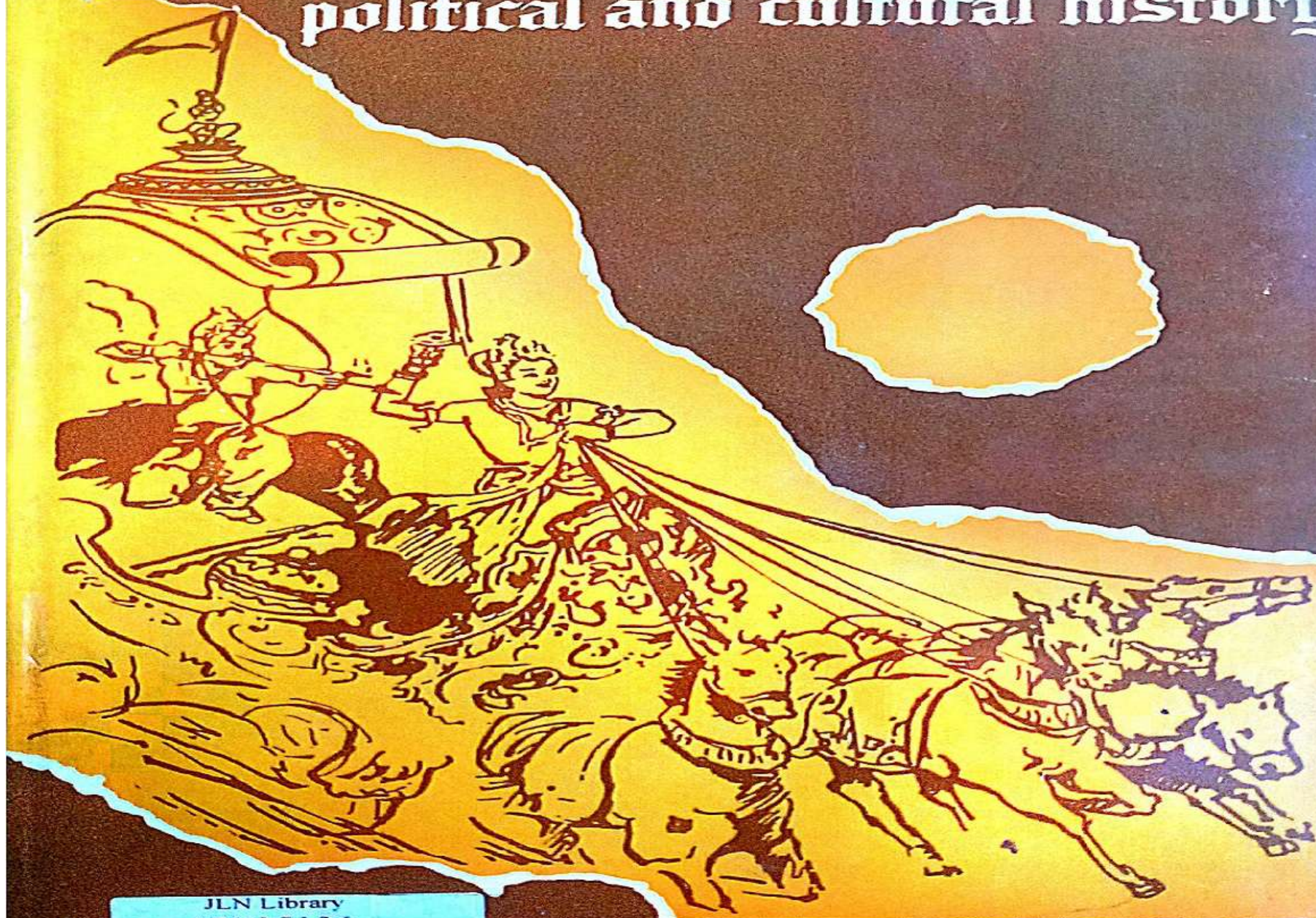


RUKSNETRA

political and cultural history



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B. K. Mustar

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I

INTRODUCTION

Kurukshetra occupies a pride of place in the history of India. It is a holy land where millions of people have been coming from time immemorial spurred by a religious motive and a burning faith in the sacredness of its soil.¹ It is the cradle of Indian civilization, tradition and culture.

It is an irony of fate that holy Kurukshetra had no Thucydides or Tacitus who could have left for posterity some historical account concerning its life and conditions. In later times, however, efforts were made to supply some information for the reconstruction of its history. The first notable attempt in this direction was made by a scholar named Banamali Mishra in the sixteenth century. Taking his materials from the *Manusmriti*, *Mahabharata* and *Puranas*, he wrote a treatise entitled *Kurukshetra Mahatmya*. Unfortunately, Banamali ignored the geo-historical contents of his materials and presented only a religio-cultural picture of Kurukshetra. His book, therefore, is a sort of directory of the holy places in this region.² A little later, another scholar, Ramachandra Sarasvati, wrote a more detailed book on Kurukshetra bearing the same name. Ramachandra was considerably attracted

1. Cf. the following statement of Dr R.C. Majumdar: "Kurukshetra was regarded as the holiest *tirtha* or place of pilgrimage among the hundreds of them dotted all over India from the Himalayas to the Cape Comorin". 'The Antiquity and Importance of Kurukshetra', *Journal of Haryana Studies*, Vol. IV, Nos. 1 & 2, p. 1.
2. Unfortunately, Banamali has not tried to identify any *tirtha* mentioned in his work.

by the holy *tirtha* and he had set out to visit it with the fullest devotional intent, but he says that in the book, he actually wrote only about those *tirthas* which gave him their *darshanas* and told about their locations, etc., in his dreams. It seems, that he could not visit all the *tirthas* properly and that is why several *tirthas* have not been identified by him correctly.¹

There does not seem to have been any literary work on Kurukshetra for quite sometime after Ramachandra Sarasvati's book. In 1855, however, one Kale Rai, Extra-Assistant Settlement Officer, Thanesar, broke this silence. He wrote a small book, *Kurukshetra Darpana* containing 94 pages in Urdu. In this book, aspects of Kurukshetra history other than religious and cultural, were described for the first time. But these were general and hazy descriptions.² In 1890, some improvement was made on Kale Rai's attempt by Inayat Ali Thanessari. He wrote a book in Urdu entitled *Tarikh-i-Ibrat Amal Thanesar ka Kamal-o-Jawal*.³ Since the author was not trained in historical methodology, his approach is like that of a fiction writer. Hence, the book is interesting, but not always factually correct.

For some decades thereafter no any concrete work was done on Kurukshetra. In 1923, Pt. Gajanan entered the field and wrote a book, *Prithudaka Mahatmya*. The author collected *shlokas* pertaining to the importance of Pehowa from the *Puranas*, etc., and retained them with their Hindi equivalents. It is an ordinary work by all standards. In 1927, another Pandita, Chuni Lal produced a brief treatise entitled *Kurukshetra Mahatmya*.⁴ The author does not seem to have taken any help from the earlier works. He merely put forth the relevant materials culled from the *Mahabharata* and the *Vamana Purana* in simple Hindi. His book is therefore of little use to serious scholars.

Meanwhile, Girdhar Dass, the son of an inhabitant of a village in Kurukshetra produced a book on almost similar lines, wherein

1. A copy of the *Ms.* consisting of 403 pages is preserved at the Manava Dharma Mission, Library at Kurukshetra.
2. The book was published by Kohinoor Press, Lahore.
3. Inayat Ali Thanessari, *Tarikh-i-Ibrat Amal Thanesar ka Kamal-o-Jawal*, Lahore, Mutba-i-Am Press, 1890.
4. Pt. Chuni Lal, *Kurukshetra Mahatmya*, Vedic Yantralya, Ajmer, 1927, pp. 68.

he has written, in addition to the other *tirthas*, on the religious sanctity of Kurukshetra. According to this author there were 275 *tirthas* in the 37 villages of Kurukshetra.¹

In 1928, the North-Western Railways had a 20-page book published on the occasion of the solar eclipse. Its title is *Kurukshetra aur Suryagrahana*. Based on Puranic data, the book gives the religious importance of Kurukshetra on the solar eclipse.² Two years later, Dayali Ram wrote *Kurukshetra Darpana athva Kurukshetra ke mashur tirtha ka Guide*. It is a small book in Urdu which gives very brief description of the important places of pilgrimage.³

Meantime, Parma Nand of Jind wrote *Kurukshetra Nirnaya*, Chandramani of Taraori wrote *Kurukshetra Tirtha Yatra*, Ravi Shankar of Taraori wrote *Kurukshetra Mahatmya* and Ram Sarup of Jind wrote *Kurukshetra Rahasya*. In all these books they highlight the religious significance of Kurukshetra.⁴ In 1936, Suryabhanu of Bandrana wrote a 16-page booklet, *Shankshipta Kurukshetra*⁵ on similar lines.

For about two decades, thereafter nobody appears to have done any work on Kurukshetra. The nineteen fifties, however, produced several attempts. In 1954, M.P. Sud wrote a 66-page book, *Kurukshetra ka atita aur vartmana*⁶ in Hindi. After establishing the ancient glory of the *tirtharaja* on the basis of the *Puranas* and *Mahabharata*, the author gives its medieval and present situation very briefly. The style of presentation is dull and all the facts are not correct.

At this very time, an anonymous author wrote *Kurukshetra Mahatmya aur Mahima*, which is a 16-page book of no historical merit.⁷ The same is the case with Yajya Datta's 26-page book,

1. It is a bulky book of about 257 pages. Kurukshetra has been discussed in 50 pages in Chapter XII (pp. 12-62).
2. At the end, important Railway Time Tables are given.
3. Dayali Ram, *Kurukshetra Darpana athva Kurukshetra ke mashur tirtha ka Guide*, Model Press, Ambala, 1930, pp. 124, and a map.
4. These books were published from Delhi between 1929 and 1931.
5. Suryabhanu, *Sankshipta Kurukshetra*, Brahma Press, Etawa, 1936.
6. M.P. Sud, *Kurukshetra ka atita aur vartmana*, Indian Printing Press, Panipat, 1954.
7. *Kurukshetra Mahatmya aur Mahima*, Bharat Book Agency, Nai Sarak, Delhi.

Shri Kurukshetra Tirtha darshana,¹ Babu Dhure Lal's 20-page book, *Kurukshetra Mahatmya*,² the 16-page book, *Kurukshetra Mahatmya*, of the Mehar Book Depot, Kurukshetra and a 20-page book, *Kurukshetra Mahatmya* of the Vaidyanath Ayurveda Bhavan Ltd., Varanasi.

In 1960, Mm. Chhaju Ram Shashtri of Delhi wrote a learned commentary on Kurukshetra entitled *Kurukshetra Mahatmya*. But this learned author has deigned to touch only the religious significance of Kurukshetra. His basis is the *Naradapurana*.³ In the meantime, there were several other attempts by the Punjab Government to highlight the importance of Kurukshetra, but these are too insignificant to merit discussion here.⁴ So were the attempts of Hirdyanarayan Saras, (*Sankshipta Kurukshetra Mahatmya*),⁵ and Digambar Prabhatpuri, (*Kurukshetra Parichaya*).⁶

To conclude, all the books, pamphlets which we have mentioned have for the most part, been written with a view to emphasize the religio-cultural significance of Kurukshetra. The other aspects of life in the region have either remained untouched or have been described in a perfunctory fashion.

Unlike these attempts, however, some scholars in modern times have made some efforts toward providing historical accounts of Kurukshetra. But these accounts are not full-fledged books but small articles, etc., in books and journals. Among these writers of short pieces on Kurukshetra, the pioneer is Sir Alexander Cunningham who published learned account of the significance of Kurukshetra in *Archaeological Survey, Report*, Vol. XIV, pp. 86-

1. Yajya Datta, *Shri Kurukshetra Tirtha Darshan*, New Light Printing, Railway Road, Karnal,
2. Babu Dhure Lal, *Kurukshetra Mahatmya*, Shri Krishna Press, Hathras (U.P.)
3. Mm. Chhaju Ram Shashtri, *Kurukshetra Mahatmya*, Dharma Press, Kamlanagar, Delhi.
4. I have also not mentioned my two attempts here : *Kurukshetra : EK Eitihāsik, Sanskritik, Parichaya and Kurukshetra Darshana*, both in Hindi.
5. Pt. Hirdyanarayan, *Sankshipta Kurukshetra Mahatmya*, Manav Dharma Mission, Kurukshetra, 1973, p. 12.
6. Digambar Prabhatpuri, *Kurukshetra Parichaya*, Hemant Press. Kurukshetra, 1975, p. 72.

106. The next scholarly account is furnished by Mahamahopadhyaya P.V. Kane, the author of the celebrated work, *History of the Dharmashastras* (Vol. III, pp. 1372-76). Dr B.C. Law's *Kurukshetra in Ancient India* published in the *Babelkar Felicitation Volume* (pp. 249-61) is also a learned account of the geo-cultural aspect of the city's history. Dr R.C. Agarwal's 'Kurukshetra in the Vedic Literature' published in the *Journal of Indian History* (Vol. XXXIII, pp. 85-90) and 'Kurukshetra in the later Sanskrit literature' reproduced in *Haryana Studies in History and Culture* edited by Dr K.C. Yadav (pp. 6-41), portray the holy city in ancient times. Dr Buddha Prakash has also presented some account of the cultural significance of Kurukshetra in his 'Glimpses of Haryana' in the *Haryana Research Journal*, Vol. 1, pp. 1-16; and so has Devindra Handa in his 'Ancient Towns of Haryana' in the *Journal of Haryana Studies* Vol III, No. 1, pp. 8-10. Dr U.V. Singh has written an article, 'Archaeology of Kurukshetra' in the *Souvenir 1975*, All-India Oriental Conference, Kurukshetra and Dr Silak Ram Phogat has made a highly significant attempt in his Paper 'Tirthas of Kurukshetra', *Journal of Haryana Studies*, Vol. VIII, 1976, pp. 14-32, to identify the *tirthas* of this region.

All these writings present glimpses of ancient Kurukshetra. About the medieval life of the place, only one paper, 'Kurukshetra in Medieval Times', by Indrajeet Sharma, *Journal of Haryana Studies*, Vol. VI, pp. 30-36 is available. Besides this, some information about the town in the medieval age is also provided by Dr K.C. Yadav in his book, *History of Haryana* (Hindi), Chapters V & VI.

There is no account of the region in modern times, except in the *District Gazetteer of Karnal* (1910) and the *Settlement Report of Karnal*, which have some interesting details; but these accounts are too sketchy to be of very much use.

The present work aims at presenting a full history of the sacred region right from the most ancient times to the present day. It is based, for the most part, on contemporary records. The aid of later works, papers in various learned journals and periodicals, has also been taken.

The book, it is hoped, will interest, like its Hindi counterpart, both scholars and general readers, for it provides a full glimpse of the religious, cultural, social, political and economic life of the *Dharmakshetra Kurukshetra*, a place which has been held in the highest esteem by the Indian people since time immemorial.

2

ANTIQUITY AND GEOPOLITICAL IMPORTANCE

Kurukshetra is as old as Indian civilization. According to Dr R.C. Majumdar, it was a religio-cultural centre even before the immigration of the Aryans into India. It is a well-known fact, says the great historian, 'that the *Naga* cult, i.e., the worship of serpents was very much prevalent in India before the advent of the Aryans, and the most famous of the *Naga* deities or kings mentioned in early literature, namely *Takshaka*, lived in the Kurukshetra region.¹ We find a reference to him in the *Atharvaveda* and *Sankhyana Grihyasutra*, but there he is styled as *Takshaka Vaisaleya*. *Takshaka* played a prominent role in various episodes in the *Mahabharata* in connection with the Kuru kings, especially Parikshit and his son Janmejaya. Janmejaya performed a *yajna* for extinguishing the *Nagas*, but *Takshaka* escaped the fate of the others with great difficulty. The *Mahabharata* also relates an interesting episode in which *Takshaka* played a vital role : this related to the burning of the *Khandava* forest, near Kurukshetra, where he lived.²

The importance of Kurukshetra as a great religio-cultural centre developed still further after the Aryans settled in this region. It is surprising, however, that the *Rigveda* does not make any

1. R.C. Majumdar, 'The Antiquity and Importance of Kurukshetra', *Journal of Haryana Studies*, Vol. IV, 1972, p. 15.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 6. The worship of *Takshaka* was quite widespread and we have definite evidence of its prevalence in Haryana. That the *Naga* cult was very popular in India even in later periods is testified to by an inscribed image of *Takshakanaga* in the Lucknow Museum.

reference to Kurukshetra. Nor does it make mention of the great Kurus who gave the place its name.¹

The *Rigveda* only mentions a lake of Kurukshetra—*Saryanavati*² which has been identified as *Saryanavati* (the present *Sanihit*) by Sayana, the great commentator of the *Rigveda*. To quote him :

शर्याणावत् वै नाम कुरुक्षेत्रस्य जघनाघे सरः स्यन्दते ।
शर्याणामदेशाः तेषामदूरमवं सरः शर्याणावत् ।
शर्याणावति कुरुक्षेत्रस्य जघनाघंभवे शरत्तृणोपेते ।

The later authorities, and modern scholars also agree with Sayana on this point.³

In the *Atharvaveda*⁴ and the *Brahmanas*,⁵ we begin to find mention of the great Kurus who gave their name to Kurukshetra and made it the home of the *Vedic* culture. Take for instance, the following verse of the *Satapatha Brahmana* :⁶

देवा ह वै सत्त्वं निषेदुः । तेषां कुरुक्षेत्रं देवयजनमास तस्मादाहुः कुरुक्षेत्रं
देवानां देवयजनमिति ।
तस्माद्यत्र नव च कुरुक्षेत्रस्य निगच्छति तदेव मन्यत इदं देवयजनमिति
तद्धि देवानां देवयजनम् ।

The *Manu Smriti* and the *Mahabharata* are full of praise for Kurukshetra and its people. The former,⁷ for instance, advises the king to place in the van of the battle men born in Kurukshetra,

1. Some scholars have, however, tried to find an indirect reference to the Kurus in the *Rigveda*. They give the name such as *Kurusarvarna*, *Pakasthuran Kaurayana*, etc., to substantiate their point. See, for instance, Dr H.A. Phadke, 'Kurukshetra : Its Importance, Origin and Antiquity' in *Journal of Haryana Studies*, Vol. VI, p. 1. Sound philology is not sound philology; there is no evidence to show that the two persons mentioned above belonged to the *Kuru* tribe.
2. *Rigveda*, Mandala VIII, 7, 29, 11; Mandala IX, 65, 22; Mandala X, 35, 2.
3. *Ibid.*, Sayana's Commentary. Also see Cunningham, *ASI*, 1878-79.
4. Buddha Prakash, *Haryana Shodha Patrika*, Vol. I, 1966, p. 4.
5. *Panchavimsha Brahmana*, XXV, 10; *Satapatha Brahmana*, IV, 1, 5, 13; *Aitareya Brahmana*, VIII, 30; *Jaiminiya Brahmana*, III, 126.
6. *Sat*, XIV, 9.9.1-2.
7. *Manu*, VII, 193.

Matsya, *Panchala* and *Surasena* (the very region from which the British recruited their sepoy in modern times). A little later, we find in contemporary literature, Kurukshetra was the scene of a prolonged fight, even before the great war between the Kurus and the Pandavas which has eclipsed its memory. It was fought between two kings, both named Chitrangada. One of them was the Kuru king described in the *Mahabharata* as a powerful emperor and victor over gods and animals, and the other was a *Gandharva* ruler. It is said that the battle continued for three years and ended in the defeat and death for the Kuru king. It may not be altogether without significance that, like the later site of Panipat, not very distant, Kurukshetra also seems to have been destined to be a historic fighting ground.¹ The *Mahabharata* is full of the great *Bharata* War between the Kurus and the Pandavas, which was fought on the holy land (*Dharmakshetra*) of Kurukshetra. It is one of those great events which arouses great interest and no little emotion in most Hindus.²

Subsequently, Kurukshetra has been styled as the most sacred region of India.³ It was one of the 16 *Mahajanapadas* of *Jambudvipa* or the continent of India.⁴ Panini mentions it in the *Ashtadhyayi*.⁵ The Buddhist work *Yogintra* makes several references to Kurukshetra.⁶ According to other Buddhist works, the city of the *Kauravas* was visited by the Buddha and it appears to have been favoured by his masterly discourses. The Buddha consumed his alms, it seems, on the bank of the Anotatta lake.⁸

The preceding discussion indicates that Kurukshetra, though a seat of some note before the advent of the Aryans, acquired great fame subsequently. By the time of the Brahmanas, its fame as a great religio-cultural centre had spread far and wide.

1. *Journal of Haryana Studies*, Vol. IV, 1972, p. 2.
2. *Ibid.*
3. See, for instance, *Matsya*, 106, 57; *Kurma*, 1, 37.
4. *Anguttara*, I, p. 213; IV, pp. 252-60.
5. *Ast*, 4, 1.127, 176, 4.2.130.
6. *Yog.*, 2.1; 2.7-8.
7. Kurukshetra.
8. *Dipavansa*, 1, vs. 43-44.

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DIFFERENT NAMES

Kurukshetra is known by various names in ancient literature. In the *Mahabharata*, i.e., *Adi* and *Aryanaka Parvas*, it is called *Samantapanchaka*. According to the *Mahabharata* Parshu Ram, at the confluence of the *Treta* and *Dwapara*, killed the *Kshatriyas* twenty-one times and filled five ponds in Kurukshetra with their blood. Parshu Ram's forefathers were pleased beyond description with this deed of their offspring and turned the five ponds into beautiful lakes. The region where these lakes were situated was called *Samantapanchaka* hereafter.¹

Bhasa, the well-known Sanskrit scholar also mentions *Samantapanchaka* in his *Urubhangam*. Dr V.S. Agrawala² is of the opinion that the place was so called for its circumference was about five *Yojnas*.³ This name was, however, not very popular and was replaced by Kurukshetra.⁴

1. त्रेताद्वापरयोः सन्धी रामः शस्त्रभृतां वरः ।
असकृत् याधिवं क्षत्रं जघानामपंचोदितः ॥
स सर्वं क्षत्रमुत्साद्य स्ववीर्येणानलद्युतिः ।
समन्तपञ्चके पञ्च चकार रौधिरान् हृदान् ॥
स तेषु रुधिराम्भस्तु हृदेषु क्रोधमूर्च्छितः ।
पितृन् सन्तर्पयामास रुधिरणेति नः श्रुतम् ॥
अथर्षोकादयोऽभ्येत्य पितरो राममब्रुवन् ।
राम राम महाभागा प्रीताः स्म तव भागं व ॥
अनया पितृभक्तया च विक्रमेण तव प्रभो ।
वरं वृणीष्व भद्रं ते यमिच्छसि यशः महाद्युते ॥

Mahabharata, Adi, 2, 3.7. The boon was made and granted as referred to in the text.

2. *Hindustan* (Hindi), New Delhi, 18 April, 1954, p. 19.

3. *Ibid.*

4. See V.S. Sukthankar, *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*, Poona, XVIII, 1937, pp. 5-6. Dr V.S. Sukthankar seems to be justified in identifying *Ramahrad* with *Samanta panchaka* (*Ibid.*, p. 20)

*Sthanu Tirtha*¹ or *Sthanaveshwara* is another name which is connected with Kurukshetra in ancient literature. The *Puranas* are full of the sanctity of the *Sthanu Tirtha*. According to the *Matsya Purana*, the headquarters of the goddess Bhavani was at *Sthanesvara*.² Another source, the *Vrhasvayambhu Purana*, also mentions the name of the place as *Sthaneswara* :³

स्थानेश्वरे न युक्तं च वाग्मत्याञ्च विनोपतः ।
स्त्रियश्च मानुषाश्चपि तीर्थे स्नानकारितम् ॥

Another popular name of this region was *Shrikantha*. The *Aryamanjusrimulakalpa* informs that the place was closely associated with the Janapada named *Shrikantha* :⁴

सप्तमष्टयता त्रीदशा श्रीकण्ठवासिनस्तदा ।
घ्रादित्यनामा वैद्यास्ते स्थानमीश्वरवासिनः ॥

We have it from Bana that the dynasty of the *Pushyabhus* ruled over *Shrikantha Janapada* whose headquarters was at Thanesar. Bana has presented a great description of the city and the *Janapada*.⁵

Besides these, it was also known under various other names, such as *Dharmakshetra*, as mentioned in the *Bhagavadgita* (Ch. I, v. 1) and the *Mahabharata* (*Vanaparva*, 86.6). At times it is styled *Brahmakshetra*, as we find in the *Jabalopanisad* quoted by Nilakantha, the commentator of the *Mahabharata*.⁶

EXTENT OF KURUKSHETRA

There is a lot of controversy among scholars over the question of the fixation of the actual borders of Kurukshetra. But if we take stock of the contemporary literature, the riddle would be easily solved. The four guardian *Yakshas* of Kurukshetra are as follows :

1. *Sthanu-Shiva*.

2. *Matsya*, XII. 31.

3. *Vr. X. 3.*

4. *Arya*, p. 626.

5. See his *Harshacharita*.

6. For details about all these names see B.C. Law, 'Kurukshetra', *Dr Balvelkar Felicitation Volume*, p. 8.

1. *Ratna Yaksha* for N.E. corner;
2. *Arantuka Yaksha* for N.W. corner;
3. *Kapila Yaksha* for S.W. corner; and
4. *Mahakruka Yaksha* for S.E. corner.

Cunningham has identified the four *Yakshas* correctly. To quote his own words :

The S.W. corner is placed at Ramray, 5 miles to the S.W. of Jind where there are said to have been both a Ramahrada and *Kapila tirtha*. The S.E. corner is at Sirkh, very nearly between Jind and Panipat, on the bank of a stream which is said to be the old bed of the *Raksi* or the *Drishadvati*. There is still a *Yaksha-Kunda* at Sinkh. The N.E. corner is at *Ratna-Yaksha* or *Ratna-Jakha* close to Pipli on the *Sarasvati*. Lastly, the N.W. corner is at Bar or Baher to the W.N.W. of Kaithal where also there is a *Yaksha-Kunda*. Thus the estimate of the size of the region of Kurukshetra agrees with the other name given in the *Mahabharata* or *Samanatapanchaka* on every side, 5 and 20 *Yojanas* all round the four sides.¹

The epics and the *Puranas* mention a belt of seven forests and nine rivers in the Kurukshetra region. Of all these ancient references, the one contained in *Vamana Purana* is the best. It reads thus :²

शृणु सप्त वनानीह कुरुक्षेत्रस्य मध्यतः ।
 येषां नामानि पुष्पानि सर्वे पाप हराणि च ॥
 काम्यकं च वनं पुष्पं तथाऽदिति वनं महत् ।
 व्यासस्य च वनं पुष्पं फलकी वनमेव च ॥
 तथा सूर्यं वनं स्थानं तथा मधुवनं महत् ।
 पुष्पशीत वनं नाम सर्वं कल्मष नाशनम् ॥
 वनान्ये तानि त्रै सप्त नदीः शृणुत मे द्विजः ।
 सरस्वती नदी पुष्पा तथा वैतरणी नदी ॥
 ध्रापया च महा पुष्पा गंगा मन्दाकिनी नदी ।
 मधुध्रवा घग्धु नदी कौशिकी पाप नाशिनी ॥

1. *Arch. Survey*, pp. 89-90.
 2. *Vam.*, 34, vs. 1-9.

द्वपद्वती महापुष्पा तथा हिरणवती नदी ।
 वर्षाकाल बहः सर्वा वनेष्वित्वा सरस्वतीम् ॥
 एतानामुदकं पुष्पं प्रावृत्काले प्रकीर्तितम् ।
 रजस्वलाह्वमेतासां विद्यते न कदाचन ॥
 तीर्थस्य च प्रनावेण पुष्पा ह्येताः सरिदराः ॥

These seven *vanas* (forests) which are easily identifiable are as follows : Kamyakavana, Aditivana, Vyasavana, Phalakivana, Suryavana, Madhuvana and Sitavana, whose names correspond to the sites of modern Kamoda, Amin, Vyasasthali (Bastali), Pharal, Sajuman, Mohana, and Sivana. Besides these places, Prithuvana stands for the territory of present Pehova and Shalavana is represented by modern Salon.

The belt of the nine rivers comprises Sarasvati, Vaitarani, Apaga, Mandakini, Madhusarava, Anshumati, Kausiki, Drishadvati and Hiranyavat.¹ Cunningham, in his 'Report of a tour in the Panjab in 1878-79', has given a very learned description² about these rivers and therefore I quote the great authority for my purpose here at some length : "The Sarasvati is well known and still retains its old name in its spoken form of Sarsuti. The other river Drishadvati is by the universal consent of all enquirers, both Brahmanas and Europeans, identified with the Rakshi. In the *Mahabharata* also another river, the Kausiki, is mentioned as an affluent of the Drishadvati, and their confluence is noted as one of the holy places. Now the *Kausiki Sangam* or Kausiki Junction still exists near the village of Balu on the Rakshi River, 17 miles to the south of Thanesar. I think therefore that there can be no reasonable doubt that the modern Rakshi is the representative of the Drishadvati.

"But great changes must have taken place in the beds of these rivers even in comparatively recent times. Both are now broad sandy channels; but Drishadvati means the "rocky" or "stony" and the Sarsuti is described by Utbi in the time of Mahmud Ghazni's invasion as having a bottom full of large stones, with

1. *Ibid.* See above verse.
 2. *Arch Report*, pp. 88-9.

precipitous banks and impetuous stream.¹ Both the Ghaghar and the Sarsuti, which have their sources in the Duns or valleys to the north of the Siwalik range, are liable to sudden floods which rush down, just as Utbi describes with 'fearful impetuosity' that sweeps everything before it. During the reign of Islam Shah the defeated Niazis who had crossed the Ghaghar near Ambala before the battle were drowned in great numbers in attempting to ford the stream, which had suddenly become a swollen torrent. In January 1840, when marching between Sunam and Hansi, I saw the Ghaghar not less than 17 feet deep and running with a strong current. I know also that the stratum of sand in the Ambala district is not deep, and that it overlies a deposit of boulder stones. In early times it seems probable that the beds of all these streams may have been deeper perhaps, even as deep as the stratum of boulders and that they have since become silted up with the enormous quantities of coarse sand which they bring down from the hills at every flood.

"The Apaga or Aughvati is a branch of the Chitang which separates from the main stream a few miles to the west of Ladwa, and flows past Pulwal to Pabnawa, where it is lost in the sands. Its whole length is about 25 miles. The Kausiki is a branch of the Rakshi. The others I have not been able to identify. But there are several important streams at the present day, such as the Markanda, the Nakti, and Chitang or Chatang, of which the ancient names are quite unknown. The Sarsuti and its branches have also been so interlaced and inoculated with one another by Firoz Shah to fill his canals, that the people have completely confused their names, so that there are now no less than three different Sarsutis."

Not only to Cunningham, but even to the present-day scholars the identification of all the rivers/streams seems to be an impossible task. It is believed now-a-days that the rivers/streams were wrongly counted. These must have been seven. Cunningham too, thought in this vein. To quote him :

There is, I believe, some mistake about the number of nine rivers, as the Hindus invariably assign seven branches to all their rivers. Such are the *Sapta Sindhu*, the *Sapta Gandaki*, and the *Sapta Kausiki*, and to which I may add, as bearing upon the

question, that there is a place of pilgrimage in Kurukshetra still called *Sapta Saraswati*. Amongst the nine names I suspect also that No. 4, the *Madhusrava*, or "honey dropper" is a mistake, as it is the name of one of the holiest pools in the bed of the *Saraswati* at *Prithudaka*. It seems probable also that the *Vaitarani* may be only another term for the *Drishadvati* or *Rakshi* as it was the name of the mother of the *Rakshasas*. By omitting these two names, the branches of the *Saraswati* are reduced to the orthodox number of seven.¹

GEOPOLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The religio-cultural importance of Kurukshetra is also enhanced by its geopolitical importance. This holy region constitutes the gateway to the citadel of the Gangetic valley, formed by the Himalayas in the north and the Aravallis in the south, with the great desert of Rajasthan, prolonged seaward by the salty and tital marsh of the Rann of Cutch, in the west. The land between the north-eastern extremity of the desert and the foot of the Himalayas below Simla provides a passage from the north-west which leads to the entrance of the Gangetic plains at Delhi on the Yamuna. Naturally, therefore, "this gateway is the key to the security of the north Indian plain and on its defence has depended the independence of the country from ages immemorial. It is significant that this is region littered with ancient battlefields like Kurukshetra, Taraori, Panipat, Kunjpura and Karnal where the fate of India continued to be decided for centuries without number. That is why it is *Karmakshetra* and *Dharmakshetra*, the land adored with libations of blood and the region requiring an immense sacrifice on the part of the people. Every inch of this territory is a holy place and a pilgrimage, where people have been coming from all parts of the country with a religious motive and a burning faith in the sacredness of its soil. This religious sanctity enshrines the military importance of this region, and its spiritual association encases the material advantage that ensues from its proper protection. A region, on the security of which the destiny of millions of men depends cannot but be the

1. *Elliot's Muhammadan Historians* (by Dowson), Vol. II, p. 40.

1. *Arch. Report*, Vol. XIV, p. 89.

land of highest religious purity and cultural significance."¹

To conclude, the foregoing account demonstrates that Kurukshetra has occupied a pride of place in Indian history owing to its religio-cultural and geopolitical importance.

3

ON THE ROAD TO EMINENCE

Archaeology is of immense importance to us in constructing the early history of Kurukshetra. This great seat of Indian culture drew the attention of the archaeologists in the first half of the present century. To begin with, the ancient mound near Thanesar (locally called *Raja Karna ka Qila*) was excavated by D.B. Spooner in 1921-22. Spooner's discoveries at the site included a stone ball with ancient symbols, Indo-Bactrian silver coins, a terracotta sealing depicting bull on one side and above the animal five letters, probably in the Kharoshthi script, large size bricks of the Kushana times and a votive tank depicting musicians.¹ Subsequently at the same site, D.R. Sahnî found a large round copper coin bearing the legend *Rajno yajñajitasa* in the characters of the second and third centuries A.D. At the same time (1921-22), Spooner explored a mound at Amin, about five miles south-east of Thanesar and discovered two beautifully carved red-stone pillars bearing the names of donors in Kushana characters.² In the thirties, another site, Theh Polar, situated on the south bank of the river Sarasvati, was excavated. The tradition connected the site with Muni Paulastya. Theh yielded 'a hoard of copper coins which included the coins of the Kushana king Vasudeva and the Yaudheyas the famous republican tribe.'³ Later on, Professor B.B.

1. Buddha Prakash, 'The Glimpses of Ancient Haryana' in *Haryana Research Journal*, Vol. I, No. 1, p. 2.

1. D.B. Spooner, *Archaeological Survey Report*, 1922-23, pp. 89-90.

2. *All India Oriental Conference, Sess. XXVII (1974), Souvenir*, Kurukshetra, pp. 26-32.

3. *Ibid.*

Lal surveyed the sites traditionally connected with the Mahabharata and discovered a typical painted grey-coloured pottery (Painted Grey Ware) from Amin, Pehowa (Prithudaka), Thanesar, etc. On the basis of the circumstantial evidence obtained from Hastinapur and other sites, Professor Lal associated this pottery with the Mahabharata period. After this, a number of sites in the region have been explored which have further pushed back the antiquity of the region to c. 2000 B.C.¹

The Department of Ancient Indian History, Culture and Archaeology of the Kurukshetra University, began systematic excavations from 1968-69.² Since then, several ancient sites have been surveyed and their antiquity established. One of the sites, namely Daulatpur (near Pipli), was excavated during 1963-69 and 1969-70. A small-scale excavation was also carried out at *Raja Karna ka Qila* from 1970-71 to 1973-74. These excavations have thrown welcome light on the past of the region from c. 2000 B.C. to the fourth and fifth centuries A.D.³

The excavation at Daulatpur represented a late phase of the Harappan civilization (c. 2000—c. 1500 B.C.). Their finds had evolved shapes with inferior treatment of the surface, and the simpler decorations in their pottery indicated a decadent stage of the culture. Broadly speaking, the material equipment of the period "included the remains of oval ovens, charred grains, grinding stones, bone engravers and copper bangles. The copper fish-hook and bone-points suggested that hunting and fishing supplemented the food supply of the people. The people in this period decorated their persons with ornaments like the bangles of faience and terracotta and beads of semi precious stones."⁴

After the Harappan phase, the excavators found the "presence of typical pottery called painted grey ware which is generally associated with the Aryans (c. 1100-500 B.C.). It also yielded antimony rod of copper, bone pins and points and stone grinders. A decorated female figurine in bone reflected the art tradition of the period."⁵

1. *Ibid.*
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Ibid.*
4. *Ibid.*
5. *Ibid.*

We need not depend entirely on archaeology for this period. Fortunately, there is great literary evidence to construct the contemporary picture. We have it on the testimony of the *Vedic* literature that in the beginning of the historical period the Bharatas lived here, after whom our country is called *Bharatavarsha*. The Bharatas are said to have kindled the sacred fire in the Kurukshetra region with great devotion.¹

After some time, another clan called *Tristu*—an offshoot of the Bharatas, became famous in this region. The famous Vedic king Divodasa, who performed great conquering feats, belonged to this tribe. Divodasa, it seems, had extended the realm of Kurukshetra very much by entering into long wars with great enemies. In the words of Dr Buddha Prakash :

Two passages of the Rigveda refer to the fight of Divodasa with the Yadus and Turvasas bracketed with Dasyu chief Shamsara. Another passage speaks of his encounter with the Paravatas and the Brishyas on the bank of the Sarasvati. He is also said to have worsted a number of chiefs like Chumuri, Dhuni, Shambara, Pipru, Shushna, Vetasu, Dashoni and Tugra by forming an alliance with Rijishvan, Ayu and Kutsa.²

Divodasa's son Sudas was also a great warrior. He faced two confederacies of the Ajas, Shigrus and Yakshus under the leadership of Bheda on the Yamuna and that of the Yadu, Turvasas, Bhrigus, Druhyus, Pakthas, Bhalanas, Alinas, Shivas, Vishanins, Purus and Anus under the guidance of Simyu, Purodasa, Purukutsa and Kavasha on the Ravi. Sudasa's most famous battle was, however, with the ten confederates (*dasharajna Yuddha*) and was particularly thrilling.

As their efforts to make the swollen current of the Ravi fordable by diverting its water through channels caused a flood in their camp Sudas made the tactical move of pressing home his attack on their seven castles. Thus taking them unawares he made short shrift of their forces and captured their leader Purukutsa.³

1. *Rigveda*, VI, 45. IX. 68.2.
2. *Haryana Through the Ages*, p. 1.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 2.

This victory made Sudas the paramount ruler of the entire *Saptasindhu* region.

After the great victories of Sudas, probably in the beginning of the second millennium, the Bharatas, owing possibly to family feuds, suffered a gradual decline and consequently, downfall. The Purus made capital of the situation and entered the scene. There must have been some kind of an initial fight, but later on, the two tribes merged. Now both became the one people "under whom the vedic culture reached its climax with the result that their speech was regarded best and purest and their mode of sacrifice ideal and perfect."¹

After some time, a new Jana called Panchalas attacked the then Paurava king Samvarana and drove him out of Kurukshetra. Samvarana, however, planned to stage a comeback. It appears "that he made an alliance with the Kurus, who were becoming prominent in the Indo-Iranian regions in the North-West, and with their help, regained his kingdom in the Sarasvati valley."²

Samvarana, it seems, did not rule for a long time. His successors were also weaklings. Under these circumstances his partner Kuru, asserted himself and became king.

KURU RULE

Kuru was a great king. He gave the region his name and made it prosperous and rich. He launched on an ambitious plan to reclaim the vast region of the Sarasvati valley for agricultural purposes in order to entrench their economic power.¹

The authors of the Puranas have given a very interesting story in a table. According to them : Kuru decided to make an area of five *yojanas* square, called Samantapanchaka, on the bank of the Sarasvati fit for cultivation and himself started ploughing it with a golden plough yoked to the bull of *Shiva* and the buffalo of *Yama*. And, being asked by *Vishnu*, as to what he was doing, he replied that he was cultivating the eight virtues of truthfulness

1. *Panchavimsha Brahmana*, XXV, 10; *Shatapatha Brahmana*, IV, 1, 5; *Aitareya Brahmana* VII, 30.
2. *Buddha Prakash*, p. 4.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

(*satya*), austerity (*tapas*), forgiveness (*kshama*), compassion (*daya*), purity (*shaucha*), charity (*dana*), composure (*yoga*) and continence (*brahmacharya*) and that their seed was in his own body. Thereupon Vishnu asked him to give that seed. He stretched his right hand which Vishnu cut into thousands of pieces and distributed among the people. Likewise he chipped other parts of his body.¹

This pleased Vishnu, beyond description say the *Pauranakaras* and he asked Kuru to ask for any boon. Kuru made the following demand :²

यावदेतन्मया कृष्ट धर्मक्षेत्रं तदस्तु वः ।
 स्नातानां च मृतानां च महापुण्यफलं विह ।।
 उपवामश्च दानं च स्नानं जाप्यं च माधव ।
 होमयज्ञादिकं चान्यच्छुभं वाऽप्यशुभं विभो ॥
 त्वत्प्रसादादृषिकेश शंखचक्रगदाधर ।
 अक्षयं प्रवरे क्षेत्रे भवत्वत्र महाफलम् ॥
 तथा भवान् सुरैः सार्द्धं समं देवेन शूलिना ।
 वसात्र पुण्डरीकाक्ष मन्नामव्यञ्जकेऽभ्युत ॥

Oh, Lord, the land which I have ploughed may be styled as Dharmakshetra. Those who bathe here should get great *punya*. Good deeds like fasts, donations, worship, *yajna*, etc. as also any bad deeds performed here, should multiply. Oh God, May You live here for ever with all the devas. The Lord replied : So it shall be.

There is at least one thing very clear from this *Pauranic* story—Kuru and his people did make every effort to make their land prosperous. As a result, Kurukshetra came to enjoy peace, prosperity and honour—it became a heaven on earth. The combination of manual labour and moral rectitude, physical exertion and spiritual elevation became the essence of this region and through it of the whole country.³

1. Quoted in *ibid.*
2. *Vamana Purana*, 22, Vs. 33-7.
3. *Buddha Prakash*, p. 6.

The *Mahabharata* and the *Puranas* are full of Kurukshetra. Both are unanimous on the point that Kurukshetra absolves one of all sins; they who die at Kurukshetra reach heaven.¹ It is the most important of all the *tirthas* on the earth² and visit to it proves very fruitful and one acquires the merit of performing various vedic sacrifices.³

There is great merit also in bathing in and visiting different *tirthas* in the Kurukshetra region, such as *Sarpadanvi-varaha*, *Soma*, *Arantuka*, *Apaga*, *Pholaki-Vana*, etc.⁴ The *Mahabharata* says that a bath in the river *Sarasvati* absolves a man from all his sins.⁵ The *Vamana Purana* says that a bather in the *Sarasvati* gets countless *punyas* and is entitled to *devamarga* :

प्लक्षवृक्षात्समुद्भूता सरिच्छृष्टा सनातनी ।
सर्वपापक्षयकरी स्मरणादपि नित्यशः ॥
श्रतीव तृणया युक्तः सरस्वत्यां ममञ्जह ।
तत्र संप्लुत देहस्तु विमुक्तः सर्व पातकैः ॥
सरस्वती समासाद्य तपंपेपितु देवताः ।
सारस्व तेषु लोकेषु मोदते नात्र संशयः ॥
पूर्वप्रवाहे यः स्नातिगङ्गा स्नानफलं लभेत् ।
प्रवाहे दक्षिणे तस्या नर्मदा सरिता वरा ॥
स्नात्वा शुद्धिमवाप्नोति यत्र प्राची सरस्वती ।
देव मार्गं प्रतिष्ठाय देव मार्गेण निःमृताः ॥⁶

The river sacred was also recognized to be the best place for performing *shraddha*, for it was believed that all the gods, *Brahma*, *Indra*, *Shiva*, *Surya*, etc., were in service of it :

येतु ध्याद्धं करिष्यन्ति प्राची माश्रित्य मानवाः ।
न तेषां दुर्लभं किञ्चिदह लोके परत्र च ॥

1. *Subha Parva*, 53.6. Also see *Agni*, 109. 14; *Vam.*, [XXX] 111.6.
2. *Vanaparva*, 83; *Anushasana*, p. 165, p. 1050; *Matsya*, 109.3.
3. *Vanaparva*, 81.8.
4. *Ibid.*, Chapter 81.
5. *AP*, 129.20.
6. *Vamana Purana*, 42, 7-19.

4

DHARMAKSHETRA, TAPAKSHETRA

The dream of Kuru came true. Kurukshetra became *dharma-kshetra* and *tapakshetra*. People began to come from far and near to perform *yajnas* here. We have it on the testimony of the *Shatapatha Brahmana* that *Maharishi Vrihaspati* told *Yajnavalakya* that Kurukshetra was the land where *devatas* perform great *yajnas* to please God, the Lord of Lords. *Brahma*, *Vishnu*, *Shiva*, etc., never left that region.¹ The very sight of Kurukshetra and the chanting of its name had a sanctifying effect:²

ततो गच्छेत् राजेन्द्र कुरुक्षेत्रमभीष्टितम् ।
पापेभ्यो यत्र मुच्येत दर्शनात् सर्वजन्तवः ॥(१)
कुरुक्षेत्रं गमिष्यामि कुरुक्षेत्रे वसाम्यहं ।
य एवं सततं श्रूयात् सर्वपापैः प्रमुच्यते ॥(२)
पांसवोऽपि कुरुक्षेत्रे वायुना समुदीरिताः ।
अपि दृष्ट्वत्कर्मणं नयन्ति परमां गतिम् ॥(३)

1. See, for substantiation the following verse of *Shatapatha*, 14.1-2 :

देवा ह वै सर्वं निषेदुः । (२) अग्नि रिदः सोमो भरवो
श्विष्णुश्चिश्वे देवाऽग्र्यन्ते वात्रिभ्याम् ॥१॥ (न्ते)
तेषां कुरुक्षेत्रन्देव यजनमास । तस्मादाहुः कुरुक्षेत्रन्देवानान्देव
यजनमिति तस्माच्च वच कुरुक्षेत्रस्य निगच्छति तदेव
मन्यतश्च देवयजनमिति तद्दि देवानान्देव यजनम् ॥२॥

Also see *Jabali-upanishad* :

यदनु कुरुक्षेत्रं देवयजनं सर्वेषां ।
भूतानां ब्रह्म सदनं अविपुक्तं वै ॥

2. *Minor Upanishads* (Otto Schrader), pp. 59-60.

नरनारायणी देवी ब्रह्मा स्थाणुः सदा रविः ।
 प्राचीं देवा निवेद्यते स ब्रह्मपि सवाः सवाः ॥
 तस्मात्प्राची सदा सेव्या पञ्चभ्यां तु विशेषतः ।
 पञ्चभ्यां सेवमानस्तु लक्ष्मीवान् भविता नरः ॥
 त्रिरात्रं ये करिष्यन्ति प्राचीं प्राप्य सरस्वतीम् ।
 न तेषां दुष्कृतं किञ्चिद्देहमा श्रित्य तिष्ठति ॥
 देवमार्गं प्रतिष्ठा च देव मार्गेण निर्गमता ।
 प्राची सरस्वती पुण्या अपि दुष्कृतं कर्मिणाम् ॥¹

The *Vamana Purana* says that those persons who live on the banks of the sacred *Sarasvati* get *Brahmajnana*.

तत्रैव च वसन्धीरः सरस्वत्यास्तटे स्थितः ।
 तस्य ज्ञानं ब्रह्मयं भविष्यति न संशयः ॥²

Similar sacredness is attached to many other rivers of Kurukshetra.

All the gods and *rishis*, from *Brahma* to *Rudra*, have made use of Kurukshetra's sacredness for their purposes. The *Narada Purana* provides fairly interesting details on this point in the following verses :

देवता ऋषयः सिद्धा संवन्ते कुरुजांगलम् ।
 तस्य सं सेवनान्नित्यं ब्रह्माचात्मानि पश्यति ॥
 ब्रह्मणा सेवितमिदं सृष्टि कामेन योगिना ।
 विष्णुना स्थिति कामेन हरिरुपेण सेवितम् ॥
 रुद्रेण च सरोमध्ये प्रविष्टेन महात्मना ।
 सेव्य तीर्थं महातेजः स्थाणुत्वं प्राप्नुयाच्छिवः ॥
 एवं सं सेवितं देवं विमुक्तं कदाचन ॥³

In connection with *Brahma's yajna*, the holy land obtained a

1. *Ibid.*, 20-25.
2. *Ibid.*, 34, 11.
3. *Narada Purana*, 9-12.

new name—*Brahmavedi*,¹ and became the king of all *tirthas*. It became a *Tapahkshetra* (कुरुक्षेत्रे तपः क्षेत्रे)².

This land was chosen for performing *yajnas*. *Vamana* said to *Indra* : "Those who perform *yajna* in Kurukshetra, they are absolved of all sins and go to *swarga* (heaven) :"³

यज्ञं च ये कुरुक्षेत्रे करिष्यन्ति शत क्रतुम् ।
 ते गमिष्यन्ति मुहुतांलोकान्वापावि वज्रिताम् ॥

The *Mahabharata* also repeated this;⁴ and so did the other Sanskrit works of that age.

SOLAR ECLIPSE

It is popularly believed that Kurukshetra becomes a centre of great sacredness on the occasion of the solar eclipse. This belief prompts hundreds and thousands of people to go to Kurukshetra on these occasions. At times, the number of visitors to Kurukshetra on the eclipse days crosses ten to fifteen lakhs.

This gathering of such big crowds on the eclipse days is not a present-day phenomenon. According to Dr Ratna C. Agrawala :

Quite a large number of people, including the rulers and the sages, used to flock to the place to have a dip into the holy water of the sacred pools and lakes at Kurukshetra. The places thus happened to attract quite a large number of visitors even in those good old days.⁵

The ancient Sanskrit texts and the accounts of travellers visiting India bear testimony to this fact. The following important

1. ब्रह्मवेदी कुरुक्षेत्रं पुण्यं ब्रह्मपि सेवितम् ।
 तस्मिन् वसन्ति ये मत्वा न ते शोभाः क्वचन ॥
Mahabharata, Vana, 83, 207.
2. *Ibid.*, *Bhishma*, 1.2.
3. *Vamana*, 41.15.
4. यत्रित यत्र ऋत्विर्नरेन्द्र ! मनुजेश्वराः ।
 तेषां त्रिविष्टये वासो यावद् भूमि भविष्यति ॥
Mahabharata.
5. I am most grateful to Dr R.C. Agrawala for this information and for the reference given below to substantiate this contention.

references will bring home the truth of this observation :

1. *The Matsya Purana* says that a visit to Kurukshetra on the eclipse day when the *Rahu* attacked the sun was a harbinger of great bliss (*Mahapunya*).¹

2. *The Srimad Bhagavata Purana*² provides even more useful details. The people, says the great *Purana*, came from all over the country and assembled at Kurukshetra before the scheduled time of the eclipse. They were extremely anxious to attain *punya* and so they observed a fast, had their bath at Kurukshetra and distributed garlands and cows among the *Brahmanas* :³

तत्र स्नात्वा महामामा उपोष्य सुसमाहिताः ।
ब्राह्मणेभ्यो ददुर्धनूबांसः स्वयुवमभालिनो ॥

It is further stated that the great assembly (at Kurukshetra) on this occasion included the rulers of various states and countries, i.e., from Matsya, Usinara, Kosala, Vidarbha, Kuru, Srojjava, Kambuja, Kekaya, Madra, Kunti, Anarta, Kerala, etc., as well as their numerous relatives.⁴

3. *The Rajatarangini* of Kalhana too informs us that the place was visited by the prince on the occasion of solar eclipse. (प्रकोचरागे प्रातः स कुरुक्षेत्रं भवायतम्)⁵ A. Stein even states that 'The eclipse of the sun in India took place on July 23 of 1134 A.D.⁶ It was visible at Thaneshvara. Many princes for Kashmir visited Thanesar then. Also a solar eclipse occurred on the occasion of Kotesvara's meeting with Mallarjuna at Kurukshetra.'⁷

4. It is said that there was a solar eclipse on the eve of the battle of Kurukshetra.⁸

5. *The Vrahat Samhita* of Varahamihira too refers to the eclipse and its effects at Kurukshetra :

1. *Matsya*, 199.12.

2. *Bhagavata*, 82. 1-9.

3. *Ibid.*, 82.9.

4. *Ibid.*, 82. 12-13.

5. *Raj.*, VII, 2220.

6. A. Stein, *Raj*, Vol. II, p. 122.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 171 (fn.)

8. S.N. Pradhan, *Chronology*, p. 268.

काश्मीरान् सपुलिन्द चीन-यवतान् हन्यान् कुरुक्षेत्रजान् ।
गन्धारानापि मध्यदेश सहितान् दृष्टोग्रहः श्रावणे ।
काम्बोजैकाशकांसच शारदमपि त्यक्त्वा यषोक्रानिमानन्यत्र ।
प्रनुशन्नरुष्टमनुर्जघात्रीं कसेत्यावृत्ताम् ॥

If an eclipse should occur in the lunar month of *Shavana*, the people of Kasmira, Pulindas, Chinese, Yavanas, those born in Kurukshetra and Gandhara, those living in the central tract, Kambojas and all whole hoofed animals and also the grains of the autumnal season, above all those living elsewhere shall be happy and live in peace.² It further says :

चित्रास कुरुक्षेत्राधिपद्य समादिशेत् ॥
काश्मीरकाम्बोजौ नृपति प्रमाञ्जवे न स्तः ॥

"When a malign *Ketu* eclipses or touches the star *Chitra*, people in the know should declare the exit from the world of the chief of Kurukshetra. If the star in question be *Svati*, the two kings of Kashmir and Kamboja will cease to exist".³

6. Alberuni also offers some interesting details concerning this subject. In his own words :

"The *Samhita* of *Varahamihira* relates that in Thanesar there is a pond which the Hindus visit from afar to bathe in its water. Regarding the cause of this custom, they relate the following : The waters of all the other holy ponds visit this particular pond at the time of an eclipse. Therefore, a man, who washes in it, it is as if he had washed in every single one of all of them. Then *Varahamihira* continues that people say if it were not the head which causes the eclipse of the sun and the moon, the other ponds would not visit this pond".⁴

7. Another Muslim scholar, Abu Rihan, records on the authority of *Varahamihira* that "during the eclipse of the moon, the water of all the other tanks comes to Thanesar so that the bather in

1. *Vrahat Samhita*, V. 78.

2. *Ibid.*, V. 78.

3. *Ibid.*, VI. 57.

4. E. C. Sachau, *Alberuni's India*, Vol. II, London, 1910, p. 145.

the tank, at the moment of the eclipse obtains the additional merit of bathing in all other tanks at the same time."¹

8. The Kulait plate of Somavarman referring to Sahilladeva of the Musana race, relates that he "vanquished the Kira troops of the lord of Durgar (Dugara) and their allies the Saumtika who forced his suzerainty on the lord of Kuluta (Kullu) who was styled Karivarsa because he undertook a pilgrimage to Kurukshetra on the occasion of a solar eclipse and made a gift of the elephants to the sun-god who ensured the continuance of his family, etc."²

The preceding narrative makes clear that Kurukshetra's importance as *Dharmakshetra* and *Tapakshetra* was quite well-established in the ancient days. This importance was of so permanent a nature that, despite several odd factors working to the contrary, it continued for centuries to come.

1. Alexander Cunningham, *The Ancient Geography of India*, London, 1871, pp. 334-35. In Cunningham's opinion, this notice by Varahmihira 'carries us back at once to about 500 A.C. when the holy tank of Thanesar was in full repute'.
2. D.R. Bhandarkar, *A List of Inscriptions of North India in Brahmi and its scripts, from 200 A.D.*, p. 256.

5

THE BHARATA WAR

In the preceding chapter, we have discussed at some length the religio-cultural importance of the Kurukshetra region after the great Kuru came and brought this region under his personal care. He loved the sacred region as he did no other place in the world—not even Hastinapur, his political capital. Kurukshetra was his spiritual capital.

Kuru ruled over his *Dharmakshetra* for a fairly long time. After his death, from among his three sons, Prikshita, Jahnu and Sudhavan, the eldest, Parikshita ascended the *gaddi* and took care of his spiritual capital with great devotion. And so did his son and successor, Janmejaya II. But after this, there occurs a break. Janmejaya II had three sons, Srutasena, Ugrasena and Bhimasena but the *Puranas* do not make mention of any of these three sons of Janmejaya II as kings; they refer to Jahnu's son Suratha as king. "This shows", says Pargiter, "that Janmejaya's branch lost the sovereignty which then vested in Suratha."¹ The cause of this is explained by a story. Janmejaya II injured *Rishi* Gargya's son and was cursed by the *Rishi*. He was, therefore, abandoned by his people and was in great difficulties. At this time, he sought help from *Rishi* Indrota Daivapa Saunaka, who purified him with a great *yajna*. He did not, however, recover the sovereignty and so his three sons passed into oblivion.²

Now the successors of Suratha, the second son of Kuru, began to rule over the Kurukshetra region. They were as follows:

1. F.E. Pargiter, *Ancient Indian Historical Tradition*, p. 114.
2. *Ibid.*

Viduratha, Sarvabhauma, Jayatsena, Aradhin, Mahabhanma, Ayutayus, Akrodhana, Devatithi, Raksha II, Bhimsena, Daleep, Pratipa and Shantanu'. Shantanu became a great king and he ruled over the Kuru kingdom very ably. Shantanu had two wives, Ganga and Satyavati, by whom he had three sons, Bhishma from the former and Chitrangada and Vichitravirya from the latter. Of these three sons of Shantanu, Bhishma did not marry and took a vow not to come to the throne. Chitrangada died in a battle. Now only Vichitravirya remained to succeed to the Kuru throne. On his coming of age, Vichitravirya married, but as ill-luck would have it, he died soon after his marriage. Now who should succeed to the Kuru throne? The problem was solved by the advice of Bhishma. Krishna Dwyapayana (Vedavyasa) effected *niyoga* with the wives of the late Vichitravirya and gave them two sons—Dhritrashtra and Pandu.

Dhritrashtra was completely blind and therefore Pandu, on becoming a major, ascended the Kuru throne. Pandu ruled for ten years on behalf of Dhritrashtra. But when Dhritrashtra's son Duryodhana became a major he handed over the *raj* to him. Since Pandu could not have any children, he permitted his two wives to bear children through *niyoga*. As a result of this, the two wives had five sons—Kunti had Yudhishtira, Bhima and Arjuna and Madri had Nakula and Sahdeva. After some time, Pandu died, his younger wife—Madri—committed *sati* and Kunti came to Hastinapur along with his five children. At Hastinapur, the young Pandavas were looked after well and received a good education along with the sons of Dhritrashtra under the care of Dronacharya. But after becoming majors, the two cousins became enemies of each other and began to think of ways and means of killing each other. This ultimately resulted in the great war of Bharata.

Cunningham has provided a very interesting account of the proceedings of the Bharata war and therefore I use his narrative at some length.² "Duryodhana, having determined to fight the Pandavas, summoned all his followers to meet on the plain of Kurukshetra, where his army encamped facing to the west, with its right resting on the Sarasvati River and its left at Amin, 5½ miles

to the south-east of Thanesar. Of this flank, which was exposed towards the enemy advancing from Delhi, a covering trench was dug, and at a council of which Bhishma was appointed general of the Kaurava army.

On the other hand, the Pandavas marched from Delhi to Kurukshetra under Yudhishtira and his brethren, who chose their brother-in-law Drishtadyumna for their general. On reaching Kurukshetra they encamped to the west of the lake facing the Kaurava army on the east with their left flank resting on the Sarasvati River, and their right near Kirmanch. On this flank they dug a covering trench.

The fight lasted for 18 days, but the details given in the Mahabharata are confined to the personal conflicts between the great chiefs. For nine days the battle raged furiously, with great slaughter on both sides, but without any decisive result. On the tenth day, however, Bhishma was killed by Arjuna, and Drona was appointed to the command of the Kauravas. For two days there was nothing decisive, but on the 13th day Abhimanyu, the youthful son of Arjuna, having broken the ranks of the Kauravas with his chariot, was surrounded and slain by Duhasasana. This took place at Amin, which is said to be a contraction of Abhimanyu, and which, it will be remembered, was on the left of the Kaurava position. On the 14th day Bhurisravas was killed through the treachery of Arjuna, and the place where he fell is now called Bhure or Bhore, by a contraction of his name. On the same day Jayadratha was slain in single combat with Arjuna. On the 15th Day Drona, the general of the Kauravas, was treacherously killed by Drishtadyumna, when he was unarmed. On the 16th day Karna took the command of the Kauravas, and on the 17th day when his chariot was driven by Salya, Raja of the Madras, he pursued Yudhishtira, and pulled him off his horse, but spared his life on account of his cowardice. Duhasasana, the slayer of Abhimanyu was killed by Bhima, who drank his blood. Then Karna driven by Salya was attacked by Arjuna, driven by Krishna. Again the Pandavas were guilty of treachery, and Karna was killed by Arjuna while trying to extricate one of his chariot wheels which had sunk in the mud. On the 18th and last day Salya became the general of Kauravas and was slain by Yudhishtira. Then Duryodhana fled, but was afterwards discovered

गौर
रौंद

1. Cunningham, Report, pp. 92-3.

and taunted into a single combat with Bhima. This fight took place in very middle of Kurukshetra, to the south of the lake. Once more the Pandava combatant was guilty of treachery, and Bhima broke the thigh of Duryodhana against the rules of mace fighting, which positively forbade all blows below the waist. Then the Pandavas proceeded to the camp of the Kauravas, and took possession of all the jewels and spoils of Duryodhana. There also they spent the night. But whilst they slept, Aswasthama the son of Drona, with Kripa and Kritavarman, the only chiefs of the Kauravas who had survived the 18th day's fight, stole quietly into the camp of the Pandava and slew Drishtadyumna, the general and the five young sons of the five Pandava brothers, and escaped free in the confusion. When the heads of the slaughtered Pandavas were brought to Duryodhana he was at first overjoyed but when he saw that the heads were those of the sons and not of the hated fathers, he died from sheer vexation.

Cunningham has given an equally interesting account of the aftermath of the war. In his words :

The war being thus ended by the general destruction of so many warriors and their followers on both sides, the few survivors, attended by the relatives of the slain, assembled on the plain of Kurukshetra to perform the funeral rites. There came the old blind Raja Dhritarashtra, the father of Duryodhana, attended by Yudhishtira, and all the widows of the departed chiefs, of Duryodhana and Karna and Abhimanyu, accompanied by Kunti, the mother of Karna, then Vidura, the uncle of the Kauravas and Pandavas, and Sanjaya, the charioteer of the Maharaja, and Yuyustu, the only surviving son of the Maharaja, and Dhaumya, the family priest of the Pandavas, all went out together to the field of battle. And they collected a large quantity of sandal and other odoriferous woods and sweet oils to form a pile on which to burn the bodies of the principal warriors, such as Duryodhana, Karna, Abhimanyu, Drona, and others; and they also collected many thousand mule-loads of faggots and oil to burn the bodies of those of inferior note. And they ordered all the surviving charioteers of those Rajas who had been slain to go through the plain and point out the corpses of their respective masters, so that such Rajas might be burned separately according to their rank. And they took with them a thousand cart-loads of cloths, some

fine and other coarser, to strap up the dead bodies before burning. Then Vidura and those appointed with him, went over the plain of Kurukshetra; and they first took up with all reverence and ceremony the corpse of Duryodhana and burned it. Next the Rajas of the first rank were wrapped in fine linen and burned with perfumes; and amongst these were the other sons of Dhritarashtra, and the sons of Draupadi, and Abhimanyu and Drona, and Karna, and the greater Rajas, such as Raja Draupada and his son Dhrishtadyumna, and Raja Virata, and Raja Jayadratha, and Raja Salya, and many others. When this burning had been accomplished they kindled a mighty fire and burned all the remaining bodies therein.¹

The site where the dead bodies of the slain are said to have been burned is now known by the name of Asthipur, or the 'place of bones'. It was seen by Huen Tsang in A.D. 635, who says that the corpses had been heaped up like straw-ricks, and that 'their bones still covered the plain'.² There are no bones visible at the present at Asthipur; and many of the people do not even know the location of the 'place of bones'.

CONTROVERSY ABOUT THE BHARATA WAR

There is a good deal of controversy about the Bharata War. Some believe that the war was fought as it is described in the *Mahabharata*, whereas other believe that it was not fought at all. Some people follow a little safer course than the ones mentioned above; they opine that the so-called great war must have originally been a petty family or tribal feud which was magnified through several centuries by various minstrels into the great war poem of the *Mahabharata*.

Then there is a general controversy among the scholars over the question of the date of the war. We shall discuss, in brief, both these problems one by one.

WAS THERE A WAR?

Dr Keith, and following him, many other scholars, rejected

1. Wheel, *Mahabharata*, pp. 364-5.
2. Julien, *Huen Tsang*, Vol. II, p. 214.

the existence of the war mainly on the ground that there is no mention of it in the Vedas or in any other Indian literary work older than the 4th century B.C.

A historical scrutiny of this view may be attempted. As far as the first part of the statement is concerned (i.e., the non-mention of the war in the Vedas), it may be argued that since the Vedas are older than the Bharata war, its being mentioned there is out of the question. And the second part is entirely wrong; there is mention of the Bharata war and the persons connected with it in the later Vedic literature, even of the pre-4th century B.C. time. A few examples may be cited :

(i) *Dhritrashtra Vaichitravirya : Yajushakatha Samhita* (10/6) makes a clear mention of this king. Keith in his anxiety to prove his above theory's correctness has committed an error by saying : "In the *Katha Samhita* there is Dhritrashtra Vaichitravirya, who is assumed to have been a Kuru king There is no ground for supposing that this Dhritrashtra was any one else than the king of Kashi".² No doubt there was a Dhritrashtra of Kashi too, but here the *Samhita Katha* is too clear to be misunderstood.³

(ii) *Pratipiya Bahlika : Shatapatha Brahmana* (12,93.3) mentions this king. There are many references to him in the Mahabharata.⁴ He was killed by Bhima in the war.⁵

(iii) *Nagarjita Gandhara : Shatapatha Brahmana* (8, 1, 4, 10) makes mention of this man who was a king of the Gandhara country. He had taken part in the Bharata war.⁶

(iv) *Vyasa : Taittiriya Aryanka* (1, 9, 35) makes a clear reference to Vyasa son of Parashara *Gopatha Brahmana*⁷ and *Bodhiyana Grihya Sutra*⁸ also make such references.

1. See, *Journal of Haryana Studies*, Vol. IV, Nos. 1 and 2, p. 4.
2. *The Cambridge History of India*, Vol. 1, p. 119.
3. For a detailed discussion see Bhagwat Datta, *Bharatavarsha ka Vrihad Itihasa*, Vol. 1, p. 193.
4. See *Udyogaparva*, 23-9; *Sabhaparva*, 34.8; 69.1, 56.2.
5. *Dronaparva*, 155, 11-15.
6. *Mahabharata, Aryanakaparva*, 255.21.
7. 1.29.
8. 3.9.5.

Hopkins makes a very interesting statement : Vyasa is mentioned as early as the *Taittiriya Aryanaka*, but not as author or editor of the epic.¹ Hopkins does not know that the *Taittiriya Aryanaka* was compiled long before the *Mahabharata* was composed.²

(v) *Krishna* : Krishna, the hero of the *Mahabharata*, finds mention in almost the entire Vedic literature (mostly as Devaki-putra).³

Besides, there are other important personages of the *Mahabharata* such as Narada, Sanbala, Drupada, Shikhandi, Suratha Shaiyya, Akruva, Shantanu, Devapi, etc, who are mentioned in the Vedic literature.⁴

In view of these facts, we cannot accept the version of Keith and his followers that the *Mahabharata* personages are not mentioned in the literature of pre-4th century B.C. Apart from this, there are references to the stories of the *Mahabharata* and its several *shlokas* (verses) in various ancient works. For instance, Shabara in his *Mimamsabhashya* using the verse 1.49 of the *Mahabharata, Adiparva*, says that the great *Rishi* (Vyasa) after giving a detailed exposition of the *Mahabharata*, this great treasure of knowledge, had given its brief index too.⁵ Vatsyayana has also made such a reference in his *Kamasutra*.⁶ His near contemporary Durga mentions several stories of the *Mahabharata*.⁷ Besides, the great *Nirukta* scholar says that *Niruktakarva* Yaska knew the whole of the *Mahabharata*.⁸ Interestingly enough, Yaska was a contemporary of Vyasa.⁹ Thus, there is no point in calling the work a myth of later times.

1. *The Cambridge History of India*, Vol. 1, p. 252.
2. See Bhagwat Datta, Vol. 1, p. 198.
3. See for instance, *Chhandogya Upanisad*, 3.17.6. This is so in the *Mahabharata, Adiparva*, 181.28, 29; *Udyogaparva*, 123.16 *Bhishma Parva*, 116.39.
4. For details see Bhagwat Datta, op. cit., pp. 191-204.
5. Shabara, 8. 1.7. He lived in the 1st/2nd Century A.D.
6. *Kamasutra*, 1, 4.
7. See *Niruktabhashya*, 4, 1; 3, 4; also 6, 30.
8. *Ibid.*, 7, 7.
9. See Bhagwat Datta, p. 85,

WHEN WAS THE MAHABHARATA COMPOSED?

This is a difficult question to answer. The text of the *Mahabharata* has undergone changes by way of additions to the central theme of the war in the shape of topics and even long episodes unconnected with the war, like those in the *Vanaparva*, from time to time. But there is reliable evidence to show that the epic poem as we have it now—the *Mahabharata*, growing out of the original text named *Bharata*—consisting of about one hundred thousand *shlokas*, must have been completed probably long before the 4th century B.C.¹

WHAT IS THE DATE OF THE BHARATA WAR ?

The date of the *Mahabharata* admits of diverse interpretations. Of the different interpretations, five are more important and we discuss them one by one.

The first view is based on tradition. According to it, the great war was fought in 3102 B.C. The first historical reference to this traditional view is found in the Aihole Stone Inscription² of the early Chalukya king, Pulakesin II. It reads thus :

त्रिशतम् त्रिसहस्रेषु भारतादाह्वादितः ।
सप्ताब्दशतयुक्तेषु गतेषाब्देषु पञ्चसु ॥
पञ्चाशत्सु कलौ काले षट्सु पञ्चशतासु च ।
समासु समतीतासु शकानामपि भूमुजाम् ॥

It is stated here that a Jaina temple was erected at Aihole when 3735 years had elapsed after the Bharata war in the Kali Age and 556 years had passed according to the era of the Saka kings. If we convert this date in the Christian era, it comes to A.D. 632-33. So the Bharata war, according to this inscription, was fought in 3735-633=3102 B.C.

This era is called the Kaliyuga era. It is also known as the

1. See for interesting discussion on this point, *Ibid.*, pp. 89-93.
2. *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. VI, p. 7.

Yudhisthira era. Dr V.V. Mirashi says that :

No early Indian inscription is dated in this so-called Yudhisthira or *Kaliyuga* era. It seems that this era was first conceived in the time of Aryabhata (circa A.D. 400) for the purpose of astronomical calculation and then it was antedated by about 3500 years. So it was supposed to have commenced in 3102 B.C. This supposition has continued to this day and so years of this era are cited in modern Indian Panchangas.¹

At a later date, however, the Kashmir historian Kalhana (circa 12th Century A.D.) has mentioned this date of the *Kaliyuga* in his *Rajatarangini* but since it did not square with the scheme of the chronology of the dynasties of Kashmir, he stated that though the *Kaliyuga* commenced in 3102 B.C. the Yudhisthira era began 653 years thereafter.²

This involves a contradiction. If we accept this view for the date of the *Kaliyuga*, we shall have to push still further backward the dates of the Vedic literature, which preceded it by some centuries. This runs counter to the evidence of the Harappa or Indus Valley Civilization. So this view cannot be taken seriously.

Varahamihira, the great Indian astronomer of the first half of the sixth century B.C., gives the date of 500 B.C. to the Bharata War.³ He says :

संकावलीव राजाति सप्तितोत्पलमालिनी सहासेव ।
नाथवतीव च दिग्यैः कौबेरी सप्तभिर्मुनिभिः ॥१॥
ध्रुवनायकोपदेशान्नरिनर्त्तौबोत्तरा भ्रमद्भिद्भव ।
येश्वारमहं तेषां कथयिष्ये वृद्धगर्भतात् ॥२॥
प्रासन्नघामु मुनयः शासति पृथ्वीं युधिष्ठिरे नृपते ।
पद्दिकपञ्चद्विद्युतः शककालस्तस्य राजश्व ॥३॥
एकैस्मिन्नुक्षे शतं शतं ते चरन्ति दशानाम् ।
प्रागुदयतोऽप्यविवराद्जूनयति तत्र संयुक्ताः ॥४॥

1. *Journal of the Oriental Institute*, Baroda, (abbreviated as JOB I), Vol. XXV (1976), p. 287.

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Brihat Samhita*, XIII, 1-4.

I shall now proceed to describe the movements of the seven sages according to the view of Vridha-Garga (Garga the elder) on account of whom the North looks beautiful, as if she has a lord and is smiling being adorned with one-stringed pearl-necklace or with a wreath of white lotuses and is, as it were, dancing at the bidding of her lord, the *Dhruva* [the pole-star].

When Yudhisthira was ruling over the earth, the (seven) sages were in the constellation of the Maghas, the date of that king is 2526, added each *naksatra* for one hundred years. They are said to be united with that *naksatra* to the east of which the sages rise.

There is no unanimity among scholars regarding the interpretation of these verses. In any case, the first half of the third verse cited is the view of Vridha-Garga and is admitted by all; but according to some, the statement in the second half of that verse is the view of Varahamihira himself. It seems better to take the whole verse as stating the view of Garga himself. After stating that the sages were in the constellation of the *Maghas* during the reign of Yudhisthira, Garga states the exact time of his rule. It was the year 2526 before the commencement of the Saka era, i.e., 2526 minus 78 = 2448 B.C. or 2500 B.C. in round numbers.¹

We find this statement in many *puranas* too. For instance :

सप्तपंयस्तु तिष्ठन्ति पयोधिण शतं समाः ।
सप्तर्षीणा युगं ह्येतद् दिव्यया संख्यया युतम् ॥
सप्तर्षीणां तु यो पूर्वो दृश्यते उदितो निदि ।
तयामध्ये तु नक्षत्रं दृश्यते यत्समं दिवि ॥
तेन सप्तर्षयो युक्ता ज्ञेया व्योम्नि शतं शतम् ।
नक्षत्राणाम्परीणां च योगस्यैतन्निर्दानम् ॥

These verses reiterate the view of Vridha-Garga and Varahamihira stated in the afore-cited passage of the *Brhatsamhita*. The *Puranas* give the data of the war as follows :

सप्तर्षयो मयायुक्ताः काले परिक्षिते शतम् ।
सन्धान्ते तु चतुर्विंशो भविष्यान्ति शतेसमाः ॥

1. *JOBI*, Vol. XIII, (1976), p. 288.

"The seven sages crossed twenty-four *naksatras* from the time of Pariksit to that of the downfall of the Andhras". This extends the duration to 2400 years.

Professor V.V. Mirashi has discussed this view very thoroughly in a lucid manner and therefore we quote him here at some length.

We know that the period of the Andhras (i.e. the Satavahanas) came to an end in circa 230 A.D. So the date of Pariksit is 2400 minus 230 = 2170 B.C. Pariksit was the grand-nephew of Yudhisthira. If we add to this the reignal years of Yudhisthira and Prikshita (totalling 96), the date of the Great War would be 2266 B.C., which is not far from the date 2448 B.C. given by Vridha Garga and Varahamihira. But is there any basis for the statement that the Seven Sages moved through twenty-four *naksatras* in the period from Pariksit to the downfall of the Andhras (i.e. the Satavahanas)? In the first place, the supposition that the Sages move through the *naksatras* is fallacious. They are not planets and therefore, have no motion. Sh. B. Diksit says that several *naksatras* such as Magha, Purva, Uttara, Hasta, Chitra etc. appear in the firmamental region opposite to the Seven Sages, and any one of them can be supposed to be conjoined with them. Garga supposed that they were conjoined with the Maghas in his days, and so did Varahamihira. There was a tradition that they were in the *Magha naksatra* in the time of Yudhisthira. Therefore they supposed that the Sages had made a complete revolution through the *naksatras* since the time of Yudhisthira and so took the intervening period as of twenty-four hundred years. But even today the same position of the Seven Sages can be affirmed. So this statement about the Sages being in the *naksatra* of the *Maghas* in the time of Yudhisthira and the date of the Great War reduced from it have no basis.¹

A great ephemerist L.D. Swami Kannu Pillai gives an interesting, but different explanation of this date of Yudhisthira given

1. *Ibid.*, pp. 288-9.

by Garga and Varahamihira. To quote him :

Varahamihira, or rather his authority says that the *Sapta Rsis* were at that time in the *Magha nakshatra* and nobody has attempted to discover what this means. The *Sapta Rsis* were supposed to spend 100 years in each *nakshatra* in succession. This is a pure convention, equivalent to a reckoning by centuries, because the ancient astronomers knew very well that the *Sapta Rsis*, i.e. the constellation Ursa Major or Great Bear had no motion of the kind. It is exceedingly probable that the conventional motion of the *Sapta Rsis* through the *nakshatras* was made to start, like the motions of the planets, with the first *nakshatra* at the date of O *Kaliyuga*. That first *nakshatra* was in all probability *Krittika* and not *Asvini* according to the modern usage. The astronomers of Varahamihira's time knew that *Krittika* was the first *nakshatra* in Vedic times and in quoting a *nakshatra* for the *Sapta Rsis* in the reign of Yudhishthira, they probably conformed to the ancient usage, rather than to their own fixation of *Asvini* as the first *nakshatra*. If so, *Magha* would be the eighth *nakshatra*, beginning with *Krittika*; that is, the entry of the *Rsis* into the *Magha nakshatra* would mean the beginning of the eighth century reckoned from O *Kaliyuga*, i.e. from 3102 B.C. This takes us to 2402 B.C., which is not very distant from 2448 B.C., the date recorded in Varahamihira's verse.¹

This indicates that there is no real basis of the supposition that the sages move through each *nakshatra* in a period of one hundred years and also none for the conventional view that they were in the *nakshatra magha* in the time of Yudhishthira. Like the first view, therefore, this view of the date of the war is also not acceptable to us.

Lokmanya Tilak and many other scholars² hold a third view. They maintain that the war had taken place in 1400 B.C. This view is based on the following verse of a *purana* :³

यावत्परिक्षेतो जन्म यावन्नन्दाभिषेचनम् ।
एवं वर्षं सहस्रं तु ज्ञेयं पञ्चाशत्पुरम् ॥

1. *Indian Ephemeris*, Vol. I, p. 483.

2. Chief among them is A.D. Pusalker. See his views in the *Vedic Age*, p.69.

3. See Pargiter, *Dynasties of the Kali Age*, p. 58.

(A period of 1050 years passed from the birth of Pariksit to the coronation of Nanda).

We know for certain that the rule of the Nandas was from 364-324 B.C. Pariksit was born soon after the Great War. So it must have been fought in $1050 + 364 = 1414$ B.C. (1400 B.C. in round numbers). A scholar, Kavishwar, has attempted to show that this very date is intended in the aforesaid verse of Varahamihira. He says : "In पञ्चदशमन्वित्युत; etc., *Shad-dvika* means the square of six or 36. *Pancha-dvi* denoted 53 *Yuta* which means their multiplication. So the number intended here is 36 multiplied by 55 or 1980. Saka-Kala which is connected with this number is the era (Saka-Kala) of Yudhishthira and not the era of the Saka (or the Scythians). He further says that the era started by Yudhishthira was known as Saka-Kala as is clear from the following verse :

सत्यब्रह्मशको भुनेविरिचित स्जेतामुजेवामन् ।
सूतपञ्चाजमदग्नि पुत्रनिहते रामः सहस्राब्दुने ॥
रामो रावणहन्तुशक्ति उदितो यौषिष्ठरो द्वापरे ।
पञ्चाद्विंशमशालिवाहन शको जातं युगेऽस्मिन्काले ॥

Varahamihira states in this verse that 'when he composed the *Brahatsamhita* (in circa 566 A.C.) the year 1980 of Yudhishthira era was either current or expired. So the era of that king must have commenced in $1980 - 566 = 1414$ B.C.¹

Professor Mirashi does not accept these arguments of Kavishwar and puts forward a strong contradictory case. He says :

This interpretation of Varahamihira's verse is open to several objections. *Sad-dvika-pancha-dvi* cannot mean the multiplication of 36 and 55. Mere juxtaposition of two numbers does not indicate their multiplication. If the multiplication is supposed to be indicated by the word *yuta*, it should have preceded *pancha*, not followed it. That word qualifies *Saka-kala* which follows

1. Quoted in *JOBI*, Vol. XIII, 1976, pp. 290-1.

and denotes that a certain number of years elapsed before the commencement of that era. Again, *Saka-kala* cannot refer to the era of Yudhisthira. The expression *Saka-kala* is noticed in innumerable inscriptions as denoting the dates of the *Saka* era, starting in A.D. 78. That era was really started by the Kushana king Kaniska, who commenced to reign in that year. It was used for more than 300 years by the Western *Ksatrapas* ruling in Malwa and Kathiawad and so it can be known as the *Saka* era as they belonged to the Scythian race. That era was used later by several dynasties for a number of centuries and is invariably referred to as the *Saka-kala*. It was only during the rule of the kings of Vijayanagara that it came to be associated with the name of Salivahana (ancient Satavahanas themselves are dated in their regnal years, and not according to any era. As a matter of fact, the word *Saka* does not denote the meaning of 'an era' in Sanskrit. It has attained that meaning only in recent times.

He further says : "The aforesaid verse mentioning the *Saka* of Yudhisthira is not old. It is not noticed in any ancient anthology of verses. Kavishwar tells me that he has taken it from Khedwal's book. There also its source has not been indicated. So the supposition that the aforesaid verse of Varahamihira mentions the year 1980 of the era of Yudhisthira which was current in the time of Varahamihira is absolutely unfounded."

There is a fourth view too, which has been advanced by Pargiter in his *Ancient Indian Historical Tradition*. The scholar opines that the *puranas* state that 26 kings reigned between Adhisimaksrna and Nanda. Taking 18 years as the average duration of a reign, the interval between the two comes to $26 \times 18 = 468$ years. Mahapadma Nanda ascended the throne in 382 B.C. So Adhisimaksrna must have commenced to rule in $468 + 382 = 850$ B.C. Adhisimaksrna was the great grandson of Janamejaya. So taking the period from Yudhisthira to Janamejaya to be of 100 years, Yudhisthira must have begun to rule in circa $850 + 100 = 950$

B.C.¹

Dr B.B. Lal, an eminent archaeologist supports this view of Pargiter on the evidence of the excavations which he conducted at Hastinapura.

The *Puranas* say that during the reign of Nichksu, the son of the aforementioned Adhisimaksrna, Hastinapura had to be deserted on account of the Ganga being in spate. The people then moved on to Kausambi (modern Kosam). Lal found evidence of the flood in the excavations at Hastinapura, and at Kausambi the same type of painted grey-ware as at Hastinapura. Their evidence substantiates the description on the *Puranas*.

But Professor Mirashi feels that both Pargiter and Lal have taken a low average of 18 or 14 for a generation. Besides, one cannot be sure about the number of generations stated in the *Puranas*. We find that even in respect of the historical period of the Satavahanas, there is a great divergence in the *Puranas* in regard to the number of kings and the total period of their rule. There is possibility of even a greater mistake in respect of the earlier period which preceded it by more than a thousand years. Besides, this statement of the *Puranas* about the number of generations which intervened between Yudhisthira and Mahapadma Nanda is contradicted by their other statement that the interval was of 1050 years.² As such, this view cannot be acceptable to us.

There is the fifth view of some archaeologists like Dr H.D. Sankalia who believe that 'the great war could not have been fought before 600 B.C.' They say :

Archaeological evidence shows that iron was not in regular use before the sixth century B.C. and unknown before 1100 B.C. The most prolific use of weapons before this period was a terracotta sling ball found stored in huge quantities behind a defensive mud-brick wall at Mohenjodaro and arrow heads of copper, bronze, bone and bamboo possibly tipped with poison. The swords and spear-heads had no sockets and hence these had to be fastened to wood bamboos or bone shafts. If the Mahabharata heroes fought in 1400 B.C. we shall have to suppose

1. Pargiter, *Ancient Indian Historical Tradition*, pp. 179-83.

2. *JOBI*, Vol. XIII, 1976, p. 292.

that they used insignificant looking microlights, small mace-heads, sling balls of stone and terracotta (not more than three inches in diameter and twelve oz. in weight). The battle then was a contest between two individuals whose personal bravery and skill in handling a mace or even managing a chariot was everything. There could not have been a pitched infantry battle. The use of the horse was not yet common or widely documented; probably it was yoked to chariots, but not ridden. The people had scanty astronomical knowledge. They did not know the division of the year into months and of month into days and of a day into *ghadis* and *palas*. This picture of the civilization and culture of the period between 3000 and 1000 B.C. shows that the Great War as described in the Mahabharata could not have been fought in that age. The Rigveda was not composed before 1000 B.C. and the war could not have been fought between this date and 600 B.C. As for the literary references, they are incidental and cannot be taken at their face value.¹

This discussion shows that from the painted grey-ware, terracotta sling balls, small arrow-heads, axes without sockets, etc., found in the excavation which Sankalia ascribes to the period between 1000 and 600 B.C. on the evidence of Carbon-14 tests, he has informed that the great war could not have been fought in that period. 'The civilization indicated by these finds did, no doubt, exist sometime in India, but it was not of the Vedic age.' No concrete evidence that it belonged to that age has yet been discovered, The Carbon-14 test is not infallible'. In his article in the *Times of India*, dated 19 October 1975, Sankalia also has admitted that there is one carbon-14 date which does not agree with the other carbon-14 dates of the painted grey-ware from Hastinapur. Besides, the dates supposed to be denoted by the Carbon-14 are in conflict with important literary evidence as shown below.

The very basis of Dr Sankalia's argument is incorrect as the following examination of it by Professor Mirashi would show :

1. Quoted in *ibid.*, pp. 222-3.

Dr Sankalia "places the Rigveda in 1000 B.C. His picture of the Rigveda civilization is contradicted by unimpeachable evidence of that Veda. The elephant and the horse were not unknown in the Rigvedic age. There are innumerable references to the horse. The Asvins derived their name from the horses which they rode. As for Sankalia's statement that there were only duels and no pitched infantry battles, we would draw his attention to the description of the 'Dasarajnyuddha' (the battle of ten kings) in the seventh Mandala of the Rigveda. In that battle king Sudas was opposed by ten kings. In describing the outcome of the battle, the poet says, 'The loot-seeking Anus and Druhyus, numbering six thousands and sixty thousands lay down in eternal slumber, sixty warriors and six more in addition to them did the same.' Had these warriors assembled there to see the duels of Sudas with his opponents? And did so many thousands perish there as a result of an earthquake? If such pitched battles took place in the age of the Rigveda, is it inconceivable that the Great War took place in the later Vedic age?

"Dr Sankalia thinks that the people in that age had no conception of the year and its division into months, days, *ghedikas* and *palas*. I wonder what evidence he has for this. Not only in the time of the Bharata War but hundreds of years before in the age of the Rigveda the Aryans had much greater knowledge of astronomy. In praising Varuna, one sage says :

वेद मासो घृतव्रतः ।
द्वादश प्रजावतः
वेदो य उपजायते ॥

This verse says that Varuna not only knows the twelve months of the years, but also the thirteenth month required to adjust the lunar with the solar year. I wonder how the archaeologists dare to make unfounded assertions."¹

In support of his contention, professor Mirashi postulates the following arguments :

"On the evidence of Carbon-14 tests of the painted grey-ware

1. *Ibid.*, p. 295.

found at Hastinapur, Sankalia fixes the date of the Rigveda at 900 at most 1000 B.C., but this is contradicted by the literary evidence of the entire Vedic literature as pointed out by Winternitz long ago. About the middle of the last century Max Muller showed that Buddhism at about 500 B. C. absolutely presupposes the existence of the whole of Vedic literature. For the composition of that literature, several centuries must have been required. In the age of the Rigveda the Aryans were living in Eastern Afghanistan and extreme North-West of India. The Rigveda contains reference to old and new hymns. It must have taken several centuries for their composition. That Veda lies behind all other works of Vedic literature, its language is much more archaic than that of the other Vedas, Brahmanas, Aranyakas and Upanisads, the composition of these works must have taken several centuries. "And yet," says Winternitz, "we see that during the whole of this time which lasted from the first beginnings till the last off-shoot of Vedic literature, the Indo-Aryan people conquered only the comparatively small stretch of land from India as far as the Ganges. If this advance from the extreme North-west over into the Eastern Ganges already took so long, how many centuries must the conquest of the whole of the Central and Southern India have taken?" As stated before, there were settlements of the Aryans in South India in the time of the Buddha (600 B.C.). Is it likely that this vast country was conquered by the Aryans in the short span of about 1000—600=400 years? But perhaps nothing but archaeological evidence will convince doubting archaeologists like Shankalia. So we proceed to state that evidence." 324918

"Again the clay tablets from the archives of the capital of the ancient Hittite kingdom, which were found in Boghazkoi, included records of treaties concluded by the king of the Hittites and the king of Mitani at the beginning of the 14 century B.C. The gods of both kingdoms are invoked as guardians of the treaties, and in the list of gods there appear, besides numerous Babylonian and Hittite deities, the names of Mitra, Varuna, Indra and Nasatyau (Asvins). The importance of this mention of the gods of the Indo-Aryans has not been realized by our Indian archaeologists. These deities are not Indo-European, not Indo-Iranians. They are purely

Indo-Aryan. So the people who worshipped them in Asia Minor must have gone there from India either for commerce or for matrimonial relations. The date of this inscription is fixed as the beginning of the 14 Cen. B.C. This shows that the Vedic hymns in which we find these gods eulogized must, in any case, be dated at least a couple of centuries before. The Rigveda which contains the hymns addressed to these gods could not have been composed as late as 1000 B.C. as supposed by Sankalia on the evidence of Carbon-14 tests. The sooner Indian archaeologists will realize the untrust-worthiness of Carbon-14 tests, the better it will be for their chronological research."¹

A question may be put here : 'What is then the date of the Great War?' We have demonstrated that of the five views about the date of that war, the first two and the last one are unacceptable for the reasons mentioned. The third view that the war was fought in 1400 B.C. appears probable. In this connection, the following passage from the *Kathaka Samhita* of the Black *Yajurveda* is of great value :

नैमिष्या वै सत्रमासत, त उत्थाय सप्तविंशति व्युरूपञ्चालेषु वत्सतरानवन्वत,
तान्ब्रह्मो दास्मिन्नवीञ्चूयमेव तान्बिमडा ध्वमिममहं धृतराष्ट्रं वैचित्रवीर्यं
गमिष्यामि, स मह्यं गृहान्करिष्यतीति तमागच्छत्² ।

This passage shows that some sages performed a sacrifice in the Naimisa forest. After its completion, they obtained twenty-seven young bulls by way of *dakshina*. Then Baka, son of Dalbna, said to them, 'You divide these among yourselves. I shall go to Dhritarashtra, son of Vichitravirya. He will donate a dwelling to me.' Saying so, he approached him. This shows that Dhritarashtra was ruling at the time over the Kuru country and was known for his liberality. This event must be dated before the Great War. There is no reason to doubt the truth of this event. We believe and there is no evidence to suppose otherwise that the Rigveda was composed in *circa* 1600 B.C. at the latest. The Yajurveda, which represents a considerable change in language and theology, can be

1. *Ibid.*

2. VIII. 3.65, quoted in *Ibid* p. 297.

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dated in *circa* 1400 B.C. at the latest.

Another passage which substantiates the above-mentioned date occurs in the Atharvaveda :¹

कतरत्त ग्रा हराणि दधि मन्थां परिश्रुतम् ।
जाया पति वि पृच्छति राष्ट्रं राज्ञः परिक्षितः
प्रभीवस्वः प्रजिहीते यवः पक्कः पयो बिलम् ।
जनः स भद्रमेयति राष्ट्रं राज्ञः परिमितः ।

These verses eulogize king Pariksit, the grand nephew of Yudhishtira. He is described as ruling over the Kuru country. Owing to his benevolent administration, the land is said to be overflowing with milk and honey. Professor Mirashi says that, "This passage also points to about the same date.

As shown above, the statement in the Puranas that 1050 years passed from the birth of Parikshit to the coronation of Nanda also corroborates this very date.....Several post-vedic works contain incidental references to the Great War and the personages like Krishna, Yudhishtira, Bhima, Arjuna, Nakula, Sahadeva, etc. The war itself is mentioned in the *SankhayanaSrauta-Sutra*.²

In view of what has been said above, we cannot help but accept professor Mirashi's view that the great war was fought about the middle of the second millenium. B.C.³

1. *Atharva*, XX, 127, 9-10.

2. *JOB*, Vol. XIII, p. 297.

3. This baffling problem has been resolved with the help of Professor V.V. Mirashi, for which I express my gratefulness to him.

6

THE AFTERMATH OF THE BHARATA WAR

After the Bharata War, Yudhishtira ruled for some time. But disgusted and demoralized as he was after the great fratricidal struggle, he abdicated the throne. Then Arjuna's grandson Parikshit, son of Abhimanyu, became king. It is difficult to determine the exact date of Parikshit's reign, but by a reasonable guess, he seems to have ruled in *circa* fourteenth century B.C.¹

What was the extent of Parikshit's kingdom? According to the *Digvijaya-Parva* of the *Mahabharata*, it extended from the land of the Kulindas (near the sources of the Sutlej, the Yamuna and the Ganga) to that of the Shursenas and the Matsyas (in the Mathura, Jaipur regions respectively) and from the frontier of Rohitaka (Rohtak in Haryana), to that of the Panchala (Rohilkhand).² The kingdom was divided into three parts: (i) Kuru jangala; (ii) Hastinapur; and (iii) Kurukshetra. The king held the Kurukshetra region in utmost esteem and maintained his royal residence at Asandivat,³ the modern Asand in Karnal district.

Pariksit's reign was marked by prosperity and affluence. We are informed by the *Atharva-veda* that here 'people thrived merrily'.⁴

Pariksit ruled for twenty-four years until his death at 60.⁵ He had many sons, but the eldest and the ablest of them all,

1. See, H.C. Ray Chaudhari, *Political History of Ancient India*, pp. 21-22.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 21-2.

3. *Ibid. Vedic Index*, Vol. I, p. 72.

4. *Atharva-veda*, tr. Bloomfield, pp. 197-98.

5. *Mahabharata*, I, 49, 17-26.

Janamejaya succeeded him. The tradition makes reference to a great snake sacrifice performed by him, but one supposes that this relates to his war with the Nagas, probably of Taxila, whom he defeated. Dr H.C. Ray Chaudhari also opines likewise: "The conquest of Taxila", he says, "by the Kuru king may be an historical fact, because king Janamejaya is represented as a great conqueror in the Brahmanas."¹

Janamejaya kept his seat at Asandivat and performed great *yajnas* here.² The *Shatapatha Brahmana* gives interesting glimpses of the life at Asandivat.³ Since his kingdom had extended too far in the north-western direction, we are informed by the *Mahabharata*, that he also held his court sometime at Taxila and it is believed that it was here at Taxila that Vaishampayana related the story of the Bharata War to the king.⁴

Janamejaya, it is surmised, had ruled for a long time—about eighty years. After his death, it seems, the Kurus began to experience a fall in their fortunes. They were divided into three lines—one of them held sway in Hastinapur, the other at Khandava and the third at Asandivat,⁵ i.e., Kurukshetra.

As a result of this division, and other such factors, the Kurukshetra region began to lose its importance. Unfortunately, many calamities also fell on the Kurus at this time. The *Chhandogya upanishad* makes a reference to the Kurus being visited by 'bad luck and disaster' and their troops destroyed by locusts.⁶ The *Shrauta Sutra* goes still further and tells an interesting story as to how the Kurus earned the curse of a great Brahmana and had to, therefore, leave this region.⁷

The expulsion of the Kurus brought in many tribes into this region. "Among them", says Dr Buddha Prakash "the Abhiras, modern Ahirs, were prominent. As I have suggested elsewhere, the Abhiras were probably the same people who are called Ibhri

1. H.C. Ray Chaudhari, p. 37.

2. *Shatapatha Brahmana*, tr. Eggeling, V, p. 396.

3. *Ibid.*

4. *Mahabharata*, XVIII, 5,34.

5. H.C. Ray Chaudhari calls it Oshukara (Hissar), but it should be Asandivat (p. 46).

6. *Chh.* 1, 10, 1.

7. *Shr.*, 10,3.

or Apiru in Hebrew, Canaanite and Egyptian texts. They were soldiers, raiders and rebels of miscellaneous origins.¹ A section of them seems to have migrated eastward and formed the pastoral tribe called Abirai living near Azerbaijan. Later, some of them moved in the Herat—Kandhar region where the tract named Abri-van is reminiscent of their settlement. From there, they reached the Indus and thence marched through the Panjab into the Sarasvati region. According to a tradition, this pure river dried up to avoid their foul touch. That they spread terror in this region in the aftermath of the debacle of the Kurus in manifest from the story of their having abducted the Yadava woman whom Arjuna was escorting from Saurashtra after the fratricidal annihilation of the Yadavas.² The fact that they could foil the prowess and strategy of even the invincible Arjuna shows their great energy, strength and cohesion.²

Like Ahirs, another tribe of Jats also settled in Kurukshetra at that time.

They are the same as the Jatloi who, according to Ptolemy, lived with the Takharoi in the northern part of the valley of the Jaxartes around Tashkent. They moved into the Panjab and occupied Shakala (Sialkot), the capital of the Madaras. The *Mahabharata* calls them Jartas, Jaretikas and denounces their outlandish character. They spread over considerable parts of North India and became part and parcel of the people of Haryana.³

In their wake or along with them other Asian people descended this region. Among them :

The Iranian Yautiya, who came to be known as Yaudheyas and whose modern descendants the Dahiyas and Dehas, constitute important Jat gotras, and the Afghan tribes called Rohas, whose modern remnants the Rohils, also form part of the Jats, as well as the Prarjunas or the Arjunayanas now represented by the Jat gotra of Juna, may be particularly mentioned. The meeting and mixing of all these tribes of varied origins and

1. *Political and Social Movements in Ancient Panjab*, p. 132.

2. *Brahma Purana*, Ch. 212, pp. 810; *Mahabharata*, XVI. 8, 17-18.

3. See Buddha Prakash, *Haryana Through the Ages*, pp. 11-12.

complexes gave the people of Kurukshetra a singular breadth and energy which made them sturdy agriculturists and cattle-breeders and strong fighters and conquerors. The genesis of the rural and agrarian orientation of the people of this region can be traced to that period.¹

These people developed a great love for self-rule and managed their affairs through oligarchical rather than monarchical government. The Buddhist sources refer to them as *Kuru Sangha*.

This sort of arrangement lasted for several centuries. The Greek historian Arrian bespeaks of its existence in his time (about 3rd century B.C.) in the following words :

It was reported that the country beyond the Hyphasis (Beas) was exceedingly fertile and that the inhabitants were good agriculturists, brave in war, and living under an excellent system of government; for the multitude was governed by the aristocracy who exercised their authority with justice and moderation. It was also reported that the people there had a greater number of elephants than the other Indians and that those were of superior size and courage.²

Many foreign invaders feared these war-like people. It is popularly believed that the military proficiency and particularly the vigour of the elephants crops of these people 'deterred the veterans of Alexander's army from risking a plunge into their country (326 B.C.).'³

After Alexander's retreat, we witness the rise of the imperial Maurayas. Chandragupta, the founder of this house (319 B.C.) occupied the Kurukshetra region. In the absence of any direct evidence, it is difficult to say what sort of administrative arrangements were made here by Chandragupta, but this much can be said with certainty that he held this region in great esteem and did all that he could to improve its position. The following account coming from Megasthenese, the Greek ambassador at his court, confirms this view : "This region on the banks of Sarasvati which is called Kurukshetra is beautiful and peaceful. Art, literature

1. *Ibid*, p. 12,
2. J.W.M. Crindle, *Invasion of India by Alexandra the Great*, p. 121.
3. Buddha Prakash, *Haryana Through the Ages*, p. 14,

are flourishing here under the state patronage."¹

Even Ashoka who had embraced Buddhism added to the greatness of Kurukshetra by a Stupa (at Thanesar) and by placing therein the sacred remains of the Buddha. This shows that at this time, apart from being a great *tirtha* of the Hindus, the place became a centre of the Buddhists sacred activities.²

After the fall of the Maurayas, when the foreign peoples like the Bactrians, Greeks, Parthians, Scythians, etc. spread confusion in North India, the Kurukshetra region also suffered, although there is no evidence that any of these invaders caused any damage to the holy place. In any case, however, there must have been some chaos and confusion all around and the people of Kurukshetra might have been disturbed. But this state of affairs remained only for a short while and after sometime, the people emerged with renewed vigour as a free people.³

Soon after, however, another powerful invader Kushana came, who, defeating the Yaudheyas, established their sway over this reign. This sway lasted for about thirty years, but after the death of their great king Huviska, the people regained their freedom.

In the last quarter of the 4th century A.D., Samudragupta occupied Kurukshetra. The Gupta king and his successors, it seems, made all possible efforts to add to the prestige and glory of the great *tirtha*. Kalidasa, the court poet of Vikramaditya confirms this point when he showers praise on Kurukshetra.⁴

After the fall of the Guptas, Kurukshetra shared the chaotic conditions which prevailed in North India for some time. But this did not, in any way, cause any damage to the cultural glory and honour of the *tirtha*, though it might have reduced the material prosperity of its people to some extent. But fortunately this situation did not last long; there arose at Thanesar a powerful dynasty of Pushabhutis who brought great benefits to the holy region.

1. Strabo, XX, C. 11 F.
2. The Stupa is not traceable now.
3. Buddha Prakash, p. 14.
4. See, for instance, the verses from his *Meghaduta*, *Purvamegha* put in praise of Kurukshetra.

THE HEY-DAY OF PUSHABHUTI GLORY

The rise of the Pushabhutis of Thanesar is a very important event in the history of Kurukshetra. This dynasty had a series of illustrious monarchs who added great glory to Kurukshetra. The founder of this dynasty of Thanesar was a Shavite political leader of this place. His name was Pushabhuti. He was a great warrior, an able administrator and a good ruler. Bana, the court poet of Harsha says that he was 'like Indra Incarnate', 'a bow supporting all varna', 'Meru-like in attribute of a golden nature', 'mandar-like in attracting the glory of Lakshmi', 'ocean-like in observing proper bounds', 'ether-like in the noising abroad of his fame or manifesting sound', 'moon-like in his receptivity for arts', 'Veda-like in truthful speech', 'earth-like in supporting all mankind', 'wind-like in sweeping away the bad passions of all kinds', 'a Guru in speech', 'a Prithu in breast', 'a Visala in intellect', a Janka in asceticism', 'a Sujatra in splendour', 'a Sumantra in secret council', 'a Buddha in station', 'an Arjuna in brilliance', 'a Bhisma with a bow', 'a Nisadha in frame', 'a Shatrughna in battle', 'a Shura in vanquishing the armies of heroes'.¹ This description is no doubt much exaggerated, but one may safely conclude from it that Pushabhuti was indeed a great man.

It is suggested by historians that Pushabhuti probably started his career as a feudatory of the Gupta kings, and after the fall of the Guptas, made himself an independent king. It is difficult to date this king. But we can hazard a guess on the basis of epigraphic

1, Bana, *Harshacharita* Eng. tr. Cowel-Thomas, p. 84.

evidence. We find that three generations had ruled over the kingdom of Kurukshetra from the time of Naravardhana to Prabhakara Vardhana. If we allot the approximate period of nearly twenty years to each ruler as is usually done in ancient India, we come to the following chronology of the Pushabhutis:

1. Naravardhana (c. 505 to 526 A.D.)
2. Rajyavardhana I (c. 526 to 545 A.D.)
3. Adityavardhana (c. 545 to 565 A.D.)
4. Prabhakarvardhana (c. 565 to 605 A.D.)
5. Rajyavardhana II (c. 605 to 606 A.D.)
6. Harshavardhana (c. 606 to 647 A.D.)

Between Pushabhuti, the founder and Naravardhana (c 505—526) there is a gap of about forty to fifty years, and we can say that two or three rulers would have ruled in the intervening period. Thus Pushabhuti comes to rule from about A.D. 455 to A.D. 475.¹

It appears reasonable to conclude that:

Pushabhuti, taking an advantage of the political instability that the invasion by the Pushyamitra and the Hunas against the ageing sovereign Kumaragupta I, established his own small kingdom. But we have seen that Skandagupta, indomitable personality soon crushed these enemies and re-established the law and order in the empire and thus granted a further lease of life to his dynasty. Therefore, Pushabhuti and his two or three immediate successors could neither make any further attempts to become independent, nor could they extend their territorial limits. And probably for their insignificant roles they do not find mention either in literary traditions or in family records.²

1. This is based on *Harshacharita* and the Sonepat Seal of Harsha. Compare it with B.N. Sharma's statement: "If we examine the question further, we do not find any possibility of taking back the reign of Pushabhuti still beyond the year 455 A.D. Any such possibility of taking back the emergence of Pushabhuti beyond this date can be ruled out on simple ground that any such attempt of carving out any political entity in the life time of Kumaragupta I, or during the reign of his immediate predecessors Chandragupta II, and Samudragupta was not possible" (*Harsha and His Time*, pp. 83-9).
2. *Ibid.*, p. 89.

But thereafter, the kings of this dynasty appear in the records. The Sonepat seal mentions Narvardhana (c. 505-526) who was probably the first to bring his family into prominence. Narvardhana is called 'Maharaja'. This shows that he certainly enjoyed a superior political position. It is difficult to know, however, what the exact extent of his kingdom was. He probably ruled over an area a few miles around Thanesar, his capital.¹

Narvardhana was succeeded by his son Rajyavardhana I (c. 526-545) born by his queen Vajrinidevi. He is said to be a 'most devout worshipper of the Sun.' He entered into a matrimonial alliance with the later Guptas. This shows that he further added to the political power of his *raj*.²

Rajyavardhana was succeeded by his son Adityavardhana (c. 545-565), by his queen Apsara Devi. This king married Mahasenagupta Devi, sister of Mahasenagupta, the ruler of the later Gupta dynasty. Dr R.C. Majumdar thinks that this alliance marked a definite step in his rise to power and importance.³

Adityavardhana was succeeded by his son Prabhakaravardhana (c. 565-605), born by his queen Mahasenagupta. He assumed the title of *Maharajadhiraja*.⁴ Buhler observes that "he must have been an independent sovereign and a man of some consequence." He in fact owed his prosperity to his valour, for we are told by an inscriptional account that his 'fame passed beyond four oceans (*Chatussamudra tikkrantakirtih*)'.⁵ He was 'a lion to Huna deer, a burning fever to the king of Sindhu, a troubler of the sleep of Gurjaras, a bilious plague to that scent-elephant, the lord of Gandhara, a looter to or destroyer of the lawlessness of latas, and an axe to creeper of Malva's Lakshmi, i.e., fortune or sovereignty.'⁶

Prabhakar's encounter with the Hunas was indeed a great affair. His son Rajyavardhana had done this job for him, however. By this conquest and others, Prabhakaravardhana must have certainly

1. Bana is silent on this point. Nor do we have any other reference to it anywhere else.

2. Some scholars treat him as a feudatory of the Guptas, but there is no evidence to support it.

3. R.C. Majumdar, *The Classical Age*, p. 97.

4. See *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. I, pp. 72-73.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 69.

6. Bana, p. 101.

'raised himself to considerable eminence', and won much political glory in North Indian politics.¹

His other victories, as mentioned previously, must have added still further to his power and prestige. We believe, therefore, the statement of Vincent Adam Smith that these wars were 'successful' and it was by them that Prabhakaravardhana enhanced his status and prestige considerably.² C.V. Vaidya also supports Smith and says that he was 'undoubtedly the premier king of Northern India' who 'defeated and humbled' the powers as referred to in the *Harsacharita*. About A.D. 605, he was 'by far the most powerful king in Hindustan' and he was well justified in assuming the titles of *Maharajadhiraja*, *Paramabhattacharaka*, and *Pratapasila*.³

Prabhakaravardhana died in the year A.D. 605 and was succeeded by his son Rajyavardhana. But Rajyavardhana's reign was very short—he was killed by Shashanka, the cruel ruler of Gauda, at Kanauj where he had gone to help his sister Rajyashri's husband, in A.D. 606. Since Rajyavardhana had died childless, his brother Harshavardhana succeeded him.

Harsha was the second son of Prabhakaravardhana. He was born at Thanesar 'in the month of *jyestha*, on the 12th day of the dark fortnight, the pleiads being in his ascendant, just after the twilight time when the young night began to climb'.⁴ This date corresponds to Sunday, the 4th June A.D. 590 (about 10 p.m. in the night).⁵

Harsha's early life was remarkable. With his elder brother, Rajyavardhana and sister Rajyashri he had very nice time. His father made arrangements for the best type of education for all his children. Harsha was the most outstanding of all. Besides learning Sanskrit and other arts and sciences, he also mastered politics, military science and other such subjects. He became adept in horse riding, swordfighting and archery.⁶

Harsha ascended the throne of Shrikantha Janapada in A.D.

1. See Pannikar, *Shri Harsha of Kanauj*, pp. 9-10.

2. *Early History of India*, p. 349.

3. *History of the Medieval Hindu India*, Vol. I, p. 1.

4. Bana, p. 109.

5. Vaidya, Vol. I, p. 43.

6. Bana, p. 118.

606 at the age of sixteen. He was a restless soul even then. On assuming the crown, Harsha decided to avenge his brother's death and punish the king of Gauda. He, therefore, entered into an alliance with Bhaskaravarman, king of Kamarupa (in modern Assam), and Madhavagpta of Malwa and Magadha. With their help, he punished Shashank, the king of Gauda.¹

[Later on Harsha planned to conquer the whole of India. He wanted to revive the days of the old Gupta empire. Within a period of six years, he brought the whole of North India under his sway, including Nepal and perhaps Kashmir. With the defeat of the king of Vallabhi, he became the overlord of Anandapura, Cutch, Saurashtra and Western Malwa.]

His almost completely victorious career suffered from one defeat. This was at the hands of Pulakeshin II, the powerful ruler of the Chalukya dynasty in the South. Pulakeshin was the lord of the south, just as Harsha was of the north. Harsha could not, however, endure the existence of a rival and therefore marched against the Chalukya kingdom. But the Chalukyas defended the passes on the Narbada so well that Harsha had to retire unsuccessfully (620 A.D.). Thereafter, the two kingdoms co-existed peacefully.²

Harsha was in any case a 'king of kings', an emperor of the vast territories of North India, stretching from Kashmir to Narbada and from Sind to Assam. He had two capitals, Thanesar and Kanauj, the latter being more favoured. Harsha's rule was not a terribly strict one. Most of the former kingdoms were left to their rulers, who were merely feudatory vassals of the emperor. They were, however, scared of the might of Harsha and would not dare to raise a finger against him. Harsha himself toured in his territories, and took care to see that people were properly treated by his officers. Anyone could approach him for justice.³

The empire was not for him a series of conquests but a mission which he would carry out to the best of his ability. It was no wonder, therefore, that peace and order prevailed everywhere. Crime was not known and the country passed through a period of happiness and prosperity. Harsha indeed deserves a

1. For Harsha's conquests see B.N. Sharma, pp. 163-94.

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid.*

high place along with the great Ashoka, Chandragupta and Samudragupta as a great ruler of ancient India.¹

Harsha was a Hindu and a devotee of Shiva. But he was at the same time an admirer of Buddhism too. His was a catholic mind and he gave equal respect to the learned men of both religions. He fed daily 500 Brahmanas along with 1,000 Buddhist monks. He prohibited the killing of animals throughout his empire. He also built a number of monasteries and rest-houses for itinerant religious people.²

Scholars from different countries visited Harsha's court. He received a religious delegation from China. It was during his time that the celebrated Chinese traveller Hiuen Tsang, a great Master of law visited India. The learned visitor who was a personal guest of Harsha, has left his eye-witness account of the peace, progress and prosperity in the empire of Harsha. On his authority we know that Harsha held every five years an assembly of people. One such was held in A.D. 643 at Prayag. It was attended by twenty kings, besides thousands of Buddhists, Jains and Brahmanas. By a rough estimate the assembly was attended by five lakhs of people. At the end of it, Harsha distributed to the assembly the wealth he had collected over the previous five years.³

Harsha was himself a scholar and although he was so busy with conquests and administration, he found time to write dramas like *Nagananda*, *Ratnavali* and *Priyadarshika*. The great writers of the day received his patronage—they were Bana, Mayura, Haradatta and Jayasena. Of these writers, Bana wrote *Harshacharita*, a biography of Harsha.⁴

To sum up, Harsha was one of the greatest emperors of antiquity. Like Ashoka, he was tolerant towards all religions. Like Chandragupta, he was a great emperor; like Samudragupta a great man of letters and a patron of learning. He died in A.D. 647.

Life in Harsha's days was very comfortable and pleasant at Kurukshetra. Bana gives a vivid and lively description of the contemporary life here. After showering all praise on the Janapada,

1. *Ibid.*, pp. 238-74.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 398-431.

3. See *Hiuen Tsang's Travels*, edited by Waters.

4. See B.N. Sharma, pp. 291-317.

the poet-historian says about Thanesar that it was 'blessed like the world's first youth, with sweet fragrance of lovely flowers in diverse pleasancess, bedecked like the road to Dharma's gynaceum with many myriads of buffalos stained from rolling in saffron, whitened at its borders like a part of the celestial realm with yak-rail flappers shaken by the winds, blazing to all the ends of heaven, like the encampment of Krita age, with thousands of flaming sacrificial fires; alloying all inauspicious signs like the Brahma, world's first descent by the meditation of Brahmarishis seated in the posture of thought, thronged like a rival to the North Kurus with hundered of great rivers uproarious with tumult surpassing Tripura as it were in having all its people unacquainted with the devastating might of Shiva's arrow, bright like the replica of the moon world, with rows of white houses plastered with stucco, like a claimant to the name of Kubera's city, oppressing the world with clanking ornaments of wine flushed beauties'.¹

Going a little further Bana gives a graphic description of the different people's estimate of Thanesar. He says: 'Sages entitled it a hermitage, courtesans a lover's retreat, actors a concert hall, foes the city of death, seekers of wealth, the land of philosopher's stone, sons of the sword, the soil of heroes, aspirants to knowledge, the preceptor's home, singers, the gandharva's city, scientists, the great artificers' temple, merchants, the land of profit, bards, the gaming house, good men, the gathering of the virtues, refugees, the cage of adamant, libertines the rogue's meet, way fares the reward of their good deeds, treasure seekers the mine, quietists, the Buddhists monastery, lovers, the apsara's city, troubadours, the festival congress, Brahmanas the stream of wealth.'²

Talking about the women folk of Thanesar, Bana puts it thus: "There are women like elephants in gait, yet noble minded; virgins, yet attached to worldly pomp, dark, yet possessed of rubies, their faces are brilliant with white teeth, yet is their breath perfumed with the fragrance of wine, their bodies are like crystal, yet their limbs are soft as acaua flowers; they are unattainable by paramours, yet robed in bodies, wide are their beautiful hips, yet are possessed of thin waists, lovely are they, yet honeyed in speech; they trip not, yet have a bright and captivating beauty; they are without

1. Bana, 81 ff.
2. *Ibid.*

curiosity, yet wedded. Their eyes are a natural mundamala wreath, the garlands of lotus leaves are here a mere burden. The images of their curb in the convex of their cheeks are carpendants that give no trouble;The talk of their dear ones forms happy, ear-ornaments; rings and the like are but affection. Their cheeks also give perpetual sun-shine; for pomp only have they jewelled lamps by night. Tribes of bees attracted by their breath are their beautiful veils, the duty of noble women, their hair nets. Their voices are above their sweet flutes, harp-playing is but an irrelevant accomplishment. Laughs are their exceedingly fragrant perfumes needless is the camphor power. The gleam of their lips is a more brilliant cosmetic, saffron unguent is a worthless blot upon their loveliness. Their arms are the softest of playfully smiting wands, purposeless are lotus, stalks. Drops of the sweat of youthful warmth are their artful warmth as their artful bosom ornaments, necklace but a burden. Their laps are broad squares of crystal slabs for their lovers; jewelled couches in their mansions a needless mean of repose. Bees clinging in greed for such lotuses are their resonant foot ornaments, useless are anklets; domestic Kalabamsas, summoned by the tinkle of their anklets are the unfailing companions of their walks; attendants are but the accidents.'¹

To conclude, the Kurukshetra region was verily a heaven on earth. The people here were rich and happy. Education and learning were being promoted. Thanesar was a great centre of activity. These were indeed the hey-days of the Pushabhuti glory.

But, unfortunately, after Harsha's death (A.D. 647), since he had no successors, there arose a civil war among his chiefs and nobles, and this represented the last nail in the coffin of the great empire.

1. *Ibid.*

THE TOMARA RULE

After the death of Harsha, Kurukshetra seem to have suffered an eclipse. Its days of glory were gone. But this is not to suggest that it had ceased to command respect in the popular Hindu mind. They, in fact, kept on holding it in great esteem as a sacred place. The region lost its imperial glory. But that is all.

The absence of the strong government of the Pushpabhutis must have caused some chaos too. This must have been settled by some insignificant ruling dynasty, for we do not have any reference to this region for quite some time after Harsha's death. This condition seems to have continued for about a century or so.

The first reference to Kurukshetra after Harsha's death is of the time of Yashovarmana of Kanauj. His court poet Vakpati informs us that his king had gone to *Shrikantha Janapada* (Kurukshetra) during his *digvijaya*.¹ It is difficult to give an exact date of this happening, but historians surmise it to be sometime near A.D. 730. This account does not make mention of any ruler of the *Shrikantha Janapada* fighting with Yashovarmana. This shows that at that time the region was ruled by some small, weak king who did not come to contest.

The rule of the Kanauj king was short-lived, for we know from Kalhana's *Rajatarangini* that he was defeated by Lalitaditya

1. See his *Gaudavaho* for details.

THE TOMARA RULE

Muktapida of Kashmir in the year 733.¹ Kurukshetra thus passed under the sway of the Kashmirians. But the Kashmirians were not destined to rule over the *Dharmakshetra* for a long time. The Pratiharas ousted Muktapida from here. The leader of the Pratiharas was Nagabhatta I of Ujjain.

The Pratihara ruler, it is evident, could not have controlled the destinies of such a distant region like Kurukshetra from Ujjain. Therefore, he appointed a local chief for this purpose. He was Jaula of the Pehowa inscription. The word Raja which this gentleman has used for him in the inscription shows that after sometime he became independent of the Pratihara control and assumed sovereign power.²

Jaula established his headquarters at Anangpur on the banks of the Yamuna and laid the foundation of the Tomara rule in Haryana. He is also known as Anangpala I.³

Kurukshetra flourished under the Tomaras for fifty-eight years as follows :⁴

Anangpala I	=	736 to 754.
Vasudeva	=	754 to 773.
Gangadeva	=	773 to 794.

In the times of Gangadeva's successor, *Prithvimala* (794-814), the Tomaras suffered the loss of their sovereignty at the hands of Dharampala, the Pala king of Bengal (770-810). Dharampala, however, did not finish the Tomara rule; he kept it intact on the condition of accepting his overlordship, which the Tomara ruler did with great pleasure.⁵

Dharamapala's successor, Devapala (810-850) also kept his hold over this region, but after him there came the deluge. It is believed that the Tomara ruler Udairaj (849-875) made capital of this situation and became independent. His successor Aprichhadeva (875-897) was also an independent king. Some scholars believe

1. *Rajatarangini*, 4, 144-45.

2. For details see H.P. Dvivedi. *Dilli ke Tomara*, pp. 180-7.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 188-95.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 196.

5. *Ibid.*, pp. 196-9.

that after Pala's extinction, the Pratiharas made the Tomaras their feudatories, but latest researches have rejected such beliefs.¹

It was not in fact the Pratihara power but the Chauhanas of Sakambhari who wanted to capitalize on this situation. In the inscriptions of that age, we come across the latter's struggle with the Tomaras. But it seems these struggles did not bear any fruit and the Tomaras remained as sovereign rulers of Haryana.²

This situation remained up to the end of tenth century. But in the beginning of the succeeding century, a fierce invader from Ghazni caused immense problems for the Tomara kings. This fierce invader was Mahmud who launched his attack on Thanesar, the nerve centre of the Kurukshetra region in October 1014.

When his ally and feudatory Trilochanpal, son of Anandpal of Panjab, learnt the news of this attack, he offered to deliver fifty elephants if the Sultan spared Thanesar,³ which was held in great veneration by the Hindus for its idol named Chakraswamin.⁴ But the Sultan declined to alter his plans. Another Raja named Ram,⁵ ruler of Dera,⁶ also made some efforts in this direction. But when he failed, he advanced at the head of a large army to contest the passage of the river Sutlej, near the place where it reaches the plains.⁷ Ram took up a well fortified position along the bank of the river with his rear resting on a hill and his front protected by a line of elephants. The Sultan ordered two divisions of his army to cross the river at different fords and to carry out a simultaneous attack on the enemy's wings. Ram's men fought bravely and held their ground firmly. In the evening, however, when the Sultan launched an irresistible attack, Ram's army

1. *Ibid.*

2. *Ibid.*

3. Utbi, *Tarikh-i-Yalmini*, p. 264.

4. Chakraswamin means 'the Lord of the wheel'. It was believed to have been made in the time of Raja Bharat as a memorial of the wars connected with his name. See *Albiruni's India*, Vol. I, p. 117; and Gardizi, p. 70.

5. Gardizi, p. 71. Utbi gives an account of the battle but does not mention the name of the Raja. Ram is again mentioned by Gardizi, p. 104, when he is stated to have done homage to Sultan Masud.

6. Gardizi, p. 71. Dera may probably be identified with Dera Gopipur, District Kangra or with Deohra, capital of Jubbal Hati, Panjab.

7. Utbi, p. 265. But he does not mention the name of the river Sutlej. This is, however, the only river which fits in with the description of the battle.

gave way. The Sultan won the day but his loss on the field of battle was much heavier than that of the vanquished enemy.¹

The Sultan now continued his march to Thanesar. The Tomara Raja, Jaipala tried to form a confederacy of the kings of North India to fight the invader and he issued appeals to this effect to all the kings. But his appeal bore no fruit, and he had to fight the enemy single-handed on the banks of the Markanda, probably a little above Shahabad. The invader might have thought that on the general route at Shahabad the Tomara ruler might have made ample defensive preparations. Thus it was little above Shahabad that he crossed the river and fought with Jaipal.

In the fierce fight on the banks of the Markanda, Mahmud's army carried the day. Now the victors entered Jhanesar unopposed and plundered it. The idol of Chakraswamin was torn away from the place where it had received for ages the homage of countless multitudes, and was transported to Ghazni and cast into the public square, wholesale destruction of the city was effected and every house was looted.²

After Mahmud's return, the Tomara chief Jaipala must have shed many sad tears on seeing Thanesar--The *tirtharaja* Kurukshetra's heart lying in ruins. He must have also done something to revive it, if not to return it to its former glorious position. But since no account is present which could throw light on his renovating activities, we have to contend ourselves by only guessing in this respect.

Jaipala ruled over the Kurukshetra region up to 1021. He was succeeded by Kumarapala (1021-1051). The most important event of his reign is the attack of Masud, the son and successor of Mahmud Ghazni. Thanesar was once again the theatre of great devastating activity. The son repeated the story of his father.³

Kumarapala could not digest the insult and this was true of several other rulers of northern India. Therefore, in 1043, they formed a confederacy⁴ and attacked the Ghaznivites. This time,

1. Utbi, p. 265; Gardizi, p. 71.

2. Gardizi, p. 71; Al-biruni, Vol. I, p. 117; *Tarikh-i-Ferishta*, Vol. I, pp. 27-31.

3. Dvivedi, p. 232.

4. The Chauhanas, Paramaras and Kalachuris formed the confederacy.

the Indian onslaught was too powerful and the Ghaznavites tasted defeat. The Kurukshetra region, as also other territories adjoining it, became independent.¹

But unfortunately at this juncture the Tomara chief Kumarapala died in an action (1051).² But the banner of freedom was kept aloft by his successor Anangpala³ (1051-81). All activities, religious, cultural and also political proceeded in a normal fashion. But this peaceful era did not last long. It came to be disturbed after Anangpala's death in 1081. This time the disturber of the peace was not an invader from outside India. He was the ruler of Kashmir—Kalasa,⁴ who is well known for his conquests (*viyyas*).

Kalhana, the great Kashmir historian cryptically refers to his 'fringing the earth under his supremacy' (*vaiskrabhvo*), mentioning his successes against a number of chiefs around his kingdom. Bilhana, who was a contemporary of Kalasa, has also given some details of his conquests in his *Vikramankadevacharita*.⁵ He has mentioned his campaign in the valley of the Chenab and the Yamuna and stated that 'that conqueror of the whole earth, filling the earth with his fame resembling the Himalayas or Sesanaga (in its white glory) reached Kurukshetra where the earning of fame of the lord of the Kurus (Duryodhana) dropping from the ear (or from that of Karna, the third commander-in chief of his army) on account of the blows of arrows of Arjuna, sank in the mire of blood.'⁶ This campaign ensured his supremacy up to the bank of the Yamuna, for the poet says, "The mass of his army who had conquered all, quaffed of the Yamuna, which on account of its dark colour, looked the playfully dishevelled hair of the earth."⁷ Thus it is clear that Kalasa's campaign in Kurukshetra and his dash up to the Yamuna signified his invasion of Haryana being ruled by the Tomaras.

1. Divedi, p. 232.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 232-33.

3. He is called Anangpala II.

4. A.K. Majumdar in *Studies in the Cultural History of India*, pp. 217-18.

5. *Vik.* of Bilhana, XVIII, 67.

6. *Ibid.*, XVIII, 63.

7. *Ibid.*, XVII, 62.

At this very time, there was another blow on the Tomaras. They were attacked by the Chauhanas from the south. This double attack must have unhinged the Tomaras, compelling them to devise some other policy for survival. It appears that they tried to incite the Ghaznavites to withstand this pressure. Professor Dasaratha Sharma has suggested that from the eleventh century, the Tomaras had allied themselves to the Muslim rulers and he quotes the *Parsvanatha-charita* of Srivara to prove that Anangpala III helped the Hammiravira¹ or the Muslim ruler of the Yamini house.

That the Lohara rulers of Kashmir had to contend with the Mulims after Kalasa's aforesaid expedition into Haryana is manifest from the remark of Bilhana that his son Utkarsa and the younger brother of Harsha, having placed the earth as the forepart of his army, made it quite free from the imprints of the blows of the hoofs of the horses of *Mleccha* kings. But it appears that the Tomaras and the Ghaznavites succeeded in concerning the Lohara chiefs of Kashmir, particularly the circumstances of strife and dissension which overtook them soon afterwards.²

But meanwhile, the Chauhana became a formidable power under their great ruler Prithviraja III. Driving away all obstacles 'like chaf before the wind', they occupied the most part of Haryana and by 1880, Kurukshetra had become a part of the Chauhana kingdom. The Tomaras went into oblivion for all time to come.

1. *Rajasthan Bharati*, Parts 3-4, pp. 17-26.

2. *Journal of Haryana Studies*, Vol. II, p. 16.

9

THE SHADOW OF THE CRESCENT

The Chauhana ruler Prithviraja III was, all the while, busy enhancing and consolidating his empire. It is but natural that he did not find time to turn his attention to the revival of the ancient glory of the Kurukshetra. Nor did destiny seem to have been in any way kind towards the *tirtharaja*, for a fierce storm now came from the north-west and added to the miseries of Kurukshetra. Sahibuddin Muhammad, the ruler of Ghor, defeated Prithviraja III at the historic battlefield of Taraori in 1192 and occupied this region.¹

On Muhammad Ghuri's death in 1206, his slave Qutbuddin Aibak became the master of the holy region. This slave-noble proclaimed himself a king, got the *Khutba* read in his name and began to rule northern India from Lahore.² Soon, however, the royal headquarters were shifted to Delhi. Neither this king, nor any of his successors until Razia's time, seem to have taken any notice of Kurukshetra. The people on their part might have their best to rehabilitate the old glory of the holy land, but there are no positive evidences to give any detailed account of their activities. The reason for this may be that the activities of the people were under cover of secrecy, for the Muslim rulers and their officials might have not liked them. This, along with so many other politico-economic reasons, must have made the people unhappy

with the Muslim rule and they must have been always on the lookout to find some chance to end it.

The discontented people got a chance to play their part in the time of Razia (1236-40), when she was facing a revolt. The people of Kurukshetra killed her at Kaithal,¹ and they were independent of the Muslim sway. But, unfortunately, this situation did not last long and the Slave armies soon brought the people under their control. This situation lasted for several decades. The stronghold of the Khaljis and then of the Tughlaqs did not permit the people to bring about any change.

There is a very interesting story about the time of Firoz Tughlaq in the *Mirat-i-Sikandari*² which has some connection with two important personages of Kurukshetra. It runs thus: One day Sultan, while on his hunting expedition, was separated from his army. After the sunset, he went in search of a place to take rest. He hesitated on seeing some people sitting outside a village near Thanesar town. After getting down from the horse he sat among these people. He took out his socks from his feet in order to relax for some time. When he was taking off the socks, one man saw his later portion of foot. He was a wise man and said to his friends: "This man is a king, besides a king no one's foot can be like this." This person had a brother also. Their names were Sadhu and Saharan. Both the brothers were very impressed. They kissed the earth before the king and said: "To-day, you must pay a visit to our house." The king accepted their invitation and both the brothers remained in service of the king throughout night. The wife of Sadhu was very wise. She said: "Though this man is great, we should not believe without proper examination." Thus a get-together was organized in which wine was served. Sadhu's sister, who was exceptionally beautiful, offered a cup of wine to the Sultan. When about a third of his cup was empty, Sadhu's wife thought it appropriate to enquire about his lineage. She added that if he was really a big man she would give the hand of the sun-like beautiful girl (her sister-in-law) to him. The Sultan said: "My name is Firoz Khan."

1. For details see *Kurukshetra University Research Journal*, Vol. VI, No. 1, pp. 91-92.

2. On 24 July 1206,

1. Minhas, *Tabqat-i-Nasiri* (Rizvi's tr.), p. 37; also see *Tarikh-i-Ferishta*, Vol. I, p. 247.

2. Rizvi's tr., Vol. II, p. 251.

The hosts were overjoyed to find the Sultan at their house and they treated him very well and offered their sister to him. The Sultan accepted the girl as his wife. The brothers also entered the royal service and became Musalmans. Sadhu was put in the Sultan's personal attendance and was given the title of Wazir-ul-Mulk. The second brother Saharan was made the Governor of Gujarat.

Firoz died in 1388. There was a great struggle among his sons over the succession. The people of Haryana capitalized on the situation and freed themselves of the control of the Tughlaqs.

But soon came a blow from the blue. Timur (1336-1405), the ruler of Samarkand disturbed the peace of the holy region. He crossed the Indus river in September 1398, at the head of a big force comprising 92,000 cavalry and overran the 'Land of five Rivers'—the Punjab—in no time. He entered Rajasthan next, and destroyed many towns and villages in a territory corresponding to the modern Division of Bikaner. In November of the same year, he left this tract and moved on into Haryana along the valley of the Ghaggar and came into Kurukshetra.

He attacked Kaithal on 30 November, plundered the town and put its people to death. Having done that, he proceeded to Asandh and reached there in the evening. 'The dwellers of Asandh were fire-worshippers.' They got scared of the invader and took to flights. He also killed the people in the villages lying on his route and destroyed their houses. In December, Timur marched to Tughluqpur Fort, the occupants of which were known as 'Salon'. They offered him little resistance. After subduing these people, Timur went towards Panipat.¹ Timur did not visit Thanesar. From Kaithal he took a right turn and leaving Karnal to his left, he went to Panipat and then to Delhi.²

After Timur's retreat, the Sayyads proved too ineffective to do anything. During their rule, there was chaos and confusion. The people of Kurukshetra, it seems, once again asserted their

1. For details see *Journal of Haryana Studies*, Vol. VI, pp. 19-21.

2. It is difficult to believe Ferishta, Vol. I, p. 264 that the invader visited Thanesar and destroyed it.

independence and the holy region regained a bit of its former glory.¹

The new position, however, did not please the Sayyads' successors, the Lodis.² Sikandar Lodi, that bigoted Prince, proposed during his father's life-time to make a raid upon Thanesar for the purpose of putting to death all the pilgrims who had assembled to bathe at Kurukshetra. The story related in the *Tarikh-i-Daudi* is as follows:³ "Before his accession, when a crowd of Hindus had assembled in immense numbers at Kurukhet, he wished to go to Thanesar for the purpose of putting them all to death. One of his courtiers suggested to him that it would be better to consult the learned before doing this. Sultan Sikander caused the doctors to assemble, and questioned the chief of them, whose name was Mian Abdulla, of Ajodhan. This Maliku-i-Ulama asked the king what there was in that place (Thanesar). He replied: "There is a tank in which all the infidels are accustomed to bathe." The Maliku-i-Ulama said: "Since when have they been in the habit of doing so?" Nizam Khan replied that it was an ancient custom. Mian Abdulla asked what the Muhammadan sovereigns who had preceded him had been in the habit of doing. The Sultan answered that up to this time they had left the Hindus unmolested. The Maliku-i-Ulama then assured the king that it would be very improper for him to destroy an ancient idol temple, and that he ought not to forbid the accustomed rite of performing their ablutions in the tank. When this conversation had lasted a short time, the Sultan placed his hand on his dagger, and exclaimed: "You side with infidels. I will first put an end to you, and then massacre the infidels at Kurukhet." Mian Abdulla said: "Every one's life is in the hand of God—no one can die without His command: whoever enters the presence of a tyrant must beforehand prepare himself for death, let what may happen. When you asked me, I gave you an answer in conformity with the precepts of the Prophet; if you have no reverence

1. It is difficult to give any exact idea of this rebuilding. Perhaps some ghats and small temples came up in the place of the original magnificent structures.

2. They came to power in 1450.

3. Abdulla, *Tarikh-i-Daudi* (Elliot and Dowson), Vol. V, p. 439.

for them, what is the use of inquiring ?” Sultan Sikandar’s wrath was slightly appeased, and he said : “If you had permitted me to do this, many thousands of Musalmans would have been placed in easy circumstances by it.”

Thus by the grace of God and the good counsels of the learned, tolerant *Ulema* like Abdulla, Kurukshetra escaped the wrath of the fanatic Lodi rulers until their fall in 1526.

To conclude, the Kurukshetra region suffered unimaginable destruction during the early medieval period. Efforts were, however, made by the local populace for its restoration, but these had to be carried out innocuously and on a very humble scale. Nevertheless, the physical injury did not lessen its religio-cultural significance, which remained intact.

10

UNDER THE MUGHALS

The Mughal Emperor Babar occupied Kurukshetra and other adjoining regions in 1526. To begin with, the new ruler tightened his sway considerably. The people of Kurukshetra objected to this, for they had not held much regard for the Delhi Sultans. Consequently, they raised a standard of revolt against Babar under the leadership of a Madhar Rajput, Mohan Singh of Kaithal in 1530. Babar sent Ali Quli, the Governor of Sirhind at the head of a big army ‘to crush the rebels’. But he was crushed instead. Then Babar sent his two great generals Tarsem Beg and Naurang Beg. Mohan Singh and his men fought with great courage and showed unparalleled bravery, but they were overpowered. The Mughal army killed thousands of people and destroyed the countryside by fire and sword.¹

Soon after this, Babar died on 26 December. His son Humayun succeeded him. Humayun ruled over this region for about a decade until he was dethroned by Sher Shah Suri. Kurukshetra, along with the other regions passed under Sher Shah’s control. Sher Shah ruled over this region for a very short time—five years. But during this short period he established peace and introduced many reforms in this region. The G.T. Road built by Sher Shah from Rohtak to Peshawar passed through Thanesar town. Taking in view the importance of the town and the facilities for the passengers, he built two *Sarais* at Thanesar. One of the *Sarais* was built on the eastern bank of the *Sannihit tirtha*

1. For details see K.C. Yadav, *Haryana Ka Itihas*, p. 77.

south of Thanesar and another one was built to the north of the town. The *Sarai* in the south is now completely destroyed, but the one in the north still exists, though in a ruined form. In the midst of this *Sarai* were a *Masjid* and a well which were destroyed during the partition days in 1947. Besides this, the ruins of the bridge built by Sher Shah over a road is still present to the north of Thanesar.

Sher Shah's successors continued to rule over this region until 1556 when Humayun's son Akbar snatched it back from them. There are several references to Akbar's relations with this holy region. One of the year 1567 that is given by the author of the *Tabkat-i-Akbari* is very interesting. It goes thus :

"When the Emperor arrived at Thanesar, there was an assemblage of Jogis and Sanyasis on the banks of a lake called Kurukhet. This is a sacred place for the Brahmanas, and on occasion of eclipses the people of Hindustan flock thither from all parts to bathe. There was a great assemblage there on this occasion, and the people were bestowing their gifts of gold and silver, and jewels and stuffs, upon the Brahmanas. Many of them threw themselves into the water, and the Jogis and Sannyasis were gathering a rich harvest from their charity. In consequence of a feud which existed between these two sects, they came to the Emperor, seeking permission to settle it by fighting. The Sannyasis were between 200 and 300 in number, and the Jogis, who wear only rags, were over 500. When the adversaries stood ready to begin the fray, by the Emperor's order some soldiers smeared their persons with ashes, and went to support the Sannyasis, who were the weaker party. A fierce fight ensued, and many were killed. The Emperor greatly enjoyed the fight. At length the Jogis were defeated, and the Sannyasis were victors."¹

The happening is of earlier times when Akbar had not adopted a secular policy. Later on, we find him giving full reverence to all religious places.

ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS

Akbar was admittedly a ruler *par excellence*. He put the seal of his genius on every aspect of the things that he touched. In the

1. See *Tabkat-i-Akbari*, pp. 110-11.

field of administration of the kingdom of Hindustan which he inherited from his Predecessor, his impact is even more important. Kurukshetra also felt this impact in more ways than one.

This region was a part of Delhi *Subah* about whose geographical situation Abul Fazl, the court historian of Akbar, writes : "On the east of the Delhi *Subah* lies capital of Agra, on the north-east it marches with Khairabad in the Subah of Oudh, to the north are (Himalaya) mountains, on the south the *Subahas* of Agra and Ajmer, on the west is Ludhiana." Delhi was a very big Subah which consisted of three distinct cultural divisions : Rohilkhand, the upper Doab, and the Haryana tract. The Haryana division consisted of four *Sarkars* (moder districts), Delhi, Rewari, Hissar and Sirhind. Kurukshetra formed a part of the Sirhind *Sarkar*. This *Sarkar* contained 33 *Mahals* (Parganas) of which the two comprising Kurukshetra were Thanesar and Kaithal. The Rajputs, Rangars, Jats, Brahmanas and Afghans were Zamindars. The executive business of the parganas was conducted by *Shiqdars*. Besides, the *Shiqdars* were also responsible for the general administration of their parganas. Sometimes, they also acted as magistrates, but their powers were not extensive. Below him was an *Amil* who was entrusted the same duties in the pargana as the *Amalgazar* had in the *Sarkar*. *Fotahdar* was a treasurer of the pargana who performed almost the same duties as the *Khazandar* did in the *Sarkar*. *Qanungo* used to keep full information about the land revenue receipts, area, statistics of local revenue rates, practices and customs of the pargana. He had to supply all the information to *Amil* and on the basis of this land revenue rates were fixed. There were three grades of *Qanungos* at that time; the first got rupees fifty; the second, rupees thirty and the third, rupees twenty per month.

The village was the last unit of administration. The village panchayats managed the affairs of the village. *Muqaddams* used to collect the revenue assessed against the names of their village. They were remunerated with 2½ per cent of the total revenue collected by them. *Patwaris* were the village record keepers. The villages were generally autonomous and the government interfered very little in their lives.

For the matter of revenue administration, this region was

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regarded as one circle—Thanesar. The revenue rates in the spring and autumn seasons, of some important crops as given in the *Ain-i-Akbari*, are given below :

TABLE 1

REVENUE RATES FOR PRINCIPAL CROPS PER *Polaj Bigha* IN THE SPRING HARVEST IN THANESAR FROM THE YEAR A.D. 1581 ONWARD

<i>Crops</i>	<i>D.J.</i>
Wheat	59-05
Gram Hindi	31-22
Barley	31-22
Adas	11-23
Mustard seed	25-17
Peas	22-03

TABLE 2

REVENUE RATES FOR PRINCIPAL CROPS PER *Polaj Bigha* IN THE AUTUMN HARVEST IN THANESAR FROM THE YEAR A.D. 1581 ONWARD

<i>Crops</i>	<i>D.J.</i>
Sugarcane (Paunda)	240-12
Sugarcane (Common)	120-19
Mash	33-00
Cotton	105-02
Jawari	34-17

The region was quite affluent and even the masses had enough to eat. The religious position was also balanced and there was no feeling of ill-will shown towards the holy region throughout the Mughal period except for a short while during the reign of Aurangzeb (1658-1707) when the fanatic Emperor forbade people from visiting the holy tank at Kurukshetra.¹

One interesting feature of the Mughal-time history of Kurukshetra is that besides being the great place of pilgrimage for the Hindus, Kurukshetra also developed as a great place of veneration for the Sikhs and the Muslims. The Sikhs held it in high esteem because of its being visited by their *gurus*.

Guru Nanak (1469-1539) the founder of Sikhism, visited Kurukshetra in 1504 on the occasion of solar-eclipse. As the custom was, and still is, a large number of Hindus came from far and near to the holy tank at Kurukshetra to absolve themselves of all sins on that occasion. The Guru found here a great opportunity of giving his message to the people assembled there. But how to avail of the opportunity? This must have been a big problem confronted by the Guru. Hundreds of great, famous *sadhus* were there, who would listen to him (Guru Nanak), a new face to all the people. Here we are informed by the *Malhar* that the Guru adopted a novel technique for attracting the attention of the people. He asked Raja Jagat Rai of Hansi, his disciple to cook a deer at the Dharmakshetra. This was by all standards the greatest sacreligious act performed there. But the Guru silenced all his critics soon by delivering a most convincing discourse on the impropriety of superstitions in everyday life right from dress to diet, and travelling to taboos. He emphasised the importance of leading a life virtuous.²

What was the impact of the Guru's visit? It is difficult to assess the true impact, but a rough estimate is not beyond making. A Gurudwara called Sidh Bati was built by the people of Kuruk-

1. It is said that he camped his soldiers in the island at the holy tank of Kurukshetra. These soldiers arrested the persons who came to bathe in the tank. The camp place is called 'Mughal Pada' (Mughal Padao) now-a-days.
2. For details see *Janam Sakhi Bhai Mani Singh*, pp. 135-36; Gyan Singh, *Tarikhi-i-Guru Khalsa*, p. 174; *Adi Grantha, Malhar Var*.

shetra soon after the Guru left this place, which shows that some people were really inspired by him.¹

The next visit was by Guru Amar Das. He stayed here for many days and attracted large crowds to his *sangats* where he 'recited sweet songs in the language of the people in the praise of God and in condemnation of superstitions which had corrupted both religion and life.' This made the orthodoxy very angry with him and they condemned him as an illiterate man who had composed his *Banis* in the impure language of the people. To this, the Guru gave an interesting reply: 'The water from the well can irrigate only limited fields, but the rain water irrigates the entire land.' His *Banis* are not well-water meant for a limited number of people, i.e., Sanskrit-knowing Brahmanas, it is meant for the masses, the illiterate and low humanity.' This must have made a deep impact on many people who subsequently become his followers.²

The sixth Guru Har Gobind (1595-1644) and the seventh Guru Har Rai (1630-1661) also visited Kurukshetra and enjoined the people to follow the path shown by the great Guru Nanak. Unfortunately no details of their visits to Kurukshetra are available. The local tradition is, however, full of stories which cannot be given much credence. We find two Gurudwaras standing in commemoration of the visits of the Gurus.³

The ninth Guru, Teg Bahadur (1621-1675) also visited many places in Kurukshetra. In 1673(?) he came to Kaithal with his wife Mata Gajri. Here he delivered many learned discourses on various aspects of Sikhism, the most famous being the one he gave on 'the auspicious days that the Sikhs should celebrate'. This discourse has a significant place in the development of the Sikh religion, for hereafter we find Sikhs celebrating so many festivals different from those of the Hindus. The Guru's visit seems to have had a considerable impact on the people of Kaithal. The religion of Nanak which had attracted only three families so far, became a little more popular in the town. From Kaithal the Guru moved to Pehowa. He visited the three shrines built

there to commemorate the visits of his predecessors—Guru Nanak, Har Gobind and Har Rai. And then he preached the new faith. Thereafter he proceeded to Baina, a small village near Pehowa. From Baina, he moved to Kanakheda and made many disciples. From Kanakheda he came to Kurukshetra, where he began his day by visiting the Gurudwaras of Guru Nanak, Amar Das and Har Gobind. He stayed here for three days and gave discourses on 'Sahaj Yoga' in Sikhism. He gave free food to the poor and *dakshina* to the *Panlitas* who it seems had become his followers. Not only this, but he gave *Hukamnama* to the latter, on which was inscribed the sanction of the Guru to collect *dakshina* from the visitors.¹

The tradition tells us that the last Guru Gobind Singh (1665-1708) also visited Kurukshetra. There is a Gurudwara also—'Gurudwara Daswin Padshai' which commemorates this event. But unfortunately [no historical account has come down to us which can throw some light on the details of his visit.²

The foregoing account indicates that the Sikh Gurus visited several places in Kurukshetra. Many people were benefited by their learned discourses and they joined the new faith. Besides, Kurukshetra and more particularly, holy Thanesar, became an important religious place for Sikhs where so many of their Gurus had come.

Especially *Nirmala*, a sect of the Sikhs, made Kurukshetra its headquarters. They had, like ancient seers, constructed three *Ashramas* here. One *Ashrama* was of Bhai Gulab Singh at *Prachikul tirtha*. His Guru was Man Singh who belongs to *Nirmala* sect. Bhai Gulab Singh got a honorarium from the Maharaj of Nabha. Bhai Gulab Singh wrote many *granthas* at *Prichikul tirtha* on the bank of Sarasvati river. His first book was *Bhavarsamarta*, written in Vikrami Samvat 1834; the second was *Moksha Pantha*, written in Samvat 1835; the third was *Adhayatam Ramayana* written on the basis of the Sanskrit language; the fourth was *Karma Vipaka*. His last book was *Parbodha Chandrodaya Nataka* written in

1. *Ibid.*
2. The Gurudwara of the tenth Guru is on the Brahmasaravara.

1. The number must have been very small.
2. Santokh Singh, *Suraj Prakash, Raj, II, Ansu, 47.*
3. *Ibid.*

Samvat 1846. It is a translation of a Sanskrit drama :

रम वेद औ बसु चन्द्र, संमत लोक भरित ज्ञान,
नम माम भ्रिग पुन वामरे दसमी वदी पहिचान ।
गुरु मानमिह पदारविद अलम्बना उरुटान,
कुरुक्षेत्र प्राचीकूल तट यहि कीन ग्रंथ बखान ॥

Bhai Gulab Singh wrote one other book *Ramanamapratapa*. In this grantha he praised the qualities of Rama. Its prose specimen is as follows :

श्रीराम नाम में जो कृतक करते हैं सो नरक जाएंगे । श्रीराम नाम अमृत को धाम है । जौन पुरख निदा करते हैं सो महापापी हैं । सोई राखसस है, महानीच हैं ।

Bhai Gulab Singh was a great translator and original poet. Two specimens of his work in which one is based on the translation of a Sanskrit *shloka* and the second on *Adhyatam Ramayana*, are as follows :

प्रभवति मनसि विवेको विपुसामवि शास्त्र समवस्तावत् ।
निपतान्ति दृष्टि विशिखायावन्नेन्दीव राक्षीणाम् ॥

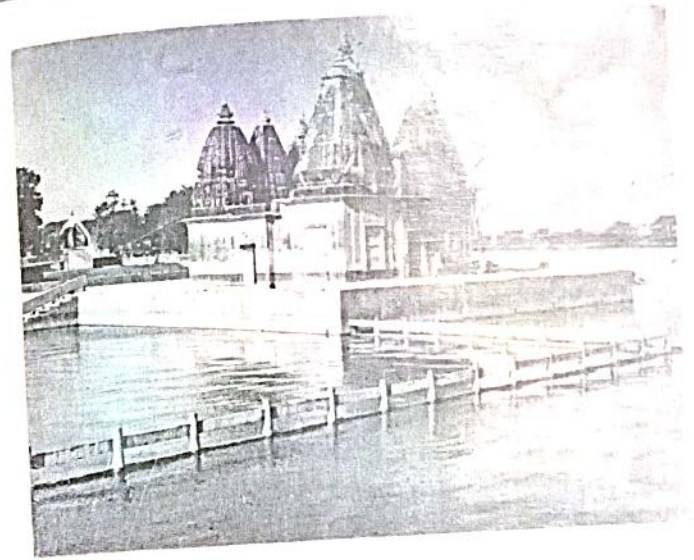
Its translation in Hindi is as under :

तबलों मन माही विवेक रहे सब प्राणन ते उपजिअइहां जोई ।
जबलों नहीं नील रोवर में ह्यनारी कटारण लगे सर कोई ।
त्रिपतीतत जब नबखण्ड मही घर नारी भजे कर जोर सुदोई ।
चतुरानललों जगमाही सिखे ह्यग नारी अजीत नहीं भट कोई ।

The second specimen of his poetry is :

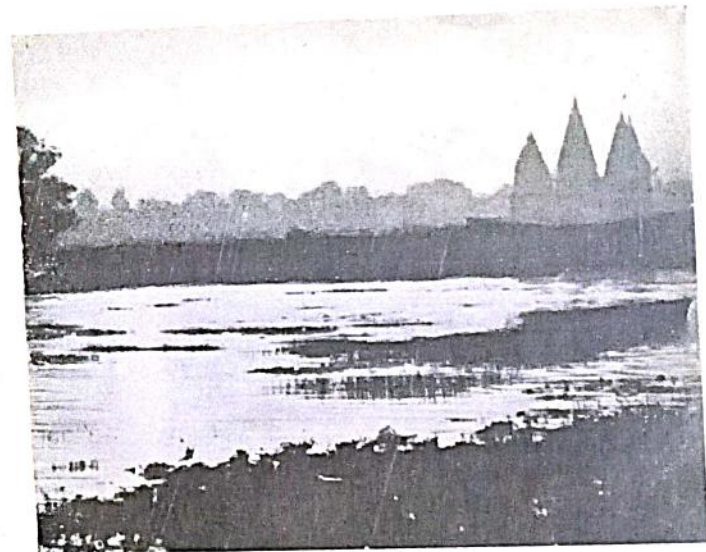
दूर रहो रघवीर खरे, भय ना वही नाही सुपादघुटावों ।
अग्ने चरण को नख लगाई, सु दीन दयाल न काज गवावे ।
राजकुमार परमार लभो पद, ती मम नावन कीटिंग आवो ।
पावन लाख पखान उठे मम नख पड़े कहते तुम आवो ।
इहं भात उपचार पखार दोऊ पद, नाव चडिई को पार उतारो ।
रघुनाथ महान भात भले मियिलापुर की ओर पुनः पधारो ॥

Bhai Santokh Singh was another learned man, an authority on the language and *Chhanda*. He wrote beautiful pieces in



1. Sacred Tank, Kurukshetra

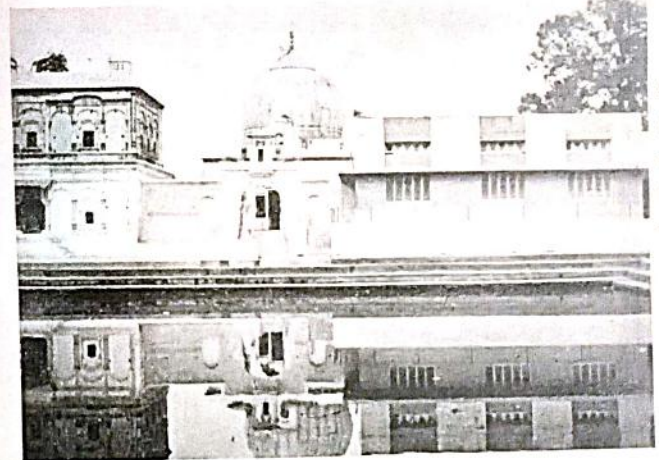
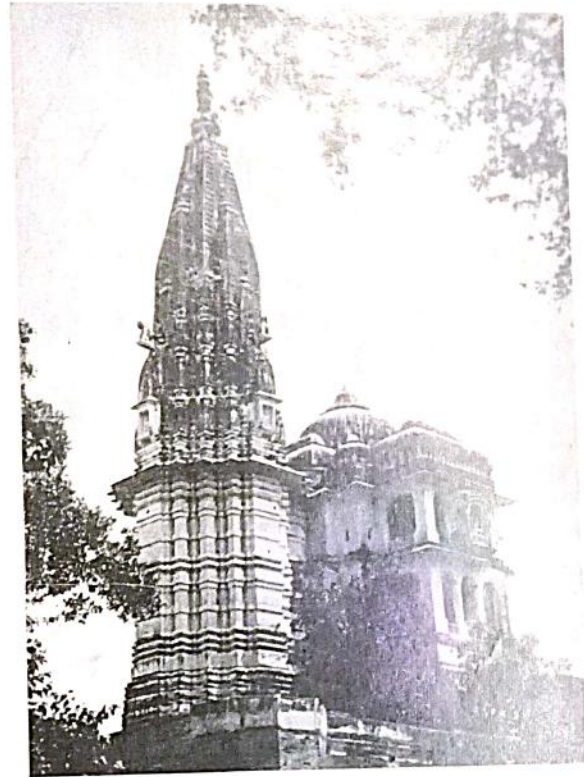
2. Solar Eclipse at Kurukshetra





3. Historic Shiva-Linga in the Sthaneshwara Mahadeva Temple, Thanesar

4.
Shri
Laxminarain
Temple
Thanesar



5.
Sthaneshwar
Mahadeva
Temple,
Thanesar



6. Saraveshwara Mahadeva Temple, Kurukshetra

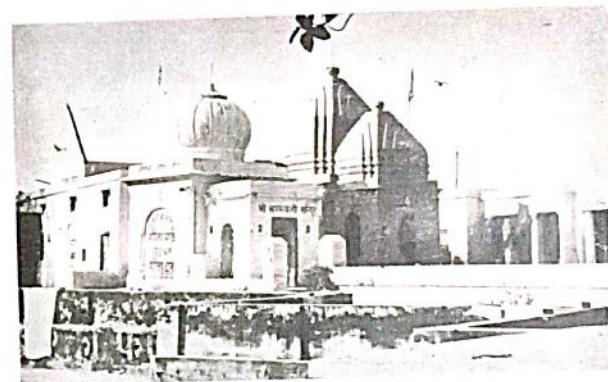


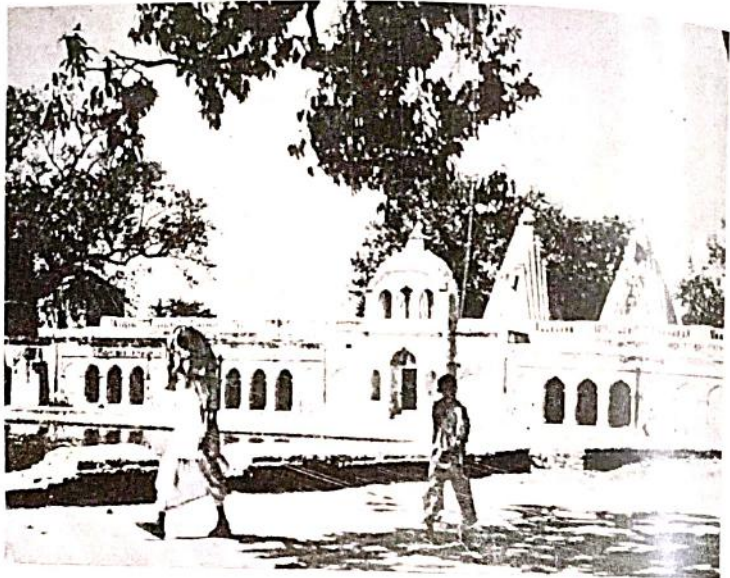
8. Gita Bhavana, Thanesar

7. Shri Bhagavadgita Temple, Thanesar



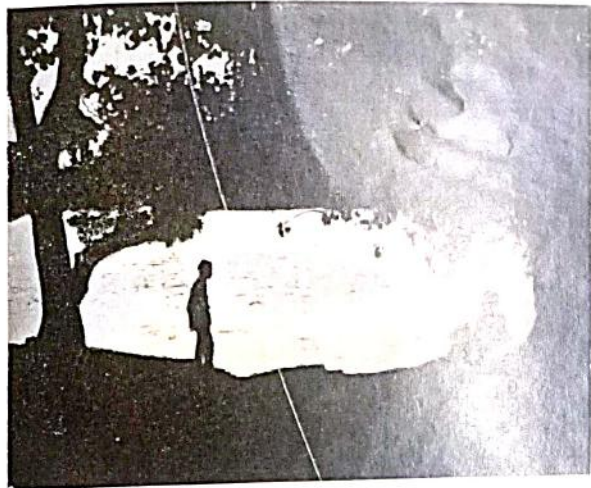
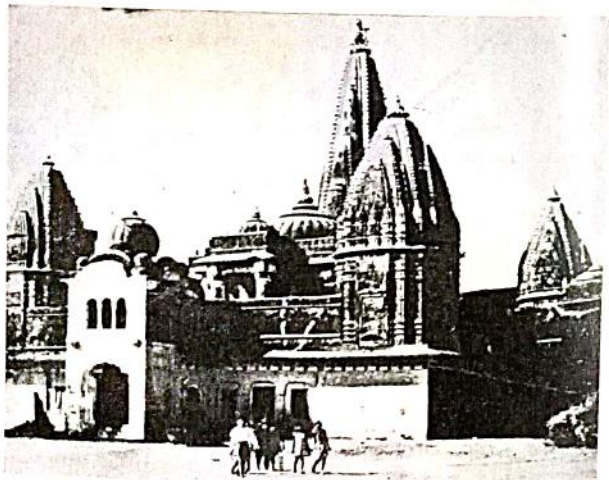
9. Jyotisara Tirtha





10. Holy Temple, Safidon

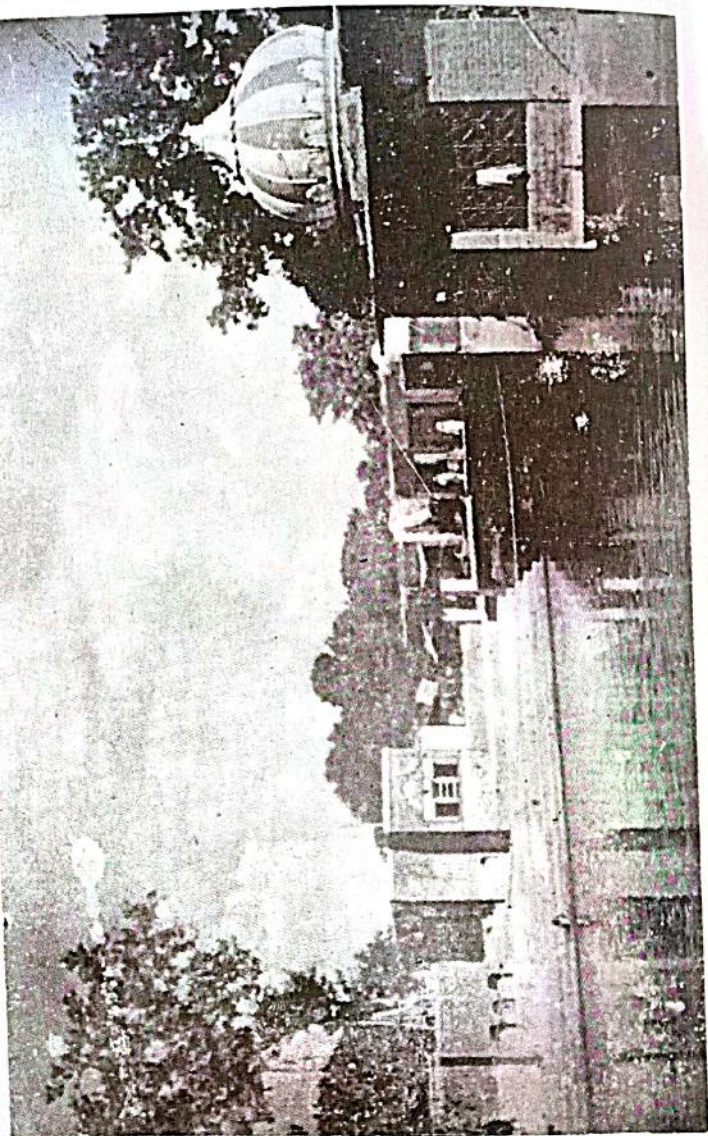
11. Shiva Temple, Pehowa



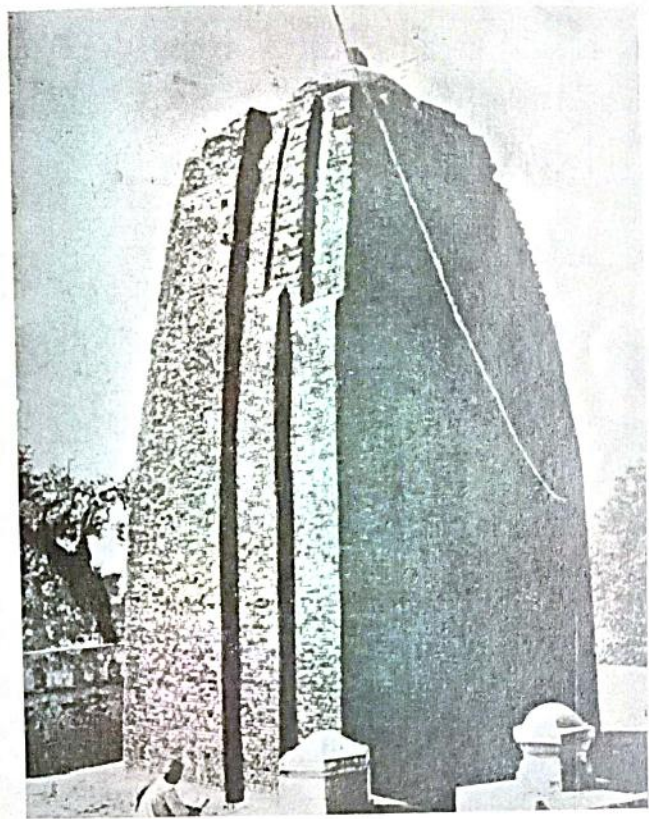
12. Banganga, Thanesar

13. Surya Kunda, Amin

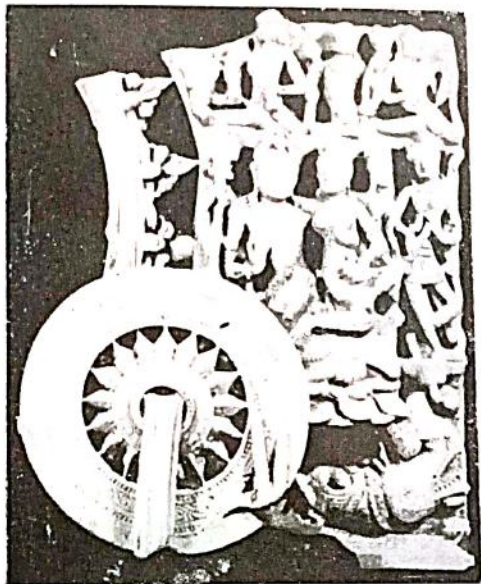




14. Sacred Tank, Pehowa



15. Old Brick Temple, Kolayat



16.
Shiva-Paravati Pratima
from Pehowa



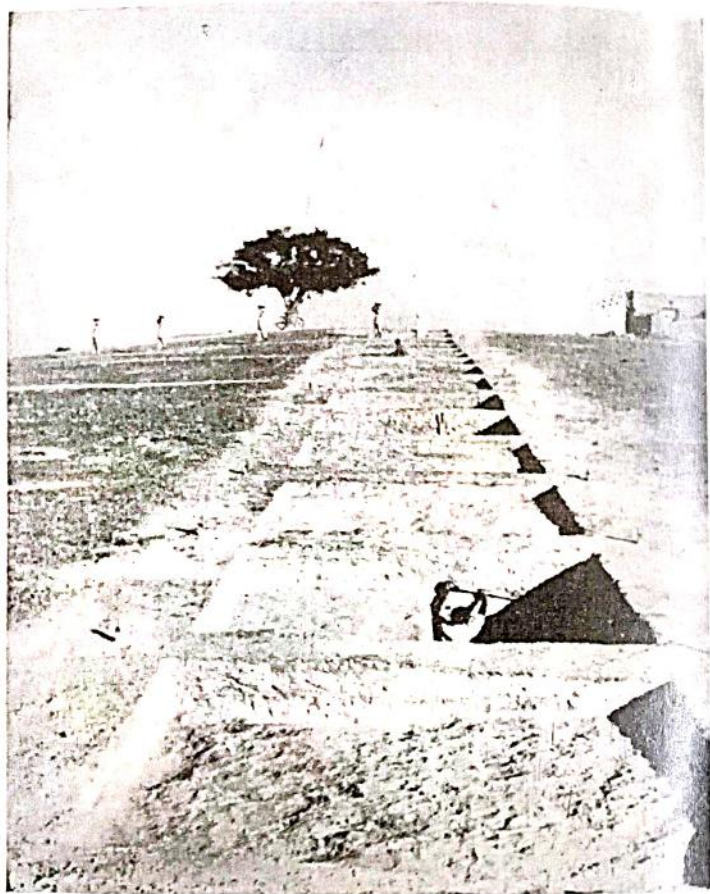
18. Sheshasayivishnu
from Kurukshetra

17. Janma-Ashtami Celebrations,
Haveli Shraanamath, Thanesar

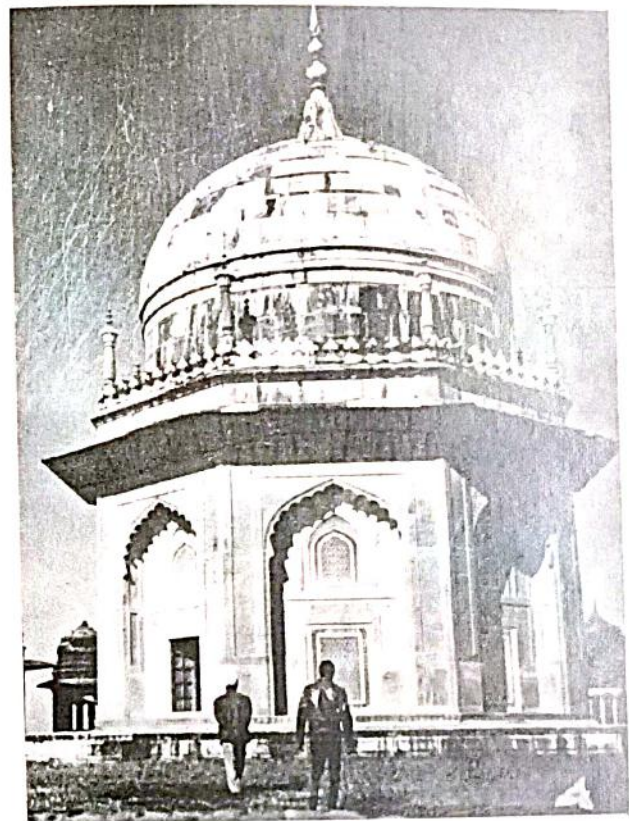


19. Brahma Pratima
from Pehowa





20. Archaeological Excavations of an old site, Daultpur

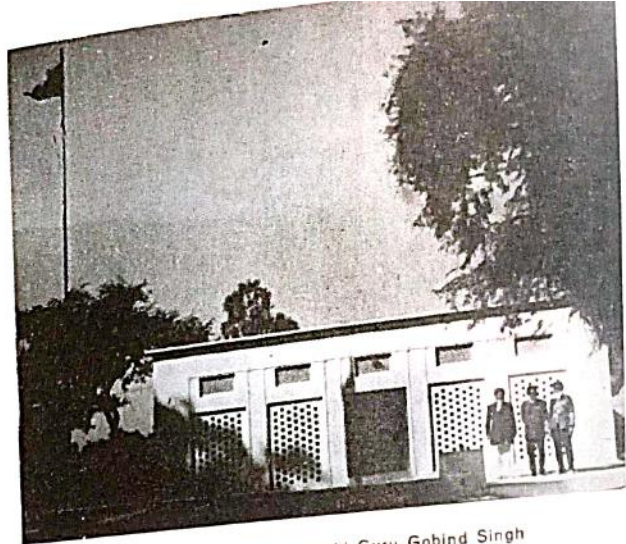
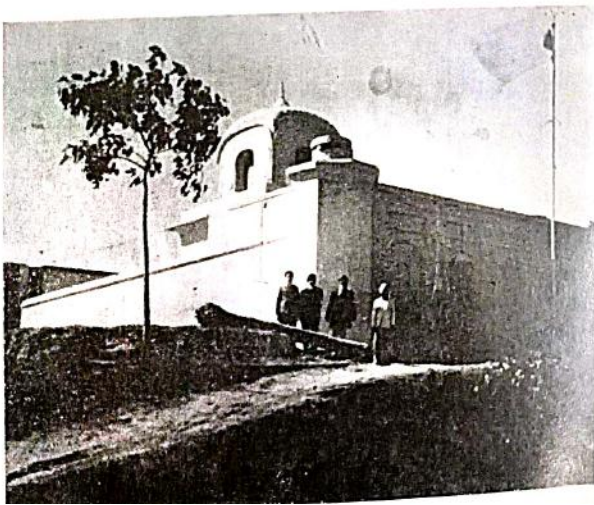


21. Tomb of Sufi Saint Sheikh Chehli, Thanesar



22. Sikh Architecture : The Samadh of Maharaja Wazir Singh of Faridkot, Thanesar

23. Gurdwara 1st Padshahi Guru Nanak Dev at Southern bank of Kurukshetra tank



24. Gurdwara 10th Padshahi Guru Gobind Singh at the North West corner of Kurukshetra Tank

25. Gurdwara 7th Padshahi Guru Har Rai at Thanesar City



praise of Guru Nanak Dev, Guru Gobind Singh, Rama and Krishna. He completed many works on the banks of the Sarasvati—i.e., *Namkosh* which was translation of *Amarkosha*; *Guru Nanak Prakash*, Samvat 1880; *Japuji*, 1886; *Garvagangini Tikka*; *Ramayana*, 1888 (but the later work was finished in Samvat 1890) and *Sri Guru Pratap Suraj* which contains the history of the life and works of ten Gurus. This work was started in Samvat 1892 but was completed in Samvat 1900. He was educated at Kashi. In his works, we find many Sanskrit, Braj, Persian and Panjabi words. He was an excellent translator. For example witness the translation of the *Bharathari Nitti Shatak Shlok*. The original Sanskrit *shlok* is as follows :

लभेत सिकतामु तैलमपि यत्नतः पीडयन्,
 विवेच्य मृगनृष्णिकामु सलिलं विषामादृतः ।
 कदाचिदपि पर्यटञ्छ शविषाण मासादयेन्न
 तु प्रति निविष्ट मूर्खंजन चित्तमाराधयेत् ॥

Its translation is as follows :

सिकता महें ते चतन कर तेल जु निकसारें ।
 कमठ पीठ पर ध्रान्त किट्ट, बडूवाल जमारें ॥
 मिस पर रासम ससे के उगवाय दिखाना ।
 तो दुष्टनि के हृदय में गुन करह महाना ।

In 1843 when Bhai Udai Singh Maharaj of Kaithal died, the British authorities took control and a reign of terror prevailed here. Bhai Santokh Singh describes this situation in the following couplet :

परी लूट कैथल बिसे, मिले चोर बटमार ।
 घ्राप घ्रापको भजि चले, तजि पुर सब इकवार ॥

Another specimen is from the *Ramayana* :

बाणी वाक सुवर्ण में विषाद वर्ण समचन्द ।
 वीन मंड मंडित करा बन्दी पद अरविन्द ॥
 पूजा अरविन्द की दीनिन्द की धरिन्द की ।
 परिन्दन के इन्द की मुक्या रामचन्द की ॥

26. Folk Dance, Kurukshetra

27. Kurukshetra University Library, Kurukshetra

पुनि श्रीष्म ऋतु कीनो जोरा ।
 तप्त भई अतिशय चहुँ घोरा ॥
 तपहि हृदय जिमि मत्सर धारी ।
 र्यों तप गई मूमिका सारी ॥
 मूषे जल कदम बिहरानी ।
 जस प्रेमी उर सखी सिखानी ॥
 सहत धरि बहु प्रमत वपुरे ।
 ज्यों गति प्रमत बिना गुरु पूरे ॥

The holy of the holies also became a great centre of the Sufi saints especially the ones belonging to the Chisti Silsila. Sheikh Chehli was the great saint who gave prominence to Kurukshetra (Thanesar) as a centre of Sufi activity. According to *Tajkarat-i-Aulia*, Hajrat Sheikh Chehli was an Irani saint, who came to India during the reign of Shah Jahan to meet Hajrat Kutub Jalaluddin at Thanesar. It is said that Hajrat Kutub Jalaluddin was a great saint of the Sufi sect. His popularity about *tapsaya* had crossed the borders of India.

Once, king Shah Jahan, while going from Lahore to Delhi with a great army dropped or made a *padao* at Thanesar. Hajrat Kutub Jalaluddin extended an invitation to the king and his army. The story is that Kutub provided a meal for the entire army with one bowl of water and half a loaf of bread. The king was greatly impressed by this magic and made a tomb of Kutub at Thanesar. In these days Hajrat Sheikh Chehli came to meet Kutub Saheb and died here. On the advice of Kutub Jalaluddin, Sheikh Chehli was given a *Samadhi* in the tomb. It is famous as Sheikh Chehli's *Maqbara*.

This tomb is situated about $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile west of the Railway Station of Kurukshetra; in the north-west corner of Thanesar town and in the east of the ruined fort of last Hindu Charkravarti king Harshavardhana. It is situated on a high pedestal which can be seen from a distance of 5 miles; to its north, there is the *Sarai* of Sher Shah.

The tomb is a beautiful piece of Mughal architecture, although the marble used is of one inferior quality. There are two graves

in the tomb—one of Sheikh Chehli and the other is unknown. The tomb is worth seeing. To the west at about 15-20 steps there is a tomb of some unknown man. To the south there is a *Khankah*. In the midst of the *Khankah* there is a reservoir of water in which there is a fountain. There is a deep well at the southern border of this *Khankah*, which fills up this reservoir. In *Khankah* there has been government school for the last half a century. One has to cross *Khankah* while going to the tomb, it has two doors to the east and west. There is no other marble tomb from Delhi to Amritsar so representative of Mughal art and architecture as the present tomb is. Its dome is more beautiful than the dome of Humayun's tomb.

After Sheikh Chehli, no great saint seems to have taken his place here. In the later times, especially after 1707, the centre lost its importance.

The preceding account shows that Kurukshetra, especially Thanesar, occupied a prestigious place as a centre of religious merit during the Mughal times.

11

UNDER THE BRITISH RULE

After the death of Aurangzeb, fissiparous tendencies raised their head on almost all fronts and the mighty Mughal Empire began to decline. Aurangzeb's successors, who were unfortunately weak and worthless, could not arrest this downward plunge. As a result, there was chaos and confusion on all sides.¹

The people of Kurukshetra welcomed this state of affairs. The local officials were rendered helpless and the people declared themselves independent of the Mughal control.² The situation was improved for them by the coming of Banda Bahadur, a disciple of the tenth Sikh Guru Gobind Singh in 1709.³

Like the other people of Haryana and Panjab, the people of Kurukshetra joined Banda's army and launched an attack on the Mughal establishments. In October, Kaithal was attacked and the imperial treasury was looted.⁴ Then came the turn of Thanesar. The Muslim official in-charge of the place tried to oppose Banda, but he was soon overpowered. Banda plundered the town, and put its Muslim inhabitants to the sword.⁵

Now Thanesar was in Banda's hands and he appointed his

1. For details see Irwin, *the Later Mughals*, 2 vols; J.N. Sarkar, *Fall of the Mughal Empire*, 4 vols.
2. The officials were so inefficient and weak that they dared not move out of their city dwellings to collect land revenue from the peasants and enforce their control on the people.
3. For details see Ganda Singh, *Banda Singh Bahadur*.
4. See H.R. Gupta, *Studies in the later Mughal History of the Punjab*, p. 46.
5. See Khafi Khan, *Muntkhab-al-Lubab*, Vol. II, pp. 652-53.

trusted men to administer it.¹ Bahadur Shah was infuriated to hear these news and he marched himself against Banda in 1709.² This did not dishearten Banda and he fought against the imperial forces very bravely. But the imperial forces were superior to his own and, therefore, he tasted defeat.³

Now Banda shifted his theatre of struggle. This improved his position. Fortunately for him, however, Emperor Bahadur Shah also died in February 1712. His successor Jahandar Shah was a relatively weak ruler and therefore Banda again gained strength.⁴ But soon afterwards, Jahandar Shah made his exit and his successor Faurukh Siyyar (1713-19) took up this work seriously. He was successful in his work and Banda was captured on 17 December, 1715 and put to death on 15 March, 1716.

These developments raised the morale of the Mughal officials. They attacked the people of Kurukshetra to bring them under their control. After a little while, they succeeded in their mission and the region once again came under Mughal control. Unfortunately, the conditions soon deteriorated with the attack of Nadir Shah, a Turkoman freebooter, who attacked India in 1739. He plundered Kurukshetra in February, 1739. He was checked by the imperial forces which were defeated.⁵

After Nadir Shah's return, the people of Kurukshetra again raised the standard of freedom. The weak Mughal officials could not do anything to subdue them. But soon afterwards, the Marathas came and the Mughal emperor Alamgir gave this region to the Marathas *vide* a royal *firman*, dated 25 October, 1754. He also cancelled the pilgrimage tax imposed on the Hindus visiting the *tirtha*. D.M. Hingane was appointed Governor of Kurukshetra.⁶

After Hingane had been in office for some time, Nizabat Khan, a freebooter (wrongly called Rushella) attacked him and after driving him out became the independent ruler of extensive

1. *Ibid.*, p. 652.
2. J.N. Sarkar, *Fall of the Mughal Empire*, Vol. II, p. 110.
3. *Ibid.*
4. *Ibid.*, p. 112.
5. H.R. Gupta, *Studies*, pp. 31-2.
6. Rajwade, *Marathanche Itihasanchi Sadhana*, Vol. II, p. 328.

territory around Kurukshetra.¹ But his rule did not last long; he was defeated by Adina Beg, the Governor of Punjab.² Adina occupied Kurukshetra and wrote to Delhi that "the Zamindars of this country are refractory and require force to keep them in order. If you intend to come here bring with you a large army and abundant war material, otherwise your coming would be inadvisable leave this territory to me."³ The Wazir accepted the latter proposal and Kurukshetra became a part of the kingdom of Adina Beg.

Nor was Adina destined to rule over the *Dharmakshetra* for long. Ahmed Shah Abdali, the king of Afghanistan attacked this region and broke his hold (1756) and annexed it along with other territories of *Sarkar-i-Sirhind* to his kingdom and placed it under Abdus Samad Khan.⁴ But even this hold of Abdali did not last long. His man was turned out by the Marathas. This brought Ahmed Shah once more into India. The Marathas tried to check him but they were defeated (1761). Now the Marathas vanished and so did the Afghans. The latter, however, kept Kurukshetra under the control of their man, Zain Khan.⁵

After Abdali's exit, the Sikhs pounced upon Zain Khan. Zain Khan tried to defend his capital (Sirhind) but he was killed and all his territory including Kurukshetra fell into the hands of the Sikhs.⁶ The Sikh Chiefs who commanded sub-contingents of groups under their *misladars* at once dispersed in various directions and proportionate to their strength, seized what fell in the way of each. They would demand from the headman of the village either some money or some sugar (*gur or shakar*) or loaves of bread, in tokens of submission, and on leaving some of these tokens with one or more of their followers in each village, they would hurry on to the next. Tradition still describes how the Sikh 'riding day and night...would throw his belt and scabbard, his articles or dress

1. H.R. Gupta, op. 81-2.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 82-3.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 83.

4. *Ibid.*

5. His headquarters was located at Sirhind.

6. See *Journal of Haryana Studies*, Vol. III, 1971, p. 21.

and accoutrements, until he was almost naked, into successive villages to make them his.¹

The Sikhs occupied the entire Kurukshetra region as follows : Mehar Singh, a Sindhu Jat of Nishanwalia *Misl* siezed the pargana of Shahabad; Sahib Singh and Gurdit Singh, Sausi Jat brothers of the Dallahawalia *Misl* took possession of Ladwa, Indri, Babain (117 villages). Bhai Gurbax Singh, the Phulkian Sardar of Bhuchauki took possession of the region round Kaithal; another *Sardar*, Dalcha Singh occupied the Radaur pargana; Mit Singh, a Dallelawalia Sardar, and his two nephews Bhanga Singh and Bhag Singh occupied Thanesar.²

The Sikhs kept the holy region under their control for a long time. The Marathas who came once again under their great general Mahadji in 1789 did not disturb them much. Nor did his successor Daulat Rao do anything.

This situation continued up to 1805 when the British appeared on the scene. The British occupied Delhi in 1803 after defeating the Marathas, the then controllers of the historic city. Shah Alam, the Mughal Emperor gladly accepted British protection. But not so the people of Haryana and especially those of Kurukshetra. Their chiefs came out in the open to fight the British.³

The chiefs of the Kurukshetra region formed a confederacy to fight their enemy. The chiefs of Ladwa and Thanesar were their leaders. This must have disturbed the British authorities a good deal who at once despatched a force commanded by an experienced officer Col. Burn. The old colonel, who had anticipated little opposition from the loose confederacy of the Kurukshetra chiefs was surprised at the stiff resistance he encountered. The Indians fought very well, but despite this, they lost to the enemy who was by all means superior to them.⁴

This defeat had a demoralizing effect on many chiefs and they broke away from the confederacy. By the end of March 1805,

1. *Ibid.*

2. *Ibid.*

3. See Dr K.C. Yadav, 'Early Resistance to British Rule in Haryana, 1803-10', *Journal of Haryana Studies*, Vol. III, No. 2, pp. 20-27.

4. *Ibid.*

'the confederacy was almost broken, most of the chiefs having accepted the terms of general amnesty proclaimed by the British to them. However, Bhanga Singh the brave and redoubtable prince of Ladwa still held out. The British, in view of his having organized the confederacy and being a great "rebel" had also excluded him from the amnesty. This, however, mattered little to the chief determined to fight till the last.¹

Greatly weakened by the desertation of almost all his allies Bhanga Singh could not put up a tough fight for long. Col. Burn having outmanouvered him at Karnal, ultimately broke his power in April 1805. Surprisingly, 'the British treated the defeated chief quite leniently, only a part of his paternal Jagir, that is pargana of Karnal was confiscated and the rest, that is the pargana of Ladwa was restored to him.'²

By April 1805, the power of the Kurukshetra chiefs was broken and all their opposition, at least for the time being was cooled. Yet the British were in no mood to hold the area under their control directly or indirectly. They left it in the hands of the original holders on the *sanads* from the Marathas.³

This policy, however, did not continue for long. In 1809, the British took all the Kurukshetra chiefs under their protection for 'they feared then a serious danger to their existence as a political power in the East by their enemies, the French, the Turkish and the Persian Emperors, who they supposed, were seriously meditating the subjugation of India in coalition if necessary with Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the ruler of the Punjab, their next door neighbour.'⁴ In such an eventuality, the northern region in the hands of petty chiefs, mostly belonging to the same religion as

1. *Ibid.*

2. *Ibid.*

3. Many British writers have criticized the Delhi authorities for giving up such a 'valuable piece of territory for the leaders of adventures' instead of keeping it under their control. Perhaps the critics have evaluated the whole issue without putting it into correct historical perspective. The fact of the matter is that it was then neither a part of the Company's policy to hold such far off land beyond the Yamuna, nor was it possible for them to keep the fierce, warlike population under perfect control without a lot of money, energy and time.

4. *Ibid.*

Ranjit Singh outside the British influence, might present a great danger to the British. Accordingly, they changed their original policy of keeping the Yamuna as the farthest limit of their kingdom in the north-west. They took all the Sikh Chiefs of the Kurukshetra region under their direct protection (1809).¹

This account shows that by the end of 1809 the whole of the Kurukshetra region had come under the control of the Company. It was the real master of the territory.² But this arrangement was not satisfactory to the Company's authorities whose thirst for territorial acquisitions was daily increasing. Accordingly, they confiscated many estates (see Table 3).

1. The British afforded protection to the Kurukshetra chiefs on the conditions given below :
 - (a) They (chiefs) shall in future be secured from the authority and influence of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.
 - (b) All the country chiefs, thus taken under protection, shall be exempted from all pecuniary tributes to the British.
 - (c) The chiefs shall remain in the full exercise of the same rights and authority in their own possessions which they enjoyed before they were received under the British protection.
 - (d) Should British force, on purpose of general warfare be required to march through the country of the said chiefs, it is necessary and incumbent that every chief shall within his own possessions assist and furnish to the full of his power, such force with supplies of grain and other necessaries which may be demanded.
 - (e) Should an enemy approach from any quarter, for the purpose of conquering this country, friendship and mutual interests require that the chiefs join the British army with all their force, exerting themselves in expelling the enemy, act under discipline and proper obedience.
 - (f) All European articles brought for the use of army shall be allowed to pass without molestation.
 - (g) All horses purchased for the use of cavalry regiments shall be allowed to pass without molestation or the demand of duty.

2. Not in 1803.

TABLE 3
ESTATES CONFISCATED¹

Name of the Estate	Date of lapse	Causes of lapse
Radaur	1828	Death of Sardarni Ind Kaur, widow of Dulcha Singh.
Thanesar (2/5 share of Bhag Singh).	1832	Death of Sardar Jamiat Singh without male heirs.
Kaithal	1843	Death of Bhai Ude Singh, without male heirs.
Ladwa	1845	Forfeited on account of misconduct of Raja Ajit Singh.
Thanesar (3/5 share of Bhanga Singh).	1850	Death of Rani Chand Kaur, widow of Sardar Fateh Singh.

These lapsed territories were regarded as a part of the Thanesar district which was formed in 1849. The District was divided into tehsils—Pipli, Thanesar and Kaithal. The Collector Magistrate was in-charge of the District and the Tehsildars of the tehsils. For law and order, police stations were established at a number of places.²

1. *Assessment Report of the Pipli Tehsil.*
2. *See Karnal District Gazetteer.*

The old records show that Kaithal progressed a good deal during the British rule but not Thanesar. This town became the victim of two great visits of cholera in 1855 and 1857 which killed the bulk of the town population. In 1851, 1852 and 1858, hailstorms destroyed all crops and caused severe famines.¹ Then the great Revolt had a very serious impact on the town, for a great majority of them sided with the so-called 'rebels'—after the Revolt these people were either killed or they fled.²

The Collector Magistrate of Thanesar, Mr. Larkins, viewed this serious situation with due consideration. He started renovating the *tirtha*. He collected a lot of money for this purpose from the wealthy people. Besides this, he also spent a lot of money from his own pocket. The western and northern bathing ghats which are known as *Larkin ghats* even to date were built by him with his own money.³

While these progressive activities were going on, the Government decided arbitrarily to break the Thanesar District. The decision was brought into effect in 1862. Pipli was put into the tehsil of Thanesar which was placed in District Ambala. In 1898, the tehsil was put under Karnal District. Kaithal was a separate tehsil and this too formed a part of Karnal.⁴ The Thanesar Municipal Committee was formed in the year 1867. This administrative arrangement continued until 1947, when the British left this country.

Neither the East India Company nor its successor, the Crown Government took any great interest in the development of Kurukshetra. No satisfactory arrangements were made for the education of the people. No college was opened here and even the position of the schools was far from satisfactory. No provision was made for female education.⁵

The local people, however, made some efforts to spread education. They started some indigenous schools in Thanesar and Kaithal and a Gurukul at Thanesar (1912). Similarly, medical

1. *Ibid.*
2. See J.N. Singh, *Haryana : Studies in History and Politics*, pp. 128-39.
3. See Kali Rai, *Kurukshetra Darpana*, p. 35.
4. *Karnal District Gazetteer*, p. 67.
5. Shankar and Kundu, *Education in Haryana*, Chapter I.

facilities were also neglected. The area was malaria-infested and it was also ravaged by cholera, plague, etc., quite frequently. The Government opened small dispensaries at Thanesar and Kaithal and seemed content with this act. In consequence, hundreds of men died every month untreated and uncared for. In the forties, some more dispensaries were opened at Pehowa, Kalayat and Safidon.¹

Nor do we find any development in industries before 1947. The people's chief source of bread was agriculture. The high government jobs were not available to the people of this region. A small number of them were, however, recruited in the army and into petty civil jobs, such as those of peons, *chowkidars*, etc.²

These conditions remained until 1947 when the British rule came to an end and the people of Kurukshetra, like their counterparts elsewhere, became free.

1. There was no arrangement for providing medical facilities to the villagers.

2. For details see *Census Reports* from 1881 to 1941.

12

ANTI-BRITISH RISINGS AND STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM

The people of Kurukshetra are well-known in history for their love of freedom.¹ They have been seen making supreme sacrifices for this noble ideal since time immemorial. They did not like the British rule too and rose against them on a number of occasions.

KAITHAL REVOLT

Kaithal was an important state in the Kurukshetra region. It was ruled by the Bhais. Bhai Udai Singh, the chief of Kaithal died in 1842, with no male heir. At this, the state was taken into possession by the British Government. This act of the Government was highly distasteful to the Phulkian chiefs—the Rajas of Patiala, Nabha and Jind, who as relatives of the late chief, were naturally desirous of succeeding to the state and thus retaining the possessions in the family. They placed their protest to this effect before the government who rejected the proposal. On hearing this, the chiefs sat quietly but not the people of Kaithal. They rose to defend the state under the leadership of Bhai Udai Singh's widow. But they could not stand against the British army for long. The town and the fort of Kaithal were soon occupied.²

1. Arrian, Alexander, the Great's historian, confirms this contention.

2. For details see *Journal of Haryana Studies*, Vol. IV, Nos. 1-2, pp. 22-44.

LADWA REVOLT

Raja Ajit Singh of Ladwa had a great hatred for the British and the British authorities knew this well. But they were not able to setting any trap for the Raja. Ultimately, they invented imaginary lapses in his rule—he was corrupt and not fit for being a ruler, they said. This was a baseless charge. But still the government took action and sent him to Saharanpur where he was put under house arrest in 1845.

The Raja waited for sometime, and when the first Anglo-Sikh war broke out, he fled from Saharanpur and joined the Sikh forces against the British. And 'having mustered a contingent of several thousand of his people, he crossed the Jullundur Doab, to the neighbourhood of Ludhiana and fought many an action.' After some time, he fought at several other places on the side of the Sutlej during the course of the war. After the war, his state was confiscated and he died a fugitive.¹

REVOLT OF THE SIKH CHIEFS

During the First Anglo-Sikh war of 1845-46, many of the sikh chiefs joined the Sikh forces openly, whereas others remained only passive. The British authorities took these happenings seriously and after the war 'their possessions were confiscated and in some case they were themselves removed as pensioners from their places.'²

The suppression of the above outbursts in no way cooled the hearts of the people, nor did the repression that followed in their wake kill their spirit. They were always ready to rise again against the Government provided the opportunity. Fortunately, they got the opportunity in May 1857 and 'seized it with both hands'.³

THE REVOLT OF 1857

On hearing the news of the outbreak of the great Revolt on 10 May 1857 at Meerut and Ambala, the people of Kurukshetra

1. *Ibid.*2. *Ibid.*3. See K.C. Yadav, *The Revolt of 1857 in Haryana*, Delhi : 1977.

rose against the British. Thanesar, the District headquarters was the centre of the rebels' activity. But unfortunately, the Maharaja of Patiala came to Thanesar with 1500 men and 4 guns on 15 May. On the 17th the Raja of Jind sent 400 men. Kunjpura and Karnal gave 350 and 150 of their men respectively.¹ With these troops, besides their own, the district authorities controlled the Grand Trunk Road and the main towns situated on it.² Now people in the distant parganas of Ladwa, Pehowa, Kaithal, Pundri, Asandh rose up in revolt. 'They drove out the revenue and police officials, made the loyalists surrender, and destroyed all vestiges of the British rule in their localities'.³

The situation continued for quite some time. But then in September there came reinforcements and the rebel parganas were settled with fire and sword.⁴

THE WAHABI MOVEMENT

After the Revolt of 1857 was crushed, there remained peace and tranquility in the Kurukshetra region. But in the 1860's this calm was broken by the Wahabis whose centre of activity was Thanesar.

This Wahabi Movement was a Muslim revivalist movement which was started by one Syed Ahmed (1786-1831) of Rae Bareilly in 1820's.⁵ It was a political movement, 'aiming at the liberation of India from the English and other infidels'.⁶

In Haryana, the centre of this movement, one Landlord, Jafar Muhammad, the headman of Thanesar was the leading light behind the whole show.⁷ He was the *Khalifa* or the official in-charge of the Wahabi activity in the north-western region upwards of Delhi.⁸ He helped the Wahabis very much in

1. *Panjab Government Records* (abbreviated as PGR), Vol. VIII-I, pp. 27-38.2. *Ibid.*3. K.C. Yadav, *Haryana Men Swatantra Andolan Ka Itihas*, p. 98.4. *Ibid.*5. For this Movement see William Hunter, *The Indian Muslims*; Ahmed, *The Wahabi Movement in India*.6. *Kurukshetra University Journal*, Vol. VI, No. I, p. 98.7. For Jafar see Jafar, *Kalapani*, (Hunter), pp. 77-79.8. *Ibid.*

fighting the British Government, and his activities went on unnoticed by the British Government for many years. But in 1863, as ill-luck would have it, they were exposed. Dr. K.C. Yadav has given an interesting story of their exposure. "One day, in May 1863, it so happened that one Ghazzan Khan, a police Havildar, posted at Thana Panipat (district Karnal) while on his rounds, found some strangers proceeding southwards along the Grand Trunk Road. Smelling something foul, the police Havildar got into conversation with them, worked himself into their secrets, and at length elicited that they were Bengali luminaries from Mulha (N.W.F.P.) on their way back to their native province to arrange for the forwarding of fresh supplies of money and men to fight against the English infidels. The Havildar at once arrested and took them to the police station. They were tried by the extra Assistant Commissioner, Ambala, who found nothing wrong with the peaceable wayfarers. Consequently, they were set free. Ghazzan Khan chose to take the acquittal of these persons as an insult to his honour and he took a vow to prove the correctness of his charge. He at once sent a letter to his village committing his son in the name of family honour to go to the N.W.F. P. to collect information pertaining to the network of the Wahabi organisation which had spread throughout India. The faithful son obeyed his father and at once set out to fulfil his mission. He joined the Wahabis at Sittana and remained there for some time (about five to six months). When his work was done he returned to Panipat. Here he made a detailed report to the effect that there existed a widespread net work for transmission of men and money from all over India to the Frontier, in which Thanesar was one of the main depots and Jafar was one of its chief Organisers. The Punjab Government appointed Parson, the Superintendent of police Ambala, to make investigations. Parson raided the house of Jafar (12 December, 1863) after being supplied with the above information and got some letters which referred to Muhammad Safi as contractor (for meat) at Ambala and Yahaya Ali and some other persons from Bihar.¹

Jafar knew what was in store for him now. He therefore left Thanesar and went to Delhi. After some time he left this

place and moved eastwards along with Hussaini and Abaullah of Patna. The Punjab police meanwhile came to know all about his movements, followed him and arrested him.²

Jafar's arrest was followed by those of Hussaini of Thanesar. Muhammad Safi, the government Contractor of Ambala, for supplying meat to various cantonments, Abdul Karim, a relative of Safi, Yahya Ali, Abdul Rahim, Abdul Ghaffar, all belonging to Sadiqpur (Patna) Qazi Mian Jan of Patna, Abdul Gaffar of Hazaribag, Hussaini and Ellahi Bux of Patna. All the prisoners were put in the Central Jail at Ambala (March 1864) where they received inhuman treatment. They were tried and found guilty of waging war against the Queen (Section 121 of IPC). In this trial, Jafar got transportation for life and the others received very harsh sentences. With the exit of Jafar Muhammad, the leading light of the movement, and his associates, the Wahabi activities ceased in Kurukshetra. Moreover, the attitude of the Government was now one of strict cautiousness; and nobody could dare take to the Wahabi activity in such circumstances. Thus, the movement 'met its doom' after 1864.²

NATIONALIST STRUGGLE

The situation remained calm and quiet for many years after the Wahabi movement. But at the end of the 19th century, especially after the founding of the Indian National Congress (1885), this peace was again disturbed. But it was after 1919, when Mahatma Gandhi assumed the leadership of the Indian National Congress and his message of fighting the unjust *Sarkar* with all non-violent weapons available in the armoury of the people of India, that the people of Kurukshetra began to take an active part in the national struggle for liberation. During the Non-Cooperation Movement, hundreds of people joined ranks throughout the region. Almost at every town and big village, Congress Committees were formed, and organized efforts were made to paralyse the administration at different levels.

However, on Mahatma Gandhi's withdrawal of the non-

1. Ibid., p. 101.

2. Ibid., p. 102.

Cooperation Movement following the Chauri Chaura violence (5 February 1922), the people ceased their struggle. But a section of the people did not like the withdrawal of the movement and formed the Swarajya Party. The Swarajya Party did not make much headway in the region and it met its doom in 1925 with the death of one of its founders, Deshbandu C.R. Dass. The Swarajyists returned to the old fold and this activated the activities of the Congress.¹

The Congress resolve of 31 December 1929 (in its Lahore session), not to be satisfied with anything short of complete independence, was welcomed in Kurukshetra. Subsequently, in response to the call of the central leaders, hundreds of people from Kurukshetra came out to join in the Civil Disobedience Movement (1930-31). The salt law was broken in almost every town and large village by preparing salt; schools were left by many students; several Government officials gave up their jobs; shops dealing in liquor, opium and foreign things were picketed by volunteers in almost every town; payment of taxes was refused at numerous places and bonfires of foreign cloth were made. The Government's measures of suppression and repressions which were quite stern did not cow the people and hundreds courted arrest, shouting nationalist slogans like *Inqalab Zindabad* (long live the Revolution). However, these satyagrahis were released in 1931 after the Gandhi-Irwin Pact was signed.

Dissatisfied with the Government's programmes, the Congress marched on. The outbreak of the Second World War (1939) did not change the situation; rather, the crisis deepened. The Government's appeal to cooperate at the critical time was turned down and the Civil Disobedience Movement was revitalized. As on the former occasions, hundreds of people throughout Kurukshetra joined the movement. The Quit India Resolution of 1942 was readily accepted by the people and they expressed their feelings resolutely.²

INA STRUGGLE

The citizens of Kurukshetra were meanwhile fighting the British Government outside India too. They had joined in fairly

1. See Appendix.
2. See Appendix.

large numbers in the Indian National Army under the command of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose. Many laid down their lives in the course of India's freedom while fighting under the banner of the Azad Hind Fauz.¹

FREEDOM AT LAST

To resume the earlier story, the Congress Movement became popular even in the villages after 1942. Hundreds of people courted arrests and made the programme of Civil Disobedience a real success. Their efforts bore fruit and India became free on 15 August 1947.

This discussion serves to underscore the fact that the people of Kurukshetra really did play a significant part, in their own humble way, in the freedom struggle of their country.

1. See Appendix for INA personnel from Kurukshetra.

After independence, Kurukshetra once again regained its real importance. The Government of Panjab planned to restore it to its old glory. To begin with, a very large refugee camp was arranged here. Here hundreds and thousands of refugees from west Pakistan were stationed. The local people and Government did their utmost, to make these people feel at home.¹

After some time, a large number of these persons were settled at Nilokheri, a small town in the vicinity of Thanesar. A large number of them also settled at Thanesar, Kaithal and Karnal.² The Muslims who were living in these places had left for Pakistan and the refugees took their place.³

These new settlers in the region spoke different languages and had different cultures. They were liberal, unorthodox and dynamic. These things affected the social behaviour of the old inhabitants—they acquired the good qualities of these men to a large extent.⁴

Many of the refugees took to businesses of various types. This way they came into conflict with the old businessmen. Since the former were more energetic and resourceful, the latter were often beaten. Consequently, they had to change their business tactics and this improved their lot.⁵

1. For details see S.K. Dey, *Nilokheri*, Delhi, 1958.

2. Besides these towns hundred of refugees settled in other towns and big villages.

3. See Kripal Singh, *Partition of the Punjab*, Patiala, 1972.

4. See Stephen Keller, *Uprooting and Social Change*, Delhi, 1976.

5. *Ibid*,

The language, dress, diet and other behavioural etiquettes of the old inhabitants underwent a change. They copied the refugees both consciously and unconsciously and hence the change.¹

CHANGING SCENE

The nationalist Government, as has already been mentioned, started taking a keen interest in the welfare of the people of Kuru-

TABLE 4

No. of Educational Institutes²

<i>Colleges</i>	
(i) Degree Colleges	5
(ii) College of Education	2
(iii) Ayurveda College	1
Total :	8
<i>Higher Secondary Schools</i>	
(i) Government (Boys)	4
(ii) Government (Girls)	1
(iii) Non-Government (Boys)	3
(iv) Non-Government (Girls)	—
Total :	8
<i>High Schools</i>	
(i) Government (Boys)	56
(ii) Government (Girls)	4
(iii) Non-Government (Boys)	12
(iv) Non-Government (Girls)	4
Total :	76
<i>Middle Schools</i>	
(i) Government (Boys)	50
(ii) Government (Girls)	8
(iii) Non-Government (Boys)	—
(iv) Non-Government (Girls)	1
Total :	59
<i>Primary Schools</i>	
Government Primary Schools	548

1. *Ibid*.

2. Figures of 1976.

shetra. To begin with, schools were opened almost in every village—primary in the small villages and high schools in the big villages and towns. Private enterprise was encouraged to open a college at Kaithal—R.K.S.D. College, another at Pundri—D.A.V. College, and the third at Kaul—Janta College. A technical institute was started at Nilokheri. The position, on the whole, is given in Table 4.

The greatest achievement is, however, the Kurukshetra University. This University came into being by an Act of the composite Punjab Legislature in May 1956 as a Unitary teaching and residential University to provide a fillip to studies and research in Ancient Indian History, Culture, Archaeology, Literature, Religion and Philosophy.

Inaugurated by Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the then President of India, the University started functioning with a Sanskrit Pali and Prakrit Department as embodied in the preamble to the Act in the year 1957. Four years later, additions were made and it was turned into a multi-faculty University with eleven post-graduate departments namely Sanskrit, Hindi, English, Philosophy, Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics, History, Economics, Political Science, Ancient Indian History Culture and Archaeology. That was the first transformation of the University.

To these, the post-graduate department of Linguistics and the under-graduate departments of Geography, Botany, Zoology and Punjabi were added a year later, and in 1963, the post-graduate department in Education was developed. The emphasis on specialized study and research in Indology, however, continued with the establishment of the Institute of Indic Studies in 1961.

The University has at present twenty-nine departments in eight faculties. The department of Geography, Botany and Zoology have been upgraded, Department of Law, Library Science and Commerce and Business Administration created undergraduate department and those of Fine Arts and Home Science were strengthened. The Department of Modern European Languages has been started which at present imparts instruction for Certificate and Diploma Courses in French and a Certificate Course in German. Thus, the University can with modesty claim that it

works towards achieving a living synthesis between our ancient heritage and modern scientific thought.

The University located on its own tract of land of about 700 acres, has emerged during the last twelve years or so on as a unique township. It is no mean achievement that Kurukshetra to-day can boast of being one of the finest campuses in India. The campus is beautifully developed with fine roads, buildings, both residential and instructional, lawns, ornamental trees of various kinds, shrubs, creepers, etc.

On 30 June 1974, the University underwent a second transformation when it became an affiliated University with its jurisdiction extending to the whole of Haryana. Besides 102 colleges, the University has also taken over the Post-graduate centre at Ambala. The total number of affiliated colleges is about 110.

In addition to these seats of learning, thirty other institutions which were associated with the Panjab University in imparting instruction in Modern Indian languages and Teaching-oriented examinations will fall under the jurisdiction of Kurukshetra University.

The University has a well-equipped Library with over 1,45,000 books on the shelves including 5000 rare volumes on Indological subjects. The library also provides microfilm reading facilities. The pride of the Library, however, is a collection of 4100 manuscripts. The University brings out three research Journals, namely the *K.U. Research Journal*, the *Journal of Haryana Studies* and *Sambhavana*. It also publishes *Prachi Jyoti*, a digest of Indological studies which goes to almost every library of the world. The research output is favourably comparable to other universities.

A detailed list of Faculties and Departments of the University is as follows :

Faculty of Indic Studies

1. Department of Sanskrit, Pali and Prakrit.
2. Department of Ancient Indian History, Culture and Archaeology.
3. Department of Philosophy, Indian Philosophy and Religion.
4. Department of Psychology.

Faculty of Arts and Languages

5. Department of Hindi.
6. Department of English.
7. Department of Linguistics and Folklore.
8. Department of Music and Dance.
9. Department of Library Science.
10. Department of Punjabi.
11. Department of Fine Arts.
12. Department of Modern Indian and European Languages.

Faculty of Science

13. Department of Chemistry.
14. Department of Physics.
15. Department of Bio-Physics.
16. Department of Botany.
17. Department of Zoology.
18. Department of Mathematics.
19. Department of Geography.
20. Department of Home Science.
21. Department of Geology.
22. Department of Human Anatomy.
23. Department of Military Science.
24. Department of Pharmacy.
25. Department of Physiology.

Faculty of Social Sciences

26. Department of History.
27. Department of Economics.
28. Department of Political Science.
29. Department of Anthropology (Teaching has so far not started).

Faculty of Commerce and Management

30. Department of Commerce and Management.

Faculty of Education

31. Department of Education.
32. Department of Physical Education.

Faculty of Engineering and Technology

33. Department of Civil Engineering.

34. Department of Electric Engineering.
35. Department of Mechanical Engineering.
36. Department of Applied Sciences and Humanities.
37. Department of Electronics and Communication Engineering.
38. Department of Textiles Technology.

Faculty of Law

39. Department of Law.

Faculty of Ayurvedic Medicine

40. Department of Ayurveda.

Faculty of Dairying, Animal Husbandry and Agriculture

41. Department of Dairying, Animal Husbandry and Agriculture.

The numerical strength of the students getting education in the Kurukshetra region from the primary standard to the college/University stage is as follows :

TABLE 5

<i>Institution</i>	No. of Scholars		
	<i>Total No. of students</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
Primary Schools	53518	35631	17887
Middle Schools	17531	12340	5191
High/Higher Schools	54529	40120	14409
College/University Departments.	6699	5295	10404

On the whole, 1,45,406 males and 57,056 females are educated/literate. They represent 23.35 per cent of the total population.¹

Education has made a great impact on people's lives. More avenues of employment have opened. About 12190 men plus 50,297 labourers and 2,507 persons are engaged in agricultural pursuits. In most cases, these people employ modern means to increase their yield. About 6,700 persons are engaged in household industries and 8,971 in other than household industries.²

1. *Census Report, 1971.*

2. Figures taken from *Census Department, Government of Haryana, Chandigarh.*

On agricultural front the output is quite satisfactory. The rice and wheat produced here go to almost every part of India in great quantities. The same is, however, not true of the industries of this place. There are no good industrial centres here like Yamuna Nagar or Faridabad. This must be explained in terms of the absence of big towns here.¹

SEPARATE DISTRICT

In 1974, Kurukshetra was made a separate District with its headquarters located at Thanesar. It has three tehsils whose population and area is as follows :²

TABLE 6
Area and Population

Tehsil	Area (Sq. K.M.)	Population
Thanesar	1439.27	368113
Kaithal	1257.51	317817
Guhla	1041.22	176969
Total	3738.00	862899

The District is predominately a rural region. It has 743 villages.³ According to a rough estimate, about 84.48 per cent people live in villages and the rest in towns. Population-wise, the villages in the District are as follows :

TABLE 7
Village Population

Less than 200 population	64
200-499	192
500-999	247
1000-1999	136
2000-4999	72
5000-9999	10
10000 and above	02

1. Kaithal, though a good centre of trade is not an industrial town. Other towns are very small.
2. Census Department, Government of Haryana, Chandigarh.
3. 723 inhabited; 29 uninhabited.

This shows that most of the villages here are small villages. Unlike Rohtak and Sonapat Districts, people live here in small settlements. The same is true of the towns here :

TABLE 8
Town Population, 1971

Town	Population ¹
1. Kaithal	45199
2. Thanesar	29555
3. Pehowa	11366
4. Nilokheri	9357
5. Pundri	9107

And even this situation has come to exist because of the coming of the so-called refugees from Pakistan in 1947. Prior to their coming, the population was less, as the following figures from the previous Census show :

TABLE 9
Town Population, 1941-61

	1961	1951	1941
Kaithal	34890	28422	22325
Thanesar	16828	11273	6574
Pehowa	11366	6159	—
Nilokheri	9357	8035	6287
Pundri	9107	7660	6552

In the past few years, Kurukshetra has come to acquire a new look. Now, the holy of the holies claims the best health facilities. Almost every big village has a dispensary and the towns—Kaithal, Kaul, Karnal and Thanesar have been given Primary Health Centres. Recently, Thanesar got a 50-bed hospital.

For improvement in means of communication, *pucca* roads have been constructed connecting all important towns and big

1. Figures of 1971.

villages with each other. On a rough estimate, we find here about 70 per cent of villages covered by *pucca* roads. Besides the old rail links, because of the broad gauge from Ambala to Delhi via Kurukshetra and Karnal and the metre gauge from Kurukshetra to Jind and Narwana, a very effective net-work has been established throughout the region. Almost 90 per cent of the villages are on bus routes now.

Post offices/branch post offices are formed in every village and telegraph station at all big towns. The telephone link has also been established between every big or small town. In this way, the distance of the regions has been shortened considerably. Every village and town is linked with each other—there is no 'distant place in Kurukshetra' now.

Electricity has come to every town and village and its use has revolutionized the entire life of the people. They work more and they earn more. Now Kurukshetra is the most affluent district in Haryana.

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RECLAIMING THE OLD GLORY

Kurukshetra is regaining its past glory now. For its integrated development, the Haryana Government has constituted a high-powered Kurukshetra Development Board (1 August 1968).¹ The functions of the Board include the overall development of the place, including its landscaping, renovation of historical places and sacred religious tanks and provision of facilities to pilgrims and tourists. Other schemes aim at building of roads and drains, rest houses and *sarais*, laying out of parks and orchards, provision of transport and sanitary facilities, etc. The total estimated cost for all this is Rs. 5 crores. Grants in-aid of Rs. 37 lakhs have been sanctioned in the three years from 1968-69 to 1970-71 by the State Government. Another sum of Rs. 30 lakhs was allocated during 1971-72.²

A sum of Rs. 92 lakhs was spent upto 31 March 1973, and a sum of Rs. 40 lakhs, out of Rs. 57 lakhs provided for the year 1973-74 was spent upto June, 1973. Besides this, the Development Board has also appealed to the public for generous contribution to supplement funds.

1. The Board is autonomous in character with a Chairman and several members. The members include four ministers, i.e., the Chief Minister, the Finance Minister, the Development Minister, the Revenue Minister and high ranking Officers including the Home Secretary, the Finance Secretary and the Secretary, Local Self Government Department with Technical Officers including Chief Engineers, B & R, Irrigation and Public Health, Senior Town Planner, Senior Architect and Chief Conservator of Forests, etc.
2. This project is at present being entirely financed by the Haryana State.

The Board has partially completed work of the renovation of the Kurukshetra tank. Desilting operations have been undertaken. The construction of *pucca* ghats, the *parakarma*, prayer cells, and twenty feet wide bathing platforms with concrete protection railing have been undertaken. The main tank is 3,860 feet long and 1,860 feet wide with an existing depth of 6 to 8 feet. The depth was increased to 15 feet to avoid any weedy growth in the tank as the sun's rays can penetrate through the water only up to small depths and encourage weed growth. The depth of the water near the bathing platform has been kept at only four feet. These arrangements to put silt-free canal water and to regulate its supply through a periphery duct with outlets all along at suitable intervals to ensure that the water pours into the tank from all the four sides to guard against such weed growth.

Three lavatory blocks for both men and women with septic tanks and soakage pits have been built at suitable places around the tanks. Three approach roads, viz. (i) the Jhansa road to Sthaneshwar temple, (ii) the Sthaneshwar temple to Sheikh Chelli's tomb, and (iii) along the south-eastern corner of the Tanks, have been completed. Another road around the Sannihit tank is under construction. The tank will be built upto the Mugalpura bridge and island. This would involve the construction of steps and bathing platforms on the northern and eastern side of the tank. On the western side, the Mugalpura island along with the approach bridge will be highlighted as a tourist-cum-pilgrimage resort.

Besides this, a cluster of institutions bearing on important aspects of the people's life has sprung up at Kurukshetra. The aim is to make Kurukshetra the centre for the study and propagation of Indian cultural values.

Let us hope the holy of the holies regains its lost glory soon.

APPENDIX I

TIRTHAS IN THE KURUKSHETRA REGION

Kurukshetra is believed to have 360 *tirthas* in the holy region. Many efforts have been made in the past to identify these *tirthas*, but no one has been able to bring to light all of them. In this appendix, all the *tirthas* have been identified, leaving only the smaller ones, such as some ponds, etc. which are not in existence at the moment.¹

1. This Appendix is based on the findings of Dr. Silak Ram Phogat of the Kurukshetra University as given by him in the *Journal of Haryana Studies*, Vol. VIII, 1976, pp. 14-32.

TIRTHAS OF KURUKSHETRA AS ENUMERATED IN THE MAHABHARATA AND VAMANAPURANA

<i>Mahābhārata Āraṇyaka- Parva</i>	<i>Re- ference</i>	<i>Vāmana- Purāna Saromāhātmya</i>	<i>Re- ference</i>	<i>Traditional</i>	<i>Village/ Site</i>	<i>Tehsil</i>	<i>District</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
		Rantuka	13.11	Ratnayaksha	Ratgal	Thanesar	Kurukshetra	North-east guardian of Kurukshetra
		Aditivada	13.12	Aditi Kuṇḍa	Amin	Karnal	Karnal	Ratnajhak near Pipli 8 km. SE of Thanesar
Machakruka	81.7			Sūrya Kuṇḍa Chakravayūha Vāmana Kuṇḍa Soma Kuṇḍa Aśvinikumāra Kullotāraṇa Ahikuṇḍa Kesari	" " " " " Kirmach	"	"	10 km S of Thanesar
Satata	81.8	Satata	13.14		Saga	"	"	A place sacred to Viṣṇu, 14 km. NW of Karnal A tirtha at Saga
		Vimala	13.15	Vimala Vimaleśvara Dhunḍhū		"	"	16 km. W of Karnal
Pāriplava	81.10	Pāripalava	13.17	Prabala tirtha Prāsara Brahmasthanā Dṛṣḍvatī- kauṣiki Bālu tirtha Daśaratha Dakhāśrama	Bhalolpur Balu Agod Dachr	" " " "	" "	Confluence of the rivers near Balu 18 km. W of Karnal 18 km. W of Karnal 32 km. SW of Karnal
		Dakhāśrama	13.21			"	"	

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Pṛthvi tirtha	81.11				Padha/ Padhri	Karnal	Karnal	23 km. NW of Panipat
Śālukinī	81.11	Śālukina	13.22	Sālona	Salwan	Kaithal	Kurukshetra	13 km. N of Safidon
Daśāśvamedha Sarpadevī	81.11 81.12	Sarpidadhi	13.23	Haṁsa tirtha Pāvana tirtha Daśāśvamedha Sarpadaman	Dadwara Safidon	Safidon "	Jind "	8 km. N of Safidon Tehsil headquarters of Jind district
Nāga tirtha Aruṇā tirtha Tarantuka	81.12 81.13 81.13	Nāga Rantuka	13.23 13.24	Nāga Tarkhu tirtha	Anta Sinkh	" Panipat	" Karnal	A tirtha at Safidon 6 km. S of Safidon SE guardian (yaksha) of Kurukshetra
Pañchanada	81.14	Pañchanada	13.27	Pañchanada- tirtha	Hat	Safidon	Jind	16 km. N of Gohana 10 km. SW of Safidon
Koṭi tirtha	81.14	Koṭi tirtha	13.28	Koti tirtha Koteśvara Mahādeva Kāmiltā				A tirtha at Hat
Aśvinī Kumāra	81.14	Aśvinī Kumāra- tirtha	13.31	Aśvaiti tirtha Yayāti Kuṇḍa Sūrya Kuṇḍa Rūpa tirtha	Asan	Jind	"	14 km. E of Jind
Vārāha Jayantyā	81.15 81.16	Varāha Soma tirtha Jvālāmāleśvara Bhūteśvara	13.32 13.33 13.36 13.36	Varāha Soma tirtha Jvālāmāleśvara Bhūteśvara Asidhāra Bhikshamati Śukratirtha Sūrya Kuṇḍa Chandra kūpa	Barah Jind " " " " " "	" " " " " "	" "	11 km. E of Jind District headquarters A tirtha at Jind A tirtha at Jind

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<i>Mahābhārata Aranyaka- Parva</i>	<i>Re- ference</i>	<i>Vāmana- Purāna Saromāhātmya</i>	<i>Re- ference</i>	<i>Traditional</i>	<i>Village/ Site</i>	<i>Tehsil</i>	<i>District</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
Ekahamśa	81.16	Ekahamsa	13.37		Ikas	"	"	5 km. SW Jind
Kṛta Śaṅcha Puṅdarika	81.17 81.17	Kṛtasaucha Paundrika	13.37 13.38	Piṅdāra tīrtha	Pindari	"	"	A tīrtha at Pindari, 5 km. SE of Jind
Muñjavata Yakshīpītīr- tha Puškara	81.18 81.19 81.21	Muñjavana yakhīṇī Puškara Kapila- Mahāyaksha yugandhara Bhūtālyo Rāmahrada	13.38 13.39 13.41 13.44 13.47 13.47 14.1	Muñjavana Dākhana Puškara Kapila tīrtha Rāmarad	Nirjan Dakhni Khera Pokhar- Kheri Ramrai	" " " "	" "	6 km. SE of Jind 8 km. S of Jind 11 km. S of Jind, A tīrtha at Ramrai
Rāmahrada	82.22	Rāmahrada	14.1	Rāmarad	Ramrai			SW guardian of Kurukshetra 8 km. SW of Jind
Yaṁsamūlaka Kāyasodhana Lokoddhāra	81.34 81.35 81.35	Vaṁsamūlaka Kāyasodhana Lokodhāra	14.16 14.17 14.21	Hatyā haraṇa Sūrya Kuṇḍa Paraśurāma- tīrtha Vaṁsamūla Kasohana Lokodhāra Kuśatīrtha Sūrya kuṇḍa Śrī-tīrtha Śivalīngatīrtha	Barsola Kason Lodhar Shimla	Hansi Narwana Kaithal	Hissar Jind Kuru- kshetra	7 km. NW of Jind 16 km. N of Jind 18 km. E of Narwana
Śrītīrtha	81.37	Śrī tīrtha Sālagrāma	14.23 14.23	Śrī-tīrtha Śivalīngatīrtha	Shimla	Narwana	Jind	A tīrtha at Shimla 12 km. NNE of Narwana

Kapilā	81.38	Kapilāhrada	14.24	Mukuta tīrtha Kapileśvara	Mator Kalayat	" "	" "	13 km. NE of Narwana 22 km. NE of Narwana
Sūrya tīrtha	81.39	Sūryatīrtha	14.26	Sūrya Kuṇḍa	Sajooma			A tīrtha at Kalayat 11 km. SW of Kaithal
Gobhavana	81.40	Gavāmbha- vana	14.29	Gavāmbhā- vana Gameśatīrtha Sāmkhinidevi	Guhna Sanghni	Kaithal Narwana	Kuru- kshetra Jind	14 km. W of Kaithal 13 km. W of Kaithal
Sāmkhīṇī (Devī tīrtha)	8.41	Sānginī Brahmāvarta	14.34 14.35	Brahmā tīrtha Sūrya tīrtha Yaksha tīrtha				
Arantuka	81.42	Arantuka	14.37	Bailuka tīrtha Dhruvatīrtha Brahmāvarta	Barta Māṇaśa (Babhrot)	" Kaital	" Kuru- kshetra	NW guardian (yaksha) of Kuru- kshetra. It is a place of vāsuki yaksha. 18 km NW of Kaithal 17 km. NW of Kaithal
Brahmāvarta	81.43	Munipraśam- sita Brahmā- varta	14.39	Śruti tīrtha	Soytha	"	"	16 km. NW of Kaithal
Sutīrtha	81.44	Sutīrtha	14.40	Bhavati tīrtha				A river and a tīrtha at Theh Polar 15 km. NW of Kaithal
Ambumati	81.46	Ambuvana- tīrtha	14.42	Kāśīśvara	Theh Polar	Guhla	"	15 km. NW of Kaithal
Kāmeśvara	81.46	Kāmeśvara	14.42		Rasulpur	"	"	A tīrtha near Theh Polar
Mātṛ tīrtha	11.47	Mātṛtīrtha	14.43					

<i>Mahābhārata Aranyaka- Parva</i>	<i>Re- ference</i>	<i>Vāmana- Purāna Saromāhātmya</i>	<i>Re- ference</i>	<i>Traditional</i>	<i>Village/ Site</i>	<i>Tehsil</i>	<i>District</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
Sitavana	81.48	Sitavana	14.44	Śritīrtha	Siwan	"	"	11 km. N of Kaithal
Śvāvilomā- paha	81.51	Svānulomā yana	14.47	Śvānuloma	"	"	"	A tīrtha at Siwan, to the north of the village
Daśāśvamed- dhika	81.52	Daśāśvamed- hika	14.48	Daśāśvamed- ha Daṇḍaka Sahasramedha Mahaṛṣi	"	"	"	A tīrtha at Siwan near Civil Hospital
Mānuṣa tīrtha Āpagā	81.53	Mānuṣa Āpagā	14.50 15.1	Mansrovar Āpagā	Manas Gadhri	Khaital	"	6 km. W of Kaithal A river as well as a tīrtha, 4 km. W of kaital
Brahmodum- bara	81.58	Brahmodum- bara	15.7	Brahmodam- bar	Sila Kheri	"	"	A tīrtha at Sila- kheri, 3 km. SW of Kaithal
Saptarṣi Kuṇḍa	81.58	Saptarṣi Kuṇḍa	15.8	Saptarṣi Kuṇḍa				A tīrthat at Sila- khera
Kedāra tīrtha Kapīsthala	81.59 81.61	Diṇḍideva Kapīsthala	15.15 15.14	Diṇḍi tīrtha Vṛddhakedāra	Kaithal	"	"	A tīrthas at Kaithal Tehsil head-quarters of Kurukshetra district
				Nakuli tīrtha Puṇḍarika Anjani tīrtha				Birth place of Hanuman, a mound in front of Muni- cipal park, Kaithal. It is in the west of
Saraka	81.62	Saraka	15.20		Shergarh	"	"	

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Rudakoṭi Ilāspada	81.63 81.63	Rudrakoṭi Iḍāspada	15.23 15.24	Koti tīrtha Iḍāspada	"	"	"	Anyājanma. Cunn- ingham locates it at Shergarh 2 km. SE of Kaithal
Kimdāna	81.65	Kedāra	15.26	Kimdāna	"	"	"	A tīrtha at Sarak. A tīrtha at Sarak. on Jakholi road and the backside of ITI, Kaithal
Kimjapa Kalasī	81.65 81.66	Kimrupa Kalaśītīrtha	15.27 15.18	Kānti Kūpa Kalaśī	"	"	"	A tīrtha at Kalsi, 3 km. NE of Kaithal Railway Station
Ambājanma	81.67	Anyajanma	15.28	Dhaṇajanma	Deodh- Kheri Barot	"	"	A tīrth at Kalsi According to vāma- napurāna this tīrtha is visited after Kaithal and before sarak
Puṇḍarika	81.68	Paṇḍarika	15.40	Puṇḍarika	Nagrād Dhos Pundari	"	"	4 km. E of Kaithal
Triviṣṭapa	81.70	Triviṣṭapa	15.41	Triviṣṭapa	Teotha	"	"	14 km. NE of Kaithal
Vaitaraṇi	81.70	Vaitaraṇi Śūlapāṇidhvaja	15.41 15.42	Nadi tīrtha Śūlapāṇiśiva tīrtha				17 km. E of Kaithal

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<i>Mahābhārata Āranyaka- Parva</i>	<i>Re- ference</i>	<i>Vāmana- Purāṇa Saromāhātmya</i>	<i>Re- ference</i>	<i>Traditional</i>	<i>Village/ Site</i>	<i>Tehsil</i>	<i>District</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
		Rasāvarta	15.43	Kotaka tīrtha Rasāvarta	Sakra	"	"	24 km. E of Kaithal A tīrtha at Sakra
		Alepaka	15.44	Paplāpeka tīrtha		"	"	
Phalakīvana	81.72	Phalakīvana	15.45	Phalki tīrtha	Pharal	"	"	24 km. NE of Kaithal
Dṛṣadvatī tīrtha	81.73	Dṛṣadvatī	5.46	Dṛṣadvatī	"	"	"	
Sarvadeva- tīrtha	81.74	Suamahat- tīrtha	15.49	Somavati tīrtha	"	"	"	
Pāṇikhāta	81.75	Pāṇikhāta	15.51	Pāṇikhāta Surya tīrtha Sukra tīrtha Mausara	"	"	"	
Mīsraka	81.76	Mīsraka	15.54					
		Vyāsavana	15.55		Baras	Karnal	Karnal	A tīrtha at Pharal. Tradition locate it at Nisang 25 km. W of Karnal A tīrtha at Baras
Manojava	81.78	Manojava	15.56	Manokāmanā Pañchaka tīrtha Sūrya Kuṇḍa Koṭi tīrtha Nimakhāra Rṇamochana	" " " Nisang Rasina	" " "	" "	24 km. W of Karnal 14 km. S of Thane- sar 21 km. E of Kai- thal A tīrtha at Meoli, 16 km. E of Kaithal
Madhuvatī (Devi tīrtha)	81.79	Madhuvana	15.57	Mohiṇā	Mohna	Kaithal	Kuruk- shetra	
Kauśiki- Dṛṣadvatī- Saṅgama	81.80	Kauśiki- Dṛṣadvatī- Saṅgama	15.59	Saṅgama				

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				Havya tīrtha	Hajvan	"	"	11 km. SE of Pundri
				Kābya tīrtha	Koer	"	"	11 km. SE of Pundri
				Sūrya Kuṇḍa		"	"	A tīrtha at Habri, 10 km. SE of Pundri
Vyāsasthali	81.81	Vyāsasthali	15.60	Vyāsasthali	Basthali	Karnal	Karnal	27 km. W Karnal.
Tila Prastha	81.83	Kimḍatta Kūpa	15.60	Tilottamā tīrtha				
Siddhimṛṇai (Devi Tīrtha)	81.83	Devi tīrtha	15.61	Devi tīrtha	Sitamai	"	"	19 km. SW of
Ahan	81.84	Anna tīrtha	15.63	Annā	Ahun	Kaithal	Kuruk- shetra	Nilokheri 10 km. SE of Pundri
Sudina	81.84	Sudina	15.63	Sudina tīrtha Darśana Hiranyavati tīrtha	Dusen Dusen	"	"	26 km. E of Kai- thal
Mṛgadhūma	81.85				Nigdhu	Karnal	Karnal	
		Kṛtajapya	15.64	Kāraṇḍava	Karsa- Khalsa	"	"	19 km. W of Nilo- kheri 21 km. W of Nilokheri
		Gaṅgā tīrtha	15.64	Gaṅgā tīrtha				
		Koṭi tīrtha	15.65	Koṭi tīrtha Rudrapada Padma tīrtha				
Vāmana tīrtha	81.86	Vāmanaka	15.65		Barsham			
		Jyesthāśrama	15.67	Jyesthāśrama	"			
		Koṭi tīrtha	15.71	Koṭi tīrtha	"			
		Sūrya tīrtha	15.73	Sūrya	"			
Viṣṇupada- tīrtha	81.87	Viṣṇupada- tīrtha	15.66	Viṣṇu tīrtha	"	"	"	13 km. W of Nilo- kheri

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<i>Mahābhārata Aranyaka-Parva</i>	<i>Re-ference</i>	<i>Vāmana-Purāṇa Saromāhātmya</i>	<i>Re-ference</i>	<i>Traditional</i>	<i>Village/ Site</i>	<i>Tehsil</i>	<i>District</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
Kulumpuna	81.88	Kulottāraṇaka	15.74	Kulottāraṇa	Kol or Kirmach	Kaithal Karnal	Kurukshetra Karnal	32 km. NE of Kaithal 10 km. S of Than-sar
Pavanahrada	81.88	Pavanahrada	16.1	Pavanahrada	Pabnawa	Kaithal	Kurukshetra	13 km. SE of Pehowa
Marud tīrtha	81.88	Hanumatsthāna	16.3	Masala tīrtha				a tīrtha at Pabnawa
Amrāṇa tīrtha	81.89	Amṛta tīrtha	16.3	Amṛtasthali				
Śāli Sūrya-tīrtha	81.90	Śālihotra-tīrtha	16.4	Śālihotra	Sarsa	"	"	11 km. SE of Pehowa
				Vaiśampāya-nahrada	Batheri	"	"	29 km. NE of Kaithal. It was known as Byas Kheri.
				Sūrya tīrtha	Theh-Malboda	"	"	8 km. S of Pehowa. It was also known Malkhal kheri
Śrikuṅja	81.91	Śrikuṅja	16.6	Śrikuṅja tīrtha	Kakewar	Guhla	"	18 km. N of Kai-thal; on Sarasvatī
Naimiṣa Kuṅja	81.92	Naimiṣa Kuṅja	16.7	Naimiṣa	Nawach	"	"	16 km. N of Kai-thal
Mehat	81.93	Mahat tīrtha Vedavati	16.10 16.9	Vedavati	Balwati	Kaithal	"	12 km. N of Kai-thal
Kanyā tīrtha	81.94	Kanyā tīrtha	16.10		Kanwar-tan	Guhla	"	16 km. N of Kai-thal

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Brahma tīrtha	81.95	Brahma-tīrtha	16.13	Brahmsthāna tīrtha	Thana	Guhla	Kurukshetra	12 km. S of Pehowa
Soma tīrtha	81.96	Soma tīrtha	16.15	Soma tīrtha	Gumthala	"	"	6 km. S of Pehowa
Saptasārasvata	81.97	Saptasārasvata	16.17	Saptasārasvata tīrtha				A tīrtha at Mangna. 5 miles W. of Pehowa
Puṣkara tīrtha	81.97	Puṣkara tīrtha	16.21	Puṣkara tīrtha				
Maṅkaṇaka	81.98	Maṅkaṇaka	16.38	Magana	Mangna/Magana	"	"	8 km. SW of Pehowa
		Suprabhā Kaṅchanākshī Viśālā Mānasahrada Suveṇu Oghanāmā Vimlodaka		Suprabhā Kāmchavākshī Viśa Sumanoharā Suveṇu Ogha Vimalodakā				
Auśanasa	81.116	Auśanasa	18.1	Auśanasa				A tīrtha in Sataur village
Brahma-Kārtikeya	81.117	Brahma-kārtikeya						
Kapāla-mochana	81.118	Kapāla-mochana	18.13	Kapālamochana tīrtha	Sataur	"	"	3 km. SW of Pehowa
Agni tīrtha	81.119	Agni tīrtha	18.13	Śukra tīrtha				A tīrtha in Pehowa
Viśvāmitra	81.120	Viśvāmitra	18.14	Agni tīrtha Viśvāmitra tīrtha				A tīrtha on the south bank of Sarasvatī at Pehowa
Brahmayoni	81.121	Brahmayoni	18.20	Brahmayoni	Pehowa	"	"	A tīrtha at Pehowa
Pr̥thudaka	81.122	Pr̥thudaka	18.16	Pr̥thudaka-tīrtha				A town of Kurukshetra district

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<i>Mahābhārata Āraṇyaka- Parva</i>	<i>Re- ference</i>	<i>Vāmana- Purāno Saromāhātmya</i>	<i>Re- ference</i>	<i>Traditional</i>	<i>Village/ Site</i>	<i>Tehsil</i>	<i>District</i>	<i>Remarks</i>					
Madhusrava	81.130	Avakīrṇa Yāyāti Madhusrava	18.25	Avakīrṇa	Pehowa			A tīrtha at Pehowa					
			18.25	Yāyāti				"	A river and a tīrtha at Pehowa				
			18.33	Manovati tīrtha				"					
				Atisena tīrtha									
				Sindhu tīrtha									
				Somakārtikeya tīrtha									
				Umtaka/ Pāpāntaka									
				Apasarodya									
				Bhārgava									
				Devāpi tīrtha									
Sarasvati- Aruṇā Saṅ- gama Samudra Cha- tvārah Śata Sahasra Sati kama Ranukā tīrtha	81.131	Vasiṣṭhodvāha Aruṇā	19.1	Vasiṣṭha Prāchi	Urnaya	Thanesar	Kuruk- shetra	A tīrtha at Arnaya, 5 km. N of Pehowa					
			19.42	Saṅgama				"	5 km. N of Pehowa				
				Samudra					A tīrtha at Urnay				
				Chatvārah— Samudra				20.1					
				Śata Sahaśra- Kam				20.3	Sainsa	Guhla	"	6 km. NE of Pehowa	
				Śati kama				20.3	Tikorān	"	"	10 km. E of Pehowa	
				Somatīrtha				20.4	Surmi	"	"	11 km. E of Pehowa	
				Reṇuka tīrtha				20.5	Renuka tīrtha Sūryakuṇḍa	Ranaycha	"	"	11 km. SE of Pehowa
													A tīrtha at Bhor

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Vimochana Tajjasa (Auj- asa) Pañchavata Kuru tīrtha Svargadvāra Anaraka	81.139	Rṇamochana	20.6	Bhūrisravā Indratīrtha Kāmeśvara Kuśatīrtha	Bhor Indrabart Kamoda Kucharan	Kaithal		13 km. E of Pehowa	
			20.7					"	10 km. W of Thanesar
			20.12					"	14 km SW of Thanesar
			20.14					"	13 km SW of Thanesar
			20.23						
			20.24						
Rudra Patni	81.148	Rudra Patni	20.24	Rudrakara	Narkatari	Thanesar	Kuru- kshetra	3 km W of Thanesar	
Viśveśvara	81.148	Maheśvara	20.24					In the west of Narkātāri	
							In the south of Narkātāri		
Mahādeva	81.149	Brahmā	20.25					In the east of Narkātāri	
Padmanābha	81.150	Padmanābha	20.25	Padmanābha Kūpa				To the south of the fort at Thanesar	
Viṣṇu loka Svastipura	81.150	Kāmyakavana Asthipādeś- vara	20.30	Kāmeśvara				Kamoda	
			25.25	Astipur				Cunningham lo- cates it 1 mile to the west of Thanesar	
Pavana Gaṅgāhrada	81.152			Pāvaṭi				To the south-east of the University	
			81.153	Bāṇa Gaṅgā				To the north of the Gurukula	
Koṭi	81.153	Koṭi tīrtha	25.48	Koti				Near Rājā-Karna ka-Qila	
Āpagā	81.154			Āpagā				To the north of the city	
Sthāṇuvaṭa	81.155	Sthāṇuvata	21.33	Sthāṇu tīrtha	Thānesar				

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<i>Mahābhārata Āranyaka- Parva</i>	<i>Re- ference</i>	<i>Vāmana- Purāna Saromāhātmya</i>	<i>Re- ference</i>	<i>Traditional</i>	<i>Village/ Site</i>	<i>Tehsil</i>	<i>District</i>	<i>Remarks</i>	
Badari Pāchana	81.156	Prāchi Saras- vati	21.19	Badi Prāchi				To the north of the city On sarasvati, to the north of the city	
Indramārga	81.157	Indra tīrtha	25.36	Indra tīrtha					
Ahorātra	81.158	Āditya	25.32	Aditya Mār- kaṇḍā				To the north of the city. on Sarasvatī and east of Sthānu- vata	
Ekorātra	81.159								Ekorātri
Tejorāṣē	81.160								Mārkaṇḍa
Ādityāśrama	81.161								Mārkaṇḍa
Somatīrtha	81.162	Mṛkaṇḍu Somatīrtha	25.31 25.1	Somatīrtha				To the north of the city. on Sarasvatī and east of Sthānu- vata	
Dadhīcha	81.163			Dadhīcha				On Sarasvati, to the north of the city	
Sārasvata	81.164								Sārasvata
Kanyāśrama	81.165			Vṛdhi Kanyā				To the north-east of Neelam talkies and to the north of Lal Saḍak.	
Sannihiti	81.166	Sannihiti	23.9	Sannihiti	Sanehat			To the south-east of the city.	
Yoni	81.168			Brahma yoni					
Arantuka	81.171			Ratnajhaka					
Dwārapāla	81.171			Koti					
Koṭi	81.171			Gaṅgā hrada					
Gaṅgāhrada	81.172								

Chaturmukh	21.28	Agni Prāchīna Chaturamukpa						To the north of the city. On Jhansa road
Chakra Durgā tīrtha	21.14	Chakrā tīrtha Durgā Kupa						To the north of the city. On Sarasvati to the north of the city
Sukratīrtha	21.23	Lakshya tīrtha Rāma tīrtha Sukra tīrtha						To the north of Sthāurvatā
Pitṛ tīrtha	21.18	Vaśīstha Prāchi						West of Sthānuvata South of Sthānuvata
Skanda	25.2							
Daksha	25.2							
Brahmā	25.11							
Vaṣeṣvara	22.12							
Nakulīśa	25.13							
Rudrakara	25.14							
Gokaṛṇa	25.15							
Vibhīṣaṇa	25.20							
Khara	25.22							
Harīta	25.26							
Vāpita	25.27							South of Sthānuvata South-west of Sthānuvata
Rudralīṅga	25.28							West of Sthānu- vata
Siddheśvara	25.30							

All in the Vicinity of Ratgal Thanesar

Mahābhārata- Aranyaka Parva	Re- ference	Vāmana Purāna Saramahāmya Chitrangade- śvara Rambhesvara Indra Parāsara Vāyu Himavatesvara Kārtavīrya Supārśva Viṣṇu Mitra Varuṇa	Re- ference	Traditional	Village/ Site	Tehsil	District	Remarks
			25.35					South of Sthānuvāṭa
			25.35					West of Sthānuvāṭa
			25.36					West of Vāyu
			25.37					West of Himavatsvara
			25.38					North of Kārtavīrya
			25.40					East of Supārśva
			25.41					East of Viṣṇu
			25.42					East of Viṣṇu
			25.43					East of Viṣṇu
			25.44					East of Viṣṇu

APPENDIX II

SACRED TANKS IN KURUKSHETRA

Kurukshetra, as indicated elsewhere, is an extensive area of about 48 *Kos* (about 100 miles) in length and the same in breadth. It is said in the Puranas that those who visit this area, or reside here even for a while, go straight to heaven after death. But the most sacred act is taking a dip in its holy tanks, which are as follows :

KURUKSHETRA TANK

Kurukshetra tank, as it is locally called, is the centre of interest for the pilgrims as soon as they arrive in the holy land. It is now about 3,860 feet in length and 1,860 feet in breadth. In ancient times, there were long flights of steps on four sides of the tank but now these exist on the northern and western banks only. The long line of trees on the northern bank and one small island and another big island in the middle of the tank have enhanced its beauty considerably. There are temples and places of Puranic and historical interest on these islands. The smaller island is linked with the Shravan Nath Math (an old Ashram of Sannyasis) by a bridge and the bigger island is linked by another bridge which runs from the middle of the northern bank dividing the tank into two parts. Ruins of some structures standing on the bigger island are said to have been of a small castle of Emperor Aurangzeb, who posted armed soldiers here to collect taxes or *Jazia* from the pilgrims bathing in the tank and taking its sacred water to their homes. The rates of taxes are said to have been rupee one for

a pot of water and rupees five for a bath. Pilgrims evading payment of taxes were punished and sometimes shot.

This tank is believed to have been excavated first by King Kuru long before the epic battle of Mahabharata and it must have undergone great changes in its long life of existence. The tank is considered very sacred and in the year 1948, a part of the ashes of the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi were immersed in it.

There are maths, temples and dharmashalas on the northern bank of the tank. Of these, the Dharmashala of Baba Kali Kamli Wala, the Gita Temple of Shri Birla and the Vyas Gaudiya Math of Bengali Sadhus as also the Gita Bhawan are very important.

There is also a sacred place for the Sikhs on the north-western end of this tank.

Both the Sikhs and Hindus take keen interest in the sacred tank.

SANNIHIT TANK

The tank is much smaller than the Kurukshetra tank and in length and breadth it is 500 and 150 yards, respectively. Pilgrims generally are led first to this holy spot at the time of the Solar Eclipse.

It is believed that on the day of *amavasya* all *tirthas* assemble at the Sannihit tank and if a man performs *shraddhis* at the time of Solar Eclipse and takes bath in this tank, he acquires the fruit of 1,000 Ashvamedha sacrifices. This tank has been called *Sannihit* because of the assembly of the entire range of the *tirthas* on the *Amavasya* day.

The tank looks like a small lake of glistening water in which are reflected the domes and spires of the nearby temples. Situated at a mile's distance from Kurukshetra railway station on Pehowa road, it is believed to be the permanent abode of Lord Vishnu. On its one side is the temple dedicated to Shri Dhruva Narain. The idols of Lord Vishnu, Dhruva Bhagat, Lord Hanuman and Goddess Durga have also been placed here. This beautiful Temple was built by Shri Panchayat Brahman (Regd.), Kurukshetra. On the other side is another temple dedicated to Sri Laxmi Narayan. On the southern side is a vast space known

as Baba Kali Kamli Panchayat Kshetra, which is affiliated to the Rishikesh temple. Two Dharmashalas and two temples with idols of Lord Krishna preaching the Gita to Arjuna and of Lord Shiva have been built here recently.

STHANESHWAR TANK

Sthaneshwar is the name of a sacred tank in front of the temple of Sthaneshwar Shiva. It is said that this holy tank was so sacred that a few drops of its water cured the leprosy of an ancient king named 'Bana'. It is further said that the Pandavas worshipped Lord Shiva here and received His blessing of victory in the great War of Mahabharata. The tank is only a short distance from Thanesar city, which itself derives its name from this tank.

CHANDRA KUPA

This is a well in the bigger island inside the Kurukshetra Tank. It is one of the four sacred wells in Kurukshetra. There is a temple on the side of the well. Here Yudhishtira is stated to have erected a victory pillar which no longer exists.

BAN GANGA (BHISHMA KUND)

This holy place is about three miles from the Kurukshetra tank. It is claimed that Bhishma Pitamaha lying on the bed of arrows felt thirsty and asked Arjuna to quench his thirst. As he would not drink the water of the mortal world, the great hero Arjuna pierced the earth with his powerful arrow and water gushed out in the shape of a spring. Bishma drank the holy water and thanked Arjuna for his great deed. Pilgrims bathe in this holy tank and earn the combined merit of all the *tirthas*.

It was here that Bishma Pitamaha rested on his bed of arrows till the end of war and gave his last advice to Yudhishtira, the eldest of the Pandavas.

BAN GANGA (DYALPUR)

A couple of miles south of the Kurukshetra tank is the village of Dyalpur where Baisakhi and Dussehra fairs are held annually on the side of a tank said to have been caused by an arrow of Arjuna

for providing drinking water for the chariot horses during Arjuna's single combat with Jyadratha.

KAMAL NABHI

This sacred tank too is adjacent to Thanesar city. It is believed that Brahma, the Creator, was born here out of a Lotus, i.e., Kamal which grew on the Nabhi (navel) of Lord Vishnu. Pilgrims worship Bhagwana Vishnu and Brahma in the temple situated on the tank and earn their blessings.

NARKATARI TANK

This tank is about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Thanesar city on the northern side of Kurukshetra-Pehowa Road. Pilgrims bathe in this holy tank and perform religious rites. This place is also associated with Bhishma Pitamaha lying on the bed of arrows.

JYOTISAR TANK

Jyotisar, the land of the Bhagwad Gita is the most sacred spot on the epic battlefield of Kurukshetra. It is said that this is the place where Lord Krishna delivered the message of the Gita to Arjuna on the eve of the great battle of Mahabharata. It was once a part of the ancient city of Thanesar.

The Jyotisar tank is about 1,000 feet by 500 feet and there stands a Banyan tree which is believed to have been there for more than 5000 years. There is another Benyan tree over the ruins of a Shiva temple. Pilgrims who assemble on the occasion of the Solar Eclipse at Kurukshetra also come here to pay homage. They offer water to the 'Immortal' Banyan tree, read or listen to the verses of the Gita.

According to tradition, it was at this spot under a Banyan tree in the battlefield of Kurukshetra that the chariot of Arjuna was made to stand by the Lord between the two armies. It is believed that the tree still stands there as the only living witness of that celestial scene. Now a marble chariot with the idols of Krishna and Arjuna stands here under the tree. Some monks belonging to the Hindu Mission, who have dedicated their lives to the propagation of the message of the Gita, look after this place. Gita Jayanti is celebrated here every year with enthusiasm.

Jyotisar is situated at a distance of five miles from Kurukshetra railway station on Pehowa road. A beautiful Canal Rest House has been constructed nearby on the bank of Bhakra Canal. The old tank has been renovated and converted into a beautiful lake for the benefit of the tourists.

PEHOWA TANK

This tank at Pehowa is 17 miles from Kurukshetra. A Pilgrimage to Kurukshetra without a dip in the Pehowa tank is not considered fruitful. From time immemorial, the Pehowa tank has enjoyed the privilege and honour of being one of the most sacred places in Kurukshetra. Pilgrims come here from far and near to perform *shradhs* and pay respects to the ancient temples.

PHALGU TANK

This is a very sacred tank at village Pharal. It is in bad shape, but the Government has directed its attention towards it very recently and it is hoped that soon it will be restored to its old, great position.

PUNDARAKA TANK

The Pundaraka Tank is equally sacred. It is situated at Pundri. It is also not in a good condition and has recently attracted the Government's attention.

KALAYAT TANK

This is a very sacred tank. The tradition says that Kapila Muni performed *yajna* at its bank. Hundreds of people visit it every month.

APPENDIX

Kurukshetra Parikrama

Visit to a holy *tirtha* is not considered complete unless a *Parikrama* (sacred walk) is taken around it. A definite route is chalked out which is followed by the devotees for *parikrama*. We give below the *Parikrama* route of the holy Kurukshetra, as it stands today :

Serial No.	Name of Tirtha to be visited	Tehsil/District	Village/Town	Distance from previous village/town
1	2	3	4	5
1	Thanesar	Thanesar	Thanesar	...
2	Sanihat	Thanesar	Thanesar	...
3	Ruderhiry or Kalusar	Thanesar	Thanesar	...
4	Vidurkoop	Thanesar	Thanesar	...
5	Vayusar or Kurukshetra	Thanesar	Thanesar	...
6	Koti Tirtha	Thanesar	Thanesar	2 Kos
7	Gangarohi	Thanesar	Thanesar	2 Kos
8	Aditi Kund	Thanesar	Thanesar	1 Kos
9	Abhaychakara	Thanesar	Amin	1 Kos
10	Vimalsar	Thanesar	Saga	1 Kos
11	Parasar	Karnal	Bahulolpur	2 Kos
12	Koshki Sangam	Karnal	Babu Gram	1 Kos
13	Dharitidhar or Vamsar	Karnal	Babu Gram	1 Kos
14	Balkhilya	Karnal	Babu Gram	1 Kos
15	Papmanadev or Jobra	Karnal	Babu Gram	1 Kos

1	2	3	4	5
16	Suryakund or Mahrani	Karnal	Babu Gram	1 Kos
17	Pushpkavas	Karnal	Agondh	3 Kos
18	Dashrath Tirth or Jasra	Karnal	Agondh	—
19	Vishnu Tirtha and Agam	Karnal	Agondh	3 Kos
20	Dakhsh Ashram Tirtha Sadhwala	Karnal	Vachar	1 Kos
21	Adipalaw or Bavan Tirtha	Kaithal	Darglani	3 Kos
22	Hans Tirtha Das Ashwamegh Tirtha	Kaithal	Salwan	2 Kos
23	Brahma Tirtha	Kaithal	Rasaloo	1 Kos
24	Parashar	Jind	Pajookalan	3 Kos
25	Koyi Tirtha	Jind	Safidon	2 Kos
26	Rattankund Tirtha Samiyag Tirtha	Panipat	Sainak	2 Kos
27	Panchnidhi	Jind	Hat	2 Kos
28	Jind	Jind	Kalwah	2 Kos
29	Roopvati Tirtha	Jind	Asan	3 Kos
29	Jamdagin Tirtha	Jind	Jamni near Asan	...
30	Varah Tirtha	Jind	Viraha	3 Kos
31-40				
41	Pindtarak	Jind	Pindara	2 Kos
42				
to	Bhut swar	Jind	Jind	2 Kos
48				
48				
to	Barahavan	Jind	Punvand	1 Kos
54				
55	Pushkar Tirtha	Jind	Pushkar kheri	Half Kos
56				
to	Ramhirdyas	Jind	Ramhirdyas	1 Kos
59	Bansbol	...	Barsola	3 Kos
60	Kayasodh	...	Kasom	2 Kos
61	Kishan Tirtha or Surya Kund	Kaithal	Kharana	2 Kos
62			Kachrana	2 Kos

1	2	3	4	5
63	Lokodwar Tirtha	Kaithal	Kharana	5 Kos
64	Shivkund	...	Lohdhar	3 Kos
65	Muketeshwar Laxmi Narayana	...	Khera	1 Kos
66	Shri Tirtha	...	Bator	1 Kos
67	Kapilhirdya Tirtha	...	Kasan	1 Kos
68	Surya Thirtha	...	Kulapat	3 Kos
69	Gowahan Tirtha	...	Sanjuman	3 Kos
70	Shankhi and Brahama- warat Tirtha	Kaithal	Gohana	2 Kos
71	Haryakhsh Dhrow to Tirtha Mulak	...	Sandhan	3 Kos
72	Haryakhsh Dhrow to Tirtha Mulak	...	Bahar	1 Kos
74	Gandharav Tirtha	Kaithal	Gahoran	1 Kos
75	Brahmavarat Tirtha	Kaithal	Brahmavart	1 mile
76	Piter Tirtha	Kaithal	Sunya	3 Kos
77	Kamleshwar Tiratha	Kaithal	Polter Majrama	1 Kos
78	Kamleshwar	Kaithal	Lakhnow	4 Kos
79	Matar Tirtha, Varnu to Tirtha, Shiv Kund	Kaithal	Rasoolpur	1 mile
82	Vasatvan to Kavashparas Tirtha Pawwaran Tirtha Uma Tirtha Dasharath Tirtha	{ Kaithal }	Sawan	1 Kos
88	Manas Tirtha	Kaithal	Manas	1 Kos
89	Upgamma Tirtha	Kaithal	Gadli	1 Kos
90	Dab Tirtha to Brahama Tirtha etc.	Kaithal	Khera Shella	Half mile
97	Hirdyakedar to Vishnu Tirtha	Kaithal	Kasba	1 Kos
110	Saravdev etc.		Kaithal or Kapithal	
111	Kulavtaran	Kaithal	Kulavtaran	2 Kos

1	2	3	4	5
112	Yaksh or Kalikund	Kaithal	Yaksh	2 Kos
113	Suryakund or Sarak	Kaithal	Shergarh	1 mile
114	Koi Koop	Kaithal	Sabajgarh	1 mile
115	Uppersidhi	Kaithal	Sabajgarh	1 mile
116	Khadanmas Sakrani	Town Kaithal	Sabajgarh	1 Kos
117	&			
118	Dhanjanam	Town	Dhoodkheri	1 Kos
119	Kultaran or another Koop Tirtha	Kaithal	Kayonak	3 Kos
120	Bhadar Tirtha	Town	Barot	3 miles
121	Pundrik Tirtha or Naghirdya Tirtha	Kaithal	Barot	2 Kos
122	Treevashatak Tirtha & Vaitrani	Town	Yayona	3 Kos
123		Kaithal		
124	Shukar Tirtha	Kaithal	Sakra	4 Kos
125	Papkolak Tirtha	—	—	—
126	Phalgoo or Hirshayad- vati Samant to Som Tirtha	Kaithal	Pharal	5 Kos
130	to Vaighat Suryakund Rishi Tirtha			
131	Shachi Tirtha	Kaithal	Shanch	4 Kos
132	Neemsar Tirtha	Karnal	Nisafig	4 Kos
133	Man kayjitnay ka to Tirtha etc.	Karnal	Varas	2 Kos
137				
138	Rinmochan	Karnal	Rasaina	2 Kos
139	Koop Tirtha	Karnal	Todayani Karora	8 Kos
140	Mat Tirtha	Karnal	Thana	1 Kos
141	Surya Kund	Karnal	Hawari	2 Kos

1	2	3	4	5
142	Sidhvati Koshki & Roopvati	Karnal	Sohana	2 Kos
143	Koshki Tirtha	Kaithal	Vayoli	2 Kos
144	Ram Tirtha	...	...	...
145	Dat Koop	...	Bastli	8 Kos
146	Vedvati Tirtha	Karnal	Sitahat	8 Kos
147	Sitahat Tirtha	...	...	...
148	Panch Tirtho Koshki Hirya	Karnal	Kowar	1 Kos
149	Awaran Tirtha	Karnal	Vasamon	4 Kos
to	Ganganam Dashrath Tirtha Swarn Nadi			
152	Pad Tirtha Mandakini Tirtha	Thanesar	Nagdhu	5 Kos
153	Vamankheter Surya Tirtha Cheshta Tirtha	Thanesar	Bolshyam	1 Kos
to				
158	Koi Tirtha etc.	Thanesar	Kirmich	1 Kos
159	Kultaran Tirtha Rabhsar Laxmansar Bararish	Thanesar	Rari	1 Kos
160	Pavanhirday	Kaithal	Pipnada	6 Kos
161	Sathanaamrit	Kaithal	Chandlana	2 Kos
162	Koop	...	...	...
163	Kultaran Tirtha	Kaithal	Kol (Kamal gram)	2 Kos
164	Karandoo or Kultaran	Thanesar	Karsa	2 Kos
165	Shalihotar or chalchia Tirtha	Pehowa	Sarsa	4 Kos
166	Vyashirdya	Pehowa	Vyaskheri	1 Kos
to				
168	Punya Tirtha Koop Tirtha			
169	Tapan Tirtha Surya Kund	Pehowa	Malamkheri	3 Kos
170	Shri Kunj Tirtha	Pehowa	Vanpura	4 Kos

1	2	3	4	5
171	Neemsar Tirtha	Pehowa	Narch	1 Kos
172	Namis or Sriganj	Pehowa	Bhanpuha	1 Kos
173	Vidhyavati and Kanya Tirtha	Pehowa	Saunti	3 Kos
174	Brahmasar Tirtha	Pehowa	Thana	1 Kos
175	Shon Tirtha Marjan Tirtha	Pehowa	Gumthala Kriiri Sisa Gram	3 Kos
176	Shivparpti	Pehowa	Mandhana	3 Kos
177	Muketshwar Mahadev
178	Shuker Tirtha Gopal Mochan Tirtha	Pehowa	Satora	3 Kos
179	Agniratha	}		
to	Manushtirtha			
200	Nignitirtha			
	Devpatia			
	Avantaktirtha			
	Sindhudwip			
	Devatirtha			
	Vishwatirtha			
	Bahmayonitirtha			
	Ahokarantirtha			
	Dalipitirtha			
	Pagtirtha			
	Prasathtirtha			
	Papantiktirtha			
	Kapiltirtha			
	Mahadevtirtha			
	Prithvisaramadadev			
	Kartiktirtha			
	Vashistpad			
	Mandlatander			
	Kuruwaman			
	Somkartik tirtha			
	Vanititirtha			
	Ghrisar Valasharva or Madhupravatirtha			
	Yati Tirtha			
201	Arnan Sangam Tirtha	Prithudak or Pehowa	Satora	1 Kos
to	Saptok Lodhar			

1	2	3	4	5	
205	Samudar Samudar Samudar Tirtha	Pehowa Kaithal	Urnaya	3 Kos	
206	Satsabajitirtha to Rinmochantirtha				
210	Somtirtha Kavatkund or Kashiwala	Pehowa Kaithal	Sahana	2 Kos	
211	Ranukatirtha	Pehowa Kaithal	Aranapcha	1 Kos	
212	Vimochan	Pehowa Kaithal	Sapsa	4 Kos	
213	Suryakund	Thanesar	Bhursanipur	4 Kos	
214	Uchstirtha	Thanesar	Rakba Hawari	4 Kos	
215	Sanu	...	...	...
216	Panchtap to	...	Thanesar	6 Kos	
217	Gurutirtha to Nabhkamal	} Thanesar			
224	Swargdwarb Nadi Bhawaj or Nadi Bharangi Anarak (Narkatari) Bhishmkund Brahmakup Ruderkup Ruderpatikup Padnabhakup Sarvavedi Ralambaya				
225	Sarvdevtirtha Laxmitirtha		Thanesar	Saravdev	6 Kos
226	Kamvan Kamyaratirtha		Thanesar	Kamondh	4 Kos
227	Jothirdyatirtha		Thanesar	Josar or Jyotisar	2 Kos
228	Batara		Thanesar	Astipur	1 Kos
229	Laxtirtha		Thanesar	Kasba Thanesar	1 Kos
230	Yani makoripavan yani Pawani	

1	2	3	4	5
231 to 234	Char devghat	Thanesar	Palol	1 Kos
235	Koshi	Thanesar	Khere Ramnagar	1 Kos
236 to 259	Gangaharidwar Koyi kup Up gaya Shragni Brahmayoni Kuber Bahar Rigatirtha Kalavatotirtha Shukertirtha Chaturmukh	} Thanesar	Town Thanesar	1 Kos
	Chakartirtha Parchivashiht Indertirtha Ramtirth Neemkhad Ekpoot Chiterkabans Aditya or Markund Soap Braji Sarswat Saraptirtha Brahmakanya Ruderling			

SOME IMPORTANT FIRMANS, ORDERS AND MEMOS

I

The Brahmins of Thanesar having petitioned the Governor General praying that the fish in the surrounding tanks, which are all places of Teeruth (pilgrimage) may not be caught, nor the trees destroyed, nor horned cattle slaughtered at this place, His Lordship in consideration of the great sanctity in which Thanesar is held by the Hindus, is pleased to direct that travellers be enjoined to regard the wishes of the Brahmins in the above mentioned respect and as far as possible in all others touching their prejudice.

(Sd) G. Clerk
Political Agent, Ambala

10th January 1832

II

PUBLIC PROCLAMATION

जाहिर दरनवाहे थानेसर तीर्थे हाए बस्वार परस्तिशगाह हनुदान अन्द ब हंगाम रोनक अफरोजी नबाव मुस्ताब मुअल्ली अलकाव लाट गवनर जनरल वहादुर दामेइकवालहू व मुकाम थानेसर व मुजीब मारुजा ब्रह्मणान् व हनुदान सकना अानजा बराए मुहाफजत माहियान व जानवरान ब हायम तयूर वगैरह अज पेशगाह साहिव महतशम अलया व नजर आसाईशे रिआया व पासे मजहब अदान ममानत कूल्ली दूदा बूद । के कसे माहि अज तालाव न स्वाहद गरिफत व दरखत न स्वाहद तरा शीद व जानवरान तयूर व दवाव रा न स्वाहद कुस्त ।

लिहाजा मुताबीक हुम साहिव आलीगान मुअज्जम अलया इस्तहार वादा मि गवद । के हिस्वुल हुम साविक दरि वाव अहदि अज सादर व दारद आनजा व चा सकनाए आनजा के बरखलाफे हनुदान वासांद व तकलीफ व इजा रसानो हनुदान व गरिफतन माहियान बर खिलाफ मजहब आनहा व तरागीदन अजजार मुकामात तीर्थेहाए व गरिफतन माहियान अज तालाबहाए व कुस्तन जानवरान व तयूर व खमूस गाप्रोकसी वगैरह मुस्तकव न गरदद* ।

यकम अग्रैल, १२३२ ईस्वी

It is evident that there are innumerable places of Hindu pilgrimage and worship in the vicinity of Thanesar. On the occasion of the visit of His Excellency the Governor General of India to Thanesar and on the presentation of an application by the Brahmins and Hindus of the place for the protection of fish, fowl and cattle etc. His Excellency with full consideration of the comforts of the subjects and respecting their religious views and sentiments was graciously pleased to strongly direct that nobody shall ever catch fish from the tanks, neither cut trees thereon, nor shoot or kill birds and fowls. Hence, in pursuance of the above order of His Excellency it is publicly proclaimed that according to previous orders none of the present or future generation whether travelling in the land or resident therein would dare injure the religious feelings of the Brahmins and Hindus of the place by cutting trees on the sacred Tirthas, catching of fish in the tanks, killing of fowls and cattle, especially cows etc., etc.

1st April, 1833

III

Robkar of the Ijlas of Mr. George Campbell, Deputy Commissioner, District Kaithal dated 4th November 1847.

No Azan shall be called up to a distance of 200 yards on all four sides of Kurukshetra Tirtha. The Mohammadans of Thanesar

*The firman is in Persian script, but owing to some technical difficulty on the part of the press, it has been given here in the Devanagari script.

are allowed to bring meat from Pipli for personal needs, but no public sale of meat can be permitted in the Thanesar town. Fish would not be caught from the Tirthas and no trees shall be cut without providing ownership.

IV

During the time I was incharge of the Thanesar district from 1849 to 1856 a period of 7 years I invariably prohibited the catching of fish in the tanks surrounding the town as also the slaughter of kine and in accordance with sanad which the Brahmins of the town hold and in consideration of the sanctity in which the tanks of Tirthas in the vicinity of the town are held I would strongly recommend an observance of the wishes of the Brahmins who form a large body of the community on this Land, as I have generally speaking found them as a body reasonable in their requests and in accordance with the orders of the civil authorities.

(Sd.) Deputy Commissioner.

Thanesar
March 8, 1856.

V

Thanesar, Distt. Karnal.
Brahmin Panchait Versus Rahim Baksh Butcher.
Removal of shop for selling meat.

In my opinion it is not proper to open a butcher's shop at this place. Ist of all, the Brahmins have got a copy of order of His Excellency, the Governor General which strictly prohibits the opening of shop for the sale of meat, secondly I have learnt on investigation that the butchers had before beginning the construction of the shop given an agreement that they wont use it for the sale of meat. Moreover, this shop is situated on the road where selling meat will be a source of nuisance, under these circumstances the shop cannot be allowed to be used for this purpose. Hence it is ordered that the shop be closed at once. Rahim Baksh be informed.

Deputy Commissioner.

VI

Office of Syed Mohd. Rashid, Asstt. District Superintendent,
Delhi District, Camp Ludhiana.

27/12/1877

I was appointed at Pipli in February in the beginning of March 73 and left the place on 17th November 73 being promoted in the Police Department. During my stay at Pipli, no case of cow slaughter ever arose, nor I ever saw cow being slaughtered there and I well remember that during this period (being summer season) no troops made a halt at Pipli. The report be submitted to the Deputy Commissioner, Ambala.

Sd/- Syed Mohammed Rasid
Assistant District Superintendent.
Delhi District.

VII

In obyance to order conveyed in Parwana, dated 8th December 77 I say on oath that I have never seen any cow being slaughtered in the so-called slaughtered compound of Pipli. Several times on my evening walks in the vicinity of Pipli I happened to pass by the enclosure, but found no fresh signs of cow slaughter. Of course, I remember so much that old bones were lying near the enclosure. This enclosure is situated on the Gurdaspura side of Pipli where there is a Kachcha pond. There was no compound wall of the enclosure but only some low mounds, as are generally made to enclose fields. When I have never seen any cow being slaughtered what can I say of beef being ever sold there. Whenever British troops made a halt here, the butchers accompanying them and not those of Thanesar slaughtered cows in one corner of the Parao (halting station) I stayed at Pipli from 1st February 1865 upto 15th May 1873 and made the above literary true statement on strength of my experience of over 8 years.

Sd/- Bahadur Hussain Tehsildar.

VIII

In obedience to order conveyed in Parwana dated 8th December 77 received through sharf Adalat Saddar, I beg to report that I served as Tehsildar of Pipli from 2nd December 73 upto the beginning of October 1875. As far as my memory can help me I state on solemm affirmation that I never saw any butcher of Thanesar slaughtering cow at Pipli, nor I ever saw any enclosure for slaughtering cows there. I have never seen any butcher of Thanesar slaughtering kine or selling beef on the arrival of troops there. Beef was generally used by the British Troops which was supplied by the butchers accompanying them. There was a shop near Sarai on the Southern side where a butcher used to sell mutton or meat of goat and sheep only. Excepting this I have never seen any body else etc.

(Sd.) Qutab-Ul-Din Munsif, Ambala
8.2.1878.

IX

Office of the Deputy Commissioner

No body can be allowed to go against the sanad granted by His Excellency Governor General Bahadur. Forwarded to the Tehsildar for compliance.

(Sd.)
30th October 1877.

X

Application of Hussain Baksh, Alahi Baksh etc. to be allowed to slaughter kine at Thanesar.

Office Orders

Thanesar town is populated by Hindus and is near Pipli. To allow people to have an enclosure for slaughtering kine at Pipli would be injuring the feelings of the Hindus and would go against their religious prejudices. Moreover now there is no enclosure there. Papers be filed.

Sd/. MajoA.B. Gurdan,
Deputy Commissioner, Ambala.
8th March 1878.

XI

Camp Pipli, District Ambala.
Application of Alahi Baksh son of Mir Baksh and Akbar son of Nabi Bux etc. butchers of Thanesar to be allowed to construct an enclosure for cow slaughtering near Pipli.

Court of D.C. Ambala
I inspected the place applied to be used by the applicants in the presence of the butchers and the Brahmins of Thanesar. I quite agree with the opinion of the Tehsildar of Thanesar and don't allow the erection of a slaughter house here. Application rejected.

If applicants intend to apply for some other place they can do so.

(Sd.) G.C. Brown,
Deputy Commissioner Ambala,
Camp Pipli.
13.4.1887.

XII

In connection with the application of Hussain Bux Butcher of Thanesar to the effect that he may be allowed the slaughter of cows at Thanesar and Pipli we agree and give it in writing that no cow has ever been slaughtered at Thanesar or at Pipli nor such thing should ever be done in future and nor shall we ever sell beef in Thanesar or Pipli.

Butchers of Pipli

XIII

His Excellency the Governor of the Panjab visited Thanesar in the course of his Monsoon tour on the 5th August 1921. He was very pleased to inspect the old historical and sacred tanks and temples of Hindus and at the request of the Kurukshetra Restoration Society performed the foundation stone laying ceremony of the Kurukshetra Pushtkalya in the presence of the Brahmin priests, men of learning and leading members of all India Sanatan Dharma Mahamandal gathered there to welcome His Excellency.

In commemoration of his visit Sir Edward Maclagan, K.C.S.I.

K.C.I.E., was pleased to make a donation of Rs. 250 which was divided among the Brahmin Panchait of Thanesar in the same proportion in which the donation of Rs. 500 was distributed by the Governor General of India in 1851.

Sir Edward Maclagan trusts that all officers of Government will scrupulously observe the sanctity of the place and assist in the preservation of works of archaeological and historical interest in Thanesar and its neighbourhood.

Government House
Lahore, 14th November 1921

(Sd.) G.C.S. Black, Major,
Private Secretary to His
Excellency the Governor
of Punjab

XIV

From
The Deputy Commissioner,
District Karnal.

To
L. Beni Parshad, Vice President
Municipal Committee, Thanesar
other signatories to the Memorial
to His Excellency the Governor
of the Punjab.
No. 739 G, dated Karnal, The
20th May 1925.

MEMO

With reference to your petition of 1st March 1924, I am directed to communicate to you the following orders of His Excellency the Governor-in-Council.

ORDER

An order prohibiting the import of beef at any time or from any place whatever would neither be fair to other communities nor within the competence of Government.
The Deputy Commissioner, however, has been instructed to make arrangements to secure that the meat of animals sacrificed at Pipli during the Id should be taken into Thanesar after dark and

by a definite route selected so that no reasonable grounds for complaint be given to members of any community.'

2. A copy of the orders issued by me after consultation with the Commissioner, Ambala Division, in compliance with the instructions of Government, is herewith attached for your information.

(Sd.) Deputy Commissioner,
24.4.25.

XV

ORDER

At no time, whether on the occasion of the Id-Ul-Zuha or otherwise, shall kine be sacrificed or beef imported for sale within the Thanesar Municipality.

2. At the Id-Ul-Zuha kine may be sacrificed at the slaughter house of Mauza Pipli after being taken into the village as quietly as possible after it is dark. The flesh of the slaughtered animals may then be brought into the Thanesar Municipality after it is dark by the route fixed by the police. It shall be brought in covered receptacles and only for the personal consumption of the sacrificers.

(Sd.) Deputy Commissioner,
24.4.25.

APPENDIX V

FREEDOM FIGHTERS OF DISTRICT
KURUKSHETRA

Sr. No.	Name of Freedom fighter and parentage	Address
1	2	3
1.	Sh. Amar Singh S/o Sh. Malla Singh	V. & P.O. Assandh, Teh. Kaithal, Distt. Kurukshetra
2.	Sh. Ajit Singh Ajit S/o Sh. Budh Singh	Shahabad, Markanda, Teh. Thanesar, Distt. Kurukshetra.
3.	Sh. Budh Singh S/o Sh. Bhagwan Singh	Vill. Nalvi, Teh. Thanesar, Distt. Kurukshetra.
4.	Sh. Charan Dass S/o Sh. Aya Singh	V. & P.O. Assandh, Teh. Kaithal, Distt. Kurukshetra.
5.	Sh. Dharam Singh S/o Sh. Kesar Singh	Allowal, Kharkarha, P.O. Teh. Guhla, Distt. Kurukshetra.

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1	2	3
6.	Smt. Gian Wanti W/o Sh. Om Parkash	C/o M/S Sarma Mal Jiwan Ram, Shahbad. Distt. Kurukshetra.
7.	Sh. Harbans S/o Sh. Neat Ram	Vill. Gagazina P.O. Rasina, Teh. Kaithal Distt. Kurukshetra.
8.	Sh. Jathedar Santa Singh S/o Sh. Kehar Singh	C/o Giani Mehar Singh, Kurukshetra, Distt. Kurukshetra.
9.	Sh. Jarnail Singh S/o Santa Singh	Vill. Gumthala Gadhu, Teh. Kaithal, Distt. Kurukshetra.
10.	Smt. Jiwani W/o Sh. Kasturi Lal	Vill. & P.O. Assandh Teh. Kaithal, Distt. Kurukshetra.
11.	Sh. Jagir Singh S/o Sh. Kala Singh	H. No. 412, Ward No. 5 Moh. Majri, Shahabad Markanda, Distt. Kurukshetra.
12.	Sh. Jagir Singh S/o Sh. Banta Singh	Vill. Dabri, Teh. Kaithal, Distt. Kurukshetra.
13.	Sh. Kamar Lal S/o Sh. Ram Chand Saraf	Tea Shop, Pehowa, Teh. Guhla, Distt. Kurukshetra.
14.	Sh. Kaka Ram Arya S/o Sh. Narain Dass	Moh. Pansari, Kaithal Distt. Kurukshetra.
15.	Sh. Kartan Singh S/o Sh. Makhan Singh	Vill. Naisi, Teh. Thanesar, Distt. Kurukshetra
16.	Sh. Lachhman Singh S/o Sh. Lakha Singh	Vill. & P.O. Jotisar Teh. Thanesar, Distt. Kurukshetra.

1	2	3
17.	Sh. Labh Chand S/o Sh. Jamna Dass	H. No. 182, Ward. No. 3, Ladwa, Teh. Thanesar Distt. Kurukshetra.
18.	Sh. Lakshman Singh S/o Sh. Nar Singh	Vill. Salwan, Teh. Kaithal, Distt. Kurukshetra.
19.	Sh. Lachhman Dutt Sharma, S/o Sh. Bal Mukan Sharma	Vill. Landi, P.O. Landi, Teh. Thanesar. Distt. Kurukshetra.
20.	Giani Mehar Singh S/o Sh. Soheli Singh	New Colony, Kurukshetra, Distt. Kurukshetra.
21.	Sh. Mohinder Singh S/o Sh. Bakshish Singh	Vill. Helwa, P.O. Sainsar, Teh. Guhla Distt. Kurukshetra.
22.	Sh. Nihal Singh S/o Sh. Arur Singh	Vill. Ditta, P.O. Kaithal, Distt. Kurukshetra.
23.	Smt. Phool Wati W/o Late Durga Singh	Vill. Salwan Teh. Kaithal, Distt. Kurukshetra.
24.	Sh. Parma Nand S/o Sh. Kewal Ram	Vill. Thall; Teh. Thanesar, Distt. Kurukshetra.
25.	Sh. Phagga Ram Sewak S/o Sh. Ajudhia Parshad	Ex-Vice President Teh. Congress Committee, Kaithal, Distt. Kurukshetra.
26.	Sh. Shiv Dayal Sharma S/o Sh. Bhora Ram	Committee Bazar, Shahabad Markanda, Distt. Kurukshetra.

1	2	3
27.	Sh. Sewa Singh, S/o Sh. Amar Singh.	H. No. 37, W. No. I, Com- mittee quarters, Shahabad Markanda, Distt. Kurukshetra.
28.	Sh. Sardara Singh S/o Sh. Budh Singh	Vill. Baloi, P.O. Dab Kheri, Teh. Thanesar, Distt. Kurukshetra.
29.	Sh. Surain Singh S/o Sh. Sawan Singh	V. Mandi Sadar, P.O. Khas, Teh. Guhla, Distt. Kurukshetra.
30.	Smt. Surinder Kanwar, Wd/o Sh. Kanwar Lal Singh	Sialkoti Farm, P.O. Pehowa, Teh. Guhla, Distt. Kurukshetra.
31.	Sh. Shinghara Singh S/o Sh. Ala Singh	Vill. Pharal, Teh. Kaithal, Distt. Kurukshetra.
32.	Sh. Tara Singh S/o Sh. Dhiyan Singh.	V. & P.O. Pharal, Teh. Kaithal, Distt. Kurukshetra.
33.	Sh. Giani Veer Singh, S/o Sh. Lakha Singh.	Pehowa, Teh. & Distt. Kurukshetra.
34.	Sh. Virendra Kumar Satyawadi, S/o Sh. Surendra Kumar.	Moh. Khuttarwara Shahabad, Distt. Kurukshetra,
35.	Sh. Waryam Singh S/o Dula Singh.	Vill. Bode, Teh. Thanesar, Distt. Kurukshetra.
36.	Sh. Balkrishna Muztar S/o Sh. Raja Ram	Raj Mahal Kurukshetra

APPENDIX VI

INA PERSONNEL

Sr. No.	Name of Freedom fighter and parentage	Address
1	2	3
1.	Shri Ajmal Singh S/o Sh. Tehal Singh	Vill. Dobkheri, Teh. Thanesar, Distt. Kurukshetra.
2.	Shri Ajmer Singh S/o Sh. Kishan Singh	Vill. Lehara, P.O. Ladwa, Teh. Thanesar. Distt. Kurukshetra,
3.	Shri Banta Singh S/o Sh. Jewan Singh	Vill. Dewana Teh. Guhla, P.O. Karah, Distt. Kurukshetra.
4.	Sh. Bishan Singh S/o Sh. Narain Singh	Vill. & P.O. Satora, Teh. Guhla, Distt. Kurukshetra.
5.	Sh. Banta Singh S/o Sh. Data Singh	Vill. & P.O. Kaulapur, Teh. Thanesar Distt. Kurukshetra.
6.	Sh. Bail Singh S/o Sh. Khushal Singh	Badhni, G. No. 6 Teh. Guhla, Distt. Kurukshetra

1	2	3
7.	Sh. Bakhtawar Singh S/o Sh. Bhura Ram	Vill. Katabpur, P.O. Kaithal, Distt. Kurukshetra.
8.	Sh. Chanan Singh S/o Sh. Jota Singh	Vill. Garhi Longri, Teh. Guhla, Distt. Kurukshetra.
9.	Sh. Diwan Singh S/o Sh. Jiwan	Vill. Pati Afgan, P.O. & Teh. Kaithal, Distt. Kurukshetra.
10.	Sh. Dev. Singh S/o Sh. Mansa Singh	V. & P.O. Haripur Teh. Thanesar, Distt. Kurukshetra
11.	Sh. Gopal Singh S/o Sardar Sant Singh	Vill. Machhrauli, P.O. Sharifagarh, Teh. Thanesar, Distt. Kurukshetra.
12.	Sh. Harnam Singh S/o Sh. Lachhman Singh	Vill. & P.O. Bakhli, Teh. Guhla, Distt. Kurukshetra.
13.	Sh. Hari Singh S/o Sh. Teju	V. & P.O. Karera Teh. Kaithal, Distt. Kurukshetra.
14.	Sh. Har Gopal S/o Sh. Laza Ram	V. & P.O. Pundri Teh. Kaithal, Distt. Kurukshetra.
15.	Sh. Harnam Singh S/o Sh. Jaimal Singh	Vill. Bhuna, Teh. Guhla Distt. Kurukshetra.
16.	Sh. Jaswant Singh S/o Sh. Banta Singh	Kaithal Distt. Kurukshetra.

1	2	3
17. Sh. Jagir Singh S/o Sh. Hazara Singh.	Vill. Karnak Teh. Guhla, Distt. Kurukshetra.	
18. Sh. Joti Singh S/o Sh. Devi Singh.	Vill. & P.O. Bodhni. Teh. Kaithal Distt. Kurukshetra.	
19. Sh. Jai Ram Singh S/o Sh. Deoti Singh	Vill. Bhagal, P.O. Guhla, Distt. Kurukshetra.	
20. Shri Jota Singh S/o Sh. Jagat Singh	Vill. Kaksala Anayat Teh. Guhla Distt. Kurukshetra.	
21. Sh. Kehar Singh S/o Sh. Wazira Singh	V. & P.O. Deoban, Teh. Kaithal Distt. Kurukshetra.	
22. Karam Singh S/o Late Ram Singh	Vill. Tukar, P.O. Bodhni Teh. Kaithal, Distt. Kurukshetra.	
23. Sh. Kartar Singh S/o Wasakha Singh	Vill. Galedwa, P.O. Pehowa, Distt. Kurukshetra	
24. Sh. Dhanna Ram.	Vill. Bakhali, Teh. Guhla, Distt. Kurukshetra.	
25. Sh. Kishan Singh S/o Sh. Hakam Singh	Vill. Kheri Sharaf Ali, Teh. Kaithal Distt. Kurukshetra.	
26. Sh. Kirpal Singh S/o Sh. Gurdit Singh	Vill. Bhoona. Plot No. 1, P.O. Guhla, Distt. Kurukshetra.	

1	2	3
27. Sh. Mukhtyar Singh S/o Sh. Mal Singh	Vill. Harigarh Bhoarkhi, Teh. Guhla, Distt. Kurukshetra.	
28. Sh. Mani Ram. S/o Sh. Jarsa Ram	Vill. Karar, Teh. Kaithal, Distt. Kurukshetra.	
29. Sh. Mit Singh S/o Sh. Jamait Singh	Vill. Sayana Khurd P.O. Sayana, Dedan, Teh. Guhla, Distt. Kurukshetra.	
30. Sh. Sub Nand Singh	Vill. Mohinpur, Teh. Kaithal, Distt. Kurukshetra.	
31. Sh. Mian Singh S/o Sh. Wazira Singh	Vill. & P.O. Bhana Teh. Kaithal, Distt. Kurukshetra.	
32. Sh. Mam Raj S/o Sh. Narata Ram	Vill. Chandana Gate V. & P.O. Kaithal Distt. Kurukshetra	
33. Sh. Mewa Singh S/o Sh. Kirpa Ram	Vill. Kasan, Teh. Kaithal Distt. Kurukshetra.	
34. Sh. Moola Singh S/o Sh. Kirpal Singh	Vill. & P.O. Kachron Teh. Thanesar, Distt. Kurukshetra.	
35. Sh. Prabha Singh, S/o Sh. Sunder Singh	C/o Saradar Singh Vill. Kakyor Majra Teh. Guhla, Distt. Kurukshetra.	
36. Sh. Nand Singh S/o Sh. Surjan Singh	Vill. Jamereri, Teh. Guhla, Distt. Kurukshetra.	

- | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|-----|---|--|
| 37. | Sh. Pritam Singh
S/o Sh. Ujagar Singh | Diwana, P.O. Karasship,
Teh. Guhla,
Distt. Kurukshetra. |
| 38. | Sh. Pishora Singh
S/o Mal Singh | Vill. Badhni,
Teh. Guhla.
Distt. Kurukshetra. |
| 39. | Sh. Pritam Singh
S/o Sh. Sodagar Singh | V. & P.O. Jyotisar,
Distt. Kurukshetra. |
| 40. | Sh. Punna Singh
S/o Sh. Asa Singh | Vill. Kalar Majra
Teh. Thanesar
Distt. Kurukshetra. |
| 41. | Sh. Pritam Singh
S/o Sh. Asha Singh | Vill. & P.O. Gurdaspur,
Teh. Thanesar,
Distt. Kurukshetra. |
| 42. | Sh. Rattan Singh
S/o Sh. Lal Singh | Vill. & P.O. Pharal
Distt. Kurukshetra. |
| 43. | Sh. Ronak Singh
S/o Sh. Atma Singh | Vill. Basantpura
Teh. Thanesar,
Distt. Kurukshetra. |
| 44. | Sh. Ram Chand
S/o Sh. Rulia Ram | Vill. Franswala
P.O. & Teh. Kaithal
Distt. Kurukshetra. |
| 45. | Sh. Rulda Singh
S/o Sh. Bishan Singh | Vill. Dhoa Pipli, P.O. Kara,
Teh. Guhla,
Distt. Kurukshetra. |
| 46. | Sh. Ram Singh,
S/o Sh. Gurdit Singh | Vill. Chaharthal
Teh. Thanesar,
Distt. Kurukshetra. |

- | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|-----|--|--|
| 47. | Sh. Shingara Singh
S/o Sh. Jawala Singh | Vill. & P.O. Papnawa
Distt. Kurukshetra. |
| 48. | Sh. Shankar Singh
S/o Sh. Surajoo | Vill. Hassola,
Teh. Kaithal,
Distt. Kurukshetra. |
| 49. | Sh. Santokh Singh
S/o Sh. Labh Singh | Vill. Mandi,
P.O. Lukhi,
Teh. Thanesar.
Distt. Kurukshetra. |
| 50. | Smt. Surjit Kaur
Wd/o Sh. Teg Singh. | Vill. Garhi Longri.
Teh. Guhla,
Distt. Kurukshetra. |
| 51. | Sh. Sher Singh
S/o Sh. Daya Singh | V. & P.O. Karora,
Teh. Kaithal,
Distt. Kurukshetra. |
| 52. | Sh. Sunder Singh
S/o Sh. Gokal Singh | Vill. Narar,
Teh. Kaithal,
Distt. Kurukshetra. |
| 52. | Sh. Sarup Singh
S/o Sh. Chanchal Singh | Vill. Khushal Majra
Teh. Guhla,
Distt. Kurukshetra. |
| 54. | Sh. Uttam Singh
S/o Sh. Hira Singh | Vill & P.O. Bakhli,
Teh. Guhla,
Distt. Kurukshetra. |

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