

- آل لنكا الراجبوت ١٥٢١

- آل لنكا بالملتان وأوجه ١٥٢٢

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M. CANARD

Langa

Community of India

The Langa community is famous for their traditional folk-songs and music, they live in Rajasthan and Gujarat. In Rajasthan, the Langa have two endogamous subgroups, Sonaia and Sarengia. Their oral tradition depicts their conversion from Rajput warriors. They migrated from Sindh to Barmer about twenty-one generations ago. Some of them claim their descent from the Lankaya Kshatriya who were brought as prisoners by Lord Rama after defeating Ravana, and thus derive their name from Sri Lanka.

Since they earned their livelihood by seeking alms, they were also called Manguiare or Manganhaar. Presently, they are distributed in the Barmer and Jodhpur districts of Rajasthan. Marwai, an Indo-Aryan language, and the Devanagari script are used. The Langa are non-vegetarian and their staple cereals are bajra and wheat.

The Sonaia Langa specialise in playing the *sehani*, a type of flute, and the *sarengia* or *sarengi*, a string instrument. The Sonaia Langa have two divisions, Mehrika and Munglika. The Mehrika accept brides from the Munglika but do not reciprocate. Among the Sarengia Langa, there are two territorial divisions, Gujarati Sarengia and Sindhi Sarengia. This division also corresponds to the specific musical instrument used.

There are two divisions among them, *nakkh* and *jati*; the *nakkh* traces the ancestry while *jati* depicts the clan. Their married women wear a nose-stud (*sili*) and toe-rings (*kadi*) as symbols of their marital status. The custom of bride-price as well as guarantee money (*mehar*) exists among them. During betrothal (*sagai*), the bride's parents get some cash from the groom's parents, but it is considered as engagement expen-

diture. *Mehar* of rupees eleven to one hundred is paid before the marriage. Only young widows are permitted to remarry.

The rule of inheritance among them is male equigeniture. Their women work only in the household. Child delivery is conducted at home, assisted by a midwife from some other community. They observe birth pollution (*sutak*) for forty days. All male children undergo tonsure (*jarula*) after four or five months and circumcision before eight years of age. Their marriage rituals include engagement (*sagai*), consent of the bride for marriage (*nikah*), payment of *mehar* to the bride and the marriage contract which is prepared by a *qazi*.

The dead are buried and death rites include the recitation of verse (*fatiha*) from the *Qur'an* and the recitation of *kulfatiha* after burial. They observe death pollution for forty days.

The main economic pursuit of the Langa is cultivation. Some of them are artists who sing regularly on radio and television. In urban areas, many of them work in the shops of the Bania, while some of them have started trade and business. They are also good horse-trainers. The Langa belongs to the Sunni sect of Islam and are affiliated to Ratan Pir of Barmer. Only menfolk take part in singing and playing music.

Traditionally, they accept water from the Rajput, Bania and other Muslim communities but not from the Meghwal, Bhangi and some other communities. They have a favourable attitude towards formal education and modern health care, but are not in favour of family planning.

The Langa or Langha of Gujarat are concentrated in Bhuj and in certain parts of Saurashtra. The Kachchi language, belonging to the Indo-Aryan family of languages, is their mother tongue and they use the Gujarati script. They are non-vegetarian. The community has thirty to forty clans, such as Azab, Hajee, Khavra, Makhan, Isani and Dafrani. Playing musical instruments and singing are their traditional as well as primary occupations. Unskilled labour is another source of income. A few young Langha go to Bombay during the marriage seasons to perform there.

Dr. Ahmad Nabi Khan

MULTAN

UNDER THE RULE OF THE LANGĀHS

MULTAN

Shaikh Yūsuf's short rule and occupation of power at Multān by Rā'ī Sahra or Sahira has been related by Ferishtā,¹ Nizām al-Dīn,² Nahāwandī,³ Ma'ṣūm,⁴ Sujān Rā'ī⁵ etc. However, 'Abd al-Ḥaḡ omits the episode and maintains that on the decline of the political power at Dehli Budhan Kī ān Sindhi, a leader of the Baluch tribe of the Langāhs collected his followers at Uchchh and marched upon Multān. He expelled Kī ān Khānan and occupied the fort. He assumed the title of Mahmūd Shāh and founded an independent rule. This occurred in 841/1437.⁶ He ruled peacefully for well over sixteen years and died in 865/1460.⁷ We do not know the details of his rule but the achievements of his successor indicate that Mahmūd Shāh's rule must have been successful in maintaining law and order which provided a solid base for peace and prosperity.

On Mahmūd Shāh's death his son Qutb al-Dīn succeeded to the throne⁸, who also ruled for sixteen years and died in 874/1469. His eldest son Sulṭān Ḥusain then succeeded to rule the territories.⁹ He has been regarded as the ablest and strongest ruler of the dynasty who extended his kingdom upto Shorekot, Chiniot, Karor and the whole territory upto Dhankot.¹⁰ It appears that immediately after assuming power, he planned to annex the neighbouring territories to this kingdom and the possession of these strong forts greatly enhanced his power and prestige.¹¹ However, the envious eyes of Buhlūl Shāh were constantly on the prosperous province of Multān. Soon after his accession to the Dehli throne, in 856/1451, he set out for Multān to conquer it,¹² but could not achieve his goal as he was forced to return to his capital to check the sudden attack of Mahmūd Sharqī on Dehli.¹³ After about six years he again planned to recover Multān but he had hardly reached Lahore when again he had to rush back to the capital due to renewed interference of the Sharqī Sulṭān.¹⁴

equal grandeur at Multan. On return, the Qāzi submitted that after visiting the magnificent palaces of Gujerāt he was of the view that the entire annual revenue of the kingdom of Multān would not suffice to meet the cost of even one such palace. Husain was very disappointed, but was consoled by his vizier, 'Imad al-Mulk Būbak who remarked 'although the kingdoms of Gujerāt, Mālwa, Bengāl and the Deccan could boast of their wealth and prosperity yet the land of Multān and Uchchh excelled them all for the presence of pious men and scholars, particularly the descendants of Shaikh Bahā'al-Dīn Zakriya, as well as the representatives of the line of Bukhārī saints'. He also mentioned the names of two outstanding scholars of the time, Maulānā Fathallah and the latter's pupil, Maulānā 'Azizallah.²⁰

Husain Langāh reigned for thirty years and gave his people a real taste of peace and prosperity. At his old age, he assigned the task of government to his elder son Firūz Khān and retired. Unfortunately, however, Firūz was an inexperienced and haughty youth who soon picked up quarrel with his vizier 'Imad al-Mulk. During the quarrel, the vizier's son Bilal was killed by a hired slave of the young Sulṭān. The vizier in turn secretly managed to poison Firuz. The tragedy compelled the old Sulṭān to assume once more the reigns of the Government. He called Jam Bayazid from Shorkot for help to get rid of the vizier. The Jām hurried to Multān and lost no time in putting 'Imad al-Mulk under arrest. Sultan Husain appointed Bāyazid his new minister as well as the guardian of the minor Mahmūd son of Firūz who was then declared the heir-apparent. A few days later, on Saturday 26 Safar 904/Saturday 13 October 1498 Husain died.²¹

Sulṭān Ḥusain was succeeded by his grandson Mahmūd. The young king soon indulged himself in pleasures and gathered a band of unworthy men around him. His conduct estranged his relations with Jām Bāyazid who in disgust gave up his residence at the court and moved to his private residence located in the outskirts of the city. It was from here that he continued to administer the affairs of the kingdom. However, the king was poisoned against Bāyazid. Disgusted and dismayed, Bāyazid left for Shorkot. The news alarmed Mahmūd who immediately sent a detachment to intercept the fugitive. Bāyazid defeated the detachment and continued his march towards Shorkot. On his arrival there, he severed his relations with Mahmūd and declared his allegiance to Sikandar Lodi. He sent an emissary to Dehli to inform the Lodi Sulṭān of the new situation.²²

camping. Soon afterwards he marched against Thāffa, as Djām Firūz had refused to recognize his suzerainty, defeated him in a closely contested battle and occupied the town. The Djām fled to Guḍjarāt [q.v.] where he died in exile.

In 931/1524 Husayn Shāh marched against Multān [q.v.], capturing and destroying the forts of Siwrāṭ, Ma'ū and Uḍḥ [q.v.] on the way. The latter place was given to plunder and the timber and débris of the fort carried to Bhakkar [q.v.]. Hearing of the invasion Maḥmūd Khān Langāh, the ruler of Multān, marched out to meet the enemy with an army 80,000 strong but at the very first stage of the expedition fell ill and died. His successor Sultan Husayn Langāh II [q.v.] considered it prudent to make peace with the invader. Frustrated and baulked of his booty Husayn Shāh marched against the desert fort of Dērāwar (in the former Bahāwalpūr state) which was said to contain a huge hidden treasure. After a stiff resistance the fort surrendered and the treasure was secured. Burning with ambition and anxious to extend his rule Husayn Shāh again thought of conquering Multān. Towards the end of 932/1526 he set out on his campaign and laid siege to the town which dragged on for a year. Unable to stand the terrible famine during which even dogs and cats were used as human food, the garrison ultimately surrendered. The city was ruthlessly devastated; all the inhabitants between the ages of seven and seventy were either made prisoners or put to the sword and a very large booty fell into the hands of the invader. According to Firishṭa (*Gulshan-i Ibrāhimi*, ii, 321), Husayn Langāh was also taken prisoner and the government of Multān entrusted to Kh'ādja Shams al-Dīn Māhūni (cf. *Ta'rikh-i Ma'sūmi*, 160).

After his victorious return to Bhakkar, Husayn Shāh learnt that Rāy Khaṅgār of Kutch (Kačh) was preparing to attack Thāffa. Husayn Shāh immediately left for that town, engaged the enemy in battle and completely routed him. Humāyūn [q.v.] on his arrival in Sind in 947/1540, after his defeat at the hands of Shēr Shāh Sūr [q.v.], sought the help of Husayn Shāh in the hope that as a former servant of his father he would not hesitate to come to his help. Husayn Shāh, however, doubting Humāyūn's intentions and sincerity, procrastinated. Enraged at his cold behaviour Humāyūn occupied the fort of Bhakkar [q.v.] and appointed his uncle Yādgār Nāsir Mirzā, as its commandant. On a rapprochement being effected Husayn Shāh agreed to render some help to Humāyūn but as soon as the latter left Sind, he promptly drove Yādgār Nāsir Mirzā out of Bhakkar and reoccupied the fort.

In 962/1554 the Arghūns and Tarkhāns of Thāffa conspired and rose in revolt against Husayn Shāh, who had been ailing for long and was unable to discharge the functions of state. A compromise was, however, effected and the revolt consequently fizzled out. Enfeebled and paralysed Husayn Shāh did not live long and died at the village of 'Alipōṭo on 12 Rabī' I 962/4 February 1555 after a rule of 34 years, aged 66.

He was first buried under a dome in the Makli necropolis, near Thāffa, but after a lapse of two years the coffin was transferred to Mecca where it was interred near the grave of his father. A grand building was erected over his grave which is no more in existence.

A brave and cultured ruler, Husayn Shāh was well-versed in the traditional sciences and held the *mashā'ikh*, 'ulamā' and scholars, on many of whom he had settled stipends, in great esteem. A poet in

Persian, he used to compose verses occasionally under the *nom de plume* of Sipāhi. He had two wives, one of whom was his cousin Māh Bēgam, a daughter of his uncle Muḥammad Muḥim Mirzā b. Shāh Bēg. Her daughter Čūcak Bēgam was married to prince Kām-rān, who had been blinded by Humāyūn, and in spite of her father's entreaties, remained firm in her resolve to accompany her ill-starred husband to Mecca, where he had been exiled.

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(A. S. BAZMEE ANSARI)

—NĀSIR AL-DĪN HUSAYN SHĀH ČAKK [see KASHMĪR].

X HUSAYN SHĀH LANGĀH I, son of Rāy Sahrā entitled Kuṭb al-Dīn, the founder of the Langāh dynasty of Multān, who had usurped the throne by treacherously ousting his son-in-law, Shaykh Yūsuf Kurayshī, succeeded to the rule on the death of his father in 874/1469. Adventurous by nature, he began his reign by launching a succession of campaigns against the neighbouring forts of Shōr (modern Shorkōṭ), Činiōf [q.v.] and Kahrōf (modern Kahrōf Pucca), which he easily reduced. At this time Shaykh Yūsuf Kurayshī, who had taken refuge with Buhlōl Lōdī, the king of Delhi, persuaded his protector to march against Husayn Langāh and assist him in recovering his lost kingdom. Buhlōl set out twice from Delhi with the intention of conquering Multān, but had to abandon the attempt owing to the threatened invasion of his capital on both the occasions by the Sharḳī sultāns, Maḥmūd and Husayn Shāh [q.v.]. It is difficult to fix the exact dates of these two abortive attempts as the authorities widely differ. The third time, when Husayn Langāh was occupied with quelling the rebellion of his brother, who had assumed the title of Shihāb al-Dīn and proclaimed himself king at Kahrōf, which had been assigned to him, Buhlōl deputed his son Bārbak Shāh to reduce Multān. He was joined *en route* by the forces of Tātār Khān Lōdī, the governor of the Panḍjāb. Husayn Langāh, hearing of the invasion and having completely crushed the revolt of Shihāb al-Dīn, reached Multān by forced marches and gave battle to the invaders, who suffered a crushing defeat and fled to Delhi. It was during his reign that Ismā'īl Khān and Faṭḥ Khān, the two Balūč brothers and founders respectively of Dēra Ismā'īl Khān and Dēra Faṭḥ Khān [see DĒRAḌJĀT] came from Mukrān [q.v.] and joined his service. This event marks the settlement of the Balūčs in large numbers in the neighbourhood of Multān. In his old age Husayn

Husayn Shah Langah 81682

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