

National Mission for Clean Ganga

(Reg. Society)

Ministry of Jal Shakti

Department of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation
Government of India

 Indian
National Trust
for Art and
Cultural Heritage
INDIA@75
Azadi Ke Rang Bharatiya Sanskriti Ke Sang

**नमामि
गंगे**

Documentation of Ganga from Gaumukh to Gangasagar Unnao District

Intangible Cultural Heritage



Front Cover Image: Craftsman working on Zardozi

Source: <https://strandofsilk.com/journey-map/uttar-pradesh/zardosi-embroidery/introduction>

Documentation of Ganga from Gaumukh to Gangasagar

UNNAO

Intangible Cultural Heritage

March-April 2022

Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage

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Ganga Cultural Documentation

Unnao District

Introduction

Unnao is a district between Kanpur and Lucknow and comes under the Lucknow division of Uttar Pradesh. It consists of five tehsils, namely, Unnao, Bangarmau, Hasanganj, Safipur, Purwa, and Bighapur. In ancient times, it was covered under the Ancient Kosala region and later became part of the Oudh subah. The district itself was created by the British upon annexation of Oudh on Feb 1856. Originally, Unnao was called Purwa district by the British.

It is popularly known as the “The land of pen and sword” since it is home to numerous freedom fighters and eminent writers. It is a land with a rich historical and cultural heritage dating as far back as the ancient era.

Unnao is famous for its leather, textile, and education industries. It is also home to some of the best street foods in the country, offering a wide variety of options ranging from samosas to local chaats and cuisine influenced by the Mughals.

The following table contains demographic data of Unnao district according to the 2011 census.¹

	Rural	Urban
Population	13,51,897	2,78,190
Female population	12,24,824	2,53,456
Sex Ration	906	911
Literacy Rate	68.29%	
Total population	31,08,367	
Population density	682/ sq km	

¹ https://censusindia.gov.in/2011census/dchb/0925_PART_B_DCHB_UNNAO.pdf

History

The Pre-Historic Period:

According to Colonel Tod, in 224 AD Kunuk Sen left Ayodhya and migrated westward towards Gujarat. However, this theory is in contradiction with the story that Vikramjeet of Ujjain visited Ayodhya in approximately 50 BC and found it completely desolate and overgrown with forest. He came across sites of ancient temples and palaces and rebuilt them to their original splendour. This theory is doubtful, not in terms of the facts presented but solely on the grounds of the dates. Thus, in conclusion, the story of a migration from Ayodhya to Gujarat and then finally to Chittor is factually sound.

The period prior to the second Rajput immigration and the Mohammadan conquests is referred to as the "dark ages". Most of the history here that has been pieced together for the time period up to one thousand two hundred AD is done by consulting and referring to the scattered recollections of the numerous families who have been able to preserve the memory of their ancestors.

Muslims found a Bisen colony in Unnao at the time of their conquest. These Bisens came from Salempore Mujhoulie in Gorakhpore and pushed westward to Manikpore. The Unnao branch is believed to be an offshoot from Manikpore and they still hold a few villages in the district. ²

In Suffeepore, according to tradition, the Brahmin proprietary body was headed by five bodies. There are five great mounds present and pointed out as the sites of their five forts. In Saipur, the old name for Suffeepore, the name of Raja Sai Shukuh is supposed to be perpetuated.³

² Baghel, Amar Singh (1979). Uttar Pradesh District Gazetteers. Unnao. Gazette, Government of Uttar Pradesh

³ Elliot, C. A. (1862). The Mythic Age. In The Chronicles of Oonao. A District in Oudh. essay, The Allahabad Mission Press.

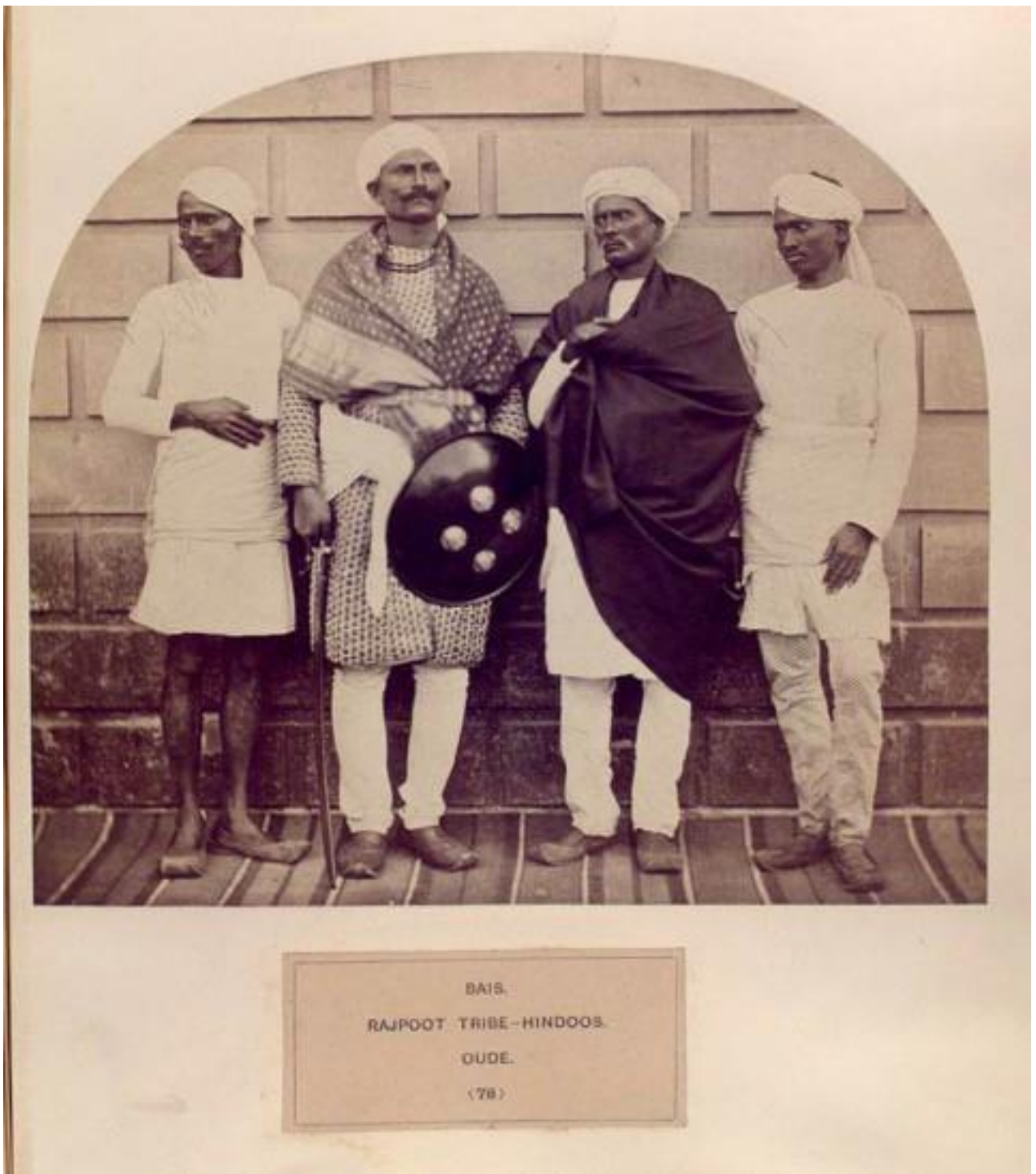


Image: Bais Rajput tribe ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bais_\(Rajput_clan\)#/media/File:Bais,_Rajput_tribe,_Hindoos,_Oude..jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bais_(Rajput_clan)#/media/File:Bais,_Rajput_tribe,_Hindoos,_Oude..jpg)).

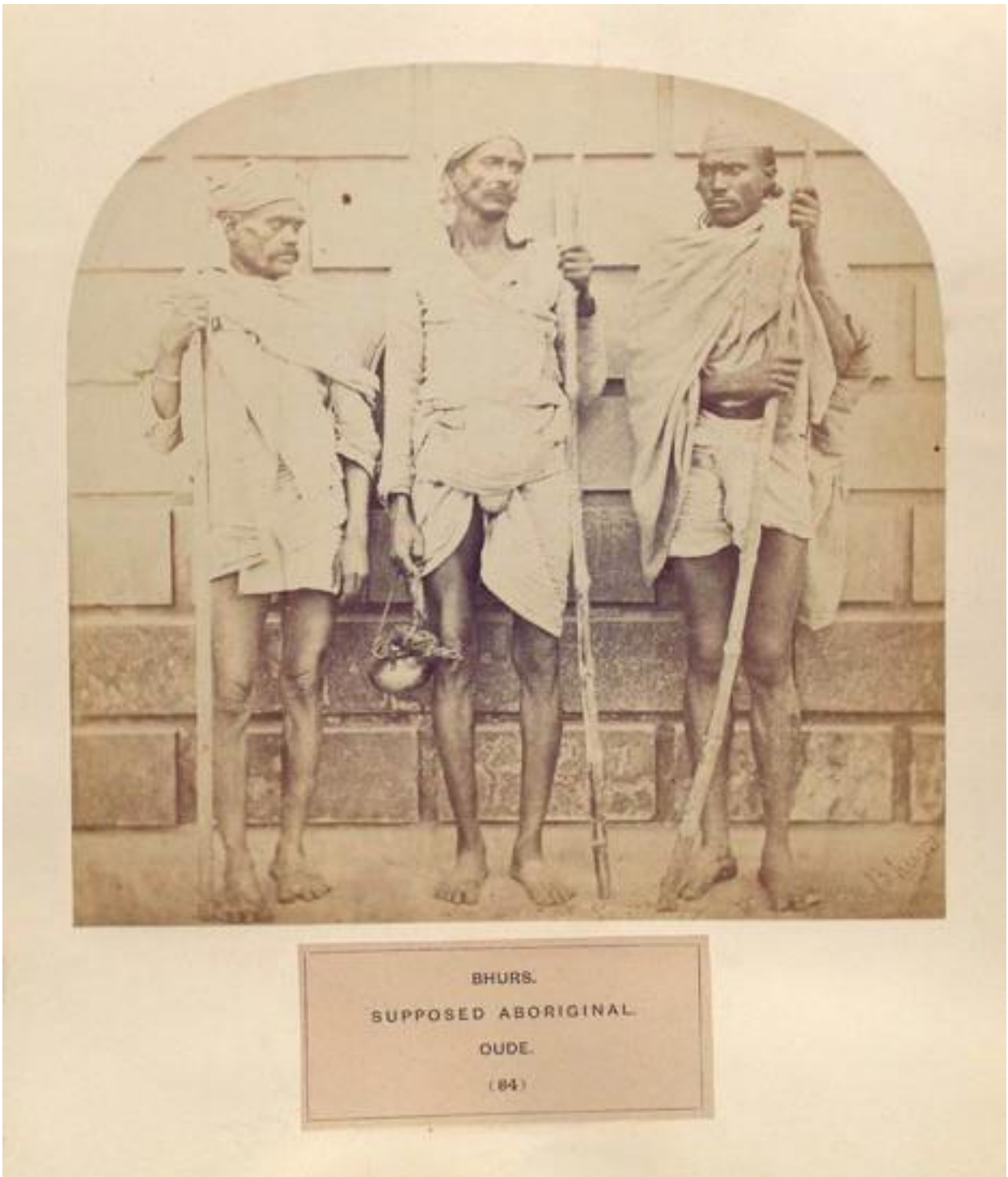


Image: Bhurs, the aboriginals of Oudh (https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/98/Bhurs%2C_supposed_aboriginal%2C_Oude.jpg).

According to tradition, the Bhurs were an aboriginal race, akin to the Cheeroos and headed by the Bhur Raja. Their oldest abode is the district of Bharach. The Bhurs spread further to Faizabad and Sultanpur, maintained themselves for a long time and were finally destroyed in the reign of Alungir. There are stories of their continued existence till date, though few and living a gypsy life in the jungles. If we were to go further south, we would come across the Pergunnah by the name of Bhudoe which is said to be named after the Burs. This Pergunnah was originally known as Bhurdooe. In places like Burhur,

which is across the Ganges and Burdhee, in the south of the Mirzapur district, and in a place known as Rewah, the Bhurs flourished in great numbers till very long.⁴ The Bhurs were powerful and independent in the Pergunnah of Bijiegurh so much so that they were able to take advantage of the 1857 revolt and made an attempt to take back the tract of country which was usurped from them by the Benaras Raja. According to Mr. E.C. Bayley, there seems to be evidence which suggests that this aboriginal race of Bhurs were Buddhists. The evidence of this lies in the fact that the Bhur fort of Khyragurh in the district of Allahabad was built at a later stage on the ruins of a Buddhist structure and there have been several Buddhist remains discovered at the Bhur headquarters in Sultanpore.

It is believed that certain aboriginal tribes like the Cheeroos in the far east, the Bhurs in the centre, and the Rajpases in the west were driven away to the hills by the Aryans, the Soorujbunsees of Ayodhya to be specific. After a while, a revolution seemed to have occurred wherein these aborigines came down from their places of refuge to reclaim the land which belonged to them, and they overwhelmed the Aryan civilisation forcing them to move to distant lands like Gujarat. Then, these tribes were able to reclaim the territories which originally belonged to them, and they spread all over the plain between the Himalayas and the Vindhyan range which passes through the south of Mirzapur⁵.

Rajput Colonisation

Eastern parts of the district, which consisted of places like Purwa tehsil and parts of the Pargana Harha, belonged to the tribal population of Bhars. The central parts of the district were inhabited by numerous tribes namely, the Lodhs, Lunias, Ahirs, Thateras, Dhobis, and Kurmis. These were small and scattered tribes which were a pastoral race. The main crop they grew was maize. The recognised leaders of these tribes resided in mud forts. They had no unity and thus overthrowing them was an easy task.

Northern areas of the district were traditionally held by Rajpases; their capital being Ramkot, which is an ancient name of Bangarmau. History suggests that these Rajpases were conquered by Banáphar chieftains, namely, Alha and Udal. Safipur, which is the old name of Saipur, was in the hands of Brahmins along with its neighbouring territories. These Brahmins were headed by five rajas. The name Saipur was derived from the name of a king called Raja Sai Sukul.

C. A. Elliott divided these Rajput colonies into three main categories:

⁴ Elliot, C. A. (1862). *The Mythic Age*. In *The Chronicles of Oonao. A District in Oudh* (pp. 1–19). essay, The Allahabad Mission Press.

⁵ Elliot, C. A. (1862). *The Mythic Age*. In *The Chronicles of Oonao. A District in Oudh* (pp. 1–19). essay, The Allahabad Mission Press.

- i. Those who fled across the Ganges after being defeated by the Muslim invaders in other parts of the country [1200-1450 AD].
- ii. Those who entered the service of the emperor of Delhi and acquired tracts of land through direct land transfer or by fighting and winning battles.
- iii. The third kind consisted of those few Rajput clans that had already established a footing in the district.

Rajput clans who held Unnao from pre-historic times included:

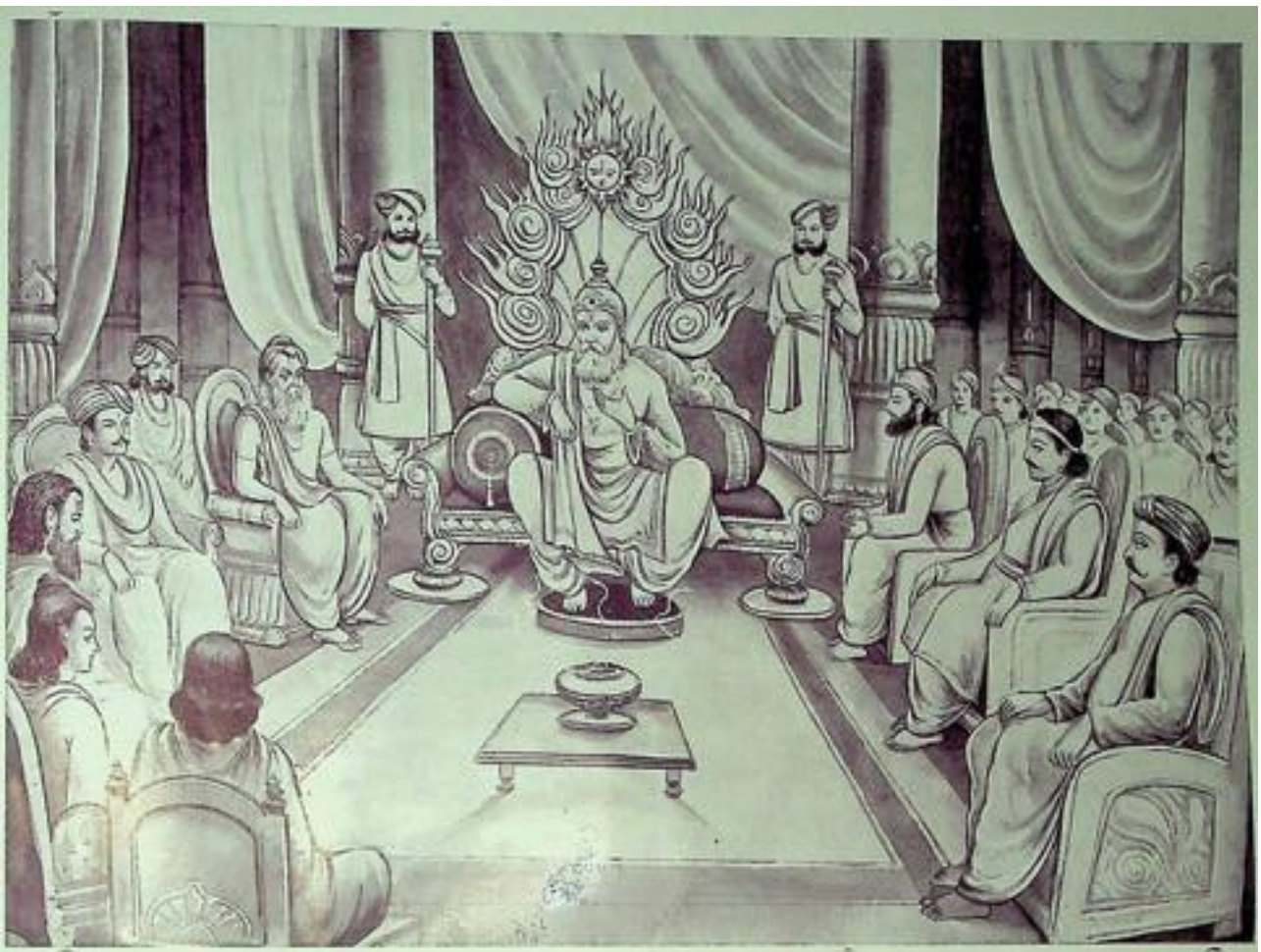


Image: King Duserath of the Rahobansis decent (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dasharatha#/media/File:King_Dasharatha_Raja_Sabha.jpg).

The clan of Raghobansi Raja, a direct descendant from the royal line of Ayodhya, who held the region called Ranbhirpur. Ranbhirpur is an old name for Purwa. A local theory suggests that the Raghobansis were exterminated by Shahab-ud-din Ghori, though this theory has been rejected by Elliott.

Another prominent Rajput clan who held Unnao were the Bisens. Unnao is said to be the local derivation of the name assigned to Raja Unwant. The Bisen clan came from Manikpur. Interestingly, the descendants of this clan can still be found in the district.

Dikhits, one of the earliest Rajput clans, were said to have come from Kannauj. They migrated into Awadh under Udebhan, who is said to be the founder of the kingdom of Dikhitan. The kingdom of Dikhitians extended from Baiswara to Hardoi and from the Ganges to the river Gomati. The area south of the Ganges went from being under the Gautama clan's possession into the hands of the Bisen clan.

Some other Rajput clans who had arrived early included:

The Chauhans from Mainpuri. This clan were the colonizers of the region south of Dikhit clan's land. They were a warlike and turbulent race, but due to there being no unity among them, they produced no leader of prominence. These Chauhans claimed to be associated with the lineage of the Chauhans of Isauli (Sultanpur).

The Raikwars were said to have settled in the Bangarmau, specifically, in the estate which is now called Shadipur Gauria. These Raikwars claimed to be the kins of the great Raikwar families of Bahraich and Bara Banki. Stories suggest that this claim of brotherhood by the Raikwars has been admitted by the Raja of Ramnagar.

The Janwars were a clan who came from Ballabgarh, near Delhi, and settled in the area consisting of the region south of Hardoi and a territory north west of Bangarmau under the leadership of Dasu.

The successors of Dasu were divided into four tarafs or parties and each of them took six villages. These villages are still held by their descendants.

The Janwars belonging to Fatehpur-Chaurasi were said to have settled in this pargana approximately 250 years ago, driving out the old inhabitants of this territory, the Thateras. Thateras were a clan predominantly occupying this region along with the area west of Hardoi. The Fatehpur settlement was said to be divided into three tarafs namely, Sarai taraf, Martha taraf, and the Takhtia taraf. Out of these three tarafs, the Sarai taraf was the oldest and due to this reason, they asserted their superiority and ended up subjugating the other two tarafs.⁶

⁶ Baghel, Amar Singh (1979). Uttar Pradesh District Gazetteers. Unnao. Gazette, Government of Uttar Pradesh

Rajput Colonies who fled to the Unnao region included:

The earliest of these clans were the Sengar clan and the Gaur clan. The two colonies of Gaur clans consisted of Baman Gaurs and Bangarmau Gaurs. By far the most important Rajput family were the Bais. Other clans coming under this category included the Panwars - the two colonies under them included Mauranwan and Safipur, the Parihars - they belonged to Marwar and were responsible for driving out the indigenous population, the Dhobis, from the region called Sikandarpur, and the Gahlots - they occupied a small estate in the Pargana of Harha, which was a region previously owned by the Kurmis.

Musalman Invasions:

The earliest invasion was carried out by Saiyid Salar Masand in the year 1030 AD. The earliest settlement by any of these Musalman invaders was in the territory of Bangaramau between the end of the thirteenth century and the beginning of the fourteenth century. This settlement was established by a man called Saiyid Ala-ud-din who was from Kannauj. He destroyed the territory of Nawal and founded the settlement of Bangarmau, now known as Safipur. Saiyid Ala-ud-din died in this area and was buried at Bangarmau where his shrine is dated 702 Hijri or 1302 AD.

In 819 Hijri, a saint by the name of Maulana Shah Akram was insulted during his travels and went to Ibrahim Shah's capital to complain. Upon hearing this, the ruler sent an army to avenge and conquer the country wherein the saint was insulted. This army that crossed the Ganges to reach Bithur was led by Saiyid Baha-ud-din, Ala-ud-din and others. They defeated the Hindus and took over the town, but Saiyid-ud-din lost his life in the battle. His tomb is present at Safipur till this day and is revered by both Hindus and Muslims.

Many members of the army settled in the town of Safipur itself and large tracts of adjacent country was given to members of the army as jagirs. Another branch of the army settled in Aiswan around the sixteenth century. A mosque is present here with the date 1040 Hijri.⁷

⁷ Baghel, Amar Singh (1979). Uttar Pradesh District Gazetteers. Unnao. Gazette, Government of Uttar Pradesh

Saiyids Of Unnao

The Sayyids of Unnao attacked the Bisen Raja under the leadership of Saiyid Baha-ud-din, Son of Ala-ud-din.

The Musalman colony of Rasulabad was another prominent colony and its leader was Saiyid Mujahid Ali Khan. He had received a land grant halfway between Mohan and Pariar on the condition that he would protect local Hindu pilgrims. These pilgrims of Hindu shrines of Pariar and Bithur were continually harassed by Dikhits. Their fort was built here around 1672 AD. Interestingly, there is no evidence of extensive Musalman occupation of Unnao district. The land is parcelled among the Rajput families, namely, the Bais in the south region, the Dikhits at the centre, and smaller clans occupying the northern regions.

During the reign of the Mughal ruler Akbar, Unnao was included in the Sarkar of Lucknow province (subah) of Awadh. In the Ain-I-Akbari, information regarding the land, army, cavalry, revenue of all the cities that were a part of the Unnao district is mentioned in detail. For example, the area called "Unám" or Unnao, had a cultivable area of 61,045 bigha with a sum of 20, 12,372 dams of revenue being collected on it. There existed a brick fort in Unnao owned by the Saiyids with a garrison consisting of 50 horses and 4,000-foot soldiers.

Mythology

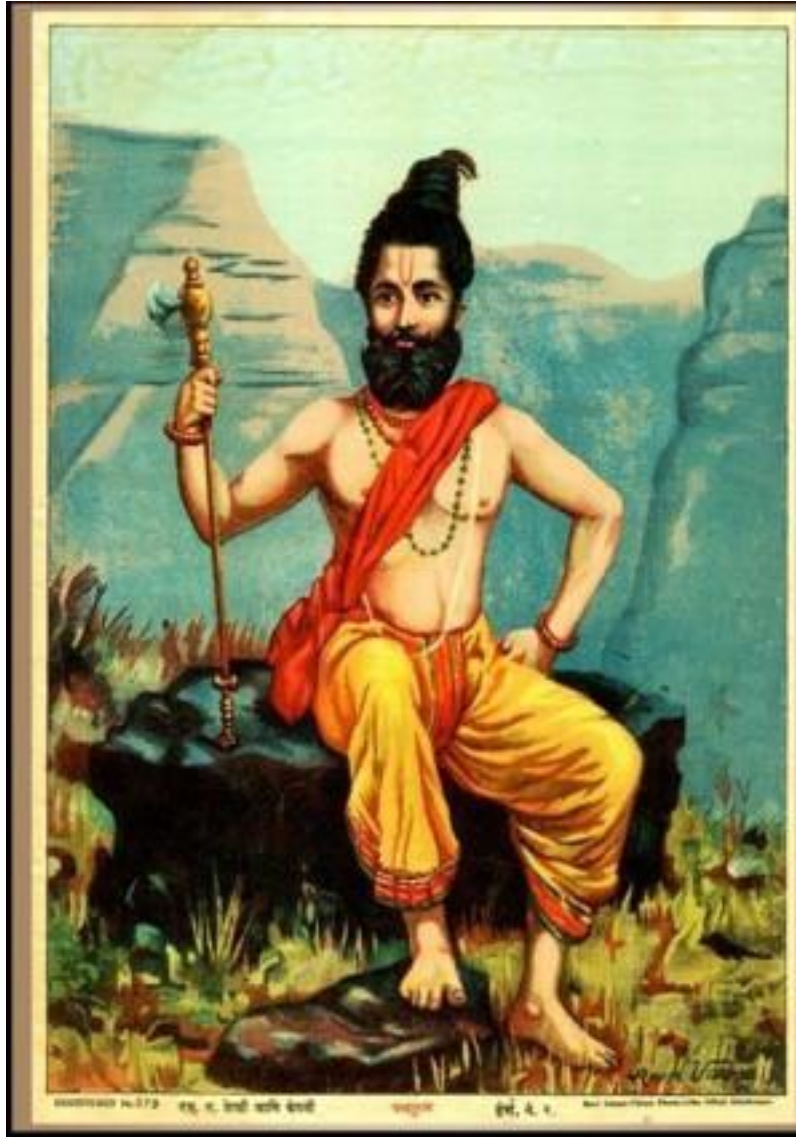


Image of Parshuram (https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/f/fd/Parashurama_with_axe.jpg).

The story about the place known as Pursundun takes place in the Treta Yug. The village where the story takes place is called Bithuripar. A holy rishi by the name of Jumdugin goes to Ajoodhia and asks the Raja for his daughter's hand in marriage. After getting married to Renukie, the raja's younger daughter, he is impressed by her loyalty and submissive nature and grants her a wish. After much thought and consulting with her mother, Renukie asks for a son for both her mother and her. Due to her mother's cunning tactics, there is a switch in the procedure and a Brahmin son by the name of Vishwamitra is born to the king and his wife, whereas Renukie gives birth to a Kshatriya son by the name of Pursuram. The town of Pursudun is named after him. Pursuram is believed to be the sixth incarnation of Vishnu.

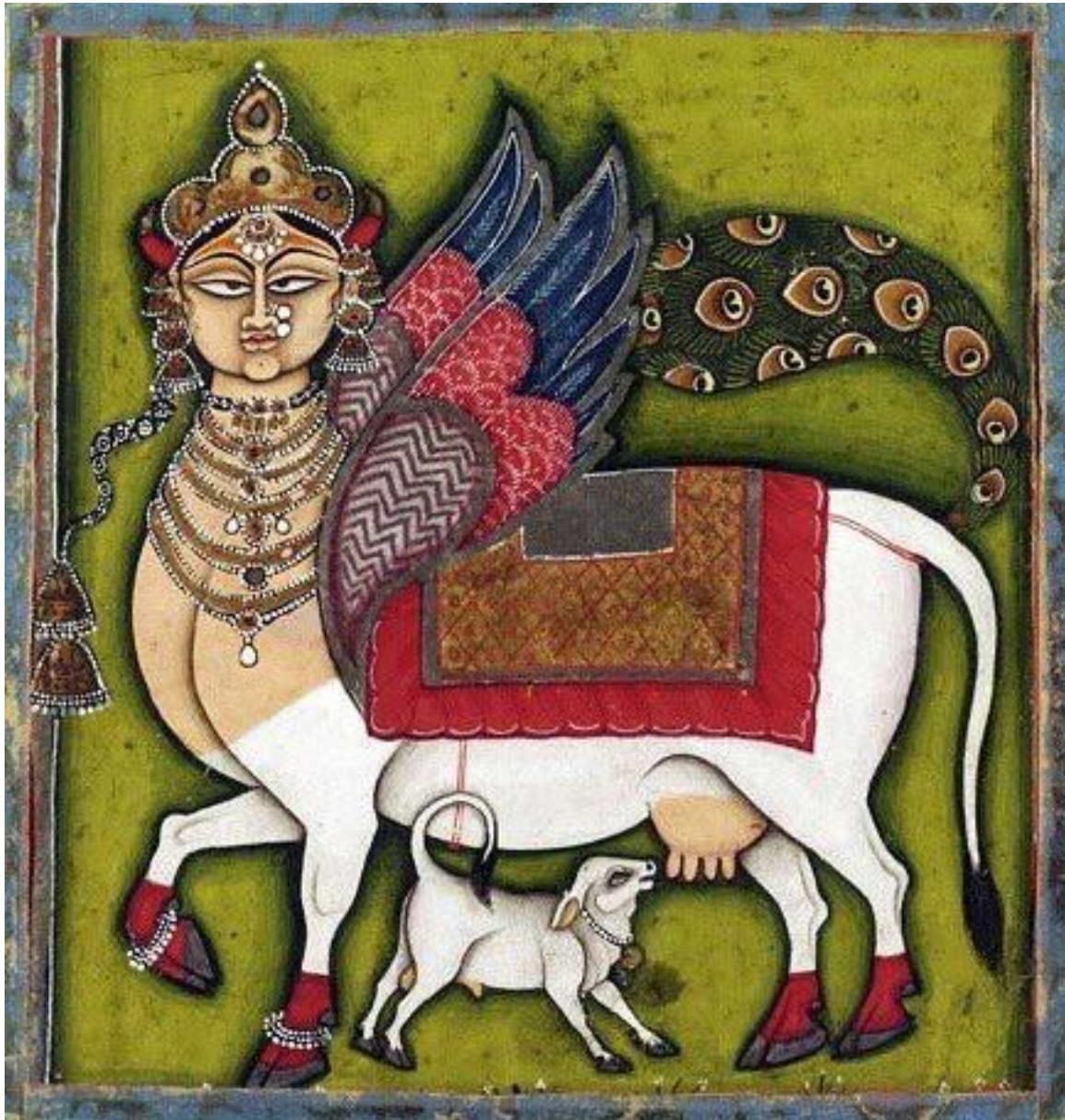


Image: Kamadhenu cow with her calf (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kamadhenu#/media/File:Kamadhenu.jpg>).

Due to a feud between Renukie's sister's husband (Raja Sahesra Arjun) and Jumdugin regarding the Kamdhenu cow which Jumdugin possessed, Raja Sahesra ends up getting the holy rishi killed. Enraged by this, Pursuram, with the devi's hatchet, goes on a killing spree of Kshatriyas, which is why it is believed that no Kshatriya claimed his caste in this region.



Image: Shiva temple at Billespur (<https://www.naidunia.com/chhattisgarh/bilaspur-bilaspur-shiv-temple-where-shiva-statue-of-10-feet-high-3060354>).

Billespur, another next prominent city, is where the next story takes place. This incident can be dated back to the "Golden Age". Here, amongst the green and fertile pastures, a mysterious incident takes place wherein a cow is said to stand at a particular spot dropping milk from her udders consistently. On further investigation, it is discovered that there exists an image of Mahadev at that spot and slowly, people from all over start visiting this location to worship Mahadev. Eventually, a temple is built here, and a tank is dug up near the Mahadev temple which exists till date.



Image: King Duserath standing over the body of Surwun whom he killed accidentally (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shravan#/media/File:Dashrath_Raja_and_Shravan.jpg)

Continuing the story from Billespur, there is the tale of the place known as Surwun. As legend goes, while visiting the temple from the previous story, Raja Duserath of Ayodhya accidentally ends up killing Surwun (the holy rishi from Chousna) mistaking him for an animal in the bushes. Being the sole caretaker of his blind parents, they become distraught and end up cursing the man who killed their only son.

At the time of his death, Surwun is said to have turned into a stone statue and local legends suggest that the navel of this statue, no matter how much water is poured into it, absorbs all of it. As Surwun died while trying to quench his thirst, this statue absorbs all the water dropped on it, with no limit. Till date, no Kshatriyas is said to be found in the town of Surwun.

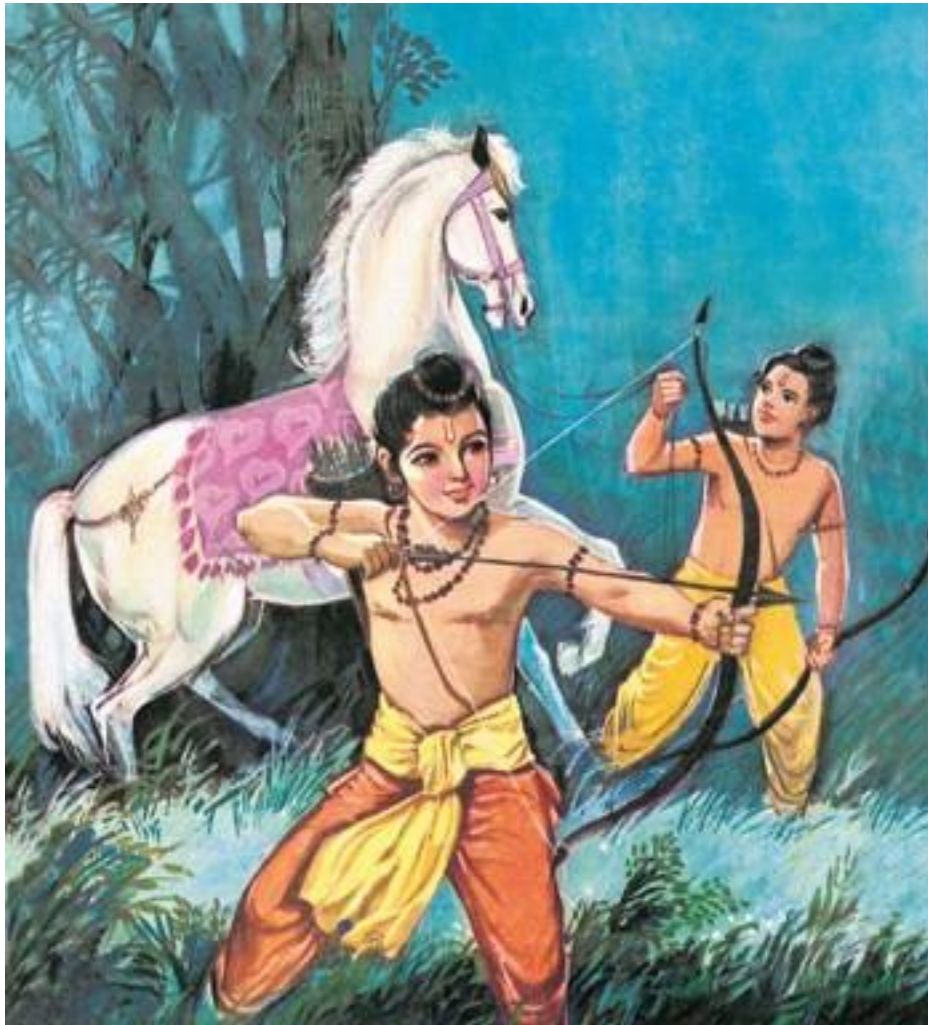


Image: Luv and Kush (sons of Lord Ram) and the horse used during Ashwamedha Yagya.

Puriur is the town where Lord Rama's two sons, Luv and Kush, spotted the white horse with black ears which was a part of the Ashwamedha yagya being conducted by Lord Rama. His two sons stopped the horse, thus challenging the king who had sent this horse, and fought a long battle with the army accompanying the horse, completely oblivious to the fact that the horse and the army belonged to their own father's kingdom. Distressed by the bloodshed, Sita finally stopped her sons and informed them that Lord Rama was their father. ⁸

⁸ Elliot, C. A. (1862). The Mythic Age. In The Chronicles of Oonao. A District in Oudh (pp. 1–19). essay, The Allahabad Mission Press.



Image: Ashwathama on his chariot (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ashwatthama#/media/File:Ashwatthama_uses_Narayanastra.jpg).

Ashwathama, upon slaughtering the Pandu clan, was lamenting in grief. Lord Krishna, refrained from chopping off his head, since he belonged to the Brahmin community and killing a Brahmin was believed to be sin, let Ashwathama go with a mere mark on his head.

Completely defeated and distraught by this mark of shame, he went on a spiritual journey, wandering to solitary places, meditating, and eventually arrived at Asoha. The people of Asoha revered him and ended up naming the village after him. He is worshipped there even today.

As the legend goes, it is believed that at the very end, Ashwathama went to the temple of Mahadev on the banks of the river Ganga, known as Kheresur, and it is here that he eventually disappeared while meditating. Though he disappeared, it is believed that he did not die and kept visiting and worshipping at the temple even after his supposed disappearance. Numerous kings and rajas who visited this temple claimed that before they could perform any rituals, they felt a presence has already visited the temple and placed fresh flowers and water in front of the deity⁹.

⁹ Elliot, C. A. (1862). The Mythic Age. In *The Chronicles of Oonao. A District in Oudh* (pp. 1–19). essay, The Allahabad Mission Press.

Places of Interest



Image: Nawabganj Bird Sanctuary (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nawabganj_Bird_Sanctuary#/media/File:Nawabganj_Bird_Sanctuary,_Unnao_03.JPG).

Nawabganj Bird Sanctuary:

This bird sanctuary was renamed as the “Sahid Chandra Shekhar Azad Bird Sanctuary” in 2015. It amongst the many wetlands of Northern India. The sanctuary houses a deer park, watch towers, boats and is also home to over 250 species of migratory birds. Some of these migratory birds include, Greylag goose, Pintail, Cotton Teal, Red-crested pochard, Gadwall, Soot, Shoveller and Mallard. Not only this, but there are also numerous resident birds as well namely, Open-bill Stork, Lapwing, Tern, Vulture, Indian Roller, and many more.¹⁰

Apart from birds, this sanctuary also houses reptiles like Cobra, Viperidae, Rat snakes, Common Krait and different types of water snakes.

¹⁰ Kanaujia, A., Kumar, A., Kumar, A., Kushwaha, S., & Kumar, A. (2014). Blooming Faunal Diversity of Nawabganj Bird Sanctuary, Unnao, Uttar Pradesh, India.

Other attractions of this sanctuary are the deer found in the deer park at the premises. These include the spotted and barking deer.





Image: Spotted Deer at the sanctuary (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nawabganj_Bird_Sanctuary#/media/File:591_Spotted-Deer.jpg).



Image: Migratory birds at the sanctuary (<https://www.tourmyindia.com/states/uttarpradesh/nawabganj-bird-sanctuary.html>).





Image: Pictures of the ruins of the fort of Raja Harbans at Bidarka Harbans

Bardaka Harbansh:

There is a village known as Badarka Harbansh which is located approximately 11 km south of Unnao near a place called Achalganj. Achalganj is 3 km west of Unnao-Rae Bareli Road. It is the birthplace of Chandrashekhar Azad's father Pandit Sitaram Tiwari and mother Jagrani Devi. Raja Harbans, who was an official at Shah Jahan's court, founded this place in the year 1643 AD. He had received a grant of 500 Bighas of land in the paragana Harha from Emperor Shah Jahan.

Raja Harbans was said to have built a beautiful house here with walls made of limestone which stood 500 mtrs tall. The walls of the house were surmounted with turreted walls, on an elaborate frieze of red stone over the gateway, having alternately geese and elephants in pairs.

It is said that here existed an enormous hall which was supported on carved pillars, and these very pillars were taken away by Asaf-ud-daula for building an Imambara at Lucknow.

The house was famous for its magnificent construction and strength, which was calculated to be way ahead of its time¹¹.



Image: Chandrashekhar Azad (<https://thewire.in/history/chandrashekhar-azad-ideology-against-communal-politics-religion>).

¹¹ <https://unnao.nic.in/places-of-interest/>



Image: Memorial of Chandrashekar Azad at his birthplace Badarka, Unnao (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Azad_Birth_Place.jpg).



Image: Raja Rao Ram Baksh of Daundia Khera (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ram_Baksh_Singh#/media/File:Raja_Rao_Ram_BAksh_Singh.jpg).

Baksar:

Baksar gets its name from the Sanskrit word of Bakasram, which denotes the residence of Baka who was a rakshas. This rakshas was said to be the one who founded this town which lies on the left bank of the Ganga, approximately 5 km south of Daundia Khera and 51 km southeast of Unnao. Baksar is the southernmost village of the district of Unnao.

Coming back to the story of the rakshas, he was responsible for the construction of a temple to Nageshwar Nath Mahadeo at the very location where this village exists. He was killed by Lord Krishna around five thousand years ago. Stories suggest that this site was conquered by a Bais Rajput by the name of Raja Abhai Chand and he not only made this place his capital, but also named this place after the shrine of Bakeshwar Mahadeo.

The temple's remains and numerous broken images can still be found at the site in the village. A bathing fair is organised annually in this region on the full moon day of Kartika and is attended by a huge number of people¹². Raja Rao Ram Baksh Singh passed away in Baksar village on December 28th, 1857.



Image: Maqdoom Shah Safi Mosque at Safipur, Unnao (<https://indianexpress.com/photos/lifestyle-gallery/photo-project-qawwali-qawwals-tradition-sufi-7639784/12/>).

Mausoleum of Maqdoom Shah Safi

This mosque in the city of Safipur is dedicated to Maulvi Akram's great grandson Maqdoom Shah Safi.¹³ Maqdoom Shah Safi was known to be a religious mendicant who was a resident of Safipur in the 1500s. When Maqdoom Shah Safi passed away, the name

¹² <https://unnao.nic.in/places-of-interest/>

¹³ <https://indianexpress.com/photos/lifestyle-gallery/photo-project-qawwali-qawwals-tradition-sufi-7639784/12/>

of the town of Saipur was changed to Safipur. Safi's mausoleum and the dargah complex which surrounds it was built by one of his followers whose name was Chaudhri Khaslat Husain. In the early 1900s, a large mosque was added to the dargah complex by the taluqdar of Sandila, called Chaudhri Muhammad Azim.

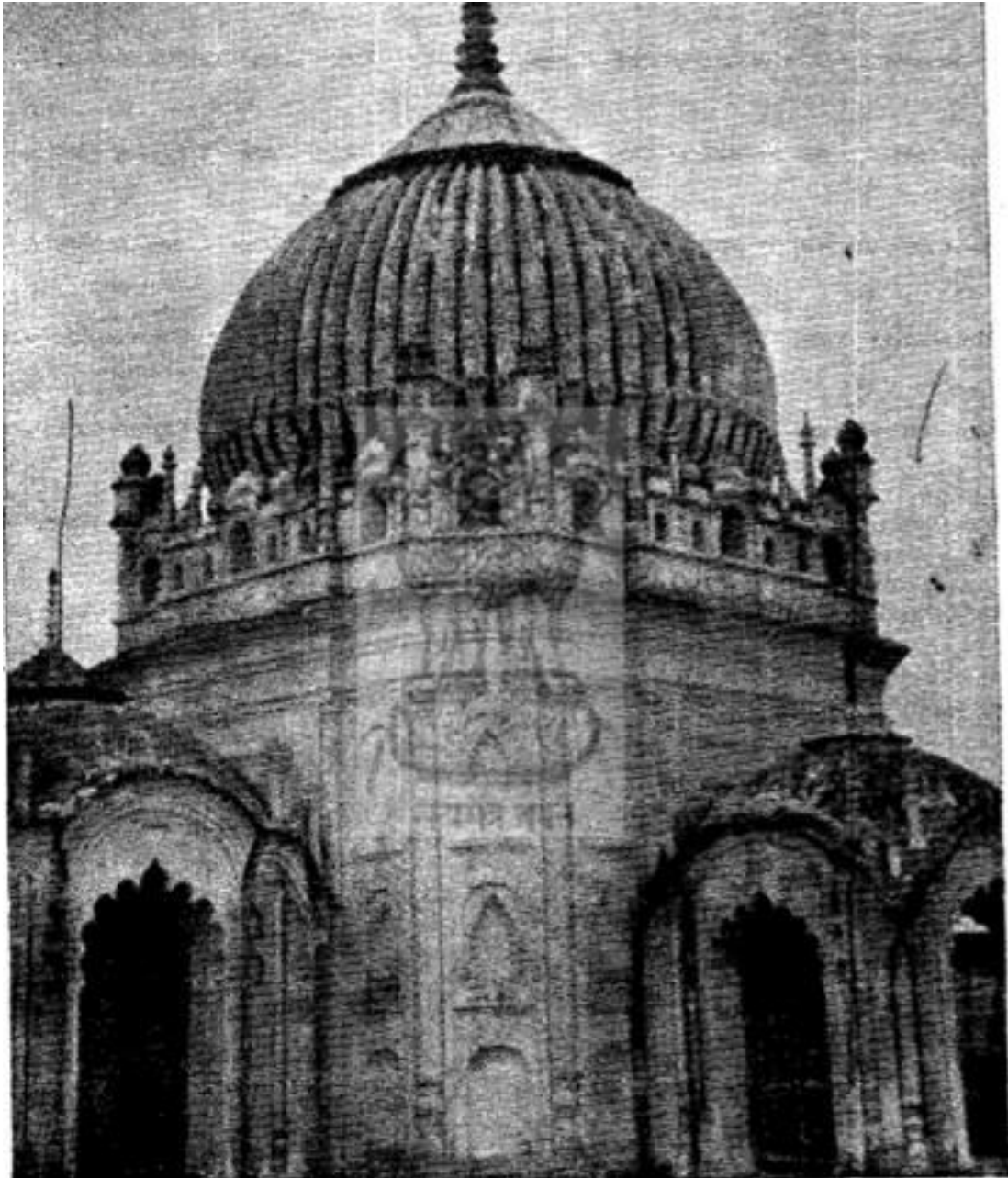


Image: Mausoleum of Maqdoom Shah Safi.



Image: Muhabbat Shah's Mausoleum at Patan.

Patan Village

This village lies on the road from Unnao to Allahabad via Achalganj, at a latitude $26^{\circ} 18'$ N and longitude $80^{\circ} 47'$ E. This village consists of numerous places of interest including the temple of Lingeswar Mahadev, the tomb of Muhabbat Shah and an ancient mound ascribed to the Bhars.



Image source: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/44012788>.¹⁴

Patan village also happens to be the epicentre of the Takia-ka-mela, a fair held on the first Thursday of Paus. This fair is held in honour of Niamat Shah who was said to be a disciple of Muhabbat Shah.

¹⁴ Sherring, M. A., and C. Horne. "The Bhar Tribe." *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, vol. 5, no. 2, [Cambridge University Press, Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland], 1871, pp. 376–400, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/44012788>.

Freedom Fighters from Unnao



Image: Raja Ram Baksh Singh (right) and his old fort at Daundiya Kheda Village of Unnao (left) (<https://www.indiatvnews.com/news/india/gold-treasure-hunt-know-who-raja-rao-ram-baksh-singh-was--29373.html>).

Ram Bux Singh:

He was a Bais Rajput from Unnao who was one of the leaders in the Sepoy mutiny of 1857. He was also a close associate of Nana Saheb. Unfortunately, on December 28th, 1857, Raja Rao Ram Baksh was hanged by the British for participating in the revolt of 1857. He was found guilty in the case of the killing of British soldiers. Interestingly, Raja Rao Ram Baksh Singh's fort was being excavated in an attempt to dig up 1,000 tonnes of gold. This fort is present in the Daundiya Kheda village of Unnao.¹⁵

¹⁵ Desk, I. T. V. N. (2013, October 19). Gold treasure hunt: Know who Raja Rao Ram Baksh Singh was. English. Retrieved January 18, 2022, from <https://www.indiatvnews.com/news/india/gold-treasure-hunt-know-who-raja-rao-ram-baksh-singh-was--29373.html>



Maulana Hasrat Mohani:

Maulana Hasrat was born in 1875 at Mohan in the Hasanganj tehsil of Unnao district, Uttar Pradesh. He was not only a freedom fighter but also an eminent Urdu poet. His real name was Syed Fazl-ul-Hasan and Maulana Hasrat Mohani was his pen name.¹⁶ He was inspired by the work Raja Rao Ram Baksh did and this is what catapulted him into becoming a part of the freedom struggle. Being a scholar, he contributed to the freedom struggle through the power and might of his pen, thus becoming the editor of the newspaper 'Urdu-A-Muallah' in 1913. Due to his provocative writing against the British government, he was imprisoned from 1914 to 1918 but this did not prevent him from writing articles and contributing to the fight against the government. Maulana Hasrat Mohani is famous for creating the revolutionary slogan of "Inqilab Zindabad" during the 1921 freedom struggle.¹⁷ He was also a member of the State Assembly in the year 1946 and finally passed away on May 15th, 1951. ¹⁸

¹⁶ Bureau, Z. M. (2017, January 2). India remembers Maulana Hasrat Mohani who gave the revolutionary slogan 'Inqilab Zindabad'. Zee News. Retrieved January 15, 2022, from https://zee-news.india.com/india/india-remembers-maulana-hasrat-mohani-who-gave-the-revolutionary-slogan-inqilab-zindabad_1963758.html

¹⁷ Bureau, Z. M. (2017, January 2). India remembers Maulana Hasrat Mohani who gave the revolutionary slogan 'Inqilab Zindabad'. Zee News. Retrieved January 15, 2022, from https://zee-news.india.com/india/india-remembers-maulana-hasrat-mohani-who-gave-the-revolutionary-slogan-inqilab-zindabad_1963758.html

¹⁸ <https://web.archive.org/web/20121227121301/http://unnao.nic.in/Personal.htm>

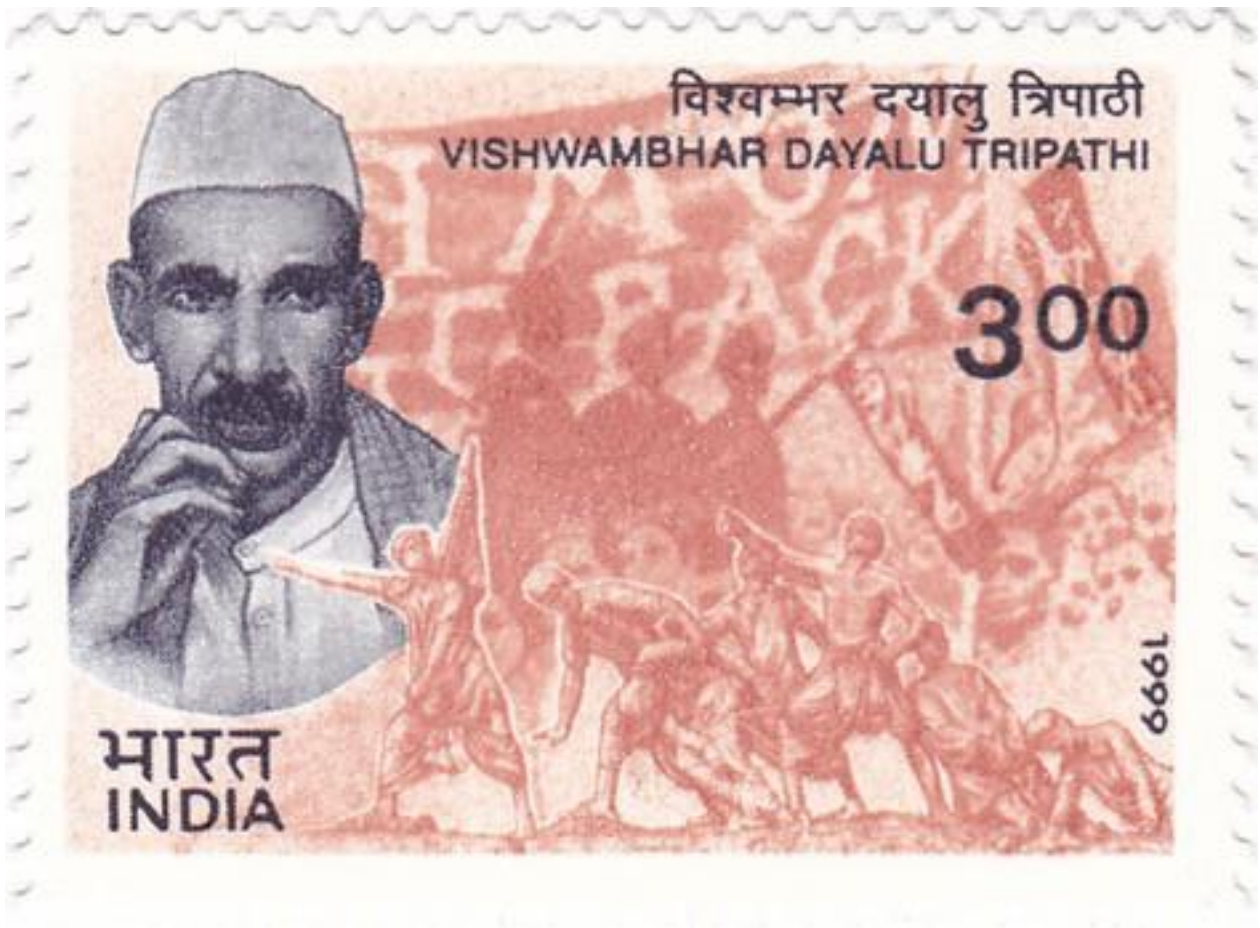


Image: Vishambhar Sayalu Tripathi (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vishwambhar_Dayalu_Tripathi#/media/File:Vishwambhar_Dayalu_Tripathi_1999_stamp_of_India.jpg).

Vishambhar Dayal Tripathi:

This great freedom fighter from the Bangarmau tehsil of Unnao was a brilliant scholar who excelled in all aspects of his life. Vishambhar Dayalu Tripathi was a close associate of Subhash Chandra Bose and he contributed greatly to the freedom struggle.

In the year 1946, Vishambhar Dayal Tripathi was elected to the Legislative Assembly and was the Member of Parliament from 1952 to 1959.



Image: Photo of the brave freedom fighter, Chandrashekhar Azad (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chandra_Shekhar_Azad#/media/File:Chandrasekhar_Azad.jpg).

Chandrashekhar Azad

This famous Indian revolutionary's forefathers belonged to a village in the district of Unnao called Bidarka village. He played a prominent role in the freedom struggle of India, getting involved in the Non-cooperation movement at a very young age. He was the one who reorganised the Hindustan Republican Association (HRA) under its new name of Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA).

Chandrashekhar Azad was born Chandra Shekhar Tiwari, to his parents Sitaram Tiwari and Jagrani Devi and he gave himself the title of "Azad" after being presented before the Parsi district magistrate Justice M.P. Khareghat.

Eminent Writers from Unnao



Image: Picture of Bhagwati Charan Verma (<https://bharatmatamandir.in/bhagwati-charan-verma/>).

Bhagwati Charan Verma:

Born in Safipur, Unnao, this famous writer was a Hindi advisor at Akashwani, Lucknow in 1950. Bhagwat Charan Verma was also a member of Rajya Sabha in the year 1978. He has been honoured with numerous awards, namely, the “Sahitya Academy Award” in 1961 for authoring the book “Bhule Bisre Chitra”, the “Sahitya Vchaspati Upadhi” in 1969, and the “Padma Bhushan” in 1971. Some of his great works include:

“Bhule Bisre Chitra”, “Chitralkha”, “Chanakya”, “Prashan Aur Marichika”, and “Seedhi Sachchi Batein”.¹⁹

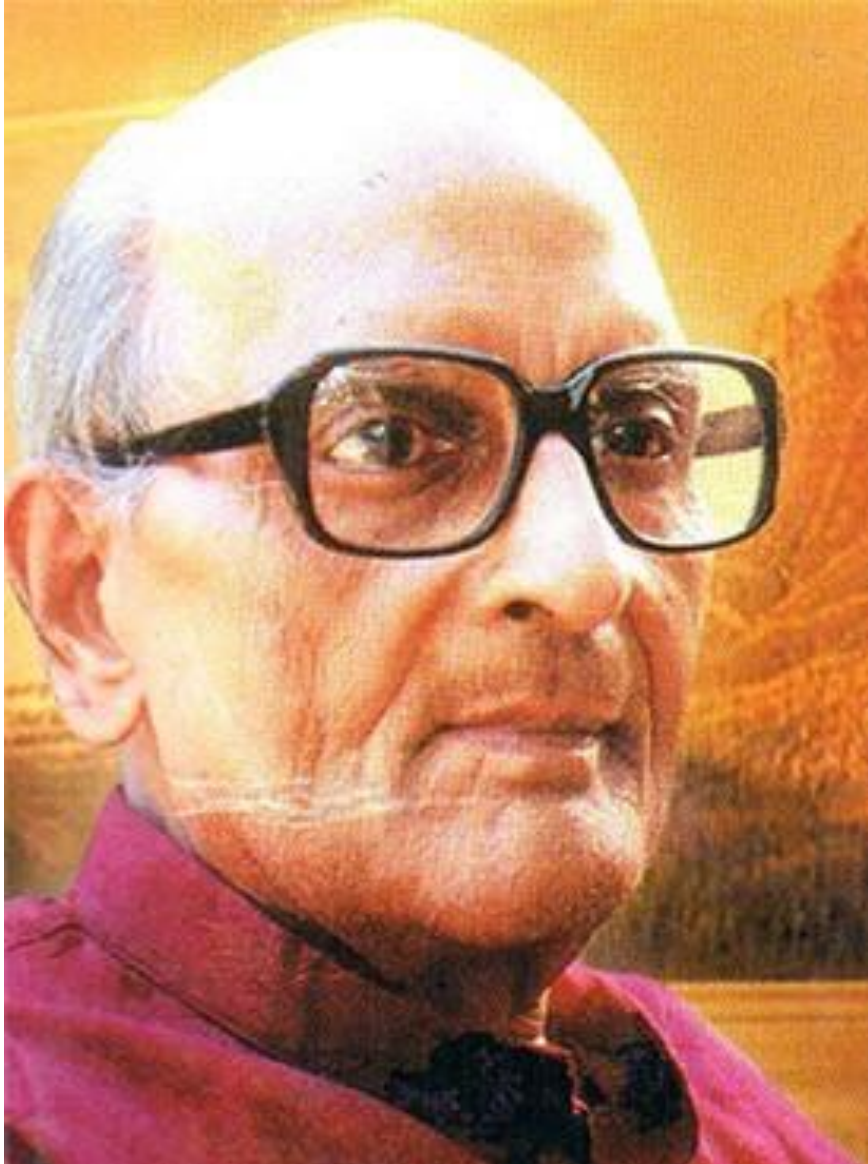


Image: Photo of Dr. Ram Vilas Sharma (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ram_Vilas_Sharma#/media/File:RamVilasSharmaPic.jpg).

Dr. Ram Vilas Sharma:

He was born on October 10, 1912, in Unchgaon Sani in the district of Unnao. Dr Ram Vilas Sharma was a Fellow of Sahitya Akademi, an eminent critic, a writer, and a poet. He did his M.A. in English in 1934 and Ph.D. in 1938 from Lucknow University and also started teaching the same subject in Lucknow University from

¹⁹ <https://web.archive.org/web/20121227121301/http://unnao.nic.in/Personal.htm>



1943 to 1971.²⁰ His poems were included in his collections “Roop Tarang”, “Sadiyon Ke Soye Jaag Uthe”, and “Pratinidhi Kavitaen”.

During his early years, he authored the novel “Char Din” and a play called “Paap Ke Pujari”. His critical writings began with an article that he wrote in the periodical “Chand” in the year 1934.²¹

He was awarded with the 'Sahitya Akademy Award' in 1970,

²⁰ Sharma, R. V., & Saha, R. K. (2000). Ram Vilas Sharma (1912—2000). *Indian Literature*, 44(5 (199)), 158–161. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23343450>

²¹ Sharma, R. V., & Saha, R. K. (2000). Ram Vilas Sharma (1912—2000). *Indian Literature*, 44(5 (199)), 158–161. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23343450>

'Shalaka Samman' from Hindi Academy, Delhi, 'Vyas Samman' from K.K. Birla Foundation in 1991, 'Bharat Bharti Samman' from Uttar Pradesh government, and many other awards. Being the kind of scholar and promoter of literature he was, he refused the prize money of many awards and requested for the money to be spent on furthering the literary cause.²²

Image: Shiv Mangal Singh Suman (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shivmangal_Singh_Suman#/media/File:Shivmangal_Singh_Suman.JPG).

Shiv Mangal Singh Suman:

Another famous Indian poet from Unnao was Shiv Mangal Singh Suman, who not only wrote Hindi poems and plays but was also an esteemed academician²³. Some of his famous poetry collections include works like "Hillool" (1939), "Yug Ka Mol" (1945), "Mitti Ki Baarat" (1972), "Vani Ki Vyatha" (1980) and many more.²⁴ He was honoured with the Padma Shri in 1974, the Padma Bhushan in 1999, the Soviet Land Nehru Award in 1974, the Deva Puruskar in 1958 and many more.

²² <https://web.archive.org/web/20121227121301/http://unnao.nic.in/Personal.htm>

²³ https://web.archive.org/web/20121020195605/http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2002-11-27/news-interviews/27319513_1_hindi-poet-heart-attack-sons-and-three-daughters

²⁴ https://openlibrary.org/authors/OL8468A/Shivmangal_Singh



Image: The famous poet Suryakant Tripathi “Nirala” (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Suryakant_Tripathi#/media/File:Suryakant_Tripathi_1976_stamp_of_India.jpg).

Suryakant Tripathi:

Suryakant Tripathi, also referred to as “Nirala” was a poet who was born in West Bengal, but later shifted to Lucknow and then to Godhakola in Unnao district. Moving to Godhakola was not a particularly strange choice as his father also belonged to this area.

Suryakant Tripathi drew inspiration from many prominent figures like Ram Krishna Paramhans, Swami Vivekananda and Rabindranath Tagore and he was also known to be well versed in Bangla, Sanskrit, Hindi and English.

His body of work is very diverse and includes poems like “Ram ki Shakti Puja”, “Geetika”, “Dhwani”, “Tulsidas”, “Janmbhumi”, “Bhikshuk”, “Bela”, “Adima”, and many more

such poems. Some of his novels include "Apsara", "Alka", "Chameli", "Kale Karname", "Choti Ki Pakad", "Nirupama", and "Prabhavati". He has also authored many essay collections like "Chayan", "Prabandh-Parichaya", "Sangraha", and "Chabuk".

Industries of Unnao

Leather Tanning Industry



Image: Leather products drying after the tanning process (<https://www.unido.org/news/kanpur-tanneries-win-awards-innovations-reduce-environmental-impact>).

Leather is being used in the world since pre-historic times and there is plenty of evidence that indicates its existence throughout the history of mankind. Its use varied in different time periods, varying from leather tools to leather shoes and leather vests. Leather manufacturing went from small scale to mass produced leather after the industrial revolution. Large animals' skin and fur both gained importance.²⁵

Leather use has found mention in our ancient texts as well, suggesting that people of that age made use of leather items in their day to day lives. There is reference to items made from leather in the Rig Veda. These items include “mashaks” which are water carrying bags, and bottles. Some other literary finds from this time period mention more leather

²⁵ <https://www.libertyleathergoods.com/history-of-leather/>

items which were used by Indians including leather bands, laces, straps, and other cord-like implements. The demand and importance of leather was quite significant even in those times.²⁶

India is known to be one of the world's largest exporters of processed leather, with more than two thousand tanneries which are responsible for the production of more than two billion square feet of leather annually.

Like many other cities of Uttar Pradesh, Unnao is famous for its leather tanning industry and the leather goods it produces. Some of the famous manufacturers involved in this sector include Mirza Tanners, Rahman Exports, Zamzam, and Superpose Groups. Not only this, some major industrial suburbs of Unnao are developed by UPSIDC for this very process, including Banter Technology Park, Magarwara Industrial area and Unnao Industrial area ²⁷.

The process of manufacturing leather requires multiple steps; the flow chart below demonstrates how this process is carried out. The process of leather tanning involves turning hide into leather and its process includes soaking, liming, de-liming, bating, pickling, and then finally, tanning. Leather tanning chemicals can be divided into four groups, namely, vegetable tanning, chrome tanning, chrome-free/ aldehyde tanning, and zeolite tanning.²⁸

An industry that is so massive and uses up numerous chemicals and space, does impact the environment as well, which is why, the government is acting on this and coming up with many policies and regulations which would make the process much more eco-friendly and efficient.

²⁶ <https://www.libertyleathergoods.com/history-of-leather/>

²⁷ <https://unnao.nic.in/district-produce/tanning/>

²⁸ <https://www.neratanning.com/leather-tanning/>



Image: Man arranging finished leather “fabric” (<https://www.thestatesman.com/business/centre-gives-final-approval-setting-mega-leather-cluster-1502819479.html>).



Image: (Representational image) Leather tanning (<https://bestleather.org/leather-tanning/>).

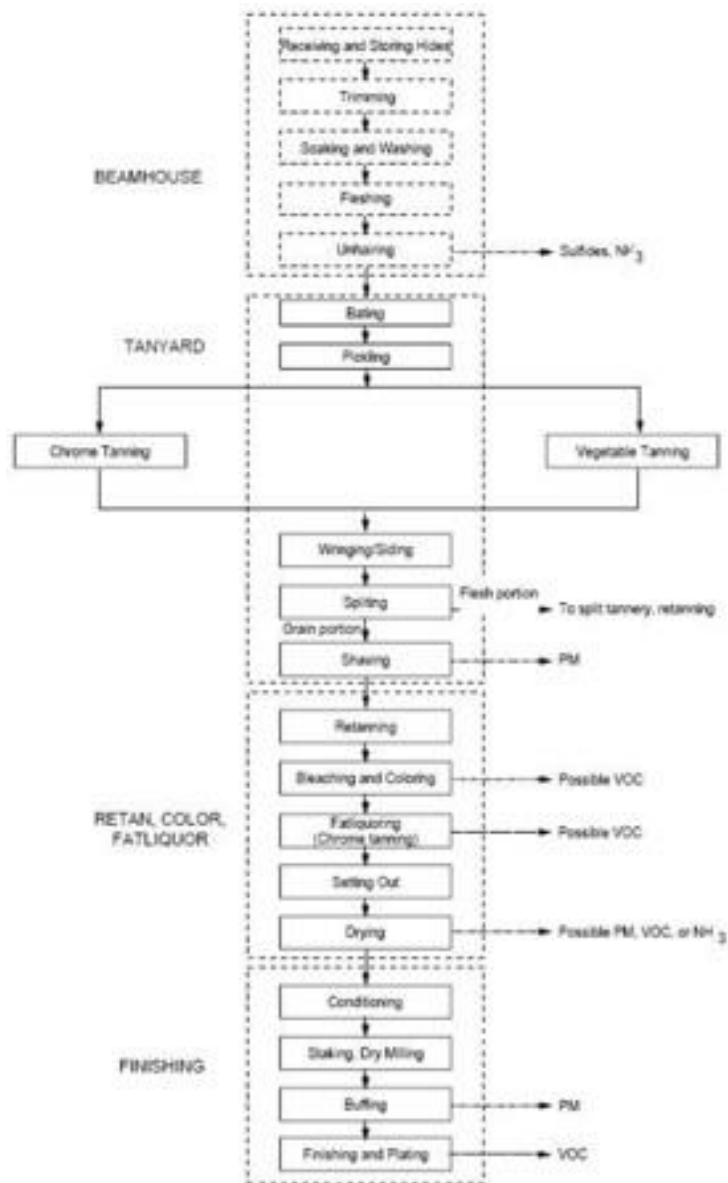


Image: Flow chart demonstrating the steps of leather manufacturing (Gupta, Shivam, et al. "Challenges Faced by Leather Tanning Industry In Kanpur." Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur, ECO332- Development Theory, Apr. 2007, p. 6.).

Zari-Zardozi Work



Image: Zardozi work using metallic gold threads ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zardozi#/media/File:Close_Shot_of_the_Zardozi_\(Zardouzi\)_Embroidery_Cushion_Covers.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zardozi#/media/File:Close_Shot_of_the_Zardozi_(Zardouzi)_Embroidery_Cushion_Covers.jpg)).

Zardozi embroidery is a type of Iranian embroidery that involves the use of metallic threads of gold and silver for making beautifully intricate designs. Apart from metals, studded pearls and precious stones are also used. Zardozi, or Zar-douzi comes from 2 Persian words, "Zar" means gold and "dozi" meaning sewing²⁹.

²⁹ <http://odopup.in/en/article/unnao>

It is usually done on fabrics like silk, velvet, or satin which helps compliment the intricate thread work, making the end products appear more luxurious. The craftsmen sit cross legged around the Adda (the wooden framework) with their tools which include curved hooks, needles, slam pieces, sitaaras, glass and plastic beads, dab or thread, round sequins, and kasab. After the initial setup, the design is traced on the cloth of choice and this fabric is then stretched out in a wooden frame, thus initiating the embroidery work. Craftsmen use needles to pull out each zardozi element and pushing it along the traced design and into the fabric using the very same needle.

We can understand in greater detail the process of how Zardozi work is done, through the images below.



Image: An artisan involved in the process of Zardozi work (<https://www.dsource.in/resource/zari-Zardozi-embroidery-bhopal-madhya-pradesh/introduction>).



Image: Framing the fabric on which the work is to be done (<https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/zari-zardozi-making-of-zari-embroidery/iAGdVS1wBzbg3g?hl=en>).

Before starting work on the fabric, the craftsman first fits the piece of cloth on a wooden frame known as the “adda”. This frame is modelled on the wooden bed frames, like

“Khaityas” which are still used in many rural regions. The “adda” is tightened or loosened according to the length of the fabric.³⁰



Image: Craftsman tracing the design on the stencil (<https://www.dsource.in/resource/zari-zardosi-agra/making-process#:~:text=In%20the%20process%20of%20zari,techniques%20using%20varieties%20of%20thread>).

Butter paper is used for the tracing of designs which is done manually by either drawing the design free hand or choosing to go for a more precise and symmetrical pattern. In order to prioritise symmetry, the piece of paper is folded in half and using a ruler and pencil, a line is drawn right in the middle along the fold. This then acts as the starting point for the symmetrical design of the craftsman’s choice.³¹

³⁰<https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/zari-zardozi-making-of-zari-embroidery/iAGdVS1w-Bzbq3g?hl=en>

³¹<https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/zari-zardozi-making-of-zari-embroidery/iAGdVS1w-Bzbq3g?hl=en>



Image: Craftsman poking holes into the butter paper (<https://artsandculture.google.com/story/zari-zardozi-dastkari-haat-samiti/fqWBrx-kemloKw?hl=en>).

After tracing the design onto the butter paper, holes are poked into it by placing it on top a soft surface of rubber or foam and using a needle. This is done so that when placed onto the actual fabric, the design can be transferred onto it easily. A lot of care and caution is needed in this process to not tear the delicate butter paper.³²

³² <https://artsandculture.google.com/story/zari-zardozi-dastkari-haat-samiti/fqWBrx-kemloKw?hl=en>



Image: Tracing the actual design onto the fabric (<https://artsandculture.google.com/story/zari-zardozi-dastkari-haat-samiti/fqWBrx-kemloKw?hl=en>).

The butter paper is then placed on the fabric on which the Zardozi work is to be done and it is traced onto it using kerosene and chalk. The chalk or powder is mixed with the kerosene oil and traced along the design on the butter paper. The design gets transferred onto the piece of fabric through the holes³³.

³³<https://artsandculture.google.com/story/zari-zardozi-dastkari-haat-samiti/fqWBrx-kemloKw?hl=en>



Image: An artisan using the awl (<https://artsandculture.google.com/story/zari-zardozi-dastkari-haat-samiti/fqWBrx-kemloKw?hl=en>).

Once the base is ready, the craftsmen get into the actual process of designing with the help of the gold and silver metallic threads, salmas, sitaras, sequins and beads. The most important tool for the artisan is the needle, and even though a regular needle gets the job done, but for sari zardozi embroidery, a special hook-tipped awl (known as “ari” locally) is used for greater precision and efficiency. As can be seen in the image above, the awl gives the craftsmen the ability to work on both ends of the fabric while using the other hand to guide and hold the thread below the fabric.³⁴

Many times, the outcome of the design depends greatly on the type of fabric being used. When a fine and transparent fabric like georgette is utilised, the zardozi design created using the metallic threads and sequins and beads gives an appearance of jewels hanging

³⁴<https://artsandculture.google.com/story/zari-zardozi-dastkari-haat-samiti/fqWBrx-kemloKw?hl=en>

in mid-air. If it is done on fabrics like silk and velvet, a different look is achieved, one that is heavier, and representative of what royalty would wear in earlier times. When the aim is to create bold boundaries or fill spaces in sari embroidery designs, gold and silver bullion threads are used for this purpose.³⁵



Image: John Lockwood Kipling's drawing of Delhi gold embroiderers at work in 1870 ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zardozi#/media/File: John Lockwood Kipling - Zardozi workers in Del-hi 2007BM7334 jpg 1.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zardozi#/media/File:John_Lockwood_Kipling_-_Zardozi_workers_in_Del-hi_2007BM7334_jpg_1.jpg)).

Historically, Zardozi work was done on fabrics which were used to adorn the walls of royal tents, wall hanging, scabbards, and the paraphernalia of regal elephants and horses. Traditionally, pure silver wires and real gold leaves were utilised making this work more accessible only to the royals and elites but today, craftsmen use a combination of copper wire, with a golden or silver polish, and silk thread.

³⁵<https://artsandculture.google.com/story/zari-zardozi-dastkari-haat-samiti/fqWBrx-kemloKw?hl=en>

In the Indian subcontinent, Zardozi embroidery is said to have existed since the times of Rig Veda, though not by the same name. This work was popularised in the subcontinent during the seventeenth century by the Mughal emperor Akbar. Due to factors like declining royal patronage and the advent of industrialisation, the craft started to decline. It gained popularity again after India's independence in 1947.³⁶

Traditionally, the zari zardozi embroidery being done in the commercial space was dominated by male artisans and women stuck to making these designs on garments which were to be a part of their personal collections.

³⁶ <https://www.culturalindia.net/indian-crafts/zardozi.html>

Education and Culture

Education



Image: An Aryasamaj Gurukul (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gurukula#/media/File:Arya_Samaj_Gurukul_School_boys_performing_Homa_ritual_1915.jpg).

Going back to the ancient period, like many other regions within India, the region of Unnao was covered by vast areas of forests and was home to numerous ashrams (hermitages). The sages who lived in these ashrams were the ones who taught pupils who came from different parts of the country. As mentioned in the mythology section, the famous Rishi Valmiki also resided in the region within the Unnao district, in a place called Puriur. He was the guru of Ram and Sita's sons Luv and Kush.

Elaborating further on the method of imparting education in these ashrams, we see that a pupil's education began at home within the family setting, and this continued when the pupil went off to the ashram where he resided with the preceptor. The student began his student's journey with the "Upanayana Sanskar" which was the initiation ceremony. The students had the liberty of choosing the subjects that they wished to learn and instructions were imparted specially in Vedic lore. Some of the traditional subjects which were taught in these ashrams included "itihasa-purana" (legends and ancient lore), "ganita" (mathematics), "anvikshi" (philosophy), "vyakarana" (grammar), "shastravidya" (state craft and military science), "jyotish" (astronomy),

“chhandashastra” (prosody), “arthashastra” (political economy), and “ayurveda” (medicinal science).

Unlike today, the system of teaching varied in those times and the primary focus was more on building the character of the child by paying more attention to them rather than imparting skills with the end goal of earning a livelihood. Knowledge was sacred and learning was free from state control. The pupil was taught to be pious and grounded in the sacred laws. The relationship between a student and his pupil was that of utmost respect and mentorship wherein, the pupils often assisted the teachers in farm work and other household chores to acquire the habits of obedience and willingness to help and serve. Not only this, the period of tutelage on average lasted 15 to 20 years depending on the child’s need and inclination. Since teachers did not have fixed incomes and accepted whatever was offered to them by the pupil’s parents, even the poorer households were able to afford a good education.

Culture (Fine Arts and Music)

In the various villages of the district, village specific folk songs are sung during festive seasons; folk songs like the “Kaharwa” during Diwali, “Phaas” during Holi, the “Alha”, “Kajari” and “Barahmasi” during the rainy season, and lastly, the “Birha” during winter nights.

Many verses are also sung for the celebration of heroes of the region. This includes a song specifically dedicated to the brave Bais Rajput of Pachimgaon of pargana Mauranwan, known as Chet Rai. Chet Rai was said to have owned a huge estate, according to these folk songs, and a specific song highlighting the bravery showed by Chet Rai against nawab Saadat Khan is also quite popular. The song suggests that this particular nawab charged heavy land revenue, increasing it from seventy lakh rupees to two crore rupees in Awadh and how Chet Rai stood his ground and was able to cut the land revenue charged on his estate to half the cost.

The district is also home to a few famous folk dances including the “Kharwa”, “Dhobiya”, and “Mela”. The musical instruments that accompany these folk dances consist of the “Thali”, the “Harmonium”, “Manjira”, “Hurka”, and the “Dholak”.

Folklore

G.M. Trivedi, the author of the piece titled “Women in the Folklore of Awadh”, went on to collect folksongs from different parts of Uttar Pradesh like Unnao, Rae Bareilly, and Fateh-

pur districts in 1967-68. He highlighted the condition and position of women in Hindu society.

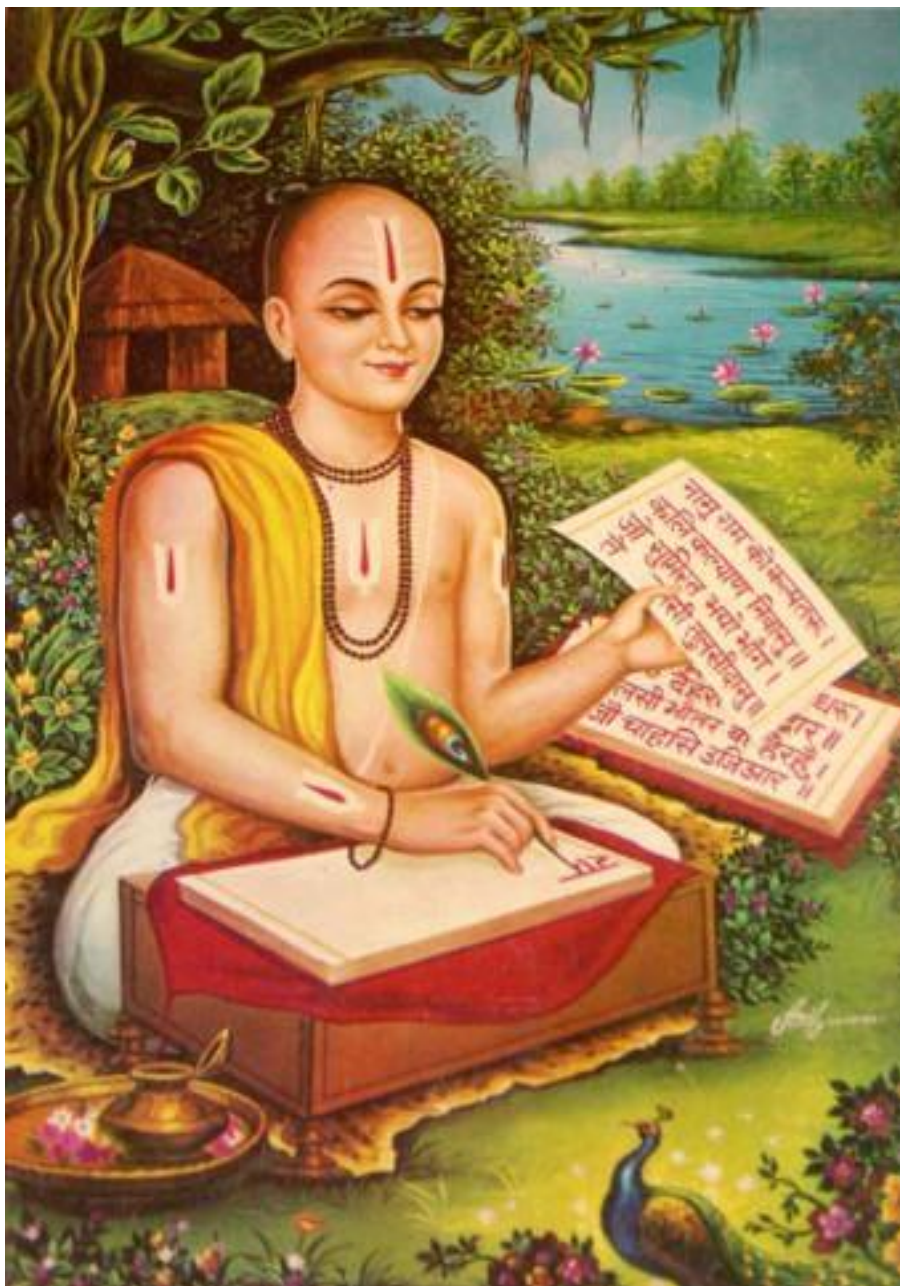


Image: Goswami Tulsidas composing “Ramcharitramanas” in Awadhi (https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/a4/Tulsidas_composing_his_famous_Avadh_Ramcharitmanas.jpg).

Goswami Tulsidas, in his “Ramcharitramanas” writes: “Why has the creator created women in the world? (She is) dependent and there is no pleasure (for her) even in dreams.” Many poets have analysed old literatures, writings and stories and concluded that the condition of Hindu women in the medieval period was pitiable, to say the least. The importance of having a son was very high, whereas a girl child was looked upon as a burden.

The role of a girl in society was very limited and so was the happiness expressed and felt when she was born. A few of the translated songs taken from some pieces of writing shed some light on how women were viewed.

If a son is born to me I will prepare golden ornaments for you.
I will throw silk.

If a daughter is born (to me) then I will give a coloured *Chunar*
of Awadh, my dear.²

'Daughter'! having heard this the father-in-law
shivered.

The stick fell down from his hand.

O God ! the daughter-in-law gave birth to a daughter :

'Daughter'! having heard this the mother-in-law shivered:

The vessel fell down from her hand.

O God ! the daughter-in-law gave birth to a daughter.³

Calendar of Events

NOTE: Exact dates may vary according to the Hindu Lunar Calendar/Panchang. Information from old gazetteers and panchang calendar available online.

MONTH	EVENT AND DATE	DESCRIPTION
January	Republic Day 26 th January, 2022	Republic Day is a public holiday celebrated every year on the anniversary of the date on which the Indian Constitution came into effect. It marks the status of India being a Republican democracy.
March	Holi 18 th to 19 th March, 2022	Bonfires are lit on the eve of Phagu Poornima to signify the legend of Holika Dahan.
April	Ram Navmi 10 th April, 2022	Ram Navmi is a Hindu festival celebrated in the spring to mark the birth of the Hindu god, Ram, the central figure of Ramayana. The day takes place on the ninth and last day of Chaitra Navratri (Vasanth). Devotional folk songs and household worship are common. The celebrations also include <i>rath-yatras</i> , or chariot processions featuring <i>jhankiyan</i> , or specialised idols for the procession.
April	Bhimrao Ambedkar Jayanti 14 th April, 2022	The day marks the anniversary of the birth of the visionary Indian activist, lawyer and the Father of the Constitution of India, Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar. Addressed with the honourific, Babasaheb, he aided the anti-caste and women's movement of early India.
April	Good Friday 15 th April, 2022	Good Friday is a Christian holiday which commemorates the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. It is variously known as Holy Friday and Black Friday as well.
May	Eid-ul-Fitar 3 rd May, 2022	Eid-ul-Fitar is a holiday celebrated in Islam to mark the end of fasting in the holy month of Ramzan. It is also called as Meethi Eid (Sweet Eid). For deserts, <i>sevaiyyan</i> is eaten pan India. Celebrations include a special Eid <i>salat</i> , which consists of two <i>rakats</i> and is usually held at 7:45 am to 9 am. Younger children are given Eidi, a special gift reserved for Meethi Eid.
August	Muharram 9 th August, 2022	The mourning of Muharram is a set of commemoration rituals observed primarily by Shia and Sufi Muslims. The solemn day is marked by grieving the martyrdom of Hussain Ibn Ali. The grieving process includes wearing black, mourning processions, storytelling, etc.
August	Independence Day 15 th August, 2022	Independence Day is a public holiday observed nationwide in India to mark the anniversary of freedom from the British crown on 15 th August 1947. The celebrations include parades, flag hoisting as well as specialised assemblies in schools. The day is critical for India as it is a signifier of many lives lost and two hundred years of domination.
August	Janmashtami 18 th August, 2022	Janmashtami is an annual Hindu festival celebrating the birth anniversary of the Hindu God, Krishna. It is observed on the eighth tithi (Ashtami, or day of the new moon) of the Krishna Paksha (dark fortnight) in Bhadrapada Masa. Celebrations include immersion of an earthen Krishna idol.

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