CHAPTER- V

Impact of Sufism on the Socio-Cultural Conditions (of the people) of Jammu & Kashmir during the period under review

The picturesque Valley of Kashmir is famous for its cultural activities, civilization and communal harmony for centuries. So far as the socio-cultural conditions of the Valley are concerned, it should be noted that with the arrival of Sufism into the Valley and with the penetration of Sufis who preached Islam peacefully in Kashmir, there started a remarkable change in the social and religious life of the people of Kashmir. From here the contacts of the local people become closer to the foreign Muslims. It was because of the Sufis efforts that the local converted people adopted many of their manners, customs, dress, diet, etc. but they could not give-up all of their old practices, beliefs and traditions, with the result a new social order emerged, combined the old ideas with the new ones. The cultural relations with Persia and Turkistan and the coming of people from such countries had directly affected social transformation. Finally the people created a society of mix traditions of the old ideas, and the new faith called Indo-Islamic Culture.¹

With the spread of Islam in Kashmir all the aspects of art, architecture and literature was influenced by the respected Sufis, theologians, artists and learned-men who came from outside to Kashmir. As a result there established a composite culture which gradually changed the social order with the passage of time and hence introduced Islamic culture in Kashmir later on.²

In the ancient Kashmir, Hindu society was cast oriented divided into Brahmans, Kashtriyas, Vaisyas and the Sudras.³ Mohibbul Hassan states that, “These divisions were not as rigid as in India. It was, for example, not uncommon for the rulers to take Domba girls (prostitutes) as their wives and make them their chief queens” furthermore there in the Valley a low born can also rise to the highest position in the State. Besides it, as usual it was the Brahman class which had enjoyed a high status. The in-charges of the temples were exempted from the burden of

taxation and other levies imposed by the State.\(^1\) The Brahman priests even indulged themselves in State affairs and used to persuade the government in their favour and sometimes they sat on hunger strike until their demands would not be accepted by the rulers.\(^2\)

Mohibbul Hassan mentions on the basis of information in the Jonaraja’s work, that the Hindus of the Valley could not escape themselves from the social and cultural influence of these outsiders and they adopted the Muslim customs with regard to dress and food habits and some of them even started to eat beef.\(^3\)

It should also be pointed out, that the Brahmans being a high religious class among the Hindus did not admit Rinchana into the circle of Hinduism. But with the transfer of political power to the converted Muslim ruler, Rinchana the privileged religious position of the Brahmans now get a set back because their special position with the spread of Islam in Kashmir now taken and filled by the Muslim divines, Sufis (\textit{Pirs}), Sayyids and Ulama. These people were much respected and regarded in the society as well in the eyes of ruling elite.\(^4\)

Earlier to the Muslim rule in Kashmir, the Muslims were employed by a number of Hindu rulers in their armies, and with the coming of Sufis from Turkistan and Central Asia they too were allowed full freedom to preach Islam. As a result due to their efforts, missionaries, and some other reasons led to the foundation of Sultanate in the first quarter of the 14\(^{th}\) century A.D. Later on when gradually and rapidly Islam flourished in Kashmir it caused a symbol of hostility among the Brahmans because they found their traditional values being upset, and some of the basic assumptions of the Hindu society was being challenged. Hence in the initial stage the Brahmans tried to challenge the Islamic missionaries. But very soon they realized the demerits of such challenge and opposition with the result they adopted the course of good will and friendship towards them. We did not found any noticeable clash between Hindus and Muslims during the Muslim rule instead we find instances of marriage of a Hindu girl with a Muslim boy.\(^5\)

\(^1\) \textit{Kashmir under the Sultans}, (ed.), H.N. Rafiabadi, op. cit., p. 355
\(^2\) Ibid., pp. 355-56
\(^3\) Ibid., p. 370
\(^4\) \textit{Islamic Heritage of Kashmir}, Vol. 2, op. cit., p. 2
\(^5\) Ibid., p. 42
With the passage of time when the Muslims permanently settled in the Valley and two communities lived side by side, in a friendly atmosphere. Only one communal clash has been noticed which occurred during the reign of Sultan Hasan Shah. Both the communities not only showed the respect of toleration, but even the inter marriages among the Hindus and Muslims were common. They visited each other’s places of worship, regarded each other’s saints, and participated in each other’s festivities occasions.\(^1\)

Though some converted Muslims had given up their old surnames and they were called according to their profession they adopted after their conversion. However, the Sufis always tried their best, in unifying economic disparities caused by the *Varna* system prevailed in the society.\(^2\)

With the passage of time in medieval Kashmir, the Hindu society was divided into two groups, the Persian speaking Hindus were called Karkun and the Sanskrit speaking Hindus were called Pundits.\(^3\)

Walter Lawrence is of the opinion that, “It would be interesting to trace the origin of the Kram names, although by intermarriage the Krams have ceased to have any individuality or distinction and to acquire whether the various *Krams* sprang from a Brahman, Khattri or Vaisya origin.” Hence the Musalmans of the Pandit, Kol, But, Aitu, Rishi, Mantu and Ganai are the descendants of the Brahmans who were converted to Islam during the 14\(^{th}\) century. And among the Khattri Krams were the Magres, Tantres, Daras, Dangars, Rainas, Rathors, Thakurs and Naiks. However Lawrence further elaborates it, that Lone is having its origin from Vaisya and about Damras he relates them to the Sudras origin that is lowest among the four Hindu castes.\(^4\) Further the Brahmans who did not give-up their caste, hence with the passage of time they got divided into two sub-castes that are the Karkuns and the Bhasya-bhatts. Here the Karkuns preferred the study of Persian and hence got the appointments in the government jobs. But the other group of Brahmans, that is,

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1. Ibid., p. 43
2. Ibid., p. 2
4. *The Valley of Kashmir*, op. cit., p. 306. *Kram* means a name or title given to a person on behalf of his / her dynasty, tribe or profession in the valley of Kashmir.
Bhashya-bhatts continued the study of Sanskrit and look after the religious matters of their community as usual.¹

Lal Ded born during the 14th century A.D in the Valley of Kashmir and was a famous Yogni of Kashmir.² It is also visible from the teachings of Lal Ded that how Islam made its influence over Advaita Saivism. Hence she becomes disturbed by large sects and religious conflicts and the beliefs and practices of the Advaita Saivism. Therefore she met Sayyid Ali Hamdani and Shaikh Noor-ud-din Rishi and learned Islamic and mystic practices from them. It was the Islamic influence on her that she gave up the idol worship and caste system. She was of the opinion that the world is an illusion. Sayyid Ali Hamadani’s influence is also shown from her sayings that, “it was not necessary for a person to become a hermit in order to achieve the absorption of the Individual Self into the Supreme, but that even a householder can obtain ultimate Reality provided he performed his religious and secular duties without any thought of gain or profit.” She also learned the use of mystic terms from the Sufis, like the Doctrine of the Divine love and hence she also used the term ‘Beloved’ to denote the Nature (God). Thus in her poetry Sufism appears when she is awakening the Beloved and says:³

“When the moonlight ended with the dawn,
Mind of her Self with illusion mad
Lalla to the love of God had drawn,
Soothing the pain that had made him sad:
Cried to her Beloved: It is I,
Lalla, Lalla, that awakens Thee:
Buried in the crystal lake doth lie
All the defilement that darkened me.”

“Although divisions in Kashmiri society based on caste disappeared for the most part, they were replaced by class distinctions which, in certain cases, retained the old rigidity. Islam no doubt provided a unifying and leavening force, and the Sufis

tried to bridge the gulf between the different classes, but, owing to the economic disparities and functional differences, real social equality could not be achieved.”

In the Sultanate period in Kashmir the Sultan and the royal family held the top status in the Kashmiri society and the nobles like Chaks, Magres, Rainas, Dars and Bhattas including the Sayyids enjoyed huge Jagirs. They also played an important role as patrons of the scholars and artists, and also erected religious buildings for the welfare of the people and for the spread of education. However, the Chaks and the Sayyids were of foreign origins. There were two categories among Sayyids: the Alavi Sayyids and, the Baihaqi Sayyids. The Alavi Sayyids started coming to Kashmir right at the beginning of the rule of the Sultans and played an active part in religious matters. The Baihaqi Sayyids arrived in the 15th century A.D during the reign of Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin, and took active part in the state politics.

However, the Sultan and the noble families established matrimonial relations with the high class elite like Sayyids, Chaks and the Magres. For gaining the political strength, they even made matrimonial relations with the nobles of the neighbouring territories like Madra, Kishtwar, Rajouri, Pakhli and Sind.

In the society besides the nobility, Ulama, Sayyids and Sufis also played a key role that mostly came from the Central Asia and were highly respected class amongst the Muslims. The Ulama were highly knowledgeable persons about the principles of the Shariat and with the passage of time the local scholars also acquired the necessary knowledge with in the country or from outside the country and reached to the position of Islamic jurists. From these people the government appointed the Qazis, Muftis and Shaikh-ul-Islam in the state judiciary.

As far as Sufis, Pir or murshids in Kashmir are concerned they influenced all the three aspects of social, religious and cultural life in the Valley. Mir Sayyid Ali Hamdani came to Kashmir during the reign of Qutb-ud-Din held the opinion that, “the Muslims should limit their desires according to the dictates of religion but they should

1. Ibid., pp. 356-57
2. Islamic Heritage of Kashmir, Vol. 2, op. cit., pp. 3-4
3. Ibid., p. 4
4. Ibid., p. 4
5. Ibid., p. 5
6 Ibid., p. 5
not annihilate them like the Hindu Sadhus or Muslim Faqirs. Sayyid Ali greatly stressed on doing Justice, social justice is the central idea of his political philosophy.”  

The Pirs, murshids, or Sufis abode was called khanqah. They laid such an impact on the ruling class that, these khanqahs of such pious people were mostly erected by the royal family members and the nobles. So khanqah was the place where a Sufi, Pir or murshid resided along with their families and the principal disciples, learned men or khalifas. On the death of a Pir he was succeeded by one among his main disciples having high intellectual and spiritual qualities. However, sometimes succession is also based on hereditary principles. The successor was generally called khalifa.  

The Sultan also participated in a Yagana ceremony once so as to avert a famine. The important thing is that in this ceremony the Brahmans got gifts from the Sultan. So for Sultan Qutub-ud-Din is concerned, he married with two real sisters* because he was ignorant about the proper knowledge of Shriah. Therefore, the Sultans did not propagate or promote religious synthesis. Initially they were not able to distinguish between right and wrong according to the Islamic point of view i.e., Shariah.  

In the 15th century during the reign of the Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin the society was categorized on the basis of racial, religious and socio-economic factors, and this comprises the indigenous and foreign origin and they ranged from urban and landed aristocrat groups even peasantry or tribal classes.  

During the 16th century when Kashmir was ruled by the Chaks, the Ulama had much influence on the government activities. It was they who were always consulted in solving the problems related to civil or religious matters. Generally in matters of

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1  Kashmiri Sufism, op. cit., p. 214
2  Islamic Heritage of Kashmir, Vol. 2, op. cit., p. 5
   *Sultan Qutb-ud-Din initially married with the two real sisters (born of the same parents) but later on he on behalf of the advice of the Sufi Mir Sayyid Ali Hamadani, Qutb-ud-Din divorced both of his wives but later the younger one came into his nikah. This highlights the impact of Sufis taking care of Shariat. See also, Sayyid Ali, Tarih-i-Kashmir, (Urdu tr.), Ghulam Rasool Bhat, op. cit., pp. 29-30
judicial administration the Chak rulers, viz, Husain Shah Chak and Yusuf Shah Chak seek help and advice of the Ulama.\(^1\)

Sayyids were highly an influential religious class in the Medieval Kashmir. Though the Baihaqi Sayyids played a crucial role in state politics during Chak Rule but on the other hand they did not give-up the motive of their life of piety and austerity as a fundamental religious duty. However, after the Mughal conquest of Kashmir by Emperor Akbar a few Sayyids were also shifted to Delhi along with Yusuf Shah Chak and Yaqub Shah, and remained loyal to their early political masters. Therefore, a Sayyid Abdul Maali, buried the dead bodies of kings Yusuf Shah and Yaqub Shah at Diswak in Bihar.\(^2\)

In the Medieval Kashmir, it was Gazi Shah Chak who for the first time gave concessions to the people in the evil practice of *begar* (forced labor).\(^3\) And later on Ali Shah stopped this practice completely.\(^4\) Yusuf Shah Chak abolished the collection of taxes from the poor classes of the society like of *Dombas, Chandalas* and *Chamars*.\(^5\)

During the 16th Century the Sufis were highly regarded and respected because of their piety, simplicity and learning. Hence Sufism established hold in Kashmir as earlier as the foundation of the Sultanate in Kashmir, during the Chak rule, as has been already explained in the earlier chapters, that the various Sufi orders were flourishing: Suhrawardiyyah, Kubraviyyah, Qadiriyyah, Naqashbandiyyah, Nurbakshiyyah and Rishi order, all have laid their influence on the Chak rulers.\(^6\)

A Kashmiri Sufi of the 16th century Shaikh Hamza Makhdumi once was so much annoyed with a person who was a drunkard that he hit a drunkard with his stick who died on spot.\(^7\) The *zikr* ceremonies of the Sufis also besides the devotional aspects served as a symbol of social equality, all classes of the different people.

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1. *Baharistan-i-Shahi*, (English tr.), op. cit., pp. 192-93
5. Ibid., f. 142.
7. Ibid., p. 82,
together do the same practice.\textsuperscript{1} Besides the 16\textsuperscript{th} century Kashmiri Sufi Shaikh Hamza Makhdumi in the Chak period in his teaching called up on the people to lead a virtuous life and he studied in his early age in the college known as \textit{Dar-ul-Shifa} at the foot hills of Koh-i-Maran in Srinagar. He studied Sufism besides the other sciences and learning's. He also emphasized that the religious taxes should be paid and he addressed the people to acquire knowledge.\textsuperscript{2}

### Population

So far, as the population of the Valley is concerned, Abu'l-Fazl is of the opinion that it was thickly populated. Later on, in 1670 roughly there were 12, 43003 people, it is remarkable that the district of Maraj (the southern part of Kashmir) was more fertile and populous than Kamraj (the northern part of Kashmir). In the Maraj district the \textit{parganas} of Vihi, Wular, and Advin were comparatively denser, in the population, than the rest while in the Kamraj district Krohen and Bangil were more populous than the remaining \textit{parganas}. Therefore, the majority of the people lived in the villages and the rural areas.\textsuperscript{3}

Besides spreading Islam in Kashmir, these Sufis always raised their voice against injustice, oppression and exploitation.\textsuperscript{4} Hence right from the 14\textsuperscript{th} Century A.D. some Sufis played a key role as social reformers. For example sati system was banned in Kashmir by the Sultan Sikandar on behalf of the advice of the Sufi Mir Muhammad Hamadani.\textsuperscript{5}

In the Medieval Kashmir Sufis being a mystic class played an important role and laid much influence on the social, religious and cultural life of the people. They maintained the structure of Sunni social and religious order integral.\textsuperscript{6} The Sufis led an an ascetic life and they give much stress on simplicity and self discipline in their quest for receiving God’s blessings. They believed within the limits of \textit{Shariat} (Islamic Law) and considered it the only way to consult God for the salvation of all miseries. However, they took \textit{Qur’an} as an important source for the teachings of Islam, but also

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{1} Ibid., p. 6
\item \textsuperscript{2} \textit{Kashir Being a History of Kashmir from the Earliest Times to Our Own}, Vol. I, op. cit., p. 112 see also, Walter. Lawrence, \textit{The Valley of Kashmir}, London ,1895, P. 292
\item \textsuperscript{3} \textit{Islamic Heritage of Kashmir}, Vol. 2, op. cit., pp. 2-3
\item \textsuperscript{4} Ibid., p. 17
\item \textsuperscript{5} \textit{Kashmir under the Sultans}, 1974, op. cit., p. 225
\item \textsuperscript{6} \textit{Sufism in Kashmir (Fourteenth to the Sixteenth Century)}, op. cit., p. 258.
\end{itemize}
gave much emphasis on the inner ward (batin) purity of man which is much important than the dogmatic formalism of the orthodox type.¹

Besides these, there were a number of Pirs and their murids who lived in the khanqahs (the organization of khanqah in Kashmir was the same as in other Muslim countries) and some endowments were granted for such khanqahs by the princes and nobles and ruling elite where these Pirs lived along with their families and followers. However, the disciples and followers used to learn the mystic teaching and practices from their Pirs or Murshids and then after achieving to the high spiritual stage, they leave the khanqah and move to other places for preaching the new disciples the ways (tariqa) of their masters teaching.²

As we have already mentioned about Shaikh Nooru-ud-din Rishi (1373-1438) the patron saint of Kashmir also called Nund Rishi. He flourished a new local Sufi order commonly called as Rishi silsila.³

Tsar-i-Sharif (Charar-i-Sharif) is a place where Shaikh Nooru-ud-din Wali (Shaikh-ul-Alam) is buried and even to this day his Ziarat attracts thousands of people belonging to both Hindus and Muslim communities. The Kashmiri people had a great regard for him,⁴ as he laid much impact on the socio-cultural life of Kashmiri people even 16th century A.D onwards. Earlier Jahangir mentions about 2000 Faqirs whom he calls the Rishis, and who had worked for the welfare of the society. He states, “though they have not enough religious knowledge or learning of any sort, yet they posses simplicity, and are without pretence. They abuse no one, they restrain the tongue of desire, and the foot of seeking; they eat no flesh, they have no wives, and always plant fruit-bearing trees in the fields, so the men may benefit by them, themselves deriving no advantage.”⁵

Further Jahangir in his Tuzuk mentions that, the people of Kashmir shave their heads and put on a round turban, the women folk wear a long tunic of Pattu cloth. He

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1. Islamic Heritage of Kashmir, op. cit, Vol. 2, p. 16
2. Ibid., p. 20
also mentions that in the time of Mirza Haidar Dughlat there were many skilled people particularly expert in music. Many instruments viz dulcimers, harps, drums and flutes were used.\(^1\) Jahangir also says that merchants and artificers are mostly of the *Sunnis* of Kashmir while as soldiers according to Jahangir were of Immamiyyah Shias and also belonged to other classes like Nurbakshis.\(^2\)

So far as the system of slavery in Medieval Kashmir is concerned, up to the Mughal annexation we do not find any evidence in the contemporary sources, but Abu’l-Fazl in *Akbarnama* mentions, “That the agreement made between the Emperor Akbar and Shaikh Yaqub Sarfi, (who invited the Mughal emperor to annex Kashmir in 1586) on the condition that Kashmiris shall not be made slaves and servants”.\(^3\) Abu’l-Fazl further says, “Probably this was to forestall the Mughal custom of taking slaves from the subjugated Valley.”\(^4\)

**Hindu Muslim unity:**

Hindu women were to retain their Hindu names even after their marriage with a Muslim. Shankar Devi who was the daughter of Raja Bahadur Sing of Kishtwar was married in 1571 with the last Chak ruler Yaqub Chak and she continued to be called with her Hindu name till her death. But she was also called as Fath Khatun, due to Muslim influence.\(^5\) Regi Chak who was a Chak noble was married to the daughter of Hindu Raja of Jammu.\(^6\)

Both the Hindus and Muslims joined in each other’s festivals and celebrations.\(^7\) The discussions were held between the Hindu Yogis and Muslim saints. One of the Chak rulers Husain Shah Chak had fixed Saturday of every week for such discussions and meetings. During the whole Mughal and Afghan period and even today the Hindus of Kashmir visited the Muslim shrines to receive blessings.\(^8\)

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1. Ibid., p. 148  
2. Ibid., p. 149  
4. Ibid.  
6. Sayyid Ali, *Tarikh-i-Kashmir*, Ms. O.R.D., No 739 (Sultans, Khan, Ms. O.R.D.), f. 15a  
Life in Srinagar:

Srinagar the capital city of Kashmir was the centre of all kind of life and activities i.e., social, cultural, economic and political. During the 16th century, houses in the city were generally lofty buildings, generally made up of cedar, pine, fir, wood and stone and mortar. Most of the buildings had five stories and each story had large apartments, halls, galleries and towers.

Thus Mirza Haidar Dughlat is of the opinion that the beauty of their exterior defied description and caused much wonder. Abu’l-Fazl mentions that in his time around 1587 the city of Srinagar continued to be attractive we also find, that Srinagar was large and populated city and river Behat (Jhelum) passes through it. Many of the houses are of wood, and few of them had five stories. On the roofs of their houses they plant tulips and other flowers and during the spring season there rival flower gardens.

However, during the time of Jahangir and Shah Jahan (17th century A.D) the conditions remained mostly the same. Thus, Jahangir almost repeats Abu’l-Fazl’s statement about the house planning in the Srinagar city.

Bernier mentions that on the bank of river Jhelum most of the houses made of wood because wood was available in large quantity and was cheap. The houses had little garden which laid good effect particularly during the spring and summer season, ‘when many parties of pleasure take place on the water.

Besides one can look the flower and kitchen gardens. On the other hand, the houses on the banks of the Dal Lake were connected by canals, on which the owners kept pleasure boats. In nutshell, the people in the city were happy, healthy and prosperous.

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1. Ibid., p. 43
2. Ibid., p. 44
3. *Tarkh-i-Rashidi* (Eng. tr.), op. cit., p. 429
Rural life:

The village life in Kashmir was quite charm full. The villages were very beautiful due to fresh air, flowing water streams, growing trees. One can freely refreshes in such villages and many of them are objects of attraction. Mostly the village houses were made of mud bricks set in wooden frames which make the four walls covered with timber. Majority of the houses in the villages having slanting roof thatched over with the Shali straw which was significant with the purpose that it does not allow snow to collect on the roof of a house. Such houses mostly belonged to the peasantry class. Generally the houses were double storied. The floor story was kept for the cattle, sheep etc., but in some of the houses of the rich, the ground floor was utilized for the purpose of hamam (warm room) for the family during the winter season.¹

The most famous companion of the Kashmiris during the winter was a portable brazier (Kangri) to warm up their body during the cold (winter) season.² The poor people wore straw shoes (pulharus) during the winter season. But the use of Kangri is still in practice in Kashmir during the winter season.³

The main occupation of the villagers in Kashmir was cultivation and the rearing of the cattle. Hence they generally believe in the below Kashmiri phrase, “Yus Karith Gonglu Sui KaKaith Karao”, He who ploughs shall reap.⁴

Nagendra K. Singh is of the opinion that, “Social life in the villages remained stereotyped and immobile. The villagers were given no opportunity to alter their ancestral occupation of tilling and rearing cattle. They continued to be treated like primitive serfs like their ancestors. They had no say in their administration, local or central and nobody bothered about them. Yet they remained a happy contented lot, whenever they were spared by their ubiquitous bogy-early snowfall and heavy rains in spring and autumn.”⁵

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1. Ibid., p. 46
2. The Valley of Kashmir, op. cit., p. 250
4. Ibid., p. 47
5. Ibid., p. 48
A small number of officials, Maulavis, Pundits and Zamaindars who lived in the towns specially in Srinagar, their life style was like that of urban type. They called other rural or village living people as gama-hakhur, which means village bull.\(^1\)

**Position of women:**

In Kashmir during the Hindu rule women were deprived of their status. They were given a small position of sub-ordination to their husbands. They could not inherit and neither claim for the right property. They can only enjoy their social life with their husbands. However as the Sufis penetrated Kashmir and spread Islam in Kashmir and it laid good impact and also refreshed the women life. It gave them their due status and prestige. It gives the right of equality to women with men though later on the women claimed their right to property.\(^2\)

Along with the shawl weaving the other thing very interested for which generally Kashmir is known for the beauties of its women.\(^3\) Although Sir Walter Lawrence ignores the beauty of women in Kashmir, but if he had visited the villages, he could see the actual natural beauty of women. If he would have visited through the Kashmir, he than could realize, strikingly beauty of women with in clear cut features, large dark eyes, well marked eye brows, and a general Jewish appearance. Hence as a proof the weavers of shawls are themselves the best examples known for their beauty throughout the world.\(^4\)

Some of the Kashmiri women stood as cultured members of the society in the fields of religion, literature and fine arts. Their handsomeness and physical charms remained unparallel. About beautiful unmarried Kashmiri girls Marco Polo had got much information.\(^5\) They (Kashmiri girls) remained objects of attraction and possession during the Mughal (1586-1752) and Pathan (1752-1819) period. Bernier who visited Kashmir in 1664 A.D\(^6\) about the physical beauty of Kashmiri girls, he writes, “Nearly every individual when first admitted to the Court of the Great Mogol

\(^1\) Ibid.
\(^2\) Ibid.
\(^3\) The Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. II, op. cit., p. 353
\(^4\) Islamic Heritage of Kashmir, Vol. 2, op. cit., p. 48
\(^5\) Travels in the Mogul Empire AD 1656-1668, op. cit., p. 404
selected wives from and concubines (from Kashmir) so that his children may be whiter than the Indians and pass for genuine Mogols”.

With the coming of Islam in Kashmir the whole society underwent a great transformation with the passage of time. It has already been discussed above that after the establishment of Islam widowhood, suicides and Sati practices were strictly prohibited for forever. However, Islam did not forced Kashmiri women to adopt purdah system though the women of the high class belonging to Sayyid and Maulavi families used it. The rest of the women worked in the fields as formers without veil.

During the early period Muslim rule, there was no difference in outlook of Hindu women from a Muslim one in dress, manners and customs. But with the passage of time there came a tremendous change. The pardah became a common practice among the upper classes of the society. The house of the women now became her proper place and obedience to her husband and the family members become her duty.

During the 16th - 18th century in medieval Kashmir the women enjoyed the similar positions or status in society as was given to them in countries like Iran, Turkistan and in the other parts of Mughal India.

Thus in case of more prosperous and respectable classes of the society for the women, an institution of harem came into existence. Harem was a separate living quarter for the ladies of the upper class of the society. But the women particularly in the rural areas generally helped their men folk in almost every walk of their life, without veil.

Hence marriages were arranged by the parents and early marriage for both boy and girl was favoured. Polygamy was practiced by only few men, but the Sultan did not kept more than four wives with the same time. Earlier after the death of a husband of Hindu women she practiced Sati i.e., she burnt herself along with the dead body of her husband but it was banned by Sultan Sikandar, on the other hand the Muslim widows generally remarried.

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1. *Travels in the Mogul Empire AD 1656-1668*, op. cit., p. 404
5. *Kashmir under the Sultans*, op. cit., p. 227
7. Ibid., p. 50
“Divorce, though permitted among the Muslims was rarely resorted to since the Chak rulers were leading a highly moral life, there was no scope for prostitution or concubine age but the polygamy was practiced within Sharia.”¹

Some women worked in the fields of gardens and by wool spinning for manufacturing shawls and to earn their bread and butter.² But the ladies of the Ulama and the aristocracy strictly maintained purdah and they did not go outside of their houses for different entertainments freely.³ These Muslim women acquired the basic education at their own houses from the tutors. But the few women were very active and cultured who opened schools, built monasteries and mosques and took interest in the public affairs for example Sura, Hyat Khatoon, Gul Khatoon and Habba Khatoon were the prominent in the list.⁴

Another important role of the Kashmiri women in the Socio-cultural aspects of their lives was that some of the ladies of the Sufis though managed the arrangements of khanqah after the death of their husbands, for example, the wife of Khwaja Moinuddin Naqashbandi after the death of her husband Khwaja Moinuddin on 5th of Muharam, in 1085 A.H/ 1674-1675 A.D she took the responsibility of the management of the khanqah. With the result, she had run the administration of the khanqah more tactfully and successfully as compared to the men folk of the period.⁵

It is general belief of the Sufis that a women could not sustains the difficulties required for the liberation and to get perfection as a Sufia but Mullah Shah Budakshi had some women disciples also.⁶ Hence Roopa Bhawani was also a saint and Sufia of her time and she was one of the disciples of Shah Sadiq Qalandar.⁷ In the Rajouri and Bhimber areas inter-marriages among the Hindus and Muslims were quite common even during the Mughal Rule. Both the Mughal emperors Jahangir and Shah Jahan put restrictions on the intermarriages and on the sati practices.⁸

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¹. Ibid., p. 51
². Travels in the Mogul Empire A.D. 1656-1668, op. cit., pp. 402-403
³. Ibid., p. 404
⁴. Kashmir under the Sultans, op. cit., p. 227
⁵. Waqiat-i-Kashmir, (Urdu tr.), Dr. Shams-ud-Din Ahmad, op. cit., pp. 281-82
⁷. Kashmir under the Mughals, 1586-1752, op. cit., p. 140
Education:

In the field of education also, Sufis played a crucial role. They established madrasas where not only Islamic knowledge was provided but they also gave scholastic doctrines of Islam and also the social and moral education was given to the students. The most important madrasas in the early period of Muslim rule in Kashmir were Madrasas-tul-Islam, Madrasatul-Darar’ul-Shifa, and Madrasatul-‘Uusqa. All of these madrasas were in the Srinagar city. In the above mentioned madrasas many types of learning of Islamic sciences and knowledge were taught viz, Qur’an, Qur’anic commentaries Hadith, fiqh and tafsir. So for the very crucial madrasa which was the centre of Islamic knowledge in all branches was Madrasatul-Darar’ul-Shifa, established by Shaikh Ismail Kubravi. Hence the madrasa was provided with all facilities like boarding for students, besides it, there was a well known library attached to the marasa and a big congregational mosque for offering Namaz (prayers) was also built near the madrasa. To these madarasas or Islamic centers, students were coming even from Hindustan and Kabul.

The Sufis also laid great stress on the women education. Baba Dawud Khaki a Kashmiri Sufi highlights the significance of religious knowledge for the women. He quotes Ghazali’s sayings, “It is obligatory on a husband to impart religious education to his wife, and if he does not fulfill it, the woman has every right to move towards a teacher without the permission of her husband to acquire ‘Ilm-i-Sharia’.” Hence with such efforts of Sufis women-education got much progress during the 16th- 17th centuries.

Both the ladies of upper and middle class received religious education by the Maulives in the Maktabs established throughout the Valley.

1. Futuhat-i-Kubraviya, op. cit., f. 72a.
3. Sufism in Kashmir (Fourteenth to the Sixteenth Century), op. cit, p. 255
5. Tarikh-i-Kashmir, Ms. O.R.D., No. 739, op. cit., p. 22b see also Muhiu’d-Din Miskin, Tarikh-i-Kabir-i-Kashmir, op. cit., p. 145
6. Tarikh-i-Kashmir, op. cit., p. 22b
7. Dasturu’s-Salikin, op. cit., p. 135
Nagendra K. Singh writes that, “The attitude of mind towards education among the population was basically secular. Education of children received particular attention. Both boys and girls were acquainted from tender age with the basic principles and formalities of their religion by their parents. When they were interested the care of the Maulavi in the Maktab or of Pandit in the Pathshalas, the inauguration ceremony was done under picturesque rituals. The Muslim boys and girls were taught the Kalima and the namaz while the Hindus were taught Sandhya (a study of the practice of Hindu practice of worship) and natinama. Higher education too was imported”

There were Pathshalas where Hindu women acquired education by the Pundits. Although the higher education was also given to the Hindu women in the above mentioned Pathshalas but women of the lower strata of society were mostly illiterate because of ill sources of income, they could not afford tuition and time so that they made the Maktub. Moreover society could not tolerate their emerging literary talents. Habba Khatun also becomes a sort of problem for her father when she acquired literally talents. Therefore, she lived a miserable life in the village.

Dress:

There is a direct impact of Sufism on the dress of Kashmiri people. Hence with their penetration a period of transition begins in Kashmir that is within the establishment of cultural connection with Arabia, Persia and Turkistan. Before their contact to above mentioned countries the Kashmiri men generally wore long loosen tunic like the people of Ladakh, Tibet, Sikkim and Bhutan. Moreover Kashmiris covered their head with a piece of white cloth. The long loose tonic was generally made of woolen stuff (Pattu). The king and the nobles wear the silken dress on the festive occasions. Sultan Hasan Shah gave silk clothes instead of cotton cloths to his servants on the occasion of coronation.

During the Hindu period this long loosen tunic was used by both men and women and the men did not shave their heads and wore the above white piece of

1. Ibid., p. 51
2. Ibid., p. 50
3. Ibid., p. 51
cloth. However during the Muslim rule (Sultanate period) the use of long loosen enlarge tunic (called in Kashmir Phiran) continued. But the women hence started to have a fillet on their forehead and a black mantilla above it which fell from the head over the shoulders on to the legs and it was called Kasaba in case of the Muslim women and Taranga in that for a Hindu women. Taranga was hence tied to a hanging bonnet falling to the heels from behind. In other words the Muslim Kashmiri women tied around their heads a piece of cloth or handkerchief type called Kasaba. Earlier the Hindu ladies tied a white handkerchief around their heads. During that period men also begin to shave and wore a close fitting skull cap and continued to wear shoes of straw. The above mentioned Kasaba or Taranga was also in use by the women during 16th-18th century.

However, during the Sultanate period the dress of the upper classes which mainly consist of the Muslim also underwent a drastic change. It happened under the inspiration of a remarkable Sufi named Sayyid Ali Hamdani in the time of Sultan Qutb-ud-Din. The upper portion of the body came to be covered with a garment called qamiz of full sleeves while the lower covering from hub to the ankles trousers called shalwar of the Persian origin and over the qamiz was put on a short vest called Sadri.

Sadri. The Kashmiri Phiran was like the Persian Phiran which opens from the neck to the waist and falls down to the ankles with a belt found to the waist. As is mentioned above but during the Mughal period also the dastar (turban) was put over the shaven head by the men.

Besides the long and loose sleeves Chogha, a turban was introduced and the Qazis and the Muftis also wore it in black color, silk cloth was also used by the upper

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1. Islamic Heritage of Kashmir, Vol. 2, op. cit., p. 52
2. Ibid., p. 52
3. The Valley of Kashmir, 1895, op. cit., pp. 251-52
5. Ibid., p. 53
6. Ibid., p. 52. This Persian influence over the dress of Kashmiri people, like Kamiz, Shalwar and Sadri remained continued during the Chak, Mughal, and Afghan rule (16th-19th century A.D), and are even today used in Kashmir by the majority of the Kashmiri people.
8. Ibid.
class people. Ornaments were also made in use by the rich men and women. The women also used ear-rings, nose drops and bangles.¹

Jahangir also praises Kashmir as it is a garden of eternal spring or an iron fort to a place of kings, charming flower bed and a heart growing heritage for Darwishes. Further also mentions about the warm puttoo woolen cloth of Kashmiris. He states that both men and women wore such a woolen cloth with the purpose so that, they may easily digest the food in the chilly winter season.²

Earlier both the men and women worn drawers (izar) had subsequently been discarded by women as is clear from the Jahangir’s record, “it is considered wrong to wear drawers, they wear tunic long and ample as far as the head and falling down to the feet and they also wear belt”³

The Persian terms to new fashioned dress in Kashmir after Mir Sayyid Ali Hamadani are for trouser (sarawil) for the Kamiz (Chethis),⁴ Short Waist (Sadri) for piharan (Chohghah)⁵ and round turban (dastar) the head dress.⁶

In 1663 A.D Aurangzeb visited Kashmir and he annoyed to see the women moving without drawers but in long loose Chogah.⁷ With the result he had given directions to the Mughal governor of Kashmir Inayatullah Khan to compel them to wear drawers to cover their naked legs.

The Sufis laid its impact not only on the Muslims but on the non-Muslim community of Kashmir as well. As after the wholesale establishment of Islam a Hindu or Muslim could not be distinguished by Jahangir in his period, because both of them worn the similar style of dress. But some of the slight changes in dress occurred, hence introduced since the time of Shah Jahan which distinguished a Pandit from a Muslim. As at the time of Mughal annexation of Kashmir, the Kashmiri Pandits had begin to wear turbans and shaves and put tika (religious mark) on their foreheads.

¹. Islamic Heritage of Kashmir, Vol. 2, op. cit., p. 53
². G.M. Rabbani, Kashmir social and cultural History, Delhi, 1986, pp. 146-47
⁴. Ibid., p. 147
⁵. Baharistan-i-Shahi, op. cit., ff. 132b, 139b
⁷. Islamic Heritage of Kashmir, Vol. 2, op. cit., p. 54
With the passage of time such a practice could not be continued by them due to some orthodox Muslim rulers.¹

In the period of Mullah Abdun Nabi Muhtavi Khan (1720) and during the Phathan rule (1753-1819) the Pandits of Kashmir dressed and behaved like their Muslim brethren in order to adjust themselves with the Muslim community and to avoid discrimination to them.² One cannot differentiate a Hindu from a Muslim on the basis of dress particularly in the cold winter season.³ The religious heads, Ulama and other prominent scholars put on black cloak of the Persian style.⁴ The Kashmiri men also covered their heads with a turban of white colour.⁵ Men of both the communities Hindus as well as of Muslims shaved their heads and keep beard.⁶ The trousers were used not commonly but it was used on certain occasions.⁷

Wooden sandals were (a type of footwear) generally used by the Kashmiris.⁸ Charar-i-Sharif in district Budgam was a famous centre where huge quantity of Kangar was manufactured by the Kashmiri artisans.⁹ The dress of the Kashmiri people was generally depended up on the climatic conditions as compared to cotton; wool was available in large quantity. Besides the Valley in the Kishtwar there were number of mulberry trees whose leaves were utilized for rearing the silk-worms for silk production.¹⁰ Both the men and women wore woolen tunic (kurta) cloths.¹¹ Cotton cloth was considered as a luxury item and was worsened by the upper class people.¹²

**Food Habits**

Srivara says that the diet of Kashmiris also underwent a great change. He notices that some of the Hindus even started eating beef in the company of their Muslim brethren.¹³

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¹. Ibid., p. 55
². Ibid., p. 55
⁴. *Asrarul-Abrar*, op. cit., ff. 208a, 2321
⁵. *The Valley of Kashmir*, 1895, op. cit., p. 251
⁷. *Asrarul-Abrar*, op. cit., ff. 221
⁹. *The Valley of Kashmir*, op. cit., p. 50
¹¹. Ibid., p. 147
¹³. *Sufism in Kashmir (Fourteenth to the Sixteenth Century)*, op. cit., p. 257
The favourite food of the Kashmiris throughout the Hindu and Muslim period was the rice. That is why paddy is grown on large scale even today. Failure of paddy crops led to the famine in the time of Ali Shah Chak.1

Hence the rice was boiled in a certain quantity of water properly until it absorbed the entire water, then it was kept overnight and then in the morning of next day it was used for eating purpose. The Kashmiris generally called this boiled rice as bhatta in their Kashmiri language.2

Sufism laid its impact not only on the dress of the Kashmiri people but on their diet and food also. Most of the Sufis came from Persia. Under the Persian influence now the rice begin to be cooked in various types of pulavs like Tursh pulav, zard pulav and shulla pulav.3 Zafron and the various other spices made the Kashmiri food cooking more tasty and favourite.4

The wheat crop was not grown in large quantity in the Valley it was used as an item of food by few limited people, but shali (rice) was cultivated in large quantity and barley was found rarely.5 Barley was the simple food for the poor people and used in the religious ceremonies of Hindus.6 The other items of food used as meals by the Kashmiris throughout the whole Muslim period were ghee, vegetables, meat, milk, pickles vinegar, nadur and wine.7

In Kashmir throughout the whole Muslim period the vegetables were dried up and preserved for the winter season because in winter no crop can be grown. This practice is in vogue even today. Hence the various types of pulses like chana, kultha, Masura, Muga, Mash and millet were grown and used as vegetables.8 Fish, mutton, beans, fowls both domestic and wild were used by all classes of the people.9 Jahangir also mentions almost the same thing that, fowl, geese, and ducks (murghabis) were

1. Islamic Heritage of Kashmir, Vol. 2, op. cit., pp. 55, 82
4. Ibid., p. 55
7. Ibid.
also considered as the favourite dishes of the Kashmiri people.\(^1\) In Srinagar area the Kashmiris preferred the water of Dal Lake for drinking purposes because it was more digestible as compared to the water of river Jhelum.\(^2\)

Besides meat, the flesh of fowl, goat, horse and various birds were very much in demand. However, pork was taken by the Hindus only before the spread of Islam. So for the beef is concerned, it was not used in the beginning of the Muslim rule commonly but gradually with the passage of time it became so popular that even some times the Hindus also took part to this.\(^3\)

In the preparation of cooked rice neither salt nor ghee were added.\(^4\) The rich people however enjoyed all the kinds of tasteful dishes. Many varieties of meat were also prepared on different festive occasions.\(^5\) Walnut oil was mostly used by the poorer people in the Kashmiri society, besides it linseed, sesame and mustard oil were commonly used. Lawrence had used the Kashmiri term *tilgoglu* for the mustard oil seeds.\(^6\)

Large number of Kashmiri people utilized the water chestnut flour.\(^7\) However the bread prepared by the nut flour was highly nutritive.\(^8\) Knolkohol was also utilized.\(^9\) The various vegetables viz, carrots, bringil, turnips and pulses were cultivated throughout the Kashmir Valley during Mughal rule.\(^10\)

The various kinds of spices viz, pepper, turmeric, ginger cloves, chilies and Saffron were used for making dishes tastier.\(^11\) Besides the local cultivation of spices some of these were imported from Agra to Kashmir. Khwaja Isahq Qari mentions that the Muslims of Medieval Kashmir ate the meat of horse with relish and favouritely.\(^12\)

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3. Ibid.
5. Asrar-al-Abrar, op. cit., ff. 38b, 247a-b.
9. Tuhfatul-Fuqra, op. cit., f. 11a
A class of people who totally avoided from meat eating was of the Rishis of Kashmir. The different fruits grown and eaten were the pears, cherries, plums, apricots, grapes, apples, nuts and preaches were much liked.

According to Nagendra K. Singh, “Zain-ul-Abidin remained a strict vegetarian during the month of the Ramazan and he prohibited cow slaughter. His successors revived it under the persuasion of the Sayyids. It is, however, an indisputable fact that indigenous Muslims have a natural repugnance for beef and the pundits for pork. This is yet another example of their communal accommodation, amity and respect for each other’s sentiments.

Drinks:

Mostly in drinking purposes tea was taken by most of the people. It was imported from China to Kashmir via Ladakh route. On the occasion of festival celebrations the participants were provided free liquor by the organizers of the celebrations. However Anguri and gandi were the favourite drinks of the singers.

But in the late 17th Century the utilization of liquor decreased as during this period Tabacco introduced in the Valley. Therefore, during the 18th Century Taobacco was commonly smoked by a larger number of people of Kashmiri society.

Because of the cold climate the fatty items like butter and other fats were not used because they were unsuitable for digestion inside a cold environment. That is why they wear a long woolen kurta to protect them from the extreme cold environment.

Sources of amusement:

The people enjoyed various social activities. The outdoor amusements which they liked were; wrestling, fishing, cock fighting, ram fighting, bird catching, hawk fighting, pigeon flying, horse riding and archery. Zain-ul-Abidin introduced fireworks

1. The Tuzuk-i-Jahagiri or Memoirs of Jahangir, Vol. 2, op. cit., p. 150
2. Ibid., pp. 145-46
6. Ibid., ff. 404-415a-b
7. Tarikh-i-Hasan, Vol. I, op. cit., f. 64 a
8. Gulshan-i-Dastur, op. cit., ff. 436b, 440b
hence the *banduq Khars* (gun makers) of Rainawari in Srinagar have been famous for gun makers and cutlers.\(^1\)

However dice and chess were the first class indoor games of the Kashmiri people from ancient times.\(^2\) Polo or *chowgan* was the outdoor; it is claimed that, it was introduced to Kashmir from Ladakh and Sultans and nobles mostly took part in this game. Sultan Ali Shah 1570-78 died of a fall from his horse while playing polo. Hunting and falconry were chief sources of amusement for the upper class of the society. Falcons were received from Kishtwar as a tribute.\(^3\) Hockey a simple version of polo was mostly played by the common people.\(^4\)

Another strange type of their entertainment was fighting with sticks and slings. This type of game was previously decided in a place at Srinagar and was played on Friday by the two youth groups. In the free fight between them resulting in serious injuries and sometimes deaths also.\(^5\)

Throughout the entire Muslim period music and dance was very popular with the Kashmiris. Under the Chak rule it got much importance. Husain Shah Chak used to enjoy the company of musicians at every Tuesday of the week at his court.\(^6\) Yusuf Shah Chak also patronized music at his court as a source of entertainment.\(^7\)

Another popular form of social entertainment among the nobility was that, the *Jashans* or convivial parties were held. The regular *jashans* were organized by Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin in his lovely pavilions on the Zaina Lank, in the Dal Lake. On such *jashans* musicians and dancing girls delighted the audience with their performance. Wine also flowed freely there. The Mughal emperor Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan also organized such *jashans* on the *Takht-i-rawans* (provable Thrones) and in the charming Shalimar, Vernag and Achabal gardens.\(^8\)

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2. Ibid., p. 58
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid., pp. 58-59
7. Ibid., p. 59
8. Ibid.
According to N. K. Sing, “the most interesting and at the same time, educative feature of their indoor life consisted in resisting historical anecdotes connected with the lives and adventures of Laleshwari and Shaikh Noor-ud-din Rishi, folk-tales like the Rustum Dastan (Kashmiri version of the Shahnama of Firdausi), Hemal-Nagari, Siva-Lagana, and the epics Ramayana and Mahabharata. They were composed and recited by men and women, whose repertoire of stories and songs was very large. By this natural gift they were able to maintain a link between the past and the present.” ¹

Festivals:

Fairs and festivals both religious and secular held an important feature of social life in Kashmir. Mostly these festivals come in the tilling and harvesting season. Although during the concerned period Hindus were in less quantity even though some of their festivals were highly regarded by their Muslim brethren also. However the festivals generally synchronized with the season of comparative leisure from outdoor activities like tilling and harvesting. The most famous among the Hindu festivals were the Shivaratri, Vyath Truwah, Gadabatha, Kichsri Amavas, Dussehra, Nagyatra and Ganachakra. Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin celebrated the Viith Truwa (birth day of river Jhelum festival along with the Hindus of Kashmir. He also fed the devotees with cream and curries on Nagyatra and Ganachakra festivals and also gave quilts and money. Similarly Husain Shah (1562-69) also observed the Hindu festivals of Navreh or (New Year’s Day) and Basant Panchami.²

Regarding the celebration of Viith Truwa festival Jahangir says, “on the night of ‘Thursday, the 13th, the Kashmiris had lined with lamps on both the sides of the Bihat (Jhelum). It is an ancient custom that every year on this day everyone, weather rich or poor, whoever has a house on the bank of river, should light lamps as on the Shabb-i-Barat. I asked the Brahman the reason of this, and they said that on this day the fountain head of the Jhelum River was discovered and the custom has come down from old days, that on this day must take place the feast of the Viith Truwah. Viith, means the Jehlum and they call thirteen Truwah. Undoubtedly, the lamp lighting was

¹. Ibid.
². Ibid., pp. 59-60
good. I sat in a boat and went round to see it.”¹ Jahangir on his visit to Kashmir observed this festival that the Kashmiri Hindus celebrated it with the great pomp and show.²

About the celebration of the Dasahra according to Jahangir, it was held on Monday, on 13th of Mihr (26th of September). It was an old custom in Kashmir when they decorated horses in the special stables and those of the Amirs and prided them.³

Hence the festivals which occur during the spring season were celebrated with more charm, lovely and colorfully than the other remaining festivals. Therefore on the festival ceremonies of Calera (April) fairs held in the open field and orchards, and the different people play different performances like dancing, acting and singing and displaying the fireworks etc.⁴

About the Caitra festival Srivara is of the opinion, “in the tubes rose balls of fire to the sky, beautiful as silver and worked like the planets Jupiter and Venus and they shone like golden stars of beautiful colour falling from the heaven.” on the Hariparbat (Takht-i-Suliaman) at Srinagar on the hill side, was used as a place where the various festivals and athletic games were held. “The people besmeared themselves with Saffron, aloes, camphor and sandal wood paste on that day and looked beautiful.” Sultan Husain Shah particularly used to take part in the above Caita festival.⁵

Sripanchami festival was celebrated on the 5th of the dark fortnight of Vaisaha (May). On this day in large gathering moved towards the Shanker-achariya Hill in Srinagar and enjoyed themselves with various ways. Suka is of the opinion, “Some held bouquets tastefully made of beautiful flowers to their noses, some were intoxicated and became uneasy when women, stranges to them, smiled, some drank wine and adorned their persons with flowers.”⁶

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². Ibid.
³. Ibid., p. 176; see also, Jahangir, *The Jahangirnama*, (ed. & tr.), Wheeler M. Thackston, New York, 1999, p. 347. Hence it is the proof of this thing that the Kashmiri Muslims continued to honour and regard the traditions and sentiments of their Hindu brethren as late as 17th century.
⁵. Ibid., p. 61
⁶. Ibid.
The Chak kings of Kashmir never interfered with the purpose of clash in festivals of non-Muslims. Hence Kashmiri Muslims always regarded and gave continued honour to the tradition and sentiments of their Hindu brethren. Such a behavior provides a route to the accommodation of communal sentiments.\(^1\)

Akbar also celebrated the Hindu festival Dewali in Kashmir, when the boats, the river banks and the roofs of houses were illuminated with lamps, all providing a magnificent appearance.\(^2\)

The Sufi Saints were mostly remarkable with the miraculous powers, even after their death. With the result Sufism became a bridge between various other creeds and Islam.\(^3\)

Though Muslims arrived Kashmir, before the arrival of Sayyid Ali Hamadani and his followers, but after his arrival Islam spread swiftly. Hence with the establishment of *khanqahs* and a network of branches which with the passage of time emerged proved beneficial in the spread of Islamic and spiritual values.\(^4\)

Keeping the keen survey of the sites of the *khanqahs* in view, it appears that, most of these were established at important Hindu centers viz, Sopur, Srinagar, Mattan and Avantipur etc. this represents Sufis were also prepared to face Hindu religious and intellectual challenges. With the result Sufis also tried to prevail, the social philosophy of Islam among their disciples. However, it was due to the efforts of Sufis for the welfare of the people in general, such practices attracted non-Muslims to these *khanqahs*. The doors of such Sufi *khanqahs* were always remained open to all classes of people. This provided opportunity to the non-Muslims, and they gradually converted into Islam. Hence on some of the *khanqahs* there were large kitchens where food was served to the needy and poor besides the inmates and visitors.\(^5\)

However in the Muslim community they also celebrated some of their socio-religious festivals. The two great festivals held among the Muslims were Id-ul-Fitr and Id-ul-Zuha. Both the festivals were celebrated with great pomp and show. The other festivals found, Shab-i-Barat, Muharam, and Nauroz, besides these festivals,

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1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.
4. *Sufism in Kashmir (Fourteenth to the Sixteenth Century)*, op. cit., p. 253
5. Ibid., p. 254
some local festivals like *Urs-i-Shah-i-Hamadan*, Urs-i-Makhdum Sahib, Urs-i-Charar-i-Sharif and Ziarat Hazratbal (also called Mehraj-i-Sharif) also became very popular.\(^1\) Although Sufism in Kashmir was on peak stage during the 14\(^{th}\) century, but the important thing is that the impact of Sufism remained continued on the Socio-Cultural life of the people even today many people who were not impressed by the living saints were attracted towards the tombs of the saints in difficult circumstances. So the Ziaratgahs, shrines and tombs of Sufis become the regular pilgrimage centers for all classes of Kashmiris, with the purpose to get their spiritual blessings. It must have their wishes and vows fulfilled. Lawrence further mentions, “Every Kashmiri believes the saints will aid if men will call’, and they think that a dead saint is more efficacious than a living priest. And Kashmiris are called by foreigners *Pir-Parast* (saint worshippers).\(^2\)

Besides the above major festivals, some of the local and religious festivals regarding the death or birth anniversary of various prominent saints and Sufis were also celebrated with great regard at various places in the Mughal Subah of Kashmir, viz the annual fair or Urs celebration of Shaikh Noor-ud-din at Charar-i-Sharif.\(^3\) Sayyid Ali Hamadani and Shaikh Hamza Makhdumi at Srinagar, annual Urs of Shah Farid-ud-Din Baghdadi and Shah Asrar-ud-Din at Kishawar, such death and birth annual ceremonies celebrated in almost in the entire valley. With the result, in the passage of time these ceremonies or festivals changed into annual fairs which attracted people from each and every corner of Kashmir.\(^4\)

George Forster, visited Kashmir in 1783 he observes that, “when a Kashmiri even of the lowest order, finds himself in the possession of ten shilling, he loses no time in assembling his party and launching into the lake, solaces himself till the last farthing is lost.” Therefore during the 16\(^{th}\) to 18\(^{th}\) centuries Kashmiris always

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2. *The Valley of Kashmir*, 1895, op. cit., p. 286 But one thing is clearly visible that it was the socio-cultural impact of Sufism that even after the death of the saint on his Urs occasions at the tombs of the saints and *Ziarats* and shrines, assemble people from all the casts, faiths and areas and participate in the ceremony and on the occasion of *melas* on such *Ziarats* and shrines. It laid good impression on the life of Kashmiris and represented the symbol of unity and similarity, irrespective of caste, colour and religion. Hence people at such Sufi centers get liberty from the social boundations on the basis of caste system, regionalism and demolished all the restrictions of low and high born and rich and poor. It explains the riddle of the cultural synthesis and essential unity and oneness of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.
3. *Kashmir under the Mughals 1586-1752*, op. cit., p. 137
participated in both religious and secular festival type celebrations. All the sections of the people took part in such festive occasions.¹

On all the festivals viz, Nauroz, Diwali and Eid-celebrations officially national holidays were celebrated and were enjoyed with such a pump and show that it looked even more fan-tasting than the Iranian style.²

**Music and Singing:**

In Kashmir a new branch of music called *Sufiana Kalam* was in vogue. Here *Sufiana* highlights its basis from Sufism. The term *Kalam* here generally means poetry. Thus this mystical poetry has about fifty four *maqams* (modes), few of them resembles to the Indian *Ragas* and accept the Hindustani names of *Bhairavi, Lalit* and *Kaiyan*, while others contain Persian names, viz, *Ishfahni, Dugah, Punjgh, Iraq, Rast-ii-Farsi* and *Sehgah*. The most vital tales are *Shetal, Nimdur, Dur-i-Khafif* and *Turki, Zarb*, but these vary from the Hindustani Tales.³

The Kashmiri music in both the categories of *Sufiana Kalam* and folk music has its unique feature that it is sung in singing group. In the folk music of Kashmiri society the well-liked types are *Chhakkri*, the *Tambur Naghma* and the *Bacha Naghma*. Although among the above mentioned *Chhakkri* was most admired among the Kashmiri people from the earlier period.⁴

So for the *Sufiana Kalam* of Kashmiri music is concerned, it has its resemblance with the Indian and Iranian musical features. It is quite clear that after the establishment of Islam, the Kashmiri music was no doubt largely influenced by Iranian music. The various musical instruments viz, Santur was used in Kashmir had originally its Persian origin and many other *Ragas* or *Muqams* are present in Persian as *Muqam, Duga, Muqam Nawa* and *Singha*, similarly a number Persian words are present in Kashmiri *Talas Sothal*, Neemdar, Chapandoz etc. prior to commencement with the singing of *Mukam* or *Raga* the verses of Shaikh-ul-Alam and of saint Lalleshwari were sung without Tall.⁵

The different musical instruments used in the Kashmiri music, but *Santoor* was most important one, it had one hundred strings over a hollow wooden frame

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¹. *The Valley of Kashmir*, op. cit., p. 256
². *Tarikh-i-Shahjahani*, op. cit., p. 94
⁴. Ibid., p. 338
made of mulberry wood. Another important musical instrument was *Rabab* and it was generally used in the Kashmiri folk music and it was brought to Kashmir from Turkistan. Therefore besides these important musical instruments, *Dhukra, Saz, Sitar, Mizmar, Tambur* and *Ud* were generally utilized for such purposes. 1 *Lute* the instrument of music had its origin from Persia. 2

Among the Sultans the credit goes to Hassan Shah Chak who was the great patron of music. He established a separate department for music under the management of Srivara. It is noticed about him that almost two thousand and two hundred musicians lived at his court. 3

So for music and singing in Kashmir are concerned they totally are indigenous. Generally most of the boys and girls were gifted by this art. We have the evidences about some of the kings who were born as musicians and poets. Zain-ul-Abidin a Sultan of the 15th century was a great lover of music and was kind towards the musicians. He called various musicians and singers from different countries like Arabia, Iran, Samarqand, Khurasan, Kabul and India to Kashmir. However, the *ud* and *lute* were the favourite musical instruments of the rich and singing on the *tumbaknaris* (Kashmiri tables) was the past time of the Kashmiri women generally. 4

Mirza Haidar Dughlat an orthodox *Sunni* of the 16th century had also a keen interest in the music. Jahangir states about him, “There were many skilled people there. They were skilled in music, and their *Lutes, dulcimers, harps, drums* and *futes* were celebrated.” 5

Hasan Shah (1472-84) was a composer as well as a poet. The last Chak ruler Yusuf Shah Chak (1579-86) was very much interested and great lover of song, beauty and nature. He liked both vocal and instrumental music. He married a Kashmiri poetess and singer Habba Khatoon the most genius and a beautiful lady. 6 She was most active lady in singing the Kashmiri songs. Many arts, music, painting etc. got prominence under her patronage. 7

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1. *The History and Culture of Kashmir*, op. cit., p. 338
2. *Zaina Rajatarangini*, (English Tr.), op. cit., p.172
3. *The History and Culture of Kashmir*, op. cit., p. 338
While as the music and singing under the Mughal and Afghan rule is concerned, they did not encouraged it. It may be that they were unaware about Kashmiri language or they had not sufficient time for performing and enjoying all these arts.¹

**Language**

With the establishment of Islam in Kashmir we come across a number of scholars and saints who made crucial contributions in the fields of theology, medicine, Sufism, history etc. Both Hindus and Muslims studied various kinds of learning and contributed large share to knowledge.²

A man is understood by his style of expression or manner generally called by his language. It is the distinguishing and unique mark of his humanism. Socialization as a human being is made possible by his language. It is the mark of his culture. Hence the language of the Kashmiris is a symbol of proud possession like the other features and aspects of their natural environment viz, salubrious climate, fruit and flowers, peaceful atmosphere and picturesque scenery.³ Originally the Kashmiri language is a branch of Dardic family of languages which includes Shina and Kohistani groups. The earliest specimen of spoken Kashmiri we come across in the *Rajatartangini* of Kalhana.⁴

In the 15th century during the Muslim rule we found the *Vayas* (sayings) of Lal Ded (Laleshwari) and Shaikh Nooru-ud-din as the existing specimens of the Kashmiri language. The sayings of Lal Ded are a terminology of Kashmiri, Sanskrit, Persian and Pahari words and phrases. Hence Shaikh Nooru-ud-din Wali besides a Rishi was also a poet. Both the Lal Ded and Shaikh Nooru-ud-din played crucial role in the Kashmiri culture by performing their sayings in the poetry form.⁵

According to Vigne, who mentions that in 1835 that in a group of one hundred spoken Kashmiri words, 25 were Sanskrit, 40 Persian, 15 Hindustani, 10 Arabic and 10 Tibetan. It indicates the various phases of cultural developments through which

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1. Ibid., pp. 62-63
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
Kashmir had passed in a period of 650 years from the time of Kalhana to that of Vigne.¹

**Houses:**

Hence in Kashmir during the medieval period, people mostly used timber for the construction purposes, because of its easy availability and cheapness it also protects the building from the damage in case of earthquakes. Mostly the buildings were erected up to fourth story in height.²

In *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*, Mirza Haidar Dughlat states about Zainagir, Srinagar “In the town there are many lofty buildings constructed of fresh-cut pine. Most of these are at least five stories high, each story contains apartments, halls, galleries, and towers. The beauty of their exterior defies description, and all who behold them for the first time bite the fingers of astonishment with the teeth of admiration.”³

So for the construction material is concerned besides the wood and stone, bricks were also used in small quantity.⁴ Jahangir in his Memoires has also complimented on the beauty of Kashmir added by the houses in the spring season.⁵

However the division of the stories arranged in such a way that the ground floor was used for the purpose of keeping the cattle, the second and third story was kept for their own settlement and the last loft formed by the roof was used as a store hall for the household goods.⁶

The roofs of house were constructing in a sloping shape, hence simply small planks fastened together with cords and covered with the sheets of birch-bark, so that it becomes water proof. Hence on these sheets of birch-bark some earthen layer was spread in order to grow white and violet lilies and tulips.⁷

Among some of these houses of the rich there were bath rooms attached to the kitchen because a big earthen pot called in Kashmir “*Mutt*” was fixed in the baths in

1. Ibid., pp. 63-64. It also shows that there in Kashmir its language has been much impressed by the composite culture.
2. Ibid., p. 65
4. Ibid., p. 65
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid., pp. 65-66
such a way that the water in it can easily be heated from the kitchen’s hearth. It was beneficial in the winter season when there one needs hot water.¹ On the banks of river Jhelum around the Dal Lake mainly the houses were built.² During the Mughal period the Kashmiris also had luxury house-boats and Shikaras (light boats).³

Social rites:

Matrimonial system:

In Kashmir in the medieval period, Hindus and Muslims favoured the early and arranged marriages.⁴ The Kashmiri Pandits also performed a sort of nikka (marriage contract) ceremony before the marriage performance. Hence the Hindus name this contract as Lagana Chirika.⁵ After the death of a Muslim on the fourth day his relatives perform Chahrum, but in the other parts of India it is observed as Siyum that is the third day ceremony after the death and on the 40th day Chehallum.⁶

So for the very dangerous evil in the Hindu society, Sati is concerned, it was in vogue up to 14th century, in Kashmir. But Sultan Sikandar (1389-1413) on the advice of a remarkable Sufi Mir Muhammad Hamadani banned on Sati as is already mentioned. Ali Shah (413-20) in the 15th century continued the ban on this evil practice but Zain-ul-Abidin revived it to some extent. Hence during the Mughal and Pathan rule we did not find any case of Sati in the Valley but Aurangzeb in his visit and return from Kashmir in 1663 founded some cases in the lower hill states instead of prohibition.⁷

At the end of the 16th century A.D in Kashmir the four great Sufi orders viz, Suhrawardi, Kubravi, Naqashbandi and Qadiri were introduced. But Naqashbandi and Qadiri had little impression on the Kashmiris. The Rishi order as mentioned earlier was introduced in the 15th century, laid deep influence on the minds of the people, in compare to the active participation of the Suhrawardi and Kubravi Sufis in state

¹. Ibid., p. 66
³. George Forster, A Journey from Bengal to England through the Northern Part of India, Kashmir, Afghanistan and Persia, and into Russia, by the Caspian Sea 1782-84, Vol. II, New Delhi, 1997, p. 9
⁴. Islamic Heritage of Kashmir, Vol. 2, op. cit., p. 65
⁵. Ibid., p. 66
⁶. Ibid., p. 67
⁷. Ibid.
politics, religion and social developments they were unable to make roads amongst people. Further more on the other hand thus Rishis preferred to live in seclusion and avoided the company of the worldly people.\footnote{1}

The early Suhrwardi and Qubravi Sufis attention towards the elite class based on their purpose that they could change the outlook of their rulers.\footnote{2} Therefore, these Suhrwardi and Kubravi Sufis of Kashmir besides the religious positions like, \textit{Qazi} and \textit{Shaikh-ul-Islam}, few of them even held the high posts in administration viz, \textit{wazir} and also performed the services of ambassadors, visited the royal court and nobles and even made matrimonial relations with them.\footnote{3}

The Sufis influence on the politics of Kashmir got strengthened during the rule of Sikandar. He very much regarded and respected to the saints and divines.\footnote{4} Jonaraja writes, “It was perhaps owing to the sins of the subjects that the king [Skindar] had a fondness for the Yavanas”.\footnote{5} Mir Muhammad Hamadani a Sufi Saint, had such an influence on the state policy during the Sultan Sikandar that if Muhammad Hamadan’s notice come about anybody who would be against his policy, he was arrested.\footnote{6}

“The Brahman as the supporters of the world,” writes Jonaraja, “had taken refuge of Patnakara in order to preserve their part and this little Brahmana, became the favourite of Suha Bhatta. But Malanoddina [Muhammad Hamdani], the great guru of the \textit{Yavanas}, feared that Ratnakara would rise in rebellion and caused him to be arrested”.\footnote{7}

The Sufis when came from Central Asia and Iran, they not only preached in theoretically but they tried to introduce Islamic Culture in Kashmir, as Jonaraja is of the opinion that during the reign of Sultan Sikandar even the Hindus also adopted the Muslim dress.\footnote{8}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item[1.] \textit{Sufism in Kashmir (Fourteenth to the Sixteenth Century)}, op. cit., p. 249
\item[2.] Ibid., pp. 249-50
\item[3.] Ibid., p. 250
\item[4.] Ibid., p. 251
\item[6.] \textit{Sufism in Kashmir (Fourteenth to the Sixteenth Century)}, op. cit., p. 251
\item[7.] \textit{Rajatarangni}, (English tr.), J.C. Dutt, \textit{Kings of Kashmir}, op. cit., pp. 67-68
\item[8.] Ibid., p. 67
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
After the death of Zain-ul-Abidin, who was a liberal ruler and during the reign of Sultan Haidar Shah (1470-72), Srivara writes, that the Non-Muslims, “at the instigation of the mlechchas [Muslims]” were persecuted. These Muslim would not be the common Muslims who had no influence on the court but these must have been the Ulama and the Sufis who had much influence on the elite class.¹

After the death of Hasan Shah (1472-84) as is earlier mentioned, a group of Sayyids called Baihaqi Sayyids dominated the State politics in Kashmir for many years with the result in 1579 they even seized the throne of Kashmir and fully indulged in the state politics.²

The Sufis influence on the administration was not because of their efforts to join the court of the ruler rather it was the need in the defeats of princes and nobles as on many occasions they came to the Sufis and asked for their blessing and if these pretenders acquired power, then they themselves thought it necessary to follow the whims of such Sufis.³

So far as the conversion in Kashmir is concerned, it cannot be ignored that its credit goes to Sufis. They penetrated in Kashmir for the main purpose of preaching and teaching Islam to its inhabitants.⁴

Prof. Mohammad Ishaq Khan is of the opinion that, in the Valley of Kashmir there was no any pressure-group launched for the Islamized of Kashmir. But on the other hand Islam evolved as a medium of social protest against the Brahmanic culture. He states that as compared to the foreigner Sufis from Iran and Central Asia the local saints viz, Lal Ded and Shaikh Nooru-ud-din Wali more influenced and shaped the Islamic culture in Kashmir. The credit goes to them as to be the cultural mediators of Islam in Kashmir essentially in Hindu-Buddhist environment.⁵

According to Mohammad Ishaq Khan little doubt, then the impact of euologization of Lal Ded as an avantara of Kashmiris must have contributed a great deal to the process of Islamic acculturation in the Valley during 15th-18th centuries, so much so that Baba Dawud Khaki extols her to the skies in the following verses:⁶

1. Ibid., p. 196
3. Ibid., ff. 80b-81a
4. Sufism in Kashmir (Fourteenth to the Sixteenth Century), op. cit., p. 253
6. Ibid., p. 26
“Passion for God set fire to all she had,
And from her heart rose clouds of smoke;
Having had a draught of ahd-e-alast,
Intoxicated and drunk with joy was she,
One of this God-intoxicating drunk,
Shatters reason into bits,
A little drowsiness from it is header than
Intoxication from hundred jars of wine.”

The Sufi saints of Kashmir were also influenced by the contemplation and
devotion practices by the Hindus, and took part in healthy cultural symbiosis. The
Muslims of Kashmir even during the 16th to 18th century sing Vakhs of Lal Ded, the
most liberal Sufia poetess, Kashmiri women of the 14th century. This combination of
cultures showed by the poetry of such saint’s represents a symbol of composite
culture in Kashmir.¹

Ancient Kashmiri literature is found in large quantity mostly in verse outline.
In the first stage i.e., till about 1555 we have Sri Kantha’s Mahaany Prakash, Lal
Ded’s and Shaikh Nooru-ud-din Wali’s Waakh and Banasura Katha. This literature
was composed up to 1555. During the stage 1555 to 1752 (second period) Persian was
confidently established as the official language as well as the language of the
literature. The distinguished writers of this period were Mirza Kamal-ud-Din Kamil
and Khwaja Habibullah Noushari. During the third stage (1752-1923), poetry took
new forms, romance stories, legends of love and adventures, so with the passage of
stages in the Muslim period of medieval Kashmir history, there varied a tremendous
change in the language and literature.²

The changes in the social and cultural daily life of the people of Kashmir
about which Jonaraja says, “as the wind destroys the trees, and the locusts the Shali
(paddy) crop, so did the Yavanas destroy the usages of Kashmira”³ So the impact of
Central Asian and Persian culture continuously remained increasing in the Kashmiri
society.

1. Kashmir And It’s People Studies in the evolution of Kashmiri Society, Culture and Heritage of
2. The Literary Heritage of Kashmir, op. cit., pp. 11-12.
In Kashmir during the Muslim rule though Persian took the place of Sanskrit as an official language, yet Sanskrit was also used side by side. As the Wasiyyat Nama (Khalafat Nama), the succession deed of Shaikh Hamza Makhdumi a Kashmiri Sufi dated 1576 is also written in both Sanskrit as well as in Persian on Brich-bark sheet of 22 X 14 inches. It is preserved in the Museum at Srinagar; it is the earliest available document of such kind.¹

So far as the calligraphy in Kashmir is concerned the Kashmiri Sultans were also took interest in it other than painting and sculpture and architecture. Though calligraphy had eight different styles but in Kashmir only two usually famous i.e., nasakh and nastaliq. As the former consisted of one-third straight lines and the later was composed entirely of curved lines. However some of the mosques and tombs built during the Sultanate still bear Persian and Arabic inscriptions in these two well-designed styles. It shows that art of calligraphy was prevalent in the Medieval Kashmir.²

Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin invited many calligraphists from Persia and Turkistan. His purpose of inviting them was not only to decorate the buildings but they also worked artistically in producing many written manuscripts. Muhammad Husain was a renowned calligraphist of Chak period. The Mughal emperor Akbar gave him the title of Zarin Kalam (Pen of Gold). Jahangir complimented him as “the chief of the elegant writers of the day” and gifted him with an elephant. Another notable calligraphist of the Chak period in Kashmir was Ali Chaman Kashmiri.³ Besides the Muslim Saints, there were a large number of Pir, Faqirs and Darwishes in Kashmir.⁴

Kashmiris have different features of their Culture and Society with their geographical spots, buildings and their daily life articles of use. Few of the monuments and picnic spots charmingly located are the Mughal Gardens, Phalgam, Gulmarg, besides these the House boats and Saffron were the source of attraction to the outsiders of the Valley. The land of Pampur about 12 kilometers south of Srinagar is even toady famous for suitable for the cultivation of Saffron. Another more important article of their daily use in the winter season was Kangri. It is generally

¹. The History and Culture of Kashmir, op. cit., p. 330
². Ibid., p. 341
³. Ibid.
⁴. The Literary Heritage of Kashmir, op. cit., p. 14
used by the common people. It is a portable fire pot protects the person from the extreme coldness of winter.¹

The Kashmiri culture has a composite character, being a constituent of Hindu, Muslim and Buddhist basics.²

During the Mughal governor Fazal Khan (1698-1701) who was forward-thinking and took himself interest in the flood safety actions. His phase is recognized for an essential event, that in 1699 A.D., Khwaja Nuru-ud-Din Ishbari, a rich businessman, brought to Srinagar the ‘Mui Mubarak’ (the sacred hair of the Holy Prophet S.A.W.) from Bijapur (Deccan) South India.³

During the long period of thirty years of Mughal emperor Muhammad Shah’s reign the political situation of Kashmir was very critical as it was the period of downfall for the Mughal rule. It was during this period Kashmir was invaded by many tribes like that of Bombas of Muzaffarabad (presently in Pakistan occupied Kashmir), Khokhas and Gujjars from Poonch and Hazara. Another phase was of Afrasiab khan the Mughal governor of Kashmir in 1748-51, was very cruel for the Kashmiri masses. By the year 1751 A.D the office of Subah of Kashmir appears to have become hereditary and practically independent of Delhi as many of the other states were also got their independence from the central powers of Mughal Empire. But it disturbed further as Kashmir fell under the hands of the corrupt officials and with the continuity of famines, that all ruined its economy. Although many Kashmiris left their home lands to settle outside Kashmir. With the result for the purpose of fairness in the government administration, two leading persons of Kashmir, Mir Muquim Kanth and Zahir Deddamari approached to Ahmad Shah Abdali and requested him to annex Kashmir as Punjab was already annexed by him. But it was again one of the great blunders of Kashmiris. Ahmad Shah Abdali easily conquered Kashmir and Mughal rule was put to an end. However the Afghans rule over Kashmir is considered one of the cruel rules in the Kashmir history. This brutal rule was also named as Shan-i-Durani (the Pathan rule).⁴

The Pathans ruled Kashmir for about 67 years. It was Ahmad Shah Abdali who conquered Kashmir in 1753. The Pathans were actually a nomadic tribe divided

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¹ Ibid., pp. 14-15  
² Ibid., p. 15  
³ Story of Kashmir, op. cit., p. 69  
⁴ Ibid., p. 70
in many groups. And finally they settled in the mountain terrain lying between the river Indus on the east and Kabul on the west. After the reign of Sher Shah Suri, the Afghans got some political importance as Ahmad Shah’s successful conquests made the Pathans the autonomous rulers of Afghanistan and the adjoining territories, so in such territories Kashmir become also victim of this rule.¹

The Mughals continued from Akbar to Aurungzeb to maintain peace and prosperity in the Valley. With such purpose they promoted art in the Valley. The great wall around Hari Parbat (Takht-i-Suliamam) and the Nagur-Nagar were built by the emperor Akbar at Srinagar. Jahangir and Shah Jahan besides providing work to the labourers in building roads and sarais also laid the famous Mughal gardens. As Akbar and Jahangir with frequent visits to Kashmir made it prosperous but during the later Mughal governors of Kashmir, it suffered from not only cruel rulers but by natural calamities, earthquakes, floods, and famines. All these factors affected the outlook of lives of the Kashmiris. But the Afghan and Sikh rule did not affect to the cultural aspects of the Kashmiris for the betterment of the people.²

During the Mughal rule there was Islamic influence on the conditions of the Kashmiri people. As in the reign of Shah Jahan even the ancient name of Anantnag was changed into Islamabad. Even today people remember it with the said Muslim name.³

The Pathan rule was more tyrannical for Kashmir. Mir Hazar Khan in 1793 was the cruelest of the Pathan rulers. He imposed jazia on the Non-Muslims but besides such cruel rulers there were some God-fearing Pathan rulers also, who employed many Kashmiri Pandits as Peshkars, Sahihkars, and Dewans.⁴

So far as the social life in Kashmir is concerned, both Hindus and Muslims, in urban and rural areas preferred to spend their lives at home, and preferred enjoying domestic life with wife and family. They consider it as a hub of their life. It is the pivot round which the entire social system moves.⁵

Literature:

1. Ibid., pp. 70-71
2. Ibid., p. 267
4. Ibid., p. 237
5. Ibid., p. 238
During the Muslim rule in Kashmir the various Sanskrit works as made of Jagdhar Bhatta’s Stuti Kusumanjali (1350), Sri Kanthan’s Balbodhini (1475), Vallabh Deva’s Vignana Bhairvi (1550) and Shivopadh Yay’s Vignana Bhairvi (1750). The Zain-ul-Abidin a great ruler of Kashmir got many books translated from Sanskrit and Arabic into Persian and Kashmiri languages. He even built a library for books. Though there are a number of books written in Persian still today are available. Some prominent authors of the period are, Shaikh Yaqub Sarfi (1521-94), Baba Dawud Khaki, Khwaja Habibullah Nawshari, Mirza Abdmal-ud-Din Kamil, Mullah Muhammad Mahsin Fani, Khwaja Abdul Karim, Baba Daud Muskani, Mullah Zihni, Mirza Kamil produced the excellent and remarkable work, Bahar-ul-urfani, compiled in 4 volumes and consisted 80,000 verses. This work was inspired by the philosophical thoughts popularized by Maulana Rumi.¹

Actually during the Muslim rule people showed such a great interest in Persian leaning, as the Persian language now had became the official language of Kashmir. There was so much of popularity of Persian language that Kashmir got the title of Iran-i-Sagir (little Iran).²

Mullah Muhammad Mohsin Fani personified the spirit of Kashmiri culture in Persian literature. He wrote Dabistan-i-Mazahib. He was a distinguished thinker of the Muslim period and was born in 1615 A.D. He belonged to such a family whose concern was with learned and cultured. He travelled to many places and met the various philosophers and religious leaders of the time. He prepared Dabistan in 1645 critically examining the mythologies and philosophies of all religions on unbiased and objective manner.³

As the society in Kashmir under Mughals is concerned, we find the whole scenario of the social, economic, political and cultural history of Kashmir drastically changed.⁴ Persian language which had been already prevalent with the establishment of Muslim rule in Kashmir but after the Mughal conquest of it, Sanskrit and Shadra script was almost withdrawn completely. Abdul Majid mentions, “New Sufi orders like Naqashbandi, Chishti and Suhrawardi were introduced. The indigenous Rishi

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¹ Society, Economy and Culture of Kashmir, Kashmir Through the Ages-3, (ed.), Suresh K. Sharma and Usha Sharma, New Delhi, 1999, p. 44
² Ibid., p. 44
³ Ibid.
⁴ Kashmir under the Mughals 1586-1752, op. cit., p. 133
(mystic) order and Kubravi order disintegrated along with Nur Bakshia order which was gaining ground during the Chak rule and ultimately diluted to the extent that it was rather difficult to differentiate the Shiism and Nurbakshiyah ideology.¹

During the Mughal rule, especially in 16th - 17th centuries, the Kashmiri merchants, soldiers, poets, artisans and scholars not only worked in Kashmir but they also moved outside of Kashmir. They travelled to the entire India, thus in this way the Indian way of life also influenced the Kashmir society.²

On the other hand many learned people also penetrated during this period, Iranis, Turanis, Afghans and even people from Hindustan came to Kashmir and also settled in Kashmir.³ It is no doubt that it gave a new shape to Kashmiri society.

The local chief of the adjacent hilly areas like little and Greater Tibet, Poonch also came under the submission, with result the people mostly the merchants, now without any restriction could move to these centers from one part to another. So these urban centers became central points of all socio-cultural activities. Srinagar being a capital city of Kashmir Subah was a hub of all social activities.⁴

As the administration and the ruling of the Mughal emperors consolidated their political sway over Kashmir and in 1620 A.D the Raja of Kishtwar was brought to knees by Jahangir's armies. As among the Hindu reyots of Kashmir once they complained against the Governor of Kashmir (Qulich) Kulbah Khan (1606-1609 A.D) to the Mughal emperor Jahangir with the result Jahangir immediately taken action against him by warning him in the following Persian words⁵:-

“Hakumat Panacha, Dadkhawahani tu bisyar,
Shukrguzarani tu kam, abi sabah bar labi
Tashnagam bire warnah as hukumatbarkhez.”

“O protector of administration; thy complaints are many, thy thanks givers are few, pour cold water on the lips of the thirsty, or else get away from the administration.”

When Jahangir saw that the Governor did not noticed his warning than he dismissed the Governor.

¹.  Ibid.
³.  Khawrikus-i-Salikin, op. cit., ff. 70b-70ab
⁴.  Kashmir under the Mughals 1586-1752, op. cit., p. 133
⁵.  Kashmir the History of Himalayan Valley, op. cit., p. 214
Ahmad Beg Khan 1615-1618 another Mughal governor of Kashmir is considered by some people as the evil star for Kashmir. However, over all the Mughals were generally liberal Muslims and, regarded and respected all the faiths. Shah Jahan too expanded his rule from Balkh to Himalaya and also visited Kashmir several times.\(^1\)

In 1642 A.D the famous Ali Mardan Khan built many sarais on the route of Pir Panchal. During this period an orthodox Khwaja Mam, was leading the Muslims who set fire to the house of the Mahadev. The news of this clash between Muslims and the Brahmans reached to the emperor Shah Jahan, he took action against the offenders.\(^2\)

Fazal Khan 1698-1701 A.D who was not only respectin g the scholars and holy men but he also built many mosques, schools, pavilions, sarais, embankments and gardens etc.. He was the first to whom the credit goes for introducing Kashmiris to the emperor’s service.\(^3\) Fazal Khan made his attention towards the various cesses and remitted many taxes, like *hasl-i-ghalak* (tax on earthen jars), *nimak* (salt duty) and *damdari* (tax on bird catcher). However in Kashmir there started a civil war among the Shias and Sunnies during the viceroyalty of Ibrahim Khan (1701-1706) due to this incident in the valley, Aurangzeb removed Ibrahim Khan from viceroyalty and ordered for the release of the Sunni prisoners.\(^4\)

However the period from Aurangzeb’s death onwards i.e., Later Mughals particularly from his successor’s up to 1753 A.D is considered as the worst period in Kashmir. In 1720 A.D. Mullah Abdul Nabi Alias Mullah Khan was the *Shaikh-ul-Islam* of Kashmir, who was succeeded by his son Mullah Sharaf-ud-Din as the *Shaikh-ul-Islam*. During this period there were clashes between Hindus and Muslims and also *Shia* and Sunni conflicts took place. Mullah Sharaf-ud-Din was put to death by the fifth Governor Adul Samad who came to Kashmir in 1722 A.D from Lahore. He executed fifty rebels living between the areas of Naid Kadal to Khwaja Yarbal. He favoured the Hindus and all restrictions placed on the Hindus were removed. Poet sang about him\(^5\):-

\begin{quote}
*Haka an Samad Phutrum zin,*
\end{quote}

\(^{1}\) Ibid.
\(^{2}\) Ibid., pp. 214-15
\(^{3}\) Ibid., p. 216
\(^{4}\) Ibid., p. 217
\(^{5}\) Ibid., p. 218
“Na rud Kuni Sharaf na rud kuni Din.”

“Samad (horse) came swiftly; there remained neither Sharaf (cardinalship) nor Din (bigotry) anywhere.”

It is claimed that about 770 gardens were laid by the Mughals in Kashmir that further beautified Kashmir, as it was already a land of attractions for the Mughal feelings.¹

Abu’l-Fazl states about the Kashmiris that Kashmir has its own dialect, language and having different culture. Sanskrit is the language they used in writing books. They write chiefly on Tuz which is the bark of a tree. There is a majority of narrow minded conservatives whom he calls the people of blind traditions i.e., the Sunnis. And there were some Imamies and Nur Bakshis but they always were found in tussle with each other. They were mostly from Persia and Turkistan. Abu’l-Fazl again mentions that, “Mirza Haidar Dughlat in his book Kitab-Rashidi says that formerly all the inhabitants of Kashmir were of the Hanafi sect. In the time of the Fateh Shah, a man named Shams who came from Iraq and declared himself, to be a follower of Mir Muhammad Nur Bakash. He introduced a new form of religion which he called Nur Bakshi, which accords neither with the Sunni or Shia belief. And the followers of this sect, like heretics, consider their duty to revile and abuse the three caliphs and Ayesha, but unlike the Shias, they regard Amir Sayyid Muhammad Nur Baksh as the Mahdi and Apostle of his time, and they do not believe as the Shias do in saints and holy persons but consider them to be Sunnis.”²

¹ Ibid., p. 219