

Kharya, Juglan, Kharar, Gorchhi, Seeswal, Barwala (Hisar tahsil), Tohana, Pirthala, Dharsul Kalan (Tohana tahsil), Khot Kalan, Data, Rakhigarhi, Sisai Bola, Narnaund, Dhana (Hansi tahsil), Ratia, Dhaulu, Lahriyan, Kirmara and Mehuwala (Fatehabad tahsil).

Closely connected to Shiva is the worship of his consort Devi or Shakti. The goddess goes by various names. The temples of Chandi Devi at Pabra (Fatehabad tahsil), Kali Devi at Hansi and Durga at Banbhora (Hansi tahsil) are worth mentioning. The devotees worship in Devi temples on Saturday but Ashtami in March-April and September-October are special days when large number of devotees visit these temples.

A few persons say 'Bishno Bishno' to pray Vishnu but he is hardly recognised under that name and is the great god of the country under the common names of Rama, Krishna and Jambha Jee. Rama is worshipped by all Hindus and the idols of Lord Rama, Lakshmana and Sita are placed in temples known as *thakurdwaras*. Rama is worshipped on the occasion of Dussehra when Ram Lila, the story of *Ramayana* is staged and fairs are held in various parts of the district. Krishna worship is also wide spread and temples of Krishna are found in villages and towns of the district. Janam Ashtami, the birthday of Krishna is celebrated with great zest all over the district but Hansi, Petwar, Umra (Hansi tahsil), Tohana, Jakhalmandi (Tohana tahsil), Latani (Hisar tahsil) and Pabra (Fatehabad tahsil) are important places for Janam Ashtami celebrations.

Jambha Jee believed to be incarnation of Vishnu is worshipped by Bishnois. Jambha Jee's main preaching was not to harm animals and trees. The birth anniversary of Jambha Jee is celebrated by Bishnois in temples dedicated to him. Most important of them are located at Hisar and Badopal. The place of pilgrimage of Jambha Jee is at Mokam¹ in Rajasthan.

Although Shiva and Vishnu are most important, yet they are too great for every day worship. The people worship minor deities which may exercise a beneficent or malevolent influence on the affairs of mankind. Selection is made out of these deities and those selected receive everyday devotion. The more common objects of worship are Bhumia or god of the homestead, Sitla—the goddess of smallpox, Gugga Pir, Ram Dev Pir and Budhla saint.

1. Mokam is a small village at a distance of 16 kilometres from Naukha Mandi in Bikaner district of Rajasthan. Fair is held here twice a year in commemoration of Jambha Jee who died and was buried here.

Bhumia often called Khera is worshipped on Sundays. People light a lamp and offer bread at the shrine. It is also worshipped at marriages. The first milk of the cow or buffalo is offered to Bhumia. Sitla is worshipped mostly by women for protection against smallpox.

Gugga Pir or Jahar Pir is supposed to be the greatest of the snake kings. Gugga is worshipped everywhere. Gugga shrine usually consists of small one-room building with a minaret at each corner and a grave inside. It is called a *mari* and is marked by a long bamboo with peacock plumes, a coconut, some coloured threads and some *pankhas* with a blue flag on the top. On the 9th of Bhadon (August-September) the long bamboo known as *chhari* is taken round the village to the sound of *deroos* and the devotees salute it and offer *churmas*. Devotional songs known as *Pir Ke Solle* are sung in honour of Gugga. The devotees sing, dance and offer presents. It is believed that the spirit of Gugga temporarily takes abode in the devotee dancer who beats himself occasionally with a bunch of iron chains, though the practice is on the decline. Gugga Pir is also the subject of folk songs. Important *maris* of Gugga Pir are at Pabra, Talwandi Rukka, Nangthala and Hisar (Hisar tahsil), Tohana (Tohana Tahsil), Girabe, Kani Kheri, Thurana, Bhatol Rangran, Petwar, Narnaund, Umra and Hansi (Hansi tahsil).

Ram Dev Pir is another saint whose worship is very much prevalent in the district. Ram Dev is considered incarnation of Krishna and many miracles are associated with him. He is known to have given life to the dead, sight to the blind, sound body to the lepers, and children to barren women. Saints from Mecca, deeply impressed by his super-natural powers, honoured him with the title of Pir. The Pir hails from Rajasthan and a shrine exist at Unicha in Rajasthan. The devotees of the Pir who are mostly persons migrated from Rajasthan, have built shrines of Ram Dev at Jandwala, Ban Madori, Bhoodya Khera (Bishanoyan), Badopal, Dhaulu (Fatehabad tahsil), Talwandi Rukka, Bhairi Akberpur, Landhari Sukhlam Bran and Seeswal (Hisar tahsil).

Budhla saint belonged to Multan and he disappeared in earth by virtue of his spiritual powers. Before the Partition of the country, the Hindus of Multan used to hold a fair on the shrine of Budhla. Now after their migration to the district, shrines of Budhla have been built at Hisar where fairs are also held. Kalapir of Khot Kalan (Hansi tahsil) and Dahdada of Narnaund (Hansi tahsil) are worshipped as local saints.

Arya Samaj .—A socio-religious movement for the eradication of illogical and superstitious beliefs, began to flourish in the district towards the close of 19th century. The Arya Samaj was established at Hisar in 1889 and Lala Lajpat Rai was a moving force in its establishment. The movement spread very fast and influenced remarkably the social and religious life of the district. Extension of education, especially of the women and depressed classes, widow re-marriage, protection of cows and propagation of Hindi are some important activities of the Arya Samaj. Though Arya Samaj temples are located in most of the towns in the district, but there is concentration of these temples in Hansi tahsil.

Sikhs

The Sikhs believe in monotheism and the teachings of the Ten Gurus and *Granth Sahib*. The Sikhs attach great importance to the recitation of *Granth Sahib* and visit gurdwaras where verses from *Granth Sahib* are recited. Besides observing some Hindu festivals, the Sikhs celebrate birth days and martyrdom days of Sikh Gurus and Baisakhi. There is a gurdwara at Hisar which was built in 1923.

Muslims

Some Muslim families are settled in the district. They have mosques at Hisar, Fatehabad, Hansi and Tohana where they offer *namaz* and celebrate their religious festivals. Many Muslims have faith in a number of saints and Pirs and hold annual *urs* at their tombs. The most important medieval monument is the shrine of Char Kutbs located at Hansi. Besides, there are tombs of Nikke Pir and Pir Akbar Ali Shah at Marh (Fatehabad tahsil) and Dheru Pir at Bhoda Hashanak (Fatehabad tahsil). It is noteworthy that these commemorative gatherings are also attended by Hindus in large numbers.

Jains

They are of Aggarwal community who have adopted the Jain faith. They worship Lord Mahavira and the images of Tirthankaras. They celebrate the *parvas*, i.e., the festivals connected with the life of Lord Mahavira and Tirthankaras. Jains abstain from meat and are protectors of animal life.

Christians

Christians are in small numbers in the district. They have a church at Hisar, where they gather on every Sunday for prayers.

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

All Hindu festivals are celebrated in the district, the most common are Diwali, Dussehra, Ram Naumi, Janam Ashtami, Shivratri, Gugga Naumi, Holi, Basant Panchmi, Teej and Sankrant. These festivals are celebrated here as in other parts of the country.¹ However, Teej or Haryali Teej, Sankrant, Sanjhi, Goverdhan Puja, Phag and Kartik Snan are special festivals of the district and are celebrated with great festivity. Teej or Haryali Teej is a seasonal festival falling on Sawan Sudi 3 (beginning of August). The rainy season starts gathering momentum near about the said date and trees withered away by the scorching spell of summer put forth tender and green leaves. To celebrate the change of season, the girls eagerly wait for Teej. It is an occasion for the newly married girls to go back to their parents for celebrating first Teej with their girl friends. On Teej, beves of young girls attired in their best clothes and wearing new multi-coloured glass bangles start pouring in some open space or a tree-grove near the pond and it takes the form of a fair. Stout swings are hung from the trees for the girls to swing. They swing with agility and sing songs. The humour, pathos and passions contained in these songs are really touching. The in-laws of the girl send gifts of ornaments, clothes and sweets and parents also give gifts when married girls go back to their in-laws.

Sakrant and Makar Sakranti is celebrated on Magh-1 (January-February) when people clean their houses and streets and take bath in the tank or canal. The *jagana*, the custom in which father-in-law poses himself to be asleep and is awakened by the daughter-in-law by striking two coconuts. The gifts are also given to the parents-in-law and other elderly people in the house. Friends also exchange clothes on this festival.

Sanjhi is celebrated before Dussehra. An idol of a woman is made on the wall of the house with mud and is decorated with clothes and ornaments. The festival start 10 days before Dussehra and the girls sing songs in praise of Sanjhi for 10 days. On Dussehra the idol is removed from the wall and is placed in an earthen pot pierced with holes and having lighted earthen lamp. The girls carry the pot with idol on their heads alongwith the devotional songs and immerse it in a nearby tank or canal.

Goverdhan Puja is observed on the day following Diwali. Cow-dung cakes representing the Goverdhan Rock connected with Lord Krishna are worshipped.

1. For details of these festivals, a reference may be made to 'Fairs and Festivals', *Census of India*, 1961, Volume XIII, Punjab, Part VII-B.

Phag is celebrated on the day following Holi. Menfolk throw coloured water on women and women in turn beat men with *korda* (twisted cloth strips). The men act as if they are powerless or are unable to defend themselves. This leads to much fun and frolic.

Kartik Snan is observed for one month by girls and women in the month of Kartik (October-November). They go to the tank or canal early in the morning to take bath and worship Lord Krishna after the bath. The festival is connected with Lord Krishna who is said to have promised the *gopis* that he will meet them in future in the month of Kartik.

The festivals of Jains, Christians, Sikhs and Muslims are also celebrated in the district.

The fairs in the district are mostly of religious origin but traders install their stalls for sale of different commodities. The important fairs held in the district are listed below :

| S. No. | Place | Tahsil | Significance | Date and Duration * |
|--------|---------------------|-----------|-----------------------|---|
| 1. | Kirmara | Fatehabad | Shivratri fair | Phagun Badi-14 (February-March) one day |
| 2. | Harita | Hisar | Do | Do |
| 3. | Jagan | Do | Do | Do |
| 4. | Pabra | Fatehabad | Durga or Devi fair | Magh-1 (January-February) one day |
| 5. | Banbhor | Hansi | Do | (i) Chet Sudi-8 (March-April) one day (ii) Asoj Sudi-8 (July-August) one day |
| 6. | Bas Azam Shahpur | Do | Do | Do |
| 7. | Bas Bad- shahpur | Do | Do | Do |

| S. No. | Place | Tahsil | Significance | Date and Duration |
|--------|-----------------|-----------|-----------------------|---|
| 8. | Tohana | Tohana | Gugga Naumi | Bhadon Badi-9 (August-September) one day |
| 9. | Dhauhu | Fatehabad | Ram Dev fair | January-February |
| 10. | Bhairi-Akberpur | Hisar | Do | Do |
| 11. | Balsmand | Do | Mahavir fair | (i) Chet (March-April) one day (ii) Asoj (September-October) one day |
| 12. | Hisar | Do | Sant Budhla fair | Baisakh-1 (April) one day |
| 13. | Agroha | Do | Maharaja Agrasen fair | October one day |

SOCIAL LIFE

The important social groups in the district are Jats, Bishnois, Brahmans, Sainis, Bantias, Gujjars, Ahirs, Rajputs, Kumhars, Aroras, Chamars and Balmikis. Jats, Rajputs, Ahirs, Bishnois and Gujjars form the agricultural backbone of the district.

Jats .—Jat is the largest social group in the district. They are of two types, Deswalis and Bagris. The Bagri Jats are confined to the western part of the district. They originally came from Rajasthan after the famine of A.D. 1783. The Deswali and Bagri Jats have so much mixed up now that it is difficult to distinguish Bagri or Deswali Jat. Their language, manners and customs are so similar that is only where the Jats of the eastern and western borders of the district are compared, the difference between them become somewhat apparent. The Jats are fine cultivators and are tough and sturdy community. Though generally agriculturists, they have now turned to many other professions with success. A large number of them are serving in the armed forces and other government services.

Bishnois .—Bishnois derive their names from Vishnu as they lay great emphasis on his worship. They also claim that it is derived

from 29 (*bis no*) tenets of their creed as enunciated by Jambha Jee. Originally, the Bishnois adopted a cosmopolitan spirit and admitted persons belonging to any caste or creed. They sink their tribes in their religion and merely give their caste as Bishnoi. They have migrated from Rajasthan and are mostly concentrated in Fatehabad and Hisar tahsils. They retain their characteristic, language and dress, which separate them from other castes. They abstain from tobacco and meat and taking animal life and cutting trees. They are fine cultivators.

Brahmans.—There are four sections of Brahmans in the district, i.e., Gaur, Khandelwal, Dakaut and Chamarva. Many of the Brahmans own land and are agriculturists. Some of them are engaged in the discharge of religious functions and ceremonies and their importance is witnessed nowadays only at the time of ceremonies associated with birth, marriage and death.

Sainis.—They are settled mostly in Hisar, Hansi, Barwala and Kirara and are good agriculturists.

Banias.—They are mostly engaged in commerce, industry and service. The village Bania constituted the backbone of the village economy by controlling rural finance and he still continues his hold in the rural areas as he is always ready to meet the unproductive credit requirement of the peasantry. The entrepreneurship has taken them to the industry in a big way and of late, they have installed many big and small-scale industrial units in the district.

Inside the caste, they are divided into Aggarwals, Oswals and Maheshwaris. The Aggarwals are said to be the descendants of the inhabitants of Agroha. They hold Agroha in great reverence and two huge temples in honour of Maharaja Agrasen, the founder of the town, are under construction in the town. Oswals and Maheshwaris trace their origin to the Rajputs of Rajasthan.

Gujjars.—The Gujjars of Hisar trace their origin to Rajathan. Their main profession was cattle rearing and milk selling but now they have also adopted agriculture.

Ahirs.—Ahirs call themselves Yaduvanshis (Lord Krishna was also from Yaduvansh) and are mostly agriculturists in the district but many of them are in the army.

Rajputs.—The Rajputs were known for their valour and chivalry and retain their martial instinct of their ancestors and prefer an army career to agriculture. Though most of the Rajput villages are in Sirsa

and Bhiwani districts, which were part of Hisar district, yet a few Rajput villages are located in Hansi tahsil. They are not efficient agriculturists and unlike Jat women a Rajput woman will not partake in agricultural and other outdoor operations.

Aroras .—Although most of the Aroras are migrant from Multan, Lyallpur and Dera Ghazi Khan districts of Pakistan after the Partition of the country in 1947, yet a few Arora families were settled earlier in Fatehabad tahsil. The early settlers were doing rural financing like that of Banias. The Aroras are hardworking and enterprising and are engaged in shop-keeping, trade, service and agriculture.

Chamars .—The term Chamar is an occupational term. Besides their old profession of leather and shoe-making, they have shifted to agriculture and services. The community is politically conscious and it has progressed much after Independence and its members now occupy important positions in the services.

Balmikis .—Balmikis were the scavengers and even now follow this profession. In rural areas, they are cultivators or agricultural labourers and do not work as sweepers. They also rear pigs, goats and sheep. Education has not made much headway among this caste.

Inter-caste Relations

Though the caste system is losing its rigidity under the pressure of economic and social forces, aided by liberal laws, it persists in rural areas. Jats and Aroras are more liberal in inter-caste relations which has influenced the social behaviour of other people also. Hatred and scorn for Harijans has decreased but people do not mix with them or dine with them. Inter-dining is only occasional and similarly inter-caste marriages are not common. In political campaigns, caste still plays a prominent role.

Joint Family System

The family is locally called as *kunba*. A group of families having common ancestors is called *thola*. Two or more *tholas* are jointly called *pana* or *patti*. It was common for several brothers, and occasionally for cousins to live together and farm the land jointly. More often the land was managed jointly while the owners lived separately. The joint family system provided the security to the widows, orphans or other physically incapacitated members of the family.

The joint family system which has been a distinguishing feature of Hindu society since time immemorial, is breaking up under the stress

of the changed economic and social conditions. The disappearance of the joint family system is more marked in urban areas but it is also disappearing in villages.

Inheritance

The right of inheritance was vested only in the male descendants and the widows had only the life time right whereafter it used to pass to the nearest male member of the deceased. Similarly, the daughters and their issues had no customary rights to succeed but they were entitled to maintenance and to be suitably betrothed and married. After the passage of Hindu Succession Act, 1956, sons, daughters, mother and the widow alongwith other heirs of the deceased inherit the intestate property simultaneously. The daughter has as good a claim to her father's property as a son provided the father does not debar her by law and that too in the case of self-acquired property only. However, generally the girl does not claim any part of the intestate property but in the absence of a brother, she usually retains her right to property.

Rituals and Customs

Wedding .—The wedding is most important ceremony. The preliminary ceremony in it is betrothal. The proposal for betrothal comes from the bride's side. Among Bishnois, the traditional betrothal is on reciprocal basis but can be contracted otherwise also. The bride's father sends a letter written on paper stained yellow with turmeric to the boy's father, which announces to him the date fixed for the wedding. The maternal uncle of the boy or girl brings the *bhat* which consists of presents and necessarily includes the wedding suits for the bride or bridegroom. Friends and relatives present *neota* to the parents of the boy or the girl but the *neota* is on wane and is taking the form of gifts and presents.

A day earlier or on the day when the marriage party is to start, the *ghurchari* is performed. The bridegroom dressed in his wedding suit brought by his maternal uncle, *kangna* or seven-knotted sacred thread tied on his right wrist, (though on wane) and head-dress consisting of a crown or crest over the turban, and generally a *sehra* covering the face is made to sit on the mare's back. The barber leads the decorated mare with bridegroom on its back, while women follow along singing songs peculiar to the occasion and the mother or aunt or an elderly woman carries a utensil containing water. His sister puts her wrap over her right hand, and on it places rice which she flings at his crown as the bridegroom goes along. He goes and worship the god of the homestead. However, no *ghurchari* is performed among Bishnois and they

cover their head with turban only and go to their temple for worship. Thereafter, the *janet* or *baraat* (marriage party) usually comprising the relatives and friends, set out midst music. The *janet* is received by the bride's side and is taken, sometimes in procession with the bridegroom on the mare to a place where arrangements have been made for their stay or towards the bride's house to the accompaniment of the band. After *barauthi* or *milni*, i.e., welcome of the *baraat* by the village panchayat and relatives and friends, *jai mala* is exchanged by the bride and the bridegroom. Among Bishnois, this ceremony is called *dhakao* when the bridegroom performs *chari marna* with the branch of a *ber* tree.

For actual marriage ceremony the Brahman lights the sacred fire and calls upon the girl's father to perform *kanyadan* (formal bride-giving). Then takes place *phas* or binding ceremony when the relatives and friends offer *kanyadan* to the girl. The girl and the boy both circle clockwise slowly four times round the fire. Among the Deswali Jats, the girl leads in the first three *phas* and the boy in the last. The Bagri Jats reverse this; with them the boy leads in the first three and the girl in the last. The latter is followed generally by all other communities. After the fourth phera, the boy and the girl sit down, their positions, however, being changed, the bridegroom now sitting on the girls' right. Among Bishnois, no *phas* are performed and the binding ceremony is *piribadal* or exchange of stools by the bride and bridegroom who also take each other's hand (*hathlewa*). *Anand Karaj* prevails among Sikhs. The bride and bridegroom go round the holy *Granth* and scriptures from *Granth* are recited. The civil marriage can also be performed but these are very rare.

The ceremony is highly colourful, picturesque, and at times interesting also. There may, however, be noticed minor variations among certain castes in the performance and observance of these ceremonies.

In the old days, *muklawā* (consumation of marriage) took place after a long time as girls were married at an early age before they attained puberty. Early marriage is no more in practice and this ceremony is performed on the day following the marriage and is termed *patra pher*. But among few communities, *muklawā* is still observed as before. After the *muklawā* or *patra pher* the bride finally settles in the bridegroom's house, and they live as husband and wife.

Among Muslims, the marriage ceremony is known as *Nikah* which is read first to the girl and then to the boy and on acceptance, the marriage is contracted.

Dowry system .—The dowry system prevails everywhere. In the past the girl's father out of love and affection for her, used to give some daily necessities of life but of late, the dowry system has become a great evil and it has become increasingly difficult for a poor father to marry even an able daughter without money. Even the dowry legislation of 1961 has not succeeded in achieving its object. People by-pass the law.

The widow remarriage was rare among Rajputs, Brahmans and Banias until recently. *Karewa*, a type of widow remarriage is also called *lata odhna* or *chadar pana* or *churi pahnana*. It is contracted with the brother of the deceased husband and the father of the widow gives one rupee to the brother of her daughter's deceased husband as a mark of giving the daughter to him. Such a marriage generally takes place after a year of the husband's death. If *Karewa* is not ceremonised, *punar vivah* is performed anywhere in their caste. It is ceremonised by putting *jai mala* (garland) around each others neck. However, if the husband died shortly after marriage and the girl has not lived with him or has no issue, she is married with all the ceremonies as usual at marriage. Of late, some-inter-caste remarriages have also held. *Kara* is another form of marriage where a man brings a woman of other caste through a mediator, for rearing children of his previous marriage or as a life companion in his middle age.

The marriage ties are solemn and sacred in the society and hence divorce is not prevalent on any scale. There is a general tendency to suffer hardship resulting from ill-matched marriages and people lead a miserable life rather than to dissolve the marriage. The widow remarriage and divorce are looked down upon in almost all the castes. However, with the coming into force of the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, a few cases of divorce are being instituted in law courts.

Birth ceremonies.—The birth of a child is an occasion to celebrate, and particularly that of a son. To announce the birth of an infant, a brass plate (*thali*) is rung in the house. A *thapa* (sign of hand) is made with saffron colour at gates of houses of near and dear ones on *chhati* (6th day). Superstitious ceremonies accompany the birth of a child. A branch of the tree is hung on each side of the room as an auspicious sign. On the tenth day, *hom* is performed when sacred fire is lighted and whole house is sprinkled with Ganga water. The Brahman after studying the horoscope of the child announces the name of the boy which is adopted as such or with some modalities. Then the Brahman,

the relatives and friends are entertained to a feast. Among Bishnois, the house is cleaned after 30 days and the ceremony is performed by Gayans, i.e. their religious priests and not by Brahmans. Gayan, the priest, performs the *hom* ceremony by [burning the sacred fire and chanting mantras of the Bishnoi faith. Among Aroras, the *chola* is an important ceremony, which is celebrated on the 15th or 17th day of the newly born son when new clothes consecrated by their own Brahman are worn. Muslims summon a Kazi who repeats *azan* in the infant's ear. On the sixth day, the mother takes a bath and sweetened rice is distributed. The name is given on the 40th day by opening the Koran. *Dasottan* (also called *sirdohan* by Bishnois) is performed on the birth of the long awaited son when *hom* is lighted and feast of sweets is served to relatives and friends.

Almost all Hindus perform the *mundan* ceremony when the boy is a few years old. On this occasion, his hair is cut and head shaved for the first time and friends and relatives are entertained to a feast.

Death rituals.—Hindus and Sikhs cremate their dead. On the third day, the knucklebones and other small fragments of bone (*phul*) are collected. If they can be taken to be immersed in the Ganga at once, well and good, but they must not be brought into the village in any case and be hung up till finally taken to the Ganga or any other stream. The post-cremation rites include *terhvi* (13th day) and sometimes it is *giarhvi* (11th day), *barhvi* (12th day) or *satarvi* (17th day). Among Bishnois, *Kharch* is performed on 3rd or 4th day when a feast is served to relatives and friends. In the past, *Kharch* was performed on large-scale but it has moderated in recent times. *Kaaj* is another form of *Kharch* which was very frequently performed in other castes but now it is very rarely performed. Children under 8 years of age are buried without ceremony. Muslims, Christians and Bishnois bury their dead. Earlier the Bishonis used to bury their dead in the *poli* (entrance of the house) but now they use a separate burial ground.

Position of Women

Among agricultural classes, the women work in the fields besides doing domestic duties. In fact, they work for longer hours as compared to the male members. Women help their men in almost all agricultural operations. The position of Rajput women is somewhat different from other communities. They observe purdah and do not go out in the fields to help their menfolk or go to the village well to draw water. Harijan women and those of other backward classes do odd jobs with their men in the fields on daily wages during harvesting and weeding. Some of them also work on repair or construction work on roads and canals. Of late, there is a trend for educating girls but people are still hesitant to send the girls for higher education.

The women take active part in almost every walk of life. The Arya Samaj movement has brought significant change in the status of women. The age old social dogmas which debarred women to rise, however, are disappearing. Purdah system though prevalent in the district is no more a taboo. The traditional concept of women being nothing more than a house wife has undergone a revolutionary change and today we see women successfully penetrating fields which were previously exclusive male domains. Now she is zealously taking part in every activity of life. Education has brought about a welcome change in the status of women in the society.

HOME LIFE

Villages.—The villages in different parts of the district differ widely in appearance. The village as a general rule had one or at the most two entrances (*phalsa*) and there was generally no passage right through it. But now the villages are scattered and the trend is to built houses outside the village more frequently along the roads. Outside the village will be found one or more temples, *shivala* or *thakurdvara*. Every village has its *johar* or pond in which rain water is collected for domestic and other use. With the implementation of the rural water supply scheme, non-availability of the water has become a thing of the past. Piped water-supply has been made available to many villages and *dhanis*. After consolidation of holdings, enough vacant land has been left round the village and village roads are now generally broad.

The houses in the rural areas are mostly indential but of late, the houses of mud bricks and thatched roofs are being replaced by pukka houses. Immediately after the entrance to a house, there is usually a room called *dahliz* or a big hall called *drawaza*. Besides, having a drawing or meeting room it is used particularly at the sides, for cattle and there are mangers and stables where fodder is chopped. There follows an open space or yard known as *angan* and at the rear of this or on either side is a verandah called *dallan* or *bichala* and behind this again are inner rooms for sleeping and living called *kotha* or *sufa/obra*. There are innumerable variations, and sometime two or three minor enclosures will be found inside the main enclosure and sub-divided by walls. Within the enclosures are *chuhlas* or hearths. The *hara* or even in which the daily porridge is cooked and milk warmed, is generally outside the entrance and built against the outer wall of the house. The houses are generally single storeyed and the roofs are used for drying wood, fodder or grain and also for sleeping in the summer. The houses usually lack bathrooms and latrines. With the availability of electricity and growing demand for better sanitary and health facilities, the look and pattern of the houses has undergone a change.

The houses in urban areas are pukka and have been provided with modern amenities.

Furniture and utensils.—There are generally few articles of furniture in a village house. These consist of bedsteads (*khats*), *moorhas* of different sizes, a few small stools (*pidas* and *patras*). Sometime a few bedsteads are of bigger size and netted with thin strings of different colours and these are used in *dalhiz* for guests and visitors. Modern furniture like chairs and tables are also finding place in village houses.

In urban areas chairs and tables are commonly seen but a few houses of well-to-do are furnished with modern furniture like sofas, wardrobes, *palangs*, *moorhas*, tables and chairs of different description. Possession of furniture is considered to be a sign of social status and taste. Of late, modern appliances like electric heaters, table lamps, radio sets and transistors are gaining popularity. The refrigerators, television sets and room coolers have also made appearance in the houses of the upper class people.

The utensils consist of metal vessels made of brass and bell-metal (*kansi*), iron vessels, earthen vessels and wooden articles. The metal vessels consist of large narrow mouthed cauldrons (*toknas* or *deg*) for storing water or cooking at feasts, smaller vessels of similar shape (*toknis*) for ordinary cooking and carrying water to the fields, still smaller ones (*lotas*, *gadwas*) for dipping into water and drinking, some tumbler shaped drinking vessels (*gilas*), a broad shallow bowl or saucer (*kachola*, *bela* or *batkiya*) for drinking hot liquids and eating *khichri* and *rabri*, *katoridan* a vessel for carrying meal to the fields and a tray (*thali*) to eat, a larger tray (*parant*) for kneading dough, a brass ladle (*karchhi*) and a spatula (*khurchana*) for turning bread. The iron vessels consist of thin iron plate (*tawa*) for baking bread and some pairs of iron tonges (*chimta*), a fry-pan (*karahi*), a sieve (*chalni*), an iron bucket (*dol* or *balti*) for drawing water from the well and huge iron cauldrons (*karahis*) used for large-scale parties or for baking *gur*. The earthen utensils commonly used are, the *ghara* or *painda*, a large vessel for carrying water from the well, the *handi*, for cooking vegetables and pulses and *kadhoni*, for boiling milk and *biloni*, for churning curd. The wooden articles like *jherni* or *rai* churning handles are used. Utensils and decorations have undergone a change more particularly in urban areas. The porcelain glass wares, stainless steel and aluminium utensils are now very common.

Dress and ornaments.—The dress of rural people is simple. The everyday clothes are usually made from coarse cloth. The male dress consists of a turban, shirt, *dhoti* and *juti*. The usual wrap is the *chadar*, and in the cold weather a thick blanket is substituted. The *khes* is another type of wrap. An *angocha* (handkerchief) is used occasionally. Men in service wear pants or pyjamas and similarly the younger people also wear pants, bushirts, shirts, coats, sweaters, leather shoes or *chappals* but no headwear. This change is

almost universal in urban areas. *Murkis*, *tungal* or *long*, different forms of ear-rings were worn by men but the practice is not in vogue now, however, a gold finger-ring is worn by men in rural as well as urban areas.

A full set of women clothes is known as *teel*. The village women wear a shirt of gent's style and *ghagra*. However, after the Partition, the *salwar* has replaced the *ghagra* and only old women now wear *ghagra*. The population which migrated from Rajasthan locally known as Bagris, wear *lehnga*, although it is also on wane and is generally worn by elderly women. The general dress of the younger women is *salwar* and *kamiz*. The wrap of cotton worn over the head is called *orhna* or *dupatta*. *Peelia*, a sort of headwear, the central part of which is of yellow colour and the rest multicoloured and *chunri* are the other important items of dress. The Bishnoi women wear slightly different dress. They wear long *ghagras* unlike the women of other communities. Their *orhna* is also multicoloured and is broader as to cover the abdomen. They have a distinction in wearing *borla* (prepared from beads) on the forehead. Now a days the common woman's dress is petticoat, sari or *dhoti*, *choli* and *orhna*. The shawl now a days used, was known as *sopli* or *dupla* in the past.

The ornaments worn by women are usually made of gold and silver. The old ornaments previously worn by women numbered no less than 81 including five for the nose alone.¹ These included *tika*, *singar patti*, *borla* on the forehead, *hansli*, *jhalra*, *haar*, *galsari*, *guluband*, *kanthi* round the neck, *bujni* and *bundey* on the ears, *koka*, *purli*, *nath* for the nose, *pachheli* and *kangni* from shoulder to wrist, *anguthi* on the finger, *tagri* round the *lehnga* or sari and *ramjhol*, *chhail kare*, *neveri* and *tati* worn on the legs.

A women's social standing is generally determined by her jewels. The nose ring, the plain armlet and the *chura* or wristlet have a social significance. Now the use of traditional jewellery which was very heavy, as described above, has become out of date and the items of jewellery in common use include necklace for the neck, *purli* or *koka* for the nose and *pajeb* for the ankles. The educated women do not use much jewellery except a chain on the neck and a few bangles on the wrist. The use of ornaments except on special occasions or ceremonies is on the decline.

The practice of tattooing (*khinana*) once common has almost disappeared.

Food.—The food of the peasant consisted of wheat, barley and gram in summer and *bajra* in winter. The pulses were a major constituent but green vegetables, where locally grown were also used. The pickle of *teet* was very

1. M.L. Darling, *The Punjab Peasant in Prosperity and Debt*, 1925, p. 64.

PEOPLE

common. The diet of the people was simple but nutrient. Peasants were especially fond of curd, butter and milk. Ghee was used in kitchen and by and large the people were vegetarian. Of late, non-vegetarian food has also found a place in few houses. The most common menu of the people is *roti*, *lassi* and vegetables or pulses in the lunch and *randher* and milk in the dinner. *Randher* is a typical food consisting of *rabri*, made of *bajra* and curd, *sattu*, made of barley, *khichri*, made of *bajra* and pulses and *dalia*, made of wheat. *Rabri* and *sattu* is the diet of summer while *khichri* is that of winter. *Dalia* is taken all round the year but more frequently in summer. On festive occasions, delicacies like *halwa*, *kheer* and *pudhe* are prepared. *Gulgula*, *sohali* and *sakarpore* are common in Sravana. There has been noticeable change in the food habits, whether it is because of economic reasons or otherwise. Instead of milk, tea is popular and so are cold drinks in place of *lassi*. Tea stalls are very common in rural as well as urban areas. Restaurants and other eating places have also been established.

Smoking has been a popular habit of the people since past. Hookah provided a traditional get together, especially of the village elders. The meetings on hookah provided a good opportunity for elders to discuss matters of mutual interest. Of late, the cigarettes and bidis have become common in the district. The use of alcohol, country liquor as well as foreign made liquor is increasing day-by-day. Sweets are very popular in the district and rural as well as urban people are very fond of eating sweets. The *peras*, a milk-sweet of Hansi carry a mass popularity in and outside the district.

The daily chore of village women is cleaning the kitchen with cow dung, yellow clay and water early in the morning before preparing the meals. *Desi* ghee is still preferred to vegetable and hydrogenated oils. The latter is socially prohibited in Adampur and a few villages around it. The Bishnois still prefer to avoid vegetable ghee in their kitchen.

Games and Recreation

The popular games of the district were wrestling, *kabaddi*, *rassa khichna*, *gindo khuli*, *guli danda* (tipcat) and *jhurni danda*. The first three games were usually played by boys and middle aged people while the latter were popular among boys and children. The wrestling and *kabaddi* continue to be popular sports among the young and middle-aged. Modern games like hockey, football, basketball, *kho kho* and netball played in schools and colleges have more or less replaced the other games. A craze among children to play various games of *buntas* or *kanchas* (round colourful beads of glass) have come up recently.

Chopar, playing cards and chess are some of the indoor games which are

played and enjoyed in urban as well as rural areas. Villagers playing *chopar* and cards in the *chopal* or *hathai* are a familiar site.

Sang or *swang* was a popular recreation and source of entertainment. The young also took pleasure in playing flute or *algoja* while rearing cattle, but these are no longer seen in villages. Of late, *swang*, a cultural and community entertainments, is being revived with the efforts of the government. The recorded music through gramophone records, tape recorders, transistors and radio sets have made inroads into the simple life of village-folk who pass their time in gossipings and listening to recorded music. Cinema is another sort of popular entertainment which is rapidly taking over all other sorts of entertainment.

Women and girls, after they are free from day's work, get together in a house or a street corner and entertain themselves by community singing. The month of Phalguna (February-March) is a period of merry-making for women. Singing and dancing in the moonlit night is quite common. The women also go gay during the month of Sravana (July-August) when they assemble in an open space in or outside the village where they sing, dance and swing. The life of womenfolk is fast changing and they now take part in various games and tournaments.

Community listening is another popular entertainment of the villagers. The south-eastern part of the district falls in the talecast range where a few people have installed television sets. Drama parties and *bhajan mandlis* move village to village for the entertainment of the people on various occasions. Religious ceremonies, festivals, fairs and marriages too regale the masses when they free themselves from routine work.

COMMUNITY LIFE

Community life is somewhat more effectively organised in villages than in towns. A growing town can not claim to be the nucleus of a single community. Its various social and economic groups are more exclusive than inclusive. They do not come into frequent contact with one another. Civic responsibilities no doubt, are applicable to all, but these are not cohesive in their nature. And this is more true of an expanding town which is sprawled over a large area. There is a growing tendency for voluntary social agencies to establish themselves in local areas or small towns and organise community life in some form or other. They also organize mass celebration of important festivals.

The social situation in villages is different. Big and small land-owners, agricultural labourers and other workers are not far apart from each other.

The limited amenities and amusements of village life are equally shared by all of them and require their combined attention.

Folk Culture

Community life is expressed through folk-songs, dances and theatre. With fast changing conditions, urban life is gradually making an inroad into rural life, taking away some of its inherent beauty and cultural rhythm. The gramophone record is an onslaught on the village *ragi* and radio seeks to replace the folk-songs and dances. But despite increasing urban influence, folk culture still continues to enliven the country-side, which hums with songs and dances on festivals and other occasions. Rohtak radio station is paying much attention to the revival of folk culture in Haryana.

Folk-songs.—Folk culture is preserved by women through folk-songs. Women sing folk-songs connected with particular occasion. These songs express hopes, aspirations, love longings, joys and sorrows of the rural people. A good number of these are nature songs sung in particular months.

The month of Sravana (July-August) brings ecstasy in its wake. Teej or Haryali Teej is the main festival of Sravana, falling on third of the lunar month¹. Village women assemble in the open space in or outside the village or on the roof of a house, most commonly at night and sing Teej songs about 15 or 20 days before Teej. Teej songs include songs of the rainy season and Jahar Pir (Gugga Pir). On Teej, the women come out in colourful costumes for swinging, dancing and singing.

An example of Teej song is given below :

*Saman aiya he maa meri rang bhariya re
he ri har barsengen musldhar,
badal garjiya he maa meri jor ka ri*

(Sravana has come, oh mother, with colourful and enchanting weather, the God will bless us with torrential rains, as the sky is overcast with thunderous clouds.)

Another song :

Meethi to kar de ri maa kothli

Joanga bebe ke des papaiya re bolia peepli

(Oh mother, add sweets to the gifts to be presented to my sister. I will go to my sister's home, as the bird papaya, has announced the onset of Sravana.)

1- A day before Teej, *Sandhara* or *kothli* comprising gifts is sent to married daughters.

The month of Phalguna (February-March) is very pleasant and inspires the women to singing and dancing. Women start dancing late at night starting on Basant Panchmi. In a famous folk-song of Phalguna a women asks for gifts of ornaments from her father-in-law :

*Susra ji yeh do jore haath,
bajna nara deo gharwa
nare ho bin mandi par rahi chaf
chal bin tok riha sansar
Bahuriya he, ham ke jane thari sar
nara to thara dewar de gharwae*

(Oh, father-in-law, I entreat with folded hands, get me tinkling ornaments, without these ornaments, my gait is slow and uninspiring and people around talk about this deficiency. Oh, daughter-in-law I am not concerned with the ornaments, ask your brother-in-law to get it for you.)

Marriage is a special occasion when folk songs are sung on different ceremonies. The ladies receive maternal uncle with a song and *arti* :

*Aaj mahilan mera beera unmani
aaya meri maa ka jaaya beer,
heeraband liyaya chandri*

(My brother, darling son of my mother, has come to my house and it is an occasion of rejoicing, he has brought a headwear decorated with diamonds.)

The bride and bridegroom are taken to the god of homestead or shrine of Devi and ladies accompanying them sing the following song :—

*Paanch patase pana ka beedla
le bhayan pe jayo ji,
jis daali mhara bhayan bethia
wa dali jhuk jayo ji*

(Visit the God of homestead with five *patase* (a sweet made with sugar) and beetle leaves, the branch of a tree having *Bhumia* will bend to bless you.)

The village women go to a tank or river in the month of Kartika. They remove mud from the tank and place it on its bank and call it *pathwari*. They worship *pathawari* as goddess and sing :

Pathwari ae khol kiwari
bahar khori teri sichan aali

Ke mange se sichan aali
an dhan mange sichan aali

(Oh Pathwari, open your door, a devotee is waiting for your blessings. The devotee is asking for the blessings of goddess for prosperity.)

There are songs connected with festivals, religious occasions and heroes like Satyawar Savitri, Gopi Chand Bhartri, Alha Udal, Fatta Jaimal and Bhura Badal. *Ragni* is an important folk-song which is sung during the performance of *swang*.¹

Folk dances.—Folk-dancing, an outburst of surging emotions, at times accompanies folk-singing. *Ghumar*, a female folk-dance is popular in Hisar tahsil. In *Ghumar*, the girls dance in a circle. In the following *Ghumar* song, the bride expresses herself as follows :—

Daman mera bhari door ka jana
men chhail gale jangi, men chhail
gale jangi, bajan de mara nara

(Dressed in heavy clothes and jewellery, I am to walk long, but I am accompanied by my darling and let jewellery tinkle.)

Loor.—is another female dance popular in Fatehabad tahsil and south-western part of Hisar tahsil. It is connected with Holi festival.

Folk tales.—The region is rich in legends and folk-tales, many of which form the theme of folk-theatre and songs of village bards. The impact of folk-tales on the social life of the people is manifest in the characters from the tales forming the motifs of the facade of temples and *chopal*. Popular folk-tales of the area are of Gopi Chand Bhartri, Nal Damyanti, Satyawar Savitri, Puran Bhagat, Alha Udal, Maharaja Agarsen of Agroha, Lakhi Banjara (a local hero) and Gujri (a milk maid who later became the mistress of Feroz Shah Tughlaq who made Gujri Mahal for her residence).

Folk-theatre.—*Swang* or *saang* is the folk-theatre of the region. For sometime past, it has been on the wane as cinema and recorded music made

1. *Swang* is a form of open-air theatre and the stage is in the midst of the audience. The formalities of drama like costumes, curtains, make-up, are hardly observed. The audience sit on all the four sides whereas orchestra takes its seat in the middle of the stage. Generally the leader of the *swang* partly plays the role of hero and other actors play different roles including that of females.

an onslaught in the life of rural people. The Government and other voluntary organisations are making efforts to revive this old form of folk-theatre.

REHABILITATION

The large-scale communal disturbances that followed Independence and the Partition of the country in 1947 inflicted vast suffering on lakhs of people and they were forced to migrate from Pakistan to India and vice-versa. The areas now in Haryana took a leading share in the resettlement of immigrants and a number of immigrants from Pakistan settled in the Hisar district. These immigrants were mainly from Multan, Lyallpur, Dera Ghazi Khan and Bahawalpur as shown in the statement below :

| District of Origin (in Pakistan) | Number of Displaced Persons Settled | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|-------------|--------|
| | Rural Areas | Urban Areas | Total |
| Multan | 42,927 | 15,470 | 58,397 |
| Lyallpur | 2,059 | 3,675 | 5,734 |
| Dera Ghazi Khan | 637 | 790 | 1,427 |
| Bahawalpur | 3,138 | 1,710 | 4,348 |
| Jhang | 150 | 127 | 277 |
| Others | 7,055 | 2,560 | 9,615 |
| Total | 55,966 | 24,332 | 80,298 |

REFUGEE CAMPS

Initially a number of relief camps were organised; one of these was set up at Hisar to provide shelter to the refugees. The educational institutions, which kept closed for some months up to February 1948, provided some of the accommodation. The services of the staff and students were utilized in the management of the camp. Students who rendered three months' social service in the camp were considered eligible for the award of certificate/degree of the Panjab University, if otherwise ripe for it without undergoing examinations.

A number of facilities were provided in the camp including free food-grains ration. A dispensary was opened for immediate medical relief. Fruit, multi-vitamin tablets and some special items of diet were issued to refugees on

medical advice. Arrangements were made for cleanliness and street lighting. The camp, thus provided much needed immediate relief to the displaced persons, and provided breathing time to all concerned to plan their future.

Steps were taken speedily to resettle the rural refugees in villages, evacuated by the Muslims, and the urban refugees in towns.

RURAL REHABILITATION

Measures were taken for the resettlement of rural displaced persons so as to get them back to normal work and to help the sowing of the rabi crop of 1947-48. Initially, land allotment was made on group basis. Persons who were near relatives or were bound by ties of friendship, formed together into groups and secured temporary allotments. All agricultural displaced persons who owned or held land and were cultivating in Pakistan, were eligible for these. These were later converted into quasi-permanent allotments in April 1948, to encourage cultivators to improve the land given to them. This was a preliminary step towards their re-settlement. Claims were invited from displaced persons, and orally verified at tahsil-headquarters. Unfortunately, in spite of their sufferings many unscrupulous displaced persons made exaggerated demands and obtained excessive allotments. To defeat these tactics, the Government obtained the original revenue records from Pakistan and re-verified the claims of the displaced persons. These also showed that there was a substantial difference between the land left behind in Pakistan by the incoming displaced persons and that abandoned by Muslims in East Punjab. The latter was smaller. To overcome this problem, graded cuts were applied in making allotments to displaced claimants, the bigger holders receiving the largest slab of cuts.

Allottees of land were given assistance by way of agricultural loans for purchasing bullocks, implements, fodder, seed and for the repair of wells and houses. In order to minimise misuse, loans were advanced in kind instead of cash. An amount of Rs. 2,79,072 was advanced in the district during 1947-48 to 1951-52. No resettlement loan was disbursed after 1961-62.

The work of conferring final proprietary rights on allottees was taken in hand in September 1955. Bogus and excessive allotments were cancelled, and only the genuine claim of each displaced person, verified from the revenue record received from Pakistan, was admitted. The proprietary rights have been conferred on 37,775 by March 31, 1979.

Rural housing.—Heavy rains had damaged a large number of houses. According to the statistics available, there were 4,170 undamaged houses, 51 repairable houses, and 551 houses beyond repair in the district. Even these houses were unevenly distributed. In some villages the number of houses

was in excess of the needs of the allottees, while in others almost the entire *abadis* had crumbled and not a single house was available. Houses were allotted on a temporary basis in the first instance. Rules for allotment of these houses were framed thereafter. Records including information of the details of evacuee houses in the villages, the number of rooms, the dimensions, the general conditions and the value of the house were prepared and lists of the allottees showing the value of houses left by them in Pakistan were also made. The Halqa Revenue Officer, generally a Naib Tahsildar did the allotment work. A list giving the order of precedence was prepared. After setting aside a few houses for common purposes, allottees were given a chance of selection according to their place on the merit list.

URBAN REHABILITATION

A number of experiments and schemes to utilise the available Muslim abandoned properties and to develop more housing were put through. All the Muslim abandoned properties were taken over under the Punjab Evacuee Property Ordinance IV of 1947, later replaced by the Administration of Evacuee Property Act, 1950. Such properties comprising houses, shops, vacant sites, *khokhas* and industrial establishments were temporarily allotted to displaced persons on rent. Their permanent disposal started in 1953-54. The properties valuing below Rs. 10,000 (below Rs. 50,000 for industrial establishments) were declared allotable, while those assessed above these figures were to be sold by open auction. Properties lying vacant or in unauthorised possession were similarly auctioned.

In the urban areas of Hisar, Hansi, Fatehabad and Tohana there were, 4,053 evacuee properties which were managed by the District Rent and Managing Officers. These properties became a part of the evacuee pool for compensating displaced persons with verified claims. Allotable properties were given away permanently as compensations to claimants against such claims. If the value of a property was in excess of his due compensation, the claimant was allowed to deposit the difference by instalments. Properties occupied by non-claimants were offered to them on annual instalments. By March 1979, 3,893 properties stood permanently allotted to displaced persons out of which 80 per cent were non-claimants. This left a balance of 160 unallotted properties. The main reasons for these remaining were lack of accurate record and in certain cases dispute about their possession.

Housing schemes.—The properties abandoned by the Muslims were insufficient to provide shelter to all the displaced persons in the district. The urban housing problem was acute. Following from the fact that most of the urban Muslim evacuees were labourers and artisans and, therefore, their

houses were unpretentious, whereas the incoming urban displaced persons were businessmen and shopkeepers, used to better dwellings. To meet the grave situation arising from the inadequate residential accommodation available and to provide suitable shelter to displaced persons, the government established 8-marla (cheap) housing colony for the middle class at Hisar and 4-marla (cheap) tenements for the poorer at Fathabad.

SMALL URBAN AND HOUSE BUILDING LOANS

The refugees were encouraged to restart their business, trade or other profession. A scheme for providing loans and grants was introduced in February 1948, under the East Punjab Refugees Rehabilitation (Loans and Grants) Act, 1948. The loan was limited to Rs. 5,000 to an individual, Rs. 20,000 to a group of 4 or more displaced persons and Rs. 25,000 to a co-operative society. The grants were restricted to unattached women, widow and others who were unable to repay loans but at the same time wanted monetary help for resettlement. The maximum amount of grant was limited to Rs. 500.

Small urban loans.—These loans were advanced to displaced persons to enable them to establish themselves in different vocations. All classes of displaced persons comprising traders, artisans, industrialists, students, lawyers and medical practitioners were helped. These loans carried an interest at the rate of 3 per cent per annum and the recovery of the loan was to be started after 3 years of disbursement. The loans together with interest were repayable in equal instalments spread over a period of 6 years. The loans and grants were strictly to be utilised for the purpose for which they were asked for by the applicants or sanctioned by the government. An amount of Rs. 6,09,946 was advanced to displaced persons during 1948-49 to 1956-57.

House building loans.—House building loans were advanced for the purchase of plots in model towns and housing colonies to build their own houses. The repayment of the loan was in easy instalments. The loan advanced during 1949-50 to 1955-56 was Rs. 4,47,590.

PAYMENT OF COMPENSATION

Compensation was paid to displaced persons who had abandoned immovable property in Pakistan, after verifying their claims, under the Displaced Persons (Claims), Act, 1950. Interim compensation was sanctioned for certain categories of displaced persons who were in urgent need of relief. The interim scheme was later replaced by the Displaced Persons (Compensation and Rehabilitation) Act, 1954. Under it, scaled compensation was prescribed. It gave proportionately more to smaller claimants, and less to the bigger. This compensation was paid out of the compensation pool, to which the central government had contributed.