

**VILLAGE SOCIAL LIFE OF KASHMIR  
(1900-50)  
(A CASE STUDY OF DISTRICT PULWAMA)**

**Dissertation**

**SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF KASHMIR FOR  
THE AWARD OF PRE-DOCTORAL DEGREE (M.Phil.)**

**IN**

**HISTORY**

**By**

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**UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF**

**Dr. Mohammad Yousuf Ganai**



**POST-GRADUATE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY  
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# **P.G DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY**

## **University of Kashmir, Srinagar 190006**

No.....

Dated:.....

### **CERTIFICATE**

This is to certify that the M. Phil Dissertation entitled **“Village Social Life of Kashmir (1900-50) A Case Study of District Pulwama”** is the original and bonafide research work carried out by **Shabir Ahmad Bhat**, Research Scholar of the Post-Graduate Department of History, University of Kashmir, Srinagar, under my supervision. No part of this dissertation has been submitted for any degree before.

It is further certified that the scholar has put in the required attendance in the Department and fulfills all the requirements for the award of Master of Philosophy.

I, therefore, recommend this dissertation for the award of Master of Philosophy (M. Phil) degree in History.

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**Shabir Ahmad Bhat**

## **ABBREVIATIONS**

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A.R	Annual Administration report of Jammu and Kashmir State (General).
Adm. Rep.	Administrative Reports of Jammu and Kashmir State, available in Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, Repository, Jammu.
Ass. Rep.	Land Assessment Report, available in Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, Repository, Jammu.
Aug.	August
Census	Census of India, Kashmir Part.
Ch.	Chilki rupees
Dec.	December
Deptt.	Department
Diaries	(i) Saif-ud-Din Diaries or Roznamcha (Persain) in thirteen Volumes maintained by Mirza Saif-ud-Din, Qamar-ud-Din and Mohi-ud-Din from 1846-61, available in the research and publication department, Srinagar.
Dist.	District
etc	Etcetra, and others
Extl.	External
Feb.	February
For.	Foreign.
For. And Pol. Deptt.	(i) Government of India Records, Foreign and Political Department Proceedings from 1914-31, available in the National Archives of India, New Delhi.  (ii) Government of Jammu and Kashmir (Chief Secretariat), Foreign and Political Department Records from 1922-47, available in Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, Repository, at Jammu and Srinagar.
For. Deptt.	Government of India records, Foreign Department Proceedings from 1846-1913, available in the National Archives of India, New Delhi.
Front.	Frontier

Gazetteer	A Gazetteer of Kashmir and the Adjoining Districts of Kashtawar, Jammu, Poonch and the Valley of Kishen Ganga.
Gen.	General
Gen. Deptt.	Government of Jammu and Kashmir (Chief Secretariat), General Department Persian Records from 1846-92, available in Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, Repository, at Jammu and Srinagar.
Govt.	Government
Hand Book	A Hand Book of Jammu and Kashmir State, 1924.
i.e.,	That is
I.G.I	Imperial Gazetteer of India (Year as mentioned).
Ibid.	Ibidem, in the same place.
INA	Government of India Records, available in the National Archives of India, Janpath, New Delhi.
Intel.	Internal
J&K	The Jammu and Kashmir
Jan.	January
JKA	Government of Jammu and Kashmir Records, available in Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, Repository, at Jammu and Srinagar.
Man.	Manwatta
Memo.	Memorandum
No.	Number
Nos.	Numbers
Nov.	November
Oct.	October
Op.cit	Opera, citate in the work cited.
pbuh	peace be upon him
p.	Page Number
Pf.	Preface
Pol.	Political

pp.	Page Numbers
pvt.	Private
R/o	Resident of
Rep.	Reprint
Report.	Preliminary Report on Settlement Operations of Kashmir and Jammu, 1868 by A. Wingate, available in the National Archives of India, New Delhi.
Rs.	Rupees
S	Samvat Year
S.no	Serial no
S/o	Son of
Sept.	September
Tr.	Translation
Tr.	Translation
Viz	Videlicat, namely
Vol.	Volume

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## Introduction

The discipline of history has travelled a long from the story of kings, Queens and courts to the inquiry into the overall existence and engagement of man with his physical and social environment. The present concept of history<sup>1</sup> is more detailed study of people, their beliefs and practices, customs and culture and the evolution of societies and civilizations.

The course of human civilization is determined to a fairly large extent by the geo-physical conditions of the region, which the people inhabit. The environment influences regulates the life of man and leads a distinct colour to the culture of man. In addition to this there are various spheres of life - social sphere, Economic sphere, political sphere, religio-ethical sphere; all of these structures are responsible for shaping the life style of the people of a particular region.

From the earliest times Kashmir has remained as the meeting ground<sup>2</sup> of various cultures and civilizations. Obviously the culture of Kashmir has passed through a number of evolutionary stages, before; it assumed its present form. Each stage of the cultural history of the valley is marked by the innovations of profound importance which helped in accelerating the pace of its progress and the ultimate formation of its present character. Many cultures, which from time to time found their way to this land by way of political, religious, cultural or other contexts contributed consciously or unconsciously to its evolution. Apart from retaining some features of their own culture the people of the valley assimilated whatever appeared good to them in the life and thought of the peoples with whom they happened to come into contact. Thus the culture that obtains today in the valley is a synthetic culture, where in the deep imprints of Persian, central Asian, Indian and above all European culture is markedly visible.

owing to technological revolution and the rapid communication system, the world has shrunk into a global village and in the wake of cultural onslaughts, many hard core cultures have got diluted; Now days we see a great uniformity in the cultures throughout the globe. The traditional customs, beliefs and values etc are vanishing rapidly. So our Valley is not an exception. It is to be mentioned that the traditional culture of Kashmir could be found in

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1. It is no longer desirable to find out what happened only in the sphere of politics. Beneath politics flow currents which basically affect the social life of the people, and considerably determine and influence the course of history. So goes to the modern trend of historiography which has dug deeper and broader into narrow and unimaginative furrows of politics and given them new dimensions.
  2. Kashmir is geographically linked with china, India, Pakistan and central Asia.



those remote villages of the valley where it exists less altered.<sup>3</sup> Thus the project has endeavored to collect those aspects of village social life of Kashmir which have remained unnoticed and uninterpreted.

The rural people of Kashmir of the period under study used to live in small hamlets and the houses stood close to one another. The people were generally linked by economic and sentimental ties; there was a sense of unity and a feeling of amicability towards each other. As a matter of fact there were not many people to live in village and thus they assisted each other as and when any occasion arose in their struggle of life. They were generally in need of one another's assistance, Secondly there was not enough of individuality and speed of the life of the village to disable one from paying attention to another and the neighbours used to have intimate relation with each other. Hence the neighborhood was of great importance in a village Social of Kashmir of the period under reference. Social relations in rural society of Kashmir were based on relation and there existed harmony and brotherhood in the rural society, as a matter of fact that the agrarian economy of rural society calls for joint action and greater social sharing. Thus the harmonious society relations were reflected in joint agricultural operations such as breaking of clods (*yatiphoer Karin*), paddy transplantation (*thal Karin*), weeding of paddy (*nend Karin*), and harvesting (*Tschombun*). The neighbours used to help one another. And similarly they supported to one another at the time of the construction of their houses besides the villagers used to share common facilities i.e. the village pond, grazing grounds, mosques, temples, shrines, graveyards, schools, sitting places under large shade of chinars, wells and waste lands.

The next important element of the rural life of Kashmir of the period under review was a joint family system. The joint family included husband, wife, uncles, aunts, sons and nephews etc. In joint family the authority rested in the eldest male member in the family. Generally, the father was the head and representative of the family and was also invested with the duty of maintaining discipline amongst the members. His orders were obeyed by all the members of family. All the members of the family used to share the burden of the family occupation, the men used to plough the field, the women harvested the crops and the children graze the cattle. In this way working together, the villagers used to maintain a sense of cooperation among themselves.

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3. In spite of revolutionary changes one could not make a clear break with the past.

Generally the rural populace of the period under review can be divided into two classes viz the cultivating class and the second those who provide their services to the former in lieu of customary shares from his (cultivators) produce, as the agriculture forms the backbone of rural Kashmir, they (*Nangars*) used to receive their remuneration annually in kind. A complete village in Kashmir meant when it is inhabited by the people of almost every *Kram* and trade. Fellow villagers typically include representatives of various service and artisan classes to supply the needs of the villagers; these include *Peer, Grucce, Malle, Gor, Tilwaen, Goor, Waen, Muqdam, Mirab, Gratiwoel, Rish Babas, Sonur, Pooj, Doon, Seche, Desil, Chan, Khar, Naid, Kral, Bhand, Damali Faqir, Doab, Ha:nz, Woewur, Aarum, Pohul, Galvan, Waza, Rangur, kander, Kanil, Domb, Watul.*

It is to be noted that the villages of Kashmir of the period under reference are no less beautiful as Arthur Neve puts it, "*The villages of Kashmir are full of human interest as we study the people in their natural environment.*"<sup>4</sup> The chief village population is found all round the valley on the higher ground which shelves up to the mountains, on the slopes below the foot-hills, the deltas of the tributary valleys and the sides of the karewahs.<sup>5</sup> The picture is vividly portrayed by Sir Walter Lawrance, "*The Kashmiri village is shaded by the unraveled plane-tree, by walnut, apple, and apricot, watered by a clear sparkling stream, the grass banks of which are streaked with the coral red of the willow rootlets, surrounded by the tender green of the young rice plant, or the dark, handsome fields of the Imbrzal and other rices of the black leaf, the Kashmiri village is rich in natural beauties. Later on the patches of rice- blooms look like a tessellated pavement, with colures running from red to and russet green to copper. There is no crowding of houses, and each man's cottage stands within its ring fence of earth, stones or wattling. The earth walls around the garden plots are built in a very simple and ingenious manner. The earth is thrown into a mould formed by wooden planks, and on the top of the earthen slabs thorns are laid, over which more earth is placed. The thorn covering protects the wall against the rain, and the structure will last for some years. This kind of wall is known as Dos. The houses are generally made of unburnt bricks set in wooden frames, and of timber of cedar, pine and fir, the roofs being pointed to throw off snow. In the loft formed by the roof wood and grass are stored, and the ends are left open to allow these to be thrown out when fire occurs. The thatch is usually straw. Rice straw is considered to be the best material, but in the vicinity of the lakes reeds are used. Near the*

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4. Ernest F. Neve, "*Things seen in Kashmir*", p.60.

5. Ibid.

*forests the roofs are made of wooden shingles, and the houses are real log huts, the walls being formed by whole logs laid one upon another. Outside the first floor of the house is a balcony approached by a ladder, later the balcony and the loft are festooned with ropes of dry turnips, apples, maize-cobs for seed, vegetable marrows and chilies, for winter use. On the ground floor the sheep and cattle are penned, and sometimes the sheep are crowded into a wooden locker known as the dangij, where the children sit in the winter and where the guest is made to sleep, for it is the warmest place in the house. For lighting purposes they use oil, and in the higher villages torches made of pine wood are employed. Kashmiri villages are conspicuous in the landscape. There is usually a group of chinar trees, with light grey trunks, mottled with pale yellow, and massive curved limbs, with dense foliage forming dark green masses in summer and brilliant splashes of light red in the late autumn. Close by are two or three lofty poplars and lines of young saplings, bordering orchards of pear, apple and apricot, or market gardens enclosed by wattle fences. Mounds covered with large purple and white irises, brilliant and fragrant in the sunshine, mark the sites of the old village graveyards, and the hamlet itself shows as a collection of large high-pitched, low-thatched gables, peeping out from among the mulberry trees.”<sup>6</sup>*

It is to be noted that the period of our study witnessed revolutionary changes in the different walks of Kashmiri life.<sup>7</sup> After the death of Ranbir Singh st. John was appointed as the first Resident in Srinagar in 1885 and he was succeeded by C. plowden. The introduction of residency paved the way for the modernization of Kashmir. It was under the influence of British residency that a series of reforms were introduced into the different fields of life. It was during the same period that the first comprehensive land revenue settlement of the state was completed under the supervision of British settlement commissioner Sir Walter Lawrance. Under this act the peasants were granted hereditary rights, which ushered in a new era in the history of Kashmir; the government restructured all the departments of state besides instituting the new ones (For the promotion of agriculture,” Dept. Of agriculture and horticulture” was established) to put Kashmir on the rails of development so that Kashmir could bear the fruits of the Modern Age. The Maharaja on the advice of the Resident commissioner abolished some of the objectionable features of the beggar system in 1891. However the beggar in all its forms was completely abolished in only in 1933 A.D.

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6. Walter R. Lawrance, “*The valley of Kashmir*”, Chinar publishing House, Srinagar, 1992, pp. 248-249.

7. The period between 1900-1950 marks the end of the medieval period and the advent of the modern age in the history of Kashmir.

under the recommendations of glancy commission.<sup>8</sup> The abolition of the beggar system gave a sigh of relief to the depressed people of Kashmir. The period is also underlined by a revolution in the in the communication and transport sector. The Jhelum valley cart road from Kohala to Baramula and then to Srinagar was completed in 1897. In 1922 Banihal cart road connecting Jammu and Srinagar via Banihal was thrown open to traffic. These measures certainly improved the communication system in the valley. It has a great impact on trade and commerce. It not only facilitated the people of Kashmir to trade in high bulky goods but also boosted the carpet and fruit industries respectively, which formed the back bone of the economy of the province. Besides it linked the valley with other parts of the subcontinent and facilitated the transmission of ideas. A hydroelectric plant, first of its kind was constructed at Mohra in 1907 A.D, instead of providing power supply to the silk industry of Srinagar it replaced the traditional lighting system of Srinagar. It was in 1880 that an era of modern education started in Kashmir by the establishment of a missionary school by Rev. J.H. Knowles,<sup>9</sup> besides a number of missionaries who came to valley and attempted to produce modern education in Kashmir by establishing missionary school. In 1905 with the efforts of Miss Annie Besant a Hindu College was started in Srinagar, latter this college was taken over by the state and came to be known as Sri Partap college .<sup>10</sup> Under the influence of British Missionary Schools, the Maharaja passed the “Compulsory Primary Education Act.”<sup>11</sup> Primary schools were opened in large numbers and by the end of 1945 there were about 20728 primary schools in the state.<sup>12</sup>

It was during the period of Maharaja Hari Singh that the “infant marriage prevention legislation” was passed which prohibited marriage of boys and girls under the age 18 and 14 years respectively. During the same period a large number of dispensaries in the state and many schemes were formulated for the eradication of epidemics. To improve the breed of the live stock, a large number of bulls of Snide and Danni breeds were imported and distributed among some peasants in selected villages. Trade and commerce and industry also received encouragement. The peasants were bestowed with proprietary rights when Sheikh Mohd.

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8. Glancy commission Report urdu tr.p.88.

9. Tyndel Biscoe, “*Kashmir in sunlight and shade*”,p.260.

10. Imperial Gazetter,p.80.

11. Report of the Educational Reorganisation Committee, 1939,p.90.

12. Adminstrative Report of the J&K State.April 13,1944 to 1945,pp.90-91.

Abdullah passed the Act “*Allow land to go to the tiller of land*”. These were the changes which had been witnessed by the period of our study.<sup>13</sup>

A good number of books have been written on the socio- economic history of Kashmir. But almost all of them have touched the ‘*village social life of Kashmir*’ on the periphery. No detailed and analytical work has been done so far. It is unnecessary to repeat here many European travelers who came to the valley at different times and recorded their observations about social, political, economic and geographical conditions of Kashmir; however, due to poor communication system, they could not reach every nook and corner of the valley to see the people from close distance.<sup>14</sup> As a matter of fact many customs and traditions of the remote villages of Kashmir have remained unnoticed and within one or two decades, they will eventually vanish; if they will not be taped. The project endeavors to deal, at some length, and in a certain depth “*The village social life of Kashmir 1900-1950*” as we made an indepth study of the selected area under reference. The areas sampled out for this purpose include *Mitrigam, Rahmoo, Tujan, Koil, Tilsura, Kasbaiyar, Shadimarg, Below Dargond, Drubgam, Zadoora, Bamnoo, Murran, Zagigam, Tengpona, Kangun etc.* villages of Dist. Pulwama.

Presently we see that the different elements of village life throughout the valley are vanishing or becoming corrupt. The elements of village life viz. village community, joint family system, group feeling, simple life, etc can be found to exist only in those villages which have remained unaffected by the influence of the towns .Otherwise, as a general rule these elements are vanishing from the village life. The community consciousness in village life is steadily decreasing. The control of the village elders over village people is almost decreasing.

Thus the little which is left if not collected, we lose this valuable information for ever. So there was an urgent need to collect those aspects of the rural culture of Kashmir which have remained unnoticed. Such an effort would not only add to the knowledge of the students about the traditional life style of the rural Kashmir. But it would also help in tracing the vivid picture of the remote villages of the valley. So in order to study the real culture of Kashmir it is necessary to go to the remote villages of valley where it still exists with less altered.

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13. Suresh k. Sharma & S.R Bakshi, “*Economic Life Of Kashmir*”, Anmol Publications New Delhi, 1995.pp. 95-96.

14. Yet these travel accounts provide valuable information about the customs, traditions and life style of the rural people of Kashmir.

The study is based on the source material comprising conventional and nonconventional. The material constitutes official documents available at the state Archives and Research Library. Part of the material consists of non-official works like travelogues and diaries. Then there is a number of reports and gazetteers. An interesting feature of the material is that the bulk of it is in Urdu, English or in Persian. Not only this, much of statistical data have been drawn from the Annual Administrative Reports and Census Reports, which help us to have a clear vision of the position as it existed then in rural Kashmir. i.e published and unpublished material. In addition to it the proverbs and the oral history forms the important source for the construction of the project.<sup>15</sup> A good number of tables have been appended with different themes dealing with various issues. The researcher has visited a number of villages such as *Mitrigam, Rahmoo, Tujan, Tilsura, Kasbaiyar, Shadimarg, Drubgam, Zadoora, Bamnoo, Murran, Kagigam, Tengpona, Below Dargond etc.* Where the researcher has conducted interviews of living elders and collected the oral history for constructing the comprehensive history of the theme “*village social life of Kashmi, 1900-1950 (a case study of Dist. Pulwama)*”

The project under study has been divided into five chapters. The first chapter entitled “Introduction” is an opening chapter giving a brief script of the dissertation. The chapter second entitled “Village community” begins with the concept of village community, morphology of the village. And it is also devoted to an elaborate study of the rural social structure with special reference to village professionals and landless classes in the light of their social status and life style of the rural society. Attention has also been paid to the Characteristics of village community; relationships in rural family; and rural Hookah group. The third chapter entitled “Economy” gives a detailed account of- Agriculture and also the Agricultural technology; Horticulture; Occupations of the rural people and other questions such as Taxation system, Land ownership, livestock, Beekeeping, Sericulture, and trade have been brought to light; All these aspects have been dealt with comprehensively, because of their economic relevance. The fourth chapter entitled “Beliefs and Customs” deals with- Belief system, Superstitions and Fairs and festivals. In the same chapter a detailed account has been given of the Rituals related to birth, marriage & death of the rural people. In addition to it the chapter also focuses on the General life style of the people i.e Houses; Dress; Kangri; Ornaments; Position of women; Food and the Pastimes. The fifth Chapter

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15. Oral tradition gives expression to the beliefs and practices of community life and truly represents its ethos. Satish. K.Bajaj, “*Methodology in History*”, Anmol publications pvt. ltd New Delhi,2002.p.225.

Entitled “Conclusion” is virtually a summing up intended to show that during the period of our study, the people of Kashmir especially the urban people were passing through a transitional period and witnessed a considerable change in their socio economic life on account of the introduction of modern education and the reform movements, which were launched by different organizations for the upliftment of the people. since the socio religious reform movements were largely confined to the urban areas as such the rural populace of Kashmir was not benefitted by these movements and hence the social life of the villagers of Kashmir continued more or less, to be the same as in the past. It did not affect their community relations, economy, traditions, customs, beliefs and even dress. The economy of the rural populace of Kashmir was predominantly based on agriculture, but the level of exploitation and backwardness being too great, did not permit it to grow and develop on its own needs. The state monopoly and the absence of technology proved the chief bottleneck to industrial activity. Consequently the society succumbed to the low standards of life and did not register progress at any level during the period of our study.

However the position of peasants improved only when government on the 13th July, 1950, the 19th anniversary of the Martyr’s made the historic decision of transferring land to the tiller and on 17th October, 1950 was passed the ‘Big Landed Estates Abolition Act’. By the enactment of the big landed estates abolition ‘Act.2007’ a ceiling was placed on all proprietary holdings at 22.75 acres. The surplus land (above the ceiling) was transferred to the tillers holding it to the extent of their actual cultivating occupation on 17th October, 1950 or was vested in the state where it was not so held. The tiller was made the full owner of the land Transferred to him.<sup>16</sup>

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16. Jammu and Kashmir State Land Reforms Officer, In Ninety Days: A brief account of Agrarian Reforms launched by Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah’s Government in Kashmir Jammu, 1948;Jammu and Kashmir State Information Bureau, Abolition of Big landlordism: Text of announcement, 13th July, 1950 at Lal Chowk, Srinagar, 1950;Suresh k. Sharma & S.R Bakshi , “*Economic Life Of Kashmir*”,pp.5-96.

# Chapter-I

## Village Community

### (A). Introduction

Man has been defined as a social being and as such cannot live in isolation. He has to live in a community.<sup>17</sup> Hillery, George A. Jr. in his book *"Definitions of Community: Areas of Agreement,"* has defined the community as, "A group of interacting people living in a common location, organized around common values and is attributed with social cohesion within a shared geographical location, generally in social units is called community."<sup>18</sup> More importantly, a community is not just the people who are in it. A community already existed when all of its current residents were not yet born and it will likely continue to exist when all of the people in it have left. It is something that is beyond its very components, its residents or community members. A "community" in some senses may not even have a physical location, but be demarcated by being a group of people with a common interest. Not only is the concept of a community a "mere construct" (model), it is a "sociological construct." It is a set of interactions, human behaviors that have meaning and expectations between its members. Not just action but actions based on shared expectations, values, beliefs and meanings between individuals."<sup>19</sup>

Generally two views have been given in the encyclopedias of social sciences differentially regarding the origin of the word 'community' viz: (i) "Community" is the translation of the German word, "*Gemeinschaft*". which means an organization or society, non-alienating, and is somehow in tune with the conditions by which humans create themselves as human beings.<sup>20</sup> In a community, all persons have social standing, standing entails the right and responsibility to produce culture in its manifold forms. A person shares community with another when the person cannot discharge from his social relationship with the other. A good test for (and consequences of) this is if a person can ignore another person's troubles, and

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17. Early societies were made up of groups rather than individuals. A man on his own counted for very little. To earn his bread and protect himself he needed the association of other men. March Bloch, *"French rural History"*, tr. by Janet Sondheimer, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978.p.150.

18. Hillery, George A., Jr., *"Definitions of Community: Areas of Agreement,"* Rural Sociology, 20 (4), 1955, p. 111.

19. Ibid.

20. Encyclopaedia of social science, edited by J Anther, IVY publishing house Delhi, 2007. p.88.



then those two don't share community.<sup>21</sup> According to another view. (ii)The word "community" is derived from the old French *communité* which is derived from the Latin *communitas* (*cum*, "with/together" + *munus*, "gift"), a broad term for fellowship or organized society.<sup>22</sup>

Thus the community may be defined as:-

1. A social group of any size whose members reside in a specific locality, share government, and often have a common cultural and historical heritage.
2. A locality inhabited by such a group i.e social, religious, occupational, or other group sharing common characteristics or interests and perceived or perceiving itself as distinct in some respect from the larger society within which it exists usually preceded.<sup>23</sup> However it is not always based on communal harmony. It is full of factions, struggles and conflicts, based upon differences in gender, religion, access to wealth, ethnicity, class, educational level, income, ownership of capital, language and many other factors.<sup>24</sup>

There could be different types of communities. A group of people with business background makes their community in which they interact with each other directly or indirectly. Some communities are formed on the racial basis like black and white community. Even neighbourhoods, churches, schools, classrooms, friends at work, any organization becomes community.<sup>25</sup> Similarly the people lived in a particular village also forms the community.<sup>26</sup> In the words of Marc Bloch, "*The individuals and families who cultivated the same ground and whose houses stood close to one another in the same hamlet or village were not separate individuals and separate families, living side by side. They were neighbours and were linked by economic and sentimental ties and forming the small society of the rural community.*"<sup>27</sup>

R.K Sharma says, "*Village community is a group of persons permanently residing in a definite geographical area and whose members have developed community consciousness*

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21. Ibid..

22. Online Etymology Dictionary, © 2010 Douglas Harper, www.dictionary.com

23. See M.L. Pandit & T.N Pandit, "*Kashmiri pundits*", A.P.H publishing corporation New Delhi, 2005.pp.5-6.

24. Enclyopeadic dictionary of sociology, vol. I(A.C) Edited by D. B Sharma, Anmol Publications Pvt. Ltd,1999.p.158.(American Heritage Dictionary) [http://www. answers. com/topic/village](http://www.answers.com/topic/village)

25. [http/ www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com)

26. Ibid.

27. Marc Bloch, "*French rural history*",p.167.

*and cultural, social and economic relations which distinguish them from other communities.”*

<sup>28</sup> Whereas A.R Desai, defines it as, “*The village community is a little republic, having nearly everything, they can want within themselves and almost independent.*” The village community consists, firstly of the cultivating class, secondly of those who minister to their most pressing wants across division exists, on one side of which stand those belonging to the inner circle of the society, that is the occupants of the land and the artisans or the menials to whom tradition assigns a cognate a racial origin.<sup>29</sup>

As is the case, throughout India, social conditions in villages of Kashmir are simpler, truer to nature and more genial than in towns.<sup>30</sup> The village community forms a self-contained and self sufficient unit, swayed by common feelings of fraternity, and the economic forces act and react mutually upon the members forming as it were a large family. In the large portion of which the residents of each village are all of one and the same class and the differentiation arising from the occupations seldom or never arises.<sup>31</sup> In economic aspect the village aims at being self sufficing, as may be assumed from its history. For not so very long ago community interests were confined to the walls of the village.<sup>32</sup> We find then that the community in question, in its normal stage, included only the differentiation of function necessary to supply the wants of an agricultural community. Almost every man (cultivator) of the period under reference was his own carpenter, blacksmith, washerman, tailor, mason, potters, oil presser, and cobbler. All belong to the artisan community were generally engaged in the manufacture and repairs of the peasant’s agriculture tools besides other related ongoing agriculture activities within the village; barbers priests and mendicants were indispensable in the village structure for the observance and performance of necessary socio religious rites and ceremonies.<sup>33</sup>

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28. R.K Sharma, “*Rural Sociology*”, Rawant publications New Delhi 2005. p .36.

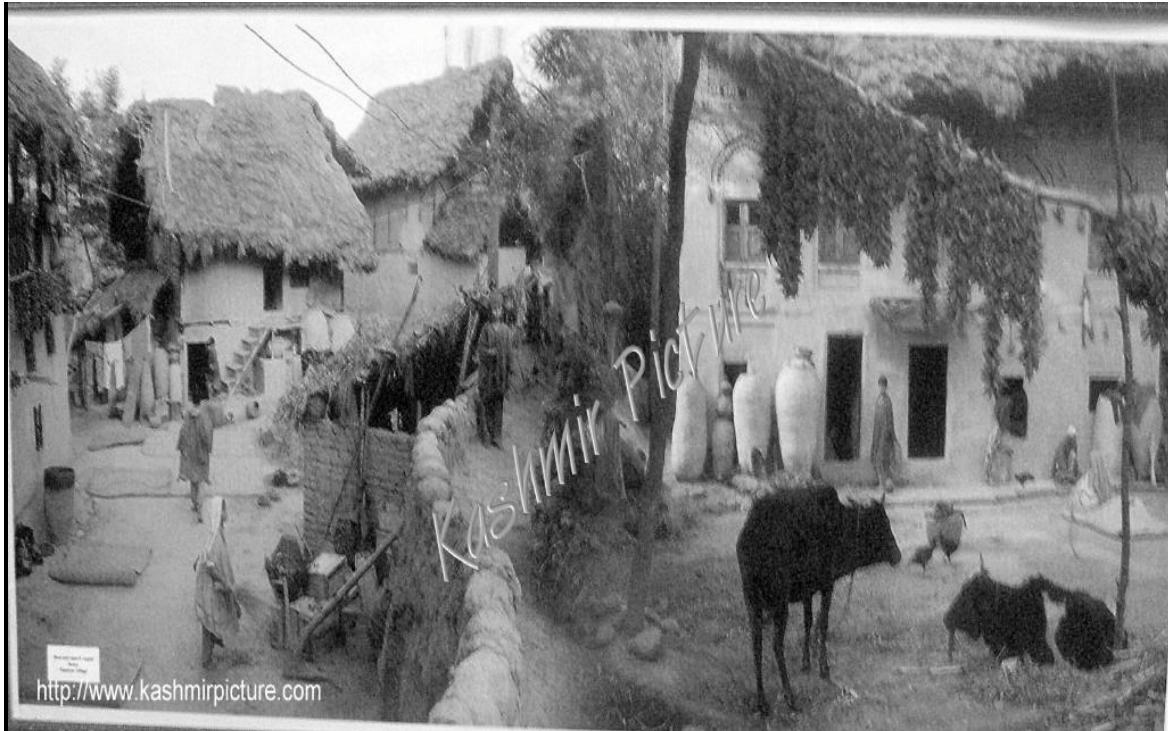
29. Census of India 1891 (a general report), p.94.

30. Census of India 1891(a general report).p.48.

31. Census report of 1911,vol.xx.p.28.

32. Census of India 1891(a general report).p.48.

33. Mushtaq Ahmad Kaw, “*The Agrarian system of Kashmir*”, Aiman publications Srinagar, 2001.p.118.



**Morphology of the Kashmiri village, [www.kashmirpicture.com/](http://www.kashmirpicture.com/)**



**Village women Returning Home carrying heavy loads of fire wood in 1943. Photo through kind courtesy of M/s Mahattas & co, the Bund**

## **(B). The morphology of Kashmiri village**

The villages of Kashmir were full of human interest as we study from the different sources<sup>34</sup> that they form a picturesque foreground to the surrounding conspicuous landscape; crystalline tributaries of rippling channels divided among green fields, dotted with mulberry and other fruit trees, lofty poplars and majestic *chinars*, grassy meadows and beautiful uplands at the foot of the distant snow-capped mountains. The courtyard used to be half fenced by a dilapidated mud wall. Sir Walter Lawrance has given a vivid picture about the morphology of Kashmiri village, *“The Kashmiri village is beautiful inspite of itself, shaded by the unraveled poplar-tree, walnut, apple, and apricot watered by a clear sparkling stream, the grass banks of which are streaked with the coral red of the willow rootlets, surrounded by the tender green of the young rice plant, or the dark, handsome fields of the Imbrzal and other rices of the black leaf, the Kashmiri village is rich in natural beauties. Later on the patches of rice- blooms look like a tessellated pavement, with colours running from red to and russet green to copper. Generally one come across the Kashmiri cultivator’s cottage with its tumble-down, thatched gable roof. Each cottage has a garden plot well stocked with vegetables. Close to the cottage is the wooden granary, an erection like a huge sentry-box, in which the grain is stored, and from which it is taken out by a hole at the bottom. In the courtyard by the cottage the women are busy pounding the rice or maize, and the cotton spinning wheel is for the time laid aside. Dogs are sleeping and little children rolling in the sun, while their elder brothers, also children, are away looking after the milch cows and cattle. On the stream is a quaint-looking bathing house where the villager leisurely performs his ablutions and below the bathing-house the ducks are greedily eating. One of the prettiest objects in the village is the graveyard shaded by the brimij (cetus Australis) and bright with iris, purple, white (guli sosan) and yellow (Zambak), which the people plant over their departed relatives. The village enjoys ample room. There is no crowding of houses and each man’s cottage stands within its ring fence of earth, stones or wattling. The earth walls around the garden plots are built in a very simple and ingenious manner. The earth is thrown into a mould formed by wooden planks(Dosi yandir) and on the top of the earthen slabs thorns are laid, over which more earth is placed. The thorn covering protects the wall against the rain, and the structure will last for some years. This kind of wall is known as Dos. The houses are made of unburnt bricks set ion wooden frames, and of timber of cedar, pine and fir, the roofs*

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34. Ibid.pp. 248-249; Wake Field, *“Happy Valley”*, pp.44-45; Francis Young husband, *“Kashmir”* pp.3-4; Bernier, *“Travels in the Mughal empire 1656-1668”*, tr. By Archibald Constable, Edinburg university press, 1966.p.422.

*being pointed to throw off snow. In the loft formed by the roof wood and grass are stored, and the ends are left open to allow these to be thrown out when fire occurs. The thatch is usually straw. Rice straw is considered to be the best material, but in the vicinity of the lakes reeds are used. Near the forests the roofs are made of wooden shingles, and the houses are real log huts, the walls being formed by whole logs laid one upon another, like the cottages of the Russian peasantry.*”<sup>35</sup>

It is to be noted that the typical village was small and the village dwellings were built very close to one another in a nucleated settlement for sociability and defense, with small lanes for passage of people and sometimes carts. Village fields surrounded the settlement and were generally within easy walking distance.<sup>36</sup>

Size of villages	Number
Grade of villages	Kashmir Province
Under 500	2,961
500-1000	473
1000-2000	133
2000-5000	12
Total	3,579

Source: Census of India, 1911, vol XX, Kashmir.p.26.

Of the total number of villages<sup>37</sup>, 82 percent had a population of less than 500, 13 percent of 500 to 1000, 4 percent of 1000 to 2000 and scarcely 1 percent of 20,000 to 5000.

According to the census of 1931 the average population per village for the state was 371 compared to 340-1921 and 322 in 1911.<sup>38</sup>

### **(C) Characteristics of village community**

A major characteristic of a Kashmiri village under the period reference was the small number of its people.<sup>39</sup> Another characteristic was the intimate relation of its people with nature.

35. Walter Lawrance, op.cit.p.248; Also see Ernest F. Neve, “*Beyond the Pirpanjal*”.p.67; Census of 1911, Vol. XX,p.25.

36. Census of 1911, vol. XX, Kashmir.p.26; These typical morphological feature still continue less altered.

37. According to Lawrance, {“*Provincial gazetter of Kashmir & Jammu*”, Rima publishing house Delhi, 1985.p.83.} the total number of villages of Kashmir in 1901 was 3,746.

38. Census report, 1931, Vol.XXIV, part.I.p.87.

Although, it is incorrect to assert that agriculture was the sole occupation of the villagers but it was the major occupation in villages everywhere. As advocated by T.L. Smith, “Agriculture and the collecting enterprise are the bases of the rural economy, farmer and countrymen are almost synonymous terms.”<sup>40</sup>

The basic features peculiar to rural life are as under:

**1) Village as a community.** The villagers used to satisfy all their needs in village. There was a sense of unity and a feeling of amicability towards each other. In this way, the village was a community because its people possessed community consciousness. The development of the village was influenced considerably by the life of the village. In this way village was a primary institution.

**2) Faith in superstitions.** Very often Nature lays waste the result of very hard labour of the farmer.<sup>41</sup> On his part and the farmer can’t comprehend its mystery. Hence, he develops an attitude of fear and awe towards natural forces, and he used to approach the nearest shrine and the family peer (priest) to seek their blessings for the mitigation of the trouble.<sup>42</sup> There were a large number of superstitions observed throughout the Rural Kashmir during the period of our study which you can read in detail in Chapter IV.

**3) Neighbourhood (*Hamsaihut*) was very important in village life.** Not many people used to live in village and thus they assisted each other as and when any occasion arose in their struggle of life .They were generally in need of one another’s assistance as Bates writes, “On

39.

Name of the District or Tehsil	Population in 1931	Density	Percentage of variation	
			1921-31	1911-21
Kash mir south or Srinagar District	771,943	274	+12.1	+7.7
Tehsil Khas	108,884	501	+8.38	+15.5
Srinagar City	173,573	15,779	+22.46	+8.9
Kashmir north	--	--	--	--
Awantipura tehsil	149,807	334	+11.04	+5.1
Kulgam Tehsil	146,147	248	+7.0	+3.9
Anantnag Tehsil	193,532	186	+10.55	+8.2

Source: Census of India, 1931, Vol. XXIV, part I, p.56.

40. Ashok Narang, “*Rural Sociology*”, Murari Lal & Sons New Delhi, 2006.p.36.

41. Floods, untimely rains, crop failures, epidemics, droughts and fires have been very common throughout history of Kashmir. P.N.K. Bamzai, “*Socio –Economic history of Kashmir 1846-1925*”, Gulshan Books Srinagar.pp.18-19; Lawerance.op.cit.p.264; Mitra, Dr. A, Report on Cholera Epidemic in Kashmir 1892, pp.50-51.

42. Walter R. Lawerance, “*The valley of Kashmir*”, Chinar publishing House, Srinagar, 1992, pp.258,63,86;Tyandel Biscoe, “*Kashmir in sunlight and shade*”.p.55; G.T. Vigne, “*Travels in Kashmir Ladak, Iskardo*”, p.328.

*the other side of the picture, the Kashmiris, though poor are very charitable; in their villages anyone who may have become incapacitated from old age or sickness, and who has no near relations to look after him, is supported by the community.*<sup>43</sup> Secondly there was not enough of individuality and speed of the life of the village to disable one from paying attention to another. Hence, neighbourhood was of great importance in a village and neighbourers used to have intimate relation with each other. Social relations in rural society of Kashmir were based on relation and there existed harmony and brotherhood in the rural society, As a matter of fact that the agrarian economy of rural society calls for joint action and greater social sharing. Thus the harmonious society relations were reflected in joint agricultural operations such as breaking of clods (*yatiphoer Karin*), paddy transplantation (*thal Karin*), weeding of paddy (*nend Karin*), and harvesting (*tschombun*). The neighbours used to help one another. And similarly they supported to one another at the time of the construction of their houses. Besides the neighbours also supported one another in performing the marriage ceremonies i.e., the neighbours or residents of the bride's village used to greet the groom's party of other villages with the appropriate behavior and also womenfolk used to sing nuptial songs in regard of groom and residents of the bride's village treated the visitors with the appropriate behavior and ostentatious respect.<sup>44</sup> The next important element of the rural neighborhood of the period under reference was that the people used to gather at particular home in the winter nights, besides sharing the hookah and discussing the daily activities, there used to be a story teller in the gathering who presents his colorful stories to entertain the people. It is not out of a place to mention that when any one died in the neighborhood, the neighbours showed great sympathy towards the bereaved family and used to make all the arrangements for performing the last rites for the dead body.<sup>45</sup> The neighbours used to wash the dead body of their deceased neighbour, and used to dig the grave for which generally someone with expertise took lead.<sup>46</sup> As discussed above the harmonious social relations were reflected in social customs like marriage, death, birth and festivals and other practices. It is to be noted that during the period of our study land-man ratio was favourable for coordination and cooperation in the villages. Large tracts of land were available for a family and this needed a

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43. C.E Bates, "*A Gazetteer of Kashmir*". Gulshan Books Srinagar,2005, p.37.

44. Based on participatory observations and interview with elders of the village of Koil pulwama, January 20-2010.

45. Prof. G.M Rabani, "*Ancient Kashmir*", Gulshan Books Srinagar,1981.p.65.

46. Mohd Abdullah Bhat s/o Ab Samad Bhat, Age 70 years ,R/o Mitrigam Pulwama was regarded as an expert grave digger of the village Mitrigam Pulwama.

huge man-power for carrying out agricultural operations. This need was fulfilled by the joint efforts of rural society- and the neighbours used to help one another in agricultural operations. The villagers used to share common facilities\_ the village pond, grazing grounds, mosques and shrines, graveyards, schools, sitting places under large shade of chinars, wells and waste lands.

#### **4) Joint family systems.**

A joint family is a group of people who generally live under one roof, who eat food cooked at one hearth, who hold property in common and who participate in common worship and are related to each other as some particular type of kindred.<sup>47</sup> It is to be mentioned that according to the census of 1921, the total number of married families of the state aged 15-40 was 526,009<sup>48</sup> and the most important feature of the rural family under reference was a joint family system,<sup>49</sup> The joint family included husband, wife, uncles, aunts, sons and nephews etc. In joint family the authority rested in the eldest male member in the family. Generally, the father was the head and representative of the family and was also invested with the duty of maintaining discipline amongst the members. His orders were obeyed by all the members of family.<sup>50</sup> All the members of the family used to share the burden of the family occupation, the men used to plough the field, the women harvested the crops and the children graze the cattle. In this way, working together, the villagers used to maintain a sense of cooperation among themselves. Much attention was directed towards the preservation of the family honour and utmost care was taken to observe and maintain the traditions of the family.<sup>51</sup> The head of the family used it for the good of all the members of the family. A joint family used to run a common kitchen and every member shared common board and lodging. In the joint family system, an individual didn't feel much necessity to save or acquire assets because the family provided insurance for the dependents and security for the oldage.<sup>52</sup>

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47. Census report of 1921, part I, vol.XXII.p.32; Marc Bloch, "*French rural history*",p.164.

48. Census report of 1921, p.32.

49. Mrs Bruce. G.C, "*The peep at Kashmir*" Gulshan publishers, 2005,, p. 32;Also see Dr Aneesa Shafi.op.cit.p.104.

50. '*khanadar gav thanadar*'

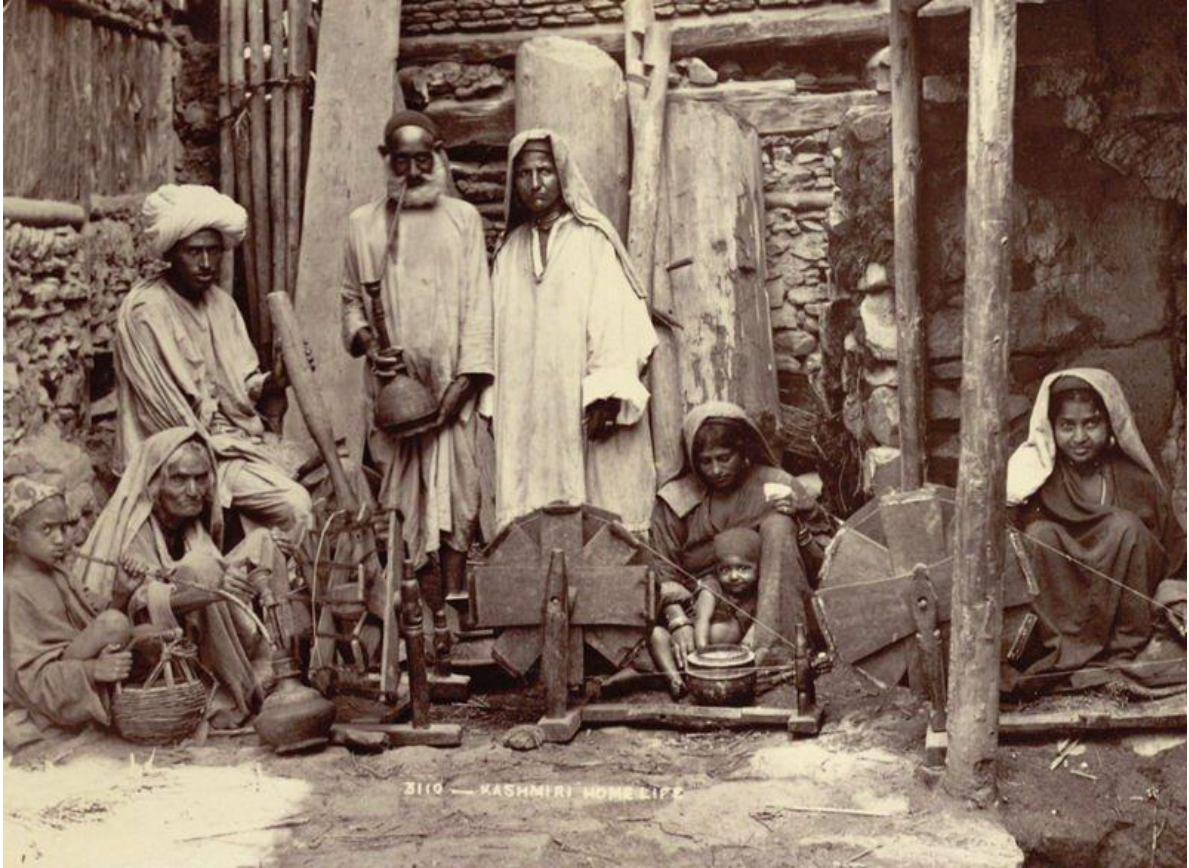
Translation:. The head of the family is like a police officer

It is the responsibility of the head of the family to take care of everyone.

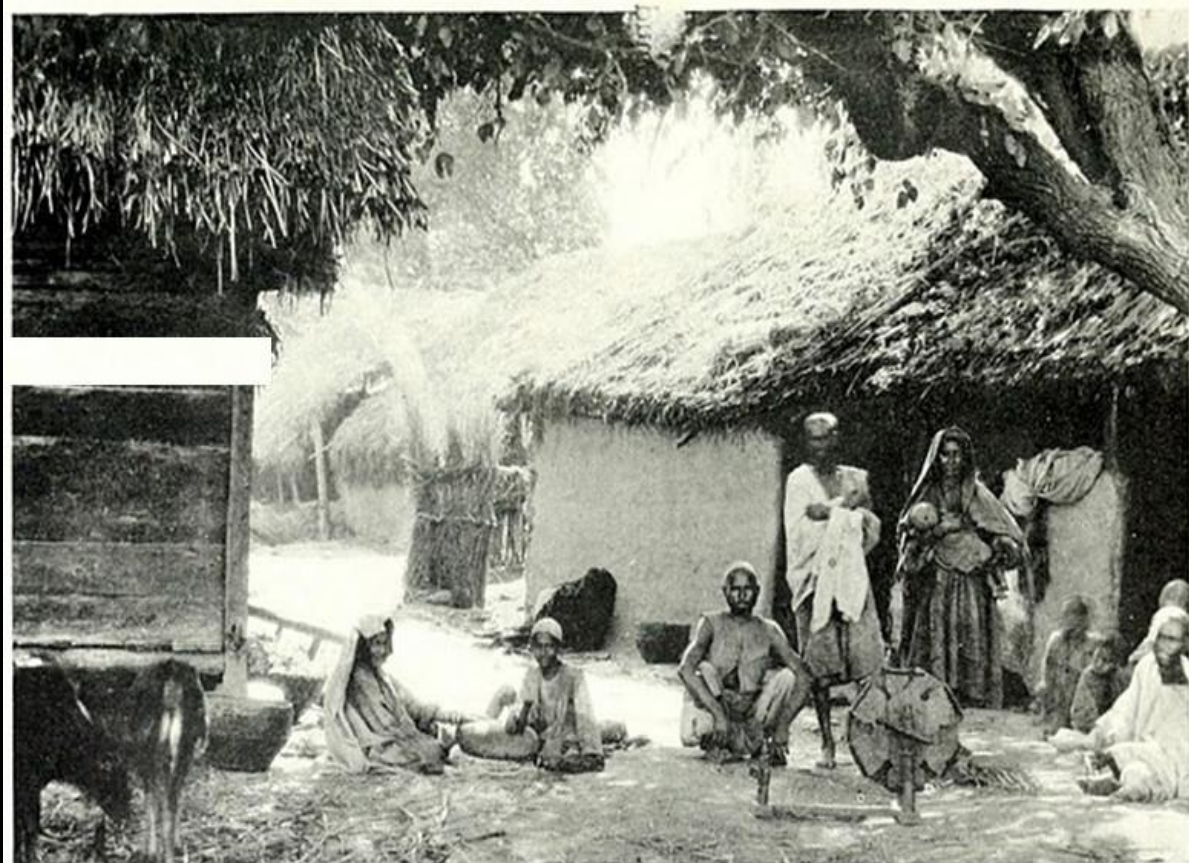
51. Interview with the elders of Rahmoo Pulwama.

52. M.L. Kapoor, "*social and economic history of J &K state*",p.112 .





Village Home life 1895. [www.kashmirpictures.com](http://www.kashmirpictures.com)



Village social life of Kashmir, [www.kashmirpictures.com](http://www.kashmirpictures.com)

Agriculture acts both ways, in certain cases it tends to encourage communal living, as the larger the number of members in a family the more economically is the industry carried on. On the other hand, in cases where the resources were limited larger families could not be supported by them.<sup>53</sup> As a matter of fact, it is noticed agriculturists prefer to live jointly in the majority of cases. Prominent among the local circumstances affecting civic life were:-

- i. The fear of *beggar*, that prevented the people of tracts in close proximity to the Banihal road in Jammu from dividing, the conscription of labour being used on individual families;
- ii. Absence of power to transfer or alienate land, which prevented the people in Kashmir from breaking up families, as no man could acquire land for himself and all had to live together to obtain the benefit of the common ancestral property;
- iii. The limited extent of level tracts in Kashmir, which afford no room for further house building on any large scale; and
- iv. The traditional tenacity of the Kashmiri, whether Muslim or Hindu, to his ancestral property and residence which made the people of the valley cling to the central stock without ever giving a thought to division.<sup>54</sup> Among the cases that were locally found to lead the breaking up of families may be natured petty quarrels and jealousies among the women.<sup>55</sup>

**5) Group feeling:** it occupied an important place among the people of rural areas.<sup>56</sup> The villagers used to respect the judgment of their superiors and obeyed the orders of their elders and the village elders had control over the individual. People were afraid of being publicly criticized or condemned.<sup>57</sup>

**6) Simplicity:** The villagers used to lead a simple and plain life.<sup>58</sup> Hence, phenomena like theft, misconduct, chicanery etc, were not found to occur very often in the villages. The villagers used to have limited means and didn't practice ostentation. In the villages people

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53. Census of 1911, vol xx.p.40.

54. Ibid.p.41.

55. '*kheni manz vokus*' Translation: Unnecessary conflict while eating; An unnecessary quarrel in the family.

56. S.I Doshi & P.C Jain "*Rural sociology*" Rawant publications New Delhi, 2002, p.140; Census of 1911, vol xx.p.28.

57. Based on the interview conducted on June 9-2009 with Gh. Nabi Bhat S/o Khazir Bhat (Age 85 years), R/o Mitrigam Pulwama.

58. Census of 1911, vol xx.p.28.

would go about in a manner calculated to attract attention were not looked upon with respect. In a village every individual endeavored to attain and observe the ideals of his family.<sup>59</sup> They were not capable of making a false pretence at cultured behavior and gaudiness, nor were they capable of boasting. They used to have sympathy for man and used to meet each other on natural and human footing. Mental conflicts and complexities were almost absent.

#### **(D) RELATIONSHIPS IN VILLAGE COMMUNITY**

1. **Head of the village family:-** The eldest member of the family was traditionally the head of the family. In family matters he was absolute authority. The family used to bears his name. The agricultural plots, farms and other properties were held in his name<sup>60</sup>. But in certain families in case of death of the head of the family, the family property did not stand in the name of eldest brother only, but was in the joint ownership of all the brothers<sup>61</sup>. In certain families the status of women was higher than that of men.<sup>62</sup> However; such families were looked down upon in the village.
2. **Husband wife- relations:-** As long as a man's parents were alive, his relations with his wife were severely limited.<sup>63</sup> And the woman was not expected to do anything for her husband alone, unless she was the wife of the head of the household. Thus she could not cook any special food for him.<sup>64</sup> However, in nuclear families man enjoyed superiority over the woman and accordingly husband commanded her.<sup>65</sup> But this doesn't mean that wife was treated cruelly. In village family, women used to have full say in family affairs. The women were great home keepers and were devoted to their husbands and families. The wife was by no means a drudge or chattel but the equal to her husband.<sup>66</sup> In rural families both men and women worked at home and outside,<sup>67</sup> and the women did not observed purdah system.<sup>68</sup> In the rural families spouses did not

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59. Ibid.

60. Statement of Ab. Hamid, Patwari of Halka Mitrigam Pulwama.

61. There are large number things which are in continuity in the development of mankind.

62. Statement of Gh. Nabi Bhat, Resident of Mitrigam Pulwama

63. T.N Madan, "*Family and kinship(a study of the pundits of rural Kashmir*", Oxford university press 1989,Delhi. P.118.

64. Ibid.2

65. Dr Aneesa Shafi, "*Working women in Kashmir*", APH Publishing Corporation New Delhi,2002.pp.70-71.

66. Mrs Bruce. G.C, "*The peep at Kashmir*", Gulshan publishers, 2005, p.32.

67. Census of 1911, vol xx.p.131.

68. Ibid.

call each other by speaking exact names; the husband would call his wife by innuendoes like *hay, hay!* Or mother of my son etc. The wife would say the father of children. The women usually used to eat after whole family had eaten.<sup>69</sup>

3. **Relationship between mother –in-law and daughter-in-law(*Hush-ti-Nush*):-** In old times the authority of mother-in-law was absolute and unquestioned;<sup>70</sup> but with the passage of time this was becoming formal than real.<sup>71</sup> The daughter-in-law, soon after coming to her husband's home would to present herself as an equal and demanded her share in the family affairs. This inevitably leads to tension and ill-will in the family. As a matter of fact smooth, cordial and harmonious relations between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law were things of the past. Though, there are still stray instances of cruelty by the mother-in-law, the daughter-in-law have, on the whole, extricated herself from the authoritarian clutches of the mother-in-law. This can be substantiated by this Kashmiri proverb, *hash ti thazi ti nush ti thazi deg dazi ti wali kus*

Translation: You stout I stout who will carry dirt out

**Relationship between father-in-law and daughter-in-law:-** In rural families the relation between father-in-law and daughter-in-law was cordial to some extent but on certain occasions the father-in-law was blamed by his wife for showing undue favours to his daughter-in-law which created some strains between the relation of father-in-law and daughter-in-law.<sup>72</sup>

**Relation between parents and children:-** In village families, the relations between parents and children on the whole used to be cordial. The parents would spare no effort in bringing up their children.<sup>73</sup> But the care and bring up of children was considered primarily the responsibility of the mother.<sup>74</sup> The sons were given a place of pride<sup>75</sup> and family control over them was loose. They were allowed full freedom of development. As a result of this freedom

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69. The practice has been witnessed with exact uniformity throughout the area of study by the researcher.

70. The famous poetess of Kashmir Habba Khatoon was highly tormented by the atrocities of her mother-in-law and her songs were reciting these sorry condition became proverbial in the valley for these pathetic songs had the common appeal.

71. Dr Aneesa Shafi.op.cit.p.96.

72. S.I Doshi & P.C Jain.op.cit.p.145.

73. '*yus mei zav su me tyuth,yas b zavus tas b tyuth*'

Translation: who I begot is loved by me and I am loved by the one who begot me

74. Dr Aneesa Shafi.op.cit.p.96.

75. Farooq Fayaz, "*Kashmir Folklore in historical perspective*" Gulshan Books Srinagar, 2008.p.71.

sometimes children tended to develop bad habits of smoking and loafing about.<sup>76</sup> However, as a matter of fact, smoking by young persons was not taken seriously in villages during the period of our study. The conduct of girls, on the other hand was strictly controlled. The girls used to help their mothers in household chores and also used to take cooked food for brothers and fathers to the fields and were great water carriers for their family<sup>77</sup>. They were married young. The sons helped fathers in fields. Thus, the relations between parents and children were on the whole, quite affectionate.

**Relations between husbands younger brother and wife:-** The relationship between a wife and her younger brother-in-law was very cordial, just like mother and son. However it has been noticed that in some cases where after the demise of the husband the woman used to marry the younger brother of her deceased husband<sup>78</sup>. The relations between the elder brother-in-law and the woman were on the other hand, very much like the relations between her and the father-in-law<sup>79</sup>.

#### **(E) CONSTITUENTS OF VILLAGE COMMUNITY / NOMENCLATURE**

In respect to the relation of the village community to the land there is a different system to be found in nearly every province and large state, and in detail too, the respective social grades are diversely arranged. But on the whole, the component parts of the society considered as an economic unit are wonderfully uniform throughout India and Kashmir from ancient times has been no exception.<sup>80</sup>

Generally speaking the village community consisted of different professions<sup>81</sup> linked through hereditary bonds into a household of patrons, the *nangars/taifdars* providing services according to traditional occupational specializations.<sup>82</sup> Thus client families of washermen, barbers, shoemakers, carpenters, potters, tailors, oil presser, weavers and priests

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76. The youth of the our period are deviating from the traditional norms and conducts, it can be testified by this proverb- '*beemi ros shur gav laakmi ros gur*' Translation: Spare the rod and spoil the child.

77. Ernest F. Neve, "Beyond the Pirpanjal". Gulshan Publishers, 2003 edition, Srinagar, 2003. P.79.

78. The practice still continues and researcher had a chance to come across such a case when Fayaz Ah. Wani S/o Aziz wani of Mitrigam pulwama was married to his brother's widow.

79. Based on the common observation and an interview August 20-2010 with Ab Rahim Sheikh S/o Qadir Sheikh Qasbay Yar pulwama.

80. Census of India 1891(A general report), Manas publications Delhi 1985, p.94.

81. Census of 1921, Vol XXII, pp.181-184. Census of India 1891(A general report), p.94.

82. Census of India (a general report), 1891. p.96; Nangars-blacksmith, carpenter, washerman, potter, shepherd, cobbler were the chief menials of the village.

used to provide customary services to their patrons<sup>83</sup>, in return they used to receive customary seasonal payments of grain and money. Ideally, from generation to generation, it is clear that members of different professions would customarily perform a number of functions for one another in rural Kashmir that emphasizes cooperation rather than competition. This cooperation was revealed in economic arrangements, in visits to farmers threshing floors by service class members to claim traditional -payments and in rituals emphasizing interdependence at life crises and calanderical festivals all over the Valley.<sup>84</sup>

A complete village in Kashmir meant when it is inhabited by the people of almost every *Kram* and trade. Fellow villagers typically include representatives of various service and artisan classes to supply the needs of the villagers. Priests, carpenters, blacksmiths, barbers, weavers, potters, oil pressers, leatherworkers (*watals*), and so on.<sup>85</sup> Artisanry in pottery, wood, cloth, metal, and leather, although diminishing, continued in many contemporary villages as it did in centuries past. The following *Krams* and craftsmen would make a complete village.<sup>86</sup>

**S. No      Local names of      Remarks**  
**Rural occupations**

01            *Aarum*                      Vegetable gardener.<sup>87</sup>

83.      Sir Herbert Risley, “*The people of India*”, Asian educational service, New Delhi,                      1999.p.130.

84.      Prof. G.m Rabani, “*Ancient Kashmir*”.pp.50-58.

85.      For detail see Lawrance, “*The valley of Kashmir*”.pp.314-315.

86.      Census of India(a general report), 1891,p.96. According to C.E Bates (page.389) in the town of *Tral* of *Wullar pargana*, There were 194 Muslim families of Zamindars including the families of the following professions.

Professions	Number Of Families
Shal-bafs	6
Bunnias	10
Bakers	1
Blacksmith	3
Carpenters	1
Mulla	4
Syeds	1
Attendants at Ziarats	5
Cowherds	12
Sweepers	6
Weavers	4
Oil-sellers	12
Gardeners	4
Washermen	4
Potters	2
Dyers	5
Fakirs	2
Dums	5
Surgeons & Physicians	3
	5

87.      For detail See, C.E Bates.op.cit.p.49.

02	<i>Bhand</i>	Minstrel.
03	<i>Chan</i>	Carpenter
04	<i>Damali Faqir</i>	A special wandering class who earn their livelihood by beggary and performing damali(dance) on the festivals of the renounced, deceased saints.
05	<i>Desil</i>	Masson. <sup>88</sup>
06	<i>Doab</i>	Washerman/lauderer.
07	<i>Domb</i>	Village Chowkidar. <sup>89</sup> According to the administrative report of 1950, the chowkidar was paid Rs/12 per month. <sup>90</sup>
08	<i>Doon</i>	Cotton cleaner- Makes the bedding/sleeping items i.e Quilts, mattresses, cushions and pillows.
09	<i>Galvan</i>	Horsemen. <sup>91</sup>
10	<i>Goor</i>	Who takes care of village cattle. <sup>92</sup>
11	<i>Gor</i>	Hindu priest who attends funerals and marriages.
12	<i>Gratiwoel</i>	Grain miller.
13	<i>Grucce</i>	A farmer who tills the land
14	<i>Ha:nz</i>	The fisherman belongs to the village community in a certain sense. Though they usually form into bodies by themselves, independent for the most part. <sup>93</sup>
15	<i>kander</i>	Breadmaker.
16	<i>Kanil</i> <sup>94</sup>	Makes Kangaries <sup>95</sup> and Baskets
17	<i>Khar</i>	Blacksmith
18	<i>Kral</i>	Potter.
	<i>Bhand</i>	Minstrel.
19	<i>Malle</i>	A Muslim Imam who leads the prayers
20	<i>Mirab</i>	Supervisor of irrigation canals.
21	<i>Muqdam</i>	Head of the village.
22	<i>Naid</i>	Barber (Hair Cutter)
23	<i>Pandith</i>	Kashmiri Hindu villager.
24	<i>Peer</i>	A Muslim clergy
25	<i>Pohul</i>	Who takes care of village sheep
26	<i>Pooj</i>	Meat seller.
27	<i>Rangur</i>	Especially, an urban occupation,deals in dying. But in villages, he use to make coloured as well as plain namdas of sheep's wool. <sup>96</sup>
28	<i>Rish Babas</i>	Attendants of Shrines and receives customary shares from peasant's produce.
29	<i>Seche</i>	Tailor. <sup>97</sup>

88. Dr. Bashir Ahmad Dabala, "*Ethnicity in Kashmir*", Jay kay book shop Srinagar 2009. P.67.

89. The village watchman was always a '*Dum*', and in addition to his police functions he was entrusted by the state with the duty of looking after the crops.The inhabitants of the village were obliged to supply him with rations. *Lawrance,op.cit.p310*; Arthur Brinckman & Robert Thorp, "*Kashmir oppressed*", Weis publications Srinagar, 1996. p.68.

90. Adminstrative report of J & K state,1951.p.78.

91. "*The Gulban or Guluwan(Gulu signifies a flock used to take care of horses, and has likewise the credit of stealing them, and receives eight turak (40 kg) of rice for the care of horse during the grazing season,-when large herds of horses are to be seen upon the Shuji Murg, and the adjoining downs, and the gulwan and his family are leading the same kind of life as the Chaupan. The guluwans are the decendants of the old warlike tribe of the Chakk, who were the warriors of Kasshmir, and who bravely resisted the invasion of Akber*"; *C.E Bates,op.cit.p.34*.

92. Census of India (a general report), 1891,p.95.

93. Census of India (a general report),1891.p.95.

94. Census of 1931,Vol.XXIV.p.231.

95. Kashmiris used *kangri*(fire pot) in winter and on cold days to warm their bodies.

96. In the village of Murran Pulwama, there are still a number of families of *Rangur kram* whose profession is to manufacture the namdas.

97. For detail see Administrative report of J& K,1950.p.32.

30	<i>Sonur</i>	Goldsmith.
31	<i>Tilwaen</i>	Village oil miller. The oil presser comes considerably above the potter and is also one of the regular village staff. His products were in demand for social ceremonial, as well as for cooking and lighting. <sup>98</sup>
32	<i>Waen</i>	A village shopkeeper.
33	<i>Watul</i>	Leather worker.
34	<i>Waza</i>	Cook, who cooks at special occasions
35	<i>Woewur</i>	Weaver. Who weaves the village <i>chadder</i> (blanket) etc. <sup>99</sup> Handloom weaving was the biggest cottage industry in the state during the period of study.
36	<i>Zaildar/landlords</i>	The <i>Zaildar</i> used to get Rs/50 per month per month and was elected under the new <i>Zaidari</i> rules and not on the principle of hereditary as was the case hereto fore. <sup>100</sup>

The above mentioned thirty-six village professionals used to live in the village <sup>101</sup> and all of these constituted the complete village. It will be fruitful to explain some of the principal professionals at some length.

**Peer:** - In village *peer* (priest/religious adviser) used to play an important role .<sup>102</sup> They were classified into two classes; The first class includes *Mullahs* learned in the law, and variously designated as *Maulvi*, *Kazi*, *Akhun*, or *Mufti*, and *Mullahs*, less learned, who used to lead the prayers in the mosque, teach children the Quran, and live upon the offerings of the faithful.<sup>103</sup> In religious matters, their authority was undisputed, marriage and naming ceremonies couldn't be finalized without the presence of priest.<sup>104</sup> Generally *Peer* belonged to *syed* Kram. Besides they were assigned to perform the *niqah* ceremony of the marrying couple.<sup>105</sup> As regards livelihood of peers they were entitled to receive their share from peasants for their services.<sup>106</sup> Besides on occasions of marriages and deaths, priests were fed by their clients and also given handsome presents in the form of cash, clothes and goods. However with the spread of modern education and its impact on villages there is some decline in the value of priests yet their functions and importance are by no means ended ; they continued to play an important role and enjoy respect in villages. The religious traditions are far too deep rooted in Kashmiri life to give way to current waves of modernization. The second class consisted of *Mullahs* who have fallen in social position and are known as *Mals*. These used to

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98. See administrative report of J & K, 1950.p.32; Census of India(a general report), 1891. p.95.

99. Census of 1911, Vol. XX,p.231.

100. Administrative report of J& K. 1950.p.78.

101. Census of India (A general report) ,1891.p.96.

102. Ibid.

103. Lawrance, op.cit.p308.P.N.K Bamzai, "socio and economic history of Kashmir(1846-1925)",p.30.

104. Census report, 1961.Mattan( J &k), a village survey.p.23.

105. Lawrance, op.cit.p.308.

106. Ibid.



wash and prepare the bodies of the dead for burial and used to dig graves and they were not allowed to inter-marry with the *Mullahs* or with the villagers.<sup>107</sup>

There was another section of priests who acted as the custodians of the tombs of the saints and their livelihood depends on these shrines. Gifts were brought to by the villagers-fowls, rice, ghee and sometimes money. The custodians of the tombs were usually descendants of the holy man interred therein. They were called *Pirs* or *Pirzadas* and wield considerable influence. They have been described as “*safed posh*” (i.e., they wear white clothes and do no manual work). They could usually read Quran. A common arrangement was for them to take turns in conducting the worship of the village mosque. Besides receiving the offerings of the faithful, they eke out a rather precarious livelihood by making and selling charms.<sup>108</sup> It is to be noted that there were wandering *faqirrs* locally called *Saiyad Makar* fraternity were fraudulent faqirs who pretend to be *Saiyads* and wander about Kashmir cheating the public. Many have now taken to trade. They intermarry among themselves.<sup>109</sup>

**Muqadam:-** *Muqadam* was one of the two indispensable officials of the village the second being the *chowkidar*<sup>110</sup>. He was an influential person of a village chosen by the community members of that village, exercising his powers by keeping an eye on the theft and other irregularities that took place in his village.”<sup>111</sup> The *Lumbardar*, or village headman, usually used to be an elderly man.<sup>112</sup> According to the administrative report of 1950, “the *lambardar* was now elected under the *lambardari* election rules and not on the principle of hereditary as was the case hereto fore.”<sup>113</sup> The *Mukdam*, or chief- man of the village was the only middle man between the government and the villagers. The duties of the village headman and the village watchman were very real, and they received small mercy if they fail to report crime or to detect criminals.<sup>114</sup> At occasions he used to dispense justice among the villagers of his

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107. Ibid.

108. Ernest F. Neve, “*Things seen in Kashmir*”, p.66.

109. Lawrance, op.cit.p.308.

110. G.T Vigne “*Travels in Kashmir, Ladak, Iskardo*”, P.310. Indus Publications Karachi, 1987, Vol 1; *Census of India (a general report)*, 1891, p.96. Ernest f. Neve, “*Beyond the Pir panjal*”, p.75.

Lawrance, op.cit.p.447.

111. R. L Hangloo, “*agrarian system of Kashmir*”, Commonwealth publishers New Delhi, 1995. pp.70-71. Parvez Ahmad, “*Economy and society of Kashmir*”, p.235; Fida Mohammad Khan Hassnain, “*Kashmir the history of Himalyan valley*”, Gulshan Publishers, Srinaga, 2002. p.411.

112. Ernest F. Neve, *Things*. op.cit.p.66.

113. Administrative report of J & K state, 1950. p.78.

114. Lawrance, “*valley of Kashmir*”. p.278.

village and enjoyed the respect among the people of his village and in the adjoining villages<sup>115</sup>. Besides settling conflicts and issues in his village, he used to make arrangements of coolies for assisting the revenue officials,<sup>116</sup> and also had to make the necessary arrangements for those officials and visitors who entered the village from time to time.<sup>117</sup>

**Farmer (Gruce):-** Farmers were nearly all Muslims.<sup>118</sup> Their Chief occupation was rice cultivation. It entails enormous labour in the formation of terraces and watering them- before and after transplantation of rice plants from nurseries i.e weeding the adventitious<sup>119</sup> plants, the harvesting and storing in the granaries. Rice is in every sense a product of the sweat, blood and tears of the peasantry. The soil of Kashmir with its extensive irrigation under the tributary system introduced by the *Moghuls*, yields a single but fertile crop of rice. Maize is grown in the uplands as far as the wooded mountain slopes. Autumn is the harvest season, called *Harud*, when rice, maize, millet, sesame and amaranth are harvested and stored. The willows are pollarded. Dry leaves are collected from under the *chinar*, which looks reddish brown owing to radical change of colour of its leaves. To protect the maize crop from the depredations of the bear, the terror of the forests of Kashmir, who used to come down from mountain side during the night, peasants used to erect roofed platform-like lofts, ten or more feet above the ground level and yell and scream and make all possible noise with their whistles, beating old kerosene tins filled with pebbles or drums or trumpets or in the exquisite moonlight when their eye commands a pretty good distance, they lustily sing melodious folksongs in chorus which used to make escape of the bear.<sup>120</sup>

One of the peasant's leisure-time occupations was the rearing of cocoons<sup>121</sup> on mulberry leaves during summer. The ready cocoons were carried to the silk Factory at Srinagar in huge bags.<sup>122</sup> During winter peasant and his family might work on rustic looms and weave woolen blankets which fetch a good price. The bee keeping also forms an important source of income for the peasant.<sup>123</sup> In addition to it poultry also formed an important component of Kashmir

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115. Interview with the Muqadam of Zagitgam pulwama(Sona-ullah-Rather, age 80 years)

116. Saif-ud-Din,Dairy,volIII,p.191

117. E.F. Knight, "*Where three empires meet*",pp.64-65

118. C.E Bates. op.cit, p.33.

119. Suresh K. Sharma & S.R. Bakshi, "*Kashmir Society and Culture*",p.174.

120. Ibid,

121. Census of 1911, Vol. XX,p.231.

122. For detail see Chapter: III economy.

123. Census of 1911, Vol. XX,p.231.

village economy. The period under reference witnessed that Poultry was abundant in Kashmir, and excellent fowls were to be found in every village. There was a large export of ducks to the Punjab. It mainly included chicken, duck and geese.<sup>124</sup> Most of the villagers used to rear poultry as its maintenance was not so expensive.<sup>125</sup> Appreciating the Kashmiri peasant, Sir Francis Young husband writes, “A Kashmiri peasant can turn his hands to anything. He can weave good woolen cloth, make first-rate baskets, build himself a house, make his own sandals, his own ropes and a good bargain”.<sup>126</sup>

**Carpenter (Chan):-** In villages carpenters used to manufacture and repair the materials made of wood.<sup>127</sup> They used to prepare wooden pattens, ladles, ploughs, beds, tables, etc. The carpenters used to receive sometimes cash and sometimes grain from farmers. In this matter the practice was not uniform in all villages. The farmers were required to make available the wood required for the manufacture of agricultural implements. A carpenter was able to earn fifty rupees or more per day on an average. A skilled carpenter was quite well off.<sup>128</sup>

**Potter (Kraal):-** In villages, pottery formed the main item of kitchenware and the people of the period under review generally used the utensils made of clay.<sup>129</sup> The clay was prepared by mixing dry earth with water and made into dough by mixing with foot work. When dough was formed and appropriate consistency achieved, the dough kept on the potter wheel. Now the potter used to revolve the wheel very fast with the help of a round stick and by manual manipulation produces fine utensils.<sup>130</sup> It is to be noted during the period of our study the cooking pots were usually made of clay.<sup>131</sup> On festive occasions earthen glasses were used for drinking water and earthen saucers for curries etc.<sup>132</sup> Milkmen used earthen vessels for curd and milk on the festivals; earthen lamps were very much in vogue.<sup>133</sup> Thus potter was necessary for a village. In every village one or two potters could make easily living. Potters

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124. Lawerane, op.cit 365; M.D Wakefield, op.cit.p.141.

125. Ibid.

126. Ibid.

127. Census of 1911, Vol. XX, p.231.

128. For detail see chapter III ‘village economy’; Bashir Ahmad Dabala op.cit.p.67.

129. M.I. Khan, “History of Srinagar”.p.95;Sofi Mohi-ud-Din, “Kashmir ki sakafat ke Badalte Naqoosh” Urdu translation.Zehra publishing house Srinagar.pp.296-298.

130. Statement of Nazir Ahmad Kumar.R/O Murran Pulwama.

131. P.N.K Bamzai,op.cit,p.431.

132. Ibid. Administrative report of J & K state,1943.p.50.

133. Earthen lamps –locally Known as *tchong*.



**Village potter, photograph taken by an unknown photographer probably in 1890, [www.kashmirpictures.com/](http://www.kashmirpictures.com/)**



**Kashmiri Pandit women laying warps on ground, 1895 photograph taken by an unknown photographer, 1895.**

manufactured not only earthen vessels but toys also. Those toys were decorated, polished and painted. Such attractive toys would fetch good prices. The potter women used to go village to village to sell their pottery<sup>134</sup> and brought back to their homes un-husked rice and sometimes cash. However, some potters used to go market particularly on fair or festivals to sell their wares. Where they used to sell their pottery against cash payments.

**Goore.** There were two classes of Goore viz milkmen and herdsman /cowherd locally known by the names of *Dodh Goore* and *Gopun Goore* respectively.<sup>135</sup> The *Shirgujri* or milk-sellers often keep and breed their own cows and sold their milk and milk products to the people of the village.<sup>136</sup> While as the *Gopun Goore* used to take the village cattle to the grazing grounds for which he was paid generally in kind.<sup>137</sup>

**Kanil (Willow worker).** *Kanil* occupied an important position in the villages of Kashmir besides manufacturing baskets for agricultural purposes, he provided Kangris to his costumers in lieu of annual payments in kind. Every village had its own 'Kanil' as Sir walter Lawerance writes, "The basket industry was of importance, and most villages have their artisan who makes the necessary basket for the Kangri, and baskets for agricultural purposes, and the kiltas used for the transport of apples and for rough village work. The superior kiltas, covered with leather, so familiar to the European traveller, are made in the city."<sup>138</sup>

**Weavers.** In Kashmiri villages weaving of woolen blankets and cotton garments were done with great vigor, especially in winter.<sup>139</sup> The Zainagir circle was famed for their soft woollen cloth. Every Kashmiri seemed to excel as a weaver, and the homespun cloth woven by the villagers in the winter was highly appreciated both by Europeans and visitors during the period of our study. The homespun (*pattu*) was often the well-worn blanket of the villager, who sells it to the Srinagar merchants<sup>140</sup>. During the period of our study the Kashmiris had won a great reputation as artisans and were celebrated in the old days for their skill in art manufactures. The chief centre of Kashmiri industries was of course Srinagar but other

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134. Principal items of earthen ware were utensils, rice bins, pitchers, pans etc.

135. Lawerane, op.cit. p.313.

136. Census of India, 1941, Vol. XXII.p.24.

137. Interview with Ab. Rahim Beig R/o Mitrigam Pulwama.

138. Lawerane,op.cit. pp. 372.

139. Census of India, 1941, Vol. XXII.p.24.

140. Lawerance, 'valley of Kashmir,p.370

localities were Villages famous for their special manufactures.<sup>141</sup> Thus Islamabad turns out excellent manufactures. *khudrang* means natural colour. The brown wool was picked out carefully. The best wool in Kashmir was found in the north where the grasses are good and the best weavers were found in the south. The Shopian was famous for wide Blankets (*Ekbari*) and the *Khodrung* blankets, made at Turk Wangam, 12 yards long and \ yards Broad, command prices of Rs. 24 and Rs. 35. The *dobari* blanket<sup>142</sup>, which Consists of two breadths sewn together (the two pieces being \ yards broad, With a length of 10 yards), commands a lower price and used to be sold by Weight, I see fetching Rs. 3. A good *Khodrung dobari* blanket now fetches Rs. 6 or Rs. 7, while a white blanket can be bought for Rs. 5.<sup>143</sup>

***Ironsmith (Khar):-*** As the very name indicates an ironsmith manufactures goods made of iron. The person, who used to practice this profession, was locally called as *Khar*. In agriculture, there were quite a few implements which used to be made of iron. It was the job of the village ironsmith's to manufacture and repair these things. Besides agricultural implements, ironsmiths used to make a number of things of daily household use. For example ironsmiths manufactured spoons, tongs, saucepans, knives, hammer, fork etc. These things were required for common use in every household and blacksmiths used to sell them in the market place or in fairs. For repair of agriculture implements, the blacksmiths were being paid in kind by farmers at the time of harvest.<sup>144</sup>

***Barber (Naid):-*** In rural Kashmir, the barber occupied a place of pride. He used to go house to house to render his services to the people in lieu of his services he used to get his share from peasant's produce in kind.<sup>145</sup> More important of his functions were outside of his normal routine of dressing hair and shaving and trimming beards;<sup>146</sup> The circumcision

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141. Ibid.

142. Ibid.

143. Ibid.

144. A few ironsmiths used to do farming along with their own job. This was so because the occupation Of an ironsmith requires a small foundry with all its paraphernalia. Therefore, it was not possible to carry on the job of an ironsmith as part time or side business average village usually has enough for One or two ironsmiths.

145. Sufi Mohi-ud-Din, "*Kashmir ki sakafat ke badalte nakoosh*",(urdu. Tr), p.288; Laweance, "*valley of Kashgmir*",p.280.

146. Ashok Narang "*rural sociology*" ,Murari lal & sons, New Delhi,2006. P.78.



Blacksmith assisted by his Family :



A village barber trimming the hair of a child

ceremony of child was performed by the barber, besides he used to settle marriages in some villages and for the makeup of groom, the barber used to render his services.<sup>147</sup>

**Washerman (Daeb):-**In village some families work as washermen (*daeb*).They used to wash the soiled clothes against payment. It was not necessary that a washerman would wash clothes of his own village; he used to bring these from other villages. Many washerman live in villages on account of easy available of water, but they collect clothes from towns. The washerman used to keep a donkey for the purpose of carrying clothes.<sup>148</sup>

**Shepherd (Pohul):-** As is clear from the name, shepherd is a person who looks after sheep and he used to take the sheep of the villagers up to the hill pastures in the summer to protect the sheep from the intense heat and get fresh grazing.<sup>149</sup> The villagers used to take long journeys at fixed intervals to carry up salt for their sheep.<sup>150</sup> And the shepherd used to bring them back again in the autumn and receive two percent of the flock if it was intact.<sup>151</sup> Besides receiving the share from peasant's produce in the form of kind they were allowed all the butter made from the sheep's milk.<sup>152</sup> He is required to account for each casualty in the flock, producing the skin for owner's satisfaction but he is not always honest many a lamb were sold or eaten by him and the loss referred to the depredations of wild beasts.<sup>153</sup> In addition to it they used to shear the sheep and keep their wool. It is to be noted that the Shepherds were generally found in hill villages.<sup>154</sup> Some shepherds used to weave blankets and sell them in markets or at fairs.

**Minstrel (Bhand):-** *Bhand* occupied an important position in the village community of Kashmir. They used to provide theatrical entertainment to the people. The people, as a whole would appreciate play acting and there were troupes of travelling players who go from village to village and provided theatrical entertainment to the people. Their power of mimicry and "get up" was excellent.<sup>155</sup> The minstrels of Kashmir (Bhaggat or Bhand) could be recognized

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147. Circumcision of children, providing their services to bridegrooms at the time of marriage ceremony.

148. Ibid.

149. Bashir Ahmad Dabala op.cit.p.66; C.E Bates,op.cit,pp. 33-34.

150. Ibid.

151. Lawerance,op.cit.p.361.

152. C.E Bates.op.cit,pp.33-34.

153. Ibid.

154. Ibid.

155. G. C. Mrs Bruce, op.cit,p.32.





The shepherded is tending the sheep of the villagers up to the hill pastures,



[www.searchkashmir.org/](http://www.searchkashmir.org/)

Kashmiri Minstrel (*Bhand*)

by their long black hair and stroller mien, and although they were practically a peculiar people, they used to combine the profession of singing and acting with that of begging, and were great wanderers. They used to play an important role in portraying the jagirdari system of Kashmir besides they were masters in portraying the different features of rural society<sup>156</sup>. They were much in request at marriage feasts and at harvest time they used to move about village to village, and in a year of good harvest will make a fair living on the presents of the villagers. Their orchestra usually consists of four fiddles with a drum in the centre, or of clarinets and drums but the company often contains twenty members or more. Such companies of strolling musicians would often used to with them dancing boys with long hair, dressed up as women.<sup>157</sup> Their acting is excellent and their songs were often very pretty. They were clever at improvisation and didn't bother about its results. They used to sing Kashmiri, Persian as well as Panjabi songs.<sup>158</sup>

**Watul (Gypsy):-** The lowest class in Kashmir was that of the *watals*.<sup>159</sup> And they have been called the gypsies<sup>160</sup> of Kashmir and they were the peculiar type of people with customs of their own. Their profession was to manufacture and to repair footwear. They used to buy leather from the beef seller and some used to skin<sup>161</sup> the dead animals and prepare raw hides from it. And as per order used to make shoes, sandals and leather rings for plough which supports the wooden neck.<sup>162</sup> Their products though unsophisticated were durable. They used to sell their products for cash. Socially they may be divided into two classes. Those who abstain from eating carrion and were admitted to the mosques and to the religion of Islam belonged to the first class while those who eat the flesh of dead animals<sup>163</sup> and were excluded from the mosques belonged to the second. And they were treated as outcasts by the villagers. It is to be noted that the Watals were a wandering tribe and though sometimes a family would settle down in a village and would build a permanent hut, the roving instinct was too strong

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156. Sufi Mohi-ud-Din, "*Kashmir ki sakafat ke badalte nakoosh*"(urdu),p.87.

157. Lawrance, op.cit.p.313; Ernest F.Neve, "*Beyond The Pir Panjal*",p.81.

158. Ibid.

159. C.E Bates, "*Gazetteer of Kashmir*" ,published by Gulshan Books Srinagar, 2005. P.33

160. Webster dictionary, Gypsy- a member of a wandering Caucasoid people with dark skin and black hair, found throughout the world and believed to have originated in India: they are known as musicians, fortunetellers, etc.

161. G. C. Mrs Bruce, op.cit,p.31.

162. Leather Ring-Locally called as '*Hat Kalmi*', Which was used in plough supported by wooden neck for drawing the bullocks..

163. Ernest F.Neve, "*Beyond The Pir Panjal*",p.84.

and after a few years the family moved on. Their principal occupation was the manufacture of leather. The Watal of the first class make boots and sandals while the Watal of the second class manufacture winnowing trays of leather and straw and perform the duties of scavengers. No villager would have any-thing to do with the scavenger Watal and would not of his own freewill eat with a *Watal* who has renounced carrion. Their habitations which were usually round, wattle huts were always at some distance from the cottages of the peasants, and there the *Watal* used to prepare the hides of dead cattle and buffaloes and the skins of sheep and goats besides Watal used to rear poultry for sale. About July the Watal from all parts of the valley and the city used to assemble at *Lala Bab's* shrine near the *Nasim Bagh* and many matters affecting the tribe were being then settled and marriage alliances were being made. The marriages and deaths of the outcast Watal were not sanctified by the presence of the priest. The outcast Watal could admit to Islam by the taking of an oath to renounce carrion in front of the Mullah.<sup>164</sup>

As mentioned earlier that there used to be thirty-six constituents in a big village. Among these thirty-six elements, there used to be some village professionals who used to render their services to the villagers, either receiving a fixed share of the harvest or being paid according to the nature of the work in lieu of customary payments at the time of harvest. And these non-agricultural segments of the society were the menials of village and locally they were called *taifdars/Nangars* (carpenters, blacksmiths, potters, shepherd, washermen, barbers, tailors, oil-pressers, cattleherd).<sup>165</sup> These menials did not have hereditary land of their own, save the garden plots adjoining their houses. The position of the *Nangar* was not defined in the same precise manner as that of the menials in the Indian village<sup>166</sup>, and even the rate of remuneration was not always fixed Thus the carpenter and the barber were allowed so much grain per plough but they always demand double that amount and usually succeed in getting it. The carpenter, blacksmith, potter, barber, and washerman would always be required in a large village but with improved communication between the village and the towns it is quite possible that the other Nangar will disappear, and either repair to the town or take to

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164. Lawerance, op.cit.p.315.

165. Taifdars- Those people who used to receive customary payment at the time of harvest for their services. Nangars- non agriculturists.

166. Census report of India of 1891,p.96.

agriculture. Many of them are already working on the land, and have proved to be fair farm labourers.<sup>167</sup>

#### **(F) RURAL HOOKA GROUP**

The people of Kashmir of the period under reference were the heavy users of tobacco.<sup>168</sup> And it was extremely common in Kashmiri villages young and old all were used to smoking hooka.<sup>169</sup> It was common sight in villages to find groups of persons taking puffs at hooka. Farmers, Ironsmiths, goldsmiths, potters, barbers, in short people from all walks of the life would find time between their working hours to smoke hooka. Smoking hooka apparently refreshed them and they would re-engage in their respective works after short spells of hooka smoke. Though smoking hooka was intoxicating and its use as narcotic couldn't be condemned, it served an extremely useful social purpose. Hooka in villages used to provide an occasion for get together and gossip .Hooka was symbolic of intercaste and intergroup distinctions. If anyone smoked hooka in any one's company he was considered belonging to his group. Smoking hooka was common indicative of an expression of affirmation of friendship. This was why usually villager did not use to share the smoke with the person belonged to *watal* family. This was because they wanted to maintain and preserve their distinction and smoking hooka with *Watals* was regarded degrading. Generally there is no restriction on smoking among the different elements of village community except the pandits and the *Watals*. Whenever a guest would arrive in any home in village, he was entertained with milk or beverages and then in a relaxed atmosphere was offered hooka to smoke. The guest and the host would take turns at hooka and engage in slow relaxed conversation. At marriages hooka was freely used and it is not out of a place to mention that smoking together was considered to be an affirmation of fraternity and friendship. However the persons belonging to *watal* class were not allowed to take smoke from the same hooka. Though in

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167. Ibid.

168. As early as 2,000 years ago, natives of the Americas used tobacco as a medicine, as a hallucinogen in religious ceremonies, and as offerings to the spirits they worshiped. When Italian Spanish explorer Christopher Columbus traveled to the Americas in 1492, he observed the Arawak people of the Caribbean smoking tobacco loosely rolled in a large tobacco leaf. They also smoked tobacco through a tube they called a tobago, from which the name tobacco originated. Columbus's crew introduced tobacco growing and use to Spain. During the next 50 years, sailors, explorers, and diplomats helped spread pipe and cigar smoking throughout Europe. At first, it was used medicinally as a purported treatment for diseases and disorders such as bubonic plague, migraines, labor pains, asthma, and cancer. Within 100 years, however, smoking for pleasure became common. See Encyclpaedia of Encarta, 2008.

169. C.E Bates.op.cit.p.39; Mushtaq Ahmad Kaw, "Agrarian system of Kashmi(1586- 1819 A.D)",Aiman Publications Srinagar,2002.p.85.

general, there were no restrictions on hooka. However in villages there were some occasions on which smoking hooka were taboo, for example smoking on *khatm sharif*<sup>170</sup>, because on this day it was forbidden to take smoke. Thus hooka group serves as an indication of one's social status. If someone would accept hooka of any person he expressed thereby his fraternity with the man. It is to be mentioned that during the period of our study there was no place of meeting where the sociable pipe is passed around and the use of the pipe seemed to have passed out of fashion in the great famine of 1879. Now people had taken to snuff which was brought over from Peshawar.<sup>171</sup>

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170. *Khatami sharif*- It is a ritual of Kashmiri muslims organized on prescribed occasions, on this day the offerings were made to the dead.

171. Sir Walter Lawrance, "*Valley of Kashmir*", Published by Ali Mohd & Sons Srinagar Kashmir, Year 2006, p. 255.

## Chapter-III

### Economy

#### (A). Physical Geography of Kashmir

The territories of J & k state which are almost mountainous, occupy a unique position in the topography of the Indian subcontinent. These mountains vary in height from hillocks on the Punjab border to the great Himalaya and Kara-Koram ranges.<sup>172</sup>, among these mountains the value of Kashmir was a level plain.<sup>173</sup> and may be described as an oval basin 80 miles long and 20 broad, extending from south-east to north-west.<sup>174</sup> Mountains of Kashmir constitute a very prominent feature of Kashmir's geography. The mountains consist of three main ranges viz the Pirpanjal range, the Jehlum valley range and the north eastern ranges.<sup>175</sup> Pirpanjal range forms a line of the great mountain barrier which divides Kashmir from the plains of Northern India.<sup>176</sup> A very large part of the valley of Kashmir has an altitude of over 6000 feet.<sup>177</sup> - Though owing to this mountainous character of the valley of Kashmir, the area of land under cultivation has been very small, Dewan Kishan Lal observes that the total area of land in Kashmir was 750,000 acres out of which 200,000 acres were under water. 150,000 acres under forest and hills, 50,000 acres under the roads and 350,000 acres was cultivable.<sup>178</sup> In other words Kashmir may be defined as a country containing for the most part of a comparatively level tract of land, a wide vale or plain, embedded and set high in that portion of the mountain mass of the great Himalayan chain which skirts the north-western border of Hindustan, stretching between lat. 33° 15' and 34° 35' N., and long. 74° 10' and 75° 40' E. It is necessary to repeat here that on the southern side we find that portion of the range known as the Pirpanjal, separating the Valley from the Punjab, with peaks varying in height from 8,000 to 15,000 feet, the sides of which are covered with dense forests, and their summits crowned in winter with pure and glistening snow. These snow clad mountains are the sources of the perennial streams which supplied water for irrigation.<sup>179</sup> On the northern side the

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172. R.L Hangloo.op.cit.p.11.

173. John Collett, "A Guide for visitors to Kashmir", Calcutta, Newman & Co. P.2.

174. Ernest. F. Neve, "Beyond the Pir Panjal", Salisbury Square, London, E.C. 1915 P.2.

175. M.L Kapoor, "Kingdom of Kashmir", Gulshan Books Srinagar, p.7.

176. See T. R. Swimburne, "A Holiday in the Happy Valley with Pen and Pencil", 1907; Ernest. F. Neve. Op.cit,p.4.

177. Ernest. F. Neve, Beyond.op.cit.P.2.

178. See Foreign deptt. Sec.31st. March 1848, file nos 60-77. National Archives of India (NAI).

179. Adm. Report of J & K State for Smvt, (1997-98), 1940-41.p.3.

mountains are still higher, approaching in some cases even 18,000 feet; bare and rugged in appearance; their loftiest peaks being covered with a perpetual snow-cap.<sup>180</sup> The peculiar physical character and the climate has from times past been a serious handicap to intensive farming and diversification of crops in the valley. The land remained under snow for four to five months a year when no cultivation was possible at all. As a result rice was the main *kharif* crop but after its harvest later in September and October there was very little time left to sow another crop.<sup>181</sup> These specific geo-climatic conditions of the valley have been responsible for the selective modes of sustenance and development of economy which primarily comprises of agriculture, agro based industry craft and relatively small portion of trade. These agrarian and non agrarian facets of Kashmir economy are discussed in this chapter.

## **(B) AGRICULTURE**

Agriculture refers to art, science and industry of managing the growth of plants and animals for human use. In a broad sense agriculture includes cultivation of the soil, growing and harvesting crops, breeding and rearing livestock, dairying, and forestry.<sup>182</sup> However, crop Farming was the principle ingredient of agriculture of the period under reference.

It goes without saying that of all cultures agriculture was the preeminent as without it the vital requirements of human existence cannot be met.<sup>183</sup> During the period of study agriculture was the backbone of the economy of the people.<sup>184</sup> The masses were essentially cultivating people and no less than 752,509 males and 381, 837 females were working in the fields.<sup>185</sup> Owing to geography of Kashmir village economy possessed certain unique and

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180. Wakefield, M.D.” *“The happy valley: sketches of Kashmir & the Kashmiris”*, London Fleet Street, 1879, p.10.

181 R. L Hanglo.op.cit.p.12; Charles Girdlestone, Memorandum on Kashmir, Calcuta, 1973, p.35.

182. G.N Yattoo, *“J and K at galance”*, Kashmir”, Book Depot. Srinagar, 2010-2011. p.112.

183. Without sustenance and shelter no other human activity is possible. It is only step beyond that truism to recognizing that this necessary economic activity has an enormously shaping impact on all other aspects of social life. Every society must provide some organized way for satisfying those material wants-foods, shelter, and clothing-without which life could not be sustained. In a cooperative and independent process, many different persons contribute in some manner to a total task of producing and distributing goods. Mckee B. James, Sociology, *“The study of Society”*, published by Ray Ashton, CBS College, 1981. p.362.

184. The importance that agriculture commands in the economy of Jammu and Kashmir can be judged from the fact that about 82 percent of the states population lives in rural areas whose primary occupation was agriculture and allied activities. About 37 percent of the states income is generated in this sector. Agriculture census commission, *“Report of the agriculture census”*, 1970-71, vol.I.pp.14-18.

185. Census of India, 1911, vol. xx (Kashmir), part.I.p.230.

distinct features. The valley used to remain landlocked for more than three months owing to heavy snowfall especially on mountain that surround it. The traditional village economy of Kashmir therefore continued for a long time. In the course of isolation the village community of Kashmir had evolved a distinct life style that was in certain respects different from the plains. Kashmir economy has been referred as hill agrarian economy and one crop economy as its field's yielded single crop in a year.<sup>186</sup> The crop was paddy which till date continues to be staple produce of Kashmiri peasants.<sup>187</sup> Cultivation of mustard crop was very rare and confined to the peripheries of Srinagar till 1892.<sup>188</sup> It was perhaps because of the intensity of cold during the winter and the marshy-ness of lands that made the cultivation of this crop impossible.<sup>189</sup> It was to be noted that prior to the cultivation of this crop walnut oil was generally used as rape for cooking as well as lightening since mineral oil until 1890 was very expensive for general use.<sup>190</sup>

Besides Wheat, barley, oats, and maize were grown throughout the Valley, Higher rainfall, irrigation, and fertilization, however, boost the yields of these cereal grains. Generally the crop pattern of Kashmir have been classified in to two groups i,e 'kharif' and 'rabi'.

The important Kharif and Rabi crops are given in the following table:

<b>Kharif crops</b>	<b>Rabi crops</b>
Rice	Wheat
Maize	Barley
Cotton	Opium; poppy <sup>191</sup>
Saffron	Rape
Tobaco	Flax

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186. The *nambal* lands (low lands) under rice cultivation produced only one crop in the year and remained lea during winter when no cultivation was possible; F. Drew, "*Northern barrier of India*", pp.170-173; R.L Hangloo, op.cit.p.18.; Walter R. Lawrance, "*The valley of Kashmir*", Chinar publishing House, Srinagar, 1992,p.329.

187. G. C. Mrs Bruce, "*The peep at Kashmir*", P33, Gulshan publishers, 2005; Mushtaq Ahmad Kaw.op.cit.p.76.

188. Ibid.

189. Art. Kashmir village economy under the Raj 1846-1947 by Dr. M.Y Ganai, "Kashmir journal of social sciences", p.83.

190. Walter R. Lawrance, "*The valley of Kashmir*", Chinar publishing House, Srinagar, 1992, pp.354-355.

191. The area under poppy cultivation during the year 1943 was 1950 kanals and 10  $\frac{1}{2}$  marlas and the area cropped was 1,813 and 14 marlas. The quantity of opium produced was 19 maunds and 22 seers. Adm. Report of J & K State for Smvt, (1997-98),1943-44.p.64.



Millet	Beans
Amranthus	peas
Buckwheat	
Pulses	
Seasame	

Source: Lawrance, "Valley of Kashmir", pp.225-330.

The crops such as paddy (unhusked rice), maize, pea, bean, pulses and millet, roughly sown in May –June and reaped in September-October, were categorized into '*kharif*' or autumn crops. The crops sown thereafter in October- November and reaped in April- May were designated as '*rabi*' or spring crops and they generally comprised wheat, barley, pulses and mustard.<sup>192</sup>

- **Cultivation Of Crops**

**1. Rice:-** Off all the food-grains, paddy was the principal crop grown largely over the whole valley. The crop was so predominant that it was grown on the  $\frac{3}{4}$  the of the total arable land<sup>193</sup> and it was grown in water with ample water supplies. Needless to mention Rice was the staple grain of Kashmir<sup>194</sup> and the principal sustenance of its population, and consequently was a great article of revenue; and the wealth of an estate or a jagir was calculated not only its value in the money, but by the number of *kharwars*(*ass loads*) of rice which it can produce.<sup>195</sup> There were numerous varieties of rice in Kashmir.<sup>196</sup>The local names of these varieties were *Shali Keow*, *Khet*, *Buber*, *Kathihar*, *Gavezir* (very tasty with good fragrance but difficult to husk), *Mazeth*, *K78*, *china*.<sup>197</sup> However the *Shali Keow* variety germinated very quickly and ripen more rapidly than any other seed. This can be substantiated by this kashmiri proverb '*Shali keow,kali vow sobun kheow*', which means if sown yesterday can be eaten today.<sup>198</sup> The rice may be roughly divided into two classes, the white and the red. The

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192. Mushtaq Ahmad Kaw.op.cit.p.75.

193. Mushtaq Ahmad Kaw.op.cit.p.76.

194. Ernest F. Neve., "*Things seen in Kashmir*", p59, Lawrance, 'valley of Kashmi Lawerane, op.cit r.p.330.

195. P.N.K Bamzai. op. cit. p; In the time of Zain-ul-Abidin the annual produce of the rice crops was said to have been seventy seven lakhs of ass-loads, of which the sovereign received one half when Moorcraft vwasited the valley, the quantity did not exceed twenty lakhs of loads. C.E Bates.op.cit.p.52.

196. Lawerane,op.cit,p.332.

197. Based on an interview with Mr. Gh Qadir Bhat S/O Mohd Sultan Bhat, R/O Mitrigam Pulwama, practicing farmer of area under study, on 25-7.2010.

198. Ibid.

former as a food was the more esteemed.<sup>199</sup> The white rice, though esteemed as a food, was from a cultivator's point of view less popular than the red rice. In the first place, the white variety was more delicate plant and suffered more from changes in temperature than its hardier brother.<sup>200</sup>

Rice was sown in the spring about the *Nu-roz* (the new day) or vernal equinox, the ground was prepared for receiving the seed. First it was ploughed three times, and when the ridges were dry they were broken by large hand hammer locally called *Yetiphur*, and then flooded for one day before the seed was sown; and the sowing may be continued from the fortieth day after the *Nu-roz*; according to the tradition there were two methods of preparing the soil. The one was known as *tao*, the other as *kyeon*. There is an old proverb in Kashmir, '*Ya kezan ya dazan*,' which means that for rice cultivation the land should be absolutely wet or absolutely dry. In *tao* cultivation the soil was ploughed dry, and when the clods were perfectly free from moisture and do not lose weight when placed over the fireplace at night, irrigation was given and the seed was sown. In *kyeonul* cultivation the soil was ploughed wet and when three ploughings were given and the soil was half water and half mud, the outturn of *kenalu* was some- times equal to that of *tao*. But as a rule it may be said that the *tao* system gives the best results and that *kenalu* involves the heavier labour.<sup>201</sup> After the seed was thrown upon water, the labourers tread it into the soil. The crop was ripe in ten or eleven weeks; the ground being constantly flooded till a few days before cutting. There were two systems of cultivation. Under the first the rice was sown broadcast; in the second the rice was first sown in a nursery.<sup>202</sup> And when it was about a foot high it was transplanted into the prepared ground, every bundle of stalks being inserted single by the hand.<sup>203</sup> The weeding alone was a tremendous task. Rows of peasants could be seen standing in mud and water, bent down, scooping out all the adventitious plants and grasses and plastering mud round the stalks of the young rice plants.<sup>204</sup> This would go on day after day under the hot sun, and the fields had to be carefully and completely weeded no less than four times a year. Where, however, the rice plants have been transferred from nurseries instead of being sown broadcast twice was

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199. Lawerane, op.cit.p.332.

200. Ibid. p.333.

201. Interview with Gh Ahmad Sheikh, R/O Koil Pulwama, age 78 years.

202. Based on my own experience.

203. Lawerane, op.cit,P.325.

204. Ernest F.Neve, op. cit, p. 59; Lawerane,op.cit,p.328; There is a Kashmiri proverb, "*Alan chuh phal, nendan chuh danih*", tr. Ploughing gives harvest, weeding gives rice.

sufficient. This special weeding was called *Nend*.<sup>205</sup> During the weeding operation the menfolk used to sing the melodious songs (*Nend Baeth*) to mitigate the pains during the whole operation of *nend*.

*Tali drao byol kol ayo barsus*

*Yes Wantam thatis kati pyars*

*Kalheri tahri degchi phalnawas*

*Yes wantam thatis kati pyars*

*Osh dadraiye sogwon be trawas*

*Yes wantam thatis kati pyars*

*Translation: The seed have sprouted, the plant thus ginned entity. Oh my friend tells me how long I shall have to wait for my lover. I will perform sacrifice for its development. Oh my friend tells me how long I shall have to wait for my lover. I will water this plant with the flow of the tears of my eyes. How long shall I have to wait?*

In the lower villages near the swamps there was an insect which irritates the skin, and to protect himself the cultivator smears his legs and arms with the pine pitch. He presents a curious appearance with his arms and legs black and his body splashed all over with grey mud.<sup>206</sup> A weed known as *Prangos* was used by the rice cultivators as a preventive against insect pests.<sup>207</sup>

**2. Wheat:-** It was grown on one-eighth of the overall arable land as a spring crop.<sup>208</sup> It was cultivated on elevations where irrigation was not possible and crops matured early, the Kashmir looked down upon it as a food.<sup>209</sup> The wheat straw was also not used as a food for the cattle. The average produce of wheat on an acre of dry land was 7 mounds.<sup>210</sup>

**3. Maize.** Maize was not raised in Kashmir till then and was introduced only as late as the 18<sup>th</sup> century and became the most important *kharif* crop grown preferably in the hilly areas of

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205. Lawerane, op.cit, p. 328; G. C. Mrs Bruce, “*The peep at Kashmir*”, Gulshan publishers, 2005. P. 33.

206. P.N.K Banzai, op.cit.p.214.

207. Lawerane, op.cit, p.331

208. Mushtaq Ahmad Kaw, op.cit, pp.81-82.

209. Lawerane, op.cit, p.328.

210. M.L Kapoor, “*Social and Economic history of J & K State*”, Anmol publications 1992. p. 7.

the valley.<sup>211</sup> It constituted the staple food of the Gujars, who lived at the fringes of the mountains of Kashmir. The Kashmir cultivators did not like it and attended but indifferently to their maize fields. The average yield of the dry land was only 8 maunds; however on irrigated lands it varied.<sup>212</sup>

**4. Barley.** In Kashmir it was cultivated in higher villages situated at an elevation up to 7000 feet.<sup>213</sup> The people did not care for barley or wheat as a food, and if cultivation improves it will be with a view to trade.

**5. Amaranth(Ganhar).**With its multi coloured stalks and flowers, it was the most beautiful of all the crops in Kashmir. It was frequently grown in rows in the cotton fields or on the borders of maize plots. Its minute grains were first parched and then grounded and eaten with milk or water. Washermen extracted an alkaline substance from the burnt ashes of the stalks of its plant.<sup>214</sup>

**6. Buckwheat or Triumba,** It was crop which could be grown in Kashmir even late and in almost any soil. It had two varieties; the one with white pinkish flowers and the other with yellow flowers. Both of them were grown in place of rice when water was in short supply. The later variety often formed the only food grain of the people in the higher valleys. On the average, an acre of land produced four and a half maunds of buckwheat.<sup>215</sup>

**7. Pulses.** *Mung, Masoor, Maha, Moth* and *Mash* were important pulses grown as autumn crops in Kashmir.<sup>216</sup>The best pulse was that of "*Mung*".It was often sown in the rice lands which required rest. The other pulses were "*Mah*" and "*Moth*". On the average, two and a half to three maunds of *Mung* and four maunds of *Mah* were obtained from an acre of land. Peas and white beans were only occasionally cultivated.<sup>217</sup>

**8. Oilseeds.** Oilseeds largely grown in Kashmir; the chief of the oil-seeds was the rape, of which there were three varieties Rape in Kashmir. The first was the *Tilgoglu*, which was sown in September and October on dry lands and especially on the soft reclaimed swamp land. As a rule there was no weeding but when as happens in reclaimed swamp, the wild

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211 Mushtaq Ahmad Kaw.op.cit.p.83.

212. M.L Kapoor.op.cit.p.7.

213. Lawerance.op.cit,p.341.

214. P.N.K Bamzai, op.cit.p.215; Lawerance. op.cit, pp. 338-339.

215. M.L Kapoor,op.cit.p.8 ; P.N.K Bamzai, op.cit.p.215;

216. Mushtaq Ahmad Kaw.op.cit.p.84.

217. Ibid; P.N.K Bamzai, op.cit.p.215.

hemp was very vigorous, the cultivator had to weed. Timely rains from February to May were required, and the crop was harvested in May and June. The second variety was known as *Taruz* or *Sarshaf*, and was sown in the spring. It ripens at the same time as the *Tilgoglu*, but it gives a smaller amount of oil from its seed. Three *maunds* of seed to the acre would be an average for *tilgoglu*. The other varieties of rape give less. The third variety of the rape was known as *Sandiji* and was sown in the standing rice when the last watering was being given. It gives a small crop but as no labour was expended the cultivator counts even the small crop as gain.<sup>218</sup>

Locality	Mean Density Per square mile in 1931	Percentage of total area which is		Percentage to cultivable area of		Percentage of gross cultivated area which is irrigated	Normal rainfall	Rice	Wheat	Barley	Bajra	Maize	Other food crops including pulses	Oil seeds	Drugs & narcotics
		Cultivable	Not Cultivable	Not Cultivated	Double Cropped										
Kashmir province	183	18.7	14.6	72.2	10	49.4	31.97	35.9	9	1.5	3	33.3	5.4	10.2	0.2
Baramula	168	18.9	18.3	96.8	4.3	45.8	35.28	34.7	12.8	2	8	30	6	9.6	0.1
Srinagar	274	28.1	16.1	57.1	17	62	31.78	46.3	5.7	1.1	-	23.3	4.3	14	0.3
Muzaffarabad	99	8.2	7.8	97.1	.04	22.7	50.43	8	6.5	1.4	-	75.9	6.7	4	-

Source: Census report of 1931, Vol. xxI V,J &K,part.I.p.69.

### Prices:-

During the reign of Maharaja Hari Singh the prices of grains were as under:-

A chilkee rupee = annas  
Name of the grain  
*Sahlee* (unhusked rice)

Ch. Rs. Per Kharwar  
2

218. Lawrance.op.cit,p.339.

<i>Uwaska</i> (barely)	2
<i>Kuuuck</i> (wheat)	5
<i>Maki</i> (maize)	2
<i>Matar</i> (peas)	4
<i>Mong</i> (Dal)	7
<i>Mosor</i> (-do-)	4
<i>Tilgogul</i> (mustard)	8
<i>Tromba</i>	2
<i>Kupas</i> (flax)	16

Source: Arthur Brinckman And Robert Thorp, “*Kashmir oppressed*”, We was publications, Srinagar, 1996.p.75.

Name of crop	Prices of food grains in Kashmir in Rs. Per kharwar	
	1901	1911
Wheat	23.14	14.0
Gram	7. o	-
Barley <sup>219</sup>	44.o	22.12
Rice	20.2	18.8
Maize	45.0	32.0
Millets	17.2	11.7
Pulses	-	-

Source: Census 1911, vol, xx, part I. p.61.

**9. Saffron.** The legendry crop of Kashmir, under cultivation since 500 B.C around pampore (erstwhile Padampore) was thought to have originated in Greece, Asia Minor and Persia spreading Eastwards to Kashmir and china.<sup>220</sup> The earliest reference to the saffron was noticeable in Kalhana’s *Rajatarangni*, having digestive and stimulant properties.<sup>221</sup> It has tremendous importance from the commercial point of view. It was however raised only at two places in the valley-Pampore and Inderkot.<sup>222</sup>

The cultivators of saffron first used to plough the land; rendered soft and prepared with the spade for planting the saffron seed (bulb) in the sloppy ground which then required no manures at all. The seed, being the first form of the saffron plant, normally took three years to come up. After three years, the seed land was kept uncultivated for a period of approximately six years to allow it to recover the energy lost. Ultimately towards the month of September while stalks appeared on the bulb to the height of a finger followed by the sprouting of buds

219. Rates of barley are given in respect of Kashmir and grain for frontier. Census 1911, vol, xx, part I. p.61.

220. M,D Wakefield, op.cit, p.141.

221. Kalhana, “*Rajatarangni*”, Eng. Tr. M.A Stein, vol. II, Motilal Banarsidas Delhi, 1979. p.428.

222. Mushtaq Ahmad Kaw.op.cit.p.77.

which yielded flowers on the top of each stalk. Each flower produced six stamens and six lilac-tinted petals and each bulb gives crops for three consecutive years after which it was dug up and transplanted lest the bulb should get destroyed if left in the same soil.<sup>223</sup> During flowering period two to three pickings were performed.<sup>224</sup>

**10. Forage Crops.** Until nineteen sixties, the villagers of Kashmir did not cultivate any specific forage crop and it was only after the aforesaid period that oats has been introduced in the valley.<sup>225</sup> This had not only reduced the scarcity of fodder, but on the other hand changed traditional cattle rearing of some of the villages of Kashmir.<sup>226</sup> Besides it is not out of a place to mention that with the growing trend of laying out of the apple orchards throughout the valley it had largely relieved the villagers from the tension of fodder for their cattle as these orchards provided huge plenty of fodder.

However as for the period of our study is concerned, the Forage crops generally comprised, rice and maize straw ,*makai khasil* (cultivation of maize merely for the purpose of fodder for cattle), *zab* (grass of swamps), *Batakh nure*, orchard grass. In addition to it *Hami gass* was one of the important ingredient of the fodder as writes Lawerance, “*In the rice villages the boundaries of the fields give a grand crop of hay, which was carefully cut, dried, and twwasted into ropes. These ropes are suspended from trees and remain dry and uninjured by the winter snows and rains.*”<sup>227</sup>

Hay was cut in the morning as soon as the dew has evaporated. The hay was raked into rows, called windrows, as soon as the leaves begin to wilt. Windrows were turned with pitchforks the following day to allow the hay to dry uniformly. When the weather was favorable, field-cured hay was ready for storage in the afternoon of the day following cutting. The hay was then stored indoors in a haymow or piled in a large outdoor heap, where drying was completed by forcing natural or heated air through the hay. In addition to it the rice and maize

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223. Ibid. pp.80-81.

224. M. Amin Masoodi. op.cit. pp 144-145.

225. Ibid.

226. There was a custom that the villagers used to confine their cattle in cowsheds during winter. And after their emergence in spring they were assigned to a professional herdsman locally known as *Goore*. No doubt at present it is still practiced in the hilly villages of the valley, where the grazing facilities are still available on account of vast pasture lands. But in most of the villages of the valley it received set back on account of the shrinkage of grazing grounds and largely because of the introduction of oats and orchard grasses.

227. Lawerance. op. cit, p. 357.

straw was also put into heaps for the winter use.<sup>228</sup> An area of about 0.06 lakh hectares was used for cultivation of paddy, maize, wheat, bajra, millets, barley and fodder. These crops yield residues as by product providing roughages for livestock in the form of paddy straw, wheat boosa, maize stalk etc.<sup>229</sup> In the cultivated area, seasonal animal fodder crops were grown in sequence to other crops, white perennial grasses and legumes were grown under hortipastoral system on field boundaries etc.<sup>230</sup>

- **Vegetable Farming.**

Vegetables provide important minerals and vitamins in human nutrition and add variety and interest to our meals. During the period of our study a wide variety of herbaceous plants were cultivated for their edible leaves, stems, roots, fruits, and seeds throughout the valley. A large number of vegetables were grown in Kashmir, the fact can be testified by this statement of Sir Walter Lawrance, "*Vegetables' are of great importance in Kashmir, and every villager used to have small garden plot, where he used to raise a wealth of food with very small effort.*"<sup>231</sup> The vegetables usually grown were - lettuce, spinach, endive, celery, cabbage, carrots, potatoes, turnips, cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, peas, beans, melons, tomatoes, Pumpkin<sup>232</sup>, Cucumber, chili, Egg-plant, white bean, Onion. Owing to poor transportation system there was no commercialization of Vegetable farming. Most fresh vegetables were formerly grown close to the houses of the villages. 'Knol-kohl (*karamsag*) was the national vegetable.<sup>233</sup> As mentioned earlier that for about three months of winter the valley used to remain under the cover of snow and was procured from the land. That was why Kashmiri's had developed a tradition of storing dry vegetables during the summer.<sup>234</sup> Next in importance was the turnip, which was largely cultivated. The root was cut into slices and dried for the winter. Vegetable marrows were abound, and they too were dried in the sun and festooned on ropes for winter use. Tomatoes are cut into rings and dried in the sun for winter use.<sup>235</sup> The wild vegetables mainly included *bumbh, kralmund or kralhul, handh, woopalhak, obeg,*

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228. Ibid.

229. M. Amin Masoodi, op. cit, p. 260.

230. Masoodi, op.cit, p. 264.

231. P.N.K Banzai, op.cit.p.220.

232. Three varieties of pumpkins grown in Kashmir, viz kashir, paryim-al, and tray are very fond of it. In winter time both Muslims and hindus consume large numbers of turnips (*gogij*). C.E Bates.op.cit.p.49.

233. Lawerane, op. cit.,p.347; Mushtaq Ahmad Kaw.op.cit.p.88.

234. The practice still survives in Kashmir despite of abundant availability of fresh vegetables.

235. Ibid.



*mashroom, narm-nor, sochal and nunar* etc.<sup>236</sup> Chillies were chiefly grown by the regular gardening cultivators. Often the sides of the houses were festooned with bright rows of red chillies or split turnips, golden maize cobs and dried apples.<sup>237</sup>

### (C) AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY

- **Implements**

The agricultural implements of Kashmir were Plough (*A:li*), Wooden mallet (*Yetiphoer*), spade (*Livan*), wooden mortar (*Kanz*) and pestle (*Moul*) etc. The plough was of necessity light, as the cattle were small, and was made of various woods, the mulberry, the ash, and the apple being perhaps the most suitable material.<sup>238</sup> The ploughshare was tipped with iron. The construction of the plough of Kashmir was very simple, and its wooden ploughshare was kept tight by a movable wedge.<sup>239</sup> The spade of Kashmir was made of wood, had a narrow face, and was tipped with iron.<sup>240</sup> It was chiefly employed by the cultivator for digging out turf clods, and for arranging his fields for irrigation.<sup>241</sup>

For clod-breaking a wooden mallet (*Yetiphoer*) was used and the work was done in gangs.<sup>242</sup> Sometimes a log of wood was drawn over the furrows by bullocks, the driver standing on the log. But as a rule, frost, snow, water, and the process known as *khushdba*, were considered a sufficient agency for the disintegration of clods. For maize and cotton a small /mud hoe (*Daji-tongoer*) was used to extract weeds and to loosen the soil.<sup>243</sup> These were the implements of agriculture in Kashmir. It is not out of a place to mention that the mortar was made of a hollowed-out bole of wood. The pestle was made of light, hard wood and the best and hardest of woods for the purpose was the hawthorn (*Kanzoel*). In some villages the rice was husked under a heavy log hammer<sup>244</sup>, which works on a pivot, was rotated by men who step on and step off the end away from the hammer<sup>245</sup> besides one of the important tool was

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236. P.N.K Bamzai, op.cit.p.222; Lawerane,op.cit.p.240.

237. Lawerane,op.cit.p.347

238. Mushtaq Ahmad Kaw.op.cit.p.65.

239. Lawerane,op.cit.p.328

240. Ibid. Census of 1931, vol.xxiv, J&K, Part. I,p.42.

241. P.N.K Bamzai,op.cit,p.233.

242. Mushtaq Ahmad Kaw.op.cit.p.75.

243. Ibid.

244. Locally called '*kir-kach-mohal*'

245. Lawerane,op.cit.P.325.

sickle (*Droet*) used for harvesting paddy and other crops. The cereal crops like wheat, barley and rice might were released from the stems through threshing while striking a bunch of cereal plants against a wooden log (*Moond*).<sup>246</sup> The entire process led to the collection of grains on the floor containing chaff and straw together. They could be subsequently separated from each other through winnowing during which a stream of air might be; as of now to blow the grain coverings down the ground a winnowing tray locally called *shoop* is used.<sup>247</sup>

- **Soil Types**

The soil of the Kashmir valley varies in origin from alluvial to lacustrine and glacial. Their present day variations have been caused mainly by climatic process and have little relation to the parent or the bed-rock. They have evolved through a long geomorphic history punctured by alterations of fluvial land glacial phases. The soil cover has enormous thickness in the bowl of Kashmir;<sup>248</sup> In Valley we find various types of soils but in broader terms there are three main categories of the soils of valley viz 1.hill soil, 2. Alluvial soils, 3.karewa soils

**1. Hill Soils:-**Hill soils are shallow, immature, acidic, and deficient in potash, phosphorus and lime and are susceptible to soil erosion. These soils are found in mountainous tracts of the state above the altitude of 700meters.Humus content of these soils varies according to slope and altitude. The crops like maize, pulses, oilseeds and fodder are generally cultivated on these soils. In Kashmir valley orchards of apple, pear and walnut have been grown on such lands.<sup>249</sup>

**2. Alluvial Soils** .Mud, silt, sand and gravel which are brought down by the flowing water and deposited over low lands constitute the alluvial soils.<sup>250</sup> Huge quantities of such soils are deposited during floods. Alluvial soils are the most productive soils of the Valley. These are found in southern plains of Kashmir valley floor. Besides the Chenab valley also possesses a narrow strip of such soil.<sup>251</sup>In Kashmir the alluvial soils are of two types viz. old alluviums and new alluviums. The old alluvium lies above the banks of the rivers and in the valley they

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246. Mushtaq Ahmad Kaw.op.cit.p.75.

247. Ibid.

248. Francis young husband.op.cit.pp.251-57.

249. Lawerane,op.cit.p.321.

250. Imperial Gazetter of India. Vol. XV,p,110. Lawerance,op.cit.p.319; Francis Younghusband,op.cit.p.205. J.L.K Jalali, “*Economics of Food Grains in Kashmir*”, Lahore 1931. p.2.

251. Ibid.

extend into the *karewas*. The new alluvium was found in the bays and deltas of the Mountain Rivers. It was the most fertile soil.<sup>252</sup> The alluvial soils owing to their high fertility can grow 2-3 crops every year if proper irrigation facilities are available. In Kashmir valley generally paddy was grown on such soils while as in Jammu region wheat, gram, paddy and mustard are commonly grown.<sup>253</sup>

**3. Karewa Soils:-** these soils are lacustrine deposits and are flat mounds in the valley of Kashmir and Kishtwar . Some important *karewas*<sup>254</sup> of Kashmir are located in Pampore, Mattan, Tral, Awantipora, Letpora, Kulgam, Shopian, Qazigund, Tangmarg, Gulmarg, Baramulla Budgam and Pulwama. Karewa soils are generally employed for the cultivation of cash crops like Saffron, almonds, walnuts, apples and pears.<sup>255</sup>

However the Kashmiri farmers recognize the following soil types by their local nomenclature:

**S. No    *Name of the soil type*    Remarks**

01	<i>Gurut</i>	These soils are rich in clay and their water holding capacity is high .They were generally employed for paddy cultivation. There are varieties of the <i>Grutu</i> soil, and the varieties may be distinguished by colour. The most fertile of these varieties was the dark, blackwash soil known as <i>Surh</i> . <sup>256</sup>
02	<i>Behil</i>	These are rich loam soils having humus content and fertility. This soil was regarded best for paddy cultivation. However this soil sometimes strikes a havoc with the paddy crop, when too much manuring makes it very strong, which causes <i>rai</i> (paddy blast) of paddy. <sup>257</sup>

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252. Lawerane, op.cit.p.320.

253. Ibid.

254. Nearly half the area of this basin-shaped valley is occupied by the Karewas which are flat-topped mounds composed of clay and loam and slit with thin layers of greenish sand. Having a width of from eight to sixteen miles along the south-west side of the valley and extending for length of some 50 miles from Shopian to Baramula, these Karewas are sometimes cut into stripes but their flat tops and almost the same altitude indicate that once they must have formed one large plateau later cut into isolated mounds by the streams descending the mountains. Dr. Ved Kumari, “*The Nilamata Purana*”, J & K Academy of Art, Vol.I,1988.p.17.

255. Lawerane,op.cit.pp.320-22.

256. Lawerane,op.cit.p.320;S.N. Koul, “*Kashmir Economics*”, Srinagar,1954-5.p.32.

257. Ibid.

- 03     *Sekil*             *Sekil* was light loam with sandy sub soil. This soil was found in lower edges of *karewas* (table lands). *Sekil* soil if properly watered gives a good yield of paddy.
- 04     *Dazanlad*         This soil was found in low lying areas near swamps.<sup>258</sup> If water was allowed to stagnate in such soils it turns red in colour .If *dazanlad* soil was properly irrigated it gives a very high yield of paddy. This soil requires no manure.<sup>259</sup>
- 05     *Nambal*             *Nambal* was peaty soil and was found near the banks Jehlum river and in the vicinity of wullar and Anchar lakes. Nambal soil was not fit for paddy and generally fooder are grown.
- 06     *Tand*                The land on the mountain slopes which was reclaimed from forests was called *tand* soil.<sup>260</sup> It lakes fertility.
- 07     *Zabalzamin*        If soil was excessively irrigated it loses its fertility and becomes alkaline such soil was called *zabalzamin*.<sup>261</sup>
- 08     *Trush*               The Soil which fails to hold irrigated water was called *trush*.<sup>262</sup>
- 09     *Lemb*                The soil in which spring occurs was called *lemb*.<sup>263</sup>
- 10     *Shatzamin*         *Shat* is the soil which contains sand and gravel. It was generally occurs in and around mountain streams.<sup>264</sup>

- **Manures**

Organic matter is important in maintaining fertility in the soil. It contains the entire soil reserve of nitrogen and significant amounts of other nutrients, such as phosphorus and

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258. The low lands under rice cultivation produced only one crop in the year and remained lea during winter when no cultivation was possible; F.Drew, "Northern barrier of India", pp.170-173; R.L Hangloo, op.cit.p.18.

88. Imperil gazetter of India, Vol XV, p.110; For detail see Dr. Parviz, "*Economy & Society of Kashmir*", Oriental publishing house Srinagar, 2007.p.101.

260. Imperial Gazzeter of India, Vol.Xv.p.110.

261. Dr. Parviz,op.cit.p.101.

262. Lawerane,op.cit.p.321.

263. Ibid.

264. J.L.K. Jalali.op.cit,p.8; Lawerance,op.cit.p.321.

sulphur.<sup>265</sup> Soil productivity thus is affected markedly by the organic-matter; Organic matter helps to maintain balance in the soil. Because most of the cultivated vegetation was harvested instead of being left to decay, organic materials that would ordinarily enter the soil upon plant decomposition were lost. To compensate for this loss, the peasants of the period under review used to reserve all dung, whether of sheep, cattle or horses in the winter when the animals were in the houses for agriculture as Lawerance writes, “*the farmyard manure is carried out to the fields by women and ploughed in, or is heaped in a place through which the irrigation duct passes and so reaches the fields as liquid manure. Sometimes the manure is placed in heaps on the fields, and when the field is covered with water it is scattered about by hand. Later on in April, as the weather opens, turf clods are cut from the banks of streams and irrigation channels*” while the summer dung was dried and after being mixed with *chinar* leaves and willow twigs was kept for fuel.<sup>266</sup> As a matter of fact that during the period of our study there was no use of chemical fertilizers. The people used cowdung and other resources of organic matter to enhance the fertility of the soil. The owner-cultivator used to manure his rice fields liberally, about 120 maunds to an acre in some cases, but the fields of the absentee landlord would get little manure and the crops of the latter were usually inferior to those of the former.<sup>267</sup> The other resources of manure were the sheep, when the flocks commenced to move towards the mountains, they were folded on the fields, secondly the Kashmiri considers *malchak* (alluvial clods) to be a far more effectual renovator of rice fields than farmyard manure. These clods were cut from the sides of watercourses and were rich in silt and a dressing of clods would strengthen a field for three years. The strongest of the farmyard manure was that of poultry and this was reserved for onions. The next best was the manure of sheep which was always kept for the rice nurseries.<sup>268</sup> In the villages where there was no irrigation stream one could sometimes find latrines and the night-soil was used in garden cultivation besides crop rotation was also practiced to enhance the richness of the soil.<sup>269</sup>

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265. The manuring of soil with animal wastes has been practiced for many thousands of years and serves as a source of various complex organic compounds that are important in the growth of plants.

266. Census of India, 1941, Vol. XXII.p.17.

267. Ibid.

268. It was a common sight in the yards of the houses of rural Kashmir to see heaps of cow dung in winter season, especially reserved for paddy fields.

269. Lawerane,op.cit,p.322.

## • Irrigation System

The mountain locked valley of Kashmir was suitably designed by the nature and its snow covered mountains were the major source for the irrigation system of the valley.<sup>270</sup> These snow clad mountains are the sources of the perennial streams which supplied water for irrigation.<sup>271</sup> The snows used to melt into various mountain streams, which lace the valley and rush down to the Jhelum River. From both sides of the Jhelum the water passes quickly from one village to another in the years of good snow.<sup>272</sup> All villages which depend for their irrigation on a certain weir<sup>273</sup> were obliged to assist in its construction and repair. The weir consisted of wooden stakes and stones with grasses and willow-branches twisted in between the stakes. The best grass for this purpose was the *fikal*. And the person who used to supervise the main stream was called *Mirab*, in addition to this duty, he had to see repairs and to call out labour. These *Mirabs* used to get their share from the peasant's harvest, besides there used to be government *Mirabs* to look after the main irrigation channels.

The system of distribution of water was rough and simple, but it had the advantage that quarrels between villages rarely arose, and quarrels between cultivators of the same village never.<sup>274</sup> It is said that the system was introduced by the emperor Jahangir. He had laid down the rule that the upper villages which had no local spring and lower villages which received no overflow water from the upper villages were entitled to a share of irrigation from the main channel.<sup>275</sup> There was an important auxiliary supply from the numerous springs of Kashmir. Some of these springs afford excellent irrigation in some villages.<sup>276</sup> Throughout the valley there was very extensive irrigation. And the river systems of the valley were fed both by rain and snow.<sup>277</sup>

Rainfall recorded in the valley during the year of 1931.

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270. P.N.K Bamzai,op.cit,p.14; Also see Census of India, 1941, Vol. XXII,p.22.

271. Adm. Report of J & K State for Smvt, (1997-98), 1940-41.p.3; Lawerane,op.cit,p.323.

272. Lawerane,op.cit,p.323.

273. A low dam built across built across the level of water upstream or regulate its flow.

274. Interview with the resident of Mitrigam Pulwama viz Mohd Akram Wani S/O Ab Khaliq Wani,age 75, date 15-06-2009.

275. Lawerane,op.cit,p.323.

276. The springs of the village Dadoora of Dist. Pulwama provides ample irrigation supply to the village of Kangan of the said district. Besides it is to be mentioned that the important irrigation cannals of the Dist. Pulwama are Romushi Ara, Ranbi Ara, Bandzoo Ara, Kaen Ara, Lar, Dubji, Nehr of Koil Pulwama, Cannal of Kakapora, Dara Kohul, Tsont Kohul, Naet & Draby.

277. Monis Raza, "The valley of Kashmir", Vikas publishing house pvt, ltd. New Delhi, 1978. p.87.

S. No	Tehsil	Rainfall (in inches)	Density
01	Kulgam	39.28	248
02	Baramulla	38.31	252
03	Pulwama	32.81	343
04	Anantnag	29.31	186
05	Srinagar	25.73	501

Source: Census report of India, 1931, Vol. XXIV, p.17.

There was some splendid garden cultivation which depends wholly on the *dhenkl* and the water can be taken off at great heights from the tributary valleys. In and around Srinagar and the large towns and villages lift irrigation was also carried on largely by means of a long pole acting as a lever and working on a pivot upon a cross-piece resting on two uprights, or on the forked branches of a tree. The short end of the pole carries a large stone as a counterpoise, and on to the long end like the line of fishing-rod hangs a thick rope with an earthenware bucket attached. This was rapidly lowered into the river or well by pulling on the rope and dragging down the end of the pole. This form of irrigation was especially useful for market gardens.<sup>278</sup>

It is to be noted that during the period of our study the Dogra rulers took measures to construct and repair large number of irrigation canals, because ample water for irrigation was almost every-where in the Kashmir province but in many areas no use of it could be made owing to the difference in levels. During the decade 1931-40 the extension of *Zainagir* canal was completed, the *Lal khul* and *Marand*<sup>279</sup> canals were extended and two new canals, known as the *Nandi* and *Dadi* canals respectively, were constructed. In 1940 the *Martand* canal irrigated 7,578 acres against 6,454 in 1930; it also supplies good drinking water to the area it irrigates. The area irrigated by the *lal khul* increased from 3,879 acres in 1930 to 4,621 in 1940. The *Zainagir* canal was commenced in 1923 and completed in 1931. It cost just over

278. In the other states of India this type irrigation system was known as *Nooriya*. For detail see Irfan Habib and Tapan Rai Chaudhru, "*Ccambridge economic history of India*".

279. During the reign of Zain-ul-Abidin attempts were made to construct irrigational works in the valley and even as far back as 5000 years ago Raja Ram Dev was said to have constructed a 21 miles long canal from Ganesh Pura to Martand Temple.<sup>279</sup> Census of 1931, Vol. XXIV(J &K) ,part. I, p.27.

Rs. 10 lacs and irrigated 7,538 acres in 1940. The Nandi canal irrigates land between the Jhelum and its tributary the *Vishav*. Actually it was an extension and reconstruction of a canal built by the local cultivators the take-off of which was defective and the distribution inadequate and irregular. It was commenced in 1936 and completed at a cost of Rs. 77,640. It irrigated 4,388 acres in 1940 against 700 previously. The *Dadi* canal replaces a small water channel constructed by cultivators; it takes off from the *Liddar* River. The revised estimates for reconstruction and extension amount to Rs. 425,0000. Work was commenced in 1937 and nearly completed at the end of the decade. In 1940 it irrigated 4,388 acres in 1940 against 700 previously.<sup>280</sup>

- **Sowing And Harvesting Of Crops**

The people of Kashmir have divided the year into six seasons, each of two months:<sup>281</sup>

1. *Sonth* : March 15 to May 15.
2. *Grashim* : May 15 to July 15.
3. *Wahrat* : July 15 to September 15.
4. *Harud* : September 15 to November 15.
5. *wand* : November 15 to January 15.
6. *Sheshur* : January 15 to March 15.<sup>282</sup>

“*Sont*” was the period from 15th March to first may. This was an extremely busy time. The fields have to be ploughed and manured for rice and maize. And then these are sown in nurseries,<sup>283</sup> and the seedlings are planted out when they are nearly a foot high. Broadcast sowing gives better crops but entails considerably more labour in weeding. During the periods of “*Grashim*” and “*Wahrat*” the wheat and barley harvest begins in the valley at the end of May, and during the whole summer the harvest goes on at the various altitudes.

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280. Census of India, 1941, Vol. XXII.p.23.

281. Lawerane,op.cit.p.326; Raina, “Geography of Jammu and Kashmir”, New Delhi, 1971, p.39.

282. The Kashmiri nomenclature was more expressive of the typical weather conditions that prevail in different parts of the year, although the periodization of the year into seasons was of notional value only. Monis Raza, “*The valley of Kashmir*”, Vikas publishing house pvt, ltd. New Delhi,1978.p.63.

283. The Kashmiri peasant believed that the note of cuckoo heralded the time of snowing. For rice, peasants practiced two systems of cultivation. Under the first rice was grown broadcast, under the second rice was sown in nursery and then transplanted. Report of British Empire exhibition, J&K, London, 1924. pp.20-23.



Linseed was a little later than wheat. From July to September the peasant are busy in the fields weeding the rice, maize and cotton. The real harvest of Kashmir comes on the September and October, called by the Kashmir's was the season of "*Harud*". It was then that the rice and maize, millet, sesame, amaranth and other autumn crops were gathered in.

"*wandh*", the time from 15th November till 15th January. During this period and on till the end of March, the first ploughing for wheat and barley was done. Then rice, maize and the other autumn crops are threshed and when the snow falls towards the end of December the people weave woolen blankets and attend to their sheep and cattle and this period is called *Sheshur*.<sup>284</sup> The following table has been drawn for the clarity to readers.

<b>Time period</b>	<b>Agricultural operation</b>
April & May	Crops sown rice, maize and other autumn crops.
May & June	Crops sown rice, maize and other autumn crops and plant out rice seedlings. Harvest wheat and barley. <sup>285</sup>
June and July	Weed rice, maize and cotton and harvest linseed. <sup>286</sup>
July and August	Weed rice, maize and cotton and harvest linseed. <sup>287</sup>
August and September	Weed rice, maize and cotton and harvest linseed, and commence picking cotton.
September and October	Crops Harvested rice and maize and other autumn crops and plough for wheat and barley, and sow wheat, barley and rape-seed. <sup>288</sup>

The following table shows a list of some crops of Kashmir with the amount of seed per acre, and the out turn per acre in the favourable produce bumper crops of maize.<sup>289</sup>

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284. Ibid.

285. Lawrance.op.cit.p.26; Census of India, 1941, Vol. XXII.p.17.

286. Ibid.

287. Ibid.

288. Census of India, 1941, Vol. XXII.p.17.

289. Sources: Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladak, Calcutta 1890; C.E Bates, A, Gazzeteer of Kashmir and adjoining districts of Kishtwar, Badarwah, Jammu Naushera, Punch and the valley of Kishan Ganga, Calcuta 1873. Walter Lawrance,Valley.op.cit; See also Imperial Gazzeteer of India, Provincial series J & K, Calcutta, 1909.

Name of the crop in	Name of the crop in English	Seeds sown per acre in seers (.83kg)	Maximum produce	
			Per kharwar (4 acres) in Kharwars	Per acre in kharwars
<i>Vishki</i>	Barley	24	16	4
<i>Kanak</i>	Wheat	27	8	2
<i>Tilgogul</i>	Mustard	6	16	4
<i>Masur</i>	---	12	6	1 1/2
<i>Kapas</i>	Flax	36	6	1 1/2
<i>Mung</i>	pulse	12	10	2 1/2
<i>Mah</i>	Mash	12	10	2 1/2
<i>Rajmah</i>	Beans	12	10	2 1/2
<i>Dhani</i>	Rice	22-24	10-60(maunds)	15
<i>Makai</i>	Maize	18	24	6
<i>Trumba</i>	Buckwheat	24	24	6
<i>Ganhar</i>	Amaranth	6	49	10

#### (D) HORTICULTURE

The geography and the climate of Kashmir is suitable for the cultivation of varied types of fruits as Lawrence writes, "*Kashmir is a country of fruits', and perhaps no country has greater facilities for horticulture, as the indigenous apple, pear, vine, mulberry, walnut, hazel, cherry, peach, apricot, raspberry, gooseberry, currant, and Strawberry can be obtained without difficulty in most parts of the valley.*"<sup>290</sup> From the ancient times fruit growing was an important economic activity in Kashmir, it was however, during the period of Lalitaditya (900 A.D) that the cultivation of fruits in the valley received considerable patronage.<sup>291</sup> Subsequently during the periods of Zain-ul-Abidin and the Mughals some varieties of fruits were brought from Kabul, Persia (Iran) and central Asia.<sup>292</sup>

290. Lawrance, 'op.cit,p. 348; See also C.E Bates.op.cit.p.48; Census of India, 1941, Vol. XXII.p.17.

291. See Kalhana's. "*Rajatarangni*", tr by M.A Stein, vol.II. Motilal Banarsidas, Delhi. 1979. p.428.

292. M. Amin Masoodi, op.cit,p.194;G. N Yattoo, "*J and K at galance*",p.119.

However as for as the period of our study is concerned the important fruits were Apples, Almonds, Walnuts, pears, peaches, plums, nectarines, cherries and grapes.<sup>293</sup> It was in around 1865 that the horticulture was started in an organized form when Ermns, head gardener of public works department in France after preliminary survey introduced some fruit plants and planted at chesma shahi Srinagar in 1875. The collection of about 25000 wild fruit stocks by one Mr. Gollan and their plantation at Baghi Sundri near Sopore for grafting and distribution in state orchards marked the beginning of establishment of nursery which provided the corner stone for development of horticulture in the valley.<sup>294</sup> According to the administrative report of 1943 there were 23,552 and 2,77,250 fruit trees in government and private orchards respectively; as many as 2,22,475 wild and nursery plants were transplanted and 2,04,814 plants were budded or grafted.<sup>295</sup> Owing to poor communication there was no large scale trade of fruits.<sup>296</sup> However commercial apple cultivation in Kashmir started in the second half of nineteenth century and beginning of twentieth century after the introduction of different varieties from Europe.<sup>297</sup> There were different Varieties of apples in Kashmir viz *Hazratbali*, *Razakwari*, *Jonathan American trel*, *Lal Ambur*, *Sona Ambur*, *Chamura*, *Delicious*, *Ambur golden*, *Maharaji*, *Lal farshi*.<sup>298</sup> The most popular apple in Kashmir was the *anbri* or *amri*.<sup>299</sup>

Walnut (*dun*) forms one of the important item of the peasant's produce during the period of our study.<sup>300</sup> It not only produced country oil to the people but at the same time was an

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293. P.N.K Bamzai, "Socio Economic History of Kashmir 1846-1925", pp. 300- 432.

294. M. Amin Masoodi, op.cit.p.195; P.N.K Bamzai, op.cit, pp 223-224; John Collett, "A Guide for visitors", Calcuta: W. Newman & CO., 4, Dalhousie Square, 1898.p.79.

295. Adm. Report of J & K State for Smvt,2000,1943-44.pp.26-27.

296. It was only after the construction of Jhelum valley cart road and the opening of Banihal road that fruit trade received the momentum.

297. According to the census of 2001 the apple cultivation in Kashmir has made impressive progress with productivity going as high as about 21.00 tonne per hectare in Baramulla District. In the course of its improvement and development, apple plantation faced numerous biological stresses, first in the form of sanjose scale in early twentieth century (1906) followed by apple scab in 1973-74 and lately by mites and alternaria and other diseases. M. Amin Masoodi, op.cit.pp.208-209.

298. Lawerane, op.cit,p.348.

299. Ibid; See also Francis younghusband, "Kashmir",p.79.

300. Walnut has been recognized as the oldest tree food known to man, dating to about 7000 B.C. The genetic diversity and adaptability of walnuts to a wide ranging conditions allow it to be grown extensively in all temperate countries where summers are not too cool. It is highly nutritious fruit. M. Amin Masoodi, op.cit,p.209.

important aid to the villager when the time comes to pay the revenue.<sup>301</sup> The people used to break the walnuts at home and carried the kernels to market, where it was sold to oil-pressers. Each ass-load of kernel yielded eight *paji* of oil, each weighing six seers to forty eight seers in the whole. About 12,000 ass loads of walnut-kernels were annually appropriated to the oil-press in Kashmir.<sup>302</sup> The nuts ripen about the middle of September, the trees are then beaten, and the fall of the nut to the ground detaches the outer rind. The tree yield from four to six thousand nuts annually; some few as many as ten thousand, or even more...<sup>303</sup> There are three species of walnuts-*kaghazi*- that was finest and most shady tree, and bears the best fruit, but the yield was not large; *Burzal*, inferior to the *Kaghazi*; walnut, the commonest species, but yields the largest amount of fruit. The *Kaghazi* was so called from its shell being nearly as thin as paper (*Kaghaz*), so that it may be readily broken by the hand, it was the largest of the whole, and its kernel was large and easily extracted. Its superiority was said to be attributed to its having been originally engrafted.<sup>304</sup> Next to walnut was almond (*Badam*).<sup>305</sup> There were large almond orchards scattered over the valley, and many of the hill-sides might easily be planted with this hardy and profitable tree.<sup>306</sup> We have no statistical data of the production of almonds in the valley of the period of our study. But according to the census of 2001 there were two kinds of almonds, the sweet and the bitter, and the former was worth double the latter in the market. And it occupied about 17247 hectare area with an annual production of 9879 tones (2001-2002). Yield registered an increase from 0.16 tons in 1974-75 to 0.57 tons per hectare in 2001-2002. Among the districts, Budgam had about 7228 hectares under almond followed by pulwama with 7162 hectare. Anantnag, Srinagar and Baramula were other major almond producing districts growing almonds in 1012, 904 and 461 hectare were respectively. However, highest production of 5780 tones of almond was produced in Pulwama district, followed by Budgam with 2458 tons and Anantnag with 1444 tons.<sup>307</sup>

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301. Lawerane, op.cit, p.352; Francis younghusband, "*Kashmir*", p.97; Moorcroft, "travels, vol II", Evergreen press Lahore, 1977. p.18.

302. C.E Bates, op.cit, p.28.

303. Ibid, p.46.

304. Ibid, pp.46-47.

305. Almond was a native of Mediterranean region from where it has spread to the countries like USA, Spain, Greece, Austria, North Africa, Italy and France. Because of climatic limitations, the main production areas of almond have been the central valley of California, areas bordering Mediterranean sea, South east and Central Asia, and limited areas in Chile, South Africa And Australia. See encyclopaedia of Encarta.

306. Lawerance, 'op.cit, p.354.

307. M.Amin Masoodi, op.cit, pp.218-219.

Besides apple, walnut, cherry and almond, a number of other fruits were being grown in different corners of Kashmir. These include pear, apricot, peach, plum, pomegranate, grape etc.<sup>308</sup>

### **(E) OCCUPATIONS OF RURAL PEOPLE**

Though not all the villagers were engaged in agriculture yet almost all the persons living in the village were in one way or the other connected with agriculture.<sup>309</sup> In rural society, the members of village community e.g, blacksmith, carpenter, cobbler, washerman, barber, potter, and shepherd rendered their services in lieu of customary payments in kind.<sup>310</sup> In this way the surplus produce was distributed among the different members of the village community.

These non agriculturists were locally called *Taifdars*.<sup>311</sup> While as the village menials known in Kashmiri as *Nangars*<sup>312</sup>, these were comprised of carpenters, blacksmiths, potters, weavers<sup>313</sup>, butchers, washermen, barbers, tailors, bakers, goldsmiths, carriers, oil-pressers, dyers, milkmen, cotton-cleaners.<sup>314</sup> These menials did not have hereditary land of their own, save the garden plots adjoining their houses.<sup>315</sup> And in a large villages the families of the *Nangars* followed their occupations and work for the villagers either used to receive a fixed share of the harvest or being paid according to the nature of the work.<sup>316</sup> According to census report of 1931, Cultivation in the state engages 558,864 earners and 192,521 working

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308. Ibid,p.221.

309. Census of India, 1941, Vol. XXII.p.14.

310. *"In the most primitive of economies – the hunting and gathering societies there probably was never any regular surplus, so there was no established mechanism for distributing surplus in such societies. Life was necessarily on a day to day basis. Even a modest surplus of production –food, housing, tools and weapons and ceremonial goods for example probably did not appear until the emergence of horticultural societies. Which gave rise to different professions in agricultural societies. So the distributive processes are organized around the claims of each person to a share of the goods produced by the collective efforts of the group."* Mckee B. James, *Sociology The study of Society*" published by Ray Ashton, CBS College Publishing 1981. p.362.

311. The Taifdars include- herdsmen, shepherds, boatmen, minstrels, leather-workers etc.

312. Lawerane, op.cit. p.310.

313. During the year 1943, handloom weaving was the biggest cottage industry in the valley. The wool weavers of the valley produced new designs of tweed. Adm. Report of J & K State for Smvt, (1997-98), 1943-44.p.49.

314. These have been discussed in the chapter II 'Village community'.

315. Adm. Report of J & K State for Smvt, (1997-98),1943-44, p.315.

316. Ibid.

dependents, making a total of 751,385 workers. In 1921 the number of such workers was 967,236 and females numbered 259,745 who show a low figure of 37,965 only.<sup>317</sup>

<i>Class</i>	<i>Total strength of earners</i>	<i>Strength of 1921 actual Workers</i>	<i>Percentage of total earners under cultivation</i>
Non-cultivating Proprietors	29,099	29,466	5
Cultivating owners	324,051	932,040	58
Tenant cultivators	193,257	-do-	34
Agricultural labourers	11,846	3,862	2

Source: Census of 1931, Vol. XXIV(J &K) ,part. I.p.211.

The Muslims who constitute the majority community in the state were preeminently agriculturists having 30,254 non cultivating proprietors, 428,759 cultivating owners and 239,316 tenant cultivators. Cattle and buffalo breeders numbered 14,634 while herdsmen and shepherds number 33,851.They have 5,374 cotton spinners and weavers, 3,261 wool spinners and weavers, 4,480 workers were engaged in lace, crepe, embroideries and 4,937 were engaged in ceramics. The number of blacksmiths, oil men, butchers, shoe makers was also considerable. Tailors, dress makers have 19,173, workers while barbers and hair dressers have 4,021.2; 251 were engaged in making jewellery and ornaments, while 4,612 were boat owners etc.<sup>318</sup>

Besides the *Waddars* (money lenders) whose principal occupation was cultivation and money lending as their subsidiary occupation, their number was even much smaller and it was simple that money lenders did not take to the plough even if they happen to acquire land.<sup>319</sup>

Table showing remuneration of the persons against their occupations.

317. Census of 1931, Vol. XXIV(J &K) ,part. I.,p.210.

318. Census of 1931, Vol. XXIV(J &K), part. I.,pp.220-221.

319. Ibid.p.222.

Class	Kashmir			
	1901		1911	
	Rs	A.P	Rs	A.P
Coolie	0	30	0	50
Carpenter	0	120	1	40
Mason	0	120	1	40
Transport(coolie)	0	40	0	60
pony	0	80	0	120 <sup>320</sup>

Source: Census 1911, vol,xx, part I. p.61.

## (F) TAXATION SYSTEM

During the period of our study Agriculture was the backbone of Kashmir economy and as such the Maharajas were supposed to pay due attention towards its development. But contrary to it we witness an agrarian crisis that hit hard to the working classes in general and peasantry in particular. It was because of various reasons but the main among these were exorbitant taxation, corruption of officialdom<sup>321</sup> and the negligence of agricultural sector by the state even British India Government had taken numerous measures towards the modernization of agriculture.<sup>322</sup> The state appropriated as much as it could from the peasantry.<sup>323</sup> An important reason for robbing the peasantry of its maximum produce was the state policy of supplying grains to vocal urbanities at cheaper rates than that prevailing in the market. The peasants were fleeced by the revenue officials<sup>324</sup> in such a way that they could not save more than that sufficed their minimum to survive. The villagers often depended upon wild fruits and vegetables and various other types of sub-standard diet like *Makai wath* (porridge of maize), *Wugra* (Rice porridge), *Go:rus* (skimed milk) and rice gruel.<sup>325</sup> In absence of fertilizers and

320. Census 1911, vol, xx, part I. p.61.

321. Prem Nath Bazaz, "*The history of the struggle for freedom in Kashmir*", National Book Foundation, Karachi, 1976,p.144;lawrance.op.cit,pp.359- 364

322. For details see Mirza Shafiq Hussain, Muntakhib Dastawaizat, Gulshan Publishers, Srinagar, 1991,p.302.

323. The men who obtained employment in the collection of grain would make their first gains in the village, where they take sometimes as much as one-fifth in excess of the legal State demand. Lawrance.op.cit.p.439.

324. Ibid.p.407.

325. Based on the information furnished from the living elders of the villages of the study area.

the modern techniques and tools the yield of land was very low. Moreover, hybrid seeds were not available to Kashmiri peasantry as late as 1940's and they continued with traditional paddy seeds whose productivity was extremely low.<sup>326</sup> Besides situated at a very high altitude Kashmir often witnessed crop failure called *Rai* because of cold waves moving from mountains to plains.<sup>327</sup> On such occasions the state instead of remitting the revenues entered it as arrears for the next year. It also kept a strict vigil on the peasants in order to ensure that no embezzlement would take place and for this purpose it appointed officials like *shakdar* and *sazawol* who were assisted by *Nizamat paltan* during the harvest season.<sup>328</sup> It was a commonplace in the villages of Kashmir that people dug out earthen bins (*Zesu*), it appears that even after the strict watch peasants used to hide some amount of grains for their bare survival.<sup>329</sup> The monetization of revenues did no less in destabilizing the age old village economy of Kashmir. It forced the peasants to borrow money from the money-lenders called *waddars* as there was always deficiency of cash currency in feudal economies. These people were lending money on exorbitant interest and were arbitrarily fixing the cost of peasant commodities far lower than that prevailing in the market. The echoes of this exploitation were heard in the speeches of the Kashmiri nationalists as late as in nineteen thirties who emphasize upon the state to introduce Money lending Bill in Kashmir in order to regulate the business of money-lending.<sup>330</sup> The legal system of the state supported and facilitated the business of money lending. A *sahokar or waddar* after an ordinary attempt could obtain an order and confiscate the peasant property. Disgusted with the state policy of taxation that made their lives almost unbearable, the peasants often migrated to plains especially Punjab in search of livelihood. But on return the major share of the little amount that they earned there as labourers was paid by them to the state as land revenue arrears. It is to be noted that that these migrations used to be cyclic especially for winter season. Again moving to the plains was fraught with dangers as some of them were perishing while crossing on foot high altitude mountains like *pir- panjal* and *Mari* due to snow storms.<sup>331</sup>

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326. M.Y Ganai.op.cit.p.81.

327. Ibid.

328. Arthur Brinckman & Robert Thorp, "*Kashmir oppressed*", Weis publications Srinagar, 1996.p.6; C.E Bates.op.cit.p.97.

329. Based on the interview with the Muqdam of Mitrigam Pulwama.

330. M.Y Ganai.op.cit.p.81.

331. Ibid.



In addition to heavy land revenue demand we find a strange type of taxation policy in which even the ordinary items did not miss the attention of the state. For instance the peasantry had to pay circumcision tax and in 1871 it brought in Rs.6000/- as revenue to the state. The villagers were to pay marriage tax called *suthrashahi*. *Mandri* and *ashgal* were another two taxes. The former for the maintenance of temples and latter for fattening the concerned priests.<sup>332</sup> The sale of chinar leaves brought into the coffers of the state Rs.25 in early 1870's. In 1871, the tax on sheep and goats earned Rs.1,07,311<sup>333</sup>. Similarly tax on the sale of horses called *zar-i-nakhas* amounted to fifty percent of the purchase money.<sup>334</sup> It is necessary to repeat here that the next to rack-renting that almost dislodged the peasantry and disturbed the equilibrium of centuries old Kashmir village economy was the corruption and malpractices of the officials in general and those of the revenue department in particular.<sup>335</sup> The revenue officials betrayed the state by making factious entries. They had made the life of village community unbearable by the exaction of *Nazrana* and *Rasum*.<sup>336</sup> Besides they misused the infamous and inhuman institution of *beggar* (corvee) in order to meet their selfish ends.<sup>337</sup> No doubt under the recommendations of Walter Lawrance *beggar* was officially abolished but it continued as late as 1947 in various forms. It was evident from the fact that the glancy commission appointed by Maharaja as late as 1931 attested to the continuation of *beggar* and recommended for its abolition.<sup>338</sup>

### **(G) Land revenue functionaries**

The following is a list of the different officials who were employed in collection and division of the land produce and in the general government of the country outside the city of Srinagar which was under the government of Kashmir and the chief Magistrate.<sup>339</sup> The valley of Kashmir was divided into various *parganas and wazarats* from time to time for purposes of revenue administration. Maharaja Gulab Singh in the beginning did not introduce any new

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332. Bates, "Gazetter of Kashmir", Light and life publishers, New Delhi, 1980, pp.29-30; It was on the recommendations of Glancy commission report that many taxes were abolished including *Suthrashahi* (marriage tax). Galancy commission report, urdu tr. By Mir Mohd Niyaz, Mir Brothers Lahore, p.148.

333. Walter R. Lawrance, *The valley of Kashmir*, chinar publishing House, Srinagar, 1992 p.407.

334. Pandit prem Nath Bazaz, "*Inside Kashmir*", Verinag publishers Mirpur, 1941 p.62.

335. For detail see P.N. Bazaz, "*The History of struggle for freedom in Kashmir*", National Book Foundation, Karachi, 1976, p.144.

336. Walter R. Lawrance, "*The valley of Kashmir*", chinar publishing House, Srinagar, 1992. p. 407 & 415.

337. Ibid; pp.411-415.

338. See Galancy commission report, urdu. tr. p. 87.

339. Fida Mohammad. op.cit. p.409; C.E Bates. op.cit. p.97.

system but allowed the valley to remain divided into different parganas, thirty-six in number. After sometime when he roughly estimated the fiscal condition of the valley he divided it into three main divisions.<sup>340</sup>

The principal of these village functionaries were:

**Tehsildar:** He had under him from two to five territorial sub-divisions and he exercises a supervision over the accounts of the Kashmiris within his district.<sup>341</sup> It was upto Tehsildar and the establishment attached to him to take the final decision regarding the total produce of the village crop.<sup>342</sup> He had power of punishment up to a fortnight in disputes and offences occurring within his tehsil were referred to him and he had from 200 to 400 sepoy under him, and is responsible only to the Diwan or Governor of Kashmir, who used to reside in the city.<sup>343</sup>

**Thanadar:** He was the chief officer over each territorial sub-division (parganah) who combined in himself both revenue and judicial authority. His duty was to look after the condition of the people in his jurisdiction and to report to the tehsildar from time to time.<sup>344</sup> Besides he had the authority to decide the disputes that occurred among the peasants.<sup>345</sup> He had slighter powers of punishment and from 40 to 50 *sepoy* under him. His chief duties were to make inspections throughout out his *paraganah* and to make reports concerning the crops and general matters to his *tehsildar*.<sup>346</sup>

**Kardar.** In the revenue machinery of the Dogras, *Kardar* held very important position.<sup>347</sup> He had under him a certain number of villages or whose crops he had to keep a strict account and to each of which he would go in person at the time when the different crops were ripen.<sup>348</sup> In order to superintendent the different distribution of each he reports to his *Thanadar* and causes the government shares of the crops to be dispatched to the city or elsewhere according to the orders he might receive. In lieu of some of the inferior kinds of grain the Government

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340. R.L Hangloo.op.cit.p.66.

341. C.E Bates.op.cit.p.97.

342. Charles Girdlestone, “*Memorendum on Kashmir*”,pp.7-8. R.L. Hangloo.op.cit.pp.68-69.

343. Ibid.

344. P.N.K Bamzai,op.cit.pp.687-89; R.K parmu, “History of Dogra rule”,Ms.p.72; R.L Hangloo.op.cit.p.69. Fida Mohammad.op.cit.p.410.

345. R .L Hangloo.op.cit.p.69; Fida Mohammad.op.cit.p.410.

346. Fida Mohammad.op.cit.p.410. C.E Bates.op.cit.p.97.

347. R.L Hangloo.op.cit.p.69.

348. C.E Bates.op.cit.p.97; Fida Mohammad.op.cit.p.410.

would occasionally take an equivalent in money from the *Kardar*. Since this arrangement was greatly preferred by the *Kardars*, there must be a large demand for these grains among the people. In order to make their own profits they are, of course obliged to sell them at high prices.<sup>349</sup>

***Moquddum***. His duty was to report any irregularities or thefts, to collect coolies and carriage for Government or others and to keep an account of the crops of his village in conjunction with another official called *Patwari*.<sup>350</sup>

***Patwari***. His special duty was to keep a separate account with each house of the cultivator of his village of the different crops belonging to it. To each village there was a *patwari*, he is paid by the Zamindars and was a necessary expense entailed on the Zamindars by the mode of collecting their tax. He is usually a *pandit*.<sup>351</sup>

***Shiqdar***: There were from one to four *Shiqdars* in each village, according to its size.<sup>352</sup> Their duties were to watch the crop while on the ground and the Government's share of the same, after it had been set aside and were waiting their removal to the Government's store-house. It is said to be a common instance of oppression for the *Shiqdars* to extort money from the *Zamindars* by threatening to accuse him of stealing the Government grain.<sup>353</sup>

***Sazawul***: He was the official who was over the *Shiqdar*. There was one *Sazawul* to about every ten villages.<sup>354</sup> His duties were to inspect the *Shiqdars* and report to his *Kardar*. It is said that he would commonly extort money from the *Shiqdar*, in the same way as we have seen that the *Shiqdar* retaliate on the peasant. None of these who were thus oppressed ever seem to complete such a step as that of complaining to the *Thanedar* of their parganah or the *Tehsildar*. All the officers, mentioned above were of course *Hindus*.<sup>355</sup> The *Sazawul* was frequently a *pandit*, and is paid by the Peasants.

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349. Fida Mohammad.op.cit.p.410.

350. Ibid.p.411.

351. Ibid.

352. Arthur Brinckman & Robert Thorp.op.cit.p.65.

353. Ibid.

354. Arthur Brinckman & Robert Thorp, "*Kashmir oppressed*", Weis publications Srinagar, 1996. p.67.

355. Fida Mohammad.op.cit.p.412.

**Tarazudar:** His duty was to weigh the grain when the portion of Government was taken from the peasant. He was always in attendance upon the Kardar.<sup>356</sup>

**Harkara:** He was a police constable. There was one *Harkara* house to about every twenty villages.<sup>357</sup> All the male members of his family being also *Harkars*. He received report from the officers and accordingly used to give direction to the *Dooms*.<sup>358</sup>

**Doom:** The *Doom* or policeman of which there was one to every village, the inhabitants of which were obliged to supply him with rations.<sup>359</sup>

As mentioned in the earlier pages that there were two kinds of crops in Kashmir known as the *Rabi* and the *Kharif*. The first of these consists of those which ripen about July, and the second of those whose harvest time is about 2 months later. The land under the cultivation of *Kharif* crops could produce two *kharif crops* except rice. The rice ground alone produced nothing but which was sown in May and reaped in September. The government scale during the period of our study of weights used in collecting their proportions of grain is as under.<sup>360</sup>

6 seers= 1 trak

16 traks=1 Kharwar

The *Kashmiris* pound their shale in a stone vessel known as *Kanz*. In order to see that no one in a village was allowed to pound his paddy, this stone pot was filled with wet mud and sealed. This seal was to be kept intact, until the share of the Maharaja was obtained from the agriculturists.<sup>361</sup>

The amount taken by the Government and the Government officials upon the *Rabi* And *Kharif* crops was as follows:

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356. Ibid. C.E Bates.op.cit.p.97.

357. C.E Bates.op.cit.p.98; Arthur Brinckman & Robert Thorp.op.cit.p.68.

358. Ibid.

359. Fida Mohammad.op.cit.p.412.

360. Arthur Brinckman & Robert Thorp.op.cit.p.68; Fida Mohammad Khan Hassnain, "Kashmir the history of Himalyan valley", Gulshan Publishers, Srinagar, 2002.p.413.

361. Ibid.

Government share	<i>Traks</i>	<i>seers</i>
Government share	20	0
The Sazawul	0	1 1/2
The Shakadar	0	1
The Tarakardar/Tarazudar	0	3/4
The Harkara	0	1 1/2
The Patwari	0	1/2
Servants of the Kardar	0	1/2
Total taken in kind out of every 32 traks of each grain of the Rabi crop	20	6 1/2

Source: Arthur Brinckman & Robert Thorp, "*Kashmir oppressed*", Weis publications Srinagar, 1996. p.67.

#### **(H) LAND OWNERSHIP**

Ownership involves, first and foremost possession; in simple societies to possess something was to own it. Beyond possession, ownership in modern societies implies the rights to use, prevents others from using, and disposes of property and it implies the protection of such rights by the government.<sup>362</sup>

Prior to the establishment of the popular Land settlement of Sir Walter Lawerance, the peasants neither enjoyed the proprietary rights nor occupancy rights, but Maharaja was the owner of the land.<sup>363</sup> As it was clear from this report of Maharaja Ranbir Singh, "*As you already aware of the proprietary rights in all the lands in Kashmir belongs to the ruling chief exclusively, for the simple reason that the territories of Kashmir were purchased by my late lamented grandfather Maharaja Gulab Singh ji and hence the sale of such land by anyone else was illelgal.*"<sup>364</sup> No doubt there were a few individuals other than the Maharaja, employed the proprietary right, it is to be noted that it was conferred by a *sanad* and was especially bestowed upon the grantees, referring to this fact, Andrew Wingate writes, "*Now whatever rights cultivators may have it was certain that ownership of villages unless*

362. Encyclopaedia of Encarta.

363. Census of India, 1941, Vol. XXII.p.15.

364. JKA, Pol. & Gen., Deptt; File No: 191/H-75 of 1918.

*conferred by the Darbar by sanad doesn't exist in Kashmir.*"<sup>365</sup> Andrew Wingate who was appointed as the first land revenue settlement officer of Kashmir in 1887, provides us a detailed information about the fact the Kashmiri peasant enjoyed neither occupancy nor proprietary rights.<sup>366</sup>

Pleading for the occupancy rights to be given to the peasants, he writes, "*The Darbar can't protect itself without the assistance of the cultivators nor was any land settlement likely to last which doesn't engage the active sympathies of the agricultural population in support of the state policy. This assistance and this sympathy can only be won by conferring upon the cultivators possession of the land they till.*"<sup>367</sup> However after the permanent land settlement the peasants were granted the hereditary occupancy rights but not proprietary rights as Lawerane writes, "*In the draft rules' Mr. Wingate, in Rule 10, defines occupancy right. I agree with him that permanent occupancy rights should be bestowed on every man who at settlement agrees to pay the assessment fixed on the fields entered in his name in our settlement papers, and that so long as the assessment was paid such occupant should not be liable to ejection. I also agree that the occupancy rights should be hereditary.*"<sup>368</sup>

In 1933 proprietary rights were conferred on occupancy tenants of state land and those with *assami* rights and remitted the payment of 'nazrana' usually levied on such occasions; the *malikana* payable by occupancy tenants over and above the amount assessed for revenue was also remitted.<sup>369</sup> But these measures did not prove fruit under the corrupt revenue machinery. As a result of the settlement operations the conferment of the *Assami* Rights on hereditary cultivators, the substitution of cash revenue for kind and introduction of systems of engagements direct with the *Assami* was- doing away with the tyrannous interference of the middlemen brought in its wake the extraordinary betterment in the lot of Kashmir peasantry by assuring them of fixity of revenue demand and security of tenure which hither to fore they couldn't dream of.<sup>370</sup> However it was under the government of Sheikh Mohd Abdullah that the peasants were bestowed with the proprietary rights under the policy of "*allow land to go*

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365. Wingate, Report, p.90.

366. To quote Wingate, "*The kashmiris are called cowardly, because they have lost the rights belonging to the peasantry elsewhere and truly submit to...*" Walter R. Lawerance. op.cit.p.430.

367. Wingate, op.cit,p.94.

368. Walter R.Lawerance.op.cit.p.430.

369. Census of India, 1941, Vol. XXII.p.16.

370. Ibid.p.14.

to the tiller of the land".<sup>371</sup> The government on the 13th July 1950, the 19th anniversary of the Martyr's made the historic decision of transferring land to the tiller and on 17th October, 1950 was passed the 'Big Landed Estates Abolition Act'. By the enactment of the big landed estates abolition Act, 2007 a ceiling was placed on all proprietary holdings at 22.75 acres. The surplus land (above the ceiling) was transferred to the tillers holding it to the extent of their actual cultivating occupation on 17th October, 1950 or was vested in the state where it was not so held. The tiller was made the full owner of the land Transferred to him. As a result of this about 9,000 land owners were expropriated without payment of compensation from the surplus land (above the ceiling) amounting to about 4.5 lakh acres out of which about 2.3 lakh acres were transferred to the tillers in ownership right.<sup>372</sup>

### **(I) LIVE STOCK**

Besides agriculture, growth of live stock sector was one of the indicators of state prosperity. Diversification of rural economy mainly based on crop production through livestock component and is considered to be one of the means of rapid economic development and generating employment opportunities.<sup>373</sup> During the period of our study there was a very limited scope for industrialization in the remote areas of the valley and the varied activities of agriculture and allied sectors including livestock rearing remained major source of year round employment. Almost every rural household used to have a livestock of one form or the other. Most of that live stock, almost 80%, was with small and marginal formers.<sup>374</sup>

Livestock generally included cattle like oxen, cows, sheep, goats, horses and poultry.<sup>375</sup> Besides providing draught power for agricultural operations, live stock was the main source of daily needs of milk, meat, wool, hides and valuable organic manure as well as means of transport in the remote hilly terrains. Ox was particularly of great significance because it was used to draw the plough. But the rearing of this animal was expensive for an average peasant as it required a good amount of fodder especially during the winter. Therefore the peasants with small holdings usually owned one ox and those with big holdings possessed more than one. The importance of an ox in rural economy can be imagined from the fact that till recent

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371. Usha Sharma, "*Cultural, Religious and Economic life of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh*", Radha publications, New Delhi.2001.p.382.

372. Suresh k. Sharma & S.R Bakshi , "*Economic Life Of Kashmir*", Anmol Publications New Delhi,1995.pp.95-96.

373. See Census of India, 1941, Vol. XXII.p.18.

374. M.Amin Masoodi, op.cit,p.260.

375. Dr. M.Y Ganai, Art. Kashmir village economy under the Raj 1846-1947,op cit,p.86.

past if a village boy wished another boy ill he would say '*may your ox die*'. The death of an ox in peasant household was not less than a tragedy because to purchase another was always difficult for an average peasant. During 1890's a pair of plough bullocks cost Rs.25, Milch-cow was also considered as an asset in rural economy. That was why the peasants were separately charged for a milch cow. A cow giving four seers of milk could be bought for Rs.8 but because of rise in price by 1890's it was difficult to obtain such a cow for Rs.15. It is interesting to note that the Kashmir's have many proverbs about their cattle. For instance '*Dand wayit gao chawit*' (one warns a man to try a plough bullock and to milk a cow before concluding a purchase).<sup>376</sup>

Similarly sheep on account of its importance was regarded as *Sun-e-sund suir* (means a golden brick).They supplied warmth, clothing and manure. A Kashmiri regarded his sheep upto the age of four years as destined for wool production and it was only in dire necessity or on occasions of rejoicing that he would part with his ewes. In spite of the number of sheep in Kashmir it was often difficult to obtain mutton in the village for the people required wool and warmth in the winter and the person who possessed plenty of sheep on his ground floor could keep his family warm in the bitterest weather. A tax of thirteen chilki rupees was levied on per hundred sheep. This tax was called *Zar-i-chaupan* and was collected as the flocks passed of the mountain pastures.<sup>377</sup> Till 1890, the state exercised the privilege of selecting one in every thousand sheep as the flocks passed up the mountains and one out of every hundred in a flock. The first was known as *Hazari or Khilkat* and the second as *Barra*<sup>378</sup>.

Pony was of extraordinary importance in village economy. But the common peasants did not afford to rear ponies. A few families in a village possessing large holdings and good man power ventured to tame this animal. In the absence of cartroads pony carriage was of great importance in Kashmir and was in the hands of a special class called *Markhbans*. These men did not breed ponies but buy them from the villagers. Moreover the affluent sections of rural society used to breed ponies for riding purposes. An impediment in pony breeding was that the villages possessing ponies were liable to constant requisitions by the Government for

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376. Lawerane, op.cit p p.407 & 415. See also M.D Wakefield,op.cit.p.140.

376. Ibid.p.359.

377. Ibid.

378. Ibid.p.363.



carriage to Gilgit and Jammu, no remuneration was paid for such kind of services. It had made pony breeding unpopular.<sup>379</sup>

The cows which were numerous in the villages were small and they hardly ever used to give more than six pints of milk a day. A cow may be bought for about twenty rupees. The ordinary cow of the villagers was not a good milch animal, and a cow that gives 4 seers of milk a day was regarded as a treasure. Every effort was made to collect fodder for the winter. Rice and maize straw was the chief fodder but a large quantity of hay was also laid by. In the rice villages the boundaries of the fields give a grand crop of hay which was carefully cut, dried, and twisted into ropes. These ropes are suspended from trees and remain dry and uninjured by the winter snows and rains.<sup>380</sup> In winter Bullocks and milch cows are given a little oilcake and cotton-seed,<sup>381</sup> and the rice straw and rice husk mixed with starchy rice water are said to increase the yield of milk. In summer the swamp grass iiari, and kicur, are excellent fodder for milch cattle. It is unnecessary to repeat here that an ample supply of good draught oxen as well as milch cows was essential for a well-balanced system of agriculture. The difficulty in Kashmir was not a shortage of cattle but an excess so large as to constitute a serious problem which was very much aggravated by the fact that most of the cattle are of very poor quality. Figures taken from the cattle census conducted in 1940, and quoted by the superintendent civil veterinary Department show that there are 130 cattle to every 100 acres of cultivated land. The production of a good type of plough ox at a reasonable price and in adequate numbers and the provision of a good strain of milch cattle. The problems were more difficult to solve than might be supposed because on the one hand the killing of cattle in the state was strictly forbidden whilst on the other hand export was prohibited. Excessive numbers due to uncontrolled breeding must lead to underfeeding and ill-nourished animals susceptible to any and every outbreak of disease.<sup>382</sup> In 1940 there were 30 veterinary dispensaries in the state against 18 in 1930. The use of goat tissue vaccine and virus has been introduced for giving immunity to cattle against Rinderpest.<sup>383</sup>

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379. Ibid.p.364.

380. Ibid, p.358.

381. Lawerane,op.cit.p.321.

382. In the winter the plough bullocks and milch cows were given a little oilcake and cotton- seed. In the summer the swamp grass iiari, and kicur, were excellent fodder for milch cattle, and in the winter rice straw and rice husk mixed with starchy were said to increase the yield of milk. Occasionally a pulse (Mooth) was given, and once a month salt must be mixed in the sheep's food. Lawerance, 'valley of Kashmir, p.363.

383. Census of India, 1941, Vol. XXII.p.18.

Table showing figures of live-stock for 1921 and 1930 in Kashmir province.

	Name of livestock	No. of 1921	No. of 1930
I	Bulls	33	33
	Bullocks	346,644	265,514
	Cows	284,839	342,987
	Youngstocks	69,131	171,512
II	Male buffaloes	2369	12,739
	Cow	46,808	(a)49,615
	Young stock	6,912	-----
III	Sheep	©791,248	553,196
	Goats	-----	557,592
IV	Horses	(d)30,853	(d)52,126
	Mares	-----	-----
	Young stock	3,175	2,115
V	Mules	666	1,102
VI	Donkeys	1,920	3,260
VII	Ploughs	131,912	15,924
VIII	Carts	222	-----

Source:Census of 1931, Vol.XXIV(J &K) ,part. I.p.44.

Poultry also formed an important component of Kashmir village economy. The period under reference witnessed that Poultry was abundant in Kashmir and excellent fowls were to be found in every village. There was a large export of ducks to the Panjab. It mainly included chicken, duck and geese.<sup>384</sup>Most of the villagers used to rear poultry as its maintenance was not so expensive. The best breed of fowl was found in Lolab valley where the practice of making capons was common. A capon was sold at prices varying from eight to twelve annas. Poultry and eggs were a source of income to villagers but the fowl cholera *Koker-Kon* which sometimes visited Kashmir caused great loss. The corrupt revenue and forest officials were taking the poultry of the villagers as *Rasum*. Nevertheless, it was a considerable source of income in fragile village economy.<sup>385</sup>

384. Lawerane, op.cit. p. 365; M.D Wakefield, op.cit.p.141.

385. Ibid.pp.365-366.

## (J) APICULTURE/BEE KEEPING

An ancient and widespread profession, beekeeping was believed to have originated in the Middle East. The early Egyptians kept bees and traded for honey and beeswax along the East African coast several thousand years ago.<sup>386</sup> However in Kashmir the tradition of bee keeping dates back to Zain-ul-Abidin's period of 1470-1490 when traditional methods of bee keeping were practiced.<sup>387</sup> It is reported that during this period several skilled bee keepers were invited from central Asia to train local people in the art of beekeeping. By late nineteenth century most of the farmers especially of the higher villages of the valley used to rear honey-bees in the walls of their own houses<sup>388</sup> and log hives made out of wood or hollow of tree trunks. Many times when colonies were smoked to extract honey the bees would desert the hives, not to return again. This bee keeping continued till the scientifically designed 'longstruth' hive was introduced in 1916-1918. And it is to be noted that during the period of our study it was significantly productive to be subjected to taxation. One house would often contained many hives, and in a good year a hive would give eight seers of honey comb. The wax was sold to the cobblers and goldsmiths of the city and towns and commanded a good price. Honeycomb was sold at about four to five annas per seer during 1890's.<sup>389</sup> The first modern apiary with Kashmir honey bee '*Apwas Cerian Indica F*' was established in the state as earlier as 1930 at Srinagar and bee keeping gradually developed thereafter. It was officially recognized as the key cottage industry in 1939. Initially its development was entrusted to Jammu & Kashmir Industries Board but in 1942, the responsibility of its development was entrusted to the state department of agriculture.<sup>390</sup> Honey was cultivated in the higher villages of the valley and used to form an item of taxation. Moreover it was not out of a place to mention that with the growing trend of apple cultivation in the valley, the Honey bees besides providing honey, they were also very useful for orchards as they help in cross pollination of crops.<sup>391</sup>

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386. See Encuclopaedia of Encarta 2008.

387. M.Amin Masoodi, op.cit,p.194.

388. Vigne, G.T, "Travels in Kashmir, Ladak, Iskardo", p 319. Indus publication Karachi 1987, vol. I. M.D Wakefield, op.cit.p.141.

389. Ibid,p.366.

390. M. Amin Masoodi, op.cit, p.194;Lawerane,op.cit ,p.366; Census of India, 1941, Vol. XXII.p.24.

391. It is a general routine of the many villages of Dist. Pulwama that during the flowering period of the apple

Orchards they used to get bee-hives on rent.

## (K) SERICULTURE

The rearing of silk worms on mulberry trees for the production of raw-silk is known as sericulture. Having originated in China about 2700 B.c, rearing of silk worm or sericulture remained a secret for a long time. It was believed to have moved out of China only about 419 A.D.<sup>392</sup> There are different versions about its movement out of china, however, it was commonly believed that it moved out of China through a princess in the process of her marriage to king of Khotan (a province of Tibet) later sericulture was practiced in other countries including Japan, Europe, South East Asia, Middle East and other countries.<sup>393</sup>

Kashmir was known for sericulture and it is said that it was first introduced into Kashmir shortly before the reign of the emperor Akbar by Mirza Hyder of Kashghar who imported according to the tradition a chittak of eggs from Bokhara.<sup>394</sup> But with the course of time it had fallen into disuse and the Pathans restored the industry.<sup>395</sup> In later times the sericulture received a considerable impetus and silk bids fair to become one of the most important products of the Mahara jah's dominion.<sup>396</sup> The Important date was the year 1869 when Maharaja Ranbir Singh, an enthusiast in new industries, revived the silk production on a large scale. No expense was spared and 127 fine rearing-houses were built in all parts of the valley. Reeling appliances and machinery were imported from Europe and a large Department was formed for the purpose of developing a business in silk.<sup>397</sup> The guild of silk-rearers known as *Kirm kash*<sup>398</sup> (literally worm-killers) was created, and these men were given certain privileges such as exemption from forced labour. They were also allowed to annex the houses of villagers for silk-breeding purposes and they were further appointed as informers regarding damage done to mulberry trees.<sup>399</sup>

In 1871 the outturn of silk in Kashmir was 70 *kharwars* (10,080 lbs) the revenue from which amounted to between 8,000 and 10,000 chilki rupees. In 1872, the production had increased to 400 *kharwars* (57,600 lbs) of dry cocoons, which are one-third of the weight of those

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392. M. Amin Masoodi, "Agriculture in Jammu & Kashmir", Mohisraw Book Series, Rawalpura, Srinagar, 2003. p.172.

393. Ibid.

394. C.E Bates. op.cit.p.61; Mushtaq Ahmad Kaw.op.cit.p.86.

395. Lawerane, op.cit,p.367.

396. C.E Bates. op.cit.p.61; Mushtaq Ahmad Kaw.op.cit.p.86.

397. Lawerane, op.cit,p.367.

398. The silk is called '*pote*' and the silkworm is called '*potekyom*' in Kashmiri.

399. C.E Bates.op.cit.p.61.

freshly spun.<sup>400</sup> Such was the excellence of Kashmir sericulture that around middle of nineteenth century about 25,000 ounces of disease free silk worm eggs of Kashmir race of silkworm were exported to Europe.<sup>401</sup> The industry, however in Kashmir received set back around 1878 due to spread of pekrine disease which resulted in the destruction of indigenous univoltine. The eggs of the latter were imported from France and to a less extent from Italy and about 30,000 ounces were distributed annually to villagers who place them in the roofs or rooms of their houses and hatch them. The young were then fed on the leaves of the mulberry trees which were very common. The cocoons when ready were purchased by the silk factory. In this way as much as 3200000 lbs. might be brought in by the villagers in one year, for which the Department of sericulture pays over Rs. 600,000(about L40, 000).<sup>402</sup>

Year	Seed reared in maunds	Mandage of cocoons
1901	19220	4184
1902	18708	9637-35-2
1903	25606	12681-19-13
1904	25527	22413-15-0
1905	26292	16325
1905	30928	13142-4-8
1906	26675	22351-380-4
1907	27544	21409
1908	28221	28422
1909	27954	23490
1910	32060	36429
1911	34158	40407
1912	34251 <sup>403</sup>	37565
1913	36006 <sup>404</sup>	37488 <sup>406</sup>
1914	36735 1/2 <sup>405</sup>	371922 <sup>407</sup>
1915	36008 1/2	33672 <sup>408</sup>

400. Ibid.p.65.

401. M. Amin Masoodi, op.cit, p.74.

402. Ibid.

403. Reorganisation report for 1942, p.13.

404. Adm. Report for S. year 1969, pp.37-38.

405. Adm. Report for S. year 1970, pp.37-38.

406. Reorganisation report for 1942, pp.12-13.

407. Adm. Report for S. year 1969, pp.37-38.

From the figures it is clear that after the organization of the industry in 1892 the rearing output increased from year to year and it reached the highest optimums of production in 1911 in case of Kashmir when production was 40407116 maunds of cocoons.<sup>409</sup> The sources are silent about the data 1916-1934 A.D.

Year	Quantity of seed required (02s) maunds	Mandage of cocoons
1935	300071/2	25389-9-0 <sup>410</sup>
1936	36608	31126-18-8
1937	38172	25768-36-1 <sup>411</sup>
1938	38645	29657-15-8 <sup>412</sup>
1939	36663	26883 <sup>413</sup>
1940	450021/2	37512-0-8
1941	498951/2	29919-12-2
1942	40702.4	19664-17-8
1943	39239	28180
1944	35604	27070-21742
1945	31594	27071
1946	36265	28549

According to the administrative report of 1943, the silk factory produced 1, 19,509 yards of cloth. The sales amounted to Rs. 4,14,149.<sup>414</sup> It is not out of a place to mention that for the promotion of sericulture the government distributed 1, 33,409 mulberry trees in the valley.<sup>415</sup>

## (L) TRADE

In normal years the food supply of the valley was ample for its inhabitants for clothing the people had wool and certain amount of locally produced cotton of fair quality.<sup>416</sup> Cotton was grown but not extensively; it was sown in May and chiefly upon the *wudars* (Karewas) as it

408. Adm. Report for S. year 1970, pp.45-46.

409. Reorganisation report for 1942,p.13.

410. Reorganisation report for 1942,p.14.

411. Adm. Report for S. year 1992-93,pp.27-29.

412. Adm. Report for S. year 1933-94,pp.55-56.

413. Adm. Report for S. year 1994-95,p.119.

414. Adm. Report of J & K State for Smvt, (1997-98),1943-44.p.47.

415. Adm. Report of J & K State for Smvt, (1997-98),1943-44.p.75.

416. Lawerance,op.cit,p.383

does not require much irrigation; the cotton was gathered in September and October. Vigne states that it was formerly produced in considerable abundance and of good quality.<sup>417</sup>

There was a wealth of fiber, ample timber, and with the single exception of salt there was no necessity of life which needed to be imported. Locally produced iron used to suffice for agricultural implements and clay vessels served all the purposes of copper and brass in domestic life.<sup>418</sup> Thus the internal trade which existed before the period of our study was the practice of barter system.<sup>419</sup> The system helped the village traders to exchange their goods in the local bazaars and at the annual gatherings held for religious purposes such exchanges also took place by means of travelling brokers and agents. The cultivator himself who was the chief producer and also the chief customer knew little of large towns and cities and expected the dealer or agent to come to his door. In every village market things of day to day consumption such as salt, edible oil, ghee, spices, vegetable, thread, coarse cloth, agricultural implements and ordinary utensils were generally available and were exchanged according to the requirements of the people. Here and there in some villages' small "*wanwas*"<sup>420</sup> or *bakals* maintained small store in which they used to sell non perishable articles of daily use.<sup>421</sup> It was unnecessary to repeat here that the internal trade was conducted both by the state and by the private businessmen. But as for as the trade in paddy or grain was concerned, it was the state alone which played the role of the grain trader in Kashmir and the state annually collected a good number of '*Kharwar*' of grain in the form of land revenue, until the government stock from these state stores was sold, the grain merchants throughout the valley were not allowed to engage in grain trade. If at all they intend to do so, they had to purchase their stocks from the government which they could market.<sup>422</sup> It is to be noted that the peasants were bound to sell their produce at cheaper rates for the city dwellers, writes Lawrance, "*The interests of the city have from the earliest times been opposed to the interests of the villages. The city people*

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417. Ibid.p.52.

418. Lawrance,op.cit,p.383; Mohammad Ishaq Khan,op.cit.pp.301-302.

419. The barter-system existed among the different elements of village community. Besides it is not out of place to mention that there existed two types of cultivable land in Kashmir viz plain and Karewa (table land) and cultivation of crops varied. The people of the *Karewa* used to exchange their crop production with the people of plain.

420. Lawrance,op.cit.p.308.

421. Ali Mohammad Dar, "trade and commerce during dogra rule in Kashmir 1846-1947 A.D", Om publications Faridabad1997.P.49 .

422. Ibid.p.51.

want grain and other village produces at rates far below the cost of production.”<sup>423</sup> Besides food grains, the other items of trade were woolen blankets, ghi, bullocks, ponies, oil seeds, walnuts were the important items of internal trade. The trade in oil seeds was small but both the traders and the agriculturists would have begun to turn their attention to linseed, rapseed and sesame as objects of export.<sup>424</sup> The chief markets of internal trade were Banihal, Shahabad, Islamabad, Bijebhara, Shopian, Tral, Pampore, Pattan, Kanihama, Char-sharief, Sopore and Kreri. Some places were famous for certain products e.g., Islamabad was the main centre of saddle cloth and gabba manufacturing and Sopore a manufacturing centre of ‘pattu’.<sup>425</sup>

The period under review was marked by considerable increase in internal trading activity of Kashmir. It can't be said that the rural areas were for most part self sufficient yet they were dependent on urban areas for various ordinary as well as extra ordinary nature. For example salt, tea, etc were important items of the food of all the people of Kashmir which were imported from outside and deposited in the urban areas. Not only this the rural areas were also dependent on the urban market for certain luxurious goods consumed by such affluent members of the village community as Zaildars and Muqaddams. Internal trade of the valley of Kashmir was carried on both by land and by the river. Where the places were not connected with water; commodities were carried by men and beasts of burden along the narrow foot-paths.<sup>426</sup> Needless to mention that the Jhelum river was an important water highway from Khanbal to Baramulla. It was because of the fact that there were ninety six *ghats*, (loading and unloading place) on the banks of river Jhelum. The internal trade of Kashmir which consisted of imported commodities as well as locally produced agricultural products and manufactures was fairly brisk. The boats laden with paddy, salt, vegetables, fruits, tobacco, snuff, paper, earthen pots, *Kangaries*, grass, bricks, stones and other forest products such as cactus, birch bark and morels were loaded and unloaded at the ghats on the Jhelum and on the lakes around Srinagar.<sup>427</sup> The goods which were bought from and sent to Srinagar from different trading centres of the valley were subjected to octroi at various places. Octroi posts were established at Islamabad, Sonawar, Maisuma, Batamalo, Chattabal, Haft chinar,

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423. Lawrance, op.cit. pp.328-329.

424. P.N.K Bamzai, op.cit. p.309; Also see Census of India, 1941, Vol. XXII. p.14.

425. Ali Mohammad Dar, op.cit. p.62.

426. Ibid.

427. Ibid, p.50.



etc. The octroi was charged according to the value of the commodity at the rate of an anna per rupee.<sup>428</sup>

The Jhelum valley cart road and the introduction of carts and Tongas together with the construction of Baramulla-Srinagar and Srinagar-Anantnag roads ushered in an era of unprecedented development Of Kashmiri's internal and external trade, "*the valley was connected with the Punjab by a good cart-road, cut along the mountain side. The road had already given a great impetus to the trade of Kashmir, and ought to have gradually develop all the resources of the valley.*"<sup>429</sup> The trade in fruits had reached some magnitude. Walnuts from which only oil was extracted were exported in large quantities while apples and to a less extent pears found a ready market with the Punjabi traders. It is necessary to mention that hides and skins were in the hands of the watal class and the quantity of live stock was so great and increased so steadily that the there would always be a considerable export.<sup>430</sup>, Salt was an important item of import and the imports rose rapidly after the construction of jhelum valley cart road, 'particularly due to cheap bullock-cart transport. A certain amount of earth salt was imported from Ladak which was meant for cattle. As salt was necessity both for men and cattle, it is to be taped that the state would use every endeavour to encourage the salt trade.<sup>431</sup> it is not out of a place to mention that the external trade was in the hands of Boharas who belonged to the Khatri caste of Hindus.<sup>432</sup>

From 1922 to the end of our period, some new developments took place in Kashmir's transport system with the introduction of automobiles both external as well as internal transportation. Besides a network of roads were constructed linking different far flung areas with the urban centres.<sup>433</sup> The construction of Banihal route was one of the most important and direct route which ran across the Banihal pass.<sup>434</sup> This is one of the chief commercial routes of the state and the inter provincial trade was carried on by this route.<sup>435</sup> Some of the trade between Kashmir and Punjab which was registered at Jammu also passed over this route. It is to be noted before the introduction of *tongas* and automobiles the import export of

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428. Ibid,p.51.

429. census 1931, p.39; John Collett," *A Guide for visitors*",p. 3.

430. P. N.K Bamzai.op.cit.pp.310-311.

431. Ibid.

432. Lawerance,op.cit.p.308.

433. Ali Mohammad Dar, op.cit,pp.18-19.

434. Lawerance,op.cit.p.383..

435. Census of India, 1891, Vol. XXVIII, p 4:T.R.1905-6,P.4.

trading commodities to and from Kashmir was carried on by different means of transportation such as coolies, ponies, horses, yak, and ass.<sup>436</sup>

The main articles of import and export were Charas, rice and other crops, seeds, fruits, ghi, wool, hides, leather, namadas, dying material and other articles of merchandise animal being, silk, timber, wool manufacture, raw and manufactured cotton, liquors provisions, tea, salt, sugar, drugs, medicines, apparel pulse, snuff, tobacco, gunny bags, Indian and European metals, oils, spices and manufactured silk.<sup>437</sup>

Trade report during 1921 in Kashmir		
Imports In Rs.	Exports In Rs.	Total In Rs.
533,719	1,251,513	1,785,232

Source: census 1931,p.39.

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436. Ali Mohammad Dar, op.cit,p.23.

437. P. N.K Bamzai.op.cit.pp.309; Ali Mohammad Dar, op.cit,pp.13,14 & 62.

## Chapter-IV Beliefs and Custom

### (A) BELIEF SYSTEM

When we look at pattern of worship all over the world we will find that there are people who even worship animals or other geographical features.<sup>438</sup> This frame will show that inspite of vast differences among religions, the various forms share four basic elements viz recognition of the sacred, ritual, system of beliefs and organization.<sup>439</sup> To quote Durkheim, “*religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices related to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community called a church by all those who adhere to them*”.<sup>440</sup>

The valley of Kashmir is not only a place of great natural beauty but is also regarded as a land of sacred *tirthas* and shrines, some of which are as old as the history of the valley itself.<sup>441</sup> There are innumerable shrines. Every mountain peak was sacred. Every spring was celestial every meadow was pious. There were so many shrines dedicated to various gods and goddesses, different saints and sages and mysterious supernatural powers.<sup>442</sup> The leading shrine was that of *Sharda* which has given Kashmir its ancient name ‘*Sharda Petha*’. This shrine was in the frontier district of J & k state.<sup>443</sup> It is not for nothing that Kashmir is called ‘

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438. S.L. Doshi, P.C. JAIN, “*Rural Sociology*”, Rawant publications New Delhi, 2003.P.201.

439. The configuration of beliefs which exists in a particular society or culture. The term (belief) has been often used to describe the patterns of religious beliefs and values and the central principles underlying these which give distinctiveness and coherence to the modes of thought within a society or culture, Dr. N.R Pathak, “*Dictionary of sociology*”, Vishvabharti Publications New vDelhi,2004.p.74.

440. Emile Durkheim, “*The Elementary forms of religious life*”, [1912] translated by Joseph Ward Swain, New York Free press. 1965,pp. 20-22.

441. In prehistoric times ‘*Nag*’ worship was common for sometime here,, “*The fact that naga worship was a popular faith of ancient Kashmir has been kept more than alive by the name with which the springs are called in Kashmir. Since it was a popular belief that the sources of water, particularly the springs, are the abods of tutelary deities who manifest themselves in the form of snakes, the springs in Kashmir came to be called by the generic term “nag”, meaning serpent in Sanskrit. And eventually the fish of the springs became halal “permissible” to see but haram “forbidden” to eat. The notion which is held by the kashmiris all and sundery, regardless of religious affilations, down to our own times.while all the springs considered abods of tutelary deities, some big springs were considered to be protected by some nagas occupying high position in the hierarchy of naga pantheon---while the naga cult and Buddhism remained successively the main faiths of Kashmir before the 6th century AD, the saiva and viasnava Brahmanism dominated the religious scene of Kashmir thence forward until islam earned mass conversion.*” M.A Wani, “*Islam in Kashmir*”, Oriental Publishing House Srinagar,2001.pp.37-38; Also see Dr. Ved Kumari, “*The Nilamata Purana*”,J & K Academy of Art, Vol.I,1988,pp.48-49; A.R Khan, “*Geography of Kashmir*”, City Book Centre Srinagar,2011.p.60 .

442. The famous shrines include Tulmula (Kheer Bhawani); Hariparbat( Sharka devi); and Khrew (Jawala Mukhi). Each of these shrines was dedicated to various aspects of the goddesses conforming to either Vaishnavite or Shaiivite beliefs.

443. T.N Dhar, “*A window on Kashmir*”, A Mital Publication, b. New Delhi, 2003.pf.p.xiii.

*Ryeshi Vaer*’ in local language. Which means the ‘*Garden of sage*’ and abode of the sages no doubt it has been. Every village in Kashmir has produced a saint. Every mountain peak was a place of pilgrimage.

During the period of our study Kashmir was largely a Muslim populated region and Islam being the principle religion of the valley.<sup>444</sup> The followers of Islam were naturally in a majority in the rural population. Out of every thousand Muslims, 917 live in villages. As regards Hindus the most important minority in the state 865 out of every 1,000 were rural residents.<sup>445</sup>

Table showing the statistics of the believers of the valley in 1911					
Locality	Religions	Proportion per 10,000 of population in			Actual Number In 1911
		1891	1901	1911	
1	2	3	4	5	6
The Jhelum valley (Kashmir province)	Muslims	9,305	9,364	9,402	1,217,768
	Hindu	636-	524	482	62,414
	Buddhist	58	-	-	3
	Sikh	1	109	114	14,772
	Christian	-	2	2	218
	Zoroastrian	-	-	-	5
	Others	-	1	-	-

Source: Census report of India,1911 Part .I.,vol.XX (Kashmir),p.107.

In the twelfth century Kashmir was predominatly a Hindu society with not a space as large as a grain of sesame without a *thirtha*.” According to Kalhana.<sup>446</sup> However at the turn of the sixteenth century we see Islam having replaced Hinduism as the mass religion of the valley.<sup>447</sup> It is to be noted that Islam made its way into Kashmir not by forcible conquest but by gradual conversion, for which the influx of foreign adventures, both from the South &

444. Lawrence, op.cit.p.286. P.N.K Bamzai, “*socio economic history of Kashmir(1846-1925)*”, p.33.

445. Census of India, 1931, Vol. XXIV. Part. I report.p.88.

446. Kalhana, “*Rajatarangni*”, Eng. Tr. M.A Stein, vol.I.p.38.

447. For detail see, M.A Wani, “*Islam in Kashmir*”, .p.55.

from central Asia had prepared the ground.<sup>448</sup> It is not out of place to mention that Islam have expanded gradually according as the Muslim hordes continued to pour into Valley until the Muslim rule was established in Kashmir in 1339 A.D.<sup>449</sup> The first Sufi to enter into Kashmir was Sayyid Sharaf-ud-Din popularly known as *Bulbul Shah*. He came from Turkistan in the time of Suhadeva. A disciple of Shah Niamat ullah Farsi who belonged to the Suharwardiya order of the sufis, he was full of warmth of love, exercised great influence on those among whom he worked and lived and converted a number of the Hindus. He died in 1326 and was buried in Bulbul Lankar, a quarter in Srinagar.<sup>450</sup> The most important convert that Bulbul Shah made was Rinchana.<sup>451</sup>

With the establishment of Muslim rule Islam marked a turning point in the history of Islam in Kashmir. Not only did Islam now receive political patronage but also became a “reference group culture” a status-improving way of life, as the Muslim was elevated from a *mleecha* to a monarch.<sup>452</sup> It is not out of a place to mention amongst the Muslim preachers who pour into Kashmir from Hamdan for preaching the message of Islam, prominent were Sayyid Mir Ali Hamadani and his son Mir Mohammad Hamadani. Amir-i-Kabir or the great Amir Sayyid Ali Hamadani was popularly known in Kashmir as Shah-i-Hamadan.<sup>453</sup> The role played by Shah-I Hamdan in spreading the message of Islam in Kashmir has discussed by prof. M.A Wani in these words, *“it is true that a policy the sayyid gave first preference to winning over the sultan and his nobels, for he was affirm believer of the view that “the common people imitate the behavior and culture of their rulers”. It is true, Sayyid Ali Hamdani won large conversions both within and without shahr “Srinagar”. We not only find that sultan and the noble families like Magrays, Ganaies and Chodris becoming his dedicated Murids but the great guru of Kali Mandir “Srinagar” and his thousands of followers also embraced Islam at his hands. when the sayyid could convert great political and religious personalities of the capital city, his preachings at other places beyond shahr would have proved more successful as the culture of shahr has always been a touch stone for attitude formation and self*

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448. Shafi Ahmad Qadri, “Kashmiri Sufism”, Gulshan publishers Srinagar,2002.p.53; N.K Singh, “Islamic heritage of Kashmir”, Vol.I, Gulshan publishers Srinagar Kashmir, 2002.p.introductory page.

449. Ibid.p.94.

450. Ibid.p.65.

451. Ibid.p.65.

452. M.A Wani, “Islam in Kashmir”, .p.55.

453. Fida Mohammad Khan Hassnain, “Shah Hamadan of Kashmir”, Gulshan publishers, 2001. pp.116-117.

*evaluation for the right of the people of Kashmir. Yet in order to convert the whole populace of Kashmir he parceled out the valley into different zones and assigned them to his most learned disciples for launching a sustained movement of promoting conversion in their respective areas.*"<sup>454</sup> It is to mention that Sayyid Ali Hamdani's mission was largely fulfilled by his son Mir Mohammad Hamdani who came to Kashmir in 1393 along with his three hundred disciples; it was on account of Mir Mohammad's persuasive teachings that sultan Skinder (1389-1413) Islamized the administration. However, the most vital success which Mir Mohammad achieved was that he won many nobles to Islam, the most important being suhabhatta, the prime minister of sultan. With the whole hearted support of the nobility, the sultan enforced the *shariah* and banned the dancing of women, gambling and playing of musical instruments.<sup>455</sup>

While Islam brought about great changes in Hindu society in Kashmir, it itself underwent a transformation in the course of time. This was because although the people of Kashmir changed their religion, they did not make a complete break with the past but carried with them many of their old beliefs and practices with Islamic colour.<sup>456</sup> Thus while they celebrated the Muslim festivals of idul-Fiter and Idul-zuha, they did not cease to participate in the Hindu festivals of Kashmiri pundits.<sup>457</sup> Vis-à-vis they have been described by foreigners as *pir parst* (saint worshipers). As Sir Walter Lawerance writes, "*in their hearts they are Hindus, and the religion of Islam is too abstract to satisfy their superstitious cravings, And they turn from the mean priest and the mean mosque, to the pretty shrines of Carved wood and roof bright with the iris flowers where the saints of past time lie buried. They generally turn with folded hands they invoke his blessings and gaze on the saints old clothes and turban and cave in which he spent his ascetic life. And Lowly obeisance's are made and with bare feet the Kashmiri draws near the doorway and smears his throat and*

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454. M.A Wani, "*Islam in Kashmir*", .pp.60-62.

455. Ibid.p.63; Shafi Ahmad Qadri.op.cit.p.72.

456. Prof. M.A Wani holds that it was not the impact of Hinduism on the religious behavior of Kashmiri Muslims. It was actually the transmission of syncretic Islamic tradition forged in Persian and Central Asian environment long before it was exported to Kashmir. This tradition not only found its expression through the emergence of various sufi-Silsilas but it was also promoted through this medium. Since Islam spread in Kashmir by the agency of the Persian and Central Asian sufis and as the ancestral belief system of their homeland had accrued from the same sources to which the pre-Islamic beliefs of Kashmir owed their origin and development, the presence of the pre-Islamic survivals or their reformulated version in Kashmiri Muslims, religious life erroneously appears to a casual observer as the impact of local beliefs and practices upon Kashmiri Muslims or as something innovated in Kashmir to meet the local needs and challenges. M.A Wani, "*Islam in Kashmir*", pf.p xi.

457. Mohib-ul-Hassan, "*Kashmir under sultans*", Gulshan publishers, Residency Road Srinagar, 2002.p.382; Kaumudi, "*Kashmir, its cultural heritage*" p.256.

body with the holy dust of the sacred precincts.”<sup>458</sup> Needless to mention that the saint worship or *peer parsti*<sup>459</sup> is an important element of the Kashmir’s belief system. Every Kashmiri believed that ‘the saints would aid if men would call them, and they think that a dead saint was more efficacious than a living priest. And one can observe that there were certain beliefs which were being practiced by the people which have the roots in the ancient religion of the people or in other words a legacy of the past and were common among the Kashmiri pundits and Muslims. It may be mentioned that certain places were held in reverence by Hindus and Muslims alike. As an existence, at Fatehpura in Vernag Ilaka and at waripura in the Magam ilaqq, the imprint of a foot on a stone worshiped by the Muslims as Kadmi Rasool<sup>460</sup> (the prophet’s foot print) and by the Hindus as Vishnupad (Vishnu’s foot). It is not out of a place to mention that the Kashmiris had been converted to Islam in 14th century and they had continued the age old practices in islamic colour. It is better to quote Lawrance, “*it may be said that when one sees the Muslim shrine with its shady chinars and lofty poplars and elms, a little search will discover some old Hindu Asthan. It was only natural that the Muslim, when they were converted to Islam should with tenderness to the old religious places, and should adopt sacred spots already familiar to the countryside.*”<sup>461</sup>

There was a no place or a village where one could not find a shrine or *Asthan* of a sufi saint throughout the valley.<sup>462</sup> However the time and space doesn,t allow me to enumerate all of them. However some of the major shrines of the Muslims are as under according to their rank.

(i) Hazrat Bal.

(2) Shah-i-Hamadan mosque.

(3) Jamia Masjid.

(4) Shrine of Nur- Din at Chrar-i-Sharif.<sup>463</sup>

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458. Lawrence, op.cit.p.286; P.N.K Bamzai, “*socio economic history of Kashmir (1846- 1925)*”, p.33.

459. Ernest F. Neve, “*Beyond the pirpanjal*”,p.80 ; Lawrence, op.cit.p.285.

460. Ibid.p.285.

461. Lawrence, op.cit.p.292.

462. Knight, “*Diary of a pedestrian in Cashmere and Thibet*”, City Book centre Srinagar,2009.p.306.

463. Sheikh-Nur-ud-Din’s shrine; popularly known called *Tsar Sharief*, is intact to this day and was place of pilgrimage for all Kashmiris irrespective of their caste and creed. Thousands of devotees throng to this holy place to invoke the blessings of the saint and to pray for the fulfillment of their fondly cherished hopes and desires. An annual fair held at this shrine during the autmmn months; is an occasion for great festivity and rejoicing. Kaumudi, “*Kashmir, its cultural heritage*”,2005,p.91.

(5) Ziarat of Dastgir, Khanyar.

(6) Ziarat of Makhdum Sahib, Hari-Parbat.<sup>464</sup>

The Hazratbal shrine equally holds the same position among the people of Kashmir as holds Mecca for Muslims of the world. After the Hazrat Bal Ziarut the shrine at Charar-i-Sharif ranks as the most sacred. Indeed, a pilgrimage thither is supposed to obviate any special necessity for going to Mecca.<sup>465</sup> Sheikh Nur Din was the great national saint of Kashmir.<sup>466</sup> He had ninety-nine disciples or khalifa. Indeed, a pilgrimage thither is supposed to obviate any special necessity for going to Mecca. Muslims from all parts of the valley flock to Charar-i-Sharif and when scarcity is imminent, where calamities such as earthquake, cholera, and drought occur, thousands gather there and sit silent on the hills around, confessing their sins and begging for pardon.<sup>467</sup> Most of them bringing offerings with them rice, walnuts, money, a fat capon, or even a ram. Twice or thrice a year, under ordinary important conditions, large fairs were held at the more of the shrines. Thousands gather together. Most of the best known shrines of second rank are the ziaruts at Shukr-ud-din, Kulgam Ziarut, Aishmuqam, Baba Marishi and Poshkar. The successors of the Khalifas were called Rishis<sup>468</sup> and some of the Pirs still bear that title.<sup>469</sup> Every village has its Ziarut<sup>470</sup>, most of which stand in impressive groves of Kabuli poplar, elm, chinar or of the rounded dark green foliage Celtic Australasian.<sup>471</sup> Every man of the village has great reverence towards the shrine of his village as for as the period of our study is concerned and with bare feet the Kashmiri draws near the doorway and smears his throat and body with the holy dust of the sacred precincts.<sup>472</sup> In order to subside troubles or to seek blessings of the saint, the villagers used to offer the cooked rice mixed with salt and country oil local called 'Tahar' at the *Ziarats* (shrines) of the sufi saints.<sup>473</sup> The custodians of the tombs are usually descendants of the holy man interred

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464. Lawrence, op.cit. p.292.

465. Ernest F. Neve, "*Beyond The Pir Panjal*", p.81.

466. Lawrence, op.cit. p.286.

467. Ibid; Ernest F. Neve, "*Beyond The Pir Panjal*", p.81; Lawrence, "*Valley of Kashmir*", p.287.

468. Ibid, p.82.

469. Ibid, p.82.

470. Ibid., Ernest F. Neve, "*Things seen in Kashmir*", p.66; E.F. Neve, "*Crusader in Kashmir*", p.140.

471. Ernest F. Neve, "*Crusader*", p.140.

472. Lawrence, 'op.cit. p.286.

473. Suneethi Bakshi, "*Kashmir the history & struggle for identity*", Vistasta publishing pvt. Ltd, New Delhi, 2009, p.188.



therein. They are called Pirs or Pirzadas and wield considerable influence.<sup>474</sup> They can usually read Quran. A common arrangement is for them to take turns in conducting the worship of the village mosque. Besides receiving the offerings of the faithful, they eke out a rather precarious livelihood by making and selling charms.<sup>475</sup> The charms consist of short verse from the Quran, or even an undecipherable scribble on a scrap of Kashmiri paperfolded up and enclosed in a little cloth or leather case, perhaps two inches long and one and half broad. This is tied round the neck of the applicant, or round one of his arms. If there is disease of the foot or leg, the amulet may be found attached to the knee or ankle. In cases of illness the pirzadas were often called in and they recite prayers and issue fresh charms.<sup>476</sup> Many patients would make special pilgrimages to the more famous shrines.

But presently it is losing ground on account of the influence exerted by the movements of Jamat-i-Islami and Ahli Hadis.<sup>477</sup> As such a large number of Islamic educational institutes have been established throughout the valley, Who not only provide the Islamic education to the students of these institutions but also rejected the unislamic practices, like pir parsti (saint worship), *Khatimi-Sharief*, *Zool Zaalun* (bonfire), *Rasme-Charam*, *Rohanposh*, *Wehrawari*, celebrating fairs of the sufi saints. The leaders of these movements declared these practices as unislamic and against the injunctions of quran and Sunnah. They exhorted the people to follow *Sharikh* strictly and refrain from visiting the shrines of the saints.<sup>478</sup>

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474. Ibid.

475. Ibid.p.66.

476. Ernest F.Neve, "Crusader".p.140.

477. For detail see B. A Khan, "*Ahal-i-Hadith movement in Kashmir*", unpublished M.phil thesis. Dept. History.K.U.p.4. Also see Younis Rashid, "*Social and Educational role of Jamat-I Islami in J&K*", unpublished. M.Phil dissertation, P.G Det. History.K.U.pp.5-10.

478. The stone, to which reference was made earlier, came to be believed to carry an imprint of the foot of the prophet, where as previously, it was worshiped by the Hindus as Visnupad (Vishnu's foot). There are various other examples which are unorthodox and unislamic. Among these noufal (prayers held to invoke the blessings of dead saints), Khatem (offerings), Daesh (tying of votive rags), and belief in the existence of ginis and spirits, were very conspicuous. The noufal, to invoke the protection of dead saints against flood, draught, scarcity etc, has a direct link with the old but curious custom of the Hindus, who were in the habit of paying offerings in congregation to Sharika Devi on the occasions of natural calamities. Similarly Khatem-i-sharief, organized by Kashmiri Muslims again and again, bears resemblance to the Hindu ceremony Shradha. When offerings are made to the dead, Deashas (rags) are tied by issue-less women with a pledge that if they bore children, they would make offerings at the shrines. Besides the performing of the Chaharum (the fourth day) and the celebration of Wehrawari are indigenous practices of remote times. Prof. A.A Suroor, "Islam in the modern world, problems and prospects", Iqbal Inst. Of Kashmir,K.U.pp.217-19.

## (B) SUPERSTITIONS

The peasants of Kashmir, like their counterparts in other of the country, were deeply steeped in conservatism and tradition. The fatal hold that was exercised by Sayyids, Rishis, Babas and Brahmans did not permit the peasant to make efforts for improving their lot.<sup>479</sup> They attributed all natural and man-made calamities to the curse of God.<sup>480</sup> Indeed, remedy for the prevalent deficiency of irrigation was sought by the peasants in the ‘supernatural’ powers of the sayyids and saints. This is understandable, in the absence of any institutional support to cultivation.<sup>481</sup> When we study the rural society of Kashmir of the period under reference we will immediately find that it depended very much on the factor of fate.<sup>482</sup> Agriculture was the basic source of economy for both the peasant as well as for the state. A single crop standing in the field could be destroyed in no time by nature or by any mischief-maker could set the whole crop to fire. The peasant’s total earnings of crop either stand in the field or harvest, such situation made the economy and security of a peasant vulnerable to all the hazards and unfriendly acts of nature.<sup>483</sup> Thus in such atmosphere there was a good room for the development of superstitions among the peasants. In rural Kashmir, due to the force of superstitions and of religion, social customs, both local and provincial had almost attained the force of law. The people of Kashmir were very superstitious, and give themselves much searching of heart and trouble in consequence.<sup>484</sup> Pandits and Muslims living in villages had many customs in common. One was their reverence for sacred places. Both were so-called pir-parast-revential to pirs, the holy men be they Hindus or Muslims. There are many shrines of these holy men of the past which were sacred to both. In an atmosphere of appalling illiteracy and helpless ignorance, it is but natural that superstition should powerfully affect the lives of the villagers. The itinerant pirs, *faqirs* and other so-called holy men put on spiritual airs and sell charms to the believing villagers to protect their children, women and cattle from the evil eye. The Muslims generally used to wear charms or amulets (*tawiz*); these

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479. R.L Hangloo, “*Agrarian system of Kashmir*”, Common wealth publishers New Delhi, 1995, p.119.

480. The droughts, earthquakes, cholera, famines and the cruelty of rulers were all attributed to God. In order to get relief from these calamities, though temporarily, the peasants were made to part with their cattle-wealth and the surplus amount of produce, in the shape of offerings to these sayyids and saints. Charles Baron Hugel, “The Punjab and Kashmir, Jammu”, 1972,p.90. Victor Jacque-Mont, “Letters from India” London 1834, p.328.

481. Laweranc, op.cit. pp.215-17; G.T. Vigne, “*Travels in Kashmir, Ladak, Iskardo*”, Vol.II.p.171.

482. Statement of Mohd Abdullah Bhat S/o Ab Samad Bhat, R/o Mitrigam Pulwama.

483. It is still a common threat for the peasantry Kashmir; See Tyandale Biscoe, “*Kashmir in sunlight & shade*”,p.149.

484. Tyandale Biscoe, “*Kashmir in Sunlight & Shade*”,p.161.

consist of names of God, the name of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), the names of Muslim saints, or verses from the Quran. The paper on which these were written was usually sewed into a piece of cloth, generally of a black colour and then tied round the arm or attached to the wearers dress.<sup>485</sup> The Kashmiri pundit villager is much more superstitious than the Muslim. He attaches ominous significance to sneezes, to night hooting of the owl on the roof of his house, to the sage oracles of his astrologer-pundit and so on.<sup>486</sup> Crows, owls and kites are ominous birds, while bulbuls, swallows and hoopoes were considered fortunate. The bulbul was considered to be the messenger bird: its chirp is supposed to foretell some guest.<sup>487</sup> The grinding of the teeth of the child while he is asleep is regarded as ominous, and is supposed to herald disease of some serious nature.<sup>488</sup> Those disposed scientifically treat it as indication of the presence of tape-worms. The remedy used by the superstitious is the tying of jay's feather to the child's neck; but the putting off a little sand into its mouth is the more practical and effective cure.<sup>489</sup> The Muslim villager would not mind sneezes, but he has a traditional fear of grave-yards. He believes in *Rah-Chowk* (will-o'-the wisp). The *jins* (geni) were believed to be of both sexes and all religions: they were very mischievous and in the exercise of evil would seem to be almost omnipotent and omnipresent.<sup>490</sup> The *dev* are cannibal giants and the *Ifrites* (elves) who were in attendance once upon Prophet Solmon seem to have been of this nature.<sup>491</sup> The *Yech* is nearly the satyr of heathen mythology. The *Dyut/Rotch* is the inhabitant of houses and the people attributed all noises, losses and domestic troubles to it.<sup>492</sup> It is to be mentioned that the *Rah-Chowk/Bram-Bram Chowk* could be found in the graveyards, wet and marshy places at night. From its description as a rapidly moving light, it may be pronounced to be a will-o-the-wisp but if an account of its personal appearance be insisted upon and the informant finds it necessary to say that he had seen the its shape it was described as an animal covered with hair, with eyes on the top of its head, and a "bisear bud shukl". The *Mushran* appears in the shape of a dirty-looking and very old man who seizes a

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485. Bates, C.E, "Gazetteer of Kashmir",p.36.

486. C.E Tyndal Bisco . op.cit.p.55.

487. Ibid.p.55.

488. Census of 1911, vol. XX, part I,p.145.

489. Ibid.

490. G.T. Vigne. op.cit. p.328.

491. Ibid.

492. Ibid.

person with a parental hug and produces thenceforth a wasting and dangerous decline.<sup>493</sup> The *Rantus* is perhaps the same as the aal or fairy. Her feet were reversed, her eyes placed perpendicularly and parallel to the nose.<sup>494</sup> The *peri* is being beautiful enough to compensate for all these horrors. Their bodies are made up of four elements but fire is being the predominant ingredient without consuming the rest.<sup>495</sup> All these superstitions were experienced throughout the Kashmir during the period of our study though some of these are still continue to be observed throughout the whole valley.

### **(C) FAIRS AND FESTIVALS**

A diverse multitude of festivals are enjoyed worldwide. Festivals may give thanks for a harvest, commemorate an honored person or event, pay respect to the dead or celebrate a culture. And as such the festivals are considered the soul of a particular society.<sup>496</sup> In other words festivals are vibrant representatives of traditional values, cultural and religious ethos and mythologized past. The various rituals and religious rites having localized distinctive uniqueness are vital components of festivals. They add substance, strength, warmth and spiritual colour to the weave of human life.<sup>497</sup>

Needless to mention, there were varied types of festivals having religious as well as secular colour which were being celebrated by the people of Kashmir. It is not out of a place to mention that Kashmir is known as the abode of Rishis because it has provided a calm and serene shelter to sages and savants for their penance. These pious and compassionate Saints and Rishis have left deep imprints on the minds of people which gave rise to saint worship and the birth days of these holy men became of the vital importance in the calendar of festivals of Kashmir. These festivals provided the people of Kashmir with a division in the monotony and bareness of their life. These festivals provided for occasions when moments of sorrow were forgotten and happiness and joy light up the lives of even the poorest among the people.

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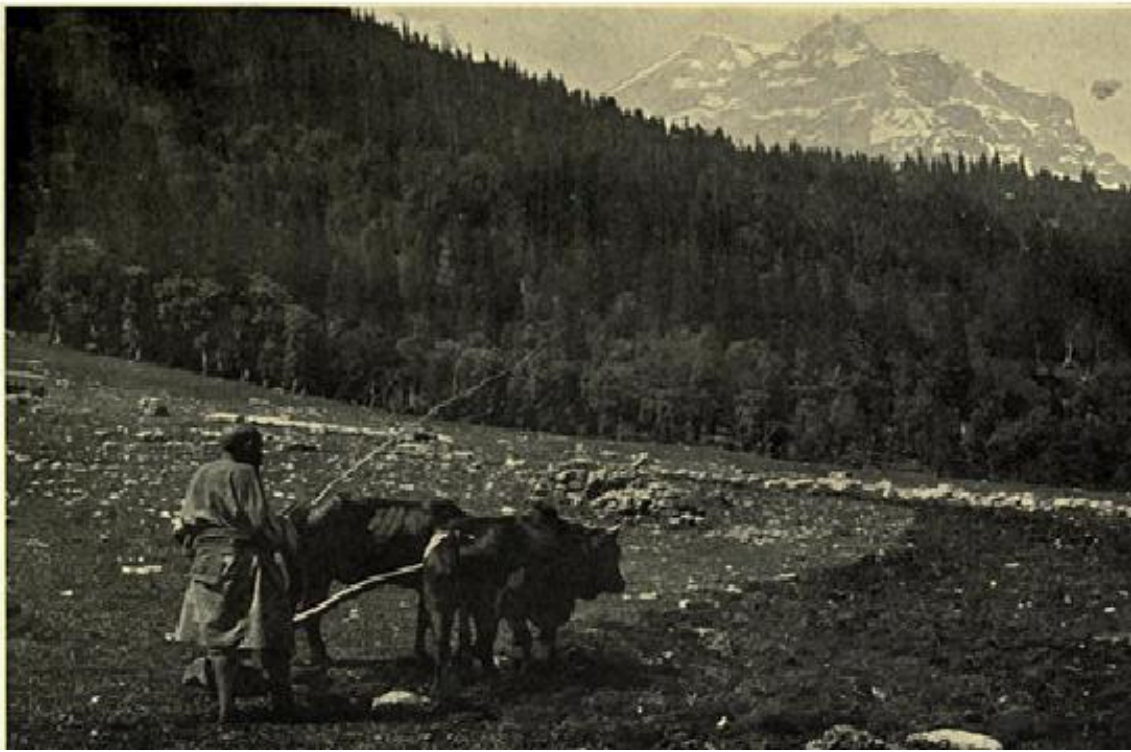
493. Ibid. p.329.

494. Ibid

495. Ibid

496. Maulana Madoodi, "*Eid-e-Qurban*", pp.3-4.

497. Upender Ambardar, Art." Maha Shivratri - Revisting Kashmiri RitualVariants".  
<http://ikashmir.net/uambardar/shivratri2.html>.



**A Kashmiri farmer ploughing his land, [www.kashmirpictures.com](http://www.kashmirpictures.com)**



**Women cleaning the weeds.(Begar)photograph taken by unknown photographer 1890.**

- **Festivals of Muslims**

Fairs and festivals have played a vital role in the life of Kashmiri Muslims. The principal religious festivals of Muslims are mentioned as under:

**1. Eid-ul-Fitar:-**After fasting continuously for 30 days from dawn to dusk in the Holy month of Ramazan, people celebrate Eid-ul-Fitar on its Shawal, the lunar month followed by Ramazan.<sup>498</sup> It is the day of one's liberation from the captivity of desires. To achieve this goal one endeavors to become a better Muslim by struggling against worldly desires and attractions, greed and corruption, which deviate man from real humanness and keep him tied to worldly affairs, if left unchecked. It is the day of victory of man over his internal desires.<sup>499</sup> It is a thanks giving day to almighty. Presents are given to nearest relatives and friends. New clothes are put on this day and prayers are held in the open ground or Idgah which is essential.<sup>500</sup> It is interesting to mention here that during the closing days of the month of Ramazan and immediately before and after the id-ul-Zuha, Young women in each neighbourhood assembled after dusk in compound of one of the houses and celebrated the functions by singing in standing rows the traditional songs called *rov*. the rows were formed one faced the other and each women extended her arms over the shoulders of her two neighbour. one of the rows kept singing a song verse by verse and the other repeated the first line of the song every time, the singing of a verse was completed by the other, no musical instrument were used during this process but the women kept on moving their bodies forwards and backwards as they went on singing the chorus. the song was pretty and the dance graceful.<sup>501</sup> Besides 'rov', 'tule lasngun tulan chas' was an accepted amusement, generally three or four women or girls sitting back to back. This was Known as 'tule langun tulan chas'.<sup>502</sup>

**2.Eid-uz-Zuha/Eid-Qurban:-**Eid-uz-Zuha is observed on the 10th of the Lunar month of Zilhaj.It is celebrated in the memory of the prophet Ibrahim's faith in God, his faith was so strong that Satan could not cause him to change his mind. The Almighty in return was

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498. Dr. Zafar Hyderi, "Radio in Kashmir", Publications Lucknow, Distributor Sheikh Mohd usman &sons Srinagar,2001. P.15.

499. Ibid.

500. G.M Rabani.op.cit.pp.56-57.

501. Mohd Ishaq Khan, "History of Srinagar", p.102.Cosmos publications Karan Nagar Srinagar 1999. The chief muslim festivals are celebrated according to luner callender, sometimes Eid falls in the winter season, at that time Draman poochan was not celebrated.

502. Ibid, Masudul Hasan, "History of Islam", vol. I, Adem publishers Delhi,2007.p.25.

satisfied with Ibrahim's compliance with the divine decree. Hazrat Ismail also passed a divine test by sacrificing his own life. He made no attempt to escape his father's blade.<sup>503</sup> Following Hazrat Ibrahim's actions, the test came to an end and his yielding to no one but Allah was proven. In order to show him that he had passed the divine test Almighty sent down a ram to be sacrificed instead of Hazrat Ismail, finally giving birth to Eid-e-Qurban.<sup>504</sup>

**3. Ide-Milad-un-Nabi:** This festival is celebrated as the prophet Mohammad's birth day which falls on the 12th of the lunar month of Rabi-ul-Awwal (750AD) but according to some versions on the 17th of the same month.<sup>505</sup> Popularly known as Id-e-Milad-un-Nabi, it is celebrated throughout the world and in Kashmir too. The Hazratbal mosque at Srinagar, is in its full charm, during the first twelve days of this month people from every nook and corner of the valley men and women, old and young, rich and poor come to Hazratbal to offer prayers and pay their homage to the holy relic.<sup>506</sup>

**4. Moharram:-** It is celebrated during the first week of Hijira year. Shias take out processions on the eve of Moharram. They recite the verses which extolled the heroic deeds of the heroes of Karbala, (Hassan and Hussain). The mourners beat their breasts and sometimes cause serious injuries to their bodies.<sup>507</sup> With the spread of modern education most of the westernized Shia families have given up the practices of beating their breasts. It is during this month of Moharram that the shias call meetings where mourners recite elegies. Feasts are arranged for the participants. The Sunni Muslims do not take part in these processions. Sunnis distribute cooked rice (*tahar*) and sharbat (*Kand sharbat*) among the poor and children. According to Sunni Muslim belief the whole universe was created on this very day by Almighty and Adam and Eve were born on this day and Noah's ark touched the shores of earth.<sup>508</sup>

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503. Ibid.

504. Mohd Ishaq Khan, "*history of Srinagar*". p.106.

505. M.H. Haykal, "*The life of Mohammad*". pp.46-50; Safi-ur-Rehman Mubarkpuri, "*Araheeq-ul-Makhtoom*", urdu tr.p.83; K.Ali, "*A study of Islamic history*" p.28; Dr. M Mukarram Ahmed, "*Encyclopaedia of Islam*", Anmol publications New Delhi, Vol.2, 2005.p.154.

506. Dr.Zafar Hyderi.op.cit.p.18.

507. Ab. Rashid Khanday, "*The sikh rule in Kashmir (1819-1846 A.D)*", Muneeza Publications, Kulgam (Kashmir), 2007.p.74.

508. See Masod-ul-Hassan, "*History of Islam*", vol. I & II.

**5.Shab-e-Mehraj:** Every year during the lunar month of Rajab-ul-Murjab, Mehraj-un-Nabi (pbuh) is celebrated in Kashmir <sup>509</sup>with great zeal and religious vehemence. It is the night of Rajab 26, when this great event of Meraj took place. That is why it is also known as Shab-e-Meraj, the night of the Ascent of the Holy prophet(pbuh). During this night the people offer the prayer, recite Quran for whole night in the mosques.

**6.Shab-i-Barat:-** It is celebrated on 14<sup>th</sup> of Shaban. On this night prayers are offered throughout the night and at places illuminations are held and money and other articles in alms are given.<sup>510</sup>

**7.Shab-i-Qadr:-** It is celebrated on 26<sup>th</sup> of Ramzan, month of feasts. Prayers are held throughout the night in the shrines and mosques. Sweet dishes are prepared and nearest relatives are invited at the feast.<sup>511</sup> The Maulvi used to give the discourse relating to the merits of this night.

**8. Dambali:** -Dhamali means leaping and jumping.<sup>512</sup>It is a group of dancers in which group of thirty or forty persons participate. They are essentially cobblers by profession but people of other (menial castes”) also used to join them. In this dance a circle row of dancers recite 40 hymns in their own local dialect and chant prayers. While doing so they would go round and round lifting their legs upto the height of their shoulders also moving their arms and hands. The *dool* player controls the rhythm of the movement of the dancers. Actually when the *dool* player plays the drum with full pace and on a quick beat the dancers dance with full force and ultimately perform extraordinary jumps, their continuous prayer gives the dances the colour of a ritual.

**9. Bhand pather:-**The existence of Bhands has remained very popular. Nilmatapurana tells us that Bhand pather was very famous in Kashmir and Bhands performed during festivals and at other occasions. In *‘Nilamata purana’* the word “*Mandavanam*” is mentioned which means dance and songs by the Bhands<sup>513</sup>.“*These have long clarinet-like pipes and drums and produce most-weird music, often in the minor key. Sometimes they are reinforced by fiddles- curious instruments, with a barbaric twang; such companies of strolling musicians often have*

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509. Ibid.

510. G. M Rabani. op.cit. p.57.

511. Ibid.

512. Dr Sumita Dhar, “*The traditional music of Kashmir*”.pp.40-41.

513. Ibid.p.31.



with them dancing boys with long hair, dressed up as women. As a general rule these people are Muslims. They are on special request at weddings and harvest feasts. Some of them are said to be good actors and have valuable dresses and stage properties.”<sup>514</sup> The important tools, which are played in various combinations are the *shahnai*, *dhol*, *nagara* and *thalij*. Before the *swarnai* player adopts his newly made instrument, a ritual offering is made in a *dargah*. The man who plays the *dhol* is the central figure in the *paether*.<sup>515</sup> The properties that are most important for every *paether* are whip and a short bamboo stick. The “*Kooda*” or the long whip as crafted from the dry stem of the *bhang* plant and looks like a thick rope which is forked at its tip. When used, it emanates a sound similar to gunshot. During performance, a character can be whipped a hundred times without being hurt because this property does not have the impact assonance acted with the whip; it just looks deadly. It is used to transform all the elements that represent oppression into strong dramatic images.<sup>516</sup>

Among the other popular festivals of the Muslims of Kashmir are Urs-i-Shah-Hamadan, Urs-i-Batmalloo, Urs-i-Char-I Sharief, Urs-i-Syed Ali Pakherpora, Urs-i-Makhdoom Sahib, Urs-i-pir Dastgir (Khanyar), Urs-i-Reshmol (Hardu Reshi, Anantnag/Islamabab).<sup>517</sup> The importance of these fairs in the lives of Kashmiri people could be judged by this statement of Lawrance, “*The annual fairs held at the various shrines are red letter days in the Fairs, dull lives of the Kashmiri people.*”<sup>518</sup> Thousands of people assembled together and spend the day in eating and buying fairings such as pretty *kangris*. Wooden pattens (*Khrawo*), glass bangles, necklaces and painted clay toys. At the same time one can find the Cobblers are hard at work repairing shoes, sweetmeat sellers drive a roaring trade and alms flow into the shrine where the many attendants (*Khadims*) would fight vigorously over the offerings.<sup>519</sup> There is a general belief among the people that a visit to the shrines will secure the object of their efficacy of wishes. Sick men will regain health; issueless women will be blessed with

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514. Ernest F. Neve, *Beyond The Pir Panjal*, p.81.

515. Ibid.

516. Dr Sumita, *op.cit.*, p.33.

517. Ab. Rashid Khanday, *op.cit.*, p.47.

518. Ernest F. Neve, *Beyond*, *op.cit.*, p.81.

519. Ibid.

children.<sup>520</sup> They people believed in the sanctity of oaths taken in certain places and there are certain trees of ordeal where a lying witness is sure to be overtaken with blindness.<sup>521</sup>

- **Festivals and Customs Of Kashmiri Pandits**

The religious festivals of the Kashmiri Pandits or the Dardic Brahmins of Kashmir have Rigvedic and Proto-Indo-Iranian roots. The Kashmiri Pandits share most of their festivals with other Hindu communities and some with the Zoroastrians, Shin of Hindukush, and other Persian and Central Asian peoples, the pre-Islamic elements of whose cultures are derived from the Proto-Indo-Iranian religion.<sup>522</sup> Following used to be the chief festivals of the Kashmiri Pandits during the period of our study.

**1. Shivaratri,** It is regarded as the crown of the festivals of Kashmiri Pandits.<sup>523</sup> In most places across India, Shivratri worship takes place in Shiva temples but in Kashmir, the puja is performed at home.<sup>524</sup> The pooja room was called *Thokur Kuth* and the front door called *Dar* were specially cleaned, one for the pooja and the other to welcome Shiva and Parvati, whose communion was the real essence of Shivaratri.<sup>525</sup> And this long drawn festival was celebrated for one full fortnight as an elaborate ritual was associated with the appearance of Bhairava (Shiva) as a jwala-linga or a linga of flame Called ‘Herath’ in Kashmiri, a word derived from the Sanskrit ‘Hararatri’ the ‘Night of Hara’ (another name of Shiva), on this day Shiva was worshiped in the form of pitcher full of water, in which walnuts were kept for soaking and worshipped along with Shiva, Parvati, Kumara, Ganesha, their ganas or attendant deities, yoginis and kshetrapalas (guardians of the quarters) - all represented by clay images.<sup>526</sup> The soaked walnuts were later distributed as naivedya. The ceremony is called ‘Vatuk baru’ in Kashmiri, which means filling the pitcher of water representing the Vatuka Bhairava with walnuts and worshipping it.<sup>527</sup>

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520. Lawerance, op.cit. p.289.

521. The shrine of pakherpora and Arihama pulwama are considered to be the proper shrines for taking oath by the people of the villages of Pulwama. The ‘*Hajweir*’ (crooked willow) of the village Puchal of Dist. Pulwama is one of such living evidence.

522. Based on the information on [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kashmiri\\_Pandit\\_festivals](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kashmiri_Pandit_festivals) , accessed on 10-04-2010; P.N.K Bamzai,op.cit.p.37.

523. T.N Dhar, “ A window on Kashmir”, Mital publications New Delhi,2003.p.68.

524. Suneethi Bakshi, “*Kashmir the history & pandit women’s struggle for identity*”. Vistasta publishing pvt. Ltd, New Delhi 2009,p.190.

525. Ibid.

526. Ibid.

527. Ibid.

**2. Navreh and Zanga trai:** Kashmiri Pandits celebrate their New Year's Day on Chaitra shukla patipada or the first day of the bright half of the month of Chaitra (March-April) and call it Navreh - the word navreh is derived from the Sanskrit 'nava varsha', literary meaning 'new year'.<sup>528</sup> On the eve of Navreh, a thali of unhusked rice with a bread, a cup of curds, a little salt, a little sugar candy, a few walnuts or almonds, a silver coin, a pen, a mirror, some flowers and the new panchanga was kept and seen as the first thing on waking up in the morning. It may be noted that the rite of seeing the thali filled with unhusked rice etc. is observed on Sonth or the Kashmiri spring festival also.<sup>529</sup> And the Saptarshi Era of the Kashmiri Hindu calendar is believed to have started on this very day, some 5079 years ago.<sup>530</sup>

Zang trai is an important occasion for the married women of the household. Zang here refers to an auspicious star or sign.<sup>531</sup> On the third day from the Navreh, ladies would go to their parent's house and dine there. From there they go to the temples with their kiths and return in the evening with new dresses and the customary Noon, *Tsocha* and *Atagat* i.e., salt, cakes and some cash. These three items were a must to be given to the married daughters, whenever they come to their parent's house, at the time of their return to their home.<sup>532</sup>

**3. Khir Bhavani mela.** The most popular manifestations of the Great Devi are Khir Bhavani or Ragya (pronounced 'Ragnya' by the Pandits). The shrine of the goddess at Tulumula was held as the most sacred by all the Hindus of Kashmir irrespective of their cultic affiliations.<sup>533</sup> On Jyeshtha Ashtami, or the eighth day of the bright half of Jyeshtha (May-June) a big festival used to be held at Tulumul to celebrate the *pradurbhava* of the Goddess Ragya (Khir Bhavani). Another festival was held at the shrine on Asharha Ashtami with equal devotional fervour, the sacred spring of the shrine that miraculously changes its colour having been discovered on the saptami of that month.<sup>534</sup> The devotees offer their worship, individually or

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528. Som Nath Pandit, op.cit, p.159; P.N.K Bamzai, op.cit. p.38; Prof. G. M Rabbani, op.cit. p.53; Suneethi Bakshi, op.cit. p.193.

529. Lawerance, op.cit. p.265; Ab. Rashid Khanday, "The sikh rule in Kashmir (1819-1846 A.D)", Muneeza Publications, Kulgam (Kashmir), 2007, p.47.

530. According to the legend, the celebrated Sapta Rishis assembled on the Sharika Parvata (Hari Parbat), the abode of the goddess Sharika, at the auspicious moment when the first ray of the sun fell on the Chakreshvara on this day and paid tribute to her. Astrologers made this moment as the basis of their calculations of the nava varsha pratipada, marking the beginning of the Saptarshi Era. Before their exodus Kashmiri Pandits would flock to Hari Parbat in thousands to celebrate Navreh.

531. Suneethi Bakshi, op.cit. p.194; T.N Dhar, op.cit. p.67.

532. Ibid.

533. Lawerance, op.cit. p.26; Mohammad Ishaq Khan, op.cit. p.106; P.N.K Bamzai, op.cit. p.38.

534. Suneethi Bakshi, op.cit. p.195.

in groups, waving lamp (dip) and burning incense (dhupa) while reciting hymns to the Goddess and singing devotional songs. They make offerings of khir to her and of milk, loaf-sugar and flowers, which they offer into the spring.<sup>535</sup>

**4. Khyachi Mavas:** This is also known as *Yaksha amavasya*. In other words, the last day of the dark fortnight of '*Paush*' dedicated to the '*Yaksha*', this ritual was performed in connection with some forest-dwelling tribe that lived there before the rishis.<sup>536</sup> On this day a special dish of moong mixed with rice is prepared in the evening. It is served to the Yaksha on an improvised plate made of dry grass. The plate is placed on the top of the compound wall. The kitchen mortal is placed on a grass ring, worshipped as a symbol of the cosmos and decorated with sindoor, sandal, raw rice and flowers. Some households serve fish on this day also.<sup>537</sup> *“During our childhood we were told that the Yaksha would be wearing a red cap while partaking of this Khichdi and whosoever is able to snatch away this cap will get riches. So, all the children would be eager to get hold of this cap, which eluded everyone.”*<sup>538</sup>

Besides the above mentioned festivals Pandits used to celebrate a good number of festivals of lesser religious importance which include *Monjaher taeher, Gada Bhatta, Shishur, Gora-Trai, Kaw Punim, Teela Aetham, Zetha aetham, Shravana punim, Vyatha Truvah, Pan Dyun, Dodh.*<sup>539</sup> It is not out of a place to mention that it was a daily routine of a Kashmiri pandit but every day when he arises in the morning he puts on wooden pattens and with a water-jar in his hand he goes down to the nearest spring or stream, bathes and used to says his prayers. If his father or mother was dead, he used to throw water in the air and utters the names of his ancestors back to seven generations. If he had an idol in his house, he sprinkles it with river-water, placing flowers and rice before the image.<sup>540</sup>

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535. Prof. G. M Rabbani.op.cit.pp.52-53; T.N Dhar.op.cit.p.63; Dr. S.S. Toshkhani, Art. “rituals & customs of Kashmiri Pandits”. <http://www.wikipedia.com>.

536. According to Neelamatpurana, the valley of Kashmir was once a vast mountain lake and was drained by Kashyap Reshi who imported residents and sages from India to live here. In those pre-historic days, it is said that tribes called Pischachas and Yakshas were living here. They used to give trouble to these immigrants and as advised by Nila, the lord of Nagas, the residents(immigrants) off and on offered food and clothing to these tribes who then allowed them a peaceful time. The festival of Khyachi Mavas is still observed by Kashmiri pundits. G.M Rabani.op.cit.p.54.

537. T. N. Dhar.op.cit.p.61.

538. Ibid.

539. For detail see Prof. G. M Rabbani.op.cit.pp.52-53; T.N Dhar.op.cit.pp.59-67; Som Nath Pandit,op.cit.pp.109-201; Lawerance,op.cit.p.265.

540. Lawerance, op.cit.p.264.

## **(D) RITUALS RELATED TO BIRTH, MARRIAGE & DEATH**

The customs and ceremonies connected with birth, marriage and death in Kashmir during the period of our study were elaborate and very expensive.<sup>541</sup> And it is to be noted that the life of an average Kashmiri peasant was ruled by customs (*Rewaj*) and traditions. It was very difficult for the peasant to maintain a subsistence level when he had to spend expensively on occasions of marriage, birth, death and other religious and social ceremonies.<sup>542</sup>

It must be explained that the customs vary according to the position and wealth of families and that there is some difference between the observances of the city people and the villagers. But the chief incidents in birth, marriage and death are the same. It is not out of place to mention that there are many points of resemblance between the Muslim customs and the pandit customs.<sup>543</sup> And the curious prominence of the walnut, salt, and the use of the mehandi dye, will be noticed. Besides the mehnzrat, or use of the mehandli dye, in both religions there is the laganchir/sathnam or fixing of the marriage day.<sup>544</sup> phirsal, the visit paid by the bridegroom to the bride's house after marriage: gulimiut, the giving of money and jewels; the dress and the title of the bridegroom as Maharaz and of the bride as maharani; *chudsu*, the giving of presents on the fourth day after death to the priests etc.<sup>545</sup>

### **• RITUALS OF MUSLIMS**

**1. Birth & Childhood:-** During the period of pregnancy both Muslims and Hindus adhere to some beliefs and practices. For instance a pregnant woman was not allowed to carry heavy loads for fear of abortion.<sup>546</sup> In rural Kashmir, baby's birth is celebrated with rites of welcome and blessing-songs, happy distribution of sweets, auspicious unguents, gifts for infant and mother.<sup>547</sup> But birth celebrations for baby daughter were more muted than for sons and were sometimes absent altogether. The Muslim baby first sees the light of the day in the home of his mother's family, she having gone there about two months before his expected

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541. G. C. Mrs Bruce, "*The peep at Kashmir*", Gulshan publishers, 2005, p.32.

542. Lawrance.op.cit.pp.256-61. See also Administrative Report of Jammu and Kashmir state, 1921-22, Jammu, 1923,p.28.

543. Lawrance,op.cit.p.258.

544. T.N Dhar.op.cit.p.94.

545. Prof. A.A Suroor, "*Islam in the modern world, problems and prospects*", Iqbal Inst. Of Kashmir,K.U.p.218.

546. Census of India, 1961, Mattan, Jammu & Kashmir, a village Survey.p.17.

547. Kashmir Today, November 1956.pp.17-19; Farooq Fayaz, "*Kashmir folklore*",p.70.

arrival.<sup>548</sup> When the child was born the priest comes in and taking the infant by the right ear, he whispers the Azan, welcoming the new arrival to this world of faith and then he repeats in the left ear the *Takbir* and adds a warning that death is the end of all things. The young mother fasts for one or two days and then has a meal of wheaten bread and eggs; the grass bed on which she is known as “*Hur*” and is changed daily. The woman was regarded as unfit for the performance of religious duties like the daily prayers as long as the usual discharge after child-birth continues, its utmost limit being forty days.<sup>549</sup> On the seventh day after the delivery, which is known as the *sindar* day, the mother bathes and the child is given its name. The name is given by the ‘Pir’ of the family. He usually gives some name suggested by the month in which the child is born. Thus a boy born in the months of Ramzan, Shahban or Rajab will most likely be called Ramzan, Shahban or Rajab. A boy born in the month in which a great saint died is often named after the saint. Thus Sultan is probably the name of a boy who was born in the month in which the great saint Makhdum Sahib died. The Kram name is of course added to the birth name e.g. *Ramzan Rahtor, Shahban Bhat, Rajab Mir, Sultan Lone*. Girls are never known by their Kram name. Among the more common names of girls may be mentioned *Fazli, Mali, Mihri, Janu, Daulati, Rahmi, Pritsi, Sundri, Zuni* (the moon maiden), *Mukhti, Farzi, Ashumi*. The richer people favour names like Taju, Sitaru, Begam and Ashu. On the seventh day the barber is called in and shaves the child's head and a great feast is given. Two or three months later the mother returns to her father-in-law's house, carrying with her presents, among which will be a cow with a calf or a pony mare with a fowl.<sup>550</sup>

**2. Shaving of head.(Zar Kasun):-**It was the general custom among the affluent villagers to go along with their family barber at the shrine of some famous saint (Charar-i-Sharief, Baba Rishi, Muqdim Sabun, Zain Shah Sabun ,Amir Sund etc) to get the first shaving of head of their children.<sup>551</sup> On this occasion the women folk used to sing the songs.

*Bismillah karith zari kaasoyo*

*Isme azam paroyo*

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548. Tyndal Bisco,op.cit.p.260; Gh. Mohammad Khan,op.cit,p.13.

549. Census of 1911, Vol. XX, Kashmir, Part I.p.144.

550. Lawerance, op.cit. p.270; Census of 1911, vol. XX, part I,p.145;

551. Gh. Mohammad Khan, “*Kashiren Musalmanun hend Rasam ti Rewaj*” tr.,(traditions & customs of kashmiri muslims), Publisher-Dept. of Kashmiri, Kashmir university Srinagar 1983 ,p.21; Census of India, 1961, Mattan, Jammu & Kashmir, a village Survey.p.18.

*Waste karo chay ti chei khabri*

*Zabre zari ho kasi zaes*

*Waste karo khood ratt warie*

*Lalas sone senz tary chey*

*Translatio: In the name of Allah, Let us start the shaving of head of our child by praising the Almighty.*

*O! Barber you have expertise, shave the head of our child carefully.*

*O! Barber our beloved child has golden locks, be careful while holding the blade.<sup>552</sup>*

**3. Circumcision (khatna):-** At the age of four or five the child would be circumcised<sup>553</sup> and this is an occasion of great rejoicing. Friends are invited and the child's feet and hands are stained with the red *menhdi* dye and he is decked out in brave apparel. For seven days before the ceremony there is nothing but singing and feasting and on the day of the circumcision (*khatna*) the child was placed on a basket under which a cock' is cooped, the perquisite of the barber who performs the circumcision. All friends and relatives used to kiss the child's hand and give him money (*guli-myonth*) after which the guests go off to a shrine with the boy and return to the house for a feast.<sup>554</sup> The folk song which the women folk used to sing on this occasion is as under:

*Tamash geero roz istaday*

*Ise kod tamhook maharaze*

*Khatan haj mahraz kya cho nundbony*

*Khuni khuni goss lalwoniye*

*Waste kar aow Dulduls khasit*

*Bulbuls sunat karith draow*

*Translation: O! Spectators be attentive, it is our auspicious occasion (we are going to circumcise our son).*

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552. Based on the folk tradition.

553. Lawerance, op.cit. p.271.

554. Gh. Mohammad Khan, op.cit, p.26.

*How lovely the circumcised our son is, he should be lulled in a lap.*

*The barber has come here on the horse back and performed the circumcision ceremony of our son.*

### ➤ **Marriage**

Marriage is deemed essential for virtually everyone in Kashmir.<sup>555</sup> For the individual marriage is the great watershed in life, making the transition to adulthood; Generally this transition, like everything else in Kashmir depended little upon individual violation but instead occurs as a result of the efforts of many people. Arranging a marriage is a critical responsibility for parents and other relatives of both bride and groom. Marriage alliances entailed some redistribution of wealth as well as building and restructuring social realignments and of course, result in the biological reproduction of families.<sup>556</sup> It is to be noted that in the late twentieth century, the age of marriages is raising in villages almost to the levels that of cities.

Marriages except those solemnized by religious rules were unknown in the valley. Neither the males nor the females had the freedom of selecting their partners and this right is solely reserved by the parents.<sup>557</sup> Before fixing the date of *Nishani* (betrothal), it was obligatory to match the *sitar* (horoscopes) of the prospective bride and groom. Besides this, the other factors which were into consideration while selecting a match, status and moral character of the family of the prospective match and their close relatives. All this and more is taken into consideration before the alliance was finalized. The wedding date (*sath nam*) is proposed by both the parties. There were no restrictions placed upon intermarriage except with *saiyads* at the top of the social scale and *menials* at the bottom.<sup>558</sup> The Sheikh Muslims (Converts) of the valley may have retained, for some time after their conversion to Islam, some of the Hindu customs of endogamy within the caste and of exogamy outside the *gotra*. But there is no trace now of these customs and the different tribal names or *Krams* are names and nothing more; There is no restriction on marriage and a Muslim of the *Tantre Kram* can either marry a *Tantre* girl or any other maiden of the villages, provided she be one of the agricultural families. The only line drawn is that one must not marry into *Saiyad* families on the one hand

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555. Marriage is the union of two souls advocated by the theologians of major religions of the world. And is highly esteemed in every religion of the world.

556. Census of India, 1941, Vol. XXII, Part I & II by Capt. R. G. Wreford.p.13.

557. Census of India, 1961, Mattan, Jammu & Kashmir, a village Survey.p.19.

558. Ernest F.Neve, “*Beyond the Pirpanjal*”, p.33.



or into families of market-gardeners and menials on the other. The cultivators looked down upon the boatmen and would not intermarry with them, as they consider them lax in the matter of morality.<sup>559</sup> It would be interesting to trace the origin of the *Kram* names, although by intermarriage the *krams* have ceased to have any individuality or distinction and to inquire whether the various *Krams* sprang from a Brahman, Khattri or Vaisya origin. It is supposed by many that Muslims of the Pandit, Kol, But, Aitu, Rishi, Mantu, and Ganai *Krams* are descendants of Brahmans who converted to Islam in the fourteenth century<sup>560</sup>. The only gradation in the social scale which is recognized among the agricultural families is that the '*zamindars*' are superior to the '*taifidars*,' that is the market-gardeners, herdsmen, shepherds, boatmen, minstrels, leather-workers, and the menials of the villages. And this gradation is maintained by the fact that the agriculturist would refuse to intermarry with these inferior castes.

The first wife and even then the second marriage were performed with the sanction of his first wife. This is generally disliked and may be considered very rare. The Muslims, if possible, marry their daughters to some near Muslim relation<sup>561</sup> and if this was not possible, they ask some man of their own tribe, who has more sons than money, for a boy whom they take into their house (*khana damad*).<sup>562</sup> The system of *khana damadi* is said to have become common in Sikh times and if forced labour was wanted for transport the unfortunate *khana damad* was always sent. If he came back alive he would win his bride. If he died it did not matter as the son of the house. At present the custom of *khana damadi* is very popular.<sup>563</sup> One of the reasons given for the popularity of *khana damadi* is that it enabled a man to keep his daughter at home and on the whole the system worked well and there were not many quarrels between the father-in-law and the *khana damad*. It is noticeable that the Muslim father is very much attached to his daughter. The *khana damad* used to adopt the *Kram* - name of his father-in-law. If a marriage with a near relative could not be arranged the father of a son who had reached the years of puberty calls in the services of a go-between (*Manzimyor*). This go-between was usually a man of great powers of persuasion and he visits families with marriageable daughters and tells highly-coloured stories of the magnificence and generosity

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559. Lawrance, op.cit, p.278.

560. Ibid, p.310.

561. Census of 1911, vol. XX, part I, p.139.

562. Lawrance, op.cit, pp.267-268; Ab. Rashid Khanday, "*The sikh rule in Kashmir(1819-1846 A.D)*", Muneeza Publications, Kulgam(Kashmir), 2007, p.37.

563. Ibid. P.N.K Bamzai, op.cit, p.39.

of his client. He then suggests marriage and would take his leave. Afterwards, on the four chief Muslim holidays, viz. Id-Ramzan, Id-Qurban, Mehraj Sharif and Ursi Nabi, the boy's father would send presents to the girl. Then for six months visits follow and at the end of this period the marriage day was fixed.<sup>564</sup>

## ▪ Pre-wedding Rituals

### 1. Formal Engagement or Nishani

Marriage were generally arranged by middle-man who appoints a day for *Nishani*<sup>565</sup> (engagement), on this day *hena* and some gold and silver ornaments would be sent to the bride through the middleman.<sup>566</sup> Once the two families agree to the alliance, a formal commitment ceremony would take place in the form of *Nishani* (engagement ceremony). Shortly after, the boy's father would go with a small party of relatives and friends with presents to the girl's house. The presents, as a rule were consisted of silver bracelets, cash, salt and sugar.<sup>567</sup> The girls' family used to lay out a meal comprising of traditional Kashmiri food. Separately in the houses of the bride and the groom, The girl's family used to send cash, fruits, dry fruits and a pot containing *nabad* ( sugar lumps) to the boy's house. This is what happened during the period of our study.<sup>568</sup>

### 2. Livun

An auspicious day is chosen for the *livun*, the traditional cleaning of the house before a wedding. On this day, the floors of the Kashmiri mud houses are cleaned and treated with a mixture of mud and water.<sup>569</sup> This is also the day when the *waza* (family cook) arrives and puts together a mud-and-brick oven called *wuri* in the backyard of the house. This is where the traditional meals will be cooked for the wedding ceremonies.

### 3. Wanvun

Every evening following *livun*, up to the marriage ceremony, a wedding song (music) session is held in both the bride's and the groom's houses where the participants include neighbours

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564. Ibid,

565. Tyndal Bisco, op.cit.p.157; P.N.K Bamzai,op.cit.p.39.

566. Tyndal Bisco, op.cit ,p.156 ; Lawerance, op.cit.p.267.

567. Lawerance,op.cit,p.268.

568. For detail see Census of india, 1961, Mattan, Jammu & Kashmir, a village Survey.pp.14-23.

569. A special colour(red) of mud was used for this purpose.

and relatives. The guests were served a salted pink tea (called *noon* or *sheer chai*) at the end of such singing sessions.<sup>570</sup>

#### 4. Maenziraat/Heenabandi

A peasant's marriage was a picturesque occasion.<sup>571</sup> The women wearing red and blue pherans (Kashmiri gowns) would sing marriage folk-songs for the *Maenzraat*<sup>572</sup>, the night when henna would be rubbed on the hands and feet of the bride and the groom, the day of marriage, when the bride would leave her father's house and when the groom would take her away.<sup>573</sup> Henna bandi is the first day. Feasts are given by both the parties to their friends and relatives. Henna and ornaments still continue to be sent to the bride. On that occasion all the women that have been called to the feast stain their hands and feet with henna. Merry concerts are held by women day and night.<sup>574</sup>

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570. A. R Khan.op.cit.p.61.

571. Chapter 19,Glimpses of rural Kashmir by S.,N.Dhar from, "Kasmir Society and Culture" Edited by Suresh K. Sharma & S.R. Bakshi.p.182.

572 The women folk used to sing Such maenzraat songs:

*Aangnas saanes almaas kanie*

*Naamdar maenze wael aangan chaie*

*Maanze paeth kuni hange tumaare*

*Maanze wael bade khumare aaye*

*Maanze majman paethe gulkari*

*Haari waarvi chaenay aaye*

*Bismillah kareth maanz laaghoye*

*Maanze seeth nam wazlavoye*

*Maanze laaghoye aethan te paadan*

*Maanze seth khoy haw sehzadan*

Translation: *The esteemed guests from in-laws house loaded with mehendi dye have arrived at the mettled yard of our house,*

*the guests of in-laws house have brought mehendi dye along with ornaments.*

*O! beloved daughter your in-laws have brought the mehendi dye trays bearing the designs of flowers.*

*Let us start to stain your hands in mehendi dye by reciting the name of God. We shall stain your hands and feet in mehendi dye, the mehendi is liked by pincers.*

573. Census of India, 1961, Mattan, Jammu & Kashmir, a village Survey.p.22.

574. Tyandale Biscoe, op.cit ,p.157.

## 5. Food served

The women present among the relatives and neighbours were invited for dinner which was used to be served in traditional kiln-baked pots called *tabche*.<sup>575</sup> The food prepared by the *waza* consisted a variety of dishes. Wazwan is regarded by the Kashmiri Muslims as a core element of their culture and identity.<sup>576</sup> Guests are grouped into fours for the serving of the Wazwan. The meal begins with invoking the name of Allah and a ritual washing of hands, as a jug and basin called the *tash-t-nari* are passed among the guests. A large serving dish piled high with heaps of rice, decorated and quartered by four seek kababs, four pieces of meth maaz, two tabak maaz, sides of barbecued ribs and one safed kokur, one zafrani kokur, along with other dishes. The meal is accompanied by yoghurt garnished with Kashmiri saffron, salads, Kashmiri pickles and dips. The feast ends with an elder leading the thanksgiving to Allah, which is heard with rapt attention by everyone. Kashmiri Wazwan is generally prepared in marriages and other special functions. The culinary art is learnt through heridity and is rarely passed to outside blood relations. That has made certain waza/cook families very prominent. The wazas remain in great demand during the marriage season (May - October). The essential Wazwan dishes include the following dishes.<sup>577</sup>

S. No	Name of the dish	Remarks
01	<i>zafraan kokur</i> (chiken)	<i>Chicken fried with saffron.</i>
02	<i>Meth ma:z</i> <sup>578</sup>	<i>Intestines of lamb cooked with Meth.</i>
03	<i>Ristae</i>	<i>Choped meat, turned into balls of walnut size with spices. Cooked in oil and red chilly water.</i>
04	<i>Rogan Josh</i>	<i>Meat cooked in spices and in a specific red colour locally called Waza rung.</i>
05	<i>Tsaman</i>	<i>Cheese.</i>
06	<i>Dhani phul</i>	<i>The back of the thigh cooked in spices and in oil.</i>
07	<i>Tabak maaz</i>	<i>Fried lamb ribs in ghee.</i>

575. <http://ikashmir.net/cookbook/recipes.html>.

576. The Khidmat, October 26<sup>th</sup>,1948 (urdu),p.2; See also The Khidmat, June 15,1947,p.5.

577. P.N.K Banzai, “*Socio Economic History of Kashmir 1846-1925*”, p.426.

578. *Meth ma:z*- A dish prepared from the meat of lamb’s stomach (dumbin) cooked in spices and meth( a herbacious plant having used as a spicey characteristic)

08	<i>Aab gosht</i>	Lamb curry cooked in milk. <sup>579</sup>
09	Marcha-wangan korma	Meat cooked in oil and red chilly water.
10	<i>Seekh kabab</i>	Spicy ground lamb on skewers.
11	<i>Gushtaab</i>	Chopped meat with spices cooked in oil, and in curds. <sup>580</sup>

## ▪ The Wedding Rituals

### 1. The Bride's clothes

The traditional wedding attire is the pheran. The groom wears a tweed pheran and *jootis* in his feet. His headgear is a turban (gordastar) to which a peacock feather has been tied with a golden thread. The bride's pheran is usually made of raffle, with ari or hook embroidery at the neck, cuff and edges. Over the *kalpush*, a long piece of starched and ironed snow-white cloth, about three centimeters in width and two to two-and-a-half metres long, is wrapped at the level of the forehead in three to four layers. A white scarf (called *zoojh*) is wrapped over the *kalpush* and it covers 50 per cent of the head from behind.

### 2. Ceremony at the groom's house

While the groom's turban is being tied, a plate of rice containing some money is touched to his right shoulder. Before marriage procession leaves for the bride's house, the groom must visit the nearest shrine and the ancestral graveyard where he seeks the blessings.<sup>581</sup> The groom and his party (*baraat/Yeni-woul*) leave for the bride's house accompanied by a group of people who are carrying a palanquin.<sup>582</sup> The groom receives the services of a professional barber (*naid*) who helps him to tie the *dastar* (turban). The marriage procession is a sight to see, Village *Bhands*, the musicians playing on wooden pipes and drums,<sup>583</sup> lead the small

579. Besides other spices, cinamom used to be the principal spice in preparing this dish.

580. Wazwan is generally served in big plates locally called *traem*. Different dishes were being served and finally the wazwan was concluded with a dish known as Gushtaab. The tradition has survived with out any alteration.

581. This custom is still in existence in the villages of Kashmir inspite of tremendous changes in the culture of Kashmir.

582. Census of India, 1961, Mattan, Jammu & Kashmir, a village Survey.p.22.

583. Chapter 19, "Glimpses of rural Kashmir" by S,.N. Dhar from, "*Kasmir Society and Culture*" Edited by Suresh K. Sharma & S.R. Bakshi,p.183; P.N.K Bamzai,op.cit.pp.39-40.

picturesque procession. The bridegroom, dressed in his best, is seated on an ambling pony, whose saddle is covered with a new *Khesh* (bed sheet).<sup>584</sup>

### 3. Reception Ceremony

On arrival of the marriage procession relatives of the bride greet the procession warmly. The father of the bride and the father of groom embraced one another symbolizing the solemnization of the relationship with a promise of a life-long friendship. The bridegroom's father can be easily made out from his busy, flustering gestures. Peasant woman brightly dressed and wearing happy smiles, with interlocked hands and catching each other's waist, from the rear of the procession.<sup>585</sup> They sing folk-songs that suit the occasion.<sup>586</sup>

*Yaaro doosto kourye geero*  
*Wouth vaen shairo chaer ha goyi*  
*Che ma chukh praran babe kabeelas*  
*Tem ha gures zeen paeraan*  
*Asalamalikum saane mahraazo*  
*Chaane yene gah paov aalmas*  
*Aesh chaaney vashe vashe bum kamaanae*  
*Aalam karuthan deevanae*  
*Mubarak kaertav kourey maajae* Yes hae yuth raaje aangan chaav  
*Haare waarev duetye aalaw*  
*Waso wean laalo chaer ha gov*  
*Zeanpaan kahro chuv saawale*  
*Douel paknaezyoone waar waare*

*Translation: O! lion(groom), you are surrounded by your nears and dears say good bye to them otherwise you will be late.*

*If you are not waiting of your paternal relatives, they are decorating the saddle.*

*Assalamualikum our groom your entry to our house has lighted the whole world.*

*Your large eyes and beautiful eyebrows have made the world crazy.*

*Congratulate the mother-in-law of groom, who got prince like son-in-law.*

*Oh! beloved daughter your in-laws are waiting,*

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584. Statement of Gh Mohammad Bhat S/O Ab Khaliq Bhat, R/o Mitrigam pulwama.

585. Lawerance.op.cit.p.266.

586. Chapter 19, Glimpses of rural Kashmir by S., N. Dhar from, "Kashmir Society and Culture" Edited by Suresh K. Sharma & S.R. Bakshi, p.183; P.N.K Bamzai, op.cit. pp.39-40.

*O! esteemed groom make retreat , you will be late.*

*O! palanquin bearers be careful while carrying the palanquin.*

On this day *nikah* or the marriage contract is drawn up and the *mahr* was fixed.<sup>587</sup> The deed cannot be drawn up without the consent of both the bride and bridegroom. They are therefore generally represented by some of their new relatives. The bridegroom's father had to pay the qazi, the mosque, the police (*suthrashahi*) and various other people.<sup>588</sup> The bride's maternal uncle has to carry her out and puts her in Palenque. The eldest female member of the family or the bride's mother kisses the bride and the groom on the forehead.

#### **4. Welcoming the newly-weds**

In a playful moment, the groom's eldest aunt would refuse the newly-weds entry into their home until she was given some cash or jewellery. In the joyful moment the eldest woman (mother-in-law of bride) of the groom's family approaches the room where the bride was made to sit, before kissing on the forehead of the bride, she used to raise the sare of the bride which has covered the face of the bride, this ceremony is known as *Mohar tulen*; the mother-in-law of the bride used to give presents to the bride in cash or silver or golden ornaments.<sup>589</sup>

##### **▪ Post-wedding Rituals**

#### **1. Khabar**

On a Saturday or Tuesday after the wedding, the bride's parents used to send *khani- tsochi* (long freshly baked bread), to their son-in-law's family. Then she was given salt as *Khabar*.<sup>590</sup> The bride stays in the house of the bridegroom for seven days.<sup>591</sup> During this time the bride's father had to send various dishes and suits of clothes to the bride-groom's father. On the third day of the marriage dry tea, sugar and cakes are sent to the bridegroom. These are distributed amongst the bridegroom's friends and relatives.<sup>592</sup>

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587. Census of India, 1961, Mattan, Jammu & Kashmir, a village Survey.p.23;Tyandale Biscoe, "*Kashmir in Sunlight & Shade*",p.157; Census of 1911, Vol. XX, Kashmir, Part I.p.143; Dr. M Mukarram Ahmed, "*Encyclopaedia of Islam*", Anmol publications New Delhi, Vol.3,2005.pp.110-13.

588. Biscoe. op.cit.p. 156.

589. This practice is still in existence without any alteration.

590. During the period of our study salt and sugar were considered as the things of prestige.

591. Tyandale Biscoe, "*Kashmir in Sunlight & Shade*",p.158.

592. Biscoe.op.cit.p.158;Census of India, 1961, Mattan, Jammu & Kashmir, a village Survey.p.29.

## 2. Wathal/Satraat

The bride would go to visit her parents in the evening. Her husband and a couple of children, probably those of her sister-in-law, accompany her. The parents of the bride had to give the bride a set of new clothes and some salt and cash. The groom was also presented with new clothes including woolen blanket and clothes.

## 3. Phirsal

This is the ceremony that takes place when the couple visits the bride's parents for the second time. Once again, they are given new clothes to mark the occasion.<sup>593</sup>

## 4. Phiryun

This is equivalent to the modern-day reception held at the girl's place. The bride's brother and sister come to the marital home and escort the bride back to her parent's home for one day. This ritual is known as the *Phiryun*.<sup>594</sup> The bride wears all the jewellery given to her by her in-laws and proceeds to her parent's home. The bride's family prepares a lavish spread of non-vegetarian delicacies for the relatives from both homes. After the grand meal, the bride and groom return to the marital home, carrying with them all the gifts presented to the bride by her parents. It marks off the beginning of a fruitful and happy life for the couple and their families.

### ➤ Death

The death of an infant or young child is a common event in Kashmir, causes sorrow but usually not major social disruption. The death of a married adult has wider repercussions. Various funeral rites, feasts and mourning practices affirm kinship ties with the deceased and among survivors.<sup>595</sup> However when a person is near the point of death, he is laid with his head towards north - south direction, and he is given as his last drink a sharbat made of honey. His relatives and all those who are present begin to recite the *kalmia* (Recitation of the names of God and the Prophet Muhammad)<sup>596</sup> and if possible the dying man too is made to recite it. Immediately after the person's death his eyes and mouth are closed and those around him

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593. Census of India, 1961, Mattan, Jammu & Kashmir, a village Survey.p.29.

594. It is not necessary that only brother and sister could accompany the bride but it depends on the situation.

595. Census of India, 1961, Mattan, Jammu & Kashmir, a village Survey.pp.24-25.

596. Sometimes 36th sura of Quran(Sura Yasin) was recited upon the dying person.



break into weeping.<sup>597</sup> His relatives fetch a big plank from the nearest mosque and place the body on it, with the face turned towards the sky. The body is then washed with warm water. The body is washed by a professional washer called *ghusal*. Meanwhile the shroud is made ready. It consists of three things. The *lafafa*, the *Azar* and the *kamiz*. The first two are merely two sheets of cloth, while the third is a long shirt with rent in the middle. The body is wrapped in these things. Then scents are sprinkled over the body and it is placed in a coffin brought from the mosque, the bier is then carried on the shoulders and those who accompany it keep on reciting the *kalim*. Over the wooden box is flung a cotton pall, which is the perquisite of the gravedigger and the priest. On the day of the funeral, and for three days after, the guests and priest are feasted by some relative of the deceased, as no food is eaten from the deceased's house. upto the first Friday after the burial the relatives and friends of the deceased go to the graveyard early in the morning every day and recite a few verses from the Quran. On the fourth day the people after returning from graveyard, wend their way to the house of the deplored person and are served with light refreshments, in the shape of tea and breads; a big feast is given there. All the relatives and friends again visit the tombs of the deceased, while to the son or the daughter are presented gifts of muslin and cash by their relatives.<sup>598</sup> For forty days prayers used to offer up for the deceased and food is given to the priest and to the poor.<sup>599</sup> For one year presents must be given every month to the priest and hereafter on the anniversary of a man's death the priest would receive a gift. The graveyard is planted over with many irises, narcissi and other spring flowers and some special trees as the Celtis, all of which are sacred. In the spring the graveyards are gardens of lovely flowers.<sup>600</sup>

- **RITUALS OF PANDITS**

**1. Birth of pandit child:-** A Hindu child used to usher into the world on a bed of soft straw of the grass, which has been rendered holy by perfumes and by the utterance of Sanskrit mantras, the birth-bed is known as *hur*<sup>601</sup> and near the bed was placed an earthen vessel known as *hurlej*. Close to the vessel the floor was carefully swept and a mystic figure was traced on it in chalk and on this figure is placed a stone pestle which was worshipped by

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597. Tyandel Biscoe .op.cit.p.158; Lawerance, op.cit.p.272.

598. Ibid.p.159.

599. Under the Influence of religious reform movements this practice has almost died down.

600. Lawerance, op.cit .pp.267-271; G. C. Mrs Bruce, "*the peep at Kashmir*", Gulshan publishers, 2005, p.31.

601. Lawerance, op.cit.p.258.

some girl of the house.<sup>602</sup> The mother is known as *losa*. On the sixth day after delivery the mother used to have a warm bath; bathing is commonly believed to remove all impurities attendant upon child-birth.<sup>603</sup> The water being mixed with certain drugs having medicinal quality, and the mother's relatives pay her visits.<sup>604</sup> During the first eleven days the visitors were not allowed to eat or drink in the house with the exception of the very near relatives, as the house is considered infectious and unclean.<sup>605</sup> On the eleventh day *kahanethar* ceremony was held and on this day the mother used to wear new clothes, made for her by her husband.<sup>606</sup> The new born babe is given its name.<sup>607</sup> The priest used to bring his horoscope and receives a good tip if it is a male child. The horoscope is a scroll of paper showing the planets that are favourable or unfavourable to the baby.

**2. Thread ceremony.** The '*yagupaveet*' or sacred thread-ceremony, is one of the most important ceremonies in the life of pandit.<sup>608</sup> When the boy has attained the age of seven years and before he reaches his thirteenth year, he must done the sacred thread and become a true Brahman. An auspicious day is fixed by the astrologer and five days before the date relatives are invited to the boy's house and there is constant feasting and the women sing and make merry. The maternal uncle presents gifts and the day before the sacred thread is put on the rites of *devgun* are performed by the family priest. *Devgun* is a ceremony when the protection of sixty-four deities called *yognis* is invoked.<sup>609</sup>

### ➤ MARRIAGE

Marriages have always been the most important celebration in all the religions, areas, communities and castes. The essence of the marriage remains the same with the only difference in the rituals and the customs by which the marriage ceremony is performed. As mentioned earlier that there was not much difference between the Muslim customs and the

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602. Ibid.

603. Census of 1911, Vol.XX, Kashmir, Part I.p.145.

604. Tyandale Biscoe,op.cit,p.149.

605. Ibid. After the delivery of child the woman (*losa*) was kept in seclusion. The period of confinement varies with the pundits, it lasts for 12 or 13. The prohibited foods before and after the child birth-heavy and heating foods is avoided during pregnancy and cooling and sour things after child birth. The patient was made to fast for three to five days after delivery and was then given strong yet easily digestible food in liquid form. Census of 1911, Vol. XX, Kashmir, Part I.pp.143-144.

606. G.M Rabani.op.cit.pp.59-60.

607. Census of 1911, Vol. XX, Kashmir, Part I.pp.143-144.

608. G. M. Rabani.op.cit.p.60.

609. Lawerance, op.cit. p.260; Tyandale Biscoe,op.cit,p.250.

pandit customs. We have discussed the different elements of marriage in the topic ‘Muslim marriage’. Let me recall those elements in the perspective of pandit marriage. The pandits maintain that marriage is one of the rituals for the spiritual good of the human body. A series of rites performed constituted the ritual of marriage. Most of the rites were of Sanskrit origin.<sup>610</sup> In pandit families marriage was decided after matching the horoscopes of the prospective bride and the groom. The caste, standard, backgrounds of the families are also matched to fix a perfect match. The matrimony time and date is then fixed in consultation with the priest, who announces the auspicious date according to best *mahurat*.<sup>611</sup> The rituals followed in a Kashmiri Pandit marriage are as under.

- **Pre- wedding rituals**

**1. Kasamdry:** It is the formal engagement of the couple in a temple, after the alliance is fixed by both the parties. The ceremony is performed in accordance to the date fixed by the Kashmiri pandit. Flowers are exchanged between the families, to show the acceptance of the association, whereas the bride and the groom exchanges ring with each other. Kashmiri meal from the bride side is served to the relatives and friends present from both the sides.<sup>612</sup>

**2. Maenziraat:** It is the ritual, where the doors of the house of both the bride and the grooms are decorated by their aunts, after which the bride takes a holy bath and is applied with designed *Heena* on her hands and feet. The evening is celebrated with a lot of traditional dances and songs on both the respective houses. The *Mehandi* or the *Heena* is applied on the hands of the Kashmiri pandit groom and bride also, as a sign of purity and blessing by the elders.

**5. Devgone:** This is the ceremony which marks the transformation of the bride and the groom from their *brahamcharya* life to the *grahast* life. In this ritual they worship the idols of gods Shiv and parvati to seek their blessings for their happy married life. The rituals is practised in the respective homes of the bride and the groom, the customs are performed by the priest. Also, the gifts to be given to the bride in her marriage are placed before the sacred fire.<sup>613</sup> A gold ornament called *dejaharu* along with other gold ornaments is gifted to the bride signifying the stage that she is ready for her marriage.

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610. T.N. Madan. Op.cit, p.105.

611. For detail see Lawerance, op.cit. pp.258-259.

612. Ibid.p.269.

613. Som Nath Pandit,op.cit,p118; T. N. Dhar, ‘Kundan, op.cit. p.66.

- **Wedding day rituals**

The bride and the groom used to be dressed in their traditional attire called *Pheran*. The groom after getting ready would move with the procession to the wedding venue where he is welcomed by the bride's family in a grand manner. The mother and the other elder female members of the bride's family welcome the groom and his relatives with a traditional arti and blowing off the conk shell. The food menu has the traditional vegetarian items, ranging from 21- 25 dishes, besides non-vegetarian items if the families will be the followers of Shiva. The feast generally comprised vegetarian dishes.<sup>614</sup> Typical vegetarian dishes include.<sup>615</sup>

<b>Name of the dish</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
<i>Ladyar Tsaman</i>	Cottage cheese in turmeric
<i>Meth Tsaman</i>	Cottage cheese, cooked in oil and Kashmiri spices
<i>Dam oluv</i>	Roasted potatoes
<i>Nadeir yakhean</i>	Lotus stem in a yogurt gravy
<i>Haak</i>	Kashmiri spinach(Knol-kohl, Brassica olerceae-Botanical name of Cruciferae family), often cooked with aubergines or lotus stem
<i>Nadier palak</i>	(Spinach and lotus stem)
<i>Tsoek vangan</i>	Sour aubergines
<i>Razmah</i>	Kidney beans, often cooked with turnip.

After serving the feast the *lagun* was performed tying the bond of marriage between the couple.

**Posh puza:** At the end of the ritual of marriage, the bride and the groom were made to sit in a comfortable posture. A red cloth is placed on their heads and then all the people around offer them flowers in accompaniment of Veda mantras.<sup>616</sup> The rationale behind this custom is that

614. Tyandale Biscoe,op.cit,p.149

615. Interview with Pandit Ratan Lal ,post man,R/o Murran Pulwama.

616. Som Nath Pandit,op.cit,p.125.

the couple is considered to be Shiva and Parvati and the two are duly worshipped. This marks the completion of the marriage after which the dinner is served.<sup>617</sup>

#### ▪ **Post marriage rituals**

The bride after changing the saree and jewellery, moves towards her husband's house, where she receives an enormous welcome by her new family. *Gar Atchun* is a formal reception given after the marriage. By the bride's family, where the both the bride and the groom are given gifts and sweets and a vast non-vegetarian meal was prepared for the guests after which the couple moves towards their house for leading a happy married life.<sup>618</sup>

#### ➤ **DEATH**

The pre-cremation or pre-disposal rites begin with the ritual last bath and include a brief recitation of mantras.<sup>619</sup> The ceremony called *anatsreth* in Kashmiri is performed generally by the eldest son or a close relative of the deceased and he alone is entitled to perform the cremation ceremony.<sup>620</sup> After the pre-disposal rites, the bier carrying the body of the deceased is taken in a procession to the cremation ground, everyone chanting: “*Shiv, Shiv shamboo*,” etc. (“O God of Peace, forgive our sins”).<sup>621</sup> At the crematorium, the ground for the funeral pyre was cleansed and smeared with cow dung. The eldest son of the deceased used to light the funeral pyre. The performer of the rites lights the pyre with a piece of lighted wood from the head if the deceased is a male and from the feet if it is a female. It is to be noted that the work of cremation used to be done by a Muslim known as *kawji*.<sup>622</sup> For this they used to receive half of the shroud (*kafan*) and some money. In return they had to supply wood for the funeral pyres.<sup>623</sup> After the pile is set to fire, the performer goes thrice around the burning body sprinkling water from a water pot placed on his left shoulder. On completing the third round, he breaks the water pot on an axe or a stone near the head of the dead body and throws a piece of wood on the burning pile as a last tribute to the deceased.<sup>624</sup> On the third day the son of the deceased visits the ashes of his father/mother and brings a few bones,

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617. T.N Dhar.op.cit.p.66.

618. Tyandale Biscoe,op.cit,p.149; Also see G. M Rabani.op.cit.p.61.

619. Lawerance,op.cit,p.262; P.N.K Bamzai,op.cit,p.40.

620. G. M Rabani.op.cit.pp.64-65.

621. Tyandale Biscoe,op.cit,p.152.

622. Lawerance,op.cit,p.263

623. Ibid.

624. <http://ikashmir.net/festivals/festivals2.html>.

called “flowers,” which are kept in the house till they used to be immersed in the Ganges, or a lake at Gangabal which is supposed to possess the same merit as the Ganges (Ganga=Ganges).<sup>625</sup> After which *shraddha* or last ceremony was performed, offerings of scent, flowers, incense, ghee, sesame and water used to be offered.<sup>626</sup>

## (E) GENERAL LIFE STYLE OF THE PEOPLE

### 1. Houses

The houses throughout the Kashmir valley were nearly all built after the same pattern and the village dwellings were built very close to one another in a nucleated settlement with small lanes for passage of people.<sup>627</sup> Village fields surround the settlement and were generally within easy walking distance. The houses were mostly two storied and they have a framework of wood which is filled in with sun-dried or in the better houses with kiln baked bricks.<sup>628</sup> The wood of which houses were built were deodar (Himalayan cedar), Kayur(pine or fir) and sungal (Himalayan spruce).The woods of the poplar and plane are used by the poor but they were far from being durable.<sup>629</sup> In the ground floor the sheep and cattle are penned, and sometimes the sheep are crowded into a wooden locker known as the *dangij* where the children used to sit in the winter and where the guest is made to sleep, for it is the warmest place in the house.<sup>630</sup> Most of the houses have a broad front verandah to the upper story. This is comfortable and airy and in summer it was used as sitting place, latter in the season the balcony as well as the loft was festooned with the ropes of dry turnips, vegetable marrows, chillies, maize-cobs and apples to be used in the winter.<sup>631</sup> At one end the cooking is done on a little fireplace made of clay. The inner rooms were chiefly used in winter, were dark and almost unventilated.<sup>632</sup> Under the thatched roofs is an airy space with stores of grass and firewood. The ends were left open to allow these to be thrown out in case of fire. Here the house hold spent the summer months. The roofs were sloping on two sides to throw off

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625. Tyandale Biscoe,op.cit,p152; Lawerance,op.cit,p.263.

626. The tradition is still prevalent among Kashmiri Pandits.

627. C.E. Bates, op.cit.p.37.

628. Ernest F. Neve. “*Things seen in Kashmir*”,p.63; Biscoe, “*Kashmir in sunlight and shade*”,p.107; knight E.F,p.76.

629. C.E Bates.op.cit.p.37.

630. P.N.K Bamzai, “*social and economic history of kashmir*”,p.438; Ernest F.. Neve, “*Beyond the Pirpanjal*” ,pp.58&241.

631. Ernest F..Neve, “*Beyond the Pirpanjal*”, pp.58, 241.

632. Ibid.



Fair Ground in Kashmir 1923 [www.searchkashmir.org](http://www.searchkashmir.org)



Minstrels performing Band-e-paether

snow.<sup>633</sup> The thatch was usually of straw. The rice straw was considered to be the best material but in the vicinity of the lakes reeds were used.<sup>634</sup> Every house had therefore come to have a trap door locally known as ‘*waga*’ on the roof through which the inmates shoveled the snow off into the streets.<sup>635</sup> The houses used to be without chimneys, so the inmates become smoke begrimed.<sup>636</sup>

#### Persons per house and houses per square mile

District, Jagir or Ilaqa and natural divisions	Average number of persons per house					Average number of houses per square mile				
	1891	1901	1911	1921	1931	1891	1901	1911	1921	1931
Jhelum valley(Kashmir province)	7	8	7	6	6	10	19	23	26	31
Kashmir North	-	-	7	6	6	-	-	19	24	28
Kashmir South	-	-	6	6	6	-	-	36	40	49
Muzaffarabad district	7	7	7	7	6	-	9	13	14 <sup>637</sup>	16

Source: Census report of India, 1931, Vol. XXIV, p.74 .

## 2. House hold goods

Talking about the house hold assess of the Kashmiri peasant it contained a cotton spinning wheel, a wooden pestle and a mortar for husking rice and few earthen pots for cooking and storing grain (*lopan*).<sup>638</sup> It is not out of a place to mention that the period under reference there was a mass poverty throughout the rural Kashmir. It is obvious from the fact that the kitchenware of the villages generally constituted of earthen ware.<sup>639</sup> The cooking and serving utensils (plates and cups) were also earthen. Occasionally one found a metal pot or a plate in a so called better class family. Even on weddings and festive occasions be it Hind or Muslim,

633. For detail see Census of 1911, Vol.XX, Kashmir, Part I.p.28.

634. Ibid.

635. Tyandel Biscoe , “*Kashmir in sunlight and shade*”,p.88.

636. Ernest F..Neve,Beyond,op.cit.p.80.

637. Ibid.p.74.

638. Lawerance, op.cit.p.250; Ernest F..Neve, Beyond the Pirpanjal, pp.59; Mohammad Ishaq Khan, op.cit.p.95.

639. For detail see Census of India, 1961, Mattan, Jammu & Kashmir (A village survey).p.15.



the dishes were cooked in earthen utensils and served in earthen plates. Cups and tumblers were also earthen.<sup>640</sup> No doubt some affluent families of the villages had metallic utensils and service cups and plate e.g., *Samavar* (kettle) and *degchi* (cauldron) were used for the preparation of tea and cooking of rice.<sup>641</sup> But the earthen ware was a general article of the house hold goods of the villager. Towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century china bowls<sup>642</sup> and China cups were imported from central Asia, as were also aluminium utensils termed *miskhorasan* or silver-ware from Khorasan. A Kashmiri pandit family if it could afford had one or two rice plates and tea cups made out of bronze. These were used by turns by the members of the family.<sup>643</sup> The other articles of house hold goods were wooden boxes for keeping clothes and mat (*wagu/patij*).<sup>644</sup> Both the city people and villagers slept on mats and straw, bedsteads being unknown.<sup>645</sup>

### 3. Dress

The clothes worn by the villagers were simple and extremely mean in appearance and there was a little difference between the grab of a man and a woman.<sup>646</sup> In winter the people used woolen clothes while as in summer they used to wear cotton clothes. There were certain peculiarities in dress which distinguish the Pandit from the Muslim. The Pandit used to wear the tuck of his white turban on the right, the Muslim on the left. The Pandit used to fasten his gown on the left, the Muslim on the right. The Pandit had long, narrow sleeves, the Muslim short, wide sleeves. The Pandits used to wear tight drawers, head- dresses of narrow white cloth, of twenty yards in length, and a smooth skullcap. Muslims on the contrary wore loose drawers, pagris of broad white cloth, never more than ten yards in length, skullcaps with raised.<sup>647</sup> There were minor differences in dress; however, the *pheran* worn by pandit woman (*panditain*) was gaudier than that of her Muslim sister. Her head-dress '*Taranga*' was more

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640. P.N.K Bamzai.op.cit. pp.430-431.

641. Mohammad Ishaq Khan, op.cit.p.95.

642. China bowls was then considered a thing of luxury,as quoted by the famous poet of Kashmir viz Gh Ahmad Mehjoor, "*Chatmo chini palen Chai hato, kal marun tschoy*" Meaning, Abstain from taking tea in the china bowl, don't forget death is closer.

643. Ibid,p.431.

644. *Wagu* was weaved out of reeds while as *patij* was made up of rice straw.

645. Statement of Mohd Qasim Bhat S/O Ab Gafar Bhat R/O Mitrigam Pulwama,age 75 years; Lawerance.op.cit.p.250.

646. C. E Bates.op.cit.p.35; G.M Rabani.op.cit.p.66; Census of India, 1961, Mattan, Jammu & Kashmir, a village Survey.p.14. Also see A. R Khan, "Geography of Kashmir", City Book centre Srinagar,2011.p.59.

647. Lawerance.op.cit.p.252.

picturesque than the *Kasoba*-the headdress of the Muslim woman. Before marriage it was customary for girls of both communities to wear skull caps which are sometimes worked with lace. *Taranga* or *Kasaba* was covered by a cloth, which was pinned at its top and which hangs back to cover the pendant tresses whose plains were woven into coarse, rustic tassels.<sup>648</sup> Most of the Pandit males used modern shoes and chappals, Muslims generally used to wear *paizars* and ordinary *chappals*. *Paizar* is a kind of footwear made of coarse leather, the upper of which is rubbed with oil to keep it soft and is used in winter.<sup>649</sup> The women wore a skull-cap with a kind of red cloth in the case of Muslim and the pandit women wore white. The panditanis called this long narrow based which they tie round their heads "*Taranga*". Their woolen skull-cap called "*kalposh*" was topped with a piece of Banaras brocade. The rest of the usual dress of the village woman is an ample *pheran* of dark blue cotton print, with red pattern stamped on it; or the gown may be of grey striped cotton or wool with wide sleeves turned back.<sup>650</sup> The ordinary veil worn by the Kashmiri female is called 'puts', it consisted of a long piece of cotton cloth thrown over the head and allowed to hang down the back; its use is confined to the Muslim women; the panditanis or Hindu females used to wear a spotted veil, called '*tikiputs*'. With the exception of the higher classes, the women do not affect to connect their features.<sup>651</sup> A long piece of cotton stuff called 'lung' was worn round the waist over the *pheran*. The attire of common Kashmiri especially peasant used to wear tattered clothes and an average cultivator would not wash his clothes.<sup>652</sup> But as a matter of fact the heavy taxation system, fear of beggar (forced labour) and the ruthless attitude on the part of revenue officials have reduced the standard of living of the people. People usually wore dirty to be found in tattered clothes and used to live in shanty and filthy cottages. Even if a person afforded a usable wear, he avoided it simply to escape

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648. Lawerance, op.cit, p.179.

649. Census of India, 1961, Mattan, Jammu & Kashmir, avillage Survey.p.14.

650. Ernest F. Neve, "*Beyond the Pirpanjal*", p.80; P.N K Bamzai, "*Socio Economic History of Kashmir 1846-1925*", p. 433.

651. It is to be noted that the purdah system was practiced only by the women-folk of city during the period of our study. The village woman used the purdah except the brides, called *Maharanis* (brides) for the nuptial day, for some time, as a token of maidenly modesty and of course as a custom.

652. The ordinary villager is rather wonderful person; He is perhaps not very ornamental. He may be dirty. His old skull-cap, grey, orange or red, is probably greasy. His cotton *pheran* looks like a nightgown with wide sleeves. Originally white this is now grey. Short loose and voluminous cotton *pyjamas*, with bare legs shrewwing below and plaited sandals of rice straw complete his costume. Ernest F. Neve. Things seen in Kashmir, p64; They (Kashmir's) are extremely dirty in their habits and person, and wash about once in ten days, and this, coupled with the fact that their clothes are equally dirty, makes them unpleasant companions in the warm weather. Lawerance. op. cit.pp. 279-281..

the nose of the tax collector.<sup>653</sup> This all have developed unhygienic habits among the villagers. No doubt Pratap Singh (1885-1925) introduced significant changes in the Begar system. but it was completely abolished in 1933 under glancy commission recommendations. The villagers preferred to live with filth and shabby dress, so as to get-rid from the eye of officialdom. In winter and when it rains heavily, the women wear the '*khrawo*' which are shoes or clogs made of wood with thoughts of straw called '*del*'. On marriage day, they wear leather shoes locally of manufactured.<sup>654</sup>

#### 4. Kangri

In the cold weather, every Kashmiri male and female carried a *kangri*,<sup>655</sup> which is a small earthen basin about six inches in diameter, enclosed in a neat basket of wicker work and filled with fine charcoal.<sup>656</sup> Some of these were exceedingly pretty being tastefully ornamented with rings and painted in brilliant colures. They were taken under the pheran and kept near the skin to give warmth to the front of the body and burns<sup>657</sup> from them were very common. Among the most prized of the Charari Sharif fairings is the pretty painted kangar. The best fuel for the kangar is '*hak*' the small drift-wood which is collected at the mouth of the hill rivers by nets. Cowdung, and other dung mixed with dried chenar leaves.<sup>658</sup>

#### 5. Ornaments

The women were generally profusely ornamented with elegant earrings, nose rings, anklets and bracelets and their mode of dressing the hair is peculiar, it was drawn to the back of the head and finely braided; the braids are then gathered together and being mixed with coarse woolen thread, they are worked in to a very long plait, which was terminated by a thick tassel (*gandapan*) which reaches down to the lions. This peculiar arrangement of the hair is called '*wankpan*'. Round the neck a color of silver or brass, enameled in red or blue or coral and silver bed necklace is usually worn; and large metal rings are common, glass bangles or massive silver bracelets and finger rings, with agate or cornelian, complete the list of ordinary

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653. The least out-ward show or a neat appearance would have meant a better position and imposition of taxes on the people. Lawerance.op.cit.p.252.

654. C.E Bates.op.cit.p.36.

655. G. C. Mrs Bruce, "*The peep at Kashmir*", Gulshan publishers, 2005. p.34.

656. Census of India 1981, part-XD, series-8 Jammu & Kashmir, handicraft survey report (Kangri & willow wiker basketry).p.52; C.E Bates.op.cit.p.38.

657. P.N K Bamzai, op.cit, p.463.

658. Lawerance, op.cit, p.251.

jewellery worn by Kashmiri women.<sup>659</sup> Women of the agriculturist class generally wore red coral beads of various designs in the form of a chain or necklace-glass bangles in various shades were worn by women of all classes, at the fairs and in the bazaars, the bangle sellers, attracted a large crowd of buyers from the fair sex.<sup>660</sup>

## 6.Village Unity

Villagers feel a sense of village pride and honour and the reputation of a village depends upon the behavior of all of its residents.<sup>661</sup> Villagers share common village facilities\_ the village pond, grazing grounds, mosques, temples, shrines, graveyards, schools, sitting places under large shade of chinars, wells, and waste lands. Often they work together, eat together, sleep together and sit together and feel no grudge for each other. They used to live peacefully. If any annoy the other but the latter would never tend to offend him. To provoke his neighbour was not his scheme. Self defense he leaves to the mercy of God.<sup>662</sup> Where village exogamy is important, the concept of a village as a significant unit is clear. When the all-male groom's party arrives from another village, residents of the bride's village treat the visitors with the appropriate behavior due to them as bride-takers—men greet them with ostentatious respect, while women cover their faces and sing melodious songs for them. A woman born in a village is known as daughter of the village while an unmarried bride is considered a daughter-in-law of the village. in her conjugal home in Kashmir, a bride is often known by the name of her natal village, for example, *Tralich, pulwamich* (women from Pulwama and Tral known by the names of Pulwamich & Tralich respectively).Traditionally villagers often recognized their elders and respected them and considered their decisions mandate. Generally the elders of the village belonged to every Kram excluding menials, they had the power to levy fines and exclude transgressors from village social life. Lawerance observed, "*The Kashmiri is not always hospitable to his neighbors, and though generous enough to strangers, I have known many instances where he showed a lamentable want of charity. This arises in a great measure from the fact that there is no unity among the Muslims. Each man's house is a separate unit, and there have been no forces at work to bring these units together. -- The village is in no way a community, and if joint action is required to make a bridge or to*

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659. Census of India, 1961, Mattan, Jammu & Kashmir (A village survey). p.15; Ernest F. Neve, beyond the pirpanjal,pp79,80.

660. P.N.K Banzai, op.cit, p.437.

661. Based on participatory research and general observation of the Researcher.

662. G.M Rabani.op.cit.p.70.

*repair the dams on the river, the villagers at once ask for the assistance of an official, who can compel all the villagers to co-operate.*"<sup>663</sup> However this is not with-standing the fact that the Kashmiris lack unity and cooperation, no doubt Lawrence might have encountered such instances but it can't be generalize with the whole valley. Instead taking part in the common welfare work of the village, the people used to do agricultural operations jointly whether it is breaking of ridges, paddy transplantation or weeding (*nend*) of paddy the people would work collectively.<sup>664</sup> It is to be noted there are large number of Villages Viz Rahmo, Qasbayar, Murran, Mitrigam, Keygam, Koil, Parigam, Zadoora, Dadoora etc. where a remarkable sense of unity survives altered less.<sup>665</sup> The statement of Lawerance further looses the ground When one makes a visit of the remote villages of valley where people living a still semi medieval life and the villagers share common village facilities\_ the village pond, grazing grounds, mosques and shrines, graveyards, schools, sitting places under large shade of chinars, wells and waste lands.<sup>666</sup> Crime is almost unknown in the villages. Property is absolutely safe, and one can't hear of such thing as the theft of crops. Offences against the person were extremely rare and when Kashmiris quarrel they call one another by bad names and will occasionally go so far as to knock off a turban or seize an adversary by his effeminate gown but they did not quarrel so aggressively which would lead to blood shedding.<sup>667</sup> Disputes were decided within the village precincts as much as possible, with infrequent recourse to the police or court system.<sup>668</sup>

## **7. Position of woman**

No study of a society is considered complete without a reference to the position of woman in it. The position of woman in a society reflects the cultural level, mental refinement and the standard of civilization.<sup>669</sup>The women of villages of the period under reference enjoyed a position of somewhat equality with their men. Purdah system was not practiced by women

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663. Lawerance, op.cit. p.278.

664. Based on participatory research of the Researcher.

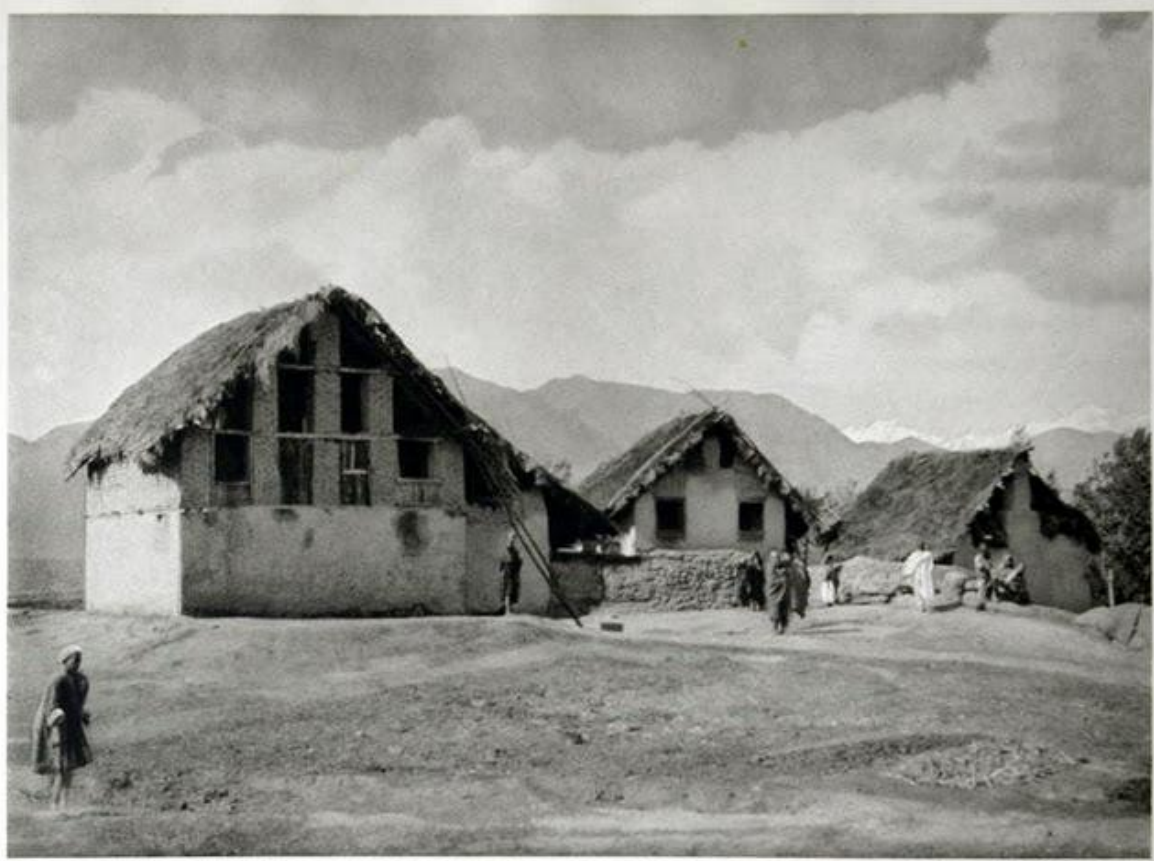
665. Ibid.

666. Ibid.

667. Lawerance, op.cit. p.277.

668. Ibid.

669. Encyclopaedia of the social science, Vol.XX.p.443; Farooq fayaz, "*Kashmir folklore*".p.70.



Rural House. 1927 by Martin Hürlimann, 1927 , <http://www.searchkashmir.org/>



Household goods(Earthen bins for storing grain)

folk of villages.<sup>670</sup> Besides doing the domestic work, women used to assist their men-folk in fields. Similarly it was just a routine job for the rural women of Kashmir to do work in fields and to carry huge loads of fuel and fodder and little girls learn to assist their mothers in almost all tasks, and from the age of 10 years participate fully in the agricultural work done by women.<sup>671</sup> “Not only do women perform more tasks, their work is also more arduous than that undertaken by men. Both transplantation and weeding required women to spend the whole day and work in muddy soil with their hands. They had also to undergo the trials of the child birth without the assistance of any midwives or skilled nurses. it was a common sight in the yards of Kashmiri peasant to see men either making thread into yarn or smoking while their womenfolk at work, the old grandmother at her spinning wheel and young women preparing meals, grinding and husking rice was a daily occupation of a Kashmiri women.<sup>672</sup> In the absence of modern water supply schemes the girls had to bring the drinking water from distant places as writes Neve, “*The girls are the great Water –carriers. Owing to hardwork they soon lose their good looks. They are married at an early age, soon after ten.*”<sup>673</sup> And it is to be noted that the womenfolk of the villages excluding syed and Pandit women were engaged in heavy manual work in the fields for long hours. Thus we see the life of an average women of rural Kashmir was very hard. Mrs. Ashbrooke Crump wrote in 1919, “*Whether polyandry, polygamy or monogamy prevails (in state),the women is always the beast of burden. you can see them everywhere hard at work, carrying loads of fuel and fodder.*”<sup>674</sup> Every household in the village has its wooden or stone mortar wherein with long and heavy wooden pestles women singing or humming folk-tunes pound paddy. But it doesn,t mean that the woman was a beast of burden. Women generally lead a free and equal life among the Muslims. No village woman used the purdah except the brides called *Maharlanis* (brides) for the nuptial day for some time as a token of maidenly modesty and ofcourse as a custom.<sup>675</sup>

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670. Ibid. No doubt purdah is strictly observed by a considerable portion of those living in urban areas. Census of India, 1941, Vol. XXII.p.14; Ab. Rashid Khanday, “*The Sikh rule in Kashmir(1819-1846 A.D)*”, Muneeza publications Kulgam (Kashmir),2007.p.34.

671. Ernest F. Neve. “*things seen in kashmir*”,pp.64,151; Knight E.F,p.58.  
Ernest F. Neve, “*Beynod the Pirpanjal*”,p.35; Biscoe, op.cit.pp.65,92; P.N.K. Bamzai, op.cit.p.426; Parveena Akther, “*The history of Kashmir in Political, economic and socio-cultural perspective(1846-1885)*”, Kashmir Info publications Srinagar, 2007. p.280.

673. Ernest F. Neve, “*Beynod the Pirpanjal*”,p.79; Also see F.R. Faridi & M.M. Siddiqi, “*The social structure of Indian Muslims*”, Qazi publishers New Delhi,1992.p.25.

674. Crump,Mrs.Ashbrooke,p.48.

675. Ibid,p.180.

There were fewer Muslim women than men; the ratio is about nine to ten. Perhaps for this reason polygamy is comparatively uncommon. More females are born than males but baby girls do not receive so much care as the boys and the mortality from smallpox and infantine diseases is higher. The girls are often mothers at the age of fourteen.<sup>676</sup> Among Muslims Many groups encouraged a widower to marry his deceased wife's younger sister but never her old sister. Unlike the pandit women, the Muslim women can marry after their divorce; divorce is recognized and the marriage of widows approved.<sup>677</sup>

Under the Muslim law daughters have equal right to inherit their father's money and property with their brothers.<sup>678</sup> But it appears that Kashmiris especially villagers followed the Hindu law of inheritance under which the daughter did not have a claim on her natal family's real estate but typically included potable valuables such as jewelry and household goods that a bride could control throughout her life.<sup>679</sup> However, with the passage of time, the larger proportion of the dowry has come to consist of goods and cash payments that go straight into the hands of the groom's family. Among some lower-status groups, large dowries were currently replacing traditional bride price payments. Even among Muslims, Previously not given to demanding large dowries, Daughters also received presents on the festivals.<sup>680</sup>

## 8. Food

Rice has been from time immemorial the staple food of the Kashmiri's and (*dhanya*) has dominated all social and economic activities of the people.<sup>681</sup> It not only formed the main source of revenue to the government but was also the medium of commerce acting as a popular currency. Every article was evaluated in terms of *dhanya* (rice).<sup>682</sup> Rice was taken in a plain boiled state, stuffing with any ingredients being avoided. It is not out of a place to mention that the Kashmiri's are heavy rice eaters and consume half a killo of rice per meal. When at work in the rice-fields a cultivator requires plenty of Sustenance, the chief staples of food being rice and other grains cooked as porridge, or ground into flour and made into

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676. Ernest F, "*Neve, Beyond the Pirpanjal*" ,p.80.

677. Census of India, 1941, Vol. XXII.p.13.

678. Dr. M Mukarram Ahmed, " Encyclopaedia of Islam", Anmol publications New Delhi, Vol.6,2005.pp.278-84.

679. Ganjoo, Nath Kanth, "*Costomary law of Kashmir*", Srinagar, 1959 A.D.p.32.

680. Lawerance,op.cit.p.266.

681. A. R. Khan, "*Geography of Kashmir*", City Book centre Srinagar,2011.p.60.

682. P.N.K Bamzai, op.cit,p.426.



bread.<sup>683</sup> On festive occasions they prepare boiled rice with colouring of turmeric. And it used to be the dearest dish to the people of the valley.<sup>684</sup>

Not long ago the villagers rarely obtained rice for their food, as they have to work on the fields of *Zaldars* (land lords) in lieu of a very little share of produce. And for the major part of year they had to sustain on wild fruits, water nuts and sometimes maize, barley, millets, and buckwheat formed their diet.<sup>685</sup> In the summer the abundant fruits of Kashmir would sustain a large population. First come the mulberries which feed not only the people but sheep, ponies, and even dogs;<sup>686</sup> then the apricot and later apples and pears. In order to extinguish the fire of hunger, the people used to eat most of the fruits unripe.<sup>687</sup> It was only after passing the “land to tiller” Act, by Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah that the peasants could now retain enough grain and pulses from their produce to last them for a year.<sup>688</sup> They had no longer to sustain themselves and their families on *singhara* nuts for more than four months in the year.<sup>689</sup> Besides rice the people consumed a lot of bakery preparations like *nan*, *kulcha*, *lawas* and delicious *khatais*. These were taken along with tea, saltish or sweet.

*Maize*:-maize was the food of the gujars and hardy mountain people. They grew it on their terraced field up on the hills and prepared it either as thick porridge or thick loaves. They had plenty of skimmed milk supplied by their herds of buffaloes.<sup>690</sup>

*Singhara*:-The *singhara* (*trapa bispinosa*) or horned waternut called by the Kashmiris “*gor*” grows on the bottom of the water lake in such profusion that around 60,000 tons were raised every year. It constituted almost the only food for at least 30,000 persons for five months in the year. It ripened in the month of October. The nut was dried and then formed into a flour or meal of which cakes were made.<sup>691</sup>

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683. Lawerance, op.cit, p.253.

684. Ibid.

685. Lawerance, op.cit ,p254; G. C. Mrs Bruce, op.cit, P.33.

686. There is a Kashmiri proverb, “*Tul aawo ti drag drawo*” i.e., the coming of mulberries subsides the famine.

687. Statement of Haji Gh. Nabi Bhat S/o Khizar Mohd Bhat, R/o Mitrigam Pulwama, Age 95 years.

688. Suresh k. Sharma & S.R Bakshi , “*Economic Life Of Kashmir*”, Anmol Publications New Delhi, 1995. pp.95-96.

689. P .N.K Bamzai, op.cit, p.467.

690. P.N.K Bamzai, op.cit, p.427.

691. Ibid.

**Non Vegetarian Food:-**Mutton was taken both by Hindus and Muslims. *Poultry* (fowls, ducks and geese) were abundant. An ordinary peasant would perhaps eat fowls about six times in the month and mutton five times. In the winter sheep fell sick, and there was no hope of recovery, they were killed and eaten.<sup>692</sup> Whenever a fish could be caught, it was eaten. Pandits would not touch poultry or eggs, but they did eat wild fowl and the eggs of lake birds.<sup>693</sup>

*Vegetables:-*Vegetables of all sorts were taken in large quantities. The common ones being the kuram sag(hak),turnip and radish. Both of these were kept in deep pits covered with earth to last for months during the winter.<sup>694</sup>Cabbages and radish, lettuce, spinach, potato, and other common vegetables boiled into a sort of soup with a little salt were eaten extensively.<sup>695</sup> The leaves of the dandelion, dock, plantain and mallow were also eaten. The root of the lotus plant called nadroo<sup>696</sup> when boiled and flavoured, was a dainty dish.<sup>697</sup> Besides in lean times, villagers would subsist on wild vegetables and edible roots like Hand, *Kretch*, *Wapal hak* (*Dipsacus mermims*), *hedur* (*agricuup sp*) which were crisis foods.<sup>698</sup>

*Milk:-*Milk formed a daily item of food. Nearly every cultivator owned a cow or two. The Muslims living in urban areas depend on milkmen for their milk. Apart from the cows owned by them, milk came daily from nearby villages. It was a sight to see the milkmen coming to the city in the early mornings. They came from their villages many miles distant at a jogtrot, carrying their earthenware pots full of milk one on the top of the other, poised on their shoulders.<sup>699</sup> Clarified butter (*ghi*) is not much eaten, as the Kashmiri finds that it irritates his throat.<sup>700</sup>

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692. For detail see Mohammad Ishaq Khan,op.cit.p.99.

693. P.N.K Bamzai, "*Socio Economic History of Kashmir 1846-1925*", p.428, Sir Walter Lawerance, "*The valley of Kashmir*",p.253.

693. Ibid.

694. Sir Walter Lawerance,op.cit,p.253; Mohammad Ishaq Khan,op.cit.p.99.

695. A. R Khan.op.cit.p.60.

696. Ibid.

697. Ab. Rashid Khanday, "*The sikh rule in Kashmir (1819-1846 A.D)*", Muneeza Publications, Kulgam (Kashmir), 2007.p.41.

698. Sir Walter Lawerance, op.cit,p.254; Francis young husband, "*Kashmir*",p.220.

699. P.N.K Bamzai, op.cit, p.430; Sir Walter Lawerance,op.cit,p.253.

700. Sir Walter Lawerance ,op.cit ,p.253.

**9. Tea:-** Tea is said to have been introduced by Mirza Haidar from Yarkand.<sup>701</sup> The Kashmiris rich and poor are passionately fond<sup>702</sup> of tea of which two kinds found their way into the markets of Kashmir by land transport direct from china. In 1875 Bates wrote there were two kinds of tea, *surati* and *sabz*. The *surati* was like English tea and reached from Ladak and the Punjab. The *sabz* tea on the other hand was the famous brick tea which came through ladak.<sup>703</sup> There were various ways of preparing tea. *Shiri chai* was made by adding to each tola of tea one masha of *phul* (soda) between a quarter and half seer of cold water was added for each partaker. The vessel was then taken off the fire and the liqueur strained through a cloth and beaten up with a stick to give it a dark colour. In the meantime half a seer of fresh milk was boiled down until three chittaks remained. This was poured on the tea, which was again placed on the fire and boiled for about ten minutes, a chitak of butter being added when the preparation was at its hottest. If tea was to be consumed in the family circle, it was served out with a wooden ladle into each of the cups, but if intended for company, it was poured, out of the pot into the tea pot (samovar).The Russian tea urn or “Samovar”<sup>704</sup> was common kitchen utensil in Kashmir. The Kashmiris like their tea very sweet or very salt: the former is known as *kahva* and the latter as *shiri*, and is always mixed with milk. Both are made in the Russian samovar which is a popular institution in Kashmir. It is the custom always to eat wheaten bread or biscuits with tea. Often spices, more especially cinnamon are mixed with the tea.<sup>705</sup>

**10. Tobacco and snuff.** Kashmiris took to smoking late.<sup>706</sup> Men and women alike were however, inveterate snuff takers, and the great bulk of the tobacco imported into Kashmir came in that form. The best snuff come from Peshawar. Many of the snuff makers in that city were Kashmiris, who returned to the valley in the summer bringing back part of their wages in snuff. Every wani's shop had a row of bottles containing snuff, which was sold in small packets of birch bark.<sup>707</sup>

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701. Mohammad Ishaq Khan,op.cit.p.99.

702. A. R Khan.op.cit.p.60.

703. Sir Walter Lawerance ,op.cit,p.254.

704. P.N.K Bamzai, op.cit,p.426.

705. Sir Walter Lawerance ,op.cit,p.254.

706. Ibid,p 254; P.N.K Bamzai, op.cit, p.432.

707. P.N.K Bamzai, op.cit, p.432.

## 11. Pastimes

It will be wrong to say that there are no pastimes in the village life of Kashmir. Nodoubt the major part of the peasant's day spent in agricultural operations (ploughing, Sowing, Weeding and harvesting).<sup>708</sup> But it has been noted out that there are separate amusements for men, women and children. After completing the day's work, the men-folk used to assemble at the yard of a particular house where they used to organize *Kabadi* matches.<sup>709</sup> After taking the super the villagers used to gather at particular home especially in winter nights, besides sharing the hookah and discussing the daily activities, there used to be a story teller, who presents his colorful stories to entertain the gathering.<sup>710</sup> In addition to it, wrestling matches were held at the fairs of saints especially at the shrines of Charar-i-sharief and at Pakherpora.<sup>711</sup>

*Birara ball*: It was a popular game among the villagers. The village youth used to turn out with slings and stones, and played a very earnest and serious game.<sup>712</sup> On other occasions children played the game *kanch marven/* stone striking. The game needed two participants each holding a small stone in his hand. One of the boys threw his stone over a distance of four to five yards and the other was required to make it a target by striking it with the stone in his hand. If he succeeded the first player was required to lift him bodily on his shoulders and carry him to the place where the striking stone lay. If he failed, it was his duty to throw the stone and of the first player to strike it.<sup>713</sup> The boys also played *hide- and -seek (Zhep Zhep)* late in the evening particularly in moonlit lights.<sup>714</sup> It is not out of a place to mention that the usual pastime for children was a game of shells which creates a lot of enthusiasm. One of the amusements of the children was *Draman poochan*. It was the popular custom among the

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708. He had to work in the fields in summer from early in the morning to late in the night, ploughing, breaking the pods with wooden hammer, irrigating the field and sowing the seeds. This work continued with greater vigour when the seedlings began to sprout. He and his family then applied themselves to weeding and tending of the plants-----When the crops began to ripen he had to watch it and drive away the birds, and later to harvest it, cut, thrush and store the grain. In winter he and his family besides lookafter cattle and sheep took to spinning the wool from his sheep and weaving pattu and blankets for his own use for the market.Ibid.p.443.

709. Heard from the mouth of Mohd Akram Wani S/O Ab Khaliq Wani, R/O Mitrigam Pulwama, age 75 years.

710. Heard from the mouth of my late maternal grandfather; Sir Walter Lawrance, op.cit . p. 255.

711. Ibid.

712. Statement of the father of author; Mohammad Ishaq Khan, op.cit.p.101.; Knowels, "*Kashmiri Proverbs*", p.3.

713. Mohammad Ishaq Khan,op.cit.p.101

714. Ibid.

village children of the Muslim community that during the spring season especially on the first day of Eid, they used to go for a short picnic in the nearest meadow of their village. The group generally consisted of 5-10 children belonging to both the sexes. Where they used to eat, play and bathe.<sup>715</sup> In addition to it the *Gabraetch* (cow boys) used to cook ‘*Churwaer*’ And roasted raw wheat locally called ‘*Khalbuz*’.<sup>716</sup>

Among the many amusements of the women folk ‘*tule lasngun tulan chas*’ was an accepted amusement, generally three or four women or girls sitting back to back. This was Known as ‘*tule lasngun tulan chas*’<sup>717</sup> During the closing days of the month of Ramazan and immediately before and after the id-ul-Zuha, Young women in each neighbourhood assembled after dusk in compound of one of the houses and celebrated the functions by singing in standing rows the traditional songs called *rov*. The rows were formed one faced the other and each women extended her arms over the shoulders of her two neighbour. One of the rows kept singing a song verse by verse and the other repeated the first line of the song every time, the singing of a verse was completed by the other .no musical instrument were used during this process but the women kept on moving their bodies forwards and backwards as they went on singing the chorus .the song was pretty and the dance graceful.<sup>718</sup> The little girls used to play with rag dolls and with pebbles (*trupi/Juli*).<sup>719</sup> However Modern games and sports, first introduced by the missionary school latter were taken by other schools, gradually these games reached to the villages.<sup>720</sup> And currently cricket, volley ball, foot ball have replaced the traditional games.

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715. Interview with Ab Gafar Sheikh S/o Ali Mohd Sheikh R/O Tengpuna Pulwama, age 70.

716. Statement of Ab Kabir Dar S/O Mohd Abdullah Dar, R/O Below Dargund. Dist. Pulwama, Age 70 years.

717. Ibid, Tyandel Biscoe, op.cit.p.106.

718. Mohd Ishaq Khan, “History of Srinagar”,p.102. Cosmos publications Karan Nagar Srinagar 1999. The chief Muslim festivals are celebrated according to luner callender, sometimes Eid falls in the winter season, at that time Draman poochan was not celebrated.

719. Sir Walter Lawerance, ,op.cit .p.255.

720. Ibid.

## Conclusion

In this work an attempt has been made to trace the social life of the rural Kashmir from 1900 -1950 A.D. During the period of our study, the people of Kashmir especially the urban people were passing through a transitional period and witnessed a considerable change in their socio economic life on account of the introduction of modern education and the reform movements, which were launched by different organizations for the upliftment of the people.<sup>721</sup> Since the socio religious reform movements were largely confined to the urban areas as such the rural populace of Kashmir by and large was not benefitted by these movements and hence the social life of the villagers of Kashmir continued more or less, to be the same as in the past. It did not affect their community relations, economy, traditions, customs, beliefs and even dress. Rural folks continued to exist as a community governed by traditions, customs, convention, unwritten social codes, collective ethics, group solidarity and sense of belongingness. In terms of the concrete aspects of culture, they still stuck to their *pheran, dastar*, indigenous foot-wear and other forms of dress as in the past.

The village community of Kashmir of the period under reference consisted of various elements e.g., blacksmith, carpenter, cobbler, dhobi, barber, potter, and shepherd rendered their services in lieu of customary payments in kind. In this way the surplus produce was distributed among the different members of the village community. These non agriculturists were locally called *Taifdars*. While as the village menials, known in Kashmiri as *Nangars*. This division of labour and social stratification which had evolved through ages was followed without any digression

The economy of the rural populace of Kashmir was predominantly based on agriculture, and more than eighty percent of the population depended on it. Though not all villagers were engaged in agriculture, yet almost all the persons living in the village were in one way or the other, connected with agriculture. Thus, agriculture can be considered to be the pivot or focus of rural economy. During the normal years the agricultural out-put was abundant and it was even exported to the neighbouring states. But in this land of plenty there was acute poverty. The peasants produced enormous wealth with the sweat of their brows but it was difficult for them to make both ends meet. Their lives were miserable and they were relegated to the status which was below the human dignity. Because of exorbitant taxation and almost feudal

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721. Yet these changes were not so revolutionary that they would make a clear break with the past. The changes took-place within the broader frame work of continuity.

land relations they could hardly eat sufficient meals. Most of them had to live for many months of the year on the fruits and wild herbs. But it is to be noted that the level of exploitation and backwardness being too great, did not permit economy to grow and develop on its own needs. The state monopoly and the absence of technology proved the chief bottleneck to industrial activity. Consequently the society succumbed to the low standards of life and did not register progress at any level during the period of our study. The nature of cultivation was dictated generally by the self-sufficient character of the village. The bulk of the produce was food grains and such crops as oil seeds, pulses, and other crops for local requirements. In these crops the commercial character was completely absent and the area covered by the food crops was also limited. Besides the rights that the peasant possessed over his land depended on the nature of tenure. Generally the peasants, peasant proprietors and the tenants worked on *jagir* and other religious and charitable lands. The revenue machinery which was corrupt from top to bottom collected revenues from the peasantry in a very ruthless manner. The revenues collected in taxes and cesses were pocketed by the revenue farmers. Besides various privileged classes came to the front and became a part of the socio-economic structure of the valley. Though in origin some of them were exotic, they ranked from governors to the petty officials and were the products and exploitative tyrannous of an age. They were the worst tyrants to their own people and lived free on the exactions made on the people. The other horrible feature of the social life was the then prevalent forced labour or *covree*. It not only induced the migratory character and depopulated the country but gave birth to innumerable social exigencies. Every year a number of peasant families were ruined permanently when the head or any other male member of the family was taken to render the forced carriage of loads in course of which he perished. This not only deteriorated the position of the peasantry but equally registered huge losses in the states financial condition. Consequently most of the peasant families were fed up with the life of extreme exploitation and misery which forced the rural men folk to work in the towns of Punjab especially in winter to earn bread for their family.

The rural society of Kashmir was heterogeneous, stratified into Muslims and Hindus besides a small number of Sikhs who entered the Kashmir during the Sikh rule (1819-1846). Generally both the Hindus and Muslims were superstitious and orthodox. They believed in hosts of spirits and animistic beliefs and chiefly under the strange halo of the priests. Both respected their religious places, *pirs*, *fakirs* and *gurus*. The Hindu-Muslim relations were harmonious in the valley. The Hindus and Muslims shared intimate relations with each other.

Caste system was the main cause for social stratification amongst the Hindus. Except for a few well off, the general life of people were ridden with poverty. Among them the happiness was a relative luxury. In addition to a discussion of the customs and ceremonies of these two communities, the project also deals with the general life style of the people i.e., food habits, use of dress, ornaments, position of woman, pastimes. It also seeks to present the process of interaction and consequent interaction in respect of these customs and habits of the two communities. On the whole the customs of the Kashmiri Muslims and pundits did not undergo much perceptible change. The people of the villages under reference practiced a myriad of variegated customs and ceremonies and were almost uniform in their socio cultural behavior celebrate different along religious and economic lines. Many rituals and ceremonies connected with birth, marriage and death hardly underwent much change. However, there were ripples visible in the stream of people's thinking. Several reform movements were launched during the period under review but they did not influence the socio economic life of rural people. Of course these movements did influence the socio-economic life of the communities. It may be stated that the villagers did not very much benefit from the reform movements and acts. They still continued following their conservative habits and customs. In this respect the pundits and Muslims of the villages of Kashmir were virtually alike and still pursued their age old customs and habits. The social setup among the two communities, Muslims and Kashmiri pundits were almost similar. The division in castes and classes, entertainment of superstitions, beliefs, prevalence of customs and habits were almost identical during the period under review.

This was the picture of the rural life of Kashmir from 1900-1950 A.D. It must be said that if there had been a ruler whose chief concern were the welfare of the people and not the exaction of money, the position would have been different.



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