

KASHMIR



Region & People

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Kashmir: Region & People

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1 Introduction

Cultural heritage of Kashmir is as multi-dimensional as the variegated backdrop of its physical exuberance which has nursed and inspired it all along. Its sanctity and evergreen stature can be conveniently inferred from the chaste shimmering snow, with its virgin demeanour from top to toe, adorning the towering peaks of its mountainous periphery. Mellowing kisses of the sun endow these summits with a rosy blush lending perennial health to our warbling brooks, roaring waterfalls and sedate and solemn lakes. To crown all, this very nectarine glow has most meaningfully groomed our mental attitude to glean unity amidst seeming diversity.

Culture is always in a flux and ferment. It is a non-stop mental journey with no mile-posts to cool its heels upon. It is, precisely speaking, the cumulative expression of the values enshrined in the heart-beats of the denizens of this Happy Valley. The irresistible stamp of Buddhist compassion, Hindu tolerance and Muslim Zest for life is most unmistakably discernible from the attainments of Kashmiri mind and intellect.

In the foregoing pages, we have made a humble attempt to portray this very salient trait of our culture.

- by **Professor K. N. Dhar**

Excerpts from:

Glimpses of Kashmiri Culture

2 Major Ethnic Groups

The history of peopling of Jammu and Kashmir State is a record of constant impulses of immigration from the north-west, west, south and east directions. The alien races, ethnic groups and various religions have influenced the cultural ethos and mode of life of the people of this region.

Ethnic group, in the opinion of Jordon is a group of people possessing a common ancestry and cultural tradition with a feeling of belonging and cohesiveness, living as a minority in a larger society. Each social group is the keeper of distinctive cultural traditions and the nucleus of various kinds of social interactions. An ethnic group provides not only group identity, but also friendship, marriage patterns, business success, and the political power base.

The mosaic of ethnic group in Jammu and Kashmir State is complex and the race structure cannot be explained without understanding the pre-historic movements of people. In the process of peopling of the region, the Dards in the north-west, the Ladakhis in the east, the Gujjars and Rajputs in the south and Paharis in the south-east have closely influenced the existing ethnicity of the people. The racial composition of the State was also influenced by the immigrants from the territories of Turkmenia, Tadzakistan, Uzbaikistan, Kazakistan, Georgia, Azerbaijan (U.S.S.R.) Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan.

The various ethnic groups of the Jammu and Kashmir State though intermingled have their areas of high concentration. For example, Kashmiris are mainly concentrated in the Valley bottom; Dards occupy the valley of Gurez; Hanjis are confined to water bodies of Kashmir; Gujjars and Bakarwals are living and oscillating in the Kandi areas; Dogras occupy the outskirts of the Punjab plain, while Chibhalis and Paharis live between Chenab and Jhelum rivers. Moreover, there are numerous small ethnic groups like Rhotas, Gaddis and Sikhs which have significant concentration in isolated pockets of the State.

2.1 Kashmiris

Kashmiris are well spread in various parts of the State but their major concentration lies in the Valley of Kashmir, Kishtwar, Bhadarwah, Doda and Ramban tehsils of the Jammu Division.



Kashmiri Muslim women at work in a village of Kashmir.

'Kashmiri' is a wide term which has loosely been applied for several streams of immigrated mainly from Turkey, Iran, Central Asia and Afghanistan, and settled in the valley. There is a close bearing of the Indo-Aryans on the racials composition of the Kashmiris. In fact, the Indo-Aryan religions and languages have substantially affected the mode of life of the Kashmiris. The influence of Sanskrit on Kashmiri language

is strong and cogent to this day. Moreover, Kashmir has also received racial impulses from Indo-Greeks which have influenced the race structure of the people considerably. The influence of Dards, Ladakhis and Punjabis has also moulded the ethos of Kashmiri culture.



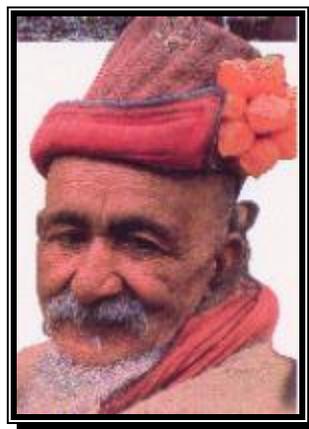
A Kashmiri Pandit Family

Kashmiris are broad shouldered and usually of medium to tall stature. They are much dolichocephic, have a well developed forehead, a long narrow face, regular features and a prominent straight and finely cut nose. They wear short pyjamas, a long loose large sleeved gown locally known as Pharan, and a skull cap. In intellect they are superior to their neighbours and efficient in business. In disposition they are talkative, cheerful and humorous.

Most of the Kashmiris live in villages and are dependent on agriculture. Paddy, orchards, saffron are the main crops grown by them while the urban Kashmiris are engaged in business, tourism, hotel-management, carpet making, silk industry, shawl-making, wood work, pieper-mache and several other handicrafts.

2.2 Dards

Dards have a long history. Ptolemy in his book 'Almagast' has used the word Daradrai for Dards of



A Dard inhabitant of Ladakh.

Photo Courtesy: J & K Tourism

the western Himalayas. Before embracing Islam, they were the followers of Buddhism and Hinduism. At present their major concentration lies in Dardistan (Derdesa), the area to the north of Kashmir Valley, especially in the catchment of Kishanganga north of Sardi, Gurez and Tilel.

In the opinion of Leitner, Dards belong to Aryan stock. This opinion is also endorsed by Ray who states that the Dardic Aryans parted from the main Aryan mass just after their entrance into India. Dardic Aryans then colonised the Pamir region from where they spread to Chitral and Gilgit.

In physical appearance the Dards are broad shouldered, moderately stout-built and have well proportionate bodies. In face they are not handsome, their hairs are usually black but sometime brown, in complexion they are moderately fair. Their eyes are either black or hazel. They are known for their ferocity. In the social hierarchy they are divisible into: (i) Renue (ruling class), (ii) Shins (religious sect), (iii) Yashkun (cultivators) and (iv) Dum (menial class). Dards are dependent on agriculture, pastoralism, cottage industries and trade.

2.3 Ladakhis

Ladakhis have been named as the people of snow-living in an arid plateau, surrounded by mountains, where cultivation of crops is hampered by severe cold and non-availability of water for irrigation. Ladakhis are a mixture of Mongoloid and Aryan races. The Aryans who settled originally in the sub-continent's northern parts were the early Buddhist people from Kashmir and the Dards from Gilgit. The Mongolian stock is traced to Tibet, from where the shepherds and nomads came to the valleys of Ladakh to graze their flocks. The present day population of Ladakh is the result of blending together of Dards and the Mongolians.



Dancers from Kargil

Photo Courtesy: J & K Tourism



Ladakhis

Photo Courtesy: J & K Tourism

The recent population data reveals that Ladakh is inhabited by the Buddhists, the Muslims, the Hindus and the Christians. The Buddhists are mostly the descendants of the Mongolians and bear a close affinity in features with the Tibetans. They are reputed for religious tolerance, honesty and hard work. There are some families even now, members of which follow different religions and yet live in peace. Where the husband wife profess different faiths, the male child is regarded as a member of the community to which the father belongs while the female child is admitted to the religion of her mother.

Buddhism does not recognise any caste or racial distinction, but some differentiation is made on the basis of social and occupational considerations. In any case the Buddhists may be classified among three principal categories, namely, Rigzang, Mangriks, and Rignu. Rigzang is the upper class. Mangriks who constitute the middle class consist of Lamas, Unpos, Nungsu, Lorjo, and Thakshos. The lowest class which is known as Pignu includes Beda, Mou, Garra, Shinkhan and Lamkhun etc.

Ladakhis are truthful, good natured, cheerful, friendly, industrious and honest. They are seldom angry and soon ready to become friends. In conversation they are very polite. Ladakhis are well built and have developed sufficient resistance to work even when the temperature is as low as -25°C.

The population of Ladakhis is not increasing steadily, probably owing to the prevalence of polyandry and partly on account of climatic and economic conditions which have been operating against the development of population and its increase in number.

2.4 Dogras

On the outskirts of the Siwaliks facing the plain of Punjab is the habitat of Dogras a distinctive ethnic group of Jammu Division. There is controversy among the social anthropologists about their origin. The major concentration of Dogras however, occurs between the two holy lakes i. e. Saroinsar and Mansar. Lake Saroinsar is at a distance of 38 kms. to the east and Mansar 64 kms to the west of Jammu city.

In the opinion of some social anthropologists 'Dogra' is a corruption of the Rajasthani word 'Dungra' means 'hill' and when the people of Rajasthan migrated in the hilly tracks under drought conditions the Rajputs gave this name to the people of hilly country, Stein opines that the name 'Durgara' is probably a tribal designation like 'Gurjara' - original of the modern Gujjar, and similarly the word 'Durgara' has been derived from Durgara' through Prakrit Dogra.

Whatever the controversy about the origin of the word Dogra may be they belong to the Aryan race and speak the Dogri language. Most of them have Brahmini path and have the sects of Varnashram. A substantial section of the Dogras embraced Islam during the 16th and 17th centuries. At the time of partition of the Sub-continent most of the Muslim Dogras migrated to Pakistan.

In appearance Dogras are short statured, slim and have high shoulders. Their complexion is wheatish, slightly hooked nose, brown eyes and jet-black hairs. The lower castes of Dogras in general have blackish complexion.

2.5 Hanjis

Hanjis - the dwellers of water, constitute a significant ethnic group in the valley of Kashmir. They are mainly confined to the Dal, Wular, Anchar lakes and the Jhelum river, especially between Khanabal (Anantnag District) and Chattabal (Srinagar District).

There is not unanimity of opinion amongst the scholars about their arrival in the valley of Kashmir. They, however agree in saying that 'Hanjis' belong to one of the ancient racial groups who were essentially Nishads (boatmen). Some of the Hanjis claim themselves as the descendants of Prophet Noah. There are historical evidences showing that Raja Pratap Sen introduced boatmen from Sangaldip (Sri Lanka). It is believed that before their conversion to Islam, they were Kashtriyas.



The boat people of Kashmir oar across Dal Lake on a winter morning

Photo Courtesy: J & K Tourism

Hanjis are sturdy, hard working active people with great imagination. On the basis of occupation and social status Hanjis are divisible into: (i) Demb- Hanz (vegetable growers), (ii) Gari-Hanz (water-nuts gatherers), (iii) Gad-Hanz (fishermen), (iv) Mata-Hanz (who deal in wood), (v) Dunga-Hanz (owners of passenger boats), (vi) Haka-Hanz (collectors of wood from water bodies), (vii) Bahatchi-Hanz (who live in Bahatch boats), (viii) Shikara-Hanz (who ply Shikara boats), and (ix) House- boat Hanz. The various Hanji groups use boats of different types, shapes and sizes, e. g. Bahatch, Khoch, Demba-Nav, Kara Nav, War, Tchakawar, Parinda and Houseboat. The type of boat which a Hanji owns and uses for earning his livelihood or the product he deals with to a great extent, denotes his class and social status.

The sex-ratio of Hanjis is about 892 as against 936 the national level and 899 the state average. The low sex ratio shows that the males are better cared and well fed than females. In fact, the females are still a neglected lot and are not properly cared like the underdeveloped patriarchal societies.

A field study conducted reveals that the literacy rate in Hanji's is only 12 per cent. The proportion of literate males and females being 20.5 and 3.7 per cent respectively. Nearly 34 per cent of the total population of Hanjis is engaged in various type of productive activities, while the remaining 66 per cent is dependent population, belonging to juvenile, Senile and household female population.

Hanjis in general do not have fixed incomes. Their income varies from month to month and season to season. It is more true of those who are engaged in hotel management and houseboat industry. In fact, tourism is an important activity on which many of the Hanjis are dependent. Tourism in itself depends on many other factors like the number and pattern of tourist inflow, the weather conditions and the political situation of the State.

Hanjis, a peculiar ethnic group attached to water in general is not developing at the desired rate. The living conditions of Gad- Hanjs and Demb-Hanjs are poor and unhygienic, while those who are houseboat owners have better income and social status. Some pragmatic planning is to be made for the socio-economic upheaval of the Hanjis of the State.

2.6 Gujjars and Bakarwals

Gujjars and Bakarwals constitute a significant proportion of the population of the State. In general, they have nomadic character and largely depend on flocks and cattle keeping for their livelihood.

The early history of Gujjars and Bakarwals is obscure. There are several theories about their origin. According to one school of thought, before their arrival in the sub-continent they were the inhabitants of Georgia (Gurjia) a territory situated between the Black sea and the Caspian Sea in the Soviet Union. Under certain push and pull factors they left their abode and through central Asia, Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan crossed the Khyber Pass to enter the Subcontinent of India. In the Sub-continent making a southward march through Baluchistan- they reached Gujrat. Most probably in the 5th and 6th century A.D. at the occurrence of some serious droughts they moved out of Gujarat and crossing Rajasthan and Punjab entered the green pastures of the Siwaliks and the Himalayas. Having their place of origin as Georgia and moving towards the Sub- continent of India they named several settlements after their name, e.g. Gujar (Central Asia), Juzrs (Gurjara), Gujrabad, Gujru, Gujristan, Gujrabas, Gujdar-Kotta, Gujar-Garh, Gujarkhan, Gujranwala in Iran, Afghanistan, Turkmenia, Pakistan and India. Cunningham (1970) is however, of the opinion that the Gujjars are the descendent of Kusham and Yachi Tribes which are considered to be the tribes of Eastern Tartars (U.S.S.R.).

The diffusion and spread of Gujjars in the State of Jammu and Kashmir is not known with certainty. When the Gujjars of Jammu and Kashmir are asked about their place of origin, they simply say that their forefathers had migrated from Gujarat and Rajputana (Rajasthan). The arrival of Gujjars in Jammu and Kashmir is attributed to the outbreak of devastating droughts and famines in Rajasthan, Gujarat and Kathiawad. There are archaeological evidences to prove that there was a spell of dryness in the 6th and 7th centuries in Rajasthan and Gujarat which led to the outmigration of these people (Gujjars), who alongwith their cattle entered the pastures of the Siwaliks and the Sub-Himalayas. The 'Gujri' language is now recognised to be a form of Rajasthani language, which supports the hypothesis that Gujjars have outmigrated from Rajputana (Rajasthan).

The major concentration of Gujjars lies in Jammu, Rajouri, Udhampur, Poonch, Uri, Ganderbal, Anantnag, Daksum, Narang and the Kandi areas of the Jammu and Kashmir Divisions. Although some of them have started developing land connections, they are essentially cattle rearers and a section of them - Bakarwals regularly oscillates between the southern slopes of the Siwaliks and the Margs (Alpine-pastures) of the Central Himalayas.

In the State of Jammu and Kashmir the Gujjars, on the basis of their occupations and settlements are classified as (i) cultivators who have sedentized themselves in the sidevalleys, and (ii) the Gujjars who practice transhumance. The second category is further sub-divided into Dodhi-Gujjars (milk-man) and Bakarwals Gujjars (who rear sheep and goats).

The houses of the Gujjars and Bakarwals are locally known as Kothas and Bandis. It is generally a mud-house against the slope of a hillock. The walls are devoid of any ventilation except a small entry door. In one of the walls there is a small hole which is the only outlet for all types of bad gasses and smoke. The shelter though unhygienic protects them and their cattle from severe colds of December, January and February.

The Gujjars and Bakarwals in the State are the followers of Islam, excepting a few who are settled in Bimber, Mirpur and Rajouri. The Gujjars, because of their strict religious adherence, have emerged as the most outstanding tribe who are trusted for their honesty.

So far as the dress is concerned, the males wear a long shirt and a trouser as per the tenets of Islam. Besides, they wear a turban of a peculiar style. The ladies usually wear a long shirt and Shalwar with a cap or Dupatta on their head. Though Purdah system among ladies is not observed, they avoid to face the strangers.

Gujjars are known for their hard work and gentle nature. Rearing of cattle horses, goats and sheep is their main occupation. They have simple food habits. Maize, milk and milk products are the main ingredients

of their diet. They usually start their day with a glass of milk and Chapatis (bread) of maize. The same food is being repeated at lunch and dinner. They do not use any type of toxic drinks as taking liquor is prohibited in Islam. Even tea is not consumed by all the Gujjars.

The Gujjars and Bakarwals have no written language and no history beyond word-of-mouth tales and traditions. They have no art beyond traditional tribal songs and the simple tribal patterns they weave into their clothes. Although they live on products of their flocks yet some of them cultivate little maize on the slopes in the narrow valleys with spade and hoe. They do not use vehicular transport instead they use draught animals. The assets and resources vital to them are pasture lands, migration routes and water-resources. These resources and assets are owned commonly by the tribes and maintained collectively. They have a subsistence type of economy and try to produce everything they need in their daily need.

Excerpts from:

Geography of Jammu & Kashmir State

by Majid Husain

Rajesh Publications, New Delhi-110002

3 Kashmiri Pandit Costume

Literary and archaeological evidence shows that in ancient and medieval times the costume of the Kashmiri male consisted essentially of a lower garment, an upper garment and a turban. If Kashmiri sculpture is any guide, men as well as women wore a long tunic and trousers, probably due to Kushana influence. According to Hieun Tsang, they dressed themselves in leather doublets and clothes of white linen. In winter, however they covered their body with a warm cloak which the Nilamata Purana calls Pravarana. The rich among them were also draped in fine woollen shawls while the ordinary people had to rest content with cheaper woollen articles like the coarse sthulkambala.



Pheran (dress of a Kashmiri Pandit woman)

Photo Courtesy: Unmesh

The use of different kinds of turbans known as ushneek or shirahshata was widely prevalent. Strange though it may be seen, the dress of a woman in early Kashmir consisted mainly of sari and tailored jackets or blouses. She is also shown wearing a long flowing tunic and trousers. It was fashion for both men and women to braid their hair in different styles, wearing sometimes tassels of varied colours.

It is, therefore, difficult to say how long back in tradition does the present attire of Kashmiri Pandit males and females go. Of course, in early Kashmir men and women both were fond of adorning them selves with ornaments. They wore rings in the fingers, gold necklaces, ear rings, armbands and wristlets and even amulets. The women also wore anklets, bracelets, pearl-necklaces, pendants on the forehead and golden strings at the end of the locks (a forerunner of the attahor perhaps). One thing is certain, the traditional dress of Kashmiri Pandits underwent a definite change after the advent of Islam. Today the following articles compose their attire:

3.1 Pheran

The long flowing dress called the pheran-pravarna of the Nilamata Purana is traditionally worn by both Pandit males and females. The dress is always worn in a pair, the underlayer called potsh, being of light white cotton. In case of women, the pheran has wide sleeves, overturned and fringed with brocaded or embroidered stripes. Similar long stripes of red borders are attached around the chest- open collars

(quarterway down the front of shoulders and all along the skirt. A loongy, or a coloured sash was tied round the waist.

The traditional male garment is always plain and has narrow sleeves and a leftside breast-open collar with a kind of lapel or lace emerging from it.

3.2 Women's Headgear: Taranga

Taranga or the female headgear is reminiscent of the racial fusion of the Aryans and Nagas to which the Nilamata Purana has referred. It symbolizes the decorative hood of the crelesstial serpent (nag) with a flowing serpentine body tapering into a double tail almost reaching the heels of the wearer. It is composed of the following parts:

Taranga - The elements for composition of the Headgear:

- a) *Kalaposh* - the cap, a conic shape of decorative brocade or silken embroidery, attached with a wide and round band of Pashmina in crimson, vermilion or scarlet. The conic shape would cover the crown and the band would be shortened threefold around the forehead.
- b) *Zoojy* - a delicate net-work cloth topped by embroidery motifs, and worn over the crown of kalaposh and tapering flowing down to the small of the back.
- c) *Taranga* - it comprises of three narrow and continuous wraps over and around the head, the final round having moharlath, starched and glazed over with an agate-stone, crystal or a soft giant shell.
- d) *Poots* - the two long lengths of fine white muslin hemmed together longitudinally with a "fish spine" pattern. Lengthwise, then the whole piece is rolled and wrapped inwards from both sides so as to form the long bodies of a pair of snakes with a pair of tapering tails at the lower end and a hood at the other end (top) to open up and cover the apex of the headgear while flowing down over the back almost touching the heels.

3.3 Men's Headgear

The turban is the traditonal headgear of the Kashmiri Pandit males, though its use is very restricted now. This turban is not much different from the turban the Muslims wear except that the Pandits do not wear any scalp cap inside. The priest class among the Pandits would wear their turbans in almost the Namdhari Sikh style.

Source: Unmesh

4 Kashmiri Pandits and Music

Onkar Aima

Onkar Aima, himself an active innovator in performing arts, whose contribution to Kashmiri Drama and Music is remarkable, has put on focus Kashmiri Pandits' contribution to the Kashmiri Music and has traced the deep roots of Kashmiri Music to 'Samveda' and to the historical records of Kalhan's Rajtarangini. Aima is from the Film Industry and is presently a governing body member of the Kashmiri Pandits' Association, Bombay - Editor.

It is the need of the time to remind ourselves that Kashmir has a very rich cultural heritage and Kashmiri Pandits have contributed a lot in sustaining it, reviving it and developing it. Kashmir has been a grand arena of arts. There have been poets, dancers, writers, dramatists and musicians, who have attained glory in the literary and art world.

In music world, Kashmiri Pandits, from time to time, have contributed a lot to bring music of Kashmir to a more advanced and organised state. Their achievements have been remarkable and to talk about these achievements of past, gives a sense of pride and pleasure - rejuvenates the spirit.

Kashmiri Music has the distinction and fascinating pattern of its ragas. There is hardly any solo music, it being chiefly sung in chorus. Kashmiri music as we hear it today, is the result of curious mixture of many an influence, under different eras. Yet "Kashmiri WANWUN" (Wanwun hur), which appears to be an adaptation of 'ALAP' - 'Vedic chants of Samveda - has not been altered in the least. Likewise "CHHAKRI" seems to have ancient origin. As per Kalhan's Rajtarangini, it can be traced down to 12th Century A.D.

In ancient Kashmir, like other arts, music thrived under the patronage of kings. In Kalhana's Rajtarangini - chronicle of kings of Kashmir - the first reference is about King Jalanka. He was a great lover of music. He maintained musicians. Mamma, blind musician, was employed to play music at the time of tantric worship. Next references to music are found in the time of King Lalitaditya. Alberuni mentions that great musical festival was held on second of Chet to celebrate the victory of King Lalitaditya over the Tibetans.

Rajtarangini supplies several clues to the development of music of Kashmir. In fact no student of music and dance can ignore the commentaries on Bharata's "Natya Shastra and original works of Udbhatt, Lollapata and Sankuka. Large number of young musicians have been benefited from the guidance of Bharata.

In 'History of Kashmir' by P.N.K. Bamzai, we read that King Kalasa, created taste for light Kashmiri music. His son Harsa, maintained large establishment of musicians and was himself a singer. He taught music to his courtier "Kanaka" - uncle of Kalhana, the historian. Bhimanayoka was a great musician of this time.

The instruments during this time were mostly flute, drum, lute, conch and cymbals. There is also mention of hudukka - sort of bagpipe. It is also mentioned in History of Kashmir by Bamzai that Bhiksacara, who occupied the throne for few months, indulged in playing music on earthen pots and on brass vessels.

During medieval Kashmir 1339 to 1819 A.D. - Muslim era - Zain-ul-abidin, Sultan Shah and Hassan Shah were great lovers of music. According to Srivara, author of Zaina Rajatarangini, musical festivals used to be held in Kashmir. It is during this time that Raja of Gwalior sent all standard books on Indian music, which influenced Kashmiri music. Srivara was also a reputed musician and rose to be the head of music department in King Hassan Shah's reign and did lot of service to Kashmiri music. King Hassan Shah also introduced Rabab - Persian musical instrument - to Kashmiri music. Even during this Muslim era, there were eminent and talented musicians like Sooni Bhat, Shridhar Bhat, Ajodya Bhat and Kshakara who developed Kashmiri music. It is because of their efforts that Kashmiri music shows stray resemblance to Indian and Persian music.

It was after the downfall of Chak dynasty that the music of Kashmir received a setback. Kashmir after this started losing art and cultural heritage. But music was kept alive by the genius and interest of individuals. It withstood storm, tyranny and barbarity.

Arnimol, in her own way, kept the music of Kashmir alive. It is said that Zutshi of Safa Kadal used to have regular musical "Mahfils" in his house. He, it is said, sold his large lengthwise-house by Taks (lengthwise) to continue with his musical "Mahfils" to keep the music of Kashmir alive.

Regarding recent past the names of musicians which come to mind and which I can recollect starts with Ved Lal Vakil, a great lover of music, who helped sustaining Kashmiri music. Amongst others, he taught and trained his two daughters and a son. His two daughters, Rageshwari and Jaijayvanti have made their own mark in the field of music. In early forties, a group of musicians, headed by Prem Nath Chatu, included Sarvanand, R.K. Channa, Wanchu and Mohanlal Aima. They toured villages and sang in towns and would have long musical sittings. Prem Nath Chatu later joined Radio Kashmir.

The contribution of Shamboo Nath Sopori and late Mohanlal Aima to music of Kashmir is quite enormous. The former ran a very successful academy. He taught and produced noted musicians. The latter revolutionized the Kashmiri folk music and gave it a fantastic texture and world appeal. His LP - Kashmiri rhythms and melodies - are still available abroad. He gave music to Pamposh - a short film about Kashmir and first Kashmiri film - MAINZIRAAT-which won President's Silver medal. Pandit Jagan Nath Sheopuri also holds a special place in present day musicians. He is doing a lot of service to Kashmiri music. He is doing special work on Sofiana music. 30 Bolas of Sofiana music have been transferred to notation and a book "Sofiana Kalam Kay Sargam" has been written under his guidance. One cannot overlook the contribution of Sat Lal Saytari, Ramkishan Chakkri, and Gopinath Bhat (Bacha), in their own style. In later age, Gopinath would only sing the Sufi poets.

Because of Radio Kashmir, lot of musicians came into the forefront. Nirmala Chutu was one amongst them, who sang for "Mainziraat". Onkar Raina along with well qualified musician Usha Bhagati are doing service to Kashmiri music. Amongst the latest musicians Bhajan Sopori holds a respectable position. He is a noted composer and is giving new dimensions to Kashmiri music. Along with him Kakaji Safaya, who was running an Academy in Srinagar till he was there, and Krishen Langoo are doing a lot to develop the music of Kashmir. All the three have taught a large number of persons. Bhajan Sopori and Krishen Langoo are recent trend setters of Kashmiri music and have successfully composed music for many T.V. Serials.

Today, when Kashmiri Pandits are in a helpless state, living under torn and tattered tents, in rickety camps, in shabby rooms and in vacated stables, mostly in and around Jammu, in Delhi and in other parts of the country, the recent lot of musicians are still active and their spirits have not dampened. Rajendra Kachru, Arti Tikku, Kailash Mehra, Rita Koul, Neerja Pandit and Purna Jaiikhani are doing notable work and are keeping the music of Kashmir alive. Yet there are many more. It is difficult to keep track of all new musicians yet one cannot forget the names of Basanti Raina, Kiran Koul, Asha Koul, Lovely Chandra, Sunaina Koul, Dhananjay Koul, Neena Kapoor, Mamta Raina, Amarnath, Sushma Kala, Neena Sapru, Veena Koul Jalali, Shuhul Koul and others. Wherever they are, they are sustaining and serving the music of Kashmir in one form or the other. While they are serving music, they, in turn are being served by music. Music gives them strength and will to face the recent calamity, in calm. These dedicated musicians are giving meaning to life. Through music they are keeping the spirits of Biradari and spirits of those who had to run away from their land, high. They are imparting strength to them to put determined rebuff to the life and to the present circumstances in a heroic manner.

According to BHARATA - the author of 'Natya Shastra' - the aim of music is to express feeling and thought. The present lot of musicians express the feelings and thoughts of hometorn people in an innovative fashion, where words might differ, the pattern may not be the same, the composition might vary but the sound-the meaning-the design is the same-Live for Maej KASHEER and burning urge to go back to their homes with dignity and grace. They provide food for our spirit - elevate us - transport us to the world of tomorrow as the great poet **Nadim** has said:

**"Me Chham aash pagahuch
Pagaah sholi duniyaah "
*(I hope for tomorrow
When the world will be beautiful).***

That is Music - food for spirit - transport to a beautiful world.

Source: Koshur Samachar

5 Five Millennia Old Culture & Literature of Kashmir

Some Landmarks

T. N. Dhar 'Kundan'

(Lecture delivered at RP Memorial Foundation Society on 16th December, 2000)

5.1 Culture Defined

It is in the fitness of things that today when the twenty-first century is knocking at our doors and when our beloved Kashmir is undergoing an unprecedented turmoil for more than a decade now, we should be sitting back and reflecting on the five millennia old culture and literature of Kashmir, the land of our birth. Before doing so let us first try to figure out what the word Culture connotes. According to Professor Terry Eagleton, 'Culture, etymologically speaking, is a concept derived from nature. One of its original meanings is husbandry. At first the term denoted a material process, which was then metaphorically transposed to the affairs of the spirit. The Latin root for this word is 'colere', which can mean anything from cultivating and inhabiting to worshipping and protecting. But 'colere' also ends up via the 'cultus' as the religious term 'cult'. The idea of culture signifies double refusal: of organic determinism and of the anatomy of spirit. It is a rebuff to both naturalism and idealism. The very word culture contains a tension between making and being made, rationality and spontaneity'. S.T.Coleridge says that 'culture is what comes naturally, bred in the bone rather than conceived by the brain'. Raymond Williams is of the opinion that 'culture is the organization of the production, the structure of the family, the structure of institutions which govern social relationships, the characteristic form through which members of the society communicate and a structure of feeling'. T.S.Eliot, on the other hand, has defined culture as 'the way of life of a particular people living together in one place; that which makes life worth living; that which makes it a society – it includes Arts, Manners, Religion and Ideas.' After the mid twentieth century culture has come to mean the affirmation of a specific identity – national, ethnic, regional rather than the transcendence of it. All these definitions make culture overlap civilization. In order to differentiate between the two, one could say that culture is the manner of our thinking and civilization the manner of our living. The former has a definite and telling effect on the latter and the two together give us our distinct identity. In effect culture of a society manifests itself in the form of its civilisation.

5.2 Ancient Hindu Period

If there is a single terminology that sums up the entire gamut of our culture as Kashmiris, it is the name '**Ryeshi Vaer**' given to our land. '**Ryeshi Vaer**' literally means a garden of sages. This land has produced an innumerable number of saints and savants, sages and Sufis, who have always stood for the durable human goods of truth, freedom, wisdom, humility, simplicity, compassion, contemplation, worship and the like. The common Kashmiri has adopted these qualities and infused them in his thinking and actions. If I borrow the idiom of Mary Pat Fisher I would say that the map of our Kashmir cannot be colour-coded as to its Hindu, Muslim, Buddhist identity; each of its parts is marbled with the colours and textures of the whole. We have had Buddhist view of life and cosmos thrive in this land for many many years in the past. We have had a distinct non-dualistic ideology called the 'Trika' Philosophy shape the metaphysical thinking of this land. We have had the Vedic rituals of the Sanatana Dharma as the basis of our very existence. There used to be an admixture of 'Shakta' and 'Tantra' in our way of worshipping and then, with the advent of Islam in fourteenth century we witnessed the rise of Sufi order in this land. All these in course of time got merged and produced a blend of culture, which is humanistic, pious and pure, yet very simple and straightforward. It has taught us to turn from the fragmentary to the 'total', from the superficial to the profound, and from the mundane material to the spiritual. Religion has never been an obstacle to this unique culture. I am reminded of a Sufi, Mohd. Sheikh, who lived in our neighbourhood at Chattabal in down town Srinagar. He used to say that the religion is '*Gaev gudom*', the rope with which we tie a cow lest it should stray into the fields and eat the crop. Once the cow knows that it has to eat only

the grass and walk only along the periphery of the field, there is no need for the rope any more. Similarly a man needs the religion only so long as he does not develop wisdom to discriminate between right and wrong and reality and falsehood.

Professor Timothy Miller, a specialist in new religious movements, has rightly observed that, 'Human culture is always evolving and reinventing its own past and present. There is no cultural vacuum from which anything truly new under the Sun could arise.' We call our way of life 'Sanatana Dharma' or the eternal norms of Do's and Don'ts of life. Our belief is that God, Universe and the Vedas are eternal and co-existent. Strict adherence to the prescribed norms ensures cosmic harmony, order in the society and the welfare of mankind. Due to this belief Hindus, the original inhabitants of this land, were neither interested in recording their history nor inclined to force their way of thinking on any one. The basic ideology has been twofold. One, '**Ekam Sat Viprah bahudhah vadanti** – the Truth is one and the learned describe it in many different ways' and the second, '**Aano bhadra kratavo yantu vishvatah** – let noble and beneficial thoughts come to us from all sides of the world'. John Renard, Professor of Theological Studies at St. Louis University, USA has said about Sanatana Dharma, 'I have been intrigued by the tradition's flexibility – some call it ability to subsume every religious idea. The larger Hindu tradition represents an extra-ordinary rich gallery of imagery of the Divine. It has encouraged visual Arts to match the Verbal. There is complete religious tolerance and it is free of large scale proselytizing.' This eternal way of life, this age-old culture of ours is said to be five millennia old on the basis of the Saptarishi Samvat adopted by us from time immemorial. Ours is perhaps the only almanac in the country, that gives this Samvat and the running year is 5076. It is a fact that the only recorded History in India, the 'Raja Tarangini' has been written by a Kashmirian, Kalhana. Yet ironically we do not have any record of our cultural heritage and historical events of the prior period and, therefore, we are unable to paint a correct picture of the life and faith of our ancestors who lived in this pious land. As in the rest of the country, we have to draw upon legends, fables and other types of literature, verbal or written, in order to visualize the picture of our ancient heritage. It is very significant that in the Indian tradition the two great epics, 'Ramayana' and 'Mahabharata' along with the 'Puranas' form the corpus of our history, from which we have to figure out what our past has been like. Kashmir also has its own 'Purana' called the 'Nilamat Purana', which throws some light on our heritage. This 'Purana' vouches for the fact that after the water was dried from the vast area of Sati Sar, sages were invited to settle in the valley and do their penance in the calm and peaceful environment of this sacred valley surrounded by the western Himalayan ranges. The aborigines, Nagas, Pishachas, shvapakas etc. were assimilated and as tribes became extinct in course of time. During this period the rituals and the injunctions of the Vedas only were followed. The inhabitants today in effect are, therefore, the progeny of the sages who settled here for penance and eventual emancipation with a sprinkling of immigrant population.

5.3 Buddhist Period

The fact that an important congregation of Buddhists was held in Kashmir, during the reign of the King Kanishka, shows that this ideology had found favour with the peace loving citizens of Kashmir in course of time. It is from here that the ideology travelled as far as Japan via Tibet and China. This ideology had Tantrik philosophy as its background and focussed on 'Mantras' or recitation, 'Mudras' or physical gestures and 'Mandalas' or meditation. The Sanskrit word for meditation, 'Dhyana' became 'Gom' in Tibet, got mixed with 'Jen' of China's Confucius and eventually became 'Zen' of Japan. In Kashmir, however, a strong non-dualistic philosophy, called Kashmir Shaiva Darshan, drove out this ideology but not before it had left an indelible mark on our culture. There are a number of places, which are named after the 'Baudha Viharas' and are called in local language as 'Yar'. In Srinagar itself we have a locality named as 'Bodager' a corruption from 'Buddha Giri' or the Buddha's hillock. These together with the non-violent passivity of Kashmiris and their life style imbued with the tenets of Buddhism stand testimony to the fact that this ideology had sway on our thinking for a long time. Buddhism accommodated itself to the local ideas while revaluing them by changing the spiritual centre of gravity. Tantra was given the meaning of extension and interpenetration. The eightfold path of this theology, right

view, right aspiration, right speech, right behaviour, right livelihood, right effort, right thoughts and right contemplation permeated into the life of the common man.

5.4 Period of the Trika Philosophy

It appears that while the Buddhist thought did shape the lives of the inhabitants, it did not quench their thirst for knowing the reality nor did it satisfy their spiritual quest. The genius of Kashmir evolved its own version of non-dualistic philosophy, which was an improvement on the philosophy of Shankara in as much as it did not accept the creation to be an illusion. This philosophy branched into two, the 'Spanda' or the vibration system and the 'Pratyabhijna' or the cognition system. This unique school of thought espoused that the Divine, which is pure light, of His own free will and by His own inherent powers, appears in the form of His creation and this is nothing but a play of His own free will. The creation gives an indication of the mundane, the spiritual and the ethereal existence, whereas the Divine indicates the light in the form of knowledge and manifestation in the form of action. This was the knowledge aspect of the Kashmir culture then and the ritualistic aspect was governed by the Vedic injunctions. Of course these rituals also were modified to suit the local conditions. The 'Sanskaras' codified by Rishi Katyayana were in vogue in the rest of the country whereas in Kashmir those codified by Rishi Logaksha were implemented. It was the effect of this philosophy that spirituality and divinity was manifest in the life style of the common man. Although many Hindu holy places and temples were destroyed by Sikander But Shikan, who ruled from 1389 to 1413, yet the ruins of these temples at many places including that of Martand Temple stand testimony to the Sun worship also being prevalent here. There is a hill feature named as 'Aeta gaej' a corrupt form of Sanskrit 'Aaditya Guha' meaning the cave of the Sun. This corroborates the fact further.

5.5 Sufi Influence

Towards the end of the thirteenth century and the beginning of the fourteenth century Islam came to Kashmir. On the one hand the invaders came to conquer and rule the land and on the other hand this place attracted the Muslim Sufis also. These Sufis believed in 'Khalwa' or spiritual retreat and propagated going from the outer exoteric to the inner esoteric. This coincided with the prevailing tradition of 'seeking to refine deeper realization of the Divine within one's consciousness rather than engaging in critical theological discussions; realizing the possibilities of the soul in solitude and silence, and to transform the flashing and fading moments of vision into a steady light which could illumine the long years of life'. Thus came into existence a synthesized cultural framework that we proudly call 'The Rishi Cult'. Glimpses of this blended culture could be seen in the day to day life of an ordinary Kashmiri. My father used to swear by 'Dastagir Sahib', a revered Muslim Sufi saint. Any Muslim passing by a Hindu shrine would bow in reverence and any Hindu passing by a Muslim holy place would fold his hands in obeisance. There are innumerable holy places and shrines where both Hindus and Muslims would go to offer prayers. Hindus and Muslims equally revered Lal Ded and Peer Pandit Padshah, and other Hindu sages. Both the communities likewise held Nunda Rishi, Bata Mol Sahib, Dastagir Sahib and other Muslim saints in high esteem. A Muslim lady, after washing her face at the river Vitasta called 'Vyath' in Kashmiri,

would join her palms and pray thus, '*Afu Khodaya fazal kar, badas ta janas, Hyandis taMusalmanas* – God shower your grace on good and bad people alike, both on Hindus and on Muslims.' A Hindu woman, after pouring milk and water on the Shiva Lingam in the temple would pray thus: '**Sarve Bhavantu Sukhenah sarve santu niramayah sarve bhadrani pashyantu ma kaschit dukh bhag bhavet** – Let all be happy, free of worries. Let all be met with beneficial and pleasant things and let no body meet with grief and unhappiness'. Salutations would be offered to Muslim elders by the Hindu youngsters and to Hindu elders of the area by the Muslim youngsters whenever and wherever they met. In return they would receive blessings in abundance.

5.6 The Other Facets of Culture

To sum up we can safely say that the origin of the cultural stream of Kashmir is Vedic. It has absorbed the influences from Buddhism. It has been shaped by the Trika philosophy of Kashmir Shaivism and it has drawn from the Muslim Sufism and in turn influenced it deeply. The enormous literature that has been produced by the sages and savants of this land portrays a picture of 'Jnana' or Knowledge dressed in 'Bhakti' or Devotion. The message has all along been one of humanism, simple living, high thinking, altruism, contentment, purity and piety. The other facets of our culture are shrouded in mystery. Take the case of the Arts. The old Sanskrit and Sharada manuscripts are full of beautiful paintings and pictures of gods and goddesses. Picturesque flowers and petals are drawn on the margin of the pages and the text is written in beautiful hand in the centre. The colours used in drawing them have been made indigenously from natural material like leaves, herbs etc. They are so prepared and mixed that even the passage of time running into centuries has neither damaged nor faded them. The art is so prolific and profound that it indicates the existence of a well-developed system. Even today one can see samples of these paintings on the top of the horoscopes and on the margin of the manuscripts written on hand-made paper. The portraits and the figures are exquisite and amazing and a well-organised research will throw light on its origin and gradual development. No wonder that the artisans of Kashmir have made a name in embroidery, papier mache and the patterns woven on carpets. In modern times Kashmir has produced a good number of artists, who have experimented with traditional and modern techniques but have distinct styles of their own. Sarva Shri K.N.Dhar, Dina Nath Almast, Ghulam Rasool Santosh, P.N. Kachroo, Manohar Kaul, Bansi Parimoo and many other luminaries fall in this category.

Music is another area where very little is known of its past. Today we have almost identical marriage songs for Hindu and Muslim marriages. The difference is that whereas the Hindus sing them in 'vilambit' or elongated tune, the Muslims sing them in 'Drut' or fast tune. The effect of SamaVedic recitation is apparent from the former. If you listen to these songs from a distance you will mistake them for 'Sama gana'. Kashmir has a tradition of very rich folk songs which depict the emotions, feelings and sensibilities of a common man as also troubles and tribulations faced by him from time to time. Floods and famines have been vividly described in these songs. Then we have a well-organized classical music called 'Sufiana Kalam' or the sayings of the Sufi saints. It has different 'Ragas' and usually the sayings of 'Lal Ded' the great poetess of Kashmiri language are sung in the beginning of each 'Raga'. In recent times we have had many a great exponent of Sufiana Kalam, Mohd Abdullah Tibbetbaqual and Ghulam Mohd. Qalinbaf being among the prominent ones. The former told me once that all these ragas which are in vogue these days have been formalized by Arni Mal, another great poetess of Kashmiri language. I have also heard Ustaaad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan state in one of his interviews on the All India Radio about the origin of Ragas that the 'Rag Khammach' has originated in Kashmir and was derived from the voice of a parrot. While the 'Tumbakh Naer' and the 'Not' or the pitcher form important instruments of the popular folk music 'Chhakri' – a chorus, the multi stringed 'Santoor' is the soul of the Sufiana Kalam. It is well known that Pandit Shiv Kumar Sharma has successfully introduced Santoor into the film-music. Other musical instruments are also in vogue in Kashmir and a well-known name in Sitar recital is that of Pandit Shambhu Nath Sopori. Chhakri was given a new direction and lustre by the late Mohan Lal Aima.

As regards the festivals and the rituals, these are primarily religious in character and therefore, different in different religious groups. But there are some commonalties. Distribution of 'Tahar', the cooked yellow rice on festive occasions is common between Hindus and Muslims. Night long singing of hymns in praise of the Divine is another common feature. The annual 'Urs' or commemorative days of various saints are also celebrated jointly by all the ethnic groups with due reverence. The Hindus of the valley are called Kashmiri Pandits or 'Bhattas' meaning in Sanskrit the honoured one. The important festival that has become their identity is the celebration of Shiva Ratri in the month of February. Unlike elsewhere in the country, here the festivities are fortnight-long and this festival has the same importance for us as the Ganesh Puja has for Maharashtrians and the Durga Puja has for the Bengalis.

Not much is known about the tradition of dramas and dance of Kashmir. Many dramas have been written in Sanskrit. Obviously these must have been staged because Sanskrit plays have always been written for being staged on various festive occasions like the advent of the spring season. It is said that King Zainulabdin had patronized drama writing and theatre. He was himself fond of witnessing plays being staged and would encourage stage artists and actors. During his time, Yodh Bhat and Som Pandit had written some plays with serious themes. The existence of folk dance called 'Banda Paether' with a strong satirical accent and the melodious group dance called 'Rouf' as also 'Veegya Natsun' on the occasion of marriages and yajnopavit ceremonies, indicates that there must have been a very well knit dance tradition in the valley. A unique and well-developed dance pattern with rhythm and synchronized steps accompanied by lively music is prevalent in Ladakh. It is, therefore, certain that there must have been a dance system in vogue during the Buddhist period in the valley also, if not earlier. This is a matter for future researchers to remove the veil of ignorance from this facet of our culture.

5.7 Our Language

The inhabitants of Kashmir have a distinct language called 'Kaeshur' or Kashmiri. Although there are two different views about its origin, yet a dispassionate and scientific analysis will show that it has developed from the language of the Vedas. Thereafter the syntax, vocabulary and idiom of Sanskrit enriched it. During the Pathan and Mughal rule, when Persian became the court language, it adopted a number of Persian words. During the rule of the Sikhs, the language of the Punjab also influenced this language and later, with the adoption of Urdu as the official language by the Dogra rulers, it had to borrow from Urdu language as well as from English. There are references in various chronicles that during the Buddhist period some religious books were written in local Prakrit, which has to be Kashmiri but these books are extinct although their translations are available. The initial glimpse of this language is had from the verses written about the love life of the queen of Raja Jayapred during 8th century and in the Sanskrit work, 'Setu Bandh' of King Praversen, who incidentally established Srinagar as the capital of the valley for the first time. This language was then referred to as '**Sarva gochar Bhasha**' or the language of the masses. The Sanskrit writers used to write in this language side by side with Sanskrit. But a systematic literature in Kashmiri starts from 'Mahanay Prakash' written in thirteenth century by Shitikanth in the same Vakh form, which was used later by Lal Ded. Kashmiris had evolved a script of their own and this is called Sharada script. It largely follows the pattern of the Devanagari script in the matter of the alphabets and combination of vowel sounds with consonants and appears to have been developed from the old Brahmi script. Unfortunately this script did not get official recognition for obvious reasons and has gone in disuse. It may not be out of place that even Ghulam Mohd. Mehjoor, the eminent poet was in favour of retaining the Sharada script. The official script is based on Persian script with some modifications. Because of a large number of vowel sounds and shades in this language this script hardly meets the requirement. It is time that the alternative script based on Devanagari alphabets, with two or three modifications is also given recognition. It may be mentioned that such a script is currently used by all the publications and journals issued from Jammu and Delhi.

5.8 Literature

It is the rule of nature that a change in thinking results in the change in action, which in turn changes the environment. All these changes are reflected in the literature produced from time to time. The literature is the mirror of the culture and the civilization of a society. Kashmir was a seat of learning because of which it is called '**Sharada Peetha**' or the seat of the Goddess of Learning. Just as the name '*Ryeshi Vaer*' denotes the culture of this land, the name '**Sharada Peeth**' indicates the greatness and vastness of the literature produced by the Kashmiris. Up to the time of Sultan Zainulabidin, known as 'Badshah', who ruled from 1420 to 1470, Sanskrit was the language of the elite. No wonder, therefore, that a galaxy of Sanskrit scholars hailed from Kashmir and their contribution to the Sanskrit literature is monumental.

5.9 Sanskrit Literature

The literature in Sanskrit of this land can be divided into two groups. The first group relates to the Kashmir Shaiva Darshan. The prominent authors in this group are Utpala Deva, Somananda, Vasu Gupta, Abhinav Gupta and Khema Raja. The scholarly works include Spanda Karika, Shiva Drishti, Shivastotravali, Parmartha Sara, Pratyabhjna Darshan, Tantra Sara, Malini Vijaya, Rudrayamal and the monumental work, Tantralok of Abhinava Gupta Acharya. A number of treatises and commentaries have been written on these works in order to bring to light the true purport of this unique philosophy. It is a matter of concern that there is no effort on the part of the state government to preserve and develop this important and world acclaimed school of philosophy. It has been preserved by individual effort of largely those individual scholars who are 'Sadhakas' or the disciples of Swami Lakkshman Joo. However, there is an 'Abhinava Gupta' centre at Lucknow established by Dr. Pandey where this philosophy is studied by young scholars. Dr. Baljinnath Pandita and Dr. Neelkanth Gurtoo as also late Dr. Dwivedi of Rajasthan University, Jaipur have edited and translated some of the selected works of Shaiva Acharyas.

The second group comprises books on subjects other than Philosophy. The most distinguished name in this group is that of Kalhana Pandit, the author of the famous 'Raja Tarangini', the only book of chronicle written in Sanskrit. This book gives an account of the Rulers and the events from the 8th century to the 12th century. It was later extended and supplemented by Jona Raja, Shrivara and Prajna Bhatta and brought up to date till the reign of Zainul-Ab-din. There are a number of books in Sanskrit written by Kashmiris on a variety of subjects like Linguistics, Aesthetics, Poetics, Sexology and the fiction. Mammtacharya is a great name because of his work, 'Kavya Prakash'. It is said that the scholars would accept no work in Sanskrit unless it had the seal of approval from Kashmir. A very prominent poet brought his book to Mammata for approval after it had already gained recognition in the Sanskrit world. The Acharya said, "The book is very good but alas I wish you had brought it earlier. I have recently completed the chapter of my book on 'Kavya doshani' or the faults and flaws in poetry writing. I had to strive hard to find examples for different flaws but here in your work I could have got the examples for all the flaws at one place and it would have saved me a lot of effort." Such was the scholarship of Kashmiri Sanskrit luminaries. 'Dhvanyalok' of 'Anandavardhan' added a new dimension to linguistics and poetics. Earlier the definition of a 'Kavya' was '**Vakyam rasatmakam kavyam** – any composition which gives tasteful pleasure is poetry'. With this work scholars were forced to change their opinion and define poetry as '**Vakyam dhvanyatmakam kavyam** – a piece of writing that gives a message by inference and suggestion is poetry.' The scholars of Sanskrit from Kashmir had always something novel to say and propound. They were multi-disciplinary scholars and respected in the entire country as geniuses. Kshemendra, the author of 'Kalavilasa', was another great writer who dazzled scholars with his writings full of wit and satire. Then there were host of others including Bilhana, Kaiyata, Udbhatta, Hayata, Koka Pandit, Jagaddhara whose literary, philosophical, devotional and authoritative works have made them immortal in Sanskrit world. The eleventh century poet, Bilhana wrote 'Vikramanka Deva Charitam' in praise of the Karnataka king who honoured him. Manakha wrote 'Shrikantha Charitam' in 12th century. Bharata's 'Natya Shastra' is an authoritative treatise on dramaturgy. During the reign of Badshah Bhatta Avatara wrote 'Banasur Katha' and 'Zaina villas' and Yodha Bhatta wrote 'Zaina Prakash'. Another big name in Sanskrit literature from Kashmir is Gunadya, who wrote 'Brihat-katha Manjari. It is felt that many of the stories from this book have been included in the great storybook, 'Katha Sarit Sagar'. A Russian scholar of Sanskrit revealed during the World Sanskrit Conference at Varanasi in 1981 that the story of their famous ballet 'Swan Lake' also has been taken from this collection. There are modern scholars like Pandit Lakshmidhar Kalla, who have opined on the basis of the internal evidence that even Kalidasa hailed from Kashmir. However, let that be as it may.

5.10 Contribution to other Languages

When Persian replaced Sanskrit as the court language, the local Kashmiris faced a serious problem of learning the language in the shortest of time. It is said that by-lingual and tri-lingual verses were composed, committed to memory and thus an effort was made to learn the new language. Two samples will show the ingenuity of the people. (1) *Roni lagani Zongla bastan, Natsun hao raqsidan ast, banda paether murdami raqas sonth amad bahar.* - Tying the jingles is called 'Zongla bastan', dancing is called 'Raqsidan', male folk dance is 'Murdami Raqas and the advent of spring is called Bahar amad. (2) The second is in the form of question and answer and runs thus: *kuja budi, kahan tha, kati osukh? Dere tha, khana boodam, gari osus, Chi khordi, kya tse khyotho, kya khaya? Du nano, do rotiyan, tsochi jorah.* The questions are in three languages about where the person was and what did he eat, and the answer also is in three languages that he was at his home and had eaten two loaves. In the absence of any authentic information with me I am unable to give an account of the prominent Persian scholars of Kashmir of the olden times. I would, however, make a mention of two very important names. The first is about a great poet Ghani, who lived during Aurangzeb's time. He is reported to have declined the invitation of the king to visit his court. His habit was to close all the doors and windows when he was in and leave them ajar when he was out. His explanation was that the most precious item in his house was he himself. The inscription on his tombstone is 'Chu Shama Manzile Ma ba Payi Ma'. It means that 'like a burning candle my destination is under my very feet'. This shows that he was a spiritual poet, who was unconcerned with worldly affairs. The second name that I wish to mention is that of Pandit Bhawani Das Kachroo. He is known for his long poem 'Bahar-I-taweel' or a long meter. This poem is written in praise of the Divine and shows an extra ordinary control on Persian vocabulary that the poet had. His wife, Arnimal too was a great poetess of Kashmiri language in her own right. There are many devotional poems written in Persian with an admixture of Sanskrit. A great saint Krishna Kar has written in praise of Goddess Sharika in these words: 'Avval tui aakhir tui, batin tui zahir tui, hazir tui nazir tui, Shri Sharika Devi namah. Man az tu nadi chakri man, pran az tu pranayami man, Dhyan az tu japa malayi man Shri Sharika devi namah.'

Kashmiris within and outside Kashmir have written in Urdu also. The well known names include Pandit Ratan Nath Sarshar, Pandit Brij Narayana Chakbast, who wrote Ramayana in Urdu, Pandit Daya Shankar Naseem, Pandit Dattatreya Kaifi, Pandit Anand Narayan Mula etc. More recently we have had poets and writers like Prem Nath Dar, Prem Nath Pardesi, Ghulam Rasul Nazki, Ali Mohd. Lone, Shorida Kashmiri, Dina Nath Mast, Pushkar Nath, and others who have made a rich contribution to literature both in prose and poetry. Writers have not lagged behind in Hindi either. Dr. Toshkhani, Ratan Lal Shant, Mohan Lal Nirash, Madhup, Dr. Agnishekhar, Khema Kaul, Dr. Krishna Razdan, Haleem, Maharaj Krishna Bharat and many eminent scholars have contributed both in prose and poetry. Their language is Hindi but the aspirations and feelings projected are those of Kashmiris. I have also given two books, 'Main Samudra Hun' and 'Main Pyasa Hun', both collections of my Hindi poems.

5.11 Kashmiri Literature

I am proud to say that my mother tongue is very rich in literature, particularly in poetry. The prominent forms in which poetry has been written have been taken from Sanskrit, Hindi, Persian and English. From Sanskrit we have adopted Vakh and Shruk or 'Vakya and Shloka' as also Vatsun or 'Vachan'. Hindi has given us Geet and Urdu Ghazal, Qita, Nazm and Rubai. From English we have taken sonnet and free verse. Lal Ded and Nunda Rishi of the fourteenth century are two great names who have written mystic and spiritual quatrains. Our poetry starts systematically from Lal Ded whose Vakhs were first translated into Sanskrit by Bhaskaracharya and then into English and many other languages. These Vakhs are dipped in Shaiva philosophy and enjoin upon us to go inwards in order to attain the reality. '*Gorun dopnam kunuy vatsun, nebra dopnam ander atsun* – my preceptor advised me in nutshell to go from without to within'. Nunda Rishi wrote Shruk, which are replete with Sufi mysticism. He has praised Lal Ded in these words; '*Tas Padman Porechi Lale, Yem gale amreth chyev, Shiv Tshorun thali thale, tyuth me var ditam Deevo* – Lala of Padmanpura drank the nectar and perceived Shiva in everything. O God,

give me a similar boon (so that I see the Divine in the similar way).' These two poets are great names in our spiritual and mystic poetry. Whereas Lal Ded has propounded jnana and Shaiva philosophy in her Vakhs, Nunda Rishi has put forth the Sufi ideology in his Shrukhs. All the Kashmiris hold both in high esteem. During his itinerary, Nunda Rishi reached village Tsrar. He is reported to have spontaneously uttered these words there, rhyming with the name of the place, '*Vola zuva yati prar* – let me wait here till the last,' and it is here that he left his mortal frame.

While this spiritual writing must have continued as a sub-stream, in the sixteenth century we suddenly see emergence of a new theme in the poetry of Zoon, later known as Habba Khatoon. She has sung songs of love, separation, and ill treatment at the hands of the in laws and other human feelings. The Kashmiri poetry thus came down from the spiritual heights to the mundane human level. Her lament was, '*Varivyan saet vara chhasno chara kar myon malino ho* – I am not at peace with my in-laws, would somebody come to my rescue from my father's side?' Arnimal further strengthens this human romantic and love poetry in 18th century. Her diction and selection of words and the musical meters used by her are exquisitely beautiful. She had profound knowledge of classical music and is believed to have rearranged the Ragas in use for the 'Sufiana Kalam'. For the first time she uses what in Sanskrit are called 'Shabda-alankaras' or decoration of the words, like alliteration and internal rhyming. An example would show her master craftsmanship. '*Matshi thap ditsnam nyandri hatsi matsi, matshi matsha-band sanith gom, vanta vyas vony kus kas patsi, vunyub karith gom* – I was in deep slumber when he caught hold of my wrist. The gold wristband cut into the very flesh of my wrist. Friend! Tell me who is to be trusted in these circumstances. He has left me crust fallen'. Rupa Bhawani is another great name in the spiritual poetry. Her Vakhs are full of Shaiva philosophy and the language is sanskritized. She lived a hundred years in 17th century and is regarded as an incarnation of Goddess Sharika. There are a number of anecdotes about her interaction with Muslim Sufi saints. In one such encounter with 'Shah Qalandar' it is narrated that the two were on the opposite banks of a river. The Sufi called her, '*Rupa (literally Silver) come over to my side, I shall make you Son (literally Gold)*. She replied, '*Why don't you come over so that I make you Mokhta (literally a pearl as also emancipated)*.

By this time the Persian influence had gone deep into our literature. Poets started writing 'Masnavis' or long fables in verse. The prominent poet of this period has been Mohmud Gami, who lived during 18th and 19th centuries. The Persian stories adopted by him included those of Laila Majnun, Yusuf Zulaikha, Shirin Khusro, etc. Yusuf Zulaikha, which has been translated in German language, is the most famous of his compositions. He no doubt introduced the Masnavi style but it reached its zenith at the hands of Maqbool Kralawari. This 19th century poet has written a monumental masnavi, '*Gulrez*', which has become very popular with the masses. From here onwards three distinct streams of poetry continued to flow unabated, the Sufi mystic, the devotional and the romantic. There is a long list of Sufi poets, who espoused the cause of purity and piety as also mutual brotherhood between various religious groups. These included Rahman Dar, Shamas Faqir, Sochha kral, Nyama Sahib and a host of others. Their philosophy was monotheistic and they laid stress on ethical and moral values. Their poetry shows a deep influence of Advaita Philosophy. '*Ognuy sapan to dognyar travo, pana nishi pan parzanavo lo* – Trust in oneness and shun duality; try to know thy real self.' '*Ognuy soruy dognyar naba, haba yi chhui bahanay* – Truth is one and there is no duality; all else is a fallacy.' In the second stream of devotional poets the names of Prakash Ram, Krishna Razdan and Parmanand are prominent. While the first two wrote devotional poems called 'Leela' in praise of Shri Rama, the last named was a devout of Shri Krishna. '*Aaras manz atsaevay, vigne zan natsaevay* – Let us join the circle of dancers and dance like nymphs in ecstasy for Shri Krishna. Parmanand, who lived in 19th century, has written a memorable long poem wherein he has compared the human actions with tilling of the land right from ploughing up to the time of reaping the harvest. '*Karma bhumikayi dizi dharmuk bal, santoshi byali bhavi aananda phal* – your actions are the land where you must put in the fertilizer of righteousness. Sow the seed of contentment and you will reap the harvest of supreme bliss.' Prakash Ram wrote the first Ramayana in Kashmiri and captioned it 'Ram Avtar Tsaryet'. In the romantic stream of poetry, the next important poet has been Rasul Meer. He has written beautiful love poems in musical meters. His famous poem starts with these

words, '*Rinda posh maal gindne drayi lolo, shubi shabash chani pot tshayi lolo* – My beloved has come out to play in an ecstatic mood, praise be to her shadow that follows her'. The description in the next line is noteworthy. '*Raza hanziyani naaz kyah aenzini gardan, ya Illahi chashmi bad nishi rachhtan, kam kyah gatshi chani baargahi lolo* – The gracious one has a neck like aswan. God! Save her from evil eye. By that your grace will be no poorer.' Rasul Meer was the first poet who addressed his poems to a female beloved. The earlier poets had made a male their love, perhaps because they were pointing to the Divine and not the human.

5.12 Modern Period

The twentieth century is the period when the Kashmiri language made an all round progress. The three streams that were flowing continued and some new trends also developed. Master Zinda Kaul is a great name among the mystic poets of this period. His book 'Sumran' won him the Sahitya Academy award. His suggestive poems are par excellence. A short poem of his reads, '*Tyamber pyayam me khaermanas, alava hyotun kanzael vanas, taer ti ma laej phaelnas, dil dodum jigat tatyom, krakh vaetsh zi naar ha* – A spark fell on the haystack, the entire jungle caught fire. It didn't take long to spread. My heart burnt and the liver heated up – shouts came from all sides, fire! Fire!' He has described God in these words: '*Kaem tam kar tamat bonah pot tshayi doorey dyuthmut, sanyev kanav tee buzmut, saenis dilas tee byuthmut* – Someday somewhere somebody has seen His shadow from a distance. We have heard it with our ears and our heart is convinced of His existence.' Ahad Zargar is another important poet of this stream who has written masterly poems on mysticism and spirituality. The immortal poet Mehjoor, who is called Wordsworth of Kashmiri language, has carried the romantic poetry to new heights. He was acclaimed by no less a personality than Rabindranath Tagore. The Hindi poet Devendra Satyarthi, collecting folk songs of different Indian languages was aghast to find that Mehjoor's poems were being sung by peasants in the fields just like folk songs during his life time. He had this message for his fellow country men: '*hyund chhu shakar dodh chhu muslim ahli deen, dodh ta shakar milanaeviv pana vaen* – Hindus are like sugar and Muslims like milk, let us mix the two (to create a harmonious society)'. Another great name of this period is that of Abdul Ahad Azad. He did not live long but left an indelible mark on our literature. He was virtually the harbinger of the progressive poetry in Kashmiri. His long poem 'Daryav' or the river is a masterpiece. He has ridiculed romance in the face of poverty, want and hunger. '*Madanvaro lagay paeree, ba no zara ashqa bemari. Tse saet gaetsh fursatha aasen, dilas gaetsh farhatha aasen, me gaemets nael naadari, ba no zara ashqa bemari* – My love! Romance is not my cup of tea. It needs leisure and peace of mind. I have none and I am crestfallen due to my poverty. So no romance for me please'.

Post Independence period is a period of renaissance for an all round development of literature in Kashmiri. Kashmiri poets were influenced by the philosophy of Marx and the progressive literature of other languages, notably that of Urdu. While Allama Iqbal was the ideal for many, Faiz, Jaffri and other Urdu poets were heroes for others and they took a cue from their writings. Whereas most of the mystic poetry was full of obscure and suggestive idiom, the poetry of this new genre of poets was frank and forthright; sometimes sounding like slogans. In response to the Pakistani tribal raid, the writers formed Kashmir Cultural Front in defence of inter-ethnic harmony and as an affront to religious fanaticism. The literature created could not remain unaffected by the political and social uprising. Earlier in 1945 Mirza Arif had started a cultural organisation by the name of 'Bazme adab'. Many enthusiastic writers got involved with this organization. Mirza Arif himself is a well-known name for his Kashmiri Rubaiyas, which are crisp and meaningful. The prominent poets of this new movement are Dina Nath Nadim, Rehman Rahi and Amin Kamil. Nadim revolutionized the entire face of poetry. He used pure Kashmiri diction, gave expression to the desire and aspiration of the common man and raised his voice strongly in defence of peace. He wrote operas and sonnets for the first time and his poems have been translated into many languages. One of his immortal poems against wars and strife is '*Mya chham aash pagahaech, pagah sholi duniyah* – I have full faith in tomorrow for tomorrow will bring new light to the entire

world.' He is the trendsetter of progressive and humanistic poetry in Kashmir. His operas, 'Bomber ta Yambarzal' 'Neeki ta baedi' etc are the milestones in our literature. Rahi is another Sahitya Academy awardee, whose 'Nav rozi Saba' shows the influence of Iqbal very clearly. He has also made a rich contribution to Kashmiri poetry. He sang, 'Yaer mutsraev taer barnyan, Maer maend phyur mas malryan, vaer zahir vaets aaman ta lolo – The benefactor has thrown the doors open and filled wine into the big pitchers; It appears that the common man will get his share now.' Kamil has written short stories and poetry both. His diction is rustic and meters musical. 'Khot sorma sranjan tala razan bhav bahar aav – The price of the items of make-up for ladies and the ornaments have shot up, it appears the spring has arrived'. This period produced a galaxy of poets who contributed to the enrichment of our literature. Noor Mohd. Roshan, Arjun Dev Majboor, Ghulam Rasool Santosh, Moti Lal Saqi, Chaman Lal Chaman, Prem Nath Premi, Makhan Lal Bekas, Ghulam Nabi Firaq, Vasudev Reh, Ghulam Nabi Khayal were active within the valley and outside there were B.N.Kaul, Shambu Nath Bhatt Haleem and myself who wrote on a variety of subjects.

Prose writing also got a philip during this period and continues unabated to date. The master short story writers include Akhtar Mohiuddin, Som Nath Zutshi, Ali Mohd. Lone, Umesh, Bansi Nirdosh, Hriday Kaul Bharati, Deepak Kaul, Hari Krishna Kaul, Santosh and Kamil. They gave expression to the emotions and feelings of the common man and picturized the life of the inhabitants of the valley. Akhtar, Lone, Kamil and Hari Krishna have written novels also and given a lead in this direction. Radio Kashmir and later the Door Darshan Kendra at Srinagar provided an opportunity and thereby played an important role in encouraging these writers. The Academy of Arts and Culture has also been publishing the works of these artists and anthologies, which inspires other young writers to try their pen. Moti Lal Kyomu has been a pioneer in the field of drama and Pushkar Bhan in satirical radio plays. Hari Krishna Kaul is also a successful drama writer. There are a host of other writers whom I have not mentioned for fear of digressing from the central point. My apologies to them since I hold all of them in high esteem and recognize their contribution to the Kashmiri literature. I am trying to convey that our language is rich in literature. There have been some translations into other languages but it is not enough. Some of the names that come to one's mind, who have done pioneering work in popularizing Kashmiri literature are Professors Jai Lal Kaul, Nand Lal Talib, T.N.Raina, P.N. Pushp, K.N. Dhar, B.N. Parimoo, MotiLal Saqi and R.K.Rehbar. There is a pressing need for translating the selected works from Kashmiri into other Indian and foreign languages so that the readers and scholars in the entire country will be acquainted with its depth and vastness. Kashmiri is the beloved mother tongue of all the Kashmiris irrespective of their creed or faith. Both the communities, the Hindus and the Muslims have produced poets, writers and artists of repute. It is, however, a pity that the language has not been receiving the official patronage that it deserves.

Post 1990 period has been a period of turmoil, which brought shame to the composite culture of the valley. The Hindus had to migrate to Jammu, Delhi and other parts of the country to escape the wrath of the foreign provoked and controlled militancy. During the last decade of their exile Kashmiri writers have authored a lot of literature. In this literature there is a lament of losing their hearth and homes, a craving to go back to their roots and pain and anguish at the way in which politics and narrow aggrandizement have cut at the very roots of their rich culture and shattered their proud tradition. The worst casualty have been the mutual trust, relationship and understanding between people of different faiths. Ladies and Gentlemen! May I, therefore, conclude by reciting this verse of mine:

**"Byeyi vaeth deenaek ta dharmaek fitnai,
Byeyi gav byon alfas nish bey.
Gotsh na yi ravun hasil kor yus,
Dashi thaev thaev astanan manz."**

(Again we are witnessing conflict and confrontation in the name of religions. Again one is getting separated from the other. I am afraid we may not lose all that we had achieved after offering prayers repeatedly at the shrines and holy places.)

I am grateful to the R.P Memorial Foundation Society and the organizers of this meet for providing me this opportunity of sharing my views with all of you, on the rich tradition of the place of my birth. Thank You.

6 Kangri

Braj B. Kachru

In a typical koshur household, the kangir continues to be the main, inexpensive source of keeping an individual warm during the winter months. A kangir is made up of two parts. The outer part is an encasement of wicker. Inside, there is an earthen bowl-shaped pot called a kondul. The kondul is filled with tsini (charcoal) and embers. A medium sized kangir holds about a pound of tsini, and its fire lasts for over six hours. Many Kashmiris fill a kangir with toh (chaff) or (guh') lobar (dry cowdung). A kangir is a constant companion of Kashmiris during the winter months. It is normally kept inside the Kashmiri cloak, the ph'aran, or inside a blanket if the person does not wear a ph'aran. If a person is wearing a jacket, it may be used as a hand-warmer.

The origin of the kangir is not known. Knowles (1885) makes the following observation:

It has been suggested that the Kashmiris learnt the use of the k'angir from the Italians in the retinue of the Mughal Emperors who often visited the valley, but no reliable particulars have as yet been ascertained.

In Kashmiri folklore the kangir has occupied a prominent place. In the following poem we see the role of the kangir in a Kashmiri's life. (see J. H. Knowles, A Dictionary of Kashmiri Proverbs and Sayings, Bombay, 1885, p. 128)

**ma:g o:y dra:g vothuy, ka:gri:,
pha:gun o:y za:gun tso:y, ka:gri:,
tsithir o:y mithir p'oy, ka:gri:.
vah'ak o:y rah'akh kati:, ka:gri:,
ze:th o:y bre:th gayakh, ka:gri:,
ha:r o:y la:r leji:, ka:gri:,
sra:vun o :y ya:vun su:ruiy, ka:gri:,
ba:dirp'ath o:y vadir peyi:, ka:gri:,
a:sid o:y ka:sid su:zmay, ka:gri:,
ka:rtikh o:y na:ritikh lazmai, ka:gri:,
mojiho:r o:y koji lajay, ka:gri:,
poh o:y toh lodmay, ka:gri:.**

A free translation of the above poem is given below. The kashmiri months, like ma:g and pha:gun, roughly correspond to the Christian calendar, January and February. However, there is no one-to-one correspondence.

**ma:g came and you were hard to get, hay ka:gri:,
pha:gun came and a plot was laid against you, hay ka:gri :,
tsithir came and no one cared about you, hay ka:gri:,
vah'ak came and there was no place for you, hay ka:gr:i :,
ze:th came and you became useless, hay ka:gri:,
ha:r came and you were chased away, hay ka:gri:,
shra:vun came and your youth disappeared, hay ka:gri:,
be:dirp'ath came and sickness came to you, hay ka:gri:,
a:shid came and I sent you a messenger, hay ka:gri:,
ka:rtikh came and I put some embers in you, hay ka:gri:,
mojiho:r came and we became concerned about you, hay ka:gri:,
poh came and I filled you up with toh, hay ka:gri:,**

The mahr'ni kangir is specially made for brides. On the first he:rath (Shivratri) after getting married, a bride brings a specially decorated kangir to her in-laws' house. These have elaborate ornamentation and usually have a silver tsa:lan. The mahr'ni kangir are not terribly comfortable because of their size, but they are extremely attractive and used essentially for decoration.



Mahr'ni Kangir

The tsa:lan looks like a small 'cake server' and is used to turn the coal inside a kangir in order to increase the heat. It is usually tied to a round wicker hook on the back of the kangir. The expensive kangri have silver tsa:lani with silver chains. An inexpensive kangir has a wooden tsa:lan attached by a string.

The sur' kangir is a small kangir specially made for small children. These vary in their size.

The kondul is a bowl-like pot which holds the tsini, charcoal, and tyongal. The kondal (plu.) vary in size according to the size of the kangir.

The term tsini means charcoal in general, but for the kangri, a special type of charcoal is used. People usually prefer charcoal of bo:ni (chinar) leaves.

Source:

An Introduction to Spoken Kashmiri
by Braj B. Kachru
Department of Linguistics, University of Illinois
Urbana, Illinois 61801 U.S.A.
June, 1973

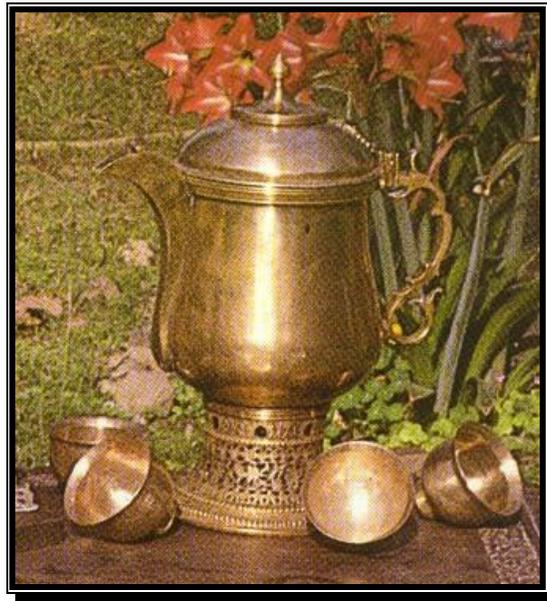
7 Samovar

Braj B. Kachru

There is no home in Kashmir that does not have a samovar. Each family has one or two samovars. Kashmiris make tea in the samovar. Kashmiris are very fond of tea. That is why any time is considered tea time.

Inside a samovar there is a fire-container in which charcoal and live coals are placed. Around the fire-container there is a space for water to boil. Tea leaves, sugar, cardamom, and cinnamon are put in the water.

Samovars are not of only one type. Some samovars, in which only one or two cups of tea can be made, are very small. Other samovars, in which hundreds of cups of tea can be made, are very big. Samovars are made of copper or brass.



Koshur Sama:va:r with 4 khae:s (cups)

Photo Courtesy:
De Leij

Culinary Art of Kashmir by Shyam Rani Kilam and S. S. Kaul Kilam

Kashmiris can make two or three types of tea in the samovar. The kehvi is the favorite tea of Kashmiris. This tea is also called mogil cha:y. There is a special tea for making it. It is called bambay cha:y. The bambay cha:y, sugar, cardamom, cinnamon, and almonds are boiled in water, but no milk is added.

The second type of tea is dabal cha:y. It is made with bambay cha:y, sugar, cardamom, and almonds. Milk, however, is also added. Kashmiri Pandits serve dabal cha:y at weddings and on feasts.

The third type of tea is called shi:r' cha:y. This type is not made with bambay cha:y. There is another kind of tea used for making that. It is prepared with bicarbonate of soda, salt, milk, and cream (mala:y). It has a very pleasant color. Shi:r' cha:y also is a typically Kashmiri tea, but not everyone likes it.

Recently, some Kashmiris have started drinking Lipton tea. But even now, the favorite tea of Kashmiris is kahvi. It is said that good kanvi cannot be made without the samovar.

It is difficult to say when the samovar was first introduced into Kashmir. In addition to Kashmir, the samovar is also found in Russia and Persia. Kashmiri tea can only be enjoyed in a Kashmiri kho:s (cup).

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8 The Valley of Kashmir – Archaeology

Walter R. Lawrence

The Valley of Kashmir is the 'holy land' of the Hindus, and I have rarely been in any village which cannot shove some relic of antiquity. Curious stone miniatures of the old Kashmiri temples (Kulr-Muru), huge stone seats of Mahadeo (Badrpath) inverted by pious Musalmans, Phallic emblems innumerable, and carved images heaped in grotesque confusion by some clear spring, have met me at every turn. The villagers can give no information as to the history of these remains, save the value guess that they were the works of the Buddhists or of the Pandus. The Pandits of the city care nothing for archaeological research, and know little about the past glories of their country in the old Hindu times. When one comes to the more recent period of the Mughals, tradition becomes more definite, and I have seen curious mosques built in a style unlike the present, of wooden beams with stones between, mostly raised by Aurangzeb. He built religious edifices, while the other Mughals devoted themselves to stately pleasure-domes, gardens, terraces, waterfalls, and pretty summer houses. While the old Hindu buildings defy time and weather the Musalman shrines and mosques crumble away and have little now of their pristine grandeur. Here and there the excellent masonry of Jehangir has withstood the great destroyer, but unless money is spent quickly and judiciously there will be little left, save the wild roses of the valley, to remind posterity of the pleasure-haunts of Selim and Naurmahal. It is to be hoped that the Kashmir State will never allow the beautiful pleasaunces of Achabal and Vernag, Shalamar and Nishat to pass away, but unless early steps are taken these fair places will become sad and unsightly ruins. As regards the older buildings of ancient Kashmir it is hard to say whether it would be possible to protect these monuments from further damage. I have often looked at Martand and noticed with sorrow that the temple to the north, supposed by Cunningham to be the fan of Ranesa, is sloping sway from the main temple, and the push of an earth-quake would send it crashing into the mass of mighty stones beneath. But if Martand - 'Precious specimen of ancient art, deserving a foremost place among the remains of antiquity' - is to be preserved, not only money but artistic skill would be required. A brick buttress would be an act of desecration. If the State ever takes up the work of conservation of ancient monuments, I think that the two relics of the old Hindus most worthy of preservation would be Martand and Payech. The former is the grandest of the ancient buildings, the latter the most perfect. Earthquakes will always render the future of the Kashmir temples uncertain, and the shock of 1885 caused great damage to the buildings at Pattan. I have made extracts from the greatest authority on the archaeology of Kashmir, and have quoted descriptions of the most important of the buildings of the old Hindus, but a rich field awaits explorers in the valley. Chance excavations, for irrigation and other works, reveal curious sculptures and interesting relics of ancient history, and any one with money and leisure might find profitable employment in tracing the old cities on the hill slopes and the karewas of Kashmir. In 1882 Mr. Garrick, late of the Archaeological Survey of India, carried out extensive excavations at Ushkpur near Baramula. He excavated a lope or stupa of squared stones, held together with iron clamps, in the hope of finding certain copper plates which, according to the Chinese pilgrim, Hwen Thsang, were deposited therein. On the copper plates were engraved the proceedings of a Buddhist synod held in the reign of Kanishka. Mr. Garrick's excavations were thorough, but unsuccessful. It was at Ushkpur that Lalitaditya is said to have built an image of the Mukhtswami and a large monastery with a stupa of the Buddhists. Along the eastern side of the valley one sees everywhere on the slopes of the mountains remains of ancient cities. I do not know how far these have been examined, but am under the impression that explorers, owing to the short time of their stay in the valley, have chiefly confined their attention to the well-known temples. I am also under the impression, founded on what the people say, that many valuable relics have been carried away from Kashmir, while the State itself has removed several sculptures and thousands of lingams from their old sites to Srinagar. The island on the Wular is a notable example of this. To the explorer I would recommend the eastern side of the valley. Tradition assigns Sumbal, on the Jhelum as the site of the ancient Jayapura, and the people say that excavation at Sumbal would reveal great treasures. Hardly a year passes without rumours of fabulous treasure being discovered in Kashmir. Official measures are at once taken to secure the State's interests, but since I have been in the valley all such rumours have proved

to be unfounded. It is quite possible, however, that treasure is found, and it is very possible that systematic exploration might discover some of the wealth with which Lalitaditya, and other conquerors endowed the valley.

My duties left me no leisure to investigate the history of the ruined forts and the little palaces (kutraj) which occur so frequently on the western side of the valley. The forts are recent, of Mughal or Pathan times, but the little palaces carry one back to the prehistoric ages when Kashmir was parcelled out among a number of princelings. The forts and palaces are now mere heaps of stones, the abode of snakes and jackals, 'the populous city is deserted, and thorns and briars have come up upon the land.' A curious antiquity known as Raman Kan, not described in previous accounts of the valley, may be mentioned here.

On the Kutraj karewa, near the village of Khushipura, the arrows of Ram Chandr and Lachman are to be found. The arrows are of cut stone, octagonal in section, stand about four feet out of the ground, and the depth to which they have penetrated the soil after their long flight is unknown. The karewa also has a number of depressions, varying in size and depth and containing water and weeds. This table-land was once the abode of the Rakshas, devils in human form, who lessened the tediousness of time by wrestling-matches among themselves and by devouring men. The depressions were made by the rubbing of giant elbows and knees against the ground during the wrestling-bouts. The avatars at last took compassion on the people thus oppressed, and preyed upon, and fired arrows from Ram Koond and Lachman Koond, sacred places in Machipura, where Hindus go to bathe, and the Rakshas were slain. The legend is interesting in that it points to a time when the Kutraj country was inhabited by a lawless people who made periodical inroads on the peace-loving and better-favoured lowlander. I have visited all the buildings which are now to be described, and have debated with myself whether anything of interest could be added by me to the excellent and accurate descriptions which expert writers have already given. I have decided that it would be presumptuous and useless, and just as in the chapter on geology I have availed myself of Lydekker's researches, so in this chapter I repeat the words of the greatest of Indian antiquarians, the late Sir Alexander Cunningham. I first give his general remarks on the architectural remains of Kashmir, and in the detailed description of each temple I reproduce the notices contained in Bates' Gazetteer.

The architectural remains of Kashmir are perhaps the most remarkable of the existing monuments of India, as they exhibit undoubted traces of the influence of Grecian art. The Hindu temple is generally a sort of architectural pasty, a huge collection of ornamental fritters huddled together, either with or without keeping, while the Jain temple is usually a vast forest of pillars, made to look as unlike one another as possible by some paltry differences in their petty details. On the other hand the Kashmirian fans are distinguished by the graceful elegance of their outlines, by the massive boldness of their parts, and by the happy propriety of their decorations. They cannot, indeed, vie with the severe simplicity of the Parthenon nor with the luxuriant gracefulness of the monument of Lysicrates, but they possess great beauty, different indeed, yet quite their own.

The characteristic features of the Kashmirian architecture are its lofty pyramidal roofs, its trefoiled doorways, covered by pyramidal pediments, and the great width of its intercolumniations. The Grecian pediment is very low, and its roof exceedingly flat, the Kashmirian pediment, on the contrary, is extremely lofty, and its roof high. The former is adapted for a sunny and almost rainless climate, while the latter is equally well suited to a rainy and snowy climate. But besides the difference of climate, there was perhaps another reason for the form of roofing peculiar to the two countries in the kind of material most readily procurable for buildings. In Greece it was stone, in Kashmir it was timber. The former imposed low flat roofs with small intercolumniations, the latter suggested lofty roofs and wide intercolumniations.

In the Kashmirian architecture the great width of the interval between the columns (which is constant) is perhaps the most characteristic feature of the order. Indeed I have suspicion that the distinctive mark of the Kashmirian style was well known to the Greeks; for an intercolumniation of four diameters, an interval seldom, if ever, used by themselves, was called Araiostyle, a name which would appear to refer to the intercolumniation common amongst the Hindus or Eastern Aryas, the 'APEIOI of Herodotus. The

vulgar etymology of Araiostyle from 'APAIO, "rare," seems extremely far-fetched if not absurd; while the etymology of the "Arian columnar interval" appears both natural and appropriate, as the intercolumniation followed by the Aryas of Kashmir was never less than four diameters.

Now the interval between the Kashmirian pillars being always Araiostyle, I feel inclined to call the style of architecture used by the Aryas of Kashmir the "Arian Order." This name it fully merits, for it is as much a distinct order of architecture as any one of the more celebrated classic orders. Like them it is subject to known rules, which confine the genius of its architects within certain limits. A Kashmirian pillar is indeed distinguished from all Indian pillars by having a base, a shaft, and a capital, and each, besides, bearing a certain proportion to the diameter. How unlike is this to the columnar vagaries of the Hindus, which are of all shapes and of all dimensions A favourite Hindu pillar has the lowest fourth of its height square, the next eight-sided, and the third sixteen-sided, and the upper part round; another has a double capital with a low flat base; whilst a third has a shaft of only one-fourth of its height, the remaining three-fourths being all base and capital, and yet these three pillars may be neighbouring columns of the same temple.

The superiority of the Kashmirian architecture over all other Indian buildings would appear to have been known to the Hindus themselves, for one of their names of the people of Kashmir is Shastra-Silipina, or "architects," a term which could only have been applied to them on account of their well-known skill in building. Even now the Kashmiris are the most expert handicraftsmen of the East; and it is not difficult to believe that the same people, who at present excel all other orientals as weavers, gun-smiths, and as calligraphers, must once have been the most eminent of the Indian architects.

Before entering upon any details of the Arian order of architecture, and upon the comparisons naturally suggested between it and some of the classical orders, I will first describe the present state and appearance of the principal buildings that still exist in Kashmir, all of which were accurately measured by myself in November, 1847. They are

entirely composed of a blue limestone which is capable of taking the highest polish, a property to which I mainly attribute the present beautiful state of preservation of most of the Kashmirian buildings; not one of these temples has a name, excepting that of Martand, which is called in the corrupt Kashmirian pronunciation, Matan, but they are all Flown by the general name of Pandavanki lard or "Pandus-house," a title to which they have no claim whatever, unless indeed the statement of Ptolemy can be considered of sufficient authority upon such a subject. He says "circa autem Bidaspum Pandovororum regio" - the Kingdom of the Pandus is upon the Betasta of (Behat), that is, it corresponded with Kashmir. This passage would seem to prove that the Pandavas still inhabited Kashmir so late as the second century of our era. Granting the correctness of this point there may be some truth in the universal attribution of the Kashmirian temples to the race of Pandus, for some of these buildings date as high as the end of the fifth century, and there are others that must undoubtedly be much more ancient, perhaps even as old as the beginning of the Christian era. One of them dates from 220 B.C.

Most of the Kashmirian temples are more or less injured, but more particularly those at Awantipura, which are mere heaps of ruins. Speaking of these temples, Trebeck says, " It is scarcely possible to imagine that the state of ruin to which they have been reduced has been the work of time or even of men, as their solidity is fully equal to that of the most massive monuments of Egypt; earthquakes must have been the chief agents in their overthrow." I have quoted this passage to show the utter confusion that characterizes the ruins of the Awantipura temples. In my opinion their overthrow is too complete to have been the result of an earthquake, which would have simply prostrated the buildings in large masses. But the whole of the superstructure of these temples is now lying in one confused heap of stones totally disjoined from one another. I believe, therefore, that I am fully justified in saying, from my own experience, that such a complete and disruptive overturn could only have been produced by gunpowder. I have myself blown up a fort, besides several buildings, both of stone and of brick, and I have observed that the result has always been the entire sundering of all parts one from another, and the capsizing or bouleversement of many of them. Neither of these effects can be produced by an earthquake. It seems also that Trebeck and

Moorcroft would most likely have attributed their destruction to the same agency, had Hey not believed that the use of gunpowder was unknown at the time; for in speaking of a traditional attempt made by Shah Hamdan to destroy Martand, they say, "It is fortunate he was not acquainted with the use of gunpowder." I admit that this destructive agent was most probably unheard of in Kashmir so early as the reign of Shah Mirshah of Hamdan; but the destruction of the Kashmirian temples is universally attributed, both by history and by a tradition, to the bigoted Sikander, whose idol breaking zeal procured him the title of But-Shikan, or "Iconoclast." He was reigning at the period of Timur's invasion of India, with whom he exchanged friendly presents, and from whom I suppose he may have received a present of the "villainous saltpetre." This is not at all unlikely, for the furious Tamerlane was as great an idol-breaker as Sikandar himself. Gibbon, it is true, denies that either the Mughals or Ottomans in 1402 were acquainted with gunpowder, but as he points out that the Turks had metal cannon at the siege of Constantinople in A. D. 1422, I think it is no great stretch of probability to suppose that gunpowder itself had been carried into the East, even as far as Kashmir, at least ten or twenty years earlier, that is about A. D. 1400 to 1420, or certainly during the reign of Sikandar, who died in 1416.

Even if this be not admitted, I still adhere to my opinion that the complete ruin of Awantipura temples could only have been effected by gunpowder, and I would then ascribe their overthrow to the bigotted Aurangzeb. Ferishta attributed to Sikandar the demolition of all the Kashmirian temples save one which was dedicated to Mahadeo, and which only escaped "in consequence of its foundation being below the surface of the neighbouring water." In A. D. 1580/90, however, Abulfazal mentions that some of the idolatrous temples were in "perfect preservation;" and Ferishta himself describes many of these being in existence in his own time, or about A. D. 1600. Besides, as several of them are still standing, although more or less injured, it is quite certain that Sikandar could not have destroyed them all. He most likely gave orders that they should all be overturned; and I have no doubt that many of the principal temples were thrown down during his reign. For instance, the tomb of his own queen in Srinagar is built upon the foundation, and with the materials of a Hindu temple; likewise the wall which surrounds the tomb of his son, Zain-ul-Ab-ul-din, was once the enclosure of a Hindu temple; and lastly, the entrance of a Masjid in Nawashahra of Srinagar, which, according to its inscription, was built during the reign of his son Zain-ul-Ab-ul-din, is formed of two fluted pillars of a Hindu peristyle. These instances prove that at least three different temples, in the capital alone, must have been overthrown either by Sikandar or by one of his predecessors. But as the demolition of idol temples is not attributed to any one of the earlier kings, we may safely ascribe the destruction of the three above mentioned to Sikandar himself. But besides the ruthless hand of the destroyer another agency, less immediate, but equally certain in its ultimate effects, must have been at work upon the large temples of Kashmir. The silent ravages of the destroyer who carries away pillars and stones for the erection of other edifices have been going on for centuries. Pillars from which the architraves have been thus removed have been thrown down by earthquakes, ready to be set up again for the decoration of the first masjid or tomb that might be erected in their neighbourhood. Thus every Muhammadan building in Kashmir is constructed either entirely or in part of the ruins of Hindu temples.

Even at first sight, one is immediately struck by the strong resemblance which the Kashmirian columnades bear to the classical peristyle of Greece. This first impression is undoubtedly due to the distinct division of the pillars into the three members - base, shaft and capital, as well as to the fluting of the shafts. On further inspection the first impression is confirmed by the recognition that some of the principal mouldings are also peculiar to the Grecian orders, but more especially to the Doric. Thus the echinos, which is the leading feature of the Kashmirian capital, is also the chief member of the Doric capital. A still closer examination reveals the fact that the width of the capital is subject exactly to the same rules as that of all the classical orders excepting the Corinthian.

Even the temples themselves, with their porches and pediments, remind one more of Greece than of India; and it is difficult to believe that a style of architecture which differs so much from all Indian examples, and which has so much in common with those of Greece, could have been indebted to chance alone for this striking resemblance. In Professor Willis admits the probability that the Kashmirian pediments may

have been borrowed from those of the Syrian Greeks, and he founds his opinion upon the fact that the trefoiled arch of the Kashmirian temple rises high into the tympanum of the pediment; a practice which was not introduced into the classical architecture until after the commencement of the Christian era. But the Professor had not, I believe, seen any examples of the older Kashmirian buildings, such as the enclosing walls of the temple on the Takht-iSuliman and of the tomb of Zain-ul-Ab-ul-din, as well as the perfect little cave temple of Bhumju. Of these specimens the first dates as early as 220 B.C., at which time the Kabul valley, and even the western Panjab, were occupied by the Bactrian Greeks, under Euthydemus and his son Demetrius. If, therefore, it is admitted that the Kashmirian architects have been indebted to those of Greece, for their pediments, for their fluted columns, or even for any of their minor details, I think that they must certainly have borrowed them from the temples of their immediate neighbours the Bactrian Greeks, and not from the buildings of distant Syrian Greeks; I think also that had these pediments been imitated from the latter Romanized examples the copyist would scarcely have overlooked the structural arches which occupy their pediments. In fact the forms of the principal Kashmirian mouldings, which are all quirked ovolos, or echni, could only have been borrowed from the pure Greek style of an earlier period than the Roman innovation of circular segmental mouldings.

Another striking resemblance between the Kashmirian architecture and that of the various Grecian orders is its stereotyped style, which during the long flourishing period of several centuries remained unchanged. In this respect it is so widely different from the ever-varying forms and plastic vagaries of the Hindu architecture, that it is impossible to conceive their evolution from a common origin. I feel convinced myself that several of the Kashmirian forms, and many of the details, were borrowed from the temples of the Kabulian Greeks, while the arrangement of the interior, and the relative proportions of the different parts, were of Hindu origin. Such, in fact, must necessarily have been the case with imitations by Indian workmen, which would naturally have been engrafted upon the indigenous architecture. The general arrangement would therefore still remain infirm, while many of the details, and even some of the larger forms, might be of foreign origin.

As a whole, I think that the Kashmirian architecture, with its noble fluted pillars, its vast colonnades, its lofty pediments and its elegant trefoiled arches, is fully entitled to be classed as a distinct style. I have therefore ventured to call it the "Arian order", a name to which it has a double right: firstly, because it was the style of the Aryas, for Arians of Kashmir; and secondly, because its intercolumniations are always of four diameters, an interval which the Greeks called Araiostyle.

Bhumju or Bumzu or Bhaumajo lies at the mouth of the Liddar valley, and is easily reached from Islamabad.

These caves are situated on the left bank of the Liddar river about a mile north of the village of Bawan, the largest is dedicated to Kaladeva. The cave temple stands at the far end of a natural but artificially enlarged fissure in the limestone cliff. The entrance to the cavern, which is more than 60 feet above the level of the river, is carved into an architectural doorway, and a gloomy passage, 50 feet in length, leads from it to the door of the temple. It is a simple cella, 10 feet square, exterior dimensions, raised on a badly moulded plinth, and approached by a short flight of steps. The square doorway is flanked by two round-headed niches despoiled of their statues, and is surmounted by a high, triangular pediment, reaching to the apex of the roof, with a trefoiled tympanum. There is no record nor tradition as to the time of erection; but from absence of all ornamentation, and the simple character of the roof, which appears to be a rudimentary copy in stone of the ordinary sloping timber roof of the country, it may with great probability be inferred that this is the earliest perfect specimen of a Kashmir temple, and dates from the first or second century of the Christian era. Close by is another cave of still greater extent, but with no architectural accessories; and about half a mile further up the valley, at the foot of the cliff, are two temples, the larger of which has been converted into a Muhammadan tomb. Both are, to a considerable extent, copies of the cave-temple, but may be of much later date.

The shrine of Baba Ramdin Rishi and the tomb of his disciple Ruku din Rishi are also close by. Hugel states that the Bhumju caves occupy a very conspicuous place in the fables of the timid Kashmiris, and are supposed to have originated from the following causes. In the year Kali 2108 (933 B.C.) Raja Nara

succeeded his father. Vibishana; during his reign a certain Brahman espoused Chandrasaha, the daughter of Susravas, a serpent-god, whose place was in a lake near the Vitusta, and near a city built and inhabited by Nara. One day, as Raja Nara beheld the beautiful daughter of the serpent on the shore of the lake, moving gracefully through the calm waters, he was struck with the deepest admiration, and endeavoured vainly to inspire the same sentiments he himself felt. At length he resolved to carry her off from her husband, but the plan failed, and the enraged Brahman called on her father to avenge the insult. A storm was accordingly called up, and the earth opened and swallowed up the king and his whole court. The sister of the serpent-god assisted him, and hurled on the city huge stones from the Bawan mountain. The caverns of Bhumju are said to be on the spot where these rocks were upturned (Huger, Growse).

Awantipura lies on the right bank of the Jhelum and is distant about 18 miles by land from Srinagar.

The ancient capital of Awantipura was called after its founder, the famous king Awanti-Varma, who reigned from A. D. 854 to 883. The whole neighbourhood is strewn with ruins, but the only traces that remain of its former greatness are the two temples which he founded - one before his accession to the throne, and the other and larger one subsequently. Both were dedicated to Mahadeva, the former under the title of AwantiSwami, the latter under that of Awantiswara. These two temples are situated on the bank of the river, one at Awantipura and the other about three quarters of a mile to the north, near the village of Janbior. They are now shapeless masses of ruins, but the gateways of both are standing, and the colonnade of the smaller temple, which had been completely buried underground, has recently been partially excavated. The style corresponds with that of the Martand quadrangle; but the semi-attached pillars of the arched recesses are enriched with elaborate carving of very varied character, while the large detached columns are somewhat less elegantly proportioned.

The writer in the Calcutta Review, from whose description the above account has been extracted, is of opinion that the silting up of the Awantipura quadrangle can only be explained by the supposition that all the Kashmiri temples were originally surrounded by artificial lakes. Forster, who visited Awantipura in May, 1783, calls the place Bhyteepour.

Martand lies on the karewa above Islamabad, and is easily reached from Islamabad, Bawan and Athabal.

The ruins of the Hindu temple of Martand, or, as it is commonly called, the Pandu-Koru, or the house of the Pandus and Korus - the Cyclopes of the East - are situated on the highest part of a karewa, where it commences to rise to its juncture with the mountains, about 3 miles east of Islamabad. Occupying, undoubtedly, the finest position in Kashmir, this noble ruin is the most striking in size and situation of all the existing remains of Kashmir grandeur. The temple itself is not now more than 40 feet in height, but its solid walls and bold outlines, towering over the fluted pillars of the surrounding colonnade, give it a most imposing appearance. There are no petty confused details, but all are distinct and massive, and most admirably suited to the general character of the building. Many vain speculations have been hazarded regarding the date of erection of this temple, and the worship to which it was appropriated. It is usually called the House of the Pandus by the Brahmins, and by the people "Martand", or the sun, to which the temple was dedicated. The true date of the erection of this temple - the wonder of Kashmir - is a disputed point of chronology; but the period of its foundation can be determined within the limits of one century, or between A.D. 370 and 500. The mass of building now known by the name of Martand consists of one lofty central edifice, with a small detached with on each side of the entrance, the whole standing in a large quadrangle, surrounded by a colonnade of fluted pillars with intervening, trefoil-headed recesses. The length of the outer side of the wall, which is blank, is about 90 yards; that of the front is about 56. There are in all eighty-four columns - a singularly appropriate number in a temple of the sun, if, as is supposed, the number eighty-four is accounted sacred by the Hindus in consequence of its being the multiple of the number of days in the week with the number of signs in the zodiac. The colonnade is recorded in the Rajatarangini as the work of the famous king Laladitya, who reigned from A.D. 693 to 729. From the same authority we gather - though the interpretation of the verses is considerably disputed - that the temple itself was built by Ranaditya, and the side chapels, or at least one of them, by his queen, Amritaprakha. The date of Ranaditya's reign is involved in some obscurity, but it may safely be

conjectured that he died in the first half of the fifth century after Christ. The remains of three gateways opening into the court are now standing. The principal of these fronts due west towards Islamabad. It is also rectangular in its details and built with enormous blocks of limestone, 6 or 8 feet in length, and one of 9, and of proportionate solidity, cemented with an excellent mortar.

The central building is 63 feet in length by 36 in width, and, alone of all the temples of Kashmir possesses, in addition to the cella or sanctuary, a choir and nave, termed in Sandkrit the antarala and arddhamandapa; the nave is 18 feet square. The sanctuary alone is left entirely bare, the two other compartments being lined with rich panellings and sculptured niches. As the main building is at present entirely uncovered, the original form of the roof can only be determined by a reference to other temples and to the general form and character of the various parts of the Martand temple itself. It has been conjectured that the roof was of pyramidal form, and that the entrance chamber and wings were similarly covered. There would thus have been four distinct pyramids, of which that over the inner chamber must have been the loftiest, the height of its pinnacle above the ground being about 75 feet.

The interior must have been as imposing as the exterior. On ascending the flight of steps, now covered by ruins, the votary of the sun entered a highly decorated chamber, with a doorway on each side covered by a pediment, with a trefoil-headed niche containing a bust of the Hindu triad, and on the flanks of the main entrance, as well as on those of the side doorways, were pointed and trefoil niches, each of which held a statue of a Hindu deity. The interior decorations of the roof can only be conjecturally determined, as there do not appear to be any ornamented stones that could with certainty be assigned to it. Baron Hugel doubts that Martand ever had a roof, but as the walls of the temple are still standing the numerous heaps of large stones that are scattered about on all sides can only have belonged to the roof.

Cunningham thinks that the erection of this sun-temple was suggested by the magnificent sunny prospect which its position commands. It overlooks the finest view in Kashmir, and perhaps in the known world. Beneath it lies the paradise of the east, with its sacred streams and glens, its orchards and green fields, surrounded on all sides by vast snowy mountains, whose lofty peaks seem to smile upon the beautiful valley below. The vast extent of the scene makes it sublime; for this magnificent view of Kashmir is no petty peer in a half mile glen, but the full display of a valley 60 miles in breadth and upwards of 100 miles in length, the whole of which lies beneath the "ken of the wonderful Martand."

Narastan. In the east of the valley about 35 miles from Srinagar, via Trahat.

This is one of the most interesting ruins in Kashmir. Its situation is very picturesque, looking down the narrow valley, while behind it the ground slopes up towards the lofty mountains of the Briangan range. The cella stands in a walled enclosure about 65 feet square. This wall, which is about 5 feet thick and 8 feet high to the top of the coping stone, has in some places fallen to the ground. The main entrance is on the west side, through an imposing portico; the outer portal is arched, the pediment possessing the usual characteristics of the Arian order of architecture. It was supported by two columns about 8 feet high, the width of the entrance between the pillars being about 4.5 feet. The outer vestibule measured about 8 feet by 4; in the middle is a square gateway opening into a second vestibule of rather larger dimensions.

In the middle of each of the other three sides of the wall within the enclosure there is a blank arched recess, and on the north side there is also a small square pastern measuring about 3 feet by 2, and a similar one on the west side seems to have led into a square chamber which occupied the south-west corner of the enclosure; this chamber was lighted by a small arched window. Projecting into the enclosure from the southern wall is a small cell about 5 feet square, with a pyramidal roof.

The cella of the temple which occupies the centre of the enclosure is similar in general appearance to those of Payech and Pandrathan, but more imposing in its proportion and elaborate in its details. Each side measures about 15 feet above the plinth. The porch, which is on the west side, projects rather more than 3 feet from the face of the wall.

In the middle of each of the other three sides is a blank trefoil archway corresponding in proportions to the portal. On either side of the vestibule the figure of a Hindu god is carved in bold relief on the panel contained within a trefoil-arched recess.

The inner entrance is a square gateway about 6.5 feet high by 3.5 feet wide supported by pillars; both this and the middle gateway of the north seem to have been fitted with stone doors. The inside chamber is about 8.5 feet square, the walls are blank with the exception of a small arched recess on the south side of the entrance. The flooring is of stone, which has given way in the centre, where probably the lingam stood. About 8.5 feet from the ground there is a cornice, from which the roof seems to have tapered to a point; the walls

are now standing to a height of about 24 feet, and the pinnacle was probably about 10 feet higher. In each side of the roof was a lancet'.

Pandrathan lies on the Srinagar-Islamabad road, and is easily reached from Srinagar.

The place is remarkable for a very old and interesting Hindu temple, standing in the middle of the tank, about 50 yards from the river bank, surrounded by a grove of willows and chenars. The tank is about 40 yards square, and in ordinary seasons 4 feet deep; it is filled with reeds growing in a bed of soft mud; the water is derived from its small springs on its northern side.

Access to the interior is therefore a matter of some difficulty, which is unfortunate, since the domed roof is well worth inspection, being covered with sculpture of such purely classic design that any uninitiated person who saw a copy of it on paper would at once take it for a sketch from Greek or Roman original.

The temple is 18 feet square, with a projecting portico on each side, and displays in a confused exuberance of decoration, more especially the repetition of pediment within pediment and trefoil within trefoil, clear indications of having been built at a later date than other existing ruins; it is probably the most modern example of the true Kashmir style extant. It was erected during the reign of king Partha, who governed Kashmir from A.D. 921 to 931, by his prime minister, Meru, who dedicated it to Mahadeva under the title of Meru Vardhama Swami.

The ground about it was then occupied by the original city of Srinagar, the modern name of Pandrathan being a corruption of the Sanskrit Puranadhishtana, i. e. "the old capital." Dr. Elmslie, however, supposes the name to be derived from Pandu and Durendun, the father of the Pandus. The seat of government had been transferred to the present site by king Pravarasena II nearly 500 years before the foundation of this temple; but the old city was not entirely deserted until its destruction by fire in the reign of Abhimanyu about the year A.D. 960. The conflagration was so violent that, excepting the temple which was protected by the water about it, no other building escaped. There are in the neighbourhood some few fragmentary remains, consisting of two large lingams, one 6 feet high, erect and entire, the other broken into the pieces, the lower part polygonal, the upper round with conical top, which together made up a height of 16 feet. Near these, which are separated from each other by a short interval, is a huge mass of stone, being the feet and legs as high as the knees of a colossal seated figure, probably a Buddhist image. At some little distance beyond this an isolated crag has been cut, as it stood, into some sculptured form, apparently a Chaumukhi, i. e. a square pillar with a figure on each face. But the rock has been overthrown, broken into three pieces, and so defaced by the action of fire that it is impossible to speak positively as to the original design. Of these fragments, one the base is still attached to and forms part of the natural rock. Baron Hugel calls the Pandrathan edifice a "Buddhist temple," and states that there are some well-preserved Buddhist figures in the interior. But he is doubly mistaken, for the temple was dedicated to Mahadeva, and the figures in the inside have no connection with Buddhism.

Trebeck, Moorcroft's companion, swam into the interior, and could discover no figures of any kind, but as the whole ceiling was formerly hidden by a coating of plaster, his statement was at that time perfectly correct.

The object of erecting the temples in the midst of water was doubtless to place them immediately under the protection of the Nagas or human bodied and snake-tailed gods who were zealously worshipped for ages throughout Kashmir (Moorcroft, Hugel, Vigne, Cunningham, Growse). Dr. Stein in his "Tours Archaeological and Topographical in and about Kashmir" - read before the Royal Asiatic Society, London, November 13.

1894 - speaking of his recent examination of ruins of in Kashmir says. 'In every case where a thorough rat examination of the ruins is still possible, I have found the Naga in a separate, larger or smaller walled basin in front or by the side of the temple irrespective of Pandrathan, which now stands in a en morass, I have come across nowhere a trace of that arrangement, according to which, as has been his frequently assumed, all Kashmirian temples were placed in the middle of tanks.'

Patan lies on the Srinagar-Baramula road about the half-way between these places.

It is recorded in the Rajatarangini that Sankaravarma, who succeeded Awantivarma, and reigned from A.D. 883 to 901, in conjunction with his queen. Sugandha, dedicated to Mahadeva. under the title of Sankara Gauresa and Sugandhesvara, two temples at his new capital of Sankarapura. This town is identified with the modern Patan, where beside the highway on the south-east side of the village two stately temples are still standing. Each is a simple cella; but in the larger one, the projection of the closed porches al the sides is so considerable that they form deep niches, or rather shallow chambers, in each of which was once a lingam. In both the architecture is of the same character as at Martand, and of equal excellence. Here and there the carving is as sharp and fresh as if executed yesterday, but there are many ominous cracks in the walls, and if the forest trees which have taken root in these crevices are allowed to remain and spread, the destruction of both buildings is imminent.

By the wayside to the north of the village, near the hamlet of Gasipur, are two very curious stone pillars which the natives call Gurmat, and believe to have been mortals who for their misdeeds suffered a fate similar to that which befell Lot's wife. These pillars are, however, nothing more than the miniature models of temples which occur here and there throughout the country, but they possess this peculiarity that they are not hollowed out in the interior, the place of the open doorway being occupied by a sculptured panel.

A few letters also remain of an old inscription which Vigne copied and sent to Calcutta, but they were found to be illegible, although bearing some resemblance to Sanskrit (Vigne, Growse)'.
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Payech lies about 19 miles from Srinagar, under the Naunagri karewa, about 6 miles from the Jhelum river.

On the south side of this village, situated in a small green space near the bank of the stream, surrounded by a few walnut and willow trees, is an ancient temple, which in intrinsic beauty and elegance of outline is superior to all the existing remains in Kashmir of similar dimensions. Its excellent preservation may probably be explained by its retired situation at the foot of the high tableland, which separates it by an interval of 5 or 6 miles from the bank of the Jhelum, and by the marvelous solidity of its construction. The cella, which is 8 feet square, and has an open doorway on each of the four sides is composed of only ten

stones, the four corners being each a single stone, the sculptured tympanums over the doorways four others, while two more compose the pyramid roof, the lower of these being an enormous mass 8 feet square by 4 feet in height. It has been ascribed by General Cunningham, on grounds which in the absence of any positive authority either way may be taken as adequate, to king Narendraditya, who reigned from A.D. 483 to 490. The sculptures over the doorways are coarsely executed in comparison with the artistic finish of the purely architectural details, and are much defaced, but apparently represent Brahma, Vishnu, Siva and the goddess Durga. The building is said to be dedicated to Vishnu as Surya or the sun-god.

Inside the cupola is radiated so as to represent the sun, and at each corner of the square the space intervening between the angle and the line of the circle is filled up with a gin or attendant, who seems to be sporting at the edge of its rays. It will be observed that the roof has been partly displaced, which is said to have been the result of an attempt made by the Patans to take it down and remove it to the city.

The interior is still occupied by a large stone lingam, and from the water-drain and the bulls carved on the smaller pilasters of the doorways it is evident that this was the original intention (Vigne, Growse).

Takht-i-Suliman. The temple crowning the Takht-i-Suliman is stated to be the earliest of all the temples in Kashmir. Baron Hugel records that its erection is ascribed to Gopiditya of the Gonerdyia dynasty, 370 B.

C., but later authorities seem to agree that the first religious edifice on this commanding site was built by Jaloka, the son of the great Buddhist convert Asoka, about 20 B.C. In all probability there is not a fragment of this now remaining. The temple was subsequently rebuilt and dedicated to Jyeshthesvara, a title of Mahadeva, by Raja Gopiditya, who reigned from A. D. 253 to 328. To this date may be ascribed the low enclosing wall and the plinth of the existing temple, but all the superstructure is evidently modern or greatly modernized. Its summit has been damaged, but its general figure has been that of a cone, with four sides formed by the rectangular adjustment of eight gable-shaped slabs of masonry, the surface of the outer slab being much less than that of the inner one. The cone, which is about 25 feet in height with proportionate base, rests upon an octagonal raised platform, whose wall is about 10 or 12 feet above the rock on which it is built, and whose circumference may be about 100 feet. A handsome flight of steps, formed, as the whole building is, of limestone, leads from the ground to the door of the temple. At a little distance below the latter building, which rises on the very summit of the Takht, are some ruins that indicate the existence of another edifice of the same material.

the interior is circular, and 14 feet in diameter; the roof is flat and 11 feet high; the walls, which are 8 feet thick, are covered with white plaster composed of gypsum, and the roof is supported by four octagonal limestone pillars. In the centre of the floor there is a quadrangular stone platform; it supports a lingam of black stone, around which is carved a coiled serpent. Upon the hinder of the two pillars on the left there are two Persian inscriptions; that upon the front of it states that the but or idol was made by Haji Hushti, a Soukar, in the year 54 of the Samvat or Hindu era, or about 1,870 years, ago, while that at the foot of the back part of the same pillar states that "he who raised up this idol was Kwaja Rukm, son or Mir Jan, in the year..... "

The remainder of the inscription is below the pavement, and cannot be made out.' Fergusson is convinced that the temple as it now stands was commenced by some nameless Hindus in honour of Siva, during the tolerant reign of Jehangir, and that the building was stopped at the date engraved on the staircase, A.H. 1069 (A.D. 1659), the first year of the reign of the bigot Aurungzeb.

Wangat. About three miles north of Wangat, at the head of the glen, far from all human habitations, are some ruined temples. They are situated high up on the precipitous mountain side, in the midst of dense jungle and towering pinetrees, which lend a more than religious gloom to their crumbling walls.

In antiquity these ruins are supposed to rank next after those on the Takht-i-Suliman, at Bhumju and at Payech. They are in two groups, situated at a distance of a hundred yards from each other, and consisting respectively of six and eleven distinct buildings. The luxuriant forest growth has overthrown and buried almost completely several of the smaller temples; on the summit of the largest a tall pine has taken root and rises straight from the centre, in rivalry of the original finial. The architecture is of a slightly more advanced type than at Payech, the most striking feature being the bold projection and lofty trefoiled arches of the lateral porches.

In close proximity is a sacred spring called Nagbal, and by it the footpath leads up the height of Haramak to the mountain-lake of Gangabal, a celebrated place of pilgrimage. A great festival held annually about August 20, which is attended by thousands of Hindus from all parts of Kashmir. By this footpath the Tilail valley may also be reached.

It is probable that the Wangat temples were erected at different times by returning pilgrims as votive offerings after successful accomplishment of the hazardous ascent.'

Excerpts: 'THE VALLEY OF KASHMIR' by Walter R. Lawrence