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Waris Shah. The name itself is a symbol of Sufi mysticism, love and romance. This great Sufi poet lived during 16th century in Punjab. Considered as Shakespeare of Punjabi poetry, Waris Shah is still alive in the hearts of millions of million people across sub-continent. His most celebrated work is Heer. Though people like Damodar Das, Ahmad Gujjar, Mukbal also tried their hands on composing Heer but Waris Shah is neck and shoulder above them. There are many stories around Heer. Some believe that Heer was actually about a woman whom Waris Shah loved and her Ranjha is Waris Shah himself. Others say that it is a traditional folklore of Punjab in which Heer and Ranjha are the lovers and story is woven around them. But it is only a matter of academic interest. What is most important is that Heer by Waris Shah stands today as one of the most precious and celebrated Composite Heritage of the sub-continent, specially Punjab part of India and Pakistan. Waris Shah is immortal and his Heer is also immortal. Here we present very small portion of Heer by Waris Shah with English translation.

Waris Shah di Heer

Couplet 1:

*awwal hamad Khuda da wird keeje, ishq keeta su jagg da mool miyaan..
pehle aap hi Rabb ne ishq keeta, mashooq hai Nabi Rasool miyaan..
ishq peer fakeer da martaba hai, mard ishq da bhala ranjool miyaan..
khile tinha de baagh qaloob andar, jinha keeta hai ishq qabool miyaan..*

Translation:

First remember that admirable God, Who made Love the cause of this world..
Firstly it was God who fell in Love, and the Prophet is the beloved..
Those who fall in love are like Holy Saints, man is better as a slave of Love..
Gardens blossom in the hearts of those, who have accepted the Love..

Couplet 2:

*dui naat Rasool maqbool wali, jeende haqq nazool laulaak keeta..
wali karke martaba wadda ditta, sabh khalaq de aib thee paak keeta..
sarwar hoye ke auliya anbiyaan da, agge haqq de aap nu khaak keeta..
kare ummati-ummati roz mehshar, khushi chhadd ke jiu ghamnaak keeta..*

Translation:

Second, praise the Prophet, who revealed the true message of God..
made him the Guardian of high rank, and pure of faults of whole Creation..
He became the leader of the Holy people, and sacrificed his life for truth..
He will call his followers on the Day of Judgement, for whom he has left his happiness and adopted grievance..

Couplet 3:

*chaare yaar Rasool de chaar gauhar, sabha ik thi ik charhendrhe ne..
Abu Bakr, te Umar, Usman, Ali, aapo aapne guni sohendrhe ne..
jinha sidaq yakeen tehqeeq keeta, raah rabb de sees vikendrhe ne..
zauq chhadd ke jinha ne zuhd keeta, wah wah oh rabb de bandrhe ne...*

Translation:

Four friends (four Caliphs) of the Prophet are like four jewels, each surpassing others in the Council..
Abu Bakr, Umar, Usman and Ali are creditable for their own qualities..
those who have discovered faith and trust, only those heads are acceptable to the God..
those who have abandoned the perceptivity and adopted asceticism are the true men of the God..

Couplet 4:

*maddah peer di hubb de naal keeje, jeende khadimaan vich peeriyaaan ni..
baajh es janaab de paar nahi, lakh dhoonde phiran fakeeriyaaan ni..
jehde peer de nazar manzoor hoye, ghar tinha de peeriyaaan meeriyaaan ni..
roz hashar de peer de talibaan nu, hath sajjrhe milan giyaan cheeriyaaan ni...*

Translation:

Praise the Pir with love, in whose service lies the spirituallity..
Without His Majesty there is no success, may you search a lot for reclusion..
Those who are accepted by the sight of the Pir, will achieve powers and spirituallity..
On the day of Judgement, Pir's disciples will get the prize in the right hand..

(Pir = Pir Makhdoom of Kasur)

Couplet 5:

*Maudud da laadla Peer Chishti, Shakarganj Masud bharpoor hai ji..
khandaan vich Chisht de kaamliyat, sheher fakkar da Pattan maamoor hai ji..
baiyaan Qutubaan de vich hai peer kaamil, jeendi aajizi zuhd manzoor hai ji..
Shakarganj ne aan makaan keeta, dukh dard Punjab da door hai ji...*

Translation:

Dear to Maudud, Shakarganj is abundant of spirituallity..
Perfection is there in the Order of Chishtis, and city of this Holy Saint, Pakpattan is like heaven..
His name is there in the list of 22 Apostles, whose humbleness and self-discipline were accepted by the God..
When Shakarganj started residing here, the pains and sorrows of Punjab were eradicated..

(Maudud = Khwaja Maudud Chishti; Shakarganj = Sheikh Farid; 22 Apostles = 22 Apostles of Chisht Order)

Couplet 6:

*yaaran asaan nu aan sawaal keeta, ishq Heer da nawwa banaiye ji..
es prem di jhok da sabh qissa, jeebh sohni naal sunaiye ji..
naal ajab bahaar de sheyer keh ke, Ranjhe Heer da mel milaiye ji..
yaaran naal majlisaan vich beh ke, maza Heer de ishq da paiye ji..*

Translation:

Some friends asked me this question, let's talk something new about the Love of Heer..
the complete legend of this fuel of Love, tell us with your tongue..
by saying couplets in a beautiful way, let's re-unite Ranjha and Heer..
sitting alongwith friends in the gatherings, let's enjoy the Love of Heer..

Couplet 7:

*hukam mann ke sajjanaan pyaareyaan da, qissa ajab bahaar da jorheya ae..
fiqra jorh ke khoob darust keeta, nawwa phull gulaab da torheya ae..
bahut jiu de vich tadbeer karke, Farhaad pahaarh nu phorheya ae..
sabha vinnh ke zeb bana ditta, jeha itar gulab da nichorheya ae..*

Translation:

following an order of friends, a beautiful legend has been written..
many sentences were re-corrected, like a new rose has been plucked..
after thinking a lot in the mind, as Farhad has smashed the mountain..
by piercing all created an ornament, as perfume is squeezed from the rose..

(Farhad = an architect from Istanbul, who has smashed a mountain for his beloved Shirin)

SUVASTU

Introduction and Background

Arshad Karim

Swat, PAKISTAN

Swat is historically an important area. Its rich archeological treasure is testimony to a glorious past. Its serene natural beauty, abundance of water, forest, wild life, good agriculture and grazing land and its strategic position provided a good milieu to nurture civilizations but at the same time attracted invaders. The coins found here provide ample evidence of transactions with contemporary civilizations. Alexander came here in 327 B.C; Gandhara Civilization reached its zenith here; and Mahmud of Ghazna's forces invasion of Swat in early 11th century A. D. brought the area under the fold of Islam. Pukhtuns of different tribes gradually occupied the region a thousand to eight hundred years ago who were subsequently driven out by Yusufzai Pukhtuns in the 16th century who live here ever since. Living in a classical tribal matrix, they finally laid a skeletal structure of a state of their own in 1915 in Swat which was subsequently organized and solidified from 1917 onwards. The state was expanded and territories outside Swat were incorporated in it. However the territory westward from Landakay, already brought under British protectorate, could not be brought under the fold of the Swat State. In 1969 Swat State, along with the two princely states of Dir and Chitral, was merged in Pakistan and were made Districts of the Malakand Division of the Khyber Pukhtoonkhwa of Pakistan.

The area of the former Malakand Division is 29,872 sq. km. In 1976 the right bank Indus Kohistan was separated from Swat District and

was made part of the newly formed Kohistan District. Later on Buner and Shangla were also separated from Swat District in 1995 and 1997 respectively and were made full-fledged separate districts. Swat District lies between 34°-13'-55" and 35°-53'-40" north latitudes and 70°-47'-15" east longitude in the former Malakand Division of North-West Frontier Province of Pakistan. The area of the present day Swat District is about 3798 sq. km with a population of 1.249 million (Population Census Report, 1998).

In Swat the first conflict between the militants and military was started in November 2007, which badly affected 34 union councils of three Tehsils of Kabal, Matta and Khawaza Khaila. Agriculture production on a total area of 92,260 hectare was badly affected and the infrastructure damaged. With time the militants occupied all the remaining parts of the district and some other parts of Malakand Division including Buner district, and every walk of life in the region collapsed completely.

On May 4, 2009, the security forces launched a full fledged military operation in whole of Swat district and some parts of Buner, Shangla and lower Dir districts. It caused severe damages to physical infrastructure and broke down of services in Swat and other parts of Malakand Division, and resulted in migration of people into other areas for security and shelter. The operation was completed by the end of July 2009 and the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) were allowed to return to their homes. Although peace is restored in the area but still the people are suffering from psychological trauma and feeling of uncertainty.

BACKGROUND

“Suvastu” is that ancient and historical name of the “River Swat” which has been mentioned and preserved in the old books with a little phonical changes and alteration of today. “Suvastu” is not only the name of the “River Swat” but the whole of the paradise like valley is called after this name-which was looked upon as “Holy” by the distant races. Both banks of the Holy River have seen and experienced numerous nations, races and civilizations. Whether the savages and uncivilized, wild; or the Aryans who left Central Asia; or the nearby Dravidians, Buddhist, Huns who crossed over the peaks of the High Hills from China, as travelers itinerants devotees of Buddha, or Iranians or the Greeks from the West, or the Mughal Army from Afghanistan and India, or the English Army from the Southern Side (India)-all these have arrived here and settled and made the Valley their home. They drank the clear and transparent water of the “River Swat” and founded new civilization by virtue of its effect. They not only themselves changed with the passage of time, but took out their newer creed, religion and beliefs to the remaining world also. All these races and nations have left over their relics at the foot and at the top of these hills.

These reminiscences still tell their stories with their dumb founded speech. And the books written by those people, still chant the hymns of the praise of this area. The writers being produced by the area and who gave artistic booklets and rich writings to the world’s literature; cannot be ignored and weighed worthless. Moreover, Swat was such a place of learning and worship for the “Divines” of the high rank that they achieved not only ‘self-awareness’ but also, knowledge of God here. The mystic songs full of the praise of God, sung by those hermits left over as legacy, provide base and foundation for some of the religions even today. The poems that had been mused on this

soil, have gained such a perennial characteristic that even today they are sung in the different worship places of the world and is deemed as a necessary part of their “Worship”.

It is not only that, numerous fighter races had fought each other on both sides of the “River”, where the blood flowed into the River’s clean and transparent water but the river and land has witnesses much more; forborne more and more; and learnt so much that probably-and possibly cannot be counted! Those incidents have been hinted at in “Suvastu” and important happenings have been described, explained and dilated on; for those, who love “History” so that they may enjoy the poem in full. The readers who already have the study of the poems, it appears as sweet reminder/a recollection for them. Those readers who have still not availed the chance of reading those historical events have a new and first start-on the path of history and would carry on much more research work in respect to the incidents and events that have been yet unknown and shrouded from the page of its history. They will know and understand them and bequeath to the coming generation the clear and original pictures and images of the past.

Living and jubilant nations never forget their history. They corroborate and re-conciliate with their events of the past and keep a deep sight on their “genuineness” and impurity and devise new ways and thorough fares for their own bright future and the peace of the world at large.

Today also, our nation is passing through vicissitudes and hard time. The nation is standing on such a steep mound, which has been eroded from beneath by the unkind and ruthless penetrating and eroding waves of time. We should turn our attention towards that end, as it should be to commemorate our past, and once again make this land of ours- Suvastu, the cradle of peace.

History in Mythological Legends – Presence of Ancient Inhabitants (or Aborigines) in the Kullu hills, and migration to these hills, through Oral Religious Stories

Tej Singh Thakur

INDIA

Introduction

History is taken from so many things but early part of it is always taken from oral history. Oral history made base for written one. Most of these were in the shape of mythologies. Later on they were made foundation stones of history to those regions, people and religion, which they represented. In many cases these oral records were not taken in account, to write history. These were not deliberate on the part of writers, but due to various reasons these were left untouched. Even though they carry a lot of rich past of people's history from ancient times to till date. Some of these are very much different from present day history, which we are seeing in books now a days. Mythology not only carries past history but also a good account of civilization's emergence and decay. Some lucky ones got their references in many great books, but few, which could not come to front because of its followers or due to unknown reasons, remained forgotten.

Similar mythological legends are prevalent in Kullu² hills, which all represent the great history of this vast region behind them. They are all together different from other mythologies. Most of them are religious in nature. They are named as Ganai in (Seraj region of Kullu hills). They are historical records of one particular clan, and are recited by a person named as (Gur¹, who is a religious person and carries this knowledge from generation to generation) since there is no other record of past considered to be older than this, therefore analyzing these in a positive perspective is very much necessary to know about the history of this said region.

'Ganai' as an Evidential Tool to Discover the Ancient History of Kullu Hills

These 'oral stories' are prevalent in the hills of Kullu in Himachal Pradesh in shape of *Ganai* which can be classified as 'oral religious stories' passed on orally from generation to generation among selected members of a particular clan. Therefore in every village, every clan has its own 'ganai' or 'oral religious story' in a *mythological story* or *legend* or *narrative form* that provides a hazy glimpse into the ancient past of that village and its clan and people from the time when it was populated and what was the situation then. They may not be as interesting as Greek mythology, but still are very exciting in nature and they do provide clues to the history of the Kullu Hills and what events possibly took place in ancient historical times. These 'oral religious stories' are recited on some special religious days. To keep these *ancient traditions* alive, these *religious stories* are not allowed to be written down, rather they are passed down from generation to generation. This may perhaps be the main reason that these 'oral religious stories' were not considered as 'credible sources' and 'evidences' or 'evidential tools' that can be investigated and studied for constructing the ancient history of the Kullu Hills. This article will argue that contrary to popular approach these ancient 'ganai' or 'oral religious stories' do provide important clues or evidences which can help us in excavating the ancient history of Kullu hills.

Some Efforts at Writing the History of Kullu Hills

Of late some of these 'religious stories' have got mention in few books by some bold historical writers of this region. The prominent among them are Late Shri L. C. Prarthi¹ and Shri Dila Ram Shabab,¹ in their books '*Kulut Desh Ki Kahani*' and '*Kullu-Himalayan Abode of Divine*'. Apart from these gentlemen very little serious work has been done on this issue. These 'religious stories' are

different but carry the history of human's evolution in the Kullu hills behind them. Writers have used and explained these stories for their needs as it suited them. These stories were made the tools to prove this region's history and its relationship with the epic age of Mahabharata and Ramayana. In most of the cases these 'ganai' i.e. 'oral religious stories' they do not even mention the epics. They only deal with the history of that particular region to which they belong. Since these are in local dialect therefore understanding them is very difficult. This perhaps is evidence that the history of ancient Kullu hills follows an independent path from that of the history of the plains.

The Main Hypothesis

The investigation of the 'ganai' i.e. ancient 'oral religious stories' provided in this article attempts to find out, if these stories provide certain clues and evidences to argue the hypotheses that - *the ancient history of Kullu hills is independent both in its cultural, religious traditions and society from that of the plains of India in that period.*

Evidences in 'Ganai' to support the Hypothesis

These stories start from the birth to the point when people settled here i.e. in the Kullu hills.

These ganai or legends provide great amount of details of ancient history, but these have never been studied or examined in a proper scientific and historical manner. Also whatever evidences are revealed from these ganai have never been seen in the perspective of *arguing the hypothesis that - there were certain ancient inhabitants living in what is the present day Kullu hills who were finished or largely exterminated or subjugated by certain migrants who finally settled down in this region and form the bulk of those who now inhabit the Kullu hills.* The writer argues that the evidence from the ganai 'ancient oral religious stories or legends' if one reads into their allusions deeply do provide the evidence to the hypothesis. The 'ganai' provide evidences of a certain fight and conflict between these 'ancient people' and the 'newer inhabitants'. In this fight the ancient inhabitants lost out and so they were finished. The few among these ancient inhabitants who asked for pardon were spared with conditions. There are still some inhabitants living in the Kullu hills who are said to be offspring of these ancient inhabitants. Perhaps an investigation into

the D.N.As of these people can be helpful in establishing if there is a link between these inhabitants and those of the ancient people mentioned in the 'ganai' i.e. 'oral religious stories'

This perspective to the history of the earliest ancient period of present day Kullu hills has never been argued or substantially investigated in Himachal². This article argues this very basic point. To prove this point as historically true we investigate the evidence of one ganai or oral religious story or legend narrated on special religious days on village Teel about the local god of Teel, that is, Shangchul³ who in the ganai one can see is himself in first person narrating the times from his birth and his travel i.e. migration from some other land to the Kullu hills in those ancient days and what he sees of the ancient people of those days and the places he travels or migrates through from Basu Desh² to Teel, where god Shangchul finally settles down and ends his travel or migration. There are different views about these i.e. the 'oral religious stories' among the local people. They relate them only with God and trust these as 'voices of God'. This is the reason why these stories have not changed even till this day. In this investigative article we take the longest legend for giving clear-cut idea about importance and nature of these 'ganai' i.e. 'oral religious stories'. This particular 'ganai' covers the largest geographical area. Here the narrator of the story is himself the God. Even today a person trusted as God's nominee recites these. These nominees are from a particular clan from ancient times, therefore this knowledge i.e. of ganai passes father to son. The particular legend chosen for research is that of God - Shangchul that starts from a place called Basu Desh and ends in Upper Kanayali² near village.

The Ganai of Shangchul

Very far between high mountains in a country named as Basu Desh² I was born without parents from a lotus I was born myself.

One-step forward from that place I reached Gadgadsar², in this place snowy mountain peaks were colliding against each other.

Again one step forward I reached Shakati², here a Kamadhenu³ cow was milking her self under a tree. It was pouring milk on the earth. I decided to make this place as my place of honor.

At that time this place and Moror² (name of a nearby village) were inhabited by sixty people each.

They all were bad, and were doing obscene activities. They were prosperous but they were so indecent, while they were doing obscene activities they were not sparing even old persons.

So I decided to finish them.

Therefore I warned them and asked them to behave properly.

Only youngest came forward, he requested to forgive him and promised me to remain in my service.

I was pleased with his request.

Then with my mighty rod I broke lake Raktisar² and flooded that place and

Marechhas and Tanguls were washed away except youngest one.

Leaving this place behind one step forward I reached Mail²

Which was a place of people of bad manners, there five Marechhas came forward and challenged me, they were uncivilized they use to wash dirty utensils in side their room.

More than that they use to call even their mother in ugly language.

So in a small fight I killed them. I posted guard there and left that place.

Then I reached Shensher² inhabited by Khasha¹ people they were neat and clean.

Amid walnut trees I made my place, handed over that to Risha³ for looking after and left this place.

After crossing river, one step forward, I reached Shanger.²

In this place a cow used to pour milk under a cedar tree. With a hit of a rod I divided whole meadow into two equal parts.

One part I kept for cows and one for a priest's (Brahmin's) son for my service and worship.

The local chief came to capture me, he put his tents in the meadow, I objected for this.

He did not pay any heed to this. Then I placed a lion on one side, God's serpent (Dragon) on another side, and third side of this meadow fire and fourth side myself.

With this I destroyed his whole army, then he came with folded hands to me asking to pardon him, he also accepted me as his family god.

From that day I banned loud shouting, firing and putting tents in this meadow forever.

This place I made highly respected for my worshiping.

One step forward I reached a mountain called Thini².

At Thini I met a person named Aladoo Gudal¹ he was there for Guggal Dhoop (herb with scented

smell when mixed with butter then it is used for prayer).

I asked him to go together, he agreed for that.

His container reached the same day at his place, whereas he reached after seven days.

There I played with Joganis (Unmarried female goddesses with great power living in high mountains) and gave them gifts before leaving them.

One step forward I reached Mannon² that was area of Kande Nag³. When I reached there he was naked in his house. I gave him clothes. I made him my God brother, which is still the same today.

Moving ahead I reached beside a Balah².

This was a village of a famous Tantric named as Udeu Bardayhe¹ (Brahmin by caste) he used to harass all Gods with his magical power whom he met.

He also challenged me; I accepted his challenge that as per condition the loser was to be killed.

We both were supposed to make a blanket of flowers (Mandla in local dialect) on the river water. The longest lasting flower blanket owner on water will win.

My blanket stayed for more than two and a half ghadi (i.e local time) while Udeu's got destroyed within one and half ghadi (local time).

Therefore he lost.

Before being killed he put a condition before me, that now onwards you are my family god, therefore your priest will be only from my clan, which I agreed and till today the priest is from his family.

One step forward I reached Bhau².

There I played game of throw ball and also tried a few hands at gambling with the Joganis of Bhau.

After that I took part in dancing some romantic dance with them and started Fag (a dance festival) and faguli (a dance festival) there.

From that place I reached Mohani Dhar²,

There were five Marechhas; they started showing eyes to me. So I finished and buried them

Over their head I placed a black smith, so that with his hammer's hit its evil spirit will not rise again

One step forward I reached at Nagani² There started a fair for dancing to please Nagani³.

From there I reached Raiyalu².

Here god Raiyalu³ was weeping under a bushy tree called as Tanialah

When I inquired for his weeping, he sadly replied that he was not having a good area to rule.

I have only Khun² and Khanala² he said, that area at

that time was full of bad people.

So he wanted Mohani

During that time 8 families were in Mohani² and 60 in Muhadagad²

Mohani was at that time under Markandey³

With a hit of mighty rod I threw dust from top of hill to bottom and from bottom to top of that hill.

Same time with hit from blue bull I threw Markandey to Sarndhi²

I gave Mohani to Raiyalu and set up brotherly relations with him.

One step backward reached Sandha². There was a powerful Marechha in that place.

In the daytime when I use to plant cedar tree in night he use to up root them.

He always used to throw ash of his fireplace in front of his house on they way.

Apart from this he used to wash his household utensils particularly used for having food inside his living room

Apart from that he challenged me for fight. Therefore I killed and buried him

That is why, I go there regularly to crush his evil spirit from coming out.

I placed my right foot there and made this also as my own place.

One step backward I reached Taghiyara². There I danced and moved forward and reached Pouri²

In this place I distributed satu made a ground as my place for dancing and left.

After that I reached Sarandhi². There were Joganis and Panch Veer³ beside a pound.

Since they did not trouble me, so I marched forward. Then I reached Shidany Nag.² He and two marechhas in that deep forest did not trouble me and I also did not bother them, went ahead.

One step forward I reached Fathepur.

In Fathepur² god Jamaiyan³ was the ruler

He was ruler of seven areas.

I distributed six of his areas to different gods to rule and kept one important area for my self.

I kept power of lighting and pouring hailstorm with him.

One step backward reached Palicha², there were five Marechhas they started challenging me.

They were thrashing their crops with huge wooden rods, same time abusing each other and also hitting with their rods.

They were priests of god Jamaiyan and Chhoi³.

I told them I am here to finish them

Youngest one came in my shelter, and promised me with his service .

He also assured me that every third year he would arrange bonfire (Jagra) in my respect.

So I spared him.

Rest of others I killed. (People of this village still claim themselves as Marechhas heirs.)

When I moved forward I met Jamu Nag³ on the way I told him I am here to finish you, he requested not to kill him, he will be at my service.

So I placed him as main guard there at place named after him.

Then I reached place Bachhoot²

This was god Narsingh's³ inhabitation I made brotherly relations with him. Here I also put my right foot, and made this as my main place.

One step forward I reached Gada²

This was Aladoo's¹ village.

Made a member of his family as my permanent reprehensive for my self.

One step forward reached Marach². This was headquarters' of Marechhas.

This I destroyed.

One step forward reached Kanaylai².

There were two blacksmith women (named as Sangla¹ and Bangla¹)

They were very naughty and use to bathe in a bathtub made of copper openly

When in the daytime I plant cedar tree they use to uproot them in the evening or in night.

So I killed them there and buried them in Jalaha Gad².

A blacksmith was placed on their head so that evil spirit does not rise again.

One step forward I reached place called Chhuad²

There was god Chhoi. I established brotherly relation with him and we exchanged trees for it's remembering.

I gave him cedar tree he gave me a bushy tree named Kuduchho.

Then I reached Khanoshi²; there was a temple of Marechhas.

Khokhunu Nag³ was their god.

One Jadwalu¹ and one Patshangru¹ were their religious heads as Mehtas¹.

These Marechhas were so rich that even their dogs and cats use to wear golden chains and rings for fair.

I destroyed them completely and dumped them in Chhuad.

Moving forward reached Raushi².

There was a resident of this place named Raushu Kol¹.

I told him I am here to kill him.
He requested not to kill him and said if you are our
countries god then I will serve you. I will also worship
you.

So I spared him and handed over my main band to
him.

Then I reached Teel²

Here a widow came out with lighted sent to worship
me.

From that day I allowed even widows to worship me
with light sent only in Teel.

Here I placed my elderly foot, and made this as my
main worshipping place.

Shouting and abusing I have banned here forever.

Moving ahead I reached Nahaseri².

This was a big field. This was near about (4km now
we can say as said from Chheaidhar² to Janaadi²

A Marechha named Khima¹ was polughing this with
his oxen known as Neelu and Nagnu

He used to plough 2.5 rows in a day.

Top of this field was a big pool on a mountain.

It was so big that if a person sees it for the first time,
all of sudden then he will die out of surprise.

So I decided to close it. With a single hit of my rod I
broke the mountain and closed it.

Under this Khima, his two oxen and one fox got buried
alive.

To remember three innocents (oxen and fox) I started
a fair here, to confess my guilt.

Then I moved forward and reached Hion Dhar².

Here I placed my right foot and made this as my place
for resting.

One step backward I reached Upper Kanyali.

It was a deep forest covered with trees
and small ponds of fresh and clean water were there.
I made this as my permanent residence.

Its Vastu I have made different from all others.

This I measured with spider web.

There were ten families in this area at that time, which
I called as Marach, prominent men were these whom
still I remember. They were Tanhu in Teel, Khama in
Khamarada, Jama in Jamach, Baroo in Bachhut,
Chhana in Chhunar

Other Ganai's from Kullu hills on the Ancient Period

There are many ganai's or oral legends in this
region. The other prominent ganai's or oral legends
are of - **Paldi**, Chehani, Mohani, Percha Palach,
Kalwari, Gussain, **Khawal Chethar** Banogi, Shanger,
Dhion Allwah, Julunag, Balah and Kandeynag, Rupi
and Raila. They all are religious in nature but in each

of them there is mention of ancient inhabitants mostly
known as Marechhas and magi riation form other part
to the present region by narrator. A research of all
these other ganai's would reveal the same common
point that there were certain ancient inhabitants
in the Kullu hills who were there prior to the
settling of those who presently live in the Kullu
hills.

For example in *Julunag's ganai i.e. oral legend*
there is mention of a clan who's forefathers were
like monkeys, they are called *Banoshdoo* in local
dialect. The ganai say a lot about the existence of
this monkey like clan in the ancient period but
maximum persons of this clan deny this now. Mr.
Veer Singh of Village Thachadhar² sees no harm
in it to be called as offspring of these ancient
inhabitants.

Ganai of Bhumasi relates it's coming from
Mahasu². On the way crossed river Satluej
Bhumasi and reached Kandi Dhaul². This very
god also encounters Marechhas on the way (at a
place called Bida Juffer). This god killed the
Marechhas.

In same way coming of God Chhoi to Chho
is said from Shua Kamaru.² It also crosses river
Satluej at a place called Behana.² Then through
Ragupurgad² via Mahadar² and Belho² reaches
chho.² Here an interesting story of same god with
same name but of different places shows it's
coming from different place. This is legend of God
Chhoi of Suragi², which tells it's coming from
Manikran² in Kullu hills.

Markandey of Percha shows it's coming
from Makadsa² or Torash² in Kullu valley. He is
said to be the owner of Balah. The Markandey's
are said to be 7 brothers, about Markandey of
Balah there is a legend that he was brought in a
basket full of horse chestnuts by Goddess of Bala
from Sujad village in Banjal. It contradicts all
seven Markandey's coming from one place.

According to Mr. Him Singh of Chhunar² (a
religious person who stayed in Chehani² for long
time) god of Chehnaï also came through Raktisar
and reached Sakiran² via Bijaypur² and
Chananthach², this also shows link from Chinese
side.

Tugasi³ of Khauli² shows it's coming from
different place with his mother and making
friendship with god Jalh³ of Deori² to finish a cruel
Marechha.

Guchalu³ (popularly known as Shangri)

came to Teel with Shangchul from Raktisar where he was a demon and use to kill whoever used to visit his place, and drink their blood, he asked this from Shangchul but could not drink even three drops which he gave to him, therefore he accompanied him conceding defeat. This is told by Virender Thakur (who is a famous narrator of these religious legends of this region) but Ganai do not mention this.

Shetu Ram tells fingers of a Mrechha are found on a stone at Neoli River.² While he was making bread, god named Than³ in Shanger killed him. This god is also said to have come from Raktisar via Mail².

Railaylu is said to have come from Ralie² near Sujad². Gain Chand Gindu **describes its come from Shariaul**. This is also supported by Rajender Thakur of Kanda² (son of a religious head of Kanda near Chujala²)

Pratap Singh religious head says that most of the people in percha migrated from kullu valley to this place, but the Markandey was already there and they adopted it as their god. Similar story of migration of Allawah was told by Mr. Tek Singh And Kamali Ram (a religious person) Kandey Nag's emergence from hill of Shat and his making 7 regions Kamal Dev Prasher of Tikki² village describes his follower.

Mr. Dula Singh Thakur a social worker from Suragi explains emergences of Chhanjhnu³ from Ghhanjhni², where as Dhani Ram Chauhan of Teel claims Shanchul's coming from Mansarovar².

According to an educationist Megh Singh and an advocate S. R. Deepak, present days inhabitants of Jamach² came from Tinder² (near Gusain²) and Percha.²

Namcholi³ was here before other gods came here says Mr. Ram Krishan of Kandhidhar². Pattanti Devi³ came from Pattan² in Lahul and Sipiti² say Lagan Chand a farmer of village Pattan. Therefore this village's name is Pattan after this goddess.

Similarly the *ganai* or *oral legend* of the god in Dhion² also mentions *Marechhas* having a three-storied water mill for grinding when he reached a place near by. In the *ganai* of *Chehnai* again the *Marechhas* are described as *ploughers* or *men using ploughs*. Again, in one of the most respected *ganai* i.e. *oral legend* of *Panchali Naryan*³ recited on special religious days in Lug Valley, *Panchali Narayan* is mentioned as throwing a Cedar tree into the

barren land where it falls on its head towards earth. If one visits the Lug Valley even today one can still see it although it is dry now however the roots of the cedar tree are still in that village and visible. Then there is the *ganai* relating *Balu Nag*³ shows him migrating from a place which was full of people who used to give poison to others who came from outside. After close examination of all these *ganai* i.e. oral legends we can find many interesting things about the life of people in the Kullu hills in the past. Although it is very difficult to trace history from religious legends, but still these legends certainly carry within them the stories of people's survival in them. They throw light on people's life, culture and relationship with nature in those ancient times. From these we can also make out the approximate dates of these events.

Evidences of an Independent Culture, Religion and Tradition in Hills

Religion, Caste, Democracy and Women,

As far as '*religion*' as '*we live it today*' in a very '*organized form*', the evidences from the Kullu hills point to the existence of '*many gods*' '*many religions*' '*many religious practices*' and '*beliefs*' and '*cultures*' that were independent off the what has been popularly classified as one body of religious belief or tradition called the '*Vedic or Aryan religion or tradition*'. This point is bolstered from the large body of the ancient religious and cultural traditions in the Kullu hills, which point to the fact that there were followers of many '*religions*' and there is no mention of only one religion. Mention of many gods in this indicates towards many religions or religious traditions. *Vedic religion* may have been there, as mention of cow and a son of Brahmin are there. However it became unpopular among masses because of its tantrism. The division of society in the name of caste was there, as there is mention of *blacksmith* and *Raushu*. It is also possible that there was a fight between the followers of different sects. There is one very important indication here of a *fight* between the *people* who used to take *collective decisions* and the *people* who were *ruled by a single person*. For example if we examine the word *Ganai*, we find it is made of two words, *Gan* and *Ai*. The word *Gan* means *people* and if taken in a broad framework, it means *masses* and *Ai* means *coming* or it may have changed over time from word a similar word *rai* which in Phahari

language [i.e. the local dialect of people of Himachal Pradesh] means *Will*. So it can clearly be understood as the *Will of Masses or People*. Most people who know Indian history are aware of the existence of small democratic republics in many parts or among various communities in the country some 2000 years back. These continued in Himachal due to its tough geographical conditions and its physical separation from the mainland India. So the world's oldest democracy was there in Himachal, however the reality is that all villages in this part were democracies in their early period. Each of them seems to have their own histories of the development of democracy. Historical facts show this that around 400B.C there were many *republics* in India where the king was elected.

Apart from the existence of some kind of democracy in the Kullu hills in a different form from today's model of liberal democracy, the peoples of the region were also having knowledge of agriculture and evidence of this is found in the use of bullocks and ox. They use to keep pets also. Women were having good position. Therefore, evil of sati and other against women were not prevalent at that time. Even women were allowed to play games and also worship. Some of these used to live like queens of the present days.

The people of this region in ancient times also had very good knowledge of herbs. They also knew about metals and its use. It seems they lived a community life, although there are evidence of people living in alone also. These people were lovers of plants. The mention of cedar planting proves this. There is also evidence that the *people of Kullu hills* in ancient times were having *knowledge of keeping dead bodies intact i.e. mummification* as done by the ancient Egyptians. They were afraid of these dead bodies rising again. Similarly there is evidence that the ancient people were having *knowledge of herbs* and to prove this *the mention of Aladoo*, that is, going to dig *dhoop (incense)* in *mountain called Thini* is proof. Even Huen Tsang has mentioned of there being medicinal plants in the country he called *Kuluta* i.e. present day Kullu hills in his travelogue. If one were to possibly do deep excavations in the places mentioned in these legends then probably some more evidences would surely emerge to support the hypothesis and argument made in this article.

The Marechhas

These 'ancient inhabitants' were called 'MARECHHA's' and 'TANGUL's', by the forefathers of present day inhabitants of Kullu hills.

The *Marechhas* (were similar to aborigines or can be called these in present context) were native of Kullu Seraj who were defeated by the new incoming migrants. Some of these were 'ancient inhabitants' whom the historians of ancient people are still searching under different names. References to the presence of these *Marechhas* are mentioned even in history of Kashmir. Even in *Rajtrangani* Kallhan has described these 'new inhabitants' as 'invaders' particularly Greek. In the Chamba² region there are many evidences to prove this theory, such as, coins of 1st and 2nd century founded there. This evidence proves Kallhan's point of 'foreign invaders from Greece'. Even there is a view, which says that people in *Malana*² are *Greeks* who lost to the *Mauryas*.

The *Marechhas* are said to be of huge size, which could weight lift ten times or more than a normal man. Some of the things of the *Marechhas* are still remaining for example 'one stone pitcher' near the area of Barnal and a *big stone* near the area of Khaldhar and *ruins of their fort* near the Marach area. In popular religious tales even today the *Marechhas* are said to be anti religion and that they were uncivilized. The new victors said these kinds of popular religious perceptions or beliefs about *Marechhas* if one looks at world history of civilizations one can find that throughout the histories of myths of peoples, the loser are called either demons or anti religious and even threat to civilization. The original inhabitants of the Kullu hills, that is, the *Marechhas* too, this is how they have been characterized in popular religious myth, belief and culture. The invaders near about 200 B.C. to 1550 A.D. killed them. Those historians who say the ancient people vanished earlier than this period are not able to give the exact date of their disappearance.

The Chinese Link and Impact on Ancient People

The evidence from the *ganai's* also proves that majority of the higher classes of Himachal's Kullu hills did not come from other parts of India. Rather the route mentioned here is in no way linked to plains. The evidence shows the present day Himachalis coming mainly from China,

Greece, Central Asia and other parts of India. The old trade route between China and India also lies in the same route and it was nearer and safe to travel along it. Much of the migration into Himachal's Kullu hills came along this route. Evidence towards this comes from a legend that a Chinese traveler was made captive by some magical women for 12 years. In a place called *Shakti* in this area. (This may be exaggerated to make story more interesting). Many believe that *captive person to be the famous (Huen Tsang* who came to India around 730 A.D. and he is said to have visited *Kullu* at that time known as *Kuluta*. However there are not many evidences to prove this and it is true that this famous traveler stayed in India for 14 years of these he remained in Nalanda maximum). Therefore this assumption is not true. Evidence of present day Kullu people's Chinese links can be found if we go deeper and investigate the festival in September in the village of *Shakti* where a song is sung in the night for special religious purposes. The song is sung in a closed room and outsiders are not allowed to hear this. The song if one investigates the words used, there are some words, which are very similar to Chinese. Therefore there are evidences that there was a migration of people into Kullu hills, mostly from outside, but not entirely from plains of main land India. A substantial migration or invasion was from China, Greece and Central Asia. These new migrants were not followers of Hindu religion, but they became Hinduised. However they did continue with their own religious ethos, which are as one sees very different from Hinduism. This assimilation into Hinduism began about 600 to 850 years ago. The mention of lotus strongly points towards presence of Buddhism. It may be that some people came to preach Buddhism or learn Buddhism and had a fight with the old Hinduism. There are also indications in the legends of fights between these new migrants with a tantric Bharamin. So this also points towards difference of religions. The evidence of these new migrants or invaders from China side burying the ancient men whom they killed in the conflict is also a clear evidence that the people of Kullu hills, when they initially were not followers of Hinduism because Hindus burn the dead bodies. Even if we assume that Huien Tsang may not have visited the Kullu hills near the village *Shakti*, it is sure that some Chinese monk or trader must have visited that place as it

is very much there in the legend. As regarding the relationship with Buddhism, a local god in the upper valley in Kullu hills is *Avlokiteshwer*, is usably linked to Buddha.

Although there is no mention of the name of race and its leader, since god himself tells this tale in the *ganai* (mentioned here) and he seems to be the leader of a clan. This person is worshiped by the name of *Shangchul ji*, in this whole region which covers the entire area of inner Seraj of the Banjar valley. The very name *Shangchul* carries some *Chinese meaning*. If we for the sake of linguistic investigation divided this word into two parts then, it is *Shang* and *chul*. The word *Shang* is a Chinese word and '*chul*' in local dialect used mostly in hills of northwest India means *top of a hill*. *Shang* in the ancient Indian context is similar linguistically to the word *Sangha* in Buddhism, which means *union*. If we add the word *Shang* [Sangha] with *Chul* it means *union of the top*. In another small legend related to this god, it is shown that *Shangchul* is coming from *Shua Kamaru*, an area that is located in *modern day Kinnour*. This legend calls god *Shangchul* as *Bushera* in *Shakti*, which is a village in the Kullu hills. Even today the main face of the statue of god *Shangcul* is made in *Shua Kamaru* area. If historian was to put all these evidences together then we get a picture of the dominant classes coming from a different place other than the plains of main land India. These invaders came and killed *natives*, that is, the *ancient people* of the Kullu hills living in this region in those days. Those *ancient people* who accepted them were spared. There is mention of *Marechhas* and *Kolas*; who were the *main natives* at that time in this area. These were subjugated. Many writers even believe that name *Kullu* is due to *Kolas*. They are said to be the first native of this region.

The Hinduisation of the Religious History, and the People in Kullu Hills.

All these evidences point to a period in the ancient history of Kullu hills when we can see the vanishing of *ancient inhabitants, natives* approximately 2300-550 B.C. back or perhaps even before this. If any person of the Kullu hills wants to truly look back into his or her historical roots in time, then there is enough initial evidence in these *ganai [religious oral stories]* that point to the crying fact that we need to further research these legends, to draw a correct history of the

Kullu hills. The later influence of Hinduism coming from the plains of ancient and medieval India on the people of Kullu hills, has led over time to the people of Kullu hills to ignore these aspects of their ancient history. Today the people of the Kullu hills can be seen relating or assimilating or merging their *village gods*, like *Shangchul*, which are *symbols of family heads or village heads to ancient Vedic gods or rishis*, which is historically not true as per the evidences provided in this article. Both the gods are entirely different in terms of their history. Such a representation of the many *gods and legends* of the *peoples of the Kullu hills* will not only damage history, but in the long run also create a conflict of the Vedic gods and mythologies with local religious myths, legends and cultural traditions. If one were to take the example of the legend and *Ganai* of the *god of Dhion* [name of an area] is a Nag [i.e. snake god] and he is said to be the youngest of 18 Nags as per local legend. However nowadays we find that in the Kullu hills, this god [i.e. Nag] is being projected as *Lomesh rishi* who is a divine *guru of Hindu mythology*, which is entirely different from what is actually the true history of this region.

These types of interpretations or misinterpretations are increasing nowadays. Everyone it seems in the Kullu hills wants to link his/her religious, cultural and mythological history with *Hindu gods and myths*. Although 99.9% population of this region is Hindu but the rituals related to local gods are different, and tribal in nature. The local legends most of the time do not mention any Hindu mythologies in them. In historical writing Kullu is named under different names. There is mention of this region of Kullu hills in the Vedas also. However there is no mention of the Vedas or Vedic gods in the *ganai's* and local religious legends of Kullu hills. Therefore those historians who link particularly the religious tradition of Kullu hills with that of the Vedic religious tradition as practiced in those ancient days in the plains of India are not doing justice with people living in the hills those days. The theories presenting the hill people of the Kullu region as migrants from plains of India too are putting forth a wrong historical fact. This also applies to the religion practiced in the Kullu hills. It had no relation with the Vedic religion of the plains of ancient India. The evidence of the *ganai's* i.e. local oral

religious legends all point to the fact that both the present day people of the Kullu hills and their religion was not of the plains of ancient India, rather the hill people came from China or Central Asia or Greece and brought their own gods and religions.

The Hindu mythologies seem to have been added later and this may be due to the mixing of local religious mythologies with Hindu religion coming from the plains. Similar is the case of another famous legend of a locally popular god who it is said emerges from a water stream. However, nowadays with the Hinduisation of local gods, this particular god has been declared a great *rishi* by his followers. This again is a clear case of how local religious history is being slowly changed into a Hindu religious history. The same god in some legends and in some parts is worshiped as *Naga god*. Most of gods in this area are claimed as God Shiva, which point toward domination of Shaivites in this part in the past. These evidences point to the presence of a strong movement against a rigid social system, which seems to be prevalent in this region.

Conclusions

All these facts prove that Kullu Hills had its independent culture and history although now Hinduism is the dominant religion in this part, but in past there were various religions here and they all got assimilated in Hinduism with the passage of time. Migration of people who stayed here were from various places i.e. central Asia, Greece, China and other parts of India. These all gave birth to a unique culture by mixing up. Therefore, these local oral religious stories are very important for knowing history of Kullu hills properly. There is a great possibility of a civilization, which may have been destroyed by new incumbents. This may not be as good as other was but that does not mean it had no significance. Excavation in places like Khnoshi, Jalhagad and Sandha may bring some surprise to present day historical researches.

Special note : 1) Indicates name of a person. 2) Indicates name of places. 3) Indicates the name of gods. Here god is used for deity, according to local traditions.

Sultana's Dream

Roquiah Khatun, later known as Roquiah Sakhawat Hossein was born in 1880 in the village Pairaband of Rangpur district in Bangladesh. She grew up in the later days of colonial environment of India in a Muslim family before the partition of the sub-continent. Her conservative family did not allow her to go to school and not even to learn Bengali and English. But Roquiah and her sister Karimunessa, who also later appeared as a famous writer, learnt Bengali and English with the help of their brothers. It was not possible to do that during the day, so both sisters learnt at night.

In 1896 Roquiah married Khan Bahadur Sakhawat Hossein a Deputy Magistrate of Bhagalpur. According to Roquiah, the path to women's emancipation is to break the chain of gender division of labour and creation of social, economic, political and cultural condition so that they can undertake any profession in the society.

As a social reformer she established a school for Muslim girls, called Sakhawat Memorial Girls' School in 1909 with only 5 girl students.

Roquiah Sakhawat Hossein

One evening I was lounging in an easy chair in my bedroom and thinking lazily of the condition of Indian womanhood. I am not sure whether I dozed off or not. But, as far as I remember, I was wide awake. I saw the moonlit sky sparkling with thousands of diamond-like stars, very distinctly.

All on a sudden a lady stood before me; how she came in, I do not know. I took her for my friend, Sister Sara.

'Good morning,' said Sister Sara. I smiled inwardly as I knew it was not morning, but starry night. However, I replied to her, saying, 'How do you do?'

'I am all right, thank you. Will you please come out and have a look at our garden?'

I looked again at the moon through the open window, and thought there was no harm in going out at that time. The men-servants outside were fast asleep just then, and I could have a pleasant walk with Sister Sara.

I used to have my walks with Sister Sara, when we were at Darjeeling. Many a time did we walk hand in hand and talk light-heartedly in the botanical gardens there. I fancied, Sister Sara had probably come to take me to some such garden and I readily accepted her offer and went out with her.

When walking I found to my surprise that

it was a fine morning. The town was fully awake and the streets alive with bustling crowds. I was feeling very shy, thinking I was walking in the street in broad daylight, but there was not a single man visible.

Some of the passers-by made jokes at me. Though I could not understand their language, yet I felt sure they were joking. I asked my friend, 'What do they say?'

'The women say that you look very mannish.'

'Mannish?' said I, 'What do they mean by that?'

'They mean that you are shy and timid like men.'

'Shy and timid like men?' It was really a joke. I became very nervous, when I found that my companion was not Sister Sara, but a stranger. Oh, what a fool had I been to mistake this lady for my dear old friend, Sister Sara.

She felt my fingers tremble in her hand, as we were walking hand in hand.

'What is the matter, dear?' she said affectionately. 'I feel somewhat awkward,' I said in a rather apologizing tone, 'as being a purdahnishin woman I am not accustomed to walking about unveiled.'

'You need not be afraid of coming across a man here. This is Ladyland, free from sin and harm. Virtue herself reigns here.'

By and by I was enjoying the scenery. Really it was very grand. I mistook a patch of

green grass for a velvet cushion. Feeling as if I were walking on a soft carpet, I looked down and found the path covered with moss and flowers.

'How nice it is,' said I.

'Do you like it?' asked Sister Sara. (I continued calling her 'Sister Sara,' and she kept calling me by my name).

'Yes, very much; but I do not like to tread on the tender and sweet flowers.'

'Never mind, dear Sultana; your treading will not harm them; they are street flowers.'

'The whole place looks like a garden,' said I admiringly. 'You have arranged every plant so skillfully.'

'Your Calcutta could become a nicer garden than this if only your countrymen wanted to make it so.'

'They would think it useless to give so much attention to horticulture, while they have so many other things to do.'

'They could not find a better excuse,' said she with smile.

I became very curious to know where the men were. I met more than a hundred women while walking there, but not a single man.

'Where are the men?' I asked her.

'In their proper places, where they ought to be.'

'Pray let me know what you mean by "their proper places".'

'O, I see my mistake, you cannot know our customs, as you were never here before. We shut our men indoors.'

'Just as we are kept in the zenana?'

'Exactly so.'

'How funny,' I burst into a laugh. Sister Sara laughed too.

'But dear Sultana, how unfair it is to shut in the harmless women and let loose the men.'

'Why? It is not safe for us to come out of the zenana, as we are naturally weak.'

'Yes, it is not safe so long as there are men about the streets, nor is it so when a wild animal enters a marketplace.'

'Of course not.'

'Suppose, some lunatics escape from the asylum and begin to do all sorts of mischief to men, horses and other creatures; in that case what will your countrymen do?'

'They will try to capture them and put them back into their asylum.'

'Thank you! And you do not think it wise to keep sane people inside an asylum and let loose the insane?'

'Of course not!' said I laughing lightly.

'As a matter of fact, in your country this very thing is done! Men, who do or at least are capable of doing no end of mischief, are let loose and the innocent women, shut up in the zenana! How can you trust those untrained men out of doors?'

'We have no hand or voice in the management of our social affairs. In India man is lord and master, he has taken to himself all powers and privileges and shut up the women in the zenana.'

'Why do you allow yourselves to be shut up?'

'Because it cannot be helped as they are stronger than women.'

'A lion is stronger than a man, but it does not enable him to dominate the human race. You have neglected the duty you owe to yourselves and you have lost your natural rights by shutting your eyes to your own interests.'

'But my dear Sister Sara, if we do everything by ourselves, what will the men do then?'

'They should not do anything, excuse me; they are fit for nothing. Only catch them and put them into the zenana.'

'But would it be very easy to catch and put them inside the four walls?' said I. 'And even if this were done, would all their business – political and commercial – also go with them into the zenana?'

Sister Sara made no reply. She only smiled sweetly. Perhaps she thought it useless to argue with one who was no better than a frog in a well.

By this time we reached Sister Sara's house. It was situated in a beautiful heart-shaped garden. It was a bungalow with a corrugated iron roof. It was cooler and nicer than any of our rich buildings. I cannot describe how neat and how nicely furnished and how tastefully decorated it was.

We sat side by side. She brought out of the parlour a piece of embroidery work and began

putting on a fresh design.

'Do you know knitting and needle work?'

'Yes; we have nothing else to do in our zenana.'

'But we do not trust our zenana members with embroidery!' she said laughing, 'as a man has not patience enough to pass thread through a needlehole even!'

'Have you done all this work yourself?' I asked her pointing to the various pieces of embroidered teapoy cloths.

'Yes.'

'How can you find time to do all these? You have to do the office work as well? Have you not?'

'Yes. I do not stick to the laboratory all day long. I finish my work in two hours.'

'In two hours! How do you manage? In our land the officers, – magistrates, for instance – work seven hours daily.'

'I have seen some of them doing their work. Do you think they work all the seven hours?'

'Certainly they do!'

'No, dear Sultana, they do not. They dawdle away their time in smoking. Some smoke two or three choroots during the office time. They talk much about their work, but do little. Suppose one choroot takes half an hour to burn off, and a man smokes twelve choroots daily; then you see, he wastes six hours every day in sheer smoking.'

We talked on various subjects, and I learned that they were not subject to any kind of epidemic disease, nor did they suffer from mosquito bites as we do. I was very much astonished to hear that in Ladyland no one died in youth except by rare accident.

'Will you care to see our kitchen?' she asked me.

'With pleasure,' said I, and we went to see it. Of course the men had been asked to clear off when I was going there. The kitchen was situated in a beautiful vegetable garden. Every creeper, every tomato plant was itself an ornament. I found no smoke, nor any chimney either in the kitchen — it was clean and bright; the windows were decorated with flower gardens. There was no sign of coal or fire.

'How do you cook?' I asked.

'With solar heat,' she said, at the same time showing me the pipe, through which passed the concentrated sunlight and heat. And she cooked something then and there to show me the process.

'How did you manage to gather and store up the sun-heat?' I asked her in amazement.

'Let me tell you a little of our past history then. Thirty years ago, when our present Queen was thirteen years old, she inherited the throne. She was Queen in name only, the Prime Minister really ruling the country.

'Our good Queen liked science very much. She circulated an order that all the women in her country should be educated. Accordingly a number of girls' schools were founded and supported by the government. Education was spread far and wide among women. And early marriage also was stopped. No woman was to be allowed to marry before she was twenty-one. I must tell you that, before this change we had been kept in strict purdah.'

'How the tables are turned,' I interposed with a laugh.

'But the seclusion is the same,' she said. 'In a few years we had separate universities, where no men were admitted.'

'In the capital, where our Queen lives, there are two universities. One of these invented a wonderful balloon, to which they attached a number of pipes. By means of this captive balloon which they managed to keep afloat above the cloud-land, they could draw as much water from the atmosphere as they pleased. As the water was incessantly being drawn by the university people no cloud gathered and the ingenious Lady Principal stopped rain and storms thereby.'

'Really! Now I understand why there is no mud here!' said I. But I could not understand how it was possible to accumulate water in the pipes. She explained to me how it was done, but I was unable to understand her, as my scientific knowledge was very limited. However, she went on, 'When the other university came to know of this, they became exceedingly jealous and tried to do something more extraordinary still. They invented an instrument by which they could collect as much sun-heat as they wanted. And they kept the heat stored up to be distributed among others as required.'

'While the women were engaged in scientific research, the men of this country were busy increasing their military power. When they came to know that the female universities were able to draw water from the atmosphere and collect heat from the sun, they only laughed at the members of the universities and called the whole thing "a sentimental nightmare"!

'Your achievements are very wonderful indeed! But tell me, how you managed to put the men of your country into the zenana. Did you entrap them first?'

'No.'

'It is not likely that they would surrender their free and open air life of their own accord and confine themselves within the four walls of the zenana! They must have been overpowered.'

'Yes, they have been!'

'By whom? By some lady-warriors, I suppose?'

'No, not by arms.'

'Yes, it cannot be so. Men's arms are stronger than women's. Then?'

'By brain.'

'Even their brains are bigger and heavier than women's. Are they not?'

'Yes, but what of that? An elephant also has got a bigger and heavier brain than a man has. Yet man can enchain elephants and employ them, according to their own wishes.'

'Well said, but tell me please, how it all actually happened. I am dying to know it!'

'Women's brains are somewhat quicker than men's. Ten years ago, when the military officers called our scientific discoveries "a sentimental nightmare," some of the young ladies wanted to say something in reply to those remarks. But both the Lady Principals restrained them and said, they should reply not by word, but by deed, if ever they got the opportunity. And they had not long to wait for that opportunity.'

'How marvelous!' I heartily clapped my hands. 'And now the proud gentlemen are dreaming sentimental dreams themselves.'

'Soon afterwards certain persons came from a neighbouring country and took shelter in ours. They were in trouble having committed some political offense. The king who cared more for power than for good government asked our

kind-hearted Queen to hand them over to his officers. She refused, as it was against her principle to turn out refugees. For this refusal the king declared war against our country.

'Our military officers sprang to their feet at once and marched out to meet the enemy. The enemy however, was too strong for them. Our soldiers fought bravely, no doubt. But in spite of all their bravery the foreign army advanced step by step to invade our country.

'Nearly all the men had gone out to fight; even a boy of sixteen was not left home. Most of our warriors were killed, the rest driven back and the enemy came within twenty-five miles of the capital.

'A meeting of a number of wise ladies was held at the Queen's palace to advise as to what should be done to save the land. Some proposed to fight like soldiers; others objected and said that women were not trained to fight with swords and guns, nor were they accustomed to fighting with any weapons. A third party regretfully remarked that they were hopelessly weak of body.

'If you cannot save your country for lack of physical strength," said the Queen, "try to do so by brain power."

'There was a dead silence for a few minutes. Her Royal Highness said again, "I must commit suicide if the land and my honour are lost."

'Then the Lady Principal of the second university (who had collected sun-heat), who had been silently thinking during the consultation, remarked that they were all but lost, and there was little hope left for them. There was, however, one plan which she would like to try, and this would be her first and last efforts; if she failed in this, there would be nothing left but to commit suicide. All present solemnly vowed that they would never allow themselves to be enslaved, no matter what happened.

'The Queen thanked them heartily, and asked the Lady Principal to try her plan. The Lady Principal rose again and said, "before we go out the men must enter the zenanas. I make this prayer for the sake of purdah." "Yes, of course," replied Her Royal Highness.

'On the following day the Queen called upon all men to retire into zenanas for the sake

of honour and liberty. Wounded and tired as they were, they took that order rather for a boon! They bowed low and entered the zenanas without uttering a single word of protest. They were sure that there was no hope for this country at all.

'Then the Lady Principal with her two thousand students marched to the battle field, and arriving there directed all the rays of the concentrated sunlight and heat towards the enemy.

'The heat and light were too much for them to bear. They all ran away panic-stricken, not knowing in their bewilderment how to counteract that scorching heat. When they fled away leaving their guns and other ammunitions of war, they were burnt down by means of the same sun-heat. Since then no one has tried to invade our country any more.'

'And since then your countrymen never tried to come out of the zenana?'

'Yes, they wanted to be free. Some of the police commissioners and district magistrates sent word to the Queen to the effect that the military officers certainly deserved to be imprisoned for their failure; but they never neglected their duty and therefore they should not be punished and they prayed to be restored to their respective offices.

'Her Royal Highness sent them a circular letter intimating to them that if their services should ever be needed they would be sent for, and that in the meanwhile they should remain where they were. Now that they are accustomed to the purdah system and have ceased to grumble at their seclusion, we call the system "Mardana" instead of "zenana".'

'But how do you manage,' I asked Sister Sara, 'to do without the police or magistrates in case of theft or murder?'

'Since the "Mardana" system has been established, there has been no more crime or sin; therefore we do not require a policeman to find out a culprit, nor do we want a magistrate to try a criminal case.'

'That is very good, indeed. I suppose if there was any dishonest person, you could very easily chastise her. As you gained a decisive victory without shedding a single drop of blood, you could drive off crime and criminals too without

much difficulty!'

'Now, dear Sultana, will you sit here or come to my parlour?' she asked me.

'Your kitchen is not inferior to a queen's boudoir!' I replied with a pleasant smile, 'but we must leave it now; for the gentlemen may be cursing me for keeping them away from their duties in the kitchen so long.' We both laughed heartily.

'How my friends at home will be amused and amazed, when I go back and tell them that in the far-off Ladyland, ladies rule over the country and control all social matters, while gentlemen are kept in the Mardanas to mind babies, to cook and to do all sorts of domestic work; and that cooking is so easy a thing that it is simply a pleasure to cook!'

'Yes, tell them about all that you see here.'

'Please let me know, how you carry on land cultivation and how you plough the land and do other hard manual work.'

'Our fields are tilled by means of electricity, which supplies motive power for other hard work as well, and we employ it for our aerial conveyances too. We have no rail road nor any paved streets here.'

'Therefore neither street nor railway accidents occur here,' said I. 'Do not you ever suffer from want of rainwater?' I asked.

'Never since the "water balloon" has been set up. You see the big balloon and pipes attached thereto. By their aid we can draw as much rainwater as we require. Nor do we ever suffer from flood or thunderstorms. We are all very busy making nature yield as much as she can. We do not find time to quarrel with one another as we never sit idle. Our noble Queen is exceedingly fond of botany; it is her ambition to convert the whole country into one grand garden.'

'The idea is excellent. What is your chief food?'

'Fruits.'

'How do you keep your country cool in hot weather? We regard the rainfall in summer as a blessing from heaven.'

'When the heat becomes unbearable, we sprinkle the ground with plentiful showers drawn from the artificial fountains. And in cold weather we keep our room warm with sun-heat.'

She showed me her bathroom, the roof of

which was removable. She could enjoy a shower bath whenever she liked, by simply removing the roof (which was like the lid of a box) and turning on the tap of the shower pipe.

'You are a lucky people!' ejaculated I. 'You know no want. What is your religion, may I ask?'

'Our religion is based on Love and Truth. It is our religious duty to love one another and to be absolutely truthful. If any person lies, she or he is...'

'Punished with death?'

'No, not with death. We do not take pleasure in killing a creature of God, especially a human being. The liar is asked to leave this land for good and never to come to it again.'

'Is an offender never forgiven?'

'Yes, if that person repents sincerely.'

'Are you not allowed to see any man, except your own relations?'

'No one except sacred relations.'

'Our circle of sacred relations is very limited; even first cousins are not sacred.'

'But ours is very large; a distant cousin is as sacred as a brother.'

'That is very good. I see purity itself reigns over your land. I should like to see the good Queen, who is so sagacious and far-sighted and who has made all these rules.'

'All right,' said Sister Sara.

Then she screwed a couple of seats onto a square piece of plank. To this plank she attached two smooth and well-polished balls. When I asked her what the balls were for, she said they were hydrogen balls and they were used to overcome the force of gravity. The balls were of different capacities to be used according to the different weights desired to be overcome. She then fastened to the air-car two wing-like blades, which, she said, were worked by electricity. After we were comfortably seated she touched a knob and the blades began to whirl, moving faster and faster every moment. At first we were raised to the

height of about six or seven feet and then off we flew. And before I could realize that we had commenced moving, we reached the garden of the Queen.

My friend lowered the air-car by reversing the action of the machine, and when the car touched the ground the machine was stopped and we got out.

I had seen from the air-car the Queen walking on a garden path with her little daughter (who was four years old) and her maids of honour.

'Halloo! You here!' cried the Queen addressing Sister Sara. I was introduced to Her Royal Highness and was received by her cordially without any ceremony.

I was very much delighted to make her acquaintance. In the course of the conversation I had with her, the Queen told me that she had no objection to permitting her subjects to trade with other countries. 'But,' she continued, 'no trade was possible with countries where the women were kept in the zenanas and so unable to come and trade with us. Men, we find, are rather of lower morals and so we do not like dealing with them. We do not covet other people's land, we do not fight for a piece of diamond though it may be a thousand-fold brighter than the Koh-i-Noor¹, nor do we grudge a ruler his Peacock Throne². We dive deep into the ocean of knowledge and try to find out the precious gems, which nature has kept in store for us. We enjoy nature's gifts as much as we can.'

After taking leave of the Queen, I visited the famous universities, and was shown some of their manufactories, laboratories and observatories.

After visiting the above places of interest we got again into the air-car, but as soon as it began moving, I somehow slipped down and the fall startled me out of my dream. And on opening my eyes, I found myself in my own bedroom still lounging in the easy-chair!

1. The Koh-i-noor ('mountain of light') is the name of a large and exceptionally diamond in the possession of the Mughal rulers of India, currently part of the British Crown Jewels. To Indians, it is a symbol of great wealth.

2. The Peacock Throne is a famous jewel-encrusted throne built for the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan, also known for the Taj Mahal. It was carried away from Delhi by the Persian invader Nadir Shah. Its current location is the cause of much speculation. Many think that one of the thrones displayed in the Istanbul Museum is the Peacock Throne. It is a long-standing symbol of royal power and splendor to Indians.

The Destruction of India's Industry and the Deacy of Her Agriculture

Jawaharlal Nehru

THE DISCOVERY OF INDIA

The chief business of the East India Company in its early period, the very object

for which it was started, was to carry Indian manufactured goods, textiles, etc., as well as spices and the like from the East to Europe, where there was a great demand for these articles. With the developments in industrial techniques in England a new class of Industrial capitalists rose there, demanding a change in this policy. The British market was to be closed to Indian products and the Indian market opened to British manufactures. The British Parliament, influenced by this new class, began to take a greater interest in India and the working of the East India Company. To begin with, Indian goods were excluded

from Britain by legislation, and as the East India Company held a monopoly in the Indian export business, this exclusion influenced other foreign markets also. This was followed by vigorous attempts to restrict and crush Indian manufacturers by various measures and internal duties which prevented the flow of Indian goods within the country itself. British goods meanwhile had free entry. The Indian textile industry collapsed, affecting vast numbers of weavers and artisans. The process was rapid in Bengal and

Bihar, elsewhere it spread gradually with the expansion of British rule and the building of railways. It continued throughout the nineteenth century, breaking up other old industries also, ship-building, metal working, glass, paper, and many crafts.

To some extent this was inevitable as the old manufacturing came into conflict with the new industrial technique. But it was hastened by political and economic pressure and no attempt was made to apply the new techniques to India. Indeed every attempt was made to prevent this happening, and thus the economic development of India was arrested and the growth of the new industry prevented. Machinery could not be imported into India. A vacuum was created which could only be filled by British goods, and which led to rapidly increasing unemployment and poverty. The classic

type of modern colonial economy was built up, India becoming an agricultural colony of industrial England, supplying raw materials and providing markets for England's industrial goods.

The liquidation of the artisan class led to unemployment on a prodigious scale. What were all these scores of millions, who had so far been engaged in industry and manufacture, to do now? Where were they to go? Their old profession was no longer open to them, the way to a new one was barred. They could die of course; that way of

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But still vast numbers of them remained, and these increased from year to year as British policy affected remoter areas of the country and created more unemployment. All these hordes of artisans and craftsmen had no job, no work, and all their ancient skill was useless. They drifted to the land, for the land was still there. But the land was fully occupied and could not possibly absorb them profitably. So they became a burden on the land and the burden grew, and with it grew the poverty of the country, and the standard of living fell to incredibly low levels. This compulsory back-to-the-land movement of artisans and craftsmen led to an ever-growing disproportion between agriculture and industry; agriculture became more and more the sole business of the people because of the lack of occupations and wealth-producing activities.

India became progressively ruralized. In every progressive country there has been, during the past century, a shift of population from agriculture to industry; from village to town; in India this process was reversed, as a result of British policy. The figures are instructive and significant. In the middle of the nineteenth century about fifty-five percent of the population is said to have been dependent on agriculture; recently this proportion was estimated to be seventy-four percent. (This is a pre-war figure). Though there has been greater industrial employment during the war, the number of those dependent on agriculture actually went up in the census of 1941 owing to increase of population. The growth of a few large cities (chiefly at the expense of the small town) is apt to mislead the superficial observer and give him a false idea of Indian conditions.

This then is the real, the fundamental, cause of the appalling poverty of the Indian people, and it is of comparatively recent origin. Other causes that contribute to it are themselves the result of this poverty and chronic starvation and under-nourishment-like disease and illiteracy. Excessive population is unfortunate, and steps

should be taken to curb it wherever necessary, but it still compares favourably with the density of population of many industrialized countries. It is only excessive for a predominately agricultural community, and under a proper economic system the entire population can be made productive and should add to the wealth of the country. As a matter of fact great density of population exists only in special areas, like Bengal and the Genetic Valley, and vast areas are still sparsely populated. It is worth remembering that Great Britain is more than twice as densely populated as India.

The crisis in industry spread rapidly to the land and became a permanent crisis in agriculture. Holdings became smaller and smaller, and fragmentation proceeded to an absurd and fantastic degree. The burden of agricultural debt grew and ownership of the land often passed to moneylenders. The number of landless labourers increased by the million. India was under an industrial-capitalist regime, but her economy was largely that of the pre-capitalist period, minus many of the wealth-producing elements of that pre-capitalist economy. She became a passive agent of modern industrial capitalism, suffering all its ills and with hardly any of its advantages.

The transition from a pre-industrialist economy to an economy of capitalist industrialization involves great hardship and heavy cost in human suffering borne by masses of people. This was especially so in the early days when no efforts were made to plan such a transition or to lessen its evil results and everything was left to individual initiative. There was this hardship in England during the period of transition but, taken as a whole, it was not great as the change-over was rapid and the unemployment caused was soon absorbed by the new industries. But that did not mean that the cost in human suffering was not paid. It was indeed paid, and paid in full by others, particularly by the people of India, by famine and death and vast unemployment. It may be said that a great part of the costs of transition to industrialism in western Europe were paid for by India, China, and the other colonial countries, whose economy was dominated by the European powers.

It is obvious that there has been all along abundant material in India for industrial development—managerial and technical ability,

skilled workers, even some capital in spite of the continuous drain from India. The historian, Montgomery Martin, giving evidence before an Inquiry Committee of the British Parliament in 1840, said: 'India is as much a manufacturing country as an agriculturist; and he who would seek to reduce her to the position of an agricultural country, seeks to lower her in the scale of civilization.' That is exactly what the British in India sought to do, continuously and persistently, and the measure of their success is the present condition of India, after they have held despotic sway there for a century and a half. Ever since the demand for the development of modern industry arose in India (and this, I imagine, is at least 100 years old) we have been told that India is pre-eminently an agricultural country and it is in her interest to stick to agriculture. Industrial development may upset the balance and prove harmful to her main business-agriculture. The solicitude which British industrialists and economists have shown for the Indian peasant has been truly gratifying. In view of this, as well as of the tender care lavished upon him by the British Government in India, one can only conclude that some all-powerful and malign fate, some supernatural agency, has countered their intentions and measures and made that peasant one of the poorest and most miserable beings on earth.

It is difficult now for anyone to oppose industrial development in India but, even now, when any extensive and far-reaching plan is drawn up, we are warned by our British friends, who continue to shower their advice upon us, that agriculture must not be neglected and must have first place. As if any Indian with an iota of intelligence can ignore or neglect agriculture or forget the peasant. The Indian peasant is India more than anyone else, and it is on his progress and betterment that India's progress will depend. But our crisis in agriculture, grave as it is, is interlinked with the crisis in industry, out of which it arose. The two cannot be disconnected and dealt with separately, and it is essential for the disproportion between the two to be remedied.

India's ability to develop modern industry can be seen by her success in it whenever she has had the chance to build it up. Indeed, such success has been achieved in spite of the strenuous opposition of the British Government in India

and of vested interests in Britain. Her first real chance came during the war of 1914-18 when the inflow of British goods was interrupted. She profited by it, though only to a relatively small extent because of British policy. Ever since then there has been continuous pressure on the Government to facilitate the growth of Indian industry by removing the various barriers and special interests that come in the way. While apparently accepting this as its policy, the Government has obstructed all real growth, especially of basic industries. Even in the constitution Act of 1935 it was specifically laid down that Indian legislature could not interfere with the vested interests of British industry in India. The pre-war years witnessed repeated and vigorous attempts to build up basic and heavy industries, all scotched by official policy. But the most amazing instances of official obstruction have been during the present war, when war needs for production were paramount. Even those vital needs were not sufficient to overcome British dislike of Indian industry. That industry has grown because of the force of events, but its growth is trivial compared to what it could have been or to the growth of industry in many other countries.

The direct opposition of the earlier periods to the growth of Indian industry gave place to indirect methods, which have been equally effective, just as direct tribute gave place to manipulation of customs and excise duties and financial and currency policies, which benefited Britain at the expense of India.

Long subjection of a people and the denial of freedom bring many evils, and perhaps the greatest of these lies in the spiritual sphere—demoralization and sapping of the spirit of the people. It is hard to measure this, though it may be obvious. It is easier to trace and measure the economic decay of a nation, and as we look back on British economic policy in India, it seems that the present poverty of the Indian people is the ineluctable consequence of it. There is no mystery about this poverty; we can see the causes and follow the processes which have led to the present condition.

Note : Reference to India here is Pre 1947, i.e. the undivided subcontinent.

Basant : A Composite Heritage

Lalarukh Farooq

Islamabad, PAKISTAN TODAY

This world is a blend of diversities. Different societies are mixture of different casts, creeds, colours, faiths, and other diversities. This is also a human dilemma to appreciate similarity. Dissimilarity is often disapproved rather men try to destroy the unlikeness. This is the major psychology hidden behind different wars and genocides.

Composite Heritage, though a new terminology, can play a role of binding agent in this regard. One might not find detailed definition of this phenomenon in dictionary or on internet but Manual of Composite Heritage compiled by Dr Khurshid Anwar, can provide thorough information about said topic.

Composite Heritage includes events, festivals, celebrations, personalities, cultures, customs, tradition, habits, language, art, architect, etc, any other thing which can be owned by different segments of society in an area without any kind of bone of contention. This sense of ownerships brings acceptance, regard and respect for diversities. Here one should not mix this phenomenon with hazards of globalization. Religion can play important role in this regard yet in some cases, blend of religion with composite heritage works as an inverse agent and mostly fire back.

If we take example of Basant festival, as far as my understanding regarding this issue is concerned, Basant can be tagged as composite heritage. However, it is called non-religious, prohibited event. Many decrees have been issued against celebrations of this festival yet there are some ground facts which make this opposition justified. Many people have lost their lives as string which is normally covered with glass powder used to cut down other kites usually slit the throats of passers-by or bike riders. Moreover, grudges and petty fights on cutting other's kites turn into serious clashes which turn this cultural festival into controversial event.

But in my opinion, this event can be made profit earning business activity with the help of

some precautionary measures and management this loophole can be crammed. Rather than smuggling chemical string, kites and other accessories of Basant from neighbour countries, local market could be given the chance and by this mean income generation and small level business industry can flourish on local level.

Tourism can also be promoted through Basant festival as a great number of foreigners are keen to enjoy this festival with its local touch. But in present scenario, this is need of time that government should not allow foreigners like Raymond Davis to enter in Pakistan, and masses of Pakistan also should behave reasonably and should not treat foreigner as Raymond Davis.

It's high time we should draw a fine line between so called fanaticism and religion. We, entertainment starved nation badly need some opportunities to get together and have some fun according to our religion and customs. Our religion does not deprive us from the right of being happy.

Otherwise one should not forget that majority of youth has been inspired and attracted towards terrorism and playing in the hands of religious fanatics. They should not have been used in the name of religion in any case. As religion dislikes extreme of any kind. In current discussion on Friday, March 16, 2012 in Supreme Court of Pakistan arguments were given that a sport cannot be blamed if a person playing it dies. People die in traffic accidents but driving has not been banned, cricket would not be banned if someone were to die after being hit with the ball.

Kite flying was regulated under the Punjab Prohibition of Kite Flying Ordinance 2001. However, activity had been banned in 2010 by the Lahore High Court. Kite-flying should continue, but in accordance with the law. What remains to be seen is whether the number of deaths caused from kite flying declines as a result of regulation.

Another measure in this regard is vital that people should be tolerant to each other as it is taught by religion and civilization. If Basant festival is celebrated as a composite heritage and owned by the different segments of society, then it would turn out into an entertaining occasion.

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