CHAPTER I

Introduction

A. Brief History of Hadaoti: Bundi, Kotah and Jhalawar

B. Political, Social and Cultural History of Kotah
INTRODUCTION

A. BRIEF HISTORY OF HADAOTI:
BUNDI, KOTAH AND JHALAWAR

The eastern region of Rajasthan is widely known as Hadaoti. The word Hadaoti takes its origin from the word Hada, which means Asthi or Bones, derived from the name of the king Asthipal (as Asthi means bones or Had i.e. the bones of the King Asthipal). The Hada Chauhans, an offshoot of the famous Chauhan clan that ruled over Delhi and Ajmer, founded the Hadaoti kingdom. Twelfth Century saw the rise of the Rajputs who forced the Meenas and the Bhils to surrender their power.

Historians believe that on the eastern side of Chambal River, Koteya Bhil ruled Akelgarh. Jait Singh (son of Samar Singh, also grandson of Rao Deva) defeated Koteya Bhil in A.D.1264 and captured the areas of Akelgarh and Kotah, which became a jagir of the Bundi rulers. Kotah remained a jagir under Bundi rule until 17th Century. Jait Singh built a fort there (at Kotah) known as Garh Fort and burying koteya’s head. The foundation of the Garh Fort rose over the slain chief near the salar gaji gate, where until today; the Kotah Royal House customarily offers prayers. The Garh Fort of Kotah is one of the highest forts of Rajasthan, situated on the banks of the Chambal River, with its three-layered fortifications heavily reinforced by massive bastions and 6 double gates and 25 burj (towers). Raj Mahal, Bada Mahal, Chhatara Mahal, Arjun Mahal, Lakshmi Bhandar and the ruined Jhala Haveli etc. are some palaces situated in Garh Fort, Kotah. These numerous palaces are the beautiful buildings not only from the architectural point of view; however, the walls and ceilings are also richly ornamented.

In 1342 A.D, Hada chieftain Rao Deva conquered this territory from the last Meena chieftain Jait Singh and extended the boundaries of the state up to the west banks of the Chambal River and he renamed the area as Haravati or Hadaoti. This colourful region derives its name from the narrow valley called Bandu-ka-Nal (Bandu was a chieftain of the meena tribe and Nal means the narrow ways). Historians believe that in between c.A.D. 1521–1557, two Afghans – Kesar Khan and Dokhar Khan seized Kotah.
However, the *Hada* ruler Rao Surjan took it back. Bundi came in touch with the Mughals in A.D.1554 in the period of Rao Surjan Singh. Rao Rattan Singh (1607-31) was appointed *Governor* of Banaras by Akbar, commences a new era in the history of Bundi. Later in the 17th century, the Mughal Emperor Jahangir (1605-27) separated Kotah from Bundi in the time of Rattan Singh Hada (1607-31), the ruler of Bundi and gave Kotah to his son Madho Singh (1624-49). Since then Kotah became a hallmark of the Rajput gallantry and culture.

Rao Rattan Singh (1607-31) was one of the most notable rulers of Bundi, considered by the Mughals as an important pillar of the Mughal Empire. Mughal Emperor Jahangir (1605-27) honoured him with the title of *Surbuland Rai* and *Ram Raj* (also known as *Rao Rai*). He remained an immortal figure in the history of Bundi for his bravery, charity, justice and love for art. He founded a town *Ratanpur* near *Burhanpur* after his name. After him came Rao Chattrasal (1631-58), the eldest son of Gopinath and grandson of Rao Rattan was a favourite of Prince Dara Shaikhon, the eldest son of Emperor Shahjahan (1628-58). He remained loyal to Shahjahan and Dara Shaikhon during the rebellion of Aurangzeb. He was appointed as a governor of Delhi.

He died in A.D. 1658 in the battlefield of *Samugarh*. He is eulogized (praised) in the history of *Hadas* for his courage and devotion. He was a lover of art and architecture. He built *Keshavarao* temple at *patan* and *Chattar Mahal* at Bundi.

His son, Rao Bhao Singh succeeded him in A.D. 1659. The Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb (1658-1707) invited Rao Bhao Singh in the Mughal court to receive the honours and posted him under prince Muazzam to handle the affairs of Deccan. He fought for the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb against Shivaji and one time served as a *Governor* of Aurangabad. In the history of the *Hadas*, he is remembered for his bravery, charity and dutifulness. His son died in his lifetime and he adopted Kishan Singh, the son of his brother Bhim Singh. Anirudha Singh (1682-1702) succeeded Rao Bhao Singh in A.D. 1682. When he ascended the throne of Bundi, he was only 15 years old. Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb honoured him with an *Elephant* and *khilat*. His eldest son Budha Singh succeeded Anirudha Singh in A.D.1695 (1702 according to some historians). He fought for Prince Muazzam (later Emperor Bahadur Shah I) in the battlefield of Jaipur. Prince Muazzam conferred the title of *Rao Raja* and gave him the...
state of Kotah as a gift. He was married to the sister of Jait Singh II of Jaipur. A bitter feud broke out between Bundi and the kachwaha rulers of Amber (later called Jaipur), due to which he was expelled from the kingdom by surprise attack by the kachwaha forces in 1702. He regained and lost his kingdom four times before he died.

While Jaipur and Kotah annexed large portion of his territory. It was not until 1739 before the Bundi rulers were able to regain control of their kingdom. Later Ummed Singh (1739-71) ascended the throne. Historians believe that he was one of the bravest, wisest and faultless characters that Rajput history has recorded. He fought against Jaipur, Kotah and Maratha for his state and regained in A.D. 1748. He built the famous Chitrasala or Art Gallery at Bundi. After him, the next chief of Bundi was Ajit Singh (1771-73), the son of Ummed Singh, who killed Rana Ari Singh of Mewar during the annual Aheria (Bundi’s ritual spring hunt) in A.D. 1773. Later his grandson Bishan Singh (1773-1821), who ruled Bundi for 48 years, proved to be a great patron of art. Ram Singh (1821-61) succeeded Bishan Singh, yet nothing of significance is on record in his favour.

Bundi became an established centre of art of Rajasthan from 17th to 19th Centuries. The school exhibits a genuine style of miniature paintings. We find very fine sets of Bundi School of Painting, delineating the Ragamala, Rasikapriya and Baramasa (pl.68a). Besides these sets, portraits, Hunting, Mythological scenes such as Vishnu, Shiva, representations of Garuda and Hanuman, Romantic themes – Laila Majnu, Soni Mahiwal and Madhavanala Kamakandala, festivals etc. are the other themes of Bundi. Glorious productions of Bundi reflect its picturesque landscapes of hills thick Jungles, lotus ponds alive with water birds, trees in different shades of green, flowering vines, the plantain, palm trees and frequent representation of peacocks etc. Bundi artists were the perfect masters to depict Elephants. They depicted the Elephants in various moods and actions. Depiction of females in the Bundi paintings have small round faces with receding forehead and chin, a sharp nose, full checks and sharply pencilled eyebrows.

Jhalawar, the land of the Jhala’s is situated on the banks of the holy river Chandrabhanga in the Southeast of Rajasthan. It was named after the former rulers of Jhalawar, the Jhala Rajputs. In earlier days, it was known as Brijnagar. Jhala Zalim Singh founded Patan or Jhalar paten, the chief town of Jhalawar in 1776. Here Zalim’s leadership came into play, for this feat would not have been achieved without the help of
a higher power, namely the British. Jhalawar went to Zalim Singh and his sons who
loally served the British even during the uprising of A.D. 1857, when the entire country
revolted against British rule. Madan Singh Jhala (1840-45), the grandson of Jhala Zalim
Singh became the first ruler of Jhalawar, after separation of Jhalawar from Kotah by the
Britishers.

With the setting up of well-planned town, Zalim Singh ensured that the wealthiest
of merchants settled in Jhalawar. With his understanding of administrative system, he
introduced the municipality system in Jhalawar and had a stone pillar inscribed with the
basic laws and regulations of the town. These laws were to assure the security of the
homes and wealth of the affluent traders. Anyone flouting these judicatures was dealt
harshly. Consequently, the town became the grand commercial mart of southeast
Rajasthan and the centre of trade for the region of neighbouring area. Jhala Madan Singh
(1840-45) built the majestic Fort of Jhalawar in circa A.D. 1840-45, while residing at
Jhalar – Patan. The walls of the Zanana Khas of the Fort are decorated with beautiful
paintings.

Jhala Prithvi Singh, who ruled the state for around 30 years, succeeded Madan
Singh. Most of the work in the state took place under the rule of Rana Bhawani Singh
(1899-1929). He built Bhawani Natyashala, which was considered an architectural
marvel. Maharana Bhawani Singh Ji established the theatre here in AD 1921, which is
one of the eight theatres of the world that boast of the remarkable underground
construction that allows the Horses and even the Chariots to appear on the stage. This
stage had been used for many cultural events and unforgettable plays, such as,
Shakuntalam, Shakespeare etc. India’s renowned sitar master Ravi Shankar grew up in
Jhalawar. His father was the prime minister of Jhalawar. Ravi Shankar’s brother Uday
Shankar was a celebrated dancer, also lived at Jhalawar for a long time. He formerly used
to dance at Natyashala in Jhalawar before the European dancer Anna Pavlена, who
discovered him and put him into international arena.

The lovely Jhalawar is also the site of several festivities. Gangaur (March/April),
a festival for women celebrated in the honour of Goddess Parvati. Women pray for their
husbands and unmarried women entreat to the goddess for a good groom. The
Chandrabhaga fair celebrated every year in the month of Kartik (Oct. & Nov.) on Kartik
Purnima (full moon day) near Jhalarpatan is rather interesting one\textsuperscript{25}. Essentially a cattle fair, Chandrabhaga becomes a hub of activity with Cows, Horses, Buffaloes and Bullocks being bought and sold by people who come from as far as Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. Kaleshwar Mahadev fair at Kyasana, Rang Panchmi (celebrated in the month of March), Annath Chaturthi at Jhalar patan etc. are the other fairs and festivals of this region.

Jhala Haveli, which was built by Jhala Zalim Singh, had 80 rooms and 50 verandas. Due to blast in the Haveli, it was destroyed. The walls of this Haveli were decorated with the murals. These are the masterpieces of Kotah School. Some paintings of the walls were safe even after blast. These are now in the collection of The National Museum of India, New Delhi. We can see these murals on the walls in the painting gallery of the National Museum of India, New Delhi. The colours of these paintings have been faded and are not in very good condition but speaking a lot about culture and art of the Hadaoti region.

Gagron Fort, Jhalawar fort, Government Museum, Buddhist caves, Hathi God, prehistoric cave paintings, thickly wooded forests and exotic wildlife are some major attractions of Jhalawar. The ancient Surya temple has beautiful sculptures and well-preserved idols of Surya. The town is also known as the city of bells\textsuperscript{26}. Government Museum is one of the oldest Museums in Rajasthan that was built in A.D.1915. It has a fine collection of paintings, rare Manuscripts, and statues of Lakshmi Narayan, Vishnu, Ardhnareshwar, Natraj and Trimurti.
B. POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL HISTORY OF KOTAH

Kotah is a large city, picturesquely situated on the Chambal River, lies in eastern part of Rajasthan. Its cartographic coordinates are 25.18°N 75.83°E. It covers approximately 12,436 km² (3.63 percent of Rajasthan State). It abounds with forests, hills, rivers that provide inspiration for substantial creative activity. The former state of kotah lies in the Eastern part of Rajasthan and is surrounded by the states of Khilchipur, Raigarh and Gwalior in the East, Bundi in the West, Jaipur and Gwalior in North and Udaipur, Jhalawar, Indore and Gwalior in South.

The Mughal Emperor Jahangir (1605-27) separated Kotah, the second state of the Hada’s from Bundi in A.D. 1624. Kotah was first given to Hriday Narain (brother of Rao Rattan) but later conferred on Rao Madho Singh (1631-48), the second son of Rao Rattan Singh (1607-31) of Bundi. The independent state of Kotah became a reality in AD 1631, when the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan (1628-58) gave the throne of Kotah to Rao Madho Singh (1631-48), the second son of Rao Rattan Singh (1607-31) of Bundi.²⁷ Soon Kotah outgrew its parent state to become bigger in area, richer in revenue and more powerful. Madho Singh (1631-48) greatly expanded his territories and included 2000 villages and the districts of Barren and Mahu, which were taken away from Bundi and given to Kotah by Mughals. He ruled 360 townships when Kotah, the second state of Hada’s was founded²⁸. He was the first Hada prince who had served in Mughal armies and was made the Governor of Balkh. He had five sons: Mukund Singh, Mohan Singh, Joojharh Singh, Kuniram, also known as Kaniram and Kishore Singh.
Rao Mukund Singh (1648-58) succeeded his father Rao Madho Singh (1631-48). It is said that Rao Mukund Singh (1648-58) was one of the bravest rulers of the Hadas. He fought many battles for Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan (1628-58). At the battle of Dharmat in AD 1658, he had lost three of his brothers on the battlefield, fighting on behalf of the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan (1628-58) against Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb (1658–1707). Only Kishore Singh survived to keep the lineage alive. He built the palace at Darah Nal. After his death, Darah came to be known as Mukundarah. Rao Mukund Singh remained an immortal name in the history of Kotah for his courage and devotion.

The dynasty continued with Rao Jagat Singh (1657-1682), son of Rao Mukund Singh (1648-58), who served the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb (1658–1707) in the Deccan, and was killed in a battlefield near Hyderabad in AD 1682. The Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb appointed him as a Senapati. He was a very friendly person as Bhimsen Saksena wrote about Jagat Singh in his book, Tarikh -i –Dilkasha, “I happened to meet him in Bahadurgarh (Probably, Bahadurpura, three miles from Burhanpur). He was very friendly with me. Infact he is a staunch drunkard, loves wine very much, and drinks that heavily. Rao Jagat Singh (1657-1682) was a great patron of arts. The credit goes to Rao Jagat Singh only for the beginning of Kotah paintings as a separate school.

He died issueless and succeeded by his cousin Prem Singh (1682-85) son of Kuniram and grandson of Madho Singh (1631-48). After six months, the nobles disposed him for his incompetence and the throne was offered to his uncle, Rao Kishore Singh (1684-86). He accompanied Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb in the campaign of Deccan and was honoured with the royal Nakkārās (kettledrums). He died at Arcotgarh Durg near
Hyderabad in A.D. 1696. He was gifted three sons: Bishan Singh, Ram Singh and Harnam Singh. His younger son Rao Ram Singh (1696-1707), the next chief of Kotah, succeeded him. He was not only a distinguished soldier but was also renowned for his bravery, charity and dutifulness. After the death of Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb (1658–1707) in A.D. 1707, he supported Prince Azam against Prince Muazzam in the battle of Jajau in A.D. 1708, one year after Emperor Aurangzeb’s death. It is important to note that both the families of the Hada, Bundi and Kotah fought on opposite sides in the same battle of Jajau.

Prince Muazzam (Bahadur Shah I) conferred the title of Rao Raja on Budha Singh and gave him the state of Kotah, because Bundi Prince Buddha Singh Hada fought from his side. Later Bahadur Shah I (Prince Muazzam) recognized Rao Bhim Singh (1707-20) as a ruler of Kotah.

Rao Bhim Singh (1707-20) played a pivotal role in the history of Kotah. He was the first Rajput ruler to have the title of Punj Hazari (leader of 5000 soldiers). He was also the first ruler to be given the title of Maharao on 8th Sep. 1713 by the Mughal Emperor Farukhsiyar (1709-19) and awarded the royal dignity of the Mahi Marātib (Insignia of fish with honours) along with the royal Nakkārās in AD 1720. He raided Bundi and brought back to Kotah, the famous Kesaria Dhwaja (which was awarded by the Mughal Emperor Jahangir (1605–1627) to Rao Rattan Singh of Bundi), two stone Elephants (which adorned the Bundi Palace Portals), the golden cupolas from the canopies of the Bundi Palace, Sankha (war conch shell), the two famous cannons of Ranthambore Fort, Kotah flag etc. He was also given the town of Raipur, Bhanpura and Kalibat by the Mughal Emperor Farukhsiyar. He extended his kingdom in three
directions – to Bhilwara in the West, Gagron in the South and Baran in the East. He became the follower of the Vallabh Sampradaya (a religious community). From this day, he regarded the image of Brijnathji as the tutelary deity of Kotah state. He considered himself the minister of Brijnathji and called himself Krishandas- the servant of Krishna. It is said that the Idol of Lord Shri Brijnath ji, which the Maharao always carried with him in battle was lost in the confusion. Fortunately, another idol of Shrinath ji that was very much similar was traced from the Haveli of a Seth in Hyderabad and brought back the deity in the state.

After Maharao Bhim Singh I (1707-20) came his eldest son Arjun Singh (1720-23). He ruled only for three years. He built Moti Mahal and Arjun Mahal of Kotah in the Kotah Fort. He died without heir to the throne. Therefore, his youngest brother Durjansal (1723-56) became a successful ruler in AD 1723. It is important to note that he was the first who met the Marathas in 1740 AD. He was a devotee of Lord Shri Brijnath ji, organised the various religious festivals of Lord Shri Brijnath ji and the ceremonies, such as, Janam- Asthami, Holi, Diwali, Radha Ashtami, Annakot etc. He was married to a princess Brij Kanwar of Mewar daughter of Maharana Sangram Singh II. His wife Maharani Brij Kanwar built Jagmandir Palace in A.D. 1740, which is situated in the middle of the beautiful Kishore Sagar Lake, is still beautiful. History records that at one time this beautiful Palace was surrounded by seven Palm trees but now very little is left of them. He was gifted two sons. Unfortunately, both were dead. He adopted the son of Rao Prithvi Singh of Anta (Nanta). He was reputed in Kotah court to be a great hunter. History records that on his hunts, he took along his royal women. James Tod wrote about Durjansal: “He was a valiant Prince and possessed all the qualities of which the
Rajput is enamoured; affability, generosity and bravery. He was devoted to field sports, especially the royal one of Tiger hunting; and he had rumnās or preserves in every corner of his dominions (some of immense extent with ditches and palisades and sometimes circumvallation) in all of which he erected hunting-seats^52. He had no sons. Ajit Singh (1756-59), Jagirdar of Anta was elected by Kotah nobles with the approval of Himmat Singh Jhala, Faujdar of Kotah. Ajit Singh was very old man and died in A.D. 1759. Jhala family were heredity Faujdars of Kotah since Madho Singh Jhala, who was appointed by Bhim Singh. He was given Jagir of Anta (Nanta), one of the Bhim Singh’s sons married to Madho Singh Jhala’s sister. After Madho Singh Jhala, came his son Madan Singh Jhala in A.D. 1740 and then Himmat Singh Jhala in A.D. 1753. Zalim Singh Jhala succeeded Himmat Singh in A.D. 1758 (his nephew and adopted son). Jhala family was very powerful especially during Zalim Singh’s tenure. He was the most important figure to Kotah subsequent history. The entire state was in his control. After Ajit Singh, came his son Shattrusal, (1759-64), during whose time Jaipur attacked Kotah, the state was saved by Zalim Singh Jhala. Zalim Singh Jhala fought with Maratha’s in the Battle of Bhatwārā in A.D. 1761^53 and defeated Jaipur after eight Kotaries of Kotah. Descendents of house of Bundi founded Kotriat, which had eight principalities that are Indergarh, Balwan, Khatoli, Jainta, Karwar, Antarda, Phusod and Pipalda^54. However, these Kotriat held direct grants from Mughal Emperor. Like other mansabs, they also rendered military services to imperial armies. However, later they form the northern region of Kotah state and were amongst the biggest thikanas of Kotah. Shattrusal died issueless and was succeed by his brother Guman Singh (1766-1771). Guman Singh was married to Zalim Singh’s sister. Guman Singh did not like Zalim Singh Jhala. He was forced to leave the
kingdom and Guman Singh seized his properties. Zalim Singh took shelter in Mewar and became the advisor to the Rana. Marathas attacked Kotah and Kotah had to pay rupees six lacks. Gumam Singh found it difficult to manage and had to call back Jhala. Jhala was on friendly terms with Marathas and protected Kotah from attacks. Kotah continued to prosper and expand its territories.

The dynasty continued when Ummed Singh (1771-1819) becoming the youngest ruler of kotah at the age of 10 years. His father Guman Singh had appointed Jhala Zalim Singh as his guardian. Zalim Singh was a Jagirdar of Anta (Nanta) and a very powerful man. He married his daughter to Ummed Singh, which increased his power tremendously. The young Ummed Singh was completely under the control of Zalim Singh. Zalim Singh became the defecto ruler of Kotah. He managed the administration with full authority. Ummed Singh enjoyed the life of king – especially love for hunting.

Zalim Singh was a frustrated and tactful ruler and introduced land reforms and taxation system by which everyone flourished – the kingdom, the farmers and peasants, the traders and the nobility. He spared no one, going to the all the extent of heavily taxing widows, who re-married.

In 1817, Lord Hastings declared war on the Rajput states. Zalim Singh Jhala was the first to accept the foreign dominion. Kotah was the first to bring under the British rule and the rest of Rajputana soon followed. Kotah was required to assist the foreigners and to pay an annual tribute in return for British protection. Zalim Singh Jhala contributed with 1500 armed men, infantry and cavalry with four cannons, marching under Sir John Malcolm. It is observed that the major event in the history of Kotah was a pact between the Maharao of Kotah and the British rule. As per the pact, kotah came
under the British rule. Maharao of Kotah remained an ornamental king while Zalim Singh Jhala had all the powers.

When Kishore Singh (1819-28) came to the throne, he opposed the prevailing set up and was therefore imprisoned by the British and Zalim Singh. He managed to escape and reached to Nathdwara with the help of Maharana of Mewar\textsuperscript{56}, an agreement was made and the British gave back the throne to Kishore Singh. It was agreed by the British to pay rupees 1, 64,000 annually to Maharao who in return accepted the administration to be run by Zalim Singh and his successors. Due to the differences between successors of Zalim Singh and Kishore Singh, Britishers divided the state of Kotah into two: kotah and Jhalawar and gave Jhalawar to the successors of Zalim Singh.

After Kishore Singh, his nephew Ram Singh II (1828-86) succeeded the throne. Madan Singh Jhala, the grandson of Zalim Singh Jhala and Rao Ram Singh also did not get along because of the unacceptable behaviour of Madan Singh Jhala. Britishers asked Rao Ram Singh to give seventeen \textit{Parganas} of land to Madan Singh Jhala in 1838\textsuperscript{57}. Madan Singh was the first ruler of Jhalawar. He gave up his rights as demand to Kotah in exchange. This event was celebrated all around kotah. Two of his royal consorts built two temples of the \textit{Ballabha Kul}. The temple of \textit{Rasika Shiromanji} by Maharani Anoop Kumari Chundawatji who was from Salumbar, a \textit{thikana} of Mewar and the temple of \textit{Phool Bihariji} by Maharani Phool Kunwar Ranawatiji who was princess of Mewar.

In 1857, some Indian troops in Kotah rebelled. It is possible that Rao Ram Singh unofficially supported them. British residency was attacked. The British political agent and his sons were murdered. Ram Singh was besieged (Prisoner) in his Palace from Oct A.D. 1857\textsuperscript{58} and there was unrest all around. In March 13\textsuperscript{th} 1858 A.D, Britishers ended
the rebellion in Kotah. Rao Ram Singh died in A.D. 1886 and succeeded by his son Shattrusal II (1886-1889). He showed no interest in the state matters. In AD 1874, the Govt. of India appointed an administrator to improve the situation.59

After the death of Maharao Shattrusal II, his adopted son Maharao Ummed Singh (1889-1940) the Jagirdar of Kotra became the ruler. He ruled up to A.D.1940 because of his work and efforts for the development of this region. He is called the builder of Kotah. The people loved him for his justice for both the rich and the poor and he is still remembered by the people of Kotah.60 His reign is also known as the golden era in the history of Kotah.

After Ummed Singh II, his son Bhim Singh came to the throne in A.D. 1940 and became the ruler. In A.D. 1948 when East Rajasthan was unified by combining nine states, kotah was made its capital and Maharao Bhim Singh became the head on March 30th 1948. Rajasthan was united as a state and kotah district came to existence.

Development of art of a particular region is the depiction of the social and cultural background of that period. Everything comprising people, events, their life style and locale shape of artistic style. That is why to study kotah Paintings, its style and development; we need to know about its art and culture of that time.

The Language of Kotah is Hadaoti, especially spoken in Kotah, Bundi, Jhalawar, Tonk, Shivpur and Badoda. Approximately 15 to 20 lakh people speak this language. Therefore, this is the only language spoken by largest number of people in Rajasthan.61 Actually, Hadaoti language is a dialect of Rajasthani language. Rajasthani language owes its origin to the ancient linguistic clan called Aprabhramsa. Rajasthani language as a whole includes many other languages, such as, Mewari, Marwari and
Dhundhari. Now a day Kotah people frequently use Hindi and English. Hindi has become a dominant language in Kotah. These show the integrity of the communicative tradition of the city. Mostly every hoarding is written in Hindi in the markets, schools and colleges.

Literature of Kotah is rich, as many manuscripts have been written in kotah. Some of them are given below:

- Shrimad Bhagavata - 18th Century, 11090 Leaves, 476 Paintings.
- Bhagavata Sukshmakshari - 18th Century, Illustrated.
- Sapt Shloki Geeta (Panchmel Granth) - 18th century, 128 leaves, illustrated.
- Geeta Panchratan (Collection of Yantrika) – 18th century, 236 Leaves, 23 illustrations.
- Bhagavata Geeta - 19th century, 94 leaves, 13 paintings.
- Vishnu Sehashernama Adi Granth - 19th century, 384 Illustrations.

Family is the major unit of the society. In earlier times in kotah, there was a joint family system. Three generations used to live in the same house. Now a day’s time changed. Now we see both nuclear and joint families. Mostly the younger son remains in the household of his parents and inherits the same home when his father dies. Five or six persons in a family are the probable average number. Parda system was also prevalent in Rajasthan in earlier times among Rajputs as well as Muslims. Now a day, a few Muslim women wear Burka (Parda).

Polygamy (the custom having more than one wife at the same time) has also practiced in kotah. Almost all kotah rulers had many wives. Madho Singh had seven
wives, Mukund Singh had ten wives\textsuperscript{63}. During that time, Polygamy was not only practiced by rulers but also by common people. At present throughout India, Polygamy is not allowed by Hindu act of laws. However, Muslims practice it.

In earlier times widows had to lead a very miserable life. They had to live in a very simple way, utilizing minimum necessary things required for living. They used to wear only green, white, black and blue clothes. They were not allowed to marry again. Now a days, if husband dies, a widow may sometimes remain in the household or live with husband’s family. Sometimes she gets married and goes to new house and leaves the children with in-laws or takes them with her. Divorce is also common in kotah state. Sometimes a divorced wife will live alone and sometimes she will re-marry. Usually the children remain in the custody of father’s family.

History records that \textit{Sati Pratha} (when husband dies, wives used to end their life) and \textit{Jauhar} (when husband of lady was defeated in battle, she used to end her life to save herself from Mughals) were practiced in Kotah\textsuperscript{64}.

\textit{Fairs and festivals} are also an integral part of life in kotah. They reflect the vigorous life style of the people. Religion pervades in all aspects of life in Rajasthan. Mostly the festivals and fairs have their roots in religion. Some are meant to mark occasions like seasonal changes, relationships or professional even-business concerns. Every season is marked with a series of fairs and festivals except the summer months, when blazing sun scorches the earth. Some of the fairs and festivals celebrated in kotah are listed here.

\textit{Teej} is the festival of swings. In this, festival swings are hanging from the trees and decorated with flowers. Young girls dress themselves in green coloured clothes and
sing songs celebrating the advent of the monsoon. It is said that this festival is dedicated to the Goddess Parvati, commemorating her union with Lord Shiva. Teej in kotah is celebrated twice a year in the month of Shravan Shukla and Bhadon Krishna. The Teej of Shravan Shukla is called as Choti Teej and Teej of Bhadon Krishna is known as Badi Teej, Bundi Teej or Kajli Teej.

Like Mysore and Kullu Deshera, Kotah Dusshera is most popular in North India. In kotah, it is celebrated for ten days and commences on the day of new moon in lunar month of Asvina (September/October). It is dedicated to two victories over evil. Both events -the victory of Rama over Ravana and victory of Mahishasur Mardani over Mahishasur culminate on tenth day. Dusshera mela of Kotah is also very famous in North India. Maharao Ummed Singh I was first to organize Dusshera fair in 1892. During this festival, Rajputs worship weapons. At many places in kotah, Goat or Buffalo sacrifices were made to propitiate kali, the goddess of destruction and war. Rulers of kotah also used to offer Buffalo in sacrifice to kali. However now a days, sacrifice of Pumpkin with a blow of sword is offered to Goddess.

Holi, the festival of colours is also celebrated in kotah state, as a spring festival in the month of Phalgun (February/March) and enjoyed by all, without any distinction of caste, creed and sex. Gangaur festival related to the worship of Ishwar & Gauri (Shiva and Parvati) and celebrated in the month of Chaitra. Women pray to Gauri (Parvati) for 18 days and asking for the protection for their families and crops. After 18 days, the idol of Parvati is taken out to be immersed in water.

Rakshabandhan (A ceremony of tying sacred thread on the wrist of the brother by sisters, who in return promise to protect his sister), also known as Rakhi is celebrated
in Kotah State. In this festival, *Tilak* is applied and sweets are offered to the brothers. Brother, in return offers gifts or money to his sister. It is the festival of love in the relationship of brother and sister. Besides these, *Diwali* (the festival of lights), *Janmasthmi* (Birthday of Krishna), *Mohram*, a Muslim festival celebrated to remember *Hussain Imam*’s sacrifices etc. are the festivals of Kotah. In addition to *Dushera* fair as mentioned above, *Durga Ashtami, Kailadevi* fair-dedicated to *Kaila goddess* and *Sitabadi fair* are also organized in the district of kotah. Other fairs like *Chabda* (*Gugor*), *Fusod* (*Pipalda*), *Kamleshvar* and *Keshorai’s Kartik Purnima* fair, *Char Choma’s Sorati* (Shivratri) fair, *and Nargauan* fair, *Sangod etc. are also important fairs of kotah*.

**Besides these fairs & festivals,** *Goverdhan Pooja, Davat Poojan, Pooja of Kuldevi Ashapura. Pooja of Danshtra Devi, Shastra Pooja and family ceremonies like Tika ceremony is done to finalize a marriage, Mundan Ceremony (head shaving ceremony), Varsh Ganth Pooja (Birthday Pooja), etc. are the ceremonies of kotah.*

**Sports and games** also play a special role in the life style of kotah. Among indoor games, gambling with dice, chess and *chauper* etc. are important games. Different varieties of chess and *chaupar* games used by kotah rulers are present in the City Palace Museum kotah. Kite flying, *Gilli danda, Gulam lakdi, Thikri, Kabaddi, Chang Pau, Ankh Micholi, Satolia* etc. are the outdoor games of kotah. Hunting Tigers, enjoying dance performances, Wrestling, animal fights (Cockfight, Elephant fight, Deer fight, Camel fight), Boating, listening music etc. were the favourite pastimes of kotah rulers.

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Traditional dresses worn by women are Ghagra, Choli, Lehanga, Lungdi, Odhni, Kanchli, Kurti, Kabja’s. Maujris or simple leather juties are also in fashion. Colours used for dresses are red, yellow, pink and orange. The work of Gota and Jari was popular. Bor on forehead, Rakhi, Tikla, Sheesh phool, Nathphool in nose, Bhavarkia, Lambi bali, Bali, Gudiyan, Karnphool Tops, Jhela, Jhumka, Kanthi in neck, Khungalim Hansti, Gop, Haar, Baijyanti, Satphool, Sankali, Bajuband, Chuda, Kangan, Anula in feet, Nebri, Ramjhol, Pajeb, Bichia etc. are the ornaments used by ladies. Mughal dresses were common in Kotah, such as, Jama, Churidar Pyjama, Pagari and Kamarband etc. Traditional male ornaments such as, anguthi, hansali, Moti ki mala, Chain Tora, Gokhru, Murki, Jhela etc. are also in fashion. However, in modern kotah, we see that some male persons are wearing Kurta and Dhoti and young boys and girls wear Jeans, Trousers, skirt, T-shirt and Kutras etc.

Among the folk dances of kotah, Ghumar dance, which women perform during marriage ceremonies. Other folk dances like, Bhawai dance which is performed by Bhawais (low caste people-professional dancers), Gauri -a Bhil dance dedicated to Shiva, Neza, Mole dance, chakri, Kurja, Panihari and Gidar etc. are the folk dances of kotah.

Kotah is famous for Doria Saries, Kotah Masuria fabric (from the word Mysore), painted ceramics and black painted pottery, filigree work, thin stands of silver and gold ornaments, calico (heavy cotton cloth), printing and lacer work on toys and ornaments. Kotah is also famous for the coaching centres for competitive exams, industries and Kotah stone, which are used to decorate ceilings and floors. Asia’s largest fertilizer plant, Hydroelectric plant (fuelled by the only permanent river in Rajasthan; the Chambal) and
an Atomic power station are in kotah. Garh Fort (City Palace – Baba Mahal, Sheesh Mahal, Chattar Mahal and Arjun Mahal), Jagmandir, Umed Bhawan Palace, Kotah Barrage and Chattaries etc. are the main attractions of kotah.
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Bada Mahal, Kotah

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