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From Kotli to Mandi Town: The Historical Transformation and Colonization of Nankana Sahib

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Abstract
This study examines the historical evolution and urban transformation of Nankana Sahib from a small village originally known as **"**Kotli**"** to "Rai Pur" and later "Rai Bhoi ki Talwandi" into a thriving city, religious hub, and key Mandi Town. The text details the region's initial development under Sikh rule, highlighted by Maharaja Ranjit Singh's construction of seven sacred Gurdwaras—including Gurdwara Janamasthan—and his extensive land grants to religious estates. It explores the region's socio-political dynamics, including anti-colonial resistance led by Rai Ahmad Khan Kharal during the War of Independence in 1857, and the subsequent consolidation of British authority through the Zaildari system and local landlord collaboration. Furthermore, the study analyzes the modernizing impacts of British missionary settlements, the introduction of the Lower Chenab Canal system, Sir Ganga Ram's agricultural innovations, and the 1911 connection to the Lahore–Shorkot railway line. These infrastructural advances shifted economic and trade dominance away from older centers like Syedwala toward newly emerging market towns like Nankana Sahib and Warburton, ultimately fostering industrial growth, commercial migration, and religious tourism.

Keywords: Nankana Sahib, Maharaja Ranjit Singh, Gurdwara Janamasthan, Rai Ahmad Khan Kharal, Canal Colonization, Lower Chenab Canal, Zaildari System, Mandi Town, Lahore–Shorkot Railway Line, Sir Ganga Ram.

Introduction

Nankana Sahib, historically known as**"**Kotli" to "Rai Pur" and later "Rai Bhoi ki Talwandi," holds a unique position in the socio-economic and religious history of the Punjab region. Originally a small village situated within the dense forests of the Sandal Bar, the area underwent a multi-stage historical transformation that elevated its status into a major city, a crucial Mandi Town, and the primary spiritual hub for Sikhism. This study examines the foundational shift of Nankana Sahib across the Sikh and British colonial eras. It explores how religious patronage under Maharaja Ranjit Singh laid the groundwork for the city's spiritual and cultural importance through the construction of seven historical Gurdwaras and extensive land grants. Furthermore, it investigates the subsequent period of British administration, analyzing anti-colonial resistance during the 1857 War of Independence, the consolidation of local power via the Zaildari system, and the transformative impact of missionary activities, canal colonization, railway network expansion, and industrial growth. Together, these historical dynamics reshaped the socio-political and economic landscape of the region, shifting regional trade hubs and cementing Nankana Sahib's role as a major center for commerce and religious pilgrimage

This paper focuses on origin and historical back ground of tehsil Nankana Sahib; its transformation from a small village into a city, allocation of Jagirs in Sikh period and British missionaries' activities in Nankana. It further seeks into the collaboration of local landlords with the British, canal colonization in Nankana and its impacts, laying of railway lines: Nankana connected to Lahore—Shorkot line and its impact, development of Nankana as Mandi Town and growth of business activities. This period had observed the shift of the status of Nankana Sahib from a small village into a city. That up gradation had brought all fruits of development and prosperity which are enjoyed by a city.

From a Small Village to City

The ancient name of Nankana Sahib wasduring pre-historic times, when Kurusand Pandvas fought the battle of Kurukshetra,One Raja Varat of Multan had set up an inhabitation of the name of Kotli at this place.[i] Later on, it became *"Rai Pur"*[ii]. *"Rai"* is a title of different clans of Rajpot, both Kharal and Bhatti families of Nankana Sahib use this title before their names. Kharals are the nativesand major caste of Sandal Bar: "a very large forested swathe between the rivers Ravi and Chenab that starts from Sheikhpura and goes down to Jhang/Shorkot".[iii]Later the old name Kotli changed to Rai Pur and later was changed with Talwandi which was popularly known as Rai Bhoi ki Talwandi.[iv] Rai Bhoi Khan Bhatti lived in *"Rana Mal"* village near Multan during Sultan BahlolLodhi's era (1412-1426). Sultan BahlolLodhi allotted eighteen hundred squares of land to RaiBhoi Khan Bhatti at *Rai Pur*. Rai Bhoi Khan Bhatti alongwith his family migrated from his native town to *Rai Pur* and permanently settled there, so the old name of the region was changed and popularisedas*"RaiBhoi ki Talwandi"* after it.[v] Later Rai Bular Khan Bhatti[vi] the son of Rai Bhoi Khan Bhatti replaced the name which was on his father's name with Nankana Sahib due to his affinity with Baba Guru Nanak. The name of Nankana Sahib is after the name of Baba Guru Nanak (1469-1539) who was the founder of Sikh Religion and was also born there. Nankana Sahib is considered to be as the Vatican City for Sikhs.

Allocation of Jagirs in Sikh Period

Nankana Sahib took many years for its transformation from a small village into a small city. Maharaja Ranjeet Singh's role (13 November 1780-27 June 1839) was prominent in this regard. Nankana Sahib was a small village before Sikh regime. Maharaja Ranjeet Singh was the ruler of Punjab and ruled for forty years from 1799 to 1839.He was a devoted follower of Baba Guru Nanak, so he built Gurdwaras[vii] at Nankana Sahib on all the places which were related or affiliated to Baba Guru Nanak's life. He also made a rich grant of 17,654[viii] acres of land to the Gurdwaras at Nankana Sahib. He devoted lands to Gurdwaras for smooth functioning by following dominant trend of sub-continent for granting land to religious places.

He visited sacred land at the last day of his five days stay at Syedwala fort[ix] in 1830 and went to"KaaloKotha"which was constructed by Baba Dharam G who was Baba Guru Nanak's grandson, popularly called as "Nanakiyan"(Now Gurudwara Janamasthan) for performing religious rituals.[x] He constructed all seven Gurdwaras during his regime including Gurdwara Janamasthan (Holy of the Hollies[xi])where Baba Guru Nanak was born, *"*Baal Leela*"* where he played, "Patti Sahib*"* where he studied, "Tanbu Sahib*"* where he took shelter under a tree like Tanbu when he came from Sachaa Sooda, "ChhevinPadshahi*"* when 6th guru visited Gurdwara Janamasthan, "Maal ji Sahib*"* where he used to graze cattles and "Kayara Saab*"* where a miracle is related to Baba Guru Nanak about destruction of paddy crop by his cattles. According to a tradition, the owner of the crop rushed to Rai Bular Khan Bhatti and complained whose act. Rai Bular told his father the whole matter. His father called him and asked about it. He denied all that and offered them to see the crop lively.They wereastonished to see paddy crop in the same position before complaint.Maharaja Ranjeet Singh visited Nankana Sahib three times in 1830, 1836and 1838 for inspection purposes during the construction of Gurdwaras.[xii]

Those religious monuments increased the importance of Nankana Sahib among Sikhs and business classes and provided as a base for cultural activities related to Sikhism among locals.All pilgrims visited all the seven Gurdwaras on their visit to Nankana Sahib.They started celebrating many events including Baba Guru Nanak's birthday in November and celebration of Bisakhi in April. Artisans, magicians and shopkeepers came to Nankana Sahib on such occasions (festivals) and they displayed or sold their items every year. Both events became very popular for their religious, cultural value and the events because a source of business also.

Worship, food and accommodation are basic needs of common man and Gurdwara gives guaranteeof all these three things to them. These developments opened the doors for business communities and seekers of new path which condemns the existing paths in Nankana Sahib. BesidesGurdwaras, the other factors which contributed in the development of the region and in the expansion of the population included migration towards this area. The colonists or new settlers from Gujranwala and other adjacent districtsstarted to migrate to Nankana Sahib on religious grounds at very small level. For instance during the Sikh regime in Punjab, Sikh rulers increased atrocities against Muslims and compelled them for migration to adjoining forests.[xiii]

According to an argument by Illyas Chatta

> *"During the Sikh ascendancy in Gujranwala several leading figures of theMuslim tribes were killed and their possessions were looted and confiscated. ManyMuslim families took refuge in the nearby jungles and Bellas (forests). For years theyoffered a 'guerrilla resistance' to the Sikh regime. When the power of the SikhKingdom was broken in the Second Sikh War, and the Punjab was annexed in 1849by the British, they returned and were restored to most of their old possessions".*[xiv]

There is great possibility that the people from Gujranwala had taken refuge in the forest of Nankana Sahib.Nankana Sahib was a dense forest all around at that time. Maharaja Ranjeet Singh was highly interested in the quick advancement of his guru's birth place and also distributed Jagirs among his loyalists in and around Nankana Sahib for the advancement of his guru's birth place.For instanceMaharaja had given fifteen thousand acres land to his Kaamdar ChaudryUmer Virk as a gift who belonged to Virk family from AkaalGarh district Gujranwala. Ch Umer was Kaamdar of Maharaja Ranjeet Singh.He was posted at FeroozWatto'an and the Maharaja gifted him fifteen thousand hector of land; as Jagir for his services[xv].Another Jagir named "Jogey ki Jagir" was given as a grantto PirMakdoom Syed NouBahaar Shah Bokhari of "JogeyKot NouBahaar" by Maharaja Ranjeet Singh in 1837, that was spread from JogeyKotNouBahaar to Hanjerwal. Maharaja was greatly impressed by PirMakdoom Syed NouBahaar Shah Bokhari for his piousness and friendship.[xvi]. Later, British government occupied all the Jagirs by subsidiary system and doctrine of lapse and distributed among their loyalists. British army defeated Maha Raja Ranjeet Singh's successors in 1849 when they took over the complete charge of the Punjab. The British government constructed foremost Thana Mangtanwala[xvii] in the area for keeping tight check on natives.

War of Independence 1857

During the war of independence 1857, the northern area of Nankana Sahib named Syedwala[xviii](Hindus and Muslims were lived in Syedwala). There were two dominating and respectable classes of old Syedwala which were Brahman and Saadat) then tehsil of districtGogera, Syedwala itself remained as district till 1853, became popular because of the son of soil and freedom fighter Rai Ahmad Khan Kharal[xix].He was born at village Jhamara,TehsilJharanwala District Faisalabad which is few miles away from Syedwala.People of Syedwala first supported Rai Ahmad Khan Kharal in the movement of war of independence 1857.[xx]

On his return during war of independence, after attacking on the enemies at Montgomery, Depalpur and Okara,he took shelter in the watchtower of Bucheki fort.[xxi]There were four watch towers surrounded by Buchekifort for security purposes but currently only one remained.The people of Menhais biraderi[xxii] protected him in every way at Bucheki. The second place of refuge for Rai Ahmad Khan Kharal was village Piddipur now known as Waseerpur. It is one kilometer away from village Kot Rai Ameer Ali[xxiii] and six kilometers from Nankana city to the east of Mangtanwala[xxiv] road when he felt insecurity from his enemies at Bucheki.[xxv] There he was hosted by Malik Bahawal Khan Waseer, and the third place to seek refuge was the Kharal in the village of Kulchpur, located ten kilometers away on Mangtanwala road.[xxvi]The British forces faced a lot of difficulties whilechasing Rai Ahmad Khan Kharalin the dense forest of Nankana Sahib. They came to know the involutions of thick forest of Sandal bardduring searching and travelling. This battle between the forces of Rai Ahmad Khan Kharal and British forces continued for several months. The British forces received toughest time from Rai Ahmad Khan Kharal and his allies in that war. Rai Ahmad Khan Kharal's soldiers fought War of Independence gallantry against British forces. He was killed on September 21, 1857 by British Forceswhile he was offering his prayer and became martyr. His campanions avenged their leader's death by killing the British officerSir George Henry Frederick Berkeley on September25,1857.[xxvii]

Commander of British army Johnson in his war dairy 1857 wrote that people who could fight with hatchets and rods against trained British army continuously for three months,so they could devastate the government any time.He advised that snatched all kinds of privileges from them so that they would lose their feelings of humanity and could not dare to fight against British forces.[xxviii]Due to that factor British government stopped all privileges to Syedwala which was being famous industrial and trading centre at that time.[xxix]

Collaboration of Local Landlords with the British

In 1858, the British government took over the charge of India from East India Company and appointed her first Governor General Charles John Canning (1812-1862) known as The Viscount Canning. The British regime started with new innovations including railway, canal and postal system in India. This development transformed Indian society at mass level. Nankana Sahib had also been passed through that transformation. A contract between forest department and north-west railway of Indiaplayed pivotal role in converting forest into fields and created space for new settlement at Nankana Sahib.

A contract between forest department and north-west railway of India in 1889-90 was signed. The forest department provided dry wood at a large scale to railway department every year. The forest department cleared one thousand two hundred and sixty two acres forest for using in laying of lines and fuel purposeof railway.The forest department provided two lacks eighteen thousands and four hundreds cubic feet wood to Railway during 1891-95.[xxx]This contract opened new horizon for new settlers in the dense jungle of Nankana Sahib.New settlements started in the last decade of nineteenth century when British Government allotted 2140 acres land to Agha/Qazalbash family.This family founded the village ChakHaiderabad. Agha Haider Ali Khan's role was decisive in establishment of a new village[xxxi]. That was the beginning of new settlements in area of Syedwala.

The British government adopted a policy to get the support of native land lords who were very popular among masses by their character and respect by offering perks including lands and titles in response of providing secret reports of locals to the British authorities.The British government strengthened the position of a Zaildar by givingpower of honorary magistrate to him. The British government gave the titles including of Zaildar, Raibahadur, Khanbahadur, Safadposh, Abadkar, Capitalist or Sarmayadar. to prominent landlords, according to their classification. Those who were courtiers or beneficiaries of the British government from 1890 to the end of the second World War included Rai Hussain Khan Bhatti of Kot Hussain. He received the title of Khan

Bahadur[xxxii] for his loyalitiesto the British government especially during first and second world wars in Nankana Sahib area. The second son of Bhatti clan was Rai Essa Khan bhatti of Thatha Essa who was Zaildar in Thatha Essa Zail[xxxiii]and after his death his grandson Rai Ahmad Khan Bhatti became new Zaildar,he played a notorious role for BawaNarain Das after Saka Nankana because he went to Mangtanwala and informed senior superintendent of police Gujaranwala about the incident.[xxxiv]

Zaildar Rai DaaimKhan Kharal from Miranpur was the successor of Rai Umer Khan Kharal who was the first Zaildar inMiranpurZail. It was included in Warburton circle which was divided into two Zails including Machrala and Miranpur.After the death of Rai Umer Khan Kharal, Rai Laal Khan Kharal of Jhangharh Laal became new Zaildar by his diplomacy with British authorities. He informed the authority about the death news of Rai Umer Khan Kharal and claimed himself as a brother of Zaildar but in reality he was just relative of him. Later Rai Daaim Khan Kharal snatched the legacy of his father from Rai Laal Khan with the support of Asad Ullah Khan of Kanjwani district Faisalabad.[xxxv]He did not endorse the British policies whole heartedly He denied to send his men to participate in WW1 (1914-1918)on the demand of the British government and submitted his resign from zaildari,[xxxvi] After his resignation MiranpurZail was further divided into two Zaildars including Muhammad Hussain Hoyeke of HoyekeVirkan and RaiSarblund Khan KharalS/O Rai Baig Khan Kharal of Perhiwala.[xxxvii]Mahr Safeer Gill from Chachke Gill was a Zaildar and did the same job like RaiDaaim Khan Kharal from Miranpur in Second World War (1939-1945) so, the British government sacked him from Zaildari and appointed Pir Syed Arif Hussain Shah of JogeyKotNoubahar on his place as a new Zaildar in Dhoka Mandi (new name Mandi Faizabad) area.AghaWalyat Ali Khan from ChakHaiderabad was also a zaildar.He was exempted from arms licence.[xxxviii] After the death of Agha Walyat Ali Khan, his son Agha Muhammad Sharif Qazalbash became new zaildar of his domain in Syedwala belt. Another Zaildar from the same belt was Rai Amir Khan Kharal of Mahrpur in MahrpurZail and after his death his son Rai Abdul Razzaq Khan Kharal remained Zaildar.[xxxix] Karam Dad Maan of Machrala became zaildar inMachralaZail. After him Ghulam Muhammad Maan from Bahawalkot sent his relatives in second world war named IllyasMaan of Allawalkot, and Bashir Maanand Ashiq Maanof Machrala along with other men of other castes including Muhammad Sharif Ansari of Allawalkot on the call of British Government. He received the title of Zaildar by the British Government in Warburton circle.[xl]Mahr Hakim Din Padhar of Natha became the first Zaildar in Thana Mangatanwala. After his death his son Mahr Noor Ahmad Padhar became successor.[xli]Sardar Kahan Singh of Chak No. 19(Saini Bar) became first Zaildar from Sikh community in ChakokZail.Heremained Zaildar till partition. He built a primary school at Saini Bar in 1916.He was very influential person among Sikh community at that time especially in Chakoks.[xlii]

Every zaildar had the power of honorary magistrate and a sub-jail under his jurisdiction. The British government established good relationship with almost all prominent biraderi heads and landlords by giving the designation of zaildar.After establishing zaildari system the British government was enjoying honeymoon period because of zero resistance from any corner at large level.The British government laterplanned introducing new inventions inclusive of railway and canal system in Nankana Sahib for material gains and for spread of Chirstianty.

British Missionaries Activities in Nankana Sahib

By the time British colonial authorities had perpetuated as administratively, missionaries also started their proselytizing in Nankana Sahib. The two other new village settlements were Youngsonabad and Martinpur, built 8km away from Nankana city to the North-West of Nankana –Shahkot road, under the British settlement plan of 1890.There were two main factors behind establishment of these two villages. First reason was to cut the jungle and prepare land for agriculture purposes and second one was to promote Christianity in Nankana Sahib. Seventy two

settler families came to Nankana Sahib in 1899 from district Gujaranwala,Gurdaspur and Sailkot and laid the foundation of both villages[xliii] for the promotion of Christianity but were not successful at large level.

Canal Colonization in Nankana Sahib and its Impacts

Canal and Railway systems both played significant role in the new settlement of Nankana Sahib. The progress of Chenab Colony formulated a new height in canal colonization in the agrarian history of the Punjab as well as Nankana Sahib. The period of Chenab Colonization was divided into two phases. The first phase started in 1892 and continued to 1905 and second phase from 1926 to 1930. The lower Chenab Canal of Rechna DoabGugera branch passed through districts including Gujranwala, Jhang, Lyallpur, and Sheikhpura[xliv]. The total cost of construction was Rs 53,072. Town of Warburton also emerged during British Raj.It was result of establishment or introduction of the British canal system. The Lower Chenab Canal passed over that dense forest in 1899 that played pivotal role in the colonization of Nankana Sahib and especially of town Warburton. Richard Warburton served as an inspector general Police posted at Patiala in united India. After his retirement British government recognized his services and allotted 750 acres land as reward at tehsil Sharakpur district Gujranwala.He was died on April 23, 1899[xlv].After his death Richard's family constructed a grand mansion (now Warburton high school)there. It was first construction in this area. They also brought servants and workers from other parts of India for establishing their farmhouse.It was one of the majorfactors in going acrosscanal from that jungle. These developments opened the doors for new settlers in Warburton[xlvi].

Sir Ganga Ram (1851-1927) was born at Mangtanwala Nankana Sahib. He was another son of soil who established the first Indian agricultural farmhouse where he used latest machinery for the first time in India at Gangapur which was 16 km away from Nankana Sahib to the West of Nankana –Jarhanwala road after his retirement in 1903.He was also founder of Gangapur village. He converted barren land into fertile land by using innovatory methods of irrigation. He carried water from the Lower Chenab Canal to his fields that seemed about to impossible because the level of his land was above the level of canal. After this miracle, his land became the most fertile land of the area. He also introduced tram for carrying luggage relating to agriculture and transporting for masses[xlvii].Sir Ganga Ram's agriculture farm became talk of the town in very short span of time due to its novelty and innovation across the country. It enhanced the popularity and motivated the masses to come and permanently settle there.

There were three categories of land grants in Chenab Colony, clear cut in both range and tenurial position inclusive of Peasant (Abadkar) ranged from a half square to two squares, Yeoman (Zamindar or Safadposh) from two to five squares, and Capitalist(Sarmayadar) from six to twenty squares. Police, Military, and above three kinds were allotted lands by the British Government. This was the largest project among the nine canal projects of the Punjab which allocated area of over two million acres.[xlviii] After the development of canal colonization, it boosted feudalism and caused further ruralisation of the economy in Nankana Sahib.[xlix]

Laying of Railway Lines

There was no proper infrastructure of communication at gross root level before British regime. They faced a lot of problems for exchanging goods from remote areas to markets or cities. Mostly raw material was available at remote centers. The British government filled this gap with railway system. The first train in the country had run between Roorkee and PiranKaliyar on December 22, 1851 temporarily to solve the then irrigation problems of farmers. Large quantity of clay was required which was available in PiranKaliyar area, 10 km away from Roorkee. British government started introducing railway system in Punjab soon after the war of independence 1857. The first railway line laid in Punjab was from Multan to Lahore and lateron wards to Amritsar and finally connected to Karachi-Kotri railway line which opened in 1861.There were

five main factors behind Lahore –Shorkot railway line connected to Nankana sahib including wood from dense forest, promotion of Christianity, Richard Warburton's farmhouse, Sir Ganga Ram's Farmhouse and gurdwaras. With that Nankana Sahib and Warburton emerged as new markets. Lahore –Shorkot railway line was laid in 1911.[l]Business opportunities and easy communication with big cities motivated the masses to migrate from remote areas to Nankana Sahib and Warburton.Barren lands of Nankana Sahib were brought under cultivation to a larger extent till the second decade of the 20th century.

Sir Micheal Francis O Dwyer (1864-1940) was lieutenant governor of the Punjabin united India from 1912 to 1919.He visited Nankana Sahib second time in 1917 and wrote about his visit. "The barren jungles had been transformed by the lower Chenab canal into a fertile plain of rich cultivation, the railway ran through it and brought in tens of thousands of Sikh pilgrims and from all the parts of the Punjab, a prosperous town and market had sprung up, the humble little shrine had become one of the largest and richest foundation in northern India. The offerings of the faithful the income of the revenues from lands had raised from a few hundreds of pounds to tens of thousands annually."

Development of Nankana as Mandi Town (1912—1921)

While passing through all above developments Nankana Sahib had become a Mandi Town from a small village in respect of population and business opportunities from 1800 to 1913.This part studies to shift economic interest from old market Syedwala to Nankana Sahib and Warburton. After passing through the railway line Lahore- Shorkotwhich was also connected to Nankana Sahib and Warburton, railway-favored towns emerged. Now trade moved from Syedwala to new towns because of railway road network. As economic influence relocates with in tehsil then trade also moves to railway favored areas. The business classes also migratewith the following trade move. Quite similarly political influence along with economic influence shifted or relocated with it. Same case was happened with Syedwala andrailway favored towns in Nankana Sahib.For instance whenLayalpur(Faisalabad) and Sargodha got the status of districts, the British government shifted her district headquarters from Jhang and Shahpur respectively.

Sikhs were dominating community in rural setup whereas Hindus were in cities as followed Muslims, and Christiansrespectively. It was common trend in all over the Punjab. Twenty villages (Chakoks) were populated to the North-West of Nankana Sahib by the British government for agricultural purposes. Sikhs were the major community among new settlers. Sir Malcolm Darling said in The Punjab Peasant Writes,"Sikhjatts from Amritsar alone, over 100,000 have migrated to the Bar".[li] After very short span of time, Nankana Sahib emerged as an agrarian area. Agricultural development is the backbone of twain sectors including Mandi Town and Industry. Both Mandi Town and industry are inter-related with each other. The two, Nankana Sahib and Warburton emerged as big MandiTowns in Nankana Sahib. Railway favored towns were on top in collecting revenue among other tehsils of district Sheikhpura because of its economic, commercial and industrial development. The bumper crops of Nankana Sahib were cotton, wheat, rice and sugarcane, so the supply of these crops was also delivered to other parts of India by train. Crystallized Salt Petre was also exported from Nankana Sahib across India. The dominating business communities of both markets were Hindu, Sikh and Muslim respectively. The name of some business tycoons wereKirpa Ram, Lala Tola Ram, Lala SundardasSahokar, Sardar Kirtar Singh Sodhi, Sheikh Muhammad Ashique, Shiekh Muhammad Yasin, Haji Noor Ahmad and Ch Sardar Muhammad.[lii]There were total seven cotton factories in both emerging markets including Nankana Sahib and Warburton. Four cotton factories were in Nankana Sahib inclusive of Ranjeet Cotton Factory at Shora Kothi road, Lala Mangat Ram Cotton Factory, in front of DHQ hospital, Devi Dittamal Prem Singh Cotton Factory at Mangtanwala road and Chopra Cotton Factory at Shora Kothi road, opposite to Ranjeet Cotton Factory. All four cotton factories were established in 1900-1921.[liii]

Another three factories including Lala Tola Ram's Cotton Ginning Factory,SardarKirtar Singh Sodhi's Cotton Ginning Factory and Ch Muhammad Sardar Virk's Cotton Ginning Factory were in Warburton. Many cottonrelating small units were also running along the big seven cotton factories in both cities. KirpaRam's role was very special in making Nankana sahib as trading centre because he remained vice chairman of municipal committee of Nankana Sahib from 1913 to 1933.He was very intelligent and played pivotal role in aggregative progress and new settlement of Nankana city. The flood of 1920 in river Ravi further enhanced the population of Nankana Sahib.The floods devastated at mass level and people who lived at banks of river Ravi forcefully migrated to Manawala, Warburton, Kasoor, Patoki and Nankana Sahib. Mostly business oriented Sheikh biraderi of DhokaMandi(new name Mandi Faizabad) came and settled to Nankana Sahib and Warburton[liv].Presently Shaikh Biraderi is one of among dominating biraderies of both cities.

To conclude, Nankana sahib had become very important town of district Sheikhpura due to its agricultural based economy, gurdwara state, cultural activities and railway connection with Lahore – Shorkot line. Every year thousands of Sikh"yatris*"* came to Nankana Sahib for their religious rituals especially on two occasions including Besakhi Mela[lv] in April and Janamasthan Mela[lvi] in November. Both cultural and economic influences moved towards Nankana Sahib on twain festivals across the Punjab. Gurdwara state of Nankana sahib turned into the wealthiest asset to the managers of Gurdwaras at Nankana Sahib among all other Gurdwaras from all over India.

Conclusion

Nankana Sahib evolved from a dense forest and modest village into one of the most prominent, commercially prosperous, and religiously significant towns in district Sheikhpura. Its transformation was driven by a unique interplay of spiritual reverence, agrarian modernization, and infrastructural development. Maharaja Ranjit Singh's extensive patronage and land grants established the region as a central site for Sikh pilgrimage, creating a foundational cultural and economic base. Under British rule, despite early local resistance during the 1857 War of Independence, administrative mechanisms like the Zaildari system, combined with canal colonization and the construction of the Lahore–Shorkot railway line, re-routed regional trade and accelerated urban growth. Connected by modern transport networks, enhanced by Sir Ganga Ram's agricultural techniques, and propelled by a booming cotton industry, Nankana Sahib—alongside neighboring Warburton—emerged as a vital Mandi Town. Ultimately, the convergence of religious tourism, commercial enterprise, and fertile agricultural land permanently shifted socio-economic power in the region, turning Nankana Sahib into a prosperous city and the holder of the wealthiest Gurdwara assets in northern India.

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[iii].MustaqSoofi, "Rai Nasir: Poet From the Sacred Land of the Guru",*Dawn*, 24 Junuary2016.

[iv].He was the founder of Bhatti family in Nankana Sahib in 15th century

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[vi].He was greatly impressed by Baba Guru Nanak for his character and teachings.He donated 150000 kanals to Baba Guru Nanak.

[vii].Gurudawara means home of guru ,It must be related to some guru.It is compulsory for any Gurudawara having Guru GranthSahib.Food is always available for 24 hours in it for

masses. Guru Granth Sahib, accommodation and food are compulsory in a Gurdwara. There are only two Gurdwaras,*ChhevinPadshashi* and Gurdwara *Kiara Sahib* having no Guru Granth Sahib due to some administrative issues after partition.

[viii].Sikh Memorandum to The Punjab Boundaries commission (Punjab Digital Library),64.

[ix].Sher Shah Soori established a defence line which was consisted of Depalpur, Syedwala, Sangla Hill and Rohtass to stop invaders who came from Middle East, Iran and Afghanistan. The fort of Syedwala was very important for defence purposes in that era.

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[xiii] Ibid, 2-9.

[xiv]. Ilyas Ahmad Chattha, *Partition and Its Aftermath: Violence, Migration and the Role of Refugees in the Socio-Economic Development of Gujranwala and Sialkot Cities, 1947-1961,* (U.K: University OfSouthhamton

School Of Humanities, Centre for Imperial and Post-Colonial Studies, 2009), 93.

[xv].KhanTahawar Ali Khan,*Biographical Encyclopaedia Of Pakistan*, (Pakistan:Biographical Research Institute, 1994-95), 791.

[xvi].Abdul Karim Tabussam, *Khanwada Haye SadaatJogeyKotNouBahar*, (Nankana Sahib: Tabbassum Publishing,2014),17.

[xvii].A small town which is 16 km away from Nankana city to the East of Nankana – Mangtanwalaroad.It is a birth place of Sir Ganga Ram who was famous architect and phelnotherapist of colonial India.

[xviii].Syedwala established by Sher Shah Sori .He wanted to become Syedwala the capital of Punjab because of geo-strategic location but failed to do it.

[xix]. Rai Ahmad Khan Kharal was declared the leader of all biradaries which were participating in 1857 war against British government of Sandal Bar and Ganji Bar.

[xx]. Mohammad Sadique, *Tahreek e Pakistan Main Sheikhpura Ka Kirdar(1857-1947)*, M.A thesis,HistoryDepartment,University of the Punjab,Quaid e Azam Campus,Lahore,97.

[xxi]. Another old town of Nankana Sahib

[xxii]. Major and influential biradari of Bucheki.

[xxiii]. A birth place of famous Punjabi poet and important regarding Kharalbiradari politics.

[xxiv]. A birth place of Sir Ganga Ram who was famous architect and philnotherapist.

[xxv]. Abdul Karim Tabussam, *Tehsil Nankana KeMahroofSiyassiKirdaar*, (Nankana Sahib: Tabbassum Publishing, 2003), 62.

[xxvi]Rai Saleem, a resident of Kulchpur,interviewed by author , 25 July,2024.

[xxvii].Sadique, *Tarikh e Pakistan Main Sheikhpura Ka Kirdar(1857-1947)*, 97.

[xxviii].Ibid.

[xxix].Ibid.

[xxx]. Anwar,*Tarikh e Syedwala*,134-135.

[xxxi].Tabussam ,*Tehsil Nankana KeMahroofSiyassiKirdaar*, 72.

[xxxii].Title was given by the British government for one's loyalty and cooperation.

[xxxiii].To strengthen her power for appointing influential locals as zaildars by the British government.

[xxxiv]Rai, Muhammad Hassan, "Socio-Political and Cultural Transformation of Tehsil Nankana Sahib: A case of Colonial and Post-colonial Era.(MPhil Thesis,The University of the Punjab,2017).34.

[xxxv]. Interviewed with Fateh Bibi: an 100 years old lady from Miranpur,12 Octcber,2016.

[xxxvi]. Prof. Abdul Karim Tabussam,Prof. Imran Tabussam,*Tareek e Zila Nankana,* (Nankana Sahib: Tabbassum Publishing,2010),164.

[xxxvii].Interviewed with Rai Shahid Khan Kharal chairman of Miranpur Union Council. He is also great grandson of Rai Daim Khan Kharal,04 January,2017.

[xxxviii]. Khan Tahawar Ali Khan,*Biographical Encyclopaedia Of Pakistan*, (Pakistan:Biographical Research Institute, 1994-95), 767-768.

[xxxix]. Ibid,788.

[xl].Interviewed with Prof Najam Man posted at Government Guru Nanak Post Graduate College Nankana Sahib and ArshidMaan, Village Allawal Kot,13 April,2017.

[xli].MahrKhashifRangAllahiPadhar , he is a member of the Punjab assembly and great grandson of Mahr Noor Ahmad Padhar Zaildar, Village Noor Mandi,16 January,2017.

[xlii]. 20 villages(Chakoks) were built in th South- West of Nankana Sahib. The Sikh community was majority in 20 villages.

[xliii]. Prof. Abdul Karim Tabussam,Prof. Imran Tabussam,*Tarikh e Zila Nankana*, 146-148.

[xliv]. Imran Ali, *The Punjab Under Imperialism, 1885-1947*, (The USA:Princeton University Press, 2014), 18.

[xlv].Hussain,*Tareekh e Sheikhupura*,308.

[xlvi]. Abdul Karim Tabussam ,*Tarikh-e- Warburton*, (Nankana Sahib:Tabbassum Publishing, 2003),37-38.

[xlvii].Abdulwaheed,Ganga Ram.....naamwar old ravian,The Ravi,2009,G C U Lahore,77

[xlviii]. Ali, *The Punjab Under Imperialism, 1885-1947*, 19-20.

[xlix]. Mahmood Awan, "Tale of A Thirsty Land," The News on Sunday, December 18, 2016.

[l].Anwar,*Tarikh e Syedwala*,69.

[li]. *Sikh Memorandum to The Punjab Boundaries commission*,33.

[lii]. Prof. Abdul Karim Tabussam,Prof. Imran Tabussam,Tareek e Zila Nankana, 2010),297.

[liii]. Ibid,296.

[liv].Tabussam ,*Tehsil Nankana KeMahroofSiyassiKirdaar*,36.

[lv]. It's a cultural festival. It is celebrated as starting harvesting season in April every year.

[lvi]. On the birthday of Baba Guru Nanak.