

## Socio-Cultural Development in Mankera (1900-2000)

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**Abstract:** Mankera, district Bhakkar, Pakistan is situated in the centre of the greater Thal desert between the Indus and Chenab Jhelum rivers. Mankera had been a subordinate state and a buffer zone between the Delhi dynasty and Kabul dynasty for many centuries. Mankera has a glorious and historical culture in the form of forts, tombs, buildings and wells etc. The joint mode of life of the Hindu, Muslim and Sikh populations of this region created unique and correspondent colours of society. A historical research approach has been applied to study the socio-cultural development of the region. After the creation of Pakistan, the migration of Muslims from India and non-Muslims from Pakistan changed the demography and created a new pattern of culture and society. After mixing native and migrant cultures, a new merged society came into being. Now the culture and society of Mankera has being developed in a new pattern which is peaceful and tolerant.

**Key Words:** Desert, Society, Culture, Tradition, Dignity, Inhabitants, Festivals, Fort, Community, Tolerance, Civilization, Historical

### Introduction

Mankera, a tehsil of district Bhakkar, Pakistan is located in the middle of the desert "Sindh Sage Thal Doab" between the Indus and Chenab Jhelum rivers. Mankera has been a sub-state of different dynasties as well as the buffer state between the Mughal and Afghan dynasties. Historically, Mankera has been a central part of "Indus Valley Civilization", one of the pioneer civilizations of the world. Many invaders conquered this region at different times and settled here. Those invaders spread their cultural flavours in the forms of grandiose forts, mosques, buildings and villages including Mankera Fort, Hyderabad Thal (Amwani) Fort, Mojgarh Fort, Tomb of Nawab Sirbuland Khan, Mosque Nawab Sirbuland Khan, Villages Karluwala, Sadhwala, Sher Garh, Wigg Saddar and Patibulanda etc. All these signs are eyewitnesses to the prestige of rulers and the cultural assets of

Mankera. Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs had been residing here for many centuries. The Muslims were in the majority, the Hindus were in second and Sikhs were next, according to the population. The majority of Muslims were peasants, shepherds, hand workers and labourers while the majority of Hindus were traders, shopkeepers and businessmen and Sikhs were cultivators and mesons. All these communities participated in each other's ceremonies of gladness and sorrows and there was no social prejudice among the people of Mankera region. At the time of the Partition of India, the Hindu and Sikh population of Punjab including Mankera migrated to India and Muslims from Indian areas migrated to Pakistan. Many Muslims migrated to the Mankera region and settled in the homes and buildings which were left by Hindus and Sikhs. The migrant people were mostly peasants, hand workers and vendors. All these migrants were allotted the shops; markets and business centres left by

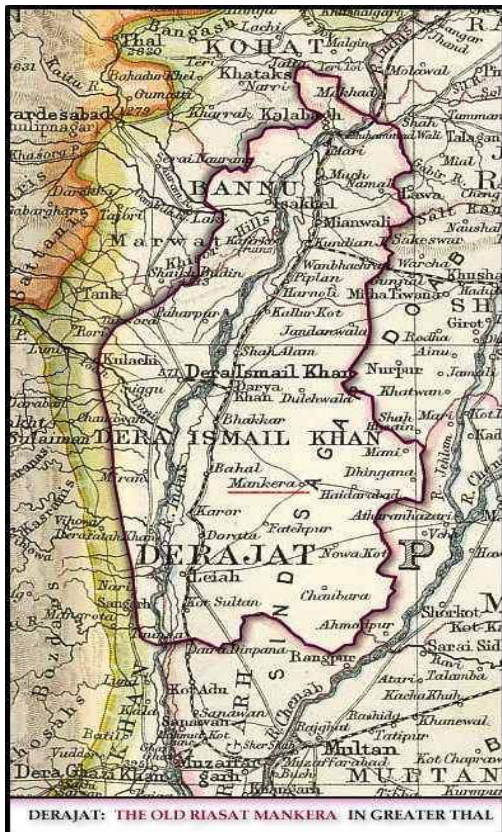
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Hindus and Sikhs. The hardworking and perseverance of Muslim migrants changed the philosophy that Muslims were ineligible for trading and business. The migrants and natives formed a society in which both communities adopted each other's cultural traditions and living styles of society. Now a new society emerged which is a Muslim majority with modern ways of life. As a whole, the society of the Mankera region is tolerant, peaceful and developing Map.

Figure 1

MAP OF State of Mankera



### Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study of the said topic are to highlight the aspects of sociocultural development in its whole complex nature and form from the medieval period to the present era during which migration took place after the creation of Pakistan. As the demography of the region and cultural dimensions of the society changed, so new cultural norms were being established related to the languages, economic

requirements, culture, living styles and social thinking which have been diffusing during the 75 years after independence. It is the requirement of the time to analyze cultural development in the context of social, political, economic and traditional depth in which culture manifests it. I selected this topic because I want to seek the reasons and circumstances for the development of tradition and culture of society before and after partition as well as the comparative analysis of different aspects of society by the change of demography due to partition. I hope that my research will help to contribute to the extent of research.

### Research Question

There was a question in my mind that how the society of the historical region of Mankera has been developing before and after the partition of the Mankera region that had been the centre of merged culture and tradition. I have tried my best to find the circumstances and actual reasons under which the diversity of the society of Mankera has been done. So, for the sake of this purpose, I visited these areas, conversant with learned elder people including Doctors, Teachers, *Hakeem* (local doctors of ancient Greek medical methodology), landlords, and other sensible persons who gave me precious information about the diversity of society. I collected other information by visiting different social media sights including Facebook and YouTube in which the interviews of the people who migrated from Mankera to India were recorded. I also consulted some books and government records including Gazetteers of districts of Punjab and settlement reports. I arrayed all this information and wrote a comprehensive article about the evolution and oscillation of the society of Mankera. I hope that it will be appreciated. The research question is what were the circumstances under which the culture of Mankera Thal was developed during the course of time before and after partition?

### Literature Review

Socio-Cultural development in the society in the region of Pakistan is an interesting topic in the current scenario because the study of cultural effects are playing a vital role in the development of society in all aspects like administration, economic management, maintenance of law and order, procreative activities, art and culture etc. The study of oscillating society involves many factors like language, living styles,

economic conditions, recreation, wedding and death ceremonies, religion, religious activities, population migration, dealings, migration and literature etc. These all factors can be observed by personal observing, reading literature, surveying different places, interviewing learned people, and studying primary and secondary sources. We are studying the cultural development in the historical region of Mankera (district Bhakkar, Pakistan) which is part of one of the pioneer civilizations of the world "Indus Valley civilization". This region is actually the joint interests of many cultural traditions from the north (salt range), south (Sindh and Baluchistan range), west (Pakhtun belt) and east (central Punjab and United Provinces region). All these neighbourhood regions spread their cultural effects over this area as the invaders from these regions not only conquered this region (Sindh Sager Thal Doab, stretched from the Indus River toward Jhelum Chenab rivers) but also scattered their cultural colours over and over this region. This region is unique in its nature as the geographical, climatic; demographical, political, historical and social circumstances have made it very interesting and important. The Geographical expert says that this region was very prosperous in the past as it was irrigated by the River Indus and its tributary rivers. With the passage of time, these rivers went away from this region and became deserts due to lack of rain by weather changes. The desert land and rough climate made it different and unique from the plain areas of Punjab in the context of climate meanings, cultivation by rainfall, and a vast desert area with small numbers of trees and herbs. All these circumstances affected the agriculture, economy and living styles of the people. Before the partition of India, there lived Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims in the region of Mankera Thal. The Muslims were in the majority and Hindus were in the second numbers while Sikhs were in third numbers by the population of this region. The Hindus were residing here for thousands of years and their roots were very deep in this region while most Muslims were those who embraced Islam during the past thirteen hindered years and some Muslims migrated from Afghanistan, Iran, Central Asia and Arab during the course of centuries. The Sikh religion came only four hundred years ago when a Hindu *Khatri* Guru Nanak left the caste system and polytheism and preached for the worship of ALLAH and also adopted *Pagri* (Religious covering over the head like a cap), Beard and Sufism because he was impressed by Muslim saints like Hazrat Mian Mir (R.A) whose tomb

is in Lahore. Guru Nanak and his nine big followers (Gurus) founded a new religion called Sikhism. Ranjit Singh belonging to Gujranwala, Punjab ruled over Punjab, Kashmir and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa from 1799 to 1841. During his rule, he defeated the Sadozai Pathan rulers of the region and conquered the state of Mankera in 1821. During his rule over Punjab including Mankera, many Sikhs migrated from *Maloh* and *Rajputana* (Indian region) and settled in the region of Mankera and populated the villages *Sadhwal*, *Goharwala*, *Karluwala*, *Sher Garh* and *Wigsadar* etc.

The economic position of the people of Mankera was such that most of the Hindus were in a better position such that all major businesses and small industries were in their hands. It was a common concept that Muslims were ineligible for business and trade and Hindus were experts in business and trading in the sub-continent including Mankera Thal. There were handloom in *Haiderabad Thal (Amuwani)* and *Mankera* possessed by Hindus. Most of the Muslims were peasants, labourers, workers, grasscutters and shepherds etc. Some Muslims were landowners. On the other, the Sikhs were mostly mesons, cultivators, landowners and businessmen as well.

There was cultural harmony in the society of Mankera. The people of all communities participated in each other's ceremonies either in deaths or wedding ceremonies. All the people participated in their creative and ceremonial activities like *Mailas* (procreative activities), *Urs*, *Hauli*, *Dewali* and *Besakhi* etc and there was no discrimination among people. Anyhow, the worshipping of each community was in their own worshipping places like mosques, Mandir, *Dharamshalas* and *Gurdwaras*.

After the partition of India in 1947, when two independent states Pakistan and India came into being then the Muslim population residing in Indian Punjab and other areas was forced pushed towards Pakistan. On the other hand, the Hindu and Sikh population residing in Pakistan also migrated toward Indian areas. The Muslim migrants settled in the houses left by Hindus and Sikhs. The same situation was in Mankera. The Hindu and Sikh population migrated toward India and many Muslims migrated towards Mankera and its surroundings. The demography of the Thal region totally changed. Now there were only Muslims residing in this area but these Muslims had different cultures, traditions, languages and living styles etc. The local Muslims speak the Siraeki language with Thalochi dialect while migratory Muslims speak *Punjabi* and

Rangri or Haryanvi languages and so on. There was a vast cultural gap among the people of the region as both local and migratory belonged to different areas having different cultural scenarios, living styles and languages even though these all belonged to the same religion i.e. Islam. With the passage of time, both communities merged with each other to some extent as both communities adopted each other's cultural habits and norms. Now the culture of Mankera is developing as the effects of the development of the world are approaching this society through print, electronic and social media.

The work on the cultural development of Mankera is naturally historical and descriptive. Some people worked on the history of Mankera and some people worked on the culture of the Thal desert but there was a small and limited work for the cultural diversity with all its aspects especially from ancient eras to the present age as there had been done many cultural changes after migration and up to now. There was a deficiency in the work for knowing the cultural oscillation over the course of time. There was also a cultural gap in information about the demographical change and comparative study of the socio-cultural history of Mankera. The beauty of this culture is that the people of this region have been peaceful, humble, simple tempered and modest even when there were Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims residing here before partition and now after the migration of Hindus and Sikhs toward India and migration of different cultured Muslims migratory toward this region.

Keeping in view all these limits and preferences, I itinerated many public places like old forts, Mosques, Mandirs, Gurdwaras, and wells etc, met and interviewed many learned people, visited many libraries, read many journals, newspapers, books, government gazetteers, government records and publications, met social media persons and utilized social media like Facebook pages and YouTube channels etc. Some sources were primary while most of the sources were primary.

The book "Tarikh Riasat e Mankera" by "Malik Dost Muhammad Khokhar" published by "Urdu Sukhan Pakistan" impressed me a lot as the history, politics, tradition and cultural aspects of Mankera disclosed upon me by the study of this book. "Tarikh e Bhakkar" by Noor Muhammad Thind" is the worthiest book which tells the history culture, political and tradition of District Bhakkar including Mankera and Thal desert. "Indebtedness in the pastoral and

agricultural zones of the Bhakkar Thal" written by "T D Bedi" is an excellent research book on the physical aspects and economic conditions of people and animals of the whole of Thal including Mankera. Mr H.St .George Tucker's "Report of land and revenue settlement of Dera Ismail Khan District of Punjab 1872 to 1879" is a piece of comprehensive information about Greater Thal and its surrounding, economic conditions of the people of Bhakkar including Thal.

A famous book "Thal" written by renowned researcher Dr Mahar Abdul Haq" published by "Lok versa Publishing House, Islamabad" is an excellent book on the culture and tradition of the society of the Thal desert region. It elaborates on the natural division of Thal, and traditional, social, cultural and literary information about Thal (Sindh Sager Thal Doaab desert region). The book "Dastan e Bhakkar" written by Syed Javed Husain Shah reflects the history and anthropology in a new pattern. The book "Jam e Tarikh Bhakkar" by Prof. Falak Sher Leel "describes the comprehensive history and civilization of Bhakkar. Research work on Thal Development Authority (TDA) by Dr Muhammad Waseem Abbas" provides great work on Thal settlement and irrigation. "Mashahir Bhakkar o Mianwali" is an excellent book written by Jamil Ahamd Rana Aarif Qureshi that explores the biographies of famous personalities of Bhakkar and Mianwali. "Tarikh e Jhang" written by Bilal Zubairi is another valuable book which provides history and culture of the region including Greater Thal. In the end, the research work "Socio-Cultural History of Mankera" by Muhammad Saqlain" reflects the culture and Society of Mankera and is a comparative study of changing culture after migration.

## Research Methodology

A descriptive and historical method with positivity in logic was used to research the said topic. The attitudes and behaviours are also described. The social life as well as the religious activities along with their beliefs is narrated. The political situation of Punjab including the Mankera region during different eras is considered so that historical background may highlight the cultural development of this region. Population and Samples during different eras are considered so that historical background may highlight the cultural development of this region.

Firsthand knowledge is called Primary sources. Primary sources were used as followed Diaries, Letters, Interviews, Oral histories, Photographs

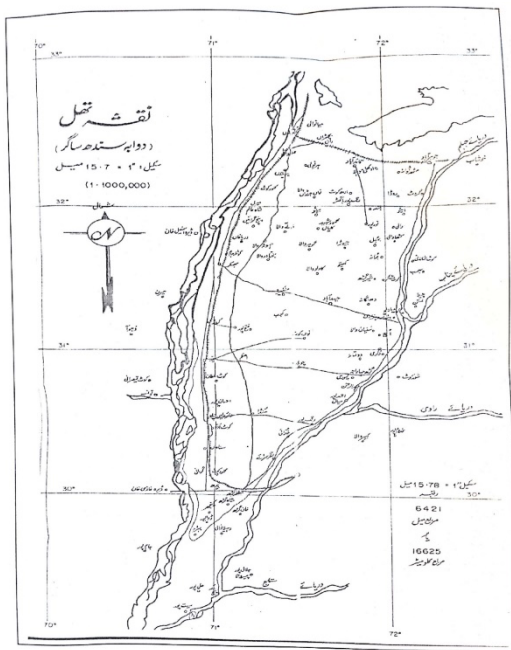


Newspapers, Poems, Atlas, Plays etc. Secondary sources are the sources which are derived material after analysis. Secondary sources use primary sources as evidence. Some secondary sources are as followed below:

The Books are written by research process, Scholarly Articles, and Bibliographies, The articles and books links in the navigation bar Dissertation and thesis etc.

**Figure 2**

Map (Greater Thal Desert)



Map of Thal Desert Punjab Pakistan

The region of Greater Thal is situated between seventy-one to seventy-two degrees in longitude and thirty to thirty-two point five degrees in latitude on the map of Pakistan with an area of sixteen thousand and five hundred square kilometres surrounded by Chenab Jhelum and Indus rivers are called Sindh Sager Thal Doab. The shape of the Thal region is an irregular triangle like a carrot. Jhelum and Chenab form its eastern border while the Indus River meets both rivers on the south side which form its western border. In this way, the natural boundary bestowed it a separate identity. This region is partially divided among Mianwali, Khushab, Jhang and Muzafargarh districts and most of its remaining part is divided between

Bhakkar and Layyah districts (Abdul Haq, 2003). Mankera had a central position in the region of the vast Sindh Sager Thal Doab desert situated between the Indus River and Chenab Jhelum rivers in terms of history. Since ancient times, Mankera City had the honour of being the capital of the state of Mankera. The land of Mankera is the custodian home of many ethnicities and cultures. Inside the derelict and seemingly unimportant ruins here are hidden immense gifts of history. History is actually a museum of experiences of the world of humanity which provide the intention that future generations can benefit from the right to earn (Khokhar, 2017).

The land of Mankera has a political and social history as many local and foreign ruled over this area and like Arabs, Turks, Mughals, Balochs, Pathan, Sikhs and British etc. It is an attempt at the political and social history of Mankera has so many specific events that in its foothills. This land birthed many personalities as their knowledge and art have been recognized for centuries (Saqlain, 2022).

### Medieval Period

The splendour of the great region Mankera and the whole of the desert Thal has remained the same throughout the scientific age from the Stone Age to the present day. There was a time when the land of Mankera was part of the Indus Basin. Aryans, Bhatti, Rajput, Egyptians, Iranians and Greeks, Bloches, Pathan and Mughals keep this great region of Thal Mankera included in their territory. Jiskani Bloches ruled over Mankera and its surrounding regions for a long time from 1648 to 1789 A D and its first ruler was Mir Bloch Khan 1<sup>st</sup> and last Jiskani Bloch ruler of Mankera was Muhammad Khan Jiskani. The famous fort whose ruins are still present in Mankera was also built by the Jiskani Bloch rulers (Shah, 2019). In the last times of the medieval period, Sadozai Pathan of Multan ruled over Mankera and its surroundings from 1795 to 1821 A D. The famous Sadozai ruler of Mankera was Nawab Muhammad Khan Sadozai whose title was Nawab Sirbuland Khan. Nawab ruled over Mankera and its surroundings from 1795 to 1815 AD (Gilani, 2015). Nawab Sirbuland Khan extended Mankera Fort and built Mubarak Garh Fort (district Kot Addu) and *Jameah Masjid* (comprehensive Mosque) Mankera. His tomb is still situated in Mankera Fort. The last Sadozai ruler of Mankera was Nawab Ahmad Khan from 1815 to 1821 AD (Kaleem, 1981). Nawab Ahmad Khan Sadozai was defeated by Ranjit Singh in

1821 and Nawab Ahmad Khan was sent to its land (*Jaagir*) in Dera Ismail Khan. Once upon a time, the region of Mankera enjoyed the status of a buffer state during the Mughal rule (Thind, 2007). Mankera was a heartland in the Indus Basin. The attackers coming from Bolan Pass and Khyber Pass used to pass through Mankera and encamp at *Trimon Dwarf*. Due to its location on the road from Lahore to *Qandhar* (Afghanistan), the historical importance of Mankera increased (Zubairi, 2002). It is proved that in the Mankera region, *Amwani* (Hyderabad Thal), *Bhakkar*, *Mal Kher Kot* (old name of Mankera), *Kehir Kot* (*Kror Lal Esan*), *Loh Kot*, *Moj Garh* and *Kot Machhi* were the oldest cities of that era. Today the names of *Moj Garh* and *Kot Machi* have disappeared from the page. The names of *Johar Abad*, *Quaid Abad* (district *Khushab*), *Fatehpur*, *Chok Azam* (district *Layyah*) and *Sara e Mohajir* (district *Bhakkar*) do not appear in history because these cities were built later (Khokhar, 2017). There were many old cities famous in history but none of them except *Multan* is present now. Where jungles were once thousands of years ago, baronial cities can be seen today, and the industrial cities of the past are now a collection of ruins. Therefore it is believed that the caravan of history is running headlong. The clouds of dust flying from its feet are in reality full of traditions, and cultural and linguistic trust. Every particle and every individual has a history in its own place because history is the name of researching the past and with this research, a person can study the era of millions and millions of years ago (Kkoxhar, 2017).

### Arrival of Sikhs

The Sikh religion was born in Indian sub-continent Punjab. Baba Guru Nanak was its founder. He was born into a Hindu *Khatri* family in the town *Talvandi* district of *Nankana Sahib* (Punjab province, Pakistan) in 1469 AD. He was a very broad-minded, well-mannered and amiable person. He raised his voice against the self-imposed principles of narrow-minded Brahmins. He believed in unity, moral life and social equality. He was greatly benefitted by many Muslim saints like "*Hazrat Mian Mir*(R A) and *Syed Husain* (R A). Under the influence of Muslim saints, and having the opportunity to learn the Persian language and exhorted to monotheism like *Bhagat Kabir*. His teaching was that God is one, all are equal, and caste is not an object. He wanted to create brotherly relations among Hindus and Muslims. After his death in 1530 AD, his followers especially his Gurus started

to interfere in the politics of the Mughal dynasty due to which some of his *gurus*, *Arjun* and *Gobind Singh* sentenced to death. His followers then completely derived from the sect of Nanak and gradually became to establish their kingdom in Punjab. That became a sect and famous for its enmity against Muslims (Latif, 1891). In the reign of Sadozai's rule over Mankera, Ranjit Singh succeeded to establish a Sikh Kingdom in Punjab. He attacked six times over Mankera. In the last attack on Mankera, an agreement was signed between Sadozai ruler Nawab Sher Muhammad Khan Sadozai and Ranjit Singh which Sadozai went to his land in Dera Ismail Khan and Mankera was occupied by Ranjit Sigh in 1821 AD (Kohli, 1933).

After the fall of Mankera on December 25, 1821, Maharaja Ranjit Singh took control of the surrounding areas of Mankera including *Bhakkar*, and *Layyah* and made *Sardar Amir Singh Sandhanwala*, the (Nzim) Governor of Mankera. *Amir Singh Sandhanwala* was a native of the suburbs of Amritsar district. In it, the spirit of Sikhism was found at the highest level. For this reason, Amir Singh Sandhanwala established two sikh settlements in the heart of the *Bhidwal* Mankera region, one of them was named "*Sher Garh*" on the name of its closed relative *Sher Singh Sandhanwala* and the other settlement was its own ex-village *Sandhanwala* was called as "*Saadhwala*." *Sher Singh*,s children became Muslims and now they are called *Shergill* but the resident of *Saadhwala* remained true to their religion and migrated toward India after the partition of India (*Bhidwal*, 1901).

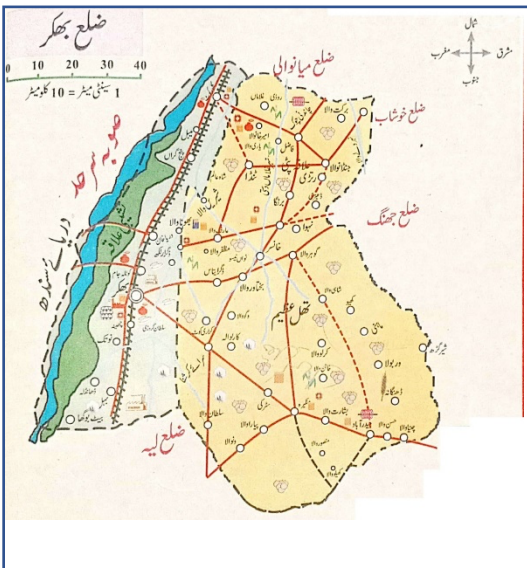
During the rule of Ranjit Sigh, over Mankera, *Lala Ratan Chand* became governor from 1822 to 1824, *Naraen Das Arora* from 1824 to 1827, *Tej Bhan Arora* from 1827 to 1828, *Abdul Samad Badozai* from 1828 to 1831, *Sardar Khizan Singh* from 1831 to 1837, *Dewan Jawaya Ram* from 1837 to 1839. *Maharaja Ranjit Singh* died in 1839 and his son *Kharak Singh* became *Maharaja*. *Dewan Karam Chand* became governor of Mankera from 1840 to 1844, *Ghulam Mustafa Khan Sadozai* from 1846 to 1847 and *Dewan Ratan Chand* became governor from 1847 to 1848. After the death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the influence of the British Empire increased and at last they occupied Mankera on June 30, 1848 AD (Khokhar, 2017).

During Sikh rule over Mankera, there were prominent tribes residing in this region like Muslim tribes *Chheena*, *Dhol*, *Bidwal*, *Sial*, *Khokhar*, *Karlu*, *Bhutta*, *Khoja Sheikh*, *Kais* etc. and Hindu sikh tribes

like Makar, Sandal, Joneja, and Aahoja etc. There were many famous personalities of Mankera during Sikh like Malik Raazi Khan Chheena, Malik Baaru Khan Bhidwal, Malik Ghulam Husain Bhutta, Malik Shah Aalam Chheena and Malik Godha Khan Khokhar etc. There played many indigenous games like Tent Pegging, Wrestling, Kabaddi, Hammer Thougthing etc. The famous forts were Mankera Fort, *Karlu wala fort Mahni Fort*, *Mojgarh Fort*, *Kerari kot fort* and *Amwani (Haiderabad Thal) Fort* etc. (Thind, 2007).

Figure 3

MAP3 (District Bhakkar)



### English Rule and Administrative Changes

The British had completely taken over the state of Mankera and its adjoining states in December 1848 AD and all the powers were taken by the Sikh government by excluding all the functionaries. The British abolished the delimitation of the states, re-fixed the taxation rate and organized revenue rules. The state was given the status of Tehsil and added to Jhang District (Zubairi, 2002). Later; the tehsils of Layyah and Mankera were separated from Jhang district in 1853 and included in Dera Ismail Khan District. In 1860 AD, the province of Multan was merged with the province of Lahore and was named Punjab. In 1860, the level of tehsil status of Mankera decreased and became the status of Police station and Bhakkar was given the status of Tehsil and police station Mankera was

included in Bhakkar Tehsil. At the same time, Darya Khan Tehsil was also broken. Mianwali and Isa Khel were also included in the Bannu district. When in 1901AD, the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP, now called Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) came into being and Mianwali and Isa Khel of Bannu District were excluded from Bannu District. In October 1901, two tehsils Bhakkar and Layyah of Dera Ismail Khan district were excluded and included in the Mianwali district. In this way, a complete district of Mianwali was formed comprising on tehsils of Mianwali, Isakhel, Bhakkar and Layyah and added to the province of Punjab. In 1908, Layyah Tehsil was separated from Mianwali District and added to Muzafargarh District. Thus Mianwali district was left to consist of three tehsils Bhakkar, Mianwali and Isakhel (Gazetteer of District Mianwali, 1915).

After capturing Punjab, the British compiled the lists of landlords, chiefs and others of districts. The names of different tribesmen Chheena, Bhidwal, Magassi, Pathan and some Hindus taken from the tribes living in the Mankera region were sent to Commissioner Multan who declared their allegiance to the British government. He gave them the names of *Khan Bahadur*, *Malik* and *Sardar* etc. Some provincial courtiers were granted *jagirs* (agricultural land) and were named *Zaildar* and *Inamdard* for the sack of revenue collection. In Mankera region, *Malik ALLAH Divaya* was *Zaildar*. *Bara Khan Magassi* of Mankera and *Gulsher Chheena* of Haiderabad Thal were *Inamdard* and both these *Inamdars* received Rs.100 per year. *Malik Ladhu Khan Kohawar* was an honorary magistrate in Bhakkar Tehsil (Tukker, 1879).

According to the censuses 1901 and 1911, the population of Bhakkar tehsil including Mankera and Haiderabad *taluquas* was as under:

Table 1

Annual census Report 1901 and 1911

S. NO	Year	Population
1	1901	1,16,612
2	1911	1,85,127

In the following there is data on the population in each of the 10,000 populations with respect to religion in district Mianwali including the Mankera region:

**Table 2**

population according to religion

S. No	Name of Religion	Population (out of 10000)
1	Hindu	1064
2	Muslim	8788
3	Sikh	143
4	Jain	1
5	Christians	4

The people of the Mankera Thal region spoke the Siraeki language with the *Thalli* dialect mixed with the *Jhangi* dialect. Therefore the Siraeki language of the Mankera Thal region was very unique from the other parts of Bhakkar Tehsil (Gazetteer of District Mianwali, 1915).

There were different castes and tribes in Mankera regions as Chheenas had great numbers of their populations. The others were *Bhidwals*, *Biluch* (*Magassi*, *Mammar*), *Awans*, *Qureshi*, *Syeds*, *Pushias*, *Kais*, *Khoja sheikh*, *Dhols* and *Sithars* etc while in Hindu castes were *Bathla*, *Sandal*, *Pandit*, *Dyal*, *Arora*, *Ahuja* and *Revri* etc while in Sikhs there were *Makar*, *Arora*, *Rajput* and *Jats* were prominent castes (Keshu Films, 2020).

There were Muslim, s mosques, *Madrasas* and *Imambargas* in every village small and large in the Mankera region. There was famous madras in Mankera headed by Molana Ahmad Yar before partition. Another *madrasa* was headed by Hafiz Muhammad Ali Maitla in Mankera (Khokhar, 2017). The Hindu worshipping places *Mandirs* and *Dharamshala* were in every village of the Mankera region. In Mankera there was a famous *Mandir "Shri Mahbeer Gi."* There was a famous *Dharamshala* in Haierabad Thal. In the Mankera region, there were also sikh worshipping places called *Gurdwara*. There was a famous "Gurdwara of Bhai Naraen das "in Haiderabad Thal. There were *gurdwaras* in *Saadh wala*, *Karlu wala* and *Wig Sadar* Saqlain. (2022). There were many prominent Muslim personalities like *Gul Sher Chheena* and *Malik Shamsher Chheena*, *Hakeem Saawan Lal*, *Nand Lal of Haiderabad* and *Molana Sheikh Ahmad Yar* in Mankera region (Khokhar, 2017).

### Administration After the Independence of Pakistan

After the creation of Pakistan, there were many serious issues faced by the newly born state of Pakistan, One of them was the flood of Muslim

migratory which was sent towards Pakistan. These migrant Muslims were forcedly and crucially driven out from their houses along with a storm of massacre and girls were taken away. All this was due to a well-organized conspiracy against the infant state of Pakistan so that it might not be handle all these disasters. There came migrants in the Mankera region too like the other parts of Pakistan. The local people of Mankera welcomed the refugees and spread no time in settling them. Food was cooked and served to the refugees, who settled in houses constructed and left by Hindus. Migrants were allotted residential and agricultural property in lieu of their claims and those who had agricultural land were temporarily allotted land as substance and one handloom for each family in Mankera Thal region so that the industry of Mankera would continue. The vacuum created after the departure of Hindus and Sikhs was filled by the settlement of Muslim migrants (Qureshi, 2014). The Hindus who left Pakistan were sure that Pakistan, the business should be collapsed, the market would be deserted and agricultural land uninhabited, but the Muslim migrants with their dedication to business and every sphere of life created such brilliance that everyone was surprised not only Mankera but every city of Pakistan has become prosperous than before (Abbas.2020).

On November 15, 1981, Tehsil Bhakkar was upgraded to district headquarters consisting of three tehsils Bhakkar, Kallurkot and Mankera as police stations Mankera and Kallurkot were also upgraded to tehsil headquarters and were included in the newly formed district Bhakkar. Now from 1981, the status of Mankera is a tehsil headquarters and it is part of district Bhakkar to till now (Gazetteer of Bhakkar District, 2022).

After becoming a Tehsil headquarter, the population of Mankera according to the census he population of Mankera is as under:

**Table 3**

The population development of Tehsil Mankera

S#	Name	Status	Population census 1998	Population census 2017
1	Mankera	Tehsil	169,882	256,865

The area of Mankera Tehsil is 1,768 Sq Km. The population density is 145.3 Sq Km according to the



census 2017. The annual population change from 1998 to 2017 is 2.2%.

**Table 4**

Gender distribution according to census 2017

S. No	Gender	Population
1	Male	131,243
2	Female	125,642
3	Transgender	10

Age groups in Mankera according to the census 2017 are as under:

**Table 5**

(Age group table (Census 2017) Tehsil Mankera

S. No	Age Group	population
1	0-14 years	97505
2	15- 64 years	148060
3	65+ years	11330

## Conclusion

Mankera Tehsil, Bhakkar District, Pakistan is one of the largest tehsils in terms of area. Its area is 1,768 sq km. The population density is 145.3 Sq Km according to Census 2017. It is a desert area and due to the lack of resources, the wheel of development has been running slow here for a long time. Despite its backwardness, this region has been a mirror of the

civilization and culture of the ancient Indus Valley. This region had many cultural colours in its sheet being the central area of three rivers. This region had the status of a regional sub-state and was the centre of the whole desert region up to the beginning of the nineteenth century. The forts of Mankera and Hyderabad Thal, the tombs of the past rulers, mosques, *Dharamshala*, temples & *gurdwaras*, streets and courtyards testify to its antiquity and civilization as well as to the harmony and tolerance among Hindus and Muslims and Sikhs. This region has been a cradle of peace and harmony as well as the cradle of Sikh, Muslim and Hindu customs and cultures. After the occupation of this region by the British, it was downgraded from the status of a state to the level of a police station. The exodus that followed the partition in 1947 had its effects on its cultural and traditional condition, but the neighbourhood's traditional simplicity, generosity and hospitality soon attracted the Muslim migrant brothers to its foothills. In spite of differences in dialects and many differences in customs and living styles, the peace-loving nature of this neighbourhood and the joys of widening their horizons for their brothers made both classes settle in each other's hearts. Its simplicity and vastness have reshaped the culture in its vast foothills and now this neighbourhood has emerged as a mirror of creative development of the best culture as the tehsil headquarters.

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