

## Punjab During Muslim Rule in India: An Outline

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### Abstract:

Due to the geographical location of Punjab, the rulers, society and economy used to change frequently from time to time. Many major changes were faced from Indus valley civilization to British rule in India. A major change was occurred after the Muslim invaders in Punjab. Mahmud of Ghazni conquered the Khorasan, marched on Peshwar against the Hind Shai's in Kabul in 1005, and followed it by the conquest of Punjab (1007), deposed the Shia Ismaili rulers of Multan, Ghaznavid lasted until 1187. This gives a strong foundation to Muslim rulers, and established Sultanate over north India. The Sultanate ruled from Delhi (1206 to 1526), when the last was replaced by Mughal dynasty. During the Sultanate Punjab became a frontier and a place for migrators. Tribes were playing prominent role in Punjab during medieval ages especially before the era of Akbar. Akbar The Great provide stability to provincial system and the fixed the boundaries. Akbar provides Mansabdari and Jagirdari to the region and stability on administrative system in Punjab Suba. Medieval Punjab is also known for the Sufism of that time and well-established trade with west. Uprising of Sikhism also denoted in medieval Punjab. Punjab remains stable until the region of later Mughals.

**Keywords:** - Muslim, Saltanate, Mughals, Suba, Zat, Quabila, Bigha, Gazis, Sarhind, Mansabadari, Jagirdari, Subadar, Diwan, Faujdar, Dastur-Circles.

### INTRODUCTION:

Punjab is a geographical and cultural land in the northern part of Indian subcontinent, comprising

areas of eastern Pakistan and northern India. Punjab is situated in the Indo-Gangetic alluvial plains, by many rivers flowing through the land. The literal meaning of word Punjab is land of five rivers; Sutlej, Beas, Ravi, Jhelum and Chenab. Punjab is connected with great Himalayas region from north and northeast, connected with central Asia from west, Thar dessert in south, and Ganga Yamuna Doab in east. Punjab region has a historical and cultural link to Indo-Aryan people as well as partially to various indigenous communities. As a result of several invasions from central Asia and middle east, many ethnic groups and religious makeup the cultural heritage of the Punjab. Indus Valley civilisation was located in this region. The Aryans established there and began new era, in 326 BCE Alexander the great, invaded Punjab (king Pours) and connected it to outer world. Until the era of British, it becomes the land of invasions due to its geographical location.

The land five rivers is a territorial concept and during course of the medieval ages, especially before Mughal age, either different chieftainships or different administrative units denoted it. The Arab accounts refers to Sindh and Hind. Multan formed part of Hind and so did the other territories of the Punjab under different chieftains. During the Sultanate the territories of the land of five rivers were divided into various shiqqs. Accord to fourteenth

century Arab account of Shihab-al-Dinal-Umari's *Masalik-al-Mmalik-al-Shiqqs*, i.e. Lahore, Multan, Kalanaur Sarsuti, Kuhram, Hansi, and Saman. Delhi was different shiqq. For a time Multan was governed by an independent dynasty.

Under Akbar and his successors the region was divided between the Subas of Lahore and Multan while the sarkars of Sirhind and Hissar Firoza formed part of the Suba of Delhi with the Sutlej forming boundary. Yet in spite of administrative fragmentation, the Punjab had developed, during the medieval period, a personality of its own. It was socially and culturally distinct from Ganga-Jamuna Doab on east, Kashmir of north, the territory of Roh on west, and Rajasthan on south. It is true that within this region there were variations from place to place and from one social group to other, but these variations do not mitigate against the broader historical unity of the Punjab in fact no one had seriously questioned this unity until the British imperialists decided to partition it on the basis of religion.

Several distinctive features mark the history of Punjab, first and foremost, society in Punjab during middle age was characterised by the powerful survivals of tribal organisations. The tribe (quake of zat), the clan (quabila) and smaller groups of cognac relatives dominated social relations and materially influenced relationship of production. Administration and policies also revolved around tribal organisations. Tribal society retained many of its basic pastoral characteristics even where

agricultural and trade were highly developed. Wealth was counted in terms head of cattle, and tax was widely collected on the basis of cattle, rather than land or agricultural production. But even in areas where agriculture was developed, revenue was often taken in terms of individuals or cattle.

During the middle period agriculture was further extended and the state provided considerable encouragement, including the extension of irrigation work. According to AbulFazal, irrigation in the suba of Lahore was chiefly from wells. Later canals were also constructed. With the extension of cultivation, the system of assessing revenue per bigha of land under cultivation (zabti system) was also extended, while the ghalla-bakshi system was further developed in province of Multan. Notwithstanding the changes, the tribal pattern continued and produced a new form of feudalism. There were areas where a dominant tribe would be of zamindars while the peasants or occupancy tenant would be of another tribe. In both cases, vestiges of communal, tribal and clan rights would continue. Simultaneously, in many cases, individuals of the tribe tended to acquire rights of overlordship over the other members of the same tribe. Then there was peculiar institution like that of the dhok. The number of small zamindars who let out land and simultaneously carried on cultivation themselves appears to be much larger in Punjab than in Ganga valley or Rajputana. These developments also appear to be connected with the continuance of the tribal system.

The complexity of socio-economic relationship in Punjab appears to have been accentuated because many new tribes seem to have come to the region during the medieval period was established themselves in a position of superiority over the tribes, which had held control earlier. These tribes were sometimes pushed out, but were generally depressed and made to accept inferior positions. The tribal tussle and the change in the state of tribes very probably continued throughout the medieval period. Even the position as recorded in the Ain-i-Akbari had undergone appreciable change by the century.

Not only was the agricultural fertility of the Punjab “rarely equalled” in the words of AbulFazal but also its trade was highly developed. Lahore, which became during the Mughal period one of the biggest cities of the country, could boast of “the choicest production of Turkistan, Persia and Hindustan” and was considered the “resort of people of all countries whose manufactures present an astonishing display”(Ain-i-Akbari).

Multan had also become great centre of international trade, passing not only through the overland route to Qandhar, but also through Indus to Arab countries beyond the seas. Although it had somewhat declined by the second half of the seventeenth century, its commercial importance is mentioned even by thevenot. Abundant agricultural surplus and

extensive trade led to the two-fold development growth of science technology on the one hand and expansion of manufactures on the other.

From the point of view of political history, the study of relationship of chieftains with the representatives of central government deserves particular attention. While the Blochi immigration into the Punjab left permanent marks, it is difficult to detect the lasting signs of many others in cursions. It is known that many “Gazis” from central Asia to Punjab with Ghazanvid armies and settled here. Throughout the thirteenth and, in fact the fourteenth centuries, the Mongol kept raiding India. Most of the raids were checked in the Punjab. The military commanders of Punjab who were entrusted with the responsibility of defending the Sultanate from Mongol raiders played a very important part in the politics of Hindustan. There were immigration on a large scale of Afghan tribes from Roh to India. It is however, surprising that comparatively few of these Afghan clans settled down in the Punjab permanently. The considerable Afghan settlement of fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in Punjab dwindled appreciably in seventeenth century.

Punjab has been great home of religious movements in the middle ages. Shaikh Ali Hujwiri, the author of KashfulMahjub; a major theoretical work on sufism, lived at Lahore in Ghanavid period and died there. BahauddinZakariya, ShaikhFarid-ud-Din

GanjShakar, Sayyed Jalal-ud-Din Bukhari were some other saints. A very large no.of Muslim tribes of Punjab claim that their ancestors were converted to Islam by one or the other of these saints. Considering that many tribes who were converted, belonged to economically deprived sections of society, the temptation of material gain could have been a lively factor.

There has been considerable uncertainty in the past about exact territorial limits of the Punjab. During the Mughal period it was the area covered by suba of Lahore that come to be called Punjab. However in terms of Mughal administrative jurisdiction this region consisted of the whole suba of Multan and the sarkars of Sarhind and Hissar-Firoza of the tuba of Delhi. The riverine system of region was its most important geographical feature. The rivers created five doabs in the northern Punjab that in Mughal times each of them lent its name to and consisted a sarkar of the suba of Lahore. These were the sarkars of bet Jalandhar Doab, Bari Doab. Rachna Doab, Chenhat Doab and Sind Sagar Doab.

From the past quarter of of sixteenth century, and throughout seventeenth century, Mughals were the single most powerful entity in south Asia. The long region of Akbar(1556-1606) had been the emergence and establishment of institutions that come to constitute its administrative framework. The highly centralised and closely regulated mansabdari and jagirdari systems became important

instruments of state power.it was through these, the Mughal ruling class sought to consolidate its authority over the far-flung regions of the empire and to encrase local elites to develop common socio-economic interest with it. Furthermore the liberal outlook of Akbar and nurtured the growth of polity that for long coloured the outlook of influential section of Mughal society. At the Mughal court where imperial policies were formulated, it helped to forge an integrated political culture out of diverse social elements. A term of politics and administrative structure thus the stage had already been set by the opening years of the seventeenth century.

Considering that the centralising pull of the Mughal imperial system was felt even in geographically distant territories of the empire, its impact upon the Punjab, a region so essentially a part of it can hardly be over-emphasised. Administrative institutions in Punjab were characteristic reflections of the Mughal system as understood in its 'classical' sense. Regularly appointed subadars, diwans, faujdar etc., with clearly defined powers functioned within well-demarcated administrative units. The authority of the emperor was actively demonstrated to the lowest levels of rural society when Mughal officials descended at regular intervals to assess and collect the land revenue. In areas where their control was tenuous, the Mughal administrators constantly endeavoured to obtain a firmer grip. The Punjab polity, in effect clearly mirrored and

objective and interests of the Mughal ruling class.

It must however be realised that each region had its own peculiarities of an effective system of governance tended to respond to local requirements and changing situations. The Mughal administration in Punjab was flexible enough to accommodate its regional peculiarities. The dastur-circles and even faujdari jurisdictions transgressed formal suba boundaries wherever geographical factors made it necessary. But in so far as the interests of a small elite determined its basic character, there was a limit to which the politico-administrative structure of Punjab could adapt itself to a major social upheaval.

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