History of Censes in Subcontinent from (1855 -1941)

A notable feature of the period was the conduct of censes operations which started with two incomplete coverage's 1855 and 1868 , and later become a regular and systematic decennial count with effect from 1881 availability of population data for the seven preparation censes (1881 to 1941) enable to capture the involving socio economic and political scene of this region. Such data, over time, has an ambiance of geological maps which help us in tracing the changing socio economic conditions during successive areas and periods

Population

First cense was conducted in 1855 and the population in 1855 is 17.6 million, and next in 1868 and population is 19.7 million , and next in 1881 and population is 20.8 million, And final censes in 1941 and population is 34.3 million people is recorded in which 29 district, 43 province, 52047 villages and 283 towns.

Population Growth

The first two attempts, in 1855 followed by in 1868, at carrying out a population census of the colonial Punjab covered only the British Territory, to the exclusion of the Punjab States. These had a partial coverage, as such. The then imperial government attempted some estimates for the entire Punjab. These placed its population at 17.6 million in 1855 and 19.7 million in 1868. The first regular census of India in 1881 recorded Punjab's population at 20.8 million and this increased to 34.3 million in 1941, again as per the Census of India. There was a twofold increase in the size of Punjab's population during the colonial period, 1849-1947. For the 1881-1941 periods, the compound annual growth rate of population works out as 0.84 per cent for Punjab. This growth rate was higher in the British Territory (0.87 per cent) than in the Punjab States (0.71 per cent). This could be attributed to the former's comparatively better law and order situation and relatively faster advancements in agriculture, extension of transport network and provision of health infrastructure. A greater accuracy in the census counts here could be an additional factor. Simultaneously the inflow of migrants to newly raised canal colonies from outside the Punjab was larger to the British Territory than to the Punjab States. The 1881-1941 periods easily lends itself to two phases of 1881-1921 and 1921-1941 in terms of population growth. During the first phase, the compound annual growth rate of 0.47 per cent was less than one-third of that during the second phase, 1.57 per cent. This was true equally of the British Territory and the Punjab States. Till 1921, Punjab was in the first stage of the demographic transition wherein high birth rate of around 50 per thousand was rivaled by a death rate which was only marginally lower. After 1921, Punjab moved into the second phase of demographic transition characterized by virtually a persistent high birth rate but a

steadily declining death rate. The drop in mortality was associated with control over famines, check over epidemics and endemic diseases, such as plague, cholera, small pox and malaria, and fall in infant mortality rate. Natural increase rate of population was, thus, marking an upward trend. This process was somewhat faster in the British Territory than in the Punjab States. The ratio between the populations of the two was in 1881 and in 1941.

Migration Streams

The colonial period was noted for massive internal migration within Punjab. This was associated mainly with the opening of canal colonies in the western part of the province. During 1886-1947, as many as nine such colonies were developed in the western and southwestern parts of Punjab. Vast stretches of the barren, uncultivable wasteland in Lyallpur, Sargodha, Shahpur, Montgomery, Multan, Gujranwala, Sheikhupura, Gujarat and Sialkot districts were transformed into highly productive land, raising large surpluses of wheat, gram, cotton, rice and fodder. Six million acres of land, earlier inhabited mainly be nomadic herders, was involved. The canal colonies were meant to meet the imperial needs of wheat and cotton, to raise mares, mules and studs and camels for the police and army, and to decongest the crowded parts of the province. Around four-fifths of the colonists originated from the seven densely populated districts of Amritsar, Gurdaspur, Jalandhar, Hoshiarpur, Ludhiana, Ambala and Sialkot, located in the central and eastern parts of the province. Two-thirds of them were Jats – Sikh, Muslim and Hindu. Arains and Sikh- Hindu Sainis, Kambohs and Rajputs were among other important groups involved. Some colonists moved in from the peripheral districts of Jhelum, Mianwali, and Dera Ghazi Khan. A part of the reclaimed land was allotted to the native displaced persons. The colonists could be separated into five categories, based on the size and purpose of land allotted (Darling, 1928). Most privileged ones were the raias farmers who got more than 5 square of land each, one square being equivalent of varying size of 22.5 to 27.5 acres but later standardized to 25 acres (Davis, 1951). The next to follow were the safaidposh (yeomen) farmers who were granted 3 to 5 squares of land each. Further, next down the ladder were the abadkar (peasant) grantees who were allotted of 0.5, 1 or 2 squares of land. The fourth category comprised military and police pensioners (service grantees) who got varying size of land depending upon their previous status or rank. Finally, there were the displaced native grantees who were allotted one-half to one square of land each.

The canal colonies redefined the demographic scene of Punjab. With a massive movement of population from the crowded central and eastern parts of Punjab to its western wing, new land-people equilibrium got established. The mean centre of the Punjab's population shifted westward. It was the best of the farmers who were involved in this redistribution process. The western Punjab, which was earlier very backward agriculturally, became the most progressive one. A well planned landscape of rectangular fields, dense network of canals, and dynamic market towns

emerged in an area which was earlier a dry wasteland. All this was also to provide a base which decided things at the time of partition of the sub-continent in 1947. Not only the agriculturally more prosperous western wing of Punjab became a part of Pakistan but it also experienced an exodus of the non-Muslims (primarily Hindus and Sikhs) from here to its less developed eastern wing, which became a part of India. The way the latter emerged from the ashes and built a progressive economy based on the green revolution and small scale industry is a story for another time. Some migration from Punjab to other parts of India was associated largely with recruitment in army. Major contributors to this process were the districts of Kangra, Jhelum, Rawalpindi, Gujarat and Rohtak, where population pressure on land was intense due either to small landholdings or low agricultural productivity under conditions of unfavorable climatic conditions and lack of irrigation. Punjab States were not behind the British Territory in this regards and were an equal contributor to the Indian army, prompted often by their princely rulers loyal to the British. During the World War I, nearly two-third of the British Indian army hailed from Punjab and at no time this share fell below three-fifths (Talbot, 1988). The process of emigration had also started. It was directed mainly to East Africa, (Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika), Southeast Asia (Malaysia and Burma), Hong Kong, and in small trickle to Canada. All these countries were the British colonies at that time.

Urbanization process

The urbanization process was also marking its downs and ups. In 1881, urban population of 2.48 millions made 11.9 per cent of the total; this percentage became 14.7 in 1941, with the size of urban population increasing to 5.04 million. The share of urban population in the total had regularly declined till 1911 and even in 1921 at 10.3 per cent the figure was lower than that in 1881. The effect of the epidemics like plague, cholera and small pox was more fatal in the congested towns and cities than in villages. It was only after 1921 that there was a significant rise in the urbanization rate. A parallel experience is represented by the number of towns; it being 168 in 1881, slowly increasing to 185 in 1921, and marking a big rise to 283 in 1941. Several factors explain this phenomenon. The post – 1921 phase witnessed the emergence of several new towns, specializing in agro-marketing and agro-processing industries. Such towns, finding an origin mainly in the canal colonies, received migrants from not only different parts of Punjab but also the neighboring United Provinces, Rajputana and Jammu & Kashmir (Imperial Gazetteer of India, 1908). Many of these towns were developed on planned lines. Decline in death rate, in response to control over epidemics and check over diseases, along with extension of health services, led to a higher rate of natural increase, especially when birth rate stayed on high. Administrative centers, more specifically district headquarters, were attracting migrants in large numbers in view of employment avenues flowing from an expansion of their educational, health and marketing functions. Of special interest is the growth of seven cities, each having a population of at least 100,000 in 1941. These included Lahore (671,659), Amritsar (391,010), Rawalpindi (181,169), Multan

(142,768), Sialkot (138,348), Jalandhar (135,283) and Ludhiana (111,639). All these places were of historic importance, and barring Ludhiana, everyone had a component of a cantonment within. None of them, however, was a 'million city'. Also, with four of these seven cities confined to the heartland, a large part of Punjab was distantly located from any city. By comparison, in 1881, Amritsar and Lahore were the only two cities in Punjab. The commercial and industrial city of Amritsar (152,000) was larger than the capital and cultural city of Lahore (149,000) in population. At the next census of 1891, however, the former surrendered its first rank to the latter. During 1881-1941, Lahore recorded a fourfold increase in its population; Amritsar two-fold only. Rawalpindi, Sialkot and Ludhiana grew by 2.5 times and Multan by only two times. By virtue of its status as a provincial capital and its role as an eminent educational and cultural centre, Lahore was bound to grow the fastest. It was assuming demographic primacy, leaving Amritsar behind to a distant second place. On the whole, the vast majority of population was living in villages, most of the towns were small in size, and rural-urban linkages were rather feeble. The scene was gradually changing with emergence of several agro-marketing and processing centers, especially in the canal colonies; activation of the functional life of the towns located on the newly laid out railway lines; and expansion of district headquarters in their administrative, commercial and industrial functions. Strengthening of the linkages of places like Lahore, Amritsar and Multan with port cities of Calcutta, Bombay and Karachi opened Punjab to the outer world to a much greater degree than witnessed ever before.

Religious Composition

Demographic feature of the colonial Punjab was the religious composition of its population. While it represented an evolution of a cultural diversity in history, it became a new and divisive force in polity over time. It was on the basis of religion that the British India was partitioned; and more pertinently the partition was specific to only two provinces, Punjab and Bengal. These two provinces were marked by not only a sensitive composition of the Muslims and non-Muslims (essentially Hindus and Sikhs in the case of Punjab) but also by regional segregation of the two religious groups, by and large. In Bengal, the Muslims were in overwhelming majority in the eastern segment and the non-Muslims in its western counterpart; in Punjab, the picture was in reverse, with the Muslims in a large majority in the western wing and the non-Muslims in the eastern. In 1941, the Muslims were in absolute majority in Punjab accounting for 53.2 per cent of the total population. The Hindus made 29.1 per cent of the total, the Sikhs 14.9 per cent, Christians 1.9 per cent, and others 1.3 per cent. Such a distribution was significantly different from that obtaining in 1881 when the Hindus made 43.8 per cent of the total population, the Sikhs 8.2 per cent and Christians 0.1 per cent. The Muslims, at 47.6 per cent, were well short of an absolute majority. Evidently, that there was a distinct fall in the percentage share of the Hindus while the Muslims and the Sikhs made a significant headway in their proportion. The Christians also recorded a noticeable increase in their numbers. The percentage share of the Hindus was caused by the conversion of

many of them to Islam, Sikhism and Christianity. Such a change of religion was much more typical of lower castes among the Hindus, such as chuhras, chamars, jhiwars and Malis. Conversion was negligible from the higher castes, such as Brahmins, Aroras, Khatris and Agarwal (Census of India, 1931) If a map of the colonial Punjab is drawn by marking districts and states with either Muslims or Hindus accounting for at least 60 per cent of the total population in 1881, the sharp divide between the western Muslim and eastern Hindu becomes conspicuous. A revealing feature of such a map is that the zone sandwiched between the two extremities described above is the one which roughly coincides with the Indian Punjab today. Neither the Muslims nor the Hindus exceeded 60 per cent of the total population. This was an area where the Sikhs displayed a relative concentration; the Sikhism seems to have spread more in the contact zone of the Islam and Hinduism. Here Punjabi was the main language spoken, as compared to Laihndi to the west, Hindi to the east Pahari in the northeast (1916). The Jats were Muslim in the west, Sikh and Muslim in the middle, and Hindu in the east/southeast (Douie, 1916). The same held good for other tribal groups such as Gujjars. A similar picture is also obtained in respect of the Rajputs and some other Hindu castes (Punjab Government, undated). Their various Hindu caste affiliations survived even after these people converted to Islam or Sikhism. salient parameters of this change included:

Growth of Population, 1855-1941

Population (in millions)			Compound annual growth rate		
Censes Year	Punjab	British Territory	Punjab States	Punjab	British Territory	Punjab States
1855	17.6	13.8	3.8			
1868	19.7	15.8	3.9	0.87	1.09	0.20
1881	20.8	16.9	3.9	0.42	0.56	0.11
1891	23.0	18.7	4.3	0.97	0.97	0.97
1901	24.3	19.9	4.4	0.62	0.69	0.38
1911	23.8	19.6	4.2	-0.24	-0.18	-0.48
1921	25.1	20.7	4.4	0.54	0.57	0.48
1931	28.5	23.6	4.9	1.27	1.40	1.11
1941	34.3	28.4	5.9	1.87	1.87	1.87

Territory	Population (in thousands)				Density
	1881	1901	1921	1941	Per sq. Mile
British Territory Ambala Division	**16939**	**19943**	**20686**	**28419**	**287**
1. Hissar	673	782	817	1007	193
2. Rohtak	554	631	772	956	426
3. Gurgaon	642	746	682	851	381
4. Karnal	855	883	829	995	318
5. Ambala	830	816	681	848	442
6. Simla	36	40	45	39	482
Jalandhar Division					
7. Kangra	731	768	766	899	90
8. Hoshiarpur	901	960	927	1170	533
9. Jalandhar	760	918	823	1127	845
10. Ludhiana	619	673	568	819	585
11. Ferozepur	747	958	1099	1423	355
Lahore Division					
12. Lahore	924	1162	1130	1695	653
13. Amritsar	893	1024	929	1414	899
14. Gurdaspur	824	940	852	1154	625
15. Sialkot	1012	1084	877	1190	755
16. Gujranwala	617	891	624	912	395
17. Shekhupura			635	853	370
Rawalpindi					
Division					
18. Gujarat	684	751	824	1104	488
19. Shahpur	422	524	720	999	209
20. Jhelum	589	594	477	630	227
21. Rawalpindi	821	931	569	785	388
22. Attock			512	676	163
23. Mianwali	365	425	358	506	94
Multan Division					
24. Montgomery	427	498	686	1329	316
25. Lyallpur			958	1396	396
26. Jhang	391	1003	571	822	241
27. Multan	557	711	889	1484	263
28. Muzaffargarh	339	406	568	713	127
29. Dera Ghazi	385	495	496	622	66

Punjab States (I) Affiliated with	**3862**	**4424**	**4416**	**5891**	**151**

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1. Dujana	23	24	26	31	337
2. Pataudi	18	22	18	22	406
3. Kalsia	68	67	57	67	318
4. Bashahr	64	85	90	116	70
5. Nalagarh	53	53	47	53	191
6. Keonthal	31	42	47	52	175
7. Baghl	21	26	25	28	229
8. Jubbal	20	22	26	30	174
9. Baghat	8	9	10	11	334
10. Kumarsain	10	12	12	14	166
11. Bhajji	12	13	14	16	175
12. Mahlog	9	9	8	9	176
13. Balsan	5	7	6	7	117
14. Dhami	3	5	5	5	183
15. Kuthar	4	4	4	5	237
16. Kunihar	2	2	2	5	189
17. Mangal	1	1	1	2	95
18. Bija	1	1	1	1	212
19. Darkoti	1	1	1	1	124
20. Tharoch	3	4	4	5	77
21. Sangri	3	3	3	4	183

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22.Loharu	14	15	21	28	123
23. Sirmur	112	136	140	156	143
24. Bilaspur	87	91	98	110	244
25. Mandi	147	174	185	233	204
26. Suket	52	55	54	71	181
27. Kapurthala	253	314	284	378	587
28. Malerkotla	71	78	80	88	534
29. Faridkot	97	125	151	199	313
30. Chamba	116	128	142	169	54
31. Patiala*	1467	1597	1500	1936	326
32. Jind *	262	283	308	361	279
33. Nabha*	250	285	263	340	359
34. Bahawalpur	573	650	781	1341	77
PUNJAB	**20801**	**24367**	**25102**	**34310**	**248**

Growth of Urban Population, 1881-1941

Census Year	Punjab Number Of town's population	Percentage of population in millions			
		Urban	Punjab	British Territory	Punjab States
1881	168	2.48	11.9	12.0	11.2
1891	163	2.46	10.7	10.7	10.7
1901	166	2.58	10.6	10.6	10.5
1911	167	2.33	9.8	10.1	8.4
1921	185	2.60	10.3	10.7	8.7
1931	222	3.52	12.4	13.0	9.2
1941	283	5.04	14.7	15.3	11.6

Religious Composition of Population, 1881-1941

Census Year	Percentage				
	Muslims	Hindus	Sikhs	Christians	Others
1881	47.6	43.8	8.2	0.1	0.3
1891	47.8	43.6	8.2	0.2	0.2
1901	49.6	41.3	8.6	0.3	0.2
1911	51.1	35.8	12.1	0.8	0.2
1921	51.1	35.1	12.4	1.3	0.1
1931	52.4	30.2	14.3	1.5	1.6
1941	53.2	29.1	14.9	1.5	1.3

Religious Composition of Urban Population, 1881-1941

Percentage of urban population

Census Year	Muslims	Hindus	Sikhs	Christians	Others
1881	48.0	45.3	4.9	1.0	0.8
1891	48.9	44.6	4.7	1.3	0.9
1901	50.0	43.3	4.6	1.2	0.9
1911	51.2	39.3	6.6	2.0	0.9
1921	20.6	40.2	6.3	2.1	0.8
1931	51.9	37.6	7.3	1.9	1.3
1941	51.4	37.9	8.4	1.3	1.0

Source: Census of India, 1931, Punjab, Part I, Report, Census of India, 1941.