

People's History of Punjab

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Problems of Writing History of the Punjab

This book describes the history of Punjab from antiquity to the beginning of Mahmood Ghaznavi's invasions. Many, who have written histories of ancient Punjab were not Punjabis, and those who were Punjabis were not very familiar with 20th century Punjab. It is, of course, not essential that the writer of a region's history has to be from that region, but it is still essential that he or she have some familiarity with the many elements of ancient culture that still exist within that region. For example, we may want to see if the tools used for cultivation in the 20th century bear any resemblance to what came before? Does the way of life, how houses are built, the way food is prepared and eaten, the rituals of birth and death, the ceremonies of marriage and so on, have any elements that date from the distant past? It is also essential to know the class and caste composition of the region. Thus, to begin, a few words must be shared about aspects of Punjabi culture and people that are necessary to grasp the history of the region.

1. The tools of tillage and plowing have not changed in Punjab for centuries. The words used for the plough and its ploughshare in the Vedas are the same as the ones used today and their mode of usage remains the same. Panini, writing his grammar in the 5th century BC, used the same terms and mentioned no others.
2. Half of the land area of Punjab remained pastoral until the 20th century and the same grains (barley, millet, sorghum, oats etc.) were still cultivated there as in the earlier periods. For these people, survival depended not just on these grains, but also on wild fruits and edible plants as well as the meat and milk of animals.

3. Up until the Maurya Dynasty, within Punjab, the region of Gandhara (Taxila, Swat, etc.) was more advanced than the rest and was the center of economic production as well as the production of new knowledge in the region. Here there was production of items for trade (such as blankets, etc.) as well as institutions of higher learning. Then this mode of advanced production gradually spread to Sialkot and its neighboring regions. It is said that Sialkot was a thriving and developed city in the time of Kanishka (127-150 AD).
4. Until, the end of 20th century, it was commonplace in Punjab for people to build their dwellings of mud walls, roofed with tree branches from nearby jungles. These houses had just one door and no windows. Crude shelters for their animals were frequently built out of shrubs and wild grasses. There was no concept of sewerage in these dwellings. A place to urinate and for women to bathe was created around the same place where earthen pots of fresh water were kept. This mode of life is even older and less developed than what we find in the ruins of Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro. This indicates that the villages and hamlets around the major cities of Harappan civilization probably looked like this and remained unchanged down to our times. Historians of today should look more closely at this way of life and not just at the ancient religious books of the Hindus, in order to write the history of this region.
5. In Punjab, we can see a distinct racial divide in addition to that of class. The ruling elite tended to be fair or whitish in color, while the lower classes had darker skin and coarser features. These lower classes looked more like South Indians or even Africans and had an appearance distinctly different

from the ruling elite. By looking at the color-based divisions within society, we can form an estimate of whether invaders from the North conquered these local people or not.

6. The rituals of birth, death and marriage seem to have elements that date from a very ancient time and they can teach us much. Thus, the play that is performed as if the bride is being abducted in a raid may have echoes of our Aryan ancestors descending on local women and abducting brides. The role assigned to dark and coarse featured Mirasis, Doms etc. on these occasions may shed some light on some very ancient tales.

We can give many more examples of such little noticed aspects of Punjabi culture. They have gone unnoticed as most of our historians were from Europe and their research focused on the Rig Veda, the Mahabharata, the other Vedas and the Upanishads. But these are not books of history, they are first and foremost religious texts, focused on religious rules, hymns and laws. To these were added the grammar of Panini and the Arthashastara of Kautilya. These two were indeed writers from Taxila, a part of ancient Punjab, but they too were not writing history. All these books can surely help us in understanding the history of ancient Punjab, but they cannot be regarded as the final word on the subject. And while these books were initially written a very long time ago, later generations have added to them and modified them according to their own needs. In just 60 or 70 years, thousands of new verses were introduced into Waris Shah's poem, *Heer* so you can imagine the kind of interpolations and additions that could have happened to ancient texts over the centuries as the role of Brahmins and the rule of the Kashatriyas was based on the sacred rules written in these texts. We know that sometimes the insights derived from a text can be entirely

transformed by changing just one line or stanza. There is a famous stanza that has been added to *Heer* that is sung everywhere in Punjab “On climbing into her wedding dolly, Heer wept, O beloved, they are taking me away, they are taking me away”, which has transformed the rebellious and headstrong Heer of Waris Shah into a weak, ordinary, weepy 20th century Punjabi girl. In the same way a single hymn about castes that has been added to the Rig Veda has drastically altered the whole understanding of caste derived from that book. r inability to decipher the script of the Harappan civilization hampers our ability to write a history, not just of Harappan civilization, but of the civilization of all of ancient India, extending all the way to Cambodia. I reached this conclusion by reading bits and pieces of history, but I am happy to learn well-known historian Michal Walters of Harvard University had already reached this conclusion. Later, we will discuss his insights in greater detail.

It is true that Punjabi language texts do not appear until the 12th or 13th century, and most works were written after the 15th century. But these later works still include very ancient cultural, social and linguistic elements. If the 19th century research works composed in Europe can use ancient texts dating from 2,500 years ago, why should we not cast an eye on works composed in the 15th or 16th century in Punjab when we write its history? The fact is that until the 18th century, large parts of the Punjab were pastoral, just as in the days of the Vedas. And the areas where regular cultivation was practiced had also not changed much from the time of Panini or the Maurya. For this reason, these Punjabi texts remain an important source of knowledge about much more ancient cultural and social features. Therefore, we will make much use of these classical Punjabi texts in trying to understand the social and cultural life of ancient Punjab. But this does not mean that

this book will rely entirely or mostly on classical Punjabi literature. On the contrary, we have consulted all the major historians who have written about Punjab and it is these books that have been used as the main source for this work; information from classical Punjabi literature has only been used where it sheds light on ancient ways and mores.

As has been stated above, the dominant form of life in ancient Punjab was pastoral, so a close look at the features of pastoral society can help to shed light on the ancient history of Punjab. In any case, when we read the various writings that are available about the Punjab, we can see that society was dependent on wild forests for many of their needs. Wild plants were a source of food and animals were hunted and grazed in these scrublands and used to obtain wool, etc. This means that large parts of the Punjab were characterized by an economy akin to the oldest form of human society, i.e. the lifestyle of the hunter-gatherers. Knowledge of this way of life has not been used to shed light on Punjabi society until now.

Those who have written about Punjabi history have concentrated on the stories of its kings and kingdoms, as is typical of a lot of historiography. Or else the focus is on the religious and sectarian divisions (e.g. Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs). The funny thing is that a lot of these writings are completely lacking in logic. For example, when Alexander invaded Punjab, he had to fight with many different small kingdoms in this area. Raja Porus, who fought against Alexander, was ruling one such kingdom between the Jhelum and Chenab rivers. Large portions of this region could not be cultivated or were subject to regular flooding. Keeping all this in view, we can safely say that in the year 326 BC the total population of this region may have been in the thousands. Thus, claims that the armies of Alexander and Porus numbered in the hundreds of thousands, raises

the question of how hundreds of thousands of soldiers were fed and housed in those times? Clearly, the small population and productive capacity of those times could not generate a surplus sufficient for this purpose. This casts doubts on the entire story and it is clear that the events have been magnified a hundred-fold.

Not much research has been done on the tribes, clans and castes of Punjab. A lot of effort is especially needed to uncover the ancient history of the lower castes and the nomadic tribes. Punjabi castes such as Musalis and Mirasis are a very ancient element of Punjabi society. Similarly, there were many tribes of wandering nomads. All these people had similar skin color and facial features. What needs to be explained is how these people came to rank so low on the social ladder? Whether one accepts Aryan migration or not, the fact remains that people with darker skin and coarser features tended to be of low caste and in servile occupations, while the ruling elites tended to be fairer and to have more Indo-European features. It is also true that people from outside continued to enter Punjab well into the 15th century, and these even included some Arabs who came after the 7th century CE. A large number of the biggest feudal landowners in Punjab think of themselves as Syeds (descendants of the prophet Mohammed). Even some of the names of fruits and vegetables in this region are derived from Arabic, for example the word wassal for onions, and the word thom for garlic. The question of how and why these Arabs became part of rural Punjabi society has remained unanswered.

Another large group of upper castes in the area like to claim that they are descended from Rajput clans that moved here in the period of Muslim rule. This leaves open the question of what happened to the Hindu elites of rural Punjab? Before the 10th century CE, Punjab was a Hindu

region, ruled by the Hindu Shahi kings, but by 1841 the Hindu population was down to only 44% in Punjab. But why is it that even in 1947 the cities of Punjab were dominated by Hindus, yet the landowning elites in the villages were not Hindus; what happened to the Hindu elites of rural Punjab? Did they escape to the cities? Or did something else happen to them? If we cannot answer these questions, we cannot put together a real history of Punjab.

It is for this reason that we will use all our sources, including classical literature as well as class analysis and the study of social relations in Punjab. We will keep the Punjab of pre-1960s in view, because the everyday life of Punjab has changed more in the last 60 years than it did in the 2,000 years prior to that. Before 1960 the houses in our villages were made of mud, roofed over with wood from the local forests, most with only one door and no windows. Domesticated animals were kept in the same enclosure and there were no toilets or sewage facilities. Water was kept in earthen pots near an area where people would urinate. This means that the typical village of the 1960s was more primitive than the ancient cities of Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro. Hence, the villages of Punjab have remained almost unchanged from Harappan times. So, studying the life of these villages can tell us more about the ancient past than we can find in religious hymns or history books. Therefore, we have tried to keep the following points in view in this narrative of ancient Punjab:

1. In most cases we will focus on ancient Punjab that extended from Haryana to Peshawar instead of the divided and truncated Punjab of today. Dialects of Punjabi are spoken in all these areas even today, such as Hindko in Peshawar.
2. To better understand ancient Punjab, we will look into the social differences between central, western

and eastern parts of the region. It is particularly important to look at the social landscape of Western Punjab, since until the creation of canal colonies by the British, the ancient social, cultural and economic features of Punjabi life survived almost unchanged in this region. In our own lifetime, some areas of southern Punjab and all of Western Punjab retained their ancient culture, which was described as “Jaangli” (wild) by the new settlers.

3. We will also take a close look at the Northern and mountainous areas, which have remained a major source of soldiers in the wider region since ancient times. Many of the later arrivals, such as the Persians, Greeks Sakas and Huns also settled in these areas. Therefore, the culture of this region can be expected to have its own unique characteristics.
4. The sources we have consulted for this book mostly believe that the ancient Harappan language must have been a Dravidian language. But another view posits that the language of the Harappans was closer to the Munda and other such South Asian languages. According to this view, the first section of the Rig Veda does not include any Dravidian words which are found in the later sections. From this it has been deduced that the Dravidian people moved via Sindh from Eastern Iran after the Aryans and that the original language of the Harappan civilization was Para-Munda. In this book if any source mentions Dravidian as the older language of Punjab, I have let that stand, but readers should keep in mind that this may or may not be true.
5. In this book, we will not provide long lists of states and their rulers, as this kind of work has probably been done better by other writers. We will only highlight characters whose actions made a real difference in the state of society and culture such as

modes of production or who achieved something exceptional.

6. Many renowned historians write history without any reference to the underlying economic structure or ideology. For example, can the large numbers in Alexander's army estimated by historians align with the small populations he was conquering and supported by the amount of food and resources to which he had access.

Historians also sometimes ignore the natural resources of the region. For example, it has been said that agriculture first started in the region of Punjab because it did not have dense forests. But if this is true, how could the region have had elephants and lions? Could the bare shrubs of the region support a large population of deer, which are extensively mentioned in our ancient writings?

Ideology has also been either ignored, or fantastic stories have been invented about it. From the Aryans to the British, every ruler has prioritized their own economic and political interest over religion. As Guru Nanak has accurately described in his writings, a king like Babur extracted plunder from everyone, destroyed their temples and mosques without distinction and raped their women irrespective of their being Hindu or Muslim. History written purely in terms of religion and religious differences thus is not enough and misses essential truths. For example, the invasion of Mohammed Bin Qasim is projected as a religious war by Muslims but it was actually an outcome of rising Arab imperialism with both Hindu and Buddhist tribes as collaborators of the invading forces. Secondly, when Mohammed Bin Qasim had

conquered Sindh, his administrative officials were mostly Hindus and the second most powerful in his regime was a Hindu named Kaska. Thirdly, when Mohammed Bin Qasim conquered Multan, he did not destroy the great idol in the temple because the offerings to this idol were made up one third of his revenue. But when the English came, they projected this conquest as a religious war in order to cultivate favor with their Hindu subjects. And of course, this also suited the interests of Hindu nationalists and Muslim Jihadists, who both wished to see Bin Qasim's invasion in religious terms. Mahmood Ghaznavi's invasions are a similar case. Mahmood attacked the Hindu Shahias of Kabul because they had attacked Ghazni during Mahmood's father's reign. Even after Mahmood's victories, Punjab was ruled by Jaipal's son Anand Pal and then by his grandson Tirlochan Pal. Mahmood had figured out in his initial invasions that the greatest wealth was to be found in temple towns, so he repeatedly invaded India to attack various temple towns and collect plunder. After each plundering expedition, he would go back to his own kingdom, and other than Punjab he made no effort to establish his rule in India or to convert its inhabitants to Islam.

Mahmood's son Masood appointed Ahmed Inaltagin as his governor in Lahore, but he was later accused of dishonesty and Masood sent his Hindu general Tilak to Lahore to sort him out. It is reported that when Tilak arrived in Lahore, he arrested several of Inaltagin's Muslim officials and had their right hands amputated. Frightened by the severity of this punishment, Inaltagin's remaining officials left his side and he was pursued by the

army and beheaded, with his head being sent to Ghazni. Through all this, there were many Hindus in Tilak's army.

Hence, the ruling elites of Hindus and Muslims frequently worked together. If this was not the case then the various Hindu officials would have had to convert to Islam in order to serve in the administration of these Muslim rulers, but this did not happen. The fact is that the upper and middle classes of urban Punjab remained majority Hindu throughout this period and did not change their religion. Even when Hindus were not a majority, they remained dominant in the administrative, economic and social life of urban Punjab.

According to the 1881 census conducted by the British, more than 50% of the Jat population had never converted to Islam. This census found that in Lahore district about 40% of the population consisted of manual workers and craftsmen. Of these, the largest single group (99,025) were "chooRas", 35,742 were weavers, 1524 were potters, 1009 were carpenters, 27,747 were fishermen, 23,066 worked preparing edible oils, 20,941 were Jhioor (water carriers), 18,527 were leather workers, 15,596 were washermen, 13,767 were ironsmiths, 11,742 were "mirasis" (traditional genealogy recorders and entertainers), 8,317 were jewelers. Arain caste made up 10% of the population, most of whom were in lower status occupations, such as vegetable sellers. If we also add in the poorer sections of other caste groups, we find that most of the population lived in poverty and a majority of these were Muslims. It is also interesting that the greatest change in religious composition occurred between the 1881 and 1941

censuses, with the percentage of Hindus in Punjab declining from 44% to 29%, with a corresponding increase in the numbers of Sikhs and Muslims. All these figures are mentioned here in order to show that the rate of conversion to Islam was quite slow during the 700 years of Muslim rule in Punjab, with only 48% of the population converting in all that time and most of these came from the lower socio-economic strata, with limited conversion in the middle and upper classes. Thus, almost all the middleman occupations remained in Hindu hands. Muslim rulers administered the country using these Hindu middlemen and treated the lower-class Muslims as badly as the Brahmins and Kashatriyas had treated their Shudra (lower caste) population. It is in this context that Bulleh Shah had stated:
Kitay Ram Das, kitay Fateh Mohammed, aiho qadeemi shor
Nipat gya dohaan da jhagRa, nikal peya koe hor
(Ram Das and Fateh Mohammed, this whole eternal conflict
Once we look beyond it, we see an altogether different reality)

7. We have used the term “Harappan” to describe the civilization that is commonly known as the Indus valley civilization. The term “Indus valley” was used for this civilization when the only major sites associated with it were located in Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro. Now we know that major sites associated with this civilization extend from Punjab and Sindh to Haryana, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Indian Gujarat state, so it is not accurate to describe the entire civilization as “Indus valley civilization”. Instead we have used the term Harappan civilization because the first major site to

be discovered was at Harappa. By no means does this imply that we are only referring to the people who lived in Harappa (near modern day Sahiwal), rather we are using this term to describe the entire civilization that extended across a vast swathe of territory in Northwestern India.

If we begin by looking at the writings composed between the 11th and 18th centuries, we will be able to detect many elements of ancient Punjabi life. We know that this ancient Punjab was a tribal society, with an egalitarian culture where decisions were made in a relatively democratic manner. Dynastic states had not yet arisen in this area. But if we look more closely, we will find that this democratic regime did not extend to older Harappan inhabitants, who had in fact sunk to the status of slaves. In addition to class conflict, this conflict between the Aryans and older Dravidian people had also acquired an element of color prejudice (with the fairer Aryans looking down upon the darker skinned inhabitants of the region) and we will keep this divide in view at all times.

Harappan Civilization

Thanks to both ancient and modern discoveries, it is now widely accepted that higher civilization in India first arose in the region of Punjab, Sindh and their surrounding states. No one denies that the first book in the Indian subcontinent was the *Rig Veda*, which was composed in the region of Punjab between 1700 and 1100 BCE.⁽¹⁾ We can also rely on the *Mahabharata* (written around the 6th century BC) to learn more about this period.⁽²⁾ It is also widely accepted that an advanced Harappan civilization existed in the region between 3,000 to 4,000 years BC, which gradually declined for some reason and was replaced by Aryan invaders from Central Asia. We can learn much from the archeological excavations of the cities of Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro, but their script has not yet been deciphered so everyone relies on the religious hymns and prayers collected in the Aryan's earliest religious text, the *Rig Veda* as a source of historical data.⁽³⁾

Before we go any further, we should say a few words about a central principle of historical research. The history of mankind teaches us that the earliest humans relied on gathering wild fruits and plants for their food and the entire group would share whatever was collected by these means. At that time there was no concept of property and no classes, nor was there any concept of marriage or family. Over time, humans developed some stone tools and weapons and using these weapons they were able to hunt animals and add meat to their diet. At this stage the status of males may have been higher than women, but as the women developed the art of cultivating crops, this hierarchy was reversed. At this time there was still no concept of class division and this stage of human

development has been labeled as the “Sat Yug” (age of truth). Later ages were then labeled Treta Yug, Dwapara Yug and Kali Yug.

While Brahmin sages may have labeled the earliest age as Sat Yug, a time of honesty, truth and innocence, but it should be kept in mind that in that age man was locked in a very difficult struggle against nature. Early death from man-eating animals and diseases was the norm and life expectancy at birth was only 30 years. Therefore, when we idealize that era as one of harmony and innocence, we should also keep its life-threatening dangers and difficulties in view. Once grain cultivation was mastered and food became more plentiful, cities and civilizations arose, and classes became differentiated. It has been stated that the modes of development of the Aryans and the Harappans had been different from each other for a long time.

Some people have proposed that cities can arise even without the development of agriculture, but how is this possible? Did the citizens grow grain in their houses? Or were cities developed by cattle herders? We should also keep in mind that the development and flourishing of cities involves significant development in the thought and ideology, developments that can take thousands of years. Such a mindset was not present in rural Punjab even in the 1960s, thus indicating that in some respects 20th century Punjab was less developed than the ancient cities of Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro.

We can say that the writing of Punjabi history has gone through three distinct stages. The first stage was before the discovery of Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro, at which stage all that we knew of ancient Punjab was derived from the Rig Veda and similar religious texts. All that we knew was based on stories, hymns and prayers in ancient Sanskrit

texts and the imagination of writers. The second stage was after the discovery of Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro, when these religious stories were put aside and a new history of the region was composed, based on the findings in these ruins. A big question at this stage was whether the Aryans had come from outside or were they the original inhabitants of this region. In the last few decades, many different streams of research were used to argue the notion of an Aryan invasion is either incorrect or needs revision. The third stage of the explication of Punjabi history began a few years ago with the use of genetic research methods, which have shown beyond a shadow of doubt that somewhere around 1300-1500 BC a large group of people arrived from Central Asia and their interactions with the prior inhabitants gradually created a new civilization. Thus, genetic research has decisively settled many old arguments about the peopling of this region, and we will summarize this research in this chapter.

As far as the name “Punjab” is concerned, in the *Rig Veda* this region is referred to as “Sapta Sindhu”, the land of the seven rivers. These seven rivers are the Sindhu (Indus), Vitasta (Jhelum), Asikini (Chenab), Parusni or Airavati (Ravi), Vipasa (Beas), Sutudri (Sutlej) and Sarasvati. In the *Mahabharata*, Punjab is referred to as “Aratta” and its people as “Balika”. The great Sanskrit grammarian Panini (4th century BC) has referred to the Punjab as “Vahika”. Another ancient name for Punjab was Madra Desh or Madra and the Greeks referred to it as “Penta Potamia” (five rivers). Mohammed Asif Khan’s research on the various names of Punjab and the first reference to it as Punjab is worth reading ⁽⁴⁾. It has been stated that Ibn Batuta first came here in the 14th century and he was the first to use the term Punjab. ⁽⁵⁾ The Harappan script has not

been deciphered as yet, but in the writings of their contemporary civilization in Mesopotamia, this region and its inhabitants have been labeled “Meluha”.⁽⁶⁾ The Vedas have also used the term Dāseya or Dasa for the inhabitants of this region.

The ruins of Harappa were first discovered in 1826 and were not properly excavated until 1920-21, when this work was carried out by the Archeological Survey of India. J. Fleet had discovered some seals and coins from Harappa in 1912 and proper excavation was carried out by Daya Ram Sahni and Madhu Saropp Vats under the supervision of Sir John Marshall.⁽⁷⁾ When all the proofs of a 5,000 years old civilization were found, the mythical history, written by Brahmans, came to an end. From there onward, the research about Indian or Punjab’s history, was done on the basis of physical evidences. However, the Brahminic obsession with starting the history from *Rigveda* never ended. However, John Marshall described the new-found civilization in these words:

. “Never for a moment it was imagined that five thousand years ago, before ever the Aryans were heard of, the Punjab and Sind, if not other parts of India as well, were enjoying an advanced and singularly uniform civilization of their own, closely akin but in some respects superior to that of contemporary Mesopotamia and Egypt”⁽⁸⁾ (page v)

“One thing that stands out clear and unmistakable both at in Mohenjo-daro and Harappa is that the civilization hitherto revealed at these two places is not an incipient civilization, and one very aged-old and stereotyped on Indian soil, with many millennia of human endeavor behind it. Thus, India henceforth be recognized, along with, Persia, Mesopotamia, and Egypt, as one of the most important areas where the

civilization processes of society were initiated and developed”⁽⁹⁾ Page viii

Findings of Genetics About Harappa Civilization

Based on the latest findings of genetic science, Tony Joseph, published his book *Early Indians* in 2018. In the backdrop of his findings and other related sources it can be concluded that, there is a consensus among historians about some basic facts of Harappa Civilization. Following is a summary of these facts:

1. According to genetic studies humans moved from Africa at around 70,000 BC towards Asia and reached the subcontinent by 65,000 BC. Not much is known about their life in the subcontinent till 7,000 BC. The first human settlement is found in Meharghar, Baluchistan which is dated back to 7,000 BC.⁽¹⁰⁾⁽¹¹⁾
2. It is theorized that at around 7,000-8,000 BC groups from Zagros,⁽¹²⁾ Iran, moved to this area. They are known to have agricultural know-how and, mixing with the local population, they created an agrarian society and established towns like Meharghar. The genes of Zagros people do not match with the ones who came from Africa in 65,000 BC. They reached this area in 4,500 years or it took 150 generations to get there. The inhabitants of Meharghar used unbacked bricks to build houses. They had domesticated many animals including goats and used cotton as well.
3. About 70-90% female genes of the subcontinent match with people who came in 65,000 BC. This means that, only 10-30% female genes are foreign or of later period. As opposed to women, only 10-

40% male genes match with original descendants from Africa, indicating that about 60% males came later. According to genetics the Y chromosome is transferred from father to son and mtDNA from mother to daughter. ⁽¹³⁾ Evidently, it means that in the subcontinent females are indigenous while the majority of males arrived much later.

4. The genes of 17% of males of the subcontinent are different and match with the Europeans. This shows that the genes of non-Aryan males constitute a large portion of racial mix of the subcontinent. ⁽¹⁴⁾
5. Leading experts of Y chromosome, Peter A. Andreal et al, published a research paper in 2014. They found that part R1a of the Y Chromosome shows that upper castes share more genes with the Europeans. Lower castes, particularly, gypsies have less gene commonality with Europeans; and the Brahmans sharing twice as much genes with Europeans compared to other castes. ⁽¹⁵⁾
6. The genetic studies have verified that a group of Central Asian males went towards Europe and the other to Punjab. Most of the emigrants were males which was proved in a 2017 research “Genetic influx from Central Asia in Bronze Age was strongly male.” ⁽¹⁶⁾ This research also showed that in the patriarchal system, the husband living with the wife and inheritance through father matches the pastoral Indo-European’s social structure. It corresponds with the observation that, usually, males emigrate for economic reasons or as invaders.

What was Found in Harappa Excavations?

The evidences found in excavations of Harappa sites are as follows:

1. Besides, Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro excavations in Gujrat, Rajasthan, Haryana and Utter Pradesh has shown that this old civilization was spread over vast area of North India. We call it Harappa Civilization just because that was the first excavated site.
2. It is estimated that at the peak of this civilization, the population of Harappa was 23,000-30,000 and in Mohenjo-Daro it was 40,000. ⁽¹⁷⁾ This was a very large population in those times. According to Graham Clark, the total population of Great Britain and Wales was only 250 persons in the Stone Age, which in the second phase rose to 4,500 and in New Stone Age to 20,000. ⁽¹⁸⁾ Hence, in 1,000 BC the Mohenjo-Daro population was greater than Great Britain and Wales combined.
These large urban populations indicated surplus production from the agricultural system. It also indicates that, for an elaborate agricultural system animal power was employed for ploughing and transportation of agro-commodities.
3. A lot has been written about the advanced city planning of Harappa Civilization cities. The homes structures, sewerage system and lined-up streets are indicative of an advanced system
4. Proofs of trade between Harappa Civilization and Mesopotamia are also well founded. From the deciphered script of seals found in Mesopotamian cities, the people of Harappa are identified as Meluha. ⁽¹⁹⁾

5. The seals excavated from Harappa Civilization show picture of a lion. However, there is no mention of lion in *Rigveda*; lot of linguistic stretching has been used to show the presence of word lion in this scripture, but it seems concocted and unreal.
6. No traces of horse have been found in Harappa Civilization excavations: the one or so claimed findings of horse are extremely doubtful. This strengthens the viewpoint that Aryans used horses and chariots to conquer the indigenous people had no horses.
7. No temple or palace has been uncovered on any Harappa Civilization sites. Similarly, other than small hunting arrows and bows no big weapon has been found. In contrast, large temples, palaces and weapons are discovered in Mesopotamia. This shows that, unlike Mesopotamia, Harappa Civilization had no organized religion and big ruling classes.
8. Cotton has been found, dating back to 6,000 BC, from Meharghar excavations. The cotton fiber was twitched in a bronze necklace . This was the first place where cotton was found. ⁽²⁰⁾
9. Wheat, barley, peas, sesame, lintels, linseed and mustard was grown in Harappa Civilization. Dog, cat, bull with small horns, buffalo, cow, pig, camel, chicken, goat, sheep and donkey had been domesticated. ⁽²¹⁾
10. The images of lion and elephant are usually found in all old civilizations, but it does not mean they were found in those places. For example, elephant images are found in Tibet despite the known fact

that this animal does not belong to that area. Elephant does not seem to be found in Punjab because it required dense forests and vast grassy lands. The rise of the early civilization in Harappa is likely correlated with iron tools needed to clear the small thin shrubs in the area. The dense forests of Ganga-Jumna valley could not be cleared before the finding of iron⁽²²⁾. Furthermore, the land in Ganga-Jumna areas was very hard to plough and could not be cultivated without iron ploughshare. In the northern areas, even in hilly Swat, there were no thick jungles and thousands of years old ploughed field has been uncovered there. ⁽²³⁾ This again reaffirms that Harappa Civilization areas had no dense forests and animals like elephants and lions.

Identifying Language of Harappa Civilization

The believers of Aryans as being indigenous to the subcontinent would argue that language of Harappa Civilization would have been some old form of Sanskrit. But if it so, Harappa script should have been deciphered by now. The others who consider Aryans as foreigners or local but different, propound that Dravidian was the original language of Harappa. They argue that Dravidian had a varied but significant influence on other Indian languages:

“Whatever, the origin of Dravidians this for certain that they are at the center of Indian population. Even in this age and era their language has been affecting others. The effect of Dravidian languages be seen in Vedas, classical Sanskrit, Prakrits and the language that emerged from them” ⁽²⁴⁾

Michael Wiltez and some other linguists have shown that Dravidian words do not appear in the earlier parts of

Rigveda. Their entry is reflected in the latter periods which means that Dravidians came to Punjab after the Aryans. Furthermore, logic and evidence indicate that the Harappan language was developed and was continuously spoken before and after the arrival of Aryans. If Punjab and Sindh, had large urban towns like, Harappa and Mohenjo Daru, linked by rivers facilitating vibrant trade then they must have a befitting developed language used for communication. After the decline of Harappa civilization, its descendants did not vanish into a thin air, rather, they must have continued communicating in their traditional languages. The constant war between Aryans and Harappans, incessantly described in Vedic literature, proves that indigenous populations kept on occupying the area.

Harappans did not and could not speak Sanskrit, therefore, Punjabi and Sindhi would be considered as descendants of the Harappan language. We will call the Harappa language as Meluha as that is what the people were called though the name of the script is never named. It is more likely that Mesopotamians would have been introduced to this word by traders of Harappa. Therefore, till the Harappa script is further deciphered we will identify their language as Meluha. We cannot call it, Sapt Sindhi, Vahika, Balika or Abhir etc. because all these names are given by Aryans who came very late These different names were given by Aryan poets who lived in different areas of Harappa Civilization.

Since Meluha was distinctly different from Dravidian languages and Sanskrit, its foundations must be from some other language. Michael Wiltez has propounded that Meluha may be related to Indian Austroasiatic languages i.e. Munda, Santhali and Khasi. Michael Wiltez says:

“An important result is that the language of the Indus people, at least those in the Panjab, must have been Para-Munda or a western form of Austro-Asiatic.”⁽²⁵⁾

In furthering this viewpoint, he elaborates:

“In short, the Panjab is an area of a Pre-R°gvedic, largely Para-Munda substrate that apparently overlays a still older local level which may be identical with Masica’s “language X” found in the Gangetic plains (preserved in some Hindi words). In general, the vocabulary of Para-Munda and “language X” words is limited to local flora and fauna, agriculture and artisans, to terms of toilette, clothing and household; dancing and music are particularly prominent, and there are some items of religion and beliefs as well (Kuiper 1955, 1991). Since no traces of the supposedly Dravidian “Trader’s Language” of the Indus civilization (Parpola 1994) are visible in the RV, the people who spoke this language must either have disappeared without a trace (cf. below on Meluha) or, more likely, the language of the Panjab was Para-Munda already during the Indus period (2600–1900 BCE).”⁽²⁶⁾

If we accept a rudimentary concept of Darwin’s theory of evolution, the creation and development of language(s) should be viewed as correlated with changing human material and social needs. The linguistic requirements at gathering/hunting stage have to be limited in comparison to animal breeding and agriculture. The advent of agriculture was a major revolution in the evolution of human society because it is based on animal and plant domestication. This revolution not only changed the mode of production of necessities but also led humans to enter the world of abstract ideas. Therefore, the language had to expand to communicate to express new material, social and mental needs. Another basic linguistic fact has to be recognized:

the formation of grammatical structures. The study of surviving hunter/gatherers' tribes shows that, whatever the stage of their linguistic level, they have defined grammatical structures. It means that the grammar of every language is in place at quite early stages.

Given the general historical pattern of linguistic evolution it will be logical to assume that people of Harappa Civilization, gone through several centuries of agricultural production, animal breeding and trading, must have a developed language and grammatical structures. On the contrary, the Aryan came to Punjab at the pastoral stage and, hence, had a lesser developed language in comparison to Harappans. Therefore, in the interfacing of two sets of speech groups, it is more likely that newcomers had to borrow more words than the indigenous people. Furthermore, if the direction of borrowing is left alone, for a while, the fact remains that the grammatical structure of the indigenous speech group could not be altered or replaced. Therefore, it is logical to conclude that the Harappan speech group continued using its language and it is preposterous to assert that their language was/is a corrupted form of Sanskrit.

The early hymns of *Rigveda* are reflective of simple prayers from human-resembling gods for simple material goods and offspring. As the Aryan society became more complex due to taking up agriculture, their old gods (Inder, Agni et al) were replaced with more abstract entities. Therefore, at the early stage, with simplistic language, reflective of pastoral mindset, could not have been competent enough to affect the speech of Harappan people.

Such a comparison between Sanskrit and Meluha can be supported by literary history of Punjab from the 14th century onwards. Since, Eastern and Central Punjab were

more advanced in agriculture and trade, therefore almost all the intellectuals and poets, from Guru Nanak to Waris Shah, belonged these areas. Western Punjab was pastoral and could produce only one major poet, Khawaja Ghulam Farid, by the end of 19th century. It is also noteworthy that Khawaja Ghulam Farid's poetry is reflective of an animal breeding society as depicted in early Vedic hymns.

Sanskrit's privileged position was based on the domination of Aryans and not because of its linguistic competence. Due to higher level of surplus consumption, the Aryans developed an organized priestly class and elites who could produce knowledge on full time basis. Panini and Patanjali represented such a professional elite. However, Panini's basic goal was to educate the priestly class for correct use of Sanskrit used for reciting Vedic scriptures. Since Sanskrit was never used for administrative purposes or for production processes, it remained confined to priestly classes. The first evidence of administrative language is found in Ashoka's inscriptions and one of that is in Sanskrit, written in Prakrits. After Maurya dynasty, the old home of Aryan, Punjab was ruled by Greeks, Saka, Kushans and White Huns and none of them entertained Sanskrit for administrative functions.

Sanskrit was not used for common people's worshiping needs either. From the 4th BC onward, in Punjab, Buddhism was the popular religion which used Prakrits (variations of Meluha) instead of Sanskrit. Buddha himself preferred Pali over Sanskrit and his followers used local languages of their regions. One major limitation would have been that most Buddhist Bhikkhus came from indigenous populations who had not learnt Sanskrit. Therefore, Sanskrit would have been the language of a tiny priestly Aryan class.

If Sanskrit was not used for administrative functions, production process, and common religious practices then how could it have developed or considered the speech of the people of Punjab? In addition, since Aryans had come, largely, as a male group, the females in the households could only speak Meluha. As a matter of fact, Sanskrit did not make any progress in the first 700 years in Punjab according to Wiltez:

“In other words, the (up to 700 year) long RV period may have seen increasing pastoralism in the Panjab, with substitution of IA river names, but with some post-Indus villagers hanging on to agriculture in those areas that had periodic flooding or could have artificial irrigation. These people are clearly distinct: most of the agricultural terminology is non-IA (Kuiper 1991)... Note that even in the later RV, Viśvāmitra and his sons can speak of the autochthonous people, the Kīkata, as being inept with cattle: 'what is the use of cows with the Kīkata?' (RV 3.53).”⁽²⁸⁾

To prove his point, Kuiper has given a list of 380 words in Rigveda which cannot be of Indo-European origin. Kuiper has claimed that indigenous words are mixed in the Rigveda hymns. Franklin Southworth also agrees with this viewpoint that mixing of Sanskrit and indigenous languages (Meluha) would have occurred at the lower strata rather than on upper tiers of society.⁽²⁹⁾ Wiltez argues, in this regard, that mixing took place by those lower strata people who knew both languages.

All the available evidence shows that, instead of declaring Sanskrit as mother of all North Indian languages, we should base our future research on Meluha and the languages that emerged from it. Hence the question remains as to what the family of languages Punjabi belongs to? Wiltez has suggested that Punjabi may be member of Austroasiatic

family of languages which includes Munda and Santhali. To test this theory, I have compiled *A Comparative Dictionary of Indian Austroasiatic Languages* in which more than 5,000 words from Punjabi are matched with Santhali, Munda and Khasi. ⁽³⁰⁾ The results are very promising; however, I have come to a conclusion though Punjabi, Santhali and Munda are very close so are the other North Indian languages: they have all emerged from Meluha as far as vocabulary and grammatical structures are concerned. This approach negates the alternative theory of Dravidian languages being the origin of Punjabi and other Indian languages about which Krishan Tarpathi, (quoting *Cambridge History of India*, Vol 1. P 42): “The impact of Dravidian can be detected in Vedic, Sanskrit, Prakrits and other folk languages ...are visible. Therefore, it is definite that before Indo-Aryans Dravidian was dominant in the north and south.” ⁽³¹⁾

Family Structure in Harappa Civilization

Most researchers agree that Harappans had a matriarchal system in which woman was the leader in every sphere of life. According to Leonel Barnett:

“Dravidian society was mostly matriarchal. If there was any tradition of marriage, it was also matriarchal. This was a very loose relationship which could be broken at any time. Therefore, the descendants were identified through the woman.” ⁽³²⁾

In this quote the term “Dravidian society” is misleading and based on the old theory we have discussed above. It should be understood that in this quote the reference is to ancient Harappan society. Harappan family structure was much more complex in which every family relationship is identified. In comparison to European limited titles of

uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, grandparents, in-laws Punjabi has an exhaustive list of minutely differentiated titles. For example, uncle can be taya, (father's elder brother) chacha (father's younger brother), mama (mother's brother), masar (husband of mother's sister), phuhar (husband of father's sister) etc. It seems like that Indo-Aryan had a few titles for mother, father, brother and sister and the additional titles were inducted by Harappan women.

The prevalence of matriarchal system in Harappa Civilization may have been due to its agricultural mode of production. Such a system had been studied in Khasi tribe of India. It was a unique example of preserving the matriarchal system. The tribe still lived at the early stage of agriculture where no modern ploughshare or animal power was being used for cultivation. The tribe is portrayed as follows:

“Their social organization presents one of the most perfect examples still surviving of matriarchal institutions, carried out with a logic and thoroughness which, to those accustomed to regard the status and authority of the father as the foundation of society, are exceedingly remarkable. Not only is the mother the head and source and only bond of union of the family; in the most primitive part of the hills, the Synteng country, she is the only owner of real property, and through her alone is inheritance transmitted. The father has no kinship with the children, who belongs to their mother's clan. What he earns goes to his own matriarchal stock, and at his death his bones are deposited in the cromlech of his mother's kin. In Jawal he neither lives nor eats in his wife's house but visits it only after dark. ...The powers of sickness and death are all female, and these are the most frequently worshipped. The two protectors of the household are goddesses...Priestesses assist all the sacrifices and male officials are only their

deputies. In one important state, Khyrim, the high priestess and actual head of state is a woman, who combines in her person sacerdotal and regal functions.” [Lyle quoted by Gurdon K xix-xx] ⁽³³⁾

It seems that Aryans brought the patriarchal system to Punjab. To show that animal breeders are fundamentally patriarchal. Toda tribe of Nalgri Hill and Tamil Nadu breed buffalos and exchange everything through dairy products. Their god is also a buffalo and their high priest is a buffalo herder. They have an absolute patriarchal system and they practiced polyandry: in exchange of buffalos all the brothers would get married to one woman.

This shows that pastoral people are mostly patriarchal: animal breeding is usually done by males. Aryans were pastoral and considered agriculturists as a profession of lowly people, according to Briffault:

“It was a society of pastoral warriors that they (i.e., the Vedic people) established themselves in the fertile plains of Northern India; they never took up cultivation of the soil, leaving it to the native inhabitants; and, indeed, they, like all pastoral warriors, profoundly despised agriculture as the occupation of conquered races.” ⁽³⁴⁾

Trade in Harappa Civilization

The very existence of several large town in Harappa Civilization presume the production of surplus food supplies and existence of classes of artisans, merchants, professional businessmen, administrators and traders. To start with, surplus food production assumes a well-developed agricultural sector and intermediaries or traders who would facilitate the supplies to the towns. In the process the intra-city and international trade develops

eventually. Most of the trade was conducted through the rivers and other water channels. It has been noted that:

“The small towns would have functioned as collection-distribution points, and the medium and large towns had a variety of manufacturing activities and a wide range of trade. Various raw materials were utilized in productive activities, namely alabaster, steatite, ivory, shell, coral, cornelian, agate, jasper, lapis lazuli, jade, chalcedony, silver, gold, lead, chert, sandstone, limestone, yellow Jaisalmer stone, flint, marble, haematite, quartzite, besalt, calcite, serpentine, feldspar, hornblende, slate, granite, and sang-i abri.”⁽³⁵⁾

There is substantial evidence that there was a booming trade between Harappa Civilization and Mesopotamia cities. A business center was established in Talmoon (contemporary Bahrain), as a middle point between Harappa Civilization and Mesopotamia. The trade was done by ships which would sail close to sea shores. However, when storms would push the ships away from the shores the shippers would not be able to find land. They used to carry crows with them that they would let fly and follow them to find land. It is also narrated that the prophet Noah who amidst the storm used a crow to find land and then a pigeon to check if the land was fertile. The origin of crow, as a foreteller of coming of a guest or lover, has been taken from this old tradition.⁽³⁶⁾

Advanced Know-How of Harappa Civilization

The size and planned layout of towns is reflective of a higher level of know-how of Harappa Civilization. However, the question is that if this know-how was completely lost after the demise of the Harappa Civilization. A popular narrative has been that Harappa

Civilization people were Dravidians who were pushed to South India. If that was true, the Dravidians would have recreated or replicated a society like the Harappa Civilization in their new home. Historical evidence does not show such a development in the South. On the contrary, there is abundance of material which shows that indigenous people of Harappa Civilization continued living in their old home and fought the Aryans for many centuries. Furthermore, recent DNA tests reveal that Aryans came as a male group and procreated through Harappan women. If indigenous population had deserted the area where the indigenous women came from to establish the Aryan households. Additionally, it is recognized that the indigenous Harappa Civilization people continued cultivation wherever it was possible. These evidences prove that Harappa Civilization indigenous people were not Dravidian, and if they were also inhabitants of this area, they constituted a small portion of the population. Therefore, Kosambi is right in arguing that large part of HC know-how survived:

“Certainly, a great deal that was connected with craftsmanship and trade did survive. The later Indian standards of weight and apparently measure (this part is not so clear) often went back directly to those at Mohenjo-daro and Harappa.” (37)

Tarpathi also recognizes that the indigenous people were equipped with great knowledge about production of goods and matters related to agriculture. However, he makes the same mistake of misidentifying them when he says:

“Dravidians were very knowledgeable about metals. Their pots were very curvy and smooth and they agriculture.

They were pioneers in building dams on rivers to irrigate crops” (38)

Historically, it would be illogical to propose that the Aryans rebuilt a new civilization from scratch after the demise of Harappa Civilization . It is correct that during the period of reconstruction, Aryans were dominant, but it is also true that indigenous people of Harappa Civilization were the ones who knew agriculture and production of other goods made by low caste artisans. As a matter of fact, the Aryans took advantage of free or cheap labor and technical know-how of indigenous people, enriched themselves, and created great empires on their toil. Not only the indigenous people produced material goods for the Aryans, but they also took part in creation of their scriptures. Kosambi has rightly pointed out that when *Mahabharata* was being created “Professional bards (suta) were the original poets and singers when Brahminism had not separated its priest caste greatly from the other Aryans.” (39) Therefore, large parts of books like *Mahabharata* are also created with substantial contribution from indigenous artists. Since the singers were indigenous Harappa Civilization artists, therefore, Indian classical musical structures are not shared by the Europeans. This is another proof that in the reconstruction of civilization, Indo-Aryan contribution is quite marginal.

A similar pattern is observed during the Muslim rule who imposed their language, Persian, for many centuries unlike Aryan’s failure to implement Sanskrit at administrative level. Nevertheless, despite Persian domination, the creative arts, like music, were monopolized by the indigenous artists: a bulk of them belonged to Punjab. If we look closely, other than matters of war and bureaucratic

functions, the foreign elites made no contributions towards innovations in production processes. Most of the Indian goods consumed or exported were the result of indigenous people's ingenuity.

The Demise of Harappa Civilization

Several theories have been articulated about the demise of Harappa Civilization. The first, and most known is Max Muller's in which it is hypothesized that Aryan invasions destroyed this civilization. To support this, view such suktas from *Rigveda* is provided:

“Inder kills the demons with his weapons and opens the waterway”⁽⁴⁰⁾

It is inferred from this sukat that Aryans destroyed the local irrigation system that led to its destruction. Furthermore, it is claimed that river Saraswathi dried up and became the major cause of end of Harappa Civilization. Because it is established that the Harappa Civilization area went beyond Punjab and Sindh and since Haryana, Rajasthan and Gujrat were also main centers of this civilization, the drying up of river Saraswathi cannot attributable to the destruction of the whole civilization. Furthermore, if river Saraswathi was still there after the Aryans came, then its drying up cannot be designated as cause of Harappa Civilization's demise.

The contemporary view is that Harappa Civilization had declined at around 1900 BC, almost 500 years before Aryans reached Punjab. According to the latest ecological research, the weather patterns had changed drastically, monsoon rainfalls had stopped, and the rivers were not flooded anymore⁽⁴¹⁾⁽⁴²⁾⁽⁴³⁾ The agricultural production dwindled substantially, and the cities were deserted. There was a 900-year drought that decimated the urban centers

from Harappa Civilization to Mesopotamia. Such dire conditions forced the Harappans to move towards the South and after several centuries they reached the southern parts and settled.

It is postulated that Harappans went to the South via two routes: one, along the sea shores and the other, through the inland. Prof. Franklin Southworth has concluded from the names of the Maharashtra cities ending in word “vali” which becomes “pali” in Southern languages that Harappans of Punjab, using “vali” for towns established the said cities. ⁽⁴⁴⁾. Brohi language, spoken in Baluchistan and parts of Afghanistan is also considered a branch of Dravidian languages.

The ecological changes as the cause of destruction of Harappa Civilization is valid to a large extent. It is logical to envision that Harappa Civilization towns could not be sustained due to a sharp decline of surplus production in its surrounding areas. However, it is a partial explanation of the Harappa Civilization decline. It is more probable that the Harappa Civilization had declined when Aryans came, and they finished off its remaining structures. The very fact that the higher caste people are of fair complexion while the lower castes are of dark color and have features like Africans, shows that Indo-Aryans conquered the indigenous inhabitants and enslaved them.

Some apologists of argue that wars depicted in *Rigveda* were inter-tribal Aryan conflicts. This can be partially true, but many things lead one to believe that these were wars between two sets of populations belonging to different races. For example, the “Asura” gods are portrayed having great knowledge of iron, among the earlier Aryans, but are described as despicable by late arrivals. Aryan poets pray

for the destruction of “Asura” and Dāseya in hymns. The contradiction among the Aryans and indigenous people is evident in many ways. Indigenous people’s god, Varata’ as a symbol of resistance, is shown to be the enemy of Aryan god, Inder. Historian Sayana takes Varata as ‘enemy’ and ‘group of people’. In *Rigveda*, Varta is usually mentioned along with Daseya, ‘slave’⁽⁴⁵⁾. Here Varata represents flat or broken-nosed enslaved Punjabi people. At many places in *Rigveda*, Daseya are portrayed as dark skinned flat nosed people who worship lingam and are devoid of any religion. In addition, it is stated that these people have a separate system of magic and their language is also different.

Harappa Cities

In the time of the Harappan civilization urban centers were relatively concentrated in the Punjab region. It has been suggested that these towns originated in the Cholistan-Mohenjodaro area and later expanded to the north and north-east.⁽⁴⁶⁾

Agroha; Ajaram; Bagrian daTheh; Banawali;
Bhagwanpura; Chak Purvane Syal; Dadehri; Dhalevan;
Gurni Kalan; Harappa; Hasanpur; Kalibangan ; Katpalon ;
Kotla Nihang Khan; Lakhmirwala; Mitathal; Mohenjodaro;
Mohrana; Nagar; Rakhigarhi; Rangmahal; Ropar; Sanghol;
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Aryans in Punjab

Genealogists, historians and research scholars from the related fields have reached a consensus that a large group of outsiders entered Punjab during 2000-1500 B.C. This group has been identified as Aryans. Prof. Michael Witzel of Harvard University estimates that the Aryans reached Punjab around 1300 B.C. ⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾ No doubt has been left that the genes of male newcomers match with the Europeans. However, genetic studies have shown that the genes of subcontinental females do not match that of Europeans but are identical to the people who came to Punjab 65,000 years back. The question is what the manner of Aryan's entry into Punjab.

Max Muller (1823-1900), in 1850, initiated the discussion about the Aryan invasion in Punjab. ⁽³⁾ According to this theory a group of Central Asian came to Punjab and the other went to Europe. It is considered one of the major emigrations from Central Asia for which no definite reasons have been found yet. It may have happened due to population growth, but it is certain that domestication of horse and use of spoked wheel chariots facilitated the emigration. ⁽⁴⁾ According to S. S. Sharma, Aryans were successful everywhere in India because "they had chariots pulled by horses -used in Western Asia for the first time." ⁽⁵⁾ Additionally, it was asserted that the Aryans invaded old Harappa Civilization, completely destroyed it, and enslaved the indigenous population. They imposed their religion and language, Sanskrit, on the local people.

Many researchers refuted the theory of Aryan invasion and claimed that they did not come as organized armies. Some

of the detractors of the Aryan invasion theory denied their foreign origin and propounded that they were indigenous as well. However, others who conceded to foreign origin of Aryans, claimed that they came as individual groups in several centuries. Text of Rigveda, created in Punjab around 1200 B.C., has been used to differentiate the Aryans who came early or in later periods. Most of the historians agree that Aryans were pastoral when they reached Punjab. It is evident from Rigveda that Aryan society centered around cows and oxen. The cow had such an effect on the social mindset that, even in our time, the kitchen area was covered with cow dung.

R. S. Sharma, in his book, History of Ancient India, claims that Aryans knew agriculture quite well. However, the other evidences do not back up such a claim. ⁽⁶⁾ The sketch portrayed by D. D. Kosambi, indicates that Aryans were pastoral, and their thinking was still at a low level. ⁽⁷⁾ Most of all, the hymns of Rigveda are centered around praying for two things: *pasu* (animals) and *parajana* (offspring). In Punjab prayer this changed to “*dudh*” (milk) and “*put*” (son), for which people in Punjab still pray.

As mentioned earlier, the Aryans had an advantage in their use of horse which was alien to indigenous people. As a matter of fact, the indigenous people considered horse as a symbol of oppression and hated horse riding. ⁽⁸⁾ The presence of elephant in Punjab is also doubtful as indigenous people would have deployed them to counter Aryans. Kosambi also confirms that elephant had not been domesticated in Punjab up till then. ⁽⁹⁾ It is possible that when Harappa Civilization was at its peak, some tribal hunters would have brought elephants or their body parts from thick forests of Ganga Valley and sold them here. It

seems more likely, because there is an evidence that elephant related goods were traded by Harappans in cities of Mesopotamia. The presence of elephant on Harappa postage stamps does not prove its presence in this area. The pictures of lion and elephants are found in many places like Tibet, where there were no such animals: these are taken to be symbols of power and were used everywhere. According to Greek historian Megasthenes, common people could not keep elephants during the period of Chandergupta Maurya.⁽¹⁰⁾ A special band of Sudras specialized in elephant hunting, he adds. After the demise of Maurya dynasty, ruling elites used to but elephants for wars and class distinctions. The rajas and feudal used to have elephants even in 20th century. However, at the time of Aryan domination, indigenous people had no elephants.

It can be envisioned that Aryan took centuries to settle in Punjab but it could not have been a peaceful transition either. The indigenous people would have resisted them at every step. In the spirit of tribalism even two local tribes cannot be at peace with each other and how it could have been possible when Aryans were completely alien to the indigenous people. Bhai Parmanand Ji calls Punjab the home of Aryans and condemns the indigenous people, which shows the basic contradiction between two groups:

“Following their own custom, their widow used to marry the younger brother of her husband. These people drink and dance on their customary gatherings. They had absolutely no caste system. Aryans hated them...Aryans conquered them and pushed them to forests or enslaved them. They are called ‘chandals’ in Manu and strict laws are prescribed to keep them in permanent slavery. They are identified as ‘shatru’ (enemy) or Dāseya (slave) in Vedas. They are

described as flat-nosed or nooseless. There are prayers to kill them and to conquer them. Inder destroys them and makes them helpless. These people live in houses and big towns. It is mentioned in Vedas that Inder destroyed the towns of these Asuras. These demons are very prosperous, they have 7 towers and 90 forts”⁽¹¹⁾

It is evident from Bhai Parmanand Ji’s description that, first, the people of Harappa were well-off before the Aryans came and, two, the Aryans destroyed a fully developed civilization and enslaved its inhabitants. Punjab’s class-based society also reflects that fair colored have oppressed the dark colored people. In several genetic studies it has been found that common Indo-European gene, R1a is found more in the upper Indian castes: twice as many Brahmans have this gene than those in lower castes.⁽¹²⁾ It is not without a cause that all Khojas, Musalis, Mirasis, Chohre, Chumar, Ahiri, Sansi, Nat, Bazi-gar, Harni, Gandla and Od are of dark color and thick lipped. ‘Varna’ is the basic word used for caste, which means color.⁽¹³⁾ From this one can infer that these dark colored people were enslaved or pushed to jungles much earlier than the class division emerged in Aryan tribal society. Writings like that of Parmanand’s, prove that indigenous people, forced to live as gypsies, were not those who were left behind at the food-gathering stage in the economic race. Many gypsies use hard learned technical know-how to create delicate things and performing arts. This shows that many civilized people would have run away into forests, and those who didn’t were turned into permanent slaves. In short, one can postulate and reiterate that indigenous people of Harappa were enslaved much before the caste system emerged in Aryan society and the society was already divided into propertied tribes and slaves.

To confirm the point that the incoming Aryans were mostly males, David Reich has said that, the males coming from Central Asian planes, were more successful than the local ones, in spreading their genes. ⁽¹⁴⁾ It is concluded in recent research from 2017, led by Marina Silva, that, "...during the copper age, the gene of Central Asian males was much higher. It was a reflection of a social system dominated by Indo-European patriarchal system." ⁽¹⁵⁾. There should be no surprise that Aryan females were considered as lowly creatures. In Vedas and Mahabharata, the names of mothers of most of the towering gurus and warriors is not disclosed because they belonged to Harappa generation. This was hypocritical of the alien males to procreate through Harappan women and then give them a bad name. In Mahabharata, it is declared that:

"Their women intoxicated with drinks and divested of robes, laugh and dance outside the walls of houses and cities, without garlands and unguents, singing all the while drunken and obscene songs of diverse kinds that are as musical as the bray of the ass or bleat of the camel. In intercourse they are absolutely without any restraint, and in all other matters they act as they like" ⁽¹⁶⁾

The incoming alien males forced indigenous women to establish households with them. However, in the due course, there was a continuous confrontation and reconciliation between the foreign and indigenous people. This was the reason that for centuries the mixed marriages were acceptable. It was much later that mixed marriages were prohibited. According to Megasthenes, there was a prohibition on outside caste marriages and changing the profession. Nevertheless, the mixed marriages continued for a long time in Punjab, prompting Brahmans of Ganga-

Jumna Valley to declare Punjab as degenerated. The contradiction between Punjab and Ganga-Jumna Valley continued till late. Waris Shah hints to such contradiction when, adoring Heer's eyes he writes, "Kajla nainan di dhar vich phab reha, charhia Hind te katak Punjab da ji" (The mascara in Heer's eyes is overwhelming. It seems like Punjab's army has invaded India.)" ⁽¹⁷⁾

According to Panini, in *Ganga-Jumna*, Punjab was characterized as "Vahika is such a country of five rivers where people are devoid of any religion (*nishta dharm*). They are polluted ones." ⁽¹⁸⁾ Probably, besides religious and social reasons, capturing of material resources was also a root cause. The Aryans occupied the vast areas of Western Punjab, turned the local population into bonded labor, and perpetuated the herd breeding till the modern times. This is, commonly, called *jatka samaj* (indigenous society) that did not change till early 20th century. Rest of the Punjab had an agrarian economy and dynamics were somewhat different.

Iron was not found during Harappa Civilization period and, instead, copper was commonly used. After the Aryans came to Punjab and iron was discovered, it became possible to clear the thick forests and plough the hard-thick soil of Ganga-Jumna Valley. This resulted in vast areas of cultivable land and, hence, the production of agricultural commodities increased manifold. Such a huge surplus production, led to realignment of classes: along with emergence of trading classes, the new kingdoms propped up, which were later transformed into empires. Ganga-Jumna valley was ahead in production because of much higher yearly average rainfall of 40 inches as compared to Punjab (6 inches in Western Punjab and 10 inches in areas

around Lahore). ⁽¹⁹⁾The economic prosperity along with establishment of social institution and private property gave rise to caste system and further subjugation of lower castes and women. Such a phenomenon may appear to be counter-intuitive, but this is the manner in which historical dynamics worked.

In a way, Punjab was left behind because of lack of institutions, opines Kosambi. However, it can be argued that due to continuation of culture of Harappa Civilization, Punjab was relatively more egalitarian and more resistant to caste system. This was likely the reason that Buddhism, an anti caste religion, could not spread in its birth place, but became much more popular in old area of Harappa Civilization (Punjab and Sindh). Punjab may not have kept its leading position in the Iron-Age, but there are several evidences that it remained a huge surplus producing area. The very fact that Persian Empire found the area to be annexation worthy in 5th century B.C., shows that it was a surplus producing area: no one tries to occupy areas comprised of forests and deserts. Frequent invasions after 400 B.C. also proves the point.

Around 300 B.C., at the time of Alexander's invasion and establishment of Maurya Dynasty, there were huge non-productive classes (rajas, bureaucracy, trading and priestly classes) that could only survive if the population was producing large enough surplus. According to some historians, Buddhism came to Punjab in 200 B.C. though Buddhist sources claim that it was there from 483 B.C. Irrespective of the identification of exact period of Buddhism induction in Punjab, the fact is that Buddhist institutions require a huge amount of surplus wealth. The Buddhist establishment, comprised of huge number of

Bhikshus, their worshipping places and educational institutions demand a big outlay of economic resources. In addition to Buddhists, there were large groups of jogis and Janis as well. On top of this, armies of local rajas and that of frequent invaders had to be sustained.

There is another indicator of an advanced production system. Buddha, despite his anti-caste stand, declared that three types of people cannot join his Sangha and become Bhikshus. One, slaves, two, those indebted to moneylenders and three, soldiers of the ruler's army. This shows that there was slavery during that time and, more importantly, the monetary system had developed to the point that institution of money lending was wide spread. The latter is a symptom of an advanced economy. People could mortgage themselves i.e. become slaves and by paying the debt could become free again. One could see glimpses of that system in Western Punjab where Khojas and Musalis were permanently kept under debt and were not free to leave the village.

On sociological level, there was a fundamental change in Punjabi society. The evidence from Harappa excavations show that it was, largely, a matriarchal society. However, given the general historical pattern, Aryans being pastoral, imposed a patriarchal system. To understand this historical process, it is universally accepted that at food gathering stage there was no gender inequality. However, at the hunting stage the males had an edge over females because they were the source of economic subsistence. After the hunting stage, society took two different directions: in the herd breeding social structure, women were pushed to a lower grade while in the nascent agrarian set-up women took the lead.

Agriculture was invented by women and they remained at the forefront until domesticated animals were used for ploughing. It is generally believed that magic emerged as a faith system with agriculture. Since, females were the pioneers of agriculture, they were the spiritual leaders and humans worshipped goddesses. At that stage there was no concept of gods. However, after the employment of domesticated animals in cultivation, the male started dominating and the goddesses were replaced by gods and men started leading the worshipping. ⁽²⁰⁾ In the Aryan social structure, the tribal patriarch used to lead the prayers and rituals of sacrifices. To validate this view, two types of Indian tribes have been studied: Khasi and Toda.

Up till 1960s, Khasi tribe of Assam, India, was at earlier stage of agriculture where cultivation was done without animal power. The tribe had a strong matriarchal system in which the woman was the family head and owner of property. The male or husband used to live with his mother's family and would visit his wife in the dark of the night and go back before dawn. ⁽²¹⁾ On the contrary Toda tribe of Nalgri Hill, Tamil India, was completely pastoral and got other necessary goods from neighboring villages. The tribe was not only patriarchal but also practiced polyandry. They would kill the females at birth. ⁽²²⁾⁽²³⁾ In the Khasi tribe descendants were identified with the mother while the system was opposite in Todas.

Several research scholars have found that Aryans introduced polyandry in India and specifically in Punjab. ⁽²⁴⁾ Gerald Berman of Berkley University studied the system of polyandry in areas of Tibet, adjoining Himalaya foothills. He has found that polyandry is not practiced due to scarcity of women. ⁽²⁵⁾ R. N. Saxena, in his book

‘Political Economy of Polyandry’, says that polyandry in the hilly areas is a leftover of Indo-European society. He has quoted Briffault, in saying that “Polyandry in Punjab is linked to Indo-Europeans. This old practice is a reflection of old tribal system and it is found in polyandry system of Hindu Kush where foreigners invaded India.”⁽²⁶⁾

Polyandry is also found in certain areas of East Punjab. Famous novelist, Abdullah Hussain in his novel *Udas Naslin* (Sad Generations) has used characters practicing polyandry.⁽²⁷⁾ Times of India, in its publication of April 1, 2011, has claimed of polyandry in several villages of Malwa area.⁽²⁸⁾

Because of being pastoral and patriarchal, all the Aryan gods, Agni, Inder, Verona, Mitra, Pusan et al are all males. They grabbed indigenous women by force and that is why it is mentioned over and over that Brahmans get slave women in compensation of their services. The old customs of weddings in Punjab, resembling invasion like arrival of bridegroom’s party, also reflect such facts.

In this backdrop, the evolution of Aryan society in Punjab had its peculiarities. If they had procreated through the women of their own, the gender relations may have changed when they reached the agrarian stage. It did not happen that way because they procreated through forcibly owned women. Therefore, the Aryan family institution in Punjab should be studied as an infrequent historical phenomenon. If it is true that the indigenous Harappan women were raised in a matriarchal system and enjoyed freedom, then they must have ongoing conflicts with Aryan males in daily life. The males could not have afforded to use violence against them, therefore, there would have been compromises. It means that in some spheres of life the

women would have sway. It would have dented the extreme patriarchal system. Probably, this is the reason that, unlike the Europeans, in Indo-Aryan extended families every relationship had a separate designation. This must have come from the indigenous women. Probably, the early Aryans had to make substantial changes in their outlook as they were designated as Dāseya and despised upon by late coming Aryans. However, the indigenous lower strata were called Dasa. Due to this difference, the Aryans had a soft corner for Dāseya but were intent to eliminate Dasa through wars.

In the beginning when decisions were made democratically through Sabha (council) the women used to participate in the deliberations, claims R. S. Sharma. ⁽²⁹⁾ However, other historians do not agree with Sharma. There are contradictory Sukats in Rigveda regarding this matter.

“Indra himself hath said, the mind of woman brooks not discipline, Her intellect hath little weight.”

Rig Veda, book 8, hymn 33, verse 17

“Nay, do not die, Purūravas, nor vanish: let not the evil-omened wolves devour thee. With women there can be no lasting friendship: hearts of hyenas are the hearts of women.”

Rig Veda, book 10, hymn 95, verse 15

“Spreading far and wide, from the south, having light and immortality in the yoke of its vehicle, rising above the darkness this bright young maid removes ills of men and is worthy of great praise .It brings great happiness to men and their homes.”

“Every house with her presence , well maintained every day, gives name to days on this earth, gives good materials for consumption, full of light, every day, comes and decorates the world.” Women in Rig Veda: Mandal 1, Sukta 123

In the epic poem, *Mahabharat*, the governance is in the hands of the males, but women are also a significant part of decision-making process. The males are identified with their mothers’ name like Bisham is Ganga Putar, Pando’s are Kunti Putars and Kuravs are Gandhari Nandan. If we view this in historical perspective, it seems that when late comers came, the society had moved to agricultural stage in which cultivation was undertaken along with herd breeding. This means that power was shared between both genders. Nonetheless, Polyandry and having children with different males was common in that period. There are indications that there was not much discrimination regarding the property ownership. For example, Pitama Bisham says:

“In later days, the husbands were prohibited to speak Sanskrit with their wives. It shows that the women were not, primarily, Sanskrit speaking and were looked down upon because of their indigenous roots.”⁽³⁰⁾

Early Historical Period Cities

Argon-Manga; Bara; Chanda Kheri; Chawinda Ghari; Deel Chappar; Fattehpur; Ghugatwind Hinduan; Ghurram; Kakrauni; Khabba; Kotli Mallian; Makhanwindi; Mattewal; Raja Karni ka Kila; Rajputan; Ropar; Saikhan Dheri; Sanghol; Saundha; Sirkap; Singh Bhawanipur; Sirsukh; Sugh; Taragarh; Vadall-Dogran.⁽³¹⁾

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Jatka Samaj (Native Punjab)

We need to explore Punjab's Jatka (native) civilization in order to understand the strategy of animal breeding production of Aryans because they practiced it until almost the 20th century. This pattern of native civilizations continued till 1970. It is a common misperception that a civilization of animal breeding existed in lower or southern areas of Punjab (e.g. Multan). In reality, this civilization stretched from 30-40 miles on the outskirts of Lahore to Sindh and this area was called *Bar* (land between rivers). As per Indu Banga, this area comprised approximately fifty percent of Punjab. Before the canal irrigation system was put into place, residents in a majority of these areas were at the stage of animal breeding and sparingly cultivated barley, millet, wheat, and other similar crops.

Indu Banga further informs that Bar's areas in lower Punjab had less rain per year (6 inches) at an average compared to Lahore (10 inches) ⁽¹⁾. In the Ganges valley, average annual rain is almost 40 inches which was causing an agricultural revolution in the Ganga-Jumna valley. Western Punjab was left behind in this quest and kept following animal breeding until the British streamlined canal irrigation. Even taxation was on cattle instead of crops, and the tax rate according to Indu Banga was 50,000 rupees on 20,000 buffaloes, 10,000 cows, and 4,000 camels in areas adjoining Chenab river. When Sawan Mal became governor of Multan during the tenure of Ranjeet Singh, he imposed taxes on female camels (two rupees), male camels (one rupee), buffaloes (one rupee), cows (six annas), goats and lambs (one anna each). ⁽²⁾

This area was subdivided in four *Bars*, Sandal bar between Ravi and Chenab, Karena (or Khazana?) between Chenab and Jhelum, Neeli Bar from Ravi to Jhelum, and Ganji Bar between Ravi and

Hakra that extended to Thal. The changes in the names of these Bars hints at a tussle between natives of the area and those who came here from outside. For examples, Sandals were locals but the settlers coming here from other areas called them Chuhras (garbage pickers). Another example is of Karena Bar used to be Changhar (native tribe) Bar but Tiwanas and Sials changed its name to Godhal Bar. Changhar was the chieftain of his tribe and contemporary Sargodha is named after him. The highest seat (pond) of this tribe used to be where currently the location of the Civil Hospital of Sargodha. Godha Changar was a descendent of Sandal. Karena, Gondal, Neeli, and Ganji Bars originated and eventually separated from Changhar Bar as well. During the Sultanate era, Nankana and Sheikhupura were called Kali Bar. Karena Bar had two forests named “Subhagha” and “Kaluvana.”⁽³⁾

As per oral tradition the animal breeding civilization started when Aryans conquered the Jatka (native) area. It was mentioned earlier too that people of Harappa based in smaller villages were doing a little bit of farming. This practice was only in those areas which were flooded frequently or where some local arrangement of irrigation was possible.⁽⁴⁾ Aryans were obsessed with cows and eventually buffaloes, although when the latter began is unclear. This much is evident that the civilization remained animal breeding even with the buffalos. In this civilization, influential people had fair or whitish complexion but features of those enslaved (Khojas, Musalis, Mirasis, and other lower castes) resembled south Indians and Africans. This pattern continues until 1970s. This is the reason why those scholars who say there was no emigration from foreign lands in 1300 BC should also explain the difference in features and complexion of the influential versus the under privileged.

The settlers arriving from upper Punjab used to call all these native dwellers *Jangli* (forest people). Both their males and females wore *dhoti* (cloth worn around the waist to cover lower part of the body) and called it *thigri*. Women wore a kurta (shirt)

but men mostly kept their upper body uncovered. Our ancestors used to recall that when they arrived to settle in Sahiwal (previously Montgomery), Jatkas (native people) didn't know how to cook roti (flat bread) or saalan (curry). They cleaned their utensils with cow dung and settlers found this practice disgusting. It was not a big deal to them since they also applied cow dung to the walls and verandas of their homes. Dr. Keerat Singh, in his book *Yadaan Ganji Bar Deyan* (Memories of Ganji Bar), has mentioned that "Janglis were not familiar with farming. Our people trained them. Still they were not as successful in farming despite spending a long time with us." ⁽⁵⁾

The staple diet in Punjab's Jatka (native) civilization was milk, and boiled meat acquired after slaughtering animals and distributing among themselves. In some areas, these natives didn't even know how to churn butter from milk. The 18th century poet, Damodar Das, has mentioned Churi (a snack made from bread, butter and sugar) which hints that roti (flat bread) might have been a feature in that civilization too. However, it is believed that the influential people ate roti (flat bread) with milk while roti was a rare commodity for those inferior in status. Buddha Parkash, quoting Russian scientist Vaselof, has pointed out that the first roti (flat bread) from grain was first made at a center between Hindukush and Himalaya, near Punjab. ⁽⁶⁾ Waris Shah wrote *Heer* in 1767 and Heer belonged to an animal breeding tribe of Sials and because milk was the cheapest commodity the lesser privileged consumed it to get by. That's why Sials' young men in Jhang taunt Ranjha (who used to take care of buffaloes) that "you will have to survive on cup of milk." ⁽⁷⁾ Heer making *churi* for Ranjha was a very big deal.

As mentioned earlier, this was predominantly an animal breeding civilization and cultivation was not very much in vogue. Baba Farid (1179-1266) lived in Ajodhan (Pakpattan) which was on a trade route in 12th or 13th century ⁽⁸⁾ and their production must have been high. But his poetry mentions several prized things like shakkar (raw sugar), brown sugar, and milk, amongst others

which are indicative of advanced farming. Then he points to the gulf between poor and rich “some have abundance of wheat flour, and others don’t even have even salt.” (stanza 44) ⁽⁹⁾ It is significant that the benchmark for richness is wheat flour which very few people had, and poverty is synonym with lack of salt since these people didn’t have enough cash to shop from the market. We also don’t know whether Baba Farid found these commodities (raw sugar etc.) in Ajodhan, Jhansi, or somewhere else.

We do find in *Fawaid-ul-Fawaid* (Khawaja Nizam-ud-Din Aulia’s diary) that boiled wild berries were consumed at the shrine of Baba Farid, but salt was hardly available for use there. ⁽¹⁰⁾ In *Khair-ul-Majalis* (page 150), it is stated that Khawaja Nizam-ud-Din’s often-repeated sentence was that any day will be like Eid (festival) if there was enough *kari delas* (berries) to eat at the Shaikh’s shrine. In the jungle (Bar), *delas* (berries) were found on the *kari* (wild fruit plant) and the devotees most likely used to collect these from there. Hence even Baba Farida and his devotees were surviving on the wild berries despite living in city of Ajodhan or perhaps those with meager resources could afford only that much. It is clear that a large portion of Punjab’s population was finding food from the jungle and even salt was out of the reach of commoners.

Khawaja Ghulam Farid (1845-1901) has written a lot about Rohi (desert) in south Punjab. He himself lived in Uch where local tribes fought against Alexander as well. Khawaja Ghulam Farid was well-informed about the upper classes of that area because he was the spiritual guide (Peer) of the Nawab (ruler) of Bahawalpur as well. Significantly, there is no mention of agricultural production in any of his writings. However, cattle and wishes for their well-being are mentioned repeatedly. He mentions lassi (sweet or savory drink made from churned curd, yogurt or buttermilk mixed with water) obtained from cows as something treasured. When he mentions Rohi, he also makes it a point that mostly women used to shepherd cattle:

“Petite and playful jattis (local youthful women) live in Rohi

They tend to lamb, goats, cows, baby goats, calves” ⁽¹¹⁾

Other than this, the only other commodity mentioned is *peelun* (berries) that grow wild in the jungle. When *peelun* ripen during the season, these are picked up and brought to the market.

“O friend, let’s pick *peelun* together, these have ripened

Some sell in equal weight, some, negotiated and exchange for one and a half times

Some sell in the market, seeing them weighed, o friend” ⁽¹²⁾

It is clear from these verses that *peelun* were being exchanged for grain of the same weight or for one and a half after some hard bargaining. Sometimes it was just weighed and sold in the market. Though not mentioned as such, but wheat, millet, and other crops were cultivated on the river banks. From the writings and poetry of Khawaja Fareed, it is evident that his civilization was animal breeding who cultivated some crops or imported grains from outside.

From the invasion of Alexander till the era of Khawaja Fareed, there was no major economic setback that could prove devastating a civilization like Harappa. That’s why we find evidence in literature that only animal breeding was the primary production source in most of Western Punjab. It should be pondered upon how this civilization could produce surplus to be distributed among local rulers as well as foreign invaders. Khawaja Fareed has also mentioned several kinds of ornaments which shows that the ruling class had access to such things. An undercurrent of this is the ratio of taxation imposed by the rulers on such production.

The next generation of Aryans after coming to Punjab were the offspring of Harappa women. For this reason, there could be extremely fair or extremely dark members in the same family, but their features were different from the natives. *Rigveda*

mentions that there was no bar on marrying different races or cultures till 1 B.C. It makes sense that the incoming Aryan males needed women and the chances of producing mixed races didn't prevent them. It is also certain that Aryans abducted indigenous women: Taking wedding processions to the bride's home appears to be a symbolic continuation of those attacks.

From the customs of Jatka (native) weddings, it becomes clear that the man taking the women away is similar to an invasion in old days. Another prevalent custom is that somebody from the wedding procession goes in advance to spy on the bride's family. The bride's family cordons off the village in a bid to stop him. If the spy remains unsuccessful, then paint is sprinkled on all members of the wedding procession which probably is like the family feud that would have broken out at such a face-off in earlier times. When the wedding procession returns with the bride in a doli (small palanquin), the entire village from the girl's side throws stones at them till the time they are out of sight. In the Jatka (native) civilization, another custom at some places was to create trenches in the way of wedding processions and then camouflage them so that the horses of wedding procession would get trapped and never reach their destination. This is also indicative of the girl being taken away forcibly. It is likely that the single Aryan men attacked and took local Harappa women with them when they came in this area. When the foreigners and locals started mixing more frequently, these attacks to abduct women became customs. Examples of this in Punjab's wedding processions is the groom arriving on a horse and insults (abusive verses) rendered by the women of the bride's family at the groom and his family (through songs). Hindu law has origins in Manu smriti (laws of Manu) which approves of eight types of marriages, including giving legal cover to weddings with women that were forcibly picked up.

Aryan men abducted Harappa women or asked for their hand for wedding, but they didn't marry off their own women to local Harappa men. That's why old tribal wars, particularly between

indigenous and Aryan, are recalled in Jatka (native) folk lore. Legend has it that when Kharals (Aryan) settled in the *Nolakhi* jungles of Ganji and Sandal Bars, Sandal (chief of indigenous tribe, also referred to as Chuhras) asked for one of Aryan girl's hand in marriage. Kharals laid down a condition that Sandal should bring all male and female members of his tribe in the wedding procession. The condition was accepted. Kharals made a stadium with timber and erected gates that prevented anybody from existing if closed. When the wedding procession arrived, the Kharals made all the Sandal males sit in the wood-crafted stadium, closed the gates and torched them to death. The Aryans took the Sandal women. Similar stories are famous about other bars as well, which indicate how Aryans and locals remained at war with each other in ancient Punjab. ⁽¹³⁾

The early parts of *Rigveda* indicate that Aryan animal breeding tribes lived in harmony and democracy. They took decisions in the gathering (referred to as *Sabha*) of entire tribe. However, "Saha" has also been added to "Sabha" (Sabha Saha). Many historians have inferred that it means only higher classes (Brahmin and Kshatriyas) could take decisions in the *Sabha* ⁽¹⁴⁾. We presume that this inference is incorrect since the caste system was not set in stone at the time of those Aryans. In fact, the opposite sounds true as only "*Saha*" (meaning Arya males) could come in "*Sabha*" and nobody from Harappans could be part of it. Keeping the lower castes out of the decision-making process of the tribe has remained standard practice for a long time. In the stories written by 16th and 18th century poets, important decisions taken by the tribe are hailed. When Chuchak (Heer's father) has to marry off her daughter (Heer), he calls a meeting of the tribe elders.

"Chuchak called brothers in a gathering for marrying off Heer

If you say I will marry her with Ranjha or call in match makers

Brothers said, O Chuchak! We will let you know in detail" ⁽¹⁵⁾

Chuchak's brothers got together and gave a decision:

"We have never had a nuptial tie with Ranjhas, nor have in-law relationship with them

Establish this relation with Kheras, advised all the brothers" (16)

When the wedlock with Kheras was agreed, Chuchak again called the tribal elders.

"Chuchak sent the invitation and leaders of all the village sections came" (17)

Before Waris Shah, Damodar Das (1551-1629) wrote Heer's story in 16th century including the same tradition. When Heer reached adulthood, the tribe elders gathered and suggested to her father, Chuchak:

"Sials gathered and gave suggestions to Chuchak

Heer is now grown-up, [therefore] seek a match for her

Damodar said all Sials agreed on the same suggestion" (18)

In the story narrated by Damodar Das, Ranjha's father, fearing conspiracies hatched by his other sons, wanted Ranjha to marry his friend, Yaqoob Khan Warraich's daughter so that he (Ranjha) is protected after his death. When the letter of Ranjha's father reached Yaqoob Khan Warraich, he also called the tribe elders to seek their opinion.

"Damodar said, [Yaqoob] called the entire tribe, and read the letter to them

Listen my entire tribe, I am reading this letter

All of you should make a choice, a kami (lower caste artisan) has brought a message

Say brother whatever is in your heart" (19)

This at least, confirms that the 16th and 18th century poets still had tribal distinctions in their minds and the traditions of tribes taking a collective decision hadn't ceased by then. Damodar Das mentions several artisans, belonging to lower castes, not involved in the collective decision-making. It must be remembered that Aryan's early tribal democracy in Punjab didn't involve Harappa people and this entire system was segregated based on racial lines. It is similar to slaves having no say in other democracies (Greece etc.) during the ancient times.

Aryan tribes elected their leader with the consent of its people and this tradition of having non-hereditary chiefs continued for a long time. From this perspective, Waris Shah confirms this tradition in Ranjha's village, Takht Hazara, with regard to his father:

“Mauju Chaudhary was protector of his village and great leader of all the brothers

He had a great honor among his brothers and was considered an authority in courtyard”⁽²⁰⁾

These two verses make it clear that Ranjha's father is the chieftain of the village, but the language used also indicates that the brothers made him leader themselves and that's why the council agrees with him. There is no suspicion here of Mauju Chaudhary taking over the chieftain's position by force. Some have even gone as far as mentioning that the lower castes could be elevated as leaders through elections. This doesn't sound right given the division of castes and that Aryan leaders wouldn't bow before Harappans.

The caste and class systems were very rigid in Punjab following the arrival of foreigners who made Harappans their slaves. The admirers of old system of Bars, were /are unaware of such a strict class system. In the local animal breeding civilization, Raths (chieftains) taking advantage of the hard work of slaves is also a proof that farming is not a prerequisite for the class system to be in place. Rather it seems that, backward invaders can stall

the traditional progress of local people as well. If they had not made the people of lower Punjab their slaves, they might have made giant strides for economic development much more quickly. D. D. Kosambi ⁽²¹⁾ also mentions that Punjab lagged behind in the farming revolution because petty chieftains and rajas carved small states for themselves in the entire area.

Raths (chieftains) classes in Punjab strictly followed the caste system and their terror was widespread. Three different people in the area narrated the same story regarding a herdsman who broke a sparrow's eggs and saw her flying towards the chief's home. He was so terrified that he rushed to chief's home so that he could respond to the sparrow's complaint. He narrated the entire story to the chief and asked how he could remedy such an act. The chief told him that the sparrow had already lodged the complaint and it could only be remedied if he brought a young buffalo as compensation. He complied forthwith.

Dr. Harkeerat Singh mentions about the religion of Jatkas (native people) that "Janglis of the Bar didn't drink alcohol at all. They religiously prayed and observed fasts." ⁽²²⁾ This may not be true. Although many in the Jatka (native) society of Punjab identified themselves as Muslims, the extent of their religious knowledge was such that one of their village elders asked if Muhammad (P.B.U.H) was ranked higher or Hussain (Imam Hussain R.A). It is possible that there were different religious practices at different places. Research of Ganji Bar villages and of Punjabi literature indicates that Jatkas practiced old Hindu traditions. This is one of the reasons that Bahmans (shortened from Brahman in Punjab) played an important role in Jatka villages. As per the published stories, Bahmans performed the role of messengers, matchmakers, and also go-between to resolve issues among families and tribes.

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Changes in Aryan Society and Mahabharata

Using the comparative method, it has been deduced that there were two types of institutions that dominated tribal systems: one that, Faith Keepers who organized prayers, rituals, and festivals and the second, War Council which took the lead in fights with rival tribes. Similarly, there are two tiers mentioned in the Aryan tribal gatherings (Sabha). One was responsible for performing religious gatherings and cultural festivals whereas the other fought tribal wars. ⁽¹⁾

It is said that formation of War Councils started much later when tribes started attacking each other. But it seems that Aryans had started forming these War Councils quite early on to collect the loot from Harappans and to enslave them. While analyzing the changes and evolution of the Aryan's economic, social, political and religious systems, we shouldn't forget that the society was divided on racial grounds and the Harappa people's hard work was being exploited unfairly. For example, shepherding the cattle would have been considered a very respectable job when Aryans themselves were doing it. The word "Mahi" (meaning male lover) is likely a remnant of those times. But this work became inferior when it was assigned to Harappans. Damodar Das and Waris Shah have mentioned Ranjha taking care of buffaloes for Heer's father was considered work of the lowest cadres.

It seems that the War Councils of Aryan tribes, after (or while) subjugating Harappans started attacking each other as well. Early on, the booty collected was distributed equally within the tribe, so each of these fights benefitted the entire tribe. Therefore, the major deity "Inder" of that time has been eulogized a lot during these fights. It means that those who led the fight on behalf of the tribe were probably extensively praised and had exalted status. Gradually, those who specialized in fighting assumed command of War Councils instead obtaining it through elections.

These commanders started to amass booty for themselves rather than distributing it equally. They also gave themselves a higher social status and made fighting wars a hereditary profession. Their tribes initially backed them completely, but later tolerated them reluctantly and finally the warrior families started using force to get their way. ⁽²⁾ The Kshatriya caste of fighters took shape and the pattern of hereditary rulers commenced. The force that was being used against Harappans was now in effect against each other within Aryan tribes.

When warrior families (later called Kshatriya) took control of their respective tribes, dynastic rule became a norm. Small princely states started forming and began to take on each other frequently. In these fights, we find Bharat tribe of Punjab engaged in a war at the banks of river Ravi with ten rajas. ⁽³⁾ The losers included the Puru tribe. Bharat and Puru tribes merged to make a bigger “Kuru” tribe which established the first big kingdom headquartered in Kurukshetra (Haryana). ⁽⁴⁾ Their first headquarter was Asandwat (Haryana) that submerged, and they made Inder Parast (now Delhi) their center. This rule (900-1200 BC) formed during the period of Rigveda when steel was newly discovered and was not in much use. The Ganges valley colonization started after discovery of iron and several areas adjoining Punjab (Haryana) became part of Kuru rule. This era came to an end during 500-900 BC but left behind many legendary stories, composed in *Mahabharata*.

The two major tribes that took part in the war of Mahabharata were Kuru and Pandu, but several other kingdoms also took part. In a way, the story of *Mahabharata* is the climax of tribal wars in Punjab. The Brahmins concocted and sanctified story treads along their self-serving design as a story of a family, but in essence it is a war between two separate tribes. The backgrounds of both tribes are quite distinct from each other. Pandus were born to two mothers (Kunti and Madri) from separate biological fathers. Kunti’s father was a herder and she had a son (Karan) even before marriage. Madri, a Madra princess, considered Kunti

from a lowly caste. Then five Pandu brothers married a single woman (Draupadi). The story of the blind king of Kuru fathering one hundred sons is also quite talismanic, but that's nothing like the story of Pandus. These stories show that polyandry (several men marrying a single woman) was prevalent within the tribes during those times and sexual norms hadn't changed.

In the story of *Mahabharata*, Pandu and his brother Dhritarashtra, were born in strange circumstances. Their grandfather, Raja Shantanu, had a son through the goddess Ganga, named Bisham. Then Raja Shantanu, fell in love with Satyawati (daughter of the chief of sailors) and wanted to marry her. Sarasvati's father laid down a condition that the next king will be Satyawati's son instead of Raja Shantanu's son, Bisham's. Raja had two sons from Satyawati, namely Chitrangada and [Vichitravirya](#). Chitrangada got the throne but died soon after, and [Vichitravirya](#) was elevated. Around that time, Kansi's ruler arranged a Swayamvara (Hindu custom in which a woman can choose a groom from an assembly of men) but didn't invite Kuru of Hastinapur. Bisham got enraged and kidnapped all three sisters – Amba, Ambika, and Ambalika. Ambika and Ambalika married Raja [Vichitravirya](#) but Amba expressed her desire to marry Raja Shalwa. When Raja Shalwa refused, she asked Bisham to marry her. On his refusal too, she became his enemy and to take revenge from him. She was reborn as Draupadi in the home of Raja Draupad of Shikhandi. Raja [Vichitravirya](#) died soon after and Satyawati asked her first son, [Rishi Veda Vyasa](#), to make both queens pregnant, thereby meaning she also had a son out of wedlock before her marriage.

Vyasa had such terrible looks that Ambika was taken aback and turned pale when they had intercourse, and this is the reason why their son was named Pandu (Pale or yellow). When Vyasa came close to Ambika, she got scared and closed her eyes, and her son Dhritarashtra was born blind. On achieving adulthood, Pandu assumed the throne and married Kunti and Madri. Dhritarashtra married Gandhari, the princess of Gandhara. In the meanwhile,

Raja Pandu's arrow hit Rishi Kandamaan by mistake while hunting, who cursed him to die if he tried to mate with a woman. Pandu went to the jungle with both his queens and blind Dhritarashtra became the king.

Raja Pandu wanted children and encouraged Queen Kunti to produce children from other men. To convince her, he quoted the old traditions:

“Thus, addressed by his loving wife, king Pandu, well-acquainted with all rules of morality, replied in these words of virtuous import, O Kunti, what thou hast said is quite true. Vyushitaswa of old did even as thou hast said. Indeed, he was equal unto the celestials themselves. But I shall now tell thee about the practices of old indicated by illustrious Rishis, fully acquainted with every rule of morality. O thou of handsome face and sweet smiles, women formerly were not immured within houses and dependent on husbands and other relatives. They used to go about freely, enjoying themselves as best as they liked.

O thou of excellent qualities, they did not then adhere to their husbands faithfully, and yet, O handsome one, they were not regarded sinful, for that was the sanctioned usage of the times. That very usage is followed to this day by birds and beasts without any exhibition of jealousy. That practice, sanctioned by precedent, is applauded by great Rishis. O thou

of taper thighs, the practice is yet regarded with respect amongst the Northern Kurus. Indeed, that usage, so lenient to women, hath the sanction of antiquity. The present practice, however of women's being confined to one husband for life hath been established but lately. I shall tell thee in detail who established it and why. It hath been heard by us that there was a great Rishi of the name of Uddalaka, who had a son named Swetaketu who also was an ascetic of merit. O thou of eyes like lotus-petals, the present virtuous practice hath been established by that Swetaketu from anger. Hear thou the reason.”⁽⁵⁾

On such urging Kunti revealed that Rishi Darwasa had told her a charm (mantra) so that she could call any deity when desired. Kunti sought the help from Dharma (God of justice), Vayo (God of air), and Indu (the highest God) and three sons, Yudhishthira, Bhima and Arjuna were born through these interactions. Kunti told the other queen, Madri, about this charm as well who convened deity Ashwini and produced twin sons, Nakoula, and Sahadeva, from him. Raja Pandu, inspired by excellent weather tried to have intercourse with queen Madri and died.

When the five Pandu brothers went to seek their share of the throne, Duryodhana (son of Dhritarashtra) refused to give them anything. The rest of the story is about conspiracies and fights of these two families against each other. In between when Pandus were hiding in the jungle, Arjun won Draupadi in a Swayamvara and all five brothers married her on the directions of their mother, Kunti. Finally, war started in which the dark-skinned Krishan sided with Pandus and they won.

Besides the war, the story shows that open sexuality (no discrimination among sisters, brothers, fathers, mothers) was common in those times and any of them could be chosen to produce an offspring. So much so that a deity, Pushan, produced a child from his daughter. It seems incest was common in those times. It is not clear if incest was because of the shortage of women or to keep the race pure. The *Rigveda* states this:

“Pushan is the lover of his sister. Pushanam Nava Jaashvam Stoshaam Vaajinam. Svasuryo Jaar Uchayate--- Just as Pushan Penetrates his sister and brings joy to her by fulfilling her, may Pushan bring joy to us.” [Rg Ved VI.55.4]

“Agni is the lover of his own sister—” [Rg Ved X.3.3]

“Ashwins are the sons of Savitar and Ushas who are brother and sister.”

“The Ashvisns married Surya and Savitri who is their sister [RV I.116.19].

seed in the daughter and produces a son, similarly the sun plants the seed in the vagina of dawn and produces their son the day.” [RV I.31.1-2].

“Agni is the son of his father and his sister” [RgVed.I.91.7]

“Brahma desired Sarasvati and went to her, asking her to stay with him. She, being his daughter, was furious at this and said, ‘Your mouth speaks inauspiciously and so you will always speak in a contrary way.’ From that day, Brahma’s fifth head always spoke evilly and coarsely. Therefore, one day when Siva was wandering about with Parvati and came to see Brahma, Brahma’s four heads praised Siva but the fifth made an evil sound. Siva, displeased with the fifth head, cut it off. The skull remained stuck fast to Siva’s hand, and though he was capable of burning it up, Siva wandered the earth with it for the sake of all people, until he came to Benares.”— Siva Purana, Jnanasamhita 49:65-80.

If the story is examined closely, Bisham was born to an unknown woman which means that his mother was a lower caste Harappa woman whom the writer or Raja didn’t want to identify. This is the reason why either mother or father of the main characters in historical or religious books are largely unknown. These unknown parents were mostly Harappa people whom Aryan writers wanted to keep secret. Kosambi has mentioned this:

“Vasishtha, however, was a new type of priest. He was begotten of the seed of two Vedic gods Mitra and Varuna, once the sun and the sky god respectively. His mother is not mentioned. On the contrary, he was - in one and the same account - 'born of the mind of Urvashi' (an apsaras or water goddess); born also of a jar which received the combined semen of the two gods; and discovered 'clad in the lightning' in a pushkara. This apparently confused narrative is really quite consistent and straightforward. It means that Vasishtha came of the human representatives of a

pre-Aryan mother goddess and as such had no father. Going over to the patriarchal Aryans required some respectable father and at the same time a denial of the non-Aryan mother. Agastya, founder of another major brahmin clan group still extant, was similarly born of a jar. The jar represents the womb and thereby the mother goddess. The seven main brahmin clan progenitors may go back to hoary Sumerian or Indus antiquity as the 'seven sages'; their names do not tally in the various lists given by brahmin scriptures.”⁽⁶⁾

The other Rani, Satyawati, was a sailor's daughter in any case so she would be a low caste Harappan. Her first son, Vasaya, who impregnated Ambika and Amblika, had terrible looks so he could be Harappan too. Since Kunti was the real aunt (father's sister) of dark-skinned Krishana, it means she would be either Harappan or mixed race. The birth of five Pandus from four deities means that they were offspring of four different men. Draupadi entering into wedlock with five brothers is also part of the polyandry tradition. In this story, Harappa women have a considerable role and there was no limit on sexual ethics. It seems that Aryan men were mating Harappa women in many forms and marriage (with a single woman) was not institutionalized by then. Pandus are still revered in the mountainous region bordering Tibet and polygamy (as previously mentioned) is in vogue in several of those areas.

Some other aspects of this story require another consideration. Draupadi's father Dhrupad's state, Panchal, became part of Taxila province during Raja Ashok's era. It is part of modern day Kallar (an arm of Kashmiri Brahmins): Panchal of Ganges valley came into being later. The legend of Mahabharata starts 1200 BC; the use of iron had not started till that time and Aryan population was not in large numbers in the jungles surrounding Ganges valley. Most of the main characters of Mahabharata still belonged to Punjab. Dhritarashtra wife, Gandhari, was from Gandhara while Pandu's both queens, Kunti and Madri, were

also from there and it would not be very off the mark to assume that Draupadi was from Kallar's Panchal too.

Historian Buddha Parkash believes that Pandus were later Aryans coming from north who challenged Kuru. He also says that five Pandu brothers represented unity of several tribes. Panini has called Arjun's devotees "Arjunika" who became "Parajunka" in the writings of Kautilya. There was also a tribe by this name till 4th century in Punjab. Arjun is the symbol of Chinese Turkmans and means white or pure which is common in Saka. Bheem, hero of Saka tribes in ancient Asia, is said to be from the Virka (Baghiar) tribe of ancient Asia. Virks of Punjab draw their lineage from that tribe while there is also a station named Virka on the Amritsar-Pathankot railway line. ⁽⁷⁾

The eldest of Pandu brothers, Yudhishtira, is said to be from Yudhia tribe who ruled upper Punjab and minted coins with his face were found in Kangra, Ludhiana, Rohtak, Delhi, Dehradun, and Saharanpur. [Cunningham](#) has pointed out that Joyia Rajputs of the state of Bahawalpur are descendants of Yudias as well. In *Mahabharata*, Yudhishtira's son is named Yudhia. Nakoula, and Sahadeva's background relates to their mother, Madri. Madra tribe is of Persian origin and dwelled between Chenab and Ravi with Sialkot as their center. The Iranian name of Madras is "Madarkara" and "kara" in that stands for military or people. In Pashto, "Kore" means house or family. Their ancestor, Raja Vyosita, like Pandu, died while having sex with queen Bhadra Kakswati. Rani Bhadra gave birth to seven sons; four of them were Madras and three were Salwas. Panini has shown that Madras were part of Salwas as well. From Pali writings, we come to know that Pandu tribe attacked Gandhara's Raja Pukasati (during the era of Raja Ambhasara of Magadh). From this account, it is clear that Pandu tribes were united including Arjunais, Virka, Yudhians, and two wings of Madra tribes. Out of these, Arjunas and Virkas were Sakas and Yudhians and Madras were Persian.

If we agree that Pandu tribes came from the north later on, it means that that they would have taken control of Gandhara's Dhrupad (Kallar Seydan) area first. The fact that they won Draupadi in Swayamvara could be a manifestation of their control of the region. Draupadi is believed to be a major goddess worshipped by Tamils and special days are dedicated for such an observance. Because only Tamils worship Draupadi, it can be inferred that that she was the goddess of people prior to the arrival of Aryans who was reintroduced in history as a special character in Mahabharata. ⁽⁸⁾⁽⁹⁾

It is worthwhile to note that Kuru had to face new emerging powers from within Punjab. In this war, Aryan states of Punjab supported Kuru Duryodhana. On the opposite side, several rulers of indigenous ancestry sided with the Pandus. ⁽¹⁰⁾ It is also worth considering that that dark-skinned Krishan is the aligned with the Pandus as the major architect of the war. His black complexion and status as a herder make it clear that he was not Aryan but belonged to the ancient pastoral civilization. Krishan's era is believed to be before 3000 B.C. while Mahabharata was fought in 1000 B.C. It clearly means that either Krishan is an imaginative character, or his era has been incorrectly mentioned. Either way through Krishan, the role of black complexioned people is decisive in the war of Mahabharata (imaginative or real). If Pandus accepted Krishan's leadership, they not only got support from indigenous areas but also took them as the intellectual leaders.

It seems that Arjun's fight against the ancient population continued. Arjun set fire to the jungles used by Nag tribe and their chief, Tikshaka, had to flee from there. The fighting continued and Arjun's grandson, Janmeja, attacked Tikshalsa and evicted Nag tribe from there too in an attempt to eliminate their race. From the seals found in Mohenjo-Daro, it appears that Harappan people used to worship the serpent and the worship pattern of Vritra people were pretty similar as well. ⁽¹¹⁾

The way the story of Mahabharata has been woven together is enough proof that this (real or imagined war) formed the basis of Maurya rule on entire India, starting from Taxila, after several hundred years. This area was home to many types of fighters who were available for hire to go to wars. The power derived by the Pandus in this area could be attributed to these types of fighters ⁽¹²⁾ and, with their help, they would have taken control of the throne in Punjab's Kurukshetra (holy land). It seems that powerful ruling classes had not emerged in the Ganga-Jumna do' aab (land between two rivers) yet and the entire political game was being played within Punjab. Max Muller says:

“In the Veda the stage on which the life of the ancient kings and poets is acted, is the valley of the Indus and the Punjab, as it is now called, the Sapta Sindhasa*h*, the Seven Rivers of the Vedic poets. The land watered by the Ganges is hardly known, and the whole of the Dekkan seems not yet to have been discovered.” ⁽¹³⁾

It must be mentioned here that a period spanning almost 600 years, after the decline of Harappa civilization, appears to be shrouded in haze. But the new civilization that started forming as per ancient teachings was only rooted in Punjab till a long time. We can find all three types of production modes in the Punjab of that era: gatherers/hunters, pastoral (cattle herders) and traditional farmers. Those food gatherers were Harappa people who used to roam around in all the jungles of Punjab.

In upper, central, and eastern Punjab, traditional farming and other similar trades had started to flourish again. It seems though that Aryans had to resort to traditional farming at some stage and they established a new economic system by using the knowledge and hard work of Harappans almost for free. After the collapsing of pastoral tribal society of the Aryans, their people also suffered from poverty in large numbers and were pushed into menial occupations after having started families with Harappa women.

In upper Punjab beyond Lahore, annual rain average was more than ten inches while the ground water was also sweet and easily

available. Punjab and areas to the east advanced in farming (after the discovery of iron) because of the hard work of Harappan slaves: even if they were not slaves, they performed all the tasks only in exchange for meals (as per Panini).⁽¹⁴⁾ It is interesting that some who had taken up farming still believe in a collectivist society. They distributed yields and extra crops were set on fire instead of selling in open market .

In the northern parts of Punjab, farming was flourishing in mountainous valleys (Swat etc.) while handicrafts were also being made. Panini mentions that women used to make many kinds of blankets before selling them in markets in areas like Swat. That's why the founders of the first Indian empire, Maurya, emerged from Taxila and Gandhara, and Sialkot became their center subsequently. Majority of the northern areas were rain irrigated that resulted in low crop yields, hence we see that it became a center of mercenaries coming from outside after 6th BC and remained so for many years to come.

Agricultural farming areas of Punjab developed to a point where it could produce surplus which enticed foreign invaders: none of them had shown any inclination to attack here before the production of crops in large quantities. However, after the discovery of iron, many moved on to Ganga-Jumna valley where substantial rain, (40-inch annual average), quickly led to streamlining of agrarian system. Consequently, in that region, class and caste system also developed rapidly, big monarchies were established, and institution of private property was put in place on solid footing. In Kosambi's view, Punjab lagged behind in this race for development because it couldn't establish institutions required for a new society.⁽¹⁵⁾

The centrality of Krishan's character in *Mahabharata* reveals that the fight for narrative was underway with full vigor. When farming started to gain ground in the new society, the public in those areas needed a new ideology whereby they could live in harmony and peace. Farmers and traders always remain in favor of peace and security of roadways. It is always a central

conditionality for them to produce crops and indulge in trading. For this reason, the influence of warrior God Inder faded away and people of agrarian Punjab started worshipping dark-skinned Krishana instead. Krishna's brother, Bala, was also revered immensely by the farmers because his insignia was the plough. Both the dark-skinned Krishan and his brother, Bala, were advocates of peacefully herding and agriculture. In *Rigveda* Krishan is referred to as a demon as well as a deity. They have been shown engaged in fighting with local Nag tribe and also doing exactly the opposite. Kosambi mentions that when Greeks arrived in Punjab, they observed that most of the population was worshipping Krishan and not Inder. ⁽¹⁶⁾

If analyzed in this context, Waris Shah created a new Krishana in the shape of Ranjha in 18th century for a new intellectual discourse. Due to the changing times, Ranjha has been portrayed as fair-complexioned (Chand Ranjha), unlike Krishana, but he had all the other traits of Krishan. Ranjha is a Krishan-like god in Punjabi classical folklore and it appears that this was a renewed effort to eliminate religions, castes, and class divisions. The poets and singers of Punjab had been yearning for such a change since antiquity. Poets and singers of ancient times were already doing what Waris Shah preached. The Brahmin Pundits had taken over all these teachings and used them for their own class interests. More painful is the fact that Brahmins placed a ban on dark-complexioned poets and singers so that they couldn't even read this literature.

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Reconstruction: Work of Aryans or Harappans?

While discussing the language of the Harappans, we have shown that the Aryans of Rig Veda, in the first 700 years, only increased animal husbandry. This is corroborated in the works of Witzel and Kuiper. However, some villages, remnants of Harappa civilization, continued agriculture—particularly, in flooded fields or where they had some alternative water sources. They were non-Aryans and according to Kuiper, all the vocabulary related to agriculture came from these sources. ⁽¹⁾ It shows that after the destruction of Harappan towns, the same people continued agriculture and further developed it. Aryans considered raising cattle superior work compared to agriculture. This attitude of considering agriculture inferior is also mentioned by historian Briffault.

If we look at the later history of the Aryans, it appears that, they subdued the local people with the horse and chariots, but production remained in the hands of the local people. The method or mode of production changes when new products are needed to fulfill human needs. When cities emerge, they can only function, if there are those who can produce surplus, and bring to market products that are needed by the inhabitants of the cities. From shoes to turbans, everything was made by indigenous artisans. These toilers were of low castes. For example, to make shoes, first Shudra, Chamar, will have to skin the carcass and then give it to the cobbler. All wooden things were made by the carpenter, agricultural appliances by the

blacksmith, pottery by potters, jewelry by jewelers and so on. Sindh Muslin was very well-known, and people took pride in owning it, but it was produced by weavers who belonged to the lowest castes. ⁽²⁾ Jokes that denigrate weavers are prevalent to this day. According to Panini the ploughing was also done by lower castes. ⁽³⁾In short, Brahmins and Kshatriyas did not contribute much to change the techniques of production.

In the older traditions of Harappa, techniques of production and arts had developed to a greater degree. It is lot easier to memorize verses while raising cattle rather than producing good. All these arts and technologies remained with dark colored and thick lipped people. Potters developed plaster to join bones and barbers developed surgery to fix noses and ears cut in battle. ⁽⁴⁾ Obviously these techniques did not come from the Aryans, but their roots go way back in antiquity.

A surprising aspect is that the expansion of Brahmanical order to Ganga valley is considered to be the 'Golden Age of India' It is true that with the discovery of iron, thick jungles of Ganga valley were cleared, and agriculture was expanded greatly with annual average rainfall of 40 inches. But it was the subjugated Harappan people who made the main contribution in terms of techniques and their free labor to establish agriculture in the Ganga-Jumna Valley. With increased production, ranks of Brahmins and Kshatriyas got richer and imposed brutal customs and laws on the lower castes. This is a classic example of how toilers enhance their own enslavement through surplus production. How can it be argued that Aryans contributed to the expansion of production of commodities when they considered agriculture inferior and occupation of lower

castes. From the times of Maurya onwards, great developments in agriculture were made by the followers of Buddhism and Jainism. With the rise of Brahminism, economic growth either stopped or contracted between the first and tenth century in India. ⁽⁵⁾

Most of the scribes of this time were Brahmins, so they categorized the era of their rise, as a Golden Age. However, this was based on only a few plays and other works such as the Kama Sutra. Other than a few temples very little evidence of this Golden Age remains. It basically started with Vedic hymns and continued with sacrifices and rituals for centuries.

During the Brahmanical period, economy did not develop, and life became very difficult for women and low castes. Killing of female children, injunction against widows including remarriage, and custom of Sati reveal the terrible conditions that existed for women during this period. The custom of Sati and inhuman treatment of widows was designed to scare women from poisoning their husbands. To put it bluntly, it was only in the Brahmanical order that men could become gods by suppressing women. This only benefitted the Brahmins and Kshatriyas, a small elite and considering half of the population was women, it can be safely said that close to 90 percent of the population did not benefit from this way of life. From a non-Brahmanical perspective this period was one of great oppression rather than a Golden Age of Indian history. Such a society had so badly decomposed from within that a handful Muslims invaders could take control and rule the subcontinent for more than 700 years.

A thousand years after the arrival of Aryans in Punjab, around 400 B.C. agriculture, commodity production and

trade had developed quite a bit. We know this from Panini's composition of Sanskrit grammar. Since he was writing grammar, we do not know which commodities were produced in Punjab and which ones were produced in other areas. However, the names of the commodities described by Panini are close to Punjabi. It shows that these words came into Sanskrit from the Maluha language. We concur with Kuiper that these words came from people of the lower strata who spoke both these languages.

According to Panini, some Shudras lived in Aryan society but outside their enclaves. They were Chandals or Chamars, who dealt with dead animals and leather. There were certain Shudra communities who would perform Yajna (worshipping) and read/sung scriptures at the time of sacrifices. They were also minstrels, whom we now call Mirasis. Shudras included artisans such as washer men, carpenters, blacksmiths, weavers etc. Some Shudras were untouchable, who used separate pots and pans to eat. In those days an indebted man could sell himself into slavery and after paying the amount off could again become free (Arya). Women of the upper strata lived under Purdah. An unmarried woman was called Kumari and *kasuri kanya*. Her son, during the unwedded period, was called *Karenina*. A bride was also called *Jani*.

During Panini's time landowners had come into being who engaged toilers in work and only gave them food in return. The status of toilers was determined by the quantity and quality of food that was given to them. The price of a slave woman was equal to five or ten horses. Between the rivers of Jhelum and Ravi two main tribes of Punjab, Sinatra and Madras, depended on barley. Vahika of the Montgomery (Sahiwal) and Multan area were dependent on milk and

lassi was sold in shops. The following are some words Panini provided related to agricultural production:

Krishi (agriculture), Vanijya (trade), Pashu Palu (cattle raiser), Vahi (tilling) from Vahna (to till), Hal (plough), Haali, Halayati, Suhalyaik (one with good plough), Durhali (one with bad plough). Three parts of the plough: Aisa (long wooden part), Potra (carved part) and Kusi (tiller). Halika or Sarika (ploughing animals), Yog (yoke), Yotra (ploughing). The word for harvesting tool in rig veda was Datarā (sickle), Panini called it Latara.

The words for all sorts of goods and services used in every sphere of life were classified by V. S. Agarwala in his book *India as Known to Panini*. The list of words is quite comprehensive and match the vocabulary used in the Harappa civilization area, from Haryana to Sindh. However, in Panini's vocabulary, the words that are used for production, cannot be found in Rig Veda or other Vedas. This shows that these words must have come from the local people who carried out the agriculture and other productive activities and not from the outsiders.

While from Panini, we do not know what products were made in Punjab or some other place in India, we do know at the time of the invasion of Alexander, many cities, towns and trading centers had propped up in Punjab. Taxila had become a great center of learning, where Kautilya was teaching and Chandragupta Maurya was a student. From the size of the army of Raja Porus, who opposed Alexander, it is clear that the economy had developed to an extent that the expenses of a large professional fighting force could be covered by taxes. A simple pastoral society cannot produce resources to support an army of even

10,000. Therefore, we assume that surplus producing agriculture was in place.

Chandragupta Maurya was not a hereditary ruler. The way he collected his armies also reveals a great deal about the economy. It is quite clear that there was a large number of mercenary soldiers in Northern Punjab who were assembled by Chandragupta:

“We know from Panini and Kautilya that north-western regions of India were full of floating contingents of mercenary soldiers, who lived by the profession of arms and lent their services to those kings, who paid them the best. Such contingents of soldiers sought fortune under the Achaemenian emperors who promised rich prospects to their troops. Megasthenes quite expressly says that the Persian got mercenary from India” ⁽⁶⁾

Someone had to be financing this mobilization of mercenary soldiers. Panini has described moneylenders quite well. Therefore, it can be inferred that there was surplus capital available and people in control of it would have supported Chandergupta Maurya. Also, a great deal of surplus is needed to support the large number of Jain and Buddhist monks along with other students in Punjab.

From Panini we can infer that except southern Punjab, villages of rest of Punjab had become agricultural. In East and Central Punjab, except Tomatoes and Potatoes, all other crops, vegetables and fruits were being produced. Tobacco came in the 17th century and Persian wheel came with the Muslims. In Panini’s time, animals were used to pull water out from wells with leather pouch. If one looks at the economic development in Punjab at this time, one

can see that these things began to be produced as agriculture developed in Gandhara and then expanded in other areas. A ploughed field dating back to 1100 B.C. has been found where rice was grown, and buffalo domesticated in Swat.⁽⁷⁾

After the end of the Maurya empire, instead of Taxila, Sialkot seems to have become a major city of Punjab. Old names of Sialkot are said to be Sakala or Sagla. During the times of Mahabharata, the area between Ravi and Chenab was inhabited by the Madras.⁽⁸⁾ In this area, agriculture and craftsmanship developed rapidly. Adjacent to Punjab, productive forces also developed in Jammu and Kashmir. It is for this reason the, Greek kings (Demetrius to Menander) expanded their rule in this area. Mihirkul, the Hun king, also made Sialkot his capitol in 510 AD. During the time of Menander, it had become a great market city where the Muslin from Banaras, precious stones and diamonds were traded. All kinds of scholars and thinkers lived there.⁽⁹⁾ Menander converted to Buddhism and Kanishka, the ruler following him was also a Buddhist. It shows that while there was class division in society, rulers did not follow the Brahmanical ideology. Because Buddhism is opposed to caste system, if these rulers wanted to follow the caste system, they would not have followed Buddhism. Based on the prosperity and economic development during Menander's time, it appears that he was a popular ruler. When he died, his ashes were distributed in many parts of his kingdom.⁽¹⁰⁾

It is important to talk about the decline of the position of women after the arrival of Aryans. The intermixing of Aryan and Harappan people, the rise of surplus and emergence of exploitative practices, contributed to this

decline. In the pastoral society, women have always been on the lower rung: In our area, one Raath (landlord), had burnt his younger sister in an oven, when she tried to elope with someone from a lower caste. In some of these pastoral tribes, there was a custom of burying a girl child at birth. But there are still remnants of matriarchal society in the cultural traditions.

In the play, *Heer Ranjha*, written in 16th century by Damodar, the character of Heer is that of a woman warrior, who leads bands of women and fights with men. Waris Shah's Heer of 18th century is a tamed female who does nothing like Damodar's Heer. It appears that slowly as production developed, position of women declined - child marriage, Sati and injunction against remarriage of widows came into being.⁽¹¹⁾ Among the gypsies, who were considered to be remnants of Harappan people, women were selling some commodities and men did not do anything, thereby giving women a higher status due to economic reasons.

Aryans were very proud of cow breeding, their religion and hymns. But slowly, the Harappans being better singers, took over this function (hymn singing) as well. In the beginning, the worshipping rituals (usually called Yagna or Yajna) was done by the tribal patriarch, and professional priests had not come into being.⁽¹²⁾ Here a question can be raised whether the old nomadic pastoral wrote these hymns (Vedas) themselves and developed an ideology or, at a later stage, Brahman priests, as proponents of organized religion, started coming with new arriving Aryans. Some historians have mentioned that the later arriving Aryans, did not think much of the earlier ones and considered them inferior and polluted.⁽¹³⁾

The ideological developments in Punjab seem to have developed along the historical path according to which agriculture is the higher stage of development from pastoral society, and the outsiders had to fall in line with this development. Therefore, it seems like that old tribal system must have been broken by the agricultural system. Slowly the tribal system which was based on collective belongings and sharing came to an end. A class-based society emerged in which the headship became hereditary. Consequently, small kingdoms emerged at the ruins of tribal-democratic republics. The *yajna* that was performed by tribal elders came to end and the elite classes started hiring the professionals who would do *yajna* on their behalf. The sponsors of *yajna* became *yajmans* and the whole profession was handed down to lower caste singers of Harappa whom we have identified as Mirasis. Panini has also confirmed these *yajna* performing singers were Shudras from lower castes. ⁽¹⁴⁾ Hence in those days, the Mirasis of lower castes performed the *Yajna* and recited the Vedic Mantras and offered sacrifices. Due to this background, the arts of music and drama have remained with the Mirasis families. Ragi, Dhadi, Bhat and other performers of art still monopolize these fields. They are the ones who perform *Nuhe* and *Marsias* for Shias and many Ragis (singers) in Sikh Gurdwaras are also from these families. For example, famous Muslim Punjabi folk singer, Tufail Niazi, and father of leading classical singer, Ghulam Hussain Shaggan, Bhai Lal Muhammad, were Gurdwaras' singers.

If one looks at the development of classical music in North India and especially in Punjab, one finds that, first of all the classical Rags are considered Pakka (solid, cooked) and the other music is called Kacha (uncooked or raw). Pakka

means that it has set principles just like religious rituals that cannot be changed. Secondly, it is 'cooked' during a long period of training and memorization. Again, classical singing is divided into Alap, Khyal and Tarana. Words of Asthai (refrain) and Antara are very old and sometimes people do not even understand them. Singers follow these compositions to the hilt and do not allow any changes in their structure. It can be inferred that such practices must have come from the ritual of *yajna* and singers must follow the structure as a religious ritual. Yajnas were generally sacrifices and if one looks at classical vocal singing, then Alap seems like it is inviting people and calling on them to be seated. On the second stage, in Khyal (central theme), the essence of sacrifice is developed and in the last stage with fast beat excitement and climax is created. It is quite possible that at this stage, the gathered people may have danced like in Dhamal. This must be the case during the Soma sacrifices. With time the words of the Vedas were forgotten, and formal structure of the Ragas was retained. It is for this reason that Thumri and Ghazal were never accepted as genuine genres of classical music by traditionalist singers. All this proves that the foundation of classical Rag was *yajna*.

Meaning of term Mirasi is the one who preserves tradition. They also preserved genealogy and arts of society. Rituals of birth and death were performed by the male Mirasis or female Mirasans. Shamsheer Singh, has described in detail the arts of Mirasis in his village in Sialkot before the partition. He writes:

“Mirasis always knew the traditions and delicate aspects of every religion. Mirasan (female Mirasi) led the whaling rituals. The women would sit on the floor and Mirasan

would repeatedly cry ‘oh my dead lion’ and the women, following her would repeat ‘oh my dead lion.’ The beat would become faster and the women would stand up. They would beat their chests and slap their own faces. In between, the Mirasan would continue adoring the dead. The rhythm would accelerate, and self-beating would increase with that. At the end, the Mirasan would send consoled women to their homes”⁽¹⁵⁾

Mirasis were supported by Rajas and Zamindars but they were also in the lower strata. Their lifestyle was also different. They did not follow established religions and were not enmeshed in gathering wealth or property. They spent what they earned on good food and clothing; and accumulating wealth was not their **nature**. There were not many amongst them who became Jagirdars (feudal) despite being very close to the rulers. It appears that their attitude was remnant of tribal democracy from the time of Harappa. Their life style of distancing themselves from religion, non-accumulation of property, enjoying good food and clothing kept ancient materialist thinking alive at some level.

Mirasis used to come during the village fairs in groups with Naqliyas (jesters). They staged various folk plays like *Heer Ranjha*, *Sassi Punnon* etc. all night. In those plays, women’s roles were also played by men, who were called Vera Radh. For example, Tufail Niazi used to play Heer’s character. Later theaters were established such as Ustad Gaman and Allah Bakhsh. Mirasis also performed the function of Bhands (comedians) at weddings parties. At the harvest time, dressed in hats and other attire of officials, they used to come to scare people and they were called Bhats. Our family Bhat would come every year and sing about our family’s genealogy. Seems like, people of

Harappa developed these traditions to carry on life. It seems to reason that when Aryan men came and started families with Harappa women, the basic customs came from the women and they engaged old singers and performers in these professions.

In the Indo Gangetic plains, Brahminism had arisen earlier and the rituals and rites of worship were performed by Purohits of upper castes but *yajna* was done by other people. The postulated rise of Brahmanism is worth exploring: the question would be whether such an ideology stemmed from the priestly class or was created by socio-economic conditions. One thing is clear that whenever Pandits (Brahmans) from Ganga Valley would come to Punjab and see all the rituals in the hands of Mirasis, they would say that Punjabi Hindus are ignorant, and do not differentiate between Pandits and those who perform Yajna. It also shows that Punjabis have had a separate ideological development. It has been said that Punjab had hardly any connection with the Aryan society:

“Vahika, the country of five rivers, is such a land which is outside the social boundaries of Aryans. These [people] are devoid of religion (*nishtha dharma*) and are polluted (*asochi*) people.”

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Foreign Invasions and Maurya Empire

According to European historians, in 900 BC, the Syrian princess, Semi Ramus invaded Sindh. When she crossed the Indus river, she met great resistance by the locals who had elephants. She brought ship builders from Phoenicia and cut the jungles of Balkh to make ships. Sthavarpati, the local ruler, faced her with large number of elephants but he could not stop the princess. She crossed the river by making a wooden bridge and put camouflage on the camels to make them appear like elephants. When the forces of Sthavarpati, found this out, they made a great charge and defeated the princess. It is said that the princess died in that war. However, Greek historians including Arian have reported that such stories were fabricated, and this never took place ⁽¹⁾ In 650 BC Tartars from the north invaded Punjab. Ogaz, king of the Tartars defeated Jagma, the king of Kashmir ⁽²⁾ Tartars occupied the areas along the Indus river. They are known as Huns in Sanskrit. Ptolemy and Pliny call them Jetis and they are considered to be ancestors of the Jats. Strabo claims that the people of Rawalpindi, Laka or Takshia, gave their name to Taxila in 600 BC ⁽³⁾.

As has been mentioned earlier that the founder of the Iranian dynasty Achaemenid (750 BC) occupied Taxila in 600 BC and his successor Cyrus (588-530 BC), had occupied Gandhara. After him Darius (550-496 BC), occupied the area in 515 BC, from Gandhara to Karachi. It is said that the Iranians must have ruled northern Punjab in 4th century BC ⁽⁴⁾. Some historians have also pointed out that iron may have also been brought by the Persians to Punjab and then it went to other parts from there. Persians also brought Kharosthi, which was the script of Aramaic

spoken by Jesus. Like Persian and Arabic, it is written from right to left. ⁽⁵⁾ This script was dominant in Punjab till 4th century and most of the Buddhist scripture were written in this script. Emperor Ashoka's inscriptions are also found written in this script. ⁽⁶⁾ It is said that it was due to the Persian influence that Chandragupta started washing his hair routinely, employed females as his personal guards, and remained invisible from public eye. ⁽⁷⁾ But according to the information collected by Alexander from the people of Punjab, it does not appear that there were any Persians at that time in the region. This means that by the time of Alexander's invasion Punjab was no more part of the Persian empire.

At the time of Alexander, the Greeks thought that Punjab is at the eastern most part of the world and the world ends beyond it. According to Herodotus , the inhabitants of this area were dark like Ethiopians and yellow like the Egyptians. He also believed that there lived savages who eat raw fish and meat as well as eat there dead. He also said that there are people who only eat vegetables. He knew of the cotton clothing used by people, which the Greeks believed was wool that grew on trees. Herodotus believed that there were ants bigger than foxes and smaller than dogs who dig holes. He thought the dirt that comes out has gold in it, which was then loaded on camels by the local people. He gave special attention to how the camels are loaded. He believed that beyond the populated area, there is an almost endless desert, after which the world ends. ⁽⁸⁾ Therefore, when Alexander reached Sutlej river, he thought that there was only a little bit of world left to conquer. At that time the Greeks believed that this area had a lot of gold and great deal of other wealth.

According to Bhai Parmanand, before reaching Taxila, Alexander fought with the Apashi tribe, who lost 40 men and Alexander took 230,000 oxen, which may be an exaggerated figure. Then he headed to Goari (Ghazni) where the tribesmen surrendered. After that he attacked Shi Ni tribes whose capital was Megasa. Their queen fought gallantly, and Alexander received a wound in his leg in the battle. He is reported to have said, "I am worshipped like son of God and sun but the pain from the wound shows that I am mortal." The queen was defeated, and she came with other women of the court and offered Alexander wine in a gold goblet. It is said that Alexander betrayed his promise and slaughtered 20,000-30,000 Magasi soldiers. Afterwards he fought with king Abisaras and defeated him and the people of Baur fort surrendered. Alexander marched forward and subdued the fort of Urinus, which was sacred to the Hindus. This was near the area of Yosufzais known as Amb. After this he reached Bakla, where the inhabitants prayed and appealed to Alexander and thus saved themselves. ⁽⁹⁾

In Punjab, his first major encounter would have been with the king of Taxila, Ambhi. But, King Ambhi joined hands with Alexander against king Porus who ruled between the rivers of Chenab and Ravi. Along with Taxila, the king of Abisar also allied himself with Alexander. Ambhi helped Alexander in the attack on Raja Porus. Alexander marched in February 326 and reached Jalal Pur in May. Various historians have given different numbers for Alexander's army varying from 35,000 to 120,000 soldiers including 15,000 cavalries. Arian, the Greek historian, says that when Alexander made Philip, the governor of Punjab, he increased his army to 120,000. These numbers appear to be exaggerations as in those days it was not possible to collect

such big armies and provide supplies for their needs. Arian states that Alexander had 8,000 soldiers. At another place he mentions that he had 6,000 soldiers and still another source claims that he had 13,000 soldiers and 5,000 cavalries. ⁽¹⁰⁾ These numbers seem more reasonable but actual numbers may have been even less.

When Alexander reached river Jhelum to attack Porus, it was rainy season. He spread the rumor that the invasion will take place after the rains in order to create subterfuge. Porus relaxed and Alexander, in a surprise move, crossed the river 30 miles away from Jhelum city. Porus dispatched his son to face him but the prince was killed in the battle. It is said that after that Porus sent 100 chariots and 50,000 soldiers. These numbers seem exaggerated as well, because at that time, the population of his kingdom was not that big nor were there resources to supply such a big army. It seems right that he used chariots that were pulled by four horses and had six soldiers in each: two archers, two with shields and two for hand to hand combat. His chariots proved useless because of uneven ground and slippery conditions in the rainy season. Porus lost the battle, but Alexander gave him his kingdom back and he became his vassal. There is a well-publicized dialogue between Alexander and Porus, in which Alexander asks Porus, how should he treat him and Porus answers that he should act like a king acts with another king. Porus told Alexander of the history behind the Nanda dynasty which came into being in 4th century BC with Agarsena, son of a barber, as its first ruler. Roman historian Carteous, in 1 AD, stated that the barber had an affair with the queen and got the king murdered and his son Nanda became the founder of Nanda empire. ⁽¹¹⁾

Alexander moved forward towards the area between Chenab and Ravi, where Porus nephew ruled. Porus' nephew escaped towards Lahore. Alexander crossed the Ravi river near Lahore and fought the Gethi tribe, whose headquarter was Singla or Sangla. Mali tribes from Multan and Uch's Akmi, Varksi and Khishdar tried to help Gethis. However, the Gethis were no match for Alexander as their archers were useless against the Greeks' shields. The Gethis lost 20,000 men in the battle. After this battle, the lands between Ravi and Beas came under Alexander's control but his army refused to go any further. He tried without success to persuade them with passionate speeches and appeals, and he had to turn back. On his way back he engaged with the Mali Brahmins of Multan. In battle with them, he was wounded but he subdued them and made Philip, the governor of the area. He subdued Osedies and King Sodagi gave him a large number of elephants. The capitol of Sodgis was four miles away from present Bhakhar. ⁽¹²⁾

It's clear that during these invasions both the Greek army and the local armies depended on the local productions. The Greeks for the first time saw cotton clothes in Punjab. Before that, they used clothing made of wood. The clothing industry had developed to such an extent in Punjab, that within few months attire for the Greek army could be produced. The tribute paid by Porus and other kings also shows that production was at a very developed stage so that the, rulers after fulfilling their needs, had extra resources to pay tributes to Alexander. This surplus of wealth in Punjab was the main reason for foreign invaders to attack.

Secondly, the story of Nanda dynasty in which a barber became king shows that even in the Ganga Jamuna area the

caste system had not become strong. Brahminism also could not take stronghold in Punjab. In the 16th century ballad of Damodar's *Heer*, Ramu Brahmin is of lower strata and is a messenger. ⁽¹³⁾ Alexander let the kingdoms of Porus and Taxila remain as they were and this agreement of Tepidaria's was reaffirmed in 321 BC. After Alexander, Punjab was in the care of Edemas and Patheon who killed Porus and king of Taxila. This led to a revolt against them in 317 BC resulting in tremendous loot and plunder. By 315 BC the Greek rule in Punjab ended. Some Greek groups stayed on and married local women. Chandergupta Maurya who had led revolts against the Greeks in 321-322 BC established his rule. It is said that those who allied with him regretted because he was as cruel as the Greeks.

There are many stories about Chandergupta, before he became a ruler. The Maurya were from a branch of Saka tribes of Gautam Buddha. In the Buddhist text, Mahavasma, it is said that Chandergupta was a Kshatriya prince whose ancestors got settled where there were plenty of peacocks. According to second century historian Justin he came from a very modest background. In Sanskrit play 'Marrakesh's' he is called '*varshala*' and '*kulehna*.' ⁽¹⁴⁾ Vershala means that his mother was a Shudra and Punjabi word kulehna means a bad omen for others.

Chandragupta's birth year is not known but historian Plutarch claims that he saw Alexander in his youth. ⁽¹⁵⁾ Another part of his biography is that Kautilya or Chanakya (350-275 BC), the writer of Arthashastra ⁽¹⁶⁾, brought him to Taxila for studies. According to Buddhist writings Chanakya belonged to Taxila and had gone to Pali Putra (Patna) for studies. There, he was ridiculed by Raja Dana Munda when he went for alms. He had taken an oath to

take revenge by destroying the kingdom. ⁽¹⁷⁾ Nonetheless, it appears from various historical descriptions that Chandergupta Maurya came from a poor family. After finishing his studies at Taxila, he recruited an army with Chanakya's help and established his empire.

The fast rise of Chandergupta indicated that collapse of tribal system had given birth to petty hereditary kings whose constituencies were limited to a few tribes with a population of few thousands. These rulers continuously fought with each other. Mahabharata's whole text is comprised of such tribal wars. Chandergupta was employing a multi-prong strategy, a part of which was destroying the small kingdoms. A full chapter of Chanakya's Arthashastra is written on the department of intelligence; it describes how, in different forms, males and females were deployed to sow seeds of discord among the tribes to conquer them by destroying tribal unity. Chanakya has also mentioned the salaries of lower and upper strata of spies. It is said that Chandergupta and Chanakya divided the tribes of Harappans along with those which were led by Aryans. Chandragupta's empire could not have been established without breaking the autonomous tribes.

The army that Chandergupta recruited to conquer Maghda was comprised of Greeks, Persians, Sakas and other outsiders. This was a mercenary army that included forces from the kingdoms that were defeated. These mercenaries of Punjab were called Ayudha Jivika Sangha. Some historians refer to them as Dacoits. ⁽¹⁸⁾ Many areas that were, initially, defeated by Chandergupta, were still ruled by Greek, and Saka rulers. Obviously, soldiers of these defeated rulers had no other option but to join the new king. In those days, the mercenary soldiers from north Punjab

were known for their service. ⁽¹⁹⁾ These mercenaries joined forces with all invaders to loot and plunder Punjab and other parts of India. Later on, they started calling themselves Martial Races and to this day, they are in large numbers in the present armies.

Some Greek historians mention that Chandergupta had 100,000 soldiers in his army. But Strabo writes that there were 400,000 soldiers in his army. According to Megasthenes, there were 600,000 soldiers, 30,000 horsemen and 9,000 war elephants in his army. All these numbers seem to be exaggerated, because at that time, the population of India was not large enough to recruit or support such large armies. Historians of those times were given to exaggeration. It stands to reason that Chandergupta had a very large army that was used to lay the foundation of the Maurya empire. After Alexander, Seleucids invaded Punjab in 306 BC but according to DD Kosambi ⁽²⁰⁾ and RC Majumdar ⁽²¹⁾ his forces fought badly and were defeated. To be saved, he gave his daughter in marriage to Chandergupta. ⁽²²⁾

Most of the information about Chandragupta's empire has been derived from Megasthenes' work, *Indica*. He came to India as a Greek ambassador and remained here for several years. He was very impressed by the great highway connecting Pataliputra with Taxila. Describing Pataliputra he states that it has a ditch 600 feet wide around it and has 570 watch towers with 64 gates. Buildings were made of wood and there is no sign of them now. According to him Chandergupta had employed a large number of women to look after his security, bathing and hygiene and when he went out, they would ride elephants and kept him away from commoners.

He wrote that the population of India has 118 tribes and is divided in 7 gradations and there is no slavery in India. He does not mention four castes. It means that either he did not know about it or the caste system had not yet fully established itself. According to him the uppermost strata were called Brahmins, who were forest dwellers and lived on roots and wild fruit. Second was cultivators, third pastoral people, fourth artisans, fifth fighters, sixth administrators and seventh were the rulers. In the second, third and fourth category were low castes and Shudras. Catching and training of elephants was done by Shudras, but commoners were prohibited from keeping elephants. He states that revenue from people ranged from 25 to 75 percent of the produce. The rich had many wives and women were educated. Sati was practiced amongst Kathi Rajput (who had moved from Amritsar to Kathiawar) and other Taxila tribes. Strabo calls Megasthenes description a fiction but many other historians opine that, other than his claim of 118 tribes, most things have proven to be correct. He is the first narrator of the tradition of non-interference of armies in the affairs of the cultivators. Niarchos, another Greek historian, says that the people of India wore cotton clothes and white shoes. ⁽²³⁾ In those days writing was so rare and difficult that Fa Han, a Chinese traveler, had a hard time finding Buddhist writings. Jain writings claim that Chandergupta Maurya belonged to their religion and, in his last days, he became a Jain monk.

Bindusara succeeded Chandergupta and expanded the empire into South India. After him, his son Ashoka became the emperor, who used to be governor of Taxila. He expanded the empire to most of India and other places. Bhai Parmanand claims that at that time Taxila kingdom included Kashmir, Panchal, Punjab and Afghanistan. ⁽²⁴⁾

This mention of Panchal in Taxila, justifies the claim of researchers that Panchal is buried under the present city of Kalar Seydan and that Draupadi, the wife of Pandeva, was from Panchal and her father was the local king. Seems like those thinkers who are attached to the word Hindustan, did not include Panchal in Punjab due to their prejudice and kept it out of it'

Buddhist sources state that Ashoka was a very cruel person and he had killed and tortured 90 of his step brothers.⁽²⁵⁾ According to these sources in the battle of Kalinga, he killed 100,000 people and the city was burnt to ashes.⁽²⁶⁾ Kalinga was the last state that had remnants of old republics. Buddhist sources claim that Ashoka was saddened by this destruction and he became a Buddhist. Historians do not agree whether Ashoka did anything to promote Buddhism. But it is certain that by his time Buddhism had spread to Punjab, Sindh and Afghanistan. It is said that during the Mauryan period great progress was achieved.⁽²⁷⁾ Agriculture was expanded, irrigation dams were constructed. The Maurya broke the tribal republics and established a centralized empire. During this period crops such as cotton, rice etc. were being produced. Sugarcane was also commonly grown.⁽²⁸⁾ Until very recently, a very thin variety of sugarcane was grown to eat which was called Katha sugarcane. It seems to be a remnant of old times, because it was not commercially viable as it did not grow very thick and juicy.

Cotton and sugarcane are very labor intensive: sowing cotton, picking up each cotton flowers individually, separating the cotton seeds, spinning the yarn and then weaving it into cloth. In the U.S., slavery was required for cotton as the southern states of the United States, that grew

cotton, needed slaves to handpick cotton flowers. When slavery ended, the British had to grow cotton in Punjab and some other areas of India. Sugarcane is even harder to grow because it requires a whole year to mature and constantly needs water. Pressing it into juice, making Gur and sugar from it requires a lot of labor. In the old days, sugarcane was pressed and with the addition of water, its juice was prepared. ⁽²⁹⁾ It was a tedious process, and, in those days, sugar was one of the most expensive commodities. With this crop, slavery increased. The British took slaves from India and Africa to West Indies to grow sugarcane.

These crops were grown in Punjab for a long time. It is unclear whether the crop work was done by Harappan slaves or by the tribal communities? In our times, sugarcane was grown by men but most of the work for cotton was done by women. Picking cotton was done mostly by the women of lower classes. It seems like that during the Mauryan times, women and Harappan slaves and especially their women must have done this work. ⁽³⁰⁾

Mauryan had developed a strong central administration but to control the broken tribes they created self-sustaining villages for the tribes. The broken tribes would gather again and fight and Chanakya advised to settle them in small groups in villages. Similarly, Ashoka settled the Shudra agriculturists in Kalinga after subduing it. ⁽³¹⁾ It was also ensured that the new villages have other artisans so that they become self-sufficient. Panini mentions six types of professions, but it looks like that even before that, many products either under the control of the central administration or the local rulers, reached larger markets. When all the needs were met in the village, they became completely self-sufficient and became isolated from other

villages: their capacity to unite and make a bigger alliance was finished forever. Perhaps this process was already going on and pushed along by outside invaders from Punjab. It also appears that during the time of the Maurya, caste divisions had not become strong, but divisions based on color had been established. At that time the castes were due to profession and tribal identities. We see its expression in Waris Shah's *Heer* at many places. It appears that the new professions were also divided along tribal lines. Their Peers (teachers) were also divided along those lines ⁽³²⁾.

Until recently, castes, sub-castes and further subdivisions still existed. In western Punjab, Jat, Rajput and Arians were main castes. Their economic conditions were not solid. In Lahore area, Arians were big landlords but in Gujarat and other areas they were toilers. Tribal relations could be seen in villages even in the 20th century in our villages. The village was divided into two gotras, Dhengas and Vachhals. Even now these two names are written in official documents. These two were further divided into smaller Baradaris (communities) in which every family had a separate name. Individuals were known by these names. In our community, there were various names such as, Bhou, Bhasku, Gapi, Sapi, Koth, Saini etc. For example, Manzur of Sainis. There were many people named Manzur. But when you added Saini, that was the person's true identification. There were people with varying skin colors from white to brown to dark.

Additionally, with time the meaning of word Caste also changed. As mentioned, during the Maurya times, the caste system in Punjab had not been fully established. For example, in Rig Veda there is only one mention of four castes in Mandala 10 in Purusha Sukta which states that the

Brahmins arose from the head of Brahma, Kshatriyas from Arms, Vaishya from legs and Shudras from feet. There is no other reference in the whole Rig Veda. This Sukta seems to be of later date. Later in the Buddhist texts, the word Brahmin is not used for a caste, but for somebody great or learned. ⁽³³⁾⁽³⁴⁾ Many historians also believe that there were many Brahmins amongst, soldiers, traders, toilers, artisans and lower strata. According to Parmanand, Kshatriyas of Punjab, depending on the need, they could take up professions of Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas. ⁽³⁵⁾ From Chandragupta to Ashoka, no ruler gave special status to Brahmins. Chandragupta's main advisor Chanakya was a Jain and Ashoka adopted Buddhism, which did not believe in caste system. Perhaps for this reason, later Brahmanical order, considered Mauryan inferior. About the four castes, Mohammad Asif writes:

“Mahabharata (8, 45, 6-7) states that there was no definitive caste division in Vahika (Punjab). A person could become Brahman at one time, Kshatriya, Vaishyas or Shudras at others. Because of such a religious freedom, it is stated in Mahabharata (8, 44) that people of Vahika have absolutely no knowledge of religious traditions. Whatever their offerings to gods and goddesses goes waste” ⁽³⁶⁾

Seems like by the 4th century BC, the relations of production and society had changed quite a bit. A new economy had emerged by the intermixing of the local and outside people. But this did not create a new ideology which created a vacuum. The Greeks tried to fill this vacuum, but they did not remain for a long time. Finally, the solution emerged during the Mauryan empire, to fulfil this internal need. Both Jainism and Buddhism tried to fulfil this need. This ideological vacuum was very deep,

and because of it after the Maurya, Greeks, Sakas, Huns and others were able to occupy Punjab.

One of the reasons for the spread of Buddhism in Punjab was that it appealed to the old traditions of the tribal communities of equality and democracy. Jainism could not gain much ground because according to their beliefs of extreme nonviolence, one could not even plough land because it would kill insects and roots. Jainism was successful amongst traders as they could make a living without hurting anything. We will explain this in detail later, but here we point out that the Vedic ideology in Punjab had been weakened. Not only that but also the old ideology of the Harappans was not in sync with the needs of time.

Punjab had advanced economically and therefore the ideas of Maurya and Kautilya came from this region i.e. Taxila. The great grammarian of Sanskrit, Panini also came from Taxila. From Rig Veda to Chanakya's Arthashastra, great writings arose in Punjab. Most historians refer to Punjab when they write about early humans in the subcontinent.

In the new social structure, family and position of women had changed. Men from outside were patriarchal. But when they started living with the Harappan women, their ideas also changed. Therefore, there are not uniform ideas about women in Rig Veda. In the earlier Suktas the gods such as Indra are male, but later on with the development of agriculture, goddesses also are found to be worshipped.⁽³⁷⁾ Compared to the Aryans from outside, women must have known more about agriculture, therefore their claims on rights must have been greater. But it seems reasonable that newly emerging stratification was against the rights of women. For this reason, in Rig Veda, there are mixed

views about women. But the writings that emerged during the Mauryan period are all patriarchal and anti-women.

During the Mauryan period, the language of Punjab had also changed. Gautam Buddha, preached in Prakrit, which was the language of the common people. ⁽³⁸⁾ There is not much information about the language of the Jains in Punjab. But it is certain that the people in Punjab did not speak Sanskrit and therefore Buddhism and Jainism had greater acceptance amongst the people. Their language must be near the language of Jogis and Sadhus, as they continued their earlier customs and traditions. It is quite possible that the language used by Guru Nanak which is called Sadhukadi, had its roots in this old language. One thing is clear - Sanskrit was not the language of people during this period. It is possible that a section of the elite used Sanskrit.

At this time Kharosthi, script was used which goes from right to left for writing. ⁽³⁹⁾ Looks like rise of Buddhism and Kharosthi script arose at the same time in Punjab. Further east in Magadh, Brahmi script was used, and all business was transacted in this script. In the third and fourth century, this script vanished from Punjab. It is around this time that Buddhism started disappearing and Brahmanical order started gaining ground. It shows that Punjab had its own language, ideology and script that was in conflict with Magadh. Brahmanical order in Magadh considered Punjab very negatively. It seems those Aryans, who moved east to Magadh, established their system according to their specific needs, were of a Brahmanical order. In Punjab, the traditions of the Harappans remained prevalent and they maintained their own language, script and religious ideology.

Endnotes

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New Foreign Dynasties in Punjab

Punjab again started coming under attack after the rule of Maurya was over. Demetrius, Greek emperor of Balkh, invaded Punjab in 165 B.C. and claimed victory in Hyderabad, Kuch, and Gujrat. His successors, Maninder and Apodontids, ruled this area till almost 60 B.C. Maninder made Sakala (currently Sialkot) his capital. After his demise, Greek-Punjabi rule disbanded, and several new claimants of the throne emerged towards upper Ravi who started minting their own coins. The Greeks, however, continued to be part of Punjab's population for a long time. It seems Greek herbal medicine also found its way to Punjab during this era.

The rule of Maurya in Punjab came to an end almost fifty years after the death of Ashoka in 231 B.C. The last Maurya Raja, Bahadurath, was killed by his commander-in-chief, General Pushyamitra Shunga in 185 B.C., who later ruled the area for several years⁽¹⁾. Ashoka had made more than 84,000 Buddha stupas.⁽²⁾ Pushyamitra destroyed around five hundred Buddhist temples in and around Kashmir.⁽³⁾ The 16th century historian from Tibet, Teradata, points out that Buddhism in the north ceased to exist because hundreds of temples, between Madhya Pradesh and Jalandhar, were destroyed.⁽⁴⁾ Historians V. A. Smith and H. P. Shastri argue that it was a reaction of Brahmins against the rise of Buddhism⁽⁵⁾ and historian Rai Kaushik agrees⁽⁶⁾. According to Ashokavadana Pushyamitra announced in Sakala (Sialkot) that anybody who beheads a Buddhist Bhikshu and brings the head to him will be rewarded. Professor Michael Witzel says that the compilation of Manu smriti (reflections of Manu), which is attributed as the reason for imposing fundamentalism on state and society, started during Pushyamitra's time as well. But historian Romila Thapar

has challenged this account on the grounds that no evidences of targeting Buddhists were found during excavations. ⁽⁷⁾ It is also believed that Pushyamitra targeted only those Buddhists who were siding with Greeks. ⁽⁸⁾

As mentioned earlier, Greek emperor Demetrius strengthened his government in Kabul and ruled over Gandhara from 180-200 B.C. ⁽⁹⁾ He started attacking Punjab and it is also believed that his army, comprising of 60,000 troops, claimed victory in the area from Sindh to Kathiawar. ⁽¹⁰⁾ He is credited for making Taxila and Sialkot prominent cities. ⁽¹¹⁾ Demetrius was killed by his grandson, Eucratides, who ruled till 156 B.C. before getting killed by his own son, Heliocles. Saka tribes dethroned Heliocles from Balakh and dragged him across the Hindu Kush. But even during the tenure of Eucratides, several Greek princes had started to divide Punjab among themselves to rule. ⁽¹²⁾ Very little is known about them, but the coins introduced by them provide some inkling as to who they were. There were around forty such Greek princes who had occupied areas in Punjab and Sindh, but only Shah Maninder and Milind went on to become prominent kings.

According to the Buddhist account, “Milinda Panha”, Maninder was born in a village called Kalasi (in Uch) after Demetrius had claimed victory in Punjab in 180 B.C. However, historian John Hazel asserts that this place was in Bagram, Afghanistan. ⁽¹³⁾

There are some reports of his birth in Sialkot as well. Punjab was divided in several small dynasties at that time. Maninder tackled all of them to take the Sakala (Sialkot) crown in 155 B.C. ⁽¹⁴⁾ He had become a devotee of Buddhism during the same period.

Foreign invaders preferred Buddhism because it had no space for the caste system. Brahmins were in ascendancy in Central India but were kept in check by the likes of King Maninder. It is stated in “Milinda Panha”, that Sialkot was a prominent city of Greeks at that time. It was built as a fortress with beautiful gardens inside. Elephants, horses, buggies, and pedestrians were regularly seen in the markets that offered Banarasi Muslin and

other kinds of cloth, ornaments and precious stones. Persons of every sect and caste were welcomed.⁽¹⁵⁾

Maninder also tried to invade other areas in India to extend his rule to the level of Ashoka's in history. In doing so, his army battled an older Pushyamitra as well who was going to offer sacred sacrifice of the horse (Ashvamedha) for Brahmins. Greek troops encircled Pushyamitra's son Agnimitra at the banks of river Indus, but the horse sacrifice still went through. Maninder reached Patliputara (Patna) but couldn't take over the old capital of Ashoka sultanate because of unrest in his own area. He returned and died soon afterwards. His minted coins have been found commonplace in Punjab. The writer of "Peri Plus" states that these coins were being used in Broach area even after two hundred years.⁽¹⁶⁾

Maninder had to return from Patna because Sakas had attacked his area. Sakas had first taken over Balakh in the first century B.C. under the leadership of King Moees (or Moga) before they crossed river Helmand to enter Sistan. Parthians joined them at Sistan and together they entered Punjab through Bolan pass. Saka took control of Gandhara and Taxila in 80 B.C. before gaining further access in Punjab. Historical accounts in this regard are unclear since Greek rulers have also been in power in several areas of Punjab during this period. Sakas strengthened their control of northern areas and Punjab under the leadership of King Azas in 55 B.C. During the last few years before Christ, Sakas lost the throne following the death of Azas and Kushanas assumed power. Even after Kushanas gained control, Sakas (Scythians) were successful in forming several small princely states in Punjab, a pattern that continued till fourth century in parts of Punjab. There is a long list of such Sakas kings.⁽¹⁷⁾ Legend has it that Chandergupta-II finally removed them from the throne.

This list indicates that Sakas and Parthians were gaining strength after the death of Raja Maninder. It is also claimed that Jatt caste is the lineage of Sakas, but historian David Mehl has proved

through DNA test of Sakas that this is not a correct assumption.
⁽¹⁸⁾ Other tests have shown 40 percent similarities in the genes of Jatt males with Sakas and Aryans, but the genes of their female counterparts do not match at all. Similarly, Pashto is also considered to be the language of Sakas, but most researchers do not agree with this viewpoint. The Wakhi language spoken by the people of Hunza (in Gilgit-Baltistan) and Chitral is also considered a variant of what Sakas used to speak.

Around 25 B.C. Kushan tribe, the most prominent of the Euchi tribes, led by Kujula Kadphises took over Kabul and started pressing forward after gaining a foothold there. During this time, King Naga and Karkota of Kashmir ruled the area between river Indus and Jhelum in 20-22 B.C. Raja Kanishka, who was born and later died in Peshawar, assumed the throne in year 127 AD and extended his dynasty to Patliputra (Patna). His capital was Porusapur (Peshawar) in Gandhara. Kanishka's government extended to China and he was the one who initiated the silk road. The first major gathering of Buddhists was at the demise of Buddha and the second was during the tenure of Kanishka. Taxila had gained great prominence during the time of Kanishka and students from afar used to come there. Raja Kanishka governed till his death in the year 150. The following is a list of the rulers of Punjab put together by historian Rawlinson.⁽¹⁹⁾

The rulers of Balakh and Sialkot were:

Demetrios 200 B.C.

Eucratides 165 B.C.

Heliocles 156 B.C.

Greek rulers of Sialkot and northern areas:

From the Ethodimes family: Antimaks, Agathochals, Philoksness, Maninder (first period from 130-155/165 B.C.), Apollodots-II, Pentalkin, Ethodimus-II, Starto-I and II, Agathokilia, Entelkidas, Maninder.

From the Eucratides family: Plato, Lisipas, Hipotratus, Pantalion, Davmedus, Zoelus, Antimacs, Phloksnes, Arkebes, Harmeos (last Greek ruler, lost power in 25 B.C.).

Unfamiliar rulers: Apollophens, Apnder, Amentas, R. T. Medros, Nikias, Hepostratis, Apnder, Telephas, Pueklas, Zoelas.

Saka and Pehlwi rulers of Punjab: Wonoons (93 B.C.), Spalirises, Orthaganes, Arsaks, Pakoras, Sandbaras.

Kushan rulers: Kojola (25 B.C. who gave himself the title of Maharaja Rajindari), Vimataktu (80-95), Vemakidphaisis (95-127), Kanishka (127-140), Vanishka (140-160), Hovishka (160-190), Vasu Dev (190-230, last prominent Kushan ruler), followed by Kanishka-II (230-240), Washishka (240-250), Kanishka-III (250-275), Vasu Dev-II (275-310), Chehu (310-325), Shaka (325-345), Kapunada (345-375).

After almost a century of Kushan's rule, Punjab came under attack by white Huns. At the time the Gupta Dynasty had a sparse presence in Punjab. That is the reason when white Huns attacked from the north in 458 A.D., they easily captured Jammu, Kashmir, Himachal, Rajasthan, Punjab, and some areas of Malwa as well. ⁽²⁰⁾ Huns had advanced under the leadership of Toramanas and established their control on the area. ⁽²¹⁾ Several of his minted coins were found from the Sutlej and Jumna valley civilizations. He lost the war to the ruler of Malwa, Raja Parkash Dharam in 515. ⁽²²⁾ It is also believed that he lost to Sikanda Gupta in 510 ⁽²³⁾ and failed to take over all of India, but it seems that his rule in Punjab continued. His son, Mihir Kala (also called Mihir Gala and Uttela in India), defeated the Gupta dynasty in 515 and started ruling with Sialkot as the central seat of his government. ⁽²⁴⁾ He eventually succumbed to Yaso Dhaman of Malwa and Narsima Gupta Bala Dutta. Mihir Gala was taken as prisoner of war but was pardoned on the intervention of Narsima Gupta Bala Dutta's mother. He died a few months later in Kashmir in 542. Toramana and Mihir Gala were the father-son duo of white Huns who are believed to be

very ruthless characters, particularly when it came to killing Buddhists and destruction of their monuments.

Ancient history indicates that Sialkot was a center of ruling families for many decades. Perhaps that is why the story of Raja Salwan and his son Raja Risalu (who made Sialkot their official headquarters) is found only in the legend of “Puran Bhagat” in Punjabi folklores. Similarly, *Anhad* or *Anahad Devi* is referenced in Balakh though Persian sources. If my memory serves me right, this devi (woman) could be the backdrop of Sufi raag, saint anhad.

The following are some of the historical towns of Punjab:

Argan Manga, Bara, Chanda Kheri, Chunda Garhi, Deel Cher, Fatehpur, Ghoghat Wand Hinduan, Ghuram, Kakroni, Khaba, Kotli Malian, Makhan Wand, Matte Wal, Raja Karni’s fort, Rajputan, Roper, Seekhan Dheri, Singhol, Sawandha, Sarkap, Singh Bhawani Pur, Sir Sukh, Sugh, Taragarh, Wadal Dogran.

(25)

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Lost Punjab

Following these degenerating times, the Guptas' rule took roots in 319 AD and continued till 543 AD although their rule had nothing to do with Punjab. There were smaller states in Punjab, including some that practiced tribal democracy. The most famous kings of the Gupta rule included Chandergupta, Samdargupta, and Chandergupta-II or Vikram Aditya. Their connection with Punjab is only to the extent that the second maharaja (king), Samdargupta, has been called "Lachvi Dohtra" (grandson of Lachvi). The queen of Chandergupta and mother of Samdargupta, Kumar Devi, was from an influential Lachvi tribe. But "Dohtra" is a classic Punjabi word that means maternal grandson (daughter's son). Famous Sanskrit poet and playwright, Kali Das (born in Kashmir), is said to be a courtier of Chandergupta junior. Some not very reliable sources indicate that Chandergupta junior attacked Punjab once but there is no substantial evidence to back the claim.

Exploration of Punjab's history till 4th AD does not reveal any real links with the kingdoms originating from Ganga-Jumna. Instead, the connections Punjab made with Ganga-Jumna during Maurya rule appear to be broken altogether during the rule of Guptas. The top tier in Punjab was dominated by Greek, Kanishka, and Saka but several other small sized kingdoms existed under their ranks. Buddhism had penetrated enough of Punjab, language and writings in *Kharosthi* script were commonly used. In the Ganga-Jumna civilization, Brahmins were getting ascendancy and Sanskrit written in Bahmani dialect was adopted for the purposes of religious and official duties. Apparently, the division of four castes was finalized in Ganga-Jumna

civilization as well. The laws introduced by Manu smriti (teachings of Manu) were also being practiced there and womenfolk were pushed to lowly ranks. The influence of Buddhism in Punjab resisted the Brahmins for a long time, and the older Harappan teachings remained alive among the hermits (jogi), ascetics (sadhu), and atheists (nastic). Buddhism and Jainism also were atheistic to the extent that they didn't believe in one god (Bhagwan or Allah). But Buddhism was uprooted in Punjab and Brahminism gained prominence. Sanskrit replaced Prakrit and Kharosthi gave way to Bahmani script.

It is important to consider here that the production mechanism established during the Maurya era didn't change much for several thousands of years till our more recent times. Basically, ploughs and bulls were used in agriculture and these two modes remained there till the introduction of mechanized farming in 1960. Clearly new crops were discovered, Persian wells and khars (for grinding wheat) also came about during this time spanning thousands of years. However, the importance of ploughing and bulls as farming techniques did not diminish. There was not much change in how blacksmiths, carpenters, weavers, potters, and handcrafters operated. Taxation and masters kept changing (i.e., introduction of feudal system) but basic production patterns didn't alter, nor did a revolution originate. Kingships came one after the other, languages and religions also transformed, but the static nature of original production techniques didn't have any impact on the basic thoughts of those people.

Although thoughts of the public at grassroots had not changed, the entrenchment of the class system had led to further encouragement of the caste system. It seems that,

for the distribution of surplus production an ideology emerged and continued for several hundred years. It may have kickstarted on the basis of difference in complexion and occupations but culminated in the ethnicity and birth. The slavery of women also started first with the prohibition on marrying Shudra (lowest caste) females and then, in patriarchal system husband became Pati Parmeshwar (demi-god). Marrying of minor girls, ban on second marriage of widows, and sati system (widow getting cremated with deceased husband) was initiated. Perhaps the Aryans had lost interest in local Harappan women and marriages were contracted on the basis of caste divisions. If this class system is studied closely, it is evident that women met the same treatment as the entire Harappan race.

Starting from 5-6 AD to the invasion of Mahmood Ghaznavi, there are no footprints of any major upheaval in Punjab. Just as there was no addition in the overall production of India in the first ten centuries, it seems that Punjab was also yawning in a static mode during that time. The total production in India in the first century was worth \$33,750,000,000 as per the dollar conversion rate in 1990⁽¹⁾ and remained relatively the same till the tenth century. The writings of Aain-i-Akbari and English writer Moreland show that tools for agriculture and production forms did not change until the arrival of the British.⁽²⁾ Only taxation and financing systems had seen some modifications. During the Muslim era, Persian wells created some difference and the canal irrigation introduced by the British finally ended pastoralism. The number of those arriving from upper Punjab to establish new colonies alongside canals kept rising but data is indicative that the settlers from upper Punjab continued with replicating their traditional mode of living.

Returning to the history of those times reveals that Harshvardhan (590-647 A.D.) ruled for 41 years starting in 606 A.D. Although, it is said that Punjab was divided in several smaller estates after the Gupta era a close examination highlights that it was the same as during their time. This is likely because the Guptas didn't have much influence in Punjab. Harshvardhan united the rulers (rajahs) of Punjab and all of them accepted him as the king (maharaja) in April 606 AD ⁽³⁾ His era is said to be of utmost peace and harmony. In his court, wise people used to gather, including the designated poet of his court, Bana Bhata who wrote a book on Harshvardhan as well. ⁽⁴⁾ Harshvardhan wanted to extend his rule to the south but prince Polakishan in the south defeated him at Narmada river in 618-619 and this river was accepted as the border between both states. ⁽⁵⁾

The family of Harshvardhan was a hotchpotch when it came to religion. His ancestors worshipped the sun, his elder brother was Buddhist, and Harshvardhan himself revered Shivaji as per his court-designated poet, Bana. However, Buddhist traveler, Zhiyan Zang, says that Harshvardhan was a very devoted Buddhist and had shrines constructed at each of those places where Buddha had set foot. He also used to arrange a 21-day long religious festival where all rulers used to worship a man-sized idol of Raja Buddha. ⁽⁶⁾ ⁽⁷⁾ According to his own records, he was a devotee of Shivaji, but it cannot be ascertained that he had converted to Buddhism later or not. ⁽⁸⁾ However, we can infer from these details that Buddhism had not perished completely until 700 AD Evidently there must have been devotees of Buddha among Punjab's ruling classes.

Before going any further, Muhammad Bin Qassim's (695-715) invasion of Sindh and Multan should be discussed. Most of the population in Sindh was Buddhist while the rulers were Brahmans. Furthermore, Punjab and Sindh had a common civilization, therefore, the conflict between Aryans and the indigenous people was similar. According to Dr. Feroz Ahmed:

“In the meantime, the aboriginal cultivators themselves were pushed to the hills or marginalized in the plains as settlement of Indo-Aryan tribes took place on a large scale...it can be deduced that the Indo-Aryan had not only marginalized the proto-Dravidian people, but also subjected them to collective exploitation and domination, legitimized the religiously sanctified caste system”⁽⁹⁾

Before the British constructed an irrigation system, most of Sindh was likely pastoral like western Punjab because average rainfall was about 6.7 inches annually.⁽¹⁰⁾⁽¹¹⁾ The irrigation system in Punjab was established by the British. Most of western Punjab and Sindh would have been like present-day Tharparker where average rainfall is about 4 inches making cultivation very scarce. However, some evidence shows that agriculture was much better in Sindh, along the river, than western Punjab. Probably, that is the reason we do not find any agricultural symbolism in Khawaja Ghulam Farid's works but there are many such references in Shah Abdul Latif's poetry. Just as in Punjab, Aryans suppressed the indigenous populations in Sindh, and later on, Buddhist population was put under the control of Brahmanism. Before Muhammad Bin Qassim's invasion in 7th century, Sindh was ruled by Chach, a fundamentalist Brahman. His treatment of the population has been described in Chach Nama, referring to a historian Hori:

“Chach treated Jats like untouchables about whom Manu has prescribed that they should be kept out of towns. Other than dogs and donkeys, they should not have any possessions. Their utensils should be broken and crooked. Their jewelry should be made of rusted iron”⁽¹²⁾

According to Crooke, earlier the Jats were treated the same way in Punjab. They could not wear a turban or colored garments. The bridegroom could not tie a festoon and bride could not wear a nose ring. Their brides had to sleep with Rajputs on the wedding night. Even now, the Rajputs do not allow lower caste people to wear colored cloths or large aprons.⁽¹³⁾

This was the general background in which the Arab invasion of Sindh took place. Much earlier, during Caliph Usman's era, Arabs had tried very hard to conquer Sindh. It is a concocted story that Arab invaded Sindh on the call of an imprisoned girl. Much before Qassim's invasion, Arabs were ruling Makran and parts of Afghanistan. Although Hindu kingdoms of Kabul and Zabul had successfully stopped their march to Khyber Pass.

Muhammad Bin Qassim was nephew of Umayyad caliph Alhajaj Bin Yousaf who had appointed him governor of Persia. According to historian Wink, Umayyad attention to Sindh was diverted because Mads of its Saka tribes were pirating the Sasandi ships which facilitated the trade between Central Asia and Sri Lanka.⁽¹⁴⁾ They were looting some Arab ships in Debal and Kathiawar. There were several wandering tribes of Sindh who were involved in such ventures. During Hajaj's governorship, Debal's Mads attacked a ship that was ferrying passengers from Sri Lanka to Saudi Arabia and imprisoned all female passengers. According to the story, Debal's governor, Rai Pratap, took

control of these prisoners. An imprisoned girl named Naheed slipped away and wrote a letter to Hajjaj for help. Hajjaj demanded the release of the prisoners and to pay a penalty which was rejected. In this backdrop, Hajjaj asked Muhammad Bin Qassim in 711 to invade Sindh.

Muhammad Bin Qassim had 6,000 Syrian and Iraqi Mewali soldiers. Another contingent of 6,000 camel riding joined him from Makran when he reached the Sindh border. Makran's governor sent five guns and some warriors to Debal through sea. The army that attacked Debal also included local contingents like Buddhist ruler of Nairon, Bhajra, Kaka Kulak, Siwastan, Gujjar and Mad tribes.⁽¹⁵⁾ Aror, Brahmanabad and Debal were three major cities of Sindh of which the first two were used as capital cities. Muhammad Bin Qassim defeated Raja Dahir, ruler of Sindh, at Aror and captured Sindh. Qassim ordered his army to kill all the fighting men, enslave their women and children but not bother artisans, traders and peasants. He sent one-fifth of looted wealth along with captured princesses to Hajjaj.⁽¹⁶⁾ He advanced further and conquered Brahmanabad, adjoining smaller cities and Multan. He asked the common citizens to continue with their lives as usual.

One thing should be kept in mind that Arab invasion was part of foreign invasions that started with Aryans and continued till Muslim and British conquests. One should also be cognizant of Baluch and other invasions on Sindh. If one looks at the Arab invasion, it was not merely power of the sword but also the Arab's skill to organize and govern. For example, when Qassim took over Debal, Hajjaj advised him in a letter:

“Whatever way possible, do not put any prohibition on food, goods should be cheap and in abundance so that grain remains less expensive for the army. Whatever is left from Debal, do not hoard it and spend on common people. When countries are conquered and forts are captured, one should make life easy for people and comfort them. If peasants, producers, artisans and merchants are prosperous then the land will be green”⁽¹⁷⁾

This letter and some other details have been taken from *Chach Nama* which may not be an authentic source. Manan Ahmad Asif has proved that this historical chronical was written in 13th century rather than in 8th century as claimed. In other words, *Chach Nama* is reflective of Arab mindset of 13th century and not that of earlier periods. However, if we keep *Chach Nama* aside and check through other sources, it is clear that Buddhist population of Sindh resented Brahminic rule of Raja Dahir. Besides Buddhist, other indigenous tribes had their own reasons of alienation. In addition to help of local tribes, Muhammad Bin Qassim was better organizer than his opponents. Nonetheless, the basic factor seems to be that majority Buddhist population of Sindh was not prepared to accept Hindu rulers’ caste system.⁽¹⁸⁾

Muhammad Bin Qassim imposed jazia (tax) on non-Muslims but not intervened in the matters of belief. Local village chiefs continued function as before. There were Hindu governors and other high-level administrators in his administration.⁽¹⁹⁾ Kaska, a Hindu, was considered over and above his army commanders and he was the main tax collector and had the key to the state treasure. He assisted Muhammad Bin Qassim in every government sphere.⁽²⁰⁾

Qasim had taken Raja Dahir's prime minister and other top functionaries. ⁽²¹⁾

Many historians contend that Muhammad Bin Qasim used force to convert people and he destroyed temples. However, Lain Pole describes the Muslim rule tolerant and economically appropriate. ⁽²²⁾ Al Biruni claims that, for Muhammad Bin Qassim the economic aspect was so important that when he conquered Multan, he did not touch the largest wooden statue, Aditya, used for Sun worship. He was told that one-third of the state revenues come from the monetary offerings to that statue. ⁽²³⁾ Despite the fact that non-Muslims had to pay special taxes the conversion to Islam was minimal. ⁽²⁴⁾ After Hajjaj's death Suleman bin Malik called back Muhammad Bin Qassim and killed him disguised in an ox's hide.

If we analyze the Arab conquest of Sindh objectively, it can help in understanding the other Muslim invasions of Punjab. Based on available literature the following conclusions have been drawn about the Arab rule in Sindh:

1. The basic motive behind the Arab invasion was to preserve economic interests. They wanted to put an end to piracy to keep the trade routes safe.
2. Most of the Sindh population was Buddhist and opposed to the Hindu rule of Raja Dahir. They were not interested in defending a Hindu kingdom. Raja Dahir had married his sister and widow of his deceased brother. ⁽²⁵⁾ Probably, people did not like it. Nevertheless, it should be kept in mind that in earlier periods incest was not tabooed, and it is possible in Sindh Brahmanism the residuals of old tradition were still acceptable. We know in South India marriage with your sister's daughter is

preferred and marrying first cousins is very common among Muslims.

3. Muhammad Bin Qassim's success greatly depended on the assistance he got from Makran and Sindhi tribes.
4. The administration created by Muhammad Bin Qassim in Sindh was largely comprised of traditional ruling Hindu elites. The Hindu ruling class was not obliged to change religion to join the new administration. This shows that formation of ruling classes is based on economic interest and not on religion. Similar pattern continued during the entire Muslim rule of India ⁽²⁶⁾.
5. Muhammad Bin Qasim did not interfere in people's matters of faith.
6. Muhammad Bin Qasim protected the productive sections (artisans, peasants and merchants) of the society to facilitate the normal functioning of economic system.

Closer examination of history of Sindh shows that modern Sindhis' narrative of raising Raja Dahir to a level of a national hero is not very justified. It is true that Arabs were invaders but so were the Aryans and Brahmans who oppressed indigenous Sindhis in the same manner. For common population, following Buddhism, Chach was also a usurper. To condemn 7th century invaders and taking previous usurpers as heroes is not logical.

The Arabs ruled Multan till the end of 10th century when it fell in hands of Qaramaite. They took the power from pro-Abbasid's governor Banu Munabbih and allied themselves with Fatmid. Imam al-Mu'izz, Fattmid, Fatmid's caliph, dispatched Jalam bin Shayban, to check if Hindu gods'

worship had reverted back. He was dismissed due to his Sharia conflicts with the center. Mahmood Ghazni conquered Multan in 1005 and massacred large number of Ismailis. However, he let Abdul Fateh Daud to keep ruling on the condition that he will implement Hanafi fiqh. He appointed Nawasa Khan, a converted Muslim, as the overall administrator of the region. However, Nawasa Khan renounced Islam and attempted to secure control of the region in collusion with Abdul Fateh Daud. Mahmud of Ghazni then led another expedition to Multan in 1007 CE against Nawasa Khan, who was captured and forced to relinquish his personal fortune to Ghazni. ⁽²⁷⁾

Multan remained under Muslim control from 8th century to Ranjeet Singh's era. Reta Grewal asserts that Multan was among the Punjab cities that were built between 7th and 10th century ⁽²⁸⁾ This does not seem probable because the Brahmans gave Alexandra tough fight; hence it is unclear if the area was a village or town. It was likely a large town when Muhammad Bin Qassim conquered it as and one of its statues was generating a huge amount of revenue. It is also true that this area remained pastoral till the 20th century. In our own times Multan has been idealized as producer of fine textile and other things: See following folk songs:

Shirts made of sheet (kind of a cotton cloth) have arrived from Multan

Our [loved] mothers have fulfilled our fancy [by buying these shirts for us]

Mothers-in-law are evil who have taken them off from our bodies.

Or

Jugni (an imaginary entity) reached Multan, where there are great wrestlers

They eat coconuts and almonds

O my pir (spiritual initiator), this is what Jugni tell us.

In 8th century AD, the Indian rajas got united and they did not allow Arabs to go beyond Multan. Little is known about this period till Mahmood Ghaznavi's invasions. Some inscriptions indicate that Bengal's ruler, Dharam Pal (770-810) had established his empire in North India. He held a large court gathering in Kannuj which was attended by Gandhara raja, Kerakankar, Madara from central Punjab, Yadav of Singh Pura, Koruv of Haryana, Malwa's Otni and Manasia of Jaipur⁽²⁹⁾ Another source indicates that a Brahman raja, Bachan Pal had established his rule in Punjab and after a long rule died in 866 AD. His son Raja Ram Singh took over and ruled till 891 followed by his son Raja Beer Singh Buntiala. ⁽³⁰⁾

Southern Afghanistan and Kabul were part of Hindu Shahi (kingdom). A Brahman, Kalar, had murdered the Buddhist ruler and captured the state in 840 AD. After him, his son Kamal Varman and his grandson, Bheem ruled for a century. Bheem had no offspring, and hence his kingdom became part of Punjab's ruler Pirthvi Pal. On Pirthvi Pal's death within a year, his son Jai Pal ascended the throne. Raja Anand Pal, Tirlochan, and Bheem Pal were Jai Pal's descendants. ⁽³¹⁾ Arabs tried many times but were unable to capture the land route of Kandahar, Ghazni and Kabul; they could not make it to Khyber Pass. Hindu kingdoms of Kabul and Zabul ruled this area successfully.

In 9th century, Samanid empire took over Iran and they extended their rule up to Bukhara. They successfully

opened the new trade routes that benefitted India as well. When Samanid royal family became unstable from within, one of their slave governor Subuktagin, established his rule in Ghazni and extended its borders to Amu river reaching Iran and Afghanistan. ⁽³²⁾ He developed a conflict with Raja Jai Pal of Punjab. To destroy Subuktagin, Jai Pal invaded Ghazni twice but ended up losing areas up to Khyber Pass. Subuktagin died in 997 and his son, Mahmood, ascended the throne and captured Punjab by 1013.

From beginning of the Afghan/Persian rule a little more information is available about economic and social conditions of Punjab. Mahmood's courtesan historian, Al-Biruni has shed some light on India but his main interest was more in knowing the Brahman ideology rather than the general life conditions. Little can be known, from Punjabi literature about the pre-Muslim Punjab but some ancient traditions, like tribal collective decision making, can be deciphered from these writings. Some other ancient trends can be detected from classical Punjabi poetry of Baba Farid, Guru Nanak, Demodar Das, Shah Hussain, Bulleh Shah, Waris Shah and Khawaja Ghulam Farid. For example, to see how the gender relations and status of woman changed, we will try to compare society in 16th century's Demodar Das versus 18th century's Waris Shah writings.

Demodar Das's society of Western Punjab, is largely pastoral. This means that the mode of Aryan pastoralism had not changed much. We can see the tribal collective decision making and the status of local chieftains. He repeatedly compares the power of local chieftains versus feudal Emperor Akbar. However, when we compare his

depiction of Heer with that of Waris Shah, we find that Mughal feudalism had affected the tribal system. This can also provide us with clues as to what would have happened in 2,000 years prior to this period. Following points are noted in this regard:

1. It seems that on the social level, in Demodar Das's indigenous Punjab, the woman is still a warrior fighting men. In his story, Heer organizes a female fighting force, wages a war against a very powerful tribe, and kills their most revered warrior. In his imagination, Demodar Das sees Heer as overpowering Emperor Akbar and all Mughals:

“Her order forced all four sides to bow before her,
she is a bow
She has absolutely no fear of Akbar, Mughals
become powerless [if front of her]”⁽³³⁾

2. In Demodar Das's depiction of society there is no role for Mullahs, and even Qazis are mentioned in passing. In contrary to these characters, Brahmans play a central role. The Bahman is a messenger, marriage maker and a functionary in customary practices. Brahmans are shown to take bribes as well to hush up things - Heer's mother pay the Brahman to hide Heer and Ranjha's relationship “[She] manipulated the Brahman, bribing him.” However, within 200 years, during Waris Shah's time, Mullahs and Qazis have taken over Brahmans' functions and were collecting bribes in the same manner.
3. Demodar Das's society is much closer to the ancient faith in Tantrism and magic in which happenings of

imaginary events was considered normal. Demodar Das uses the imaginary powers on every turn of the events. To start with, both fall in love through invisible powers and Ranjha uses spells to get over every hurdle. By Waris Shah's time the role of magical powers had become negligible. Waris Shah goes a step further and shows that all revered spiritualists and their magical power fail to overcome and alter the natural or societal discourse: that the success of a lover affair between individuals of different classes and castes is impossible, and results in death in the end.

4. Some realignment of classes was also underway during the Mughal era feudalism. For example, the boatman, in Demodar Das's story is a semi slave of a tribal chief. However, in Waris Shah's story, written in 18th century, the boatman is an independent professional who works for money. When Ranjha begs him to give him a ride for God's sake, the boatman replies "We give a damn to God, you sister-fucker, we work for money." (34)

However, many things did not change during the last 2,500 years or there was a marginal alteration. The division on the basis of color, caste and race remained almost constant. The kind of people Panini described as lower castes, remained so up till 20th century. Almost all the artisan, including the hymn singers, were considered among the lower castes and were forced to live outside the Aryan settlements. In the 20th century the situation was same: the artisans were allotted residential plots in an exclusive street at one side of the village. Like the ancient times they could hardly change the profession or marry in other casts. As a

matter of fact, the caste system within the artisans was so deep that everyone had their own *pirs* (spiritual guide) as described by Wari Shah. ⁽³⁵⁾

On a broader scale, besides the artisans—universally among the lower castes in Punjab—the other laboring classes were not much better off in Panini’s time. In the western pastoral Punjab, the laboring classes, largely comprised of Khojas, Musalis, Changars etc. lived like semi-slaves, herding the animals of ruling elites and doing other chores. Their women were violated and misused on permanent basis. When the Aryans were herding cows, the profession was considered to be of the highest status—the word for lover as *mahi* comes from that tradition—however, when the enslaved indigenous people were put to this work, the same profession became the lowest and most degraded. In *Heer*, Ranjha is pushed to the lowest level of workers when he accepts to be grazer of buffalos.

In the agricultural areas of the Punjab, the situation was a little different but not much better than in Panini’s time. According to Panini, ploughmen (*halwara*) were paid by different quantities and qualities of food. In 1950s, our family used to hire agricultural laborers on annual basis in exchange for daily food, one pair of shoes and two sets of clothing. The only difference that took place in 2,500 years was that the payment used to be one sack of wheat (2.5 mounds) monthly or 12 sacks a year. All the other artisans were paid in kind at the harvest time. Cotton was picked by females of the laborers’ family for a small fraction of the daily picking that was the source of petty cash for them.

The Aryans had assigned the work of hymn singing to the low caste indigenous artists, called Mirasis in common parlance in our times. They were further divided by their specialties, into Khans (the classical singers of Mirasis), Bhantray, Dome, Dahdi, Kalal, Bhand, Mirsang, Pakhawji etc. These were the main keepers of the arts in the society. Other artists were low caste people like Chuhras, Bhail, Sahnsi, Kangar, Chumar, Chamrang, Sandal, Machi, Rawal, Changar, Billaymar, Odh etc. ⁽³⁶⁾ From the anthropological and sociological perspective, the lower the caste the more chances of being the indigenous of Harappa Civilization. Hence the gypsy tribes had the least mixing with the foreign genes. Probably, they were the best sample for discovering the original genealogical structures, but they have disappeared into ever-swallowing urbanization.

Emergence of cities between 7th and 10th century

Adampur; Ajodhan; Akkbar; Ambakapi or Ammakatis; Aminabad; Atak; Bhairawal; Bhakkar; Bhatnir; Bhatinda or Tabarhind; Bhera; Chamba; Chinapatti or Patti; Daulatnagar; Dipalpur; Doraha; Fazilabad; Ganaur; Gharaunda; Ghuram; Gujrat ; Hansi; Harappa; Hasan Abdal; Hazara; Hoshiarpur; Jahwal; Jhelum; Jalandhar; Jhang; Kalanaur; Kapurthala; Karnal; Khushab; Kohram; Kusawur or Kasur; Lohawur or Lahore; Machhiwara; Masudabad; Mong or Nikea; Multan; Nagarkot; Nakodar; Nandana; Narela; Panipat; Peshawar; Rahon; Rajgarh; Rawalpindi; Ropar; Sadhaura; Samana; Sarsuti or Sirsa; Sakala or Sialkot; Satghara; Shahdara; Sirhind; Shorkot; Taki or Asarur;

Talamba; Taxila; Tohana; Narsingha or Ransi;
Uchh;Wazirabad. ⁽³⁷⁾

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Ideological Discourse in Ancient Punjab

Aryans, being pastoral had a backward mindset and could not stomach the relatively enlightened worldview of Harappans. Believing in strict patriarchal system, freedom of women was a moral hazard for them. However, when they had no other way but to procreate through indigenous women then they had to concede women some freedom. We highlighted this point through Bisham and Raja Pandu's statements in *Mahabharata*. Aryan hypocrisy was also pointed out: many of their warriors and spiritual stalwarts' parents are unknown and, instead, some of them are said to born through gods and others from jars. Many basic facts are pushed under the rug in the name of religion.

There was a basic ideological contradiction between Aryans and the indigenous people. Many traditional historians were not aware of this, and they continued making self-contradictory claims. Agrarian Harappans had a progressive proto-materialist thinking. Most likely, they believed in Tantrism, in which the entire universe is conceived materialistic and understood as a sequence of causes and effects. On the contrary, Aryans believed in imaginary gods, though in the beginning, these gods were more human and materialistic. But being imaginary, these gods were soon transformed into abstract entities becoming the basis of Brahmanism. On the other hand, Harappans' ideological evolution reflected itself in philosophies of Charvak, Sankhia, Jog and Tantrism. In turn, these philosophies are the basis of Punjabi classics.

Since Harappan script is not deciphered, we have to use indirect methods to trace their ideological discourse. To unveil the ancient philosophical discourse of Punjab, three methods will be employed:

1. Rigveda and other Sanskrit scriptures will be used to identify the concepts that Aryan priestly classes were rebutting. It will be assumed that the rebutted arguments were of Harappans.
2. Ancient philosophical discourse will be traced through a comparative method i.e. to see the kinds of ideas that came into being at different stages of socio-economic development. This will show the kind of ideas that were prevailing at the pastoral versus agrarian stages.
3. Anti-organized religion philosophical movements will be analyzed to bring forth the ancient thought patterns.

Up until now, most scholars have been using the first method. They extracted the Harappan philosophy from Vedas, Mahabharata and Buddhist scriptures. Most notable scholars in this category include, Max Muller, Bhatta Charia, Briffault, Jaswal, Keith, Kosambi, McDonald, Needham, Radha Krishna, Rehas Davis, H. Shastri, S. Shastri and Malti Schindege. Although these scholars have tried to use Aryan scriptures to unearth the Harappan philosophy, their linguistic limitations at the pastoral stage do allow them to grasp the deeper thinking of people who were at the higher stage of agriculture. For example, Rigveda is comprised of simplistic hymns asking the devas to grant more animals, material wealth and children in addition to destruction of enemies. The main power their major gods, Inder and Agni are credited with increasing the

material goods and annihilating the enemies. Inder, being the main destroyers of enemy forces, is a drunkard and indulges in other hedonistic activities. Some historians believe that he must have been a tribal chief who was raised to the level of god.

The Aryan god are shown to be destroying Asuras, Dāseya Dasa and Panni. In some writings Pannis are described as Aryan's merchant class but most evidence does not confirm this. In Rigveda, one of the main targets is Dāseya and Dasa, though they are mixed in the following sukta:

“Around us is the Dasyu, riteless, void of sense, inhuman, keeping alien laws.
Baffle, thou Slayer of the foe, the weapon which this Dāsa wields.”⁽¹⁾

A lot has been written against Asura in Rigveda. Some researchers are of the opinion that Daseya were those people who had come from Iran. However, Chattopadhaya is of the opinion that “In many references word Asura is used for creators of Indus civilization.”⁽²⁾ In the sixth mandal of Rigveda, the war between Inder and Asura is referred to, and Inder is named as “Asura Ghan” (killer of Asura). According to some historians Asura is a generic term used for all those who resisted the Aryans.

“Asuras, daityas, danavas, and nagas denoted people of different cultures in various stages of civilization ranging from the rude aboriginal, uncivilized to the semi-civilized races, offering strong resistance to the spread of Aryan culture”⁽³⁾

Asura's have been described in Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics as:

The historical grain of truth in this poetical story is apparent: the Aryans in their invasion of what is now called India were obstructed by that fierce and savage-like people whom they called Asuras or demons, and whom they expelled or partially annihilated...builders of these ancient embankments still found in the Mirzapur district.⁽⁴⁾

One can see the contradiction in the quote above in which Asura are recognized as both dam builders and barbarians at the same time. A similar impression was given in the previous quote in saying that Asuras were at the lower level of the developmental stage. Such a self-contradictory view has been presented by Indian nationalists who are misinformed. Such people who take history as a mechanical process try to portray that Harappans were enslaved because they were left behind during the economic development of society. It is strange that Maha Sabha Parmanand admits that, at the time of Aryan invasion, the indigenous people were very prosperous, had many towers, forts and lived in big towns and yet they were uncivilized. It is ridiculous to argue that the urbanized population was barbarian in comparison to pastoral nomads.

We have to see how and why human ideological thinking was born at the pastoral and agricultural stages using a comparative method. Historians postulate that at the stage of gathering/hunting humans were focused on survival and had no time or capacity to create abstract thoughts. At this stage, humans had no control over producing goods or increasing them. If natural products became unavailable in an area, there was no choice but to move to another area. This basic limitation became the cause of humans spreading all over the world. In this environment, humans

were a little ahead of other animals because they could think of better methods for gathering/hunting and move on. Nonetheless, we must be cognizant that humans were not too different from animals because of their total dependence on nature.

When animals and plants were domesticated humans got some control over nature. Now, humans were not totally dependent on nature: they could manage their own feed and choose space and time. At this stage, since humans were able to create their own subsistence, they were intrigued to find out the process of production cycle of animals and plants. This knowledge was also necessary to enhance the production. After the invention of agriculture, human started settling in communities and their relationship with nature changed drastically. Now, humans could grow food, but another type of uncertainty faced them. Agricultural production also depended on many forces of nature and every day they confronted an unknown future. There is considerable time between sowing and harvesting, and in this time any natural force can destroy the crops. Similarly, domesticated animals can die because of unknown diseases or preyed upon by wild beasts. Due to this ever-present uncertainty the human desire to understand the process of nature and controlling it increased.

To keep up courage against uncertainty, humans started creating magical and religious myths. The very elementary finding was that the universe has a system of creation and annihilation. Humans learned this from the regularity of cycles of their own procreation and that of animals and plants. Then, humans came to the conclusion that their own bodies functions just like the rest of the universe. Therefore, if they can control their own body, they can

manipulate the universe through it. This very notion became the basis of magic, proto-materialism and creation of mythical entities that can control the forces of nature. The belief in magic was closely associated with agriculture while the creation of mythical entities was more prevalent in pastoral mode of living. The control over nature was much more pertinent and necessary for agricultural production. The crop cycles are much shorter and unpredictable. On the other hand, animal breeding has long production cycle and relatively less uncertain. Furthermore, these two modes of productions led to contrary arrangements of gender relations.

Since agriculture was invention of woman, they were the ideologues and preachers of newly found ideology. The woman was perceived as a creator of life (and food) and nourisher, therefore, she was considered to be symbol of fertility and image of highest power in the universe. In certain Indian areas, the seeding is still done by women. ⁽⁵⁾ This is the reason that at early stages, female goddesses were worshipped because they were the ones who give food, children and all kinds of material goods. It was much later when males took over agriculture (due to using animal power) and female goddesses were replaced by male gods and matriarchy by patriarchy. ⁽⁶⁾

Bulleh Shah, an 18th century Punjabi classical poet, expressed the power of women in these verses:

I will blow out these mantras, and put sun to fire

The mascara in my eyes is like clouds, I will ignite fire
with my eyebrows

I will scare like lightening of thunderstorm, will go home in
shape of clouds

I will sit on the tracks of nothingness and blow conch

I am neither wedded nor unmarried, [but] I will play with a son in my lap ⁽⁷⁾

Background of Harappa Philosophy

From the mini statues, seals, coins and other things found in Harappa excavations, it has been postulated that it was a matriarchal system. The inhabitants of Harappa were proto-materialists and strongly believed in magic. Aryan's characterization of Harappan women, as free spirits, also proves that this tradition was a continuity of the old culture.

“But while the women are frequently known to share in the active pursuits of men, the constructive occupations which have given rise to the development of material culture belong, in the rudest societies, almost exclusively to the sphere of women's work, and the men take no share in them. All industries were at first home industries, and developed thereafter in the hands of the women, who are the home-makers and stayed at home” ⁽⁸⁾

If the Harappan were agriculturists, then according to comparative method, their ideology should have been proto-materialism and belief in magic. The basis of magic is basically materialism. It is believed through magic humans can control the natural forces and change them: a rainfall, thunderstorm, killing or reviving dead can be managed by magical powers. The essence of this belief is that humans which are a form of matter, can cause change in the universe which is made of matter as well. The whole idea had emerged from the very fact that by sowing a seed one can produce something. Such knowledge led to a much broader system of magic. It is a misperception that humans knew process of procreation from the very beginning. The

fact is that in very early times human believed that a child is conceived in breasts and that is why the size of woman breasts is shown so huge in ancient paintings. Then child birth was associated with menses etc. ⁽⁹⁾ It was much later that humans found the secret of child birth.

Domestication of animals and growing food was not only a means to feeding oneself, but it was a major breakthrough in the human thinking process. The very idea of controlling the universe through human body became the basis of philosophy of Tantrism. ⁽¹⁰⁾ The word *tan* is a common Punjabi word which means human body. The philosophy of Tantrism has been recurrent in Punjabi classical poetry. Sultan Bahu puts it in this manner:

This body is the abode of Truthful God, O *fakir*, have a look at it

Don't beg Khawaja Khizar, find the water of eternal life within yourself

Lighten up the adobe of love in the darkness [of your heart] where you will find the lost ones ⁽¹¹⁾

The importance of this verse is that even Khawaja Khizar--the prophet of rivers, direction giver and beholder of water of eternal life—is negated for searching the truth within one's own body. The basic stress is on finding the eternal life within the human body. It is also suggested that humans have lost something that can be found by igniting internal light.

Like Tantrism, philosophy of Jog is also based on awakening the inner human powers to control the outer world. Several rituals, joga exercises and composed mantras are prescribed to enhance the internal powers.

Contrary to common modern perception, these philosophies were taken to be as believable as belief of one God of organized religions. In old agrarian communities, everyone strongly believes that spiritually accomplished people can bring rain, stop the dusk storm, kill someone by curse or revive a dead person. As a matter of fact, on every 11th day of the month, the distributing of *kheer* (rice cooked in milk) was commonly practiced in the memory of Pir Dastgir (a saint of Bagdad) known for a miracle in which he recovered a drowned boat and revived all the dead passengers. It was considered the highest level of blasphemy to question this tradition. It is very difficult for a 21st century rational person to imagine how billions of human beings believed in such a system and act accordingly. But it was as real as we believe that paper money can buy real goods and services.

On the philosophical level such a belief system was a reflection of proto-materialism in which the whole universe is conceived as sequence of cause and effect, the basis of modern sciences. ⁽¹²⁾ In other words, to bring internal changes in the material human body produces the effect of gaining special powers, and in return, these powers can become a cause to have an effect the changed the natural course. Such a philosophy, based on the universal law of cause and effect, is noteworthy. No temple or symbol of organized religion has been found in excavations of any sites of the Harappa Civilization. From the absence of temples or deities—commonly found in excavation of Mesopotamia Civilization--it is inferred that the system of belief similar to Tantrism or Jog was the ideology of that society. The proponents of this view assert that practice of Jog in Punjab, in later periods, was a continuation of the philosophical discourse of the Harappa Civilization. It

happens so that the largest Jogi Tilla (mound of jogis) is located near Jhelum, Punjab. This deserted large structure seemed to be a creation of the medieval era, but it may have been there for centuries.

Furthermore, the woman is the core element of the philosophy of Jog and this is another basis to link it with Harappan matriarchal system. To awaken womanhood in your body (called woman principle) is the first requirement of Jog. Most Punjabi classical poets including Shah Hussain and Bulleh Shah, address the world as being females. Greatest Sindhi poet, Shah Abdul Latif Bhatai's poetry revolves around seven or eight women (Marvi, Sassi, Saadia, Nori, Sohni. Laila and Sorath et al.). The greatest symbol of resistance in Punjabi culture is still, Heer, a woman. ⁽¹³⁾

The second basic principle of Jog is requirement of the five Ms: Madh (liquor), Masa (flesh or meet), Matasia (fish), mudra (roasted corn) and Madhona (sexual intercourse). These are five markers and are supposed to please goddesses and gods. ⁽¹⁴⁾ The requirement of sexual intercourse is somewhat contentious but Chattopadhaya has shown that such practices were common in early agrarian societies. ⁽¹⁵⁾ If the entire practice of Jog is taken to bring the mind and body in a certain ecstatic condition then the basis of ritual of 5 Ms can be understood easily. This rule of 5 Ms is not found in Punjabi classics as such but one can see some of its reflections. For example, Bulleh Shah says:

Drink alcohol and eat kababs, burn your bones to ignite fire
under

O Bullhead, steal, rob God's house and deceive the deceiver of all deceivers.⁽¹⁶⁾

In another verse Bulleh Shah writes:

Who is called a unique sadhu,

He comes in the form of sprinkling beauty

Jogi, when you will merge, [it doesn't matter) if you call for [Muslim] prayer or blow conch [like Hindus].⁽¹⁷⁾

Waris Shah takes a step further to define a Jogi:

He [Ranjha] recites Quran, call for prayers and arranges his place and blows conch.⁽¹⁸⁾

Waris Shah explored the philosophy of Jog at length. Following the 5 Ms, he had Heer and Ranjha indulge in sexual intercourse. He wrote about 21 stanzas on their physical merging and it may be one of the finest erotica poetries. Here is a randomly picked small stanza:

You have been squeezed like never before and you look like a yellow okra flower

Someone has twisted your back shoulders and seems like something has been pushed and pulled

Your body parts look crushed like an oxen wrestling with yoke

Waris Shah, pray that everyone be blessed like this ⁽¹⁹⁾

Other than Waris Shah, no other poetic narrator of Heer's story has even hinted towards this aspect. Probably, no one was looking at the dynamics of Jog like Waris Shah. He knew and followed the minute details of Jog practice and that is why he knew that Ranjha cannot become a complete

Jogi without sexual intercourse. He had him fulfill the custom of *madh* when he wrote:

“Bulbous root, poppy-head, opium, hemp drink, transported by intoxication.”⁽²⁰⁾

Regarding fulfilling the conditions of *madh* and *madhona*, it is evident that philosophy of materialist Tantrism was well and alive in 18th century Punjabi literature. As a matter of fact, one can only comprehend the classical tradition of Punjabi classics in the context of ancient Harappan philosophical discourse. Along with 5 Ms of Jog Waris Shah mentions the myth of five pirs (spiritual heads) and at first sight it appears that he is bringing in metaphysical entities into his story. But, in the end providing a key to his symbolism, he interprets five pirs as five human senses.⁽²¹⁾ By that interpretation, he subverts the traditional metaphysical characters into material human bodily qualities.

Before Waris Shah, Shah Hussain, a 16th century stalwart, was known for shaving, head, beard, moustaches and eyelids, along with drinking alcohol drinking.^{(22) (23)} According to the historical account, when Shah Hussain met Emperor Akbar, he had a wine cup in one hand and a flagon in the other.⁽²⁴⁾ Shah Hussain’s fulfilling of *madhona* was not with a woman because he was in love with boy named Madho. One account describes Shah Hussain’s gatherings as follows:

“That day Shah Hussain had invited his friends over a meal and special sweet nans were prepared. In his gathering, dancing and singing was going on, and sexual indulgence along with drinking was also there.”⁽²⁵⁾

According to the oral tradition, a bottle of alcohol was given in offering on Shah Hussain's shrine by his followers. It is also known that on his annual festival sexual indulgence was permitted within shrine boundaries. Noor Ahmad Chishti portrays his annual festivals in his Yadgar-e-Chishti:

“Whole night there used to be singing and excessive alcohol was consumed, and kababs were eaten...Some listen to Qawwal music and some shameless lowly people are seen sitting with prostitutes.”⁽²⁶⁾

These details are provided to show that Harappan ideology of proto-materialist Tantrism and Jog continued up until 18th century. Punjabi classical poetry is reflective of an ancient indigenous life style that was condemned in Vedas as we have mentioned earlier in this book.

Aryan's Thought Process

To counter proto-materialism of Harappans, the idealists try to prove the existence of The Creator from Upanishads⁽²⁷⁾ and other Aryan scriptures. However, the modern materialist school of thought propounds that the idealism emerged as a result of change of mode of production, private property and division of caste-class systems.⁽²⁸⁾ They proclaim that earlier Vedic hymns were closer to the materialist reflection of the universe. At the initial stages, the Aryan gods were just like humans and the entire system of prayers and rituals of sacrifices was geared towards getting a few material things.

As we have said earlier, Deva Inder must have been a tribal hero before being raised to the level of god. In Rigveda,⁽²⁹⁾ Inder is called a close friend who coming from eternity “helps us like a friend and listens to us like confidential

friends. His friends are also praiseworthy (i63m4.1, 100,4).
⁽³⁰⁾ Then it is mentioned that “Inder’s friends poured wine for him (iii,39, 5). ⁽³¹⁾ Remember Inder, it is said that “O Inder, you are giver of horses, cows, barley and wealth to us. You are our friend and talk to us like friends (I 53,2).”
⁽³²⁾ Likewise, Agni is considered to be a friend of and called upon “O Agni, you come to us like friends and parents and fulfill our desires. The men oppress in worst ways, but you swallow our enemies.” ⁽³³⁾ All gods are addressed like friends and it is claimed that we have been friends with them from our ancestral times. Varuna was also a major god in old times and therefore, reminding him of old friendship it is said “What happened to your friendship with us which was beyond any worry. Can we renew our friendship and enter your house with thousand doors? You are the treasure of food” (vii 88.5). ⁽³⁴⁾ In the earlier parts of Rigveda, the poets had friendship with gods and, specifically, Varuna. They were considered as tribe’s part. In one sukta it is said that “O Agni, O Asura, in this custom of ours, cows, sheep horses and offspring are filled. Our desire is that you come to our gathering like humans with no anger. You are own big wealth and water” (iv, 2,5). ⁽³⁵⁾ If we gather statistics of Rigveda verses about gods’ characteristics, most of them are material. There are 3,000 suktas of this kind that constitute one-third of Rigveda. ⁽³⁶⁾ If most of the hymns are related to material worldly goods then how can these gods belong to another sphere?

After having shown that material needs were the basis of hymns, we need to see how these material goods were distributed. Most thinkers agree that, in all societies, at the stage of gathering/hunting everything was commonly owned, and concept of private property had not emerged yet. When humans reached the stage of domestication of

animals and plants (agriculture) then class differentiations started propping up. However, even then the division was limited to food and a commonly shared system lingered on till a matured agrarian stage was reached. ⁽³⁷⁾ Aryans of Rigveda had come to Punjab as pastoral people who had already gone through gathering/hunting stages, therefore, it is less likely that they still had the system of commonly owned property. However, it seems that poets of Rigveda had a remembrance of old times.

In Rigveda, the word *vari* or *varia* is used for material wealth. ⁽³⁸⁾ *Varia* is derived from *Viram* which means dividing. It appears that Punjabi expression ‘*vari jana*’ (to sacrifice oneself for other) has the same root, meaning to sacrifice your share for another person. In Rigveda, *bhag* also means share or distribution of shares of wealth and *Bhagwan* means the one who distributes shares. ⁽³⁹⁾ *Devi Savitri* also distributes *bhags* (shares). In the social set-up with commonly owned property, god distributed the shares but with the emergence of classes, humans took over this function and, they started giving shares to gods as well. This *sukat* seems to be written, after centuries, in the later part of Rigveda:

“O *Agni, Yajmans*, loaded with food, distribute it according to your guidance, we should increase food...we should increase food during wars and give a portion of it to gods.” (i, 73,5) ⁽⁴⁰⁾

The place designated for distribution of wealth in the tribe was called *vidatha*, an alternative word for *samiti* which means gathering. *Vidatha* is a more commonly used word in Rigveda and ‘*vidya*’ (knowledge, wisdom, understanding) is also derived from it. *Vidya* also meant shared knowledge. *Sabha* (*sab hey*) also stands for

gathering which is also used for dividing shares or lots. *Aksa* is another word for drawing lots. *Aksa* is also used when throwing dice in gambling. Aryans were addicted to gambling and in later Rigveda sukats some are shown repenting after they had lost their wives and children in gambling. But the main meaning of *Aksa* is to justly distribute shares. Pawal Baden has mentioned this process in new age in Peshawar:

“The area was divided through drawing lots. If the distributed land varied in quality, then the tribal leaders would distribute the lots by dividing them in circles or by some other method. The shareholders would pick the lots of their choice”⁽⁴¹⁾. This shows that the division in Sabha was justly.

In early periods of Rigveda, the decisions were made in the tribe through consensus. Some historians think that the addition of word Saha with Sabha means that decisions were made by Brahmans and Kshatriyas only. This interpretation is not backed up by historical evidence.⁽⁴²⁾ Instead of being council of higher classes, it may have meant that only the tribe members can take part in Sabha and no outsiders are allowed. The ‘outsiders’ may have meant the indigenous people of Harappa who had been enslaved by the Aryan tribes. The women were prohibited to take part in Sabha either.

Sabha’s leadership was divided in two sections: one, the Keepers of Faith and two, War Council whose basic duty was to look after the department of war. The Keepers of Faith was responsible for arranging festivals while the War Council looked after the tribal wars.⁽⁴³⁾ When the tribal system was broken the Keepers of Faith became Brahmans and leaders of War Council became Kshatriyas. In the last

parts of Rigveda, the word *samiti* is used for war. In these late periods tribal democracy came to an end and the rajas (kings) became hereditary. Har Parsad Shastri has described this change in his Bengali book 'Buddhism' in these words:

“In the beginning people used to feed on love and live in the abodes which was bliss. Feeding on food which was love and living in abodes which were bliss, they lived thus. And whatever they did was *dhamma*. Then emerged among them the distinction of *varna* (color): some had good *varna*, some bad. Vanity was thus born and with its *dhamma* died. And with-it dried-up love honey on which they were so long feeding. .Nobody, then had any idea of hoarding. But the idea of hoarding the grain gradually grew in their minds. And the greed for hoarding went on increasing. Along with it dawned the consciousness of the difference between the sexes. .They started to cultivate the land which ultimately made the collective ownership of it no more possible. Land was distributed among the individuals for individual cultivation” ⁽⁴⁴⁾

It appears that in the beginning, the War Council used to distribute the looted material on an equal basis. At that point most of the War Council was meant to fight the Harappan tribes, plunder and enslave them and grab their women. However, when Aryan tribes started fighting among themselves, the heads of War Council started keeping the loot, giving rise to personal property and hereditary rulers. The collapsing of shared tribal system was very painful for the Rigveda poets and they whaled a lot.

As described earlier, the tribal elders used to lead the prayers and recite mantras. Reciting the mantras at the

occasion of sacrifices was called 'yajna'. However, after the end of tribal democracy when Brahmans and Kshatriyas took power in their hands yajna was assigned to lower caste professional singers. The propertied classes started calling themselves as 'Yajmans.'⁽⁴⁵⁾ Through this change, using mantras for enhancing power was monopolized by the upper classes. The professionals performing Yuj were considered at a lower level in the religious rituals led by Brahmans.

Towards the end of the Rigveda era, the struggle for economic gains and blind greed became very intense leading up to stagnation of ideas and the poets who could create new hymns became extinct. New groups emerged who would recite Vedas without any understanding. These new groups started creating complex religious rituals out of the hymns which were created for enhancing the material resources. Reciting Vedas and attaching them to certain rituals became a profession that gave birth to Brahmanism as we know it.⁽⁴⁶⁾ There was a power struggle between Keepers of Faith and warriors but in the end priestly classes won and the warriors became dependent of their *mantras*.⁽⁴⁷⁾ In addition, the warriors or Kshatriyas also needed the religious people to keep peace: they could not rule by constant violence and needed ideology to pacify the ruled ones.

The new Brahmanism introduced an abstract Creator or Bhagwan, who runs the universe from without. Living in some imaginary sphere the Bhagwan has its own will which cannot be affected or changed by humans. Therefore, it is his will that creates some people as privileged Brahmans and others as worthless Shudras. This is how the idealist philosophy of 'Janam-vad' (Birthism) came around.

If the people start believing such an ideology, then there is no need to use violence for keeping peace.

In addition, to control the Kshatriyas, Brahmans used the imaginary power of magic, mantras and astrology. Apparently, it is akin to Tantrism but there is a fundamental difference. In Tantrism the power lies within human body while in Brahmanism humans are not the core or center of the universe. The real power lies in an external entity, Bhagwan, who can be approached through selected intermediaries. The course of nature can be changed by Bhagwan only and he can be manipulated by intermediaries belonging to a certain caste. Bhagwan, has endowed the selected caste to see into the future. In this manner, the intermediaries gained the control of everyone and every aspect of society. Qazis, Mullahs and pirs did the same thing in Islam.

The uncertainty that was born at the agrarian stage, giving rise to magic etc. was not limited to common people: it was shared by ruling classes like Kshatriyas as well. As a matter of fact, they experienced higher anxiety of uncertainty because they had much more to lose. They were more superstitious and depended more on intermediaries like Brahmans and astrologists. In most of the popular stories about ruling rajas we can see how they followed the Brahmans and astrologists in making vital decisions. For example, Raja Salwan kept his son, Poran, for twelve years in confinement. Another ruler threw his daughter (Sassi) in the water to drown because astrologists had told him about her future love affliction. Similarly, in Mahabharata, Raja Pando, is cursed to procreate no children. Raja Dahir of Sindh married his real sister because astrologists told him that it will be her husband who will rule India.

The Indian rulers started undertaking wars and conquering adventures on the advice and blessing of Brahmans. This way they assumed the role of empire making and breaking. The religious intermediaries had such a psychological influence over the rulers that according to Baba Guru Nanak's 'Babar Babi' Indian ruler, Ibrahim Lodhi, was confident about his sway over Babar because Muslim Pirs and Hindu Pandits had assured him of this. If 15th century, Muslim rulers were so superstitious, one can imagine the mindset of persons who ruled 1,000 years earlier. In general, everyone takes advantage of others' insecurities, but Brahmans took it to the extreme. They made rituals of sacrifices so complicated that, other than them, no one else could perform it.

Furthermore, they had everyone believing that nothing can be accomplished without offering sacrifices. The sacrifices became so incessant that, at the end, only a few could afford it. Consequently, the gaining of wealth and power, through using religions, became the tool of the rich. This also meant that poor and low caste people could never please Bhagwan and, hence, they deserved a lowly life. It should not be surprising that religion became the monopoly of upper castes: The lower castes could not study or recite Hindu Vedic scriptures. Therefore, the lower castes, comprised mostly of descendants of Harappa Civilization, stuck to their old belief system of Tantrism. ⁽⁴⁸⁾

There was another factor that lifted the Brahmans to the highest levels. As the state institution became complex, literate people were needed to run it. Since, Brahmans were the only educated lot, Kshatriyas became dependent on their know-how. This is the reason they did not lose their supremacy during Muslim or English rule. Even after 1947,

Brahmans led most of the political formations, from Congress to Communist Party.

Brahmanism could not dominate Punjab for long and Mirasis remained the one who knew 'Yuj'. It is noteworthy, that in Punjab, only Mirasis address the propertied classes as *Yujman*. It seems that Mirasis were professional singers of the Harappa Civilization much before the Aryans came and, at a later stage, assigned them the profession of *yajna*. It also looks more likely, that at earlier stages they were no professional *yajna* and the function was fulfilled by elders of Aryan tribes. It remains to be determined when Aryans conceded this function to Mirasis.

The tradition of lower castes, being the religious functionaries, has continued in Punjab up to the modern times. Punjabi Muslims also considered Mullahs among the lowly artisan castes. They were used to write amulets and other things related to superstitions. Khawaja Farid has also mentioned ".have the Mullah write an amulet." Mullahs also used to read and write letters as Waris Shah has described in his 'Heer'. Despite all their usefulness, Mullahs were treated as lowly class and they were given limited wheat at the harvest time like all other artisans. Only boys from poorest families used to take up this profession.

A friend narrated an interesting story about his grandfather's view about Mullahs. The old man used to go regularly to village mosque for prayers: only old people used to go to mosques. One day the village Mullah had some emergency and requested the old man to recite 'azan' (call to prayer) for him. But when Mullah came back, the old man told him that he should never ask him to do this

work of 'kammiss' (artisans). However, during Muslim rule, when selected Mullahs were used as Qazis, to run the system of justice, they became somewhat respectable. But, in Punjab, religious functionaries have never elevated to the level of Brahmans of Ganga-Jumna valley.

The rise of Qazis during Muslim rule can provide some clues to the rise of Brahmanism. In 16th century poet Demodar Das's *Heer*, Qazi has no significant role except towards the end when he validates the ruler's decision. However, in Waris Shah's *Heer*, written in 18th century, Qazi plays an important role as a land revenue functionary, an endorser of ruling class's misuse of religion and in the end overturns raja's decision. This indicates that Qazis becoming more powerful than the rulers just like the Brahman domination of Kshatriyas. ⁽⁴⁹⁾ Although Brahmans, like Mullahs, were also considered as kami (artisan) used for carrying messages and arranging marriages between different tribes. This is clear from all stories in Punjabi classical poetry. The religious functionaries became a political force with urbanization in Punjab after 1960s. ⁽⁵⁰⁾

Ideological Conflict and New Formations

In the preceding sections we traced the roots and evolution of ideology of Aryans and Harappa Civilization. Using the comparative method, and through examples of matriarchal Khasi ⁽⁵¹⁾ and patriarchal Toda ⁽⁵²⁾ tribes we found that in early agricultural stage, society tends to be matriarchal while pastoral tribes are usually patriarchal. We also found that matriarchal system has led to materialist philosophies like Tantrism, Charvak, Sankhia and Jog. Materialist schools of thought are referred to as Lokayata which means people's thinking ⁽⁵³⁾

Lokayata's materialist philosophy was founded much earlier than Jainism and Buddhism. According to Bilington a philosopher, named Charvak, wrote this philosophy in his Brahspati Sutra. ⁽⁵⁴⁾ Ajita Kasa Kambily is also credited for founding this school of thought. ⁽⁵⁵⁾ There is a consensus about the fact that philosophy of Charvak was popularized in second or third century. This school of thought ridicules all the spiritualistic philosophies and asserts that entire human knowledge is based on evidences obtained through human senses. ⁽⁵⁶⁾ This universe is made of four elements, earth, water, fire and air. ⁽⁵⁷⁾ Probably, this philosophy was named as Charvak because in Punjabi Char means four and Vak means saying. However, the intellectuals, not familiar with Punjabi, misinterpreted it as chewing. Reflection of this philosophy can be seen in Bulleh Shah who portrays the entire human activity as a game of earth:

The earth makes advances, o friend

The earth is clothing, horse and [its] rider

The earth makes the earth run, the entire clamor is that of earth

The earth tries to kill earth with earth's weapon

The earth having surplus earth on it, becomes arrogant earth

After playing and laughing it became earth [again], earth is lies with legs stretched ⁽⁵⁸⁾

These verses show that the life is game played in this life and humans should relish the material body. If we view Charvak through Punjabi classical poetry, its conceptual framework can be distinguished clearly. A few verses of Shah Hussain are befitting to elaborate this point:

O mother, let me play, who will come back to play my
game

The full youth will never come back, play and laugh with
your love

Dusty earth will cover the face [in the end]

We love laughing and playing, God himself has blessed us
with that

Some lived crying and weeping all life, [and] some
achieved laughing and enjoying from this plane (life)

Dance around and play amidst the home yard, repeated
remembrance finds God nearby ⁽⁵⁹⁾

As for the Aryan's ideological transformation, most historians have not analyzed it from a historical perspective. While historians acknowledge the collapse of a shared Aryan tribal system, they do not explain the causes of change. Just the passage of time does not result in fundamental change: a mode of production can perpetuate itself for thousands of years. Our own experience is that agricultural system established during Maurya period survived for thousands of years up until 1960s. If Aryans were pastoral in 1500 BC, they could have remained so till the modern era like Toda tribe. Therefore, it is reasonable to hypothesize that change in Aryan society occurred due to fundamental shifting of mode of production.

First of all, it appears that shared tribal system would have come under tremendous pressure because of induction of agriculture. Although Aryans hated the agriculture and its practitioner in the earlier period, but Panini's portrayal shows that they had taken up cultivation before 500 BC. In the backdrop of society's division on the basis of color—

Harappans being enslaved—the early Aryan agricultural would have peculiar characteristics. They would have used the Harappan enslaved labor and segments of their own population, that that had been pushed down in the process of tribal break-up, for agricultural production. According to Panini's description, ploughing was done by hired hands who were paid in varying quality and quantity of food. It seems plausible that Harappans were key to the Aryan agricultural production because they were the ones who had technical know-how of cultivation. Therefore, a proto-feudalism would have been in place from the very beginning in Aryan agricultural society.

Another fundamental aspect has to be taken into account: the Aryan households were put in place by forcibly abducted Harappan women. The indigenous women, being more knowledgeable about agriculture, would have played a significant role in the mode of production which was new for Aryans. It must have some effect on the gender relations in that society. The prominence given to female characters in Mahabharata shows that this could not have been possible if the Aryans were stuck in the pastoral stage. The views expressed by Raja Pando that women enjoyed much more freedom in the prior eras also indicates that in the earlier periods Harappan women, despite their captivity, were more assertive. It is evident that with the increasing surplus agricultural production, subjugation of women and lower castes increased manifold. Megasthenes also affirms such a development in describing that the upper-class women stayed behind the scenes.

On the ideological level, with the change of pastoralism into agriculture, magical spells were incorporated. We don't find such magical spells in Rigveda, but scriptures

created later, like Atharvaveda, is all about magical practices. This ideological evolution further affirms that ideology of magic emerged at the agricultural stage, and at its initial stages, women's position was enhanced. However, given the importance of color and class in Aryan society, the creation of magical spells was monopolized by the Brahmans to enhance their position further. This was an additional tool in the hands of Brahmans to put themselves on top. If these magical spells were believed to be real changers of historical outcomes, and lower castes and women were prohibited to read scriptures such as the Atharvaveda, then the Brahmans had established themselves as the sole masters of the universe.

Most of the ideological evolution, resulting in the supremacy of Brahmans and Kshatriyas took shape in the Ganga-Jumna valley: it could not get rooted in Punjab till very late. The early recorded history indicates that Jainism was the religion of at least the ruling elites. Both Chandergupta Maurya and Kautilya were followers of Jainism. Jainism, unlike Brahmanism, does not believe in a Superbeing or other deities. This has led some Jain historians to claim that since no temple is discovered in Harappa excavations, therefore those ancient people may have believed in Jainism⁽⁶⁰⁾. This cannot be verified till the Harappa script is deciphered but, in some ways, Jainism seems to be closer to the perceived ideology of Harappa people. But the problem is that Jainism could not be people's religion because killing every creature, including plants and their roots, is prohibited in this faith system. The agriculturists, or even pastoralist, cannot afford it because they have to make living through cutting plants and animals. This is the reason, that Jainism was popular only

in the trading classes because they could afford not killing any creature.

Historical facts also show that Brahmanism could not have a complete domination in Ganga-Jumna valley till quite late. Rulers of pre-Maurya Haryanka Dynasty were followers of Buddha to start with. Though the later Haryanka rulers destroyed the remaining tribal democratic republics, including Buddha's own tribal kingdom, yet Brahmanism faced strong resistance. The very fact that Chandergupta Maurya's conquest of Nanda Dynasty and making Pataliputra, his capital, shows that, being a Jain, he had no regard for the Brahmans. His grandson, great Emperor Ashoka, embraced Buddhism and the religion became the most popular faith system in Punjab and Sindh, the old bed of Harappa Civilization. However, it seems that Brahmanism had made significant inroads during Maurya period because according to Megasthenes, inter-caste marriages and change of professions were prohibited during Chandragupta's rule.

Nanda and Maurya dynasties were being built on the ruins of democratic tribal systems. The class struggle triggered by induction of agriculture, giving rise to hereditary rajas and emergence of small kingdoms was very much resented by later Vedic poets. This tradition of antipathy towards annihilation of communal sharing, and overwhelming greed, inherent in the class struggle, has its reflections in entire Punjabi classical literature down to our own times in writings of Najm Hossain Syed and Shiv Kumar Batalvi. Buddha's own philosophy was a reaction against rising caste/class system through Brahmanism. Buddha was trying to reconstruct the communal sharing, the core of tribal democracies, that was annihilated in front of his eyes.

There were many other ideologues who were preaching similar ideas, but Buddha got the distinction of finding a popular following.

Like Jainism, Buddhism was also embraced by rich traders at the very initial stages and they financed the establishing of Sangha. When Buddha began preaching his ideology, prosperous educated individuals joined his ranks. The early converts like Taposa, Bhalika et al. belonged to trading families.⁽⁶¹⁾ When Buddha showed a miracle to conquer a snake, a thousand ascetic Brahmins joined him.⁽⁶²⁾ Then ruler of Magadh Dynasty, Maharaja Bhimbisara (558-491 BC) also embraced Buddhism. The richest trader of that time, Anathapindika, bought the most expensive garden from the king and presented it to Buddha.⁽⁶³⁾ Raja of Kosala, Pasindi, also adopted Buddhism. This shows that in Buddha's time, most of his converts belonged to the ruling elites. Probably, this is the reason that Buddha prohibited the admission of slaves, moneylenders' indebted individuals and deserter soldiers of royal army.⁽⁶⁴⁾ This also shows that slavery and advanced financial system was already in place by that time.

On Buddha's advice, Raja Bimbisara of Magadh's Haryanka Dynasty did not invade the strong Dravidian state of Viji, but his son, Ajatashatru (492-460 BC) imprisoned his father and destroyed the Licchavi dynasty.⁽⁶⁵⁾ It is an example of greed for power that ten successive rulers of Haryanka Dynasty imprisoned their fathers or killed them. It is noteworthy that the Mughal brutality against their fathers and brothers had started with founding of empires in the ancient times. However, when Chandergupta Maurya conquered Magadh, Nanda Dynasty had taken over the Haryanka rule. It is said that founder of Nanda Dynasty

was son of a barber which means that caste system was not yet deeply rooted. This was the period when empires were being built and destroyed and the struggle between classes and castes was intense. This was the backdrop of rise of Buddhism.

There are two contradictory evaluations of Buddhism. The first one is that Buddha destroyed the caste system and uplifted the common people. ⁽⁶⁶⁾ He also negated the concept of alien Superbeing and diverted the human attention back to material world. He preached that, instead of birth, human beings' actions are the basis of society. He also rejected gender discrimination: women could join his Sangha just like men ⁽⁶⁷⁾. However, the contrary view is that Buddhism was a movement of aristocracy which did not better the life of common people. Probably, both viewpoints have some elements of truth.

Despite all the criticism of Buddhism, the fact remains that this religion, eventually, became the popular religion in Punjab and Sindh. The question is what was new in this ideology that was appealing to rulers and general population of certain regions. ⁽⁶⁸⁾ It is postulated that Buddha created an ideological structure on the basis of tribal shared-communal living with a democratic decision-making processes. His own tribal kingdom, Saka, was the model of such a social set-up. In the aftermath of destruction of shared communal tribal life, Buddha's ideology was to recreate that imaginary life through an idealistic model. He had seen the murderous decimation of his own tribe ⁽⁶⁹⁾ and the way his friend Raja Bimbisara was imprisoned and starved to death and his other follower, ruler of Kosala, was dethroned and had died. ⁽⁷⁰⁾ Those

were the times which were described by Bulleh Shah in these verses:

When everyone ran after their own interest, the daughters started robbing the mothers

No commonality was left between fathers and sons, [and] mothers were not helping daughters ⁽⁷¹⁾

Buddha created communes, called Sangha where individuals, irrespective of their caste, class or gender, could practice a shared living after detaching from the conflict-ridden class society. In practice these were islands of communal living in the sea of class society. In fact, Buddha had no formula to stop the emergence of new class-based society because of human greed. He found a temporary solution of escaping from agony of such society and seeking *moksha* (freedom) by living in Sanghas. His Bhikkhus could live a shared life and make decisions democratically but such arrangements were akin to creating imaginary structures.

Probably, the ancient Harappan cultural spirit was more conducive to spread of Buddhism in Punjab. Buddhism's non-recognition of Superbeing, was closer to Tantrism and its negation of divisions, based on caste, class and gender were also appealing to Punjabis, as descendants of Harappa Civilization. Buddhism had no prohibitive rules for marriage either: Buddha was married to her own real first cousin. ⁽⁷²⁾ The women could also join Buddhist Sangha and it might have enhanced its appeal in Punjab, where priestesses were the original worship leaders. At the time of Buddhism's entry in Punjab, there were large swaths of tribal democracies still surviving:

“The new reality was that the state trying to get itself recognized through direct violence and it was a big change. However, the old condition of tribal system run by principle of democratic decision making was still prevailing in Punjab but had come to an end in Ganga Valley.”⁽⁷³⁾

Brahmanism reached its peak during Gupta Dynasty (319-543) in Ganga Jumna valley. This period is called “Golden Age” of India because Sanskrit art and literature prospered in this era.⁽⁷⁴⁾ Although it is claimed that significant growth took place during Gupta period, but the statistics show that there was no increase in GDP of India between 1st and 10th century. More importantly, the woman subjugation reached a new high: early girl marriages, prohibition on widow remarriages and Sati (self-emulation) became common. Similarly, new extreme prohibitions were promulgated under the [Manu smriti](#) laws. If one adds up the proportion of oppressed population of this period—50% as women and 40% as lower castes—it comes to 90%. A few Sanskrit plays could not compensate the degradation of human life.

The system of tribal of democratic decision making and lesser gender discrimination in Punjab may have been due to the following reasons:

1. When Aryans came to Punjab, as their first home, they were practicing tribal democracy. The tribal communal democratic principles may have deeper roots in Punjab than the areas they moved to later on such as Ganga Valley. We have mentioned that earlier Aryans mixed more with the indigenous people than those that came later. Therefore, it may have been more difficult to change the social

institutions in Punjab than in areas developed at a much later stage.

2. In the earlier periods, the Aryans had created their households by abducting the indigenous women with whom they had to compromise more. But, a few generations later, the women may have been more affected by their class status rather than their original culture. Therefore, the Aryans who moved to Ganga-Jumna were more class/caste conscious than the ones who continued living in Punjab.
3. Punjab was target of frequent invasions from the north and it was ruled by foreign rulers—Greek, Saka, Kushans, White Huns--up until 4th to 6th century. Many of these rulers preferred Buddhism's anti-caste ideology over Brahmanism. Consequently, the Brahmanism, along with their language, could not establish themselves in Punjab the way they were able to dominate the Ganga-Jumna Valley.
4. Although Al-Biruni asserts that Brahmans fled to South as a result of Muslim invasions it looks more likely that they had left Punjab much earlier because of other foreigners' interventions. Al-Biruni, being an elitist, is very sympatric to Brahmanism and despises the common people of Punjab. ⁽⁷⁵⁾ Nevertheless, he points out one common characteristic of Indian (i.e. Punjabi) men that differentiates them from the Central Asians: Unlike the invaders from North, the indigenous males consult their wives in every decision making ⁽⁷⁶⁾. In general, the Muslim ruling classes, coming from the Central and West Asia, hated converted Muslims and preferred to deal with upper-caste Hindus.

Therefore, Al-Biruni's claim is less trustworthy. Historically, from the 2nd century BC up to the British era, Brahmans were never able to affect the political discourse in Punjab: Kshatriyas dominated, different spheres of life in this area.

5. In Punjab's rural culture, at least in central and east Punjab, the lower castes were not treated as badly as in other areas. For example, the aged lower caste people were addressed respectfully with the title (uncle, aunt etc.) reserved for the people of higher caste elders. This shows that Punjab maintained parts of egalitarian culture up to the modern times: it has changed after the urbanization and mechanization of late

Buddhist would have found Punjabi culture much more accommodating. Conversely, Buddhist way of life was not very alien to Punjab. Nonetheless, idealistic Buddhist ideological structure could not be sustained in the long run: it was bound to fail. By creating communal Sanghas away from society, ground realities could not be changed. Furthermore, Buddhist institutions were supported and sustained by rich traders and the ruling elites. It shows that dominating classes were least bothered about Buddhism. As a matter of fact, it was comforting for them as well. At some level they were also agonized by the uncertainty of the new caste/class system and they also shared nostalgia for the old communal living.

However, the emerging mode of production was more prone to dividing people into classes and castes. It was in search of a different ideology than Buddhist collectivism. Since Buddhism could not fulfill the emerging ideological needs, the ruling classes stopped adhering to the religion.

Buddhists were so detached from the worldly affairs that they could not manage the large estates granted to them by previous rulers. Furthermore, they could not help the ruling classes in running the state bureaucracies. On the contrary, the Brahmans were capable and willing to perform these functions. Consequently, the Brahmans' ideology was accepted by the ruling classes. Punjab was slow to adopt the required institutional changes and was left behind in the sphere of economic development. As a result, it could not maintain the levels of large amount of surplus production which, also, resulted in the downfall of Buddhism which was totally dependent on it.

Continuation of Harappan Philosophical in New Era

Although Jainism and Buddhism faded away from Punjab, the essence of Tantrism and Jog had been a recurrent theme. In the 15th century, Baba Guru Nanak, resurrected the concept of communal sharing. He also preached the "Middle Path" like Buddha and negated the caste, class and gender discriminations. However, he emphasized that one has to remain the functional part of society while practicing communal sharing. He did not create parallel living arrangements like Buddhist Sanghas. While Buddha was silent on the question of existence of One God, Guru Nanak embraced it in declaring "Ik Onkar" (He is one). But the question is that what is the difference between his Oneness and that of organized religion's preachers like Mullah, Pandit and Pope?

The Oneness may be interpreted in two contradictory ways. Oneness may mean that He is an external player, manipulating the world according to his will and whims. Humans are helpless to affect his will except through intermediaries, the upholders/functionaries of organized

religions. He can be pleased to get favorable life outcomes through performing the rituals prescribed by organizers of religion and by making offerings to them. The other understanding of Oneness means that it is not an alien entity acting from without, but it is one universal law according to which the whole universe functions. Human beings, like all other phenomena of nature, embodies this universal law. So, everyone should search and recognize this Oneness within and relate to the universe through it. With such an internal realization, one can live in harmony with fellow human beings and the universe. Probably, Guru Nanak's Oneness is embracing of one universal law which unfolds in the principle 'cause' and 'effect'. This concept is elaborated by Bulleh Shah in this question:

[If] Habil (Able) and Qabil (Cain) were born to Adam

Then who gave birth to Adam ⁽⁷⁷⁾

It means that if a male (Adam) and a female (Eve) were prerequisite of birth of humans then how could Adam have been borne by himself? In other words, if Adam can come into being from nowhere then why a couple's mating is required for procreation: they could also be brought in the world like Adam. This is reflective of Buddha's dialogue with a Brahman who insisted upon the incidence of birth as the basic cause of differentiations between human beings. Buddha argued that if a Brahman woman has menses like a Shudra female, and both conceive as result of copulating, carry the child for nine months and go through same pain at the time of birth, then how can the two children be differentiated? Bulleh Shah's question should be viewed in this perspective: the universe functions as sequence of 'causes' and 'effects'. Waris Shah also elaborates the

universal law of 'cause' and 'effect' through the philosophy of Jog as follows:

Like a string in a necklace of beads, within all like that
He's entered

In all the living He's like life, intoxication from hemp
and opium accrued

Like in leaves henna's color absorbed, in life like that
and the world appeared

Like blood in the body, breath within, in light within
light so flared ⁽⁷⁸⁾

In this stanza, the universal law has been enumerated through concrete 'causes' and 'effects.' Waris Shah, was evaluating the traditions of Buddhism, Tantrism and Jog. His main objection like Guru Nanak's is that if a spiritual path cannot change and better the societal living then it has no use. Criticizing the super Jogi, he argues that if Jog prohibits the mating between men and women, then how is the process of procreation going to work. His criticism applies to Buddhist Bhaktas as well.

Baba Guru Nanak had the similar long dialogue with Jogis in 'Sidh Ghoshti' ⁽⁷⁹⁾. It should be kept in mind that the dialogue between both sides is possible because the common belief in universal law. Baba Guru Nanak's view is that to live by this principle one does not have to engage in physical exercises and live a secluded life. In Waris Shah's words "If you ask men to stay away from women, then the Gurus are not to be milked." ⁽⁸⁰⁾.

In this backdrop one can see that Guru Nanak's philosophy was practiced in social and political institutions unlike that of other Sufis and Jogis and was more like Buddha's

philosophy which distinguished itself from his other contemporaries. Unlike Buddha's rich followers, Guru Nanak's initial appeal was more among the artisan and downtrodden classes. His lifelong companion, Bhai Mardana, was a Mirasi from the lowest caste of Harappans.⁽⁸¹⁾ Despite all these differences, Guru Nanak's philosophy was also put aside when Sikhs gain the political power. Most of the ills, like caste, class and gender, that Guru Nanak fought against found their way back into Sikh society. His teachings were ignored to the point that seven women burnt themselves on Ranjeet Singh's pyre. It seems like that by the end of Sikh rule in 1849, Hindu traditions had engulfed Sikhism to such an extent that Hindu Mahants (Brahmans) had taken over their worship places (Gurdwaras) and had banned the entry of lower castes in them⁽⁸²⁾. It was in 1920s that Singh Sabhas launched a movement against them and got the Gurdwaras back⁽⁸³⁾⁽⁸⁴⁾. At the present times, Sikhism is just comprised of certain rituals like other religions including the concept of langar (shared eating). It leads us to conclude that Guru Nanak's philosophy was another shade of Buddhist idealistic structure which was put aside by the raging war of economic classes.

Shadows of Ancient Punjab in Our Times

To make sense of happenings and deal with unseen forces of nature, humans created imaginary entities like god, goddesses, djinns, fairies, witches and other spirits. Humans developed a strong belief that all beneficial and harmful things are caused by these imaginary entities. Humans also started believing that such well-meaning and evil spirits can be controlled by controlling its own body and through tantrum spells. Every harmed and damaged

thing can be fixed by the spiritual beings who have taken pains to detach themselves from society and have gone through strenuous physical exercises. It is interesting to note that such spiritual beings are better outside the society (detached like Jogis and Sufis). This idea later led to an alien One God and became the basis of organized religions.

Everyone in agrarian society believed in ideology based on the unseen entities hovering around all the time. As a matter of fact, every village or settlement had its own god, goddesses, djinns, fairies, witches and other spirits. They were all residing on certain trees, bushes and empty spaces around the village. At that stage the humans conceived themselves to be part of nature and had a personal relationship with everything. Speech was considered to be commonly understood by trees, animals, stones (god statues) and invisible entities. So, humans would talk to animals like personal companions and partners and thought that they responded. The unseen entities circling around were also a projection human beings. This was the reason that these spirits could be good, bad, naughty and mischievous. ⁽⁸⁵⁾ The only difference was that these entities were supposed to be living in infinite space and time. They could transform themselves into different forms versus humans who are imprisoned into one definite structure in a given short space and time.

These entities were passed down through hundreds of generations, residing in the same tree or bush. This basic faith in invisible entities was common across humans in all parts of the world. Therefore, the ideology of entire Indian subcontinent's agrarian society and the whole world was common. It was never consciously recognized by urban elites because, apparently, humans were divided on the

basis of various organized religions. Bulleh Shah conceptualized it in these verses:

Somewhere, his name is Ram Das and in the other [places]
Fateh Muhammad

When this conflict [of names] was resolved, someone else emerged [out of it] ⁽⁸⁶⁾

The exitance of such a common ideology is the reason that when forty years ago, the agrarian mode of production changed, similar reactions ensued. The rise of religious fundamentalism in the last forty years is similar among Hindus (Hindutva), Muslims (Jihad), Sikhs (Khalistanis) and even Buddhists (killing Rohingya Muslims). Understandably, the belief in invisible surrounding entities has given way to abstract organized religions everywhere ⁽⁸⁷⁾. The belief in invisible entities can be detected in 20th century poet Munir Niazi:

The house walls are stained with red sprinkles

The doors clatter in the midnight and witches shriek

Snake's whooshing echoes like whispering of veiled love

Here and there, hidden faces from out of city, laugh

The smell of staled garland passes by like spirits

The night guard's hollering point to the graveyard path ⁽⁸⁸⁾

From such modern depictions of invisible surrounding entities one can imagine the fear of people of the Harappa Civilization, and their need to seek remedies to control their surroundings. That is how Magic, Tantrism, Jog, Charvak and Sankhia were born.

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