CHAPTER V

DAILY LIFE

The achievements of the Kashmir in the realms of philosophy and politics as depicted in the *Rājatarāṅgini* have been the subject matter of research by many scholars and valuable light has been shed on these as a result of their labours. But as regards the social and economic condition in which they lived, there is not much authentic information, although this book gives us valuable information about the daily life of the people of Kashmir of that time. Kalhana in his *Rājatarāṅgini* particularly in later portion shows an observant eye and an open mind for the affairs of the world around him. He displays every little knowledge of human nature, intimate acquaintance with his country’s material condition. He has shown interest in antiquarian details even of the humblest kind, and in the fact of every-day life. References related to food and drink, dress and ornaments, games and pastimes, luxury and amusements and many other objects of our day-today life, are given in ample.

FOOD AND DRINK

Rice was the staple food of Kashmir. Dhānya (rice-crop) and a particular class of it called śāli have often been mentioned in the literary works. Dhānya has been frequently mentioned in the *Nilamata Purāṇa* and in Kalhana’s chronicle as a major food of the people which was also offered in worship to gods. It is also mentioned as a subsidiary currency. Kalhana has given plenty of references related to it e. g. in book one, a Nāga’s daughter who was married to a Brahmana, was standing on the top of her mansion, a loose horse was eating the rice which had been left outside the courtyard to dry in the sun. The *Rājatarāṅgini* points out that the fields in the valley were covered with the autumnal rice-crop and scarcity of rice invariably resulted in disastrous famine. This clearly proves that rice was the principal food of the people. We have in Kṣemendra’s *Narmamāḷa* references to various preparations made from rice, boiled-rice, rice mixed
with sugar and sugar-cane, cakes of rice and meal of dried rice. Such references have often been referred to in the Nilamata Purāṇa. According to the Venetian traveller Marco Polo (13th century CE) rice was the principal food of the people of Kashmir.5

Barley (java) seems to have formed the food of the poorer classes and mainly of agriculturists who bore the brunt of heavy taxation.6 A particular day of the year was observed as a festival, when the barley became ripe in the field. "Apūpa and pistaka (bread and cake) were made from rice or barley."7

Pulses too were an important item of food. We have mention of canā (gram) and lentil. Dāmodaragupta in his Kūtūrīmata Kāvyā speaks of three kinds of pulses, kulattha, canā and masūra. Kṣemendra mentions fourth variety, called mudga. Rice and pulses, cooked jointly was known as khiccarī. This was taken, especially on religious occasions.8 Another kind of food prepared from pulses was the parpaṭa or papara or cake.9 In one reference Kalhaṇa mentions that when Kalaṣa died, his wives who were difficult to control, spread this rumour that Kalaṣa had always ill treated them. He always used to give them mung dal to eat.10 Stein says that by that time, mung dal was not considered to be good food of good families.

The nature of vegetable food-stuffs and fruits can be ascertained to some extent from literary sources. Vegetables seem to have been assiduously cultivated. We have mention of ārāmika or vegetable cultivator in the Rājataṛaṅgīṇī and also irrigation and manuring of vegetable gardens. Vegetables growing wild in the forests and meadows like kachidani and upal-hak also seem to have been consumed by poorer classes. The Rājataṛaṅgīṇī mentions when king Avantivarman came to worship Bhūteśvara he noticed that the temple-priests had placed on the base of the god’s image a kind of wild-growing herb of bitter taste called utpalaśaka.11 According to traditional belief, the Utpalaśaka formed the diet of the ancient Rṣis in the
The herb, now known as *upathak*, grows abundantly on the mountain slopes of Kashmir and forms one of the commonest vegetables of the Kashmir cuisine. Another edible vegetable was *kaechaguccha*, a form of grass. Kalhana in his chronicle tells once upon a time a young Brahman, Viśākha by name went at midday to the bank of a pond to seek the shade. There he saw the moon faced maiden eating this grass. But he did not consider it good food. Kṣemendra called it *kachidani*. It grows plentifully on the meadows of the valley. It is now known as *kacdan*. A third one *sanda* is modern *hand*, which grows all over the valley and is appreciated for its medical properties.

By nature, Kashmir is abundantly rich in fruit and formed an important article of diet. Hsuen Tsang’s account seems to show that the pear, the wild plum, the peach, the apricot and the grape were the principal fruit products of the valley in the seventh century CE. The grape was particularly considered as the fruit par excellence. Kalhaṇa refers to *kapittha* fruit as obtainable in Kashmir only for short period at the commencement of summer, it is reasonable to accept Stein’s suggestion that the term was used in Kashmir for cherry which ripens in June.

Milk undoubtedly comprised one of the principal diets. Milk of cows and probably also of buffaloes was consumed. Various preparations of milk such as *ghee* (*ghṛta*), butter (*sarpī*), condensed milk (*kṣīra*) and curd (*dadhi*) were known. Honey (*maksiṇa*) and sugar (*ṣarkarā*) were used to sweeten food. Kalhaṇa has compared the juice of the sugar-cane with nectar by Kalhaṇa and the white sugar, produced from it, was a delicacy.

Drinking of wine seems to have been quite popular. Wine seems to have been recommended specially on ceremonial occasions. The wine, cooled and perfumed with flowers, was appreciated as a delicious drink. In Kalhaṇa’s
Chronicle a large number of persons are met with who are addicted to drinking. When Harṣa was on his way to conquering south India, Kalhaṇa tells that along with his army, in Karnataka region, he enjoyed wine, which was made of coconut. The drinking of wine, far from being forbidden, has been specially recommended on ceremonies occasions in the Kashmirian Purāṇa. Kalhaṇa tell that during the reign of Harṣa, Darads used to consume wine continually and Harṣa could not tolerate it, as little as the rising sun tolerates the light of the herbs in the mountain gorges. Juices from grape and sugar-cane, both of which grew in the valley, were distilled into spirituous liquors. The wine, cooled and perfumed with flowers, was appreciated as a delicious drink. Of drinks other that alcoholic Kalhaṇa mentions a kind of cold sweet drink (tuhīṇa śarkarāḥ) which was taken with great delight in hot summer days.

Salt was a precious article and if Kṣemendra is to be believed, it was consumed by the rich alone. Among the spices which were used with food, mention may be made of black-pepper, ginger (mārīcadraka) and asafoetida (hīṅga). Onion was regarded as a nutritious vegetable food. Garlic, though popular was a taboo to certain: orthodox sections

Meat was one of the most important articles of diet. The Nilamata Purāṇa prescribes it on some of the festival days. The fowl and the ram (kukkuṭa and meṣa) and perhaps also the goat served the dishes. Various edible birds too were massacred. In the Mahāpaḍma or Vular Lake in the winter month’s vast flocks of wild geese and other water fowl frequently used to come. Where large numbers of them were shot by boatmen and others and used to sell them in the city. The lake is also rich in fish and the population drilling in the village near the lake lives largely by fishing. Kalhaṇa in his work tells that King Avantivarman established by his own authority a prohibition against the killing of fish and birds at this place. Fish was also eaten by the people of ancient Kashmir. Kalhaṇa tells that people of Kashmir eat shadfish which he called Pāṭhīṇa. Stein tells that Kashmiri pundits give this name to
the Ramayad, a kind of small fish generally eaten at Śrāddhas. It is permitted as food by the Smrtis and in particular recommended for Śrāddhas offerings. Kalhana also mentioned the fish-juice (matsyayāśa or matsyasūpa) was, considered to be a particularly strength-giving tonic food. King Kalasa is supposed to have eaten it. The use of matsyasūpa is also mentioned by Kṣemendra in his work Samayam. Pathina, a kind of shadfish, was much esteemed as food. In the eleventh century CE eating of domesticated pigs (grāmyasukara) might have been a fashion among a section of the people. The eating of the meat of the pigeon as well as that of the cow though not unknown, was looked with disapprove. The latter is said to have been eaten in the land of Mlecchas. Marco Polo (thirteenth century CE) informs that the food of the people of the Valley was flesh with rice and other grains. We have mention in the Rājatarangini of “fried meat” and sometimes highly spiced being taken by people.

The chewing of betel leaf seems to have been a popular luxury among the rich. The king and his courtiers were ever found to be chewing the betel-Leaf, which owing to prohibitive cost of transport from Central India was a mark of affluence and aristocracy. The average Kashmirian was very fond of betel-leaves (parṇa or tāmbūla). Dāmodargaupta, Kṣemendra and Kalhana often refer to chewing of betel-leaves and betel-nuts, sometimes with well-mixed lime. King Jayapīḍa used to take the rolled betel-leaves from his attendants standing at his back and therefore his hand moved at every movement to the back of his shoulder. Kalhana has named many other kings like king Bhoja, king Harṣa etc., who also used to chew betel-leaves. The rich people used to engage betel bearers who could constantly supply them prepared betel leaves on asking. Kalhana says that by that time chewing of betel-leaves was regarded as a habit of man of good birth. Kalhana also refers to the habit of chewing of potāsa, a sort of camphor.
DRESS AND ORNAMENTS

As regards the dress and ornaments of early inhabitants of Kashmir, we have literary as well as archaeological evidence. The costume of the male population consisted of a lower garment (adharâraṁśu), an upper garment (angarakṣa),\(^42\) and turban (śīrahśata). In the battle-field, leather strap was used for guarding loins.\(^43\) But with the growth of influence from the plains of India during the Kārkotā rule, we find from the Rājatarangini the advent of a short jacket or blouse with half sleeves and a long lower garment, the tail end of which touched the ground.\(^44\) A long robe hanging down the shoulders to the knees, tied up at the waist with a girdle or belt formed the dress of men-folk.

The dress of a woman was composed mainly of sari and jackets.\(^45\) During the reign of Harṣa fashionable ladies dressed themselves in jackets which covered but half the length of their arms and wore long lower garments, the tail end of which touched the floor.\(^46\)

Hiuen Tsang visited Kashmir during the years 632-635 CE. He writes that the climate of Kashmir was cold and stern and so 'the people wear leather doublets and clothes of white linen'.\(^47\) The low temperature of the valley, particularly at the time of winter, must have compelled the people to employ woollen garments to cover their body. In one of the passages of the Rājatarangini, Kalhana refers to the use of woollen blankets (kutha)\(^48\) and in another of warm cloaks (pravara).\(^49\) But the Chronicler points out that fine woollen blankets (forerunner of later Kashmir shawls) were allotted for the rich urban people only.\(^50\) The plebeians of modest means probably had to satisfy their wants with cheaper woollen goods such as the skins of black antelopes (kṛṣṇajīna) and coarse woollen cloaks (sthitulakambala) which again were sometimes distributed to them by charitable persons.\(^51\)
The eternal fondness of women to adorn themselves with ornaments found expression in ancient Kashmir also. Among the various kinds of jewellery worn by the ladies of his native land, Kalhana mentions anklets (nūpura), necklaces (hāra), wristlets (kankana), armlets (keyūra), bracelets (pariharya) and earrings (kuṇḍala). Kṣemendra speaks of collars made of pearls and Dāmodaragupta of pearl-necklaces (muktāhāra). A special type of armlet called valayakalapi and ear-ring called kanakanadi have been referred to in Kuttanimata Kāvyā. Valayakalapi was a sort of armlet having the face of a peacock and moon shaped end. Kanakandi seems to be palm shaped small ear-drop. In the eleventh century, king Harṣa introduced new fashions in dress and ornaments among his courtiers and queens. These were golden ketaka-leafed tiaras (svaṃketakapatraṅka) pendants on forehead (tilaka) and golden strings at the end of locks (keśantavaddha hemopavitaka).

The men used different kinds of ornaments which were not very unlike to those of women. In his Kuttanimata, Dāmodaragupta describes the son of an officer in king’s service who wears rings in his fingers, fine gold necklaces and two types of earrings, one of which is called dalabitaka and the other śiśapatraka. Another wealthy man is said to wear necklace, armlet and wristlet made of gold and coral beads. Kṣemendra observes a merchant’s son putting on great gold rings heavy with pearls hanging from ears and a golden amulet shining in the midst of the jewellery about his neck. He has on his feet carefully fitted silver anklets with large olives carved from lapis-lazuli. Dāmodaragupta records the dress of an attendant who has got in his neck coarse and cheap kacavartakamala and conch shell in his hands. According to Kalhaṇa’s evidence too, the male population of Kashmir used ornaments. These consisted chiefly of finger-rings, ear-rings, necklaces and bracelets. Men wore shoes which were made of leather. Sometimes’ the shoes had steel-made soles and floral decorations outside. Kṣemendra refers to a particular kind of footwear called peacock-shoe (mayūropanat) which was a fashion of his day. The use of
wooden sandals was also in vogue. A cane-stick in the hand and a dagger or sword at the waist were other accessories. A dagger at the waist can be seen in the Viṣṇu images of the Utpala period. No doubt it records the fashion of the period. For beautifying them the fashionable persons used to apply kumkuma on the hair, anāgarāga on body, white mustard on forehead and saffron pomade on beard.57

Nor were the ladies backward in toilet and make-up. The ladies used camphor, sandal and saffron to toilet and perfume the body,58 scented cheeks with leaves soaked in musk, reddened the feet and lips with lac59 and applied collyrium in the eyes.60 The married women decorated their foreheads with painted marks.61 Sometimes these beauty-marks were made with camphor. The ways of dressing the hair were various. Coiffures were decorated with flowers and gold thread. Sometimes flowers were also bound with locks.62

It was a fashion to keep rather long hair to which combs were attached. Sometimes, tassels of varied colours were joined with the hairs. Kings and nobles also braided their hair in various styles.63 While the commoner used ordinary śirahsata to cover their head, the aristocrats decorated themselves in various manners. While describing an affluent person, Dāmodaragupta says that three fourth of his head was covered with a piece of cloth. Kalhaṇa speaks of a musical soiree in the royal court which looked resplendent by the white head-dress of the princes and nobles. The diadem of king Haraśa, according to him was fixed to a broad turban.

Some idea regarding the costumes and ornaments of early Kashmir of a period prior to the one known from literary source may be had from a study of the sculptures and terracottas. One of the brick tiles of Harwan depicts a lady carrying a flower vase. She wears transparent robe, a kind of close fitting turban and large ear-ring.64 Another tile shows female-
dancer wearing loose robes and trousers while a third one gives the picture of a female musician who also dresses herself in trousers. Some of the male figures of Harwan are dressed in lose fitting trousers and Turcoman caps. The costumes of Harwan undoubtedly show in them the influence of Central Asian dress. The exact period when the people used to dress themselves in Central Asian fashions cannot be ascertained. It might have taken place in the early centuries of the Christian era. But the Central Asian tradition seems to have made its influence felt on the costumes of Kashmir and its adjoining regions for a long time and when Huen Tsang visited India in the middle of the seventh century CE he observed, in north India, where the air is cold they (people) wear short and close-fitting garments, like the Hu people. One of the terracotta tiles of Harwan represents an armed horseman equipped fully with bow and arrow. The flying scarves attached to his military uniforms may be identical with what Kalhana says *virapatta* or lapels of the military uniform.

Sculptural representations sometime confirm the conclusion that we derive from a study of the literary sources regarding the dress and ornaments of ancient Kashmir. Among the sculptural fragments recovered from Uskur, there is an upper arm encircled by a beaded armlet which seems to have been connected by a similar band with necklaces. Another fore-arm has a bangle round the wrist. The wristlets that were in fashion in those days are illustrated by two other partly broken hands. A fragmentary left hand has a ring on the little finger which is deserving of notice. One of the sculptural figures of Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara from Pandrethan represents him heavily ornamented. Among the jewelleries worn by him one may easily note a three-peaked diadem, an elaborately jewelled necklace, a heavy jewelled wristlet, and a jewelled girdle fastening the dhoti. The ornaments must have been taken from real life; one of the Viṣṇu images of Avantipura is crowned with elaborately jewelled three-
peaked tiara. It is probable that similar crescent crowns were worn by the kings of the Valley. Ananta’s diadem says Kalhana ‘was adorned with five resplendent crescents’.68

From the specimens of Graeco-Gandharan sculpture unearthed at Ushkur and Akhnur, can be had an idea of the dress worn by people during and after the Kuṣāṇa rule. A fine silk or cotton garment hemmed in at the middle and falling loose to the ankles was the common dress of men and women. This is further corroborated by the figure depicted on terracotta tiles of the 4th century CE found at Harwan. The first century CE of the tiles has the figure of a lady carrying a flower vase, who wears a transparent robe, a kind of close fitting turban and huge ear rings. Another tile shows a female-dancer wearing loose robes and trousers while a third one has a figure of a female musician dressed in puffed-up trousers. Some of the male figures are dressed in loose fitting trousers and Turkman caps. All this shows a marked influence of Central Asian dress, which seem to have become the fashion after the first century CE

HOUSES

A critical study of the Rājatarangini shows the Kashmir of ancient times as full of villages and towns. From the large number of towns, villages and cities founded by kings, queens and courtiers it appears that the kingdom was densely populated. Being a cold place, it can be easily surmised that all had a roof to live under whereas the kings and their courtiers had their palatial houses to live in. The masses had timber houses and huts. Even the mendicants had their own houses. A large number of vihāras, temples, hospices and Mathas provided shelter to the poor in society. Foreign students lived in hostels specially built for them.69

From the excavations conducted recently at Burzahom, we learn at the earliest inhabitants lived in pits, covered with roof of grass. But in later periods we have literary evidence of well-planned and will-laid-out towns and cities.
Srinagar, originally founded by Pravarasena II, was, for instance, "provided with regularly arranged markets and was full of “mansions which reach to the clouds”. In fact one of the five characteristics of Kashmir’s renown was its lofty houses. The houses of the rich were built in quadrangles (Catuhśālā) with large compounds in the middle. There were, as one of the tiles at Harwan depicts, balconies and verandahs, and sloping roofs with lofts. Urban houses were definitely better than those built the villages. The latter had courtyards surrounded by a wall and there was invariably a small garden of vegetables and fruit trees attached to it. The hut had a mud floor and the rooms were "full of mosquitoes where the seat was a place strewn with grass."

GAMES AND AMUSEMENTS

Dice and chess were the favourite indoor games of the people. Dice-playing has been referred to in several passages of the Rājatarāṅgini. Alberuni in his account on India has left a detailed description of the mode of chess playing which was very popular in the northern provinces of India in the eleventh century CE. Gambling, though in vogue, was regarded as a reprehensible pastime. The game, however, has been prescribed in the Nīlamata Purāṇa, to be played particularly on the darker fifteenth of the Kārttika.

Kandukākridā had been one of the most favourite games of ancient India. Its prevalence in early Kashmir is testified to by Dāmodaragupta’s evidence. Among other outdoor games, hunting was a popular one. A terracotta tile from Harwan depicts a hunter on horseback chasing a deer. There can be no doubt that "the picture was taken from real life. Kalhana gives vivid description of kings engaged in hunting accompanied by dogs, bands of Dombas and jungle-folk. Jackal hunting was particularly popular.

Dancing and singing, as well as theatrical performances were widely appreciated. A tile from Harwan represents a female musician playing on a
Another depicts a dancer in actual dancing posture. Dāmodaragupta refers to the playing of vīnā as an artistic pastime. The Niłamata Purāṇa lays down that gīta; nṛtya and vādyā were to take place in some of the religious festivities. Bilhana extols the women of his native land for their cleverness in acting. If Kalhaṇa is to be believed, many of the kings of the valley were lovers of dancing and music and musical plays regularly took place in the illuminated assembly-halls of the royal palace. One of the monarchs, Harṣa, not only enjoyed dances and songs, but also taught in person the dancing girls, how to act. Dāmodaragupta mentions about the performance of the play of Ratnāvalī at his time. The reference is, evidently to the work of Śrī Harṣa. Literary evidence testifies to the existence of the institution of Devadāsī in early Kashmir. Dancing and music must have been cultivated by them as well as by ordinary harlots. Bharata’s Nāṭyaśāstra was held in high honour and according to an authority was one of the approved texts of studies. Kalhaṇa also was aware of the precepts of Bharata on dancing and singing. It is highly probable that many of the dancing performances of early Kashmir were strictly in adherence to the school of Bharata.

Another interesting item of amusement was puppet-play. A writer of the ninth century refers to wooden-dolls (drum. Another depicts a dancer in actual dancing posture. Dāmodaragupta refers to the playing of vīnā as an artistic pastime. The Niłamata Purāṇa lays down that gīta; nṛtya and vādyā were to take place in some of the religious festivities. Bilhana extols the women of his native land for their cleverness in acting. If Kalhaṇa is to be believed, many of the kings of the valley were lovers of dancing and music and musical plays regularly took place in the illuminated assembly-halls of the royal palace. One of the monarchs, Harṣa, not only enjoyed dances and songs, but also taught in person the dancing girls, how to act. Dāmodaragupta mentions about the performance of the play of Ratnāvalī at his time. The reference is, evidently to the work of Śrī Harṣa. Literary evidence testifies to the existence of the institution of Devadāsī in early Kashmir. Dancing and music must have been cultivated by them as well as by ordinary harlots. Bharata’s Nāṭyaśāstra was held in high honour and according to an authority was one of the approved texts of studies. Kalhaṇa also was aware of the precepts of Bharata on dancing and singing. It is highly probable that many of the dancing performances of early Kashmir were strictly in adherence to the school of Bharata.

Another interesting item of amusement was puppet-play. A writer of the ninth century refers to wooden-dolls (daruma-yīva pratimā) which were made to dance with the help of a mechanical thread (yantrasūtra).

According to Dāmodaragupta, there were luxurious theatre halls in his native valley, fitted with leather-cushioned couches. But these luxury-houses were probably meant for the rich alone. A passage of the Rājatarāṅgini tends to show that common people had to witness theatrical performances under an open sky, when caught by a downpour; they had to disperse in all directions.

FAIR AND FESTIVALS

The people celebrated a number of festivals, chief among which was the Śivrātri. Held on the thirteenth day of the dark fortnight of Phālguna (Feb-
March), the festivities connected with it extended to several days. The king observed the festival with great eclat and "flooded his people with presents, just as Indra floods the earth with rain at the conjunction of planets. " Feasts were held and dancing and singing performances given by the court artistes. Poetic symposia at which outstanding compositions of poets were applauded and their authors suitably rewarded were a regular feature.

Kalhana mentioned in the *Rājataranginī* that the night of Māgha the king celebrated the religious festival which is connected with wakes. Then in month of Caitra special festival was celebrated by the people of Kashmir, which was attended by flowers and which illuminates all regions (asa), brings coolness (htada) to everyone. It is also known as spring festival because by the month of Caitra falls the commencement of the Kashmir spring. Another important festival, still known in Kashmir, was the Indra-Dvadāśī, held on the twelfth day of the bright half of Bhādra (September), which was the day of pilgrimage to the sacred sites of the Varāhakṣetra at Bārāmūla. This was naturally a festival of universal rejoicings; coincide as it did with the ripening and harvesting of the rice crop. It was an ancient festival and combined with the Nāgayātrā festival held on the fourth of the same fortnight, was also a very popular one. A detailed account of its celebration is given by Srivara in his life of Zain-ul-abidin, who himself used to take part in the festivities.

An old and popular festival deriving its origin from the ancient tradition of people leaving the Valley in winter and coming back on the advent of summer; was that of Aśvayūjī held on 15th day of Aśvina. Elaborate customs prescribed for this festival are given in the *Nilamata purāṇa*. People had to amuse themselves by throwing mud at each other by indulging in abuse and playing jokes in order to frighten away the Piśācas who were supposed to attempt to enter the homes of men on that day. This custom, now entirely forgotten, is comparable to the modern Holi festival and is often mentioned by Kalhaṇa. People enjoyed this day by witnessing jugglers’ performances, horse-
play and exhibition of feats of strength. The festival is also referred to by Alberuni.

Apart from these special festivals there were many more traditional ones, like the new years day in Caitra and the pilgrimages to several tirthas in the Valley. Alberuni mentions that Kashmiris celebrated Lalitāditya’s victory over the Tibetans every year on the second of Caitra.

The common people had also other means of amusing themselves. Strolling musicians and players, theatrical and dancing performances in the temples as well as horse-play jugglers shows are often mentioned in the Rājataranginī. A passage in the Chronicle tends to show that the common people witnessed theatrical performances under the open sky; when caught by a downpour, they would disperse pell-mell in all directions. A tile from Harwan represents a female musician playing on a drum and another depicts a danseuse in a dancing posture. We have mention of music and dancing in the Nilamata Purāṇa too. The kings were great lovers of dancing and music. King Harṣa, for instance, was not only a lover of music and dancing, but an adept at these arts too. He composed songs and set them to music. He personally taught dancing girls and actors and gave music lessons to pupils. Bharata’s Nāṭyaśāstra was commented upon by Kashmirian authors and there is evidence to show that dancing as an art was assiduously cultivated by ladies of rich families. There were luxurious theatrical halls fitted with leather-cushioned seats and the palace and the temple had a nāṭya-mandapa, a dancing and theatrical hall, as essential part of their architecture.

And for the poorer classes there were folk-songs, folk-dramas and music. Modern Chhakri, the popular music played to the accompaniment of brass and earthen vessels, seems to have an ancient origin. At marriage feasts, sacrifices and other festivities the folk musicians were in great demand.

Pilgrimages to holy places in India undertaken by religious minded people were a regular feature of life in ancient days. We have a record in the
Rājatarangini where it is mentioned that Kashmiris were freed of pilgrim’s tax at Gaya by the munificence of Ermantaka, a resident of Pariḥāspura, as also by Kandarpa the commander-in-chief of king Harṣa. Matṛgupta went to holy Varanasi with the hope of finding happiness in quietness in other story Kalhana narrates that king Kalaśa, who was trying to get the trust of his son Harṣa said that he wants to throw all his power and burden of crown upon him. After handing over him the treasures of his grandfather and of his own and as an ascetic he will go to Varanasi or to Nandikṣetra. As people from Kashmir were going for pilgrimage to other parts of India similarly pilgrims and students from other parts of India visited Kashmir and we have mention of several kings and queens building hostels for their residence.

CONVEYANCES

The Conveyance of the early Kashmir was mainly the horse, carriages, boats, elephants and palanquins. Kashmir had a fine breed of horses as there are numerous references swift steeds, to prancing horses and to mounted troops (aśvavara). When Hiuen Tsang entered the Valley, he was received at the outer end of Pass by the maternal uncle of the king who had been sent with horse and carriages to escort the pilgrim to the capital. A perusal of the Chronicle of Kalhana leaves no room for doubt that the horse was an important conveyance and the poet-historian often refers to the march of mounted troops (aśvavara). King Ananta was so fond of horses that he was exploited by his horse trainer during the early years of his reign.

The elephant appears on the tiles of Harwan. Kalhana too refers to the stables of elephants. It may be presumed that the elephant was used as an aristocratic conveyance. Camels were preferably employed for carrying on heavy loads. It has already been mentioned that because of the alpine nature the kingdom, and the consequent difficulty in making and maintaining roads, there were no wheeled carriages in Kashmir till as late as the last quarter of the 19th century. Carriage of goods and passenger in the Valley was mainly
done by boats, of which there are several references in the Ṛājataraṅgiṇī.\textsuperscript{102} While speaking of the conveyances which were in vogue in contemporary Kashmir, Alberuni remarks the inhabitants of Kashmir are pedestrians, they have neither riding animals nor elephants. The noble among them ride in palanquins called \textit{katt}, carried on the shoulders of men.\textsuperscript{103} That litters (\textit{karniratha}) were used by the aristocrats receives confirmation from Kalhaṇa’s Ṛājataraṅgiṇī. But the first part of the Muslim savant’s statement that the inhabitants of Kashmir had no riding animals can hardly be accepted.

From earliest times, the river Vitastā formed the most important highway of Kashmir. The important towns of the valley were mostly, situated on its banks and boat must have been needed to carry on internal trade and traffic. The Ṛājataraṅgiṇī frequently refers to them as means of travel in the valley.\textsuperscript{104} The busy coming and going of ships was also connected in the mind of Kalhaṇa with the splendour of a large town.\textsuperscript{105}

**DISEASES AND MEDICINES**

The Ṛājataraṅgiṇī, River of Kings brings before us the earliest use of Āyurveda in ancient Kashmir. Scattered over various \textit{Taraṅgas} the description of  küçük, Šalya cikitsā, Rasa-Śāstra and Kāyāckarma, etc. are given in the Ṛājataraṅgiṇī.\textsuperscript{106} There is description of spread of an epidemic \textit{Lūtā} during the reign of king Bhīṃsena.\textsuperscript{107} Then other disease \textit{Pitta doṣa} vitiation induced is also mentioned, which depicts Āyurvedic basis of understanding of pathogenesis of disease. There is reference to the death of ten thousand soldiers in the army of King Jai Singh due to \textit{Śīta Jvara}, which spreads like an epidemic characterized by chill (śīta) and fever (jvara).\textsuperscript{108} King Vajrāditya is described to have been inflicted with \textit{Kṣaya roga} or wasting disease due to excessive indulgence in physical sex for pleasure.\textsuperscript{109} In the Ṛājataraṅgiṇī there is reference to believe that plastic surgery and repair surgical practices were too practiced by \textit{vaidyas} of ancient Kashmir.\textsuperscript{110} To cater to the needs of the infirm, aged and the sick there were numerous charitable institutions like \textit{Mathas,
hospices and hospitals. Here is a record of a hospital having been built by king Raṇāditya.¹¹¹

The standard of life of the people of ancient Kashmir seems to have been fairly high and in no way inferior to people living in the rest of India. For, it is only in congenial social and economic environments that the arts of peace can flourish. The Rājatarāṅgini is more than account of the reign of the kings of Kashmir. The chronicle is a vast mine of information about the history of the society of ancient Kashmir. Through the study of different Taraṅgas of the Rājatarāṅgini and with few information from the archaeological remains, we can connect account regarding the day to-day life of early Kashmir may be formed by weaving these scattered threads into a single texture and we can say that society of ancient Kashmir was an open-minded, liberal and humane society, culturally advanced, intellectually ablest and aesthetically conscious.
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