INTRODUCTION OF MALANA: A PROFILE

Himachal Pradesh has been a closed book till recent times. The cavalcade of time in the adjacent plains barely touched Himachal. The world of its people has consequently been different from that of the neighboring plains Conquerors have come and gone, leaving but with little impact, and the myths and beliefs of Himachal have remained unaffected. Thousands of years of isolation have only helped to ensure that modern thought and investigation find it difficult to penetrate the labyrinthine and misty paths.¹

Himachal Pradesh is bound between 30°22 to 33°12 North latitude and 75°74 and 79° East Longitude. To the East, it forms India’s border with Tibet, to the North lies state of Jammu and Kashmir, Uttaranchal in the South-East, and Haryana in the South and Punjab in the West. The entire territory of Himachal Pradesh is maintained with altitude varying from 350 to 7000 meters above the mean sea level.² On 1st November, 1966, when the Punjab state was reorganized with the formation of Haryana as a separate State and merger of Kullu, Kangra, Shimla and some hilly areas of Hoshiarpur district and Dalhousie of Gurdaspur district of Punjab into Himachal Pradesh.³ It became the eighteenth State of the Indian Union on 25th January 1971.

Himachal is also known as Dev Bhumi - the land of God. The State has a geographical area of 55,673 sq km spread in 12 administrative districts. Shimla, the capital, was the summer capital of the British (then known as Simla) from AD 1864 till independence.⁴

³ Ohri, Vishwa Chandar (ed.), Arts of Himachal (New Delhi: Asia Publisher), 1975, p. 80.
State is veiled from the plains by the shivalik range of mountains. Shivalik literally means the 'tresses of Shiva' and to ancient geographers it was known as Mainak Parvat. The most prominent landmark of the state is the perennial white snowline on various peaks. The Dhauladhar overlooks the Kangra valley in supreme grandeur, while the Pir Panjal, the great Himalayan and the Zaskar ranges stand guard over Chamba, Lahoul-Spiti, Kullu and Kinnaur. Not much is known in definite terms about the earliest inhabitants of the region and why it is now known as Himachal Pradesh. Scientists opine that Shivalik foothills were inhabited by the people from the Indus Valley civilization which flourished between 2250 and 1750 BC. People of Indus Valley Civilization pushed the original inhabitants of Ganga plains who were known as the Kolorian people towards the North.

**Kullu:**

The district of Kullu is situated in the deep recesses of North Western Himalayas. Because of the surrounding mountains the district for centuries remained isolated from the outside world. As at present it is difficult to visualize that Kullu was a land locked district in the past. According to legend Kullu derives its original name from the word Kuluta. This name occurs in Vishnu Purana and Ramayana. A Cunningham was the first historian to point out about the origin of the said name, after deciphering an ancient coin bearing the name of the early rajas. The valley had been so isolated and remote that according to an ancient legend, it came to be called Kulantapitha meaning the end of the habitable world.

Kullu state is said to be founded by Behangamani Pal. His son Panchch Pal succeeded him and consolidated the Kingdom. Bihang Pal, Hin Pal and Svarg Pal were next in succession. Kullu finds

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mention in Rajtarangini as a separate state in the sixth century AD. The Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang (AD 629-645) describes the country of K’iu-lu-to situated at 7001i (117 miles) north-east of Jalandhar which corresponds with the location of Kullu. The original capital of Kullu was at Jagat Sukh on the left Bank where the line of Rajas Ruled for twelve generations till the seat of government was shifted to Naggar at the time of Visudh Pal. Jagat Singh shifted the capital to Sultanpur in Kullu proper in AD 1660.8

Kullu district forms the eastern part of Central Himachal Pradesh. It is surrounded by Lahoul and Spiti district from north and east by Shimla and Kinnaur districts from south and south-east direction, by Kangra and Mandi districts from west and south-east. The district in its present form lies between 76° 55' and 77° 50' north latitude and 31°21' and 32°25' east longitude. The total area of the district is 5,503 square kilometers.9

Having lived for centuries in remoteness and seclusion, Kullu people are comparatively simple and submissive to the constituted authority. The economy of the people living in these remote valleys largely depends on fruit farming, agriculture and animal husbandry. In low-lying fertile valleys where irrigation facilities are available, cultivation of off-season vegetables has come to stay as a rewarding source of income to the peasantry.10

Malana:

A civilized society in a country like India originates in the village where people of different identities interact for mutual benefit, self-sufficiency and autonomy. All villages outwardly appear to be similar but each has its core, a soul, which is a distinct as one fingerprint from the other. There are what is called artist villages, epic villages, shrine

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villages, fringe villages and forsaken villages distinguished by their inhabitants and their traditions of these. In Himachal Pradesh, the most distinctive are the shrine villages. In every such village there is a presiding deity recognized by people of all religions on the basis of faith only. Malana is one such village in the district Kullu that has preserved its age-old traditions and customs.\textsuperscript{11}

**Physical Setup**

Physical features and environment of a community influence the human settlement and have an indelible bearing on human life either directly or indirectly. Therefore, it is essential to study the physical features and environment in which a particular community is living. Malana is located in the lap of big mountain peaks at an altitude of 2,633 meters (between 70°15' 30" north latitude and 30°40' 04" east longitude). The village is situated on the right side of Malana torrent.\textsuperscript{12} Malana nala has its source near the snowy peak of Deo Tibba, 6223 m, near Hamta Pass. It flows, touching the foot of the village through a deep and precipitous gorge after travelling for about thirteen kilometer before reaching Malana and covering the same distance further before meeting the river Parvati opposite Jari. Malana receives an average snowfall of two to three meters and a good amount of rain between the months of June and September. The inhabitants of Malana have chosen their habitat at such a remote and inaccessible place that the outsiders can reach only after a great exertion. The paths can be covered on foot and no road was worthy for loaded mule. All the goods were transported to and from Malana on human back. Malana could be approached traditionally through four main routes. Three of them led across high passes and the forth was an all ascending journey equally tough and exerting. This peculiar feature in the physical character helped the Malanis in pursuing their ideal of keeping themselves

\textsuperscript{11} www.ignca.gov.in/ex_0055.htm

\textsuperscript{12} Kumar, Krishan, *Direct Democracy and Village Governance* (New Delhi: Regal Publications), 2007, p. 2.
undisturbed, aloof and independent. Though their habitation is difficult
to approach, the people are not so, though it is true that they liked to
remain confined to themselves and unattached to any outsider.¹³

The easiest way to reach Malana is from Jari which is a 23 kms
picturesque trek to Malana. Jari is two hour’s drive from Kullu and is
situated at the confluence of the Malana and Manikaran nallah, which
join to form the Parbati River. Jari is an entry point to Malana. About
one and half kilometers from Jari are the Malana powerhouse and one
has to register his or her name here before entering the valley. From
the power house to the dam is a 10 km trek and thereafter it is an
uneven trek of 7 km to Malana. The last 4 km stretch to Malana is a
treacherous uphill trek. But the greenery all around with interceptions
of waterfalls and streams keeps one’s spirit high.¹⁴

The second route originates at Naggar, the ancient Capital of
Kullu, and passing through the villages of Rumsu and Pulag, crosses
over the 3658 m high Chanderkhani pass across the mountain range
separating the Parvati from the Beas. This route is the lengthiest,
about 25 km, and at the same time cannot be said to be an easy trek.
The arduous labor is compensated by the appealing and enchanting
views on the way. The third pass which is presently called Rashol is
known traditionally as Roshkolling. Starting from Kasol in Parvati
valley one has to cross the river Parvati and start to climb up through
Chhalal to Rashol village, it is a 16 kilometers track. The fourth path
originates at the village of Jana in the Beas valley, and passing
through the top of the ridge called Bheling pass, between Jana and
Malana, reaches Bheling, known as Bhelag to the residents of Jana,
near Malana, from where there is about an hour’s walk or around three
kilometers upto Malana. Bheling is doghar (outhouse) of the Malanis,
where they keep their cattle, sheep and goats. This path is situated on

¹³ Tobdan, Exploring Malana: An Ancient Culture Hidden in the Himalayas (New Delhi:
¹⁴ www.ignca.gov.in/ex_0055.htm
the South-West of Malana is the least known to the outsiders among all the four routes and is used mostly by the residents of Malana and Jana and the villages nearby like Kotadhar, etc. These routes are not open throughout the year. During winter months November to March, the tracks are extremely inaccessible as 10-14 feet of snow at various mountain peaks blocks them, which isolates Malana from the outer world. When snow starts melting then the route, which opens up first and makes Malana accessible lays along the banks of the torrent itself a perilous goat track winding through the narrow gorge and below immense precipices. However, the usual falls of rock and huge boulders from the cliff along with glaciers above tend to discourage visitors to this village.

Earlier Studies and A Peep into its History:

Malana, as it is known widely is unlike any other village. Its people and their ruler Devta Jamlu have been the subject of special interest, and of investigation, for the past one and a half centuries. European travelers had started visiting the place perhaps shortly after the takeover of the region by the British in 1846. Harcourt, Assistant Commissioner, Kullu, 1869-1871, visited Malana, accompanied by other companions, in 1870 and stayed there on the night of 9th May. He has left a vivid note on Malana and his journey perhaps first of its kind. He also tells that a British Forest officer had visited the village the previous year and that officer was the first such visitor in the past five years. It appears that initially the number of visitors was small but it increased a great deal soon thereafter. James Lyall, Settlement officer, Kangra, from 1865 to 1872, prepared a comprehensive and detailed note on Malana covering a wide range of subjects. An extract of his note is incorporated in his Report on Settlement which was submitted in 1875. Lyall’s note remained a guiding source for the

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Gazetteers and all kinds of official and non-official purposes for all time to come.

Mr. Dane, another officer of the same rank as Harcourt, got constructed road across Chanderkhani pass. Colonel Tanner of Survey of India had visited before the Gore. Gore was perhaps the first non-official visitor whose description is available to us. His photographs are extremely valuable in the study of history of Malana and on aspects like the pattern of settlement, expansion of the village, dress, architecture, etc. Gore also came, like Harcourt, through Manikaran and Rashol Pass.

G.M. Young visited Malana in 1911 with the simple objective of watching the icon of Akbar or Jamlu, a subject of unending debate, which is displayed once in a year in the annual festival of Phagli. His detailed description of the occasion remains a document of long standing value. Forbes also visited the village in the same year. He came from Shimla through Jalori pass.

Bruce, taking the route reverses to that of Harcourt and Gore, commenced his journey to Malana from Naggar (1912) and reached Kasol through Rashol Pass. He has left a long and informative account of the journey. H.A. Rose, based on the census reports and other sources, has compiled a detailed note of Malana. Hugh Whistler (1924) too has left an important description.17

Malana is essentially a “Hermit” village according to Professor Collin Rosser, who spent two years during 1952-53 in the village. The Oxford University has conferred him a doctorate in Oriented Studies on Malana – a surviving village republic. He says “Malana is like a walnut. It has a very hard shell outside but is pleasant enough once cracked open”.18

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Prarthi was a resident of Naggar which has traditional, economic and cultural relations with Malana since ancient times. He possessed first-hand knowledge of the cultural practices of the area and has devoted some amount of space on the subject in his work on Kullu (1971). The endeavors of the two dedicated researchers, Narender Sharma, a resident of Naggar, and Krishan Kumar, have resulted in their valuable contributions.

The Gazetteers of 1897 and 1917 register a concise data on Malana which have been quoted extensively for their being easily accessible and reliable.\(^{19}\)

The origin and history of Malana is obscure and shrouded in mystery due to the absence of historical evidence. Therefore, it is difficult to ascertain the origin of the village.\(^{20}\) The Malana people neither know when their village was first inhabited, nor where they themselves came from.\(^{21}\)

Malana, in the local usage is pronounced as 'Mala’nha'. Some early European writers spelt it as Malauna. In 1973, it was gathered that earlier Malana was also known as Chhe-beeha (six-twenty, or \(6 \times 20 = 120\)). It implies that the village when it was so named was populated by 120 souls. There are villages similarly named in numerical terms like pandra-bees (\(15 \times 20 = 300\)), atharah-bees (\(18 \times 20 = 360\)), das-shau (\(10 \times 100 = 1000\)), etc. This may not be the original name of Malana but a latter name and might belong to circa 1500 CE.

The story of founding of Malana is explained by a number of legends. In one story it is told that once a band of hunters came to the valley. After having eaten food on the spot where the temple now lies, they went to hunt. When they returned after the game they found that the fragments of bread left behind has sprung up into the shape of

corn. They took this incident as a blessing of the Devta and assuming that the Devta had taken them under his special protection, they decided to settle there and thus they laid the foundation of the village.  

A vague legend current in the valley ascribes the formation of the village to the hero or God Jaemlu, alias Jumduggun, but his is quite a mythical individual although temples to his honor are very numerous in kooloo. In Buddhist literature, the real name of Jamleo was Jambal, a temporal deity with a temple at Hamta in Spiti. The Jamlu cult is prominently prevalent and looked upon as an outstanding distinction in the religious life of the people who profess and practice this cult. An interesting account of Malana and the Akbar-Jamlu legend has been contributed to the Journal of the Punjab Historical Society, Volume IV. Nos: 2, pages 98-111, by Mr. W.M. Young, I.C.S. who visited Malana in March, 1911 and witnessed the principal annual ceremony there. He writes that the name Jamlu is a combination of the word Jamad-Agni, the name of the eminent Rishi (Sage) in the Vishnu Purana who sought rest and seclusion in the Himalayas. Renuka, the wife of the sage is called Naroi in Malana. Jamad-Agni’s name is also written as Jumduggun and his son Parasu Rama is believed to have founded the famous temple of Devi Ambika at Nirmand, and other temples in Outer Seraj and Rampur Bushahr. Parasu Rama is acknowledged at Malana as the son of Jamlu, who is called Jumduggun and the Gyephang La in Lahoul, brother of Jamlu, is known as Jagemdamb apparently, a male variant of Jagadamba Devi.

According to a story from mythology, Jamdagni Rishi is the father of Parashuram, one of the 24 incarnations of Lord Vishnu. After

his intense prayers, Shiva appeared before him. Jamdagni Rishi asked for a secluded place, full of nature's bounty. Shiva told him to go to Malana. The Rishi's two brothers followed him. In order to avoid them, he created a mist in the valley and told them that the place was not good. His brothers left his company and one went to Lahoul and the other to the Banjar Valley. Malana was already in the control of a Rakshasa when the Rishi reached there. The Rakshasa Banasura resisted him. The conflict between Jamdagni Rishi and Banasura ended with a peace treaty, according to which administration and justice were to be handled separately. While administration was with Banasura, justice was kept under the preview of Jamdagni Rishi. In case of a dispute in the administration, it was to be sorted out by the judiciary. With the passage of time, Jamdagni Rishi gained superiority over Banasura, but the village retained its traditions, which are still followed there.

The association between Jamlu and the Mughal Emperor Akbar is, however, well known, and Akbar's image in gold is the object of worship on the twelfth phagun (Bikarni month corresponding to March) every year. The legend is that Akbar was stricken with leprosy because his tax-collectors at Delhi extracted two gold pieces as Jazia-Tax from a sadhu who had been given those pieces at Malana, from the treasury of Deota Jamlu. Akbar was told that the dreaded disease or leprosy was due to the curse of the God. Jamlu consequent upon the gold pieces having been taken away from the Sadhu. The Emperor thereupon ordered an inquiry into the matter and as a result of a search made, found the said gold pieces struck together surprisingly in the imperial treasury at Delhi. In order to relieve the Emperor of the curse and the disease of leprosy, it was proposed that the Emperor Akbar should himself on a pilgrimage to Malana along with the gold pieces and invoke the blessings of God Jamlu in the

temple at Malana and also return the gold pieces to the temple. But somehow, the Emperor was unable to pay the proposed visit and instead, he had the gold pieces sent to Malana along with a gold statue of himself accompanied with the gold and silver images of the imperial horses and elephants for their being offered to the God Jamlu. Consequent upon the gold pieces brought to Malana as aforesaid, the God Jamlu was invoked and placated and as a result, the emperor’s prayers were granted and he was relieved of the curse and also cured of the disease of leprosy. 27

One more legend expresses the belief that Malana village is Greek in origin. According to it, some of soldiers deserted from Alexander’s Army probably came here to settle along with Kullawi women. Carving of the soldiers in the village with full-length armed dress supports this legend in some way because Indian soldiers bore only half-length armed dress, but not full length armed clothiers. Further, both, the ancient Greece as well as Malana village are known to practice democracy of their own kind.

Though, there are different legends and fairy-tales about the origin of Malana village yet the legend which describes the origin of Rishi Jamadagni (Jamlu Devta) is deeply rooted in the minds of the inhabitants and reigns supreme in the customs, traditions and lives of Malaneese. 28

In modern parlance as is commonly prevalent in the area they are designated as Rajputs. In the official record in the British period the people of Malana were designated as Kanets like in most other areas around. G.M. Young addresses the residents of Malana in the parlance commonly existing in the hills at the time as ‘Kanets’. Professor Vambery came to the conclusion that the Malana people were probably a branch of the same family now represented by Turks,

Sharma and Bhalla, of the Department of Anthropology of Panjab University, said to have conducted a morphometric study of the Malanis with a view to tracing their relationship with some of their neighboring populations. Their observations appear to depict that the Malanis are a distinct population clearly distinguishable from the neighboring populations of Himachal Pradesh. Some scholars presume that Malana constituted sometime in the past a part of a wider cultural zone of Kanawar or Kanaur, the upper Manikaran or Parvati valley. In the course of time, Malana, being situated in a secluded place, maintained its old cultural pattern but the others who were exposed to the influences of their neighbors were assimilated with them.

We get the first hint on the population of the village from its name Chhe-beeha as referred to earlier. Lyall reports the population of the village at "about forty or fifty families". Harcourt also reports the same figure, which is bare numbers may be placed between 250 and 300. G.M. Young gives the census data at 376 in 1901. The figure reached up to 784 in 1981 and crossed the mark of 1000 in the census of 2001. There is a spectacular increase of 35 (20%) and 493 (81%) in the number of families and persons respectively during the decade of 1991 and 2001.

**Social Structure and language:**

An exotic atmosphere catches hold of the visitor once he enters the village- houses with their antique look and the people in their traditional attire it seems to be a different world altogether. Malana had been a self-governed village like an independent state. It has evolved its own system of governing machinery and judiciary, which is one of the most important features of Malana. However, its effective jurisdiction is confined to the geographical limits of Malana.

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30 www.ignca.gov.in/ex_0055.htm
village has a council which functioned like an autonomous governing agency.

Colin Rosser remarks, that perhaps the most interesting feature of the village is its political and judicial organization. The village administration is democratic and is believed to be the oldest republic of the world. Throughout Kullu, Malana is famed both for its Village Council and as the ‘Village of Jamlu’. The social structure of Malana in fact rests on villager’s unshaken faith in their powerful deity, Jamblu Devta. The entire administration of the village is controlled by him through a village council. Jamlu is the ultimate authority, and the source of power, in the political, judicial and religious spheres. His power and influence form an integral part of social control in general and of political and judicial machinery in particular.

Malana is divided into two-upper Malana (Dhara Beda) and lower Malana (Sor Beda). Except for two families of Lohars and Julahas who came to the village as drummers and were allowed to settle there, Malana is inhabited by only Rajputs. Harcourt (1870) cells the two sectors of the village as two villages, and Gore (1895) and Bruce as two Malanas. This is so because in those days the two sectors of the village were situated quite apart from each other. The middle part, the space between the two divisions of the village, forms the third sector of the village and was once vacant except some establishments of Jamlu. This occupies physically the best part of the village and also is fairly large in size. Harcourt describes that between the two divisions there stretched an inclined plane of the richest grass, broken occasionally by trees and grey rock. These trees and rocks have presently disappeared. By the time the village was destroyed by fire in 2008 the two sectors had joined to give picture of one Malana.

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32 en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malana,_Himachal_Pradesh
34 en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malana,_Himachal_Pradesh
Kaulu Ram, a senior resident of the village, tells that the gap was filled within the last thirty years. This section is the most important and the busiest part of the village. All the sacred structures are located here. The community activities too are held here.

The village is governed through a Council which consists of several sub-groups. Their members are partly permanent and partly elected on a principle which attempts to give fair representation to various sections of the village, geographical or otherwise. The village has two categories of functional organizations. (a) The village council, the judicial and administrative set up, and (b) Bari, the body of the functionaries and other workers. The Village Council consists of two Assemblies (i) Riggin Nashing or Jaishthang (The upper house) and (ii) Kora Nashing, Kor or Kanishthanc (the lower house).

The first has traditionally eleven members which may again be divided into two sections (a) Mudiya, the body of three hereditary and permanent members, (Goor, Pujiyara and Karmist) and (b) Jathere or Jaishtha, the body of eight members, who are chosen for one year and each one is called jathere. Jestang is a recently coined term for this group of eight jathere. The Council is consisted by some other functionaries.

Howell noted that there were two assemblies in the village Riggin Nashing, the Upper Assembly, and Kora Nashing, the Lower Assembly Riggin literally implies upper, noshing means sitting and Kora means circle or round. In the Riggin there sit eleven members Constitution of this body has been changing from time to time, although the number of members remained almost constant. Howell’s information is lone example but is valuably. His predecessors, Gazetteer (1897) and Harcourt (1870), as well as his successors describe the body as consisting of three permanent and eight elected members. Presently there is no gur since around three decades and the seat has remained vacant. However the functional duties of gur
are executed by the pujari. In the Council (the Riggin Nashing) at present there are four members instead of three. These are the karmishth and pujari and their assistants, junior Karmishth and junior pujari. There are eight jathere. Thus there are at present twelve members in the assembly.\textsuperscript{36}

The body, generally called as the Kor, Kora Nashing or Kanishthang, is the Lower House of the Koram. It is a permanent house, which consists of eighty-four members. Every member represents the each household of Malana village. The number is fixed by the Koram is eighties of the twentieth century and is still continuing. They are the male heads of all households of the village and are entitled to vote and are called the chaker (voters).\textsuperscript{37} In the words of Colin Rosser, “Only the head of a household is allowed to vote: the principle is ‘one vote per house’. Women have no vote, and in fact may not be present at an election. The low caste lohars may be present – they sit apart but ... have no vote.”\textsuperscript{38} Therefore it is clear that only male heads of the households except scheduled caste can become the member of the Kor, he offers one rupee to Jamlu Devta and takes the oath in name of the Devta before the Jaishthaing that he will sincerely follow the rules and regulations made by the Koram and will remain faithful to both the devta as well as the Malanese community.\textsuperscript{39} The villager who is not member of the Kora is known as hood.\textsuperscript{40} Jamlu Devta has a decisive role to play in the administration of Malana village. When the members of the Jaishthang and the other villagers face any confusing situation and it becomes difficult for them to take a decision, then they seek help from the Devta. The problem is put forward to Jamlu Devta for solution.

\textsuperscript{37} Prarthi, Lal Chand, \textit{Kuloot Desh Ki Kahani} (Kullu: Neel Kamal Prakashan), 1971, p. 239. 
\textsuperscript{38} Srinivas, M. N. (ed.), \textit{India's Villages} (New Delhi: Asia Publishing House), 1969, p. 84. 
\textsuperscript{39} Kumar, Krishan, Op. Cit., p. 146. 
\textsuperscript{40} Tobdan, Op. Cit., p. 75.
The judiciary is an organ of government, which are both an impartial interpreter and protector of law. The nature of society depends upon the nature and effectiveness of the judicial system existing in it. If the judiciary is independent, impartial and effective then the people enjoy freedom and rights, lead a dignified and honorable life. The Malana village has evolved its own judicial system, which is in practice since times immemorial and is being practiced even today. The people have strong faith in their judicial system, which according to them is delivering the justice well through the centuries and is most beneficent even in this time. The village has a three tier single integrated judicial system. First is the Koram, second is the Chhaba and third is the Devta Jamlu. All the cases of the village Malana are dealt by this judiciary. Barring only two cases, no other dispute is referred to other judicial courts.

The self-governing system of Malana ensures direct participation of public in the affairs of governance. The people legislate for themselves. Both the houses enact laws in consultation with the general people. The laws are also subject to referendum for approval. The people can also initiate law-making process through the member of the Koram. The representatives so elected by the people are responsible for their functioning to people and if fail to act and work for the welfare of the community, are recalled and removed even before the expiry of their term. In addition to it, the people also effectively participate in executing the laws. It is worthwhile to mention here that the direct democracy is governance, which ensures direct participation of the people in decision making process. Since Malana has evolved a self-governing system, which ensures direct participation of the people in process of governance therefore it may be called as a land of direct democracy.41 The village is, in a way, a model of ancient Indian system of village self-government, except that

41 Kumar, Krishan, Op. Cit., pp. 159-175.
the part of spiritual element may be found rarely elsewhere. Jamlu is the last authority in every matter in Malana related to any subject spiritual or temporal. All difficult issues may be decided by Jamlu. The people of Malana speak a language of their own known as Kanashi or as we generally say Malani. Only the Malanis and none of the outsiders can speak and understand this language. With the people of Kullu they speak Kulluvi.\textsuperscript{42} Kanashi according to Rosser, "must be one of the smallest languages in the world. Kanashi has its own grammar, syntax and vocabulary and is not understood by any Kullu villager other than Malanis."\textsuperscript{43}

\textbf{Table 1.1: Selected thematic list of words with English, Hindi, Tibetan (Milchang) and Hindi Correspondences}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Kanashi</th>
<th>Tibetan (Milchang)</th>
<th>Hindi</th>
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<tr>
<td>Cow</td>
<td>Hooj, lang</td>
<td>Lang</td>
<td>Gaayye</td>
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<td>Dog</td>
<td>Kute</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Kuttaa</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goat</td>
<td>Bokar</td>
<td>Bakar</td>
<td>Bakraa</td>
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<tr>
<td>Horse</td>
<td>Goda</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Goda</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sheep</td>
<td>Khaa</td>
<td>Khas</td>
<td>Bhed</td>
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\textbf{Wild animals}

| Elephant | Hathi | - | Hathi |
| Fish     | Mach | Machas | Machli |
| Monkey   | Bandrong | Bandras | Bandar |
| Tiger    | Thaarh | Tar | Cheetah |

\textbf{Colours}

| Red     | Lal | - | Laal |
| Yellow  | Peegh | Pik | Peela |
| Blue    | Ragh | Rag | Neela |

\textsuperscript{42} Tobdan, Op. Cit., p. 80.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Rooko</th>
<th>Reg</th>
<th>Kaala</th>
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<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>Chhog</td>
<td>Thog</td>
<td>Safedh</td>
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### Parts of the body

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<thead>
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<tr>
<td>Tooth</td>
<td>Gaarh</td>
<td>Gar</td>
<td>Daant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Numerals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>one</th>
<th>Eed</th>
<th>It</th>
<th>Ek</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>Nish</td>
<td>Nish</td>
<td>Dou</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three</td>
<td>Shoom</td>
<td>Sum</td>
<td>Teen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four</td>
<td>Pooh</td>
<td>Pu, Puk</td>
<td>Char</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five</td>
<td>Angah</td>
<td>Nga</td>
<td>Panch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six</td>
<td>Cch</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Chah</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seven</td>
<td>Set</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Sath</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eight</td>
<td>Ath</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Aath</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nine</td>
<td>Nou</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Nau</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ten</td>
<td>Des</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Das</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Table 1.2: Selected thematic list of terms regarding Village Judiciary, Location, Architecture, Fauna and Flora with Kanashi and Hindi Correspondences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Village Judiciary</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kanashi</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hakkma</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jarang</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jeshta</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Kardar  |  Non-Elected Member of Village Council

**Location**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dhara-bheda</td>
<td>Lower Malana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sara-bheda</td>
<td>Upper Malana</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Architecture**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Architecture</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Handula</td>
<td>First place (in the center of the village)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhoming</td>
<td>Floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaiang</td>
<td>First Floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khudang</td>
<td>Ground Floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pati</td>
<td>Balcony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pittang</td>
<td>Door</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roshvat</td>
<td>Roof</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Fauna and Flora**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fauna and Flora</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chabarh</td>
<td>Lizard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chora</td>
<td>Herb used for better digestion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kadu</td>
<td>Herb used in case of body pain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelamch</td>
<td>Herb used in case of cough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Putish</td>
<td>Herb used in case of stomach ache</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ring</td>
<td>Snake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tontidar</td>
<td>Spider</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

From the linguistic point of view Malana appears to be an island. The language of the village, called Kanashi, is unintelligible for outsiders from the Kullu or Parvati valley, who speak dialects belonging to Indo-European family of languages. It has been classified as a Sino-Tibetan tongue, related to Milchang, which is a sub-branch of Kinnauri (a group of dialects spoken in Kinnaur).44

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44 www.ignca.gov.in/ex_0055.htm
People in Malana consider all non-Malani to be inferior and consequently untouchables. Visitors to Malana town must pay particular attention to stick to the prescribed paths and not to touch any of the walls of dev ghar. If this does occur, visitors are expected to pay a forfeit sum that will cover the sacrificial slaughter of a lamb in order to purify the object that has been made impure. Malani people may touch impure people or houses as long as they follow the prescribed purification ritual before they enter their house or before they eat. Malanis may never accept food cooked by a non-Malani person, unless they are out of the valley. Malanis may offer visitor food but all utensils will have to undergo a strict purification ritual before they can be used again. Malana, according to Colin Rosser, “has developed an almost fanatical sense of difference, of village cohesion, and of intense group loyalty. All who do not ‘belong’ are treated with virulent suspicion and even contempt. No matter how open and friendly one is to them, this suspicion can only be allayed, rarely dispelled completely. At the first favorable opportunity it bubbles again to the surface and erupts like a volcano”.

However, there is a saying about Malana that the village is like a walnut. It has a very hard shell outside but the kernel is pleasant enough once cracked open. Though, they appear hard, rough and violent, however, if one peep inside into their hearts, the Malanese is implicitly very courteous and hospitable. The guest can stay there for any number of days he likes and the villagers do their best to attend to him. One of their traditions is that a culprit who enters in the village is treated as a man who has come to the Devta for shelter. The villagers make it a point to protect him from any kind of danger.

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45 www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malana,_Himachal_Pradesh
The Dharmashalas (rest houses) in the center court of the village are richly decorated with wooden carvings depicting flora and fauna which include peacocks, horses, elephants, birds, dancers and various flowers. The Dharamshalas are meant for pilgrims visiting the shrine of Jamdagni Rishi on festive occasions. Houses in Malana are two or three storied and each storey has a specific name and purpose.

The ground floor is called Khudang, which acts as a cattle shed and where the firewood and fodder for the sheep and goats are stored. The first floor called Gaying is used to store eatables, wool and fur weaving woolen fabric. The top floor with an overhanging balcony is called pati. It is the actual living quarter. The houses are built of alternate bands of stove and limber. The inner walls are plastered with mud. The outer side is entirely made up of wood and acts as a verandah.\(^{48}\)

The foundation for reconstruction of the sacred buildings, after the fire incident, was laid on April 28, 2008 and the consecration ceremony after the completion of the two bhandars and the kothi of Athara Karadu was held on December 4, 2008. Representatives of the barah deoghars among which are counted those from Koodung, Soyal, Shangchar, Rumsu, Chachogi, Pulag, Rashol, Tosh etc. attended the ceremony. The gur and the pujari of Gepang from Lahoul were also present on this occasion. The sutra (thread encircling) ceremony was held on August 13, 2009. Work on the Kothi and the Marhang for the musicians was being carried on after the thread ceremony, perhaps because these are not sacred structures.

Presently the villagers have changed the pattern of construction of their houses and have introduced the use of cement and iron, even though it is difficult to fetch the material upto the site from the road-\(^{48}\)

\(^{48}\) www.ignca.gov.in/ex_0055.htm
head which is about two kilometers away. Lesser amount of wood is used now.49

Fairs and festivals have their own significance in the social and religious life of the people. This exhibits the characteristics of the culture of society.50 Malana, like many other villages in Kullu celebrates a number of melas, fairs and festivals, round the year, and inspite of its avowed aloofness enjoys overwhelming participation from the enthusiastic people from even distant parts of Kullu. During all these days of rejoicing, Jamlu’s men own full responsibility of taking care of the necessities of boarding and lodging of the participants. This is not only the responsibility of the public, but of the private households also. If anytime someone does not get food in the common kitchen, he can go to private houses for food who will accept him gladly. Two fairs of phagli are held annually, phagli and chhoti (small) phagli. This custom of two phaglis exists in the deoghars. They also agree on dates and in the method of celebrations with that of Malana. The former, dedicated to Jamlu, is held in Phagun and the latter is held in honor of Devi Narodu, in the month of Chait. In the villages other than those of deoghars only one phagli is celebrated and its dates and method of celebration also differ. Birthday of Jamlu is celebrated on the full moon day of the month of maghshar. The devta comes out on this day.

Bhautad or Badoh is an ancient festival which appears to have been very important and exhibits the strength of Malana as against the deoghars. It is now extinct since long but once it was celebrated on a very large scale.

The days of the festivals in Malana appear to have been fixed according to the movement of the moon and the day of a week, rather

than a date, in conjunction with the month. The phagli is held on the first Friday of phagun and Jamlu’s birthday is held on the full moon day of Maghshar. Malana people sing songs on all occasions, in the fields, festivals, etc. in the language of Kullu and dance similarly.  

Marriages help both in regulating the sexual life in society as well as granting recognition to the progeny. It is not only a ceremony but also an important institution of society. Marriages of Malaneese are, generally held within the village. G.M. Young notes that men from the other half only and vice marry women from the other half only and vice versa. In the view of Colin Rosser, "Malana is an endogamous village...... The Malanis themselves certainly like to think of their village as endogamous, and marriage within the village is the preferred pattern." A.F.P. Harcourt also asserts that the Malaneese don’t intermarry with the people of any other village. The Malana village is spread into two parts, called as Dhara Behar (consist five clans) and Sara Behar (composed of three clans) and the people of one part are expected to marry in the other part of the village and vice-versa. G.D. Khosla maintains, “The village which consists of two distinct hamlets separated by a hundred feet of open land. The residents of each part marry only mated chosen from the other part. So a kind of strict endogamy combined with limited exogamy ensures the purity of the Malana people.” There are two forms of marriages, i.e. Arranged and Love marriages. Besides all the restrictions some marital relationship exists with other societies. It is told that the Malanis have marriage relationship with Rashol, Chhalal, Chauki, Baladi, etc. G.M. Young says that women from Rashol are taken in marriage to Malana when required. But this is very small in number. We gather that there are

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women from Malana one each at Jana, Jagatsukh, Naggar, Manikaran and Sultanpur. There may be some more, but the number is very small.

No clear reason is known for the continuation of this prohibition. Rose explains the reason for the custom, "this custom of intermarriage the allege to be due not to exclusiveness on their part, but to their inability to pay the consideration for betrothal which is demanded by the parents of girls in the other parts of Kullu, while there is no demand for their own marriageable girls among the marrying men of Kullu". Rose himself advances another reason which is unique to Malana, the land of Jamlu. He says, "they are too much under the deota’s protection to intermarry with any kullu kanets though occasionally take wives from Rashol not giving women to Rashol men in return". Colin Rosser maintains that Malana is not only physically and linguistically isolated; it is socially insulated from outside contact. It may be presumed that in the matter of marriage also they follow the same ideals of isolation as they have been following many other cases. They have even been charged with the inbreeding in a bid to maintaining the purity of their race.55

Divorce too is not uncommon is as simple as the marriage. In case of divorce, according to the law of the land, the boy has to arrange a separate house, the food, etc. for the girl. The Malaneese can keep one or more wives. Further remarriage of a widow or divorce is allowed and quite common in Malana. In shows that Malaneese do not inhibit conservative and orthodoxical approach in this context.

Similarly, there are not elaborate last rituals to be performed at the time of death. The dead body is wrapped in a coffin and taken to the cremation ground and consumed to flames on a pyre on the death of the husband, the widow can remarry but after a gap of one year.56

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56 www.ignca.gov.in/ex_0055.htm
The nature of economy and the structural feature of economic system vary from society to society and change from one historical period of time to the other. The economic system of Malana was much different from those of the villages around it. The society followed on ideal of isolation and the socio-economic institutions perhaps must be characterized by the same unique social philosophy. Another prominent feature of the economy was that it depended largely on external sources. Moreover it is largely a macro enterprise. Income was earned collectively and credited into the account of the community of Jamlu. Thus the earnings of the people of Malana may be divided into broad categories. Firstly, the income from the household activities which is generally an individual enterprise and earned within the village, and secondly the income generated by the community, mostly from outside the village. The main sources of household income of the families of Malana traditionally constituted agriculture, animal husbandry, herb collection and forestry. Besides they had other minor sources of income. In addition to these the Malaneese also undertake a few subsidiary occupations like weaving, bee-keeping, food grain collection form the twelve abodes of Jamlu Devta and sale of ghee and cannabis (marijuana).57

Agriculture is one of the main occupations of the people of Malana village and occupies a prominent place in the economic lives of the Malaneese. No irrigation facility is available, and due to high altitude and cold climate only one crop is grown in the year. Agriculture activities at Malana are confined to a period of six to seven months in a year, i.e. from April to September/October. Because of the extremely cold climatic conditions the land remains covered with snow form the middle of October to March. The fields are terraced and sloppy. Therefore, it is not possible to plough the land with the help of

bullocks. All cultivation is done under rain fed conditions, although at places they have sources of water. Rice and maize don’t ripe under the climatic conditions of Malana, therefore they are not cultivated. Production is insufficient to meet the demand of the residents. They saved traditionally buckwheat, wheat, saryara, rajmash (a pulse), barley, pumpkin and potato. The crops grown are coarse and of inferior quality but very rich in nutrition. It is not certain whether it is a different variety or an antiquated variety, as the grains, as well as the color, of wheat in Malana are usually reddish in color, and in size they are smaller, almost half of that of normal. In fact all the agriculture operations are done manually and the animal power are not employed consequently the agricultural economy, rather the whole economy; show heavy dependence on the other sectors viz. animal husbandry and forestry.

People breed cows, sheep and goats in large numbers forming a subsidiary occupation. Each house kept about 50-60 sheep and goats on an average, and some upto 150. An old report says that, “There are some good sheep runs or nighaars in the valley which are held by the Malana men or by the zamindars of villages paying revenue to the deo”.

In the winter they take their flocks to Bilaspur, Sirmaur, Tata Pani (Shimla district), Bhajji, Sunni, Suket and Mandi. They get wool, meat, and milk from animals. In the winter they work on the wool and they meet most of their requirement of wool from their own produce. Animal husbandry depends largely on the forests, exploiting the abundant natural resource goats and cattle there is no veterinary facility available in the village. Malana produces wool in sufficient quantity to meet its requirements. Most of the formers spin and weave clothes themselves for their own consumption.

The Malaneese are engaged in weaving activities especially during the winter season, when heavy snowfall cover the entire Malana glen and paralyses all agricultural and other outdoor activities. They weave woolen blanket (gassag), woolen cloth (patti) for woolen coat, pyjama, basket and the articles for bedding purposes mostly the old male members do yarning of the wool. They can be seen performing this activity throughout the year even when they are gossiping with each other and while walking also they continue to do the same. The wooden articles are manufactured in the traditional handlooms and are not for sale but used by the family members. Both men and women perform the weaving activities.\textsuperscript{59}

The wide expanse of the mountain slopes were exploited economically in many ways: for collection of fuel wood, timber, fodder, grazing of sheep, goat and cattle, and collection of herbal and medicinal plants rearing of honey bees, hunting, etc. Honey is produced in sizeable quantity and is of good quality. Thus the vast forests in the steep slopes, although. Not much suitable for cultivation, were exploited beneficially.\textsuperscript{60}

Some of the families at Malana adopt the occupation of bee keeping. The bees are kept and tamed in the cylindrical wooden boxes (dodre). The hollox boxes are closed from each side, leaving behind a small hole in every box for bees to enter in. the bees make the honey comb inside such boxes and the Malaneese extract the honey (Bas) from these boxes in the month of May. They use it as a substitute of both sugar and gur, and also sell it in the nearby markets and fetch a good price.

Herbs collection is another subsidiary occupation of the people of Malana village. To quote V. Bhalla and P.C. Sharma, "A wide variety

\textsuperscript{60} Tobdan, Op. Cit., p. 110.

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of exotic and costly herbs of medicinal importance grow wild in forests of Malana glen. These are not only used in curing ailments in the local system of medicines but are also collected and marked in large quantities. Some of the important herbs include banafsha (Viola cinera), ban-ajwain (Thymum serphyllum), chora (Angelica glauca), and guchhi (Morchella esculenta).”

The people collect herbs when they are free from farming activities. Verma writes that in 1980 dhoop, karru, pateesh and guchhi of the quantity amounting to 12800, 800, 100 and 100 kilograms, respectively, which could fetch income at the price of rupees, 7, 12,120/- and 500/- per kilogram respectively, were extracted. Valuable aromatic and medicinal herbs are found in the high alpine pastures above the Malana glen. The chief among them are Guggal (Juniperous), Kadiu (Gentian), Patish (Aconite or Taxus Baccata), Chora (Angelica Glaucia), Guchhi (Mor Chella Esculenta), Shingli-mingli (Dioscorea Deltoida), etc. The people of Malana village sell these herbs in Jari and Bhuntar, the nearby markets, which fetch them a good income. The wide expanse of the mountain slopes were exploited economically in many ways: for collection of fuel wood, timber, fodder, grazing of sheep, goat and cattle, and collection of herbal and medicinal plants, rearing of honey bees hunting etc.

Tailoring, water flour mills, tourism, sale of desi ghee and cannabis or marijuana are the other sources of income in Malana village. Very few people are engaged in the tailoring occupations. The water flourmills owners earn flour of wheat or maize in return for grinding the grain.

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The economic sphere of Malana expanded much beyond its geographical confines as it drew a substantial quantity of income from outside and this is the most peculiar aspect of its economy. The unique feature of the primitive economy has no parallel in any other society in the region. This is a cooperative venture and is expended as such various sources of income falling in this category may be enumerated as under:

People had great faith in the power of Jamlu and they came from far off places to receive his blessings, for pooch – to ask questions and seek his guidance in many important matters. The devotees paid tributes offerings, etc. to the Devta.

The amount collected traditionally be the people of Malana of all kinds from the deoghars was known as kor. The term kor is not known well presently, but it survives both in Malana and in some of the deoghars. This kind of income was derived from two or three major sources. Firstly, Jamlu owned land in the deoghars which were given on share basis and half of the produce was given on share basis and half of the produce was received by Jamlu of Malana. Secondly, the Malanis visited the deoghars once or twice in a year on Kora/Phere (round), for collection of Kor (revenue cess). At one place it was called Khalaut.63

The Malaneese collected food grain in the name of Jamlu Devta from His twelve abodes and some villages of Kullu district. They regard that the twelve abodes of Jamlu Devta and the nearby villages fall under the hoar (Jurisdiction) of the Devta, therefore the collection of food grain as revenue of Jamlu Devta from these areas is their customary right. In this connection, A.H. Diack observes "all the Malana people except a few men, old women and children, cross the pass in the end of Maghar or beginning of Poh, and spend more than a

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month in the villages in Kullu containing land assigned to their God, billeting themselves on every house. In the same way at other times the Ra Deo visits for a few days Buladi and Bishana, two villages in Kothi Kais, where it borders on Malana, which are hold by the deo, and at other times the villages in Ha’ Kandi, in Rai Gyan Singh’s jagir which are assigned to it. The resident of all the twelve abodes of Jamlu Devta gives revenue to the Malanees (Ra Deo) because of their devotion of the Devta and also out of fear of His wrath. Besides the villages of twelve abodes, Ra Deo also collects grains from some nearby villages. Though there is no compulsion for these villagers to give food grain to the Malaneese when they come for the collection, nevertheless, the villagers contribute a mite either due to a fear of wrath of Jamlu Devta or due to their devotion to the Devta.

Lyall reports that Poling (Pulag), Ramsam (Rums), Shauran, Baoli, Kirian Ber and Karoji (Karjan), “nearly all have lands which pay rent to the Malana deo”. After the introduction of the Tenancy Act, the tillers become the owners and the Devta, like others, has been rendered landlers. The ex-Munshi of Malana belonging to village in Kullu tells that the villages of Shauran, Rumsu, Pulag, Hallan, Naggar, Jari, Chauki, Baladdi, Bhanara Shāuna, Rashal, etc. were hold by Jamlu of Malana and the only land freshly broken on the government wasteland were owned privately by the people. In this regard Lyall says that although the Malana men are illiterate yet they keep accounts from their memory. “The Malana Karmishth keeps Kulu accountants in Kulu villages where Jamlu has a muafi and these keep the rent rolls in the various muafis.”

Devta Jamlu also receives contributions in the form of Chaakri (obligatory service) from the twelve deoghars. It is told that the people

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of Malana used to call five people each from a deoghar for Chaakri. People came from many villages more than the specified number of deoghars. People went at least twice to give attendance in the court of Jamlu for Chaakri from the villages of Shauran, Rumsu, Hallan, Chactiogi, Jana, etc. in the months of August and February. Many come voluntarily and they felt happy in serving the God free.

In the village of Rumsu it is told that when a person died without any heir, all the goods belonging to the person were customarily transferred to Jamlu in Malana and only one article was retained in the village by the Pujari. Perhaps this custom might have been prevalent in other deoghars. This perhaps formed one of the minor sources of income of the community.

The Malaneese have evolved a credit system in the village. The people help and give credit to each other at the time of need. The debtor returns it in time without paying any interest. Loans are taken mostly for the construction or repair of house. It is taken either in the shape of cash or kind. However, whenever there is any natural calamity, i.e. draught, and epidemic, etc. the Malaneese get help from the Devta’s bhandar. Both barter as well as monetary systems operate in Malana village. The Malaneese exchange various food items with each other. While writing on the barter system of Malana village Colin Rosser writes, “The Malanis supplement their food supply by bartering ghi, wool, honey and game birds in various kulu villages for rice and maize, rock salt, and iron tools. In these transactions, the Malanis dislike taking currency and insist on their traditional barter rates even when these rates are unfavorable to them.”

Malana earned in collective account at the same time it had created a number of heads for expenditure significantly on the account

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of community. A substantial share of this income is expended on account of the guests of the village. They have created a permanent infrastructure for the purpose one of the responsibilities of the community was the payment of land revenue to the government. Malana also paid some other cesses, rates and fees. There are a number of gatherings, fairs, festivals, etc. held in the village. The villagers dine collectively. People assemble from various parts of Kullu in large numbers and the community makes all arrangements for their food and stay. Lyall says that "at the fairs (Males) held and Malana all comers are fed free as long as the fairs last. Any Sadhu or beggar who visits Malana gets food and a blanket it he wants it. Such visitors are very number our owing to the difficulty of the roads." Besides, there are regular visitor to the village who visit the village in good weather and come in large number. They are served either in the community centre or they are distributed to the individual families. Similarly Devtas from the neighboring villages visited village regularly and large number of people accompanied them. Arrangement for them is made similarly.68

Economically Malana is a poor village and the standard of living is below that of the average Kullu village. The Malaneese mainly depend upon agriculture, livestock and some other subsidiary enterprises, which fetch them an earning only to meet both the ends and live hand to month. It is observed that in spite of inaccessibility, marginality and fragility the village Malana has enough resource potential. If it is harvested properly then it can prove a boon to augment the local economy, which will certainly help to raising the living standard of Malaneese.69

The Malaneese believe in animism, which includes belief in souls, spirits, transmigration, future life, etc. It is worthwhile to mention

here that the existence of Jamlu Devta is also considered in the form of a divine spirit who speaks out to the devotees through the Good (an oracle or mouthpiece of the Devta Jamlu). They also have faith in the existence of evil spirits, i.e. goghra (ghost), githy rakas (little ghost with fire on his head), churel (witch), opra (bad spirit), etc. It is believed that these evil spirits usually dwell on high hills, rocky doles or in groves and some of these are very harmful to human beings as these are very harmful to human beings as these may cause physical deformity, madness, sudden illness or even death. Further, the Malaneese believe that only Jamlu Devta can relieve the victim of the effect of evil spirits by his supernatural power.70

The dress of people depends on the factor of climatic conditions situated at high altitude, the village Malana has very cold climate with heavy soulful in winter and plentiful rain almost the year. Therefore, both the males and females of this village sport thick woolens. Women ordinarily wear a blanket called gashang. It is rolled round the body, tucked on the breast near the two sides of the shoulder with two needles, both tied through a chain, which are made of silver. At the waist it is tied with a gacha (waistband). Inside they wear a chhou, a small shirt. Chhoa is a shirt longer than chhou, reaching up to knees. The ladies do not wear pyjama, put on long woolen socks up to the knees.71

A few women of the older generation wear white woolen cap similar to those of men with flap on about two third of it folded upwards and whole of the rim provided with a black cloth strip. Earlier, till about half a century ago, women wore white cap. The flap which was folded up words was provided with muslin of brownish color similar to that which was worn in Kinnaur in those days. These days they ordinarily

70 Ibid, p. 105.
wear thipu, cloth piece of about a square year, like those worn in Kullu. Has court report, "female wear a curious species of brown could (like a monk's) over the head, but this is not uncommon in one or two villages above Manikaran."\footnote{Harcourt, A.F.P., Op. Cit., p. 41.} This bag-like head dress, called googli, is now seen worn in the festivals. Both men and women wear Khobe. Above it they wore pauncha (covering for their legs). In the Phagli mela during the dance, women wear a special dress.

Both the women and men use socks made from rough pure wool. The shoes used by the people are mostly made of threads prepared from bhang (a marijuana plant) and are called Khobag and some shoes are also prepared from goat hairs.

Men are not seen wearing any kind of ornament. The women ornaments include earrings mostly made of silver and called as Khundi. Women wear bracelets of metal and other materials. They adorn nose on both the sides, usually of silver, studded in the middle with the semi precious stone. They wear necklaces of pearl and beads. The most adorned part of the body of a woman is the ears. They wear a number of rings numbering from around six to twelve or thirteen on each ear. These rings are molded from simple silver wires, like those of women in Kullu. But in Malana they have more elaborate designing. Sometimes these rings are partly braided into spirals. Such an elaborately worked ear ornaments cannot be seen anywhere in the state. The credit must go to the highly skilled craftsmen of Malana, each women wears silver discs in nostril. Both men and women wear finger rings. It is pertinent to mention here that the Malaneese do not use gold jewelry as according to them gold is meant only for God Jamlu.\footnote{Tobdan, Op. Cit., pp. 88-92.}
Wearing of leather shoes with in the village premises is still restricted and not preferred. The Malaneese regard various items of leather as impure, as they are of the view that the things of leather are made from the skin of cows and bulls. However, shoes made out of skin of sheep and goats are allowed along with shoes of cloth and rubber. It may be observed that barring a few differences the dress of Malaneese resembles much with that of the traditional dress of Kullu people. In this context, A.F.P. Harcourt observes, "The men dress much as do the peasantry in Kooloo, and the women wear the round brown cap, and plaids of a sober grey; but here as in other villages, is to be seen the curious monk-like cowl of madder-brown cloth, that is carelessly adjusted across the head-piece, and allowed to hang down the shoulders."74

It has been observed that life at Malana has begun to change. People are discovering the simple joy of a better working life. They have been producing some very good quality hashish. Blessed by Lord Shiva, god quality cannabis plant grows in abundance there. For ages the use of cannabis has been an integral part of their lives, from medicine to footwear. But in the past they had never traded it; neither did they know the value of it. Their only trade with the outside world had been sheep wool.

In the seventies came some white men. They taught the villagers how to rub the cream — the cleaner and more potent hashish suitable for an international market. Those foreigners drew them into business. Malana cream became an international brand. Hashish production grew like a home industry for each household. The poor villagers started earning money and they didn’t know the value of money either. The incursion of political parties also means creation of political polarity among the beautiful people of a peaceful hamlet. With

no knowledge or perspective of the outer world innocent illiterate villagers take sides of political parties and create a divide within.

The Indian government took notice of a hidden backward tribe who as per laws of the state were into criminal activity. The outlaws were to be brought under the rule of our mainstream democracy. Malana became a part of our national electorate, a part of our mainstream administration.

And the invasion begins. To give them the light of our civilization, government starts building a series of dams, tunnels through the mountain to generate hydel-power. Malana gets electricity, Television, satellite dishes, mobile phones, a vehicular road. With them comes all the vices of a modern world, comes money, and comes greed.

And the fire strikes... In January 2008, in a devastating fire, caused by an electrical short circuit, half the village including four ancient temples gets completely destroyed. The villagers comprehend that the political divide has disturbed their unity so the God is angry. The people who haven’t lost their houses accommodate those who have lost theirs. But the fire annihilates; the curse of the modern world has hit hard upon the hidden treasure of this ancient civilization - their trust. The rebuilding of Malana witnesses transition of an ancient civilization. Rules of the modern word, which promote homogenization and convenience, force replacement of traditional methods and practices. In our democracy it’s illegal to cut trees, so the villagers are forced to build concrete houses instead of their traditional stone and wood ones. Poor villagers cannot understand how come the government can destroy their jungle to build the dam or the road and they themselves are prohibited to cut a few trees to rebuild their homes. Concrete house means outside knowledge, outside people, more money; so comes outside aids with their political interests! An
age-old traditional society crumbles; the influential individuals turn corrupt, families break apart, brothers fight. For the poor villagers hashish still remains their only means to earn some money, and it's a very little money, not even enough to make their living forget about rebuilding their homes. Their production is very restricted now because of police watch. They don’t understand why they have to give away something, which has been so special to them for thousands of years! For them governance is for the people, so why can’t the government make special sanctions for these poor people in crisis! They don’t realize why they have to become a part of India and lose their sovereignty!

We can see the end is very near. In the name of progress of human civilization, like thousands others, another ancient civilization is getting engulfed by a modern one, losing its unique identity to homogenization. When the whole world is looking for an answer to the shortcomings of the present form of democracy, we witness a beautiful model of self-governance, one of the world’s oldest-forms of democracy for the people being obliterated by the rule of the majority.75

The word Democracy is Greek, and our system a British legacy, but a real Democracy has been thriving right here for centuries. All we need is to look within literally. The civilized modern world has a lot to learn from Malanese.76 The way they settle their issues is a lesson to the urban elite. No law books, no clauses, no constitutions, no lawyers, no policemen or police stations and yet the villagers live in mutual harmony, sharing their burden with each other with basic minimum requirements, the Malanese over the centuries have learned to live in tune with nature. They may not have access to the luxuries of

75 www.aheadofdemocracy.com/story-of-malana.html
76 www.ignca.gov.in/ex_0055.htm
the modern world still one can see the glow of contentment on their innocent faces. The village of Malana is like a well knitted family. If we really want to protect and preserve this heritage we should leave the affairs of the village in the hands of the Malaneese. Only minimum interference to which they have untidily shown restraint will help. They are happy to be part of benevolent nature. Malana with its unique lifestyle, language and traditions has remained curiosity for the outsiders for the last so many decades. Much has been written about it, but not in a proper perspective and that is why the researcher has taken this study so that the good qualities and other aspects of the Malana people can be bring forward to the whole world in a good manner.