(The Sight of blood is abhorrent to a Kashmiri)
(Lawrence Str W.R.)

(To my own countrymen who have suffered)

KASHMIR
Social and Cultural History

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PREFACE

This is a collection of my scripts written over the last several years for journals and newspapers. They have, therefore, naturally varied themes though each piece essays a point of view in a limited manner. I just thought of putting them together in the present form and, therefore, these are with those who are interested in the history of native land (Kashmir) and can be found worth.

(G.M. Rabbani)

Sathu (Sadi Qazi Zada)
Srinagar, Kashmir.
Nov., 1985
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SATHU, (Sadi-Qazi Zada)
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Administrative System Under Kashmir Sultans

The administrative set up in mediaval Kashmir did not undergo a drastic change but remained intact which was prevalent in ancient Kashmir. Sanskrit remained the official language under early Sultans and the Civil servants known as Kayashtas continued in office un-disturbed.

With the advent of sayyids and missionaries of Islam from Central Asia and Iran during the fourteenth and fifteenth Centuries, the administrative system slowly began to change. The tendency to model the administration on the system prevalent in other Muslim countries began in 1338 A.D. and new institutions under Arabic and Persian influence were imported and old official designation became out dated. The main administrative development seems to have been complete during the reign of Zain-ul-Abdin (1450 A.D.)

The kingdom of Kashmir was divided into three principle administrative divisions.

1. Kramrajaya is Kamraz (Territory below Srinagar)

2. Mudhavrajaya is Maraz (Territory on both sides of the River Jhelum above and including Srinagar).
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3. Lohra......Loran......Lohran is modern Poonch and Mandi which was added to the kingdom of Kashmir in the middle of 10th century and these divisions were further sub-divided into Paraganas known as Tehsils today.

Earlier list of parganas prepared during the Chak period was forty-one. The number changed under Mughal and Afghan Governors and during the Sikh rule these were further reduced to thirty-six as stated by Mr. William Moorcroft in 1823 A.D. and Baron-Von-Hugel in 1835 A.D. Under Dogra rule the paraganas were reduced to eleven after the fashion of the British provinces. But no regard was paid into the historical division of the country. The old position of districts remained in tact uptill 1948 A.D.

It was in 1320 A.D. a Ladakhi prince Lachan-Gyalbu Rinchan after conversion to Islam proclaimed himself Sultan of Kashmir assuming the title of Sultan Saddur-ud-Din and thus laid the foundations of an independent Muslim Kingdom of Kashmir. After his death Shah Mir and his successors infused vigour and efficiency into the administration. The powers and prestige of the Sultans began to expand gradually. The Sultan of Kashmir began to recover authority and control over the neighbouring states including Ladakh, Baltistan and other frontier regions.

In the administrative set up first of all we had the office of Sultan or Monarchy which was hereditary. Sultan was the head of the State. He was an autocrat and an apex of the whole organisation. His authority was supreme. He was the Law giver as well an interpreter. He was the supreme commander of the armed forces and led campaigns either personally or through commanders. He could declare war and peace. The Sultan was assisted by council of ministers and high officials in his duties. Ministers were chosen from the leading aristocracy who were very powerful and prevented the Sultan in becoming a despot. When the Sultan was weak or ineffective the real power was in the hands of nobles who set up or pulled down rulers and parcelled out the kingdoms.

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among themselves. The great authority which they wielded proved harmful to the country, it prevented the establishment of a strong centralised government. It led the formation of cliques and rebellions. Sultans had coins minted in their own names.

Next to Monarchy was the prime minister or Wazir-i-Azam. In the region of Sultan-Zain-ul-abdin Wazir's position became "above anybody" and began to be chosen by the Sultan himself. He dictated the policy of the state and exercised the supreme power of the Government. He was the head of the civil administration and the highest official in the State. He was the constant advisor to the ruler and enjoyed his utmost confidence. He led the armed forces. Upon his ability and wisdom depended the welfare of the people and the stability of the Government. After the death of the Sultan Zain-ul-abdin wazirs were so powerful that they reduced the sultans to the status of mere puppets and themselves became de-facto rulers.

Next to the Wazir was the Dewani-Kul (Finance-cum-Revenue Minister) or Mushri Mal, the most important officer in the kingdom. It came into existence in the reign of Sultan Fateh Shah 1516 A.D. who was anxious to reduce the power of the Wazir Azam. The Wazir Azam retained the military, executive and judicial functions but the power to control the finance was taken away from him and placed in the hands of Dewani-Kul.

Sheikh-ul-Islam was the head of the ecclesiastical department. This post had been created by Sultan Sikander in 1380 A.D. and continued under later Sultanate and Mughal rule. The Sheikh-ul-Islam was the representative of the Ullema and his duty was to see that Sharia law was enforced. A person of high learning and piety was appointed to this post. He performed the coronation ceremony and was legal and religious adviser to the Sultan, Chakhs rulers abolished this post and instead created Qaztul Qazat who became the Qazi of Srinagar later on.
The administration of Justice was in the hands of Qazi. He was assisted by Mufti who gave rulings on cases according to the Islamic laws. Next to Mufti was subordinate judicial officer known as Mir-Adil who functioned in every district to decide property suits. Justice was administered by the Sultan and the Wazir personally in the court which was open to all. The decision of Civil suits was according to the Sharia or the personal laws of the contending parties. Hindus and Buddhists were ruled according to their own laws. The pandit or shastari or Lama explained the personal laws of Hindus and Buddhist. Status of pandit was the same as that of the Mufti. Sultans were accessible to the people. They dealt out justice impartially but the punishments were not according to Sharia. Kashmir Sultans like Skander. Ali Shah and Zain-ul-abadin never favoured capital punishments nor lashes were inflicted on the criminals. Criminals were made to work in public buildings and roads. Highest punishment was exile.

Mir Bakhshi was the head of the military Dept. He kept the registers of soldiers, distributed the pay and was responsible for their recruitment. This post was created by Sultan Ali Shah in 1570 A.D.

Amir Dar or Lord Chamberlane was another important officer who always remained in the company of the Sultan. Petitions were presented through him and no one was allowed to enter the royal presence without his permission. He made arrangements for important celebrations and was thus the master of the ceremonies.

The Nayaak was in charge of passes leading to the valley of Kashmir. He was directly under the Central Government. The post was hereditary. They were given Jagirs in lieu of their services. They had at their disposal a force which was stationed at fortified out posts and they had to see that no one entered the valley or left without Khatti Rah (permit). They were required to defend the valley and prevent smuggling and collect customs duties on goods exported and imported. When the Nayaaks proved traitors, the valley was invaded. During the Mughal times this duty was entrusted in the hands of Maliks who acted as “Wardens of Marches”.

Khazandar was treasurer. He sometimes played the part in securing the succession of a claimant to the throne.

The internal administration of Srinagar was controlled by the city prefect known as Kotwal. He had to collect the fines from the people and had to look after their morals. He was responsible for law and order in the city and protect the citizens from thieves or robbers.

Muhtasib was another important post who supervised the markets inspected weights and measures. He had to see that public prayers were conducted properly five times a day, that intoxicating liquors and drugs were not manufactured or sold publicly that no one was found drunk in public places and that gambling and immoral livings were not carried on. Every village had a Muhtasib.

As already said the valley of Kashmir was divided into three districts. Each district was kept in charge of Hakim-nish which remained in vogue upto 1948 A.D. He generally belonged to the royal family and was a man of trust. Hakim Ala was required to maintain law and order in his district and collect revenue and dispense justice. Each district was further sub-divided into several Tehsils and kept in charge of a sheikdar. Each Tehsil had a number of villages, which formed the unit of administration. Each village had an Accountant or patwari. For maintaining law and order each Tehsil or pargana had a police Officer called Sarhang Zada who had under him a group of villages. Dooms and Chandals were under this police officer who swept the houses in the day and kept watch in the night and for this service they were given food by the villagers. The post of Lumbardar was introduced for the first time by Raja Todarmal during Akbar's time. The Sultans were kept informed by the doings of their subjects, the ministers and officials through the net work of spies. Spies were kept on the frontiers of the valley to keep an eye on the enemy agents and Nayyaks.
During the Mughal period the administrative system underwent a revolutionary change. Kashmir became a province or a Subah of Mughal empire. The form of the administration was brought in line with the rest of the country. Mughal officers took over the charge of the different departments. The official hierarchy gradually expanded. The new portfolios came into existence. Each Governor or Subhedar brought with him his own secretary. He had his advisors, Nayab Subhedar (Deputy Governor) Sahab Kar (Chief Secretary), Dewan (Controller of Revenue and Finance), Qanungo, (Settlement Commissioner) and peshkar (Personal Assistant). Subhedar invariably belonged to the Mughal Nobility. He was the representative of the Sovereign. During medieval period Kashmiri pandits were treated with respect. They regained their power and prestige and held the position of trust and responsibility in the administration.

In the end let me conclude that the administrative setup was efficient and happiest under Mughals and Afghans, Kashmir was a province subject to laws administered from the Mughal and Afghan capitals provincial Governors issued regulations which were in the nature of by laws and Muslims were kept deliberately illiterate.

2

Coinage in Ancient Kashmir

In the numerous passages of chroniclers of Jonaraja, Srivara and in the Lokaprasaka there is some mention of Dinaras which states the price of commodities, amount of salaries, etc. It is clear that it has been a currency of the rulers of ancient Kashmir. The tradition prevailing in Kashmir shows that the currency of Kashmir was based on a decimal system of values starting from a very small unit. From the literary evidence Kushans (Kanishka Havishka and Vasudev) ruled the Valley of Kashmir in early centuries of Christian era. Their rule was fairly well established. The coins issued by these rulers were in actual circulation in Kashmir as media of exchange. It was a bimetallic currency of gold and copper. Since Kashmir was a flourishing trade centre of India and central Asia, there must have poured into the valley enough of gold do enable its rulers to mint gold coins in abundance. This metal naturally facilitated trade with foreign countries as gold has from time immemorial been the medium of international exchange. The coins issued under Kushans were of inferior type in metal. Though these coins have been recovered at different places, of Kushan empire but it is certain that these coins hailed from the valley of Kashmir. After imperial Kushans, Kashmir witnessed the rule of Kidara Kushanas. The gold coins of Kidaras closely follow the imperial Kushan type having king standing on the obverse and goddess seated on the reverse. There is in addition the word Kidara written in Brahm characters of about 4th century A.D. The coin type including the legend Kidara
was adopted on the coins of the local rulers of Kashmir from about the 6th century A.D. and continued until 9th century. A Kashmirian poet of the 9th century remarks that the poems of his time were called Kidarasic. Next we come to the time of Mehrkula the Hun king 6th century A.D. The theory of Mehrkula's coins being struck in Kashmir lacks force. No coin of Mehrkula was found within the confines of Kashmir. Even kings of Karkuta dynasty adopted the letters Kidara in keeping with the past tradition. He struck coins in the valley and Mr. Cunigagg thinks that one of these types is a copy of Kushan king where in the king is standing on the obverse and the goddess seated on the reverse with legend Jayatu Mihiraklua was struck in Kashmir. A large number of coins have been found in Kashmir which are at present housed in S.P. Singh Museum, Srinagar and ascribe to a king named Torman. He issued coins which are invariably in copper instead of gold and follow the coins of Kidara Kushanas having standing on the obverse and a goddess holding lotus on the reverse, and this continued till the beginning of Karkot rule 627 A.D. Even though Kashmir had attained great prosperity, we find an electrum coinage of mixed metal which contain gold, silver and copper in different proportions. A large number of these coins have been found in distant places as Uther Pradesh and Bihar showing the brisk trade going on between Kashmir and rest of India. The name of Sri Torman in Brahmı character is written on the obverse the reverse contains the legend Kidara written from the left. There is a mention of a king named Torman in Kalhana's Rajtarangini who was a brother of ruling monarch Hiroya father of king Parvarsana II. But Hun king Torman is not known to have ruled over Kashmir. Torman of Kashmir was different from Torman the father of Mehrkula. It is his son Mihirkulu who came to exercise his sway over the valley and introduced the copper coins of his father. During the latter Hun rulers economic condition of the valley worsened. Over land routes were disturbed and closed down. Kashmir became a "landlocked territory" detached from rest of the world. It became an impoverished country. Gold and base gold coins went out of circulation. After the death of Mihirkulu we come to the reign of Parversen, the founder of modern Srinagar. Who had again coinage of gold and silver. On the obverse of silver coin, Lakshmi is seated with lotus in her left hand, to the right is the word Sri Parvara, on the reverse is king standing to left crescent topped sceptre in left hand. His gold coins are of slightly different type from his silver. The goddess seated on the lion with lotus in left hand is described by Cunningham as Lakshmi is probably to be identified with goddess Ambika. The presence of crescent topped standard shows the monarch's inclination to Shavism a fact which Kalhana agrees. The name of Sri Parversena is written in Brahmi characters of about 5th century A.D.

Between the time of Parversen and the rise of Karkotas under Duralabhavardhana founder of the dynasty are to be assigned some coins of rude workmanship of seated goddess and standing type containing the name of Sri Narendra on the obverse and Kida on the reverse. Sri Narendra was king of Karkota dynasty was also the first member of the family who struck coins in his own name which were in circulation even during Lalitadiya and his grandson Jayapida's time. Lalitadiya had a prosperous reign over 36 years but did not struck coins and kept some copper coins of his father and grand father in circulation. Jayapida is said to have struck coins in his name. The legend Sri Vinayadiya is written on the obverse and the words Jayati and Kida appear on the reverse. There was great debasement in currency during the reign of latter Karkot kings, no doubt due to the instable political conditions prevailing in Kashmir. But when under Avantiverman Kashmir witnessed an era of consolidation and peace, we find again the mixed gold coins in circulation. There is one class of coins issued in the joint names of Queen Dida and Khemagupta. Kalhana states that king Khemagupta was so enamoured by his wife Dida that he became known Dida Ksema. Excepting under Harsha (1089 A.D.) when in the beginning of his reign he struck gold and silver coins. His gold coins are of two classes. The obverse of the class one
describes a horse with a lance to its right. The legend goes as Harshdeva. Its legend Sri Harshdeva on the reverse an elephant on the right. His gold coin have been in abundance but silver and copper are rare and the last Lohara kings reverted to the copper coinage. It appears that the rulers, the Damaras, rich merchants, and nobility were engaged in amassing bullion in the form of heavy ornaments. King Yasarkara carried with him two and a half thousand gold pieces when he went to pass his last days in the temple at Bijbehara. Keshmagupta and other kings and queens had the rich treasures of gold and ornaments although there is no evidence of gold coinage, copper coins were alone in circulation.

A part from political instability the main reason for withdrawal of gold from circulation was the complete break down of trade and commerce with the rest of India following the policy of "isolation" adopted by the later kings. Bullion ceased to enter the valley and since there was no need of precious metals for settling transaction with outside traders, the remaining few gold coins seem to have gone out of circulation.

Besides metallic coins, cowrieshells were used in daily transaction. The cowrieshells have been in use almost all over India when metallic coins were not invented. It was the principal medium of exchange in daily transaction. But sometimes it was found to be current side by side with gold silver and copper coins. It Ksemendra is to be believed in the 11th century A.D. Cowries were used in daily transactions. The lowest denomination of the prevailing currency was cowrshall (varatake) is evident from Kalhana. The use of cowrieshells prevailed up to Jonaraja's time (16th century). Another medium of exchange in early Kashmir was paddy or Dhani which we still observe in the rural areas of Kashmir. In the 9th century the land revenue of Kashmir was collected in the form of Dhani or Paddy. In fact payments of rents, fines, wages etc. were also paid equivalent to Dhani or Paddy. Barter system was also prevalent in old Kashmir and the

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Dhani or Paddy was the main medium of exchange. It was an essential commodity and therefore acceptable to all. It had the quality of being divisible in the minutest portions. In a slightly later stage of economic life, cowrieshells possibly came in use.

From the coins the general economic conditions of the people in the Valley can be examined. Under Kushan rule Kashmir shared the prosperity of the great empire when bigmettallic currency prevailed. The over land trade routes were opened which enriched the Valley and raised her economic standard to a high level. It was during this flourishing period that the Roman golds being ultimately transformed into minted Kushan coins became current in Kashmir. The gold coins were adopted for carrying on trade with foreign countries. Since foreign countries would not accept anything but gold. The copper coins was presumably the medium of exchange in local transaction. From the 9th century onwards there is no evidence that gold coins were in actual circulation. The reason for withdrawal of gold coins is not for to seek. It is presumed that gold coins were needed for payment to foreign merchants who would not accept any other metal. Now when trade with foreign countries came to standstill due to instability and change of government in foreign countries, gold coins were no longer required. Whatever little trade was going on could be paid back by gold bullions and as far as Indian territory were concerned with cowrieshells as well. It is clear that from the 10th century onwards Kashmir had a coinage of copper only. Copper was extracted and minted in the Valley but there were no gold mines. All gold appears to have poured from outside by way of trade and commerce. When trade with foreign countries ceased, the entry of gold also stopped. Another cause for the withdrawal of gold coins from 10th century onwards must be sought in the operation of general economic law that when coins of more than one metal are in circulation, the coins of less valuable metal from the market. Bad money drives away the good.
Ancient Srinagar—A Glimpse

Srinagar is the symbol and emblem of the valley of Kashmir. Scholars in Mereaval Kashmir called it 'shari Kashmir'. Alberuni who reached near our borders in 1021 A.D. generally calls it 'Shari Kashmir'. All hopes, fears, glories and feelings whether these are physical or spiritual are represented here in amplitude. One cannot know fully the Kashmir vale unless he knows this historic city of our forefathers—Srinagar. This is the royal and ancient city and the present name is Srinagar. During the Muslim rule people called it 'Shahar' and at present it is locally known as such. "The city says Alberuni, 'covers a space of foursakhis'. But when the Sikh rulers of the Punjab annexed Kashmir 1819 A.D. they restored its ancient name of Srinagar which was Srinagari. This city has a chequered history and for the first time, we find its mention in Kalhan Pandit's political works. Raja Tarangni. According to him ancient Kashmir has had a number of capitals. The most important of these was Srinagari—the city of Sri, an appellation of the goddess Lakhshmi. Nagar means the city or may mean wealth or beauty or Soveriegnty. Lakhshmi was then quite a popular deity worshipped by the inhabitants of the valley and we find quite a number of shrines of goddess Sri existed in the valley and the founder of Srinagar is created with the establishment of five large shrines of the goddess Lakhshmi. The dominant faith of the people was the Naga worship snake cult. This had been the earliest religion of the land. But long before the Vedic Aryans had introduced the philosophy of Shavism and Vishnu cult.

This royal city was situated at the old site of Pandrithan village, two miles in the east of present Srinagar. It was founded in the 3rd century B.C. by King Asoka when he was a devotee and worshipper of Buteshwar and had before this built two shrines at Vijbro (present Bijbehara) known as Ashokishwar Shrines. It (Srinagari) carries the old memory in its name which is the corruption of the word Puranadishtan (old capital). It was a large and a prosperous city rolling in wealth. If our first chronicler Kalhan Pt. is to be believed, it contained ninety six lakhs of houses so high that these touched the clouds. Its real extent is indicated by the ruins of an old temple at the site of present Badam Bagh Cantonement. The ruler caused temples Stupas and Vihars to be constructed in this city. The stone architecture was prominent and Greaco-Buddhist influence was predominant. It enjoyed a privilege of being a metropolitan city up to the end of 6th century A.D.

Buddism had found its footing in the valley in the early 3rd century B.C. Buddhism was first preached in Kashmir by Midhantika and the rulers of Kashmir patronised Buddhism up to the end of 11th century. Thereafter in the 6th century a new city was founded by King Parversen near the present Srinagar fort in the areas of present day Makkah graveyard and Nowhatta. It extended up to the right bank of the Jhelum river near Aali Kadal Bridge. The city was then named as Parversenpur or Praverpur which remained in use up to 11th century and later on resumed the name of old city of Srinagar. Since both Srinagar and Praverpur existed side by side the old name remained in common use with the inhabitants.

Medieval historians according to Prof. Wilson Haider Malik of Chadur and Azam Diddawari mention that the old
Srinagar built by King Ashok was Sir Kanligund near the temple town of Mattan. To this tradition George Bhular, the modern Indologist refers "that some Brahmins of the valley also think that it lay near Islamabad". But according to the Chinese traveller, Hieun Tsang who visited and stayed in Srinagar for two years in 631 A.D. mentions the capitals, the old and new. The old city lay in the South of the present city "near the great mountain". The description is agreeable with the identification of capital with the present Srinagar and the old capital at Pandraithan and its surroundings. Why this site was chosen? Perhaps for intrinsic value. Later rulers built their capital at other places in the valley. Lalitaditya built his capital at Parhasapur six miles below Srinagar on Ikhmanpur plateau. His son Vijraditya built his capital at Shankerpur now known as Pattan. Jayapid had his capital at Jayapur modern Anderkot village in Sonawari Tehsil. Avanti-Verma founded his capital at Woontpur. Kushan rulers, Kanishka, Jushka, Havishka built their capitals at Kanispur (Baramulla), Jushkpur (modern Zakur) near Hazratbal Shrine Srinagar. Havishkpur, now Ushkur village, two miles in the east of Baramulla and so on. Srinagar was then put in the district of Madhvarajay-Maraz, present day Anantnag and Pulwama districts above Srinagar from earliest times.

The founder of Srinagar built a number of Shrines in the city dedicated to Shiva, Vishnu, Kali and other deities. Among the temples at present is Maha Kalishwari near Fath Kadal. He divided the city into eight wards which are intact even today. Each word was supervised by a ward officer deity known as Bhairav in whose honour temples were built and are even worshiped today by the Brahmins of the valley.

Srinagar became the centre and mistress of propogation of Buddhist doctrine and was patronised by the local rulers beside by side during the early centuries of Christian era. It radiated Buddhist influence to Central Asian countries Siberia, Manchuria, Sinkiang (Xinjiang) and Tibet (Xizang). King Jayendra founded a grand Vihar known as Jayendravihaarnear our present Jamia Masjid which was visited by the Chinese pilgrim Hieun-Tsang who stayed here for two years and copied Sutters and other Buddhist manuscripts. Jayendra had erected a silver statu of great Buddha in this Vihar. Another great Vihar was founded by the queen of King Megvahan known as Amrit Bhawan Vihar in our present day localty at Wonta Bhawan, Srinagar. Chinese pilgrim, Oukang visited this Vihar in the middle of 8th century. There existed one more grand Vihar at Srinagar in Narvor locality, called Narvdh Vihar. From here, Chinese traveller spent four years in the valley. On pilgrimage to these holy sites and in studying Sanskrit. Besides in the neighbourhood of Srinagar there were three hundred Vihars and innumerable stupas and sacred images. Tibetan Buddhism drew inspiration from Kashmir. Fourth Buddhist Council was convened near Srinagar under the Chairmanship of Katyaniputra where a split occurred in the Buddhist Church known as Mahayana School. Unfortunately Budhism fell on its evil days from 9th century. Its place was taken by the rulers of Shiva and Vaishnava faith. Srinagar was acclaimed as Shardadesh. All religions, faiths enjoyed wide popularity in the valley even Marco Polo* Venetian traveller states "that at this true Srinagar was pre-eminent among the idolatrous countries and it was original source from which Idolatory had spread around".

It became the pinnacle of fame due to goddess of learning (Saraswati). Even today young ones in the plains kneel down before Kashmir as if moving towards the spring of knowledge.

Bilhan, our great Scholar poet of 11th century, native of Khannauj village (Srinagar) gives a vivid picture of pera- pur (Srinagar) and says "it is the most charming and surpassing in beauty all other cities. For its coolness in summer and for the beauty of its grooves, even those who have reached the garden of celestials could not forget it". Srinagar being the centre and mistress of cultural activities, she produced exponents of Shiv philosophy like Sri Kanth, Somnand and Vasugupta, Kallat and Probhmani Bhat, the great Abhava-gupta. Khemraj, Udhhbhat and Mamatta Acharaya. They
adorned courts of rulers of Kashmir at various times and pried their inspired pens under the Sun of Srinagar. Equally were important the Rehterician Anand Vardhan and a composer of Buddhist poetry. Shiv Swamin, Utpaldev, Rattankar propounded and enriched the philosophy and culture of their native land Kashmir, Kshemandir, the literature also flourished during the period. Though he was a Shavite in the beginning, but later on became a Vaishnava he was a versatile genius and wrote didactic and satiric poems.

Brahmans were the highly privileged class. They received agrahars (Land grants) from their rulers. Nilmatpur, 'Kutanimatta Kavy' tell us that caste system on Indian pattern was non-existant in the valley. There were of course low castes like Dooms, Chandals and Hanjis. The origin of Kashmir Brahman is obscure but there is a clear evidence that there had been several large scale migration of the Brahman from the plains of India into the valley from a remote period, Raja Tarangni refers "to the Brahman who had come from Aryadessa". King Mihirakula brought about 5000 brahmans from Gandhara, region and settled them in the valley in the 6th century. Agriculture was adopted as the principal means of livelihood by the bulk of the people. Cultivators were hard pressed but got little share in the produce at the hands of big landlords. Besides a number of crafts and industries had often been developed at an early period. By the middle of 7th century Srinagar merchants were extremely rich and owned palaces which far excelled the royal palace in comforts and decoration. Sudras were not considered as degraded in the society of Srinagar. The artisans, weavers and carpenters commanded respect. There was no purdah system among famels. They moved in the society. During festivals she accompanied her husband and her relatives. The custom of dedicating girls to the temples for singing and dance had been an early customs in Srinagar. King Jalauk gave hundred bodies of his Serabile to serve in the temple Jesthudra of Srinagar (modern Zeebyeur temple). Budha's birthday was a chief festival upto 11th century. The king was an absolute ruler. Divinity was attributed to him.

To Brahmins he was a part and parcel of Lord Shiva. To Buddhists he was Sarva Mahashakya. When he was oppressive, Brahmins resorted to hunger strike and he had to yield.

Rice is mentioned as the major food of the inhabitants of Srinagar. Marco Polo tells us when crop of rice was reaped, Kashmiris performed the ceremony of Navanna. Grape was cultivated in every house in Srinagar. Utpalsaka (Wopalak) Sanda (Haind) Kachagueca (Karaich) were the commonest vegetables. Meat was generally taken on festivals. The fowl, the ram and goat served the dishes. Fish and fish juice was considered as strength giving tonic. Such was a brief glimpse of our native land, ancient Srinagar Culturally, Politically and economically, Sir Edward young-husband laments and says that "Srinagar should have been built on the plateau (Kerewa). Just above Pampore from aesthetic point of view. Either of these sites would have been preferable to the present lowly situation amid the swamps so muggy in summer and so chilly in summer".
Medieval Srinagar—A glimpse

With the advent of Muslim rule, a new era started in Kashmir. Islam had by now made progress in Central Asia and in northern Kashmir—Chitral, Gilgit and Hunza. A fair number of people had joined new faith and order. Kota Rani, a daring woman had assumed the reins of Government in 1318 A.D. These were the days when the Manghol invader Dalchu of Lamaist faith had just reduced Perver Sen's city (Srinagar) into ashes and only eleven families had survived to rebuild the new city of Srinagar. "Srinagar and its neighbourhood", says Jonaraj (Zoonraj), was like a region before Creation, a vast field with men without food and full of grass. When the violence caused by Dalchu ceased and the son found not his father nor the father his son". Out of these ashes Kota Rani rebuilt the capital and gave utmost relief and succor to the afflicted inhabitants of Srinagar. Richan Gyalbu Budhist and now king Saddarud-Din after conversion had since arrived from Ladakh and married Kota Rani. He was very popular and captured power but died soon in 1329 A.D. leaving Srinagar in disorder and chaos. Richan built for his perceptor (Pir)—Bulbul Shah—a hospice near his palace on the banks of Jhelum. He also built first Jamia Masjid near his palace at Aali Kadal. He (Richan) is buried in Bulbul Lanker Mohalla, a neglected and forgotten mazzar, Alas ! A Muslim adventurer Shah Mir had found access in her court and by ability and tact had strengthened his position and cooperated with Kota Rani in organising resistance to the Monghol invasion. He now got an opportunity to overthrow Kota Rani, the ruler. The queen abandoned her capital Srinagar and rebuilt the old site of Jayapidas (Vinaditty) capital at Anderkot near Sumbal village, Tehsil Sonawari formerly Jayapur. Anderkot had a fort and was situated in the middle of Sumbal lake. The town, its markets and dwelling houses were on the other side of the lake. Anderkot had three large temples where pilgrims from far off place would come here and worship. Anderkot (Jayapur) offered an excellent site for putting up defence against enemy. Kota Rani was defeated here and imprisoned where she died in 1339 A.D. Shahmir laid here the foundation of a new dynasty called Shahmiri dynasty which ruled Kashmir for over three hundred years with the title of Sultan Shams-ud-Din. Anderkot remained the capital for over forty years and here he (Shahmir) lies buried—almost a forgotten ruler. His son Allaud-Din erected many buildings and beautiful gardens. By this time propagation centre of Islam had begun near about Jamia Masjid and Anderkot lost its past glory and royal status. Sultan Allaud-Din shifted his residence near the old site of Rinchapur (Aali Kadal) called it Allaudin Pora present day Khanqahi-Maulia and its suburbs. In 1361 A.D. Srinagar was hit by a devastating flood. The Jhelum and its tributaries were in spate and low lands in Srinagar were submerged. "There was not a tree, not a boundary mark, not a bridge, not a house that stood in th way of the which it did not destroy. The great loss was the destruction of dwellings and crops". To reduce, to the minimum recurrence of floods, the Sultan's son Shahab-ud-Din replanned the city and selected the elevated and healthy area around Kohi-maran (Hari Parvat hill) for his capital and named it Lakshmipur or Shahab-ud-Dinpur now Shahampur, a mohalla extent near Nauhatta. This new city extended from Nauhatta to Lal Bazar including present Malkhha graveyard and Zadibal. Here military barracks were constructed. Srinagar was now onwards termed as "Shahri Kashmir" as mentioned in the chronicles. His son Sultan Qutub-ud-Din added a few localities between Zaina Kadal and Aali Kadal on the left bank of Jhelum called it
Qutub-ud-Dinpor. Here later on Sultan Zainul Abidin's rebellious sons had their headquarters. This "Shahi Kashmir" became now a centre of ceaseless religious activity which had far reaching consequences throughout the valley. "When Srinagar caught cold the whole valley sneezed." Islam now was the dominant faith of the masses. Muslims from outside had started coming in the valley since beginning of 5th century as traders and propagators. Political and administrative system did not change. It remained intact untill recent times. Srinagar remained the "hub of all life" social, cultural and political. All movements had origin in the city. When Srinagar was peaceful there was tranquility throughout the kingdom. Sultan Zainul Abidin, a born architect, built his mansion (Zaina Dab) at Nausher, two miles below Shahab-ud-Din Pora (Shahampur). He called it Zainanagar.

Kashmir became a province of moghal Empire at the close of 16th century. Moghal emperors like Akbar, Jehangir and Shah-Jehan beautified and adorned "Shahi-Kashmir" (Srinagar) and around it built a huge bastioned wall (now neglected) and laid beautiful gardens of great size and rebuilt Srinagar called it Naggar. The valley had only two districts Maraz (ancient Madhavarajjya) and Kamraz (ancient Karamrajya). These two districts remained in charge of Hakim-Aala. Srinagar was the chief city of Maraz and was under the direct control of Sultans. It was thickly populated according to Zaffarname, and Pandits (Brahmans) were largely concentrated here who got prestigious posts under Muslim rulers. Zaina Khul better known as Lachma Khul was the chief source of drinking water for the residents of Srinagar. This canal was dug out by Sultan Zainul-Abidin (1430). Its head regulator was Sindh nullah Ganderbal. It emptied near Jamia Masjid thence at old Mar canal near Kadi Kadal. Dal lake water was also used for drinking purpose. Markets and street of Srinagar were paved with cut stones. "Merchants were prosperous". Mirza Haider says, "control over the prices of commodities was regulated by monthly notification". Tradesmen carried on their trade in their houses but after the advent of Moghal rule this system changed and business began to be conducted in the open markets. Wheeled traffic was non-existent. Jhelum was the chief highway. Boats piled on its waters. Upper classes travelled in litters. Srinagar now became a central place wherefrom trade and commercial routes converged. Travellers, pilgrims and political emissaries enriched the life of Srinagar.

Medieval rulers established a net work of madras in different parts. In mohalla Qutubud-Dinpora a residential school and a university was founded which had a hostel attached to it for both teachers and the taught. One more college was opened at Sarat-kadal. Haji Pir Mohd. Sahib acted as its Principal. A metrological observatory was located at Pari Mahal. Madrasa Darushifa (Medical college) was opened on the eastern spur of Kohi Maran (Hari Parvat) near about present Central Jail and the revenue of Bhagi Daulatabad and Bhagi Malkhana (Bhagi Angori) were assigned to it for its upkeep.

Most important festival celebrated by the inhabitants of Srinagar was Spring or Sont festival. According to Skuha Pt. celebrated historian, people of Srinagar gathered around Hari Parvat hill to witness athletic games. Sultan Hassan Shah particapted in the festival (1563 A. D.) and distributed prizes. On this day common fairs were held in open orchards during the month of April. Musicians and dancers showed their art.

The Vyth Truwah festival was also popular. It was the birthday of Vyth (river of Jhelum), an ancient custom on this day the Jhelum and its tributaries and towns were illuminated with lamps. Zainul Abidin, his successors, Akbar Jehangir participated in this festival. People of all walks of life irrespecitive of religion, caste and creed participated in the festival. Sultan's would go in a boat to Maraz to enjoy the spirit of flowers. This festival was scrapped during the rule of Dogras. Even Nurjehan celebrated the festival of roses in newly built gardens near the Dal Lake.

Such is a brief glimpse of our native land, Srinagar of medi eval Kashmir which has earned a special distinction and has attained a high position as centre of art, learning and culture.
5

Capitals of Ancient Kashmir

Hecataeus, the Greek geographer, in about 500 B.C. mentions a city called Kaspapyros. Herodotus, the Greek historian mentions the city of Kashmir, the city of Gandharians. He evidently refers to the same city by the name of Kaspapyros, while Lassen and Humboldt take it as Kasmira. He further says that Kaspapyros was the name of a city whereas Kasmira stood for a kingdom. We know from the same chronicler that the Iranian King Darius sent his expedition to conquer that kingdom. According to another Greek historian, Ptolemy (in 150 A.D.) Kashmir was Kasperira. It was a region lying below the sources of Jhelum. In their earliest references the Chinese mentioned Kashmir as Kipin, a territory on the Northern confines of India. In the Kushan period Kashmir was included in the Kushan empire. The first Chinese travellers to enter the valley of Kashmir were Chenyi and Chemong. They visited Kashmir in the beginning of the 5th century. Another Chinese envoy deputed by the Tang emperor in 540 A.D. described the northern part of Kashmir “a country enveloped on all sides like a precious Jewel with a valley in the south” which ever might be the correct description this ancient city cannot now be located.

Old Srinagar. Kalhana, who lived in the beginning of the 12th century mentions the city of Srinagar in the south east of
modern Srinagar most probably situated near the present Pandraithan “Purananthishan” i.e., old capital on the right bank of the Jhelum. It was in the 3rd century B.C. that Ashoka the Muaryan emperor built this city. It was the capital of Kashmir upto the 6th century A.D. In the neighbourhood of this city his son Jalaika built a grand shrine called Jyesthurudra which is believed at present the existing temple of Shankaracharya hill. Dr. Stein, an eminent antiquarian of this century has shown that Jalaika’s Jyesthurudrá must be looked for either on the very hill or in its close proximity viz (Zeehyair tirtha).

Modern Srinagar was known as Paravarapur. After the 6th century A.D. the rulers of Kashmir built their capitals according to their own convenience mostly on the river banks. These are now insignificant villages. In the 5th Century king Parversena removed his capital a few miles north of the old capital and called it Paraverapur (modern Srinagar). The kings palace was located some where below Habakadal on the left bank with its land marks of Hariparbat and Shankaracharya hills. The city was dotted with many stone temples dedicated to Shiva, Durga Kali and Bharvas. Kalhana mentions its ghats and bathing houses. Bilhana another Kashmiri Scholar, found the city of Srinagar most charming and surpassing to all other cities in beauty and in its coolness in summer and also for the beauty of its grooves. Hiuen-Tsang who visited Kashmir in 631 A.D. calls it the ‘new city’. He says the old city lay to the east. It was on both banks of Jhelum and the founder had embellished it with many palaces and temples. The history of Srinagar is very interesting. It was destroyed and rebuilt several times. The houses were mainly of timber as they are now. Kalhana mentions several palaces, the splendour of markets and mansions which were so high as seem to reach the clouds. How it lost its name of Pravarapur and assumed that of the city of Srinagar is difficult to say perhaps it was the old name that remained in common use with the people. It (Srinagar) is only fifteen hundred years old.
Parihaspur: (Ancient Capital of Kashmir)

In the middle of 8th century the great king of Kashmir Lalitaditya founded the city of Parihaspur or Paraspur as it is now called and is situated 2½ miles south west of Shadipur and is in between the villages of Panznoor and Haratth and stretching from there, on a Karewa (Plateau) of Ichman Dever. Unfortunately the city of paraspur had remained unidentified till 1892 A.D. when the ruins of this city were found for the first time by Dr. Stein. The city was already known to our earlier chroniclers like Haider Malik of Chodra, Mohammad Azam of Diddamari, Birbal Kachru and Narayan Koul. It was built in the centre of the valley so that views could be obtained from the Indus Valley to Harmukh and Mahadev. No city was ever set in more lovely surroundings than Paraspur. Lalitaditya built this city out of the vast treasures which he had brought from the subdued regions. Lalitaditya, erected five large buildings in this city.

1. The temple of Parihasa Keshaya with a silver image.
2. The temple of Mukta-Keshya with a golden image.
3. The temple of Mahavaraha with an image clad in golden armour.
4. The temple of Goverdhanadhara with a silver image.
5. The Rajvihara, Buddhist monastery with a large quadrangle and a colossal statue of Buddha in cooper. This indicates that there must have been large settlements of Buddhists. He erected a stone pillar 54 cubits high with an image of Guruda on the top.

The city throws light on the religious conditions of Kashmir. The Chinese pilgrim, Oukong who visited Parihaspur in 759 A.D. only a few years after Lalitaditya's death says that Buddhist cult was in a flourishing condition and there existed numerous vihars and stupas. He says Buddhas image was brought from Maghada by his Prime Minister, and for a pretty long time was existing even at the time of Kalhana

1148 A.D. A great religious festival was celebrated in the month of March every year to commemorate the victories of Lalitaditya. But as ill luck would have it, two centuries later copper statue of Buddha and other silver images were removed and melted down by king Harsha and in the rising which led to the downfall of king Harsha 1089 A.D. Parihaspur was occupied and burnt by the pretender to the throne of Uccala. The steep slopes of the Plateau and marshes around it made it a position of military value. When Uccala had suffered a defeat some of the routed rebels threw themselves in Raj Vihara monastery which was subsequently burnt and raised to the ground. Thereafter Parihaspur ceased to be the royal residence and Lalitaditya's son Vijraditya, removed its foundation. King Avantiverman diminished its importance further. His irrigation Minister Suyya Verma effected the regulation of river Jhelum and diverted its junction 3 miles away near Shadipur. A century and a half later Anantiverman's son Shanker-Verman carried away the structural material from Pariashpur and used the same material for the construction of his new city and temples at Panit. Even during the last decades of 19th century it was robbed of its valuable construction material by the Maharaja's Government for the metelling of Jhelum valley road which was later on put to stop by Mr. Talbot, the then British Resident in Srinagar.

This city of Parihaspur is the birth place of our great master poet historian, Kalhana Pandit, the author of Rajarama son of a great Kashmirian Minister the illustrious lord Canpaka during the reign of ill-fated king Harsha.

2. City of Tapper

About the middle of 7th century Partapditya II founded the city called Partappur which according to the poetic assertion of Kalhana it rivilled the city of India in splendour. Dr. Stein identified the city as the modern village Tapper on the high way of Srinagar Baramulla. Excavation conducted here recently have unearthed the foundation of an old stone temple built by his queen. It was a grand city upto the time of king Ananta but latter on destroyed by the iconoclastic zeal of latter rulers.
City of Jaypur

This city was a flourishing city built by Lalitaditya's grand son Jayapida at the close of 8th Century which is identified with its present village of Anderkot in Tehsil Sonawari near Sumbal village. It was built on an Island raising from the Sumbal Lake. The fort of Anderkot was surrendered by Kota Rani the last Hindu queen of Kashmir to Shah Mir, her minister. There is no trace left of this grand city except a few hamlets. Jayapida built temples and vihars and a great Matha was built by his queen.

Pattan:—Avantiverman's son Shankerverman founded the city of Pattan known as Shankerpura Pattan, on the highway from Srinagar to Baramulla. This is established by Kalhana's testimony, he says that Shanker-pattan lost its proper appellation and became known only by the name of Pattan. To build this city Shanker-verman used the structural material from Lalitaditya's city of Parihaspur. He also built two grand temples which exist on the road side.

Avantipur:—During the ninth century A.D. Kashmir had another illustrious ruler in the person of Avant-verman. He built the city of Avantipur, present "Wontipur". It stood on the high and dry Area of Western hills on the right bank of Jhelum. Owing to its central and strategic location in the Valley the city was of considerable importance since the date of its foundation.

According to the Chronicles of Kalhana, Jona Raja and Srivra, it covered a large area. Around the ruins can be recognised the remains of two old temples of Shiva and Vishnu. It was a flourishing city up to 12th Century A.D. when it was destroyed and burnt down by Damaras (feudal Hindu tribe).

Pampore:—It was founded in the first quarter of 9th century A.D. by king Padma, maternal uncle of Jayapida. Because of its central position in the valley, the city grew in importance and is frequently mentioned in Rajtarangini. Here is a temple—dedicated to Vishnu and a Ziarat of Shoga Baba Sahib.

City of Bemyun:—(Bemina)

This city was founded by a Tartar king Abhimanyu I which was later on called Abhimanyupur. This was wealthy city and had a Shiva temple. The location of this city is not known (Dr. Stein) identified it as a present Bamyun, (Bemina) situated in the west of Srinagar. It was here that the rites prescribed in the Nilmat-purana were revived after Buddhist rule in Kashmir.

Sandimat Nagar

This city flourished before the Christian era and was founded by a King named Sunder Sen. This beautiful city is believed to have got submerged under the waters of Wular lake. A severe earthquake shook the city and water gushed out of the earth and the whole city was submerged and all its inhabitants were drowned.

Vibhara (Bijbehara)

The city was called the city of Vibhara round the ancient shrine of Shiva-vibhayesa. The credit for the foundation of this city goes to king Vijaya who ruled over Kashmir about 158 B.C. Vibhara is wrongly pronounced as Bijbehara. It was here that several decisive battles were fought during the civil wars between the latter Lohar kings and several pretenders to the throne. The city was the headquarters of powerful Darmars (A Hindu feudel tribe).

Narapar City

The city was situated on a Karewa somewhere near present Bijbehara on Srinagar Anantnag highway. Kalhana says that the markets of the city were kept full of suppliers, by the high roads leading to it and sailing of hundred boats playing up and down gave splendour to the river. Its gardens were full of fruits and flowers. Another name of this city was Kimnarapora. It was encircled by walls. They city was founded by king Nara in 900 B.C.
Damodhara’s City

For many years after Ashoka’s death Kashmir was ruled by a prince named Demodhara whose descent it not clear. He is believed to have built his capital city the present airport plateau called Yachigam Pargana which is henceforth called “Domodhar Udar”. In order to raise water for drinking and cultivation, he erected a Dam called gudsathu which is an extant village.

Havishkpur

Ushkur, Demodhara was succeeded by three Tartar princes, (Hushka), Jushka, Kanishka who founded three capital cities. Huskpora, Jushkpora and Kanispur which are now mere villages. Huskpor is the present day Ushkur two miles in the east of Baramulla. It was the Headquarters of Buddhist monks and also the first city of note in the valley at its entrance from the Jhelum valley road.

Jushkpor

It is ten Kilometres away from Srinagar, On Ganderbal road. It was a centre of trade and learning. It is now called (Zukar). In its vicinity a grand Buddhist Vihara named Amritbawan was built which is now a locality ‘Wantabhawan’ extant.

Kanishpore

(Kanishpora) This city was founded by the great Kushan King, Kanishka. On Srinagar Baramulla, High way. Some historians believe that Kanishka convened his fourth Buddhist council at Kanishpor under the Chairmanship of Naga Aryana which is a controversial affair as yet.

Kashmir in the eyes of Baron Von Charles Hugel

It was in 1835 A.D. when three European visitors Baron Charles Von Hugel, G.T. Vigne and Dr. John Henderson visited Kashmir, which was then a part of Maharaja Ranjit Singh’s domination (ruler of the Punjab). Hugel was a well-known Austrian Botanist and the rest were of the English nationality. Kashmir was then ruled by Maharaja’s viceroy or governor, Col. Mohan Singh.

Hugle reached Srinagar on 17th November 1835 A.D. through Pir Panchal Pass known then as Old Mughal route. He obtained Maharaja’s permission to visit Kashmir and the governor treated him as a State guest. He halted at the first station near Srinagar which he calls Kakanpur Sarai now Kampur Sarai, ten kilometers in the south of Srinagar, Tehsil Chadura. Here he saw a big military cantonment built by the Sikh Government and about two division regiments, i.e., 1200 men were being drilled and trained by the European Generals. Their uniform consisted of a “red jacket; “blue trousers” and “blue turbans”.

Then the esteemed visitor entered “Shahergahr” (Sherghari Palace) in the evening and was received by the Sikh governor
and his officials "Shaheghur" (Sherghari palace) was then governor’s official residence and a strong fortress built by the great Afghan ruler, Amir Khan Jawan Shir. The Sikh Governors named it as Narsinghgarh. It was a walled city but "unfitted for defence" says the visitor (Baron Von Hungel) and was the official residence of Afghan Governors until 1819 A.D. Sheikh Imam ud Din the last Sikh Governor, founded a grand mosque in its northern corner in 1845 A.D. (1275 A.H.) which has now been reconstructed by the residents of the locality known as Qila Masjid (Shaheedi Ganj) near Old Saccot gate.

Hungel was then lodged in a house, surrounded by "filthy and ruinous" suburb on the bank of the river Jhelum and here at this spot (near present DC's office) Jhelum reminded him of the river "Arno at Florence" which seemed to him much deeper and remarkably still and says "it winds most picturesquely through the city and is covered with boats of various forms and fashions". He says "Sherghar palace" (Sherghari) has several remains of the court both Civil and military. The entrance to the palace leads from the river bank through a wooden stairs which also leads to terrace and pavilion, adorned with "curiously carved woods".

On his request, the visitor (Hungel) was allotted a spacious and clean place to live in, half a mile below Sherghari palace known then and now also as Bhagidilawar Khan. These quarters were being usually assigned to the Europeans visiting the valley during the Sikh rule. These are situated on the banks of Brari Nambal, branch of the Dal Lake near the entrance of Old Mar canal. It is now the site of M.P. Higher Secondary School. Here the other two British visitors Messers G.T. Vigne Dr. John Henderson had already taken up their residence. Its garden was surrounded by fruit trees, vines and beautiful persica with two little square buildings. He then pitched up his tent like the other two visitors. "He was warmly received by the inhabitants of Srinagar". A party of Kashmiri females received him with songs "Vanvoon", "Kashmiries are very handsome", says he, especially their female folk who are superior to them in beauty.

The aim of these early visitors to Kashmir was to observe the activities of the Russian Czar in the north of His Majesty’s empire (India) who was then extending his empire and influence in Central Asia. Dr. Henderson had returned to Srinagar from Ladakh to trace the source of the river ‘Attock’ but actually to ratify the treaty which Mr. William Moorcroft early Britsh visitor had entered with the Raja of Ladakh in 1822-23 A.D.

Mr. Hungel gives a pathetic picture of Srinagar under the Sikh rulers who were the master of the "Vale of Kashmir". Srinagar which was once a city of palaces and reduced to dilapidated houses, streets of unemplid filthiness. This was his first observation and says "I turned may disappointed gaze from the works of man to the glorious mountain scenery above (Mehadev and Zubuivan peaks) with their thousand peaks of snowy whiteness, their graceful outlines, the harmony and repose which seemed to characterise the calm mountainless valley, the contrast between simple majestic nature and enterprising ambitious man filled my heart with emotions which imprinted the beauties of the first on my memory and made human works lose every shadow of significance. "Srinagar is a city of bridges and seven bridges span the river Jhelum. They are the most dangerous and most enduring. They are composed of large cedar trees, fifteen to twenty feet long and three feet in diameter. A storm or wind of any great violence is a thing altogether unknown in Kashmir. Jhelum is covered with boats of every size which gives a pleasant stirring appearance to the whole city. Streets leading to the big mosque (Jamia masjid) are dirty and muddy. It is pity that Jamia masjid is in a ruinous condition and closed for prayers. Here Azan, or call to prayers is prohibited. Sickness and famine have of late years so depopulated it that it produces revenue of small amount. He observes that at the foot of Hari Parbat Parvat there was once another city called as Nagar
Nagar and enclosed with strong walls and towers. This city is now in dilapidated condition and was once the lovelies part of the valley. Blocks of stone and large columns lie in desolate grandeur around. In this city a beautiful mosque called Akhun Mullah Shah lies perishing. It has five black marble and stone lavish upon it. Not a living soul lives in Nagar Nagar. The fort of Hari Parvat is called Kohi Maran. It is garrisoned by the Sikh troops. The guards do not allow any person to proceed further nor attempt to ascend the heights.

Islamabad (present day Anantnag) “city of the faith”, is the second city of Kashmir. It is but a shadow of its former self. Its spacious houses are in ruins. Its principle streets are all deserted. Many dwelling places have sunk into decay and exposed to wind. The beautiful carved ornamenting the terraces and windows is nearly destroyed by owls and jackals who are the most frequent occupants of the place. Jackals are in abundance in Kashmir.

Punishments are very heavy. “Criminals are hanged on the branches of chinor trees. They are dragged sometimes through the streets of Srinagar. Penalties and strips are usual punishments”.

On 3rd December 1835, he left Srinagar in a boat via Jhelum valley.

During the 19th century Central Asia had become the target of Russian colonial expansion with the consolidation of Russian Empire under Peter the great and the great queen Catherine. This advance caused the British Government great anxiety who had now established its empire in the Sub-continent. Russian pushing south from South Siberia established themselves on three Khanates—Bukhara, Khiva, Kokand and even upto Pamirs. William Moorcraft, an enterprising Veterinary Surgeon, probably the first Englishman to Kashmir was commissioned by the British Government to make journey through the Himalayas to the table land of Tibet to collect political and military information for the British fort in India. He had enormous difficulties in obtaining permission from Ranjit Singh—the Sikh ruler of the Punjab, to whom Kashmir was then subject. His adventurous spirit took him to the remotest corners of northern India which was not known to any European traveller till then. Mr. Moorcraft toured the whole of Nubra valley till he reached the eastern boundary of Ladakh beyond Pangong lake. He wished to go to Yarkand but the Chinese authorities refused the permission. So he decided to set out for Bukhara by way of Kashmir. When he reached Leh in
1821, he became possessed of a letter from Russian minister recommending a merchant to the good offices of Ranjit Singh, assuring him that the traders of the Punjab and Kashmir would be well received in the Russian Dominion and Russian Emperor is the well wisher of Ranjit Singh". Russians were in communication with the Raja of Ladakh as it proved later on. On coming to know of this, the British Government began to take active interest in the affairs of Kashmir and its frontier regions from the beginning of 19th century. Mr. Moorcraft reached Srinagar in 1822 and stayed here up to May 1823 in company with Izzatullah, his guide and interpreter. Moti Ram was the Sikh Governor of Kashmir at this time. He was lodged in a guest house at Bagh-Dillawar Khan on the banks of Brari-Nambal and was beset by the crowds of people who not only filled the garden but also came in boats. He was pursued wherever he went by inquisitive crowds, by importunate beggars and by suspicious officials. He was pleased to see the natives of Kashmir and characterizes them as the most lively and ingenious people of Asia, highly intellectual and morally assume a high scale.

He gives a picturesque account of the city of Srinagar and says 'It is situated towards Mullah Mar where the best houses in the town are to be found. There are several canals flowing through it which are crossed at various places by stone and wooden bridges whose condition is that of decay and are choked with clay and mud. Sheikh Mohalla is the centre of trade and in it are the houses of big merchants and bankers. It will become the focus of Asiatic civilization, a miniature of England in the heart of Asia. It occupies the central position in Asia. It is Kashmir that has had the fullest and closest contact with a vast variety of cultures. It maintains its celebrity as the most delicious spot in Asia or in the world'. He was moved to see the economic condition of Kashmiris who were in most abject circumstances and draws a pathetic picture. They are exorbitantly taxed by the Government and subjected to every kind of extortion and oppression by its officers. Not more than about one sixteenth of cultivable surface is in cultivation and Kashmiris are driven in great numbers to the plains of Hindustan. That five hundred emigrants accompanied him. Every trade was taxed—Shawl was the most important industry in Kashmir and he tells us that it is the only industry which gives employment to 20 thousand persons. It is stamped and taxed at 26% with heavy duty on its materials imported. The value of Shawl goods manufactured is about Rs. 25 lakhs per annum but it has begun to decline. Considerable sum is also raised from the import of wool. Every shop or workman who is connected with this material is taxed.

The whole land is the property of the ruler and is known as khalsa land. Cultivators are in extreme rechexedness and the Government instead of taking only half a produce on the threshing floor had now advanced its demands to three quarters—Buchers—bakers—boatmen vendors of fuel, public notaries all paid a sort of corporation tax and even the kotwal or chief officer or justice paid a large gratuity of thirty thousand of rupees a year for his appointment.

Villages where Moorcraft visited in Lolal pargana were half deserted and the inhabitants were a semblance of extreme poverty'. He was shocked to see that people were allowed to reap very little advantage from their labour for a troop of tax gatherers were always in the village who had sequestered nine tenths of grain of the former for the revenue. The consequences of this system are gradual depopulation of the country. Inhabitants are starving. People of the city are thinning though less from immigration than poverty and disease.

On Islamabad or presently Anantnag he was disappointed to see that it was swarming with beggars and the inhabitants around were 'half naked and miserably emaciated' presented a ghastly picture of poverty and starvation. The rulers he says looked upon Kashmiris little better than cattle.

He observed that the general character of the city of Srinagar is that of 'confused mass of ill-favoured building—
narrow lanes, scarcely broad enough for a single cart to pass, badly paved. Houses are generally two or three storey and are badly constructed and neglected and present a runious condition with broken doors or no doors at all. During his stay he brought to light the grave of Mirza Haider Dougalat, ruler of Kashmir 1542-AD and got a stone inscription installed at his grave in Mazari Salatin (Maharaj Gung) which is extant and in a bad state of preservation.

Before his departure through Jhelum Valley road he got an inscription on stone pillar installed at Char Chinari giving the names of European visitors to Kashmir.

He was stopped at Uri by the semi-independent Khakha ruler who demanded Rs. 5000/- as custom duty which he refused to pay and then left through old Moghul road.

Sacred Historic Shrines of the Valley Kashmir

The Valley of Kashmir from centuries past has been considered to be the holiest of the holy lands. This land came to be known as Reshi-Bhumi or ‘the land of the sages’ or in Kashmiri, “Pir Wari”. Thus Kashmir possesses innumerable attractions for pilgrims from all sections of the people. There are sacred shrines associated with the name of sacred gods or saints which are the source of attraction and inspiration to the millions of our land.

Common social and cultural ties bind together the Kashmiri Pandit and the Kashmiri Muslim. Reverence for spiritual Gurus and holy men is the striking feature of our life. That is why Kashmiris have recognised no differences of caste and creed. There are shrines in the valley which to this day are sacred to both the communities. Visits to such shrines and tombs show us the common ideals and aspirations cherished by the Kashmiris. Men and women flock to these common places of worship from near and far to pay their homage to the holy saints and “Aulias”. This is the most appropriate service to God or as a means of getting wish fulfilled. Prayers are offered at these places. “A typical example of unity and integrity in the social religious spheres are reflected in the homage paid at these mosques or places of
worship. Khanqah Shah-i-Hamdan. One of these mosques in the Khanqah of Shah-i-Hamdan in Mohalla Allauidin Pora on the river Jhelum near Fateh Kadal. This historic Khanqah is sacred both to Hindus and Muslims of the valley and was built in the memory of Shah-i-Hamdan Alia Mir Sayid Ali, a saint of Hamdan who paid a visit to the valley in the reign of Sultan Qutub-ud-Din, 1374 A.D. It really represents the great Sayid's (Shah-i-Hamdan's) Chillah Khara or the place of retreat and devotion and not his tomb which is in Khatlan or (Kolab), Tajik Republic, (U.S.S.R.) Near about this Khanqah as Kashmiri Pandits believe that a temple dedicated to Kali Ishwari by King Parversen II (7th century A.D.) was built and the shrine of the Goddess is inside the Khanqah. In 1395 A.D.) Sultan Sikander, made an extension to this Khanqah and endowed it with three villages, Vachi, Nonawani and Mattan, in (Anantnag or Islamabad District) and appointed Mulla Sayid as trustee latter. It was destroyed by fire and Sultan Hassan Shah rebuilt it in 1480 A.D. at a huge cost. During the reign of Sultan Mohammad Shah II 1502 A. D. Mir Shams-ud-Din Iraqi, a Shia theologian arrived in Srinagar Kashmir, and established his headquarters at Zadibal and began to preach his faith. Gazi Khan and Mosa Raina and Qazi Chak who were the ministers of Sultan Mohd. Shah were converted by him to the Shia cult and at his instance they got the permission of the Sultan to pull down the Khanqah of Shah-i-Hamdan telling them “deceptively” that it did not look well as a single storey. Therefore Khanqah was pulled down but the programme of rebuilding it was postponed. Then after two years, Qazi Chak’s sister named Saliha Maji, wife of the Sultan Mohd. Shah, rebuilt the Khanqah selling her dowry to meet the expenditure. It cost three thousand rupees and sixty thousand copper coins. In 1737 A.D. the Khanqah again burnt down and was reconstructed by Abul Barkat Khan, the Pathan Governor and is standing since then being repaired from time to time.

Soon after the conquest of Kashmir by the Sikhs of the Punjab in 1819 A.D. the Sikh Governor Hari Singh Balwa ordered demolition of Khanqah saying that as “it was a Hindu shrine, the Muslims should take off their possession.” He sent Phoola Singh, the Sikh Commander for this purpose who trained his guns towards the Khanqah from Pather Masjid Ghat, and now everything was ready to blow it away, the Muslims of Srinagar in a deputation headed by Syed Hassan Shah Qadiri, Khanyari, went to Bir Bal Dhar an influential noble of the time and who had invited Sikhs in Kashmir and requested him to intervene and save the Khanqah. On the intervention of Bir Bal Dhar, the order was not executed presumably also for fear of rebellion. It is one of the most sacred places in Kashmir. His (Shah-i-Hamdan’s) followers are known as Kubravis. Its top commands the magnificent view of the city. It is built of Cedar with a golden ball on the top.

Khanqah of Syed Mohammad Al-Madani Mohalla Adalat Masjid, Srinagar.

Among the pre-Mughal Muslim buildings of Kashmir, one of the prominent is Khanqah and Ziarat of Syed Mohammad Al-Madani at Bota Kadal, or Adalat Masjid Zidi Bal, Srinagar known as Khanqah-i Zain-ul-Abidin. Syed Mohammad-Al-Madani belonged to Madina. He accompanied the envoys of Timur to Kashmir. He settled and made his residence at Jogia Lanker, Rainawari, (Srinagar) permanently. He returned Timur with presents of Sultan of Kashmir (Sultan Sikander) and obtained Timur’s permission to settle in the valley. Zain-ul-Abidin was attracted by his piety and took him to Nowsher, Vicharnag, Srinagar, his capital and put him up there. Zain-ul-Abidin built in his memory the Khanqah and Mazar for his decrees in 1444 A.D. (848 A. H.) after the fashion of Prophet’s mosque at Madina. Pandits of the valley believe that it was a site of the temple known as Raneshvara temple built by King Ranaditya (414-474 A.D.)

Khanqah of Shaikul Alam (Chhari Sharif)

The Khanqah was built by the great Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin along with the tomb of patron Saint of Kashmir Sheikh Noor-ud-Din Rishi, known as the Alam Dar-i-Kashmir. The Khanqah got burnt down during the reign of the chak-
accidentally. Sultan Yaqub Chak declined to reconstruct it. Thereafter it was reconstructed by the Rishis of the time in 1131 A. H. (771 A. D.) The Khanqah again got burnt down and was reconstructed along with the tomb by Atta Mohd. Khan Burkzoi, the Afgan Governor in 1805 A.D. who had an unusual esteem for the Saint. The Khanqah of today is the same built by Atta Mohammad Khan. It consists of a large oblong building with a wing at the end. It is built with hewn timber placed traversely and raised on a plinth of raised brick works. The building looks as if it is double storycd. The central chamber measures 80 feet by 60 feet. The elevation is about 30 feet. The roof which is raised is supported by four pillars of hewn timber each having been formed out of the single trunk of a Daidar tree. The interior is plain. The massive wood work is not stained with stone materials. Sheikh Nur-ud-Din and his followers established themselves throughout the valley and the Ministers at the shrine are still known as Rishis.

Khanqah-i-Noor-Bakshia-Zadibal, Srinagar.

The Noor Bakshia sect was introduced in Kashmir by Mir Shamsud-Din Iraqi, a man of great learning. He attracted the notice of Sultan Mirza Bikaria of Hirat 1469-1506 A.D. and sent him Kashmir as envoy in 1481 A.D. to the court of Sultan Hassan Shah of Kashmir. He stayed in the valley for eight years. He carried on his missionary activities and converted Baba Ismail Kubravi and Baba Ali Najjar to his faith. Due to hostility of the ulama he was compelled to leave Kashmir. Again he was sent to the valley and revived and spread the Nur Bakshia creed with the assistance of Baba Ali Najjar. On reaching Srinagar Musa Rains, a powerful noble became his convert and gave him money to carry on his work and also land at Zadibal to build Khanqah. The foundation of this hospice was laid in 1503 04, A.D. and was built in the next year. But he had to face difficulties and obstacles. Sayyid Mohammad Baihaqi opposed the construction of the Khanqah-Nur Bakshia by Mir Shamsuddin. However the construction of this Khanqah was complete in 924 A.H. (1504 A.D.) only with two stories. Its breadth diverts seven yards

and the height of the lower storey was 10 yards upper was eight yards high. This was the most magnificently built Khanqah at the time. Mir Shamsuddin is believed to have died in 1526 A.D. (for there is no mention of him in the chronicles after this date). He was buried in this Khanqah at Zadibal and his Masoleum is held in great veneration by the Shias of Kashmir.

Khanqah-i-Baba Ismail Kubravi, Pakhribal, Srinagar.

The Khanqah was opened and constructed by Sultan Hassan Shah (1089-1101 A.H.) for his Pir (spiritual guide), Baba Ismail Kubravi, the great grandson of Abul Mashaikh Sheikh Sulaiman, a follower of Shahi-Hamdan. This Khanqah stood on the Dal at Pakhribal on the northern spur of Hari Parbat. Close to it was opened by the Sultan (Madrasa-Dar-us-Shefa). Both for Khanqah and Madrasa the revenue of villages Wandhama, Haran, Dairaind, Behama (Tehsil Ganderbal) and the gardens of Daulatbad (Rainawari) and Banghi-i-Anguri, the modern Malkha graveyard were set apart for the maintenance of the Hostel and the Library. This was run by Sheikh Fathullah Haqqani assisted by Akbar Mulla Darwesh. The Khanqah comprised 300 snug cubicles. Loud chanting of morning and evening prayers together with penitential psalms could be heard on the eastern bank of the Dal Lake. This great Khanqah together with Madrasa Darushifa was burnt down under the orders of Sultan Yaqub Chakk but the building was restored by the Moghal Emperor. Akbar used the same building as Jharokai Darshan or appearance to the public. Sheikh Hamza Makhdom popularly known as Hazrat Sultanul-Arifeen would offer his prayers and was also a student of Madrassa Darushifa.
Thorough—Fares Of Ancient Kashmir

Thorough fares in ancient Kashmir were not the same as we observe these today. Traffic was carried on thorough-rivers canals and water ways. There were of course through fares along which ponies, bullocks, palanquins and elephants could pass. Villages, towns and cities were linked by means of foot paths and farwhether roads. During the first half of the 16th century under Mirza Haider Dughlat the streets of Srinagar were paved with cut stones. Popular, avenue ran from the East to the South of Srinagar. Wheeled traffic was quite non-existent in the valley.

The mountains around the valley have always played an important role in the protection of its inhabitants. Kalyan Pandit Misri (Now known a Kalhana) our first chronicler speaks of Kashmir as unapproachable by the force of soldiers. The chinese travellers. Huein Tsang and Oukong who visited the valley during the 7th and 8th centuries describe the difficulty in crossing the mountains. Alberuni testifies to the same and says that the watch stations or Drangas were built and maintained at all these passes and a strict watch was exercised. Nobody was allowed to enter or leave the pass without special pass or permit. Before the Christain era, says Alburuni, only the jews were allowed to enter the valley for commerce and trade. The country, says Speraf-ud-Din, the historian of “Timur” is protected on all its sides by its mountains and the inhabitants are not troubled of fortifying themselves. During ancient and medeaval times the faudal chiefs Deverpati in ancient Kashmir Nayyak (Under Kashmir Sultans) and Malik (under Moghal and Afghans) were the guardians of the passes. These fortified posts were known as Rehendi Chowkis. Those who were allowed to enter or leave had to have a pass called Pravana Rahdari issued by Hakim-i-Ala of Madhavrajya (Maraz) and Krama rajya (Kamraz) district. It also served as an important check on un-authorised emigration. This system continued upto 1870 A.D. when it was abolished by the second Dogra ruler of Kashmir, Maharaja Ranbir Singh. The ruins of these Watch stations (Drangas) are still extant and the principle routes which lead to the valley and its neighbouring territories are referred to in indigenous literature and also in the accounts of the foreign travellers. Trade and commerce was carried an with other countries through these routes. Inhabitants of the valley were excellent pedestrains and maintained life lines of commerce across Himalayan regions on foot.

The most notable and important, route in ancient Kashmir was the Bansel route now known as Banihal cart Road (B. C. Road) at a height of 9200 ft, taking the name of village situated at the south foot of the pass mentioned in the chronicles as Bansala. The Banihal range runs 35 miles from the east to the west and continues fifty miles more after attaining an elevation. Banihal route has always been convenient route of communication with the upper chinab valley. Jammu and Himachal Pradesh regions, the latter being a tributary to the kingdom of Kashmir. Here at Banihal a great fort existed even during the days of Kalhana Pandit 1150 A.D. and was known as Bansala Castle. Here a pretender to the throne of Kashmir Bashkisara was captured and killed when he tried to invade the valley in 1130 A D. Banihal is the only route across the Pir Panchal range on
which communication is never stopped by snow fall. It was
remodelled and re-aligned by Dr. A. Mitra, P.W.D. Minister
during Maharaja Pratap Singh’s reign in 1910 A.D. and was
maintained as a private by the ruler, when in 1922 A.D. It was
opened to the Public for use. This is our national highway
today and connects the valley with the rest of the country.
Two new low level tunnels have been constructed during the
fifties of this century on this pass which have reduced the
distance between Jammu and Srinagar.

After proceeding further towards the west is the route
known by its pass as Budail pass (14000 ft) or saidov. Saidov
is the village close to modern Shopian town two miles away.
Kalhana Pandit calls this route as Sidpath. Pt. Shriram
refers to it as Siddhadesa. It connects Srinagar with Akhur
and Sialkot (Pakistan) in an almost straight line. It is main-
tained as a track even now and owing to its Shorness was
favourite route with the inhabitants of the valley. It is by this
route that the great saint scholar Sheikh Yakub Sarfni along with
his companions proceeded to the court of Mughal emperor
Akbar at Agra to seek his help against Yakub Chakhs oppressive
rule in Kashmir, About five miles to the west of this route we
reach the lowest dip of the range in the south west of Srinagar.
At a village known as Huraprar on the old imperial moghal
rout. Harpur is the station at its enterance formerly called
as surapur by Shriva built by Suraverman. Minister of
king Avantier-man in the 9th century A.D. It is the first
station for those leaving Kashmir for Rajouri. This route
has played an important role during the rule of Sultans of
Kashmir. Miherkul, the Hun King invaded Kashmir in 511
A.D. and while crossing the pass, the king lost 101 elephants
and the mountain is therefore called Has-Vanj(Elephants
cave). He brought 5000 Shaviate Brahmanas from Gandhara,
Kabul Valley) and settled them in the valley and granted
them thousands of Aghararas (Jagirs) throughout the valley.
He was a follower of Lord Shiva. The moghal rulers
often used this route for their visit to Kashmir.
Akbar invaded Kashmir and sent his expeditions under the command of Qasim Khan. It connected

Proceeding in the west along the same range we find
another route known as Tosa Midan route on account of its
natural advantages. It was a popular route until the construc-
tion of the Jhelum valley road. It was the shortest and the safest
route connecting the valley with Punjab. Morted of Gazznavi
tried to invade Kashmir through this route in company with
Alburuni in 1021 A.D. but failed to conquer Kashmir. It
was over this route that the chinese traveller, pilgrim
continued his journey to India after his years stay in Srinagar.
Maharaja Ranjit Singh the ruler of the Punjab attempted
an invasion in 1814 A.D. but had to return from Tosa
Maidan Platuel due to confusion created in his army by the
Afghan defenders. The route was closed by snow longer than
the old moghal route. During the winter months the route
from Poonch to Kashmir lay by the lower passes leading into
the valley through Haji Pir pass 8500 below Baramulla.
The route started from the village Drang at the foot of the
mountain and ascend over to the edge of Tosa Maidan platue
13000 ft. and then descend to the large village of Mandi and
thence to Poonch. At this place a formidable fortress and Gate
Dranga was built by Lohara ruler. Its ruins are still extant.
The route is to be remodelleq and reopened for wheeled traffic
in the near future. The chef and the most notable thoroughfare
was through Jhelum valley known as “Varahmul-Gandhar
route”. The route served as the royal route under the Greeks
and Kushans. But during the medeaval times under Afghans.
This route was rendered difficult on account of hillmen or
Gujjar tribes who inhabited the region below Baramulla and
were known as Khoik (Khakkas) and Boinm (Bombas) who
often raided Srinagar and its neighbourhood. They were a
source of constant terror to our great grand-fathers till
Maharaja Gulab Singh subdued them in the early fifties of
the last century. They carried marauding raids into the
valley and even today our mothers quiten their crying children
by saying that Khoknas have come. The Chinese pilgrim
and traveller Huein Tsang entered the valley in 631 A. D.
through this route and was received by the King of Kashmir
at Baramulla. The route was difficult and risky owing to
the narrow valleys and ravines. Afghan rulers ordered its
remodelling and thus it became the least exposed line of
communication between Kabul and Kashmir. Kalhana Pandit
calls it “\(\text{\textbackslash \text{andhara route}}\)”. The route started at Havishkpur
(present Ushkur village) two miles in the east of Baramullah
town, Mukta-pida Lalitaditya led an expedition to Central
Asia through this route. During Afghan and Sikh rule it
had commercial and military importance, with the danger
of present century. This route was again remodelled and
opened for wheeled traffic. It became the life line of the
valley until 1947 when it was closed and blocked by the
Pakistan armed forces beyond Uri 65 miles from Srinagar.
Close to Baramullah there stood once a watch station (Draga)
where strict check was exercised over the persons entering
or leaving the valley. The village is still known as Drangabal
by the local inhabitants. During the Buddhist rule various
Viharas and Buddhist monasteries were built on this route at
Kitsum Kich-hom Khadanyar and Sangram and Zahanpur
villages tehsil Uri. Here a monastery and a vihara was uner-
headed recently by the Archeological Survey of India, villages
where pilgrims and travellers could stay at Zahanpur
monastery. Huein Tsang and oukang stayed for several days.
During this period there was a constant movement of people
from Central Asia and Tibet to Kashmir. Kalhana Pandit
says that Avanti-Varmans son led an expedition to Hazara
through this route and perished in the way, Alberuni calls
it “the best known entrance to Kashmir”. It is the Easiest

snow free route to Kashmir from the Punjab and it is by this
route that learned scholars, sufi and sants from Iran and
central Asia come to the valley and propagated Islam. Along
this route there was one more route which connected the
valley through Kajnag Peak with the Neelam valley (old
Kishen ganga) and now in Pak-held Kashmir. Kalhana Pandit
calls this route Sharda route. The territory between
Kajnag and Neelam was a tributary to the ruler of Kashmir.
There stood once on Neelam an ancient shrine of the Sharda.
Pilgrims from the valley and other parts of India used this
route for pilgrimage Goddess Sharda and upto the time of
partition of the sub-continent this was the shortest route to the
shrine and Muzzafarabad, Colonies of tribesmen and Afridis
were established to guard the passes. The northern route
which connected the valley with Astor Gilgit and Baltistan on
the Indus river, started from the northern shore of the Wolar
lake through the villages of Matrigam and Vijmarg near
Bandipur is known as “Gilgit transport road”. It passes
through Tragbal and Razdhan pass 13000 ft. and small valley
of Gurais. It was improved by the British Engineers during
19th Century. The route has now been improved and remo-
delled by the Indian Army Engineers and opened to wheeled
traffic upto Gurais recently by the State Chief
refers in serval passages to the hill fort of Dadghatta near
Tragbal when his father canpak was in charge of this fort and
guarded the mountain route leading to the valley from the
invasions of Dard tribes. This route served as the second
line of communication with China and Central Asia. This
route was followed by the Chinese travellers, Fahein in 399
A. D. Chemong in 400 A. D. and Fahong in 420 A. D. the
chinese official envoy Song Yun travelled through this route
in 515 A.D. Ou Kong calls this route as “the Gate of north”.
At Doasai village this route branches off to PO Liu (Baltistan)
Shigir and Skardu. On the art of Kashmir there was and
now a very important route leading to Ladakh and Zang
(Tibet) in Jiang (Sinkiang) and China so this route was given
the Tibatean name Zojila after the name of the mountain.
Kalhana Pandit calls it Bhuthaland route and he points out
that when the northern route from Dard Country was closed in winter this route was used for Journey to Kashmir. It was through this route that in the 14th Century that Zalju the moghul (not of muslim faith) entered the happy valley and reduced the population to eleven families after destruction and arson. Rinchan, the Bhatta the first muslim ruler after conversion to Islam entered through this route in 1320 A.D. Mirza Haider Dughlat invaded Kashmir with a small moghal army in 1532 A. D. and established his rule. The route has played a great role in cultural political and commercial intercauses between Xi Zang (Tibet) and Kashmir during Kushian periods and after Merchants and traders travelled to deliver goods China to Kashmir and vice versa. According to Marco Polo cloths and vermillon was imported to Kashmir from China. Then in the South east of Kashmir one more route known as Kishtwar Sinthan road connected the valley with Kishtwar. This route served as an exit for the habitants of the valley during famines and political disturbances. It is now realigned and re-constructed and will in the near future connected the valley with the Kishtwar and Chamba. These thorough fames mentioned converged at Srinagar. Religious missionaries and priests, traders and Ganetees, Pilgrims and political emissaries and official inerants all have influenced life of the people of the valley.

Kashmir in the eyes of Sir Edward Young—Husband

"But oh: I am always disappointed to see that Srinagar (city of the Sun-capital) was not placed on the plateau just above Pampur in the South (Samboora Karewa, Tehsil Pulwama) or on the plateau of Parihaspur (Ikhmanpur Udhar-Sonawari Tehsil) in the centre of the Valley from sanitary and aesthetic point of view. Parihaspur was choosen by the great king Lalitaditya Muktapida (A.D. 8th century) being high and dry and healthy and commands views right on the field and marshes and wooden hamlets and also immediately over-hangs the river and commands a view of the most picturesque reaches in its course. These two sites would have been preferable to the present lowlying situation: amidst the swamps so muggy in the summer and so chill in winter" says Sir Edward Young-Husband, K.C.I.E., Ex.Army Officer, British Resident—Jammu and Kashmir in the early years of this century and whose travels mainly in northern India and Tibet yielded major contributions to geographical research and forced the conclusion of Anglo-Tibetaan Treaty September 4, 1904 that gained Britain long trade concessions. He marched on Lhasa, the capital and forced the conclusion of the trade treaty with Dalai Lama, the then Tibet ruler. This action brought him knighthood. He first visited Kashmir in A.D. 1887 and has written of the local
beauty spots of Srinagar and the valley. He resided for over 20 years. At the same time he admits that this site (present Srinagar) has attraction of its own and built as it is on either side of the river. Canals and waterways intersecting it and with snowy ranges filling the background of every vista. The city of Srinagar must be ranked among the most beautiful in its peculiar style unique. It is a gay place for the summer months with games going on every day, dances nearly every week, dinner, garden parties and picnics. The distinguishing features of the combination of picturesque but richly wooden houses, of mosques and temples of balconised show of merchants houses and royal palaces with the broad sweeping river and the mountain background.

Kashmir to him is a saucer shaped and is a renowned valley with a length of 84 miles, a breadth of 20 to 25 miles and a mean-height of 5600, above sea level in the heart of Himalayas. The only country with which one is most apt to compare it is Switzerland. The valleys of Switzerland are like the side valley of Kashmir but Kashmir seems much more likely to impress by its natural beauties. One sees mountains majesty and sublimity at their very zenith and possesses a combination of quite loneliness and mountain grandeur which has a fascination of its own. A country of such striking natural beauty must surely at some period of its history have produced a refined and noble people. Amid these glorious mountains, breathing their free and bracing air and brightened by the constant sunshine there must have sprang a strong virile and yet aesthetic race. The beautiful Greece with its purple hills and varied countours its dancing seas' and clear sky, blue produced the graceful Greeks but Kashmir is more beautiful than Greece.

Harwan in its vicinity is noted for its natural beauty. It is especially reserved for the sport of Viceroys and here it was in the autumn of 1906, the Maharaja (Partap Singh) entertained Lord Minto who felt he was in a heaven of rest and natural enjoyment. The air was clear and bracing the sky cloudless. The evenings sun throwing long soothing shadows up
the valley. Dachigam is the typical of the prettiest part of rural Kashmir and the side valley. Hokarsar is right in the centre of the valley and from the lake a complete elliptical ring of the snowy mountains can be seen. The most and the nearest conspicuous peak is Haroko 16903' and is 20 miles distant. It (Hokarsan) affords the best duck shooting site in the world and it was here in 1906 Lord Minto (Viceroy of India) led the party shoot over 1500 ducks in one day. These ducks fly from far away Siberia halting here for a time on the lakes and marshes on their way to India. Their number is so great that Srinagar sky is covered with ‘whirling’ whistling and whizzing flights of ducks. The sight took away my breath. Christmas is most enjoyable in Srinagar and brings a round of festivities, dances and childrens parties. Sportsmen and occasional travellers drop in here throughout the winter.

Srinagar is the Central starting point for all expeditions. Here houseboats, Donga boats equipped and all the paraphernalia of Kashmir travel are obtained alongwith Sotkaris and servants engaged. Boat building is one of the most important in the country. The Kashmiri is an intelligent and clever carpenter. His boats are of all sizes from the great grain barges carrying cargoes of thirty tons to the ‘parindas’ or fliers propelled by forty or fifty rowers and light skiffs for a couple of paddlers. Houseboats are of elegant design. These are not indigenous to Kashmir. They were introduced by Mr. M.T. Kennard. They are now numbered by hundreds and Europeans live in them for the whole year and pay seventy to hundred rupees as rent to the owner. In mid summer they are not abodes but they form a most convenient and luxurious mode of travel. Each contains a couple of sitting rooms with file places, bed rooms and bath rooms with a cook boat attached to it. The group boat forms a convenient base from which short expeditions into the mountains can be made. And if properly supervised and instructed and encouraged the Kashmiri should be capable of constructing any kind of craft. About the inhabitants of the valley, he pays them a glowing tribute and says that Kashmiri women is renowned for her beauty. They...
strikingly handsome with clear our features, large dark eyes well marked eye-brows and a general Jewish appearance. Kashmiri Hindus are known as Pandits or Bhatas and are well known all over India for their acutness, subtlety of mind, intelligence and quick wittedness. They prefer priestly, literary and clerical occupation but in the severe competition of life many have been compelled to make use of their hands than their brains and have taken to other professions on the whole they have a cultured look about them. Kashmiri Muslims form the large majority of the population and have no caste, are engaged in various occupations and are found in every grade of social life. He (Muslim) has something singularly attractive about him. He combines dignity with deference to a noteworthy degree that he has free intercourse with Pandits (Hindus). Conservative the Kashmiri is but not altogether impregnable new ideas. He (Muslim) is polite, sedate, grave and attractive gentleman. A Kashmiri is kind to his wife and children and divorce scandals or immorality among them are rarely heard. He must have a house to live in come what may. He will not marry his daughter to a person who is houseless. He is intelligent and can turn his hand to most things. A Kashmiri can build a house of his own, make his own sandal, his own rope and a good bargain. Physique of both men and women is excellent. The whole State is in the grip of a grinding officialdom and the officials are the remnants of a bygone, ignorant and destructive age. The ruler feels necessity of educating and training his own subjects. The smaller officials and clerks are State subjects. Indian officials are dominating the State service. Technical departments are manned by European and American specialists. These Indian officials belong to adjoining British province of the Punjab. The local executive is likewise presided over by Government of India native officials. None are Kashmiris. They have been lent by the British Government to the Maharaja for a specified number of years and draw big salaries. Kashmiris are very intelligent, extremely few have posts in the State service. Of the shawl industry, he laments that the industry is the best known but its production has sadly fallen. Kashmir shawls in the middle of the last century used to be very fashionable in
Europe but France-Pressian war of 1870 seems to have sealed the gate of the industry. After this it never revived and the famine of 1877-79 carried off number of weavers. The first shawls which reached Europe were brought by Napoleon at the time of his campaign in Egypt as a present to the Empress Josephine. 30,000 persons were engaged in this industry. Some of the best of the shawls are preserved in Srinagar Museum. They show much tasteful arrangements of colour and fineness of workmanship but one does not wonder that they have gone out of fashion. Fruit is Kashmir’s most important products and says Young-Husband, it has great future before it. It is expected to increase largely in future. Even one apple tree according to the then Director Peychand, has yielded 30,000 apples. If railway line comes to Kashmir carriage will be easier, cheaper and export will increase to a striking dimensions. It will be the best means of making the railway pay but will also bring the great profit to cultivator and owner.

Iron is not plentiful but Kashmiri has such natural skill that he can turn out quite good guns and rifles and will make all the ordinary surgical instruments required in hospitals.

Pear, quinces are grown abundantly and have a bright future if developed and nourished properly. Railways will remove its draw back. Grape cultivation has fallen since the time of moghals—they were plentiful, walnut, mulberries and almonds are grown in considerable quantities. They are renowned all over India. They are large red and attractive looking and sell well.

During early sixties-cultivation was decreasing. People were poor. In other country their State would have been almost one of starvation and famine. Justice was such that those who could pay could at any time get out of jail while the poor lived and died there without hope. There were few men of respectable and none of wealthy appearance and there are almost prohibitive duties levied on all merchandise imported or exported. By the early seventies some slight im-

Kashmir in the eyes of Sir Edward Young—Husband
I recall my childhood days which go back to the fifty-two years (I was then in 7th grade). A physical display of schools was held in the S.P. High School complex. Prominent personalities were present to witness the show. My eyes fell on a towering and thin figure with a red fez cap on his head and dressed in European fashion leading the batch of a student group in the display. I was told he is the only highly qualified Muslim gentleman in Kashmir whose name is Sheikh Mohd Abdullah; a science teacher of present day M.P. Higher Secondary School, Srinagar. None could predict he would one day change the destiny of his native land and awaken “dumb driven cattle” from deep slumber. Who could say he would be called Babai Qoam? (Father of Kashmiris). He is now Sheri Kashmir, Qaudi-Azam known by his people. This Sher (Loin) Sheikh Mohd Abdullah was born on December 5, 1905 at Soura, 10 Kms from Srinagar.

On return from Aligarh he joined the Education Department as Science teacher. His whole public life of 52 years is before my eyes. In 1930 he started his public life by organizing a study circle of educated youth in the interior of the city where they would discuss, debate and yonder over the sad state of affairs of the State under Dogra rule. I remember late Ashai-Registrar University played an important role in this circle when his services had been terminated under Dogra rulers directive.

His (Sheri-Kashmir) imprisonment, his trials and his externment from his native land is a guide and lesson book for us. His firm faith in God like a true Muslim is a beacon light. He stood four square against all storms. He is now a legend. He is a hero, great teacher, statesman, able administrator loved by the people from the depths of hearts, a votary of truth and non-violence. He was a spirit of man, the oneness of humanity, universal brotherhood and love were his creed and ideology. Himself a perfect Muslim, regular in prayer (Nimaz), he had great respect for all creeds and religious faiths. When he started his movement even as a Muslim Conference President, he never allowed prejudice or hatred to cloud his thinking and ideology. His life is a “Saga of heroism” suffering and dedication to the well being of his Kashmiri Qoam (nation). He is a ‘colossus’ in the history of Kashmir, has walked on the political stage brilliantly for more than a half century. He fought for freedom, justice, communal harmony, secularism, suffered incarceration and untold hardship in the Vale like Mahatma Gandhi, Jawahar Lal Nehru and Maulana Azad in India. He was a living symbol of Hindu Muslim unity. Old, young, small children would ring out loud and clear the clarion call “Hindu-Muslim-Sikh Insaaf Zindabad” (Long live Hindu Muslim Unity). We boys in teens then would sing in the streets the song most popular in his praise:

Deetun Nad Qomas Kairon Khufta Bedar
Bagamo Shahar Gov Ayan Sheri Kashmir
(He summoned the nation and awoke them from deep sleep)

In villagers and cities Sheri Kashmir became famous)
His followers are called Sher (Loin) nationalists to the core of heart of hearts. They are believers of secularism and nationalism. In those days he had just secured Masters Degree in Chemistry from Aligarh Muslim University. He gave up teaching job, took to public life at a time when Hari Singh’s autocratic rule was at its zenith and his administration was taken up by feudal burocrats. I recall on 14th of July 1931, he was put behind bars along with his companions in the Dogra army barracks of Badami Bagh, later on in Hari-Parbat Fort prison under the orders of Sutherland, Police Commissioner. His other companions in five small rooms of Fort prison were Mir Waiz Mohd Yousof Shah, Ch. Ghulam Abbas, Ghulam Nabi Gikkar (college student), Moulvi Abdul Rehim (S/o late Mohd. Abdullah Vakil, Ahamdiyya), Mistry Mohd. Yakub, Qazi Gouhar Rehman of Jammu. They were released after some days. Their arrest and imprisonment paralysed the life in Srinagar. Streets were deserted, schools and college were closed. I remember 20 persons had been shot dead a day before viz., on 13th July. On 14th July five persons were killed. Reign of terror was let loose. The city of Srinagar, the towns Anantnag, Baramulla, Sopore were handed over to the Dogra army and spearmen on horses. Every passer by in the street had to say ‘Maharaja Bahadur Ki Jai’ at gun point. Every resident in the city had to stick on his shoulder symbol of Dogra flag indicating loyalty to the dynasty.

Soon after Muslim Conference came into existance. Sheri Kashmir was elected as its president. It became a proper forum of the political activities of Kashmiris. People of all walks of life joined this organization. There was now split in the conference in late 1931 when Maharaja’s Prime Minister, Raja Hari Krishen Kaul played his game of “divide and rule”. I remember brother fell upon a brother in the name of Sher Bakra. With the passage of time need was felt to convert the Muslim Conference into National Conference. These were the months of July-August 1938. Sheri Kashmir once told “after launching an agitation in July 1931 we experienced that not only Muslims but the vast majority belonging to other commu-

nities were also suffering equally. Only proteges of the Maharaja and people with vested interests were enjoying their lives in the entire state. Therefore, keeping non-muslims out of the movement which basically aimed at economic uplift of the people in general did not appear logical. Thus we converted the party into secular forum and named it National Conference.” It is said when Jawahar Lal Nehru was going to North West Frontier province alongwith Frontier Gandhi—Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, he met Sheri Kashmir at Lahore Railway Station, in company with Bakshi, Nehru advised him to broad-base the National Conference and keep the doors of the organization open to non-muslims. Many other well-educated, wide awake young men like Mirza Afzal Beg, teetecian, who had just given up service in Accountant General’s Office, Bakshi Ghulam Mohd, Organiser, Mufti Jalal-ud-Din, Shyam Lal Saraf and others joined the movement. After his conversion to National Conference he went on to lead the secularists and nationalistic rule and the oppression of his burocratic officials. His leadership placed a new programme reflecting the urges, aspirations of Kashmiris and a blue print. ‘Naya Kashmir’ was drafted known as Magna Carta or great charter for Kashmiris. It envisages a new social order better and a richer life irrespective of caste, colour or region. This programme tells us the deep thinking and conviction of the leader. He gave a red flag with white plough. He was as unquestioned leader from the beginning commanding respect all round him. He had a qualification to draw crowds with him. He swayed the audience with his oratory. He had learnt at the portals of Aligarh University to start oration with the recitation of a few ‘Ayats’ from the holy Quran with which he opened all his public speeches. At times most of the listeners in the audience swooned with emotion. He was respected and held in deep awe. He gave us a sense of belongingness. He was a Kashmiri to the core of his heart and proved of it. He ushered a new dawn infused in us the sense, “Ye Mulkh Hamara Hai” this is our country. He was attracted by Nehru in early forties. They came close to each other. It was said Nehru was under Sheikh’s spell. Within a few years Sheh
Kashmir was elected president of All India State Peoples' Conference which had launched freedom struggle in princely states numbering about 566 States ruled by autocratic Maharajas and Nawabs.

A land mark in the State People's struggle was the 'Quit Kashmir' slogan given by Sheri Kashmir in early months of 1946 demanding repudiation of sale deed of Amritsar and denounced the Maharajas right to rule saying that 'Sovereignty resides in the people'. A century earlier imperialist Britishers had entered into treaty of Amritsar (March 16, 1846) with Gulab Singh, Dogra ruler, to whom Kashmir was sold on a poultry sum of 75 lakhs of rupees (Nanak Shahee). Sheri Kashmir gave a clarion call to the people to rise up in an organised and peaceful manner against the treaty and autocracy. It was a struggle unique in the history of Kashmir. He launched it for the transfer of power to toe people. Reign of terror was lest loose within a few hours of the arrest of Sheri Kashmir, hundreds of workers were arrested all over the valley. Srinagar became the 'city of dead'. Dogra Army harassment and repression on peaceful, innocent and unarmed Kashmiri was so great that my language is narrow and poor to express. At times we had to crawl before the Dogra army personnel in the streets especially on road-crossings. This was indeed a do and die struggle. Sheri Kashmir was tried and sentenced to nine years imprisonment with a fine of Rs.1500,00. R.C. Kak, a deonald and a tyrannical Prime Minister without any foresight did not read the writing on the wall. He got an opportunity to assume and wield unlimited authority in the State. He was at the helm of affairs under Maharaja. Shri Asaf Ali pleaded for Sheri Kashmir while Madsudhan Kak, defended on behalf of Maharaja's Government. During this detention Sheri Kashmir was elected as president of State People's Conference. On hearing the pitless repression Pt. Nehru who was at the moment engaged in important talks with the Cabinet Mission members rushed to the aid of Kashmiris. He was arrested and lodged at Domel. The news of arrest shook the whole of India, fearing its repurcussions, Maulana Azad, the Congress President, called him back to Delhi for consultations.

Himself desired to visit Kashmir, Gandhi Ji reached here in July 1947. His visit proved comforting to the harassed people. He was impressed with communal harmony that prevailed in the State. He said that it was very difficult for me to know whether Kashmir was predominantly Muslim or Hindu. Meanwhile far-reaching developments were taking place in the country. The British Government had announced the transfer of complete power to Indians. The partition of India was in the offing. On 14th August 1947 Pakistan came into existance. On September 29, 1947 Sheri Kashmir was released unconditionally. R.C. Kak had been dismissed and there was an outburst of spontaneous joy among the people who associated Kak with repressive regime. Unfortunately country plunged into communal frenzy. On his release Sheri Kashmir was faced with the important question whether he should accede to India or to Pakistan or remain independent. There was another question for him, namely the freedom of the people, Sheri Kashmir thought that this question could be decided only when free. Pakistani leaders did not pay heed to it and wanted to force the issue of accession speedily. Result was large scale invasion by Afridi tribesmen supported and abetted by Pakistan. Maharajas Government had collapsed. He fled to Jammu leaving his subjects to their fate on 26th October 1947. Sheri Kashmir flew to Delhi and vice versa to appeal to the Indian cabinet to despatch armed forces to help Kashmiris to repel invaders. It was a critical hour Sheri Kashmir took himself the task of volunteereers from all communities came forward to offer resistance to the invador. A night vigil was kept for any tribesmen entering the city by stealth or any fifth columnist creating panic. Srinagar plunged into darkness. People were panic st.iken. Invaders reached near the gates of Srinagar (Shalteng). Young men were given training at Goal Bagh (now Gandhi park) and Sheikh Bagh P.W.D.
grounds. Residents of Srinagar would collect daily at Lal Chowk to hear further developments in thousands. Hari Singh signed the instrument of Accession at Jammu. Indian troops were lifted by air. The raiders were driven out after 12 hours battle at Shalteng leaving behind 300 dead. Citizens heaved a sign of relief. Before the arrival of Indian army Sheri Kashmir summoned a public meeting at Partap Park Srinagar informing the citizens about the raiders destruction and loot and the aid that India is to give at this time of peril. During these critical hours volunteers went through the streets and lanes shouting Sheri Kashmir Ka Kiya Irshad-Hindu Muslim Itihad. The message was in time Muslim refugees from Jammu who had been attacked by Hindu communalists were pouring into the valley through the Southern passes. For maintaining peace in the valley credit must be given to Kashmiri Muslims who showed tolerance brotherhood under Sheri Kashmir’s leadership. In the meanwhile on October 24, 1947 Dogra Maharaja revealed his intention of forming an interim Government headed by Sheri Kashmir S.M. Abdullah to the Government of India so that whole hearted co-operation and support of the messes represented by National Conference comes forth in order to repel invaders. Emergency Government was declared under Sheri Kashmir as Chief Emergency Officer which continued up to March 5, 1948 when the same administration was converted into a regular council of ministers with Sheri Kashmir as first popular Prime Minister. What are the land marks of his first phase of administration? I shall say the programme of social and agrarian reform as envisaged in the Naya Kashmir had to be implemented. Big landed estates were abolished and a plan was prepared to transfer it to the tillers. The total area cultivated was about 22,00,00 acres which belonged to the Dogra rulers and his jagirdars called chakdars. The land-lord was allowed to keep 160 kanals (20 acres of agricultural land, 1 acre for vegetable gardening (1/2 Acre) 4 kanals as residential site 10 kanals (1.25 Acres) or orchards altogether 182 kanals (22.75 Acres).

Loi in the Vale Sheri-Kashmir

It freed the peasant from the unbearable burden of complete economic dependence on the landlord.

Thereafter reforms in Educational filed were carried on. Mother tongue was introduced as medium of instructions. M.P. Schools for imparting education in arts, science and handicrafts were opened. Jammu and Kashmir University came into existence on November 1, 1948. It was an examining body and was transformed into a teaching University. Many dispensaries were also established.

Sheri Kashmir’s speach at Ranbirisingpora was not liked by then Indian leadership and blamed him that he wanted to carve out “Sheikdom” of his own. What was in his heart of harts? He was mis-understood by the Indian public. His sole ambition was not let Kashmiris be dominated by others culturally and politically. Kashmiris must have their own individuality and indentity. They should not be swamped by an outside culture. He believed since we have thrown our lot with India (limited accession) we must have a place in the sun. We cannot remain aloof. But unfortunately Indian leadership could not fully understand his mind. A historian in India will record one day that he was a believer in secularism and he never faltered. He said “Hindus are my relatives because my ancestors were Hindus. If you harm them you are harming my relatives”. He cooled and kept down hot heads among his party men. In 1948 Seri Kashmir went to the United Nations to show to the world how Pakistani raiders have butchered their co-regionists in Kashmir and looted innocent people. His colleagues like Bakshi Ghulam Mohd, Late Saraf turn coat politicians, late Sadiq, vindictive, weak and wavering administrator, did not like his actions and speeches of Ranbir Singh Pora. They felt aghast and toppled down his Government. According to Dr.Karan Singh, D.P. Dhar played an important role in throwing out his Government. He was arrested on 9th August 1953 and later on tried in the so-called Kashmir Conspiracy case, a fabricated one. Good sense prevailed. The case was withdrawn in 1964.
Sheri Kashmir was released after 13 years from jail. Nehru at first supported the State Government but later on lamented over his actions against him. He was invited to Dehi by Nehru and sent on goodwill mission to Pakistan, which was cut short by untimely death of Shri Nehru.

In 1965 Sheikh Sahib went on Haj pilgrimage and visited Egypt, U.K., and Algeria. He had a courtesy call on Chinese Prime Minister, Mr. Chou-en Lai who had also gone there at that time. His meeting with the Chinese leader brought a change in the mental balance of Indian leadership and impounded his passport. He was arrested and detained in Omarawamand and Kodia Kanal for this petty affair. He was released in January, 1968. Indian leaders began to realize that it is useless to knock down Kashmir Loin. On his entry in Srinagar in March 1968 he was given a rousing reception which was the greatest of its kind.

Now at last Indian leaders began to understand him. They began to realize that confrontation an conflict is not good in the larger interest of the country. They, therefore, initiated an atmosphere of calm and cool understanding by bringing Sheri Kashmir in the main stream. It was well motivated and he welcomed it and informed Mrs. Gandhi that he had no hesitation in making a fresh bid to restore proper understanding of the objectives for which he strove all through. The two leaders maintained their respective representatives, Mirza Afzal Beg and Shri G. Parthasarthy to conduct the dialogue which continued for more than two years which resulted in the emergence of Kashmir. Accord which established the basis of Centre-State relationship. Following this accord Sheri Kashmir was sworn in as Chief Minister on February 25, 1975. The Government under Sheri Kashmir introduced various far-reaching reforms in administration, finance and education. A new era was ushered in Administration. It was a period of discipline and progress. Various agricultural and industrial schemes were introduced. Elections were held and Sheri Kashmir

got an overwhelming majority defeating rival parties like Janta and Congress-I. Janta leaders Jagjivan Ram, Morarji Desai came here to campaign. I recollect Jagjivan Ram opus at Palaground Srinagar. He said “Shek Sahib is too old he should rest, relax and retire from politics. But later on they had to bow before Sheri Kashmir and acknowledge his unquestioned leadership of Kashmiris. During elections he had a mild heart attack. Morarji Desai, Charan Singh, Jagjivan Ram who headed ‘fools and jokers’. Government later on had no courtesy to see him when they were here for campaigning of elections. Nothing can be more disgraceful than this. This attitude will go deep in history. Jina Shery Kashmir Shekh Mohd. Abdullah, the peoples hero, a great teacher, statesman and an able administrator, the brightest star which shone for a half a century in our firmament passed away peacefully on 8th of September 1982 (19 Ziked 1402 A.H.) at 6.35 P.M. at Srinagar. He is no longer in our midst but his spirit is with us and will abide throughout the ages when we are dead and gone. At the time of his passing away he had said prayers and ‘Alvida’ (good bye) to the people. He reseated his son Dr. Farooq Abdullah’s idea of going out of Kashmir for treatment. He rebuked him saying that I do not want to return to my people as a dead man. Three days holiday and 11 days mourning was announced. We Kashmiris should rededicate ourselves to the rich heritage bequeathed by him and resolve to carry forward the torch lit by him fifty two years ago and keep his flame bright and clear.

May God bless the noble soul of the great departed leader and friend, mentor and teacher (Aameen).

N.B.—The subject matter is based on my personal anecdotes and recollection.
Zaina Lank

town with his family. When his request was granted he appeared in the true form and thus formed the lake. The king shifted his capital in two yojnas further west called it Visvagaspovura. Now it became a dwelling place for Naga and his family.

There is one more legend connected with the diety. He was once threatened with desiccation by a Dravidian magician to leave the lake. He wished to drag him out and settle him in an 'arid land'. The Naga was horrified and appeared in a dream with folded hands before king Jayapida (Vonadutt) for protection and promised to show him a gold mine as reward. The king (Jayapida) accepted his request and induced him to let the magician try his magic. The waters of the Lake were dried by the magician. Mahapadma and his family together with relatives were seen as human faced snakes and himself a span long wriggling in the mud. The king interfered and caused the lake to be restored. The Naga (Mahapadma) resented this insult and showed the king a copper mine instead of gold mine in the district of Koramajya (Kamraz). He obtained copper sufficient to coin hundred crores dinnars which bore his name (Jaya) (Sri).

There is another tradition that the city prior to lake was sandimmatnagar built by king (Sandiman) in about B.C. 1951. The city was inhabited by Sinners whose vice and sins grew in an alarming rapidity that Mahapadma Naga was very furious and resolved upon the destruction of entire city including its inhabitants. Among the residents of doomed city was a humble and pious potter Nandgupta whom the deity resolved to spare. He appeared to him in a dream and warned him of impending doom of the city told him to save himself. Next morning the potter related the warning to the citizens but was laughed at for his pains. As soon as the potter left the city, the waters began to rise until the entire side was overwhelmed by the great deluge. Janaraja (Zanarazat) gives a pathetic account of it. The terrified children who stood at first when the water was low at the feet of their
mothers, soon as the water began to rise higher got in to their laps then clung to their breasts, next jumped upon their shoulders and finally sat upon their shoulders and then sat upon their heads as if they were their embodied vital breaths. The flood covered their quacking limbs of women as if they were an affectionate lover embracing his beloved whose limbs are trembling with emotion.

Two of its feeding streams rise from the mount Harmukh in the east of Wular. These are Erin and Nadhumati. Erin has its source in the Shira Sar and Sarbal Sar. Two more tributaries join it at Ishentur and the other at Juban. It enters the Wular at Naidhal. The Madhumati rises from the tarns of Salnaisar and Lalgul Sar and is joined by Stonshpah Nar. Several tributaries join it and enters Wular between Nusght and Laharwalpur. Zainagir canal has been drawn from the stream at Sonarwari. Mean discharge of Mudhumati at Sonarwani is generally 254 cusec. It irrigates Khioham and Zainagir areas more than 8000 acres. Wular leaves at Sopore a delta town created by its siltation. It is also a delta of the Jhelum. It receives water from Sukhnag and Ferozpur and Ningle Nullahs after irrigating the area of Tangmarg, Pattan and Sonawari tehsils lose themselves in the large marshes under the banks of Jhelum which sometimes give security to the boats from the storms of Wular. The Ningle and Sindh give the best drinking water.

Abdullah Khan, the Pathan Governor (Subedar) A.D. 1747 had his drinking water brought daily from Ningle to Srinagar. In normal years Wular is 12 miles long and 9 miles in breadth. In the years of flood such as 1951, which I observed personally its breadth was 13 miles and length 16 miles. Much cultivable land in Sopore tehsil (villages Aadipur, Hatlangu, Warapur and Watlab remained submerged during early fifties and has now been reclaimed after dredging and desiling the Jhelum from Khadanyar to Sopore. I find now a new locality of Nurgah developed on reclaimed land of Wular in the east of Sopore.

Zaina Lank

When winds come down from the mountain gorges of Erin and Bandipur, locals call it ‘Vij Wav’ and the great surface of the lake changes into a sea of rolling waves and the bed of the lake becomes visible. When the gale of Sangri hill gorge at Aalosa village blows down on the lake, locals call it ‘Naga Koan’. Its rolling waves become most dangerous to the boatmen who take refuge in nearby surrounding ghats or villages or on the Island called Zaina Lank, a place of great beauty-built by the great king of Kashmir Sultan Zainul Abid-Din alias Bad Shah (A.D. 1420-75). Lanka is now Lank a corrupt word in Sanskrit. The Sultan had a great love for Wular lake. It was his favourite spot. An idea of construction of an island occurred in his mind. He selected a suitable site and consulted his ministers and wise men for this purpose. Special deodor boats were constructed and joined by iron sheets. Cargo boats were filled with boulders and sunk at this spot. In this way an island emerged and was named Zaina Lank after its builder which still retains the name. It is a rectangular in shape and measures 87 meters by 68 meters. The Sultan built a magnificent four storeyed palace and grand mosque which was of solid structure. Its ruins are still extant strange as it is that late R.C. Kak Superintendent State Archaeology and Shri N.K. Zutshi, Lecturer have given false view that the site of Zaina Lank was once an old temple. They have given their own interpretation and have admitted that the island was raised out deep water where palace and the mosque were built by the Sultan for his worship and recreation. Sultan and his predecessors were tolerant and sympathetic towards non-muslims. How then the material of a Hindu temple be used for mosque and palace. The noted Moghal scholar and historian Abul Fazal hundred or more years after, says the temples in Kashmir are in a state of preservation-the whole country (Kashmir) is a holy ground of Hindu sagea-45 temples are dedicated to Mahadeva, 64 to Vishnu, 3 to Brahma and 22 to Durga. Jehangir, the Emperor remarked that the lofty temples and idols which were built before manifestation of Islam are still in existence. Sultans pursued a policy of non-interference in the religious matters.
Zaina Lank built on the site of old temple is a figment of imagination of Mr. Zutshi and R.C. Kak. I wonder a Phd. thesis like this on Zainul-Ab-id-Din which is based on prejudice and against the principles of national integration is accepted by the Lucknow University. This false view is untenable and the authors have depended on Bahristani Shahi whose author has never cared to investigate Historical facts have been mis-represented and mis-constructed. The pillar which R.C. Kak considers as Shiv Lingum is none but an umbrella like ceiling which was a part wall around the mosque is still extant. R.C. Kak must have come across a stonelike-Shiv Lingum which was planted by Partap Singh Dogra ruler. Elder boatmen of Srinagar inform me that the Dogra prince would sometimes visit Zaina and enjoy Wular lake. He was orthodox and deeply religious.

Near the Lank (Island) water fowls are plenty during autumn season and is main source of game. In addition swans, geese and species of seagull are very common. They breed on the thicker matted leaves of aquatic plant. The wild fowl depart from the lake early in May and reach upto Siberia. They return again in Winter.

This island was discovered by Dr. V. Smith in A.D. 1874 a stone slab bearing inscription mentioned in the name of Zainul-Ab-id-Din and contains the date 847 A.H. (A.D. 1442-43) which at present is housed in S.P.S. Museum, Srinagar. Dr. Smith brought to the notice of the Maharajas’ Government of its bad state of preservation. This island was built in the centre of the lake but today it is near Woosi Khun where Jhelum falls in the lake because of deposition of silt which has never been removed during Dogra regime. The Wular lake is shrinking and if it is not attended to, will one day be a small pond with a small channel within 100 years.

I am now informed that to make the lank more attractive for tourists State Government has introduced Russian Jet boat service this year (1982) with the assistance of Russian Engineers through which they can go on sight seeing in the lake.

Sultan Zainul Ab-id-Din celebrated his annual festival (Jashan) in company with his ministers, saints, sobeks and scholars in this Island and he would stay for 40 days during and after Ramzan fast. The valley was often raided by the marauding tribes of Jhelum valley below Baramulla and Karnah valley known as Khokas and Bombas. Their main aim was loot and arson. Their raids continued off and on unto the middle of 19th century and our mothers still frighten weeping children saying that Khakas have come. The Sultan kept a strict watch over their movements from this places. During Sultan’s reign his son Haji Khan proclaimed the banner of revolt from this Island but was soon suppressed. After Sultan’s death the Island was repaired once during the Moghal period. When Akbar, the Moghal Emperor, paid a visit to the valley, he went round the lake and spent several days at the lank. Here he enjoyed Waswan (Kashmiri feast) with his officials and then left through J.V. Road. After the annexation of Kashmir by Ranjit Singh, the Sikh ruler of Punjab in A.D. 1819, he paid a visit to the valley and desired to see Wular lake. His boats were caught in a storm but luckily had a narrow escape after landing safely at the Lank.

Zaina Lank is a symbol of art and architecture and has been dedicated to us by the king who had welfare of his motherland in his heart of hearts. Its preservation is essential as a monument and must be looked as a shrine by the state Archaeology in the near future.
and stayed up to the accession of Sultan Sikandar Shah-Meru.

dubbed unnecessarily as iconoclast.

An idea of construction of Jamia Masjid occurred to the
king for daily worship and congregational prayers. The king,
suggested the site of present Mazari Salatin (Maharaj Gunj)
where water was available as the most convenient site for
Jamia Masjid. His wise queen, however, suggested that vacant
land in between Tarapida Tirtha and Maheshwari close to her
residential palace. Accordingly construction of Jamia Masjid
started in 1398 A.D. in consultation with Mir Sayyid Ali of
Hamdan. Plans and estimates were prepared by the reputed
engineers of the day, Kh. Saddur-ud-Din and Sayyid Mohd.
(Luristani) were invited by Sultan Sikandar to his court from
Khurason. They planned a mosque which could accommodate
40,000 worshipers at a stretch. The king approved the plan
and the mosque was completed in 1401 A.D.

Jamia Masjid has a history of its own. Sir Walter Lawrence
believed that the mosque stood on a land which was sacred
to Buddhists of Ladakh. They gave it to their own name Tsitsung
Tsulak-Kang and the mosque until 19th century was
called 'Bodo Masjid' and not Jamia Masjid. According to
some historians, it was a Buddhist temple on the ground that
the walls bore pictures of Buddhist saints. A few others say
that the Bodo Masjid was called Bota Masjid and was
somewhere below the "Caste hill of Srinagar". In Kashmiri
Bota means Lamaic or Budhistic applying to Baltistan and
Ladakh.

After the death of Sultan Sikandar his son and successor
Sultan Zain-ul-Abadin made additions and alternations in the
mosque. He opened and constructed a grand Seminary to
the north of it probably in Gujwara localities where persian,
arabic and sanskrit could be taught. Qazi Mir Mohd. Ali of
Bukhara was appointed its principal and the revenue of four
villages was assigned to the schools for its up-keep and
maintenance. To make it more magnificent and beautiful a
canal named Zaina Khul afterwards Lachmi Khul was-
constructed whose source and head regulator was Sindh Nallah at Ganderbal and the water was brought to the mosque through the eastern entrance which fed the large tank in the internal compound. The canal fell into disuse after 1903 A.D. when Srinagar Water Works Department was instituted by Partap Dogra’s Government. Its (Lachmi Khul) embankment are still extant near Medical Institute at Soura. The used or extra water from the tank flowed down through small ornamental chuk and then passed through the channel leaving the mosque by an underground passage in the western wall. After the meandering course of quarter of a mile in the pretty rill now replaced by the usual gutters empties itself into the Nallah Mar canal now Nallah Mar Road drain.

Jamia Masjid has passed through many vicissitudes. Sultan Zain-ul-Abadin constructed four tall minars and the inner compound of the mosque 254’ wide and 334, long, planting the chinor trees round it. The tradition assigns these changes to his grand son Sultan Hassan Shah in 1476 A.D. During his reign there occurred a serious conflagration in the neighbourhood of Jamia Masjid in Nauhatta (Sikandarpur) and it could not escape from the calamity. Sultan Hassan Shah reconstructed the mosque but unfortunately he died before completing the work. After his death his son Sultan Mohd. Shah resumed the construction in 1485 A.D. and completed some portion of it in three years. The Chief of the Army Staff of the then Kashmir Army Malik Ibrahim Maghey, a native of Tracham (Kupwara District) built the roof and walls around it out of his own private purse in 1488 A.D. He decorated the inner compound and planted Chinars and removed the houses around it to a distance of 100 feet in order to keep it safe from conflagration. “From 1561 A.D. 186 A.D. (Period of Chakks) political conditions in Kashmir were marked with confusion, bitter rivalries and instability”, Jamia Masjid was neglected except during the reign of Yaqub Chakk (Tactless prince), the repairs were carried by Qazi Musa, a renowned Ulema of the time out of his private purse. After the annexation of Kashmir by the Moghals in 1386 A.D. Akbar summoned two hundred artisans from Central Asia to execute the work of renovation and beautification of the mosque. In 1620 A.D. (1029 A.H.) again a great fire broke out in Nauhatta and Jamia Masjid was burnt just on the day of Ide-Ramzan (Idul-Fitr). At this time Emperor Jehangir was in Kashmir and he himself took part in extinguishing the flames in the company of Dilawar Khan, Subedar (Governor) of Kashmir. He ordered its immediate reconstruction under the able guidance and supervision of historian, Architect Rais-ul-Mulk Haider Malik of Chadura which was carried out in 17 years. Jehangir appointed Muls Jafri as its perceptor (Pir) with adequate emoluments and ordered the construction of a task in the middle of compound. This was completed in seven years. Shah Jehan Padshah Gazi incised his proclamation on a stone fixed on the Southern gate of the mosque which depicts how Kashmiris were freed from the exhorbitant taxes imposed by the Mohgal governors. This inscription is extant even today.

During Aurangzeb’s time again 1754 A. D., Jamia Masjid was gutted along with twelve thousand houses in its neighbourhood starting from Mohalla Qavadara. Aurangzeb heard of the accident. His first enquiry was whether the chinars were safe. He said the mosque could be rebuilt in a short time but a big chinor could not be replaced. He enlisted the services of all bricklayers and masons in the city and had the mosque completed within three years. It is evident from the structure itself as well as from the historial records that the Mughals adhered to the plan of original mosque of the Sultan Sikander. Aurangzeb decorated the minars with silver crests and it cost him five thousand dinars. He simultaneously ordered the erection of a ladder of seventy five steps which lead to Minars. Houses all round the mosque were pulled down so that there is no recurrence of fire. From Aurangbeeb’s time down to the 1914 A. D., the structural history of the mosque forms a record of decay.

Subsequently in 1754 A. D., Kashmir became a part of Ahmad Shah Abdali’s empire. It was ruled by the Afghan governors deputed by Afghan kings. This rule, says Sir
Walter Lawrence, "was a brutal tyranny, unrelieved by good works, chivalry, and honour." The mosque was slightly repaired by Haji Karim Dad Khan, Afghan governor in 1776 A.D. and the second time by Subedar Azad Khan in 1789 A.D. During the sixty nine years of Afghan (Pathan) rule, Jamia Masjid was neglected and when repair work was taken in hand, these were executed out of rents received from the shopping complex around it. In 1819 A.D., Kashmir was annexed by Ranjit Singh, the ruler of the Punjab. The mosque was closed and the doors blocked for 25 years under the orders of Diwan Moti Ram, a Sikh governor in 1820 A.D. Its Jagaris were confiscated and subsidy was stopped. Azan (Call to prayers) was prohibited here. Later on deputation of Kashmiri Muslims was led under the leadership of Mouli Amir-ud-Din and Mouli Nasir-ud-Din who submitted a memorandum to Sher Singh who then ordered the then Kashmir governor Sheikh Gh. Mohi-ud-Din to open the mosque and hand it over to the muslims. The Sheikh initiated repairs spending a lakh of rupees on the same. After the treaty of Amritsar in 1846, Gulab Dogra ordered the affairs of Jamia Masjid to be put off indefinitely. His successor Ranbir Singh allowed opening of the mosque only on Fridays. A construction Committee consisting of Kh. Rahim Shah, Gafoor Shah Naqshbandi was formed who collected a huge amount for its repairs and Ranbir Singh Dogra granted six thousand rupees but due to Shia-Sunni conflict in 1872 (1289 A.H.), the plan of mosque was kept in abeyance and some of the members of the committee were arrested and deported in Jammu jails. It will be remembered that on Fridays the market round Jamia Masjid would serve the purpose of trading centre. The District Magistrate of the Dogra regime Wazir Panoo planned the closure of the market so that Muslims of the valley would have no chance to assemble and create problems. He opened and developed Maharaj Gunj and colonised it by no-Kashmiri Hindus as tradesmen. In 1891, Kh. Rahim Joo approached Ranbir Dogra for further grant who sanctioned nine thousand rupees and out of this grant—Lachmi Khul was repaired. In the beginning of this century a construction committee

was reconstituted under the Chairmanship of Bakshi Parmanaand with late Mirwaiz Rasul Shah and late Kh. Samad Joo Kukroo (of Baramulla) as its members who demanded thirteen thousand rupees. However, process of decay could not be arrested. It had fallen into disrepair, but thanks to the efforts of the late Sheikh Maqbul Hussain, formerly Revenue Minister of the State, it was restored by the subscription raised among the zamindars of the valley along with the revenue known as “Masjid Fund” and on the technical advice from Archaeological Department, Government of India, Sir George Marshall gives credit for Jamia Masjid renovation to Col. H.A.D. Fraser, then State Engineer and to Mr. Thad Avery, the contactor who took in hand its reconstruction. The grandeur of Jamia Masjid lies in its four cloisters each about 120 yards in length supported by pillars deodar wood of great height and its spacious quadrangle. The effect of this winter forest tall bare pines in unquestionably striking wrote Mr. Gravsee in 1892 (January). And whatever beauty it possesses, "is due not to art, but to the natural randeur of the forest, which has been simply trimmed and transplanted from the mountain side to its present position". The lofty pillars in the propylons, the detail of the spires and the uniformity of the whole design prove that the builders know what they were about plain plinth to finial—that they were reproducing forms of which they were masters”.

Sir W. Lawrence visited the mosque in the eightees of the last century and believes that the pillars of deodar were felled and obtained from the forest of Tashwan, Srinagar (now locality extant on the left bank of Jhelum between Fateh Kadal and Zaina Kadal). The present compound is bisected by the broad paths planned according to the pattern of Mughal gardens.

Today I find the chinars planted by the great medeival sultans have been felled and aesthetic view and coolness of summer has disappeared. Instead its area should have been increased for worshippers, keeping in view the growth of population in the valley but no step has been taken.
Thanks to the present Managing Committee who have rebuilt and re-opened the shopping complex around on its vacant land and this has made it (Jamia Masjid) to stand on its own legs financially.

But oh! some miscreants tried to burn down the monument in July 1979. Their heinous designs were foiled by the timely arrival of local residents. Only its southern and eastern gates were set on fire and windows were damaged.

The mosque is one of those distinct and lasting legacy which have come down to the Muslims of the valley from their fore-fathers. It is a monument worth preserving and a great symbol of human skill and understanding directed towards a unique spiritual end.

King Ranadittiya Alias Tunjina
(A.D. 474-521)

He is said to have been the younger brother of Lakhna Narendraditya in whose name stands a locality in the interior part of the old Srinagar known now as Lakhriyar-Nawakadal, Srinagar. He is called Tunjina by the people mostly Budhists. Many fables and fairy tales are attributed to him. He is credited with a reign of three hundred years and the events recorded of it correspond fully to its miraculous length. The account of his reign given by Kalhana cannot be relied on. The source of his reign is based on traditions and folklore. During his reign Budhism and Brahmamism flourished side by side. He was a descendent of the founder of our present Srinagar. King Perversena II. He was loved by his subjects and treated them as his sons. He was brave, handsome and pious. To Kalhana he is a fairy tale here. Fantastic stories are attached. His descent to the under world, the wonders worked by his queen Rana Rambha at the consecration of various shrines and tirthas are recorded in detail in the chronicles. He got the temple Vishnu Ranaswamin built in about, some say A.D. 475 while others say A.D. 223. This temple appears to have enjoyed greater celebrity. The temple was somewhere near the graveyard of Sultan Qutub-ud-Din and his queen (A.D. 1373-1389) in the compound of Haji Pir Mohd. Sahib, Saraf-kadal, Srinagar. From the accounts given
by Mankha (12th century) the great poet, in "Sri Kantha Chariterns" his father who was a minister used to worship and offer prayers at this temple. He says Ranawasvin was always crowded with devotees. Jonaraja, the court historian of Sultan Zainul Ab-ud-Din mentions this was the chief temple in the city of Praverpur (present Srinagar). He says further the Sultan carried the canal called Zainagangha Lachmak, through the capital town Zainagiri was built (present Naushar Srinagar) as far as Ranawasvin temple. It would bring water from the Sind river via Amburber village in the quarters of Nushar and Sangin-Darwaza in the west of Hari Parvat fort. It continued in the southerly direction to the Jama Masjid and emptied itself into the old Mar canal at Kadi Kadal. This canal into dis-use after the Srinagar Water Works Department was instituted in 1903. The original plan of the temple and its structure has been described by Sh. Jayanta Bhatta, author Nayamijari and Nyayakalika. His another book was discovered in Jaisamler, Rajasthan. He is Agamaclan. This ancient temple was identified by Dr. Raghvan of the Madras University. Ranawasvin though in ruins after the passage of more than fifteen hundred years impresses one with its magnificence and the grandeur that might once have its chief characteristic surrounding the central temple at four cardinal points stand the plinths of four other minor traingles which are connected with paved path. At this shrine King Chakra Varman’s wife queen (A.D. 936) would worship in the month of Magh (January) which is the time for greatest snowfall in the valley. The monument is under the State Archaeological Department but never has been restored to its original shape nor ever any repairs have been carried. Ranaditya would pray at the old shrine of Butestwar Naranagh (Sind valley) Tehsil Ganderbal. He built his residence near about the present Rainawari, founded by him, known as Rajana Vatika, Ranaditya’s garden. It is largely inhabited by Brahmans whose solemn fast (prayopavesa) gave no small trouble to king Sussala of Kashmir (AD 1121-28) in his worst straits. Ranvor (Rainawari) has continued to the present day a favourite place of residence for city brahmans. It is a large suburb of Srinagar now laying on the western shore of Dal Lake—Vishwa Bharti

King Randittya Alias Tunjina (A.D. 474-521)

Educational Complex is situated in the middle of it on its bank. According to Abul Fazal, Ranaditya ruled only for thirty years. He erected a grand Brahman Mandal and an inn on the super of Hari Parvat hill and a grand hospital. He is credited to have laid the foundation of Martand temple and dedicated it to Vishnu. Architects from Gandhara region were employed in its construction and later on we see king Laladittyuka Mukhtapida built a grant stone fencing wall which is still extant. His queen Amrita Prabha (built a grand Vihar at Amritabhavan (Vonta Bhawan) where Chinese pilgrim Onkang stayed and copied manuscripts in A.D. 789. She placed a statue of Budha at this Vihar. Ranaditya is credited to have founded a grand temple Raneshwara near his capital town where he consecrated a linga. I believe this temple must have been somewhere near the Khanqah of Sayed Mohd. Al Madni, at Adalat Masjid mohalla, Bota Kadal, Srinagar. King Yasasakara (A.D. 939-948) deposited his sword at the base of its Linga. In the 11th century Sangamaraja the ruler spent one third of a crore for the restoration of his shrine. At last it is said Ranaditya entered in the cave at Bumzoo-Mattan and disappeared alongwith his companion and never returned.
Kashmir in the Eyes of Abul Fazal

In 1586 A.D., Kashmir became a Moghal Province and was composed of Pakhl, Bhimber, Swat, Bajur, Kandhar and Zubistan with Kabul as its capital. It was known as Subah of Kashmir in the moghal empire. Thus century-old isolation and seclusion was shaken. It brought about a new transformation in the consolidation of India and sound pattern of administration. Three years later Akbar in company with Abul Fazal, his minister, paid his first 'visit of pleasure' to the valley of Kashmir. It was Sunday, the first day of Shaban 994 of Hijri corresponding to 5th June 1589 A.D. He made his entry on the same day amidst 'great rejoicing and merry making'. The Emperor was warmly welcomed by the people of all communities. 'After the people of Kashmir' says Sukha Pandit, an eye witness, 'had seen the sovereign, a continuous festivity was held in every house of Srinagar'. Abul Fazal records that the royal journey to the valley was made in a holiday mood. Akbar travelled by the Bhimber pass and Ratan Panjal but desired to travel quietly. He dismissed all but a few companions, Prince Murad was sent in advance to take charge of the royal encourage. The emperor travelled partly on horse-back and traversed heights and hallows and partly on foot. At mid day he rested for a while under a shadow of a tree. On reaching Srinagar he called Kashmir 'Bhagi Khasa' Special garden and also 'Vilayati Ba Jamal' or beautiful country. Abul Fazal was fascinated by the sight of Srinagar like his master. He says 'The praises of Kashmir cannot be contained within the narrow of language'. The visit of the emperor and his minister was made at a time when moghal rule had not been established firmly. It was recently a conquered province and his statistics are not accurate. He says Kashmir is 120 Kos in length from Ver to Kishanganga and its breadth is from 10 to 25 Kos excluding Karnah and Dardistan (Darda). On the East is Paristan and river Chenab, on the South-east is Banhal and Jammu mountains, on the North-east great Tibet, on the West Pakhli and Kishen Ganga river, on the South-west Gakhbar country. On the North-west little Tibet, i.e., Baltistan.

26 different roads lead to Hindustan but those by Bhimber and Pakhl are the best and are generally practicable on horse-back. Hasti Vhanj, viz., old moghal route via Shopian is meant for march of troops. Kashmir is a holy land full of sacred places, hermits retreats and quite natural sceneries, appropriate to be the retired abode of reculse. It is the Sufis paradise which contains liberal broad minded worshippers of God. First and foremost among the wonders of Kashmir stand her idol temples. In and around of Shahar there are about more than 150 temples in the rest of the world. There is not to be seen or heard of one building like this. These temples are in a state of preservation—the whole country (Kashmir) is a holy ground of Hindu sages—45 temples are dedicated to Mahadev, 64 to Vishnu, 3 to Brahma and 22 to Durga, etc. wonderful legends are attached with them Kashmiri is the language of its inhabitants. It has spread in to south on to Kishwar and has flowed over to Pir Panchal in the lower hills of Chenab where it appears in a number of mixed dialects such as Pogli, Siraji of Doda and Rambani. Kashmiri is persian and Hindi and is
derived from Sanskrit. It is not the name used by the people of Kashmir itself. There the country is called Kashiru and the language is Koshiru. Kashmiri has one true dialect. Kashmiri has influenced Dogri and has merged with it in the southern hills of Pir Panchal between the watershed and the valleys of Chenab. There are a number of mixed dialects. Kashmiri spoken by muslims differ from that spoken by Hindus. Not only is the vocabulary of the former more fitting with words borrowed from persian, it has for many centuries been influenced by Sanskrit. Its speakers maintain that it is of Sanskrit origin Kashmir Ka.

Kashmir is enchanting and might be called a garden of perpetual spring surrounding a citidal terrace to the skies. Its streams are sweet to the taste, its climate invigorating and its waterfalls seem music in the air. Its rain and snowfalls are similar to that of Turkistan and Iran. Flowers are enchanting and fill the heart with delight. Violets, red rose and wild narcissus cover the plains. Its spring and autumn are extremely beautiful. The houses are all the wood and are four stories. It is not the custom to enclose them. Tulips are grown on the roofs which present a lovely sight. Shahar is the capital called Srinagar. It is four farsakas in length. The rivers Vyth (Jheelam), Mar and Lachma Khul flow through it. The latter two khuls have disappeared now. It has been flourishing city from ancient times and the home of artificers of various kinds. Beatiful shawls are woven and they manufacture woollen stuffs which are soft. Durmat pattu and other woollen material are in use. The bane of this country is its people, yet strange to say not withstanding its numerous population and scantiness of the means of subsistance theiving and begging is rare among its inhabitants.

Mir Sayyed Ali Hamdani resided for some time in this Shahar and a monstry founded by him still preserves his memory. Adjoining the Shahar are two large lakes always full of water and it is remarkable that their water will not deteriorate in good savour and wholesomeness for any length of time provided their free exit is undisturbed.

Kashmir in the eyes of Abul Fazal

Mulberry leaves are reserved for silk worms. Eggs are brought from Gilgit and Baltistan. There are neither elephants nor camels. Cows are black and ill-shaped but give excellent milk and butter. Bazar system is little in use as brisk business is carried on at the houses of businessmen. The people take pleasure in skiffs on the lakes and their haws strike the wild fowl in mid air. The carriage of goods is effected by boats. Boatmen drive a thriving trade.

Brahman class is numerous. Their learned books are in Sanskrit language. They have a separate character which they use for manuscript work. They write on Tuz which is the bark of a tree. All their ancient documents are written on this. They are the most respectable class in this country. They do not loosen the tongue of calumny against those not of their faith nor beg nor importune. There are many Reshis who are true worshippers of God. They employ themselves in planting fruit trees and are generally a source of benefit. They abstain from flesh and do not marry.

At present various sciences are studied and their knowledge is of a more general character. Their astrological art and astronomy are after the manner of Hindus.

Emperor during his brief stay ordered quite a few administrative reforms. He adopted many measures for public welfare and beautification of the valley. He displayed great activity like clearance of silt from channels and laying of many orchards. From this day dates the avenues of spirelike populars and groups of giant like planes in shadow of which even now the traveller rests. It is the memorial of Akbar's sense of beauty and love of well being.

Mulberries and fruits are numerous, Melons, apples, apricots are excellent. Grapes are planted in every house. Mulbery is little eaten, its leaves being reserved for the worm.

The food of the people is rice, wine, fish and various vegetables which are dried up and preserved. In the Brangi
area (Anantnagh) there is a spring called Kokar Nagh, the water of which is cold and wholesome. Should a hungry person drinks of it, his hunger will be appeased and its satisfaction in turn renews appetite.

Abul Fazal’s detailed description of Kashmir in many respects valuable to the historical students but it is particularly in connection with topographical search that we must feel grateful to him for having like his great master (Emperor Akbar) caught some of the enthusiasm of the past.

The whole valley is divided into two divisions—Maraz on the east and Kamraz on the west. It contains 38 parganas excluding Darda and Karnah. According to assessment revenue was fixed at 63 lakhs of kharwars. The system was by apraisement and division of crops. Assessment by special rates and cash transactions were not the custom of the country. Every plot is called a Patta. Emperor visited Kashmir and issued several ordinances regarding the taxation of the country and fixed the land tax at one fourth.

Chinar is called Booin by us and the word is Bhawani in Sanskrit which has become corrupt and is Booin that is a blessing Mata (Mother). Booin (Chinar) is a blessing mother considered by the inhabitants of Kashmir. Its shadow keeps us cool during summer months and its sight is pleasing to the eyes. It protects us during torental rains. Its Botanical term is ‘Platanus Orientals (Plain). Its leaves and branches shine during summer months. The Chinar is classed number one tree and is a royal tree. Its felling is strictly prohibited by the State Govt. It grows at a height of 4000 to 6000 feet above sea level. It requires coal and warm climate and the soil alluvial. When winter sets in, its dried leaves are turned into charcoal and used in Kangris (fire-pons) which keeps us warm and for us it a defence against winter. Its account is given in Raja Tarangni, “as old trees in whose hollow is fire”. I believe it, this allusion to chinar because chinar when it is old gets hollow and ignites spontaneously. A thorough research is required in this connection.

Laleshwari or Lalted, a poetess saint of Kashmir during early 14th Century AD has mentioned of Chinar:

“Kainchan Raen Chai Shehej Booni
Neerew Naibur Shul Karew
Kainchan Raen Chai Bara Pathe Honee
Necrew Naibur To Zang Khaiyew”.

Sir Jamshid Ji, poet laureate, has given the origin of Chinar and says that Chinar is Iranian tree which has been imported by various countries of the world. He has mentioned in his account Zina Avista, Herodotus, father of history tells us that Chinar was sacred to Sassanian emperors of Iran because Iranians call it ‘Fazal tree’ biggest tree. Rulers of Damoas Island in Mediterranean decorated the graveyard of their ancestors around by these chinar trees. Lateron it was planted in Scilly and other Italian and French cities. The Govt. of these States recovered revenue from the owners on account of it. The inhabitants would enjoy its shade to the full during picnics. It was planted in Iberian Peninsula Spain and Portugal. These were the days according to Pliny, Greek Historian, French army was invading the Roman cities and were turning these into ashes in the first century of Christain era. It was sacred in Spain and France that the growers watered it by liquor at the roots. During 6th Century AD it was planted in large number in various Balkan States and north Europe. It is quite evident that Chinar was in existence and planted during the reign of Lalitediya Muktapida (AD 707-760) in Kashmir. Some opine that Islamic propagators imported this plant in Kashmir. Emperor Jehangir gives a brief account of it in his memoirs, he says that it is one of the oldest trees in Kashmir and exists since ancient times. When I reached near Srinagar at Rawalpur village, it started raining torrentially. I along-with other five horse riders took shelter in one of cave holes of a chinar. My father Jalal-ud-Din Akbar, emperor had also taken shelter here with thirty four persons in its hollow according to Akbar Nama. I can very much infer that the chinar tree is the oldest tree in the valley of Kashmir.

Mrs. Stewart in her book ‘Gardens of Moghal Empire’ says that emperor Jehangir imported chinar trees from Iran so that his beloved queen’s desire is fulfilled but this argument cannot be relied upon. He himself mentions its existence in his memories. He further says that I have bought about 800 plants from Iran and planted them at Shalimar, Manasbal, Askabal, Vernag-Kokarnagh (Bundu Zalangam) Shadipur and Ganderbal. In AD 1635 emperor Shah Jehan planted about 1200 chinar plants at Naseem Bagh. During the reign of Aurangzeb-Alamgir, Islam Khan (Zia-ud-Din Badakshi) planted chinar trees in his town which he founded after his name Ismailab (Anantrag) which can even now be seen at Shir-Bagh and in the temples nearby. Moghal Governors held Durbars under the chinar trees on a raised platform. They discussed day-to-day problems of the State under the shadow of chinars and music dance and drama was also held. During the night chinar trees were illuminated which added the magnificence of the Durbar.

In AD 1398 when the construction work of Jamia Masjid of Srinagar was taken in hand Sultan Zain-ul-Abdin a few years later planted a few chinar trees in its compound and around it in order to give it an aesthetic view. In AD 1674 the mosque was destroyed on account of a big conflagration. When Aurangzeb heard of it, his first enquiry was whether the chinars very safe”. Mosque can be built but growth of chinars is difficult. Prince Dara Suiykh built a big barden of chinars at Vijbor (Bijbehara) in AD 1646-AH 1066. The chinars are still visible and extant. One of the chinar trees at Vijbor (Bijbehara) is above three hundred years old. Chinars leaves have played an important role in arts and crafts. In paper machie and walnut woods the painting of chinars are beautifully decorated. Its wood is used for making of mortors, furniture and oil presses. In Kashmir our shrines, temples and tirthas and churches are decorated by planting these trees in their vacant lands nearby. It is a sacred act. At present the number of chinar trees in the valley is approximately 50000. Badshahi Bagh at Bijbehara was decorated by prince Dara Shukuh with chinar trees under the superintendence of Daroga Mohd. Zahid Abul Hassan Samarquandi. This site lies on the right and left banks of river Jhelum near the present bridge which connects Dacchan Pur illaqa with that of Nandi illaqa and is now converted into a park. Near Bachh Pur colony, there was an old chinar garden called Bhaghi Illahi which was planted by emperor
Jehangir in 1050 A. H. (1640 AD-Nuri-Jehan), Planting of chinair trees was encouraged by the Moghal emperors. Nasim Bagh is entirely a chinair grove. It makes delightful camping grounds where they afford a cool and very welcome shade in the hottest part of the day. It has a place of honour among the threes of Kashmir.

Chinar has a beautiful glamour when autumn lights up, big chinair plane trees burn red against the dark blue rock back-ground. There are few more brilliant breathlessly enthrancing sights. Chinair Bagh (‘Bohemia of Srinagar’) can Isunti Khul canal is cool and shady encampment in Srinagar awes its name to its magnificent chinairs. Achhabal, Vernag and Kokarnahg and Ganderbal will lose its charm if the chinairs had not been planted there. Moghal emperors extended its cultivation. Jehangir and his empress Nur Jehan planted chinairs in Shalimar garden in Srinagar although she did not long to see its growth. During Moghal period there were about 700 gardens or more near about the Dal Lake planted by chinairs.

Nishat Bagh would not be a garden of pleasure if the clusters of chinairs if shading the walks were not there. Chinair tree is a native of Greece and Western Asia. Both Romans and Greeks love it because of its shade. (Britannica Encyclopedia). Chinairs on Ropa Lank Sona Lank (Char Chinair) were planted during Afghan period. Moghal emperors decorated the garden outside the temple of Mattan with beautiful Chinars. Its girth can be more than 63’ as found at Bijbehara. Manashal and Bhaqi Safa wrongly called Baghi Jaroka were decorated by chinair trees by Nur Jehan empress are still extant. In the Civil Lines near Tourist Reception Centre, Amar Singh Club one can see grooves of chinair trees which add the grandeur of the area, but I see near the Tourist Reception Centre great chinairs have been spoiled by removing the first layer of its trunk which have resulted its decay. It is a royal tree and like the walnut belongs to the State. It attains its magnificent size. In their old age the chinairs decay and many trees at Nasim Bagh and Bijbehara are hollowed on.

Floating Houses of Kashmir

During pre-historic times, when the valley of Kashmir was drained off, big lakes and marshy lands were left behind. Among the lakes still extant is the Wular lake, a part of which became navigable in course of time by small boats. The streams and canals served the population as highways and the floating houses with many designs, size and forms became an essential part of the communication system in the State. From Abul Fazal’s Ain-i-Akbari we learn that boats were the centre upon which all commerce moved and that in Kashmir there was made a model of a ship that astonished everyone who saw it. The great Mughal Emperor Akbar on his visit to Kashmir, ordered that on the Bengal Model double storeyed residential, floating houses, with fine windows, be built. Within a few days, thousand boats were got ready and a floating city was visible on the waters of Kashmir.

All the important capitals and cities were located on the banks of the Jhelum. We still see that between the villages there is communication through boats. The city of Srinagar has been rightly called the ‘Venice of the East’ with river Jhelum as ‘its Arno’.

The Kashmiri took to boat life from very ancient times. He belongs to a tribe which was very important and
prominent. Boat dwellers are an important class in the socio-economic life of the people of Kashmir. Sir Walter Lawrence tells us that King Parvena Sen introduced boat-men a Hanz in Kashmir from Sangal dip (Modern Singa Pur) to Kashmir during the 6th century A.D. On the other hand, our first Chronider, Kalhana Pandit, says that they were originally inhabitants of the valley who were relegated to mental work by Aryan settlers. They were known as Nishads before they accepted Islam as their faith. Shrivar and Sayyid Ali, Chroniclers of 16th century, call them Dhivar and Kasrjan respectively. They claim Prophet Noah as their ancestor. Some accounts point out to a gipy origin. They belonged to the Vaisya caste and even now Handis (boatmen) call other tribes as Shudders or Sudras. Hanjis have borrowed the pattern of their boats from Noah's ark.

They live permanently in these floating houses with their families. The father of a family is an autocrat and his discipline on board is often of a violent character. Indeed Kashmir is an intelligent and clever carpenter, says Young Husband. He has never gone out of the valley. Yet has an excellent knowledge of boat craft. The pioneer of modern education in Kashmir, Canon Tyndale Biscoe says "to respect the boatmen in their work, as boatmen for they have delighted me over and over again in their knowledge of boat craft, for they are kings at it. Then again they can work hard. They will tour your boat up, stream all day and if really necessary will continue all night".

There are many sub-divisions in the Hanji tribe. There are the half amphibus paddlers of the Dal Lake, known as "Demba Hanz". They were vegetable gardeners and bring vegetables in small boats for sale to the city. Their boat is called Demovar. They now live in small huts in the Dal Lake. The boatmen of the Wular Lake are known as "Gari Hanz". They gather Singhara nuts in the lake and live on the income from the sale. They live in boats and houses on the banks of this lake. These two sections of Hanjis held their head high among other Hanjis and do not marry out of their caste. Next in respectability come the boatmen who live on large barges, known as bahats, in which cargo of about 800 mounds of grain and wood is imported into the city. This type of boat has a high prow and stern. After it is a cabin with three rooms in which the boatman and his family live. There is another section of Hanjis known as Dung Hanz who carry passengers and sometimes load from one place to another. Their floating house is about 50 to 60 feet in length and about six to eight feet in width in the centre. It has a sloping roof of matting and also side walls. Dung Hanjis are very muscular and active people. Their floating houses are used for short sajourns in the lake by visitors as the boat alternative to a tent. Then at another stage during the Maharaja's Govt. the Dung was transformed in a modern house boat by Mr. Kenand. He is the first Englishman to have built the modern houseboat, supplanting the old Larkin in Kashmir during the last decade of 10th century. Every Dunga is a floating house and a hotel in miniature. The Dunga Hanjis profession has to some extent dwindled and they have now taken to other vocations. The economic condition has improved and are now satisfied with their lot. Some of them own buses and load-carriers.

Then there is another section of this tribe which is known Gadhanz or fishermen, who do nothing of fish. They surpass even the Dunganz in their power of investments. Some of them live in small floating houses throughout the year while others huts on river banks. They are mostly settled in the Sopore delta town. They help their relatives in distress, especially when a storm breaks out over Wular lake. Thus they have close community feelings and their economic lot has improved.

Another small section of the tribe is Haka Hanz who make their livelihood by dredging for drift-wood in rivers and bringing it to the city for sale as fuel for winter. They live in their own small floating houses throughout the year. They cook their food in earthen utensils. Lastly we have one more section of Hanjis known as Mata-Hanjis. They deal in the
sale of firewood, bricks and lime etc. and are now economically more prosperous than all other sections of Hanjis. They have now abandoned the floating houses and live on the banks of the Jhelum and Tsunti Khuli canal in their mansions. Since the carriage of goods and passengers in the valley was done by boats, the life of a boatman was prosperous. He did not like to build a house on the land but preferred river life where his brethren lived in floating houses.

Living in a floating house is quite different from living on land. There are few more pleasant experiences than being towed up the river in a floating house. When one travels from one place to another in a boat there is no packing to be done without delay, the floating houses moves to a place one desires. To make the tourist industry flourish in Kashmir it is necessary that more and more floating houses be constructed and furnished. This will improve the economy of the State especially during the summer months.

They do not give education to their children but marry them at an early age. They are the most backward class among Kashmiri Muslims, socially and educationally. Their percentage in education is nil. They are a muscular, active people. Their paddling is heart shaped and can steer the boat wonderfully without causing any damage. In every sect of Hanjis, caste rules are strictly followed. They do not intermarry among themselves. Non-Hanjis never inter in to matrimonial alliance with Hanjis. Quarrelling is very common among ‘bahaq Hanjis’ (Hanjis who are transporters of grain especially). One can find their quarrelling near the banks of Jhelum and Tsunti Khuli canal even late in the evening where they live in majority. That has given them evil reputation in the eyes of visitors and other local inhabitants. The latter do not mix with them only on this ground. Their expenses on marriages are very simple and meagre compared with other sects. Only their economic condition has improved and now they (Hanjis) own buses and carrier trucks but do not prefer to leave boat life.

Mr. Fredrick Drew, an Englishman was employed in the various civil capacities during the Maharaja’s Government in 1862 A.D. and was asked to do geological investigation in the State. In 1865, he was put in charge of Ladakh in order to remove all indirect restrictions upon central Asian trade in that quarter. He was in the service of Maharaja of Kashmir for a period of ten years from 1862 to 1872 A.D.

He has left behind a memorable account of what he observed here. He says that Kashmir has justly a reputation for something distinctive if not unique in its character. Its position and form together are such that there is no parallel to it in the whole of Himalayas. It is a plain embedded among the mountains, a wide vale enclosed by mountain ranges lying at such a height above the sea as on the one hand to be of a climate entirely different from that of India, being saved from the heat that parches its plains and on the other hand to be free from the severity of cold that visits the more lofty plateaus or wide valleys that are found more towards the centre of the mass of the mountains.

Of the people of Kashmir he writes that Kashmiri People are doubtless physically the finest of all races that inhabit the territories of the valleys of Kashmir. They are of the finest
race on the whole continent of India. Their physique, their character and their language are so marked as to produce an identity from all around as distinct from their neighbours as their country is geographically separated. The face of a Kashmiri is of pure High Aryan type, particularly of Kashmiri Pandit. Muslims and the peasantry have kept their breed unmixed. They are a robust race, broadshouldered and large framed and of great muscular power. Their clothing is simple that of the poor people is entirely woollen.

Kashmiris have qualities which one to be interested. They are noisy but not quarrelsome not are given to fight. They hate bloodshed. In intellect they are superior to their neighbours and are certainly keener than Punjabis and in perfection and clearness of mind and ingenuity, far outvie their masters, the Dooras. In disposition they are cheerful and humorous. Kashmiris are good linguists nearly all the men & a good proportion of women know either Punjabi or Hindustani. The Hindustani indeed will well carry one through Kashmir though Punjabi is more spoken by the older men who learnt it when the Sikhs were masters. The Kashmiri language is rather harsh in sound but it seems to one who listens to a conversation without understanding to be expressive, and be able to be made emphatic, those who speak it never at a loss to express every shade of meaning wanted.

About the economic condition of the people he says the country people are but poorly off. I think indeed that they get a fair meal but they can afford little beyond their simple food and are unable to provide against a rainy day. So when a bad year comes as though not often does sometimes happen they are put to great straits and will perhaps leave the country in numbers, for the isolation of the place is such that it is exceedingly difficult for any great importation of corn to be made to redress the failure of a harvest. Famines have in former times been occasion of migration of Kashmiri, the origin of the settlements of them we met, within various parts of outer hills and those in the Punjab.
 Kashmir in the Eyes of Mr. Fredrick Drew

as one follows the turns of the river or the streams flowing steadily below with boats of all kinds coming and going on it—is one remarkable interest and beauty.

Gulab Singh's; the first Dogra rulers greed for money, he gives an interesting story, that it was customary to offer a rupee as Nazar (present). Any one could get Gulab Singh's ear. Even in a crowded one could catch his eye by holding up a rupee and crying out, "Maharaj Arz Hai", that is Maharaja, "petition". He would pounce down like a hawk on the money, and having appropriated it would patiently hear out the petition. Once a man after this fashion making a complaint when the Maharaja was taking the rupee, closed his hand on it and said, "No first hear what I have to say". Even this did not go beyond Gulab Singh's patience. He waited till the fellow had told his tale and opened his hand. Then taking the money, he gave orders about the case.

Kashmir villages are very picturesque. The cottages are two storied in some parts. They have mud walls with a low-sloping gable roof of thatch or of rough shingle. Of the city people he writes, "In Srinagar there is more variety in the inhabitants than in the country around, the people here are more divided up into castes, some of which are based on hereditary transmission of occupation. Kashmiri Pandits have some fine cost of features and their chief occupation is writing, great numbers of them get their living by their pen as Persian Writers chiefly in the Government services. Pandits are used to less laborious work than Kashmiri Muslims. They do not follow any other calling that requires muscular exertion. They do not spread generally over the country. Kashmiri Muslim are laborious and hard working. Women among them are generally good looking and have well shaped face, good brow and straight nose with black long hair. They wear like men long loose gown hanging in one fall from the shoulders to the ankles. About the city of Srinagar, he says it is the ancient and the present name of the city. During the medieval period it was called by the name of Shahar. Dr. Bernier in Aurangzeb's time and Forester who was in Srinagar, 1783 A.D. uses the name Shahar and not Srinagar, but when the Sikhs conquered Kashmir they restored the ancient name Srinagar but inhabitants call it Shahar. It is situated in the centre of the valley on the banks of Jhelum which is like that of the Thames at Kingston in width and rate of flow. It (Jhelum) is the chief artery of traffic. There are one or two streets and those but short ones that have anything like a continuous traffic while the river is almost always alive with boats. The river aspect of the city is extremely picturesque there is nothing like a quay or embankment and there is no line of regular buildings but each house is built independently, height uneven, off form varied and in material changing as to the proportion of stone and wooden. The view of these buildings uneven, irregular but for that very reason giving in the sunlight varied lights and depths of shadow, of the line of them broken with numerous stone ghats or stairs thronged with people that lead from the river unto the streets and lanes of the city, of the mountain ridges showing above in form varying
19

Islamic Conception of History and Historians of Kashmir

History has always been a popular field of knowledge with the Muslims. They had a glorious tradition or historical writing from the early days. From 14 century to the end of 15th century, we have a wide variety of historical works in Persian. The Muslim historical and other literature formed a cultural import differing little in subject matter or idiom from already established forms of historical writing in Muslim countries outside Kashmir. 'The Islamic conception of history is theistic'. The central idea and belief Islam is that there is no God but Allah and Muslims believe in Holy Prophets and Prophet Mohammad as the last and Chief of the Prophets. Muslims always rejected the idea of incarnation of God. The Holy Quran contains the revelation of God and, therefore, guidance for history is to be derived from it. The Islamic view of history is not considered by Muslims to have been reached by reflection on the facts of history. It is the day how history is regarded. The Islamic conception of history is very different from the Hindu idea of history. It added a new wing to the historical writing. We have a number of historical accounts and biographies giving a detailed account of kings and royal courts. Historians were appointed in the courts of the rulers of Kashmir. They were naturally eager to please their patrons than to present a 

-comprehensive picture. As good and pious Muslims they adopted a didactic purpose in revealing the ways of Almighty to the Subjects of the ruler and the rulers were set up as agents of the divine purpose. The Central theme was the events and activities of the influential personalities—Sultans and Kings. Common people found no place in history. Even persons like Alamdari Kashmir, Sheikh Nur-ud-Din Reshi and Lalesh Wari (Lal Ded) were ignored. The aim of the historians was to please the ruler of the day. All history thus had a courtly halo around itself.

Historical literature of the Moghal period covers a very wide field. It cannot be briefly classified as official histories, informal histories, biographies, letters, literary works, records, etc. Abul Fazal's Aini Akbari is a comprehensive work on Akbar's life and reign, containing a detailed account of the administration and social life of the times. The administrative reforms initiated by Akbar and the varied re-actions of the court are portrayed vividly by an admirer and friend of Akbar. Muslim historians of Kashmir presented their works rather as collection of data than as an analytical study of personalities and events. Moralising limited and based on Holy Quran dominated the purpose of historical writings.

The earliest of Muslim historian mentioned is Mulla Ahmed who undertook orders of Sultan Zainul Ab-ud-Din. Mulla Ahmed was an eminent scholar and historian. He called the history of Kashmir as Bahral Asmar or the sea of tales. It was not completed by him and in A.D. 1594 Akbar instructed Mulla Abdul Qadir Badayuni to write and complete it. The book is not traceable. Mulla Ahmed's history is the source book of another eminent historian Malik Haidar of village Chadur. Pt. Jenarsa flourished during the reign of the same Sultan Zainul Ab-ud-Din. He was his courtier. It helps us to understand the circumstances which led to the establishment of the Sultanate in Kashmir. He has exaggerated the virtues of his master. He wrote history from the Brahman's point of view. He was an orthodox
Brahman and deliberately avoids the name of Mir Sayyid Ali Hamdani known to us as Shahl Hamdan, in his chronicles. After his death Shreevara Pt., his pupil became the courtier. He himself says 'I am attracted by the Sultan's merits'. His work is not as remarkable as that of his master Jenara. It is a source book on the period. After him Pt. Prabha Bhatt started to write history. His topography and chronology are not up to the mark. He had not mentioned anything about the struggle of Sultan Mohd. Shah and Fateh Shah.

Sayyid Ali composed his Tarih Kashmir during Sultan Yousuf Shah Chakka's rule. Its manuscript is available in the Research Department. It gives a glimpse of the part played by Sayyid Ali Hamdani and his son Mir Mohd. Hamdani. It is important because of being religious as well as political history of the period. He was an eye witness to the rule of Mirza Haidar Dughlat and his death. Its chronology and topography are not valuable. Its theme is the propagation of morality. This is based on Qazi Ibrahim's Tarihik Kashmir.

All other histories were written after the Mughal conquest of the valley., viz., A.D. 1586. A few historians began to write and take interest with the problems and descriptions of the inhabitants of Kashmir. Zaffarnama was composed by Sharafu-ud-Din Ali Yazdi. He was the historian and biographer of Amir Timur. It was probably composed in A.D. 1424. It gives an account of Sikandar Shahmeri's relations with Timur. It gives a brief description of the Geography and inhabitants of Kashmir. Timur has composed Malfuzati Timuri and has given topography of the valley.

Nizam-ud-Din composed Tabkati-Akbari. Herein he gives a brief history from the earliest times to the annexation of the valley by Akbar (A.D. 1586).

We come across with a historian of early 17th century of Kashmir in persian by an anonymous author. Popular tradition believe his name to have been Mirza Mehdi. He himself gives the date of compilation as A.D. 1586 and the date of completion as A.D. 1614 (A.H. 1023). He gives the brief history of Sultan Yousuf Shah and Yakub Shah Chakka. It is written in ornate and verbose style entitled 'Bharistan Shahi'. Hassan Bin Ali's History of Kashmir was written at the request of Jalal-ud-Din Malik Mohd. Naji (grand-father of Haidar Malik of Chadoora). His defect is that he omits the history of later Shah Mird and Chakka but deals in detail of the early period. Anyhow it is valuable. The well-known and eminent historian and architect of his period is Haidar Malik son of Hassan Malik of village Chadoora (Now raised to Tehsil status). He wrote Tawarik Kashmir in persian. He was a companion of Yousuf Khan in his exile after the annexation of Kashmir by Mughals. He wrote his Tawarikh Kashmir in A.D. 1612 and completed it in A.D. 1620. Haidar Malik was an eye witness to many events. His chronology is not correct. Though he was an orthodox Shia Muslim yet he does not spare Yakub Chakka's oppressive policy towards Sunni Muslims. The author's material is based on the histories of Hassan Bin Ali and Bahrani Shabi. He wrote in a simple and biased style. Mirza Haidar Dughlat (A.D. 1542-1551) was a great learned and scholar ruler of Kashmir. He composed his notable Tawarikhi Rashidi which is a source book of Mughal rule in India. This has since been translated by N. Elias and E. D. Ross. It was completed in A.D. 1546. The book contains detailed account of his invasion on Kashmir. He has given an account of buildings, monuments, culture, handicrafts and agricultural aspects of Kashmir. He ruled for more than ten years but died soon after. Otherwise he could have left a valuable account. His chronology is not correct.

During the middle of 15th century, Tuhsfatul Abbad was composed by a fanatical and orthodox Shia Muslim who does not give his name but must have been a disciple of Mir Shams-ud-Din Iraqi who introduced Nurbaksh-Shiya faith in the valley. He discusses the difficulties that Mir Shams-ud-Din Iraqi had to face in his propagation. However, it tells us the progress of Islam in the valley. One such copy is obtained.
for the Research Department Kashmir University from the late Hujatal Islam Agha Sayyid Mohd. Yousof, the Shia Mujahid of Badgam (now Yousof Abad). Mohd. Azam Khawja known as Azam Didda Mari—the Diddamar qtr. is on the right bank of Jhelum river between Nawakadal and Safakadal, Srinagar built by queen Didda for the accommodation of pilgrims and travellers was a great scholar and saint chiefly known as historian under later Moghals. His history is known as Tariikh Azmi. It is written in Persian. The Persian edition of it has been published by Mufti Mohd. Shad Suddat of Nowhatta through Nur Mohd. Bookseller, Srinagar. Azmi died four years after the defeat of Marhattas by Ahmed Shah Abdali at Panipat (A. D. 1761) and lies buried at Malikah graveyard, Srinagar. His tomb requires to be renovated. He was an eye witness to the arrival of the Prophet’s Holy Relic in Srinagar in A. D. 1698 (A.D. 1110). Tawarikh Azami is a popular source of later historians. The works have been used by Kh. Azam for preparation of Tawarikh Kashmir are:

1. Tariikh Rashidi
2. Tariikh Sayyed Ali
3. Muntakhib of Hassan Beg
4. Tawarikh Haidar Malik
5. Reshinama of Baba Nasib-ud-Din Gazi
6. Darjati Saddat of Kh. Ishaq Navchu
7. Asrarul Abrar of Daud Mischati
8. Tahfatul Fuqara etc. of Sheikh Mirad
9. Ma Seri Alamgiri

Abul Wahab Nuri A. D. 1768 composed Fatohati Kubriya. It is a Tazkira account in Persian of the Kuberawi order of Muslim mystics. It is a history and is based on Asrarul Abrar.

Mulla Bahaud Din Mattu A. D. 1832 composed a history of Muslims of these orders. Khausa Bhaudin, life of Makhudham Hamza Naqsbandia Qadirya, Chistiya Reshnama E/O.

Of all the histories of Kashmir, Pir Gh. Hassan of Gamru village, Tehsil Bandipora (in Khuyahom Pargana) on the bank of Volur Lake is a notable historian of 19th century. His ancestors belonged to Srinagar, Zoonimar Mohalla, who migrated during the Sikh rule. While on his travel in Rawalpindi, he secured a copy of Waqia Kashir by Allama Ahmed, the poet laureate of Sultan Zainu Abadin. It is a translation of history of Kashmir in Sanskrit by Ratankar Purana. It contains an account of thirty five kings who ruled Kashmir five thousand years back known as “Lost kings”. These accounts were lost to history. Even Kalhana Pandit, our master historian fails to trace the account of these rulers. They belong to pre-historic times. This is of immense importance.

Pir Ghulam Hassan wrote in Persian with equal facilities. He was respected for his learning. Even Sir Walter Lawrence had to pay tribute to Pir Ghulam Hassan, whom he supplied historical information and also taught Kashmiri language. What else (of the Kashmiri language) I have learnt, I owe to Pir Gh. Hassan Shah, a learned Kashmiri whose work has entirely been among the villagers. When Sir Walter Lawrence became Private Secretary to the Viceroy, he invited Hassan through the British Resident in Kashmir to be presented to the Viceroy. But the invitation was too late as Hassan had died a few days before. He had winning manners, quick wit and patriotic zeal. He planned his work in four volumes and compiled complete history of Kashmir from the earliest times to the death of Ranvir Singh Dogra (A.D. 1885). The first deals with the geography of Kashmir; its monuments, castes, tribes and religious sects. The second deals with the history of Kashmir from the earliest time to the writers own time. Ancient period is based on Kalhan Pandit’s Raja Tarangiri,
the second on Baharistani Shahi, Haidar Malik's history, Nizam-ud-Din and Abu Fazal have been his source. I find though the historian was no poliu Muslim he had to keep in view his own interest. He has equally held Muslims of the valley responsible for demolition and destruction of Brahman and Buddhist tirthas, temples and viharas. In this respect his history is defective and he blindly followed his predecessors. He is acclaimed the first leader of Kashmiri Muslims who champhained their cause. He has not investigated but had to please Dogra masters of Kashmir. He has throughout maintained his historical sense. He has depicted the poverty of Kashmiri muslims under Sikhs and Dogras. He had to maintain the policy of Dogras.

Among modern historian is Munshi Mohammad Din Faqiq. He is the author of 70 works. Tarikhi Budshahi is based on research and Munshi Sahib has given the best of his life to research of the history of Kashmir. He died at Lahore on 14th September (Friday) 1945 at the age of 69. Besides, he has written 'Shibabi Kashmir' and Aqwami Kashmir. He has maintained simplicity both in prose and verse. He has not suggested any reform in his writing or brought liberal outlook among Kashmiris but has maintained loyalty to the Dogra rulers and feudal lords or zaildars of Kashmir. He has not depicted pitiable conditions of Muslim peasantry under Dogras nor has he mentioned woes and sufferings of Kashmiri Muslims when they were forced for Begar or corvee by Dogra rulers nor the policy of Dogra rulers who deliberately kept Kashmiri muslims backward and ignorant in matters of education and Government services.

Mohd. Shah Saadat (Mufti) was a research scholar and an employee of Research Department of our own time. He hailed from Pandan Mohalla Nowhatta, Srinagar. He was the brother-in-law of Maulvi Mir Waiz Mohd. Yousuf Shah of Kashmir through his sister. He was made a Durbari in 1924 under Partap Singh Dogras orders. He has published 25 treatises on different topics relating to Kashmir. His History of Jamia Masjid is very fruitful. He was helpful to the scholars. Lastly I shall not forget my research scholar friend late Mohd. Amin
Bridges of Old Srinagar

Jhelum (Old Vitasta) flows through Srinagar since the hoary past. Modern Srinagar was founded during sixth century A.D. The rulers at various times changed and chose other sites than Srinagar as their capitals, settlements on the left bank of Jhelum at Srinagar emerged during 9th and 10th centuries. Kings’ Palace was located some where below Habba Kadal on the left bank. The Jhelum comes out of Vernagh and flows in a small channel up to Khanabal or above. It is spoken as Sandryan, various tributaries from Kohar (Arpat) Bringi (Kokarnagh) and Shahabat Dooru and rainwater from catchment areas of Pir Panchal join it near Khanabal or above. Lidder river from Pahalgam after irrigating areas of Dachnipur and Khovarpur meet at Gur and Vaghama villages below Khanabal.

From Khanabal (Anantnag-Islamabad) people call it Vyth, derived from Vyth Vytra a village near Vernagh, from Baramulla to Demel it is called Kashur Darya. From Demel onwards, it is spoken as Jhelum. It has played an important role in the economy and has influenced the character of Kashmiris before the advent of vehicular traffic. Greek historians call it Hydaspus, to Ptolemy it is Bidaspus. To our people in Medieval period it is Behat. To our ancients it is Vyth. The name Jhelum is Muslim origin. Alberuni,

(Abu Rehan Ibni-Ahmed) calls it Jailum meaning slowness. Shrivara Pt. Sanskritises this into Jailami. It is navigable from Khanabal (Islamabad-Anantnag) to Baramulla without any lock except Weir at Chattabal where a passage for navigation exists separately. It is 122 miles from Vernagh to Kichhoam where Jhelum leaves the Valley through a rocky bed. Its width during December is 210 feet when the river is at its lowest and the mean depth is 9 feet. Sharaf-ud-Din Ali-Yazdi (A.D. 1397) informs us the existance of 30 Boat Bridges on Jhelum. The art of construction of bridges, especially of Deodar was the principal material for building bridges until the present times when it has now been replaced by masonry construction and it is believed to have been introduced by the Greek Rulers in the Pre-Christain era. The number of bridges has varied from time to time depending on the growth of population, expansion and development of the city. Bridges are cheap says Lawrence, “and picturesque”. Their construction is ingenious.

The river boats were tied together by chains across the river and wooden floor was made over these for pedestrians. These bridges were blown up or untied at the approach of enemy. These existed since the 6th century A.D. When modern Srinagar was founded by Perversen II, one such bridge existed near about present Maisuma (then Maisuma Island) known as Brahut Sethu. From this bridge “great fire of Srinagar” could be seen during king Sussalas reign (A.D. 1150). King Harshdeva constructed another boat bridge called Maha Sethu for his own use. This bridge was located between Nawakadal and Zainakadal. It is believed that at this site later on Sultan Ali Shah (A.D. 1449) built the first bridge on the Jhelum called after his name Aali Kadal. Now Sultan Ali Shah built and innovated a new style of bridge building? Firstly he made iron clasps to import strength and durability. Boat-fuls of stone and earth in thousands were brought to the spot and sunk till the surface rose sufficiently above the water level ensuring immunity from storms and floods. Wooden trestles of deodar were constructed by placing rough hewn logs at right angles. As the structure
approached the requisite elevation to admit house boats passing beneath the deodar logs were centilevered. This reduced the span. Huge trees were made to serve as girders to support the road ways. The bridges have survived long. On this very style Sultan Zain-ul-Ab-Ud-Din constructed (A.D. 1427) Zainakadal bridge. This bridge was soon burnt down by his rebel son Adam Khan in A.D. 1500, the last Shahmeri Sultan Habib Shah built Habba Kadal. A year later (A.D. 1551) Sultan Fateh Shah constructed Fateh Kadal in the heart of the city (now old city) Nur-ud-Din Khan Bamzai-Afghan Governor built Nawakadal in A.D. 1767-68 for the benefit of the people of inhabitants of Nawakadal and Khandabawain area. Saif-ud-Din Moghal Governor built the 7th bridge and named is Saifakadal A.D. 1671 (A.M. 1082). An inscription was installed at the eastern corner of the bridge giving the name of the builder, has now been removed and housed in Shah Sahib’s mosque close by.

In A.D. 1774 Afghan Governor later on an independent ruler of Kashmir Amir Khan Jawan Shir shifted to Shergar fort (now old Secretariat) built by him as his residence. To connect the right bank areas then known as Maidani Maisuma he built Amira Kadal bridge after his name at a huge cost which was swept away in the great floods of 1893.

Shergarth fort, his residence and office was used by five Sikh Governors deputed by the Lahore Govt. upto 1819 A.D. and down upto 1926-27 by first four Dogra rulers. The last Dogra Hari Singh made his residence in hilly health resort Gupkar at the foot of Zaberwan hills where he entertained Lord and Lady Irwin (late Lord Halifax) Viceroy of India in early 1927. This palace is now Oberoi Palace Hotel and Restaurant.

All the six out of seven bridges were swept away by the heavy floods of 1893. Though these bridges had weathered many a serious flood. Amira Kadal was rebuilt in 1895 by Partap Singh Dogra who tried to change its name as Partap Kadal but Amira Kadal remained in common use with the

people. This bridge is in a delapidated condition and now stands replaced by a brand bridge, which is now bustling with traffic. The old bridge is now taken over by pavement vendors on both sides which create obstacle to the pedestrians. Upto the end of last century two bridges Habba Kadal and Zaina Kadal had a row of shops on them which were cleared later on.

Out of 30 bridges only seven bridges existed upto 1956. Srinagar was, therefore, known as “City of seven bridges” Partial restoration and repairs were carried by the Moghal Governor Ali Mardan Khan during Jehangir and Shah Jehan's reign. It is curious that none of the boat bridges can be traced. Engineers of ancient period did not permit sufficient span. Their successors muslim engineers used wood in their construction.

Sultan Zainul-Ab-ud-Din had un-restrained love and great vision and instinctive understanding. He diverted the Dal water through Mar Canal which was previously flowing through confluence at Habba Kadal (Sheli-teng). He spanned seven bridges Naid Kadal, Bohri Kadal, Saraf Kadal, Qodri Kadal, Rajveri Kadal, Doomba Kadal and Skidafar now removed for constructions of Mar Canal Road after five hundred years.

All the main seven bridges in the city were closed at 10 P.M. when gun was shot at Hari Parvat Fort, and re-opened at 4 A.M. during Sikh and Dogra rulers upto A.D. 1949. None was allowed to cross these bridges during the night. With the growth of new colonies in the upper reaches of Srinagar a few more bridges have been constructed. In order to connect Gadi-Hanji Pura and Raja Bagh colonies a new bridge with a bazaar name Zero Bridge was built after 1957. How this bridge got its old sounding name? Local residents with an impish sense of humour refer to the fact that one of the contractors sana Shora was hard of hearing. The word for this affliction is “Zuer” so it was named ‘Zuer’ bridge. The word got corrupted to Zero. It lies up stream unquestionably the Bridge No. 1. the new bridge could not but be as
such as Zero Bridge and should continue as such. In due-
course of time traffic became heavy and the bridge has now
outlived its utility. It has now become so weak that railings
have been put at both ends to prevent the entry of heavy-
vehicles like loaded trucks. Policemen have been posted here
to check heavy loaded trucks. As mentioned earlier with the
growth of population of Srinagar from 2 million to seven-
million a few more bridges have been constructed in the down-
town area of the city during late fifties and early sixties. Noor
Bagh bridge or Cement Kadal was built to connect localities
of Idgah and Zonimir areas. Budshah bridge was built in
1956 in order to decrease the load on Amira Kadal bridge.
This bridge is considered now the centre of Srinagar zero-
demic.

Another bridge, Bisoe Memorial Bridge over Jhelum was
completed in December, 1982 and opened by the late Chief
Minister Shiekh Abdullah being close to the C.M.S.H./School-
started by late Mr. Tynadle Bisoe, the Christain Missionary
in the eighties of the last century. Late Mr. Bisoe is the
pioneer of Western Education in Kashmir. This bridge will
connect circular road built under Master Plan of Srinagar.
Mr. Bisoe’s bronze bust was erected on the eastern edge of
bridge which has been spoiled by some miscreants and is
removed now.

One more bridge is proposed to be built up on Jhelum
near or above Polo Ground. The project is estimated at one
crore. The Govt. is finding the way to get the amount.

Besides, State Govt. has constructed a “By Pass Road” in
order to lessen the traffic load on main roads of interior part
of Srinagar, where generally accidents occur. This “By Pass
Road” passes through extreme south western part of Srinagar
and is connected through a massive concrete cement bridge at
Panthchok (old Panduchak) at a huge cost which will be
opened in the near future. It connects the main J.V. Road at
Shala Teng, suburb of the city where further advance of
Pakistanis tribesmen was halted by the Indian Army in Nov.,
1947 who retreated lateron and Srinagar was saved.

Mountain Gates (Drangas) in Old Kashmir

The importance of the mountains around Kashmir is very
great and serve us as protecting walls which has been recognized
both by the inhabitants and foreign chroniclers. Since the early
period the inhabitants have been won’t to pride themselves on
their country’s safety from foreign invasions, a feeling justified
only by the strength of these natural defences. Kathana,
spokes of Kashmir as unconquerable by the force of soldiers
and of the protection offered by its mountains walls.
Chemong, Fuyong, Huen Tsang and Oukong Chinese pilgrim
scholars to Kashmir in early centuries testify to this.
Alberuni (Abu-Rehan), the famous scholar, traveller does the
same. He shows us how to maintain this natural strength of
the country by keeping strict watch over the passes which lead
to the valley (Kashmir). Sharof-ud-Din, the historian
(A.D. 1397) says about Kashmir “This country is protected
naturally by its mountains on every side so that the inhabitants
without the trouble of fortifying themselves are safe from
the enemy’s invasions.

Nature has favoured Kashmir with a beautiful landscape,
rich and fertile soil, it was coveted by people from the
inhospitable regions of Central Asia, China and Tibet.
Therefore, the rulers had to perfect its military organisation and strong defence and had to build especially on the passes leading to the valley. Chinese pilgrims and Alberuni had occasion to note the system of frontier gates-watch stations. Drangas, where a careful guard was kept over the passes leading through the mountains. These fortified posts or "mountain gates" which they guarded played an important role in the narratives of Kalhana—our historian and subsequent chroniclers. Therefore, historical developments are closely connected with these watch stations—"Drangas".

These small forts or watch stations (Drangas or in more specific terms as Dakkas or Kotsals, were in true sense the real gates and the word Dranga ‘watch stations’ is given by the commentator Mankha, the poet A.D. 1135. These gates served the double purpose. Firstly to guard the approaches to the valley and were garrisoned by loyal and experienced troops under a commander designated as Drangadasa or Devarpati in pre-muslim era—margea or Lord of the passes—Nayyaks during Sultanate period and Maliks under Moghul rule. Local commanders were feudatory lords. They were bestowed large jagirs by Sultans and Moghul rulers.

Secondly custom duties and revenue was collected from those who entered or left the valley. Smuggling was prevented and culprits were severely punished. Every migrant was thoroughly examined and was not allowed to pass without the special permit or pass, now visa known then as Khati-Rah issued by Mandalessa in ancient period and Hakimi-Aalain medeaval times. The system served as an important check on unauthorised immigrants which continued during the mediaeval period of Kashmir history. Commanders of the army units were the past masters in the guerilla warfare. They often beat back the invaders with heavy losses in men and munitions. When the Lord of the gate—Devarpati—Nayyak or Malik turned disloyal against the ruler, the valley had then every apprehension of being invaded by the enemy. Therefore, in lieu of his services the lord of the gates post was created hereditary and was granted a big jagir.

Mountain Gates (Drangas) in Old Kashmir

Harapura Drang

The first mountain gate or Dranga was that of Sura Pur now called in corrupt from Hura Pur (Tehsil Shopian) on the old Moghul route or Pir Panchal mountain at the entrance of the valley at a height of 6114 in the valley of the Rembyar stream which leads to the passes of Pir Panchal, of Durhal and of Rupri, was originally built by king Avantivarman’s (A.D. 855/6-883) minister Sura Verman. It was dedicated to Lord Shiva called as Diamond city. It maintained its importance as trading centre with custom chowki upto A.D. 1878, when it was abolished by Ranvir Singh Dogra. One of the main routes of communication to the outside world led through this pass. Moghul rulers had built inns and residential houses for travellers so that they could stay there. Sultan Zainul Ab-ud-Din (A.D. 1430) established a colony of labourers whom he brought from Rajouri and Bhimber. This gate was known as Illahi Darwaza—gate of the Lord. Afghan rulers often repaired this gate. Present form is their work who in A.D. 1812 and A.D. 1819 had to defend Pir Panchal against the invading armies of the Sikh ruler of the Punjab—Ranjit Singh. Hura Pur is at present a small trading centre. Potatoes are largely grown here which find market in Srinagar and its suburbs. Kalhana mentions Upala, a rebel and the murderer of King Sussala (A.D. 1121) when attempting to re-enter Kashmir from Pushiana—village at the south foot of the Pir Panchal pass, was caught up the mountains nearby the Lord of the gate. With in a short period the road will be a second line of communication after remodelling. Second Dranga or gate existed on Tosa maiden route Tehsil Beru—At its entrance a fortress with a large gate was built. Dr. Stein calls it Karkota Dranga. It played a great defensive role of the valley. Alberuni saw it in A.D. 1021 and described it as the biggest gate. Mohd. Gaznavi when he tried to invade the valley was defeated by Kashmirian force under the king Sangamaraja of Kashmir. The attitude and the difficulty of the mountain defiles and extreme cold and barreness must have had a good share in making Karkota Dranga a formidable fortress. At present traces of foundation of the castle are extant at the village Drangabal. Remodelling of this
road is under the active consideration of the State Government. In the south west of Tangmarg we find an old fortress on the banks of Ferozpur Nullah 5 KM away from Tangmarg town. I believe it is Loh-kot better known as Loharkatta and must have been built during the early years of Lohara dynasty ruler. Lohara became a part of Kashmir during the tenth century A.D. It is a territory lying between Poonch and Mandi tehsils acquired by queen Didha when she was married to Kshemagupta of Lohara. Later on king Jayasimha placed his son in charge of this district. Here was a prominent gate with watch station for collecting custom duties and safeguarding the valley. During Indo-Pak conflict of 1965 most of the Pakistani infiltrators tried to enter the valley but by the timely information of one Mohd Din Gujjar, to the Indian army, their attempts were foiled. He was awarded Padma Shri by the President of India. Lohara remained adistric of Kashmir upto the advent of Moghals (A.D. 1586). From Lohar in the distance is 60 miles upto Srinagar. This fort and Dranga was repaired by the Sikh Government of Kashmir during 19th century.

**Drang at Baramulla**

Close to the western end of Baramulla town on the right bank of Jhelum, there existed an old watch station (Dranga) known today by the locals as Drangabal village where strict check was exercised on the movement of people from the grandara route (J. V. Road) in the valley. It is now in ruins. Its foundation material was carried and used in the construction of Jhelum Valley Road during the latter part of 19th century.

Areas below Baramulla, now Tehsil Uri, Muzzafarabad were held by Khasas or Khokhas who often carried murauding expeditions into the valley. Baramulla—Sopur and Srinagar. Their last raid was 1836 A.D. when they were brought under control by Gulab Singh Dogra. People have suffered a great deal. Their tyranny and loot has given birth to a proverb in Kashmir 'Khokha-ha'. They are remembered even now when our mothers frighten our weeping child. But in our

*Mountain Gates (Drangas) in Old Kashmir*

own time Pakistani raid in October 1947 was more fatal. They destroyed villages and towns in Baramulla district. People became panic striken in Srinagar during the dark days of October-November 1947. The only Hydro-electric station at Mohra-Uri was destroyed and Srinagar plunged into darkness. I found on my recent visit it (Dranga) is in ruins and never any care has been taken to preserve.

**Huya Houm Dranga Kupwara**

In the extreme north-east and in Kupwara district, we have the old village of Drang of Huya Ham. Its ancient name is Huya Srama and a site of old frontier watch station towards Kishen Ganga valley (now Neelam) where pilgrims would leave for Sharda tirtha through this route in ancient time. Although situated outside the limits of the Kashmir valley, Sharda shrine is forgotten by the pandits of Srinagar and lies now in the Pak-held area of Kashmir Substitute tirthas have been found elsewhere in the valley. The Drang is called Sona Drang (gold Drang) and has half a mile in south-west of Hayhom village. Remains of old towers are extant which leads up straight behind Drang to the mountain range in the north. The Drang and its name appears is Mahatmya as Suvarnurdhangaka. Afridis were settled have during Pathan rule to guard the roads across the mountains from irruptions of the turbulent bombas in the Kishen ganga valley and from possible raids of Chilasis. Kalhana gives us an interesting account of the difficulties offered by winter march to the pretender Bhajora during King Jayasimhas time (A.D. 1128).

**Drang at Dadukut Bandipore**

The first line of communication we meet in the upper Kishen ganga valley is known as Gurez and connects with the routes leading to Astore (Gilgit) and Baltistan on the Indus. From Gurez point road is closed and is under the control of Pakistan since 1947. During 19th century it was improved by British Engineers into the Gilgit Transport Road, crosses the range by Tragbal and Razdhani pass nearly 12000 feet high. This road is remodelled and it motorable upto Gurez.
and Telail by the present army engineers, Government of India. It was recently Oct. 1975) opened for heavy wheeled traffic by the late State Chief Minister, S.M. Abdullah. It starts from Matrigam village formerly Athvatoor village known as Dughaghata now Dad Kut PASS. It lay some eight miles farther to the east (Bandipur tehsil). Dard tribes of the valley from the north. This was fit for loaded animals in ancient times. We find the traces of some forts referred in the chronicles. This fort together with watch station (Dranga) was repaired by king Harshadeva of Kashmir in A.D. 1090 and placed Canpaka father of Kalthana historian incharge of this Dranga as Davarpati. This fort was occupied by Kashmir baron and later on fell in the hands of Dards. The site of the fort is on the Dadkut pass seen by me recently. Its route is through alpine ravina and is known as Vijje Marg. The garrison had to depend on water supply on a store of snow. Heavy wind and snow storms occur on the vular lake adjacent to it thorough this ravine known as Vyje Wav by locals. During mediaeval period Maliks were custodians of this castle and lived at Bandkat near Bandipur. Oukong Chinese pilgrim, to Ashmir (A.D. 749) calls it the “gate of the North” through which the road led to Po-lui (Baltistan) may have meant this Dranga or the fort of Dudighata (Dudkot).

Then proceeding in the east of Dudkut 10 miles and in the north of Srinagar—Leh Srinagar road which passes over Zojila was an important thoroughfare. It connects Kashmir with Ladakh and thence with Tibet and China. Natural watershed has been the ethnic boundary. On this route at Gagangir village, a Dranga (watch station) and a fort existed and often repaired by mediaeval rulers. Various invasions were made through this route. Gagangir is 7400 feet above the sea. This was an important place in the defence of the entrance to Kashmir. Gyalbu Rinchana—a Ladakhi prince after his conversion (to Islam) from Ladakh settled down in the fort at Gagangir who later became the first Muslim king Saddur-ud-Din of Kashmir. Chinese traveller pilgrim calls it ‘the gate of the East’ Mirza Haider named it as ‘the narrow defile of Mountain Gates (Drangas) in Old Kashmir

Lar.” His second favour inroad occured (A.D. 1532). He has explained his exploits with special reference made to ‘Gagangir Dranga’ by the ancient chronicler. The route on which the watch station was built was called Bhatuta land route by Kalthana. The road is under Beacon roadways, Government of India and is important from defence point of view.
Haider Malik and His History of Kashmir

Haider Malik, son of Hassan Malik was a resident of Chadura-Kashmiri Tsodur in the Nagam Pargana at a distance of 10 miles to the South of Srinagar. His ancestors were Rajputs belonging to the Chand (Raina) family. Originally they had come from Trigarta (Kangra-Himachal Pradesh) in the closing years of the reign of king Jaya Sinha (1128 A.D.) of Kashmir in the wake of their adventurous leader Mala Chand. Chodura was the family's hereditary seat. Mala Chand had been assigned a jagir in Lar Pargana (new Ganderbal) and appointed him as his Minister and Chief of the Army Staff. This Jagir remained in the family's possession upto Malik Mohd. Naji's time, Haider's Grand Father. Haider Malik and his brother were Kashmiri noble men and were 'orthodox Shias'. Malik Haider and his father Hassan were in the service of Sultan Yusuf Shah Chakk for 24 years and he was so much devoted to him that both father and son followed him in to exile to Bihar after the Moghal conquest of Kashmir in (1586 A.D.). During this period both engaged themselves in several successful missions for their master. But the turning point in his career was when Jehangir became emperor he granted Yusuf Khan a jagir in Bengal and sent him with Qutub-ud-Din to suppress Sher Afghan in Burdwan where Aiba Chakk, another exiled Kashmiiri Knight-errant was killed. Haider Malik and his brother Ali Malik protected and sheltered in his own house Mihr-un-Nissa Begum who was destined to become the future famous empress Nur Jehan against all dangers. In appreciation of his bravery and loyalty, Haider Malik was warmly recommended by her to the emperor Jehangir. The emperor bestowed upon him the titles of Chogtai and Raisul-Mulk.

Haider Malik was a great architect and a builder. Jehangir employed him to lay out a canal from the Sind river to irrigate Nur-Aliz Garden. Shah Jehan appointed him superintendent of buildings, he constructed a water fall and a stream at Vernag in Shahabad Pargana. The inscriptions at this site is extant and reads like this.

He rebuilt and renovated the Khangah of Nur Bakshiya Zadibal which had been burnt down by Zaffar Chakk. He also built Jama Masjid at Poonch.

On 16 Ramzan day 1619 A.D., the north eastern part of the city was completely gutted by fire. Three thousand houses-
were burnt. Jamia Masjid the only lordly mosque in Srinagar was also burnt. The emperor Jehangir was in Kashmir and himself took part in extinguishing the flames. Emperor ordered Haider Malik to rebuild the mosque and the task was completed under his supervision in 17 years. He gives the history of the mosque on a stone slab which even today is fixed on the top of the southern gate of Jamia Masjid.

Haider Malik began writing his Tarikhi-Kashmir in 1618 A.D. and completed it in 1620-21 A.D. Mulla Ahmed’s History Bahml Asmar forms the basis of his work. Another source of information was the study of Bharistani-Shahi written by an anonymous author and Tariki Kashmir by Hassan Bin Ali Kashmiri which is a short history of Kashmir from the earliest times to 1616 A.D. written at the request of Jalal-ud-Din Malik Mohd. Naji who were anxious to preserve a record of the achievements of his ancestors. The Bharastan Shahi is a history of Shahmeri Sultans upto the reign of Sultan Hassan Shah (A.D. 1563) which is briefly narrated but the Moghal conquest of Kashmir is exhaustively given and is a useful supplement to and check upon the Moghal accounts. But in addition Haider Malik records many of the old traditions preserved in his family of the Chakk period, Haider Malik was himself a witness to many events being a young man at the time but there is no mention of the part he played in there. He writes in a simple lucid style, his topography is perfectly correct though his chronology is not correct and reliable. Haider Malik eulogises the wisdom and courage of his grand father Malik Mohd. Naji. Just as the author of the Bharastani Shahi exalts the achievements of Bhaibai Sayyida’s. Though by faith he was a “thorough Shia Muslim”, yet he writes dispassionately and freely criticises his own co-religionist ruler Yakub Chakk for his oppressive and intolerant policy towards Sunni Muslims. His account of the reign of Chakk Sultans and their attempts to repel the Moghal invasion of Kashmir is very valuable and detailed. But unfortunately he is silent and does not describe the life of Yusuf Shah Chakk and Yusuf Chakk in prison during the last days. His Tarikhi Kashmir is a valuable document for the period (1586-1627 A.D.). The striking feature of this work are graphic description of places like, Shahab-ud-Din Pora-now Shadipur, Devasar, Lar, Tolamula, Amarnath Cave-Ich-Ichgam now Alabad, Hokursar etc. etc. and the description of the earlier period is diffused, exaggerated and occasionally undependable. One of the distinguishing feature of Haider Malik’s Tarikh is his love and patriotic feelings for his native land Kashmir which can be inferred in his account of the relations of Chakk rulers with emperor Akbar. Supernatural forces play the greatest role in determining the course of events in Kashmir.

Malik Haider’s history is an epitome of the works of Maulana Nadiri and also as mentioned earlier of Mulla Ahmed whose pet name was “Qutub”. Malik Haider has quoted the following two line say the Poet.

[Some Persian verse written on the page]
Malik Haider has preserved in the pages of his history the following elegy on Sultan Syyids Shahmeri datt.

Nothing definite is known of the administrative machinery of Kashmir as it worked in the dawn of history. If Huien Tsang and Kalhana are to be believed, Kashmir was part of Ashoka's empire. It is possible that the Maurayan system of administration was introduced which was in vogue during the time of our poet historian Kalhan Pandit. He gives credit to the introduction of new administrative measures in Kashmir not to Ashoka but to his son Jaluka in about 3rd century before Christ. The Government of Kashmir was of the same type as those of other states. Before Jaluka's time the Government of Kashmir was run by seven chief officials or ministers, the judge, the revenue superintendent, the treasurer, the commander of the army, the envoy, the priest and the astrologer. With the extension of Ashokas empire to Kashmir, his son Jaluka increased the number of offices (Karamshans) into eighteen and by this act inaugurated the constitutional system based on Mahabharata and Ramayana. These offices were, the counsellor, the purohita, heir apparent, generalissime, chamberlain, steward of the royal household, superintendent of prisons, treasurer, auditor of the treasury, officer with judicial functions, engineer of works, lord chief justice, president of the assembly, criminal jurisdiction, warden of fortifications and conservator of forests.
In the administrative set up first of all we had the office of Kingship which was hereditary. According to Kalhan Pandit the sovereignty of the state lies in the King. He was of divine origin and had absolute powers in the true sense of the term. He was part and parcel of Lord Shiva.

Nilmat Puran—

"Kashmir is Parvati, know that its King is a portion of Shiva. Though he be wicked, a wise man who desires his own prosperity will not despise him."

According to Buddhists he was hailed as the Lord and was called Sarva Mahasakya. He could not be hurt by a man. He is also the source of all light. Though he was regarded as part and parcel of God and also in theory his powers were unlimited. There was always some sort of practical check over his authority. The first check was supplied by the Prime Minister and other ministers whose will the King could not wholly ignore. If Kalhan Pandit is to be believed their opinion was to be solicited in case of the selection of a new monarch. The King had to be humble and modest, versed in sacred and secular lore. He received his training for the high office from his childhood when he held the position of Yuvaraj. The King was certainly the chief patron of the state, of the society, by the religion and of the culture but he did not create them. He was throughout guided by the age old customs, usages and traditions. He was not allowed to be autocratic. If the king was weak or ineffective, the prime minister dictated the policy of the state and exercised the supreme power of the government. We have several instances of kings being placed on the throne of Kashmir either by the council of the ministers or by a committee of nobles and Brahmins. In the 6th century A. D. at least two kings Megghavahan, and Matri Gupta were placed on the throne of Kashmir by the council of ministers. Before his death king Yasaskar in A. D. 939 had to conserve Varnta as king with the approval of his ministers. During the reign of Queen Didda 980 A. D. We find Brahmmins of the valley holding fast for removing Tungas.

Sarvadhi Kara (Prime Minister) from his office. Thus king were often compelled to take measures they did not like. Next comes the council of ministers which had to assist the king in the work of administration. The prime minister of Mukhyamatri was the most important and powerful. His position was above anybody and was directly chosen by the ruler. The next in rank was the minister charge of revenue administration known as Grahakripyadhitak. He was appointed direct by the king. This post was created by king Shanker verman in 883 A. D. and was the most important office. It was the highest ambition of every revenue officer to get this post. He had under him five secretaries called Davar. All the domestic expenses such as grants to temples, Brahmimas, the poor, strangers, grants for the fodder of the domestic animals and the salaries of the royal servants could be incurred with his consent. The office of the minister in waiting (padagar) combined the duties of revenue collection and finance administration. The Accountant General (Aksepal) and the recorder of the official documents functioned under him. This system continued till the time of Lalitaditya 700 A.D. who created five new departments (Karanshths). The five departments taken together were put in charge of an officer known as Panch Maha Sabha. He presided over all these departments and was of high status. He also functioned as minister for war and peace, who drafted and signed the treaties on behalf of the king. The other office was that of the city perfect known as Nargaadep who was in charge of the administration and defence of the cities and towns. Davarpati was the Lord of the gates. He was in charge of the defence of the passes leading to the valley and had a general command over the watch stations established on them. Lalitaditya’s grand son Jayapidda added two more offices to the existing administrative machinery. One of these was the department of justice (Dharmadhitkarar) and the other was the office of the moving treasury Kala Gunja. The creation of a mobile ex-chequeer became necessary to serve on expeditions when the king’s own treasury (Gunja) was far away. Shankerverman created two new departments. The first was charged with a share of law of markets (Atta pati Bhaga) and with a
collection of taxes on market shops etc. The second office (Ghokrata) concerned with the domestic affairs placed in charge of the treasurer through whom Shankerverman collected profits arising from the sale of incense, sandalwood, and other article of worship from the temples on the plea that they were the kings legal share of the selling price.

From ancient time Kashmir was divided into two principle administrative divisions: Kamraz and Maraz which has been referred in Sanskrit texts as Kramaraja and Madavaraja. At present Kamraz comprised the areas on both sides of river Jhelum below Srinagar while Maraz comprises those above it including Srinagar. In the Lohara period (10th century) one more mountain district called Lohara kingdom was added to the kingdom of Kashmir. This mountain district is immediately adjoining Kashmir in the south-west and is now Rajouri and Poonch districts. This district was brought under the control of Kashmir on account of Keshma Gupta’s union with queen Dida in the middle of 10th century which continued down to the times of Kalhana Pandit 12th century & later. These districts were further sub-divided into several Tehsils called Visaya. According to Lokapranaksha, Kashmir was sub-divided into 27 tehsils (Visayas). District was in charge of a Governor called Mandalesha who was responsible for the administration of the whole district. The tehsil or Visas was in charge of Margapati (today’s tehsildar). His function was the supervision of Visaya (Tehsil) and villages lying within it, checking of their accounts and inspection of roads. He also appears to be an executive officer to decide civil and criminal cases. The village administration was carried on by the Gramadivira or Gram Kayastha. His duty was to maintain records showing the area of the holding of the villagers with their revenue, assessment etc. According to Kashemendra he could be appointed and suspended by Margapati. He is the official ancestor of our present patwari. Next to Gramadivira was Skandekas. He is identified as village head man, modern Maguddam or Lambardar who was responsible for the collection of revenue and other cesses and had to look after the welfare of the village. He held his office at the will of Margapati and paid bribes to him for retention of the post. Since old days he has been an important factor in rural administration. These posts existed since ancient times. Their salary was paid out of the contributions made by the villagers. Lastly to man the efficient administration in the government their evolved a highly trained class of civil servants known as Kayasthas. The career of the Kayasthas was open to all castes and classed of population, as some believe, except Brahmins. They were the lions under the throne. A Kayastha (civil servant) drew his salary from the royal treasury monthly. According to Kalhana due to the efficiency of this class in the day-to-day administration the king could raise taxes and would look at their faces for their guidance and direction. Some kings like Uccala adopted severe measures to curb the corrupt practices of the civil servants and even terminated their services. Kayasthas became indispensable and gained in power and prestige. Both Kalhana and Ksemendra paint the Kayasthas with the blackest hue especially their greed for money, dishonest dealing and low moral character and pride. They carried systematic oppressions in different periods. The common man, the tiller of the soil and the humble worker had to bear the brunt of their inhuman exactions measures. In the end let me add that the administrative set-up of ancient Kashmir was well developed, well organised the efficient. Officers of the state were generally honest and dutiful. We had efficient system of executive, revenue and judicial administration and smooth government was maintained throughout. We have no reference that the rulers of ancient Kashmir bestowed favours on their kith and kin or their favourites.
Kashmir as Nehru Saw It

An architect of modern India, Jawahar Lal Nehru, the greatest of all Indians after M. Gandhi and free India's first prime minister for 17 long uninterrupted and formative years, was born on November fourteen, 1889 at Allahabad. He was the second son of Moti Lal Nehru through his wife Surup Rani, a Kashmiri girl. First Soh did not survive for infant mortality was very high in those days.

If Nehru is remembered as a builder of India, it is not merely because he laid the foundation for its economic progress but also because he helped to establish certain institutions—a frame work for governance and the democratic process and carefully nursed them until his death. During the half century of his active political life he was ardently interested in everything of national and international importance. He was the world's most committed and yet its most refined enemy of absolutism, exploitation and discrimination and he strove to give reality to his vision of a new world order based on peace and co-existence. He was the first Afro-Asian leader to lead his country of millions along an "untrodden path of non-alignment and a mixed economy". The multi-farious roles he played in his life and the mighty problems he faced at each stage and level in themselves would have made the task of biographer most difficult but added to these are millions of words, he wrote and spoke during his life time. He was indeed a prolific writer. Books and articles apart even his letters often tended to turn into booklets. And then he was a willing speaker prove to giving half a dozen performances in a single day. Unprepared and unhearsed. And yet he was not a person he released his own tensions fully in his writings, speeches or even his own outbursts of temper. He sustained throughout his life an inner conflict and tension, and while living simultaneously in the world's of Ideas and realities he strove continuously to level the barrier which separated them.

Nehru was a man of intellect of vision and of essential goodness. He was honest and sincere, kind and considerate, dispassionate and indecisive. He was possessed with ruthlessness, malice and pettiness, he had no aptitude for manoeuvres for dreary details of organisation and his personality had a sprinkling of vanity, conceit and romance which in his case be travelled rather than blemished'.

So far my writing is concerned I shall not dwell on Nehru's political involvement in Kashmir problem or its future status—politics is a 'dirty word' as Monir Raza puts it and therefore is not my field. I remember a foreign correspondent once said about his foreign policy that his attitude to this problem 'revealed the sensitivity of a man whose love could be compared to the deep and enduring passion of a lover for a beautiful woman. He attitude towards its intervention was influenced by his strong love for its people. To him it (Kashmir) was like 'a crown on the head of India and the heart of Asia'. I shall give here interesting view of Nehru's passionate attachment to Kashmir which he has penned down in some of his books, written and published before India attained political freedom.

Nehru was by conviction 'modern of moderns', a socialist, doubting, questing, internationalist—a citizen of the world and by faith a humanist, a bewildered Brahmin—obsessed with the fact of his ancestry being Kashmiri Pandits.

He was a bit European, a bit Chinese, Arab and African. But taken as a whole he was Indian and nothing but Indian.
He appeared to have been proved of the fact that his ancestors were Kashmiris. He observes in his autobiography we were Kashmiris. Over two hundred years ago early in the 18th century. Our ancestors came from that mountain valley to seek fame and fortune in the rich plains below. Raj koul was the name of that ancestor of ours and he had gained remembrance as a Sanskrit and Persian scholar in Kashmir. He attracted the notice of Emperor Farukia during the latter's visit to Kashmir and probably at the emperor's instance, the family migrated to Delhi about the year 1716. He tells us later the love and affection for his mother and says "I admired her (Surup Rani) beauty and loved her, amazingly small and beautiful hands and feet she belonged to a fresher stock from Kashmir and her people had left the homeland only two generations back".

People all over the world consider Jawahar Lal Nehru as a world statesman, a captain who led the freedom movement and as I said earlier a builder of New India. But to the core of his heart he was a poet and a human individual. He was deeply moved by the un-surpassed scenic beauty of his land of forefathers and says "I wandered over the Himalayas which are closely connected with old myth and legend and which have so much influenced our thought and literature. My love of the mountains and my kinship with Kashmir especially drew me to them, and I saw there not only the life and vigour and beauty of the present but the memoired loneliness of ages past.

The thirst for wandering in search of beauty of nature compelled him to visit Kashmir of and on. It was an unending journey for the quest and beauty of nature which he could never complete to his satisfaction.

He says but the journey is always worth the making even though the end may not be in sight and quotas walter de-la Mare.

"Yea, in my mind these mountains rise,
Their Perils dyed with evening roses
And still my ghost sits at my eyes
And thirsts for their untroubled snows"

Chap. VI. (Autobiography)

Kashmir as Nehru Saw It

He paid several non-political and care-free visits to the valley and recounts his experiences of his first visit to Kashmir in the summer of 1916 a few months after his marriage. During this visit he journeyed beyond the valley and went up to the Ladakh road over and above, with his cousin. He wandered for several weeks in the mountains. At Matayan he was told that the cave of Amarnath was only 8 miles away. He attempted to reach the holy cave over the high mountains but due to his inexperience of climbing the mountains he slipped down a steep gorge but was saved by his cousin from the jaws of death. It is clear that fate had spared him for a purpose. Here he says, "we turned back weary and disappointed and the cave of Amarnath remained unvisited."

This was his first visit (1916) to Kashmir. He further says, "The higher valleys and mountains of Kashmir fascinated me so much that I resolved to come back again soon". But he could not fulfill his resolution due to his preoccupation in the coils of politics and public affairs. He paid a brief second visit to the Kashmir valley in 1940 during the World War II. He writes about his hurried visit in the Postscript to his autobiography he added, "But sometimes there is an escape for a while at least from this world. Last month I went back to Kashmir after an absence of 23 years. I was there only for 12 days, but these days were fulfilled with beauty and I drank in the loveliness of that land of enchantment. I wandered about the valley and the higher mountains and climbed a glacier (kolhai) but felt that life was worth while".

Jawahar Lal Nehru, as an eminent student of world history was greatly fascinated by the chequered and colourful history of Kashmir. He appears to have been deeply impressed by the study of kalhana's Rajatarangini. In his Discovery of India (Chapter Four, section 12) he observes: "Unlike the Greeks, and unlike the Chinese and the Arabs, Indians in the past were not historians. Only very gradually are patient scholars today discovering the clues to the maze of Indian history. There is really only one old book, kalhana's Rajatarangini, a history of Kashmir written in the twelfth century A.D., which may be
considered history”. In his Glimpses of world history, (Chapter 9) he notes, “The only real history in Sanskrit is a history of Kashmir, Rajatarangini. The chronicle of the king of kashmir, and was written by Kalhana...we shall read it not only because it is a fare book, but also because it tells us a great deal about the past, and especially about kashmir, which, as you know, is our old homeland.”

The History of Kashmir fascinated Nehru also because this valley was once a great seat of culture and learning, a centre by turns of both Buddhism and Brahminism. It was here he reminds us, that the great medieval scholar and traveller, Alberuni, studied and mastered Sanskrit, it was here he recalls, that Zian-ul-Abidin, a century before the advent of the Great Akbar, realized the concept of a national state and of a composite Indo-Muslim culture. Nor can he forget the celebrated Buddhist missionaries and pilgrims who traversed through this valley to and fro across the Himalayan barriers and established undying cultural links between India and Central Asia, as also between India and China”. As a historian, Jawaharlal Nehru, while recognising that kashmir, through centuries of history, had developed an identity peculiar to herself, observes, “But in spite of this difference, kashmir had always been and continued to be an important seat of Indian learning and culture” (Discovery of India, Chapter Six, Section 4).

Let me conclude with a reference made by Nehru to the Treaty of Amritsar in his Glimpses of world history. Chapter 109. This book was originally written by Nehru in the form of letters addressed by him to his daughter from prison. Addressing Indira Gandhi, he says, “It may interest you to know because you are a kashmiri that kashmir was sold by the British to Raja Gulab Singh of Jammu for about Seventy-five lakhs of rupees. It was a bargain for Gulab Singh. The poor people of kashmir of course did not count in the transaction”.

Islam in Kashmir

Islam is simple and so practicable that it is acceptable to everyone who wishes to understand it with an open mind. The divine principle, enshrined in the holy Quran are clear and impressive. The Quran is our constitution and it ushers us towards pious and holy path of life. People have accepted the Islam because of its reality and simplicity. Islam believes in converting the hearts of this people by real preaching.

The Holy Quran has strictly prohibited its followers to employ force or any kind of coercion in winning the people of other religions. In the connection, verse 256, 2nd Surah warns us:

“Let there be no compulsion in religion. Truth stands out clear from the error. Whoever rejects evil and believes in God has grasped the most trustworthy hand hold that never breaks.”

Muslim saints, Sufis and Missionaries were conscious of the Divine command propounded by Prophet of Islam.

“Invite all to the way of Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching and argue with them in ways that
art best and most gracious: for Lord Knoweth best who have strayed from His part and who receive guidance.

Islam became popular because its followers be haved as an army of liberation for delivering humanity from the misery, exploitation and backwardness. They gave message of peace and prosperity to the humanity. The contribution of Islam to modern Spain and south east Asia is still evident. The intellectuals of present Spain still mourn on the tragic withdrawal of Islamic forces from their country, as they believe that their socio-economic and cultural development would have been far better, under the banner of Islam. The Govt. of Spain has recently allowed the Muslims dwelling in that country to worship in the great Mosque, built by Muslim warriors of the past.

Muslims were being treated as the ‘angles of salvation’ and were being received everywhere as harbingers of peace and deliverers of humanity. To quote Prof. Toyangnee, ‘wherever followers of Prophet went for propagation they did not have arms in their hands but were harmless to the core’ Prophet’s followers ‘entered Spain as the force of civilisation and culture’ and when they were expelled after 700 years it marked an end of culture there.

The year 97 A. H. (715-716 A. D.) is the land-mark in the annals of Kashmir. Prophet’s followers entered in the valley as traders under the leadership of a Syrian Muslim Hamim by name in the company of Raja Dahir’s son who found shelter with the then ruler of Kashmir Chandreapida. The figutive prince informed the ruler that he had with him an Arab Muslim trader with extraordinary qualities of Islam were called Mallachas then and as such were allowed to settle in a separate then part of Srinagar which became known as Malchamar (Ali Kadal, Srinagar). These Muslims entered as traders later on as adventurers and propagators. Years rolled on this way and Kalhana records that Lalitaditya’s son and successor Vijiraditya “sold many men to Maliechas” and these men introduced practices “which befitted them.”

Morcopolo, a famous traveller tells that “a colony of Muslims in Kashmir had emerged and the people (Brahmins and Buddhists) do not kill animals and that when they want to eat meat they get the Saracens who dwell among them to play the butcher”. These Saracens were emigrants from far off lands from Turkistan or those who had believed Pagans Gods and had now accepted Islam as their faith at the hands of Priest missionaires from Central Asia and India. Later on we hear ruler of the valley Harshdev (1089 A. D.), Rajadeve (1212 A. D.), Bikascarc (1120 A. D.) and Jayasimha (1128-1155 A. D.) employed and recruited muslim soldiers in civil and foreign wars who fought with loyalty. Harshdev’s Chief of the Army Staff a muslim Madna by name or in the words of Kalhana “captains of hundreds”. Harshdev introduced muslim influence in every walk of like, in dress and garments.

The saint missionaries and Sufis came in the guise of traders and adventurers and were responsible for spreading Islam in the happy valley. The first Sufi and missionary was Syedd Sharrat-Ud-Din Bulbul Shah. His teaching had great impact on the ruler of Kashmir Rinchana later on King Saddac-Ud-Din. This was important episode in the annals of Kashmir. It increased the “prestige of Islam” and soon some of the nobles accepted the new faith. His work was carried on by other Sufis, chief among them were Sayyid Jamal-Ud-Din, Sayyid Hassan-Sammani, Sayyid Taji-Ud-Din, Sayyid Ali Hamdani and his son Mir Mohammad Hamdani. Then came other propagators Alamdari Kashmir, Sheikh Nur-Ud-Din Reshi and his discipies. After him such persons who played the role of propagators were Shams-Ud-Din, Sheikh Hamza Makhduum, and Baba Daud Khaki. Due to their efforts majority of the inhabitants of the valley accepted Islam as their faith. People held in great esteem these Saints and build and endowed mosques and Khanqah for them. Not a single muslim ruler actively participated in their missionary activities. These propagators had “seldom solicited cooperation”. In the words of Stein (Dr) “Islam made its way into Kashmir not by forcible conquest but by gradual conversion” (Raja Tarangini). Kashmir was as hopeless state until the establishment of a stable Government infused with spirit of
tolerance and equality. The original creeds in the valley had grown so “sterile and un-responsive” that they needed to be revolutionised. According to Kalhana social and political disintegration had begun from the beginning of 11th century. There was growth of sectarianism in Hindu Society and the anarchy in the religious creeds had set in. The social system adhered by the majority had degenerated into mass of superstitions and rituals and could not satisfy spiritual demands of the people. Islam was free from ceremonial caste and priesthood. It appealed to the masses and won the converts. By the close of 14th century A. D. we see the great saint poetess Lala Ded (Laleshwari) she raised voice against superstition, Brahmin conservatism and dogmatism.

Another factor responsible for the success of Islam in Kashmir was the laxity of caste rules. Buddhism had relaxed caste rules but it had become strong and cohesive force under Brahman rulers. Therefore Muslim propagators had no difficulty as it did have in other parts of India.

Muslim rulers adopted a policy of non-interference in religious matters and the success of this simple and “monotheistic religion” was mainly due to the efforts of Sufis in Kashmir for whom the ground was already prepared. Jonaraja (Zoonaraj) bewails and laments “Kingdom of Kashmir was polluted by the evil practices of Malechas”. Shrivar also complained the “abolition of old practices and their substitution by new ones”. But inspite of these protests foreign ideas and influence had gone deep in the minds of masses. In course of time all castes other than Brahman had disappeared from the valley. Thus Islam brought about a great transformation in Kashmir society but retained some old beliefs and there was no complete break.

Idul Fiter, Idul Zuha were common festivals. Ganacakra, Sont, Veth-trawah were celebrated by both the communities. Muslims of the valley continued to accept Hindu places of worship as sacred. Even the time of Baba Daud Khaki (A.D. 1521-86) there were instance of Muslims worshiping idols.

Islam in Kashmir

(Aasarul Abrar page 276). Our Muslim rulers had Hindu wives who clung to their customs after acceptance of Islam. Muslim rulers participated in Hindu festivals and visited Hindu Shrines and requested the aid of the Gods. In order to avert famines and constant rains even today some sacrifices are made by the Muslims. On his visit to Kashmir Abul Fazal observed that at Tukshaqanaga (Zevan village) near Srinagar 300 Muslims were worshipping the deity.

Islam brought about new values in Kashmir society but at the same time past was not done with Islam opened new gates to foreign influences especially Iran and Central Asia. It brought about a new change in our mother tongue Kashmiri which was enriched by Arabic and Persian words. Due to introduction of various cultures it brought about a fresh renaissance in our Kashmir. Kashmir society was tired of anarchy and civil wars of later Hindu rulers. Islam was greed as saviour and willingly accepted by the inhabitants. Stability, order and peace was ushered in. Brahman were dissatisfied with the corrupt ministers of old regime. Trade had suffered and agriculture had come to standstill. Under these circumstances Islam was welcomed in Kashmir. Agriculture began to flourish. Burden of taxation was tightened, life and property rendered safe and sound. New ideas began to be assimilated. It brought about religious toleration.

Islam changed our way of life. Kashmiri became charitable and hospitable so much so that when guests arrive in our homes we do not touch food without them. The result is the emergence of a society (Kashmiri’s) which is secular tolerant and democratic in character and outlook.
Sultan Salim later on Nur-ud-Din Jehangir was born on 17th Rabi-ul-Awal, 977 A.H. corresponding to August 31, 1559 at a Village Sikri then, near Agra. Till his birth he says, "my father Jalal-ud-Din Mohd. Akbar was continually praying for the survival of a son to dervishes and reculses." He was brought at a court which extended a splendor Patronage to art and in a city which was in itself go marvel of art. His aesthetic faculties were trained to a remarkable degree. His education made him fairly conversant with history and Geograpy. He was fond of biographical details. (His interest in botany and Zoology would have done credit to any professional scientist.)

It is his Memoirs that gives a lively account of India in the early decades of 17th century and a valuable supplement to the AKBARNAMA. To quote Henry Beveridge, Memoirs of Jehangir is for more human and fuller of matter than the story a Gallic works, "His Memoirs are not inferior in interest to those of Baber". Jehangir was by no means a remarkable man as his great grand father, Baber. He was a most fatly man and his own account of himself often excites our desgust and contempt. But he had the sence not to confine his narrative to on account of himself and he has given us a picture of his father, the great Akbar which is a bigger 'plum' than anything in Babar's Memoirs. But his account of himself has also its charm, for it reveals the real man and he lives for us in his memoirs. Jehangir was noted a strange mixture. The man who could stand by and see man flyed alive and who himself tells us, put one man to death and had two others hamsstrung because they showed them-selves in opportunity and frightened away his game, could yet be a lover of justice and could spend his Thursday evenings in holding high conversation. Tuzki Jehangir or his memoirs had been written for the first twelve years of his reign he made them into a volume, Jehangir, reigned for 22 years but ill health and sorrow made him give up the writing of his memoirs to the beginning of the 19th year. He then dropped writing memoirs in the name of the emperor but he continued the narrative of the reign to Jehangir's death in his own work, 'the Iqbal Nama'. Mohd. Hadi afterwards continued the memoirs down to Jehangirs death. Jehangir is a true Indian. He dewells delightedly on the charm of India's flowers, particularises the palas, the bokul and the champa and arows that no fruit of Afghanistan or central Asia is equal to Mango.

Jehangir paid a few visits to Kashmir along with his father emperor Akbar, when he became king, to avoid the schorching heart of the plais. Jehangir would always be in Kashmir in the lap of nature. Among other things in his memoirs there is a full account of Kashmir which is considerably superior and praised by Sir Walter Lawrence.

Jehangir visited Kashmir in the second year of his reign and pitched his camp of the banks of Jhelum, and records. In the night a very strong wind blow, dark clouds obscured the sky and it rained so heavily that even the oldest person had never seen such rain with in their memory. The rain ended with showers of hail stones, which were as large as/ hens eggs".
Jehangir gives us an account of Vernagh which is the source of Bhat now Jhelum. The spring rises in a basin of an octagonal form about 20 yards. Near it are the remains of a place of worship for reculeses cells cut out of the rock and numerous caves. The water is exceedingly pure...the depth was not more than one and a half the height of a man.” Jehangir rebuilt the spring with stone and garden laid out with a canal. His first inscription.

Jehangir describes the flowers and springs with poetic fervour. He would gaze rapt with wonder and admiration at a beautiful rose or a tulip hill or revulet.

Speaking about Kashmir Jehangir says,” It is a garden of eternal spring or an iron fort to a palace of kings—delightful flower bed and a heart expanding heritage for dervishes. Its pleasant meadows and enchanting cascades are beyond all description. There are running streams and fountains beyond court. Wherever the eyes reaches there are verdure and running water. The red rose, the violet, and the narcissus grow of themselves in the fields, there are all kinds of flowers and all sorts of Sweet Scented herbs more than can be calculated.

In the soul enchanting spring the hills and the plains are filled with blossoms, the gates, the walls, the courts, the roofs are lighted up by the touches of banquet-adoring tulips.

Jehangir describes the weight and measures current in Kashmir. He says the Pakhli nav (J.V. road) route is the best route to kashmir'. Speaking about Jhelum, Jehangir says “It passes through the heart of the city. No one drinks its water because of its heaviness and indigestibility. All the people of Kashmir drunk the water of lake that is near the city called Dal.”

Rice is the principal food of the people. They boil it fresh and allow it to get cold and then eat it and call it batha, poor people keep a portion of batha for a night and eat it next day. Oil and butter are used by people who are well of comparatively.

Men and women wear woollen cloths called pattao and put on a round turban. They believe without wearing pattao they catch cold and cannot digest without it.

The labourers in Kashmir used to get salt in return of their wages. Jehangir makes a particular reference of the shortage of salt in Kashmir which is imported from Hindustan for “salt is not produced in Kashmir. Jehangir continues even in the beauty of the inhabitants there is but very little.”

There is a body of Fakirs whom Kashmiris call Reshis. They have no religious knowledge or learning and possess simplicity. They abuse no one. They eat no flesh, they have no wives and always plant fruit bearing trees in the fields. They are about 2000 in number. There is a body of Brahmans living from of old in this country and talk in Kashmiri. One cannot distinguish them from Muslims. They have books in Sanskrit and read them. They carry into practice whatever relates to the worship of Idols. They are esteemed greatly. To him (Jehangir) Kashmir is the Ideal abode for seclusion and
meditation. That is why he prayed with his dying breath. I want Kashmir and nothing else.

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