

## CHAPTER IV

# Culture

## What is Culture ?

On this subject, there are divergent views of the historians and scholars. Regarding the ambit and scope of culture, it is worthwhile to quote the views of Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru before proceeding to the actual contents of the culture.

"What exactly is the 'culture' that people talk so much about? When I was younger in years, I remember reading about German '*Kultur*' and of the attempts of the German people to spread it by conquest and other means. There was a big war to spread this *Kultur* and to resist it. Every country and every individual seems to have its peculiar idea of culture. When there is a talk about cultural relations-although it is very good in the theory-what actually happens is that these peculiar ideas come into conflict and instead of leading to friendship they lead to more estrangement. It is a basic question - what is a culture? And I am certainly not competent to give you a definition of it because I have not found one.

"One can see each nation and each separate civilization developing its own culture that had its roots in generations hundreds and thousands of years ago. One sees these nations being intimately moulded by the impulse that initially starts a civilization going on its long path. That conception is affected by other conceptions and one sees action and interaction between these varying conceptions. There is, I suppose, no culture in the world which is absolutely pristine, pure and unaffected by any other culture. It simply can not be, just as nobody can say that he belongs to one hundred percent, to a particular racial type, because in the course of hundreds and thousands of years unmistakable changes and mixtures have occurred.

"So, culture is bound to get a little mixed up, even though the

basic element of a particular natural culture remains dominant. If this kind of things goes on peacefully, there is no harm in it . But it often leads to conflicts. It some times leads a group to fear that their culture is being overwhelmed by they consider to be an outside or alien influence. Then they draw themselves into a shell which isolates them and prevents their thoughts and ideas going out. That is an unhealthy situation because in any matter and much more so in what might be called a cultural matter stagnation is the worst possible thing.

"Does culture mean some inner growth in man? of course, it must. Does it mean the way he behaves to others? Certainly it must. Does it mean the capacity

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to understand the other person? I suppose so. Does it mean the capacity to make yourself understood by the other person? I suppose so. It means all that. A person who can not understand another's view point is to that extent limited in mind and culture, be nobody perhaps, barring some very extraordinary human beings can presume the fullest knowledge and wisdom. The other party or the other group may also have some inkling of knowledge or wisdom or truth and if we shut our minds to that then we not only deprive ourselves of it but cultivate an attitude of mind which I would say is opposed to that of a cultured man.

" The cultured mind, rooted in itself, should have its doors and windows open. It should have the capacity to understand the other's view point even though it can not always agree with it. The question of agreement or disagreement only arises when you understand a thing. Otherwise it is a blind negation which is not a cultural approach to any question".

# Introduction

Haryana's contribution to the main stream of Indian history and culture has been remarkable. A rendezvous of various people, it was here that they came, got mingled and contributed towards making of Indian culture.

That is why the Vedic land of Haryana has been the cradle of ancient Indian culture and civilization, this is the land from where the knowledge of Indian philosophy and spiritualism flourished all over the country and on this land our saints and sages recited the Vedic hymns. Dr. Hari Ram Gupta, an eminent historian also corroborates this view. He says as "Heaven and earth seldom combined and God rarely agreed to create a better habitation for man than ancient Haryana. In the remotest past, its geographical situation was somewhat different. The climate of this region was cold and enjoyable. And this should account for the earliest habitation of man in this region. After scientific examination of these (some findings), Dr. Guj B Pilgrim concluded that one and half crore years ago, the early man lived in Pinjore region round about Chandigarh. This confirms the Indian traditions which this region as the matrix of creation and civilization. It is the site of northern altar where Brahma performed the pristine sacrifice from which creation arose. But Haryana not only claims the honour to the cradle of man, it also served as the cradle of civilization. Indians saw the dawn of civilization in the regions of Indus Valley and that of Saraswati. Our recorded history begins with Aryans. Several Indian historians particularly Prof. Abinash chander Das and Dr. Radha Kumud Mukerji are of the view that the original home of Aryans was the Haryana region".

To the literary tradition it has always been the land of plenty and the very heaven on earth. Here on its battlefields-Taraori, Karnal and Panipat - decisive actions of Indian history took place and powers of oppression were defied. It was the meeting

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place of various streams of religious thought - Hinduism - Buddhism, Jainism, Sufism and Sikhism<sup>1</sup>. The continuity of rich cultural and spiritual heritage can be captured through the various places of pilgrimage, shrines, mosques and gurdwaras scattered all over the region and also perhaps immortalised in its art tradition. The meeting place of various currents of religious thought, the region quite naturally stimulated growth of literature in Prakrit, Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic, Hindi and Urdu. It was also the scene of various architectural activity in form of magnificent structures scattered all over the region - the Pinjore Garden - an enchanted world in design and effect, the tomb of Shah Kalander of Panipat - an example of calligraphic decorative style, the majestic Ibrahim Khan Sur's mausoleum and dexterously planned Chhatta Rai Mukand Dass at Narnaul, the Barsi gate of Hansi- a fine specimen of fort architecture and last but not the least, the massive red stone and marble tomb of Shaikh Chehali at Thanesar whose imposing elegance and style places it among the most striking and picturesque monuments in north India.

## **Haryana Culture in Palaeolithic and Neolithic Ages**

"Man has been called a 'tool-using animal' and no doubt all progress of culture is due to the increased use of tools and implements in the conquest of nature to make life more happy and comfortable. The material history of man is an account of the progress from a tool-less state to the present state of complicated machinery<sup>2</sup>".

" To begin with, these records consist of the rude tools which the people used in their daily life. Considering the nature and material of these implements, the historians have divided the earliest settlers into two classes, namely; Palaeolithic and Neolithic.

## **The Palaeolithic Age**

In the Palaeolithic age, rude stone implements were used as hammers, or as weapons for hunting wild animals or for the purpose of cutting and boring. Such implements were usually made of stone pieces of hard rock called 'quartzite'. In the early stages of the Palaeolithic Age, pebble tools were made by primitive man. They were prepared from smooth, rounded and rolled pebbles. Pebble tools include crude hard axes, cleavers, scrapers and flakes. In the later Palaeolithic Age, there was improvement in tool making. Hard-axes were made of quartzite, sand stone and chalcedony and they were ovate and pear-shaped.

In the latter Palaeolithic period, the implements were primarily of stone, though bone was used also. The nature of these tools and technique of making them were different. They were extremely small about three centimetres or so in length or pygmy

1. H.A. Phadke : *Haryana : Ancient And Medieval*, 1990, p.231.

2. Dr. Ishwari Prasad : *History of India*, p. 7.

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tools. These tools include rectangular blades crescent blades, scrapers with one side sloping end edged cores, points, etc. Hence they are called microlithes and have been found in practically the whole of India<sup>1</sup>.

The old stone age has two stages of culture, one is the early Palaeolithic culture and other is the Microlithic culture. In fact, in the early Palaeolithic age, men had no fixed homes, though a few might have made huts with trees and leaves. Their life was a quite crude and savage and centre round the use of stone tools and implements. They were used for hunting animals and for the purpose of cutting and boring.

They lived in constant dread of wild animals like tigers, lions and elephants.

They roamed from place to place in search of food. Their life was quite individualistic, devoid of any ties. They had no idea of agriculture. They lived on the flesh of animals and such fruits and vegetables as grew in wild jungles. Their life did not differ much from an animal.

In the mesolithic age or microlithic culture men were still in the hunting age. They did not produce food. They were not familiar with agriculture. They lived either in rock-shelters or on small hillocks and drew their water supply from hillcock girt.

## **The Neolithic Age or New Stone Age**

The capacity for progress is an inherent characteristic of man. This distinguishes him from an animal. Consequently, after lapse of thousand of years, man reached the neolithic age. In this age also men had to depend solely on stone-implements and were ignorant of any metals. But their implements differed much from those of preceding age. Because, firstly, they used stone other than quartzite, and secondly, they were not merely chipped but in most cases grounded, grooved and polished as well. The man of neolithic age fashioned "his tools out of fire grained dark green trap, though there are examples of basalt gneiss, and stone and quartzite.

Neolithic men had settled life. They practised agriculture and grew fruits and corn. The animals, such as the cow, the dog, the ox, and the goat were domesticated. The art of producing fire was known to them. Fire made their life easier. Instead of eating the uncooked flesh of various animals, they now started roasting it. They used well chipped and polished tools. Besides this, bows and arrows were invented and were used for the purpose of hunting and safety from the wild animals.

They learnt the art of pottery. They lived in caves, the walls of which were polished. They used to bury their dead.

1. Dr. B.N. Luniya : *Life and Culture in Ancient India*, 1978, p. 24.

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## **The Copper and Bronze Age**

The civilization and culture of this copper and bronze age in northern India is supposed to be posterior to that of Indus valley. It comes after the Indus Valley civilization. Because the people of Indus Valley used stone tools, their blades, etc. resembled larger microliths and copper tools and weapons of simplest type.

### **Archaeological evidences of Prehistoric and Protohistoric Haryana**

The archaeological explorations in Haryana began more than a century ago with the efforts of Sir Alexander Cunningham, C.rodgers and later followed by D.B. spooner and many others. These attempts though pioneering were mainly exploratory in nature and largely confined to historical period, hence their full import could not be understood for want of scientific and advance knowledge. B.B.Lal was the first to bring to light archaeological findings for the pre-Buddha history of this region with his discovery of Painted Greyware, protohistoric ceramic industry of the first half of the first millennium B.C. at Kurukshetra, Pehowa, Amin, Panipat, etc.He has associated this pottery with the Aryans of Mahabharata period. The discovery of stone age tools from Pinjore and Chandigarh and Ferozepur Jhirka further suggest the hoary antiquity of the human habitation in this region<sup>1</sup>.

Another attempt in the field of excavation was undertaken for the first time by the Department of Ancient Indian History, Culture and Archaeology, Kurukshetra Universty, Kurukshetra. Dr. Udai Vir Singh, in collaboration with Dr. Suraj Bhan, conducted excavations at Daulatpur, Karan-Ka-Kila and Mirzapur<sup>2</sup>. Dr. Suraj Bhan started exploration of the region since 1961 and discovered as many as two hundred archaeological sites. He conducted independent excavations

at Sugh(1964-65). Mitathal(1968) and Siswal(1970). Jointly with jim. G. Shaffer, he conducted an extensive archaeological survey in northern Haryana bringing to light a number of pre-Harappan, Late Harappan, P.G.W. historical and medieval sites. During Banawali excavations, Shri R.S. Bisht brought to light one of the most important town sites of Pre-Harappan and Harappan cultures of the region. During Bhagwanpura excavations Shri J.P. Joshi of Archaeological Survey of India, adduced for the first time evidence of overlap between the late-Harappans and painted grey ware cultures, a discovery of considerable significance for the early cultural and historical study of the region<sup>3</sup>. The above mentioned archaeological discoveries prove beyond doubt that region was

1. H.A. Phadke : *Haryana : Ancient And Medieval*, 1990, p.231.
2. Udai Vir Singh : Recent Archaeological Discoveries in the vicinity of Thanesar, K.U. *Research Journal*, X, 1976, p. 241.
3. J. P. Joshi : 'A Note on the Excavation at Bhagwanpura, *Puratattav* No. 8, 1975-76, New Delhi.

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inhabited from very early times and was the centre of various cultural and political activity. It perhaps holds the key to some of the fundamental question of an early history and archaeology.

The Shiwalik Foothills, the then Ambala district but now in Panchkula district, and the region around the Aravallies (in Gurgaon district) present a clue to the earliest habitations of the region<sup>1</sup>. The primitive people who settled here in the Shiwaliks used stone tools like choppers, cores unworked



flakes, scrapers, cleavers and hand axes. Such tools have been discovered from Dera Karoni, Mansa Devi, Pinjore, Ahian, Dhamla, Kotla, Suketri (now all in Panchkula district) occupying the Shiwaliks Foothills and to the lower Palaeolithic age.

Evidence regarding stone age sites has been recently discovered by the Department of Archaeology, Haryana, at Ferozpur Jhirka (district Gurgaon). The relics recovered not only indicate the antiquity of the area but also mobility of those who lived at a time when there was hardly any surface route or means of transport. The stone age tools were discovered from the terrace of Jhirka - *cho*, a seasonal *Nullah*, which descends to the plains from Aravallies and forms a channel connected to the Shibi *Nadi*. The tools lay embedded in gravel deposits and consist of cleavers and hand axes made of quartzite, possibly leads to man's rock shelters in the area. The evidence probably belong to the Stone Age culture of the Palaeolithic phase whose relics suggest the use of similar technology in the Soan (near Rawalpindi of Pakistan) region.

To have cultural sequence during proto-history phases it is essential to throw some light on excavation at Siswal in respect of the lost courses of the Drisadavati and the Yamuna. The earliest of these proto historic people who are called pre Harappans settled at Banawali in the first half of the 3rd millennium B.C. They built their houses of sun dried or kiln-baked bricks displaying a sense of direction and definite town- planning. They were skilled in producing pottery with wide range of decorative shapes, and knew copper smelting. For their decoration they used ornaments of leads or gold, semi precious stones, terracotta, steatite and bangles of clay, shel, faience and copper.

The second phase in the protohistory of the region is marked by the advent of the Harappans (C.2300-1200 B.C) whose most prominent settlement were discovered at Banawali and Rakhigarhi. At Banawali, the Harappans supplanted the Pre- Harappans about 2300 B.C. They were versatile in building planned and fortified township laid in the classical chessboard pattern. The striking feature of this culture were streets, defence walls and sanitary arrangement. They used painted pottery and

1. Man Mohan Kumar, *Archaeology of Ambala and Kurukshetra Districts, Haryana, 1978, MS(Kurukshetra University)*, pp. 34-36.

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their food included barley, meat and fish. On the very basis ancient pattern, in the modern period, many towns had the defence walls.

Their seals show superb craftsmanship and their weights of stone and ivory precision. Their skill in metallurgy is evident from their copper and gold ornaments, and their terracotta figurines throw light on their folk art. Surplus food production in the field and cattle farms, hunting and finishing helped to bring about a great urban revolution leading to the emergence of complex society of specialised trade men, skilled and unskilled labourers and workers during the Harappan times at Banawali.

The other Harappan site is that of Rakhigarhi in Hansi tahsil. It lies on the dried up old course of the Drisdavati and is perhaps the most extensive of the known Harappans sites in India dominating the fertile Indogangetic Divide, it further gained ascendancy in the expansion of Harappan Culture in north India. On the basis of its location, it is said that it was the eastern most provincial capital of the Harappans.

The dichotomous plan as indicated by the twin mound the mud-brick platform, the typical burnt and mud-brick architecture, the classical ceramic industry and the script indicate that this site was once a mature Harappan town. The archaeological importance of the site, though it still remains unexcavated, is further proved by recent discovery of a steatite seal belonging to the mature Harappan culture. It scans the image of one horned animal, probably the rhinoceros and classical harappan script.

To provide a continuous cultural sequence from

pre-Harappan to late Harappan, the excavation covered by Dr. Suraj Bhan at Mitathal is essentially and independently detailed herewith :-

### **Excavation at Mitathal (Bhiwani District)**

The village of Mithal is located at a distance of 11 kilometres in the north-west of Bhiwani. The ancient mound lies about a kilometre to the west of the village.

The site is divided into two main mounds, the higher lying to the east (called Mitathal-I) and the lower one to the west (called Mitathal-2). The two mounds are separated by a gap of approximately 15 metres. Mitathal-I the oval-shaped low rising mound, measures approximately 150X130 meters and rises to a height of 5 metres. Mitathal-2, is a flat oblong shaped mound, the longer axis being north south. It measures approximately 300X175 metres and is about 3 metres high from general ground level.

The site was for the first time placed on the archaeological map of India in 1913 when coins of Samudra Gupta were discovered from here<sup>1</sup>. In December, 1965

1. *Archaeological Survey of India Reports - 1914-1915.*

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Dr. Suraj Bhan had an opportunity to see a few beads from the site which indicated Harappan affinities. In 1966 Shri Mewa Singh collected two copper harpoons and a ring, the characteristic implements of copper hoards from the slopes of Mitathal<sup>1</sup>.

### **Results of the excavation**

The structural remains were unearthed in both the periods. They have constructed of mud bricks. The use of burnt bricks is, however, attested by the discovery of bricks bats in both periods. The structures of the period are constructed of mud bricks measuring 30 x 20 x 10 cms., laid in a single brickcourse in typical Sothi style noticed at Kalibangan<sup>2</sup>. The use of mud dads is also attested. The occurrence of ash and burnt earth on the floor indicates the use of thatched roof for the structure.

Period 11(a) is marked by a speedy extension of the township perhaps on the pattern of the Harappan cities represented by an aeropolis and town site. The structures of this phase are solid, the walls being some times, as wide as one metre. Some of the walls are also provided with off sets. The bricks measure 40 x 20 x 10 cms., the typical Harappan size met at Kalibangan. The settlement appears to be planned with streets-oriented east-west and north - south and are one metre to 1.70 metre wide. The streets are staggered as noticed at Kalibangan.

## Antiquities

The site has yielded a variety of antiquities such as beads, bangles, terracotta, stone, shell, copper, ivory and obone object.

**Beads.** - The beads found here are made of semi precious stone like carnelian, agate, flint, chalcedony and also of steatite, faience, pone and terracotta. In all, forty beads of semi precious stones, steatite and faience have been found from the site. of these eighteen came from the excavations and twenty two from the surface . The excellent manufacture of the stone beads, careful cutting of steatite discs beads and the variety of decoration on the faience of beads show that these people had attained a high standard in the art of lapidary and possessed a developed aesthetic sense.

The stone beads were manufactured locally is borne out by the discovery of an unfinished agate bead and an unworked agate nodule from the site. Steatite beads are limited in number and are confined to disc and spacer varieties. The most common are the faience beads found in a variety of shapes viz tuballan, barrel, segmented, gadrooned, biconical convex, ghata shaped etc. Some of the tubular type have incised chevron designs while gold borders are indicated in a few barrel types. The absence

1. Suraj Bhan : *The Dawn of Civilization in Haryana : Studies in History and Culture*, 1968, pp. 1-5.
  2. *Indian Archaeology : 1962-63, A Review*, p. 20.
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of long barrel carnelian beads so characteristic of the Harappan cities in Indus valley, perhaps indicates the non-availability of the suitable raw material rather than any lack in the art and skill on the part of the Mitathal people.

In all terracotta beads were recovered from the site of which 8 were from the surface. The important shapes include short truncated biconical circular, biconical spheroid circular, pear shaped and standard barrel. The study of terracotta beads shows an interesting evolution from biconical truncated or barrel and pear shaped in the succeeding phases.

**Bangles.**—Bangles found at the site are made of faience, shell, copper and terracotta. These include 253 bangles of faience, 243 found in the excavations; two shell bangles, four copper bangles, two from the excavations; and 95 terracotta bangles, 88 from the excavations. The main type of bangles include rectangular, flatish, plano-convex, ovaloid, elliptical, round or triangular sections, heart shaped thin bangles and broad flatish bangles with ribbed exterior. The ribbed and multi-ribbed bangles came from the late level of the phase. The bangles are decorated with geo-metric and linear incised design painted commonly on pottery. The most common of the design include horizontal lines, oblique lines, concentric lines, chevrons, group of fluting lines, opposed unibangles, crossed hatched panels, oblique strokes meeting at apex, indented ridge designs and oblique hatched civelets.

The abundance of faience bangles in a exceptionally rich

variety of shapes and designs at Mitathal suggest the popularity of the ornament all over the region in this period. The white glaze on the greenish paste seems to suggest the use of silver for ornament in the later period. It is perhaps for this reason that the silver bangles bearing striking similarities in shape and designs with faience bangles of proto-historic times are popular in Haryana even today.

**Terracotta Objects.**—The terracotta objects recovered from the site include cart-wheel, wheeled toys, marbles, animal figurines, triangular cakes, sling balls, discs etc. Atleast 14 wheeled toys were recovered from the sites. These are represented by the bodies of birds with horns of bull or ram. In addition to these finds, some other interesting terracotta objects such as box like rectangular object, a circular tablet, sling balls, marbles discs and triangular cakes. The circular tablet is pressed from the middle with fingers and decorated with nail pattern, so characteristic of the nature of Harappan culture.

**Stone objects.**—The stone objects recovered from the site include weights, sling balls, a ring stone, a blade and agate core, hammer stone, saddle querns and mullers. The site also yielded a fragmentary ring stone in grey sand stone with typical horn glass section, characteristic of neolithic culture, from the surface. It is partly polished.

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**Copper Objects.**—The site yielded 16 copper or bronze objects. It is interesting that implements of the last phase have their counter parts in the 'Copper Hoards' of Ganga Valley and Rajasthan.

**Ivory or Bone pins.**—Two fragmentary ivory or bone pins were recovered from the site. These polished and crude

appear to have been used as hair pins.

**Pottery.**—The pottery from Mitathal is broadly classified into two traditions, viz. Sothi and Harappan. The sothi tradition of pottery recovered from the site without any break from the lowest levels while the Harappan were appeared slightly later in period (IIa). The main shapes include storage jar with wide mouth, vase with oblique cup rim and bowl with flat grooved top. The main shapes include storage jar with wide mouth, vase with oblique cup rim and bowl with flat and grooved top. The main Harappan types comprise dish on stand, dish, goblet, beaker, perforated jar and lid with a central knob. The main designs include horizontal lines, oblique lines, wavy or zig-zag lines, unique design, cross hatched triangles, cross hatched diamond, arched designs in horizontal lines, honey comb, leaf-lotus, flour bean design, plant of gram, fish and crane.

The excavations at Mitathal has thrown significant light on the Proto-historic archaeology of north India. Firstly, it has revealed a continuous sequence of cultures at a single site from the earliest occupation of the area by Sothi people, driven and followed in the wake by the famous Harappans from lower Saraswati in northern Rajasthan. The site has revealed the survival and co-existence of the Sothi folk with the Harappans throughout the period.

As per the observation of Dr. H.A.Phadke, "providing a continuous cultural sequence from pre-Harappan to the late Harappan, Mitathal can also help in understanding in a better perspective, the lesser known localised chalcolithic cultures of the Gangetic delta<sup>1</sup>. "Further, its nearness to the Aravalli outspurs, arouses curiosity about whether or not the copper fields of the northern Vindhys were tapped by those proto-historic people<sup>2</sup>. Two mounds, one bigger and the other smaller- possibly suggest the citadel and lower city following the classical Harappans town planning like Banawali. Here also Harappans seem to have overcome the pre-Harappans when the latter were still in prime youth. Further, the interaction between the two tradition possibly led to the growth of a hybrid culture which ultimately had its sway after the hey day of the Harappans. "Among the notable finds of the site are *piazza* where road and lanes coming from cardinal direction meet, walls of the house blocks, massive mud bricks platform, drains, and hearth. The excavation has also unearthed various road levels exhibiting evidence of ancient cart tracks".

1. Dr. H.A. Phadke : *Haryana; Ancient and Medieval*, 1990, p.4.
  2. Marg : *Haryana Heritage*, September, 1974, p.7.
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The recent explorations and preliminary excavations at Balu (Jind district) have yielded typical pre-Harappan, Harappans and late Harappans pottery. From the point of view of sequence and chronology the excavation would prove useful in understanding the cultural development of this region. The material cultural richness of the site can very well be gathered from its surface collection - distinctive pottery remains, inlaid Harappan stone beads; triangular and oval cakes and several examples of faience bangles.

The next phase called the late Harappan culture (1700 B.C.-1500 B.C.) representing the decadent phase of Harappan civilization. The remains of oval ovens, charred grains, grinding stones along with copper fish hooks and bone points at Daulatpur suggest that hunting and fishing supplemented the food supply of the people.

Another important explored late Harappan site is about 100 m. north of Augand (district Karnal) popularly known by the name of Jasrath tank. Here several mud brick structures are clearly visible of which the most important is a large mud brick platform perforated by several circular pits. Besides late Harappan pottery, the site is rich in faience bangles. This culture was widely spread over Haryana can very well be proved by discovery of its pottery at various sites in the districts of Ambala, Kurukshetra, Karnal, Jind, Hissar, Bhiwani, Rohtak, Mahendragarh and Gurgaon. The changed ecological conditions might possibly led the Harappans to adopt new tools in imitation of the Neolithic people. This



process of assimilation of the two cultures led to the evolution of a composite culture in the region.

Towards the beginning of 1st millennium B.C. with the advent of Painted Grey ware culture, a new era dawned upon Haryana. Recently, an important PGW site has been located at Bhukari (Ambala district) although some late Harappans and Kushan shreds were also collected from here. Furthermore, the PGW has been recovered from several sites mentioned in the later Vedic literature and associated with *Mahabharata* period. The predominance of the ware in the Saraswati and Drisdavati valley indicates the association of the PGW culture with the later Vedic and Sutra age.

Further, the Bhagwanpura excavation also throws light on the three phases of the structural activity of the painted grey people. The different levels of the sites reveal variety of animal bones, bull, sheep etc. The Bhagwanpura excavation helps in reconstruction of the earliest phases of archaeology and history of this region.

## **The Modern Hinduism and Indus Valley Religion**

Modern Hinduism possesses many of the features of the religion of the Indus Valley. Hinduism of today has derived many of its features from the Indus Valley civilization.

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**Worship of Shiva and Linga.**—The worship of Shiva and *linga* were well-established in India long before the Aryans. On one particular seal discovered at Mohenjodaro, we find a three face figure with tall horned head dress, surmounted by wild animals and sitting in a yoga posture. Shiva with all his

emblems is depicted here. The yogic posture of the deity gives the impression that he is Mahayogin and the figures of animals around him prove that he is the deity of lord of animals (Pashupati). The three faces are the symbols of three eyes of Shiva. The emblem of *Trishul* has its origin in the horned head-dress; all these features are associated with God Shiva.

The conception of demi gods occupying the four corners is also represented on this above referred seal. The elephant and tiger on the right side of the God and the rhinoceros and buffalo on the left side represent the four quarters as in the pillar of Ashok. Some scholars find the origin of the *yoga* in this representation on the seal.

The great epics, the *Ramyaana* and the *Mahabharta* sing the glories of Shiva. He becomes the member of the Holy Trinity (Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh or Shiva). He holds *Trishul* as his weapon and uses the Bull, *Nandi* as his vehicle. In the course of time Shiv worship spread all over India and Haryana is not an exception. There are larger number of Shiva devotees in the State of Haryana.

The discovery of pointed conical clay, shell and stone pieces which look like exactly a Shiva-*Linga* explains the worship of linga in the Indus Valley. At present, Shiva is worshipped in the form *Linga* all over India. The cult of *Linga* worship is borrowed from the Indus Valley Culture. The *Mahabharata* explains the worship of Shiva in form. The Worship of *Linga* in Shiva temples with water, flowers, fruit, incense, offerings, etc. continues even today.

**The Cult of Mother Goddess.**— A large number of figurines of terracotta, faience, etc. portraying a standing female figure, wearing a girdle round her loins, with an elaborate head dress and collar, occasionally with necklace, have been found at Mahenjodaro. They represent the Mother Goddess. The concept of Mother Goddess continues even today. It is known under various names such as *Mata*, *Amba*, *Kali*, *Durga*, etc. Some times, prayers are offered to her with offerings to ward off evil spirits.

A seal amulet, discovered at Mohenjodaro, depicts a row of seven female spirits wearing a sprig on the head, a long pigtail but no horned head dress. This is the early origin of the concept of *Sapta Matrika*, Which later on was elaborated in the Gupta period and early medieval period. The present concept of *Sitla Mata*, the goddess of small pox, has its origin in the belief of *Sapta Matrika*.

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**Worship of Animals, Trees Water & Fire.**—Animal worship formed a part of the religious beliefs of Indus Valley people. A large number of animals like the elephant, rhinoceros, bull, buffalo, tiger, unicorn, etc. were represented on seal and amulets or terracotta, faience and stone figurines. Some of them depicted are semi-human, half animal and half human being. Some of them considered mythical animals. Semi-human, mythical and actual animals were worshipped in the Indus valley. Probably, those animals which were not domesticated were worshipped in some form other.

Animal worship is practised even today. Some animals have been associated with gods and goddesses as their vehicle. For example, Shiva's vehicle is the Nandi or Bull; Durga's vehicle is Tiger. Vishnu rides on Grud; Kartikey on Peacock and Ganesh on Rat. The Sun-God drives on riding in a chariot driven by six horses. Cow is associated with Krishna. *Puranas* narrate many stories, myths and legends associated with cow. Hindu, even today regard cow as a sacred animal.

The existence of tree worship in the Indus Valley is evidenced by the representation of trees and leaves, especially *Pipal* on many seals and sealings. Trees were considered as residing places of deities. This concept of tree worship has been continued since then. Modern Hinduism has great reverence for tree. A large number of trees and plants like *Tulsi* and *Pipal*, banyan (*Vat Veriksha*), *neem*, etc. are worshipped today. Watering *Tulsi* plant is a religious duty in many Hindu families in the state of Haryana. On certain occasions *Tulsi* plant leaves are used to propitiate Gods. Leaves of mango tree and Ashoka tree are used on many religious and social occasions. *Pipal* tree is worshipped by offering water to it. Many Hindus light *diyas* under the *Pipal* trees on many days;

the Hindus do not use its twigs as fuel.

Water played an important part in the daily life of the Indus Valley people and the bathing at the Great Bath was performed on certain ceremonial occasions. Ceremonial ablution with water formed a feature of their religion. Good bath room in dwelling houses at Mohanjodaro indicates that daily bath was an important aspect of the life there. The modern Hinduism has followed the practice of daily bath and ceremonial ablution. Today bathing is considered as a religious ritual. Bathing is essential before performing any religious rite or ceremony. Even dead body is bathed before it is cremated. Bathing in sacred tanks and rivers on certain occasions is considered very sacred by devout Hindus. Auspicious bathing on the occasion of solar eclipse at Braham Sarover at Kurukshetra is considered highly sacred. Like wise many persons take bath in the Yamuna near Sonipat on the occasion of *Somati Amavas*.

Rectangular aisles found at Mohenjodro were sacrificial altars where offerings were made to fire and other gods. Consequently one can surmise that the cult of fire (*Agni*) was personified. *Agni devta* became an important god of the Hindu pantheon.

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*Agni* plays an important part in many religious ceremonies and worship of the Hindus. While performing the Hindu wedding ceremony, the fire God is specially invoked. He becomes a witness of the wedding ceremony of the young people.

**Sun worship.**— The discovery of seals portraying the *Swastiks* and wheel, indicates the worship of the sun symbolically. *Swastika* continues to be a good religious

symbol among the Hindus. The worship of the sun was elaborated by the Aryans in the Vedic period. The *Gayatri Mantra* of the Rigveda is specially devoted to the praise of sun God. It invokes his blessings. He gives light, life and warmth to every one. Sun is personified as God who sits in his chariot driven by seven horses. In course of time, Sun worship evolved as an important cult of the Hindus. Offering of water and flowers to Lord Sun every day morning is considered religious duty.

**Snake worship.**—A lablet showing a seated deity with a hooded cobra over his head indicates the prevalence of snake worship is an old religious practice. Nag Panchemi day is devoted to the worship of snakes the Indus Valley culture. Reverence and worship of snake continues even today. Worship of snake and offerings of milk to it is deeply connected with Hinduism.

**Sacrifice.**—Certain seals discovered at Mohanjodaro depict human/animal sacrifice. We come across the representation of goat on some seals and goat has always been favourite animal for sacrificial pottery and terracotta objects of Mohenjodra Harappa, find their counterpart in the a goat before goddess Kali has continued even today.

**Beliefs in Evil spirit and charms.**—A very large number of amulets with a variety of figures have been discovered at Mohanjodaro. People kept such an amult on their person to ward off the evil effects of demons. Such amulets served the purpose of magic and charms. The Aryans in later Vedic period believed in evil spirits and efficacy of magic and charms. This faith in evil spirits and charms is followed even today by large number of persons. Metal amulets are put either round the neck or tied on the left arm in the Haryana State.

**Motifis and Designs.**—Some of the motifis, designs, shapes and forms were discovered in the valley.

Thus, many present day forms of worship and religious conceptions and beliefs existed in the Indus Valley. Many religious beliefs of Indus Valley Culture have gone into the warp and woof of Hinduism. Though some of them disappered but a large number of them continued to exist in some shapes or forms. There has been a continuity of religious and cultural traditions right from Mohanjodaro period down to the present day.

**Conclusion.**—Some scholars maintain that the Vedic

civilization of Aryans flourished prior to the Indus Valley civilization and therefore, the Aryans were the

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authors of the Indus Valley civilization. John Macohall has advanced many arguments to prove that the Indus Valley Civilization was quite distinct from and earlier than the Vedic Civilization and his view is generally accepted. The majority of the scholars hold the view that the authors of Indus Valley civilization were Dravidian who flourished in India before the Aryans.

The Vedic Culture is narrated in the following account.

## Main tenets of Vedic Age

As Haryana is known as cradle of Indian Civilization and Culture; so it is essential to have a look at the social life and literature during Vedic period. Thereafter some relevant light pertaining to Haryana with reference Vedic period will be thrown in the following pages.

## Social Life

**Family.-** The Aryans developed a healthy social life. The family rather than the individual was regarded as the social and political unit. The members of the family lived in the same house built of wood or reed. The family was patriarchal. After the death of the father, the eldest son took charge of the family. It was a joint family system. Every house had a fire place (*agnishala*), besides a sitting room and apartment for the ladies. The father was the head of the family and was styled *Irihapati* or

*dampati*. He exercised autocratic power over the family members. Though, usually kind and affectionate, yet occasionally he acted cruelly. The head of the family usually the senior or male member, with his wife performed all religious ceremonies and was helped by her in the management of house hold affairs. The Rigveda has many references about the warm hospitality shown to the guests. It is exhibited by the word '*atethi*'.

**Position of Women.**\_ In this age women were held in great respect. They were honoured in the home and respected outside. There is no evidence to show that women had a subordinate position in society. In intellectual and spiritual life they occupied the same position as men. In social and religious gatherings they occupied a prominent position. They had absolute equality with men. They could perform sacrifices independently and were not regarded as impediments in religious pursuits. There was no *parda* system, as is known at present, nor the burning of widows on the funeral pyre (*Sati*) was prevalent there. The education of the girls was not neglected. Many of the educated had become distinguished poetesses. The *Rigveda* mentions the name of learned women; they attained to the rank of *Rishi* and composed hymns. According to some tradition there were as twenty women among the seers of the *Rigveda*. If some of the Vedic poets and philosophers were women, there were women warriors also. Girls were given in marriage when they attained full maturity. The

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normal age for marriage was 17 to 18 years. The girls, some times, had chosen their own husbands with the consent of their parents. Marriage was love as well as for money was not unknown. It was regarded as sacrament. Weddings were celebrated in the house of the bride's parents. The bridegroom

grasped the hand of the bride and led her round the fire. These two acts constituted the essence of the marriage.

Perfect harmony and happiness were prayed for conjugal life. The marriage ritual was picturesque and elaborate. The hymns about the marriage show the sublime outlook of the Vedic Aryans. Ordinarily, a man married one wife, and thus monogamy was the useful rule. Polygamy was, however, practised and was probably confined to kings and great chiefs only. There is no reference to polyandry. Remarriage of widows was permitted but it does not seem to have been the rule. The standard of female morality was pretty high.

Women were not independent persons in the eye of the law. They had to look to their male relations for aid and support. They had honourable position in the house. The term, *dampti*, used in the Rigvedic period, designates the mistress as well as master of the house. The wife was admitted to full religious rites and participated in all the major ceremonies and offerings of the husband. She acted as the queen of the home. There is no evidence in the Rigvedic period that women were isolated in social functions or gatherings. On the other hand, ladies trooped to festal gatherings. The desire for a son was natural in a patriarchal organisation of the Aryan society. The son alone could perform the funeral rites for father and constituted the line. Sonlessness was as much deplored as poverty.

## **Dress, Ornament and Food**

The clothes were of different hues and were made of cotton and deer skin or wool. The garment consisted of three parts—an undergarment called *nivi*, a lower garment called *vasa* or *Paridhana* and an over garment or upper garment termed *adhivasa*. It was like a clock. *Alka* was probably woven, well fitting garment. Often garments were embroidered with gold. Ascetics used to wear deer skins.

People frequently used gold ornaments and floral wreaths especially at the time of festivals. Ear-rings made of gold were worn by men and women alike. *Kurira* was a head ornament worn by females, especially brides. *Nishka* was gold ornament worn on the neck, and *rukma* was an ornament worn on the breast. Both men and women wore turbans. Their hair was long and combed. Women used to fold their long locks in broad plaits.

Wheat and barley formed the staple food of the people. Milk



and its various products such as curd and butter and many kinds of vegetables and fruits were used.

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Meat was also taken, especially at the great feasts, weddings and family gatherings. The flesh of sheep and goat was generally taken.

They obtained drinking water from rivers, springs and artificial wells from which it was raised by a wheel of stone and poured into buckets of wood. They drank distilled liquor, Sura on ordinary occasions. Its use was condemned in later age. In the sacrifices and religious ceremonies, the intoxicating juice of plant called *Soma* was freely drunk. Anger, dice and *Sura*, the Veda declares "are said to cause men to sin".

**Amusements.**—Gambling, dancing, chariot racing and hunting formed the favourite pastimes of the people. But gambling was condemned in the *Rigveda*. Among other amusements mention may be made of boxing and music accompanied by lute, flute and drum. Music both vocal and instrumental was practised. Both men as well as women participated in dancing, women were expert in dancing and singing. They displayed their skill in dancing and music to the accompaniment of lutes and cymbals. The singers of the Rigvedic Age took delight in dwelling on joys of life.

**Morals and Society.**—Morals of the people were very pure. Robbery and other crimes were rare as people lived contented life. Hospitality was enjoined upon all. Great respect and affection was shown to guest. To speak truth was considered a religious duty. Seduction and adultery were regarded as sins.

The Aryans were undoubtedly a pastoral and agricultural people when they entered India. Gradually they settled in society. The Vedic *Kulas* or families were grouped into larger units in the formation of which *varna* (colour) and *Sajaty*a (kinship) played an important part, from the very beginning, in the society, the fair skinned Aryans (invaders) were marked out from their dark-skinned rivals who were termed *Sudra*.

In the Aryan society itself, men of kingly family(*kshatrya*) and the descendants of priests (*Brahmans*) were distinguished from the common freemen, the vis<sup>1</sup>. The four clear divisions of society, the *Brahmans*, the *Kshatrya*, the *Vaisva* and the *Sudras* are mentioned in some of the earlier hymns. But in the hymns of the Rigveda, there is a little trace of the rigid restrictions typical of caste in its mature form<sup>2</sup>. There was hardly any taboo on inter-marriage and change of occupation. Families were not wedded to a particular profession. People could change their occupations according to their needs or talents. The heredity of profession was not yet a recognised principle for less an established fact. There was no restriction on the taking of food cooked by *Sudras*. People lived freely with each other.

1. *An Advanced History of India*, 1967, written by R.C. Majumdar, Datta and Ray Chaudhary, p. 32.

2. B. N. Luniya : *Life and Culture in Ancient India*, 1978, p. 88.

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**Agriculture.**—Reference in the *Rigveda* shows that Agriculture was the mainstay of the Aryans. It was principal occupation of the village folk. They ploughed the fields by means of a pair of oxen bound to the yoke. Bulls and oxen

were regularly used for the purpose of ploughing and driving carts. There were heavy ploughs which required twenty four oxen to draw their cultivated fields were known as *Kahetra*, water was led into them by means of irrigation canals. They knew the use of manure. There are copious hymns devoted to ploughing, in which Vedic Aryans invoked the blessings of their gods for plenty of crops, rains and welfare of their cattle. Barley and wheat were the principal produce of the field but old seeds and cotton were also cultivated. Rearing of cattle and other domestic animals was not less important than agriculture. Aryans had no land problems. Cows were held in great respect. Cattle breeding was an important means of living. The wealth and prosperity of the Aryans depended upon the possession of a large number of cows. Herds of cattle were daily led to the pastures by the *gopa*. Aryans primarily pastoral people, and, therefore, cows and bullocks were their most valued possession.

**Religion.**—The religious conceptions and philosophical thought of early Aryans are revealed in the poetic garb in the *Rigveda*. Like several other aspects of their daily life, the religion of the early Aryans was also plain and simple. They looked with reverence and awe the various powers of nature. They were deeply impressed by mysterious working of the awe-inspiring forces of nature. They realised the dependence of human welfare on the powers of nature and, therefore, invested them with supernatural or divine character they styled them in the gods and worshipped. In fact, they worshipped the glorious aspects, the various power and manifestations of nature such as the Sun, the Moon, the sky, the Dawn, Thunder, wind, Air etc.

Whenever the Aryans perceived lively power, they created deity. At their earliest stage, the gods, therefore, represented the power of nature. Gradually they came to be divorced from which they had originally represented and ultimately came to be worshipped themselves. The gods of the Rigvedic period numbered thirty three. The gods of the Rigvedic period are of the three orders or plains, (i) Celestial sphere, (ii) the aerial sphere (iii) terrestrial sphere. The Dyalus, Varuna, Mitra, Surya, Savitri, Pushan, Vishnu, the Adityas, usha and Aesvins belong to the first order; Indra, Apam-Napat, Rudra, Vayu-vata, Prajanya, Apab and Matrisvan to the second order; and Prithvi, Agni, Soma, Brishpati and rivers belong to the third order. The three spheres or orders have three presiding deities; Sun is the god of first, Vayu is the god of second and Agni is the presiding deity of the third sphere. Then Indra, Agni and Soma were

the three most popular deities, as very large number of hymns are addressed to them and their names come frequently in the *Rigveda*.

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## **Rigvedic Mythology**

Some important aspects of the Rigvedic mythology were as follows :—

1. Most of the objects of devotion are the personifications of the principal phenomena of nature.
2. Totemism in the sense of the actual direct worship of animals or the belief in an animal ancestor did not exist.
3. There was no hierarchy among the gods.
4. The essential nature of Vedic gods was benevolence. They were invoked for receiving favours. Power was only an inevitable attribute of a protecting agency and was the chief feature of the gods. The Aryans were not afraid of the gods. They were the friends of man. And so, besides the worship of the gods by prayer, the Aryans propitiated them with offering of ghee, milk, grain, flesh and *Soma* juice. The process of offerings was simple and plain. Everyone, rich or poor, could perform them according to his means.

There was the predominance of the male element in the mythology. Goddesses like Prithavi, Aditi, Usha and Saraswati occupied very subordinate status. In the Indus Valley mythology, the mother goddess is co-equal with her male partner.

## Philosophy of Rigvedic Age

Hymns of the *Rigveda* reveal certain philosophy of the Aryans. They did not conceive the ideal asceticism or self-mortification as yet. Men did not return into forests and subject themselves penance in order to meditate in religion. The world was not considered as an evil, a place of misery by the *Rigvedic Rishis*. There was no eagerness to get rid of the body and to escape from the shackles of this world. But this does not mean that they wanted to enjoy life to the full.

The *Rigvedic Rishis* conceived this world as a fit place for virtuous men to lead a good life under the protection of benevolent gods. This world formed the true stepping stone to a higher life in other regions. There was no tinge of pessimism in the *Regvedic* religion or philosophy. They did not believe that life is a misery which can be ended by eradicating desire or *vasna*. There was little mention of evil and the fate of evil men. There was no conflict between man's future and his present, no conflict between *Dharma*, *Arth* and *Kama*. Man's life was conceived of as harmonious unit. The theory of reincarnation or rebirth was not completely formed. The *Rigvedic* hymns had no consistent theory regarding the life after death. At death the body was

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carried to the funeral pyre. It was accompanied by the wife and relatives of the dead. The pyre was then kindled with fire from the family hearth and the hymn for the dead, " Go forth, go forth, upon the path of old" (*Rigveda*,X,14) was chanted. When the flames completely consumed the body, the bones were collected, washed and buried in urn<sup>1</sup>.

The Rigvedic ideas of life after death were very vague. The

soul departed to the (Land of fathers) *Pitralok* where it was received by *Yama*, the king of dead and rewarded and punished according to his deeds (*Rigveda*, IX Mandal).

In the course of time the views of the Aryans about nature and divinity changed. In the later hymns of the *Rigveda* we find unmistakable indications of the tendency towards monotheism and even monism. The Rigvedic Aryan worshippers appreciated the glorious phenomena of nature and they soon rose from their phenomena to grasp the mysteries of creation and creator. They soon realised the noble truth that God exists and that He is the creator of all creations in universe. The hymns of *Rigveda*, Mundal give us a glimpse of the sublime conception of the supreme deity. These hymns foreshadow the idea of universal unity and express the belief that God is one although he bears many names." The gods are one and same, only the sages describe them differently". Again, it is stated in *Rigveda* that, "Do not praise or worship any deity other than God, for that way leads to destruction : ' thus the idea of single supreme power governing and controlling the universe seems finally to have emerged and to have superseded the earlier conception of a number of deities co-ordinating in their work of controlling the cosmic phenomena.

## Vedic Literature

The only source of information about the Aryans in India is the vast literature known as the *Vedas*. The word 'veda' has the restricted meaning of sacred book. The *Vedas* are four in number - *Rgveda*, *Samveda*, *Yajurveda* and *Atharveda*. The *Rigveda* is the oldest *Veda*. It may be said to be of 1000 B.C., but its contents may be of much more ancient date. The *Samveda* hardly counts as an independent text because many of its hymns are borrowed from the *Rigveda*. The *Yajurveda*, if the portion of the black *Yajurveda* is left out, is a collection of short magic spell used by certain class of priests at the sacrifices. The *Atharaveda* is important and interesting as it describes beliefs and superstitions of humble folk.

The parts which constitute the Vedas are (1) The *Samhitas* of the four *Vedas*; (2) The *Brahmanas* attached to each of the *Samhitas*; (3) The *Aranyakas*; and (4) The *Upanishads*, mostly attached to *Brahmans*. The *Samhitas* are the books of hymns or

1. H.G. Rawlinson : *India, A short Cultural History*, p. 32.

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psalms, which are sung to the praise of various gods. But *Atharveda Samhitas* deal with the magic spells and witchcraft. The *Brahmans* are the treatises relating to prayers and sacrificial ceremonies. They seek to explain the hymns of the *Samhitas* in an orthodox and dogmatic way. Rituals, sacrifices, their mystic meanings and sacred significance is dealt in the *Brahmanas* elaborately. The *Aranyakas* deal with philosophical doctrines. They laid great emphasis on moral values in preference to sacrificial rituals. The *upanishads* signifies secret or esoteric doctrine. They deal with such as spiritual topics, universal soul, the origin of the world and mysteries of nature.

The *Upanishads* explain various theories of the creation of this universe. They explain the doctrine of the transmigration of souls and ethical doctrines of *Karma*. The *Upanishads* have influenced Indian philosophy and thought considerably.

## The Cultural resemblance with Vedic thoughts

The above expounded philosophy and thought of Vedic period are prevailing even today to a great extent. It is not a matter of single aspect, but Vedic influence is perceived in Haryana, whether it is social life, religious life, agriculture as main occupation and other branches of life-every where there is a great resemblance with the Vedic culture with that of Haryana.

Some scholars are of the view that the ancient Aryans first settled in the territory of Haryana, particularly on the banks of Saraswati and Drisavati rivers. The *Vedas* were composed

on the banks of these rivers by the *Acharyas* and *Rishis*.

Dr. H.A. Phadke's account corroborates the earlier mention as follows.

"Watered by divine rivers- the Saraswati, the Drasdvati and the Yamuna, the region gained considerable religious importance. On the holy banks of these rivers were kindled sacred fires, and Vedic hymns composed and recited. In ancient times, the Saraswati perhaps occupied the same position and importance as was enjoyed by the river Nile in the life of an Egyptian. Like the Egyptian priests, the Vedic seers also composed beautiful hymns in praise of the Sarasvati. She is described as the river *par excellence*, the best of mothers' the best of goddesses and an ideal place for Vedic sacrifices. The Sarasvati was the scene of the activities of the famous Vedic tribes, the Bhartas, the Purus and the Kurus<sup>1</sup>."

There is no hesitation and doubt in declaring that Haryana has been the home of Aryans. From this place they spread into other parts of the country. The records in the gazetteers are greatest and authentic testimony of this fact : "This region was the

1. H. A. Phadke : *Haryana : Ancient and Medieval*, 1990, p. 10.

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home of the Bharatas, a famous *Rigveda* is tribe of the Aryans. In the later Vedic period, it appears that Bharatas and the Purus were merged with Kurus who commanded the strategic plan between the Sarasvati and the Yamuna near the north-eastern edge of the desert of Rajputana, giving it their name Kurukshetra or the land of Kurus.<sup>1"</sup>



The second instance is as," with the advent of the Aryans in the later half of the second millennium B.C. began a new era in the history of this region. The Aryans settled in the land of their sacred rivers, the Sarasvati, the Drishdavati and the Yamuna. Their prominent tribes, the Bharatas, Purus and Kurus fought battles here, performed *yajnas* and recited and composed Vedic hymns here<sup>2</sup>."

**Aryan Culture in later Vedic Age .—** With the growth of extensive kingdoms and large cities, the political and cultural sway of Aryans further extended towards the east and south. By the end of Vedic period the Aryans had thoroughly conquered and subdued the fertile plains of northern India watered by the Jamuna and upper Ganga. Simultaneously, with the Aryan expansion and colonization, the west Punjab gradually got out of Aryan ken and the center of Aryan world shifted from Punjab to the land between the Sarasvati and the Ganga.

Many of the famous tribes of the Rigvedic Age passed into oblivion and new ones taken their place. Thus, the Bharatas, the Purus and the Tritsus were superseded by the Kurus, the Panchals and the Kasis. Though their names do not occur in the Rigvedic hymns, but in the later Vedic age they played an important role in the political life of the country. It seems that the Purus and Bharatas who were enemies at the time of the Ten kings were now amalgamated under new name Kurus. They occupied Kurukshetra as well as the districts of Delhi And Meerut. Their capital was Asandevat (present Assandh of Karnal district). They were considered the most cultured of the Aryans. They were the best masters and could perform sacrifices without fault. The later Vedic texts describe powerful Kuru Kings like Balhika Pratipiya, Parikshit and Janamejaya.

**Cultural Traits .—** Though little can be traced in the mode of house building and the style of dress, in dietary the eating of meat was disfavoured. Variety of eatables had increased. No forms of social entertainment had come into existence. Music both vocal and instruments, dancing, chariot-racing, horse-racing and gambling were the amusements of the Age.

1. Tripathi, R.S., *History of Ancient India*, 1960, p. 42; Dr. Buddha Prakash, *Political and Social Movements in Ancient Punjab*, 1964, p. 80.

2. According to Hopkins and Keith, the bulk of hymns composed in the land around Sarasvati, South of modern Ambala (R. C. Majumdar, *History and Culture of Indian*

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The position of women had deteriorated. She could not inherit property and her earning belonged either to the husband or the father. The birth of a daughter was regarded as a source of misery and a son was an object of desire. Women were not allowed to go to tribal assembly (*Sabha*). They had no share in politics. Polygamy was practised and married women of upper classes had often to suffer the presence of rival wives. The rules of marriage underwent a change toward greater rigidity. Marriage was banned within the circle of agnates and cognates. There were instances of child marriage and *Sati*.

It is a social concept which prescribes suitable activities for different stage of life. According to it life is divided into four periods, namely, *Brahmacharya* (the period of celibate education); *Grihastha* (the period of domestic life); *Vanaprastha* (the life of retirement into the solitude of forest for meditation and introspection); and the *Sannyas* (the life of renunciation and ascetic search for divine life). The later Vedic age was gradually organising this ideal for every householder to follow.

The caste system developed during this period in many directions. Hereditary occupations, workers' guilds, *gotra*-traditions, the race feeling between the *Arya varna* (Vedic Aryans) and *Dasu varna* (aborigines) and mixed marriages were the factors in caste elaboration in this age. The functions and duties, the privileges and status of four castes were determined minutely in the religious and social spheres.

In the early Vedic time there seems to have been a three-fold division of the society into Brahman (priest), Rajanya

(nobility or aristocratic section of the population) and the *Vis* (common folk). This division was more or less occupational and had no similarity with caste system as it developed later on. In the Vedic Age, there is no trace of hereditary occupation and endogamy and the people were undivided one. But in the later Vedic Age this system was more developed. The doctrine of four castes-the Brahman, whose duty was to learn and guide, the *Kshatriya*, the warrior, the protector and the ruler, the *Vaisya*, engaged in economic pursuits, and the *Sudra* the common man, the tiller and the cultivator came into being. The caste system became very rigid. From the Vedic language there were two independent developments, namely, Sanskrit whose form was fixed by Panini and the Prakrit which went to changing with the needs of the times.

The profession of the physician was well-established. A large number of diseases are mentioned in the *Attarvaveda*. They were treated with herbs. The frequent killing of animals during the time of sacrifice must have, undoubtedly, acquainted the people with rudiments of anatomy. But medicines seems to have been still primitive and overshadowed by the concepts of magic and spells.

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**Religion .**—The old gods, Varuna, Indra, Agni, Surya, etc. were worshipped by the people with less zeal. The characters of these Rig-vedic gods had now become colourless. Their natural basis was utterly forgotten. They were now evoked as demon-destroyers. New gods like Shiva, Rudra, Vishnu had arisen. Thus, the lustre of the older Rigvedic period was gradually growing dim. Gandharvas, Apsaras, Nagas, etc. were raised to a semi divine rank. Snake worship made their appearance now. Monotheism was being advocated.

Another change that took place during this period was the elaboration of the rites and ceremonies concerning the old Vedic religion. In the Rigvedic days the ways of worship and *yajnas* were a simple affair which every house holder himself could do. In the later age, however, sacrifice became the all important thing in worship. The sacrifice dominated everything. Gods were subordinated to them. People believed that gods must submit to the sacrifice if properly performed. Hymns were considered as charms or spells to be used in sacrifices. Popular superstitious beliefs in spirits, imps, spells, charms, incantations and witchcraft found a place in the sacred canon.

There were daily and periodical sacrifices. Infact, the life of an Aryan was a series of sacrifices performed under the supervision of the Brahman priests. This firmly established the supremacy of Brahmans.

"Man is born with certain '*rinās*' or debts which he must discharge in his life. He has debt to pay to his gods, to the *rishis*, to men and to the lower creatures. And he discharges these debts, if he worships the gods, studies the Vedas, performs funeral ceremonies, is hospitable to guests and offers oblations to the *bhūtas*".

All this indicates high moral sense and noble sentiments. Selflessness was to characterise all actions. Everything was to be sacrificed to attain freedom of spirit. Prayers and good works constituted godliness, which was supposed to be the first requisite of a good life. Inner purity was inserted on as much external purity. Truth, performance of *dharm* (duty), respect for parents, love of fellow beings and abstinence from theft, adultery and murder were the *Sine Qua non* of a good life.

A verse in the *Atharvaveda* suggests the idea of Brahma as the first cause of all existence and oneness of man with the world soul. It is the universal soul or the Absolute" that dwelleth in every thing that guideth all beings within. After the death of person his soul passes into the another body and again into another and so on before it can be freed from all its imperfections and mingle in the universal soul. This is the doctrine of transmigration of souls. Allied with this was another doctrine of *karma*. " It lays down that no act or deed is lost and all that actions, good or bad. bear their proper fruits and help that their authors up or down the scale of transmigration. The same theory is enunciated in *Bhagwat Gita*. The soul have to be born again and again and reap the

fruits of the actions (*Karmas*) of their previous times.

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### Culture

Closely connected with the doctrine of *Karma* and transmigration of soul is the doctrine of *Moksha*. It is the state of birthlessness and deathlessness, a point of time in the journey of the soul when it is liberated from the cycle of births and deaths and becomes merged into the infinite universal soul of which it is but a small particle. A man was required to keep before his mind this deal of *Moksha*, and he was expected to strive for it throughout his life.

The idea of reward and punishment after death, in exact correspondence to the good and the bad deeds of a person in this life had gained a firm hold in this period. The attainment of immortality and the company gods in the heaven was deeply cherished aim and incentive to the practice of piety and good works in this life. The theory that penance and attainment could purify and absolve the soul from guilt and exhaust the period suffering, was also believed in and followed.

Another current of the religious thought before the final close of the age was the ascetic ideal life. *Tapa* (austerity) and *Brahmacharya* were emphasised much and asceticism was favoured considerably.

The Aryan culture prevalent during the later Vedic age created considerable impact on the life of the people of Haryana.

## Impact of Vedic Age in Haryana

Painted Grey Ware is the pottery which has been discovered

at most of the sites mentioned in the *Mahabharata*-Hastinapura. Indraprastha, Kurukshetra, Prithudaka (Pehowa), *Tilaprastha* (Tilapat), *Paniprastha* (Panipat), *Sonaprastha* (Sonipat) etc. have therefore, been tentatively associated with the Aryans<sup>1</sup>.

The *Rigveda*, the earliest extant literary work of the Aryans, records the advent of the Aryans in the land of Seven Rivers (*Saptasindhu*)<sup>2</sup> which roughly covers the region between the Indus and the Yamuna. Bharatas, the most prominent of all the Rigvedic tribes, which later gave this country the name of Bharata, settled in the region between the Sarasvati and the Yamuna rivers<sup>3</sup>. Bharata princes are said to have sacrificed on the banks of the rivers Sarasvati, Apaya and Drishadvati<sup>4</sup>. Manusha and Ilaspada, described in this context in the *Rigveda*, are identified with modern Manas, about 5 km north of Kaithal<sup>5</sup>, and Shergarh, nearly 3 Km. south-west of

1. B. B. Lal, "*Excavation at Hastinapura and other explorations in the Upper Ganga and Sutlej Basins*, 1950-52", *Ancient India*. Nos. 10 & 11 (1954-55), pp. 147 ff.

2. *Rigveda* II, 1, 2, & 3 : *Yo hatvahirinat - Saptasindhun -yoga udajat upadha balasya*.

3. Cf. R. Pischel, *Vedische Studies*, Vol. II, 1892, p. 218; C. V. Vaidya, *History of Medieval India*, Vol. II, Poona, 1924, pp. 271 ff.

4. *Rigveda* III, 23, 4:

*Nitva dadhe vara prithivya Ilaspade sudinative ahnam |  
Drishadvatyam Manusha Apayayam Sarasvatyam revadagne  
didihi ||*

5. M. L. Bhargava : *The Geography of Rigvedic India*, Lucknow, 1964, pp. 30-33.

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Kaithal which itself is associated with the Vedic text *Kapishthala-Katha Samhita*<sup>1</sup>. *Rigveda* mentions the Battle of Ten Kings (*desa rajna yuddha*) on the Purushni (modern Ravi) in which the Bharta king Sudas came out victorious defeating the confederation of ten tribes comprising Anu, Druhyu, Yadu, Turvasa, Puru, Alina, Paktha, Bhatana, Siva and Vishanin<sup>2</sup>. Sudas also defeated the Ajas, the Sigrus and the Yakshus under their leader Bheda on the bank of the river Yamuna<sup>3</sup>. He won many other battles also. The Bharatas excelled not only in military warfare but in morality and learning as well<sup>4</sup>. The Purus, though defeated by Sudas, were an influential tribe and descendants; Durgaha, Girikshit, Purukutsa, Trasadasyu, Hiranyin, Triksho, Tryyaruna, Kurusravana, etc.<sup>5</sup> The Purus and the Bharatas gradually merged in the great complex of people which came to be known as the Kurus.<sup>6</sup> Bharatas have been mentioned as powerful tribe of the past in the *Brahmanas* but their name is missing in the geographical list of the later literature.<sup>7</sup> The *Vajasaneyi Samhita* refers to the Kuru-Panchalas probably as a variation of the Bharatas.<sup>8</sup> In the *Brahmanas*, the Kurus are invariably mentioned in conjunction with the Panchalas.<sup>9</sup> H.C. Ray Chaudhari has suggested the identification of the Panchalas with the five tribes of Krivi, Turvasa, Kesin, Srinjaya and Somaka mentioned in the *Rigveda*.<sup>10</sup> The later Vedic texts comprising the *Yajurveda*, *Atharveda*, the *Brahmanas* and the *Upanishads* were composed in the land of the Kurus and Panchalas<sup>11</sup> which coincides with the present Haryana, neighbouring Punjab and Western Uttar Pradesh. It is also worthy of note that whole of this region abounds in Painted Grey Ware settlements. Asandivat (modern Asandh)<sup>12</sup> mentioned in the *Aitareya*<sup>13</sup> and *Satapatha Brahmanas*<sup>14</sup>; Turghna of the

1. Ed. Raghuviere, Lahore, 1932, *Introduction*, pp. 1-2.

2. *Rigveda* VII. 18.

3. *Ibid.*

4. *Satapatha Brahmana* XIII. 4, 5, 14. For English Translation by J. Eggeling, see *Sacred Books of the East* p. 398.

5. Keith, A.B. and A.A. Maedonell, *Vedic Index of Names and Subjects*, Oxford, 1912, Vol. I, p. 327, *The Vedic Age* (Ed. R.C. Majumdar), Bombay, 1965, p.246.

6. Of.Mbh. XII. 349, 44; *Kurva nama Bharatah*.
  7. *Vedic Index*, I, p. 167.
  8. *Vedic Index*, I, p. 168; II, p. 96; *Vajasaneye Samhita* XI, 3, 3, 6, 3.
  9. *Vedic Index*, I, p. 165.
  10. H. C. Raychaudhuri, *Political History of Ancient India*, Calcutta, 1953, p. 71.
  11. *Vedic Index*, I, pp. 165-169.
  12. Devendra Hana, "*Identification of Asandivat*", *Vishveshvaranand Indilogical Journal*, Vol. III, Part II (Sept. 1965), pp. 278-81.
  13. VIII. 21.
  14. XIII. 5, 4, 2.
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*Taittiriya Aranyaka*<sup>1</sup>, probably *Srughna* of that later literature and identified with modern Sugh near Jagadhari<sup>2</sup>, besides Kurukshetra , *Ilaspada* , *Manusha* and *Kapishthala* mentioned above, have all yielded Painted Grey Ware. It has aptly been observed by prof. R.S. Sharma that " The stage of the material equipment of the PGW phase called so because of the distinctive character of this pottery is comparable on many counts to the material culture of later Vedic texts. This shows the begining of territorial state formation, advent of social stratification and the emergence of administrative machinery, in the later Vedic texts; all these presuppose a full-fledged agrarian society, not typical of thr R.V. phase. He



continues to say that although a good portion of the geographical day the PGW, the fact that the R.V. people were mostly pastoralists, used neither iron nor glass, and cultivated only barley, rules out the possibility of their being equated with the users of the PGW culture. On the other hand, it may be good case for using the PGW archaeology for the study of the later Vedic Culture"<sup>3</sup>.

The material culture of the PGW people is mostly known from excavations at Hastinapura<sup>4</sup>. The moral, religious and spiritual values which developed in the holy land of Haryana are found from literary sources. It was here in Haryana that the foundations of Aryan religion and culture were laid. The people worshipped a host of gods, performed sacrifices, recited *mantras* with pure speech (*Pathiya Svati*) and engrossed themselves in philosophical speculations. Lotus lakes of Kurukshetra and the surrounding region have been mentioned in the *Satapatha*<sup>5</sup>, *Mahabharata*<sup>6</sup>, *Vishnu Purana*<sup>7</sup> and *Harshacharita*<sup>8</sup>. The religious merit and sanctity of Kurukshetra have been sung in various texts; many of the *Shastras*, *Smritis* and *Puranas* were composed here. Haryana region occupies a prestigious place in *Mahabharata* period. An account pertaining to Haryana is given in the following para :—

"The *Mahabharata* knows Haryana as a land of plentiful grains (*bahudhanyaka*) and immense riches (*bahudhana*). The account of the expediting Nakula relates that he advanced on Rohtak (*Rohitaka*), which was full of horses, cattle, wealth and crops and blessed by God Karttikaya, the generalissimo of the army of the

1. V. 1, i.

2. Suraj Bhan, "*Report of Excavation at Sugh* (1964 and 1965), *Journal of Haryana Studies*, IX (1977), p. 5 ff.

3. R. S. Sharma, "*The Later Vedic Phase and the Painted Grey Ware Culture*", *Puratattva*, No. 8 (1975-76), p. 67.

4. Lal, *op. cit.*, pp. 1-51.

5. XI, 5, 1, 4.

6. *Mbh.*, Adi Parva, 207, 47-48.

7. IV. 6

8. Ed. by K. S. Parab, Bombay, 1912, III, p. 94.

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gods, and had a severe contest with the *Matta mayuras*. From there he marched to the other end of the region comprising deserts and reached the city of *Sirsaka (Sarisaka)*".

As per *Vaman Purana*, King Kuru ploughed the field of Kurukshetra with a ploughshare of gold drawn by Nandi of Siva and reclaimed an area of seven *Kosa*. Side by side, he laid down the code of conduct for its people based on the practice of the eight virtues of truthfulness (*Satya*), austerity (*tapas*), forgiveness (*Ksama*), compassion (*Daya*), purity (*Saucha*), charity (*Dan*), composure (*Yoga*) and continence (*brahmacharya*), combining manual labour with moral advance, he remarked that by cultivating the land he was developing the eight virtues".

As already explained that the sacred books of Hindus are the *Ramyana*, the *Mahabhart*a and the *Gita*. People recite the *mantras* and *shalokes* from the *Ramyana* at some special occasions. *Akhand Path* too is performed at the celebrating birth days.

## Epics

**Ramyana** .— *Ramyana* is a most important religious book of the Hindus. It is essentially a poetic creation, influenced the thought and poetry of later ages in course of which new matter came to be added to the original composition. It is difficult to fix any specified period for the entire poem. Winternitz "believes that if the *Mahabharata* attained its present form in the 4th century, A.D., the *Ramyana* must have received its final shape atleast a century or two earlier<sup>1</sup>".

The nucleus of the *Ramyaana* is the story of Ram, the eldest son of Dasaratha, a prince of the Ikshvaku family of Ayodha, in the Faizabad district of Uttar Pradesh. The prince married Sita, the daughter of Janak, king of Videha in north Bihar. Owing to a palace intrigue, the Ikshvaku prince had to leave his home and go into exile for a period of fourteen years. He repaired to Dandaka forest in the Deccan with his wife and faithful half brother, Lakshmana. He dwelt for some time on the banks of Godavari in Panchvati, which is usually identified with Nasik. Here he came into conflict with the *Rakshasas* or cannibal chieftains who were a source of disturbance to the peaceful hermits of the locality. Among the hostile chieftains were some persons closely related to Ravana, the mighty king of Lanka (Ceylon). That potentate avenged his injured relations by carrying off Sita, wife of Ram, to his island home. In their distress, the Ikshvaku princes allied themselves with Sugriv, Hanuman and other monkey chiefs

1. *The Gazetteer of India, Volume-II, History And Culture*, Ministry of Education And Social Welfare, Govt. of India, p. 179, New Delhi.

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## Culture

of Kishkindhya in the Ballary district of South India and crossed over to Lanka. They killed the *Rakshasa* king with most of his clan and rescued princess Sita.

As the period of Ram's exile was now over, he returned with his wife and brother to Ayudhya where he was warmly received by his half brother Bharat in whose favour he had been made to relinquish his rights. Meanwhile people came to question the propriety of taking back a princess who had long been kept confined by a *Rakshasa* king. To silence the unreasonable clamour of the multitude, Ram had to banish his

faithful consort, the ideal of Indian womanhood. The duty of Raja , according to Hindu notions was always to please his subjects who were his children<sup>1</sup>. The virtuous royal lady found a shelter in the hermitage of Valmiki, where she gave birth to the twin, Kusa and Isha who subsequently returned to their ancestral home and succeeded to their heritage.

The *Ramayana*, which is the *adikavya* or the first ornate poem according to indigenous estimation, is ascribed by tradition to Valmiki, the *adikavi* or the first author of ornate poetry.

The *Ramayana*, in its present form, is made up of seven books and some 24,000 verses (*slokas*). Book I, the Balakanda deals with early history of lord Ram but it is complicated by the insertion of numerous Brahmanical legend and myths. The real story of Rama epic begins with Book II and ends with Book VI. Book VII again contains numerous myths and legends dealing with the origin of the *Rakshasas* and fights of their leader Ravana, with Indra, the early life of Hanuman, the legend of Yayate and Nuhusha, and the Sudra ascetic Sambuka. As regards the Ram story, this book narrates that part which relates to Ram deserting Sita in the forest, her giving birth to Kusa and Isha and their singing Ram epic in the court of Ram.

"As in the case of the *Mahabharata*, the *Ramayana* has not come down to us in its original form<sup>2</sup>". The whole book VII and most of Book I are undoubtedly later additions to the epic, for these two Books contain a number of topics which have no or very slight connection with the main story. It is again only here, with a few interpolated exceptions in Books II-VI, that Ram appears as an incarnation of Vishnu whereas elsewhere he is only a mortal hero, and in the genuine sections, the Vedic God Indra, and not Vishnu, is given the highest place in mythology.

1. Majumdar, R. C; Ray Chaudhri, H.C. Datta, Kalikinkar: *An Advanced History of India*, 1967, New York, p. 87.

2. Majumdar, R. C.; Pusalker, A. D., *The Age of Imperial Unity*, *Bharatiya Vidhya Bhawan Series*, Bombay (Mumbai), 1960, p. 253.

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There is a great controversy about the chronological order of the *Ramyana* and *Mahabharata*. It is worth while to quote some references to settle needless controversy. As per the mention of R.C. Majumdar, historian of international level, in *the Age of Imperial Unity*.

"From numerous references to the *Ramyana* and its author Valmiki in the *Mahabharata*, from the abridged version in the same epic of the Ram story as we find it in the present *Ramyana* and also from a mention in the *Harivamsa* of dramatic representation of the *Ramyana*, it may be concluded that the *Ramyana* in its present form must have existed atleast two hundred years before the fourth century A.D., the latest date by which the *Mahabharata* must have attained its final form. But the nucleus of the *Mahabharata* may have existed prior to the nucleus of the *Ramyana*. The celebrated grammarian Panini makes allusions to Vasudeva, Arjuna and Yudhishtire but he is silent about Ram and so is his successor Patanjali as well as the inscriptions prior to the begining of the Christian era... It is,, therefore, permissible to conclude that the original *Ramyana*, in which Ram was a human being, was composed by Valmiki in the third of more probably in the fourth century B.C. and that with addition of book I and VII and some passages in the other books, it assumed its present form at the end of the second century A.D. when Ram was already deified as an incarnation of Vishnu."

## **Ethical and Cultural Importance of the Ramyana**

It represents to the people the high ideals of family life which have taken a firm root in Indian thought and tradition. The characters of the epic have been standing forth as moral examples to the successive generations of the Hindus. Rama is still regarded as faithful, dutiful and ideal son, an affectionate brother, loving husband, stern and relentless hero and ideal king. He placed the welfare of his subjects above

the most cherished personal feelings. Sita is still supposed as a model for Indian womanhood, both in purity and fidelity. Her underlying love and profound devotion and fidelity to Rama has become an ideal for women to be attained in life. Lakshman is still looked upon as an ideal brother. Even today *Ramyana path* is celebrated every Hindu family daily.

**The Mahabharata .—** The *Mahabhart*, as we have today; was never the work of any one author nor it was written down at one time. In point of form it is not a single book but a whole literature, and in point of time it stretches along a vast period. It is only in a very restricted sense that we may speak of the *Mahabharata* as an epic or a poem. Indeed, in certain sense, the *Mahabharata* is not one poetic production at all, but rather a whole literature. However, it is a great compilation extending over centuries, its compilation is ascribed to venerable sage Vyasa who is credited with the authorship of the *Puranas* and compilation of *Vedas*.

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According to story related in the *Mahabhart*, king Vichitravirya of Hastinapura, in the Kuru country, identified with a place in the Meerut district had sons named Dhritarashtra and Pandu. Dhritarashtra was born blind and hence Pandu succeeded to the throne. He died in the life of his elder brother, leaving five sons - Yudhishtira, Bhimsena, Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva. Dhritarashtra had more than a hundred children, of whom the eldest was Duryodhan. The sons of Pandu married Draupadi, daughter of the king Panchala. The third prince, Arjuna, married also Subhadra, sister to Krishna who belonged to the powerful Yadva confederacy of Mathura and Dvaraka (in Kathiawar). The Pandus claimed a share of their paternal kingdom. They were given the Khandava forest to the south of the Kuru kingdom, where they built a stately city of Indraprastha near modern

Delhi.

The Pandus effected conquests in all directions and laid claim to the rank of paramount rulers, performing the *Rajasuya*, which was now a sacrifice of imperial inauguration. The prosperity of their rivals roused the jealousy of the sons of Dhritarashtra. They invited Yudhishtira, the eldest among the Pandu Princes, to a game of dice, secured his defeat and sought to enslave Draupadi. The Pandu queen was dragged to the open court and there subjected to gross insults. The Pandavas were next sent to exile for a period of thirteen years. At the end of the period the five brothers demanded the return of their kingdom but met with a refusal. Thereupon the rival cousins engaged in deadly conflict on the field of Kurukshetra.

The Kuru host, led by Bhishma, Drone, Karana and other mighty warriors, was destroyed. The battle of Kurukshetra lasted for 18 days. In this great battle, almost all the contemporary kings of India joined one side or the other. The result was total annihilation of the Kauravas; and the Pandavas finally attained sovereign power.

With the passage of time, new legend and episodes of kings and various aspects of human life described in its social and political bearing came to be added in the central theme. This process continued for centuries till about early part of Christian era and epic attained its present form in a hundred thousand verses.

The *Mahabharata* is divided into 18 *parvas* and there is a supplement called the *Harivamsa*. The epic passed through three principal stages of development before it assumed its present form. Literary and inscriptional evidence suggests that by A.D. 500 *Mahabharat* had become more than a epic; it was a sacred book and religious discourse; the *Mahabharat* did not exist in the 4th century B.C. in its epic form; the transformation of original story into our present compilation took place over the long stretch of years between the 4th century B.C. and 4th century A.D.<sup>1</sup>.

1. *Gazetteer of India, Volume-II* 1973, New Delhi, p. 179.

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It is now generally accepted that the great battle between the Kauravas and Pandavas was a historical event which occurred some time between 1400 and 1000 B.C. It is equally true that *Sutra* tradition and narrative literature are of a very early date. It is therefore, not unreasonable to assume that great battle and atleast some of the ballads of the kings who took part in the fight were contemporary. Among the *Sutra* works *Sankhayana Surauta-Sutra* is the first to refer to the Kurukshetra battle.

Some characters of the *Mahabharata* have been shining as beacon light as a moral examples to the successive generations of the Hindus. Yudhisthira is considered as an embodiment of truthfulness, a module of unflinching rigid moral values-virtues. The Pandava brothers typify the sweet, affectionate brotherly relations. We find Bhishma a stern regard for truth, combined with a keen sense of duty, remarkable heroism and filial love.

"The *Mahabharata* is not merely a 'song of victory', it is *Purana Samhita*, a collection of old legends and an *Itevritta* or traditional account of high souled king and pious sages, of dutiful wives and beautiful maids. We have charming and edifying stories like those of Sukuntala and Savitri, of Nal and Sibi. Side by side with these we have the thrilling lays of Amba and Vidula. In the first Book the epic claims to be *Sastra* or authoritative manual laying down rules of conduct, *Dharma* (moral and religious duties), *Artha* (material wealth) and *Kama* (pleasure of the flesh). Finally, it claims to be a *Moksha - Sastra* pointing the way of salvation to mankind. Manuals of a didactic character are chiefly found in the later Books. Among the religious poems that form part of the epic, the most famous is the *Bhagavad - Gita* or the song of the Lord which constitutes the bed-rock of Hindu theism".

The significance of epics portrayed by Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, former Prime Minister is given below :-

"I do not know of any books anywhere that have exercised such a continuous and pervasive influence on the mass mind



as the *Ramyana* and *Mahabharata*. The *Ramyana* makes us 'we' it binds together our variegated society (north & south), east and west; unity in diversity against a common background of national heroes like Lord Rama, Lakshman, Bharata and Hanuman and heroic tradition and ethical values"<sup>1</sup>.

**The Gita .—** The earliest and best exposition of the doctrine of Bhagavata sect founded by Vasudeva Krishna is to be found in the *Bhagavadgita* (also simply called the *Gita*) which has been incorporated in the *Mahabharata*. Although it cannot be definitely dated, it is generally referred to the first or second century before Christ.

1. Shastri, P. D.: *Ramayan the Great Epic of India and the World*, p. 44.

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The *Bhagavadgita* holds a unique position in Indian literature. It is a poem which, by virtue of its dialogue form, takes on a dramatic interest, and imparts lessons in philosophy, religion and ethics without seeming to do so, because the occasion or situation which gives rise to the dialogue is of the nature of a psychological crisis which may occur in the life of any individual. Arjuna, who represents such an individual, comes to the battle field to fight his kinsmen, the Kauravas. At this crucial moment, a curiously pessimistic mood suddenly overcomes him. The fratricidal combat in which he was about to engage appears to him to be a sinful act and he decides to withdraw from the battlefield. Krishna who serves as his charioteer, dissuades him from this cowardly course of action and his teaching to Arjuna in this connection forms the subject matter of the *Bhagavad Gita*. It is this specific situation involving a moral dilemma which gives a perennial charm and universal appeal to the poem.

Nevertheless, as practical teaching is the motif of the work, its teachings are predominantly ethical. It also discusses metaphysical problems, more or less as a background to its ethics, and contains an exposition of many other doctrines inter-spersed here and there along with its main one.

That *Karma-Yoga* or activism should be the focal point of its teaching follows naturally from the fact that Arjuna who in the beginning of the poem, is discovered as overwhelmed by a pseudo-philosophical mood of inaction, resignation and aversion to duty, declares himself at the end ready to fight in that detached frame of mind which behoves the philosopher in action. *Karman* (or action) should be end in itself and not the means to achieve the result which must follow the *Karman* but should never form the inspiration to activity. *Karman* signifies the whole set of duties i.e. social obligations or *varna-dharmas* which according to the *Gita* itself are incumbent on every individual.

The *Gita* steers a middle course between the two ideals of *Nivritti* and *Pravritti*, which held the field in those days, by choosing the golden mean. *Nivritti*, i.e. withdrawal from all *Karman*, or renunciation, had then become popular among certain types of people, because *Karman* was supposed to involve the doer in various circle of birth and death. The *Gita* points out that *Karman* by itself does not form a bond. It is the attachment to the result or fruit of action that constitutes the bond. On the other hand, the path of *pravritti*, which prescribes the performance of all duties, social obligations and ritualistic activities, is attended with the danger that, though selfishness is held in check by a sense of duty, it may extend its scope to the other world, which is the scene of the realization of rewards from action in general and ritualistic in particular. The *Gita* points out that the rewards, though transferred to other world, are nevertheless transitory and constitute a bond all the same, as it involves coming back again to the world after the exhaustion of merit.

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The *Gita*, of course, teaches the doctrine of rebirth. The character we develop in this life will determine the type of next birth. This doctrine gives a reality to free will inspite of necessity or determination, because the latter operates in a single life only. The discipline of rebirth leads to perfection and ultimately to *moksha*<sup>1</sup>.

The second path, the *karma-yoga* of the *Gita*, gives a new version of the Vedic theory of sacrifice and harmonises it with true spiritual knowledge. Sacrifice is nothing but self-restraint and self-surrender. The sacrifice of sense pleasure is true sacrifice. The *karma-yogin* surrenders to God whatever work he does. He not only lives but also acts in God. The *Bhakti Yoga*, the path of love and worship or emotional attachment to God, as distinguished from knowledge or action, is according to the *Gita*, the royal road to *moksha* (salvation), being the easiest and open to all.

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 orientation, 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.

According to some historians the *Gita* is a stirring testament of war and an inspiring scripture of heroism, but side by side, it is also a sermon of peace and non-violence. Among the qualities of a good man (*abhiyata*), it includes non-violence (*Ahimsa*), truth (*satya*), affability (*akrodha*), sacrifice (*tyaga*), peace (*santi*), absence of back biting (*apaisune*), compassion (*daya*), ungreediness (*alolopta*), softness (*mardava*), bashfulness (*hri*), straightforwardness (*acapala*), dominating spirit (*teja*), pardon (*ksama*), firmness (*dhrti*), purity (*sauca*), friendliness (*adroha*) and modesty (*natimanita*) and states that a man of such qualities heads for salvation. How then it is possible that a soldier fighting and killing others on the battle field can be a votary of non-violence (*ahimsa*)? The *Gita* resolves the dilemma in two ways. Firstly, it 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 who is attached to thing, 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 the 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. Accordingly the hero or warrior, who fights the

1. Majumdar, R. C., Pusalker, A. D: *The Age of Imperial Unity*, 1960 (Bombay), p. 446.

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battle, thinking fighting alone is his duty, and is devoid of the feeling of malice or rancour for his adversary and is, likewise immune from partiality or favouritism for his collaborator, is not polluted by the sin associated with killings. On the other hand, the truant, who desists from the physical acts of injury, but harbours rancour and hatred for others and wishes ill to them is equally of the heinous offence of violence."

It is clear from the above narration that *Bhagavadgita* expounds a comprehensive philosophy of dynamism current in ancient Haryana. It seeks to provide a philosophical foundation to the profession of arms and invests the warrior with a respectful position and a noble status. Side by side it canonizes his professional integrity and injects an intensity of purpose into it. It enjoins on the warrior to stake his all in fighting and not to flinch or falter even in the face of tremendous odds<sup>1</sup>.

It is, however, the *Gita* which has been "The most influential

work in Indian thought<sup>2</sup>". It has left an indelible impact on Indian life as it represents the quintessence of the teachings of the entire Vedic literature. It shows mankind the way to self realization through performance of duty, dignity of labour, love of humanity, excellence of activities, detachment, devotion, etc. Pointing to the transience of life and immortality of soul, it has taught the lesson of equanimity, righteousness and sublimation. "This priceless gem of Indian philosophy is a gospel of universal peace, universal love and universal brotherhood.<sup>3</sup>" The enunciation of the doctrine of *Karma* is unique in the *Gita*. It inspires people of all walks of life and shall continue to do so for time to come. "It is perhaps the deepest and loftiest thing the world has to show", said Wilhelm Von Humboldt.

## The Puranas .—

The *Puranas* are a type of mytho-historical literature which has played a unique role in the development of Indian society and culture for many centuries. Along with the epics (*Itihasa*), the *Puranas* have been styled in the *Chhandogya Upanishad* as the fifty *Veda : Itihasa -Puranah Panchamo vedanam*. The *Puranas* deal with (1) the evolution of the universe, (2) dissolution or recreation of the universe, (3) genealogies of gods and seers, (4) groups of great ages included in an aeon, *kalpa* and (5) the history of royal families<sup>4</sup>. Matters on Hindu rites and customs such as *varnasrama*,

1. Prakash, Buddha : *Glimpses of Hariyana*, Kurukshetra, 1957 p. 28.

2. S. Radhakrishnan, *Principal Upanishad*, London, 1953, p. 519.

3. Bhanot, S. D. *Significance and Teachings of the Bhagavad Gita : Lectures on Cultural Heritage of India*, Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan, Chandigarh, 1986, p. 33.

4. *Sargascha pratisargascha vamso manvantarani cha |*  
*Vamsyanucharitam chaiva puranam panchalakshnam ||*

*dharma, sraddha, dana, diksha, vratas, tirthas* etc., which normally fall in the domain of the *Smritis* and *Dharma sastras*, were also incorporated into the *Puranas* at an early stage. It is these matters which have influenced and guided the laity in their day to day activities-performance of certain rites, observance of fasts, making donations, visiting holy places, etc. The various anecdotes, myths and legends narrated in the *Puranas* as well as some incidental references to socio-cultural life of the people, their social organisation, stages of life, forms and system of marriage, family, position of women, foods and drinks, dress and decoration, customs and conventions, duties, ceremonies and rituals, beliefs and superstitions, occupations, pastimes etc., which make *Puranas* a veritable store house for getting insight into all aspects and phases of the life of the people. There have also been influencing the behaviour of the people of Haryana as also of the other regions of the country by presenting models. Pusalkar has rightly observed that the *Puranas* "have been influencing the life of the people throughout the centuries and are valuable as supplying material for the critical study of such diverse subjects as religion and philosophy, folklore and ethnology, literature and science, history and geography, politics and sociology<sup>1</sup>." The occurrence of the words '*sruti-smriti-Puranokta*' in the *sankalpa* of almost every ritual indicates their hold on the everyday's life of the Hindus even at the present time<sup>2</sup>.

## **Jainism**

The origin of Jainism is shrouded in the mystery<sup>3</sup>. In the *Rigvedic Mantra* there are clear references to Rishabha and Arishtnemi, two of the Jain *Tirthankars*, the former being the founder of Jainism. The story of Rishabha also occurs in the *Vishnu-Purana*, and *Bhagvat Purana* where he figures as an *Avtar* (incarnation) of Naryan. All this show that Jainism is as old as the Vedic religion, if not older<sup>4</sup>.

The Jains believe that it is the outcome of the teachings of twenty-four *Tirthankars* or prophets or saints, all Kshatriyas,

coming one after the other. The first twenty two *Tirthankars* are so legendary in character that it is hardly possible to say anything about them. The twenty third *Tirthankar*, named Parsvanath, who lived 250 years before Vardhamana Mahavir, seems to have been a real historical personage. The names of twenty four Jain *Tirthankars* are as follows :-

1. A.D. Pusalkar, *Studies in Epics and Puranas of India*, Bombay, 1955, Introduction, p. XVIII.
  2. A. K. Banerjee, "*Puranas*", *Prabuddha Bharata*, Vol. LIX, No. 2, Feb. 1954, p. 65.
  3. B. N. Luniya : *Life and Culture in Ancient India*, 1978, p. 158.
  4. *The Cultural Heritage of India*, Vol. I, Chapter IV, p. 185.
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1. Rishabhadev 13. Vimalnath
2. Ajitnath 14. Anantnath
3. Sambhavnath 15. Dharmanath
4. Abhinandan 16. Shantinath
5. Sumatinath 17. Kunthanath
6. Padmaprabhu 18. Amarnath
7. Suparsvanath 19. Mallinath
8. Chandraprabhu 20. Manisurvirnath
9. Puspadant 21. Neminath

10. Sitalnath 22. Arishtnemi

11. Shreyansanath 23. Parsvanath

12. Vasupujya 24. Vardhamana Mahavir

It would be better to throw some light on the teachings of Parsvanath. He was the son of king of Varanasi but he abandoned the royal state in favour of spiritual life. His main teachings were; non-injury; non-lying (not to tell lies); non-stealing and non-possession. Parsvanath seems to have left a well formed organisation behind him. The parents of Vardhamana Mahavira and members of his family were the followers of Parsvanath's religion.

Vardhamana Mahavira was born in Kundagrama in 599 B.C. in a rich Kshatriya family. Vardhamana was educated to the highest perfection in all branches of knowledge and art, and was married to Yasodhara, had by her a daughter whose husband Jamali became the disciple of Mahavira. In his thirtieth year, on the demise of his parents, Vardhamana renounced the world, left his home and became an ascetic in the search of truth.

For thirteen years, Vardhamana lived the life of self-mortification, severe austerities and deep meditation. Then in the thirteenth year of his asceticism, he attained the "intuitive knowledge". At this supreme knowledge and the subsequent final deliverance from pleasure and pain, during his forty two years of age, Vardhamana became known as Mahavira. The great hero, or *Jino* ( the conqueror who subdued his passion) and his following were named as *Nirgranthas* (free from fetters and bonds). He established a religious order which was open to all friars and nuns as well as laymen, both males and females. He accepted the teachings of Parsvanath as the basis of his faith.

1. The Cultural Heritage of India, Volume-I, P. 207.

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Mahavir was more a reformer of an existing religion than the founder of a new faith. Buddha found out the truth for himself and established a new sect and its monastic order. But Jain tradition makes no such claim for Mahavira. He is represented as following a well-established creed of Parsvanath called Jainism. He is regarded not as founder of a new sect, but merely as a leader of a religious community already in existence.

Parsvanath taught only four vows, i.e. *Ahimsa* (non-injury), *Satya* (speak truth), *Asteva* (non-stealing) and *Aparigraha* (non-possession). Mahavira added one more to these four vows- *Brahmacharya* (chastity and non-adultery). Most of the features of Jainism as revived and preached by Mahavira were already existing. Probably, what he did was the codification of an unsystematic mass of beliefs into a set of rigid rules of conduct of monks and laymen. After Mahavira, the drawing up of the list of sub-divisions of *Karma*, the systematic arrangement of the teaching in the rubric of the seven principles of soul, non-soul, influx, bondage, cessation, expurgation and liberation; the elaboration of the doctrine of the five or seven *Nyayas* and *Saptabhangi* and the formation of the rules of temple-discipline".

The teachings of Jain *Tirthankars* are compiled in the form of sacred writings called the *Angas*. The Jain canon that is preserved and claimed by the *Svetambar* sect of *Jainism* was finally settled and compiled in the present form in the fifth century A.D., nearly a thousand years after the death of Mahavira. Both the sects of Jainism, *Svetambras* and *Digambaras*, postulate the original canon that consists of the 12 *Angas*, including the 14th *purvas* as a part of the last *Anga*.

## Principles of Jainism

**1. Rejection of the Vedas.-** Mahavira rejected the authority of the *Vedas* and objected to the Vedic rituals and the Brahman supremacy. He advocated a very holy, ethical and elevating code of life and severe asceticism and extreme penance for attainment of the *Nirvana* or the highest spiritual state. It was in contradiction to the Vedic sacrifice and ritual. Though Mahavira had thrown open the doors of his religion to all without distinction of caste, creed or sex, he was not opposed

to the theory of caste-system.

**2. Negation of God.-** Lord Mahavira did not believe that God created this world or exercised any control over it. According to Jainism God is not eternal. He is not the author of everything, the creator. The whole universe of being, consisting of mental and material factors, has existed from all eternity undergoing an infinite number of evolutions, produced by the power of nature without the intervention of any eternal deity. The diversities of the world are traced to the five co-operating conditions of

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time, nature, necessity, activity and desire to be and act<sup>1</sup>.

According to Mahavira, there is no creation of the world; no supreme creative spirit, nor there is any creator necessary to explain the nature of the world. God., according to him, is only the highest, the noblest and the fullest manifestation of all the powers latent in man ( the most perfect man). Man's salvation does not depend upon the mercy of God or any such person. Man is the architect of his own destiny<sup>2</sup>.

**Equality.-** Jainism lays great significance on equality. While taking a vow, a layman or an ascetic expresses his determination about equality thus : "I undertake to observe, O , Lord, the attitude of equality". At other place, this vow of equality is expressed thus, I disassociate myself from harmful activities according to my capacity. His attitude of equality develops sameness for all mankind. There is intrinsic equality among all selves whether they are born from earth, water, vegetation, insects, birds, animals or human-beings.

**Atma.-** According to Jainism, the world consists of the eternal, uncreated, co-existing but independent categories,

namely the conscious being *Jiva* corresponds to soul. It knows, feels and wills. It acts and is acted upon. It suffers when it comes into contact with matter and it is born again and again and again to suffer. Its highest endeavour is to be free from this cycle of birth and death, to get salvation from the worldly bondage by attaining highest knowledge of truth and profound meditation.

**Transmigration of soul.-** *Karmas* (actions) of an individual determine his higher or lower stage of existence. *Karma* surrounds a soul and gives it a definite shape. Passions, ignorance, desires, etc. originate *karmas* and a soul takes birth and rebirth to reap the fruits of his *karmas*. On account of various *karmas*, both good or bad, a soul creates its own present future. A soul is thus subject to the law of *karma* and re-birth.

**Salvation.-** Mahavira believed in dualistic philosophy and held that matter and soul are the only two ever-existing elements. In other words, a man's personality comprises material and spiritual natures. The former is perishable, while the latter is eternal and evolutionary. According to him, on account of *karma* (the accumulated effect of the actions done in the past lives) the soul is in state of bondage created by passions and desires collected through several previous births. It is by means of continued efforts through several lives that the *karmik* forces constitute the final liberation of the soul (*Jiva*). But *Tapas* or severe austerities and self-mortification and discipline of the body, the forming of fresh *karmas* are loosened and finally shaken away. Side by side with the decay of the *karmas*, the intrinsic qualities of the

1. Dr. Radhakrishnan : *Indian Philosophy*, Volume I, p. 333.

2. B. N. Luniya : *Life and Culture in Ancient India*, 1978, p. 160.

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soul get expressed more and more and the soul shines in full luminosity and infinite greatness and glory which represents final liberation or *nirvan* and then the soul becomes the pure soul with infinite knowledge, power and bliss<sup>1</sup>.

According to Jains, the *Siddha* souls are of five categories :

- (1) The *Tirthankars* or the liberated, who preached Jainism in the embodied conditions ;
- (2) The *Arhat* or the perfect soul who awaits the attainment of *nirvan* after shedding the *Karmic* body;
- (3) The *Acharyas* or the heads of the ascetic groups;
- (4) The *Upadhayas*, or the saints and seekers teaching principles of Jainism;
- (5) *Sadhus* (monks) - a class which included the rest.

**Ahimsa.-** One of the cardinal principles of Jainism is *Ahimsa* or non-violence. All objects, animate or inanimate, possess life and feel pain on the infliction of injuries. Therefore, the greatest emphasis is laid on the doctrine of *Ahimsa* or non-injury to any kind of living-being, however, low may be the state of its evolution. *Ahimsa* has two aspects : negative and positive. In the negative aspect not only human-beings, but even beasts and animals should not be subjected to violence. In the positive aspect, love, kindness and compassion should be extended to all creatures. *Ahimsa* is the sheet-anchor of Jainism.

**Ethical Code.-** Certain ethical code is assigned both for a house-holder and homeless monk. Since the aim of life is to attain salvation, one has to avoid evil *karmas*, that gradually prevent all kinds of fresh *karmas* and destroy the existing ones. For this purpose, a house-holder is to observe the following five vows:-

- (i) **Ahimsa** (non-violence).- It means that violence should not be caused by words, thoughts and actions.
- (ii) **Satya** ( Speaking truth).- One should not only speak truth, but avoid spreading bitter truths also. Untruth in all forms be avoided.
- (iii) **Asteya** (non-stealing).- One should never steal or pick

things directly or indirectly. It includes the use of false weight and measures and adulteration of things.

(iv) **Aparigraha** (non-possession).- It means that one is to avoid longing for worldly things, possession in wealth and property.

1. *The Cultural Heritage of India, Vol. I, P.207.*

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(v) **Brahmcharya** (non-possession).- It means control of passion, emotions and desires. Purity in thoughts, words and deeds be cultivated.

These five vows for leading spiritual and ethical life comprise the right conduct. It enables one to control the body and mind and purify them. Then there are two principles, Right Faith and Right Knowledge. The former means a belief in the *Jains* (*Thirthankars*) and their teachings and the latter means the knowledge of eventual liberation of life in all existing things. More severe than this is the code laid down for a monk. Jainism believes in the self-mortification and control of the body. A hard and austere life is very essential for the Jain monks.

## Jain Philosophy

According to Jainism, knowledge is the intrinsic property of the *Jiva* or soul. In view of the spiritual development of an individual, knowledge has five categories, viz. *Mati*, *Sruta*, *Avadhi*, *Manah Paryahya* and *Kevalya*. The first *Mati* refers to the ordinary process of sense-perception. The second *Sruta* is revealed by the scripture. The third, *Avadhi* is called clairvoyance. It enables one to see mentally what is happening or existing out of sight. It is an exceptional insight

to see events occurring in different lands at distant times. The fourth *Manah Paryahya* is an extra perception to know the thoughts in the minds of other persons. The fifth, *kevalya* is the supreme knowledge. It is obtained when soul attains complete emancipation.

Jain philosophy explains that world consists of *Jiva* (consciousness) and *Ajiva* (unconsciousness). When the Jains speak of *Jiva* inhabiting in a plant or animal, it means life. But when they talk of emancipation of *Jiva*, it implies soul or *Atma*. Soul is never completely separated from matter until its final liberation.

***Jivas*** are classified according to the evaluation of their sense organs. There are categories of *Jivas*. The first is endowed with one sense organ and it implies the vegetable kingdom. The Jains consider the vegetable kingdom to be susceptible to touch. The second category of *Jivas* is endowed with two sense-organs i.e. touch and taste. The worms belong to this category. The third category has three developed senses touch, taste and smell. Ants are its example. The fourth category is endowed with touch, taste, smell and sight; for example bees have evolved these four organs. The fifth class has the sense of hearing in addition to the four developed organs. Human being represents this class. A person possesses mind and intellect.

According to Jain philosophy, a soul has to pass fourteen stages of spiritual development to attain the stage of *Kevalya Jnam*. The soul has to struggle hard through these thorny stages. It controls its passions; subdues its desires and gets gradually spiritual powers. The mind is purified by constant self-mortification, austerities and

*Tapa*, and selfishness is abandoned and attachment to the world is completely suppressed and destroyed. It then acquires the highest knowledge and becomes a *Thirthankar*. In the last fourteenth stage, the mortal body of the soul is abandoned and soul becomes *sidh*. During the course of fourteen stages, different kinds of *karmas* are got rid of and their effect ceases and soul becomes purer and purer in each stage. When the last remnants are annihilated, the soul attains emancipation.

## Great Schism of Jainism

The fourteen *Purvas*, the text books of the old Jain scriptures which Mahavira himself had taught to his *Ganadharas*, were perfected by Sambhutavijaya and Bhadrabahu. Sambhutavijaya is said to have died in the same year in which emperor Chandra Gupta Maurya ascended his throne. Towards the close of fourth century B.C., a terrible famine lasting for 12 years broke out in South Bihar. When it led to the exodus of an important section of the Jains headed by Bahadrabahu, to the Mysore, many Jains remained in Magadha under Sthulbhadra, a disciple of Sambhutavijaya. They summoned a council of elders of Jainism at Patliputra about 300 B.C. to collect and revive the knowledge of the sacred texts which was passing into oblivion. Its result was the compilation of the 12 *Angas* that are considered as the most important parts of the Jain canon. After the first council of elders, later additions were made to the Jain canon (*Angas*) by learned monks like Samarya, Aryarakshita, Virbhadra, etc. A collection of commentaries explaining parts of ten canon were called *Niryuktis*. They are ten and were composed in the first or second century A.D.

The followers of Bhadrabahu, on their return to Magadha, refused to acknowledge the canon, as drawn up by their co-religionists in Bihar holding that the 14 *Purvas* were lost. Moreover, there was already a wide gulf made between those who had emigrated and those who stayed in Magadha. The latter had become accustomed to wearing white garments and discarded Mahavira's teachings whereas the former still continued going naked and strictly followed the teachings of Mahavira. This is how the first schism split the Jainism into *Digambras* (skyclad or naked) and *Swetambaras* (clad in white). The followers of Bhadrabahu were *Digambaras* and those of Sthulbhadra were known as *Swetambaras*.

Later, furthermore splits took place among both sections - the

*Digambaras* and the *Swetambaras* - the most important of them being one that renounced idol worship altogether and devoted itself to the worship of the scriptures. They are called *Terapantis* among the *Swetambaras* and *Samaiyas* among the *Digambaras*. This sect came into existence not in early than sixteenth century.

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## **Contribution of Jainism to Indian Culture**

Though a small community, the Jains played a very important part in the development of the languages of the country. The Jains utilised the prevailing spoken languages of the different times at different places in the country for their religious propaganda and the preservation of the sacred knowledge. Their religious literature which is written in Prakrit is very vast. Thus they exercised a healthy and prominent influence on the development of Prakrit languages. They even gave a literary shape to some vernaculars for the first time. It preserves the form of language as it was current prior to the evolution of the present day vernaculars, especially Hindi, Gujrati and Marathi. The Jains have also written some of their scriptures in Sanskrit both narrative and philosophical.

Jainism has contributed a good deal towards the strengthening of ethical life and moral virtues. They advocate rigid austerities both external and internal to shut the influx of evil and heavy *karams*. The Jainism lays down simple ethical code for an average house-holder. He has to observe five principles - *Ahimsa*, *Satya*, *Asteya*, *Brahmacharya* and *Aparigraha*. He must be free from evils like violence, cruelty, falsehood, theft, unchastity, lust, avarice, etc. The observance



of these simple minor morals and virtues are known as *anuvartas* in Jain terminology.

*Ahimsa* or non-violence occupies a significant position in Jainism. It prescribes a practical manual for showing kindness and love to various forms of life. No insect or animal or any living-beings should be injured or hurt either thoughts, words or deeds. One should avoid violence even indirectly. Speaking ill of others publically, casting aspersions on others, false implication, dishonest behaviour, rebuke, rebuff, etc. are included under violence and one should avoid such things. The most important contribution of Jainism in cultural field is the principle and philosophy of *Ahimsa*.

Jainism like other sects has utilised art for the propagation of doctrines. Sculptures, architecture and paintings have been harnessed for expressing the beauties of Jainism. Jains worship the images of Jain *Tirthankars* and other divinities. The custom of icon- worship among the Jains may be traced to the Maurya-Shunga period. Epigraphic evidence also proves that the custom of image-worship was prevalent among Jains in India and even in the pre-Mauryan times.

Jainism contributed greatly to the development in the realm of painting. The Jains have illustrated their manuscripts lavishly. They used golden and bright colours profusely. The mini-portraits under profuse illustrations in the manuscripts.

## **Influence of Jainism in Haryana**

Some influence of Jainism can be traced from the time of Buddha. Its main centres were Agroha and later Pinjore. According to literary tradition, *Rohidya* (perhaps

*Rohtaka*) was blessed by several visits of Lord Mahavira and that a shrine of Dharana Yaksha existed in the *Pudhavivadimsaya* garden of the town. Thereafter, Jainism seems to have gone into abeyance in the region for centuries till the times of the Pratiharas and Chahamanas.

Many Jain sculptural pieces and architectural remains of this period have been recovered from various places-Pinjore, Kurukshetra, Sirsa, Khokrakot, Asthal Bohar, Sat Kumbha and Mohanbari of Rohtak district and Aharvan, B Narhel Nagram and Somerwala (Hissar district)<sup>1</sup>.

The Jain images collected from Kabira Chaura and Gogapir mound (all in Pinjore area) suggest the existence of several temples dedicated to *Tirthankaras* of which only two - Adinatha or Risabhanath and Neminath are identified on the basis of their distinguishing marks. These images belong to both the sects of Jainism - *Digambra* and *Svetambra*, the latter seems to be not very much popular for a solitary example of a headless torso belonging to this sect and assigned to C 9th century on stylistic grounds has been recovered. The images of *Digambara* sect are completely naked and are seated in rigid *Padmasana* pose. These are stereotyped and lack artistic beauty. Of particular interest in the back slab of a marble is a Jain image with delicate carving and minute details. The slab, shaped like half - crescent with *makaras* emitting the Yaksha figures forming the projection at either end, is beautiful. The central *chhatra* and the lotus halo, *gandharvas* was playing the musical instruments, the elements carrying full vases of water in their trunks anointing the *Tirthankars* add divine atmosphere to the entire carriage.

Jain *Tirthankara* images from Asthal<sup>2</sup> Bohar stand out prominently for their simplicity. These represent Parsvanath and Satinath seated in *Padmasana* with *antar dhyanamudra*, while other images are distinct for their snake hoods canopy while on the Santinath image is depicted an umbrella with *Kalpavarksa* like leaves. The

Adinath images from Binva and Ata (district Gurgaon) belong to a period between A.D. 900-1000 and 1000-1200 respectively. The latter depicts Adinath in *dhyanmudra* but the central Srivatsa mark is not quite distinct.

Other important features of the images can be seen in the *Padmapitha* supported by two lion couchant on the front and in between a *dharamchakra*. The hair-locks of the deity

falling on both the sides of his shoulders and above branches of a tree possibly *nyagrodha* (*banyana*) and halo mark as back drop. The Narnaul sculptures

1. H. A. Phadke : *Haryana : Ancient and Medieval*, 1990, p. 98.

2. The discovery of idols Parsvanath and male and females Jain deities from Asthal Bohar and Khokrakot indicates that this area was under Jain influence in ancient times : *Rohtak District Gazetteer*, 1970, p. 325.

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which are of a later period (13th-14th century) only suggest that Jainism continued to flourish to a certain extent in the area even during the early Sultanate period.

Jainism in its popular form known as *Vidhimarg* was prevalent in Haryana. Haribhadra Suri, the founder of this movement, who was inspired by the national aspect of Jainism, raised his voice against all immoral practices of the Chaityavasins (i.e. those living in *Pariyas*) who were doing practically everything unworthy of monk. This new creed which subsequently became a living force in central and western India entered Haryana where it came to be known as *Vidhichaitra*.

Jinavallabha, the disciple of Janeswara Suri and one of the prominent teachers, chose Haryana and Rajasthan as the centres of his religious activities leaving all his proprietary rights in the *matha*, garden and temple at *Ashika* (Hansi). He dedicated his whole life to the propagation of this new creed. As people were still attached to old dogmas and customs, his indeed was a very difficult task. Faults were found with him and his methods, where ever a new

*Vidhichaitna* was established, attempts were made to capture it even by foul means, sometimes using the influence of local people to meet their end. The followers even had to shed their blood in defence of their rights. Undaunted by adverse circumstances, Jinavallabha by his sound scholarship coupled with sincerity, simplicity and adherence to the faith, succeeded in winning over a large following to his mission. The following were the rules observed at *Vidhichaitya*:—

1. Here are followed no rites of those who go against the *Satra*;
2. None ever bathes here at night;
3. It is no property of Sadhus;
4. Women do not get admission here at night;
5. There is no insistence on the privileges of castes and sub-castes; and
6. Worshippers are given no *tambula* (betel leaves).

Jinavallabha wrote a number of treatise to serve as sound basis of anti-Chaityavasa propaganda. His style was perhaps a bit polemic and language sometimes vitriolic. *Vidhichaitya* with his sound footing continued to flourish in the region till the advent of the Turks towards the close of the twelfth century A.D.

The Hissar district had been the main centre of the Jain activities in the closing years of 19th century. As per the *Hissar District Gazetteer* of 1892, there was two main ramifications of Jainism prevailing in then Hissar district, an account of the Jainism prevailing in those days in the Hissar district is given below :

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"Jainism is certainly a development of Hinduism. The question has been fully discussed in the *Census Report* of 1881, and it is not necessary to touch on it here. The Jains appear to rever the gods of the Hindu pantheon, but reject the divine origin of the *Vedas*. Their supreme deity is *Nirankar*, corresponding apparently to the Hindu Narain, but their immediate objects of worship and reverence are the 24 *arhats* or saints who have obtained final *nirvan (mukti)* with *Nirankar*. They do not appear to reverence or feed the Brahmins, but they have *Sadhus* or priests of their own, and their meritorious conduct consists to a large extent worshipping *Nirankar* and in feeding the *Sadhus*. They do not wear the *Janeo* or sacred thread, they have certain amount of reverence for the cow, bathing is not considered any part of their worship nor do they appear to reverence the *ling*, the symbol of Siva. Their scriptures consist of the 32 *Sutras* written by Mahavir, the last *arhat*. The leading principle of conduct inculcated by their religion is abstention not alone from taking animal life but from causing harm of any kind to any living creature (*Jio*).

"Of the 24 *arhats* worshipped by the Jains, the most famous are Rikabdas the first *arhat*, and Parasavnath and Mahavir the last two.

"Of the Jains there are two main sections, the *Mandirpanthis* and the *Dhundiapanthis*. The distinction between them consists in this that *Mandirpauthis* worship images of the 24 *arhats* in temples, while the *Dhundiapanthis* worship no idols and have no temples. The present *Mandirpanthis* are the successors and representatives of the original Jains, while the *Dhundiapanthis* are a schismatic affshoot.

(a) "In the temples of the *Mandirpanthis* are always found images of one or more of the 24 *arhats*. The *Madirpanthis* are themselves divided into two sections the *Swetambaras*, whose images are clothed and adorned with jewels, and the *Digambaras*, who worship nude idols.

(i) The priests of the *Swetambaras* are called *jalis*. The *Swetambers* believe that women can obtain salvation (*mukti*), while the other Jains deny that this can be unless the woman is first born again as a man. The principal caste who follow the doctrines of the *Swetambaras* Jains are the Oswal Baniyas. There is a tradition explaining how the caste came to adopt this form of faith. The Oswal Baniyas were originally Rajputs of Osanagri in Rajputana; while they were yet Rajputs, a boy

was bitten by a snake; a *Swetambaras* Sadhu sucked the poison from the wound and restored the boy to life, and the people of the place in consequence adopted the Jain religion and became members of the *Swetambara* sect.

(ii) "As stated above, the idols of the *Digambaras* are nude; their Sadhus are called *nuns*; they carry a sort of *chauri* or brush wherewith to

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drive away insects, &c., and no leather of any sort, probably as being an animal product, is allowed in their temples.

"There is a further sub-division of the *Digambaras* into (1) the Bispauthi section who reverence the 24 *arhats*, the Guru and *Shastras*; and (2) the *Terapanthi* section, who accept the *arhats* and the *Shastras*, but deny that there is now any Guru other than the *Shastras* themselves. The priests of the *Digambaras* are naked except for a longoti round the loins.

(b) "The second great section of the Jains consists of the *Dhundiapanthis*. It was originally an offshoot from the *Swetambara* section of the *Mandirpanthis* as noted above. The *Swetambaras* were originally divided into 84 sub-divisions; of these one was the Lanka, which was again split up into three minor sub-divisions, or *gaddis*, viz. the Nagari, Gujarati and the Uttradhi. Under the influence and guidance of 22 men called Gurus, the Lanka-Nagari developed into a large sect, distinct not only from the *Swetambara* section but from the whole body of Jains as then constituted; its members, however, still retained the name of Jains in order to distinguish themselves from other Hindus. The section thus formed was called the Baitola and subsequently the sect of the *Dhundiapanthis*. The schism which led to its formation appears to have occurred in *Sambat*

1709 near Ahmadabad under the leadership of Dhan Das and Dharm Singh.

"In *Sambat* 1817 the *Baistola* or *Dhundiapanthis* was itself split up by the defection from its midst of the sect of the *Terahpanthis* under Bhikam Sen. The name of the sect appears to have arisen from the fact that at first it included only 13 men, and it must not be confused with the *Terahpanthi* section of the *Digambaras*. They have had five Gurus, whose seat is Rajnagar in Bikanir, viz. Bhikam sen, Bas Mal Rai Chand, Jit Mal and Meg Raj.

"The main features which distinguish the religion of the *Dhundiapanthis* from that of the other Jains is the absence of idol worship in their temples.

"The *Dhundias* do not reverence Shiva, Brahma and Vishnu in any way apparently, nor do they make pilgrimages. The *Dhundias* wear a cloth over their mouths, in order to prevent the entrance and consequent destruction of animal culae; probably for a similar reason the *Dhundias* will not drink water in its natural state (*Kacha Pani*), but only that which has been warmed or otherwise treated (*PakkaPani*).

"The *Baistola* section of the *Dhundias* reverences the 32 *Sutras* of Mahavir, which form the Jain scriptures, but the *Terahpanthis* have a separate scripture consisting of 52 *slokas*. The *Terahpanthis* will not protect one animal from the attack of another,

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but the regard of *Baistola* section for animal life will rise even to the length of doing this. On the whole the *Terahpanthis*, as compared with the *Baistola*, are a more advanced and more heterodox sect."

# Buddhism

Buddhism was the movement that gave a great shock to Brahmanism. It was started by Gautam Buddha who was a notable contemporary of Mahavira. He was the son of Suddhodhana, chief of Sakya clan in Nepal Tarai. His mother was Maya. Siddharatha was born about the year 566 B.C. As Maya died due to child birth, Siddharatha was brought up by his aunt and step mother, Prajapati Gautami. From his boyhood, Siddharatha showed signs of contemplative turn of mind and a deep compassionate nature. He was perturbed by the eternal problems of life, its suffering, disease and death. After the birth of son named Rahul, he left home at the age of 29 as a wandering ascetic in search of truth. This departure is known as the Great Renunciation. He wandered here and there. Finding no satisfaction, he practised the penances, the most rigid austerities and made fruitless efforts to find truth. He then gave up penances, took bath in the river and sat under a *Pipal* tree at Bodh Gaya. Here he attained supreme knowledge and insight. Revelation came to him that Great Peace was within his own heart and he must seek it. This is known as the Great Enlightenment and since then he became known as the Buddha, enlightened one.

## Main Principles of Buddhism

Gautam Buddha never endeavoured to establish a new religion or creed. Neither he talked of codes and conventions, nor laws and rites.

He indicated a new way of life-the virtuous path treading which one could attain deliverance from birth and death. He advocated not a set of doctrines or dogmas but a rational scheme of spiritual development. Simple goodness of spirit, deed and conduct is the basis of his teachings. Pure motives, sublime thought, good actions and virtuous deeds constitute high ethical noble code. They are aids to the attainment of *Nirvana*. One must shun evil thoughts, tendencies and action and cultivate noble virtues.

Buddha did not recognise the authority of the *Vedas* as revealed knowledge. He was the reviler of the *Vedas*. He rejected the infallibility of the *Vedas*, condemned the bloody animal - sacrifices, protested against the complicated, elaborate and meaningless rituals.

Buddha did not believe in the caste system. He challenged



the caste system and the priestly supremacy. According to him, caste is not base for spiritual development

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or the attainment of *Nirvana*. He opened the doors of Buddhism for the persons of all castes. He admitted persons into the Buddhist *Sangh* without any distinction of caste.

Buddhism denied the existence of a supreme creative spirit. Buddha disbelieved the existence of God. It was, according to him, the individual exertion at self-improvement and virtuous life that mattered most. Self culture is the key-note of his teachings. The virtuous path, as suggested by him, is a code of practical ethics that has a rational out-look. Buddhism, therefore, was more a social than religious revolution. It taught the code of practical ethics and laid down the democratic principle of social equality.

**Eight-Folded Path .-** Buddha preached his followers the four "Noble Truths" concerning sorrow, the cause of sorrow, the remedy or destruction of sorrow. In other words, he pointed out four certainties-there is suffering in life, this suffering has a cause, this suffering could be removed by destroying its cause and destruction of cause is possible by the pursuit of eight-folded path. The cause of the suffering is *Trishna* or desire for material enjoyments and earthly things. As one desires impermanent, changeable and perishable objects, one's desires cause suffering and disappointment. And it is this desire that is responsible for the births and rebirths of man. When the selfish desire or craving for existence has caused to act in man, he urged, it is only then possible for the individual soul to obtain *Nirvana* or freedom from this unending cycle of births and deaths. How to annihilate this craving or remove this desire is, therefore, the real problem before a man. Self mortification, he argued, could never

overcome *Trishna* and bring about an escape from re-birth and subsequent suffering. Mere repetition of prayers, or sacrifices or the chanting of the Vedic hymns was futile in cleansing the mind from gross desires. The desire, suggested Buddha, can only be removed by following the eight-fold path.

The eight-fold path consists of the following steps :-

- 1. Right View or Faith.** The knowledge of the four truths which Buddha enunciated in his first sermon ;
  - 2. Right Aspiration.-** That requires us to renounce pleasures to bear no malice and do no harm to others;
  - 3. Right Speech.-** Signifying that we should abstain from lying, slander, abuse, harsh words and idle talk;
  - 4. Right Action.-** Meaning that we should refrain from taking what is not given or abstain from carnal excesses;
  - 5. Right livelihood.-** Requiring us to abstain from any of the forbidden modes of living;
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- 6. Right effort.-** Consisting in suppressing the rising of evil conditions, in eradicating those that have arisen and in stimulating good conditions;
- 7. Right mindfulness.-** Requiring us to look on this body and the spirit in such a way as to remain self-possessed and careful overcoming both hankering and dejection; and
- 8. Right Contemplation.-** meaning to take the form of four meditations, it is the end and the crown of the eight fold path.

The above referred *Eight-Fold Path*, lies between two extremes, namely, grossly sensualism or vile pleasure-seeking on the one hand and the extreme asceticism or the severest self-mortification on the other hand. It teaches men how to live a moral and religious life. It is this path that ultimately brings, according to Buddha, final bliss or *Nirvana*.

**Nirvana.-** Buddha compared *Nirvana* to the expiring flame when there is no hay or wood to burn. *Nirvana* literally means the 'blowing out' or extinction of craving or the desire or *Trishana* for existence in all its forms and the consequent cessation of suffering. It is not mere disappearance or extinction but a tranquil state to be realised by a person who from all craving or want is free.' It is deliverance or freedom from re-birth. It is positive blessedness and complete perfection. It is a kind of existence devoid of egoism, and a timeless existence.

It is the highest emotional state of spirituality and blessedness. It consists essentially in sub-dueing the highest spirit and the perfect control of thirst. This may lead one to conclude that Buddhism teaches the doctrine of inaction, i.e. cessation of activity, desiring little<sup>1</sup> or doing little. But Buddhism does not teach inaction but non-doing of evil deeds. It teaches the doing of various kinds of good things. It laid stress on purity of conduct, truthfulness, love and benevolence, obedience to parents and respect for elders, non-drinking, charity and kindness and mercy to all living-beings. Buddha did not like flattery. He valued the observation of true path and hated the sin not the sinner.

**Karma.-** Another doctrine on which Buddha laid great emphasis is the *Law of Karma*, its working and the transmigration of souls. The condition of man in this life and the next, he argued, depends upon his own actions. Neither a sacrifice to gods can wash away sin, nor any prayer of any priest, nor any prayer of any man can do himself or any other man any good. A man reaps what he sows. As a man acts, so shall he be. Every individual is the maker of his own destiny and that no god or gods could change it. We are forever making our own moral world for good or ill. We can never escape the consequences of our deeds. We are born again and again to reap the

1. B. N. Luniya : *Life And Culture in Ancient India*, 1978, p. 177.

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fruits of *Karma*. This is the law of *Karma*. If an individual sins no more, he dies no more; when he dies no more, he is born no more and thus he comes to live the life of 'Final Bliss'.

**Ahimsa.-** Another prominent feature of his teachings is *Ahimsa*. He condemned animal sacrifice. He advocated non-injury in words, thoughts and deeds but non-violence of Buddha was not negative, but positive in contents. According to him, the spirit of love is more important than good deeds. Non-violence towards life is recognised as an integral principle of his practical morality. Buddha enjoined love and non-violence for all living-beings.

In his religious teachings, Buddha may be called an agnostic, because he neither accepts nor rejects the existence of God. He refused to be drawn into any theretical discussion about God or nature of the soul. Whenever he was questioned about them he either maintained silence or remarked that God or gods were also under the eternal law of *Karma*.

**Life of monks in Sangha.-** Buddha had two kinds of disciples-monks (*Bhikshu*) and lay worshippers (*upasikas*); the former were re organised into the *Sangh* or congregation, the number of which had swollen with the spread of Buddhism. The membership of the *Sangha* or religious order was open to all persons, male or female above fifteen years of age and free from leprosy, consumption and other infectious diseases. Persons who were in services of the king or an individual, or who were in debt or had been branded as robbers or criminals were refused admission into the *sangha*. But exceptions were made in the case of convicts, slaves or persons with bodily deformities. There were no caste

restrictions. Thus the *sangha* formed a community of persons who were physically fit to perform the noble-service required of them.

The lay Buddhists led the life of house holders and financially contributed to the maintenance of the *Sangha*. The Buddhist *Sanga* set up many monasteries in different regions.. They were most remarkable contributions of Buddhism to Indian culture. In the beginning, they provided accommodation to the monks for carrying on their studies and meditation. But gradually they developed into academic centres for producing talented monks, well-grounded in religion and philosophy. They grew up not merely as organisations for training missionaries, but also as great centres of culture, to which teachers, students and scholars flocked from far and near.

**Admission into Sangh.-** The ceremony of initiation into the *sangh* was simple and plain. Whenever, a new person, a man or a woman, desired to join order, he or she had to get head shaved, put on a yellow robe and before the President of the local *sangh*, take the following oaths of fidelity to the Buddha, the *Dharma* and *Sangh* :-

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1. I take refuge in the Buddha.
2. I take refuge in the *Dharma*.
3. I take refuge in the *Sangh*.

Next he or she was to repeat the ten commandments of Buddha. They were abstinent from (i) killing; (ii) stealing; (iii) adultery; (iv) speaking falsehood; (v) drinking intoxicating liquor; (vi) afternoon meals; (vii)

witnessing of dancing and music; (viii) the use of garland, scents; (ix) the use of high beds and (x) the acceptance of gold and silver. Then he was required to attach himself to a monk who would give him certain preliminary training after which he was to present him to an assembly of monks and make a formal proposal for admitting him to the *Sangh*. When permission was given, he was to be ordained as a monk. Henceforth, he was required to observe the internal discipline of the *sangh* and abide by its rules for leading a life of poverty, chastity, devotion, austerity, simplicity and celibacy.

**Life of monks.-** The monks used to live in monasteries. It was the hub of religious life and discipline of the monks. Sometimes large monasteries housed thousand of monks. For example, the erstwhile monastery at sugh (Yamunanagar district) contained thousands of Buddhists. These monasteries had dwelling rooms, service halls, well, bath rooms, etc. The ownership of a monastery vested in the *sangha*. The monks were allowed three garments (*Chiveia*), an upper robe, (the *uttrasane*) which was wrapped round the legs from loins to the ankles with its end drawn, at the body, from the right hip, over the left shoulder and allowed to fall down on the back; the undergarments (*Antaravasna*) wrapped round the loins, fastened by an end of cloth being tucked in thighs or by a girdle. It trenched below the knees; *sanghati* was the waist cloth wrapped round the waist and the back and tied with a girdle. These garments were yellow.

For food, begging was the usual rule; but monks were allowed to accept invitations to meals and offerings sent to monastery by the faithful and ardent Buddhist. During the rains, the monks were required to take up a fixed abode in a monastery. The neighbouring Buddhist house holders provided for their subsistence. Religious and spiritual discipline was enforced for the monks during their stay in the monastery.

The life of the monks and the nuns was strictly governed by the laws and the ten commandments and there was no room for personal likes and dislikes. Property was held in common and the possession of private property was strictly forbidden. The monks were forbidden of the use of garlands, scents and the other articles of personal decoration. They were not to indulge in liquor, flesh food, dancing etc. They were required to sleep on a hard and narrow bed, puritanic life of destitution and stern morality.

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The regulations for the nuns were stricter. It was feared that if equality was promised to them, it might lead to indiscipline and immorality. Gautam Buddha was in favour of ordaining women as nuns but he did so reluctantly at the repeated requests of chief disciple, Ananda.

## Mahayan and Hinayan

A century after Buddha's death, Buddhism was divided into many branches, which adopted their respective modes of worship. Mahayan and Hinayan were main sects. Their philosophy is concisely given as under :-

*Maha* (superior or great) *yan* (vehicle) differs from *Hina* (inferior or lesser) *yan* (vehicle) in its ethics, doctrines, monastic life and conception of Buddha. *Mahayan* (great vehicle) carries an individual to the highest goal of Buddhahood and *Hinyan* (lesser vehicle) carries to the state of *Arhathood*, a stage supposed to be lower than that of Buddhahood. The Hinayanists advocated monastic system wherein monks strive for salvation of their own-self by meditation and self-abnegation. They endeavoured for the effacement of self. The Mahayanists were of the view that self abnegation meant only for personal benefit and his ultimate aim of attainment of *Nirvan* is his selfishness. According to the Mahyanists the effacement of the self could be achieved successfully by dedicating one's own life to the service of others. A Mahayanist must resolve that he would not seek his own happiness or *Nirvana* until he had enabled others to realise their happiness or *Nirvana*. The altruistic attitude was the key note of the *Mahayan* sect.

The Hinayanists, followers of the old real Buddhism, laid

emphasis on a disciplined life of four *charvas* and ten *Bhumis* for the attainment of *Arhathood* *Summum Bonum* for a Buddhist monk. The *Arhathood* is the highest condition where *karam* does not bind the individual and the fire of the hot passion is completely extinguished. The state can be attained by a solitary life, meditation, contemplation and self abnegation; on the contrary, the Mahayanists laid emphasis on Buddhahood. A *Bodhisatva* is destined to attain *Bodhi* (knowledge) and became a Buddha in the long run. Every Mahayanist is a *Bodhisatva* as distinguished from Hinayanist who is called *sravka*.

The Mahayanists speculated a new theory of voidness (*sunyat*) and transformation of the Buddha into great mythological god, almost eternal, along with a practice of unflinching devotion (*Bhakti*) towards these great beings *Mahasatvas*, instead of the old customary reverence to the Lord Buddha. The introduction of the worship of Buddha and of the *Bodhisatva*, a novel feature of *Mahayan*, was in clear contrast of Hinyan. The Hinayanists conceived of Buddha at first as an omniscient

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human beings, but later on regarded him as superior to all beings. They did not worship images of Buddha or *Bodhisatva* but expressed reverence and made offerings to the symbol of Buddha, i.e. feet or lotus.

The Hinayanists relied more personal efforts at good and virtuous living as the means to attain salvation, the Mahayanists relied more and more on the devotion and the worship of the Buddha as a way to salvation or *nirvan* and therefore they introduced image worship with its attendant rituals, ceremonies, charms, and formulae. Faith replaced reason and devotional worship took the place of self-efforts.



The Hinayanists regarded the salvation of the individual as the goal, while the Mahayanists had their object to be the salvation of all beings. The Hinayanists practised self culture and good virtuous deeds as the way to salvation. They attain perfection by practising the Dharma as promulgated by Lord Buddha. But the Mahayanists placed more reliance on faith and devotion to the virtuous Buddhas and *Boddhisatvas* leading to the goal of salvation. The Mahayanists help others to attain their salvation before attaining their own.

Another significant point of contrast between the sects is that the canonical texts of Hinayan were all written in pali, those of Mahayan in Sanskrit. Dr. Radhakrishana observes that the Hinayan is a colourless religion denying God in doctrine, though allowing the worship of Buddha in practice. There is no devotion or *Bhakti* which implies a living God". Mahayanists, on the other hand glorifies Lord Buddha as god of gods.

## **Tantrik Buddhism**

The emergence of the tantrik *Buddhism* was an important feature of the Post-Harsha period of ancient India. The high ideals of Mahayan Buddhism which aimed at the salvation of all, soon yielded to gross superstitious and immoral practices of *Tantrism* so far as general masses were concerned. In the eighth century A.D. *stotras* and *stavas* were introduced in the Mahayanist doctrines. Later on, it was placed under the yale of mysticism and *Tantrism* by the addition of a lost *Mudras* (mystical diagrams), *Kriyas* (rites and ceremonies) and *charyas* (meditational practices and observances for internal and external purity). *Tantras* pertain to *sadhana* (religious exercises and practices) to expound practical methods for the realisation of ultimate truth.

Their methods and practices comprised, besides esoteric *yoga*, a melody of hymns, rites, etc. Emphasis was laid on the elements of *Mantras*, *Dharanis*, *Mudra*, *Mandala*, *Abhishek* etc.

The above mentioned elements have a propensity to generate beliefs in magic,

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sorcery, charms, etc., having their application to gods, demi-gods, goblins, demons, fiends and the like. When the elements of *yoga*, or sexo-yogic practices were added to these, it was full-fledged *Tantrism*. In practices, *Tantrism* had two-fold character. On the one hand, it was a systematisation of vulgar magical rites with its formulae and pantheon ; on the other hand, it was a highly developed mysticism. It had both professional sorcers (*Yogins-Siddhas*) and laymen.

*Tantrism* had two terms *Pranjana* and *upaya* as symbols of female and male aspects of the absolute *Tantrik* Buddhism and laid stress on the union of *Prajana* and *upaya* both in the esoteric *yogic* senses. In *Tantras*, a beautiful girl of sixteen, to be adopted for the *Sadhna*, was styled as *Prajana*.

The *Tantrik* Buddhism condemned the practices of austere penances, difficult vows, fasting, going pilgrimage, etc. According to it such practices inflict torture upon human body and mind and make man morbid, and disfigure his face and therefore such things can never lead to perfection. The way of *Tantrik* Buddhism for attainment of perfect enlightenment is only through easy process of enjoyment. The male and female represent in this world the division that exists in the nature of the absolute as *upaya* and *Prajana*, the union of which is the highest reality. Therefore, for the attainment of the highest spiritual experience, men and women must, first of all realise themselves as manifestations and *upaya* and *Prajana*, and be united together in body, mind and spirit. The supreme bliss (*Mahasukh*) that emerges from such union is the highest religious gain according to *Tantrik* Buddhism. Therefore, all the esoteric *sadhana* must be performed by the male and female together, and it is the easy process of realising the highest truth.

The sexo *yogic Sadhana* of the Buddhist *Tantriks* is calculated to be capable of transmitting "even gross sex pleasure into the realisation of infinite bliss in which all the activities of the mind are absolutely lost and in which the self

and the world around are lost in all pervading oneness". The *sexo-yogic sadhana* of the Tantrik Buddhists paved the way for the dominance of the erotic and sensual practices which undermined the sense of moral values. They led to gross debauchery and perversion of morals and ethics. *Tantrik* ideas and practices caused general de-gradation of religious life in India.

## Sexo-Yogic Methods Of Buddhism

The Buddhist system of *tantrism*, compounded with the principle of the *sexo-yogic* practice, is known as Vajaryan. Vajaryan is the way for the *vajar* nature of the self and all entities. In addition to the emphasis laid by Vajaryan upon the secret *yogic* practices, it attached great importance to the worship of many gods and goddesses

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of an extensive pantheon which it evolved. It also developed numerous rites, rituals and practices to the efficacies of *mantras* (charms), *Mudras*, *Mandalas* etc.

Another outstanding feature of *vajrayan* is the identification of ultimate reality with the conception of Lord Supreme (*Bhagwan*) as *Vajrasattva* or *Vajradhara* : and *Vajradhara* is identified with *Bodhichitta*. He who realises *Vajrasattva* becomes himself *Vajrasattva*. The idea of *Vajrasattva* as the lord supreme introduced a new and expanded pantheon of gods and goddesses in *vajrayan* sect. *Vajrasattva* is Adi-Buddha (the Primal enlightened one) and has five attributes, from which proceed five kinds of meditation (*Dhyanas*). From these emanate five deities known as the five *Dhyani Buddhas* or *Tathagatas*.

Each of the above mentioned *Dhyani* Buddhas has a divine consort (*sakti*) or his own. In the Vajrayan system of worship, the god is to be meditated in union with or deeply embraced his *sakti*, filled with erotic emotions and enjoying great bliss (*Mahasukha*). One who attains the stage of *yuganadha*, attains perfect enlightenment and eternal tranquility and becomes free from cycle of birth and death.

## **Kalchakrayan**

About tenth century A.D. a new sect of *Tantrik* Buddhism called *kalchakrayan* came into existence. It was within the fold of *vajrayan*. The supreme deity of *kalchakrayan* was called Lord *kalcharkra*. Here *kal* denotes the ultimate immutable knowledge and *chakra* means cycle of world process. *Kalachakra* implies the absolute unified principle of *prajna* and *upaya* and he is thus *Bodhihtta*.

*Kal chakrayan* and *Vajrayan* both have the same methods of worship, rites, rituals, *mantras* etc. But the difference between the two that *kalchakrayan* has predominance of many gods and their female energy, having awful and terrible aspects, and other dreadful fiendesses known as *dakins*. All of theses are to appear with *mantras* (charms), magic circles, sacrifices, offerings etc. Another difference is that *kalchakrayan* laid emphasis in time which with all its divisions and sub-divisions (year, month, fortnight, week, day or night, hour, moment), exists within human body. The whole universe with all its animate and inanimate objects lies in the human body.

## **Sahajayan**

In the eleventh century, a section of the *Tantrik* Buddhism revolted against all conventions and ceremonies, rites, *mantras* etc. of *vajaryan*. It was called *sahajayan* Buddhism. It discarded the high philosophy and profound knowledge, installation of images and worshipping of gods and goddesses. According to it, truth is a matter of intuition and could be acquired through easy, straight and natural way (*sahaj*). They

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followed a path of *yogic* practices, *charyapadas* (devotional songs) and *Doshas*. Sahajyan flourished in 11th and 12th centuries in the country.

With the lapse of time those very features of Brahmanism were introduced in Buddhism against which its founder Gautam Buddha raised his voice of protest. The rise of Mahayanists led to the worship of the Buddha and Boddhisatvas and created many more of the latter. The images of Buddha and many new Boddhisattavas were worshipped everywhere and people built great temples to them and endowed with considerable wealth and ornaments. Then many separate gods and goddesses were also introduced and were worshipped by Buddhists. Many unworthy persons who entered the Buddhist monasteries began to relax many rules and sought sanctions to indulge in many vices. Therefore, they introduced some practices which were contrary to the ethics of Buddhism and composed many books on their own doctrines. This phase of Buddhism is known as *Tantrik* or Vajaryan Buddhism. They made complete departure from the religion as preached by Lord Buddha. Instead of attaining *Nirvan*, the acquisition of magical powers, through *sexo yogic* practices, as detailed above, became supreme object of some of new sects. Vajaryan advocated many esoteric practices in which women and wine were most essential things.

The *Tantrik* beliefs and superstition contributed to the downfall of Buddhism in the north. It disappeared in Muslim period.

## Contribution Of Buddhism To Indian Culture

It is noteworthy feature that Buddhism after the tenth century was influenced by Brahmanical revival. Many features of Buddhism were incorporated in Hinduism. It was nearer to Brahmanism in its doctrinal approach and also in its pantheon. For example, the images of Avalokiteshvara and

other Buddhist divinities have some analogy to the image of Vishnu. The benign attitude of Shiva is noticeable in certain images of *Dhyani* Bodhisatvas, while few others exhibit the dire and terrible character of Shiva. The fierce Buddhist god Heruka in the dancing pose with a corpse below him, and emblems like *vajra* and *kapala* in his hands, a *khatvanga* along the left side of his body, a garland of skulls (*mundamala*) around his neck and other features leave no doubt that this particular god concept was based on the terrific aspect of Shiva.

Yamari like Yama, the Hindu god of death, has a buffalo for his mount and a mace with a skull pointed on it. Many goddesses have also been conceived in Buddhism. Besides Goddess Tara, such as Buddhist goddesses like Saraswati, Apparajita, Grahmatika, etc. have distinct Brahmanical association and resemblance. Vajaryogini was the Buddhist counterpart of the *Tantrik* goddess Chinnamasti.

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In the domain of Hinduism of the later period there is unmistakable evidence of the influence of Buddhist thought and ethics. Though Buddhism never dislodged Brahmanism from its high pedestal, yet it left on it permanent impression of its own. The scholars and writers of Brahmanism were profoundly impressed by the altruistic attitude and ethics of Buddhism, universal love and sacrifice for the good of mankind they were adopted in the Brahmanical literature.

The doctrine of Ahimsa, so strongly, stressed, devoutly preached and sincerely practised by the Buddhism, was incorporated bodily in their teachings by the Brahmans of later days. This emphasised respect for life in all forms and minimised the spirit of sacrifices which involved the loss of

life. Buddhism, thus, exercised humanizing effect on Hinduism.

Buddha prescribed a severely practical and simple code of ethics for his followers. In addition to the noble moral code, such as charity, purity, self-sacrifice, truthfulness and control over passions, he emphasised love, truth, compassion, equanimity and non-injury to the living creatures in thinking, speaking and doing. He laid stress on ideal of service to the humanity and freedom from avarice, sin, passion and hatred. Though the *Upnishads* had advocated these virtues before the rise of Buddhism, they did not raise a tone of public morality to such a high pitch as Buddhism. Then Mahayan sect of Buddhism placed before the people a noble ideal of service in the form of *Bodhisatva*. Besides these, Buddhism explained to the masses that man is the architect of his own destiny not any God or gods. This led to the rise of individual religion in place of Brahmanism.

Buddhism considered this world full of pains, sufferings and miseries. Pursuit of eight folded path and the austere life of a monk were advocated to end the miseries. The best way to attain the final liberation is to detach from worldly life. An individual is to strive for his own salvation. Consequently, several persons abandoned their hearths and homes to lead the life of an ascetic and monk in monastery. Natural glory, political achievements and economic greatness sank into pale insignificance before the glory of individual *nirvan*. It gave rise to escapism.

Another new thing given by Buddhism was the monastic system or the organisation of religious devotees (in disciplined communes or orders). The institution of the *Ramdvira* and the *math* (organized brotherhoods of sadhus) is a feature was introduced in the Hindu society as a result of its contact with Buddhism. Before the advent of Buddhism old men used to retire to hermitages in the forests to end their remaining days in solitary recluse and lonely contemplation. But the grouping of religious devotees into fraternity of monks, obeying a common head, following a common code of disciplinary rules and living together under a common roof, did not

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exist. Then, the Buddhist *sangha* for the first time made systematic organised attempts in India to teach simple code of ethics for better spiritual life of masses. In due course, the Buddha *vihars* became the first centre of free education in India. There the common folk received their lessons on moral and spiritual truths.

The practice of worshipping personal gods, making their images and erecting temples in their honour, was adopted by the Hindus in imitation of the Mahayan Buddhists. These elements did not form a part of the Aryan religion which consisted mainly of sacrifices on open altars in the open air. The Buddhists set the example of constructing and dedicating cave temples, and the Hindus and Jains followed it.

Buddhism unlike some other religions, never resorted to the sword and acts of vandalism to gain its adherents. This made the Indian nation shrink from shedding blood and adopt pacific temperament. The vivid description of the horrors of war terrified the Indians out of the political life and life of war. Buddhism thus toned down the martial games and exercises and in due course fell an easy prey to the sturdy invaders from the north.

Buddhism denounced the caste system with all its distinctions and advocated equality in society. All could embrace Buddhism and partake the Buddha's message irrespective of sex, age or position in society. This shattered the concept of caste distinction and divisions and made the people tolerant each other.

The *yogachar* doctrine of Buddhism was very popular. Besides these main sects (Hinyan and Mahayan) of Buddhism, there were eighteen sects which differed from each other in many ways. These divisions became the main cause for its downfall.

## Impact of Buddhism in Haryana



## Buddhism in Kurudesā

The region, although fell under the influence of Buddhism during 6th century B.C., continued to hold its supremacy in rituals and ethical code of conduct.

The region, frequently referred to in Pali canons as Kuru, was one of the sixteen Mahayanapadas, three hundred leagues in extent and had its capital at Indraprastha which were seven *leagues* in circumference. Its other parts were known as Kurukhetta which included Thanesar-Kaithal-Karnal and Rohtak - Hissar districts respectively<sup>1</sup>. Kutrudesā, its another name denoted the culture of expansion of its people, the Kurus, from Saraswati to the Ganga and included Kurukshetra which had already come to prominence as the chief centre of Aryan religion and culture.

1. H. A. Phadke : *Haryana : Ancient and Medieval*, 1990, p. 30.

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The Kuru realm seems to have very little political influence in Buddha's time, for the centre of political gravity had already shifted to the east, to Magadha. The Kuru Kings, however, do find mention in Buddhist literature. The dynasty which ruled at Indapatta is mentioned as belonging to the Yudhitthilla *gotta*, and reference is also made several times to Dhanajaya who was none else than Arjuna of the epic tradition. Bodhisatta Sutasoma who belonged to the Kuru tribe made large gifts, but he got no pleasure in making such gifts as there was none among the recipients who possessed five moral qualities, a necessary condition for the efficacy of such charity. During Buddha's time, the King of Kurus was called *korvya*. King Korvya lived in the well known city of

Jhullakotthila, identified with Dhankot in district Gurgaon. It is also so called because houses of its people had abundant grains.

Other basis of the regions during that period were kammasadamma and Kundli or Kundila(village on G.T. road in Sonipat district ). Kammasadamma was a *nigma* or *nagara* where Buddha used to stay. The other town Kundli of Kundila has been located at village Kundal (also in Sonipat tahsil) where a high mound yielding remains of early historical period exists, and which according to local tradition is connected with the *Mahabharata* period.

The famous Buddhist nuns Nanduttara and Mittakali also belonged Kammasdamma. The *Chullayogga* mentions *Aggalapura* (Agroha) as a strong hold of Buddhism while the *Vinaya Patika* recounts the visits of renowned physician Jivaka to the town of Rohtak. The people of Kuru kingdom were reputed for deep wisdom, generosity and bodily wealth.

Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang visited this area in the second quarter of the seventh century A.D. In his account of Srughana (Sugh in Yamunanagar district), the pilgrim mentions an *Ashokan stupa* towards the west of Yamuna containing hair and nail relics of *Tathagatta* (Buddha) as a spot where in former terms the Tathagata had preached the law to convert men and to its right and left were stupas containing mortal remains of Buddha's famous disciples Sariputta and Maugalyana and other great *arhats* (saints).

There were five *Sangh ashrams* at Sugh housing 1,000 Buddhist monks who engaged themselves in learning and learned discussions. Besides, it was an important centre of Buddhism in this part of the country for it maintained a large number of Buddhist monks<sup>1</sup>.

The kingdom of Srughna is described in more details by Hieun Tsang. He relates:-

"The capital, above 20 Li in circuit, was on the west side of the Jamuna, and was in a ruinous condition. In climate and natural products of the country

1. *Ambala District Gazetteer*, 1984, p. 375.

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resembled Sthanesvara. The inhabitants were naturally honest. There were Buddhist monasteries and above 1,000 Buddhist ecclesiastics, the majority of whom were Hinayanists, a few adhering to other schools".

Hiuen Tsang makes a special mention of Thanesar about which he wrote :-

"The manners of the people are cold and insincere. The families are rich and given to excessive luxury. They were much addicted to the use of magical sorts, and greatly honour those of distinguished ability in other ways. Most of the people follow after worldly gain, a few of them give to agricultural pursuits. There are three Sangharsamas in this country with about 700 priests. They all study (practice or use) the little vehicle (Hinayan)".

It further informs us that at Srughna the pilgrims enjoyed the learned company of Acharya, Jayagupta. Hiuen Tsang stayed here one winter and half of the following spring and studied the entire *Vibhasa* text of the Sautrantika Buddhist School. It would thus appear that Srughna developed into an important centre of Buddhist religion and culture. Although it maintained a good number of Buddhist scholars, but their faith was on the decline giving to Brahmanical religion.

The village Asthal Bohar near Rohtak is known for its *math* (a monastery of *kanphatta jogis*). The jogis claim to be spiritual descendants of Buddha's earliest *Bhikshus*. They represent Nath cult which originated as one of the branches of the Mahayan form of Buddhism. Guru Gorakh Nath is believed to be its founder.

## Minor Religious sects & Beliefs

The Buddhist and Jain literature refer to numerous other minor sects and religious beliefs. These sects preached different doctrines and practices.

## Ajivikas

They were said to be Sudra *Sannyasis* whose leader was Makkhali Gossalla. Gossalla was born as a slave. He became a pupil of Vardhaman Mahavira in the second year of his monkhood and was with Mahavir for the next six years. But there appeared differences between the two on rejuvenation and other principles and Gossalla drifted away from Mahavira. Gossalla then called himself a Jina and resided in Saraswati. It became center of the Ajivika activities. Gossalla died there six years before Mahavira. He was a radical teacher who denied even basic doctrine of Hindu thought-theory of *Karma*. He argued that "man is subject to laws of nature. Action, therefore, cannot lead a man out of the laws of nature. Action, therefore, can not lead a man out of the inevitable and so quietest view of life is desirable.

1. H. A. Phadke : Haryana : Ancient And Medieval, p. 64.

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The Ajivikas were wandering-mendicants and lived in solitary meditation. They believed that things gain perfection even through non-performance of action, and that "that is a process of natural and spiritual evolution through ceaseless round of births and deaths. They followed extreme asceticism and austerities of all kinds. They loved solitude, and disdained efforts even decencies. Their precept was the attainment of a given condition of any character does not depend either on one's own acts, or on those of another, or on human endeavour. There is nothing like power, energy, strength or human vigour.

The Ajivikas were noted for their matted hair, beard, the use of water pot and carrying of a staff. Some of them begged in every second, third or fourth, fifth or sixth even in seventh

house. Some begged in every house, but did not accept alms if there was a flash of lightning. Some of them performed penance by entering earthen vessels. They were men of right living and in this mode of right living, they were followed by both the Jains and Buddhists.

## Saivism

Saivism had its origin in the deeply rooted worship of a prototype of Shiva and Shiva cult was borrowed by Indo-Aryans from Indus culture. Saivism was known in the early centuries of Christian Era B.C. There are references to Saivism in the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramyana*. As a separate religious sect with its own philosophy and organization, Saivism may be traced to the Pashupat from which is mentioned in *Mahabharata* along with the system of *Sankhya*, *Yoga*, *Pancharatra Veda*.

## Principles of Saivism

Saivism is considered as the oldest religion in India. Shiva is conceived as the lord of the *Yogis* who seek union with the world soul by intense concentration. He has been supposed to be the god of fertility and procreation. He is considered not only as a destroyer, but also creator and preserver. He is worshipped under the symbol of *lingam* or phalus and it is even now very common everywhere in India. His vehicle (*vahana*) is *Nandi*, the bull. He is reckoned as the most powerful god of the trinity Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh. Shiva himself is all transcending, sublimely beyond all limits of space, time and form, eternal and infinite.

The fundamental concept of Saivism is that a changing cosmic force destroys as well as reproduces the universe. It is suggested that Lord Shiva represents the force which rules the universe. He reproduces and destroys, and thus effects a change. Animal and human existence is the outcome of sexual impulses. The union of *Purusha* and *Prakriti* is constant and continuous process. It manifests itself in individuals who must have a beginning and an end.

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By the very nature of his activities Shiva appears to be a great ascetic. He is conceived as a great ascetic and personification of the forces of nature. Later on Shiva came to be identified with time (*Mahakal*) and death (*Mrityu*). When he is presiding over procreation, he is conceived as *Ardhanarishvar*, half man and half woman. He is considered *Mahadeva* (great God), *Hara* (the seizer), *Bhairava* (the terrible) and *Pashupati*<sup>1</sup> (the lord of cattle). He symbolises human souls. Lord Shiva is depicted as powerful, wrathful and impetuous god, but generous and bountiful; one who spares nothing when propitiated, and confers boons on his devotees. Lord Shiva helps his *Bhakats* or devotees to achieve freedom from bondage.

## Sects of Saivism

In the beginning, there were two classes of Saivas, viz., devotees of Shiva :

(i) the house holder devotees of Shiva and (ii) the ascetics whose sign was tonsure and yellow robe. They did not lay emphasis on rigid observance of caste system. But they insisted on the practice of *yoga*.

**Pashupat.-** The earliest sect of Saivism is Pashupat. It was associated, in the early stages with the 'Lord of Cattle' but later on with the lord (*Pati*) who helps his creatures (*Pashu*) in achieving freedom from bondage.

In the early centuries of the Christian era, Saiva sects were known as Lakul, Pashupati or Maheshwara after the name of their god or historical founder. In the *Mahabharata* it is stated that Pashupati (Shiva) revealed *Jnan*, known as Pashupat. The Pashupats believe that Maheshwara (Shiva) has taught five categories of means or processes for the release of *Jiva* (soul) from its worldly bonds. These categories are : (1) *karya* or effect, viz., that which is not independent; (ii) *Karana* or cause, viz., that which is independent. These two categories involve abstruse philosophical concepts. (iii) *yoga* or path which connects the individual soul with god through

the channel of *chitta* (mind), chanting of *mantras*, meditation, etc. (iv) *Vidhi* or rule which takes the aspirant to the Lord Shiva. This *vidhi* has two aspects, firstly, *charya* (conduct). It is primary and direct means for the destruction of miseries and unhappiness. It consists of besmearing the body with holy ashes, lying in ashes, singing, dancing, muttering magic formulae and circumambulation; secondly, *Vidhi* is subsidiary means which are helpful to *charya*. These consist of besmearing the body with ashes after worship, begging and eating the remnants of what others have eaten.

(v) *Duhkhanta* or the end of misery, it is the absolute elimination of misery. while in other religious system the destruction of misery is considered as *Moksha*, while in the Pashupati sect this is coupled with the attainment of super normal powers.

1. There are large number of followers of Pashupati sect in Haryana.

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From very early times, certain mystic practices were associated with Pashupat sect. In brief, the essentials of Pashupat sect are those of a virile theism, leaning on the side of healthy ascetism. The followers of Pashupati sect emphasise simple ascetism, meditation, repetition of the symbol and 'renunciation of lust, greed and anger in a spirit of forgiveness. Later on Pashupat sect degenerated. It resorted to acts of sorcery and a form of cannibalism - eating human flesh and drinking in the human skulls.

**Vira Saivism.-** Vira Saivism means the Saivism of stalwart. The vira-Saivas worship Shiva alone.

The *linga* that they wear on their person distinguished them from the followers of other sects of Saivism. As the Vira

saivas gave prominence to the *linga* (Phallus) and the Nandi or Bull, the name lingayats is also applied to them. They emphasise *Bhakti* and such virtues as truth, morality, self surrender, love, cleanliness, etc. They follow anti-Brahmanical practices, like women wearing the *linga* like men, *Diksha* ceremony in place of *upanayan* both for boys and girls, Saivite formula for the Vedic Gayatri *Mantra*, use of Shiva Gayatri, widow remarriage, etc.

The individual soul proceeds from Shiva, partakes of his essence and finds ultimate rest in him. It finally becomes one with Him. The final goal of the soul is the unity with *Para Shiva*.

**Saiva-Sidhanta.-** According to Saiva-Sidhanta, Shiva is the operative cause of the world. Saiva-Sidhanta recognises Maya and Jiva. World is resolved (*Ma*) into it and it evolved (*ya*) from it.

Besides the images of Shiva, the figure of other Saiva divinities were also made and worshipped. Skand (kartakeya) and Ganpati were the sons of Shiva, Skand was worshipped as war god. He was also known as Mahasen. Yodhey kings of Rohtak in ancient period worshipped the Skand god of Saivism.

Ganesh, Vinayak or Ganapati was also worshipped as a god to ward off evil. It is believed that Ganpati cult came into existence about sixth century A.D. But real popularity of Ganesh came later on.

The existence of about 100 *Deva* (or Mahadeva) temples at Thanesar at the time of Chinese pilgrim shows that Saivism was popular in Haryana.<sup>1</sup>

## **Thanesar as a seat of Saivism in ancient time**

The name *Sthanavisvara* is derived, either from *Sthana*, meaning an abode of *Isvara* (Mahadeva), or from an amalgamation of the names of *Sthanu* and *Isvara*, or

1. H. A. Phadke : Haryana : *Ancient And Medieval*, 1990, p. 61.



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from *Sthanu* and *sara* (laka). Thus, the place is connected with the lord Shiva(Siva). The *Materya Purana* mentions an abode of goddess Bhawani Durga at *Sthanesvara*, while the *Mahabharata* states that god *Sthanu* (Siva) had himself appeared in a form there<sup>1</sup>.

The *Mahavagga* mentions *Sathuna* or *Thuna*, a Brahmin village in the west (*Pachimaya disaya*); while the Divyavadana adds upasthuna, and describes them both as Brahman villages (*Pasehimena Sthuno pasthu Nakau Brahmana Gramakau*).This accords the account of Chinese traveller Hiuen Tsang who regards Thanesar as the western most country of Buddhist Madhydesa.The *Vrkatsvayambha Purana* names the place as *Sthanesvara* and its association with the Srikantha *janapada* can be gathered from the Buddhist work *Arymanjurrimulakalpa*. Further the recent discovery of clay and seals and sealings at Daultpur(about 15 km. from Thanesar) recording the legend 'Sthanesvarasya', i.e. of lord Sthanesvra, in *Brahmi* character shows that Thanesar had already grown into a centre of Saivism by 4th-5th century A.D.

The *Harshcharita* of Bana makes it sufficiently clear that *Sthanvisvara*, the capital of Srikantha of *janapada*, was situated near the bank of river Sarasvati. The region Srikantha derived its name from a *naga* (cobra). Bana presents a graphic picture of saivism which was popular in Thanesar, though its Tantrik form was not then unknown. His account is valuable on the religious life of the people under king pushpabhuti, an ardent devotee of Siva and whose example was emulated by his subjects. Bana writes :

"From boyhood upwards (Pushpabhuti) untaught by any man, entertained a great, almost unborn devotion towards Siva, the adorable, readily won by faith, creator of creations, annihilator of existence. The dispositions of his subjects also were conformable to their monarch's mind. Thus house by house, the holy lord of the cleaving axe was worshipped, the winds

blowing in those pure districts were fragrant with much resin melted in sacrificial pits, they dropped a rain of dew from the milk used for bathing, they whirled along petals of Bel twig chaplets. It was with gifts and presents customary in Siva worship that the king was honoured by citizens, dependents, councillors and neighbouring sovereigns".

Bana's *Harshcharita* (the deeds of Harsha) written about early seventh century A.D. gives a detailed account of the king's interest in Tantrik practices and his close associations with a southern Saiva Acharya Dhirva. The Saiva influences in the region can be gathered from *Vamana Purana* (C.A.D.700) which provides a detailed account of various Sivalingas disappeared with the advent of Muslim invaders; but there seems little doubt that the region had great impact of Saivism. Mention of hundred

1. H. A. Phadke : *Haryana : Ancient And Medieval*, 1990, p. 61.

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Deva temples (Mahadeva) by Hiuen Tsang co-relates with the evidence in the *Vamanapurana*. The popularity of Saivism in Srikantha *janapada* was also due to royal patronage. The literary and epigraphic evidence show that Harsha was a devotee of lord Mahadeva (*Paramamahesvara*). This special feature of devotion to Siva explains why the capital was named as *Sthanvisvara*, and why Bana who enjoyed Harsha's patronage presents a vivid and detailed account of the royal city.

The influence of Vaisnavism can be traced at Taxila as early as first century B.C., but this is not possible in case of Haryana before 4th century A.D. Most of the Vaisnava images discovered in the region belong to Prathara Tomara-

Chahamana period (A.D.800-1100).

## **Naga-serpent worship**

Worship of *Naga* or serpent is traceable in all major religions of India. The Naga-cult is traced back to the Indus Valley Culture where two seals representing the devotion of Naga have been found. In the reign of Kushan king, Huvishka, a Nag statue was installed. The Naga worship has been assimilated in Saivism, Vaishnavism, Buddhism and Jainism. If Vishnu uses Shesh Naga as his couch or seat, shiva wears snake and Parshvanath, the Jain *Tirthankar*, has a serpent symbol and Buddha received the homage of Muchilinda and Elapatra. Balram is conceived as the incarnation of Shesha Naga.

## **Worship of other deities**

The Sun was deified in the Vedic age. There were devotees of *Surya* (Sun). He was a popular deity in the third century B.C. The Kushan coins bear the image and name of the sun. In the epics and *Puranas*, sun is regarded as a popular god. Even today a large number of people worship sun by offering water in the morning.

Kuber, the lord of wealth was also worshipped. He is represented in sculpture with his two *nidhis*. Even now many trading classes worship Kuber in the areas.

## **Vasudeva Cult**

Reform movements were started against the domination of the Brahmans and the sacrifices performed by them. The Vasudeva cult was also one of such reform - movements. "The cult of vashudeva was formed from the same intellectual ferment which produced Buddhism and Jainism, but it was a religious reform. It repudiated slaughter of animals and the inefficiency of the sacrificial ritual and advocated the path of devotion as the way of salvation. Like Buddhism and Jainism, it was the natural reaction against the barren excesses of the Vedas<sup>1</sup>.

1. R. C. Bhandarkar : Vaishnavism, Saivism and Minor Religious Systems, 1928, p. 7.

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This cult was essentially a Kshatriya movement and was not much favoured by Brahmans. The Vasudeva cult was flourishing on the fourth B.C. A reference to the founder of this sect is available in the *Chhandagva Upnishad* which mentions sage Krishna, son of Devki, as a disciple of Rishi Ghora of the Angirsa family. The above volume refers in one and the same passage to sage Krishna and inculcation of such virtues as *Tapas* (asceticism), *Dana* (charity), *Arhava* (simplicity or piety), and the same virtues are extolled by Krishna in the *Gita* in his discourse to Arjuna on the battlefield. Vasudeva Krishna was also the hero of the Yudu clan. He became the leader of the religious movement and later on was deified and styled Bhagavat. This gave rise to Vasudeva-Krishna cult. It was contemporary cult to Jain Tirthankar Arishtanemi who preceded Parsvanath and was earlier than Vardhman Mahavira.

Later on, pastoral character was attributed to Krishna and there are numerous stories about Krishna's wanton childhood, tender boy-hood and youthful amorous ecstasies. These are narrated in the *Harivamsa* (a supplement of the *Mahabharata*). The stories about the early life of the pastoral Krishna were probably developed out of Vedic legends about Vishnu who was called Gopa (protector of cow) in Rigveda.

## Vaishnavism

Vaishnavism denotes "the particular theistic religion of which Vishnu is the object of worship and devotion as the supreme God. Vishnu was known in the Rigvedic period. Vishnu was usually recognised as an aspect of the Sun in *Rigveda*. Later on, the abode of Vishnu became the goal of the spiritual aspiration of the devotees of Vishnu".

In the course of time, Vasudeva Krishna of the Vasudeva-Bhagavata cult was identified with the Vedic deity Vishnu

and henceforth the Bhagavata religion came to be known as *Vaishnava Dharama*. It is probable that the Vasudeva Bhagavat cult was greatly influenced by Pre-Aryan ideas, practices and faiths.

Later on, Vasudeva-Krishna- Vishnu was identified with a sage or named as Narayan. He was deified. The tenth *Prapathaka* of the *taittiriya Aranyaka* regards Naryan, Vasudeva and Vishnu as one and the same deity. Here Narayan appears also as Hari and as the deity, eternal, supreme and Lord.

Some scholars argue that Naryan was an ancient popular leader of religious thought. He was born in the family of the another well known sage named Nara. In the course of time, the worshippers of the deified sage Naryan who were originally known as Pancharatrikas were mixed with the followers of the Bhagavata cult who were worshipping Vasudeva as the supreme God.

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Patanjali, the grammarian, mentions the name Krishna and Janardhan, the synonyms of Vasudeva; God Vishnu-Vasudeva was deified and his representation in figures began to appear in the beginning of the Christian era. A four armed figure of Vishnu with *chakra* (wheel) in the upper and left hand appeared on the coins of the Panchal King. A seal of matrix of Kushan king Huviska has the figure of four armed Vishnu with *sankha*, *chakra* (wheel), *gada* (mace) and a ring like object in place of lotus. Later Kushan kings had leanings towards Bhagavata religion.

## **Bhagavata Religion in Haryana**

Bhagavatism became greatly popular during the Gupta period(4th to 6th centuries). The Gupta kings were ardent followers of the Bhagavata faith and during their times were built many a Vaishnava temple and shrine all over northern India.

As already noted, the epic, and Puranic traditions are unanimous with regard to the Kshetriya origin of Krishna-Vasudeva. The Buddhist and Jain sources corroborate this fully. The Buddhist *Ghatajataka* describes Krishna-Vasudeva as a scion of the royal family of Mathura. The Jain *Uttar-adhyayana sutra* also points to the same. It is now a well accepted fact that the name *Sattavata Dharma* as applied to Bhagvata Dharma shows that it originated with *Sattavatas* (same as Vrishnis) from Satvant onward (who was a younger contemporary of Rama-Dasarathi).

The predecessors of Krishna who were all Vaishnavites, belived in a Vishnu worship characterised by love, devotion and service to a monotheistic divinity. Krishna Vasudeva developed this theism soon into a special cult later known as Vasudeva or Bhagavata or Pancharatra doctrine, but also called Sattavata which was particularly associated with Mathura and the Yadavas and adjacent regions and branch clans. In the inscriptions of our period Samkarshana has been traditionally described as i.e. brother of Krishna. The association of Vasudeva with Samkarshana (i.e. Balarama) proved beyond doubt that the Bhagavata religion had its founder in the Yadava prince Krishen-Vasudeva and was not a pre-existing full-fledged one, independent of Krishna-Vasudeva.

The Garuda column of Besnagar and the Bhagavata inscription of Hathibada and Ghosundi prove that the Bhagavatas accepted the identification of Vasudeva-Krishna, with Naryan and Vishnu by 200 B.C. Now the question arises as to who really and how the amalgamation of Naryana Vishnu and Krishna- Vasudeva took place as these deities were originally different from each other.

Vishnu is a Rigvedic god, and probably like most of them a nature god. He seems to have been a personification of the sun. Though comparatively few verses have been addressed to him, he holds quite an important place in the Vedic pantheon,

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and his importance rests chiefly on his three strides with which he strode over the universe. Of these three steps, two are earthly, but the top one, the highest is known to himself. No one dares approach this third step, not even the 'soaring winged birds'.

From the times of the later Samhitas and Brahmanas, Vishnu grows further in importance. In the *Satapatha Brahmanas*, he comes to be recognised as the personification of sacrifice. The *Aitareya Brahmana* also assigns Vishnu the highest place among the gods. Though Vishnu came to the forefront of the gods in Brahmanical literature, his position did not acquire stability in early Vedic times. Vishnu, however, rose to the highest distinction in the epic, in fact the whole of the *Mahabharata* is permeated by Vishnuite influence.

The epic describes several incarnations of Vishnu, Krishna-Vasudeva as is well-known is one of them. It is as Krishna-Vasudeva and Narayana that Vishnu commands the supreme respect in the epic. Visnuism becomes infused with life only when it is definitely identified with Narayanism or Vasudevism. Though Vishnu maintains also a separate and independent existence apart from Krishna, the most attractive and interesting feature about him is his transformation into the supreme personal god as Krishna-Vasudeva. It is like a personal development of the Vedanta philosophy only it is touched here by the personality of the man-god Krishna.

Regarding Narayana, we know that he is not an ancient deity like Vishnu. He is mentioned for the first time in the *Brahmanas*. The *Sathapatha Brahmana* iii,3,4, calls him Purusha Narayana who at the instance of Prajapati places all the world and all the gods in him, thus becoming the power of sacrifice lasting over five nights and became supreme. In the *Mahabharata* he is identified with Vishnu.

In the epic the identity of Vishnu and Narayana as the eternal

Purusha is an acknowledged fact. In the 4th *prapathaka* of the *Taittiriya Aranyaka* mention is made of Narayana in connection with Vishnu and Vasudeva apparently as three phases of the same supreme spirit (*Narayanaya Vidmhme, Vasudevaya dhimahi, tanno Vishnu prachodayat..*)

We have seen that the worship of Vishnu is as old as the *Rigvedic* days, but Krishna-Vasudeva is a latter divinity. The Vasudeva-cult cannot be definitely proved on any authentic ground much prior to Panini's time (c.600 BC). It is difficult to say when Vasudeva came to be identified with Vishnu. Vasudeva is the name of Vishnu in a passage of the *Taittiriya Aranyaka*, but according to the consensus of opinion this work cannot be earlier than the beginning of the Christian era. In the *Bodhyana Dharmasutra* which is an orthodox treatise dating at least as far back as the 3rd century BC we find that Garutman is the vehicle of Vishnu and Kesava is Vishnu's epithetic. Patanjali's *Mahabhashya* (early 2nd century BC) tells us that Kesava was an appellation

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of Vasudeva-Krishna. This shows that the identity of Vasudeva-Krishna with Vishnu was an established fact in 3rd or 2nd century BC.

Garuda is a sun bird and the Garudadhivaja of Besnagar, erected in honour of Vasudeva, suggests close relationship between Vasudevism and the Sun-worship. The Vedic Vishnu with whom Vasudeva was identified in the epic times we know a solar deity. In the *Rigveda* also Vishnu is mentioned along with the sun and is regarded as one of the Adityas. Vishnu's three steps represent, according to scholars, the sun's daily courses, namely his rise, zenith and setting. The three immortal steps, namely *dama*, *tyaga* and *apramada*, mentioned in the Besnagar Garuda Pillar inscription, seem to be an



attempt to moralise the old mythical features of the three steps of Vishnu.

It will not be out of place to say that one of the chief contributions of Bhagavatism or Vaishnavism is the reconciliation of two traditionally opposed ideological camps, the worshippers of the Nagas and Garuda. To the Naga worshippers the earth itself is the divinity, the earth mysterious and fertile which is supported by Naga Sesha and which draws its sustenance and fecundity from the waters of the ocean. The worshippers of Garuda are evidently the worshippers of the sun shining high in the sky. The difference is between the ethereal and the earthly. Vishnuism closes the difference as is evident from various mythological stories, one being that of the Ananta Sayana of Vishnu on the waters of the sea.

Before we end, we may briefly refer to the nature and antiquity of Bhagavatism or early Vaishnavism in Haryana. Kurukshetra being the venue of the exposition of the *Gita*, Krishna worship must have been in vogue here in this region since an early time. Historically speaking, however, the earliest evidence on the subject in the region of Punjab and Haryana is provided by certain sealings belonging to 2nd century BC to 3rd century AD. They come mostly from Sunet and contain names, such as Harivara, Vishnu-soma, Vishnu-bhadra, Krishnadatta, Narayana, etc., which are all Vaishnavita in import. Again, there is a sealing which reads *hitam Bhagavatah Svaminarayanasya* which would probably suggest that about the third century A.D there was in Sunet a temple of Narayana. The motifs on the Sunet seals include *Sankha*, *Chakra*, *Gada* etc. *Svastika* and *Chakra* designs are found also on same seals from Agroha.

The Tusam (Tosham) rock inscription clearly shows that Bhagavatism or Vaishnavism was in a flourishing condition in the Hisar area during the Gupta period. This inscription in the 5th century Gupta script from Tusam (Tosham) to the north of Bhiwani contains an allusion to Vishnu (Krishna) and Jambavati (one of the eight queens of Krishna) and refer to the construction of two reservoirs by one Acharya called Somatrata for the use of Vishnu called Bhagavat or the Divine One. Somatrata is described in the inscription as a highly esteemed follower of Sattavata or Bhagvata religion.

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Vaishnavism has enjoyed uninterrupted popularity all over Haryana during the Medieval as well as the later times. It is interesting to note that Gujjar Kheri has yielded certain sculptures of the early medieval period, representing scenes from Krishna's life. Images of Vishnu and his *Avataras*, belonging mostly to Pratihara period have found in various parts of Haryana. A special mention may be made there of some beautiful images of Vishnu (c.9th century) found at Thanesar, Kosli, Agroha, etc. and of the Vaikuntra image from Prachin Siva temple, Pehowa.

Pehowa (ancient Prithudaka) inscription from the temple of Garibnath contains useful information about Vaishnavism in Pehowa and also Kanauj during the Pratihara period (9th-10th centuries). The object of the inscription is to record that a certain horse dealers who met at horse fair at Pehowa-Prithudaka agreed to impose upon themselves and their customers certain taxes and *tithes*, the proceeds of which were to be distributed among some temples, priests and sanctuaries in proportions duly specified. The institutions that benefited from his arrangement include the temple at Prithudaka of Vishnu in the Yajna-Varaha form (boar incarnation). The temple was built by Brahmana Bhuvaka.

In addition to the above there are a few more interesting records throwing considerable light on the history of Vaishnavism in Haryana. The Sirsa stone inscription of the 9th century records that there were images of Krishna(the enemy of demon Mura) united with Lakshmi (Lakshmi Narayana) which formed a part of a Siva temple there.

An undated *prasasti* of the regin of Mahandrapala of Kanauj (i.e.c. 10th century) from Pehowa mentions certain members of the Tomara family, who constructed a temple of Vishnu in Pehowa. The inscription begins with adoration of Vishnu verse 4, the Sarasvati which flows near Pehowa, Verse 5 praises the ruling king of the country, Mahendrapala who was a Pratihara king.

# Saktism

The worship of Sakti was also prevalent in ancient period, though the conception of the Shakti-cult reaches its perfection during the Gupta period as we learn from the Epics and the *Purana*. In the *Purans* we find the conception of Hindu-Trinity reaches the final form. The gods were mostly represented with their consorts having all the iconographic features of their lords. Among the consorts of Brahma, Vishnu and Siva, the members of Hindu triad the consorts of Siva, Durga rose to the status of an all powerful mother goddess. In the epic we find two Durga *Stotras*, one by Arjuna in the *Bhisma Parva* and the other in the *Virata Parva* by Yudhisthira<sup>1</sup>.

1. Vidhya Bhushan : *The Cultural History of Northern India* (from 150 B.C. to 350 A.D.), 1988, p. 112.

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The conception of the great Goddess here is almost similar to that found in the *Devi-Mahatmya* section of the *Markandeya-Purana*. These are enough examples to show that the Mother Goddess was prevalent in India and the conception of Sakti-worship was also taking its shape. A terracotta figurine of the Kusna period is quite interesting as it has a full blossomed lotus with petals falling over the shoulder in place of the head. The other characteristics are absolute nudity, the prominent breasts, deep naval mark and most realistically modelled and most determinately emphasised sex-organ which prove fertility characteristic of such figures and thus represent some type of ideal mother Goddess. On the basis of this and many other terracotta figurines, it is said with certainty that the mother goddess cult was in vogue earlier and is still prevalent. This prevalence of the worship of

Mother Goddess had a great role to place in shaping the conception of the Sakti-cult.

The chief consort of Vishnu, Laksmi was also worshipped. Her conception as a great goddess is mentioned in the Epics and *Puranas*. After churning of the ocean, Laksmi came out and she was given to Vishnu. She is mentioned as the wife of Vishnu. She has been closely associated with Kuber and Yaksas. As mentioned in the *Ramyaana* Laksmi reside in the ear of Kuber with lotus in her hand. She is associated with Indra. The *Mahabharata* also refers to the association between the two. Laksmi is more popularly worshipped as the goddess of wealth. On the mercy of her depend the prosperity and fortune of the people. It is said that once when Laksmi abandoned *Indra-Loka*, it became deserted and there was chaos and confusion everywhere which led demons to attack *Indra-Loka*. By her grace one can obtain everything. Since she guarantees good harvests, she may be regarded as the goddess of agriculture also. It may be pointed here that she has been regarded as the guardian deity of farmers since the Vedic Age.

The Rajput period witnessed the growth of Saktism<sup>1</sup>. Its followers worshipped power in the form of Mother called by various names - *Adi Sakti*, *Maha Sakta*, *Durga Kali*, *Jagadama*, etc. The mother goddess was conceived as the consort of Siva and creator of all power. They offered human and animal sacrifices to please her.

Tantrism was associated with the Shakti cult. It believed in certain dormant powers in human body and attempted to revive them by *Mantra*, *Japa* and other magic rituals. Most obscene and other immoral practices were also followed.

Sitla Mata, goddess Masani, is worshipped by the people of Haryana. There is a temple of Sitla Mata in almost every village and town. The most important among Sitla Mata temples is the one located at village Gurgaon suburb of Gurgaon city. The goddess is believed to help her devotees to ward off small pox. The other important Shakti personage is Mata Choganan which is also worshipped deeply by the people

1. B. N. Luniya : *Evolution of Indian Culutre*, 1997, page 301.

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of Haryana. Mata Vaishno Devi is revered by the people in the state. In one form or the other Mata Vaishnao Devi is worshipped in every temple of the State. Through the night and day *Jagratas*, she is worshipped everywhere.

## The Cult of Animism

In addition to worship of Shiva and Shakti (Mother Goddess) both in human and symbolic forms, people followed animism since pre-historic period. It means worship of stones, trees and animals in the belief that they are abodes of spirits, good or evil. They regarded some trees as givers of wisdom and life. There were two forms tree worship in the pre-historic period - one in which the tree itself was worshipped in its material form and the other in which tree was personified and endowed with human shape and attributes. Perhaps the *pipal* tree was regarded sacred. Bulls, tigers elephants, crocodiles, etc. were worshipped. The dove was looked upon as sacred.

All the above symbols of worship are followed by the people of Haryana even today.

## Cultural Significance of Ancient Rivers

### The foundations of indian Culture

"Watered by the divine rivers - the Saraswati, the Drsadvati and the Yamuna, the region gained considerable religious importance. On the holy banks of these rivers were kindled sacred fires, and Vedic hymns composed and recited. It was the land of divine sacrifice which bacame the foremost and highest form of duty for gods as well as for men<sup>1</sup>".

## River Sarasvati in Vedic period

In ancient times, the Sarasvati, perhaps occupied a very important position on religious grounds. The Vedic seers composed beautiful hymns in praise of the Saraswati. She is described as the river par excellence, the best of mothers, the best of goddess and an ideal place for the performance of Vedic sacrifices. The *Taittiriya Brahmana* describes *Rigveda* and *Samaveda* as springs of her water, while in the *Mahabharata* and *Puranas* she is known as *Vedamata*, *Vedagarbha*, *Sruti* and *Trayividya*. This shows her associations also with the composition of the Vedic Hymns. The *Atharaveda* describes Maruts as ploughing barley besides her when the lord of the plough was Indra, strong with hundred powers. She was *Sinivali* the goddess of fertility, blessing the valley with abundant food supply and vegetation. She was the

1. Phadke, H. A. :*Haryana, Ancient and Medieval*, 1990, p. 10.

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inspirer of good songs, promotor of all gracious thoughts, holy and the dearest among the dear ones. The Vedic seers prayed to her for the favour of glorious treasures, milk and her blessings and for living on her banks for ever<sup>1</sup>.

The Sarasvati was the scene of the activities of the famous Vedic tribes - the Bharatas, the Purus and the Kurus. The *Satpatha Brahmana* narrates the story of Vedegha Mathava (a king of Videha) accompanied by his priest Gotama Rahugana, carrying the sacred fire from her banks to east preserving there by the tradition that the Kosalas and the Videhas received their culture from her. In the *Mahabharata*

mention is made of Sarasvata, her son, sticking to her famine stricken banks and saving the Vedas when everyone had left.

The antiquity of the Sarasvati can be traced back to still earlier times. The discovery of Pre-Harappan, Harappan, late Harappan and PGW sites, along her bed and the recent Bhagwanpura (district Kurukshetra) excavations on her bank showing for the first time evidence of inter action between the late-Harappans and PGW cultures, are of considerable significance for the historical continuity of the region.

"The river Sarasvati, identified with the modern Sarsuti, is a mere shadow of its former self. It takes its rise in the Sirmur hills of the Himalayan range, flow past Yamuna Nagar, Ambala, Pipli, Kurukshetra, Pehowa, Sirsa and is ultimately lost in the deserts of Bhatner. The ancient town of Sirsa, also called Sarsuti, still stands on the north side of the dry bed of the Ghaggar."

The archaeological explorations of the Sarasvati- Ghaggar Hakra bed further proves the Vedic and epic tradition that the Sarasvati was once a mighty river with a continuous and perennial flow down to the Arabian sea. The river seems to have dried up because of serious seismic disturbances towards the close of the Vedic period. The Vedic sages, aware of this phenomenon, prayed her intensely not to deprive them of her life giving waters. This fact finds mention in the *Brahmanas* and is also the subject of various Puranic legends. Thus the stories relating Sarasvati's carrying the Vadavanta (fire) in a golden jar to the western sea, her disappearance because of the fear of touching the spectribes and the curse of the sage Utathya causing her to go to Marudesa and thereby bacame dry, are all Puranic legends to explain the natural factors which greatly interrupted her flow. Further more, the archaeological investigations of Suraj Bhan have shown that in the late-Harappan times the desiccation of the river had already started resulting in the shifting of her settlement to the upper valley and that it has lost most of its flow by the PGW period with little chance of its periodical rejuvenation.

1. Dr. H.A.Phadke. : Haryana, Ancient and Medieval 1990, p.10.

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Although dried up considerably, the Sarasvati continued to retain her importance. As the goddess of speech she is associated with Brahma and creation.

Rishi Vashistha also extolls the river with praise in the Rgveda. This fact has quoted by a famous Hindi writer<sup>1</sup>. The *Sutra* mentions sacrifices held on her banks as of special sanctity. The entire region between *Plaksaprasarvana* (the place of her rise) and *Vinasana* ( the place of her disappearance) was the proper locality for the performance of *Sarasvata Sattras* (fire rituals). She is glorified in the *Mahabharata* and the *Purans*. The Sarasvati (river goddess) of Aryans primarily known for the composition and recitation of the *Vedas* (sacred lore), the *Brahmanas* and intensive philosophical speculations of the *upnishads*, was elevated later on, to the lofty status of the goddess of learning to be worshipped in temples and educational institutions for ever.

As per *Ambala District Gazetteer*, 1892, the origin of Saraswati is as under :

"The Sarusti, the ancient Saraswati, is famous in the annals of early Brahminical history, as the most sacred river in India after the Ganges. It does not rise in the hills, but begins in a large depression in the north of the Mustafabad *pargana* of Jagadhri. For the first 20 miles of its course it is utterly insignificant, its channel being frequently only marked by a shallow depression on the surface of the ground, and being often lost entirely. Like the Brahmans who trade on its sanctity, it lives on the contributions of its neighbours. It is only after the Chautang joins it at Bhaini that it acquires a continuous channel and is worthy of being called a stream."

Latest research in the modern period was made through explorations. Cunningham in his *Archaeological Report* for 1863-64, gives the following account of the river :-

"The Sarasuti, in Sanskrit Saraswati, is too well known to require more than a mere notice. Its name is derived from Saras, a 'lake or pool' and character which it still bears, as it



partially dries up early in the year, and Vati like meaning the river of lakes or pools, becomes a mere succession of pools without any visible stream. The Brahmans have cleverly taken advantage of these pools, to each of which they have attached a legend with its accompanying shrine. Thus, along the bank of the Sarasuti to the north of Thanesar, from *Ratan Jaksh* on the east to *Aujas Ghat* on the west, a distance of only five miles, there are no less than 34 shrines, or seven shrines in one mile, or a shrine at every 250 yards. Of these the most celebrated is the *Kula Prachin*, or *Ganga tirath*, in which the Ganges herself is said to have bathed to get rid of the load of sin with which the people had defiled her waters. Another famous place is the *Sthanutirath*, where *Vena Raja* dedicated a shirine to Siva, under the name of *Sthanu*.

1. Dukhi, Lila Dhar : *Haryana Ki Sanskritik Virasat (Hindi)*, 1992, p.21.

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According to the legend, the leprous *Raja Ben*, whose name I have found as widely diffused as those of the Pandus themselves, while travelling in *doli* was set down by the bearers on the bank of the Saraswati. A dog crossed the river and stopped near the *doli* to shake himself, when some water was sprinkled on the Raja, who was astonished on seeing that each spot thus wetted immediately became whole. He at once plunged into the stream and came out entirely cleansed from his leprosy. These two legends are alone sufficient to account for the deeply-rooted belief of the people in the purifying quality of the waters of the Saraswati. Some places refer to the destruction of the Kshatriyas by Purasu Ram and other spots are dedicated to the story of the Pandus, such as *Kshirihî - vasa* and *Asthipur*. In the first of these places the water of the river was changed to milk (*kshira*) for the use of the wearied Pandus, and in the other their bones (*asthi*) were

collected together in a heap. In A.D. 634 these bones were shown to the Chinese pilgrim, Hwen Tsang, who records that they were of very large size. All my enquiries for them were fruitless, but the site of Asthipur is still pointed out in the plain to the west of the city towards Aujas Ghat".

On the lost course of the river Saraswati, important geographical analysis has been made by a professor of Jawahar Lal Nehru University, New Delhi. He threw light on many new points pertaining to causes of decay of the Saraswati and probable course of the river. The account based on the latest study is given below to have a comparative study :-

In early Vedic period the Saraswati after taking a rise in the Himalayas emerged into the plains for the first time at Adi-Badri (in the then Ambala district)<sup>1</sup>. It disappeared and reappeared several times in its course towards west and southwest till it flowed into the sea. It was visible between Adi-Badri and Chalur, Bhawanipur and Belchappar and reappeared again at Barakhera before being joined by Markandeya at Urnai near Pehoa (Pehowa) entering Kurukshetra region. This suggests that the Saraswati in its upper course had been reduced to a disconnected, intermittent stream in early Vedic period and, therefore, had ceased to be a mighty stream. The Saraswati disappeared completely at Vinasana *Tirtha* near Sirsa. It is generally known in the Indian geographical literature as the "Lost Saraswati" or the "Lost river of Indian desert". The gradual decay of the river called Saraswati in the Vedic period has been mentioned in the post Rigvedic literatures. By the time of Vajasaneyi Samhita it is possible, that the Saraswati for most part of the year ceased to be a continuous stream. The very name Saraswati "abounding in pool or lakes" suggests that from the beginning certain portion of its course resembled like a lake (*Saras*).

1. Now the place falls in the Yamuna Nagar district

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**Causes of Decay of the Saraswati<sup>1</sup>.**- The main causes of decay, disruption and disappearance of once a mighty river may be attributed to the following geographical factors which were active in that part of the region right from the source to its mouth:-

1. Severe volcanic eruptions.
2. The tertiary orogeny (the Tectonic movement) causing parallel folds in Himalayan mountains.
3. Severe earth movement which caused the upliftment of the sea in Rann of Kutch region.
4. Regression, transgression and recession of the sea.
5. Repeated glacial conditions over the area.
6. Change in climatic conditions from massive to lone continued arid conditions.
7. Establishment of desert conditions in the region through which it flowed.

All these factors have collectively or individually caused desiccation of the Saraswati.

The Saraswati described as a river full of water throughout the year and also forming lakes at places makes it explicitly clear that it must have been originated from the glacial peaks of Himalayas and not near the foot of Plaksha tree or Sirmur hills of Siwaliks as a view held by some scholars. It can be argued that no river would depend on rain water only unless and until it has regular source in the snow covered peaks. Himalayas would have provided large volume of water through glaciers to maintain its flow in the channel of Saraswati.

It is possible, that as a result of the tectonic movement in the Himalayan region, parallel folds would have formed, and thus the changes in the course of Indobrahma would have taken place. Simultaneously the source of the Saraswati which was originally located in the Himalayan glaciers might have got disturbed and shifted westwards to its present site at Sirmur hills of the Siwalik where there is no snow.

The tectonic movement, therefore, would have caused two fold effects on Saraswati :-

(a) That due to shift in the source of the Saraswati the regular supply of large volume of water from the glacial Himalayas was cut down suddenly. This might have put tremendous strain on the channel, totally depending on the rain water, to carry it to its earlier destination i.e., the sea and

1. Dhurnidhar, K. P. Contributed the write-up.

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started dwindling at places thereby disappearing in its upper and middle course also.

(b) That the tectonic movement would have also caused, as is obvious from the geological and geographical findings, changes in the course of many rivers in the northern India including Indobrahma. As a consequence of this, the tributaries which were earlier supplying large volume of water ( such as Ghaggar, Apaya, Markandeya etc.) from the upper reaches of the Himalayas to the Saraswati channel also were in short supply of water and many other tributaries got diverted and joined some other main river like, the Yamuna, Sutlej and Indus. Subsequently, the catchment areas became considerably dry and small. All these conditions might have rendered the Saraswati to become non perennial and disappear at places.

Due to the repeated glaciation over the western part of the continent (Western Rajasthan) and the associated climatic changes that took place during the period the amount of rainfall would have reduced considerably. Such changes in the course of the Saraswati and in its catchment areas made it a non-perennial. Thus the Saraswati would have lost its way

in due course of time.

When the floors of the sea were raised at the confluence as a result of devastating earthquake, marine condition withdrew from a major part of the region and desert condition got established in western Rajasthan. The formation of sand dunes and *barakhanas* took place in the desert area. Slowly and slowly the course of the Saraswati would have got dismembered in the desert area particularly between Balotra and Sirsa. The glacio-fluvial deposits had already affected its upper course. These could have been one of the reasons for its complete disappearance beyond 'Vinasana'. Later on, the course might have got diverted westward. The present dried-up course, claimed as the original course, might be the afterward diversion of the main channel of the Saraswati.

The later researches show the existence of a big lake at the tail end of the Saraswati at 'Vinasana' extending in a south-west direction. This clearly indicates the direction that the Saraswati would have taken on its onward journey towards the sea. In such a circumstances it would have definitely passed through Rajasthan (i.e. west of Aravallis).

**Probable Course of the Saraswati.-** The upper course of the Saraswati from source to 'Vinasana' has already been identified and agreed upon by many scholars. It is beyond the point of 'Vinasana' and the sea that it has remained controversial and unsolved due to lack of authentic proof on scientific lines. And, therefore, sometimes

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one starts doubting the very existence of the Saraswati apart from the question whether it actually flowed to the sea.

**Earlier View.-** O.H.K. Spate in his book *India and Pakistan*

(p.433) recognises its onward course beyond 'Vinasana' with the dried-up-bed or *wadi* comprising the interconnected beds of the Ghaggar, the *Nali*, the *Hakra*, the *Walinda*, the *Miran* and the Eastern *Nara* which run parallel to Indus.

This view is not based on scientific explanation and therefore, cannot be accepted on the following grounds :-

1. The general slope of the region from 'Vinasana' southward is south-westerd and not westward. Therefore, the river would not have taken a westward course. The Saraswati while flowing westward continuously for a long distance takes an abrupt turn to the south-west near northwest of Sirsa and forms a lake which also lies in the same direction.
2. The course suggested by Spate forms the northern and western limit of the great Indian desert down upto the Rann of Kutch. The region between the Indus and the course suggested above is so narrow, and occupied by the tropical monsoon type of vegetation that even the strongest westerlies would hardly have any impact had it flowed through this part of the area.

**Proposed views on the course of the Saraswati.-** Based on ancient literatures and geographical and geological evidences available two distinct views emerge on identifying the course of the Saraswati beyond 'Vinasana'.

1. That the Saraswati might not have flowed beyond 'Vinasana'.
2. That the Saraswati might have passed through Rajasthan to the Rann of Kuch if all flowed beyond 'Vinasana'.

i(a) It is now quite clear that the Saraswati was a great perennial river which flowed independently to the sea. But it is not evident from the Vedic literatures the very concept of sea known to the Vedic people. Although a mention of sea appears at several occasions, it is difficult to know whether it was Rann of Kutch or some other water body which was considered as sea. A.C. Das calls it as the Rajputana sea.

Geological evidences show that the western part of Rajasthan was occupied by the sea upto geological sub-recent times. This sea covered the Rann of Kutch and extended upto north of Bikaner and Saraswati and Luni valleys.

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It may be possible that the Vedic people might have taken this extension of the sea as 'the sea' into which the Saraswati might have flowed and 'the sea' might have extended upto a little down the point of 'Vinasana'. Due to the final withdrawal of glaciation and marine conditions from this part of the region, there was aridification and reduction in rainfall. As a result of such climatic changes, the source of the Saraswati which had already shifted westward from glacial peaks of Himalayas to Siwaliks (as a result of Tectonic movement) would not have received sufficient volume of water. Consequently, it might have sunk in the sand and disappeared as soon as it entered the Rajasthan desert to proceed further, somewhere near 'Vinasana' thus leaving behind a lake at the tail end.

(b) A reference of Kamakhya forest at the head of the desert area close to Trinavindu lake has been given in the Vedic literature (in certain passage of *Vana Parva*). Unfortunately *Bodhayana Dharmasutra* and the *Manava-dharmasstra* do not give in any hint about its location. However, the million scale map of the area clearly shows the existence of marshy bed around the lake at 'Vinasana'. From this it may be concluded that the present lake which also stands at the head of the desert area at 'Vinasana' might be the remnant of the same Trinavindu lake (in a shrunken form) giving the appearance of a sea due to its vastness in the Epic period. The Saraswati river thus might have flowed into the Trinavindu lake and not the Rann of Kutch as understood by many scholars.

(c) This view is further substantiated by the ancient literatures. Vedic literatures and Vedas mention about a capital cities that originated, developed number of holy places, seat of learning and flourished on the banks of the Saraswati. The location of most of these places have already been identified with the places along with their present names

and locations, by the historians and archaeologists. Interestingly these places are found to be located on both the banks of Saraswati from the source to 'Vinasana' only. Beyond 'Vinasana' hardly any place worth mentioning has been identified. The Vedic literatures too give very scanty information about the places beyond this point. However, some scattered locations like Nagari, Hagar, Pushkar, Rairch and Bairah spread over the desert area are reported in the Vedic literatures.

Since the location of all places are found between the area, stretching from source to 'Vinasana' only, one is bound to guess that the concept of the sea to the Vedic people might have been the sea of permo-carboniferous period which extended upto north of Bikaner or sheet of glacial cover of

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pliocene into which the Saraswati might have flowed at 'Vinasana'. The second possibility is that the present elongated lake at the tip of the Saraswati at Vinasana might have been a big lake covering a vast area which gave the appearance of sea to the Vedic people. Later on the Epic writers and scholars mistook it for the Arab Sea or the Rann of Kutch. The presence of Saraswati depression of varying width within Bikaner the then (Bikaner State) reveals the fact that this lake might have extended upto Bikaner in the past. The Saraswati might have been an inland drainage river.

(d) The presence of several lakes called Rann(e.g., Mitha Rann, Khara Rann, Kanod Rann and Kharawala Rann etc) in the north western part of Jaisalmer makes to think that the whole extent of the sea upto north of Bikaner might have been misunderstood for Rann of Kutch of the present day. The Saraswati might have flowed to Rann (sea) nearby 'Vinasana'.



2. Thus it can be said that the Saraswati would never have flowed beyond Vinasana. If one has to think that the river Saraswati must have flowed to the sea i.e. the Rann of Kutch then one has to believe that it must have passed through Rajasthan to reach Rann of Kutch. We also find evidences in *Mahabharata* that the course of Saraswati after drawing up during the late centuries of 2nd millennium B.C. became the great land route between heart of north India and the west coast (Hastinapur to Dwarawati or Dwarka).

The downward course of the Saraswati in Rajasthan may be identified as passing through Nohar tahsil of Ganga nagar, Lunkaransar and Kolyat tahsils of Bikaner, Phalodi and Shergarh tahsils of Jodhpur and Balotra tahsil of Barmer and joining in river Luni at Balotra.

The old channel of the Saraswati from 'Vinasana' to Luni at Balotra as identified above is primarily based on the following factors :-

(a) Presence of alluvium in the extreme western part of the desert as detected by Nimal Ghose with the help of Landsat Imagery and field investigations explains the deposits of transported material by the Saraswati. The subsurface water in this tract clearly indicates that inspite of prolonged dry and wet spell the Saraswati might have maintained its flow through this part of Rajasthan for quite sometime before disappearing from the desert.

(b) The maps in the Atlas by Rochette (1788) compiled from all the latest and most authentic materials give the clear idea of disconnected channels

of inland drainage which could form the basis to trace the missing link of the Saraswati upto its confluence with Luni-near Balotra. Originally Luni might have been the tributary of the Saraswati.

It makes one to think that possibly the decay of the Saraswati channel might have been gradual in parts from confluence to headward. First stage of desiccation might have taken place between Munjasa village of Phalodi tahsil and Gopalsar village in Kolayat tahsil Shergarh tahsil of Bikaner might have fallen prey to the northward advancing sand of Jodhpur district. In the second stage the course between Vinasan near Sirsa to Govendsar village in Kolayat tahsil might have fallen to advancing sand dunes encroaching upon the less arid areas also. In the third stage the dismembered course which could continue till 1788 was further buried under sand dunes between Gobindsar to Munjasar and Gopalsar to Balotra in some two hundred years. When Rochette prepared his maps the last two dismembered parts were alive. Now the whole course of the Saraswati from 'Vinasana' to Luni near Balotra is found missing from the Indian maps of the present time. The lakes near Porkaran might have been the result of the dislocation of the channel of Saraswati westward due to severe attack of longitudinal sand dunes across the course between Munjasar and Gopalsar at the first stage of desiccation. While the disappearance of the channel between Vinasana and Govindsar may be attributed to the short supply of water from the upper reaches and the advancing sand dunes from much arid areas.

In the present paper a brief account of the probable course of the river Saraswati has been critically examined based upon various Vedic literatures, geological, geographical, historical and archaeological findings. However, the study of place names may be interesting and help in identifying the course of the Saraswati beyond 'Vinasana'. Nevertheless, the present interpretation may give some clue to the researchers for further investigations on the subject.

## **Drasdvati River**

The Drasdvati identified with Chutang, rose in sub-mountainous Panchkula district, passed through Kapal Mochan, Balchhapur, Mustafabad, Ladwa, Nisang, Jind, Hansi and Hissar and ultimately culminates in Rajasthan near Bhadra. It was not a formidable river like the Saraswati. The *Rgveda* specifically associated Drasdvati with the kindling of

sacred fire, and offerings made by the Bharata princes, Derasravas and Devavata on her banks. The existence of pre-historic sites on her dried-up course also testifies to her antiquity and importance. The Drasdvati became dry in the Post-Harappan period as a result of the cutting off her downward flow by joint waters of the Saraswati and Somb which had taken eastward course to meet the Yamuna. In the *Panchavimsa Brahmana* and the *Srauta Satrus* alongwith the Saraswati, the Drasdvati is the scene of special sacrifices.

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## Yamuna River

The river Yamuna, well-known for her traditional associations with Lord Krishana, rises in the Himalayas, and it emerges from Shiwalik range at Khara. It becomes extensive near Faizabad from which place canals have been taken out from her main stream. The western Jamuna canal(which is more relevant to the reference) irrigates several districts of Haryana. In the pre-historic times, the river seems to have followed a more westerly course feeding the old bed of Drasdvati (modern Chautang) below Jind (its remnants can be seen in the western Jamuna canal with its Hansi-Hissar branch and another flowing below Panipat).

The river which forms a part of the Gangetic system today, belonged to the Indus system in remote times. The Yamuna is mentioned in the *Mahabharata* as a speedy river falling into sea. The river is variously known to the classical writers. It finds mention in the *Rigveda*, *Atharvaveda* and the *Brahmanas*, the *Sutras* and later literature. One of the holiest rivers of India of the later times, it also witnessed the rise of Indraprastha and Delhi, the centres of political powers.

"River Yamuna has a great history, mostly shrouded. The

name Yamuna is mentioned in connection with Dasarajan, the battle of ten kings mentioned in the *Rigvedic* literature. According to some scholars, the Yamuna in early times used to flow in the course of Saraswati<sup>1</sup> and like the Satluj was a tributary of the Ghaggar which was an independent river system running in the Hakra bed and brining into Rann of Kutch<sup>2</sup>. For reasons yet to be fully investigated, the Yamuna-Satluj plain is said here experienced an uplift which dismembered the then river system. The Satluj shifting to the west and the Yamuna to the east, leaving the Ghaggar a truncated independent stream with utterly inadequate water supply for maintaining its flow upto Rann of Kutch".

Surj Bhan is of the view that the Yamuna river flowed into the areas of Mitathal near Bhiwani in ancient times. Now the Yamuna gradually drifted towards Karnal and Panipat.

Besides the above main rivers, there are still a number of small rivers which flow to south western parts of Haryana. M.L. Bhargava has attempted to identify a number of these rivers with those mentioned in early Vedic literature. Bhargava recognises south eastern Rasa, a river mentioned in *Rigveda* with the Sahibi, and the Vedhusara with the river Duhan mentioned in the *Mahabharata* as having originated from the tears of Divya Pauloma, the wife of sage Chyavana and flowing past the

1. Majumdar, R. C. : *The History and Culture of Indian People, Volume-I; The Vedic Age*, 1965, p. 87.

2. *Karnal District Gazetteer*, 1976, p. 7.

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latter's *asharam*. The river still flows through the region near a place Chyavan *asharm* (Dhosi). The *Mahabharata* describes it as a sacred stream with many holy places on its

course and important river in those early times. The learned scholar similarly suggests the association of the stream Kasavati or ksnavan with *Rigvedic* tribe, the Krsnas who lived on her banks; and that the river Nai is identical with the river Anumati associated with Brhaspati who came in conflict with the Panis and the Krsnas who lived further south-east. The last named river came to be known as Harishmati, its bed has now turned with into a *nala* and, therefore, called lower Nai. Furthermore, Bhargava equates the Rigvedic Arvavat sea with several shallow marshes of varying sizes at various distances, a few kms. south, south-west and the Jahangir-Jahajgarh lake in the Jhajjar tahsil.

The big or small size lakes received the waters of Yamuna, Drisdvati and various streams of the Aravalli's since time immemorial. It is probably this lake which is called-Dvaitvana after the name Dhvasana Dhvaitsana, a powerful king of Matsyas who performed horse sacrifice on its banks and who finds mention in the *Mahabharata* in the context of Pandavas movements in course of their exile.

## **Cultural Systhesis**

### **Impact of the people from the West& Central Asia**

Discovery of lithic artefacts from the Naraingarh-Chandigarh frontal range of the Siwaliks bespeaks of climatic congeniality and ecological equanimity which was so very essential for the inception and efflorescence of human culture during the pre-historic period. The alluvial plains of Haryana attracted the early farming communities from west and north-west and consequently, Haryana became the cradle of one of the earliest and most grandiose of civilization known to contemporary world. A wonderful town-planning with careful lay-out of roads, streets and habitational area; an elaborate drainage system; an astonishing uniformity of standards throughout the entire length and breadth of the Harappan empire; organised municipal set-up; flourishing urban life, monumentality; brisk trade and commerce; literacy; developed arts and crafts etc. were some of the distinguishing traits of this civilizations. During the historical aspects, too, the fertile plans of Haryana rippling with bouncing harvests and teeming with multitudinous population, have been witnessing the majestic and interminable drama of the movement and migration of peoples, irruptions and

absorptions of invaders and the rise and fall of states and empires<sup>1</sup>".

Cultural synthesis has been taking place in Haryana since the pre-historic period. The discovery of chopper-chopp-ing and acheulian artefacts belonging to two distinct

1. Prakash, Buddha, *Political And Social Movement in Ancient Punjab, Delhi*, 1964, Preface, p.v.

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traditions associated with northern and southern cultural groups during the palaeolithic period from the Naraingarh-Kalka Siwalik Frontal Range is the evidence of the cultural synthesis which seems to have taken place thousands of years ago in Haryana.

Incessant and almost imperceptible movements, migrations and mixtures of people have been taking place in India and the adjoining countries. They have had their impact over Haryana which was the window of the country towards Asia and the world at large as noted earlier. When Babur conquered a part of north India, he was very much impressed by the diversity of peoples and languages here than anywhere else in the world<sup>1</sup>.

The *volkerwandlungen* of the Indo-Mediterranean, Indo-Australoid, Indo-European and Caucasian people is evidenced in the Indus cities<sup>2</sup>, and the case may be expected to be similar in the Harappan settlements of Haryana too. The Harappans had trade relations with far-flung areas of Afghanistan and the fertile crescent. The Haryanavi merchants of the Indus civilizations might have brought with them the fashions which were imitated by the natives. This is best illustrated by the famous bronze dancing girl from

Mohenjo-daro with a typical hair-coiffure of the Kulli culture<sup>3</sup>. The typical cylindrical Persian Gulf seals found from the Harappan sites indicate that Babylonian merchants had settled here also. Some of them might entered into nuptial relations with the native girls and begot children. The opulent mercantile class formed a distinct group (*Panis*) which had been despised in the *Rigveda*<sup>4</sup>. This book records the Aryan movement through the Sapta-Sindhu region to the realm of the Bharatas in the Valley of the Yamuna and the Ganga. The migrant tribes advanced gradually from the north-west. But other tribes, following in their footsteps, dis-located them and pushed further. The invaders came in tidal waves<sup>5</sup>, sometimes fighting internecine wars, allying themselves at other times with the natives to check the push of the others<sup>6</sup>. It has been already referred to the *Dasarajayuddhu* and the fusion

1. M. Elphinston, *Account of the Kingdom of Caybul*, London, 1819, cf. A. Burnes, *Travels into Bohhara*, Vol. II, pp. 415,16.

2. B. A. Guha and P. C. Basu, " *Report on the Human Remains Excavated at Mohenjo-daro in 1928-29*" in *Furhter Excavations at Mohenjo-daro*, New Delhi, 1938, pp. 613-38; P. Gupta A. Basu and P. C. Dutta, *Human Skeletal Remains from Harappa*, M. A. S. I., No. 9, 1962, pp. 13-188. Also see S. S. Sarkar, *Ancient Races of Baluchistan, Punjab and Sind*, Calcutta, 1964.

3. Gosh A. *Indian Prehistory*; 1964 (Eds. V. N. Misra and M. S. Mate Poona, 1965, pp. 112 ff.

4. *Rigveda* X, 108.

5. There is linguistic as well as archaeological evidences to this effect.

6. Prakash, Buddha, Op. cit. p.7.

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of the Purus and the Bharatas. The account indicates that Sudas had to deal with fresh hordes of invaders who comprised "significant admixture of Iranian elements"<sup>1</sup>. The off-shoots of the aggregation of tribes lingered on in Haryana and their scions seem to have played an important part in the history of the region later.

The encyclopaedic epic, the *Mahabharata*, mentions a host of tribes in the country, some of which seem to have certainly been of alien ethnic origin. Some of the customs and characters mentioned therein also smack of strangers from the Indian viewpoint. Initially the Madras might belong to the aggregation of Iranian peoples<sup>2</sup>. Some scholars think that the Madras is the same as the Malloi of the Greek historians<sup>3</sup>. In ancient times, however, Madras have been mentioned as a constituent, along with the Udumbaras, Tilakhalas, Yugandharas, Bhulingas and Saradandas of the Salvas<sup>4</sup>, the name which bespeaks a scythian origin. The Udumbaras lived in the Kangra Valley; Tilakhalas in Hoshiarpur area; Yugandharas lived at and around Jagadhari; the Bhulingas inhabited the erstwhile states of Ramgarh and Morni<sup>5</sup> and the Saradandas occupied the valley of the Markanda<sup>6</sup>. Many of the modern Punjabi and Haryanvi sub-castes probably derive their names from the ancient Salva tribe<sup>7</sup>. Similarly, modern Jats are thought to be descendants of Jartas or Jarthikas mentioned in the *Mahabharata*. Panini, Patanjali, Kautilya and others speak of a large number of tribes in the Punjab and adjoining regions. The *Mahabharata* indicates that some of them at least were Non-Indian in origin. This has been observed by the historian Arnold J. Toynbee also<sup>8</sup>. "It is tempting to conjecture that the ferocious communities, that were encountered by Alexander, the Great in the Indus Valley in 327-324 B.C. were the descendants of Eurasian nomads, who had been deposited there by a more recent *Volkerwanderung* than that of the Aryas".

Alexander's invasion of India in the fourth century B.C. is an important event in the history of India. It opened the traffic between India and Bactria and the world beyond. After Alexander, Seleucus attacked India again and history bears witness to the fact that he had to give his daughter and the satrapies of paropamisade, Aria,



1. Buddha Prakash, op.at, p.77.
  2. Ibid, p. 90 Hff.
  3. Przyluski, J. "Ancient Peoples of the Punjab, "*Indian Studies; Past and Present, Calcutta*, 1960.
  4. Apastambiya Mantrapatha II, 2, 12-13.
  5. Bharadwaj, op. cit, p. 109.
  6. Ibid., p. 110
  7. Prakash, Buddha op. cit., p. 252.
  8. Toynbee, Arnold J. *A. Study of History, Vol. V.*, p. 274.
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Arachosia and Gedrosia to the Indian Emperor Chandragupta Maurya. This was probably one example and many Indians might have won alien tribes. Important, however, is the fact that the Greeks settled in Bactria sustained interest in India and when the Mauryan power declined, they renewed their incursions and were sometimes successful. Abundant coins of Apollodotos, Menander, Antialcidas, Antimachos and other Indo-Greek rulers from Rohtak<sup>1</sup>, Sugh<sup>2</sup>, Sonipat<sup>3</sup>, Sadhora<sup>4</sup>, Raja Karna ka kila<sup>5</sup> (Karnal), Theh Polar<sup>6</sup>, Agroha<sup>7</sup> etc. attest to their rule over Haryana during the second-first centuries B.C. The law-giver Baudhayana calls the people of Bahlika (which includes parts of the present-day Haryana also) as of mixed origin and lays an embargo on visiting it because of the outlandish habits and customs prevailing there<sup>8</sup>. Greek historian Strabo tells that a Bachhanalian festival of the Persians, in which men and women, dressed in Scythian style, passed day and night in drinking wine and wanton play<sup>9</sup>. The

*Mahabharata* also narrates that the people of Bahlika, drank, danced and revelled<sup>10</sup>. Evidently, it were Greek and the Scythians who popularised this vogue here<sup>11</sup>. It was perhaps because of the prevalence of such exotic and outlandish practices, symbolic of the Scythio-Iraian impact, which has completely subdued the social set up of the state that Baudhayana, Karna and Buddha denounced it. Social mixing up reigned supreme and affected the caste system. Karna's observation made in the *Mahabharata*<sup>12</sup> that in the Vahlika country a *Brahman* might become a Kshatriva, a Vaisya, a Sudra, a barber turning again the *Brahmana*. Social mobility seems to be in the very blood of the Punjabis and Haryanvis.

Scythians and Persians left an indelible mark on the foods and drinks of the Haryanvis. Besides drinking, eating of flesh of different animals, the consumption of garlic and onion continues to date in many of the Haryanvi homes. It has rightly been observed that the detraction of the people of this region from the established standards

1. Sarasvati, Swami Omanand : *Ancient Mints of Haryana, Jhajjar*, V. S. 2036, pp. 55-56.
2. Handa, Devendra : *Studies in Indian Coins and Seals, Delhi*, 1985, pp. 21-23.
3. *Numismatic Chronicle*, 1872, p.161.
4. Rodgers, C.J. : *Report of the Punjab Circle of the Archaeological Survey*, 1888-89, Calcutta, 1891, p. 24.
5. *Annual Report of the Archaeological Survey of India*, 1921-22, pp. 48-49.
6. *Ancient India*, No. 9, p. 130.
7. H.L.Srivastava, *Excavations of Agroha (Punjab)*, MAST, No. 61 Delhi, 1952.
8. *Baudhayana Dharmasutra I*, 2.2, 4 pp.
9. Strabo, *Geography*, XV, III, 20.
10. *Mbh.* VIII. 40, 25-28.
11. Prakash, Buddha : *op. cit.*, p. 225.
12. *Mbh.* VIII. 45, 6-7.

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of conservative society was the result of a social revolution which was brought about by the intrusion of exotic Asian elements into its population<sup>1</sup>.

The social revolution of the people was heightened by the ardent and protracted rule of the Greeks, Parthians, Sakas and Kushanas. The Kushana dominions extended from Varanasi to Central Asia. So Haryana became a part of a Central Asiatic empire without any barrier or frontier. The people of Asia swarmed into Punjab and Haryana in vast multitudes and dominated their culture<sup>2</sup>. The indigenous people began imitating the manners, morals, literature, religion and philosophy of the aristocratic aliens-Scythians. Iranians and Greeco-Roman, the same way as they did later during the medieval and modern periods by aping their Muslim and English masters. Very few people know that almonds, asafoetida, shallot, walnut, water-melon etc. were introduced in India by the Iranians and a kind of camphor, lead, minium, peach, pear etc. by the Chinese. Similarly belts, boots, coats, trousers etc. were introduced in dress by the aliens. The use of metal armour (*kavacha*), long sword, pike, stirrup and horse-shoe also appeared in India because of the presence of the Central Asiatic peoples here.

An analytical indepth of brilliant study of foreign elements in Hindu population had led D.R. Bhandarkar conclude that "There is hardly a class or caste in India, which has not a foreign stain in it". Dilating on the subject, Buddha Prakash, too, has rightly observed that, "The early immigrants invariably became one with the indigenous people and offered stiff resistance to fresh incomers. In this turmoil of wars, invasions and admixtures, various social and cultural elements met, mixed and merged in an amalgam. Hence the social set up of this region was like that of a glacis, crucible, confluence of kaleidoscope. Exotic tribes, having outlandish

customs and heterogenous cultures, perpetually changed the pattern of life of this region. Therefore, it witnessed the progressive unfolding of a dynamic social revolution in the ancient history of this land.<sup>3</sup>"

The Hunas who entered India as barbaric invaders during the fifth century A.D., held sway over north India for less than half a century and soon Indianized. Soon they were recognized as one of the thirty six clans of the Rajputs and the sub-caste Hoon still persists in this region. The Gujars are no more regarded as aliens<sup>4</sup>.

1. Prakash, Buddha : op. cit., p. 232.

2. This fact is borne out by a number of terracottas with Scythian ethnic features found from Sunet, Sunam (Punjab) Sugh and Thanesar (Haryana).

3. Prakash, Buddha : op. cit., p. 217.

4. Munshi, K. M.: Glory that was Gurjara Desa (A.D. 550-1300), Bombay, 1970, pp. 173-81; Dasharath Sharma, *Rajasthan Through The Ages, Vol. I, Bikaner*, 1966, pp. 108-10.

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They seem to have spread north and east-ward from Gujarat, the Gujara Desha, whence they got their nomenclature.

The impact of the Gurjara-Pratihara's have, however, been indelible and many Gujars still inhabit Haryana. Places bearing their name<sup>1</sup> also bear witness to their influence in Haryana. In the medieval period, however, the Gujars seem to have adopted cattle rearing and selling of milk and milk-products as their main avocation<sup>2</sup> which in many villages

persists to the present day.

## **The Introduction of Muslim Culture in the region**

The new Islamic or Muslim culture was introduced in India by the Arabs. The expansion and propagation of Islamic culture was attempted by means of peace as well as force<sup>3</sup>. The former was followed by the Arab traders and Muslim saints or dervishes. The latter was adopted by the Arabs, Turkish and Mughal invaders. The Arabs took a very active part in India's commerce. The Arabs, therefore, entered India as traders and sailors. In spite of the previous repeated attacks of the Muslim powers, foundation of the Muslim Empire in India was laid by Shahab-ud-din Ghorī (1175-1206).

The first salient feature is that the history of Mohammadan rule in India is more a chronicle of kings, courts and conquests than of an organic or a natural growth. It is the kings and their doings that fill page after page of Mohammadan history. The people and their culture do not very much matter and, therefore, are given a secondary place.

The early dynasties were short-lived. Dynasty after dynasty tumbled down after ruling for a short period. Their history is of unceasing round of valour, greatness, discord, degeneracy and decay. The Mohammadans were the first invaders of India who were not absorbed into the elastic and ever expanding Hindu-fold. Many invaders before them the Greeks, Scythians, Mongolians, Parthians, etc. had been completely Hinduised in name, speech, manner, religion, dress and ideas a few generations after their settlement in India<sup>4</sup>. In fact, they had lost themselves in the ocean of Hindu community. But the Mohammadans ever remained a separate community in India. Islam being a fiercely monotheistic religion, could not allow any compromise with polytheism or admit a plurality of deities.

The assimilative power of the Hindu religion, which absorbed the ingredients of different and distinct sects making them its own parts, had disappeared by the time

1. For example, Gujar Kheri in district of Ambala and Sonapat.

2. Ibbetsen, Denzils, *Punjab Castes*, Patiala, 1977 (reprint). pp. 182 FF.

3. Luniya, B. N. : *Evolution of Indian Culture*, 1997, p. 304.

4. Ibid.

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the Muslims entered India. Those very Hindus whose ancestors embraced foreigners and offered them an honourable status in their society, now considered mere touch of a foreigner a grave sin. Therefore, there is no wonder if the Hindus and Muslims had to live in the same land without being able to mix together freely.

Nothing had enabled them to bridge the gulf between them. Though, Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru stated that the Muslim invaders were absorbed in India, their royal dynasties were completely Indianized and they considered India as their mother land. But other historians do not concur the above view. Sir Jadu Nath Sarkar views that the Muslims in India, throughout the succeeding centuries, turned towards a spot in Mecca, had their own law code, their own administrative system, their own language, literature, shrines and saints<sup>1</sup>. They were restricted themselves to India as is the case with the Hindus. They always looked to the countries outside India and sought models from Arabia, Syria, Iran and Egypt.

Muslims were the only people who led militant religious crusade upon India. They were full of religious zeal and had come to India with the definite idea of converting others to their own religion and not to be absorbed by others. From A.D.1200 to A.D.1580 the Muslim State and society in India retained its original military and nomadic character, the ruling race lived merely like an armed camp in the land. As a matter of fact, "the Muslim settlers in India used to be in the land but not of it". They always preserved their exclusive identity in India, and in the 20th century, India had to pay very heavy

price for it- partitioning of the country.

However, the great interaction of different cultures - Hindu and Muslim - took place in India has its own significance in history.

## **Synthesis of Hindu and Muslim Culture**

With all their limited resources, the Muslim rulers in India found it difficult to establish a stable and efficient government in a vast country like India. Though they had gained political sovereignty, they could not deprive the Hindus of their economic supremacy. Therefore, they had to seek the co-operation of the Hindus and depend considerably on their goodwill and support for a stable government, peace, law and order in the country.

The Muslim sovereigns had neither seasoned diplomats, nor experienced administrators, nor-farsighted statesmen in their ranks. Their followers were neither farmers nor businessmen. In fact, the Muslim invaders did not bring with them merchants, agriculturists, artisans and clerks. The Hindu dominated the economic life of them. Clerks and accountants in government offices and revenue collectors in

1. Sarkar, J. N. : *India Through the Ages*, p. 41.

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the villages were Hindus. Architecture was done by the Hindu artisans. Hindu Pandits offered advice to Muslim judges in administering justice. The employment of Hindus in civil administration and economic pursuits was a necessity of the Muslim Government. Therefore, the goodwill and support

of the Hindus was indispensable for the Muslim monarchs.

The Muslim rulers could not afford to be always in a warlike mood for the establishment and expansion of their kingdom in a foreign country like India. Psychologically, the Muslim sovereigns could not constantly follow the policy of bitter animosity and persecution. Sabre-rattling and gory activities could not be prolonged indefinitely. After bloodshed and unmitigated tyranny, they had to act necessarily in the interest of their subjects for peace, prosperity and safety. Necessity compelled them to revert to the pursuits of acts of peaceful life.

In the absence of strong central power, many Muslim rulers rose in rebellions. Frequent wars waged between the Sultans of Delhi and independent provincial Muslim revolted. Thus, the Muslim rulers fought stubbornly the Muslims more than they fought the Hindus. The support and co-operation of the Hindus was sought by both sides. The needs of the time compelled the Muslim monarchs to favour the Hindus. Thus, various factors compelled even the most zealous and fanatical Muslim sovereigns to be favourably inclined towards the Hindus and their culture. The Hindus realised the futility of waging wars with their Muslim masters. They subordinated to the political supremacy of the Muslim masters. They surrendered to the political supremacy of the Muslim rulers, abandoned hostile attitude and began to lead a peaceful life. Besides this, they expressed a keen desire to compromise with and accommodate the Muslims in their country.

Hindus converted to Islam, retained Hindu customs and manners in their new Muslim society. They, thus, indirectly endeavoured to diffuse Hindu cultural influence in the Islamic society. The intelligent and broad minded Hindus and Muslims realised the futility of war and persecution. Muslim scholars and saints began to study Hindu scriptures and mix freely with their Hindu brethren. Hindus also did not lag behind in the study of Muslim philosophy and the Quran. They were trying to understand each other and to study the best elements of the culture of each other. Many Muslim rulers patronized fine arts and encouraged literature of the Hindus as well as of the Muslims. Some of them went to the extent of adopting Hindu religious practices and undertaking pilgrimage to Hindu shrine.

Historians differ about the synthesis of these two culture. Some scholars hold the opinion that the Hindu religion and society were influenced to the core by the forces of Islamic



culture. Contrary to this is the opinion that the Hindu culture, instead

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of being influenced by Islam, had deeply impressed Islam and its followers<sup>1</sup>. A noted historian remarks" that the mutual intercourse led to mutual understanding. Not only did Hindu religion, Hindu art, Hindu literature and Hindu science absorb Muslim elements' but the very spirit of Hindu culture and the very stuff of Hindu mind were also altered<sup>2</sup>". Titus in his book, *Indian Islam*, states that "when all is said there seems to be little doubt that Hinduism has brought a far greater change in Islam than Islam has brought in Hinduism which still continues to pursue the even tenure of its way with a complicity and confidence that are amazing". In spite of the political subjugation in the medieval age, India was culturally so much alive that it was like a tree which gives shade even to that person who cuts off its branches. E.B. Havell remarks, "Islam seized her political capitals, controlled her military forces and appropriated her revenues, but India retained what she cherished most, her intellectual empire, and her soul was never subdued".

The reciprocal influences of Hindus and Muslims were too superficial in character to affect materially the fundamental-differences between the two communities<sup>3</sup>. The mutual impact between the two is expounded minutely here.

## **the impact of Indian and Islamic Civilisation**

As noted above, so immense was the assimilative potentiality of the old Hindu culture and civilization that earlier invaders

of India like the Greeks, the Sakays, the Huns, etc. were easily absorbed within the fold of her population, and in due course they completely lost their identity. But it did not happen so with the Turko-Afghan invaders. But it is a fact of history that whenever two different types of civilization and cultures came into close contact with each other and remain associated for centuries, both are bound to be influenced mutually. Thus, long association, the growth of the converted Indo-Muslim community and its mixing freely with the Hindu-community, the demand for peace, justice, security and proper government, the spirit of tolerance etc. led the Hindu and Muslim communities to imbibe each other's thoughts, traditions and customs, and consequently many important social changes took place.

The Hindus under Muslim domination fretted and chafed at the loss of their political power. Their political subjection was followed by social degradation. They were over-taxed, were excluded, with rare exceptions from high offices, treated with severity and reduced to a state of abject misery. Take the example of Ala-ud-din

1. Luniya, B. N. : *Evolution of Indian Culture*, 1997, p. 313.
2. Tara Chand : *Influence of Islam on Indian Culture*, p. 127.
3. Majumdar, R. C. : *The History and Culture of Indian People - The Delhi Sultanate*, p. 617.

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Khilji under whose reign, some of the Hindus embraced Islam to escape the special kind of tax, *Jaziya*.

In spite of all this, the structure of economic life in the country was dominated by Hindus. The Muslim invaders did

not bring with them cultivators though the lands were given in *Jagir* to the Amirs, yet the cultivating class remained Hindus. Nor was conversion on such an elaborate scale as to displace the Hindu *zamindars* and Hindu cultivators. The land system in fact did not change and, therefore, the Hindus, in general, in the country led fairly the same life as they had led before in spite of the Muslim domination.

Trade did not change hands to any considerable extent. The Muslim invaders were military adventurers who despised trade and failed to understand the elaborate Hindu credit system in which the business of the whole country was based. Thus, while a certain section of the Muslim community dominated the administrative machinery, the Hindus had monopolistic control of economic life of the country.

Besides this, the lower ranks of the bureaucracy had of necessity to be Hindus during the Muslim rule. The Muslims being the favoured children of the state were accorded a preferential treatment. They monopolized the higher offices, but being unskilled administrators the lower rung of officialdom had of necessity to be Hindus. The Patwaris, the accountants, the treasurers and others in the districts were invariably Hindus, while the governors, police officials, judges and district officials were all Muslims. In spite of the Muslim domination, the employment of Hindu bureaucracy continued.

As regards religion, one is surprised to note that in the face of Islam's conquest of north India, the Hindu religion was strong enough to maintain its hold on the minds of the people. Every thing was open to a Hindu who embraced Islam. The Hindu religion withstood the shocks of Islam. It continued to survive. Even more than this, under the most bigoted Sultans like Ala-ud-din and Firoz Tughlaq, the Hindu religious leaders and saints received royal honour and recognition. Jain sources enable us to know that the Sultan Ala-ud-din Khilji had religious discourses with Acharya Mahasena. It is also reported that the Digambara Jain saint Purna Chandra of Delhi and Svetambra ascetic Ram Chandra Suri were in favour with the same Sultan. Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq had two Jain officers who exercised great influence over him, while Firoz held in high honour the poet Ratna Sekhra.

## **Impact of the Hindus on the Muslim Society**

In the early centuries of Muslim rule, Mohammadans lived in India as a garrison in a hostile country, holding little or no intercourse with their Hindu subjects. But it

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was inevitable that with the lapse of time the barriers between them should be relaxed if not broken down entirely. Consequently, the mutual intercourse between the two communities influenced the culture of both. The following paragraphs will reveal how the Muslim society was influenced by the Hindus and their religion.

Many Muslim conquerors married Hindu women. Take the example of Firoz Tughlaq. During the time of Firoz (1351-88) the district of Hissar shot into prominence. The ruler came to have somewhat unusual fancy with the Haryana region particularly with Hissar area. Being on the direct road from Khurasan, Multan and the West Punjab, which ultimately reached Delhi. Besides, the place was admirably adopted as a starting point for the hunting expeditions in which Sultan (Firoz Shah) frequently indulged<sup>1</sup>. Having had a great attachment with the area, he married Gujar Hindu girl who in the later period influenced the Sultan extraordinarily. The king got built the Gujri Mahal in the memory of his queen at Hissar which is now not in a good condition.

The Hindu women introduced their social customs and rites to their new homes. The influence of the Hindu women in Mohammadan harems was one of the factors which brought reconciliation between Islam and Hinduism. " The traditional devotion and the tenderness of Indian motherhood helped greatly to soften the ferocity of the Turki and Mughal nomads". Some scholars are of the opinion that Muslim morality was highly influenced by the Hindu thoughts and

customs. Muslims became practically monogamous by a curious process which made divorce impossible. Remarriage of widows became rare under the Hindu influence.

Apart of this, contact with Hindu society brought about the rise of class distinctions and differences among the Muslims. Some of the Sultans of Delhi appointed only men of noble birth to high offices. The conception of caste was gradually developed among Muslims. Mutual contact developed new castes and sub-castes. Various classes of Muslims began to reside separately in different localities even in the same town; for example Shaikhs and Sayyids. In the days of Delhi Sultans, a Turk, a Pathan, a Sayyid or even a Shaikh would not think of matrimonial relations with a person of a lower rank, i.e, one outside these four *dhats* or *quams*, or even outside his own particular denomination.

The lower functional groups were organised on the model of the Hindu caste system with their panchayats or caste councils and officers to enforce the observance of caste rules by the time honoured sanction of boycotting. The mutual jealousies among the foreign and Indian Muslim nobles and Amirs of Sultan developed caste like groups in higher and aristocratic Muslim society.

1. Hissar District Gazetteer, 1915, p.21.

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The conception of untouchability evolved in due course in that society. The lower persons of Hindu society were converted to Islam in large numbers due to tyranny of the caste system, the prospectus of escape from the poll tax and other social advantages. These new converts were treated like untouchables in Muslim society. They were given neither share in the administration nor any place in the Muslim

aristocracy.

They were also not given share in their social and economic privileges. They constituted a distinct and separate class in the general Muslim population. Many of them followed handicrafts and were employed by the conquerors as artisan. Many of them were weavers, barbers, carpenters, blacksmiths, tailors, wood-cutters, water-carriers, engravers, painters, physicians, etc. In the course of time, they developed their own class-distinctions like those of Hindu caste system. They retained Hindu mode of life to a great extent and avoided the eating of beef and widow-remarriage, and continued to express reverence to local gods in subdued tone. Even today many Muslim villagers consult Hindu astrologers and propitiate the local gods in times of troubles.

As the wealth increased in Muslim court and society, the hold of religion became some what weaker and consequently, superstition, ignorance and evil practices began to gain ground. Muslim festivals were celebrated with pomp and show like Hindu festivals. The festivals of Shahi-Barat was celebrated like Shivratri of the Hindus, with a night long vigil, bustle and noise. The ceremonies of *Aqiqah* and *Bismillah* were observed in the name as the Hindus *Mundan* and *Vidyarambh sanskar*. Hindu marriage ceremonies influenced the marriage ceremonies of the Muslims, especially the decoration and dowery of the Hindu bride.

The Hindu superstition of evil eye (*nazar*), the *utara*, and the ceremony of *arti*, which was termed by the Muslims '*nisar*' had taken deep root in the Muslim society. The ceremony of *nisar* was performed by taking platefuls of gold and silver coins or precious jewels and passing them repeatedly (not less than seven times) over the head of the sovereign and then were scattered or distributed among the poor persons, beggars and other assemblage of servants.

The Muslim intellectual and religious leaders were profoundly impressed by the Vadic or Yogic system of Hindus. The mysticism of Islam in its Indian environment was not quite same as Sufis of Islamic lands. The Muslim mystics under the influence of mysticism helped to shorten the distance between those who emphasised the ethical or metaphysical aspects of their faiths. The Hindus had cultivated the institutions of hereditary *maths* with their *Gurus* and *chellas*. The Muslims adopted it for their saints and evolved the office of the *Pir* or *Shaikh* and his descendants.

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Like the Hindus, the Muslims began to keep faith in vows (*manatas* or *minats*) and they approached Hindu *yogis* and *Sadhus* or hermits for the fulfilment of their long cherished desires. Muslim sovereigns like Muhammad Tughlaq went with gifts to Hindu saints, and sages to get their innermost desires fulfilled.

As regards idol worship, Indian Muslims have been nearer to the Hindus of India, as compared to the Muslims of foreign countries. The reverence for and worship of tombs of *pirs* or saints is seen among Indian Muslims. Worship of *Pir* is another form of Hindu practice of *Guru Puja*. The Muslim perform rites at tombs of the *Pirs* or saints who are believed to have the power of averting disease or disaster or any other evil. Muslims paid visits to tombs of the saints and tied strings or ribbons on their mausoleum for attaining their desires. This is an age-old practice of the Hindu.

The Muslims adopted many Hindu customs of daily routine life. The Hindu turban became very popular among the Muslims. The Muslim rulers and nobles had to modify their dress to suit Indian environment and climate. Hindu habit of daily bath and personal hygiene before performing any religious ceremony was followed by the Mohammadans.

In the realm of administration the Muslim rulers retained in fact many of the Hindu institutions of government specially in the departments of revenue and finance. They followed the Hindu practice of using war elephants in open battles. Titus has rightly remarked in his book *Indian Islam*, that "Hinduism has brought a far greater change in Islam than Islam has brought in Hinduism".

# Impact of Islam on Hindu Society

In fact the Hindu society could not remain unaffected by social customs and religion of its new rulers. The Muslim occupation of India accelerated certain undesirable tendencies that had already manifested themselves in the Hindu society on the eve of the Muslim conquest. The birth of a girl was looked upon as an inauspicious event. Consequently, infanticide spread widely among the Hindus. It was a measure adopted by the Hindus so that their virgins might not run the risk of losing their chastity at the hands of the Muslims. Many Hindu chiefs and well-to-do persons were compelled to offer their daughters in marriage to the Turkish Sultans, their nobles and followers. The *parda* system, seclusion of women, unknown in early days of Hindu rule, was introduced elaborately into the Hindu society and women generally lived in seclusion in the sphere of their homes.

Child marriage was introduced in the society and it was said that the proper age of marriage for girls was seven, and that a marriage after the age eleven or twelve was sinful. Early marriage of the Hindu girls to avoid their kidnapping by the Muslims

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became the fashion of the day. The missionary zeal of Islam which aimed at converting the Hindus, compelled the Hindus to be orthodox in outlook and practice to save their religion and culture from the onslaught of Islam. So attempts were made to make the caste rules more rigorous and daily rules of conduct more rigid. The numerous social taboos and restrictions regarding caste, marriage, eating and drinking had become all more stringent among the Hindus.



It is true that such a social structure was incapable of any progress; its very rigidity and stiffness served as a strong cordon which protected the Hindus from being submerged entirely in the new Islamic culture. The condition of Hindu women deteriorated considerably. Dependence of women on their husbands or other male relatives became prominent feature of Hindu society. Though they enjoyed position of respect, they could not command equal rights with men and were not allowed to participate in all social functions and ceremonies. Women were expected to observe strict fidelity in their conjugal life. To safeguard their honour and chastity against the Muslims the customs of *Jauhar* and *Sati* both were widely prevalent through out the country among the Hindus.

An unhealthy feature of social life that crept into the Hindu society due to Muslims was slavery. Slavery was common in the Muslim society and to keep slaves was a recognised fashion of the time. It was well-known common practice with Delhi Sultans, their nobles and *Amins* to maintain slaves both male as well as females. " The institution of slavery might have served certain useful purpose of service and pecuniary gains for the kings and *Amins*, but it produced some baneful social results. In fact, it was a stamp of unprogressiveness, inhuman feature and unhealthy element in the society.<sup>1</sup>"

Another result of the contact with the Muslims was that Mohammedan dress, etiquette and ceremonial show came into fashion in the Hindu society. *Achakan* and *salvar*, popular dress in northern India, was introduced in Hindu society under Mohammedan influence. Sumptuous dinners were the fashion of the day among rich communities. Gambling and wine drinking, which were common vices of the Muslim society of the age, were followed by Hindus. Recreational life and activity were influenced by Islamic contact. Hunting, hawking, and many other games became Mohammedanized.

Another social result of the introduction of Islam and Muslim rule in India was the divisions of society on vertical basis<sup>2</sup>. Before thirteenth century Hindu society was divided horizontally. Neither Buddhism nor Jainism could effect this division

1. Majumdar, R. C. : *An Advanced History of India*, 1967.

2. Panekkar, K. M. : *A Survey of Indian History*, p. 166.

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but both were easily assimilated. On the contrary, Islam split Indian society into two distinct divisions from top to bottom, Hindus and Muslims. In due course these two sections evolved as two separate nations in the same country. The seeds were sown in the medieval age for the two-nation theory.

Two parallel societies were vertically established on the same soil. At all stages they were different in all walks of life. Hindus became more orthodox in their outlook and practice than what they in the past. To fortify their position against the propagation and spread of Islam, the Hindus increased to a great extent the saga of many social taboos and create rules. New rigid rules of conduct, diet, marriage and religious rites and ceremonies were prescribed. They formulated a large number of rules in the *smriti* works to strengthen the Hindu social body. The increased rigidity of the caste system and new regulations produced far-reaching consequences into the Hindu society. First, it was possible to safeguard Hindu culture against the alien Islamic Culture. Secondly, initiative and continuous progress disappeared from the life of the Hindus. Their social structure was rendered incapable of any growth. Thirdly, lower castes found their lot more miserable. They were being crushed between the milestones of social and religious tyranny of higher classes and politico-religious tyranny of the Muslim fanatics. Some liberal Hindu leaders and reformers were opposed to the increased conservatism of the Hindu society. The character and conduct and dignity of Hindus were adversely affected by the rule of the Delhi Sultans. When higher and middle class Hindus came into close contact with their alien rulers, they were compelled to conceal their sentiments of time honoured customs, culture

and religion, and in due course they developed servility of character to get on in the world<sup>1</sup>. Therefore, the Hindus, in general, lost manliness and straight forwardness in behaviour.

## **Impact of Islam upon Hinduism**

In the beginning of the period under review, Islam gave a very rude shock to Hinduism. It shattered the Brahman supremacy and destroyed the royal patronage that Hinduism had been enjoying. Hindu religious monuments and temples were levelled to ground and Hinduism being deprived of state patronage, could not evolve further. Its growth was stunted, but Islam was spread far and wide in the country.

## **Growth of the Spirit of mutual harmony between the Hindus and the Muslims**

Both the Hindus and the Muslims realized, with the lapse of time, the futility of war and persecution. Gradually, a spirit of harmony, fellow-feelings and co-operation was appearing between the two communities. They endeavoured to

1. Srivastava, Dr. A. L.: *History of India*, (1000-1707), 1989, p. 309.

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understand each other. Consequently, not only Hindu art, Hindu religion, Hindu literature and science assimilated certain Muslim elements, but very spirit of Hindu culture also was transformed to some extent. In the same way the

Muslims also attempted to absorb keenly many elements of Hindu culture. They willingly offered themselves for mutual exchange of ideas. Many religious sects arose in this period which attempted to harmonize Islam and Hinduism, and to find a common meeting ground for the devotees of both creeds in which differences of rituals, dogmas and external working of their faiths were ignored. Ramanand, Kabir, Guru Nank, Dadu etc. were some of such devotees and forerunners. If the Hindu religious leaders and saints made efforts to synthesize Hindu-Muslim thoughts, the Sufi sects of the Muslims, their writers and poets adopted Hindu doctrines and followed many of their traditions. Famous Muslim scholars and saints began to labour for the dissemination of the ideas of Islamic philosophy and mysticism.

The healthy spirit of mutual toleration found expression in the growing veneration of the Hindus for the Muslim saints, particularly of the mystic school and a corresponding Mohammadan practice of venerating Hindu saints and ultimately it led to common worship of Satya *pir*. The Hindus offered sweets with great pleasure on the tombs of Muslim *Pir* or saints and listened with reverence to the recitation of the *Quarn*. The tomb of Mama-Bhanja Muslim *Pir* at Sonipat is a specific example of common worship between the Hindus and Muslims. To express their sentiments of brotherhood and chastity they commenced feeding of Muslim *faquirs* and *Shaikhs* and began to observe Muslim festivals and fairs. The *Dargah* of Mamu Maula Bux *Pir* at Rehore village draw a large number of Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims. They get blessings of the *Pir*.

The spirit of harmony, toleration and co-operation also found expression Hindu customs, religious beliefs and observances while living in Hindu environment. Several social functions of the Hindus at the time of birth, marriage and death were adopted by the Muslims. Rajendra Prasad (former President of India) in his book, *India, Divided*, gives numerous instances to prove that Muslims assimilated many of the Hindu practices.

Muslim scholars, preachers and saints began to study Hindu philosophy like *yoga and vedanta*. Many were attracted to the study of Hindu sciences of medicines and astrology. Similarly, the Hindu astronomers borrowed from Muslim technical terms, the Muslim calculation of latitude and longitudes and branch of horoscopy<sup>1</sup>.

As a result of the Hindu-Muslim contact there gradually

emerged a linguistic mixture and Urdu is the outcome of the mingling of Persian, Arabic and Turkish

1. Majumdar, R. C. and others : *An Advanced History of India*, 1967, p. 38. (New York).

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works and the ideas with languages and concepts of Sanskrit origin. In the course of time Urdu became the *lingua franca* of the people . Hindu and Muslim writers and poets of the age exchanged ideas mutually and expressed their thought in the vernaculars.

The spirit of assimilation between the Hindu and Islamic cultures led to the evolution of new styles of architecture and music. According to Tara Chand, " The craftsmanship, ornamental richness and general design remained largely Hindu, the actuated form, plain domes, smooth faced walls and spacious interiors were Muslim superior positions". This synthesis of style was followed not only in monumental art of India, but also in the utilitarian works - houses, streets, bathing-ghats and even religious with the Iranian *tanpura* and *Sitar* was produced. It is a popular Indian musical instrument. The *tabla* is also Muslim modification of Hindu musical instrument *mridang*. A fusion of Hindu and Iranian systems of music led to the evolution of light songs, like *qawallis*, instead of only classical strains. New arts and crafts were introduced in the country; for example, power making, enamelling, inlay works of stones, metals and jewels etc.

Besides this, impact of Islam on Hinduism produced important consequences. Islam gives the message of universal brotherhood, introduces equality in society, rejects caste system and untouchability, is opposed to idol worship and teaches oneness of God. These Islamic ideas had thrown

up a powerful challenge to the upholders of Hinduism and guardians of Hindu society. In the course these ideas began to have an unconscious or the conscious effect upon the philosophical Hindu mind, and fostered the growth of liberal movements under some saints and preachers who came to be known in history and religious reformers.

## **Legacy of Mughals**

The foundation of Mughal dynasty was laid by Babar who won the Ist Battle of Panipat in 1526. The Mughals gave many things to the Indians vis-a-vis to Haryanvis. The Mughal age was not only a period of experiment and innovation but of continuation and culmination of those processes of fine arts that had their seeds sown in the later part of the Turko-Afghan rule. The spirit of harmony and synthesis that commenced in the closing years of Delhi Sultanate continued in the Mughal period even in the realm of fine arts. The beneficent of royal patronage affected markedly the quality of arts produced by the people.

The culture of the Mughal period was the court culture. It was inspired throughout the age by the throne. The masses had no hand in it. The Mughal culture depended entirely upon imperial patronage when the keen and personal interest of the Mughal emperor stimulated, it attained greatest heights; but it languished and

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faded away when the ruler's position declined. Consequently, under the five Mughal rulers, fine arts rose to the highest standard of excellence, but they touched their lowest ebb when the court patronage was discontinued. The Mughal emperors being lovers of fine arts had evolved new styles and

techniques which indicate a happy mingling of Persian and Indian elements. This synthesis left a deep impression on painting, architecture, embroidery, jewellery and metal works of the age.

Jadunath Sarkar observes that nearly two hundred years of the Mughal rule in the country provided to the whole of northern India uniform centralized administrative system. It gave not only official language and coinage but a popular *lingua Franca* called Hindustani for the people of all classes except the Brahmans and the stationary village folk. Some features of the Mughal system of administration are still traceable in India. The Mughal land revenue system and the divisions of the country into *subas*, *sarkars* and *paraganas* still continue under new names. Present provincial and district administration are derived from Mughal proto type. The present civil service, composed of men of all walks to administer imperial and local affairs, is the relic of the *mansabdari* system of the Mughal, shorn of its feudal and military character. In the judiciary some of the present laws are derived from the Mughal codes. A few Mughal canals are still existing even today.

There was one and the uniform system of administration all over the Mughal empire. All the twenty *subas* of the vast empire of the Mughal were governed by exactly one and the same administrative machinery. Besides this, the Mughal state was a national state in which all Indians, Muslims and Hindus and foreigners could live comfortably and find employment for the talents. This made all realise the imperial oneness of vast India.

The earlier Muslims aimed at destroying everything that was Hindu, whereas the Mughals assimilated and synthesised Hindu and Muslim things and created them in immortal forms. In fact, in the realm of culture, the Mughal period witnessed both harmonization and a revival.

The Muslim age and the Mughal rule had considerably influenced the Hindu culture. Habits, manners, dress and social amenities introduced by the Mughals found general acceptance. There arose uniformity of social manners and dress among the people irrespective of their creed.

Though the condition of women as a whole showed marked deterioration due to the rigidity of *parda* system. Polygamy was a common feature of this age. The Mughals rolled in luxuries, comfort and other special enjoyment. Palsaert writes : "The palaces of rich were adorned internally with lascivious

sensuality, wanton and

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reckless festivity, superfluous pomp, inflated pride and ornamental daintiness. All this naturally produced vast difference between the standard of rich and the nobles and that of common people. The drink was a common evil confined only to the upper classes and a large number of persons died of intemperance. Meat became a common article of food for the nobles and Kings.

## **Impact of the West on Regional Culture**

In the closing years of the eighteenth century channels of Indian culture were getting dry. The culture of the country had become moribund, decadent and effete. The creative spirit had disappeared from fine arts, literature, science, philosophy and religion. The intellectual life had become dull and sluggish. Knowledge was petrified. Society with all its customs was like a pool of stagnant water.

## **General Condition before Renaissance**

H.G. Rawlinson remarks the "general condition of India in the eighteenth century was perhaps the unhappiest in the chequered history of the country". The break up of the Mughal empire caused widespread anarchy and misery. Northern India became a scene of plunder and slaughter. There was no government worth the name.

The Renaissance revitalized all spheres of life and reawakened the nation from the slumber of ages. It brought



about a marvellous reawakening and wonderful progress in the realm of politics, society, religion, literature, philosophy, science and industry.

The reawakening in the social sphere transformed entirely the social life of the country. It brought about a great upheaval. At the advent of British rule, there were numerous social evils like the *sati* and *parda* system, child marriage, enforced widowhood, illiteracy, untouchability, rigid caste system, etc. which led to national degeneration. But the Renaissance removed these evils. They began to lose their tyrannical hold on the minds of the Hindus. It smoothed the path of social progress. The people were entangled in the numerous superstitions, meaningless elaborate rituals, expensive ceremonies, rigid traditions and orthodoxy habits. Nation wide movements were started to emancipate the country from these evils. Swami Dayanand Saraswati struggled very much hard to bring awakening to remove the social and orthodoxy from Haryana. The teachings of Hinduism have been adjusted to the scientific thought and the political and social philosophy of the west. A new feeling of unity had dawned.

The impact of western civilization was very extensive. The advent of Islam influenced chiefly the Hindu princely order, aristocracy and town dwellers. They determined the tendency and not the tone of the social whole. But the revolutionary

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changes which the western culture initiated did not stop in towns. They gradually filtered into remote villages in ever widening circles of influence. This process was hastened with wonderful rapidity by the conquest of space and time through improved means of transport and communications which solved easily the problem of distance and immobility. Thus, the influence of the west spread far and wide among all

classes of people in towns and villages.

The first influence of the west was felt in the realm of education. Western culture began to spread through English education which was commenced by the Christian missionaries and encouraged considerably by the decision of lord Macaulay. The western system of education introduced in India, the study of western philosophy, science, literatures, history, economics, sociology, etc. It created literate classes which derived their ideas not from the age long traditions of the land but from the west. They looked to the west for every aspect of their life and imitated a good deal of the western culture. This had the effect of developing wide gulf between the educated and the uneducated classes in India. Apart from this, the new literatures brought into existence the middle class with its manifold problems or privileges.

The impact of the west and English education was keenly felt on the vernacular literature of the region. Contact with European minds benefitted Indians considerably. Through the English language and the western literatures were thrown open to the Indians and a flood of ideas to let loose. It had an intensely stimulating effect. Before 1919, Indian nationalist leaders received inspiration from the western literature of freedom. They modelled their speeches and articles on the western thought and borrowed a good deal.

Numerous works in English language provided new trends of thought and action in India. The Indian prose literature began with the translation of English prose works. Our prose writers wrote essays in the light of western ideology. They imitated western style and theme in their writings. Indian story and novel also were profoundly influenced by the western literature. They were absent in the realm of Indian literature till the first-half of the nineteenth century.

The direct action of the state and the indirect examples of the British people and the contact with the western people have infused a spirit of progress into Indians. The best Indian thinkers felt grave discontent with the prevailing social, political religious and economic set up. They were eager to translate their progressive ideas into action.

These were notable achievements of the British rule in the field of arts. In 1860, Alexander Cunningham was appointed the Director of Archaeology. He did a

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lot of original work in the field of research in general to the country and particular to the then Haryana. His search in the field of lost track of great river Saraswati and archaeology pertaining to Haryana is of great significance. The literature of Cunningham with his commentaries are even available today through the old gazetteers.

The appointment of Dr. Hultz as first eminent epigraphist to the Government of India was the beginning of great work of reclamation of Indian history. The deciphering of the scripts of ancient India and official research for old inscriptions and documents all over the country and their publication provided India first corpus of source material from which her history was constructed. It soon created among Indians a historical sense, a pride in the achievements and nationality. The story of the Mauryas, the Guptas, Vakatas, the Chulkas, the Pallas and the Rastrakutas of Indian history was recovered to us by the devoted labours of European scholars who were in the service of the British Government in India.

## **The Recovery of India's ancient literature**

The British enabled people to recover their ancient literature-Vedic, Buddhist and Jain. The *Vedas* and their commentaries had almost totally disappeared from India, The land of Aryans, where no one could interpret them rightly and explain them correctly. Worst of all, none had the fortune to possess a complete authentic manuscript of the text. Similarly, for thousand years Lord Buddha had been forgotten and great literatures of Buddhism in Pali and Sanskrit were totally neglected and ignored. It were the English who printed the Vedic and Buddhist literatures of India and revealed them to Indians. The enterprise and

scholarship of Europeans restored to Indians the ancient literature of Buddhism from Nepal, China and Japan. Many English, German and French scholars had sent the lost and forgotten ancient literatures to other European countries and they made them available to Indians in the printed book forms.

European scholars who cultivated the study of Sanskrit literature opened the eyes of the Indians to the great rich heritage that their ancestors had bequeathed them. It was the enthusiasm of European scholars like William Jones, Cole Brooks, Max Muller, etc. for the culture of India that provided first impetus to the modern study of classics in India. They did much to introduce ancient Sanskrit to the Western world. Wilkians translated the *Gita*, Jones edited the *Shakuntala* and several other Sanskrit plays and works. Colebrooks wrote extremely on various aspects of Indology and edited numerous Sanskrit texts such as *Grammer* of Panini and *Hitopadesh*. Under the inspiration of Max Muller, a great German scholar in England, sacred books of

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India were translated and published, and Indian philosophy was studied with keen interest in the west. All this restored India's classics to Indians, enabled the new middle class in India to know of nobler and higher thing in their own thought, and helped to rouse the world's interest in India and provided great impetus to the sense of nationalism among Indians.

We are witnessing a silent revolution in Indian society due to the impact of the west. On one side there is the group of conservatives and reactionaries who warned the people of the invidious encroachments by the west hindered all kinds of progress and persuaded the people loudly to follow old

traditions and customs and maintain social solidarity. On the other side, there was a group of progressive persons. They focussed the attention of the people on the major social evils and induced the people to accept good thing of the west. This has roused our social consciousness and helped in the growth of middle class. It were the middle classes which imbibed many western ideas and followed numerous western customs and manners. They have the snobbishness of west. Being well educated, restless, critical and individualistic they played a prominent role in moulding of the destiny of the country. They provided pioneers and guided political emancipation and social regeneration.

On account of impact of the western civilization and culture our moral ideas are changed beyond recognition. Through actions and reactions, through antagonism and assimilation, western ideas began to penetrate into Indian thoughts and habits. Our manners and methods, dress and diet, modes of thought and ways of living reveal western traces.

The caste system in Haryana which has been the bedrock of Hindu society for centuries together, is itself collapsing; its rigidity is slackened. Many social evils are disappearing fast. A new view of life and conduct has been introduced in India by the west. The younger generation is becoming individualistic in its outlook. The emphasis upon the individual has tended to loosen our social bonds and shake our social solidarity and cohesion. Our institution of joint family and caste system have received very rude and violent shock.

A significant result of impact of the west are the country wide bold attempts to have social reforms especially to liberate Indian womanhood from the bond of social tyranny.

The Indian culture and philosophy have influenced the western thinkers and scholars to a great extent. Many European scholars studied Indian classic languages and they were deeply influenced by the pristine glorious culture of Haryana.

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## Fine Arts

### (i) Sculpture

But for a few terracotta mother goddess and animal figurines<sup>1</sup>, no sculptures in stone or metal are known from any of the proto-historic sites of Haryana. Beautiful terracotta figurines of Maurya and Sunga period were found from Agroha, Sugh, Thanesar etc.<sup>2</sup>. The earliest stone sculptures came from Hathin and Bhadas from southern Haryana and Amin near Kurukshetra. They are railing pillars showing Yakshai Yakshi or some other figures. Amin pillars depicting Yaksha Padmapani and a couple are objects of great merit<sup>3</sup>.

The southern districts of Faridabad and Gurgaon, probably because of their vicinity to Mathura, yielded the earliest sculptures in Haryana. Besides the railing pillars from Hathin and Bhadas referred to above, another part of a pillar and an architrave are preserved in the Gurukul Museum, Jhajjar. The former show a lady toileting with the help of an attendant and the latter probably depicts some Jataka scene<sup>4</sup>. In 1913-14, a red sandstone bust of a colossal *Yaksha*, 87x79 c.m., was found from Palwal. Carved in the round, it shows the figure wearing heavy turban under which thick locks of his hair are visible. Ear ornaments, collar, flat triangular torque, *sapatra-keyura* and traces of *uttariya*, are visible on his person, It is datable to the late Sunga period<sup>5</sup>.

Art activity seems to have received a philip in Haryana with the establishment of the Kushana empire. Sanghel, about 55 kms south of Gurgaon yielded some very important and interesting Kushana sculptures, the most remarkable amongst which the Ikanamsa triad<sup>6</sup>, a fragmentary figures of Mahishasuramardini and a female attendant<sup>7</sup>. Bhuna near Fatehabad yielded a beautifully carved railing pillar of the

1. Bisht, R. S. : "*A New Harappan Site in Haryana*". *Man and Environment*, Vol. II. pp. 86-88; Suraj Bhan, *Excavations at Mitathal and Other Explorations in the Sutlej-Yamuna Divide*, Kurukshetra, 1975.

2. Most of these, however, remain still unpublished.
  3. Aggarwal, R.C. : *Suga Pillars from Amin near Kurukshetra Lalit Kala No. 14*, 1969, pp. 50-53.
  4. Sheela Devi. *Art Traditions in Haryana, Unpublished Thesis, Kurukshetra University*, 1975, Pl. XXIV. A & XXVII. A.
  5. Joshi, N. P., *Catalogue of the Brahmanical Sculptures in the State Museum, Lucknow*, 1972, pp. 116-17. Fig. 44.
  6. Handa, Devendra : "A Kusana Ekanamsa Relief from Haryana", *Bulletin of Museums & Archaeology in U.P.*, No. 29-30, June-Dec. 1982, pp. 41-43 & Fig.
  7. D.P.S. Punia, *Archaeology of Mahendragarh and Gurgaon Districts (Haryana) unpublished thesis, Kurukshetra University*, 1976.
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## Culture

Kushana period<sup>1</sup>. A Kushana pillar capital showing winged lions seated back to back on one side and a couple on the other, now displayed in the National Museum, New Delhi was recovered from Khokrakot(Rohtak)<sup>2</sup>. A life size Buddha from Bahmanwas (Rohtak), a *triratna* symbol, *Bodhisattva* head from Mahmudpur, etc. housed in the Gurukul Museum, Jhajjar and a beautiful Buddha image recovered from near Jhajjar now housed in the Department of Archaeology and Museum, Haryana, Chandigarh are the other important Kushana images from Haryana known so far. The *Bodhisattva* head and Buddha from Jhajjar show Gundhara impact.

From the very beginning, man has sensed the nebulous presence of unseen forces active on this earth. These forces, of which nature was the visible manifestation, were seen to be the representatives of some celestial body. From this thought emerged the concept of nature as god. Different aspects of nature, were, therefore, seen and identified as different gods. Major gods out of these were Agni, Vayu, Surya, Vasu, Indra, Vrihaspati, Varun and Ashvins. Among these, Agni, Indra and Surya considered to be the most important, were regarded as terrestrial, atmospheric and celestial deities respectively and therefore, in Brahmanic literature, all the deities were categorised on this basis as Vasus, Rudras and Adityas respectively. At about the end of Vedic age, Vishnu from amongst the Adityas, Shiva from amongst the Rudras and Brahma of the Vasus acquired more prominence as compared to the others. These three gods constituted the pantheon and were soon converted into lithic form. They were beautifully represented in stone by the artistic hands of the sculptors of historic and early medieval times. With the passage of time, these sculptures became the centre of fascinating legends. A mention of above gods is given below :-

## Ganesha

Ganesha is the elder son of the divine couple Shiva and Parvati. *Puranas* refer to the myth as to how Ganesha lost his head in an unfortunate accident. It was however, replaced by Shiva with an elephant head. In order to compensate him for his uncommon appearance, he made him a chief of his *Ganas*. Thus he received the name Ganesha, the Lord of the *Ganas*.

Being an important deity, the sculptures of Ganesha are very common. This image of Ganesha is made of buff sandstone and was found from Prachin Shiva Temple at Pehowa. The god is seated on a cushioned seat. He is wearing a diamond crown and has three eyes. He holds flower bud or his own tooth, lotus flower, an

1. Now housed in the Department of Archaeology & Museum, Haryana, Chandigarh.

2. P. C. Aggarwal, *Early History and Archaeology of Kurukshetra and Ambala Division*, JHQ, XXXI (4), Dec. 1955, pp. 205-206.



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axe(*Parashu*) and the bowl of sweet balls in his lower right, upper right, upper left and lower left hands respectively. Two flying *Vidyadharas* with garlands are shown on either side of his head. A little rat (his vehicle) is depicted near the right foot of God. On stylistic grounds this graceful sculpture may be attributed to circa 9th century A.D.

## Brahma

Hindu religion is based on the Trinity or Trimurti i.e. Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, of which Brahma is placed first. He in conception and form, is the source of the *Vedas*, the supreme sacrificer and the creator of the universe. The four *Vedas* are said to have issued from his four mouths.

This beautiful sculpture of Brahma, in buff sandstone, was found from Prachin Shiva Temple, Pehowa, district Kurukshetra. The god is shown seated on a lotus pedestal. In this relief, only three faces are shown and the fourth one is supposed to be at the back. Among his four hands, lower right is in *abhaya* pose and the upper right and the upper and lower left hold a *Sruk* (ladle), a book and a *Kamandalu* respectively. His vehicle swan is shown near his right leg. Two fire altars with three flames, signifying the sacrificial aspect of the god may be seen behind the upper two hands. The god wears a garland, a pearl necklace and a sacred thread.

Exquisite expression, rhythmic flow of lines and the care with which it has been carved make it a masterpiece of Pratihara art. It may be assigned to *circa* 9th century A.D.

# Vishnu

Vishnu has been a particularly active and prominent deity since the Vedic times. His supremacy over other gods began to be pronounced in the *Brahmanas* and the *Puranas* and a time came when the prominent heroes of the legends and religious movements were all identified with the incarnation of Vishnu. The main purpose of the incarnation was always the suppression of evil and promotion of god.

This Vishnu icon, made of greyish black sandstone, was found from village Kosli in district Rewari. Standing on a lotus seat placed on a *Panch-ratha* pedestal, he holds in his four hands clockwise *Shankha*, *Padma*, *Gada* and *Chakra*. Around the main deity, the ten incarnations viz. Matsya, Kurma, Varha and Narasimha on the top, Parashurama, Rama and Budha on his right and Vamana, Balrama and Kalki on his left have been depicted. Three minor deities are shown in miniature pillared panels at the top. Below his hands hold *chakra* and *Shankha*, *Shridevi* and *Garuda* are shown as his attendants. Near the feet of Lord Vishnu is the donor couple seated in salutation with folded hands. It is complete figure marked by rigid frontality, profuse jewellery

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## Culture

and conventional stiffness. This sculpture can be placed in *Circa* 12th century A.D. on the basis of style.

## Hari Pitamaha

There are a number of sculptures of Hari-Hara (Vishnu & Shiva) and Hari-Hara-pitamaha (Vishnu, Shiva & Brahma) and the stories behind the representation have been narrated in

the *Puranas*. But surprisingly not even a single sculpture of this type of Hari-Pitamaha has so far come to the notice of the scholars. It is the first such sculpture which has been acquired by the Department of Archaeology, Haryana, from village purkhaas of district Sonapat. It is made of buff sandstone. The speciality of this sculpture is that it is carved in a round shape and the backs of both the deities are joined to each other. All the hands of both the deities are missing. It is also broken from the basal portion. The halo is common for both the deities and is carved from both the sides which is broken from the top. Vishnu is standing in *abhanga* pose and wears a *Kiritamukuta*. *Yajnopavita*, a necklace and a *dhoti* which is tightened with a waist-band. Brahma or Pitamaha is also standing in the same pose as Vishnu. He is having three faces including a bearded central one. Both the faces on either side are comparatively smaller and carry the indication of a beard in the form of incised line. The central face is shown with a beautiful ornamented *Jatamukuta*. The god also wears the same ornaments and garments as Vishnu. A small fire-altar below his right hand is also shown. On the basis of the remains it can be presumed that both the deities were having a separate group of four hands each.

This beautiful masterpiece may be dated to *circa* 9th -10th century A.D.

## Varaha

Varaha, finds mention in the *Puranas* & elsewhere as the third incarnation of Vishnu in the traditional order of *Avataras*. The story, in brief, is that Hiranvaksha, an asura, one of the two sons of Diti, obtained a boon from Brahma that he would not be hurt by noxious animals. Unable to bear the burden of the excessive evils wrought by this *asura*, the earth sank beneath the waters of the ocean. To save the earth at this critical stage, Vishnu assuming the form of a boar (*Varaha*), lifted the earth from the depth on his tusk. Then he slew Hiranyaksha. The asura had forgotten to include the boar in the list of animals when he obtained the boon from Brahma.

This sculpture representing *Varaha*, made of greenish sandstone, has been found from Bhima Devi Temple, Pinjore, district Panchkula. The prognathism, all the hands and part of legs are completely gone. The deity facing left is standing in *alidha* pose with the left leg raised and the right stretched. The God wears a crown, *Vanamala*, necklace and *Yajnopavita*

and a strap like waist-band in which a small dagger is tucked. A double-petalled halo behind the head is also shown.

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Though this figure represents the usual hybrid form of the God, it is unique in its slender shape, smooth modelling and beautiful decorations. This sculpture may be assigned to 10-11th century A.D. on the basis of its style.

## Narasimha

Narasimha is the fourth incarnation of Vishnu. The story behind the *Avatara* is elaborately described in the *Puranic* texts. Hiranyakashipu, the brother of Hiranyaksha, had received a boon from Brahma after strenuous *tapas*. The five-fold boon that he desired and obtained was that he should not die at the hands of any being created by Brahma, including the hands of man, beast, gods and *asuras*, by any weapon, on earth and in heaven during day or night, neither inside nor outside and he should be unequalled by any other being. With all his desires granted, the *asura*, got about avenging his brother's death by prohibiting the worship of Vishnu. But Prahlad, his son, was an ardent devotee of Vishnu and Hiranyakashipu failed to alter his son's devotion to the god in spite of all his efforts. Ultimately, in an argument he asked Prahlad, whether Vishnu resided in the pillar of the palace and kicked it. The pillar burst and Vishnu in the terrible form of Narasimha (half man and half lion) came out and killed Hiranyakashipu with his claws.

This small buff sandstone sculpture of Narasimha has been collected from Hansi, district Hissar. The Narasimha is shown with four arms. His proper two hands are engaged in tearing the belly of the demon Hiranyakashipu who is lying

on his lap. Remaining both the raised hands hold a scarf like object. The deity without any attribute is also interesting. This image may be dated to 7th century A.D.

## Vamana

Vamana is the fifth incarnation of lord Vishnu. In this incarnation, Vishnu reduced himself to a dwarf to chastise the demon Bali, the great grandson of Hiranyakashipu, who had grown troublesome to the gods. Vishnu taking the shape of a dwarf (Vamana) went to Bali and begged for himself three strides of earth which he granted. There upon Vishnu covered the whole of earth and sky in two strides and with the third he pushed Bali to the nether regions.

This buff sandstone sculpture to Vamana has been found from Bawal, district Rewari. The god is shown as holding *Padma*, *Gada*, *Chakra* and *Shankha* in his lower right, upper right, upper left and lower left hand respectively. Vamana Vishnu is beautifully decorated with ornaments. Below his lower right and left hands two of his attributes, i.e. *Shankha* and *Chakra* are shown in personified form. To further right and left of these *Ayudha-Purushas*, two female counterparts of Vishnu, *Shridevi* and *Bhudevi* are shown with lotus in their hands. A *lotiform auriole* behind the head highlights the grace of god. On either side of the *Pabhamandal* are Brahma and Shiva shown seated on the right and left respectively indicating the supremacy of lord Vishnu.

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### Culture

It is the only known sculpture of the Vamana form of Vishnu not only from Haryana but the whole northern region including Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir. This unique and beautiful sculpture may be assigned to *circa* 10-11th century A.D.

## Vaikuntha

Vaikuntha is the most controversial form of Vishnu. Some of the ancient texts relate this form with Indra also. The *Vishnu Purana* says that Vishnu was born of Vaikuntha an *Asuri* daughter of *Prajapati*. The *Mahabharata* refers to this form of Vishnu as *Murtichatushtaya* i.e. four fold image of Vaikuntha (Vasudeva) Narasimha, Varaha and Kapila. Except in Kashmir, Vaikuntha image from all parts of the country shows only three faces, the fourth one at the back can, however, be presumed.

This pinkish buff sandstone sculpture of Vaikuntha Vishnu was found from Prachin Shiva Temple, Pehowa. The deity is standing in *Tribhanga* pose. Three faces of god are visible., the fourth one on the back can not be seen. The central face is human with a *Kititamukuta* on his head. On the right and left are the stylised faces of a lion (simha) and a boar (Varaha). This eight-handed deity shows *abhaya* pose. *Chakra*, sword and arrow in his right hands and *Shankha* (Conch-shell), *Gada*, bow (mutilated) and shield in his left hands.

The personified forms of his attributes, *Ayudha Purushas*, Shankhapurusha and Chakrapurusha, are shown on the right and left sides, respectively. Behind the *Ayudhapurushas* stand two female attendants which are probably Shri Devi and Bhudevi. At the top, on either side of the head, are shown two flying garland-bearing *Vidyadharas*.

The facial expression and the overall effect gives an impressions of serenity and deep concentration. This rare piece of sculpture is datable to 9th century A.D

## Yoga Narayana

A variety of new forms of gods and goddesses came into existence during medieval times. The deities were shown in a variety of postures. These were worshipped by the devotees with different objectives. The Vaishnava *Yogis* started worshipping their God in the form of Yoga-Narayana to attain *Yoga*.

This *Yogasana* Vishnu or Yoga-Narayana made of buff sandstone has been obtained from Sirsa. The deity, seated in the *Padmasana* pose on a lotus seat in a pillared niche, has four hands. The front two are placed in his lap and back right and left hands hold a mace and a *Padma* (Lotus flower)

respectively. He is wearing a cylindrical crown *Kiritamukuta*, long garland, ear ornaments etc.

Simplicity and grace are the distinctive features of this sculpture. It can be assigned to the 10th century A.D.

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## **Lakshmi-Narayana**

In this class of images, the goddess Lakshmi is represented sitting on the left thigh of Vishnu. These images are very rare in Haryana. This illustrated icon of Lakshmi-Narayana is made of grey sandstone. It was found from the ruins of the Bhima Devi Temple, Pinjore. Though it is not in a very good state of preservation and the facial expression and other details are not very clear due to the roughness of stone, yet it preserves its basic features. God Narayana is seated probably on a lotus seat with the right leg dangling. He holds *Padma*, *Gada*, *Chakra* and *Shankha* clock wise in his four hands. The normal left hand which holds *Shanka* also encircles Lakshmi and touches her left breast. Goddess Lakshmi is seated in *Sukhasana* on the left thigh of Vishnu (Narayana). Her right hand is placed round the neck of her Lord and the left one holds a lotus. The Kneeling two-handed Garuda is depicted below as if supporting the lotus seat on which the pair is seated. On the receding recesses on both sides stand the female fly-whiskers in pillared panels. This interesting and rare sculpture, though mutilated is assignable to *circa* 10-11th century A.D.

## **Hari-Hara**

The image of Hari-Hara is the combination of two great gods Vishnu (Hari) and Shiva (Hara). The purpose of the fusion

has been narrated in the *Purana* in an interesting story according to which Vishnu adopted the form of a beautiful maiden Mohini, for distributing the nectar (*Amrit*) between gods and demons. Shiva loved that form and embraced her. This syncretic icon also signifies the fusion of the two major cults of Vaishnavism and Shaivism.

The present image of Harihara, made of buff sandstone, has been found from Village Beri of distt. Rohtak. In this image the left half represents Vishnu and the right half represents Shiva. Vishnu has been shown with a *Kiritamukta* (Vishnu) and Shiva with a *Jata Mukta*. The upper and lower hands of Vishnu hold, *Chakra* and *Shankha* and Shiva holds a trident and a flower. A snake is shown coiled on the trident. The vehicles Garuda and Nandi (Bull) of Vishnu and Shiva are shown on the sides of their respective Lords. Two attendants, one male and one female, are shown on either side. These attendants may be recognised as Padmapurusha and Shridevi and Trishula Purusha and Parvati at the sides of Vishnu and Shiva, respectively. A beautifully, ornamented lotus-petalled halo is carved behind the head of the deity. Brahma and Surya have been shown seated on the lotus cushioned seat on either side of the halo. Harihara is standing on a lotus pedestal.

This composite form of Shiva and Vishnu, Harihara, symbolises the ultimate unity of time and space, Shiva representing time (*Mahakala*) and Vishnu representing space.

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This beautiful and well preserved sculpture is datable to 10-11th century A.D.

## Sheshashayi Vishnu



Vishnu, the protector of universe, is represented in different forms during medieval times. This form of the god is shown in reclining pose on the Shesha Naga (a mythical snake). *Mahabhart*a describes that the Vishnu had to assume this form within the sea at the end of *Pralaya* (the great flood). Traditionally it is also believed that the god rests on the snake for four months from *Shravana* to *Kartik* every year.

The present grey sandstone image of Sheshashayi Vishnu has been collected from village Chhota Madana of district Ambala. The Vishnu is shown lying with slightly raised body the seven hooded Shesha who has canopied him. The hood is partially damaged. Four handed Vishnu holds *Chakra* and *Shankha* in his left hands whereas upper right hand is supporting his head and lower right hand is resting on chest. Mace, the third attribute of Vishnu, is kept near his head. His left leg is bent whereas the right is stretched and is held by Lakshmi. The god is shown with usual ornaments. The image of Brahma is completely gone, who is to be seated on lotus flower issuing from the navel of Vishnu. It is interesting to note that the stalk emerges from the background of the deity in this sculpture, not from the navel as described in the texts. Two male dancing figures Madhu & Kaitabha are shown towards the left of the lotus-stalk. Nine plants were also carved on the top of the panel but only seven are left at present. Stylistically this sculpture may be placed in *circa* 10-11th century A.D.

## Mukha Linga

Shiva is one of the most popular and important deities in India. He is mentioned as Rudra in the *Rigveda* where he has a subordinate position. Gradually, in other *Vedas*, *Brahmanas* and *Upanishads*, he acquired a higher status and different epithets. But the personality of Rudra was fully developed in the *Puranas*. Shiva is represented in aniconic and anthropomorphic forms in the sculptures. Aniconic representation is in the form of *Lingas* which may be either plain or with one or more faces. The antiquity of *Linga* worship goes back to Harappan age. But the *Ekamukh Linga* worship has gained more popularity during the Gupta period.

The red sandstone sculpture was found from village Gujjar Kheri in district Sonapat. Upper and lower portions of the Linga are broken and only its head remains. The locks of hair are styled in the *Jatamukuta* fashion. The god is shown with a moustache and with three eyes including the one on his

forehead. Below his horizontally placed third eye an *Urna* is also shown. The nose is partly damaged.

The smiling and graceful face, half closed eyes and elongated ears combine to present a divine effect, which is at the sametime somewhat are inspiring. Stylistically the sculpture may be dated to *circa* 5th century A.D.

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Culture

## Ishana

Ishana a form of Shiva, is one of the eight *Dikpalas* basically. *Dikpala* means regent or guardian god of half quarter of the sky. He is the Lord of north-east direction. The *Vishnu Dharamottara Purana* suggests that the images of Ishana should be made like *Ardhanarishvara* i.e. half portion of the body should be that of shiva and half of Parvati. But the account presented by *Agni Purana*, *Matsya Purana*, tallies with this present sculpture.

This present sculpture of Ishana, in the central pillared niche with two female attendants has been obtained from Bhima Devi Temple, Pinjore. It is made of grey sandstone. The four-handed deity is shown in a standing pose, holding a trident in upper right hand, a snake in upper left hand and a *Kamandalu*, i.e. water vessel in lower left hand. The lower right hand is damaged but it seems to have held a rosary. Adorned with a beautiful *Jatamukta*, he wears necklaces, armlets, waist-band, a sacred thread and a long garland, Vanamala. His vehicle Nandi (bull) is shown standing near the right leg. He is looking upwards towards his master. Two female attendants holding a lotus in one of their hands are shown standing on either side in the pillared niches. The second *pralamba* hand is shown as holding the free end of the scarf, like Agni's icon described above this image, too, shows elongation and frontality. This sculpture may be assigned to *circa* 10th century A.D.

## Ashrams

The saints and *Sadhus* are also regarded by the people. There are many *asharams* and monasteries. Asthal Bohar is a great *sadhu* centre in which saintly life with saffron cloths is led.

Mahandergarh-Rewari and its surrounding areas is known as the land of saints, *sadhus* and *faqirs* since long past. The region is dotted with numerous *ashrams*, and prominent of them are as under :—

**Swarg Ashram, Noorgarh.**— The *ashram* is located at Noorgarh, 26 kilometers from Rewari. The-74-year old Swami Sommanand sponsored this *ashram* besides free medical centre for the ill and injured from morning till evening. Many patients whose ailments have been declared incurable by leading hospitals visit this *ashram* for treatment.

**Khole Ashram (Rewari tahsil).**— A *ashram* is located at Khole village. It was looked after by 87-year old Baba Bhairon Nath who had been living in open for the last 50 years not caring for rain, sun or hailstorm. Persons of high position also visit this place.

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**Vedant Ashram, Seehma.**— It is also located at Seehma, 40 kilometres from Rewari. Swami Khetanath who looked after this *ashram* was well-known for solid services for the last four decades. He started schemes for constructing temples and utility centres for the common public.

**Bhagwat Sewa Ashram, Daroli.**— It is located at Daroli, 20 kilometres from Rewari and is looked after by Swami Shardhanand. The devotees visit this *ashram*.

The people look these *ashrams* as a centre for care and they donate something for the poor and needy persons. The people get mental peace from the day to day teachings and preachings given at these *ashrams*.

## Education in Ancient Times as a basis

## for Gurukul System

Culture refers to the distinctive ways of life of the people, their complete design for living. Education is a process of stabilising, of transmitting, of guaranteeing continuity to the culture. Education as a part of culture has the twin functions of conservation and modification or renewal of culture<sup>1</sup>. Education is concerned with the function of conserving, transmitting and renewing culture. In fact, education is conceived as a systematic effort to preserve and maintain culture. Generally, education is the process by which society, through schools, colleges, universities and other institutions transmits its cultural heritage, its accumulated knowledge, values and skills from one generation to other.

Cultural transmission is the passing of cultural traits and complexes from one generation to another so that traditional way of life is well preserved and maintained. Innovation is defined as a deliberate novel, specific change, which is considered to be more efficacious in accomplishing the goals of a system. Education is the inclusive process of both cultural transmission and innovation. It is the culture in which education generates and flowers. It is the culture upon which education exerts, in turn, nourishing or debilitating influence<sup>2</sup>.

Indus valley civilization is the first recognizable state in the development of Indian culture. Some of the essential features found in Indian culture of today had their beginning in the ancient civilization. The people of the Indus valley had developed the art of pictorial writing. They had evolved their own script as evinced on their seals. This reveals that people were educated. They had developed their own system of education. For want of adequate and proper historical evidence, it is not possible at this stage of our knowledge to give a good description of the educational system of Indus Valley Civilization. But in the Vedic Age of the Aryans there was a definite

1. Ratan, Navaratnam : *New Frontiers in East-West Philosophies of Education*, 1958.

2. B.N. Luniya : *Life and Culture in Ancient India*, 1988 p.555.

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process of education. Therefore, it is from the Vedic age that educational development is given here.

The ancient educational system covers several centuries from the pre-historic times of the Aryans to the advent of Muslims. Two succeeding systems of education can be delineated during this period. The first is the Brahmanic education that was popular during the Vedic period and in some succeeding centuries. It was followed by Buddhist educational system from early centuries of the Christian era and it was flourished well from the fifth to the eleventh century. In fact both the Brahmanic and Buddhist systems of education continued in ancient India.

## Education in the Vedic Age

Education in ancient India, particularly in the Vedic age, was a private affair. There was no state department of education. Education was not controlled and developed by the state. There was no well organised system of education from the primary to the university standard as it is in the present age.

At the beginning of the Vedic period, the family was the only education agency. The head of the family transmitted the knowledge of the Vedas to his son. Later, when the life had become very complex, certain noble priests and Brahmins accepted the profession of teaching. In the Vedic age, education was thus in the hands of the priests, philosophers and Brahmins.

**Aims of education.**— The aims of education were the inculcation of noble ideals, formation of character, building up personality, preservation and enrichment of culture; and good training of young rising generation in the performance of their social, economic and religious duties<sup>1</sup>. The system helped the development of personality by cultivating self-respect, self-reliance and self restraint. Great emphasis

was laid on purity in thought and life and civic and social duties and responsibilities. The *Vedas* were regarded as revealed and therefore their preservation was of paramount significance in the educational system. To saintly scholars the object of education was attainment of true knowledge of the Absolute which enabled a person to realise the complete identity of the self with the supreme being. Education was considered as a means to develop saintly habits and to control one's carnal desires and mental activities connected with the world.

## Upanyana Sanskar

A child was admitted to the student life after the ceremony of the initiation (*upanyana*). The *upanyana* meant the formal initiation into Vaisya castes at the age

1. A.S. Altekar : Education in Ancient India, Banaras, 1944, p.357.

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respectively of eight, eleven and twelve. The initiation of the boy into studentship by the teacher marked, as it were, his second birth in a spiritual sense.

After the initiation, the student was *Brahmachari*. It meant religious student or Vedic student. The salient educational features of the *upanyana samskar*, as described in the *Grahya Sutra* are:

- (i) The formal acceptance of the pupil by the teacher at the request of the former.
- (ii) The entrusting of the pupil to the care of certain deities.



(iii) The vows and duties to be discharged by the pupil while residing at the house of the *Guru*, such as collecting and putting fuel in the fire, fetching water and begging alms.

(iv) The dress of the pupil consisting of the *ajina*, the girdle, etc.

After the initiation, the *Brahmachari* had to undergo a two-fold course of discipline, physical and spiritual. The former consisted of (1) wearing of the Kusha girdle, and deer or goat skin, (2) letting his hair grow, (3) collecting fuel and tending house hold fire and begging alms.

The spiritual discipline included (1) offering fuel and worshipping in the fire (*Agni*) twice daily, (2) control of senses, (3) practice of austerities, (4) living a dedicated life, and (5) satisfying the teacher by gifts acceptable to him.

**Role of teacher.**— In the earliest times of the Vedic age, every father or *Rishi* (sage) was a teacher who imparted to his son the knowledge of the Vedic texts he has personally acquired. Each such family of Rishi was like a Vedic school and admitted pupils for instruction in literature or texts in its possession. Later on when life became complex, Brahmins took up the profession of teaching. The teacher was expected to possess all moral and spiritual qualifications.

The Brahmin teacher, some times a priest, taught the students of three higher castes at his house, giving them free lodging and boarding. The teacher was the central figure, the very pivot of the educational system with which the state had very little to do.

After the *upanayana samskar*, the teacher admitted the boy to studentship. He was in sole charge of his moral, mental and physical upbringing. It was the duty of the teacher to teach the pupil the truth exactly as he knew it without concealing anything from him. "Lead from darkness to light" was the sacred duty of the teacher. The teacher provided in his own residential house for the free boarding and lodging of certain number of pupils, and in return he received from their daily service during

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the period of studentship. At the end of it the pupils offered voluntarily gifts to the teacher. It was *gurudakshana*. Thus, in a measure the teacher was compensated for his labours.

## **Relations between the Teacher and Pupil**

It is to be noted here that the relation between the teacher and his pupil was the happiest kind; it was in no sense mercenary, but very sacred and almost spiritual. The teacher was the friend, philosopher and guide to the pupil. He functioned as an intellectual and spiritual father to the pupil. The teacher and the pupil were united by a common aim of preserving and propagating the sacred learning and showing its worth in their life and conduct. The pupil was to show the greatest respect to the teacher. He had to gather sacred fuel for fire worship and bring alms, by begging from door to door, to the teacher. However, it was not merely a one sided discipline. The teacher also observed certain vows and rules. He looked after his pupil very affectionately, and loved him like son. He even nursed when he was ill. The teacher revealed his paternal care and interest in matters of looking after the pupil. He provided financial help to the indigent pupil.

**Sphere of the Pupil.**— The pupil was under the observation of the teacher all the twenty four hours. The duty of the pupil was to honour the teacher like his father or mother, by word, thought and deed. He was constantly to keep before himself the aims of learning—*sharadha* (faith), *praja* (progeny), *dhan* (wealth), *ayu* (longevity) and *amaritatya* (immortality). Strict discipline was maintained.

The *Upanishada* required that a pupil should be calm and unperturbed in mind, self-restrained, self-denying and patient. He was to be the true embodiment of renunciation, asceticism, humility and chastity ; personal purity and good health were essential conditions for study. Great emphasis was laid on truthfulness, observance of duty (*dharma*), devotion to *Acharya* or *guru* (preceptor) and to one's parents.

The daily routine of the pupil was collecting fuel for the sacred fire, looking after the sacrificial fire, begging alms, herding and guarding *guru's* cattle-grazing on pasture ground tending the house of *Guru* and other service to the *Guru*.

The daily begging of alms, on which the pupil lived, was for inculcation of "plain living and high thinking" and had probably little or nothing to do with the high or low financial and social status of the pupil, or of the pupil to produce in him a proper spirit of humility. The pupil endeavoured to develop his personality mentally and morally through his devotional service to his teacher. He had to learn and practise austerities. The maintenance of chastity and celibacy was obligatory on the pupil. He had to overcome certain passions and evil habits of mind, such as extravagant desires,

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lust for mundane glory, excessive sleep, anger, taste for fragrance, love of physical adornment, etc. The period of studentship was normally fixed at twelve years or until the pupil had mastered the *vedas*, though it could be extended to much longer period such as twenty four or twenty eight years, some times even for life in exceptional cases.

**Subjects of study.**— In the early Vedic period, arithmetic, grammar and prosody were main subjects of teaching. The Vedic literature (the *samhitas*, and *Brahmanas*, the *Aranyakas* and *upnishads* appended to them) formed the chief subjects of instruction and the vital part of education. The knowledge of the sacred hymnology and sacrificial ritual was systematized considerably and it was transmitted orally, by word of mouth from teacher to pupil.

The preservation of the Vedic literature by a meticulously correct and scientific methods of recitation. The *upnishads*

provide us an extensive list of subjects of study. The main subjects taught were not only the *vedas*, but also spiritual knowledge (*Brahma Vidya*), highest knowledge called *Para Vidya*, but also grammar, mathematics (*Rasi*), chronology (*Nidhi*), dialectics (*Vakovakya*), ethics (*Ekayand*), astronomy military science, science of snakes, knowledge of portents (*Daiva*), *Pitra Vidya* (science relating to the names); according to Max Muller, it means rules for the sacrifices for the ancestors), *Deva Vidya* (etimological interpretation of divine names or knowledge of gods), *Bhuta vidya* (demonology or science of elements) and *Devajana Vidya* (dancing and music).

Language was also an important subject of study. Many were experts in language and grammar. All this shows that a very comprehensive view of education was developed at the end of the later Vedic period.

Many numerous subjects of study developed considerably the intellectual side of education. As most of the knowledge was transmitted orally, memory was specially valued faculty and was cultivated most assiduously. The students of Brahman caste who aspired to become Vedic scholars, studied specially the art of war and the elementary knowledge of the administrative function. Some times, the Kshasthya students studied Philosophy and the evolution of the doctrine of *Brahmana*. As the Vaisyas were not likeky to be engaged in the intellectual life of the day, they nominally fulfilled the duty of Vedic study.

**System of teaching.**— The method of instruction was oral. The teacher taught the students orally. As the education in the Vedic age was essentially religious in character, the first step in education was to impart the sacred texts to the learners by

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recitation. The Vedic hymns, the methods of sacrifice and other religious hymns were memorised by the pupils. The teacher recited the Vedic hymns and texts section by section and the pupils repeated his words after him. The pupils recited in presence of the teacher, got the mistakes corrected and learnt it by heart.

The recitation of the Vedic texts was cultivated as an art by itself. A great value and potency was attached to the very sounds of the letters and syllable by which the sacred words were uttered. There was prescribed pronunciation which the pupil had to commit to memory. In fact, recitation, contemplation and comprehension of the meaning of the text was vital to education.

All this was a perfect tutorial system and the pupil was under observation of the teacher. Debates among the students were held. The rite prescribed for victory in debates reveals that literary debates were very common and were held in special assembly halls which used to be crowded.

**Term and Session for teaching.**— The term for teaching commenced with *upakarman* (inauguration) ceremony which was performed some time during the bright fortnight of the month of *Sravana* (July-August) when the green grass and herbs appear on account of the rainy season. The Vedic study then continued for four months and a half or five months and half or six months, at the end of which came the *upsaya* (discharge) ceremony which formally closed the first term in the month of *Pausha* or *Megha* (January-February). After this there was a break of study for five or six months. This was probably the long vacation of the educational institutions. According to *Dharam Sutras*, the Vedas might be studied during the bright fortnight and the *Vedangas* during the dark one. This almost year long recitation was subject to numerous interruptions (*Anaydhyayas*) or "no lessons" intervals, the special occasions for which were births and deaths, portents, miracles, lightning, thunder, rains and eclipses and normal occasions for which were the 14th and 15th days of the two fortnights, the last days of the seasons, etc.

After completion of the whole course came the ceremony of *samavartana*. After it the student was called *snataka* (one who had taken a ceremonial bath, making the termination of studentship). Now he could either enter upon the married state and found a house hold or (in exceptional cases) remain celibater.

After getting married his principal duty was the management and support of his family from which he was so long absent. However, *samavartana* ceremony did not signify the end either of Vedic study or of moral training. The *snataka* could carry on his studies either as a teacher or student. The *Svadhya* or daily recitation of the Vedic text was a part of the five-fold daily routine, consisting of the performance of the five *Mahayajnas* (great sacrifices), or the married *Snataka* in the capacity of a

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house holder, and comprises portions not only of the *samhita Brahmanas*, and *kalpasutras* but also of the *Gathas*, *Itihas* and *Puranas*.

**Moral and Physical training.**— Moral training formed the very first and the backbone of the educational system of the age. Great emphasis was laid on the development of character. A student had to observe many vows and to practise numerous austerities. He was subjected to the most rigorous discipline. The intellectual side of education was developed the numerous subjects of study.

Physical training was an integral part of the educational scheme of the Vedic age, as it is indicated from the unmistakable trend of the numerous prayers for the grant of vigor and strength. The begging of alms, morning and evening prayers, gathering of fuel sticks, and the manual labour involved in the service to the teacher and his family, and in the worship and tending of the fire all entailed on a student adequate hard work and physical exercises. The daily and regular recitation of Vedic texts was a strenuous vocal exercise. Then, the *Pranyams* (control of breath) formed a part of the daily *sandhya* (morning, noon, and evening

prayers) adoration. It was not only an ideal technique for the lungs, but for all the parts of the body also. Besides this, "the *Danda pradhana* (handing of the staff to the initiated boy) was a regular ceremony, the staff was certainly a excellent weapon for self defence".

**Secular and professional education.**— Though the Vedic education was essentially religious and philosophical in character, yet there was arrangement for secular and professional education. Its vogue is simply evidenced by the progress in all walks of life and the economic, political, industrial and material prosperity of the age. People received training in diverse arts and crafts for material gain. Agriculture and horticulture and animal husbandry attained to a high norm of progress and people were trained in these professions. The education in the Vedic period did not ignore the material aspect of life, the evidence whereof is available in the *Yajurveda* and *Atharveda*.

**Education of women.**— Girls like boys were also educated. In addition to the elementary education imparted to them, they learnt music and dancing and received instruction in the daily routine work of household. Dancing and singing were recognised as a feminine accomplishments.

Women sages were called *Rishikas* and *Brahmavadinis*. The *Brahmavadinis* were the products of educational discipline of *Brahmacharya*, for which women were also eligible. Rigveda V,7,9, refers to young maidens completing their education as *Brahmacharnis* and then gaining husbands in whom they were merged like rivers in oceans. Women participated in the intellectual life of the age. Women were teachers, philosophers and poetesses. Some of them possessed very high spiritual knowledge and composed the Vedic hymns.

## Salient features of the educational system of the Epic Age

Though the epics, the *Ramyaana* and the *Mahabhartaa*, give us glimpse of the creed of the militarism of the age, yet they throw light on the education of the period. There were references to principles of duties and responsibilities of different *varanas* and *Ashrams*. There were prescribed rules for education of the Brahmans. They were required to fulfil certain conditions and achieve special qualifications such as purity of soul, unimpeachability of character, profound study of *vedas* and *vedangas*, self-restraint, humility, etc.

The duties of the Brahman pupil were; devotional service to *Guru*, rigid discipline of the *Brahmacharya*, mendicacy, etc. His daily routine and the curriculum of the studies were also fixed and regulated. After spending 25 years in his study and service to his preceptor, he would bid farewell and return home to shoulder responsibilities of settled house holder. There are reference to ideal students of the age.

As the *varna* system had assumed inflexible rigidity in this age, the Sudras were deprived of their rights of the study of the *vedas* and high military training. The example of Ekalavya, Sudra boy, bears testimony to this statement. Teachers were mostly *Brahmans*. They also performed *yajnas*, and received gifts. Different castes had their special curricula appropriate to their occupations. The *kshatriyas* had to learn military science, specially the art of archery. The *Vaisyas* and other castes allied to it had to learn agriculture and various crafts.

**Professional Education.**— The society was mainly classified into four categories or *varnas*, namely Brahmans, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Sudras. Each of these *varnas* was divided and sub-divided according to the needs of the times in different professional group known as castes. This classification was based partially on the division of labour. Every caste was allocated a particular profession and had its professional duties and responsibilities. Therefore, secular and professional education was prescribed for all castes and sub castes according to requirements of their respective duties and responsibilities towards the society. Young persons were provided professional education so that they would perform well their future function in society.

The main duties of the Brahmans were studying and teaching



the *vedas*, performance of the *yajanas* for himself as well as for others and receiving and giving gifts. The continuity of the profession of priesthood from father to son gave birth to a distinct and a separate class of priests. There the Brahmins were trained to become priest. The Brahmins also undertook the responsibility of imparting education to Kshatriyas and Vaishyas in view of their specialisation in the profession of teaching; with the lapse of time, the study of the *Vedas*, *Upanishads* and *Vedangas* came to be

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regarded as of secondary importance by the Kshatriyas and Vaishyas. They thought it sufficient for them to have obtained merely superficial knowledge of these subjects.

The duties and responsibilities of *Kshatriyas* were limited to defence, protection of the people and administration. Therefore military training was imparted to Kshatriyas and princes. It was confined to them. They acquired the knowledge of war strategies. There were no military schools and colleges, but generally the retired members of hereditary forces trained young men in the art of warfare, specially in the use of different weapons. Some times Brahmin teachers like Dronacharya gave instruction in the use of different weapons, archery and other arts and crafts. The princes were educated in Political Science and Economics and administration through parables and fables as evinced by the *Akhyayikas*.

The study of the *Vedas* and *Vedanges* was regarded as of secondary magnitudes by the Vaishyas. Therefore, they received commercial and agricultural education. They had to study economic and business methods. As service had become the occupation of the Sudras, higher education was not provided to them. They learnt agriculture, cattle rearing,

dairy farming, spinning, weaving and many arts, crafts and handicrafts. Some of them learnt singing and dancing, vocal and orchestral music, perfumery and dyeing of clothes. Their knowledge transferred from generation to generation as heritage.

**Medical Science.**— Medical Science which was advanced in this age was available to young men of all castes by private teachers. The student of medical science was required to undergo a special *Upanayana* ceremony, even though he might have undergone the ordinary initiation ceremony. The Ayurveda *Upanyana* ceremony was open to the members of all castes. The initiated student was required to pledge a vow to follow certain injunctions. Only that student who possessed perfect health and high moral character was entitled to the Ayurvedic *Upanayana*. A student of medical science was required to possess physical charms, unimpeachable character and essential virtues such as moral courage, patience, intelligence, generosity, perseverance, tenacity of purpose, fortitude, truthfulness, freedom from avarice, devoted service and humility, directed to relieve the suffering humanity.

The study of medical science in the age comprised diverse aspects such as pathology, medicine, surgery, toxicology, snake bite, blood test, study of bones, etc. The whole science was divided into two *Sastra* (theory) and *Prayoga* (practice).

Great emphasis was laid on the training of surgery (*salya*). "The beginners were taught how to hold and use of surgical instruments by practising upon pumpkins. Puncturing was demonstrated of the veins of dead animals, the manner of holding the probe on dry Alabu fruits, clarification of stretched pieces of leather covered with

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hair, sewing on the thin piece of cloth of soft skin, application of bandages on stuffed human figures and the use of caustics on soft pieces of flesh. The novice was then gradually initiated in real cases and allowed to extract darts, cleanse wounds and the use of the knife in piercing and cutting diseased parts of the body<sup>1</sup>".

**Arts and Crafts.**— A major portion of the population of the country earned their livelihood by following the profession of different arts and crafts. Ancient Indian literature refers to sixty four arts (*Kala*).

By apprenticeship with the expert of the art or craft young men, irrespective of caste, learnt arts and handicrafts. The master craftsman admitted apprentice to his craft and taught him in his own home and fed him. The youngman desirous of industrial training was first required to secure the consent of his parents or guardian before he was apprenticed to his master. He would then decide about the period of his apprenticeship. The apprentice was to live with his master whose home was his workshop.

The master craftsman had certain obligations toward the apprentice during the period of training. They were : (1) He should treat the apprentice as his son ; (2) He should provide free lodging and boarding in his own house; (3) He should teach him honestly and whole-heartedly without any reservations or holding back from the apprentice any secrets of his knowledge; (4) He would not exploit his pupil and employ him on work not related with his chosen craft. He would not treat the apprentice as hired labourer.

The apprentice had also certain obligations towards his teacher. They were : apprentice would not leave his master before the stipulated period of apprenticeship even if he completed his training. An apprentice deserting his master or lacking in character was given corporal punishment and confinement. The deserted master could sue the guardian and parents of the apprentice for a breach of contract. The apprentice should work for his master (teacher) and yield him fruits of his work, serving out his full term.

Yajnavalika also explains that even if the apprentice has had his training completed before time, he must live on his master's house upto time fixed, giving to him all that he earns by his work for the time as return for what his master has spent on him by way of free boarding, lodging and tuition. If

the art could not be learnt by the apprentice within the time first stipulated, there would be a formal extension of apprenticeship with its liabilities to the teacher and the apprentice.

**Education of women.** — In the past Vedic period and the Sutra age, the women were highly respected and honoured. They had full freedom to develop their

1. Altekar, A.S : *Education in Ancient India*, page 180, 1944.

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personality. They participated in the performance of the religious and social functions with men. They received good education. They were not prohibited from receiving education like boys, girls had to undertake the *upanayana* for career. After the *Upanayana* ceremony, women were called *Brahma Vadinis*. They were admitted to the discipline of *Brahmacharya*.

As time passed on, the feeling of superiority of men affected the social status of women adversely. The conviction was gaining ground that the women were not worthy for the Vedic education. The rules of the *upanayana* applicable to women were gradually being changed. In course of times this belief was taking firm root, that, if the sanctity of the Vedic texts were to be preserved intact, women should be denied Vedic education. The ratio of women education was constantly and steadily declining. The social thinkers in the early centuries of the Christian era began to stress the role of women as the mistress of the household. Provision of all domestic comforts for the husband by virtue of her proficiency in all household affairs came to be regarded as the sole purpose and significance of women's life. Then the false belief that women are inferior to men intellectually was gaining ground. Such view and beliefs dealt a serious blow to the education of

women.

**Educational institutions.**— In the Vedic age there were schools headed by a teacher and it was located in teacher's own house. In subsequent period these schools developed into special schools. The *Sutra* period was an age of numerous schools of thought in various subjects of study. They were named after their founders.

In the epic age, some institutions had developed into *Ashrams* or hermitages. In the *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* we have references to such numerous *Ashrams*. There the students from different parts of the country flocked together for learning around famous sages and saints who were learned teachers there. A famous hermitage near Kurukshetra deserves special mention here because it produced two famous women hermits of the age. One was a Brahman maiden who acquired there the *yogic* powers and became Tapassidha and the other a Kshatriya princess who lived the life of celibacy and attained spiritual eminence.

A full fledged *Ashram* was expected to have the following sections and departments :(1) *Agnisthana*, it was a common hall for the prayer and worship of fire; (2) *Brahmasthan*, it was department of Vedic study; (3) *Vishnusthan* it was the department of Political Science, Economics and allied subjects (*Rajniti*, *Arthaniti* and *viratta*); (4) *Mahendra-sthana*, it was the department to Military Science; (5) *Vivasvata-sthana*, department of Astronomy; (6) *Soma-sthana*, department of Botany; (7) *Garuda-sthana*, department of dealing with transport and conveyances ; (8) *Karttikeya-sthana*, it was like a military school for the study of military organisation and management, methods for forming groups, patrols, battalions, brigades, etc<sup>1</sup>.

1. Mookerji, R. K : *Ancient Indian Education*, p.333.

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**Gurukuls .—** For higher education students were required to go to *Gurukuls*. In the *Ramyaana* and *Mahabharata* we find several instances to show that even princes had to live in those *Gurukuls* and spend religious life and that also with their poor fellow students. Ram and Lakshman, Balrama and Krishana spent enough time with their *Gurus*.

The students living in *Gurukuls* had to follow the rules and regulations of the *Ashram* strictly and they lead a life of a *Brahmacharya*. The *Ashram* did not allow a *Brahmachari* to look at or touch a woman till he completed his studies. Manu further says that a *Brahmacharin* should abstain from dancing, singing and playing musical instruments.

*Gurukuls* were generally located in forests away from the din of the city life, so that the student could study in peaceful atmosphere. Our great poets and philosophers (*rishis*) of the ancient past lived in forests teaching hundred of students. These celebrated teachers attracted students from distant place. It was considered so beneficial that rich parents deliberately used to send their children to distant places, even when there were famous teachers in the towns.

The students trained at home were considered inferior to those trained in a *Gurukuls* as former suffered from desultoriness and want of application. Apart from the *Gurukuls* located in forests there were *Gurukuls* in villages and towns also. However, these *Gurukuls* were tried to be located in a secluded place or garden and in holy surroundings.

There is a good picture of the daily life of a student in the *Gurukul*. They had to live a very simple and pure life in the *ashram* of his *Guru*, rising in the morning before sun rise. He had to take bath every day and offer *sandhya* prayer twice daily, but not allowed to sleep during day time at all. The *Guru* was, therefore, not only to teach a student different *sastras* but he was also required to instruct him in the rules of personal cleanliness and of proper conduct.

One of the significant aspect of the ancient Indian *Gurukul* system was the practice of begging by the students. Yajunavalika also states that *Brahmahari* was taught and maintained *gratis* by the teacher, he had to collect his food for himself by begging blameless *Bahmanas* for supporting the body, and whatever he obtains should present it to him i.e. his teacher. The system of begging by the students had some

educational value also. Service had been the chief motto of Hindu social life. The four-fold social order could not have survived such a long span of time if this attitude of Hindu had not been there<sup>1</sup>. Naturally pupils were taught humility and were trained

1. Vidya Bhushan : *The Cultural History of Northern India (From 150 B.C to 850 A.D.* 1988, p.48.

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in such a way that they could feel the help of society in their development. The begging also made students to learn self reliance and self-restraint.

A student was required to take meals only twice a day, every morning and evening, but must abstain from taking a third meal in between the two. "The eating too much causes ill health and prevents acquisition of the spiritual merit. The students were forbidden from eating flesh or honey or stale sweet. According to Manu, a Brahmchari should wear piece of hempen cloth.

The teacher had a great responsibility and he used to teach everything which he knew. He was not to shirk from instructing his pupil and was to maintain a high standard in respect of his own academic attainment.

The following account includes the educational system of existing *Gurukuls* in Haryana :—

## System of Gurukuls in Haryana

There are a few *gurukuls* in Haryana where the ancient system of education has been prevailing. A brief description of these gurukuls is here :

**Gurukul Jhajjar** .— The Gurukul located 5 km. south of Jhajjar seems to hold its own in the midst of modern academic institutions. It was set up in 1915. It has more than 250 students, ranging from standard VI to Acharya degree classes. It presents a picture of the historical Gurukul Ashram, as depicted in the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramyaana*.

The students in the 10-12 age group once admitted to *Gurukul* starting after passing V from any school are not supposed to return to their home till they have become *Acharyas*. The parents and relatives, however, can meet them only at a specific place in the institute, and too with the prior approval of the authorities.

The discipline among the students is striking, All of them wear white *kurta* and *dhotis*, in south-Indian fashion and keep the mandatory tuff of hair on the back of their head. They are taught to treat every body with respect. The teacher-taught relation is that of ancient *guru-shishya* tradition. The classes are held in the open with students on gunny bags and the teacher sitting on the cot. The four examinations, namely "*Pratma*" (primary), *Madhyma* (secondary), "P" "*Shastri*" (Graduation) and "*Acharya*" (Post-Graduation) are conducted by Maharishi Dayanand University.

The day for student and teachers begins unfailingly at 4 a.m. and ends at

9.15 p.m. In between, the students attend their classes, do their home task and other chores like tending and milking cows; farming on the land attached to the *Gurukul* and runs various errand of the teachers. The *Gurukul* has an area of about



400 *bighas* which is mostly used for farming purposes and raising fodder for the cows.

The students are taught the Vedic philosophy, martial arts and Yogic exercises.

According to Omnanand Swami, the chief of the institute, their museum has a collection of antiques, mainly of *Mahabharata* period, excavated from various parts of Haryana. In the field of medicines, the institute boasts of innovations. *Chavanpras* of the Gurukul is extensively marketed throughout the State.

## **The Vidya Vihar Gurukul, Kurukshetra**

The Vidya Vihar Gurukul was established on April 13, 1913, by Swami Shardha Nand, situated a few kilometres from Kurukshetra Railway Station on the Thanesar Pehowa road, adjoining Kurkshetra University. It is managed by Arya Pritindhi Sabha. It is a residential institution for boys. There is no tuition fee but maintenance allowance per month is charged. The institution is affiliated to Gurukul Kangri University for *Vidya Adhikari* (Matric).

The main purpose of the institution is to teach Sanskrit and Hindi in order to improve the knowledge of the *Vedas* and other *Shruti* lore.

## **Gurukul Gharaunda**

Shri Ved Vidyalya Gurukul was established in April, 1939. It is situated opposite Gharaunda Railway Station. It is residential institution for boys. There is no tuition fee but maintenance allowance is charged. The institution prepares boys for *Pragva*, *Visharad* and *Shastri* examination. The institute is affiliated to Banaras Hindu University.

## **Kanya Gurukul, Khanpur (Near Gohana)**

The Kanya Gurukul was founded by Bhagat Phool Singh, a great social reformer. Though he was assassinated in 1942, still he is symbol of hope and progress for the people of area. Though he was Jat but he worked earnestly for the members of Scheduled Castes for their equality in order to abolish

social taboos.

The institution has a good arrangement of education for the girls only. "Our Gurukul" says the 84-year old Subhashini daughter of Bhagat Phool Singh "is the chief instrument for the social and economic uplift of our girls".

Besides education, some medicines are also prepared in the *Gurukul*.

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## **Other Gurukuls :—**

There are other Gurukuls; i.e. Gurukul at Bhainswal in Sonapat district and Gurukul at Matindu. The Gurukul at Bhainswal, which functions as branch of Gurukul Kangri (Hardwar), was founded by Bhagat Phool Singh, a disciple of Swami Brahma Nand.

The main purpose of these institutions founded on the pattern of education in ancient India, is to teach Sanskrit and Hindi. Their aim is to teach the *Vedas* and *Shruti* lore. These provide physical education according to ancient ideas.

## **Fairs**

The festivals and fairs are also an important part of cultural life of the people of Haryana. The common festivals celebrated by Hindus are Holi, Janam Ashtami, Dussehra and Dewali. The minor festivals are Shiv-ratari, Gugganaumi, Solono (Raksha-Bandhan and Bhyaduj. It is no need to dilate upon the formalities followed by the people at the time of every festival. It is suffice to say that these festivals provide

common ground to meet with one another. The Muslims greet their Sikh and Hindu brethren at the time of Dewali and Baisaki festivals. The Hindu and Sikhs also embrace their brothers (brethren) at the time of Idul-Fitar and they exchange sweetmeats on such occasions. These festivals extend national integration and a sense of common oneness in the country.

Some fairs which carry national importance need to be described as great centres for cultural significance. These include Kurukshetra fair, Phalgu fair, Pehowa fair and Mata Mansa Devi fairs.

**Kurukshetra fair.**— Kurukshetra is an important place of pilgrimage for the Hindus all over India. Whenever the Solar *Eclipse* occurs, there is an congregation of about five lakh devotees all over the country. 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. Brahmsar or Kurukshetra tank at the time of eclipse, giving alms and charity.

It is believed that on the *amavas* (moonless night) and during the period of eclipse, all *tirthas* assemble at Sannhit tank and by performing *Sharadhas* 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 Kauravas and Pandavas was deformed. As chance would have it, it got smeared with the soil of this place and became all right. Keeping in view this purifying and healing effect of the

soil, the Kauravas and Pandavas constructed a tank which is regarded sacred. A dip in the tank is believed to relieve one of all diseases.

At this occasion people and devotees visit shrines and temples and pay obeisance to the deities. Religious books are recited, *bhajans* are sung; *Kirtans* are held and *sharadhas* of ancestors are performed.

**Phalgu fair.**— Kurukshetra fair, described earlier and Phalgu fair held in the honour of a *rishi* of this name mentioned in the *Mahabharata*, are also the biggest fairs, They attract the large crowds.

The Phalgu fair is held at Pharal, ten kilometres from Pundri town. This fair is held when *amavas* during *sharads* occur on Monday.

The number of visitors are from all over the country including a sizeable proportion of women approximately over three lakhs. They are mostly from Hindus and Sikhs sections. The fair lasts for 15 days. It is considered sacred to perform here the *sharads* of ancestors on the *Somavati Amavas*. The mode of observance of this religious fair include a bath in the tanks and offering *pinds* and *sharadas* in the name of ancestors.

**Pehowa fair.**— known *mela chet chandesh*, it is a fair of great religious significance for the Hindus. It is held at Pehowa. This fair is held for 3 days on *chaitra* 13 to 15 (March-April) but the main sanctity is attached to the night between the 14th and 15th of the dark half of lunar month. It is held annually. People from far off places come here to take bath in the holy Saraswati water. It is believed that the departed ones whose spirits are not at peace get *mukti* (salvation) if the necessary ceremonies are not performed here.

The fair is attended by more than one lakh pilgrims including a fair proportion of women. Hindus and Sikhs are principal participants though visitors from other communities also come there. *Bhajan* and *Kirtans* are also organised.

**Mansa Devi Fair.**— A fair is held twice a year in March-April and September-October at Balaspur (near Manimajra Chandigarh, U.T.). It is a religious fair dedicated to the goddess Mansa Devi whose temple exists there. It is believed that all the wishes of a devotee are granted on having a *darshan* of the goddess. The first hair cutting

ceremony of children is performed here. The devotees sing songs in eulogy of the *Mata* and make many kinds of offerings in the shape of cash, cloths and ornaments. People from Haryana, Punjab and Himachal Pradesh also visit this fair.

**Jambha Jee.**— The Bishnoi community reveres Jambha jee and considers that he was an incarnation of Vishnu. He was also against all types of intoxicants. The birth anniversary of Jambha jee is celebrated by Bishnois in temples, dedicated to him and they also worship him at home.

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The perusal of this account of the fairs already alluded casts a lot of light on the cultural aspects of the people of Haryana.

The cultural traits of the people of Haryana are unique. Generally the people are religious, highly moral and upright. The Muslims and Meos practise Namaz and other rituals in the mosques whereas the Hindus and Sikhs are not so widely divided in their religious practices though there are some variations. Hindus are mainly devotees of Lord Rama, Lord Krishna, Mahamai Vaishnu Devi, Hanuman and other deities. The Sikhs follow the teachings of their Gurus and visit *Gurdwaras* regularly. Hindus also are the followers of Sikh Gurus and visit *Gurdwaras* on special occasions while the Sikhs also pay obeisance to the Hindu gods.

The religious toleration and secularism with modernism are the important virtues found in Haryana. Despite the different religious affinities the people believe in monotheism and live peacefully with the people of other religions. The Hindus also give regard to the Muslim shrines. The historic shrine of Mamu Bhanja at Sonipat is a glaring example in this direction. Dargah of Muslim Pir, Mamu Maula Bux at village Rehor is a symbol of national unity; all sections of people-

Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs pay obeisance there.

The prayers in the name of God, Allah and Guru are sung by the students at the morning prayers in the schools and *maktabs*. These people recite hymns from their sacred books and do worship at their homes and some recognised religious places. At special occasions people resort to visiting their historic shrines. They like the rural people visit their pagodas and local temples. On every occasion they invoke deities with firm beliefs in religious practices. Though they are simple-minded.

Some people are followers of Arya Samaj set up by Swami Daya Nand. He gave them a new strength not based on orthodoxy. The major portion of the people also believe in *Vedant* given by Swami Vivekanand ji whose secularistic ideas of advice are beacon light in making the people religiously moderate. An example is reproduced here from his *Biography*. The letter written by Swami Vivekanand from abroad preaching the welfare for the downtrodden :—

"I do not care whether they are Hindus, or Mohammedans or Christians but those that love the Lord will always command my service".

"Plunge into the fire and bring people towards the Lord, everything will come to you if you have faith".

"I always pray for you; you must pray for me. Let each one of us pray day and night for the down-trodden millions in India who are held fast by poverty, priest craft and tyranny, pray day and night for them. I care more to preach religion to them than to the high and rich. I am no metaphysician, no philosopher, nay, no saint. I am poor; I love the poor".

Due to the teachings of great saints and preaching of religions, people are by and large kind-hearted.. They donate liberally. They always care for the poor and down-trodden. People donate for the arrangement of *langer* and free food at the religious places. At the historic Shrine of at Mata Mansa Devi complex, such *langers* are arranged by the people and religious and voluntary organisations. The people are in the habit of giving clothes, grain and money to the temples, charity and piety are in their blood. In *Gurdwaras* free *langar* is always held. At the martyrdom days biggest *langars* are held. The *dharamshala*, wells and *baori* are also built by the people. The observance of fast on Tuesdays and during Navratras becomes a ritual. During Navaratras many people do not take wheat flour. They only eat vegetables and fruits. In Haryana, the people are *pitar pujak*. They worship their *pitar*. Even in rural areas, the farmeres do not plough the fields on *Amavas* day. Some people visit Hardwar and Kurukshetra on religious days to get salvation and solace based on religious conviction.

A large number of people remain away from wine, meat and other drugs. Though some values have been changed; now some people have changed their food habits and begun to eat meat and taste wine under the urban influence. Some influence of Jainism and Buddhism is found in the society. There are many persons who do not eat onions and garlic even today.

Generally in rural areas people depend on milk and milk product. That is why Haryana is known as heaven or home of milk and ghee. It is a maxim;

*Deso me desh Haryana,*

*Jare doodh, ghee or Dahi ka khana.*

"Haryana is one of the states where people are addicted to eating or tasting milk and curd".

Generally, the people are simple in dress. In rural areas the old people feel proud of wearing headgear (*Khandwa*), *dhoti* and *kurta*. There is some change in the dress for the younger generation. The *pant*, English dress, is coming into vogue for young persons.

In social life people are by and large rigid. The people are neither bigamous nor polygamous but they are monogamous. They believe in peaceful family life. Even Muslims are

changing their social habits particularly polygamy to monogamy, though there are some exceptions. Hindus are by law or social bindings not allowed digamy. But under strict conditions second marriage is allowed.

Besides, people love animals and birds. They extend kindness to fauna. The cow is regarded as mother by the Hindus. The urine of cow is used at home or some

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occasions as sacred as Ganga water. Specially *Peepal* tree and *Tulsi* plant are worshipped by the people.

*Tulsi* plant (also called sweet basil) has been an integral part of Hindu worship since time immemorial, specially for the *puja* of Lord Vishnu. According to ancient scriptures even the soil of *Tulsi* bed is sacred. If a body of a dead person is cremated with *Tulsi* twigs, his soul is freed from the cycle of rebirth and is believed to attain salvation in Lord Vishnu's celestial abode. In the old days when women lived in strict *purdha*, they used to emerge outside early in the morning to do *Tulsi puja* and get a much needed dose of fresh air and sunshine. Almost every temple and house has a *Tulsi* plant for religious purpose. The people do not use the twigs of *peepal* tree as fuel. These are used for *hawan* and *puja* purposes. Some ladies do worship by sprinkling water at the *peepal* tree and *Tulsi* plant on certain occasions.

Mostly the people are fatalist. As a rule, Hindus believe in transmigration of soul. The idea was that if one fed people in the memory of the dead, they would also benefit from it. A similar explanation is given for the act of pouring water before the rising sun, the idea being that it will reach the elderly dead of the family, who have now been born else where. The people believe that for that salvation of the soul



of the dead, certain ceremonies are essential. One of these is to carry the bones of the dead to Haridwar and throw them in the Ganges, which purifies every thing. In Haryana such ceremonies are performed either at Haridwar, if a person can afford the expenses, or Garh Mukteswar, which is comparatively nearer. The influence of the professional Bramans is still predominant, and without them, most of the ceremonies would be incomplete.

The influence of witchcraft is also great on the minds of the people. Though the impact is lessening under the modern education. Many people still believe in the influence of malevolent deities like *bhut pret* (ghosts), *opra* (outer elements), *Jhapat* (influence of evil spirit) and the like . There is a class of people who are supposed to possess the power of divination. Some times they succeed in restoring the sufferer to health. Often result could be more than the disease. The people now a days dissipate their energies and hard earned money in finding solution to their day to day problems. Now there is a change in the outlook of the people who have become more materialistic. Now it seems to be more true today the maxim of Mahatama Buddha, "More we progress materially, more we have to live in constant worries and fears".

## **Folk Lores and Folk Tales**

Still Haryana is rich in folklore or folktales. The region is inhabited by simple, unsophisticated people, with traditions of their own. While of a straight and frank

disposition, they harbour deep emotions and some time sensitive nature which have found expression in rich body of folk culture.

The region is rich in legends and folk-tales, many of them form the theme of folk theatre and songs of village bards. The impact of folk tales on the social life of the people is manifest in the characters from the tales forming the motifs of the facades of houses and *chaupals*. The popular folk tales of the area are of Gopichand Bharthari, Nal Damyanti, Satyawand-Savitari, Puran Bhagat and Allaha Udal. The elderly women and men still influence the characters and other traits through tales infusing and inculcating the idea of sacrifice, devotion to parents and honesty and integrity among the youths.

## Folk Songs

It is quite obvious that community life is expressed through folk songs highlighting the inherent beauty and cultural rhythm. Even today the folk culture is preserved by women through folk songs which with their burden of love and labour have a peculiar charm of their own. These songs express hopes, aspirations, love longings, joys and sorrows of the rural people.

There is a variety of folk songs, each connected with a particular occasion. At the time of marriage merriment, birth-days and some special festivals such *teej* and Holi in *phagun* month, the ladies sing folk songs. The month of Phagun enliven even the elderly ladies to dance and sing during the moonlit night.

The month of Savana (July-August) brings ecstasy in its wake. *Teej* or *Haryali Teej* is observed throughout Haryana. By this time rains have started. On the day of Teej the women come out of their homes in colourful costumes for enjoying a swing or *pehing*. On this occasion, they sing folk songs.

The another form of folk songs are *bhajans* by *bhajan mandlis*, prayers sung by the students in schools and *swangs* staged by *sangis*.

There are many occasions when *bhajan parties* are invited. Some time at the occasions of collection of the common donation for the construction of school buildings and temples, *bhajan parties* are arranged and these sing songs in a folk atmosphere.

Secondly, prayers are sung at the time of *arti* in temples. This is a very old tradition which is still being followed. The *arti* in the eulogy of gods are sung by the devotees.

Thirdly, the arrangement of *sawangs* depicted the style of folk songs. Now a days, this system is fading away However, the people in the villages sing the *ragnis*

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and other couplets in the company of duo and trios. The audience enjoy the *ragnis* of the famous *sangis*.

**Swang** .— It would be worthwhile to dilate upon the background of *swang* in Haryana. Haryana *swang* follows in the old tradition, being the most popular variety of performance based on open stage technique. It is all male cultural troupe.

The female troupes are not altogether unknown. Towards the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the last century, all women *swang* troupes performed in western U.P. and adjoining *khadar* area of Haryana. The parts were played by women. Sardari of Kalayat, Natani of Gangana, and Bali of Indri were some of the leaders of such troupes. Now women roles are played by men.

The origin of *swang* is traced to one Kishan Lal Bhat, who two hundred years ago laid the foundation of the present style of folk theatre. A notable early pioneer was Ali Bux of Rewari, who successfully staged *Fasanai*, *Azad* and *Padmawat*. In Haryana, the most celebrated name is that of Dip Chand Bhaman of Village Sheri Khanda in Sonipat district. He is still in public memory and is popularly styled as the Shakespeare or Kalidas of Haryana. Semi literate, he had a spark touch of genius. He polished the style of Ali

Bux and gave a new colour to this folk art. The *swang* of the time had two categories, (i) *Kirtan* style and (ii) *Nautanki* style. Dip Chand's style of performance incorporated elements from music dance, pantomime, versification and ballad recitation. During the Ist World War, when Dip Caand's capacity for improvization and adaptation was at its peak, the British Government made him Rai Sahib and granted him other favour. His catching song compositions with martial tunes attracted large recruits to the army.

Among disciples Hardeva Swami of Golar, Bhartu Braman of Bhainsru and Qutbi Doom and Khema were famous. Hardeva skilfully polished his guru's *chambols* style and made some improvements in Haryanvi *ragni*. Baje Nai, disciple of Hardeva beautifully mixed both styles of folk music, this created a greater mass appeal. Nathu Ram, another well known *Swangi* coached a number of talented pupils, which included Man Singh, bulli, Dina Lohar and Ram Singh.

Pandit Lakasmi Chand of Janthi Kalan is the next most celebrated name in Haryana after Dip Chand. He improved the *ragni* style of singing. He possessed a very rich, melodious voice and was also a successful composer. The significant *swangs* staged by him included *Nal Damyanti*, *Meera Bai*, *Satyavan Savitari*, *Poojarin*, *Seth Tara Chand*, *Puran Bhagat* and *Sahi Lakarhara*.

There are historical and semi historical themes based on epics, such as *Raja Rissalu*, *Kichak Badh*, *Draupadi chir Haran*, *Amar Singh Rathore*, *Sarwar Neer*,

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*Jaswant Singh* etc. Themes of old literature, such *Gopi Chand*, *Bhartari Hari*, *Harish Chander*, *Raja Bhoj*, etc. are also adopted. Mythological themes like *Prahlad Bhagat* and

Punjabi romances like *Pooran Bhagat* and *Heer Ranjha* were also taken up.

Due to modern influence, films and T.V. the practice of staging *swangs* is disappearing. But the literature and their composition are liked by the people of Haryana in rural areas. Books of *ragnis* and *swangs* composed by Laksmi Chand are followed individually and the *ragnis* are sung at different occasions. The literary significance left by Pt. Laksmi Chand is not less estimated in Haryana. The characters staged in the *swangs* are beacon light for the people of Haryana. Through these stories, the qualities of sacrifices, valour, nationalism and devotion of service towards nation, truthfulness, etc. are inculcated in the minds of younger generation. The *ragnis* are telecast from All India Radio and *Akash Bani*, Rohtak. These are liked by the people of Haryana to a great extent.

## Introduction to Music & Dance

"Haryana is the cradle of the Aryans where were created the earliest *Samhitas* of *Rigveda*, *Yajurveda* and *Samaveda*. The last mentioned *Samhita* provides the earliest evidence of the musical traditions of the country. Love of music and dance is indirectly indicated by the episode of Pururavas and Urvashi who are connected with Kurukshetra<sup>1</sup>. The *Bhagavata Purana*<sup>2</sup> also refers to the love for songs and music of the people. The Buddhist text *Divyadana*<sup>3</sup> attests to the tradition of song and music of the people of *Brahmavarta* which comprised Haryana in ancient times. A terracotta votive tank of the Kushana period at Kurukshetra depicts one musician elevated on a platform, another figure playing on a pair of cymbals and two others playing on a flute and a *tabor*<sup>4</sup>. Love of dance, drama and music of the people of Rohtak is known from the drama *Padataditikam* also<sup>5</sup>. Bana, too, refers to the existence of music halls and dancers at Thanesar. Images of dancing Ganesa from Pinjore<sup>6</sup> and Nataraja figures from Rohtak and Sandhaya (near Jagadhari) ascribable to *circa* 8th-9th centuries, too indirectly indicate the tradition of dance and music in the region. Very interesting,

1. *Satapatha Brahmana* XI, 5.1,4.

2. *Bhagavata Purana* III.21, 27-28.

3. *Divyavadana* (Ed.P.L.Vaidya), Darbhanga, 1959, pp.67-68; Vinavallika mahati sugho shakaih srotrabhiramaischa gitadhvaniranuparata prayogam.

4. Annual Report, *Archaeological Survey of India*, 1921-22, p.48.
  5. *Chaturbhani* (Ed. Motichandra and V.S. Agrawal), Bombay, 1959, p.168.
  6. Srivastana H.L. *Excavations at Agroha, Punjab*, MASI, No.61, Delhi, 1952. p4 peXIII
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however, is a terracotta tablet inscribed with seven musical notes in the script of the ninth century A.D. found from Agroha as it is the irrefragable evidence of the continuing tradition of music in the area. Srutadevi Sarasvati with a Vina from Hansi, various friezes depicting dancing and singing figures from Pinjore, the depiction of the gandharvas on the door surface found from Pehowa, Ratpur, Pinjore, etc. all indicate that love for music and dance continued down the ages in Haryana."

## Folk Music/Musical Instruments

Haryana has a rich tradition of folk music. Interestingly here even villages have been named after classical *ragas*. For instance, in Charki Dadri tahsil of Bhiwani district, several villages have names related to wellknown Ragas. These are Nandgam, Sarangour, Bilawala, Brindabana, Todi, Asaveri, Jaishri, Malakosha, Hindola, Bhairvi Gopi Kalyana, etc. Similarly in Jind district there are *Jai jai vanti*, *Malavi*<sup>1</sup> etc.

The folk music of Haryana broadly falls into two categories; classical form and country side music.

**(1) The Classical form.**— The group of songs that is closely

linked with the classical form of singing. The themes of such songs are usually mythological, *Allah*, *Jaimal Phatta*, *Barahmas* etc. Some teej songs; *phag* and *Holi* songs belong to this group.

**(2) Country side music.**— This group includes legendary tales, such as *Pooran Bhagat (Rag Maand)*, ceremonial songs, seasonal songs, ballads etc. Its music as a whole survives in cross cultural traits of social rapport. In such songs *Jai Jai Vanti*, *Pahari*, *Bhaiavi*, *Kafi*, *Jhinhont* and *Bhairavi ragas* are used. *Rag Pilu* is used in some songs sung by Ahirs, using a scale with twelve semi-tones.

The people of Haryana had excelled to such an extent in this form of music that they had become famous throughout India. They were known as melody kings. The author of *Chaturbani* conveys that Haryana folk musicians were in great demand even in the as far as places as Ujjain; and when they sang their sweet melodies to the accompaniment of the lutes, hundreds of people gathered round and listened to them with rapt attention<sup>2</sup>. Obviously, such a melodious popular music could not have been ignored for a long even by the classical masters. In consequence there was an admixture of the two types and new *ragas* which contained the melodious and lyrical content of the folk musicians and classical mixture of grammar of masters.

1. Verma, D.C.: *Haryana*, p. 89, 1975.

2. Aggarwal, V. S., *Moti Chandra, Chaturbani*, p.168.

music which they could sing at any time when needed. Some of these folk songs, called *rasakas*, says Bana, were even obscene (*ashilila*). Such songs were sung at the time of the marriage of Rajyashri, sister of Harsha.

The music tradition remained quite strong in the post-Harsha period too<sup>1</sup>. There are plenty of literary and archaeological evidences to prove this point. A special mention may be made of an evidence of the latter type, a terracotta tablet of the 9th century from Agroha bearing seven musical notes viz. *sa, re, ga, ma, pa, dha, ni*, in *Brahmi* (northern) character. This is an enviable discovery in the history of the Indian music, for it is the first and the earliest archaeological evidence of the type<sup>2</sup>.

Even during the medieval period, unlike many other arts, happily music did not suffer any damage. Now there is some change. The old language is replaced by popular languages, or even dialects and, there is also a admixture of Persian modes in music. The new scheme known as northern school modified the *ragas* much. The style like *dhrupad, dhamar, khayal, thumari*, etc., became popular.

During medieval period, in the courts of the Delhi kings and the local feudal chiefs, a few of Haryana musicians showed their excellence in almost both the classical and semi-classical styles.

In the series, Surdas, visually disabled musician belonging to Dhadi-caste born in 1478 at Sihi village of Faridabad district. Surdas, the king of musicians, was blind by birth. He probably got his first lesson in musicology at a village not far off from Sihi, from some Sadhus of the Haridas order. Later, he was influenced by Vallabha Charya who made him *keertana kara* in the temple of Shri Nath at Mathura, the birth place of Lord Krishana. Here he composed and sang over a lakh of verses, *dhrupads* and *bhajans* due to which he came to occupy an important place in the category of musicians. The contribution of Surdas to the music is a unique. As time passed, the tradition started by him blossomed into many varieties, the use of which is being made by singers in the temples and elsewhere for the last 500 years not only in Haryana but in most parts of India.

Surdas travelled extensively. He went to Mathura in U.P. It was during his above mentioned visit to Mathura, that Sur met Akbar, the then king of Hindustan. There goes an interesting story as to how this happened. One day Tansen,



Akbar's court singer sang a lyric composed by Surdas. It moved Akbar very much and he

1. *Journal of Haryana Studies*, 1983, p.43.
  2. *Memoirs Archaeological Survey of India*, No. 61, 1952.
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enquired as to whose composition that was. "It was Sur's work", said Tansen. "Wonderful" was Akbar's response, and since then Akbar desired to see him.

Gokulnath has given a graphic account of Akbar's meeting with Sur at Mathura. The very first song sung by the melody king in the praise of his Madhava (Lord Krishana) moved Akbar. Sur was a great follower of Lord Krishana. He at once measured the status of the great singer but this did not satisfy him. He wished to know his status as a *Bhakta* too. "Shri Bhagwan", he said to Sur, "has given me the power to rule and every man of talent has sung of my glory". You are also a talented man and, therefore, you should also sing of my fame. If you wish to get something from me (in return of this) you need only ask for it. Sur gave a sharp retort to the king in a *pada*:—

"There is no room in my heart for any one else;

For there lives Krishana, the son of Nanda'.

Akbar was pleased to hear this from Sur; and he tried to conciliate him by "giving" a village and great wealth. But Sur did not accept any thing. Atlast Akbar said; "Baba Sahib, giva a command atleast". Sur's command was in line with that of great *sanyasi* : "From now or never again summon me or come to me".

In the later Mughal period, the famous *khayal* singers Kallan Khan and his sons Hafiz Khan and Basir Khan of Gudiani, a village near Kosli, occupied a pride place in the world of music. Kallan was a disciple of Hoddu Khan (D-1870), the greatest *Khayal* singer of Gawalior House. Kallan was a very famous for his lyrical *Khayal*<sup>2</sup>. Kallan's son Hafiz Khan's fame as a great *Khayal* singer reached even in south India. He was invited by the king of Mysore to adore his court and won laurels there. Subsequently, he was employed in the court of Indore. He died in 1920. Basir Khan, his brother, in certain respects, went ahead of Hafiz. He received his education from two music giants of his age, Umraov Khan of Delhi House and Innayat Hussain of Sahaswan. He shaped into a master artist whose fame as a great *khayal* singer reached far and wide like his brother's. He was, however, a man of independent nature. He left one court after the other. Mysore, Bhavanagar, Indore, etc. were some of these courts that he visited and stayed. He got his recognition for his musical excellence. He died in 1940.

Mian Achapal was another great musician of this time. He was great singer and musician who had acquired unparalleled mastery over a number of styles *\_khayal*,

1. Chaitanya Deva : *Indian Music*, p.45.
2. Chaube, S.K. : *Sangita Ke Gharone Ki Charcha*, pp.92-93.

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*tarana trivata, chaturanga, saragana* etc. His composition have been famous even to this date and many great musicians sing them. He had a large number of disciples of whom most famous was Tarnas Khan, a big name in the history of Indian music.

After independence, some activity to revive the classical music had been noticed. Jasraj being classical vocalist was born at Hissar. He was trained into the tradition of *Mewat gharana*, especially by his elder brother, Mane Ram. He received the title *Suar samrta* for his having established a perfect harmony between *svara* and *laya*. The Government of India awarded him *Padamashiri* in 1975 and the *Haridas Sangeeta Samiti* (Varindavan) gave him the *Swami Sri Haridas Sangeeta Award* in 1978. He has to his credit seven long playing records on different *ragas*.

**Instrumental music.**— Like vocal instrumental music has also been quite rich in Haryana since time immemorial. In the past Vedic period, the instrumental music gained better position than it had in earliest times. It was no more a religious affairs. Its use became comprehensive. A few examples : Bana describing the march of the Thanesar army says, "No sooner than the marching drum had been sounded musical instruments began to be played. Straightway the drums rattled the *nandis* rang, the trumpers brayed, the *khayals* hummed and the horns blared". On Harsha's birth, an auspicious ceremony was held in an atmosphere where musical instrument like conchshell were blared; drums and trumpets were sounded. Later harlots danced to the accompaniment of many musical instruments; tambourines tinkled, strong drums were belaboured; the low gourd lute sang gently boomed *khayal* with their brozen soundings bozes. *Alingyaka*, a special elongated drum, *anuttana alaburina*, lute with a sound box are reported to have been used for musical sound in the public places of Thanesar<sup>1</sup>.

There were many great masters of instrumental music at Harsha's court; Jimuta was a tambourine player (*mardanjika*); Paravata and Madukara were flute players (*Vanishika*) and Dardukara was a music teacher.

With the vanishing of the courts of the old kings, instrumental music got a set back. But somehow artists like *jogis*, *bhats*, *sangis* and *bhajanis* tried to keep the flame of music burning to some extent. According to official estimates, there were six hundred *jogis* and *bhats* in 1942 in two districts of Rohtak and Gurgaon. During British period harmonium, volin, piano in the shape of western orchestra were introduced. In the big towns especially among the westernised elite, the western music became popular.

After partition in 1947, many *jogis* and *bhats* migrated to Pakistan. Some went to Delhi; While other's left this

profession altogether in favour of manual labour.

1. Aggarwala V. S. : *Panini Kalin Bharat*, pp. 89-91, Vs 2012, Varanasi.

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**Folk Musical Instruments.**— There is a great variety of musical instruments which are essential accompaniment of folk music. Most of these are common to the northern India. Broadly, there are three categories: stringed, wind and percussion.

**Been.**— The snake charmers mostly use it. Two small bamboo pipes are fixed in a hollow gourd. One keeps the drone of the basic note, producing a monotone ; and the other one is used for producing tunes by the performer. The player blows into the gourd and his fingers moves smoothly on the finger holes of the double reed instrument. It is used in many folk dance performances.

**Shehnai.**— This is a common instrument, seen on the marriage occasions. This is an open air instrument like *bansari*. The modern experts have brought to this instrument a fluidity comparable to that of stringed instrument.

**Iktara.**— This is one stringed instrument which is played with fingers. It is made from a piece of bamboo about a metre long, with a large gourd attached to one end. The other end of the stick is inserted into the hollow of the gourd resonator, which is covered with hide. Before singing, the singers hum gently, feeling for right pitch. The sound of the string keeps the drone of his basic note. The instrument is generally used by *Jogis* (bards).

**Dotara.**— This is like two stringed *Iktara* and used for playing sound.

**Sarangi.**— This is bow instrument because it is played with a bow, which is made of long strand of animal hair, fixed on a bow shaped stick. This instrument takes a prominent place as on accompaniment to the main singer. It is about 60 centimetres long, made by hollowing out a single block of wood. For tuning, four pegs are fixed in it to set things according to the pitches of twelve semi tones. Some *sarangis* have thirty five to forty sympathetic strings running under four main strings. It has for long been a folk instrument used by common people, particularly the bards for their simple music.

**Shankha.**— This is the most ancient wind instrument known to man. In India it is considered very sacred, being regarded as one of the attributes of Lord Vishnu. Before using, the *shankh* is drilled in such a way as to produce a hole at the base, taking care that natural hole is not disturbed. The instrument is used in temples and shrines. In ancient time, *shankh* was used on the battlefield, to alert the warriors. On the battlefield of *Mahabharata*, the *shankh* used by Lord Krishna was called 'Panchajanya'.

**Bansari.**— This is one of the earliest wind instrument called by many popular names like *veena* and *murli*.

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**Harmonium.**— Though not originally belonging to India, the harmonium is commonly used in all cultural performances. It is used by *swangis* and *bhajanis* in Haryana as an accompanying instrument.

**Dhol.**— This is two sided drum, played by two small wooden sticks. A barrel shaped wooden drum is covered with skin on both sides. It is used on the occasions of marriages, festivals, wrestling matches, dance performers, etc.

**Dholak.**— This is a smaller version of *dhol*, mostly used in Ahirwal.

**Daph.**— This is one side drum and serves as accompaniment to the dances, particularly *Dhamal* dance, popular in Rewari and Mahendragarh districts. It is very simple in construction, consisting of an open circular frame with only one side covered with skin. It can be played either by hand or with small sticks. It is used on festive occasions.

**Khanjari.**—This is small variety of *daph*, with only difference that *Ghungru* are fixed around it. It is generally used in solo dance performance.

**Damru.**— This is very small drum, shaped like a hourglass. It is an attribute of Lord Shiva who is to have played it during his Tandva Nritya (cosmic dance). It is used as an accompaniment for devotional and ritualistic folk music, especially in Gugga dance. It is also used by jugglers.

**Deru.**— Deru is bigger version of *damru* but serves the same purpose.

**Nagara.**— This is also a side drum but heavy and large in size and rests on the ground while playing. Its body is made of copper. It is played with two large sticks. It is relic of feudal times when state declarations announcements were made with the beat of the *nagara*.

**Jhal.**— This is a smaller version of *nagara* and played smaller sticks. It is always placed on the left side fo the *nagara*.

**Taasha.**— This is one side earthen instrument played by two small sticks. It is used in ceremonial occasions and some time also on the occasion of dance performance.

**Ghara.**— This earthen pitcher is the cheapest instrument played on different occasions of a dance performance.

**Cymbals.**— There are two sound pieces of bronzes which produce matallic sound during a dance and other occasions.

**Bells.**— These are used generally in temples during *artis*, *Kirtans* and other devotional performances.

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**Ghungru.**— These are worn by a dancer around his/her ankles to give force and effect to the dance. It also helps in producing rhythm.

**Khartal.**— These are small *ghungru* fixed on two small wooden pieces and are struck together to keep the rhythm according to the tempo of other instruments.

**Chimta.**— This has long and flat iron pieces, joint together on one side with some small bells fixed on them. They are used during *swangs* and also in temples on other occasions. It is very popular in Haryana.

**Manjira.**— This is a pair of metallic cymbals used for producing rhythm. It produces a pleasant sound for producing rhythm. It produces a pleasant music and is used mostly as accompaniment to devotional music frequently dance performances. It is also used by *Jogis* of 'Nath *Parampara*' during their prayers.

## Folk Dances of Haryana

It is said that dance is the mother of all arts, music and poetry exist in time; painting and architecture in space but dance lives at one in time and space. Folk dances all over the world have common themes. These may depict seasons, festivals, religious rituals, harvesting, hunting, etc.

A terracotta found from Sugh depicting a dancing party going in bullock cart indicates that the art had been professionalised in the 2nd century B.C. The Jataks, too, throw some useful light on the art of dancing. The art was included in the list of sixty four *kalas* and had begun to be learnt by high and low alike in this period. In the times of Yaudheys, the fame of Haryana dances reached as far places as Ujjain.

The Pushabhutis pushed the art to zenith. Bana gives a

detailed account as to how the courtesans, the ordinary folk, the professional dancers and the court *narityakars* showed their excellent feats on different occasions. For instance, at the time of the birth of Harsha, a captivating dance performance took place.

Bana makes reference to court dancers. Tandivika was a young male and Harwka a youthful female dancer. They used to perform dances on special occasions. There are some references to folk dances. The most famous of these dances was *arabharti*.

The Haryana folk dances can be divided into two group; social dances(ii) ritualistic dances. The details of each kind of dance are as under:—

**Ras Leela.**— This dance is common among the people living in 'Braja area' of Faridabad district. Lord Vishnu has been manifest in many incarnations. He is the supreme embodiment. He is Lord Krishna. The *gopis* of '*Brija bhoomi*'; the simple milk maids, are his true devotees. Krishna chooses them as the finest examples of human beings, for they willingly surrender their all to the Lord, one by one. Their

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pride, their egoism their ignorance, their possessiveness they lay them at His feet. Radha, the most beautiful *gopis* proud of her beauty and power over men, is the last to surrender to the utter bliss of the Lord. Jaydeva, the composer of *Gita Govind* tells her story in lyrical verse; the story of eternal struggle of the human being; the *ras leela* world as His own self and as the selves of the dancing *gopis* who form a circle around Krishna. In this circular dance, the bracelets, anklets, and the bells of the *gopis* sound together in perfect harmony. *Gopis*, moving the rhythm, sway their bodies gracefully.



**Phag dance.**— This is a seasonal dance through which the agricultural people express their joy and vigour. During the months of February-March (*phalgun*), they have a little leisure between sowing and harvesting. The crops growing well, the spring is on; and the rural folk express themselves through song and dance.

Like women, the men also perform a dance called *dhap* dance during the *Holi* days. The women dance separately. They do not participate in the male dancers.

**Loor dance.**— This is not a common dance. It is performed only in the areas adjoining Rajasthan. Like other dances, it is also done at the night. The dancers form two rows holding each other hands. They are like two opposing teams on a sports ground and sing songs which usually contain taunts for their opponents. The talented side wins the contest which however, remains unacknowledged by the losing side.

In Dadri area, the term *loor* is used for girls. The participants in this dance are all girls.

**Daph dance.**— *Daph* dance is also a seasonal dance connected with the harvest and spring. It depicts the joyful emotions of the farmers. Men and women of all sections of the village community participate in this dance, though separately.

As early as the fourth century A.D. the drummers of Rohtak and the Yaudhey melodies based on *Ragnis* set the fashion for the cultural world in the northern region of India. For melody instruments the ancient *Haryanvis* used flutes, lutes and *beens*.

**Dhamal dance.**— Dhamal dance is as old as the *Mahabhart*a. It is popular among the Ahirs of Rewari, Gurgaon and Mahendragarh areas. The dance, which is rooted in the deeper emotions of the people, is performed on the moonlit night of *phalgun*. Free from the cares of life for the time being, the dancers assemble in an open space and form themselves into a circle. They start with a song to the sound of *Dhamal* beats. Between fifteen and twenty dancers participate in the dance. Old musical instruments like *sarangi*, *been*, *dholak* and *Khartals* contribute the orchestra. According to legend, the dance depicts the story of Dropdi and Kichak of *Mahabharata*.

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**Gugga dance.**— Gugga Pir with several names is worshipped practically all over Haryana and devotees are scattered over the neighbouring state of Rajasthan. He is equally worshipped by both Hindus and Muslims. About a week before Gugganaumi, his devotees take out a procession led by a *bhagat*, carrying *Gugga ki chhari*-five *bhagats* are the main dancers. They carry their own musical instruments in their hands consisting of *dholak*, *majhira*, *desu*, *chimta* and cymbals. The *bhagats* sing song in praise of *Gugga*.

These parties are seen roaming in Haryana villages during the month of *Bhadon*. It is exclusively male dance and falls in the category of ritualistic dances. Though simple, it creates an atmosphere of charged with spiritual fervour among the devotees of *Gugga*.

**Jhumar dance.**— The dance takes its name from *jhumar*, an ornament commonly worn on the forehead by young married girls. It is performed exclusively by women. They form a circle and move gracefully, accompanied by the beats of *dholak* and *thali*. There are many variations, each with its own distinctive rhythm. The dancers dressed in colourful costumes lose themselves in joy. The performances last several hours. A girl comes forward and breaks into song. This dance resembles the well-known Punjabi *gidha* and thus named Haryanvi *Gidha*. It is common in all parts of the state.

**Ghumar dance.**— There are some dances which receive inspiration from religion. The gods are invoked to shower their blessings on the labours of a community. *Ghumar* is a Rajasthan dance and it is popular in Loharu, Charkhi Dadri and some parts of Hissar and Bhiwani, bordering Rajasthan. The dance is performed by women devotees on their way to temple. Young women and girls carrying brass plates of offerings in their hands go to the village temple, singing devotional songs. The dance is performed on Dewali, Holi

and on the occasions of *Gangor puja*.

Brass plates in hand, girls make a circle and start singing. The musicians strike a chord and as soon as tunes begin to take shape and gain momentum, the dancers put their offerings aside forming a large circle and dancing gracefully with uplifted arms to the simplest beats. Slowly the dancers gather momentum, the swaying bodies become fully absorbed taking the dance to its climax.

**Khoria dance.**— This dance is a variety of the *ghumar* dance, performed by women only. It is popular in the central areas of Haryana. It is also connected with a daily life of the people and with the most important events like harvest.

Singing a folk song, the girls enter the dancing place and make a ring. The simple movements require form and colour with the swirling of their full-gold work

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skirts and coloured *chunderis* and the gleam and jingle of heavy rustic jewellery. The graceful steps give place to a faster tempo until two or three pairs of the girls break from the ring into the centre with crossed arms join together, swirling on the axis of their feet, while the girls in the ring clap to the beat of the drum. In the final stage, the dance is around the circumference.

**Holi dance.**—This exuberant dance is connected with seasonal festival of spring, when the rural community rejoices and relaxes after the completion of their agricultural operations. It is performed in various formations to the accompaniment of drums and pipes. Both men and women participate. Percussion instruments like drum, *jhanjh*, *chimta*, *khartals* and *thalis* and anklets on the feet of the dancers

produce the rhythm.

*Abir*, *gula* and coloured water is sprinkled on each side of the dancers. The dance is accompanied by *chaupies* and *chamaulas* which sustain the performance for hours. The women folk often use twisted ropes, *kolras* to mock beat their counterparts, the menfolk. This dance is popular in Palwal, Faridabad and Ballabgarh areas to a greater extent; it is also performed in other areas.

**Gangor Puja dance.**— This dance is performed in villages bordering on Rajasthan. It is ceremonial dance of women in connection in the puja ceremony of *Ishwar* and Gangor (Lord Shiva and Parvati). Dressed in colourful costumes and jewellery, with brass jars on their heads, the women move in circle, the movements and the pattern of the dance changes according to the music. The smiles of dancers are an important element in performance. It is a devotional dance to invoke the blessings of the gods for good harvests and is usually performed in months of *phalgun* and *chait*. Sometimes the dance takes the form of *kirtan* associated with the Lord Shiva and Parvati.

## **Architecture in Haryana since ancient period**

### **Domestic Architecture**

**The early man in Haryana lived in caves which were not built by him but these were provided to him by nature. There came 'Siswals' on the next stage. Their houses were simple and rugged. Their walls were constructed by and large in single mud brick courses<sup>1</sup>. They had thatched roofs just like present *dhara* style.**

After several centuries, the Harppans who migrated north-west made some significant change in the existing structures. The excavations made at Banawali, near Hissar, yielded very valuable evidence on this point. The broad

arterial streets, running from north to south, have been found straight and uninterrupted whereas those running from east to west are usually narrow and staggered. The archaeologists believe that this planning perhaps protected the town from the blistering winds of the west and the monsoon rains of the south east. The excavation indicates that houses were built

1. Phogat, S.R: *Archaeology and History of Rohtak and Hissar Districts*, p.315.

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along these streets in a planned manner. Almost every house had a few rooms, a kitchen and a toilet. Their sanitary arrangements depended on the use of sanitary pottery jars which served as wash basins as also for soakage purposes. Excepting a few places where there was constant flow of water, structures were usually made of sun baked bricks meticulously moulded into two sets, small and big. The smaller ones ranging in sizes from 6X12X24 cm. to 8X16X32 cm. were used in constructing residential houses, while the bigger ones 10X20X40 cm; 11X22X44 cm. and 12.5X25X50 cm. were used for buildings meant for defence purposes. In each case, however, the ratio of brick sizes remained the same 1:2:4; a practice which the Harappans maintained throughout the existence<sup>1</sup>. The Vedic literature makes some reference to elegant buildings with gorgeous and pillared halls. There were either public buildings or houses of upper class gentry. The ordinary folk lived in small, simple but clean and well ventilated houses.

The *Mahabharata*, Buddhist and Jain literature throw some light on the architecture. The former informs that there were well fortified towns in Haryana, and houses were very strong and spacious and comfortable. The *Divyavadane* describes the ancient city of *Rohitaka* (Rohtak) as sprawling across twelve *yajanas* in the length and seven in breadth and

surrounded by seven fortifications, having sixty two gates, hundreds of thousands of tenements. The roads were good, markets and shops spacious. The houses were usually multi storeyed<sup>2</sup>. The towns of Ihulakota (Khaithal), *Sona Prastha* (Sonipat), *Roni* (Rodi), *Sar Sisaka* (Sirsa), *Tausayana* (Tosham) and *Esukari* (Hissar) had also lofty houses<sup>3</sup>. Patanjali in his *Mahabhasya* makes references to masonry palaces at *Srughana* (Sugh). Excavations at Agroha show it to be a well planned and prosperous settlement with domestic structures of burnt bricks<sup>4</sup>.

Bana, the court poet of Harsha makes rich contribution in this respect. His description of the palace of Harsha at Thanesar is unique one. He says,

"The palace was contiguous to the military camp, strong walled with one massive entrance (*rajadvara*).

Inside the *rajadavara* were several rooms, probably for the residences of the guards. Then there was a main palace which was magnificently planned. There were three courts; in the first court towards the left of the *rajadvara* was *avasthana mandapa*, a spacious pavilion for royal groups and opposite to it on the right was the *mandura*,

1. See for details, *Bananwali*, Haryana Government publication pp. 4 & 5.

2. *Devyadana*, P.L Vaid, p.67.

3. Aggarwala, V.S. *Panini Kalin Bharat*, pp. 86-87.

4. Srivastava, H.L. '*Excavations at Agroha (Punjab)*, *Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India* (No.61), 1952, p.2.

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(stable) for the royal horses; the second court contained the *behvasthana mandapa (diwan-i-am)* where the king held his general *darbar* and in the third court was a *rajakula*, the royal residence. It had two *mandapas*, the first *mandapa* was a sort of special drawing room whereas the latter was like a *darbar-i-khas*<sup>1</sup>. Beyond it was a royal residence *dhavalagraha*, a multistoreyed mansion. There were two beautiful stair-cases; one on the right and other on the left leading to the upper floors. In the upper storey, there was a central hall. Adjacent to it were two rooms, *saudha*, a sort of drawing room for queens, and the *vasagraha*, the sleeping chambers, beautifully decorated with painting. A little away from it was the guest room, especially for formal guests. It was called *prajriyaka*. In the back portion (on the upper storey) was *chandrasalika*; a roofed part pavilion supported by several pillars. This was used by the royal couple to enjoy the moonlitnight."

The houses of the rich people were also quite massive and elegant. Pushpadanta, another poet of tenth century makes references to the houses of the gentry having as many as ten storeys. The common men, however, lived as before, in simple structure, usually made of sun-baked bricks.

## **The contrast pertaining to Architecture between the Musalman, Mughals, Hindu & Westerners**

Before coming to the actual specimen account of building, *Dargah, Baghs*, etc. of Indo-Muslim, Mughal and the British period, it would be worthwhile to have comparative contrast of building designing between above powers which ravaged the country (Haryana) in the early period. Without having a glance over the architectural style of the medieval period particularly of the Mughals, the account in this domain would be incomplete, because the Mughals constructed maximum buildings, religious or non-religious, generally in India but the then Haryana could not escape from their attention.

One of the richest contributions of the early Muslims was in the domain of architecture. The spirit of synthesis that was expressed in religious thought was also clearly manifested in fine arts<sup>2</sup>. The Indo Muslim architecture is a shining example of this spirit of synthesis and harmony. The Muslims had evolved their own art with certain characteristics. Islam

had been flourishing in the arid region of scanty rainfall stretching from the Mediterranean coast to the Chinese wall. This atmosphere had reached on the Muslim conception of art. However, for their religious needs the Muslims had to assemble in an open extensive place embodying, sublimity, purity,

1. Aggarwala, V.S. *The Deed of Harsha, Being a Cultural Study of Bana's Harsh-Charitra*, pp.240-241.

2. *The Cambridge History of India, Chapter- XXIII, Volume -III.*

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peace and providing shelter for the congregation. Thus, the Muslim art was conditioned by the learning characteristics of the Muslim mentality, practical needs of their religion and worship and geography of their region. Consequently, salient features of the Muslim architecture were massive and extensive buildings and mosques, aspiring domes, tall minarets, lofty portals, open courtyards, pillared naves, huge walls all bereft of sculpture but adorned with a few mouldings, geometrical patterns and calligraphic inscriptions.

On account of their physical features of the region, the Hindus had evolved distinct mental characteristics and system of culture, peculiar and individual. What wonder them if such physical features and unique mental set-up should have evolved certain system of architecture, and we, therefore, find in the Hindu art vastness, stability, majesty, magnificence, sublimity and infinite richness and variety. Like the Indian land, covered extensively with the variety of beautiful flowers, leaves, creepers, plants, etc., every small part of Hindu buildings and temples was covered with the most elaborate carvings and profuse sculptures, all serving to



manifest reality. The spiritual and aesthetic, concepts of the Hindus were fully expressed in their art. Hindu religion and art have been inseparably linked together. With the advent of Islam, the Hindu and Muslim systems of architecture were synthesised. The followers of Islam brought in their train the art of different countries of the western and central Asia. The happy fusion of these with the different indigenous styles of Hindu art led to the growth of a new Indo-Islamic style of architecture.

There were many factors for the blending of the two systems. The foreign rulers and their followers being military adventurous did not bring with them craftsmen and sculptors. Consequently for the construction of their buildings they employed local artisans. The Indian craftsmen possessed sufficient experience and independence to enable them to work out in their own manner and with their own materials every structures as were required to meet the needs of their new Muslim rulers. They introduced unconsciously, Hindu architectural designs and decorations in the Muslim buildings.

The early Muslim sovereigns constructed their palaces, mosques, tombs and other structure out of ready-made materials which they obtained by demolishing fortified towns, temples and other buildings of the Hindus. Some times spoils of the Hindu temples were supplemented by a certain amount of new and original masonry under Islamic direction. Many times the temples of the Hindus were converted by the Muslim rulers into mosques by dismantling their *Sikhars* and roofs and erecting in their place domes and lofty minars. Moreover, there were common features between the temples and mosques. It was open courtyard surrounded by chambers or

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colonnades. Temples which were built on this plan were easily converted into mosques to suit the needs of the new conquerors.

## **Striking contrast between architectural structures**

The Hindu art was decorative and gorgeous, while the Islamic art was marked with puritanical simplicity. The basis of the Hindu art was trabeate, while that of Muslim was arcuate. It means that the Hindus used rows of pillars and long beams laid horizontally to span spaces. The Muslims adopted arch to bridge a space and erected graceful domes. Rows of pillars were essential for Hindus, while the *mehrab*s and carved bow shaped roofs for the Muslims. Solidarity and beauty were special characteristics of the Hindu buildings, but spaciousness and simplicity of the Muslim structures.

The Hindu temples had splendid lofty *sikhars*, the Muslim mosques and other tombs had magnificent bulbous domes. The walls of Hindu temples were extremely solid, stable and divided into plinth and basement and stepped by deep projection, the walls of the Muslim buildings were plain and smoothed faced. The temples had massive darkness and sombre passages leading to dim shrines and cells; whereas the mosques had vast courts open to light and air coming through many doorways. The Hindu architecture exhibited an infinite richness and variety of sculptures. The Hindus conveyed their meaning by iconography and carved figure compositions. Their monuments were enriched with countless idols of divinities. The walls of their temples and buildings were pulsating with life and imagery. The variety of mouldings and richness of ornament was extraordinary in Hindu buildings.

The Muslims were fond of puritan simplicity and they were iconoclasts. The representatives of natural forms and human figures were prohibited by Islamic traditions and practices. For ornamentation the Muslims used colour and lime and flat surface carving and ingenious geometric patterns.

**Indo-Islamic Architecture.**— Though both systems of art differed fundamentally in their ideas and techniques yet they mingled together giving rise to a new type of Indian architecture. This is described by scholars like Fergusen as Pathan while some like Havell have regarded it as entirely

Indian. Some scholars like John Marshall and R.C. Majumdar disagree with these views and point out that the Indo-Islamic art is neither merely a local variety nor is it merely "modified form of Hindu art". In fact, like other aspects of culture of the time, it represented a blending of Brahmanical, Buddhist and Jain styles with those of western and central Asia. Consequently, alterations came about slowly in architecture in the use of arches, style of ornamentation, composition of various parts of the buildings, addition of certain minor features as minar and dome, utilization of wide open space for structures and adoption of plain.

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Outlines of surfaces and smoothed walls as distinguished from the extremely mystic and richly decorated walls and pillars of the Hindu temples and buildings.

It is difficult to ascertain how much the Indo-Islamic architecture owed to the Hindu style and how much to the Islamic system. The historians have widely differed in their opinions about the significant question whether the Hindu-art or the Muslim art had predominant influence in the synthesis of these two arts which has exercised far reaching, powerful and distinct influence? It is a controversial subject. The renowned art critic, Havell, remarks that the Hindu influence is abundant and rich in the medieval art. The Muslim attitude towards art was profusely impressed by the Hindu art. The influence of the Hindu art is distinct on many Muslim structures of Medieval age. Feurgussion, Smith and Elphinston hold the opinion that Hindu influence was negative.

Various factors contributed substantially to the evolution of the Islamic art in the region. The Arabs who entered India had no liking for art. They could not comprehend the dignity

and majesty of architecture. Contrary of this, the turks were liberal patrons of architecture. They brought into India the art of architecture which was evolved in Persia and it was synthesised with the Hindu architecture. The Muslim architecture had already become a 'heterogenous product' before it was introduced in India. Under the patronage of Muslim rulers, it assimilated in India new elements and enriched considerably. The truth is that the Muslims converted invariably Hindu temples and other structure into their buildings and mosques. They adopted the indigenous style of architecture to suit their own needs. Thus, in transforming the art they had absorbed many ideas and methods of the Hindu art. The Muslim is indebted to Hindu art for its grace and strength which according to Marshall were significant elements borrowed from the Hindus. Though the Muslim architecture was little influenced by the Hindu style in the vicinity of Delhi due to numerical superiority of the Muslims.

The Muslims had added to the Hindu architecture the special characteristics of spaciousness, massiveness, majesty and width. The new foreign rulers introduced *mehrab* or arch, dome, *minar* and tomb in the indigenous architecture. They had enriched design and beauty and adopted the use of coloured stones and glazed tiles to brighten the effect of colours. They endowed the buildings with new beauties of form and colour.

Pattern of subtle curves, intricate and geometrical designs were used for rich decorative treatment. Sometimes the historic inscriptions and verses of the *Quran* in decorative, graceful letters were engraved on the Muslim places of worship. The design of golden *kalash* (the ornate lotus creation and its metal final) at the top of the

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*Sikhar* of Hindu temples was adopted by the Muslim in placing a stone *kalash* on the domes of mosques and tombs. The Hindu scheme of profuse ornamentation was applied to decorate the archs or *mehrab*s. The Muslims adopted the Hindu techniques to make the structures more strong, stable and graceful. They learnt from the Hindus proportionate massing of structures and their different parts.

The Muslim structures are of two types religious and secular. The former consists of the mosque and the tomb. The latter include such structures as intended for public and civil purposes such as pavilions, town gates, houses, walls, gardens, palace, forts, etc. The mosque has an open courtyard surrounded by a pillared varanda. The congregational prayers-the side facing Meca is elaborated into a pillared hall or sanctuary with a wall at the back having a recess or alcave called a *mehrab* indicating the direction for prayer. There stands a pulpit on the right side of the *mehrab* and high tower or minaret rising above the walls to summon the faithful to prayer. The sanctuary where the *mehrab* is enshrined is elaborated into the principal architectural feature with the courtyard and its cloisters leading up to it. There is a central graceful dome over the sanctuary. The tomb, constructed to make the resting place of the dead, is an imposing structures of the vaulted halls and towering domes enclosed within a spacious garden enshrining in the centre the grave of the dead. The tomb has a chamber in the centre of which is the cenotaph, the whole structure being roofed by the dome. In the ground underneath this building is the mortuary chamber called the Maqbarah or Tahkhana with the grave (*kabr*) in the middle. Some of the large mausoleums have a mosque as a separate building, the whole being situated within one enclosure called a *rauza*. Some important tombs are called or named as Dargahs.

## **Imperial style of Architecture**

On the whole the building of Pathan rulers were imposing, magnificent and massive. They were beautifully furnished and sometimes were master pieces of architectural skill. Though in the beginning the Muslim architecture was light and graceful, with the lapse of time it became heavy and solid. Muslim structures were erected in the region from the days of Slave ruler Qutb-ud-din.

Particularly Firoz Shah Tughlaq took a leading role in the

architectural domain in Haryana. He was a magnificent builder. He had a passion for repairing ancient buildings and erecting new ones. He spent vast sums of money on the construction of many public works and maintained a large number of craftsmen and architects at the cost of the state. He laid out several cities such as Fatehabad and Hissar in Haryana. But the architecture of the Tughlaq period lost the splendour, luxuriance and variety which characterized that of Slave and Khiljis regimes.

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The epilogue pertaining to the Muslim architecture given by the famous historian, Tara Chand, is under:—

"In the domain of art, the foreign conceptions of the arch, the dome and minaret were combined with the traditions of Hindu art. The Hindu and Muslim elements coalesced to form a new type of architecture. The severity and simplicity of the Muslim architecture was mellowed down and the plastic exuberance of the Hindu architecture was curtailed. The Muslim emphasis on harmony and form blended with Hindu emphasis on splendour and decoration. The craftsmanship, ornamental richness and general design remained largely Hindu, arcuated form, plain domes, smoothed faced walls and spacious interiors with Muslim super impositions<sup>1</sup>.

## **The pattern of architecture during the Mughals (1526-1707 A.D.)**

With the exception of emperor Aurangzeb, whose puritan ideas prevented him from patronizing fine arts, all the early Mughal emperors were great builders. In fact, with the advent of the Mughals, Indian architecture enters upon a new phase

in which the rugged austerity and simplicity of the work of earlier Sultans of Delhi is softened and beautified by Persian influence<sup>2</sup>. Architecture under the Mughals attained its most sumptuous form. The unexampled wealth and splendour and great luxury of the Mughals enabled them to construct buildings of supreme beauty and lay out extensive pleasure gardens. Mughal architecture is really a happy blending of Persian and Indian styles.

The Mughal buildings, unlike of the Sultanate period, indicate no manifestations provincial or regional style. They display uniformity in their architectural character and structural principles. The chief characteristics of the Mughal buildings are the bulbous graceful dome, the cupolas at the corners standing on slender pillars, magnificent palace hall and the lofty vaulted gateway. The Mughals introduced the style of constructing mausoleums in the centre of large park like enclosure, and the innovation of constructing a double dome, the outer and inner one, the latter formed the vaulted ceiling of the mortuary chamber underneath.

There are certain historians like Fergusson, who believed that the Mughal style of architecture was foreign in origin. The theory of Fergusson has been criticized by E.B. Havell who maintains Indian culture had a remarkable power of absorbing foreign elements of art. He points out that the art and culture of foreign countries with which India had established relations and had their impress upon the Indian art, but it cannot be asserted that the inspiration of the Indian master craftsmen was entirely foreign.

1. Tara Chand : *Influence of Islam on Indian Culture*, p.243.

2. Luniya, B.N. *Evolution of Indian Culture*, 1977,p.398.

Under the Mughal there was a good deal of fusion of culture and arts. According to John Marshall, in a country so extensive and diversified like India, it cannot be definitely said that architecture ever conformed to a single universal style. The personal tastes of the Mughal emperors moulded the types considerably. Much depended upon them. The Mughals provided the elements of grandeur and originality to the grace and decoration of Hindu architecture.

## **Architectural pattern before Akbar**

Babur, being a prejudiced critic of Indian architecture, was not satisfied with structure that he found in the country. It is said that he invited architects from other centres of Islamic culture to construct his buildings. Kabuli Bagh Mosque at Panipat built during that series of construction is one of the best specimen of architecture. This mosque is very much intact even today.

After the death of Babur, Humayun liking for Persian style led to the Persian influence on Indian art. On account of his anxiety and trouble, Humayun did not find enough time to indulge in his artistic fancy. However, during his time, an important mosque was built at Fatehabad in Haryana. This has enamelled tile decoration in the Persian manner. Percy Brown points out that Babur and Humayun both had indirectly influenced the subsequent art, "Babur" marked aesthetic sense, communicated to his successors, inspired them under more favourable conditions to the production of their finest achievement, while Humayun's forced contact with the culture of the Safavids is reflected in that Persian influence noticeable in many of the Mughal buildings which followed.

Sher Shah who snatched power from feeble hands of Humayun was a great builder. His successors followed his example. The Sur period is the age of transition in the history of Indian architecture. It was in this period that the art was beginning to shake off that puritanical influence which had fettered it since the time of Feroz Tughlaq and was endeavouring to become more ornate in style.

## **Architectural style under Akbar**

Mughal architecture, as we know it for all practical purposes, begins with Akbar. He had a unsatiable passion for building. Abul Fazl rightly observes, "His majesty plans splendid



edifices, and dresses the work of his mind and heart in the garment of stone and clay". Akbar's reign saw a remarkable development of architecture. He mastered every detail of art and with a liberal and synthetic mind he borrowed his artistic ideas from a variety of sources. The expert craftsmen of his reign gave a practical shape to his ideas.

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The main elements of the style of architecture evolved under Akbar were the use of red sand stone with insertion of white marble, carved or bodily inland patterns and painted designs of the interior walls and ceilings for the ornamentation. The Persian and Hindu influences had their full play in the Akbari style of architecture. While still retaining the Persian ideas which he inherited from his mother, his policy of tolerating the Hindus, sympathizing with their religion and culture and his attempts to win them over to his side made him adopt the elements of Hindu architecture in his buildings whose decorative features were copies of those seen in the temples of the Jains and Hindus.

During the reign of Akbar's successors, the architecture and painting assumed Indian character and in the exquisite and magnificent structures of their periods there is nothing which can be pronounced as distinctly Persian. IshwariParshad rightly points out that "the Mughal style, which was an amalgamation of many influences, was more sumptuous and decorative than the style that preceded it, and its delicacy and ornamentation furnish a striking contrast to the massiveness and simplicity of the art of Pre-Mughal days".

The architectural structures of emperor Shah Jahan, as compared with those of the great Akbar, are inferior in splendour, massivity and originality of conception, but they

are superior in soft grace, elegance, highly artistic nature and lavish display and rich ornamentation of subtle nature. Consequently, Shah Jahan's building art gained exceptional elegance. The robust and exuberant style of Akbar gave way to elegant and effeminate style under Shah Jahan. In fact, Mughal architecture reached its climax under Shah Jahan. It was carried to the highest degree of perfection.

Shah Jahan's architecture is noted for certain characteristics. Not only change in the building material but change in the technique and in the architectural elements of style was also introduced in this age. Now marble was substituted for redstone. It was the age pure white marble. The technique was also changed. Coloured tiles were rarely used. Rich decoration was obtained by means of inlaid patterns in coloured stones. "The chisel of the stone carver was replaced by the fine instruments of the marble cutter and polished".

As regards the style, instead of rectangular character of the structures of the previous period, there arose the carved lines and flowing rhythm of style under Shah Jahan. Ornamental elements of curvilinear order and marble arcades of engrailed archs became the distinguishing characteristics of the style. Spacious grandeur of design was successfully combined with feminine grace. Then, the Hindu influence, so strong under Akbar, entirely disappeared in Shah Jahan's buildings.

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With the death of emperor Shah Jahan art declined, because his son successor Aurangzeb, being puritan, ceased to encourage it and erect new buildings. In fact, he was more eager to demolish Hindu temples than to construct splendid edifices of his own.

The views of eminent historian R.C. Majumdar pertaining to

architecture of Mughal are given below:—

"Aurangzeb's accession to the throne marks the end of the rich harvest in building art. It may appear that the abundant and ceaseless output that characterised Shah Jahan's regime brought in a natural exhaustion and the decay of the Mughal architectural style followed as a matter of course.

The reign of Aurangzeb saw the rapid dissolution of the Mughal architectural style. There are few things says Fergusson, "more startling in the history of this style than the rapid decline of taste that set in with the accession of Aurangzeb". The empire of the grand Mughals reached a tottering height during his reign and the envitable crash was not long in coming. Symptoms of disintegration were apparent even during his life time and with his death vanished the splendid imperial fabric raised up by the great Akbar. It is only natural, therefore, that during these declining days all forms of cultural activity languished. Aurangzeb's own temperament seems to have contributed more to the rapid decay of architectural tradition than any of natural causes. His austere puritanism gave little encouragement to art, and his narrow bigotry tried to exclude all non believers from participating in the construction of monuments of Islamic faith or of those intended for the use of the believers in Islam<sup>1</sup>."

## **Architecture of Medieval period in Haryana**

In Haryana during the medieval period there has been considerable interest in the construction of buildings mostly in the form of tombs (in the sacred memory of Muslim saints and men of eminence), mosques and other associated religious establishments for prayers, recitation and the teaching of the holy scriptures. These are scattered all over Haryana particularly at Sohna, Jhajjar, Hissar, Narnaul, Hansi, Panipat, Thanesar, Kaithal, Sadhaura and Pinjore<sup>2</sup>.

Situated under the shadow of Aravali Hills, by the side of Delhi-Jaipur road, the hamlet of Sohna has a number of tombs, mosques, Sarais and other structures constructed during the medieval period. The Sita Kund at the foot of a perpendicular rock, is one of the very few secular buildings of the Muslim period and is believed to have been constructed in the fourteenth century, though it has been subjected to

1. Majumdar, R.C. : *The Mughal Empire*, 1974, p.800.
  2. Phadke, H.A. : *Haryana, Ancient and Medieval*, 1990, p.218.
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subsequent heavy alteration and repairs. This was originally the tomb of a saint built in Lodhi architectural style during the early sixteenth century. The Kala Gumad and the Lal Gumad built sometimes before 1570 A.D. and an eighteenth century fort constructed on the brow of the hill overlooking the town are other notable structures of the place.

The monuments at Jhajjar, a group of tombs built mainly of *Kankar* stones in Pathan style, in view of their planning, design and decoration probably belong to sixteenth century. Commenting on their architectural features Mulk Raj Anand and R.S. Bishit write:

"The monotony of the facades is relieved by the use of bold lines. The rear hemispherical and proportionate domes over heavy necks make them interesting survivors of the Pathan style in the Mughal period. The whole impact is of modesty and rhythmic elegance. Thus they stand out as a class of their own. These structures are silhouetted against the highly wooded, serene environment of open country side, far from crowded town, which enhances the gravity of purpose of the monuments for which they were meant. The verse engraved on all the walls of the first tomb purports to say that : 'all man's worldly desires and hopes lead him no where but to the dust'. (indeed an appropriate epitaph on that period of marauders and freebooters)".

Important monuments at Hissar, built during the times of Firoz Shah are Lat Ki Masjid, the Kotla and Haus-Khas. They

stand out as ambitious architecture incorporating the basic elements of Tughlaqabad in the context of his (Firoz's) own ambition. The slightly slanting walls, the *jallis* and the columns are adopted respectively from Seljuk, Hindu and Buddhist styles. Space is, however, occupied for the function of Muslim prayers. The town of Fatehabad also has a small and unassuming, but exquisitely proportioned and enamel decorated little mosque, perhaps the oldest one, which according to local tradition was built by emperor Humayun in the course of his flight to Amarkot.

The imposing architectural monument at Narnaul is the tomb of Ibrahim Khan, an officer of the Lodhis at that place. Built by Sher Shah Suri (1538-46) the former's grandson, it was constructed under the supervision of Shaikh Ahmad Niyazi. A perfect Pathan style square tomb it is characterised by massive outlines, exquisite details and pleasing interplay of colours. Among its other remarkable features which have given it balance strength and dexterity, mention may be made of a high terrace, double storey sinoulation, bold archs, low domes, beautiful kiosks on carved pillars, slender turrets (*guldasta*) and elegant merlons. As rightly observed by an eminent scholar, the use of deep red, grey and white stone, encaustic tile work, painted ceiling with

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excellent brush work and subtle lapidary, give it richness which is unique among such building in Haryana<sup>1</sup>. More details about the architectural designs and beauty of the Mughal monuments are given in the following pages.

Jal Mahal or Khan Sarovar or Chatta Rai Mukand Das come under that category. Their descriptive sketch is given below:—

**Jal Mahal or Khan Sarowar.**— The art and Mughal style of structure of the Jal Mahal are beautifully designed by the builders. These are unique in style and construction. The walls of Jal Mahal were constructed with lime in those days but even today one can see the brightness of the walls. This pleasant building 'whose water and air are refreshing like paradise', was got constructed by Shah Quli Khan in 1591 A.D. This is stated in an epigraph setup there. Standing in the centre of a large tank, now dried up and reached through a causeway, this 'pleasure house' like a small palace in a tank is surmounted by five kiosks, the larger being in the centre and the remaining at the corners.

The under side of the recess, arched passage, enhances the beauty of the tank (dried up) and gives it a fairy land charm. Of the large garden which was laid out around this *baradari* exists no trace here now.

**Chhatta Rai Mukand Das.**— This spacious building built by Ray-i-Ryan Mukand Dass, the Diwan of Narnaul, during the reign of Shah Jahan (1628-58 A.D) is dexterously planned and embellished, though its exterior is unostentatious and drab. It is a five-storeyed structure with several halls, rooms and pavilions. The entire planning and the remanents of the interior decoration show ambitious intentions. The extensive open terrace on the south, light elliptical pavilions on different levels, halls on pillars and running *verandah* around a central court, once adorned with a marble fountain, impart to it spaciousness and light. The profuse use of marble for veneering and pillars and brackets, provided with articial cataracts and drains might have been cosy retreat during the tropical summers.

In the south eastern corner on the terrace, there is a dilapidated well, from which the water was raised into reservoirs, at various levels, through the Persian wheel to supply all the storeys. An exquisite isolated gateway complex, well provided with projecting balconies and marble veneering stands a few metres to the west of the palace. This is said to have been the main entrance to the complex. The intervening space is now being separated by jerry-built modern constructions.

1. *Marg, Haryana Heritage*, XXVII, No. 4, September, 1974, p.32.

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This building is reputed with three underground floors. It is, however, possible to visit only one and it was remarkable provision for natural light. Legend has it that the building is equipped with four underground tunnels leading to Jaipur, Mahendragarh, Delhi and Dhosi. People believe that a marriage party once went down the tunnel leading to Delhi and was not heard of again. It said that Akbar and Birbal visited this town frequently.

At a small distance from the Chatta lies the Sarai Rai Mukand Das. The building bears an epigraph, which says that, during the reign of Shah Jahan, Rai Rayan Mukand Das, a Courtier of Nawab Asif Khan, built the lofty building of caravan *serai* under the supervision of Mehta Puran Mal Hari Dass.

The Rang Mahal at Buria is an important monument. It was built in 1630 by a noble of Shah Jahan. It is a beautiful building having massive archs of stone masonry. Wood was not used anywhere. The interior walls have been beautifully decorated but time has disfigured most of this work.

There are some buildings of the later Mughals, too, at several places. Shish Mahal at Farrukhnagar comes in this category. It was built by Nawab Faujdar Khan. It is a double storied building of local stone, slate and lime. Its interior has decorations. The artists, especially who were concerned with mirror work, seem to have got inspiration for the specimen work from the Mughal palace at Delhi (Red Fort). The building has given way and not much of its grandeur is intact now.

There are two palaces of the *rajas* of Ballabgarh and Rewari of the same period. Built of black stone, bricks and lime, they are more in line with Rajput structures. The former has internal decorations but not the latter.

With the advent of the British (1803), the architectural

activity in the domestic sphere underwent change amply. Now townships came into existence where the buildings were, to a major extent, planned on European lines. Karnal, as far as the records show, claims the honour to be the first modern town with such buildings, in 1806, the British authorities established the cantonment here and constructed simple but modern houses, barracks, shops, etc. Of all these buildings, Ochterlony House and Adams House are still palatial mansions.

Next the pattern of architecture at Gurgaon is important. European type of houses were built here round the public garden. Of the house built by Cavendish (the first administrator of this place) locally called *ghamandi Sahib* house and a *serai* are fine pieces of architecture.

## **Non-residential architecture**

Archaeological excavations at Banawali give an idea of forts and fortress built by these people. For instance, the Banawali township was fortified with 6 to 7 metres

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thick walls built of bricks measuring 10X20X40 cms, 11X20X40 cms. or 12.5X25X50 cms. Inside the town was main fort, its location was on the western side. The ordinary citizens were not allowed to reside there; as in later period there was heavily guarded by troops.

The Aryans also had a large number of forts, some of which were impregnable. Unfortunately, the archaeological remains of these forts are yet to be traced. The *Mahabharata* refers to ten such forts here. These were very difficult to conquer and these great forts located at Rohtak, Meham and Sirsa. The



other forts were at Hansi, Hisar, Agroha, Fatehabad, Dhatrat, Safidon and Panipat. The debris of Thanesar fort of Harsha gave a very vague idea about its formation. The fort covered extensive area surrounded by massive walls, about 11 feet thick and 20 feet high. There was a deep moat along with the wall on all sides. There was usually one gate. Outside the fort were the army barracks.

There were yet another types of forts, a specimen of which is found at Hansi. This fort has been rated as one of the best forts in India. It is very old fort which has received repairs and renovations from several hands. Probably, the Indo-Scythians gave it most of the strength that it had until the early medieval times. The remains prove that the fort had double defence the outer and inner. The outer defence had a quick stone wall around the township. It had probably two or three gates; the first gate is still intact. It is fine example of fort architecture, its protruding round bastions, big rectangular forms, be decked with simple panelings, contrasted with encaustic tile work in sphenoid, give the effect of both strength and beauty. About one kilometre inside the outer defence was the real fort. It had a big structure surrounded by high and mighty walls of heavy black stone. Out of 3 gates, only one gate which is still intact.

During medieval times forts gained greater importance, thereafter some changes occurred in war strategy. As a result, several new forts were built and old ones repaired and remodelled to suit the need of the day of the famous forts which find mention in the contemporary histories, the most famous is Gopal Giri, a strategic hill top on Delhi-Gurgaon border in Mewat. It was built by Balban soon after he became king. though small, it had great military importance. It is now in a dilapidated condition.

The forts at Kotla, Indore, Jhamarawat and Sohna were built about this time by local Mewati chiefs. All these forts were at hill tops and they were built in simple, rugged Turko-Afghan style. All of them are in ruins. The forts built by Ferozeshah Tughlaq at Hisar and Fatehabad were also in a dilapidated condition. The fort at Mahendragarh is quite intact. This fort, probably built by Marathas during the end of eighteenth century, has civil offices and this fort is quite strong. Hodson, the commander of the British forces in 1857, had rated this forts as one of the strongest

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forts in India<sup>1</sup>. Some other forts were also built in the later Mughals and modern times by the local feudal chiefs of the region. Of these special mention may be made of the forts of Jind, Ballabgarh, Farrukhnagar, Nahar, Gharaunda and Kaithal. These are ordinary forts with no architecture importance.

The other construction of the type also contains architectural interest. *Baolis* or step-wells whose construction was considered a great service to the society are important specimens of the type. These were built because the water level was very deep in these days and was out of approach of the people. An inscription discovered from Bohar near Rohtak expounds the construction of a *baoli* (step well) by Thakura noble near the village of Balambha<sup>2</sup>. Cunningham came across a magnificent *baoli* at Pinjore. Its architectural pillars which can still be seen, bespeak of its grandeur. It is dated A.D. 1440<sup>3</sup>. No *baolis* of early Mughal times are available now. Several *baolis* of the later medieval times representing a combination of Turkish *hamam* style and the Indian well have been seen. Under this category, the most important and the oldest *baoli* is at Pinningwa near Gurgaon. It is built of bricks and lime with a strongly walled well in the centre and flights of stairs down to reach water level. It is of the early 17th century. Almost similar in style and the *baolis* are at Sirsa, Hodal and Farrukhnagar.

There is a pond at Suraj Kund (present Faridabad district). It is a magnificent structure of the 10th century A.D. It was built by Surajpala, a Tomar King. The extension tank is lined with continuous flights of steps in stone. Its plan is segmental, the chord being on the western side. It is fed by a natural brook at the north west corner and is provided with a broad flanged range on the north east<sup>4</sup>.

There are some *sarias* (resting places) which were public

buildings meant for lodging the travellers. They were built on the road sides. They were simply multi roomed mansions representing a synthetic style of Hindu and Muslim architecture of the time. The oldest Saria is at Thanesar which was built by Sher-Shah. The other *serias* are at Palwal, Smalkha, Gharaunda, Karnal, Taraori and Narnaul. All the *sarias* except one at Palwal whose date is not known and other at Karnal bearing the time of Aurangzeb, were built by the local officials in the time of Shah Jahan.

Some bridges showing good engineering feats were also built during Shah Jahan period. These were made of bricks and lime and they are very strong. Many

1. Jagdish Prasad, *Mewat Ka Itihas*, P.110.
2. Mitra Rajendra, Lala, "Note on the Palam Baoli Inscription". *Journal of Asiatic Society of Bangal*, P.104.
3. Cunningham : *ASI R, Vol. XIV*, P.71.
4. Chopra, Prabha : *Delhi history and Places of Interest*, pp.223-24.

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bridges have been ruined by largest spell of time. Only a few survive. The *Badshahi Pul* or 'Mughal Bridge' near Karnal contains architectural beauty. It is a very good specimen of the Mughal engineering of Akbar's time.

The history of architecture cannot oversight the laying out and specimen of gardens of past period. Of these the earliest known is the Kabuli Bagh at Panipat. It was laid out by the Mughal emperor Babur after his victory in the Ist Battle of Panipat (1526). Its plan and structuring was done after Babur's favourite gardens at Kabul. The other garden was

Shah Bagh at Narnaul (now in ruins). Qule was a noble of Akbar and he laid this beautiful garden and named it *Azam-i-Kausar*. Thirdly, there is a famous garden at Pinjore; now it is known as Yadvendra Garden. It was laid out in the scale and concept of the stepped gardens of the Mughals in the time of Aurangzeb by one of his cousins and high official, Fidai Khan.

Unlike the most of the Mughal gardens, however, the entrance to the garden is from the higher ground, the seven terraces descend from the hill, revealing a fresh view at each level. An arterial water channel passes through the garden which is studded with fountains, pools, basins, falls and slanting cascades. To beautify the garden still further parterres are used so as to effectively by make it a water flow garden. At the end of central points of a terrace, a palace and a pavilion have been constructed. The Shish Mahal and its surrounding pavilion is on the first level; the Rang Mahal with its spacious open halls is on the second; and the Jal Mahal is on the fifth level. As in other Mughal gardens, privacy is ensured to a greater extent, here by putting an embattled wall all round. A fortification wall separating the upper two terraces from the rest doubly ensure the privacy and security of *Zenana*.

An interesting account dilating the details of architectural beauty is reproduced below from *Ambala District Gazetteer*, 1984:—

"The inspired designer absorbed the space on both sides of the flowing water, with an uncanny genius for human outlook. Each of the seven terraces offers contrast of shadows and substances. Fidai Khan could not stay for long here. There is an apocryphal story showing how the ruler of Sirmur was trying his best to regain control over Pinjore. He managed to send some female servants as had their throats swoolen with goitre. The Khan's wives were terrified on hearing that the climate bred such a disease. Fidai Khan deserted the place".

"In the middle of the first terrace is the Shish Mahal in the Rajasthani Mughal style, with small windows and apertures. There is a lyrical *Hawa Mahal* approached by steps on the side of the wall. Second terrace is uplifted to the sky by large arched doorways, above which there is a Rang Mahal. Cleverly devised by the architect, the stair of the lower terrace is from the open half way below. The place above is itself a

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pleasure house, with an enormous open yard. The upward flow of the water from the fountains cools the eyes.

The Haryana Govt. is recreating the whole complex by adding coloured illuminations to the play of fountain water providing rest places. The Pinjore garden has been renamed as Yadvindra Garden as a mark of respect to the late Yadvindra Singh, Maharaja of erstwhile state of Patiala.

## Religious buildings containing architectural designs and beauty

This genre of architecture though very important, is not very old. Unfortunately, no monument of Vedic or later Vedic period has been made available so far. The earliest religious monuments found in Haryana relate to the time of Mauryas. It is a *stupa* of Chaneti, a place three kilometres from Sugh, Yamunanagar district. Of course, the *stupa* does not exhibit any marked architectural excellence but its significance lies in the fact that it is only surviving *stupa* in the state.

It is about ten metres high and is built of bricks put in with their courses being laid one over the other leaving some space on the forgings in a hemi spherical position.

There was one such *stupa* at Thanesar too; it is attested by Hiuen Tsang's account. This monument, built by Ashoka was about 80 metres high. Some relics of the Buddha were preserved in it. It was constructed with bright and shining bricks of yellowish red colour. Hiuen Tsang believed that from the brilliant light emitted and many spiritual prodigies exhibited themselves. Besides it, Hiuen Tsang saw three

monuments at Thanesar and one at Sugh which accommodated about 1,000 and 700 priests respectively, These were by all means very magnificent structures now in ruins completely.

It is assumed that from the 4th century A.D. Hindu temples had also begun to come up. The earliest refers to such an activity which is found in a rock inscription of 4th and 5th century from Tosham. Here was built a Vishnu temple which was probably a humble construction small in sizes with a flat roof. There are some indications of temples devoted to Vishnu existing at Agroha and Nachar Khera of Gupta times.

Kartikaya type Yaudhey coins provide material to prove that some type of temples existed in Haryana with some variations, they generally depict a square pillared temple surmounted by a pointed, perhaps thatched, arched roof. The temples were perhaps erected on a plinth consisting of two parts placed one over the other. Some times a pillared circular shrine encircled an inner chamber, the sanctum sanctorum, inside it. The low domed shaped roof was placed over the lintel from the centre of which rose a decorated shaft with pointed top for holding a flag<sup>1</sup>.

1. Mukherjee, D. "*Glimpses into The Temple Architecture on some Early Indigenous coins of Northern India*".

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Cunningham noted some remains of a temple slightly later date at Kapal-Mochan, 76 kilometres from Sadhaura. This was a Vishnu temple and very big in size. Bana says that Thanesar abounded in temples of which one devoted to Shiva, another devoted to mother goddess and yet another to Vishvakarma, the god of architects.

Hiuen Tsang was of the view that Thanesar had some

hundred *deva* temples. During the post-Harsha period, a large number of temples were built. Some idea can be had by seeing some mini designs of the temples, a votive stone temple of Vishnu from Gurawara built in A.D. 897; another votive red stone Brahmanical temple from Rohtak, built in 11th century; other votive Brahmanical temple from Hissar and Sirsa built in 11th century. The first two temples belong to the *Rekha* type in *nagara* style and the other to the *Bhadra* type. Some of these temples were of magnificent structures.

An inscription of the time of the Pratihara Bhoja from Sirsa conveys that there was a Shiva temple built here of burnt bricks and thick slabs of stone. This temple was probably built by Pashupati Acharya. This monument was an amazing thing on earth. Its golden peak was as high as the sky and it attained the height of summit of Kailash mountain<sup>1</sup>.

The Pehowa inscription of (A.D.882) of Maharajadhiraj Bhisdeva records the construction of several other temples of Vishnu there at different sites of which three were very old structures. The account of the inscription is : "As long as the earth is bounded by four oceans, so long may these temples shine as a monument of magnification, several other temples should have also been of such elegance in and around Thanesar". But in 1018 Mahmud of Ghazni plundered the city and destroyed its temples, not sparing even the great temple of Chakraswami.

Later on, the city was again plundered by Sikandar Lodhi and the remaining temples were finally razed to the ground<sup>2</sup>. Sultan Masud captured the cities of Hansi and Sonapat in 1036 and destroyed several temples there<sup>3</sup>. In 1194 the city of Rohtak was attacked and burnt by Mahmud Ghuri. Several temples in the ancient city met their doom. Sirsa also suffered likewise at the hands of the invader<sup>4</sup>. Similarly, Agroha was first destroyed by Muhammad Ghuri, and then by Muhammad Tughlaq. Firoze went even a step further, he removed the debris of the temples for building his favourite city at Hisar<sup>5</sup>.

1. *Epigraphic Indica Vol. XXI*, ptVIII, pp.94-95.

2. Elliot and Dowson, *History as Told by its own Historians*, Vol.IV, pp.439-40.

3. Ibid. Volume V, p.318.

4. *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Volume-I, p.263.

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Despite the mass destruction of temples by the tartuffish Mughal kings, two Shiva temples of that time were saved at Kalayat town, 18 kilometres from Kaithal. Two brick temples which date back to *circa* 700 A.D. The temples are built with carved bricks without any mortar and are very good examples of early temple architecture and show an unrivalled creative flowering in sculptural art. According to traditions, the temples were formerly seven and were destroyed during the time of Aurangzeb<sup>1</sup>.

Both the temples are in *Nagara* style. Although they are comparatively small, their size is compensated by their elegance and architectural excellence. Both the temples resemble Orissan style in their *sikharas* and Orian (Surya's temple in Rajasthani in the rest of their structure).

"Only two sanctuaries stand now though originally they are said to have been five. They are square in plan comprising. A sanctum and sanctorum have lofty spires whose salient features indicate the temple to have been *pancharath*. The spires were originally perhaps divided into different *bhumis*. There is no terrace and the walls emerge directly like the early Bhuvenshewar temples".

The relics in the form of architectural remains which indicate that beautiful temples might have stood at Pehowa and Pinjore. These temples conformed in style to the north Indian temples. A commemorative slab from Gurawara, now available in Jhajjar museum, provide much information about architecture. These temples stood on terraces and their walls were adorned with sculptures. A pillared porch existed in front of the sanctum and it was surmounted by a triangular



*sukansa*. The side salients were divided into storeys.

The door surrounds of such temples consisted of carved *udumbera* fine or more *bans* of the jambs with river goddesses at the base<sup>2</sup>.

## Muslim Monuments

Muslims, too, made ample architectural activities in medieval period. As a result, thousands of Muslim monuments of different description-mosques, *idgahs*, *khangahs*, tombs etc. came up within the area. The important monuments are listed below:—

1. Kotla *Majid*, Nuh;
2. Majnumshah *Masjid*, Nuh;
3. *Masjid* at Farrukhnagar;
  1. *Jind District Gazetteer*, 1986, P.259.
  2. Handa, Devendra : *A Prathihara door way from Pehowa (University Research Bulletin, October (No.2), 1986, p.149.*

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4. *Masjid* at Gurgaon;
5. Bhundsi *Masjid*, Bhundsi;
6. Lal *Masjid*, Rewari;
7. *Masjid* at Narnaul;
8. Palwal *Masjid* at Palwal;
9. Salarjang *Masjid*, Panipat;

10. Kabuli Bagh *Masjid*, Panipat;
11. Sahahbad *Masjid* at Shahbad;
12. Thanesar *Masjid* at Thanesar;
13. Sadhaura *Masjid* at Sadhaura;
14. *Masjid* at Pinjore;
15. Sher Bahlol *Masjid*, Hissar;
16. Humayun *Masjid*, Hissar;
17. Jama *Masjid*, Hissar;
18. *Lat ki Masjid*, Hissar;
19. Mir miran *Masjid*, Hansi;
20. Bagarwalla *Masjid*, Jhajjar;
21. Dini *Masjid*, Rohtak;
22. Balban's *Masjid* at Sonipat;

## **Tombs, *Khangahas & Darghas***

1. Daiwala Tomb, Sohna;
2. *Dargah*, Taoru;
3. Allyakhan's Tomb, Ferozepur Jhirka;
4. *Dargaha*, Palwal;
5. Roshan Chirag Tomb, Palwal;
6. Sheikh Shahabaz Tomb, Palwal;
7. Sayed Barahazari's Tomb, Rewari;
8. *Dargaha* Shah Chokha, Khosli;
9. Shah Quili's tomb, Narnaul;
10. Ibrahim Suri's Tomb, Narnaul;

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## Culture

11. *Dargah* a Kalandar Bake, Karnal;
12. Miran's Tomb, Karnal;
13. Tomb Naugaza, Nisang;
14. *Dargaha* Kalandar, Panipat;
15. Mubasaq's tomb, Panipat;
16. Jatal's Tomb, Panipat;
17. Shamsuddin's Tomb, Panipat;
18. Bhauddin's Tomb, Panipat;
19. Imam Qasim's Tomb, Panipat;
20. Balkhis tomb Gang Shahidelen, Samalkha;
21. Tayab's Tomb, Kaithal;
22. Kamal's Tomb, Kaithal;
23. Makhdum's Tomb, Kaithal;
24. Shah Bhik's Tomb, Thanesar;
25. Sheikha Chehli Tomb, Thanesar;
26. Khizhar's Tomb, Sonipat;
27. Sayed Yusuf's Tomb, Sonipat;
28. Shah Nawaz Tomb, Jind;
29. Shah Juman's Tomb, Hissar;
30. Chahar's Qutab, Hansi;
31. Tomb and *Dargaha* Bhauddin, Rohtak,

32. *Dargah* — Mamu Maula Bux Pir — Village, Rehor, near Barwala, Panchkula district.

Now it is very essential to narrate the description of some important above buildings which carry architectural importance.

The Lat-Ki-Masjid, Hissar, built by Feroze Shah Tughlaq is a fine piece of Turko-Afghan architecture. It has a ambitious plan in elegant posture. Its slightly slanting walls are absorbed from the *Seljuk* style. The *Jalis* are taken from the Hindu style; the column is adopted from the Ashokan pillar. Space is, however, provided for

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the observance of Muslim prayer. The pillars supporting mosque are of an old temple and probably brought from Agroha or Hansi. There is a sandstone pillar or *lat* about 20 feet high. The lat is made of two stones one is an ancient and is 10 feet high and 8 1/2 feet in circumference and the other is of red sand-stone. There is an inscription in Sanskrit at the top of the lower stone of the pillar. The letters are cut at the junction of the stones which show that the ancient stone pillar is from ancient Hindu structure which was recut and created by Feroz Shah.

Gujri Mahal is situated outside the fort and appears to have been built as an outlying portion of the palace as a residence for a Gajri, mistress of Firoz Shah. The remains of Gujri Mahal is *baradari*. The walls of *baradari* are thick and sloping, with 12 doorways with a window over it. There are 4 pillars, appear to have been brought from some old Hindu-temple which support the roofs of the domes. Below the

building, are three underground apartments, one of which is a tank which served as a bath.

An important medieval monument is the shrine of *char Qutbs* colloquially called *Chahar Qutbs* which is located in an enclosure to the west of Hansi town. The shrine of *Char Qutb* was expanded from time to time and a number of buildings were added later. The domed edifice and pavilion and either side of the domes were added later. The most imposing edifice is a mosque in the northern enclosure. A square canopied tomb locally called *chhatri* has two graves and four carved sandstone pillars support the enamelled canopy. A little away, ten ornamented red stone pillars carry four canopies giving shade over graves of descendants of Qutb Jamal.

There is an important monument at Fatehabad town. This monument is known as a *lat* or a stone pillar, measuring slightly less than 5 metres in height and 1.90 metres its circumference at the base. It was created in the centre of Idgah. The lower portion of the pillar is a mono-block of eight buff sandstone and is possibly the remaining part of the pillars that lies in the mosque at Hissar. It is more than likely that both the pillars once made a single monolithic pillar which was possibly erected by Ashoka at Agroha or Hansi.

Another important structure of this period is the shrine of the Sufi saint Shah Shiafuddin Bu Ali Qalandar of Panipat. Its originality is obtained in the grave chamber but the rest has been subjected to the successive alterations and additions. There are front *varndas*; the marble screen in front which speaks of superb craftsmanship, was added during the period under reference. Besides this, decoration with geometrical patterns in gold, yellow and red on the ceiling of the tomb was also done during Aurangzeb's<sup>1</sup> time.

1. *Marg* : Vol XXVII, No. 4(1974) , p.30.

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## Culture

The tomb at Narnaul built by Sher Shah Suri in honour of his able grand father contains some improvement in structure. The work was done under the supervision of Sheikh Ahmed Nazi. The mausoleum is a perfect example of the square tomb of the Pathan style, characterised by its massive outlines, exquisite details and pleasing interplay of colours. The erection of high terrace, double storey simulation, bold archs, low domes, beautiful kiosks on carved pillars, slender turrets (*guldassatas*) and elegant merlons, give it balance, strength and dexterity. The use of deep red, grey and white stone, encaustic tile work enhance its richness which is unique among the building in Haryana.

The tomb of Shah Quli at Narnaul is a shade of different from the earlier Pathan Lodhi tombs, for it absorbs the Hindu-Muslim architectural blandishments cultivated by Akbar. This new phenomena is especially visible in the walls sunken all sides to give depth and facade scooped out in invitation windows to release their power of stone and to formalise decoration.

The tomb of Shah Willayat at Narnaul stands beside the mausoleum of Ibrahim Khan. It is a big tomb-cum complex which incorporates within it a long tradition of architecture ranging from the Tughlaq to the British period. Originally the tomb and adjoining complex were constructed during the reign of Feroz Shah Tughlaq. The autor of Gulzar says that the eastern colonnades and dome were erected by Alam Khan Mewati, and a part of the enclosure was also erected by him.

The old portion has all stern simplicity and grandeur of Tughlaq style of architecture. The archs have the ogee cushion after the fashion of time. The tomb itself is surmounted by a hemi-spherical dome, erected by a finial of the Pathan style. The interior of dome is a perfect square. Its two enclosures were constructed towards the end of Mughal time<sup>1</sup>.

The tomb of Jamal Khan, an Afghan, is very beautiful monument. The pointed arch with the s-curves as well as other details of construction, put it coeval with the tomb complex of Shah Wilayat. Today, there are graves inside.

It is a big square monument with single chamber inside. It seems double storeyed from the outside, as the second level is obtained by way of providing an open *varanda* running

around. The wide low dome and ogee archs and some other features of architecture, place it in point of time with the tomb and old parts of the adjoining Madaras built in 1357. A.D. in the Tughlaq style.

A short distance north of Sonipat stands a small, but attractive mausoleum erected by Khizar's Khan, a descendant of Sher Shah Suri. The structure is an octagon

1. A part was added in British period.

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surmounted by spacious dome. Some beautiful and delicate carvings are sculptured on the front portion.

There are some good buildings of the Mughal times also. In these buildings elegance, beauty, complexity and delicacy, mostly absent in the buildings of the older days, are present in simple measure. The Kabuli Bagh *Masjid* at Panipat proves this point. About 40 feet square with small quadrangle adjoining, the *masjid* gives a magnificent look. It is crowned by a beautiful dome surrounded by twenty six domes of small dimensions. It is one of the finest specimens of the Muhammadan architectures, says David Ross. Unfortunately, the beautiful piece of architecture lies in ruins and most of the domes have disappeared.

The mausoleum of Sheikh Chehli, a Sufi saint of great fame, was built by Shah Jahan at Thanesar. According to David Ross, "It is one of the most graceful muhammadan tombs next to the Taj, built of pure marble. It stands on an imposing raised platform. Its dome is surrounded with small minarets and doors and windows are frilled with marble. There are beautiful *jhallis* and *guldastas*.

There are some good mausoleums, of almost the same time,

at Jhajjar. These are six in number. Architecturally speaking, these tombs fall in the group of the Pathan mausoleum and can not be far removed from each other in date as the planning, design and door are similar. These are mainly built of Kankar stones. The monotony of the facades is relieved by the use of bold cut lines. The near hemi-spherical and proportionate domes over heavy necks make them interesting survivors of the Pathan style in the Mughal period. The whole impact is of modesty and rhythmic elegance. Their structures are silhouetted against the highly wooded, serene environment of an open countryside, far from crowded town.

The earliest Indo-Islamic monument of Haryana is the Baradari or Prithvi Raj Ki Kutchery, a modest building standing on a hillock to the north of the Tosham hill near Bhiwani. It is made on a cross wise plan with each wing projecting over three metres from the central building which is surrounded by a low dome. The whole structure has sixteen arched openings. It is made of marble stones, joined and plastered over with lime mortar.

Patharya *Masjid* at Sadhaura is another early Islamic monument in Haryana. It consists of three rooms, each covered by a hemi-spherical dome raised on cylindrical neck. The central room is bigger, 19 feet square while the side rooms measure 15 feet each. In all there are fine doorways, three of the front and one of each end. It has got five feet and three inches thick walls.

Cunningham explained the description of this mosque "The corners of the square rooms are changed to the octagonal form by arched pendentives, each consisting of



three distinct archs springing from brackets and lessening the span as they recede. Behind the innermost arch, there is a small semi circular domed niche, supported on a bracket in the corner. But in spite of its small size, the general appearance of this mosque is striking as to the harmony of its proportions<sup>1</sup>.

The Madrasa at Thanesar represents a decadent Mughal style. It is made of bricks and built on a level six metres lower than the tomb of sheikh Chille nearby. It is 53 metres square from outside and has a small gateway in south west corner but the main entrance is from the eastern side. In its centre is a square tank of 8.2 with northern sideways. Probably it formed a part of Sheikh Chille's tomb which Ross ranked as the Taj Mahal<sup>2</sup>.

Cunningham also held the view that the high and wide marble dome with pleasing colour arrangment of the octagonal column combined with marble position make this tomb one of the most picturesque monuments of north India<sup>3</sup>.

The octagonal tomb at Thanesar each side being 5.4 and 3.5 metres on the exterior and interior, stands on platform in a 53 metre square which was once paved with marble. It is made of red granite faced with white marble. The enclosure rises about 12.5 metres above the level of the plain and its walls have twelve cupolas and terraces which indicate that they were originally glazed tiles. Each force of the tomb possesses a rectangular recess covered with a cusped arch and be decked with two marble screens. Ornamental battlements rise above the projected caves and the whole is capped with a pear shaped on a circular neck. A pinnacle surmounts each angle of the octagon. The soffit of the dome shows painted design. Inside exist two graves. Fine workmanship and harmonious proportions are characteristics of this monument.

The European started a new era of construction activities. In modern times, Indian architecture has changed itself though the sythesis between the European and Indian architecture is clearly visible in them. Concrete, cement, stone and iron are profusely used in the construction of these buildings. The Britishers made a great impact even on the architecture of the Indian whether they belonged to Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and others. They gave a new dimension to the mason activities whether they were religious or non-religious.

In 1837, Major Jheretry Sudt. of Bhatiana (Sirsa) founded yet another modern town at Sirsa. Many impressive buildings

such as Dak Banglow and *Shib Logon Ke Bunglows*, were worth seeing. Ten years later, the Ambala cantonment was laid in 1843. Covering 7,220 acres, this oblong shaped township running from north east to

1. Cunningham, *Archaeological Survey Report, XIV*, p.74.
2. Ross, David, *The land of Five Rivers, Patiala*, 1970 (reprint, p.241)
3. Parihar, Subhash : *Mughal Monuments in the time of Punjab and Haryana*, 1985, pp.40-41.

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south-west was definitely an improvement on other attempts in town planning and architecture. The streets were wide and straight and the *bungalow* and houses impressive. There were many good public buildings such as Mosonic Hall, the Sirhind Club, the Town Hall, the Government School, Ward Institute, Lepers Asylum, the Dak *Bungalow* and the Commissioner's Kutchery.

The first ever church to have been built here was the St. James's church at Karnal in 1886. Though simple in structure, this church was an impressive building having a spacious hall, and about 100 feet high tower supported a large ornamental cross. The church was dismantled after the cantonment was shifted from here to Ambala. Now only a part of this tower stands.

Subsequently, two more churches were built here, one was St. Emannel's Church in 1861 and other Ascension Church. Though not as impressive as the former, both these churches are also structures of some merit.

There are some churches at Ambala. The St. Paul's church is

of great architectural importance. It is very beautiful, semi structure capable of accommodating more than a thousand persons. Unfortunately this grand building was destroyed in 1971 during raid. The two other churches, Holy Red and Emerey Church built in 1905, are average churches. The Sadar Bazar church is a very humble construction. The Methodist church at Sonipat is a good & impressive but it is in bad shape now. There is a church of Egophay at Gurgaon. Though old (1863), it is not impressive architectural point of view. The same is true of the Baptist Church at Palwal. It is made of red brick and grey stone, it is a simple construction. The church at Rewari, built by S.P.La. Mission in 1890, is a spacious and good building.

## Temples

Some Jain temples, especially at Ambala, Bhiwani and Gurgaon are also quite impressive. They are for the most part built of marble and have elegant interior decorations. All these temples are of recent make. There are several shrines, too, of which two of the Sarvagis at Rewari have Rajasthani touch in their make-up. A similar shrine, almost of the same period, also of Sarvagis is at Ferozepur Jhirka.

A Shiva temple, built by Siryonath Jogi, is also in Rajasthani style; it depicts architectural merit. Murle-Manohar temple of Behadurgarh also very impressive.

The Laksmi Narayan temple built on the banks of Sanhit tank at Kurukshetra, is magnificent building. It has a Chaula design. Another temple Birla Mandir is also an quite elegant structure standing amidst grassy enclosure, it has a spacious hall floored with marble. It is built in old Orrisan style.

The Gauri Shankra temple, sponsored by Seth Kirori Mal at Bhiwani, is the most beautiful having the design and architectural specimen. The multi-storeyed shrine is a magnificent piece of architecture. The entrance is imposing structure. Stair cases raise the shrine about ten steps higher than the ground level. The shrine has three sub-temples of Gauri and Shankra in the middle, and of Laxmi and Vishnu, and of Radha and Krishna on the right and left, respectively. The life sizes marble idols of the deities are placed in each sub temple. In the centre of the building, there is a pillar square with entablatures joining the ceiling. The top of the temple is a long pyramidal structure bearing a golden *Kalasha* and trident on the cusp. The entire building is a magnificent structure.

## Rest Houses

The Dorothey Villa at Charkhi Dadri built by Maharaja of erstwhile princely state of Jind (now PWD rest Huse) is a beautiful building. It is based on pillars and its porch has beautiful architectural design.

The newly built 19-suit PWD Rest House at Bhiwani bears modern or British design. It is very beautiful building; the front part has archative structure.

Over the design and architecture in the present time, Rana, a well known architet and academician being a dean of Sushant School of Art and Architecture laid stress, that architects must design in harmony with nature. He observed that it is unfortunate that "architects are getting more and more involved with materials and less and less with what they are actually expected to do the building they design. He stressed the need to live in harmony with natural environment. Architecture can not be a living art if it does not respect nature and its laws, besides the architect's knowledge of the nature of building material<sup>1</sup>".

## Sikh architecture

Apart from building of a religious order, Sikh architecture has secular building types such as forts, palaces, *bungas*(residential places), colleges etc. The religious structure is the Gurdwara, a place where the Guru dwells. Sikh Gurdwaras are by and large commemorative buildings connected with ten Gurus.

The main requirements of a Gurdwara is that of a room in which *Adi Granth*, the holy book, can be placed and a small *sangat* (congregation) can be seated to listen to the *path* or reading from the holy book and to sing and recite the sacred verses. Gurdwaras have entrances on all the four sides signifying that they are open to and all without any discrimination whatsoever. This distinguishing feature also symbolises

1. News item appeared in *The Tribune* dated 19th October, 1994.

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the essential tenet of the faith that God is omnipresent. In some cases, however, space restriction does not permit entry from all four sides. The building of Sikh shrines are classified one of four basic types; the square, the rectangular, the octagonal and the cruciform. On the basis of number of storeys, the Gurdwaras have elevations which may be one, two, three, five or nine storey high. One comes across several interesting variations of Gurdwara designing worked out on the permutations and combinations of the aforesaid basic plan and elevation types.

As a rule, *gumbad* (dome) is the crowning feature of a Gurdwara. Rarely a shrine is flat roofed. Some times, a small one-room shrine is topped by a *palki*, a palanquin roof, derived from Gengal regional style of architecture. More often that not, a dome is fluted or ribbed but a plain dome has also been used in some cases. The dome is usually white though some times gilded. In some cases domes have been covered with brass. Usually, domes on Sikh shrines spring from a floral base, and have inverted lotus a symbol top from which rises the, *Kalsa*. Based on Mount *Kalsa*, held sacred in Hindu mythology the *Kalsa* shoots up in the form of a

cylindrical construction, often with some concentric discs, spheroids, culminating in a small canopy with pendants dangling at the outer rim. An interesting point to note is the manner in which the dome is related to the cuboid structure of the shrine. As a rule, the lower part dominates the domical structure, and looks somewhat austere in comparison with it. Apart from the large central dome, there are often four other small cupolas, one on each corner of the usually cuboid structure of the shrine. The parapet may be embellished with several turrets, or small rudimentary domes, or crenellations or replicas of arcades with domical toppings or strings of *guldastas* (bouquets) or similar other embellishments. Minarets the ubiquitous symbols of Mughal architecture are rarely seen in a *gurdwara*.

A recurrent element of *gurdawara* design is the preferred use of two storeys to gain sufficient elevation for the shrine. However, restrained the design may be, the elevation is usually treated by dividing the facade in accordance with the structural lines of columns, piers and pilasters, with vertical divisions creating areas of well modelled surfaces. The most important division is, of course the entrance which receives more ornate treatment than other areas. The treatment often creates bas-reliefs of geometrical, floral and other designs. Where magnificence is the aim, repousse work in brass or copper gilt sheeting is introduced often with a note of extravagance. *Jaratkari*, intricate inlay work, *gach*, plaster of Paris work, *tukri* work, fresco copainting, *pinjara* (lattice work) are the techniques used for embellishments of exterior surfaces as well as for interior decoration. *Jaratkari* is both expensive and time consuming technique of studding semi precious and coloured stones into marble slabs. The slabs often have florid or geometrical borders which enclose painstakingly

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## Culture

executed inlay work using floral shapes and patterns. Beautiful designs are made on the walls with *gach* which is subsequently gilded. Some times, the *gach* work is rendered highly ornamental by means of coloured and mirrored cut glass as well as semi precious stones. This is called *turki* (small piece) work. Frescoes, depicting popular episodes from the lives of the ten Gurus, are to be found in some shrines. Designs employed are based on vine, plant, bird and animal motifs.

Brick, lime mortar as well as lime or gypsum plaster and lime concrete have been most favoured building material, although stone such as red sandstone and white marble, has also been used in a number of shrine. The latter found use more as cladding or decorative material than for meeting structural needs for well over two hundred years. Nanak Shahi (of the time of Nanak) brick was most commonly used for its intrinsic advantages. It was a kind of brick tile of moderate dimensions used for reinforcing lime concrete in the structural walls and other components which were generally very thick. The brick tile made mouldings, cornices, pilasters, etc. are found easy to work into variety of shapes. More often than not, the structure was a combination of two systems, viz, trabeated and post and lintel and arcuated, based on vaultes and archs. The surfaces were treated with lime or gypsum plaster which was moulded into cornices, pilasters and other structural features as well as non structural embellishments.

As a style of building design, Sikh architecture might strike the lay onlooker as eclectic; a pot pourri of the best features picked up from here and there, but it embodies much more than meets the casual eye. It shares its stringent regulation with the awesome austerity of Islam's uncompromising monotheism and celebrates its lush exuberance with the playful polytheism of Hinduism. Eclecticism might have been its starting point but Sikh architecture has flourished to a state of artistic autonomy so as to work out its own idiosyncracies.

Sikh architecture reflects a lively blend of Mughal and Rajput styles. Onion shaped domes, multifoil archs, paired pilasters, inlay work frescoes, etc. are doubtless of Mughal extraction, more specifically of emperor architect Shah Jahan's period, while oriel windows, bracket supported caves at the string coure, *chhatris*, richly ornamented piezes, etc. are reminiscent of elements of Rajput architecture such as seen in Jaipur, Jodhpur, Bikaner and other places of Rajasthan.

Use of water as an element of design has been frequently exploited in Mughal and Hindu architecture but nowhere in so lively a manner as in Sikh architecture. Water becomes a *sine qua non* of Sikh building design. The *gurdwara* is placed lower down than the structures in vicinity, unlike a *masjid* or a *mandir* which are usually placed on a raised platform.

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While sticking to the same basic requirements, different Sikh shrines have developed their own characteristic expression. It may be recalled that most of the *gurdwaras* are commemorative buildings and therefore, the sites on which they have been built had intrinsic challenges and advantages which were more fortuitous than premeditated.

"Inspired by Guru Nanak's creative mysticism, Sikh architecture is a harbinger of holistic humanism based on pragmatic spirituality says S.S. Bhatti".

Architectural point of view pertaining to the *gurdwaras* in Haryana, a few *gurdwaras* are quoted here: *gurdwara Chhati Padshahi* at Thanesar; *Kapal Mochan Gurdwara* at Bilaspur; *Manjhi Sahib Gurdwara* at Ambala City; *Nada Sahib Gurdwara* near Panchkula; *gurdwara* of Lakhan Majra and *gurdwara* at Jind, etc.

## **Planning in layout the towns/villages**

The town of Banawali, Seeswal and Rakhigarhi were Pre-Harappan and Harappan settlements and centres of activity during prehistoric times. So, it would be worthwhile to give the details of their layout first.

The Banawali town occupied by the people during



pre-Harappan culture was a well planned and fortified township in the classical chess board pattern. The broad arterial streets, running from north to south, have been found straight and uninterrupted, whereas those, running from east to west, were usually narrow and staggered. This planning perhaps protected the town from blistering winds of the west and severe monsoon rains of the south east.

The town seems to be divided into two sub joined fortified areas, one separated from the other by a six to seven metres thick wall running centrally across the mound from north to south. A narrow opening, provided through the defence wall in the centre of the mound, was perhaps meant for communication between the two parts of the city blocks, which the better fortified western side was dominated by the elite, while the commoners and business communities lived in eastern wing.

The portion gate was guarded by a massive square bastion. Planned mud brick houses, with several rooms, a kitchen, a toilet, etc. are found built on either side of the roads and lanes. Their sanitary arrangements depended on the use of sanitary pottery, Jars which served as washbasins and as also for soakage purposes. Except in a few places, which demanded constant use of water, structures were usually made of sun baked bricks meticulously moulded into various sizes.

Due to strategic location dominating the fertile Indo Ganga divide, Rakhi-garhi seems to command a paramount position in the expansion of Harappan culture in

north India. Its location some 350 kilometres south east of Harappan, 190 kilometres, east of Kalibangan and 80 kilometres, east of Banawali might suggest Rakhi Garhi to be the eastern most provincial capital of the Harappan<sup>1</sup>.

The site comprises extensive ruins cut up into five parts broadly falling into a twin mound complex nearly 2 kilometres in circumference. As revealed from explorations, the site seems to be a settlement of pre Harappan and Harappan people. It was quite likely their metropolitan town and a trading centre.

The Harappan culture pertaining to Rakhigarh is marked extensive settlement laid on dichotomous plan typical of a 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 the existence of platforms.

The old town of Hansi located on a mound, was a walled settlement with five gates opening in different directions; Delhi gate to the east, Barsi gate to the south, Umra gate to the south west, Hissar or Char qutb gate to the west and Sisai or Gosian gate to the north. These gates with the exception of Barsi gate are no longer in existence. As recorded in a rectangular sandstone inscription in the north inner wall of the Barsi gate, it was built in A.D. 1302.

The walled city had two wide streets running through the town and crossing one another at right angles. The other streets are narrow and winding. The town expanded beyond the walled limits after 1947.

The Hissar town came into light when Firuz Tughlaq ordered the construction of the fort which was completed in A.D. 1354. He named it 'Hisar-e-Firuz', the fort of Firuz. The Hissar town sprang up later around this fort.

The original town was a walled settlement inside the fort with four gates; Delhi gate, Mori gate, Nagauri gate and Talaqi gate. These gates are no longer in evidence but the vicinity in which they stood continue to bear their names.

Now a days, many urban colonies, modern shopping complexes and a large grain market have altogether changed the complex of the town.

The Fatehabad town was founded by the emperor Firuz Shah

Tughlaq and named after his son, Fateh Khan in A.D. 1352. The site on which the town was founded was a hunting ground. He dug a channel from the Ghaggar in order to supply the town with water.

1. Suraj Bhan, *Excavation in Mitathal (1968)* and *Other Explorations in the Sutlej-Yamuna Divide*, 1975.

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The old town was surrounded by a wall which has been dismantled to a great extent except near the fort.

Ellanabad, the then village, was inundated and made very unhealthy in 1863 by the floods of the Ghaggar. J.H. Oliver, the then Deputy Commissioner of Sirsa district built a new town on the higher ground close by and named it Ellanabad after his wife. He laid it in rectangular wide streets.

In 1837, the site of the town Sirsa, once a populous and flourishing mart was then wholly deserted. But the traditions of its former prosperity were not forgotten, and numerous merchants residing in the neighbouring Rajasthan repeatedly urged Captain Thorestry, the Superintendent of Bhatiana district, to restore the town. In January, 1838, Captain Thorestry made a commencement of new town in the uninhabited jungle to the east of the old Sirsa fort.

The town was laid out as a square of 2,801 feet side, crossed by broad streets at right angles to each other and this presented an appearance of regularity. The town of Sirsa continued to grow in size and importance as the surrounding country became more fully colonised.

The Bhiwani town was formerly surrounded by an old wall, now walls are in complete decay. This had 12 gates, all of which are now decayed. Of these were the Bapora gate to the

north-west; Rohtak gate to the east; and the Dadri gate to south- east; The old town is congested. The streets are narrow. It is dotted with old ornate buildings with orient domes or Rajput style pavilions. The doorways are carved in wood and almost as big as castle gate. The architecture and masonry of these buildings seems to indicate that the workmen and artists had attained a degree of high sophistication.

The town is no longer confined within the old walls; habitation has spread outside. Many new buildings have sprung up to the north-west, north-east, east and west of the town. The houses in old town are built of brick and lime and most cases are several storeys high. New houses of modern designs constructed with bricks, cement and steel have come up in the recent developed areas on planning suggested by Country and Town Planning Department.

The old town of Charkhi Dadri which was surrounded by a stone wall with four gates; Rail *Darwaja*, Delhi gate, Budwana gate and Charkhi gate. Later on two small entrance extended itself outside the old wall towards the railway station and new bus stand. The old compound wall with the gates was built by Maharaja of erstwhile Jind state in 1917 *samvat*. The old houses are mostly built of stone and lime; some present an imposing appearance. The Muslims before partition used to

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build underground cells (apartments in the ground floor). They were known as *Bhoras*, now in ruins. The streets are narrow and blind. The new modern houses are coming up according to modern plan.

The houses in Loharu town are scattered. They are generally built of stone and lime in old style. The houses made of brick, cement and steel with modern design are coming up. The streets are mostly *pucca*.

The township outside the Ballabgarh fort precincts was laid out by Raja Bahadur Singh of Ballabgarh. It still bears the terraces of careful planning-quadrangular market places, wells at cross roads and a large garden which he named Dilkush.

The Faridabad town was laid out on specific planning, sector-wise design. It is a modern city somewhat like Chandigarh. The whole town (new township) has been divided into many sectors supported by wide roads and fully filled with modern amenities. It contains multi-storied buildings.

The Firozpur Jhirka town is said to have been founded by Firoze Shah Tughlaq as a military post by putting down neighbouring turbulent tribes. The remains of the old town named Dhand still exist to the north of the present site where there are many tombs and shrines in ruins. The old part of the town is rectangular in shape and surrounded with a high wall which is now in ruins.

The town of Rohtak is said to have been rebuilt in the times of Prithvi raj. In 1828, General Mundy speaks of "the ancient and consequently ruinous town of Rohtak. The wide circuit of its dilapidated fortifications and still elegant domes of many time worn tanks tell melancholy tales of gone-by grandeurs". At one time, the town had a wall all around with gates. Only three gates can now be seen and these too are in a dilapidated condition.

The town of Kaithal is situated on the banks of an extensive artificial lake, called the Bidkiyar lake with numerous bathing places and flights of steps. A high wall partly of pucca bricks and partly of mud enclosed the town. It had eight gates, of which Karnal gate to the east, Keorak and Suraj Kund gates to the north and Kesai and Dogran gates to the west were the principal ones. These gates are now in a dilapidated condition though they still mark different parts from the old town.

The Karnal town was formerly enclosed by a masonry wall, now, the wall is in complete decay. It had two gates, of which Nawab, Kalandar and Ghazni gates to the east and Jundla gate, to the west were principal ones. Some of them still exist and serve as exits from the old town. To the west of the town

lies an extensive *bazar* known as *Sadar Bazar*. It used to be the main shopping centre of the old cantonment and was known for the manufacture of tiles and flower pots.

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The town of Panipat is situated near the old bank of river Yamuna upon a high mound composed of debris of centuries. On all sides Panipat rises gently upward towards an old fort which is the highest point. Surrounded by an old wall pierced by 15 gates, of which Salarjang, Shah Walayat and Madhoganj are principal ones, Panipat has its suburb stretching in all directions except in the east. The town with its narrow and crooked streets is crossed by two main *bazars*. Shah Rah, the Imperial Mughal Road, known as G.T. Road, passed through the town. Even today, its *kos minars*, south and north of Panipat stand as mute witnesses to the once great highway of men and commerce.

Pundri town is also enclosed by a wall and has four gates; Pundrak gate in the north, Kaithal gate to the west, Rai gate to the south and Habri gate to the east.

Panchkula is developed on the outskirts of Chandigarh, amongst the picturesque background of the Shiwaliks and the Ghaggar. The township was originally sub divided into 14 residential sectors, 2 industrial sectors, one town centre, a park and areas for regional recreation. It is based on modern planning.

### **Chandigarh's Unique Urban form**

Chandigarh has the distinction of being the modern India's most carefully planned city after Raja Sawai Jai Singh's Jaipur and Mughal emperor's Fatehpur Sikri.

Chandigarh town plan has another distinction. So far, apart from the British new towns, Chandigarh has the largest application of the idea of cellular neighbourhood development in an organized and unified plan. The planners conceived the termed 'Sector' for a neighbourhood unit. The reason behind it so was that the horizontal roads in Chandigarh roads running parallel to the Shiwalik hills have slight curve.

Another distinction of the new city lies in the fact that Le Corbusier used a system of classification of urban functions he called : Living (residential, working office and commercial activities), care of the body and spirit (recreation) and circulation (movement system). Chandigarh architecture is characterised by the following features<sup>1</sup>:—

**1. Widespread use of exposed (unplastered) Brick Work.**— The warm and expressive qualities of exposed brick work are so overwhelming that this feature of Chandigarh architecture has been followed by other architects throughout the country.

1. The write up on architectural planning of Chandigarh is based S.S. Bhatt's news item of dated Nov. 28,1994 in *Chandigarh Newslines*.

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**2. Primary Geometric shapes.**— Match box system of architecture in Chandigarh is mainstay. Primary geometric shapes are easy to conceive, easier to draw and easier to build.

**3. Unclusttered Massing.**— The components which comprise the recall block of a building also follow the dictates of simple geometry.

**4. Honesty of expression.**— The articulate of structure along with the use of materials in their undecorated form, have been a major contribution of Chandigarh architecture.

**5. Simple techniques.**— As a result, a vast majority of the buildings in Chandigarh have been built largely with manual labour and indigenously trained craftsmen.

**6. Various buildings and Zoning Control.**— Chandigarh architecture has the unique distinction of having various buildings and zoning controls in terms of frontages, heights, fenestration, set back etc. whereby an orderly street picture has invariably been developed.

**7. Austere Aesthetic.**— Architecture is the distinct expression of an intrinsic beauty of design rather than mock up of buildings.

**8. Respect for ordinary materials.**— Brick had been used widely in traditional Indian architecture. It was here in Chandigarh that brick for the first time became a material of contemporary construction as well as expression of the imperatives of modern building design.

Regarding laying out and planning of villages, it is enough to say that not a set of architecture planning was followed. The streets are narrow and crooked.

The houses of the poor people in rural areas differ a great deal from those in urban areas in architectural plan and material used. The houses can be categorised as such (i) substantially roomy houses (*Pucca*), (ii) substantially roomy houses (*Kacha*), (iii) *Chappars*, (iv) *jhompris*, (v) *Gher*, (vi) *Galwan* and (vii) *Baithaks*. The first two types of houses have identical planning as far as architecture goes ; they only differ in material used in their construction. The first is made of pucca bricks. If stone is easily available, the stone is used with lime. The pattern is followed in southern Haryana where Aravali hills are there. The second category is made of mud bricks. Their plan of construction is usually as main gate, big room called *poli* or *deodhi*; then courtyard (*angan*) with a small kitchen (*rasoi*) at one end and often cattle shed or open *than* on the other. Then there is the *delan* or open varandh after which come sleeping room and living rooms (*kotha*). The cattle are generally penned at night either in *angan* or in *poli* and fodder is often stacked on the mudroofs. Of late this practice has changed a great deal; now the cattle are kept in *gher*, a small house built away from residential



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quarters. Now a days, the fodder is stacked either in *gher* of *getwar*. Some rich persons, especially those belonging to the middle class have constructed multi storyed buildings with porch. The farms have come up. The poor persons have generally one-roomed houses of mud bricks and thatched roofs. These are called *chappers & chhands*.

Those who are extremely poor are compelled to live in *Jhopris*.

## **Handicrafts and Handloom**

In Haryana, the Aryan, Mughal and western cultures have synthesised to evolve present handicrafts. However, this synthesis has left behind a backlash of rituals, customs, pattern and style in the crafts. A backlash so pervading its strength and deep in its intensity, that it could submerge one's entire being and leave one gasping for breath. That is the tradition of Haryana a complex mosaic of cultural and ethnic characteristics so vast and heterogeneous in its origin and content that it would have been buried in layers of time, had it not been for the art and artefacts of the anonymous craftsmen, and the housewives. In humble objective made of clay, metal, wood and cloth, give a repository of culture. People are so justifiably proud of it, today. The living traditions of Haryana are depicted in embroidery, ornaments, textiles, woodwork, stonework, metal work, pottery and votives terracotta and crafts.

The women, with the needle in their gentle fingers, give expression to their creativity in bold and bright coloured embroidery. Vivid pictures on *ghaghras*, *choli* etc. illustrate the richness of *phulkari* or embroidery of the state.

Alongwith these, are the details on techniques used, the socio-religious connotations, the precise patterns, the distinctive styles and delicate signs. The same themes and votives undergo a change of technique in a wide spectrum of woven fabrics ranging from the *bandhej* or tie and dye, the woven *sopali*, the varied printing on cotton and silk, the gold brocades with *zari*. The most striking feature of the embroidery and textiles of Haryana are the colours-purple, deep maroon, cherry, red and bright yellow.

Chunky ornaments of copper, silver, gold, lead and brass complete the attire of the Haryana men and women. These give details on the method of metal working, the iconography of metal images and the functional utility of household items of copper, bronze and brass. Early 19th and 20th century images provide a fair idea of the indigenous method of casting, forging and hammering. Surface ornamentation created by chiselling, punching or inlay work is at its best in ceremonial pots and sprouted vessels.

The skill of the wood-carvers of Haryana has not been restricted to furniture, dowry boxes or images, but has extended in major way into fashioning of columns, struts, balconies, doors and windows. Experts on wooden architectures give a four

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fold classification of the types of wood carvings in the State figural work, abstract and geometric patterns, carved flat wooden ceilings and incised wood work drawn from block printing.

The most important class of rural stone carving comprises memorial canopies and votive objects. Terracotta is another

medium for votive objects made by people. They provide an insight into the complicated ethnic and historical background of the crude figures of horses, elephants, tigers, bulls and buffaloes. There are festival crafts in form of clay toys. This has rightly concentrated on the non-scriptural village tradition as distinguished from the classical tradition by its spontaneity of expression. Haryana has been under constant attack by the foreign invaders hence it could not preserve art heritage, clay art, beads and metal objects. In the field of stone sculptures, however, there is a few. These have been recovered from various excavations carried out in the state.

Haryana has always remained a rendezvous for various races, cultures and faiths. The earliest scenes of human drama that were enacted on this stage are lost to time. Whatever can be recollected with the help of archaeology tells that first tool-making men appeared in the hospitable Shiwaliks of Haryana over a million years back. Ever since then man's quest for newer lands, frequent mass-movement from the west and Central Asia, under varied socio-political compulsions or human thirst for religious imperialism, caused continual stream of immigrations into India and every time, Haryana had to bear the heaviest burden. Various findings in the form of terracottas, bronzes, miniature paintings and stone sculptures reveal that handicrafts have been age old tradition in Haryana. Under the unfavourable circumstances the traditional handicrafts in the state continued to survive and had a strong base in the rural as well as urban culture. However, with the advent of industrialisation, the Britishers preferred to neglect the inherited crafts of the state, even then the skill could get its recognition. Mr. Lockwood Kipling, Principal of Lahore School of Art, furnished the following note on some of the special handicrafts of the state.

"At Rewari there is a large manufacture of brassware. The greater bulk consists, of course, of cooking utensils; but fancy articles involving chasing, engraving and parcel - tinning. A selection from the brass wares usually sold was made for the Calcutta Exhibition by Mr. Christie of the Police, and included among some coarse and rough workmanship much that was good and characteristic. Lamps of different sorts, the standard *shamadan* and hanging lamps, cart bells, inkstands and pen cases, *hookahs*, temple bells and water vessels of different sorts, nearly all of which were in cast brass, made up the collection. Such ornament as was used was lightly chased and wanted in force and definition, and the finish left much to be desired. It must be remembered,

however, that all these articles are intended to survive for long time

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daily use by a rustic and heavy handed people, and to be periodically scrubbed with sand and water. The construction of the cart bell (*Zang*) is curious, the mouth being closed by a number of leaf-like plates turning inwards and upwards from the rim, like the recurved petals of a flower. This arrangement ought to produce a characteristic vibration which perhaps suggested the name *zang*. *Hookahs* are here made with ears and handles, parcel-tinned and engraved through the tin into the brass; like Moradabad ware, but without the black ground<sup>1</sup>". Mr. Lockwood Kipling, also furnished the following similar note for the other part of the state.

"Jagadhri has a well-deserved reputation for brass-ware. Tasteful and pretty lamps with branching arms touched with colour on the leaves, and many other forms of brass-ware, are here exceptionally well made. Shahabad is spoken of as excelling in some handicrafts, but they seem to be practised by one or two individuals only. Two silversmiths from this place contributed to the Exhibition of 1882 very good specimens of chiselled silver, such as open work bracelets set with turquoises, and belt clasps of excellent, though somewhat minute, workmanship. They are also the best seal-engravers in the province, being capable of cutting intaglios of armorial and other subjects, as well as the usual Persian writing for signet rings. Here also is a *virtuoso* in the manufacture of musical instruments, such as *saringis*, *tamburas*, etc. Mulberry and *tun* are the woods generally employed, and ivory carving and inlay with wood carving in low relief are freely introduced. He also produced the *pique* inlay known in Bombay work-boxes, made by arranging tiny rods of metal, sandal wood, partly coloured ivory of

geometric section in patterns which are glue up and then sawn across in sections, each section like a slice of the English sweetmeat called 'rock', being a repetition of the pattern ready for insertion in a ground. From the same place, from time to time specimens of one of the many puerilities in which native ingenuity and skill are so often wasted are sent. This is a sort of paper-lace writing cut into a dainty open work of foliage and other forms with great delicacy and some skill in design. There are examples of this triviality in the Lahore Museum<sup>2</sup>.

The traditional handicrafts activities of the potters, cobblers, ivory carvers, *duree* makers, metal craftsmen, stone carvers, doll and soft toy makers etc. have now been given encouragements to flourish. The Haryana State Handloom and Handicrafts Corporation has come forward to exploit this skill optimally.

### **Metal ware Art**

Metalware crafts of the state have got fame all over the country. The metalware craftsmen learnt to manufacture the items through traditional skill and experience. The renowned brass art and metal ware craft are located at Rewari and Jagadhari.

1. *Gurgaon District Gazetteer*, 1910, p. 148.

2. *Ambala District Gazetteer*, 1923-24, p. 98.

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The brass handicrafts generally have trays, wall plates, brass pots and brass vessels. These items are well decorated with artistic skill and are so perfectly decorated that artistic approach has been recognised even in abroad. The study of brass metal wares reveals a unique art and skill of the state

which revolves round its religion and way of life. This is the traditional approach of the skill, however, the art reflects the present also. The commercial flavour has given new direction to the traditional art. The products have hence got export recognition. The peculiar feature of this skill is that the majority of the metalware craftsmen belong to the '*Kasara*' community. Since there is no institute to exploit this crafts, the skill has been percolating from generation to generation and their artistic skill is tasted only through exhibitions and emporia.

## **Leather Zari-work**

The skill and good handicraft *zari* work is traditionally a team work. The most of the work on leather is done by men, the *zari* embroidery work is done by woman-folk. The process of manufacturing of leather *zari* items is largely confined to footwear of different shapes and designs. The *Tilla Jutti* is well-known footwear of men and women in Haryana and adjoining states. These footwears have maintained their identity and reflects the regional cultural fabrics. In spite of adversity, the leather craft continues to thrive and its popularity has not dwindled to that extent. However, the continuous craze for *Tilla Jutti* is giving ample favour to the promotion of this traditional crafts of the state.

## **Clay Pottery**

The art of clay pottery is hereditary. With the raw material available locally, the craftsmen mould clay in fineness in the form of animal figurines, statues of gods and goddesses, dolls, flower pots and other household items like *surahis*. The fine paintings on these clay articles well speak about the ancient traditional skill. Moreover, the attitude of the rural potters is to display their work for they regard the clay with which they work as a living material. This rural craft is indigenous in nature. However, the government has set up training centres in pottery making at Jhajjar and Malab for transformation it into modern skill. The rural potters make objects of clay for their clients etc. who offer them too their goods on various occasions.

## **Ivory carving**

The ivory carving craftsmen in the state have developed this art to a great extent; now it is known at national level. The

ivory handicrafts is a family affair and the skill is exposed through family training. The glimpse of this art is available in the form of necklaces, bangles, toys, cigarette pipes, etc. These items explicitly describe the standard of ivory carving skill in the state.

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## **Stone Carving**

Stone carving is a traditional craft. The skill and craft of Narnaul carries national reputation. Marble and stone carving in the form of statues, animals, birds etc. have got new impetus in the state through the government.

## **Wood craft**

Wood work is an ancient craft and its field is wide. The traditional wood craft may be seen at doors, windows and other household items. The beads of *malas* of exquisite designs carved out of log of *sandal* have found a place in the export items. The skill of Mangali (Hisar) needs special mention in this regard. The details may be seen at the end of the chapter.

## **Dolls and Soft-toys making**

Doll and soft toy making is a traditional craft of Haryana. In every household this craft is thrived. Doll making is also connected with rituals and customs. Girls after wedding bring dolls and toys for their new homes. Well decorated toys are also sent for the arrival of male baby. The new buildings are also ceremonised with paper and cloth dolls.

With a view to encouraging the skill, the government is

making efforts at various places in the state to impart training on modern lines for doll and toy making.

## Carpet weaving and Phulkari

*Panja durries* are a major traditional craft of Haryana. The *durries* carry folk art motifs. *Panja durrie* making has also enriched the folk song when the young girls assemble in a house and mix the production with the emotions through songs. This traditional skill has been further exposed to carpet weaving and the state has the privilege of making first quality carpets.

The *phulkari* has been the craft of every household. The craft reflecting the different styles of needle work on clothes enlivens the household female folk culture of Haryana. The mechanisation has given a set back to the needle work. This ancient heritage passing from generation to generation has, however, been well preserved through *phulkari* in rural areas. The *phulkari* may be well noticed in traditional Haryanavi dress. The jewellery of silver as well as gold worn in villages also encompasses state's ancient heritage.

The skill of handicrafts in the state is very extensive and it has been exposed to many fields. *Moodah* Making from grass ropes and *sarkanda*, palm leaf handicrafts, *lac* work etc. are also some of the traditional handicrafts of the state which have got recognition throughout the country.

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The needle work and embroidery is very important in the life of a nubile girl. The needle work still plays a vital role in finding her suitable husband in rural areas. Even today it is customary for a girl to embroider with needle atleast one *rumal* and pillow cover before marriage . Such embroidery



has a variety of motifs embroidered such as animals, birds, flowers, trees and scenes from mythology.

Earlier the thread used was silk, floss, giving a smooth silken surface to the embroidered portion in sharp contrast to the texture of the rustic cotton ground. Now a days simple thread with colours is used.

## Handloom

A sizeable section of the population in state is involved in the handloom industry. Traditionally the coarse cloth made by *Julahas* in the villages has been an important village industry. The *Khadi Gramodyog* is the further extension of this traditional skill. Handloom sector is thus an important activity which continues to thrive even today, however, with the introduction of powerloom the traditional handloom skill has come under threat. Panipat has emerged as the leading centre of handloom sector in the state. The potential of handloom sector here has been well exploited and the skill has got recognition all over the world. The handloom goods of the state are very much in demand abroad due to quality, specimen and skill.

Haryana's country side is thus museum without walls. As crafts are created for daily needs and serve a functional purpose and therein lies their significance. The weaving crafts tradition come into fabric of every day life, the relationship between the craftsmen and the clients and the technical perfections show complete mastery over the medium and tools. The form is determined by the usage. The technique, the usage, the aesthetics, socio-economic relations, religions and philosophy are all the aspects which form the cohesive social fabric through these crafts. Thus these traditional crafts depict the rich cultural heritage of the state.

**Museums.**— There are four museums which have rare exhibits of great artistic and archaeological importance. The Gurukul Jhajjar has established a museum where rich collections regarding the ancient Haryana have been kept. The museum has proved very valuable for studying the past of Haryana. The account is given in following pages.

Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra, has an archaeological museum in the Department of Ancient History and Archaeology. The museum has rich collections to study the ancient history and cultural heritage of the region. The state museum of archaeology has been set up at Chandigarh by the

state the Department of Archaeology. There are 90 exhibits on display, 60 are sculptures and the rest includes pillars and excavated material. Also on display are excavated pre-Harappan and Harappan finds.

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The sculptures on display belong to Kushan (1st century A.D.), Gupta (5th and 6th century A.D.) and Gurjar-Pratihara (8th to 12th century A.D.) periods.

To depict the rural life of Haryana, Chaudhry Charan Singh Agriculture University, Hisar has maintained a museum. In this museum, the material has been collected from the different parts of rural Haryana. The collections are very valuable to study the change in the life pattern of the villagers in the State.

Sri Krishana Museum was set up in 1987 at Kurukshetra by the Kurukshetra Development Board. The exhibits in the museum, for the present have been selected keeping in view the spiritual requirements of the large number of people. In this museum, some of the best reproductions of miniature paintings of Kangra, Bundi, Basohli, Malwa and Mewar schools have been kept. These are copies of the original paintings housed in the National Museum, New Delhi, Bharat Kala Bhavan, Varanasi, Government Museum and Art Gallery, Chandigarh, and several other places in India. Bronze sculptures selected from different state emporia, such as crawling Krishna, Kaliyamardana and Krishna and Radha have also been exhibited in the gallery. Two wooden sculptures, one of the Venugopal and other depicting scenes from Krishna's life are further additions to the exhibits. The museum also presents *pichhawai* paintings of Krishna themes from Rajasthan, reproductions of ancient sculptures like Vishnu, Varaha, Ekanamsa, Narasimha etc. The gold painting

of Bala Krishna from Ranjavur, beautiful inlay work of wood and bone depicting Akrura taking Krishna and Balarama to Mathura, and Krishna preaching the *Gita* to Arjuna, small ivory sculptures of Yashodha and Krishna, a wooden door with Radha-Krishna and various episodes from the life of Krishna, and palm-leaf folios richly decorated with *Dasavatara* images as well as incidents from the life of Lord Krishna have found place here.

**Crafts Museum.**— A Crafts Museum has been set up by the Haryana Tourism Development Corporation at Surajkund (Faridabad) where a regular crafts mela is held in the month of February. The corporation has collected choicest objects of arts and crafts produced by the artisans. They include antique rural crafts articles, such as an old cot, a leather coat, age old wood, carved almirahas, an antique bullockcart and earthenwares of yore etc.

**Gurukul Museum Jhajjar.**— This museum was established in 1962. This is the first museum in the state where valuable ancient remains have been collected. It is spread into over 7 acre of land. The credit of establishing this prestigious museum goes to Archarya Bhagwan Dev. Now it is the main centre of attraction for studying the rich heritage of the state. The museum boasts of having ancient remains from Khorakot (Rohtak), Asthal Bohar, Sumaid (Punjab), Naurangabad (Bhiwani), Rakhi (Hansi), Agroha (Fatehabad) and different places of the country. The seals and coins

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from different eras viz. Mahabhartar, Kushan, Kaniska, Agrahkaran, Kussambhi, Ayodha, Indonesia etc. have been retained. Besides, seals, coins, arms, clothes etc. relating to Prithviraj Chauhan, Anangpal, Mohammad Ghure, Sultans of

Lodhi dynasty, Mughul Kings etc. have also been preserved.

The museum also contains 33 idols of *Ramayana* era. The manuscripts, books *tamra patras* etc. in different languages numbering about 50 thousand have also been maintained here. There are about 300 arms and war weapons made of stones, iron and other metals. Earthen and metal wares numbering over 30 thousand have also been kept in the museum.

**Archaeological Garden.**—Yadvindra Garden at Pinjore is the only archaeological garden maintained by Tourism Corporation of Haryana. Hawa Mahal and Jal Mahal are the fine specimen of Mughal architecture. The design of garden divided into different depressions and dimensions throw ample light on Mughal period.

**Fine Arts and Music.**—Haryana has been rich in fine arts and music since ancient times as revealed by the early literature and epigraphical evidence of the excavations and other remains. The Ashokan pillar standing in the mosque at Hisar bears testimony to the skill of monolithic craftsmanship of the period.

The names of many villages connected with the various forms of classical music amply testify the glory of music in the state. Folk songs are sung in the villages at different times of the years. Though there has been no centre of classical music learning yet the people learn the music from the traditional *gurus*.

To popularise and propagate the Haryana folk music and dance, the state organises music competitions at various levels. Folk music hidden in oral traditions and *ragnis* of Dada Lakhmi Chand sufficiently reflect the early evolution of musical knots in the state.

**Libraries and Reading Rooms.**—Library movement is the recent development. Haryana has been traditionally the follower of oral literature. The knowledge has been percolating from generation to generation through oral tradition. Whatever has been written remained the exclusive preserve of the individual. Many early manuscripts are still available with the individuals.

With the spread of education, the reading habits of people have also increased. The voluntary social organisations as well as the Government have come forward to set up public libraries and reading rooms for the masses. The history of the

establishment of libraries in the state dates back to 1926, when the first full-fledged

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library was established at Ambala City by H. Fyson, the then Deputy Commissioner, Ambala <sup>1</sup>.

The library movement gained momentum after Independence. Village library scheme was introduced in 1950, when some panchayats collected subscriptions and opened libraries and reading rooms.

Under District Library Scheme all district headquarters have library facilities.

**State Archives.**— Haryana State Archives came into being as an independent wing of Government in 1976. This wing is engaged to acquire, service and preserve for posterity the public and private records of historical, administrative, political, economic, social, cultural and research value and also to coordinate and guide all operations connected with public records in respect of their administration, preservation and revaluation with a view to ensure that records of permanent value are not destroyed.

The State Archives has a large library consisting of about 12,000 books. Besides, the archives has rich acquisitions of past records. In order to make oral history much valuable the wing has tape recorded evidences of 186 freedom fighters. All these collections provide ample facilities to research scholars to study the cultural, historical, social and economic life of the state.

**Haryana Sahitya Akademi.**— It seeks to achieve improved standards in the field of Haryanvi literature. It aims at

fostering and co-ordinating literary activities in the languages of Hindi, Urdu, Panjabi to create among the people the consciousness of the basic unity of literature in the languages and thus to promote through them the cultural unity.

The Akademi is also engaged to encourage the production of good literature. The good literary works are acknowledged and the literary persons are suitably rewarded.

**Literature.** — Haryana has been the centre of literary activities since ancient times. The bulk of *Vedas* were composed here on the bank of the Saraswati and Drishdwati. Several *Puranas* and other works were composed on this land at later period. The spirit of literary pursuits continued afterwards too and it was under this influence that Harsha (7th century) wrote *Ratnavali*, *Priyadarshika* and *Naganandam*. He was followed by his court poet Bana who also did his famous works *Harshacharita*, and *Kadambari* in Sanskrit. In the medieval times, three other languages came into vogue for writing purposes, here; these were Arabic, Persian, and Urdu. Later on, there came English composition in the 19th century.

1. *Ambala District Gazetteer*, 1984, p. 304.

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## Culture

**Sanskrit, Prakrita and Apabharamsa.**— A great deal of literature was composed in Haryana in Sanskrit, Prakrita and *Apabharamsa*.

The story of literary activity in Haryana, as far as Sanskrit literature is concerned, is the most ancient in the world, for *Rig Veda*, the oldest work in the world was composed here on the banks of the sacred Saraswati and Drishdwati. The work is in *chhandas*. A little later, when Sanskrit language developed in its classical form, a lot of Vedic literature-most

of the of the *Brahamanas*, *Aranyakas* and *Vedanagas*<sup>1</sup> were composed here. A detailed scrutiny of the *Mahabharata* leaves in no doubt that a major portion of the great epic was also composed here. About this time, Lord Krishna recited the *Gita* here at Thanesar (Kurukshetra) and Manu wrote his great

*Smriti* (*Manusmriti*) sitting on the banks of the great Saraswati at *Prithudaka*<sup>2</sup> (Pehowa).

A lot of Sanskrit literature was also composed here in the post-*Mahabharata* period, the time of the Guptas and the Pushpabhutis being especially productive. The bulk of the *Puranas* were composed here in this period<sup>3</sup>. These were followed by three dramas of Harsha, the scholar-king of Thanesar: *Ratnawali*, *Priyadarshini* and *Naganandam*<sup>4</sup>. These dramas are rated as the best dramas in Sanskrit literature, those of Kalidasa being an exception, of course, Bana, the court-poet of Harsha was also a great scholar like his master : his two works *Harshacharita* (incomplete ) and *Kadambari* occupy a pride place in contemporary literature<sup>5</sup>.

There are references to several works done in the early medieval period in Prakrita, but none except those of Thakur Pheru are available today. This scholar was one of the greatest literary figures of his time. He belonged to Kanana, a small village eight km. from Charkhi Dadri in district Bhiwani. He was a Jaina, and had a deep knowledge of the Indian literature and sciences known at that time. Sultan Alauddin Khalji (1296-1316) was so much impressed by Pheru's unfathomable knowledge and unparalleled intellect, that the king bestowed upon him an honourable rank in the *darbar*. As per literary information Pheru was very intimately connected with the treasury and mint of the Khilji emperor (Alauddin).

1. It is difficult to give exact verdict in this regard, but internal evidence in some of these works leads to this supposition.

2. This account is based on strong traditions prevalent in the region.

3. The *Vamana* and *Vayupurana*, or at least bulk of them, were composed here. Besides, on the basis of internal evidence it is belived that some portion of several other *puranas* were also composed here.

4. All these works are published in several editions and are easily available.

5. The same is true in case of both these works.

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Pheru wrote treatises on different subjects. His most famous work is *Ratnapriksha*. Consisting of 132 verses in Prakrita, it was written for his son Mahipala in 1315. As the very name of the book shows, here author dealt with gems (*ratnas*), their types, places of availability, value, effects, qualities, defects, etc. His other important work is *Vastusara*, a work of architecture. It contains three chapters of different aspects of architecture. Its language is also Prakrita. Another work *Ganitasara*, consisting of 311 verses in Prakrita abounds in such valuable information as prices of different things, weights, measures, name of cloths, measurements of land rates, taxes, etc. which were in prevalence at that time. It is a useful work to know about the economic condition of the period. Then there is *Dhatuttpatti* comprising 57 verses in Prakrita, it deals with metals like bronze, brass, lead, etc. and other substances like Hingul, Pindura, Kapura, Chandana, Kasturi, etc. Another work is *Jyotishastara*. Here in 474 *shlokas* (composed in Prakrita) the learned author deals with the movements of the stars and planets and their effects on human beings. It is truly a masterly exposition of *Jyotisha*. The *Dravyapriksha* is another important work. It has 149 verses and 29 tables where the information supplied by the verses is tabulated. The language of the work is Prakrita influenced by *Apabharmsha* and the local dialects. In this work, the Thakura gave methods of purifying silver, copper, tin, lead and other metals. After that he describes at good length coins of pure gold, pure silver, as well as of alloys of different metals. In his description of coins Pheru had given their weights, coin value and the ratio of the ingredients in the alloys. There is a small book in *Apabharamsa* also. Its title is *Yagapradhana chatus padika*. It is a religious work



which deals with the lives of Jaina *acharyas*.

Needless to say, the writings of Thakur Pheru are marked by patient industry, thorough research, profound scholarship and clear vision. They contain a teeming mass of interesting details pertaining to the subjects discussed in them. Besides, they throw a flood of light on the contemporary conditions. These works are surely valuable sources of the history of medieval India in general and that of Haryana in particular.

About this time, literary activity was also in *Apabhramsa*. The several works of Pushpadanta, a great Jaina scholar from Rohtak (10th century ) are perhaps the earliest specimens of the literary form of the language. Of these works, *Adipurana*, *Uttarapurana*, *Mahapurana*, *Nayakumara-Chariu*, and *Jashara-chariu* <sup>1</sup> based on the lives of the Jaina Tirthankaras and great potentates are his best works. The contemporary life, especially as it was found in the palaces and of the high stratum of society has been discussed in very lucid terms in these works. Pushpadanta's example was followed by a number of writers, the chief among whom being the 12th-century

1. Phogat, S.R. *History and Culture of Haryana : A classified and Annotated Bibliography*, Chapter-4.

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poet Shridhara, who wrote *Vaddhamana-chariu* and *Pashana-chariu* <sup>1</sup>. He introduces himself as a resident of Haryana. The themes of his works are also related to the lives of the Jaina *Tirthankaras*. Another famous man was the 15th century poet Bucharaja, who wrote *Mayanjudha*, *Santosha Jaitilaka*, *Chetpapudggla dhamale* and *Thandana*. These works are the specimens of the simplified *Apabhramsa*. This language in a way can also be called ancient Haryanvi.

Another famous man of letters was the 16th century poet Vallaba who wrote *Kukaramanjari Chaupai*, a folk tale of great merit. Jinavallabha Suri, a great Jain scholar of Hansi used his literary skill in making the language a powerful vehicle of expression even in prose. His following seven works are good specimens of this: *Sukshmaratha Sidhanta Vicharasarashadha Shiti*, *Sardhashataka*, *Pindarishuddhi Vicharasarashada Shiti*, *Panshadhayidhi*, *Dharama Shiksha*, *Divadaskulaka Parshonurashataka* and *Shrngarashataka*.

In the 17th century, the literary works in *Apabhramsha* ceased to be done. In this age there was a tendency to go to Sanskrit again. But all the works which were composed then were of secondary nature, being for the most part digests of commentaries. This was, nevertheless, the case almost everywhere in India in this age. Nishal Dass (1791-1863 ), a great Sanskrit scholar, of this period did many works of the later type. This great scholar, the author of the celebrated works *Vicharasagara* (Hindi) is reported to have authored commentaries of *Ishoupanishad*, *Kathopnishad* and *Mahabharata*. He also wrote many other works, such as *Vritavivarana*, *Vritidipika* and *Bhasha Ayurveda*. Unfortunately, none of these works are available today.

In the later part of the 19th century, Shridhar of village Desna (Kurukshetra) wrote commentary of *Bhagvadgita*. A two-volume book *Sutravriti* is attributed to Shridhar's contemporary Hardari Lal of Kurushetra . His another contemporary Swami Hiradasa to the Dadu sect wrote a *Mahakavya* named *Daduramodoya* in 14 *cantos* at Bhiwani. It deals in a highly poetic style with the life and teachings of the well-known saint Dadu. The next great name is Sita Ram Shastri, again of Bhiwani, who did a commentary on the Yaksha's *Nirukta* in three volumes. His two other works entitled *Sahityoddessa* and *Sahityasidhanta* are learned exposition of the subjects concerned.

In the present century several scholars have enriched Sanskrit literature. Of these scholars, Chhaju Ram Shastri, popularly called *Vidya Sagara* of Ratauli (Jind) has made very substantial contribution. His earliest work is a *Kavya* (in five *cantos*)

1. Phogat, S.R. *History and Culture of Haryana : A classified and Annotated Bibliography*, Chapter-4.

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entitled *Sultanacharitam* on the life-history of king Mahipala, son of Mahendrapala of Chittor who otherwise known as Suratana which in popular pronunciation is changed to Sultana. His play *Durgabhayudayam* in seven acts has for its theme the *puranic* story of the encounter of Goddess Durga with demon Mahisa and his destruction at her hands. It is a scholarly work of merit. His another equally great play is *Chajjuramayam*. It tells the story of Rama in seven acts. Among his other publications are *Kurukshetramahatmya*, *Karmakandapadhatih*, and *Shityabinduh*. He also did commentaries in Sanskrit on old text *Mulachandrika* on the *Nyayasidhantamuktavali*, *Sarala* on the *Nyayadarshana*, *Sarabodhini* on the *Vedantasara*, *Pariksha* on the first two parts of the *Mahabhasys*, *Sarabodhini* on the five *ahyayas* of the *Nirukth*, *Sadhana* on the *Laghusiddhantakaunudi* and *Parikasha* or *Vidyasagari* on the *Kavyapraksha*. Besides these works, Chhaju Ram also did a history of Sanskrit literature, *Vibudharatnavali* in verse which seeks to refute many a well known theory of western scholars. His latest works are *Shivakathamritam* on the Shiva legends in the *Puranas* and a valuable treatise on astrology *Pratyakshajyantisam*.

Madhavacharya Shastri, a contemporary of Chhaju Ram is another great Sanskrit scholar of Haryana . He wrote many works in Sanskrit of which *Kabircharitam*, *Paratatavadigdarshanama*, and *Kathashafakuma* are quite well known. Vidya Vidhir Shastri of Satana (Panipat tahsil) is another great scholar. His famous works are *Vyavaharabhanu*, *Shridayanandarsicharitam*, *Maitrayanisamhitokta-suktisangraphah*, *Maitrayanasamhita* and epic (*Mahakavya*) on Arya Samaj and its founder Dayananda Sarasvati. Vidyadhar Shastri Gaur of Sirsa Kheri (in Jind) is another famous scholar. He published commentaries on the *Katyayanasrautasutravritti* and *Sulbasutravritti* which are "remarkable for their clear exposition". Shastri prepared a monograph

*Nityakramaprayogaha* on the daily rituals. He has also six other works to his credit, namely *Devayajnikapaddhati*, *Sraddhaspra*, *Smartaprabhu*, *Silanyasapaddhati*, *Vastusantipaddhati* *Viyahopaddhati*, and *Upanayanpaddhati*.

Another Sanskrit scholar Satya Deva Vasistha of Bhiwani published three learned works, *Sayagrahanitikavyas* *Satybhasyam* a commentary in four volumes on the *Visnusahasrana* and *Naditativadarsanam*, a work on Ayurveda. Shiva Narayana Shastri of village Gatoli (in Jind) is also a good Scholar. His specialization is Philosophy. His *Chatrabodhni*, a commentary of the *Tarkasamgraha* is a fine work. Bhikshu Gauri Shanker of Bawani Khera is a great lexicographer and his work *Sarvatantrasiddhantapadertaalaksanasamgrahah* is a famous work on the subject. Kokilanand Sharma of Bhiwani, author of *Panchamahayajna*, Shridatta, author of *Kenopanishad*, Radhakrishana Shastri (of Jatu Bhiwani) author of *Hariyanavaibhavam*, and Shivanarayan Shastri (of Bhiwani) author of *Niruktamimansa* etc. are other learned scholars.

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## Culture

**Arabic and Persian.**— What was true of Sanskrit, Prakrita and *Apabharans* is also true with Arabic, and Persian literature. Nevertheless, endeavour is being made here to supply as much information as is possible in present circumstances. Being in close proximity of Delhi, this region received great inspiration from scholars of Arabic and Persian living there. As a result, several centres of learned and creative activity came to be established here at Rewari, Jhajjar, Hansi, Hisar, Panipat, Karnal and Ambala. In the catalogues of the works of the above two of a number of writers from these and other places in Haryana but unfortunately many of these works are not available today.

In the list of litterateur of Arabic and Persian, the first name is of Sayad Alauddin Panipati. He was in the reign of Alaud-din Khalji and was held in high esteem. He had encyclopaedic knowledge of Arabic and Persian literature and was poet par excellence. He is credited to have written about half a dozen works in poetry in both the languages, but unfortunately none of his works is available today<sup>1</sup>. Sheikh Jamaluddin of Hansi,<sup>2</sup> a contemporary of Muhammad Tughlaq was also an equally brilliant scholar of Arabic and Persian. He wrote excellent verses in both the languages and was author of several works. Sheikh Quth-ud-din of Hansi, a contemporary of Sheikh Jamal was also an equally great scholar. His glass of nectar was Persian. He wrote on Muslim Theology<sup>3</sup>. Almost in the same field, at equal height there stands another scholar from Panipat, Sheikh Sharaf-ud-din Panipati who wrote several books of which the following are very famous :—

*Kitab-i-madan-al' ami Ganj-i-laulfa, Sharbi -Adab-al-Munidin.*— His letters styled as 'spiritual and theological truths' which he sent to his chosen pupils in the form of epistle are found in three volumes (volume-I contains 150 letters, volume II 100. and volume-III 25). It is believed that these volumes were edited by Abul-Fazl<sup>4</sup>. Sheikh Nuruddin of Hansi who was also a great scholar in the reign of Feroze Tughlaq. He wrote several works in Persian on Muslim theology<sup>5</sup>. His contemporary and friend, Ahmed Thanesari was also a learned author of several works in Persian and Arabic, he worked as a letter writer in the court of Firoz Shah<sup>6</sup>.

Sheikh Abdul Qudis of Gangoh (Thanesar), who lived in the reign of Humayun, was a great author and scholar. He wrote a learned treatise in Persian on Muslim

1. Barni, Zia-ud-din *Tarikh-i-Firozshahi* (Bib-Ind), P. 350.
2. (Tr. Jarret), *Ain-i-Akbari* Vol. III, p. 411.
3. Ibid, p. 415, *Amir Khusro*, Siyar-ul-Auliya, pp.250-55.
4. For details see Ibid, pp. 133, 410.
5. Affif, *Tarikh-i-Firozshahi*, p. 132.
6. Muhammed B. Khani. *Tarikh-i-Muhammadi* (MS).

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theology which is available in published form under the title Mystical saying of Abdul Qudis<sup>1</sup>.

Hazi Sultan of Thanesar was also a man of great literary wisdom. He was a great poet and scholar. He knew Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian. He was a contemporary of Akbar, who appointed him as a Kirori of Thanesar. He is reported to have translated *Mahabharata* in to Persian. Under the title the Book of Wars, Sultan's contemporaries Ghunhati and Mihvati both of Hisar were great poets who composed their *climans*<sup>2</sup>. His other contemporary were Sheikh Panipati, who wrote a standard work on Muslim theology in Persian entitled *Ghiriyyah*,<sup>3</sup> and Sheikh, Abul Fatah of Thanesar foremost among the wise men of his age, who authored several works not known to us today<sup>4</sup>.

The first urdu litterateur of India, Mohammed Afzal, (1539-1626) was a Haryanvi and he belonged to Panipat. He was a great scholar who had mastery over both prose and poetry. He is believed to have written many works, but so far only one found available is popularly known as *Bikata Kahani*. It is in poetry a sensitive depiction of a lovelorn woman's feelings and emotions who remained away from her husband<sup>5</sup>. Sheikh Jiwan a contemporary of Afzal, who belonged to Jhajjar, was also an equally great scholar. He authored five books: *Fikaba-i-Hindi*, *Mahsharnama*, *Dardnama*, *Khwabnama-i-Panjambar* and *Dabir-nama-i-Bibi Phatima Khatun*<sup>6</sup>. His contemporary Abdul Wase of Hansi was also an equally Urdu scholar who authored the first Urdu-Hindi dictionary<sup>7</sup>.

Mirzafar 'Zatal' (1659-1713) of Narnaul, a great humourist of the court of Aurangzeb was also an eminent Urdu scholar. He wrote very good poems which have been recently published from Lucknow<sup>8</sup>. Zatal's contemporary and spiritual brother

Abduljabil 'Atal' also from Narnaul, as also an equally famous humourist. Unfortunately none of his works is available, although his stray verses are found in several works of the 18th century<sup>9</sup>. Another well-known urdu poet of this period was Imam Bakhsh of Thanesar who wrote *Mazija-i-Nabi*<sup>10</sup>.

1. *Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol. III, p. 417.
2. The work was started by Naqib Khan by orders of Akbar but he could not complete it. Haji Sultan completed it. See Badaoni, *Muntkhab-ul-Twarikh* (Bib Indi), Vol-III p. 118. Sultan was hanged for corruption (1598 ).
3. Ibid. pp. 291-92.
4. Ibid. p. 129.
5. For details see Hafiz Mohd. Shirani, *Panjab Men Urdu*, pp. 208-11.
6. Ibid. pp. 217-19.
7. Mohd. Waker, *Tarikh-i-Nazm-wa-Narsia Urdu*, p. 68.
8. Shirani, See Hafiz Mohd. loc. cit, p. 223.
9. Ibid. p. 230.
10. Ibid. pp. 222-23.

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In Urdu prose Master Ram Chandra (1821-1880) of Panipat, that famous Professor of Mathematics of Delhi college occupies an enviable position. He wrote many learned treatises on different subjects of which the famous ones are *Usual-Jabro mugabila*, *Tazkiratul ka milani*, *Ajabi-i-Rozgar*.

*Bhutnihabg, Aijaj-i-Quran, Usual-i-Illam-i-Hayyat and Ilam-i-Tabi*<sup>1</sup>. Panipat also produced another man of letters in this period-Mir Mehadi Majruh (1833-1902). He was a pupil of Mirza Ghalib. His couplets resemble those of the teacher in content, language and style. His letters which he wrote to the Mirza are also invaluable, having a great deal of literary taste<sup>2</sup>. Slightly later, yet another great figure came on the scene at Panipat. He was Altaf Hussain Hali (1837-1914). A highly gifted scholar of Urdu, Persian, and Arabic, he wrote several scholarly works in prose as well as poetry. Of the famous ones are : *Mazamin-i-Hali* (1881), *Makatib-i-Hali*, *Maqalati-Hali*, *Mawtbat-i-Hali* (2 Volumes), *Musaddas-i-Hali* (1879), *Havat-i-Sadi* (1884), *Muqaddima-i-Sher-o-Shairi* (1893) and *Yadgar-i-Ghalib* (1897). All these works are fine pieces of scholarship, but the masterpiece is *Muqaddima-i-Sher-o-Shairi*. It is truly "an epoch making work,<sup>3</sup> where in a little over two hundred pages, Hali elaborately discussed the art of poetry as understood in the east and west and summed up the essentials of good poetry<sup>4</sup>.

Hali set an example to others by composing poetry on modern lines, in disregard of the old, stale and vulgar style hitherto followed by many Urdu poets and thus rightly earned the title of the "Father of modern Urdu poetry".

Another literary giant from Panipat, and a contemporary of Hali, was Khawaja Jafar Hasan Ansari (1837-1915). A disciple of Mirza Ghalib, he was also a great scholar of Urdu, Persian and Arabic like Hali. Some of his famous works like *Diwan-i-Jafar*, *Ramuza Sakhun Kilida*, *Hikmar*, etc. were published from Ambala. Vahid-ud-din 'Salim' (1867-1928) disciple of both Hali and Hasan, was also a great man of erudition. He was private secretary to Sir Sayed Ahmed Khan for some time. Later he took to journalism. He edited many famous papers like *Aligarh Gazette*, *Muslim Gazette of Lucknow* and *Zamindar of Lahore*. He wrote several books of which *Vaza-i-Istlahat* is very famous. His critical essays compiled in *ifadate Slim*<sup>5</sup> also make good reading.

1. S.Jafar: *Master Ram Chander aur Urdu nasra ke Irtika me Unke Hissa*.

2. Kadiri: S.M, *Urdu Shairi Ka Intikhab*, p. 140.

3. Abdullah: *The spirit and Substance of Urdu Prose under Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan*, pp. 140-141.



4. Latif: *Influence of English Literature on Urdu Literature*, p. 10.
  5. Sandailavi, S.A.: *Abbi Tassurat*, pp. 39-40.
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Vishambar Das Garma of Panipat, a contemporary of Hali, and Salim, was also a famous Urdu poet and Dramatist. His first contribution of *ghazals* was published in 1912. Later he published several plays which have been staged in different cities of Haryana,<sup>1</sup> and elsewhere. Shayam Chander Raushan' (1896-1958) again of Panipat was also an equally famous scholar. He was a great patriot and that is why in his works there is a touch of partiotism, romanticism and philosophy. His famous work are *Kalam-i-Raushan*, *Diwan-i-Raushan*, *Tofan-i-Dil*, *Nara-i-Kaum Farishta* and *Nurjahan* <sup>2</sup>. Another Urdu poet of note was Anup Chand 'Aaftab' (1897-1898), again from Panipat. He was also a great nationalist, and a great patriotic poet. Lal Chand 'Falak' of Panjab influenced his writings. His works include *Jalva-i-Aftab*, *Khyalat-i-Aftab*, *Jakhmi-i-Vatan*, *Joshi-i-Vatan*, *Kaumi Talwar*, *Jajvat-i-Aftab*, *Shamshir-i-Vatan* and *Gem-i-Roshan* (all poetry ) and *Rishi Ka Balabala*, *Drama Sati Ajanana*, *Hindustani Shurma* and *Kaumi An n* (allprose).

There are many modern Urdu writers in Haryana. Of these Khwaja Ahmed Abbas (b. 1914) is most famous. He wrote his first stroy-'*Ababil*' in 1936 which has been translated into 16 different languages of the world. He wrote more than 20 books to his credit, the famous being *Ek Tarki*, *Mausafir Ki Diary*, *Jafran Ke Phool*, *Chirag tale Andhera* and *Andhera-Ujala*<sup>2</sup>.

#### Hindi

The earliest Hindi writer who wrote in what is now *Khadi boli* was Chauranginath, a Natha ascetic from Asthal Bohar (Rohtak). He lived in the thirteenth century. He is reported to have written several books, but now only two are available- *Pranasangali* and *Yayutrabhavanopadesha*. The former edited by Hazari Prasad Dwivedi has been published<sup>3</sup> but the latter is still in the manuscript form<sup>4</sup>. A little later, another ascetic of the sect, Mastanath following his great predecessor contributed a great deal to the cause of Hindi. His *banis*<sup>5</sup> which have been since published are written in chaste and simple Hindi. There is more influence of the local dialect (*Bangaru*) on his language<sup>6</sup>.

1. *Anwar-i-Aftab* (Commemoration Volume).
2. For details see his Autobiography, *I am not an Island*.
3. Ranjit Singh, (*Haryana Aur Natha Sampraday*), *Jana-Shitya*, 1965, pp. 37-38.
4. The original seems to have been lost. What remains today is Tibetan Translation of the Hindi work found in a library at Tanjore.
5. Srikanth Mishra, *Chauranginath Ki Shabd : Khadi Boli Ka Andolan*.
6. Ram Parkash, "*Haryana Ka Nirguna Bhakti Kavya*" *Sapta Sindhu*, March, 1968, pp. 63-64.

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Ishardas, a fourteenth century poet, a resident of Jaginipur in district Faridabad was also an eminent Hindi scholar who wrote several works. His three works *Angadapuja*,

*Bharatavilapa* and *Satyavatikatha* are, however, more famous. His verses are very simple, but his language is greatly influenced by *Avadhi*<sup>1</sup>. For some works from Haryana has been traced so far. Another great literary figure was Surdas, considered the greatest blind-poet of the world. Born at Sihi, a small village near Ballabgarh( Faridabad) in 1487, Sur wrote one lakh *padas* in Brajabhasha. These *padas* are specimens of literary refinement and maturity of style. Unfortunately, most of these literary gems are now lost; the *Surasagara*, now available, contains not more than 10,000 of his *padas*<sup>2</sup>.

In the 16th century, there was a large number of scholars who contributed a lot to the Hindi literature. Of these, Virabhana, the founder of the Satnami sect is the most famous. Born in 1543 at Bijesar, a small village near Narnaul, the saint-poet composed a large number of verses which are now found in his *pothi*, popularly known as *Grantha Sahib*<sup>3</sup>. His brother Jagjiwan was also a good scholar and his *banis* are also of literary value<sup>4</sup>. Maldeva, a contemporary of both the Satnami brothers, also wrote several works in verse, important being *Purandra Chaupai*, *Suradundari Chaupai*, *Veerandada Chaupai*, *Bhojaprabandha*, *Vikrama Panchadauda Chaupai*, *Dhandeva Padartha Chaupai*, *Angana Sundari Chaupai*, *Mriganka Padmovati Rasa*, *Bala Shisksha Chaupai*, *Shilabavani*, and *Vrihadagachariya Gurwavali* <sup>5</sup>.

The 17th century is also rich in its scholarly field. Of these about ten are quite famous. Sundardas, a Jain of Karnal was a great scholar who wrote several works of which *Sunder Satsai*, *Sunder Vilas*, *Sunder Shringar* are famous. His contemporary Banarasidas, another Jain poet of a village in Rohtak district was also an equally well-known scholar. His works *Ardhakathanak* and *Banarsivilas*, are quite famous<sup>6</sup>. Another good poet of this period was Haridaya Ram alias Ram Kavi who belonged to Gharaunda (Karnal). Among his works, *Rukmani Mangal*, *Hanumana natak*, *Chitrakutavilas* and *Dharama Charit* are well-known. Ram Dass from Agroha was also another famous poet of this age. The *Sudamacharit* and *Prabjujaspachisi* are his well-known works<sup>7</sup>. Khadag Sen from Papariwal from Mahendragarh district also

1. See Hindi MSS Survey, Report (Abridged ), Vol. II, p. 79.

2. Many scholars ascribe several other books besides *Surasagar* to Surdas.

3. Ram Kumar, *Hindi Sahitya Ka Alochanatmaka Itihasa*, p. 393. Also see *Pothi, (Guru Grantha)*.
  4. Ibid.
  5. For details see *Hindi Sahitya*, Vol. p. 475.
  6. *Sapta Sindhu*, March 1968, pp. 63-65.
  7. See Panjab *Literature Survey Report, Nagri Prachara Sabha*, 1922-24, Sabha Report, 1912-14, 1941-43.
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composed several works, of which *Trilokadarpana* which described three worlds (*lokes*) was very famous<sup>1</sup>. Achalkirti, a Jain Acharya of Narnaul also, wrote many works, but so far only *Vishapahara* written very contently in verse<sup>2</sup> is available. Another great poet of this period was Rup Chand, a Jain from Kurukshetra. He wrote several learned works of which *Mangalagitapraphanda*, and *Jinastuti* have so far been available. His works relate to Jain philosophy and *dharm*<sup>3</sup>. Another Jain poet Anandaghana, of some village near Sirsa wrote an important work, *Anandaganabahatari Satayali* which throws useful light on various aspects of the lives of the Jain *Tirthankaras*<sup>4</sup>

During the 18th century, there had all we have been a dozen good scholars. Of these, Garibdas of Chhudani was the most famous. Born in 1717, he was a Jat by caste. He contributed a great deal to Hindi literature. His *Hikharabodha* which contains 24,000 *padas* is considered by scholars as one of the *standerd* classical works on the *Nirguna* philosophy. Besides this, he wrote two other books, *Bijaka* and *Ratansagar*. In all these works, the learned author provided a detailed and logical explanation of the dogmas and ideology of the

*Nirguna* sect<sup>5</sup>. By his efforts, Garibdas became very famous and large number of people became his followers. They were called Garibdasis<sup>6</sup>.

Garibdas's contemporary Nityanand, an ascetic of Narnaul also made substantial contribution to the *Nirguna* literature by his *Guru Grantha*, containing his *banis* and a general work *Satya-Siddhantapriksha*. Since he had a very good knowledge of the *ragas*, he placed all the *padas* in the *Satyasiddhantakpraasha* under different *ragas*. Both these works of Nityanand are published. Jait Ram, fourth son of Garibdas, composed a number of devotional songs on various themes<sup>7</sup>. These songs are now compiled in *Garibdas ki Janmakatha*, and *Mula Jamma Ka Anga*. Besides, he also wrote another book *Dhruva Bhakta Katha*<sup>8</sup>. Dayaldas, a contemporary of Jait Ram

1. Sabha Report, VS 2001-03, 2010-12.
  2. Ibid. 1900.
  3. His birth place was Salempur. His father's name was Bhagwan Das and he was Agrawal by caste.
  4. *Haryana Chitra* Nov. 1967, pp. 37-40.
  5. *Nirguna* means beyond quality. A class of saints regard God as devoid of attributes of passions i.e. beyond quality (*Nirguna*). This class of saints has come to be called by this name. For detailed information see Barathwal, *Hindi Kavya men Nirguna Sampradaya*; Parsu Ram Chaturvedi, *Uttari Bharata Ki Santa Parampara*.
  6. Garibdas died on *Bhadon Sudi* 21, 1856 VK (1799 A.D).
  7. The *granthas* have been published from Hyderabad.
  8. The manuscript was given by Bhagwana of Rewari. It is now with Ranjit singh who is working on it.
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and disciple of Garibdas composed *Vicharaprakasha* based on the subject of *advaita*. The book comprises five chapters and found in question-answer form<sup>1</sup>.

Lal Chand Jain of Rewari was also a great scholar of this period. He wrote *Sammed Shikhar Mahatmya*, in praise of the place where 20 Jain Tirthankars got *Nirvana*. His contemporary and another Jain poet, Rai Chand Jain of Ambala wrote *Sitacharita* on the basis of *Jaina Padmapurana*. Another poet Atma Ram of Ambala wrote *Atma Bawani* in verse and *Agyan Timir Bhaskar*, and *Nartatma* in prose. Fateh Chand, another Jain scholar from Kalanaur, a village in Jagadhari wrote *Suktavali* consisting of spiritual sermons<sup>2</sup>.

A little away from Ambala, in the region of Kurukshetra, there were several *deras* of the Nirmalas<sup>3</sup>, a sect of the Sikhs. There lived many poets of deep knowledge of Hindi. Of these, Gopal Singh of Thanesar was very famous. He wrote several works but so far only *Ramachridya* is available. Sant Ram Singh, also of Thanesar, wrote *Vedantapraenottaramala*. The books of the Nirmala scholars were written in a very simple language and their themes are related to their religious philosophy<sup>4</sup>.

During the period under review, Hindi poetry flowered at the hands of a number of outstanding poets in the courts of the Indian princes also. Mukanddas of Palwal (district Faridabad) who was at the court of Raja Karam Singh of Patiala in the later part of the eighteenth century, wrote *Rasasiromani* and *Sarvasangraha*. Another illustrious scholar of this period Bhai Santosh Singh, who was at the court of Raja Udai Singh of Kaithal, wrote a number of scholarly treatises on various subjects. The most important of his writings are *Amarakosha* (Hindi translation), *Nanakaprakasha*, *Atmapurana* (Translation) and *Garvagnitika* on the *Japji* and *Balmiki Ramayana* (Translation) and *Gurupratapasuraja*. His last named book is considered to be a work of great literary merit<sup>5</sup>. Shambhu Das of Charkhi Dadri who was at the Jind court also wrote several works of which *Rukamani-Mangala*<sup>6</sup> is famous.

1. The book has been published by the Matha.
  2. See JHS, Vol IV (1979), pp. 52-54.
  3. *Nirmala* means pure. It is a Sikh order opposed to the Akalis. They do not undergo any rite of purification but simply receive amrita like other Sikhs. See *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. IX, pp. 375-76.
  4. *Haryana Chitra*, Nov. 1967, pp.37-40.
  5. Ibid. pp.37-40.
  6. Dr. Indra Rani Rao; *Rajkavi Sambhu Avam Unka Kavya*; 1986, p.16. other works of Sambbbhu Das are *Jaogan lila*, *Sri Krishan Lila* and *Bhajan Mala*. For more details see the above written book of Indra Rani Rao.
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Nishchaldas, of Dhanana the then (Hisar), born in 1791 in a Jat family was the greatest scholar of his time. He was a great master of *sankhya*, *Nyaya*, *Vyakarana*, *Vedas*, etc. He was a Dadupanthi. Remarkable for his creative genius, this versatile scholar wrote a number of monumental works in prose and poetry in Hindi and Sanskrit. His greatest contribution to Hindi poetry is his philosophical work *Vicharasagra*. The book has been translated and published in English, Bengali and Urdu Swami Vivekananda rated this work as the greatest work on *Vedanta* written in any language within the last three centuries. His two other works *Yukti prakasha* and *Vrittiprabhakar* are quite well known. These are also masterly expositions of *advaita* philosophy presented in a simple form with an admirable lucidity of expression.

There were some efforts at compositions in Haryanvi too in

this period. Of the Haryanavi poets Dedraj of Nangi *pantha* is the earliest. He was born in 1771 at Dthersu near Narnaul. He was a social reformer who preached against social evils of the age through simple verses written in Ahirwati. His *banis* are found in published form in *Dadhraj ke Banioki Pothi*. He is said to have written three other works, too, but these are not traceable so far. Baba Haridas (1807) wrote an interesting book *Raja Ratnasena* in the Bangaru dialect<sup>1</sup>. Swami Ram Swrup of Village Gaura (Gurgaon) wrote several books, like *Krishnalila*, *Rupa Basant*, *Harishchandra* and *Shravaraniira*. He waged a relentless struggle against the social evils through his popular verses. Suraj Bhan of Bhiwani also wrote interesting books *Dulha dhari* and *Mazlum*. In the latter work, the author wrote against the exploitation of the Indians by the British. The Government banned the book and punished the author. Sev datt of Gurgaon (b.1869) translated *Bhavedgita* into Haryanvi under the title *Gitasandesha*. Ahmed Baksh, a Muslim poet of Thanesar composed *Sanga Ramayana*. *Guga Chauhan* and *Sauratha Padmini*.

Haryana's contribution to Hindi prose has also been quite unique. Balmukand Gupta, the father of Hindi prose was born here (1865) at Guryani, a small village in the district Rewari. Balmukand's works are regarded as pioneering efforts in the early modern Hindi prose. He translated a number of famous works from other languages like Bengali, Sanskrit, etc. into Hindi, most famous of them being *Mandela Bhagini*(1889), *Haridas* (1895) and *Ratnavali natika* (1898). Later on, he made original substantial contribution to literature by his learned works like *Shivashamhu Ka Chittha*, *Dilli Bhasha*, *Chittha aur Khatand* and many smaller works, such as *Khilona*, *Khel-Tamasha*, *Sarpaghta-Chikitsa*. etc. Balmukand also made substantial contribution to Hindi Journalism. R.C. Majumdar is right in saying: "Balmukand Gupt of Guryani and his two associates, Amritlal Chakravarti and Prabhu Pandey edited from Calcutta weekly paper, the Hindi *Bangavasi* which was the most influential Hindi newspaper during the two closing decades of the nineteenth century and considerably advanced

1. For a detailed study of Bangru dialect see S.L. Yadav, *Haryana Pradesha Ka Loka Sahitya*.



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the Hindi prose style. Balmukand edited many Hindi papers besides *Hindusthan* and *Bharatamitra*.

Like Balmukand, another great scholar of Haryana was Madhav Prasad Mishra (1871-1907). He also made great contribution to Hindi prose and Journalism. Born at Kungar (district Hisar) he mostly lived at Calcutta. He edited a number of papers and periodicals, chief among them being *Sudarshana*, *Vaishvopakaraka* and *Brahman*. Besides that, he wrote learned essays on various political, social, economic and religious themes. All these essays of Mishra re-published in the *Madhava Prasad Nibhandavali*<sup>1</sup>.

Kehari Kripan (1886-1974) of Bhiwani was also a good writer of this age. His works *Shishupalavadha* on Subhash Chandra's life and *Kamapapati Nehru*<sup>2</sup>, are well known. Vishumbharnath Kaushik (1891-1945) of Ambala, author of *Man*, *Bhikharani*, *Bhisma Galpa-andir*, *Chirtrasala*, etc. was a great genius<sup>3</sup>. Bhadant Ananda Kaushalyana (b.1905), also of Ambala and author of *Buddyvachana*, *Bhikshu Ke patra*, *Buddha aur Uske Anuchara*, *Jataka* (2 parts), is also a great name in the Hindi world<sup>4</sup>.

Dada Lakhmi Chand, Mange Bahaman and Chander Badi are the household names in Haryana. These celebrities of the *saang* lovers were considered the best commentators on the contemporary social life. Their poetic talents charmed and left admirers wonder struck. While Dada Lakhmi passed away in 1949 and Mange Bahaman later. Chander Badi, Maher Singh are *ragni* composer of the modern Haryana. Most of the poetic works are a result of his ecstasy or exhuberance, matter what type of circumstances and predicaments he is placed on. He served in the army and many *ragnis* are based on long departure from home. This oral literature of Haryana further subject of exploration.

The above account shows that the people of Haryana have made substantial contribution to Sanskrit, Prakrita, *Apabhramsa*, Arabic, Persian, Urdu and Hindi literature.

## Paintings, Murals and Calligraphy

During the Seswal period, Some specimens of artistic skill are available. The pottery remains discovered so far carry paintings in bichrome with black or black and white designs, mostly linear and geometric. Not a single piece depicts unartistic

1. See JHS Vol. VI (1974), pp.75-78.

2. Ibid. pp.75-78

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

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touch; whatever done is done by a masterly stroke. This indicates a long tradition of unsophisticated art behind.

In the Harappen period, this art of painting was enriched to some extent. The archaeological remains of their times found from Mitathal and Banawali substantiate this point. Their pottery, for instance, testifies great increase in the quality and quantity of designs. The black painted pots have variety of horizontal or zag-zag lines, there are crosses and triangles with suspended verticles lines, dot loops, deaf-designs and lotus images with stalks are quite frequent. Some decorated designs include cord impressions and incised wavy lines. The terracotta pieces found at Banawali yield richer harvest. They exhibit numerous painted motifs, more common among which are peacocks, leaves, trees, leer, stars, fish, flowers, intersecting circles, checked-board, honey-comb patterns. Some seals, carry pictures of rhinoceros, ibbex, wild goat, unicon a composite animal with a tiger's body and a bull's

horns. In the light of these finds, it may be assessed or considered that those people used to paint these and other such like objects<sup>1</sup>.

The advent of the painted grey ware using people struck some set-back to the art of painting. During Vedic period and epic era, painting was considered one of the useful arts which was necessary to be mastered for any person desirous of receiving good education<sup>2</sup>.

During the Buddhist period artistic activity seems to have received still greater fillip, but unfortunately no works of the artists are available. Same situation is with the later period upto the beginning of the Gupta period. The Gupta period, for instance, is well-known for its painting activities, but so far there is no specimens of this art of this period.

There is ample proof of artistic details of Harsha's period. As per the *Harishcharta* of Bana, Harsha, the king of Thanesar was great painter. His signatures in highly flowery style of writing in Banaskhera Copper plate bears a testimony to this fact. Besides, he was a great patron of artists including painters. Bana refers to a great painter, Viravarma, a friend of his being at the royal court<sup>3</sup>. There were several others whom the king employed on special occasions. At the time of Rajyashri's marriage, for example, painters skilled in the art of painting were engaged to do auspicious scenes and motifs. Bana has given vivid description of some paintings done by these artists. Leaf and plant pictures were painted on whitened clay pots for use in the marriage ceremony; portraits of gods, goddesses and others were painted on walls as

1. Please see, *Banalwali excavations*, pp.10-11.

2. Yadav, K.C. : *Journal of Haryana Studies*, p. 38.

3. Aggarwal, V.S. : *Deeds of Harsha*, p. 35.

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for requirement of the palace. The bridal chamber in the royal palace at Thanesar had its two sides of entrance painted with figures of *Rati* and *Prite*. The *Vasgriha* of Yasomati also had painting on its wall<sup>1</sup>.

The period after Harsha, suffered a heavy set back. There was no court to extend patronage to the painters. The circumstances were not congenial to develop this art; as peace and tranquility was very much disturbed by the new raids.

During the Mughal period law and order was fully set-up. These activities revived to some extent. The central Asian potentates carried a rich painting tradition along with them. As a result, in their *durbars*, in the courts of their feudal nobles and even in general places, this art found some footing once again. A large number of artists who had forsaken it as an unproductive affair took to it seriously in the various parts of Mughal Raj. The great Akbar enhanced the art to greater extent. A para from a historical record is given below:—

"Akbar gives it (painting) every encouragement as he looks upon it as means both of study and amusement. Hence the art flourishes, and many painters have obtained great reputations. The works of all painters are weekly laid before his majesty by *Daroghas* and the clerks; he then confers rewards according to excellence of workmanship, or increase the monthly salaries. Much progress was made in the commodities required by painters and correct prices of such articles were carefully ascertained. The mixture of colours has especially been improved. The pictures thus received a hitherto unknown finish. Most excellent painters are now to be found, and masterpieces worthy of Bihzad may be placed at the side of the wonder works of the European painters who have attained world wide fame. The minuteness in detail, the general finish, the boldness of execution etc., now observed in pictures incomparable, even inanimate objects looks as if they had life. More than a hundred painters have become famous masters of the art, while the number of these who approach perfection, or of these who are middling, is very large. This is especially true of Hindus; their pictures surpass our conception of things. Few indeed in the whole world are found equal to them"<sup>2</sup>.

Haryana being close to Rajasthan where there was a great deal of painting activity and where a distinct Rajasthani style had developed, was influenced by Rajasthani style. Some artists of Rewari, especially at the court of the former Raos in the later part of 18th century, made useful contribution to the art. In their works, the

1. Aggarwal, V. S. : *Deeds & Harsha*, p. 118.

2. Iswari Prasad: *A Short History of Muslim Rule in India*, 1981, page 472.

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nature treated decoratively and portraits in sensitive, dazzling colours, accentuated lines, and brisk movements. They mostly deal with Krishana themes from whom the Raos of Rewari traced their descent. Some artists in this period also showed their skill in painting books. Most of these works are lost. Some are carefully preserved. For instance, two very beautifully illustrated manuscripts of the 19th century now preserved are of *Bhagwat* and *Puran*. They depict Lord Krishana in different poses as also other deities in rhythmical lines. The pictures are in technicolour. But taken on the whole, the paintings show a deficiency of masterly hand.

It is observed that paintings from Haryana, too have not been studied properly as yet<sup>1</sup>. The floral paintings may be seen at Panipat. Buria has preserved in its Rang-Mahal a painted elephant of late Mughal period. Pinjore, too, possesses late Mughal painted monuments.

Religious paintings exist in many temples and tombs at Jagadhari, Chhachhrauli, Ambala, Karnal, Kurukshetra, Kalayat, Kaul, Kaithal, Murthal, Narnaund, Pehowa, Rohtak, Gurgaon etc. Monuments at Panipat, Sonipat, Sadaura, Sohna, Farrukhnagar and Narnaul bear painting including

secular ones.

Birla temple at Thanesar and Kirori Mal temple at Bhiwani are also rich in paintings. Done by masters in modern paintings, these portray pictures of gods and goddesses, sage, seers and depict scenes from *Puranas*.

The tradition of mural paintings was also kept alive in Rajasthani period of paintings. The artists followed the tradition and techniques of paintings the walls and ceilings of their houses, *baithaks* and *diwan khanas*. Their popular themes are historical, mythological heroes, beautiful dance scenes and scenes depicting hunting expedition, wrestling bouts, cock an ram fights, troops on the march enagements and wild life.

Such paintings were found almost in every village and big town. Lt. William Beri in 1840 wrote. "The houses of richer *baboos* are plastered with finest *chunam*, decorated with paintings of various devices in much better taste than is usually displayed on such occasions. Some old *havelis* in Pehowa and *Pundri*, Rewari and Narnaul also give evidence of the presence of a lot of murals there. Unfortunately, not enough care is being taken to preserve them. For instance, the paintings in the Jain Temple at Sonipat are partly lost some originality during the process of renovation.

Interesting murals are also found in a private mansion at Charkhi Dadri. Chandersen, a high official of Nawab Bahadur Jang Khan of this place had an excellent

1. The only attempt made so far by K.S. Kang, *Wall-paintings of Punjab and Haryana*, 1985. It, however, gives details only a few murals from district of Ambala, Kurukshetra and Karnal.

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taste in art and literature, and he got over two dozen paintings done in his *Diwankhana* in 1854-55<sup>1</sup>. The painter was Vazeer Khan who was trained in the oudh school of painting.

These murals have for their themes god and goddesses, important contemporary and historical character scenes from classical literatures and animals and birds<sup>2</sup>. The murals were probably done by some famous artists from outside Haryana; although some local hand is also visible. Paintings of forefathers of Nawab of Charkhi Dadri are lively examples of famous art . The ceiling painted in geometrical designs in lively colours and the lower portions of the ceilings and walls having portraits of soldiers in standing pose and horses, princes smoking *hookahs* and floral designs are the works of the later additions. They are simple in nature.

Murals and wall-paintings in the temple at Mata Mansa Devi near Panchkula form an important part of the temple. This temple contains thirty eight panels of wall paintings besides floral designs painted all over the ceiling and the archs leading into the temple. The drawings of the temple are not of high standard but a great variety of themes is illustrated. There is an inscription in one of the galleries of this temple which can be translated as follows :—

"This chandi was painted by Angad in *samvat* 1870 (A.D. 1813) in the bright half of month of *chaitra* (March). B.N. Goswami professor of Fine Arts, Punjab University, Chandigarh, thinks that these paintings must have been executed by A.D. 1876 at the latest but according to Mira Seth these paintings were done in later half of the 19th century<sup>3</sup>".

A project for restoration of the old wall paintings in Mansa Devi Shrine got under way. The Lucknow based Indian Conservation Institute executed the project which took about an year to complete.

The Haryana Chief Secretary who inaugurated the project, said ICI had conducted extensive tests to evolve the best methods to restore the paintings which are covered with roof, DOT sprays, enamel paints, fungus and efflorescent salts. This project cost Rs. 3 lakh on restoring the 200-year old paintings which are on eight panels and depict scenes from Devi Bhagwat, Durga Saptshati, the *Ramyana*, the *Mahabharata*, the *nakshatras* and *navgrahas*, the marriage of

lord Shiv and Krishana Leela<sup>4</sup>.

1. The fact has been made available by K.C. Yadav in his *Journal of Studies*.

2. *The Tribune*, April 10, 1980.

3. Miss Mira Seth, *Wall-Paintings of the Western Himalays*, 1976, pp. 85-87.

4. A news item appeared in the Chandigarh Newslines, October, 1994.

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ICI Director General, who was present at occasion said the paintings which are some of the best example of the art of the area, had been done on lime plaster with mineral colours, using gum as the medium. In some paintings, gold leaf was used for ornamentation.

He was of the view that restoration of these paintings was a unique challenge to the conservation because these had suffered all types of decay, including flecking of paints, cracks in plaster, scratching and names and signatures by the visitors and crude attempts at restoration with enamel.

The work would involve consolidation of weak plaster, filling of lost plaster, fixing of bulging plaster, cleaning of soot, dirt and other deposits.

Besides the works of the professional artists, the layman who, too, has an artist in him also does this work. His work is called folk painting. The folk murals on the whitened walls in black, red and blue colours and special ritualistic decorations and auspicious paintings during the festivals at the time of marriage, child birth and such like occasions are specimen of



this art.

No doubt, India is a nation of innumerable festivals. Apart from ritualistic features of these festivals, which vary place to place and festival to festival, the elaborate decoration of one's surroundings is one of their major attractions. In Haryana the most peculiar aspect of these festive folk designs which are executed mainly on the walls alone during marriages and festivals, is that apart from their linear base another artistic dimension is aptly added to them by putting these dimensional motifs made of clay.

Today numerous competitions are held in schools and colleges to keep somewhat vanishing art alive. Hence the students use poster colours and other colourful materials to make different designs which normally are based on the existing folk designs.

The *sathias*, *thapas*, *mandanas* and *sanjhi* are some of the specimens of folk-paintings. Though it is crude and simple in forms. Yet it has a capacity for attraction.

The tradition of *sanjhi* though it is on the decline, need special mention. This is observed mainly in rural areas. The culmination of earth, woman and art is depicted on the walls during the Dussehra days when *sanjhi* is observed by the young girls. After digging out the mud-earth from the ponds, the girls prepare small stars and a form of *sanjhi*. Then these articles are kept in the sun for drying up. Thereafter, these stars *sanjhi* is put on different type of colours. Then *sanjhi* is celebrated and worshipped before this form to fulfil the desires in life.

The village girls observe *sanjhi* for a period of ten days around Dussehra. They move out at night with earthen pots (coloured ) on their heads. These pots have holes all around and are lighted with *diyas* (earthen lamps) placed in them. This presents a

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lovely scene. The boys try to break the painted earthen pots which the girls try to protect. On the Dussehra evening these earthen pots with lighted *diyas* inside are floated in ponds. The lighted *diya* symbolises Sita (purity) while the boys represent *rakshasas* (evil powers) from whose custody Sita is released.

Some old village panchayat *ghars* or *paras* or *chaupal* serve as a institution of considerable importance in the life of villagers. Some of the older *chaupals* have on the walls crude and stylised paintings of Lord Krishana, Lord Rama, the Pandavas, Sravan Kumar, tigers and horses, elephants and railway trains. For instance, a *chaupal* at Meham bears a chariot-drawn by horses, painted on its walls.

Located on the Kosli-Rewari road via Jatusana, Gurdiani's 150 odd *havelis* with beautiful engravings on them remind one of its rich cultural heritage. The *havelis* of Gurdiani (Rewari district) attract people from distant places because of their historic importance and the work of art on them.

The outer walls of poor people's houses are decorated with tiny figures of birds, flowers, animals and human forms. According to sociologists, the wall decorations, for instance, in northern India, are purely, aesthetic purposes and on occasions, to drive away evil spirits.

Gita Mandir is one of the premier temples of this region and also a specimen of Hindu-architecture in modern times. The main deity of the temple is Lord Krishana, whose life-size marble statue is very impressive. Full text of *Bhagwat Gita*, the song celestial, is engraved on the walls around the main temple. Carvings of various scenes from Hindu mythology are configured on the walls, pillars and entablatures which are the highlights of the grandeur of the temple. In the main hall, the portraits of Sage Ved Vyas, Mahatma Buddha, Guru Nanak Dev Ji, saint Tulsi Das, Guru Gobind Singh and Saint Ravi Das are incised on the walls along with their sayings. Another attraction is large size all marble chariot driven by four horses are depicting Lord Krishana delivering the message of the *Gita* to Arjuna. One couplet from each of the eighteen chapters of the *Gita* has been inscribed.

It was at Amin that two inscribed red stone rectangular pillars

were discovered and these are lying in the shrine of Thakur ji on the west bank of Suraj Kund. These pillars are carved on all the four sides and have no sockets for cross bars. The inscriptions on them are in characters of the Krishana period. The depiction of the trading and artistic activities of the people carved on these pillars appears to have been the work of some Sunga-artists.

The art of calligraphy seems to be no more now a days. During the days of Harsha, it was on the zenith. Harsha used to put signatures in highly flowery style of writing. His signature in this style on a copper plate is a testimony to this fact.

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Secondly, during the Mughal days, there was a age of calligraphy. In the tombs and *diwankhanas* some specimens of this art are available. The paintings and calligraphy are still available in the *darghah* (tomb) of Bu-Ali-Qalandar at Panipat.

Calligraphy is an ally of painting in the realm of art. Mainly legible writing can not be described as a specimen of calligraphy which has a form and design in it. A calligrapher must maintain a delicate balance between his mind and hand. Still, the marvel is that it gives no impression of affection or artificial writing. Alas! we have not made efforts to promote in the younger generation, a taste for such vivid, well shaped and sparkling hand writing.

Several sculptures written beautifully in hand by our scholar saints are still carefully preserved in our libraries and art museum. Similarly, calligraphy immortalised in couplets and psalms of some medieval poets should be viewed as an eminent part of cultural heritage.

## Vedic Sites with rich culture

There are many places in Haryana whose cultural treasures still attract the outsiders and create much regard to know more about the past of the state. The places abound in cultural heritage are described here :—

The only land of Haryana is generally regarded as the birth place of the most ancient Indian culture and civilization. It is but natural that it should be invested with great archaeological potential. On the Indian side this tract can probably boast of the largest number of ancient sites noticed in Vedic literature. Some important Vedic sites of Haryana are described here :—

### Manusa

This village now called Manas and located about five kilometres to the west of Kaithal is the site of the town and tank mentioned as Manusa in the *Rigveda*. It is a big village covering an elevation consisting of the accumulation of old cultures. The painted Grey ware, tentatively associated with the *Mahabhart*a sites, and Early Historic plain Red Ware were picked up from the periphery of the mound which in all likelihood conceals much earlier remains.

### Ilaspada

A big old mound by the side of the modern village of Shergarh, about 2 kilometres, to the south east of Kaithal, is believed to be the site of the place named Ilaspada or Ilyaspada in the *Rigveda* and later in the *Mahabhart*a. It is supposed to have got the name from Ila, the first known ancestress of the so called Lunar dynasties.

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The old mound is both high and extensive. It rises to about forty feet from the base and a small Shiva temple has now been built on the top. There is a lake not far from the mound on which pottery and brick bats lay scattered. Bricks measuring 8½"x14" and 10"x14" could also be seen and the slopes of the mound revealed remains of house structures. In the pottery scattered on the surface, the Early Historic painted ware predominated. The priest of Shiva temple had a copper plate piece which although resembling a Kusan coin had been rubbed beyond recognition.

Another *RigVedic* name *Vivasavat Sadana* (the dwelling place of Vivasvat ) is also supposed to refer Ilaspada <sup>1</sup>.

## Kapisthala

The name of present town of Kaithal has emerged from *Kapisthala* which is associated with Vedic text *Kapisthala Katha Samhita*. The town is also noticed by the celebrated Grammarian Panini and others much later by Alberuni. The naming literally means 'the abode of monkeys' and local tradition connecting it with the monkey god Hanuman, is supported by a temple dedicated to his mother, Anjna.

## Assandivat

*Assandivat* or the present town of Assandh lies on the bed of the Dresdvati about 32 km. from Karnal. This important Vedic site finds mention *Attrevā* and *Satapathu Brahmanas* as the capital of the great king Janamejaya Parikṣita, who is said to have performed a horse-sacrifice here. The town retained its importance for long and it has been in *Sutra* literature apart from grammatical works of Panini and others.

A considerable part of the present town stands on the ancient mound from which, at one place, rises to a height more than sixty feet, a circular brickwall eminence resembling the Dhamekh Stupa of Sarnath. The structure undoubtedly represents the remains of a Buddhist Stupa which, in view of its larger sized bricks (10"x14") is not later than the Kushana period. People describe it as the fort of king Jarasandha of great epic but this belief is evidently born of phonetic affinity between the two names.

# Srughana

This place is known as Sugh now. The ruins at Sugh were rightly identified by Cunningham with the ancient city of Srughana on the basis of description given by the Chinese traveller Hiuen Tsang (Yuan Chwang). Srughana was an important city of north India and has been frequently referred to in early and medieval literature.

1. Bhargava, M.L. : *The Geography of Regvedic India*, 1964, p. 55.
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The earliest reference to this city is found in *Astadhyayi* of Panini. An earlier reference to this city may perhaps be found in the form of Turghana mentioned in the *Taittiriya Aranyaka*. Turghana is stated here as marking the northern border of Kurukshetra, the place where gods performed *Sattra*.

The city is mentioned in Pali literature. Patanjali's reference to the name of the city as many six times indicated the premier position of the city in the 2nd century B.C. The city ranks high importance in the *Mahabharata* when it is mentioned along with the famous city of Hastinapura. *Varaha mihira* while describing the regions belonging to Jupiter recounts the *Srughanas* alongwith *Bharatas*, *Snuviras* and others. In the 7th century, a Sanskrit work *Vasavadatta* refers to it which suggests the continued importance of the town in later times. It may have been founded round about 1000 B.C. and developed into a big city during the early centuries before and after Christ<sup>1</sup>.

A more detailed account of the city is recorded by Hiuen Tsang who visited the city in the 1st half of the 7th century A.D. According to him the Suloki Nu, country extended over

6,000 Li in circuit on the Ganga in the east and was backed by the mountains in the north. The capital city was 20 Li in circuit and located on the western bank of the Yamuna. It had been deserted by this time though the foundations of the structures were still strong. There were 5 *Srughanas* housing 1,000 Buddhist monks who engaged themselves in learning and learned discussions, Hiuen Tsang also saw several *stupas* which commemorated the visit of the Budha or enshrined relics of Buddhist saints. He also mentions 1000 Brahmanical temples in the city. The above account shows that Srughana was the capital city of a kingdom extending either side of the Yamuna under the Shiwaliks. Besides, it was an important centre of Buddhism. The city probably lost its importance after 7th century and the name survived in a localized form as the only memory of its former glory.

## **Kurusravana**

In the Rigveda neither Kurukshetra figures in a geographical sense, nor the Kurus in the sense of people<sup>1</sup>. But their existence can be gathered from the mention of such names as *Kurusravna*, *Pakasthaman Kauravna Kauravya* or a man of Kuru people is described in the *Atharveveda* as enjoying prosperity with his wife under the rule of the king Parikshit. Mention is also made of the Kausavya king, Balhika Pratipiya in the *Satapatha Brahmana*. In that period the Kurus were most probably included in the Puru tribe as can be seen from the name. Trasadasyu applied to Kurusravana which means the descendant of Trasadasyu, a well-known king of the Purus. Similarly,

1. Aggarwala, R.C. : *Early History And Archaeologies Of Kurukshetra And Ambala Divisions*, 1955, p.293.

2. Phadke, H.A.: *Kurukshetra : Its Importance, Origin and Antiquity (only a write up)*.

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the Bharatas who appear as enemies of the Purus, later on coalesced with them and formed the people known as Kurus.

The Kurus were the most important people in the age of *Brahmanas* and there is hardly any doubt that most of the important Vedic texts known as *Brahmanas*, and next in importance only to the *Samhitas*, were composed at Kurukshetra. It was, in fact the land of Kurus, for the Kurus alone are chiefly mentioned in connection with it. This explanation, though useful in arriving at the derivation of Kurukshetra from the Kurus, does not help in the problem of the origin of the latter.

The meaning of the word Kuru as given in the Sanskrit dictionaries is a priest or a boiled rice. Does this mean that the people who were later known as the Kurus were originally a class of Bharatas or the purus connected with the priestly profession. Do they refer to the *Vedas* or to the sacrifices ?

The name *Kurusravna* or *Kurustute* found in the *Vedas* would probably support the derivation of the term Kuru after either the *Vedas* or the sacrifices. Further this would explain as to why the *Brahmanas* repeatedly associate Kurukshetra with divine sacrifices. Kurukshetra's other name Brahnavadi would be an additional support to this proposition. Thus, it may be inferred that Kuruvah or the Kurus were the performers of sacrifices and the locality of their association was, therefore, called Kurukshetra.

During the *Brahmana* period Kurukshetra was considered to be chief centre of *Vedic* culture. Sacrifices must have been performed there on large scales for they were thought to be the *dharam par* excellence. It was believed that the Devas attained divinity because of them. The divine sacrifices were thus performed at Kurukshetra and the place was, therefore, known as such.

The *Rigveda* although unaware of Kurukshetra, does not mention a place called Saryanavat which according to the later commentators and modern scholars is to be located at this place. The word occurs at several places in the *Rigveda* and according to Sayana it denotes a district in Kurukshetra. He fixes its location in the back part of Kurukshetra and which also indicates according to him a lake of that name. The unusual consistency of his statement on this point is in



favour of taking the word in the sense of a place name.

Saryanavat is associated with the mythological story of the horse headed Dadhyarch which is perhaps even older than the legend of Purusavas. The legend is further repeated in the *Samveda* and also in the *Atharveda*. It is stated that with his bones Indra slew ninety nine Veritras. Dadhyarch was associated with *Asvins* and *Asvins* with Kurukshetra. It is said that he was during his life time a terror to the Asuras who after his death multiplied and overspread the whole earth. Then Indra

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inquired whether any thing of him is left behind and was told that the horse's head was still in existence, but no one knew where, search was made for it and it was found in the lake Saryanavat, on the skirts of Kurukshetra. Cunningham in his report observes that this may be another name for the great tank at Kurukshetra, and consequently that sacred pool is atleast as old as the *Rigveda* itself.

Even if the modern writer such as H.A. Phadke, does not accept the proposed identification of the Saryanavat lake, the antiquity of Kurukshetra can very well be established on the basis of other literary evidences. In the *Maitrayani Samhita* of the *Krishana Yajurveda* occurs the earliest reference to Kurukshetra. It is here that the gods are stated to have performed their sacrificial session. In its supplementary, the *Satyapatha Brahmana* more details are added. It proclaims their mode of sacrifices as the best and narrates the legend that gods performed a sacrifice in Kurukshetra.

According to the *Satyapatha* and the *Gapatha Brahmanas*, Uddalika Aruna, one of the most prominent teachers of the *Veda* period was a *Brahman* of the Kuru-Panchalas. That the

Kurus are frequently mentioned in the *Brahamanas* along with Panchalas suggest their intimate relationship. But the most interesting information seems to be mythological romantic story of Aila King Pururanas and their celestial nymph Urvasi.

The clear mention of Kurukshetra in the *Satpatha Brahmana*, therefore, helps in tracing the antiquity of the region atleast upto the times of Pururavas, who has been mentioned as king in the *Rigveda*; and who according to Puranic traditions was the first historical person of the Paurava or the Aila dynasty which ruled over Kurukshetra region for several generations.

The Puranic tradition attempts at deriving the name Kurukshetra after the famous king Kuru of the line founded by Pururavas. Time and again the *Satapatha Brahmana* states that the land of the divine sacrifices of Agni, Indra, Soma, Makha, Vishnu and Visvederah was Kurukshetra. The history of Kurukshetra which is known as Dharamaksetra or the place of religious merit. The *Mahabharata* mentions a *Saraka Tirath* in Kurukshetra.

In the *Panchavimsa Brahamana* Kurukshetra again finds mention in connection with Rusama and Indra. The former is said to have run around Kurukshetra and defeated the latter who understood her challenge to refer to the earth proper. The story suggests in connection of Rusamas, who are mentioned as a people in the *Rigveda* with the Kurukshetra region. This receives some support in the *Atharvaveda* where they are referred to along with their king Kausama.

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Equally interesting is the information which this *Brahamana* gives the details about the religious life of the people. It tells that proper place for the Saravata *sattras* was between Plaksa

Prasravna (the source of Sarsvati and Vinasana) the place when Sarsvati lost in deserts. Kurukshetra developed into a great centre of Aryan culture during the period of *Brahmanas*.

Under the Mughals, Kurukshetra continued as a place of pilgrimage. It was made much more accessible during the reign of Sher Shah, with the completion of the G.T. road. It was also during the Mughal period that Kurukshetra developed as a place of religious veneration for Muslims and Sikhs.

Kurukshetra was a great centre of Sufi activity. Saint Hazarat Qutub Jalaludin resided at Kurukshetra and it was here that he is said to have fed an entire army with one bowl of water and half a loaf of bread. Hazart Qutub was visited at Thanesar by Sheikh Chehli an Iranian saint. Sheikh Cheheli died during the course of his visit and his tomb still stands as model of Mughal architecture.

For Sikhs Kurukshetra has become to be regarded as especially holy. Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism visited this place in 1504, making many comments to the then new faith. Guru Amar Das preached at Kurukshetra, as did Guru Har Govind and Guru Har Rai. The ninth Guru Teg Bahadur also visited Kurukshetra, hence by this time had a number of Gurdwaras, or temples, commemorating the visits of earlier Gurus. It is widely believed that Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth Sikh Guru visited Kurukshetra. In any event by the close of Mughal period, the region held a great deal of religious significance for Hindus, Buddhists, Muslim and Sikhs.

The Buddhist literature refers to two villages (of Kuru realm) which were said to have been visited by Lord Buddha himself. But these places might be between the Ganga and the Yamuna<sup>1</sup>.

Kurukshetra tank, Sanhit tank and Nabhi-Kamal are the specific place in Kurukshetra which are considered very sacred. At Nabhi-Kamal the Lord Brahma is said to have been born out of a lotus which grew on the *nabhi* (navel) of Lord Vishnu. Visitors generally visit this place in the month of *Saravasana*.

Kurukshetra has been a symbol of sanctity and holiness for centuries. Traditionally, its dust blown by wind or by the feet of pilgrims would take a sinner to *paramgati* (complete communion with God). All who die here attain *moksh*

(deliverance from taking birth again and again). The very thought of living there would rid person of all his sins. According to the *Mahabharata*, Kurukshetra is a *tirath* excellence in all the three worlds.

1. Aggarwala, R.C. : *Kurukshetra in later Sanskrit Literature*.

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Now a days, Kurukshetra is especially popular as a place of pilgrimage during the Solar eclipse when two million people visit the town to take bath in the sacred tanks.

## **Brahm Sarovar (Kurukshetra)- holiest site**

This is a place which is considered by the the people of northern India most holiest place. The people from all parts of the India come here to take bath in the Brahm Sarover. A fair symbol of cultural amalgamation is held here.

Bisham Pitamah lies pierced by hundred of arrows but as the god blessed him with the power to choose the moment of his death, he waited for the time he knew to be most auspicious-*uttravan*.

Those who bathe at the Braham Sarovar believe that not only are their sins washed away but it brings them as much spiritual merit as performing as *Aswamedna Yaga*.

The Hindus and Sikhs take bath considering that the place most sacred.

## **Amin**

Amin is said to be the traditional site of *chakra vyuha*

strategic arrangement of the army of the Kaurvas, planned by Guru Dronacharya to trap the forces of the *Pandavas* led by Arjuna's warrior son, Abhimanyu, during the famous battle of *Mahabharata*. Amin is also known as Abhimanyu Khera or mound of Abhimanyu. Abhimanyu was killed by Jaydratha inside the *chakrvyayuha*. Aditi is said to have seated herself in ascetic abstraction. Here she gave birth to *surya* or sun. The women in the vicinity who desire male children pay their devotion at the temple of Aditi on Sunday.

## Prthudaka

The present town of Pehowa is undoubtedly well-known Prthudaka of the *Mahabharata* and the *Puranas*. The place derives its name from Prthu who was called the 1st king. On the death of Vena, his son Prthu performed the usual funeral ceremonies and for 12 days after the cremation, he sat on the bank of the Saraswati offering water to all visitors. The place, therefore, came to be known as Prthudaka or Prthu's pool.

It is an ancient place of pilgrimage. It is believed that Prajapati created the world and the four *varanas* of Hindus at this place. The place is of great antiquity.

The earliest literary reference to the site occurs in the *Mahabharata*, the name Prthudaka. He is remembered as the first of consecrated kings, lord of both the worlds of men and animals and inventor of agriculture. Evidently, Prthu was an eminent

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ruler who also composed Vedic hymns. The place associated with him has an obvious claim to a hoary antiquity which is supported by archaeological evidence.

## Jyotisar

It is another very important place of pilgrimage. This tank is about 500 feet x

100 feet. Five kilometer west of Thanesar, it is situated on the Kurukshetra-Pehowa road. The old bed of the sacred river Sarswati lies near Jyotisar village in the shape of a narrow canal. At Jyotisar, no relic is seen except a banyan tree which is said to have been there for more than 5,000 years. Lord Krishana is believed to have delivered his message of the *Bhagad Gita* to Arjuna at this place. Pilgrims generally visit this place first before setting on pilgrimage to Badrinath and Kedarnath. *Adi* Shankracharya also visited this place on his way to Badrinath and Kedarnath.

## Sthaneshwara

Presently known as Thanesar, it is identical with *Sthanathirtha* of the *Mahabharata*, with Ptolemy's Batan Kaisara and with Hiuen Tsang's Sa-ta-ni-she-ta-lo, and it is one of the most ancient and celebrated places in India. The earliest authentic notice of the place is by the Chinese pilgrim, Hiuen Tsang in A.D. 634. It is intimately connected with the history of the Kaurava and Pandava brothers.

According to *Mahabharata*, this is the holiest place in the sacred region of Kurukshetra, the scene of Satya Yuga, where "Indira slew ninety times nine varitas and Kuru collected his hosts for an advance towards the Jumna, and where Bhisama, the heroic leader fell pierced with arrows like quills upon the porcupine, and was laid down to die upon on arrow couch",

Here Kuru the ancestor of the Kauravas and Pandavas, spent his allotted time in ascetic abstraction, and "Purusavas having lost beloved Urvasi, met his celestial bride, sporting with four other fair nymphs in a lake beautiful with lotuses". The first Aryan settlement was established here, the ruins of Dilipa's fort can still be traced, and the ground is hallowed by the sanctity of ages. It has the place of precedence in Hindu pilgrimage.

For many kilometres Thanesar, the country, is considered by the Hindus to be the most sacred, and is named *Dharamakshetra* or the holy land. Local tradition ventures to affirm that in an adjoining pool called Kula-Prachin, Mother Ganges bathed to purify herself from the burden of sin which millions had defiled her water. There are many lakes and holy

tanks about Thanesar to which the Brahmans attach extraordinary virtues, which are visited by many thousand pilgrims yearly. Mounds of ruins scattered for kilometres, containing chiefly the remains of Buddhist *stupas* and monasteries.

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As already referred, one of the first Aryan settlements in India was in the tract between the Saraswati and the Drisdawati, the modern Ghaggar, with the capital city at Thaneswar. According to Manu, the city Thaneswar, was called *Brahma-varta*. It was regarded as holy land specially prepared and selected by the great God. It was also named as *Madhya-desha* or middle land. The beauty of this region is frequently alluded to in Vedic poetry.

### Sitaban

It is a village, 10 kilometres north of Kaithal, on the Kaithal-Chika-Patiala road. Siwan is said to be a contraction of the word Seoban or sitaban, the first home of Sita. There is an old shrine of Sita built in the ordinary form of Hindu temple. The shrine is said to mark the spot where the earth swallowed up Sita, wife of Lord Rama, in answer to her appeal for a proof of her chastity.

### Vyasathali

Presently this village, about 26 kilometres west of Karnal, is known as Bastali. It is said that it was at this village that sage Vyasa, the author of the epic of *Mahabharata*, lived; hence this place is known as Bastali. The Ganga flowed underground into her well to save him the trouble of going to the river for a bath, bringing with it his *lota* and loin cloth, which he had left in the river, to convince him that water was

really from the Ganga.

## **Panchpura**

Pinjore is an ancient historical and religious place. It is associated with five Pandava brothers who enroute to Himalayas during their exile, stayed here for some time. The place was then known as Panchpura which was later corrupted into Pinjore. Cunningham could decipher in the worn out letters of Pinjore Baoli inscription, the old name of the place as Panchpura.

## **Sadhurah**

It is said that Sadhaura was camping ground of Sadhus on their way to the Ganga and is the corruption of its original name Sadhurah. This town had been the centre of activity of Banda Bairagi.

The place is also associated with Pir Budhu Shah, a Muslim saint, who helped Guru Gobind Singh in the battle of Bhagni in which all four sons of Pir Budhu Shah were killed. A gurdwara named after him has been built to commemorate his memory.

## **Bastianwala**

Located about 4 kilometres away Bilaspur on Bilaspur-Chhachrauli road, the Panchmukhi Hanuman temple is situated in this village. The temple had an idol of Hanuman with five different images. The temple is said to be one of the three of its



kind in India. It is held in high esteem and a large number of devotees visit it on every Tuesday.

## **Asthal Bohar**

The village near Rohtak is known for its *math* (a monastery of *Kanphatta jogis*). It is a great centre of *Sadhus* (saints). According to legend Pooran Bhagat son of Salbahan of Sialkot, known in Haryana as Chourangi Nath, the disciple of Guru Gorkhnath, came here and founded this place. The establishment of *math* is also ascribed to him and to the same period. After being neglected for centuries the *math* was revived in 1791 or so when Baba Masth Nath came here. Dhuin Chourangi Nath and Kala Mahal are old buildings.

## **Rohitaka**

It (Rohtak) is identified with *Rohitaka*, mentioned in the *Mahabharata*. It was quite possible the capital of Bahudhanyaka, the kingdom Yaudheys. The ancient highway carried the trade of the Ganga valley to Taxila passing through Rohtaka or Sakala.

The ruins of ancient town are found at Khorkrakot or Rohtasgarh, a mound near the present town.

## **Jaintapuri**

The present town was earlier known as Jaintapuri. Tradition assigns the settlement of the town to the *Mahabharata* period. According to legend Pandavas built here a temple in honour of Jainti Devi (the goddess of victory) and offered prayers for success in the battle against Kaurvas.

## **Ramahrada**

Presently, this place is called Ram rai. Ramahrada is a traditional south-west *yaksha* of the Kurukshetra region. It is connected with the mythological story of Parsurama who after annihilation of Kshatrayas, filled five pools with their blood and propitiated his forefathers here. Culturally and religiously this place is very significant.

## **Dharamsthan**

Dhamtan (present name) is corrupted name of *Dharamsthan*, (religious place). This place is situated near Narwana. It is said to be the *ashram* of Rishi Valmik or Balmiki and vanue of *Asvamedha yagya* of Lord Rama. Guru Tegh Bahadur, ninth Sikh Guru, stayed here on his way to Delhi.

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## **Hansdehar**

Tradition connects the place with Rishi Karadam who practised penance (tapsaya) here for many years. His son Kapilmuni took birth and composed *Sankhya Shastra* here. Its name is said to have been derived from tradition that Brahma came here to attend the marriage of Karadam Rishi on the back of a *hans* (goose). The sacred Saraswati is said to have flowed by the place and *Pandavas* came here and offered pindas to their forefathers.

## **Kaplayat**

Kalayt is located on an old mound and is an ancient place associated with Kapilmuni. Hence he (Kapilmuni) is said to have delivered a discourse of *sankhya shastra* to his mother Devbhuti. *Mahabharata* and *Vamana Purana* referred to a *tirth* known as Kapila Harda popularly known as Kapilmuni *tirth*. According to legend Raja Salivahna who got cured of his skin diseases here, got temple built here.

## **Sarpdevi**

This place is possibly the site of Sarpadevi or Sarpidahi referred in *Mahabharata* and *Vamana Purana*. It is associated with snake-sacrifice of Janamejaya son of Parik- shit. The

latter lost his life in the struggle against the *Nagas* of Taxila which was later avenged by his son Janamejya, symbolised in the epic tradition of Sarpasastra (snake sacrifice) which possibly took place at Sarpdevi.

## Apeleva

Palwal is identified by the Hindu Pandits with the apeleva of the *Mahabharata*, of Pandava kingdom of Indraprastha. Tradition associates with the same period the high mound of old site of Aharwan.

## Agroha

Agroha has been a famous place in the history of Haryana. It is situated about 20 km. north-west of Hissar. Agroha takes its name, according to tradition after king Agra, the progenitor of the Aggarwals. A fort of the mound is still believed to be the residence of king Agra.

The fort on the top of the mound is pointed to be the residence of king Agra. The name Agroha, however, can certainly be said to be a corruption of the old Sanskrit name *Agrodaka* which is met with in the *Mahamayuri* and on the old coins found from here. Barnett gives another derivation also : *Skt Agra-rodhaka-Pkt. Agga-rohaya-Agroha*. But the derivation from Agrodaka seems to be more convincing because of the literary and numismatic evidence. Agrodaka lay on the trade route, from Taxila to Mathura in ancient times.

In a Tibetan version of the Vinaya of Mula-Sarvastivadians (Dulva. III. 62a) Buddha is stated to have lived at "bab chu rab-tu-bzan-mo'i Gramdu" (=on the bank of the River Excellent). Przyluski thinks that the Tibetan translators had before them probably the original Sanskrit word 'Agrodaka'. The place mentioned as A-Kia-

Lou-t' o (Agroda) on Tehe Mang's journey from Sakala to Rohitaka( =modern Rohtak) is also very probably our Agrodaka. A-riguttarapa and Aggalapura found in the Vinaya and mentioned in the itineraries of Mendhaka and Revata are the distortions of the place name Agrodaka according to Przyluski. Barnett corroborates Przyluski's identification of Aggala-pura with Agrodaka, but on different ground. He thinks that Aggala-pura signifies "Town of Aggalas" and that Aggalas is synonymous with Aggacha-janapada of the coins found from Agroha. Barnett takes both the names, Aggalapura and Aggodaka to be the names of one town, i.e. Agroha. Agrodaka itself, however, seems to be a derivative name meaning a water-store or tank at Agra which may have been the original name of the place. This Agra may be identified with Ptolemy's Agara.

From the word agacha of the legend 'Agodaka Agacha janapadasa' found on Agraha coins. Barnett traces the existence here of an oligarchic tribal state of the Agacha *janapada*. He derives Agacha from Sanskrit agra-tya or agrat-tya meaning 'the inhabitants of Agra'. On another group of Agroha coins, Barnett read the legend as 'Agacamitrapadabhisthayinam' meaning ' (coins) of the rulers (or ruler) of the allied state of the Aggacas' and held that "it is possible that the Aggacas may have been admitted into the confederation which was under the hegemony of the Salvas. Another possibility is that they had formed a league with their neighbours the Sibis". Barnett identified the Agras or Aggalas with the Agalasseis, a tribe in Panjab, who fought fiercely against the Greeks, as we learn from Quintus Curtius, and when they could not resist they burnt their houses and thus killed their women and children. It was learnt from Diodorus (XVII 96) that Agalasseis were a tribe in the neighbourhood, the Siboi, i.e. the Sibis who dwelt in and around Shorkot in Jhang. In Alexander's time, both the Sibis and Agalasseis were large tribes who probably occupied spacious areas extending far beyond Shorkot and Agroha and possibly included between them region (part of the Montgomery district) which separates Jhang from Hissar. According to Barnett the name Agalasseis itself supplies some evidence as it was probably translated from the common word Aggalso or Aggalase, a nominative plural from Aggala in Pali.

The Mendhakavadana acquaints us of the expansion of Buddhism in the the north-west including Agroha. We learn from the Chullavagga that Aggalapura and the Audumbara capital were recognised as the strongholds of Buddhism in the north-western regions. Jainism is said to have been propagated here by the Jain monk Lohacharya (A.D. 14-38).

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Coming down to the archaeological history of Agroha which has been revealed to us through the excavations conducted here by Rodgers and Srivastava and the coins discovered at and around Agroha. We may say that the town was probaly founded before the fifth century B.C. and has since then remained occupied almost continuously. Srivastava's persistent excavations in 1938-39 of the high and extensive mound immediately to the south of the road brought to light a punchmarked coin and one coin each of Atialkidas, Appolodotos, Strato and Amyntas ( all in one vase), a hoard of 51, mostly rectangular coins of the Agacha janapada, in another vase, a clay seal with the Brahma legend in two lines (1. Pavanesa Rudra, 2. dharma? ) below the bull (palaeographically ascribable to 2nd-3rd century A.D.) and bearing marks of severe burning besides terracotta and copper objects, fragments of stone sculptures, plaques, grinding stones, beads of various types, small objects of ivory, horn and shell, a terracotta tablet containing the seven *svaras* in reverse order.

Srivastava's excavations revealed that the town was a well planned and prosperous one. Discovery of the Kushan and Yaudheya coins, bricks with human heads having typical hair styles, belonging to the Gupta period, a terracotta plaque with Visnu's image, terracotta seals and sculptures (now in the Gurukul Museum, Jhajjar) and the Mahisasuramardini figures, broken Varaha sculpture and Kubera image described

by Srivastava provide us the concatenations upto the time Samantaveda whose coins are also reported to have been found from here. The relics recovered from Agroha indicate the influence of Bhagavatism during the Gupta and early medieval period preceded by Saivism, Buddhism and Jainism during the rule of the Indo-Greeks and the Kushanas in the early centuries of the Christian era.

## **Tosham**

On the top of the hill, there is an irregular plateau covered with Jungle growth. There are platform and ponds, some of which contain little water. These water ponds lie along the eastern border of the rock, and carry scenes like Pandutirth, Surya Kund, Vyas Kund and Kirkara Sarovar. The very name Tosham is suggestive of its derivation from Sanskrit word. People also associate it with legendary Pandavas and claim that there was Topobhumi where sages, in olden times, observed penance.

## **Sairishaka (Sarsuti) (Sirsa)**

It is said to be one of the oldest places of north India and its ancient name was Sairishaka, which finds mention in *Mahabharata*, Panini's *Ashatadhyayi* and *Divyayadan*. In the *Mahabharata*, *Sairi Shaka* is described as being taken by Nakula in his conquest of the western quarter.

During the medieval times, the town was known as Sarasuti. It has been mentioned as Sarasuti by a number of medieval historians.

## **Guru-Gaon**

Gur gaon was settled by Guru Dronacharya during the *Mahabharata* era. It is also considered as sacred place.

## **Ferozpur-Jhirka**

Nestling in the green Aravallis, the name of Ferozpur Jhirka in Gurgaon district is associated with a temple dedicated to Lord Shiva. The temple is the site of many annual congregations where the Hindus and Meos assemble to mark the celebrations of the Pandavas offering obeisance during their exile, and two Meo brothers taking refuge here after a hot chase by the British. The former were spearheading the fight against the alien rule in Mewat.

A quiet spring flows here and its source is not known. The sound *jhir jhir* of the spring lent its name Jhirka, to the town's first name Ferozpur. Hence, the name of the town is suggestive of communal harmony.

The cave where the Pandavas are believed to have stumbled on to a 'Shiva linga' is located in the main temple complex.

## **Dhankot (Tahsil Gurgaon)**

The village lies 11 km. west of Gurgaon on Gurgaon-Farrukhnagar road. Tradition has it that milk was supplied from this place to Guru Dronacharya and his pupils at Gurugram, now known as Gurgaon. It is also identified as Jhulli Kottiha (of the Buddhist literature) and was visited by Lord Buddha.

## **Saiyad (Tahsil Gurgaon)**

This site lies 3 km. west from Gurgaon on Gurgaon-Dharmpur road. Traditionally this site is believed to be the residential place of Guru Dronacharya and his pupils,

## **Atta**

This village is situated 5 km. east of Sohna on Sohna-Hathin road. The archaeological fields located at the site show that it probably had been an important centre of art and architecture in the time of Gurjara-Pratiharas.

Two beautiful icons-one representing Uma Maheswara seated on Nandi of early medieval period and the other representing Adinath (the 1st Jain Tirthankar) of medieval period have been found at the site. It has also yielded early historic pottery and late medieval.

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## **Yugandhari**

Jagadhri is thought to be a relic of the old Yugandhari", the king of the Yugandharas<sup>1</sup>. The Yugandaras have been mentioned by Panini as a tribe, that was a constituent of the Salva Republic according to the Chandraravriti. Yugandhara stands for (1) the name of a warrior who fought on the site of the Pandavas and attacked Drona and was finally killed by the latter, (ii) a people; (iii) a place or a mountain. As a mountain, Yugandhara has been referred to in some Buddhist texts also. It, therefore, seems probable that the name Yugandhara was used as region inhabited by a tribe of that name. As per Buddhist texts, the region of the Yugandharas is stated to have been situated on the west bank of the Yamuna and south of Kurukshetra and is called a gateway to Kurukshetra.

## **Asika**

Local tradition, however, attributes its foundation to Anangpal, the Tomer King of Delhi, who ruled during the 12th century, A.D. Possibly the town was destroyed earlier and refounded by Anangpal. An inscription dated V.S. 1224 and belonging to the Chahman king Prithvi Raj-II (now in the Royal Scottish Museum) mentions the name of the town as Asika( Hansi).



An important medieval monument is the shrine of *Char-Qutbs* colloquially called *Chahar Qutbs* which is located in an enclosure, to the west of the town. The shrine is more than 800 years old and is a resting place of four divines of the Chistia order of Sufism; Sheikh Jamal-ud-din Ahmad Hanswi; Sheikh Burhan-ud-din Sufi; Sheikh Qutb-ud-din Munawar and Sheikh Noor-ud-din. These divines held an important place in the annals of Muslim mystics and saints are considered among the saints of high rank. Jamal-ud-din was the son of Hamid-ud-din and nephew of Niamat Ullah. On his father's death he was given the administration of Hansi, but he preferred to religious devotion. He became the disciple of Baba Farid who came here from Pak-Pattan (Pakistan) and lived here for 12 years.

The other tombs and temples which need be mentioned, are Lakhi Banjara tomb near Char Qutbs, tomb of Begum Skinner, *smadh* of Baba Jagan Nath Puri, *Smadh* of Hansa Nath, temples of Kayamsar tank, Chowpattis temple, Kali Devi temple and a Shiv *mandir*.

On January, 1982, the images of many Jain *Tirthankars* - one thousand years old-were recovered from the debris of the mound of the fort. These are made of *Astadhyai* steel. These idols have been placed in Digamber Jain temple, on Hissar-Hansi road. This shows that this place had been a great centre of Jain-thinkers.

1. *Journal of Haryana Studies*, July, 1971, p. 1, write-up written by Devindra Handa.

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A *urs* is held on the place of Char Qutbs every year. Many devotees participate in the *Urs* celebrations from Rajasthan, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh. Many Muslims came from Pakistan to attend these *urs melas*. A special thing is that

Hindu and Sikhs also participate these *urs melas* in a large number. This conveys a message of harmony and cordiality among the people of different faiths and creed.

## **Interaction with the culture of other areas outside the state**

There is not much difference between the culture of Haryana and that of the areas adjoining with Haryana. The people of Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Punjab and Himachal Pradesh mix frequently among themselves and share their cultural outlook.

Kumbh at Allahabad is considered very sacred. The people visit in mid of January at the Kaveri river for taking bath at Khumb mela for religious importance. It is believed that bathing there gives deliverance from birth again and again.

Hardwar carries world wide importance religiously. The people from all over India visit and take bath from time to time. Likewise, the people of Haryana also visit this place and offer obeisance there.

The *Dham* of Mata Vaishnoo Devi is considered very famous throughout world. During Navratras people from Haryana offer dedicated worship and have *darshan* at the famous shrine of Mata.

Just 11 km. from Ajmer lies a hamlet called Pushkar ji where Brhama, the creator of the universe, lives in a serene temple-the only one of its kind in the world. For centuries, a great fair has been held here every year on *Kartik Poornima*. It attracts people in thousands, the people trade, relax, worship and wash their sins away in the holy lake in front of Brahma's temple.

According to *Padam Puran*, after creating the universe, Lord Brahma got on his swans flew around. The world searching for a suitable place to perform *yaga*. He finally selected Pushkar as the most appropriate site for rituals.

The people from southern Haryana also visit Pushkar and share their dip in the lake there.

The Sufi Saint Chisti Dargah at Ajmer is a place of veneration for Muslims. From time to time, the Muslims of Haryana visit Ajmer and offer *chadars* at the *dargarh* of Chisti.

The followers of Gugga, mostly Hindus from southern Haryana go to the grave near Dadrewa (Ganga Nagar district in Rajasthan) in the Bagar tract which he is said

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to have ruled over. He was a basically Chauhan Rajput and his proper name was Gugga Bir. The Muslims also flock to his shrine and his name has been altered to Gugga Pir, while in the opinion of many, he himself became a Muslim.

The day of Gugga is observed on *Bhadra* (August-September). The people usually wear yellow clothes during worship. They search about the holes that might contain some snakes and pour on it *kachi lassi* (diluted milk) and *sewain*.

Every year the people, particularly Sikhs & Hindus gather at Anandpur Sahib (Ropar district) the birth-place of the *Khalsa* in the month of March. The Sikhs from Haryana also visit this occasion.

Shaheedi Jor Mela is held at Fatehgarh Shib in Punjab. The procession started from Gurdwara. The procession with *Panj Piaras* move towards Gurdwara Jyoti Saroop where the Sahibzadas of the tenth Guru Gobind Singh were cremated.

*Kirtan jathas* from various parts of Punjab and Haryana recite hymns. *Gatka*, a traditional dying sport, is also performed. The pilgrims pay obeisance to Mata Gujri, the mother of Guru Gobind Singh, who was also arrested here along with Sahibzadas and was kept in (*thanda burj*) the cold dome where she breathed her last after the martyrdom of *Sahibzadas*. Both Hindus and Sikhs assemble here to mark the commemoration ceremony.

## **Sacred place of Jhambha Jee**

## **(Mokam) Rajasthan**

Jhambha jee believed to be an incarnation of Vishnu is worshipped by Bishnois. He was born in 1485 at Pipasar in Bikaner. When a lad of 5 years, he used to take his father's herd to water at the well and had for each head of cattle a peculiar whistle, when 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. The day, a man, 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 on foot, but gallop 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 then saw him for the first time. The bewildered Udaji exclaimed Jhambha Jee (Omniscient) and henceforth the boy was known by this name.

His main preachings were not to harm animals and trees. The birth anniversary of Jhambha Jee is celebrated by Bishnois in temples dedicated to him. The place of pilgrimage of Jhambha Jee is at Mokam, a small village at a distance of 16 kilometres from Naulkha Mandi in Rajasthan. The Bishnois of Haryana consider this place sacred and visit there time to time to pay obeisance.

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## **Iconography and Hindus**

From the very ancient period the Hindus are idol worshippers. Idol is a part and parcel of their life. Recently many excavations also support this view. In every Hindu home, one can see idols of their gods and even Sikhs

maintain images of Sikh *Gurus*. The people get moral and spiritual power from these images.

As per Swami Vivekanand, the "images are aids to gathering our wayward minds, devices for imbibing ourselves with the higher attributes through lore, tradition and association and their contemplating the idols and attributes we imbibe them".

## **Haryana as Karam Bhoomi and Veer Bhoomi**

The people of Haryana have been the toilers since the pre-historic period. They made their way by dint of hard work to the zenith of glory. The motto has, been for them "work is worship".

Haryana is a land of warriors and martyrs. They have been holding a sword in one hand and in other hand they have a tight grip the plough for keeping this land ever verdant.

The martial traits of the people brought laurels for the state. It has been the arena of wars. The *Mahabharata* war was fought here at the battle field of Kurukshetra. The *Mahabharata* was fought for the highest values of righteous which gave to the region world wide fame because of profound and sophisticated thought expounded in the holy *Bhagwat Gita* by Lord Krishana recited to the quivering Arjuna. This profound philosophy became the foundation of Indian culture and thought.

The region has been the scene of many a war because of its being a straight way from north-eastern side. As years roled by, successive streams of Huns, Turks and Tughlaqs invaded India and decisive battles were fought on this land. At the end of 14th century, Temur led an army through this area to Delhi. Later, the Mughals defeated the Lodhis in the historic battle of Panipat in the year of 1526. Another decisive battle was fought in the year 1556 at this very site, establishing the supremacy of Mughals for centuries to come. During the Second Battle of Panipat, the role of Hemu Dusr of Rewari carries much significance. He fought against the Great Akbar and died a heroic death in the battle field.

The Mughal ruler, Aurangzeb, was a great despot and unjust ruler. The Satnami Sadhus, the followers of Rahdas Chamar, fought against injustice of the ruler and they did not show their backs, rather they were cut to pieces near Narnaul.

During the period of later despotic Mughal rulers, the Jats of Ballabgarh- Faridabad belt fought gallantly. The Rajputs being a warrior community and martial race also laid down their lives against the Mughals.

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Towards the middle of 18th century, the Marathas had established their sway in Haryana. The intrusion of Ahmed Shah Duranni into India, culminating in the Third Battle of Panipat in 1761, marked the end of the Maratha supremacy and the rapid decline of the Mughal empire, leading ultimately to the advent of the British rule.

Indeed, the history of Haryana is the saga of the struggle of verile, righteous, forthright and proud people. From ancient times, the people of Haryana bore the main brunt of invaders and foreign hordes with their known traits of bravery and valour. They survived many upheavals, upholding the traditional glory and greatness of land to this day.

The epoch-making events of yore, the martyrdom days, war of Indian Independence of 1857, are praiseworthy and notable. The Jat Raja Nahar Singh of Ballabgarh laid down his life in the national struggle. He rather lost everything for the sake of country-secondly, Rao Tula Ram of Rewari, being the hero of 1857, gave his life for the freedom country. Many Ahirs fought the Nasibpur Battle near Narnaul and reddened the earth with their blood. This incident cannot be forgotten.

Many Muslim rulers such as Abdur Rehman Khan of Jhajjar laid his life for the cause of the nation. Abu Kalandar of Panipat played his patriotic role in the war of independence. Hukam Chand Jain of Hansi died as a martyr.

The great sacrifices in the freedom struggle, and the display of outstanding valour, unflinching courage and heroism in

recent years are all in keeping with the character of this land of action. Bold in spirit and action, Pt. Shri Ram Sharma struggled very much in the national movement. The essence of this point is that the people of Haryana have formed a bulwark against the forces of aggression and anti-nationalism.

Now-a-days, the people raise memorials for the past heroes. They celebrate the martyrdom days of the heroes. These things carry a historical significance to infuse national and patriotism among the youths of this land. The military persons also laid down their lives in the wars fought against Pakistan and China. Their sacrifices are memorable.

As already alluded to, that this region is littered with ancient battle fields like Kurukshetra, Taraori, Panipat, Kunjpura and Karnal. Nasibpur was a battle field during 1857 where the forces of Rao Tula Ram faced the British forces gallantly. That is why it is *Karamaksetra* and *Dharamaksetra*, the land adored with libation of blood and the region requiring an immense sacrifice on the part of the people.

## **Significance of bangles in the life of woman**

The importance of bangles in the life of a woman is very much. It accords married status to a woman. After marriage mostly the women wear colourful bangles

which carry the cultural importance in the society. There are many occasions on which the married ladies change their bangles. Karva Chauth is considered a festival; every married woman changes her bangles and keeps fast for the well-being and long life of her husband. As per the Hindu custom a married woman breaks her *suhag* (bangles) at the death of her husband and throws them on the pyre of the husband. Then she never wears bangles in life. This is a very ancient custom.

## **Changing secenario in the status of women**

In the modern society the status of women is changing very fast. The old adage "the hearth for women and field for men" has become very old. Now a days, the status of women has undergone a change. In every field the woman has appeared and this change has been accepted by man. Despite this cultural family ties remain as permanent as it were before this change.

Our leaders such as Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru and Mahatma Gandhi ji fought for raising the status of women. The views of Nehru regarding the women are as under:

"Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru did not want Indians to give up their cultural heritage, but he did want them to accept a more scientific and progressive way of life. His support of the Hindu Code Bill, which sought to modernise family relationships and to give women a share in family property 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 women. He did not like that they should be imprisoned in their kitchens. All services, including foreign service, were thrown open to women<sup>1</sup>".

The women of Haryana are struggling to step up their activities in heroic and adventurous in every fields. For example, Ms Santosh Yadav, resident of village Joneyawas of Rewari district, scaled the Mount Everest for two times; first in 1992 and second in 1993. She earned many national awards in this regard. Her rare achievements of becoming the



first and only woman in the world to scale the mount Everest twice has been recorded in the Guinness Book & the World Records in 1994".

The second woman is Mrs K. Malleswari Tyagi who glittered the name of Haryana by weight-lifting in Olympic games in Sydney in 2000. At that time she earned bronze medal. Besides many cash award, the Haryana Government honoured her by giving away the cash award of Rs. 25 lakh. She also bagged many national and international awards in connection with the weight lifting.

1. Ruskin Bond : *Man of Destiny, Biography of Jawahar Lal Nehru*, 1976, p. 114.

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## **Main language**

The people speak Hindi-in a *Bangru* dialect. Their *khas boli* is sweet and simple. The other dialects are Panjabi and Urdu<sup>1</sup>. The Sikhs mainly near Karnal and Pehowa speak Punjabi. The Haryana contributed very much to the Hindi language.

Mr. Balmukand Gupta of Gurdiani village (Rewari district) comes in the forefront in this line.

## **General Characteristics of Medieval Saints**

We have a fairly definite idea of the religious condition of India at the opening of the fourteenth century. Buddhism had practically disappeared, as a separate religious sect, from the land of its birth, and hold of Jainism was confined to a narrow region in the west<sup>2</sup>. Islam was yet confined to a number of scattered settlements in northern India. The orthodox Brahmanism reigned supreme over nearly the whole of India but it has ceased to be a homogenous sect, and was practically a heterogeneous compound of relics of various developments in the past.

One great peculiarity of Indian culture is that it adds to, but

seldom altogether supersedes the old institutions, and faithfully preserves, as far as possible, all relics of the past, even though they are hidden, or changed beyond recognition, by later growths.

The most characteristic feature of the religious evolution of the period was the prominence attained by a number of devotees who are generally labelled as saints or mystics. These medieval saints, who have shed lustre on the age, possessed certain distinctive characteristics in common. They were non-sectarian in the sense that they were not affiliated to, or at least were not leading members of any particular sect, and had no desire to establish a separate religious sect of their own. These saints were free from bondage of any particular creed and not blind faith in any sacred scriptures; they attained illumination by individual exertion through freedom of thought and culture. They did not observe any rituals and ceremonies, nor followed any dogma, and most of them severely denounced idolatry. They condemned polytheism, believed in one God, and what is more important, realized the unity of God invoked by various sects under different manner such as Lord Kishana, Rama, Shiva, Allah, etc. They believed in *Bhakti* (love or devotion) as the only means of salvation, and gave a very comprehensive interpretation and profoundly psychological analysis of the conception *Bhakti*. This may be said to be their chief and permanent contribution to the religious thoughts of India. With them *Bhakti* meant single-minded, un-interrupted and extreme devotion to God without any ultimate motive (*ahaituki*), growing gradually into an

1. Main details pertaining to languages are given in the chapter 'People'.

2. Majumdar, R.C. : *The History and Culture of the Indian People*, 1960, p. 547.

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intense love. This love was akin to love of a man for dear and near ones, and graded by some into clear categories by analogies with human relations, such as devotion of a servant to a master, love between friends, affection of a mother for a child, and lastly all absorbing passion of a lover for his beloved. Brahma, the Supreme God, or ultimate reality, called as Rama, Hari, Krishana and by any other name or abstract idea was the source of all joys, or eternal bliss, and was conceived as the supreme beloved. God, it was maintained, does not live in a temple, but in the heart of man, and physical body was regarded as the abode of all truth.

The realization of all this, and the approach to God through personal love and devotion alone, form the foundation of religious life. It is not, of course, an easy task, and requires purification of mind and body from all sins. All this is hard to achieve without the help of a *Guru* or religious preceptor. But even a *Guru*, however, spiritually illumined he may be, can not lead salvation or final emancipation, which depends on the grace of God. For this purpose a complete surrender to Him on the part of devotees is absolutely necessary.

These saints took into account the whole personality of man and, therefore, did not unduly emphasise his rational faculty<sup>1</sup>. Religious truth and beliefs, they held, were not matters of pure reasons alone, and a man's passional and volitional nature must also be regarded as a valid contributing factor.

These are, in brief, the essential principles preached by these saints, through simple aphorisms, parables, and maxims which brought home to even ordinary and uneducated persons the universal truths which were considered more valuable than sectarian doctrines or scriptural texts. As a rule these saints preached through vernaculars, rather than Sanskrit, for they wanted to uplift the masses. The same noble object led them to do away with the invidious distinctions of caste and bestow special care and attention upon the degraded and depressed classes.

The latitudinarianism, freedom of thought and intense self-exertion in intellectual and spiritual spheres, which characterized the saints, undoubtedly generated in them a spirit of revolt and criticism, and no wonder that in spite of a frank recognition of their greatness, they or their followers were not always accorded a place within the orthodox fold. For this reason, if not for others the followers of many saints

were formed into close sects against their avowed policy. Even when the followers of heterodox sects were accepted or tolerated, in course of time, by the orthodox section, they had to shed some of their characteristics, specially the heterodox views about castes and worship of images.

1. Majumdar, R.C. : *Delhi Sultanate*, 1960, p. 548.

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These mystic saints have undoubtedly leavened the thoughts of Haryana, but it is difficult to determine the nature and extent of their permanent influence on Hinduism. In any case, they failed to modify either the religious ideas and practices or the outward structure of the Hindu society to any appreciable extent.

## **The Rise and Growth of Sufism in Haryana**

The Muslim rulers, by and large, adopted an intolerant attitude towards the Hindus and frequently destroyed their holy places, the Sufi movement soon wove itself with the complex culture pattern of India and helped removing the spirit of mistrust and isolation between two religionists<sup>1</sup>. Some aspects of the Muslim rule on the cultural life of the people of Haryana may be described in the following pages.

During the Sultanate period, Haryana witnessed the growth of Sufism. The earliest sect of this order in the region-the Chistis, named after their founder Khawaja Muinudin Chisti, had their centre at Hansi<sup>2</sup>, which was considered to be the frontier between the Chishti and Suhrawardi jurisdictions.

The most outstanding figure of the Chisti *silsilah* associated

with the region during the thirteenth century was Shaikh Farid-ud-din Masu Ganj-i-Shakar. He transformed the *silsilah* into an organized spiritual movement. After completing his studies in mystic discipline at the feet of Shaikh Qutb-ud-din Bakhtiyar Kaki, he settled at Hansi. Shaikh Jama-ud-din, a descendant of Abu Hanifah of Kufat and the then Khaitib of Hansi was to deliver discourses and pronounce judicial decisions. As informed by Mir Khurd and Abul Fazl, he renounced his office and became the disciple of Shaikh Farid. Consequently, he had to suffer starvation and poverty. When he requested Shaikh Nizamud-din-Auliya to inform Shaikh Farid about his misery, the latter replied, "Tell him that when a Wilyat (spiritual territory) is assigned to anyone, it is his duty to bear its burden". These sufferings rewarded him with high degree of virtue and higher spiritual experience.

Shaikh Jamal was a man of wide learning. His two books a *Persian Diwan* and an Arabic treatise *Mulhamat* bear testimony to his scholarship. The *Mulhamat* is a work of general mystic interest, a condensation of the mystic thought of the preceding generation also bringing out a clear distinction between the externalists and the mystics.

A *zahid* (externalist), he remarked, keeps the exterior clean with water; an arif (mystic) keeps his interior clean from passions. The *Diwan* throws considerable light

1. Nizami, K.A. : *Some Aspects of Religion And Politics in India During the Thirteenth Century*, p. 175.
2. Phadke, H.A. : *Haryana : Ancient And Medieval*, 1990, p. 204.

on the contemporary religious thought and instructions. The Shaikh died at Hansi during the life time of his master.

Shaikh Nurudin, contemporary of Firuz Tughlaq, authored several Arabic and Persian works on Muslim theology. Afif gives an account of Shaikh Nurudin (his preceptor's) interview with the Sultan whose request to settle at Hissar-i-Firuz for the benefit of people, was declined by Shaikh on the ground that Hansi had been his ancestral home and the abode of his predecessors. As fate would have it Hissar suffered due to Mongol invasion while the town of Hansi not only remained unaffected but it offered protection to the people of Hissar who took refuge there.

Shaikh Nurudin was a friend of Maulana Ahmad Thanesari, An Arabic poet whose noble elegies 'the whole of which are copied into *Akhbar-ul-Akhyar* bear testimony to his eminent talents and genius. Shaikh Jala-ud-din Tabrizi, one of the saints of the Suhrawardi order also had short stays at Hansi. Other distinguished men of the town were Maulana Fakhrudin, Kazi Kamal-ud-din, Nizam-ud-din and Samsu-du-din.

Other towns which also felt the impact of Sufism were Narnaul, Kaithal, Jhajjar, Hissar and Panipat. Shaikh Nasiru-ud-din Chiragh told people that prayers at the tomb of Saikh Muhammad at Narnaul resolved all difficulties. The Shaikh was one of the earliest Sufis who accompanied Muin-ud-din Chisti to India. He was murdered by Hindu fanatics. One of the disciples of Shaikh Munawwar, Sayyid Tajudin Saiswar also died at Narnaul. Shaikh Nizam-ud-din Auliya referred to Maulana of Kaithal, as one of the three *denish mands* (externalists), a category of learned men who spent their time in academic pursuits and did not hanker after worldly prestige and glory. Barni mentions Saiyid Majib-ud-din, Saiyid Mugis-ud-din, Saiyid Ala-ud-din and Maulana Jalal-ud-din, Saiyid (of Kaithal), Malik Tajudin Jafar, Malik Jalal-ud-din, Malik Jamal and Saiyid Ali (of Jhajjar) as the celebrated men during the Khalji reign, while at Hissar was Gula Mira, Nobahar, descendant of Shaikh Farid <sup>1</sup>.

Among saintly personages of Panipat there was a Shaikh Shrafu-ud-din(early fourteenth century ) better known by his patronymic Abu Ali Qalandar. At the age of forty he came to Delhi and received spiritual training under the able guidance of Khawaja Qutab-ud-din. His merit as a teacher was recognised by many learned men of his age and for twenty years he was associated with the administration of justice. In

one of his writing he makes the following remarks about himself :—

"Unexpectedly I received call from God, and throwing all my learned books, into the Jamuna, I set out on travel. In Roumelia I fell in with Shams-ud-din Tabrizi

1. Phadke, H.A. : Haryana : Ancient and Medieval, 1990, p. 206.

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and Maulana Jala-ud-din Rumi who presented me with a robe and turban and with many books which in their presence I threw into the river. Subsequently, I came to Panipat and there lived as a recluse".

The passage illustrates how useless he considered the bookish knowledge for God realization and how disinterested he was in worldly affairs. He spent the remaining years of life at Panipat as a recluse meditating on what he had learnt through experience. his correspondence with Shaikh Bakhtiyar-ud-din is an important source of Sufism in India.

A contemporary of Abu Qalandar was Hazrat Khawaja Samsu-ud-din Turk whose teacher Shaikh Ala-ud-din Sabri had advised him to stay at Panipat but he later could not because of his failure to satisfy the spiritual needs of the people. He, therefore, went over to military profession under Balban. Fade up also with his new job, he returned to Panipat at the command of his master and came there in contact with Abu-Qalandar and succeeded in acquiring the friendship of the latter, which continued till his death. He was succeeded by Kabir-Al-Auliya Hazrat Shaikh Jalal-ud-din Makhdum. Saiyyid Ala-ud-din was another noted figure of the town (Panipat), a contemporary of his namesake the Sultan, he was

the author of numerous Persian and Arabic works which are now untraceable but were probably known to Barani who makes complimentary remarks about their author's erudition and scholarship.

Under the Mughals Sufism extended to various other parts of Haryana. Hansi, its important stronghold during the Sultanate, lost its former glory and Thanesar and Panipat emerged as the new centres of the Sufi activity. The details on the lives and works of the Sufi saints are available even today. They exerted much influence on the minds of the people.

Hazrat Jalal-ud-din was the most outstanding Sufi saint connected with Thanesar. In exoteric and esoteric learning he was profound. He was an expert in imparting instruction in divinity. Towards the last year of his life, living in complete seclusion, he absorbed himself in meditation and in reading the Quran. At the age of ninety three, although exceedingly weak and feeble yet no sooner did he hear the call to prayer, he would rise without any assistance, put on his shoes, take his staff in his hand, perform his ceremonial ablutions and stand up for prayers. After this he would go to reclining position on a couch.

Sheikh had visited Agra in connection with the settlement of some matter regarding his *alma* holding in Thanesar. Emperor Akbar visited him, once with Bairam Khan and next with Abul Fazl.

According to Abdul Haq Mahaddis, Shaikh Jalal remained occupied throughout his life in devotion to the Almighty, in teaching and preaching of *Zikr* and *Sama*. He



also wrote a commentary on *Sama* and a treatise entitled *Irshad-ut Talibin*. Shaikh was respected by all, that for eight years he read the whole of the *Quran* everyday and that he never went out of his cell. Another noted personality of the Sufism was Shaikh Abui-Fath, a profound scholar who mastered Islamic tradition under Saiyid Rafi-ud-din, the traditionalist and later shifted to Agra where he shared his knowledge with eager and inquisitive student for forty years.

Haji Sultan was yet another well known figure of Thanesar during Akbar's time. He had undertaken pilgrimage to Mekkah and Madinah. He had a phenomenal memory and could reproduce religious text verbatim. He was one of those eminent scholars engaged by Akbar for Persian translation of the *Mahabharata* known as *Razmname* (or book of wars) and also the *Ramyana* which was begun by Naqib Khan. The scholars of those days praised Sultan Haji for the work done by him. Badoni states that when the first draft was completed 'Shaikh Faiz' was directed to convert the rough translation into eloquent prose and verse, but he did not complete more than two sections. Haji Sultan then revised these two sections, put right the defects in the first edition, supplied the omissions and comparing it word by word with the original, brought out such a point of perfection that not a fly mark of the original was omitted. Haji Sultan was profound scholar, meticulous and painstaking.

It is said that Sultan was charged for killing a cow at Thanesar and was banished to Bhakkar by the imperial order. Khan-i-Khanan, the Subedar of Multan and a friend of Sultan treated him kindly and after the complete subjugation of Muslim allowed him to return secretly to his native place. After the Asirgrh and Burhanpur expedition Khan-i-Khanan made a petition to the emperor for the reversal of Sultan's sentence. The request was granted and the emperor privately ordered Abul-Fazl to appoint him Karori of Thanesar and Karnal. Later on the *ryats* again petitioned against his oppressive rule, and when it was found that the charges have some substance, he was sentenced to death.

In the line of Saikh Jala-ud-din, there was Shaikh Chehli Banauri, a Sufi saint after whom is named the marble tomb in Thanesar. Shaikh Chehli seems to be a popular name who is variously mentioned as Abur Rahim, Abdul Karim or Abdul Razak. Probably he was the spiritual adviser of Dara Shekhoh and also the author of a book entitled *Lives of the Trilis* (Muhamandan saints).

The other towns of Haryana which continued to be spiritually benefitted by the Sufi movement under Mughals were Panipat, Narnaul, Hissar, Sadaura, Jind, Sohna and Safidon.

The earliest known saint of Panipat of this period Shaikh Amanullah Panipati was deeply influenced by the *Advaita* philosophy. He is the author of two works

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*Asad-la-Helis* and a contemporary on the well-known composition *Lavah* of Maulana Jami. Muhammad Afzal, the author of *Vikat Kahani* was also associated with the town. Shaikh Abdul Kabir's son Shaikh Jindapir, a contemporary of Shaikh Jalol of Thanesar, was another noted figure of Panipat. Held in high veneration both by Hindus as well as Muslims, the Shaikh breathed his last at Panipat (1509) and was succeeded by his worthy son Shaikh Nizam-ud-din. Shaikh Man, the disciple of Shaikh Muhammad Hasan, was another noble soul of Panipat who had good fortune of enjoying the companionship of Shaikh Salim-i-Chisti, whom he put the question was it induction or revelation that was the means of your attaining to your goal ? and the shaikh replied, 'Our means is heart to heart' probably referring to the method of the Sufis of the revelation of God, who himself draws them to the mysterious bonds inflaming their hearts with an ardent love for them. Shaikh Man is known as the composer of a work *Ghariyyh* which though not traceable, is supposed to be a polemic on *theology* or rather mysticism of the Sufis. The work seems to have invoked considerable interest for Shaikh Azizullah, another theologian wrote in its reply *Risala-yi-Ainiyyah* wherein the questions regarding essential unity of all things were discussed.

This tradition of Sufi saints and scholars was continued by Sheikh Shah Ali Chisti and Canullah Panipati, both

descendants of Kabir-ul-Auliya, the latter a writer of merit but whose works written in Persian script remained in obscurity and very little of it has come to light.

Shaikh Nizam-ud-din was a noted sufi saint of the Chisti order of Narnaul. His real Guru was his elder brother, Shaikh Ismail. He was one of those few Sufis who had overcome worldly desires, and had chosen a religious life voluntarily and deeply influenced those who came in contact with him. According to Badoni that the Shaikh used intoxicant for the purpose of inducing a trance or mock state of religious ecstasy. He spent a strictly religious life for nearly forty years guiding the needy and also visiting far off places of pilgrimages such as the holy shrine of Khwaja Qutb-ud-din Bakhtyar of Ush in Transoxiana till he grew too old, and celebrated the saint's festival at Narnaul itself.

Akbar, the Mughal emperor, visited the Sheikh in 1578 but was not, however, impressed by the latter. Abul Fazl calls him vaunter of simplicity. At Hissar, there were Sheikh Junaid, Ghurbati and Minndi. Shaikh Junaid's tomb lies towards south of Nagauri gate at a distance of about 300 yards. Ghurbati is supposed to have participated in an assembly of *darvishes* convened by Shaikh Hussain of Khwarazm for the chanting of devotional songs.

Among other contemporaries of Akbar mention may be made of Shahbad, a learned man who translated Badoni's *History of Kashmir* in Persian, Shah Qumaish,

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the son of Abul Hayat, and the seventeenth descendant of Abdul Kabir Jalami and the founder of Qumaishia order, a branch of the Kadirvyas at Sadhaura where lies his tomb and an annual fair is held; Shah Dujan (Jind), a disciple of

Sadrudin Maleri, Dujana a *qasba* in Rohtak district is named after him.

Sheikh Chayan Ladh of Sohana was one of the most renowned successors of Sheikh Abdul Aziz of Delhi. Although in early life due to extreme poverty the Sheikh had suffered hardship, he continued imparting instruction to worthy pupils in Sufi texts such as *Fusus* and the *Naqd-di-fusus*. Towards the close of his life he gained favours of emperor Akbar who consulted him on several important matters of the State. He had his residence in the *ibadatkhana* and was admitted to private interviews at night in connection with prayers and recitations of holy scriptures. He died in 1590.

Another Sufi saint was Mulla Nuruddin Muhammad Safodini. As a poet he wrote under the Takhallus of Nuri and he was called Nuri of Safidon also because he held that place as Jagir for sometime. He attained distinction for his mastery in geometry, exact sciences and astrology. He had a comprehensive knowledge of philosophy and rhetoric and was a man of pleasant disposition. A close associate of emperor Akbar, he received from the latter the title of Tarkhan. In 1586, he was appointed by Akbar as a trustee of the tomb of Humayun in the imperial capital.

Along other Sufi saints of Haryana who in the succeeding ages continued the propagation of their creed and worked for the moral generation of the people were much noble souls as Ismail Shah (Hissar), Abu Shekur Silm and Shaikh Doda Sahib(Sirsa), Muhammad (Dadri), Gaus Ali Sahab and Maulvi Ahmadullah (Panipat), Shaikh Muhammad (Ambala), Shaikh Abdul Uddus (Mahendragarh) and last but not least, Ghulam Kadar Jilsani of Rohtak who brought about a happy synthesis of Advaitism, Vaisnavism and Sufism<sup>1</sup>.

Historically, Sufism was a religious system which in the course of its development had imbibed several beliefs which are essentially of Hindu origin and which, in one form or another, were already familiar to the Hindus and the majority of Indian Muslims converted from Hinduism, who came into contact with the great Sufi teachers. It is not strange, therefore, that in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries it came to be a common practice with the bulk of Indian Muslims to be attached to some religious preceptor, usually a Sufi, just as the Hindus considered the guidance of a Guru to be essential for one's spiritual salvation, so that almost every religious minded Muslim linked himself up with one Sufi

Silsila (chain) or another as a *sine qua non* of respectability and religious awareness"<sup>2</sup>.

1. H.A. Phadke : *Haryana : Ancient And Medieval*, 1990.

2. Majumdar, R.C. : *The History and Culture of the Indian People*, Volume-VII, 1974, p. 665.

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## **A General View of Sufism and its impact**

The Muslim mystics or Sufis were men of deep religious feelings, who led a ascetic lives and laid emphasis on the practices of self-discipline as preparing the human for the intuitive knowledge of God<sup>1</sup>. They soon developed loving devotion to God with an element of ecstasy, and belief in immense of God in the sense that all is in God. A further development, is to be found in the doctrine of '*fans*', the annihilation of self, which means the annihilation of human attributes through union with God. They believed in soul, a spiritual substance, different from the body but akin to the universal soul. These were regarded as heretic doctrines and many Sufi preachers had to sacrifice their lives for the sake of their faith, though they regarded themselves as devout Muslims.

The Sufi doctrine was not only widely propagated in the Islamic world but also further on Indian soil. Nizam-ud-din Auliya was one of the greatest Sufis of the Chishti order in India and a mighty spiritual force. He laid stress on the element of love as a means of the realization of God. The love of God implied, in his view, the love of humanity, and this ethical idea was strongly inculcated by him in the hearts of his disciples. He had a deep attachment to the idea of

universal love. Therefore, the Sufis regarded the service of humanity as a part of mystic discipline.

It is hard to believe that medieval mysticism could owe much to the direct influence of orthodox Islam. It has been suggested that the somewhat heterodox views, beliefs and practices of the Sufi sect of Islam had a great influence over the medieval saints<sup>2</sup>.

There are undoubtedly some striking common features between the two, in particular the stress on the approach to God through love, intellect and intellectual life being regarded not only as valueless but almost as a positive hindrance. Among other similarities may be noted :—

- (i) Physical exercise like restraining breath;
- (ii) Services and submission to Pir or Guru;
- (iii) Recitation of sacred words;
- (iv) toleration of other religious; and
- (v) belief in union with the Supreme Being through Bhakti or love.

The general liberal and unorthodox attitude regarding rituals and ceremonies is also another point common between them. It has been pointed out that not only an ideology but also in the poetic representation of the same.

1. Majumdar, R.C. : *The History and Culture of the Indian People*, Volume VI, 1960, p. 551.

2. Ibid. Volume VI, p. 553.

# **Bhakti Movement and its impact even today**

According to ancient Hindu thought salvation or freedom from bondage of birth and death, which is ultimate end of human life, can be attained by three means, namely; *Janana* (knowledge), *karma* (action) and *Bhakiti* (devotion). During the period of Sultanate of Delhi, a series of Hindu religious reforms which emphasized the last, namely devotion, which became known as *bhakti* movement<sup>1</sup>.

The history of the movement goes back to the time of great reformer, Shankaracharya who successfully combated Buddhism and gave Hinduism a common solid philosophical background. He established a logical monistic system and laid emphasis on the first of the three methods of attaining salvation, namely, knowledge. But this failed to evoke hearty response from the common people. Anxious to attract the popular minds towards Hinduism and make it living and active force in the life of common people, our religious thinkers of the medieval age laid stress on the third means, namely; *Bhakti* (devotion).

The *Bhakti* cult cut across distinctions of high and low birth, the learned and unlettered, and opened the gateway of spiritual realization to one and all<sup>2</sup>. The mystics and saints of this age were unconventional and anti-ritualistic and ignored the age old restriction of caste and creed, or attached little importance to them. A large number of the mystics belonged to the traditional *saguna* school of philosophy which believed that God has many forms and attributes; that he manifests Himself in incarnations such as Rama and Krishna and that His spirit is to be found in the idols and images worshipped at home and temples. But the other trod a new path and formed the Nirguna school of philosophy which believed in a God without form or attributes, but nevertheless merciful and responsive to human prayers. Its basic approach was by no means alien to Hindu Vedantic philosophy.

Among the saints of north India, Ramanuja and Rama Nanda were the first to spread their message. Kabir, the disciple of Rama Nand, lived a life of house holder; earning his living by weaving. In his songs, there is a denunciation of worldliness, the life of sexual pleasures, sectarianism, formal religious practices and uprighteous conduct. He exhorted people to live a simple, spiritual and moral life. The God, he worshipped, was formless one; he called him by many names both Rama

and Rahim. He sharply condemned caste and religious distinctions and taught the brotherhood of man. He appealed to the conscience, the inner voice of man, and not to scriptures, Hindu or Muslim. He believed that the ultimate goal of the human soul is unity with God. He had both Hindus and Muslims as followers.

1. Shrivasta, A.L. : *History of India*, (1000-1707), p. 290.

2. *The Gazetteer of India*, Volume-II, edited by Dr. P.N. Chopra, 1973, p.414.

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Kabir ji believed in *bhajans* and condemned all kinds of sham, insincerity and hypocrisy. The following poem of Kabir admirably sums up his teachings :—

"If God be within the mosque, then to whom does the world belong ?

If Rama be within the image, then who is there to know what happens without?

Hari is in the east; Allah is in the west. Look within your own heart, for there you will find both Rahim and Rama.

All the women and men of the world are His living forms. Kabir is the child of Allah and Rama; He is my Guru; He is my *Pir*.

Vain, too, are the distinctions of caste. All shades of colour are but broken arches of light.

All varieties in human nature are but fragments of humanity. The right to approach God is not the monopoly of Brahmins (lettered persons), but belongs to all who are sincere of heart".



The other saints of this period were Rahdasa the cobbler; Dhanna, the Jat farmer; Sen, the Barber and Pipa, the Rajput.

Rahdasa-Chamar -a contemporary of Kabir and a fellow-disciple of Ramananda was from Varansi. He was a householder like Kabir, a mystic of *Nirguna* school and his fame spread far and wide. Rani Jhansi of Chittor became his disciple. He composed songs brimming with love and devotion, and unlike Kabir never criticised other's beliefs. Some of them are included in *The Guru Granth Sahib*, the sacred text of the Sikhs. After him his followers formed Rahdasa panth. It is still prevailing in the society.

Sundaradasa, being Vaisya in caste, spread his message far and wide. Thereafter,, Jagwandasa-Satnami-was a *Nirguna-upasaka* (worshipper of formless God) and practised yoga, but he was a great devotee of Sri Krishana of Varindavan. In his composition, he blended *nirguna* and *Saguna* ideas. Other mystics of the *Nirguna* school who may be mentioned are Shaikh Farid whom Guru Nanak Dev visited at Pakpattan; Baba Mulakadasa; Baba Dharupdas, Yan Sahib; Bula Sahib and Garibdas.

Another great preacher of this time was Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism and received of the pure monotheistic doctrine of the Upanishad<sup>1</sup>. He became wandering preacher of a casteless universal, ethical, anti-ritualistic, monotheistic and highly spiritual religion<sup>2</sup> which reflected the ideas of Kabir a good deal. His disciples call themselves Sikhs (derived from Sanskrit Sisya, disciple, or Pali Sikkha,

1. R.C. Majumdar, Ray Chaudhry & Datta-*An Advanced History of India*, p. 399, 1967.

2. *Gazetteer of India*, 1973, p. 416.

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instruction) and formed the new Panth. Nine Gurus followed in succession to Nanak Dev ji and gave the sect a stability and distinctness. Guru Angad collected Nanak Dev ji's oral teachings and put them down in a new spirit, the *Gurmukhi*. Guru Arjun Dev ji', the fifth Guru, constructed the Harmandir at Amritsar. He had the *Vanis* (words) of the previous Sikh Gurus and other saints like Kabir, Namdeva and Rahdasa Chamar brought together to form the *Guru Granth Sahib*. Guru Gobind Singh later named *Granth Sahib* as the everlasting Guru.

The Sagun School of Hindu mystic was represented by Tulsidas, Surdas and Mira Bai. Tulsidas ji composed *Ram Charitmanas* in Hindi. It expounds the different aspects of the Hindu Dharam in the form of a narrative Lord Ram's deeds. He also wrote *Vinayapatrika* and several other works. Mira Bai was deeply religious and devoted to Lord Krishana even in her teens, blossomed into a great saint and poetess whose songs are as popular as these of Tulsidas and Surdas. Her form of worship was to regard Lord Krishna as her lover and real husband and pour out pent- up love and devotion to God as Lord Krishna.

The *Bhakti* movement succeeded in realizing the 1st object by bringing about the simplification of worship and liberalization of traditional caste ideas. Even today in every branch of life of the people, the above mentioned saints still lay a great impact.

## Neo Socio-religious trends

Presently, there are many sects or off-shoots of Hindu religion or philosophical trends in which a large section of population of Haryana is engrossed with. These cultural traits are expressed through the special *samagams* (congregations), audio cassettes or by the chain of their selected followers.

The main philosophical ideas are expressed by Ruhani Satsangis, Nirankaris, Radha Swamis, Hare Rama and Hare Krishana, Brahma Kumari and Brahm Kumars, Sacha Soda, Rama Saranamitis and Oshoites.

The preachings of Ruhani Satsang revolve round our traditional philosophy emanating from *Guru Granth Sahib* and *Banis* of Kabir and Sufi saints. They mainly try to remove the social evils. They preach to refrain from meat,

wine and adultery. Thus, the philosophy carries the people towards a classless and casteless society. There are centres in Haryana. Near Panchkula there is a famous centre. Free *langar* is organised. Some special congregation is also arranged. The main emphasis is laid down on the spiritual purification.

The philosophy advocated by the Radha Swamis is also akin to our traditional philosophical ideas. They preach to keep themselves away from social evils. The

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purity of meals and purity of soul is reflected through their preachings. They advocate non-violence and truthfulness. There are centres in Haryana but their main centre is at Beas in Punjab. People go there in large number without any ideas of region, caste and creed. The followers are baptised by giving '*nam*' through their own means.

Nirankaris consider that God is formless. They are of the view that purity of life can be exhibited through worldly life. According to them "*Family is cradle of peace*". They also stress to eradicate social evils and promote universal brotherhood in the society.

The followers of Hare Rama and Hare Krishana, as appeared from their name, are the followers Lord Rama and Lord Krishana. They preach the main traits of the philosophy of Lord Krishana and Lord Rama. Their main emphasis is on leading a pure and simple life. According to them, through purity of soul, one can attain salvation.

The *Rama Saraman gachhammis* also preach the Bhakti cult of Lord Rama. They also want to attain the supreme goal (salvation) through the pure and simple life.

The Brahma Kumaris/Kumars also put emphasis on the law of Karam, non attachment towards worldly things, peace of mind and world peace through virtuous life. According to them, we should not shed tears over the 'death of our nears and dears.'

"Here in this world, this precess of going out and coming in (death) is going on for ever. We, too, have to make our exit one day, we also have to depart surely, we will not play this very part here for ever. So, instead of giving way to grief, we should remember Shiva. For it is He who is our true and eternal friend and our support in old age. It is He who keeps us up and grants us happiness" <sup>1</sup>.

The idea of soul is as under :

"Well, souls come into world and ultimately, go and then come again. They take one corporal form, shed it off and then takes another. That is the essence of the philosophy.

"Dear children ! the establishment of peace in the world is my responsibility but to co-operate in this task is your responsibility. And I ask you for no other co-operation, but that you become holy and righteous by thought, word and deed, for peace and spiritual solace come only through purity. Come, children, you give me your vices and evils and, in their place, I will bless you with the valuable gift of real wisdom and virtues which will bring you constant peace. Children, I don't ask you to

1. *Peace of Mind And World Peace* issued by Prajapita Brahm Kumaris Iswarya Vishewa Vidhadalya, Pandav Bhawan, Mount Abu, P. 9.

give me anything which is useful to you but I ask only for your bad proclivities and your evils which have led you to peacelessness and of which you are tired and sick".

The purity is the essence of their philosophy.

## **Bhagwan Rajnish's Ideas**

The philosophy and ideas of Osho, Acharya Rajnish, now he is called Bhagwan Rajnish by his followers, are not traditional. There a great departure from our traditional philosophy. His main book is *Sambhog Se Samadhi Ki Qar* which is liked by his readers. *Philosophy of the Esoteric* is also available in the market.

Regarding sex, Osho says, "Create meditation out of sex; make sex an object of meditation. Treat it as a temple and you will transcend it and be transformed. Then sex will not be there, but there will not be any suppression, any sublimation. Sex will just become irrelevant, meaningless. You have grown beyond it. It makes no sense to you now".

Regarding God, the ideas of Osho, Rajnish, a para from his works is reproduced here:

"Even the cosmic is not total, because non-existence is beyond it. So, even God is not total. God is just a part of Brahma. God is not Brahma itself. Brahma means all light and darkness combine. God is not death; God is only life. God is not non-existence; God is only existence. God is not darkness; God is only light. He is only part of total being, not the total".

The dynamic meditation is observed by organising *sadhabhawna Shivir*. The followers of Guru Rajnish attain eternal peace by *prem* and *dhan*.

The followers preach his philosophy through audio cassettes and mutual meetings. In Haryana, there are some meditation centres-mainly in big cities in which only a few intellectually go and organise their meditation.

## **Dera Sacha Sauda (Shahpur Begu)**

Located on the Begu road, the Dera was set up in Sirsa district by Shah Mastana, a saint in 1948. He had a large following of all castes and laid special stress on chanting the name of God, service of the humanity and austere life. Dera

is housed in a spacious buildings having 600 rooms, a hall and big ground. There are arrangements for free kitchen (*langar*). No offerings are accepted and expenses are met from the income of the land attached to it. A large number of devotees join the birth anniversary and death anniversary celebrations in April and November, respectively.

**Namdhari Seet.**— Dera Jiwan Nagar (Sirsa district), located 30 kilometres west of Sirsa, it is an important centre of Namdhari Sect. Earlier known as Chichal, the village was named after Jiwan Nagar after Jiwan Kaur, mother of Pratap Singh, a

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Namdhari saint. A large number of followers of Namdhari sect came from Shekhpura Sialkot and Gujranwala district after partition and settled here. An interesting feature of the fair, held there is that simple marriages costing just Rs. 11/- are solemnised.

Our culture is based on morality and spiritualism. The main traits of our culture are : forbearance, freedom, brotherhood and world peace. Since the ancient period, the culture of our country is treading the path of welfare of all. Despite the main inroads and attacks, our culture is everlasting. Though under the influence of modern era, there are some alterations and cultural inroads, yet these vices cannot wipe out this philosophy and culture of the area.

It would not be a digression to say that ancient culture of the world and such as *Greek*, Rome and Egypt vanished time to time but Indian culture is evergreen and shall remain alive to many centuries. Mohammad Iqbal is right in saying, a couplet which is as under.

*"Unan, Missar, Rome sub mit gaya jahan se*

*ab tak magar hae baki namo nisha hamara*

*kuchh bat he ki hasti mitti nahin hamari*

*sadio raha ha dushman dore-e- jahan hamara.*

## **Cultural Significance**

Every inch of the territory is a holy place and a pilgrimage, where people have been coming from all parts of the country with a religious motive and a burning faith in the sacredness of the soil of Haryana. This religious sanctity enshrines the military importance of this region, and its spiritual association encases the material advantage that ensues from its proper protection. A region, on the security of which the destiny of millions of men depends, can not but be land of highest religious purity and cultural significance.

## **Currency & Coinage**

### **Historical Significance of Numismatics**

The coins are the most important source of the history of ancient India <sup>1</sup>. Many thousands of these have come to light. Hoards have been unearthed in different parts of the country-a single hoard sometimes yielding many thousands-and individual specimens have constantly been found on or near the surface of ancient sites. Most of them at first passed into the hands of private individuals, but a number were recovered by scholars or acquired by public institutions. There is no doubt, however, that quite a large proportion was melted or otherwise lost to antiquarian study.

1. R.C. Majumdar : *History and Culture of the Indian People (The Vedic Age)*, Volume-I, 1957, p.56.

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The importance of numismatics for the study of the economic condition of the country is, too, obvious to need a detailed considerations. Hence, we shall only indicate how coins have helped us to reconstruct the political history of various periods.

The earliest coins of India bear only figures, devices or symbols, but with few exceptions, no legends. These coins were sometimes cast in dies, but more often the symbols were punched on the metallic pieces. Some times there are many symbols, punched at different times. They were not probably deliberately stamped by the issuing authority, in order to guarantee their genuineness and value. These authorities might have been kings or states, but also certainly included individual merchants, trade guilds, city corporations and similar bodies, for the idea of a state monopoly of minting coins was yet unknown.

In the absence of legend, it is impossible to allot the different coins to these different categories. The meaning of the figures and symbols, once familiar to the people using these coins, is no longer clear to us though some of them are familiar objects or well known conventional designs.

It is not till after the Greek invasion that we come across coins with the names of kings clearly engraved on them. Excepting, perhaps a few coins of the time of Alexander, the most important series of such coins were those issued by the Greek rulers of Bactria who ultimately conquered the Punjab and North-western Frontier.

The artistic excellence of these coins is never been surpassed in India, and the portraits of kings and other figures on them show Hellenistic Art at its best. These coins of the Gracco-Bactrians Art at its best. These coins of the Gracco-Bactrians set a new fashion and may be said to have revolutionized Indian numismatics. The most important feature added to Indian coins from time forward was the name and sometimes even portrait of the sovereign who issued them. How it has helped our knowledge of political history will be apparent from the fact that it is from these coins alone that we know of nearly thirty Greek kings and queens who ruled in India.

The coinage of the Greeks was imitated by the Scythian and



Parthian invaders who followed in their foot steps, and although the execution of their coins is far inferior, they are equally important for historical purposes. Here, too, the coins alone have enabled us to reconstruct an outline of their history, and recover the names of quite a numbr of rulers. With the exception of a few inscriptions and literary reverences, which otherwise would have been of little help, the coins have been the sole source of our information regarding the Greeks, the Sakas and the Parthians that entered India after the dissolutions of the Mauryan empire. The Kushans who followed them likewise issued a large number of coins but the history of this dynasty is not known from other sources.

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The coins have also been the principal source of our information regarding various Indian States<sup>1</sup> both monarchical and republican that flourished during the same period. Most of them, like Malavas, Yaudhey, the Mitra rulers of Panchala etc. are almost exclusively known from their coins.

The Guptas who founded the gratest empire in India after Maurys, issued a large variety of fine coins. Although we know a great deal of their history from epigraphic records, the coins form an important additional sources of information. With the downfall of the Guptas, the numismatic evidence ceases to be important source of history.

Isolated coins, here and there, have no doubt, proved to be of a great value, but they seldom afford us material information not otherwise available. It is a curious fact that coins of even great emperors like Harsha or ruling dynasties like Chalukyas, Pratiharas and Palas, not to speak of lesser kings and dynasties, are either unknown or of little significance.

## Historical background of currency and coinage

The antiquity of coinage in India may go back to the 7th century B.C. on the basis of literary sources, archaeologically it can not be dated earlier than 5th century B.C. Gold was probably used as money during and before the time of the Buddha but no gold coins have found<sup>2</sup>. The earliest coinage of India, so far known, are in silver and copper. They are called punch-marked and cast coins because of the techniques employed in making them. They are uninscribed, and therefore, it is difficult to identify the names of their issuers. Punch-marked coins are metallic pieces, more or less rectangular in shape, with symbols punched there on. They are often trimmed at corners, so as to scale the required weight.

The cast coins, usually of copper and used along with the punched-marked currency, were made from moulds. These coins were most popularly known as *Karsapanas* in Buddhist and later literature, but some of them were also known by such names *Puranas*, *Dharanas*, *Prati* etc. The coins had their sub-multiples. For long these coins were regarded as private issues of bankers, guilds and corporate bodies or local authorities. But it is generally believed now that local punched-marked coins struck by local states of the *Janapadas* can be distinguished from 'imperial' punch marked coins issued by the imperial dynasties of Magdha. Punch marked coins bearing such symbols as 'three arched hills surmounted by a crescent or a peacock' are generally associated with the ruling houses of the Mauryas.

1. R.C. Majumdar, A.D. Pusalkar and A.D. Majumdar: *The Vedic Age*, 1951. p.58.
  2. The Gazetteer of India (Volume-II) p. XXXI.
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The wide circulation of these coins all over India testifies to the political unification during the time of Chandragupta and Ashok Maurya. The famous statement of Chankya that he turned 8,000 coins into 8,00,000 in order to raise an army to liberate Magadha, may well be substantiated by the discoveries of silver coated punched marked coins.

In the Mauryan period, coinage continued to be purely Indian or at any Asiatic in character. Ashok did not care to imitate the beautiful Bactrian issues and he was content to use the primitive rudely struck coins which formed the currency of India before his time. The Indian coins were punch-marked. The idea of striking coins with two dies obverse and reverse, one side bearing the effigy and titles of the king and the other side having some other device, was gradually adopted by Indian princes in imitation of the issues minted by dynasties of foreign origin<sup>1</sup>.

The earliest inscribed coins dating from the first quarters of the third century B.C. or in the beginning of the 2nd century B.C. are the main sources for the reconstruction of the dark period of Indian history after disintegration of the Mauryan empire. These post-Mauryan coins on the one hand consist of five double die struck coins of the Indo Greeks and their successors of foreign origin who followed the Mauryas in the north-western part of their empire, and on the other hand they consist of 'hot stamped' (making an incuse thereby), and die struck, mostly single die and of crude workmanship in copper coins of the local monarchical and non monarchical states of indigenous origin who rose to power on the decline of the Mauryas in the northern and central parts of their empire.

The history of the Kushnas would be considerably poorer if numismatic testimony to their power and strength was removed. The stratification of coins in archaeological excavations established the convention of placing the Kadphises group of Kings before the Kanishka group. The occurrence of an imitation bust of a Roman king, and that of a goddess on a curul chair, approximately fixes the date of the end of Kadphise I's reign. The names of the later Kushan kings are preserved only their coins.

More than 25 kings with names ending in Mitra and issuing a coinage of homogenous type which circulated from Eastern

Punjab to the borders of Bihar, who have to be satisfactorily accommodated after the Mauryas, are known from sources other than coins except in two or three cases. There are many such dynasties often termed local or tribal, who appeared on the political stage of northern India after the fall of the Mauryas and before the rise of Guptas.

1. Luniya, B.N. : *Life and Culture in Ancient India*, 1978, p.451.

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## **Legendary Coins of Yaudheys (Haryana)**

The silver and copper coins/coin moulds and clayseals of the Yaudheys have been found from time to time since 1834 when Captain Cautley came across coins of Yaudheys for the first time at Behat, near Shaharanpur (U.P). Till today, large hoards of coins and number of seals have come to light from various places in the states of Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan<sup>1</sup>.

The discovery of a fair number of coin-moulds of the Yaudhey at Sunnet in Ludhiana district, at Khokra Kot in Rohtak district and Naurangabad in Bhiwani district shows that the these three places were mini towns and presumably important centres of Yaudheys in Christian era. The coins of Yaudheys were recovered from various places of Haryana such as Panipat, Assandh, Kharkhaudha, Sonipat, Khokrakot, Naurangabad, Jajjaiwanti, Hansi, Sirsa and Baghaula (Faridabad distict).

As regards the seals of Yaudheys, an exhaustive volume with profuse illustrations of seals published by the authorities of

Jhajjar maseum contains a detailed account of the material on the Yaudheys preserved in that museum. It records the discovery of the seals from Naurangabad and Khokrakot.

The findspots of coins, the coin moulds coupled with the evidence of the inscriptions seem to indicate that the Yaudhey's territory comprised an area that may be roughly defined as being bounded on the west by a line from Bahalpur along Satluj and Beas in Kangra to Saharnpur Via Panipat and Sonipat to Bharatpur, and on the south by a line drawn from Bahalpur via Suratgarh, Bhatner and Sirsa (Haryana) to Bhartpur. According to Swami Omanand Saraswati, the seals, coins and coin-mints of the Yaudheys came from Alwar, Bhartpur and Dhaulpur (Rajasthan); Bahawalpur State (Pakistan), Hissar, Jind, Karnal, Ambala, Rohtak, Gurgaon, Mahendragarh (Haryana) and many other places in India. The area thus indicated shows that the Yaudheys were most powerful people of Punjab and Haryana tribes. However, it seems that they did not occupy the wide region suggested by the provenance of these coins, seals and inscriptions at one the same time.

Cunningham identifies the Yaudheys with the modern Johiyas who occupied both banks of the Sutlej along with Bhawalpur frontier called Johiyas *ban* after them and believes that have derived from them. According to him, the whole of Rajputana, eastern Punjab and vast tract of the land between the Sutlej and the Jamuna, right upto the borders of Kurukshetra formed the Yaudhey Republic in the early centuries before Christ and during the middle of the second century A.D.

P.L. Gupta suggests that the Yaudhey in the second first century B.C. were in occupation of the *Bahudhanyaka* country (present Haryana state) when they issued

1. Gupta, Parmanand : *Geography from Ancient Indian coins and seals*, 1989, p.61.

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coins with legends *Yaudheynam Bahudhanake*<sup>1</sup>. Thereafter being pressed by the foreign invaders, most probably the Indo-Greeks, they left Haryana region and at stages spread over the north eastern as well as north western parts of Rajasthan some times in the second third century A.D.

K.K. Desgupta summarises the legends read on the coins of the Yaudheys as under:—

- (i) *Maharaja*
- (ii) *Yaudheyam Bahudhanake*
- (iii) *Bhagavata Svamino Brahmanya - Yaudheya*
- (iv) *Bhagavata Svamino Brahmanya devasya kumarasya*
- (v) *Bhanuva or Bhanuvasya*
- (vi) *Yaudheyam*
- (vii) *Yaudheyaganasya Jaya*
- (viii) *Ravana or Ravanarya*

Besides this, other legends on some of the Yaudhey coins noted by Swami Omanand are as under:—

- (ix) *Yaudheyaganasya Jaya, dvi tr*
- (x) *Bahudhana Yaudhey*
- (xi) *Yaudheyam Jayamantradharam*

On the above legends; seven legends ( II,III,VI,VII,IX,X,XI ) bear the names of the Yaudheys. The word *Maharaja*, if it is not a personal name, shows that the Yaudheys were inclined towards monarchy. The word *Bahudhanaka* which is a locative form of *Bahudhanaka* (*Skt Bahudhanake*) is a place name and is the same as mentioned in the *Mahabharata*. The term seems to correspond to Rohtak and its neighbourhood in Haryana and the coins in question are to be attributed to the Yaudheys of Bahudhanaka. The coins bearing the legend *Bhagavata svmino Brahmanyadevasya kumarasya* seem to have been issued in the name of war god *Brahmayadeva* (i.e Karttikeya). The other legend *Bhagavata svmino Brahmanyadeva* Yaudhey clearly indicates the name of the

presiding deity of the Yaudheys as *Brahmanyadeva*. The coins bear the effigy of god *Brahmanyadeva* and figure of peacock also with the above legend. In the light of above legend, it is to be concluded that territory of the Yaudhey was administered in the name of war god Karttikeya known as

1. Gupta, Parmanand : *Geography From Ancient Indian Coins & Seals*, 1989, p.64.

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*Brahmanyadeva* and Kumara. The Brahmi legend *Bhanuvasya Ravanasya* etc. may represent the names of the Yaudhey chiefs indicating thereby the then monarchical influence on the Yaudhey coinage, although a limited nature.

The legend *Yaudheyaganasyajay(h)* occurring on several copper coins is indicative of the fact that the tribe had a *gana* form of Government. The coins bearing the legend are of a late date, approximately of the third fourth century A.D. on some specimens occur the conjunct letter *dvi* or *tri*, a apparently abbreviations of *dritiyasa triyasya*, in addition to the legend of old days.

Cunningham suggests that like the three fold divisions of the Johiyas, viz. Lakvira, Madhera and Admera, the Yaudheys were also similarly divided into three classes or sections and the *dvi* and *tr* on the coins refer to the second or third divisions of the tribe. Altekar, however, suggested that Yaudheys in alliance with Kunin das and Arjunanas formed confederacy in *circa* A.D. 200 against the Kushanas and letter *dvi* and *tr* refer to the second and third confederating units of this union.

Keeping in view the small number of the coins with the letter *dvi* and *tr*

K.K. Das Gupta suggests that it may be second or third

republic of Yaudheys themselves rather than confederating units of the tribes. Bela Lahiri in this connection suggests that the words *dvi* to *tr* on the Yaudhey coins refer to the three centres, *Rohitka*, *Marubhumi* and *Sarisaka* referred in *Mahabharata*. *Rohitka* seems in all probability to be Rohtak (the ancient site is represented by Khokrakot where Yaudheya coin moulds of the Bahudhanyaka mint were found; *Marubhumi* represents adjacent parts of Rajasthan. *Sairisaka* may stand for Sirsa, the district headquarters in Haryana.

## Chronology of the coins & seals

The coins of the Yaudheys are chronologically divided into three groups. The coins which carry the legends, *Yaudheyanam Bahdhanaka*, or simply *Yaudheynam* and *Maharajasa*, belong to the second century B.C.-Ist Century A.D. The coins inscribed as *Bhagavata Svamino Brahman yadevasya kumarasya* or *Bhagavata Svamino Brahmanya Yaudhey* or bearing the names of *Bhanuvarma* and *Ravna* etc. belong to the second-third century A.D. However, the scripts of the coins with the legend *Yaudheyganasya Jaya* and very close to the Gupta characters. Both Allan and Smith have assigned them to the third-fourth century A.D.

As per R.C. Majumdar, an eminent historian, "in some cases, the god is called Brahmanyadeva only, while on a few specimens the coins appear to be called *dramma* (from Greek *drachoma*) of the deity". This class of coins, which is connected closely in style and type with the coinage of the Kunindas, bears the representation of the six headed god Skanda. On some of the coins the god Skand is found on the obverse,



while a goddess with six hands is represented on the reverse. This deity has been identified with Shashthi or Devasena, wife of Skand.

"A third class of the Yaudhey coins in copper shows Kushana influence in style and types and may be assigned to the third and fourth century A.D. The legend on these coins runs *yaudhey ganasya*, victory be to the republic of the Yaudheys; but in some cases we have either *dvi* or *tr* (tri) in addition. It has been suggested that *dvi* and *tri* are contractions respectively of the word *dvitiya* or *tritiya* indicating the second and third sections of Yaudhey tribes"<sup>1</sup>.

## **Description of yaudhey coins-given by Birbal Sahni**

Before describing the moulds and their technique, it is perhaps well to give a brief description of the coins to which they evidently belong.

"MY moulds are all of one general type of coin although, as we shall see there are great many variations. It is a small bronze coin of the Yaudhey series which has been well known since '*Prinsep*' first figured it over a hundred years ago on the basis of Captain Cautley's find at Behat. Since then this coin has been figured, described or mentioned by many authors including Cunningham, Vincent, Smith, Rapson, Sahni, Jayaswal and Allan."<sup>2</sup>

"The main features of the coin, as revealed by a study of the moulds, are described here.

I have not had access to the coin itself except in three specimens thickly encrusted with verdigris which I discovered in *situ* on splitting some of the moulds. They had been overlooked by the operator while breaking up the moulds. I have of course refrained from cleaning these rare specimens<sup>3</sup>.

### **Obverse :**

Humed bull always facing right with the head turned obliquely towards the observer; left forelegs raised, ears always omitted; in front of the bull a *yupa* or sacrificial post within a railing. Along the margin a *Brahmi* legend in the curved lines which are sometimes clearly separated by stops.

Line I *Yaudheyana* (m)

Line II *Bahudhanake*

1. Majumdar, R.C. : *The History and Culture of Indian People*, 1954, p. 167, Volume-II.

2. Sahni, Birbal : *The techniques of Casting Coins in Ancient India*, 1945, p. 10.

3. Sahni, (Birbal) was a professor of Botany at Lucknow. He came across some coins and moulds during excavations at Rohtak in 1936.

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**Reverse :**

Elephant nearly always facing right, but in a variety of postures standing or moving; trunk always upraised. Below his feet is a long curved line (not serpentine). Above the back is a flowing pennon or flag and *triratana* or nandipada symbol".

The coins *ca.* 19 mm. in diameter; in the absence of any clean specimen "I can not give the weight approximately". The metal is bronze (copper plus tin), but no quantity analysis has been possible.

"To judge from the moulds the obverse face of the coin should be flat or slightly concave and reverse slightly convex because in the moulds the sockets for the bull side are nearly always deep, very sockets for convex in the middle and have a rather permanent edge, while those of the elephant side and like a very shallow saucer, with the edge passing gradually into the general surface of the disc. The surface features of the coins are well brought out in some of the excellent

photographs reproduced in Allan's *Catalogue of the Coins of Ancient India*. Smith also describes this coin as slightly concave on the obverse. The correspondence between the coins and moulds is so close that no doubt can be entertained of the coins having been cast in moulds of the same type, if not at the same mint" <sup>1</sup>.

Swami Omanand Saraswati is of the view that Birbal Sahni excavated Khokrakot in 1938 and found many moulds with melted coins. He was the first man to make research in this regard<sup>2</sup>.

## **Details of techingues the moulds-their form & structures**

A good idea of the form and mode of construction of the moulds may be obtained from a study of fragments found during excavation. As per Birbal Sahni, the mould was made up of a series of discs placed in a vertical column, like a pile of coins. The whole pile was plastered over with clay, only a funnel-like crater being left at the top for receiving the molten metal <sup>3</sup> The crater led vertically down into a central canal, like the shaft of a mine. From this canal, again as in a mine, horizontal channels led out at different levels, and these opened into the coin sockets. At each level eight such channels radiated from the central shaft, and opened into many coin sockets arranged in a ring. The coupled faces of contiguous discs bore the negative impressions of the obverse and reverse, respectivley, and were so placed as to make the opposite sockets coincide exactly.

1. Sahni, Birbal, : *Techniques of Casting Coins in Ancient India* 1945, page 11.

2. Saraswati, Omanand : *Ancient Mints of Haryana*, 1979, p. 50.

3. Sahni, Birbal : *Techniques of Casting Coins in Ancient India*; 1945, p. 2.

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After the metal had been poured in the mould was cool enough, it was broken up and the coins, attached in whorls at the ends of the spokes, were broken off, the remaining metal being again put into the melting pot. Occasionally a coin hurriedly broken off would carry away with it the end of the spoke. On the other hand, a portion of the coin margin may be left behind on the spoke and the coins show a concave scar.

These flaws, incidental to the technique of cast coins, were discussed by many British writers such as Bahrfeldt. Such coins were also liable to go into circulations and had figured by numismatists, e.g. Cunningham, Majumdar and others. Cunningham figured an unusually interesting specimen of what we might call a twin coin—a pair of coins still joined together like dumb-bells, having never been broken apart since they were cast in the mould.

In breaking up the mould, the workmen would be liable to overlook an occasional coin or two, hidden in a portion of the mould that has been left unsplit. Among the heap of discarded moulds found at Rohtak there were quite a number still sticking together in their original couplings, and on splitting some of them apart, it was found the three coins lying in *situ*. One of them has a short piece of the lug still attached.

No complete disc was discovered, "I have spent hours trying to piece together the fragments into complete discs, but it was hardly expected that this would be an easy matter with the thousands of fragments all jumbled up in a heap. Actually I did not even find two fragments that exactly fitted each other along their fractured edges"<sup>1</sup>. However, it is quite easy to make a rough reconstruction of a disc. The curvature of the outer edge shows that the discs were about 87 mm. in diameter with a central hole 7 mm. across, from which the eight canals radiated so as to open into eight circular coin sockets each about 19 to 21 mm. in diameter. "The radial canals are shallow; they are gradually narrow from the centre outwards, their broader inner ends being united into a shallow through round the central aperture".

Along the outer curved edge the discs were slightly thicker (average 5 mm.) than they were round the central aperture, where the trough look away from the thickness of the disc. Occasionally a disc was somewhat thicker or thinner than the normal, but on the whole the workmanship was uniform and very neat.

"As a rule, the sockets on the two faces of a disc belong to different faces of the coin. If one side bears the obverse impressions, the other bears the reverse. The exceptions to this rule are very few.<sup>2</sup>

1. Sahni, Birbal who excavated the site of Khokrakot at Rohtak in 1938.

2. Ibid.

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Thus the two faces of the disc are quite independent of each other in the design which they carry. For the same reason it will be clear neither the radial canals nor the coin sockets need necessarily coincide in their positions on the two faces of a disc. In fact on practical grounds, it is better that they should not because, if all the coin whorls in a column of disc were superimposed instead of being irregularly disposed as they actually are, the discs would be more liable to crack owing to uneven heating by the metal".

An important question is the nature of the materials of which the original models of the coins and of the radial canals were made. An inspection of the fragments of discs shows that the eight radial channels were made in a single operation, that is, by means of a single 8-rayed model pressed into the clay, while each of the 8-coin sockets was made separately : a different coin model was pressed in at the end of each ray.

This is clear from the fact no two coin sockets on any one of the fragments examined were identical either in their designs or in their angular orientation round the central canal, and from the fact that the end of the radial channels did not always meet the circumference of the coin sockets. It is also proved by an examination of an interesting fragment which bore two distinct impressions of the 8-rayed model. The fainter impression (with the rays ending blindly ) was evidently in error and it was seen partly superimposed by the correct one.

The model for the right radial canals was pressed down into the clay to half its own thickness. This model was no doubt a flat piece of metal cut into a unique shape. A notable feature of this piece (deduced from the impressions left by it on various discs) was a specially thickened rim or collar round the central aperture, which must have facilitated the passage of the metal from the vertical shaft into the radial canals by making the initial opening somewhat wider. That this model was a metallic piece with sharp edges of the impressions left by it on many of the moulds.

Such impressions can be made by a piece of metal cut out of a sheet. Moreover, a piece of this shape could much more, conveniently be made out of a sheet of metal than out of any other material, such as wood or clay. The arms were not always of equal length and the ends were sometimes obliquely truncated. But the central hole was always neatly circular. To judge by the depth of the radial channels on the moulds the thickness of the sheet from which these models were cut was about 1.5 mm.

As far the coin models (positions) it is not easy to say whether they were made in clay or wax, wood, soapstone or other material. The fact that quite a large variety of models was used may indicate that they were probably made in some easily worked material, such as clay or wax. But this need not have been the case because, once the initial trouble of engraving the originals had been taken, actual coins might have been used as models for succeeding generations of coins.

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This was the practice in Roman times and this is commonest and easiest device of progress down to this day. There is, however, another and better reason for the view that either wax or clay was used for making the original models. A minute examination of the moulds the bull and elephant as well as the script, particularly where the letters occasionally touch the margin or are cut off by it-suggests a cursive style of writing and a rather free-hand style of design for the bull and the elephant, such as would only be possible in soft material.

It may be that at the very outset a negative was made in wax or clay; in the small size of these coins it would be much easier to engrave a negative (with bluntly rounded stylet) than to carve a positive. If the original negative was in wax, a positive could be made from it directly by casting in fire clay and then baking cast so obtained. If it was in clay, it could be baked hard before making a positive from it, and this positive could be made either in clay or metal, to serve as modal. Considering every thing, "I am inclined to conclude that this was the method adopted at the Bahudhanka mint<sup>1</sup>".

To ensure free flow of metal into the coin sockets any obstructing bits of clay left between the end of a radial canal and a coin socket had to be removed. Failing this precaution, some of the sockets would not receive the metal; a few sockets which appear to have remained empty because channels were blocked, either from the very first, or later, by fusing of the clay when mould was baked prior to the casting. In great majority of fragments the channel into the socket was free. The channel being made up of two opposing counterparts, it would suffice if the passage was cleared only on one of the coupled faces. In fact this may be an advantage because the kink thereby left in the metal near the edge of the coin would make it easier to break off the coin from the end of the spoke. On comparason with the Mathura coin moulds it leaves no doubt as to the advantage of this procedure and it is possible that the intelligent Yaudhey coin might have purposely left these obstructions on one side of each disc<sup>2</sup>.

Many of the fragments had a small irregular bit of brick or stone embedded in the outer border between the coin-sockets. This foreign object was often seen sticking that such pegs had once lodged there. This was a tenon and mortise device for replacing the discs exactly in their places when coupling the moulds. The irregular shape of the bits made it easy to recognise the pegs (tenons) belonging to their pits (mortises). With more than one tenon on each face of a disc it was important that they should have distinct shapes. "No complete disc has been found but by roughly reconstructing a number of discs it is possible to say that on each face, there were two or three places, either for a mortise or a tenon.

1. Poof. Birbal Sahni who excavated the Khokhrakot mound near Rohtak in 1938.

2. Sahni, Birbal : *Technique of Casting Coins in Ancient India*, 1945, p. 23.

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Another device worthy of note was an oblique groove drawn across the outer edge of each disc. As the casting was done with the discs placed in vertical column, these grooves ran obliquely across the outer (cylindrical) surface of the whole set of discs. The groove must have served as an index line to enable the workman to check from out-side the positions of the discs when re-constructing a set after the models had been removed. From the appearance of the grooves it is clear that they were made while the clay still soft or atleast unbaked; the edges of the groove are sometimes raised. The smooth surface of the groove shows that it was made with a blunt rounded instrument like the edge of a well-worn coin. As a rule the groove was about 1 to 1½ mm. wide and about as deep.

Occasionally there came across a fragment which is blank on one face, some times two discs are found sticking together by



their blank faces. On splitting them apart, the groove or grooves were frequently seen continued across from the edge on to the blank face. The blank faces generally show a thin crust of dark grey dusting powder, looking like ash from an oven, which must have been used to prevent the discs adhering firmly. It appears that the complete mould must have been contained several sets of discs placed one above the other, and the dusting powder was spread between the blank on the top and bottom of contiguous sets".

In making up this column the blank top surface of each set was first covered with a thin layer of dusting powder before the next set was placed upon it. Several pairs of disc fragments including portions of the top and bottom discs of contiguous sets were found sticking together by their blank faces with the remains of the powder lying between them.

There were two adhering discs, one of them had an oblique groove across its rim. The fact that this groove had not continued on to the other disc shows that the discs belonged to two consecutive sets in mould. When they were split apart they disclosed, as expected, two blank faces. On one of these faces the groove was continued across the blank surface, this being the top disc of its set; the other, being a bottom disc, had no grooves on its lower face which was in contact with the base board.

Among the many fragments of discs were found a few very interesting pieces of coarse and porous burnt clay which no doubt originally formed a plaster jacket round the entire mould. This clay luting contained a large admixture of plant material, especially the husk and grains of a cereal. According to Birbal Sahni, who came across these things in 1938, "the grains are wheat or barley and some are paddy. Of course the grains as well as the husk are charred, but the microscopic cells of the husk have left clear impressions on the matrix of carbonised clay; and their careful examination may help one to identify the cereal beyond doubt, even in the charred

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and broken condition. The quantity of plant material thus mixed with the clay contributed to the rather porous condition of the clay; after it was baked the partial combustion of the organic matter left small lacunae in the body of the clay".

The clay here mentioned must have been plastered over the whole pile of discs so as to seal up any chinks between the discs and thereby prevent the molten metal from leaking out. At the same time some porosity was desirable to allow the imprisoned gases to escape as the metal was poured in. Several pieces of the clay luting were found among the mould fragments. It is interesting to see on the concave inner surface of the impressions of the rims of the discs against which the luting was plastered. From the fragments found at site, it is certain that atleast 8 or 9 discs were placed one on top of the other; probably the total number in the complete mould was much larger. Luckily, one of these pieces of luting is from a region where the oblique groove ran across the surface of the pile, and, as expected, the groove is here represented by an oblique ridge.

The disc found there had an unusual thick luting applied to one surface, evidently belonged to the very bottom of a mould. The flat lower surface might have been formed in contact with the floor on which the pile was placed after luting was applied.

From the structural details described above it is now possible to say that the casting was done in a complex mould. The metal poured into the crater filled the central canal and hence spread horizontally at different levels through the radial channels into the world of coin sockets. The clay luting around the entire mould served to bind the discs into a compact pile and prevented the leakage of metal. At the same time the porous nature of the luting allowed the escape of hot gases in advance of the inflowing metal. The importance of mixing husk and grain with clay of the plaster would now be evident, when the mould was baked the combustion of the vegetable matter left the plaster in a porous condition and yet strong enough to hold the discs together.

The discs were usually of dark grey colour but occasionally their marginal portions graded into red, a result no doubt due to unequal baking. According to Birbal Sahni, "the moulds must have been baked at a temperature of over 600<sup>0</sup>c but that temperature was not maintained long enough to turn the central part red."

In some discs the outer parts were light and spongy, being riddled with gas holes. A few of these were seen sticking together by their outer spongy portions so as to form a fused mass. The metal might have been poured in while the mould was still hot, to ensure its easy flow through the narrowest channels. Probably the mould was kept in an oven while the metal was poured in, only the top of the mould, with crater, being exposed.

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"This is strongly suggested by the fact that fragments of the luting have been found which show signs of having been subjected to a great heat. They are not only spongy with gas holes, but have even become fused with rims of the discs they covered, and a few have a red colour instead of the usual dark grey.

From the structure of the fragments it is possible to say that the following simple appliances were probably used in making the moulds :

1. A circular wooden base board about 87 mm. in diameter, with a cylindrical peg 7 mm thick fixed in the centre.
2. A hollow cylinder just wide to fit round the circular platform.
3. A wide mouthed cup a little box without a lid, of 23 to 25

cubic centimetres capacity, for measuring out rapidly the quantity of kneaded clay required for each disc has been calculated to be roughly 23 to 25 cubic cm.

4. A stylet made of wood or metal, with rounded tip about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mm. thick, for engraving in clay or wax.

5. Some flat pieces of metal about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  mm. thick, to serve as a models for the radial channels.

6. Fire clay; wax, ash or charcoal dust; bits of stone or brick (to serve as tenons) ; paddy or other grain with husk.

It now remains to give a connected account of the steps in the process of constructing and using the moulds.

(a) "The circular base plate is dusted with powder, the cylinder is placed over it, and the first disc is prepared round the peg; its circumference being controlled by cylinder. The 8-rayed model was for the radial canals is slipped over the peg and pressed into clay down to half its own thickness. Then a coin model is similarly pressed in at the end of each of the rays, taking care that all models have the same face down, whether it is obverse or reverse. Two or three small bits of bricks or stone are pressed half way down at intervals near the margin to serve as tenons.

The first disc is now ready. It is dusted with powder before the second disc comes to lie on it.

(B) The second disc is first prepared as a blank on another base board. It is then transferred to as to lie on top of the first disc, overwhich it is now firmly pressed down at all points. It thus receives on its lower impress of all the models and of the tenons projecting from the top of the first disc.

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If the first disc receives the obverse impressions of the coins, the second receives the reverse. On the upper surface of the second disc another set of models and tonon is pressed in, and the surface is dusted over as before to prevent adhesion with the third disc, which is next laid on the second; and so on.

(c) "In this way, the discs are erected in a set of dozen discs. The top and the bottom discs being blank on one face, coins would be formed only in eleven whorls".

(d) "The cylinder is now removed and the oblique groove (which is later to serve as an index line) is drawn across the outer cylindrical surface of the set cutting into rims of all the discs. Preferably two such grooves are marked, on different sides, and slanting in opposite directions. This would help to distinguish the upper and lower faces of the discs. If these grooves, moreover, are continued across the blank top face and they would help to distinguish top disc from the bottom one which cannot be so marked because it is in contact with the board".

(e) "For some time this first set of discs is allowed to dry in the sun till the discs are hard enough to be handled without fear of their being deformed. Meanwhile a number of other sets are prepared in the same way allowed to dry".

(f) When the discs in a set are hard enough to be handled freely, they are lifted apart and for a time kept in a row in their regular sequence, all with the upper side up. The coin moulds as well as the radial canal models are now carefully removed for repeated use. The tenons, however, are all left in their places.

(g) "Each disc is now carefully examined on both sides to see that the coin impressions or the sockets are clear. It is also important that all channels for the flow of metal into the sockets should be free of obstruction".

(h) "When the discs are all in a satisfactory condition, they are again built up into original set but a plain board (without a peg). With the help of the tenons and mortises, and of the key lines on the rims, they can easily be replaced in their correct positions".

(i) "In the same way a number of other sets are built up after removing the models from them".

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(j) "Several of these sets are now placed one over the other to form a column of convenient height. Assuming that there, say, a dozen discs in each set, four or five sets make a column about 10 to 12 inches in height".

(k) "When the column has been made up it is plastered over with a paste of clay mixed with unhusked grain, a funnel like crater being left at the top to receive the molten metal. The mould is, however, not yet ready for casting".

(l) "The final step before casting is to bake the mould, with its clay luting in furnace. This will harden the discs and burn out the vegetable matter in the luting, thereby making it porous enough for the escape of gases".

(m) "The casting is then done in the hot mould, preferably with the mould still standing in the furnace with only the crater exposed".

(n) When the mould has cooled, it is broken up, the fragments of discs and of the clay luting are discarded while the coins, attached in close set whorls upon a central axis, are broken off and cleaned.

"From the above description, it is obvious that none of the discs can be removed intact, and these can, therefore, be no question of their being capable of use for repeated castings. This fact is important for comparison with some of the other coin moulds discussed in my book. While in this fact the simpler moulds had the advantage, the Rohtak moulds were capable of yielding a much larger number of coins at each casting. So far I am aware, nothing comparable with the Rohtak material in its interest for the coining technique has

been brought to light since the rich discoveries of Roman coin moulds in France, England, Germany and other countries. So far as I know, none of the many authors who have described the Yaudhey coins have ever minted that the coins were spurious<sup>1</sup>."

The hoard of coins was excavated from various places in Haryana. Interesting paras in this connection is reproduced from the book *Haryana ki Sanskritik Virasat*, written by Lila Dhar Dukhi :

"Till today many moulds and coins of various type have come to light in Haryana. First of all the oldest coins were found from Sugh and Agroha. Thereafter the coins were recovered from Naurangabad, Sirsa, Theh Polar, Sthenesavar, sonipat, Rohtak, Sangwan and Mitathal were engravited<sup>2</sup>.

1. Birbal a professor of Botany Lucknow based.

2. Dhukhi Lila, Dhar; *Haryana Ki Sanskritik Virasat*, 1992, p.67.

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Culture

## **The Gupta Coins**

The coinage of the imperial Guptas occupies a place of great importance. Some of their predecessors like the indo-Bactrians and the Kushans had, no doubt, issued coins of high artistic beauty, but they are foreign in inspiration with their legends in Greek and Kharosthe scripts"<sup>1</sup>.

Gupta coins are regular in size and weight and bear the figures and names of the rulers. In the early stages they showed some foreign influence. It was rather Kushan than Roman. But very soon they became entirely national in their

art, motif and execution. In its artistic variety and originality the gold coinage of the imperial Guptas has hardly any equal among the coinages of ancient India.

The artistic merit of Indo-Bactrian coins is, no doubt, very high, but they do not show that striking and pleasing variety in types and motifs, which we see on Gupta coins. The Indo Bactrian coins usually have the bust of the king. On the Gupta coins the bust is rare<sup>2</sup>. The king is displayed in various attitudes and attributes. He is usually standing and wielding either a bow or a battle axe or a standard. Sometimes there is an umbrella bearer by his side. He is often shown in a deadly grapple with a lion, the tiger or the rhino, some times riding a horse, some times on elephant and some times playing a lute and some times feeding a peacock.

The Hindu art was remarkably creative in the Gupta age as is evidenced by its sculptures and coins. There is a multiplicity of types and each type has got a surprising number of varieties. The art of the Gupta coinage was thoroughly Indian. Gupta gold coins show superb craftsmanship and rare masterpiece of design and artistic technique. The artists pay considerable attention to details and ornamentation revealing classical taste of the age. The literary renaissance which characterised the Gupta age is reflected in its coinage. For the first time in the history of numismatics the legends became mostly mortal. Their poetical merit is also very high.

The coinage was started by Chandra Gupta-I in about 320-21 A.D. He issued gold coins in the names of himself and Lichhavi consort and exhibit the portraits of both. The *lyrist*, the tiger slayer and the *Asva-medha* type coins of Smudra Gupta rank among the best specimen of ancient Indian numismatic art. Goddess seated on lotus or throne is common. Lion slayer type is one of the most artistic type of Chandra Gupta.

1. Late Rao Uttam Singh from a Bhardwaj clan of Charkhi Dadri (Bhiwani district) collected a hoard of coins. He was a known numismatist. The information has been gleaned from *Coins of India*, 1969, p.17, written by Rao Uttam Singh.

2. Ibid, p.18.



## Unique Coins & Currency of Samudra Gupta

Samudra Gupta was devoted to religious observances and sacred scriptures. He was a follower of the orthodox Brahmanical cult and gave many hundreds of thousands of cows by way of gift to Brahmans.

There can be no doubt that Samudra Gupta was a striking almost unique personality; and he ushered in a new age in the history of India. It is in the fitness of things that he assumed the title *Vikramanka*, evidently in imitation of the King Vikramaditya of legendary fame.

"We have a remarkable memorial of his life and reign in the rich variety of gold coins issued by him. They not only indicate the power, wealth and grandeur of his empire but also give some idea of his physical appearance and insight into his remarkable personality.

"Three types of coins represent him in a military garb. In one he stands fully dressed, holding a bow and arrow, and on the margin runs the legend, "having conquered the earth, the invincible one wins heaven by good deeds". Another depicts him as holding a battle axe with the appropriate legend, "wielding the axe of Kritanta (the god of death), the unconquered conqueror of unconquered kings is victorious. In the third, the king wearing turban and waist cloth, is trampling on a tiger which falls backward as he shoots it with the bow in his right hand, the left hand pulling the string back behind the ear".

"The legend refers to the king as having the prowess of a tiger. These figures of the king are apparently drawn from real, as also that of the fourth type referred to above in which the king, wearing waist cloth plays on a *vina*. The legend on this type of coins simply gives his name without any reference on his martial exploits. The fifth type of coins

commemorate '*Asvamedh*' sacrifice. It shows on obverse, a spirited horse standing before a sacrificial post, and on the reverse, the figure of the queen empress. The legend of type reads : " The king of kings, who performed the *Asvamedh* sacrifice, having protected the earth, wins heaven".

"To celebrate his memorable victories in northern and southern India, Samudra Gupta performed an *Asvamedha* sacrifice probably late in his reign. He took particular pride in the revival of this ritual and it was no wonder that he should have issued gold coins to commemorate this event in a fairly extensive quantity. The coins of this type are fairly numerous. The British Museum and Lucknow Museum possess some coins of this type.

"The coins of the *Asvamedha* type vary in sizes from .75" to .90, and in weight from. 112.5 grains to 119 grains the average weight of normal coins is 115 grains in some cases and 118 in others.

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"The obverse design of the *Asvamedha* type shows that sacrificial horse standing before a decorated *yupa* (sacrificial post) enclosed in a platform; a penon is flying over it from the top of *yupa*. The reverse shows the crowned queen on a pearl bordered mat."

"The *Asvamedha* coins are among the best specimens of the numismatic art of the ancient India. The horse on the obverse looks noble and graceful and seems to be resigned to its impending doom. The figure of the queen is slim and graceful, her attitude is one of the alertness, as befits her role in the sacrifice".

"Obviously the best artists were selected to cut the discs and

they were fully conscious of the importance of the event they were called upon to commemorate on the imperial coins<sup>1</sup>."

"These five types of coins thus symbolise both the martial and peaceful pursuits of the king. The personal appearance of the king, so far we can judge his figures on the coins, is in keeping with the impression we otherwise form of him<sup>2</sup>."

The artistic execution of the gold coins of Samudra Gupta fully illustrates the wonderful progress of art which forms such a distinctive feature of the Gupta period and Justifies its designation as Classical Age in India<sup>3</sup>.

Chandra Gupta-II was the first Gupta emperor to issue a silver currency<sup>4</sup>. Gupta silver coins conform closely to their proto type. All the Gupta silver issues weigh about 30 *grs* or 1.944 gms. His silver currency is more or less similar to that of Kshtrapas of western India.

"While his predecessors issued only gold coins-Chandra Gupta-II introduced those of copper and silver as well. The obverse of his silver coins was imitated from that of the western Satraps as these coins were obviously meant for circulation in territories conquered from them. But on the reverse the usual *chaitya* symbol was replaced by the bird '*Garuda*', the vehicle of Vishnu, which figures prominently also on the coins of Samudra Gupta, as befitting a devout follower of Vishnu. The copper coins, which show no less than nine varieties, have the same general type, viz. King on the obverse and the *Garud* on the reverse".

"The gold coins of Chandra Gupta, rival those of his father in grandeur and brilliance, and like them throw considerable light on his personality and imperial pomp and power. Some variations made by him in the types of his father's coins seem

1. Altekar, A.S. : *Coinage of the Gupta Empire*, 1957, Patna, p.62.

2. Majumdar, R.C : *The History and Culture of the Indian People*, 1954, p.45.

3. Ibid. p.16.

4. Rao Uttam Singh : *Coins of India*, 1969, p.19.

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to be full of significance. Thus he is represented as slaying a lion instead of a tiger, and the difference is emphasised by the legend *Simha Vikrama* (One who has the prowess of a lion). It is gradually held that these coins indicate his conquest of Gujrat where lions were there fairly common. In his couch type coins he holds, not a lyre like his father, but a flower and token with legend *rupakriti*, this new type may be taken to represent his intellectual and physical eminence or artistic sense".

"Chandra Gupta II also introduces some new type of his coins. In one of these he stands with his left hand on his hilt of his sword with a dwarf attendant holding his umbrella over his head probably a symbol of his claim to universal sovereignty. Another represents him as riding on fully caparisoned horse. These as well as the lion slayer type are fitting tributes to his personal valour and martial spirit, which was evidently not incompatible with artistic or intellectual temperament suggested by couch type. A coin doubtfully attributed to Chandra Gupta-II, represents the king as standing before a deity, probably Vishnu, and extending his right hand to receive the divine *prasad* in the form of three sweetmeats<sup>1</sup>. No copper coins of his predecessors are known and only half a dozen copper coins of Kumar Gupta have so far come to light. He issued a new type of gold coins depicting Kartikeya riding on a peacock on one side and the king feeding a peacock on the other the also substituted the peacock for Garud on the silver coins.

Kumar Gupta had ample silver currency. The date is given not behind the king's head, as on the Kshtrape coins, but in front of it. The reverse shows a fan-tailed peacock. Chandra Gupta II is the only Gupta emperor who can be said to have issued a copper currency.

The traditional standard weight of a gold coin according to Manu was 80 ratties i.e. about 140 grains. or 9.072 gms. The early Gupta emperors generally issued coins to the standard

of 120 grains. or 7.776 gms. The Gupta emperors adopted the Kushan standard. Their gold coins weigh between 120 and 121 grs or 7.840 gms. Samudra Gupta continued this weight standard through out his reign. The gold coins of Chandra Gupta II weigh 121 grs. or 7.840 gms. 124 grs. 8.035 gms., 127 grs. or 8.229 gms., 129.5 grs. or 8.392 gms. Kumar Gupta issued gold coins to the 127 grs. standard. Gupta coins were called *Dinara*hs. The coins of later Gupta princes are very inferior in style and execution. The period of Gupta supremacy begins with 319-20 A.D. and ends with the death of Skanda Gupta in 480 A.D.

Skand Gupta also issued coins depicting the king, armed with bow and arrow, as standing in front of the *Garud* standard while beyond it, is a female figure facing the king and holding a lotus in her left hand and an indistinct object in her right hand.

1. Majumdar, R.C. : *The History & Culture of Indian People*, Volume-II, 1954, p.22.

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All these scattered evidences may indicate that Skand Gupta's mother was probably not the chief queen of Kumar Gupta and having no indisputable legitimate claim to the throne. Skand Gupta had to fight with one or more rivals.

"The peace and security established by the strong arms of the Guptas, together with the trade relations with several countries, improved the economic sources of the Gupta empire considerably. This resulted favourably on the coin of the Gupta sovereigns. Laxmi with elephants was depicted on the gold coins of the Guptas. The association of the ideas of Laxmi (the goddess of wealth) with elephants, the symbols of the circulation of wealth like Kubera pouring out coins, point

of wealth of the Gupta monarchs <sup>1</sup>. Enormous quantities of gold and silver and wealth that poured in the state treasuries enabled the Gupta sovereigns to issue varieties of gold and silver coins. These show considerable artistic technique marked by clarity and elegance of designs and letters. Their shapes and forms are regular and uniform, execution is precise and refined. A dynamic naturalism characterises both human as well as animal figures. The figures of sovereigns, standing queens and goddesses are imposing lovely and winsome".

Artistically, the Gupta coins and especially their gold pieces are of great importance, since they present in the beginning a new development of the Kushan coinage and then turn into a completely Indianized idealistic production. The figures on the coins are more natural and balanced and have greater linear rhythm than ever before. The best illustrations are found among the lyrist, horseman, and the arched types. With the downfall of the Guptas, the skill of minting artistic coins seems to have degenerated.

## **Coins of Harshvardhan (1st half of the century A.D.)**

In the time of Harsha the coinage of gold had become very rare<sup>2</sup>. His silver coins are of Madhya Desa type of the Gupta silver coinage weighing 32 grains or 2.073 grammes<sup>3</sup>.

One of these coins, the names of "Sri Harsa" has been read. A gold coin of Harsha has been discovered in the Farrukhabad district of Uttar Pradesh. The coin in size and fabric is similar to the gold coin of the Imperial Guptas. The silver coins of Harsha are also imitations of the Gupta silver coins bearing a dancing peacock on one side and a long border legend on the other. The gold coins weigh 113.50 grains

1. Luniay, B.N. : *Life and Culture in Ancient India*, 1978, p. 414.

2. Rao Uttam Singh : *Coins of India*, 1969, p. 23.

3. Ibid.

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or 7.354 gramms. It is round in shape and 2.00 cm. in size. On one side is the Brahmi legend in five lines; as detailed below :—

*Obverse Side*

*Parama bha ttarako Mahara*

*Jadhiraja Parame Svara Sri*

*Mahara (ja Ha) rsadeva*

*Reverse Side*

Shiva and Parvati, seated on a Nandi. Shiva is four-handed and nimbate, in the upperside right hand a rosary. The lower right hand rests on his thigh. The left upper hand holds a *trisul*, while lower left hand around the neck of his consort.

Shiva is *jatamukta* and with round earrings, over the rosary is a snake. The goddess is nimbate. Below *Nandi* is seated facing to right .

## **The Coins of Post Harsha Period**

The coins of the early medieval age do not possess the grace, charm, originality, artistic excellence, wide variety of types and good metrical legends of the Gupta coinage. Generally there is no newness or originality about them. Their types are imitations of older ones and are very crude in execution. The following are the main types of these coins :—

- (i) King and fire alter type ;
- (ii) Standing king and seated goddess;
- (iii) Horse-man and bull type ;
- (iv) Seated goddess type.

The shapes of minor coins are :—

- (1) Hanuman type
- (2) Lion attacking elephant type
- (3) Cow suckling calf type

## **Coins of Rajputs**

Rajputs followed the hind device of the Bull and Horse man on the silver and copper coins and more or less the same weight standard in their coinage till the conquest and occupation of the northern India by Muhammad bin Sam in 1193 A.D. Their gold coins have the seated goddess on reverse. Gold of their coins is good as well as base.

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Bull and Horseman type continued for some generation to find a place among the coin types of the Muhammadan conquerors, the Sultan of Delhi.

## **Medieval Coinage**

The story of Indo-Muslim coinage begins in the second half of the 11th century, when the authority of the later Ghaznavid princes driven out by Ghur Kings was confined to the Punjab already conquered by Mahmud Ghazni during A.D. 1001-26. Here they struck small coins of mixed metal with Arabi legend in Kufi on one side and Indian Bull of Shiva on the other<sup>1</sup>.

Mahmud Ghazni during his invasions of India issued or struck a gold *Dinar* weighing 179 grs. and 9" in size, and



exhibiting the legend in Arabic in Kufic script in 397 A.H. and also silver Dirhams in the year 418-19 A.H. (1027 A.D.). On one of the types of silver Dirhams is Sanskrit legend in Devnagri script<sup>2</sup>.

### **Weight Centre Margin**

45 grs. *Adyktam-eka Avyukatya name ayam tamkin*

*Muhammad a-vatari hata Mahmudpura ghatita(h)*

*nri Pate Jajikiyara samvat 418.*

*Mahamada*

## **Coins of the Sultans of Delhi**

Muhammad Bin Sam became the defacto ruler of northern India after defeating Prithvi Raj Chauhan in 1193 A.D. He was a Ghori Turk while his successors were his Turkish slaves.

Muhammad-Bin-Sam issued coins on indigenous lines. These coins were named Delhiwala weighing about 32 *rattis* or 57.6 grains. These coins exhibit the Sultan's name in Nagri characters. These issues were made from an alloy of silver and copper (billon). The obverse displayed a recumbent humped bull, while a Chauhan horseman on the reverse. He also issued coins with the Qanauj device of a seated Lakhmi.

But it was with consolidation of the Muslim authority under the Mamluks (A.D. 1206-90) that Indo-Muslim coinage received its definite character. In the first issues, the early Sultans adopted the local currency with minor changes. The type of Bull and horseman and Luxmi were retained and even some of the coins legend (names & titles) were inscribed in Nagri script for some time. A few decades later, pictorial representation was replaced by inscriptions setting forth the *Kalimah*, king's name and titles, date and mint.

1. *Gazetteer of India*, p. XXXIX.

2. Bhardwaj , Rao Uttam Singh : *Coins of India*, 1969, p. 32.

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Among the early types, one remarkable coin has the Sultan's name in Nagri around the Bull on one side and that of Prithavi Raj around the horseman on the other. But the chief coins, particularly the silver *tankas* and billion jitals were standardized by Iltutmish (A.D. 1211-86) who issued coins of many varieties. The standard set-up by him survived until the reign of Shershah, while the fabric type of the coins continued with the slight modifications till the time of Balban (A.D. 1266-87) who substituted the device of horseman on billion coins by his name in Nagri; this bilingual type was continued subsequently. Balban's coins also represent the extension of the mint system. The next appreciable change in coinage was effected by Alla-ud-din Khilji <sup>1</sup> (A.D. 1296-1316) who also issued square coins in gold and silver, a shape which was largely adopted by his son, Mubarak Shah (A.D. 1316-20). The gold coins and silver coins of the latter are perhaps the first in the series of the Delhi Sultanate, being remarkable for variety of title legends, boldness of design of relief and shape.

The reign of Muhammad Bin Tughlaq, 'the prince of moneyers' (A.D. 1325-51), is extremely rich from numismatic point of view. On his coins which in various types, the most remarkable is his forced currency of brass and copper token issues.

Muhammad-Bin-Tughlaq introduced in two sizes gold *Dinars* of 13.056 gms. in 727 A.H. It is 16 *rattis* or 28.8 grains over and above the *tankah* of 11.196 grams of 96 *rattis*. A *ratti* weighed 1.8 grains. The heavy *Dinar* was current along with *tankh*. After 729 A.H. there was no further issue of *Dinar*<sup>2</sup>.

He also introduced another gold as well as silver coin called the *Adli* of 80 *rattis* or 9.330 gms., i.e. 16 *rattis* or 28.8 grs. less than the *tankh*. *Adli* was not coined after 727 A.H. He started his forced token currency of 9.265 gms. of copper or brass which substituted till 732 A.H. There is bewildering variety of his billion issues. The forced token coin weigh 142 grs. or 9.265 gms. and 18.8" in size.

## Historian's assessment of his token currency

"The reign of Muhammad Tughlaq is an important land mark in the history of Indian coinage. He reformed the entire system of coinage, fixed the relative values of the precious metals and issued various types of coins. Most of these coins were noted for their artistic design and execution. His most notable experiment in the field was the introduction of token currency.

1. A detailed description of the coinage of the Khalji Sultans is given by a Hindu named Thakur Pheru who was a responsible finance officer under the Khiljis.
2. Rao Uttam Singh : *Coins of India*, 1969, p. 34.

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"There were several reasons for introducing brass and copper coinage. Firstly, there was want of precious money in the treasury which had been drained by wars and rebellions and also by costly experiments in the field of administration. Secondly, owing to famine and harsh taxation policy, there was considerable fall in the Sultan's revenue. Thirdly, he was anxious to augment his revenues in order to undertake the conquest of the distant provinces of India and of some foreign countries. Fourthly, Muhammad who fond of experimentation and, therefore, wanted to open a new chapter in the history of coinage in India. Fifthly, he was encouraged by the examples of Chinese and Persian rulers before him who had introduced token currency in their countries in the thirteenth century".

"With the above object in view, Muhammad promulgated an order making copper coins the legal tender and putting these

coins on par (in value ) with gold and silver coins. He ordered that the people should use these coins in all transactions just like gold and silver coins; but he took no steps to make the mint monopoly of the state. Those days, in make and design and in execution and finish, the coins turned out by the royal mints were not such that they could not be easily imitated by private persons. And as the Sultan made no arrangement for preventing the circulation of counterfeit coins, private persons began to manufacture copper coins. Barni says in the right orthodox Muslim fashion that the house of every Hindu became a mint. There is no reason to believe that Musalmans resisted the temptation to which, according to Barni, the Hindu succumbed.

"People hoarded gold and silver coins and paid their revenues in the new ones. Foreign merchants purchased Indian commodities with the token currency in the country but refused to accept the latter while settling foreign products. Trade came to standstill. Business was very much hampered, and gold and silver became scarce. The result was a great confusion and the Sultan was bewildered to see his scheme crumbling down before his very eyes. He was compelled to withdraw the token currency and ordered the people to take from the royal treasury gold and silver pieces in exchange for brass and copper coins. The state was thus defrauded, while private people made huge profits at its expense".

There was nothing remarkable about the coins of the later Tughlaqs (A.D. 1351-1414) and their successors, the Syeds (A.D. 1414-51) and Lodhis (A.D. 1451-1526).

## **Currency System of Sher Shah Suri (A.D. 1540-45)**

Sher Shah's outstanding achievement was in the field of currency reform. He found on his accession that currency system had practically broken down for want of specie, the debasement of the current coins and the absence of a fixed ratio between the coins of various metals. There was another difficulty namely, that coins of all

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previous reigns, in fact of all ages, were allowed to circulate as legal tender. Sher Shah took steps to issue a large number of new silver coins which, subsequently, became known as *dam*. Both the silver rupee and the copper *dam* had their halves, quarters, eighths and sixteenth.

he abolished all old and mixed metal currency. He fixed a ratio between the copper and silver coins. His silver rupee weighed 180 grains, of which 175 grains were pure silver. His rupee *minus* its inscription lasted throughout the Mughal period and was retained by the English East India company upto 1835. V.A. Smith, an eminent historian rightly observes.

"It is the basis of the existing British currency, upto 1947".

Sher Shah's name and title and place of mint were invariably inscribed on the coins in Arabic characters. Some of his coins bore his name in *Devanagiri* script and some had the name of the first four Khalifas in addition. Gold coins of pure metal of various weights, such as 166.4 grains, 167 grains and 168.5 grains, were executed. The ratio of exchange between the rupee was 64 to 1. The ratio between the various gold coins and silver coins were fixed on a permanent basis. These currency reforms proved very useful and did away with a great deal of inconvenience which was experienced by the general public and particularly by the trading community.

These reforms elicited high praise from modern numismatists. Edward Thomas, for example, observes that Sher Shah's reign "constitutes an important test-point in the annals of Indian coinage, not in its specific mint reforms but also correcting the progressive deteriorations of previous kings and as introducing many of those reforms which the succeeding Mughals claimed as their own".

He discarded bullion, made extensive use of copper for lower denominations and he introduced a new copper coin of weight varying between 300-330 grains which was adopted by Akbar under the name *dam*.

Sher Shah's gold *Mohur* and silver rupee were generally

maintained in form and size throughout the Mughal period except in the reigns of Babur (A.D. 1526-30 and Humayun (A.D. 1530-40, 1555-56) when broad, thin pieces of the Central Asian types in gold and silver and copper types of later Sultanate fabric, were issued.

Babur and Humayun struck gold *Ashrafis* silver *Shahrukhi* or *misquali* and copper coins of non Indian standard in weight, design and execution<sup>1</sup>. Their gold issues are very small and rare. The silver coins of Babur and Humayun weigh 76 and 113 grains, respectively. There is a silver coin of Humayun weighing 180 grains issued after his reoccupation in India, in 962 A.H. The issue is mintless. The copper coins of Babur and Humayun weigh upto 142 grains and are 8" in size. The copper issues of both Babur and Humayun bear dates as well as mint names with some honorific titles.

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## Coins issued by Akbar, the great Mughal Emperor

The early coins<sup>2</sup> of Akbar (A.D. 1556-1605) were old fashioned, but in 1584 he started a new series of good workmanship bearing the *Ilahi* era and new legends including a metrical one. Among his most remarkable coins are those with animate designs of duck, hawk and Ram-Sita.

During the early year of his reign Akbar adopted the currency system of his predecessors and made only nominal modifications, such as the insertion of his name and titles and the place and year of mintage on his coins. His mints were in the charge of minor officers called *Chaudhries* and there was little co-ordination between various mints.

During the later part of 16th century the emperor undertook the reform of the currency and appointed Khwaja Abdus Samad Sheraizi, a noted painter and calligraphist, to be the superintendent of the imperial mint at Delhi. All the mints at provincial headquarters which had hitherto been under *Chaudhries*, were placed under more responsible officers who were required to work under the supervision of Abdus Samad. The staff under him consisted of a *daroga* (assistant superintendent) a *sarafi* (assayer), an *amin* (assistant to the *daroga*), a treasurer, a *musfhrif* (accountant), a weighman, a melter of ore, a plate maker and a merchant whose duty was to supply gold, silver and copper.

The mints issued gold, silver and copper coins. The silver coin known as rupee was round in shape, like its modern successors and weigh 172 grains, Akbar also issued a square rupee called *Jalali* but it was not so common and popular as the circular rupee.

The rupee had its one half, one fourth, one eighth, one sixteenth and one twentieth pieces. The chief copper coin was the *dam* or *paisa* or *fulus*. It weighed 323.5 grains or almost 21 grammes. The ratio between the dam and rupee was 40 to 1. The lowest copper coin was *jital*, and 25 *jitals* made one paisa. The most common gold coin was *Ilahi* which was equal to ten rupees in value. The biggest gold coin was the *Shahanshahi* which weighed a little over 101 *tolas* and must have been used in high business transaction.

1. Scattered account about coins may be seen in Chapter- *The Places of Interest*.

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All coins of various metals were characterised by purity of metal, fulness of weight and artistic execution. They bore calligraphic inscriptions containing the name and little of the emperor and place and year of mintage only, a few coins had figures inscribed upon them. They were probably intended to be commemorative medals.

Akbar introduced square shaped gold and silver coinage in 985 A.H. and orders to this effect were issued by him while he was camping at a place near Narnaul.

The *Ain-i-Akbari* mentions the following coins of Akbar:

### **Gold:**

1. *Sehansah* - 100 *mohur* piece round in shape
2. *Rahas* - 50 *mohur* piece, round as well as square
3. *Atmah* - Both round and square one fourth of *Sehansah*
4. *Jugal or Chugal* - Double *mohur* piece, square
5. *Lal-i-Jalali* - round, in weight and value equal to double round *mohur*
6. *Aftabi* - round, worth 12 rupees
7. *Ilahi* - round, worth 10 rupees, weighing 188 grains
8. *Adalgutka* - round, worth 9 rupees weighing 170 grs.
9. *Mohar* - round, worth 9 rupees weighing 170 grs.
10. *Lal-i-Jalali* - square - worth 10 rupees, weighing 188 grs.
11. *Muini* - square, worth 10 rupees
12. *Mihirabi* - worth 9 rupees with *kalima* or *ilahi* legend, weighing 170 grs.
13. *Chahargosha* - square worth 12 rupees
14. *Gird* -  $\frac{1}{2}$  *Ilahi*
15. *Dhan* -  $\frac{1}{2}$  *Lal-i-Jalali*



16. *Salimi* -  $\frac{1}{2}$  Adalgutka
  17. *Rabi* -  $\frac{1}{2}$  Aftabi
  18. *Man* -  $\frac{1}{4}$  Ilahi or Lal-i-Jalali
  19. *Panj* -  $\frac{1}{5}$  Ilahi
  20. *Pandhan* -  $\frac{1}{5}$  Lal-i-Jalali
  21. *Sumni* -  $\frac{1}{8}$  Ilahi
  22. *Kala* -  $\frac{1}{16}$  Ilahi
  23. *Zarah* -  $\frac{1}{36}$  Ilahi
- 

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The *non-Ilahi* type or *Kalima* type square gold *Lal-i-Jalali* exhibiting the dates 986, 987 and 988 A.H. and *Alif* from 990 to 992 A.D. and weighing 188 *grains* are extant in some public and private collections.

## Silver

1. *Rypia* - round worth 40 *Dams* of copper
2. *Jalalah* - square, worth 40 *dams* of copper
3. *Darb* -  $\frac{1}{2}$  *Jalalah*
4. *Charan* -  $\frac{1}{4}$  *Jalalah*
5. *Pandu* -  $\frac{1}{5}$  *Jalalah*
6. *Asht* -  $\frac{1}{8}$  *Jalalah*

7. *Dasa* - 1/10 *Jalalah*

8. *Kala* - 1/16 *Jalalah*

9. *Suke* - 1/20 *Jalalah*

### **Copper**

1. *Dam* or *fulus* of 323 grains - ½ *Tanka* of copper

2. *Damri* - 1/8 *Fulus*

3. *Paula* - ¼

4. *Adhela* - ½ *Fulus*

5. *Damra* - *Tankah*

Akber is entitled to high praise for placing the currency on sound scientific foundation, and his coins have been highly spoken of by modern numismatists.

"Akbar deserves high credit for the excellence of his extremely varied coinage, as regards purity of metal, fulness of weight and artistic execution. The Mughal coinage, when compared with that of queen Elizabeth of other contemporary sovereigns in Europe must be pronounced far superior on the whole. Akbar and his successors seem never to have yielded to the temptation of debasing the coins in either weight or purity. The gold in many of Akbar's coins is believed to be practically pure<sup>1</sup>."

Mercantile affairs of the empire during the reign of Akbar and his successors were transacted in round gold *mohur*, rupees and dams. " The coins of the Mughal State, especially those of Akbar were excellent in respect of purity of metal, fulness of weight and artistic execution<sup>2</sup>".

1. Smith, V.A. : *Akbar the Great*, p.157.

2. Majumdar, R.C , H.C. Ray Chaudhry, and K. Datta, *An Advanced History of India*, 1967, p.568.

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Under Jahangir (A.D. 1605-27), workmanship attained in highest level of excellence and artistic merit. The numerous varieties of his coins include the most remarkable issue, the zodiac *mohurs* and rupees and a Bachanalian *mohur* of Ajmer.

*Tuzak-i-Jahangiri* gives some interesting names of Jehangir's gold and silver coins which are as follows<sup>1</sup> :—

### Gold

1. *Nur Shahi* - 100 *tolas* (Akbari)
2. *Nur Sultani* - 50 *tolas*
3. *Nur Daulat* - 20 *tolas*
4. *Nur Kareem* - 10 *tolas*
5. *Nur Mehar* - 5 *tolas*
6. *Nur Jehani* - 1 *tola*
7. *Nurani* -  $\frac{1}{2}$  Nur Jehani
8. *Riwaji* -  $\frac{1}{2}$  Nur Jehani

### Silver

1. *Kaukab-i-Tala* - 100 *tolas* (Akbari)
2. *Kaukab-i-Iqbal* - 50 *tolas*
3. *Kaukab-i-Murad* - 20 *Tolas*
4. *Kaukab-i-Bakbat* - 10 *tolas*
5. *Kaukab-i-S'ad* - 5 *tolas*
6. *Jehangiri* - 1 *tola*
7. *Sulani* -  $\frac{1}{2}$  *tola*
8. *Nisasi* -  $\frac{1}{4}$  *tola*

## 9. *Khair Qabul* - 1/10 tola

### Copper

Similarly, copper coins and their small denomination were named separately, e.g., *Fulus*, *Rawani*, *Raij*.

Jahangir issued a gold *Mohur* exhibiting his own image seated cross-legged, holding a book in left hand and a goblet in the right. During the last five years of his reign Jahangir ordered that the coins in gold and silver be issued in Nurjehan's name concurrent with his own coins.

1. Rao Uttam Singh : *Coins of India*, 1969,p.42

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Shah Jahan (A.D. 1628-58) reverted to the *Kalimah* type issued in different varieties. Shah Jahan and his successors also issued gold and silver 'Nisans' to be given away to the poor and needy. Shah Jahan recalled from circulation Nurjahan's coins as soon as he ascended the throne. The coins of Shah Jahan and his successors were more or less monotonous in design and shape. Calligraphy of the legend on the imperial coins is of superior quality throughout.

The coins of Aurangzeb (A.D. 1658-1707) are monotonous in character. However, with the legend on the reverse indicating the regnal year. Aurangzeb started a type that survived through out the end of the Mughal series and series of various Indian states which issued currency in the name of the Mughal emperors.

As the champion of Sunni orthodoxy, Aurangzeb issued a number of ordinances to make the Muslim conform to the orthodox rules of conduct as taught by the *Quaran*<sup>1</sup>. He gave up the practice of inscribing the *Kalima*<sup>1</sup> on the coins.

## Coins of the Sikhs

The Sikh coinage falls into two distinct categories : Trans Sutlej and Cis-Sutlej.

In the year 1765 A.D. the Sikhs took possession of Lahore and they struck their coins at Dar-ul-Sultant Lahore in 1822 *Samvat Bikaram*. Their silver coins bear the following Persian legend on 'obverse'.

*Deg, Tag, Fatah Nushrt bedrang Yaftaz Nanak Guru Gobind Singh and on the reverse Zerol Dar-ul-Saltant Lahore and date 1822 (samvat). The weight and sizes of the silver rupee is almost equal to the Mughal rupee of 178 grs. or 11.535 gms<sup>2</sup>. Silver is pure. The copper paisa bears a legend in Gurmukhi characters (Sri Guru Nanak ji).*

In 1799 A.D. Ranjit Singh entered Lahore and struck as his first coin in silver in 1856 *samvat* B.K. His coins do not bear his name but continue the same Persian coin legend as hitherto. Under Ranjit Singh coins were minted at Lahore, Amritsar and Multan.

In 1767 A.D. Ahmed Shah Durani again invaded Punjab and then conferred the right of coining money in his territory and title of *Raja-i-Rajgan* on Amar Singh, the chief of Patiala. The Phulkian chief of Kaithal adopted the Durani, coin-legend on their coins.

*Hukam Shurd az Qadar-i-Bechun ba Ahmad Badshah*

*Sikka zan bar sim-o-zar az auj-i-mahi ta ba mah.*

1. Srivastava, A.L. : *History of India* (1000-1707 A.D.), 1989,
  2. Ibid. Rao Uttam Singh's booklet.
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The coin distinct is seldom complete on the Sikh coins. The gold and silver are pure. The weight of the Patiala gold *Ashrafi* or *mohur* is  $10\frac{3}{4}$  *mashas* or 10.500 gms. and that of silver rupee is  $11\frac{1}{4}$  *mashaas* or 10.900 gms.

The rulers of Patiala regularly coined money which circulated even beyond their territory. The mint at Patiala remained active since 1767 A.D. upto Ist quarters of 19th century. Each ruler put his own distinct mark instead of his name on the coin without changing the legend, the Nabha Rajas adopted the trans Sultaj legend on their coins after the death of Raja Jaswant Singh A.D. 1840. The Jind Rajas also issued gold and silver coins upto 1865 A.D.

The Sikh coins of the trans Sutlej and Cis-Sutlej regions went out of circulation after 1877 A.D.

As already stated, the right of coinage was conferred on Patiala ruler by Ahmad by Shah Durani. No copper coin was ever minted and only on one occasion, in the reign of Maharaja Narinder Singh, 8-*anna*, and 4-*anna* pieces were struck<sup>1</sup>. But rupees and gold coins or *asharifis* were coined at intervals upto 1895, when the mint was closed for ordinary coinage.

The Patiala rupee was known as *Raja Shahi* rupee. It was rather lighter than British rupee but contained the same amount of silver. The rupees known as *Nanak Shahi* were used in connection with the religious ceremonies at Dusseshra and Dewali festivals<sup>2</sup>.

## Pre- British Situation of Coinage

During the early period of Mughal rule, gold *mohars* and silver rupees were both current in northern India. The rise of numerous independent kingdoms on the break-up of the Mughal empire led to the introduction of a multiplicity of coins, as the issue of coins was regarded as one of the insignia of sovereignty. It has been estimated that as many as 994 different types of coins, of both gold and silver, were current in India<sup>3</sup>. This system had many disadvantages for the people in the field of commerce and trade.

The British began striking coins in the name of Shah Alam,

the titular Mughal emperor, in the 18th century and continued the process further. The gold *mohur* with its smaller denominations was struck at Murshidabad. The gold *mohur* weighed 188 grains or 12.181 gms. This weight of the gold coins remained unchanged until 1832 A.D. Silver rupee and coins of smaller denominations were struck at all mints. These coins were machine made. Uptill then coins were handmade. The melting of the

1. *Mahendragarh District Gazetteer*, 1988, p.153.
  2. *Imperial Gazetteer of India provincial series*, pp.295-96.
  3. *Faridabad District Gazetteer*, 1994, p.244.
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edges of silver coins upto 1818 A.D. was aslant, afterwards the melting of the edges of gold and silver coins was straight and later the silver coin had a plain edge upto 1832 A.D. Gold and silver coins were pure like those of the Mughal coins.

In 1832 the British East India Company struck coins in the name of the English King, William IV. The gold *mohurs* of william weighed 360 and 180grs. i.e. 23.388 and 11.664 gms. respectively and silver rupee weighed 180 grains. In 1837 A.D. the British East India Company issued coins in the name of Queen Victoria. Her gold *mohur* and silver rupee had a equal weight e.g. 180 grains.

The East India Company tried to issue silver and gold coins with a definite legal ratio, weight and fineness. But owing to the fluctuations in the value of the two metals, it proved exceedingly difficult to maintain legal ratio between the two types of coins. Gradually the gold *mohur* being undervalued, disappeared.

In 1841, an attempt was made to reintroduce gold coins; the gold *mohurs* were accepted for public payment at the rate of fifteen rupees to a *mohur*. But price of gold fell owing to the discoveries of metal in Australia and California in 1848-49. Lord Dalhousie definitely abandoned the experiment of 1841. Gold was thus given up as a medium of exchange. But this led to the scarcity of money, so trade suffered. Several proposals were given to introduce gold currency in India instead of silver, but no effect was given to them till today. During 1908, coinage included 1 rupee (Silver), 8-*anna* piece, 4-*anna* piece, 1 *anna* and paise.

In 1950 for the first time the coins of free India were issued<sup>1</sup>.

Upto 1957, the coinage was as under :—

- (i) Silver rupee,  $\frac{1}{2}$  rupee,  $\frac{1}{4}$  rupee and  $\frac{1}{8}$  rupee;
- (ii) Quarternary alloy rupee,  $\frac{1}{2}$  rupee and  $\frac{1}{4}$  rupee;
- (iii) Nickel rupee,  $\frac{1}{2}$  rupee and  $\frac{1}{4}$  rupee;
- (iv) Cupronickel 8 *anna* ,4 *anna*, 2 *anna* , 1 *anna* and  $\frac{1}{2}$  *anna*;
- (v) Nickel brass 2 *anna*, 1 *anna* and  $\frac{1}{2}$  *anna* ;
- (vi) Copper double pice, Single pice, half pice and pie and
- (vii) Bronze single pice, half pice and *pie*.

An *anna* was equal to 4 pice or 12 *pies* and pice was equal to 3 *pies*.

From April 1957, the decimal system of coinage was introduced in the country. Now a rupee consists of 100 paise with different coins in the denomination

1. P.L. Gupta : Coins, 1969 p.173.

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of 1,2,3,5,10,20,50 and one rupee and five rupee. The currency notes are current at present in the denomination of rupee 1,2,5,10,20,50,100 and 500.

The currency note of 1000 rupees were in circulation a couple of decade ago in the country but this series of notes were demonetised to curb the black money in circulation. Now the Govt. has circulated 1000- rupee notes.

## **Chief Features of a 1000-rupee note**

The Reserve Bank of India introduced the one thousand rupee note on October 9, 2000. The Rs. 1000 note, which is pale orange in colour, has several distinct features. For one, the printing of the figures '1000' looks blue when the note is lying flat and green when it is held up. Also, the security thread can be seen alternatively on one side of the note only. When held up against light, one can see 'RBI' and '1000' written on the security thread. The number of note, when seen face up, is in fluorescent red on the bottom left side of the note and in fluorescent blue on the top right side of the note.

The one thousand rupee note introduced on 9th October, is in the Mahatma Gandhi series bearing the father of the nation's portrait in the water mark. The note bears the signatures of RBI Governor, Bimal Jalan and has a length of 177 mm. and width of 73 mm.

The notes of above denomination are printed in a combination of off-set and intaglio process. The overall colour scheme is generally pink (light peach colour with grey off set back ground) and the Mahatma Gandhi portrait printed in grey colour, which is in contrast to the general back ground scheme.

Mahatma's portrait numeral 1000, RBI seal and legend, guarantee, and promise clauses and governor's signatures are printed by intaglio process. An important feature introduced on these notes is that the numeral '1000' above the legend 'ek hazaar rupaiya' (in Hindi) is printed in optically variable ink, as already stated, a colour shifting ink.

The water mark window has the portrait of Mahatma Gandhi with light and shade effect and a readable window security

thread alternatively visible on the obverse but to tally embedded on the reverse.

## Theh Polar-A Numismatic Study

The village under the present study, i.e. Theh Polar (Theh of Polar ) is situated at a distance of about 15 kms. from Kaithal towards north on Kaithal-Cheeka road,

1. News item appeared on September 27, 1997.

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which cuts the monud into two parts. Most of the parts of the mound are under present day habitation. The ruins of the site lie on the southern bank of the Saraswati river. The village was placed on the archaeological map when H.L. Srivastva conducted excavation here. During the recent times Painted Grey Ware was reported from the site. According to the local traditions the village was destroyed before the *Mahabharata* war. Traditions also describe the place as an abode of Paulastya Muni, who was the ancestor of the Ravana. The name polar is a corrupt form of Paulastya.

The purpose of writing this paper is to put before the scholars the entire numismatic evidence, at a glance, from a single site<sup>1</sup>. So far this type of study has not been conducted by any scholar, except a brief paper by Rodgers, in which only a few coins of a particular period were described. In the past only a particular type of coins, of new variety etc., are reported and illustrated. Some earlier scholars even did not mention the site from where the oins were collected. They some times purchased coins from metal dealers of the local city market, and on the basis of that the provenance of coin is difficult to authenticate. To cite a few examples, Rodgers writes, "In

Jagadhri I met with a gold coins of Samudra Gupta, a hemidrachm of Appolodotus and one of Antimachus, which, I am sure, had been obtained from Madalpur, "and similarly Cunningham reports 300 copper coins which "were all found between the Sutlej and Jamna rivers"<sup>2</sup> or sometimes the coins are referred to but no description and illustration is given, as Cunningham writes, "I obtained no less than 125 Hindu coins of all the ages"<sup>3</sup>. There are scores of such examples. In this state, it is not possible for the scholars to know the provenance of the coins, their description and illustrations. Here, in this, an attempt has been made to describe not only the earlier reported coins and seals but also the coins collected by Shri Manmohan Kumar from the site under the present study. These coins are classified chronologically, and are described and illustrated.

Before the present explorations at the site in 1975, only a few seals, sealings and coins were reported from the site. The explorations yielded so many more coins, different from the earliest coins i.e. Punch-marked coins down to the modern coins. In this paper coins only upto the Sahis are given.

During the excavations conducted by H.L. Srivastava, some clay seals and sealings were recovered. Some of these seals bear legends *in relievo* while the others have their devices sunk in clay, like the emblem of bull, trident, *charanapadukas* and lotus etc. Two copper seals have a trident emblem and legend *sam-mukhn (e) kas*

1. *Journal of Haryana Studies*, Vol. XI, Nos. 122, 1979, p.I.
  2. *Coins of Ancient India*, p. 79.
  3. Cunningham: *Archaeological Survey of India Reports*, Vol. II (Simla 1871), p. 229.
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(i) *Svarsya* i.e., in the presence of Lord of Kasi. Another seal with *trisula* emblem and *kasisvara* along with a seal with legend *Sri Rajama (ha) ta* and another seal has only last letters of the name *bhadrasya*. Most of these seals, as is evident from the trident, bull etc., which are related with Siva and secondly the name ending with *Isvara viz. Kasisvara* is also one of the names of Lord Siva. The representation of the *Charnapadukas* is associated with Buddhism. The seal with the fire altar and the inscription *Sri Rajama (ha) ta* belongs to some government official and so also the seal with the legend ending with *bhadrasya*! Apart from these seals and sealings the site also yielded some rude imitations of coins of Vasudeva. Some Indo-Scythian coins were also reported from the site i.e. Theh Polar. But there is no other reference to these coins in any other text<sup>1</sup>. The other during excavations from the place are described in the following pages.

### **Punch-marked Coins**

The earliest coins of India are the Punch-marked coins. The present site yielded two Punch-marked coins.

(A) Metal : Silver; Shape: Circular

Size : 1. 85 cms. (diameter); Weight: 2. 65 gms.

Obverse : Sun, three arched hill and some other indistinct symbols.

Reverse : Blank.

#### **Coin No. 2**

(B) Metal : Silver; Shape : Circular

Size : 1.47 cms. (dia.); Weight: 3.20 gms.

Obverse : Sun Symbol, Ujjain Symbol and some indistinct symbols.

Reverse : Three arched hill.

### **Indo-Parthian Coins (c. Ist Century A.D.)**

(A) Metal : Copper; Shape : Round

Size : 1.17 cms.; Weight : 1. 85 gms.

Obverse : Bust of the king to right.

Reverse : Greek deity Nike, Winged slanting and traces of legend.

1. *Karnal District Gazetteer* (1976), p. 188; Punjab District Gazetteer, Vol. VI-A. Karnal District Gazetteer, 1918 (Lahore 1919) p. 14.

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## **Kushna Coins (c.1st century to 3rd century A.D.)**

**A. Coins of Kanishka. c. 1st century A.D.**

### **Coin No.1**

Metal : Copper Shape; Circular

Size : 2.73 cms. (dia.); Weight ; 15.90 gms.

Obverse : King standing to left, holding spear in the left hand and offering at an altar with his right hand, illegible Greek inscription.

Reverse : Radiating Greek deity to left, holding some indistinct object in both hands, Kadphises symbol.

### **Coin No.2**

Metal : Copper Shape Circular

Size : 2.62cms. (dia.); Weight : 13.30 gms.

Obverse : Same as on coin No.1

Reverse : Iraninan deity to left with left hand resting on hip and right hand upraised.

## **B. Coins of Vasudeva**

### **Coin No. 1**

Metal : Copper; shape Circular

Size : 2.18 cms. (dia.), Weight 7.95 gms.

Obverse : King standing to left with trident in the left hand and offering with right hand, traces of legend.

Reverse : Siva standing, with trident in left hand before the bull.

### **Coin No. 2**

Metal : Copper, Shape Circular

Size : 2.11 cms (dia.) Weight 4.05 gms.

Obverse : King standing to left

Reverse : Seated Ardoksho.

## **Yaudheya Coins (c. 3rd-4th century A.D.)**

Yaudheyas were one of the most important tribal republican people of ancient India and their coins are wide spread in Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan and U.P. These coins range from c. 2nd-1st century B.C. to c. 3rd-4th century A.D. Coins of c. 3rd-4th century A.D. were found from the site and one specimen is described below.

Metal : Copper; Shape; round

Size : 2.48 cms. (dia.); Weight ; 9.85gms.

Obverse : Karttikeya standing, facing, holding a spear in right hand and left hand resting on hip, peacock to left and inscription, '*Yaudheya ganasya jaya*' in Brahmi.

Reverse : Female deity walking to left, with left hand raised and right hand resting on hip, flower vase to left and border of dots.

## **Indo-Sassanian Coins**

With Vasudeva and Kanishka III the Kushana dynasty appears to have come to an end. In the middle of the 3rd century A.D., Sassanians were extending their power towards east. According to Farishta, Ardashri-I Babagan (c. 226-41 A.D.), the founder of the dynasty in Persia, conquered Balkha, Kharasan and Kabul and advanced as far as Serhind<sup>1</sup> (Punjab state). The subdued territories were governed by the princes of royal family and issued their coins. These Indo-Sassanian coins bear Sassanian bust on the obverse and fire altar on the reverse.

The site yielded a few stray coins also which are described below.

### **Coin No.1**

Metal : Silver; Shape; round

Size : 2.19 cms. (dia.); Weight: 3.25 gms.

Obverse : Blurred.

Reverse : Fire altar.

### **Coin No.2**

Metal : Silver coated copper; Shape; round

Size : 1.91 cms. (dia.); Weight: 3.25 gms.

Obverse : Crude bust of king to right.

Reverse : Degenerated fire altar.

## **Kidara Kushana Coins**

After the later Kusana rulers, the territories of the Kushanas under the Sassanid governors, passed on to kings of another dynasty or tribe which is known as Kidara

1. Majumdar, R.C. : *The Age of Imperial Unity*, p. 152.

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or Kidarites because the name of the first ruler was Kidara<sup>1</sup>.

Metal : Copper; Shape; round

Size : 2.95 cms. (dia.); weight: 6.15 gms.

Obverse : Crude figure of the king standing, to left and the rest of the flan is illegible.

Reverse : Crude figure of goddess seated on throne and the traces of legend.

## Kota Coins

A large number of copper coins are found in Punjab and Haryana region from various sites, which represent Siva and Nandi, in the later Kusana style on the reverse, while on the obverse there is a symbol which is taken by the scholars as composite legend "Kota". Nothing is known about the date and issuer of these coins. From the depiction of Siva and Nandi in the crude form, which is a clear imitation of the later Kusana coins of Vasudeva, it is evident that these coins were issued after that period and there is every probability that these coins formed the standard currency after the fall of the Kussanas. A few such coins, as detail below, were collected from the site.

### Coin No. 1



Metal : Copper; Shape; round

Size : 8.1cms. (dia.); Weight ; 3.80 gms.

Obverse : "Kota" written in Brahmi as given above, inside the beaded border

Reverse : Crude figure of Siva along with Nandi. Apart from these so called "Kota" coins, some coins with specific symbol which is taken by the scholars as "Thakapa" written in Brahmi, were also found from the site.

### **Coin No. 1**

Metal : Copper; Shape: round

Size : 1.88 cms (dia.); weight: 3.90gms.

Obverse : Specific symbol which can be read as "Thakapa".

Reverse : Blurred

1. Gupta, P.L. *Coins*, p. 32.

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### **Coin No.2**

Metal : Copper; Shape: Square

Size : 1.99X 1.74cms; weight : 4.60gms.

Obverse : Same as on coin No.1

Reverse : Humped bull walking to left, border of dots.

### **Coin of Harsha-Vardhana**

During the 6th-7th century A.D. the Pushpabhutis established

their dominion with their capital at Thanesar. But during the time of Harsa the capital was shifted to Kanauj. With the shifting of the capital the region around Thanesar began to lose its political importance though it continued to be a religious and cultural centre. Though the region was a centre of the Pushpabhuti activities yet not a single coin of this dynasty has so far been reported from the region. The coins of Harsavardhana are found mostly in U.P. Silver coins of the Gupta type were adopted by the Vardhanas. The coins of Siladiya (Harsavardhana ) of the Puspabhuti dynasty are known of the eastern peacock type coins of Kumargupta and Skandagupta . The historian found one such coin from the site and this coin is described here.

Obverse : Crowned head of the king to right and some illegible letters.

Reverse : Peacock standing facing legend va-ni-sa-va-pa-ti-sri-sa-la-da-tya-di-vam(ja) ya-ti.

The present coin is similar to the coins published earlier<sup>1</sup>, but on the obverse the head of the king is to the right.

## **Sahi Coins**

In about the second half of the ninth century A.D. a dynasty named Sahi was ruling in the region of Gandhara and Kabul. The coins of this dynasty are very common in Afganistan, Punjab, Haryana and throughout north India. These coins are found both in silver and copper. The silver coins of Samantadeva<sup>2</sup> and Spalpatideva were a standard currency of that period. These coins were even issued posthumously in their names. The site has a good number of such coins and a few are described here.

### **Coins No. 1**

Metal : Silver; Shape: round

Size : 1. 88 cms (dia.); weight; 3.25 gms.

1. *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1906, p. 846.

2. Gupta, P.L. *Coins*, p. 69.

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Obverse : King riding on a caparisoned horse holding a spear in the right hand.

Reverse : Recumbent humped bull to left and legend Sri Samantadeva.

### **Coin No.2**

Metal : Debased silver; shape; round

Size : 1.49 cms. weight; 3.30 gms.

Obverse : Same as on coin No. 1

Reverse : Same as on coin No. 1

### **Coin No. 3**

Metal : Copper; Shape ; round

Size : 1.51cms. (big) Weight; 2.95 gms.

Reverse : Recumbent caparisoned bull to left and legend Sri Samantadeva in Brahmi.

Obverse : King riding on caparisoned horse holding spear in his right hand.

### **Coin No. 4**

Metal : Copper; Shape; round

Size : 1.48 cms. (big) Weight ; 3.05 gms.

Obverse : Same as on No. 3

Reverse : Same as on No. 3

### **Coin No.5**

Metal : Copper; Shape; round

Size : 1.14 cms (dia.) weight : 2.95 gms.

Obverse : Same as No. 3

Reverse : Same as on No. 3

From the description of these and many other coins ranging from Punch-marked coins to the Sahi coins, it is apparent that the site is very rich and important so far as the numismatics is concerned. But so far we have not found the copper cast coins, earlier Yaudheya coins, Indo-Greek coins and Saka coins etc. from the site.

## **Matchless and Unique Art recognised at World level**

There are several Indians who made their contributions to the art in a unparalleled manner and they have entered at international fora from time to time. Dipak Syal, a qualified interior designer from Yamunanagar has been holder of four Guinness Book

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records . He is the only Asian with the records to his credit,<sup>1</sup> but he wants to do more. "I want to line up some more records breaking all human achievements to get a total of eleven records which will make me the person with the highest of Guinness Records", says the young artist. He is the perhaps the only person known to have made portraits on grains of rice. In his collection he has a number of portraits of prominent persons. One of them is the portraits of Mahatma Gandhi painted on a single grain. of rice.

Recently he sketched with naked eyes the portrait of H.H.

Sheikh Rashid Bin Saeed Al Maktoum as a millennium art piece on a rice grain with the name UAE flag (coloured) and his signature. And to make it extraordinary, the grain is passed through a human hair. He spent more than 700 hours in seven months to complete this special artifact master piece. Till date this is the first miniature work which has been done in fifteen years. This young artist started trying his hand on micro miniatures in 1985. As a school student he could not make a dent despite his excellent performance in arts and drawing.

In 1987, he started entering competitions. Finally, he succeeded in writing 813 alphabets on a single grain of rice which was far above the existing record during 1990. At present he can draw any body's portrait on a single grain of rice. Due to his wide recognition, the Guinness officials approached him for a performance and the artist with aplomb repeated the feat. They awarded him with the laurel of being the world record holder.

He uses a human hair split 11 times as a brush, dipped in a natural colours to write and draw on grains. Then the grain is polished with a thin layer of lacquer to give a long life. He does microminiatures with the naked eye. Each portrait or inscription takes six to twelve months. This is the statutory condition laid down by Guinness people that no external aids should be used to perform a feat.

He has credited for such records for writing 2,557 alphabets on a grain of rice, balancing 253 coins horizontally on the edge of a vertically free standing coin, balancing 21 coins horizontally, vertically and alternately on their edges and threading a sewing needle 8,927 times in two hours continuously (77 times in a minute).

He has also drawn the entire globe on a lizard egg. According to him, one must have a sharp eye sight, good reflexes and an artistic vision for indulging in minuscule writing or painting. He has won the State Award. Now he is eying the National award. He was honoured and sponsored by a number of big organizations in India and abroad. Recently his trip to Dubai was sponsored by Air India to display his latest masterpiece, 1. This write-up is based on the newsline sponsored by Ashwani Datta, appeared in *The Tribune*, dt. May 23, 2000.

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the portrait of Sheikh Rashid on a grain of rice which is the only piece in the World. It will be kept for public viewing at Sheikh Rashid Museum, Dubai. This will be proud moment for India, that an Indian artist's network will be kept in an international museum.

## Unique Story of Mangali's Rosary Beads

Mangali is a little known village, 12 km. from Hissar. The village has some mud-dwellings whereas other houses are brick and mortar structures and modern by rural standards.

This is a village in Haryana in which every resident earns for himself. It is one of the biggest producers of rosary beads, exporting them to countries like Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran, France, the UK and the USA. The village has more than 100 units which produce wooden beads for rosaries for the domestic purposes as well as the export markets.

**Genesis of this Art.**—The matchless art began way back in 1923 when a member of the Khati (carpenter) caste learnt the art of making sandalwood beads from his maternal uncles in Gurgaon district. An old resident of this hamlet recalls that when his father set-up the first hand-operated drilling machine, it drew derisive comments from fellow villagers. In those days *Khatis* made *charpoys*, doors and windows, simple furnitures and at the most, carts to be driven by animals. Carving beads was considered a lowly job. Slowly and steadily, a dozen such units operating from animal sheds for want of more space came up. In those days hand-operated drilling machines were messy and involved a lot of physical labour, therefore, production was modest. The villagers continued working this way for more than five long decades; then an electrically-driven drill was set up in 1974 by a progressive artisan. Until the early eighties, *khatis* owned all

units. Thereafter, the principle of demand and supply forced other castes to plunge into bead-making for rosaries.

Today the village is one of the biggest producers of beads made of sandalwoods, red-wood, *ber*-wood, *shisham* and Ebonite. Mostly, these beads are used for making rosaries for members of different religious communities. As per religious bindings, rosaries for Hindus have 108 beads, while those for Muslims have first 100. The rosary beads were earlier carved from sandalwood only. Now some change has been effected. With the cost of sandal wood sky-rocketing, the poor communities of artisans have begun using beads of cheaper materials like red-wood, *shisham* and *ber* wood. But it is confirmed from these artists that beads supposed to be exported are still made from sandalwood.

Until nineties, a few units engaged in making the ivory beads for the purpose of making neclaces. However, with the ivory becoming scarce, none of the units deal

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in ivory beads now. Some units holders are feeling some hindrances such as sales tax on sandalwood. According to them this came as big blow and considerably reduced the exports. The popularity of godmen like Bapu Asa Ram has given a new lease of life to the art and profession. Besides exporting the beads to foreign counties like Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran, Abudhabi, France, the UK and USA, the Bapu's Ahmedabad *Ashram* is a major buyer of Mangli's rosaries. It is estimated that a family earns on an average Rs. 5,000 a month from this avocation.

Bead-making is a laborious task. It keeps the entire family busy throughout the day. Everybody chips in the moment he or she is free. The young boys work on the drill. The aged

and the young including women help thread the beads. Even toddlers are not spared. They can always collect the waste from under the drills. It is a co-operative effort in more ways than one.

Due to increased competition, the villagers are diversifying into other spheres. A few of them began making iron chains for animals. These chains do not require machines run on power as these chains are made of by hand.

## **Gitanjali in Sanskrit**

Born in Jind district Mahaveer Prasad Sharma got his education in Hindi and Sanskrit. Muse seemed to have attracted him early in life and he started composing Sanskrit verse. He is aware of the limited audience for his writing, yet he insisted on writing in Sanskrit. He believes, "there is natural rhythm in Sanskrit language and it does not take much efforts to create music out of words". It is his intense love for Sanskrit that prompted him to translate "*Gitanjali*" into this language. He remarks that Sanskrit is a language of intellectual elite.

While there may be a number of translations of the world famous "*Gitanjali*" written by the laureate Rabindra Nath Tagore, there is none so far in Sanskrit. Mahaveer Prasad Sharma, a well-known Hindi and Sanskrit poet from Haryana filled this gap by translating "*Gitanjali*" into Sanskrit and that too in verse.

The translation has been appreciated by critics. The translation appropriately called "*Sanskrit Gitanjali*" has won several awards in its very first year of publication. Recently it got an award from Delhi Sanskrit academy and has also been shortlisted for other prestigious awards.

Mahaveer Prasad is currently busy with "*Vijaypatram*", the Sanskrit translation of the "*Zafarnama*" and Guru Gobind Singh's letter to Aurangzeb in Persian. Translation particularly of a highly acclaimed literary work is not a simple job. It requires deep and wide knowledge and insight into different languages and literatures. "It is not just a translation, it is transliteration".



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Mahaveer Prasad has mastered seven languages including Sanskrit, Hindi, Bangla, Persian, Urdu, English and Punjabi. Besides, he knows several dialects like Dogri, Bhojpuri, Chhatisgarhi and others. He has also the working knowledge of several other Indian languages like Marathi, Gujarati and Oriya.

## The Quarn in Sanskrit

Late Prof. Satya Dev Kamboj, resident of village Alahar of Yamuna Nagar district, was born in 1918. He earned fame and name by translating the *Quarn* in Sanskrit which was published in 1984. This literaray feat earned encomium for him from many quarters. Haryana Sahitya academy awards him Rs. 5000/-, Maharastra Govt. Rs. 25,000/- and Delhi Govt. Rs. 51,000/- Besides the above, he also drafted at least 19 books in Sanskrit.

## Cultural Significance of Inscriptions

Inscriptions are considered very important in understanding the cultural and historical activities of the preceding generations. In Haryana there are hundreds of inscriptions engraved on rocks, stone pillars, slabs and images; copper, earthen objects; terracotta tablets and bricks and birch bark. The language of the records is different at different times. It was Sanskrit and Prakrit in ancient times; Arabic and Persian in Medieval times and English in modern times. Very few records in Hindi and *Devanagri* script have been reported so far<sup>1</sup>.

The earliest epigraphic account from Haryana available so far is inscribed on sandstone pillar known by various names, viz. Bhimasena's pillar, Golden pillar, Feroz Shah's pillar and Delhi-Siwalik Pillar. This historic pillar standing at Firoz Shah Kotla, Delhi was carried to this place by Firoz Shah Tughlaq from the village of Topra where it stood originally.

Topra pillar is identified by Cunningham at Topra village in Ambala district. Besides several minor records of pilgrims and travellers, the pillar bears three inscriptions of the Chauhan Vigraharaja IV and seven edicts of Ashoka.

Next comes a fragmentary terracotta plaque from Sugh (ancient Srughna) of Yamunanagar district representing a child in seated pose and learning the vowels. This plaque is now exhibited in the National Museum, New Delhi. On the basis of palaeography of the letters and the art of the plaque, it can be assigned to the 2nd century B.C. The writing of vowels on wooden-board for the purpose of learning is the earliest available depiction, in the form of '*Barakhadi*' not only in Indian art but also on any kind of material.

The only Kharoshthi inscription, known from Haryana containing two incomplete lines and one letter i.e. (*akshara*) of a third one is discovered from Karnal.

1. Phogat, S.R., *Inscriptions of Haryana*, 1978, p. I.

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It belongs to the Saka-Kusana period. Then comes the five inscriptions reported from Tusham (Tosham). Neither of them is dated though, Fleet on Palaeographical basis has assigned these to the end of the fourth or the beginning of the fifth century A.D. A stone pillar of Ashoka's time is now installed in Gujri Mahal at Hissar. It bears some eight names of pilgrims on different parts, the palaeographically these records belong to the end of the fourth or beginning of the fifth century.

Seven sculptured terracotta bricks depicting scenes from the *Ramyana* were found from Nacharkhera, a village near Tohana in Fatehabad district <sup>1</sup>. Two of these are inscribed in Gupta characters. The inscription engraved on the specimen

depicting Lord Ram, Sita and Lakhshmana talking to Jatayu is taken from Valmiki's *Ramyaana*, whereas the other specimen bears the name of *Trisira rakhasa* who shown being informed by a soldier that 14 *rakhasa* were unable to defeat Lord Ram. The specimens possibly belong to a Vaisnava temple made of terracotta bricks.

Cunningham discovered two fragmentary stone inscriptions from Kapalmochan village of Yamunanagar district. Both the records in Gupta characters belong to a temple at the site of the discovery of the inscriptions. A stone inscription from Laos (Indo-China) of the fifth century A.D. records the setting up of Kurukshetra *Mahatirtha* by the Maharajadhirja Sri Devamka in his country. R.C. Majumdar who brought the inscription into light has compared the verses of this record with those found in the *Mahabharata* and the *Puranas*, and believes that the court *panditas* of Devamka must have come across such eulogies in Indian literature.

Three inscriptions from Pinjore were brought to light by Cunningham. Of these, the first one is quite illegible; the only important information we can get from it is the name of Pinjore, which in ancient times was called Panchpura. The second one contains six lines but its contents are not clear. The third record is in Devanagiri script and records the names of some persons, but the object of writing is not known.

A terracotta seal from Agroha bears an inscription in five lines in Gupta characters. This seal throws a significant light on the history and administration of the Yaudheys. From this seal we gather that the leader of the Republic used to bear monarchical titles. This fact is attested by the Bijayagadha inscription. The Yaudheys who were a war like people had their capital at Rohtak and are known in Junagadh inscription as indomitable Kshatriyas.

Another important record is the copper seal of Harshvardhan from Sonapat. It records the genealogy of the Pushyabhuti rulers and provides the information that Pushyabhuti rulers were devout worshippers of the Sun God, and that Rjya wardhana (II) is called *paramasaugata*.

1. Sulak Ram : *Archaeology of Rohtak and Hissar districts*, Ph. D. thesis, 1972, p. 203.

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A stone inscription from Kaman, the headquarters of a tahsil of the same name in Bharatpur district of Rajasthan falls into two parts, the first of which is effaced and contains a description of a temple of Shiva whereas the second part contains seven different records ranging from the year 180 to 299 probably belonging to Harsha Era. The important informations we get from the view-point of Haryana history from this inscription are the (i) recording of a Brahman named Kakkuka who was a resident of Rohtak, and (ii) the donation of a merchant named Vajrata. Vajrata of this inscription is the same merchant who is mentioned in an undated inscription of Mahendrapala from Pehowa as an ornament of his family who obtained all his wishes and gained an enormous rise in honest profession<sup>1</sup>.

One of the inscriptions discovered from Pehowa (882 A.D.) and of reign of Bhojdeva throws a significant light on religious and cultural history of the region. Pehowa, according to this inscription, was a great trade centre for horse dealer. Another inscription of the time of Bhoja, the Pratihara ruler was found at Sirsa. It is of much value from the view point of religious history of the region. It records the construction of a brick temple of Shiva by Nilkantha, a saint of *Pasupta* sect at Sirsa. It gives us an information that atleast for five generation of the *pasupata* sect flourished here during the eight and ninth centuries A.D.

Another inscription from Pehowa of the time of Pratihara Mahendrapala (A.D. 895 to A.D. 905) speaks of the Tomaras. The object of writing is to register the building of triple temple of Vishnu at Pehowa by three Tomara brothers namely Gogga, Purnaraja and Devraja. A terracotta, tablet bearing the 'seven musical notes' was unearthed during the excavations of Agroha by H.L. Srivastava<sup>2</sup>. This tablet, bearing musical notes, viz *ni, dha, pa, ma, ga, re, sa* of 9th century A.D. is one of the earliest archaeological evidences for the history of music.

A stone slab inscription from the village of Mohanbari, Jhajjar tahsil is important for religious history. It speaks of a temple of Vishnu<sup>3</sup>. Another Vaishnava record engraved on a votive Vaisnava temple carved in a single piece of stone about 40" high is found from Gurawara village, (Gurgaon area). The inscription records the death of a person named Vishnu Hari, the worshipper of God Vishnu. It is interesting to note that death of the worshipper is recorded in *Saka Samvat* where as the date of engraving this inscription is dated in *Vakrama Samvat*.

A stone inscription from Hansi of the time of Prithviraja II, the Chauhan ruler of *Sakam-bhari*, speaks of the fortification of Hansi. It further provides an important

1. Journal of Haryana Studies, Vol.I No.1, 1969,p.16.
2. Srivastava, H.L. Excavations at Agroha Punjab, Memiors Archaeologival Survey of India, No.61,p.4.
3. Silak Ram, op.cit.p.246.

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information that Hansi was stronghold of the Chauhans of *Sakam bhari*. They fortified the city and made it a base in order to check the attacks of the Muslims. They had started campaigning Haryana right from the early 10th century A.D. and accordinagly, as we know from Harisa (Rajasthan) inscription killed Tomara rulers, namely Rudra, Salvana and Tantrapala of Delhi.

Another inscription on a large slab in Udaipur Museum belonging to the reign of Rana Makala of Mewar and dated 1487 V.S. (A.D.1430) refers to the construction of a well by the Brahman Vidhyadhara who was the descendant of Surapala of the Gauda family of Haryana. Another

fragmentary Chauhan *prasati* from Rajasthan, at present, in the Ajmer Museum makes mentions of the achievements of Arnoraja, the Chauhan king and refers to his conquest of *Haritanaka* (Haryana) country also<sup>1</sup>. A fourarmed Sam Karshana image of Vishnu in black stone was found to the southeast of the Qutab Minar, Delhi. It bears an inscription which provides us the information that in *Samvat* 1204 (A.D. 1147) this image was installed by a merchant of *Rohitaka* (Rohtak).

Ladnu (Jodhpur district) of Rajasthan inscription refers to Dhilli (Delhi) as the capital of *Haritana* (Haryana) country. Another Vighraharaja IV, the Chauhan ruler, are engraved on the above mentioned pillar, Firoz Shah Kotla, Delhi which bears Ashoka edicts. Visaladeva, son of the illustrious Avelladeva king of Sakambhari is said to have conquead the land between the vindhhya and the Himalaya mountain and by repeatedly by exterminating the Malechehhes (Muslims) he made Aryalarta once more the abode of Aryas.

Bojola, Udaipur district of Rajasthan, Jain rock incription of the time of Chauhan, Somesvara records the genealogy of the Chauhan Kings, and further records their conquest of *Dhillika* (Delhi) and *Asika* (Hansi), the stronghold of *Haritanaka* (Haryana<sup>2</sup>). Badaun(UP) inscription refers to some Saiva ascetics of whom one Isanasiva is said to be the eldest son of Vasavana, a resident of Hariyana (Haryana).

A stone slab inscription dated *Vikrama Samvat* 1333(A.D 1276) and of the time of Ghiyas-ud-din Balban was discovered from Bohar village, near Rohtak. The slab seems to have been taken to this village by some unknown person or agency. The object of this inscription is to record the excavation of a step well between Palamba and Kusumapura villages in the then Union Territory of Delhi. It records that the land of Hariyanka (Haryana) was first ruled by Tomaras, then by the Chauhans, and was being ruled by the Sakas (Muslims) when the inscription was written. This

1. Sharma, Desharatha, *Early Chauhan Dynasties*, 1959,p.45.

2. *Journal of the Asiatic Society, Bombay*, Volume IV, part I,p.40.

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inscription is an important source for the chronology of the rulers of Delhi from Sahab-ud-din to Ghiyas-ud-din Balban. It also gives the glory of the capital city of Delhi where Udhhdhara, the excavator of the Boali was born.

The inscriptions from Medieval period and modern period are also very important. To know the effervescence of the Mughals, the inscription of that period are considered a source material.

A list, prepared by S.R. Phogat consists of 78 inscriptions of Medieval from Rohtak, ten from Maham, eleven from Jhajjar, two from Panipat, one from Sewah near Panipat, nine from Sonipat, eleven from Hissar, two from Barwala, seventeen from Hansi and two from Fatehabad. Most of these inscriptions belong to Mughal period-43; one is of Muhammad bin Sam's time; and thirty three of the later Pathan kings. These inscriptions were found either on mosques or on tombs. Unfortunately during post Independence period, many of these building have suffered damages and as such a large number of these inscriptions have been misplaced or damaged.

These inscriptions are an important source of the history of the Medieval times. They provide details about many important officials, saints, and famous personages who lived in Haryana during the Sultanate period. They also give some indications of the social, economic and cultural life of the people. These inscriptions are in Urdu script.

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