

Chapter-III

People

Introduction

The Punjab-Reorganisation Bill passed by the Indian Parliament on

September 10, 1966 bifurcated the bilingual state of Punjab and made provision for the setting up of the new state of Haryana comprising the districts of Gurgaon, Mahendragarh, Rohtak, Hissar, Karnal and some parts of Sangrur (Punjab) and Ambala districts. Having an area of 43,887 square kilometres, the state of Haryana came into existence on November 1, 1966. During the reorganisation of the Punjab¹ in 1966, the Sangrur district was bifurcated and Jind and Narwana tahsils were allocated to Haryana and further constituted into Jind district.

Population Trends

As per 1971 Census, the population of Haryana state was 1, 00,36, 808 (males 53,77, 258 and 46,59,550 females). The urbanites numbered 17,72,959; males 9,57,033 and 8,15,926 females. The total number of ruralites were 82, 63,849 (males 44,20,225 & 38, 43,624 females).

At the time of 1971 Census, there were 7 districts in Haryana State; Ambala, Karnal, Rohtak, Gurgaon, Mahendragarh, Hissar and Jind. This was the first census after the formation of Haryana as a state. The table below indicates the districtwise population in Haryana in accordance with the Census of 1971 :-

Population

Name of the district	Males	Females	Total
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Hissar	11,43,185	9,89,763	21,32,948
Rohtak	9,48,893	8,36,641	17,85,534
Gurgaon	9,17,766	7,89,603	17,07,369
Karnal	10,68,598	9,12,705	19,81,303
Ambala	5,90,751	5,07,634	10,98,405
Mahendragarh	3,63,960	3,27,679	6,91,639
Jind	3,44,105	2,95,505	6,39,610
Total	53,77,258	46,59,550	1,00,36,808

1. Dr. Buddha Prakash : *Glimpses of Haryana*, 1967, p.1.

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On the basis of population, Hissar district had the largest population whereas the district of Jind stood at the bottom in respect of population. Since independence days; the population has been increasing day by day. During the decade's period (1951-61), the population of Haryana rose up by 34.12 percent whereas during the next decade(1961-71), the population increased by 32.23 percent. The increasing trends in population in regard to the then districts of Haryana during 20 years period (1951-1971) are shown below :_

District Population Percentage increased

1971 1961 1951 1961-71 1951-61

Hissar 21,32,948 15,44,910 10,49,448
38.06 47.21

Rohtak 17,85,534 14,20,391 11,22,046
25.71 26.59

Gurgaon 17,07,369 12,40,706 9,67,664
37.61 28.22

Karnal 19,81,303 14,90,430 10,77,381
32.93 38.34

Ambala 10,98,405 8,85,785 6,78,175
24.00 30.61

Mahendragarh 6,91,639 5,43,448
4,39,271 27.27 23.72

Jind 6,39,610 4,64,873 3,39,629 37.59
36.88

Total : 1,00,36,808 75,90,543
56,73,614 32.23 34.12

During the Census of 1971, the Hissar district topped the list of districts with reference to occupied residential houses. The houseless population as per 1971 Census in Haryana was 39,753. The district-wise details about the occupied residential houses are given below :—

District No. of occupied Rural Urban
Houseless
residential houses population

Hissar 3,12,039 7 7 11,121

Rohtak 2,57,899 7 7 4,019

Gurgaon 2,56,558 7 6 4,419

Karnal 2,88,119 7 7 12,407

Ambala 1,72,308 7 5 4,393

Jind 89,772 7 7 1,108

Mahendragarh 93,731 7 7 2,286

Total : 14,70,426 7 6 39,753

People

To assess the changing trends in the then districts of Haryana vis-a-vis rural and urban population is very essential. The highest rural population than that of other districts was in Hissar district which was closely followed in this respect by the Karnal district. But Ambala district had the highest urban population than that of other districts of Haryana. Hissar stood at the second rung of the ladder. The details are given in the following A & B tables:—

Table A

District Rural population as per 1971 Census
Total Males Females

Hissar 17,93,120 9,58,164 8,34,956

Rohtak 15,05,597 7,98,813 7,06,784

Gurgaon 13,91,385 7,44,657 6,46,728

Karnal 16,44,204 8,87,292 7,56,912

Ambala 7,53,670 4,06,889 3,46,781

Jind 5,54,901 2,98,199 2,56,702

Mahendragarh 6,20,972 3,26,211 2,94,761

Total 82,63,849 44,20,225 38,43,624

Table B

District Urban population as per 1971 Census
Total Males Females

Ambala 3,44,735 1,83,862 1,60,873

Hissar 3,39,828 1,85,021 1,54,807

Rohtak 2,79,937 1,50,080 1,29,875

Gurgaon 3,15,984 1,73,109 1,42,875

Karnal 3,37,099 1,81,306 1,55,793

Jind 84,709 45,906 38,803

Mahendragarh 70,667 37,749 32,918

Total 17,72,959 9,57,033 8,15,926

There has been much variation in the population since 1901 till today. There was no decline in population during any decade in the case of Hissar district, while

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Ambala and Gurgaon were only districts which recorded decline in their population during the decade 1911-21. The small increase in population for the decade 1941-51 was mainly on account of influx of population, took place between India and Pakistan.

Another strange point to note is that the urban population of

the state during the past seventy years i.e. upto 1971 Census, increased by more than three times. Taking the towns of 1971 Census only into consideration, the population increased by 241.8%. Except for the decade 1901-11 when the urban population as also the rural population recorded a decrease, the urban population increased more rapidly than rural population. The higher increase in urban population as compared to that in rural population is obviously for the reason that there is a continuous migration of population from rural to urban areas; the latter having the better educational facilities and also large avenues for employment. This process of shifting of population from rural to urban areas was found in all the districts of the state. Another reason for the variation in the rural-urban growth of population can be attributed to some rural areas being treated as urban in the later census. The decadal variation in population of Haryana since 1901 is given below :-

Year Persons Decade Percentage Males Females
variation

1901	46,23,079	- -	24,76,398	21,46,681
1911	41,74,690	- 4,48,389	- 9.70	22,74,916 18,99,774
1921	42,55,905	+ 81,215	+ 1.95	23,07,992 19,47,913
1931	45,59,931	+ 3,04,026	+ 7.14	24,73,236 20,86,695
1941	52,72,845	+ 7,12,914	+15.63	28,21,792 24,51,053
1951	56,73,614	+ 4,00,169	+ 7.60	30,31,626 26,41,988
1961	75,90,543	+19,16,929	+34.12	40,62,797 35,27,746
1971	1,00,36,808	+24,46,265	+32.23	53,77,258 46,59,550

At the time of 1971 Census, there were 7,064 villages in Haryana state. Of these villages, as many as 6,731 had returned population from within their boundaries. The remaining 333 villages were uninhabited. In the case of these 333 villages, it would be necessary to mention here that there were some villages with the areas of which had fully or partly been included in the neighbouring towns growing after their names, but they were recognised as such for land revenue¹ purposes by the Government.

1. Now the land revenue (land tax) was abolished by the Government.

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The position regarding inhabited and uninhabited villages in each district (1971) is given below :-

District Number of Villages

Total inhabited uninhabited

Ambala 1,306 1,221 85

Karnal 1,429 1,366 63

Rohtak 806 772 34

Gurgaon 1,586 1,471 115

Mahendragarh 558 542 16

Hissar 1,078 1,059 19

Jind 301 300 1

"The percentage of population (35%) living in villages of size group

2,000-4,999 to total rural population in the State is the highest amongst the various size groups, closely followed by that living in villages of size-group 1,000-1,999 (29%). These two groups together have about two-third of the total rural population in the State. The third position in terms of percentage of population is held by the size group 500-999. However, in terms of the number of villages in the aforementioned three size groups, the position is quite reverse. Of the total number of 6,731 inhabited villages, the size group 500-999 has as many as 1,909 villages, while the size groups 1,000-1,999 and 2,000-4,999 have only 1,673 and 975 villages respectively. A still smaller size-group 200-499,

which has only 6% of the total rural population of the State living in its villages, the number of villages falling in this group is 1,400."

There were only 8 villages with population over 10,000 in the State. Four of these were in the then Karnal district (one in Guhla tahsil and 3 in Kaithal tahsil) and the other four were in Hisar district (one each in Sirsa, Fatehabad, Hisar and Hansi tahsils). The number of villages with population 5,000-9,999 was however, 148 and they had more than one tenth (11%) of the total rural population. The smallest sized villages i.e. with a population of less than 200 were 618 in number but in terms of population, they accounted for only 1% of total rural population. Such villages were mostly in Ambala, Gurgaon and Karnal districts¹.

According to 1971 census, there were 65 towns in the State of Haryana. Their classification according to sizes of population (six classes) is as follows :-

Class-I with a population of 1,00,000 and over 2

Class-II with a population of 50,000 to 99,999 9

1. *Census of India, 1971, Haryana (General Population Tables) p. 43.*

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Class-III with a population of 20,000 to 49,999 14

Class-IV with a population of 10,000 to 19,999 15

Class-V with a population of 5,000 to 9,999 20

Class- VI with a population of less than 5,000 5

As already explained that the total number of towns as per 1971 Census was 65. Their town wise break-up is as such : Ambala district had 10 towns; Karnal district-II; Rohtak district-8; Gurgaon district-14; Mahendragarh district-5; Hissar district-12; and Jind district-5.

Population as per 1981 Census

The Haryana state comprised 12 districts with 39 tahsils as on December 31, 1979-the date on which the boundaries were frozen for the conduct of 1981 Census. By the time of 1971 there were 7 districts in Haryana. There were many changes in the district and tahsil boundaries caused by the creation of five more districts and seven new tahsils due to transfer of villages from one tahsil to another tahsil during the decade (1971-81).

As per 1981 Census, the total population of Haryana state was 1,29,22,618; males-69,09,938 and females 60,12,680. The total rural population was 1,00,95,231 (males 53,80,966 and females 47,14,265). The urban population stood at 28,27,387 (males 15,28,972 and females 12,98,415). The district-wise population is as under:-

District Population

Males Females Total

1. Hissar 8,01,771 6,94,763 14,96,534
2. Sirsa 3,76,602 3,30,466 7,07,068
3. Bhiwani 4,84,702 4,35,350 9,20,052
4. Gurgaon 4,51,861 3,97,737 8,49,598
5. Faridabad 5,52,163 4,48,696 10,00,859
6. Jind 5,05,937 4,32,137 9,38,074
7. Mahendragarh 4,96,903 4,62,497 9,59,400
8. Ambala 7,53,308 6,56,155 14,09,463
9. Kurukshetra 6,06,571 5,23,455 11,30,026
10. Rohtak 7,12,769 6,29,184 13,41,953
11. Karnal 7,13,478 6,09,348 13,22,826
12. Sonapat 4,53,873 3,92,892 8,46,765

People

By comparing the figures of population of both censuses i.e. 1971 and 1981, the population increased by 28.75 percent by the time of 1981 Census. The increase of persons was 28,85,810. The total number of occupied residential houses in Haryana was 19,59,351 ; in rural area - 14,71,836 and in urban area - 4,87,515. The institutional and houseless population in Haryana was 92,882.

In the Haryana state, there were 6,745 inhabited villages at the time of 1981 census, with a population of 1,00,95,231 persons, of which males and females were 53,80,966 and 47,14,265 respectively. In the state, 465 villages with population less than 200 persons were claiming 25,959 males and 22,407 females. The villages where the population ranges between 200-499 persons, were 1,034 containing 1,99,106 males and 1,73,465 females ; 1,776 villages falling in the sizes group 500-999, contained 6,92,397 males and 6,12,602 females. As many as 14,15,707 males and 12,51,904 females were living in 1,883 villages of size group 1,000-1999 persons. Atleast 1,346 villages containing 21,46,992 males and 18,78,712 females, fell in the population range of 2,000-4999.

The number of villages in the size group 5,000-9999 was 221 with 7,71,963 males and 6,64,879 females. There were only 20 villages having the population of 10,000 persons and above all divided into 1,28,842 males and 1,10,296 females.

The percentage of population living in the villages in the state was highest, being 39.88% in the size group of villages with 2000-4999 persons. This proportion was followed by 26.42%

in villages with population size 1,000-1999, 14.23% in villages with population size 5,000-9999; 12.93% in villages of the size group

500-999; 3.69% in villages with 200-499 persons, 2.37% in the villages having population 10,000 and above and only 0.48% in villages with population of less than 200 persons. More than 80% of the population was residing in villages of 3 size group i.e. 1,000-1999, 2,000-4999 and 5,000-9,999 persons. In Ambala district, the highest proportion of population living in villages (31.22%) was found in the size group 500-999. In the districts of Kurukshetra (34.65%), Karnal (44.53%), Jind (49.10%), Sonapat (52.89%), Rohtak (47.95%), Faridabad (33.42%), Bhiwani (36.47%), Hissar (52.95%) and Sirsa (42.52%), the highest proportion was found in the size group of villages with population 2000-4999. In the districts of Gurgaon (31.09%) and Mahendragarh (41.57%), the highest proportion was in the size group of villages with population 1000-1999. Thus, out of 12 districts by 1981 census, the 9 districts had highest proportion of their population in the size group of villages with population 2000-4999.

In all the districts, there was a decline in the percentage of number of villages and percentage of population in the size group less than 500 from 1971 to 1981. All

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the districts, except Ambala and Gurgaon had recorded a decrease in the percentage of number of villages in the size group 500-999 but a decline was recorded in the percentage of population in all the districts in this size- group from 1971 to 1981. In the size group 1000-1,999, mixed trends were observed. While some districts recorded decrease and others registered increase both in the percentage of population from

1971 to 1981. In the size group 1000-1,999, mixed trends were observed. While some districts recorded decrease and others registered increase both in the percentage of number of villages and percentage of population from 1971 to 1981. In the size class 2000-4,999, gain in percentage of the number of villages and also gain in percentage of population was recorded for all districts except Rohtak and Faridabad where the position was otherwise. In higher categories mixed trends were recorded.

The number of towns in Haryana was 81 in 1981 in comparison to 54 in 1901, their population had grown approximately 5 times within a span of 80 years. At the time of 1981 census the maximum urban population (4,63,777) was found in Ambala district and the minimum (1,25,375) in Mahendragarh district. In other districts, the urban population was 4,08,594 in Faridabad; 3,46,292 in Karnal; 2,88,647 in Hissar; 2,66,094 in Rohtak; 1,86,052 in Kurukshetra; 1,69,189 in Gurgaon; 1,52,046 in Sonipat; 1,47,369 in Bhiwani; 1,44,496 in Sirsa and 1,29,456 in Jind. Mahendragarh district where minimum urban population has been recorded at the time of 1981 census, was third among the districts in 1901 so far as numerical strength of urban population was concerned. The first two were Ambala and Rohtak districts. In 1901, the minimum urban population was recorded in Jind district.

In Haryana state there were 54 towns in 1901. Their strength was reduced to 36 in 1911 due to change in the definition of town which now excluded over-grown villages lacking distinct urban characteristics. Then again there was an increase in the number of towns which became 39 in 1921, 41 in 1931 and 45 in 1941 but could not tally with the strength of towns in the state became 62 which was more than the strength of towns as was in 1901. It was only in 1951 the strength of towns was in 1901, i.e. 54 towns after a period of more than 40 years. The strength of towns became 61 in 1961, 65 in 1971 and 81 in 1981.

There was an increasing trend in the number of towns since 1911. In 1981 census the maximum number of towns (14) was found in Ambala district and minimum number (3) in Sonipat district. The strength of towns in other districts was 10 in Gurgaon, 8 each in Hissar and Karnal, 7 in Kurukshetra, 6 each in Jind, Rohtak and Mahendragarh, 5 in Faridabad and 4 each in Bhiwani and Sirsa.

As per census of 1981, the total number of households was

19,95,593; 14,86,489 in rural area while 5,09,104 in urban area. The districtwise position of households in 1981 was as under :-

People

District Number of Households
Rural Urban Total

1 2 3 4

Hissar 1,78,546 50,642 2,29,188

Sirsa 82,997 24,072 1,07,069

Bhiwani 1,09,130 25,465 1,34,595

Gurgaon 98,372 28,575 1,26,947

Faridabad 85,937 84,652 1,70,589

Jind 1,17,174 21,545 1,38,719

Mahendragarh 1,24,610 19,903 1,44,513

Ambala 1,44,295 88,752 2,33,047

Karnal 1,48,451 60,948 2,09,399

Kurukshetra 1,38,217 32,333 1,70,450

Rohtak 1,54,041 45,099 1,99,140

Sonapat 1,04,719 27,218 1,31,937

Position of Population of the State In 1991

As per census of 1991 the total population of Haryana state was 1,64,63,648 persons; Males 88,27,474 and females 76,36,174. The population rose during 1981-91 by 27.41 percent. By the time of 1991 census, the number of districts rose to 16; Panipat, Rewari, Yamunanagar and Kaithal districts were constituted during the mid of 1989. The total area of the state was 44,212 square kilometres¹. The district wise population with growth percentage in accordance with 1991 census is as under:-

District Persons Males Females Percentage Decade Variation

1 2 3 4 5

1. Ambala 11,16,878 5,92,538 5,24,340 30.43

2. Yamuna Nagar 8,21,880 4,36,415 3,85,465 27.26

3. Kurukshetra 6,41,943 3,41,612 3,00,331 23.41

4. Kaithal 8,20,685 4,43,019 3,77,666 20.78

5. Karnal 8,85,797 4,75,056 4,10,741 26.54

1. *Census of India (Haryana State), General Population Tables & Primary Census Abstract, 1991.*

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1 2 3 4 5

6. Panipat 8,33,501 4,49,504 3,83,997 33.50

7. Sonapat 7,54,866 4,10,133 3,44,733 27.15

8. Rohtak 18,08,606 9,77,075 8,31,531 19.29

9. Faridabad 14,77,240 8,08,223 6,69,017 49.81
10. Gurgaon 11,46,090 6,12,620 5,33,470 32.67
11. Rewari 6,23,301 3,23,460 2,99,841 25.46
12. Mahendragarh 6,81,869 3,57,004 3,24,865 27.91
13. Bhiwani 11,39,718 6,06,378 5,33,340 22.91
14. Jind 9,63,104 5,24,014 4,39,090 23.10
15. Hissar 18,44,634 9,91,016 8,53,618 23.84
16. ¹Sirsa 9,03,536 4,79,407 4,24,129 27.79

The Hissar district had the largest population at the time of census operations of 1991. Rohtak district stood at the second ladder, having the population of 18,08,606 persons. The Faridabad district registered the highest growth rate (49.81 percent), the steep increase from the population growth rate of 1981, which was 40.27 in 1981. The reason may be industrial development in the district. The Panipat district stood at second ladder in relation to population growth rate in 1991 (33.50 percent).

As per 1991 Census, the total rural population in Haryana was 1,24,08,904; males 66,57,334 and females 57,51,570. Total population in the age group 0.6 in rural areas was 24,29,267; males 12,94,035 and females 11,35,232. The percentage of rural population in Haryana was 75.37. Out of total 1,24,08,904 persons living in rural areas of Haryana, as many as 14,55,081 persons were found in Hissar district which had the largest concentration of rural population in 1991. The minimum concentration of rural population was found in Kurukshetra district 4,87,809 in 1991.

The population residing in villages is known as rural population. Since agriculture is the mainstay of the people of Haryana, that is why, 75.37 percent of its total population has been found in rural areas. Among the districts, the highest percentage of rural population (85.30) had been recorded in Kaithal district whereas it was only 51.43 percent in Faridabad district. It also reflects the degree of urbanization in Haryana.

In Haryana State, there were 6,759 inhabited villages at time of 1991 Census, covering a population of 1,24,08,904 of which 66,57,334 were males and 57,51,570 females. In the state, 358 inhabited villages with population less than 200

persons

1. *Series-8, 1991, p. 130.2*

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were claiming 18,623 males and 15,738 females. The villages where the population ranged between 200-499 persons were 724 containing 1,37,106 males and 1,20,965 females while 1,545 villages were in the size group 500-900 persons inhabiting 6,13,306 males and 5,40,664 females. As many as 15,38,699 males and 13,48,779 females were living in 2,021 villages of the size group 1000-1999 persons. There were 1,703 villages of the size group 2000-4999 where in 27,60,562 males and 23,79,761 females resided. The number of villages in the size group 5,000-9999 persons was 364 having 12,84,664 males and 10,89,830 females. There were only 44 villages in the state having population of 10,000 persons and above claiming 3,04,374 males and 2,55,833 females.

The proportion of population living in villages in the State as a whole, was the highest (41.42 percent) in the size group of villages with 2,000-4,999 persons. This proportion was followed by the size group of villages with 1,000-1,999 persons (23.27 percent); 19.14 percent in villages with 5,000-9999 persons; 9.30 percent in villages with 500-999 persons; 4.51 percent in villages with population 10,000 and above; 2.08 percent in villages having population of 200-499 and 0.28 percent in villages with population less than 200 persons. In other words 83.83 percent of the rural population had been found in three size groups of villages i.e. 1,000-1,999; 2,000-4,999 and 5,000-9999 persons. As per 1991 census, among the four districts of Ambala, Yamunanagar, Kurukshetra and Rewari, the highest

proportion of rural population of each district had been recorded in the villages with size group 1,000-1,999 persons. The villages of the size groups 2,000-4,999 persons, claimed the highest proportion of rural population in the remaining 12 districts - Kaithal, Karnal, Panipat, Sonapat, Rohtak, Faridabad, Gurgaon, Mahendragarh, Bhiwani, Jind, Hissar and Sirsa. The villages with less than 200 persons registered the lowest proportion of rural population in each district of the State.

By 1991, there had been a decline in the percentage of inhabited villages and percentage of population residing therein, in the sizes-group of villages with population less than 500 and 500-999 persons from 1981-1991 in the state as a whole. The percentage of number of villages and percentage of population inhabited therein had recorded a gain in the sizes-group of villages with 2,000-4,999 persons, 5,000-9,999 persons and 10,000 persons and above from 1981 to 1991 in Haryana. There is only one size group of villages with 1,000-1,999 persons where an increase in the percentage of number of villages and a decrease in the percentage of population had been recorded from 1981-1991 in the state. In all the districts (except- Rohtak) there was a decline in the percentage of number of villages and percentage of population in the sizes group less than 500 persons from 1981 to 1991 but in Rohtak district a marginal increase in the percentage of number of villages and constant percentage of population

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in this size group had been recorded from 1981 to 1991. There was increase in the percentage of number of villages in the size group 2,000-4,999 persons in all the districts but an increase in the percentage of population had been recorded in

all the districts except Kurukshetra, Kaithal, Panipat, Rohtak and Hissar. Similarly, a gain in the percentage of number of villages and percentage of population had been recorded in all the districts (except marginal decrease in percentage of population in Rewari district only) in the size group of villages with 5,000-9,999 persons from 1981 to 1991. A gain was registered in villages with population 10,000 and above from 1981 to 1991 in both the percentages of number of villages and of population in all the districts where they were found during the census of 1991. In other categories, mixed trends were recorded.

The percentage growth of population in the areas now comprising the state of Haryana between 1901 to 1991 was +256.12 in total population; +206.47 in rural population and +606.31 in urban population. Numerically speaking, urban population had been multiplied by about 7 times while total population increased only 3.5 times during the last nine decades. The decennial growth rate of total population of Haryana during 1981-91 was 27.41 percent and among the districts it was highest in Faridabad district (49.81) and the lowest in Rohtak district (19.29). The growth rate of rural population of the state as a whole during the last decade was 22.92 percent and among the districts it was highest in Panipat district (32.08) and the lowest in Rohtak district (16.28). The decennial growth rate of urban population in Haryana during 1981-91 was 43.41 percent and among the districts it was highest in Faridabad district (75.61) and the lowest in Mahendragarh district (28.15). The highest growth rate of population in the district of Faridabad during the last decade might be due to the spread of industries attracting immigrations.

Although in number, the two sexes were not widely divergent, their disparity was of great interest to social scientists because of the different roles of the two sexes in society and its economy. Haryana is a region with deficiency of females. This fact is supported by the latest census results. The sex-ratio for the state as a whole was 865 in 1991 census and among the districts it was highest in Rewari district(927) and the lowest in Faridabad district(828). The rural sex ratio for the state was 864 while it was 868 for urban areas. From 1971 to 1981, the sex-ratio in urban areas was comparatively lower than what was found in rural areas, but in 1991, the sex ratio became relatively higher in urban areas. The highest rural sex-ratio (940) had been recorded in Rewari district and lowest (831) in Sonipat district as per 1991 census.

The district wise sex-ratio (rural and urban) as per the result of 1991 Census is given below :-

People

District Rural Urban Total

1 2 3 4

Ambala 865 922 885

Yamunanagar 885 880 883

Kurukshetra 883 867 879

Kaithal 848 878 852

Karnal 856 887 865

Panipat 848 871 854

Sonapat 831 873 841

Rohtak 843 881 851

Faridabad 842 813 828

Gurgaon 867 886 871

Rewari 940 859 927

Mahendragarh 911 901 910

Bhiwani 881 875 880

Jind 834 859 838

Hissar 861 864 861

Sirsa 887 876 885

The district wise total rural population, as per 1991 census, is as under :-

District Persons Males Females

1 2 3 4

Ambala 7,19,884 3,85,956 3,33,928

Yamunanagar 5,44,953 2,89,086 2,55,867

Kurukshetra 4,87,809 2,59,063 2,28,746

Kaithal 7,00,048 3,78,790 3,21,258

Karnal 6,42,514 3,46,131 2,96,383

Panipat 6,07,156 3,28,513 2,78,643

Sonipat 5,76,841 3,15,091 2,61,750

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1 2 3 4

Rohtak 14,23,133 7,72,110 6,51,023

Faridabad 7,59,727 4,12,556 3,47,171

Gurgaon 9,13,386 4,89,263 4,24,123

Rewari 5,28,101 2,72,262 2,55,839

Mahendragarh 5,97,225 3,12,481 2,84,744

Bhiwani 9,43,150 5,01,522 4,41,628

Jind 7,97,560 4,34,946 3,62,614

Hissar 14,55,081 7,82,054 6,73,027

Sirsa 7,12,336 3,77,510 3,34,826

With reference to the rural population Hissar district had the highest persons as per the Census Hand Book of 1991; Rohtak district was at the second step of the ladder.

As per 1991 census, highest density of population (702) was in Faridabad district and lowest 211 in Sirsa district. In the year 1991 the density in Haryana was 372 as against 292 in 1981 and 227 in 1971. For India as a whole the density was 274 for 1991 census as against 216 in 1981.

The density of population considers the average number of persons living per sq-km. it also indicates man-land-ratio. Natural resources coupled with the degree of industrialisation determine the extent to which a higher density of population can be supported. Density of population cannot be treated as an index either of poverty or of prosperity of a state or country.

The following table explains the birth and death rates per thousand from 1971 to 1991 :-

Birth Rate (per thosand)

Year Rural Urban Total

1 2 3 4

1971 44.2 32.4 42.1

1975 39.7 29.7 38.0

1980 38.3 31.4 37.2

1981 37.8 29.6 36.5

People

1 2 3 4

1982 38.2 30.1 36.5

1983 37.8 29.7 35.9

1984 38.5 32.6 37.2

1985 36.6 32.9 35.7

1986 36.9 29.6 35.3

1987 35.4 31.3 34.5

1988 35.0 29.9 33.8

1989 36.6 30.1 35.2

1990 33.1 27.5 31.9

1991 34.7 27.2 33.1

Death Rate¹ (per thousand)

Year Rural Urban Total

1971 10.4 7.3 9.9

1975 13.2 8.3 12.3

1980 12.0 7.2 11.2

1981 11.9 7.6 11.3

1982 10.0 5.7 9.1

1983 9.8 6.5 9.0

1984 11.7 7.9 10.9

1985 9.7 7.1 9.1

1986 9.2 6.0 8.7

1987 9.4 6.8 8.8

1988 10.4 7.6 9.8

1989 9.0 6.6 8.5

1990 8.9 6.9 8.4

1991 8.5 6.8 8.2

1. Dr. S.P. Gupta : *Three Decades of Haryana (A Descriptive Study)*, 1999, pp.25-26.

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As regards birth rate it had fallen from 42.1 per thousand in 1971 to 33.1 in 1991; the death rate had fallen from 9.9 per thousand to 8.2 per thousand during the period of 20 years. The infant mortality rate had fallen from 72.0 per thousand in 1971 to 68.0 per thousand in 1991.

This fall in infant mortality rate had been due to improvement in availability of medical aid and improvement in family welfare measures.

Life Expectancy.- The number of years for which people of a country expect to live at the time of birth is the average life expectancy of that country. It depends mainly on the death rate and the age at the time of death. In India life expectancy increased from 41.3 years in 1961 to 60 years in 1991. In Haryana, according to 1991 census, poverty is the root cause of short span of life. The discovery of wonder medicine to control small-pox, plague, cholera, general improvement in medical assistance, increase in number of hospitals, doctors, nursing homes, etc. have helped to save life. Public health measures under Five-Year Plans have further reduced the death rate.

In accordance with the Census Hand Book, 1991 the total

urban population of Haryana was 40,54,744 (males 21,70,140 and females 18,84,604). The percentage of urban population was 24.63. The district-wise urban population with growth rate is as under :-

District Percentage Persons Males Females

Ambala 29.26 3,96,994 2,06,582 1,90,412

Yamunanagar 30.01 2,76,927 1,47,329 1,29,598

Kurukshetra 30.09 1,54,134 82,549 71,585

Karnal 25.34 2,43,283 1,28,925 1,14,358

Kaithal 32.73 1,20,637 64,229 56,408

Panipat 27.25 2,26,345 1,20,991 1,05,354

Jind 28.42 1,65,544 89,068 76,476

Sonipat 29.30 1,78,025 95,042 82,983

Rohtak 24.18 3,85,473 2,04,965 1,80,508

Hissar 25.90 3,89,553 2,08,962 1,80,591

Sirsa 24.43 1,91,200 1,01,897 89,303

Bhiwani 25.03 1,96,568 1,04,856 91,712

Faridabad 43.05 7,17,513 3,95,667 3,21,846

Gurgaon 27.29 2,32,704 1,23,357 1,09,347

Rewari 37.69 95,200 51,198 44,002

Mahendragarh 21.96 84,644 44,523 40,121

The decennial growth (1981-91) was highest (43.05) of Faridabad district. There after Rewari district followed the increase pattern. The reasons for the abnormal growth may be the attraction towards industrial progress providing much livelihood avenues to the people.

If we consider 1901 as the base year with urban population as 100, then the urban population of Haryana in 1991 had grown to 706 revealing a 7 fold increase approximately. The highest growth of urban population was recorded in Faridabad district where urban population grew to 2,045 in relation to 100 in 1901; and the minimum growth had been found in Rewari district(258) in relation to 100 in 1901. There are five districts;namely, Faridabad, Jind, Sonipat, Hissar and Karnal where the indices of growth of urban population were more than 1000 in 1991 in relation to 100 in 1901.

There were only 5,74,074 persons living in urban areas at the time of 1901 census. Then urban population decreased to 4,49,704 in 1911 because the number of towns was reduced to 36 in 1911 from 54 in 1901 due to change in the definition of town which excluded overgrown villages lacking distinct urban characteristics. The urban population of the state was 5,64,743 in 1931; 7,05,945 in 1941; 9,68,494 in 1951; 13,07,680 in 1961; 17,72,959 in 1971; 28,27,387 in 1981 and became 40,54,744 in 1991.

The urban population of the state multiplied by about 7 times during the last nine decades. At the time of 1991 census, the maximum urban population (7,17,513) was recorded in Faridabad district and minimum (84,644) in Mahendragarh district. As per jurisdiction of 1991 census, the maximum urban population was recorded in Rohtak district (94,192) and minimum in Jind district (12,879) at the time of 1901.

In 1991 census, the number of class-I towns was 11 containing 52.93 percent of urban population of the State. Whereas with same number (11) of towns in class-II, it was found 18.98 percent of total urban population. The number of towns in class-III was 18 where 13.14 percent of total urban population resided¹. The highest number of towns was recorded in class IV(31) containing only 10.78 percent of total urban population of the State. Class-V towns were 21 out of total towns of Haryana claiming 3.94 percent of total urban population while class VI towns were 2(Uchana of

Karnal district and Ateli of Mahendragarh district) where 0.23 percent of State's urban population resided.

1. *Census of India (Haryana State), General Population Tables, 1991.*

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Out of 16 districts, as per 1991 census, in the State, 5 districts viz. Faridabad, Ambala, Yamunanagar, Karnal and Panipat recorded a higher degree of urbanization than the State and all India average. On the whole, State registered 24.63 percent of its population as urban population in 1991 census against 21.88 percent in 1981 census, showing a healthy and upward trend in urbanization. The Faridabad district had retained its pride place of having the highest proportion (48.57 percent) of urban population of total population in the State. Ambala district with 35.54 percent urban population ranked second. In the descending order Yamunanagar district came at third place with 33.69 percent urban population, while Karnal district at the fourth place with 27.46 percent and panipat district at fifth place with 27.16 percent urban population. All these districts are centres of industry, trade and commerce, which form the basis of higher urbanization in the districts, attracting immigrations.

Disabled Population

By 1981 census, Haryana had 15,843 disabled persons; 7,656 blind, 4,828 totally crippled and 3,359 totally dumb. Hissar district shared the highest blind persons (819) while Mahendragarh district had 815 blind persons. The district-wise position as per 1981 census, the disabled persons are as under :-

District	Totally blind	Totally Crippld	Totally dumb	Total
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Persons Persons Persons

Hissar 819 472 316 1,607

Sirsa 410 341 216 967

Bhiwani 536 324 273 1,133

Gurgaon 727 357 223 1,307

Faridabad 616 308 190 1,114

Jind 593 308 226 1,127

Mahendragarh 815 368 316 1,499

Ambala 624 629 509 1,762

Karnal 731 452 296 1,479

Kurukshetra 743 509 294 1,546

Rohtak 607 445 316 1,368

Sonapat 435 315 184 934

Total : 7,656 4,828 3,359 15,843

The number of blind persons are higher than those of other crippled persons¹.

1. *Figures according to 1991 census are not available.*

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Govt. is affording a lot of financial incentives to the disabled persons to stand them upon their own feet.

Literate Persons

After the creation of Haryana as a full-fledged state, some measures were adopted to enhance the literacy in Haryana. At the time of 1981 census, for working out effective literacy rates, the population of children in the age group 0-4 was excluded from total population. Literacy rates were 36.14 percent for the state as a whole, 30.33 percent for rural areas and 56.86 percent for urban areas. The district-wise percentage of literacy as per 1981 census is as under :-

Among the Total Population

District Persons Males Females

Ambala 44.62 53.03 34.97

Kurukshetra 32.40 41.75 21.56

Karnal 36.77 47.27 24.49

Jind 26.18 38.08 12.24

Sonapat 40.85 54.28 25.34

Rohtak 42.55 56.44 26.82

Faridabad 39.19 52.14 22.93

Gurgaon 35.23 48.61 20.02

Mahendragarh 38.61 55.52 20.44

Bhiwani 33.07 48.13 16.30

Hissar 29.97 41.46 16.71

Sirsa 29.88 39.52 18.88

The literacy rate was 48.20 percent for males as against 22.27 percent for females. In rural areas, the literacy rate was 43.44 percent for males and 15.37 percent for females. The district-wise rural percentage of literacy rates were (as per 1981 census as under :-

District Percentage of literacy among Rural Population

Persons Males Females

1 2 3 4

Ambala 35.81 45.77 24.30

Kurukshetra 27.80 37.53 16.54

Karnal 29.74 41.61 15.76

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1 2 3 4

Jind 22.42 34.71 8.03

Sonapat 36.76 51.25 20.09

Rohtak 38.32 53.40 21.28

Faridabad 27.65 43.31 9.21

Gurgaon 29.18 43.57 12.87

Mahendragarh 36.03 53.66 17.23

Bhiwani 29.55 45.34 12.15

Hissar 24.32 36.56 10.28

Sirsa 24.32 34.32 13.04

From the above table it became evident that the literacy rates for females of Jind and Faridabad districts (rural areas) were not satisfactory. Lowest literacy rates for females in Jind district was 8.03 whereas in Faridabad district the literacy for females stood at 9.21 percent. This shows that females were not offered incentives for pursuing education.

The district-wise position of the percentage of literacy in urban areas as per 1981 census is as under :-

District Percentage of literacy among the Urban Population

Persons Males Females

Ambala 62.59 67.97 56.49

Kurukshetra 55.73 63.10 47.15

Karnal 56.60 63.39 48.79

Jind 49.62 59.22 38.43

Sonapat 59.54 67.97 49.63

Rohtak 59.65 68.62 49.38

Faridabad 55.93 64.98 44.05

Gurgaon 59.52 68.76 48.49

Mahendragarh 55.80 67.56 42.47

Bhiwani 51.54 62.30 38.87

Hissar 53.60 61.67 44.07

Sirsa 51.57 59.28 42.29

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In urban areas of the state, the literacy rate was 64.95 percent and 47.35 percent for males and females, respectively. As expected, the literacy rates were higher among the males in urban areas. Among the districts literacy rates were highest (44.62%) in Ambala district and the lowest (26.18%) in Jind district.

All children in the age group 0-6 have been treated as illiterate in 1991 census while during 1971 and 1981 censuses, children in the age-group 0-4 years were recorded as illiterate. It was on the advice of the Department of education in the Ministry of Human Resources Development and the Planning Commission that children in the age group 0-6 years were taken as illiterate even if such children were going to school and had picked up reading and writing a bit. It was felt that the ability to read and write with understanding was not generally attained by children in the age-group 0-6 years especially in rural areas. Population of children in the age group 0-6 years constitutes 18.98 percent of the total population as against 19.48 percent at the time of 1981 census.

Literacy as per 1991 Census

As per 1991 census, the total literate persons were 74,49,012; male literates 49,50,113 and female literates 24,98,899. The literate persons in rural areas were 49,74,926, male literates 34,74,151 and 15,00,775 female literates. The urban literates stood at 24,74,086; male literates 14,75,962 whereas female literates 9,98,124. According to 1991 census, the literacy rates for the whole state were 55.85¹ percent. The rural male literacy rates were 69.10 percent while urban female literacy rates were 40.47 percent.

As alluded above, the percentage of literates to total population (excluding age group 0-6 years) for the state as a whole worked out to 55.85. The male literacy rate was relatively high in the state as compared to female literacy rate (40.47) which is true for the country as whole. The literacy rate was comparatively high in urban areas (73.66) percent) than the rural areas (49.85 percent).

As per 1991 census, the district-wise literacy position is as under:-

District Total literate and educated persons
Males Females Total

1 2 3 4

Ambala 3,71,369 2,47,631 6,19,000

Yamunanagar 2,51,200 1,59,046 4,10,246

Kurukshetra 1,94,334 1,16,192 3,10,526

1. These literacy rates pertain to the population aged 7 and above.

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1 2 3 4

Kaithal 1,96,687 86,901 2,83,588

Karnal 2,58,400 1,44,733 4,03,133

Panipat 2,42,288 1,26,127 3,68,415

Sonipat 2,57,854 1,34,084 3,91,938

Rohtak 6,11,227 3,10,306 9,21,533

Faridabad 4,81,290 2,22,379 7,03,869

Gurgaon 3,25,225 1,44,670 4,69,895

Rewari 2,15,179 1,13,051 3,28,230

Mahendragarh 2,20,897 96,196 3,17,093

Bhiwani 3,47,215 1,50,888 4,98,103

Jind 2,59,255 1,06,554 3,65,809

Hissar 4,93,797 2,22,089 7,15,886

Sirsa 2,23,896 1,17,852 3,41,748

Total : 49,50,113 24,98,899 74,49,012

The Rohtak district had the highest literate persons (9,21,533). Even the female literacy position was very stellar than other districts. Kaithal district had 2,83,588 literates which was at the lowest ebb in connection with literacy.

Kaithal district had lesser (86,901) literate females; these figures were the lowest. Thereafter, Mahendragarh district had 96,196 female literates. This showed that females in Kaithal and Mahendragarh areas were not sufficiently offered incentives for education. Secondly, orthodoxy of the people might be a hindrance to further the education of the females.

It is evident that Govt. is very serious to bring the maximum girls to the net of education. The response is encouraging.

Population as per 2001 Census

Area.— The total area of the state, as per 2001 census is 44,212 square kilometres. There is no change in the area of the state as compared to 1991. There were 16 districts in Haryana at the time of 1991 census and at present there are 19 districts in the state. Between 1991-2001, the three newly created districts are Panchkula, Fatehabad and Jhajjar. The number of tahsils has increased from 53 in 1991 to 67 in 2001. Among the districts, Bhiwani with an area of 4,778 square kilometres (Provisional) is the largest one while Panchkula with an area of 898 sq. Km. is the smallest one.

Population.- According to the 2001 census, Haryana's population stands at 2,10,82,989; out of which 1,13,27, 658 are males and 97,55,331 females. The

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percentage decadal population growth of the State increased from 27.41 in 1981-1991 to 28.06 in 1991-2001 as against 21.34 percent of India. Haryana accounts for 2 percent of total population. As per census figures 46,19,341 persons were added to the population of the State between 1991-2001.

This accounts for 2.5 percent of addition to India's population. Haryana state is the 10th largest contributor in population growth.

As already stated Haryana accounts for 2 percent of the total population of India. It ranks 16th according to the size of population among 28 States and 7 union territories in census 2001. The growth rate of Haryana has exceeded that of punjab (19.76 percent) and Himachal pradesh (17.53 percent) and even U.P (25.80%) It is near Rajasthan 28.33% in 2001 census. The table below shows the district-wise ranking of population size based on 2001 census :—

District Population Males Females % of total in 2001 population of the State

1. Faridabad	21,93,276	11,92,537	10,00,739	10.4
2. Gurgaon	16,57,669	8,84,456	7,73,213	7.36
3. Hissar	15,36,417	8,29,782	7,06,635	7.29
4. Bhiwani	14,24,554	7,57,824	6,66,730	6.76
5. Sonipat	12,78,830	6,95,314	5,83,516	6.07
6. Karnal	12,74,843	6,83,776	5,91,067	6.05
7. Jind	11,89,725	6,42,057	5,47,668	5.64
8. Sirsa	11,11,012	5,90,298	5,20,714	5.27
9. Ambala	10,13,660	5,42,366	4,71,294	4.81
10. Yamunanagar	9,82,369	5,27,426	4,54,943	4.66
11. Panipat	9,67,338	5,28,578	4,38,760	4.59
12. Kaithal	9,45,631	5,09,933	4,35,698	4.48
13. Rohtak	9,40,036	5,08,885	4,31,151	4.46
14. Jhajjar	8,87,392	4,80,240	4,07,152	4.21
15. Kurukshetra	8,28,120	4,43,841	3,84,279	3.93

16. Mahendragarh 8,12,022 4,23,048 3,88,974
3.85

17. Fatehabad 8,06,158 4,27,536 3,78,622 3.82

18. Rewari 7,64,727 4,02,381 3,62,346 3.63

19. Panchkula 4,69,210 2,57,380 2,11,830 2.22

Total 2,10,82,989 1,13,27,658 97,55,331

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Faridabad district occupies the 1st place in the State by recording highest population of 21,93,276 as per 2001 census. If we re-cast data as per the latest census jurisdiction, it continues to occupy the 1st position (with 10.4% population of the State) which has witnessed 48.47 percent growth rate during the last decade caused by industrial development attracting in-migrants. The newly created district of Panchkula is the least populated with a population of 4,69,210. It claims only 2.22 percent of total population of Haryana as per 2001 census.

As per present jurisdiction, Gurgaon district whose rank was 4th according to size of population in 1991 has elevated its position to 2nd with 7.36% of the State's total population in 2001 because of industrial development and being nearer to Delhi, attracting in migration of not only of industrial workers but also of public at large for whom comparatively cheaper accommodation and less polluted atmosphere is available. There are nine districts whose individual population has been counted more than 10 lac, namely, Faridabad, Gurgaon, Hissar, Bhiwani, Sonapat, Karnal, Jind,

Sirsa and Ambala.

It is a matter of concern that at the national level the population growth rate has declined where as the percentage decadal growth rate of Haryana has risen slightly for (1981-91) from 27.41 to 28.06 (1991-2001). The decadal growth rate for India as a whole has been worked out to 21.34 percent 1991-2001 as against 23.86 percent during 1981-91. Surprisingly there are only three districts in Haryana, namely Rohtak, Kaithal and Mahendragarh where the decadal growth rate is below the national average (21.34 percent) during 1991-2001.

The percentage decadal growth was +28.75 during 1971-81; 27.41 during 1981-91 and 28.06 (provisional) during 1991-2001. There are only four districts which witnessed comparatively higher growth rate than the State average (28.06 percent) during 1991-2001 and these are Panchkula (51.16), Faridabad (48.47), Gurgaon (44.64) and Panipat (38.57). The decadal growth rate is as low as 19.09 percent in Mahendragarh district. Since the formation of Haryana population growth rate has remained high persistently in Panchkula, Faridabad, Gurgaon and Panipat and above 25 percent in Hissar, Ambala and Rewari. It has been low and declining in Kurukshetra, Karnal, Sonapat, Jind, Fatehabad, Sirsa, Bhiwani and Mahendragarh.

Density.— Density conveys land-man ratio and is normally calculated as number of persons per square kilometre. The density of population in Haryana had thus increased from 128 in 1951 to 372 persons per square kilometre in 1991, to 477 persons as per square kilometre in 2001. Faridabad district retains its position of 1991 as most densely populated district of the State. It has a density of 1,020 persons per square kilometre as per provisional result of 2001 census while Sirsa district has

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the lowest density of 260 persons per square kilometre. There are only three districts in Haryana, namely Fatehabad, Bhiwani and Sirsa where density is below the national average (324 persons per square kilometre).

The density is more than 600 persons per square kilometre in the districts of Faridabad, Panipat, Ambala and Sonapat while it ranges between 451 and 600 in eight districts, namely, Gurgaon, Yamunanagar, Kurukshetra, Rohtak, Panchkula, Karnal, Jhajjar and Rewari. It is below 451 in the remaining seven districts.

Sex Ratio

As per provisional result of census of India 2001, there are 861 females per 1000 males in the Haryana state as compared to 933 females for 1000 males for India. The sex ratio in Haryana was 865 in 1991. On the basis of facts and figures it is said with certainty that Haryana region is with deficiency of females. It is surprising that sex ratio in all districts is below the national average (933). The sex ratio in Haryana as per 2001 jurisdiction was 867 in 1901, 835 in 1911; 844 in 1921; again 844 in 1931; 869 in 1941; 871 in 1951; 868 in 1961; 867 in 1971; 870 in 1981 and 865 in 1991. It is notable that sex ratio of Haryana has declined continuously since 1981 and is at its lowest since Independence.

The details pertaining to ranking of districts by sex ratio as per 2001 census, are as under :-

District Sex Ratio (Number of females per 1000 males)

2001 1991

1 2 3

1. Mahendragarh 919 910

2. Rewari 901 927

3. Fatehabad 886 877

4. Sirsa 882 885

5. Bhiwani 880 878

6. Gurgaon 874 871

7. Ambala 869 903
8. Kurukshetra 866 879
9. Karnal 864 864
10. Yamunanagar 863 883
11. Kaithal 854 853
12. Jind 853 838

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- 1 2 3
13. Hissar 852 853
14. Jhajjar 848 861
15. Rohtak 847 849
16. Sonapat 839 840
17. Faridabad 839 828
18. Panipat 830 852
19. Panchkula 823 839

The sex-ratio is above the state average in ten districts, namely, Mahendragarh (919), Rewari (901), Fatehabad (886), Sirsa (882), Bhiwani (880), Gurgaon (874), Ambala (869) Kurukshetra(866), Karnal (864) and Yamunanagar (863). The sex ratio is below the state average in the remaining nine districts.

There are many reasons for the decline of sex-ratio in Haryana. In the patriarchal society, the image of woman is

termed as '*abla*' helpless creature. The historical past is supported by myths which depict Indian woman as tender, passive and helpless while the male counterpart symbolises activism, sternness and physical valour. The myths is depicted by well-known Hindi poet, Maithli Sharan Gupt: "*Abla jeewan haai tumhari yehi Kahani ; anchal mein hai dudh aur ankhon mein pani*"(Milk in breast, tears in eyes). It is dangerous trend. For the sake of progress and prosperity of the State, we should shed off orthodox views about women.

A report in the newspaper appeared highlighting causes for the decline in the sex-ratio; is given here:

"Females infanticide in the form of total genocide is rampant in Haryana. Clinics conducting sex-determining tests have mushroomed all over the State. Now vans fitted with necessary equipment visit villages to destroy female foetus."

"The gross destruction in sex-ratio in Haryana has created an explosive situation. It is likely to have devastating consequences in times to come. The unsustainable imbalance in the sex-ratio is fast reviving the outdated hideous, custom of '*atta-satta*' (exchange of brides between two families) in some¹ areas."

Literacy

Total literacy rate was 25.71 percent in 1971 which had gone upto 37.13 percent in 1981; 55.85 percent in 1991 and 68.59 percent in 2001 in Haryana. As per 2001 census male literacy is 79.25 percent and female literacy is 56.31 percent. As expected male literacy is relatively higher than female literacy in all the districts. Rewari district,

1. *The Sunday Tribune, April 15, 2001.*

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where male literacy rate is 89.04 percent, ranks first in the state while lowest male literacy has been recorded in Fatehabad district (68.71 percent). Female literacy rate is the highest in Panchkula district (68.98 percent), while it is the lowest in Fatehabad district (46.40 percent).

The literacy rates in Haryana, both for males and females, are comparatively higher than the national average for males (75.85 percent) and females (54.16 percent), so naturally Haryana recorded a relatively higher literacy rate than the national average (65.38 percent), during 1991-2001. There are five districts namely; Gurgaon, Jind, Sirsa, Kaithal and Fatehabad where literacy rate is lower than the national average. So far as female literacy is concerned, it is below the national average in seven districts namely; Bhiwani, Hissar, Sirsa, Jind, Gurgaon, Kaithal and Fatehabad during 1991-2001.

Language

Hindi is the spoken language of the majority in Haryana. As per 1981 census Hindi was spoken by 88.43 percent (1,14,27,531 persons) of the State¹. The percentage of Punjabi speaking population was 9.17 (11,85,290); Urdu speaking population covered 2,27,264 persons, accounting for 1.76 percent. The persons with other languages were 0.64 percent.

The district-wise distribution of population by languages (according to 1981 census) is given as under :-

District	Hindi	Punjabi	Urdu	Others	Total
----------	-------	---------	------	--------	-------

Hissar	13,34,928	1,54,011	482	7,113	14,96,534
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Sirsa	4,04,182	2,99,141	61	3,684	7,07,068
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Bhiwani	9,11,944	4,784	55	3,269	9,20,052
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Gurgaon	6,90,448	12,108	1,43,069	3,973	8,49,598
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Faridabad	8,96,923	47,498	44,595	12,843	10,00,859
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Jind	9,01,192	34,510	81	2,291	9,38,074
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Mahendragarh	9,46,670	10,232	357	2,141	9,59,400
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Ambala 11,54,194 2,09,015 26,434 19,820 14,09,463

Karnal 11,39,667 1,60,095 10,569 12,495 13,22,826

Kurukshetra 9,26,978 1,97,330 805 4,913 11,30,026

Rohtak 12,96,442 40,598 366 4,547 13,41,953

Sonapat 8,23,963 15,968 1,390 5,444 8,46,765

1,14,27,531 11,85,290 2,27,264 82,533 1,29,22,816

1. *Figures according to 1991 census are not available.*

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The above table shows that all the districts had a majority of Hindi speaking persons. Sirsa district during 1981 census had the large number of Punjabi-speaking population. As far as Urdu is concerned, Gurgaon and Faridabad districts had the majority of Urdu speaking persons. The areas of Gurgaon and Faridabad had the Meo/ Muslim population which spoke Urdu preferably.

Dialectic Variations - There are numerous dialectic variations in the state. The phonetic expression changes with the border areas of the state. In many cases of dialects, the grammar is on the whole similar but vocabulary is often quite different.

First of all, the dialectic variations of Gurgaon, Rewari and Faridabad area are expounded here. Mainly three dialects (Mewati, Ahirwati and Braj Bhasa) are prevalent in the areas of the above districts. The following extract, taken from an old gazetteer, details the three dialects :

" The language of Meos is Mewati, a sub-dialect of north

eastern Rajasthani. The language of the north and west of the Gurgaon district in which Ahirs predominate is Ahirwati, another sub-dialect of the north-eastern is Rajasthani, while the language in the east of the district in which the Jats predominate, is the Braj Bhasa dialect of western Hindi.

"Mewati is a border language. It represents Rajasthani fading off into Braj Bhasa and the form of Mewati in Gurgaon is, as might be expected much mixed with Braj. The peculiarities of the Mewati dialect as given in the linguistic survey, are detailed below:

"Mewati dialect is prevalent in the areas of district Gurgaon and Hathin tahsil of Faridabad district of Haryana. Near Gurgaon, two kinds of Mewati dialect are found, (i) *Meo-Mewati* and (ii) *Mewatar Mewati*. *Meo-Mewati* includes *Khanjada*, Meo, Sayyad and Muslim sub-castes, while *Mewatar-Mewati* includes the people of Ahir, Jat, Gujar, Brahman, Bania, Rajput caste. *Meo-Mewati* dialect has the mixture of words of Braj and Arbi-Farsi languages; *Mewatar-Mewati* includes words of Sanskrit, Bangru, Ahirwati dialect"

Some specimens of *Meo-Mewati* and *Mewatar Mewati* are under :—

Meo-Mewati dialect

"Nu.. loo kanha ja rohe ?

Hindi version — *Idhar ko Kanha ja raha he ?*

English version — Where are you going this side ?

Tolu mane kahi hee.

Hindi version — *Tujhko mane kaha tha.*

People

English Version — I told you.

Mewatar -Mewati

" Nu koo kanha ja ro he ?

Hindi version — *Idhar ko kanha ja raha he ?*

English version — Where are you going this side ?

Tou mane kahi hi.

Hindi version — *Tujhko mane kaha tha.*

It is pointed out that in Haryana at every 4 *kos*, there comes a dialectical change. There are numerous dialects in Haryana.

"Ahirwati represents the connecting link between Mewati and three other dialects, Bangru, Bagri and Shekhwati. In its grammar it differs little from Mewati. It is the stepping stone between that dialect and Bangru, and the point of connection between it and Bangru is the use of the word *su* instead of the Mewati *hun* to mean : I am". Thus *hir sai* - he is an Ahir. The nomenclature of strong masculine nouns of the *a* base ends and same rule is followed in adjectives and the suffixes of the genitive. Short '*a*' often becomes long '*aa*', eg *kaankar* for *kankar* for *kankar*-nodula limestone, *Maakhi* for *Makhi* —a fly.

"Braj Bhasa — One of the noticeable differences between Braj and the other two dialects is the use of cerebral '*r*' for '*l*', e.g. *baadar* for *baadal*- cloud; *bijri* for *bijli*— lightning; and *chaupar* for *chaupal* - the village club or guest house. Long '*a*' is pronounced very broad and sound more like '*au*'. Long '*i*' denoting the feminine generally becomes '*ia*' e.g. a cat is '*billia*' in Braj and '*billi*' in Mewati and Ahirwati; a female jackal is *gadria* instead of '*gadri*' and a female monkey '*bandria*' instead of '*bandri*'".

There are other instances to differentiate between them. For example in Mewati 'wind' '*baao*', in Ahirwati it is a *baun*, and in Braj it is *biyar*. A white ant in Braj is *uksa*, in Mewati *dimak*; and in Ahirwati *diwal*. These instances might be multiplied, and they show how puzzling the language of the villagers is until main the differences between three dialects have been mastered.

Forty-nine spoken dialects were recorded as their mother

tongue in the then Gurgaon district¹ during 1961 census. Besides Hindi, a language of majority, Urdu, Mewati, Punjabi and Pahari unspecified were also spoken by the people of this area.

1. Now the district of Gurgaon stands divided between 3 districts, Gurgaon, Faridabad and Rewari.

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In Mahendragarh and Rewari districts majority of the people speak Ahirwati dialect because these areas are dominated by Ahirs. People of some villages in Nizampur block bordering Jhunjhunu district of Rajasthan speak both *Bagri* and Ahirwati dialects. *Bangru* dialect is spoken by the people of the areas adjoining Charkhi Dadri, a sub division of Bhiwani district. Mewati dialect is also spoken by few a people of the Rewari district.

Haryanvi is the main dialect of the Bhiwani district, although there are many variations of it. In the Bhiwani and Bawani khera tahsils, people generally speak *Haryanvi*. In the Loharu tahsil, *Haryanvi* is slightly dominated by Bagri dialect as it is influenced by the neighbouring state of Rajasthan.

In the Chakhi Dadri tahsil, the dialect of the people besides *Bagri*, has been influenced by *Braj* dialect due to the visits of the inhabitants to Braj areas in the past. *Kit gaya tho* of the *Haryanvi* dialect, is pronounced, as *kit gaya tho* or *kit gayo tho* in the Dadri area and *kathe gayo tho* in the Loharu area. The special tendency of ending with 'o' in the word *tho* in place of 'a' in the word '*tha*' is a main feature of Bagri influence while the adoption of 'yo' in the word *gayo* in place of 'ya' in the word *gaya* is the influence of *Braj* dialect. With the expansion of education facilities and means of communications, the use of standard form of *Haryanvi*

dialect is on increase.

Haryanvi is the main dialect of Hissar district. In the west of Fatehabad tahsil of Fatehabad district and Hissar tahsil, *Haryanvi* is slightly dominated by *Bagri*. In the Nahri tract of Tohna and Fatehabad tahsils, the dialect is somewhat affected by Punjabi.

Around Hansi tahsil some peculiarity of language is observed. *Karia gayo tho* mean where have you gone ?

The *Haryanvi* and *Bagri* dialects are the main dialects of Sirsa area. *Bagri* is spoken in the south west of the district and *Haryanvi* in the east. In the *Nali* tract towards the north, the dialect is affected by Punjabi.

Pure or *theth Haryanvi*, the major dialect, has many dialectic varieties which are spoken in different parts of Rohtak district. Ahirwati another dialect of the district is a mixed product of *Haryanvi* vocabulary and Mewati structures. Depending on the nature of the mixture, it is sometimes considered as *Haryanvi* influenced by *Mewati* and at other times *Mewati* influenced by *Haryanvi*.

The dialect of displaced persons is *Jhangi*. They many times use *jhung* words. They speak so fluently; even many Punjabi speaking persons cannot get at the meaning exactly.

Though Sonapat district is mainly a Hindi-speaking area, yet it falls in the region of *Bangru* dialect. *Bangru* represents the western group of dialects of Hindi. Its

People

phonology and grammar are similar to a great extent to that of standard Hindi but are conspicuous standard Hindi dental 'a' and 'i' are changed (though not always) to cerebral 'n' and

'i' i.e. *Jana* for *Jaana* to mean go and *Sa'la* for *sala* to mean brother-in-law.

In *Bangru* there is no short vowel in the final position of words i.e. *sa'dhu* for *sadh* to mean saint and *Kaavi* for *kavi* to mean poet. Consonant clusters are rarely used in this dialect. A few other peculiarities of the *Bangru* dialect are 'sai' for 'hai' to mean is *karda* for *karna* to mean doing 'kad' for *kab* to mean when.

There are various variations of dialect in the areas of Karnal, Kurukshetra, Sonipat and Kaithal districts. At the time of 1961 census, there were 22 spoken dialects in the then Karnal district; now this had been bifurcated into more district. As we travel from Kurukshetra to Karnal-Panipat we have to observe dialectic variations. Hindi with small admixture of Punjabi words is spoken, especially in the northern areas. In the Panipat and Kaithal tahsils, there are many persons who use such words as are not used in the rest of the areas. Really their pronunciation and accent are quite different.

The quality of speech of the few closely resembles that of Rohtak district. The language of the Thanesar tahsil of Kurukshetra district and Indri area of the Karnal district is a curious admixture of dialects because of the mixture of Punjabi words with the local dialect. To the northern side of Kaithal district, the proximity of Punjabi speaking zone introduces a Punjabi element. Both the locals and displaced persons have adopted many words from each other's language.

The various scripts used are : *Devnagri* for Hindi, *Gurmukhi* for Punjabi, Persian for Urdu and Roman for English. After the emigration of Muslims in 1947, the use of Urdu gave place to Hindi in a gradual manner. Some shopkeepers still maintain their account books in *Lande*.

Hindi is spoken by the largest number of persons in the Ambala and Yamunanagar districts. The average dialect spoken in districts of Ambala and Yamunanagar is on the whole remarkably free from Punjabi influence but we go towards Punjab, it is affected by more or less by Punjabi.

The use of *Ketha* for said, *badna* and not *batna* for to divide and the use of 'nu' or 'no' indicate the dative and are the specimen of the areas having influence of Punjabi. The dialect adjacent to the Himachal Pradesh is affected by *Pahri* language. The specimen of dialect spoken in Morni hills and other areas bordering Himachal Pradesh are : *Tera Ka Nam*

hai meaning thereby 'what is your name'; *Aus ghora ree ka umar hai* for what is the age of the horse.

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In Chandigarh city, the position is quite different. The city has a composite character. The persons having the long association with rural areas still use a peculiar accent in their speaking. They also use Punjabi words in their local language, such as *Kehra* and *kithe* means which and where.

The people of Jind area speak *Bangru* which is of slight variations of the *Haryanvi* dialect having its own peculiarities. People in the urban areas use some words of *Haryanvi*, but they are switching towards a standard form of Hindi. In the areas adjoining the Rohtak district, the quality of speech resembles that of the people of Rohtak areas.

When we proceed towards Narwana, we find a gradual change so much so that the aspirated consonants '*gha*, '*Jha*' '*dhh*' and reflect their separated aspiration and the vocables of the dialect fall in line with the dialect of the people of the area forming Kaithal district. Again initial and middle '*aa*' change into '*a*' in the dialect of this area. Here one finds some words which are totally different from those spoken by Rohtak people but the words are fully intelligible to the people of Jind area. For example, we can consider *giman* (manger), *guar* (cattle yard), *Bakse* (land where cattle heads assemble before departing for grazing), *Khail* (big pitcher), *rane* (dry piece of dung) *dhamanjer* (bad cold) and *takhri* (balance).

The area adjoining Narwana, aspiration or '*h*' sound plays prominent role in determining the accent and the tone of the whole speech. Hindi consonants '*gh*', '*jha*', '*dha*' '*dhha*' and '*bha*' are aspirated sounds and aspiration is completely

blended whereas these consonants seem to possess a joint when spoken by the people of this area. For example, in *dhara* 'dha' is an aspirated sound in the Hindi and an aspirated joint sound in the dialect of the area which may be denoted as *dahara*.

The pronunciation of 'h' sound is very interesting. Some times it has changed its place as in *hara* which is pronounced as *ahara* in this dialect. Similarly, 'hari' becomes 'ahari' and 'buhari' becomes 'buari'! Again 'h' sound is disappearing in some cases as 'am' for *ham* meaning 'we'.

The sound feature conspicuous in the dialect is the change of 'aa' sound into 'a'. The examples may be given as 'gail' for 'gal', 'dail' for 'dal', 'pail' for 'pal', 'aig' for 'ag'. But there are some exceptions.

Some specific words of *Khari Boli* (Bangru) prevalent in Bhiwani district and some areas of Rohtak are given below:—

Khari Boli Meaning in English

1. *Giabhan* Conceived
2. *Pishno* Grain for making atta

People

3. *Hara* Place for fire-dung
4. *Khusra* Tattered shoes/old shoes
5. *Littar* Old shoes
6. *Bitora* Store of cow-dungs
7. *Padi* She-calf of buffalo

8. *Pada* He-calf of buffalo
9. *Bhari* Broom
10. *Modhi* Up-down
11. *Sidhi* Straight
12. *Karde* do it
13. *Algoja* Small flute
14. *Katai Kone* Not at all
15. *Baihhri* She calf of cow
16. *Nu-na-Manu* I do not accept it in this way
17. *Otle* Accept it
18. *Dhamchar* Bad cold
19. *Ghesali* Small heavy stick for separating corn
20. *Ghesla* heavy stick for separating corn
21. *Fakar* Fakir/sadhu
22. *Jabra* Mouth
23. *Marjani* Abusive language for a girl
24. *Dangar* Cattle
25. *Chhore* Boy
26. *Gebi* Naughty
27. *Ushara* Front part of the hut
28. *Khel* Some pacca place for storing water for cattle
29. *Uut* Badmash
30. *Kadhawani* Earthen pot for heating milk
31. *Kinghe* Which direction
32. *Manas* Man

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- 33. *Jeenani* woman
- 34. *Beechona* Bed-sheet
- 35. *Bichhade* Arrange the bed sheet
- 36. *Tarke* Tomorrow
- 37. *Kathe* where
- 38. *Tikra* Loaves/bread
- 39. *Timan* cooked vegetables
- 40. *Bhitar* Inside
- 41. *Khappar* head
- 42. *Bateri* sufficient, enough
- 43. *Gojh* Pocket
- 44. *Bohria* wife of the younger ones
- 45. *Bateo* guest
- 46. *Gehti* Neck
- 47. *Tewar* sight
- 48. *Basan* Picher
- 49. *Tabar* child
- 50. *Nohra* outer house
- 51. *Chobara* upper storey
- 52. *Tap* fever

53. *Challu* small quantity of water

54. *Tukk* Piece of bread

55. *Kasan* utensils

56. *Taishan* Railway Station

57. *Lachhan* Signs of character

58. *Bitori* Store of dungcakes

59. *Dakh* Buffaloe

60. *Laggar* Milking animal

61. *Jingri* Small girl

62. *Data mat* Don't stop me

People

63. *Pon* air

64. *Raji ho go* he showed acceptance

65. *De-hi* Body of a person

Regarding more details pertaining to *Bangru*, research document written by J.D. is very important¹.

Harde Das, resident of Badli village of Rohtak district contributed much to the Hindi language (*khari boli*). He was born in *samvat* 1932. In the later years of his age he settled in Akehri village and died there in *samvat* 2015. Specific couplet highlighting the *Khari-Boli* or *Haryanvi* is given below:-

Bande Apa chetle, Satguru Kanhe pukar

Esha Oshar pava ke Janam jua mat har

Oshar Milna kathin he Janam jua mat har

Mansa deh durlab ati, Mile ne baram bar.

Bande (man), *appa* (self), *chetle* (recognise) or know thyself
Oshar (opportunity), *Manas* (man's) and *Deh* (body) are the words explained by Harde Ram in pure *Haryanvi* dialect.

Another dialect of saint Harde Das is given below :—

jo too chetya nahi, chalya janam gawya

Chourasi ke chakar me vohdin gote khaian

Cheta (know), *challa* (perished away) *Gawya* (lost) and *Gote* (swirling) are some other specimen or pure *Haryanvi*.

Saint Harde Das used to wander here and sing in the praise of God. He used many kind of words from small dialects of different areas. Some words of *Haryanvi* language of Rohtak used by him are given below :—

Imrat (pure water), *Johri* (small pond), *kirodh* (anger), *than* (catch), *pani* (water), *siana* (wise man), *chhattari* (umbrella), *Gani* (abundance) and *Dubar* (angan).

Saint Harde Das came under the influence of *theth Ahirwati* dialect. Some examples of *theth Ahirwati* are as such *khot* (fault), *Leekre* (small branches of trees), *Niari* (separate) *Tum* (ornaments), *Rojgar* (employment) and *Kade* (when).

Harde Das used some words from Punjabi, Rajasthani, Mewati and Baraj Bhasa dialects :—*Tohe*, *Babri*, *Itbar*, *Oshar* and *Achraj* relate to *Braj Bhasa* dialect. *Gaflat*,

1. Singh, J.D., *A Descriptive Grammar of Bangru (Haryanvi)*.

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Jalim, Nafa, Tohfa, Khojana and *Talab* belong to Arbi — Pharsi dialect. *Lor* and *Nal* from Punjabi dialects, *sasar* from Rajasthani dialect and *Lalhala* and *Lu* from Mewati dialects were used by him.

Mutual dialectical exchange

Due to change in communication, the world is changing very fast. The people visit other areas on one or other pretext. They get under the influence of other language when they visit the other areas. For example, atleast, two lakh Rohtaki (residents of Rohtak area) live in Delhi. So they absorb many dialectical changes.

Likewise, a person lives in other cities such Jullundhar; he will certainly pick up some dialectical change.

The essence of dialects is that many educated persons are bilingual while other agrestic persons speak pure Haryanvi dialect.

Religious Divisions (Groups)

The religion Pervades from ancient past to the present as main basis for the structure of the society. In the early times, however, the society was unreligious; the people professed Hinduism. A little later, in the 5th century B.C., two reformed forms of religion, namely Jainism and Buddhism established their influence upon the Indian society. Several centuries later, in medieval times, there came Islam, followed by Sikhism (15th century) and Christianity (18th century) in the country.

According to 1961 census, 67½ lakh people in the region were Hindus, 5 lakh Sikhs, 3 lakh Muslims, 26 thousand Jains, 85 hundred Christians and 7 hundred Buddhists. Every religion further divides into sub-classifications. Despite the religious diversity, there has been always a remarkable communal homogeneity in Haryana.

The religious population is on the increase. During 1971 the religion-wise details are as under :—

Religion Population Percentage of Total Population

Hindus 89,56,000 89.23

Sikhs 6,31,000 6.29

Muslims 4,06,000 4.04

Jains 31,000 0.31

Christians 10,000 0.10

Buddhists 1,000 0.01

Others Negligible Negligible

People

As per 1981 and 1991 censuses the religion-wise break-up is as follows :—

Religion-wise As per 1981 Census As per 1991 Census
category Total Population Total Population

1. Hindus 1,15,47,676 1,46,86,512

2. Sikhs 8,02,230 9,56,836

3. Muslims 5,23,536 7,63,775

4. Christians 12,515 15,699

5. Buddhists 761 2,058

6. Jains 35,482 35,296

7. Other religions 680 156

8. Religion not stated 38 3,316

Total 1,29,22,618 1,64,63,648

The theory and traditional beliefs of each religion are expounded here.

HINDUS. —The majority of population of the State consisted of Hindus. They follow Hinduism. Now the question arises what is Hinduism. In this regard, different theories and ideas have been given by the thinkers. As such there is no meeting point on Hinduism.

Regarding the definition of Hinduism the scholars have no agreed opinions. It is not unoften that Hinduism is misunderstood. Quite a few scholars consider it as a jumble of creeds and rituals. For instance, a reputed scholar on religion, Deva Raja has observed, "Compared to the neatly formulated religious creed as Christianity and Islam, Hinduism appears to be a welter of beliefs, doctrines and practices that defy the understanding and interpretative ingenuity of even sympathetic students".

Many scholars while defining the Hinduism, it is believed, do not take into account the unique attributes of Hinduism as religion which, to use the word of Swami Vivekanand, "admits of marvellous variation, an infinitive amount of liberty to think and to live one's life; and the central message of which finds expression in the *Gita* through the words of Lord Krishana ? Through whatever path men come to me, I accept them through that very path".

"Hinduism has no single book; no single dogma or set of exhortation; no single philosophic concepts to believe in; no single God to worship; no single prophet to follow; Even Lord Krishana is not the authority of the *Vedas*. But the *Vedas* are his

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authority. His glory is that He is greatest preacher that ever existed. Hinduism was not born at a given time and at a given place. It has no beginning and no end. It is eternal. It is an everlasting process of moving towards realization of divinity within a continuous attempt to search God and see God".

American scholars have also expressed their view on Hinduism which are widely accepted. American scholar, Emerson, said, "Hinduism believes that our life is an apprenticeship to truth, that around circle another circle can be drawn; that there is no end in nature, and every end has a beginning".

The country men should not forget the contribution of Arya Samaj to the enrichment of Hinduism. "Back to the *Vedas*" expressed by Swami Daya Nand Saraswati, founder of Arya Samaj. Likewise, the role of Swami Viveka Nand in the contribution of Hinduism is not less significant. As Swami Viveka Nand said, "whether we are conscious of it or not, we think in the *vedanta*; we live in the *vedanta*; we breathe in the *Vedanta*; we die in the *vedanta*; every Hindu does that".

As already pointed out that Hindus are in majority in Haryana. As per 1981 census, the total number of Hindus were 1,15,47,676. The district wise population of Hindus as per 1991 census as under :—

District Population of Hindus

1. Ambala¹ 9,54,044
2. Yamunanagar 6,77,076
3. Kurukshetra 5,17,512
4. Kaithal 7,34,881
5. Karnal 9,18,143
6. Panipat 6,24,164
7. Sonipat 10,36,300

8. Rohtak 7,82,104
9. Jhajjar 7,02,896
10. Faridabad 12,98,359
11. Gurgaon 7,43,497
12. Rewari 6,19,711
13. Mahendragarh 6,76,405
14. Bhiwani 11,27,661

1. *Information of District Panchkula has been included in Ambala District .*

People

15. Jind 9,20,581
 16. Hissar (Provisional)¹ 11,94,215
 17. Fatehabad (P) 5,06,424
 18. Sirsa 6,52,539
- Total 1,46,86,512

The modern writers and thinkers make a dichotomy between the present Hinduism and past Hinduism. The book on "*Hindu Gods and Goddesses*" by

H.A. Rose opens with a discussion on " The Hinduism of today", the religion of the masses as distinct from Hinduism of the *Vedas*. Its specific thrust lies in the focus on the polytheistic aspect of Hinduism and its cosmogeny shorn of esoteric teaching and ethical proclivities. The prefatory

observations about what constitutes Hinduism are followed by on account of the worship of Brahma, Shiva, Vishnu, Hanuman, the five Pandvas and *Bhagwat Puran*. The worship of nature encompasses reverence to Yamuna, mother earth, moon planet, rivers, trees, the birds and animals and the Sun God . Nature worship having its origin in Vedic mythology, is animated by pantheistic doctrine and the pristine man's scare of inscrutable and incomprehensible phenomena around and his attempts at propitiating gods in search of favours.

God and Goddesses and local deities of Hindus

The Hindus follow traditional Hindu beliefs and practise Sanatam Dharam. They believe in Shiva, Vishnu, Brahma, Rama and Krishana. The *vedas*, *upnishadas*, *Ramyana* and *Mahabharata* are their religious books. Places of worship of Sanatam Dharam are *mandirs* and *shivalias* where the stone idols of gods and goddesses are kept.

Lord Shiva.—The religious practices of the Hindus are identical all over Haryana. Shiva temple or Shivala is found in every village and town. Shiv or Hari is the ancient God of the Hindus, the Shiva worshippers are in large number in Haryana. Basically every home or temple is found in Haryana with Shiv idols. Even the name of Haryana is attributed to the worship of Hari-Shiv God. Gauri Shankar mandir in Bhiwani and Shankar Bhagwan mandir at Charkhi Dadri deserve special mention.

People visit Shivala or Shiv temple on Mondays and worship God Shiva by pouring milk and water on the Shiva linga (Symbol of God). Many persons keep fast on Monday and they take only one meals at that day after performing worship in the temples. The Jogis (priests) generally of Kanphara (pierced ears) class take the offerings.

1. *The population of the Hindus, as per 1991 Census is based on the table of Statistical Abstract of Haryana, 2000-01 issued in ESO, P. 63.*

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The people also celebrate *Shiv Ratri*. On that day many fairs are held and people worship Shiva by visiting temples. Ambala, present Panchkula and Yamuna Nagar districts are closely associated with the worship of Lord Shiva and his consort Parvati, represented through Shakti. According to a legend, Shiva struck the head of Brahma while latter was persuing Saraswati. Shiva cleared himself of the sin in the Kapal Mochan at Bilaspur (Jagadhari tahsil). A Shiva temple is located at village Sindhai, about 2.5 kilometres away from *Kapal Mochan*. The temple contains *Linga* (phallus) said to be installed by Lord Shiva himself, after his bath in *Kapal Mochan* tank. According to *Skanda Purana*, those people who take bath in *Kapal Mochan* tank in the bright half of *Kartik* month and visit *Linga* of Shiva, get eternal bliss.

Dera Baba Sarsai Nath requires special mention with reference to *Shiv Bhakti*. The Dera located outside Hissar gate (Sirsa), the construction of the temple is assigned to the 13th century. It was built by Sarsai Nath, a saint who is said to have meditated here. It is held in high esteem by the people.

Mughal emperor Shah Jahan visited *Dera* Baba Sarsai Nath to get blessing for his ailing son. On fulfilment his dreams, the emperor built a dome and donated land to the temple. A document in Arabic, in possession of *Dera* authorities testify Shah Jahan's visit to the temple. The *Dera* has temples of Shiva and Durga.

As a new trend, the worshippers of Lord Shiva, arrange a audio cassette and hear the psalms (*bhajans*) highlighting the *shakti* of Lord Shiva.

The Karnal and Kurukshetra districts have been closely connected with Shiva worship from ancient times. According to *Puranic* literature and the *Mahabharata*, the famous Sthanu Tirtha existed in the area (Thanesar) and the place was called after Sthanu (Shiva). A terracotta seal with a bull and a kharoshthi legend on it discovered from the mound known as Karan Ka Kila in Thanesar may also be corroborative of this visit. Besides, a stone slab depicting

four-armed Ganpati with Shiva and Parvati was discovered from Amin (Kurukshetra district). The worship of Shiva in the temples at Kurukshetra and Pehowa is very popular. *Panchmukhi murti* of Shiva at Pehowa is the only one of its type in the whole of India.

Shiva's temples at village Bagoht (Mahendragarh district), Shankar Bhagwan Mandir at village Kamania of the same district deserve special mention. The Shiva temple at Bagoht is very famous. The devotees bring *Kanwar* (small pitchers full of Ganga water) and offer at this temple.

There are ancient temples of Shiva at Birkhadwala, Barod, Hat and Paju Kalan in Jind district. The temple at Hat, known as *Hatkeshwar Mahadeva* temple is believed to be very ancient. A bath in its tank is equivalent to the spiritual merit of performing

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fine *yajnas*. At Barkhedwal, near Kalayat, there is a famous Shiva-temple. It is said that King Khandwag after donating his entire kingdom took *sanyas* and worshipped Lord Shiva who is stated to be appeared from the earth.

Lord Rama.— Ram is worshipped by all Hindus as the incarnation of Vishnu. The idols of Rama, Lakshman and Sita are placed in temples. The devotees worship these idols in the morning and evening. Almost every temple in the State is adorned with above three idols. The people attach a great reverence to the Lord Rama. On the occasion of *Ramnaumi*, the people keep fast during *Navaratri*, all the devotees go to temples and worship Lord Ram. They donate something and distribute some *pakwans* such as *kheer*, *puri* and *halwa* among the beggars and others. The cows are also fed with *kheer* and *puri* on this day. *Ram Lila* story of Ram during the

Dushera days is staged in various parts of the state. *Ram Lila* keeps reverence for Rama and folk theatre alive. Gauri Shankar mandir at Bhiwani deserves special mention.

Lord Krishana.— The Kurukshetra tract is also intimately connected with the life of Krishana. It was here he acted as Arjun's charioteer in the epic battle and sang the song celestial, the *Gita*. Like *Ram Lila*, *Krishana Lila* is also staged in various parts of the state. The devotees go to temples and worship Lord Krishana.

Lord Krishana is worshipped through out the State by all Hindus especially the Ahirs who claim themselves to be his descendants. They used to visit Mathura and Vrindavana, the sacred places connected with the life of Krishana even in those days when there were no means of communication except carts or camels. Besides, the name of Krishana is very dear to every Hindu of the country and temples dedicated to him are found every where in villages and towns of the region. Even some devotees keep the idols of Lord Krishana in their homes.

There is a famous *Hans* or goose tank at Ika in Jind district. It is believed that here Lord Krishana, after escaping from the *Gopis*, concealed himself in the guise of a goose (hans is the symbol of soul). People from the adjoining areas as well as remote places bathe here on Sunday in the month of *sawan* (July, August) for their purification. Cow worship is deeply connected with the worship of Lord Krishana. The devotees read the *Gita* in the morning and the poetry versed by Surdas who devoted his whole life in the worship of Lord Krishana.

Hanuman-Monkey God.— The followers of Vishnu are specially devoted to this deity and the images of Hanuman, the monkey god, are to be seen in most of the temples. Kaithal town is deeply connected by traditions with Hanuman. It was named as *Kapisthala*, a Sanskrit word meaning a place of monkeys. The deity is worshipped on Tuesdays in a temple situated in the heart of the town. Besides, in the east of the town, there is a mound said to be the birth place of Hanuman and as such it is known as 'Anjani Ka Tila', Anjani was the mother of Hanuman.

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There is a custom of creating a Hanuman temple before digging a well to avert some mishap during the construction; as Hanuman is considered the god of strength. A difficult work is started after saying *Jai Bajrang Bali*. There are many families near Mahendragarh which worship the deity by cooking a 'Rot'. This is a great occasion of festivals. A large number of people are fed with *churma* (a mixture of *ghee* and sugar with *(Rot)*. Many people stipulate in advance a *swamani kadai* if something is fulfilled. On every Tuesday the temples are decked with the followers of Hanuman. They go to temple with a *prashad* and after offering the *prashad*, the remaining *prashad* is distributed among the beggars and each and every person who comes across devotees. The staunch devotees keep fast on Tuesday and take one-time meal without salt. There are others who read *Hanuman Chalisa*, a book on Hanuman in the evening and morning.

There is a *Panchmukhi Hanuman* temple at Bastianwala in Jagadhri tahsil. There is gigantic idol of Hanuman with a face representing five different images. The temple is known to be one of the three of its kind in India. In Bhiwani town, a big temple is situated outside Hanuman gate and at Charkhi Dadri *Hanuman ji ka bara mandir* is very famous.

There is huge temple at Bamanwas near Narnaul which was built by *Baba* (Sadhu) Rameshwar Dass. In this temple the idol of Lord Hanuman on the main entrance is so huge (having a height of 40 feet approximately) that probably it has no comparison in *i.e.* northern India. In Sirsa town, Hanuman temples at Rania road and Goshala road deserve special mention. At Chulkana village (Sonapat district), a big temple is situated and a big statue of Hanuman stands installed in the temple.

Lord Vishnu.—The district Kurukshetra has been deeply and closely associated with *Vishnu cult* and the *Mahabharata* refers to the various *teraths* named after Vishnu. The famous idol Jagson (Vishnu) in the temple of Chakraswami at Kurukshetra was removed to Ghazni by Muslim invaders¹. The Pehowa inscriptions also bear the testimony to the practice of Vishnu worship and the existence of Vishnu

temples. People still worship Vishnu but he is hardly recognised by them under that name though the common names of Rama and Narayana, he is the great God of the country. Temples dedicated to him exist in several villages and towns of the State. Vishnu worship in Kashipuri temple at Kaithal is very popular. The image of Trivikrama Vishnu in this temple was recovered from Siwan².

Ganesh and Satyanarain gods are also worshipped by the Hindus. The people also organise Satya Narain Katha at their homes. The *Pandit* of a temple comes to the

1. Elliot and Dowson, *The History of India As Told by its own Historians*, Vol. iv, 1872, P. 454.

2. R. C. Majumdar : *The History and Culture of Indian People*, Vol. IV, P. 336.

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home and recites the *mantras* at the occasion of the *Katha*. The idol of Ganesh ji is offered water and milk in temples.

Other deities.—Most of the malevolent deities are worshipped by women and children. Some Muslim *Pirs*¹ and *Sayyads* are also worshipped by the Hindus.

Sun God.— This is the god whom the people chiefly delight to honour. No shrine is ever built to this god, but Sunday is the day sacred to him. On Sunday the devotees do not eat salt; nor do they set milk for *ghee*, but make it into rice milk, of which a part is given to the *purohits* in honour of the sun, and a lamp is lighted for him on Sunday. Water is thrown towards the sun in the morning and with first steps out of doors in the morning, the devotee salutes the sun and says *dharm ko sahai rakhya suraj maharaja* (keep me in the faith, O, Lord the sun). The professional Brahmans in temples take

offerings. The staunch devotees keep fasts in his honour on that day. This means eating only one meal with one sort of grain and abstaining salt.

The *Mahabharata* refers to the popularity of Sun cult in Kurukshetra tract. It is believed that Aditi had given birth to Surya at Suraj Kund situated at Amin, about 5 kilometres from Thanesar. There still exists a temple of Aditi and a Suraj Kund nearby. During the eclipse of the sun, the millions of people assemble at Kurukshetra in order to bathe in the holy *sarovar*.

Goddesses.— Sitla Mata is worshipped by the people of every village/town. The most important among the Sitla Mata temples located at village Gurgaon, a suburb of Gurgaon town it is named after Masani, the goddess of small pox.

The main purpose for which the devotees come to pay homage and make offerings is to entreat the goddess to help them to ward off small pox. This purpose is achieved by requiring the people to visit the temple for the performance of important ceremonies. This is done by a ceremony known as *jal dena*; the devotees spend a sleepless night at the temple chanting hymns and songs in honour of the goddess. A section of the visitors come for the *mundan* ceremony (the first hair cutting ceremony) of their children and offer the crop of the hair at the altar of the goddess. Among other visitors married couples also come to invoke the blessings of the goddess for a happy married life.

It is said that during an attack of the small pox, no offerings are made; and if the epidemic has once seized upon a village, all offerings are discontinued till the disease has disappeared, otherwise evil influence would spread. The important shrines are at Pathri, Kabri and Baholi of Panipat district.

1. The *Dargah* of a revered *Pir* at Rehor village near Barwala (Panchkula) is visited by every body cutting across the religious and caste lines, the people invoke blessings of the Muslim *Pir* Mamu Maula Bux, under the guidance of Shri Ram Pal Sharma who is a *Gaddi Nashin* of the *Dargah*.

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The *Shakti* is closely connected with the worship of Shiva and far more widely spread is the worship of his consort, *Devi* or *Shakti*. This goddess goes by many names Durga, Kalika, Chandi, Naina, Mansa, Sharda, Ambika, Kali, Bhawani and others.

Devi is worshipped all over the state but her worship is most in vogue and most diversified in Ambala district (now in Panchkula district). Many celebrated and famous temples of Devi which are visited by a large number of devotees from all over the state and neighbouring states of Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Chandigarh are located at Balaspur (Mansa Devi), Chandi Mandir (Chandi Devi) and Talokapur (Sharda Devi). The other important temples of Devi are located at Kalka (*Kalka Devi*), Orian (*Naina Devi*), Charmian (*Kalka Devi*), Bhojpur (Durga), Raipur Rani (Durga), Ambala City (Ambika Devi), Ambala Cantonment (Kali Devi), Babyal (Gyasi Devi), Mullana (Durga), Phokra (Durga) and Kalawar (Durga). Mata Vaishno Devi is most celebrated in the country. During *Navratras*, people keep fast for a longer period. The devotees worship in the temples, already referred to, on Saturday but *Ashtami chet sudi* (March-April) and *Ashtami Asoj Sudi* (September-October) are special days when large number of devotees visit these temples. The devotees worship the deity and make offerings of sweets, eatables, cash, clothes and ornaments.

The first hair cutting ceremony of children is performed at the temples of

Mata Mansa Devi. The devotees sing songs in the praise of the goddess and make many kinds of presents in the shape of cash, clothes and ornaments.

Bhumia or Khera.—Bhumia, the god of the home-stead or the village itself, often called Khera, is an important god. Bhumia is worshipped on Sunday. People light a lamp and offer a cake of bread at the shrine, and feed Brahmans. This is done twice a year, after the harvests are gathered in and also on other occasions, Bhumia is worshipped at the time of marriage. The bridegroom before proceeding to the bride's house, takes a round of his own village and worships Bhumia, and again worships the god before he enters his house along with his bride. When a woman has a son, she lights lamps, and affixes with cowdung five of the *Panni*

grass called *been* to the shrine, so too the first milk of a cow or buffalo is always offered to Bhumia. Women commonly take their children to worship Bhumia on Sunday. The *Pujaris* take offerings. Every village has the shrine of Bhumia.

Gugga Pir.—Gugga or Jahir Pir, though a Muslim, is supposed to be the greatest of the snake kings. Gugga is worshipped throughout the State by the Hindus. The 9th and 15th of *Bhadra*, especially the former, considered a *Gugga Naumi*, are dedicated to this Pir, and generally the 9th of any month and all Mondays are his days. His shrine usually consists of a small one room building with a minaret on each corner

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and a grave inside. It is called a *mari* and is marked by a long bamboo with a peacock plumes, a coconut, some coloured threads, and some hand *pankhas* and a blue flag on the top. On 9th *Bhadra* the *Jogis* take this fly flap known as *chhari* round the village to the sound of *deroos* and devotees bow their heads and salute it by offering *churmas*. The Balmiks and Dhanaks in many villages play the *deroos* and sing devotional psalms in the honour of the Gugga. It is known as *Pir ke sole*. It is said that beating of *deroos* is the exclusive privilege of the Balmiki community; others may partake in singing, dancing and simply offering *churmas*. It is believed that the spirit of the Gugga takes abode in the devotee dancer who proves this fact by beating himself occasionally with a bunch of iron called *chabuk*. Gugga Pir is also subject of folk songs. Songs to him are sung on the occasion of child birth and marriage.

The people also worship the rivers, i.e. the Yamuna, the Saraswati and the Markanda. The Ganga river or Ganges is

also revered by the Hindus. The Yamuna or Jamuna ji and the Saraswati are worshipped. The people take bath in the rivers particularly on the occasion of *Sanskaranti*. However, no shrines are dedicated to them. The Markanda is linked with the *Rishi* of that name and a temple of Markanda exists at Harjoli. People from adjoining villages take bath in the river on the *Puran mashi* of *Asoj* (September-October). The people of Sonipat area take a dip in the Yamuna river on *Kartik Puranmashi*. It is believed that a dip in the Yamuna river on Sundays at the time of waxing moon purges from all sins.

Revered Pirs.—Ram Dev Pir is a saint whose worship is very much prevalent in the Hissar district. Ram Dev is considered incarnation of Lord Krishana 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 the 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 exists 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, Boodya Khera, Badopal, Duala, Talwandi, Rukka, Bhaini Akber pur, Landheri Sukhlam Bran and Seeswal.

Budhla saint belonged to Multan and he disappeared in earth by virtue of his spiritual powers before partition of the country, the Hindus of Multan used to hold a fair on the shrine of Budhla. Now after migration to the district, shrines of Budhla have been built at Hissar where fairs are held at Kalapir of Khet Kalan (Hansi tahsil) and Dahdadas of Narnaund are worshipped as saints.

The local tutelary gods and saints worshipped by the persons since time immemorial have lost much of their importance though they have not disappeared altogether. For example, mention may be made of a Ghaibi Pir (hidden saint) also known Bala Sayyad at Rajlugarhi of Sonipat district. People visit the shrine, built

squarely in the form of a tomb on the top of a raised platform on every Sunday. *Sadhus* are also revered by the people. Jot Nath Sadhu at village Dhani Phogat near Charkhi Dadri is worshipped by the local people of many surrounding villages.

Shani Devta.— *Shani*, one of the nine planets of the solar system is also worshipped in the Sirsa district in particular. But in general through out state people have a fear of Shani Devta and donate *tel* (mustard oil), *dal* and cash to *Shani* persons. Two temples are dedicated to *Shani Devta* at Sirsa town are located in Noharia bazar and Bhadra bazar. People worship *Shani* idols in these temples on Saturdays by offering mustard oil. Since *Shani* is not worshipped in temples elsewhere in the state, the existence of these two temples in Sirsa district is quite significant.

General mode of Hinduism.— Hinduism, however, also attaches a sacred character to certain wells, tanks, rivers, trees etc. Thus on sacred days, pilgrimage to river Yamuna or to a canal or tank nearby may be undertaken for bathing in it. For example, Kurukshetra is a great seat of religious veneration for Hindus who visit occasionally to have a bath in the sacred Brahmsarover.

Pipal tree is looked upon with reverence in pursuance of an ancient tradition. Water is offered to it every day and sometimes cotton threads may be wrapped around it. The people do not use its twigs as fuel. The cow is sacred to all Hindus and Nandi (Lord Shiva's bull) invariably appears in Shiva's temple in the form of a picture or a statue.

Practical religion assumes form of rituals elaborate or simple, according to personal capabilities. Thus fasts are kept on holy days in a year or on particular days in a week accompanied some times by performance of *havans* or recitation of devotional songs (*kirtan*), reading from the religious texts (*kathas*). Fasts may be observed either on pure devotional grounds or with a view to achieving some long cherished desire. Rituals are practised in an effort to produce rains or to stop them when they are excessive, to protect oneself against evil eye, to propitiate the deities, etc. There is, in fact, an

endless multiplicity of purposes and practices. To this may be added worship of the various symbols, the *shaligram* stone and Tulsi plant. Now religion is going to be a code of rituals.

Sacred books of Hindus.— The sacred books of the Hindus are the *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata*, *Bhagvad Gita*, *Upnishads* and *Vedas*. All these religious books guide the destiny of the Hindu race. These books carry some eternal and constant message for the people. Regarding the *Gita*, Dr. Buddha Prakash expounds the dynamic culture in the para below:—

"The philosophy of dynamism of the epic age in Haryana is expounded in the *Bhagavad Gita*, a part of *Mahabharata*. This work is a result of many doctrines and

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creeds but its core is essentially a synthesis of heroic cult. It consists of a dialogue between Arjuna and Lord Krishna on the eve of the great battle. As the rival armies stood in array and the glittering chariot of Arjuna, drawn by fiery white steeds, lumbered towards the enemy, he was struck with remorse at the prospect of the killing of the relatives and friends for the sake of material gain and thought of retiring from the battle in order to save them. But his friend, philosopher and guide, Krishna who was driving his chariot, egged him on to fight without caring for the consequences. Since it was his sacred duty and moral obligation. The dialogue between these two persons is instructive with a dramatic quality, literary charm, logical subtlety and fatalistic determination, that do not have any other parallel¹".

The *Gita* insists that the four classes of priests, warriors, farmers and traders and servants are based on quality (*guna*) and action (*karma*) so that there is sufficient mobility and resilience in them, but side by the duties and obligations

enjoined by them are binding on the individuals belonging to them and deserve to be discharged to be with unquestioning sincerity and absolute dedication.

"To inculcate the ideology of fighting for its own sake or action for the sake of action the *Gita* adumbrates a philosophy of determinism bordering on fatalism. According to it, the universe moves by its own momentum. Nature including to man, works by its own imperatives and orientations, and there are impersonal forces driving man towards specific fields of action. The whole scheme of being, consisting of birth and death and appearance and disappearance of multifarious forms, is an inexorable and irrevocable process. It is personified in the microcosmic form (*viratrupa*) of God, which embraces and encompasses the whole expanse of space and span of time²."

The *Gita* is a stirring testament of war and an inspiring scripture of heroism, side by side, it is also sermon of peace and non-violence. Among the qualities of good man (*abhiyata*), it includes non-violence (*ahimsa*), truth (*satya*), affability (*akrodha*), sacrifice (*tyaga*), peace (*shanti*), absence of backbiting (*apaisuna*), compassion (*daya*), ungreediness (*alohuptva*), softness (*mardava*), bashfulness (*hri*), straight-forwardness (*acapala*), dominating spirit (*teja*), pardon (*kasma*), firmness (*dhrti*), purity (*sauca*), friendliness (*adroha*) and modesty (*natimanita*) and states that a man of such qualities heads for salvation.

Firstly, the *Gita* says that all good qualities, including non-violence, are the corollaries of non attachment. Non-attachment is the greatest virtue and attachment is the greatest vice. One who is free from attachment is devoid of all vices, and he,

1. Dr. Buddha Prakash : *Glimpses of Hariyana*, 1967, p. 23.

2. *Ibid.* p. 26.

who is attached to things, is the home of all sins. A person, who has no bias or prejudice for or against the issue of any endeavour, is not touched by taints associated with it. On the other hand, he, who is engrossed in the cares and anxieties of fruits and results, partakes of the blemishes pertaining to them. According to the *Gita*, non-violence is a mental attribute meaning the absence of malice and hatred rather than the abstinence from bodily injury.

SIKHS— Before narrating the main tenets of Sikhism, it is worthwhile to trace a laconic history of Sikh Gurus who gave permanent footing to the modern Sikhism.

Guru Nanak (A.D. 1469-1539), the founder of Sikhism, was a mystic of the Nirguna school, but his followers branched off from Hinduism and founded a separate religious system. He married and had two sons, but he had a longing for spiritual life since his boyhood. He became a wandering preacher of a casteless, universal, ethical, anti-ritualistic, monotheistic and highly spiritual religion. His disciples called themselves Sikhs (derived from Sanskrit *Sisya*, disciple, or Pali *Sikkha*, instruction) and formed new *panth*.

Guru Nanak nominated his disciple, Lehana, as his successor who collected Nanak's oral teaching and put them down in a new script, the *Gurumukhi*.

His successor Guru Amar Das (A.D. 1552-1574) divided the Sikh spiritual empire into twenty-two *parishes* or *manjis*, each under the pious and devoted Sikh. The *langar* or free kitchen maintained by voluntary offerings had become a source of Sikh unity and solidarity. Guru Amar Das introduced many innovations which helped in the building of a Sikh temple. He was succeeded by his son-in-law Guru Ram Das. He had a tank dug at the site granted to his wife by emperor Akbar. He also laid the foundations of Amritsar which was destined to become the religious capital of the Sikhs. He died in 1581 and his son, Guru Arjun Dev built the Harmandir (Temple of God) in the midst of the tank. In A.D. 1604, the compilation of *Adi Granth* was completed and it was placed in the Harmandir. As already referred that he compiled the *Adi Granth*, or "the first Sacred Book", as the original Sikh scripture is called, by collecting select verses from the works of his four predecessors as well as from those

of the Hindu and Mohammadans saints who appeared since the days of Jai Dev. The Sikhs formed a compact community with an extensive organisation and a religious order with the guidance of the Sikh Gurus, as detailed below:—

1. Guru Nank Dev Ji (A.D.1469-1539)
2. Lehana (Angad) (A.D. 1539-1552)
3. Amar Das (A.D. 1552-1574)

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4. Ram Das (A.D. 1574-1581)
5. Arjun Dev (A.D. 1581-1606)
6. Har Gobind (A.D. 1606-1644)
7. Har Rai (A.D. 1644-1661)
8. Har Kishan (A.D. 1661-1664)
9. Guru Tag Bahadur (A.D.1664-1675)
10. Guru Gobind Singh (A.D.1675-1708)

The execution (A.D.1606) of Guru Arjun Dev by the Mughal King was the turning point in the history of Sikhism. The Sikhs took arms in self-defence. Guru Har Gobind, son and successor of Guru Arjun Dev enlisted a body of troops. He died in A.D. 1644 and was succeeded, according to his choice, by Har Rai, one of his grandsons.

Guru Har Rai was succeeded by his younger son, Har Kishan (A.D. 1661-1664), a boy of five years who died soon after. Then Teg Bahadur youngest son of Guru Har Gobind

succeeded him. Guru Teg Bahadur the ninth Guru strengthend in many ways the spirit of resistance against the religious intolerance of Aurangzeb. He was taken to Delhi and beheaded in A.D. 1675.

Sikhism seemed to be threatened with extinction. Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth Guru and son and successor of the executed leader, found himself in a very difficult position. Under the circumstances, Guru ji revitalized the Sikhs by giving them a new ideology and a new plan of action. He suppressed the organisation of *masands* collection of the offerings of the Sikhs. Laying new foundations for the old religion, he created what was henceforth known as the Khalsa. A great open air gathering of the Sikhs was convened and the Guru selected five of his followers who were prepared to lay down their lives. Guru Gobind Singh declared that those who accepted the new method of initiation formed the *Khalsa*: "the *Khalsa* is Guru and Guru is *Khalsa*". The Sikhs were to wear the five emblems - *kesa* (long hair), *kachha* (short breaches), *kada* (iron bangle), *kirpan* (sword) and *kangha* (comb). This created a compact brotherhood in faith which was also to be a brotherhood in arms. The Sikhs were to find spiritual leadership in the *Guru Granth Sahib* and temporal leadership in the *khalsa*. Guru Gobind Singh was assassinated by a *pathan* at a place called Nander at Godavari in 1708. The Sikhs guruship ended with Guru Gobind Singh. Before his death, he himself named *Granth Sahib* as the everlasting Guru of the Sikhs.

The Sikh Guru enjoined the worship of one supreme God. The devotees visit *Gurdwaras* where verses from holy scripture (the *Granth Sahib*) are recited. Besides

observing some Hindu festivals, the Sikhs celebrate *Gurpurbs* (birth days and martyrdom days of the Sikh Gurus) and *Baisakhi* which marks the birth of the *Khalsa*. *Akhand path* is some times organised either in thanks-giving in the fulfilment of a desire or on the occasion of birth and death. None must appear bare-headed before the *Granth Sahib*. The devotees also read *Japji Sahib* in the morning and *Rahrahs Sahib* in the evening. They read the *Kirtna Sahib* before going bed.

As per 1981 census the total population of the Sikhs in Haryana was 8,02,230. Their district-wise population is as under:

District Population Population
As per 1981 census As per 1991 Census

Hisar 98,577 1,24,239

Sirsa 1,90,469 2,44,540

Bhiwani 1,869 2,159

Gurgaon 4,032 3,366

Faridabad 17,616 21,749

Jind 26,569 25,204

Mahendragarh 3,654 1,794

Ambala 1,74,205 1,33,196

Karnal 1,07,641 1,07,186

Kurukshetra 1,69,638 1,15,645

Rohtak 4,857 3,286

Sonapat 3,109 2,899

In Panipat district (18,571); Kaithal district (78,828); Rewari district (955); Yamuna Nagar district (72,497), Jhajjar (722); total population of Sikhs as per 1991 Census was 9,56,836.

The majority of the Sikhs were in the districts of Sirsa, Ambala, Karnal and Kurukshetra. This analysis is based on the population as per 1981 census.

The important *Gurdwaras* are *Manji Sahib*, *Sisganj Gurdwara*, *Padshahi Bagh Gurdwara* (Ambala City);

Panjokhra Shib Gurdwara, Lakhnor Sahib Gurdwara; Nada Sahib Gurdwara and Kapal Mochan Gurdwara at Bilaspur (Jagadhari tahsil). Mastgarh Gurdwara at Shahabad, Gurdwara at Thanesar and Gurdwara at Tirawari are held in high esteem. Gurdwara Manji Sahib at Karnal is a very sacred shrine of the Sikhs.

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This place was sanctified by the visit of Guru Tegh Bahadur, the 9th Guru, on his way to Delhi where he had gone for the supreme sacrifice.

There is also a *Gurdwara* in the sacred memory of Guru Tegh Bahadur who on his way to Delhi stayed at Jind for some time. A fort like Gurdwara was built in the memory of Guru Tegh Bahadur who took some rest at Dhamtan (Jind district) while he was on his way to Delhi. Another branch of the Sikhs is Namdhari sect. They also wear turbans.

Teachings of Guru Nanak Dev

It has been mentioned above that Sikhism was, to a large extent, a reaction against the oppression of the Muslims to which Nanak Dev, the founder of the sect, was an eye-witness. Another contributing factor was the Bhakti cult which was then at its height in India. Nanak Dev, like other medieval saints, such as Ramananda (14th century), Kabir and Namdev (15th century) and Chaitany (16th century), was a product of this movement. These two factors and forces—Muslim oppression and Bhakti cult—shaped the growth and development of both Sikhism and the Sikh nation.

The same forces may be said to be at work, in greater or lesser degree, for the other Bhakti movements mentioned

above. Thus we find that one of their principal aims was to remove the bitterness then prevailing between the Hindus and Muslims. It may not be a mere coincidence or accident that many of these movements laid great stress on the abolition of idolatry and caste distinctions which constituted two fundamental differences and causes of provocation and persecution between the two communities. These medieval saints preached that there was only one God and laid stress on the brotherhood of man, resembling, in these respects, their Muslim counterparts, the Sufis. They all declared that it does not matter if God was called by any name, Allah, Khuda, Ram or Hari.

Guru Nanak Dev preached to Hindus and Muslims alike. It was then a blasphemy to equate Hinduism and Islam, but Guru Nanak Dev had malice to none and love for all. To win confidence of Muslims he would sit in graveyards for hours or even for days in meditation uttering verses in praise of Allah. He would join prayers in mosques, pointing out to some that their hearts were not concentrated on God, but were wandering in their homes or fields. He explained the significance of their five daily prayers thus :they have five different meanings firstly to speak the truth, secondly to earn their livelihood by right means, thirdly, to give away in charity in the name of God, fourthly to cherish good intentions, and lastly, to praise God.

Guru Nanak Dev preached to Hindus against idol worship and caste distinctions both by word and deed. He preferred taking food with his disciples of low castes. People made offerings to the Guru both in cash and kind in accordance with old

traditions. In the beginning Guru Nanak Dev distributed all this among the poor who came to listen to him. Afterwards he organised a free community kitchen called *langer* where all dined without any consideration of caste, creed or religion. In the *sangat* (congregation) and *pangat* (*langer*) all were equal. As everybody was required to earn his livelihood by fair means and hard work, all persons from a labourer to a lord and from peasant to prince were considered alike in dignity and prestige. The contribution made by every Sikh in the form of cash, kind or service in the *Langar* was held in similar esteem and regard. It was in this way that Guru Nanak tried to loosen the bonds of caste system. This also developed the spirit of charity, fellow feeling and service and made the new movement popular. *Langar* became a symbol of equality and fraternity among his followers.

Guru Nanak Dev laid emphasis on the observance of five things: (1) *Nam* or singing the praise of God, (2) *Dan* or charity for all, (3) *Ashnan* or the daily bath to keep body clean, (4) *Seva* or service of humanity and (5) *Simran* or constant prayer for the deliverance of soul.

Guru Nanak Dev's religion consisted in the love of God, love of man and love of godly living. Guru's God was the true Lord, the Creator, unborn, self-existent, immortal, omnipresent, unrivalled, transcendent, formless and omnipotent; yet He possessed many attributes of personality. He was an Ocean of Mercy, the Friend of man, the Healer of sinners, Cherisher of the poor and Destroyer of sorrow. He was wise, generous, beautiful and bountiful. He was the Father and Mother of all human beings and took care of them, Christ could think of relationship between God and man as that between father and son. To Guru Nanak Dev this relationship appeared as between husband and wife. A son could not be the constant companion of his father, but a faithful wife could not remain away from her spouse. This position also raised the status of woman. True devotion, complete surrender of self and thoughtful constant repetition of the *Nam* as opposed to mechanical ritualism, would enable an individual to reach God. "Efface thyself so that thou obtain the bridegroom". God could be attained by repeating his *Nam* continuously. Without *Sat Nam* (the True *Nam*) nobody could get salvation. *Nam* signified worship and devotion to God and feeling and realising His presence at all places and at all times. He thus established deep spiritual unity between man and God. The Sikhs greeted each other by saying *Sat Nam*, *Sat Kartar* or *Sat Sri Akal*, meaning True Name, True Creator or True Timeless one.

Guru Nanak Dev held that for the realisation of God, Guru was essential. He was a divine gift. God manifested Himself for the salvation of mankind in some teacher or Guru. Without him God could not be realised. It was only through the Guru that a man could have communion with God. "Man shall not be emancipated

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without the Guru's instruction; see and ponder upon this. Even though man performed hundreds of thousands of ceremonies, all would still be darkness without the Guru". The Guru could lead one to redemption, and in His presence there was no necessity to worship any god or goddess. But the Guru could be found only through God's grace. From his disciples Guru Nanak Dev demanded complete surrender to the Guru. Only then salvation could be achieved through the superior spiritual power of the Guru. The faithful disciple would follow Guru's instruction implicitly. He must listen and sing with the utmost devotion and reverence *Gurbani* or the hymns composed by the Guru and practise *Gurmat* or the wisdom as revealed through the Guru's hymn. But the Guru was a teacher and not an incarnation of God. He was a man among men calling upon his fellow creatures to live a holy life. He was to be obeyed but not to be worshipped. Guru Nanak Dev declared that his own Guru was God. His disciples addressed him by the appellation of *Sat Guru* or the True Guru.

Guru Nanak Dev laid stress on internal discipline which implied devotion, service and restraint of emotions. He asserted that salvation could be attained only through upright character and good deeds. In *Japji*, Nanak says:

"words do not the saint or sinner make,

Action alone is written in the book of fate,

what we sow that alone we take,

O Nanak, be saved or for ever transmigrate".

He further observed:" Abide pure amid the impurities of the world, thus shalt thou find the way of religion. He explained it thus:" They are not be called pure who wash their bodies and sit at leisure : rather the pure are they, O Nanak, who enshrine the Lord in their hearts".

Nanak emphasised the importance of *Karma* to escape from the transmigration of soul. "Life is as the shadow of the passing bird, but the soul of man is, as the potter's wheel, ever circling on its pivot". He denounced all the external marks of holiness, fasts, pilgrimages and penances. He condemned asceticism and renunciation of the world. A householder was equally acceptable to God as a hermit, and secular business did not stand in the way of emancipation. As a matter of fact ascetics and those who had renounced the world had nothing to do with Nanak's religion. His religion concerned worldly men who led a family life and earned their bread by hard labour. He bitterly censured people who in the garb of saintliness went abegging for their food and clothing at the door of a householder. Live in the world, but lead a good life, and help others to do so, he asserted. *Sadh Sangat* or *Satsang*, viz. association with virtuous and holy men, would help in achieving this objective. Work, worship and distribute (*Kirt Karo, Nam Japo and Wand Chako*) was his motto.

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In Guru Nanak's time Indian society was based on caste and was divided into countless water tight compartments. Men were considered high and low on account of their birth and

not according to their deeds. Equality of human beings was a dream. There was no spirit of national unity except feelings of community fellowship. In Guru Nanak's view, divine love was the criterion to judge whether a person was good or bad. As the caste system was not based on divine love for all, he condemned it. Guru Nanak Dev ji aimed at creating a casteless and classless society, of the modern type of socialist society in which all were equal and where one member did not exploit the other. Nanak Dev ji insisted that every Sikh house should serve as a place of love and devotion, a true guest house (*Sach Dharmsala*). Every Sikh was enjoined to welcome a traveller or a needy person and to share his meals and other comforts. Bhai Gurdas says: "Wherever the holy feet of Guru Nanak Dev Ji touched, *Dharmshalas* sprang into existence".

Woman received great consideration from Nanak. She was given equal status with man. She was allowed to attend his sermons along with men. *Purdah* was discouraged. Women joined in the chorus in singing hymns. For *langar* men brought provisions and fuel wood, while women cooked food. Men and women both served meals to the *pangat*. Nanak Dev ji condemned *Sati* or the custom of self-immolation of widows on the pyres of their dead husbands. The Guru said : " How can they be called inferior when they give birth to great men? Women as well as men share in the grace of God and are equally responsible for their actions to Him."

Guru Nanak Dev ji called his religion *Gurmat* or Guru's wisdom. This word occurs in the hymns of Guru Nanak Dev ji more than two hundred times. His disciples called themselves Sikhs from Sanskrit word *sisya*, meaning a learner or a person who takes spiritual lessons from a teacher. The public called them *Nanak Panthis*, *Nanak Prastan* or *Sikhs*. The Sikh congregations were called *Sangat*. The place where Sikhs gathered to listen to the Guru's sermons and sing hymns in praise of God were known as *Gurdwaras*. The community kitchen where all ate without any distinction was called *Langar* and the persons eating there formed a *Pangat*.

In certain respects Nanak's religion differed from other reform movements, as of Ramanand, Kabir, Chaitanya and Gorakhnath.

1. The latter laid stress on fundamentals of Hinduism, believing that their acceptance would ultimately bring about social readjustment. Sikhism, from the very beginning

concentrated on social reform and repetition of the Nam.

2. Conception of God in Sikhism is different from that of other Bhakti saints. The Sikh God is *Akalpurkh*. He is without body, formless and timeless. The other saints believed in Rama and Krishna being incarnations of God.

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3. Sikh religion had no mythology, no traditions and no ambiguity. It was plain and simple. "Believe in one God, have faith in the Guru and lead a good life, then success in this world and salvation after death are yours." The other reformers mainly concerned themselves with salvation of the soul.

4. In Sikhism renunciation of the world was prohibited, while the other sects advocated it.

5. No other Bhakti leader dislodged Sanskrit from the position of being the sacred language of Hinduism, though they preached in the local tongue. This factor was mainly responsible for confining Sikh religion to the Punjab as the Punjabi language was not understood outside this province.

Muslims

Muslims formed third largest group in the State. As per censuses district-wise population of the Muslims is as under :—

District Population Population
As per 1981 Census As per 1991 Census

Hissar 8,422 14,260¹

Sirsa 2,648 3,973

Bhiwani 5,112 8,283

Gurgaon 2,61,645 3,94,304

Faridabad 1,12,806 1,50,341

Jind 11,111 13,813

Mahendragarh 2,660 2,344

Ambala 63,114 22,094

Karnal 28,719 14,689

Kurukshetra 11,105 7,217

Rohtak 3,853 2,719

Sonipat 12,341 19,892

Total :— **5,23,536**

In Panipat district (31,333); Kaithal district (5,425); Rewari district (1,281); Yamunanagar district (69,468); the total population of the Muslims as per 1991 census was 7,63,475. The population of Muslims in Jhajjar district was 2,339.

1. The Population figures of Fatehabad district having the Position during 1991 have been adjusted with the figures of Hissar district, following the table of *Statistical Abstract of Haryana*, (2000-01), P.63.

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They follow Islam. They practise *namaz* and celebrate religious festivals like *Id* and others. The Muslims believe in one God and their religion enjoins five duties upon them. These are recitation of Kalma (an expression of faith in God

and the Prophet Mohmmad), the offering of *namaz* five times a day preferably in a mosque, *roza*, *hajj* to Mecca and contributions in cash and kind for charitable purposes.

Many Muslims in the state, have faith in saints and hold annual *urs* at their tombs and some important places. During the performance of *namaz*, they cover their heads with caps. For the performance of *namaz* in a mosque, only the male members of the community are allowed.

The Muslims wear new clothes at the time of the celebration of religious festivals like *Id-ul-Zuha*, *Ramzan* and *Id-ul-Fitre*. They also observe Muharam to commemorate the martyrdom of Hussan and Hussain, the Prophet's grandsons. Friday is sacred to them.

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 Hashank (Fatehabad tahsil). The Muslims from rural areas flock to Karnal, Panipat and Kaithal on the occasions of their festivals for offering mass prayers. The Muslims from other parts of the country come to Panipat, the birth-place of the Muslim poet Hali, to celebrate the *urs*. Hali was a nationalist poet whose contribution in the freedom movement cannot be forgotten.

In Sonipat district, a tomb at Rajlu Garhi, *Maqbra* of a Pegamber, at Nathupura, and a tomb of Sayyad at Kharkhoda are important monuments where the Muslims visit on special occasions or on the day of *Id*. There is a Jama Masjid at Sirsa where the Muslims offer Namaz and celebrate their religious festivals. Mosque Shah-bu-Shah at Panihari (Sirsa tahsil) and a mosque at Chautala (Dabwali tahsil) are also of great significance.

The important places are the shrines of Shah Kumaish at Saddhaura, Lakhi Shah Darvesh and Tawakkul Shah at Ambala. It is noteworthy that these commemorative gatherings are also attended by the Hindus in large number.

Jains

Jainism is very deep-rooted in Haryana. Jainism is a philosophy based on the teachings of Mahavira, a senior contemporary of Buddha. It takes reality to be a multiple comprising two main kinds of objects the *Jivas* (souls) and the *Ajivas*

(non-souls). The *Jivas* is infinite in numbers. They vary in their capacity for knowledge, power and joy. The essence of *jiva* is consciousness, power and bliss. Potentially, every *jiva* has these qualities in infinite magnitude but actually it displays them in

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varying degrees, being overpowered by the material particles of *karma-pudgala* with which the souls are inter-mixed from time immemorial like iron and ore. The more free a *jiva* is from the matter, the more capable it is of manifesting its inherent consciousness, power and bliss.

Under the category of *Ajiva* come matter, space, motion (dharma), rest (adharma) and time (kala). Both the *Jivas* and *Ajivas* have been existing eternally. The world was never created. It is eternal. Jains do not, therefore, believe in the existence of a Creator. Instead of believing in God, they believe in the existence of perfected souls abiding in the highest region of the world with fully developed consciousness, power and bliss.

The doctrine of Jain philosophy is called *Anekantavada*. The Jain doctrine of *Syadvada* asserts that statements must be made with caution, keeping in view that they can not be absolute and that opposite statements are plausible. Jainism recognises five sources and kinds of knowledge. *Mati* (knowledge) obtained through sense perception and inference; *Srute*, knowledge conveyed by others through intelligible symbols; *Avadhi*, knowledge acquired by some supernatural means such as clairvoyance and clairaudience; *Manahprayaya* knowledge of other minds gained by means of telepathy; and *Kevala jhana*; knowledge of perfected souls who have acquired omniscience.

The Jains lay great emphasis on Ahimsa (non-violence); both in theory and practice. They remain away from meat eating. Many do not taste onions and garlic.

They worship Lord Mahavira and images of *Tiranthkaras*. They celebrate the *Parvas* i.e., festivals connected with the life of Lord Mahavira & *Tiranthkaras*. Like other Hindus, they celebrate all other festivals. They do not believe in idol worship but congregate at *Sthanaks* visited by Jain *Munis*. Five vows enjoined on men are: truth, *ahimsa*, celibacy, restraints of passions and non-stealing. The Jain priests are required to observe these vows strictly.

The Jains reside in Rewari and Narnaul tahsils of Rewari and Mahendragarh districts. Though they are scattered throughout Haryana. They mainly reside in cities. Formerly, Hissar and Hansi were the great centres of Jainism. The whole population consisting of Jats in Baroda village near Uchana has adopted Jainism. It is believed that they follow an important person of this village who had true faith in this religion. There are three temples of *Svetamber* and *Digamber* sects of Jains in Sirsa town and one at Dabwali. In Chandigarh, there are temples of *Digamber* sect. The people following this religion are in great number in Chandigarh. The District-wise population, as per censuses is as under :-

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Population Population

District As per 1981 Census As per 1991 Census¹

Hissar 5,143 4,159

Sirsa 1,625 1,143

Bhiwani 1,299 1,113

Gurgaon 3,057 3,332

Faridabad 1,713 2,149

Jind 4,272 3,208

Mahendragarh 1,575 919

Ambala 5,199 4,028

Karnal 3,523 1,119

Kurukshetra 371 443

Rohtak 3,099 3,475

Sonipat 4,606 4,624

Total 35,482

In Panipat district 2,351; Rewari district (1,174); Kaithal district (174); Yamuna Nagar district (1,143); the total population of Jains as per 1991 Census was 35,296. Jhajjar district had 752 Jains.

According to above details, Jains had the much concentration in Sonapat district where as Kaithal district had the lesser population.

Christians

The Christians consider the *Bible* as their holy Book. They observe Easter, Christmas and New Year's Day as festival. The place of their worship is church. The important churches are at Ambala Cantonment, Jagadhari, Rewari and Sonipat. There are four churches at Sirsa and Dabwali.

Christians, though in small number in the Bhiwani district started missionary work in Bhiwani in 1887 and church was organised in 1903. Medical, educational and orphanage works were started by the Bhiwani Mission at Bhiwani. A church was built in Naya Bazar, Bhiwani in 1935.

The appearance of Christianity in Karnal district dates back to the time of Akbar, when he allowed the Roman Catholic missionaries to preach their religion in his empire. Anyhow, it was only during the British period that some tangible effort was

1. For more details, see table on p.63 of Statistical Abstract of Haryana, 2000-01.
(The population of Fatehabad district as per 1991 Census has been included in Hissar district.)

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made to build churches at Karnal and Kaithal (Now a district). A church called the

St. James Church was constructed at Karnal in 1806, but with the removal of cantonment to Ambala, the building was dismantled and the material removed to Ambala in 1843. A church at Karnal, which was completed in 1905, serves the protestant Christian Community of the district. It functions under the management of the churches of India, Burma, Pakistan and Ceylon with its headquarters at Calcutta (now Kolkata). In 1960, the Catholic Mission was re-organised, two churches, one at Habri and Panipat, were built, and the Mission also started school at Karnal.

The Christians attend the churches on Sunday for special prayer. They also celebrate Good Friday. The district-wise population as per censuses is as under :-

District Population Population

As per 1981 Census As per 1991 Census

Hissar 540 819

Sirsa 1,029 1,274

Bhiwani 315 156

Gurgaon 658 1,042

Faridabad 2,621 3,649

Jind 723 73

Mahendragarh 127 12

Ambala 3,737 2,978

Karnal 936 813

Kurukshetra 1,152 1,032

Rohtak 132 75

Sonapat 245 307

Total 12,215

In Panipat district 665; Rewari district (159); Kaithal district (986); Yamuna Nagar district (1,621); the total population of Christians as per 1991 Census was 15,699. Jhajjar district had 38 Christians.

Buddhists

The population of Buddhists in Haryana them Jhajjar district 38 Jains negligible. The total number in Haryana, as per 1981 census, was 761. Their district-wise details of population are as under :-

(Hissar & Fatehabad
districts)

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District Population Population
As per 1981 Census As per 1991 Census

Hissar 37 107

Sirsa 116 26

Bhiwani 8 12

Gurgaon 94 274

Faridabad 243 893

Jind 108 26

Mahendragarh 7 1

Ambala 92 244

Karnal 18 27

Kurukshetra 9 18

Rohtak 2 22

Sonapat 34 14

Jhajjar 27

Total 761

In Panipat district (72); Kaithal district (79); Rewari district (16); Yamuna Nagar district (67); as per 1991 census, the population of Buddhists was 2,058.

It would be worthwhile to trace the beginning of the Buddhism. The Buddhism was started by Gautam Buddha. Siddharath was his name and he belonged to Gautam clan. He was born in 566 B.C. After great struggle and ups and downs, he became Buddha, the enlightened one.

Buddha taught his followers the four 'Noble Truths' (*Arya Satya*) concerning suffering, the cause of suffering, the destruction of suffering and the way that leads to the destruction of sorrow. That did not either lie in habitual practice of sensuality or in habitual practice of self torture. There was "Middle Path" called the "Noble Eight Fold Path" that is to say, Right views, Right aspirations, Right speech, Right conduct, Right livelihood, Right Effort, Right mindfulness and Right Contemplation¹.

This was the path that opened the eyes, bestowed understanding, led to peace of mind, to the higher wisdom, to full enlightenment to *Nirwan*. The *Nirwan* literally means

"the blowing out or extinction of craving or the desire for existence in all

(Hissar & Fatehabad
districts)

1. *Advanced History of India* by H.C. Ray Chaudhary, K. Datta and R.C. Majumdar,
1967,
P. 83.

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forms, and the consequent cessation of suffering. But it is not mere extinction. It is a tranquil state to be realised by one who "from all craving-want was free".

According to Huin Tsang, a Chinese traveller, Sugh (Yamunanagar district) was a great centre of Buddhism. There were five *Sanghashrams* housing 1,000 Buddhist monks who engaged themselves in learning and learned discussions.

Huin Tsang saw several *stupas* which commemorated the visit of the Buddha or enshrined the relics of Buddhist saints, Sariputra and Mandgalyana. It was an important centre of Buddhism in this part of the country, for it maintained-large number of learned Buddhist monks, although the religion of Buddha was on the decline and Brahmanism was growing popular with the people in India about this time.

Thanesar was also a great centre of Buddhism. In the 7th century A.D. Yuanchwang mentioned about the kingdom of Thanesar and testified to the existence of three Buddhist monasteries with more than 700 professed Buddhists. The Buddhist literature refers to two villages (of Kuru realm-Kurukshetra) which were said to have been visited by Lord Buddha himself.

Agroha was too a famous centre of Buddhism whose early importance may be due to its location on the trade route between Taxila and Mathura. Assandh now a part of Karnal district was famous for Buddhist stupas and monasteries.

Early Settlements in Haryana

The Sarasvati¹ basin now comprising the State of Haryana constitutes a significant part of the great plains of India. Geologically speaking much of the plain is of a very recent age and its surface has been built up by the silting action of its streams. The Siwaliks are composed entirely of the Tertiary deposit. In contrast, there are in the south the outliers of Aravallis (Delhi system) belonging probably to the lower Kuddapah age. The basin slopes from north to south and south-west and in the south-east the Aravallis provide gradient towards the north. To the east of the Aravallis the tract slopes to south and south-east. Although there are no prominences, the topography of the region can be described as slightly undulating.

The archaeological activities began in the region in the later half of the 19th century when Sir Alexander Cunningham carried out explorations at Thanesar and Sugh and identified these ruins with the relics of the important ancient cities of *Sthaneshvara* and *Srughna*. Later on a number of early coins were collected from various historical sites by Rodgers. Regular excavations, however, began in the region in the twenties of last century and the excavations at Raja Karna Ka Qila', Theh Polar, Khokhra Kot and Agroha brought to light early historic coins, seals and

1. The write-up is based on the findings and investigations made by Dr. Suraj Bhan.

terracottas. But the fuller archaeological potential of the region could not be assessed due to lack of scientific techniques and the main interest of the scholars was confined only to the historical period.

A systematic survey of proto-historic sites was initiated in Sarasvati-Yamuna basin in early sixties. As a result, 228 protohistoric sites were plotted on the map ranging from the pre-Harappan to the Painted Grey Ware Culture. The stratigraphic position of the cultures in the area was determined by undertaking excavations at the selected sites, viz. Siswal, Mitathal, Daulatpur, etc. and by closely observing the rain gully cuttings at Rakhi Shahpur and Banawali. The work has been further substantiated by the recent excavations at Banawali, Kurukshetra and Bhagwanpura.

The Sequence of Cultures

Siswal A Culture

The Siswal (A) people were the first colonisers of Haryana so far attested by archaeologist's spade. There have been discovered more than 15 settlements of these people all located on the layers along the lower courses of the Sarasvati and Drisadvati valleys. Only two sites of the culture namely Siswal and Banawali have been excavated so far. Banawali represents a sizable fortified settlement with somewhat closely

located structures as at Kalibangan. They used sub-dried bricks (10X20X30 cm. and

13X26X39 cm.) conforming to the standard ratio of 1:2:3: as observed at Kalibangan. A wide range of ceramic wares painted with black and white pigments and sometimes decorated with incised designs on the external as well as internal surfaces illustrates a developed potter's art of the people. The vessels were largely made on wheel. They had already known the technique of copper smelting. They decorated their persons with ornaments comprising beads of semi-precious stones and steatite, and bangles of shell and faience. Besides, they used saddle querns and pestles of stone for grinding the corn. Clay disc missiles were perhaps used for defence or offence. The mainstay of the culture was apparently agriculture which was carried with in all probability wooden ploughs drawn by draft cattle as revealed

by Kalibangan excavations. Although bulk of the pottery was painted with linear and geometric motifs, they had already evolved drawing the naturalistic designs like the fish, stag, etc.

But other settlements, perhaps with the exception of the one lying buried under the Harappan citadel at Rakhi Shahpur, are of small size and no traces of brick architecture of fortifications could be noticed in course of the surface explorations though it requires to be ascertained through excavations. The most common finds at these sites including that of Siswal, excavated on a very limited scale, are the typical ceramic fabrics painted in bichrome (black and white), over red surface, clay disc missiles, beads and bangles and grinding stones. The use of copper is also attested at Siswal.

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The above cultural repertoire indicates the existence of specialisation in arts and craft, the most important one's being smithy, lapidary art, mason's art, potter's art and probably also wood working and leather working based on surplus production. Trade must have existed in corn, metal, precious stones, cattle, etc. on a moderate scale. The script as well as the standard weights do not appear to have been known by now. Yet the society seems to have developed inner contradictions on account of inequalities of wealth. The occurrence of citadel and rather congested settlement of Banawali is contrasted with the other smaller village settlements which might not have been much different from Sarangpur near Chandigarh having a cluster of huts only, suggests that the towns had already appeared in this period in all probability as seats of political power (the state) which would be concomitant with the rise of classes. The inequalities, however, do not appear to have grown much as

can be guessed from the material remains. The political institution of kingship or an oligarchy seems to be based on military capabilities from amongst the nobility as in the Vedic time. It was the nobility which resided in the towns, almost centrally situated in the territory and which happened to be superimposed by the Harappan seats of administration as at Banawali, Kalibangan, Harappan and perhaps also at Mohenjodaro and Rakhi Shahpur. This stage of social development of the Siswal people vis-a vis the Harappans seems to broadly anticipate the Janapada stage (territorial kingdom) of the latter Vedic era, marking a transitional stage from Jana (tribe) to the Mahajanapada (city states of great kingdoms).

Harappan Phase

The next stage in the socio-cultural growth of the region is marked by the extensive establishment of the Harappan settlements at Rakhi Shahpur and Banawali. The Siswal sites continued to survive into this phase side by side with the Harappans. This is attested by Siswal excavation which stratigraphically revealed the transformation of Siswal A into Siswal B stage of the culture. The association of a few mature Harappan potsherds and antiquities in the Siswal B deposits suggests its contemporaneity with the Harappan settlements. Mitathal II A, a Harappan settlement, falls mid between the Harappan sites and the smaller Siswal B settlements in size and cultural milieu, the latter two representing the parallel traditions of comparatively purer variety.

The relationship between the co-existing extensive Harappan settlements, the medium sized Mitathal II A settlements and the small sized Siswal B settlements may not be far to guess. The large sites like Rakhi Shahpur and Banawali may have well represented the Harappan cities, Mitathal II A being a town, and Siswal B sites the villages. The differences in the three categories of settlements are not only in sizes but also in the culture content and in all probability in the sociological

composition of the inhabitants-the cities predominantly inhabited by the Harappans, the villages chiefly by the Siswal folk and the towns by the mixed population. Thus this phase marks a stage when the two people came into closer contact and lived together in the same region, at the same sites and perhaps in the same houses, particularly in the towns. It is this mixed culture of these towns which marks the provincial character of the Harappa culture of this region.

Cities

The surface indications at *Rakhi Shahpur*, the most extensive Harappan site known within Indian territory (next only to Harappa in size), reveal a typical dichotomous Harappan town plan-the citadel mound on the west and the lower town on the east. The citadel mound is separated by an open space into two parts. The western half of the citadel mound revealed an extensive use of mud bricks suggesting perhaps the existence of platforms. In the city mound on the east were found exposed a number of mud and burnt brick structures. The bricks are laid in English bond and measure variously between 26X13X6½ cms. and 48X24X12 cms. (all in the ratio of 1:2:4).

The recent excavations at Banawali have unearthed a well-planned city laid on the classical chess board pattern, so well known to us from the parent sites of Mahenjodaro and Harappa. The settlement is divided into two parts by a mud brick fortification wall provided with rectangular bastions and a street. There have been exposed three broad north-south thoroughfares and east-west lanes. All run along the cardinal directions approximately. The roads were about 5.40 metres wide, while the lanes measured 1.50 metres. Excellent sanitary arrangements were made by way of laying out *pucca* drains or putting soakage jars on streetsides. The structures were made of sun-dried bricks and burnt bricks had been sparingly used only in the drains. The ratio of the brick dimensions remained 1:2:4 as anywhere else in the Harappa Culture. The walls were plastered with mud. There had also been discovered ovens, refuse pits and various road levels. In

one case, the ancient cart tracks were exposed and the space in between the wheels corresponded strikingly to that of the present day bullock carts. Several houseblocks were also exposed. In one of the rooms in the house a number of jars were found half embedded in the floor, while in another a bathroom was exposed. On the floor of a brick paved room was found one of the Harappan seals.

Towns

The settlements of Mitathal II(A) is a medium sized Harappan settlements falling between Rakhi Shahpur and Siswal B in dimensions and the cultural milieu. It is laid on the twin mound pattern. The structures are made of mud bricks

(ratio 1:2:4) laid in English bond, and the streets (1m.-1.79m. wide) appear to be staggered in the Kalibangan II style.

People

Villages

The Siswal B sites are comparatively small and are located around the Harappan towns and cities along the water courses in central and southern Haryana. The material culture of this phase of sites is distinguished from Siswal A by the absence of white painting and scarcity in shapes and designs in pottery, and the association of the Harappan elements. At Dhansa near Delhi a Siswal B site was excavated by the geologists recently. Although the settlers had used sun-dried mud bricks of Harappan size the structures are flimsy and temporary. Their poverty is gleaned through the absence of household objects but for clay beads, bangles and disc missiles.

Thus a glance at the material remains of the Harappan period in our region reflects the exuberance of the material culture of classical tradition in cities and towns. The developed technological equipment (reasonably inferred on the basis of the excavated sites of Banawali and Mitathal) and extensive trade, suggested by the wide range and standardized products of the craftsmen, reveal a specialisation and advanced division of labour, perhaps, to the degree of hereditary professions. The use of sun-dried as well as burnt bricks for structures at Rakhi Shahpur, the varied sizes of the houses at Banawali as at Kalibangan, the variety of ornaments made of different materials (metal, semi-precious stones, shell and clay) in Mitathal II A and the differences in the ceramic traditions at these sites indicate the socio economic differences among the people of these towns and cities. This is further supported by continued alignments of the house walls in successive reconstructions and differences in the household and the grave goods at Kalibangan and Harappa, the Harappan cities in the adjoining areas. The above evidence testifies the established division of Harappan society into groups occupying different social positions based on private property. The glaring contradictions are apparent in the material repertoire from the Harappan cities and towns and the Siswal B villages. Furthermore, the location of impressive Harappan citadels separated from the lower city at Rakhi Shahpur as at Kalibangan is suggestive of alienation between the state and the people.

There are no carbon-14 dates from Harappan settlements in the region. As such, the chronology for this period has been worked out by cross-dating on the basis of c.14 dates from Kalibangan II where the Harappan Culture is placed between c. 2300 and 1700 B.C. This time bracket could be broadly applicable to the Harappan phase in Haryana also.

Mitathal II B Culture

The end of the mature Harappan phase still continues to be a problem. It is significant that while the Harappan cities came to an end at the close of this phase as at Banawali and Rakhi Shahpur, the towns and villages continued to survive in the

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next phase called here Mitathal II B. The reoccupation of some of the city sites by Mitathal II B people is also attested as at Banawali. Interestingly, the Mitathal II B pottery shows resurgence of the Siswal elements blending harmoniously with the transformed Harappan. It is tempting to surmise that it were these neo-Harappans (Harapanised Siswal and Siswalised Harappans) who were responsible for the fall of the Harappan cities in our region. A similar situation appears to have obtained in other provinces leading to the replacement of the centralized Harappan authority by the neo-Harappan elites-the Jhukhar people in Sindh, the Rangpur II B and

Surkotda-B people respectively in Gujarat and Kutch, and the cemetery 'H' or a related people in southern Panjab (West Pakistan). The first blow to the empire was perhaps delivered at Mohenjodaro which led to the disintegration and ultimate fall. This seems to be indicated by the evidence of massacre at Mohenjodaro and comparative study of the c. 14 dates of Harappan cities.

It is, however, difficult to agree with A. Ghosh that the vestiges of urbanism disappeared from India with the fall of the Indus civilisation and the second urbanisation was ushered in independently of the former around c. 600 B.C. The Harappan civilisation did not flourish in cultural or geographical isolation. There lived several communities on the peripheries at different social levels.

A similar stage of socio-economic development could be postulated for the Painted Grey Ware culture before the time of the Buddha if we examine the material evidence from Hastinapura, Kausambi, etc. The use of copper, semi-precious stones, iron, glass, bone and ivory objects as well as a highly sophisticated wheel thrown pottery unmistakably point to specialization in arts and crafts and trade. The discovery of a large house with a number of rooms in the Painted Grey Ware levels at Bhagwanpura does indicate a stage of stabilization and social stratification. Here too one has to be cautious in comparing these settlements with the Harappan cities. What one should really examine is

the change from the earlier stage of the Painted Grey Ware culture. The horizontal excavations at some of these sites might reveal the existence of mud ramparts or the signs of wooden fortifications. We know from the later Vedic literature that there had come into existence territorial kingdoms (janapadas) and a stratified society (Varnas) in the pre-Buddha times. Kingship had become hereditary and the popular assemblies (Sadha and Samiti) of the Rig Vedic times had lost their importance. The gorgeous religious ceremonies such as the Asvamedha, Rajasuya etc. indicate the resources of the States. Thus the first half of the first millennium B.C. marked a transitional stage in the growth of urbanisation among the Painted Grey Ware people. The distinct social formation and the ideological values system of the Painted Grey Ware people does not appear to have facilitated free interaction with the contemporary cultures and the consequent quick transformation

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until they reached the lower Yamuna and the Central Gangetic Valley and had an access to the raw material and people of the plateau, the then torch bearers of urbanisation.

Peopling of Southeast Haryana

In southeast Haryana variation¹ in settlement morphology and plans, through ages may become evident if compared with congested multistoreyed mansions of modern age to the thatched, reed, grass or bamboo dwellings of the forest dwellers of dry deciduous areas which may well be considered to be the past images of settlements. Saptasindhu of which the study region was a part, has been the cradle of Indo-Aryans from where they spread all over northern India. Ever since Pre-Aryan times till Post-independence period, the

area has undergone many historical upheavals which have left their mark on socio-cultural aspects of its inhabitants and settlements. The present attempt is to deal with the peopling of the land in relation to settlements which developed through the various historical phases. The account is based on place-names, observation of ancient sites, stream courses, old coins, ancient literature, and other published and unpublished documents and information provided by local sources.

Significance of Place-names

Interpretation of place-names is rather a recent development in the study of Historical Geography. Smith considers them as "relics of an early age and richly informative of conditions at the time of settlement". In addition to providing ample information on historical aspects of settlements, they possess an enormous advantage as they are found "widely distributed and evenly scattered" in some areas. The technique unfolds several features of the linguistic characteristics, chronology and progress, social and cultural aspects etc. during the successive cultural waves in the area, the information which otherwise would remain embodied in the shroud of the past ages. Below an attempt has been made to analyse place-names by examining prefixes and suffixes of villages and town names in order to know the origin, evolution and mode of settlements in the early days of Southeast Haryana.

Linguistic Approach

Though the study region, as already pointed out, has undergone many cultural changes since ancient times, most of the place-names point towards human habitations of the later dates. The movements of the people in the region elucidates the impact of at least two broad cultural groups viz. the Indo-Aryans, and the Muslims. This causes the place-names to bear two linguistic components and consequently settlements in Southeast Haryana possess prefixes and suffixes and point towards the influence of these people.

1. *Journal of Haryana Studies, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra, 1975, p. 18.*

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The place-names ending with *Pura*, *Puri*, *Gaon*, and *Nagar* have their roots in Sanskrit. A closer examination of the suffixes *Pura*, *Pur*, and *Puri* (for instance Singhapura, Kishorpur, Fatehpuri, etc.) denotes the size characteristic of settlements in which *Pura* seems to be a larger village, *Pur* a normal sized, and *Puri* a smaller one. Presently, on account of growth, names of villages ending in the above mentioned suffixes seem to be inappropriate.

The names ending with *Gaon* and *Nagar* express clearly both the size and nature of settlements. The term *Goan* is a transformed form of ancient *Grama* meaning village, viz. Gurgaon, Nayagaon, Nawadatigaon, etc. In ancient times *Nagar* meant town but currently it is wrongly used for small village as well, like Ramnagar, Abdalnagar, Azadnagar, etc. all comparatively smaller in size, and of later dates.

Suffixes like *Wasa*, *Was*, *Bas*, *Abad* and *Bad* are commonly met with. The first three seem to have their origin in the Sanskrit word *Vas* (habitation), for example *Banwasa* (habitation in the woods), *Khetawas* (habitation in agricultural fields), *Jatuwas* (habitation of the Jats), etc. On the other hand *Abad*, or *Bad* have their roots in the Persian or Urdu language. Such settlements, for example, Muazzambad, Wazirabad, etc. are prevalent all over the area and consequently signify Muslim influence. Their meanings almost coincide with those of *Was* or *Bas*.

Place-names ending with *Kalan* (big) and *Khurd* (small) viz. *Baldhan Kalan*, *Baldhan Khurd*, *Bahora Kalan*, *Bahora Khurd* etc. also have Persian origin and designate parent and daughter settlement respectively.

Garh signifies a fortress as in Ballabgarh, Bahadurgarh, Gokalgarh etc. Such settlements developed along the forts erected by the local rulers. *Khera* and *Kheri* form both prefixes and suffixes in many place-names such as Khera Alampur, Neem Khera, simply Khera, Kheri etc. *Dhana* and *Dhani* are other important features of place-names in the study area in which the former express the sense of a bigger

settlement than the latter. Dhani elucidates a very small (usually a daughter) settlement (hamlet).

Classificaton of Place-names

Place-names are always associated with particular objects which emphasize salient aspects of settlements. In southeast Haryana places are described after persons, communities, classes, features or events etc. Such affiliations may be grouped into the following :-

1. Place-names affiliated to Persons.- Settlements as Bahadurgarh, Ferozepur, Rajindrabad, Chaddhwana, Kosli, Nahar, Pataudi, etc. are named after their respective founders. Such names alomst in all cases form the prefixes of place-names.

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2. Place-names affiliated to physical features.— Many of the prefixes or suffixes reveal the physical nature of the place of settlement. Such associations, for instance, *Ban* (forest), in *Banwasa*; Pahar (mountain) in Paharpur and Pahrwas, *Pahari* (hill) in *Bajada Pahari*; *Bir* (a small patch of remnant forest) in Bir Dadri; Jungle in *Jungle Jhabwat*; *Khet* (agricultural land) in Khetawas, etc. explain the physical environment of the inhabited places.

3. Place-names affiliated to communities and Clans.— Settlement associated with particular communities such as Jat (Nangal Jat), Ahir (Ahir Majra), Bhat and Mali (Bhat Gaon Malian), Bhat and Dogra (Bhat Gaon Dogran), Rajput (Ferozepur Rajput), Meo (Ali Meo), Turk (Turkiawas), etc. show the impact of a particular community, or caste, preferably the founder, to whom the village as a whole

belongs or belonged.

Similarly, a few of the place-names start with the name of a particular clan, viz. Baroda Mor, Rathiwas, Bhainswan, Kosli, Sisoth, Selang etc.

4. Place-names affiliated to Parent Settlements.— A few of the prefixes of place-names in the study area clearly indicate an 'off-shoot settlement' sprung out of the larger one. Habitations such as Muhammadpur Nuh, Babpur Nuh (from Nuh town); Hassanpur Sohna, etc. (from Sohna town); (Berli Taoru, a rural service centre); Jalal Hathin, etc. (from Hathin a rural service centre) etc. all come under this category.

5. Place-names affiliated to quality of Land.— A few of the suffixes such as *Khadar* (low lying areas of new alluvium, and liable to floods) and *Bangar* (higher areas of old alluvium out of the reach of floods, etc. and as a result comparatively dry), for example, Ferozepur Khadar, Ferozepur Bangar, etc. simply quality of land in a relation to its level and productivity.

6. Miscellaneous Affiliations.— Many settlements bear one word names such as Talwana, Uchat, Chhara, Dharron, Khol, Marot, Birohar, Khorma, Balab, etc. These carry forms of earlier names which must have been originally quite meaningful.

Pre-Vedic Period

Pertaining to settlements in the Pre-Harappa period, Suraj Bhan mentions settlements of Sothi culture in the Saraswati Valley. Sothi people lived in mud-brick houses in small fortified settlements. They are said to have cultivated crops with their implements of bronze, copper and stone and domesticated animals like ox, goat, etc. But during such a remote phase of history the area was perhaps almost completely under vegetative cover.

The next phase in the settlement history of the region is the arrival of Harappan people who perhaps lived as contemporary of the Sothians. Harappa culture existed

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between 2000 B.C. to 1700 B.C. Thus, arrival of the Harappan people in the region is estimated early as 2000 B.C. and extending later to 1700 B.C. Their further eastward movement is supposed to have been checked and stopped short of the Yamuna by the forests of Rohtak and Karnal regions and swamps along the Yamuna. The influx of other Harappan people from the west appears to have forced the old entrants to clear the neighbouring forest land for settlement. Subsequently, the farmers established themselves almost permanently in the northern parts of the region. Thomas is of the opinion that the civilisation might have extended into the valleys of the Yamuna and the Ganga.

While this civilisation was on its last legs near about 1500 B.C, influx of Aryans with a distinct culture ushered in a cultural revolution in the region. They constantly fought with the earlier inhabitants to gain supremacy and the latter in course of time were subdued in great number and were made slaves or Dasas who lived with the Aryans as their servants. The remaining fled away to the nearby forests who later on were called *Asuras*, *Rakshasas*, *Danvas*, etc. by the Aryans.

The Vedic Period

At the time of the Aryan arrival, the region under study was almost completely covered with forests and dotted with a few spotted settlements of the pre-Aryan people, who ultimately were compelled either to vacate the region or accept the subjugation of the former. The Aryans probably also occupied the deserted settlements of their predecessors, and in addition, raised new settlements by clearing the forests preferably along the then permanent streams of the area such as Sahibi, Krishnawati etc. Regarding the physical environment during the Rigvedic period, Gupta mentions that the climate of the region of that early time was much colder and enjoyable which provided favourable environment for the early settlers.

References to the Aryan conflicts with the *Danvas* are

frequently mentioned in many verses of the Vedic texts. They are said to have occupied the desolate parts of forests dwelling sometimes on trees, in huts and even in well-built houses. Even during the Mahabharata time no well-defined settlements could occur in such parts of the referenced area. The immigrants brought about a new twist in the settlement history of the land by clearing more and more forest land for residential and agricultural purposes. The *Danvas* were propelled into thicker and remoter parts of the forests. Such areas remained devoid of Aryan settlements for a long time. A portion of the southeastern part of the region, viz. Nuh, Ferozpur Jhirka and the adjoining portions of Gurgaon, Palwal and Ballabgarh tahsils remained inaccessible even upto recent times. All the towns of this area, e.g. Ferozepur Jhirka, Nuh, Sohna, Taoru, Hodal, etc. are of comparatively recent origin. Similarly, the confluence area being swampy

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on account of the large and elongated water body affecting major parts of Jhajjar tahsil remained under forest for comparatively later times.

As has already been mentioned, the area presently lying in south-east Haryana constituted an important part of the *Saptasindhu* of *Rigvedic* period which may rightly be regarded as the cradle of Indo-Aryan civilization.

On account of dense vegetative growth in a few parts, swamps and settlements of *Danvas*, the Aryan settlements spread in patches over a limited part of the area. In addition there were also hermitages, preferably along the water courses, e.g. shrine of Chavana Rishi on the Dhosi hill, Gobhawana etc. Such isolated shrines used to be in the forested areas well away from the main settlements.

A village during *Vedic* period used to be an agglomeration of many *Kulas* or families which lived in separate houses or *Grihas* enclosed by a boundary. "Most villages were probably open, but walled villages more or less like a fort were perhaps not unknown". Just beside the settlement area a belt of agricultural land, surrounding the village on all sides was an usual feature. Such plough land was divided and owned by separate individual families. Beyond the plough land or patches in between, could be found communal pastures after which was the forested land. Amita Roy points out that the some castes used to "live beyond the pasture in poor and humble shelters". The villages were inhabited by persons belonging to one clan engaged in agriculture. The *Dasas* are said to have lived separately out of the villages. Early village seems to have had a village assembly hall in the centre of the village, where the villagers could gather on village ceremonies, festivals, discussions, etc. Panini gives reference of village boundaries marked by forests, thickets, hills, revulets, jungles and other natural obstructions. During his time the peasant house having roofs of straw and reed used to be a common house type in the village. The habitation was known as *Vasti* and the agricultural fields in general as *Urvara* or *Kshetra*. The word *Nagar* is not referred to in the Rgvedic hymns which probably indicates absence of large cities during those times. However, the word *Pura* is used perhaps to denote settlements of considerable size. There were perhaps two habitations which might have come under the category of *Pura*, viz. Mahem and Rohtak. The early Vedic texts do not refer to the morphology of *Pura* or *Grama* in detail.

During the early Vedic period as there had not developed rigid caste-system and also the social taboos against the non-Aryans, separate grouping of *Shudras* and low castes were not found.

In the age of later *Samhitas*, the house was large enough to accommodate, in addition to a large family, the domesticated animals. The houses were still built of wood as in the Rgvedic period. "Probably four pillars were erected, propped up by

beams leaning against them at an angle. Ribs of bamboo cane, a bridge, and a net of thatched covering over the bamboo ribs made up the roof. Grass was used to fill in the walls which were finished with reed work. The *Shudras* were not pushed out of the habitation sites as caste system had not been so rigid.

By the time of *Upanishads* and *Sutras*, the Aryan settlements grew in size and the larger settlements such as Mahem and Rohtak acquired regional status. The house morphology perhaps also developed in the sense that it might have added a sitting or drawing room, a provision room, and a sleeping or retiring room. As caste system had crept in the society, as a result *Shudras* and outcastes were pushed out of the main settlements to reside in a separate colony away from the village or town.

Post-Vedic Period 1000 B.C. 566 B.C.

From the *post-Mahabharata* period down up to the Buddha's time the area on account of paucity of a strong kingdom faced many political upheavals. A considerable portion of the area was still under forests which gave shelter to the aboriginal tribes. The cleared patches of land were no doubt completely Aryanised by the time of *Mahabharata* (about 1000 B.C.) and the (area) was included in the kingdom of the descendants of Pandvas. Urban settlements of Mahem, Rohtak, Sonipat, Palwal and Rewari were the seats of political representatives of the Pandva successors.

After Janmeijya, son of Parikshit, political situation especially in our area got worse and the social admixture with the forest dwellers started freely. This might have brought about a revolution in the social structure in the region. Before and even during the time of Buddha, the forest dwellers are said to have been in plenty. This leads to an expectation that these people started coming out of their abodes of forests perhaps during the time of Parikshit and their attempts finally led them to overpower the area. This brought about a phase of deforestation of the wooded land and thus new areas

provided plenty of space of settlements. Slowly, the social taboos increased and the social life became very strict. The low caste people, *Dasas*, lived out of the main habitation site.

Buddhist Period 566 B.C. _187 A.D.

By the time of Buddha the political arena had completely shifted to the east, and southeast Haryana faced a sort of political vacuum which had put it out of the capital sphere of the strong governing authorities. Thus, the importance of the area which it acquired during the Vedic period declined and with it perhaps the settlements also could not retain their previous grandeur.

The layout of rural settlements remained the same as it was during the Vedic or *post-Mahabharata* period. The aboriginal tribes which dwelt in the forests during the

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earlier periods were socially approved by their counter-parts.

The social structure of the villages of Vedic period had disintegrated by the time of Buddha, which consisted of specific castes, p-riests, carpenters, potters, weavers, etc. On account of the rigid caste system, some castes had to live out of the main settlements. Till 1947, tendency was reflected in the grouping of village communities where we had houses of certain castes clustered at the outskirts of rural residential sites.

The villages were compact, the houses being so close to each other that a fire starting from one might spread to the whole village. The size of settlements varied from 30 to 1,000 families. Such villages also had a sort of enclosure or fence of bushes or a sort of wall around the village. The building

material still consisted of wood, mud, etc. But perhaps since the latter phase of later Vedic period, houses instead of huts or reed, grass and woods appeared on the scene, though later forms had not completely gone out. Similarly, in the *post-Mahabharata* and Buddhist periods, constructions of both types could well be seen in the countryside.

Around the village, spread the cropped land which was an individual property of the families in the village. The rightful owner of such agricultural land was the male head of the family as patriarchal system was the rule during and prior to Buddhist period. Every village had a common pasture land where the domesticated animals could graze. As the density of settlement was low, villages were quite apart from each other. There were no definite roads linking one settlement to another except the cart paths. It also seems that every important village had common public hall which served the common purpose of assembling for discussions, ceremonies, etc.

During the time of the Buddha, several of the important towns like Rohtak had grown and most probably they were the seats of almost independent Yaudhey states and the Agrawala clans. The towns of Sonapat, Palwal and Rewari were seats of independent kingdoms, and each kingdom was divided into villages, towns and capital cities (*Grama*, *Nigam* and *Rajdhani*). *Panini* also refers to towns of Sonapat and Gaudapura (Gauda-Gram), i.e. modern Gurgaon which indicates that these also had acquired a regional importance during the 6th century B.C.

The common people lived mostly in villages in thatched houses, sometimes plastered with mud perhaps for fear of fire, as life was simple in the villages. Agriculture was the base of rural populace but we also find references to persons working in other spheres. The cattle rearers and herders avoided town and villages and lived in cattle ranches. Craftsmen like potters, weavers etc. also constituted a considerable population of both rural and urban life.

Post-Buddhist period 187-647 A.D.

After the time of the Buddha, north-western India remained divided into small states. On account of Alexander's invasion of the Punjab (327 B.C.), Persian influence filtered into the border lands of western Punjab, but the study area remained out of it. The Mauryan empire (322 to 187 B.C.) swept away the Macedonian prefectures and overran the small principalities of *Kurus* and also of the neighbouring states and established an empire which brought about a political stability in the study area which greatly encouraged growth of the already founded settlements and pushed up the standard of living of the people.

After the Mauryans, the area came under the domain of Sungas (187-75 B.C.) whose antiquities discovered from Khokhrakot (Rohtak), by Birbal Sahni testify their rule over the region. The *Yavanwas* (75-30 B.C.) and Madhyadesha were also overrun by the *Yavanas* or Greeks during the first century A.D. As a result of these and other tribal movement of people like *Sakas* (scythians), *Pahlavas* (Parthians) Kushanas, etc. eastern Punjab underwent a cultural change which loosened the strict social laws of the society prevalent during Buddha period. But on account of political instability settlements could not grow or progress much during the post-Mauryan period till the Yaudheyas took hold of the region who perhaps again rose to power with the fall of Kushans. Coins of Yaudheyas have been found from various places, like Sonipat, Rohtak, Naurangabad, Dadri and a few other places in the region. The Yaudheyas ruled over the area from about middle of the second century A.D. to nearly middle of the 4th century A.D. The earliest Yaudheya coins found in the area are attributed to the period about the end of the second century B.C. Later the Yaudhayas were subdued by the Guptas who seemed to have reigned over the area till Harsha made it a part of his empire (606-646 A.D.). After Harsha, the whole of Madhyadesha (from 646 to 836 A.D.) experienced an era of internal strife and foreign invasions but the area retained its former kingdom under Yashovarman till about 731 A.D. By 836 A.D. the

Madhyadesha fell in the hands of the Pratiharas who ruled over the area till about the middle of the first half of 11th century A.D.

Though the study area lacks significant evidence which may throw some light on the condition of settlements during the Mauryan period, yet the political stability ushered in by the Mauryas, their strong administration, and the social conditions thereby helped a lot to foster the urban and rural life during those days. Buddhist literature and Kautilya's *Arthashastra* are important sources of information.

The towns, especially the headquarters of government or commercial towns had some sort of defensive measure like ramparts or walls made of bricks. Such settlements had a definite layout. The buildings in the town especially those belonging

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to higher castes and well-off persons used to consist of more than one storey and were made of permanent materials like bricks & stone etc and were plastered. The walls were decorated with motifs. The houses belonging to rich people were well furnished and well planned. Such houses were spacious with several rooms and were often well maintained. Artisans like potters, ironsmiths, carpenters, etc., had some specific localities. Also markets of perishable goods, fish, etc. were located out-side the town gates. But shops of other goods were located within the towns.

The rural populace was mostly dependent on agriculture. The village was an agglomeration of houses (*Grihas*) occupied by individual *Kulas* or families (usually from 30 to 1,000 families). Important and large rural settlements were enclosed by some sort of defensive measure, a wall or rampart, etc.,

beyond which used to be the arable land of the village called *Grama Kshetra*. The agricultural land was owned by individual families. Beyond the agricultural land was the village pasture. Many villages also had protected forest area used for religious practices and *Ashrams*. Thus, the villages used to end in uncleared jungles.

The agricultural land consisted of *Krishta* (cultivated), *Akrishta* (uncultivated wastes or fallow), *Sthala* (high and dry ground), *Kedara* (fields shown with crops), *Arama* (grove), *Shanda* (plantations of fruits), *Vata* (sugarcane plantations), *Vana* (forest), *Vivita* (pasture) and *Pathi* (area under roads).

The village as a dwelling place was marked by (i) *Vastu* (area covered by houses), (ii) *Chaitya* (sacred trees), (iii) *Devagriha* (temples), (iv) *Setubandha* (embankments), (v) *Samsana* (cremation grounds), (vi) *Sattra* (alms house), (vii) *Prapa* (storage of drinking water), (viii) *Punyasthana* (sacred spot), and public halls for dancing, assembling etc.

The intermarriage between Aryans and non-Aryans and incorporation of even foreigners like Yavanas, Sakas, etc. in the Hindu society who later on made them a part of it is one of the outstanding features of this period. Even the nomadic tribes of Central Asia and the Greeks and Parthians who came to conquer were absorbed into the Hindu fold.

Early Medieval Period 647-1192 A.D.

With the fall of the Pushyabhutis (647 A.D.) the phase of peace was maintained by the Pratiharas who had established a strong power in the area till the repeated invasions of Mahmud, and later on by Mohammad Ghori. Bhoj I was an important Pratihara king whose name is still remembered through poetry and plays.

The rural settlements during the medieval period were often constructed of

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impermanent material like mud, wood, etc. which could not stand for long.

Beri seems to be one of the towns founded during the Pratihara reign. The town is said to have been founded in 930 A.D. by a Dogra trader. The second town is Hodal which may be associated with this period. The other towns already founded might have grown and attained a fabulous status during this period. The town of Mahem is said to have been founded by a local Powar Raja named Balu before the time of Prithvi Raj.

Prior to the invasions of Mahmud of Ghazni, the peaceful atmosphere, and a comparative increase in the existing population must have led to rapid deforestation, but still a considerable part of the land comprising portions of Jhajjar tahsil, and of Gurgaon district, especially the hilly tract, remained under forest. Many new rural settlements were also founded in the cleared patches of land but such small settlements were parts of the larger villages and belonged to the sect or clan or their parent village. This diffusion or dispersal increased settlements considerably in the study area.

The first quarter of the 11th century witnessed raids by Mahmud who took Thanesar in 1014 and conquered Kanauj in 1018. The period was one of decay and ruin for the urban centres. His expeditions were merely raids to loot and destroy the wealth of the country. Mahmud looted and ruined the towns of Mahem, Rohtak and perhaps Sonipat. In addition, the rural settlements he passed by were completely devastated by setting fire to them and killing mercilessly the inhabitants. His fear caused a considerable portion of the population of northern and north eastern portions of the area to migrate to the east of Delhi.

However, the period from 1036 to 1192 was of comparative peace. At least two towns claim to have been founded during this time. The towns of Jhajjar was founded by a Jat named Jhaju Ram near about 1050 A.D. But it seems that the foundation of Jhajjar dates back to Harsha's time or to early

medieval period for the town is said to have been destroyed by Muhammad Ghor and was rebuilt by a Jat clan and named after Jhaju Ram the leader of the clan as Jhaju nagar. The town suffered heavily in the famine of 1783 which almost ruined it. The town of Rewari is said to have been founded by Raja Rew in about 1000 A.D. but actually it was rebuilt on its ancient mounds, situated at a small distance from its present site and known as Buddi Rewari. The town of Sohna mentioned to be an ancient Rajput settlement was also founded during this period. In addition, a few towns which were ruined by the raiders were rebuilt, town of Rohtak is said to have been rebuilt by Prithvi Raj in 1160 A.D. Another town which suffered at the hands of Mahmud of Ghor is Gohana. Though an ancient settlement Prithvi Raj had built here a fort as a protective measure which was destroyed by the raider.

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Thus, it was period of ruin and decay and many of the settlements were destroyed, some of which were rebuilt and resettled by the Raja and the local clans.

Muslim Period 1192-1803 A.D.

Muslim conquest of Delhi by Muhammad Ghor and the weakness of the Hindu Rajas brought about a sort of cultural and religious change in the study region. The period from 1192 to the fall of Mughal empire may, for the convenience of study, be divided into two phases-I. Sultanate period A.D. 1192-1526, and II. Mughal period 1526-1803.

During the Sultanate period, most of the remaining forested area on account of increased pressure of population and movement of the people like Rajputs and Jats, had been

colonised. The Ahirs also seem to have moved into the area during this period.

Kosli

Kosli, a large Ahir village was founded by Kosal Singh in 1193 A.D., who is said to have met a sage engaged in meditation at the site of the present village (now town) then under dense shrub jungle. The hermit advised Kosal Singh to establish a village at the site by clearing the forest.

Bawal

The town of Bawal is said to have been founded by a Chauhan Rajput

Rao Sainsmal in 1205 A.D. who named it after the *Gotra* or seat of his *Purohit* as Bawalia. The next town claiming origin during this period is Pataudi which was founded in 1210 A.D. in the time of Jalalu-din-Khilji by Pat, a Mewati. Ferozepur Jhirka is the fourth settlement founded during the Sultanate period by Feroze Shah III during the first decade of the second half of 14th century. Feroze Shah established cantonment for the subjugation of the hill tribes. This slowly developed into an important settlement. The town was established at a very strategic point along the route that entered Gurgaon district from the Rajput stronghold of Rajputana, beside the main outliers of the Aravalli range of the area in the southern tip of Gurgaon district.

In addition to the new foundations, Mahem an important and ancient settlement which was devastated by Mahmud, was rebuilt in 1266 A.D. by Peshora, a Bania of Agrawala clan.

The new foundations in the desolate and forested portions encouraged many other small habitations to develop in the vicinity which considerably filled the gaps between the inhabited and the non-inhabited parts, a marked feature of the medieval period.

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The Sultans of Delhi did not provide ideal conditions for the development of settlements as they levied heavy taxes which must have deteriorated the economic condition of the villagers.

However, with the victory of Babar over Ibrahim Lodi at the Battle of Panipat (1526), the foundation of Mughal rule in India was laid. Akbar built a strong empire. Till the Second Battle of Panipat (1556), however, political instability and tussle for power operated among the Afghans, Rajputs and Mughals. After Akbar's victory in the battle, the Mughals established a strong and stable political power which provided ample opportunities for growth of old and foundation of new settlements in the region.

The new foundations during this period included Kanaud (modern Mahendragarh) which is said to have founded by Malik Mahmud Khan a servant of Babar. But the town was peopled by Brahmins of the *Kanaudia* group whence it derived its name (Kanaud). Actually, the town seems to have been ruined site of a small habitation along the Duhan stream belonging to much more early period.

The next town claiming origin in the Mughal period is Faridabad which was founded by Sheikh Farid in 1605 during the time of Jahangir. The main purpose in founding the town was to protect the present Delhi-Agra Highway.

The rule of Aurangzeb (1658-1707) did not favour any new foundation of settlements in the region, and his razor-edge policy resulted in many revolts by the Jats, Sikhs and Rajputs. The Satnamis of Narnaul occupied Narnaul, but were soon overpowered by the imperial force. Such state of affairs and his strict policy against the Hindus who were forcibly converted to Islam turned the local population and the chieftains up in armour against the Mughal ruler. And with the death of Aurangzeb in 1707, started rapidly the downfall of the Mughals. However, the town of Farrukhnagar was founded in the reign of emperor Farrukh Siyar (1713 A.D.) by Nawab Fauzdar Khan. The town was laid as a protective measures against the local rebellions and the outside invaders.

The town of Bahadurgarh and old settlement by the name of

Sharafabad belongs to much older time than the later Mughal period. In the time of Alamgir II (1754) a fort was built by Bahadar Khan, a Baluch Chief. The spot of the settlement of Dujana had been the abode of a saint Durjana Shah by name, with whose permission Muhmmad Khan (Malik Jutta), belonging to Jhajjar family settled at the place, he is said to have cleared the wooded patch and cultivated the land which soon attracted the other settlers. It served as the seat of Nawab of Dujana till the British took over the region.

With the removal of the remaining forested patches, the area had been almost completely settled by about 1754 A.D. The disintegrating central power attracted

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Nadir Shah in 1739 who brought a general massacre, looted, and set houses on fire in the historical city of Delhi. The invasion almost destroyed the Delhi empire economically, later in 1749, 1750, 1751 and 1757 Ahmad Shah Abdali invaded India and ultimately conquered Delhi and returned with a large booty leaving his son as his Viceroy in India, but soon Ahmad Shah Abadali left India (1762) ordering the Indian chiefs to recognise Shah Alam II as the emperor. "In 1750 many ambitious powers, such as Jats, Biluches, Marathas, Rajputs, Ruhelas, etc. struck deadly blows from all directions". Palwal, Ballabgarh, Nuh, Ferozepur Jhirka and Ghasera were seized by Jats of Bharatpur, Kanaud and Narnaul by Rajputs; and parts of Gurgaon, Rewari, Rohtak and Jhajjar by Biluches. This loose political condition brought about a period of upsurge and plunder in the area. Conflicts among the inhabitants were also common during this period.

But none of the Hindus could succeed in capturing Delhi which had been gradually passing into the hands of

Britishers.

British Period 1803-1947

Ultimately, with Shah Alam-II, Delhi completely fell into the hands of the British. This was a period when rapid growth in the already existing settlements took place. The region prior to 1847 had been under the local chieftains like that of Jhajjar, Bahadurgarh, Dujana, Dadri, Pataudi, Rewari, etc. Obviously, the towns which served as seats of the Nawabs and Rajas developed considerably. The changes brought about by constructions of railway lines and road; changes in administrative boundaries; construction of military cantonments and comparatively a stable government helped a lot in the development of already existing settlements.

The town of Gurgaon which has been merely a small village experienced a rapid growth after it was made the district headquarters in the beginning of 19th century (1816). The military cantonment also became an additional quality of the town which might have attracted the settlers.

A fort already constructed at Kanaud (Mahendragarh) which was a part of the state owned by Maharaja Mahendra Singh of Patiala in 1861. After Maharaja's name the town came to be known as Mahendragarh. Similarly, the town of Bawal expanded under the Raja of Nabha. The Katra bazar of the town was built in 1860 and a fort was constructed in 1875. During the British rule, the town served as an important market centre for the local as well as the neighbouring villages but it suffered from competition with Rewari.

The town of Rewari was the only important town which acquired a prominent place as market centre. It also served as district headquarters of the present Gurgaon district during the British period. From 1805 to 1857, the town remained under Tej

Singh and his descendents. Rao Tula Ram turned rebellious in 1857 and the town was confiscated. The town attracted many local traders from the neighbouring states, and since the construction of railway it rapidly increased as a commercial centre especially for manufacture of brass-ware. In 1873 the town was partially inundated by the Sahibi Stream which had normal course only 11km. east of the town. Similarly, many other towns like Nuh, Farrukhnagar, Jhajjar, Dadri, Rohtak, Sonipat, Hodal, Beri etc. began to acquire local as well as regional importance as centres of trade and commerce. Many of the important towns were given the status of tahsil headquarters after the removal of the chieftains, and almost all were provided with municipal committees.

Thus during the British period, a rapid growth of settlement both urban and rural took place.

Post-Independence Period

After independence in 1947 the region faced the most crucial event of partition. For a short time a wave of loot and murder prevailed over the region; the Muslim inhabitants of the area migrated to Pakistan and consequently the habitations, especially the villages belonging to them were severely ruined as the migrants left them to the mercy of the neighbouring Hindu villagers. The towns of Jhajjar, Dujana, Gohana, Bahadurgarh, Dadri, Farrukhnagar and Pataudi, almost equally shared by Muslims faced a severe blow. In addition, a large number of rural markets like Kahnaur, Kalanaur, Hussain Ganj(Hassangarh), Kharkhauda, Taoru, Pataudah, etc. and a large number of Muslim villages were deserted.

The displaced persons from Pakistan who migrated to the alluded region, were rehabilitated both in the urban and rural areas. The newcomers brought a great cultural change in the region. The new government by constructing canals, roads, introducing electricity to more settlements, opening new educational institutions, hospitals, etc. provided ample opportunities to the inhabitants to reshape their destinies. The communicational facilities made the town accessible to even remoter villages. This accelerated many small towns which previously deserved no more rank than large countryside

villages to expand and acquire the status of towns. Settlements of Ateli, Kanina, Nuh, Haley Mandi, etc. rose and attained a prominent place as commercial and trading centres of the neighbouring villages. With the rehabilitation of refugees, the deserted settlements of the Muslims also came to life and many of them like Kahnaur, Kharkhauda, Taoru, rose to the place of more prominent rural markets.

The economy of larger towns like Rohtak, Gurgaon, Sonipat and Rewari, on account of their favourable locations, seats of district and tahsil headquarters and coming of the refugees who adopted varied occupations, became more complex. A

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few towns like Bahadurgarh, Sonipat, Gurgaon, Faridabad and Ballabgarh which prior to 1950 were merely small market towns, sprang up as industrial centres.

The Hindu Varana System during ancient period

The Hindu society had a four-fold division: Brahmana, Ksatriya, Vaisya and Sudra. Out of these four classes the first three enjoyed certain privileges from time immemorial which were denied to the fourth one¹. Rather, fourth order suffered from certain disabilities. This four-fold division goes back to the *Rigveda*. No doubt in the beginning it appears to be based on the principle of division of labour, but gradually it became hereditary in character and inter change was not permissible².

Each *Varna* was assigned certain duties to perform and its order in the social hierarchy was fixed. The social functions of the four *varnas* are noticeable in the Milindapanho and

Manu also states that the "differential duties and occupations have been assigned to them by the creator".

The Dharmasutra writers strongly advocated that the four-fold division was primarily based on birth and the Dharmasutras illustrate how the *varna* was gradually turning into *jati*. Dr. P.V. Kune has analysed the references in this regard and comes to the conclusion that by the time of the *Brahmans* literature the upper castes (Brahmana, Ksatriya and Vaisya) had already been crystallised into groups more or less dependent on birth, while the *Sudras* mainly the *Dasas* and *Dasyus*, had already been relegated to a lower position. The division of labour in the background of numerous arts and crafts led to the rise of sub-castes based on occupations even before the close of the Vedic age; besides, there were some non-Aryan tribes in the Vedic society and various aboriginal tribes were being admitted into the Aryan folk. Hence, in the period under review the jurists found a society dominated by the above factors showing the *varna* was slowly drifting towards *Jati* system. They put on emphasis on the *Jati* system and on the basis of it they had laid down rules for the regulation of the society.

It is interesting to note, as mentioned in the *Mahabharata* "that by means of good deeds a Sudra can be a Brahman and a Vaisya and Ksatriya. Such account is found in the *Brahma Purana*. The *Mamansakar*s have criticised the *varna* theory and upheld the theory of *jati*. Kumarila Bhatt argues that determination of *varna* on the basis of *vrtti* or action is absurd as in such a case a person could become Sudra or

1. Dr. Vidya Bhushan : *The Cultural History of North India (From 150 B.C. to 350 A.D.)*, 1988, p. 8.

2. Ibid.

Brahman at the same time by performing good or bad deeds; hence he holds that the caste is signified by the cognition of the caste of the parents". Sudhakar Chattopadhyaya, while discussing the issue comes to the conclusion that both the *Jati* and *Varna* theories had been operating in ancient India¹.

Yajñavalkya also discussed the *Varna-Jati* problem. He asserts, "By men of the same *varna* in women of the same *varna* are born *sajati* i.e. sons of equal *varna*. In blameless marriages sons (are begotten) continuing the line. Kautilya and Baudhayana, the earlier writers maintain that son begotten by one on women of the next lower caste should also be considered to be *savarnas*.

Manu on the other hand observes "son begotten by twice born men on wives of the next lower order, they to be similar (to their fathers), but blamed on account of the faults (inherent) in their mothers. It appears that Manu and Yajñavalkya both do not accord the status of *sajati* to such persons who were born of wives belonging to the lower *Varna* than the father. During the time of the composition of the *Manu Samhita* the position had degraded a little, became complete during the time of Yajñavalkya. Hence both of them reduced the *varna* in the framework of *jati*.

Brahmans

The Brahmins were the most respected and the most privileged members of the society. But there are indications to suggest that even among the Brahmins there were two classes, the one was well-respected while the other was living in degenerate condition, if we rely on *Kurma Purana*¹. Patanjali also mentions two types of Brahmins—one who takes food in a *Sraddha* ceremony and other one who does not. In the *Puranas* we find some distinct categories of the Brahmins, one of the categories was of the *Risis* as *Saptrisi*; *Brahmrishi*, *Devrishi* and *Rajarishi* are mentioned in the *Puranas*.

The Brahmins, being created from mouth of the creator was bound to be the highest in the Hindu social order. Manu clearly mentions that on account of its superiority in origin, the Brahmins are the masters of the *Varanas* and the *Mahabharata* considered them to be superior of all other *Varanas*. Our law-givers (Manu-Yajñavalkya) mention that the Vedic studies be confined to the twice-born. The

Brahmans, in particular, were devoted to the studies of the *Vedas* and had the duty of preserving them. It was imperative for a Brahman to study the *Veda* without any motive of gain as the great grammarian Patanjli states. According to Manu, the study of *Vedas* without any motive is his highest Dharam and the rest of his activities are said to be secondary Dharam

1. Vidya Bhushan : *The Cultural History of North India*, 1988, p. 10.

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The Brahmans, therefore, were as a rule devoted to studies not only of the Vedic texts but of other branches of learning also. Brahmans were, therefore, engaged in the accumulation and dissemination of knowledge. But they were prohibited from instructing *Sudra* pupil as Manu lays down that such Brahmans, who impart knowledge to the *Sudra pupil* or learn from *Sudra* teacher should not be invited at *Sraddha*. This reference by its implication also mentions that in that period *Sudras* were equally interested in pursuit of learning and some of them had gained enough reputation to attract Brahman pupils.

Brahmans had several functions to discharge, the most important among them were teaching and as priests in sacrifices, besides advising kings in administration. Manu enlists some six occupations of the Brahmans, but teaching, accepting gifts and officiating at a sacrifice were three means of livelihood. Some of the Brahmans became family priests, (called *purohits*) of kings, but many used to engage themselves as *Rtviks* (the priestly class of the Brahmans) whose work was only to conduct the various religious performances of the people and they were known as *Artvijna* Brahmans. Patanjli further says that these Brahmans wore red turbans. The sacrificial priests were of sixteen types and

among them the temple priests had the lowest status.

The priests received *daksina*, which was a source of their livelihood. Though the sacrifices took more time of these priests but they were not paid *daksina* with an increase in the same proportion. The causes for this decline in the popularity of the sacrifices in the period is not difficult to imagine. The growing popularity of Buddhism and jainism and their advocacy of *ahimsa* having a mass appeal was bound to effect adversely the popularity of *yajnas*, the slaughter of animals being their chief characteristic¹.

The Brahmans who rose to the status of semi-divine being (*bhudeva*) in the age of the *Brahmanas* became the target of the other social groups and hence decline in the income of the Brahmans also. Hence new ways were devised by the *Dharam Shastra* writers, to make *dan* popular in the society. According to *Vishnu Purana* the gifts were given to Brahmans for the welfare of the *pitrjana* of the donor. The *Puranas* further declare that those who do not give gifts to the Brahmans go to hell. Such persons were also condemned in the society. The Brahmans accepted gifts from all castes including *Sudras*, naturally all the *Varana*, were expected to make gifts to them. The inscriptions of this period also record gifts made to them, both in cash and kind.

1. Vidya Bhushan : *The Cultural History of North India*, (from 150 B.C. to 380 A.D.), 1988, p. 12.

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It is interesting to note that though the Brahmanas were permitted to receive gifts both in cash and kind, Manu clearly mentions that they should not receive gifts as in the end its result is not good and a Brahman loses his spiritual power by

accepting gifts again and again. He should prefer to live on the collection of fallen grains than gifts, in straitened circumstances, however, he may receive gifts but that also not from *Sudra* even for a sacrifice as in that case he would become a *Chandala* in the next birth.

Though in order to improve the economic condition the importance was attached to *dan* but it could not become the lasting solution to the problem. The pursuit of Vedic studies and taking to teaching profession was far from adequate, hence the Brahmins were forced to take up other vocation also. The Dharmashastra writers, thus, permitted to Brahmins to follow the profession of other castes for the sake of livelihood, particularly of the Kshatriyas and Vaishyas in hour of need.

Brahmins enjoyed several privileges, some for raising their economic position. They had to pay low rate of interest in comparison to other castes as prescribed by the Smiriti writers. According to Manu, the property of Brahmin was considered sacred. Due to these liberalities, the economic position of the Brahmins deteriorated during that period and efforts were made by law-givers to improve their lot. But Manu does not favour the Brahmins to become very wealthy. A Brahmin should procure wealth as much as is sufficient to maintain his life.

Though the chief occupation of the Brahmins was priesthood but from Vedic period itself the Brahmins actively participated in administration. The Brahmins could adopt the profession of the Vaishyas in time of distress. The Buddhist literature, however, shows that in ordinary circumstances also Brahmins and Kshatriyas could accept the trading profession. We also get references to the Brahmins of bartering and carpentry. Such Brahmins were not allowed to take part in *Sraddh* ceremony.

The Brahmins enjoyed some judicial privileges also. They could not be cited as witness by a non-Brahmins litigants. According to Manu, a Brahmin should not be offended or assaulted.

The Brahmins, therefore, held the highest position in the Hindu society, but as in the earlier period the Kshatriyas challenged the Brahmin supremacy. The Sudras also defied the existing social order. It may be mentioned here that Sudras, being the fourth and lowest grade among the Hindu social order, suffered from many disabilities and

economically very weak¹.

1. Vidya Bhushan : off cit.

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Kstriya

The next to the Brahmans in the Hindu social order were the Kstriyas, whose main duty was to protect the people, make gifts to the Brahmans, perform *yajnas* and study the scriptures. Essentially, the Kstriyas were destined to rule, their special duties and sources of maintenance being arms and protection of the earth.

A Kstriya king was expected to maintain discipline of different castes, suppress bad and encourage the good. In the time of distress, he could adopt the profession of Vaisya but not of a Sudra.

The Kstriyas were required to undergo Vedic education and according to Manu, the Vedic education was confined to the *dvijas* only, several Kstriya Kings having received the Vedic education have been mentioned in the *Puranas*. On the other hand the Kstriyas were not only interested in the science of administration but they were also interested in the subjects like philosophy and religion.

The Kstriyas had a right to perform Vedic *yajnas* and *tapas* or penances. We get references in the *puranas* to the old kings retiring to the forests for penances. They could also lead an ascetic life (*sanyas asram*). They could also observe the vow of fasts like the Brahmans as the *Mahabharata* clearly mentions that only these two *varans* could observe it.

The *Samiritis* assign to the Kstrijas the sole occupation of ruling and fighting, besides the duty of Vedic studies, sacrificing for themselves and making gifts. Hopkins on the basis of *Mahabhart*a remarks that "fighting was the motto of this caste; a Kstria's death in the battle is most commended while that in the house due to disease is a sin". As per the accounts of the *Ramyana/Mahabharata*, Hopkins observes that Kstrijas were trained principally in the art of fighting (*dhanurveda*) and they passed out of the boyhood in their 16th year. The *Mahabharata* also mentions that a prince is to learn the arts of managing horses, elephants and chariots, as well as those of writing and accounts and waging wars.

Manu distinguishes between a Ksatriya and other *varnas*. He also mentions the creation of the Kstria from arms of the Creator. The form of greeting for a Kstria was quite different from those of the other three *varans*. The nature of a Kstria should denote the title of power, which should imply protection. Like other twice born *varans*, the Kstrijas were prohibited from eating certain food articles.

"The *Raksasa* form of marriage has been prescribed for them, besides the other forms like *Asura*, *Gandharva* and *Paisacha*. The practice of *Niyog* was also prevalent among them and usually Brahmins were appointed to raise issues on the Kstria women. The idea of Sudra woman being the 1st wife of a Brahmin or a Kstria did

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not get the approval of Manu.

So far relation between Kstrijas and Brahmins is concerned, it was only the duty of the king to protect and support Brahmins who were the custodian of Vedic knowledge and the preserver of *Dharam*.

Manu further says that a Brahman only 10 years old is regarded as a father by a Kstriya 100 years old. To kill a Brahman was a grave sin. In the *Mahabharata* the Brahmans have been considered to be the political asylum to the Kstriyas. Manu clearly states that the Brahman offender's property is exempt from confiscation. If a Brahman died heirless, his property was to be distributed among fellow-Brahmans, while that of other castes was to be escheated to the king.

In the older *Pali* Canonical Texts the Kstriyas invariably precede the Brahmans. The story of the early life of the Buddha indicates that out of the two higher *varana*, Kstriyas now held the top most rank. It was quite natural because the founders of the new faiths, Buddhism and Jainism belonged to the Kstriya class.

Two *varnas* some times came to inimical terms. Some of the Brahman sages revolted against tyrannical rule of the king Vena, as the *Puranas* mention. Armed conflicts between the two were also not uncommon. The *Mahabharata* records several such instances. The vast empire of Dandaka Kstriya was destroyed by a Brahman. Parsuram is said have destroyed the Kstriyas several times. The Mauran rule was overthrown by Pushyamitra Sunga. However, in general both *varanas* worked in harmony because on them depended the prosperity and security of the country.

Vaisya

The Vaisyas constituted the third order of the Hindu society. Their position was lower in the society than the Kstriyas and higher than Sudras. They were, however, considered to be a twice-born (*dvija*), and therefore, were entitled to the Vedic studies. But a Vaisya was the backbone of the Hindu social order as his duty was to do trade, lend money, cultivate land and tend cattle for which Manu wants the king to order a Vaisya.

Manu and Yajnavalika enjoin upon the Vaisyas the three-fold duties of Vedic studies, performing sacrifices and making gifts which include agriculture, cattle-rearing, money lending and trade among their occupation. The *Mahabharata* also lays down the same three fold duties and considers cattle-rearing their special occupation. This means that their main sources of livelihood were trade, agriculture, animal husbandry, etc.

The *Smriti* law permits the Vaisyas to take up arms for self-defence, for the defence of cows and the Brahmins.

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According to *Vishnu Puran*, in the age of the Kali the Vaisyas would abandon agriculture and commerce and gain a livelihood by servitude or the exercise of mechanical arts. Manu also allows a Vaisya to maintain himself following the mode of life meant for a Sudra if he finds it difficult to subsist by following his duties and occupations of trade and agriculture. The Vaisyas were divided into several groups.

Manu mentions different forms of greetings made for the Vaisyas and introduces distinction even in the ceremony of naming of the child. Among the forms of marriage *Asura* form is meant for the Vaisyas and Sudras, besides *Gandharva* and *Paisanacha*, but they were not permitted to marry Sudra women. "If he has a male offspring by Sudra wife alone he becomes an outcaste."

Sudra

The Sudras, being the last in the Hindu social hierarchy, were denied almost all the privileges enjoyed by the higher orders. The old theory that a Sudra was to serve the three higher *varanas* was repeated by Manu and favoured by the *Vishnu Purana* and the *Mahabharata*. Thus, it appears that the "chief purpose of their existence was to serve the privileged order of the society. However, in times of distress a Sudra is allowed to live by practising various arts and crafts or serving a Kshatriya or a rich Vaisya or alternatively by engaging in trades and crafts of various kind".

The service rendered by Sudras was of course not without

payment, but the income of the Sudras was very low and was far from adequate. Their life, therefore, must have been miserable, because they could hardly earn enough for their maintenance. Since the earnings from serving the higher *varans* were not adequate, they had to take to other means of earnings during the period. They were employed as hired labourers and slaves but mostly engaged in agricultural works by individual land owners.

Besides working as agricultural labourers and domestic servants the Sudras also worked as artisans to earn their livelihood, but they could take to the occupation of artisans only when they failed to secure their livelihood through the direct service of the upper *varanas* as Manu states. *Amarkosa*, a work of the Gupta period, includes garland-makers, washermen, potters, brick-layers, weavers, tailors, painters, armour, leather workers, black-smith, shell-cutters and metal workers besides players on drum, flute and *vina* actors, dancers, tumblers under the *Sudra-varga*. They were also engaged in carrying on trade.

In the 2nd century A.D. money was deposited with the potters, the oil-millers and even with weavers. The Buddhist deposited money with such persons for the purpose of providing robe and other essentials for the monks. Hence the Sudras were

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enjoying the right of property, trying to accumulate wealth and were trusted by the richer section of the society for heavy deposits.

In the field of administration, the Sudras, no doubt, rose to the status of kings but this does not mean that there was any improvement in their administrative and judicial right. The

position of the Sudras had gone low in the society that they had become untouchables for the Brahmins and later were advised not to keep contact with the former.

The doors to Vedic studies were closed for the Sudras, but the doors to general education were, however, open for them. Since they were debarred from the Vedic education, they were naturally deprived of several religious rites which required recitation of Vedic *mantras*. The consecration of sacred rites and performance of the Vedic sacrifices were not meant for them. Manu further goes to state that they were not worthy to receive the sacraments and have no right to follow the *dharam* of the Arya.

In the 3rd century A.D., a change in the above attitude is noticeable, as we find Vishnu permitting a Sudra to perform a sacred libation under certain circumstances. Yajnavalika also states that a Sudra could perform fire sacrifices with *namaskar mantra*. Though we get reference to Brahmanas officiating as priests for the Sudras but such Brahmins were condemned in the society, particularly, the *Samriti* held such Brahmins in a very low esteem. The Sudras, however, could attain heaven and the *Vishnu Puran* assign *Gandharwa*¹ heaven to the Sudras engaged in menial services.

It may be mentioned here that the alienation from the Vedic rites made them to lean towards heretical doctrines.

In relation to the *varan*, the principle of *karam* was emphasised. It was due to *karma* one was born in high and low castes.

Evolution of caste system

Jainism appears to have opened its doors for every one irrespective of his caste, sex and nationality. Like Buddhism, Jainism was against the social order existing at that time in the Hindu society. Both Buddha and Mahavira were against the *varana* system. The *varana* system means different grades of social order or hierarchy of the *varans*-Brahmins being the highest and the Sudras the lowest. Several donations made by these lower castes to Jain monasteries are referred to in the inscription. They included iron mongers (*lohakara*), carpenters (*vardhakin*), perfumers and (*gandhika*). It is interesting to note that even a person belonging to lowest caste could

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become Jain saint. The *Uttaradhajana Sutra* refers to a saint Hariesbala who came from a Chandala family.

Caste System in Vedic Age & Epic period

The caste system of the Hindus in the present form developed in the later Vedic age and Epic period and, therefore, it is more than 2,000 years old. It is complicated and has split up Hindu society into more than 3,000 water tight compartments. It has not only produced strongest impediment in the way of the solidarity of the Hindus but has created social inequality among them.

It is said that the word "caste" was used for the first time by the Portugese at Goa. The word 'Caste' is, related with the Portugese word 'Carcia'. It was in 1563 that a Portuguese *Carcia-De-Orta* wrote about the Indian caste system thus : "No one changes from his father's trade and all those of the same caste of shoe makers are the same". Later on in 1567, Yule and Burell wrote about caste that :Gantoos (Hindus) are dividing themselves into distinct races and castes of greater or less dignity holding the Christians in low degree and then so superstitiously that no one of a higher caste can eat or drink with those of the lower."

The caste system has certain distinct features. They relate to eating, drinking, marriage and profession. Members of a caste were not allowed to dine, drink and marry outside the caste. Members of one caste were forbidden by an inexorable

social law to marry outside their caste. Though the restrictions are less rigid but members of the same caste follow a fixed profession. "Avoidance of pollution through water, food, or contact, use of temples, birth and death taboos, marriage rules, clothing and ornaments, language, house, etc. are chief features of the caste system. Every caste began to be governed by its own rules and regulations which became different from other castes¹".

In what manner and what time exactly this caste system originated is difficult to say. There is little doubt that in its very early stages, the Indo-Aryans had no social or professional groups. At first they lived as one homogenous people in the Rigvedic age, there were only two classes of people in society, the Aryans and Non-Aryans; the fair-skinned Aryans and dark coloured aborigines.

MacIver also holds the opinion what caste structure grew out of the racial factor. There was consciousness of superiority and inferiority of race. This led to social distance and taboos between one race and another. The pride of the superior race, the Aryans, resulted in social compactness. Their religion also played its part for social separation, enhancement and transformation of social groups. Further grouping of

1. Hutton : *Castes in India*, pp. 90-91.

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the Aryan society into Brahmans, Ksatriyas and Vaisyas took place centuries after and this process developed on the lines of evolution.

At the advent of the Aryan, life was simple and easy but with the lapse of time they began to enjoy a settled and peaceful life. The era of nomadic life and constant war with the

aborigines and Non-Aryans came to an end. In the later Vedic period, when the tribal chiefs developed into big territorial monarchs, they lived in august and pompous courts. They lived to perform religious rites on an elaborate and pompous scale. At this time religion became more ritualistic. This involved strict adherence to the details of forms and formula of the religious rites and ceremonies. Together with this, an average man became too busy to perform his rites and ceremonies and to understand the sacred hymns and their exact significance.

All this, therefore, provided sufficient work for a class of specialists and, therefore, such a group arose in the descendants of the old priest community of the Rigvedic times. They undertook to perform these elaborate ceremonies and sacrificial worships on behalf of the princes and people and composed songs to applaud their masters' triumphs. They being in custody of the spiritual work of the society, devoted their life for mastering the vastly elaborate rules and rituals of sacrificial worship, and thus acquiring special knowledge to perform them in all their minute details. Naturally, they acquired a position of the lofty aloofness from the rest of the people of the Aryan society who were more or less engrossed in mundane affairs. This accounts for the rise and subsequent supremacy of the Brahman caste.

A distinction being thus made with regard to one class of society, distinction in other spheres of work, soon made their appearance and obtained place in society according to the nature and importance of the work. In the early days of the Rigvedic age, during the tribal wars, every able bodied man accompanied his chief to the battle and returned to his plough in the time of peace. But the extension of their territories and constant wars compelled the Aryan rulers to keep a body of trained and skilled soldiers in constant attendance so that their services could be requisitioned at any moment of emergency.

It was on this body of the professional men that the task of defence and burden of fighting fell and the system of employing the untrained in the times of war was gradually discouraged. Thus fighting became a profession for defensive and offensive purposes and the class of fighters and warriors in due course formed themselves into a separate independent class with their own social and political traditions and they were styled as Kshatriyas.

Kshatriyas class was included king's relatives, his nobility,

the relatives of other chiefs of petty states. They fought for the protection of the country and maintained

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peace. The rest of the Aryans, engaged in odd jobs, i.e. trade, industry agriculture, craft, and other peaceful pursuits, were called Vaisays. They obtained lower position than that of Kshatriyas.

Many professional sub-castes rose in prominence. Gilds of workers tended to crystalize into castes and sub-castes, as different professions became hereditary, chariot-makers, smiths, leather-workers, carpenters, weavers etc. developed into castes. The fourth class of men who formed the bulk of population was called *Sudras*. They were the menial and servile workers whose duty was to serve the other three classes. The rank of *Sudras* who occupied the lowest position was swollen by the aborigines. Along with their functions and duties, the privileges and status of the four castes were differential minutely in the religion and social spheres.

The historical origin of the caste system is explained above. It is based on the division of labour. Therefore, in its original form it was class-system rather than caste system. In its earlier stages, the system was flexible. There was considerable elasticity. Social and religious taboos had not developed round the concept of caste. There were considerable mobility in the society.

Basis of the distinctions were on professions and on scientific and rational ground, it was not difficult for a man to change from one caste to another. Change of profession could lead to change of caste. Individuals as well as families could pass from caste to caste.

The fact that along with the inclusion of Dravidian gods in the Aryan Pantheon, Dravidian priests were accepted as Brahmans, is an evidence of the fluidity of the caste-system in the beginning. A man's caste was decided by his profession and conduct and not by his birth as it is done today. Dronacharya, the famous military instructor of the Pandava and Kaurva brothers of *Mahabharata* period was a *Brahman* by birth. He was successful and experienced Kaurva' commander in the famous war between Kaurvas and Pandavas. Great sage Vashistha was born of a prostitute. Parsuram, a Brahman by birth, became a *Kshettrya*; Vyas who composed *Mahabhart*a was the son of a fisher woman, while Vidur, the guide, philosopher and friend of the king Dhritarastra was a *Dasiputra* (son of a maid-servant).

Certain Non-Aryan tribes were allowed to join Aryan castes after performing certain rites. "Regarding the other essentials of the caste system, there is nothing to show that interdining and intermarriages between members of different classes were prohibited; althoughh a free social intercourse of the three upper classes with the lower classes of *Sudras* was regarded with great disfavour. Even the *Sudras* were not saddled with restrictions regarding food & marriage.

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Religiously they were permitted to take part in certain rites, but excluded from the Vedic sacrifice in general. Professionally they were agricultural labourers, domestic servants, petty peasants and menial workers. Even in the later *Vedic* age, the untouchability of today had not yet raised its ugly head.

The advent of Islam and subsequent establishment of Muslim rule in India contributed towards the rigidity of the caste system and made it all more stiffened. As the Muslims,

unlike the earlier invaders of India, possessed a strong and coherent culture of their own, they could not be absorbed into the Hindu society. The rigidity of the caste system was further hardened and social intercourse with the Muslims was forbidden by the leaders of the society.

The different castes and classes, presently existing in Haryana are given as social groups.

Social Groups

In Haryana, there are many social groups. Their detailed account is given below alphabetically:—

Ahirs

Ahirs are chiefly found in the districts of Mahendragarh, Rewari, Gurgaon, Faridabad and Rohtak. In other districts such as Bhiwani, Hissar and Sonapat, their number is small.

Basically Ahirs claim to have descended from the people to which Lord Krishna of *Mahabharata* period belonged. Besides it, many other folk etymologies are current. One of these is *Ahiar* "snake killer", due to the fact that Lord Krishna had once killed a snake. According to the *Shrimad Bhagwat*, Lord Krishna did not perish a adder but brought it out of the Yamuna. The name *Ahir*, according to H.A.Rose, is derived from the Sanskrit *abhira*, a milkman. As to their origin, a number of traditions are current. The *Ahirs'* own tradition, mentioned by Rose, is that a Brahman once took a *Vaisya* girl to his wife and her offspring was pronounced *amat-sangyas* or out caste; that again a daughter of the *amat-sangyas* married a Brahman, and her offspring were called *abhiras* (i.e. Gopas or herdsmen), a word corrupted into *Ahirs*.

According to the *Delhi District Gazetteer*, 1883-84, their (*Ahirs*) tradition claims for another theory for their origin. The story goes that when the incarnation of Krishana took place in Bindraban (Vrindavan), some demon carried off the cattle of an ancestor of the tribe and also the man himself who was tending them. Lord Krishana by his omnipotence, created a man himself for the purpose of tending the cattle, and brought back the cattle for him to take care of and his descendants were henceforth to be called Ahirs.

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The Ahirs are divided into three *khaps*, viz., Nandbansi, Jadubansi and Gualbansi. The Jadubansi Ahirs, who claim to be descendants of the yadu, a nomadic race, have 55 *gotras* (clans ¹). So, Ahirs were probably by origin a pastoral caste but in Haryana they are now outstanding agriculturists and stand in quite the first rank as husbandmen.

They are for the most part concentrated in the region around Rewari and Narnaul- Mahendragarh because of their preponderance is known as Ahirwal or abode of Ahirs'. Nothing can be said with certainty when the Ahirs settled in Haryana ? V.V. Mirashi has suggested that probably the original habitat of the *Abhiras* (Ahirs) was the region between the Sutlej and the Yamuna. From there some of them migrated beyond Mathura in the east and Maharastra in the south.

The Ahirs who have settled in Rohtak district claim that they descended from a great grand son of Prithvi Raj, who adopted the practice of Karewa. According to the District Gazetteer, the Ahirs settled in Jhajjar considerably later than the Jats. Some Ahirs in Jhajjar are said to have come from Delhi but most came from Rewari. Except a few Kosli villages, all others have separate origins. Like Jats, Ahirs are also divided with a number of *gotras*. A few of them are referred here. These are Koslia, Khola, Afria, Bhatotia, Sultania, Mehta, Nimran, Khatodhia, Khosya, Karirya, Lahoties and Satlanya. The Ahirs rarely use their *gotras* with their names. They only add Rao or Yadav with their names.

Besides other qualities, their military traditions have deep roots. Ahirs were a bold peasantry, their country's pride, accustomed to handle the ploughshare and wield the sword with equal readiness and success.

It would be worthwhile to trace their military tradition and other heroic deeds. Ruda Singh, a Yadav noble from Tijara

obtained the state of Rewari in 1555 from Mughal Emperor, Humanyun, for rendering meritorious military services during the latter's encounter with Surs. Later, his son, Ram Singh popularly called Ramoji. He had a hard struggle in extirpating the criminals. Two of these notorious dacoits, who had carried on depredation to the very gate of the imperial capital were sent to emperor Akbar. Pleased with the daring action, the emperor appointed Ram Singh as Faujdar of the *Sarkar* of Rewari. Ram Singh said to have witnessed the reigns of Akbar and Jahangir, while his son and successor, Shahbaz Singh was a contemporary of Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb. Shahbaz was a great warrior who died fighting against a daring robber Hathi Singh. Shahbaz was succeeded by his eldest son, Nand Ram. He retained the confidence of emperor Aurangzeb who confirmed him in his jagir and granted him title of 'Chaudhri'.

1. Rao Man Singh : *Yadav-Ahir Kuldepika*, 1889.

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When Nadir Shah launched a fierce attack on India in 1739, he was detained at Karnal by Balkrishan Rao (Ahir) of Rewari. A fierce battle was fought. Balkrishan, the Rao of Rewari, who fought, heroically at the head of an army of 5,000 strong was killed in this battle. Nadir Shah the victor, praised the late Rao's heroic deeds.

Muhammad Shah was so much impressed with the Rao's bravery and heroism that on Nadir's departure he granted to Bal Krishan's brother Gujzar Mal the title of Rao Bahadur and commander of Five thousand. Since the title 'Rao' is current among the Ahirs.

The heroic bravery shown by Rao Tula Ram and his cousin Gopal Dev in the Ist Battle of Independence, 1857 cannot be

oversighted. Later in the 1st and second world wars, many Ahir soldiers sacrificed their valuable lives for the sake of country.

Ahirs are splendid cultivators, hardworking and very good soldiers. Their social and economic position is very satisfactory. Their standard of living is high. Among them are professors, lawyers, bureaucrats, judges, highest military officers and famous politicians. The education among the male and female is gaining solid grounds. Even in adverse circumstances, the Ahirs can eke out their livelihood. The Haryana Government has declared them as Backward class.

Jats

The origin of the Jats is shrouded in mystery. Some people believe that they came from outside and others consider them as indigenous. In any case they are traditionally treated as a separate caste. They are Hindus. "Jats were not mentioned as a prominent caste during Akbar's time but gained a footing probably after the breaking up the Mughal dynasty. Later they became an important element in the politics of that time".

They are scattered throughout Haryana. But they are mainly concentrated in the districts of Rohtak, Sonapat, Jind, Karnal, Panipat, Bhiwani and Hissar. They began to enhance themselves politically in Haryana under the leadership of Chaudhry Chhotu Ram ji who was held in high esteem. Rising from humble beginnings by sheer hard work and integrity of character, he occupied a most honoured position in the then Punjab politics for more than two decades. Jats also struggled in the freedom movement of the country. Ch. Devi Lal (former Deputy Prime Minister of India) remained in Jail in 1942 for anti British activities.

The Jats are divided into twelve chief clans (*gotras*) and about 137 minor *gotras*. The main *gotras* are Maliks (also called Gatwallas), Dahiya, Ahlawat, Rathee, Dalal, Sahrawat, Kadian, Jakhar, Golia and Deswal. The chief *gotras* of the Jats in Gurgaon and Faridabad districts are Sarot, Rawat, Dhariwal, Dagar, Tewatiya, Tanwar,

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Pokhawat, Katamiya and Raibdar. In Sonipat and Rohtak districts, the main *gotras* are Dahiya, Ahlawat, Dalal, Hooda and others.

The Jats in Bhiwani and Hissar districts are of two types in respect of *gotras*; Deswali and Bagris. Deswali Jats claim to be original *Haryanvi* and Bagri Jats are immigrants from Rajasthan. Inter-marriages now take-place between them. Bagri Jats of Loharu and Bhiwani tahsils have by and large adopted the culture of the Deswali Jats of the area.

As per the account of the gazetteer¹, there is another division of Deswali and Bagri Jats, commonly recognised throughout the Bhiwani district, viz. Shibgotra and Kasabgotra Jats. The Shibgotras are so named from the fact that their ancestor is traditionally said to have sprung from the matted hair of God, Shiva. The Kasabgotras, on the other hand, claim that their forefathers originally belonged to Rajputana and they took to agriculture and the marriage of widows, and so sank in social scale.

There are said to be 12 *gots* of Shibgotra Jats. The tradition as to their origin is : One Barh, a Shibgotra, made himself master of a large portion of Bikaner. He subsequently founded a town Jhausal and from his 12 sons sprang 12 *gots* of Shibgotras, of whom only three or four are to be found in the Bhiwani district. This difference of traditional origin may well point to a real difference in descent, and the Shibgotras may have been originally Non-Aryan aborigines, whose chief deity was shiva, and with whom the less militant tribes of the Aryan invaders inter-married, adopting at the same time, some of their social customs and worship, there by also getting to their social level and becoming Jats. This would also account for the prevalence of the worship of Shiva among the Jats.

The principal clans of Bagri and Deswali Jats in Bhiwani district include Sangwan, Shorans, Ghatwals, Puniyas, Duhans, Panghals, Phogats, Booras, Leghas, Kalkas, Lore,

Potalya, Lathar and Kundu.

In the Dadri tahsil, Sangwans have settled in 40 villages as these were held by Sanga, their ancestor. Shorans are in 75 villages of Loharu tahsil, which had been held by their ancestor, shora.

The Jats of Karnal and Panipat areas seem to have held parts of country about Samana in very early days as a part of an early-Indo scythian kingdom. The principal clans of the Jats here are Jaglan, Ghamghas, Gatwal or Malak, Deswal, Katkhar or Gahlaut, Sandhu and Halawat. Although scattered here and there, they are predominantly found in rural areas of Kaithal, Karnal and Panipat tahsils.

1. *The Hissar District and Loharu State Gazetteer (Hissar District), 1915, pp. 87-88.*

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The *gotras* of Jats found in North India vis-a-vis Haryana are listed below:—

1. Abra
2. Ahlawat
3. Andar
4. Aantal
5. Arya
6. Areb/Arev
7. Ashok/Sihag
8. Atwal

9. Atri/Itri
 10. Aulakh
 11. Asra
 12. Baber
 13. Bagdawat
 14. Bazar
 15. Bajwa
 16. Bal/Baal
 17. Balan
 18. Balhara
 19. Ban
 20. Bainse
 21. Bussi
 22. Bath
 23. Belari
 24. Banewal/Banwal
 25. Bhambu
 26. Bhangal
 27. Bhinder
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28. Bhati	56. Dewal
29. Boparai	57. Dhama/Dhami
30. Bhullar	58. Dhalwal/Dhariwal
31. Barung	59. Dhaka
32. Bishala	60. Dhankhar
33. Barar	61. Dhanch
34. Budhwar	62. Dhanda
35. Boora	63. Dhanoya
36. Chahal	64. Dharan
37. Chatha	65. Dhillon
38. Chauhan/Chawan	66. Dhindhra
39. Chabuk	67. Dhindwal
40. Cheema	68. Dhonchak
41. Chhillar	69. Dhul
42. Chhikara	70. Dhohan
43. Chhokar	71. Dochanj
44. Chhina	72. Gallan
45. Chimmi	73. Gathwal
46. Dabas	74. Gor/Gori
47. Dagar	75. Goraya
48. Dahiya	76. Gajwa
49. Dahima	77. Gajba
50. Dalal	78. Ghangars
51. Dhul/Dhal	79. Ghuman
52. Daulta	80. Gill
53. Dangi	81. Godha

54. Dral

82. Godara

55. Dushwal

83. Grewal

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84. Gulia

112. Kahlon

85. Gehlawat

113. Kalkit

86. Guhil

114. Kang

87. Gumar

115. Kataria

88. Gurlawat

116. Kushwan

89. Gondal

117. Khur

90. Gusar

118. Kher/Khare

91. Hal/Halla

119. Khatri

92. Hanse

120. Khatkal

93. Her

121. Khokhar

94. Hooda

122. Kaler

95. Henga

123. Kohar

96. Jakhar

124. Kular

97. Jaglan

125. Kundu/Kandola

98. Jalota

126. Kuntal

99. Jangooia

127. Lulli

100. Johal	128. Lakhanpal
101. Junwar	129. Lamba
102. Jatasara	130. Lathar
103. Jatrana	131. Lathwal
104. Jaghria	132. Lochab
105. Johiya	133. Lohan
106. Juun	134. Lohoria
107. Kadyan	135. Mathar
108. Kajla	136. Madenna
109. Kak	137. Madhan
110. Kakran	138. Mahil
111. Kathia	139. Malik

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140. Mal	168. Pahal
141. Mann	169. Patar
142. Mangat	170. Pulwan

143. Mand	171. Panghal
144. Mander	172. Panesar
145. Mawla	173. Panaich
146. Mahlawat/Mahla	174. Panu
147. Minhas	175. Panyang
148. Mirdha	176. Parihar
149. Mitha	177. Paroda
150. Mokhar/Mokhal	178. Pawar
151. Mor/Morr	179. Paraswal
152. Moond	180. Pahor/Por
153. Nahal	181. Parwey
154. Nalwa	182. Phogat
155. Nandal	183. Phoolka
156. Nain	184. Peeru
157. Naipal	185. Potalia
158. Narwal	186. Punia
159. Naubar	187. Rai
160. Nasir	188. Rana
161. Nehra/Nara	189. Ranjha
162. Nijar	190. Rathi (Rathee)
163. Nunya/Nun	191. Rathal/Ratol
164. Ohlan	192. Rathor
165. Ozhlan	193. Randhawa
166. Ojla	194. Rapria
167. Odhan	195. Rawat

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196. Redu	224. Singhroot
197. Riar	225. Sindhu
198. Roj	226. Sagarwar
199. Ruhela/Rohella	227. Sohal
200. Sahota	228. Solgi/Sholanki
201. Sahrot/Sahrawat	229. Suhag/Sihag
202. Saalar	230. Syal
203. Salkan	231. Takkhar
204. Shamil	232. Tahlan
205. Samra	233. Taank
206. Sangha	234. Tokhar
207. Sanghera	235. Tanwar
208. Sangwan	236. Tatran/Tatar
209. Sinsinwar	237. Jhind
210. Sandhu	238. Tewatya
211. Sapra	239. Thakran
212. Saran	240. Tiwana
213. Saroha/Sarohi	241. Toor/Turan
214. Sarandh	242. Tusar/Tusir
215. Sasi	243. Tomar

216. Sainkhan	244. Utar
217. Siwach	245. Ulhan
218. Sheokand	246. Virak
219. Sheoran	247. Varaich
220. Shahi	248. Vatghan
221. Shergil	
222. Sibya	
223. Singhmar	

People

According to Sir George Campbell, "The Jats having great physical and moral energy are admirable cultivators, and under a fair system, excellent revenue payers. They are prodigiously tenacious of their right in land and very orderly

and well behaved in possession of these rights. In fact, in every way they are beyond doubt a fine people".

Agriculturally, the Jat is as dominant as ever, and in addition, he is also branching out in other directions, taking a hand in a small way in trade and cottage industries in rural areas. In services, particularly in the army and police they are in large number. They are finding representation in civil service also. Among them they are prominent doctors, civil servants, educationists, army officers, contractors, builders, engineers, noted politicians, professors, wrestlers and famous businessmen. They are always found ready to make sacrifices for the sake of the country. They have the capacity to make adjustment in their social behaviour. Whenever, they are put, they can eke out their living by sheer of hard work. Their economic and social standards are very high. They have lofty buildings as their mansion/dwelling places. Some are land lords while others are petty cultivators.

Rajputs

"Chivalry thy name is Rajput". The term Rajputs denotes a caste or a sect of warlike traits. The Rajputs were known for their valour, chivalry, loyalty, horsemanship and swordsmanship. They retain the martial instinct of their ancestors and prefer an army career to agriculture. A large number of Rajputs have joined the armed forces and have proved their worth as soldiers. Bapora and Tigrana villages of Rajputs top in the military service. They still retain the superiority of descent and their pride being a Rajput.

About their bravery, the historians' account is testimony. In the words of

Dr. Hari Ram Gupta an eminent historian of Haryana, "Rajputs were the first people of India to strive and sacrifice in the service of the nation and religion. They continued the struggle for over seven hundred years, and set the noblest standards of chivalry and morality which have not so far been surpassed by any other people or country. It was for this reason that everyone in India who had some pretensions to valour and heroism laid claim to Rajput origin¹".

Rajputs are scattered all over Haryana. Around Bhiwani town, there are many Rajput villages. The Rajputs of Bhiwani area migrated from Rajasthan to settle here. Some of the Rajput clans are quoted here: Chauhans, Panwars, Jatus , Sheikhwats, Tanwars and Bhattis.

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Many Rajputs believe themselves to be descendants of their *Surajbansis* and *Chanderbansis*, hallowed ruling dynasties whose deeds have immortalized in the great epics, the *Ramyaana* and the *Mahabharata*.

According to the *Karnal District Gazetteer*, the oldest Rajput settlers in Haryana are of two principal clans; the Mandhars and the Chauhans. The Mandhars settled in very early days in the country about Samana; Ferozeshah, Mughal king, chastised them, carried off their *Ranas* to Delhi and converted many of them to Islam. The Safidon branch obtained the villages, now held by them in the *Nardak*, in comparatively later times by intermarriages with the Chauhans. Though they expelled the Chandel Rajputs from Gharaunda when they first came into these parts, the Chandel reconquered them; and the final occupation by Mandhars coming direct from Kalayat. The Mandhars claim to have descended from Lao, one of the two sons of Rama, the hero of the *Ramyaana*. It is also credited to have founded the city of Lahore. The other son of Rama was Kus who ruled Kashmir and founded the Kachwaha and Narban- gens. The Mandhars, according to the account, are thus. *Suraj bansis*, with their origin at Ayodha. Kalayat is their principal place in these parts.

The Chauhans, according to the same source sprang from the original people who settled at Jundla. They all claim descent from Rana Har Rai who is said to have conquered the country single-handed.

In Ambala and Naraingarh areas, a large percentage of

Rajputs are Chauhans. Many of these families had substantial means in former days but their estates are now heavily encumbered the lands having passed in many cases into the hands of money-lenders.

In the Rohtak district, Hindu Rajputs claim to be Punwars. In Jhajjar areas, the Bachas dominate numerically with some Chauhans, Tanwars and Bud-gujars.

In Gurgaon area the Rajput clans are those of Budgujars and Chauhans. The ancestor of the Budgujars, according to prevalent traditions, migrated from Jullunder under peculiar circumstances. The story goes that while playing dice with the goddess Devi, one of their ancestors noticed that her hand was wet and on further enquiry he was told that this was owing to her rescuing a sinking ship. The ancestor did not believe the version of Devi who in wrath cursed him with result that he and his men wandered and lastly settled here after supplanting the Khanzadas from here. This migration is said to have taken place about the middle of the 15th century. Since then the clan is settled at Sohna and area around. Besides military officers, they are in every branch of profession. Their economic condition is satisfactory.

People

Brahmans

Brahmans form an important section of the people in Haryana. This is not due to their numerical strength but because of social high status and high respect in which they are generally held.

As per historians' view, Haryana was the home of the Vedic Aryans, who settled along the Saraswati river and in

surrounding areas. The Brahmans formed the apex of the Aryan hierarchy, and were in fact its most prestigious class entirely dominating its social and religious life then, as they have continued to do service. The Brahmans who, undoubtedly constituted the top of this order, similarly claim that they are the descendants of the old priestly class who gave form and texture to the great Aryan civilization.

Brahmans are divided into four main groups; the Gaurs, Saraswats, Khandelwals and Dhima. The Gaurs believed that they came originally from Bengal but it is much more likely that they came as *purohits* or family priests of the various immigrant agricultural tribes among whom they were settled. The Saraswats were, however, the original settlers of this region (the Saraswati valley). The Khandelwals and Dhima, who in all probability had migrated from Rajasthan.

According to the *Karnal District Gazetteer*, the mass of the Brahmans in the tract are Gaurs. Those belonging to the *Chaurasi* sub-divisions, according to the prevalent belief, assisted Janamejaya's holocaust of snakes and received a gift of 'Gaurs'.

The most common *gotras* among Brahmans are: Bharadwaja, Vashists, Gautam, Bacchhasa, Parsiva and Sandlasa. But many of them add Sharma with their names. The *Rohtak District Gazetteer* has recorded that the Brahmans of the whole country side belong to Gaur sub division of the area. The name is probaly derived from their residence at Ghaggar. The main sub-clans are Vashists, Gaurs, Mihrwal, Dabra, Bhardwaj and Koshisk.

Many leaders belonging to Brahman community extended their much contribution to the freedom movement of the country. In this catergory, Pt. Sri Ram Sharma stands on the forefront. His services can not be forgotton. Under the changed circumstances, many Brahman youth have shown a great inclination towards army. They are now good officers in the army. Besides, among them there are advocates, bureaucrats, noted businessmen, good agriculturists, doctors, engineers and famous politicians.

Some Brahmans versed in astrology, however, earn their livelihood by practising astrology and priesthood. Many of them are joining public and private sectors. The economic condition is very much satisfactory.

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Dakaut Brahmans rever *Shani* (Saturn). Saturday is associated with *Shani* and the Dakauts on this day take offerings of iron, sesame (*til*) or *urd*, black clothes, oil and *satnaja* (seven types of grains mixed). They have mostly shifted to other activities, as their traditional family religious profession is not adequate as a source of livelihood.

The Chamarva Brahmans have their own story. They say that their ancestors went to perform the birth ceremony of Guru Ravi Das, a great saint from Uttar Pradesh. Ravidas was a Chamar by caste and *Purohit* (priest) who performed the *haven* ceremony at the birth of RaviDas Ji was declared outcaste by his fellow Brahmans. Since then the descendants of that *purohit* (priest) have been officiating in the religious ceremonies of Chamars. They do not accept offerings from any other castes. They are also called *Gorra* Brahmans and mostly found in Bhiwani¹.

Tyagis or Tagas

Tyagis are also of Brahman origin. Those who gave up priestly profession and took to agriculture came to be known by this designation. Those who accepted offerings of ordinary nature became Gaur. Both retained their division in ten clans and hence are called *dasnam* Brahmans. The Tagas wear sacred thread but Brahmans do not intermarry with them. They are mostly found in Faridabad district, Kaithal tahsil and other parts of Haryana. They are good cultivators. They join army. They are noted educationists.

Vaish (Bania community)

The word *Bania* is from the Sanskrit *banij* which simply means a trader, and it is more the name of a class or occupation than of a tribe. The three divisions of this caste

are Aggarwals, Oswals and Maheswaris. Aggarwals the most plentiful in Bhiwani and Hissar districts are said to have come from Agroha. Agroha was founded by Aggarwals after Raja Aggar Sen. The town was raided by the Muslims after which the Aggarwals dispersed to the south and east. The popular surname among them is Gupta whose origin can be traced back to the founder of that dynasty. Oswals and Maheswaris, the other two divisions of Banias trace their origin from Rajasthan.

Now a days, they constitute the backbone of industry; they control the commerce and trade and operate most of the privately owned public utility projects. Many of them in the past left Bhiwani villages and Mahendragarh town and settled in other parts of the country particularly in Kolkata and Bombay. The Aggarwals and Guptas have shifted to services. They form a major chunk of Haryana bureaucracy. They are good officers in police.

1. *Bhiwani District Gazetteer*, 1982, p.55.

People

Their services towards the country cannot be overlooked. For example, late Babu Bal Mukand Gupta was born in Guryani village of Rewari district. His role in the freedom struggle of the country is very much praiseworthy. He was a journalist and poet who aroused the nationalistic feelings by dint of his writing and composing songs. Secondly, Banarsi Das Gupta played an important role as a leader of Praja Mandal Movement against the ruler of the then Jind State. Ram Saran Mittal was at the forefront in Narnaul to spearhead the Praja Mandal Movement.

These people show a special inclination towards making

donation for a religious purpose. They give money for construction of temples and *dharamshalas*. Seth Kirore Mal spent a lot of money for the construction of Gauri Shanker Mandir at Bhiwani. He was a very wealthy person and belonged to Luhari village in Bhiwani district. To watch their interests, they have their own *sabhas*. They are held in high esteem because of self and other religious inclination towards Hinduism.

Gujjars

Gujjars (Gujjara-Pratihara) were once the rulers of this country. The story goes like this, "After the dissolution of Harsha's empire, Haryana continued to flourish. The Pratihara empire was followed by the Tomar ruler's son of whom, Anangpala founded the city of Delhi. Haryana formed a part of his empire. According to the *Pehowa Inscription* (822 A.D.), the area appears to have become a part of the empire of Bhoja of the Gurjara-Pratihara¹ dynasty".

During the period of Gujara-Pratihara period, Haryana reached at peak of progress in trade, art and culture².

During the British period, the Gujjars suffered much. They were thrown out of cultivation. An account from an old gazetteer is given below:—

"In the days of heavy assessment which preceded the regular assessment, the Gujjars attempted to evade the weighty *jamans* imposed on them by using their lands as grazing ground and throwing them out of cultivation, and then deserting the villages, when pressed for the payment a course which led to their rights being forfeited, under a special rule issued by the Government of India to check desertion of estates".

Like Ahirs and Jats, the Gujjars are brave persons. Being a pastoral tribe their settlements were mostly found in the riverine low lands along the hills in the south-Gurgaon and Faridabad areas, and Shivaliks in the north. The region around Jagadhari and Buria and near Samalkha where they lived in large number, was called Gujrat until recently³.

1. D.C. Verma : *Haryana*, 1975, P.14.

2. Dr. Buddha Prakash, *Glimpses of Haryana*, 1967.p. 20.

3. K.M. Munshi : *Glory that was Gurjara Desh*, Vol. I, pp. 173-81.

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Gujjar is a martial community which struggled for the preservation of their freedom for centuries. Denzil Ibbetson probably means to say same thing in different words. "The Gujjars have been turbulent throughout the history. They were constant thorns in the eyes of Delhi emperors and are still ever-ready to take advantage of the bonds of discipline".

Their main concentration is near Narnaul, Palwal, Ballabgarh tahsils, Naraingarh and Jagadhri tahsil, around Kaithal and in Hissar district.

They are efficient cultivators. They are tall having good physique. Cattle keeping was their main occupation. Besides agriculture, they are good officers in the army and civil service. A few of them are famous politicians. They are fully conscious to their rights.

In Bhiwani district their main clans are Besih, Karhan, Kaau, Brar, Mohmor, Bochhawari, Rawat, Maisi and Janya. They are found in Bhiwani-Dadri and Bawanikhera tahsil. In Karnal area the principal clans of Gujjars are Rawal, Chhokar, Charmain and Kilson. They are mostly concentrated in the rural areas of Panipat and Kaithal tahsils. They are the devotees of Lord Krishana.

The Gujar or Gurjar *gotras* are numerous. A few of them in general are listed below:—

1. Chechi
2. Poswal
3. Bhadana
4. Chhokar
5. Bhumla

6. Bhatti
 7. Meelu
 8. Gighar
 9. Kepar
 10. Chauhan
 11. Chaudhry
 12. Kataria
 13. Pratiharas
 14. Parmars
 15. Chalukas
-

People

Gujar community is a social, secular and a partriotic race. The country is proud of their contribution in Freedom Movement before Independence. They have their own *Sabhas* and *Prishad* to protect their interests. In this line *Gujjar Samaj Kalyan Parishad* (Regd.) Chandigarh is one of them.

Rors

No satisfactory information whatever is forthcoming as to the origin of the Rors. Most of them trace their origin from the neighbourhood of Badli near Jhajjar. They hold a *Chaurasi* (84) villages about Pehowa and a *Bara* (12) villages beyond the Ganga. They occupy many villages in Karnal, Kaithal and

Jind districts. Amin a small village near Kurukshetra was their headquarters (*Tika*).

The Rors, while almost as good cultivators as the Jats and assisted by their women in the same way are much more peaceful and less grasping in their habits. They are fine stalwart men, of much the same stamp as the Jats¹. They are joining Government service. Many youths are in military and police services. They are very hardworking.

Their principal clans are:—

Jogran, Ghanter, Khechi, Kulania, Gurak, Maipia, Dumian, Rojra, Kainwal, Lathar, Kharangar, Jarautia, Dhankar, Khaskar, Chopre, Tharak, Kokra, Talso, Dodani, Turan, Lamra, Kultagria and Mual.

Their social status is on the very good footing. They are politically very much conscious.

Sainis

Sainis are widely scattered throughout the Haryana state. Their main pockets of population are in Naraingarh tahsil, Ambala tahsil, Sonipat area, Mahendragarh town, Sirsa, Hissar, Hansi, Barwala and Kirara. In Charkhi Dadri and Mahendragarh town, there are *Mohallas* of Sainis.

They are good agriculturists. They prefer vegetable cultivation to foodgrains. Sainis are sturdy cultivators and manage to thrive on their small holdings. Under the changed circumstances, they are also adopting other avocations to eke out their livelihood. In civil and military sides they have good strength and even many officers.

They have very good economic status. In the Hindu hierarchy, they hold very good status.

1. *Karnal District Gazetteer, 1918*, p.47.

Kamboj

Kamboj are an agricultural tribes unmatched for their hardwork. Their main concentration is near Indri, Sirsa district, Gurgaon district, Yamuna Nagar district, Karnal district and Fatehabad district.

In Sirsa district they are known as Kambo. They have migrated from Pakistan during partition and are scattered in various parts of the district. Besides agricultural operations, they are shifting to Govt. service. They are also joining forces. They are turning towards business and industries.

They specially rever Baba Bhuman Shah. They have good social status and standard of living.

Meos

The Meos are ancient people, probably descendants of the *Medas-Meda Meos*. It is said about the Meos that they are happy blend of Islam and Hinduism. In any case, in spite of being converted to Islam they have followed the customs and cultural practices of both Hinduism and Islam.

"Although the Meos were converted from Hinduism to Islam about four centuries back, their adoption of Islamic cultural practices, even the religious injunctions prescribed in the *Koran*, remained until 1947 at best nominal and did not advance beyond male circumcision and burial of the dead¹".

Many Meos were "Muslims" by name only and they followed about 50 percent of their old Hindu customs. Several Meos had Hindu names as Dhan Singh, Chand Singh and Saonmu Singh. But a few years back the Meos turned to orthodox Islam. They have changed their names from Singh to Khan. Most of them now offer their daily prayers (*Namaz*) five times a day in a mosque or at home. Women observe *Namaz* at their houses. Their Mullah is respected and is given customary offerings on various occasions like births, deaths and festivals. *Juma Namaz* is held on every Friday and

Muslims assemble in *Idgahas*, mosques or some other scheduled places.

Socially, the Meos are a well-knit community, capable of united action in an emergency. Their main concentration is in Ferozepur Jhirka, Nuh and Hathin areas.

As per the record of *Gurgaon District Gazetteer*, 1910, the *pals* and *gots* of Meos are given below:—

"Any Meo will tell glibly that the tribe is divided into twelve *Pals* and fifty two *gots*; but no two enumerations of the *Pals* correspond precisely; and the fifty two

1. Partap C. Aggarwal : *Caste, Religion and Power*, 1971, p.1.

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gots include *pals* which are as such: (i) Balot (ii) Ratawat (iii) Dewal (iv) Lundawat (v) Chiklot (vi) Dimrout (vii) Dulout (viii) Nai (ix) Yonglot (x) Dahngal (xi) Singal (xii) Kalesa or kalsakhi.

"Besides these, there is thirteenth *palakhra* or little *Pal*, *Pahat*. The *pals* which are strongest in Gurgaon are the Dahngals in the north of Nuh; the Chiklots in the south-east of Nuh and in the country round Punhana; the Lundawats, Dimrouts and Dulots in the Ferozepur valley, and the Dewals in the country, south of Nuh. These Meo sub-tribes still possess a strong feeling of unity and the power of corporate action".

The Meos claim descent chiefly from three branches of Bans and twelve sub-branches or *pals* enumerated below:-

Bans Pal Gotra

Yadav 1. Chiklot

2. Demrout

3. Dulout Atleast 18 *gotras*

4. Nai

5. Pundlot

Tomar 1. Lundawat

2. Dewal

3. Bagoria Atleast 15 *gotras*

4. Ratawat

5. Balot

6. Gaurwal

Kachuwaha 1. Ghaseria Most of the other *gotras*

Each Meo is thus aware of the *Pal* or the *gotra* to which he belongs as also the *pals* and *gotras* to which most of his acquaintances belong. ``The Meos living in each geographical units whether it be a village or only a section of a village thus constitute a single family, the boys and girls of which are taught to regard themselves as brothers and sisters. Marriage between boy and girl belonging to same *gotra*-which has thus become both a lineal and geo-graphical unit-comes to be regarded as incest¹.".

The Meo women do not observe *purdah*. It is said that Meos owe a great deal to the energy of their women. They do most of the field work except ploughing.

1. Hashim Amir Ali, *The Meos of Mewat*, 1970, pp. 53-54.

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The Meos are hardworking people. They are good agriculturists. They are also joining to other branches of civil services. Their contribution towards the 1st war of Independence cannot be over-sighted. They are fully conscious to their political life.

Other Groups

The villages in Haryana were self-contained communities, as some of the early British administrators observed. They had within them all they needed. Thus life centred round the village panchayats. This self-sufficiency was made possible by the presence in the village of number of other functional communities apart from agriculturists.

The village artisans and craftsmen and certain other workers who helped in agricultural operations on which the prosperity of the village rested. These included the village blacksmith, carpenter, barber, *dhobi* and village potter. The separate account for the above mentioned castes is given here :—

Khatis

The term *Khati* is an occupational term and it developed into a caste later. The *Khatis* trace their origin to Brahmans and call themselves Jangra Brahmans. *Khatis* are unevenly scattered and found in every village. A few of them prepare wooden implements for the daily requirements. They in rural areas are not technically trained in their occupation and they are only capable of making furniture for villagers.

Now under the pressure of complex economy, the Khatis are turning towards Govt. service and other branches of this profession. In urban areas they have their timber shops. Many are timber merchants.

In every profession they are found such as army officer and civil functionaries.

Kumhars

Kumhar is an occupational term connected with pottery. Many distinct tribes are included in it. Kumhars are divided

into Mahar, Gola, Magrichi, Bidwati, Nagori and Bhandia. These are not separate clans. Many Kumhars families have abandoned pottery and taken to agriculture, while others are busy in the sale of earthen wares at the time of Dewali. Now they are turning towards Govt. services. In Hissar district many families are owning agricultural lands. They do cultivation.

Their economic position is somewhat good.

Lohars

Lohar is also an occupational term. Some *lohars* are called *Deswali Lohars* and are scattered in rural areas. They have not confined themselves to blacksmith's

People

work but adopted the agricultural profession. A majority of them are turning towards Govt. Service.

Suthars, another type of *Lohars* are also found in very small numbers in Bhiwani district. It is said that nearly 12,000 were taken to Delhi by Akbar (Mughal Emperor) and then they were forcibly circumcised and made to become blacksmiths. They are usually called Multani *Lohars* in contradistinction to the Deswali *Lohars* and are sub-divided into sections, the Bara and Bhatti. They are now carpenters in this district.

Another type of *Lohars* is Gadiya *Lohars*. They wander place to place to earn out their living by blacksmithing.

Sunars

It is also an occupational term. They are busy in preparation

of ornaments. Now under the pressure of circumstances they have turned to other sides like Govt. service. Many of them add with their names Verma.

Rabaris

Rabaris are immigrants from Rajasthan. They had left their homes during famines and settled in various parts of Haryana. In the Bhiwani district they are found at Bawani Khera, Paluwas and Biran. They claim Rajput origin and state that they have socially sunk due to poverty. The influence of Rajasthan is still noticed in their dress and dialect. Their main occupation is the camel trade. They are distinguished from others by long beards and moustaches.

The youths are turning towards Govt. service.

Marathas

Rose in his *Glossary* speaks of Marathas in then Punjab as a group of Brahmans, a relic of the Maratha supremacy. After the Third Battle of Panipat, the Marathas settlers spread the whole of Punjab and many places of Haryana such as Kaithal, Karnal, Shahbad, Panipat, Jind and Charkhi Dadri. They add Tiwari and Vats with their names.

They are intellectual persons and fully conscious towards their political and civil rights. They are well-knit in every higher profession. They are doctors, professors, engineers and are holding many posts in Govt. service. Their standard of living is high.

Three historical temples in a complex adjoining the main bus stand at Karnal remind of the Maratha days. The temples are controlled by the Durga Bhawani (Hetuwalli) Trust. During the 18th century after the Third Battle of Panipat, Marathas

prayed here to invoke the blessings of Lord Shiva and goddess Chandi¹. Since then several Maratha families of the Vats subcastes have been regularly visiting these temples. The trust organizes get-together for communal amity.

Bishnois

Bishnoi sect was originated during the 15th century². Bishnois derive their names from Vishnu as they lay great emphasis on His worship³.

Originally, the Bishnois adopted a cosmopolitan spirit and admitted belonging to any caste and creed. Originally the Bishnoi community was formed by the Jats, Sheketrvs and Vaishya. Besides, Bishnois sect admitted Brahmans, Charans, Shudras and Muslims. Among Hajuri disciples, Aliji, Laloji and Dehiji belonged to Brahman caste; Tejoji, Ali, Kanhoji belonged to Charan caste; Samas Din, Aminya Din, Din Ahmad and Rahmat ji belonged to Muslim religion; and Mote meghwal belonged to Chamar caste⁴. They sink their tribes in their religion and merely give their caste as Bishnoi. Most of them migrated from Rajasthan and concentrated in Fatehabad tahsil⁵ and Hissar tahsil of Hissar district, many areas of Sirsa district and Siwani, Jhumpa and Lilus in Bhiwani district.

They retain their characteristic language and dress which separates them other caste. The use of tobacco and meat is forbidden. They abstain from taking animal life and cutting trees.

They are followers of Guru Jambheswar Maharaj who is believed to be the incarnation of Vishnu. His main preaching was not to harm animals and trees. They celebrate the birth anniversary of Guru Jambha jee in temples dedicated to him. Most of them are located at Hissar and Badopal. The place of pilgrimage of Jambha jee is at Mokam in Rajasthan.

The story is current about the place Mokam. Mokam is a small village that lies at a distance of 16 kilometres from Naulkha Mandi in the Bikaner district of Rajasthan. The village has been in existence for more than five centuries. Twice a year a fair is held in commemoration of saint Jambha jee who died here and was buried. Bishnois from all parts of

the country come to pay their homage to the illustrious founder of their sect⁶.

1. *The Tribune*, Dated 28-2-1991.

2. *Sirsa District Gazetteer*, 1988, p.59.

3. Hira Lal Maheswari : *Jambhaji, Vishnoi Sampradaya Aur Sahitya, Volume-I*, 1970.

4. *Ibid.* p.462.

5. Now Fatehabad is a fullfledged district.

6. *Bikaner District Gazetteer*, 1972, p.116, Rajasthan State.

People

It would be worthwhile to throw some light on the birth and life of Guru Jambha ji who is revered by the people as a greatest saint.

A story pertaining to birth of the saint is as under :-

There lived a man named Laut in pimpasar village south of Bikaner. He attained the age of 60 years and had no son. One day a neighbour was going out to sow his field met Laut, and deeming it a bad omen to meet a childless man turned back from his purpose. This cut Laut to the quick, and he went out to the Jungle and bewailed his childlessness until evening when a *fakir* appeared to him and told him that in the nine months he should have a son. At the time named a child miraculously appeared in Laut's house, and was miraculously suckled by his wife, Hansa. This happened in *Samvat* 1508 (A.D.1451).

When a lad of 5 years, he used to make his father's herd to water at the well, and had for each head of cattle a peculiar whistle, which it knew and recognised, at the sound of his whistle the cows and bullocks would come, one by one to the well, drink and go away. One day a man named Udaji,

happened to witness this scene and struck with astonishment, attempted to follow the boy when he left the well. He was on horse back and the boy was on foot, but gallop was as fast as he would, he could not keep up with the walking pace of the boy. At last in amazement, he dismounted and threw himself at his feet. The boy at once welcomed him by name though he saw him for the 1st time. This bewildered Udaji exclaimed "Jambha jee"(Omniscient) and henceforth the boy was known by this name.

He being an incarnation (*Avtar*) of Vishnu, played with his fellows, and then for 27 years he tended cattle, but all this time he spoke no word. His miraculous powers were shown in various ways, such as producing sweets from nothing for the delectation of his companions, and became known as '*Achambha*' (the wonder), whence his name of Jambha ji by which he is known.

After 34 years, a Brahman was sent for to get him to speak, and on his confessing his failure Jambha ji again showed his powers by lighting a lamp by simply snapping his fingers and uttered his first word. He then adopted the life of a teacher and went to reside on a sand hill in the south of Bikaner where after 51 years he died and was buried instead of being burnt like an ordinary Hindu.

His did not marry but devoted himself to the life of an ascetic teacher. His sayings (*sabd*) numbering 120 were written down by his disciples, and have been handed down in a book (*Pothi*) which is written in *Nagri* character.

After the death of Jambha ji, there was a vacuum in the Bishnoi community. Then Vithal ji, born in a carpenter family in Rewari in *samvat* 1589, controlled the

gaddi (religious order after Jambha ji). He is known as Vihloji by the Bishnoi community. He started two fairs at Jambholav. He died at Ramdawas in *samvat* 1673 and Ramdawas is famous as Vihlodham. After his death Swami Surjan ji took the reins of the religious order.

The twenty nine precepts given by Jambha ji for the guidance of his followers are as follows:—

Tis din sutak-Panch roz ratwanti nari

Sera karo shanan - sil santokh - suchh pyari

Bani - pani - idhni - itna lijyo chhan

Daya - dharm hirde dharo - guru batai jan

Chori - nindya - jhuth barjya-bad na kariyo koe

Amal - tamaku-bhang lil dur hi tyago

Mad - mas se dekhke dur hi bhago

Amar rakhao that bail tani na baho

Amashya barat runkh lilo na ghao

Hom jap samadh puja - bash baikunthi pao

Untis dharm ki akhri garu batai soe

Pahal deo par chavya jisko nam Bishnoi hoe.

The above couplet is thus interpreted :-

"For thirty days after child birth and five days after a menstrual discharge a woman must not cook food. Bath in the morning; commit not adultery; be content; be abstemious and pure. Strain your drinking water. Be careful of your speech. Examine your fuel in case any living creature is burnt with it. Show pity with living creatures. Keep duty present to your mind as the teacher bade. Do not steal. Do not speak evil of others. Do not tell lies. Never quarrel. Avoid opium, tobacco, *bhang* and blue-clothing. Flee from spirits and flesh. See that your goats are kept alive. Do not plough with bullocks. Keep a fast on the day before the new moon. Do not cut green trees. Sacrifice fire; say prayers and meditate, perform worship and attain heaven. And the last of the twenty nine duties prescribed by the teacher - Baptize your children if you would be called a true Bishnoi¹".

Bishnois consider it a good deed to scatter grain (chiefly *bajra* and *moth*) to pigeons and other birds, and often have a large number of half tame birds about their villages. The day before the new moon they observe as a sabbath and fast day, doing

1. *Hissar District Gazetteer*, 1915, p.60.

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no work in the fields or in the house. They bathe and pray three times a day, in the morning, afternoon and in the evening, saying "Bishnno Bishnoo" instead of the ordinary Hindu "Ram Ram". Their clothing is the same as that of other Bagris, except that their women do not allow the waist to be seen, and are fond of wearing black woollen clothing.

The ceremony of initiation (*pahal*) is as follows:-

" A number of representative Bishnois assemble and before them a *sadh* or Bishnoi priest, after lighting a sacrificial fire *hom*, instructs the novice in the duties of the faith. He then takes some water in a new earthen vessel, over which he prays in a set form (*Bishnogayatri*) stirring it while with his string of beads (*mala*), and after asking the consent of the assembled Bishnois, he pours the water three times into the hands of the novice who drinks it off¹. The novice's scalp-lock (*choti*) is then cut off and his head shaved, for the Bishnois shave the whole head and do not leave a scalp-lock like the Hindus; but they allow the beard to grow; only shaving the chin on the father's death.

Infant baptism is also practised and 30 days after birth of the child, whether the boy or girl, is baptised by the priest (*sadh*) in much the same way as an adult; only the set form of

prayers is different and the priest pours a few drops of water into child mouth, and gives the child's relatives each three handfuls of the consecrated water to drink, at the same time the barber clips off the child's hair. This baptismal ceremony also has the effect of purifying the house which has been made impure by the birth (*sutak*). The Bishnois intermarry among themselves only, and by a ceremony of their own, in which the circumambulation of the sacred fire, which is the binding ceremony of Hindus, is omitted.

They do not rever Brahmans, but have priests of their own chosen from among the laity. They do not burn their dead but bury them below the cattle stall or in a place frequented by cattle, such as cattle-pen.

Bishnois go on pilgrimage to the place where Jambha ji is buried south of Bikaner, where there is tomb (*mat*) over his remains and a temple (*mandir*) with regular attendants. A festival takes place every six months in *Asauj* and *Phagan* when the pilgrims go to the sand-hill on which Jambha ji lived and there light sacrificial fires (*hom*) of *Jandi* wood in vessels of stone and offer a burnt-offering of barley, *til*, *ghee* and sugar at the same time muttering set prayers. They also make presents to the attendants of the temple and distribute *moth* and other grains for the peacocks and pigeons which live there in numbers.

1. *Hissar District Gazetteer*, 1915, p.61.

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Including Mokam, there are ten centres in the country which are considered sacred by them¹.

Some of the *gotras* of the Bishnois prevailing in Haryana and adjoining areas of Rajasthan and Punjab around Hissar, Bhiwani and Sirsa, are given below:

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------|
| 1. Agarwal | 25. Kukna |
| 2. Arig | 26. Keru |
| 3. Abhir (Ahir) | 27. Khadah |
| 4. Aajna | 28. Khati |
| 5. Amra | 29. Khava |
| 6. Ihram (Ishram) | 30. Khasa |
| 7. Eyar | 31. Khileri |
| 8. Isharwal | 32. Khichar |
| 9. Uttalkal | 33. Khara |
| 10. Udani | 34. Khokhar |
| 11. Godara | 35. Khor |
| 12. Enchra | 36. Khoth |
| 13. Eren | 37. Garg |
| 14. Audia | 38. Gatt |
| 15. Karwasar | 39. Gawal |
| 16. Karir | 40. Geela |
| 17. Kalwania | 41. Gujela |
| 18. Kanswa | 42. Guresar |
| 19. Kakar | 43. Gooru |
| 20. Kalirana | 44. Gor |
| 21. Kasania | 45. Kharingia |
| 22. Kasil | 46. Songara |
| 23. Kapasia | 47. Dholia |
| 24. Kuhar | 48. Baner |

People

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------|
| 49. Gobhil | 77. Delu |
| 50. Goyal | 78. Dhandhnia |
| 51. Goyat | 79. Dhaka |
| 52. Gora | 80. Dukia |
| 53. Chandel | 81. Tanwar |
| 54. Changhar (Chuttar) | 82. Tega |
| 55. Chahar | 83. Tard |
| 56. Chautia | 84. Tundal |
| 57. Chauhan | 85. Tetarwal |
| 58. Jawar | 86. Thalor |
| 59. Jatrana | 87. Jhori |
| 60. Jagu | 88. Daya |
| 61. Jakhar | 89. Diloya |
| 62. Jaguda | 90. Dagesar |
| 63. Jani | 91. Dedu |
| 64. Jiwal | 92. Dewara |
| 65. Jhang | 93. Dotar |

66. Jhalla	94. Dhatarwal
67. Jhuria	95. Dhann
68. Jhadkan	96. Dhayal
69. Jhohar	97. Dharania
70. Tandi	98. Nara/Nai
71. Tuhia	99. Nirwan
72. Tulya	100. Naine
73. Toklia	101. Panwar
74. Dagar	102. Parrihar
75. Dara	103. Pathan
76. Dudi	104. Parwal

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105. Patodia	133. Bhadu
106. Palaria	134. Bhutta
107. Purwar	135. Bhojawat
108. Puhiya	136. Munda
109. Punia	137. Matwala
110. Potalia	138. Mala
111. Bajaj	139. Mahiya
112. Bachhial	140. Manjhu

113. Batesar	141. Machra (Majra)
114. Bard	142. Matwi
115. Bulkia	143. Mal
116. Balawat	144. Maliwal
117. Bagria	145. Mund
118 Bana	146. Meda
119. Barat	147. Mehla
120. Baghala	148. Moga
121. Bajria	149. Mohil
122. Bajna	150. Rathore
123. Basania	151. Rayal
124. Beechu	152. Rao
125. Burdak	153. Rahar
126. Buria	154. Rewar
127. Bola	155. Rohj
128. Bhuwal	156. Lalesar
129. Bhutt	157. Lambha
130. Bhambhu	158. Lega
131. Bhakhar	159. Lol
132. Bhadera	160. Lohmaror

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161. Badiyar	176. Sirghark
162. Vanial	177. Sirdya
163. Vara	178. Sihgar
164. Veedasara	179. Seewar
165. Vilonia	180. Seewanl
166. Verwal	181. Seelak
167. Sarak	182. Sisodia
168. Sahu	183. Suthar
169. Sarawak	184. Sunar
170. Sai	185. Sewda
171 Sankhla	186. Soda
172. Sanwak	187. Sardu
173. Saran	188. Sothar
174. Singhal	189. Hada
175. Siwarkhia	190. Huda

Besically, Bishnois are excellent cultivators who plough their fields with the help of camels and bullocks. Besides, they are going to other professions such as judiciary, army, police and civil service. Some of them are famous politicians touching national level. Many of them include educationists and advocates.

Scheduled Castes

In India, there are many classes, which are socially backward and economically weaker. A schedule or list of these castes was prepered on the orders of the President of India. Such socially backward and economically weaker castes which have been given a place in this list or schedule are called Scheduled Castes. In the long past these people were treated badly due to their social backwardness. The people of such castes were called untouchables. So untouchability was

prevailing in those days in the country in one form or the other. In this context, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar is quoted, "Untouchability among the Hindus is an unusual phenomena; in no other part of the world mankind has ever experienced it and in other societies of the world there is no such thing as untouchability".

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To raise the economic and social condition, govt. of India formulated a policy and schedule of these castes was prepared, the Scheduled Castes have been defined in Article 341 of the Constitution of India. Gandhi ji called these persons '*Harijans*'. The Scheduled Castes in Haryana are listed below :-

1. Ad-Dharami
2. Bengali
3. Barar, Burar or Berar
4. Batwal
5. Bauria - Bawaria
6. Bazigar
7. Balmiki, Chura or Bhangi
8. Banjra
9. Chamar, Jatia Chamar, Regar, Raigar, Ramdasi or Ravi dasi
10. Chanal

11. Dagi
12. Dhanak
13. Dumna, Mahasha or Doom
14. Darain
15. Dohgri, Dhangri or Sigg
16. Gagra
17. Gandhila or Gandil
18. Kabirpanthi or Julaha
19. Khatik
20. Kori,Koli
21. Marija or Mareeha (Yaricha)
22. Mazhabi
23. Megh
24. Nat
25. Od

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26. Pasi
27. Perna
28. Pherera
29. Sanhai

30. Sanhal
- 31 .Sensi, Bhedkut or Manese
32. Sapela
33. Satera(Saresh)
34. Sikligar
35. Sirkibund
36. Sansoi

Population of Scheduled Castes

During 1991 Census, the above noted Scheduled Castes had been recorded in Haryana. The total strength of the Scheduled Castes was 32,50,933 (males 17,47,821 and 15,03,112 females) accounting for 19.75 percent of the total population of the State. A total number of Scheduled Castes (26,75,277) lived in rural areas; out of them, there, were 14,38,290 males whereas 12,36,987 females. In urban areas the total population of these persons was 5,75,656 (males 3,09,531 and 2,66,125 females).

Hissar district had the highest number of Scheduled Castes population (4,28,072) and Mahendragarh district with Scheduled Castes population of 1,05,410 had the smallest population which came to 3.24 per cent. The district -wise population as per 1991 census is as follows :—

District Population

Total Males Females

1 2 3 4

Ambala 2,56,775 1,37,562 1,19,213

Yamunanagar 2,05,155 1,09,691 95,464

Kurukshetra 1,26,918 67,670 59,248

Kaithal 1,75,977 95,691 80,286

Karnal 1,77,364 95,610 81,754

Panipat 1,49,104 80,614 68,490

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1 2 3 4

Sonipat 1,34,682 72,945 61,737

Rohtak 3,32,872 1,80,474 1,52,398

Faridabad 2,37,203 1,29,529 1,07,674

Gurgaon 1,55,720 83,645 72,075

Rewari 1,20,317 63,178 57,139

Mahendragarh 1,05,410 54,627 50,783

Bhiwani 2,16,162 1,15,800 1,00,362

Jind 1,88,409 1,02,791 85,618

Hissar 4,28,072 2,30,018 1,98,054

Sirsa 2,40,793 1,27,976 1,12,817

Total : 32,50,933 17,47,821 15,03,112

Among tahsils, highest number of Scheduled Castes population¹ was in Jagadhri tahsil (1,78,860) of Yamunanagar district and the lowest in Hathin tahsil (15,394) of Faridabad district. Similarly, among community blocks, this number was the highest in Jagadhri (67,253) and the smallest in Morni (2,152). In urban areas, the highest concentration of Scheduled Castes population was in Faridabad Complex (73,993) which is class-I town and is the biggest industrial complex attracting unskilled workers from neighbouring areas.

The account of a few castes is given below:-

Balmikis

Balmikis were scavengers and sweepers. Even today a large number of families are following their old profession in urban areas. In rural areas they work as labourers and agricultural labourers. The Government is making much efforts to raise their social and economic position. Now youths are turning towards Government service and other branches of modern professions. They have their own *sabhas* to protect their rights.

Their *gotras* are numerous. Some of them are quoted here Bidhlan, Sarwan, Chauhan, Tanwar and Jetia, They also rear pigs, goats and sheep. The education has yet to make much headway among the caste.

They are followers of Rishi Balmiki. In Hissar district, some of the families extend special worship of Lalbeg or Lal Guru. They consider that Rishi Balmiki was a disciple of Lal Guru or Lalbeg.

1. At the time of printing, as per 2001 Census the figures of population of Scheduled Castes were not available with the Census Department.

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Bawarias

Bawarias are unevenly scattered in Haryana. They are mainly found in Rewari, Mahendragarh, Bhiwani, Hissar and Sirsa districts. In olden days their position was not good. The Britishers noted some unlawful activities. But today they are in Government service. They also render agricultural labour. Many of them are joining army and police services. Besides

other *gotras*, Chauhan is found among them. They are attracting towards education.

Many of them are fond of hunting. Some of the families are also conscious about their standard of living.

Bazigars

They belong to a gypsy tribe. They are jugglers and acrobats and are in a good majority in Sirsa district. Many of them are agricultural labourers. The youths are attracting towards Government service.

Bazigars specially rever their Guru Makeem Shah. The religious gathering of Bazigars is held at Rania for 4 days during June-July¹.

Chamars

The term Chamar is an occupational term. Besides their old profession of shoe-making , they have shifted to Govt. service. The Government is encouraging them to set up small industries. A very few people own land (only small patches) in Loharu and Bawani Khera tahsils of Bhiwani district. The majority of them cultivate land as tenants. Some are holding good position in Govt. service while others are serving the country as petty officials. Despite the fact their economic condition has in general, not improved upto the expectations. Many families are living from hand to mouth. Their standard of living is yet to rise.

The Chamars in Haryana State, particularly in Bhiwani district are divided into four sections; Chandors or Deswali Chamars; Koli, Bhambhi and Jatia or Jatav. Kolis are found in Bhiwani and Jhumpa. Bhambhis are found in Siwani and Rajpuria Bas. Jatia or Jatav are met in Bhiwani. In other areas of the State the above sections are too found. Jantias are found in majority in Rewari. They tend to prepare different kinds of shoes.

There are no social barriers among sub-castes and inter-caste marriages take place.

The *gotras* of the Chamars are numerous; a few of them are given here : Behmini, Dahiya, Sehwat, Gothwal, Borwal, Ahlawat, Tanwar, Sehjan, Punia, Rathee, Mehra, Kathiwal, Alaria, Singhle, Barola, Ranga, Bagotia, Chauhan and Chunbook.

1. According to legend, Baba Hari Singh was none else but Hari Singh Naluwa and is revered by Bazigars.

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They are the followers of saint Ravidas ji. This community is gaining political consciousness recently.

Dhanaks

Dhanaks are unevenly distributed in the Haryana State. Besides labourers, they are attracting towards Govt. service. They are politically conscious to some extent.

Nayaks

Like Bawarias, Nayaks or Aheris was a hunting class in the past. They are still good of hunting . Besides Govt. service, they are labourers.

Sapelas

There is another class of wandering tribes known as sapelas or Saperas. Some of them have settled permanently in Rania, Bharolanwali and Sirsa and the head of the family goes alone for his pursuit even now. The Sapelas also prepare and sell certain indigenous medicines for curing snake bites.

Specific Study

Social Mores, Customs & Food Habits of the Social Groups of Theh Bahri Village

Location.— Theh Bahri is approached by a 6-kilometre long

metalled road from Rajaund, an important village on the Kaithal-Assandh road (State highway

No. 11), lying at a distance of 27 kilometres from Kaithal and 14 kilometres from Assandh. It is 41 kilometres from Jind, the tahsil, sub-divisional and district headquarters. The village is located at a distance of 70 kilometres from Karnal, the nearest city with all approach means, 67 kilometres from Kurukshetra, 64 kilometres from Panipat, 33 kilometres from Safidon and 29 kilometres from Pundri, with which it is directly connected via Rajaund.

Theh Bahri is bounded by village Bangran in the north, Rajaund, in the north-east, Thal in the east, Bahri in the south-east, Baghana in the south-west and Durana in the west.

History of the village.— Theh Bahri, as the name appears in the revenue records, is popularly known as Bir Theh Bahri or Khirkali in the surrounding area. It is said that before the creation of the Criminal Tribes Department in 1917, Bir Theh Bahri was a desolate (Theh) Jungle (Bir) of Bahri (the adjoining village towards the south-east). The land had a wild growth of *kikar* (*Acacia nilotica*), *dhak* (*Butea monosperma*), *kendu* (*Diospyros tomentosa*), *jal* (*Salvadora aleoides*), *jand* (*Prosopis*

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cineratia), *peepal* (*Ficus*), *bar* (*Ficus bengalensis*), *hins* (*Capparis zeylanica*), *arund* (*Riccinus*), *Karia* (*Capparis decidua*), *garanda* (*Carissa spinarum*) and *jhar* (*Zizyphus nummularia*). The land falling under the village area round about 1918 when the jungles were cleared and was acquired by the Criminal Tribes/ Agricultural Settlement was established in the village for Muslim Baluch a criminal tribe.

It is also said that there was a *kutch*a wall around the village habitat which had two gates in the east and west with large wooden doors (*khirkal*) and the movements of the tribe was restricted and closely watched by a Superintendent and an Assistant Superintendent of the said department who had their residences here. The village became popular with the name *khirkali* in the surrounding area due to the large wooden doors (*khirkal*) in the two gates of the village habitat.

The Bhedkuts, the Bawarias, the Sansis and the Tagu Brahmans, the present residents of village Theh Bahri, who were also Criminal Tribes in the Criminal Tribes Agricultural Settlements in Multan and Montgomery, were rehabilitated in the village by allotting them 5 to 10 acres of land on *batai* system. Jhinwar, Kumhar and Sunar households also settled in the village in the post-independence period.

The history of transformation of these hardened criminals and habitual offenders into normal citizens and the social and economic factors which brought them into national mainstream can be broadly divided into four periods as given below:—

(1) 1900-1923.—During the period, they were notorious for commission of crimes such as thefts, livestock stealing, burglaries, high-way robberies and other anti-social activities and used to lead a nomadic and predatory life. The Government of India enacted Criminal Tribes Act, III of 1911. Under this Act, certain tribes were declared as Criminal Tribes and restrictions were placed on their movements. Those settled in villages were required to report their presence to the headman of their respective village daily and they could not leave their villages without getting regular leave passes. In 1913, the Punjab Government appointed a Committee of two members (Raja Hari Kishan Kaul C.I.E. and Mr. L.L. Tomkins of the Indian Police) for the purpose of examining various administrative problems that presented themselves in connection with these tribes. The committee was required to suggest as to how the provisions of the above Act could be utilised in dealing with tribes of varying degree of criminality with a view to their reformation; to go into the question of opening reformatory settlements and to report on the industries on which the members of the tribes could be employed in order to determine how far it would be necessary to provide land for their maintenance. The committee commenced enquiries into the various complex problems and submitted its report in 1914. The committee recommended the opening of reformatory, industrial and

agricultural settlements for the members of these tribes. It also suggested to appoint a Special Welfare Officer

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who should control all the working connected with criminal tribes. On the basis of these recommendations, a separate department, known as the Criminal Tribes Department, was created sometime in 1917. The Head of the Department was designated as Deputy Commissioner for Criminal Tribes, Punjab.

(2) 1924-1951.—The Criminal Tribes Act 111 of 1911 was replaced by the Criminal Tribes Act, VI of 1924. The members of these tribes used to be arrested and removed to reformatory, industrial and agricultural settlements opened at various places by the Government where they were to be joined by their families, provided work and compelled to work for their living and had to educate their children. There were schools both for boys and girls in each settlement in which male and female teachers were employed by the department. Medical facilities were also available there at the expense of the department. Besides, a cooperative i.e shop was opened for each settlement where the inmates of the settlement used to buy their necessities of daily use. There was one reformatory settlement at Amritsar where hardened criminals of these tribes were detained for a period of 5 to 10 years. It was practically a jail. Industrial settlement were meant for criminals of lesser degree. The members of criminals tribes were provided work either in forests, factories or railway workshops. In agricultural settlements at various places, 10 acres of Government land was allotted free of cost to each member of the criminal tribes who had not been convicted of a non-bailable offence or absence during the last ten consecutive years. The members of these tribes were required to pay to the Government all land revenue,

assessed occupiers rates, cesses etc. in respect of that land. After the expiry of 15 years from the date of commencement of the tenancy, if the member of Criminal Tribes was not convicted of any offence under Chapter XVII of the Indian Penal Code or under the Criminal Tribes Act or any non-bailable offence or was not ordered under section 118 of the Criminal Procedure Code to execute a bond of good behaviour, he became entitled to the grant of occupancy rights under the Punjab Tenancy Act in the said lands. In the Reformatory Agricultural Settlement, lands were given to the members of the Criminal Tribes (who were not otherwise eligible for grant of land under the rules) on *batai* system and Government share was collected in form of produce. In the Reformatory School at Amritsar (Punjab), children of these tribes, between the ages of 9 and 19 years, were removed of for imparting education and industrial training. Each settlement was placed under the charge of an officer known as Superintendent and restrictions were placed on their movement, thus providing them a settled but isolated life.

(3) 1952-1987.—With the dawn of Independence, the Criminal Tribes Act, VI of 1924, which was monstrous from the democratic views insofar as it restricted the personal movements and freedom of a section of the citizens of the country was

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repealed in 1952, consequent upon the recommendations of the committee appointed by the Government of India and all restrictions on their personal movements and freedom were lifted. With the repeal of the Act, the work connected with the education, economic and social uplift of Criminal Tribes came to be the responsibility of the states so that there should be continuity in welfare activities in this respect. These tribes

came to be known as ex-criminal tribes after the repeal of the Act but this nomenclature was resented by the tribes themselves both in the Parliament and on the platform. The natural corollary therefrom was that these tribes came to be known as 'denotified' and in course of time known as Vimukt Jatis. Thus during the period they were leading a free and normal life as Government tenants.

(4) 1988 onward.—The Government of Haryana decided on 30th March, 1988 to confer proprietary rights on the Government land in favour of the allottees in Theh Bahri village. Thus, the members of these castes might lead an honourable life as peasant proprietors. This shows a total and complete change in their life style from that of a criminal vagabond to a peace loving, well-settled land owner.

The list of denotified communities in the composite Punjab reads as follows: (1) Bangali (2) Barar (3) Bauria or Bawaria (4) Nat (5) Gandhila (6) Tagu Brahman of Karnal district (7) Dhinwara of Gurgaon district (8) Minas of Gurgaon district (9) Bhora Brahmans of Kangra district (10) Mahtams of police station Mamdot and Fazilka of Ferozepur district and (11) Sansi (including subcastes, Kutchband, Bhedkut, Mahesh, Godri, Rechhbana, Kepet, Aharia, Tettlu, Bheria, Bhantu, Arhar, Bhatut, Chattu, Babura, Kikan, Harrar, Mehla, Rehwala, Biddu, Lengeh, Singiwala, Kalkhar, Mirasadkari, Bhagiarmar, Singiakat, Dhe, Chaddi or Chadi, Biehalia, Pakhiwara, Baddon, Harni).

The villages solely inhabited by these tribes are Theh Bahri (the village under study) in Jind district and Bir Bidalwa, Deputywala Bidalwa and Bir Bhandari in Karnal district.

Ethnic Composition

Bhedkuts.—Bhedkuts numbering 160 households and 909 persons including 473 males and 436 females and accounting for 69.92 (approximately 70 per cent) of the total village population constituted the single largest group, forming the backbone of the village economy. They are members of Vimukt Jatis and also appear in the list of Scheduled Castes in Haryana State. They came from Pakistan in Theh Bahri in the wake of Partition of India in 1947. Among 160 households belonging to them, 152 hailed from Multan district and 8 households from Montgomery district of Punjab in Pakistan. Fifty two households of Bhedkuts including a village chowkidar and a barber of their caste were rehabilitated in Theh Bahri by the Criminal Tribes

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Department and later on by the State Social Welfare Department in 1953 after the repeal of the Criminal Tribes Act, 1924 in 1952 and reorganisation of the Criminal Tribes Department by giving 10 acres of land per family to 42 households, between 5 to 10 acres per family to 7 households and less than 5 acres per family to 3 households on annual lease basis on one-third *batai* system.

Bhedkut is said to be an accretion of the Sansi tribe. Various legends describe the origin of the Sansi tribe. According to Rose*, "In Sialkot", it is said that once a Raja of the Punjab expelled his daughter from his city. Wandering in the wastes, she gave birth to Sansi, who became a free booter and had two sons Bhaindu and Mahla, from whom are descended the 23 Sansi *gots*. But in Gujrat, Sansis claim descent from Raja Sahns Mal, a nomad of the Lakhi Jangal. In Lahore, Sahns Mal is reported to be a Raja of the highlands of Central India, who was deposed and banished for leprosy. According to Jhang version, the Sansis are of Punwar Rajput origin. From mahla, his eldest son, sprang the 12 *Sansi gots*, while Bhaindu, his second son, had 11 sons, from whom are descended the Kikans and Bhedkuts. Bhedkut means sheep killer, because these Sanis, when they stole a sheep strangled it instantly to prevent it bleating. Sahns Mal, Mahla and Bhidhu are also propitiated as defied ancestors prone to exert an evil influence on the descendant, who incurred their displeasure." Although Bhedkuts are an offshoot of Sansi and have been grouped together as a single caste under the group 'Sansil Bhedkut or 'Mahesh' in the list of Scheduled Castes, they do not inter-marry.

In Teh Bahri, Bhedkts style themselves as Hindus, believing in all gods and goddesses of Hindu pantheon and are clean

shaven. In actual practice, they display a curious and happy combination of Hindu and Sikh faiths. They have provided a Gurdwara in the village by installing *Guru Granth Sahib* in an old mosque, which is looked after by a priest of their own caste. In addition to all Hindu festivals, they also celebrate *Sangrands* and *Gurpurbs* in the Gurdwara with equal enthusiasm and solemnise marriage by *Anand Karaj* ceremony according to Sikh rites. They also invoke their dead ancestors when they want some wish to be fulfilled or to overcome some calamity faced by the household and promise to sacrifice a goat and to offer some bottles of liquor in their names.

Bhedkuts in the village are divided into two clans, namely, Mahla and Bhidu who inter-marry. Some exogamous grouping also exists in each of these two clans which function like *gotra*. The exogamous grouping of Mahla clan in Theh Bahri comprises Dhir or Dhiriya, Jhanwariya, Mahla, Nahriya, Naiyka, Nanda, Sabhaniya and Tamaichi and Bhidu clan consists of Bhana, Duniyan, Ghammadi, Ghassi,

* *A Glossary of the Tribes and Castes of the Punjab and North-West Frontier Province*, Volume III, compiled by H.A. Rose, Language Department Punjab, Reprint, 1970, pages 363-364

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Maachhar and Popat. For negotiating marriages, the names of exogamous groupings are reported to be scrutinised and it is customary not to marry in one's own clan. Local endogamy and cross-cousin marriages are reported to be favoured but parallel cousin marriages are tabooed. In a few cases, marriages by exchange were also reported but they satisfied the condition of clan exogamy. There are no love marriages. The selection of the match rests with the parents whose will prevails over those of children. Usually the proposal comes from boy's parents. Bride price was reported to exist and its

monetary value ranged between Rs. 2,000 and Rs. 2,500. About two decades ago, child marriages were quite frequent among Bhedkuts but the custom has, however, been given up. A difference of 1 to 3 years is kept between the ages of the boy and girl. The custom of both junior and senior levirate prevails in the caste, depending on the mutual consent of the likely spouses. If a child less than 5 years dies, it is buried but a dead person above this age is cremated.

The houses of Bhedkuts are both *kutchha* and *pucca* structures and consist of one or two rooms with a courtyard. Fifty per cent households lived in *kutchha* houses, 31 per cent households resided in semi *pucca* houses with *pucca* walls and *kutchha* roofs and the remaining 10 per cent households stayed in *pucca* houses with *pucca* walls and *pucca* roofs.

Insofar as their economic life is concerned, majority of Bhedkuts are working as cultivators and agricultural labourers. Some of them are engaged in labour, construction and transport activities such as rickshaw pulling, motor driving, tonga driving and buffalo cart driving and a few of them follow miscellaneous occupations such as shopkeeper, teacher, flour miller, registered medical practitioner, priest in gurdwara, chowkidar etc. Temporary outmigration to the rural areas of Bathinda district of Punjab State, of their sizeable population for working as agricultural labourers for picking cotton from mid-October to mid-January every year is a recurring feature of their economic life. Usually they leave the village after Dussehra festival and return to their houses before Lohri festival.

Sansis.- "Sansis own 23 households¹ with a population of 137 persons: 74 males and 63 females. They form the second biggest group in the village, accounting for 10.54 per cent of the total population of the village. They are also one of the Vimukt Jatis and a Scheduled Caste in Haryana State. Of the 23 households, 18 have migrated from Pakistan (12 from Multan and 6 from Montgomery districts of Punjab). Among the remaining 5 households, 3 have migrated from Patiala district and 2 from Ludhiana district of the neighbouring Punjab State. Ten households of Sansis were rehabilitated in Theh Bahri by the Criminal Tribes Department and later on by the State Social Welfare Department by giving 10 acres of land per family to 7 households

1. The figure are based on the Census Handbook of India (Haryana), 1981.

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and between 5 and 10 acres of land per family to 2 households and less than 5 acres of land to one household on annual lease at one-third *batai* basis".

The origin of the Sansis tribe has been described in detail in the preceding note on Bhedkuts. Sansis profess Hinduism as their religion. They invoke their dead ancestors when they want some wish to be fulfilled or to get rid of some trouble or disease and promise to sacrifice a goat or cock or to offer a cauldron of cooked rice or some quantity of *laddoo* sweets or *karah* dish in their names. They also specially propitiate Lalanwala Pir for similar purposes, to whom they have dedicated a small shrine in the eastern outskirts of the village. Shitla Mata, the goddess of small pox, which has *sthan* (place of worship) in the western part of the village habitation, is worshipped by them on the occasion of Navratras.

The Sansis in Theh Bahri are divided into three clans, namely, Bhidu, Mahla and Chhaole. Some exogamous grouping exists within each clan. Exogamous grouping of Bhidu clan in their households consists of Bhidu, Kaarkhal, Kalsi and Shivaji *gots*, and Mahla clan comprises Mahla, Bhains and Nat *gots* and Chhaole clan covers Chhaole, Chhaadi and Daraaj *gots*. A man does not marry a woman of the same patronymic grouping to which his father belongs. Local endogamy and cross cousin marriages are allowed but parallel cousin marriages are prohibited. The system of marriages by exchange also obtains but the percentage of such marriages is very low. The custom of both junior and senior levirate prevails among the caste. Marriage by elopement is looked down upon. Though old people still believe in child marriage, the younger generation is increasingly in favour of adult marriages. A difference of 1 to

2 years is kept in the ages of the groom and the bride. The proposal for marriage may come from either party but the custom of bride price is reported to be absent among them. Marriage is solemnised by *phere* (circumambulation) ceremony round the sacred fire and is officiated by a Brahman priest called from the neighbouring village of Bahri or Bangran. A dead child upto 5 years of age is buried and a dead person above this age is cremated.

Sansis mostly live in *pucca* or semi *pucca* houses. Thirty six per cent households live in *pucca* houses with *pucca* walls and *pucca* roofs, 21 per cent households stay in semi *pucca* houses with *pucca* walls and *kutcha* roofs while the remaining 43 per cent households stay in *kutcha* houses with *kutcha* walls and *kutcha* roofs

A study of their economic life reveals that majority of them are engaged in cultivation and agricultural labour. A few of them are also working as rickshaw puller, grocer, vegetable vendor, carpenter, blacksmith, chowkidar and *sewadar* in the village *dera*. Many of the Sansis outmigrate temporarily to the rural areas of Bathinda district of the adjoining Punjab State to work as agricultural labourers from mid October to mid-January every year.

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Bawarias.- Like Bhedkuts and Sansis, Bawarias, also known as Baurias, are members of a Vimukat Jati and constituted one of the Scheduled Castes in Haryana State. They claim 15 households in the village with a population of 110, consisting of 59 males and 51 females. They represented 8.46 per cent of the total village population as per 1981 census. All the 15 households hailed from Multan district of Punjab in Pakistan and migrated to Theh Bahri after partition of India. Eight households of Bawaria caste were rehabilitated by the

Criminal Tribes Department in Theh Bahri in the post independence period and later on by the State Welfare Department by giving them 10 acres of land per family on annual lease at one-third *batai* basis.

Regarding the origin of this tribe, Rose* stated, "Besides the derivation from *bawar* (a snare with which they used to catch wild animals), which is the one usually given, Mr. Williams records other traditions, as to the origin of the name 'Bauria'. According to one, the emperor Akbar demanded a *dola* from Saudal, Raja of Chitor and on the latter's refusal, a battle was fought in which some of the warriors were engaged near a *baoli* or well. Those on the Rajput side were called Baolias or Bawalias. A third explanation is that after the capture of Chitor, a youngman of one of the tribes which had taken to the jungles saw and loved a Rajput maid of good lineage. They were married but the youngman returned to jungle life and was called *Baola* (imbecile) by the bride's relatives for doing so or on account of his uncouth manner".

The *gotras* of Bawarias resemble with Rajput names. Eleven out of 13 house-holds belong to Chauhan *gotra* and the remaining 2 of Panwar *gotra*. Among Bawarias, a man cannot marry a woman of the same patronymic *gotra* to which his father or mother belongs and as such cross-cousin and parallel cousin marriages are tabooed. Local endogamy is permissible. Marriage by exchange is looked down upon. The custom of both junior and senior levirate prevails among them. The proposal for marriage may come from either party but there is no custom of bride price. Some households solemnise marriage by performing *Anand Karaj* ceremony according to Sikh rites while others perform it by *phere* (circumambulation) ceremony round the sacred fire, according to Vedic rites. If a child upto 5 years dies, it is buried while a dead person above this age is cremated.

Bawarias are Hindus by religion. They specially worship Gugga pir or Zahir Pir (Saint apparent) and possess the power to cure a snake bite. As they also make offering to Hindu deities and Sikh Gurus.

* *A Glossary of the Tribes and Castes of the Punjab and North-West Frontier Province*, Volume II compiled by H.A. Rose, Language Department, Punjab, Reprint-1970, page-73.

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Bawarias mostly live in semi *pucca* houses. Almost 10 per cent households live in *pucca* houses with *pucca* walls and *pucca* roofs, 60 per cent households reside in semi *pucca* houses with *pucca* walls and *kutchha* roofs and 30 per cent households stay in *kutchha* houses with *kutchha* walls and *kutchha* roofs.

A study of the economic life of Bawarias reveals that majority of them are engaged in cultivation. A few of them are working as agricultural labourers, tonga drivers and rickshaw pullers. Like Bhedkuts and Sansis, Bawarias also undergo seasonal migration from mid-October to mid-January every year to the rural areas of Batinda district of Punjab State for working as agricultural labourers.

Tagu Brahmans.—Belonging to a Vimukta Jati, Tagu Brahmans had

5 households in the village having 24 members with 16 males and 8 females. They share 1.84 per cent of the total population of the village. They migrated to the village from Pakistan-3 households from Multan district and 2 from Montgomery district of West Punjab. Four of their households were allotted 10 acres of Government land per family by the State Social Welfare Department on annual lease basis in 1953. They belong to Bharadwaj, Kushal and Mudgil *gotras*.

According to D. C. Verma, "The Tagas (Tagus) are of Brahman origin. Those who gave up priestly profession and took to agriculture came to be known by this designation. Their origin dates to the celebration of snake sacrifice of Janamejaya held at Safidon in Jind district. The *Karnal District Gazetteer* has mentioned that as there were no Gaurs in this country at the time. Janamejaya summoned many from beyond the sea. Those who did not accept money rewards for their services were awarded a hundred and eighty four villages in the parts. When they decided not to take offerings in future, they came to be known as 'Tagas' or 'Tagus'. Those

who accepted ordinary offerings became Gaur Brahmans. Both retained their division in 10 clans and hence are called 'Dasnam Brahmans'. The Tagas wear the sacred thread but Brahmans will not intermarry or eat with them."

They are Hindus by religion and command the highest social status in the village community. All the six households are engaged in cultivation. A member of the community is Sarpanch of the village panchayat and is an active social worker. Their housing condition is comparatively the best in the village. Out of 5 houses owned by them, 4 are *pucca* or semi *pucca* and 1 is *kutchha*.

Among Tagu Brahmans, a man does not marry a woman of the same patronymic *gotra* to which his father, mother, father's mother or mother's mother belongs. A widower can remarry but a widow remarriage is not favoured. Marriage is solemnised strictly in accordance with the Vedic rites by circumambulating round the sacred fire

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and is officiated by a Brahman called from the neighbouring village of Bahri or Bangran. A dead person is cremated but a child below 5 years is buried.

Jhinwars.— Jhinwar or a water carrier caste has also been recognised as one of the Backward Classes in Haryana State. There are 36 Jhinwars (22 males and 14 females) in the village, who are distributed in 3 households. They account for 2.77 per cent of the total population of the village. They hail from village Sirsil in Karnal district and belong to Chauhan *gotra*. One of their households was allotted 2 acres of land for service as a village menial, on annual lease basis in 1953 by the State Social Welfare Department. One of the households is engaged in cultivation, another is agricultural

labour, while the head of the third household is a motor driver. Two households reside in semi *pucca* houses and one in *kutchha* house.

Jhinwars are Hindus. A Jhinwar does not marry a woman of the same patronymic *gotra* to which his father, mother or father's mother belongs. Marriage between cross cousins and parallel cousins is tabooed. Since all the three households belong to the same *gotra*, the village forms an exogamous unit for them. Junior levirate is customary. Marriage is solemnised by *phere* (circumambulation) round the sacred fire, which is officiated by a Brahman priest of Bangran village. A dead child upto 5 years is buried but a dead person above this age is cremated.

Residential Pattern .— One hundred households having 524 members (285 males and 239 females) live in equal number of houses containing 175 rooms. It emerges that on an average a house consists of about two rooms and about 3 persons share one room among themselves which indicates that the accommodation available to the household can by no means be regarded as adequate, especially when households goods, grains and kitchenwares are also to be stored in the same space. Forty-four per cent of the households live in houses having only one room each which is shared on an average by 4.6 persons. Forty per cent households reside in houses having two rooms each which are occupied on an average by 5.5 inmates. Thirteen per cent of the households live in houses consisting of three rooms each occupied on an average by 6.5 persons and the remaining 3 per cent of the households stay in houses comprising four rooms each shared on an average by 6.3 persons.

Each house has a big enclosed compound attached to it which is used as a sitting place by the family members and for tethering cattle during the day time and also for storing implements, water vessel, fodder, fuel and other odd equipments. A cattleshed is provided in the compound by households owning livestock. Only 6 percent of the households have provided a separate kitchen (10x10) in the compound near the main living room. About 20 well off households have constructed a separate *baithak* (men's sitting apartment) in the facade of the building, through which access

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is gained by family members. There are no regular bath rooms or lavatories provided in the houses, as only one household in the village, belonging to a Bhedkut headmaster, is reported to have a separate provision for these amenities. Men bathe either at the village well or in the open compounds, where 23 households have also installed handpumps. Women bathe either under the cover of a cot or behind closed doors when the men are out. Children taking bath in the canal minor is also a common sight. All persons, young and old, go to the fields to answer the call of nature, generally near the canal minor where they get both privacy and water. Fifty four per cent houses are electrified.

The residents have no preference for any direction which their main living rooms or the front of their houses must face but a house is never faced towards the west because it is associated with the setting sun. The plinth is raised $\frac{1}{2}$ foot to 2 feet above the ground level, depending on the *kutchha* or *pucca* construction. It is higher in the case of *pucca* houses than that in the *kutchha* houses. Floors are generally *kutchha* and are periodically given a coat of a mixture of cow dung and mud. The dimension of a room is generally 14'x12' or 12'x12'. Height of the room is 12 feet in *pucca* houses and 10 feet in *kutchha* houses. In most cases, the roof is made of beams and rafters of *chil*, *kail*, *saal*, *aam* or *safeda* wood with an overall covering of thin flat wooden pieces called *phattis*, a sheet knitted with the tops of the *sarkanda* sticks known as *sirki* and mud mixed with straw. In *pucca* roofs, the wooden beam and rafters are covered with tiles or stone slabs pasted with cement and an overall covering of earth. In about 10 houses, iron girders have been substituted for wooden beams. Only 8 houses in the village have RBC/RCC roofs. Windows and ventilators are a feature of the newly built *pucca* houses only. In *kutchha* houses, round or rectangular holes are provided in the front or rear wall which serve as ventilators.

Burnt bricks are available at the brick kiln in village Rajaund. *Kutchha* bricks are moulded by paid labourers and dried in the

sun. A labourer charges thirty rupees for moulding one thousand bricks. *Kutch*a bricks are moulded either in the months of *Magha* and *Poh* after the sowing of *rabi* crop or in the month of *Phalgun*, when again the season is slack before the harvesting of *rabi* crop. Beams, rafters, stone slabs, iron and cement are purchased from the markets of Kaithal, Assandh and Jind. For constructing a *kutch*a house, one mason and two labourers are engaged for three days. The masons and labourers are locally available. The mason charges thirty rupees¹ per day in addition to free tea and lunch as his daily wage, while a labourer is paid fifteen rupees per day and is served with one tumbler of tea.

1. The figures and account are based on the survey work carried out in 1981.

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A *kutch*a house consisting of 2 rooms is reported to cost about 3,600 rupees. The detail of cost of one *kutch*a room is reported as given below :—

Wooden beam —1 Rs. 550

Wooden rafters — 22 Rs. 660

Wooden *phatti*-2 quintals Rs. 180

Wooden door —1 Rs. 250

Wages of one mason for 3 days Rs. 90

Wages of 3 labourers for 3 days Rs. 90

Total : Rs. 1,820

A Bhedkut, who is a headmaster in a school, has constructed

a *pucca* house at a cost of Rs. 85,000 which contains two bed rooms, one dining room, a verandah, a kitchen, a bath room, a lavatory, a cattle shed and the three walls covering the courtyard. He started the construction of the house in 1982 and completed it in 1987.

Dress and Ornaments

Dress.— The dress of the people is simple and the clothes are mostly made from the coarse mill made cloth, purchased from the cloth merchants of Assandh, Jind, Kaithal or Rajaund and stitched by the local tailors. The dress of an adult male consists of a *Kurta* (shirt), a *chaadra* (2½ metres long and 1½ metres wide waist cloth) or *pyjama* (trousers) and a *pugri* (5 metres long turban) or *parna* also *saafa* (2 metres long piece of coarse cloth used as a headgear). Young boys wear *kamiz* (shirt) and *pyjama* (trousers) in place of *kurta* and *chaadra* and are found bareheaded. A few well-to-do villagers working outside the village and a few students studying in higher classes dress themselves with shirts and pants. Almost every male wears a vest and an underwear. Rubber chappals or *Jutti* (ordinary country made leather shoes) form the popular footwear of males. Costly leather boots, *chappals* and *gurgabis* (unlaced shoes) are worn only by well to do and educated males. During winter, male members of all castes wrap themselves in *chadar* (a sheet of thick cotton cloth stitched double or single), *khesi* (a cotton plaid) or *kambal* (an inferior blanket). Woollen coats and sweaters are also put on by well-to-do and educated males to ward off cold.

The traditional dress of a female consists of a *kurti* (shirt) and *salwar* (baggy trousers) made of different cloth, having different colours and a *dupatta* or *chunni* (scarf) to cover the head and shoulders. However, the younger generation of females in the village is increasingly getting used to *jumper* and *salwar* made from the same cloth material. A few housewives belonging to well-to-do households also wear blouse,

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petticoat and *saree*. Women do not wear underwears and only a few of them put on bodices. Generally newly married women wear silken dress, while the clothes of all others are made of cotton cloth. Women folk generally spare two pair of dress for use at wedding and other festive occasions or while visiting the market or relatives. They are of better stuff, though not better tailored than the ordinary wear. Rubber chappals, slippers of rubber tyre and *sandals* are the common type of footwear used by womenfolk of the village. There hardly exists any sartorial difference in the wearing apparel of the villagers on the basis of caste. However, whatsoever, difference is visible in their dress, corresponds to the economic and social status of the people. Rich and educated persons wear relatively better quality of clothes and have greater variety of garments for change.

Ornaments.— Males do not use any ornaments, except finger rings and that too are worn only by a few males belonging to well off households. Females are enamoured of light jewellery, usually made of yellow metal. A list of ornaments worn by women, the part of the body adorned metal used and approximate weight is given below:—

Ornament Part of the Metal used Approximate body adorned weight

Suian clips Head Silver 1 *Tola*

Tikka Forehead Gold 6 *Mashas*

Pendal Neck Gold 1 *Tola*

Gaani Neck Gold 1 ½ to 2 *Tolas*

Zanjeer Neck Gold 6 *Mashas*

Locket Neck Gold 6 *Mashas*

Haar Neck Gold 1 *Tola*

Mohar Neck Gold 1 *Tola*

Koka Nose Gold 6 Rattis

Nath Nose Gold 3 Mashas

Balian Ears Gold 6 to 9 Mashas

Kundal Ears Gold 6 Mashas

Kante Ears Gold ½ to 1 Tola

Chhap Finger Gold or 3 Mashas
Silver

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Churian Wrist Gold 2 ½ Tolas

Chura Wrist Lac ---

Shakuntla Chain Ankles Silver 8 Tolas

Paazeb Ankles Silver 10 to 12 Tolas

Bichhwa Toe Silver 3 Mashas

Household Goods .— Except for a few wall calendars or photographs of some saints and deities here and there, the interiors of houses contain mostly utilitarian goods. Clothes are kept in iron boxes, locally known as *sandook* and *paitti*. Grains are stocked in sacks, iron drums or earthen *bharolis* (large receptacles often rectangular in shape) but flour is kept in iron *tankis* (boxes) or tin canisters. Water is stored mostly in earthen pitchers, iron buckets and in some cases in pitcher shaped brass pots, locally known as *banta* or *gagar*. Handmill (*chakki*) for grinding flour, *jharna* (sieve), *khali* (the wooden mortar), *ukhal* or *moosal* (large wooden pestle), a reel, *kulhara*, *kulharri* and *gandaasi* (type of axes) for splitting wood and a lamp or lantern are found almost in every house.

Koondi (a stone mortar), *moosali* (a small wooden pestle), an iron pan, fire tongs, blow pipe and other accessories are found lying in every kitchen. *Peerhis* (four legged wooden structures woven across cotton or *munj* ropes or cotton or plastic (*niwar*) and *patras* (flat wooden pieces with small legs are kept by many households and offered to the guests for sitting upon. As for other articles of furniture, villagers are guided by their utilitarian needs rather than by any social prestige that many attach to possession of any decorative furniture. They prefer cheap and durable furniture to showy and expensive one.

Food and Drinks.—In respect of eating habits, all castes in the village are reported to be non-vegetarian but due to economic pressure and high cost of living, the residents cannot afford to take meat daily. Meat is, however, cooked atleast once a week in almost all households. There is no butcher's shop in Theh Bahri and the meat is usually purchased from the roving butchers belonging to the neighbouring areas, who frequent this village with a live or slaughtered goat, sheep or pig. At times, an animal is sacrificed by a resident household for home consumption as well as for sale. A few persons of the Jhinwar caste of the nearby villages sometimes visit Theh Bahri for sale of fish. Poultry birds are reared by many households for eggs and meat.

Wheat is the staple food of the residents which they consume throughout the year but during the winter season, maize and *baira* (pearl millet) are commonly substituted for wheat. Other supplementary foodgrains consumed during the year are barley, gram and *jowar* (millet). Although paddy is a local produce but it is mostly

grown for the purpose of marketing and rice is consumed only on ceremonial and festive occasions or at the time of entertaining a guest by the common villagefolk and once or twice a month by well-to-do families.

Villagers consume alike vegetables and pulses. Pulses of *moong*, *masri*, *urd*, *moth* and *arhar* are grown in the village itself. The non-cultivating households purchase these from the village shops. Seasonal vegetables are grown by the farmers for domestic consumption. Three Bhedkuts and two Sansis are also working as green grocers in the village.

The residents take two meals a day, one in the morning between 9.00 a.m. and 10.00 a.m. and the other in the evening between 6.00 p.m. and 7.00 p.m. The morning meal consists of wheat *chapatis* with either pulse or some locally available vegetable and butter milk. If occasion so demands, the wheat *chapatis* may be taken with a paste of salt and chillies prepared in the form of a *chatni* (sauce). The evening meal consists of *chapatis* of wheat, maize or *bajra* flour depending on the season and taken with a pulse, vegetable or meat dish. During winter, green leaves of mustard mixed with those of gram, *methi* (fenugreek) and *palak* (spinach) are cooked frequently to make a vegetable preparation known as *saag*. *Khichri*, a hotchpotch of millets, *moth* and *moong* or *dalia* (porridge) is also cooked for a change. These are also used as a light diet that helps to increase appetite. Spices, ginger, garlic, onion and green chillies are also consumed by the residents. Pickles of mangoes, lemons and chillies are prepared by the housewives and taken during summer as a substitute of pulse or vegetable or as an additional item of food.

Most of the villagers use *desi ghee* as the cooking medium and for frying purpose. The use of vegetable oils is also becoming popular among the households, which do not rear milch animals and also cannot afford to purchase costly *pureghee*.

Karah, a preparation of wheat flour fried in *ghee* and treated with a thick syrup of sugar or jaggery, *kheer*, rice cooked in milk with sugar added, sweet rice and *senwian* (vermicelli) are their favourite sweet dishes prepared on festive occasions.

Insofar as drinks are concerned, tea as a stimulating drink has become very popular among the residents which is taken atleast twice a day, once in the morning between 6.00 a.m. and 7.00 a.m. and then in the afternoon between 3.00 p.m.

and 4.00 p.m. Milk and butter milk also constitute their favourite drinks. Milk is the last item consumed before sleep in summer as well as in winter by those who can afford it, while butter milk is mostly taken with the lunch by many residents. Local country made liquor is consumed freely in the evening and has become a matter of habit with a large number of male adult, the rich and poor alike. Smoking of *bidis* is a common feature of all castes in the village.

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Utensils used by the residents include a brass *patila* (kettle) for cooking vegetable or pulse; another steel or brass *patila* for boiling milk; an aluminium *patili* (small kettle) for preparing tea; *praat*, a brass basin for kneading flour; *karchhi*, a brass ladle for stirring and serving vegetable; *gilas*, a steel or brass tumbler for drinking water tea or milk; a brass *lota* or a brass or steel jug for servicing tea or water; *thaali*, a brass or steel plate for eating food; *thaal*, a brass platter for eating food, *kaulian*, small deep plates of brass, steel or bell metal for eating vegetable or pulse; *baati*, a large mouthed brass or steel pot and *katora*, a large mouthed bell metal cup for eating vegetable; *chhanna*, a bell metal container for taking milk or butter milk; a steel *donga* for serving meat, vegetable or pulse; *dolu*, a steel container with cover, for carrying tea or butter milk, *dabba*, a brass container for taking food to the fields; *banta*, a brass pitcher for storing water, *baalti*, an iron bucket for carrying water, *karahi*, a large cup shaped frying pan of brass or aluminium and *chamcha*, spoon for eating liquid food. Besides, earthen pitchers and earthen *haandis* are also used for storing water and simmering milk, respectively.

Customs and Practices Connected

with Birth, Marriage and Death

Birth .— Among Sansis, the first delivery, customarily occurs at the enceinte woman's paternal home and the subsequent ones take place at her husband's house but among all other castes, it is customary to have even the first delivery at her husband's place. Only in the cases of difficult and protracted deliveries, the woman is taken to the nearest Primary Health Centre at Rajaund. Any prenatal practices are hardly reported by all castes. It has been informed by the residents that the enceinte woman continues to perform all household duties upto the advanced stage of pregnancy and takes usual diet as cooked in the household but she is not made to do any arduous works involving exertion and lifting of heavy load as a precaution against miscarriage. For a month or two preceding confinement, she is also reported to put on a nutritive diet including an increased quantity of milk and *desi ghee*. There are two untrained *dais* (midwives) in the village belonging to Bhedkut and Sansi castes who attend to delivery cases, irrespective of the caste of the pregnant woman. When the gestation period of a woman draw to a close and she begins to feel labour pains, one of the midwives is called for obstetrical attendance. Normally two women of near kinship or *biradari* also assist at the time for accouchement. For the purpose of delivery, usually a separate place is arranged in the house and the male adults and children are tabooed to go near the parturient. The travailing mother is given hot milk emulsified with *desi ghee* to facilitate the child birth. At the time of parturition, the midwife severs the naval string with a sharp blade boiled in hot water and buries it along with the placenta within the house premises. She bathes and clothes the new born and washes the mother.

The birth of male child is preferred and rejoiced as compared to a female birth as it is believed to continue the ancestral line. If the new born is male, the midwife is given 101 rupees, 5 kilo grains and 1 kilo jaggery. At the birth of a girl, she gets only 10 rupees besides the usual payment of grains and jaggery. The birth of a son is announced with ringing of a bell metal plate in the room where delivery takes place. The entrance door of the house is decorated with twigs and leaves of *neem*, mango or *siris* tree by the sister who is paid a suit of clothes for this work. Women coming to greet the new born are regaled with candy drops.

The mother and the infant are guarded against evil influences. A knife or a piece of iron is kept below the mother's pillow or infant's cushion which is believed to scare away the malignant spirits and counteract the influence of the evil eye. One of the closest female relations or an elderly woman of the *biradari* provides postnatal care to the mother and the new born baby. The midwife massages the bodies of the mother and the baby for 6 days. For two days following delivery, the mother is fed on a thick syrup of jaggery, *desi ghee*, thyme seeds, cumin seeds taken with milk. For the next ten days, she is fed on light diet consisting of *dalia* (porridge), *halwa* (a preparation of wheat flour fried in *desi ghee* and treated with a thick syrup of sugar) and milk and thereafter for a month she takes *panjiri*, a sweet mixture of *desi ghee* and wheat flour, ginger, thyme seeds, aniseeds, *kikar* gum, dry fruits, etc. to re-coup her health. The baby continues sucking milk from his mother's breasts for about a year. Milk of goat, cow or buffalo is given to the infant only after it is six months old. The child is weaned from mother's milk by applying something bitter at the nipples. A diet of *chapatis* and pulses in small quantities is given to the child after it has become one year old and regular diet begins after the child has attained the age of two years.

The period of pollution lasts 6 days among Bhedkut and 7 days among Sansi and Tagu Brahman households and 21 days among Bawaria households, when the parturient remains inside the house. On this day, a purificatory ceremony is performed, a bath in hot water and attired in new clothes. The house is cleaned and the floors are smeared with a thick dilution of clay and cowdung. Gangajal, the water of the holy Ganges is sprinkled, incense is burnt and the deities are propitiated. The child's maternal uncle or mother's father brings clothes for the mother and the child, an ornament for

the child and *desi ghee* . The child is administered *janam ghutti*, honey or jaggery syrup (*gur ka ghol*), usually by the maternal uncle or by a person who is thought to be of good fortune and pleasant in temperament, with the belief that the child will acquire all qualities of that person. The naming ceremony is also performed on this day. *Halwa* dish or sweetmeats are distributed among the caste households. Relatives coming to see the child for first time give some present like a frock, a *chaddi* (a small breech), a toy or some cash according to their relationship. The period of confinement lasts for 40 days when the purificatory ritul is repeated. A *traagi*, a

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belt of grains or silver tinklets stringed in the black thread, is tied round the child waist on this day to keep off evil eyes as the child is taken outside the house and exposed to the external world from this day. In the case of a male birth, it is customary to get lullaby sung by *heejras* (eunuchs) who come from towns. They are pleased with 51 or 101 rupees. No special significance is attached to the *mundan* (tonsure) ceremony among Bawaria, Bhedkut and Sansi homseholds. Among Tagu Brahmans and Jhinwars, the *mundan* ceremony of the boy is performed at home at any time after forty days but before attaining the age of one year. The barber, called from village Bangran (2.5 Kms), cuts the first crop of the hair and relatives and friends who are invited on this occasion are regaled with sweetmeats or candy drops. Womenfolk sing songs on this occasion.

Marriage

a) Marriage Customs

Regarding the institution of marriage, each caste forms an endogamous ethnic group. Inter-caste marriages are not approved by the society. Among Bhedkuts and Sansis, who constitute the two major ethnic groups in the village, it is customary not to marry in one's own clan or *gotra*. Some exogamous grouping also exists within each clan which functions like *gotra* and for negotiating marriage, the names of exogamous groupings are reported to be scrutinised. Among Bawarias a man does not marry a woman of the same patronymic *gotra* to which his father or mother belongs. Among others including Jhinwars, a marital alliance is avoided in one's own, mother's and father's mother's *gotras* is reported to be customarily prohibited. Cross-cousin marriage, that is to say, marriage with the daughter of a maternal uncle or aunt, is customarily allowed among Bhedkuts and Sansis which may be ascribed to Muslim influence since they are displaced persons from Pakistan but it is prohibited among other castes. Parallel cousin marriages are tabooed among all ethnic groups in the village. There are no love marriages, premarital and extra-marital relations are reported to be hardly tolerated.

Local endogamy is practised among Bhedkuts, Bawarias and Sansis, whereas the village constitutes an exogamous area for the remaining ethnic groups. A peculiar custom prevails in the Kumhar community. A marital alliance of a girl from one side in exchange for a marital alliance of a girl from the other side is insisted upon. If the prospective bridegroom does not have a sister to offer in marriage to the brother or some other near relation of the prospective bride, he must come forward with an offer from amongst one of his cousins or other relations. If he cannot find one such relation to offer, the boy has to wed celibacy in place of the girl. A few instances of marriage by exchange are reported among Bhedkuts also. Polygamy and polyandry are not allowed but in the case of a childless marriage, a man may be allowed second wife with the consent of the first wife.

Insofar as the two major communities of Bhedkuts and Sansis are concerned, in addition to local endogamy, the endogamous area covers Ambala, Kurukshetra, Karnal and Hisar districts of Haryana State, Union territory of Delhi and Ganganagar district of Rajasthan among Bhedkuts and Ambala, Kurukshetra and Karnal district of Haryana State, Patiala, Ludhiana and Jalandhar district of Punjab State and Saharanpur district of Uttar Pardesh among Sansis.

Among Bhedkuts, who constitute the dominating section of the village community, the proposal for the marital alliance comes from the boy's parents. Bride price was reported to exist among them. Among all other ethnic groups, the proposal for marriage comes from the girl's side and the bride price is not demanded. Traditionally, Bhedkuts and Sansis married their daughters at an early age but at the time of enquiry, it was reported that they had started marrying their daughter when they entered the later phases of their adolescence. The system of early marriage dominates more in the case of female marriages.

The marriage ceremony among Tagu Brahmans, Jhinwars and Sansis is conducted according to Vedic rites by a Brahman priest, whereas among Bhedkuts, the Bhai of the local gurdwara, who belongs to their own community officiates to conduct *lawan* (circumambulations four times in clockwise direction round the seat of *Guru Granth Sahib*) and the marriage solemnised in this way is called *Anand Karaj*. Among Bawarias, marriage may be conducted either by *phere* (circumambulation round the sacred fire) by or *lawan* (circumambulation round *Guru Granth Sahib*) ceremony.

Cases of divorce or desertion are not uncommon in the village and are customarily instituted in the Biradri Panchayats which after hearing both the parties fix certain amount of penalty which the guilty party pays to the aggrieved party for social sanction of divorce. Widows are allowed to remarry among all castes except Tagu Brahmans. Among Jhinwar caste, the custom of junior levirate prevails, that is to say, on the death of a man, his younger brother has the first claim to the widow than his elder brother. On the other hand, among Bhedkuts, Bawarias and Sansis the practice of junior as well as senior levirate prevails. Widows

over 35 years of age, who may not wish to remarry, live on the property left by their husbands. Widower marriage is a simple sort of marriage which is effected by the man throwing a red wrap over the woman's head and putting wristlets (*chura*) on her arms in the presence of male and female members of the brotherhood. A plate containing sweet cooked rice is placed between the man and the woman and each puts seven morsels of food in each other's mouth. Myrtle is also applied on the woman's hand this day. The members of brotherhood are feasted on goat meat dish served with rice or *chapatis*.

Betrothal .— Preliminary negotiations are directly initiated by parents of the boy among Bhedkuts whereas among other castes usually the party from the girl's

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side takes initiative. Once marital alliance is agreed upon between the two parties among Bhedkuts, the parents of the boy along with their family members, selected close relations and caste brethren visit the girl's house on the day of betrothal. The boy does not accompany them. On reaching the girl's house, the boy's father meets the girl's father with warm embraces. The boy's and girl's mothers also meet in the similar fashion. The girl's father invites his friends and relatives, selected persons of the village community and members of the village panchayat. The boy's father gives a suit of clothes, a pair of shoes, a gold ornament and a cosmetic set for the girl and 20 kilo *laddoo* sweets and dry dates. The womenfolk of both sides attire and adorn the girl with the presents brought for her and sing songs suiting to this occasion. Two platters containing *laddoo* sweets and dry dates are kept in front of the girl's and the boy's fathers which they exchange with each other. The date of marriage is fixed generally according to the convenience of both the parties in

the presence of people representing both sides. The father of the girl distributes *laddoo* sweets among the persons attending the betrothal ceremony. The persons belonging to the boy's side take sumptuous lunch hosted by the girl's parents and before returning the boy's father gives 101 rupees, the boy's mother and brothers 21 to 51 rupees each and other persons accompanying them 2 to 5 rupees each to the girl. This completes the betrothal ceremony.

Among other castes, the betrothal ceremony takes place at the boy's residence where both the parties get together. The priest does not officiate this ceremony. The boy is seated on a low stool. In the presence of the brotherhood and other elderly persons of the village, the father of the girl puts a sum of Rs. 51 or 101, a suit of clothes consisting of a shirt, a pant and a towel tied in red and white threads (*mauli*), *laddoo* sweets and a coconut in the scarf of the boy and in a few cases delivers him a wrist watch. Thereafter he places a mark on his forehead with turmeric liquid mixed with rice grains and puts a piece of sweetmeat in his mouth. Friends and relatives of both sides offer 2, 5 or 11 rupees each to the boy depending on their relationship. The date for conducting marriage is also fixed on this day according to the convenience of both the parties. The father of the boy serves tea and distributes *laddoo* sweets, *shakkar* (raw sugar) or candy drops among the persons present on this occasion. The boy's father hosts a gala lunch to the girl's relations, in which meat, liquor and sweets are served to them.

A fortnight or month before the wedding ceremony, a member of the boy's household goes to the girl's house and hands over 5 strings of *mauli* (a tinted cotton thread) containing an iron ring, a lac ring, a cowrie, a betel, nut, a turmeric piece and mustard seeds tied in a piece of red cloth) and material for the preparation of *batna* (abstergent paste) consisting of 5 kilo barley and gram flours, 1 kilo sarson oil and half kilo turmeric as items of *shagun* (augury) meant for the use of the girl. He also

makes final settlement with the girl's father regarding details of the wedding ceremonies and the number of guest in the wedding party. The girl's father delivers him a *peeli chitthi* (a formal marriage invitation card sprinkled with turmeric water).

Batna ceremony.— For 3 or 5 days preceding the marriage, seven *batnas* (abstergent paste, prepared from barley and gram flours, turmeric and sarson oil) are rubbed over the bodies of the boy and the girl, at their respective houses by their brother's wife to give a shine to their complexions. During this ceremony, women folk sing merry songs and soaked wheat grains mixed with raw sugar are distributed amongst them. The *batnas* are so planned that the last *batna* of the girl falls on the wedding day and of the boy on the day of departure of the *barat* (marriage procession). After the seventh *batna*, the boy and the girl take bath and dress themselves in new clothes at their respective places. The maternal uncle carries the girl to the place where she is decorated as a bride and to the boy at a place where *sehra* (marriage crown) is to be tied over his head. The brother's wife who prepared the *batnas* gets Rs. 101 from the maternal uncle for the service rendered by her. So long as the maternal uncle does not pay her this amount the womenfolk continue to repeat the following words.

Bol maama bol maama, bolda kuon nahin, Palle taire sau rupayya, kholda kyon nahin.

(Speak maternal uncle, speak. Why are you silent ? You have a hundred rupee note in your pocket. Why don't you take it out?)

Kangna or Gaana ceremony .— On the day of first *batna* (cleansing ceremony), the brother's wife ties *kanganas* also known as *gaans* (seven knotted sacred thread) each on the wrist and ankle of the bridegroom and the bride at their respective places.

Maandha .— One day before the departure of the marriage party, the bride's and bridegroom's fathers give a lunch called *maandha* to their friends and relatives at their respective houses. The persons attending the feast offer their voluntary monetary contributions. The maternal uncle brings *nanak*

chhakk (gifts from mother's parents) which consists of some cash for the purchase of furniture, a few ornaments and some outfits of clothes as a contribution to the dowry in the case of a girl's marriage and 101 rupees, a *kangna*, a marriage crown and clothes for the boy and his mother in the event of a boy's wedding.

Shaant ceremony .— Among non Bhedkut households, one day before the marriage, the *shaant* ceremony is performed, the nine *grahas* are worshipped by the bridegroom's maternal uncle to avert any inauspicious occurrence during the marriage.

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Sehra ceremony .— On the day of departure of marriage party, the bridegroom wears the clothes brought by his maternal uncle. Brother's wife (*bhabhi*) applies collyrium (*kajal*) in his eyes and receives 25 rupees from him. The mother's brother ties *sehra* (wedding crown) on his head.

No significance is attached to *chaak pooja* (worship of potter's wheel at the potter's house) and *ghori charhna* (mare riding) ceremony. Prior to the marriage party proceeding to the bride's village, the bridegroom takes a round of the village accompanied by ladies singing marriage songs and pays obeisance at the seat of *Guru Granth Sahib* in the gurdwara or to the deities in a temple or at other place of worship, the bridegroom then does not go to his house and spends time in some other house or shop. At the time of the departure of the marriage party, friends and relations deliver 2 to 5 rupees each to the bridegroom. The father offers 2 to 5 rupees to each of the girls.

The *barat* (marriage party) consists of 40 to 100 persons and

its sex composition is about two-third males and one-third females. It travels to bride's village in the morning by bus hired for this purpose. The marriage party arrives with the bridegroom and is accorded a warm reception at the outskirts of the village by the bride's father and his friends and relations and escorted in a procession to a *dharmshala*, school or *chaupal*, where arrangements have been made for its stay and entertainment. Light refreshments are served to the *baratis* here.

Barothi ceremony .— The representative of the bride's family comes to invite the *barat* for lunch. At the entrance gate of the bride's house, the bride's sisters check the entry of the bridegroom with the help of ropes and allow him passage after receiving 51 or 101 rupees from him. At the threshold (*barothi*) of the house, the bride's mother performs *aarti* around the bridegroom's face, places a *teeka* on his forehead and delivers him a finger ring and some amount in cash. The bridegroom puts some money, which is generally more than the amount received by him, in the platter carried by his prospective mother-in-law. *Milni* (introductory meeting) ceremony is performed in which the father and maternal uncle of the bride offer a blanket or a turban to their counterparts in the bridegroom's family. After *barothi* ceremony, the marriage party is entertained a sumptuous lunch at bride's house.

Phere ceremony .— Thereafter, the key function or the actual wedding ceremony takes place at the time of *lagan* or *muhurt* (auspicious moment). In the courtyard, a canopy is erected under which the family priests of both the parties, the bride and the bridegroom with their relatives assemble. The family priest lights the sacred fire. The worship of *nav-grahas* is first performed, followed by recitation of *mantras*, in which the tenets of married life are read out to the wedding couple, the main principles

being chastity, sincerity, faithfulness to each other and promises to stick together through thick and thin. The father of the bride places the right hand of the bride into that of the boy, which is known as *kanyadan*. The parents thus give away their daughter in marriage and usher her into the new world of *grihastha*. The Brahman ties the hem of the girl's wrap to the bridegroom's scarf. This ceremony is known as *grasthi bandhan*. After this, the *phere* ceremony takes place and they both walk four times round the sacred fire. In the first three rounds of the fire, the bride leads and in the fourth the bridegroom. When they sit down, they exchange their seats. *Phera* is now recognised as one of the essential ceremonies under the Hindu Marriage Act.

Anand Karaj prevails among the Bhedkuts. The bride and bridegroom go round the seat of holy *Guru Granth Sahib* four times. The ceremony is called *lawan*. Some extracts from the sacred book are read and though they are originally meant to describe in a figurative way the union of human soul with the Supreme Being, they are made to serve the purpose of sanctifying the union of bride and bridegroom.

The bride and the bridegroom are taken inside the bride's house where ladies collect. The sisters of the bride offer a plate containing sweetmeats to them. The bride and bridegroom put sweetmeat in each other's mouth. After that the bridegroom is taken to the place where the marriage party is made to stay. A few relatives of the bride come there to fetch *vari* from the bridegroom's father which consists of bride's trousseau, one or two ornaments, antimony container and toilet set. The bride wears these clothes and ornaments and applies toilet on her body at her house. The brother's wife styles her hair.

Khatt ceremony .— The marriage party is invited at bride's house. The dowry consisting of five or seven bride's costumes, one or two ornaments, utensils, articles of furniture and in some cases a radio set, a bicycle, a sewing machine, an electric fan or in a few cases, a television etc., depending on the economic condition of bride's family is exhibited to the people. The custom of exhibition of the dowry is called *khatt* ceremony. After this, the articles of dowry are handed over to the bridegroom's father and loaded on the bus.

Vida ceremony .— The *vida* or the send off ceremony is the

last function to be performed at the house of the bride's parents. It is a very touching and emotional scene as one would see the bride's relations weeping and tears trickling their eyes. The bride's relations offer 2, 5 or 10 rupees each to the bride and bridegroom. When the marriage party returns to the bridegroom's village, the mother of the bridegroom pours some oil on the threshold and drinks milk from the container after touching it seven times on the heads of the newly wedded couple. The bridegroom and bride

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touch the feet who blesses them for a happy married life. The sisters of the bridegroom check their entry and allow them to enter the house only after accepting certain amount of money. The bride is escorted and seated inside the house. Every woman who unveils the bride to see her face offers her 2, 5 or 10 rupees.

The next morning the sister's or father's sister's husband unknots the scarf of the bridegroom from the bride's warp and gets some cash amount for this service. The bride and bridegroom untie each other's *kangnas* or *gaanas* in the presence of *bhabhi* who fastens these 4 *Kangnas* in the four legs of the cot used by the couple. On the third day, the brother of the bride takes her back to the paternal house where she stays till *muklawā* ceremony (final return of the wife to the husband's house).

Death .— The dead over five years of age are cremated by all castes in the village. The corpse is not cremated after the sun set. The dying man is asked by his son or wife, if he has any last wish to be conveyed. In some households, he is made to give 51 or 101 rupees to each daughter and sister as a last meritorious gift. When a person is about to breathe his last,

he is taken off the cot and placed on the ground. Holy water of the Ganges is put in his mouth and among some Bhedkut household, Sukhmani Paath is recited for the benefit of the departing soul.

Immediately after death, a rupee coin is put in the mouth of the deceased as a viaticum. The females in the house start weeping loudly and beating their breasts as soon as a person expires. The neighbours and relatives come for mourning after hearing the news or message sent by the members of the household of the deceased. The dead body is given a ceremonial bath with soap and water to which some Ganges water is added which is supposed to absolve the deceased all sins committed by him during his life time. *Desi ghee* or butter is applied to the mouth and antimony is put in the eyes of the deceased. The corpse is then wrapped in about 15 metres long *kaffan* (shroud) which is usually white or red, depending if it is male or female, respectively. The chief mourner, who is usually his eldest son, gets his head and beard shaved clean from the barber. Bier is prepared from bamboo sticks and the dead body is laid on it in a supine position. In case the dead body is of an old person, 1 kilo *laddoo* sweets, contained in a bell metal plate, are placed on the bier in the right hand of the corpse, which are then taken off and given to the sister or eldest daughter of the deceased. Thereafter, a ball of barley flour (*pinda*) is placed on the right hand of the deceased by the chief mourner. The *kaandhis* (four persons who have to carry the hearse) assemble and put their hand in a *chhanna* (an open mouth bell metal pot) turned up side down and each of them in turn strikes it three times with a stick. The face of the deceased is shown to the kinsmen and others to have a last glimpse. The widow breaks her glass bangles and removes metal toe rings which are placed on the bier along with toilette (*shingar*).

The hearse is then carried to the cremation ground, followed by a funeral procession, uttering in unison *Ram naam satt hai, Har Ka naam gatt hai* which means Rama's name is the absolute truth and Shiva's name gives salvation. One of the mourners carries fire in an earthen pot called *haandi*. The chief mourner throws mustard seeds, cotton and in some cases coins over the hearse on the way. *Bains* or dirges are sung by womenfolk on the death of a young person.

After reaching the outskirts of the village, the funeral procession halts to take rest. At this place, a branch of *beri* tree is fixed in the ground and a piece of shroud is torn and tied to it. The *pinda* (oblation) carried by the corpse is deposited here. The *kaandhis* make seven rounds of it, four in clock-wise direction and three in anti-clockwise direction. This ritual is called *mot ke saat phere* or seven circumambulations of death. The females usually accompany only upto this spot and then return. Persons carrying the bier change their shoulders and again proceed to the cremation ground.

At the crematorium, a rupee coin is placed as a viaticum for the deceased person and pyre of wood and cowdung cakes is prepared over it. The dead body is placed on it. *Desi ghee* and incensed material (*saamagri*) are poured on the dead body of the corpse and more wood and cowdung cakes are arranged on it. The head of the corpse is placed towards the north and feet towards the south. The fire kept in a *haandi* is placed on the ground towards the head of the corpse. The *kaandhis* (carriers) again make seven rounds of the pyre, four in clockwise direction, three in anticlockwise direction. In the case of married woman, her widower light the pyre. A father performs the same duty for a son, a son for a father, on failing such relationship, any near relative. When the pyre is fully ablaze, the skull of the deceased is cracked with the stroke of a pole three times and the performance is called *kapal kriya*. The mourners throw wood sticks on the burning pyre and sit at a nearby place. Among Bhedkuts, the *granthi* (priest) of the local gurdwara performs *ardas* (Sikh prayer) for the benefit of the dead person. After this the mourners return and wash their hands and face at the canal minor and then assemble at the door of the house of the deceased person. The chief mourner sprinkles water on the mourners. Every mourner is given *neem* leaves which they taste and spit. An elderly person makes a short speech praying for the salvation of the deceased and consoling the members of the bereaved family. After this the people disperse.

At the house of the deceased, the place of expiry is coated with a liquid of clay and cowdung as a purificatory ritual. No food is cooked in the deceased's household for three days, which is served to the family members by persons belonging to their community.

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On the third day after death, the bones of the deceased and the two rupee coins one placed under the pyre and the other put in the mouth of the deceased are collected and washed. These are either put in a new earthen bowl called *haandi* and buried at the cremation site or taken to Hardwar for immersion into the river Ganges. In the latter case, the bones and the rupee coins are carried by a male member of the household in a white or red cotton cloth bag, depending if it is male or female, respectively. The four *kaandhis* (carriers) are fed on sweet rice on the third day.

The Bhedkuts and some Bawarias arrange 7 *sadharan paath* of *Guru Granth Sahib* in the house which are concluded on the thirteenth day after death when the *granthi* of the local gurdwara performs the *bhog* ceremony and prays for the benefit of the soul of the deceased. Mourning is observed for 13 days from the date of death. During this period, friends and relatives visit the bereaved family for offering condolences. During this period taking of meat or liquor is prohibited. Among Sansis, the pollution is reported to last for a period of 10 days during which washing of clothes and cutting of hair is avoided. On the 10th day following death, *dasahi* ritual is observed among them when both males and females wash their clothes and take bath at the well or canal minor.

Kirya Karam and *pagri* ceremony are performed on the 13th

day after death among all castes. Among Tagu Brahmans, Jhinwars, and Sansis households, the *pandit* chants incantations (*mantras*) in the house so as to grant peace to the soul of the deceased. The Brahman or Sikh priest is given clothes and shoes, depending on the economic condition of the household. The members of opposite clan among the Bhedkuts and in-laws of the chief mourner among other castes tie a turban (*pagri*) on his head and deliver him some cash. They also bring clothes for the widow. A feast is also served to the community members on this day, the expenses of which are borne by the households belonging to the opposite clan in the case of Bhedkuts and by in-laws in the case of other castes. The wife of the deceased puts off her jewellery and no festivals are observed for a year atleast.

Intra-family relations .— The joint family system, though traditionally prevalent, is fastly disintegrating in the village. The most important characteristic of the joint family system is that the income of all its members is pooled and spent for the benefit of all the members whether or not they have actually earned any part of it. The basis for the system is to ensure maintenance of all descendants from a common ancestor, father or grandfather. The widow or orphans, the children, young boys and girls and elderly or decrepit or physically incapacitated members of the family, all receive the attention of the head of family and are supported and maintained out of the joint family fund.

In the simple and intermediate type of families in the village, intra-family relationship is quite smooth as there is no internal friction among the members.

However, in joint families, the intra family ties begin to loosen as the head of household advances in age and among agricultural families in particular, the family bond weakens after the death of the head of household. The above contention is supported by the fact that there is no collateral joint family having two or more married couples between whom there is a sibling bond, in the surveyed household of the village. The number of lineal collateral joint families having parents and their two or more married sons, is also insignificant in the village i.e. only 3 per cent. The only important type of joint families which have survived in the village are lineal joint families, having two couples between whom there is a lineal link, which account for 20 per cent of the total household of the village.

The trend of breaking of joint families and the spread of simple and intermediate families seems to have been faster during the last few years. During 1981-87, the average size of a family has gone down from 6.68 persons per family at the time of 1981 Census to 5.24 persons per family in 1987 (survey data). The disintegrating process came to the fore with a number of factors emerging under the changed conditions of life. Mutual love, respect and good behaviour among all the family members, spirit of sacrifice and toleration for each other's weakness are important factors for leading a happy joint family life. Oneness of family occupation (i.e. all the adults must be employed in similar occupations) is equally important factor for the survival of a joint family. However, now a days, the growing materialistic and individualistic trends in thinking and intolerant attitudes of the people are eating into the vitals of this system. The mounting pressure on land due to phenomenal increase in population has broken the oneness of the family occupation and led to shift in occupations. Disparity in the income of the members of the family creates some imbalance in the joint family. The immediate cause is provided by petty jealousies and quarrels among the children, the ladies of the household and strained relations between the mother-in-law and the daughter-in-law. Now life is also so hard that sometimes people are compelled to leave their homes in search of gainful occupations. Yet another important factor, which seems to be peculiar to this village for splitting the joint families, may be the near implementation of the Haryana Government's decision to vest proprietary right on the Government land and houses occupied by the residents and their innate desire to have separate property rights in their names in the revenue records by showing that they live in independent households.

Status of Women .— The lot of rural housewife, on the whole, is hard one. She attends to all types of household chores which include cooking the meals, scouring the utensils, cleaning the house, washing the clothes, looking after the children and feeding the livestock. When the men are at work in the fields, she carries the food to them. During sowing and harvesting operations, she does a considerable share of

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work and after going home, she has to cook the evening meal. In the morning as well as in the evening, she carries water from the well or public tap. The system of *purdah* still prevails among the women. Due to conservative outlook of the people, they have remained most neglected in the sphere of education. Now, there is general awareness of the importance of women's education. The old thinking that the social order would crumble if women were educated is disappearing.

Inheritance :— As a general rule, the son or sons were entitled to the inheritance after father's death. In default of a son, the widow ordinarily succeeded to her husband's estate, or in case there was no widow, the mother and father succeeded. The mother had the prior right, though as she and the father ordinarily lived together, no partition was as a rule, required. If neither parent had survived the deceased, his brother or brothers or his brother's sons within seven degrees succeeded in turn per capita. A daughter received no share, but if she was unmarried, a share was reserved to defray the expense of her marriage. As a rule, sons, whether by the same or different wives, shared equally¹.

Now according to Hindu Succession Act, 1956, sons and daughters, the mother and the widow along with other heirs² of the deceased, if any, inherit the intestate property simultaneously. A daughter has as good a claim to her father's property as a son. However, inspite of the rights conferred by law, it appears to have become a general practice for the girls not to claim any part of the intestate property. In the absence of a brother, a girl may sometime give her land to her near relatives, though in such cases, she usually retains her right to property.

Khatris & Aroras (Refugees)

India was bifurcated into two parts; India and Pakistan in 1947. The partition was followed by a mass migration of population from the territory now comprising Pakistan, especially West Pakistan to the Punjab and *vice versa*. Lakhs of Hindus and Sikhs moved from West Punjab to East Punjab and almost a similar number of Muslims travelled from east Punjab and U.P. to West Pakistan.

This movement was one of the most massive in history involving inevitable hardships, miseries and also tragedies. The refugees moved on foot in convoys, in buses and by rail under the protection of the Military Evacuation Organisation. In spite of the official efforts to protect the migrating refugees, lawless elements, on both sides, played havoc with many convoys. Communal feelings had been excited and accentuated. As a result many persons behaved barbarously in those days. History is witness to the mayhem of innocent people in both parts.

In Haryana, they settled in urban and rural areas of the districts of Bhiwani, Hissar, Sirsa, Rohtak, Karnal, Panipat and Sonipat. They later on spread to Faridabad

1. *Phulkian States Gazetteer (Patiala, Jind and Nabha)*, 1904, p.312.

2. Specified in class 1 of the schedule vide section 8 of the Hindu Succession Act, 1956.

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and other areas of Haryana. Gandhi Camp of Rohtak was thickly populated of these persons. Karnal and Panipat have the majority of these people.

There are two major sections of these people; Khattris and Aroras. In Karnal and Panipat areas the main castes of non cultivators moved into the then Karnal district from Gujranwala, Multan and Muzaffargarh districts of West Punjab (Pakistan). They are found in large number in the rural areas of Thanesar and Karnal tahsils; Khattris predominate in the Thanesar tahsil while Aroras in Karnal tahsil.

Although accurate statistics are not available, it is estimated that 3,00,688 Muslims migrated from this district (Karnal) to Pakistan. They consisted of Afghans, Baluchs, Muslim Rajputs, Sayyads, Gujars and Sheikhs. The immigrants into the then district were mainly Brahmans, Virks, Mazhabi Sikhs, Aroras and Khatirs from Sheikhpura, Gujranwala, Multan and Muzaffargarh districts of Pakistan.

As a first step, the displaced persons were set-up at Kurukshetra, Karnal, Panipat, Kaithal and Shahbad. The biggest camp was established at Kurukshetra which accommodated the largest number of refugees.

The Government provided gratuitous relief to the displaced persons. During the process of gradual elimination of such type of relief, the unattached women and children and infirm and aged persons who were living in these general camp, were encouraged to shift to Mahila Ashram, Karnal. A sewa Sadan accommodating nearly 250 women and children was established at Karnal but was bound up on the establishment of the Ashram there.

In the Ashram gratuitous relief at the full prescribed scale was given to women and children and educational facilities were provided for the latter. Various cottage industries and crafts such as weaving, spinning, knitting, tailoring, embroidery, laundry, toy-making, carpet making, *niwar* and *darri* making were established to train women and to equip

them for earning their livelihood. Arrangements were also made for training them in midwifery and nursing. On completion of their training in select industries and crafts, the trainees were encouraged to form industrial co-operatives for earning their livelihood.

The then Karnal district accommodated 2,50,471 displaced persons; 1,32,709 in rural areas and 1,17,762 in urban areas. Rural and urban rehabilitation was followed by the Government. New townships were set-up at Karnal and Panipat; 8 marla (cheap) Housing Colonies were made at Karnal and Panipat; 4 marla (cheap) Housing Colonies were established at Karnal, Panipat, Thanesar, Samalkha, Tarawari, Shahabad and Pehowa.

People

Mud-hut colonies were constructed in 1950 for providing accommodation in the residual population in refugee camps. These were constructed on the respective sites of camps in Karnal and Panipat with 1,600 and 600 mud-huts respectively and each mud-hut covered an area of 210 square feet. These were immediately offered to the occupants of refugee camps who belonged to Scheduled Castes and Backward Classes and to persons who were resourceless and landless.

At least two camps were established at Rohtak in 1947, with a capacity of 50,000 each. About 1.24 lakh of Hindus, Sikhs and others settled in Rohtak and were from districts of Jhang, Multan, Muzaffargarh, Lyallpur and other parts of Pakistan. The rural areas accommodated 53,451 persons whereas urban population of such refugees consisted of 70,194 persons. No accurate figures are available to show the precise number of Muslim evacuees, but the diminution of about 1.63 lakh in the Muslim population in the census figures of 1941 and

1951 indicates roughly the extent of their migration to Pakistan. Most of them were Afghans, Baluches, Rajputs and Sheikhs.

To hasten the resettlement of rural refugees living in camps, evacuee lands in the then Rohtak district were allotted to displaced persons mostly from the Jhang district and the Alipur, Leiah and Kot Adu tahsils of Muzaffargarh district, and indigenous colonists who were forced to abandon their lands in the canal irrigated areas of Lyallpur, Montgomery, Sheikhpura, Multan, Shahpur, Sind and Bhawalpur. Every effort was made to allot land of the same or similar quality as was left behind by the claimants in the West Pakistan. Sub-urban lands or land carrying additional valuation were allotted to claimants of higher categories.

Garden colonies were also established to encourage fruit cultivation. These garden colonies were organised on co-operative lines, and irrigation was provided to them from tubewells and canals. Modern facilities like tractors, insecticides and pesticides were provided and every effort was made to make them model colonies.

As a part of urban rehabilitation, new townships were made at Rohtak and Sonipat. About 4 Marla and 8 Marla colonies were set-up at Rohtak and Sonipat.

For Scheduled Caste refugees mud-hut colonies were established at Sonipat and Rohtak. A total of 2,726 mud-huts were constructed - 1,996 at Rohtak and 730 at Sonipat. The cost of super structure and land varied between Rs. 255 and Rs.275. About 123 mud-huts were utilised by the Mahila Ashram, Rohtak. House building and small urban loans were granted by the Government.

In Hissar district total number of 80,298 displaced persons came; out of them a sizable number 55,966 settled in rural areas while 24,332 were allotted sites in urban areas. Initially a number of relief camps were organised; one of these was set up at

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Hissar to provide shelter to the refugees. The educational institutions, which kept closed for some months upto February, 1948 provided some of the accommodation. The services of staff and students were utilised in the management of the camp. The students who rendered three months' social service in the camp were considered eligible for the award of certificate of Punjab University, if otherwise ripe for it without undergoing examinations.

A large number of Muslims migrated from the then Ambala district to Pakistan. They consisted of Sheikhs, Qureshis, Rajputs and Gujars. On the other hand we know that 1,88,892 (1,00,535 males and 88,357 females) displaced persons coming from other side of new border (Pakistan) were settled in rural and urban areas of the then Ambala district. The immigrants were mainly Khattris, Aroras, Labanas, Jats and Brahmans from Rawalpindi, Gujranwala, Sargodha, Jhelum, Sheikhpora and Gujrat districts of Pakistan. According to 1951 census, they consisted 20.01 percent of the total population of the then Ambala district. Kharar and Ropar tahsils were also part of Ambala district in those days. Many steps in the direction of rehabilitation were taken up by the Government.

The Muslim population of the then Gurgaon district consisted of Meos, Afghans, Baluches, Muslim Rajputs and Sheikhs. Exact figures of Muslim evacuees are not available, however, the diminution of about 86,000 in Muslim population in the census figures of 1941 and 1951 indicates roughly the extent of their migration to Pakistan. The displaced persons from Dera Ghazi Khan, Mianwali, Muzaffargarh and other parts of Pakistan settled in the district of Gurgaon.

The following statement gives their number according to the district of origin:—

District of origin Persons Males Females

1. Lahore 1,104 658 446
2. Sialkot 711 369 342

3. Gujranwala 521 295 226
 4. Sheikhpora 557 256 299
 5. Gujrat 443 220 223
 6. Shahpur 1,318 667 651
 7. Jhelum 321 238 83
 8. Rawalpindi 788 398 390
 9. Attock 388 204 184
 10. Mianwali 13,910 7,163 6,747
-

People

11. Montgomery 985 428 557
12. Layallpur 1,651 900 751
13. Jhang 1,935 1,168 767
14. Multan 2,843 1,537 1,306
15. Muzaffargarh 4,109 2,154 1,955
16. Dera Ghazikhan 29,674 14,521 15,153
17. Gurdaspur 228 17 211
18. Bahawalpur 633 336 297
19. Hazara 616 341 275
20. Mardan 1,870 1,032 838
21. Peshawar 1,363 671 692

22. Kohat 2,321 1,308 1,013
23. Bannu 9,928 4,989 4,939
24. Dera Ismailkhan 5,086 3,558 1,528
25. Baluchistan 24 13 11
26. Hyderabad (Sind) 31 21 10
27. Karachi 143 73 70
28. Larkana 01 01 --
29. Sukkar 18 14 04
30. Upper Sind Frontier 76 61 15
31. Quetta 89 59 30
32. Dacca (Now in Bangladesh) 11 03 08
33. Chittagong 04 -- 04
34. Jhar Parkar 06 04 02

Every kind of loans were given to these persons by the Government to resettle them. The Government had to face a lot of hardships in the rehabilitation of the refugees.

The Khattris and Aroras functioned as traders, shopkeepers and bankers in West Punjab (Pakistan). For a successful prosecution of these professions and reasons of security, they lived in town and large villages. Their work did not involve any manual labour but, deprived of their easy way of making money due to the partition, they

changed their economy and increasingly drifted into the rank of workers. Their resettlement in the stagnant towns of Punjab and Haryana quickened the process of social life. The drab bazars, with ill-kept shops, completely changed. The town-men here were socially backward, and their women *purdah* ridden. The displaced shopkeepers penetrated isolated villages where bananas and oranges can now be had.

The culture of west Punjab had a liberalising influence on the local women who emulating the example of their sisters from the Pakistan, discarded *purdah* and escaped from the prisons of their homes and now *bahujis* (wives) can also be seen elegantly dressed promending the streets.¹

They are very hard working people.²

Meghas

Meghas are the inhabitants of Indri, a town some twenty kilometres north east of Karnal. The place bears testimony to the fact that long ago it was surely the capital of some kingdom. Even today Indri has ruins of palaces, fortresses, orchards, ponds and mounds, etc. belonging to a bygone era. The Yamuna flows at a distance of about 10 km. from here.

As per the historical records that after the invasion of Alexander of India, his army commander Seleucus of Macedonia married his daughter to Chandra Gupta Maurya after a treaty which was concluded between Greek invader and the then rulers of India. As per the report of *The Tribune* of 20th May, 2000, "History abounds in stories that say many other girls were also given away to Chandra Gupta Maurya, by the Greeks, to be married to Indian soldiers. The progeny born out of this mass wedlock was called Maghas. Their claim sounds genuine, if one goes by the historical fact of the matrimonial alliance between the Greeks and the Indians."

Maghas migrated to Indri and various other places in Haryana including Sadhaura, Naraingarh and Tohana from the then kingdom of Magodha which constitutes the present day Bihar. Legends confirm that Indragarh was the capital's name at that time. The ruined remains of Indri bring out the existence of its magnificent culture.

Maghas claim their lineage to the mighty Maghada empire. Still they have convincing evidence to prove their lineage in

the form of their bodily features. Their customs, traditions and rituals are now similar to those of the locals. They have a fair complexion and have broad forehead with golden brownish hair. Their long faces have well defined features. The locals, in comparison, are shorter in height. The

1. M.S. Randhawa, *Out of the Ashes*, 1954, pp.218-19.

2. More details may be seen in the Chapter 'History'

People

elder members of this tribe are of the view that they still have typical Grecian features- large forehead, long nose, luscious lips and a pinkish complexion. To protect their own genetic lineage, Maghas perform endogamous marriage within their tribe. There is a practice called *Anta santa* which is still prevalent in the above expounded tribe where a person who marries another's sister will have to marry away his own sister to the brother of his wife. Even to this day the Maghas have retained their genetic typicalities of appearance and the men and women of this tribe stand out from the rest of local population, in so far as their beauty, body structures and complexion is concerned. The population of Maghas in Haryana is almost 5,000. Over the years they have adopted the Hindu customs.

They claim that they have known in the long past as warriors par excellence. They are teetotallers, non-vegetarians and non-smokers. Women observe *purdah* system and wear heavy *ghagras*. Their ornaments have a typical Harynvis look. the members of this tribe also of the view that till Independence, the tribe was not recognised as a distinct ethnic entity.

They are also proud of their folk lore. Their folk lore boasts of queen Nehal Dey who outshone the rest of the beauties of

her times. She was a wonder struck beauty who fell in love with Nar Sultan, a very handsome man and the son of the king of Kelagarh (Karnal). Her sister Mahakdey was also equally beautiful. Two palaces, now in ruins, belonging to these beautiful women, are still present at Indri. The Sheesh Mahal in Gudha Village, near Indri, is believed to have belonged to Nehal dey. Even a casual look at the structure gives an impression of a perfect blend of Indian and Grecian architecture. The domes are supported by aisles and arches in pinnacle style with over hanging casements made from small bricks.

Nihaldey Ka Qissa, Mahakdey Ka Qissa and *Janni Chor* are the important themes of *Haryanvi swangs*. Besides them, many other *qissas* and *ragnis* have been attributed to the love stories of Nehaldey and Nar Sultan. The love story of Mahakdey too, has all the ingredients of a romantic plot. The present police station of Indri, is housed in what was one time known as the palace Queen Mahakdey. The beautiful pond in front of this structure speaks about the glory and richness of a fullfledged kingdom of its times.

Ethnic History of Lubanas

The Lubana (also spelt as Lobana, Libana and Lebana) community is said to have derived its name from this word-*Lavank* because its members traded in salt. But *Lubanas* did not deal in salt alone but other goods as well including *gur*, grains, oil seeds and petty ornaments, like ear trinklets and brass rings¹. In that case they would not have become known after one trade item to the exclusion of others.

1. Jaswant Singh : *The Lubanas in Punjab: Social, Economic and Political Change*, (1849-1947).

Linguistically, the *lubana* is more in propinquity with Sanskrit *Lubhana* or *Lubana*, meaning that which pleases, attracts or gratifies. The community was once known for continuing the ancient tradition of mimicry through wayside shows; hence the name *bahurpia* (from *bahu* many and *rupia* forms) tagged to it. The mendicant action of the community entertained people by assuming different forms and characters both playfully and derisively. The historical course of the community did not, however, follow a single track. Many Lubanas assumed the role of carriers of goods from one part of the country to another. Due to their nomadic life pattern and their indulgence in trade activity of minor nature, they came to be called *banjaras*. Their lineage has been variously traced to Chauhan or Raghuvansi Rajputs, to Gaur Brahmans and even to Suryavansi and Chandravansi Kshatryas, perhaps because of the changing nature of their activities at different places and at different periods of time. Although a vast majority of them came from Hindu stock; there were some who claimed affinity to the Turks.

The dynamics of social change among the Lubanas lay both in endogenous and exogenous factors. Change a value neutral concept occurred in a gradual way in the community affecting at times the quintessentials of its socio-cultural system. The more or less accephalous character of the community also helped to imbibe values and norms of other (cultures) without any fear of deviational sin.

The first prominent Lubana to be fascinated by the Sikh way of life was Saundhe Shah who came in contact with Guru Angad Dev. He was followed by many others like Baba Hasna and Baba Tekht Mal who served the fifth and sixth Gurus. Another Lubana Sikh, Baba Dalipa, is said to have preached the Sikh doctrines. Makhan Shah, the wealthy trader who discovered Guru Tegh Bahadur from among the impostor Gurus at Bakala and Lakhi Shah who alongwith his son Naghia, cremated the headless body of ninth Guru by burning his own house were Lubana Sikhs.

The Lubanas numbered nearly 50,000 as per 1881 census. In the first year they showed a demographic increase of 14 to 16 per cent. This describes how and why the number of Sikh Lubanas surpassed that of Hindu and Muslim Lubanas in 19th century. Lubanas served in the armies of Guru Gobind Singh, Banda Bahadur and Maharaja Ranjit Singh and distinguished themselves by their fearlessness and sincerity.

Many of them took to agriculture as a result of the agrarian policy of Maharaja Ranjit Singh which entrusted waste land to them on a nominal rent.

Gradually, the polytheistic Lubanas worshipping mother goddess, snake, *smadhi*, tree or some such object came to abhor the traditional religious practices. Adoration of the *pipal* tree almost disappeared. The role of purohits or religious mendicants also diminished in their socio-religious life. The use of sacred thread, smoking the *Hukhah*, opium and intoxicating stuffs became a taboo for members of community.

People

The political consciousness among the Lubanas was as much the consequence of the administrative policy of the British as of the socio-cultural resurgence brought about by the Sikh Sabhas. They acted both as collaborators and opponents of the Raj which is evident from the fact that while they served the British cause during two World Wars, they also participated in *Akali morchas* and Congress movements.

In Haryana both Sikh and Hindu Lubanas are found at scattered place near Karnal and Naraingarh tahsils.

Bairagis (Byragis)

The Bairagis are divided into four classes viz. the Nimawat, Ramanandi, Bishn Swami and Madhava Acharya who "are distinguished by special devotion to Krishna, Rama, Vishnu and Madho respectively". The Bairagis abstained from meat eating and spirits. They were allowed to marry; those who do so are called *gharbari* while those who remain celibate are called *nagar*. As per old gazetteer, "the Bairagis are generally

pujaris of Vishnu, Krishna and Hanuman but not of Shiva. They are called *Swami* as a title of respect. The Ramanandis wear red and Nimawats white *bhinds* in their *tilk* or caste marks.

After independence, the past activities changed to a great extent. Now they have turned towards Govt. service and other avocations suited to them.

Gosains

Gosains were basically a subdivision of the *Sanyasi* sect of *faquirs*. The founder of Gosains was Shimbu Acharj who had ten *chellas*, each of whom originated a separate section of Gosains. The name of every member of each section ends in the same syllable such as *gir*, *puri*, *tirath*, *arram*, *asan* and *nath*. The name is given by the Guru to the *chella* at initiation.

"Gosains are both celibate and married. The latter are called *gharbari*, and they engage in agricultural and worldly occupations. Gosains marry only within their own section i.e. a *gir* may not marry a *puri* or vice versa. The celibate are called *Nath*."

In the independent India, every caste has gained consciousness. They are also turning towards Govt. service. They are found in Hissar district.

Inter Religious and Caste Relation

History is a witness that religion never stood in the way of national integration. Whenever the country faced the danger, the people cutting across the religious lines formed themselves under one banner to save the country. The Muslims helped their

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Indian brethren in the dangerous situations and vice versa. The slogan has been that, "we are one".

All the three battles of Panipat show that the Mughal rulers appointed Hindus on many important posts. They were fixed commanders. During the Ist Battle of Panipat (1526), Ibrahim Lodi confronted Babur at the battlefield of Panipat. Among the victims was Raja Vikramajit of Gwalior who fought like a true Rajput on the side of Ibrahim who had been lately his enemy. That was for the sake of country.

In the Second Battle of Panipat (1556), Hemu, a Dusar Hindu of Rewari, was a capable general and minister of Adil Shah Sur. He came forward to oppose the Mughals. Having assumed the title of Raja Vikramjit, Hemu met Akbar and Bairam Khan at the historic field of Panipat with a large army and he laid down his life in the battle field.

The Third Battle of Panipat (1761) gave many examples of Hindu-Muslim unity. Ibrahim Khan was in the service of the Peshwas of Poona. He commanded trained battalions at the time of Third Battle of Panipat under the Maratha Chief Sadashiv Rao bhao. Ahmad Shah Abdali and Rohalla Chiefs of Gangapur tried their best to seduce Ibrahim Khan Gardi in the name of Islam and also being an Afghan brother to desert Maratha and join them in the holy war. He rejected all such advances. He waited upon Sadashiv Rao and placed twenty five sealed covers and original letters received from the enemy camp before him and told.

"Today I shall discharge my duty". Ibrahim Khan Gardi laid down his life in the battle field for the sake of friendship of Hindu General."

The life of Sikh Gurus gave many lasting example of religious oneness. Mardana was Ist disciple and life long companion of Guru Nanak Dev. He was a Muslim by birth and Mirasi by caste and rebeck player by profession.

Amardas was succeeded in the Guru's office by his son-in-law, Ramdas (1574-1581). Akbar, the Great Mughal king, who had a great veneration for this Guru, granted him a plot of land at Amritsar containing a pool, which was enlarged later on.

Mian Mir was a renowned sufi saint. He was such a holy man of God, that the boons granted by him turned into reality. people thronged to him in large number from far and wide. Guru Arjun Dev often visited Lahore to see the birth place of his father and meet his relatives. On the occasion of one such visits, he called on the pir (Mir). The two men of God met and became life long friends. Guru Arjun Dev Planned to build a temple in 1589 in the centre of the Holy Tank called Amritsar. He invited Mian Mir to lay the foundation stone of 'Hari Mandir', present Golden Temple at Amritsar.

People

Sayyid Buddhu Shah was a Muslim saint of Sadhaura, now in Yamuna Nagar district. Pir Buddhu Shah expressed a deep grief at the execution of Guru Tegh Bahadur.

Guru Gobind singh was determined to exterminate the religious oppression of the Mughal Government. He concentrated his efforts against the cruel government and not against Islam. He was an embodiment of love and affection for all. His instructions to the Sikhs were to treat everybody with courtesy and consideration. It was for this reason that both Hindus and Muslims were attracted towards him. Muslim sufi saints and Muslim commanders of note, and hundred of Muslim soldiers fought under his banner. Pir Buddhu Shah of Sadhaura together with sons and seven hundred followers fought hard in the battle of Bhangani in 1688 in which the Muslim saint lost four sons and hundreds of his followers. A Gurdwara named after Buddu Shah was built to commemorate his memory.

Malik Muhammad Jaisi was a well known Hindi poet during Sher Shah's rule. He wrote a number of books, the best of which is *Padmavat*. He had a wonderful command over Avadhi, and Hindi spoken by the people of east.

Mirza Abdur Rahim Khan-e-Khan was the son of Bairam Khan, tutor of Emperor Akbar during his minority. He was a great scholar of Persian, Arabic, Turki, Sanskrit, Hindi and Brajbhasa. He occupies a prominent place among the Muslim poets of Hindi. Among his Hindi works *Rahim Sat Sai*, *Barde Naika Bhed*, *Ras Pahchadhavayi* and *Sangar Sortha*.

The nation can not forget the services of nationalist Muslim poets. They tried to infuse patriotic spirit among the masses through their verses and works. During the 1st war of Independence, Altaf Hussain Hali of Panipat played an important role. Altaf Hussain Hali in his poem *Hubbi-e-watan* said,

"O, my countrymen, O, my highest heaven;

what has happened to your soil and sky ?

In exchange for a handful of your dust,

I shall not accept heaven if it is offered to me".

At this stage Muhammad Iqbal (1876-1938) appeared on the scene as a great nationalist poet. He sang such beautiful songs of Hindu-Muslim unity as struck roots in the whole of country. In *Tarana-e-Hindi*, Iqbal said,

"*Mehjab Nahin Sikhata Aapas me ber rakhna,*

Hindi hain Hum Vatan hai, hindustan hamara".

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"Religion does not teach mutual enmity;

We are Hindi and Hindustan is our native land".

There are many *mazars* which attract Hindus and Muslims and infuse unity among them. A specific of them is as under :

Sonipat town is proud of having the oldest shrine-Dargah Mamu Bhanza, built over 1,200 years ago, where a descendant of Prophet Mohammad lies buried. The shrine has always drawn devotees from all castes, creeds and 80 percent of its devotees are Hindus. It is a living example of toleration and brotherhood between the Hindus and the Muslims.

There are many *mazars* and *Idgas* where the Hindus and the Muslims occasionally visit for getting blessings. Many festivals of Haryana attract people irrespective of caste, religion and creed. This shows that there is a general oneness among the people.

Marriage Customs

Marriage is a union of hearts. It is not a contract between the parties. Through marriage system, family system is established, which is essential for a healthy society. Without marriage system, there cannot be a sexual discipline in the world. Though there are some modern thinkers who are opposed to the marriage system, but the present society disapproves them totally.

All the Hindu customs, including that of marriage, have their foundation in tradition and practice, both of which are subject to change. The scriptures sanction what ever has been established by long practice in a society. How the intitution of marriage was established is recorded in the story of sage Uddalak and his son Svetketu, who established this custom when his mother was asked by a guest to accompany him for the night. Polygamy and polyandry were freely practised and accepted in spite of Lord Rama's gallant effort to establish monogamy. Draupadi's marriage to the five Pandva brothers was not an aberration. The *Puranas* record the case of Jatila who married seven sages and another woman who had ten husbands. Polyandry was cursed by the son of Uthathya, who was born blind. On being humiliated and insulted by his wife, Pradvishi for his blindness, he laid down that henceforth a woman must learn to be happy with one man all her life and was forbidden love with another man.

Five forms of marriage were well recognised in the epic period. The most favoured was the Brahm marriage, when the father of the girl, after making discreet enquiries about the qualities and status of a man, gave away his daughter in

the presence of witnesses, and vows were exchanged between the bride and the bridegroom

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before the sacrificial fire. The father performed the ceremony of '*Kanyadan*' with the hope of achieving salvation through the gift. This form was preferred by the learned. For completing the great horse sacrifice, Lord Rama had to instal a gold statue of Sita at the ceremonial site. The girl adorned with costly ornaments and decked in all finery would be given away. The fire god would preside over the ceremony and bless the couple with prosperity, long age and fruitful life.

Vows of mutual respect would be exchanged between the girl and bridegroom. The bridegroom would accept her in marriage with the words, "I am cast in the image of Vishnu, but so far lacked a Luxmi. You are cast in the image of Luxmi. Without you I am incomplete. Let us beget numerous long-lived sons; let our love abound and our happiness and glory ever increase. I accept your hand in marriage with all promise of happiness and progeny that go with it".

Madri, the second wife of king Pandu, was obtained after Salya, her brother, had received precious stones and cattle from Bishma who was negotiating the marriage. If the girl did not receive any offers of marriage, the father might arrange a '*swavmber*' or a trial of strength where the girl made her choice or accepted one who passed the test. This system was prevailing among the princesses. Sita and Draupadi were married thus.

In a '*Gandharva*' marriage, the girl would make her own choice of a husband and the father would endorse it. An '*Asura*' marriage was one where the girl was bought for a

high price and father and her relatives were bribed with money and costly gifts.

Lastly, the man could run away with the girl after killing her custodians and relatives is a '*Rakshisha*' marriage. Of these five forms, already mentioned, the last two were disapproved by the society. The '*Asura*' and *Rakshisha* forms were looked down upon

With the passage of time, the custom of marriage improved slowly. Even the Mughal Kings took steps to create healthy traditions.

Akbar, the great Mughal king, tried to regulate usages in such away as to make the consent of both the bride and bridegroom, and the permission of the parents was necessary for the marriage contracts. He also sought to check marriage before puberty by either party, marriages between near relatives, acceptance of high dowries and polygamy.

In earlier period, widow marriage was not allowed in India. Arya Samaj and many social reformers made many efforts to introduce the widow marriage. Hence Hindu widow's Remarriage Act was passed in 1856. The Hindu law of Inheritance

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(Amendment Act) of 1929, the Hindu Women's Right to Property Act of 1937, the Hindu Marriage Disability Removal Act of 1946, the Special Marriage Act of 1954, the Hindu Marriage Act of 1955 enforced monogamy and judicial separation, nullity and divorce. The Hindu Succession Act (1956) introduced inheritance rights for women in equal degree with men, though it with-held from the daughter the right to claim partition of the family dwelling place. The

Hindu Succession Act & Hindu Adoption Act and Maintenance Act of 1956 give equality to Hindu women in matters of marriage and adoption also. By the special Marriage Act of 1954, which permitted civil marriage to all Indians, the age of marriage was fixed at 21 years for the bridegroom and 18 for the bride.

In the present society, here is the root of the prevailing custom of the arranged marriage when the duties of man and woman as husband and wife are clearly laid down from the beginning to end. Of course, other social consideration have entered into institution of arranged marriage.

Marriage to them, is a socio-religious sanction for sexual functioning between any man and woman with the sole purpose of procreation. Once, however, they come together, they have elaborate duties to perform to each other and to other family members and to the society.

Restrictions on marriage alliance.— Generally the clans are exogamous, i.e. while every man must marry into his own tribe, no man can marry into his own *gotra* and clan. In rural areas no person is allowed to marry from his or her village. This is a greatest taboo. The restrictions on the marriage alliance described in *Gurgaon District Gazetteer*, 1910, are as follows:—

"Among the Ahir, Brahman, Taga, Jat (Hindu or Musalman), Hindu Gaurwa, Agri and probably the Mallah tribes,, as well as some Musalman Gaurwa, a man may not marry a woman belonging to any of the following *gotras* :—

1. his own *got*;
2. his mother's *got*;
3. his father's mother's *got*;
4. mother's mother's *got*;

And same prohibition applies to women.

Among the Gujars and Kaysths only first three *gots* enumerated above are forbidden. A man may marry in his mother's mother's *got*. Among the Rajputs, both Hindu and Musalman, a man may not marry a woman :—

1. of his own *got*;
2. of his mother's *thamba*;

3. of his mother's mother's family or grand father's mother's family;

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so far as relationship is traceable.

Among the Meos, a man may not marry :—

1. a woman of his own *got* or *pal*;
2. a woman of the village his mother belonged to, even though of a different *got*;
3. a woman of the village his father's mother belonged to;
4. any woman whose relationship with him is close enough to be traceable;
5. the daughter or descendant through males for two generation only of a woman of his *got*.

"Among the Aggarwal Bania, a man may marry in any got, except his own; even in his mother's got and even in his mother's family provided the relationship is not very close. There is no distinct limit fixed:.

Generally, the rural population is still in the grip of caste rigidness in the matters of marriage. Among the Haryana also these restrictions are followed to a greater extent. A man belonging to chamar caste is not supposed to marry a woman belonging to *gotras* of his neighbours and brethren. Supposing, there are six *gotras* in a village, a person has to marry outside of these *gotras*.

The marriage within the *gotras* or with cousins or intercaste are also not approved by society and hence is rare. There has

been occasional relaxation among the displaced Hindu migrated from Pakistan, who may marry the daughters of maternal uncle and aunt.

Though endogamy is permitted in Islam, Meos do not marry woman of their mother's or father's *gotras*.

Selection of the match.— Basically there are three prominent forms of marriage, viz. *Vivah* (Hindu marriage) and *Nikah* (Muslim marriage). *Anand karaj* is the system of marriage which prevails among the Sikhs.

There was a time when early marriage was the rule of the day in the state but with the enforcement of the Child Marriage Restraints Act, 1930 put a check on child marriage. Lately, the Child Marriage Restraint (Amendment) Act, 1978 has now provided 21 and 18 years as marriage age for boys and girls, respectively.

The selection of the match is generally sought by the parents through some match makers or prominent persons. Now a days in the big cities, there are marriage

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bureaus which help in the selection of a suitor. Secondly, classified newspapers issued from Chandigarh carry the details of nubile girls and boys. Many select the matches after getting details from these papers or other newspapers. There are some *Sabhas* such as Kaystha Sabha which organises get together of their own people. In such meetings they get the knowledge about these things besides their day to day problems. Now a days there is a tendency of either party to verify the particulars of the boy and girl. Some times face to face meetings of the boy and girl in the presence of their parents is arranged. By doing so, they get an opportunity to

know each other. This system is prevalent among the educated persons. In rural areas the selection is negotiated by the parents in an arranged marriage.

After the settlement or selection, the parents of the girl offer *teeka* (saffron powder) to the boy and ceremony marks the settlement of marriage which is announced. Betrothal (*Sagai*) follows the *teeka* ceremony.

In case of Meos, no *teeka* or betrothal ceremony takes place but some representative (previously family *Nai*) goes to boy's house with a small earthen pot containing *sarson tail* (mustard oil), a piece of turmeric and a coin and the wedding date is fixed finally.

Among Hindus, *Peeli Chithe* (a letter smeared over with turmeric) is sent from the girl's side proposing the date of marriage, which is confirmed by the boy's side. After betrothal, the *sahwa* or *lagan* i.e. an auspicious date for wedding is fixed by the parents in consultation with a *purohit* or by a professional Brahman. It is made clear here that a *manglik* girl or boy is not betrothed to a non-*manglik* boy or a girl.

In rural areas there are some peculiar customs prevailing before the actual celebration of nuptial. It would be worthwhile to go into the details of these customs.

The boy's Brahman fixes an auspicious day and decides how many ceremonial oilings (*ban*) the boy is to undergo. It must be 5, 7 or 11; and the girl will undergo two fewer than the boy. The boy's father sends a *lagan* or *tewa* generally 9, 11 or 15 days before the wedding, which is a letter communicating the number of Ban and the number of guests to be expected; and accompanied by a suite of female's cloths (*teel*) and a pair of shoes.

The boy and girl then undergo their *bans* in their respective homes. The women assemble and bathe them while singing, and rub them from head to foot with oil and turmeric and peameal. The *bans* are given one each night, and are so arranged that the boy's *bans* will end the night before the procession starts, and the girl's the night before the wedding. After each *ban* the mother performs the ceremony of *arta* and *sewel*, described below, to the boy.

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The girl has only *sewal* performed, as *arta* can under no circumstances be performed over a female. The day of the Ist *ban* is called *haldhath*, or red hand. Seven women with living husbands husk 5-1/4 *sers* of rice and make sweet with it. The Brahman comes and sticks up two small round saucers bottom outwards, against the wall with flour, and in front of them a flour lamp is kept alight in honour of ancestors. On either side he makes five marks of a *Mehandi* hand (in earlier period a bloody hand) on the wall. This is done in each house.

In the girl's village the street turnings all the way from the village gate to the bride's house, and the house itself, are also marked with red or red and white marks. After the Ist *ban*, the boy has the *rakri* or black woolen thread, with a small iron ring (*chhallā*) and some yellow cloth and betel-nut, tied round his left ankle.

The girl has her small gold nose ring put on; for upto that time she can only wear a silver one; and she must not wear a large one till she goes to live with her husband. She also takes her silver wristlet (*Chura*) which no married woman may wear, and substitutes for them atleast five of glass on each arm. These glass wristlets and nose ring form her *suhag*, and a woman who has a living husband (*Sohagan*) must always wear them.

The day before the procession is to start or arrive as the case may be, the *manda* or *mandap* is erected. At the boy's house they take five seed-stems of the long *sarkanda* grass and tie them over the lintel. They dig a hole in front and to the right of the threshold, put money in it, and stand a plough beam straight up in it. To this they hang two small cakes fried in ghee with three little saucers under and two above this, and two pice, all tied on a thread. Finally, some five *beran* culms, and a *dogar* or two vessels of water, one on top of the other, are brought by the mother, attended by singing women, and

after worship of the potter's wheel (*chak*), are put by the door as a good omen

At the girl's house the same is done, but instead of burying the plough beam they erect a sort of tent with one central pole, and four cross sticks or a stool with its four legs upward, at the top, and on each is hung a brass water pot upside down surrounding a full one in the middle; or a curtained enclosure is formed, open to the sky, with at each corner a lichi or nest of five earthen vessels, one on top of the other, with a tripod of bamboos over each.

On the same day the mother's brothers of the boy or girl brings *bhat*. This is provided by the mother's father and consists of a present of clothes; and necessarily includes the wedding suit for the bride & bridegroom, and in case of the boy head dress he is to wear at the marriage. When the *bhat* is given, the boy's or girl's mother performs the ceremony of *arata* or *minna*. She takes five wicked lamp made of flour, places it on a tray (*thali*), and while her brother stands on stool (*patri*), waves it up

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and down his body from head to foot. She also performs *sewal*, which consists in picking up her petticoat (*sari*) and touching his body all over with it. They then take the brother in doors and feed him on *laddus* or *ghee Khand*. The people then collect in the courtyard, the *bhati* offers *bhat* (monetary help) and other articles.

Wedding.— On the day when *Barat* is to start, the boy is dressed in his wedding suit brought by his maternal uncle. In rural areas the boy before proceeding to bride's house worships the local gods and gets blessing, then he proceeds the *Barat*. In urban areas the family deity is worshipped or

the Mata Vaishnu Devi is worshipped by visiting a nearby temple. The dress of the bridegroom being peculiar resembles with time and occasion. He has to wear the headgear. This is customary. Besides, the headdress consists of a crown or crest over the turban, and a *sehhra* covering the face.

In urban areas, the people try to settle relationship within their city. Supposing the residents of Chandigarh prefer to settle relationship of marriage either in Chandigarh, satellite towns; Mohali & Panchkula.

The ceremony of *gurchari* is then performed mostly in the evening time or night time. Some relatives lead the decorated mare with the bridegroom on its back, while women follow along singing songs peculiar to the occasion and the mother or aunt or an elderly woman with 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. After the completion of the *ghurchari*, the *barat*, usually comprising relatives and friends, sets out with music. It is customary, after *ghurchari*, the boy does not return his home without bride. If both the parties reside at the same place, which usually happens in a town, no arrangements for the lodging of the *Barat* are necessary. If, on the other hand, the *barat* comes from outstation, it is received by the bride's side usually at the railway station or if by bus, at some pre-agreed spot in the case of town or on the outskirts of the village, from which the party is taken, some times in procession, to *jandalwasa*, *dharamshala* or *Chaupal* and *janjghar*. In Chandigarh & other towns of Haryana there are many *janjghars*. In Chandigarh many middle class families make arrangement for marriage ceremony in a noted hotel. On payment basis, the owner of the hotel arranges food and many other things.

In the evening the *barat* proceeds in a procession with the bridegroom on the mare, towards the bride's house with pomp and show. The groom's friends dance before the mare to the accompaniment of the band. Such dancing in a marriage procession is a new feature of the recent origin prevalent only in towns.

The marriage party is received by the relatives and friends on the bride's side. The first ceremony to be performed is called *barotete* or *milni* when the boy's father and the girl's father embrace each other and the latter gives some money to the boy's

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father. At the door stand women singing and *jaimala* is put by the bride around the neck of the bridegroom and vice versa. After the colourful ceremony the bridegroom is taken into the house and the *baratis* are entertained to a delicious and sumptuous dinner amidst merriment and festivity. Those persons who celebrate this occasion at the *janjghar*, have to perform all these ceremonies there at the fixed time.

The actual marriage ceremony always takes place after nightfall at the bride's house in the courtyard (*angan*) for which canopy is erected. The *purohits* and family priests of both parties are available. The *purohit* prepares the *chowk* and lights the *hom* or sacred fire. Thereafter, the *purohit* calls upon the girl's father to perform the *kanyadan*, i.e. formal bride-giving. The latter then puts some money or a gold ring into the boy's hand and *purohit* from girl's side pours water on them, the father then says that he gives his daughter to the bridegroom who accepts her in the form of words called *susat*. The girl's *purohit* then knots her *orhna* to the boy's *duppatta*, and then the *phera* or binding ceremony takes place.

The girl and the boy both circle slowly four times round the fire, keeping their right side towards it. Among a certain caste of Bhiwani district, the girl leads in the first three *phas* and the boy in the last. The Bagris 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 girl's right. The marriage is performed according to Vedic system, the number of *phas* is seven.

The *purohits* of both sides recite *mantras* and their respective genealogies, while the *phas* are going on. The women sing suitable songs. The ceremony covering all rituals takes more than two hours. The *purohits* use Sanskrit language and elaborates on the duties of husband and wife quoting from scriptures.

In Sanskrit *shlokas* the bride's priest requests the bridegroom to agree to the following conditions on her behalf :—

1. "In *Yag* (charity of food) you will consult me;
2. In *Kartik* (October-November) and *Magh* (January-February) when you go on pilgrimage, you will take me with you;
3. You will take care of me during my youth and oldage;
4. You will consult me in all your money transactions;
5. You will consult me in bargains about cattle, etc;
6. You will supply me with jewellery, food and clothes according to the season; and
7. You will not ill treat me in the presence of other women."

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The priest of the bridegroom's family accepts these conditions on behalf of the bridegroom, subject to the bride's acceptance of the following five conditions :—

1. "You will not go alone to any place inhabited or uninhabited without necessity;
2. You will not go into the presence of, nor converse with a drunkard;

3. You will not go to parents or other relatives without my permission;
4. You will not leave your parents house without my permission nor until sent for by me; and
5. You will not disobey me."

On behalf of the bride her priest expresses acceptance.

There was a time when dancing girls were invited and songs were arranged at the occasion of marriage. But these things have changed completely. Only rich persons can afford the dancing girls. In the urban areas the recorded songs entertain the guests and invitees.

In rural areas, grammophones fitted with loudspeakers have taken their place. A marriage in a village is gala occasion and the entire community is regaled to popular tunes and songs of the hit films.

In cities, marriage celebrations have some different appearance and outlook with the assistance of specialised contractors. The house of the bride is lit with multi-coloured lights, *shamianas* are put up and the passage is adorned with paper flower decorations. The *barat* approaches at the fixed time, heralded by incandescent lights, and a band playing music to which young boys and girls dance madly. The feeding of the *barat* is usually undertaken by a separate contractor. All these extensive and expensive arrangements are made just for one night.

Not long ago, the *barat* used to stay at bride's place for 3 days but this custom has changed under the stress of price-rise. Now the *barat* returns the next day. The bride's maternal uncle escorts the girl, followed by the women singing to the car in which she is to depart. The bride follows the bridegroom during his short walk. A few coins are thrown over their heads as a mark of good wishes and the procession starts back for home.

Though Bishnois belong to Hindu sect, yet there are some variations pertaining to marriage rituals. Among Bishnois, the traditional *betrothal* in most cases is on reciprocal basis but can be contracted otherwise also. Among Bishnois, no *phas* are performed and the binding ceremony is *piribadal* or exchange of stools by the bride and bridegroom who also takes each other's hand (*hathlewa*).

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Now there is no separate *Muklawā* ceremony. The consummation of marriage took place after a long time because the girls were married at an early age before they attained puberty. Now the boy and girl are married at a fairly mature age, this ceremony is performed on the day following the marriage and termed *patra pher*. After *patra pher* the bride finally settles in the bridegroom's house and they live as husband & wife.

A peculiar custom of *santa* prevails in the Ror community. A *nata* of a girl from one side in exchange for a *nata* of a girl from the other side is insisted upon. If the prospective bridegroom does not have a sister to offer in marriage to the brother or some other near relation of the prospective bride, he must come forward with an offer from amongst one of his cousins or other relatives.

Anand Karaj prevails among the Sikhs. The distinction between *Anand Karaj* and the Vedic marriage is that in the former the bride and bridegroom instead of going round the fire, go round the holy *Guru Granth Sahib*, the sacred book of the Sikhs. Some extracts from the above holy book are read and though they are originally meant to describe in a figurative way the union of human soul with the Supreme Being, they are made to seem the purpose of sanctifying the union of the bride and bridegroom.

After the expiry of the marriage ceremony, the departure of the bride takes place with a number of household items such as cooler, t.v. etc. Some clothes and utensils are given on the part of the parents. There is a custom to offer some gold bracelet; those who do not afford golden ornaments offer silver ornaments to the bride.

The most simple and dowryless marriages are performed among Namdhari Sikhs even today in the form of mass marriages on Holla festivals. These marriages are performed in the Sirsa district when there is a much concentration of Namdhari Sikhs.

Marriage System among the Muslims

Marriage among the Muslims is a contract. Unlike the Hindus, the initiative amongst the Muslims is always taken by the boy's side. The request for the hand of the girl is conveyed to her parents through a letter, called *ruqqa* written on golden paper and wrapped in red handkerchief.

There after, the date for engagement called *mangani* is fixed. For this ceremony, mostly female relations of the boy accompanied by a few men go to the girl's place taking presents of sweets, ornaments, betel, etc. with them. After certain ceremonies,

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a golden ring and silver band is put on the third finger of the girl's right hand. Later the same day, a few relatives of the girl go to the boy's house again after some time for settling the date of marriage. This is called *biah mangna*.

On the day of marriage, the bridegroom is dressed in the wedding clothes and a *sehra* made of flowers. He rides a mare and leads the marriage party. The *barat* is received by the bride's relatives and the bridegroom is seated on the *dais*. The ceremony of *nikah* then starts. The *quazi* sits opposite him along with *vakil* and two witnesses. After *khutba* is read, the consent of the bride to the marriage is formally attested by the witnesses, though in practice, the consent has been

prearranged. The bridegroom's consent is also formally asked. After *nikah*, *sherbat*, *misri* and *chhuharas* are distributed.

The Quazi enters the *nikah* in his register and prepares the *kabin nama* (marriage papers) on which the names of the bride and bridegroom, the *mehar* fixed, the date of marriage, etc. are written. This paper is signed by the bridegroom alongwith a couple of his relatives who sign as witnesses. The *Quazi* also signs it and hands over to the bride's parents. After *sehra* has been recited, the assembled guests are served with food. The bridegroom is taken inside the house for performing certain ceremonies. The concluding ceremony is called *rukhsat* when the bride is carried to the *palki* and the *barat* returns.

Due to modern influence, the polygamy among the Muslims is on the decline.

Marriage system among the Meos

The Meos have some peculiarities of marriage. A Meo marries early. The wedding is a prolonged affair. It is preceded by a year long preparations. Although polygamy is permissible, a Meo usually has one wife. As widow marriage is allowed in Islam, a young widow is generally married to the brother of the deceased husband. This is done so that family property is not divided or does not go out of family. In spite of rigid rules of sanguinity, customs defining who can marry who, elopements are not rare. But they are not taken lightly either.

Before settling a marriage, the Meos avoid the three *gotras* of *leash*. The famous writer, Hashim Amir Ali elaborates as under :—

"The Meo code of marriage prohibits a man from marrying not only from the *gotra* to which he himself belongs but also forbids him from marrying in the *gotra* of his mother or father or even from the *gotra* to which his maternal grand mother belonged. Assuming for the sake of clarification that *gotras* are always geographical units also, the above restriction would only imply that a youngman could marry from any of the thousand and odd villages of Mewat except his own and that of his mother or father and that of his maternal grand mother. All the women of these four villages

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would be regarded as his own intimate family and the social code would allow the women of these four villages to be relatively more free with him than with the men of other villages for, after all, was he not their brother ?

This is not to say that this intra *gotra* marriage taboo is never, never ignored. All such rules are de jure patterns of accepted behaviour and every society, through its dormant powers of social control, and its weapons of gossip, putting up of noses, frowns, ridicule and other more overt forms of ostracism does usually enforce such unwritten. Elders often choose not to see instances of contravention when they do not find them sufficiently flagrant to challenge or endanger the very social order which they consider their function to uphold."

Meo marriages are generally held in the month of May and June after the crops have been harvested. The ceremonies begin with *lagan*, followed by *chak nauta* and *ban nauta*. Dinners are served to the groom and his all people by close relation a week before marriage. During the *bendi ka bag* four days before the marriage, *ladoos* are distributed in the village by the groom's family. *Batna* and *banwara* involve giving an oil bath to the groom two days before the wedding. The *barat* is received by the bride's people on the outskirts of the village. Money (*Sagun*) is distributed by the bride's people among the *barat*.

The *nikah* is performed in the village mosque according to Islamic custom. The *Maulvi* recites some verses from the *Koran* and asks for the consent of the girl. As soon as the girl's consent is received, the *Maulvi* asks the boy's consent and the *nikah nama* is signed. The legal ceremony does not take more than ten minutes. After this, dried dates

(*chhuharas*) are distributed among the guests.

The *barat* is served rice in earthen ware with sugar and pure ghee sprinkled on it. After feast, the guests carry a spare dish called *kotal* and present to any householder of the village who provides them the necessary facilities for the stay. The *kotal* signifies that the person is a *barati*. Satisfactory arrangements for the stay of *barat* is a matter of respect and dignity for the whole of the village. The *barat* leaves after two days. The bride's relatives go to bridegroom's village and bring her back after a couple of days.

Under the modern circumstances the competition is on the increase. Every year a big amount of money is poured into weddings. The ruinous expenditure on weddings today appears enviable because hosts vie with one another in holding pompous receptions. The surprising thing is that people spend lavishly, though not all of them have money. Some take a loan from money lenders and spend a life time in returning the money with interest. If they do not indulge in such a show and wasteful overspending, their relatives should snigger.

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Widow marriage.— With regard to indoor marriage, Jats, Ahirs, Meos, Gujars and Scheduled Castes are more advanced as compared with the other castes. A woman of marriageable age seldom remains a widow and she is readily accepted as wife by one of the brothers of the deceased husband. This type of marriage is called *Karewa* which is not accompanied by any ceremony. The woman merely resumes her jewels, bracelets and coloured clothes which she ceased to wear on her husband's death. A widow can not be compelled to marry but the influence of the family is strong enough to make her yield to their wishes. If the widow is in

the middle age group, she always avoids remarriage.

Civil marriages.— In rural areas the society is somewhat orthodox. The boys and girls are not allowed to cross the caste and religious lines. They are discouraged to seek their spouse at their sweet will. But in cities, there is a tendency, not of majority, to select the spouse of their own choice. They are ready to cross the caste and religious lines. The love marriages are performed with the consent of the Registrar of marriages. These marriages are notified in advance on the notice board of the Registrar.

Reet type marriage.— Reet type of marriage, though on decline, is still in vogue in the Morni hill area of Panchkula district. Reet literally means custom and a *reet* marriage is recognised by custom. It is never the 1st marriage in case of a woman, though it can be in the case of a man. It is, however, only after her first regular marriage that *reet* may take place. The people who practise *reet* consider it a form of marriage, which can be contracted by payment of a lumpsum of money to the former husband¹.

No ceremony of Hindu marriage is observed in it. The payment of certain amount to her husband or her husband's heir if widowed, is all that is required for its purposes. When this is done, the effected purchase becomes the better half and legal partner in life of the buyer. Thus it is a divorce and marriage both rolled in one; as it is a divorce to the 1st husband and marriage to the second in a single transaction..

Marriage system of Christians

Marriage among Christians is solemnised in a church by the priest. Before the marriage ceremony, he baptises the bride and bridegroom. After the ceremony, the friends and relatives are served with a feast. There is not much difference in rituals among the Roman Catholics and the Protestants.

Dowry System .— The practice of giving, taking and demanding dowry has been declared illegal with the passage of the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961. Any person

1. *Ambala District Gazetteer*, 1984, p.62.

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who violates the law could be sentenced to imprisonment upto six months or to a fine upto Rs. 5,000 or both. Nobody can demand dowry.

Now a days there is awareness in the public. The people in general are keen to lessen this system. On June 12, 1960, a big social conference of all castes was held at Sisana village of Sonapat district to effect reforms in marriage and other customs. The conference, which was attended by over one lakh persons, expressed views against the evil of dowry system.

Despite the fact the system is prevailing to some extent in the well-to-do families.

Family System

In rural areas people call the family as Kunba. A group of families having common ancestors is called *thola*. Two or more *tholas* are jointly called *pana* or *patti*. It is common for several brothers, and occasionally for cousins to live together and farm land jointly. More often the land is managed jointly while the owners live separately. An advantage of joint family system is that income of all its members is pooled and spent for the benefit of all members, whether or not they have actually earned any part of it. The basis for the system is to ensure maintenance of all descended from a common ancestor, father or grand-father or great-grand-father. The widows or orphans, the children, young boys and girls, all elderly or physically incapacitated members of the family, all receive the attention of the head of family.

This type of system was a distinguishing feature of Hindu society since time immemorial. Now it is breaking up under the stress of the changed economic and social conditions. The main condition for the break-up of joint family system are: the competition for earning a living, the tax structure, the

increased cost of living, the mobility resulting from the requirements of service and above all, the growing spirit of individualism.

It is no longer possible for one earning member of a family to feed and support many dependents. Another factor which has contributed in the dissolution of joint family system is the growing tendency of late marriages both for boys and girls. When boys and girls marry at a comparatively advanced age, they prefer to live independently. A new pattern, with an individualistic bias, is steadily emerging. Those who enter service, have naturally to go wherever they are posted and they can hardly uproot the headquarters of the joint family and move it with them place to place according to exigencies of service.

Not to talk of urban areas, the joint family system is disappearing even in the villages, where people depend almost entirely on agriculture. The average holding is not enough to support a joint family which continue growing in sizes. It is, therefore,

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inevitable that some members of the family should move out in search of service to the urban areas to supplement the meagre family income. In this way the migration of rural population to the cities in search of living whether in business, industry, service or some form of labour has virtually affected the structure of the joint family. Those who migrate to the towns get attuned to modern amenities of life and try to settle down there with their families.

Inheritance

The law of inheritance prevailing in the closing year of 19th century in the areas of Karnal, Panipat, Kurukshetra and Kaithal is given below :—

"The land owned in severalty by individual families is not only inherited but also invariably divided on the occasion of separation of property in strict according with ancestral shares. The family members often divide the land among themselves for convenience of cultivation more in accordance with the appliances at the disposal of each than with proprietary shares, just as the common land is allotted to various families on a similar scale¹. But this division is not a division of property and the right of the members to a redistribution according to shares, with due regard to the preferential right of each to the land he has cultivated, so long as it does not exceed his share, is always recognized by the people, though some-times, (not often) contested by the individual concerned.

"The rules of inheritance are as follows : No practical distinction whatever is made between divided and undivided families; in fact the terms are hardly ever used. First the sons and sons' sons by strips how lowsoever succeed, sons representing their dead fathers. In the absence of them, the widow takes an interest strictly limited to a life tenancy. If there is no widow, or after her death, the brothers and brothers' sons inherit by strips with representation. In their absence the mother takes a life interest. After these the inheritance goes to the nearest branch in the male line, the division at each stage being by strips. Daughters, if unmarried, have a claim to maintenance only. If, property is separately acquired by a son in a divided family during his father's life, the father inherits before the brother; the separation of interest before the father's death is not allowed, and no separate property can be acquired by the individuals of an undivided family. The father may divide the land for convenience of cultivation, but on his death, or the birth of another son, it will be open to redistribution.

In attesting the record of common customs the whole countryside has declared that, where there are three sons by one wife and one by another, all four share equally.

1. *Karnal District Gazetteer*, 1892, pp.135-37.

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But there have undoubtedly occurred instances in certain families, especially among the Rajputs of the Nardak, where the division has been by wives. Where *chunabaul* is the rule of division, the full brothers and their representatives succeed to the exclusion of the half blood; otherwise there is no distinction between the two. All sons, whether by original marriage or re-marriage (*karewa*), are on equal footing; no priority is attachable to the sons of any particular wife. But a Rajput Muslim should marry a woman of another caste, as they sometimes do, especially in cities, the sons do not inherit at all, the property going strictly in the tribe.

"A son born less than seven months after the marriage is consummated, even though be-gotten by the husband, and one born more than ten months after the death or departure of the husband, is illegitimate. An illegitimate son can not be legitimised, nor can he inherit. A son by former husband brought with her by a woman on her remarriage, who is called *gelar*, (*Gel* together) if born, and *karewa* if unborn at the time of remarriage, inherits as the son of his begetter. A member of family who becomes a monk (*sadhu*), loses his inheritance; but does not do so merely by becoming a beggar. But the disciples of the monks inherit from them as their sons. The life interest of widows subsists so long as one is alive, and is shared by all equally. But a Musalman widow of another caste has no interest, and a widow who remarries loses all right even if she marries the husband's brother. Pregnancy also destroys their rights; but not mere reputed unchastity. Their rights are not contingent upon their living in the husbands village. Woman's separate property is unknown. It is remarkable how wholly, in the minds of the people the family is represented by its head. At the regular settlement the name of the head only was recorded as a rule, and the people still think that it is quite sufficient to send their heads to represent them in the court or elsewhere. This feeling, however, is weaker among the Jats than among other tribes

and they have become notorious in consequence".

The *Hissar District Gazetteer*, 1915 throws light on inheritance prevailing in the then Hissar district which is now divided in the districts of Bhiwani, Sirsa and Fatehabad. In those days Dadri (Charkhi Dadri) was the part of Jind State. The law of inheritance that prevailed in the above areas is detailed below :—

"Inheritance in all cases follows the rule of representation, i.e. if an heir who would have been entitled is dead, his male heirs will succeed to his interest. The main object of rural customs in regard to present and reversionary right in property is to keep in the agnatic group or family and thus in all but a very few cases only agnates can succeed.

"The main rules of inheritance are as follows : Succession goes first to the sons and sons' sons, per strip with representation. i.e. if a son has died, the share which he

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would have taken goes to the sons and so on. If a son has died leaving a widow, she takes a life interest in the share which would have come to him. The nearer male descendants do not thus exclude, the more remote, but all share according to the position which they occupy in relation to the deceased. As between sons by different mothers, the usual rule is that the distribution is equal among all sons, i.e. *pagvand* or *bhaainbat* and not by mothers *chandaband* and *maeonbat*.

"In other words no regard is paid to uterine descent. The higher casts in towns generally follow, however, the latter rule. In the absence of sons a widow takes a life interest in the deceased's estate, but where sons succeed she had a claim to suitable maintenance only. On the death of the widow or in

her absence or on her remarriage, the father, if alive, succeeds. This of course, rarely happens, as it is not often that the son separates from his father during the latter's life time and still less often does a separated son obtain a separate part of the family land on partition before his father's death. The father's succession is confined practically to cases in which a separated son has acquired land subsequently.

"After the father the succession goes to the brothers and their descendants per stirp and by representation; if a brother has died leaving a sonless widow, she takes a life interest in the share which would have gone to the deceased brother. In the absence of brothers or brother's sons or widows the mother of the deceased takes a life interest similar to that of the widow. In the absence of any above the succession goes to the nearest agnate branch per stirp and by representation.

"Daughters and their issues have no customary right to succeed; they are entitled to maintenance and to be suitably betrothed and married".

Since the Dadri tahsil was previously under the Jind State, the laws of inheritance prevailing in the then Jind State were applicable to the Dadri and Jind areas and were as under :—

"As a general rule the son or sons natural or adopted are entitled to the inheritance on the father's death, on his abandoning the world and becoming *faquir*, or on his changing the religion. In default of a son, the widows ordinarily succeed to their husband's estate; or in case there is no widow, the mother and the father succeed. The mother has the prior right, though, as she and the father ordinarily live together, no partition is, as a rule is required. If neither parents has survived the deceased, his brother or brothers or his brother's sons within seven degrees succeed in turn per capita. A daughter receives no share, but if she is unmarried a share is received to defray the expenses of her marriage. This share is fixed by the court according to circumstances and depends on the means of the family.

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"As a rule, sons whether by the same or different wives, share equally. By custom a widow is not allowed to alienate the estate so as to deprive the reversionary heir of it; but she can do so on the occurrence of any special emergency, e.g. in order to pay the debts, defray wedding and funeral expenses or prevent the family honour.

"Among Muhammadans, even of the cultivating castes, there is a special custom whereby daughter in some places receive share in land".

In other areas also somewhat similar system of inheritance prevailed before independence, 1947. In this regard some uniform pattern was established by the Hindu succession Act of 1956.

The intestate property before the enactment of the Hindu Succession Act, 1956, was inherited by the son after the death of his father, and if there is no son, the widow of the deceased inherited it. The widow had, however, only life interest in the property and she was not legally entitled to dispose it off as she liked. Except *stridhana*, a woman was not supposed to be the absolute owner of the property, nor could a married daughter claim share in her father's property.

Now, according to the Hindu Succession Act, 1956, sons and daughters, the mother and the widow along with other heirs of the deceased, if any, inherit the intestate property simultaneously. A daughter has as good a claim in her father's property as a son, provided the father does not debar her by law. In spite of the right conferred by law, however, it appears to have become a general practice for the girls not to claim any part of the intestate property.

Divorce and Desertion

Divorce in the present sense was unknown in earlier time. During the Mughal period (1526-1803), there was no divorce among the Hindus, while it was permitted both for Muslim men and women¹.

The position of divorce during 1910 is based on a para reproduced from an old gazetteer, as given below :

"The Muhammandan tribes in theory follow Muhammandan Law, though in practice divorce is not customary except among the Meos and Khanzadas. While all the Hindu tribes assert that they have no custom of divorce, it appears that when the wife is unchaste the husband some times expels her from his house and will have no more to do with her. This is called *tyag* and practically amounts to divorce. Unchastity is the only sufficient ground for such expulsion. Among the Jat if a wife so expelled goes and lives with another Jat and bears him sons during her first husband's life

1. *The Mughal Empire (1526-1803)* by Dr. A.L. Srivastava, 1993, p. 521.

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time, they will be considered legitimate and will have share in their father's property. Among the Jats, Gujars and Meos, if a wife, whether with or without the connivance of her parents, runs away with another man, and arrangements for her return to her husband's house fail, a sum varying from Rs.50/- to Rs.200/- is paid by the man who remarries her. The payment is called *jhagra* and severs her first husband's connection with her."¹

In India, there is more than one legal system regulating divorce; the dissolution of marriage in the different communities being regulated either by customary law or by special legislation. But now the overwhelming majority come under the provisions of the Hindu Code Bill, 1955 which applies to Hindus, Sikhs, Jains and Buddhists over 85 percent of the population; and the Civil Code of 1954 which applies optionally to all persons residing in India or subject to Indian

Jurisdiction.²

Hindu marriages performed under Vedic rites were unbroken till the Hindu Code Bill of 1955. Despite the fact that no legal provision for divorce existed among the Hindu prior to 1955, among most of the backward and Scheduled Castes divorce could be brought about by the permission of the caste panchayat and the divorced woman was allowed to remarry.

Now for the first time in the history of the Hindus, the sanctions of the customary law were done away with, and a uniform law was made applicable to all Hindus. The Act permits divorce either by husband or wife. Besides this, the provisions for divorce as provided under the Special Marriage Act of 1954, are among the most progressive in the world. It allows for divorce by mutual consent without imputation of misconduct against either party. Also the divorced person has the right of remarriage after the lapse of one year from the date of the divorce of the divorcee.

Despite the fact, in the rural areas there is a general tendency to suffer hardship resulting from ill matched marriages rather than practice divorce. Majority prefers to lead a miserable life rather than to dissolve the marriage. Another way out has been to leave the girl with her parents for good.³ Generally separation is looked down upon in almost all castes.

Specific Socio-economic study on separated women in Haryana

Desertion is the common mode adopted by male members to effect the break down of marriages in rural Haryana. And the most common cause for desertion or separation is temperamental incompatibility leading to verbal and physical violence. Though desertion is the common cause but more than 80 percent of the females who

1. *Gurgaon District Gazetteer*, 1910, p.58.

2. *Delhi Gazetteer*, 1976, p.170.

3. *Bhiwani District Gazetteer*, 1982, p.67.

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have been deserted do not get any maintenance allowance (alimony) from their husbands.¹

The study was conducted in two districts of Haryana, Faridabad and Mahendragarh. Faridabad is a highly industrialised city with the highest per capita income and Mahendragarh, an agriculture based district has the lowest per capita income. Eleven villages of Ballabgarh block of Faridabad district and 13 villages of Narnaul block in Mahendragarh district were selected for the study.

The study reveals that young widows in the age group of 16-30 years are 4.96 percent and 7.73 percent in Mahendragarh and Faridabad districts respectively while the widows in the bracket of 16-45 years are 39.73 percent and 22.13 percent in Faridabad and Narnaul (Mahendragarh district). The deserted are younger in age as 60 percent in Narnaul and 67.27 percent in Faridabad are below 30, only 29 percent in both the districts are between 30 to 45 years.

About 90 percent widows in both the districts are illiterate while only 70 percent (Mahendragarh) and 63.64 percent (Faridabad) of the deserted are illiterate. Most of the widow (more than 60 percent) come from upper castes. Similarly, 56.67 percent deserted women in Mahendragarh and 43.45 percent in Faridabad belong to upper castes followed by backward castes. Among the widowed and deserted Scheduled Castes are about 13 percent only.

It has been found out that majority of the subject are deserted ones, a small number is in the category of separated ones through the courts and panchayats. More than 90 percent are not in receipt of any maintenance allowance (alimony) for which many of them held responsible.

The most common cause for desertion or separation is temperamental incompatibility leading to verbal and physical violence in many cases. Dowry is the second most important cause for it in Mahendragarh district while sexual dissatisfaction is reported to be important only next in

temperamental incompatibility in Faridabad district. Poor physical appearance and illicit sexual relations are another important reasons for desertion. In most cases, it is the wives who worked hard to avoid separation or desertion by husbands. To solve immediate problems of living 40 percent to 49 percent sought parental help when 31 to 38 percent want for jobs. About 15 to 21.8 percent did nothing for it. None in Mahendragarh (Narnaul) and

1. These were some of the findings of a socio-economic study on widowed and divorced or separated women in Haryana, conducted by the Department of social work of Kurukshetra University.

The project was sponsored by the Department of Women and Development, Ministry of Human resources Development.

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only 3.63 percent in Faridabad got their dowry items back. 91.67 percent and 92.74 percent in Mahendragarh and Faridabad did not get any item of dowry back from their in-laws.

Respondents (more than 94 percent) are negative to effect of separation on their children. Faridabad continues to (in 92.73 percent cases) get invitations whereas only 20 percent of ruralites of Mahendragarh are invited for social functions by their co-villagers and relatives. More than 29 percent respondents are satisfied with their arrangements for their children, only 18 to 25 percent complain of poor arrangement for the upbringing of their children. The rest do not have children.

A total of 26.67 percent spouses in Mahendragarh (Narnaul) and 32.73 percent in Faridabad got remarried without observing legal formalities. A good number of deserted women talked of their problems of accommodation and

misbehaviour by relatives. A percentage of 43.33 in Narnaul and 43.64 percent of the deserted in Faridabad against 0.3.31 percent to 03.05 percent of widows complain of taunt and suspicion over their character. It is only the deserted/separated ones who complain of harassment by in-laws and spouses.

Most of the widow's girl children are illiterate in both the districts. The deserted in both the districts have less children than widows.

The widow's age of marriage, in general, is lower than that of the deserted, majority of whom were married between 16 to 20 years. Widows, who are usually older than the deserted, have health problems.

Position of Talak in Islam

Islam was perhaps the only religion of the time to treat marriages a purely social and contractual obligation. A Muslim husband in India divorces his wife by simply pronouncing the word *talak* three times. A divorced Muslim wife cannot get any maintenance from her husband as, she has been provided for at the time of her marriage by fixation of *mahr* to which she has unquestioned right.

In order to mitigate the unequal position of the Muslim wife, the British enacted the Dissolution of Muslim Marriages Act, 1939, under which the wife could claim a divorce from her husband under certain conditions enumerated in the Act. But unlike the husband, she is required under the Act to establish her case in court before she can obtain a divorce.

Under the present circumstances, to some extent, position is changing.

Position of divorce among Christians

In this connection they are governed by the Indian Divorce Act of 1869. A Christian husband in India can obtain a divorce from her wife only if he can prove

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that she has committed adultery. A Christian wife, on the other hand, has to show that husband's conduct is not merely adulterous but also cruel, or that he has committed incestuous adultery, or bigamy with adultery or adultery with desertion for two years or more. Grounds for judicial separation are desertion, cruelty and adultery.

Impotence and lunacy at the time of marriage and bigamy result in a declaration of nullity.

Birth rituals and customs

In a society, the birth of a child is normally celebrated; whether it is boy or a girl. In the modern society even the birth of the girls are also accompanied with celebration. The birth of a child is followed some rituals or customs. These are as such.

To announce the birth of an infant, particularly of son, a brass plate (*thali*) is rung in the house. A *thapa* (sign of hand) is made with *geru* (saffron colour clay) at the gates of the house. A branch of *neem* tree is hung on the each side of the main gate. Some other superstitions are practised to keep away the evil spirits. The parents of the mother of baby are also informed. The friends and relatives celebrate 6th day (*Chhati*) by eating delicious food and they keep awake throughout the night. At this occasion many play cards and some tipplers taste liquor at this auspicious day.

On the 10th day (*Daswa din*), the parents of the *Jacha* bring some ornaments, ghee, clothes and cash money for the *Jacha*. The *hom* ceremony is celebrated on the 10th day; sacred fire is lighted and whole house is sprinkled with Ganga water. Generally professional Brahman does the *hom ceremony*. The Brahman is always consulted about *namkaran* of the baby. The Brahman prepares horoscope and suggests the word about naming the child. The name of the child is suggested by the Brahman after consulting the religious books.

Among Bishnois, the house is cleaned for 30 days and the

ceremony is performed by *Gayana*, i.e. their religious priest not by the Brahman. The *Gayana*, the priest performs the *hom* ceremony by burning the sacred fire and chanting *mantras* of Bishnois faith. The child is received into it :

"Vishnu Mantar kan jal chhuwa

Shri Jambhguru ki kirpa se Bishnoi hua".

After listening to the Vishnu *mantras* from *Jambha ji Sakhi*, the child is converted to Bishnoi faith. *Dasotan*, Bishnois call it *Sirdohu* which is performed, if a son is born after a long wait or in older age of the parents. Now a days this ceremony is on the decline.

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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.

Muslim 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 10th day by opening the *Koran*.

Almost all Hindus perform *mundan* ceremony when the boy is a few years old. For this purpose they go to some religious place. Around Chandigarh areas, the people go to Mata Mansa Devi Shrine for this purpose. The surrounding Rohtak and Charkhi Dadri areas, the people go to *Beri* for *mundan* ceremony. On this occasion, the hair of body is cut and head shaved for the first time and friends and relatives are entertained to a feast.

Disposal of the dead and burial customs

The disposal of the dead body is carried out in each religion. The Hindus and Sikhs cremate the dead while the Muslims bury the dead body.

Among Muhammadans no special ceremony is observed on the death of a child of 12 or under. The clothes worn by the deceased are carried at the burial ground and the body after being dressed in new clothes and wrapped in a shroud (*Kafan*) is buried.

On the approach of death in case of persons over 12 among the then Muhammadan Rajputs Anzan is repeated in the ears of dying persons and honey diluted with water pour in his or her mouth. After death of a *fakir*, his relatives put cotton in the nostrils and ears to prevent water entering them and then wash the corpse, after which the cotton is removed. Among Meos, only relatives wash the corpse and no cotton is used. The body after being dressed in new clothes and wrapped in a shroud, is laid on the bier (*janaza*) which among Meos is the bed on which the deceased died, but among other tribes must be a different bed.¹

The *janaza* is then carried off by four men with the head foremost, and set down close to the grave, which is dug pointing north and south, and is about 5 feet deep. After the reading of prayers, the body, without the shroud which is given to the *fakir*, is lowered and laid on its side with the face towards the west (Meecca) in a recess at the bottom of the grave. The open side of the recess is then closed with earthen vessels or stone, so that when the grave is being filled no earth may fall on the body. Grain is then distributed among the poor. On return back to the home, *darad*

1. *Gurgaon District Gazetteer*, 1910,p.76.

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is said by the funeral party for the benefit of the soul of the deceased. A fire is burnt on the grave for 40 days to keep away animals digging out the body.

On the third day after the death, the relatives and friends of the deceased say *Kalima* and for each *kalima* put some parched gram on a heap until 12 1/2 *sers* are collected, when the grain with sugar *patashas* or *dachidanas* is distributed among the party. Among Meos, this ceremony is not in vogue but the *tija* or the ceremony of the third day is observed by distributing *patashas* among relatives, and in the evening by feasting the four persons who carried the body to grave. During the three days between the death and *tija* the deceased's family members do not eat at their own, but at their friend's house. The Meos observe the 40th day after death by saying *fatiha* for the benefit of deceased's soul, and if they are well off, by feasting the poor and their caste fellows. Some middle standard families give funeral feast (*kaj*), to which all friends and relatives as well as almost the whole village and the neighbouring villages are invited and expensively feasted. The guests present the heir of the deceased with a money contribution (*neota*) and a turban (*pagri*), clothes and money are distributed to the poor persons on the day of *kaj*. The custom of *kaj* is on the decline.

A day before the *Id-ul-zuha*, *Id-ul-fitr*, Moharram and *Shah-a-barat* following the death the *firja* ceremony or distribution of *halwa* or *chapati* among the brotherhood is performed among all Muhammadans.

Disposal of the dead by Hindus

Among Hindus, children under 7 years of age on their death are buried without the observance of ceremonies. In other cases, on the approach of death the ground is leaped and spread with *dab* grass or *munj* on which dying person is laid. Some coin is put in the mouth of the dead.

The period of *sutak patak* or ceremonial impurity of the house and its inmates begins from the moment of death. the

corpse is washed and clothed in new unbleached white garments and wrapped in shroud, the clothes worn at the death left at the burial ground.

The bier (*arthi*) is made of bamboos or *farash* branches bound together. On this the body covered with shroud (*kafan*) is placed and carried feet foremost to the burning ground (*marghat*) by four relatives. One is the deceased's nearest male relation, most probably son, and on him devolves the duty of performing the funeral ceremonies (*kiria karam*).

Before starting the *arthi*, the glass bangles (*churians*) and metal finger rings worn by the deceased's widow are broken and placed on the bier. After going a short distance the bearers change places. On arrival at burning ground water is sprinkled

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on the ground, the pyre is prepared and water sprinkled round it. The body with the bier is then placed on the pyre. The part of the shroud over the deceased mouth is torn and a piece of sandal wood placed in the mouth.

The funeral party then place the logs of *pipal*, *jant*, *farash* or *kikar* wood and fuel cakes on and around the pyre. The relative who performs the ceremonies sets fire to the pyre with a torch of *pula* grass. A third *pind* then is given. When the pyre is alight, the chief mourner breaks open the skull of the dead with a stick and pours ghee into it. The mourners go to pond and wash hands and feet, then return homes. They assemble before the house of the deceased. Thereafter they disperse. They take bath at their house.

A *diya* or a fire is lighted in the room where death took place and is kept burning for 12 days. On the third day after the

funeral, the *phul* or remains consisting of nails, bones and teeth of the deceased are collected by the relatives and taken and thrown into the Ganges by some male member of the family or by family priest. This ceremony is called '*Sorni*'. On the same day an earthen vessel (*gharva*) containing a hole which has been stuffed with dab grass, is tied to a Pipal tree, and the chief mourner fills it with water in morning and evening for 9 days. The water is allowed to drip to the ground; the idea being that it reaches the deceased. This rite is called *ghat*.

On the 11th day, the *prohit* or Achraj breaks the *ghat*. He is then fed with sweet-meats and monetary help. On the 12th day, the *Tairami* ceremony is performed. Balls of ghee, sugar and rice are thrown into the fire. So, *hawan* is performed.

Instead of the *tairami* ceremony, Ahirs feast twelve persons, including Brahman and the four relatives who carried the bier, on the 12th day.

Some rich persons perform *Kaj* ceremony. But the custom is on the decline due to the economic pressure and modern circumstances.

Bishnois, though a Hindu sect, bury their dead. Earlier, the Bishnois used to bury their dead in the *Poli* (entrance of the house) but now they use a separate burial ground. Among Bishnois, *Kharch* is performed on 3rd or 4th day when a feast is served to relatives and friends.

Home Life

The villages in different parts of the state differ widely in appearance and size. The village as a general rule had one or at the most two entrances (*phalsa*). Generally there was no passage right through it. But now the villages are scattered and trend is to build houses outside. Now a days Government is also selecting model villages under modern planning with each and every amenities.

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Outside the village will be found one or more temples, *Shivalas* and *Thakurdwars*. In Mewat area, we can see mosques because that area is inhabited in majority by the Meos. 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 non availability of water has become a thing of past. Piped water scheme has been made available to many villages, still the wells are used by the people in rural areas.

Importance of traditional wells in rural areas

Six decades ago, when the need to build wells was recognised for augmenting the drinking water supply, a surveyor would be summoned by a *tholedaar* - a head of the family. The surveyor possessed appropriate knowledge for correctly identifying a site for a new well. Often, it was on community land.

The surveyor would keep in mind the proximity of the site to the dwelling area, the texture of the soil, underground water the new well may yield, water needs of the people, financial resources available with the commissioning community, the capability of the terrain and adjacent pond for recharging the aquifer and the vegetation cover at the premises.

When so many parameters were considered who would dare say we were unscientific?¹ The true significance lies in the depth of this traditional knowledge gradually developed and successfully utilised by the village surveyors.

An ideal site would be a high corner on the bank of a pre-existing pond. Certain plant species were considered an ideal indication of the type of sub-soil, the taste of underground water and its quantity. People knew that with a grove of plant species like *peepal*, *bargad*, *pilkhan*, *goolar*, *neem*, *jamun*, *mango*, *sahjan* and a thick undergrowth of bushes, the top soil at the site of the new well was capable of holding

moisture longer during hot weather.

In the next phase, as architect-cum-mason would be approached who would undertake construction on behalf of the *thola* or *paras* i.e. several groups of families of a lineage in a village. The master mason and the surveyor would decide about the size and design of the well.

Shortly, an old *dhaak* or *jandi* tree in the *bani* i.e., community forest to obtain adequate quantity of wood to prepare the *neemchak* a circular foundation on which walls or kothi of the well was raised. *Dhaak* or *jandi* wood was considered ideal for a *neemchak*, for it would not decay in mud even after many decades. This wood is capable of withstanding immense pressure.

1. The account is based on the write-up appeared in Saturday plus of *The Tribune*.

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Till 50 years ago, lime rocks dug out from the community land and locally known as *rori pathar* were shaped and sized, according to construction plans of a well. Our masons shaped these blocks with primitive tools but exceptional skills. Later, brick masonry was introduced.

The diameter of the community wells found in Haryana ranged somewhere between three to five meters. The quality of binding material or mortar for bricks is another marvel. The fixing material, a thick paste, consisted of limerock (*rori*), accacia seeds (*kakroli*) or Guar seeds, white jute (called *sun* or *patsun*), wholesome seeds of *urad* pulse grounded with water. In a circular trench a bullock would roll a heavy grinding wheel to crush this mixture and prepare it for use.

When the wall of well was sufficiently raised, a *chabootra* would be built around it. The final structure of a well were

the *chabootra*, *parchha* (a depressed and sloped place near the rim of the well where water would drop), *bhaun* (a large wooden pulley), *burjee* (minarets) and *khels kothe* (tubs).

The ruggedness of masonry was remarkable in the sense that it lasted 100 to 150 years. The structure of most of the community wells in Haryana is visibly intact even today. Four pillar wells with four *bhauns* were commonly built in Haryana. But wells with eight to 12 *bhauns* were also built a 100 years ago at Beri, Dujana and Manheru villages in Haryana.

To stabilise the structure, the well was clad with fine white lime. The local artists decorated wells with devotion, by drawing figures of sages, pheasants and mounted warriors. To enhance the grace, *chhatris* (shelters) adorned with wall paintings were also built at a considerable cost. Besides, the upper half of the pillars was covered with colourfully drawn geometrical designs.

The fine art work on wells in south western Haryana was inspired by later Kishangarh (Rajasthan) style. Regretfully the fine art work on most wells in villages of Meham and Jhajjar blocks including Beri has either faded or been defaced by urchins. Artists, who made these colours from local material passed away without transferring the secret chemistry to their heirs. The village wells in Deeghal village, Farmana, Badshapur and village Bhaini Chanderpal deserve special mention.

Installation of stone figures of deities on wells was discouraged. Instead, building a well near an existing temple or raising a temple near a well or building both together was considered auspicious.

Wells are an object of our rich cultural heritage. A culturally sensitive relationship evolved between wells and our rural people, especially in semi arid south west Haryana and vast desert areas of adjoining Rajasthan.

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The socially significant custom of ceremoniously taking a bride to the well is on the decline. Earlier, the new bride wore colourful dress in the evening and was decorated with heavy jewellery of gold and silver. She, then strode gracefully towards the well singing folk songs in chorus in the company of senior women of her husband's clan. Her physical strength and sweet voice was under scrutiny.

The well hummed with colourfully dressed brides twice during the day late morning and early evenings. The teej festival has historical links with huge trees on the premises of wells. If there were few wells, there were few trees and the celebrations would be a low key affair.

Now-a-days, most wells are dilapidated. The decaying old trees stand mutely in the company of the deserted wells. The younger generation does not possess the vision to preserve the abandoned wells even as a landmark of cultural heritage.

Dwellings.— The houses in rural areas are mostly of identical nature/pattern. These are built with mud bricks. The majority of the people are having pucca houses built of stone and bricks. Under the economic change, the officers belonging to villages most of them from army, are keen to build modern *kothis*, akin to those of urban areas. The general pattern of the houses are as such : immediately after the entrance to a house, there is usually a room called *dahilz* or so called *darwaza*. Besides being a drawing room or meeting room, it is used particularly at sides, for cattle and there are mangers and stables where fodder is chopped. Then follows an open space or yard, variously called *angan*, *sahan* or *bisla*, at the rear of this or on either side a *varanda*, and behind this again are inner rooms for living and sleeping called *kothi*.

This is a fairly accurate description of the standard plan of a house but variations are innumerable. Frequently two or three minor enclosures will be found inside the main enclosure and sub-divided by walls. Within the enclosures are the *chulas* or hearths at which bread (*Roti*) is baked. The Hara or oven 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 usually lack bath rooms (latrines). Now a days people are conscious of having bathrooms. In the past there was no special designing of houses except few *havelis* which had been built by *Banias* or other rich persons. The doors of those are generally covered and some have also flower decorations in brass.

There are some receptacles (*kuthlas*) for grain which are atope built up into a cylinder. There has been a small hole in the bottom, out of which the grain runs and keeps a full, a small receptacle open in front from it is taken as required. Another way of storing grain is *bukhari*, which is separated within the *kotha* with a partition wall about 1 to 2 metres high. *Kothi* is another construction within the *Kotha*. It is regular

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in shape and besides foodgrains, other articles of daily use are stored in it. It has a *tanki* (small window) for the entry and exit of articles. The face of the *kothi* is decorated with colourful drawings in a indigenous style.

As already pointed out, with the spread of education and growing demand for better sanitary and health facilities, the villagers are changing the pattern of their houses. They now have a separate shed for cattle. Still they have well ventilated houses. After the formation of Haryana, the electrification of villages was accelerated in 1968. By this time, the villagers are using the electricity to convenience to a greater extent.

Dwelling in urban areas are almost *pacca* and within the planning. Though a few towns such as Bhiwani and Charkhi Dadri have some old style houses besides new *bastis*. Almost in every city and town, the people are having well designed

and planned many storey houses. A few towns/cities such as Faridabad and Chandigarh have sector plan. These cities are model cities and divided by sectors, well paved streets and road. HUDA (Haryana Urban Development Authority) or Haryana Housing Board offer built-up houses after charging the cost of the building. New modern colonies have also come up. The houses in them have been provided with modern amenities. These are fully electrified and piped water supply is available. The modern colonies have an arrangement of underground sewerage.

In many towns & cities many storeys of the houses are available. Besides, there are parks for get-together and other purposes.

Furniture and Decoration.— The furniture maintained by the villagers consists of a few bedstead (*manja*), Khat made of wooden frames covered with netted string; a few small stools (*pida* and *Khatola*) of identical construction; a few small low wooden tables (*patra*); and some large baskets to store clothes in. There are some small shallow baskets (*dalri*) for bread, grain and some narrow mouthed ones (*bajri*) to keep small articles. Lately, some such villagers have made arrangements for *sofasets*, chairs and central tables. This arrangement is keenly made by ex-servicemen and other officers. They use desert-coolers, T.V. and radio.

In urban middle class houses, chairs and tables have become normal things. The homes of well-to-do persons are tastefully furnished and decorated in the modern style. *Sofas*, wardrobes, double beds, *palangs*, iron foldings *plangs*, *moorahs*, tables and chairs of different description and other items of modern furniture fill the houses.

In the houses of the richer persons or famous politicians, each room has its appointed furnitures. The drawing room is furnished with western style with carpets, *sofasets*, *setties*, curtains, central table, peg stools, etc. Cushions are kept on the *setties* and the backs of the *sofas* and chairs covered with embroidered cloth. Some

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times, television sets, radio grams, etc. are also kept in the drawing rooms. In addition, specimens of art made of ivory, brass wood etc. alongwith flower vases and ashtrays add lusture to the decor. While the dining room is furnished with a dining table and arm chairs. Framed photographs and paintings, either original or reproduction, adorn the walls of the various rooms.

Regarding decoration, the only items that are found crude toys, pictures of Hindu deities, clay idols, etc. The Sikhs adorn their houses with the life sketch pictures of their Gurus, paintings prepared by Sobha Singh such as Sohni Mahiwal. The staunch Arya Samaj leaders have pictures of Saraswati Saya Nand and other Arya Samaj leaders.

In Christian homes, pictures of the Chirst, Virgin Mary, etc. are hung on the walls, whereas the Muslims have the sacred number 786, sketches of Mecca and Medina or the Kalma are also framed.

Besides, some paintings made by the Britishers and former artists are found in each home of richer persons.

House holds utensils.— the general name for household vessels is *bartan*, the earthen ones collectively known as *basan* and metal ones *kasan*. An old gazetteer listed the following items.—

1. *Bartna* (*degchi* by Muslims), a small pan of brass for cooking *dal* etc.
2. *Tokni* (called *degcha* by Muslims), a large pan of brass for cooking rice and holding water.
3. *Tokna* (called *deg* by Muslims), the same but large.
4. *Thali* (called *rikabi* by Muslims), a metal plate.
5. *Bela* or *Katores* (called *pyala* by Muslims), a big cup of brass and *kansi* for drinking milk, butter milk, *sharbat* etc. It is called *katori* when of a smaller size.

6. *Lota* (called *badna* by Muslims), small pot of brass for drinking water.
 7. *A bkhora*, a small tumbler of brass.
 8. *Chamcha*, a spoon of brass.
 9. *Parat* (called *tabuk* by Muslims), a tray of brass for kneading flour.
 10. *Biloni*, a churn.
 11. *Jewa*, an iron girdle for cooking bread.
 12. *Chimta*, the iron tongs.
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The metal vessels consist of large narrow mouthed cauldrons (*toknas*) for storing water and cooking at feasts, smaller vessels of similar shape (*toknis*) for ordinary cooking and carrying water; 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* for drinking hot liquids and eating *kichri* and *rabri*, and a tray *thali* to eat, a large tray *parat* for kneading dough, a brass ladle (*karchhi*), a spatula (*khurchana*) for turning bread, thin iron plate (*tawa*) for baking bread (*roti*) and some pairs of iron tongs (*chamta*), a frying pan (*karhai*) and sieve (*chhalni*), both of iron and iron bucket (*dol* or *balti*) for drawing water from well.

The utensils are made of brass and bell metal (*kansi*). The earthen utensils commonly used are *ghara* or *painda*, a large earthen vessel, in which water is stored, a *handi* (a utensil for cooking vegetables, *dal*) and *kadhoni* (a utensil for boiling milk) and *biloni* (a utensil for churning curd).

Wooden articles such as *jherni* (small churning handles) are used for preparing mixture of ground *bajra* and pulses in boiling water for cooking *khichri*, *ruee* (churning handle), *palias* (iron vessel used for pouring milk and ghee). In many villages iron cauldron called *karahi* are to be found, they are used when culinary operations are required on a large scale as at wedding or funeral feast.

A period was there when the rich people with the kings used to eat food in silver wares. It was a matter of dignity, now the silver wares are for the worship at the Diwali festival. Utensils and decorations have undergone a change particularly in urban areas. Side by side with the copper and brass utensils, porcelain and glassware are finding favour with the people. Stainless steel utensils are gaining popularity. Besides, China crockery is favoured by rich and poor alike.

Dress and Ornaments.—The dress of the people is simple. The everyday clothes are usually made of coarse cloth, whether mill made or hand spun. The elderly persons wear *pagri*, shirt or *kurta* and *dhoti*. The young persons do not like to wear *pagri*.

The usual wrap is the *chadar*, and in the cold weather a thick blanket or a *khes* is preferred. Many persons use *angochha*. The men in service or students wear pants or *pyjama* while others as already pointed out, commonly desire for *dhoti* which can serve many purpose.

With the economic improvement and the expansion of education, almost all castes have been affected by the change in fashion. The new generation preferably wear pants, bush shirt and coats of latest designs.

Gone are the days when the *ghagra* was in vogue. Some how many aged ladies use the *ghagra*. Now a days the village women wear a shirt of gent's style with collar.

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The younger generation wear *salwar* and *kameez*. The wrap of cotton worn over the head is called *ordhna* or *dupata* (a sort of headwear) the central part of which is of yellow colour and rest printed multi coloured and *pomcha* or *chunri* are the other item of dress.

Now a days *sari* has become an important part of dress with it there are *choli* (blouse), *ordhna* and shawl. The middle class women wear night dress (*maxi*). The young (school going) girls like to use frock. The highly educated ladies use pants and bush shirts of latest fashion.

The men having good economic condition now use readymade shirts, bush shirts and trousers of cotton or terrylene in summer and woolen suits and neckties or woolen jackets and trousers in winter. Clothes made of synthetic fibres like nylon, terrylene, terrycot, terrywool etc. are demanded by the middle class people. Certain sections of population use this variety of cloth almost exclusively, the cotton, having been driven out of competition. The advantage in this variety is that not only it longer lasting and crease resistant, but easily washable at home also, needing little or no ironing.

The coloured sports shirts, jeans extra wide belts, etc. are also very popular among the fashion conscious. The younger folk imitate the westernized dress.

The senior persons of the society still wear *dhoti* or loose *pyjama* and *kurta*. Some elderly persons wear *churidar pyjama* as well. In summer a cotton or *khadi* Jawahar jackets may be worn over the *kurta* while in winter, woolen jacket along with shawl or an *achkan-sherwani* may be used. The Gandhi cap is very popular with this type of dress; sometimes a cloth cap or in winter a fur cap may be worn. The lawyers have their black coat during courts period.

The Sikhs invariably wear a turban irrespective of the western or Indian dress. In winter full sleeve sweaters, mufflers, scarves and gloves are commonly used by all sections of the people. The woolen monkey caps are also

worn by some elderly men, young children and men wear woolen jackets while driving scooters and motor cycles. Some persons wear overcoat.

The traditional Muslim dress used to be the *angarkha* and waist coat, usually embroidered, wide *pyjama* and cloth cap, which could be plain or embroidered. Occasionally *burka* is used by the Muslim women. The poor people like to remain in *kurta* and *tehmad*, with a fez cap. The young generation or educated class wear westernised dress i.e. pants, shirts and suits.

The Bishnoi women in rural areas wear different dresses. They wear long *ghagras* unlike the women of other communities. Their *ordna* is printed multi coloured. It is

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broader as to cover the abdomen. They have a distinction in wearing *borla* on the forehead. But the educated ladies like to have some change in dress.

Meo dress.— The Meo women are as characteristic as their men and are known as Meonies. Each of the two has a distinct dress and role in the society.

The men wear white *dhotis* or coloured *tehbands* and shirts called *kurtas*, of varying lengths. A turban on the head, generally whitish, is a must. But observers have suggested that even males tend to adopt three colours in their rugged garbs. The keeping of *lathi* is indispensable for a Meo in rural areas. It is almost a part of dress. It adds dignity to his ubiquitous beard.

The Meonies, perhaps like the women of all communities are the more picturesque and display more individuality. It is said

that their dress in former times had consisted of *lehngas* and *cholis*, long skirts and light *bodices* in common with other village women of Rajasthan. But even the gazetteers of the last century mention that this was disappearing. Today they wear *shalwar* like loose coloured *pyjamas*, long skirts of full sleeve reaching to their wrists and a *dupatta*, scarfs on their heads. Invariably these three garments are of three colours red-green, yellow and black becoming most common. These colours are fast and deep.

Above the thick triangular scarf, with two its corners framing the face and falling on the shoulders, the Meo women, when going out of their houses, are often found to carry baskets on their heads. Beneath these baskets is generally kept a soft ring with coloured strings falling from it on the shoulders and reaching up to waists. The ends of these strings are adorned with shells or beads and sudden movement of head makes soft music.

Thick but hollow silver ring and ornamental chains round the neck as well as silver bracelets round the arms are also characteristic of Meo women. Majestically they walk there to the well for water and with two metal pots balancing one above other their weight balance and softernal by the inervening ring. It is one of the sights that enlivens the Mewat landscape.

Surma (black collyrium) for eyes, *mehandi* (paste of leaves) for colouring the palms and *ubtan* for softening skins are also used by the women. Hair oils and scented vaseline have by now found their way and some times one comes across plastic *beendies* on their foreheads. The custom of tatooing, however, has gone out of fashion both for males and females.

Hair designing-changing trends

In rural areas the condition of hair dressing is some what same as it was in vogue in earlier periods. But in urban areas, ladies of high rank belonging to middle

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class go to hair saloon for a hair cut, massage, facial, eye brows etc. The beauty parlours are popular in the cities. At the time of marriage, many would be brides go to beauticians and spend exorbitant expenditure on such exercises. It has become a fashion . Hair dye has become very popular with the aged persons or middle aged who want to look younger than their age. Many young persons whose black hair gets prematurely grey fall in the category. They go to hair saloons for a hair dye.

Normal cutting has a variety of hair designing in the society. The big city like Chandigarh has a host of such hair saloons. The people surrounding Delhi, go there for hair cut or nearby towns.

"For centuries men have preened in secret, but atleast they are gaining courage to come out of the closet and plunk themselves down in the beautician's chair".

Day by day the bathroom shelf which held no more than toothpastes, shaving cream, aftershave and hair oils grows crowded with moisturesers, deodrants, lotions and gels. Even the barbar's shop is not what it used to be. The men of all ages now a days visit hair saloons-teenagers, middle aged and those on the wrong side of 50 for having their eye brows threaded, their hair dyed or may be streaked, having a nice *henna* treatment and styling, blemishes bleached, complexion rejuvenated and nails trimmed and buffed.

As already pointed out, barber shops have different kind of clientele. Most of many clients want a trendy look and take film stars as their models. If a client does not want a hair cut, he is probably for massage or a facial. A Londoned trained beautician in Sector 17, Chandigarh gives the following version:—

"She claims that her herbal treatment is very popular with men. She says that most clients visit for facial, threading and hair treatments once a month. The popular hair style are same the Shahrukh cut, vegetable cut and Mushsroom cut. I also get a fair number of men who want their streaked-including

young guys taking part in fashion shows or who want to look particularly fetching at a wedding. However, most clients prefer a neat look".

Pedicure is strange story in the big cities, it is opted by the big business men. The pedicure specialist gives male feet a treat. For this purpose, the beauticians have an array of shampoos and Ayurvedic medicines which are used to clean the skin and soften callouses and corns. As per version of beautician, "First, the feet go into a big basin of hot soaping water to which tinchrodine merebromin and some Ayurvedic medicines are used. After a nice long soak of 45 minutes, they get brisk rub then a oil massage".

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Foot wears.— The footwear of rural people is devoid of variety. The people use leather shoes, *jutis*, plastic chappals, etc. Some young persons also use shoes as being cheaper.

During last two decades, the Haryana State has made much progress in the domain of small scale industries. Embroidered *jutis* (*Tila jutis*) of Rewari district has a great attraction among the people. The younger generation both male and female like it to wear. During Mughal period, this foot wear was the monopoly of the kings and nawabs. Now a days, it is in great demand around Rewari district as well as throughout Haryana.

The foot wear of city folk is also of many varieties. Men wear many types of *chappals*, sandals and shoes, Leather of several shades and varieties is also used. The boys generally wear rubber soled shoes as they are longer lasting. The shoes worn by the women are of still large varieties. Many women make it point to wear matching foot wear with their clothes. High, medium or small heeled shoes or *sandals* are bought by

women depending upon the latest fashion. Canvas shoes are also liked by morning walkers or evening walkers. In cities, people use bath room rubber *chappals*.

Ornaments.— Since the very early time, ornaments have been considered the index of economic and social status of a person. All the communities living in urban or rural areas alike wear ornaments of gold, silver and diamond. The rich persons invest much in ornaments as they are considered insurance against a rainy day. At the time of marriage both the parents and in-laws offer ornaments to the bride and bridegroom according to their economic condition. Ornaments are worn on the ears and nose, the forehead and crown of head, the neck, chest, upper arm, the wrist, thumb, finger and ankle and toe-this literally from head to toe. The details of ornaments worn by the persons in the state are given below:—

As already pointed out, the ornaments worn by the women and usually are made of gold and silver. Hundred years ago, women in rural areas used to wear heavy silver ornaments on their ankles and chest. In those days even they walk with difficulty due to these heavy ornaments. Now the ladies wear the ornaments as per their convenience.

The ornaments include *tika*, *singar*, *patti*, *borla* (worn by a Bishnoi woman is made of different colours), *phaini* on forehead, *hansli*, *jhalra* (long hanging string of silver or gold coins), *galsari*, *gulbandh*, *jaumala*, *kanthi* round the neck; *karanphool*, *bujli* or *bujni*, *danee*, *kantey*, *bundey*, *tops*, *bali* on the ears; *koka*, *purli*, *nath* for the nose; *tod*, *chann*, *pachhaili*, *kangani*, *chura*, bracelets, in order from shoulder to wrists;

and *anguthi* (ring) on finger, *tagri* worn round the *lehanga* or *sari*, *ramjhol*, *kari*, *chailkari*, *tate* and *pati*, *pajeb* (made of silver) are worn on legs.

It is presumed that a woman's social standing was generally determined by her jewels. Now a days, this is not gaining popularity among the masses. However, some ornaments even today are much popular. The rose-ring, the plain armlet and the *chura* or wristlet have a social significance. In the past, the armlets, bracelets and anklets being solid and not easy to remove, were worn always while the rest on special occasions, such as marriages, festivals and the like. Now the use of traditional jewellery as described above has become out of date. The items of jewellery in common use include *kanthi* for the neck, *purli* or *koka* for the nose and *pajeb* for the anklets. The educated women do not use much jewellery except a chain on the neck, rings on the fingers and a few bangles (golden) on the wrists. It is generally seen that use of ornaments save on special occasion, is on the decline.

Now-a-days there is a perceptible change in the society. The glass and plastic bangles sold by the peddlers are also worn by the women. In their day to day life, women generally wear few ornaments, and that to light ones.

In the past, men used to wear silver or gold buttons, with or without chains, finger rings of gold or alloy and ear rings known as *murki*. But now wearing ornaments is no longer popular with the males. The young and old in the recent wear rings and chains (golden) on the neck. Some are fond of wearing golden *kara* on the wrists.

The use of artificial jewellery is on the increase, as gold has become so dearer, hence it is beyond the capacity of an ordinary family.

Food.—A large majority of rural population take vegetarian food. Generally, the villagers take three meals in summer and two in winter. The staple diet of the people in the villages is wheat, gram, barley, maize, *bajra* and *jawar*. While the economically better off take wheat and *gochani* (mixture of gram and wheat) in summer and *bajra* in winter.

In addition to the ordinary cakes (*chapatis*) made from the flour of above mentioned grains, the following dishes are very popular in the rural areas:—

"*Dalya* or as the Meos call it *gassa*. This is a porridge made

of *bajra*, *jawar* or barley of which the rural people are especially fond of."

"*Rabri*.— This is made by mixing *bajra* flour in the cold weather and barley flour in the hot weather with water and whey, and leaving the mixture in the sun until it ferments. Some salt and more buttermilk are added and the whole is put over a smouldering fire. It is eaten at night with salt and milk, and in the morning with salt and butter milk."

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"*Maheri*.— This is *bajra*, *jawar* or barley flour cooked in buttermilk, and is a favourite food of Meos and Khanzada. The light morning meal taken before the peasant begins his fields work consists generally of what is left over from the meal of previous evening. It is called *kalen* or *kaleva* by the ruralites."

In the morning, some people take Lassi and Roti (*chapati*) and *churma*. The lunch menu include *rotas* of *bajra*, barley and gram mixed, one dish of vegetables or pulse. Some time *karhi* may be prepared. The vegetables available in the rural area are green beans of *guar*, *tindai*, wild tinds which grow in sandy areas, *sangar* (beans of *jand* tree) and *rayata* of *phog* (dried flowers of *phog* plant). In the rural areas, other vegetables are also frequently used. They buy them from the town and use there as per their liking. They also prepare special dish of *khir* and *halwa* on the occasions of festivals. *Gulgula* and *puri* are most special dishes of the areas.

In winter, *sag* prepared from green mustard leaves of Sarson is eaten almost every day by the villagers, because *sarson* is easily available there. A family, irrespective of its economic condition, generally takes only one dish, either of pulse or vegetable, with *chapatis*. The poorer section use *chutni*

prepared from crushed onion, mint, chillies and salt. While well-to-do families use pure *ghee*; other use vegetable oils (*Dalda* and *Rath*). The households which own milch cattle also take milk, curd, butter, butter milk, etc. The left over butter milk is some times given to other needy persons. Tea has gained popularity in rural areas. Many tea stalls have also sprung up on small bus stops.

In the urban areas, majority of the people are vegetarians, a good number of people from Sikh community use meat as their food. The Hindus and Muslims also enjoy meat eating. The Hindus do not take flesh eating on Tuesday. They mostly take the chickens, goat flesh and mutton.

The well-placed city folk start the day with bed tea. Now tea has become very much popular in the urban areas. In the morning almost every family member but for younger children, take tea during breakfast. In earlier period, people were not so habitual of drinking tea. Before 1939 or by the time of Independence days (1947), the tea companies used to offer free prepared tea which was introduced to the people. In those days people were hesitant to use tea; instead of tea, they used to take milk. It has been often seen that tea now a days has become the root cause of many chronic diseases. Despite the fact, in offices tea clubs are there. Even guests are served with tea and biscuits.

The breakfast in a well-to-do family may consist of milk, cereals, egg, and toast, tea and coffee. Some house holds may prefer to have *paranthas* with curd or

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lassi and *pooris*. The menu at lunch time generally is *chapatis* or rice taken with *dal* or vegetable and curd. Some

times in place of *dal* or vegetable, the non vegetarians may enjoy mutton or fish eating. The food at dinner is generally similar to that of lunch in many homes with slight variations. Some times the left over vegetables and *dal* at lunch times may be used again at the time of dinner. This necessitates due to rising prices day by day.

Pickles and *chatnies*, *papar*, *salad*, etc. are eaten at lunch and dinner. Many varieties of sweet dishes are prepared occasionally and seasonal fruits are also eaten. *Paneer* is a special dish in many homes.

The cooking mediums are pure *ghee*, refined oils, mustard oil and vegetable oils. During summer season cold drinks like *sherbats*, squashes, fresh lime, aerated waters, etc. are taken to quench the thirst. Smoking is also vogue in the society.

Some of the south Indian dishes like *dosa*, *idli*, *vada*, *sambhar*, *uppama*, *rasam*, etc. are also popular and the people use these things in restaurants and coffee house. Punjab *Chana Bhatura* is eagerly eaten by the people.

Some times people make special arrangement in the famous restaurants at the time of wedding, business conference, a birthday party, a gossip kitty party or just a cosy get-together. The restaurants cater to their needs at their door step. For large gatherings they can cater for with waiters, bone china crockery and silver ware. For birthday parties, toffees, caps and pipes for the kids are on the increase. With the festive season such as Dewali they make special arrangement for free home delivery even to Panchukula. The food can be packed and sent or if some one wants the services of a waiter, that is also available.

There are many rich persons who some times visit restaurants and relish special *karahi* chicken, *methi* chicken, *achari gost*, *paneer banke bahar*, *murg kastoori kabab*, *murg* and *haryali kabab*. The people use different varieties of ice creams.

Little use of intoxicants and drugs.— In ancient period, the then Haryana was the bowl of milk and the people by and large used milk and milk products. There was no use of wine in such a large scale. Due to these dry habits, there was longevity in the state. The people had robust body and mind.

Even in Mughal days, a peculiar kind of prohibition had been set in and people were discouraged to use intoxicants including wine. Balban, the great Muslim ruler used to give deterrent punishments to the wine traders; their hands were

cut; the wine users were canned publically. During the Khilji period the wine users were got dangled in the unused wells (*Jheras*). After the battle of Khanwa with Rana Sangha, a warrior Rajput of Rajasthan, Babar, the founder of Mughal dynasty, introduced prohibition in the kingdom. Akbar, the great Mughal abstained from taking wine. Jahangir and

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Aurangzeb used to award heavy punishments to drunkards. In the time of Aurangzeb, who was a teetotaler, the wine users had to get amputated their hands and feet as a punishments. There were others exemplary punishments for the intoxicants.

All the religions decry the use of wine and other intoxicants. As per Islam, the wine is the mother of all sins. Even Christianity does not permit the use of wine. According to Christ, the wine is the door of hell. There is a reference in *Manusamarti* that the wine makers were not allowed to live in the locality. Even many historians and philosophers and thinkers said, "The use of wine is fatal and harmful both for the society and state".

After independence, the British imposed prohibition in Rohtak district. Thereafter, the Govt. made efforts to ban the use of wine by imposing partial prohibition. During the last decade, the use of wine enhanced and many hearth and reputed families drained away all sources of income. They lost all things.

In 1995-96 the Govt. imposed total prohibition in the state¹. This social evil must be eradicated to give an opportunity to the people to make progress by leaps and bounds. The use of wine and other intoxicants can drain away the hard earned money and may ruin the family and health. A poet also corroborates this version:

"jo uljhe in gillaso mein,

Wo na ubhre upni Jindgani".

Use of betel (*Pan*). — *Pan* chewing has become common with many young and old persons. The daily chewer digest their food hardly if they do not chew *pan*. In the towns and cities, there are small *pan* shops. The *pans pattas* come in many varieties; these are *paitis*, *desi*, *banarsi*, *murgai*, *saunfi*, *golta*, *kapoori* and *lanka pattas*. *Desi* and *Banarsi* are available round the year, but *murgai* is available only in winter. *Saunfi patta* tastes sweet and is primarily used in making *meetha pan*.

Although habitual claim that *pan* chewing is a necessity, for most of us it is luxury. A *sada pan* may cost anything between Rs. 2/- and Rs. 3.50 while a *meetha* variety can cost Rs. 3/- to Rs. 5/-.

With the changing time, the *pan* business has seen quite a few fluctuations. The younger generation in urban areas is going away from *pan* chewing.

Occultism and Superstitions

Occultism.— Today it is an open fact that education is pervading every nook and corner in the society. Despite the fact the rich and middle class people have to seek the shelter of occultists and astrologers to get instant solution to their day today

1. The Govt later withdrew the prohibition.

problems. Very poor persons are not in the grip of these things; as they do not afford or understand the intricacies of such modes of occultism.

Each and every city is full of astrologers and occultists. From dawn to dusk, they are flooded with good educated and wealthy persons to seek their advice to solve their complex problem such as loss in the business, marriage stars for the nubile girls and boys, health and wealth, getting a son by birth etc.

Mostly the Hindus are much in the grip of such things. First of all, as per Hindu mythology, the *manglik* girls should be married with *manglik* boys, otherwise the astrologers say that one of them may face dooms-day in life. So, for the proposed arrangement of such nuptial, people go to *tantriks* to get their advice to soften the *manglik* stars. The believers in such things get some kind of amulets to be tied on their necks for early solution of marriage problems. Chandigarh, Ambala and Panchkula cities are teeming with such *tantrik* houses. Either they perform such activities in their house or separate palmist centres. They charge exorbitant fees.

Second category of advice seekers is of educated persons to achieve better career. Now-a-days population is growing so fast so is the case of unemployment to get a somewhat satisfactory job, jobless go to *tantriks* for guidance. Thirdly, in the materialistic age, people get advice to enhance themselves materialistically i.e good bungalow and honourable place in the society and good spread of the business activities.

There are some occultists who advice their patrons to get their fingers stoned and exchange their luck. Today there is a world of gem-therapy, as it is one of the ancient practices of astrology. It may aim to link up stars and stones. There might be surefire means to achieving health, wealth and happiness instantly. According to *Jyotishi*-gem therapist, all illness or misfortunes occur because a particular planet has become either too weak or too strong. Gem, he says, contains different planetary properties and, therefore strengthen or subdue the effect of a particular planet. Another experienced astrologer gives a slightly different explanation, "There are nine important blood vessels (one for every planet) in our forehead and all of them lead to the heart. The individual suffers if any of them malfunctions. Stones rectify the fault and restore the individual's health and property. The third version of a *jyotish* is " everybody emits several rays of

different colours. The weak rays are the root cause of all our miseries and the only way to strengthen them is by wearing a stone".

As per the views of eminent occultists and astrologers, the healing effect of the stones and gems is as under :—

"If serious diseases yield to gems, what are the day today miseries? Wearing a coral (*moonga*) will have a sanguine effect on your blood pressure and constipation. Cat's eye control blood sugar and people with fast deteriorating

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vision can regain it by investing in either an emerald or a ruby. Persons with a very short memories or dull students who never seen to clear examination will find their intelligence level rising to brilliant heights with an emerald. For arthrits and a whole gamut of aches or pains, you can find solace in amethyst. And for those gentlemen who lack (*ahem*) vigour at hot stone will have you up and about".

An astrologer claims that he had brought many estranged couples together with the help of a coral ring. He swears by the effect of gems on emotions and relations. coral and pearl keep smooth tempers and make things easy. According to a *pandit ji*, people having difficulty in tying knot can also take recourse to a coral. Gems are invaluable in attaining worldly success, "with the least possible efforts". The astrologers opine that the most important stones from the success angle are *Pukhraj* (Topaz), ruby and *neelam* (sapphire).

"Are you having trouble in getting a promotion or do you lack confidence in public dealings? Just wear Pukhraj. This little yellow stone guarantees quick name and fame. This is most popular stone".

"Ruby helps in strengthening *surya graha* and therefore leads to fame and power. This is the gem for politicians".

"*Neelam* brings quick return in business but it is a very costly stone.

The stones are very particular about which fingers they wish to adorn. Pukhraj prefers fingers next to the thumb, while Neelam commands the central finger ; pearl and ruby like the third finger and emerald the small finger. They are very fussy about the metal in which they are studded. *Pukhraj* prefers gold, *pearl* like silver and *moonga* has a soft spot for copper. Sapphire likes both gold and iron.

A gem's efficiency also depends on its weight. " A child can get with a gem by weighing between 2 and 5 *ratas*, 3 to 7 *ratas* is enough for a woman but a man may have to wear a gem weighing as much as 12 *ratas*. The heavier the person, the heavier the gems".

The educated persons are more prone to wearing gems in the present society which is becoming complex day by day. It has become a fashion to wear gems by the youngster, students, married and unmarried girls or women, politicians, doctors and employees. They spend huge money and time in buying precious stone which are on sale in the market just like ornaments. Many gullible persons are misled in these things. They stay away from the hardwork which is real path to hard labour and upright character which can bring contentment in life. According to Swami Vivekanand, "*Man is the real maker of his fate*".

However, society is tending towards these artificial thing like stones to find easy ways to success. The following are the stones worn by the people :—

1. Topaz
2. Tourmaline
3. Turquoise
4. Tircon
5. Opal
6. Pearl
7. Agale
8. Alexandrite
9. Amothyst
10. Amber
11. Cherysoprase
12. Citrine
13. Peridot
14. Pelloerkey stone
15. Sphene
16. Spinel

So is the society as is the literature. The city (Chandigarh) despite its educated inhabitants does not mind exploring this mysterious zone of occult. All kind of such literature is hitting the stands. Of late starting from roadside sellers with lower middle class customers, these books are becoming part and parcel of standard book stalls.

The books like *Kaali Tapasya*, *Jantra Mantra*, *Upyogi Upaya*, *Jhad Phoonk Kyon*, *sidh Hast*, *Hast Gyan Se Mantra Gyan Tak*, come across a section of the readers going in for indepth study of this literature comprises persons with curious minds to deeply religious people. The aged women are found to be more fond of such books and are regular readers.

Superstitions.—The masses generally cling to many traditional superstitions in performing ordinary acts of daily life. Some of the commonly practised superstitions are listed below:—

17. Spodumene

18. Tanzanite

19. Coral

20. Diamond

21. Jade

22. Jasper

23. Jet

24. Lapis Lazuli

25. Rose quartz

26. Rubi

27. Sapphire

28. Moonstone

29. Sardonyx

30. Morganite

31. Obsdian

32. Onyx

If a black cat crosses one's path, it is a sign of failure in work. If someone sneezes, it is a bad omen for going out or beginning a job. A woman with an empty pitcher, coming from the opposite direction and crosses one's path, is considered inauspicious. If the pitcher is full of water, it is regarded lively sign. While going out on an important journey, it is generally considered inauspicious to come across a person carrying a bundle of firewood.

There are others who do not cross a four way centre (*choraha*). They always avoid the central place of it. They think that some persons place some *tundor* in this place which may prove harmful to man and material. Now a days it has become a customary to consult a *purohit* or astrologer on every occasion i.e. the birth of a child, for fixing the dates of marriage or on any other important occasions. There is a category of persons who get some lockets for setting the early marriages of girls and boys, enhancement of business and lucky stars in the personal life. Some *hawans* and *Ratjagas* or consultation are adopted on starting a new factory or for solving the favourable litigation.

In earlier times also, people believed in omens and charms. They were very much prone to superstitions. So, like superstitions, charms are in common use. The leaves of the *Siras* are especially powerful, and after them, those of mango. They are hung up in the garlands with a mystic inscriptions on an earthen platter in the middle and the whole is called *totka*. The *Jand* is another very sacred tree. In illness it is a good thing to have an inscription made on an earthen vessel by a *fakir* and to wash it off and drink the water.

Superstitions are innumerable. Odd numbers are lucky. People consult the astrologer before getting a registration number of their vehicles. Other persons who strongly believe in *jhad punch* to ward off the evil spirits *bhoot* or *parets*.

On Mondays and Saturdays many persons do not go to wards east. The evil spirit (*Desu sul*) resides in that direction on these days. On Sunday and Thursday many people do not go to the west. Then others who do not purchase iron on Saturdays. A cow that caves in *Bhadon* and a she-buffalo that calves in *Magh* are considered inauspicious. If a mare foals in *sawan* in the day time, it is a inauspicious and *pun dan* or offering items, is a remedy. If a crop has grown exceedingly well, a black pot or tattered shoe is suspended on a pole in the field. This is to avert the evil eye. Three men together do not start on a journey. If they will have to do so, two go first, the

third joining them later. They will start after eating some *gur* (jaggery) or *laddu* or curd (*dahi*).

A house with a broad front and narrow back is considered inauspicious, the reverse is auspicious. Hell and heaven on earth are discussed occasionally.

People

To conclude the subject, an extract from the *Gurgaon District Gazetteer*, 1910, is reproduced as below:—

"Tales of sorcery is not unknown. There used to live in the district (Gurgaon) a Brahman sorcerer, who was said to steal the skulls of the people who died young, and to hold the unfortunate spirits imprisoned in them. Then if any one offended him, he sent a spirit into the offender, who took the name of the dead man or women in whose body the spirit formerly dwelt, and stated when asked, that Brahman had sent him. If something was given to the Brahman, the patient generally got better. This Brahman was also able to control the will of *Pitars*, cause wells to fall in by throwing written charms down them and secure favourable results to a suit in the courts by the recital of other spells. Some wizards, Mr. Channing, the then Settlement Commissioner, was told, if they cut off a lock of a woman's hair, could cause her to die; and then, when she had been burnt, could bring her to life again and thus secure her for their own enjoyment".

The educated persons do not feel the efficacy of these things. But elderly ladies still waste their time in following these things. The above mentioned things enslave the minds of the people. If they fall in the grip of superstitions, they cannot tread the path of success.

Amusements

Before 1947, a game of chess or dice was popular item of entertainment for high or upper class families in cities and towns. In rural areas playing cards was a popular pastime. Flying kites was also done by a few persons. Wrestling was another item of recreation; periodic wrestling *dangles* were arranged at the time of holding the religious and social fairs. *Bhajan-sabads kirtan* were held periodically. Many persons used to play *Iktara* in those days. But in recent times, the pastimes of the people have undergone significant change.

Before Independence, cinema was no entertainment for most of the people; as *cinemaghars* were hardly in existence only in big cities of the country. Secondly, people could not understand the logic of spending money to see shadows. Now a days cinema has become very popular. What to talk of labourers, every *rickshaw walla* keenly visits the cinema houses for entertainment. Now in every city or town, there are many cinema houses. Radio listening is limited only for poor persons or many people in rural areas still take interest in radio listening. Now a days television watching has become very much popular. The town dwellers have become very much habitual of T.V. watching. Now the cable.T.V. shows two pictures daily. The inhabitants of Chandigarh and Panchkula enjoy the T.V., almost every programme. In addition to *Chitrahari*, the coverage of important news, social events, interviews with prominent

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personalities in different fields, etc. are very popular with the viewers. Important sports events and matches are also televised. The T.V. has covered every corner and is being commercialized.

Visiting to restaurants and tea houses is another popular form of recreation. These places serve as a meeting place where people gather and discuss many things on holiday or leisure time. Chandigarh is a very famous city with many visiting places. People go to Sector-17 and take many things from eating houses. They enjoy very much there.

Picnicing is yet another popular amusement, especially during winter. The sight of hundreds middle income families picnicing with lunch baskets and other accoutrements in public parks at weekends and holidays is an important event. Many people go to Pinjore Garden and Kasoli for picnic purposes. The rich persons ply their vehicles and in the evening they come back after picnic enjoyment.

Today *kitty* culture has become very important with the rich ladies. In many such parties money is incidental. Most of the women are not in desperate need of money. The idea behind their get together is a recreation and monetary part has been introduced to create additional interest. It provides a welcome change and chance to meet with friends. Most of the restaurants offer fabulous discounts to *kitty* parties. It has become a fashion to be a member of a *kitty* party.

Games

Wrestling.—Wrestling is the most ancient sport of Haryana. The references to which are found in the early vedic literature, should have been found its origin and initial development in this region. Even today it is the choicest sport of Haryanvis. They must follow the rules of the national style of wrestling with slight difference here and there. It is one of the indigenous sports of Haryana.

Every village has an *akhara* and the youngmen and children go there regularly in the morning and evening and perform wrestling exercises. Besides, they take exercises such as *dands*, *baithaks*, *mugdar* lifting. etc. From amongst them the village *pahlwan* is selected and some times he is given milk, *ghee*, almonds to the free of cost by the villagers. He is considered pride of the village and he really justifies when he brings name and fame by winning in the tournaments and *melas*. On many occasions, the *pahlawans* join some organisations such as police and army. Then organization spend on their diet. On many occasions the name of Haryana shone when her famous wrestlers brought laurels at world level. Amongst them the wrestlers are : Shri Lila Ram of Mandola village of Bhiwani district, being a Common-

Wealth Champion, Udey Chand (bronze medalist in the World Wrestling Championship held at Tokyo), Sujjan Singh (position-holder in Asian games), Chandgi Ram (*Hind Keshri*), Bhim Singh, Ram Dhan and others.

People

Even the Government extends helping hand in the expansion of this feat.

Kabaddi.—*Kabaddi* is a very popular game in Haryana. The dimension of the field, the number of players on a side, the cry of the *cant* and the duration of the game are undefined. It is played on nights during the months of *phagun* and *chaitra* (February-March), as also during *Teej* and Rakshabandhan festivals. Two teams take part in the game. Of a number of varieties in which the game is played, the two types popular are Haryana Style and National Style. Haryana style *kabaddi* is played in a circular field with a periphery of 75 feet with 10 players on each side while the field for National style *kabaddi* is marked as a rectangle of 13 metres by 10 metres.

In Haryana type, a player of one team goes to the court of the other team repeating *kabaddi/kabaddi/kaudi* in one breath. If the player after touching and encountering any player of the opposite teams returns to the boundary dividing the two courts still uttering *Kaudi kaudi* in the same breath, the particular player of opposite side is considered to be successful and that team gains one point. In case the player does not return to the boundary in one breath, he is considered to be out and his team loses one point.

In the National Style, the player going to the court of the opposite team may be encountered by any number of players of the other team. If he does not return to the boundary line dividing the courts, his team loses one point but if he reaches the boundary line in one breath, the other team loses points

corresponding to the number of players who encountered him. The playing time for the game in both types is the same, viz 45 minutes including an interval of 5 minutes. The team securing more points wins.

In Haryana, regular tournament are held to discover promising talent in national events. Some games of rural area are as follows :—

Hool.— Hool can be rightly called the hockey game of Haryanvis. It is one of the ancient games of Haryana. *Khulla*, made of a branch of *kikar* tree of the shape of a hockey stick, and *gind*, a ball made of rags and twigs, are all equipment required to play the game. It is usually played in the month of *phagun*, near *Holi*. The *maidan* outside the village is the ground and all the young children of the village are the players. On opposite end of the big *maidan*, goal posts are marked by small sand dunes (*kurhis*) and the game is exactly played like hockey. This game is now-a-days on the decline.

Gulli Danda.—*Danda* , a three feet long and a *guli*, a small piece of wood sharpened at each end are all that required to play the game of *guli danda*. The game can be played by one pair or two teams of any number of players, there being no time limit for the duration of the play. It is usually played in the ground outside the village.

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The game has many varieties, the most popular being one known as *gooch* type, where a small hole measuring five inches in length one in width and two in depth is dug and the *guli* is placed on it width-wise. It is thrown, by *danda* being placed under it, by one of the players of the striking team, while the members of the fielding team stand in front of the *goocher* to take a catch of the *guli* and oust the player. If *guli*

(*biti*) is not caught, it is thrown back to hit the *danda* placed on the *gooch*. If it strikes the *danda*, the striker is out, otherwise he will hit the *gooch* with his *danda* thrice and measure the ground with distance it has traversed. The game goes on in this manner till the fielders oust the whole team. Then fielders take their turn and so on. This kind of game is decreasing its importance today.

Ankh Micholi.—*Ankh Micholi* or hide and seek is a very popular game among the children of both sexes. It is called *dhabila* or *dhaila* in many parts of Haryana. It is felt that the game found its origin during Buddhist days in India but the origin lacks historical evidence. It is one of the oldest sports of Haryana. In it one of the players is made to sit in a corner with eyes covered and rest of the players hide themselves. When all hide themselves a signal is given to the blind man to carry on the search. The players are required to touch the spot where the blindman sits with covered eyes in the beginning. The player who fails to do so and is touched by the blind man will take the place of blindman and the game goes on till the players get tired.

Kan Danka.— *Kan danka* is known by many names as *ghirni danka*, *kaya ghirni*, etc. It is played in the area of dense trees. At the very outset, a circle is drawn under tree and from among the players a 'server' is detailed after toss. Then a prominent player comes in the circle and throws a *danda* (a stick measuring two feet) under his left leg, slightly lifted up for the sake of convenience. The server goes to fetch the *danda* and meanwhile all other players climb up the trees. The server puts the *danda* in the circle and goes to catch the player sitting on the trees. The players on their part try to escape his catch and jump down from the trees to touch the *danda*. The man who is caught becomes the server. If nobody is caught, the old server again serves in the earlier way, and the game goes on till the players get tired.

Chopar, cards and chess are some of the indoor games, which are played and enjoyed in urban as well as rural areas. Playing *chopar* and cards in the open ground or *chopal* are familiar sight.

Modern games like hockey, cricket, football, volley ball and basket ball are popular among students, where there are facilities of playgrounds, while games like *kho-kho*, net ball, etc. are popular among girl students. Lately, panchayats and private associations have started organising games and holding terminal and annual tournaments. Government also

extends monetary help to the players.

People

Adventure sports

Just the Haryana State has gone ahead in all fields as it has stepped up in adventure sports lately. Now-a-days the State has created a number of adventure sport facilities.

Parasailing is a thrilling sport of gliding through air while sustained by a parachute and towed by a vehicle (jeep, speed boat). The parasailor runs for a short while till he is airborne and after that he flies like a bird.

The facility of parasailing is available at Pinjore aviation club, 30 km. from Chandigarh.

Facilities for water sports including rafting, canoeing, kayaking, rowing, angling, etc. are available at Hathini Kund (146 km. from Chandigarh (in Yamunanagar district) on the river Yamuna, with rapids of I and II degree intensity which are suitable for amateurs. Suraj Kund (8 km. from south Delhi) and Badkhal Lake (32 km. from Delhi) in Faridabad district, and Damdama Lake 65 km. from Delhi) in Gurgaon district also contain the above water sports facilities.

Haryana Tourism Department conducts water rafting from Paonta Sahib in Himachal Pradesh to Hathini Kund in Haryana in the Yamuna. Boating and angling facilities are available in Karan lake near Karnal.

Towards the south west of Delhi are the denuded hills of the Aravalli ranges in Haryana. In the north-east of the state are the lower Shiwalik hills. These hills provide scope for rock climbing in the state. Haryana Tourism provides the

necessary equipment for rock climbing like ropes, pitons, gloves, carbines, rucksacks, sleeping bags, tents grappling ropes, etc. The department also organises mountaineering expeditions to challenging peaks. The state also has good trekking tracks especially in Morni hills and around Hathini Kund.

Fairs and Festivals

Fairs

The fairs and *melas* have traditional significance. These are held at fixed places in the name of goddess or *devis*, *sadhus* or saints and in veneration to the rivers, etc. These *melas* are a symbol of cultural amalgamation. The description of most important fairs is given as under :

Mata Mansa Devi fair .—Before giving the mention of the fair it would be appropriate to explain legend of Mata Mansa Devi.

Mythology has it that when Daksh Prajapati arranged a big *yajna*, his humiliated daughter, parvati, became a *sati* by jumping into the *havan* kund. Agonised by the

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sacrifices, Lord Shiva carried the corpse of goddess Parvati on his shoulders and wandered about in a state of semi-insanity. To rid Lord Shiva of the dead body Lord Vishnu started dismembering the corpse of Parvati with his arrows. As a result, the parts of the body were scattered at different places. The sports where the parts fell came to be known as Shakti peetha called Kali Devi, Kamkhya Devi, Shakambri Devi, Hingle Devi and Mansa Devi.

A fair is held twice a year in March-April and September-October at Bilaspur near Mani Majra. It is a religious fair dedicated to goddess Mansa Devi whose temple exists here. It is believed that all the wishes of a devotee are granted on having a *darshan*. People come from all over India-some are in a crawling position attend both the fairs. The devotees stand in long queue to have a *darshan* of *Mata*. During these fairs, devotees sing songs in the praise of the goddess and make many kinds of offerings in the shape of cash, cloths and ornaments.

The first hair cutting ceremony of the children is performed here. The free *langars* are also organised.

Kapal Mochan Fair.—Kapal Mochan fair is held annually on *Kartik Puran Mashi* (October-November). The holy bank of Kapal Mochan, the venue of the fair is located about a kilometre north of Bilaspur¹ in the Jagadhari tahsil of Yamuna Nagar district. It is the biggest fair in the district and attracts pilgrims from all over India. The pilgrims take bath in Kapal Mochan tank and pay obeisance to the statues of a cow and a calf standing on the banks. The devotees also take bath in the Kapal Mochan tank and Suraj Kund.

Some people call it Gopal Mochan. As per the hear say, the water of Gopal Mochan has retained its virtue, and is considered by many to be more efficacious than of the Ganges at Hardwar.

Talokapur Fair.— A fair dedicated to the goddess Sharda Devi is held at Talokpur on *Chet Sudi Ashtami* (March-April). The pilgrims from Ambala and Yamunanagar districts and adjoining areas of Himachal Pradesh attend the fair. The devotees worship the deity and offer *parshad*.

Shah Kumaish Fair.— A religious fair in honour of Shah Kumaish is held at Sadhaura in February. The fair was started by Bairam Khan in 1556 A.D. The visitors worship the tomb of Shah Kumaish. The devotional singing, drum-beating and wrestling are other attractions of the fair.

Mela Markandya.— A fair dedicated to Rishi Markandya is held at Haryoli (Ambala tahsil) on *Asoj Puranmashi* (September-October). The devotees worship in the temple dedicated to Rishi Markandya and take bath in the river Markanda.

1. More details may kindly be seen in the chapter-Places of Interest.

People

Mela Pankha.— A religious fair in the memory of Taj-ud-din Chisti who later on came to be known as Hazrat Lakhi Shah is held at Ambala in the month of June at the tomb of Hazarat. A procession is taken out and devotees recite verses from the *Koran*, make offerings of sweets, fruits, *chadar* (sheet of cloth) and fans. The *qawalis* are also sung in the eulogy of the saint.

Kurukshetra fair.—Kurukshetra is an important place of pilgrimage for the Hindus all over India. Whenever, the solar eclipse occurs, there is a congregation of about five lakh devotees from all over India. Similarly, at the time of lunar eclipse, there is a gathering of about one lakh people. The mode of observance of this religious fair includes a dip in the holy tanks, viz. Brahmsarover, Kurukshetra tank and Sannihat tank at the time of eclipse, giving alms and charities, visiting various shrines and temples and offering obeisance to the deities.

It is believed that on *amavas* (moonless night) and during the period of eclipse, all *tiraths* assemble at Sanhit tank and by performing *shraddas* and taking dip in the tank at the time of solar eclipse, one acquires the fruits of *ashvamedha yajna* and is absolved of all previous sins.

According to another legend, one of the fingers of an ancestor of Kaurvas and Pandvas was deformed. As chance would have it, it got smeared with the soil of the place and became all right. Keeping in view this purifying and healing effect of the soil, the Kaurvas and Pandavas constructed a tank which is regarded sacred. A dip in the tank is believed to relieve one to all diseases.

At this occasion, religious books are recited, *bhajans* are sung; *kirtans* are held; and *shraddas* of ancestors are performed. In more recent times cinema and circus show, and wrestling and *kabaddi* matches have been added.

Phalgu fair.— Known as *mela chet chandash*, it is a fair of great religious significance for Hindus. It is celebrated in Pehowa town. The fair is celebrated for three days on *chaitra Badi* 13 to 15 (March- April) but main sanctity is attached to the night between the 14th and 15th of the dark half of the lunar month. It is held annually but gets added significance of the *chaitra amavasa* (moonless night) occurs on Monday which is regarded as very auspicious. People far off places come here to take bath in the holy Saraswati, considered river of knowledge. This is a place to bestow salvation (*mukti*).

A Hindu considers his sacred duty to visit Pehowa to perform the rites of those of his ancestors and relatives who die under abnormal circumstances.

The fair is attended by more than one lakh pilgrims including a fair proportion of women. The Hindus and Sikh are principal participants though visitors from other

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communities are also there. All groups are represented. The visitors observe the fair by having a sacred bath in the pond constructed at the confluence of Saraswati and Markanda and by offering of *pinda* in the name of ancestors and giving charities. As elsewhere, *bhajans* and *kirtans* are organised. Wrestling and Kabaddi matches are played; cinema and circus shows and exhibitions are held for the entertainment of the visitors.

Baisakhi fair at Panipat.— It is a seasonal and religious fair

celebrated on *Vaisakha* 1 (April 13) every year by both Hindus and Sikhs at Panipat. The *mela* is also organized at many places in the district. At Garhi Nazir (tahsil Guhla) it is also called *mela* Guru Teg Bahadur in whose memory stand a *Gurdwara*. Baisakhi celebrated at village Dyalpur of Thanesar tahsil had a different significance. The legend goes that it was here on this day that Arjuna shot an arrow into the earth and water of the Ganga gushed forth. Thus, Bhishma took water and quenched his thirst.

Mala Bhagwati Bala Sindri.— It is a religious fair held on *Chaitra Sudi* (March-April) at Dehrah and Shahabad. At Dehrah it is called *Mela* Devi Bala Sundri or Sundri Bhawani. The devotees worship the deity and make many kinds of offerings in the shape of cash, cloths and ornaments. It is attended by both Hindus and Sikhs.

Pindara fair.— At Pandu Pindara, 4 kilometres from Jind, a fair is held on *Somvati Amavas* where people offer pinda balls of kneaded flour to their forefathers. They worship at Pandav temple and take a dip in the holy tank.

Ram Rai Fair.— A religious fair is celebrated on *Puranmashi* in *Baisakh* (April-May) and *Kartik* (October-November) at Ram Rai. Ram Rai and Ram Harid, as it is known, is connected with Parshuram who is said to have killed *kshatras* at the place. In the temple the idols of Parshuram with his parents Jamadagni and Renuka are placed. The devotees worship after taking bath in Sanet Tirath, the holy tank.

Mela Shri Sukhdev Swami.— It is a religious fair held in August-September at Sajuma. It is said that Sajuma is connected with Sukhdev who is practised penance here for 25 years. The fair was started after attainment of *Sidhi* or realization of God by sage. People take a bath in the sacred tank and worship the *Samadhi* and make offerings.

Mela Hat or Athsath Tirath.— It is held on the last Sunday of Sawan (July-August) at *Hat* village in Safidon tahsil. The Pandavas are stated to have visited here during the battle of *Mahabharat*. Another legend says that in ancient times a *sadhu* came here along with a pitcher in which he collected sacred waters from *Athsath teraths* (sixty eight places of pilgrimage). The pitcher was placed in the temple and the fair is held to commemorate the event.

Hola Mohalla.— At Dhamtan (Narwana tahsil), a fair known as Hola Mohalla is held in *Chet Badi* I (March-April). It is a

religious fair, connected with the visit of

People

Guru Teg Bhadur, the ninth Sikh Guru to the place on his way to Delhi. People take holy bath in the tank and pay obeisance to the *Guru Granth Sahib* in the Gurdwara dedicated to the Guru.

Mala Ramsar.— It is a religious fair celebrated every month at Danauda Khurd (Narwana tahsil). There is a holy tank named Ramsar tank. Earthen lamps are lighted at the tank and *shakkar* (jaggery) is distributed.

Vaisakh Purnima and Kartik Purnima.— People from far and near flock to celebrate these two fairs at Tosham (Bhiwani district). They take a bath in sacred *kunds* at the Tosham hill. About 10,000 persons attend these fairs. It is said that there was a great sage who had four to five disciples possessed supernatural power. After his death a small temple was raised in his honour and began to worship him. There are five *kunds* (reservoirs) differently named with the *pucca* tank and *dharmshala* existing here. A bath in the *kund* (though four of them are filled with earth and are dry) is considered sacred as a dip in the Ganga.

Krishna Janam Ashtami fair.— Almost in every town of Haryana, Krishna Janam Ashtami is celebrated with enthusiasm. The fairs are held in many towns of Haryana. But in Haryana, Bhiwani is known as the little Kashi, for its temples.

Krishn Janam Ashtmi is celebrated on the 8th of *Bhadra* (August) with great zest, celebrations in Gauri Shankar Temple at Bhiwani start a number of days before the Janam Ashtami with illuminations and other decorations, exhibitions

of *Jhankis*, *bhajans*, *kirtan* and *puja*. On this day all temples in the town are decorated and *handolas* and *jhankis* are displayed. People from far and near visit Bhiwani to see the decorated temples.

Durga Ashtami.— Durga Ashtami fair is also held at Bhiwani on 8th *Badi* of *chaitra*. Durga temples are decorated on the day. The villagers flock to have *darshan* of Durga Mata. The idol of Durga Mata is taken out in a decorated chariot and people in thousands follow it in procession.

Devi fair at Deosar village.— At Devsar about 5 kilometres from Bhiwani, in the Bhiwani tahsil, a fair is held twice yearly in *chaitra* (March-April) and *Asuj* (September-October) in honour of Devi. It is said that Mahajan of Bhiwani had a dream that if he built a temple for goddess at Desar, he would amass huge profits. Consequently, he got the temple erected and a regular fair began to be held. Another legend says that bad days cast over the man. He asked for a boon from goddess. The latter removed his hardships and he got a temple constructed in her honour.

According to yet another tradition or version, a speaking image of Durga Bhawani riding a tiger appeared here. This temple of Devi is on hillock close to the

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village. About 10,000 persons from adjacent villages attend the fair. The offering of cloths, coconuts and sweetmeats are made. The first hair cut ceremony of a child is also performed here by believers.

Devi fair at Pahari village.— at Pahari, in Loharu tahsil, two fairs are held where the object of veneration is also Devi. These fairs take place in the month of *chaitra* (March-April)

and *Asuj* (September-October) on a hill at a distance of about 16 kilometres from Loharu. It is said that during the battle of Tarain between Prithvi Raj Chauhan and Mohammad Gauri, some Rajput soldiers under the command of princess were camping on the hillock. The princess received the sad news of her husband's death in battle. She lit the funeral pyre and burnt herself to death. The people called the princess goddess, constructed a temple in her honour and installed an idol.

Another version is that some time undated past, somebody installed an idol of Durga here which is still worshipped. About 10,000 persons attend the fair. Even persons as far away as Bombay (Mumbai) and Calcutta pay visit in the fair. Offerings of ornaments, cash and sweet-meats are made.

Mela Sitla Mata Dhanana.— The Sitla Mata fairs are quite familiar in Haryana. But the fair at Dhanana in Bawani Khera tahsil attach special significance.

There is a shrine in honour of Devi Sitla at Dhanana village. It has a small idol (about 15 cm) of Devi Sitla in a room, where generally women and children worship and offerings of sweet meats, loaves and bangles are made. People from all parts of Haryana attend the fair. The hair cutting ceremony of children is also made here.

Hanuman Mela at Imlota village. — At Imlota village of Charkhi Dadri tahsil, a fair in honour of Hanuman is held on the 10th of *Phalgun* (February). People of adjoining villages attend the fair, wrestling and *kabadi* are held on this occasion.

Gugga Naumi fairs.— These are common throughout Haryana. These fairs are held in August every year. Some people go out in search of holes that might have snakes and serve them *kachhi lassi* (diluted water) and *sevan* (cooked vermicelli).

The important fairs of the then Hissar district are mentioned in the following statement:—

Place Significance Date and Duration

Kiomara Shivratri Fair February-March (*Phagun*)

Harita Shivratri Fair February-March
(*Phagun Bedi*-14 one day)

Jagan -do- -do-

People

Pabra Devi Fair (*Magh-I*) January-February
One day

Banbhuri -do- (1) *Chet Sudi* 8

(2) *Asuj Sudi* 8

March-April
July-August one day.

Bas Azam Shapur -do- -do-

Bas Badshapur -do- -do-

Tohana Gugga Naumi *Bhado Badi-9*(August-
September one day)

Daulu Ram Dev Fair January-February
One day

Bhairu Akbarpur -do- -do-

Bal samand Mahavir Fair *Chet* (March-April one day)

(2) *Asoj*
(April one day)

Hissar Sant Budha Fair *Basakh-I*
April- one day

Agroha Meharaja Agrasen October One day

It is worthwhile to give details about Ram Dev Fair and
Budhla Saint who were closely associated with some fairs of
Hissar district.

Ram Dev Pir.— Ram Dev Pir is a saint whose worship is very much prevalent in the Hissar district. He is considered incarnation of Krishana and many miracles are associated with him. He is known to have given life to the dead, sight to the blind, good body to lepers and children to barren women. Saints from Mecca, deeply impressed by his supernatural powers, honoured with him the title of Pir. The Pir hails from Rajasthan and a shrine exists 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, Bhoddy Khera, Badopal, Daulu, Talwandi Rukka, Bhaini Akbarpur and Seeswal. Fairs are held many places, as stated above.

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

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hold fair on the shrine of Budhla. Now, after migration to the district, the shrines of Budhla have been built at Hissar. When fairs are held, Kalapir of Khot Kalan (Hansi tahsil) and Dahada of Narnaund tahsil are worshipped as local saints.

The Ram Dev fairs are also known in the Sirsa district. A fair popularly known as Mela Ram Dev is held annually at Kagdana, Ludesar, Ellnabad on *Magh Sudi* 10 (January-February), on *Magh Sudi*-9 at Kuranwali and by annually at Mandi-Dabwali on *Bhado Badi* 10 (August-September) and *Magh-Badi*-10 (January-February). Saint Ram Dev Maharaj basically hailed from the then Bikaner State. Now he is worshipped in this area. A story is current. That goes as such:

In 1914, one Panchan who belonged to the priestly class of Kanaria among the Chamars and who had faith in the saint,

constructed a platform in the village in his name. In 1932, a Brahman named Thakur Dass contracted a leprosy. As a result, he began to live away from the village in a hut. One day the Brahman had *darshana* of Ram Dev Maharaj riding horse. Thakur Dass joined Panchan, a great devotee, in worship of Ram Dev and got constructed a pucca temple by raising contributions from the Chamars. The Brahman got cured of leprosy. This strengthened the belief of the villagers in the saint and they began to hold the fair in his honour.

Mela Sacha Sauda.— A particular type of fair called Mela Sacha Sauda is held at Sirsa town on last Sunday and at Shahpur Begu and Jagmal wali on first Sunday of every month. The fair is celebrated in the memory of faqir Shah Mastana. A story is current about the Fakir.

"Baba Shah Mastana was a great saint. His name was Khema Mal but for remaining always in meditation, people started calling Mastana Shah. He was the disciple of Baba Sawan Shah belonging to Radha Swami cult. He was very fond of singing and dancing. When he used to meditate, he started dancing which was against the principles of Radha Swami Sect. Baba Sawan Shah asked Shah Mastana to refrain from the habit of dancing as women followers were also among the devotees. Mastana ji, however, failed to do so and then Baba Sawan Shah asked him '*Dig, khoh wich* (jump into the well). Mastana ji a sincere pupil, jumped into the well. When other followers of Baba Sawan Shah reached the well, they found him dancing into the well. They asked him to come out from the well. Mastana ji refused to do so, until Baba Sawan Shah came himself there. Then Baba Swan Shah came to the well and asked him to come out and allowed him to establish his own way of preaching. Since then Baba Mastana set up *sacha sauda* and his followers used to dance when they perform *satsang*.

Mela Baba Bhuman Shah.— To worship the *sadhus*, saints and pious persons is the tradition of Haryana. A fair in the memory of Baba Bhuman Shah is held at

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Mangla, Maujdin, Kuta Budin and Girdan Wali of Sirsa district. The date of fairs varies from place to place and coincides with the visit of Baba Bhuman Shah, belonging to Kamboj community to the above places.

The following story connected with Baba Bhuman Shah is prevalent:—

Baba Bhuman Shah was born in 1688 A.D. in Mintgumri district of Pakistan. There are many legends attached to the name of Baba Bhuman Shah. As per legend, when he was two and half years old and was sleeping in a cradle, a snake spread its hood over his face to protect him from the sunshine. His mother was stunned to see a snake near him. But the snake disappeared immediately. After the incident people started to see a snake near him. But the snake disappeared again. After the incident people started to see Baba in large number. The family shifted from Bhawalpur to Dyalpur. He used to take cows to the forests where he always kept plenty of food with him to serve passers-by and the saints.

Once Guru Gobind Singh ji, while passing through the jungle alongwith followers saw Baba Bhuman Shah serving saints. Guru Gobind Singh and his followers satiated with meals and Guru Gobind Singh blessed Baba with open hands to serve the *Sadh Sangat*.

Hola fair.— A socio-religious fair called Hola fair is held at Jiwan Nagar on *chet Badi-I* (March-April). It is widely celebrated by the people belonging to Namdhari Sect. Mass marriages are performed on this occasion.

Baisakhi fair at Sirsa.— The Baisakhi fair is held at Sirsa on Baisakhi I (April 13) with full zeal which reflects the joy among the peasantry particular and masses in general. On this day, a fair known Saba Boole Singh is also held in the memory of Baba.

Mela Shah Bu Shah.— A fair known as mela Shah-bu-Shah is held at Panhari on *Bhadon-I* (August-September). It is

celebrated in the memory of Muslim saint Shah-bu-Shah. People worship Smadhi of the *Baba*.

Mela Bhimeshwari Devi at Beri.— The *mela* is held at Beri of Rohtak district twice a year on *chaitra Sudi 8* (March-April) and *Asuj Sudi-8* (September-October). According to legend, the image of goddess Bhimeshwari Devi was brought from the hills and installed at Beri. Newly married couples blessed with son come here to pay homage. The first *mundan* of the babies is also performed here. Lakhs of people attend the fair which is a very important in the area.

Mela Baba Mast Nath at Asthal Bohar.— It is celebrated in the memory of Baba Mast Nath and is held on *Phalgun Sudi-7* (February-March). People worship at the *smadhi* of the saint at Bohar (Rohtak tahsil). This fair is also held at Khera Sadh

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(Rohtak tahsil) where people worship both in the temple and at the *smadh*. Besides people, many *sudhus* attend this fair.

Sat Khumb fair, Kheri Gujjar.— The Sat khumb fair carries special significance in the Sonipat area. It is celebrated at Kheri Gujjar twice a year; on the last day of *Srawana* (July-August) and *Kartik* full moonday (October-November). The important feature of the fair is the people take great interest in attending these fairs. Kheri Gujjar is considered an ancient seat of culture.

Yamuna fairs.— The people refer to the river Yamuna as Yamuna ji. There are no shrines to the Yamuna, but people go and bath in the river on several occasions. The important fairs are held at village Bega and Bakhtawarpur. People take a dip in the river Yamuna on *Kartik Puranmashi*. It is also believed

that dip in the river Yamuna on Sundays at the time of waxing moon purges from all sins.

Some other fairs of local importance of Sonipat district are listed below:—

Town/village Fair Date & Duration Significance

Rindhana Mata fair *Chet Sudi-8* Religious offerings made in the temple

-do- Shivratri *Phalgun Badi-14* Religious
(February-March)

Dhanana -do- -do- -do-
Alalalpur

Baroda Mor Dohabwalla *Bhadon Badi-5* Religious fair in the
(August-September) memory of a Sidh
Fakir.

Rabhra Baba Balknath *Phulgun Sudi-9* Fair dedicated to
Baba (February-March) Balknath

Gohana Mela Jal Jholni *Bhadon Sudi-1* Religious (August-
September)

Akbarpur- Mela Nanak On the day Religious, in the
Barota Dev Ji of Holi memory of Guru Nanak Dev Ji.

Garhi Brahman Mela Sambhu August Religious
Dayal

Nahri Mela Himat Nath *Phagem Badi* - 9 Religious, in the memory of Saint Himmat Nath

Kharkhoda Ganga, Dushera *Jeth-7* Religious, Birthday of (May-June) Ganga ji

Bhainswal Kala Mela Gurukul February-March Religious, Annual Function Gurukul

There are a few *sati* fairs in Mahendragarh district, These fairs are held in the memory of those women who committed *sati* during long past (now committing *Sati* is against the law). These fairs at Dalanwas is held in the memory of a Mahajan woman who committed *sati* when her husband was killed by robbers.

Almost 40 fairs, associated with local saints or *sadhus* are held in the district. These fairs are evenly distributed over the district and some of them attract visitors from far off places.

Fairs associated with Bhairon are most common. About Bhairon fair at Busduda (Rewari tahsil), it is said that people from Agra and Delhi come to this fair. Formerly girls of Mallah caste used to be married to the god at the festival, but the practice has long been discontinued. The tradition is still followed by way of marrying an effigy of a girl made out of wheat flour to the god.

One of the important fairs of the district is Shaheedi *Mela* held in September for two days at Rampura near Rewari to commemorate death anniversary of Rao Tula Ram, an Ahir who fought for the freedom of the country against the British.

The fairs to the reverence of goddesses (*Devis*) are also common in Mahendragarh and Narnaul tahsils. These fairs are variously known as Tankrinwala Devi, Budho Mata, Pathwari Mata, Durga Mata, Mata Jawala Devi, Tat Mata, Bichhun Mata, Thauri Mata, Chamunda Devi, Masani Mata and Sitla Mata. A few important fairs which are attended by large number of people are Jawala Devi fair or *Devi Ka Mela* at Mahesar (Narnaul tahsil). Sitla Mata fair at Assanwas (Narnaul tahsil), Doo Doo fair (Sitla) at Nangal Chaudhry, Budho Mata fair at Shanbazpur, Basaura fair and Chammunda Devi fair at Narnaul.

Shivratri fair at Mahendragarh is commonly attended by a large gathering. People come in new attires.

Basoda fair at village Basdoda in Rewari tahsil, where there is an ancient temple of Bhairon ji, is held on the *Chet-Sudi-II*, and it remains for two days. People from Delhi and Agra attend the fair.

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Chief among the fairs of Gurgaon and Faridabad districts is that of the goddess of smallpox, Masani, popularly known as Sitla Mata Ka *Mela*, it is held in village Gurgaon, suburb of Gurgaon town, at the temple of Sitla Mata. There is a temple of another goddess in the village. She is called Choganan Mata on account of her temple being located near the main crossing (*chogan*) of the village. It is believed by some people is that she is the younger sister of the goddess Masani. This temple is stated to have been built by the sweepers of the village when they were not allowed access to the temple of Masani Mata. It is, however, now visited by all shades of visitors without any distinction of caste or sub-caste.

The fair is held on two days in a week, i.e. Monday and Tuesday. The fame of the shrine has spread to distant places. The pilgrims now come from all over India. Men and women are almost equal in number. The attendance is at its peak during the month of *chaitra* (March-April) when all the roads leading to the village and village site are found full of bustling humanity. More than one lakh people are estimated to visit the fair on this occasion. It bespeaks of the faith that people, especially simple country folk still repose in traditional fairs and miraculous cures. The attendance is considerable during the three succeeding months, and then again in the *Asuj navratras*. However, in the month of *Sawana* (July-August), members of Scheduled castes like *Saperas* and *Sansi* alone come to attend the fair; other castes do not generally attend in that month.

Mela Baldev Chhat.— This is another important religious fair which is held to celebrate the birth anniversary of Balram or Baldev, elder brother of Lord Krishna and to commemorate the killing of the demon Pralambasur by him. During this process he founded Palwal town.

The legend goes that near about 1857, the Maharaja of Bharatpur was bringing an image of Baldev from Delhi. The wheels of the chariot got jammed at Palwal and would not move despite the Chariot being dragged by one hundred horses tied to it. Maharaja then declared that if it be the will of Lord that the image should remain there, then left let it be so; but the chariot should move with the usual complement of two horses only. The remaining horses were unfastened and two horses drove away the chariot. So, a temple was erected at the place and the image was installed in it.

It is estimated that about one lakh visitors attend the fair which is held for three days in the month of *Bhadon* (August-September). People worship Baldev in the temple. *Jhankis* were taken out in a procession and the effigy of Kansa, the demon king is burnt.

The fair is also held for four days in Hodal town and for three days in Ballabgarh town and attended by about 15,000 and 70,000 people, respectively. The fair is also

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held at villages Chhapraulla and Bhandari (for two days) in the Palwal tahsil and at villages Pali, Dhauj and Fatehpur Tigga (one day) in the Ballabgarh tahsil.

Mela Pir.— This religious fair, is held on *Baisakh Puranmashi* (full moon of April-May) for two days at village Kaushak in the Palwal tahsil. According to legend, the *illaqa*

was once ruled by Raja Rod. He wanted to relieve the Gujjars, one of his subject tribes, of their cows and buffaloes. They went a *Sidh Mahatama* living near the bank of the Yamuna. He gave them a bow and an arrow and asked them to shoot the arrow at the Raja's army. They did likewise; and result was that the soldiers of the Raja's army began to fight among themselves and perished. After this, the *Sidh Mahatama* threw a rod and said, *Jahanparega kattak, vahin basege Kaushak* (Kaushak would be inhabited at the place where the rod would fall).

Kaushak village came up at the place where the rod fell. The Gujjars brought the *Sidh* to Kaushak; but after a few days, he died while in *Smadhi* (meditation). Both Hindus and Muslims became his followers and Muslims called him a *Pir*. The fair is held in his honour. It is attended by about more than 5,000 people. People celebrate the occasion by taking a holy dip in the Yamuna.

Mela Burha Baba.— The religious fair is held at Palwal town for one day in the month of *Megha* (January-February). It is attended by 2,000 persons, mostly women and children. They worship at the temple which is without an image.

According to legend, Palwal as formerly surrounded by deep woods, and people before passing through the woods, used to worship the statue of Lord Shiva and Burha Baba and seek his protection.

Later, Muslims destroyed the image and converted the priests to Islam and they are still Muslims. The general belief is that the ashes of the place cure skin diseases. Another story is that a trader of this place got huge profits and constructed the temple and the tank.

Mela Suraj Kund.— As religious fair, it is held on every Sunday in the month of *Sravana* (July-August) at village Lakurpur in the Ballabgarh tahsil. About 2,000 visitors are estimated to attend the fair which is celebrated by taking a holy dip in the tank.

According to legend, Suraj, commander of Raja Anag pal, the ruling over small state became victim of leprosy. Following the instructions from a *Sadhu*, he took bath in the rainy water standing here and was cured. He constructed a tank at the spot and the fair began to be held. Another legend is that Raja Anag Pal had no male issue. He attended a big *yajna* at which all *devtas* (gods) were invoked. Suraj, the sun

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god, also came but he had to be requested to return because nobody could stand his heat. The tank, Suraj Kund, was used as Havan Kund for that *yajna*.

Mahadev Ka Mela.— This religious fair is held for one day once in the month of *Phalgun* (February-March) and again in the month of *Sravana* (July-August) at village Inchhapuri in the Gurgaon district. It is attended about 5,000 people. The people worship god Shiva and goddess Parvati and make offerings of milk, flowers and Ganga water. It is said that over a hundred years ago, while digging the earth people came across idols of Shiva and Parvati which they failed to remove. Then they built a temple over them considering them as spontaneous appearance of Shiva and Parvati.

Mela of Ravana of Meos.— Religious and recreational in character, the fair is held for three days in the month of *chaitra* (March-April) at Ferozpur Jhirka. It is associated with Ravana of Meos. It is attended by 8,000 persons among whom Meos predominate. Wrestling, feats by *Bazigars*, dramatic performances and puppet shows are some of the attractions of the fair.

Shiv Mela at Jhirka.— This religious fair, which is dedicated to god Shiva, is held for three days in the month of *Sravana* (July-August) and *Phalgun* (February-March) at Ferozpur Jhirka of Gurgaon district. It is attended by several thousand of persons. People take bath at the *Jhar* (Spring) and offer prayers and offerings in Lord Shiva's temple where *bhajans* (religious songs) and *Kirtans* held.

The women folk among Meos, or Meonies as they are called, participate in equal proportion to their men in the fairs held at

places associated with Shaikh Musa, Shah Chokka, Bhartri Hari and Lal Das. Even near Nuh, a large fair assembles on the occasion of the Teej festival. The majority of the participants consists of the Meos in their best clothings and with their traditional turbans and *lathis*. The Meo women also participate freely in the fair and come from far off villages in groups of lightly coloured femininity and singing songs reverberating through the hills of Mewat.

In rural area of Haryana, numerous fairs are held; every village is a seat of traditional cultural fairs. No doubt, gatherings in these fairs are somewhat not impressive. Only local people assemble. These fairs are traditional; cultural amalgamation of people irrespective of caste and creed.

Festivals

Festivals and fairs are an integral part of religious life. The common festivals celebrated by the Hindus are Holi, Janam Ashtami, Dussehra and Dewali. The minor festivals are Shivratri, Gugga Naumi, Solono (Raksha Bandhan) and Bhaiya Duj. Muslims celebrate Idul-Fitre while Christians celebrate the Christ birthday. The Sikhs

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celebrate the festival connecting with their Gurus and Baishaki. The detailed account of festivals is given below :—

The festival of lights, Diwali and Dussehra are the chief festivals, universally celebrated by the Hindus all over India. In Haryana, these festivals are celebrated with great pomp and show.

Dewali.— Dewali takes place in the middle of *Kartik*. First

comes the little Dewali on which rice and sugar put in vessels, with one rupee coin placed on the top are given away to the *purohit* or girls. The deceased ancestors are said to visit the house of their families on that day, and it is in their name that ceremony is performed. Houses are white-washed and cleaned. On the next day, or the *Gobardhan*, Dewali lamps (earthen lamps) are lighted in the evening and sweets are exchanged between relatives and well wishers. Delicious foods are prepared and people perform *pooja* and place ornaments and coins at the time of *poojan*. The crackers are freely enjoyed.

On the night many families in Mahendragarh and Gurgaon areas sleep on the ground. On that night they do not use cots for sleeping. The members do not go to bed before 12.00 pm.

The moneyed classes and trading classes specially consider Dewali as their own festival. On this day, they perform *pooja*, which is considered auspicious for their profession.

Some persons gamble on the night of Dewali. It is very bad habit.

Dussera.— Dussera is probably the chief Hindu festival, being associated with the great epic *Ramyaana* and renowned hero, Ram. The celebrations last nearly a month. First come the *Shradas*, early in September and last over a fortnight. Brahman are fed on these days in the memory of the deceased elders of the family.

Shradas are followed by *Navratras* which, as their name implies, are nine in number. Oats sown in the field or deposited in big utensils, are watered on each of these days. On the Dussera day, pudding (*halwa*) is eaten with rice and curd. All the members of the family-children, girls, men but not women put stalks of green oats on their heads.

The celebration of Ram Leela is all too familiar. On that day the effigies of the demon king, Ravana, and his supporters are burnt. This is a concluding day of Dussera.

Holi.— Most of the Hindu festivals in Haryana are much the same as in other parts of the country, with some local variations. Holi is celebrated with gusto, particularly in the area bordering Uttar Pradesh. For days before the festival, married women and girls sing songs at night time. They play and run freely in the moon lit

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night on the day of Holi, a huge fire is lighted and the items prepared with cow dung are placed in the *Holika* fire. The local people stand around and enjoy the singing. Some persons fry the stalks of wheat plants in Holika fire which is considered auspicious. A delicious food is prepared on this occasion.

On *Dhulhandi (phag)*, the day following Holi, men folk throw water on the women who retaliate by a mock beating with sticks or *korras*, twisted cloth strips. The men act as if they were powerless and their pretended attempts at shielding lead to much fun and amusement.

In urban areas colours of different kinds are used with one another. Mostly upto 2 p.m. the *gulal* throwing ends. In the evening people wash their clothes and take bath. The children also like it very much.

Festival of Teej.— Teej or Haryali Teej is a seasonal festival falling on *Sawan Sudi-3* (beginning of August). 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 festival, bevvies of young girls attired in their best clothes and wearing new multicoloured glass bangles start pouring in some open space or a tree grove near the pond and take 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 and sweets when the married girls go back to their in-laws.

On the night of Teej, a delicious food such *khir* and pudding are also prepared. The married ladies wear new set of bangles and shinning dress. The *heena* is applied on hands and feet by the ladies. The Teej is celebrated with fervour, gaiety and enthusiasm in big cities. In Chandigarh, Teej is celebrated in Rock garden. Cultural programmes carry on throughout the day. The students attired in their traditional dress enjoy the festival.

Makar Sakranti.— Sakranti is celebrated on *Magh-I* (January-February) when people clean their houses and streets and take bath in the tank or canal and river *Jamuna*, the custom in which father-in-law poses himself to be asleep and is awakened by the daughter-in-law by striking coconuts. The gifts are also given to the parents-in-law and other elderly people. Friends also offer clothes. *Churma* (delicious food) is prepared on this day.

Sanjhi festival.— Sanjhi is celebrated before Dussehra. An idol of a woman is made on the walls of the houses with mud and is decorated with clothes and ornaments. The festival starts ten days before Dussehra and the girls sing songs in praise of

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Sanjhi for ten days. On Dussehra the idol is removed from the walls and is placed in an earthen pot pierced with holes and having lighted earthen lamps. The girls carry the pot with idol on their heads alongwith the devotional songs and immerse it in a near by tank or canal.

Goverdhan Puja is observed on the day following Dewali. Cowdung cakes representing the Goverdhan Rock connected with Lord Krishana are worshipped.

Gugga Naumi.— It is a religious festival connected with snake worship observed on *Bhadra-9* (August-September). A number of legends have clustered around Gugga. He is called Gugga Pir. Some refer to him as Baggarwalla because of his grave near Dadrewa (Ganga Nagar District) of Rajasthan in *Bagar* tract which he is said to have ruled over. He is believed to have flourished about the middle of the 12th century. He was a Hindu and his proper name was Gugga Bir (Gugga the hero). The Muslims also flock to his shrine and his name has been altered to Gugga Pir (Gugga saint), while in the opinion of many, he himself became a Muslim. Gugga had a peculiar power of curing snake bite. Monday is his day, the 9th is his date on which Gugga descended into earth. To commemorate this event, festival is celebrated and Gugga is worshipped by offering *Kachi lassi* and *sewains* to the snakes.

Festival of Karva Chauth.— The festival of *Karwa Chauth* falls in the month of *Kartik* (October-November) and is observed by married women only. They keep fast on the day in order that their husbands may live long. The *puja* is performed by the women sitting together in the afternoon, the fast is, however, broken after looking at and offering water to the moon at night.

Festival of Basora.— The festival of Basora falls in the month of *chait* (March-April) and literally means festival of stale bread. On the eve of festival, all households prepare *dalia* or sweet rice and set it aside uneaten. Next morning, women rise early and after ablution they perform *puja* at *chabutras* dedicated to the *matas*. Then stale food (*Poondgi*) is offered to all the members of the family.

Festival of Gangore.— This festival is celebrated with gaiety in southern parts of Haryana. Gangore is celebrated for a fortnight ending on the third day of the bright fortnight of the month of *chait* every year. All unmarried girls worship Gauri. Early in the morning, girls dressed in fine and multi coloured clothes, go to well or river, with metal pots on their heads, singing songs. On their return they worship the idol of Gauri with sacred water they bring.

Married women put *kajal* in the eyes of the idol Gauri, and also fill her *mang* with *sandoor*, a red coloured powder. *Mehandi* is also applied to the palms and feet. The women then take the *sandoor* from Gauri's figure and apply it in their *mang* with

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the belief that their *suhag* will remain forever like that of Gauri. Maidens on the threshold of youth aspire handsome husbands.

Hoi is another festival of Haryana. The ladies keep fast in order to prolong the lives of their sons. In the evening they break their fast. They fill up the small earthen pitchers with grains and observe worship of Mata hoi.

Amavas is a very important festival of Hindus. On this day, the farmers do not yoke their oxen in the field. It is celebrated every month with *kheer* and *churma* in rural areas.

Festival of Devathni Giras.— The festival is celebrated in the month of *kartik*. It is mainly a festival for women. It is observed in order to awaken the gods who are supposed to be asleep from the ninth day in *Asadh* (June-July). The women keep fast on the day and in the evening they assemble at a selected place and beat upon brass utensils to wake up the gods. After this, they break the fast and special dishes made at this occasion are eaten.

Besides the celebration of Hindu festivals, the Sikh celebrate the *Gurpurbs* (the birthdays and martyrdom days of Gurus). On the occasion of *Gurpurbs*, processions are taken out and congregational prayers and recitation from the holy book *Granth Sahib* are held.

The Jains celebrate the birth and Nirvan anniversaries of Parasar Nath and Lord Mahavira. The principal festival of Buddhists is Buddha Purnima, the day on which Buddha is believed to have been and to have attained enlightenment as well as *nirvan*.

Christmas and Easter are two principal festivals of Christians; the former is celebrated in honour of the both of Jesus Christ, while the latter connect with his resurrection. The Christians go to churches and exchange the present of sweetmeats.

The Muslims festivals are *Id-ul-Fiter* and *Ramzan*. During the month of *Ramzan* the devotees keep fast during the day time through out the month.

Id-ul-zuha commonly called *Bakrid* as goats are butchered in the name of Allah. *Shab-e-Barat* is celebrated with fine works and presents of sweets.

Past heritage and characteristics of the people

Haryana in the Vedic literature and ancient Indian history, is known as *Baduhanyak*, the land of rich harvests, situated between the Yamuna on the east and the Saraswati and Markanda on its north western side. It was the first home land of cow grazing Aryans, coming from central Asia, with their herds and the inseparable flute. The banks of the Saraswati were the birth place of Indian culture, philosophy

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of life, fine arts, poetry, drama and music. Thus the lotus land of Saraswati gave birth and rise to the rich Indian heritage acknowledged every-where¹.

The righteous war of *Mahabharata* was fought on this land of action. Much before, great king Kuru had heralded an era of scientific agriculture on this land. As the legend goes that Kuru had borrowed the plough from Lord Brahma, bulls from

Lord Shiva and produced the seeds by chopping his limbs and scattered them on this holy land. The Aryans like the flow of the river, Saraswati, Yamuna and the Ganga took with their march, seeds sprouted, came into full bloom and Indian philosophy and culture, a source of fragrance for the entire world.

The philosophy of Vedic literature, the enchanting symphony of *veena*, the unparalleled music of *Dundubhi vadaks* of Rohtak, the dream land of the world famous scholar, musicologist and philosopher, Amir Khusro, simple and sturdy living of the men folk, unrivalled valour of the soldiers on the battle field from ancient times to the modern wars, or envied notes of Murich khan of panipat, birth place of *Sarangi* music are some of the values and achievements which he scattered like forgotten pearls on the land constituting Haryana.

The story of life, like the story of a river is the tale of rise and fall. After living through a perfect system of education of Vedic India and excellent administration of the last Hindu king, Harsha, who ruled from *Sthanishavar* (Thanesar), the people on this land faced without break the rigours of dark age-an age in which warriors had to welcome invaders with their sword and women at home had to live a life of separation and insecurity, still maintaining the dignity of home and upholding cultural traditions. Social upheaval, economic distress and administrative looseness deprived the philosophers of the *Vedas* and the *Gita* of their benefits of literacy. But our people even in this turmoil preserved their social virtues, philosophy of life, music and poetry through folk poems.

The people of Haryana are God fearing, religious, simple, honest and hardworking. Since ancient period, Haryana has been the battle field; so military instinct has been imbibed in them. They maintain simple living and high thinking. They are devoid of hypocrisy.

Folk Songs

Folk songs have many varieties; seasonal songs, marriage songs, bravery songs, *Raagnis* etc. The majority of men warble *raganis* of Pt. Lakhmi Chand and other important *sangis*. Lakhmi Chand had created a deep impact on the minds of the Haryanvis by his *sang* based *Raagnis*. First of all, a few instances of *Raagnis* of Lakhmi Chand are quoted here from the book.

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Lakhmi Chand, like the great English poet, John Keats, had a premonition of death and the greatest impact which his guru's composition exercised on his mind also relates to the transience of life, as detailed below:

Jagat se yeo, Raen ka sapna re,

Na too kiseka, no koe tera,

Sapna saman samagh ghar dera

Chirya kesa ren basera.

English version

"The world is short-lived like night dream. None is yours and you belong to none. You should treat your life merely as a short-lived dream. What you treat as your belonging, your home is like a nest of sparrow meant purely for a night's stay".

Mat pita hon janam den ke, nahin karam ke sathee,

Satgur gyan vichar bina, koi banta nahin himati,

Man Singh guru ne bata diya, jo kuch kho rakha tha,

meri balakpan deya lai, mene sab dukh ro rakha tha,

Lakhmi Chand jagat ke khatar, jo kuchh bo rakha tha.

English version :

"Parents merely give birth and never accompany the processes of life. None except Guru and wise thoughts are real companions in need. Guru Man Singh guided me to the recovery of what I had missed altogether. I had cried out of my woes and he owned me as a helpless child. I was staggering in the absence of direction and my mind was fighting for a goal, says Lakhmi Chand".

In the *Saang* Raja Bharatharhari, the king is lost in the sad mood and a query, he speaks out his agony.

"Bina umang hansa na ave, meri bandh re ganth bharam ki,

Guru Man Singh dharm ki rahe khete Sukhde konya,

jisna milya daya maraj wu chot dukhdi konya,

Lakhmi Chand chukdi konya jo ubhre rekh karam ki."

English version :

"Without exhilarations, smile does not appear on the face and obscess of suspicion bites me from within. Speaking in the line of Man Singh, Lakhmi Chand

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believes that the crop of virtues is always lush and green. A wound on appropriate medication gets relief from pain and whatever is destined to be the line of fate, is not erasable".

Even *saang* Padmavat was a popular story in the whole of folk India. Simple villagers related the story in twenty minutes' time. Lakhi Chand with his imaginary poetic depiction, musical enrichment and dramatic imagination transformed the folk tale in five hours absorbing *sang*.

The *sang* begins with prince Ranbir Singh, leaving for hunting with his companion Chander Dutt. Ranbir Singh on the chase of a deer all of a sudden reached the gardens of Padmavt and faces unique palace and matchless beauties with Padmavat standing amongst them. Enamoured of the surroundings, he utters the following words:

"Kisne mahal banya se yo

dhang duniya te niyara

parde jali chak chandi ke,

Jhakidar chubara.

Ek tala bhara tha thande jal ka

dur tak ja sardai

Ek adhi jagah kanthare par

hare rang ke kai".

English version :

"Who has built this unparalleled palace beyond the known design of the world. Its curtains and windows sparkle like the precious silver. There is a pond brimming with cold water and splashing coolness to the farthest point. It is also covered with mass here and there on the banks".

Love and war were the two main obsessions of the youth in Haryana. The simlies describing love and war naturally have to be similar. War injures bodies and love injures mind. If love succeeds, it offers a divine panorma to the lovers in their life. Damyanti married Nal, as per a classic story. Lakhmi Chand points out rich colours and the process of *swayamber* in which Nal and Damyanti stand together like inseparable gods. The poetic stanza is as follows :

"Lajja sahit pakar ke bastar,

ger dai phool mala,

samjh ke raja Nal ke,

har diya joban bala,

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Bama hath pakar ke hogi

kari pati ke dhore

Sati pati ka sat samgh ke

Bandhi dharam ke dora".

English version :

"With modesty, virgin Damyanti garlanded Nal into marital companionship, shyly and softly touching his apparel, Damyanti stood close to Nal in the same inseparable spirit in which lightning emanates from sky of moisture laden clouds and returns to them quickly".

How beautifully Lakhi Chand points Meera's single minded obsession :

"Aoo sakhi, aoo sakhi

hai dharam mamdli me,

Lakhi Chand kahe ese dhang me

Parem ka batna malke ange me

mane to girdhar ji ke sang me

English version :

"Come along, come down to the group of religious singers O, companions. says Lakhmi Chand, Meera's only prayer is to smear the bridal ointment of Lords love on her person and all she prays is immortal, and elevating marriage with God, Girdhar."

Songs of war and valour

Yeats Brown, an eminent British journalist and author who toured India extensively during World War-II wrote:

"Thousands of miles and thousands of men will have passed before my eyes but what is all my seeing worth if I miss the heart of India, the villages where the men who shape her destinies are bred".

It was from among these men from India's villages that thousand joined the British army and contributed to the glorious triumph of Allies over the Axis powers in 1945. Half a dozen Indian divisions whose discipline, endurance and valour became exemplary consisted of these sturdy soldiers from India's villages.

What Yeats Brown calls the heart of India "throbs vibrantly in the hundreds of Haryanvis folk songs which echoed throughout the country side during that time.

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They missed the dauntless spirit of the Haryanvi soldiers and of their families at a time of test and trial. As Haryana has always been the home of sturdy soldiers and valiant heroes, so even during the two World Wars hundred of young men turned up for recruitment in the army and provided their mettle at different war fronts.

While these soldiers were fighting fierce battles, their hearts in touching songs which are a soulful expression of the stress and strain of hundreds rural families all over Haryana. A young bride languishing for her husband, a loving sister waiting for her brother to bring the *bhat* for her daughter's marriage, or an old mother counting days to see her soldier son's face are some of the themes of these touching folk-songs of Haryana that were composed and sung during

World War-II.

In one folk song, a sister says to her brother who is leaving the village to join army.

"Beera tu to bharti chal padya,

Mera kaun bharega bhat

Beera ho rahi ghor ladie

Mera kaun bharega bhat".

English version :

(Oh brother mine, since you are going to the war, who will bring *bhat* for me now; Oh, brother mine, a fierce war is going on, who, now, will bring *bhat* for one). *Bhat* from *bhratra* in Sanskrit, meaning brother, consists of clothes, ornaments, gifts, etc are given at the time of marriage of the sister's children. In Haryana sisters attach a lot of emotional significance to these gifts and to the ceremony which they are given.

The soldier-brother consoles his sister by assuring her of his early return from the war:

"Babey, tu mat pachhtaya ai, Tera aan bharoonga bhat".

English version of the above song

(Oh, sister, do not regret, I shall return soon and bring the *bhat*).

The song ends on a tragic note because the brother never returns; he gets killed in the war. In this last time of this song the sister identifies her sorrow with that of the hundreds of other women who too have lost a loving brother an obedient son, or the *jamai*, a son-in-law. She says,

"Kisi ke to mar gave kanwar ladle,

kisi ke ratan jamai he".

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English version

(Some have lost their young sons and brothers and some, alas! have lost the gem of a son-in-law).

These songs give us a glimpse of the gloom which engulfed hundreds of families all over the region. In another Haryanvi song, bride curses the enemy the Germans for killing the sons from far away land. She says¹:

"German, tera jaiyo nas,

Aaj ya tadke,

Tanney mare birane lal

Jahaj bhar bhar ke

Main kis pe karoon singar kaleja dharke".

English version :

(Oh, Germans may you be ruined, if not today then tomorrow. You have killed ship loads of sons from other lands. How and for whom, should I bedeck myself when my heart is beating with sorrow for my beloved husband).

Though the death and destruction were imminent, the martial traditions of Haryana were upheld with the zest and zeal. To boost the morale of the soldiers, inspite of the personal loss, the women in one song after another, reminded them of the traditional valour and heroism of Haryana. They inspired them thus:

"Haryana ka veer kate, Darya Nahin Karte

Maut te darya karen sai paji, jin ne paap karen hoon kafi,

Mafi ke yachna veer karya na hin karte"

English version :

The valiant sons of Haryana have never known fear. Only

sinners are forever afraid of death because they have sinned much . But the brave men never stoop.

In yet another song, the young wife inspires her husband to join the army so that his valour becomes known to all and he is able to bring name and fame, to the family.

She says:

"Piya, Bharti mein ho lay na,

Pat ja chatrapan ka mol,

1. Sudhir Kumar Sharma contributes this write up to *The Tribune*, dt. July 22,1995.

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German mein ja ke ladiye,

Apne ma bapan ka nam kareye,

Tain topan ke aagey ladiye,

apni chhati ne de khol.

English version :

"Dear, go and get recruited in the army where the worth of your valour will be known to all. Fight the Germans and bring honour to your mother and father. Facing the cannon, bare your chest fearlessly".

Even in the World War-I Haryana soldiers and officers played a very significant role. The statement shows that 11,366 persons went to that war, many of them were in the famous 6th Jat Regiment. Many of the songs composed during those days got revived with the renewed pain and pathos during the

Second World War. One folk song gives a graphic account of a German attack in a song that takes us to the war front itself:

"German ne gola marya,

ja phoota amber mein,

Garad main sipahi bhaje,

Roti chhuti langer mein,

Un beerain ka ke jeena,

Jinke balam chheh number mein".

English version :

"The Germans hurled a bomb which exploded on the sky. The soldiers on guard were startled. Some left behind their food uneaten in the mess. Now, life and its pleasure have no meaning for those women whose husbands are in number i.e. 6th Jat Regiment.

Haryana's professional folk singers too displayed much interest in the war. One such *saangi* was Deep Chand of village Sheri Khanda in Sonapat district. For his efforts in encouraging young persons to get recruited in the army during World War; he was given the title 'Rai Sahib' a singular honour to be conferred on any folk singer in India except Rai Sahib Natha Ram of Hathras.

In a song that became popular during both World Wars, Deep Chand deftly blended English and Haryanvi words to compose an impressive song in the local dialect. He sang:

"Bharti ho lay na,

Tere bahar khade rangroot,

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Adey milange phathey lattey,

udey milenge suit,

Adey milenge tutey litter,

udey milenge ful boot,

Adey milenge sukey tikkar,

udey milenge fruit.

English version :

"Join army, other recruits are waiting outside for you. Here, in the village you have tattered clothes to wear, there in the army, you will wear a suit. Here you wear worn out slippers, there you will get full boots; here you eat dried crumbs but there, fruits will be served to you".

One folk singer whose *ragnis* are true reflections of a soldier's sentiments is Jat Mehar Singh being a soldier himself. He in his *ragnis*, has delved deep into the soldier's psychology and has composed some beautiful pieces of folk dialect. In *ragni* he says:

"pardesan te chithhi aayee, missar ki tayyari hogi,

Ghar kunbe te door, Mehar Singh yah moti lachari hogi "

English version :

"Orders have come that we have to get ready to go to Egypt. Oh, what helplessness, Mehar Singh that now I will have to go far, far away from my kith and kin, home and family."

Reminiscent of Chandra Dhar Sharma Guleri's famous war story *ushne kaha tha*, many *ragnis* use the flash back or dream technique to highlight the emotive effect of the song.

In one song, a soldier, while lying asleep in a tent dreams of Angoori, his sweet heart, and of the special treatment he receives at the house of his in-laws but when he wakes up he, to his dismay, finds the familiar friends snoring by his side.

The soldier says:

"Sapne ka kay jikar karron,

Ek bat jaroori aagi,

Tamboo kay main pare pare,

yad Angoori aagi".

English version :

"How should I tell you of my dream? It was indeed a wonderful experience. While lying in my tent, I was gripped by the thoughts of Angoori, my beloved".

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Marriage Songs

At marriage, when the girl is taking *phas*, her married friends remind her of their own experience and advice to her to walk slowly around the sacred fire otherwise she will become a laughing stock among her friends by revealing her impatience.

The following few lines depict beautifully the situation:—

"Halwe halwe chal lado mahari,

Tune hansengi sahelaryan,

Ye moth se mat pare lado mahari.

English version :

"Walk slowly and slowly, your friends will cut jokes with you. Don't grind the *moth grains* O, my abigail."

After marriage when the girl departs for her in-laws, all her friends and village women gather to give her a hearty send

off in song :

"Sathan chal pari re,

Mere dab dab bhar aye nain,

Apni sathan ka main kurta sima dyun,

batana ki la do lar;

Apni sathan ka main daman semadyun,

Gotya ki la dhun lar.

English version:

"My eyes well up with tears when my friends depart from me. I want to get tailored a shirt for my friend embedded with the buttons rows. I may get tailored a *daman* (petticoat) for my friend".

Love of brothers and sisters become a key note of the songs of Teej:

Neem ke nimobli lagi

Sawan ke din awega,

Awe ri meri ma ka jaya,

Ke ke chiji layawega.

English version:

"The *neem* tree has laden with fruits. My brother will come in the *sawan* month. My real brother will come and what kinds of things will he carry for me".

There were songs connected with festive and religious occasions and also exploits of the heroes of old time like Alha Udal, Fatta Jaimal and Gopi Chand.

The account pertaining to folk dance and music may be seen in the Chapter IV Culture.

The Punjab *Bhangra* and *kawali* in Urdu are also prevalent in some parts of Haryana. The rural *bhangras* are popular. They are very instructive for them. A typical example of some of the adages are as under :—

Rural Adages

1. *Mota biyaj sahuakar ne kowe,
Aurat ne kowe hansī,
Alus, nind kisan ne kowe,
chor ne kowe khance.*

(An exorbitant rate of interest ruins a money lender; the habit of uncontrolled laughter ruins a woman; the working time wasted in idleness and sleep ruins a farmer, coughing ruins a thief).

2. *Kheti karo to hal jotu,
adhi karo to sath raho,
ghar bathe puchho ge to,
bhail dege ke chhutoge.*

("The best way of cultivation is to plough it yourself; if you have a tenant, watch him; enquiries made sitting at home will yield nothing; you may have to sell your bullocks as the tenant will misappropriate most of the harvest").

3. *Jis kheti pe khasam na jawe,
wah kheti khasmo na khawe.*

(A field which is not supervised by the farmer, reaps no harvest; the expenditure incurred will prove ruinous).

4. *Kheti to thori kare, mehnat kare swani,
Ram chahe us manas ko tota kabhi na aawe.*

(A farmer who handles a small area, but puts hard labour, God willing, shall never be in want).

5. *Chole, moth, bajra, ye se ret ka ladla.*

(Sandy soils suit the cultivation of gram, *moth* and *bajra*).

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6. *Kalar ka kaya khet, Kapti ka kaya het.*

(The salt infested land is of as much use as is a deceitful or malicious friend).

7. *Jamin kalar, sada fakar.*

(The alkaline soils keep the cultivator in perpetual poverty).

8. *Uncha gaon bhala, nicha khet bhala.*

(A village is good if at high level, a field if at low level).

9. *Rohi bhom, saput ghar, ur satwanti nar,
ghorun pe chadna, ye char surarg sansar.*

(A heavy soil, meritorious son, virtuous wife and horse to ride, and just four heavens on earth).

10. *Kheti to reti bhali, is pe dale khat,
Kar gore kaman kabe, kant bhah lagode sat.*

(Even a sandy field is good, if manure has been added to it. The farmers wife coaxes him to plough it seven times, for ample harvest).

11. *Achha beej, chokhe khad, malik khush, mujara sadh.*

(Good seeds and enough manuring benefit both the landlord as well as the tenant).

12. *Char mas na chawe barkha, soka bund,
Mangsar, chet, baisakh aur chotha jeth ko dundh,*

*Eh charo chhorkar, barkha atho mas,
To puri howe teri aas.*

(Four months *Mangsar*, *chet*, *Baisakh* and *Jeth* you do not need rains even of gold drops. The rain is welcome rest of the year. This ensures bumper harvests and safe threshing periods).

13. *Dum bhala jo bolana, bahu bali jo chup,
Sawan bhala jo barsana, Jethi bhaleri dhoop.*

(For the bards, it is good to speak and sing, for the daughter-in-law to be bashful and speakless; rains are good for *sawan* but hot sunshine is necessary for *Jeth* to mature crops).

14 *Jhar lagya jo chet, na ghar na khet.*

(Rain during the month of *chet* (March-April) ruins the harvests and consequently the household.

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15. *Sadh do aur sawan nit bhadon char aur ausoj ek.*

(Two falls of rain in *sadh*, daily falls in *sawan*, four in *Bhadon* and one in *Asoj*, constitute the ideal rainfall of the summer).

16. *Jab chamke pacham uttar ki oor,
Tab jano pani ka jor, Titar pankhi badli,
Vidwa kajal rekh. wa barse, wa ghar kare enme meen na mekh.*

(Lightning flashes, in the north-west and a partridge feather shaped cloud indicate certainty of rains; just as a widow puts *kajal* in her eyes is sure to find a husband).

17. *Pala para to bahut begare sarson, tara chano ko mare.*

(Frost is injurious to *Rabi* crop, it especially destroys mustard, sesame and grain).

18. *Lakhe liyo lakh ka, Neela lijo karore,
dhols lijo bah ke, pila dijo chor,
Itani bat kanhu ne kant, bhure ke na dekhu dant..*

(White, blue and black are superior breeds, whereas the yellow and brown coloured are considered the worst).

Position of Women

The creation of universe was ascribed by the Aryans to the union of *Prakrti* and *Purusha*. The woman is supposed to be *Prakrti* and man *Purusha*; the union of the two created the home and made the world. According to ancient ideals, the wife is half of man and hence as long as he does not obtain her, he is incomplete¹. The epic literature also lays down that a man's half is his wife; therefore, she is called *ardhagini*.

General Status of Women in Ancient Period

The women were never accorded an independent status, they were assigned a very high place in the house. Subservience of women to men is neatly summed up in the *Manusmriti* where it is stated a woman should not be independent. As a daughter, she should be under the surveillance of her father; as a wife, of her husband; and as a widow, of her son.

In the Vedic age women were not deprived of the advantage of education and were not considered incompetent to study *Vedas* or participate in philosophical discussions. They even composed some of the hymns of the *Rigveda*. After finishing their education, they could either enter married life or devote themselves to religious

1. Dr. Savita Vishnoi, *Economic Status of Women in Ancient India*, 1993, p.4.

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and metaphysical studies just like men. They took part in the sacrifices performed by their husbands and term *patni*, which is applied to wife, indicates this participation.

In the Vedic age, women were not married before puberty. Both the parties to a marriage seem to have had a voice in the selection of their partners. When a husband died without an issue, his widow was allowed to raise an issue by *niyoga*. Most women preferred a married life though some of them preferred to lead a life of celibacy.

In the post-Vedic period, the position of women gradually underwent deterioration in many respects. The trend started in later Vedic age. Women were now debarred from the study of the *Vedas* and were considered to be unfit to pronounce the *Vedic mantras*. They were required to obtain knowledge of duty and morality by studying the *Puranas* only. Marriage ceremony is stated to be only sacrament for women which could be performed with the *Vedic mantras*. Women were debarred from *upanayana* or the initiation ceremony. The reason of imposition of such a disqualification on women appears to lie in the historical situation of the earlier times when the old Aryan system was being restructured through marriage with the indigenous people.

With the intention of preventing the women of Non Aryan origin, some of whom were now accepted in the Aryan families, from participation in the sacrifices, a general disqualification on women was imposed. Unfortunately, even after the formation of their compact homogenous society was completed, these disqualifications remained continued.

Manu takes a low view of women's intelligence which may be inferred from a verse wherein he observes that the understanding of women is apt to waver and they do not make good witness. According to him "the two sexes are unequal in strength, stamina and psychology"¹. Such a view was bound to lead to a decline in women's education. However, there were some *smriti* writers who protested against the low view of women.

A woman's right to choose her husband make us believe that marriages in the early *Vedic* age were transacted when maidens were generally of mature age. This practice continued till about the 5th century B.C. It is in the succeeding age of the *Sutras* that we find marriages of infant girls coming into vogue. From the 4th century B.C. onwards, writers of the *Dharmasutras* advise that marriage of girl should not delayed for long after her puberty. Manu and Kautilya concur with them. Vasishtha and Baudhayana prefer to give a time of three years after puberty but Gautam and Vishnu insist that marriages must be celebrated within three months after puberty. However, there was no uniform practice in this regard in the society. The *Kamasutra*,
1. K.V. Ramaswamy: *Aspects of the social and Political System of Manusmriti*, p.162.

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which belongs to the end of this period, indicates that when it was composed both the post-puberty and pre-puberty marriages were prevalent. The stories of the *katha saritsagar* refer both to child marriages and love marriages.

It may be observed that although Manu did not entertain a very high opinion of the female intellect, he insisted that women should be honoured. Manu assigns them the highest position of respect and says that a mother is no case to be forsaken even if she has fallen from moral rectitude. The *Mahabharata* also desires that one who derives prosperity must honour and respect women and look upon his wife as the goddess of fortune (*Lakshmi*).

A Hindu marriage in ancient India was held to be indissoluble; it was supposed to subsist even after death. The *Rigveda* entertained a very high ideals about the sanctity of marriage. The *Sutra* literature condemns the practice of

divorce. The *Apastamba* says, "If the marriage vow is transgressed, both the husband and wife certainly go to hell". Manu also did not cherish the idea of divorce. Manu and Yajñavalkya both lay down that a man may abandon his wife if a serious disease of her was not disclosed by her parents before marriage or if there is a loss of chastity on her part. Manu also does not object to a woman abandoning her husband if he is insane (*Unmatta*), impotent (*kliba*, *abija*) or suffering from an incurable or contagious disease (*paparogi*).

According to the *Smritis*, there are five cases of legal sanction wherein a wife is allowed to take a second husband, i.e. if he is missing (*mashta*) or dead (*mrta*), or becomes ascetic (*pravrajita*), or is impotent (*kliba*) or is degraded from the caste (*patita*). Kautilya also speaks divorce (*tyaga*) which could be obtained only in case of mutual enmity and hatred between husband and wife. But he maintains that marriage of the Brahma, Daiva, Arsha and Prajapatya forms cannot be dissolved at all.

Position of Widow in Ancient Time

The position of widow was quite satisfactory till 300 B.C. There is very little evidence of the prevalence of the custom of *sati* in *Rgveda*. About remarriage of widows, there is no clear or definite reference in *Rgveda*, but the widow could live with her late husband's younger brother to get a son for her husband, if she so chose. The rules of *Dharmasutras* permit remarriage of woman whose husband is dead, has become an ascetic or has gone abroad after a period of waiting which varies according to circumstances.

In Jainism and Buddhism, marriage was not compulsory for women; rather it was regarded as a fetter which women were advised to avoid. They were urged to become nuns without entertaining the matrimonial bond. Among the nuns of the

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Therigatha, the majority consists of women who had renounced the world during their maidenhood. The career thus opened for women by Jainism and Buddhism attracted a large number of talented ladies and offered a somewhat freer status.

System of Niyog During Ancient Times

The birth of a son was considered in Hindu society as a great occasion of joy and if a person died without leaving behind a son to perform his *Sraddha*, it was a great misfortune for him. Therefore, the Hindu society permitted that a widow could bear a son with any *sapinda* or *sagotra* of her husband. This system was known as *Niyog*.

The legal authorities of that period also permit the practice of *Niyoga*, but they do not allow it for more than one son¹. They appear to be cautious in the sense that in the name of *Niyoga*, the widow may not find a permanent companion for sexual pleasure.

Manu, therefore, warns that after the attainment of the purpose of *Niyoga*, the man and woman have to behave towards each other like a father and a daughter-in-law. At the same time he condemns this custom and considers it a beastly behaviour. This custom is, however, not condemned by *Yajnavalika* (law giver of Ancient Period) and Vishnu permits it within certain limits. If we rely on the *Visnusmrti* it appears that the custom of *niyoga* was prevalent in the period.

The widow was, thus, given the right to procure son even after the death of her husband by the custom of *niyoga* but her marriage was generally not favoured by the *Dharamsastra* writers. The legal authorities like Manu, Yajnavalika and Vishnu disfavour widow marriage. Manu states that a widow should not think of remarriage and eulogises widows maintaining physical chastity. The *Mahabharata* considers widow remarriage a sin. Vatsyana holds similar view and he considers widow sex relation no better than prostitution.

The practice of *niyoga* was also prevalent during *varana* system. Usually Brahmans were appointed to raise issues on

Kshetraya women.

Property rights of women

Property rights of women were hardly recognised in ancient patriarchal civilization of the world. They themselves were looked upon as an item of the movable property of the husband as the term *dampati* would show. The husband was required to take a solemn vow at the time of marriage that he would never transgress the rights and interests of his wife in economic matters.

1. Dr. Vidya Bhushan : *The Cultural History of India* (From 150 B.C. to 350 AD), 1988, p.56.

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The *Taittiriya samhita* holds that the wife was the mistress of the household. They used to receive wedding gifts called *parinahya* which later came to be known *stredhana*. A *Vedic* text declares that the wife was considered to be their owner.

B.S. Upadhyaya believes that a daughter had an assigned share in her father's property¹. However, he had not defined the word share. We contend that a daughter with brother did not have a legal right to inherit her father's property. She had a privilege of her maintenance only if she remained unmarried. On being married she could claim possession of only gifts given to her at the time of her marriage.

The Jain wife was a partner in all legal functions. In the matter of adoption, her powers were coextensive with those of the husband, whether he was alive or dead. She had full right over her *Stridhana* which was of five kinds : *Adhyagnikrta* or that which is given at the time of marriage in the presence of the nuptial fire. *Adyavanika* or that which the

girl brings of her father's house; *Pritidhana* or that which is given affectionately by the girl's father-in-law; *Saudnayika* or that which is received by the married girl from the parents, brothers and husband; and lastly, *Anvadheva* or that which is given at the time of marriage from her own, or her husband's women relatives. Thus, above five kinds of a woman's property consisting of gifts and wealth, which entirely bride received at the time of her marriage, entirely belonged to her.

Position of women in Delhi Sultanate

The social fabric knitted by the Prophet did not allow intermingling of two sexes. Emphasis was laid upon for seclusion of women and their activities were mostly restricted to the fourwalls of the house. It is worth mentioning inspite of all these, a life of empty idleness and complete seclusion was not a part of prophet's scheme of feminine existence. The *Quran* simply mentions, the veiling of women to avoid the display of feminine beauty which was likely to arouse the passion of men². But this practice was not strictly observed for, we find several examples of women participating in public activities without a veil.

Purdah system.— The seclusion of women continued to be inforce during the Sultanate period. The public appearance along with men in various spheres of life was not deemed congenial in the early medieval society. Islam advocated complete Seclusion of women, and considered those women pure and moral who observed *purdah*. According to it the character of those females was subject to suspicion who failed to observe *purdah*. It even insisted that women should not laugh loudly in the presence of people.

1. B. S. Upadhyaya, *Women in Rgveda*, p. 48.

2. Lokesh Chandra Nand : *Women in Delhi Sultanate*, 1989, p.35.

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Amir Khusrau, harped on the same string with the help of a number of metaphor. The renowned poet considered *purdah* as the best ornament of women which should be religiously observed when a girl comes of age (generally taken as seventeen years). The place of women was home, which provided the security and enabled them to lead a moral life. According to him, a woman should not peep here and there, the one who roamed about were not women but bitches.

In the royal household *purdah* was generally strictly observed. Raziya ardently followed this custom in the beginning of her reign but in order to mend the ways of the Sultanate she discarded her veil.

The movement of women in palaces was restricted probably to preserve the integrity and chastity of women. It was with this aim, Sultan Sikandar Lodhi forbade women from visiting tombs. The seclusion of women led to certain disadvantages. Their education was generally hampered and it also created a feeling of inferiority complex in them. This attitude was instrumental in undermining their social status. The attempts were made by Bhakti saints to free woman, which was a symbol of seclusion and isolation.

Sati custom.— Among the Hindu women the custom of self immolation or *sati*, continued to be popular during the sultanate period. By performing *sati*, they not only undiminished their deep love for their husbands but also brought honour to the family. Amir Khusrau expressed his appreciation on the selfless love and devotion which the Hindu wives had for their husbands and which impelled them to end their lives along with husbands. The poet pointed out that this custom was un-Islamic in spirit and thus not proper for Muslim women. This inhuman, horrible act of *sati* was considered to be an obligatory action on the part of women.

It was Sultan Mohammad bin Tughluq who resolved to eradicate this deep rooted custom which undermined the status of women¹. The Sultan could not comprehend the idea that the death of the husband was the signal of the wife's end. Thus, he insisted that widows henceforth should take the consent of the royal authority before performing *sati*. Provision for widow remarriage further shook the very foundation of the *sati* system. Since then the women who performed *sati* had the consent of the state. But the incident of *sati*, no doubt, was checked to a great extent.

The information about the institution of harem during the Sultanate period is very scarce. The sultan's wives, mother, daughter and sisters resided in the harem. Numerous females and eunuchs were employed to carry on the orders of those inmates of the harem. Though there was strict observance of *purdah*, male slaves too had an

1. K.S. Lal, *Twilight of Sultanate period*, p.269; *Punjab under the Sultans*, B.S. Nijjar, p.149.

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access to the harem. The Sultan gave liberal patronage to concubines but they did not enjoy the status of equality of a married wife. It appears that the children born from them are deprived of various privileges and opportunities.

The famous historian (A.L. Shrivastava) gave a version on the position of women during Mughal empire¹. The details are as follows:

Unlike in the ancient Hindu period, our women of the Mughal age did not enjoy a high position, *Purdah* and child marriages became common on account of the influence of Islam and conduct of Muslim rulers and nobles. Except those of the lower classes, Hindu women did not move out of their houses. The Muslim observed *purdah* much more strictly than Hindus. The birth of a daughter was considered inauspicious, while that of a son was a occasion for rejoicing. On account of early marriage, there were many widows in our society and they were not allowed to remarry.

Polygamy was common among Musalmans, who could according to Sunni tradition marry four wives at a time. A Shia could marry more than four.

There was no divorce among the Hindus, while it was permitted both for Muslim men and women. Although Hinduism did not prohibit polygamy; monogamy was the rule with the Hindus on account of habit and economic necessity; rarely did a man of average means and status marry more than one wife. Only Hindu ruling classes indulged in this pastime. In spite of these handicaps, women exercised great influence at home and some of them helped their husbands in their avocations.

Prominent social practices of the Mughal period were *sati*, child marriage, *Kulinism*, and the dowry system. Akbar tried to regulate social usages in such a way as to make the consent of both the bride and bridegroom and the permission of the parents, necessary for the marriage contracts. He also sought to check marriages before puberty by either party, marriages between near relatives, acceptance of high dowries, and polygamy². But the attempts do not seem to have been effective in practice. Social evils increased during eighteenth century.

Women and Bhakti saints

During the Delhi Sultanate a number of saints and reformers flourished. Their impact upon the social and religious life of the period was profound. Their writings and preachings touched the various aspects of life. Women did not escape their attention. The deteriorating condition of women perhaps provoked them to help the women in improving their lot.

1. A.L. Srivastava : *The Mughal Empire* (A.D. 1526-1803)p.521.

2. *Women in Delhi Sultanate*, 1989, by Lokesh Chandra Nand. p.11.

Ramanand, about whose life much is not known, mainly worked for regeneration of society, by bringing women into prominence¹. He threw the doors of spiritual life open for women. He readily accepted women as his disciples.

The life and teachings of Kabir throws light on various rituals and dogmas which encircled the life of women during his age. He tried to break the very chains which kept women in confinement.

Kabir considered motherhood, the most important phase in a woman's life. As a mother, she appears to be most pious and humble creature. It is her love for the children which holds her in great esteem. Like Guru Nank, Kabir also considers the relationship between God and devotee as that of husband and wife. Keeping this relationship in mind, Kabir speaks highly of an ideal wife, who is symbol of love, purity and sacrifice.

Kabir's liberal and catholic attitude did not end here, he threw open the doors of spiritual life to women also. Women disciples were accepted by Kabir ji. Thus, he gave them equal status with that of men. Men, of course, was allowed even to leave his wife in pursuit of spiritual life but under one condition that he was to leave behind a male child to look after the abandoned mother².

In his writings many controversial statements regarding women can easily be found. He says that woman is inseparable to man. The relation between two is close and strong. She is united to man as soul to God. But, on the other hand he treats woman as '*Maya*' or illusion, sinful and treacherous. He conceives her as a part of lust of man.

Though apparently men and women are on equal footing, yet deeper analysis shows that woman is incessantly given a subordinate place to man as is clear when Kabir says that male child should be there to look after the deserted mother. Kabir advocated that woman should be treated mildly. He laid the task of preserving the integrity of females and their protection upon the shoulders of the Kshetrias from oppression. Adultery is regarded by him a sin equivalent to murder. To bring about social cultural unity he advocated inter caste marriage³. So much so that he gave his own daughter Kmaili in marriage to a Brahman youth.

The age in which Guru Nanak Dev lived had set forth harsh and degraded norms for women. They were deprived of most of the religious and social rights and

1. *Medieval Indian Culture* by Dr. A. L. Srivastava, p. 46.
 2. *Women in Delhi Sultanate*, 1989, by Lokesh Chandra Nand, p.11.
 3. *Kabir, the Apostle of Hindu-Muslim Unity* by M.Hedayetullah, p.52.
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it appears that perhaps they ceased to be an independent identity¹. Guru Nanak Dev analysed that corruption in social life was due to the fact that women were not given an independent place in the society. They were not playing important role in the social life and thus their condition appeared to be rather pitiable². Guru Nanak Dev, the founder of Sikh religion regarded women equal to men. He was of the opinion that it was upon women that the growth and welfare of the society rests. According to him, women should not be treated inferior to men. Women give birth to great men and are responsible for prosperity in the society. Thus, he tried to upgrade their social and spiritual status.

At very outset Guru Nanak Dev threw open the doors of eternal bliss and attainment of spiritual knowledge to women also. Married life was generally considered as a hurdle in pursuit of spiritual life³. But Guru Nanak advocated against this belief.

His conception of marriage and married life can be understood a glance on his own life. He regarded that bonds of marriage was pious and the result of the will of God. Thus, Guru Nanak propagated the idea of monogamy. He gave spiritual touch to the institution of marriage and emphasized that married life was not an impediment for those aspiring to lead a life of spiritual pursuits.

There was no place for lust and adultery in Guru Nanak's

scheme of women's emancipation. For him the base of society was love, purity and co-operation. Guru Nanak infused a new vigor in women by providing them spiritual and social right. He placed women on equal platform with men.

Vallabhaacharya had great regards for women and worked incessantly for their moral and spiritual uplift. In his opinion women are more apt for *Bhakti* path than men. They can also attain salvation. So he had many women disciples.

Together with spiritual guidance he taught women general behaviour and principles for their moral enhancement. He advocated purity in sex life. According to him, duties towards family are no way impediments in spiritual life.

Guru Amar Das lived in a age when child marriage, *purdah*, female infanticide, *sati* and many other dogmas were underminig and ruining the status of women⁴. They were looked down in society. Guru Amar Das appeared as a gospel to educate

1. *Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh* by A.C. Banerji, p.85.

2. *History of Sikh Gurus* by Surjit Singh, p.506.

3. *Essays on Sikhism* by Teja Singh, p.305.

4. *Guru Amar Das* by Fauja Singh, p.5.

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his ignorant masses. He liberated women from the clutches of outdated customs and rituals.

First of all, he attacked the very roots of *Sati* system and brought forth new lease of life for those for whom no other

alternative was left than to embrace the flames of their husbands pyre. Provisions for widow remarriage were made which shook the belief of women in *Sati* system.

The Guru Amar Das advocated for inter caste marriage which he did not consider unhealthy and unreligious act. *Purdah* system was too vehemently denounced by Guru Amar Das. For regeneration of society, he started *piri* system which was entrusted with the task of educating women in religious and social norms. Female infanticide was strongly opposed to Guru Amar Das. To him, women are fountains of love, tenderness and sublime nature.

While working for regeneration of society Guru Nanak, Kabir and Guru Amar Das gave equal status to women alongwith men. Chaitanya considered them to be inferior in intelligence and cause of ill-fame (vice). He considered them to be a hindrance on the path of spiritual life. Those who have resolved to lead a spiritual life, according to Chaitanya should keep away from women. He criticised those who take pride in establishing and maintaining relationship with both men and God. He warned people to keep away from such personalities. Women, he said, are responsible for pollution of thoughts, so much so, that even the sight of a wooden statue of woman can distract the mind and be responsible for immorality. Not only this, he advised people to avoid seeing alone even with their own mother, sister or daughter.

The attitude of Sufi saints towards woman was kind and liberal. They considered them helpless halves of the society. According to them a woman was not disqualified to be initiated as *murid* (disciple), though the process of her initiation differed slightly from that of man.

The Sufis were not silent on the issue of prostitution. The presence of prostitutes in society served a purpose of its own but their activities were to be carried on secretly without making much publicity. Complete eradication of prostitutes perhaps would have meant a menace to the pious women who would be exposed to unquenchable human lust. No doubt, it is an offensive profession but it served to divert and satisfy lascivious men.

Another heinous crime was adultery. It was an unpardonable act and those who indulged in it were subjected to harsh public punishment (stoning to death). This was to infuse a sense of fear in the hearts of the people to keep them away from immoral acts. It also combated the growing evil of prostitution.

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Position of women during (1850-1900)

One sure measure to gauge the refinement of society in a given age and clime is the status enjoyed by women therein¹. The bettered their status, the more cultured the society. Judged by the yardstick, society in northern India in the second half of the nineteenth century could not boast of a complementary degree of refinement.

The high status known to have been enjoyed by Hindu women in Vedic age had become practically a myth. It had through the centuries, completely degenerated so that the condition of women was at lowest ebb during the greater part of 19th century.

Ideologically, women were considered absolutely inferior to men, having no significance, no personality. They were, by and large, ignorant and illiterate. Reading and writing was superfluous for them, if not completely pernicious.

Sentiments regarding their capacity, uses and disposition were contemptuous and brutal in the extreme. In no field other than the one concerning women, perhaps, Manu's so called injunctions were more readily observed, reducing women mainly to physical and mechanical entities, owned and regulated by men for the satisfaction of their physical happiness.

Aspects of social inferiority of women

Although Hindu religion had never taught the inferiority of women, there being no parallel in Hinduism to the story of

man's fall as a result of eve's temptation and the stigma attached to womanhood as a whole. It was perceptible as a general trend among other communities also, including the Muslim and Parees. The Muslim women did not even today take part in prayers at the mosque.

The first display of social inferiority of woman was at the birth of a baby girl; presently a striking contrast to that of a boy. The birth of a daughter was generally observed with expressed sorrow. There would generally be few festivities of any description; little announcing of the birth with the sounding of conch, no singing and dancing by women in the family; no visitations from dancing eunuchs, no feast to the Brahmans; and no congratulations from friends and relatives.

The general gloom that ensued the birth of a girl was indeed due, to a great extent, to prospects of having to face enough difficulties in arranging her marriage, finding no proper match and humiliation for having resources for her marriage.

The restrictions on marriage, especially those of hypergamy, practised among certain sections of the people and ruinous expenditure involved in it posed serious problems, the solution of which led to customs of most heinous nature. A daughter to remain unmarried was considered disgraceful and impious.

1. Shiva S. Dua : *Society and Culture in Northern India (1850-1900)*, 1987, p.136.

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Female infanticide.— The practice of female infanticide, however, by no means, was confined to some sections of Hindus. The methods were of different kinds. The signal '*doodh pilao*', feed with milk was sufficient to secure the infant's destruction. In other case, the female infants were

either given opium, or left uncared for until they expired. This custom did not assume an alarming position in Haryana. Though there were some scattered cases.

The vicious practice, however, had prevailed long enough to leave undesired effects. Female infanticide naturally created dearth of wives-girls for marriage among the castes which practised it. They had, therefore, to look around for a bride among others and, often to pay heavy price for her. Perhaps, this encouraged traffic in girls and may be kidnapping of children which was a serious menace also received abetment. Brokers in this trade would procure small girls on payment of paltry sums to poor parents particularly at times dispose them off for more profit. The very castes which destroyed their own females for mere pride of blood and heritage, when in quest of a wife, stooped to purchase a female of whose caste or heritage they had no idea. Nor did they want to make any efforts to enquire about it. In fact, they connived with the brokers pretending the girl came of high caste.

Attitude of sufferance towards girls

There is no gainsaying the fact that in areas where infanticide had been prevalent, the life of a girl was less valued and as a general rule she received far less care and attention than a boy. This could be seen even in daily routine of life.

The attitude of sufferance towards girls was common in all communities, the parental love and warmth notwithstanding. The birth of a female child, even among educated supposed to be changing their attitude, was accepted helplessly as a verdict of a fate.

Basically, the Hindu social system proceeded on the assumption that the daughter did not belong to the family and that at the proper time she would go to her husband's family. Hence the difference in the attitude towards a female child was somewhat peculiar. Distinction was made in her rearing and even in the ceremonies performed for her. Since a daughter was raised with a view to preparing her to go to another family to which she was to belong. Marriage for her was imperative, the main ceremony, the only *sanskara* she could go through and thus the most important event of her life. Her training in this direction commenced early in her childhood which was actually far too short.

The worship of *Tulsi* plant in many parts of the northern India

had some special objective, the blessing of good husband.
Unmarried girls, even small children also

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observed the fast along with the married women of the family on special day for the purpose of giving offerings for the long life of the husband. Thus at an early age girls were made conscious of these things that might be in store for them.

Seclusion of women

As enjoined by the *shastras* and confirmed by custom, a girl of high rank would pass into the marital state as chosen for her parents at an early age, when there could be no question of her voice. Even if marriage proved to be an asylum, the beloved wife and the daughter-in-law lived in complete subordination to the mother-in-law in strict seclusion among her own sex within the precincts of the part of the house meant for women. The seclusion of women, though observed much more strictly among the Muslims, was converted alike both among them as also high caste and well placed Hindus as a mark of social superiority.

These restrictions were confined to the higher and middle classes. In the lower grades of life, women appeared in public without reserve for they could not afford the luxury of remaining in seclusion. They needed to work out of doors for their daily bread.

However, it goes without saying that a life spent in strict seclusion with little education and enlightenment of any description kept most women generally ignorant with an extremely narrow vision and restricted horizon. They were completely absorbed in the routine of domestic life, looking

upon men, the bread winners, on whom they depended for every thing, as their protectors and hence devoted themselves heart and soul to their service and welfare.

Female attachment towards ornaments

The instructive love for jewellery as an aid to the enhancement of feminine charm which is universal even today, had in the absence of other interests become too exaggerated. Women of all ranks would be covered with jewellery made of gold, silver, brass and glass depending upon the resources of the family. Primarily meant to serve the variety of women, as also of the men who provided it, jewellery was the main part of their property, the *Stridhana* over which men normally had no claim.

The full display of jewellery could be witnessed on special occasions such as fetes, fair, festivals, feasts and marriages. Even children, boys and girls would be seen in good dresses. Women at such times would dress up with vengeance, so to say, for this their only diversion from the drudgery of the household routine.

Male child as a source of family security

A married woman would normally be happy and content with her lot especially if she were the mother of a son. Her status in that family would be considerably

enhanced. But if, per chance, she happened to prove barren or bore only daughters, her lot was far enviable. Living under a constant threat of being superseded by a rival wife, she could become at once drudge in the family.

For the Hindu women generally, there was no redress whatever from an ill sorted marriage under any circumstances. The law governing these matters had been so interpolated that even Manu's sanction for divorce under exceptional circumstances was disregarded.

The stigma of widowhood

In a high caste Hindu family the position of a widow, more often than not, was most melancholic. The widowed mother of girls was treated indifferently. From the moment of her husband's death she was taught, regardless of her age to lead a forlorn life of austerity, abandon every comfort, renounce every desire and abstain from all delicacies. All amusements were strictly forbidden to her.

Rise of immoral trafficking

That was a society in which young females were forcibly taken away. Some times they were lured with underhand means. They were commercialised with the view of making money. This created a sense of insecurity among the women of all sections.

Widow remarriage

The miserable condition of the high caste Hindu widows was aroused the pity and stirred the thought of many leaders of the community.

There are many castes of Hindus in which remarriage of widows is not allowed. This is a cruel joke and tyranny to the widows. Supposing, a young girl became widow, she had to face a lot of tribulation and trouble in this superstitious society.

Not doubt, many social reformers took steps in arranging the marriages of widows.

Economic condition of women

Economically, women were entirely dependent on men, the earning member of the family. However, much she might contribute to the resource of the family by way of the domestic work she did, there was no recognition of it. This dependence upon the family members subordinated her position. She was not allowed to go to schools. Thus, no avocation was available to her. If she was to face a miserable condition, she could not brook all this.

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Right to inheritance and property

The right of maintenance as a daughter or married woman was almost uniform in all communities. Law enjoined father to maintain his unmarried daughter. On the death of the father, the daughter was entitled to be maintained of the deceased's estate. According to Hindu Law, a daughter on marriage ceased to be a member of her father's family and became a member of her husband's family, so there after, she was entitled to be maintained by her husband.

While legal systems recognized a widow's right of succession and inheritance in the estate of her deceased husband.

The Muhammandan law, contained explicit provisions regarding the maintenance of a daughter or a wife. A Mohammadan father was under statutory obligation to maintain his daughter and the position of Mohammadan widow was much better than her Hindu sister. The Mohammadan law, though orthodox in many respects, like Hindu law, was more liberal and equitable in its branch of succession and inheritance. A Mahammadan woman was given a definite and certain share and not excluded from inheriting her father's and husband's property even if the

deceased left behind him male lineal descendants.

Concluding the write up, it is assessed that women as a rule suffered from disabilities of all kinds were to a great extent votaries of unjustifiably social tyranny which imposed obligations on them without giving them corresponding rights.

The steps taken by the Government and non-Government agencies to improve the condition of women brought somewhat solace to women till independence.

The efforts for the improving the condition of women in the past are as under:—

During this time, some social reformers appeared on the scene and advocated for the emancipation by removing the prevailing social evils. A laconic account is given below:—

Attitude of Keshab Chandra Sen

Keshab Chandra was a great social and religious leader who carried the message of the Brahma Samaj and of Raja Ram Mohan Roy to several parts of the country.

He was against the *purdah* system for women. He advocated women's education and supported the inter-caste marriages. He was against the child marriage and polygamy.

Swami Dayanand Saraswati also advocated female education. He also denounced such evils as the *purdha*, child marriage and polygamy. He favoured the widow marriage.

Syed Ahmad Khan (1864-75) opposed several evils that crept into the Muslim society. He favoured the education of Muslim women and opposed *purdah* system.

Versalingam was also the follower of Brahm Samaj. His greatest contribution was to the emancipation of women.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy was a great social reformer. He favoured several reforms in the Hindu society. He advocated:

1. Female education;
2. Suppression of *sati*;
3. Prohibition of early marriage;
4. Widow remarriage;
5. Prohibition of polygamy;
6. Suppression of female infanticide.

The greatest achievement of Raja Ram Mohan Ray in the field of social reform was the abolition of *sati* in 1829. He had seen how the wife of his elder brother was forced to commit *sati*. His campaign against *sati* aroused the opposition of the orthodox, Hindu who bitterly attacked him. He realised that the practice of *Sati* was due to extremely low position of Hindu women. He advocated the abolition of polygamy, that is, the practice of a man having more than one wife and wanted women to be educated and given the right to inherit property¹.

He advocated and performed inter-caste marriages and widow remarriages, opposed the custom of *purdah* and condemned caste divisions.

Due to his staunch efforts, the Government implemented the following reforms:—

- (i) *Sati* was abolished in 1829;
- (ii) Regulation against female infanticide was passed in 1795, 1802 and 1804.

Iswar Chander Vidyasagar's greatest contribution was to the cause of widows uplift and girls education. He played a great role in the passing of law which made the marriage of widow legal. He himself started a number of schools for girls. It is difficult to imagine today the strong opposition which the

supporters of girls' education faced from the orthodox people in those days. Some of them, for example, said that 'a man who married an educated girl would not live long'. Vidyasagar did not concern himself much with the religious questions. However, he fought with the help of his

1. *Modern India* (Text Book) p.135.

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vast learning and knowledge of religion, against all those who opposed reforms in the name of religion.

The miserable condition of the high caste Hindu widows had aroused the pity and stirred the thought of many leaders of the community earlier in the century. He raised a voice, at once strong, persuasive and appealing, inspiring and convincing in the crusade he started against enforced widowhood.

He published a paper showing that Hindu *Shastras* did not prohibit widow marriage which created a stir and led to much acrimonious discussion for which Dharma Sabha was greatly responsible. Undeterred, he sponsored a petition seeking legislation for the legalization of remarriage of Hindu widow. The Act of 1856 was the result, though passed after much agitation and despite the opposition of a huge majority of orthodox. It legalised the status of Hindu widow contracting second marriage and their children by such marriages. But the law did not preserve for the widow her civil rights. The widow on marrying a second time forfeited the property from her deceased husband" as if, says the Act, "she had then died".

The Act, however, remained merely a permissive one for decades to come. Custom and caste, with its weapon of

excommunication proved much stronger allies of the orthodox public opinion. For all practical purposes law and legislation appeared to be checkmated. Curiously enough, the greatest obstacle in the matter was the opposition and orthodoxy of women.

The practical lead given by Pt. Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar in marrying his son to a widow was followed by some others in quick succession but after that zeal appears to have languished on account of adverse public opinion and it remained just a beacon light for a long time. It was only with the progress of education and work of reformers, later during the century, that a change of attitude among higher classes was discernible and some widow marriages took place. But the practice never became general.

Status of women after Independence

After Independence, the Indian Parliament sought to remove the legal disabilities of Indian women by passing several Acts. The first instalment of Hindu Code Bill, the Hindu Marriage Act not only prohibited polygamy but granted the right to divorce to women as well.

With regard to inheritance rights, the Hindu Succession Act of 1956 put women on an equal footing with men. Now women are given absolute control over their property no matter how acquired. Another important change was recognition of the right of the daughter and her children to succeed equally with the son and children to all the property of either parent.

In the matter of adoption, too, women had no choice before 1956. But according to the Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1955, a married woman can adopt a child under certain circumstances¹. The legal rights of inheritance for women were too recognised by the Act, under which a wife has a right to maintenance even when she is separated from her husband.

Suppression of Immoral Traffic Act, 1956, the Women and Children's Licensing Act, 1956, the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961 may also be mentioned in this connection.

As already expounded, the ancients never even thought of an unmarried daughter, or of the economically independent wife, or of married widows, problems with which we are now concerned².

"The daughter was legislated out of existence; the wife became part of husband's family and the widow was presumed to have died³." The above referred situation of the society was shaped into a new one after Independence due to the vigorous efforts of Gandhi ji and Nehru ji.

Jawahar Lal Nehru's efforts in raising the position were unique. One such example is given below :—

"Jawahar Lal Nehru did not want Indians to give up their cultural heritage, but he did want them to accept a more scientific, progressive way of life. His support to the Hindu Code Bill, which sought to modernise family relationship and to give women a share of property in a family, was strongly resisted; but he staked his career on the passage of the Bill; and as usual, he won. He fought constantly for the rights of women⁴. He did not believe that they should be imprisoned in their kitchens. All services including foreign service were thrown open to women. They were soon occupying positions of authority in schools and colleges, newspapers advertising agencies, Legislative Assemblies and Municipal Corporations and in both government offices and private firms. In the political field, Jawahar Lal Nehru frequently entrusted women with high offices. When his sister, Vijay Lakshmi Pandit, became President of the United Nations General Assembly in 1955 she became a symbol of liberty and status of Indian women.

Generally, now Indian Constitution also championed the cause of Indian women. It gives equal rights to women. Numerous other rights like that to property, maintenance,

divorce, etc., have been granted to women through various enactments.

1. *Delhi Gazetteer*, 1976, p.172.

2. *Bhiwani District Gazetteer*, 1982, p.69.

3. Panikar, K.M. *Hindu Society at the Cross-Roads*, 1955, p.53.

4. Ruskin Bond : *Man of Destiny (A Biography of Jawahar Lal Nehru)* ,1976, p.114.

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Even abortion has been legalised. Women are now by law required to be treated equally with respect and have been given equal status with men in almost every sphere.

Despite all the efforts to dispel the prejudice against women, the people in rural areas feel more happy on the birth of a boy than a girl. Women are considered primarily useful for home. Women in rural areas take their full load of domestic work and field work. This includes cleaning the house, fetching water from the well and village common tap, cooking meals for the family and even carrying these to the men at work in the fields. Women also help their men in almost all agricultural operations, like hoeing, harvesting and weeding, except ploughing. *Purdah* is still practised, but not so rigidly. Married women cover their faces when moving among the elderly persons in the house or out in the village or in the fields.

The status of women in the urban areas is comparatively much better. Education has received new impetus with the opening of numerous academic and various technical institutions with the spread of education, social barriers against employment are generally collapsing. They are now increasingly replacing men or participating with them in parallel fields such as social work of various fields including

education, child welfare, community work and arts and crafts. There is no fields in Haryana in which women are absent. They are big officers, famous doctors, shining politicians, highly educated and revered mothers and sisters.

A change in their social and dependency conditions is necessary to improve woman's position in the society. Employment is major plank for women's uplift and emancipation. Therefore, in all programmes designed to stimulate agricultural, animal husbandry and forestry activities, village and small scale industries and the rural service sector, the consciousness of the need to increase the share of the benefits going to women has to be heightened and realised in order to uplift the submerged masses of women.

Community Consciousness

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 the economic groups are more exclusive than inclusive. They do not come into such frequent contact with one another.

In the big cities, the situation is somewhat different. They form the *Sabhas* caste wise. In Haryana there are numerous castes which have their separate *Sabhas* and associations. The Brahman *Sabha* also exhibit their activities to improve their educational and economic interests by assembling from time to time. Likewise, the

Aggarwal *Sabhas* which propagate their own economic and political interests. They spend huge money in opening their Vaish schools and colleges. No doubt, these institutions are open to all. Rajput *Sabhas*, Gujjar *Sabhas*, Saini Associations, Chamar *Sabhas*, Jat Associations and *Sabhas* are more active. The Jat Associations also watch their interest by opening Jat schools and Jat colleges.

The *Kaysth Sabha* is a unique in this direction. It is worthwhile to elongate the version to some extent.

The origin of Kaysth community is shrouded in mystery. Though they are scattered in Haryana. They were petty clerks and revenue officials during Mughal period. The caste people began to organise themselves. The main object of this organisation was to work for the moral and material well being of the community concerned. They extremely believe in sorcery and occultism.

On these lines, there is a Kayasth Sabha in Chandigarh. Its members frequently meet and discuss their social and educational problems. They try to solve them jointly.

By organising these sabhas and associations on caste lines does not mean that there is complete disunity among them. There is full and complete social harmony among the different caste and communities. There is unity among diversity. The people irrespective of caste, religion and creed come together, discuss together and eat together when need be. Such is the character of Haryanvis whose past deeds make the history stellar and beacon light for others.
