

Gulab Singh and the beginning of the historiographical tradition on Jammu

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In dominant historical narratives and popular perception, Maharaja Gulab Singh has invariably been portrayed as a great warrior and statesman of the 19th century. He is projected and perceived as a self-made military hero who began as an ordinary soldier and ended by crowning himself king of one of the largest princely states, Jammu and Kashmir. Descriptions of his phenomenal military success have overshadowed his other important, long-term contribution to the realm of historiography on Jammu and to the making of the region's historical consciousness. His keen interest in textualizing the history of Jammu and his use of historiography as a tool to contest the colonial construct aimed at altering the region's historical memory were, by all standards of the time, an extraordinary contribution. This appears even more so when seen in light of the fact that he did not have either the time or the occasion to receive any formal education. The present paper is an attempt to bring out this enduring contribution of Maharaja Gulab Singh, which has rarely been part of the continuing historical discourse.

Jammu did not have a *Rajatarangini*, or rather, even if it had one, there is no way we can know about it. A historical text of the kind of *Rajatarangini*, based on which one could construct the fascinating historical profile of Kashmir, was simply unavailable in the context of Jammu¹. In fact, the domain of discourse on the past of Jammu was nonexistent till as late as the beginning of the fourth decade of the nineteenth century. The absence of any historical narrative, therefore, had left enough space and scope for any interested agency to appropriate, create, or even

alter whatever little existed in the name of a historical narrative of the region. In the second half of the fourth decade of the nineteenth century, this is precisely what happened; the vacant space of local historiography was suddenly sought to be appropriated and hegemonized by the trans-local Colonial authority, which had earlier collaborated with the new royalty in the making of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. However, since the purpose of the production, and also of the consumption, of the knowledge of the past of the region had an agenda, the colonial narrative sought to create a historical narrative that was not only garbled but also fell far short of being objective in its construction.

The urgent necessity to create a historical narrative on Jammu by the members of the colonial dispensation was the result of their misplaced perception of the Treaty of Amritsar with Maharaja Gulab Singh. The unprecedented expansion of his military commander, General Zorawar Singh, in territories such as Baltistan, Leh, and Ladakh, particularly in Tibet, had already sown the seeds of apprehension about the ambition of Maharaja Gulab Singh, which was further accentuated by the possibility of a Dogra- Nepal rapprochement. There also lurked the fear in their mind of the colonial authority that the Maharaja may join hands with the disgruntled element of the Lahore Darbar. Thus, despite the conclusion of the treaty, there was enough fear and apprehension among the members of colonial powers who no longer considered Maharaja Gulab Singh as a predictable and trustworthy ally². They somehow now wanted to redeem their perceived mistake by dislodging the new Maharaja or at least diluting the legitimacy of his authority.

The hidden agenda comes out clearly in the very introduction of the first colonial narrative titled *A History of the Reigning Family of Lahore with some account of the Jummoorajahas, the Seik soldiers, and their Sirdar*³. G.Car Michael Smyth, the author of the text, begins his narrative by stating, "...after the

account given in these pages of GoolaubSingh(Gulab Singh) atrocities, the public will, I dare say, be greatly surprised at the British Government entering into a treaty with such a monster⁴. He then goes on to add ‘my works also include the history of the Dogra family and their iniquities with which but few people are acquainted.... I have now been twenty-six years in India, and during the whole of my sojourn in the East, I have never heard of so infamous a miscreant as the Rajah of Jummoo.’⁵

The organization and the title of the book, and the place and space allocated in it to the history of Jammu, indicate that Smyth had no intention to write on the history of Jammu; he was originally engaged in producing a historical narrative on the Lahore Darbar. The history of Jammu was an afterthought that was hurriedly constructed and appended to the text, which was nearing the end of its compilation⁶.

The book consists of twelve chapters, a section on miscellaneous notices, and an appendix, spanning more than two hundred sixty pages. Of the twelve chapters, only one, a rather slim section, was devoted to the history of Jammu, covering the period from ancient times to the emergence of Gulab Singh as Maharaja, and it spans merely forty-five pages. Within those forty-five pages, the ancient past of Jammu receives only marginal space, filled with patchy and vague details about the names of some kings and dynasties.

While dealing with the genealogy of the new Maharaja, Smyth locates their ancestral home in a nondescript village somewhere near Oude⁷. Though he also furnishes a detailed list of ancestors of the Maharaja, they all have been described as ordinary soldiers or, at best, petty Zagirdars who were uncivilized, uncouth,

moving around in the forest with half-naked followers⁸ and most of the time living in temporary huts⁹.

Smyth's narrative indicates an unexplained haste to arrive at the period of Gulab Singh. There are occasions in his narratives where he takes a temporal jump by merely enumerating names without any details¹⁰. His eagerness to reach the period of Gulab Singh becomes quite obvious when he hurriedly summarizes the account of Beeram Dehu and his successors by stating that “ it is necessary, however, to pass over ...purely traditional times and to come down at once nearer the present day.”¹¹

Thus, after offering a hurried and sketchy account of the ancestral history of Maharaja, Smyth moves on to discuss the rise of Gulab Singh. His description of the rise of Gulab Singh from the position of an ordinary soldier to the position of Jagirdar, Raja, and Maharaja is just contrary to what we have in the *Rajadarshani*.

Explaining how Gulab Singh rose to the position of Jagirdar, he writes, “In the beginning of 1814, Runjeet Sing found an excuse for displacing the Jemadar, Kooshial Singh, to whom he had committed the charge of the district, and for delivering the country over to his favorites, the Rajpoot brothers. This measure was the result of an intrigue of the elder brother, Goolauboo (Gulab Singh), who had managed to fill his master's mind with distrust of the Jemadar by describing him as engaged in schemes for establishing himself as the independent chief of the hill countries. With the " aid and support of Misser Dewan Chand, the wily brothers found little difficulty in persuading the too partial Maharajah that in their hands only could the government of their native district be satisfactorily carried on. As preliminary to their formal establishment in the hills, Goolauboo was presented with a Jaghire of about forty thousand rupees a year”¹².

On his rise from jagirdar to Raja, he had the following words to offer: “It must be observed here that the younger brothers, from their good looks and more compliant disposition, were personally more in favor with the Maharaja than was MeeanGoolauboo (Gulab Singh). On them, Runjeet was desirous of conferring the title and dignity of Rajah, but they, well tutored in the part they were to play, declared that they could not consent to receive honors, which were withheld from Goolauboo, their wise, brave, and well-deserving elder brother. They prayed, therefore, of their kind master, their father, as they now styled the Maharaja, that in any honors and favors which he had to bestow upon the family, Goolauboo might have that preference to which his merits, as well as his seniority, entitled him. A slave to his vile passions, which had driven him into the toils of these cunning and unscrupulous youths, Runjeet, rather than forego his design of ennobling his minions, Dehanoo, and Suchetoo, at length consented to include the less favored elder brother in the patent of nobility. Thus, in the year 1818, the three brothers were created Rajas¹³

Having said all this, Smyth ends his accounts by saying, “The later history of the three brothers, the death of the two younger and the exaltation of the eldest, are recorded elsewhere in this book, and need not, therefore, be further noticed. It is enough to say that Maharajah Guoolaub Sing, *through the favor of the British Government*(emphasis mine), sovereign of Kashmirand Jummoo, is now sole and undisputed LORD OF THE HILLS”¹⁴.

Throughout the narrative of Gulab Singh's life, Smyth makes uncharitable, often nasty insinuations. He would like us to believe that everything bad that happened to the Sikhs during and after Ranjeet Singh was the doing of Gulab Singh and his brothers. As if the derision of Gulab Singh's ancestors and insinuation against him were not enough, Smyth tends to become more aggressive when he describes the

character of the Maharaja as ‘most repulsive, ambitious, avaricious and cruel by nature’¹⁵. He then goes on to add that “He is an eater of opium, he tells long stories, keeps irregular hours, sleeps little, has a mind unsettled, offers little, promises less.... yet with all this, in reality, a very leech, sucking their life's blood, the shameless slave-trader of their boys and daughters, brothers' sisters, wives, and families. The would-be great merchant of the east; the very jack of all trades, the usurer, the turnpenny, the briber and the bribed, ...the very pawnbroker, the very purchaser and retaker of his alms”¹⁶.

It is in this context that we see the initiative by Maharaja Gulab Singh to construct and textualize a meta-historical narrative of Jammu that can be put into the public domain, not only to counter the colonial narrative but also to historicize Jammu's past on the larger canvas of history. Besides this, the royal initiatives towards historical reconstruction were also rooted in the difficult context within which it was located¹⁷. The newfound authority of the Maharaja was resented by some of the erstwhile states of the region in Jammu¹⁸, and the legitimacy of his authority was also being contested in Kashmir. Since the creation of the new state also led to the creation of new geographical boundaries, there was also a need to announce and popularize the new territoriality of its sovereignty with a hint of history¹⁹. As stated earlier, the colonial authority was already engaged in the alteration and appropriation of the history of the region for its vested interest²⁰. The matter was further complicated by insinuations and uncharitable descriptions of the new Monarch, which had started appearing from Punjab.

Thus, hemmed in by a zone of multiple discomforts, the Maharaja decided to use history as a tool to even out many of his discomforts. Soon after becoming the Maharaja, therefore, Gulab Singh launched the project to craft a meta-historical

narrative on Jammu and, without losing any time, chose GaneshadasBadehra to do this.

It may be worthwhile to mention that the chosen one, ie, Ganeshdas Badehra, neither belonged to Jammu²¹ nor was the craft of history writing his calling; he belonged to a family of scribes and traditional revenue officials²². He makes no bones of the fact that he and his ancestors earned their bread by working as ‘*ganungo* at the *chakala* of Gujarat ’ before he was brought to Jammu by his master to work in his office sometime in 1846²³. Badehra speaks in detail about his ancestry and family and their occupation²⁴, but nowhere does he ever stake a claim to be a historian of any consequence or refer to any of his works of any kind, much less on history²⁵.

The point one is trying to make by citing these details is that when Badehra was assigned the job, he neither had much time nor enough sources; even his familiarity with the entire region must have been limited, given the fact that the better part of his life was spent there in the Chakla of Gujrat, and he was barely one year old when he arrived in Jammu. However, one must admire the genius of Badehra, who, despite his continuing engagements, transcended all the limitations of time, space, and knowledge and managed to bring out, within a short span of a little less than a year, a chronological historical narrative, ranging in time from the period of the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* to the period of his Patron. What is, however, important about the text is that it was crafted in a manner that suited the needs of his patron and also the people of the region.

Badehra seems to have been much inspired by the rules of historians’ crafts laid down by Kalhana in his *Rajatrarangini*.²⁶ The first clear manifestation of this is the title of his text, which was *Rajadarshani*. Explaining the framework of his

narrative, he says that "...I compiled this treatise in the fashion of a *Rajavali* and named it *Rajadarshani*"²⁷. Since Kalhana refers to the sources of his construct, Badehra also does the same in his text using almost similar phraseology. Talking about sources of his narrative, Badehra starts with a disclaimer to the effect that "... despite the best effort no history of this country could be discovered, and the existence of the former rulers could not be ascertained"... In the same pages, however, he goes on to describe the sources by stating that 'I heard most of the account from the narrators of the old lore, and the Brahmin conversant with true knowledge of dynasties and from bard.... Some facts were narrated to me by greyheads and knowers of facts. Some facts were gleaned from various histories of India and from the manuscript of ancient *Rajavalis*... I gathered some names from here and some facts from there"²⁸.

The first issue with which the author engages himself in the text, after dedicating a few verses in the praise of god and his patron²⁹, is to construct a respectable lineage and distinguished royal ancestry of Maharaja Gulab Singh. Thus, he pronounces, summarily but emphatically at the beginning that " as the Rajas of Jammu are related to the *Surajbanshi* race and go by the name of *Raghuvanshi*, the origin of their line has been established from the Sun and is brought down to the auspicious name of Sri Maharaja Gulab Singh Bahadur"³⁰.

After making this pronouncement, Badehra engages himself with the ancient past and, in the process, constructs a detailed genealogy of Maharaja Gulab Singh from the period of the *Ramayana* and *the Mahabharata*³¹. He begins with a description of the divine origin of the solar race³² and provides a list of the kings who belonged to this race. The long account that follows Badehra takes us to the period of the *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*, talks about the migration of Raja Agni Gir from Ayodhya to Jammu, through Ajmer and Haridwar, and then takes us to

the establishment of the Jammu Kingdom by Raja Jammu Lochan³³. From this point onwards, he details the rise and fall of several dynasties, which are not known through any other sources, and finally takes us to the emergence of the Dev dynasty, the various branches of which ruled the state since then, and, finally, we are told that Maharaja Gulab Singh was related to this ruling house.

Apart from connecting the new Maharaja with the mythical Rama and constructing his respectable lineage, Badhera also tries to establish the royal pedigree of Maharaja Gulab Singh and legitimize his authority over the territory by giving a detailed account of how the areas within his state and even outside were conquered by the kings of his lineage at different points of time in history. The central purpose of Badhera's *Rajadarshani* was to write the history of the Jammu region woven around the ancestral history of Maharaja Gulab Singh; he also tries to weave his narrative on a larger geographical canvas by situating it in the larger context of the history of 'north-western India'³⁴. Thus, two narratives run parallel all along the text; one related to the history of North-West in general and another one related to the history of Jammu in particular. What follows in the name of the ancient past is the continuous narrative of wars, the rise and fall of different dynasties, territorial gains and losses made by the ancestors of Maharaja Gulab Singh. In places, he goes out of his way to prove that the ancestors of the Maharaja were great rulers and warriors, and one of them even managed to conquer the whole of India³⁵. This total saga of victory and defeat, territorial gain and loss, is finally presented at the beginning of the eighteenth century, when Maharaja Ranjit Dev became the ruler. Badhera clearly enumerates the names of the areas that were under the control of Maharaja Ranjit Dev by the beginning of the eighteenth century³⁶. The list of areas given by Badhera, incidentally, included all the areas that came under the control of Maharaja Gulab Singh.

However, the process of legitimizing the claim of the new Maharaja over Kashmir was not as easy for Baderah as it was in the context of Jammu. What made his work difficult was the presence of a well-documented history of the region. Baderah thus chooses to change the format of his narrative when it comes to Kashmir. Instead of talking about the region in detail, he speaks intermittently about it and makes constant attempts to project it as the region which existed in history as a subordinate one to Jammu³⁷. He does this by citing several occasions when the ancestors of the Maharaja intervened, or were invited to intervene, whenever any crisis emerged in Kashmir in historical times.

The real genius of Baderah as a historian comes out when he constructs a narrative that served to legitimize the claim of the Maharaja to Kashmir. What offered him the clue to his masterly stroke of the craft of history was the ambiguity that existed in *Rajatarangini* about the names of fifty-two rulers who ruled Kashmir for a period of about twelve hundred and sixty-six years. Kalhana, while writing the history of Kashmir, attempted to retrieve their names, but ultimately gave up by stating that the names of thirty-five kings “have been immersed in the ocean of oblivion, their names and deeds having perished through the destruction of the records”³⁸.

It is here that Ganesh Das painstakingly constructs the history of the family of Raja Jammu, also known as Jam Dev, and locates his family in Kashmir.³⁹ He goes on to suggest that the elder son of Raja Jammu, Daya Karan, was deputed to rule over *Sati-sar*, i.e., the Kashmir region, on the earnest supplication of the countries and the chief thereof⁴⁰. His descendants ruled there for about twenty generations for a period of six hundred and fifty years. He further adds that “some say fifty-five people from his illustrious dynasty enjoyed the sovereignty of Kashmir for a period of one thousand and seven hundred years. At last, the last

ruler of Kashmir belonging to the dynasty of the Raja of Jammu ... was killed on the battlefield of Kurukshetra in the war between Kurus and Pandavas”⁴¹. He takes his arguments to their logical conclusion in the text by describing the entry of Gulab Singh into Kashmir. To quote him, “ The *vilayat* of Kashmir had long before the era of *kalyug* been favored by the Rajas of Jammu...after the passage of a period of four thousand, nine hundred and forty-seven years, the *entitlement* reverted to the *claimant* (i.e., *Maharaja*)...and the countries of Jammu and Kashmir were integrated into one unit”⁴².

An important strand in Badehra's narrative is the way he speaks about the colonial authority in the text. Though the entire narrative constructed by him aimed at the glorification of the new Maharaja and his ancestors, which in a way also ran counter to the colonial narratives, he also plays very safely when it comes to the description of colonial masters. He uses titles and honorifics that were designed to keep the colonial authority in good humor.

Thus, within less than a year, despite his little familiarity with the region and the profession of the craft of history writing, Bandera managed to bring out what was considered, till the 19th century, to be unknown and unknowable. While it is not clear to what extent his constructed narrative was based on authentic sources, what cannot be doubted is the fact that it served its purpose to a large extent; it provided a respectable genealogy, established the royal pedigree of his patron, and also tried to legitimize and historicize the claim and authority of his patron over the territory of Jammu and Kashmir. In fact, his text also became the first text through which the territorial identity of the region of Jammu and also of the new state was articulated. The text, in a way, also set the agenda of what the ancient past of the region should be and the perspectives within which it ought to be situated. Most

importantly, it marked the beginning of the tradition of the historiography of Jammu.

Badehra seemed not to have been satisfied with the fact that the account of his patron was rather brief in *Rajadarshani*⁴³. At the end of the text, therefore, he expresses his desire to write a separate biography of Gulab Singh and even goes to the extent of proposing its title as *Gulabnama*. However, for the reasons best known to him, Badhera decided to move away from his court to serve the colonial authority⁴⁴.

Maharaja Gulab Singh, despite his excessive enjoyment on multiple fronts, did not forget about the proposal of Badhera; the responsibility to write *Gulabnama* was, therefore, handed over to the trusted Diwan of the court, known as Kirpa Ram⁴⁵. The keen interest of Maharaja Gulab Singh in continuing the process of historical reconstruction of the region and his period has also been recorded by the author of *Gulabnama*⁴⁶. To quote the author, “the late Highness had been, with a view to patronize this one exalted of his favor, sending commands for writing his account of the achievements of his august personality”⁴⁷. The project, however, remained unfinished till Gulab Singh breathed his last. We are told by Kirpa Ram himself that a little before his death, Gulab Singh reminded him of his order to write his biography and hoped that he would not fail to execute the work after his demise⁴⁸. True to the wish of his Maharaja, Diwan Kirpa Ram did manage to execute the work during his lifetime, though its publication was withheld, for reasons unknown, till his death⁴⁹.

Though the temporal extent of the text is a little larger than that found in the narrative of Badehra, it is essentially a glorified bibliographical sketch of Maharaja Gulab Singh, situated in the background of the historical narrative of Jammu.

Despite being couched in a rather ornate style, its account has a touch of authenticity. In the construction of his narrative, he used a range of sources. It may also be remembered that most of the events after 1830 were witnessed by the author himself, and about the remaining, he had direct and first-hand knowledge from his grandfather and father, who took part in most of them. To quote the author himself, "... (he) chose to carry out the command of his master after tremendous inquiry and keen research. For a long time, I enquired from the grandees of this family and the wise and truthful old persons, and the youngsters full of zeal and of noble character, and from reliable servants, and put all this in black and white. Most of the anecdotes have often reached my ears from the late Highness, who remembered many incidents and events since his early childhood on account of his keen memory. I verified several incidents from my revered father, Diwan Sahib (Diwan Jawala Sahai), and scratched out all the doubts and suspicions with the pen of certainty..."⁵⁰

However, apart from the obvious aim of the text, Diwan was constantly trying to achieve several other goals through his narrative, some of which were mutually opposing. For example, while on the one hand, he was aiming to create a glorified version of the life of Gulab Singh in a manner that would serve as a counter to the colonial narrative, on the other hand, he was also trying to ensure that there was enough in the narrative to keep the colonial master in good humor⁵¹. At another level, the text was also trying to bring potentially contesting local powers of the earlier period into the fold of the new authority of the Maharaja by accommodating them and their heroes in the larger narratives of the making of Jammu⁵². However, care was taken to accommodate and adjust them in a manner that would also define their subordinate relation to the superior, Gulab Singh. Apart from these, the text, in a way, was also trying to lend strength to all the

constructs that were offered by Badhera in his account by adding information, not necessarily always verifiable⁵³.

Like Badhera, Diwan Kripa Ram also starts with a detailed statement on the sources of his narrative⁵⁴ which he gathered “after tremendous inquiry and deep research”⁵⁵ and then states the objective of his text which was to, quote him, “put the discourse in order by the narration of the eminent pedigree from the rise of Brahma to the rising of the star of His Highness ... Afterward... narrate some of the outstanding achievements of the late Highness”⁵⁶.

True to his stated scheme, Kirpa Ram begins his narrative with a lengthy and complex account of the genealogy of his Maharaja⁵⁷. The chapter in which the details of the “eminent pedigree” of the Maharaja have been detailed by the author is titled “*Statement of the Late Highness’ Angelic pedigree from the appearance of Brahma to the Blessed personality,*” which gives a good idea of the content of the chapter in advance⁵⁸. Once through with these, he starts his real narrative from the point where Badhera had ended’ i.e., ‘narration of some of the outstanding achievements of the late Highness,’ which fills the major part of the work.

Diwan unfolds the second, and also the central, objective by narrating the early life of Maharaja Gulab Singh⁵⁹. What is important in the description is his attempt to lend divinity to the birth of his master⁶⁰. What follows is the graphic description of the meteoric rise of Maharaja Gulab Singh from the status of a valorous sepoy employed in the Lahore court to the status of a sovereign ruler of Jammu and Kashmir⁶¹. Like Badhera, Diwan also tries to legitimize the claims of the Maharaja on Kashmir and other territories,⁶² which have now become part of the new Jammu and Kashmir State.

Thus, the author of *Gulabnama* projects his master, Maharaja Gulab Singh, as a born king and a hero, often attributing, in a very subtle manner, the element of divinity to him as well⁶³. Throughout the book, he is depicted as a man in whose veins runs the royal blood, who was brutal on the battlefield and kind and generous at home, and extremely rational, reasonable, and benevolent when on the throne. In between these, we also find discussions on themes that seem out of context.

Though some of the historical constructs of Ganesh Das and Diwan Kripa Ram were contested by colonial historians then, and also by some of the modern historians now, what remains out of the realm of any contestation is the fact that it was Maharaja Gulab Singh who laid the foundation of the historiography of Jammu. Whatever might have been the immediate necessity, the historical narrative that was offered by Bادهhra was easily accepted and soon became hegemonic.

Conclusion

The account of Bادهhra and Diwan Kripa Ram also broke several of the stereotypical images of Jammu, and it was no longer imagined as a region that historically existed as subordinate to the power of Punjab, Himachal, or Kashmir. Both the historical narratives also managed to create, for the first time, a hero for the Jammu region whose influence was trans-local. It was also the text that pointed out the long rule of the Dogras in Kashmir, which needs to be probed further. These texts also became the earliest texts in the subtext in which the regional identity of Jammu was articulated. Also, whatever little competing, conflicting, or contesting historical memory at the local level was left; they all were suitably modified, reconciled, and incorporated by the royal narrative, which was produced by Dewan Kirpa Ram⁶⁴. To date, these two texts remain important

texts on the history of Jammu and have played a crucial role in the formation of historical consciousness. Contemporary authors continue to draw heavily from them. ‘*The Short History of Jammu Raj*’ by Prof. S. S. Charak illustrates the point well. The book, which has run into several editions and enjoys great popularity among the students of the history of Jammu, carries the distinct mark of Badhera’s account, as far as the ancient past of Jammu is concerned.

References

¹ The absence of a textualised narrative, however, does not mean that the society that existed within the region lacked the sense of history. It seems that Jammu chose to keep its history alive through oral and bardic traditions. Apart from these, the records of genealogy of families of consequences were also maintained. Ganeshdas Badhera, the first compiler of a historical narrative on Jammu, referred to the existence of genealogical records, bardic tradition etc. in Jammu., See *Ganeshdas Badhera’s Rajdarshini, A Persian History of North western India from Earliest time to AD 1847*, translated by Dr. Sukhdev Singh Charak, Annotated by Dr. Anita K. Bilawaria, Jammu, 1991, p.2. Even Kahan Singh Billawaria, who wrote *Tarikh –i-Rajgan-i-Jammu wa Kashmir*, published in 1929 from Lahore, also speaks about the existence of such records.

² Ibid., Maharaja Gulab Singh was not a favorite of colonial authority. In fact Hardinge’s policy in the North West, particularly the decision to make Gulab Singh the instrument of Lahore diminishment had came under attack from various eminent quarters of British opinion. For instance Lord Ellenborough, Governor General of India from 1842 to 1844, had forcefully repudiated the policy of rewarding Gulab Singh., p.28

³ The colonial narrative was authored / edited by Major G.Car Michael Smyth which appeared in January, 1947

⁴ Ibid, p.xx

⁵ Ibid, p.XX

⁶ The history of Jammu is titled ‘The Lords of the Hills: A Genealogical History of the Jummoo Family’. The chapter constitutes the last section of the book and is spread over merely forty-five pages. See *A History of the Reigning Family of Lahore with some account of the Jummoo Rajahs, the Sikh soldiers and their Sirdars*, reprint, New Delhi, 1985, pp.219-263

⁷ Ibid., p. 220

⁸ Ibid., see his account of Beehram Dehu, who was contemporary of Baber (Babur), pp.237-38

⁹ Ibid., pp. 241- 2

¹⁰ Ibid., see p.221

¹¹ Ibid, p.239

¹² Ibid, p.254

¹³ Ibid., p.255-56

¹⁴ Ibid, p.263

¹⁵Ibid,p.257

¹⁶ Ibid., pp.257-58

¹⁷ For a detailed analysis of the difficult situation in which the new monarch was located, see Mridu Rai, *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects: Islam, Rights, and the History of Kashmir*, New Delhi, 2004

¹⁸ Since the smaller principalities of Jammu were welded into one political unit through coercion, some of them resented their loss of power and territories. They were looking for opportunities to assert their independence.

¹⁹ For a discussion on how the text became a tool to legitimize the authority of the New Maharaja, see Shyam Narayan Lal, 'Problems of Legitimacy and the Beginning of modern Historiography of Jammu', in *The Proceedings of the Punjab History Conference*, the 42 session, 2011, pp. 41-46

²⁰ See Chitrlekha Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging: Islam, Regional Identity and the Making of Kashmir*, London, 2004, see also Mridu Rai, *op.cit*

²¹ It seems that Maharaja Gulab Singh took Ganeshdas Baderh to Jammu sometimes in 1946 and appointed him to the *daftar*. See C.A. Storrey, *Persian Literature*, London, 1939, p.687

²² *Rajadarshani*, p. ix; also, see Sukhdev Singh Charak, *Historiography on Jammu*, 1997, p.27-28

²³ Ibid., p.134, 144

²⁴ He claims to belong to the same clan as that of Maharaja Gulab Singh.....

²⁵ Ibid, pp.134,144

²⁶ *Kalhana's Rajatarangini* (3 Vols.) M.A. Stein (Tr.), 1989

²⁷ *Rajadarshani*, p.2

²⁸ Ibid., pp.1-2

²⁹ Ibid., He opens up his narrative with the praise of God, and then proceeds to describe his patron as ... 'His Highness, the source of favours, Sri Maharaja Saheb, of high excellence, knower of the secrets of the world, empyrean in status, sun-like in dignity, Behram in impetuosity, -Maharaja Gulab Singh...' See, p.1

³⁰ Ibid, p.2

³¹ Here Baderh seemed to have drawn heavily from *Puranic* sources

³² Ibid., the list of the kings seems to have been borrowed from *Bhagwat Purana*, see p.5, fn.11-12

³³ Ibid. pp-7-14

³⁴ This may be because since he and his ancestors had spent most of their life in the north eastern part of India, he was more familiar with the history of the region than the history of Jammu where he barely managed to spend just a year. We are told that he was brought to Jammu by his master in 1846, finished his narrative by 1847, and then moved on to join colonial authority. See *Rajadarshani*, p.IX, 124

³⁵ Ibid, pp-26-43; see the detail given by him of the conquest of Raja Bodh Arjan,

³⁶ Ibid, p.165

³⁷ Ibid, for example Raja Bodh Arjun has been described as the one who not only reduced the king of Kashmir to subordinate status but also chastised the '*marjaban* of the Little and Great Tibet who did not give justice to the subordinates and the class of merchant'. p.27

³⁸ *Kalhana, Rajatarangini*, (tra) M.A. Stein, 2 vols. Delhi, 1961, see vv 44,54

³⁹ *Rajadarshani*, loc.cit, pp. 9-10

⁴⁰ Ibid, pp.10-11

⁴¹ Ibid, p.11, pp.228

⁴² Ibid., pp. 229-30

⁴³ Strangely enough, though Badhera devotes considerable space for the narration of the political events of the past, yet Maharaja Gulab Singh's period has been treated rather briefly spreading over only twenty seven pages. See *Rajadarshani*, pp.203-229

⁴⁴ By 1854 he seemed to have joined the service of colonial authority, see *Rajadarshani*, p.x,

⁴⁵ It may be pointed out that Diwan Kripa Ram was not a historian by profession. The account of his family, which is given in *Gulabnama*, tales us that his forefather was a scribe by profession and his father was first appointed as *Karkun* by Gulab Singh. It was only in 1822 that Gulab Singh elevated his father to the status of *madarul-muhamor* chief minister of Jammu and honored him with the title of *Diwan*. Since then the family managed to monopolize the office of Diwan. See Diwan Kirpa Ram, *Gulabnama, A History of Maharaja Gulab Singh of Jammu and Kashmir*, Translated from Persian and Annotated by Sukhdev Singh Charak, Anita Charak Billawaria, Srinagar, 2005, see Introduction.

⁴⁶ *Gulabnama* by Diwan Kripa Ram, Jammu, 1919

⁴⁷ Ibid, p.1, It is also recorded that “ the day His Highness Maharja Ranbir Singh left towards Bijbarah he reminded the writer of this memoirs in seclusion and said that often time the late Highness had asked him for undertaking the compilation of the history of his achievements but due to want of time he (the writer) could not lay his hand on this... see also p.402

⁴⁸ See *Gulabnama*, p. 2

⁴⁹ Ibid., According to the chronogram prefixes to the text as a part of general preface we are told that the compilation of the text was over by *samvat* 1922, yet the text appeared in print only in VS 1933 i.e., AD 1876

See, Introduction, pp. i- xlv.

⁵⁰ Ibid, p.2

⁵¹ By now the unfolding of events had made it quite clear that the existence of state depends on the mercy of the colonial empire and it was felt necessary not to rub them on the wrong side.

⁵² Ibid, pp.108., See the twist in description of the killing of Mian Dido who was operating like a Robin hood in the area around Jammu in open defiance to the authority of the Maharaja,

⁵³ Compare *Gulabnama* account of the lineage of Maharaja Gulab Singh with the one given in the *Rajadarshani*

⁵⁴ See Sukhdev Singh Charak, 1997, p. 64

⁵⁵ His sources for historical construct were, as we are told by the author, were, “oral tradition preserved in the memory of many of the characters who participated in the incidents described in the text, documentary and literary evidence, *Rajadarshani* of Ganeshdada Badhera and a Persian chronicle *Rauzat-us-safa*. It seems that Maharaja Gulab Singh had also handed many important documents, including his diary, to him. See *Gulabnama*, p.3

⁵⁶ Ibid, p.2

⁵⁷ Ibid., The entire discussion is divided into three sections and spread over about twenty two pages. See pp.1-22

⁵⁸ Ibid, p.3

⁵⁹ Ibid, pp.49-57

⁶⁰ Ibid, see 49-50

⁶¹ Ibid. The narration mainly consists of the description of Gulab Singh's military campaigns in Lahore Durbar, his personal conquests, his participation of court politics and intrigues, his role in the last day of the Lahore Durbar, his role in Anglo Sikh war and conferment on Gulab Singh the title of Maharaja. The narrative finally terminates with the account of the sad demise of his master.

⁶² Ibid, p.8

⁶³ Ibid, See Diwan's descriptions of the birth of Maharaja Gulab Singh, pp 50-51.

⁶⁴ See *Gulabnama*