

# ***Social and Economic Change in Multan: 1849-1947***

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## **ABSTRACT**

*Over the centuries, Multan has been overrun by many people who advanced into southern Asia across Chenab River on the plains of Punjab. Multan was practically an independent kingdom but at times remained under rulers like Greeks, Arabs, Mughals, Afghans, Sikhs and the British; all besieged Multan. The British took over the city in 1849 and introduced reforms in all spheres; be it technology, governance, irrigation, canal colonies, administration or justice. After partition, Multan became part of Pakistan. The city grew slowly than the other city centres in Punjab which surpassed it in size and trade. The present paper highlights Multan's social and economic changes and progress under the Raj and the way it sustained a prominent place among top three cities of the Punjab contributing towards the economy of Raj after Amritsar and Lahore.*

## **Introduction**

Multan was one of the richest agricultural land areas in the Punjab. It was popular for cotton and mango gardens producing 40 percent of the total of mango crop in the

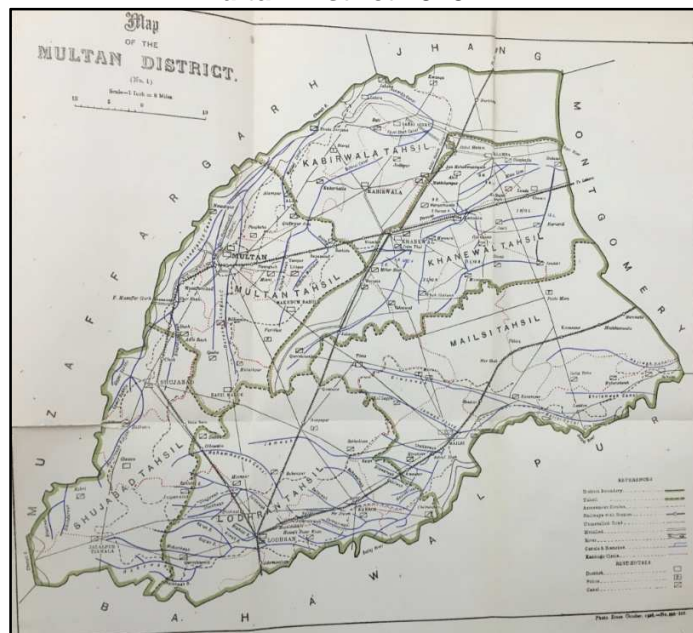
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country.<sup>1</sup> Government established experimental agricultural farms throughout the district for research on seeds, land types, usage of agricultural machinery and animal husbandry. Before the British arrival, Multan was one of the centers for handicrafts. Its traditional *lungis*, *dorias*, fancy embroidered clothes were sent throughout India and abroad as well.<sup>2</sup>

After the war of 1857, the Colonial administration decided to use local elites as intermediaries amid the masses and administration. There was huge increase in the prices of agricultural land due to political stability and enormously improved communication and irrigation facilities in the region. Multan's economy was based on agro-production but agriculture was largely dependent upon rivers, canals and wells due to very minor rainfall. The availability of water was crucial to the economic growth and well-being of Multan.

#### Multan District 1923-24



1 Mahar Abdul Haq, *Multan* (Lahore: Pakistan Punjabi Adabi Board, 1980), 28.

2 Abdul Haq, *Multan*, 29.

SOURCE: *Punjab District Gazetteers*, Volume VII Part A. (Lahore: Superintendent Government Printing Punjab, 1926).

Multan was divided into three well marked divisions; low lying lands on the river, land accessible to canal irrigation and desert areas inaccessible to canals.<sup>3</sup> There were two main harvests, the *rabi* or *hari* (spring) sown in October-November and reaped in April-May and the *kharif* or *sawanis* sown from June to August and reaped from early September to end of December. The *kharif* crop includes rice, millet (*bajra*), and maize, while the *rabi* included wheat, barley and oats. With the development of canal irrigation, the wheat crop assumed great importance. Since most of the agriculture remained dependent on rainfall, it was the failure of *kharif* harvest which always resulted in drought and famine.

**Table 1: ANNUAL RAINFALL IN DISTRICT MULTAN IN 1881**

District	Average Annual Rainfall in inches	Area in square miles	Percentage of cultivation on total area	Population	Population per square mile
Multan	6.6	5,882	16.5	471,563	80

SOURCE: *Punjab District Gazetteers*, Volume XXXIII B. Multan District, Statistical Tables, 1904. Lahore: Civil and Military Gazette Press, 1908.

*Punjab Census 1868*, General Statement no. 2. and *Punjab Census 1881*, Abstract no 14, 35.

3 *Settlement Report 1899-1900*, (Lahore: Civil and Military Gazette Press, 1908).



railways increased importance of the Punjab as a province and Multan was one of the major contributors in imports and exports of goods. The fiscal year of 1880-1881 proved Multan as a major city for the development of the economy as it was third largest town after Amritsar, Delhi and ahead of Lahore in imports and exports.

**Table 2: IMPORTS AND EXPORTS WITHIN THE PUNJAB IN 1880-81 (value in rupees)**

City	Value of Imports	Value of Exports	Total Value
Amritsar	31, 534, 287	13,030,985	44,565,272
Delhi	22, 072, 933	9,874,125	31,947,118
Multan	8, 404, 104	3,703,382	12,107,486
Lahore	7, 333, 518	1,202,717	8,536,035

SOURCE: Punjab Government, *Report on the Internal Trade and Manufactures of Punjab (1880-81)*, Lahore; 1882,12-17.

Multan's economic growth changed its importance for the British and they started considering it one of the major markets. Its geographic location in the South of Punjab further made it convenient for the British to have a control and watch over Bahawalpur state and further adjacent areas. The commodities and goods were all transported via railways through Multan to the major towns and cities like Jhang, Bahawalpur, Khanewal, Kabirwala, Dera Ghazi Khan and Sindh.

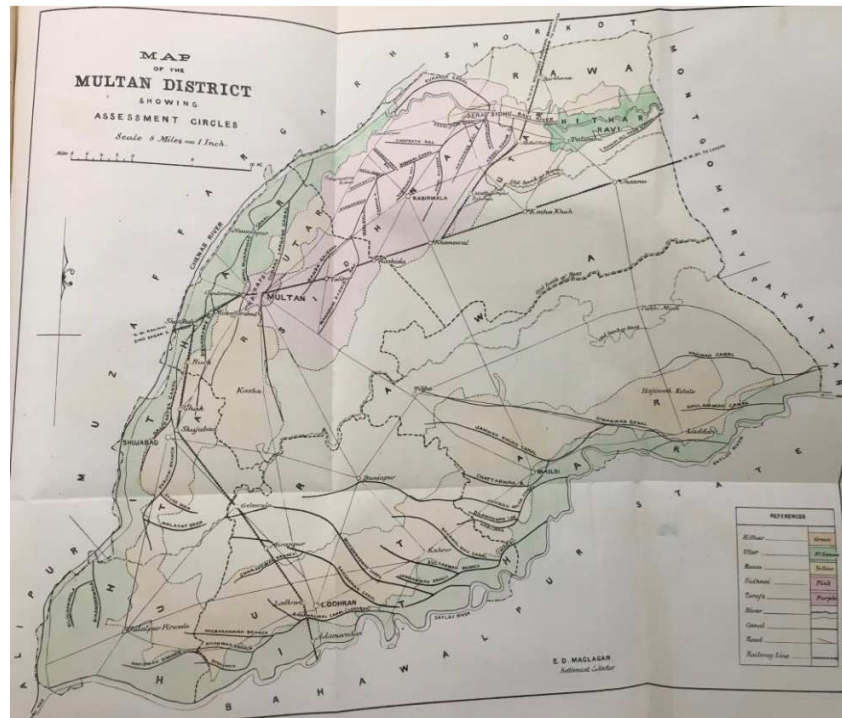
**Table 3: IMPORTS AND EXPORTS OF AGRO-COMMODITIES IN TONS DURING 1880-81**

Commodity	Import (in tons)	Export (in tons)
Raw Cotton	714	562
European Cotton	85	2
European goods	867	520
Indigo	490	379
Wheat	10,223	541
Seeds of all sorts	3,757	626
Raw Silk	49	17
Refined Sugar	2,206	825
Unrefined Sugar	2,384	1,325

SOURCE: Punjab Government, *Report on the Internal Trade and Manufactures of Punjab (1880-81)*, Lahore; 1882,12-17.

Agrarian developments in the Punjab opened new avenues of economic development for the local community and surrounding areas of Multan.

#### Map of Multan District Showing Assessment Circles



SOURCE: E.D. Maclagan, *Settlement Report of Multan District* (1901)(Lahore: Civil and Military Gazette Press, 1901).

The time of British colonialism in India is, generally, divided in three broad phases which are connected to one another; the first stage (1757-1813) as a colonial trader, the second stage (1813-1860) as controller of state power and collecting revenue and third stage was (post-1860) when they invested capital in many fields like railways, irrigation and plantation and many other areas to compete in global market.<sup>6</sup>

6 Sanjay Kumar, "Colonialism and Rural Society in Punjab, 1901-1947" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Kurukshetra University, 2012), 4.

### Development of Canal Colonies and its Impact on Multan

Between 1885 and 1926, the British government embarked upon a successful agricultural expansion plan. The process of agricultural colonisation started in western Punjab from 1885 and continued till the end of British rule. Overall, nine canal colonies were developed during this period.<sup>7</sup> According to the colonisation project, a network of canals was constructed on uncultivated land which resulted in possible migration into this area from other parts of the Punjab.

**Table 4: CANAL COLONIES IN THE PUNJAB**

Name of Colony	Period of Colonisation	Doab	Districts	Name of Canal Work	Estimated Cost of Construction (Rs. 000)
Sidhnai	1886-1888	Bari	Multan	Sidhnai	1,301
Soda Para	1886-1888	Bari	Montgomery	Lower Sohag Para	1,803
Chunian	1896-1898 1904-1906	Bari	Lahore	Upper Bari Doab	—
Chenab	1892-1905 1926-1930	Rechna	Gujranwala, Jhang, Lyallpur, Lahore, Sheikhpura	Lower Chenab	53, 072
Jhelum	1902-1906	Jech	Shahpur, Jhang	Lower Jhelum	43, 613
Lower Bari Doab	1914-1924	Bari	Montgomery, Multan	Lower Bari Doab	25, 086
Upper Chenab	1915-1919	Rechna	Gujranwala, Sialkot, Sheikhpura	Upper Chenab	43, 596
Upper Jhelum	1916-1921	Jech	Gujrat	Upper Jhelum	49, 770

<sup>7</sup> Ali, *The Punjab Under Imperialism*, 8.

Nili Bar	1926- (not completed by 1940)	Bari	Montgomery, Multan	Sutlej Valley Project	83, 787
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SOURCE: Imran Ali, *The Punjab Under Imperialism* (Michigan: Oxford University Press, 2003), 9.

Multan's geographic locale was important and it was part of three major colonisation projects of the Punjab. Multan was part of Sidhnaï Colony and this settlement was done in 1886-1888 and total land allocated was around 250,000 acres. To attract people to Multan, the minimum grant was fixed at fifty acres.<sup>8</sup> This canal colony project served as platform for Multan's rapid growth and attracted influx of migrants from all parts of the Punjab. Lower Bari Doab Colony was the second settlement which started in 1914 and in which Multan was considered with Montgomery. The original land allotted for this project was 1,192,000 acres but later on reduced to 900,000 acres in 1916.<sup>9</sup> The last major settlement project under the British was Nili Bar Colony which started in 1925 and continued until 1940. The land allocation for this last Multan related project was divided into two types; 1,000,000 acres perennial and 2,710,000 non-perennial and it was further divided into state and private land.<sup>10</sup>

**Table 5: SIDHNAI COLONY LAND DISTRIBUTION IN MULTAN DISTRICT**

District	Muslim Number of Grantees	Percent of Allotted Area to Muslims	Number of Grantees Hindus and Sikhs	Percent of Allotted Area to Hindus and Sikhs	Total Number of Grantees	Total percent of Allotted Area
<b>Multan</b>	607	37.32	73	4.21	680	41.53

SOURCE: Ali, *The Punjab Under Imperialism*, 46.

It is worth mentioning here that influential families of notable religious elites like Gardezi, Qureshi and Gilani families

8 Ali, *The Punjab Under Imperialism*, 14.

9 Ali, *The Punjab Under Imperialism*, 30.

10 Ali, *The Punjab Under Imperialism*, 38.



obtained respectively 193, 275 and 262 acres of land in the Lower Bari Doab Colony.<sup>11</sup> Multan's population also continued to flourish as the city was growing under the British Raj. The population of Multan increased 60 percent from 1881 till 1921 just because of colonisation schemes under Sidhnai and Lower Bari Doab. In 1921, there were 1647 villages in Multan district which rose to 2287 by the time of partition.<sup>12</sup>

Multan has been surrounded by three different routes of canals; the Sidhnai, Chenab and Sutlej canals. Sidhnai canal was dependent on the Ravi. Sidhnai canal system comprised of main canals, the Abdul Hakim and Fazal Shah.<sup>13</sup> A small area of Kabirwal and large area of Multan and Shujabad were dependent on canals of Chenab. Out of the four running canals from Chenab, Sikandarabad was the most efficient. Second canal of Chenab canal system was the Durana Lantana and Wali Mohammad separating at boson regulator. The Matithal was third canal serving parts of Kabirwala and Multan and Balochanwah was the last and fourth one running through Shujabad serving about 20 villages.<sup>14</sup> On the Sutlej River four canals were serving namely the Mailsi, Muhammadwah, Sardarwah and Bahawalwah-Lodhran. All these canals were unified by the irrigation department for controlling them.<sup>15</sup> These canals directly or indirectly irrigated and cultivated Multan's land and supported its economy.

### **Irrigation in Multan**

Multan became popular because of its agricultural growth, inhabitation of *abadkars* and allotments of land under canal colony settlements. The agricultural products were in need of

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11 Ali, *The Punjab Under Imperialism*, 106.

12 *Multan: Past and Present* (Karachi: Finance and Industry Publication, 1968), 57.

13 H. W. Emerson, *Final Settlement Report of the Multan District* (Lahore: Superintendent, Government Printing Punjab, 1921), 2.

14 Emerson, *Final Settlement Report of the Multan District*, 3.

15 Emerson, *Final Settlement Report of the Multan District*, 3.

proper irrigation. Maximum area of the Punjab was irrigated by river channels, canals, water tanks and wells etc. The following table shows the irrigation from different sources:

**Table 6: IRRIGATED AREA FROM DIFFERENT SOURCES IN DISTRICT MULTAN (000 ACRES)**

Year	Public Canals	Wells	Misc. Sources	Total Irrigated Area	Total Sown Area
1901	4561	3747	574	8851	23212
1906	6801	3132	825	10758	29875
1911	6964	3420	570	10955	26309
1916	8072	3433	691	12196	31704
1921	4997	3587	709	13293	31026
1926	9586	3484	609	13679	30407
1931	9929	3767	571	14267	32007
1936	10886	—	632	15605	32643
1941	11639	4618	658	16915	32299
1946	12780	4190	601	17571	32699

SOURCE: M. Mufakharul Islam, *Irrigation, Agriculture and the Raj: Punjab, 1887-1947* (New Delhi: Manohar, 1997), 158-59.

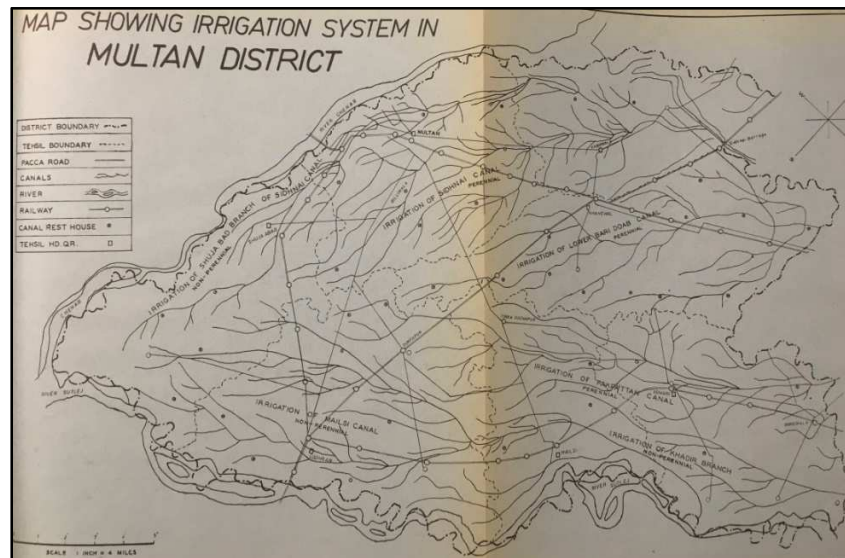
The natural means of irrigation in the Punjab were rivers and rains. Wells, canals and *jhallars*[Urdu: lake] were the important artificial means of irrigation. Wells were of two kinds: *kachcha* and *pakka*. The *kachcha* wells were dug in the earth without masonry walls. In some districts they worked with a type of Persian wheel. The use of wells was sole means of irrigation confined to the non-canal villages in and around Multan. The value of well irrigation was affected by a variety of causes; the area well has to serve, the nature of soil, the character of canal irrigation, efficiency of tenants and number of well-catties were the chief factors.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Emerson, *Final Settlement Report of the Multan District*, 4.

**Table 7: WELLS IN DISTRICT MULTAN IN 1921**

Multan Tehsil	Wells (Condition)	During Settlement Period	In 1921
Multan	In use	3,946	6,192
Multan	Capable of use	481	430
Total	—	4,427	6,622

SOURCE: H. W. Emerson, *Final Settlement Report of the Multan District*. (Lahore: Superintendent, Government Printing Punjab, 1921), 5.



SOURCE: *Multan: Past and Present*, Karachi: Finance and Industry Publication, 1968.

After having a brief glimpse of the Multan's growth as third major agricultural city of the Punjab after Amritsar and Delhi and leaving Lahore behind its economic growth by the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century, local elites and people who had strings of power and were major beneficiaries of all these developments either by land grants, by honorary appointments and some of them being religious elites of the area facilitating the British in execution of its plans and accomplishments of projects. These religious elites were the same who later on supported the establishment of Khairul Madaris. Those who supported and welcomed

Khairul Madaris in Multan include family members of Gilani, Bukhari, Qureshi and Gardezi at the time of partition of India. The British Raj left blessings in shape of administration including but not limited to law and order, irrigation, canals, roads and bridges, schools, railways, telegraph and public health.<sup>17</sup>

### **The Local Elites**

The political scene in Multan was a good example of traditional setup. The population of the city can be classified in three categories as per tribe/caste, religion and profession. The tribe and profession of Multan city marked the identity distinction because religion and culture had a profound impact on professions of the citizens.<sup>18</sup> The British government's key aim was to balance economic changes and maintenance of political stability. The colonial administration used local elites as a buffer between people and administration. The same local elite took power and strength to control the masses once the British left India after dividing it into two new states of Pakistan and India. The role of these elites changed from intermediaries to masters and mentors as custodians of the sacred shrines. The local castes and creeds of Multan simultaneously served the British and got influential powers and appointments with the passage of time. The famous families which served in various capacities and were conferred with favours by the British include: Gardezi Syeds, Qureshis of Kabirani, Qadirpur, Jalalpur and Ghauspur, Gilani Syeds, Sadozais, Badozais, Khakwanis, Mullazais, Bosans, Khokhars, Bagai and Raizadgans.<sup>19</sup>

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17 Prakash Tandon, *Punjabi Century 1857-1947* (Berkeley: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1968), 13.

18 Muhammad Shafique, Muhammad Javed Akhtar & Lubna Kanwal, "Religious Locale and Inter-Religious Demographic Structure of Colonial Multan," *Pakistan Journal of Islamic Research*, Vol 11, 2013, 45-58.

19 For details see, Syed Muhammad Aulad Ali Gillani. *Muraqqa' i- Multan* (Lahore: Jazib Publishers, 1995).

Syeds and Qureshis were the biggest beneficiaries of such policies.<sup>20</sup> These elites performed the duties of local administrators well before the colonial era. This patron-client relationship of colonial administration and local elites developed over the time. All the colonial policies like Revenue Free Jagirs, *tirni* (grazing tax), Court of Wards Management and Land Alienation Act of 1900 were in favour of these local elites including Jagirdars, Pirs and SajadahNashins. These grants were quite old and many of them originating from Mughal Sanads and were maintained for pastoral purposes in the South-western Punjab. The British introduced the Court of Wards in the Punjab under the Punjab Court of Wards Act 1903 (Punjab Act 2 of 1903). In the set-up, the Executive District Officer (Revenue) of a District was to be the Court of Ward in respect of the person and the property of ward where 'Ward' stands for any person or the whole or any part of whose property, the Court of Wards constituted for the time being has assumed superintendence. These local elites were also granted posts in local administration as *zaildars*, [honorary magistrates]<sup>21</sup> titles and huge land grants.<sup>22</sup>

Since the British East India Company annexed the Punjab in 1849, all the land including the waqf properties attached to different sufi shrines came under the Company control through Court of Wards. The Court of Wards was a legal body created by the East India Company. Its purpose was to protect heirs and their estates when heir was deemed to be minor and therefore incapable of acting independently.

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20 *Punjab Government Report on the Revenue Administration in the Punjab and its Dependencies for the Year 1865-66* (Lahore: Civil and Military Gazette Press, 1867), 65-66.

21 *Punjab District Gazetteers, Volume XXXIII B. Multan District, Statistical Tables: 1913* (Lahore: The Civil and Military Gazette Press, 1913), xxxix. Some of the names from religious and political elites who were enjoying Civil and Criminals powers in Municipal limits of Multan of 1st Class, 2nd Class and 3rd Class include Khan Muhammad Yar Khan, Sayed Hassan Bakhsh Gardezi, KhalifaPir Bakhsh, Makhdoom Hassan Bakhsh, Shaikh Riaz Hussain, Mahar Allah YarHiraj and Nur Muhammad Khan Bosan.

22 *Settlement Report of Multan District (1880)* (Lahore: 1880), 31.

However, due to regional identity of the big shrines and very high socio-religious status of their hereditary custodianship, many such religious elites were compensated and granted lands as Company's policy of collaborations. Between the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and the 1920s, some of the Syed and Qureshi families in Multan fell into debts and their properties were taken under the administration of the Court of Wards.<sup>23</sup> During settlement process, these Pirs and custodians were again granted tracts of lands for the maintenance of socio-religious institutions under their management and these elites also collected taxes on behalf of the central government.<sup>24</sup>

These local religious elites trace their lineage back to the Holy Prophet or Pious Caliphs. British considered these religious elites as good intermediaries between them and the masses of Multan and the Punjab. This relationship was somehow like patron client relationship because all these families and groups received favours from the British. Examples of this patron-client relationship of elites and colonial administrators are as follows. From Gardezi Syeds, Syed Murad Shah was the first focal contact who went to serve the British when Multan was surrounded in 1848.<sup>25</sup> Murad Shah was leaving Multan and was on his way to his native town Korai Baloch which was 15 miles away from Multan. When the British reached Sardarpur, they needed some local sharp minded individuals who knew the area and people very well. Murad Shah was recommended by the locals owing to his wit and sharp mind being one of the respectable Syeds. Murad Shah was immediately summoned by the Major General and requested to stay and live with the British camp for safety, security and making local area accessible for British troops. Murad Shah

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23 IOR/V/24/2488, 6. For example Estate of Sayyidd (Syed) Hamid Shah was given under the wardship of S. Faiz Bakhsh and Zain-ul-Abidin. The wards were appointed who were educated at Aitchison College, Lahore.

24 Arthur F. Buhler, *Sufi Heirs of the Prophet* (South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1996), 107.

25 Gillani, *Muraqqa' i- Multan*, 235.

accepted the offer and started serving the British Army. This was the start of Murad's career. When Punjab went under the command and control of the East India Company and Murad was appointed Peshkar of Shorkot on June 8, 1849. He was promoted to Teshildari in 1850 and served for thirteen years at different places.<sup>26</sup> His relations with the British flourished day by day and he managed his locales and posting stations in such good condition that his career was getting promotions. In 1864, Murad was promoted as Extra Assistant Commissioner and next year was appointed as Native Agent Bahawalpur State.<sup>27</sup>

Murad's sudden death on January 10, 1876 paved way for his son Syed Hassan Bakhsh Gardezi to the administrative apparatus as a reward for his father's loyalties towards the British. Hassan got numerous appointments like Member Municipal Committee Multan in 1882, Vice President of the Municipal, Honorary Judicial Magistrate in 1891 and promoted with power and duties in 1893 and received title of Khan Bahadur in 1899.<sup>28</sup> Hassan reached from Divisional Darbar to Provincial Darbar in 1905, only in two decades from his initial appointment. Hassan's loyalty was unquestionable like his father. He contributed 8000 rupees for the First World War fund to the British government. Madrassa Bab ulUlum of Multan,<sup>29</sup> a Shia seminary was established on five square acre (125 acres in measurement) donated land of Hassan Bakhsh.

Another example of local notables is of the Qureshis who were religious elites and their lineage started from Ghaus Baha ulHaqZakariaMultani. This lineage continued and many descendants became sajjadanashins (hereditary successor of sufi shrine or pir or custodian) of the holy shrine in Multan. During Sikh rule, many of the lands and

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26 Gillani, *Muraqqa' i- Multan*, 236.

27 Gillani, *Muraqqa' i- Multan*.

28 Gillani, *Muraqqa' i- Multan*, 241-42.

29 Justin Jones, *Shi'a Islam in Colonial India: Religion, Community and Sectarianism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 38. Also See Gillani, *Muraqqa' i- Multan*, 243.



associated properties of shrines were confiscated. In 1818, when Ranjit Singh occupied Multan, he fixed property of amounting 3,500 rupees annually for the shrine of Ghaus Baha ulHaqZakariaMultanibut DiwanSawan Mal paid 1,600 annually to the sajjadanashin.<sup>30</sup> In 1848-49 siege of Multan, Makhdoom Shah Mahmood, a descendant of Baha Uddin ZakariaMultani, supported the British against the Sikhs and as a reward he obtained 2,000 rupees and half of the land of the mauza (a type of administrative district, corresponding to a specific land area within which there may be one or more settlements) as personal gift of land grant.<sup>31</sup>

Makhdoom Shah Mehmood served the British government in 1857 war as well. He kept the Commissioner informed of all the developments and helped in recruitment of police force. Shah Mehmood himself stood in battle field with Colonel Hamilton. He rendered services for safety and security of the British camp and war equipment and weapons. In 1860, Makhdoom was granted BegiwalaBagh and as reward of war services eight *chahat* (land irrigated by wells) amounting 550 rupees and annual jagir of 1,780 rupees.<sup>32</sup> Makhdoom Shah Mehmood died in 1865; on his funeral day local government observed public holiday for paying homage and reverence by closing all local schools, offices and judicial courts. His son MakhdoomBahawal Bakhsh was coronated by Deputy Commissioner as next sajjadanashin. Bahawal Bakhsh was also one of the beneficiaries and got allocation of nine mauzas. In 1877, he was appointed Honourary Magistrate and Member of local Municipality. In 1880, he was rewarded with a robe of honour for rendering his services in Kabul war.<sup>33</sup>

Gilani Syeds were another elite group favoured and supported by the Raj. Gilanis trace their roots back to Imam Hassan (R.A), Hazrat Ali Murtaza (R.A) the fourth caliph of

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30 Gillani, *Muraqqa' i- Multan*, 251.

31 Gillani, *Muraqqa' i- Multan*, 251.

32 Gillani, *Muraqqa' i- Multan*, 252.

33 Gillani, *Muraqqa' i- Multan*, 252.

Islam. Many of the descendants of the Gilani's remained close and loyal associates of the British. One example from the Gilani's is of Haji Syed Muhammad Saddruud Din Shah who became sajjadanashin on the death of his father Makhdoom Syed Muhammad Ghous Salis (R.A) in 1878.<sup>34</sup> Syed Muhammad Saddruud Din Shah's name was entered in provincial *darbaris* (courtiers). He served district jail Multan for four years as honorary visitor. He was member of *Anjuman-i-Rausa*. He was invited to the coronation ceremony of Delhi Darbar in 1911 as religious head and landlord of the Punjab.<sup>35</sup> After Saddruud Din Shah, his son Haji Syed Ghulam Yasin being elder son became sajjadanashin. Ghulam Yasin also served in various positions like Honorary Magistrate from 1918 till 1922. From 1918 onwards, Ghulam Yasin remained unopposed member of Multan Municipal Committee and later on remained Vice President of the Committee.<sup>36</sup>

Multan administration, as in other districts of the Punjab, was also composed of Lambardars, Zaildars and Tehsildars to monitor the administrative structure. Minor elite groups were at the top of Muslim society like Syeds, Qureshis, Gillanis etc. Pathans and Balochs were from the warrior class and Syeds and Qureshis represented the religious elite. These groups held large areas of land which was granted, gifted by the British government for their loyal association and support during their rule. Out of 1,375,747 acres held by Muslims at the time of the second regular settlement of Multan (1874-1880), Syeds and Qureshis who comprised less than 5 percent of the Muslim population, controlled 213,548 acres which becomes 16 percent of total land and Pathans and Balochs, roughly 6 percent of the Muslim population, held 124,135 acres which was around 9 percent of land.<sup>37</sup>

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34 Gillani, *Muraqqa' i- Multan*, 292.

35 Gillani, *Muraqqa' i- Multan*, 292.

36 Gillani, *Muraqqa' i- Multan*, 296.

37 Himadri Banerjee, *Agrarian Society of the Punjab (1849-1901)* (New Delhi: Manohar, 1982), 28.

Multan's local power structure was fashioned by the British to have a close group of loyal local servants and associates for helping them conquer and later on rule the place smoothly. In this entire epoch, the religious elites turned landlords served the purposes and became influential with the passage of time.

Multan was multi-ethnic and multi-cultural city accommodating population of world leading religions by the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century. Multan, also, was a center of Sufi activities and leading shrines concentrated huge disciples. Furthermore, it is considered city of saints and pious people because numerous shrines of sufi saints like Muhammad Yousaf Gardezi, Sheikh Baha Uddin Zakariya, Sheikh Saddar Uddin Arif, Sheikh Rukun Uddin Fateh, Syed Musa Pak Shaheed, Shah Shams Sabzwari, Hafiz Muhammad Jamal Multani and Hafiz Ubaid Ullan Multani are in Multan city.<sup>38</sup> However, Hindus, Sikhs, Christians, Parsees and Jews were also found in Multan.

Hindus and Muslims were the major groups inhabiting Multan. However, Muslims not only formed a definite majority, but also increased their strength in number during first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century under the imperial administration. According to the population census of 1881, the population of the Muslims was 52.84 percent of the total population of Multan city and Hindus formed 43.63 percent of its total population. The population of Hindus decreased in terms of fraction, according to the census report of 1891 especially due to a minimum level conversion of Hindus to Christianity, therefore the population of Muslims increased in fractions in comparison with the Hindus. However, the Jew population seems to have migrated and no census evidence of existence of Jews after 1891 is available. Multani society was based on caste and clan system, having distinction of customs, traditions and rituals. Major number of castes and clans had equal following of Islam and Hinduism.

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38 Abdul Haq, *Multan*, 30-31.

### **Multan towards Urban Development under the Raj**

After the annexation, Lord Dalhousie put the Punjab province under a Board of Administration. The settlement of land, assessment of land revenue, adjudication of rights and interests and registration of tenures were conducted by the Board with admirable efficiency. The Board was abolished in 1853 and its power vested in a Chief Commissioner.<sup>39</sup> Initially, in the Punjab, the land revenue was collected from an estate as a whole and prevalent system of assessment and revenue collection was followed. This was called Mahalwari system, however it was changed with the passage of time. The state authorities then went to the Rayiat, in which they started collecting the revenue from cultivators directly.

The British introduced a land settlement to maximize the land revenue. This process by which the government officials use to determine the land revenue, payable, was called the settlement of land revenue. Commercialisation of agriculture was the outcome of development of transportation. The new means of communication like railways and roads resulted in faster movement of various agricultural commodities at cheaper rates. British policy to increase cultivated area and land revenue led to an extensive program of canals and colonization in the Western Punjab. The network of canals and irrigation system of subcontinent increased ratio of production and radical changes in crop patterns under the British policies. Few indicators of urban development of Multan which help us to have a look at the growth of population, increasing means of production due to more influx of migrants, new facilities like roads and railways helping the city to be more central and focal to the mainstream trade and business.

### **Migration**

Societies are transformed by conquest or peaceful migration. Migration often happens for searching bread and butter, for

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39 James Douie, *The Punjab, NWFP and Kashmir* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1916), 188-89.

peaceful homeland, for better settlement etc. The migrant communities assimilate themselves with existing norms, customs, culture and practices. Multan being centre of agricultural development, trade route and commerce centre in addition to a religious city attracted a huge influx of population as migrants. The migration took place because of few factors including but not limited to agrarian development, allotment of land by the British, irrigation system and canal colony structures. Population rise of Multan can be seen through this table which can help us in understanding growth of city.<sup>40</sup>

**Table 8: POPULATION OF MULTAN OVER THE DECADES**

District	Population in 1881	Population in 1891	Population in 1901	Population in 1911	Population in 1941
Multan	556,557	635,726	710,626	814,871	14,84,333

SOURCE: Punjab District Gazetteers, Volume XXXIII B. *Multan District, Statistical Tables*, xii.

### Roads and Railways

Roads are also part of effective communication but the British invested too little in the construction and maintenance of roads, so most fell into disrepair within a few years and became impassable.<sup>41</sup> The only exception to this rule was the Grand Trunk Road which was once stretched from Kabul to Dhaka. The British rebuilt this between 1833 and 1855 and made it navigable for faster horse teams.<sup>42</sup> After the Great Rebellion, the initial plans were made for the operation of state road system as 'imperial roads' to join British India at district and regional level with already emerging railway network which was to open up the subcontinent.

Roads in Multan were initially not metaled but with the passage of time this development took place. The unmetaled roads were also in fairly good condition. The major

40 Punjab District Gazetteers, Volume XXXIII B. *Multan District, Statistical Tables*, 1913 (Lahore: The Civil and Military Gazette Press, 1913), xii.

41 Michael Mann, *South Asia's Modern History: Thematic Perspectives* (London: Routledge, 2014), 347.

42 Mann, *South Asia's Modern History*, 347.

roads were; the old road from Multan to Lahore which was running parallel to the railway, the road from Multan to Lodhran and Bahawalpur which lay to the East of Indus Valley Rail Line and the Old Customs Road coming from Pakpattan and the Montgomery district was going towards Mailsi and Lodhran.<sup>43</sup> Another good road leaves Lahore Road at Tulamba and runs around the district passing through Serai Sidhu, Multan and Shujabad and finally crossing the Sutlej into Bahawalpur. Besides these main roads, there are cross roads from Multan to Luddan and Mailsi and to Kahrora via Duniapur.<sup>44</sup> The development of roads provided Multan a chance to connect to nearby cities, markets, and trade centers.

Railways also played a vital role in the political and economic development and integration of colonial Indian empire. The introduction of railways, which is one of the legacies of British rule in India caused a remarkable increase in the communication between different parts of Indian subcontinent but also brought about profound changes in the habits and outlook of society.

The British capitalists invested their capital for the construction of railways in India. The British introduction of railways to India had multi-pronged interests and reasons behind it. The first and foremost interest was of commercial nature and India was going to serve the British factories' raw material and eventually better transportation and communication would serve a good selling market for the British finished goods all over India. The second motive of construction of railways was frequent and hassle free movements of troops throughout India. The British military motives in addition to the establishment of cantonment cities and later on connecting them to rail network was need of the hour. Last but not the least was political interest of the British in introducing railways was maintenance of efficient political

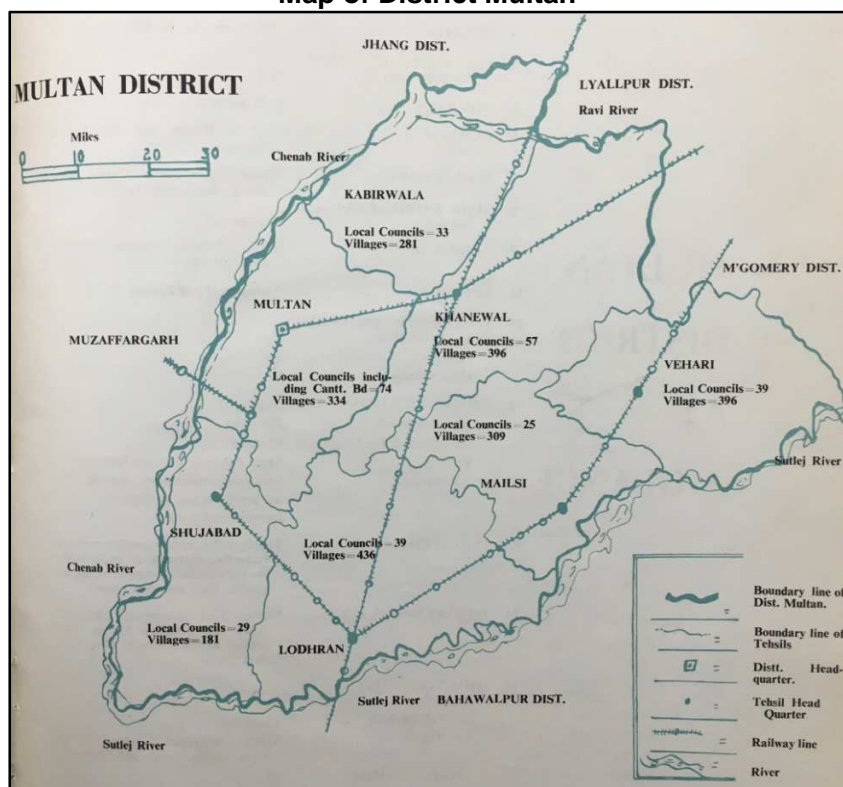
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43 Charles A. Roe, *Report on the Revised Settlement of the Multan District of the Punjab, 1873-1880* (Lahore: W. Balls, 1883), 32.

44 Roe, *Report on the Revised Settlement of the Multan District of the Punjab*, 33.

administration throughout India for peaceful and tranquil maintenance of law and order.

### Map of District Multan



SOURCE: *Multan: Past and Present* (Karachi: Finance and Industry Publication, 1968).

After annexation of the Punjab, the British were anxious to connect the region with rest of India. Different companies were created under single administrative control for this purpose namely; the Sindh Railway Company, the Indus Flotilla Company, the Punjab Railway Company and the Delhi Railway Company to connect all major economic cities and hubs through railways.

**Multan-Lahore-Amritsar Line:** The colonial government allowed in 1856 a survey of constructing a railway line from Multan to Lahore and Amritsar. The Punjab Railway



Company was separately established for this purpose. The work on the line started in 1859.<sup>45</sup>

**Lahore-Multan Line:** The construction of this line was started at Sher Shah on Chenab River to the city of Multan. The initial 11 miles long line was opened in 1863 for carriage of goods for construction and finally this line was made functional in 1865.

**Multan-Kotri Line:** This line stayed in different debates until in 1878 when it was completed. The basic purpose of connecting Multan with Kotri was providing a viable connection between Karachi Port, Lahore, Delhi and Amritsar. But River Indus and its delta changes were a constant hurdle in its completion. The line was built on the left bank of the Indus. Multan's railway line and station served as one connection for the development and socio-economic change of the city. The nature and course of trade changed once the railway station was made operational and in the year 1896 and 1897 Multan district railway station had record imports and exports transported.

**Table 9: IMPORTS AND EXPORTS OF VARIOUS ARTICLES VIA MULTAN DISTRICT RAILWAY STATION IN 1896-97 (IN MAUNDS)**

Articles	Imports	Exports	Articles	Imports	Exports
<b>Cotton seed</b>	280	137,021	Salt	19,164	291
<b>Cotton loose</b>	31,272	16,500	Kerosene oil	9,088	66
<b>Cotton press</b>	475	168,102	Common oil	5,802	424
<b>Wool raw</b>	40,170	19,799	Dried fruit	16,297	11,484
<b>Gunny-bags</b>	17,176	14,468	Fresh fruits	136	3,260
<b>Edible grain</b>	1,92,288	136,364	Bones	489	8,743
<b>Wheat</b>	98,690	414,962	Hides, Skin	2,006	25,383
<b>Rice</b>	37,654	2,733	Iron	27,788	1,228

45 Edward Davidson, *The Railways of India: With an Account of their Rise, Progress, and Construction* (London: E. & F. N. Spon, 48 Charing Cross, 1868), 311.

Articles	Imports	Exports	Articles	Imports	Exports
<b>Oil seeds</b>	27,266	796	Piece goods	26,101	---
<b>Sugar refine</b>	58,600	610	P G Indian	7,098	270
<b>Gur</b>	130,210	7,143	Multanimitti	552	---
<b>Ghee</b>	15,074	682	Sajji	260	2,876

SOURCE: Report on the Internal Trade of the Punjab by Rail and River for the Year (1895-96), Lahore: 1896, Multan Statement No.3 and Report on the Internal Trade of the Punjab by Rail and River for the Year (1896-97), Lahore: 1897, 1-30.

The introduction of railway brought changes in fares, profit and revenue trends throughout India. Railway also enhanced the capacity of commuting goods, individuals, commodities and import and export at a large scale. Multan was also one of the hubs for trade and commerce activities. The colonial state ownership of the railways took many advantages of it. The performance of Indian railway was quite different before and after 1920. There was trend to higher output, productivity and profits between 1850 and 1919 when the traffic flow was not on much higher scale but 1920s onwards this profit started decreasing and the local trade was only operational because the freight charges and taxes levied on import and export discouraged the foreign business in colonial India.<sup>46</sup> In terms of economy, railway played a major role in integrating markets and increasing trade. Domestic and international economic trends further shaped the pace of railway construction and the demand for the important traffic flows to the ports. In terms of politics, railways shaped the finances of the colonial government and the Princely States. Lastly, railways increased national income and integrated the Indian markets.

### Education

The education system was supported and strengthened by the British in Multan. There had been a missionary presence in the Punjab well before 1860 and educational projects and

46 Dan Bogart and Latika Chaudhary, *Railways in Colonial India: An Economic Achievement?* (May 1, 2012), 23-24. Available at SSRN: <http://ssrn.com/abstract=2073256> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2073256>

Muslim educational setup was also flourishing. The evangelical Church Missionary Society (CMS) had a presence in Amritsar since 1851.<sup>47</sup> CMS later established schools in Peshawar (1854), Multan (1856), Dera Ismail Khan (1862) and Bannu (1865). The missions were committed to girl's education in this period. Mrs Annie Briggs pursued proselytising curriculum in the small CMS female school in Multan. The curriculum included the translations of scriptures, lessons in cleanliness and the singing of hymns etc.<sup>48</sup>

Multan's first madrasa was established in the 7<sup>th</sup> century by Muhammad Bin Qasim.<sup>49</sup> Besides, Sheikh Baha Uddin Zakariya also established a madrasa in Multan fort where Maulana Ala'u Din, Allama Abdul Qadir, Maulana Muhammad Idrees, Maulana Imam Bakhsh and Moulana Allm Din use to teach Fiqh, Quran, Hadith, Tafseer and logic to the students coming from different areas.<sup>50</sup> Nasir Uddin Qabacha established a madrasa which was run by Allama Kashani.<sup>51</sup>

While looking on the major Indian scale, Multan was much ignored and there were four middle, 36 primary schools and one lower school existed.<sup>52</sup> In the Middle schools, English was taught with vernacular, Persian and Urdu both were taught in Primary schools education which was totally in vernacular. The town schools were normally attended by Hindus and village schools by all classes. The Table 10 shows the schools strength in Multan.<sup>53</sup>

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47 *Punjab Gazetteer Multan 1883-4* (Calcutta: Government Printing Office, 1885), 120-21.

48 Mrs Briggs to Mr. Fenn, May 1, 1878, CI 1/O/54/1-2, CI 1/O/54/6.

49 Mahar Abdul Haq, *Multan*, 33.

50 Abdul Haq, *Multan*, 33.

51 Abdul Haq, *Multan*, 34.

52 Roe, *Report on the Revised Settlement of the Multan District of the Punjab*, 35.

53 Roe, *Report on the Revised Settlement of the Multan District of the Punjab*, 36.

**Table 10: SCHOOLS AND STUDENTS STRENGTH IN DISTRICT MULTAN IN 1883**

School Description	No. of Schools	Hindus	Mohamedans	Others	Total
Middle	4	337	124	3	464
Primary	36	460	1,038	—	1,498
Average	—	13	29	—	42
Lower	1	270	113	3	386
<b>Total</b>	41	1,067	1,275	6	2,348

SOURCE: Roe, *Report on the Revised Settlement of the Multan District of the Punjab*, 36.

Syed Sadarud Din in 1944 under the influence of Maulana Syed Ahmad Saeed Kazmi Amrohvi established a madrasa.<sup>54</sup> This madrasa was initially patronised by Munshi Allah Baksh. Madrasa KhairulMa'ad was established by Maulana Hamid Ali Khan in Rohtak and he served this madrasa in Rohtak till 1959 and then he established it in Multan at Churi Sarai.<sup>55</sup> Madrasa MazhrulUloom is opposite to AamKhasBagh Multan and established by Mulana Muhammad Sharif. JamiaArbiaTaleemullbrar is situated at Khaniwal road Multan. It was established in 1945 by Syed Mubarak Shah Baghdadi.<sup>56</sup> Besides these madrasas, there were few more like: Madrasa Anwar ullbrar at Aurangzeb road, Madrasa Rumia in Pakdaman graveyard, and Madrasa Rizvia Anwar ul Quran in KalyMandi. In 1947, such feasible and conducive environment was already prevailing with the available madrasas in which KhairulMadaris of Jalandhar was welcomed and re-established in Multan.

54 Roe, *Report on the Revised Settlement of the Multan District of the Punjab*, 36.

55 Roe, *Report on the Revised Settlement of the Multan District of the Punjab*, 374.

56 Roe, *Report on the Revised Settlement of the Multan District of the Punjab*, 374.

### **Multan's Growing Wealth through Revenue and Tax Collection**

Multan's growth as third major agricultural city of the Punjab after Amritsar and Delhi and leaving Lahore behind its economic growth by the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century was showing city's stature as a leading hub of economy. Revenue is considered as backbone of any system, government, authority and administration in the world history. Multan being the center of agricultural suburbs and major beneficiary of canal colony developments got attention of the British rulers for revenue and tax collection. The system of land revenue assessment was almost same as it was prevailing before annexation. The government used to collect taxes or one can call the *mahsul* in cash or in kind. The colonial practice and method of assessment were following: Jinsi, nakdijinsi, zabti and karari.<sup>57</sup> When Punjab came under the political control of the British government, Multan was provided with fix cash assessment. The first settlement was sanctioned in 1849 and was commonly known as the Charsala, based on average collection of previous four years.<sup>58</sup> The second settlement was carried out by Major Hamilton in 1853 for Shujabad and Lodhran and later, in 1854 by his successor Mr. H. B. Henderson for other tehsils.

After these experimental settlements, the British government decided to carry out regular settlement with an idea for implementing them for longer period with better income. Three regular settlements were introduced for period of ten years each. First settlement was undertaken by Sir John Morris in between 1857 and 1860.<sup>59</sup> No review was carried out of first settlement till 1873. The second regular settlement was carried out by Sir Charles Roe in 1873.<sup>60</sup> The

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57 E.D. Maclagan, *Gazetteer of the Multan District 1901-02* (Lahore: Civil and Military Gazette Press, 1902), 291.

58 Maclagan, *Gazetteer of the Multan District 1901-02*, 295.

59 Maclagan, *Gazetteer of the Multan District 1901-02*, 296.

60 Maclagan, *Gazetteer of the Multan District 1901-02*, 297.

third and last settlement was carried out in 1896.<sup>61</sup> The Table 11 shows the assessment of all settlements.

**Table 11: ASSESSMENT OF SETTLEMENTS IN MULTAN**

Sr. No.	Settlement	Estimated increase in Cultivation	Assessed Land Revenue	Increase or decrease in Land Revenue
1.	First Summary Settlement, 1849	N/A	Rs. 5,94,151	N/A
2.	Second Summary Settlement, 1854	N/A	Rs. 5,87,835	-1 percent
3.	First Regular Settlement, 1858	N/A	Rs. 4,85,835	-18 percent
4.	Second Regular Settlement, 1880	16 percent	Rs. 6,85,016	+41 percent
5.	Third Regular Settlement, 1901	33 percent	Rs. 13,39,844	+30 percent

SOURCE: Maclagan, *Gazetteer of the Multan District 1901-02*, 298.

Multan was one of the leading districts in tax collection and contribution towards the Punjab province. Income tax was assessed and collected by revenue department and Mr. Parker was deputed for tax assessment and collection in 1888.<sup>62</sup> In Mr. Parker's assessment the year wise income tax of Multan city and cantonment was assessed per individual which was following:

**Table 12: YEAR WISE INCOME TAX OF MULTAN CITY**

Sr. No.	Year	Number of Assesseees	Amount of Tax in Rs.
1.	1886-87	1,384	26,749
2.	1887-88	1,387	26,892
3.	1888-89	1,566	26,613
4.	1889-90	1,829	36,018
5.	1890-91	1,976	38,175
6.	1891-92	1,984	38,968
7.	1892-93	1,937	38,828
8.	1893-94	1,991	40,447
9.	1894-95	1,979	40,975

SOURCE: *Report on the Income Tax Administration, Punjab, 1891-92, 18 and Report on the Income Tax Administration, Punjab, 1894-95*. (Lahore: The Civil and Military Gazette Press, 1895, 19). V/24/1762.

61 Maclagan, *Gazetteer of the Multan District 1901-02*, 298.

62 *Report on the Income Tax Administration, Punjab, 1891-92* (Lahore: The Civil and Military Gazette Press, 1892, 9). V/24/1762.

Mr. Parker's assessment and estimate of income tax was increasing with each passing year and this popular growth in the tax collection, assessment proved that Multan was leading city in terms of wealth. In next ten years from 1895 till 1905, the tax collection rose to 42,891 after the assessment procedure which was carried out by the revenue department on individual assessees.<sup>63</sup> Each passing year was having rise in the collection and assessment which was a key indicator and measure showing Multan's growth and prosperity. In year 1911-12, the 1,050 assessees paid 50,717 rupees as tax in Multan.<sup>64</sup>

### **Conclusion**

Multan flourished as social and economic hub under the command and control of the British government since its annexation in 1849. Multan's agricultural, social, cultural and economic life has been considered among the top contributing cities of the Punjab since it came under the British rule. The advancement and introduction of technology like railways, roads, irrigation and revenue collection raised Multan's stature as social and economic centre in the colonial times. The British Raj left impressions of successful administration in addition to irrigation, canals, roads, bridges, schools and railways at the time of partition of India.

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63 *Report on the Income Tax Administration, Punjab, 1905-06* (Lahore: The Civil and Military Gazette Press, 1906, v). V/24/1762.

64 *Report on the Income Tax Administration of the Punjab, 1911-12* (Lahore: Punjab Government Press, 1912, iv-v). V/24/1762.