CHAPTER – III

PILGRIMAGE TOURISM
POTENTIAL OF KASHMIR
Valley of Kashmir is full of tourism resources of different types, spread throughout its different districts. Praised from time to time by historians, travelers, rulers, peers, saints, visitors and natural lovers because of its unique resource base and geographical position. “Paradise on Earth”, “Jannat-e-Benazir”, “Peer Veer”, and Switzerland of India, are some of the many compliments which have been bestowed on Kashmir. A unique setup of mountains, meadows, lakes, rivers, fountains, springs, forests, valleys, gardens, looks as if designer has taken its time to keep everything with great caution and attention at its allotted space, it seems as if bride has been decorated with the precious jewelry and diamonds and put in a colorful dress. Then one more thing has been added to its beauty in the form of cool and calm environs. This beautiful bride of natural beauty was then given its natural setting, in the form of pleasing climate, to preserve its beauty. The Valley gives different charm and look in different seasons and hence varied appeal and attraction to tourists without any human intervention.

Our natural beauty, rich climatic diversity, lush green forests, flower meadows, highland pastures, sky kissing and snow-clad mountains, murmuring brooks, freshwater streams, mesmerizing valleys and waterfalls, grand rivers and above all ancient shrines, mosques, temples, monasteries, gurdwaras and beautiful gardens are attracting tourists of all tastes. The Valley has world famous tourist spots of Gulmarg, Pahalgam, Sonmarg, Verinag, Dal Lake, etc. The names of these tourist spots itself signifies everything. Besides, the Valley has a strong base of pilgrimage tourism which has yet not been efficiently highlighted.

Kashmir is the land of Saints and Sufis bestowed with religious wealth in the form of numerous shrines and places of worship enjoying reverence and allegiance of people professing different faiths. There are numerous sepulchers of saints which have enchanting environs, while visiting these shrines, one feels in close proximity of the Almighty. Some of the shrines have historical importance in addition to religious significance attached to them. These shrines
belong to Hindus, Muslims Sikhs, Buddhists, and other faiths. Hence, reasonably highlighting this vast Pilgrimage Tourism potential will add more colors and attraction to the garland of tourism attractions of the Valley.

3.1 PILGRIMAGE TOURISM OF KASHMIR VALLEY

The State of Jammu and Kashmir being a diverse State in terms of its natural resources, with each region distinct from one another in every feature. While talking about the pilgrimage potential, every region, Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh has its own pilgrimage tourism potential. In the "City of Temples", Jammu, "Raghunath Temple" is the oldest and blessed one. Ladakh, "The Land of Lamas," is a great seat of Buddhism. Ladakh played a vital role in the propagation and spread of Buddhism in India, China, Japan and other neighboring countries. It is also sometime called as "Land of Monasteries". Some very famous, old and sacred monasteries are found over here. People from different corners of world swarm this place to perform religious rituals. Valley of Kashmir, called as "Peer Veer" or "Resh Veer" is not reserved to any particular religion, as it being a multi-religious pilgrimage destination of the State.

This "Paradise on Earth" has had a kind appeal towards all the great religious personalities, starting from Hindu dominant period through Buddhist era to the rule of Sufi’s, it has attracted all towards it without any distinction on the basis of any cast, creed or religion. Almost all great religious personalities of different religions have found a unique call in the environs of the Valley. They have found all the ingredients to satisfy their spiritual thirst and make a straight call on almighty without any disturbance here. It is not that they have remained confined to any particular area of the Valley. Every nook and corner of the Valley has proved an ideal destination for performing their spiritual duties. This is the reason why all the districts of the Valley are thriving in different pilgrimage spots.
Fine structures have been built at their burial sites and resting places and in some cases, memorial, as a mark of respect, which vary from time to time. For example, in the era of Hindu rulers, like, Gopaditya, Jonaraja, etc, beautiful temples have been built. In the era of Buddhist rule, like, Ashoka, Kaniska, etc, various viharas, monasteries and stupas were built. In Mughal period, various mosques, shrines, etc, are the examples of their architectural excellence. These traditional mosques, shrines and Khanqahs are the richest representations of the cultural heritage of Kashmir. This built heritage has evolved over a period of centuries through cross-cultural exchanges between Kashmir, Iran and other Islamic cities of Central Asia. In Sikh era, fine Gurdwaras have been built at the places were the Sikh Gurus have performed some religious duties. So, in order to adequately highlight the potential of pilgrimage tourism of Kashmir, a sample specimen of this vast treasure has been given in this chapter. These spots are presented here in chronological order but due to some variation in beliefs and historical accounts, there may be some variation in their presentation. Further, some caves and springs are also given in this chapter about which exact date of exploration is not known. However, an utmost care has been taken in their presentation. In order to ease the passage of pilgrim to a pilgrimage spot their geographical position and location has been given the first place in writing. And in order to introduce these spots to pilgrims their history, architecture and secular character has been briefly discussed. Some of the Pilgrimage spots of the Valley presented here in the chronological order of their creation are:

3.2 AMARNATHJI CAVE SHRINE

The great Himalaya is the abode of Lord Shiva. Most sanctified tirtha of Kashmiri Pandits and that of Indian Hindus is Amarnath. This shrine is in a cave called Amarnath Cave. Besides, there is a Chotta Amarnath or Mini-Amarnath at Thajwara Bijbehara, the religious sanctity of this cave temple is
similar to the Amarnath\(^1\). The Buddha Amarnath of Poonch (Jammu), a similar Shivling (like Amarnath) in cave at Domel on the Ramn Nalah (stream) in Tilail (Baramulla) are other Amarnaths of the state. In addition to them, there is a belief that there is an ice Shivling in Zanskar (Ladakh) too\(^2\).

The cave shrine of Shri Amarnathji is situated at a considerable altitude 75\(^0\)33’ and 34\(^0\)13’ longitude, at height of 3,962 metre or 12,995 feet above the sea level\(^3\). Holy Cave is located at a distance of 48 kms from Pahalgam. The 48 km trek from Pahalgam to Amarnath cave is full of adventure, beautiful landscapes and pilgrimage sites.

The origin of the pilgrimage is described in a Sanskrit book Bringesha Samhita\(^4\). Kalhana mentions the tirtha as the “Amburnath”. There is a reference to it in Kalhana’s Rajtaragini, while discussing King Nara, who reigned from 1048 - 1008 B.C\(^5\). The God is worshipped in a linga shaped ice block. Legend has it that Lord Shiva recounted to Goddess Parwati the secret of creation in a cave in Amarnath\(^6\). Unknown to them a pair of mating doves eavesdropped on this conversation and having learned the secret are reborn again and again, and have made the cave their eternal abode\(^7\). Many pilgrims report seeing the doves pair when they trek the arduous route to pay obeisance before the ice lingum.

The pilgrimage (yatra) to this holy cave started in an organized manner around 1850 during the reign of the Dogra Maharaja Gulab Singh\(^8\). This yatra is perhaps thousands of years old. However, as far as recorded history is concerned this ice lingam (a Shivait fertility symbol) was discovered by Adam Malik, a Muslim shepherd from Batakot, in the 17\(^{th}\) on 18\(^{th}\) century A.D\(^9\). In

\(^1\) Kashmir Times, newspaper (English), 25/10/2007, Jammu
\(^5\) Fazili, Manzoor, op cit
\(^7\) Pamphlet of Shri Amarnath Shrine Board
\(^8\) Deewan, Perwaz, op cit, pg 427
\(^9\) ibid
return, the Maharaja decreed that a representative of the Malik family would be present at the cave shrine along with the Mahant (priest) and the pandits of Bhawan and Ganeshpora. Before Gulab Singh, his Sikh mantor, Maharaja Ranjit Singh of Lahore (Punjab) would patronize the yatra (circa 1817). Ranjit Singh paid Rs. 2 to every religious person who agreed to perform the pilgrimage in those days\(^\text{10}\). The Holy Mace (*Chhari Mubarakh*) would be stored in Amritsar, which is close to Lahore. The procession of the holy cave would start from Amritsar. The Dogras later shifted the resting place of the Holy Chhari Mubarak to the Dashanami Akhara of Srinagar\(^\text{11}\) (on Maulana Azad road near Budshah Bridge).

### Fig. 3.1

**ROUTE CHART**

**SHRI AMARNATH JI YATRA**

- **PAHALGAM**
  - Sonamarg
  - Mahagunas Pass
  - Warbal
  - Pissu Top
  - Chandanwari
- **Baltal**
  - Sangam
  - Rabital
  - 3 km
  - Jyoti
  - 2 km
  - Panjtarni
  - 6 km
  - Nagatnag
  - Pissu Top
  - 1 km
  - 3 km
  - Senthag
  - 4 km
  - 6 km
- **SONAMARG**
  - 11 km
  - 11 km

**Source**: Promotional Pamphlet of Jammu & Kashmir Tourism Department

In order to perform the pilgrimage to the cave of Lord Shiva. There are two routes to reach the Cave shrine of Shri Amarnathji, known usually as **Pahalgam route** and **Baltal route**. On the Pahalgam route, trek from Chandanwari to Amarnth Cave is covered in two days, with night halts at

\(^\text{10}\) ibid

\(^\text{11}\) Deewan, Perwaz, op cit, pg 427-428
Sheshnag (Wawjan) and Panjtarni. The distance from Pahalgam to Chandanwari (16 kms) now covered by vehicular transport, and the tail runs along the Lidder river. Pilgrims camp at Pahalgam or Baltal on the first night out. The first day’s trek of 12 km’s from Chandanwari is through spectacular, primeval countryside, and the main centre of attraction is Sheshnag, a mountain which derives its name from its seven peaks, resembling the heads of a mythical snake. The journey to Sheshnag follows steep in lines up the right bank of a cascading stream and wild scenery untouched by civilization. The second night camp at Wawjan overlooks the deep blue waters of Sheshnag Lake, and glaciers beyond it. There are legends of love and revenge too associated with Sheshnag, and at the camp these are recounted by campfires, to the stillness of pine scented, Himalayan night. The second day’s 12 km trek steadily gains height, winding up across Mahagunas pass at 4600 mts and then descending to the meadow - lands of Panjtarni, the last camp enroute to the Holy Cave. From Panjtarni, Amarnathji cave is only 6 kms. But an early morning’s start is recommended for there is a long queue awaiting entry to the cave. Entrance to the cave is not regulated, darshan is a hasty affair for there are many others waiting outside to pay homage before the awesome Shiva Linga. The devotees sing bhajans, chant incantations, and priests perform arti and puja, invoking the blessings of Shiva, the divine, the pure, and the absolute. For those who journey with faith, it is a rewarding experience, this simple visitation to a cave shrine, the home of the Himalayan medicant who is both destroyer and healer, the greatest of the Hindus Gods. The same day, following darshan, devotees can return to Panjtarni in time for lunch, and continue to Sheshnag to spend the third night out. They can also spend the night at Panjtarni itself, returning to Chandanwari/Pahalgam the next day. Pilgrims can also return via second route, the Baltal route to Srinagar. Distance between the important points of Amarnath Yatra as well as altitude of main stoppages on the route is given in table 3.1.

12 Chaitkara, M.G. op cit, pg 127-136
Table 3.1
DISTANCE AND ALTITUDE OF SOME MAIN STOPPAGES
ENROUTE THE CAVE SHRINE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DISTANCES</th>
<th>ALTITUDES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Chandanwari - Sheshnag = 12 kms</td>
<td>1. Chandanwari = 2895 mts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Sheshnag – Panjtarni = 12 kms</td>
<td>2. Pissu Top = 3377 mts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Panjtarni – Cave = 6 kms</td>
<td>3. Sheshnag = 3352 mts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Baltal – Cave = 14 kms</td>
<td>4. Poshpathri = 4114 mts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Mahagunas Top</td>
<td>5. Mahagunas Top = 4276 mts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Panjtarni</td>
<td>6. Panjtarni = 3657 mts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Holy Cave</td>
<td>7. Holy Cave = 3952 mts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: SASB Pamphlet

The second route from Baltal to Holy Cave is very steepy, mostly uphill, seven to nine hours journey. The return takes only a little less. If a person leaves Baltal at four in the morning, allowing for an hour or two at the Holy Cave of Shri Amarnathji, he can be back at Baltal by ten or eleven that night. The slope can be slippery on the way back it is advisable to take the picturesque Pahalgam route to the Holy Cave and the shorter Baltal route for the return journey. Hence enjoy time and nature conveniently.

Pilgrimage to the holy cave is considered auspicious in the month preceding the Sawan Puramashi, better known as Raksha Bandhan13. This is the

---
13 Chatterji, J.C., “Kashmir Shaivism”, Indological Book Corporation, Patna-1914, pg 87
first full moon night of August, late July. The route to the Holy Cave is buried under snow at least nine months a year. So, even theoretically the journey cannot be done except in the remaining two three months. Time period of pilgrimage has been increased to two months from the earlier tradition of one month.

3.3 SHANKARACHARYA TEMPLE

Commanding a panoramic view of Srinagar, the temple is located at 1100 feet above surface level of the main city on the Shankaracharya hill, also known as ‘Takht-e-Suleiman’.

The ancient monument is widely known as Shankaracharya temple. It was constructed in 5th century B.C. by the Pandavas and completed by Maharaja Gopaditya. The installation of the Shiv Linga of Lord Shiv Shankar in the temple was done by Maharaja Pratab Singh. Formerly, there was a renowned pilgrim centre by the name of Jayestheswara at this place. This mountain Gopadari got its very name after the King Gopaditya. According to local tradition, the temple was built in the 3rd century B.C. by Ashok’s son Jaluka in 220 B.C. At dawn, the orange rays of the rising sun salute the Shiv Linga, the symbol of the divine Lord Shankar at this temple. It is said, when the temple was built, the land below this mountain was submerged in water. The stone for construction was brought in rafts from far away mountains. The temple is shaped in the form of Shiv Linga. A mere glance of the Shiv Linga, which is installed at the core of the temple, gives improvable inner peace to devotees. In the year 750 A.D., the Adi Guru Shankaracharyaji observed deep penance in this temple and attained spiritual wisdom. Since then the temple got its changed name “Shankaracharya Temple”. It is after completion of his

---

15 Information given on Sign Board planted by Archeological Survey of India at the Temple
16 Wakhlu, Somnath, op. cit, pg 221
penance here, that Guru Shankeracharyaji founded the famous 4 places of learning (Dham)\textsuperscript{17}.

The temple dedicated to Lord Shiva is originally attributed to Jaytheswara on the Gopadari. The octagonal hill plinth on which the temple stands and the stairs leading to it are earlier and may have formed part of the building, traditionally ascribed to King Gopaditya\textsuperscript{18}. The super structure is later. The shrine consists of a cell, circular inside and square externally, with two projecting facts on each side. There also exists a low cell to the north and a tank to the south east. The sanctum contains a linga. The flight of steps flanked by two side walls originally bore two Persian inscriptions, one of which is of 1659 A.D. The ceiling with its two columns appears to have been erected by Mughal King Shah Jahan in 1644 A.D., as stated in an inscription found on a column. The original ceiling is dome shaped and built of horizontal course of Kanju stone on stylic considerations; the temple belongs perhaps to 6th century A.D. It is not certain if the temple exits in the same form as it had been built more than two thousand years ago. The first repair of the temple is believed to have been undertaken during the reign of Lalitaditya in the 8\textsuperscript{th} century A.D. According to the historian Shrivara, Zainul Abideen conducted second repair of the temple after it had been damaged by an earthquake. The third time repair was undertaken during the governorship of Sheikh Mohi-ud-Din, when the temple is believed to have been named as ‘Shankaracharya’\textsuperscript{19}. Dogra ruler, Maharaja Gulab Singh constructed stones stairs upto the temple. The temple besides a prominent Hindu religious place is of great archeological importance. The temple commands a magnificent panoramic view of the Srinagar city. Although there is heavy rush of pilgrims to the temple throughout the year but the festival of Raksha Bandhan, Shivratri and other Shiv festivals attract maximum tourists.

\textsuperscript{17} ibid
\textsuperscript{18} Farid, Syed Ajaz, “Tourism in Kashmir”, Rajesh Publications, New Delhi, 2003, pg 76-77
\textsuperscript{19} Wakhlu, Somnath, op cit, pg 221-222
The site of Shankaracharya temple is a multi religious destination. Kashmiri Muslims call it ‘Takhat-i-Sulaiman’ means Solomon’s throne[^20]. It is said that the Prophet Soloiman (RAH) while flying in air used to take rest on top of the hill. So, this spot is considered sacred for Muslims also.

Shankeracharya Temple lies in Srinagar district across the Nehru Park, a beautiful island within Dal Lake. One can either trek to Shankaracharya temple from the Durga Nag temple lying in Civil Lines area or alternatively can take an automobile up to the foot steps of the temple from the Boulward road. The climb is approximately 7 kms and then there is a flight of 243 odd steps. The road passes through jungle and catches a beautiful view of the city and Dal Lake.

### 3.4 MATTAN TEMPLES AND SPRINGS

Only 5 miles away from the town of Anantnag and 42 miles away from summer capital, on the Pahalgam road, is a village known as Mattan or Bhawan.

At Mattan or Bhawan, there are four temples dedicated to four Hindu Gods, Sun God Temple (Surya Narayan), Mata Durga, Bhagwan Ragunathji and Lord Shiva. There are also two sacred springs by the name of Vimal Kund and Kamal Kund. Both the springs are abounding in sacred fish. In the middle of Vimal Kund is located Sun God Temple[^21]. According to Hindu tradition, this is the only place in India, which is linked with the special type of puja done for those who suffer ‘Akaal Mitue’ meaning ‘sudden and early death’ due to some untoward incident[^22]. Special type of puja or prayer is done for attaining “Gatee and Muktee” on Adhikmasa months, which comes after near about 2½ years

[^21]: Information given by the Head Pujari at the Temple complex
[^22]: Jerath, Ashok, “Hindu Shrines of Western Himalaya”, Association of Literatures, Folklorists, and Artists, Jay Kay Book House, Jammu-1990, pg 249
and falls on Vijay Saptami usually between 15 May and 15 June\textsuperscript{23}. This Adhikmasa month was celebrated this year in 2007 and for performing the special prayers people from all parts of the country and abroad visited the place in big numbers. Not only for this special occasion, but also being a place attached with four Hindu Gods, it attracts thousands of devotees from far and wide.

In fact, the site of Mattan is a multi religious spot and hence very sacrosanct. There is a Sikh Gurdwara, \textit{Gurdwara Patshai Pehli}, within the same compound of the temple and a Muslim shrine, \textit{Ziyarat Baba Bamuddin} at a bit distance away. Hence, the place is a multi-religious and revered place for Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims.

In ancient scriptures, the name of Mattan (Bhawan) is given as \textit{Martand}; ‘the Sun’. The \textit{Sun God Temple} or \textit{Sun Temple} or \textit{Surya Narayan Temple} or \textit{Martand temple}\textsuperscript{24} is located at Martand, 2.5 kms away from Bhawan or Mattan. The most memorable and beautiful work of King Lalitaditya is the construction of this spacious temple, which the emperor got built in honour of \textit{The Sun God} or \textit{Bhaskar}\textsuperscript{25}. Martand holds a very high place in the world’s great architectural designs and is considered to be an excellent example of art and skill of Kashmiri Hindus\textsuperscript{26}. Martand is situated at the top of a high plateau and overlooks the plains of the Valley which wear the garment of venture. It is a masterpiece of the site and beauty of nature which gives the Sun temple its unique and superb grandeur.

\subsection*{3.5 KHIR BHAWANI TEMPLE}

This revered temple is situated at Tullamula in a picturesque garden of Chinars, inside a village called Mahespora, 23 km north of Srinagar. The shrine comes under the jurisdiction of Ganderbal Tehsil of Srinagar district. Kashmiri

\textsuperscript{23} ibid
\textsuperscript{24} Wakhlu, Somnath, op cit, pg 200
Pandit community holds this temple in highest regard. It is dedicated to Ragnya Devi.

Lovingly called as Khir Bhawani, Kashmiri Pandits call it "Temple of Tulumula", "Ksheer Bhawani", sometimes also 'Milk Goddess'.

Kashmir from ancient times has remained a spiritual and sacred place for pleasing Gods and Goddesses. It is said that Sri Ram, the Hindu God, is said to have prayed to Goddess Ragnya Devi during his 14 year exile. When his exile was over, he ordered Hanuman to shift the Devi's seat from Lanka. According to a variant, Sri Ram wanted to do this in order to deny Ravan, the demon King, the Goddess protection. Therefore, this would have happened in the last year of exile. Justice Shiva Nath Katju gives a third version; the Devi was worshiped by Ravan in Lanka and was brought here and installed in Tulumula after Ravan's defeat by Shri Ram Chanderji. In any case, Sri Hanuman carried out the orders. He uprooted the Goddess temple from Lanka and took it to a place called Shadipora. Later the mother Goddess visited one Pandit Raghunath Gadroo in a dream. She indicated that she wanted her temple to be shifted to Tulumula.

The Temple of Ksheer Bhawani is a historical temple. Before entering the main islet to have Darshan of the holy spring of Bhawani one comes across two important sites (one of Ziarat of Mir Baba Haider (a Muslim saint) and other is the Samadhi of Shri Labhu Shah, a saint who lived some 150 years ago in Kashmir). The small temple, made of white marble, is located in the middle of a spring (or Kund or Sarovera). Walls in an extended hexagon have been built around the spring. A tiny footbridge over the spring leads to the temple. This is the style that testifies that Kashmiri Pandit shrines of nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The vast courtyard around the temple is paved with devri, the most expensive stone in Kashmir. The temple that one witnesses today is

27 Deewan, Perwaz, op cit, pg 503
28 Wakhlu, Somnath, "op cit, pg 205
29 Ibid
relatively recent. Maharaja Partap Singh built it in 1912. Maharaja Hari Singh made some additions\(^{30}\). There are clear water streams near the temple and many chinlar trees in and around the complex. Scared fish are found in large number in these streams, in which devotees bathe and then place offering of flowers, rice, sugar, and milk\(^{31}\).

The water of the small reservoir that surrounds the temple comes from a sacred spring. It changes its color from time to time. This is considered miraculous and is attributed to power of the Goddess\(^{32}\). The color of the water is examined on a particular auspicious day every year. It is believed that the color indicates what the forthcoming year will bring for the people, which magically changes color, turning into black, when warning of disaster. Walter Lawrence noted, 'perhaps the most sacred place in the Kashmir is the spring of 'Khir Bhawani''\(^{33}\).

The festival of Jesht Astami celebrated at the temple has a spiritual, refreshing and enlightening appeal in itself. It is celebrated on the 8\(^{th}\) day of the first lunar fortnight of the month of Jeth (May-June). This is said to be the date on which Goddess Khir Bhawani or Ragnya Devi had first revealed herself\(^{34}\). There is a large gathering of devotees in the evening. In their hands, the devotees hold lamps filled with ghee (butter) and incense sticks (dhup) as they chant their prayers. They light these lamps and sticks and trace circles in the air with both, in the ritual manner. Priests chant devotional hymns. The ringing of sacred bells heightens the mood. From 1989 onwards, Civil Secretariat Hindu Devotees Sanastha is performing Hawan on every Zesth Ashtami\(^{35}\). Shukla Paksh Ashthami is the other auspicious day to visit the temple on every month of the year, when special prayers (hawans) are performed. This is the eighth day of the first fortnight of every lunar month. The Har Ashthami day, too, is an

---

\(^{30}\) Deewan, Parwaz, op cit, pg 503-511
\(^{31}\) Ibid, pg 207
\(^{32}\) Jerath, Ashok, op cit, pg 247-248
\(^{33}\) Wakhlu, Somnath, op cit, pg 205-210
\(^{34}\) Deewan, Parwez, op cit
\(^{35}\) Booklet issued by Civil Secretariat, Hindu Devotees Sanastha
auspicious time to visit this temple. On these Ashtamis, Hindus fast, bathe in the streams near Khir Bhawani, and pray at the temple inside. The most auspicious festival at temple is Navaratri. It is considered auspicious for Kashmiri Pandits to visit the temple of their guardian Goddess on all nine days. On the last (ninth) Navratri, an aarti (prayer) is held at the temple after which people break their fast. On the tenth (Dussehra) day, Ravan’s effigy was once burnt.

The Temple of Kheer Bhawani has had a deep link with South India since ancient times. Sri Parijnanashram Swamiji, the Adi Guru of the Kanara Saraswats is believed to have migrated from Khir Bhawani to Karla more than a thousand year ago\textsuperscript{36}. To this day, during their annual festival, the Kanara Saraswats give the main Shiv Linga an Abhishek (an ointment) of five litres of fresh milk. This is later used to prepare ‘Kheer’ (pudding) for the ‘prasad’ offering. This is sometimes followed by an ‘abhishek of teerth’ (pilgrimage) which is taken all the way from “Ksheer Bhawani” (Kashmir) to Karla. The Saraswats of Saurashtra, Maharashtra, Gujrat, Karnataka and Kerala believe that their ancestors had came from Kashmir. It is due to this fact that devotees from all parts of India particularly south throng this place in thousands during festival times.

3.6 SHARIKA DEVI SHRINE

The shrine is situated on the summits of Hari Parbat Hill at a height of 500 feet from the level of the city about 3 miles from first bridge\textsuperscript{37}. It is situated much higher than the other two shrines of Muslims and Sikhs. Cool, calm and scenic environ houses the shrine and makes visitors delighted.

The Sharika Devi shrine is also called as the Shrine of Chakreshwari; Sharika Parbat, Sharika Bhagwatii, Pradyuman Peeth, Shakti Peeth, Shri

\textsuperscript{36} Keenan, Brigid, “Travels in Kashmir”, Oxford University Press, Delhi-1989, pg 203
\textsuperscript{37} Arora, R.C., op cit, pg 42
Chakramm, Siddapeeth, Tripur Sundari, Maha Tripursundari and Rajrajeshwari.38

The Goddess Sharika has many forms of Mahashakti. Jagdmaba Sharika Bhagwati is one of them. The mother Goddess Jagdamba means the ‘Mother of the World’. It is the title of Goddess Durga in all her manifestations of which Sharika is one. Bhagwati means Goddess and Sharika is her personal name. ‘Mahashakti’ means the great energy or the great power. This divine energy assumes a human form in the shape of Goddess Durga and her various incarnations. In Kashmir, Sharikaji is also known as Hari, means the bird or mynah. Kashmiri Pandits believe that her home in Kashmir is at Hari Parbat in Srinagar. For them, she is the guardian Goddess of Srinagar city. She is also their Isht Devi (favorite Goddess). Goddess Shakira has eighteen arms (Asht-Dash-Bhuja). She thus combines in herself all nine incantations of Lord Shiva.39

Sharika is the Sanskrit equivalent of ‘Heer’. Inside the shrine is a large stone (a Shila). It represents Para Devi, the Goddess of the shrine. Some writers feel that this could be very stone that Goddess Sharika has dropped into lake. There is a holy rock (Shila) on which a mystic pattern has been etched. This is the Shri-Chaker (or Maha Shri Yantr). That is why she is called ‘Chakreshwari’ and her shrine is sometimes called ‘Shri Chakram’. The Temple is the most revered place for Kashmiri Panditis to offer passionate prayers. There is also a tradition of going around the entire hill called the Parikrama route. The circumambulation would begin at the Ganishon (Ganesh) temple and end at Kathi Darwaza.

The shrine is colorfully lightened during the following days of the year. Har Ashtami or Har Athum is the Asthami (the 8th day) of the Krishnn Pakesh (dark fortnight) of the month of Phagun (Feb-March). Then there are three consecutive auspicious days during the Shukl Paksh (bright fortnight of the

38 Deewan, Perwaz, op cit, pg 306
39 ibid
month of Ashad (June-July), Har Satum (Saptami/the seventh day), Har Athum (Asthami) and Har Navum (Navmi/the ninth day). Har Navum (Ashad Navmi) is the birth anniversary of Goddess Sharika. According to a belief, thousand of years ago, it was on this day when a stone was dropped by Goddess (in the form of a bird) on the lake demon. A Kashmiri food specialty of boiled rice and lamb liver is distributed on this occasion called as 'Taher-Charvan'. The other auspicious days are Navroz (the new year of the day of the Kashmiri Pandits), which occurs during the month of Magh (March-April) and the nine Navratra days (Nav-Durgah).

3.7 HARWAN

This Buddhist pilgrimage site is located at the bottom of Zabarwan hills towards the northern bank of Dal Lake, at a distance of 21 kms from Srinagar on the Shalimar road. The name of the village is phonetically derived from ancient Sanskrit word “Shadarhadvana” meaning ‘the grove of six saints’. According to Rajtarangni, Harwan was the residence of Nagarjuns, the great Buddhist patriarch who is said to have been a contemporary of Kanishka (125 A.D.). The place was inhabited by Buddhists in the 3rd century A.D. A big monastery was raised here probably to commemorate some important function held at the place during Kaniska’s time. It has also been established that the great Kushan ruler Kanishka had held the Fourth Buddhist Council here in the 1st century AD. Religious importance of the pilgrimage site is further highlighted from the sculptures obtained during excavation at the site, like, Head of Buddha, Head of Buddha’s attendant, Head of Buddhist monk, Head of the Bodhisattava, etc.

---

40 ibid
41 Pamphlet of SPS museum, Srinagar, pg 4
43 Pamphlet of SPS museum, Srinagar, pg 4
3.8 PARIHASAPORA

The Karewa of Parihaspora is situated at the distance of 25 kms from Srinagar on the Srinagar-Baramulla road. It was chosen by King Lalitaditya in 750 A.D. for the erection of new capital city. The site is a great Buddhist pilgrimage spot. At this site 3 Buddhist structures, a stupa, a monastery and a chaitya have been excavated. Excavations at the site have revealed some Buddhist sculptures dating back to 8th century A.D. Some of them are:

- Image of Buddha seated cross legged on a lotus pedestal in a trefoil niche.
- Image of standing Buddhistiva.
- Image of standing Yaksha.

Raja Vihara was also built by Lalitaditya at Parihaspura. It housed a colossal statue of Buddha besides other relics of gold and silver. Examination of the site reveals that the Rajavihara was a quadrangle of 26 cells around a square courtyard paved with stones. These cells were used by the monks.

3.9 PANDRENTHAN

Pantherathan is situated at a distance of 7 kms from Srinagar on the Srinagar-Jammu National Highway. The name of Pandrenthan is derived from the Sanskrit word “Purandishthana” meaning ‘the old capital’. Ashoka founded this new capital city at Pandrenthan in 250 B.C. A temple built by Meruvardhana, the Prime Minister of King Partha, who ruled Kashmir in the beginning of the 10th century A.D., has came to light at this place. The temple is a Madapa type and is surrounded by a beautiful spring. Particularly, the site

---

44 Kak, R. C., op cit, pg 53, 148
45 Pamphlet of SPS museum, Srinagar, pg 8-9
48 Pamphlet of SPS museum, Srinagar, pg 6-7
49 Ibid

67
is famous for its Buddhist sculptures dating back to 8th century which came to light during excavations, and includes the following:

→ Stone image of a standing Buddhastiva holding lotus and rosary in his hands in Abhaya-mudra.

→ Stone image of Buddha in Dhyan-Mudra.

→ Stone image of three headed Shiva seated cross legged. Ganga in swimming pose over his head. Holding principal objects in his hands.

→ Stone image of standing three headed Shiva in devbhanga pose. Four armed wearing snake of sacred thread and waist hand.

→ Stone image of standing two armed Paravati, in tribhanghe pose, wearing necklace, breast hand, waist hand holding in her two hands is lotus, vessel. The miniature male attendant is on the left the image is slightly mutilated.

3.10 VIHARA OF SAURA

This pilgrimage spot of Buddhists is located at a distance of 9 kms from the main city. It is known for the life size stone sculptures of Buddha. The name of the town Soura can easily be attributed to Surasavihara, founded by King Surendra. Soura’s the probable site of the Surasa vihara, some of the Buddhist religious sculptures collected from this site is datable to 8th and 9th century A.D., like, fragmentary terracotta head of Buddha, terracotta plaque depicting Buddha seated cross-legged and hand held in Gharama Chadramudra and Fragmentary Terracotta plaque depicting three stupas and Buddha seated cross legged attended by three standing Buddhasttavas.

50 Jerath, Ashok, op cit, pg 250
51 Dutt, R. C., “Kings of Kashmir” Translation of Kalhana’s, “Rajtarangini”, Low Price Publications, Delhi-1990, pg 65
52 Pamphlet of SPS museum, Srinagar, pg 11-12
3.11 AWANTIPORA TEMPLES

This historical town of Awantipore is situated at a distance of 25 kms from Srinagar. The town was founded by King Avantiverman who reigned in Kashmir from 855 A.D. The place is known for two magnificent temples\(^53\), first and the largest is the temple of Shiva and half a mile further up is the small bed more ornate and better preserved temple of Avantiswamin (Vishnu)\(^54\). 9th century sculptures of King Avantiverman and his consort, besides other sculptures are also present here, which includes\(^55\), Stone image of Vishnu, Stone image of three headed Siva, Image of headless Vishnu, Image of four Armed Lakshmim etc.,

The temple is visited by almost all travelers and tourists who travel through this road and other tourists who trip Kashmir for visiting diverse tourist potential of the Paradise.

3.12 KHREW TEMPLE

The temple is situated atop a hillock in Khrew at a distance of 5 kms from Woyin and 22 kms from Srinagar. Nearly 200 steps take one to the temple. The temple deity is Shola Bhagwati, the Goddess of fire\(^56\). There is a Sulphur Spring at the bottom of the hillock in which pilgrims bathe before climbing to the temple. The hillock is believed to have been a volcano. A fair is held at this temple called as “Fire of Volcano”\(^57\). The temple is a source of employment to many locals, Muslims as well as Hindus, an excellent example of communal harmony.

\(^{53}\) Jertah, Ashok, op cit, pg 247
\(^{54}\) Keenan, Brigid, op cit, pg 213
\(^{55}\) Pamphlet of SPS museum, Srinagar, pg 9-10
\(^{56}\) Brown, Percy, “Indian Architecture”, Apt Books, New Delhi-1944, Pg 191
\(^{57}\) ibid
3.13 VISHNU PAD

It is situated at a height of more than 14,000 feet in Anantnag district, 14 miles from Aharbal fall. This is the only holy place connected with Lord Vishnu in Kashmir\(^{58}\). It is believed that Lord Vishnu had placed his holy foot at this place where the present big lake is found. This is the reason that the lake is shaped as foot\(^{59}\).

3.14 RAITHAN AND RAJAGIR

It is situated in the vicinity of Yecchgam and Ycchkot, the guardian tribes of the fourth Buddhist Council records\(^{60}\). The village of Raithan is at a distance of 12 kms from Srinagar. Many Buddhist relics are found in the area, including the famous Budoha panel.

3.15 DASTGIR SAHEB SHRINE

Located in Khaniyar locality of Srinagar, the shrine is situated on the left side of the Srinagar-Leh highway, 4 kms away from Lal Chowk towards North. The shrine belongs to Hazrat Shah Sakhi Mohammad Dastgir who came here from Baghdad in the reign of Aurangzeb. The shrine is particularly famous for three important reasons, first and foremost among them is that it bears the ‘Signature of Hazrat Ali (RAH)’, secondly for being an abode of the ‘sacred hair of Hazrat Ghausul Azam’, and last but not least, because of its being the holy place of Sayyed Jalaluddin Mushtag\(^{61}\).

The shrine is one of the holiest places for devotees cutting across the caste and communal divide, as every year it attracts hundreds of devotees from different parts of the state. Popularly known as ‘Ghausia Shrine’, is also unique

\(^{58}\) Deewan, Parwez, op cit, pg 321
\(^{60}\) Bakshi, S. R., op cit, pg 151
for its architectural design. The shrine holds a prominent place in the heart of devotees who keep coming here again and again to pay their obeisance. At this site a festival is held on the 11th of Rabi-u-Sani (4th lunar month)\textsuperscript{62}. On this date and the following Friday, the holy relics are shown to public. Actually the festival starts from 1st of this month and lasts for full fortnight. On 11th of Rabi-u-Sani more than one lakh pilgrims attend the festival.

3.16 KHANQAH-E-MUALLA

The shrine related to Hazrat Mir Syed Ali Hamdani is situated in the middle of Zena Kadal and Fateh Kadal on the right bank of river Jhelum in the old city\textsuperscript{63}. The site is 4 km in the north of Lal Chowk. It is situated on the road side and hence one does not need to walk any longer. The Khanqah is famous by many names, as Khanqah-e-Mualla, Shrine of Shah-e-Hamdan or Ziyaret-e-Mir Sayyed Ali Hamdani.

The shrine-cum-mosque is named after the renowned Iraqi mystic, scholar, poet, theologian and author, Mir Syed Ali Hamdani, popularly known as ‘Shah-e-Hamdan’ in the Valley. The saint visited the Valley three times in connection with the propagation of Islam. He succeeded in bringing about mass conversion and thus changing the whole socio-cultural picture of the Valley. The mosque enshrines besides other things, ‘the Banner of the Prophet of Islam’ and a ‘Wooden Pillar’ against which he usually reclined in his tent. Both these things were brought by Shah-i-Hamdan to Kashmir\textsuperscript{64}. These relics are kept in a repository fitted with glass panes, which has been installed at the outer gate of Hijre Khas, a small room which saint used for meditation. This room lies to the north-west corner of the mosque\textsuperscript{65}. Sultan Qutbuddin built

\textsuperscript{63} Wakhlu, Somnath, “op cit, pg 215
\textsuperscript{64} Anwar, Khursheed, op cit, pg 187
\textsuperscript{65} ibid
special room for Hazrat Mir Sayyed Ali Hamdani in the northern side of this place after seeking permission from his son Mir Mohammad Hamdani.

Sultan Sikender built the first building of Khanqah-e-Mualla in 1389 A.D. The Quranic verses and the Awdad Fateha were inscribed in the mosque of the shrine in golden words. Its arch is one of finest symbols of calligraphy in Kashmir. The Khanqah is a wooden structure whose chief aesthetic feature is its beautifully carved caves and hanging bells. The interiors are richly carved and painted, and the antique Chandelien give it an air of magnificence.

At Khanqah-e-Muala, a festival is organized every year on 6th Zilhij, the 12th lunar month, on anniversary of the great saint. Thousands of Kashmiris attend the festival in order to offer prayers, recite Holy Quran and get blessing of the saint. This festival lasts for six days i.e., from 1st to 6th Zilhaj. Besides, the Khanqah is visited frequently by thousands of devotees every day, without any bias on the basis of caste, creed, color or religion.

3.17 CHRAR-E-SHARIEF

Situated in a small town, 35 km to the south of Srinagar called ‘Chrar’, at the height of 6400 feet, in the sprawling garden of ‘Sangram Daar’, who was among the favourite disciplines of Sheikh-ul-Aalm. It is a beautiful place away from the rough and tough city life. Cool and calm environs welcome pilgrims, refresh and enlighten them. The dargah is visited by hundreds and thousands of pilgrims.

Chrar-e-Sharief is the final resting place of Sheikh Noor-ud-din Noorani. The saint is popular by the name of ‘Sheikh-ul-Aalm’ among the Muslims and Nund Rishi among the Hindus, also known as ‘Shamsul Aarifeen Sheikh Noor-ud-din Noorani’. The shrine is known as ‘Chrar-e-Sharif’. The

---

66 Kapur, M. A., “op cit. pg 384
67 ibid
68 Information given by some Rishies at the Shrine
Dargah of Sheikh-ul-Aalm holds vital place in the hearts of devotees coming from various parts of the country. Sheikh Noor-ud-din(RAH) had widely traveled throughout Kashmir. The shrines of this great Sufi are found all over the Valley.

Sheikh Noor-ud-din was born in Qaimoh, a small village on Srinagar-Jammu National Highway, 22 miles to the south-east of Srinagar. Born in 1377 A.D., he was an illiterate person. But with his genius and piety, he wielded tremendous influence on all Kashmiris Hindus and Muslims alike. He was a pious soul and traveled throughout Kashmir to spread the message of peace and communal harmony. He mediated for 12 years inside a cave. Four centuries after his death, Afghan governor Alta Mohd. Khan issued coins in his name. No other saint perhaps in human history has ever had coins struck in his name. The great Rishi died at the age of 63 and at his death, the King of Kashmir, Zainul Abidin himself was the chief mourner at his funeral.

The old shrine structure as well as Khanqah was the true example of the traditional shrine structures of Kashmir, based on Kashmiri-Iranian architectural pattern. The shrine along with Khanqah was gutted in a devastating fire in 1995, but given the devotion of people a new Dargah is being constructed by combining the traditional elements of Kashmiri architecture and modern craftsmanship. The new building of the shrine is very big and spacious and can accommodate thousands of people. It is built on modern lines but the design of the shrine has been kept unchanged.

The death anniversary of Nund Rishi which according to Kashmiri tradition falls in the month of Poh (December) is celebrated at many places. But the most important among these is at Chrar, the shrine to invoke the blessings of the saint. On the eve of the festival his wooden chappal, stick, etc.

---

71 Sufi, G.M.D., “Islamic Culture in Kashmir”, Light and Life Publishers, 1979, pg 41-42
are displayed to pilgrims\textsuperscript{72}. People of all religions without any discrimination visit this shrine.

\section*{3.18 SHAH ZAINUDDIN WALI SHRINE}

Located at a distance of 74 km in the east of Srinagar at a height of 2110 meters, in a village called \textit{Aishmuqam}, is the Ziyaret of Zain-ud-din Wali. The shrine falls on Anantnag-Pahalgam road. The site of the shrine catches a panoramic view of the village as well as its adjoining areas. The place that turned hatred into love and is said to have transformed even the hardcore criminals into philanthropists, is considered to be one of the most important Sufi landmarks in the Kashmir Valley\textsuperscript{73}. The long flight of stairs from the village to the top of hills takes one to the final abode of Baba Zain-ud-din, who was one of the favourite disciplines of Aalmdar-e-Kashmir Sheikh Noor-ud-din Noorani.

The saint was a Sikh prince, before his conversion to Islam. He was belonging to the ruling family of Rajas of Kishtwar. Among the local inhabitants the legend is that after Zain-ud-din attained spiritual perfection his master Sheikh Noor-ud-din advised him to migrate from Sopore to the cave of Aishmuqam. On his arrival, the saint found the entrance to the cave blocked by snakes and reptiles. He carried with him a \textit{club}, which he had received from his master. He placed the club on the ground and it soon turned into a dreadful cobra, the snakes in the cave got awestricken and vacated the cave after they surrendered to the saint. These are said to have fled to \textit{Puhurpujan}, at some distance towards the east of Aishmuqam. Legend says that in that area snakes and cobras are non-poisonous because of the miracle performed by the saint. Not only are they non-poisonous but so humble that if ones feet gets smothered

\textsuperscript{72} Anwar, Khursheed, op cit, pg 193

74
with milk, the snakes being fond of milk, they would lick the feet but would never bite.\[74\]

Baba Zain-ud-din was the second but the dearest Khalifa of Aalmdar-e-Kashmir and the style of his shrine especially the outer façade is similar to the shrine of Dastgir Sahib in Srinagar, and has a style that matches the one of Baba Rishi near Gulmarg. The Pinjkari of this shrine is worth surveillance. The grave of Baba Zain-ud-din is in a cave. Such is the devotion of the people that they virtually crawl inside the cave and find immense solace sitting besides Zain-ud-din Wali’s grave.

Annual urs mela is celebrated here on 13th of Baisakhi corresponding to 25\textsuperscript{th} of April every year. The fair is lighted by making fire of Gale wood in the night which is called as ‘Phiroo’. The custom of making fire by Phiroo is connected with this shrine only. The unique ‘Zool’ festival is celebrated to celebrate the end of winter season and beginning of sowing season. The relics enshrined in the shine are displayed to public, staff of Moses, turban of Zain-ud-din Wali, etc, on the festive occasions as well as on other important religious days.\[75\]

3.19 BABA RISHI SHRINE

Situated 45 km towards north of Srinagar, at an elevation of 7000 feet above sea level, 1000 feet less than that of Gulmarg. The shrine is situated in cool and healthy grassy slopes surrounded by forests, in the village Ranbuah about 7 kms for Gulmarg.

Baba Rishi is the popular name of Baba Payam-ud-Din, a prominent disciple of Sheikh Zain-ud-din Wali of Aishmuqam. Rishi Sahab is reported to have belonged to a rich family, and suddenly left all worthy relations and turned into a Saint. Baba Reshi was born in Zahand Village of Largan Derbal,\[74\] Anwar, Khursheed, op cit, pg 192
\[75\] As revealed by the Rishis at the shrine
but on the instruction of his master he came to settle in Ramboh village in the last phase of his life and became an ascetic and lived here till his demise\textsuperscript{76}. A number of huts and buildings have been constructed in premises of the shrine, in order to accommodate the multitude of pilgrims, who are provided free board and lodge there.

The walnut wood planed Shrine of Baba Payam-u-din Rishi, also popularly known as Baba Rishi, is not only unique for its architectural design, but also for its amazingly beautiful location that is surrounded with picturesque Gulmarg hills. Often the cluster of floating clouds percolating from the top of the hills hovering over the shrine makes the visit to this place an unforgettable experience. During winter months when almost everything freezes in and around Gulmarg, the shrine gets wrapped in thick white sheet of snow and makes it look even more fascinating. But it is not the beauty alone that attracts thousands of pilgrims to this shrine, but its their belief and faith which brings them here every year.

The saint died in 1475 A.D. and his death anniversary falls in \textit{Poh} (December)\textsuperscript{77}. The festival is attended, not only by Muslims, but also by a large number of Hindus, who usually visit the shrine to take a vow to dedicate some object or objects if their prayers are granted. Baba Reshi was a symbol of good will and communal harmony, and therefore there is nothing surprising that this shrine attracts hundreds of thousands of devotees from all casts and beliefs. The shrine is particularly famous for a big fire place, which is said to have been made by Baba Rishi himself. It is a common belief among the devotees that who so ever puts mud plaster on this fire place, the blessings of Baba Reshi ensures that his wishes are granted.

\textsuperscript{76} Rafiqi, Abdul Qaiyum, “Sufism in Kashmir”, Bharatiya Publishing House, Varanasi, 2001, pg 159-174
\textsuperscript{77} ibid
3.20 GURDWARA PATSHAHI PAHILI

It is located in the same compound of the Mattan Temple complex, infront of the Holy Springs. From the religious sources, it has been found that Guru Nanak Devji during his 4 religious tours, once traveled through Kashmir(during his third tour), stopped at various places but rested for a long time at Mattan for religious discussions with a Hindu priest, namely Pandit Brahmadas. The ‘Goshtee’ meaning ‘religious conversation’ in Sikhism lasted for 13 days. Guru Nanak Devji donated his hand written Guru Granth Sahib and six Shastars (swords) to the religious spot, which later was converted into a big Gurdwara known as “Gurdwara Patshahi Pahili”.

It is the most visited Gurdwara among the Gurdwara’s of Guru Nanak Dev of Kashmir Division. Fine Gurdwaras are built at all the resting places of Guru Nanak Devji, which include, Gurdwara each at Hariparbat, Shankaracharya, Awantipora, Bijbehara, Anantnag, Pahalgam, and Amarnath.

Three festivals are held at Gurdwara Patshahi Pahili every year, the festival of Baisakhi which usually falls on 13th April, birth anniversaries of Guru Nanak Devji and Guru Hargobind Sahib. These festivals are celebrated according to the Nanak Shahi Calendar. Besides these festivals, people visit the Gurdwara on other days as well and they are revealed darshan of the sacred things without any restriction.

Muslim Shrine of Baba Bamuddin is located a bit distance away from these two revered spots on Pahalgam road. People visit this sanctified spot frequently, particularly, people visiting Pahalgam, first stop at this place to take blessings of the saint and then proceed towards their destination.

---

79 As revealed by Granthi of the Gurdwara during an Interview
80 Court, Henry, op cit
81 ibid
3.21 BABA SHAKOOR-UD-DIN SHRINE

The shrine of Baba Shakoor-ud-din is located in the village of Watlab, in Baramulla district, some 55 kms away from summer capital.

Shaniaz Naqshbandi also called as Baba Shakoor-ud-din, was a poet and a scholar of high repute. He authored some Persian books among them 'Chainama' and 'Dewan-e-Niyaz' are worth mention. He died in Kabul and was buried in its royal graveyard.

The shrine which exists today has the tomb of his father Abdu Rahim Naqshbandi which is known by Kashmiris as Khoja Sahib. The shrine is in possession of 'the Sacred Hair of Prophet Mohammad (SAW)'. The other sacred thing in its possession include, the Hair of Hazrat Abu Bakare Siddique; the first Caliph, the attire of Hazrat Imam-e-Azam, the Head Gear of Hazrat Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jeelani, the Stick of Imam Musa Raza and few parts of the Holy Quran which were written by Hazrat Usman Ghani on the skin of deer in his own hand. It is mentioned in history that Hazrat Usman Ghani was reciting the same Quran before his martyrdom. It is for this reason that it bears certain blots of blood. Some of the parts of this holy Quran are preserved in the museum of Istanbul (Turkey) and Tashqand (Uzbekistan). The two and half parts of the Quran were gifted to the Naqshbandi family by the Mughals.

3.22 SHRINE OF SYED HASSAN MANTAQI

This attractive and holy shrine is located in the historical and archeologically important town of Awantipore, which reminds us of the famous King Avantiwarman. The shrine is situated on the National Highway, a little
bit distance away from the main market, nearly 28 kms from the Summer Capital.

Syed Hassan Mantaqi was a kind and generous person. The shrine of Syed Hassan Mantaqi is the most salaried shrine among the shrines situated on the main road of National Highway in Kashmir. Almost every vehicle moves forward from this place after donating at this shrine, doesn’t matter whether the vehicle belongs to Muslim, Hindu, Sikh, Christian or to person of any other belief. Donating at this shrine is considered a security certificate for traveling on that highway. It is only because of the popularity and the hallowed character of this shrine, that every individual pays his respects here. A festival is also held at the shrine on the anniversary of this great saint, on which people from far and off visit here.

3.23 PINJOORA ASAR SHARIEF

The shrine is situated at a distance of 12 km from Pulwama town in the direction of Shopian. The shrine is most venerable Muslim shrine of the district because it houses the Holy Relic of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) which is displayed on special occasions. Pinjora Asar Sharief is the only shrine in entire South-Asia which houses the relics (Hair) of three venerable figures of Islam, Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), Hazrat Abu Bakar Siddiq and Dastgir Sahib. Nearby the shrine is a pond in rectangular shape, the water of which is considered sacred and is used by pilgrims for purifying and healing purpose.

3.24 GURDWARA CHATTI PADSHAHI

Chattipadshi is located close to the shrines of Makhdoom Sahib and Sharika Devi, on the foot hills of Hari Parbat fort, on its southern gate. It is very much accessible for visiting. Situated at a distance of 3 km from the main

---

86 Keenan, Brigid, op cit, pg 211
city, it falls on the road which leads to Hari Parbat Fort. One of its gates also opens to the road, which leads to Hazratbal.

Chattipadshi is one of the most important Sikh Gurudwaras in Kashmir. *Guru Hargobindji, the sixth Guru visited this place in 1620*. Main reason of the visit of Guru Hargobindji, the sixth Guru (Chhatta Padshah), was his visit to the place at which Gurdwara Chatti Padshahi has been built to give darshan to the old women. On his way back to Punjab, he also rested at some places in Kashmir, at which beautiful and massive Gurdwaras have been built, like, Gurdwara Thana Sahib in Baramulla, Gurudwara Parampila in Uri, etc. But according to Granthi of Gurdwara Chatti Padshi, Guru also rested at two more places in Baramulla which includes, Singhpora and Kalmpura.

The old structure of the Gurdwara Chattipadshi has been replaced by a new modern architectural wonder. The Gurdwara has been constructed on the modern lines. It is a concrete structure, which is very much spacious and houses the tomb of the old woman and is also the House of the sacred Adi Granth Sahib written by the Sixth Guru himself. The main hall of the Gurdwara has a room where the Guru was presented a white cloak, woven by the Pandit woman, who while weaving the clock has lost her eye sight. The room is on the left side while entering the main hall. The Guru shot an arrow into the ground and water gushed out. He took the water and sprinkled it on her eyes. Her eye sight was miraculously restored. A well has been formed at the sight from where water gushed out of the ground, it is considered holy.

Although devotees pay their respects at the regular intervals of time but the heavy rush of pilgrims visit this sacred place on the annual celebrations in the form of fairs and birth anniversaries of Guru Nanak Devji and Guru Hargobindji, on 28th November and 11th June, respectively.
As the Gurdwara is located in Muslim locality scenes of secular brotherhood can be seen when a Muslim guides his Sikh brother about the different things at Gurdwara. As the Muslim and Hindu religious spots are also closer to it, most of the devotees visiting them also pay their respects at the Gurdwara. It is a multi-religion spot witnessing the coming together of all religions.

3.25 HAZRATBAL SHRINE (THE WHITE MOSQUE)

The shrine cum mosque is situated at an attitude of 5250 feet on the western bank of world famous Dal Lake. Hazratbal has the geometrical position of 34° 5' N and 74° 5' E. Location of this Shrine is an ideal place for catching the most panoramic view of the Dal Lake. Hazratbal is a pristine white marble edifice casting its reflection in waters of the lake.

The shrine is known by many names including, Assar-e-Sharief, Madinat-us-Sani, Darhgah Sharief and Dargah. History of the Holy Hair present inside the mosque goes like this; Imam Hussein son of Hazrat Fatima and nephew of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) was bequeathed some relics of the Holy Prophet (PBUH), mostly hair from the beard. One of these relics was passed down the generation to his descendent, Syed Abdullah of Mecca. On account of some litigation that Abdullah was involved in, he was stripped of his citizenship by the ruler of that time. So in 1634 A.D., he left Mecca and emigrated to Bijapur. The Mughal King, Shah Jahan, received him cordially and as mark of respect allotted him a Jageer at Bijapur. The Mughal King, Shah Jahan, received him cordially and as mark of respect allotted him a Jageer at Bijapur. Later on his death, his son, Syed Hamid favoured Dara Shikhon and the Jageer was confiscated. When Aurangazeb became the Mughal emperor, he forfeited his estate, evicting Hamid from it. Hamid went to Delhi to get the state restored. There he met Khawja Noor-ur-din, a wealthy philanthropist from Srinagar. Because of

---

92 Anwar, Khursheed, op cit, pg 195
93 Deewan, Parwez, op cit, pg 461-467
94 ibid
some help or money which Khwaja gave to Syed, the relic passed on to Khwaja\textsuperscript{96}. Khwaja thus became the first resident of Kashmir to receive a relic of the Prophet of Islam (PBUH)\textsuperscript{97}. So he set on journey to Kashmir, via Lahore. The Syed sent his attendant Khwaja Maidanish, who had been the guardian of the holy relic, along with Khwaja Noor-ud-din. It was when Noor-ud-din reached Lahore that Aurangzeb got to know that the Khwaja had obtained the holy relic. He sent soldiers to force Khwaja Noor-ud-din to give up the holy relic. \textit{The emperor then sent the relic to Ajmer to be kept in the Shrine of Khwaja Moin-ud-din Chishti}\textsuperscript{98}. The loss of relic shocked Khwaja to death. Mean while, it is said, Aurangzeb had a visitation in a dream in which he was reprimanded for having obtained the Holy Relic by force\textsuperscript{99}. So on the ninth day of confiscating it, Aurangzeb sent his personnel for tracing out the Khwaja and returned the Holy Relic. On learning of Khwaja Noo-ud-din’s death, Aurangzeb arranged to get the Relic and Khwaja’s coffin to be sent to Srinagar. On 10\textsuperscript{th} March, 1700, the Relic and the coffin traveled to Srinagar via Shopian and \textit{reached the city’s haft chinar area on the 5\textsuperscript{th} April, 1700}. On the orders of the Mughal governor of Kashmir, Fazil Khan, the Holy Relic was kept in the Naqsh Band Sahib Shrine of Downtown Srinagar\textsuperscript{100}. But the crowds that came to see the holy relic were so large that a more commodious home had to be found. The choice fell on the lake side orchids (bagh) of the Mughal Nobel Sadiq/Sher Khan, who donated his huge mansion located amidst the orchards to house the Holy Relic. Khwaja Noor-ud-Din was buried in the Holy Relic’s new shrine, which was now given the name “Hazratbal”.

Hazratbal is housed in one of the most impressive post-war mosques anywhere in the world, a modern, Indo-Islamic building. It was the first shrine of importance in all Kashmir built in modern, pan-Indian style. Hardly any shrine or mosque built in Kashmir after that has been in the traditional Indian-
Kashmiri style. Hazratbal is made of pure marble, giving a very soothing and calm look and adding an extra edge to its beautiful surroundings. It can house more than 20,000 people at a time. *The construction of the present marble structure was started by the Muslim Auqaf Trust headed by Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah in 1968 and completed in 1979.* It is the only mosque to have a doomed roof mosque in Srinagar, the others are having distinct pagoda like roofs.\textsuperscript{101}

*The Holy Relic has been deposited in a casket and is displayed on several important occasions every year.* Hindu, Muslim, Sikhs, infact, Kashmiri of any religion, of both sexes, and of all ranks and ages, are there for the purpose of seeing and being seen, praying for their wishes and getting their wishes fulfilled. Holy Relic is displayed on ten (10) occasions in a year\textsuperscript{102}:

1. *Id-Miladun Nabi* (Birth day of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH)) 3 days
   12 and 13 Rabiul Awal and following Friday

2. *Meraj*, 27\textsuperscript{th} and 28\textsuperscript{th} Rajab and the following Friday 3 days

3. *Anniversaries of the four caliphs of the Prophet* (PBUH) 4 days

Each festival is attended by more than half a million people from all over the Valley. Thousands of stalls are put up by the business community of Srinagar and outsiders, and business to the tune of millions of rupees takes place on these festivals. These festivals also provide a platform to the handicraft artists and other artisans to exhibit their art before big congregation. It is the ultimate place for shopping of local brands.

Kashmir from the ancient times has remained a situate for religious meet. It has remained as a place of multi-religious destination and is famous for its secular character. In Kashmir, mostly, a Muslim shrine exists near a Hindu shrine and vice versa, as well as most of the shrines and temples have near by religious places of other religions, like, Sikhism, Buddhism, etc. *The ancient*
chronicle feed the idea that even at Sudrabal near Hazratbal ancient Hindu religious place existed. In ancient legend related by Kalhana represented the spring at Sudrabal as an avtara of the Sodara Nagar worshipped originally near the scared site of Bhutesvara below Mound Harmukhata. The same has been written by the English writer Stein\(^{103}\).

Other shrines in Kashmir that possess relics of Holy Prophet (PBUH) are shrines of Kaabamarg, Khirram Sirhama and Seer (all in Anantnag), Pinjoora Aasar Sharief (Pulwama) and Jenab Sahib Soura (Srinagar)\(^{104}\).

3.26 MUKHDOOM SAHIB SHRINE

The shrine of Mukhdoom sahib is situated on the south-east of Hari Parbat hill in Srinagar\(^{105}\), 1000 feet higher than the surrounding land. It catches a panoramic view of the Srinagar city and is visible from most places of the city. The shrine is known by various names as Mukhdoom Sahib, Sultan-ul-Aarefeen, Sultan Sahib, and Badshah.

Here lies entombed Hazart Sheikh Mukhdoom, one of the leading mystics of Kashmir who wielded powerful influence on the people of Kashmir. Besides his tomb, the body of Dawood Khaki, a chief disciple of the saint and once the chief justice of Kashmir is also entombed in the shrine\(^{106}\). Hazart Mukhdoom and his disciple have converted a large number of people to Islam. The spot of the shrine formed the site, where he used to mediate in seclusion. Later on Nawab Inayatullah Khan, the then Governor of Kashmir, built a mausoleum on the lands of the saint in 1713 A.D\(^{107}\).

The Jahangir mosque, Salar Baig Mosque, Zahir Mosque, Sarai Khas Mosque and a pond also exists here. On the left side of the shrine, there is

\(^{103}\) Fazili, Manzoor, op cit, pg 74-175
\(^{104}\) Vigne, G. T., op. cit., Vol. II, pg 92
\(^{105}\) Arora, R.C., op cit, pg 41
\(^{106}\) Deewan, Parwez, op cit, pg 250-251
\(^{107}\) ibid
Kastoor Pind, which is in a way an open air worshipping place. The Hazartbal shrine is clearly visible from here.

Makhdooom Sahib Shrine is very important in the history of political, social, religious and cultural history of Kashmir. The devotion of the Kashmiri Muslim for the shrine can be guessed from the fact that whenever there is drought or floods, the people put water in the pond by bringing it in pitches and this way according to belief, they succeed in averting natural disaster in the city.

Two festivals are held at the shrine. One at the anniversary of Baba Dawood Khaki on 3 Safar for one day, another on anniversary of Mukhdoom Sahib on 11 Safar for 13 days upto 24 Safar\(^\text{108}\). Both the festivals are celebrated with great respect and honour. But the arrangements are more varied on the anniversary of Mukhdoom Sahib, as it being a lengthy festival were people from all corners of the country rush towards the shrine.

The shrine of Makhdoom Sahib is a spot of secular brotherhood were people from every cast and religion without any distinction pay their respect to the shrine. The pilgrims visiting either the temple of Sharika Devi or Gurdwara Chattipadhi, consider it their duty to visit this shrine and offer their nazrana. Some of the famous Khanqahs of the Sultanate period of Kashmir are given in table 3.2.

\(^{108}\) As told by Rishies at the shrine
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME OF THE KHANQAH</th>
<th>SILSILA</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Khanqah-I-Sayyid Sharaf al-Din</td>
<td>Shrawardi</td>
<td>Bulbul Lankar, Srinagar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulbul Shah</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khanqah-I-Sayyid Hussain Simnani</td>
<td>Kubravi</td>
<td>Kulgam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khanqah-I-Mualla</td>
<td>Kubravi</td>
<td>Srinagar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khanqah-I-Ala</td>
<td>Kubravi</td>
<td>Tral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khanqah-I-Wala</td>
<td>Kubravi</td>
<td>Wachhi, Pargana, Shawura</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khanqah-I-Bijbehara</td>
<td>Kubravi</td>
<td>Bijbehara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khanqah-I-Sopor</td>
<td>Kubravi</td>
<td>Sopor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khanqah-I-Drugian</td>
<td>Kubravi</td>
<td>Srinagar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khanqah-I-Sayyid Barkhurdar</td>
<td>Kubravi</td>
<td>Dana Mazar, Srinagar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khanqah-I-Shaikh-ul-Aalm</td>
<td>Rishi</td>
<td>Chrar-i-Sharif</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khanqah-I-Kubravi</td>
<td>Kubravi</td>
<td>Mattan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khanqah-I-Faiz Panah</td>
<td>Naqashbandi</td>
<td>Asham, Sonawari</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khanqah-I-Sayyid Muhammad Madani</td>
<td>Kubravi</td>
<td>Srinagar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khanqah-I-Jalal al-Din Thakur</td>
<td>Kubravi</td>
<td>Gojwara, Srinagar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khanqah-I-Malik ahmad Yetu</td>
<td>Kubravi</td>
<td>Srinagar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khanqah-I-Shamas Chak</td>
<td>Kubravi</td>
<td>Srinagar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khanqah-I-Baba Ismail</td>
<td>Kubravi</td>
<td>Srinagar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khanqah-I-Zadibal</td>
<td>Nurbakshi</td>
<td>Srinagar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khanqah-I-Sayyid Ahmad Kirmani</td>
<td>Shrawardi</td>
<td>Narwar, Srinagar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.27 IMAMBARA BADGAM

It is situated in an ideal situate of Badgam, which is a district headquarter. Badgam is located at a distance of 15 kms from the Srinagar. The Imambara is located within the heart of the Badgam town. Badgam is a foremost place for Shi'ate Muslims of the Valley. The building of the Imambara was originally constructed in 1857 under the supervision of Aga Syed Mohammad, on the place where famous Shi'ate religious leader Aga Syed Mehdi used to offer prayers\(^\text{109}\). Inside of the building was designed by Asgar Ali of Mirgund, Badgam. The present octagonal Imambara has five main entrances each of 12 feet width\(^\text{110}\). One of the entrances is reserved for the women. Indo-Iranian piece of architecture, the Imambara commands great reverence in Shia community of the Valley because the place is attached with their foremost religious leader Aga Syed Mehdi. Apart from its religious significance, it is equally important as a piece of monumental value due to its old and unique architecture. Major as well as minor festivals of Shia community are celebrated here. Being a district headquarters, it is well connected with the summer capital and other parts of Kashmir.

3.28 VIVEKANANDA KENDRA NAGDANDI ACHABAL

Situated at a distance of about 10 kms from Anantnag, 3 kms from Achabal, in the beautiful environs, is a splendid place called Nagdandi. Away from the heavy rush and crowd, it’s cool and calm atmosphere, takes one close to himself as well as to nature.

*Sri Ramakrishna Maha Sammelan managed by Vivekananda Rock Memorial Committee Kanyakumari, is situated at Nagdandi.* A saint Ashokananda Maharaj came here in the year 1934-38 and worshipped at this place for years altogether. His *Samadhi* is inside the ashram. This Hindu


\(^{110}\) ibid
pilgrimage spot is also revered because of an ancient spring and few idols of ancient times. The pilgrimage spot also has a library, and a yoga centre. Recently, Newton's Memorial Science centre has also been installed in the campus. It is a major attraction in the area for tourists and pilgrims. The Kendra has its headquarters in Kanyakumari. It is engaged in various religious, social and environmental activities. Every day, there is a heavy rush of devotees as well as needy visiting this place. Annual festival is held on the day Chhari Mubarak (linked with Amarnath yatra) reaches here.

3.29 THE CAVE TEMPLE OF LORD SHIVA

The Valley of Kashmir is an abode of Lord Shiva. The Lord has made this part of the earth very sacred and special due to his presence and meditation for hundreds of years. His presence can be felt here and his specimens signify the same. Recently, in August 2001, a Cave Temple dedicated to Lord Shiva has been found by nomadic Bakerwals, Ghulam Qadir and his son-in-law. It is situated in cool and calm environment of a beautiful valley near Holy Cave of Shri Amarnathji at an altitude of around 12,500 feet.

The cave-temple is located just above the treeline. It is positioned in a rocky portion of a medium sized meadow that is now being called Shiv Marg. It is a natural cave, consisting of at least three caves within the main cave. The first cave is quite shallow. It has a whitish stone idol, a bust of Lord Shiva, which is a little more than a foot high. Certain things quite visible from the main idol are, Shivji's top-knot, the cobra (Nag Devata) coiled around his neck and a hump on his other shoulder, and some of the deities' facial features are also visible. There are more than a dozen Shiv Lingas near this idol; the oval tops of most of them had been sliced off quite neatly; only one Shivling in the first cave is fully intact. It is protected from the winds by another whitish idol,
the features of which have been blurred even more. All these idols and lingums have been carved out of a natural, raised platform, around five or six feet higher than the ground platform. All of these idols are fixed to the ground below. To the left of first cave is a third, dark cave, it is extremely deep, water trickles through this cave. If one runs his hands along its ceiling it gets filled with a whitish, lime like paste. A perennial spring, namely, Amrit Kund is some 250 metres from the cave temple. This Kund (Tank) has a tiny outlet in the front. This is typical of all Yonis on which a lingam is placed in Shiv temples.

The Cave Temple is accessible nine months of a year. It falls on the Pahalgam-Chandanwari road before Chandanwari, at a short distance from this road. The distance varies according to the route chosen among the three possible routes to the cave temple. One route is from the ‘camping site’ just before Chandanwari, a distance of 4.5 or 5 kms upto the Cave Temple. Second route is from the bridge just before the shops at Chandanwari, around 5 kms long. Third route is from Kud (or Kurah) Pathri and is the longest route to the Cave Temple, its length being 6 or 7 kms. Government has ordered construction of a “Pony Track” from Chandanwari road to the Cave Temple some 4 years back but still the track is on documents.

3.30 SACRED SPRINGS OF THE VALLEY

In the language of Kashmir, the word for ‘a spring’ is ‘Naag’, and Nagas are considered to be the earliest inhabitants of the Valley. In a sense, this is borne out by geology since that the Valley was once "a vast span of water, similar to a huge dam, walled in by high mountains". The Nilamata Purana records how the Valley was elevated out of water and left under the care of

---

114 Most of the information regarding this newly explored cave have been taken from Perwaz Deewan’s book “Kashmir” as well as Individual observation of the researcher at the spot

115 As revealed by officials at Tourism Department, Srinagar, and present status checked by the Scholar at the site

116 Farid, Syed Ajaz, op cit, pg 13
Nagas, of whom Nila, the son of Kashyapa, was the chief. Kashmir is named after Kashyapa. The term 'Naag' stands for spring; 'Chesma,' and 'Negin' for small springs'. An auspicious and famous river of Kashmir, the Vitasta (Jhelum) originates from a spring near Verinag and is responsible for water supply to most parts of the Valley. The religious significance of the river is established by Nilamata Purana, myth of the Indigo Goddess, when it records the entire land of Kashmir as the material manifestation of Uma and describes her as the divine form of the Vitasta. Springs though are found in other parts of world also but the ones in Kashmir are the reason of miracles and individual need of some spiritual personalities. Hence, are kept at high religious order.

People take the water of these springs to their homes for the ailing and healthy because they believe in its healing power. There are enormous number of springs found all over the Valley. A sample specimen of these sacred springs is underlined below.

3.31 NAGBAL

It is situated in east corner of Anantnag town, at a distance of 60 kms from the summer capital. Located in the cool environ under the shade of chinnars, at the base of a mountain, the entire complex is properly known as Nagbal and is a famous Hindu religious center in Anantnag. The spring rises beautifully from the foot of a small hill-lock and is dedicated to the worship of Ananta or Vishno. By the left side of the holy spring, a small temple had been constructed in the times of Maharaja Ranbir Singh, the second Dogra ruler of Kashmir. A Gurdwara has also been built in the same complex of Nagbal.
3.32 VETHA - VATUR (VETASTHA)

Vetha-Vatur, also called Vitastatru, is a pilgrimage spot located at about 2 kms to the west of Verinag Spring, which is 26 kms from Anantnag. It is the fountain head of Vitasta river. Every year, the pilgrimage to this holy place is usually held on 13\textsuperscript{th} day of the dark half of the Bhadra month (August-September)\textsuperscript{121} which is attended by big horde of devotees. Vetha-Vatur can be approached through the link road, which turns off, from the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway at Lower Munda.

3.33 SUT HARAN

Sut Haran is situated near the famous meadow of Tosamaidan in the midst of thick forest. The legend has it that during his 14 year exile (Vanvas) Ram Chander passed through these woods and stayed here along with Lakshman and Sita. It is said that Sita would bath in the spring which consequently got its name from her as ‘Sita Haran’\textsuperscript{122}. The name got later changed to ‘Sut Haran’. Close to the spring is a rock which, according to the legend, was used by Sita to sit on. The spring is also said to be the origin of a small lake, ‘Tosamaidan’. The water of the spring is very sweet. It is very sacred spring so for as Hindu religion is called, although, it is respected by Muslims and Sikhs as well, they also believe in its spiritual character.

3.34 PUSHKAR NAG

The spring owes its name to the village of its origin, Poshker. The spring finds a mention in the chronicle, Neelamat Purana, according to which a devotee was spiritually as much benefited by taking a dip in the spring as by a night-long recitation of the Vedas\textsuperscript{123}. It is located in east of Poshker village between Khag and Ferozpora. Kashmiri Pandits offer here special prayers

\textsuperscript{121} Bhat, A. R., op cit, pg 103
\textsuperscript{122} Chatterji, J.C., op cit, pg 175
\textsuperscript{123} Ibid, pg 185
known as *Diavai Paath* and the devotees take a dip in the spring during the month of Sawan.

**3.35 SHIV NAG**

Shivnag is equally holy for Hindus and Muslims. This spring, located in *Trehgam*, is a symbol of Hindu Muslim unity. *Muslim Ziarats of Syed Ibraheem Bukhari and Mir Kherarullah, Jamia Masjid and a Shiv Temple stand on the same bank of the spring*.

The order of presentation of the above mentioned pilgrimage sites (except some caves and springs) not only highlights their religious importance but also throws light on the architectural construction done during different periods of history. It also gives an idea about the patronage given by different rulers for the propagation of religion. The above mentioned pilgrimage spots are the sample specimen of the vast treasure of Pilgrimage Tourism Potential of the Valley. As pilgrimage tourism of the Valley is the garden full of different colors and charm of Pilgrimage tourism sites, it is not possible to efficiently highlight and explore all this treasure in one study. It needs an individual approach on different pilgrimage tourism interests of the Valley.

The study has drawn attention to different colours of the garland of pilgrimage tourism of Kashmir, for example, various Hindu pilgrimage spots, like, Shankaracharya Temple, Sharika Devi Shrine, Kheer Bhawani Temple, Awantipore Temple, Khrew Temple, Vishnu Pad, Cave Temple of Lord Shiva and Vivekananda Kendra Memorial. Sacred Springs, like, Nagbal, Vetha-Vetur, Sut Haran, Pushkar Nag and Shiv Nag. Diverse Buddhist Pilgrimage spots like, Harwan, Parihaspora, Panderathan, Vihara of Saura, Raithan and Rajagir. Pilgrimage spots linked with Sikhism like, Patshahi Pehli and Chatti Padshahi. Varied Muslim shrines, like, Dastgir Sahib Shrine, Khanqah-e-Maula Shrine, Chrar-e-Sharief Shrine, Shah Zainudin Wali Shrine, Baba Reshi Shrine, Baba

---

124 Individual observation of the scholar at the spot
Shakoor-ud-din Shrine, Syed Hassan Mantaqi Shrine, Pinjoora Asar-e-Sharief Shrine, Hazratbal Shrine, Makhdoom Sahib Shrine and Imambara Badgam. Some of the most important pilgrimage spots which can act as major pilgrimage and tourism attractions have been thoroughly discussed. In addition to these adequately highlighted pilgrimage sites, there are still lots of other temples, caves and springs, monasteries, viharas and stupas, revered gurdwaras and shrines which are of high religious order but have not still came to limelight. Hence, considering the list of varied pilgrimage spots presented through this study and other spots which are still in darkness, the hypothesis “Kashmir valley has vast potential for multi-religious pilgrimage tourism” gets proved. An attempt has been made in this Chapter to sufficiently highlight maximum pilgrimage sites, particularly those which are kept in high religious order. But there exists further scope for exploration by dragging out pilgrimage spots in the Valley which have gone in oblivion. Future researchers may pick the thread from here and conduct studies ahead of these highlighted pilgrimage sites of Kashmir. The next chapter deals with the “Management of Pilgrimage Tourism of Kashmir”.