CHAPTER-V
THE AREA AND THE PEOPLE

“One is respected in one’s own country; in Dab and Hanu villages, the Dards are respected”.

Ladakhi Proverb

The studied area comes under the region of Ladakh. Ladakh is a region in the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir (Map-5.1) between the Great Himalayas and the Karakoram ranges, and is one of the coolest regions in the world. This region is inhabited by people of Indo-Aryan and Mongol-Tibetan descent.

Geographically, Ladakh lies between north latitude 30° 45’ to 35°50’ and east longitude 75° 45’ and 80°31’, and constitutes the northernmost part of India, at an altitude of 3505 metres. It is bounded on the north and east by China, in the north-west by Gilgit and Skardu Tehsil (now occupied by Pakistan) in the western side Bandipore, Ganderbal and Anantnag Districts of Kashmir valley Kishtawar of Jammu while state of Himachal Pradesh touches its border in the southern side. The Ladakh has two Districts namely Leh and Kargil District. Leh District (Map-5.2) is one of the largest Districts of the country in terms of area; it has the lowest population density across the entire country. Leh the main town itself is situated at 11,500 ft., enclosed by the Karakoram Mountains on the north.

The Ladakh region is one of the highest in the world, with an altitude of the inhabited places varying from 8000ft. above sea level near Kargil to around 20,000ft in some places of Changthang (near China Border) sub-division of Leh district. The average height of mountains is 12,000 ft (www.googlemapindia.com).

Ladakh is a vast sandy desert full of gold granite dust and barren lofty mountains. Thus, Ladakh has one of the peculiar charms which belong only to barren countries. Cowley Lambert (1877) writes:

“The prevailing features of this country are bare rocky mountains, bare gravel slopes, and bare sandy plains, with not a green thing, not a bush, not even a blade of grass, excepting a grey kind of prickly sage crop here and there”.

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5.1 FIELD AREA

The field area comes under Leh District, which has seven Blocks namely Leh, Karu, Durbuk, Nyoma, Khaltse, Saspol, Chuchot and Nubra in District Leh. The Broq-pa tribe comes under Block Khaltse (Map-5.3) of District Leh. The Block Khaltse is located on the North-west of the District was established in the year 1975. The block Headquarter Khaltse is situated at a distance of 98 Kilometers away from District Headquarter Leh. The anthropological research has been carried out in Dah-Baima and Hanu villages (Map-5.4) of Broq-pa tribe residing in lower Sham.

5.1.1 Origin and Present Settlements of Broq-pa

The Broq-pa tribal community of Jammu and Kashmir is mainly concentrated in Drass valley and Dah-Hanu valley in the Ladakh region. The Broq-pa tribe is a small community in Ladakh residing in villages namely; Gharkon, Darstik, Dah-Baima and Hanu. Administratively, the Broq-pa tribe of Dah-Baima and Hanu comes under Leh District, of block Khaltse. Broq-pas residing in Darstik and Garkhon villages comes under Kargil district. The Broq-pa is also known as *Minaro* or Aryan, according to the local people of the Broq-pa tribe.

The anthropological investigation has been carried out among the Broq-pa tribe of Leh District. The research is carried out in two villages of Broq-pa tribe namely; Hanu (Plate 5.1) and Dah-Baima (Plate 5.2) of Leh district, Ladakh. Dah-Baima village is divided into two settlements namely Dah and Baima. The Broq-pa has their settlement at narrow valley along the Indus River and inner valley in Lower Sham area. The Broq-pa villages lie approximately 170 kilometres from Leh town.

The word *‘Broq’* means Tibetan high pastureland and *Broq-pa* must mean a ‘High Lander’. The Broq-pas are also called shin, since they inhibit the high hill of Ladakh in Jammu and Kashmir. At home they speak in Shina, one of the languages belongs to the dardic branch of Indo-Aryan family of languages. They do not have a script of their own language (Singh, 2002).
MAP 5.2
LEH DISTRICT

Source: Statistical Department, Leh (2011-2012)
Source: Statistical Department, Leh (2011-2012)
Plate 5.1: Aerial view of Hanu village

Plate 5.2: Aerial view of Dah-Baima settlement
The local language is called as Broqskat. They communicate with outsiders in Ladakhi language and Hindi/Urdu.

The word ‘Broq’ was later called ‘Drok’, ‘brok’ and as ‘Brog’ and even pronounced as ‘Dok’ (Jina, 1996). They are further distinguished by following words:

- Inhabited area - Broq-yul (Brok-yul, Drok-yul)
- Male person - Broq-pa (Brok-pa, Drok-Pa)
- Female person - Broq-mo (Brok-mo, Drok-mo)

According to anthropologists, this tribe is supposed to be the offspring of the Dards of Chilas in the Gilgit region. The Broq-pa community is considered to be the last race of Aryans, and is confined to Dah-Hanu valley and Drass valley. The Broq-pa or Shins are a small community of Dards people settled in the area generations ago. Like the people of Gilgit, they speak an archaic form of the Shina language; they called this local language as Brokskat that is taught verbally, with no written script or alphabet. Except the people of village Hanu, they speak same language as other Ladakhi Non-Broq-pa. The legend goes that once a Ladakhi king prohibited the Broq-pa of Hanu village to speak their own language, in return he granted them the distinction of being officially “Ladakhi” instead of ‘looked down upon’ Broq-pa (Bhasin, 1992).

The Himalaya is the original home of many ancient tribes. Like other tribes, Dards migrated to inner and outer Himalaya from various entrance points beginning from prehistoric to early Christian era. In the early period they came to western Himalaya and settled down along the fertile Indus valley. Ethnologically Dards are of the Indo-Aryan stock. It is said that they are the survivours of Alexander’s troops, who after their general departure scattered over Indus valley lying between ‘Kylindrine’ and ‘Dardi’, meaning Kulu and Dardistan. There is no definite point of time when Dards migrated towards Indus valley. However, they came in many groups and established their colonies at Skardu, Dras, Skurbuchan and Kha-la-tse. These villages lay along the Indus in Ladakh (Jina, 2000).
From the oral histories recorded by Kloos (2000) during his fieldwork among Broq-pa from the elder people of Dah and Hanu, the elders in Dah believe that their Dardic ancestors originally came from Europe and settled in the Pur valley, east of Gilgit. Then Duthamelo Sanaleph, the grandson of Angutheno, moved to Gilgit, and had three sons there: Galo, Melo, and Dulo. As they grew up, one brother became a good hunter, one a good trader, and one a good shepherd, and by joining their skills they became rich. The hunter-brother used to provide him with meat, the trader-brother used to give him money, and the shepherd-brother provided him with butter and curd.

The three brothers went on hunting together. As the year passed on, the people of Gilgit became jealous of this family’s success and made a plot to kill them at a party. The brothers’ musician friend who was playing on that party, however, knew of the plot and warned his friends with a special tune or rhythm. The brothers understood: one of them gestured while dancing, “Oh, today we will die;” another signaled, “Today our life is finished,” and the third said, “We escape.” Thus, during a dance called nimaskor brasal they made space around them by dancing wildly, and escaped. They fled Gilgit and passed through some villages before they came to Ganoks valley, where they stayed for some time. There each brother had one son: Galo’s son was Gapomaro, Melo’s was Thapomaro, and Dulo’s was Gil Singhe (Kloo, 2004).

During field work the investigator came across the history about the origin of Broq-pa or Minaro/Aryan. According to the local elder the terms Minaro or Aryan are same in meaning. Minaro came from a village called Phiaa (Gilgit). The Minaro was a legendary group of brothers, named Galo, Melo and Dulo. They went on hunting one day and reached Skardo during the harvesting time, so they helped in Khu-yu skor sa (threshing activities) in return they got food for their work. They had Mashadari guns (famous and great guns for hunting). On noticing the famous gun, the villagers came to know that these strangers were actually hunters. Consequently, the villagers got upset and were afraid of legendary brothers. They decided to catch and imprison them. At the dark of the night, the entire village came out and fought against the legendary brothers. Somehow they managed to escape from there and reach Hanu Broq or Drok (highland). The next day they went near a pond about to take bath and clean their clothes and shoes (some grains of barley and straw got stuck in their shoes) as they helped in threshing activities when they were in Skardo. And they went back to their own village Phiaa (Gilgit).
Next year they came again for hunting and reached up to Hanu Broq (highland). Upon reaching, they saw that the grains of barley that they had left near the pond were grown into new healthy crops. On seeing this, they thought that they may be they could cultivate the area. So, these legendary brothers Galo, Melo and Dulo decided to settle down there and distributed the land among them. Galo decided to settle in Handangsmin (is a highland in Hanu valley) now called Handang Broq and Dulo finally decided to go to village Ganoks (Gilgit). Melo settled in Dah. Finally the three brothers got separated. Galo decided to settle in Hanu Broq (highland), and later moved to the lower areas of the valley.

The highland of Hanu was then named as Handang smin (reap barley without any effort or grow innocently) or Handang Broq, it was in the highland of Hanu that the three legendary brothers came by chance and the left over barley seeds grew in to new plants without any physical effort. Then all the three brothers lead their own clan, at that time they did not have rantak (water mills) to grind barley. So people used tsik (big grinding stone) to make barley flour and continued their livelihood. Dulo shot a Da (arrow) and said where ever this arrow falls, he will settled there, so Dulo settled in Dah. The Da (arrow) shot from Hanu Brok by Dulo reached to Dah village spang (pasture) and it got hit to a brak (huge rock) which left a big crack, later it is believed that water came out of the brak. So they came to raltaan (fertile area) from Brok (highland) and started agriculture. So, the Dah village was named after this story. Apo Sonam, aged 87 from Dah village said,

“Gyut po khare nang Na cha Aryan ney gyut yin tsuk”
(Aryans are our ancestor).

They sang a song which describes the origin of Broq-pa. Traditional wedding song of Hanu, it goes like...........

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Song</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Soso koso kohani ho</td>
<td>Where do you come from?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brushal Gilgi hani ho</td>
<td>We are from Gilgit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Run ras ye hani ho</td>
<td>What is your religion?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ram ras sili lha hani ho</td>
<td>We are worshipping of deities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durus ye hani ho</td>
<td>What is your race?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galo, Melo, Dulo hani ho</td>
<td>We are descendants of Galo, Melo and Dulo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Phuntsog, 1999)
After Muslim invasion in the 14th century, Dards, who were settled in Drass, embraced Islam. As a result they cut themselves off from their original traditional customs and folklores. Moreover, on the other hand, Dards of Dah, Hanu, Darstiks and Garkon villages neither accepted Islam nor Lamanism. Thus, they were able to preserve their centuries-old traditions (Jina, 1996).

In Tibetan a Dard is called a Dogpa (Broq-pa) and they call them by shin or shrin. Thus, Dog-pa (Broq-pa) is synonymous with herdsmen, shepherds, who live in tents. Thus, shin and Dards who migrated from Dardistan and settled in Indus valley mainly depend on dairy and animal husbandry. The Hymnal Dardic migration very clearly indicates that they were pastoral people and depended less on agriculture. But according to Francke, Dards exhibit an ordinary skill in construction of water course along the cliffs, but as per the other historians Balti is a born engineer as he was endowed with a born instinct of alignment. Almost all the water cannels in dardic village of Dah-Hanu etc. are the work of skilled Balti not the indolent Dard (Kaul, 1992).

5.1.2 Tax and force labour evasion

Once a Ladakhi king Tsewang Namgyal demanded forced labour (thal) from the Hanu-pa. However, there was one man, Apo Tho Shali, who refused this demand in the name of all Hanu-pa he said “Like a dog does not wear a saddle, a Dards does not do forced labour”. On hearing this king arrested Tho Shali and take him to Bru-zhal gyal-po Izam-pa (bridge near Hanu Doo) there he buried him alive within its walls. Tho Shali was asked repeatedly if he would give labour, and again and again he refused until only a finger was, appear out of the burial which still waved “No!” (Kloos, 2000).

On a rock near the old bridge’s foundations there remains an inscription saying: “Tho-shali was killed because of his resistance” (Phuntsog, 1999). Because of the martyrdom of Apo Tho Shali, the resident of Hanu valley were exempted from all taxes and forced labour until 1842, when Ladakh lost its independence. Even today, the people of Hanu celebrate a yearly festival to express their combined joy and sorrow over the exemption from taxes and the death of this local hero.
5.2 POPULATION

According to the population census of 2011, the district has population of 147,104, male 92,907 and female 54,197. According to census of 2001, the estimate population of Leh district of 1, 17,232 souls among male is 64306 and female is 52926. Average Literacy rate is 80.48 per cent (Table 5.1).

Table 5.1: Demographic Profile of Leh District (Census, 2011)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Actual Population</td>
<td>147,104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>92,907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>54,197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population Growth</td>
<td>25.48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area Sq. Km</td>
<td>45,110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Density/km²</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex Ratio (Per 1000)</td>
<td>583</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Sex Ratio (0-6 Age)</td>
<td>944</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Literacy</td>
<td>80.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Literacy</td>
<td>89.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Literacy</td>
<td>64.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Child Population (0-6 Age)</td>
<td>11,816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Population (0-6 Age)</td>
<td>6,079</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Population (0-6 Age)</td>
<td>5,737</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literates</td>
<td>108,885</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Literates</td>
<td>77,619</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Literates</td>
<td>31,266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Proportion (0-6 Age)</td>
<td>8.03%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys Proportion (0-6 Age)</td>
<td>6.54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls Proportion (0-6 Age)</td>
<td>10.59%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: [http://www.census2011.co.in/census/district/621-leh.html](http://www.census2011.co.in/census/district/621-leh.html)
Table 5.2: Population of Broq-pa Community in Dah and Hanu villages
District Leh- Ladakh. (Census 2011)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Villages</th>
<th>Dah-Baima</th>
<th>Hanu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Households</td>
<td></td>
<td>96</td>
<td>239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>536</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>489</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>542</td>
<td>1025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literate</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illiterate</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>685</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Buddhist</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>Buddhist</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Statistical Department, Khaltse

The research work conducted on the Broq-pa tribe residing in villages namely, Dah-Baima and Hanu of Leh district. The total population in Hanu village is 1170 (M=611, F= 559). In the village Dah-Baima the total population is 547 (M=295, F=252). There are 239 households in Hanu and 96 households in Dah-Baima village (Table 5.2).

5.3 POLITICAL ORGANISATION AMONG BROQ-PA

The village has two political organisation, namely Goba system which traditional political organisation and Panch system which is recently implemented. The issues of land and other disputes matter is looked after by the Goba (nambadar or head of the village). Development and requirements like tap water facilities, poor development fund, ration supply on time, settlement of village disputes, organisation of any event in the village and arrangement of guest accommodations in the village are looked after by the village Sarpanch and Panch members. The Goba and Panch group works in collaboration for the development of village. The organisation of the village political system is shown as below:
Other than the political groups there are women self help groups who work in their chutso (group) among neighbourhood women. They have village education committee (VEC) and ama tsogspa (mothers committee) groups. All these groups work for the development of the village. The zunu tsogs pa (young group) the yulpa, represent the political authority of the village.

They organise meetings in the village Panchayat Ghar. In their meetings, they decide on village festivals, new rules, water rotation matters and agricultural tasks. The Goba have full control and without his permission, nobody is allowed to do any agricultural work in the village. In case of any disputes, the matter is looked into by the Goba, sarpanch and other Panch members. In the course of judgement, they decide about the punishments or fines. If the Goba is unable to settle a dispute, the conflict goes to the yulpa (villagers). The yulpa seeks to ensure that good relations are restored after conflicts have been resolved. In this case the village elders take the decision according to their traditions and they may impose strong penalty.

During any social gathering, the community has the tradition of (dral) sitting arrangements. The village Goba sits at dral-go (before every one), then Amchi and other elders of the village, later sit according to the age difference. The males and females have different dral. In case any monk is invited to any social event then, he is given great the respect right to sit before Goba and other elders of the community. If the dral is common for males and females, then all males are sit are made to sit first. Thus, the dral-go makes sure that order is imposed on all social occasions. The richer and poorer households are not acknowledged in the village line-up, so the richer households do not gain any special status on social occasions. Although educated persons are definitely paid a mark of respect.

5.4 EDUCATION FACILITIES AVAILABLE IN HANU AND DAH-BAIMA

It is a universally accepted fact that education is indispensable besides, being the most important tool of the modern world. Education is the purification of one’s body, mind and soul in the true sense of the word. It improves the quality of life of society in general, and its residents in particular.
The knowledge, skills and etiquettes that the people acquire and imbibe through education enables them to participate fully in the developmental processes and ultimately helps in the poverty alleviation and overall welfare of the society as well. The literacy rate of the district Leh is recorded as 80.48 per cent according to 2011 census (Table, 5.2).

As goes a Ladakhi proverb, 

"Yontan pa tang ser tsong pa"  
(An educated man is like a gold trader)

Tracing the advent of education in this region the local people recollect that at first a teacher from Achinathang, a neighbouring village came to their village to open a school. At that time the village used to conduct temporary classes in Chuthang pi khang pa (in a villager’s house). The teacher used to come to every house and advise parents to educate their children. Somehow with the grace of God, he managed to convinced about 10-13 students, though many students were not allowed by their parents to attend school considering it as a waste of time. Anyways, ultimately after all odds, the school was established in around 1950-52. School building construction was started late after three generations.

**Hanu:** There are two Government Primary Schools, one Govt. High School and one Govt. Middle School in the whole community. Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) programme under the state government is also working well in these two villages. Children aged between 2-6 years provide lunch, learn and plays all the day time in the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) centre. To attract children of under privileged and weaker sections of the society, free schooling facility, scholarship, free uniforms and other incentive have been provided by Education Department of the District Leh.

**Dah-Baima:** In Dah settlement there is one Government Middle School and one Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) programme under the government, and there is one primary school, one Government High School
and one Middle School in Baima settlement. There are two Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) Programmes in Baima village.

Nowadays all these institutes are working well in the community and a majority of the children of the community are getting educated from these schools. Some of the children from village are also studying in Leh town while some are studying outside of Ladakh.

5.5 MEDICAL FACILITIES

The Broq-pa community comes under the block Khaltse, District Leh. The Khaltse block has one Community Health Centre, two allopathic dispensaries, five family welfare/sub centre and twenty-three medical aids centre. The government health centre has taken the major responsibility for the delivery of health care service to the local people.

In the Broq-pa villages the healthcare facilities are available at a distance of about 7-10 kilometers away in the community. In village Hanu there are two medical sub-centre and one allopathic dispensary (Plate 5.3) along with one Amchi system funded by state Government and working well in Hanu yokma settlement. The local Amchi system as well as Lhabanism system is also available in the community. In Dah-Baima village there are two medical (Plate 5.4) sub-centre and Lhabanism, but Amchi system is not available in the village.

5.6 OTHERS FACILITIES

The state Government provides ration for people every month in both the villages. Hanu Yok-ma, there is a diesel generator that provides lights for restricted time, but in Dah settlement light facilities is not available. In addition to this, the people also have solar light. In Dah village many households uses own made bamba (lamp). Telephone connections like mobile as well as landline are available in Dah-Baima, but the communication facilities is not available in village Hanu but there are only two satellite phones for the whole community, one for the Hanu Gong-ma and the other for Hanu Yok-ma.

The sources of drinking water is available in the form of tap water, spring water, hand pump and stream water. Shortage of water sometime
happened in Dah-Baima for agricultural purpose. In Hanu village, agriculture
have good source of water from glacial melt.

5.7 ECONOMIC LIFE

Agriculture is the backbone of the district economy as it engaged over
70% of the working force mostly as cultivators, agricultural labourers and
livestock rearers, yet this sector has been now affected by the service sector
especially Tourism as it attracts the people constantly. According to 2001
census, the work participation has reduced by 0.3%. Only 37.92% of the
working force constitutes Cultivator whereas 4.85% (1981 census) are
engaged in Livestock, hunting and forestry. (Report of Statistical Department,
Leh 2010-11).

According to Village papers, the Leh District has a reporting area of
51684 hectares out of which 10197 hectares has been brought under
cultivation of various crops during 2010-11. Whole of the cultivated area is
irrigated and mono cropped with main source of irrigation is canal/ khuls.
Double cropping is undertaken in some parts of Khaltisi and Nubra blocks
given in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3: Crop wise area brought under cultivation in District Leh,
during the year 2010-11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Crops</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Wheat</td>
<td>Hect.</td>
<td>2579</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Grain</td>
<td>Hect.</td>
<td>4421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Pulses</td>
<td>Hect.</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Vegetable</td>
<td>Hect.</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Fodder</td>
<td>Hect.</td>
<td>1947</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Statistical Department, Leh

There are vast stretches of land available yet irrigation facilities being
not available and scanty rainfall, these cannot be brought under cultivation
and keeping in view the reclamation of these desert areas, creation of sources
of irrigation becomes uneconomical.

The department of agriculture is working with the main objective to
improve the overall production per hectare of cereals, fodder, pulses, and
Plate 5.3: Allopathic dispensary Hanu village

Plate 5.4: Health centre of Broq-pa community
vegetable and oil seeds. In addition distribution of improved agriculture implements, thresher machines, lift irrigation pump sets, trench cultivation and vegetable cellars have been made. (Report of Statistical Department, Leh 2010-11).

In the Broq-pa area the main source of the economy is agriculture, supplemented by animal husbandry. Animal husbandry plays a pivotal role in the rural economy, and generates substantial income to native. They produce two crops in a year, barley, peas, mustard, potatoes, cabbage, cauliflower, turnip, radish, spinach, capsicum, brinjal, pumpkin, bottle gourd, etc and fruits grown like apricots, almond, walnut, grapes, cherry, peach and apple.

They uses and sell surplus produce of these animals like wool, pashmina, milk, butter, dried cheese etc. They rear domestic animals like goat, sheep, dzo, dzo-mo and cow. Earlier, Broq-pa did not rear cows due to some religious taboos.

5.7.1 Agriculture Work

Broq-pas are cultivators and rear cattle. Mostly women indulge in field activities like irrigating, planting vegetable, manuring, weeding, etc. While working in the fields, they sing and whistle, in order to make the work light. The whistle brings cool breeze and makes them relieved from the sweating at work. Different activities of agriculture are involved with rituals and offerings. In the village Lha, a blob of butter is used to make the offering more auspicious on chang (local brew), phey (barley flour) and chapatti and incense of Juniper. There is a local farmers’ saying about agriculture,

“nima rem na nyas khe-rad, chu rem na nyas khered , tan a-rang rem nyas khong ba ched”

(if the sun becomes powerful, then sun says I will take crop, if the water becomes powerful, it will say I will take it, now I, farmer have, become more powerful than sun and water, and I will take it).

During the ploughing and sowing season, they use dzo, strong sturdy animals for working as well as carrying goods. While ploughing they sing a song to the dzos.
While furrow by ploughing

Ya ya kus kus
Than norbu nyisk, rimo laskyot
Sha-bas norbu nyiska

While stopping at one end they say..Khao....Khao (rest for a while)
Means........ ‘Come come, my precious bulls, come and make fine furrow,
Both of you are very good in ploughing.......now rest for a while’.

At the time of harvest and cutting alfalfa, at that time people sing agricultural songs like

Haldam ma la zer
Haldam Lamo zer

The work is quite tough and hard
But we make it easy with song...

These days most of them use thresher machines. Some thresh their crops by using animal because the thresher machine is difficult to reach the terraced fields. 3-4 days before threshing, the villagers prepare yulthak (small ground) they put the crops on yulthak and bring 5-6 dzos (breed of cow and Yak, used to plough field) tie and them together and make them walk on the harvested dry crops till the crushed hay turns in to fodder. This process takes about an hour. While taking turns around the crops they sing a song that goes like......

Ho lo ho lo ho lo....khor khor
Thama thara khor
Mama skirla khor
Ongse skri la khor

Means  Take turn around, turn around
Outside.......turn around at outer side
‘Mama’ the innermost turns around at the centre
Turn around on the centre of the threshed crops.

After the crop is well threshed, then winnowing is carried out. The separated seeds and hay are then carried and stored at home. The hay is
given to the domestic animals during the winter months when the grass outside is scanty. The agricultural work is carried out with the help of different agricultural tools which are prepared by them in the months of March-April before the agricultural work begins. In most of the houses they have traditional toilets locally known as deychoot (toilet). They use night soil mixed with ash and goat dung as manure, for enriching the soil.

5.8 RELIGION, BELIEFS AND TABOO

There is definite information available about the religion of ancestor of Broq-pa or Drok-pa. Some historian believes that they were nature worshipper. They worshipped the sun, the stars, the water and the mountains. Other historian feels that they were animist. One can still find skulls, horn and bones of animals at their worshipping places. The old Broq-pas usually says, “the sun is God which gives heal to the earth, by worshipping the sun they become prosperous, healthy and get good vegetation. The moon is blissful and gives wisdom” (Jina, 1996).

With a very slow process Broq-pas of Leh district accepted Buddhism now they practices and perform every rituals and customs of Buddhist community.

5.8.1 Daily purification rite

Early morning, people burn juniper incenses in order to purify the room atmosphere and ignite a lamp in chot-khang (monastic room), every households has chot-khang (monastic room) and recites mantras. The fumigation is given to all room to make it purify by incense of juniper. The kitchen is the only functional room in a traditional or modern house. The hearth serves as a decoration piece in the kitchen performing its normal function of providing fire for cooking as well as heating the room. They only used wood in traditional hearth; juniper incense is burnt on wood charcoal only as Broq-pa considered use of cow dung as taboo.

5.8.2 Taboos of rearing and consumption of cow’s product

Broq-pa considered milk, butter, meat, leather and cow dung as polluted or impure. As Broq-Lha (Protector or God of Broq-pa tribe) do not use the cow’s products, they are not supposed to burn cow dung in their Thaab (traditional hearth). If they do so, it is believed that their thaab Lha (God of hearth) will get angry and will impose punishment on the family.
These days many people rear cow and use its products. But in some households people still do not use cow dung in their thaab (traditional hearth) as they strongly believe in myths and want to please the thaab-Lha (God of hearth) because of the fear of their family getting harmed in case of dire consequences. The villagers have started using cow’s milk, butter, and cow dung, with the permission from their yul-Lha (village Protector) since the last three decades. But still many Broq-pas do not use cow products. Cow’s and dzo’s meat is highly prohibited among Broq-pas. They only eat sheep and goat meat. Now a days, they use chicken also.

5.8.3 Beliefs and Celebration Concerning Agriculture

5.8.3.1 Saka

In Hanu before cultivation begins, they host a small occasion called Saka. This is done to mark the best suited date to start the cultivation as they believe that they should not use the iron blade of the plough in the soil without the consent of the spirits of soil/water. So the Saka is done in order to inform the spirits of soil/water to move away to a safer place. They perform sangs (purify rite) ritual in honour of a zang-Idan gyalpo (Protector of community) by a monk every month and also before and after the harvest period, in the basal areas of mountain. After saka, the sowing season is takes place. They celebrate pre-harvest and post-harvest festivals which are social events related to religious overtones. The whole village takes part in this festival. Pre-harvest festivals (Plate 5.5) are celebrated in order to have good and healthy crops during the year. Along with this, they also perform small rituals to fix date and time to start farming new crops. The post-harvest festivals are celebrated in order to thanks their Lha (Protector/Goddess) for the new crops which they get in hand.

5.8.3.2 Snyo-lha

The festival of greenery is celebrated in the 5th month of the Tibetan calendar. In the early morning with Lharna (music consider auspicious at the beginning of any social event), the villages young boys go to the mountains to collect different wild flowers like makoting, chondol from the mountain tops. The young girls collect roses from the village. Then the young boys come with...
Plate 5.5: Broq-pas celebrate saka in Hanu village

Plate 5.6: Broq-pas celebrate flower festival in Hanu village
wild flowers and arrange them in a pattern on stick, after descending from the
mountain top. Then they all assemble at the place where all the villagers and
young boys and girls reach to celebrate mentok stadmothey (festival of
flowers shown in Plate 5.6). The mentok stadmo is celebrated over three
days. The young boys reach at the venue, a song called mentok stadmo is
sung at the beginning of the festival. The wordings of the song are:

*mentok pa goks sa, stad mo goks na*
*mentok pa gyoks na shabas shik molang*
*stadmo pa gyoks na, sess shik tong,*
*Mentok stadmo gana bing, mentok stadmo shar na bing*

Translation: Who reached before? Is it the people with flowers or the
spectator?

If is the people with flowers then congratulate them
If it is the spectators, let them dance.
Where did the festival of flower begin? It starts in the East.

Snyo-lha is celebrated in order to offer new crops tho-phut (the very
first produce) to the village Lha Zangldan Gyalpo, village Monastery and
stupa. The Lhabdak (care taker of Lha) offers the tho-phut of the crops to
Zangldan Gyalpo and a monk performs rituals at the Zangldan Gyalpo (totem)
in the village.

5.8.3.3 Srub-Lha

Then after a month, the harvest time starts and just before the actual
harvest day, they celebrate a festival called srublha. The srublha is celebrated
in order to thank their community Lha (God/Proctector) for healthy and fruitful
crops during the year. On the srublha, the villagers makes a big stog (Prasad
made of barley flour mixed with butter, sugar and dried fruits), for about more
than an hour they recite mantras and later they distribute the big stog among
the villagers. Then they enjoy with tea, wine, dance and song. Then in the
next 1-2 days, the villagers start harvesting the crops. The agricultural work is
done by helping each other. They make a group of 4-6 households, so they
may work in turns to each other agricultural work. A ritual rite then take plays in the month of September after all the agricultural work; the ritual lasts for 7 days. The *phasphun* (group of families work together in every events of household as well as in social event) of the village get turns to organize the ritual. The expenditure of the ritual is collected among the villagers; they arrange 5-6 monks for the ritual. On the last day of the ritual, they perform a *storma* of village; the monk makes a big *storma* (Plate 5.7) and enhances the *storma* with beautiful and colourful design made from butter. In the evening after dawn, the *storma* is then carried by two village persons to the lower area of the village and is burnt. This ritual is performed in order to eliminate the all misfortune of the village and to destruct the evil spirits who bring unhappiness. They believe that with the village *storma*, all the misfortunes and evil spirits would eliminate and peace and fresh environment prevail in the community. On this day no is allowed to move out of village, they believe that one may suffer from ill or any misfortune if he ventures out.

5.8.3.4 *Chopo Srub-Lha* or *Bonona* (Festival of Harvest)

Broq-Pas of Biama, Dah and Darstiks celebrate their special festival every three years. The story about their migration is sung during the harvest festivals, once in three years. This festival is known as *Chopo Srub-Lha or Bonona*, which means the festival to pray for fertility of their women as well as of the soil. About the origin of *Broq-Pa* the local elders have to say that folk songs of *Broq-pa* itself prove that their fore fathers were migrated from Gilgit and were fierce hunters. The folk song and folktales have preserved the great story and history of their ancestors. The pre-festival preparations include *Lhabdak* (care taker of Lha/Protector) of the valley, who stays near the village *Lha-tho* (totem of the Lha which used to be at a higher cliff) fasting for 7 days. The *Lhabdak* (care taker of Lha/Protector) fasts for 7 days, with only water and a handful of *Kholak* (local food) a day, he has the hardest preparation for the festival. He should also keep good hygiene of himself during these 7 days and should stay at the *Lha-tho* (totem of Lha). On the last day, the *Lhabdak* along with his helper descends the cliff and comes to the main land where all the villagers gather, and all the young men of the village receive him at the *Lhatho* (totem of Lha) and all the women dressed in their best traditional dress.
Plate 5.7: Villager perform ritual after harvest to appease their Lha and eliminate the evil effect of evil spirits by performing storma at the lower end of village.

Plate 5.8: Broq-pa celebrates Cho-po srublha.
welcomes the Lhabdak (caretaker of Broq-Lha) with flowers, burn junipers and serve chang (barley beer). The Chopo Srub-Lha festival (Plate 5.8) lasts for 5 days during which they make merry, sing folk songs and do folk dance.

At the time of Harvest Chopo Srub-Lha, celebrates Yul-Lha Sol Ches (offer delicious cuisine to village Protector). The Protector is given special attention and offers the Phut (first new crop of the year) of the crop and they all pray. Here is a tradition that when they meet Lhabdak after those 7 days, they put off their decorated hats and make tippi scorche (make three times round of hat dress) over Lhabdak's head. This means they rejoice of meeting him after a long time. Later all gather at a place where they celebrate Chopo Srub-Lha by folk song singing and dancing. It is a tradition that Dah and Garkhon alternately celebrate after every 3 years.

In Hanu Chopo-srublha festival was abandoned about 3 decades ago, but they do celebrate other festivals like saka, snyolha srubLha, and recite mantras and monks perform rituals throughout the day. In the evening, tsok (prasad) is distributed among the villagers. In the meantime, they are served tea and chang. Rituals are performed in order to bring peace and fortune to the dead person. In Broq-pa valley when someone dies, the family members and the relatives do not wear flowers on hat. They put it off for a long period. They do not even take part in any dance and singing of feast and festival.

5.9 SOCIAL LIFE

5.9.1 Traditional dress

The Broq-pa males wear a large woollen dress held at the waist by a waistband called skey-rag (waist tie) and tibpi (cap) decorated with yellow-orange flowers made from woolly leather of lamb and home spun-wool (Plate 5.9). The elderly males wear their own hand made shoe, which is made from the wool-spun and leather of animals used as sole. The cap for women is made from home spun-wool sheared off from their sheep (shape like duck beak) decorated with red and yellow coral beads, silver loquat, lots of needle line-up in a row, different fresh flowers, colourful ribbon and old coins etc.
Broq-pa women are very beautiful with sharp features and fair skin, and lively and hospitable nature. They are very fond of wearing flowers, especially they use shoklo (bright red) flowers grown in their garden. Married women make many pleats of their hair which is attached to an artificial white colour woollen pleat decorated with red coral and silver beads that reaches up to feet. The Broq-pa women use fresh flowers in their headdress to enhance looks and sacred thread are also attach to the hat for protection from evil spirits.

5.9.2 Food habits

The traditional Broq-pa diet is based on locally grown foods such as wheat and roasted barley flour called as tsampa or phey (barley flour). The roasted barley flour takes in different ways. Other important foods include potatoes, radish, turnip, cabbage, dried leafy vegetables stored for winter season, fruits like walnut, apple, apricot, peach, grapes, etc. Traditional butter-salt tea is special among Ladakh which is served the whole day. Earlier, dairy and poultry were out of their menu because of religious taboos. Every religious ceremony and special event is celebrated with chang (local brew) and tsampa is also known as phey (barley flour). Not a single event is complete without chang. Among Broq-pa of Baima and Dah, Gunn-chang (grapewine) is an additional local wine brewed from grapes and kept intact for 2-3 or more years. It is quite expensive and considered highly nutritious, so it is not serve commonly as barley-chang (local brew).

5.9.3 Custom of greeting each other

Among Broq-pa, if the family members or any near and dear ones meet after a long period, they follow a tradition of tippi skor-chas (head dress is put of other person head and make a three round). This symbolise that they were very happy about the reunion. While doing this among the Broq-pa of Dah-Baima, they says “yee shin buwa ti-ya” among the Broq-pa of Hanu they use Ladakhi dialect, says “Khamzang Duk sa” (How are you? happy to see you).
Plate 5.9: Broq-pa men and women in their traditional dress
5.9.4 Role of Phaspun

During any events like marriages or deaths, the Phaspun (a group of families) members play the most prominent role. Phaspun carry out all duties and rites. The phas-pun (clan) membership is lifetime; they help in carrying out all the duties at the time of death, marriage, birth and social events also.

5.9.5 Birth rites

The Broq-pas believe that women who give birth should not venture out of house for a month, even the fathers are also not allowed to move out for a week. During this period she is kept in a separated room and her clothes as well as her cups, plates etc are also kept separate from other members of the family. She is not allowed to participate in the household work. The people believe that if they touch the bambak’s (child bearing mother and home) clothes or other belongings, they would get polluted. The neighbours do not go to bambak’s place and do not eat anything prepared at the bambak’s home for about a month. After a week, a monk is called who performs sangs (ritual of purification) to purify the house. The sangs are specially done on the roof of house. On this day, they get sand from stream and sprinkle in room and burn juniper incense in every room. On this day bambak gets new dresses. The same day they put the baby in new tsepo (basket). They carry the baby in tsepo every where after this rites. A knife well covered, and an amulet is attached to tsepo. This is done to protect the child from evil spirit/evil eye. In and around Baima, they celebrate da-gang after a month of child birth. On this day, all the villagers come and offer money according to the kinship relation, carry a plate full of barley, khataks and ibex figurine and kabtse (design cookies) made of wheat dough. If the child is a boy then they make ibex and present it to the mother of child, if the child is a girl then they present kabtse (design cookies) to the mother. The host family accepts the gifts given by their relatives, villagers and neighbours. People usually give seven chapattis decorated on a big plate in a beautiful pattern; barley seeds are pour on chapatis and then they are decorated with kabtse, khataks and money according to their wish. The designed plates are called phabs-thaks. The host family accepts those phab-thaks by saying ‘choat’, which means to appease thaab Lha by offering phutt (the very first bite) of the phabs-thaks. All the
relatives and villagers bring beautifully design phabs-thaks which are the kept near traditional hearth.

They celebrate lo-pa (after attained twelve years) when the child attains lo-skor chik (complete twelfth years). On this day the family hosts a party and all the villagers are invited. The child is given a traditional dress of Broq-pa. Besides, he is also offered gifts and khataks (auspicious scarf) and money. The lo-pa is celebrated after every twelve years of a person till death. The lo-pa is mostly celebrated in winter, as in winters everyone is free from agricultural tasks. So the winter season is spent in hosting lo-pa and savouring the moments.

5.9.6 Death rites

Death ceremony takes place with rituals and lamps in honour of peace of the deceased’s soul. Every villager comes to console the family members. For almost seven days the villagers do not have tea or any other food from the robak (death person’s home). The phasphun plays a significant role in carrying out all the activities of the robak home, the phasphun may have tea and food from them. On the last day, which is also called shol-zag, the spur (body of death person) is taken to the cremation place with ritual. There the dead body is burnt and 2-3 members of the phasphun carry out the burning and other tasks at the cremation place. The death ceremony of Broq-pa is different from that of the other regions of Ladakh. They do not build proper tomb, rather they prepare a small temporary platform and burn the body on it. After 49 days of cremation, the family members call 3-4 monks and perform rituals. They perform different ritual according to their economic bearings. On this day, all the villagers gather at Gonpa, (monastery).

Drew (1875) describes Broq-pa as a casteless society unlike other Dard communities. However, they have three castes like divisions -priests, cultivators and artisans. The artisan castes include mon (musician), garra (blacksmith) and shing-khan (carpenter).