CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

The present thesis entitled "A Study of the Tribes of Himachal Pradesh During The Colonial Period: A Historical Perspective", has been written with a view to have an idea of the history and customs of the five dominant tribes of Himachal Pradesh during the colonial period. These tribes are normally the inhabitants of the far-flung areas i.e. the remote areas in the State of Himachal Pradesh. Owing to lack of transportation and other modern facilities these tribes mostly remained out of touch from the modern civilized world. The term 'civilized' does not mean that they don't have their own civilization or customs. In fact they mainly remained cut off from the outer world or they never wanted to come to have co-ordination with the outer world. They wanted to maintain their own heritage culture without any disturbance from the outsiders.

The main purpose of this study is to ascertain as to how these people settled in this remote region, what is their past history, where from they migrated and improved their living standard etc. It is a matter of common knowledge that the Gaddis, Gujjars, Kinners, Lahaulas and Pangwals are the dominant tribes of Himachal
Pradesh. The largest population of tribals in Himachal Pradesh is of the Gaddis and Gujjars which are ninety percent whereas the other tribes constitute the remaining ten percent of the total population.

A number of sociologists and social scientists like T.S.Negi, S.S.Shashi and others have studied the different aspects of the 'Tribes of Himachal Pradesh', according to their own area of interest. Some seminars too were organised by the economists, social scientists and research institutes on the life and activities of these tribes. These studies are however, inadequate. The views of sociologists are also be modified and restudied in historical perspective. No comprehensive historical study of these tribes of Himachal Pradesh has so far been made. It is with this aim that the present scholar has undertaken this study.

Before discussing about the tribes of Himachal Pradesh, it is necessary to know that what is a Tribe'. Neither the Constitution of India nor any government authority has specifically defined the word 'Tribe'. Even the Dictionaries or the jurists and the social scientists have not yet evolved any generally accepted and standard definition of this term. The Hindi equivalent for the English word tribe as used in the Hindi version
of the Constitution is Adam Jati. 1

In India it is significant to note that communities or people have always been known in plural like Janah, Andhra, Savarah, Kinnaurah. Ultimately it is considered on the basis of territories to be known as Janapadas and most of the names of districts, divisions and states and the tribe and Jati depends upon social religious cum economic organization.

The Aryan speaking people were settled in Indus and Ganga-Yamuna Valleys and they were master of agriculture and had experience of producing a large variety of cereals, fruits and vegetables. They also developed

1. In the eighteenth century, 'Caste' was used with the 'Tribe' and it referred to the various social groups. In Europe, the word 'tribe' was used as denoting the evolution of a community of people within a particular territory and language area which constituted a progressive march toward nationhood.

Whereas the Romans meant with the 'tribe' as a political division, the Greeks equated it as fraternities. In western world, the 'tribe' stood for a territory allotted to a family or Community. According to the Oxford Dictionary its meaning is taken as a role of people aggregated in primitive conditions under a headman or a chief. In the Irish history, the term 'tribe' meant families, communities or persons having the same surname.
the works of animal husbandry and identifiable crafts. They had their own administration and concept of kingship. We also know about *Sabha*, *Samiti* and *Parishad* etc. They had organized social and religious system of Brahmanical Hinduism. The system controlled on hereditary has came to be known as caste system. The *Janas* settled themselves as agriculturists for two, three generations and adopted Hindu social economy, organization and even languages, religion and culture of the Indo-Aryan speaking people.

The Himachal tribes are simple, straightforward and frank. They have their own traditions and way of living and they lead a very hard life among other tribes of India. The tribes of Himachal Pradesh live in different areas of the Pradesh viz., mountains, jungles and inaccessible places. They have numerous problems of their own. Gandhiji was aware of their difficulties. He warned the caste Hindus that they should not misunderstand the tribes and hate or exploit them. It is a historical fact that the tribes played a main role in the history, culture and freedom movement of our country.

Himachal Pradesh is practically a recent episode in the political geography of India. The inception of this state took place in April, 1948. As a matter of fact in most of the works written prior to 1948
and even afterwards Himachal Pradesh is mostly taken as north-western part of India along with other neighbouring states. This labelling perhaps serves as a better connotation for both historical and cultural purposes. It indeed signifies the practical reality instead of involving in myopic outlook. After all man's living is more related to geo-environmental niches than mere artificial state boundaries. In a number of published reports, this area has been included in a broad canvas comprising the Punjab, Kashmir and even Uttar Pradesh.

In view of great diversities and multicultural background, the ethnic components and system of Himachal Pradesh attains a special form, both in characteristic features and their over-all or total expressions. Even today it is difficult to identify the indigenous tribes, castes and sub-castes of Himachal Pradesh in a concise manner. Similarly, it is seldom possible to enlist the total number of tribes and castes of this province. Compulsive and forced attempt in this regard may lead to erroneous results. The main factor responsible for this wrong estimation is the distribution of a number of tribes and castes, rather the ethnic groups over a wide area, including Himachal Pradesh. In other words, concrete boundaries for groups of people and culture are indeed difficult to ascertain.
According to 1991 census the total population of Himachal Pradesh is 5,111,079 of which the Scheduled Castes population is 13,10,296 (25.34%). whereas the population of Scheduled Tribe is 2,18,349(4.22%). Within a period of last eight decades, the growth rate of population shows 166.16%, i.e., from about 1.92 million in 1901 to 5.11 million in 1991. Population density has reached 92 persons per sq.km., compared to 35 persons per sq. km of 1901. Both the contents and number of population in this region are changing at a rapid speed.

In Himachal Pradesh presently the tribes are found in following districts:

1. Chamba
2. Kinnaur
3. Kangra
4. Mandi
5. Bilaspur
6. Mahasu
7. Sirmour
8. Lahaul & Spiti

The largest population of tribes resides in Chamba district. The district of Chamba, except Kinnaur in rural areas, has a higher percentage of scheduled tribes among their population than in case of the other districts. In Chamba district Gujjars, Gaddis
and Pangwals live in a great majority. The second district of major population of the tribals is in Kinnaur. In this district only Kinner tribe resides, whereas in Lahaul and Spiti the name of the tribe is known as Lahaula tribe. Thus the two largest populated areas in Himachal Pradesh are Chamba and Kinnaur.

The official list bears the following main tribes to be found in Himachal Pradesh:

1. Gaddis
2. Gujjars
3. Kinners or Kinnauras
4. Lahaulas
5. Pangwals

Some other minor tribes like Lamba, Khampa and Jads are also found in Pradesh but not in a great majority and population. However, above five tribes are the main tribes of Himachal Pradesh. Every tribe in Himachal Pradesh has two major classes in its community, high and lower castes. A part from this every tribe has some of the sub-castes and gotras.

A. **Historical Perspective**

The historical perspective for our purpose, in one sense, may well be taken to begin from the colonial period to the time of the birth of Himachal Pradesh. Himachal Pradesh is essentially the name of a political
and administrative unit, now enjoying the status of a full-fledged State within the Union of India.

The other point of view would be that 'Himachal Pradesh' for the purpose of the present subject, inherently represents the territories comprised in it rather than time since which this name has been adopted for social and economic purposes. The spirit of the subject under treatment conceives the territories going collectively under the name 'Himachal Pradesh' rather than the timing of the origin of that name for those collective purposes. In this context the 'Modern Period' might be taken to be the period of history after the advent of the British control. The word 'control' has been used deliberately instead of 'rule' or 'reign'. The British influence over the territories now comprised in Himachal Pradesh originated, grew and took roots in different forms, varying from nominal sovereignty in the beginning, to superintendence and to direct and cent percent administration. Even at its highest, the control, in respect of the Princely States, amounted to no more than superintendence, differing in extent and intensity at different times and in different states, while in those parts which came to be included in what was then called 'British India', the control meant full-fledged direct administration.
Himachal Pradesh was born on April 15, 1948. It represents, territorially, quite a mosaic of social and economic heritage inherited from earlier history. Politically and administratively, the areas now constituting Himachal Pradesh fall into two categories of Punjab Hill States and Simla Hill States with reference to the period before merger into new entity called Himachal Pradesh. On the eve of Indian independence, the modern area of Himachal Pradesh, was almost equally divided between British Indian territory and the territory of Indian States. The latter was again equally divided between the Punjab Hill States and Simla Hill States. After independence, Himachal became a Chief Commissioner's Province. The new centrally administered unit was named Himachal Pradesh. With the Constitution becoming operational on January 26, 1950, Himachal Pradesh became a Part 'C' State and on November 1, 1956 it became a union Territory. Statehood was granted to Himachal Pradesh on January 25, 1971 whereby it became the eighteenth State of Indian Union.

The native states were decidedly backward in comparison with the British Indian counterpart, the smaller the native state the greater the degree of backwardness, generally speaking, socially as well as economically. In the areas inherited from British India, almost all parts of northern India are provided with some basic importance so far as peopling of the
area through migration, their admixture and impact are concerned. The area was inhabited by people from a distant past as revealed from the occurrence of Palaeolithic and Neolithic remains. Even later, parts of the same area was under the influence of Harappan people.

About historical period the incoming of Iranians may be taken as an important event. Their influence was spread over Punjab and other parts of north-west India. About Persians, Vincent Smith commented "Persianising of Kushan coinage of northern India should be explained by the occurrence of an unrecorded Persian Invasion\textsuperscript{\$}. Under the influences of Greek, Mauryan and Gupta dynasty the tribal and indigenous cultures of N.W.Provinces as well as Himachal Pradesh passed through gradual development. Other influences of the Saka, Yuech-Chi, Chinese, Tibetan and Hun affected the course of development to a greater extent. On the other side, due to character of greater assimilation of Hinduism the foreign cultures passed through transformation towards Hindu fold of society, of course, with some reservation and restrictions.

Even today, it is perhaps, a hard task to enlist all the tribes and castes of Himachal Pradesh including the levels of sub-castes and sects. This is due to limitations of varied sorts among which the distribution
pattern, ethnic and cultural identities are the main. Due to this peculiar feature of ethnic composition, in this State, the census operation (1991) was carried out on the basis of two different lists of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes which were used in an ununiform manner in different districts. There were no scheduled tribes in the districts of Kangra, Kullu, Simla and Dalhousie. In case of 1981 census operation the Census Directorate adopted a generalized list for all the districts of H.P. stated 56 castes and 8 tribal groups as scheduled. The total number of castes and tribes in Himachal Pradesh is numerous and the exact number is not found in reports of census so far available. In the following lines it is necessary to include brief description of some major castes and tribes. It will therefore, not be out of place here to discuss briefly the main tribes included in the present study.

GADDIS

Gaddis of the Himachal are an agricultural-cum-pastoral and semi-nomadic race indigenous to the Brahmaur wizarat of former Chamba State (Now Chamba district of Himachal Pradesh) and spread to certain foothills of Dhauladhar range. The tract of mountainous country with ill-defined boundaries lying on the both sides
of the Dhauladhar is described as Gadherh by the Gaddis.\(^1\)

Erstwhile Chamba wizarat constitutes the oldest wizarat of Himachal, having been founded perhaps as early as 550 A.D. The early history of Chamba is in obscurity. Kashmir rulers are said to have invaded Chamba in the 7th century and again in the 1050 A.D.\(^2\) There are several references to Chamba or Champa (as the place was then named), in the Kalhana's Rajatangini (a historical book related to the Rajas of Kashmir).\(^3\)

Originally the state was very small in area and was called Brah mau wizarat i.e. the valley of Ravi from below Bara Banghal with its tributaries, the Budhil and the Tundahen. Brahmapura was the old name of Brah mau and it is believed that Brahmapura was founded by one Maru in 550 A.D. Maru was the father

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1. Primarily they are inhabitants of Brah mau tehsil of Chamba district but they cover a much wider areas including the Kangra border villages such as Dharamshala and around Palampur.


of first ruling chief Jaisthamba, a man of religious disposition and belonged to the family of Ayodhya. According to local legend the people of Brahmaur requested him to stay there so he established himself at Brahmaur. After Maru several Rajas ruled in succession but only their names are well known and very little information is available about them.

In 4th century Panini mentioned names of some hill republics in his famous writing named Ashtdhayai, wherein Chamba is written as Gabdika and the people as Gabdik (or the Gaddis). Even in our own times Brahmaur is famous for Gaddis and the area is called Gadhern by Gaddis. although Gaddis live in many other parts of Chamba and Kangra but they consider Brahmaur as their birth place. In Sanskrit the meaning of word Gadhar is related with sheep and Gaddi as shepherds.


Gaddis were notified to be an agricultural tribe under the Punjab Alienation of land act (XII of 1900) by Punjab Government notification No.63 of 18th April 1904.¹ There is some difficulty in defining the exact meaning of the word Gaddi as the term refers to a territorial group, to a special class of people wearing special clothes such as chola and dora and to an isogamous union of the castes of Rajput, Khatri, Rana and Thakur. This makes difficult to form a clear definition.²

It is believed that the Gaddis are not the actual inhabitants of the area and they migrated from the Indian plains in the early times. It is further believed that Gaddis were the descendants of the old Gadhaiyas once found in many parts of North-Western India and from there they came to this hill area and settled down in Brahmaur wizarat.³ It can be judged by this fact that there is a close relation between

social and cultural life of inhabitants of both these areas.¹

The Gaddis have traditions which also ascribe their origin to immigration from the Indian plains. It is believed that their ancestors fled from the open country to escape the horrors of the Muslim invasions and took refuge in these ranges which were at that period almost uninhabited. They are most certainly Hindus and had remained so for a very long period. In fact the Gaddis regarded themselves as more Hindu than the various other immigrants from the Indian plains.² The Sipis were the descendants of early inhabitants of the valley before the upper castes had driven them.³

The upper castes i.e., Brahman, Rajput and Khatri Gaddis have different views about their immigration from the plains. The Brahman Gaddis are supposed

1. The culture of Gaddis is similar to the culture of north-western India and they follow Hindu religious rites. They migrated from the parts of north-western area time to time and settled down in the Gaddi land called Gadhern.


3. Sipi is the lower caste of Gaddis. The Sipis usually occupy the best land in the valley which implies that they were the earlier inhabitants.
to have accompanied Raja Ajay Varma to Chamba who was the ruler of Brahmaur wizarat between 780 to 800 A.D. and become the top most class who wear the sacred thread and act as priests and prohíts in the royal palaces of the wizarat. However when the capital was shifted from Brahmaur to Chamba in 920 A.D., they lost the state patronage and took to other professions.¹

The Rajput Gaddis have the same tradition about their migration as the Gaddi Brahmins. Many of the Rajputs are probably the descendants of invaders from the plains. It is believed that the Rajput Gaddis came to Brahmaur as soldiers first with the Brahmaur prince, Raj Jai Stambh. Brahmaur which was already represented as the oldest religious centre of the state, became the man power reservoir for the royal troops and with the help of these Gaddi troops, Partap Singh Varma ruler of Brahmaur could first reconquer Pangi and Lahaul which Tsewang Namgyall had brought back under the rule of Ladakh.² A special relationship existed between Raja and Rajput Gaddis.³

3. The Raja at his coronation was separately crowned by each of the five cultural groups in Chamba state on five successive days. But since he considered himself a Rajput (Gaddi) the first day was entirely devoted to traditional Gaddi Hindu ceremonies and Raja dressed himself in a Gaddi uniform. Some of Gaddi Rajputs were appointed on the posts of wazirs by Rajas.
The Khatri Gaddis have a different view about their migration to Brahmaur. According to them their ancestors arrived in Brahmaur in the seventeenth century from Lahore to save themselves from persecutions of Aurangzeb as these hills provided a safer shelter for them. They settled themselves in Brahmaur but never forgot their original home, Lahore. According to legend of Khatri Gaddis that Ujadaya Lahore, Basaya Bharmaur which implies that Lahore was the original home of the Khatri Gaddis.¹

The Gaddis who used to pay the bachh darrit cess (the special land tax) were given special privileges in the political system under the Raja's rule. The Gaddis also offered begar (forced labour) to the Rajas which was however, abolished in the year A.D. 1871. After that they used to pay individual taxes to state. They also worked as soldiers in royal army and rendered other services to the state. The Gaddi army was a very strong army at one time and during all the military expeditions the army of Brahmaur must have consisted a bulk of Gaddis. That is why even after the shifting

of capital to Chamba in 920 A.D., the Chamba forces were generally called as Gaddi army.\(^1\)

As already mentioned, the Rajas had a special relationship towards the Gaddis and in case of a miscarriage of justice or other fault on the part of any of the Raja's officials, the aggrieved Gaddi could appeal directly to the Raja. This created a strong bond between the Raja and his Gaddi subjects. There were also special legal privileges by which the Gaddis could try their own members instead of referring the matter to the Chamba magistrates.\(^2\)

On 1st November 1921, the state came under the direct control of the Government of India, Political Department, under the Britishers. The Gaddis were able to improve their way of life due to some improvement in the means of communications within the state. Some roads and bridges were established in the area which raised the standard of living of the Gaddis on a small scale.\(^3\)

On the whole Gaddis are entirely Hindus, both in their religion and in their social organization. Their distinctiveness within the Hindu tradition rests on four factors. Their history which has been continuous for at least 1,000 years, their political system and privileged position in the wider Chamba state which has given them a high degree of self-Government, the special position of the Raja as representative and owner of the national interest in land and their strong connection with the God especially Lord Shiva. History, politics, land and religion all form different facets of Gaddi national character.

GUJJARS

Gujjars, a beautiful tribe of Himachal Pradesh are known as an ideal, worthless and thieving race, rejoicing in waste. Both upper and lower classes are addicted to pastoral habits. One important factor about the Gujjars of Himachal area is that almost all the Hindu Gujjars are settled in permanent habitats and have taken to agriculture and other professions, whereas the majority of Muslim Gujjars still stick to nomadic pastoral life and only a very few are settled, rather semi-settled. The Muslim Gujjars are much attached

1. Some have fixed abode and pasture their cattle in the adjoining wastes, while other move with their herds spending the summer on the high ranges, and the winter in the woody parts of the low hills.
to their tribal customs, rites and rituals.¹

The Gujjars are found in great numbers in every part of north-west India from the Indus to the Ganges and from the Hazara mountains to the peninsula of Gujarat. Many important places in North-west India are given the Gujjar names such as Gujranwala, Gujjar Khan and Gujarat. They are found only in small bodies and much scattered throughout eastern Rajputana and Gwalior but are found in great numbers throughout the country of Jammu, Hazara, Chamba and Kangra.²

During the British rule the Gujjars were concentrated in the interior areas of Chamba, Kangra, Mandi, Bilaspur, Sirmour and hills of Shimla. They were also found in small numbers in the areas of present Kinnaur, Lahaul-Spiti, Solan and Kulu. They followed both in Hindu and Muslim religions, the majority however, consist of Muslims.³ The Gujjars like Gaddis have

2. S.S.Charak, op.cit., p.69.
been notified as tribe\(^1\) under the Punjab Alienation of Land Act (XIII of 1900) by Punjab Government notification No.63 of 18th April, 1904.\(^2\)

Numerous terms are used for Gujjars such as Gujar, Gujjar, Gujrareta and Gujretra. According to linguists, the meaning of word Gujjar is a warrior class. Some of the derivatives of the term are Gujral and Gujrehra which signify a dwelling place of Gujjars or the region of Gujarat and even characteristics of the Gujjars. According to one theory the word Gujjar appears from 'Gujar' which is related to distortion of Groter Kshatriya\(^3\) a brave and warrior community of Rajputs.\(^4\)

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1. The Gujjars of the Punjab area merged in Himachal Pradesh after reorganization of the state in 1966 have not been included in the list of Scheduled Tribes by State Government whereas those living in the old Himachal are included in the Scheduled Tribes list.


3. In many ancient books the word Groter is used for the qualities of a Kshatriya.

Another word used for Gujjars is 'Gorjan' which means leader of masses. The people of Gujjar tribe are very fond of using the title 'Gorjan'. This tribe also takes its name from the Sanskrit term 'Gurjara', the original name of the country Gujarat. But with the passage of time, Gujjar was used in place of 'Gurjar' which means a warrior class of Rajputs.\(^1\)

Historians have different views about the origin of Gujjar community. The traditions of the tribes give little information about their origin and history. It is believed that in the middle of the fifth century there existed a Gujjar kingdom in the south-western Rajputana.\(^2\) The town of Gujarat is said to have been built or restored by Ala Khan Gujjar during the rule of Mughal emperor Akbar.\(^3\)

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2. According to a legend, they claim descent from a certain Nand Mihar, who is perhaps Nanda, the foster father of Krishana, who was raised to distinction because he slaked the thirst of Alexander the great with a draught of buffalo milk. A section of the Gujjars had believed to move southward down the Indus, and were shortly afterwards separated from their northern brethren by another Indo-Scythian wave from the north.

It is further believed that they came from 'Gujrata' which is now in Gujrat state in western India and some others believe that they come from Gujranwala in west Punjab. Their traditions clearly show that they were Hindu Rajputs of Rajasthan in early times from whence they migrated to the hills where afterwards they converted into Muslims.¹ The Gujjars also believed that Gogha Chauhan was one of their ancestors. Gogha Chauhan is a name which has great importance in the folklores of the Punjab and Rajasthan. This tradition is common among both the Hindu and the Muslim Gujjars².

Some historians identified Gujjars with the Kushan or Yuchi or Tochari, a tribe of eastern Tartar. It is believed that during 6th century A.D., country faced terrible attacks by Asiatic people called Huns and Gujjars. The emperor of Kannauj, Skand Gupta faced these attacks successfully. However, a large community of these foreign invaders settled down in Rajputana.

1. The tradition describes that there was a king of Dhara who was a Hindu and when he died some of his sons were driven out of his kingdom. They went to another Hindu King and obtained grants from him. This was the Chauhan sect (Chahamana) branch. Then they took service with another king. They became Rajputs. They then came to the Punjab and became Muslims.

2. K.M. Munshi, Glory That was Gurjara Desa, (Bombay, 1954), pp. 387-88.
and Punjab and got mixed with the natives of the country. About 840 A.D., a Gujjar empire was established by Raja Bhoja with its capital at Kannauj.  

Various origins are thus claimed by different Gujjar clans. These are Chauhans from Rai-Pithora of Delhi, Chandervanshi from Jadu Rajputs of Muzzaffarnagar. Parmars, Jats and Ahirs are the other clans of the Gujjars and all are of one ethnic stock because of a close relationship between them. The Jats were recognised as the camel graziers and perhaps husbandmen, the Gujjars the cow herds of the hills and Ahirs the cowherds of the plains. Historians have different


2. According to Cunningham "the Gujjars were present in the Gujarat area before Christ. During British period they were found in every part of the north west India, from the Indus to the Ganges, and from the Hazara mountains to the peninsula of Gujarat. They were specially numerous along the banks of the upper Jamuna near Jagadhari and Buriya in Saharanpur district and one of the northern districts of Gwalior, which is still called Gujargarh. In the east they were found in small numbers whereas in western states specially towards Gujarat they were in majority. In the southern Punjab they were thinly scattered but they were in great numbers in western Punjab and even they had given their names to some places such as Gujranwala in Rachna Doab, Gujarat in the Chaj Doab and Gujjar Khan in Sindh Sagar Doab."

views about their migration from Gujarat to other areas and also whether they converted to Islam before leaving the Gujarat or after it. When Gujjars are asked for their migration and conversation to Islam they simply say that their ancestors had come from Gujarat and they were forced to embrace Islam due to cruelty of emperor Aurangzeb. Some historians believes that most of the Gujjars of the Himalayas were immigrant Muslims from the plains who apparently were converted to Islam at various times.¹

The things are not clear why these tribal people left Gujarat and settled in the Himalayan area. They left Gujarat, Kathiawad and entered Jammu and Kashmir and from there they migrated to Chamba, Kangra and other areas of Himachal Pradesh. Some of them are landholders but majority of Gujjars move with their herds in search of grass. It is also not clear that they came direct from Gujarat to Jammu and Kashmir or from the neighbouring plains where they had settled from times immemorial.²


It seems certain that the Gujjars came to inhabit Himachal Pradesh from the adjoining regions of Jammu and Kashmir State and the Indian plains. There are three different sources of Gujjar settlements in Himachal Pradesh from three different directions. Firstly Hindu Gujjars are believed to have entered Himachal Pradesh from the neighbouring areas of the plains through isolated and stray migration. They first set foot through Kangra and Bilaspur from the neighbouring districts of British India and than spread over to other areas having pastures. This belief has been passing on from generation to generation.¹

Second view about Gujjars migration to Himachal is this that Muslim Gujjars seem mainly to have first set foot in princely states of Chamba and Sirmour and thence spread out gradually to other localities outside these states.² To the Chamba state, the Muslim Gujjars were driven by the growing inadequacy of grazing resources in the neighbouring parts of Jammu and Kashmir.³

³ To support that Gujjars in Chamba entered from Jammu and Kashmir, there go two legends. According to one legend, they were allowed to enter the erstwhile state of Chamba as a result of the services of an old Gujjar woman in saving the life of a closed relative of the ruling prince of that time. Second legend tells of some Gujjars being invited by the Rani of Chamba about 200 years ago for the continued supply of milk for the royal family. In both the cases it is presumed that they spread out in whole of the district with the passage of time.
There is yet another theory about Muhammadan Gujjars who entered Sirmour from Punchh. The story about their migration is very interesting. It is believed that Raja of Sirmour Shamsher Prakash once visited to neighbouring state of Punchh for matrimonial purposes. He was inspired by the profuse availability of excellent milk, Gujjar tribe and their buffalo herds. He requested the ruler of Punchh for the migration of some Gujjar families to Sirmour and promised liberal grazing facilities for them. Gradually, from Sirmour the Gujjars spread out into other parts of the Simla Hill States.¹

KINNERS

The Kinner tribe is also known as Kinnara or Kanaura which literally means the inhabitants of Kinnaur.² In modern languages this tribe is called as Kinners and Kanaura whereas in ancient language this tribe is called as its original name Kinnara. In Kinnauri language Kanauring is used as the name of territory and Kanaures (singular) and Kanaurya (plural) for its inhabitants.³

¹. T.S. Negi, op.cit., p.117.
². The name of the principal territorial habitat of the tribe has been variously spelt and pronounced as Kanauring, Kanaur, Kanawar, Kanawar, Koonawar, Kinnawar and Kinnaur etc.
Originally and presumably, the territory derived its name from the tribe. Kinnaur (Kinnara Desa) was the abode of the Kinnara tribe. The original Kinner Desa is believed to have been far larger than the Kinnaur district of today. During the British period this was a part of the erstwhile Bushahr state. After that it became a tehsil of Mahasu district. In May 1960 the border district of Kinnaur was carved out.\(^1\) This area is also called 'Khunu' by Tibetans. The meaning of Khunu or Kunu is a mountain. It is believed that modern word Kunawar takes birth from Kunu. In the letters of Bushahr State it is mentioned as 'Kunawar'. The name 'Kunawar' is used by the European travellers who visited this area from time to time.\(^2\)

Kunawar is also known as Kurpa. It is called Maon in Leh area. Maon and Mone are related with the names of erstwhile Bushahr State. Mone is the ancient name of the Kamru village of Kinnaur and shows the relation of Mone tribe to this area. Mone (Kamru) was the capital of some ancient state and it was a place where coronation ceremony of many Bushahr chiefs had taken place. According to Moorcroft 'Kunawar' is seventy miles


long and 40 miles wide in the north and 20 miles in the south”.

Kinners are the inhabitants of Kinnaur which was known as Kinner Desa and Kimpursha desa in ancient period. It is believed that in ancient period the Kinner Desa lay between the sources of the Ganga in the east and the Chandra Bhaga river in the west. It is also said that this land was spread between the rivers Jamuna and Sutlej.

It is also believed that the southern part of Kashmir known as Kinnaur is reminiscent of the ancient Kinnerdesh. The region lies along the upper valley of the Jhelum between the Dhauladhar and the Zanskar mountains. Thus the country of Kinnauras or Kimpurusas lay positively to the west of Kailash and lake Mansa. It can be identified with the modern Kinnaur in the upper valley of the Sutlej where the headquarters of Chandra Bhaga approach very near to it. Modern Kinnaur does lie to the west of the Manasarover lake and the Kailash mountain of Tibet.

Kinners are mentioned in the religious books of Hindus, Bodhs and Jains. In Rajatrangini, it is mentioned that Kinners were born from the shadow of Brhama which shows the religious background of the Kinners. Originally, they ranked among the minor "deities" that represent "different cultural forces" in the Hindu Pantheon. Kinners of today are plainly normal human beings, but not so were their ancestors according to ancient literature.

Kinners are not mentioned in the important Hindu religious epic Rigveda but they are mentioned in Vayupurana having their abode in Maha Neel Parvat. According to D.C. Sircar Kinners and Gandharvas are the ancient tribal races. Gandharvas were the original residents of Gandhar Desha. D.C. Sircar mention Kinners as Gandharvas. Alberuni mentions that Kimpursha and Khasha are also the tribes of the Himalayas. Kimpursha and Kinners are the same.

1. Amarkosha a famous Sanskrit classic mentions them as Vidyadhara, Apsarases, Yaksas, Raksases, Gandharvas, Kinners, Pisacas, Guhyakas, Siddhas and Bhutas.

Tribe
tribes according to Alberuni. Kinners are mentioned along with Devas and Rakshasas in various religious books. They are mentioned as Devas, Chandharvas, Charanas, Sidhas and Apsaras in Ramayana. The great poet Kalidasa remembers them in his famous book Kumarsambhava as Kirats, utsavasanketas, vidyadharas, Kimpurushas, Punyajanas, Yakshas, Sidhas and Ganas.

Kinners are mentioned as Gandharva, Yaksha, Rakshasa, Daitya and Danavas in Vishnu Purana. The words Rakshasa, Daitya and Danavas are used for anti-Devtas. They are also mentioned in Shiv Purana as Yakshas, Rakshasas, Gandharvas, Charanas, Sidhas. According to Mahabharata, Kinners and Kimpursas are the different people and Kinners are mentioned by various names.

5. They are mentioned as Gandharvas, Yakshas and Sidhas.
According to a legend Kinners were known for their voice and they were the musicians in the court of Indira and taken as a standard to test the quality of their music. They are believed to have formed the "orchestra at the banquets of the Gods" and also "in Indira's battles". Kinnaras were the male dancers of the celestial kingdoms. They were to attend on the principal deity in the central shrine, doing dancing, waving fly whisks and offering garlands of flowers etc.¹

According to the Buddhists sources, Kinners were the cave dwellers and the fruit gatherers living in the Himalayas. It is believed that Buddha in a previous birth was born in the region of the Himalaya as a male fairy (Kinnara). It is also believed that Buddha had preached his doctrines to Yakshas, Gandharvas, Asuras, Garudas and Kinners and they all had a similar faith in them. There are several stories in Takkariya Jataka related to the Kinners.²

An interesting aspect about Kinners is that they have been described as half human, half bird with birds legs and wings and with human head in ancient Indian

According to Jataka stories, they have been described as horse headed and half bird, half human figures. They are described with human body mounted upon by the head of horse or even with the horse's body and the head of a human being. According to K.M. Munshi, Kinners live in Himachal Pradesh and have long and horse like faces. Every Kinner wear a horse mask during the group dance on Baisakhi festival.

This narration about Kinners that they are horse faced people is far from truth. It is noticed that they never used horse like faces on any occasion. They used to wear demon masks on different festive occasions and these masks are used by only four or five persons not by all tribals. But there is no custom of wearing the horse masks and moreover the festival of Baisakhi is not popular with the Kinners.


As in case of many other tribes, originally Kinners were also nomads and in course of time they came to settle down. It is believed that Kinners also existed in copper age before the Aryan invasion. They had conflict with their neighbouring tribe Khash which ruled over them for a long period. Due to this intermixing, they adopted certain customs, manners and beliefs and even after coming into contact with the Aryans of plains, they kept their original customs, traditions as well as language.

According to Kinnaur Gazetteer, kinnaur was ruled by Tibetan king from Lhasa, capital of Bhot Kingdom during seventh to tenth century. Emperor Shorchen Gambo or Song Tsen-Gambo (630-50 A.D.) was the founder of Bhot empire. During this period Bhots held intercourse distantly from Lhasa and the kinners got acquainted with Bhot language as well as with Buddhism. There was some intermixing of blood and some changes also came into the social cultural and religious spheres of the Kinners.

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1. Khash is a powerful tribe of the Himalayan region.
3. Ibid., p.52
After the tenth century which is called the Gugeperiod of Bhot empire, Kinnaur was no more a princedom to be exploited from distance. The ruler of Lhasa had come to establish his kingdom at the border of Kinnaur and had to have their co-operation and sympathies. The strength of the Bhot ruler laid not in the hand of his generals and soldiers from Lhasa but he was completely dependent upon the new relationship created and contacted in Kinnaur and a new nobility and ruling class which had come to stay in Kinnaur, called Thakurs.

Around fourteenth century, Kinnaur was divided in seven parts, locally called Satkhund. There must have been a loose control of the Raja of Bushahr over the region. Every part was ruled by a Thakur and they built their own forts on commanding sites. We can still

2. "S.C. Baipai however denies the statement quoted in gazetteer about the Bhot rule in Kinnaur. In support of his view he further writes that Kinnaur was never ruled by any Bhot king. They never crossed the river Sutlej. The corroborative evidence of the Vamsavalis of Kulu and Chamba establishes the existence of an independent Bushahr state till the tenth century, the first phase of Tibetan rule in Kinnaur. He further writes that even now we do not have the Bhot influence in the interior region of Kinnaur and how it is happened that after a rule of about eight centuries the Bhot culture is only on the border of Tibet with Kinnaur". S.C. Baipai, Kinnaur in the Himalayas, (Delhi, 1981), p.56.
see the Labrang, Morang and Kamru forts telling the story of that age. During the medieval period Bushahr was an independent state and not attacked by any Mughal ruler of Delhi as Chamba, Kangra and Sirmour States were attacked and made tributary to the Mughal empire.

During the colonial period the Kinners were attacked by the Gurkhas of Nepal. In 1810 A.D., Gurkha army attacked Kinnaur, where the infant Raja and his mother fled away to Kamru along with the hereditary wazir of Bushahr state. The Kinner army checked the attack bravely and cut-off the communications by destroying a bridge. Peace was made with the Gurkhas and Bushahr Prince on a payment of Rs.12,000 as annual tribute.


2. Raja Chatar Singh of Bushahr annexed the Koorais of Dulaitoo, Kurungoloo and Kuaitro in 1611 A.D. He consolidated the position of Bushahr State and was considered as a most virtuous ruler of Bushahr. Raja Kalyan Singh was his successor.

Kinnaur remained the part of Bushahr state during the British rule. It was affected by the British Government in different matters. In 1864 A.D. the forests of the area were given to Britishers for a period of fifty years. The final agreement was made in 1877 A.D., besides securing to the Raja an annual payment of Rs.10,000 in consideration of the rights conceded.

Kinners are regarded as the oldest tribal people who had great impact of Tibetan culture on their social and cultural life. This tribe is also mentioned in the Vedas, the Puranas, the Indian epics and the theological literature of the jainas and the Buddhists. They served as soldiers in Bushahr army and fought many battles for the ruler. During the British period they enjoyed some facilities such as medical and education. They had glorious past and history with them and are known as a beautiful tribe of Himalayan region.

1. From A.H.Diack, Chief Secretary, to Secretary Revenue and Agriculture, Govt.of India, 22 December 1905, Foreign Internal, 13, September, 1906, No.120.

2. The Britishers took some interest about the progress of the area and a provision was made to give Rs.30,000 annually for ten years for road construction and general administration out of the profit of the forests of Bushahr.
LAHAULAS

The inhabitants of Lahaul & Spiti district of Himachal Pradesh are known as Lahaula Tribe. The dominant tribal people of the area are Bhots and Swanglas. Bhots are Buddhists whereas Swanglas are Hindus. The Lahaulas are aboriginals who belong to the earliest of the entrants of the kinds of races known as Indo-Tibetans or Indo-Mongoloids. They had occupied the present inhabited areas long before the beginning of the Christian era. The tribal people of Lahaul belong to mixed race with mixture of Indian and Tibetan races. Lahaul and Spiti is a home to these sturdy people who not only endure and withstand the rigours of nature but love solitude and extremely hard life of these forbidden mountains.¹

Lahaul and Spiti is situated in western Himalaya and is separated in the north from Ladakh region of Jammu and Kashmir by the Baralacha range and in the east is situated Tibet region. In the south-east the district is separated from Kinnaur district by a lofty mountain and in the south-west and west the district is separated from Kulu and Chamba district by the high ranges. Prior to the formation of the new district it was the part of Kulu under the Deputy Commissionership of Kangra State.²

An idea of the early history of Lahaul can only be traced from old traditions as no written records apparently exist. The first historical reference to Lahaul is found in Huen Tsang, a Chinese traveller who visited Kulu between 629 to 645 A.D. during the course of his travels in India. He mentioned the name of area as 'Lo-u-Lo' which lies north of Kiu-lo-to. He also mentioned the area of Lahaul in his writings as 1800 or 1900 li (360 or 380 miles). The origin of the name 'Lahaul' is uncertain. The Tibetan Lho-yul south country (with reference to Ladakh) and Lhahi-yul, the country of the Gods, have been suggested.

1. According to a legend it is believed that during Mahabharata war which was fought sometime in 1400 B.C., several rulers of the Himalayan territories were the participants. According to the accounts of the Mahabharata and the Bhagwat Gita, it is believed that the people of Lahaul-Spiti also must have been the participants in the Mahabharata war. According to another legend, the great Parshu Ram, whose valorous deeds have been fully eulogized in Valmiki's Ramayana resided in the area for some time founding the temple at Nirmand in Seoraj, where he is still worshipped.

Lahaul & Spiti had no independent existence in ancient times. Its history is connected with Tibet and Ladakh during this period. It is possible that with the decline and disintegration of the empire of Harsha (which gave rise to several small principalities), the principality of Spiti with major portion of the present Lahaul must have come into existence.¹ Spiti in early times was ruled by kings bearing Hindi names which clearly points to the existence of a kind of people having strong Indian impression. One of the earliest known ruler is Samundra Sen who presented a copper plate to the temple of Parshu Ram at Nirmand. The other rulers were Rajindra.i Sen and Chet Sen. During the period of Rajindra Sen, Kulu became tributary to Spiti for a short period till Parsidh Pal of Kulu gained victory over Spiti in a battle near Rohtang Pass.²

Before Lahaul came under the sway of the Rajas of Kulu, it was one of the provinces of the petty Buddhists kingdom of Guge (Tibetan Kingdom) which borders Chumurti and upper Kinnaur. It is also believed that Gyalpos of Ladakh never ruled in the valley at all. During the

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1. Tobdan, History and Religions of Lahul, (Delhi, 1984), pp.36-37.

rule of Guge, Triloknath and Pangi (both of which are now parts of Chamba) had been within its limits and Lahaul was larger than what it is at present. Buddhism seems to have been introduced into Lahaul during this period.

In the latter end of the seventeenth century or beginning of the eighteenth century, the Guge Government in Lahaul had become almost powerless and the Kulu Rajas easily established their rule over Lahaul. It is believed that Raja Bahadur Singh or Bhadan Singh (1532 to 1569 A.D.) extended his rule upto Lahaul. Raja Budhi Singh ruled over Lahaul from 1672 to 1688 A.D. He was a great ruler of Kulu. He introduced various improvements in the administration, such as payment of the revenue in cash instead of in kind. During the reign of Raja Jeet Singh the whole of Lahaul was under the supermacy of Kulu. In 1840 A.D. Raja was deposed and captured by Sikh forces. Lahaul along with Kulu, thus came under direct control of the Sikhs. After the first Sikh war,


2. The other rulers were Pratap Singh (A.D.1569 to 1584), Par Singh or Parbhat Singh (1584 to 1618), Prithi Singh (1618 to 1635), Man Singh (1635 to 1637) and Jagat Singh (1637 to 1672).

A treaty was concluded on 16th March, 1846 A.D. at Amritsar between the British and Maharaja Gulab Singh whereby Lahaul was ceded to the British. The only portion of Lahaul which was under the rule of Kulu and Sikhs, included in the British Territory and existed boundaries were maintained with the Chamba and Ladakh. Both these parts are known as British Lahaul or Chamba Lahaul and were finally united in the year 1975 A.D.

Lahaul was an important place for Britishers as it was a border area of Tibet and an important trade route passed through it to the Central Asia. Due to this importance the Britishers carried out some developments in the area in the field of roads, bridges and sarias (inns). Some schools and dispensaries were also opened during this period. East India company placed the administration of the principality of Lahaul under a wazir. The British continued to rule over Lahaul, as elsewhere through the local chiefs. They did not make any change in the traditional administrative set up.


During the early British regime in the Punjab, some Christian missionaries belonging to the Moravian mission reached Lahaul. The main object of the mission was to started regular preachings of Christianity. It appears that the missionaries were initially successful in their main objective in gaining followers of the Christ. The Moravian mission was opened at Kyelang in 1857 A.D. as affirmed by Jaschke who was himself one of the members.¹ The mission was closed in 1945 A.D. when Dr. Bernardo, a prominent member of the mission was murdered.

The missionaries helped the tribals on the point of progress and development of the area. They opened schools, dispensaries and printing press at Kyelang. They taught many new things, such as knitting, planting of fruit trees, production of vegetable seeds, sowing of oats and potato. They also introduced the iron, smokeless ovens and well ventilated houses of modern design. The mission left this area in 1945 A.D. having done much good to the tribals lanlingly.²

The people of Lahaul belong to a mixed race. The Bodhs or Bhots constitute the largest and most important section of the society. The prehistoric inhabitants belonged

to a mixed race of Mundari and Tibetans. There is view on record that in remote times (B.C. 2000) the area was inhabited by an aboriginal tribe in language, and perhaps also in stock analogous to the Munda speaking tribes of Bengal and Central India. The Mundas were the earliest inhabitants of India and their original abode lay in the hilly regions extending from the Aravalli mountains and proceeding erstwards along the Vindhyas and other ranges and the south-eastern districts of Chota Nagpur. It is noticed that the language of Lahaul have strong affinities with the languages of the Mundas.

Another similarity between the two races is the custom of erecting commemorative slabs of stones for deceased persons practised in Lahaul also dates back to the same period. However, besides these similarities, there are also some dissimilarities noticed in their physical appearances. Mundas are dark complexioned and thick lipped whereas Lahaulas have yellowish Mongoloid features.


2. The peculiar languages are three in numbers i.e. Bunan, Tinan and Manchat. Bunan is spoken in Bhaga Valley, Tinan in Chandra Valley and Manchat in Bhaga Valley to Thirot. These languages are found to have strong affinities with the language of the Munda speaking tribes of India.

There is yet another view regarding the origin of Bodhs and Bhots. It is believed that before settling the Tibetan inhabitants in the area, there was another kind of race settled in Lahaul, named Mon who spoke Mon language. Mon means Aryan people and Mon language is an Aryan language. There is also a similarity in the languages of Mons and the Lahaulas. Presently Mons are living between Indian plains and Tibet. Mon is a Tibetan word and the people of Mon tribe are of a mixed race. Lahaulas are called Mon by Tibetans but Kulu people are called Mon by Lahaulas. It shows a relation between Mons and inhabitants of Lahaul.

It is also believed that the Lahaulas are pure Tibetans with a strong infusion of Tartar blood. As already stated Bodhs or Bhots are the dominant tribal people of Lahaul and the name Bodh has been derived from Tibetan origin. The Bodhs or Bhots are found in Spiti and upper Lahaul valleys and also in the Pattan valley of Lahaul.

2. The word is also implies on different tribes of India. Its exact equivalent in Sanskrit is Kirata. In Vedic Literature Karata is applied to Mongoloid people who lived in the Himalayas. The mon or Kirata means Aryan people.
4. It is observed by Harcourt that many years ago a colony of 200 persons emigrated from what the people call China, but which was in all probability, the territory of great Tibet.
In support of this view it is argued that Tibetans called their country name Bod-yul and Bod is believed to be the name of their race. This word is very close to Bodh tribe of Lahaul. In ancient literature name of Tibet is called as 'Bhota Desh' means country of Bhots. Bhots is applied for the people of Tibet and their language is known as Bhotia language.¹

The people of Spiti have unmistakable evidences on their faces of their Chinese or Mongolian descent whereas Lahaulas are not comely race,² and intermixture of Hindu and Tartar blood.³ According to another version, the Lahaulas came to be recognised as Kanets. It is due to an observation of Indian element in the Lahaulas or Mongoloid element in the tribes living in Kulu and some other lower hills. The Kanets are known to be of the same origin as the Khasias.⁴ The Lahaulas are considered

2. A.F.P.Harcourt, op.cit., p.43.
3. This intermixture has failed to produce a population remarkable for good looks and both sexes are short, and the woman perhaps bear off the palm for ugliness, the mongolian origins of the race being shown in many cases by the oblique eyes, flat face and large mouth.
It is believed that Kanets of Lahaul are migrants from Kulu or Banghal.

As early stated Bhot or Bodh and Swangla are the dominant Lahaula tribes of the area. There is still a controversy as to who were the original inhabitants of Lahaul-Both (or Bhot) or Swangla. The Swanglas are the inhabitant of only lower Lahaul or Pattan valley. The Swanglas follows Hindu religion, professing the Shaivite faith. They are Brahman. It is believed that they belong to the Mediterranean stock. According to tradition, it is believed that they are migrants to this area from Chamba, Jammu, Kishtwar and Kashmir.

1. In Land Revenue Settlement Bhots and Bodhs are recorded as Kanets. It is learnt that, to begin with Kanet was mentioned as their caste too.


3. According to a legend once a father and his son came to the Tandi confluence from Rishikesh to perform the death rites. The saying is that they used to fly in the air, as they had such superhuman powers. Once they felt hungry and they asked some people of this area for food and were offered meat. The father refused to take meat whereas the son took it. Thereafter, the father flew back to Rishikesh but the son lost his saintliness and his flying power by taking the meat. He remained here and married a local lady. His offspring spread. The swangla are that offspring according to this legend.

According to other legend about the origin of Swanglas is that the two Swangla brothers were coming from Chamba. They felt hungry and they demanded food from the local people of the area. They offered them beef. The elder brother did not take it but the younger one ate it. The elder brother became angry and out of rage, called his younger brother (Chandal). Both of them settled here and got married with local girls. The elder brother offspring was called Swangla or Brahmans while that of the younger brother was called Chandal.
It may be concluded that the tribes of Lahaul area belong to a mixed race. The ancestors of Bodhs and Bhots came from Tibet and its surrounding countries and settled down in these areas and mingled with the aboriginals by marriage and other modes of social intercourse. The people of this tribe adopted the culture and religion of Tibet. The other dominant tribe Swangla is a pure Hindu tribe and they are believed to have migrated from the adjoining areas of Himalaya to Lahaul. So, the culture and race of Lahaula tribe are mixture of that Indian and Tibetan.

PANGWALS

Pangi is one of the picturesque region of the Himachal Pradesh. After separating Kulu from Lahaul and Spiti it enters Chamba territory on the western border of Bara Banghal and traverses the state from south-east to north-west for more than 60 miles. The valley is bounded by Jammu and Kashmir including zanskar in the north, Lahaul and Spiti in the north-west, Brahmaur tehsil in the east and Churah tehsil of Chamba in the south.¹

Pangi is an outlying district of the erstwhile State of Chamba situated between N.latitudes 32° and 33°15' and E.longitudes 76°20' and 77°. It comprises an area of 1,176 square miles and forms part of the valley of the Chenab or Chandra Bhaga. This river flows in a north westerly direction through Pangí, between mountain ranges more or less parallel which separates the valley from zanskar on the north and Chamba on the south. Lahaul and Padar form continuations of the valley and the boundaries to the east and west respectively.¹

Pangi is surrounded by high mountain ranges with magnificent snowy peaks. Dhaula Dhar, Pir Panjal and zanskar are the three mountain ranges of Himalayas in order of their promixity to the plains. The Dhaula Dhar begins on the right bank of the Beas and running north by west, forms the boundary between Mandi and Kulu. This range stands out distinctly to separate Beas and Ravi valleys. Pir Panjal range starts from the foot of river Ravi and covers Chenab valley. The zanskar range is the most direct continuation of the main Himalayan axis. It runs in a north-western direction, dividing Ladakh from Lahaul-Spiti. It closes in the Chamba State, for a short distance along its Northern border, separating Chamba -Lahaul from zanskar and further west-forms the

The valley is popularly known as Chandra Bhaga. The Pangi or mid Himalaya range is a direct continuation of the main Himalaya axis. The region between the Pangi and Zanskar Ranges is some what of an irregular square, each side of which is about 35 miles. It comprises the valley of the Chandrabhaga through nearly 90 miles of its course, from the Tirot Nala in Lahaul to the Gangaur or Sansari Nala separating Pangi from Padar in Jammu. This area earlier formed the fifth wizarat of Chamba State.

The winter season in Pangi is very severe and Pangi is not connected with the headquarters at Chamba by fair weather roads. The major parts of the valley remains snowbound for a major part of the year. Snow


3. This region is divided into two parts, of nearly equal size, by a lofty spur from the Zanskar range, called Gurdhar, with peaks of 21,000 feet, the highest in the state, running in a south-westerly direction between the Saichu and Miyar Nalas and ending opposite Tindi. The north-western portion from Rauli to the Gangaur Nala is Pangi, and the south-eastern from Rauli to Tirot is Chamba-Lahaul.
may begin to fall in the lower parts of the valley as early as October and till March or April the whole valley is under snow and communications with the outer world and even between the various centres of population is completely suspended. The Chenab flowing in to the valley from Lahaul-Spiti runs through the whole length of Pangi valley and divides it into two parts. Sural, Hudan and Saichu streams, which are the major tributaries of the Chenab and divides it into Sural, Hudan and Saichu sub-valleys.¹

Pangi is unique in its grandeur and beauty. The valley is matchless so far as its natural beauty is concerned. The scenery is sublime and imposing and nature appears in her widest and grandest moods. Its high mountains, lush green valleys, beautiful trees like deodar and so many fruit bearing trees captivate the hearts of the tourists.² The great river rolls in a deep and narrow gorge, lashing itself into fury against the adamantine cliffs that confine it. The water-falls flowing down from the mountains also present a beautiful natural scenery. The roads are just as one might expect in such


² There are several beautiful side valleys in Pangi of which the principal are the Saichu, Parmaur, Hunan and Sural Nalas all leading up to the Zanskar range.
a region, narrow and dangerous. Elsewhere the path crosses from ledge to ledge by means of *trangaris*, or narrow wooden bridges of a primitive and insecure kind, sometimes at a giddy height above the torrent.¹

Pangwals are the inhabitants of Pangi tehsil of Chamba district of Himachal Pradesh. During the colonial period, Pangi was the part of Chamba *wizarat*. The Pangwals belongs to various castes and all embracing tribal fold consists in the language, the dress, the way of life and the common homeland. The seclusion and inaccessibility forced by geographical and topographical compulsions have welded these different castes in a tribal community.²

The origin of the Pangwals is shrouded in mystery. According to the family traditions, the Pangwals have immigrated from various parts of hills, some from Lahaul, and other from Kul. In support of this view they claim that Pangwals are Hindu tribes and their culture and religion is nearer to the adjoining areas of the hill states. They have Hindu caste

system, sub-divided into high castes and low castes including Rajputs, Thakurs, Brahmins and Rathis. The low castes include Halis, Lohars, Meghs and Dakis. Their fairs and festivals are also similar to the adjoining states.¹

There are three different versions about immigration and origin of the Pangwals. However, the versions are unconfirmed and give only a faint idea of the origin of Pangwals. According to first version² it is said that because of difficult terrain the Chamba State considered Pangi as the best place for sending those criminals who were condemned to life long sentences. It is presumed that these criminals permanently settled here and married locally. The generations of these criminals established different settlements in the area and come to be collectively called Pangwals. To substantiate this version it is said that even today the traditional Pangwal tope which is widely worn in this region bears a close resemblance to the one generally provided to prisoners.³

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1. S.S.Charak, op.cit., p.74.
According to the second version, it is believed that in times immemorial the settlers of Lahaul and lower Chenab were faced with great difficulties because of heavy pressure on land and pastures. These people were wandering in search of good land and green pastures to feed themselves and their cattle. They finally settled at Pangri region as this place had plenty of good land and green pastures. The present day Pangwals are said to be their descendents.

The third version about the origin of Pangwals seems to have a historical background. It is believed that during the Muslim rule in India certain Rajput nobles were apprehending persecution at the hands of the Muslims. Therefore, they decided to send their families to a safer place which was beyond the reach of the attacking army of the Muslims. Pangi was selected as safe place because of the difficult terrain. The families of these nobles left for Pangi in caravan, escorted by their soldiers and servants. After several days of hazardous journey. The caravan finally reached Pangi. Most of the Rajput nobles, who remained


2. Caravan means a group of Travellers.

behind to fight against the Muslims died in the battle field and many of them were seriously injured and could not join their families at Pangi. When all hopes of their warriors returning vanished the Rajput ladies ultimately married their servants and soldiers. The Pangwals are said to be their direct descendants.

It may be concluded that since prehistoric times this region was settled by a long series of migrations over centuries, chiefly from various surrounding areas. The Munda speaking kolorian tribals were the first immigrants to Himachal region. The second influx of immigrant tribals might have entered into Himachal from north-west frontier. These people are believed to be of Aryan origin and might have preceded the vedic Aryans in coming to India. They came to be known as khashas and assimilated the aboriginal tribes.

It is believed that most of the tribal people of Himachal are migrated from Indian plains and adjoining areas to this remote region from time to time. Some of them fled to this area in search of a safer place to save themselves from the persecutions of Muslim rulers. The early history of these tribals

2. This version can hold good in the sense that even today we find the Rajputs of Chandrabansi, Suryabansi and Thakur gotras among the Pangwals.
is shrouded in mystery. The sources are unconfirmed and give a faint idea of the origin of these tribals. The local traditions and legends can offer valuable clues in this regard. In fact numerous tales are related with the origin of the tribals. These traditions may help discovering many evidences of the early history of tribal people.

B. **A Survey of source material**

Studies on tribes and castes in historical context and sense may be reviewed through two distinct phases, in accordance with their specific nature. The first phase includes the works of pre-independence period which also includes the reports of travellers, missionaries, census, commissioners and even ethnographic glossaries made mostly by British administrators. The second phase brings out the works of post-independence period when more specialized studies on specific castes and tribes have been taken care of.

During the first phase, information about tribes and caste communities of the area are found to an appreciable extent from the travelogues. These reports are very generalized in nature, but still display brief information about a number of local ethnic groups. Valuable informations are embodied in the census reports of 1901-1902, published in a number of volumes.
Some historians have described the ethnic system of this area in very broad form in the earlier century, and most of them failed to attain the level of analytical ethnography. These works do not convey detailed ideas about any specific caste or tribal group. Still these works are perhaps the prime initiations of integrating anthropology, more especially ethnography by historians. Harcourt (1871) has referred to the people of three Himalayan districts, viz., Kulu, Lahaul and Spiti. Regional studies have come out in the district gazetteers of Kangra (1883) and Kulu, Saraj, Lahaul and Spiti (1918). In addition to the same, the glossary prepared by Ibbetson (1909) is of great importance.

Research tradition during the pre-independence period was upheld by many scholars. Among them Crooke (1896) is worth mentioning. His works still act as the basic source of information on tribes and castes of Himachal Pradesh and the neighbouring states. It is true that hardly any monographic studies were taken up during the said period on individual caste and/or tribal group. A kind of exceptional breakthrough was made by Bingley (1904) who brought out descriptive studies on society and culture of three groups, viz., Jat, Gujjar and Ahir. The contribution of Wilberforce (1918) on the Gaddi tribe is also of great importance.
Besides the fore-mentioned works, scattered information are also available. As works on disposal of dead in Spiti region, social functions in Lahaul and such other works related to folklores and folk culture of the region. Extensive works on fairs and festivals were carried out later by Census Commission of India.

The second phase of work was triggered by a number of independent workers in which different caste and tribal groups were considered. Government organisations came forward, and in this regard Anthropological Survey of India made pioneering efforts. Furtherance was made by the scholars, at least some of them, of the Institute of Advanced Studies, Shimla and tribal ethnography came to lime light. Bose's (1969) study on Hill Gaddis points out the relationship between ecology and economy, and the role of external forces in breaking down the tradition. Surfeit of publications came out during this phase. Despite the impetus, monographic works based on intensive field studies in this area remain a major hindrance. Sporadic publications on individual tribal culture and social institution as part of a culture came out by a number of workers (Bose, 1963)(Narula, 1964). Among other works, the noted ones are of Malhotra (1935) on the Gaddis, Bhatnagar (1965) on the marriage system of the Gujjars of the Chamba districts, Mathai (1963) and Das (1954)
on the kinners. Researches have also been carried out and their results, about the people of the region are available from the works of different scholars.

The tribal studies in Himachal Pradesh gained a new spirit after the independence. Inspite of the fact, the studies are yet too little in relation to the number of ethnic groups in the area. Along this line D.N.Dhir (1969) and Divyadarshi (1969) made significant comments on the importance of tribal studies. They tried to draw attention of the anthropologists as well as government to understand the problem of Himachal Pradesh of the present days and to undertake relevant studies. Studies on castes in this state are still meagre. In the pre-independence publication castes are included in the same glossary of tribals, later, specific studies on caste system of this area were made but the scope and converge are limited.

By and large, the survey highlights the major fundamental works of different times in which some informations about the population of this area (H.P) are available to some extent. In terms of time period, research works on tribes and castes began in the middle of nineteenth century but the list of articles show generalized accounts. Works of pre- independence period in this area are still
important. During the post-independence period, though expansion of tribal and caste studies was made through different Government agencies but this area has been largely neglected in comparison to other states or Union Territories of this country. Naturally, up-to-date information on people, especially tribes and castes, of the area are below minimum satisfactory level.

The official documents and publications carry a greater presumption of truth, though it does not mean that these sources are above suspicion or error. It is not possible to comment on the non-official sources one by one. Unfortunately, some of the private books and articles contain not only errors but, in a few cases, blunders. The travellers, mostly Europeans and English, of the olden times were far more serious and far keener observers and also had very much greater time because they had to travel on foot and, at best, on horse back, whereas the travellers of present times dash in mechanised transport. There is now an unfortunate tendency to travel more for fun and enjoyment than for any serious study of men, matters and things. It will be good to bear all this in mind as a broad guide while studying the literary sources, governmental as well as private. Some of the foreign travellers listed below, have been found very useful in the present study.
Foreign Travellers

1. 'Journal of a Tour in the Snowy Ranges of the Himala Mountains and to the Sources of the Rivers Jamuna and Ganges'- London, 1820 by Fraser, J.B.


5. 'Himalayan District of Kooloo, Lahoul & Spiti,' London-1871: Harcourt, A.F.P.


8. 'Pen and Pencil Sketches, being the Journal of a Tour in India', London, 1832, by G.C.Mundy.

9. 'An account of a three months tour from Simla through Bushahir, Kunawar and Spiti to Lahaul', Calcutta, 1882 by Murray Aynsley, HGM.

13. 'Western Himalaya and Tibet', London, 1852 by Thomas Thomson.

Among the Publications of Himachal Pradesh Government, mention may be made of:

1. The Annual Administration Reports of the Government Departments. Each and every department is supposed to produce such a report every year.

2. The address to the Legislative Assembly, every year, at the Budget Session or the first Session in the new year, when it falls before the Budget Session, by the Head of the State (Governor), the Budget Speech made every year by the Finance Minister, and the Annual Budget, between them,
would constitute a source of strategic importance to study the history both socially and economically.

3. The Annual Economic Review which is part of the documents made available at every Budget Session and the occasional and special reviews by the concerned Government Departments.


5. The 5-Year Plans and the Annual Plans prepared by the Government.


7. Publications by the Census Organisation of the Government of India at every Census including village surveys.


9. Settlement Reports, Assessment Reports and the "Standing Record" prepared by the Settlement Officers conducting land revenue settlements.

10. Publication of the Regional Centre for Economic Research, the Himachal Pradesh University,
the Himachal Pradesh Agriculture University and the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla.


General/Modern Books

Apart from the sources mentioned above, a number of general and modern works, such as J.Hutchison and Jean Philipe Vogel's History of the Punjab Hill States, (2 Volumes) and works by S.S.Shashi, Rahul Sankritayan, Manohar Singh Gill, T.S.Negi, S.C.Bajpai, S.C.Bose, P.Chetwode and M.S.Ahuwalia have been found very useful in the present study. A detailed list of the modern and secondary sources such as Gazetters, Reports etc., is given in foot notes and in the bibliography at the end of the thesis.