

PUNJAB CENSUS OF 1855 : METHODOLOGY*

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AT the National Archives of India one comes across a useful material providing statistical information on the Punjab population. The information — both statistical and descriptive — is in the form of a census which was conducted by the Punjab Government in 1855. The most interesting feature of this census is that it gives a detailed information on the method of conducting census enumeration. The following sources contain information on the subject under review.

1. Selections from the records of the Government of India (Foreign department) No. 18, Calcutta, 1856: General report on the administration of the Punjab territories from 1854-55 to 1855-56 inclusive.
2. Selections from the records of the Government of India (Foreign department) No. 11, Calcutta, 1856: Report on the Census, taken on the 1st January 1855, of the population of the Punjab Territories, pp. 1-33; papers connected with the administration of Mysore, pp. 35-217.

'Census of 1855'

The census of 1855 gives information about the methods adopted in counting the number of persons in the Punjab territories. "On the night intervening between the 31st Dec. 1854, and the 1st January 1855, a census of the people was taken throughout these (Punjab) territories. This census was effected by enumerating all persons who slept in each house, whether situate in the city, village, or hamlet, or altogether isolated, throughout these territories, from Kurnaul to the Khyllur Pass, and from the confines of Jumoo to the confines of Sindh. On one and the same night, all sections of the people, the sturdy yeomen of the Upper Punjab, the wild mountaineer near the Frontier, the wandering cattle grazier of the Central Districts, were all counted. An agency and machinery for the enumerating had been organized, and complete forms for registration and record had been prepared beforehand. The people evinced a laudable alacrity to cooperate even in the wildest district. There was no desire for concealment of numbers, even of the women. There were no prejudicial rumours spread about. There was no doubt of the intentions of the

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