



RESEARCH PAPER

Business History and trading firms in Colonial Multan: A Historical Review

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this article is to develop a general narrative of firms and cottage industries and their connected zones that led the growth of import and export in the 19th century British Multan and thus to supply missing chain of Business History. The trading companies associated with import and export had several features in common with trading firms globally, especially a high degree of mobility, institutional adaptations and occasionally diversification into banking and manufacturing Sector. But the certain aspects to be highlighted of process with in the regions where they operated: such as the differences between the ports and the inland trading orders between cities and indigenous firms. This research will try show how the town of Multan emerged as the main trading center during the British period. For example, the canal colonies had deprived Multan for export trade in wheat with the competition of Lyallpur. The development of lower Bari Doab Colony had shifted the centre of gravity of the cotton industry from Multan to newly developed colony towns of Jahanian, Kahanawal and Mianchannu to with the large supply of American cotton. The direct route to Karachi by Khanawal Lodhran chord lines serves further to increase the industrial importance of these mandies and cargo to Multan. Official and non-Official records from British Indian Library London and civil secretariat Lahore are being consulted to draw empirical results.

KEYWORDS: Business History, Trading Companies, Multan, Colonial

Introduction

Multan, an ancient living city, has been the most important region of south Asia. It was purposefully developed to be the main trade route at the juncture of the Ravi and the Chenab rivers. Since thousands of years, it has been a developed, well planed and strongly fortified living city.(Duranni,1981) Its recorded history can be traced at least to the time when Alexander the great invaded many parts of the ancient India. The political significance of the region was enhanced by its geographical and strategic location while its contiguity with the North Western Frontier added to its strategic significance.

Multan was an important hub of trade and commerce for both the provinces, the Sindh and the Punjab. Its topography, climate, history and socio- cultural traditions gave Multan a prominent position in the region.. The region was economically transformed through Sidhnai canal colony and became the important wheat and cotton market and indigo producer area of South west Punjab.

The future of the agriculture trade and food system is subject to considerable concerns. Increasing agricultural demand, fuelled by growing and urbanized population, rising incomes and substantial development needs modern infrastructure like roads and railways. Multan was an important hub of trade and commerce for both the provinces, the Sindh and the Punjab. Its topography, climate, history and socio- cultural traditions gave Multan a prominent position in the region as internal trade center.

Towns, Trade and infrastructure

Under the Colonial rule the district witnessed great improvements in its towns and trade. Five municipalities were constituted. At the Census of 1881, all places possessing more than 5,000 inhabitants, all municipalities and all head quarters of districts and military posts were classed as towns. Under this rule, the following places were returned as the town of the Multan district. (Multan District Gazetteer, 1884)

Table 1
Population of both Males and Females in Tehsils Of Multan

Tahsil	Towns	Persons	Male	Female
Multan	Multan	68,674	38,988	29,688
Shujabad	Shujabad	6,458	3,420	3,038
Lodhran	Jalalpur	3,875	1,965	1,910
Mailsi	Kahrur	4,804	2,532	2,272
	Dunyapur	2,041	935	1,106
Sarai Sidhu	Talamba	2,231	1,214	1,017

The municipality of Multan was first constituted in 1867. It was that time, municipality of the first class. The committee was consisted of 24 elected members; they had the right to choose their chairman from their members. (*Multan District Gazetteer*, 1883-84) New Municipal committee of Multan constituted in 1884 under the Local Self Government Scheme, (*Annual Report of the first class Municipality of Multan for the year 1883-84*, 1884) consisted of 24 elected members. Out of them 15 were Hindus, 8 Muslims and one Christian. The constitution of the Municipal Committee had differed in different times. Between 1885 and 1899 it consisted of 36 members, of 24 elected and 12 nominated but since 1899 it had been composed of 24 members only, from whom 16 were elected and 8 nominated. Of the elected members 8 were Muslims and 8 Hindus. The nominated members comprise 4 Europeans, 3 Muslims and one Hindu. (*Gazetteer of Multan District 1901-1902*, 1902)

Of all these towns Multan was the largest and finest. (Revised Multan District Report, 1880). It was built throughout of pukka bricks and a population of 689,918 in 1901. (Financial Report of Multan District, 1921) The Tahseel only contained one city, Multan Khas, which both from its position and past history considered a place of great importance. It contained a population of nearly 60,000 inhabitants, together with a large and extensive bazaar. Shah Shully and Quesbah Khas were its large villages. Several large villages were flourished near the bank of the river, all of which contained bazars and served as markets and for the disposal of surplus produce. Roads from the city diverged in several direction to many places of importance. Lahore, Bhawalpoor, Sukkur, Moozuffarghur, Mylsee, Khuror, Ferozepoor, Surraee Sidhoo and Jhang were all connected with Multan by fine broad Kutcha roads, while a large number of smaller roads connect the larger lines of traffic with the neighboring villages and each other. The trade of Multan was not equal to what might be expected of a place which had direct water communication with most parts in the civilized world, the imperfect condition of the internal communication of Multan with the Punjab was the main cause of this. A railway and steamers of light drought of water on the Indus would make a wonderful change. The years from 1855-1859, a large quality of indigo was yearly exported to Cabool, Bombay and Lahore, the production of the sugar however was little more than the consumption of the immediate neighborhood, while cotton was not exported in large quantity. For the imports, Multan took a considerable quantity of silk from Cabool and Persia and gave them back Indigo and Silk scarf's. The Silk manufactures here had been introduced from Bhawalpoor, which far excels Multan in the quality and quantity of its Silk goods, many of which were remarkable handsome and some of great value. (Moriss, (1860)

In Tahseel Mylsee there were many Qusbahs and towns. Khuror the principal town of Tahseel and headquarter of the custom establishment. Loodan was chief town of the Talooqua, Dunyahpoor, Khanpoor and Kurrumpoor were also fair sized towns, were famous

as the chief seat of learning. Sulderah, Julla Fiddu Boolukpoor, Alleewah, Jumpaneewah and Ranawahee, Futtehpoor, they all were also places of considerable importance but now they were no more than ruins. The principal roads were Multan to Ferozepoor via Tibba and Loodun, from Multan to Bahalwalpur and also from that place to Maylsee and Khuror. The Sutlej Preventative line was also a good road and traverses the whole tahseel from East to West, at the distance of 3 or 4 miles from the Sutlej, and in a direction nearly parallel to the course of that river. All the chief towns and large villagers were also connected with the main roads and each other by smaller roads, which were in good order and quite available for wheeled carriage. All the chief towns and large villages served as markets for the disposal of surplus produce. They all contained bazaars inhabited by monied traders, who had dealings with the principal, zamindars of the neighborhood. In the majority of instances however each village had its own "Shah" who resides in the places, he made advances to the cultivators and received in return all their surplus produce, which he in his turn made over to the monied traders in the large towns, by whom again it was exported or otherwise disposed of. The chief exports in the towns were indigo, dates and sujeer and ghee. In general the Zemindars and cultivators sell these articles to their "Shahs" who again disposed of them to foreign traders the indigo however was often sold by the zamindars themselves to Puthans from Cabool or Seiks from Lahore and Umritsar, who made yearly excursions into that part of the country for the purpose of purchasing it from the growers. This arose from the village "Shahs" being very shy of speculating in Indigo, in consequence of the great risk attending this article of produce, Ghee was generally exported by the Shahs themselves to Multan, while dates and Sujee were both exported by them and also taken away by traders from Multan to Lahore. Wheat was exported to Bhawalpoor and Multan. (Assessment of Tehsil Mailsi, Appendix, C)

The chief town of the Tahseel was Shoojabad, which next to Multan considered the most important city in the district. Many wealthy traders resided here, and commerce of Shoojabad extended to Bombay and Afghanistan. The only other place worthy of the name of a town was Secundurabad which contained a fair bazaar. The chief market was of Shoojabad Khas, but owing to the vicinity of the cities of Multan and Khangurh, it considered quite available for the disposal of surplus produce, its trade and commerce was much valuable. A very superior quality of Indigo and Sugur were being produced and exported. The Sugur was exported by the merchants of the place but the Indigo was generally brought up by traders from Cabool, Bombay and Lahore. Wheat, cotton and rice were also exported in fair qualities. The main reason of the flourishing trade of this town was the residence of several persons of capital having an intimate connection with the agricultural community as proprietors, bankers and grain dealers. The principal road was that from Multan to Scinde which traversed nearly the whole of Tahseel, there were also made roads from Shoojabad to Khangurh and Khuror, while most of the larger villages were connected by minor roads. (Tahseel Shoojabad, Appendix)

Tahseel Suraee Sidhoo did not contain any city of note, but there were several Qusbahs worthy of passing notice, the three principals were Toolumba, Suraee Sidhoo and Sirdarpoor, they all were fair sized Towns with bazaars and chiefly inhabited by small traders, carried on the chief trade of the Tahseel. Runjoowanah, Dadoowanah, Fazil Shah, Mumdal and Salarwahun were large villages and principal markets of that part of the country. The chief roads traversed that Tahseel from Multan to Lahore, from Multan to Jhang, in addition all the larger villages were joined by well defined paths, quite passable for camels and other beasts of burden, which were the chief means of transport in the Tahseel. The trade of that Tahseel neither was very insignificant nor with the exception of wheat was of the indigenous article of produce exported. At that time the state of commerce was very low in that part of the country, which might be treated partly to the ignorance and idle habits of the people and partly to their poverty. (Tahseel Suraee Sidhy, Appendix, A)

Tahseel Lodran was formerly divided into 3 Talloos each presided over by a separate kardar; they were Sirdarwah containing 104 mouzahs. Bahadrapur with 46

mouzahas and Ghazeepoor comprising 25 mouzahs. Talooqha Sirdarwah, named with a canal, made by Sirdar Khan in the reign of Bhawal Khan was largest of three. This tahseel was interlinked with three main roads, from Multan to Bahawalpur, from Multan to Scinde and customs line which runs down from East to West in a line nearly parallel to the course of the Sutlej. With the existence of these roads, carts were almost entirely unknown, camel's bullocks and donkeys being invariably used as means of transport. The trade of that was chiefly confined to indigo which was largely grown, especially in Talqua Sirdarwah and annually exported, the tahseel being periodically visited by traders from Bombay, Cabool and Piundadan Khan for the purpose of buying up this valuable produce. Ghee too was exported as also dates, which were grown in fair quantities in the river at the junction of the Chenab and Sutlej. (Tahseel Lodhran, Appendix, E)

Of all these tahsils Multan was important. Next to Multan tehseel Mailsi was significant for its indigo producing. Village Shahs played role of Arthis in this tahseel. Various district officers played significant roles for the development of these Tahsils. Under the management of Hamilton Multan greatly flourished as a depot and a mart of river trade, situated on the river Chenab, designated it out the best port for shipping the surplus produce of the district, which found to Multan, Sukhar, Karachi, Bombay. Besides which the cloth manufacturing was exported to Afghanistan. Under the suggestion of Mr. Morris, the development of rail, road and bridges were considered.

Initially the economic base of Multan district was agriculture and the financial institutions and markets were established as a result of agricultural activities but railway brought rural Multan into the worked market and demised its parochialism and Oblation. The introduction of the railway in the district altered the course of the trade and much of the goods formerly going by river or by camels started to go by rail. In 1894 it was estimated that about two munds of grain went by Bhera to Sukhar at a rate of $4\frac{1}{2}$ annas per mund and 4,000 from Khushab to Multan at a rate of 2 annas per mud but the carriage of goods by rail through more costly than the river was considered so much safer and quicker that it was generally preferred. Cotton was largely exported both in raw and manufactured by villagers at Khushab. Girot, Bhera and Sahiwal were carried across the frontier by Powinda traders on their way back from their annual expeditions down the country. (Shah-Pur District, 1884)

The district agricultural trade was boosted by infrastructure of roads railways and canals. The railway facilitated urbanization via commuter trains, the suburbanization's of cities like Multan, Calcutta and Bombay. The socio-Physical morphology of these South Asians' cities displayed the impress of railway development and if the railways shaped city landscapes, they reshaped landscapes and mind sets. Tunnels, bridges and embankments altered and mastered Multan terrain. Under the myth of free trade Multan was deemed to produce and export raw material and food stuff and to import textile and steel goods, machinery and miscellaneous manufactured articles.

As a matter of fact throughout the colonial period the region was converted to an economic colony. The British exported taxes monopolized valuable primary product such as Indigo, cotton, wheat and salt. They promoted these products for their own home industries. Besides manipulating tariffs to help British exports railway and roads were constructed and guaranteed rates of interest so as make the interior of the region accessible. All these techniques of direct political control manifest their mind design and incorporated with drain theory.

Study of commercial agricultural requires understanding the theory of government manipulation of tariffs in the interest of Lancashire cotton industry from 1859-62. It reveals the adjustment of British free trade doctrine in the middle of 19th century. So it is obvious the selection of crop for commercial transition was subject to the industrial and of western

market. Priority was given to such crops as indigo opium, cotton, jute and tea for commercialization.

Wheat was the most important crop of the district. The peasant producer sold his grain to the village shopkeeper who sent it into the market town and there it was brought by the large grain merchants resident in the district who sent it to Multan, Sukhar or Karachi where it was sold to European exporting firms of Karachi began to send agents of their own to Khushab and Bhera where they purchased wheat from the local dealers generally a resident of the place these dealers arranged for serving the grain purchased till it was dispatched to Karachi and extended advances of cash if necessary charging the usual rate of interest, which in that case was 8 annas per month. A next cash crop of the district was cotton the most important indigenous stuff for the textile industry affected by the 19th century trade policy. India ceased to export manufactured goods to Europe early in the century. Indigo was the third commercial crop, centuries before the modern chemical industry began producing artificial bluing dyes, Indian cultivators had been growing a plant called indigo which yielded the dye necessary for bluing cotton cloths. With the growth of modern textile industry in Great Britain in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries there was a great expansion in the demand for dye. Indigo trade became a rich source of high profits for the East India Company in India. Indigo being one of the most valuable staples of Multan district, as well as chief revenue paying crop of three of the principal Tahsils in the some had a great worth on the subject of its culture and manufacturer (Morris, 1884).

Inland Transportation and Commerce in the Region

After a short period of annexation the provincial administration recognized that the agricultural commodities of landlocked Punjab could most conveniently be exported through Karachi, though some uncertainty existed as to whether river steamers or railway were the best form of inland transport. The question was ultimately decided in favor of the railway. In Punjab after the war of 1857, an extensive export import trade grew up between Punjab and the outside world via the port of Karachi owing a favorable location on the Lahore Karachi railway, Multan city became a major focus of this commerce.

A railway from Karachi to Kotri was built in 1861 and this was extended to Multan in 1878 but goods and passengers had to be ferried across the river at Sukhar until the Sukhar bridge was opened in 1887 and the branch from Khenewal to Lyallpur in 1900. (Malik, 1962) Mussels of the Bombay Government steam flotilla called regularly at Multan on the Chenab and during the flood season occasionally ascended as far Kalabagh on the Indus. Jhelum on the Jhelum, Lahore on the Ravi and Ferozepur on the Sutlej. (Project Aghan Trade, 1883)

The flotilla was not a dependable commercial carrier. In the frequent spells of low water the steamer's carrying capacity was extremely limited and troops and government stores took precedence over private cargo. In 1857 commissioner G.W. Hamilton of Multan reported that goods had been detained for months at Karachi and eventually had to be forwarded to Punjab on camels. The Bombay Indus Flotilla was disbanded in 1862, five steamers being turned over to the Sind, Punjab and Delhi railway company which was constructing a line from Karachi to Multan city. Until the completion of the line, the company's vessels plied between the railway and Multan. (Arrora, Marine Department, 1930)

In 1862, the Punjab government Marine Department was formed to conduct steam navigation on upper Indus. Government intended to prove that steamers could be operated profitably, then retire in favor of private enterprise. The experience was not a success due to an inability to acquire vessels with the requisite combination of light draft and powerful engines. The five Marine department's steamers were unable to attract sufficient cargo to meet expenses because they charged substantially higher freight rates than local country

boats. Afghan caravan merchants, Pown dahs persisted in giving own land Via Multan to Lahore and Amritsar. After running up a deficit of Rs.1, 400,000, The Punjab Flotilla was abolished in 1872. (Arora,1930)

Multan was one of these luckiest South Asia's cities which were able to retain its pre-colonial economic importance by a redirection of energies. Al though the central Asian caravan trade Multan's traditional declined in importance following annexation the town shared in the profits of the new overseas commerce by being a railhead at a point where the river routes of Punjab radiated like the ribs of the fan

In 1860, commissioner Hamilton of Multan reported that trade was improving as a result of increased steam traffic on the Indus and that agriculturalists prices were high and likely to remain so.(Kenneth,1968) Commissioner William ford stated in 1863 that the trade of Multan city was growing and that the town had become much wealthier since he left here ten years previously. During fiscal 1862-63 Multan city exported Rs. 4, 201, 50 cotton 24, 007 bales being shipped by steamers to Karachi. In 1862-63 the city also exported Rs. 901, 810 in goods down the Indus in 299 country boats. In value the country boat trade of Multan was second only to that of Ferozepur, which exported Rs. 4, 093, 470 in goods. (Land Report, 1860).In 1865-66 Multan city exported approximately Rs. 3000,000 worth of cloth to Jhang District and Afghanistan. (Land Report,1863)

After completion of the railway to Karachi, Multan city became one of the chief mercantile centers of Punjab. The town funneled exports to Karachi and distributed imports from that port throughout the province. The main exports were cotton, wheat, wool, oilseeds, sugar and indigo; the main imports were European cotton textiles and other European manufacturers. Multan also imported fruits, drugs and spices from Afghanistan while exporting to the country indigo, European and indigo cotton fabrics sugar and shoes. Multan merchants had agents in every major Punjab city and the large firms of Lahore. Amritsar, Peshawar, Jullundur and Delhi maintained representatives at Multan. (Punjab Report, 1871)

In fiscal 1880-81 the trade of Multan city was the third largest in value in the province after Amritsar and Delhi but ahead of Lahore. (Internal Trade Report,1882)

Table 2
Total Value in Rupees of Imports and Exports within the Punjab

City	Value of Imports Rs.	Value of Export Rs.	Total value Rs.
Amritsar	31,534,287	13,030,985	44,565,272
Dehli	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

Some of the Principal imports and exports of Multan in 1880-81 are given below (Internal Trade Report.1881)

Table 3
Import and Export agro-commodities in tons during the year 1880-81

Commodity	Imports(Tons)	Exports (Tons)
Raw cotton	714	562
European Cotton	85	2
European piece-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

In his report on Multan city trade in 1880-81 the district Deputy Commissioner stated that the weavers of the city preferred European to Indian yarn. There was a brisk

demand for Multani textiles across the Afghan border. The substantial increase in European piece- good imports from 664 tons in 1879-80 was due to the opening of several new shops and big purchases by powindah merchants. One half the European piece- good exports went to the north-west Frontier and Afghanistan, the other half to neighboring districts and Bahawalpur imports of raw silt from Bokhara, Kokand and Heart had resumed in 1880-81 after an interruption of two years. Four-fifths of the silk imports came from these places and the rest from china, silt was re-exported mainly to Jhang, Bahawalpur and Sind. (Punjab Internal Trade,1881)In 1882-83 Multan city ranked fourth in the value of its trade, behind Dehli Amritsar and Lahore. (Internal Trade Report,1883)

Table 4
Total Value of Imports and Exports of Multan during the year 1882-83

City	Imports Rs	Exports Rs	Total Rs.
Dehli	43,422,514	26,656.886	70,079,200
Amritsar	27,725,133q	9,515,038	37,240,171
Lahore	10,867,704	6,830,110	17,697,814
Multan	7,466,149	2,950,722	10,416,921

According to the Punjab internal trade and Manufacturers report for 1882-83 the commercial future of Multan was uncertain. On one hand the opening of a railway to Sibi, Baluchistan might attract the Afghan trade away from Multan; On the other hand the city should benefit from the growth of rail traffic with Karachi. As trade with Sind appeared to be avoiding Multan order to escape paying town duties octroi the Municipal Committee was advised to consider reduction in duties. (Punjab Trade Report, 1884) The internal trade report for 1883-84 remarked that Multani octroi rates were in fact not excessive. Trade was shirking the city because goods could be shipped directly to their destinations from rural railway stations. (Manufacture Report,1884) Between 1883 and 1885 Punjabi rail-born commerce with Karachi expanded extremely. For the years 1883-84 imports with Sind and including Karachi was 15% and total value of exports was 30%. (Manufacture Report,1884)For the year 1884-85 imports with Karachi was 35% and total value of exports was 40%. (Punjab Manufacture Report,1886)

Multan town developed its trade with Karachi. The town s' imports of European piece- goods increased from 654 tons in 1883-84 to 2662 tons in 1884-85, within the same years, exports by rail of wheat increased from 1147 tons to 5655 ton. The Internal Trade Report for 1884-85 concluded that fears about the future of Multan regarding trade proved baseless. The trade of the district Multan was similar to the Multan town. Lahore was the next station for trade. According to the Punjab Internal trade report for the year 1885-86, trade of Lahore was decreasing. While the bulk of the trade remained the same, it decreased in the value by two lakhs of rupees. The trade of Lahore consisted principally in the import and export of railway plant and rolling stock, wines and spirits and unclassified articles and in the imports of cotton piece goods, wheat, ghee and sugar. An export of wheat from Lahore was almost inappreciable. (Punjab Trade Report, 1886)

Total trade traffic of Multan station during the last two years was as follows. Total imports from the Punjab were 817,586 in Munds and 34, 83,210 was in value. The ratio of trade from other provinces was 722,518 in Munds and 47, 38,329 were in value. The total exports within the Punjab and other provinces were 775,324 in Munds and 55, 60,422 in value.(Punjab Manufacture Report ,1886)The growing importance of Multan as a commercial center was noticed. In the years 1885-86 the rail born traffic had increased by 20% in value and nearly 50% in weight. There was a slight falling off in imports of European twist and yarn and cotton piece-goods caused by the large imports of those articles in 1884-85. The principal increase in imports was in railway plant and rolling stock. There was a marked increase in exports of raw cotton, indigo and wheat. 20,979, raw cotton, 30,404, indigo and wheat 260,923 Munds were exported from Multan during the years 1886-88. Multan town became the principal exporting center for indigo, which was grown in same quantity in the districts of Multan, Muzaffargarh and Dera Ghazi Khan In fact, indigo trade

had engrossed to such an extent that 3,500 maunds of Indigo were imported into Multan by rail for re-export. The manufacture of indigo in this district was worth noticing but its price was low. However its price was Rs. 66 per maund, one rupee higher than last year. (Punjab Trade Report, 1887)

Wool was the major article imported between the years 1886-87, from other Punjab stations via Multan from Delhi, Amritsar and Lahore. Total quantity in munds imported from Multan to other Punjab stations and from other provinces were 425 with 23,320 values in rupees. Small exports of grain mean a small inflow of money. For the year 1887-88, total imports to Multan from other Punjab stations and from other provinces was 548 in munds and 28,409 was in value (Punjab Trade Report, 1887). In imports chief increase in value had occurred in commodities like unrefined sugar about 20 Lakhs of rupees, grains 6/4, opium 6 and raw silk 5/4. Dried fruit, nuts, Brass and copper, Iron, European cotton twisted yarn, dyes, non intoxicating drugs and chemicals 3 to 5, kerosene oil, umbrellas, manufactured leather. The whole increased in unrefined sugar was imports from North-Western provinces and Outh and the good-sugar cane crops of those territories was sufficient explanation of the phenomenon. The increased import of all grains was the result of the poor crops of many districts of the Punjab in the year under report. All other items of increased might put down to the ordinary fluctuations of trade depending partly increase of population and wealth but more upon the depletion of stock caused by low imports of 1886-87.

Decrease in imports have occurred for the most part in Indian cotton piece goods Lakhs of rupees, European cotton 6 and drained sugar Lakhs. Dyes and tans, unwrought copper, Indian tea, other metals and salt were in value of 1/4 and 2/2 Lakhs. The results were instructive, in the External Land Trade Report it was shown the European and Indian cotton were being more and more appreciated in the countries to the West and North West of the Punjab and that disregarded casual fluctuations an increased export of those commodities was going on. In a general way it might be taken that the purchasing power of population was indicated by the amount of commodities exported and retained for consumption that was total imports of such commodities by rail and river minus total exports by rail, river and roads. While imports into the Multan as selected station was Hides and skins, Hides, Dressed. Total traffic of Multan for three years had been as under: (Punjab Trade Report, 1887)

Table 5
Total Value of Imports from Punjab and other Provinces: Year 1889 in Rupees

Block	1886-87 Rs.		1887-88 Rs.		1888-89 Rs.	
	Munds	Value	Munds	Value	Munds	Value
Imports						
From the Punjab	896,178	38,90,871	1,148,800	39,06,65	576,770	39,41,472
other Provinces	208,778	34,76,596	235,653	33,71,711	229,372	32,81,404
Total	1,104,956	73,67,467	1,384,453	72,78,365	806,142	72,22,836

Table 6
Total value of exports for the year 1889 in Rupees

Block	1886-87 Rs.		1887-88 Rs.		1888-89 Rs.	
	Munds	Value	Munds	Value	Munds	Value
Exports						
To the Punjab	216,467	19,31,077	495,580	25,11,519	268,579	31,19,097
other Provinces	107,755	18,14,043	95,663	14,26,235	161,161	16,15,966
Total	324,222	37,45,120	591,243	39,37,754	429,740	47,35,066
Total traffic	6429,178	1,11,12,587	1,975,696	1,12,16,119	1,235,899	1,19,57,9112

According to the above statistics (Rail and River Trade, 1889) the trade of the Multan station was in flourishing state, imports were fairly steady and exports were increasing fast. The imports of European cottons, though far below the figure for 1886-87 was as high as that for 1887-88. The chief item of imports were indigo, beer, ghi, refined sugar and in exports indigo and silk piece- goods were large items.

Table 7
Value and Weight of Trade in rupees with average of five years

Imports		Exports		
Years	weight	value Rs	weight	Value Rs
1889-90	8,675,974	8,50,91,707	17,091,051	6,98,10,803
1890-91	10,528,305	8,92,06,698	16,189,981	6,52,24,616
1891-92	12,550,706	9,95,85,332	21,217,071	8,27,62,316
1892-93	12,185,885	9,19,98,135	11,823,964	6,63,38,722
Average of five Years	10,251,654	8,87,39,881	15,957,440	6,94,58,931

Imports by river had shown an increase both in weight and value but the export which had progressed steadily during the last three years but with the analysis of last year report this had declined to a considerable extent, the decrease amounting to 11 lakhs of maunds in weight and 23/2 lakhs of rupees in value. The reason was supposed to unpopularity of the water routs for the conveyance of merchandise but to a general fall in the export trade with corresponding decrease in the rail born trade as well. River- born trade had progressed to the total trade in respect of imports. In exports River-born trade had undergone a slight fall, having been reduced in its proportion to the total Export trade by rail and railway, from nearly one thirteenth to one-eighteenth. (Kishan,1893)

In Rail trade, there was a significant development in the year 1894-95, both in imports and exports. The imports had a further rise of about 957 thousand maunds in weight and about 8/2 lakhs of rupees in value. The exports on the contrary had fallen short of those of the preceding year by 13/2 million maunds, causing a contraction of over 73 lakhs of rupees in the value. The sowing for the Rabi of 1895 was therefore largely retarded and the consequence was a contraction of 7.1% in the total crop area. The Kharif of 1895 was even less favorable than the Rabi. The rainfall throughout the season was much less than in 1894. The area sown was not much smaller than that of 1894, but a very large portion of it failed to mature for want of rain. The area under crop was 14.5% less than in 1894. There was a very considerable falling off in the area under all the most important food cereals. The cotton crop alone was a good one, in fact the best known for many years. Prices ruled fairly high throughout the year under report and became much higher towards its close.

The total trade was of the Province was decreasing. The total weight of the trade of last year was 39,801,507 maunds as compared with 52,776,861 maunds in the preceding year, viz., about 24.6% less while the value had diminished from Rs. 22, 70, 06,234 to Rs. 22, 05, 38,528 by 2.8% only. It had observed that the imports had shown some improvements both in weight and value, and that the imports had shown some improvements both in weight and value, and the unfavorable results were noticeable in the exports alone. The weight of the exports had decreased by about 13 millions of maunds but the difference in value amounts to about sixty lakhs of rupees only.

The import of raw cotton had small increase, but this was not due to larger local consumption but to an enhanced demand for the export of this article. A firm development in the import of Indian cotton piece-goods was noticed. The largest quantity of these goods came from Karachi seaport, Bombay port standing next in importance. The demand for aniline dyes was increasing and their import appears to be keeping pace with the demand. The import of other dyes had also expanded largely. The cause of the increase in the import of wheat was that a small quantity of wheat had to be brought in from other provinces, although the Rabi crop of 1895 was not so large or so good as that of 1894, yet the demand for foreign export remained brisk. In the import of Railway materials there was a large increase owing to the construction of the Wazirabad- Lyallpur Railway (Rail and River Trade,1886)

On the whole the block of North-Western Provinces and Oudh stood first in the importance in regard to the trade of the Punjab. In imports its share of the total trade had

slightly decreased from 31.76% to 30.23% and that of Karachi had risen from 27.88 to 30.8 just exceeding the % of the United Provinces. In export, however, the latter Provinces had still a long head; they had received only 34.99% of the total export, last year, as against 40.58% in 1894-95. Karachi had made an improvement from 23.28 to 27.63%. As regards the other blocks there were no remarkable variations, except that Bombay port had progressed from 10.47 to 11.01 in exports, While Calcutta port had gone down from 16.18 % to 13.71 % in imports but gained from 8.45 to 9.8 % in exports. (Report,1896)

Table 8
Total trade in munds and value in rupee for the year 1899

Years	Imports		Exports	
	maunds	value Rs	maunds	Value Rs
1896-97	240,874	16,71,610	1,437,321	66,26,948
1897-98	149,151	9,48,106	1,005,297	40,32,578
1898-99	110,814	8,44,077	1,738,575	50,75,847

Imports had decreased both in weight and value, mainly owing to the prevalence of plague in Karachi. The exports mainly wheat had decreased both in weight and value. Decrease in imports spread over most of the articles of trade and was particularly marked in the case of Dyes and Tuns, there was a small increase in Gram and Pulse, oil seeds and railway plants. Other dyes, Grains and Pulse were chief exports, the weight of which increased from 7 to 11 lakhs of munds . Wheat was the most important article for export with in the provinces. The imports and exports were distributed between Sind and Karachi as follows:- (Punjab Report, 1901)

Table 9
Trade between Karachi and Lahore for the years 1901

	Imports		Export	
	Rs	Mds	Rs	Mds
Karachi	6,77,325	84,455	34,06,009	1,242,380
Sindh	1, 66,749	26,359	16, 69,838	516,195

The exports to Sind mostly consist of articles of local consumption. The bulk of the wheat exported direct to Karachi. Taking the total volume of Provincial trade, including both and river-born traffic, the chief increase in imports were found in the following articles:- (Punjab Report,1901)

Table 10
Increase in different articles with value in lakhs

Articles	value lakhs of rupees
Cotton piece-goods European	70
Wine	10
Gunny -Bags and cloths	8
Woolen Piece-goods, Indian	6/5
Manufacture of Iron and steel	6/5
Cola and Coke	6/3
Gold coin and Bullion	4/5
Steel Bails and Fish Plates	3\2
Silk Piece goods Indian	3
Hides of Cattle, Raw	2
Cardamoms	2
Jowar and Bajra	2
Leather, Manufactured	2

The import of the year report valued at Rs. 3, 30, 79,595 was the highest on the record. More than half of the quantity imported comes from Karachi and as in previous years the Delhi city and Sutlej - Jhelum blocks took the large share of the commodity. The import of Leather, Manufactured was mainly from the North-Western Provinces and Bombay and was taken by the Cis Sutlej and Jhelum- Indus blocks. The total value of the import of this article was, however, exceeded by that of the export.

Table 11
Decrease in different articles with value in lakhs

Articles	value lakhs of rupees
Silver Coin	52/2
Sugar, Refined	17
Rise not in the Husk	15
Wheat	11
Sugur, Unrefined	10
Grams and Pulse	9
Horses, Ponies and Mules	8
Ghi	5\2
All other articles of Merchandise	3/2
Kerosine oil	¾
Cotton Piece-goods, Indian	3/2
Irion and steel, wrought	3
Silk Piece- goods, Foreign	3/2

The decrease was mainly in the import derived from Bengal, the supplies from other sources having remained normal. The price had risen but slightly and it was possible that the variation was due only to the action of some of the companies controlling the trade. The decreased import of Cotton piece goods was due to a falling off in the supplies derived from Karachi (Punjab Report,1901)

Table 12
Increase in different articles with value in lakhs

Articles	value lakhs of rupees
Wheat	134/2
Wool, Raw	55/2
Rapes and Mustard seed	28/2
Silver Bullion	30/2
Cotton piece goods European	15/2
Til or jawar	5/2
Other Dyes	5/2
Other oil seeds	5
Carriages and Trunks	2
Wooden Piece-goods European	3/2
Leather, Manufactured	2

The demand had a foreign one, as a whole the whole of the increased export went to Karachi. The export of Cotton Piece-goods European was entirely from Delhi city which took a principal share of the provincial import. (Punjab Report,1901)

Table 13
Increase in different articles with value in lakhs

Articles	value lakhs of rupees
Cotton, Raw	32/2
Jowar and Bajra	20/2
Silver coin	17
Hides of cattle	14/2
Gram and Pulse	12/2
Sugur, Unrefined	7/2
All other articles of Merchandise	6/2
Indigo	6
Cotton Twist and Yarn, Indian	3
Other grains	3
Skins of Sheep, Dressed	2
Cotton Piece-goods, Indian	2

As regards heavy fall in exports of Cotton Raw be noted that the export to the North-Western Provinces declined by one- half; the value of exports to Calcutta and Bombay fell in each case by four lakhs in the case of Karachi by 19 lakhs and condition was unfavorable to export trade. The comparatively high rate of exchange during the year operated against exports to Europe, the reason was that the mills in Bombay and Calcutta, which manufacture

mainly for export to China and the East, were similarly affected by the high price of the rupee. (Punjab Report,1901)

Table 14
Figures of total trade from 1899 to 1901

Years	Imports		Exports	
	maunds	value Rs	maunds	Value Rs
1898-99	14,895,412	12,55,01,976	22,965,864	10,00,07,007
1899-90	19,919,199	12,06,40,348	20,364,616	11,63,73,967
1900-01	16,771,088	12,81,77,559	15,131,419	9,67,45,016

However, the total value of imports during the last three years had been noticeably fast between 12/2 and 13 crores. In total weight the import trade of 1899-1900 exceeded that of the preceding year by 5 million maunds and of the year 1901 by three million Munds. That was probably due to the largely increased import of food grains. The total value of exports of exports, which in 1899-1900 exceeded that of 1898-99 about 1/2 corers, fell again in the year 1901 by almost 2 corers. It was a matter of surprise that in the year in which a severe famine lay over a considerable part of the province, the Multan district, though suffering from a short supply of water was not in a state of famine, Bikaner, Jodhpur and Native States in that direction (Punjab Famine,1901) In the Province the agricultural conditions almost everywhere were unfavorable, a greater value of goods had been sent out of the Punjab than in the prosperous years. The brisk revival of the cotton trade and the export of hides due to the mortality of the cattle in the Southern districts accounted in great measure for this feature of the triennium. (Punjab Report,1901)

As regards District Multan as a whole the following figures gave indications of the courses and nature of trade. The imports and exports by rail for the Railway stations of the Multan District average of two years 1896 (Punjab Internal,1897) and 1897 (Punjab internal,1898) in maunds.

Table 15
Import and Export of different articles

Articles	Imports	Exports	Articles	Imports	Exports
Cotton seed	280	137,021	Salt	19,164	291
Cotton loose	31,272	16,500	Karosine oil	9,088	66
Cotton press	475	168,102	Common oil	5,802	424
Wool raw	40,170	19,799	Dried fruit	16,297	11,484
Gunny-bags	17,176	14,468	Fresh fruits	136	3,260
Edible grain	1,92,288	136,364	Bones	489	8,743
Wheat	98,690	414,962	Hides, skin	2,006	25,383
Rice	37,654	2,733	Iron	27,788	1,228
Oilseeds	27,266	796	Piece goods	26,101	...
Sugar refine	58,600	610	P,G,Indian	7,098	270
Gur	130,210	7,143	Multanimitti	552	...
Ghi	15,074	682	Sajji	260	2,876

District Multan was importer of rice, oilseed, oil, sugar, iron and piece goods and an exporter of wheat, cotton, indigo, bones, hides and sajji. There was an excess import of raw wool but cleaned wool was a staple of export. The district was not well suited for sugarcane or for the better classes of oil seeds and rice so that considerable quantities. So too the surely of ghi in the district did not meet the demands of the city and large imports were made from Jhang and Montgomery. Iron and piece-goods had of course to be imported from Europe. The large exports of the district were almost entirely to Europe except in the case of indigo, the chief part of which goes to central Asia. The chief staple of European trade was wheat, cotton and wool. Multan had long been a well- known centre of wheat trade but with later years it had to contend with new centers such as Layallpur, (Punjab Agri operations Report,1908) which had somewhat impaired its prosperity in this respect.

Conclusion

The introduction of the railway in the district greatly altered the course of the trade and much of the goods formerly going by river or by camels started to go by rail. In 1894 it was estimated that about 700 munds of grain went by river from Bhera to Sukkur, at a rate of 4/2 annas per mund, and 4,000 munds from Khushab to Multan at a rate of 2 annas per mund; but the carriage of goods by rail, though most costly than the river, was considered so much safer and quicker that it was generally preferred. Cotton was largely exported both in raw and manufactured state. Raw cotton was exported mainly from Khushab toward Multan. The district agricultural trade was boosted by the infrastructure of roads, railways and canals. By linking the various canal irrigated districts to Karachi and other parts of India through railway, internal and external trade of the Punjab in agricultural produce dramatically increased. Multan district was mainly connected with the rest of the Punjab through railway line via Sukhar, Kotri and Karachi. The old market towns of Shujabad, Mailsi and Kabirwala which focused their trade on immediate surroundings in the river valley lost their importance. These local centers increasingly found it hard to compete with well managed marts of Khanawal, Mianchannu which were all colony towns. The grain markets were uneasily over crowded in the busy season and it was enlarged from time to time.

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