CHAPTER: 2
Himachal Pradesh- An Overview
1. Introduction

It is said in Puranas that “He who goes to the Hills, goes to his mother, the loving, affectionate nourishing bounteous mother”\(^1\)

Himachal derives its origin from two Hindi words ‘Him’ and ‘Aanchal’, meaning ‘Snow’ and ‘Lap’ respectively. Thus, etymologically, Himachal Pradesh stands for the region which lies in the slopes and foot-hills of the Himalaya.

Himalaya\(^2\) is not a single continuous chain of mountain but a series of parallel ranges intersected by enormous valleys and extensive plateaus. Running from Kashmir to the eastern end of Assam, the Indus River in the west and the Brahmaputra river in the east.\(^3\)

This is known as Dev Bhumi, to the ancients, is situated in the heart of the Western Himalayas. According to the Puranas, Himachal is the Jalandhara Kund to the Himalayas. In praising the glories of Himachal, the Skand Purana says, ‘He who thinks of Himachal, though he may not behold it, it is greater than he who performs worship in Kashi and shall have pardon for all his sins. Those, while dying think of its snows, are liberated from their sins. In a hundred ages of gods I could not tell them of the glories of Himachal where Shiva lived and the Ganges fell from the foot of Vishnu like the slender thread of a lotus flower.\(^4\)

“Among the Immovable’s, I am the Himalayas”\(^5\)

As we know Himachal \(^6\) lies in the lap of Himalayas, Lord Krishna said in Bhagwat Gita that I am Himalaya among the immovable, Himachal live in the lap of Lord of Krishna, and there will be permanency in peace, prosperity, purity that literally means divine, eternal and vibrant, sacred land of God and Goddesses.

Many saints, munis, gurus, monks, artists came to His lap for pursuing of their knowledge, peace and meditation. This Bhumi has become a Tapo Bhumi in real sense that ideally suited them for writing scriptures and manuscripts and artwork in the pious, tranquil atmosphere. Who established homage here and explore Vedic religion culture and art in every spare of Himachal Pradesh. Almost every hamlet, village, town has a symbolic place of worship. Entire Pradesh has many temples dedicated to Shiv-Parvati, Shakti Maa, Load Vishnu, Nagas and local deities. In the
Himachal Pradesh, one of the most beautiful states of India, lies in the lap of the King of Mountains, Himalaya, nestling in the lap of nature; it is endowed with lush green forests, bushing streams, emerald meadows, enchanting lakes and the eternal snows.

With this ancient background which provided the cultural ethos, it is also essential to know the geographical and historical background of Himachal Pradesh to understand the art in this state.

2. Geographical Background

Himachal takes its name from the Himalayas. Himachal literally means 'Land of snowy mountains'. Himalayas, the great mountain system extends almost 2,500 Km. from North-West to South-East and width of Himalayas is between 250 to 300 Km. The Himalayas are one of the youngest among the mountain system in India and these are believed to be 40 million years old. The Himalayas are also the highest mountain system in the world, which may be divided into three zones.

- Western Himalayas (Jammu-Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh)
- Central Himalayas (North of Uttarakhand)
- Eastern Himalayas (Sangri la Range and Brahmaputra Watershed)

Geography of Himachal Pradesh is characterized by breathtaking beauty. The huge Himalayan mountain ranges laden with snow, complemented by the picturesque landscapes, take one to the land of his dreams. Himachal Pradesh is almost wholly mountainous with altitudes ranging from 350 meters to 6,975 meters above the mean sea level. It is located between Latitude $30^\circ 22' 40''$ N to $33^\circ 12' 20''$ N and Longitude $75^\circ 45' 55''$ E to $79^\circ 04' 20''$ E. It is considered the eighteenth state of the Indian Union on 25th January 1971. Shimla, the capital has been the summer capital of the British from AD 1864 up to Independence.
Shimla is the capital\textsuperscript{11} of the state. Spread over a vast area of 55,780 sq km and bordered with the beautiful state of Jammu and Kashmir on the north, Punjab in the south-west, Haryana in the south, Uttaranchal on the south-east and the Chinese state of Tibet on the east, Himachal Pradesh is charming the senses of humanity since eternity.

2.1. Three Himalayan Ranges in Himachal Pradesh
Himachal Pradesh can be divided into three well-marked ranges which fall in western Himalayas and are different from one another in aerographical, hydrographical as well as vegetation features. These ranges are

- The Outer Himalyan (Shivalik) range
- Central Himalayan range
- The Greater Himalayan range

**The Outer Himalyan (Shivalik) range**
The word Shivalik literally means the ‘Hair locks of Shiva’, which is known as ‘Mainak’ Parbat in ancient times. Shivalik literally means ‘tresses of the Shiva’. It covers the lower hills of district Kangra, Hamirpur, Una, Bilaspur and lower parts of Mandi, Solan and Sirmaur districts. It forms a continuous, parallel chain to the principal Himalaya and forms the southern part of the state with height ranging from 600 meters to 1,200 meters. These ranges are some hat steep and difficult as slopes in the south also have gentle slopes towards the northern valley called dun or duar. It maintains a regular and conspicuous form between the Ravi and the Yamuna Rivers. Shivaliks have been badly eroded after the result of high deforestation. Shiwalik ranges are mainly of scattered, strong and sandy hillocks. This enormous erosion has given birth to numerous chokes which are torrential and seasonal streams and can be seen in abundance in the Una district. Wild animals like tiger, leopard, and bear etc lives in densely forest Shivalics. Scrubs forests are covering the south facing slopes of the Shivaliks, Sal forests are on the northern slopes and miscellaneous broad leaved forests are covering in the west. Paonta, Nahan tehsil, Pachhad and Renuka tehsil of Sirmaur district, Balh valley and Jogindernagar area of Mandi district, Kangra, Dharamshala Palampurnd Dehra of district Kangra, Dalhousie, Bhattiyat, Churah and Chamba tehsil, Sarahan, Nalagarh, Kunihar, Hamirpur, Una and Nurpur, these places are located in this range. ‘The annual rainfall in this zone varies from 1500 mm to
1800 mm. The climate and soil of this zone is suitable for the cultivation of maize, wheat, sugarcane, ginger, citrus fruits and table potatoes.\textsuperscript{12}

**The Central Himalayan range**

The central/inner Himalaya range occupies the central part of Himachal Pradesh and is known as the northern zone. Which are composed of granite and other crystalline rock of unfossiliferous sediments. The Panchmuda range is with the highest peak of Chur, situated in the south of Shimla. Height of mountain of Lesser Himalayan zone is 400-500 meters. Lower slopes of mountains in the east and west are covered by dense tropical forest. Magnificent coniferous forests of deodars are in Bushahr, Jubbal, Chopal, Kullu areas. Other species are oaks, chir, pine, deodar, blue pine, fir, spruce, hemlock, rhododendron, chestnut, and walnut, sub-alpine and alpine pastures. Chamba, Dalhousie, Mandi, Shimla, Solan, Baijnath, Palampur and Dharamsala are located on the outer fringe of the Lower Himalayas.

Dhauladhar, ‘Grayish White’ range, which presents fascinating panorama over the Kangra, is the outermost portion of Lower Himalayas range. It is intercepted by the Satluj at Rampur Bushahr, by Beas at Larje by Rave at valley. Dhauladhar range of the greater Himalayas starts from near Badrinath South-west of Chamba. The beautiful Kangra Valley is backed by Dhauladhar range. The outer Himalayas or Shivaliks are marked by a gradual elevation towards the Dhauladhar. However, the rise is more abrupt in Shimla hills, especially in the conspicuous peak of Chur.\textsuperscript{13}

The climate and soil in this zone is suitable to temperate fruits and seed potatoes.\textsuperscript{14} There is a sudden rise in Dhauladhar Mountains of 3,600 meters or 10,800 feet above the Kangra valley. Dhauladhar forms Southern boundary in Chamba district and separates from Kangra district. Hathi Dhar, range quite easily seen in this region, is a lower hill range which runs parallel to Dhauladhar in its South. Dhauladhar in Kinnaur\textsuperscript{15} district constitutes the South-Western part of the district and forms a longitudinal belt along the boundary line between Kinnaur and Shimla and Uttrakhand in its South. It runs parallel to Satluj river in its Western half and also parallel to Baspa river in its Eastern half, which are the main tributaries of Satluj river. This range gives origin to some streams and rivulets in Kinnaur district. It extends towards North and North-Eastern Mandi and runs in continuation of Dhauladhar of Kangra.
district in North-West to South-East direction passing through North-Eastern Jogindernagar tehsil and North- Eastern Mandi Tehsil.\textsuperscript{16}

Pir-Panjal is the largest range of the lower Himalayas and it separates itself from the Himalayas near the bank of Satluj river, so it makes a water-divide between the rivers Beas and Ravi on the one side and the river Chenab on the other side. Pir-Panjal range makes a turn towards the Dhauladhar range near Bara-Banghal that is the source of the river Ravi. It is a long mountain range and extends beyond Chamba district to Northern Kullu district and adjoining area of Lahaul-Spiti and Kangra district.\textsuperscript{17} Most of the passes are located across this range and many of these remain closed from December to March.

**The Greater Himalayan range**

The great Himalayan range having an elevation between 4800 m to 6000 m comprises of a towering snow clad ridge that runs along the North-Eastern border of the State and then turns Southwards, separating the Trans-Himalayan Zones of Pooh, Lahaul and Spiti from the rest of the country. Also this range separates the drainage of the Spiti River from that of the Beas. It consists of a number of peaks having an altitude of over 6000 m. Some of the famous passes like Baralancha and Rohtang are across this range.\textsuperscript{18} The southern part of range is covered by deodar, fir, blue pine, spruce, moru and kharsu oaks, hem-lock, rhododendron, sub-alpine, betula and alpine meadows. The normal rainfall is low in this zone. Largely devoid of vegetation can be seen in the northern slopes. Pooh and Spiti desert areas are the driest places, dry climate suits for cultivation of dry fruits, like Walnut, Almond, Grapes and Cash crops like Zira, Saffron, Kuth, Hops and Millets.

This zone consists Lahaul, Spiti, Kinnaur (Pooh) and Pangi areas, which is mainly a tribal belt. Civilization of this area produces and preserves some interesting remnants of great historical value. Which have innumerable vestiges of ancient Vedic civilization right from the Mahabharata period onwards.\textsuperscript{19}

The climate in this zone is not cold in summer and of semi-arctic nature in winter. The soil is thick and supports variable fertility. The climate in this zone is very suitable for cultivation of dry fruits. Rainfall in this zone is low but Snowfall is very heavy that starts in the mid of October-November to March-April. Snowfall is so
heavy and geographical conditions become so odd that during the period of snowfall, the whole region remains cut off from the rest of the world the quality of life suffers and life looks very isolated. The famous **Zanskar Range** is also found in this part of the Himalayas which is Eastern most range. This range acts like a big wall by separating Spiti and Kinnaur from Tibet. Zanskar Range has a number of very high peak points rising over 6,500 meters (19,500 feet). The highest among its peaks is Shilla which is 7,025 meters (21,075 feet) high. The second one is Riwo-Phargyul which is 6,791 meters (20,373 feet) high. This range is cut across by the Satluj through its Shipki defile. There are numerous passes in this range at an elevation varying between 5200m to 5000m and it nestles permanent glaciers. This range has thin and young soils and depth in this place occurs in the Valleys or on gently inclined hill slopes. This zone is without of forest vegetation. Occasional tufts of grasses and natural flowers come up on the mountain slopes only in summer.

### 2.2. Rivers of Himachal Pradesh

The Himalayan mountain chain has a dominant influence on the climatic conditions prevailing over Indian sub-continent. They lie in the path of rain-bearing monsoon winds and thus bring rain to a large part of India. The Himalaya houses a vast reservoir of moisture both in the form of ice, fresh-water and underground water. The rivers draining the Himalayas sustain life in the Northern part of the Indian sub-continent. The direct sources of rivers for water are rain and snow. The rivers of Himachal provide water to both the Indus and the Ganges systems. The drainage system of Himalaya is very complex in the sense that water percolates through various channels available in the mountainous region following the amazing behavior according to certain scientific principles of fluid dynamics. It is composed of both rivers and glaciers. Himalayan river criss-crosses the entire mountain chain. In fact, a number of rivers are older than the mountain system. They have cut across the various mountain ranges. The important rivers of Himachal Pradesh are the Satluj, the Beas, the Ravi, the Chenab and the Yamuna. One of the most important rivers of this area has been the Saraswati around which Indus civilization developed. This ancient river, due to several geographical factors, went underground and whose track became known from the images of NASA in recent years. However, out of these five rivers, four flow through Himachal Pradesh and along with their tributaries draining parts of Himachal Pradesh.
The Satluj River

Its Vedic name is Satudri and Sanskrit name Shatadru. It is the largest among the five rivers of Himachal Pradesh. Satluj rises from beyond Indian borders in the Southern slopes of the Kailash mountain near Mansarover lake from Rakas lake, as Longchen Khabab river (in Tibet). It enters Himachal at Shipki (altitude- 6,608 metres) and flows in the South-Westerly direction through Kinnaur, Shimla, Kullu, Solan, Mandi and Bilaspur districts. Its course in Himachal Pradesh is 320 km. from Rakastal, with famous tributaries viz. the Spiti, the Ropa, the Taiti, the Kashang, the Mulgaon, the Yula, the Wanger, the Throng and the Rupi as right bank tributaries, whereas the Tirung, the Gayathing, the Baspa, the Duling and the Soldang are left bank tributaries. It leaves Himachal Pradesh to enter the plains of Punjab at Bhakhra, where the world's highest gravity dam has been constructed on this river. Its total catchment area in Himachal Pradesh is 20,000 sq. km. The Satluj finally drains into the Indus in Pakistan. The catchment area of about 50,140 km. of Satluj river is located above the permanent snow-line at an altitude of 4,500 metres. The upper tracts of the Satluj valley are under a permanent snow cover. The prominent human settlements that have come on the banks of the Satluj river are Namgia, Kalpa, Rampur, Tattapani, Sunni and Bilaspur. Its total length is 1,448 km.

Beas River

The Rohtang pass at 13,050 feet (4,350 metres), 51 km. North of Manali gateway to the valleys of Lahaul and Spiti lies on the main Manali-Leh highway. It has remained the main attraction for all tourists visiting this picturesque hill resort. During the season from early June to mid-October. The name Rohtang is a new one, the old one being Bhrigu Tung. On the South of this pass lay the civilized state of Kullant (Kullu), while to the North lay the more desolate and barren areas of Lahaul and Spiti. Both these areas were not connected and according to legend the people prayed to Lord Shiva to make a way. Lord Shiva with his trishul cut the Bhrigu Tung mountain and made a path that is known as the Rohtang pass. On the right of this pass lies the source of the river Beas also known as Beas Rishi. At this spot the great thinker and writer of the Mahabhart, Maharishi Vyas, meditated. The attraction of the river has been so great that whoever came here remained to stay. The great sages Narad, Vashisht, Vishwamitra, Vyas, Prashar, Kanav and Parshuram came here on different
occasions and meditated on the banks of this river. Still, today their temples exist in this valley of Vyas.

To the South of this source lies another source known as Beas Kund. Both these mountain streams meet at Palachan village, 10 km. North of Manali to form the river Beas. In ancient times the river was not known as the river Beas but as Arjiki and till the time of the Mahabharta this remained its name. Besides affording a magnificent view of the snow-clad mountains of Lahaul, this pass is also the source of the river Beas. From a clear blue easy flowing mountain river to an awesome torrent during the monsoon. The world famous tourist resort of Manali is situated on the right banks of the river Beas. From Manali, this holly river after passing through dense evergreen forests reaches the town of Kullu. After covering hundreds of Kilometres through the hills, the river at Hari Ka Patan in Ferozapore district of Punjab embraces the river Satluj before flowing into Pakistan.

Its main tributaries are the Parbati, the Spin and Malana nala in the East; and the Solang, the Manalsu, the Sujoin, the Phojal and the Sarvati Streams in the West. In Kangra, it is joined by Binwa, Neugal, Banganga, Gaj, Dehr and Chakki from North, and Kunah, Maseh, Khairan and Man from the South. The Beas enters district Kangra at Sandhol and leaves it near Mirthal. At Bajaura, it enters Mandi district situated on its left bank. In Mandi district, its own Northern feeders are Hansa, Tirthan, Bakhli, Jiuni, Suketi, Pandi, Son and Bather. The northern and Eastern tributaries of the Beas are perennial and snow fed, while Southern are seasonal. Its flow is maximum during monsoon months. At Pandoh, in Mandi district, the waters of the Beas have been diverted through a big tunnel to join the Satluj. It flows for 256 km. in Himachal Pradesh.

The Beas (Vedic Arjiki or Arjikiya and Sanskrit Vipasa) forms the world famous valleys of Kullu and Kangra. This river bears testimony of those historical events which do not find mention in the recorded history. It has played a significant role in the development of peculiar hill culture which pervades the life of hill people living in the towns and surrounding villages since ages. We have to owe to this sacred river in terms of our culture, economy and social life. The important settlement on the bank of Beas River is Kullu, Mandi, Bajaura, Pandoh, Sujанpur Tihra, Nadaun and Dehra- Gopipur. The total length of this river is 460 km.24
Ravi River
In later Sanskrit period it came to be known by the name of Irawati. Ravi river rises from the Bara Banghal (a branch of Dhauladhar) as a joint stream formed by the glacier-fed Badal and Tant Gari. The right bank tributaries of the Ravi are the Budhil, Tundahan Beljedi, Saho and Siul; and its left bank tributary worth mentioning is Chirchind Nala. Town Chamba is situated on the right bank of the river Ravi. The Ravi river flows by the foot of Dalhousie hill, through the famous Chamba valley. The river with its length of about 158 km. In Himachal has a catchment area of about 5,451 sq. km. As the Ravi River flows down from the heights, it passes hillsides with terraced fields. Sometimes the hill seems to move away and the river comes out into lovely green valleys. It carries away even sturdy trees. The Ravi river first flows Westward through a trough separating the Pir Panjal from Dhauladhar range and then turns southward, cutting the deep gorge through the Dhauladhar range. It flows nearly 130 km. in Chamba region, before leaving it finally at Kheri.

The Ravi river forms the biggest sub-micro region of Chamba district. From Bara Bangal of Kangra district, it flows through Bara Bansu, Tretha, Chanota and Ulhansa. The Ravi river merges with the Chenab in Pakistan. The well-known human settlement along the river is Barmaur, Madhopur and Chamba town. Its total length is 720 km.  

Chenab River
Two streams namely Chandra and Bhaga rise on the opposite sides of the Baralacha pass at an elevation of 4,891 metres and meet at Tandi at an elevation of 2,286 metres to form the river Chenab. The Chenab rises from the South-East and Bhaga from the North-West of the Baralacha pass. It enters Pangi valley of Chamba district near Bhujind and leaves the district at Sansari Nala to enter Podar valley of Kashmir. It flows in Himachal for 122 km. With its total length of 1,200 km., it has a catchment area of 61,000 sq. km., out of which 7,500 sq. km. lie in Himachal Pradesh. It is the largest river of Himachal Pradesh in terms of volume of waters. The Chenab valley is a structural trough formed by the great Himalayan and Pir Panjal ranges. The Miyar Nullah joins Chenab in Lahaul, while Saicher Nullah joins it in Pangi valley. Its tributaries in its lower course are river Jammu Tavi and Bhaga, while the river Munawarwali in Dun valley. It meets the Indus river at Mithankot about 950 miles
down in Pakistan and ultimately joins Arabian Sea. The important human settlements that have come up along this river are Udaipur, Killar, Doda and Ramban.

Yamuna River
It enters Himachal Pradesh at Khadar Majri in Sirmaur district. Yamuna river is the largest tributary of the Ganga. The Yamuna river has mythical relation to the Sun. It rises from Yamunotri in Gharwal hills and forms the Eastern boundary with Uttarakhand. The Yamuna is the Eastern-most river of Himachal Pradesh. Its famous tributaries are Tons, Pabbar and Giri or Giri Ganga. The Giri Ganga rises from near Kupar peak just above Jubbal town in Shimla district, Tons from Yamunotri and Pabbar from Chandra Nahan Lake near the Chansal peak in Rohru tehsil of Shimla district. Its total catchment area in Himachal Pradesh is 2,320 km. It leaves the state near Tajewala and enters into the Haryana state.

The main geomorphic features of the Yamuna valley are interlocking spurs, gorges, steep rock benches and terraces. The latter have been formed by the river over the past thousands of years. The area drained by the Yamuna system includes Giri-Satluj water divide in Himachal Pradesh to the Yamuna Bhilagana water divide in Gharwal. To be more precise the South-Eastern slopes at the Shimla ridge are drained by the Yamuna system. The utilization of water of the river system is being done by the way of transportation of timber logs, irrigation and a hydel power generation. After Himachal Pradesh, the river flows through the state of Haryana, Delhi and Uttar Pradesh where it merges with the Ganga river at Allahabad. The Yamuna is 2,525 km. long.

2.3. Climate
The Himalaya constitutes the highest mountain system of the world. There is great diversification in the climatic conditions of Himachal due to variation in elevation (450-6500mtrs). It varies from hot and sub-humid tropical (450-900mtrs) in the southern Low tracts, warm and temperate (900-1800mtrs), cool and temperate (1900-2400mtrs) and cold alpine and glacial (2400-4800mtrs) in the northern and eastern high mountain ranges. Process of Metalwork is also affected due to climatic conditions. Climate of Himachal Pradesh is divided into three broad seasons.
Winter (October-February)
During winter, the nights, mornings and evening are colder in the higher altitudes. The average snowfall is about 3 meters and lasts for about 3 to 4 months at an elevation of about 3000 m. Heavy snowfall is experienced in the areas of Himachal Dalhousie in Chamba district, Lahaul, Spiti, Pndi, Kullu and Manali areas, upper Shimla hills and Kinnaur district during winter. Good winter precipitation is essential for apple orchards and rabi crop.

Summer (March-June)
Heat touches it’s a climax in the lower areas in June, which makes weather hot, dusty and fine haze hangs over the hills. Kangra, Bilaspur and Mandi districts, some parts of Sirmaur and Solan districts and adjoining areas of Una and Hamirpur districts get extremely hot. Higher altitude has temperate climate. ‘Satluj is responsible for the excessive hot months in Mandi district having Tattapani and Dehar the hottest places.’

Rainy season (July-September)
The Bay of Bengal and Arabian Sea currents bring rainfall that causes the fall in temperature. Landscapes become fresh and green in monsoons it causes many difficulties by floods, erosion due to heavy rainfall. Victor Jacquonment, who travelled in Kinnaur, remarks, “The climate is beginning to be very different from that of the southern slopes of the mountain. There is nothing but wind and haze, whereas on the other side, the rain is coming down by the bucketful” Dharamshala has the highest rainfall of 3400 mm. Spiti is the driest area (below 50 mm rainfall) being enclosed by high mountains on all sides.

The main season is the spring from mid-Feb to March-April. The air is cool and fresh. Colourful flowers adorn the valleys, forest slopes and meadows. In the hill stations, the climate is pleasant and comfortable. The entire landscape becomes green and fresh. Streams begin to swell and springs are replenished.

3. Historical Background
Himachal Pradesh has been inhabited by human beings since the dawn of civilization. It has a rich and varied history which can be divided into several distinct eras.
About 2 million years ago man lived in the foothills of Himachal Pradesh, viz in the Bangana valley of Kangra, Sirsa valley of Nalagarh and Markanda valley of Sirmour. The foothills of the state were inhabited by people from Indus valley civilization which flourished between 3300 and 1750 B.C.\(^2\) around the great river Saraswati. There are many evidences of the existence of the pre-historic humans in this region. Much information about ancient history of Himachal is given in epics like the Ramayan, Mahabharata and other scriptures like the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Puranas.

According to the Mahabharta the tract which forms the present day Himachal Pradesh was made up of number of small republics known as Janpadas (some sort of a kingdom) each of which constituted both a state and cultural unit during 2\(^{nd}\) c BC to 2\(^{nd}\) c AD. Those are\(^3\)

- **Audumbras (Pathankot):** These were the most prominent ancient tribes of Himachal who lived in the lower hills between Pathankot and Jwalamukhi and formed a separate state.
- **Trigarta (Kangra):** Trigarta is located in the foothills drained by three rivers, i.e. Ravi, Beas and Satluj. It is believed to have been an independent republic.
- **Kuluta (Kullu):** The kingdom of Kuluta was situated in the upper Beas valley which is also known as the Kullu valley. Its capital was Naggar.
- **Kulindas (Shimla hills and Sirmaur):** This kingdom covered the area lying between the Beas, Satluj and Yamuna rivers, i.e. the Shimla and Sirmaur hills. Their administration resembled a republic with members of a central assembly sharing the powers of the king.

**Yugandhar (Bilaspur and Nalagarh):** Yaudheyas extended from the Indus river to Ganga river during the period the 5\(^{TH}\) BC to the 11\(^{th}\) AD. The present areas of Himachal were only a sphere of the Yaudheyas influence.\(^4\)

The Rig Veda mentions the rivers which flow through Himachal. The text also talks about Shambar, The foothills of Himachal were inhabited by people from the Indus Valley Civilization which flourished between 3300 and 1750 BC. The Vedas are the oldest compositions of the Aryans.\(^5\) The Rig Veda mentions about Dasyus and Nishads living in this region and their powerful king Shambra who had 99 forts. From
the early period of its history, tribes like the Koilis, Halis, Dagis, Dhaugris, Dasa, Khasas, Kinnars and Kirats inhabited this land. In the eastern area that is now Lahaul & Spiti, Kinnaur and, dwelled the Chamanags and Damanags. It was around that time that an offshoot of the Aryan race, the Khashas, entered the Himachal arena and became the new masters of the land. Another phase of migration took place with the coming of the Bhotas and Kiratas, the Mongoloids.

The Aryans with their superior qualities and human values, whose influence over this area dates back to the period before the Rig Veda and settled here permanently. The period also saw the establishment of small Janapadas or Republics in Himachal Pradesh. For remaining independent for a long time that’s why they maintained a good relationship with the Mauryans. After the rise of the Guptas in the North Gangetic plains the Aryans lost their independence.

The vast Mauryan Empire of old (4th to 2nd BC) extended its boundaries well into Himachal. Chandragupta slowly influenced most of the republics of Himachal by show of strength or use of force though he usually did not rule them directly. Chandragupta’s grandson, Ashoka (3rd c BC), even introduced Buddhism here and erected many stupas. One of those stupas existed in Kullu Valley, which the Chinese traveller Hiuen- Tsang (630-45AD) talks about in his writings.

After the Mauryas, the land came to be ruled by Thakurs and Ranas, their ruling areas were small in size and boundaries constantly changing due to wars with neighbours. However, in Mandi and the adjoining areas of Suket (present day Sundernagar) and Kullu, these Ranas and Thakurs were quite powerful and retained their independence for a long time.

Trigarta (Kangra) is known to have had great administration and reached a high level of development. It came to be regarded as the land of legendary wealth. Kuluta (Kullu) is also known to have had an organized administration under the Pal kings. Their capital was at Jagatsukh.

In 500 AD, Raja Maru founded Brahmapura (present day Bharmaur) in the Chamba valley and began the long Varman dynasty. Rajender Sen of Spiti invaded Kullu (in around 650 AD), but two reigns later the Pal king recovered both.
The next great king after the Mauryans to establish an empire of worth was Harshavardhana. With the rise of Harsha in the early 7th century, most of these small states acknowledged his overall supremacy though many local powers remained with the petty chiefs. Harsha’s capital was at Thaneshwar (now in Haryana) and later at Kannauj (in Uttar Pradesh). After the break-up of his empire there was, once again, great political upheaval. A new class called the Rajputs came on the scene after having been vanquished by those from the plains. Some of the kingdoms they founded were Nurpur, Jubbal, Keonthal, Baghat, Baghal, and Sirmaur.  

However, the Varmans peacefully sat on the throne of Brahmapura one after the other for quite some time. In two successive wars with Kullu, Meru Varman (700AD) killed the Pal kings and expanded his kingdom from the Ravi valley to as far as the present capital. Hiuen Tsang (the Chinese traveler) reported around this time that Chamba, Kangra, Kullu and Mandi were still the important states, though Kullu remained subject to Brahmapura for a considerable period.

A few decades after Harsha's death (647 A.D.), many Rajput states ascended in Rajasthan and Indus plains. They fought amongst themselves and the vanquished moved to the hills with their followers, where they set up small states or principalities. These states were Kangra, Nurpur, Suket, Mandi, Kutlehar, Baghal, Bilaspur, Nalagarh, Keonthal, Dhami, Kunihar, Bushahar, Sirmour.

In the meantime of 800-1000 AD., some Rajput’s Kahluria clans came and ruled in the Himachal area like Bilaspur, Kangra, Chamba but the next Varman promptly won it back. Chamba was made the new capital in 930 AD.

Spiti was invaded by Tibetans and Ladakhis who overthrew the ruling Hindu Sen dynasty. The Pal rajas of Kullu lent a helping hand to the invaders and was rewarded with some villages in Spiti.

During Medieval Period, many new states came into being during this phase. The relatively larger states like Chamba, Kullu, Kangra and Mandi were broken into smaller kingdoms. Some of the new states were Guler, Siba, Datarpur, Handur and Koti. It was also during this time that India was hit by a wave of invaders from
Central Asia, West Asia and Europe. Himachal, unfortunately, was the entry point for most of them through the passes.

The Pathans, Lodis, Mughals, British, Dutch and Portuguese left their impact on the political and administrative setup of various states. Often it so happened that some relative of the kings of the Delhi Sultanate or the Mughals rebelled against the ruler and then sought refuge in the mountainous and hilly tracts of Himachal and Punjab. But, thanks to the difficult terrain and harsh climatic conditions, the Sultanate kings and the Mughals could never really establish their authority over the kingdoms in Himachal. However, some places like Kangra did catch the Mughals keen eye. The Period (1000-1400 AD), marked the beginning of foreign invasions. The Kangra fort was mercilessly looted by Mahmud of Ghaznavi in 1009 and many more such attacks followed. Muhammad Tughlaq captured the fort in 1337 while his successor, Firoz Shah Tughlaq, held his sway over it in 1351. The kingdom of Hindur (present Nalagarh) was founded as an offshoot of Kahlur (Bilaspur) by Ajai Chand in the 12th century. Among the other major happenings was the invasion of Lahaul, Spiti and Kullu by Lahchen-Rgyalpo of West Tibet/ Ladakh between 1030-1080. Bahu Sen (from Suket) settled in Manglan in Kullu, where his descendants lived for 11 generations. This was the beginning of the dynasty of the Sens of Mandi. Later Ajbar Sen became the first true king of Mandi.

Later on as the Mughal dynasty began to break up; the rulers of the hill states took full advantage. The Katoch rulers of Kangra availed of this opportunity and Kangra regained independence status under Maharaja Sansar Chand who became a mighty figure in the latter half of the 18th century and ruled for nearly half a century. He was one of the ablest administrators of the region. After he took formal possession of Kangra fort, a great art lover Sansar Chand began to expand his territory. The states of Chamba, Suket, Mandi, Bilaspur, Guler, Jaswan, Siwan and Datarpur came under the direct or indirect control of Sansar Chand.40,45 The Rajputs, under the leadership of Sansar Chand owned this region in 1773 AD, till the attack by Maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1804 AD, which crushed the Rajput power here.46 Parallel happenings included declaration of independence by many nawabs, rajas and kings all over India. The Gurkhas (under Prithvi Narayan Shah), Sikhs (under Ranjit Singh in Punjab) and the
East India Company (under Richard Colley Wellesley) were becoming increasingly powerful.

The Gorkhas, a martial tribe came to power in Nepal in the year 1768. They consolidated their military power and began to expand their territory. Gradually the Gorkhas annexed Sirmaur and Shimla hill states. With the leadership of Amar Singh Thapa, Gorkhas laid siege to Kangra. They managed to defeat Sansar Chand.47

Capturing some of the territories under Sansar, who went into hiding in his fort and stayed there for four years. Ranjit Singh defeated Amar Singh Thapa and the poor Gurkhas had to turn their attention to Bushahr and Rampur.

Following the rise of Gurkha power, an Anglo-Gurkha war became inevitable and things came to a head in 1814-15. Meanwhile, the Sikhs were becoming really puissant even though Ranjit Singh had died by now. They plundered and looted many places in Himachal including Spiti in 1841. The Gurkhas now appealed to the British for protection against the Sikhs, which the British readily agreed to – the Anglo-Sikh war took place in 1845. The Treaty of Lahore (1846) was signed between the British and Sikhs, by which the British retained the territory between the Ravi and the Sutlej (practically the whole of Himachal), and gave the west of the Ravi to the Jammu king. The rulers of Kangra state and some other small states combined with the Sikhs against the British in 1848 but were crushed ruthlessly.48

The revolt or first Indian war of independence resulted due to the building up of political, social, economic, religious and military grievances against the British. The British territories in the hill came under British Crown after Queen Victoria's proclamation of 1858. The states of Chamba, Mandi and Bilaspur made good progress in many fields during the British rule. During the First World War, virtually all rulers of the hill states remained loyal and contributed to the British war effort both in the form of men and materials. Amongst these were the states of Kangra, Siba, Nurpur, Chamba, Suket, Mandi and Bilaspur.49 The British established many hill stations in this region to protect themselves from the extreme heat and dust of the northern plains in the summer. Shimla became the summer capital of India, many old houses and buildings tell the story of English grandeur.50 In about the early 19th century AD, the
British exercised their influence and annexed the areas of Shimla after the Gorkha War.\textsuperscript{51}

The people also participated in the freedom struggle movement of the hill during 1914 to 1947. Praja Mandal launched agitations for social and political reforms, agitations against the British, the Mandi conspiracy to murder the Superintendent and Wazir to loot the treasury, blow up the bridge over Beas river. However, conspirators were caught and sentenced to long terms in prison. The Pajhota agitation in which Sirmaur state people revolted, is regarded as an extension of the Quit India Movement of 1942. Important freedom fighters of this state during this period included Dr. Y.S. Parmar, Padam Dev, Shivanand Ramaul, Purnanand, Satya Dev, Sada Ram Chandel, Daulat Ram, Thakur Hazara Singh and Pahari Gandhi Baba Kanshi Ram. The Congress party was also active in the freedom movement in the hill state particularly in Kangra.\textsuperscript{52}

**Himachal Pradesh in the post-independence era:** The Chief Commissioner's province of H.P. came into being on 15\textsuperscript{th} April, 1948. This Pradesh became a part C state on 26\textsuperscript{th} January, 1950 with the implementation of the Constitution of India. Bilaspur was merged with Himachal Pradesh on 1\textsuperscript{st} July, 1954. Himachal Pradesh became Union Territory on 1\textsuperscript{st} November, 1956. Kangra and most of the other hill areas of Punjab were merged with Himachal Pradesh on 1\textsuperscript{st} November, 1966 though its status remained that of a Union Territory. On 18\textsuperscript{th} December, 1970 the State of Himachal Pradesh Act was passed by Parliament and the new state came into being on 25\textsuperscript{th} January, 1971. Thus, Himachal Pradesh emerged as the eighteenth state of Indian Union. Himachal Pradesh has come a long way since then. It has seen a number of full-fledged governments which have led the state towards economic self-reliance.\textsuperscript{53}

### 3.1. Administrative Divisions

Administratively the Pradesh was initially divided into the four parts. These are Chamba, Mahasu, Mandi and Sirmaur. The number rose to with the amalgamation of Bilaspur. In consideration of strategies compulsions, on 1\textsuperscript{st} May 1960, the new border district of Kinnaur was cravered out of the Mahasu district. In 1966 additional districts of Kangra, Shimla, Kullu and Lahaul and Spiti were added to the six districts of the time. After the attainment of statehood, on 1\textsuperscript{st} Sep. 1972, the government undertook a reorganization of the districts. Una and Hamirpur were created out of the Kangra district. From that date on, Himachal Pradesh is divided into 12 districts for
administrative purpose, Lahaul & Spiti district is the biggest having 11.72% of the state's area followed by Kinnaur district having 11.50%. Hamirpur and Bilaspur have respectively 2.01% and 2.11% of the state's area.

Himachal Pradesh is divided into 12 districts namely, Kangra, Hamirpur, Mandi, Bilaspur, Una, Chamba, Lahul and Spiti, Sirmaur, Kinnaur, Kullu, Solan and Shimla. The state capital is Shimla which was formerly British India's summer capital under the name Shimla.

- **Sirmaur**
  Sirmaur is a small district occupying the South eastern corner of the state. In the past it was a princely state. The border of this district touches those of Uttranchal, Haryana, Solan and Shimla. The Chor peak is the highest point of this district, lies at the boundary of Sirmaur and Shimla districts. The Giri rivers divides the district into 22 unequal halves North of the Giri river lie the Pachad and Sangrah, Shillai areas. Poanta area is very much industrial area. The largest amongst these is the cement plant at Rajban. Some places produce many fruits such as Kinoo and Guava. The Nahan area is situated on and located near the famous Renuka Lake.

- **Solan**
  It is located to the west of Sirmaur district, it extends from the plains of Haryana to Chail across the Ashni River. Parwanoo is large industrial town situated at the border of district and Haryana. The three small hill stations of Kasauli, Subathu, and Dagshai lie to the north east of Parwanoo in the low rolling Shiwalik hills. The Solan area is spread along the highway to Shimla and the Rajgarh road. Kandaghat and Nauni, where the University of Horticulture and Forestry has a sprawling campus. The Chail is known for its natural beauty of deodar-clad slopes and gurgling streams. It includes the mountain resort of Chail and the surrounding countryside which is visited by thousands of tourists each year. Nalagarh and Baddi situated in the foothills along the border with Punjab and Haryana. Many industries have come up at Nalagarh and Baddi. A major cement plant is also to be constructed at Darlaghat.

- **Shimla**
  It occupies the eastern part of the state. It touches border of Uttarakhand, Sirmaur, Solan, Bilaspur, Mandi. Thousands of tourists visit this area each year. It is also well
known for fruits like apple. Tract of Kotkhai, Jubbal and Rohru is the apple belt of the state. Chopal is situated amongst thick forests in the eastern part of Shimla. The Rampur Bushar is located along the Satluj River.

- **Kinnaur**
  It occupies the north-eastern part of the state. It extends along the Sabling river after it enters India near Shipkila. The southern one third of this district lies in the higher Himalaya while the rest of it is in the trans-Himalaya zone. The Nichar is a part of the Main Himalayan, situated above the Satluj River though the national highway passes far below the town which was located on the old road to Tibet. Wangtu, a small mountain hamlet along the national highway is located in the gorge of the Satluj River. The Sangla Valley opens is Satluj River is Upstream of Wangtu along other small hamlets. Chilgoza, Pine forests are abundant around Peo and Kalpa. This tract produces a large quantity of fruits such as Chilgoza, Khumani, and other dry fruits. The Pooh areas lies in the dry zone of this district, small hamlets and the road finally reaches the international border with Tibet near Shipki la pass.

- **Bilaspur**
  The Bilaspur district lies in the lower hills of south-central Himachal Pradesh, has been constructed on the slopes above the Govind Sagar Lake. The national highway to Kullu passes through this area. A large cement plant is located at Barmana.

- **Mandi**
  It is situated in the central part of the state. The Balh valley in which lies Sundernagar and Ner Chowk is the most prosperous part of this district. It yields a large quantity of agricultural production. Many industrial units have come up in this area. The Karsog area is situated in the middle Himalayan range. The slopes are covered with dense forests.

Mandi area lies in the valley of the Beas river it extends till Larji along the national highway to Pathankot. India's only rock salt mines are at Drang. A large hydro-electric power-house is situated at Jogindernagar which is also connected by rail with Pathankot.
• **Kullu**

It is situated in the middle and higher Himalayan mountain ranges of central Himachal Pradesh. It covers the upper valley of the river Beas and its tributaries like the Parbati, Tirthan and Sainj. The Kully district is bounded by Shimla, Lahaul & Spiti, Chamba and Mandi districts.

![Kullu Emblem in metal](image)

The Shamshi area lies at the ahead of the Kullu valley. It is known for its imposing beauty. Nagger is another beautiful station in this area. The Rohtang pass is located atop the Pir- Panjal range that separated Kullu and Lahaul & Spiti districts.

The Kullu area occupies the central part of the Kullu valley. It is well developed. Other towns in this area are Bhuntar, Shamshi and Katrain. The Parbali valley famous for the hot water springs at Manikaran opens into the Kullu valley at Shamshi. Other river valleys that form a part of this district are the Tirthar and Sainj valleys. The Kullu valley is known for its fruits production particularly apple.
- **Lahaul and Spiti**

This is the largest district of the state occupying the Northern and North-Eastern parts of this district. It is bounded by Ladakh and Chamba, Kullu, Shimla and Kinnaur districts.

Lahaul is approached after crossing the Rohatag pass across the Pir Panjal range. This is made up of the valley of the Chandra and Bhaga which merges with each other at Thandi to form the Chenab or Chandra Bhaga valley.

Lahaul- downstream of Tandi is the Chenab valley, extends till Udaipur downstream of which it is known as the Pangi Valley. Tirlokndh is an important pilgrim centre in the valley. There is a helipad at Keylong which serves as a vital link with the rest of the world as the Lahaul valley remains cut off for a long period of the year.

Spiti- valley is made up of the area drained by the Spiti River. It can be approached via Pooh over the Kunjam La pass via Lahaul. This is very remote area. Kaza is the largest town of this tract. The Spiti valley national park lies in the catchment area of the Spiti River.

- **Hamirpur**

Small district of Hamirpur is situated in the foothills of south-central Himachal Pradesh bounded by Bilaspur, Mandi, Kullu and Una and plains of Punjab. The slopes are gentle in the south while there occurs low rolling hills in the northern and north westerns part of this district. Himachal Pradesh is densely populated. The economy is largely agriculture based, as the land is fertile. Industrialization has rapidly taken place in many parts of the plains. Important places are Hamirpur and Sujanpur Tira.

- **Una**

Una, another small district located in the foothills of south central Himachal Pradesh, extends from the plains of Punjab to low rolling Siwalik Hills. The boundaries of this located district touch those of Punjab, Hamirpur, Kangra, Bilaspur district. Una district is densely populated and well developed. Its economy is agriculture based and almost flat lands are fertile. Una area is gentle sopping terrain. It is well developed as a modern town. Chintpurni is another important town, having a famous temple.
• **Kangra**
This is a large and prosperous district of North-Western Himachal Pradesh. It was a princely state in the past. Kangra lies between the Shiwalik hills and the towering Dhauladhar range, was called Nagarkot in the ancient times. Kangra proper originally was a part of the ancient Trigartha (Jullundur) which comprises of the area lying between the river "Shatadroo" (probably Sutlej) and Ravi. A tract of land to the east of Sutlej which probably is the area of Sirhind in Punjab, also formed a part of Trigratha. Trigratha had two provinces. One in the plains with headquarter at Jullundur and other in the hills with headquarter at Nagarkot. Agriculture is the mainstay of the economy. Horticulture, tea gardens, tourism, and industries also contribute.

Kangra valley is one of the most pleasant, relaxing and spiritual place in the Himalayas. This area has the maximum number of famous ancient temples charging the environment with spirituality. Jhamakada is a folk women dance performed in Kangra district, accompanied by a variety of percussion instruments and lyrical songs.

At present Dharamshala is the headquarters of the Kangra District in the Indian state of Himachal Pradesh. In 1855, Dharamshala had only two major areas where civilians settled in, McLeod Ganj, named after Lieutenant Governor of Punjab "David McLeod", and Forsyth Ganj, named after a Divisional Commissioner. These three places were the spiritual and trade centres until 1904. After a severe earthquake devastated the area, however, these centres were reorganized, which picked up again quite fast. After the arrival of Dalai Lama, the head of the Tibetan Govt. in exile, in 1960, Dharamshala became internationally known.

The Palampur a modern town extends from the temple town of Baijnath down to Palampur. Nurpur and Shahpur are well-developed and prosperous towns. Bara Bengal is a remote tract across the Dhauladhar range which forms a part of Kangra district. The Rave River rises in Bara Bengal area before flowing into Chamba district.

• **Chamba**
This is the North-Western district of Himachal Pradesh its northern part is drained by the Chenab River and the southern two thirds by the Ravi river. It is bounded by
Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, Kullu and Lahaul & Spiti districts. Chamba is situated in the western Himalayas. The town stands on a plateau on the right bank of the Ravi river valley between Dhauladhar and Zanskar ranges south of the inner Himalayas. Chamba is a personally magnetized old-fashioned and unenlightened town and hill station of Himachal Pradesh, amidst lush greenery, scenic picnic spots, and cluster of tiny villages. Chamba is known for its temples and palaces preserving much of its medieval past. Thus known for its historic importance, Chamba is now one of the most popular tourist destinations of Himachal Pradesh. Dalhousie is a beautiful hill station and cantonment well developed, Bharmour area is remote and under developed.

The Chamba town is named after Champavati, daughter of Raja Sahil Varma of the Brahmaur royal house who shifted his capital in 920 AD. But even before that around 6th century AD it was ruled by the Rajputs of the Chamba valley. Later in the medieval period it was under the reign of the Mughals and then taken over by the Sikh kingdoms. Chamba became a part of the state of the Himachal Pradesh only after the British during the independence of India in 1947.

Millennium Gate of Chaugan in Chamba is containing several beautiful deities on copper plaques.
3.2 Different Eras from Vedic to Golden Period

At this point, it may be worthwhile to summarize various eras and kingdom in the state of Himachal Pradesh, in reference to the metal art, in a tabular form as:

Table 1: Different Eras from Vedic to Golden Period of India. (Source: mainly internet Wikipedia)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SN</th>
<th>Era</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Name of deities/ metals referred</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Rigveda (created)</td>
<td>Prior to 6000 BC (Tilak)**</td>
<td>Metal as: gold, silver, copper, Iron, bronze</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Mahabharat</td>
<td>5561 BC (Astronomical)*</td>
<td>Iron statue of Bhim. On the basis of excavation of Dwarka city sunken in Arabian sea, the probable date the city is between 7500- 5500 BC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Indus Valley Civilization*</td>
<td>3300-1900-1300 BC</td>
<td>This civilization developed around the rivers Saraswati and Indus, covered the entire area expanding from the Arabian sea to the Gangetic valley in the east including whole of Punjab as far as Himalayan foothills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Panini period</td>
<td>5th century BC</td>
<td>In the commentary on Panini’s work by Patanjali reference has been made of Vasudeva, Vishnu, Shiva, Skanda, Aaditya, Mahakala and Vaman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Gandhara dynasty (N-W India), Magadh dynasty (W-E India)</td>
<td>6th - 5th c BC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Lord Mahavir</td>
<td>599-527 BC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Lord Buddha</td>
<td>563-483 BC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Mahakavi Kailidas</td>
<td>Mid of 5th - 4th c BC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Nanda</td>
<td>5th - 4th (up to 321 BC)</td>
<td>The empire covered some part of Punjab and touched the boundary areas of Himachal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Chandragupta Maurya- Kautilya period</td>
<td>4th c BC (after 321 BC)</td>
<td>An important event in the history of Himachal Pradesh was the Greek invasion in 327 BC by Alexander who reached Taxila via Afghanistan, and his one of the units reached as far as the river Beas in Himachal where the strong resistance was offered by warrior communities of the area. Kautilya mentioned, in his Arthashastra, various metallic images of deities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Maurya period (Emperor Ashok)</td>
<td>3rd c BC</td>
<td>Ashoka adopted Buddhism and worked for it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Period</td>
<td>Time span</td>
<td>Historical Note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Shunga period</td>
<td>2nd c BC (185-75)</td>
<td>A copper lota was found at Kundlah (Kullu) of this dynasty in 200-300 with inscription of Gautam Buddha life. (Now in British museum collection). Another image, half- Gandhara and half- Gupta period, of brass inlaid with silver was found in Fatehpur (Kangra). Towards the end of this era, mention is made of Vinayaka, Ganesh, Mahapurukh and Yama.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Vikramaditya</td>
<td>2nd to 1st c BC (started Vikram Era)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Shalivahan</td>
<td>1st c BC (Started Shak Era)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Kushan period</td>
<td>1st-2nd c AD</td>
<td>Started coinage with Kartikeya and his peacock alongwith his weapon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Gupta period</td>
<td>320-550 AD</td>
<td>Golden period, gold/ copper coins with Kartikeya continued up to this period. Huna (worshippers of Sun and Shiva) invasions hastened the decline of Gupta dynasty around 455 CE. The Hunas period came to an end. At this time, another class of ‘Gurjar’ appeared and established the ‘Pratihar’ dynasty. Rule of Harsha was the period of peace and prosperity for Himachal during 6th- 7th CE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Karkota period</td>
<td>625- 1003 CE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Audumbaras</td>
<td></td>
<td>Most powerful north Indian Tribe of Himachal in lower hills of between Sirmaur and the river Yamuna, also in eastern part of Kangra. Issued Kulata coinage from 1st c BC with deities. The main deities were Sadashiv Mahadev and Kartikeya, also coins with Dharamchakra and Tri- rantna (symbol of Buddhism).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Kunindas (Kulindas)</td>
<td>2nd c BC- 3rd c AD</td>
<td>Central Himalayan kingdom, silver coins, Mahabharat's reference that they were defeated by Arjuna.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Yaudheyas</td>
<td>Contemporary of Gupta period as Gupta subdued them.</td>
<td>The kingdom lied close to that of Pandavas, took part in Mahabharat war.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* http://www.hindunet.org/hindu_history/ancient/ramayan/rama_vartak.html

** http://www.indianetzone.com/2/rig_veda.htm
4. Cultural Background

4.1. Ethnicity, languages, dresses and Cuisine

There is 90% Hindus population in Himachal Pradesh. Brahmins, Rajputs, Kannets, Rathis and Kolis are main Communities in this state. A percentage of people are also Tibetans. Muslim, Christian and Sikhs are in minority but they also enjoy the same rights as Hindus. The tribal population of the state comprise of the Gaddis, Kinnars, Gujjars, Pangawals and Lahaulis.

The Gaddis themselves believe that their ancestors fled from the plains of India due to the lack of security for them. The Gaddis are the traditional shepherds who migrate from the alpine pastures to the lower regions during the winters these people normally reside in the Mandi, Kangra and Bilaspur district though a majority of them live in the Kangra district. There are farmers, weavers and tinkers (a mender of metal household utensil) also.

The Kinnars are the inhabitants of the Kinnaur region. Some of these people believe that they belong to the Kinners of Mahabharata while others consider themselves the descendants of the Kirats. Kirats were the people who were overpowered by the Aryans and Khasaa and forced to recede into the remote Trans Himalayan region. They practice polyandry and polygamy the Kinnaures is quiet resemble to that of the Aryans, and have some Mongoloid features. These people are soft spoken and indulge mainly into occupation like rearing of sheep and raising of wool. Other occupation of these people includes agriculture and horticulture.

The Gujjars are the Muslim tribe of the Himachal Pradesh, who rear buffalo herds. Most of the historians believe that Gujjars came to India all the way from central Asia during 6th century. They are mostly vegetarian and are shepherd and goatherd by occupation. Search for better pastures take them to lowland plains in the winter and to the upper reaches of the Himalaya during the summer.

The Pangawals of the Pangi region of the Chamba district are both low and high caste Hindus. They are straight- forward, honest religious and industrious. Their main occupation generally is agriculture; some of them rear sheep and goats also. This tribe is superstitious and God fearing. Their main belief is in Shiva Nag Devi worship.
The **Lahaulis**, spread in both regions Lahaul and Spiti include some of the following castes. The upper category is of Brahmins, Rajputs, Thakurs and while lower one is of Halis, Bhots, Lohars and also Buddhist. Lahaulis are honest, hospitable and peace-loving. Mostly are non-vegetarians. They are agriculturists but mule rearing, weaving and spinning are their occupations.

Himachal Pradesh is a land of diverse cultures. So many Languages are spoken in the Himachal Pradesh. But, Hindi is the official language of the state. Among them, the prime languages of Himachal Pradesh are the Punjabi and Pahari, Dogri and Kangri. Gujarathi is also spoken in the western parts of the state. Pahari is one of the most common and most spoken languages of Himachal Pradesh. It is derived from the ancient Indian language of Sanskrit. Nearly all the basic words in the language are taken from Sanskrit. Many of the words are also taken from another ancient language of Prakrit. There are different tribal languages also flourished due to the settlement of many different types of tribes. The languages may also differ from region to region. There are many other regional languages like Kinnauri, Lahauli, Chambyali, Pangwali, which are spoken in the state. The Pahari languages are classified under central Pahari, eastern Pahari and western Pahari. Garhwali language is also classified under Dogri and Gaddi.

The majority of the people in Himachal are that of Hindus, but Buddhists, Jains, Sikhs, Muslims and Christians also have respectable place here. People professing different faiths and pursuing their own way of life customs, conventions, and beliefs a from unique example of mutual cooperation and acceptance. They have respect for each other’s religion and status. The people of Himachal are very delightful and colourful in the world.

Dress too reflects cultural mode of the inhabitants, every region of the Bharat has its own identity which can be seen through the dress and wearing. Mode of the dress is also dictated by climate, traditional influence of adjoining areas and fashions. Impact of westernization is clearly visible in these areas. These are historical evidences of the type of dresses that is widespread through paintings, wood -crafts, stone images, folk songs.
Dress in **Lahaul**, people consists of loose trousers and coarse woolen coat, like a gown, which is tied at the waist with a Sash. Sometime, a jacket is used over this coat. Head cap similar to Kinnaur area is used. Pula or straw shoes are commonly used. Female dress consists of churridar pyjama, a gown (dugpo), it hangs below the knees. Woolen shawl is used in winter. In Spiti, small cap, loose coat or thick woolen cloth girth at the waist by a long and broad Sash, with boots gathered up below the knees are used. Kurta and blanket are popular dresses in upper hill areas. The **Kinnaur** male adorns a long coat (Chubha) and woolen trousers (Chamu sutan) while the women have a woolen sari called Dhoru as their dress. Their feet are protected by shoes that are made up of wool and goat hair.

The most attractive aspect about the **Gaddi**, is their attire. The women wear splendidly colourful dresses that are spun at home. A thick scarf over their head serves both as a decorative and protective purpose. The black sash on their back is also useful since it carries their little child. Ornaments of the Gaddi women include semi precious stones, little mirrors in their necklace and peacock feather.

In the upper hills of Shimla the male dress consists of Kullu and Bushahri cap, Kurta jacket (Sadri) with and coarse woolen trousers, narrow at knees loose at waist known as Rebdar Suthans. Women here generally put on Salwar and Kamiz and use a scarf (Dhatu) on their heads. Over coat is considered very important and a status symbol for fair and festivals. Old ladies use chupken (high and v shape in neck and till knees) and coarse trousers. The women footwears are sandal, slippers and desi Jutti. Old people like to put of shoes locally known as Paaaintai.

Following Traditional dresses of Himachal Pradesh are given below which are popular with beautiful design.

- **Jhaggi**: A long wollen women garment with trousers and tied with gachi, used in Mandi, Kullu and Rampur Bushar.

- **Choli**: Covers the breast along with dupatta ghagra and suthan, with finenely embroidered and fitted with coloured glasses and beads.

- **Ghagra and Suthan**: The dress has been popular women dress of Mandi. Gown Turban and Cap: turban was popular in the past. Wollen Kullu and Bushari caps and long trousers, now the dress is past relic.

- **Dhattu**: A square piece of coloured cloth/ scarf of women headwear.
- **Kurta and Blanket**: Upper areas quite popular dress.
- **Anga**: A quite popular men folk over garment reaching to knees of Mandi and Kangra district.
- **Chupkan**: A frock along with trousers, angu, gachi and cap for gents are used in Rohru and Pubbar valley.
- **Chhupta**: A V- shape neck gown till knees is used by both genders in Rampur, Kotkhai, Kotgarh and Kumharsain.
- **Pishwas**: A colored gown of very fine muslin alongwith waistcoat and dupatta for head which is common in Mandi and Chamba.
- **Cholu**: Ordinary, a long till knees male Kangra dress along with cap, kurti.
- **Chuba**: A male dress goes along with gachi, trousers, coat, shirt, waist coat and chadru in upper areas of Shimla and Kinnaur district.
- **Reshtata**: Anklets touching women gown, tight at breast and loose downwards.
- **Pattu**: A home spun blanket is used for many purposes.
- **Sadari**: A jacket is used by both genders in Kotgah and Kumarsain.
- **Gachi**: A simple white sheet of cloth used by females over chapta around their waists.

With the changing time, the dress up of the people has now become a mixed one. Though the above-mentioned style is now hardly followed, people have started wearing western style of clothes.

Food of Himachal is very similar to the rest of the north India. They too have dal-chawal subzi-roti as other states of North India. Non-vegetarian food is preferred. Some of the specialties of Himachal include Pateer, Chouck, Bhagjery and chutney of Til. Apart from all these Nesasta is a sweetmeat of the Kangra region, Indra is the dish prepared of Urad dal and Bada/ Poldu is cooked in the Shimla region. The Siddu, made from soyabean or wallnut is much similar to Nepali Mo Mos, but are quite larger and fatter in size, is a very famous.

### 4.2. Art and Craft

The geographic isolation of Himachal has allowed its people to evolve their own unique tradition of art and handicrafts. Various art traditions flowed in the Himachal Pradesh due to the migration of a number of different peoples (like the Shakas, Kushanas, Gujijars and Hunas etc) from central Asia and the Indian plains. Perhaps the
most significant of the art-traditions is the one related to the temple architecture. This possesses a certain characteristic of its own resulting from several factors such as special raw-material, climate and religious trends.

The handicraft that comes out of this state and is worth appreciating, are woodwork, paintings, the carpets, leather embroidery works traditional woolen shawls, beautifully patterned carpets, metalware, and many other artistic items. Here, Monasteries are also splendid examples of Himachal art.

Since ancient times Vedic literature and Vedic temples have been the most important sources of inspiration in respect of discovery, study and knowledge, to artists in the field of architecture, iconography of sculptures, various metal images and metal craft, not only in Vedic tradition but to other traditions also in North- Western India and particularly in Himachal Pradesh.

The architectural design and decoration in temples in the form of stone, wooden and metallic works, reflected through engravings of images, fluorinated designs and, various beautiful musical instruments depicting various themes and pictures related to psychology of rural folks. For example in a few ancient temples of upper Himachal wooden panels with profuse designs and decoration can be seen, namely Bhimakali temple of Sarahan. In some of the temples, decorated gates are made of metallic (brass, silver or gold) plaques like those in Sarahan, Kaliwari in Shimla, Jwalaji etc.

In later period, inspired by the architectural & sculpture designs and decoration through the media of stone, wood and metal, creative mind of rural India indigenously made those musical instruments for playing during rituals & worship, entertainment during festivals and celebrations and for concentration on the self with a tranquil environment.

the same creative spirit was continued in making paintings (miniature, wall hangings and Thungpa etc), jewelry, embroidery in garments, design on beautiful rugs, carpets and pottery. It is also reflected in fabric designs and leather craft.
Temple Architecture

The architecture of Hindu temples in Himachal Pradesh have four varieties, depending mostly on the geographical conditions.

- The classical stone Nagara type, curvilinear or flat-roof temples.
- The pent-roof (with alternate courses of wood and stone) or indigenous hill style.
- The pagoda style, consisting of from two to five super-imposed roofs, each one a little smaller than the one below it.
- The indo-Mughal style.

The Nagara temples

This type of style temples is very common in the state. These temples are entered through an ornamental porch usually supported by two pillars. A peculiar feature of the Nagara temples is the umbrella shaped canopy or covering of wood or zinc placed over and around the amalakala stone which forms the top of the shrine. Temples are carved out of stone slabs to protect the building from heavy snowfall. Which consists a square cella, a small portico and a low platform, in which idol is placed. The form of shikara either rounded or curvilinear and has its top either a kalasha (finial or an amalaka, that is a circular ribbed stone disc).

Rock-out temple complex at Masrur in Kangra is the finest specimen of the nagara style, the Jagatsukh temple near Manali in Pratihara style both are belong to 8th century. Manglor, Bajaura, Mukraha, Manikaran, Sultanpur, Chakki, Sarsai, Jagatsukh and Naggar in Kulu district, Manimahesa and Narsingh temples in Bramhour, Lakshmi-Narain in Chamba are the outstanding examples on Nagara style. Baijnath in Kagra built in 1204, unique example of post-Gupta traditions. The Trilokanath and Panchvaktra and a shrine built by Raja Ajbar sen (the founder of the new Mandi Township), is the temple of Bhutnath, which have outstanding architectural importance. The magnificent Nagara style temples of old Bilaspur town is which portray rich tradition of Indian art built between 7th and 12th A.D. also this style can be seen in the Hamirpur and Shimla.
Pent-roof/Chalet type temples
The earliest among the main groups, are the pent-roof shrines. These are made of stone and wood and are simple in design and structure. Although the pent-roof and pagoda type temples are stylistically different but the general features of the two types are such that their plan, structure and decorative motifs are almost the same. Their main difference lies in their construction and in their number of roofs. This type of temples are scattered in all over the Himachal but mostly found in Brahmaur, Chhatrari and Mirkul in Chamba district, Hatkoti and Jubbal in Shimla district, Kullu, Sirmaur, Mandi. These are fine examples of indigenous art, imagination and skill. Some of these are of great interest owing to elaborate wood work which has been carved to embellish their ceilings, doors, pillars and facades.

Pagoda type temples
Pagoda temples have special appearance of pyramidal tiered its tower like storied structure of stone, brick, or wood. It consists of from two to five super-imposed roofs directly over the garbhagriha. These are mostly square or rectangular and have an
open and closed verandah running round the shrine in a clockwise direction. Entire wooden structure the doors, windows and pillars are richly carved. The earliest multistoried pagoda type Shiva temple of Nirmand is now in ruined condition. Other examples are Tripusundari Devi in Nagar, Jogeshwar Mahadeva in Dalas, Hidimba Devi in Dhungri near Manali, Mandi, Shimla, and Kinnaur, Dakhani Mahadeva temple of Nirmand, all were built between 14-19th century A.D.

The Indo- Mughal style temples

Indo-Mughal temples are built during medieval times with a mixer of dome and nagara type temple. The Syam Sen (1664-79) Kali temple on Tama hill, Shiva temple at Tira- Sujanpur (1793) with onion domes and cusped arches are examples of this style.

Buddhism entered in the Himachal Pradesh during the 8th century A.D. Buddhist religion and culture predominated in several areas of the state, mostly in Lahaul, Spiti and Kinnaur. Consequently, several monasteries are existing in the state.

The Buddhist Monasteries: These monasteries are classified into three categories.

- Tak-phu: Its type is Rock-cut monastery, which lies in a cave.
- Gompa: Its type is suggestive of solitary place.
- Lhakhang (Du-khang or Tsug-lag-Khang): These are near to villages for the academic purpose.

Flat-roofed monasteries with some rooms and corridors are situated in Lahaul & Spiti and Kinnaur. Traditional Tibetan style frescoes with Buddhist lore themes are painted. Metal and clay images of Buddha, Padmasambhava, Avalokitesvara and other deities placed on a raised platform in the chapel. There are some monasteries which are Kangyur, Kanam in tehsil Pooh district Kinnaur, Pooh, Nako, Gelugpa-Tabo, Dhankar and Kee in Spiti, Shashur, Kardang and Gurughantal Monasteries in Lahul, Bhima tila, Buddhist stupa at Chetru in Kangra, Buddhist temple at Riwalsar in Mandi district, Trilokinath temple at tuned in Lahul. A famous Tabo monastery in Spiti has largest area. It has painted walls and wooden carved standing Buddha with attendants have splendid example for the Buddhist art.
Stone Work
Stone carving has been explored to the fullest in Himachal. The fair variety of stone found in this hilly region. Numerous shikhara (spired) stone temples dot the landscape. The Lakshminarayan temples of Chamba and the temples of Baijnath and Masur in the Kangra Valley are some splendid specimens beautifully carved memorial stone slabs called panihars are also found in several places, especially near temples and fountains.

In the Googa Madhis in the villages, the Googa and his Googadi, his horse and soldiers are carved out in details. Many walls display beautiful relief work. The Shiva temple at Baijnath and the Krishna temples at Masroor are carved out of a single rock. The temples at Chamba, Mandi, Kulu and Bilaspur areas display feats of architectural skill by local artisans much before the advancement of science.

The stonemasons are known as 'Batai Hadai'. Large buildings and small articles of daily use in the houses like pounding stones, mohras, pots and basins also display the skill of local masons amply. Many houses have statues of lord Ganesha near the door.
These and the divine animal statues in the local temples are all carved locally. Stone masons can be found in each area and locality in Himachal. Stone carvers are hammering away at their blocks even today, producing several artefacts of domestic use. These include traditional stoves (angithi), circular pots for storing (kundi), pestle and mortar (dauri, danda), mill stones (chakki) and other things. The centres of sculpting in Himachal are concentrated mainly in Mandi, Chamba, Kinnaur and the Shimla Hills.

**Wood Art**

Himachal has forests all over the state abound in pine and deodar, besides walnut, horse chestnut and wild black mulberry. Wooden temples and palaces have been built and carved with lavishly effect. The steep-roofed pine temples of northern HP often bear relief figures carved on their outer walls. Intricately carved seats, doors, windows and panels speak volumes of the craftsmen’s skill. The Bhimakali Temple of Sarahan is a perfect product of this kind. Pahari artisans make woodcarving still a living tradition in Himachal Pradesh. They use wood to make intricate net, trellis work or perforated reliefs that filter light, transforming the interiors of a building with the play of light and shade and balancing mass with delicacy. They make beautiful objects of everyday use like vedis (low benches), bed legs, cradles, bedsteads, low settees, boxes, ladles, churners, rolling pins, wooden utensils, charkhas (spinning wheels) and hukka nali (the pipe and body of the smoking pipe), fruit bowls, beer mugs, wooden jewelry, decorative boxes and carved images. Bamboo and willow bark is also stripped and fashioned into sturdy trays and baskets.

The Dom tribe is well known for producing fine household articles made of bamboo. They are later painted in bright colors. They manufacture boxes, sofas, chairs, baskets, racks and several articles used in daily life. The tradition of woodcarving goes back to 7th - 8th century AD. The temples of Lakshna Devi in Bharmour and Shakti Devi in Chattrari are embellished with highly intricate woodwork done in a classical manner of the post Gupta period. Deodar wood is chiefly employed for wooden architecture of the temples, decorated with figurative kind of work, displaying the strong influences of the Chamba School of painting. Some devil masks are also preserved in Chamba museum which were used in dance in temple complex of Chattrari.
The Chamunda temple of Devi Kothi (Churah), Shakti Devi temple, Ganda dehra and Chamunda Devi temple of Chamba town are famous for their exquisite wooden relieves depicting the themes of Hindu mythology and folklore. The remains of the State Kothi Bharmour are now preserved in the Bhuri Singh Museum, Chamba. Mohd. Latif is such one craftsman who has received National award for the making of replica of a door of Bharmour Kothi. Latif hails from the family of traditional carpenters and his father Miran Bux was a good craftsman.

**Metal Work**

Religious worship is bound to be an elaborate process in daily life of Indians. Temples and homes are replete with pretty objects needed for worship in Himachal, all fine specimens of metalwork.

**Coin:** discovered in different parts of Himachal are chronologically displayed in Numismatic Gallery in the museums of Himachal Pradesh and will be briefly discovered in Chapter 3.

**Weaponary:** In the Bhuri Singh museum there is a section devoted to armoury that contains different types of bows and arrow, swords, farsa, shield, metal dresses protecting the body, barchhi, bhala, fire arms including revolvers, pistols, guns. cannons. The enclosed photograph is of a cannon mounted on wheels. The separate canons without wheels are also seen in the museum.
Normally, the barrel part has the least metal art. However, the small part which is handled while operating the cannon, to fill the gun powder and other material, has artistic engravings on it. Similarly, in other firearms, guns and pistols artistic work is engraved on smaller portion. of dimension about 12 inches. The handles of various cutting weapons are invariably artistic in nature. All these pieces are unique antique items that were normally used in the war, battle, close fight.

Similar armoury is also displayed in other museums of Himachal Pradesh namely in Shimla State museum, Army museum, Annadale, Shimla, Army museum, Sapatu. Such armoury museums were also preserved in other royal families of the state.

The traditional attire includes ornaments for almost all parts of the body in most tribal communities. Fine jewelry is crafted out of silver and gold. This part in more detailed will be described in Section 3 of Chapter3

Bronzes of different regions of Himachal are exhibited in state museum, Shimla in its Bronze gallery. In addition to it, bronzes of rest of India are also displayed which reflects the cultural tradition, artisanship and religious belief of the people.
The metals used mainly are brass, copper, iron, tin and bell metal. Studios in Chatarahadi, Bharmaur and Baujora have produced several beautiful bronze sculptures in the past. The statues of Ardha Vishnu are beautiful examples of the art of metal casting. Some statue forms found in the state are those of Shiva and Parvati, Ganesh, Vishnu in Baikunth, Uma-Maheshwar, Mahishasur Mardini (Durga), Kartikeya and Durga as Shakti. Their shapes and postures follow the strict classical patterns. The Shimla and Nirmand areas produced good artists. Apart from the exquisite statuettes enshrined. There are several metal objects like bells with artistically designed handles, lamps, incense burners, low settees of silver or brass, vessels Musarabbas (brass pots for storing water), tumblers, platters and charotis (large pots used for feasts), beautifully rendered floral motifs and miniatures and ornate metal musical instruments in these temples. In fact, the common lota (a small globular pot for storing water) itself is available in so many different forms all over the state that it is amazing. Similar things may be used as everyday items at home. The traditional metal (brass and bronze) pots produced locally have a beautiful finish. The Mangath region in Kangra district is well-known for brass utensils. Some of the more affluent homes possess beautifully fashioned teapots, smoking pipes, carved panels, doorknobs and various other artifacts. Metal workers haven’t lost their magic touch; this centuries old craft is still one of the most vital traditions of the state. Another metal craft unique Mohras or metal plaques representing a deity are common in Kullu and Chamba. Most of them represent Shiva, but masks of the mother goddess Devi and other deities are not uncommon. These plaques are usually made of bronze, brass or silver and consecrated by a pujari (priest) before being installed in a temple. The head is sculpted in bold relief, while the neck and shoulders are more summarily treated. Each village has its own mohra. Mohras have been made in Himachal for at least 1,400 years now. They are taken out of the temples on a palanquin in processions during religious festivals like the grand Kullu Dussehra. Chamba was the foremost centre of metal casting. The temples of Bharmour and Chamba are embellished with life size bronze sculptures possessing high quality workmanship. Prakash Chand, Hakam singh, and Ramesh Chand who are renowned sculptors further revive the tradition.
Painting
Himachal Pradesh has a rich tradition of painting. Museums and art galleries preserve the famous miniature paintings of the region. Traditional ritual paintings can be seen in most village houses on the floors and walls. Women draw magical diagrammatic designs called yantras on the thresholds on ceremonial occasions. Rice paste is used for floor painting and natural colours with bright motifs painted on walls of houses and temples. Walls of temples in the Himachal full of miniature painting, called Pahari, flourished between the 17th and 19th centuries. Wall paintings are an essential part of the art of the hilly regions. These are painted on walls especially treated for the purpose with clay, lime and golu. The surface of the wall is rubbed over with round stones to give it a smooth finish. The palace at Chamba, the Akhan Chandi palace, the Laxmi Narayan temple, the living rooms of old houses in Durga Mangnu and the palaces of Bilaspur have beautiful wall paintings. The Kangra fort, the Narvadeshwar temple, the palaces at Sujanpur and the temples and palaces at Vijapur and Alampur also have wall paintings. In Kullu the tradition of decorating the palace walls with wall-painting began during the reign of king Preetam Singh.

The wall paintings in the Sheesh Mahal show the influence of the Kangra school. Connubial paintings (Dehre) and ornamental door hangings are examples of this art. These are usually made in houses of the rich by women from poorer families. Their subjects deal with traditional and mythological figures like Ganesh, birds, flowers, vedika scenes, Kahars carrying Palanquins, the bride and the groom, the barber and his wife, the Shehnai players and women folk all dressed in local finery. The wall paintings done by women on festivals describe the stories connected with the occasion.

The early Pahari paintings of the mid-17th century were in the Basholi style. Which are extraordinarily colourful and charged with vitality and emotion.

There was a wholesale ferrying in of Mughal style and fashion, from dress to architecture to the arts can be seen after coming of Mughal court painters during the second quarter of the 18th century. The resultant was the Guler-Kangra style. This late Pahari style first appeared in Guler, after in Kangra. Raja Goverdhan Singh (1744-1773) of Guler gave shelter to many artists. Receding planes, quasi-realistic landscape
and frequent enlargement of the figures on the page are the features of Guler paintings.

The Kangra School flourished happily under Raja Sansar Chand (1775-1823), Kangra Fort, where he held court for nearly 25 years, was once adorned with paintings and attracted art lovers from far and wide.

The temples and palaces at each of these places were adorned with lovely miniatures. The 1905 earthquake damaged many of these buildings but still some of the miniature wall paintings can be seen. "The Kangra style is by far the most poetic and lyrical of Indian styles," says art historian J. C. Harle. The Bhuri Singh Museum in Chamba is best-known for its exquisite collection of Pahari miniatures.

Brightly coloured thanka are scroll paintings with traditional vegetable or mineral colours on canvas, edged with a border of rich silk. These are usually depicting the Buddha and other deities and the wheel of life ritual paintings displayed during certain Buddhist festivals.

Bandwari is a traditional ritual painting of Chamba, which is done on either sides of a door during wedding ceremony and several figures of Hindu Gods and Goddess together with Ganesh at top are still painted in this ritual style. Sohnu and Jawahar
(Chamba) were very good for their fine work their works are also preserved in the BSM Chamba. Hira Lal and Prem Lal were also traditional painters in Chamba who kept the art of painting alive in Chamba until third quarter of the present century. The sons of Prem Lal, Ami Chand, Hans Raj and Prakash Chand are also painters and are still practicing their ancestral profession in Chamba town. Vijay Sharma is another young man who paints in different styles of Pahari painting and has received the National award in 1990.

**Embroidery & Garments**
Himachal people love to dress up everyday so colourful and simple. The Gujjars’s dress long shirts are delicately embroidered with circular and linear patterns with colorful thread. The people of Chamba are majorly fond of all sorts of accessories which include bright scarves worn by the women, bangles and rings made of horsehair and brightly patterned grass shoes. Lahaul has its own traditional footwear. Hand knit woolen socks along with gloves, mufflers and caps are brilliantly patterned in bright and cheerful colours. The typical striking Kullu caps are in shades of grey or brown and flat on the top. Pashmina shawl is the product which is highly in demand not only in Himachal but all over the country.

Thapada is a large embroidered shawl, which is a specialty of the handicraft of Himachal Pradesh. The shawls of Kullu are depicting the traditional Pahadi designs and often woven from the wool of angora rabbits. The borders of these plain-looking shawls are decorated with dazzling geometric designs.

Shawls of Lahaul-Spiti, especially, are a riot of colours. Other items of craft include the Kohana, a kind of a wall hanging, pillow covers, blouses and caps rumals, coverlets, hand fans, caps, cholis, gaumukhi and such things. The motifs either are from the traditional stock of miniature painting, the landscape or are innovations of the women themselves. This urge to create and live with beautiful pieces is very much a part of pahari culture. They often depict scenes from the Mahabharata, the Ramayana and the Raas-lila of Radha and Krishna, hunting, Nayika Bhed, Shiva family were other popular themes. The embroidery is done in silk yarn on tussar cloth or fine cotton. The stitches are so fine that there is no evidence of knots or loose threads. As such, both sides of the rumal are alike.
The ground is usually white or cream, but the embroidery threads (usually red and orange) are in striking contrast. The red and orange richly embroidered silk rumals of Chamba are simply beautiful. The women of Chamba have traditionally made them for 1000 years now. These rumals are actually small shawls meant to be used as head coverings. Traditional Chamba slippers, plain or embroidered, are exceptionally comfortable to wear. They are embroidered with multicoloured threads- red, black, green, yellow and blue, and imitation zari (gold thread). Shoes, sandals, socks and belts are also embroidered.

The tradition of Chamba Rumal is still alive and a number of young girls are engaged in producing beautiful Rumals. Kamla Nayyar is such an accomplished embroider who has contributed in the revival of the tradition of the Chamba Rumal. Masto Devi, Poonam and Lata are other gifted girls who are devoting their time for preserving this rich heritage.

Rugs & Carpets
Their brilliant colours and traditional motifs on carpets and blankets can make spellbound by their appearance- garudas perched on flowering trees, dragons, swastikas, flutes and lotus blooms In the higher reaches of the state, hill folk rear
sheep and goats and weave the wool and hair into traditional blankets, rugs and namdas (heavy rugs). Namdas are made with beaten wool. In fact, men spin wool by hand. Woolen rugs and carpets from Lahaul, depicting the traditional Pahadi designs.

Fleecy soft blankets called gudmas are also very popular. They are made from the wool of the Giangi sheep. They come in natural wool colours and are finished with a red or black edging. There are many furnishings to choose from: thobis (floor coverings), karcha (mattresses), which are made from goat hair, pattoo cloth (like shawls), carpets and yarn made from soft wool.

**Other crafts**

Leather craft is extremely developed here and the slippers and shoes made in Chamba are in large demand. The Himachal people are adept at the art of making pots and statuettes with clay in many shapes and sizes. These include pitchers, bowls, platters, cups, lamps and small and large pots. These are decorated with white patterns drawn with Golu clay. Toys and figures of gods and goddesses are made during festivals.

**4.3. Music, Dance, Fairs and Festivals**

Music and dance reflects the culture and the tradition of Himachal Pradesh. Through their dance and music, they entreat their gods during local festivals and other special occasions. There are also dances that are specific to certain regions of the state. People of the state generally prefer folk music. There is no classical form of music, as for the Himachal Pradesh is concerned. These dances are very vital part of the tribal life. Hardly any festivity here is celebrated without dancing. Mostly every district has unique form of Himachal dance. Those are Losar, Shona, Chuksam (Kinnaur), Dangi (Chamba), Gee, Burah, (Sirmour), Naati, Kharait, Ujagjama and Chadhgebrikar (Kullu) and Shunto (Lahaul & Spiti), Jhamakra (Kangra). Some of the dance forms like Dulshol, Dharveshi, Drodi, Dev Nritya, Rakshas Nritya, Dangi, Lasa, Nati and Nagas are danced all over the region.

Celebrations of the New Year begin with the National Snow Statue Competition at Kufri. The ice-skating in Shimla begins around this time. The bonfires of Lohri, a festival to mark the sowing of the Rabi crop light up the night sky on January 13 every year. A fair in the memory of the sage Baba Barbhag Singh is held at around the same time at Una. It is believed that the Baba had magical powers, which were used
towards altruistic ends. The little kites dapple the horizon with their color during the Basant Panchami, the arrival of the spring. Char is celebrated in Lahaul centered around the temple of Trilokinath.

Shivratri or the festival to celebrate the marriage of Shiva in March signifies ritual gaiety at the famous Baijnath shrine. The town of Mandi with its ancient temples revels in the Shivratri fair for a whole week. On elaborately decorated palanquins, hundreds of local deities are carried to the town. Accompanied by folk bands, they make their first stop at the Madho Rai temple and then go to pay obeisance to lord Shiva at the Bhootnath temple. This is followed by festivities—music and song, dance and drama. Yet, all the while, the atmosphere is surcharged with deep religious devotion. In the third week of March, the fascinating Nalwari fair is held at Bilaspur. Cattle is traded, there are wrestling bouts and aero and water sports shows are recent additions. Chait, the first month of lunar calendar is celebrated by the dancing of women in Kullu and by folk singing in Chamba. Chait Durga Asthami is celebrated in the Shakti shrines at Hathkoti, Chitpurni, Jwalamukhi and Vajreshwari, The Navratri begins this month. Fairs are held in Chamba, Bilaspur, Kangra and Rohru village in Shimla district.

Color and fun mix on Holi, the festival of colors at the Gurudwara at Paonta Sahib in Sirmaur. In April, Chhat celebrations are held in Kullu and Chamba. Paonta Sahib welcomes Hindu and Sikh devotees on Baisakhi. Held on the first Baisakh - the 13th April - Baisakhi is one of Himachal's most important festivals. Rooted in the rural agrarian tradition, it bids a final farewell to winter. At Tattapani near Shimla, at the Rewalsar and Prashar lakes near Mandi, people take purifying dips in the water. Numerous village fairs complete with wrestling, dancing and archery are also held on this day.

In April, Rali with its clay models are made by unmarried girls pray for grooms of their choice and the newly wedded ask for happiness and prosperity in Kangra. At Chamba, the Sui Mela is thronged by women and children and at the village of Taraur in district Mandi, the Mahu Nag fair is held. The holy Markandaya fair is held near Bilaspur and the Rohru Jatar is held in honour of the deity, Shikhru.
River rafting festivals and water sports Regattas starts in throughout the state in May. The Dhoongri fair celebrates focused around the goddess Hadimba Devi in Kullu. In the same district, the Banjar fair and the Sarhi Jatar are held in May. Near Shimla at the exquisite glade of Sipur below Mashobra, the charming Sipti fair is held. Paragliding season begins in Bir in Kangra.

In June, a wide spectrum of national talent, a variety of programmes and a splendid setting make Shimla's Summer festival a memorable event. Shimla also hosts the Red Cross Fair, sport tournaments, flower shows, photographs and posters exhibition and a fashion show based on folk costumes. The Kangra festival is also held in June at Kangra. At Solan, on the third Sunday of the month, the Solan fair honours the goddess Shilooni, the presiding deity of the region. On June's full moon night, the Ghantal festival is held at Lahaul's guru Ghantal monastery.

In July, Kaza's Ladarcha fair, the old trade routes come alive as traders barter and sell a variety of goods and produce. At Keylong, the Lahaul festival is also held this month. Shravana Sankranti is celebrated at Nahan, at Arki, buffalo fights mark the Sair fair and conducted in honour of Banar devta of Shari, the Rampur Jatar is held near Jubbal in district Shimla.

In August, Chamba's famous Minjar fair which celebrates the bounty of nature and prays for a good harvest. Also in Chamba, the Manimahesh Yatra to the sacred tarn of Manimahesh is held immediately after the festival of Janamashtmi. Celebrated in Chamba, Kullu and elsewhere, Chrewal, Badronjo or Patroru is a festival of fire and flowers - and a time for purification of the fields. During this time, several places in Chamba, Bilaspur and Sirmour have the Gugga fair which is connected with the worship of Gugga, the Nag devta. The same month witnesses the Dal fair in upper Dharmshala. The Shravan fair is held at the shrine Naina Devi, while the Ashapuri fair is held in Kangra.

In September, as the rains end, autumn sends fiery colours racing through the hills. In Kinnaur, the festival of flowers, Fullaich opens a window to its remarkable people and their beautiful countryside. Villagers scout the hillsides for flowers which are collected in the village square. These are then offered to the local deity. Then comes a spate of revelry - singing, dancing and feasting. Kalpa has some of the most vibrant
celebrations and every twelve years, there is the special festival. A fair is held and masked dances performed in Temple of Shakti Devi at the village of Chhatrari in Chamba district, colorful fair of Rath-Rathni. The Kangra valley celebrates the festival of Sair. This is also celebrated with stalls, singing and buffalo fights at Arki and Mashobra. Under the watchful walls of old fort at Nurpur, the Nagini fair bids the summer farewell.

In October, Dussehra is one of the most sacred festivals of the Hindu religion, two hundred deities coverage in Kullu for its Dussehra celebrations. They pay homage to lord Raghunath while music and colour fill the Silver valley. Numerous stalls offer a variety of local wares. This is also the time when the International Folk festival celebrated. The Jwalamukhi temple in Kangra becomes the venue for a major fair. At Killar and Panai, the Phool Yatra witnesses a remarkable display of neighbourly affection and the Dehant Nag is worshipped. The Pong Dam is the site of water sports championship held in the same month.

In November, the age-old Lavi fair fills Rampur with a burst of activity. Even today, the tradition is as vibrant as ever. By the churning waters of the river Sutlej, a variety of goods including wool, dry fruits and horses are bartered and sold. Diwali is celebrated throughout the state. At Sirmaur, idols of Parasuram are immersed in the waters of Renuka Lake.

In December, as winter arrives, anglers shift to the Pong Dam. With the blessings of Nobel Laureate, his holiness the Dalai Lama, the International Himalayan festival is held in Kangra district. Troupes from the Himalayan nations are present. In their icy wake, the winter winds carry all the delights of ice-skating at Shimla. The extravaganza of the Ice Skating Carnival is normally reserved for December. Christmas celebrations overtake Shimla and Dalhousie and as the church bells chime, they carry away another event-packed year.
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