediately prepared for it. He threatened to meet the British in the field of battle. A compromise formula was proposed by Ranjit Singh's men that the cis-Sutlej states should pay tribute to Lahore and the Company should stand guarantee to this, to ensure payment only then Ranjit Singh would not cross the Sutlej with his troops. Metcalfe did not agree to this proposal.⁵²

However, Metcalfe managed to convince the Maharaja somehow into the Treaty of Amritsar,⁵³ which was signed on April 25, 1809.⁵⁴ This was a short treaty declaratory of mutual peace and friendship. It seems that by now Maharaja had also realised his limitations and agreed upon the British terms and conditions. While negotiating with the Maharaja, Metcalfe had two considerations/principal advantages in his mind. First, that govt. would be at liberty to come forward any time when circumstances may require its interference, and second

⁵¹ Translation of a note transmitted by Metcalfe to the Maharaja of Lahore, on 12 Dec. 1808, N.94; M.L. Ahluwalia (ed.), *British India's.....*, pp.259-66.

⁵² Bhagat Singh, *Maharaja Ranjit Singh*,, p.135.

⁵³ See, Appendix C.

⁵⁴ M.L. Ahluwalia (ed.), *British India's.....*, p.446.

that the independent Sikh Chiefs were not compelled to resign themselves in despair to the sovereignty of Ranjit Singh.⁵⁵

According to the terms of the treaty, the British govt. undertook to abstain from interference with Maharaja's territories and subjects, north of the Sutlej. In turn, Maharaja agreed not to interfere in the states belonging to the chiefs in the South of the Sutlej.⁵⁶ This treaty marked the beginning of the westward drive of British influence and military power beyond the river Jamuna.⁵⁷ The British frontier jumped from the Jamuna to the Sutlej and British Suzerainty was established over the region whereas till Sept. 1808 the British had considered Karnal as their most advanced post towards the Sikh territories.⁵⁸

To conclude, the contributions made by Charles Metcalfe and David Ochterlony to turn the situation in favour of the British paramountcy, one could say that the diplomatic skills shown by Metcalfe, backed by Ochterlony's troops saved the situation for the British as well as for the Sikh Chiefs of the region South-East of Sutlej.⁵⁹ The Treaty of Amritsar brought not only political and

⁵⁵ M.L. Ahluwalia (ed.), *British India's....*, p.263.

⁵⁶ Kaye, *Life and Correspondence....*, p.221; N.K. Sinha, *Ranjit Singh* (Calcutta, 1933), pp.30-31.

⁵⁷ S.R. Bakshi, *British Diplomacy and Administration in India* (Delhi, 1971), p.34.

⁵⁸ M.L. Ahluwalia (ed.), *British India's....*, p.166.

⁵⁹ Syed Muhammad Latif, *Maharaja Ranjit Singh - Punjab's man of destiny* (Delhi, 1999), p.50; Charles Raikes, *The Englishman in India*, p.282.

territorial losses but also economic loss (i.e., stopped exactions of tributes etc.) to the Maharaja.⁶⁰

Being the protectors of these states, the British couldn't remain aloof from the developments in these states. The British were confronted with the two main problems: First, extreme misgovernance; and second, mutual aggrandizement and usurpation. Once the chiefs of South-eastern Punjab were relieved of the fear of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, they resumed their old hostilities and the stronger ones started encroaching upon the weaker ones as in case of Chalauddhi (state belong to late Baghel Singh, the oldest in the protected states),⁶¹ which was usurped by Jodh Singh, the chief of Kalsia from the hands of widow of Baghel Singh.⁶² He was close to Ranjit Singh and his unfriendly demeanour to the British government ruled out any possibility of a lenient treatment to him on this issue. On Jodh Singh's non-compliance to the resident's demand to restore the principality to Rani Ram Kaur, he was threatened with the use of force.⁶³ But he gave the excuse that he had already handed over Chalauddhi to Ranjit Singh. At last troops were mobilised from Karnal and Meerut for Jodh Singh. Seeing the British troops in his vicinity,

⁶⁰ Gulshan Lal Chopra, *Punjab as a Sovereign State* (Lahore, 1928), p.65.

⁶¹ *Extracts from Reports on the settlement of the Perganas formerly comprised in the Thanesar district*, Lahore, p.18.

⁶² Mian Bashir Ahmed Farooqui, *British Relations with.....*, p.37; K.N. Pannikar, *The British Diplomacy.....*, p.110.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, Seton to Jodh Singh, June 24, 1810; *Pol. Cons.* July 19, 1810, N.18.

he surrendered Chalaudhi to British government, which was eventually handed over to the widow of the Baghel Singh.⁶⁴

In this way, the British who had been looking for an opportunate time, started their programme of intervention and mediation. However, only after repeated requests made by the chiefs of Jind and Thanesar as in case of Patiala's misgovernance.⁶⁵ With the cases of Chaluddhi, etc. in mind, the British now were clear that mere protection against the external enemies wouldn't help the peaceful existence of the states in this region. If the benefits of the protection were to be real and convincing, internal security and cordial mutual relations also had to be established.⁶⁶ According to Ochterlony, the Sikh chieftains were eager to prey upon their neighbours for increasing their power.

In the light of above development, on 22 August, 1811⁶⁷ a proclamation was issued by the British which directed the restoration of all the states which had been annexed or usurped from the original rulers, and also prohibited any encroachment in the future. Erring chiefs were warned of penalties in case the guidelines issued by his proclamation were violated. This proclamation therefore assumes importance in the sense that it gave the British the right to interfere

⁶⁴ K.N.Pannikar, *The British Diplomacy.....*, p.111; Seton to Edmonstone, Nov.6, 1810.

⁶⁵ Griffin, *Ranjit Singh*, p.173.

⁶⁶ K.N.Pannikar, *The British Diplomacy.....*, p.113.

⁶⁷ See Appendix D.

in the south-eastern states of Punjab for the maintenance of status quo between the chiefs and settlement of their disputes. British thereby assumed a sort of big brother status, and placed each chief individually under the British authority. Previously the British control was only in the nature of a general control, which was over the cis-Sutlej states as a whole.

It was, however, made clear that the intention of the government was to abstain as far as possible from interference in the region ruled by chiefs, south of the river Sutlej.⁶⁸ Thus they declared non-intervention as the basic principle of the British Policy. Also, the British had no design of annexing these states, at least in the first decade of the nineteenth century, and hence were not slow in issuing the two proclamations guaranteeing their rulers independence in the internal affairs as well as security against foreign aggression.

As regards the management of the region which the British got from the Marathas in 1803, it appears that it was only in 1810 that the British authorities directly started administering it.⁶⁹ Previously, the region of Haryana (Parts of Hansi, Hissar, Rohtak, Jind etc.) was taken care of by Abdus Samad Khan of Dujana by a Sanad dated May 4, 1806 by Lord Lake. But he could not administer without British

⁶⁸ *Gazetteer of Karnal District*, p.45; S.R.Bakshi, *British Diplomacy and Administration*, p.144.

⁶⁹ *Imperial Gazetteers of India*, Vol.XIII,1908, p.54; Mian Bashir Ahmad Farooqui, *British Relations with.....*, p.20.

aid.⁷⁰ In 1809-10, Edward Gardiner accompanied by a cavalry force under Col. James Skinner marched towards Haryana Region which was rendered necessary by the continued raids of the Bhatti chiefs. This body of troops, in addition to the above task had to restore order in Haryana and was sent by Resident at Delhi, A Seton.⁷¹

On the way at Beri, Gardiner called the leading men of the town and impressed upon them all the liberal yet firm policy of his government, and asked them to desist from all acts of violence and accept British protection.⁷² To ensure safeguards against those who submitted and promised their obedience to the British government, police stations were also established.⁷³

The combined army marched through Rohtak, Hissar, captured Bhiwani, defeated the Refractory chiefs of Fatehabad and Rania and suppressed many fissiparous elements. The British commanders and administration afterwards pacified the chiefs, confirming some of them in their Jagirs.⁷⁴ Seton considered Bhiwani strategically to be the most important place.⁷⁵ Next, Sirsa was brought under the control after defeating Nawab Zabta Khan. The civil headquarters was now fixed at Hansi in 1810 under the charge of Gardiner who retained this

⁷⁰ *Punjab State Gazetteers, Dujana States*, Vol.IIIA, Lahore 1908, p.2.

⁷¹ *Ibid*; Buddha Prakash, *Haryana Through the Ages* (Kurukshetra, 1971) p.88.

⁷² Military Commander in Haryana to Seton, March 17, 1809, *Foreign Department*, *Pol.Cons.* Apr 10, 1809, cons.56.

⁷³ *Ibid*.

⁷⁴ Buddha Prakash, *Haryana Through....*, p.88; P.J.Pagan, *Gazetteer of Hissar district* (Lahore 1893), p 41.

⁷⁵ Seton to Edmonstone, July 15, 1809.

office till 1816.⁷⁶ In 1818, a second expedition secured the rest of the territories possessed by the Bhattis, who under Nawab Zabta Khan continued to encourage raids. In the second expedition, all his territories were confiscated. For the first time Sirsa Tehsil was brought directly under the British Rule.⁷⁷

The Refractory chiefs / tribes submitted to the British yoke which was beyond their power to be shaken off. For the fear of extermination, they gave up their predatory habits and settled down as agriculturists.⁷⁸ The company's decision to directly administer this area was prompted by the consideration of security of the contiguous territories, already under its administration and strategic importance of the tract in relation to the Sikh kingdom under maharaja Ranjit Singh. This region was sought to be used as an impregnable barrier against an attack of the Sikh ruler of Lahore to impose his authority over the states in the south- eastern part of the Punjab.⁷⁹

In the aftermath of taking these several Sikh and Muslim states under protection, the British gradually began to assert their right as the paramount power and exact military and other obligations from them as necessitated by the prevailing circumstances and conditions

⁷⁶ P.J. Pagan, *Gazetteer of.....*, p 41; *Gazetteer of Hissar district*, pp.33-34.

⁷⁷ *Imperial Gazetteer of India, Provincial Series, Punjab*, Vol XIII (Calcutta, 1908),p 147.

⁷⁸ S.R.Bakshi, *British Diplomacy and Administration.....*, p.146.

⁷⁹ Lord Minto to Seton, *Foreign Deptt. Pol.cons.* Feb.6,1809, cons.104

from time to time. The company's policy towards these states may, broadly and briefly, be reviewed under four heads:

- (a) Intervention in the internal affairs of the states.
- (b) Resumption of territories of the states.
- (c) Prevention of intimacy between the chiefs south of Sutlej and Lahore Darbar.
- (d) Exaction of military obligation from the states.

On the pretext of misgovernance, disputes about succession, matters of chiefs vis-à-vis their feudatories,⁸⁰ the company intervened in the internal affairs of Punjab States. Through out the company's period intervention was occasional and incidental rather than systematic and uniform.⁸¹ In case of mismanagement in the Jind State under Raja Sangat Singh (1822-34), the British authorities sent a native official temporarily to carry on the administration of the state.⁸² In 1812-13, the British did not approve the will of Raja Bhag Singh of Jind.⁸³ The authorities intervened authoritatively in all the cases of succession to assert the Rule of Primogeniture, but with exceptions. In the absence of any concrete policy, or law of inheritance, it was the British wish that reigned supreme in the case

⁸⁰ Indra Krishen, *An historical Interpretation of the Correspondence of Sir George Russel Clark, Pol. Agent, Ambala and Ludhiyana (1831-43)*.

⁸¹ A.C. Arora, *British Policy Towards.....*, p. 7.

⁸² Griffin, *ROP*, pp.326-27 ; S.N. Rao, *Cis-Sutlej Sikh States 1800-1849* (unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Punjab University, 1953) pp.183-84.

⁸³ Griffin, *ROP*, pp.309-22; Mian Bashir Ahmed Farooqui, *British Relations With.....*, p.28.

of disputes. Ladwa was annexed to the British territories on the excuse of misgovernance.

The British resumed the territories of the states either by applying the doctrine of lapse i.e. on the failure of a natural male heir, or by arbitrary decision about disputed lands or on the grounds of disloyalty to the suzerain. The confiscation of the estates became the policy matter of the British Rule on one pretext or the other; and where diplomacy failed, they frequently applied force to achieve their objective.⁸⁴

In May 1816, an important point of dispute arose between the states of Kaithal and Ladwa which furnished another opportunity to the British to intervene. Bhai Lal Singh of Kaithal had demanded from Ladwa chief a monetary exaction, *Mushakans*, another name of Rakee or protection.⁸⁵ Later on, Kaithal chief extended his claim of *Mushakans* to seventy villages of the Sardars of Thanesar and Shahabad. The British government finally rejected the claims of the Kaithal chief on the ground that such exactions by one chief from another were tantamount to the supremacy of the former over the latter.⁸⁶

In 1834, when Raja Rajat Singh of Jind died without male issue, the British had a mind to usurp the whole of the Jind State and

⁸⁴ A.C. Arora, *British Policy Towards*, p 11.

⁸⁵ S.N.Rao, *Cis-Sutlej Sikh States*...., p 155.

⁸⁶ *Ibid*.

bring it under their direct control. But the timely protest made by the other Phulkian states and others, saved it and the territory was assigned to Sarup Singh of Aranauli, the nearest collateral to the Jind family.⁸⁷

The British also acquired the lands affected by Avulsion,⁸⁸ when in 1806, some villages belonging to Sardar Jodh Singh of Kalsia, Bhagwan Singh of Buria, Dulcha Singh of Radour and Bhanga Singh of Thanesar, which were formerly lying on its western Bank went to the other side of the river. The British of the ground of law and order problem annexed these villages which were now lying across the river.⁸⁹

During the period 1824-34, a good number of minor states in the South-East of Sutlej lapsed to the British for want of male heirs. For example, Ambala, Radour, Jagadhri, Dhanaura, portion of Buria, portion of Shahabad, Sadhaura and portion of Thanesar.⁹⁰

The story of the British relations with the Sikh Chiefs clearly shows that the British taking advantage of the vagueness of laws and customs in case of succession, appropriated many Jagirs in the region

⁸⁷ Sohan Singh Sheetal, *Rise of the Sikh Power and Maharaja Ranjit Singh* (Delhi, 1978), p.466.

⁸⁸ Mian Bashir Amhed Farooqui, *British Relations with....*, p39.

⁸⁹ Seton to Lushington dated 16th Jan 1810; Seton to Pattron (Saharatpur Magistrate) dated 9th April 1810 and Lushington to Seton dated June, 1810.

⁹⁰ Balkrishna Muztar, *Kurkshetra : Political and Cultural History* (Delhi, 1978) p 91; S.N. Rao, *Cis-Sutlej....*, p.197; *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Vol XVI p. 50.

South of Sutlej.⁹¹ So much so that many a times they laid down fresh Rule of succession.⁹² In 1831 the Government of William Bentinck instructed Sir George Russel Clerk (Pol. agent Ambala) to sound the Chiefs of Patiala, Kaithal, Jind and Nabha to find out "if they were willing to pay tribute on the understanding that should they not do so the Government would take advantage of all lapses as the only means of reimbursing itself for the expenses incurred in protecting the States between the Sutlej and the Jamuna."⁹³ The tribute proposed to be demanded was one-eighth of the revenue of each estate. This demand was plainly unjust and was in violation of Article 2 of the Proclamation of 1809, which clearly laid down that the Sutlej Chiefs would be exempted from all pecuniary tribute to the British Government. The four Chiefs, therefore, rejected the proposal courageously after considering it in a joint meeting at Bhawanigarh. Though the British considered right to escheats as the sole return for their protection.⁹⁴ Consequently, the British authorities decided to apply the doctrine of lapse to these Chiefships also. In November 1834, when Raja Sangat Singh of Jind died without any male issue, the British authorities after a lot of discussion recognised the claim of

⁹¹ Fauja Singh, *Historians and Historiography up the Sikhs* (N.D., 1978), p.149.

⁹² Griffin, *ROP*, p.200.

⁹³ Clerk to Metcalfe, March 23, 1836; Indra Krishen, *An Historical Interpretation...*, p.14.

⁹⁴ *Punjab. District Gaz., Ambala District* (Punjab, 1925), p. 26; S.N. Rao, *Cis Sutlej...*, pp.212-13.

Sarup Singh, a senior collateral, only to that portion of the Chiefship which had been under the possession of Gajpat Singh, the common ancestor; the remaining territories of the State, comprising Ludhiana, Morinda, Bassia, half-share in Mudki and Jandiala lapsed to the British Government.⁹⁵ This was obviously done as a punishment for refusal of the principal cis-Sutlej Chiefs to pay tribute. In 1843, when Bhai Udai Singh, the Chief of Kaithal, died without any male heir, the estate was annexed by the Government of Ellenborough.⁹⁶ Thus, much before Dalhousie, the doctrine of lapse was applied in many cases of the Cis-Sutlej estates and estates of the Punjab.

The Company also confiscated the territories of the states on the ground of disloyalty to the Paramount Power. After the First Anglo-Sikh War, the British Government absorbed many petty Sikh states of the region South-East of Sutlej which were considered guilty of supporting the enemies of the British, and also confiscated portions of the territories of some principal states whose loyalty was considered to be dubious.⁹⁷

Despite the earnest efforts made by the British authorities to bring about complete severance of relation between the Sikh States south-east of the Sutlej, they could not get success because chiefs of Jind were having matrimonial relations within the Lahore Darbar. The

⁹⁵ Griffin, *ROP*, pp.328-46; S.N. Rao, *Cis-Sutlej...*, pp.215-31.

⁹⁶ S.N. Rao, *Cis-Sutlej...*, pp.237-45.

⁹⁷ A.C. Arora, *British Policy Towards...*, p.12.

Jind Raja Sangat Singh visited Lahore more than thrice in 1826, 1827, 1831 and 1834 and accepted the Jagirs in Trans-Sutlej and Cis-Sutlej areas in lieu of *Nazrana* on the first two occasions.⁹⁸ Even during the first Anglo-Sikh war, quite a few of these chiefs gave support, openly or clandestinely, to the Lahore rulers as against their paramount.

The proclamation of 1809 by the British made it mandatory for chiefs to furnish, in accordance with their respective means, carriage, supplies and troops to the British at the requisition of the latter in case of any emergency. Accordingly, the chiefs helped the British during the Gurkha War (1814-16), First Anglo-Afghan War (1832-42), and during the First and Second Anglo-Sikh Wars, 1845-46 and 1849 respectively. During the First Anglo-Sikh War, very few Sikh Chiefs proved to be faithful to the British govt. because of their relations with the Sikh Army of Lahore. As Griffin points out "the hearts of the Sikh population in our protected states were with the men of their own tribe and sect and decidedly averse to the British govt."⁹⁹ Some chiefs indulged in open hostilities or passive obstruction during 1845.¹⁰⁰ Govt. therefore, now made up its mind to reduce them.

⁹⁸ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh Guru Khalsa- Raj Khalsa*, Vol.III (2nd edition Amritsar), pp.147-48.

⁹⁹ Griffin, *ROP*, p 192.

¹⁰⁰ *Punjab district Gazetteers*, Vol VII, part A, *Ambala district*, (Punjab 1925) p. 26.

However, some chiefs such as those of Patiala, Jind, Shahabad etc, guided by personal interests which were considered to be bound up with success of the British, proved their loyalty and helped in all possible ways to assist the paramount. After the ceasefire, the British govt. rewarded obedience and punished disobedience. The chiefs of Jind, etc. were rewarded with additions to their territories, the other chiefs suffered for what was regarded as their disloyal conduct, Ladwa was liquidated and whole of their territories confiscated by the British authorities.¹⁰¹ Many petty chiefs of the Region South-east of Sutlej were deprived of their sovereign powers and it was ruled that in lieu of military service from the smaller states, which they were bound to render, they would be required to pay a commutation tax at the rate of twelve and a half percent of their respective income.¹⁰² The states of Kalsia, Buria, etc. were exempted from the operation of this rule.¹⁰³

When the second Anglo-Sikh War broke out, the Chiefs of Jind¹⁰⁴ and other states offered their services to the British as usual, which were utilised to some extent in the form of carriage and supplies.¹⁰⁵ After the war and annexation of Punjab, Dalhousie's govt. deprived many petty Chiefs of the region of South-east of Sutlej of all

¹⁰¹ Bal Krishna Muztar, *Kurukshetra....*, p 90; *Imperial Gazeetter of India, Provincial Series, Punjab* (Calcutta, 1908), Vol XVI, p 50.

¹⁰² C.U. Aitchison, *A Collection of Treaties...*, p.115-16.

¹⁰³ *Imperial Gazeetter of Punjab*, Vol IX, p 106.

¹⁰⁴ *Punjab States Gazetters, Phulkian States. Patiala, Jind and Nabha*, Vol XVIIIA (Punjab, Lahore, 1909) p, 216; *Imperial Gaz. of India, Provincial Series, Punjab* (Calcutta, 1908), vol.XIV, p.168.

civil, criminal and fiscal jurisdiction, reducing them to the position of ordinary subjects of the British govt. in possession of certain exceptional privileges.¹⁰⁶ But the Sikh Chiefs of Jind, Kalsia, Buria,¹⁰⁷ as also the Muslim Chiefs of Pataudi, Loharu and Dujana were allowed to exercise as usual their authority.¹⁰⁸ But in 1846, the Nawab of Kunjpura lost his Sovereign powers.¹⁰⁹ Another thing that needs to be mentioned here is nature of relationship between the Muslim states and British vis-à-vis the Sikh States. The Muslim states of the South-eastern region always helped the British in suppressing the politico-military activities of the Sikh Chiefs which the British called as rebellions, marauding activities. The Muslim Chiefs also helped the British campaigns of the trans-Sutlej area. For instance when Kaithal was Annexed as an escheat in 1843 to the British territories and there occurred disturbances, Nawab Ghulam Ali Khan, Chief of Kunjpura, found an opportunity of proving his loyalties and furnished a party of 50 Sawars to assist the British troops in suppressing the disturbances.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁵ *For Deptt. Sec. Cons.*, 30 June 1849 No.40-49; Griffin, *ROP*, p 304, 502; *Imperial Gazetteer of India* Vol II, p 328.

¹⁰⁶ Griffin, *Ranjit Singh*, p 199.

¹⁰⁷ *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Vol.IX, p.106; *Punjab district Gaz's*, Vol.VII, Part A, *Ambala District* (Punjab, 1925), p.27.

¹⁰⁸ A.C. Arora, *British Policy Towards...*, p 17.

¹⁰⁹ Griffin and Massy, *Chiefs and Families of Note in the Punjab*, Vol I (Punjab, 1940) p.18; *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Vol XVI, p 27.

¹¹⁰ Griffin and Massy, *The Chiefs and Families...*, Vol I, p.19.

In reward the Nawab got a letter of praise from George Russel Clerk for this timely help to Major Lawrence to control the disturbances and subduing the miscreants. The letter further says that govt. expected such a response from the Nawab on such an emergency.¹¹¹

The British political Agent, at Ambala and Major Broadfoot asked from Nawab of Kunjpura, material assistance again in 1845 during Lahore expedition in ¹¹² gratitude for the peace and safety they enjoyed under the British govt.¹¹³

From the above discussion one gets a clear picture that almost all the states, whether big or small, in the South-eastern part of Punjab, with the exception of one or two states, had helped the British during the Sikh wars to establish their paramountcy. In exchange they could retain their possessions little longer.

The British authorities always annexed the territories with the excuse that it would benefit the masses.¹¹⁴ How far this excuse was justifiable can be judged from further discussion. The British authorities emphasised good governance and made persistent efforts to enforce it through the Political Agency at Ambala and Military

¹¹¹ Nawab Mohammad Ibrahim Ali Khan, *History of Kunjpura* (Lahore), p.43.

¹¹² Griffin and Massy, *The Chiefs and Families...*, p 20.

¹¹³ Nawab Mh. Ibrahim Ali Khan, *History of...*, see Appendix No. XVI, XVII, pp.47-48.)

¹¹⁴ Indra Krishen, *An Historical Interpretation...*, p.111.

Stations at Karnal among the endless semi - independent states from 1809-1847.¹¹⁵

The Area under the direct British rule grew up gradually with each successive lapse and made the occasion for regular settlements of the village revenues. It has been well said that "independence for the Sikh Chiefs had no nobler significance than the right to do evil without restraint, and to oppress the people who were so unfortunate as to be their subjects."¹¹⁶ Even though the British never failed to highlight the benefits that accrued upon the peasants in the wake of their rule in a particular area, their own reports mention that the assessment in the lapsed Sikh was too severe.¹¹⁷

But there is little doubt about the fact that during the British Rule, law and order condition improved. Some development works were also undertaken. "An Inspection... of Kaithal has convinced Major Lawrence of the deplorable state of neglect to which the late govt. of Kaithal had for some years abandoned the inhabitants. There are villages but there is little or no cultivation. The villagers live for the most part on plunder..... "vertiably, the annexation of the state must have proved a boon to the inhabitants. A partial disarmament was carried out, the restoration of stolen cattle was enforced, and offenders were put on security. Not a road, except the ordinary village

¹¹⁵ *Punjab District Gazetteers, Ambala District* (Punjab 1925), p.25.

¹¹⁶ Griffin, *ROP*, p.218.

¹¹⁷ J.M. Douie, *Settlement Report of Karnal-Ambala* (Lahore, 1891), p.16.

tracks, existed; but Lawrence set himself at once to the task of laying out highways and a good deal was accomplished in this direction.¹¹⁸ The British govt. was serious about such nuisances and, at the earliest, wanted to put a stop to the discreditable proceedings which were having a serious effect on the tranquility and well-being of the British territory of Delhi.¹¹⁹

The Revenue system of the Chiefs was based upon the rule of squeezing the weak and getting as much as they could out of the strong. In addition to a share of the produce, numerous cesses were levied.¹²⁰ However, there was one check on the exactions of the chiefs. If the villagers were pressed too far, they abandoned their lands, and the revenue disappeared with them.

Under Sikh rule cultivation had declined as is proved by the number of deserted sites which tradition says had once been occupied by the village communities. The famines in the last quarter of the 18th century and first quarter of the 19th century times of Confusion which followed upon the decay of the Mughal Empire, were the factors responsible for this. The cessation of internal order and border warfare gave a sudden impulse to agriculture and when order was restored there was no lack of claimants to the ownership of the

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Indra Krishen, *An Historical Interpretation.....*, p.392.

¹²⁰ J.M. Douie, *Settlement Report of.....*, p.10.

deserted sites.¹²¹ Land revenue was the most important source of income to the govt. But income was also derived from custom duties and excise of Akbari fines and court fees etc.¹²² Each chief used to levy tolls and customs duties upon goods crossing through their territories. This proves that trade was going on satisfactorily, if not flourishing.¹²³ In addition to this, the British had to intervene in the internal affairs of these states in case disorders and anarchy became serious, because this caused damage to the trade and peace. For example, In Kaithal under Bhai Udai Singh's, and in Jind, under Raja Sangat Singh who had to shift his capital because of lawlessness and disturbances in the territories in and around Jind.¹²⁴

The British portrayed the law and order and justice in very ugly shape. This perhaps they did deliberately to justify their annexations. There is no doubt that the administration of the state was far from satisfactory under some chiefs, but other chiefs appear to have administered the state satisfactorily. True, that the Sikh chiefs did not set up efficient system of administration. They treated the resources of the state and their subjects as personal property. Within his own

¹²¹ A.C. Arora, *British Policy Towards...*, p.71.

¹²² S.N. Rao, *Cis-Sutlej...*, p.16.

¹²³ Griffin and Massy, *Chiefs and Families of...*, Vol.I, p.17.

¹²⁴ Griffin and Massy, *Chiefs and Families of...*, Vol.I, p.27; Griffin and Massy, *Chiefs and Families of...*, vol.II, p.485.

domains each chief was lord paramount. He exerts an exclusive authority over his vassals, even to the power of life and death.¹²⁵

The great Sardars, both Muslims and Sikhs led generally a more or less dissolute life.¹²⁶ "Among the lower classes of inhabitants", wrote Oclerlony "the intervention is earnestly wished as anxiously expected, while the chiefs regarded it with jealousy."¹²⁷ This shows that intervention on the part of the British, wherever and whenever it occurred, naturally pleased the inhabitants, though it offended the chiefs.

As far as social evils were concerned, the British made sustained efforts to stop robbery, cattle lifting, smuggling, thuggee, traffic in children, female infanticide and many others so widely prevalent in the area of their jurisdiction. The British authorities introduced vaccination in the territories of the chiefs.¹²⁸ Also the Sanads of 1847 besides renewing assurances of protection and guarantee to the possessions, imposed on the chief of Jind, Kalsia, Buria etc. definite obligations in regard to the suppression of Sati, infanticide and Slave dealings.¹²⁹ In this way the British could eradicate the social evils. Irrigation too was improved. Seeds were

¹²⁵ Ganda Singh (ed.), 'Early European accounts of the Sikhs-----' in *Indian Studies: Past and Present*, Vol.III, No.2, p.242.

¹²⁶ P.N. Khera, 'Social life in Sikh Kingdom', *The Punjab Past and Present*, vol.XIII-I, April 1979, p.48.

¹²⁷ Mian Bashir Ahmed Farooqui, *British Relations with....*, p.54.

¹²⁸ Indra Krishen, *An Historical Interpretation of...*, pp.417-418.

¹²⁹ C.U. Aitchison, *A Collection of Treaties....*, pp.160-260.

given to the cultivators and arrangement were made for equitable revenue settlement. As a result, the area under cultivation was greatly enhanced.¹³⁰

As far as condition of women is concerned, in some families widows succeeded in preference to collateral male heir. However, in 1811, Lal Singh of Kaithal told Ochterlony that widows were not entitled to succeed in Bhaikian Chiefship.

In others it had not been customary to allow the succession of widows. Murry has cited the following cases in which the widows had succeeded to chiefships on failure of male issue and of Brothers and nephews of their Husband - Ambala, Chalaudhi, Mustafabad, Thanesar, Radaur, Buria Jagadhari, Dhanaura etc.¹³¹

There was another immunity to minimise the cases of female succession. The Sikhs had recourse to a custom by which a widow married a brother of the deceased husband. Thus, the brother could succeed to the estate. This custom was known as the 'Karewa' or 'Chaddar-Dalna'.¹³²

In the period of turmoil and disorder, the alliance between a brother-in-law and a sister-in-law saved the estate from partition and

¹³⁰ Indra Krishen, *An Historical Interpretation of...*, p.418.

¹³¹ *Extracts from the settlement Reports on Pargana Formerly comprised in the Thanesar dist., Lahore*, p.17; Murry to Cole Brooke, Jan. 10, 1828, B.N. 74, L.N. 17.

¹³² Indra Krishen, *An Historical Interpretation of...*, pp.45-46.

fragmentation. Thanesar, Jind, Mustafabad, Ladwa, etc. were the states where this practice was followed as and when needed.¹³³

Last but not the least, we could say that this region was served by the great British administrators, generals and diplomats such as George Russel Clerk, Col. Ochterlony and Charles Metcalfe respectively, who were not only talented but concerned too. Thus the consolidated efforts on the part of British authorities could establish the British Rule.

¹³³ Ibid, pp.48-49.

Conclusion

The dissertation has attempted to study the socio-economic and political history of the region South-east of Sutlej since the days of the emergence of Banda Bahadur as a political and military force in the region, to the period when the British gobbled up the entire region after wresting it from the Sikhs.

The history of the region can be divided into three distinct phases. The first phase begins with the death of Aurangzeb and the subsequent shift of power centres to the periphery. The loosening of controls from Delhi contributed to the emergence of Banda Bahadur as a major player in the area South of Sutlej. In fact, Banda had started his conquests from this region only. Even earlier, during the hey day of the Mughal empire, the area South-east of Sutlej had come under considerable influence of the teachings of the Sikh Gurus. Considering the strategic as well as economic importance of the region, it was natural for the Sikhs to attempt an assertion of their control in this area. Banda Bahadur not only provided a dynamic military leadership to the Sikhs, but also introduced a new ethical and moral dimension to the struggle. Khalsa under his leadership initiated the notion of 'Gurmatta' according to which protection was ensured to anyone oppressed by the State or even dacoits and thieves. This seems to be an important strategy to gain legitimacy by the Sikhs and to break the authority of the Mughal state which had become synonymous with the oppressive rulers.

As mentioned earlier the region South-east of Sutlej had tremendous strategic importance for anybody having designs to control north India. Of the entire area, Ambala, Karnal, Panipat, Hissar, Kurukshetra were especially important strategically; Ambala was the central spot through or close to where every invader entering north India was bound to pass en route Delhi. Besides being of strategic importance, most of the trade routes passing up north to Tibet and Central Asia passed through this region.

Due to the multifaceted importance attached to this region, the domination of Sikhs in the area South-east of Sutlej was never undisputed and was challenged by the Marathas and the Afghans. The local Muslim Chiefs were also seeking an opportunity and the right alliance to root out the Sikh power from the area.

Though the Sikh *Misls* came to the region South-east of Sutlej taking benefit of the declining Mughal power and to establish their hold, by about 1770's the Sikh Chiefs who established themselves there, started functioning as the vassals of the Mughals in the area, and brought in the Mughal system of governance and revenue collection. Thereby, they became the instrument of perpetuating the system which their predecessors had discarded.

The decline of the power of the Mughal throne at Delhi made the Maratha a strong force in the region. However, the third battle of Panipat in 1761 gave a mighty blow to their power, and the Marathas

took around fifteen to twenty years to start getting counted once again as a power in the region South-east of Sutlej. It was Mahadji Sindhia who exerted control over this area following 1784, on behalf of the Mughal Emperor, who had been by this time reduced to a titular head.

Though Abdali didn't come after 1767 in this region, he left behind the Afghan nobles/governors to control northern India. The Afghans were therefore, an important power in the region, but their importance declined considerably in the subsequent years and to the close of 18th century they had ceased to be of any consequence in the power structure of the region and their place was taken by the Foreign adventures such as George Thomas, an Irish adventurer who established himself in the territories of Haryana and continuously raided and plundered the territories belonging to the Sikh Chiefs of the region South of river Sutlej. Thomas, therefore, became a menace for the Sikh Chiefs and this forced them to visit Perron, the Maratha deputy for North Indian Affairs. Perron too had designs of establishing Maratha power in the region. Considering this he readily accepted the offer made by the Sikh Chiefs of the region to dislodge Thomas from his possessions whom Perron also considered as one of the obstacle to accomplish his object.

Infact, the instance of acquiring territories by foreign adventurers like Thomas in his individual capacity was a unique in

the history of the late 18th century India. The Sikh Chiefs who took Marathas help to oust Thomas, the very next year, turned against them in the wake of growing British Power in the region. The role of the Muslim Chieftians of this region was that of an ally of all the powers that invaded this region.

While studying the history of conquests in the 18th and 19th centuries, one can easily draw parallels between the strategy followed by the British and that of the native princes. The Marathas and also Ranjit Singh believed in attacking and invading a vast region and penetrating deep into the neighbouring territories, without ever thinking of consolidating their hold over the region. On the other hand the British believed in capturing as much they could hold on effectively. After capturing Awadh, the British captured Delhi in 1803 in order to secure the former, and in order to secure the latter they annexed the whole region south of Sutlej. Later, in order to secure the region south of Sutlej they annexed Punjab Proper (Present one across Sutlej). In the initial years the British did not intervene directly in the area under study viz for almost twenty five to thirty years uptill 1809 the British followed the policy of wait and watch. However, they put their front men in this area in the form of Jagirdars who were either Europeans or part of the local elite, who saw the conveyence of their interests with the British. However, the new land revenue measures introduced in the region, alongwith political and military

unrest, led to a substantial decline in the trade and agriculture in the region.

After 1803 the British policy in the region was one of cautiousness, determined partly by the local power equations and partly by the global political climate. At this point of time the British did not want to enter into a conflict with Maharaja Ranjit Singh across the Sutlej, despite the fact that the various Chiefs (Both Sikhs and Muslims) of the area South of Sutlej who had formed a confederacy repeatedly pleaded with the British for military assistance and possible intervention. Franco-Russian alliance and the possible threat of their invading northern India also prevented the British from entering the region South-east of the Sutlej, which would definitely have weakened the position of Maharaja Ranjit Singh as a potential buffer. In 1806-07 Maharaja Ranjit Singh repeatedly invaded the region South of Sutlej and the local Chiefs again pleaded the British to intervene. At this point of time the Franco-Russian threat had declined and the British opened up negotiations with Maharaja Ranjit Singh and finally in 1809 signed the Treaty of Lahore, according to which the Chiefs of area South of Sutlej were taken under British protection and Maharaja Ranjit Singh gave up all his claims in the region in lieu of non-interference by the British in his territories up north (trans-Sutlej).

Thus began the third phase, which saw the British gobbling up the entire South-eastern area gradually over a period of about forty years. The British at this stage gradually started interfering in the internal affairs of the chiefdoms of area South of Sutlej. They prevented the growth of intimacy between the Sikh Chiefs; the chiefs were asked to provide military contribution to the British in the form of horsemen or foodgrains for the British armies passing through their territories. The local chiefs also played into the hands of the British and at various occasions they were themselves directly responsible for inviting British interference in the region. The British on their part used all measures at their disposal to wrest control over the area. Subsidiary alliance and the Doctrine of Lapse were successfully implemented. On several occasions, a lot of territory was annexed by the British owing to the changing course of the Yamuna; the land falling on eastern side after the river had changed course was claimed by the British as theirs, in order to maintain the 'natural' boundary provided by the river. Also, at the time of two Anglo-Sikh wars (1845-49) the Sikh States which dared to help the Lahore Darbar were punished by depriving them of their sovereignty by the British; those which sided with the British were 'rewarded' in the sense that they were allowed to 'rule' for a little longer with some powers and privileges.

As far as society and economy of the region South-east of Sutlej are concerned, the changing of rulers and continuous warfare had great effect on the trade and agriculture. The social evils which were prevalent during the reign of the Sikh Chiefs were corrected to some extent with the advent of the British rule in the region.

Thus by around 1849 most of the area South-east of Sutlej was annexed by the British.

Appendix

APPENDIX - I

Proclamation of Protection to Cis-Sutlej States Against Lahore (Dated, 1809).

Translation of an "Ittilah Namah", addressed to the Chiefs of the country of Malwa and Sirhind, on this side of the River Sutlej, (3rd may, 1809).

It is clearer than the sun, and better proved than the existence of yesterday, that the marching of a detachment of British troops to this side of the river Sutlej was entirely at the application and earnest entreaty of the several Chiefs, and originated solely from friendly considerations in the British Government, to preserve them in their possessions and independence. A treaty having been concluded, on the 25th of April, 1809, between Mr. Metcalfe on the part of the British Government, and Maharaja Runjit Singh, agreeably to the orders of the Right Honorable the Governor-General-in-Council, I have the pleasure of publishing, for the satisfaction of the Chiefs of the country of Malwa and Sirhind, the pleasure and resolutions of the British Government, as contained in the seven following articles:

ARTICLE 1 - The country of the Chiefs of Malwa and Sirhind having entered under the British protection, they shall in future be secured from the authority and influences of Mahraja Runjit Singh, conformably to the terms of the treaty.

ARTICLE 2 - All the country of the Chiefs thus taken under protection shall be exempted from all pecuniary tribute to the British Government.

ARTICLE 3 - The Chiefs shall remain in the full exercise of the same rights and authority in their own possessions which they enjoyed before they were received under the British protection.

ARTICLE 4 - Should a British force, on purposes of general welfare, be required to march through the country of the said Chiefs, it is necessary and incumbent that every Chief shall, within his own possessions, assist and furnish to the full of his power, such force with supplies of grain and other necessaries which may be demanded.

ARTICLE 5 - Should an enemy approach from any quarter for the purpose of conquering this country, friendship and mutual interest require that the Chiefs join the British army with all their force, and, exerting themselves in expelling the enemy, act under discipline and proper obedience.

ARTICLE 6 - All Europe articles brought by merchants from the eastern districts, for the use of the army, shall be allowed to pass, by the Thanedars and Sayerdars of the several Chiefs, without molestation and the demand of duty.

ARTICLE 7 - All horses purchased for the use of cavalry regiments, whether in the district of Sirhind or elsewhere, the bringers of which being provided with sealed "Rahdaries" from the Resident at Delhi, or officer commanding at Sirhind, shall be allowed to pass through the country of the said Chiefs without molestation or the demand of duty.

The above declaration being published and circulated, became the charter of rights to which the chiefs have since looked, and appealed, for the settlement of all questions that have arisen between them and the British Government. The matters specifically provided for were those that immediately pressed. There has been much, however, of intricate dispute between rival candidates for sirdarees; between chiefs who had divided their territory before the declaration of protection was published, and had bound themselves to their co-proprietors by mutual obligations; between chiefs and their dependants of the Sikh nation, as well as Zamindars, as to the extent of right and authority possessed at the time of the declaration of protection; and, perhaps more than all, boundary disputes and quarrels regarding participated rights. These differences, whenever they have arisen, have required adjustment and arbitration by the British officers on the spot, and have formed the subject of continual references to the Supreme Government at Calcutta. The regulation of successions was also a matter, that from the first required to be undertaken by the protecting authority, and failing heirs of any kind according to Sikh custom and law, the escheat is considered to fall to the protecting state.

APPENDIX - II
Sanad granted to Abdus Smad Khan of Dujana,
4 May 1806

Adverting to the merit of your past services and conduct, the Right Honourable General Lord Lake, Commander-in-Chief, assigned to you from the beginning of the Fussul Rube'e (spring crops) of 1213 Fuslee year, September 1805 A.D., the under-mentioned mahals as a jaidad, for entertaining a Risalah, and also for a personal Jagir for yourself, comprehending the whole of the land revenue and the collection of customs, with an exception to such gardens and such ayma Jagir, punarth, and other rent-free lands, as also such daily allowances as have long been assigned for charitable purposes, on condition that you require no aid from the British Government, and that you settle the affairs of your mahals with your own troops, and provided also, that in any season of exigency, you furnish, on application, to the aid of the British Government, a force consisting of 200 horse, and that you always continue to manifest your attachment to the British Government, and your zeal to serve its interests. This grant has been confirmed to you by Government, who, sensible of the merit of your services and conduct, which have been made known to it by the communications of the Right Honourable the Commander-in-Chief, has been pleased to grant those lands to you and your heirs for ever. The British Government neither have, nor will have any concern with them whatever, but they will remain in your possession, and that of your posterity.

Entertaining a due sense of gratitude for this distinguished mark of favour, you will continue steadfast in your attachment to the British Government, and in your exertions to serve its interests. In this consists your own advantage and welfare.

Then the schedule of lands was given.

Note: Similar *Sanads* were granted to Faiz Talab Khan of Pataudi and Ahmad Bakhsh Khan of Loharu on the same date.

APPENDIX - III
TREATY OF AMRITSAR (25TH APRIL, 1809)

First, "Perpetual friendship shall subsist between the British Government and the Sate of Lahore; the latter shall be considered, with respect to the former, to be on the footing of the most favoured powers, and the British Government will have no concern with the territories and subjects of the Raja to the northward of the river Sutlej.

Second, "The Raja will never maintain, in the territory which he occupies on the left bank of the Sutlej, more troops than are necessary for the internal duties of the territory, nor commit or suffer any encroachment on the possessions or rights of the chiefs in its vicinity.

Third, "In the event of a violation of any of the preceding articles, or of a departure from the rules of friendship, on the part of either state, this treaty shall be considered to be null and void".

The treaty being concluded, Mr.Metcalf came away on the 1st May following. All further discussions with Ranjit Singh were then dropped, and it became a principle, in all relations with this chief, to confine communications, as much as possible, to friendly letters and the exchange of presents; but the British officers on the frontier were instructed to watch the proceedings of Ranjit, and to require instant redress, in case of any infringement of the terms of the treaty, by interference with, or encroachment on, the rights and territories of chiefs and sardars east or south of the river Sutlej. By this treaty Ranjit was guaranteed in the possession of territory on the left of the Sutlej, yielding more than twelve lakhs of rupees, and capable of yielding twelve times that amount.

APPENDIX - IV

SECOND PROCLAMATION OF PROTECTION (22ND AUGUST, 1811)

On the 3rd May, 1809, a proclamation comprised of seven articles, was issued by the orders of the British Government purporting that the country of the Sardars of Sirhind and Malwa, having come under their protection, Raja Ranjit Singh agreeably to the treaty, had no concern with the possessions of the above Sardars; that the British Government had no intention of claiming tribute or fine and that they should continue in the full control and enjoyment of their respective possessions. The publication of the above proclamation intended to afford every confidence to the Sardars; that they had no intention of control and that those having possession should remain in full and quiet enjoyment thereof.

Whereas several Zamindars and other subjects of the chiefs of this country have preferred complaints to the officers of British Government who having a view to the tenor of the above proclamation have not attended and will not in future pay attention to them; for instance, on the 15th June, 1811, Dilawar Ali Khan of Samana, complained to the Resident at Delhi against the officers of Raja Sahib Singh, for jewels and other property said to have been seized by them; who in reply observed that the village of Samana being in the territory of Raja Sahib Singh, any complaint should be made to him; and also on the 12th July, 1811, Dussownda Singh and Gurmukh Singh complained to Colonel Ochterlony, Agent to the Governor-General against Sardar Charat Singh, for their share of property, and in reply it was written on the back of the petition that 'since during the period of 3 years, no claim was preferred against Charat Singh by any of his brothers, nor even the name of any co-partner mentioned and since it was advertised in the Proclamation, delivered to the Sardars that every Chief should remain in the quiet and full possession of his dominions, their petition could not be attended to'. The insertion of these answers to complainants is intended as examples, and also that it may be impressed on the minds of every Zamindar and the other subjects that the attainment of justice is to be expected from their respective Chiefs, that they may not in the smallest degree swerve from the observance of subordination. It is, therefore, highly incumbent upon the Raja and other Sardars on this side of the river Sutlej that they explain this to their respective subjects and court their confidence, that it may be clear to them that complaints to the officers of British Governments will be of no avail and that they consider their respective Sardars as the source of justice, and that of that free will and accord be observed uniform obedience.

And whereas according to the first Proclamation it is not the intention of the British Government to interfere in the possessions of the Sardars of this country, it is, nevertheless for the purpose of ameliorating the condition of the community particularly necessary to give general information that several Sardars have since the last incursion of Raja Ranjit Singh wrested the estates of others and deprived them of their lawful possessions and that in the restoration they have used delays until detachment from the British army have enforced restitution as in the case of Rani of Zeera the Sikhs of Cholian, the taluks of Karowali and Chalaudhi, and the village of Cheeba; and the reason of such delays and evasions can only be attributed to the temporary enjoyment of revenues and subjecting the owners to irremediable losses. It is, therefore, by order of the British Government, hereby proclaimed that, if any of the Sardars and others have forcibly taken possession of the estates of others, or otherwise injured the lawful owners, it is necessary that, before the occurrence of any complaint, the proprietor should be satisfied and by no means to defer the restoration of the property in which, however, should delays be made, and interference of the British authority become requisite, the revenues of the estate, from the date of the ejection of the lawful proprietor, together with, whatever other losses the inhabitants of that place may sustain from the march of troops, shall without scruple be demanded from the offending party; and for disobedience of the present orders, a penalty according to the circumstances of the case of the offender shall be levied, agreeably to the decision of the British Government.

APPENDIX - V

Rajas and Chiefs of the States, South of Sutlej 1764-1849..

Patiala	...	Raja Ala Singh, till 1765. Raja Amar Singh, 1765 —1781. Sahib Singh, 1781—1813. Karam Singh, 1813-1845.
Jind	...	Gajpat Singh, 1767—1789. Bhag Singh, 1789—1819. Fateh Singh, 1819—1822. Sangat Singh, 1822—1834.
Kaithal	...	Bhai Lal Singh, 1809—1818. Partap Singh, 1818—1823.
Kalsia	...	Jodh Singh, 1809—1819. Sobha Singh, 1819—1823.
Ladwa	...	Gurdit Singh, 1809—1810. Ajit Singh, 1810—1823.
Shahabad	...	Karam Singh, 1775-1808
Buria	...	Sardar Nanu Singh, till 1764. Sardar Bhag Singh, 1764-1829. Gulab Singh, 1829-1843.
Kunjpura	...	Nawab Najbat Khan, 1739-1760. Nawab Daler Khan, 1760-1773. Nawab Gulsher Khan, 1773-1801. Nawab Rahmad Khan, 1801-1822. Nawab Ghulam Ali Khan, 1822-1849.
Governors-Generals	...	Warren Hastings, 1731-1785. Lord Cornwallis, 1786-1789. Sir John Shore, 1793-1798. Lord Wellesley, 1798-1805. George Barlow, 1805-1807. Lord Minto, 1807-1813 Warren Hastings, 1813-1823 Lord Amherest, 1823-1826. William Bentinck, 1828-1835. Sir Charles Metcalfe, 1835-1836. Lord Auckland, 1836-1842. Lord Hardinge, 1844-1848. Lord Dalhousie, 1848-1856.
Chief secretaries to the British Government		A. Edmonstone, 1803-12. J.Admn., 1812-1818. C.Lushtington. W.B. Bayley.

**Persian Secretary to the
British Government**

J.Monkton.

Residents at Delhi

A. Seton, 1803-1809.

J.Adam, 1809-1812.

C.T. Metcalfe, 1812-1818.

Sir David Ochterlony.

Agents to the Governor-General

Sir David Ochterlony, 1809-1819 at
Ludhiana.

Assistants to the Agent

Captain Birch.

A. Ross.

W.Murray,

R.Ross.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Bhai Vir Singh (ed.), Bhangu, Rattan Singh, *Prachin Panth Prakash*, Wazir Hind Press, Amritsar, 1914).

Calender of Persian Correspondence, Being Letters which Passed between some of the East India Co.'s Servants and Indian Rulers and notables, Govt. of India, Central Publication Branch, Calcutta, 1911-14, Vol.I-V.

Francklin, William, *Military Memoirs of Goerge Thomas*, Reprint for John Stockdale, Picadilly, 1805.

-----, *The History of the Reign of Shah Alam*, Cooper and Graham, London, 1798.

Fraser, James, *The History of Nadir Shah*, A.Millar, Bachaman's head, London, 1742 (2nd ed.).

-----, *Memoirs of Colonel Skinner* in two volumes, Smith, elder and Co., 65 Cornhill, London, 1851.

Foreign Dept./ Secret Proceedings, National Archives of India, (Relevant Vols. From 1785-1849).

Forster, G., *A Journey from Bengal to England through North India, Kashmir, Afghanistan and Persia into Russia*, 1783-1784, in the volumes, London, 1798.

Ganda Singh (ed.), *Hukamname*, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1975.

Khafi Khan, Muhammad Hashim, *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab* (1772), Biblica Indica, Calcutta, 1874, two volumes, Supply Information About G.G.Singh and Banda Singh Bahadur. Portions translated by Elliot and Dowson, *History of India as told by its own Historians*, Vol.VII, Kitab-i-Mahal Allahabad, 1964, pp.211-533.

Singh, Santokh, *Sri Guru Partap Suraj Granth* (ed. Bhai Vir Singh) Khalsa Samachar, Amritsar, 1926-37.

Secondary Sources

- Anand, Balwant Singh, *Guru Nanak - His Life was His Message*, Pub. by Guru Nanak Foundation, Near JNU, New Delhi, 1983.
- Ahluwalia, M.L. (ed.), *British India's Foreign Policy Series*, Select documents relating to Maharaja Ranjit Singh's negotiations with the British envoy Charles Theophilus Metcalfe (1808-09) and the British Missions to Sind, Afghanistan and Persia. Ashoka International Pub., New Delhi, 1982.
- Archer, Major, *Tours in Upper India: and in Part of the Himalayan Mountains with Accounts of the Courts of the Native Princes*, in two volumes, Vol.I, Richard Bentley, New Burlington Street, London, 1833.
- Arora, A.C., *British Policy towards the Punjab States (1858-1905)* Export India Publications, Jullundhar, 1982.
- Bakshi, S.R., *History of the Punjab*, Anmol Pub., 1991.
- , *British Diplomacy and Administration in India (1807-13)* Munshiram Manoharlal, New Delhi, 1971.
- Banerji, Brajendranath, *Begam Samru*, M.C.Sarkar and Sons, Calcutta, 1925.
- Buck, Major C.H. *The Annals of Karnal* Superintendent, Govt. Printing, Lahore, 1914.
- Centenary Volume, *The Maharaja Ranjit Singh*, Centenary Celebrations Committee, Cawnpore, 1940.
- Chopra, Gulshan Lall, *The Punjab as a Sovereign State (1799-1839)* Uttar Chand Kapur and Sons, Lahore, 1928.
- Data, Paira Singh, *Banda Singh Bahadur*, National Book Shop, Chandni Chowk, Delhi, 1995.
- Dua, J.C., *Eighteenth Century Punjab: British Historiography*, Radha Publications, New Delhi, 1992.

- Farooqui, Mian Bashir Ahmed, *British Relations with the Cis-Sutlej States (1809-1823)*, Monograph No.19, Punjab Govt. Record Office Publications, 1941.
- Forrest, George W., *Selections from the Letters, Despatches and other State Papers Preserved in the Foreign Department of Govt. of India (1772-1785)* Vol.III. Printed by Superintendent of Govt. of India, Calcutta, India, 1890.
- Gandhi, S.S., *Sikhs in the Eighteenth Century: Their Struggle for Survival and Supremacy*. Singh Brothers, Amritsar, 1999.
- , *Struggle of the Sikhs for Sovereignty*, Gur Das Kapur and Sons (Pvt.) Ltd. Delhi, Jullundhar, 1980.
- Garrett, H.L.O. (ed.), *Cunningham's History of the Sikhs*, Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press, 1918.
- Giani, Gian Singh, *Twarikh Guru Khalsa*, Vol.I, Guru Gobind Singh Press, Sialkot, 1891.
- , *Shamsher Khalsa (Twarikh Guru Khalsa, Vol.II)* Guru Gobind Singh Press, Sialkot, 1894.
- , *Sri Guru Panth Prakash* (Litho, First ed.) Delhi, 1880.
- Grey, C. (ed.) *H.L.O. Garrett's European Adventurers in Northern India (1785-1849)* Language Department, Punjab, Patiala, 1970 (Reprint).
- Griffin and Massy, *Chiefs and Families of Note in the Punjab, A revised ed. of "The Punjab Chiefs"*, Vol.I and Vol.II, Printed by Superintendent, Govt. Printing, Punjab, 1940.
- Griffin, Sir Lepel Henry, *Ruler of India — Ranjit Singh*, S.Chand and Co., Delhi, Jullundhar, Reprint 1967.
- , *The Rajas of the Punjab*, Language Department of Punjab, Patiala, 1970 (Reprint).
- Gupta, H.R. *Marathas and Panipat*, Punjab University, Chandigarh, 1961.
- , *Cis-Sutlej States (1769-99)*, Vol.II, Minerva Book Shop, Lahore, 1944.

- , *Studies in the Later Mughal History of the Punjab*, Lahore, 1994.
- Hasrat, Bikramjit, *Life and Times of Ranjit Singh*, Printed at the V.V.R.I Press, Sadhu Ashram (Hoshiyarpur), Pub. The Author at Hatikhana, Nabha, Punjab, 1997.
- Hutchison, Lester, *European Freebooters in the Mughal India*, Asia Pub. House, New York, 1964.
- Juneja, M.M. *History of Hissar: From Inception to Independence (1354-1947)*, Modern Book Depot, Haryana, 1989.
- Keene, H.G., *The Fall of the Mughal Empire of Hindustan*, W.H.Allen and Co., Waterloo Place, Pall Mall, London, Reprint 1887.
- , *Hindustan Under Free Lances (1770-1820): Sketch of Military Adventures in Hindustan during the period immediately preceeding British Occupation*. Borris, Laigham and Co. Ltd., London, 1907.
- Khan, Nawab Mohammad Ibrahim Ali, *History of Kunjpura State*, Punjab Printing Works, Lahore.
- Khanna, K.C., *Sikh leadership and some aspects of Anglo-Sikh relations*, Dept. of Punjab Historical Studies, Punjab University, Patiala, 1983.
- Krishen, Indra, *An historical Interpretation of the Correspondence of Sir George Russel Clark (1831-43)*, Printed by Gulab Chand Kapur and Sons, G.B.Road, Delhi, 1952.
- Lall, John, *Begam Samru : Fading Portrait in a gilded frame*, The Lotus Collection New Delhi, 1997.
- Latif, Syad Muhammad, *Maharaja Ranjit Singh : Punjab's man of destiny*, National Book Shop, Delhi, 1999.
- Lee-Warner, William, *The Protected Princes in India*, Macmillan and Company, London, New York, 1894.

- Major, Andrew J., *Return to empire : Punjab under the Sikhs and British in the mid 19th century*, Sterling Publication Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1996.
- Malcolm, Lt. Col., *Sketch of the Sikhs : Their origin, Customs, and manners.*, Vinay Publications, Chandigarh, 1981 (Reprint)
- Mittal, S.C., *Haryana : A Historical perspective*, Atlantic Publication and Distributors, New Delhi, 1986.
- Muztar, Balkrishna, *Kurukshetra : Political and Cultural History*, B.R. Publishing Corporation, New Delhi, 1978.
- Narang , Gokul Chand, *Transformation of Sikhism*, Printed of 'Tribune' Press, Lahore, 1912.(Reprint Delhi, 1960).
- Narang, K.S. & Gupta, H.R. , *History of the Punjab (1500-1858)*, Uttar Chand Kapur and Sons, New Delhi, 1969.
- Pannikar, K.N., *British Diplomacy in North India : A Study of the Delhi Residency (1803-1857)* , Associated Publication House, New Delhi, 1968.
- Phadke, H.A., *Haryana : Ancient and Medieval*, Human Publication House, New Delhi, 1990.
- Prakash, Buddha, *Haryana through the Ages*, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra, 1971.
- Princep, Henry T., *Origin of the Sikh power in the Punjab and Political life of Maharaja Ranjit Singh : with an account of the religion, laws and Custom of the Sikhs*, Language Department, Punjab, 1970.
- Raikes, Charles, *The Englishman in India*, Longmans, Greens and Co., London, 1867.
- Sardesai, Govind Sakharam., *New History of the Marathas (1772-1848)* Vol. III, Publication by K.B. Dhawale, for Phoenix Publication Bomabay, 1948.
- Sarkar, J.N., (ed.), *Mahadji Sindhia and North Indian Affairs (1785-94) in English records of Maratha History* , Poona Residency

Correspondence, vol.I Printed at the Government Central Press, Bombay, 1936.

- Sethi, R.R., *The Mighty and Shrewd Maharaja : Ranjit Singh's relation with Other Powers*, S.Chand and Company, Delhi, Jullandhar, Lucknow, 1960.
- Sheetal, Sohan Singh, *Rise of the Sikh power in the Punjab and*, Dhanpat Rai and Sons, Jullandhar city, 1970. & *Maharaja Ranjit Singh*, Delhi 1978.
- Shejwalkar, T.S., *Panipat : 1761*, Deccan College, P.G. and Research Institute Poona, 1946.
- Sikha, N.K., *Rise the Sikh Power*, A. Mukharjee and Company Pvt. Ltd. Calcutta, 1960 (third print).
- Singh, Bhagat, *Maharaja Ranjit Singh and His Times*, Sehgal Publication Services, Delhi, 1990.
- Singh, Teja & Singh Ganda, *A Short history of the Sikhs : 1669-1765*, Orient Longmans, Bombay, 1950.
- Singh Fauja (ed.), *Sirhind through the Ages*, Dept. of Punjab Historical Studies, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1972.
- Singh, Fauja (ed.), *Historians and Historiography of the Sikhs*, Oriental Publication and distributors, New Delhi , 1978.
- Singh, Gopal, *History of the Sikh People (1469-1978)*.
- Singh, Ganda, (ed.), 'Early European accounts of the Sikhs and History of origin and progress of the Sikhs' in, *Indian Studies : Past and Present*, VolIII, No.2 to 4., Today and tomorrow's Printers and Publication Karol Bagh, New Delhi, 1974.
- Singh, Ganda, *Banda Singh Bahadur*, S.G.P.C., Amritsar, 1964.
- Singh, Ganda, *Ahmad Shah Durrani*, Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1959.
- Singh, Harbans, *Guru Tegh Bahadur*, Sterling Pvt. Ltd. , New Delhi 1982.

Singh, Khazan , *The History and Philosophy of Sikh Religion*, Naval Kishore Press, Lahore, 1914.

Singh, Ranvir *Guru Tegh Bahadur*, Printed at the Caxton Press (Pvt.) Ltd. New Delhi, 1975.

Singh, Trilochana, *Guru Tegh Bahadur-Prophet and Martyr*, Delhi Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, Delhi, 1967.

Suri, Sohan lal, *Umdat -ut-Twarikh*, Arya Press, Lahore, 1885-89
English version of Daftar II and IV by Vidya Safar Suri
has been Published by S. Chand and Co., New Delhi,
1961.

Gazetters, Journals and Settlement Reports

Punjab district Gazetteers, Vol VII, Part A, *Ambala district* (1923-241),
Compiled and Published under the authority of the
Punjab Government, Punjab, 1925.

Punjab State Gazetteers, Dujana State, Vol III A, Printed at the 'Civil
and Military Gazette Press, Lahore, 1908.

Punjab States Gazetteers, 'Phulkian States : Patiala, Nabha and Jind',
Vol XVII A ,Printed at the Punjab Government Press,
Lahore, 1909.

The Imperial Gazetteer of India, Vol- V, Oxford at Clarendon Press,
1908.

Imperial Gazetteer of India, Provincial Series, Punjab, Vol. II, VI, XIII,
XIV, XV, XVI, XXI. Superintendent of Government
Printing Calcutta, 1908.

Pagan, P.J. *Gazetteer of Hissar District*, Civil and Military Gazetteer
Press, Lahore 1893.

Journal of Haryana Studies, Vol III Kurukshetra , 1991.

*Extracts from Reports on the settlement of the Parganas formerly
comprised in the Thanesar District*. Punjab printing
Company , Lahore (no date mentioned)

Douie, J.M., *Settlement Report of Karnal-Ambala*, Published by 'The
Civil and Military Gazetteer Press, Lahore, 1891.

Articles

Alam, Muzzaffar, 'The Sikh uprisings under Banda Bahadur,' in Proceedings of the *Indian History Congress* , Vol. I, 39th Session (Hyderabad, 1978).

Khera, P.N. 'Social life in Sikh Kingdom' in *The Punjab past and present* , Vol XIII-I, April 1979.

Unpublished Thesis

Rao, S.N., *Cis-Sutlej Sikh States : 1800-1849*, Ph.D. Thesis, Punjab University, Chandigarh, 1953.