

V i t a s t a

THE PUBLICATION OF KASHMIR SABHA, KOLKATA

Vol. XLVII (2023-2024)



THEME

Art, Culture, Heritage and Language
as a catalyst of Spiritual Awakening and Social Well-Being

With Best Wishes From

M/S. DEV ENTERPRISES
KOLKATA



Kashmir Sabha Kolkata expresses its gratitude to Sh. Autar Krishan Dhar for his exemplary leadership as President of our Sabha from 1990-1997 to steer the construction of Kashmir Bhawan, Kolkata. But for his personal initiative, efforts and support from his team, our Bhawan may have remained a distant dream.

We also place on record our sincere thanks and appreciation to the members of executive committee of the Sabha during his tenure and other members of baradari who put in their best efforts to make this dream of having our Bhawan in Kolkata a reality.

May Mata Khir Bhawani Bless all.

July 22,2023

Kolkata

This issue of Vitasta is dedicated to

**SPIRITUAL AWAKENING AND
SOCIAL WELL-BEING OF HUMANITY**



Art, Culture, Heritage and Language

as a catalyst of Spiritual Awakening and Social Well-Being

- 04 From the President's Desk - Suneel Kaul
- 05 Secretary's Report - Rajesh Tikoo
- 06 From the Editor's Desk - Suman Raina
- 08 Remembrance

Section I

THEME BASED ARTICLES

- 10 Kashmiriyat Unveiled: Rituals, Art and Traditions as Catalysts for Spiritual Awakening and Social Well-Being - Ridhima Kaul
- 14 Art, Culture, Heritage and Language as a catalyst of Spiritual Awakening and Social Well-Being - Jinia Chakrabortya
- 17 Lifestyle...An Impetus - Chander M Bhat
- 20 Experiencing Spirituality from Creativity - Aahee Sapru
- 22 Spirituality and religiosity in conferring tolerance and resilience in displaced Kashmir Pandit community - Sudhir K Sopory
- 27 Art from Wholeness Can Transform the World - Arun Wakhlu

Section II

OUR LANGUAGE AND IT'S SCRIPT

- 34 Kashmiri language and the Script Conflict - Uma Kant Kachru
- 39 Importance and preservation of our mother tongue: Kashmiri language and culture in diaspora - Dr. Roop Krishen Bhat
- 45 Kashmiri Language Script - Synchronic Digraphia - Ashok Dullu

Section III

LALDED

- 53 Yogini Lalleshwari of Kashmir - A Mystic and Poet of Highest Order - Ravi Dhar
- 57 Lalded - Ashok Dullu

Section IV

OUR HERITAGE

- 63 Kashmir's Traditional Miniature Art - a Heritage Conserved - Sanjeev Munshi
- 66 Martand Sun Temple - The Lost Jewel of Kashmir - Sanjeev Munshi
- 70 Enriching the youth - Raj Nath Bhat

Section V

HINDI & KASHMIRI

- 73 हरमुख कोई मेरे साथ चले! - अग्रिशेखर
- 78 आफ़ताबिक नूरनिय वुछ - डॉ. रमेश निराश
- 79 महामहेश्वराचार्य अभिनवगुप्त और तंत्रसार१। - Lalit Parimoo
- 83 धरती मां - Kusum Dhar 'Sharda'

Section VI

KASHMIR AND BEYOND

- 85 Zest For Life - Kadambari Kaul
- 86 Language, art, culture and Heritage - Virender Bhat
- 90 'Sancha'-Ancient Treatise of Himachal Pradesh - A Glorious Gift from Kashmir - Upender Ambardar
- 94 Art, culture, heritage and language - Tonmoy Chakraborty
- 96 Medical education - a distant dream still haunted by our community - Kanka Pandita

Section VII

- 99 Glimpse of Sabha Activities

Section VIII

- 104 Contacts of our permanent members in West Bengal, rest of India and abroad



Committee Members

KASHMIR SABHA KOLKATA

CK35 Salt Lake City, Karunamoyee, Kolkata 700 091
www.kashmirsabhakolkata.org

OFFICE BEARERS

President – Mr Suneel Kaul
Secretary – Mr Rajesh Tikoo
Joint Secretary – Akshay Moza
Joint secretary (IT) – Ms Preeti Thusoo
Treasures - Mr Rakesh Kaul

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Ms Suman Raina

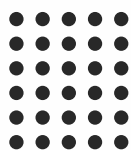
CULTURAL AND SPORTS COMMITTEE

Mr B M Misri (Convenor)
Ms Sunita Roy Koul
Ms Durga Kaul
Ms Rita Kaul
Ms Usha Kaul

TRUSTEES

Mr B M Misri
Mr Surender Munshi
Ms Kalpana Dhar

Mr Maharaj Krishan Kaul
Mr Rakesh Kaul
Ms Suman Raina





Calendar

April 2023 - March 2024

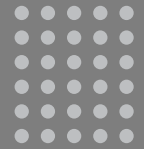
Important Kashmiri Pandit Festivals and Functions celebrated at Kashmir Bhavan Kolkata

S.No.	Month	Year	Date	Day	Festival
1	March	2023	26	Sunday	Navreh & Zangtra
2	April	2023	17	Monday	Swami Lakshman Joo Jawanti
3	May	2023	9	Tuesday	Swami Lakshman Joo birthday
5	June	2023	30	Friday	Bhagwan Gopinath Jayanti
6	September	2023	10	Sunday	Janmashtami Function
7	September	2023	19	Tuesday	Ganesh Chaturthi
8	October	2023	2	Monday	Swami Lakshman Joo Nirvan Divas
9	October	2023	24	Tuesday	Dussehra / Vijaya Dashami
10	January	2024	27 & 28	Saturday & Sunday	Annual Hawan
11	February	2024	4	Sunday	Koshal Homm
12	February	2024	11	Sunday	Sports / Picnic / Cultural program
13	March	2024	10	Sunday	Maha Shivratri / Salam

The calendar is based on Prem Nath Shastri's Vijayashyor Panchang of 2023-2024
(Saptrishi Savenvt 5099 & Vikrmi Savenvt 2080)

(Compiled by B. M. Misri, Convenor of Cultural and sports Activity Affairs, KSK)

Note: Sports, Picnic & Cultural program dates are proposed and to be discussed in Executive committee meeting.



Dear Biradari Members

The year that has just gone by stands testament to the collective dedication of all the members to

the cause of our community and its members. It is amazing to note the speed with which the members have been openheartedly responding to the calls for financial support. I truly can't thank you enough for your benevolence. Feeling really blessed to be a part of this group. I urge you all to keep up the spirits and keep contributing whenever and whatever you can. The Sabha really needs funds not only to keep up with the inflation but also to beat the rising cost of maintenance / up-gradation of the Kashmir Bhawan building & its facilities and the continuation of the various charitable activities.

It is a matter of great pleasure to present the Annual Vitasta Issue 2024 which makes it a must to acknowledge and appreciate the selfless dedicated work of Team Vitasta led by Suman Raina. Thank you so very much Suman Ji and Team Vitasta for continuing to do a wonderful job.

Thanks are also in order to all the authors who by contributing their writings make it possible for us to continue publishing Vitasta on regular basis. Publishing Vitasta would also not be possible without the

tremendous support of individuals / organisations that help us financially by placing their messages / advertisements. Big thanks with gratitude to all the authors & advertisers. I also put on record my gratitude and sincere thanks to the members who make time to take efforts and get us the advertisements thus keeping Vitasta financially viable.

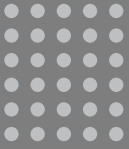
Last but not the least, my thanks to all the Executive Committee Members especially Rakesh ji for the invaluable support, help and guidance for the smooth functioning of Sabha.

Do accept my heartfelt greetings for a Happy & Successful New Year 2024. Request you all to, please, actively participate in the activities / functions organized by the Sabha.

The strength of the active members of the Sabha has dropped to an alarming low which puts a big question mark on the future of the Sabha. We need not only to incorporate new members and involve them in the Sabha activities but also increase the overall participation of the members. It would be great if the trend of decrease in the participation could somehow be reversed. We are really open to suggestions to help us achieve the desired change. Please feel free to send in your inputs.

Warm Regards,

Suneel



Secretary's Report



Firstly, I wish all the Biradari members a very happy and prosperous New Year 2024. I would also like to thank all the Executive

Members/Office-bearers of the Sabha for showing their trust and faith in me.

We at Kolkata are a smaller Sabha as compared to other states, but we have never ever let our culture and tradition diminish since our inception. We have never missed a chance to celebrate our rituals and customs. This time too all regular functions were organized and like last year this year too puja was organized on two additional occasions viz Ganesh Chaturthi & Swami Laxman Joo Nirwan Diwas, which will now be a regular feature in the Bhawan.

Participation, by Biradari members, in various functions has not been up to the mark which continues to be an area of concern. On behalf of the Sabha, I appeal to all the Biradari members to please make time to participate in as many functions as possible.

I would like to place on record our Thanks & Gratitude to all the sponsors for contributing graciously to the Sabha and

its activities. We look forward to your continued support.

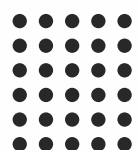
I also appeal to the benevolent hearts of all the members to please do come forward by generously donating to the "Kashmir Sabha Trust" which is our Registered Organisation with benefits of rebate under Section 80G of the Income Tax Act.

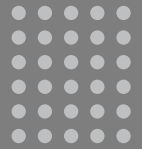
Look forward to a very healthy participation of the members in the functions organized by the Sabha at the Bhawan and also to the support and guidance in taking forward the drive to add new members.

Last but definitely not the least we solicit your suggestions to help make Sabha more vibrant and lively.

Regards,

Rajesh





Just like an umbilical cord is the lifeline and link that nourishes a fetus in mother's womb; our culture, heritage and

language are the cords suppling the nourishment of our existence and identity to us. Our culture reflects in our ideas, customs and social behaviour. It is our expression of our cultural identity that shows the world what we believe; it highlights our values and priorities. Our heritage is the keystone of our culture that plays an important part in identifying the source of our umbilical cord. It is a gift we have received with a responsibility of valuing it and preserving it for our future generations. Our culture, heritage and language are our sense of pride and we have to take onus on us to develop and conserve it. In this issue we have got a deep and thorough understanding of this mother-child bond. We also will find how this bond along with art can help us to liberate and can guide us to spiritual awakening and social wellbeing.

In Ridhima Kaul's words; rituals, art and traditions are not mere customs but a lifeline to a shared past, a bridge to the present, and a beacon for the future.

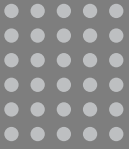
Jinia Chakraborty believes that it is high time that we realise the role and importance of our culture, traditions, art,

language and heritage in maintaining our spirituality and enhancing our social well-being. In the pursuit of modernization and becoming tech-savvy, we are forgetting the basic fundamentals of Indian culture.

According to Chander M Bhat, the fusion of modern technologies and traditional elements will augur well in preserving culture and heritage in today's world. By promoting cultural and artistic events, we can create a sense of community and bring people together.

Aahee Sapru visualizes art as ever-flowing and dynamic in nature; it uses the eyes of a keen artist to observe the world and produce such a finely tuned melody which transcends from aesthetics to spirituality and shakes the core of an individual so much so that it transforms itself into a trigger for an emotional experience unfelt from performing our daily activities. Spirituality is terrifying for a limited and emotional mind as it fails to accept what may or may not be. Art, however, eases a mind into a realm beyond reality which gets reflected through one's own artistic journey.

Sudhir K Sopory elaborates the concept of Logotherapy, which suggests that the primary motivational force for humans is to find the meaning of life. Logotherapy is founded upon the belief that striving to find meaning in life is primary the most powerful motivating and driving force especially under labyrinthian state of affairs.



Our language has preserved thousands of years of social as well as ethical value of Kashmir and is real representative of our thoughts. Unfortunately, it has been facing challenges ranging from the negative attitude of younger generations towards its use in daily life, role of parents, administrative policies regarding its script etc. and lack of subject specific teachers in Kashmiri Language. Articles by Uma Kant Kachru, Dr. Roop Krishen Bhat and Ashok Dullu delve deep into this to give our readers a clear understanding of the issue.

A jewel of our heritage, a guiding star towards our spiritual upliftment and liberation, an ardent practitioner and propagator of Kashmir Shaivism, Yogini Lalleshwari, has today become a subject of study for modern scholars and sociologists. Ravi Dhar and Ashok Dullu have given our readers a glimpse into the life and liberation of our own Lal Ded.

Through Sanjeev Munshi we get to know about the ancient art of Miniature paintings that used to be hand-drawn by our Kul-Gurus and presented to each 'yajmaan' on 'Gauri Tritiya' (Gor-Tray). We can find them on our 'Zaatukh' or Janma Patrika too. He also gives us a glimpse of history, architecture, destruction and other details about Martand Sun Temple. Raj Nath Bhat wants our youth to learn about our history and be proud of our rich heritage. Virender Bhat tells us about 'matrika chakra', the wheel of cosmic manifestation. Upender Ambardar talks

about the 'Sancha Granth', believed to have travelled to Himachal Pradesh from Kashmir hundreds of years back.

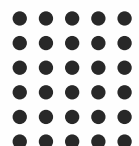
Section 5 is a literary treat in Hindi / Kashmiri by eminent writers like Dr. Aghishekhar, Dr. Ramesh Nirash, Actor Lalit Parimoo, and Kusum Dhar 'Sharda'.

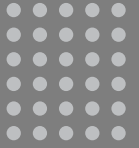
I believe this issue of Vitasta will serve as a good piece of literature for our readers. I am confident that the rich content will attract the attention of the readers and give them not only a good reading experience but will also serve as a source document for future reference.

I would like to offer my sincere thanks on behalf of Kashmir Sabha Kolkata, to all the authors who have taken time off their busy schedule and contributed by penning down their thoughts for this issue of Vitasta. I also thank our advertisers for their continuous support and special thanks to those members of Sabha whose valuable efforts have been a great support and without which this issue would not be easy to release.

With hand folded Namaskar and warm regards!

Suman





Remembrance



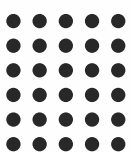
15.12.1935 - 18.09.2023

Prabha Ogra

Kashmir Sabha Kolkata was saddened to learn of demise of Mrs Prabha Ogra, popularly called as Ogra Auntyji by our Biradari. She left for her heavenly abode in a calm and peaceful way at the residence of her daughter, Kalpanaji, to unite with her husband, late Mr M K Ogra (popularly recalled as Uncle Ogra) and son, late Bhupesh Ogra.

Mrs Prabha Ogra was born in Banmohalla in downtown Srinagar to her parents, Late Bhagwan Das Trichal and Dhanvati. She got married after completing her matriculation to Uncle Ogra and relocated to Calcutta in 1953. She was a devoted homemaker with a calm and patient personality. Unlike most Kashmiris, she never ate onion, tomatoes and garlic. She was a passionate listener of cricket commentary in her younger days, especially during matches of her favourite team of West Indies.

We pray for eternal peace and moksha to her soul. Sabha will miss her physical presence in various activities but we are sure of her heavenly blessings.



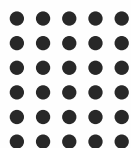


SECTION I

XLVII

THEME BASED ARTICLES

2023 - 2024



Kashmiriyat Unveiled: Rituals, Art and Traditions as Catalysts for Spiritual Awakening and Social Well-Being

Ridhima Kaul

In the heart of the Himalayas, where the earth kisses the sky and the rivers whisper stories of centuries gone by, there exists a cultural tapestry unlike any other. A tapestry woven with the threads of wisdom, artistry, and tradition, nurtured over generations by the resilient Kashmiri Pandit community. As I stand amidst the echoes of history, I am reminded of a timeless Kashmiri verse: 'Zan chavur wanun wuchum sahibas, Vuchhun wuchhum navjawan.' These words resonate with the spirit of a people who have not just preserved their heritage but, against all odds, have passed it down through ages. Join me on a journey into the heart of Kashmiriyat, where rituals, art, and traditions are not mere customs but a lifeline to a shared past, a bridge to the present, and a beacon for the future. In a world that's ever-changing, the enduring legacy of the Kashmiri Pandits shines brightly, offering a glimpse of how culture, when embraced with unwavering love, can become a catalyst for spiritual awakening and social well-being.

In the intricate tapestry of life, there are places where the past and present dance together, and one such place is the enchanted land of Kashmir. Here, nestled amidst the majestic Himalayas, the essence of Kashmiriyat weaves a story that transcends time itself. Our journey through this timeless realm begins with a profound

theme: "Art, Culture, Heritage, and Language as a catalyst of Spiritual Awakening and Social Well-Being."

As the revered saying among the Kashmiri Pandits goes, "Karya kaaryavaar jeh ch'ivyun, shruhun chu vuchhun navjawan." This verse encapsulates the very soul of Kashmir, where rituals are not just a set of actions but a sacred journey through time—a passage of continuity and reverence.

In the heart of Kashmir, the past never truly fades away; it breathes in the present, infusing every gesture, every word, and every stroke of art with the wisdom of ages gone by. This is not merely a tale of a place but a testament to the resilience of a people who, in the face of history's storms, have clung fiercely to their traditions, their rituals, their art, and their language.

For centuries, the artisans of Kashmir have crafted masterpieces that reflect not only their skills but also the deep spiritual connection they hold with their land. The intricate patterns of Kashmiri shawls, the mesmerizing papier-mâché work, and the vivid hues of Pashmina carpets are more than just art; they are expressions of a culture deeply rooted in aesthetics and spirituality.

Music, too, flows like the rivers of Kashmir, with Sufi mysticism infusing soul-stirring melodies. The poetry of Lal Ded, Habba

Khatoon, and the mystical verses of Nund Rishi reverberate through the ages, touching the hearts of those who seek a deeper connection with the divine.

In this enchanting world, rituals aren't mere customs; they are sacred passages that connect generations to their ancestors. From the elaborate ceremonies of marriage to the soul-soothing chants at the temples, each ritual is a bridge to the past, reminding the people of who they are and where they come from.

And then, there's the Kashmiri language—more than a means of communication, it's a repository of ancient wisdom. The rich tapestry of words holds within it the accumulated knowledge of generations. The writings of Kalhana, the Rajatarangini, and the literary gems of Mahmud Gami and Mahjoor stand as testaments to the profound cultural and intellectual heritage of the region.

But this isn't just a journey through words; it's a voyage through emotions—a tapestry woven with the threads of joy, sorrow, perseverance, and hope. It's an exploration of how these ancient practices aren't relics of the past but guiding lights in a world that seeks meaning and connection.

As we navigate the alleys of time, we'll encounter not just facts but feelings, not just history but heartbeats. We'll witness how art, culture, heritage, and language, cherished and nurtured by Kashmiri Pandits, continue to resonate in the soul of the region, awakening spirits and fostering social harmony. Join us on this odyssey through the heart of Kashmiriyat, where the past and present are intertwined, and

where the art of existence itself is illuminated by the culture that refuses to fade.

My connection to Kashmir and its enchanting tapestry of culture and traditions runs deeper than words can express. Growing up, I was fortunate to be enveloped in the warmth of a Kashmiri Pandit family, where every ritual, every custom, every piece of art carried not just tradition but a sense of belonging and spiritual resonance.

The stories of my grandparents, who themselves were born in the heart of Srinagar, painted vivid pictures of a bygone era when the air was filled with the fragrance of saffron and the melodies of Rabab. Their recollections of Navreh mornings, when the entire household would gather to seek blessings for the year ahead, left an indelible mark on my heart.

But it was the evenings, when my grandmother would recite verses from the scriptures and share the profound wisdom contained in them, that I truly understood the spiritual depth of Kashmiri Pandits. It was through her eyes that I saw the Kashmir Valley not just as a geographical region but as a sacred land where spirituality intertwined with daily life.

Their narratives of leaving behind their homes, their temples, and their way of life were laced with sorrow, but they also carried an unwavering spirit, a determination to preserve their culture, and an undying love for their homeland.

My personal connection to Kashmir and its people, particularly the Kashmiri Pandits, has been a profound journey of discovery.

It's a connection rooted in shared rituals, cherished customs, and a love for the culture that has defined the identity of the region.

As I embark on this exploration of Kashmiriyat, it's with the knowledge that this is not just a story I'm telling; it's a story that has shaped me, one that I carry with me as a testament to the strength, resilience, and enduring love of people who have always called Kashmir their home.

The timeless rituals and festivals that have been an integral part of the Kashmiri Pandit culture continue to weave their magic through the fabric of time. Generation after generation, the essence of traditions like Herath, Gadd Battha, Pann Puja, Navreh, and more remains not only alive but thriving.

Herath, the celebration of Lord Shiva's union with Goddess Parvati, continues to be observed with devotion and reverence. Families gather to offer prayers, perform rituals, and pass on the spiritual significance of this festival to their children, ensuring that the flame of faith continues to burn brightly.

Pann Puja, the joyous homage to the Goddess Beeb Garab Maej, is a moment of unity and spiritual devotion. Families bake the sweet flatbread named Roth with care of purity and perform rituals to invoke blessings, instilling in their children the values of wisdom and prosperity.

Navreh, the Kashmiri New Year, heralds the arrival of a new beginning. Families still mark this occasion with the 'Navreh' or 'Nayi Patri,' symbolizing renewal and hope

for the year ahead. The significance of this event is shared with the young ones, ensuring that the traditions endure. These celebrations are not relics of the past; they are living traditions that bridge generations, nurturing a profound connection to Kashmiri culture. The meanings and beliefs behind these rituals are passed from elders to youngsters, carrying forward the legacy of Kashmiri Pandits.

In a world of constant change, these traditions provide a sense of continuity, identity, and spiritual nourishment. They serve as a testament to the resilience of a people who have preserved their cultural heritage and continue to do so, enriching the tapestry of Kashmir's cultural diversity.

In the journey through the heart of Kashmiriyat, we have travelled through time, emotion, and the intricate tapestry of a culture that defies the bounds of history. We have witnessed the power of rituals and customs to connect generations, the enduring influence of artistry, and the deep spiritual resonance that infuses every corner of the Kashmir Valley.

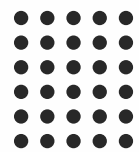
As our exploration draws to a close, we are reminded that Kashmiriyat is not a relic of the past—it's a living force, a cultural heartbeat that continues to resonate. It's a testament to the resilience of a people who have faced challenges and hardships, yet have clung fiercely to their traditions, their rituals, their art, and their language.

Today, as we navigate a world marked by change and uncertainty, the essence of Kashmiriyat serves as a timeless guide—a source of inspiration for those seeking

spiritual awakening and social well-being. It stands as a reminder that culture is not static; it evolves and adapts, but its core values endure. In the face of adversity, the Kashmiri Pandits have demonstrated the power of culture to foster resilience, unity, and an unwavering connection to their homeland. Their stories, rituals, and customs are not relics of a bygone era; they are beacons that illuminate the path forward.

So, let us carry the spirit of Kashmiriyat with us, not just as a memory of a land far away but as a living testament to the enduring power of culture to shape our

lives and inspire our souls. May it serve as a reminder that in the embrace of our traditions and the celebration of our shared heritage, we find the catalyst for spiritual awakening and social well-being, not just in Kashmir but wherever our hearts call home.



Ridhima is a final-year student pursuing a B.Sc. in Biotechnology, with a passion for bridging the gap between science and culture. Academic journey has equipped her with a solid foundation in life sciences and medical research. In addition to studies, she is an avid writer and blogger. Under the banner of "Ridhima Writings," have been blogging since 2021, where she explores various topics, shares insights, and expresses her perspectives. The endeavour has honed her research, writing, and storytelling skills. Unique blend of scientific knowledge and writing expertise has led her to explore the intersection of science and culture, with a particular focus on preserving and celebrating the cultural heritage of Kashmiri roots. Deeply passionate about the importance of preserving cultural heritage and fostering understanding across disciplines, as she embarks on the path toward a career in biotechnology, she aims to continue exploring this connection. With a dedication to both the sciences and the arts, she looks forward to contributing to endeavours that bridge these worlds and promote meaningful dialogue.



Art, Culture, Heritage and Language as a catalyst of Spiritual Awakening and Social Well-Being

Jinia Chakraborty

It is often believed that spiritual awakening can influence our aspects of well-being, such as living a meaningful life filled with purposes to serve humanity and experience personal growth as well. In this respect, we are fortunate enough to have been born in a country known to be a rich storehouse of spiritual knowledge and wisdom. It is said that spirituality is the soul of our country and it has been an integral part of our way of life.

We are also a melting pot of many cultures and religions, and all of these have greatly contributed in making India a great country. Our country is known for its diversity and plurality of its culture. India is known to have one of the world's largest collections of music, dance, theatre, folk traditions, performing arts, rites and rituals, paintings and writings, that are popularly known as the "Intangible Cultural Heritage" (ICH) of humanity. In other words, India's culture is inclusive of its varied languages, religions, art forms, music, celebrations, customs, etc.

Earlier, India was mainly known for its culture, traditions and spirituality. People lived in peace and harmony with each other maintaining a healthy life style. We went on to achieve important milestones in every field of study even at those days while maintaining our customs and culture. But, with the advent of industrial revolution in the post-independent India,

the Indian economy experienced a massive transformation which led to the rapid development and urbanization of the economy. The dawn of urbanization was brought in with the inventions of new technologies including electronic gadgets such as mobile phones, television sets, computers, etc. alongside various new developments in the education, service and other sectors. As the Indian economy grew, people slowly embraced globalisation and urbanization leaving behind their cultural ethics and art. People from all masses slowly started taking a liking towards western culture and traditions. They started to believe that western culture and their languages are more advanced and stylish than our own culture, heritage, language and even, the style of art. This change of mindset acted as a trigger in the collapse of the traditional and cultural way of living in majority of the households which led to growth of nuclear families by division of the big joint families which India once boasted of.

It has been found that over the years, we have started adapting to western lifestyle not only in terms of our working life, but also in terms of food habits, clothing, family ideals and bonding, and to a great extent in our celebrations as well. We have taken a liking towards waking up late and staying up late at night citing productivity at work. Following the adults at home, young

children have started considering this as a standard and convenient way of living. Evening story telling sessions of elders have been replaced by office parties, Kitti parties, going to clubs or even discotheques. Earlier parents narrated folk tales to children or sang lullaby while tucking them to bed. Nowadays, nobody bothers to attend to their child during bedtime and instead, ask “Alexa” to do the parenting job. Dining table discussions have given way to quite dinners or glaring glances at mobile screens. Families and relatives have stopped meeting or conversing with each other until they have been invited over some occasions. Festivals and get-together have become occasions for showing off wealth and power rather than love and care for each other.

In the earlier days, celebrations of festivals were a mass event where everyone from young to old, employed to unemployed, boys to girls would participate wholeheartedly to make it a grand success. Everyone used to focus on how to celebrate the festivals rather than trying to show off one’s own prowess or wealth or even beauty. But nowadays, celebrations have become a class event where who belongs to which section of the society matters more than even celebrating together. The true essence and spirit of the festivals have long been vanished from the heart and soul of the Indian people even before they could realise it. The saddest part is that the bonds between people have been broken down or torn apart due to the fastest adaptation of modernization by forgetting our own identity, which is imbibed within our culture and traditions. All these changes have not only resulted in

degradation and losing of our traditions and culture, but also our overall health and well-being. Our spirits have been tortured and tormented by such changes which can be proven by the growing number of suicides, murders, depression related disorders and other anti-social activities happening in the society. Children rarely respect their elders or even obey them. They have built a gap between themselves and their parents, which keep on increasing with time. The Indian society is no longer unified but have developed cracks and rifts due to the distance created between people. Not only this, people are suffering from various diseases and health issues due to the unhealthy lifestyle and food habits adapted by the masses. Our traditional food is oriented scientifically and is seasonal. The traditional way of eating, that is, through hands has its own share of health benefits as our fingers releases digestive enzymes when it comes in contact with food. Our native languages spread warmth and love amongst people belonging to various strata of the society as everyone is able to understand it. We need not belong to highly educated or upper class of the society to understand our own Indian languages. So, it can be very well understood that with the distance created between us and our culture, traditions, heritage, language, art forms, etc., we have suffered both physically as well as psychologically. This has resulted in the deterioration of our social well-being and destroyed our spiritual growth. Thus, the only way to regain our lost spirituality, improve our well-being, and live a sustainable life, is by using our art, culture, language and heritage as a catalyst.

It is high time that we realise the role and importance of our culture, traditions, art, language and heritage in maintaining our spirituality and enhancing our social well-being. In the pursuit of modernization and becoming tech-savvy, we are forgetting the basic fundamentals of Indian culture. We are neglecting our roots. It is time for us to realize that if we need to survive in a healthy way, we need to water our roots daily. In other words, we need to revive our social customs, culture and traditions. We need to bring back the rich cultural heritage, the societal interdependence, the bonding between people and the emotional interdependence as well.

The present generation is suffering from serious health issues like cardiac ailments, stroke, diabetes mellitus, obesity, kidney failures, high blood pressures, and even mental issues. Our forefathers and their previous generations were not found to be suffering from such serious ailments in massive number like us. Then why are we suffering so much? The answer lies in the fact that it is we, who have dumped our culture and heritage in the pretext of being more advanced, modernized, literate and scientific. Our forefathers followed all customs and traditions without any doubt

in mind because they believed that these practices benefit an individual and the society at large. We should adapt to changes with time but not by discontinuing our cultural practices. We should revive our culture, heritage, language and art as it will work as a catalyst in improving our spirituality and social well-being. This is the only way by which we can survive in the present times as well as in the future to come.

References

<https://www.india.gov.in>
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8651234>
<https://www.tripoto.com/india/trips/india-land-of-spirituality-5d8c9e5fbd3a4>
[https://www.ijhssi.org/papers/vol11\(5\)/Ser-2/C1105021317.pdf](https://www.ijhssi.org/papers/vol11(5)/Ser-2/C1105021317.pdf)

Jinia Chakraborty, a master in Economics from the University of Calcutta, has also completed MBA in Finance and HR from IISWBM, Kolkata. She is a Certified Data Visualisation Expert. After serving in a Nationalised Bank as a Manager for 8 years, she now pursues her passion of teaching through private tuitions for school exams and competitive exams. During her banking job tenure, she passed JAIIB exam. She is also now working as a freelancer in management consultancy field. She can be reached at jinia.15@gmail.com

Lifestyle...An Impetus

Chander M Bhat

Art, culture, heritage, and language have always been considered as the liveliest sources of spiritual awakening and social well-being. These four components touch the deepest roots of human existence and help people in exploring the rich potential of their culture and heritage that has passed down from generations to generations. Art and culture play an essential role in creating an identity that helps people connect with their history and tradition, and thus, creates a sense of belongingness and emotional attachment with their culture and heritage. The language acts as a carrier of knowledge, and disables the shedding of light on one's culture, tradition, and heritage. It is thus important to understand how these four components can work together as a catalyst for spiritual awakening and social well-being. Secondly art, culture, heritage and language are intricately connected to the spiritual and social well being of individuals and society. These pillars of human identity help us understand who we are, where we come from, and how we related to the world around us. They serve as a catalyst for personal growth, social cohesion, and community development.

Art is indeed a unique expression of human creativity that encompasses various forms like painting, sculpture, poetry, literature, music, dance, or drama, etc. Art possesses a magical quality that can connect the heart of people from all corners of the world. Different forms of art carry distinct stories, traditions, and values that are inherited from the past. It is through these expressive

forms of art that people re-live their past, feel the emotions once felt by their ancestors, and extract wisdom from the tales that their history has to offer. Art have always been an impactful force and an element of change that can bring awareness and awakening in people who view and appreciate it. Art is also a form of expression that transcends language barriers and cultural differences. Art has the power to heal, inspire, and transform us at a spiritual level. It allows us to connect with our inner selves, find meaning in our experiences, and appreciate the beauty of life. Through art, we are able to explore our true potential and understand the infinite possibilities of the human imagination. This process of creation and expression can bring a sense of fulfillment and purpose to our lives, which is essential for our spiritual well-being.

Culture and heritage are the cultural identity of a community or a society. They represent the traditions, customs, religion, festivals, and beliefs that belong to a particular group of people. In today's globalizing world, where people struggle to find their place in an increasingly homogenized world, the importance of culture and heritage preservation becomes even more important. Preserving culture and heritage helps people remain connected with their roots and also serve as a compass for future growth. Sometimes, in the changing waves of time, we can experience a unique blend of modernization and the preservation of culture and heritage. Therefore, embracing

and preserving culture and heritage can help people find meaning in their lives, remain connected with their identity, and lead to spiritual awakening. Heritage and culture are closely related to our sense of identity and belonging. They allow us to understand our roots, our traditions, and our values. They provide a framework for our social interactions, relationships, and behaviors. Heritage and culture help us develop a sense of belonging to a community or group, which is essential for our social well-being. They provide us with a shared history, language, and cultural practices that help us form bonds with others and create a sense of unity. By embracing our heritage and culture, we can celebrate the richness and diversity of human experience and create a more inclusive and tolerant society.

Language, on the other hand, is an essential tool for communication that carries the knowledge, customs and traditions. Language not only allows the people to communicate, but it also helps in the preservation of culture and heritage. It is through language that people narrate stories, express their thoughts, and understand the customs and traditions passed down from generations to generations. Language is the key to experiencing a culture more closely. Language is another crucial element that can promote spiritual and social well-being. Language is not just a means of communication; it's a reflection of our thoughts, beliefs, and culture. The language we speak shapes our perception of the world and influences our behavior. It allows us to connect with others on a deeper level, express our emotions, and express our

thoughts clearly. Language also plays a significant role in shaping our spirituality. Certain languages have been used throughout history to express religious concepts and ideas. Therefore, learning a new language can promote spiritual growth and understanding of different cultures.

Art, culture, heritage, and language, thus, work in unison as significant catalysts of spiritual awakening and social well-being. The preservation of culture, heritage, and language help people to remain connected with their roots and understand the origin and history of their society. Embracing and preserving art help in maintaining culture and heritage that adds richness to society and fosters creativity and innovation. Through art, culture and heritage the knowledge, values and traditions can be passed down to the new generation. The fusion of modern technologies and traditional elements will augur well in preserving culture and heritage in today's world. Art, heritage, culture, and language can also be used as tools for social change and community development. By promoting cultural and artistic events, we can create a sense of community and bring people together. These events can also be used to promote social cohesion and inclusiveness, build stronger relationships, and improve the quality of life for everyone. Through art and culture, we can also raise awareness about social issues and challenges that affect our communities. Education about our heritage and culture can also increase understanding and tolerance of other cultures.

Furthermore, from the perspective of social well-being, these elements play a pivotal

role in building a healthy society by promoting a sense of unity and togetherness. People who have a deeper understanding of their culture, art, heritage, and language tend to appreciate and respect each other's values and beliefs, fostering harmony and peace within the community. By practicing one's culture and heritage, individuals tend to appreciate other cultures and identify with diverse ethnicities.

In conclusion, art, culture, heritage, and language are the building blocks of spiritual awakening and social well-being. These elements represent the past, live in the present, and shape the future. Appreciating and preserving the cultural aspects of a community can help people derive meaning in their lives, remain connected with their roots, foster creativity and innovation, and create a sense of unity and

togetherness. It is, therefore, imperative that all efforts must be made for the preservation of art, culture, heritage and language, to serve as a catalyst for spiritual awakening and social well-being. Art, heritage, culture, and language are also essential pillars of human identity that play a crucial role in our spiritual and social well-being. They allow us to connect with our inner selves, form relationships with others, and make sense of the world around us. They provide us with a sense of belonging and purpose, which is essential for our overall well-being. By embracing our cultural identity, learning new languages, and promoting art and culture in our communities, we can create a more integrated, tolerant, and harmonious society.

Born on 20th March, 1960 in Murran a village in South Kashmir, Chander M. Bhat retired as Assistant Director Postal Services, Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh in Department of Posts, Govt. of India. His articles regarding Posts and of Non-Political nature stands widely published in various papers and magazines of the country. A booklet "How to Collect Stamps" published by the Deptt. of Posts, has earned him genuine accolades. He worked on the project of tracing the roots of his co-villagers and of the village Murran, resulting into the culmination of a widely acclaimed book "Murran ...My Village". Man with depth, Chander M. Bhat has also another book, "Ocean by Drops" (collection of poems) in his vase having colorful poems. His book "Ancient History of Jammu and Kashmir", confirms his researching capability. Various research papers like "The Splendor that is Amarnath" and "Vitasta...The Sacred River of Kashmir" are valuable additions to his works that has proved very fruitful and guiding force in the exile period of Kashmiri Pandits community of which the author is also a member. Mr. Bhat has authored eight books and is presently working on the Shrines and Temples of Kashmir. He has documented all the 661 Shrines and Temples of Kashmir spread over all the 10 districts of Kashmir viz. Anantnag, Baramulla, Budgam, Bandipore, Ganderbal, Kupwara, Kulgam, Pulwama, Shopian and Srinagar. Mr. Bhat is recipient of two Gold Medals for his exhibits on Jammu and Kashmir (in Philately), first recipient Tika Lal Taploo Award for contribution to the Culture of Kashmir, Moti Lal Saqi Garauv Samaan for his Hindi Poetry and many more. Mr. Bhat has designed 138 Special Cover, Special Cancellations and other Philatelic material for Department of Posts, India. E-mail: chander.1831@gmail.com Mobile No: 09419-60793



Experiencing Spirituality from Creativity

Aahee Sapru

An unusual attribute of human mankind has been its universal ability to develop novelties like art, culture, language and heritage, even when the greatest of problems was how to escape from a rampaging mammoth with minimum casualties.

As far back as we can trace, humans have always dabbled in the creative arts and developed a shared communication system apart from survival activities. So how is it that humans developed and partook in creative arts and linguistics even when the next meal was not guaranteed?

Archaeologically speaking, the presence of creative industries hints at the urbanisation of a culture, however, even during pre-historic times, we find art in the deepest and darkest of caves, hiding from the naked eyes and waiting to be discovered.

If the reader wishes to consider the complex evolution of differentiated stone tools¹ and the discovery of fire, creative vision and an ability to experiment hint at humans thinking beyond the immediate, the timeline for creative experiments gets pushed back further than the cave arts.

The thing about art is that Art comes from the Heart for the Heart. Then this art seeps into our actions and permeates itself in places where art might not be apparent such as linguistics, architecture, apparel, jewellery, dance, drama and what not.

Does anyone dare to call Shri Kalidas's work anything less than art? Can anyone

bear to call the *Shilpis*² of Kailashnath to be any less than an artist? Simple answer, No.

Following the same tangent, can anyone consider these monumental works of art to be non-spiritual in nature? No.

Art is not just a medium of expression, but it is also an instrument of spirituality, by becoming the *Yaan* to *Dhyaan*³ it urges the creator and observer to see the art form as a vehicle to realise the unrealised.

If the reader has been paying attention, one might question how would the discovery of fire be an art form. It could certainly be a creative vision or even a fluke but how would fire incite spirituality? Well my friend, it might not be obviously spiritual in nature but we do trace the emergence of Fire worship as evidenced by fire alters being found in the earliest of civilisations and not to miss out on *Agni*⁴ being worshipped as a major *Devta* and being invoked the most, right after *Indra Deva*. Spirituality is everywhere, even in the smallest of atoms, it just requires a creative nudge for it to become obvious.

In Indian terms, art took different forms from as small as miniature paintings which depicted themes as large as this *Bhramanda*, or even all those temple⁵ walls which tell the greatest of stories through the most intricate of carvings and boast the most musical of pillars and the most mathematical of equations.

Art is ever-flowing and dynamic in nature, it uses the eyes of a keen artist to observe

the world and produce such a finely tuned melody which transcends from aesthetics to spirituality and shakes the core of an individual so much so that it transforms itself into a trigger for an emotional experience unfelt from performing our daily activities, most commonly felt through *Bhajan* lyrics and even *sufi* songs⁶. Artistic liberties further challenge our notions of normalcy and stereotypes as evidenced by our *Shilpis* creating gods and demons of similar features where it gets hard to discern which one is a god and which one is a demon⁷, urging us to not get entangled with *Maya*⁸.

Creative ability requires an experimental mind. So does spirituality. It requires a mind devoid of skepticism and open to experiences which may challenge the very foundations of an individual. Spirituality is terrifying for a limited and emotional mind as it fails to accept what may or may not be. Art, however, eases a mind into a realm beyond reality which gets reflected through one's own artistic journey. One can experience the divine in the complex *Vishnu Sahastranamam* the melodious *Shrimad Bhagwat Gita* the colourful miniatures depicting the joy-inducing *Rasleela* or the grand temples where divinity is obscurely present in the structure.

¹ Evolution of stone stools from Paleolithic to Neolithic from crude to complex.

² Shilpakars are/ were different from engineers and mason workers as their sole focus was to create a structure which focused on aesthetic and spiritual experience while remaining sensitive to the cultural perceptions of the society.

³ Dhi: Mind (Buddhi) Yaan: Vehicle

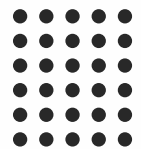
⁴ Rg Veda had dedicated around 200 hymns to Agni who acts as the messenger to gods, by carrying our Ahuti or offerings to the heavens.

⁵ The term for temples in Sanskrit is Devalaya, which literally means a structure for the self-luminous (Deva) which embodies rhythm (Alaya) and induces exhilaration when looked upon.

⁶ Eg, "Sasoon ki mala pe simroon me...." A couplet which invokes unbridled love for a nirankari authority.

⁷ Sculpture of Devi Chamunda, which at first glance encourages fear, or even multiple gods being painted with dark and black tones, same as many Asuras.

⁸ A famous instance for the same is the creation of Indraprasth by Mayasur where the reality was farce and farce was reality.



Aahee Sapru is a masters student of Archaeology from Ambedkar University, Delhi and a humanities enthusiast.

Spirituality and religiosity in conferring tolerance and resilience in displaced Kashmir Pandit community

Sudhir K Sopory

Kashmir Pandits, the indigenous inhabitants of the land of Kashyap, have resided in the present-day Kashmir for centuries making significant contributions to religious philosophy, language, grammar, art and development of culture of spiritual way of life and believing in the wellbeing of all physical and biological world. The valley of Srinagar has historically been a well spring of innovative thoughts and practices characterized by simplicity and humility. However, with the advent of an alternate and imported religious faith, the situation took a turn for the worse for the Pandits. They faced challenges not only in practicing their faith and contributing to the life and literature, but also in ensuring their survival. Over several centuries of Muslim rule, the community experienced killings and forceful conversions eventually leading to their exodus at different points of time to other places, primarily in the northern part of India. Despite these trials, some of the finest knowledge and cultural heritage still emerged from the valley during those times. such as vakhs of Lal Ded and Rupa Bhavani etc.

The reign of terror only came to a halt when Dogra regime started ruling the state. During this time Kashmiri Pandits played a pivotal role in the revival of literature on Kashmir Shaivism, administrative development and building robust educational system. Following India's Independence and the unfortunate division of the country, the community faced further challenges with

the attack of Pakistani Rangers. Some Pandits left the valley during this turmoil, including part of our family. I was born during this short exodus in Ambala. Luckily, the situation started improving when the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir acceded to India. However, these relatively better times lasted for only 7 decades, marked by skirmishes and the community continued to face new challenges. Nevertheless, the overall situation seemed tolerable. Throughout these periods one could pursue one's education, and take on different jobs. Above all, faith, religious practices and spirituality remained central in the lives of Kashmir Pandits. They would seek blessings of many saints and religious practitioners. Every family was linked to a Devi temple or "sthaan" where one would visit on special occasions or on important religious dates. This enabled many KPs to develop an ethos of faith in religion, temples, Gurus and many got chance to learn ancient scriptures and also practice their traditions; providing solace, hope and strength.

The genocide of the 1990s, led to one of the largest exoduses of the Kashmiri Pandit community. They all got relocated in Jammu and rest of the country with whatever meagre resources they had. Despite the pain and suffering, many young members of the community, some of whom were not even born during those events, have excelled in various fields and have got adequately settled in India and abroad. Of course, the quest to return to their homeland remains a

persistent aspiration. One of the questions that comes to mind is how the community was able to survive and endure the displacement, terror and adversity?

While I have not done any sociological and ground level research in this area and cannot supplement my general observations with any quantitative data, I feel, based on observations and informal interactions, that overcoming the deep trauma may be attributed to their spiritual and religious beliefs and the nurturing of these beliefs over generations. These practices are well engraved in their sub conscious mind and the faith in their prayers remained unflinching. In his book, Mr Jagmohan, former Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, has also mentioned that wherever Kashmir Pandits lived, be it in camps in Jammu or some other places, they always had kept a space for worship.

The concept of Logotherapy, proposed by Viennese neurologist, Victor Frankl, himself a holocaust survivor, suggests that the primary motivational force for humans is to find the meaning of life. The basic principles of logotherapy enumerates that life has meaning under all circumstances. Even under the most miserable and challenging situation our main motivation for living is our will to find meaning in life. And above all, we have freedom to find meaning in what we do, and what we experience, or at least in the stance we take when faced with a situation of unchangeable suffering. In the years of initial displacement, the Kashmir Pandits, to me it looks like, intuitively followed logotherapy, and that too based on Kierkegaard's will to meaning and not on Alfred Adkers doctrine of will to power or Freud's will to pleasure. Rather than power or pleasure, logotherapy is founded upon the

belief that striving to find meaning in life is primary the most powerful motivating and driving force especially under labyrinthian state of affairs. The broad purpose of life for Kashmiri Pandits under the unfavourable and strenuous circumstances in 1990s was to strive for survival, and also stay engaged in our value system. Despite the daunting environment they prioritized education, health, and employment which became the immediate purpose of life for displaced Kashmir Pandits. They achieved success on these fronts. under the most challenging, complicated and oppressive environment, due to their, as I hypothesized earlier, belief in self, in their prayers and resilient adaptive strengths.

Studies have shown that faith and spirituality can help individuals and communities overcome difficult conditions. There is relationship between Frankl's ideas of finding meaning to life with the religious nature of the human being; and on the relationship between religiosity, psychotherapy, and logotherapy. **In a study done amongst the children of sub-Saharan African countries who lived amongst poverty and armed conflict zones, it was found that spirituality and religion practices overcame the trauma as also health hazards. From different analytical and conceptual studies which have been reported, one can say that faith and spirituality can surmount the hard conditions and elicit strong will to exist and find a meaning to life. Broadly then, faith and spirituality serve as sources of solace, hope and empowerment for displaced communities and help them thrive under the changed unfavourable circumstances and uncertainty. Their deep spiritual upbringing was also a key and**

significant factor that played a role in helping Kashmiri Pandits to cope with their relocation.

How does faith and bhakti give strength to overcome personal and community-based calamities? In October 2022 issue of Samarpan, the magazine of JK Yog, Swami Mukundananda writes “Faith or shraddha is the decision of the intellect based on technically sound knowledge. When we internalize the divine knowledge of the scriptures from the Guru, the quality of faith transforms into one that is highly inspiring, uplifting, and results in positivity.”

In his Ph.D. thesis submitted in 2021 to the University of Oslo, Ruth Abraham has written a section on the role of religion and religiosity in getting over trauma. He found this was effective in Eritrean female refugees. He writes “religion and faith sustained their hopes and reaffirmed their identity”. Many such studies by various other scholars have also come to similar conclusions that belief systems provide ways to keep underhand the suffering and loss. Maria Alejandro Andrade Vinueza showed in their paper published in International Journal of Childrens Spirituality, in 2017, that “spirituality has potential to answer the deep existential needs...and can constitute key resilience factor”. This was based on their studies on migrant children. Parganent and coworkers in a paper published in 2000 conclude that “religion and philosophical orientation makes reality and suffering understandable and bearable”. In another report entitled “Anchored by faith: religion as a resilience factor” published in 2010, Parganent and Cummings write that the number of studies on religion has grown and it has become clear from many of these studies that religiousness can play

significant role in response to major stressors. What were then the beliefs and strong religious practices that helped Kashmir Pandits to maintain their identity and helped them sail through their sufferings?

In Kashmir, the pandits generally followed various religious functions, mostly at home, or along with close family members. Though some were common to socio religious events with other Hindus, yet some of their own functions are unique to the community. Like, hearth (Shivratri celebrated in their own way), Khesch mavas, Gaur triya, Kav punim, pan, etc. Kashmir Pandits also participated in community level functions. These were mostly when puja or hawan or vahurvod (kashmiri birthday) or shradh of saints and sages was performed at temples, shrines and ashrams. This faith based religious and spiritual practices encouraged collaboration among the members of the community. More importantly some of these were associated with specific days like Jestha, Durga, and Hara Ashtami and connected with visits to specific temples, like Hariparbat, Kheer Bhavani, Khrew and other places in the valley. In fact, each family was also linked to Kul(tribe) Devi of a specific temple or Ashram. Worship was generally accompanied by chorus singing of devotional bhajan or reciting hymns and slokas from various texts. Many Kashmir Pandits would remember these by heart. Besides worshiping Shakti, there was absolute faith in Siva and His various Bhairava forms. In fact, Kashmir Pandits had not only developed spiritual attachment to physical forms of Devi and Siva (Bhairava), but many saints and Gurus had realized the nonphysical state of Param Shiva and Shakti. They not only gave supreme teachings but

were also a source of strength and hope. One can thus imagine that a religious based culture ecosystem prevailed which brought identity and spiritual upbringing in the community and helped them during their relocation.

After displacement two things were uppermost in the mind of every Kashmiri Pandit family. One, and foremost, how to survive and at the same time look ahead in grooming and securing the future of the young generation with limited financial resources and constricted space for living. Especially those who got relocated in tents etc. They concentrated to impart proper education to their children. Everyone strived in that direction. Financially limited help came from the Govt and some through gracious support from community members. Two, and more importantly to remain focussed on the first objective, without falling into the trap of trauma and dejection and helplessness, one required calm and stable mind and proper thinking. Under such stressful conditions one can get diverted to wrong pathways. To avoid this happening, besides hard work and focus on job, and education of children, the family members and community followed their practices of prayers and religious rituals. Whenever possible they would join community organized bhakti prayers, hawan, and other programs.

To support the thesis of Frankel with overcoming of adverse conditions by Kashmiri Pandits one may have to do ground level quantitative social studies. At present I could not find any concrete reports. Bashir et al with Smita Deshpande, published a paper in 2023 in Soc Work Ment Health journal, wherein they have done work on Muslim community in a couple of districts in

Srinagar. They mention that cultural and religious practices and community gatherings do help cope with conflict and natural disasters. Annshika Mondal published a detailed study in 2022 in International Journal of Indian Psychology on internally displaced Kashmiri Pandits. However, she has not deeply touched on this topic of spirituality and religiosity.

While some actions to rebuild and reconnect with their culture and religion took place in the state and few other cities, many symbols of Kashmiri Pandit's deities and places to meet and perform community-based functions did not exist in most other cities. It goes to the credit of many leaders and organizations who, in order to stay connected through religion practices and values, built new physical spaces and temples. Overtime these efforts helped keep the community rooted in its culture and ethos and provided a sense of belonging and strength. In Faridabad, for example, where many displaced families tried to settle, a number of cooperative societies were built along with the construction of Sharika Bhavan with temple complex, in addition a replica of Hariparvat was built in a nearby village. Many new religious structures and bhavans were constructed in different places along with creation of new organizations who would plan joint gatherings. Over a period of time many families through their sheer hard work and faith, and some with support from various organizations and individuals, came out of financial difficulties. Their children did very well and have excelled in their chosen profession. Proudly many of them have kept their religious and social culture alive by aligning with various organizations in India and abroad

Besides putting faith and religiosity in their

life, one more important thing that Kashmiri Pandits have indulged, after their exodus, is in the revival of their philosophical and spiritual teachings through Kashmir Shaivism. This component was broadly missing when Kashmir Pandits were living in the state before 1990. We see regular discourses now being organized on, for example, Acharya Abhinav Gupta, on Trika philosophy, or on the values and significance of temples and religious places. Some organizations are committed in rebuilding the temples in Srinagar, in resurrecting the Sharda language and also emphasising on learning the Kashmiri language, which unfortunately is not being spoken in many families.

In addition to maintain traditions alive among their younger generation it is as crucial to ensure that the memory of the events leading to the exodus remain vivid in their minds. This has been partly ensured by many Kashmir Pandit authors who have

written books and articles. And community members have organized events to preserve this memory. The community's faith in prayers, scriptures, and devotion to deities along with the philosophy of Kashmir Shaivism, continue to be central to their resilience and culture. I am very hopeful that the community's cultural and spiritual heritage is poised for revival in the valley in near future.



Professor Sudhir K Sopory is currently Emeritus Senior Scientist at the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB), New Delhi where he also worked as Group Leader and Director. He also held Distinguished Scientist position of the Govt of India at ICGEB. He obtained his Ph.D from University of Delhi and had several post-doctoral/visiting scientist stints in Germany and USA. He earlier worked as Professor at the School of Life Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi where he also served as the Vice Chancellor. He has published over 275 papers in international refereed journals, written around 60 book chapters and edited 14 books. He is a fellow of all the four National Science Academies in India and The World Academy of Sciences, Trieste, Italy.



Amongst others, he has been conferred National Civilian Award, Padma Shri; S.S Bhatnagar Award of Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, Birbal Sahni Medal of the Botanical Society of India and Life Time Achievement Awards of the Indian National Science Congress, PHSS Foundation, Biotechnology Research Society of India, Society for Ethnopharmacology and Indian Botanical Society. He was the first Indian to receive Corresponding Membership Award of the American Society of Plant Biologists. He has been conferred D. Sc degree (h.c) from Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi and Rani Durgavati University, Jabalpur. He was the President, Indian Society of Plant Physiology for two terms. Currently he is the President of Biotech Research Society of India. He is also President of Kashmiri Sewak Samaj, Faridabad and Vice-President, All India Kashmiri Samaj.

Art from Wholeness Can Transform the World

Arun Wakhlu

There is a common substratum permeating the intricate tapestry of life; infinite love and wholeness. It dances as profound creative intelligence. This foundational reality forms the basis for understanding the interplay between our thoughts, emotions, and the transformative power of art. This article explores the connection between these elements. It emphasizes the impact of our patterns of thought on individual and collective well-being. Art is shown as playing the role of disturbing, reinforcing, and restoring these patterns, thereby enabling people to evolve towards more joy, peace, and wholeness. The unique contribution of Abhinavgupta (a philosopher, mystic, and aesthete from Kashmir) is also explored. Finally, we see how great leaders are Social Artists whose work of collective art is a more wholesome society.

1. Thoughts, Emotions and Actions create our "World"

The quality of our individual and collective lives is intricately tied to the predominant patterns of thought we harbour. Research across psychology and neuroscience underscores the influence of mindset on emotions, behaviour and overall life satisfaction. Positive thought patterns, such as gratitude and optimism, correlate with improved mental health and resilience. Conversely, negative thought

patterns contribute to stress, anxiety, and diminished well-being. Understanding and reshaping these cognitive frameworks are pivotal for fostering a healthier, more fulfilling existence.

While we speak of our world, as if there is only one unique world out there, the truth is that each person carries their own "world" in their mind. What you are calling your world, is simply a projection of your own thoughts: of the conditionings and paradigms that you hold. This is like what happens when you don a Virtual Reality (VR) headset, and are soon immersed in a unique world depending on what is being projected by the software. In your case, while you may not be wearing a visible VR Headset, you still see the "world" through an invisible Mindset. Our view of life shapes our way of life. We do not see the world as it is, we see it as we are. All "reality" is virtual reality!

Emotions serve as powerful indicators of our alignment with the creative intelligence that governs life. Positive emotions like joy, peace, laughter, compassion, and love signal harmony with our deepest core and the interconnectedness of all life. Conversely, feelings of sadness, fear, and suffering indicate a divergence from this inherent creative intelligence and the contraction of one's sense of identity. All our illusions, delusions, distractions, cravings, and

aversions all arise from the self-centred thoughts of the ego, a false and limited notions of who we are. All self-centred thinking, is a kind of insanity. It is neither honest nor accurate, and is a constant, hurtful distraction from all that is. Even though there may be secure and familiar sensations of endocrine and nervous system habit, it is a pathological luxury you cannot afford. (If you want to be awake and free, that is.) The irony is that when you let go, when you give it up completely, the peace and security we sought in so many limited and transient forms, is everywhere. Recognizing and understanding emotional cues become essential for realigning ourselves with the natural flow of life and achieving a sense of wholeness.

We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them. To keep thinking in the same old ways, and to expect different results is lunacy. We need to change the old paradigms that have brought us here. Humanity's operating system needs a total reboot. This is where art can play a huge role.

2. The Transformative Role of Inspiring Art

Art, in its myriad forms, has been a source of inspiration for humanity throughout history. It is a medium through which individuals express their innermost thoughts, emotions, and ideas, transcending the boundaries of language. Whether through painting, sculpture, music, literature, or dance, art has the

power to evoke profound emotions and awaken the spiritual senses. The act of creating and experiencing art creates a subtle distance between one's creative intelligence (the innermost core of silence, emptiness, love and freedom) and what is being created or experienced. The self-forgetting flow and presence that art induces can be a transformative process that leads to self-discovery, personal growth, and a deeper understanding of the world and one's place in it.

Visual arts, for instance, have the capacity to transcend language barriers and connect people on a profound level. A painting or a sculpture can convey complex emotions, tell stories, and communicate cultural values, all without the need for words. The works of great artists like Leonardo da Vinci, Vincent van Gogh, and Frida Kahlo, among many others, continue to inspire and touch the souls of individuals worldwide. These artists used their creative expressions as a means to access deeper dimensions of human existence, inviting viewers to contemplate their spiritual journeys.

Music, another form of art, has the unique ability to stir emotions, soothe the soul, and ignite a sense of spiritual awakening. Powerful music brings one home to the silence beyond the notes. The playing of masters like Ravi Shankar and Bismillah Khan, and the compositions of masters like Beethoven, Mozart, and Tchaikovsky, as well as contemporary musicians such as Bob Dylan, Nina Simone, and John Lennon, have touched the hearts of

millions. Music transcends cultural and linguistic boundaries, invoking emotions and transcendent experiences that connect people at a fundamental level.

Furthermore, literature, through the power of words, can transport readers to different worlds, challenge their beliefs, and inspire introspection. Works like Fyodor Dostoevsky's "Crime and Punishment" or Gabriel García Márquez's "One Hundred Years of Solitude" have delved into the depths of the human psyche, exploring moral and existential dilemmas that lead to spiritual questioning and growth. Literature has the capacity to stimulate intellectual and emotional engagement, promoting self-awareness and empathy.

In essence, art serves as a channel for individuals to explore and express their innermost thoughts and feelings, fostering spiritual awakening by providing a medium for introspection, self-discovery, and connection with the ineffable aspects of existence. Moreover, the universality of art transcends linguistic and cultural boundaries, making it a powerful force for uniting diverse communities.

When artists tap into the wellspring of wholeness and creativity, their works become instrumental in restoring individuals and societies. Art created from a space of profound connection serves as a mirror, reflecting the viewer's inner landscape. Whether it be Van Gogh's "Starry Night" or Maya Angelou's poetry, these creations resonate with universal

truths, guiding individuals back to a state of equilibrium and oneness with all of life.

Collectives and communities that engage in artistic expression, such as singing, dancing, and creating art together, experience a profound sense of unity. Shared languages and rhythms foster a collective consciousness, weaving individuals into the fabric of a connected and whole community. This communal experience not only enhances social bonds but also acts as a catalyst for profound sources of health and well-being.

Art, in its visionary forms like poems and theatre, has the capacity to tell stories of a world waiting to be born. Poems capture the essence of human experience, distilling emotions and reflections into words that resonate universally. Theatre, by placing spectators in a dispassionate introspective space, allows individuals to see their lives through the lens of awareness. These artistic expressions provide glimpses into potential futures, inspiring individuals to actively participate in shaping a more conscious and compassionate world.

The spiritual Heart of humanity is the source of great art.

3. Wholeness/Shiva is the Source and Goal of all Art

Art emanating from the heart of humanity has the potential to save the Earth. By honouring intuition, respecting love, and celebrating the magnificence and abundance of life, individuals can

cultivate a deep connection with the natural world. This profound reverence for life becomes a guiding force, prompting sustainable practices and fostering a collective consciousness that recognizes the intricate web of life. In essence, art becomes a powerful catalyst for the expression of "Love in full Expression," paving the way for a harmonious coexistence with the Earth and each other.

When Abhinavgupta said: *"Listen carefully! Stop holding on to this or that, inhabit your true absolute nature, and peacefully enjoy the essence of what it is to be alive!"*, he was pointing to the Heart, one's true absolute nature.

You are the way and you are the goal, and there is no distance between you and the goal. You are the seeker and you are the sought; there is no distance between the seeker and the sought. You are the worshipper and you are the worshipped. You are the disciple and you are the master. ~ Osho

Wisdom is knowing I am nothing, Love is knowing I am everything, and between the two my life moves. ~ Nisargadatta Maharaj

Abhinavagupta, made significant contributions to various fields, including philosophy, aesthetics, and spirituality. His teachings, deeply rooted in the Shaiva tradition, offer a holistic perspective that intertwines art, emotions (*rasas*), and spiritual awakening.

At the core of Abhinavagupta's philosophy is the concept of "Shiva-consciousness," the ultimate reality that

permeates all existence. According to him, every aspect of life, including artistic expression, can be a means to attain spiritual awakening and union with the divine. Abhinavagupta emphasized the interconnectedness of the material and spiritual realms, asserting that the path to transcendence can be paved through aesthetic experiences.

One of Abhinavagupta's most significant contributions is his elucidation of the theory of *rasas* the aesthetic emotions or moods evoked by artistic expression. He believed that art has the power to evoke specific emotions in the audience, leading to a heightened state of consciousness. These *rasas*, ranging from love and joy to fear and disgust, serve as a bridge between the mundane and the divine. Abhinavagupta viewed art as a vehicle for the soul's journey, a medium through which one could experience the myriad emotions that ultimately lead to self-realization.

In Abhinavagupta's perspective, the artist becomes a conduit for divine expression, channelling the cosmic energy into the artwork. He saw artistic creation as a form of worship, a sacred act that connects the creator with the divine source. Whether it be dance, music, or visual arts, the artist, according to Abhinavagupta, participates in a divine play, expressing the inherent beauty and creativity of the cosmos.

Abhinavagupta's teachings on aesthetics extend beyond the realm of art, encompassing the entire spectrum of human experience. He emphasized the

importance of cultivating a heightened awareness of emotions in everyday life, recognizing them as pathways to self-discovery. By understanding and transcending these emotions, individuals could move closer to the realization of their true nature, aligning themselves with the divine consciousness.

The practice of aesthetic contemplation, as advocated by Abhinavagupta, involves immersing oneself in the beauty of the arts to experience a transformative journey. Whether through the rhythm of dance, the melody of music, or the visual splendour of paintings, individuals can access deeper layers of consciousness and connect with the divine essence within.

Abhinavagupta's teachings continue to inspire artists, philosophers, and spiritual seekers alike. His holistic approach, integrating art, emotions, and spiritual awakening, remains a timeless guide for those seeking a profound understanding of the self and the universe. In the tapestry of his teachings, the threads of creativity, emotion, and spirituality are intricately woven, inviting individuals to embark on a transformative journey that transcends the boundaries of ordinary perception and leads to the realization of the divine within. This is the pathway to individual and social wellbeing.

4. Leaders as Social Artists

The common core of inspired artists and great leaders lies in their ability to envision possibilities beyond the ordinary. Both groups possess a profound sense of creativity, transcending conventional

boundaries to bring forth innovation and change. Artists channel their creativity into diverse forms of expression, while great leaders harness it to envision and realize transformative goals. Both share a passion for pushing boundaries, challenging norms, and inspiring others to join in their vision. The ability to communicate, empathize, and ignite a collective spirit are essential traits uniting these two seemingly disparate groups, as both artists and leaders strive to shape a better, more impactful world.

Great art inspires us to remember our creative source, the deepest core of who we are. It reminds and reconnects us. Stories, teach, inspire, and help us create. When we tell the story of the future, we are actually sowing the seeds of that future. Leadership is about creating new futures. Leadership and art are similar because both create new possibilities and new perspectives. Actually, leaders are social artists. Great leaders and great artists share one more thing in common with the core of life...joy! Swami Chinmayananda once said "Joy is the hallmark of excellence in every field."

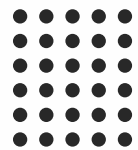
The secret of joy in work is contained in one word – Excellence. To know how to do something well is to enjoy it. - Pearl S Buck.

Leaders and artists have a huge impact on society. When leaders and artists live from the paradigm of wholeness, (characterized by joy, energy, enthusiasm, and peace), their thoughts, words, and actions create huge positive impacts.

As His Holiness the Dalai Lama has said,
“The planet does not need more successful people. The planet desperately needs more peacemakers, healers, restorers, storytellers, and lovers of all kinds.”

We need Artists who are Leaders, and leaders who are artists...people who are like empty flutes on the lips of LIFE: Love in

Full Expression. Their collective work of art is a more wholesome world that works for all.



Arun Wakhlu, is the co-founder of Pragati Leadership Institute, Pune, India. He is also the initiator of Poorna Pune, (Compassionate Pune), and the co-founder of Foundation for Peace and Compassionate Leadership.

Arun is a Sannyasin of OSHO and has the spiritual name Swami Amano Gaurav.

Arun has a B. Tech degree from IIT Delhi, and a PGDBA from IIM Ahmedabad. He has logged over 35,000 hours of facilitation and coaching internationally. He has worked to develop leaders in leading organizations (Business, Education, NGOs and Governments).

An accomplished writer, Arun has written the award-winning book “Managing from the Heart”. This was followed by the book “One Wholesome World”. His latest book (with a Foreword by H.H. The Dalai Lama is called Awakening Wholeness. It aims to serve the youth of the world.

Arun has initiated the movement called Education Today, Society Tomorrow (ETST), and also volunteers as a global Board Member of the Charter for Compassion.



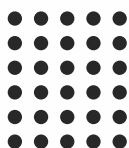


SECTION II

XLVII

OUR LANGUAGE AND IT'S SCRIPT

2023 - 2024



Kashmiri language and the Script Conflict

Uma Kant Kachru

My five-year-old granddaughter was with her Hindi vernacular book opened on a page which had one word on each page with pictures. The words were शलगम and षट्कोण. What struck me was the way she was deciphering the words. She just spoke the alphabets and the words came out. It just set me thinking; if this was written in Arabic or Roman scripts, would this child be able to read the words? In Arabic, the first word would be spelt and read as “Sheen, Laam, Gaaf, Meem” and in Roman, “Ess, Ech, Aey, El, Jee, Aey, Em”. In neither would the self-learning child be able to read the correct word. This is because these scripts are non-phonetic. Devnagri alphabet is purely phonetic. This took me to the last few weeks’ video conference discussions on the social media on alternate/ co-script for Kashmiri since Government of India has, so far, not granted recognition to the requested Devnagri as the alternate official script for it. While this is a welcome move and all the active organisations/ groups who have taken this initiative, deserve congratulatory accolades, it is ironical that an unsuited, Nastalik script has the official recognition while the one which is scientifically better suited, is lamenting to be recognised and is ignored. This tells volumes about how professional is our official system of linguistics in the country.

However, these video conference discussions precipitated four issues that form the basis of this article:

- Is there a need for seeking recognition for an alternate script?
- Conflicting views on Devnagri or Sharada to be the alternate script.
- Which is scientifically better suited for adapting to Kashmiri phonetics?
- What should be the approach methodology?

I will deal with each one separately.

Is there a need for seeking recognition for an alternate script?

To me, this is a non-issue. Instead, I would first ask myself, “Why do I need an alternate script?” And the answer is very clear; because majority of the Kashmiri Pandit diaspora doesn’t know how to read or write in the recognised script, which is Nastalik. In order to keep our language alive amongst the Kashmiri diaspora, we need to provide a script for our writers, poets and creative artists through which they can reach their creative works to their audience. This is the basic need. And, if we have consensus on this, who stops us from using the chosen medium. The critical question then is, which script? I will deal with this in a while. The focus here is that we must provide the medium for communication, irrespective of it not having government recognition. If my diaspora across the globe standardises on a script and adopts it for writing Kashmiri, in the next one decade we will make loads of literature of varied kind available to our

community that will motivate and facilitate them to communicate in Kashmiri. It is also a great opportunity for transliteration of the rich Kashmiri work available in Nastalik that can be made accessible to the diaspora. When we have large amount of literature available in the alternate script, we will have a strong footing and reason to present our case and seek recognition for it. Let us also remember that recognition has only a cosmetic value for the script, particularly in the digital world of today, except for publishing the works by the Sahitya Academy.

Conflicting views on Devnagri or Sharada to be alternate script:

If we believe that there is need for an alternate script, the next natural question is which script? To me, any Indian script is good enough for Kashmiri with modifications to accommodate the nuances of Kashmiri phonetics. To support my argument, I will take you to the basics of the majority of the Indian scripts. The basic alphabet of all the major Indian scripts is the same, with different symbolic representations. The “स्वर” (vowels) start with अ and end with इः. Similarly, “व्यंजन” (consonants) start with क and end with श्र. The symbols make them different for different languages. This basic concept will help us understand that Devnagri or Sharada is not the issue. The issue is which is easier in adaptation. The good news is that both the scripts have their respective UNICODE, thus making them equally digitally enabled. However, if we look at the demography of our diaspora, more than

95% are familiar with Devnagri, mainly because of Hindi being the common connecting language which uses Devnagri script. It, therefore, becomes an easier choice because the readership community will only need to learn phonetic variations through modified signs (मात्राएं). On the other hand, Sharada, by dint of its remaining dormant for centuries, the majority diaspora is not familiar with it. Besides, historically, Sharada has been more a script for scholarship than for the Kashmiri language. All the works and manuscripts in this script are in Sanskrit language, including the scriptures. Though we find Grierson mentioning in his “Preliminary Note” of his famous – A Dictionary of the Kashmiri Language, “Kashmiris use three alphabets for writing their language. Hindus as a rule employ either the Sharada or the Nagari character and Musalmans the Persian”, we haven’t found any authentic original Kashmiri work available in Sharada. This also lends support to the theory of Kashmiri having been largely a dialect till Nastalik was adopted as its script. Adopting Sharada will involve mass training which is a long and tedious effort before it becomes the popular first choice for the people. Sharada, though is extremely important to be revived through training and learning as there is a lot of rich material in published and manuscript forms in libraries spread across the globe that need to be revived and made readable. For this we don’t only need students knowing Sharada but also knowing Sanskrit language.

We have a young group – The Core Sharda Team (CST) which started a campaign a

couple of years ago to train students desirous of learning the Sharada script. This team deserves accolades for the way they have adopted a simple but effective method of training people using the social media – WhatsApp. Today they have enabled a respectable brigade of over 2000 people who can read and write in this script and these numbers are continuously increasing. What is, though, a challenge still is that not all are Sanskrit enabled. However, the good news is that CST has a group of 140 PhD Sanskrit scholars already working with them on the manuscripts. This drive of training people to learn both, Sanskrit and Sharada script, has to be cultivated within the diaspora, which may need a different approach. This team has also developed a mobile app that facilitates writing in Sharada on the mobile phones. They now need to work on adoption of new मात्रा to make it fully Kashmiri phonetic ready and make the app available to general masses to popularise it among those who are interested in using it with some basic training. This drive needs support from the community for revival of this script which is thought to be older than Devnagri.

With Devnagri, we have a different challenge. Although it has evolved as a reasonably ready script, there is no standard version adopted by the writers. Each one uses her/ his own method of playing with signs (मात्रा) for phonetic representations of typical Kashmiri words, making it hard for the reader to decipher. This seems to be a historical problem with us. Even, for building the Kashmiri dictionary, Grierson had to face the

problem of different flavours floating, of which he has made exemplified mention in the preliminary note. This problem persists till date with multiple standards in use. Incidentally, this also makes our case weaker when presenting to the Government authorities, since we don't have a standard Alphabet. This has happened because, yet again we have adopted unstructured and individualistic approach in silos when trying to adopt signs for phonetic nuances. It may be pertinent to mention that an effort in making Devnagri as its alternate script was made more than a century ago in 1914 when the first primer for it was written by the famous Sanskrit scholar, Pt. Nityanand Shastri. What is notable is that this primer was published two years before the famous Indologist, G A Grierson brought out the first ever edition of Kashmiri dictionary in 1916 which, interestingly is also predominantly using Devnagri script for phonetic representation. However, what is also sad is that this primer remained only in private possession and came to light only a decade or so ago. Despite making it known, we yet again repeated the mistake by ignoring it and preferred to redesign the wheel individually, resulting in multiple versions sans standardisation. However, let bygones be bygones. These experiences give us new learnings. The first step, therefore, is to bring all the versions to converge into one standard script. Each version has meant a lot of individual effort and we must not ignore that. We need to invite all the creators, scholars, writers, poets on a common platform and bring consensus on a standard version. Then this

standard version will need to be computer enabled. This will not be a challenge because, Kashmiri script writing software – **Akruti Kashmiri Arinimal Engine** is already available, thanks to Dr Roop Krishen Bhat (former Director at Ministry of HRD, Deptt. of Higher Education, Govt of India) and his team who undertook the development of the engine which is usable with the normal computer keyboard. Dr Bhat and his team deserve accolades for making this brilliant software available. However, it is not much known or easily available for use by masses. This must be made free downloadable so that more and more people use it for writing their stuff. There is already an Android version of Devnagri keyboard available on Android phones which has all the signs that Akruti is using for Kashmiri.

Which is scientifically better suited for adapting to Kashmiri phonetics?

Much of this is already explained above. Any Indian script is scientifically equal with modifications to include new signs. If Arabic script, which doesn't have signs to represent the phonetics of Kashmiri language, could be modified by the Kashmiri scholars to create Nastalik, Sharada and Devnagri scripts have many of the signs (मात्रा) suitable for easy adoption. Akruti has done it very effectively. Extending the same logic, Sharada can be upgraded by adding appropriate signs (मात्रा) to make it fully suitable to write Kashmiri. Thus, the issue with Sharada is not in the science of its script but practicality of its adoption as addressed above. I recently saw that CST has

collaborated with Aprant Software and created the Sharada alphabet version software. This, again, is a big leap forward. Thus, if the teams work on mass adoption of this script, it is as suitable as Devnagri. It is a collective responsibility of both the teams to see that Sharada script revives to its full glory.

Approach methodology:

- **Devnagri Script:**

Standardise on one Devnagri script by consensus with writers and scholars.

Reach out to the intellectual community to adopt the standard script.

Adopt the standard in Akruti.

Adopt a publicity strategy to make the script available to the global community.

Make Akruti freely available to all.

- **Sharada Script:**

CST continues its drive of training.

Prepare a publicity campaign for mass reach of the concept of Sharada learning.

Create a Sanskrit literate Sharada core group in the team to work on scriptures and manuscripts in different libraries.

Create a time bound program for converting them into Devnagri.

Make the converted work available to masses.

Make publicity campaign to reach Aprant Software to the diaspora with

awareness campaign and encourage them to learn and write Kashmiri in Sharada.

- **Recognition for alternate/co-script:**

Bring all active groups, scholars, writers under one platform.

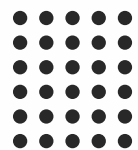
Let there be one official representative organisation.

Adopt and agree upon the common standard script.

Create database of available literature written in the alternate script.

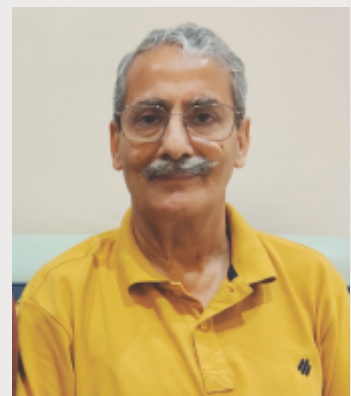
Represent the case for recognition to HRD Ministry with data through the official organisation only.

Approach influencing Government organisations/ ministers/ officials at different levels to push the case.



I have spent over 35 years in the corporate world where I have held senior management positions that provided me the opportunity to interface with people across all levels. Professionally, my work profiles span from being a Software Systems Engineer to heading Sales & Marketing, Business Development, Business Operations functions to heading Telecom Strategic Business Unit (SBU) in various IT Solution companies. Soft skills training and motivational speaking have been my voluntary initiatives.

Post superannuation, I have devoted my time to social service, reading, writing and occasional singing. Currently I am Editor of NEELAMATAM – a quarterly research journal of Nityanand Shastri Kashmir Research Institute (NSKRI), Delhi; Editor-in-Chief of NAAD – an AIKS mouthpiece; Chief Editor of Sharda Tarangini – a socio-cultural quarterly magazine published by Kashmiri Sewak Samaj, Faridabad.



Importance and preservation of our mother tongue: Kashmiri language and culture in diaspora

Dr. Roop Krishen Bhat

Ever since the unfortunate and tragic mass displacement in the year 1990 leaving behind century's old homeland in Kashmir, Kashmiri Hindus have been wondering like nomads from place to place in search of social security, livelihoods, opportunities and mental peace. While as the decade of Nineties was the worst; physical survival remained the sole concern of the community. The last two decades have been a period to ponder over, assess and analyse the physical, social and political losses suffered, accept the tragedies as they were and attempt to rearrange the broken threads and move forward. Big volumes could be written on the bitter experiences, tragedies and sufferings the community has underwent during last thirty years and such attempts have already been made by various writers, scholars, historians, journalists, community leaders and individuals. Sufficient and incredible literature has been written on various happenings in several languages including in Kashmiri in the form of poetry, short stories, novels, biographies etc. Perhaps the unique and brighter side of the current displacement or migration has been the accumulation of vast amount of publication of displacement literature or the literature in exile as we name it especially in Kashmiri Language. This becomes unique because in earlier similar displacements or migrations

of Kashmiri Hindus from Kashmir there is hardly any such literature written in Kashmiri. The obvious reason has been the neglect or under development of Kashmiri language in those times and its status only as a spoken language.

Since then, lot of water has flown down the Vitasta. Immediately after the Independence of India in fifties Kashmiri language was included in the school curriculum in Kashmir, J&K Academy of art, culture and languages after it was established, set up a committee of scholars which recommend the script for the language. Perso- Arabic with modifications suitable to sound system of Kashmiri was accepted as the script. It may be mentioned here that the first ever script was Sharda and lot many manuscripts are even now available in that script. Devanagari and Roman too were used by some scholars to write Kashmiri during those times. The decade of seventies in the last millennium has been the golden period as far as Kashmiri literature is concerned. Lot of young writers came to limelight and besides the rich poetic tradition, new genres like short story, novel, essay, drama, travelogue etc. were written and lot of literature was accumulated. Both the litterateurs and the literature of this period i.e., the decade of seventies of the last millennium has virtually been the most rational, objective, secular and

harmonious.

Unfortunately, the language was almost eliminated from school curriculum, but was introduced at PG level in the University of Kashmir. It gradually spread to several colleges. However, attitudinal changes towards the language started appearing amongst certain scholars in the decade of eighties and Urdu was preferred in day-to-day communication, public speeches, declarations, religious sermons, slogans and even prayers. The trend was further complicated by biased, rigid and unscientific stand of politicians and few scholars towards its scope and script. Militancy added to its woes since the language of militants too was Urdu and all dictates and communications were issued through this language. Broken and rustic variety of Urdu was preferred in and outside homes instead of much refined, sweet and easily comprehended mother tongue, Kashmiri. Kashmiri Language was degraded and disowned to a greater extent during militancy in Kashmir. A conscious effort was made by certain vested elements to marginalize the Kashmiri language, literature and culture and promote Urdu. The Kashmiri scholars remained tight lipped and mute in the earlier years of militancy and not much was written or talked about in this period in the valley.

However, the trend was different so far as displaced Kashmiri scholars were concerned. Record number of books in all genres have been written in Kashmiri after displacement. Though there has been a bloom in Kashmiri literature after

displacement, even new names not heard earlier in the field of literature were born and became popular instantly, but the language in itself has been the worst sufferer or victim so far as its use, patronage and promotion is concerned. Being forced to live and survive in alien cultures and amongst non-Kashmiris, our people voluntarily and effortlessly started ignoring and discarding their mother tongue for various silly and petty reasons like non-native environment, curricular or career opportunity etc. Kashmiri was seen as a hindrance or obstacle in learning other languages and was perceived as unnecessary burden, which if ignored would not make much difference for their survival, as Kashmiri language was not a bread earner. Governmental hostility towards Kashmiri, the wider spread settlement of the community across various states and countries resulting in inter community marriages amongst our youngsters has further worsened the situation. There are a host of other reasons, some even boasting of being part of global fraternity or global world which in their eyes could be relished or lived only through English.

The excuses apart, the hard fact remains that we Kashmiris are generally hostile to our language and culture or even to our existence as Kashmiris. We succumb to material gains easily, have inbuilt inferiority complexes about language and are prone to change at the cost of our identity or individuality, were ever we may be. Let me make an effort to answer and dispel some of the above reasons and underline the fact that a community is

known only through language and culture and not through Surnames.

I presume and believe that there is a reasonable and sizeable majority amongst us who want to live and be known as Kashmiris, rather than get dissolved as nobodies in the vast ocean of humans across the world. Since we are proud of our rich cultural heritage and of eminent legacy of great luminaries in various fields of knowledge known and respected globally and most of us love to live and be known as Kashmiris.

Having said and accepted that we have to consciously honour and explore the reasons to keep our identity alive. The sole and only factor to do that is to know and speak Kashmiri language where ever we may be, in our home with family members and with fellow Kashmiris where ever we meet, in offices, market places, social functions, get togethers etc. even in alien environments. If Punjabis, Bengalis, Tamils, Gujratis can proudly do so why cannot we? Following steps if followed may be helpful to achieve our goal.

1. We need to shed the tag of inferiority complex attached to being or speaking Kashmiri, gone deep into our psyche perhaps for historical reasons as I believe strongly so i.e., having lived as slaves of outside rulers for hundreds of years, forced to even hide the Kashmiri identity.

2. Of course Kashmiri is not in school curriculum outside Kashmir, but there is sufficient teaching-learning materials available in Kashmiri which could be helpful, like, Books published by Central

Institute of Indian languages, Mysore; Let us Learn Kashmiri-Primer and Reader, (in Devanagari) A Handbook on Audio cassette course; Basic, Intermediate and Advance Courses, Primer written by Sh. M K Raina; Spoken Kashmiri Courses by Prof. Braj Kachroo and Prof. Omkar Koul; A course in Kashmiri Language by Roop Krishen Bhat, A course in Kashmiri language, available on U tube, A Kashmiri primer by Arvind Shah etc. There is a Devanagari software known as Arnimaal Aakruti available and used by all our community journals and writers and a host of other materials available now. It may be mentioned that all these materials have been produced during last thirty years keeping the need of community members in mind and lot of expertise and collective efforts, teamwork and hard labour has gone into it.

3. It takes just twenty clock hours to start from scratch and learn Devanagari script and those who know Devanagari already, learning additional diacritical marks and signs for writing Kashmiri is a matter of two to three hours only. It would take thirty to fifty clock hours more to learn the basic structures of language and be able to speak smaller sentences and be able to communicate. If spoken regularly the perfection is achieved in a few months' time.

4. It is true that Kashmiri Language is not a bread winner like many other Indian languages, but Gujrati, Punjabi, Tamil and for that matter any other Indian language outside India is not a bread winner too, even then these languages are spoken over

there widely by their speakers. What matters is the love, urge and pride for the language and community. Kashmiri like many other languages does have a limited commercial value, in translation, IT & communication, mass media, AIR, TV, etc. But it serves as a secret/code language to avoid leakage of information and provides enjoyment, gives fulfillment, confidence and satisfaction.

5. It is a false apprehension that Learning or speaking Kashmiri would be an obstacle in learning of other languages, over-burden the children, spoil their English or Hindi pronunciation. It is a simple myth and it really works the other way round. There is research evidence that Mother tongue helps the child to pick up or learn second or other language easily and faster. One always comprehends better in mother tongue and translates communication in other language. In India most of the people are multilingual and simultaneously chaste in several languages. Several worlds renowned writers write in more than one language with perfection and ease and even better than monolinguals. While as we Kashmiris have produced world class writers like Lal Ded, Mahjoor, Nadim, Rahi, Hari Krishen Kaul etc.; Incidentally all of them except Lal Ded initially started writing in other languages and lived like no bodies in those languages, however, when they switched over to their mother tongue, they excelled in the language and are widely translated and recognised. There are many other Kashmiri writers who continued to write in other modern Indian languages like Urdu, Hindi, English etc. but only few of them

received recognition. We may boost of sending our children to English medium schools but we have hardly produced any English literature of international fame during last few hundred years. The matter of fact remains that one can achieve greater heights with ease only in one's mother tongue.

6. Inter community marriages remains an issue but the reality is that our youngsters have no opportunities or occasions to meet each other. Where ever they are, in colleges or work places they are dominated or surrounded by non-Kashmiris. Our NGO's and leaders have to create opportunities where youngsters can meet. Camps such as held by KOA, USA, is one such example. Our youngsters usually remain absent from almost all community functions. While we are losers in terms of language and culture, when our daughters marry outside the community, however, the boys marrying other community girls could be counselled to learn Kashmiri and adopt to Kashmiri culture. When we talk of culture, it does not mean eating *roganjosh* or *haakh* or wearing *pheran*, but to carry forward and preserve our language, host of rituals, basic *sanskars* from birth to death and traditions, respect for elders, encouraging joint family system, celebration of festivals, preserving of folklore, performing and visual arts, learn to love and practice basic Kashmiri cultural moorings.

7. NGO's and socio-cultural organizations have to shoulder responsibility to provide resources for preservation of language and culture by establishing Cultural centres with complete Kashmiri ambience, with

facilities like learning/teaching of Kashmiri language and culture, art galleries, museums, libraries, seminar rooms, auditoriums, sports equipment, Kashmiri cuisine, entertainment etc. Such places should serve as alternatives to Clubs. While as we have constructed lot many Ashrams and temples but unfortunately have failed to establish such cultural centres. The Ashrams which have large infrastructures like Bhagwan Gopi Nath Ashram Jammu and many others could spare some space for such activities periodically. The Lal Ded Centre at Pamposh Enclave, Delhi is such a place which could be developed into one with such facilities as mentioned above.

8. The *shuhul taaph* organised by KECSS at Lal Ded centre, international mother tongue day organised by Centre for Kashmiri language literature and culture of AIKS, and *Samanbal* organised by Kashmir Cultural Trust are few important events which do help in preservation of language and culture to some extent. Other organisations like *Samprat*, Vomed and *Naagrad adbi sangam* at Jammu, Kashmiri Sabha Mumbai (Zaan project), Kashmiri Sabha Kolkata too are also doing good work in this regard by organising seminars, conferences, workshops, get togethers, bringing out publications in Kashmiri or about Kashmiri culture etc. There are websites like <https://kousa.org>, www.kashmirculturaltrust.in etc. where such materials are uploaded.

9. The role of CIIL, Mysore and NRLC Patiala has been phenomenal during last few decades. The materials produced and programmes organised were very helpful

for preservation and promotion of Kashmiri language and culture. The language camps for Kashmiri children organised at various places across the country proved beneficial and became popular. Unfortunately, this Institute is currently in a very bad shape and not able to conduct any such activity.

10. At individual level, efforts of persons like Late. Sh. M.K. Kaw, Ex Secretary Education Govt. of India, persuading CIIL Mysore to publish Kashmiri learning materials; an initiative of Late A.N. Kaul Sahib, former Editor-in-chief of Naad installing Smt. Lalita Kaul Sahib annual awards for best speakers for youngsters in Kashmiri, being organised on the day of *Mahashivratri* by JKVM in Delhi; have been good initiatives towards preservation of Kashmiri among children and youngsters. Another effort by JKVM in organising *Gaashtarukh* competition too has become a helpful one in preserving our mother tongue through music. Efforts of KOA of USA by organising language camps in USA is worth mentioning here. Late Prof. Braj B Kachroo, Prof. Omkar Koul, Dr. B.K. Moza, Dr. Satinder Ganju, Sh.M.K. Raina are few other eminent names who have tirelessly worked in different capacities for preservation of Kashmiri language and culture in diaspora.

11. Subscription to Vaakh, the only literary journal in Devanagari and some of our community magazines which carry the Kashmiri section like Koshur samachar, Kheer Bhavani Times etc. may be of great help to stay in touch with literary trends in Kashmiri and improve reading skill.

It is a hard fact that no other language other than mother tongue remains the sole and complete language of communication. One may be an expert speaker in other languages but it is difficult to be confident and achieve the native speaker's level of ease and expertise. Having realised the importance of mother tongue in communication and comprehension, the Govt. of India through its latest National Education Policy (NEP 2020) also gives importance to learning through mother tongue till primary level, however, our community is deprived of this privilege too as there are no such schools near us which could provide such facility. The migrant schools in Jammu like that in Jagti does not have such facility.

To sum up, there is an individual and collective responsibility on all of us to contribute through one or the other way in this endeavour, do our best towards preserving our language, culture and there by our identity as Kashmiri community. I am sure all of us want to do that and live as proud Kashmiris where ever we may be.



Dr. Roop Krishen Bhat is a writer, Linguist, translator, media freelancer, editor Vaakh and former Director, MHRD, Govt. of India.
email: roopkbhat@gmail.com
Phone: 9868555535



Kashmiri Language Script - Synchronic Digraphia

Ashok Dullu

We, as a community have been forced to take an inventory of our lives especially after the recent dispersion. We find ourselves lost in so far as our Culture is concerned. The pangs of separation from homeland may perhaps have subsided but the burden of assimilation in societies where we had to settle down has put extra pressure on the diaspora.

Communities, in normal circumstances, do ponder over state of one's culture every now & then, but it is always perhaps a natural and slow process. It manifests itself in terms of reforms that could be ushered in to suit the changing times. Elders who in normal times have the responsibility of passing on the traditions to gen-next are confused to say the least. Liberal traits in our community had already caused the rot to set in, but now, the fear of losing our cultural roots is real & we have become very sensitive about it.

We find a lot of written material in the form of Books, Articles, Blogs on the Net. But it looks like a huge library without indexing. There is a need to build an Encyclopedic corpus for our Cultural fund in Kashmiri language.

Let us now take up one of the sub-stratums of these markers we are considering in this write-up, based on excerpts from various articles and information available:

Language

Kashmiri or Koshur is generally accepted

as a member of the Dardic subgroup of the Indo-Aryan language. In my opinion, serious academic research, without any bias or pre- conceived ideas is needed to put the issue of origin of Kashmiri language, to rest. Six million Kashmiri speakers scattered in India, Pakistan, UK, USA and Gulf Countries as in 2018, is a fair indication of the numbers.

Let us briefly trace the historical passage of our mother tongue with regard to our script. This issue unlike the issue of Origin has an important bearing on our efforts to preserve and nurture this cultural marker. There are now four orthographical systems used to write in the Kashmiri language: the Sharada script, the Devanagari Script, the Perso- Arabic script and lastly the Roman script which started informally but is gaining currency especially with dispersed Kashmiri Pandits.

Kashmiri first appeared in writing during the 8th century AD in the Sharda alphabet. This script has evolved from Brahmic family of languages. Gurumukhi script is derived from the Sharada script.

As Mr. K N Pandita in one of his write-ups on Kashmiri Script writes, *“Sharada script, that was in vogue in Kashmir a couple of centuries before Kalhana (1149 AD) wrote his chronicle. The manuscript of Rajatarangini on which Stein worked and is preserved in Germany, is in Sharada. Stein had to study it and perfect it with the learned Kashmiri*

Pandits in Srinagar of whom he is highly appreciative.”

The Encyclopedia Iranica describes the impact on the Kashmiri language through contacts with Persians as follows:

“The influence of one language on another primarily takes place as a result of linguistic contact. It is always the dominant language that influences another language or languages on different linguistic and literary levels. Main contacts between Kashmir and Persia were both political and cultural.”

“With the establishment of Muslim rule in Northwest India towards the middle of the 11th century, Perso-Arabic words made their way into native Indian vocabulary of the languages spoken at that time. Kashmir is said to have had cultural and trade relations with Persia from ancient times, but the influence of the Persian language and culture did not dominate until the introduction of Islam during the middle of the 14th century. The pace of Perso-Arabic influence in the valley was accelerated with the immigration of Sayyads, nobles, and other scholars from Persia and Central Asia. Persian began to be studied in earnest by Kashmiri scholars in the educational institutions founded by the rulers and presided over by eminent scholars from Persia.

As a result of foreign invasions, Muslim rule, and the spread of Islam in Kashmir, the Persian socio-cultural patterns had a profound influence on Kashmiri art, language, and literature. According to Prithivi Nath Bamzai (p. 422), “the impact of the Arabic and Persian cultures which followed the wholesale adoption of Islam in Kashmir, produced profound and far-reaching effect on diet, dress, marriage and morals, art and literature, which is discernable among

the people even today. The profound and most important influence was that of Persian language and literature on Kashmiri language and literature.”

Mr. K N Pandita further elucidates this point *“With the advent of the Muslim rule in about AD 1339, Sharada continued to be in use for a number of years. But simultaneously Persian Arabic script was also introduced. Down to the times of Zainu’l-Abadin, both scripts continued to be used, Persian by the ruling class and the elite that had converted to Islamic faith and Sharada by the plebeians and particularly the Purohit class who were most concerned with theological and astronomical literature. Though Sharada remained the script for writing Kashmiri for many years after the rise of the Sultans, yet Sanskrit continued to be the mainstay of Kashmirian literary and historical scholarship. The Brahmans and the Purohit class, if they meant to maintain their reputation as the custodians of ancient Hindu Kashmirian lore, had to perfect their knowledge of Sanskrit language and literature. The fact of the matter is that not only during those early days of transition, even in later times and also now, when we talk about the Kashmiri Pandit scholarship, we unmistakably mean Sanskrit scholarship. In this scenario, Sharada remained limited to writing some of the Kashmiri texts and recording such matter as had liturgical content. In this sense it is not perhaps very safe to say that Sharada script is perfect to represent all vowel and consonant sounds of Kashmirian language.”*

Iranian Encyclopedia further elaborates *“After about a century of Muslim rule, Persian became the official language of Kashmir. With the patronage of Muslim rulers, the Persian language became*

popular with the educated people. Instead of writing in their mother tongue, Kashmiri creative writers considered it a matter of great honor, pride, and dignity to write in Persian. The Kashmiri language in the 14th century had proved itself a successful medium for the vakhs (poetic renderings in four-line stanzas mostly related to Kashmiri Shaiva philosophy of the poetess Lalla) and šruks (poetic compositions in four-line stanzas mostly related to Sufi philosophy of Shaikh Nur-al-Din Wali). Later it became dominated by the Persian language and its literary styles. Kashmiri continued to be used as a medium by semi-literate creative minds, such as the 16th-century poetess Habba, in their compositions. Persian continued to be the official language during the rule of Mughals and Afghans.”

Explaining the transition, Mr. K N Pandita further explains, “With the rise of the Sultans followed by the Sayyids of Baihaq and then the Chaks, only Persian language received full patronage from the royalty and acceptability with the common Kashmirian literati. I don’t think any of the Muslim rulers ever felt the necessity of evolving a script for Kashmiri or reviving the Sharada script of olden days. It is true that a bias against Sanskrit and Sharada developed, and the small Pandit community continued for some time to record their liturgical fund in one of the two languages/scripts viz. Sanskrit and Sharada. Persian flourished for a long time, from 1339 to 1846, a period of nearly five hundred years. I am not going to deal with this aspect except to reiterate that Persian being a very sweet language with very simple grammar and almost musical intonation supported by very rich prose and poetry genres of literature, became very quickly

acceptable to the Kashmiris. Perhaps the humanistic teachings of stalwarts of Persian poetry and prose writings left a deep impression on the minds of Kashmiris. The Pandit Karkuns had to learn Persian in order to earn a living by doing clerical jobs. In the process, the major segment of Pandit Karkuns lost touch with both Sanskrit and Sharada and when the Afghans seized power in Kashmir in the early decades of 18th century, the remnant of the Pandit community -identified itself with the new and imported cultural ethos. The Muslims of Kashmir, if and when they needed, began adopting Persian script for Kashmiri idiom. It was not a policy matter with the contemporary government for the government never needed it. It was only on personal level.

With Sikhs assuming power in Kashmir, Persian continued to be the official and formal language of Kashmir. Historical record available to us today of that period is all in Persian, especially historical fund. Birbal Kachroo, a Pandit scholar of the day, wrote the history of Kashmir in Persian. Many Pandit Persian versifiers earned a name during this period.

During the later period of Maharaja Ranbir Singh, Urdu gradually began to replace Persian. I have myself examined minutes of cabinet meetings of Maharaja Pratap Singh written in Urdu. We can find these reports in the archives department with J&K Government. The reason for this shift was that at that point of time, interaction between the State government and people, with the Punjab government and people received a strong boost. In other words, this was the beginning of exposure of Kashmir to the world outside.

As Urdu grew to replace Persian and interaction between Kashmiris and

outsiders increased phenomenally, some literate Kashmiris with taste in letters, began to use Urdu script for writing Kashmiri. They had no innovative skills to adapt the Urdu script because the complexity of Kashmiri pronunciation defied such attempts. We can say that every writer adopting Urdu script for Kashmiri had his own methodology and a uniform code of scripts was totally absent."

"It was replaced by Urdu in 1907, and the latter continued to be the official language of the state of Jammu and Kashmir even after its independence in 1947."

The scene, post-independence left the script issue veering towards Urdu even if it was not found suitable to Kashmiri language. There was also not even a feeble attempt to revive Sharada as a script.

It is important to revisit History, as it helps indicate a path for future progress. This Cultural marker, for both the communities, has unfortunately got entangled in the larger context of "Kashmir problem". This is one of the main obstacles in going forward in so far as script issue is concerned.

Kashmiri Muslims in Kashmir write their language with the Arabic script. Kashmiri as a language was introduced in the curriculum with this script in seventies and has found a place in regular curriculum in University of Kashmir. The fact remains, that Kashmiri as a language got the state patronage. The State by recognizing it as a state language and the Center, by putting it in the Scheduled list would mean that it will evolve as a powerful competitor to Urdu or English and eventually replace it, perhaps, has not happened.

Sadaf Munshi in her blog in 2016 laments thus *"Many factors continue to be hurdles in efforts towards the promotion and revitalization of the Kashmiri language, the biggest among them being the choice of script. A socio-historical account of the situation can help clarify some of the complexities in understanding the controversy around the question of the Kashmiri script, which has become the focus of intense debate between Muslim and Hindu Kashmiris recently following the HRD Ministry's proposal to introduce an "alternate" official (Nāgri-based) writing system for the language. Many Kashmir-based writers, language activists and critics are threatening to launch a protest in opposition of such a move."*

MHRD has indicated it as an alternative script and not as a replacement of State's official Perso-Arabic script.

How do we preserve our Cultural inheritance – by written literature, as it can then get to our next generation. Written in what language – Kashmiri, in scripts that will make it read widely. Both communities need to concentrate sincerely to tackle the problem of preservation of our language amongst new generations and not bicker over script.

Common sense will dictate that Muslims should use Perso-Arabic script as Pandits will use the Sharada /Devanagiri /Roman script. Script is not the problem but sincerity in preservation of Kashmiri language as a Cultural marker is.

Sadaf Munshi has bared open the reality which both communities should give a heed to, the status as per her blog is: *"Today, when the Kashmiri language has*

been introduced into the school curriculum of Kashmir after efforts by various local non-government organizations, there has been an enormous dearth of qualified teachers trained to teach it. Many "teachers" have been assigned the job of teaching the language without a background check on their qualifications, eligibility and proficiency levels. In some cases, even non-native speakers who have very little proficiency in spoken and/or written Kashmiri are assigned to teach the language. What is extremely unfortunate and ironic is that often the medium of instruction in the classrooms, even during a Kashmiri language class, is a language other than Kashmiri. Under these circumstances it is hard to imagine how successful the attempts to revitalize the language will be unless effective measures to promote it are taken in time."

"With globalization and the dominance of English all around the world, the status of Kashmiri was relegated to the bottom of the language hierarchy."

"Because of the dominance of languages other than Kashmiri and lack of institutional support younger generations are rapidly shifting to other prestige languages"

Dr K N Pandita reflects on this issue too – *"Children of the Kashmiri diaspora -- Hindus and Muslims -- have little or limited exposure to their heritage language, and speak languages other than Kashmiri as their primary medium of communication. Native language literacy is dismally limited."*

Pandits, dispersed as they are, are trying to revive the Sharada Script within the confines of the community. Devnagari and Roman script is currently favored and

understood by most Kashmiri Pandits. Whether alternative scripts get a nod from MHRD eventually, should not distract the Pandit community from going ahead with adopting script of their choice. I earnestly wish that this issue be dis-entangled from the *Kashmiriyat*, 'Kashmir Problem' and allow us to progress on preserving it for gen-next.

A Standardized Devanagari-Kashmiri script is already in place developed by the Northern Regional Languages Centre, Patiala. An Indo-Roman script for the Kashmiri language has also been evolved by the Lalla Ded Educational and Welfare Trust under its prestigious Project *Zaan*. Rationalized Roman for Kashmiri devised by Dr R L Bhat is a pioneering work to transmit Kashmiri to the young generations.

Advocating, the need for a rational script for gen -next of Kashmiri Pandit community, Dr. Pandita makes his point thus: *"Our children in exile speak all the local languages except their original mother tongue. They need a language that brings them closer to the environs and social milieu surrounding them. They need a language that will open the doors of livelihood upon them. Kashmiri language is least qualified to address these imperatives. Therefore those who are fanatically committed to a search for a scientific script for Kashmiri should not overlook these harsh realities on the ground. Now supposing that we have to develop a script in any case for Kashmir either for the preservation of our cultural fund or for prompting our futuristic aspirations for cultural advancement, then, in my opinion the time is ripe that we come out of emotions and*

sentiments and begin thinking like cool and considerate scientists.”

Modified on scientific lines, the Romanized script will give great advantages in preserving this Cultural marker, Dr. Pandita postulates.

In conclusion, both Kashmiri speaking community activists should focus sincerely on preserving the corpus of our literature, liturgical fund and future writings in the scripts of our choice.

Muslims can go ahead and focus on Perso-Arabic script and use the existing agencies to promote our language and its corpus of literature. Kashmiri Pandits should go ahead and use any or all of the scripts including Perso-Arabic which will support to preserve our language and also help us preserve our Cultural and pass it on to gen-next.

We have a lot of Kashmiri Pandits who have a considerable contribution in the existing corpus of Kashmiri literature in Perso-Arabic script. I would like that this, as well as that of Muslim writers be translated in other scripts under consideration for wider readership and also for preserving it for gen-next.

It will be a loss to all of us, if we build walls and not bridges, to harness all writings in Kashmiri irrespective of which religion the writers belong to. It is our common cultural heritage that we should focus on instead of cribbing about a common script.

We should channelize our energies for a Synchronic Digraphia i.e., the coexistence of two or more writing systems for the same language. False narratives that

MHRD is going for a Diachronic Digraphia i.e., the replacement of one writing system by another for a particular language should be avoided and resisted by both communities.

After all we shall not be an exception, Nationally or Internationally in this domain. Have a look at the following:

In India:

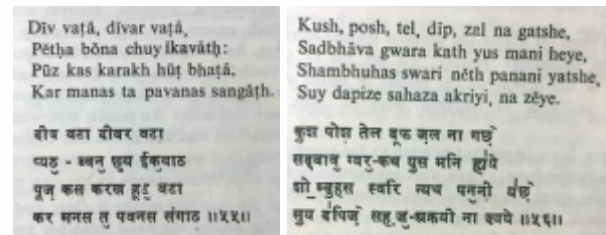
Kashmiri (written using Devanagari, Perso-Arabic, Śāradā scripts, Roman); Konkani (Kannada, Devanagari, Malayalam, Roman (Romi Konkani) and sometimes in Persian scripts); Pali (Brahmi, Sinhala, Devanagari, Khmer, Burmese, Thai, Mon); Punjabi (Gurmukhi and Shahmukhi); Sanskrit (originally unwritten, it started to be written using Devanagari, Brahmi, Tamil, Malayalam, Kannada or some other Indian language script depending on the author's first language); Saurashtra (used its own script, but largely uses Tamil and occasionally Devanagari these days); Tulu (Kannada, Tulu); Dogri, The language of Jammu (not Kashmir), spoken by about 5 million people in India and Pakistan, mostly around the Jammu region and has historically been written in at least four scripts -Dogra Aakhar (adapted from the Takri scrip, which itself is closely related to both the Sharada script for Kashmiri and Gurmukhi script for Punjabi) Devnagri, Roman, Perso Arabic.

International:

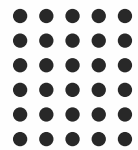
Serbian, which is written both in Serbian Cyrillic alphabet and Gaj's Latin alphabet ; Malay, which is written in both the Latin alphabet and Jawi alphabet; Ladino (aka

Judaeo-Spanish), which is written both in the Hebrew alphabet and the Turkish variant of the Latin alphabet.; Inuktitut, which is written both in Inuktitut syllabics and Latin, Japanese is a language which uses multiple scripts: there are minimum three different character sets used in the language.

In the end, I shall put a Vakh in different scripts. I urge all readers of this article to try and realize that if you are looking for some meaning, script does not matter. Cynics may, no doubt, split hairs but essence remains the same in any script.

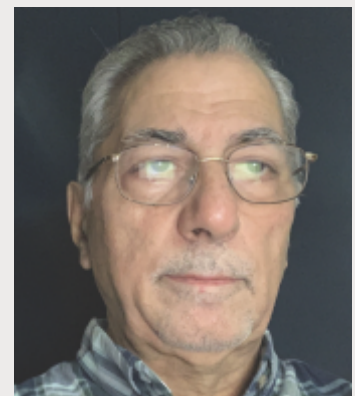


“Preservation of one’s own culture does not require contempt or disrespect for other cultures.” Cesar Chavez (American Activist and Labor Organizer. Founder of the National Farm Workers Association; 1927-1993)



Ashok Dullu is a Kashmiri speaking senior citizen. He left Srinagar in 1982 at the age of 33 years, to pursue a better career as a Graduate Electrical Engineer. Since his retirement he is engaged in researching Kashmir History, ancient as well as contemporary. He is keenly interested in Kashmiri Pandit Community history and is engaged in studying the cultural history of the community. An ardent supporter to preserve and propagate the community cultural legacy, long-cherished longing to go back to roots has been a constant with the community, the passion now is to ensure whatever part of our rich and syncretic cultural legacy can, in any form be passed onto to Gen-next. He has chosen Vadodara, Gujarat as his new adopted home, without giving up the hope to die in his motherland. He is actively engaged with the community through Kashmir Sabha Baroda and is the Editor of Yearly community Magazine -Kongposh since 2016.

Email: ashokdullu@gmail.com



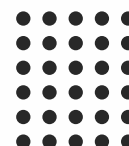


SECTION III

XLVII

LALDED

2023 - 2024



Yogini Lalleshwari of Kashmir – A Mystic and Poet of Highest Order

Ravi Dhar

Medieval Kashmir's foremost socio-religious icon, Yogini Lalleshwari, has today become a subject of study by modern scholars and sociologists alike. Such is the expanse of her thought and philosophy that people are marvelling at the erudition of an apparently unlettered village damsel who lived in one of the darker and volatile periods of Kashmir history and yet rose to the peak of self-realization, a devotee of Lord Shiva in HIS pristine form; she had, during her own lifetime visualized divinity like Adi-Shankar and Swami Vivekananda! Her words of earthy wisdom, spoken probably extempore in Kashmiri language, have been recorded in the folk tales of Kashmir and by some later day Muslim historians; Lalla was beyond all formats of worldly restrictions and had lost her body-consciousness by then, uttering her precious Vakhs and Vatchuns (poems, set in a peculiar 4-line meter), in a state of divine ecstasy.

Lalla, named Lalleshwari by her parents, was born on Bhadrapada Shukla Paksh Ashtami (Eighth day of bright half of month Bhaderpada) of the year 4396 as



per Saptrishi Samvat prevalent in Kashmir, corresponding to 1320 CE at Village Pandrenthyan, near Pampore, Srinagar. She was married at an early age (12) to one Sona Bhat of Village Drangbal near Pampore, Srinagar. As was customary amongst Kashmiri Pandits those days, her in-laws gave her a new name -Padmavati. At her new home, Lalla found her preceptor and guide, the venerable Shaivite Guru, Siddha Srikanth (also known as Syed Bayu) – incidentally, he was the Kul guru of her in-law's family

and thus had free access to Lalla. Srikanth introduced Lalla to the intricacies of Shaivite theory and theology. Soon, the master realized that his ward was ready to outshine him and allowed her the freedom of thought and practice. The exchange of ideas, in the form of deep meaning, philosophical riddles, between Srikanth and Lalla are of the highest philosophical order and is well documented. Occasionally, her husband too would participate in these exchanges. Lalla is said to have remembered her previous lives in various births and her Guru, Siddh Srikanth confirmed her previous incarnations.

At her new home, Lalla also found her tormentor-in-chief in the form of her wicked mother-in-law who appeared hell bent on making Lalla's life miserable. Besides throwing jeers and insults at Lalla, she would find fault with whatever Lalla did. One famous folklore associated with Lalla is that the MIL, in order to underfeed Lalla, would keep a stone in the 'toor' (peculiar brass vessel found in every Kashmiri home; often, women folk would eat food from this 'toor') and cover it with rice. Lalla being what she was, never complained about the poor quantity of rice; instead, she would wash the stone and carefully keep it back, along with the 'toor'. One day, when a feast had been arranged at her 'in-laws' house, she is reported to have commented wryly, "Bhat marityan ya bhatiyen, Lalli nilwath tchalye ne zanh" – loosely meaning, 'No matter what

happens in the house, how many feasts are arranged, Lalla shall continue to receive the stone in her food plate." Another story associated with Lalla is that once she was fetching a pitcher of water from the river for the household on her shoulder when her husband broke the earthen pitcher with his stick – while the pitcher broke, water is said to have remained intact; Lalla filled up all household utensils with the water and threw the remaining out where it took the shape of a pond. The pond, known as Lalletrag, exists even today in her village.

Such meteoric was Lalla's spiritual progress that she started losing her body-consciousness and left her home at age 24. Legend has it that her belly started growing and drooping, thus covering her private parts – incidentally, a big, drooping belly is known as 'lal' even today, in Kashmir. In her state of spiritual ecstasy, she would roam around, meeting other spiritual people of the age. One such story concerns Nund Rishi, aka Shiekh Noor-Ud-Din. It is said that after his birth, Nund Rishi refused to accept milk from his mother's breast. Lalla, a wandering mystic by then, is said to have taken the young baby into her own lap and commented, "Yeli Yine mandtchok ne, teli dodh kyaze chukh ne tchavan" – loosely translated as: "When you did not feel ashamed of being born (coming into this world), then why are you ashamed of suckling milk from the mother's breast?" Saying this, Lalla is said to have offered her own breast to the

infant Nund Rishi and lo! The baby accepted the milk that flowed from Lalla's breast!

Lalla lived during probably the most tumultuous and trying period of Kashmir's history. Much of the record of Lalla's life is rooted in oral tradition, and as a result the details of her life and beliefs vary considerably. Many contemporary Kashmiri chronicles, such as those of Jonaraja, Srivara, Prajyabhata and Haider Malik, prepared by Chadura, do not mention Lalleshwari. The first written record of Lalleshwari's life is contained in Tadhkirat-ul-Arifin (1587), a collection of biographies of saints and religious figures written by Mulla Ali Raina, followed by Baba Daud Mishkati's Asrar-ul - A description of his life. In these texts Lalleshwari is described as a mystical saint who appeared to travellers in the forest. In 1736, Khwaja Azam Diddamari's Tarikh-e-Azmi contains a more detailed account of Lalleshwari's life. She is also mentioned in the Persian history, Wakiyati-e-Kashmir (1746), in which she is described as famous during the reign of Sultan Alauddin (1343-54) and died during the reign of Sultan Shihab. A total of 258 of Lalla's 'vaakhs' stand recorded, very popular as folklores and folk songs as well as songs, proverbs and prayers. Her vaakhs are regularly sung by Kashmiri sufi singers, Hindu as well as Muslim - a tribute to their earthy wisdom and high spiritual content.

Towards the later part of her life, Lalla is reported to have moved to Bijbihara (Anantnag) town where she is reported to have given up her mortal frame in year 1392 CE - her soul is said to have arisen as a flame to merge with the Supreme Soul. Lalla is said to have laid the foundation of the Rishi-Sufi trend in Kashmir. She had broken the shackles of organized religion, mingling with spiritually awakened people, irrespective of religion. She became known as Lal Dyed (Dyed in Kashmiri means a grand old and wise woman), Lalla Yogini, Lalleshwari etc; Muslim populace preferred to call her Lalla Aarifa. Over the years, a peculiar trend is seen to have emerged in the name of 'research' by various 'Islamic scholars' in Kashmir - that towards the end of her life, Lalla embraced Islam. Such bigoted minds fail to accept that Lalla had started out as a devout Shaivite and, over time, just outgrew organized religion. Such devious mindsets, in a bid to erase the Hindu history of Kashmir have tried to rename Shankaracharya Hill as 'Takht-e-Sulemani' and Hari Parbat as Koh-e-Maran". This trend is very much in keeping with the Islamic usurpation of Christian Churches Jewish places of worship and Hindu Temples - Sofia Hagia in Turkey and the history of Jerusalem (Al-Kuds for the Muslims).

My painting is a humble tribute to Lalleshwari, Kashmir's first poetess and spiritual giantess!

Let me present before you some of her
most popular Vaakhs:

अमि पन सदरस नावि छस लमान

कति बोजि दय म्योन मेति दी तार

आम्यन चाक्यन पोन्य ज़न शमान

जुव छुम ब्रमान घर गछह

आयस वति गयस न वति

सुमन साथा लूसुम दोह

वछुम चन्दस हार नो अथा

अथ वावि तारस दिम क्याह बा

क्याह कर पाचन दहन त काहन

वाखशुन यथ लेजि यिम करिय गयि

सरी समहन यथ रज़ि लमहन

अद क्याजि राविहे कहन गाव

आयस कमि दिशि त कमि वति

गछह कमि दिशि कवा जाना कथ

अन्तिदाय लगिमय तते

चनिस फोकस काह ति नो साथ



Ravi Dhar was born at Safakadal, Srinagar (Kashmir) on 20th June 1958 to Smt. Girija and Sh. Girdhari Lal Dhar in a famous Dhar clan of Balkak Dhar. Having Masters degrees in Fine Arts (Painting), English Literature and Hindi Literature. Working as freelancer artist in Pilani, Rajasthan and putting up there since 1990. Recipient of J&K State award in 1982 and 7th Inspire Award in 2021. Exhibitions participated in include One man and group shows across India in many states. 45 years of work experience as painter, Sculpture and designer.

Website:- www.artisttravidhar.in

Mob:- 9588046519



LALDED

Ashok Dullu

Lalla's married life and liberation

A great deal of controversy exists as to precisely when Lalla was born. Some writers give the date of her birth as the middle of the fourteenth century while other sources indicate that Lalla could have been born somewhere between A.D 1317 and A.D 1320 (even as early as 1300-1301), and that she died in the 1370s or 1380s.

Lalla was given in marriage to Nicha Bat of Pampore at a young age. Her in-laws gave her a new name—Padmavati. The custom of naming a new bride when she is accepted into her husband's family still exists among Kashmiri Hindus. It symbolizes a married woman's new identity as a wife and daughter-in-law. However, in her verses, she always refers to herself by her maiden name Lalla and it is this name that has come down to posterity.

Maltreated in marriage, legends speak about her mother-in-law as a tyrant who filled her marital life with suffering. Both Lalla's family and that of her husband Nica Bhat belonged to different Śaiva Tantric sects that were at odds with each other. This was perhaps another source of tension for poor Lalla.

Lalla was not given enough to eat. Her mother-in-law would give her small servings, making them look larger by hiding a stone underneath the food on her plate. Lalla would quietly eat whatever she was served. Lalla plays along with the ruse, making the guests think Lalla is treated like a queen. She dutifully washes the stone at

the end of the meal, placing it back on its shelf each time.

A special *grahashanti* ceremony (a prayer for bringing peace into the house) was once held at her house. As she went out that day to fetch water from the river, one of her neighbors teased her that she would have a feast that night. Lalla's reply that has become a famous proverb in Kashmiri was:

"hund maritan kinah kath noshi nalvat tsalih nah zanh"

which means - whether a lamb or a sheep is killed at her house, the daughter-in-law will always get a stone.

Some legends describe that her marriage was not consummated, while others say she was a disobliging wife who preferred to keep to herself.

Her morning chores would invariably be her daily visit to the temple where she performed her *sādhana*, or a riverside, or a well to fetch water sometimes alone or other times with other women. Sometimes she is followed & seen disappearing into a white light. At other times, she is encountered in deep trance by the river.

One day, the mother-in-law finally succeeds in casting enough doubt into the mind of her son, that he decides to follow Lalla as she goes about her morning chores. Suspecting her of infidelity, her husband followed her to the river bank where he found her sitting alone in a meditative posture. He went home and waited for her to come back. Soon Lalla

returned with an earthen pitcher full of water on her head. Filled with rage, her husband hit the pitcher with a stick. While the pitcher broke into pieces, the water stayed miraculously intact on her head. Lalla calmly went inside the house and poured the water into smaller vessels until all vessels were full. She threw the leftover water outside the house where a pond is believed to have formed. Later on, this pond was named Laltrag (the Pond of Lalla), which remained full for many centuries.

The miracle of the water pitcher makes her very famous as does the springing of the pond.

This incident represents a turning point in Lalla's life. The fact that Lalla is able to nourish her household with that water without reacting or responding to the torrent of raging emotions from her in-laws, is symbolic proof that she has achieved a higher level of transformation. She is a realized soul who no longer requires to continue with the meaningless married life. So, it is a culmination of the maltreatment meted out by the mother-in-law and the final act of breaking the pitcher of the ego, freeing the waters to flow where it wills which truly frees her from bondage of the ego, and not just the unfortunate marriage.

In this story, among the elements that seemed to spark such a response of awe and admiration were Lalla's dedication to daily spiritual discipline despite the demands of her family life; her ability to remain calm and accepting in the face of adversity; and the transformation of the

heroine.

As Lalla rejects social conventions, she is subject to ridicule, which causes a great deal of pain to her. At the same time, it makes her focus even more intensely on her spiritual quest, now that she occupies a space outside the system. She says in a verse:

The chain of embarrassment will only break When I can tolerate taunts and mocking words Robe of self-pity will burn away When the inner unbridled horse (restless mind) is brought under control.

So she begins the life of a wandering ascetic, who many times is depicted as naked or semi-nude.

This is a very controversial issue among authors who have written about Lalla. Many writers have difficulty trying to reconcile their awe and reverence for Lalla with the problematic image of a naked woman. That she took up this mode of life seems to be supported by one of her vaks:

Gwaran von nam kunuy vatsun

Neybra dop nam anndaray atsun;

Suy gav Lali mey vaakh ta vatsun,

Tavay mey hyotum nangay natsun.

My Guru gave me but one precept; "From without withdraw your gaze within, and fix it on the Inmost Self." I, Lalla, took to heart this one precept, and therefore naked I began to dance.

Lalla's wandering in a nude state could refer to her divesting or de-robing herself of all worldly attachments, including her family, friends, and the comfort of a home. Nakedness expresses vulnerability and humility, but it can also be inherently

freeing, like that of a naked child at play, innocent of the shame or danger that adults' experiences impose upon the state.

It is not out of a desire to shock, nor in a mood of self-mortification. It is just in her "fine madness" she had become completely unselfconscious. She is then made out to have cast away her apparel to go about dancing in the nude. Her craving for breaking the conventional bonds of societal mores by liberating herself was expressed early on in her life:

mandachi haa'nkal kar tshe'nyam

When can I break the bonds of shame?

When I am indifferent to jibes and jeers.

When can I discard the robe of dignity?

When desires cease to nag my mind.

Lalla meets Hamadani - The Baker story

This story has very interesting dimensions.

The essence of the story where not much is contested is that her credentials as an evolved soul were fairly well established. The body of work – *Vakhs* attributed to her are ample proof of this fact. It is also accepted that when this incident happened, she was a wandering ascetic.

What is contested is, her wandering as a poorly clad or naked ascetic, her conversion to Islam, her spiritual ascendance with respect to her Muslim contemporaries.

The story begins with Lalla, who has taken to roaming poorly clad, claiming "there are no real men" here so why should I wear clothes? She would spend most of the time in her Sadhana away from the crowds.

She was a practicing Yogini from the Kashmir Shaiva tradition. One day, she joins the people who have gathered to welcome this Sufi Saint from Hamadan.

The historical context of Hamadani's journey to Kashmir is briefly described here to put the events in context. The stern but generous ruler Timur back in Persia was in the habit of disguising himself and going out and giving to the poor, but a "greedy Sayyid neighbor" caught wind of one poor woman's fortune and stole it from her. After a long-detailed drama, which is longer than the baker story, the conclusion of this drama results in Timur's announcement that all Sayyids must prove their purity by passing the ordeal of riding the hot iron horse. Only Mir Sayyid `Ali Shah Hamadani, who was a sufi saint of the Kubarwiya order is said to have gone successfully through the ordeal. Timur's insistence that all of Ali Hamadani's followers too have to pass the test made their stay in Hamadan untenable. Timur is also said to have ordered Ali Hamadani to go to Kashmir. So, you find him in Kashmir on the mission to spread Islam in Kashmir.

Hamadani saw from a distance a poorly clad woman but bright like lightning. The moment she saw him and the party, she ran shrieking "I've seen a man! I've seen a man!" and runs for cover. She first runs into the shop of the grocer or butcher, who yells while moving towards her and sends her back out. Then she runs across the street into the baker's and jumps in the oven. Baker faints out of fear of what the King would do to him. Then to his shock and relief he sees Lalla emerging in fine

clothing and then hastening after Hamadani.

Lalla had purposely thrown herself in the oven to show Hamadani that the ordeal he had endured at the hands of Timur was an easy job for persons of advanced occult powers. On seeing Lal Ded coming out of a furnace of fire attired in fine clothes, his pride of riding the fire horse was humbled, and he becomes a constant companion of hers. In this story Lalla is now a saint in her own right meeting another saint on the path.

This was the period when Islam was making inroads in Kashmir. Sultans had already established their kingdom. Islam was patronized by them. We find Lalla identified and revered by both Hindu and Muslim religious traditions, despite her Hindu heritage. Perhaps this is due to the temporal placement of her life. She lived at a time when the presence of Islam was growing in the valley, and the recognition of her by the Sufis was a natural inclination especially as she was in any case propagating oneness of God as against the highly ritualistic religious beliefs of the original settlers -Kashmiri Pandits.

Adopting the local saint, as a means to allay the fears and anxieties around the strange and new, seems rather ingenious. By incorporating her into the narratives of great saints, she becomes part of the greater narrative that develops around Islam in Kashmir. It also perhaps helped to keep the deeper roots of the cultural identity structure intact, connecting the past to the present.

Conversion of prominent Kashmiri Pandits & to use it later for propagation finds a very frequent mention in the history. In fact, these converts have inflicted more atrocities than the foreigners themselves.

It will be pertinent to note that Lalla 's Vakhs were orally transmitted for over 300 years before her name was mentioned by Persian scholars in their works. The 20th & 21st narrators include Kashmiri Pandit Scholars, Kashmiri Muslim scholars, Britishers, Journalists, Internet bloggers and diaspora.

The first scholarly accounts of Lalla, originating from British colonialists, Temple and Grierson in the early part of the twentieth century, provide some form of scholarly legitimacy to her existence and indicate her worthiness of further study.

Scholarly attention from Lalla's fellow Kashmiri Pandits also reclaims her as one of their own, reasserting her connections with the Kashmiri Śaiva tradition, and her identity as one.

Similarly, Lalla serves as a uniting force that transcends religious identity in favour of community identity, bringing Kashmiris together in their love of Lalla and her story.

There is no doubt that the history of Hamadani's seven hundred followers fleeing from Timur's edict and settling in Kashmir had a profound effect on the Kashmiri community, changing the very fabric of the society.

Sayyid Hamadi was a great proselytizer, but one wonders how in his book "Zakhirat-ul-Muluk" to guide a Sultan in

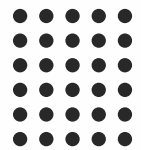
treating his non-Muslim subjects, he could bring in conditions which perhaps even Quran-sharif did not lay down on how to treat non-Muslims. He was no doubt a disciplined & trained Islamic proselytizer. He is regarded as the greatest influencer to bring Islam to Kashmir.

Life is a story, and Lalla is just one of them – A shining connection to intermingling identities for Kashmiris and spiritual explorers. Her universal elements will continue to draw in the explorers of story and symbolism, while her unique Kashmiri qualities will shift and change with the times and the narrators.

Acknowledgements:

- Locating Kashmir in Lal Ded: Communicating identity and meaning through narrative: Diane Fereig

Note: This write up is meant to bring out some striking aspects of Lalla to fore for our community. It rests heavily on the material as indicated in Acknowledgements.



Ashok Dullu

Email: ashokdullu@gmail.com

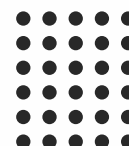


SECTION IV

XLVII

OUR HERITAGE

2023 - 2024



Kashmir's Traditional Miniature Art – a Heritage Conserved

Sanjeev Munshi

The blessed land of Rishi Kashyap, Kashmir became a garden in which bloomed knowledge in all its creative forms – philosophy, religious theology, languages, poetry, music, sculpture, architecture, painting, dance and performing arts (natya shastra) in various manifestations besides the various schools of spirituality.

Mostly, on festivals, artists started depicting various aspects of life in their paintings. Quite often, art reflected the impact of religious thought. An artefact that I recall from my own childhood was known as 'Krealpakhsh', depicting various religious icons, mostly images of Saraswati in her many manifestations. These artifacts were hand-drawn, by our Kul-Gurus and presented to each 'yajmaan' on 'Gauri Tritiya" (*Gor-Tray*). Often, our 'Zaatukh' or Janma Patrika would have several of these hand-made miniature paintings. The traditional panchang, colloquially called Jantri in Kashmiri found in almost every Kashmiri household across the country carries these images called '*Krool Pachh*'

that is used for certain religious functions. Credit for keeping this art form alive must go to these humble Brahmins who led simple, pious lives but acted as reservoirs of knowledge, carrying the flame from generation to generation. The colours used would be organic and each painting would be unique in design and concept. The images, always, would be linked to our religious iconography and folklores.

With this segment of Kashmiri Pandit community going out of vogue, post 1990 migration, this art form, like many of our traditions is becoming extinct. As a student of art and a Kashmiri Pandit, well known artist and painter, **Mr Ravi Dhar** felt a strong urge to revive this ancient artform and to present it to the new generation as part of our cultural heritage. So far, he has created ten masterpieces. Each miniature has a strong link to the traditional folklores associated with our religious icons.

What makes Miniature Painting special: Defined by delicate brushwork, a mélange of colours, and graceful forms, miniature



Mata Saraswati – Patron Goddess of Kashmir



Lord Ganapati with Riddhi & Siddhi



Shiva with Parvati on Harmuk



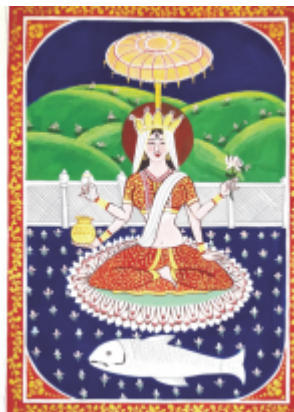
Devi Kalika slaying demons



Shiva with Kartikey and Ganesha



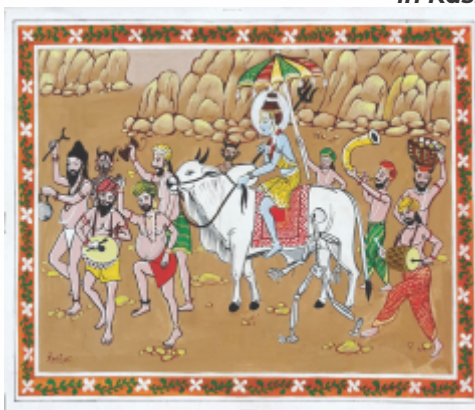
Devi in her Ashtadashbuj Roop, known as Sharika in Kashmir



Mata Vitasta – Lifeline of Kashmir



Shiva and His consort, Shakti



Shiv Vivah – the Marriage Procession



Shiva weds Parvati as Her parents watch

with regional style variations. In North, we have had the Basohli School of Art, also known as the Kangra or Pahari Miniature art, prevalent in HP and Jammu region. Madhubani style of Art flourished in Mithila area of Bihar (Purnia, Bhagalpur, Muzaffarpur etc).

History of evolution of Miniature art:

The earliest Miniature paintings in India can be traced back to the 7th century AD, when they flourished under the patronage of the Palas of Bengal. Buddhist texts and scriptures were illustrated on 3-inch-wide palm leaf manuscripts, with images of Buddhist deities. Jainism inspired the miniature artistic movement of the Western Indian style of miniature painting. This form prevailed in the regions of Rajasthan, Gujarat and Malwa (MP). With the advent of Iranian/ Mughal influences paper replaced palm leaves, while hunting scenes and varied facial types started appearing along with the use of rich aquamarine blues and golds. Rajasthani miniatures centred around the love stories

paintings are so delicate, that even today, with so much modernization, squirrel hair (or similar) is used to create the brushes used in this art form. Each painting abounds with fine photographic details, capturing even the hair on a character. Miniature art is an intense labour of love illustrated on a range of materials like palm leaves, paper, wood, marble, ivory panels, and cloth. Organic and natural minerals like stone dust, real gold and silver dusts are used to create the exquisite colours. Even the paper used is special; polished with stone to render a smooth non porous surface. Miniature painting is a branch of painting in which the artist portrays not only his feelings but also the period in which the painting was made. We find that miniatures became popular across India

of Lord Krishna and the mythological literature of Ramayana and Mahabharata, created as manuscripts and decorations on the walls of havelis and forts. Many distinct schools of Rajasthani miniature art were established, like the schools of Malwa, Mewar, Marwar, Bundi-Kota, Kishangarh and Amber. The Deccan style refers to the miniature art style that was practiced in Bijapur, Ahmednagar, Golkonda, and Hyderabad.

Over a period, the Miniature form went into a cyclic decline in Kashmir. Several factors were responsible, including: Arrival of Oil Painting art, Display of realism in art, advent of the printing press that made it easy to reproduce images in mass numbers at low cost, loss of patronage from the royal and elite connoisseurs etc.

Quest for Revival:

Serious attempts for revival of this artform have been made by several artists, art lovers and intellectuals earlier too! Maybe, the message did not percolate down the line with the seriousness it demands. As an artist, Mr Ravi Dhar has taken up the task of reviving the miniature artform, as it existed

in Kashmir for hundreds of years! He has so far created ten artworks, each depicting stories associated with Kashmir's rich history of tantra and religious imagery. In the era of social media, he is trying to spread the word across various platforms including Facebook, LinkedIn, WhatsApp etc. If the artform is to be revived, many, many artists shall need to own it and put it to practice!



An old photograph showing the local artists displaying their paintings and artwork

Pt. Sanjeev Munshi, originally from Budhagir, Alikadal, Srinagar and currently living in Vadodara, Gujarat, is a retired Pharma Marketing Consultant. He is keenly interested in matters social, historical and of human behaviour, particularly Kashmir related issues. He can be reached at sanjeevmunshi@hotmail.com



Martand Sun Temple – The Lost Jewel of Kashmir

Sanjeev Munshi

Kashmir's history, as per its illustrious historian son, Pt Kalhan, can be traced well into the Mahabharata times. Kalhan, in his epic Rajtarangini has mentioned that King Gonanda I ruled Kashmir (3238-3188 BCE?); he was related to King Jarasandha of Magadh. His son, Damodara was killed in battle with Balaram, brother of Sri Krishna! It was Sri Krishna Himself who anointed the widowed Queen Yashovati as ruler of Kashmir with himself as her protector! Yashovati, thus became the first woman to rule Kashmir! Kalhan mentions that King Ramdev of Pandava dynasty was a great king whose kingdom extended as far as the Bay of Bengal; Ramdev is said to have built a magnificent temple dedicated to the Sun God (Martand) in 3007 BC. Amongst the Kshatriya(warrior) clans of India, one branch (Surya Vanshi) considers itself as direct descendants of the Sun God. Over centuries, several subsequent kings and monarchs are said to have repaired and renovated the temple complex, particularly since Kashmir is quite prone to earthquakes. It was ultimately Emperor Lalitaditya Muktapida, Kashmir's own Napoleon of the Karokota dynasty, who is said to have rebuilt the Martand Temple as his tribute to the Sun God during his reign (724-761 CE).

Martand temple was built atop a plateau near Mattan town, in Anantnag Distt of Kashmir, about 60 km from Srinagar. Sir Walter R Lawrence (1857-1940), a British

Civil Servant and historian, in his '*The Valley of Kashmir*' (1895), has mentioned that the 'Martand Temple(ruins) occupy *the finest position in Kashmir. This noble ruin is the most striking in size and situation of all the existing remains of Kashmir grandeur*'. Sir Alexander Cunningham (1814-1893), an engineer turned historian cum archaeologist who visited Kashmir (1836-40) has mentioned that the erection of this Sun temple was suggested by the magnificent sunny prospect which its position commands. "*It overlooks the finest view in Kashmir and perhaps in the world. Beneath it lays the paradise of the east, with its sacred streams, orchards, and green fields, surrounded by vast snowy mountains, seem to smile upon the beautiful valley below*".

From the ruins and related archaeological findings, it can be said that Martand Temple was an excellent specimen of Kashmiri architecture, which had blended the styles of Gandhara, the Gupta era and even the Chinese schools of architecture. Lime mortar was used with huge blocks of grey limestones. As lime mortar was used on a wider scale in North India only after the rise of Delhi Sultans in 13th century, the use of the material in this grand temple suggests that Lalitaditya employed immigrant Byzantine (modern day Turkey) architects. This Sun Temple is believed to be the result of the cross-currents flowing from Roman, Byzantine, Sasanian (Iranian),

and late Gupta periods.

Martand Temple complex consisted of a courtyard with the principal shrine in the middle and a colonnaded peristyle. The grandeur of the temple can be judged from the facts, as under

- The main temple is 63 feet in length, 36 feet in width. It is in the centre of the courtyard. The temple was raised on a plateau and was visible from all sides around Martand.
- The courtyard is 220 feet long by 142 feet broad and contains eighty-four fluted columns facing the courtyard. The whole structure is built on grey stones carved beautifully in those days by the stone masons. Each stone is a big boulder and carved in such a way to give shape of squares and circles.
- The peristyle is externally plain, except on the West side, which originally had a row of columns similar to that of the Avantipura temples. It gives an indication that engineering art adopted at Avantipura temple is like the one available at Martand.
- The temple is divided into *Ardhamandapa* (the outer portion) measuring 18 feet 10 inches square, *Autarala* (the middle portion) measuring 18 feet by 4 ½ feet and *Garbhagriha* (the inner portion) measuring 18 feet and 5 inches by 13 feet 10 inches. It is believed that an idol of Sun-God was installed in *Garbhagriha*. It was a perfect engineering marvel giving an indication that three gates were to be crossed to reach the main

temple. Thus, the Hindu mythology of *Aehlok*, *Parlok* and *Pataallok* are to be seen over here.

- The entrance, or gateway, stands in the middle of the Western side of the quadrangle and is the same width as the temple itself. The walls of the gateway are profusely decorated and indicate a welcome sign for the pilgrims who believe in the heavenly powers of Lord Martand.
- The outer periphery of the temple is 270 feet by 180 feet and has three main gates. This indicates that builders of the temple wanted to show that Lord Martand has two eyes and the sixth sense to watch the world.



The temple had a colonnaded courtyard, with its primary shrine in its centre and surrounded by 84 smaller shrines, stretching to be 220 feet long and 142 feet broad total and incorporating a smaller temple that was previously built. The temple turns out to be the largest example of the peristyle in Kashmir, and is complex due to its various chambers that are proportional in size and aligned with the overall perimeter of the temple. In accordance with principles of Hindu/ Indian style of temple architecture, the

primary entrance to the temple is situated in the western side of the quadrangle and is the same width as the temple itself, creating grandeur. The entrance is highly reflective of the temple due to its elaborate decoration and allusion to the deities worshiped inside. The primary shrine is located in a centralised structure (the temple proper) that is thought to have had a pyramidal top - a common feature of the temples in Kashmir. Various wall carvings in the antechamber of the temple proper depict other gods, such as Vishnu, and river goddesses, such as Ganga and Yamuna, in addition to the sun-god Surya.

Walter Lawrence writes. "There are in all eighty-four columns- a singularly appropriate number in a temple of the sun. The number eighty-four is accounted sacred by the Hindus in consequence of its being the multiple of the number of the number of days in the week with the number of signs in the Zodiac (Rashis)".

With the advent of Islamic rule in Kashmir (1339 CE), started the systematic campaign to Islamise Kashmir. The new rulers thought that the best way to terrorize the Hindu populace was to attack their temples and annihilate the priestly class. Sultan Shamas-u-Din, (1339-1342), the founder of Shahmir dynasty was greatly influenced by Islamic missionaries, preachers, sayyids and Sufis from Persia, Afghanistan, and Central Asia, some of whom had entered Kashmir to escape the wrath of Timur. Mir Sayyid Ali Hamadani (Shah Hamadan) entered Kashmir with 700 sayyids; and, his son, Mir Muhammad Hamadani, with 300 more. These two

Islamic preachers played a vital role in Islamization of Kashmir through organized tyranny and destruction of hundreds of temples, including Martand.



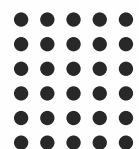
Sultan Shihab-ud-Din (AD 1354-1373) was the one who started destruction and desecration of temples as a state policy to terrorize Kashmiri Pandits. Many temples in Srinagar and the magnificent temple of Vijeyeshwar at Bijbihara fell victim to the mad zeal of this despot. As per historians, mass conversions, mostly from the non-Brahminical castes, took place during this time, mostly to gain royal favours or, to escape punishments. Kashmiri Brahmins looked down upon these neo-converts as betrayers of the faith. And, ironically, it was some of these neo-converts who caused maximum damage to the faith of their ancestors. The worst offender that comes to mind is one Suha Bhatt, who, after embracing Islam, took the name of Saif-ud-Din. He was appointed Prime Minister by Sultan Sikandar Shahmiri (1389-1413) and along with Mir Muhammad Hamadani, son of Shah Hamadan, he egged on Sikandar to start a vile campaign of death and destruction of Brahmins as well as Temples of Kashmir. The iconoclastic Sikandar's zeal to destroy the magnificent heritage of Kashmir has been documented by historian Jonaraja (1389-1459) in his *Dvitiya Rajtarangini*. Another historian, Hasan b Ali, who compiled *Tarikhi-i-Kashmir* during Mogul King Jahangir's era (1605-1627 AD) has commented, "This country

possessed from the times of Hindu rajas many temples which were like the wonders of the world. Their workmanship was so fine and delicate that one found himself bewildered at their sight. Sikandar, goaded by feelings of bigotry, destroyed them, and levelled them with the earth and with the material built many mosques and khanqahs. Jonaraja notes in his Dvitiya Rajtarangini that, "The Sultan forgot his kingly duties and took delight, day and night, in breaking images ... He broke images of Martanda, Vishaya, Ishana, Chakrabrit and Tripureshvara There was no city, no town, no village, no wood where Turushka left the temples of the gods unbroken".

Destruction of the grand edifice of Martand Temple presented itself as a great challenge for Sultan Sikandar Butshikan. For one year he tried to demolish it, but failed. At last, in sheer frustration, he dug out stones from its base and having stored enough wood in their place, set fire to it. The gold gilt paintings on its walls were destroyed and the walls surrounding its premises were demolished. Its ruins even now strike wonder in minds. Historian Hassan b Ali further adds, "Sikandar meted out greatest oppression to the Hindus. It was notified in the Valley that if a Hindu does not become a Muslim, he must leave the country or be killed. As a result, some of the Hindus fled away, some accepted Islam and many Brahmans consented to be

killed and gave their lives. It is said that Sikandar collected, by these methods, six maunds (225 kg appx) of sacred thread (Janeu) from Hindu converts and burnt them. Mir Muhammad Hamadani, who was a witness of all this vicious brutality, barbarism, and vandalism, at last advised him to desist from the slaughter of Brahmans and told him to impose jazia (religious tax) instead of death upon them. All the Hindu books of learning were collected and thrown into Dal Lake and were buried beneath stones and earth."

Ruins of Martand, today, stand mute witnesses to the religious bigotry that befell Kashmir in the 14th century - its impact resulted in seven exoduses of Hindus from Kashmir. Had the Temple not been destroyed, it would have shone today, prouder than the Pyramids of Egypt. Alas, that was not to be and today we mourn the wanton destruction of a magnificent work of craftsmanship by a tyrant.



Sanjeev Munshi
Phone: 9099188501
sanjeevmunshi@hotmail.com

Enriching the youth

Raj Nath Bhat

We have been denied access to our own history and traditions for the last several centuries. Very recently, I learnt that one King looted temple wealth in the past; another King threw all the worthy Hindu manuscripts, that his men could lay their hands upon, into the Dal Lake at Srinagar. The fact that there were Hindu killings in 1930 was concealed from us. We were made to live in a seemingly peace-loving environment till 1989-90, which year showed us the path to hell.

We did not know that there were Sanskrit stalwarts like Ishwara Kaula in the nineteenth century whose scholarship and talent were given due respect and recognition by the then British Officer George A. Grierson. Ishwara Kaula wrote the first grammar of Kashmiri in Sanskrit which was published posthumously by the Asiatic Society, Calcutta (now Kolkata) with a foreword by Sir George Abraham Grierson. According to scholars, Pandit Ishwara Kaula has followed the great Sanskrit scholar-grammarian Bhattoji Dikshita of the tenth century B.C.E. in writing the grammar of Kashmiri. ***The first Kashmiri grammar is available in Hindi translation now.***

Our young minds need to know that a community is known by her achievements. It is widely believed that

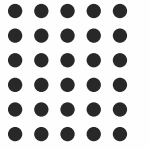
the notion and art of writing short stories spread from Kashmir to the world. It must be a matter of pride for the young minds to know that our ancestors wrote extensively on various aspects of aesthetics, literary criticism, philosophy, grammar, history etc. Kashmir has been the first place/state in the world where queens have steered the state affairs after the demise of the King. There have been women warriors as well as statespersons. Most of the work deserves to be translated from Sanskrit into modern languages. Therefore, there is a dire need for the young minds to learn Sanskrit and learn the art of successful translation so that they can bring before the world the treasure of knowledge that has been created by our ancestors in our homeland.

Fresh renditions of Kalhana's Rajatarangini and the history works written thereafter need to be presented to the world afresh. Abhnavagupta who lived a thousand years ago was not only a devotee-philosopher but also an aesthetician. His work in both the areas is exemplary which must reach out in modern idiom to the world at large. It was not uncommon for the Kings and their Prime ministers to write commentaries on theoretical works. For

several centuries it was considered auspicious to write commentary on Patanjali's '*Mahabhashya*' for a good harvest in the region. Kalhana established a norm which was followed cleverly by the subsequent history-writers.

There is, therefore, a requirement to know about our past by mastering Sanskrit and the art of translation. The

mastery of the target-language is a prerequisite for undertaking any translation project. Therefore, the youths must learn several languages along with Kashmiri and Sanskrit.



Rajnath Bhat is a retired teacher, retired from BHU from the post of Professor of Linguistics on 30.6.22. He is presently based in Varanasi and can be reached at mobile no 9415222335, email: rnbhat2k2@gmail.com



SECTION V

XLVII

HINDI & KASHMIRI

2023 - 2024



हरमुख कोई मेरे साथ चले!

अग्रिशेखर

बात सितंबर 2013 की एक सुबह की है। मेरे मित्र संजय मोज़ा ने आग्रहपूर्वक मुझसे कहा कि आप मान जाइए, हम कल चुपके से अपनी कार में कश्मीर के लिए चल पड़ते हैं। हम भी हरमुकुट यात्रा में शामिल होंगे। संजय मोज़ा को पता था कि मैं उसकी तरह ही एडवेंचर प्रिय रहा हूँ। और कश्मीर के जिहादी आतंकवादियों के हिटलिस्ट पर होने के बावजूद जोखिम उठाने के मोह का संवरण न कर पाऊँगा।

नब्बे के दशक में हुए हमारे जीनोसाइड और सामूहिक जलावतनी के बरसों बाद एक जाँबाज़ निर्वासित युवक विनोद पंडित ने सेना के सहयोग से हरमुख यात्रा फिर से आतंकियों से लगभग मुक्त पथ से शुरू की थी। सेना और राज्य के संबंधित अधिकारियों ने उसे यात्रा के पारंपरिक पहाड़ी-मार्ग वुसन से जाने की अनुमति नहीं दी थी इस मार्ग में ऊपर ऊपर जाने पर सघन वनों और पहाड़ी खाइयों में पाकिस्तान से प्रशिक्षण कर के आए आतंकवादियों के ठिकानों के होने की उन्हें सूचनाएं थीं। मैंने संजय मोज़ा को हाँ कर दी। दूसरे दिन हम जम्मू से सुबह चल दिए।

अपने पाठकों के लिए यहाँ प्रसंगवश बताता चलूँ कि कश्मीर के हालात, जेनोसाइड और अलगाववादियों व आतंकवादियों के कारनामों को देश-विदेश में बेखौफ होकर बोलने और लाखों निर्वासित कश्मीरी पंडितों के साथ खड़ा होने के अपराध के लिए मैं उनकी आँख की किरकिरी था इसलिए उनकी हिटलिस्ट पर था। मुझपर जम्मू में भी दो बार हमले हुए थे। मैं इससे पहले कश्मीर के दिनों में दो-तीन बार तीन भिन्न मार्गों से हरमुख जा चुका था। एकबार सन् 1983 में अपने पर्वतारोही मित्रों के कहने पर बुखार से जूझ रही अवस्था में ही तैयार हो गया था। उसबार हमने सोनमर्ग से जाना तय किया था और मुझे बीच रास्ते से ही वापस लौटकर आना पड़ा था। मेरी हालत खराब हो गयी थी। अगले वर्ष मैं एक अन्य पर्वतारोही दल के साथ इसी रूट से होकर वाँगथ कंगन से लौटा था। इससे भी वर्षों पूर्व हमने यह यात्रा बाँडीपुर के दुर्गम पहाड़ी मार्ग से करनी चाही थी पर खराब मौसम ने हमें जानलेवा जोखिम उठाने से रोक दिया था। बहुत सुना था कि जोखिम भरा दुर्गम पहाड़ी-मार्ग है जो त्रिसंगम से लोलगवल से हरमुख को जाता है।

संजय मोज़ा आराम से कार चलाते हुए अपने बीते दिनों के एडवेंचर के अनकहे अनुभव सुना रहा था। हम दो बजे श्रीनगर पहुँचने वाले थे। इस यात्रा के संयोजक विनोद पंडिता के साथ जाने वाले यात्री डल झील के किनारे ज़ीठयार

(ज्येष्ठेश्वर) में रुके थे और दूसरे दिन वहाँ से सुरक्षाबलों की देखरेख में नारान नाग, कंगन के लिए निकलना था। वास्तव में यह पारंपरिक यात्रा का वापसी का रूट था जो मेरा पहले का देखा हुआ था। मुझे इस बात की अतिरिक्त प्रसन्नता थी कि इस वर्ष के यात्री दल में अबकी बार मेरे कुछ युवा साथी भी देश के सुदूर राज्यों से भी चले आए थे। पुणे से राहुल कौल, वृषाली, दिल्ली से विट्ठल चौधुरी, सुशील पंडित, रषनीक और सुनील रैना राजानक।

पूर्व में हरमुख यात्रा के मेरे अनुभव काफी रोमांचक थे जो मैंने रास्ते में संजय मोज़ा को सुनाए। सोनमर्ग के रास्ते यह यात्रा मैंने 1988 में अशोक हकीम, राजेश गगरू, जयकिशन, शिबन सुल्तान, कौल साहब और सलमान के साथ की थी। इस रूट में विष्णुसर, गाडसर (गरूड सर), कृष्णसर, यमसर आदि अलग अलग रंगों के अनेक मनोहारी सरोवर पड़ते हैं जिनके अपने उपाख्यान थे जो अब लगभग लोकस्मृति से उतर चुके थे। यहाँ पहले पड़ाव पर जहाँ हमने रात गुज़ारनी थी सहसा हम सबको ऐसा लगने लगा था कि रास्ते में जो स्थानीय मुस्लिम चरवाहे हमें मिले वो हमें विचित्र नज़रों से देख रहे थे। ये पहाड़ी-मार्ग आतंकियों की पनाहगाह हो सकते हैं और सम्भव है इन्हें उनकी जानकारी भी हो; और यह राजनीतिक हालात के चलते हमारी अतिरिक्त संवेदनशीलता या शंकालु मनस्थिति भी हो सकती थी।

जो भी हो, सबने सुरक्षा की दृष्टि से मेरा नाम पुलिस एस.पी. युसुफ साहब रखा जो स्थानीय युवाओं को पहाड़ी पुलिस दल बनाने के लिए सर्वे पर इधर आए हैं। उन दिनों मेरी कतरी हुई जमाते इस्लामी के युवकों जैसी दाढ़ी भी हुआ करती थी। इसलिए इस छलिया रूप से हमें सहानुभूति का लाभ हुआ था। बात दूर दूर तक फैल गई थी। यह कश्मीर में अलगाववादी सशस्त्र आतंकवाद की चुप तैयारी के दिन थे। ज़रूर स्थानीय पहाड़ी चरवाहों को यह लगा होगा कि हम दरअसल पाकिस्तानी आतंकी दल होंगे जो हिंदु देश में इधर यात्रा के बहाने घूम रहा है। संजय यह अनुभव सुनकर मुझे कुछ देर भय मिश्रित नज़रों से देखता रहा। फिर उसने बताया कि वह इस दुर्गम और रोमांचक पहाड़ी यात्रा का फिल्मांकन करेगा और बाद में मैं उसकी पटकथा लिखूँगा। हमने दूसरे दिन कार ज़ीठयार (ज्येष्ठेश्वर) में रखी और यात्री दल के साथ उनकी बस में सवार हुए। साथ में पुलिस के कुछ सुरक्षाकर्मी भी बस में चढ़े।

॥ हरमुख का आख्यान ॥

एक बार माँ पार्वती की समाधि टूटी। उसने देखा शिव नहीं थे आसपास। कहाँ गये होंगे? वह विकल होकर उन्हें ढूँढने लगी। लेकिन शिव नहीं मिले। वह विरह की तरह उन्हें वितस्ता किनारे किनारे ढूँढती भागी। वह प्रयाग (वर्तमान शादीपुर, कश्मीर) के संगम तक पहुँची।

यहाँ से माँ पार्वती ने सोचा क्यों न हरमुख जाया जाये, शिव एकांत प्रिय हैं, सम्भव है वहीं समाधिस्थ हों। वह अनेक गाँवों, तीर्थों से, नदियों, नागों (जलकुंडों) से होते हुए उनसे शिव के बारे में पूछती हुई हरमुख की ओर बढ़ी। उसने गाँधरबल के नुनर गाँव से आगे वुसन के पारंपरिक पथ से जाने का निर्णय लिया। वुसन से आगे वन्य पुष्पों और वृक्षों के उद्यानों से होते हुए वह 'रामरादन' पहुँची। यह वह स्थान है जहाँ कठिन तपस्या करते मूर्छित हुए अपने भाई भरत के जीवादान हेतु राम ने शिव की आराधना की थी। एक अन्य कथा के मुताबिक यहाँ धनुषभंग के बाद परशुराम ने शिव से पुनः शक्ति प्राप्ति के लिए आराधन किया है। इससे इस स्थान का नाम रामरादन है। यहीं पर प्राचीन शिव मुष्ठागिरि स्थान है जहाँ परशुराम का निवास रहा है। आगे मुंड पृष्ठागिरि है जहाँ शिलाद मुनि को एक शिला तोड़ते हुए एक दिन रुपहली कांति का स्वयंभू पुत्र-रत्न मिला था जो नन्दि कहलाया। आगे आगे चलते हुए माँ पार्वती भरतबाल (प्राचीन भरतगिरि) की चढ़ाई करने लगी। यहाँ अखरोटों के पेड़ बहुतायत में होते हैं। आगे भुर्ज के भी वृक्ष मिलते हैं।

यहाँ से कुछ ऊपर माँलिश नामक एक सुन्दर चारागाह वह थककर पहुँची होंगी। यहाँ से आगे 13,469 फीट की ऊँचाई पर 'हंसद्वार' के दामन में 'ब्रह्मसर' है। 'हंसद्वार' में ब्रह्मा हंस के रूप में अवतरित हुए थे। यहाँ से आगे 'बरनिबल' नामक दरे से होते हुए एक स्थान पर उसे पूछने पर किसी ने बताया, "नहीं मैंने शिव को यहाँ से जाते नहीं देखा।" पार्वती के नेत्र से एक आँसु टुलककर नीचे गिरा जो कालांतर में 'द्वख प्योर' (दुख की अश्रुबूंद नामक ठंडा जलकुंड) कहलाया और जहाँ पर किसी ने बताया कि हाँ, उन्होंने शिव को यहाँ से होकर आगे जाते देखा है, वहाँ पर आज "स्वख प्योर" (सुख की अश्रुबूंद नामक गुनगुना पवित्र जलकुंड) है।

इस तरह माता पार्वती दुर्गम पहाड़ों का चप्पा-चप्पा छान मारते हुए सभी पवित्र पड़ावों पर रुकते फिर आगे बढ़ती रही होगी। और यहाँ से थोड़ी ही दूरी पर आगे गहन गम्भीर 'कालसर' अथवा कलोदक है जिसमें मनौती पूर्ण होने के लिए तीर्थयात्री तांबे का सिक्का श्रद्धापूर्वक फेंकते हैं।

किंवदन्ती है कि यहाँ दत्तात्रेय ऋषि ने दीर्घकाल तक शिव की तपस्या की थी। मान्यतः यह भी है कि बालक नन्दि ने यहीं जल में खड़े होकर सौ वर्ष पर्यन्त शिव की तपस्या की थी जिससे इस सरोवर के एक भाग का नाम नन्दकल (नन्दी कुल्या) भी पड़ा।

इसी के पश्चिमी कोने में 'चाँग्य नाग' अर्थात् दीपकुंड है। कहते हैं पूर्वकाल में यहाँ माता ने हरमुख की तलहटी में कहीं तप करने हेतु कोई जगह ढूँढने के लिए काल नामक एक गण को भेजा था। गण ने माँ से झूठ कहा कि उसे वहाँ ऐसी कोई जगह न मिली। इस पर माँ ने स्वयं यहाँ आकर यह पश्चिमी कोने में दिये के आकार के नाग (कुंड) का चयन किया और गण को बाती की तरह यहाँ सूखकर दुर्बल होने का शाप भी दिया।

मान्यता है शिव को ढूँढते हुए यहाँ पहुँचने पर पार्वती ने अपने तप का एक अंश कालसर में अर्पण किया। इस कलोदक के नीलवर्णी भीतरी भाग को काल शिव की तपस्थली और उसके बाहरी भाग के हल्के हरे जल को नन्दि की तपस्थली होने की मान्यता है।

यहाँ से आगे 'दान्द लोट' (प्राचीन नन्दीपुच्छ) को पार करते ही 'नुन्दकल' (नन्दि कुल्या) से उसने 16,872 फीट की ऊँचाई पर स्थित हरमुख शिखर की ओर कैसे देखा होगा, मैंने कथा के धरातल पर खड़े होकर कल्पना की। हरमुख के उत्तुंग और सुरम्य एकांत में उसने शिव को गंगा के साथ क्रीडारत देखा। उसे क्रोध मिश्रित आश्चर्य हुआ। सामने पार्वती को देख गंगा भी अचकचा गयीं। वह शिव की जटाओं से नज़र बचाकर कुछ धारों के रूप में नीचे गिरीं और पतनोन्मुखी होकर बहने लगीं। इससे उसका नाम 'हरमुकुट गंगा' पड़ा। पार्वती ने क्रोधित होकर गंगा को पुनः वापस न आ पाने का शाप दिया। शिव तो संकोच और ग्लानि में थे ही। उन्होंने पार्वती का क्रोध शमित कर उन्हें संतुष्ट कर लिया। इस हरमुख का महात्म्य मुझे एक पर्वतारोही और एक कवि के तौर पर बहुत प्रेरित करता रहा है। यह जो ऊपर मैंने आपसे उपाख्यान साझा किया, इसमें विस्तार देने के आशय से एक कवि के नाते मेरी कल्पना का भी अंश सम्मिलित है।

इस कथा को किसी साहित्यिक विधा में प्रयोग करने की मेरी योजना है। यह उपाख्यान मैंने ऋषिकेश में आयोजित एक सांस्कृतिक सेमिनार में 'कश्मीर की लोकवार्ता में गंगा' विषय पर बोलते हुए जब अपने भाषण में पिरोकर सामने रखा तो वहाँ सम्मानित श्रोताओं में ओडिषी और मोहिनीयट्टम की दो सुप्रसिद्ध नृत्यांगनाओं कविता द्विवेदी और मोम गाँगुली भट्टाचार्य ने मुझे विशेष धन्यवाद दिया। कविता द्विवेदी इतनी अभिभूत हुई कि वह कभी इस

आख्यान पर ओडिषी नृत्य करके रहेंगी।

॥ एक कश्मीरी लीला-कविता का साक्ष्य ॥

यह कथा एक लोकप्रिय कश्मीरी लीला (काव्य रचना) में भी वर्णित है:

"वन्दयो म्वन्य बु पादन
छाँडथो रामरादन"

अर्थात् मैं तुम पर अपने नेत्र न्यौछावर करूँगी, तुम मुझे मिला तो सही। मैं रामरादन (परशुराम ने जहाँ आराधना की थी) में खोजूँगी तुम्हें।

इस लोकप्रिय कश्मीरी लीला-रचना में हरमुख यात्रा के वे सभी पड़ाव मिलते हैं जिनसे होकर तीर्थयात्रियों को पर्वतारोहण करना होता है। साहित्य के गंभीर अध्येताओं के लिए यह भक्ति काव्य स्थान-चेतना का एक अन्य बेहतरीन उदाहरण है।

सोनमर्ग के रास्ते पर कंगन से आगे नारान नाग में रात्रि विश्राम के बाद अगली सुबह हमने दुर्गम बुधेश्वर (पौराणिक भूतेश्वर गिरि) की चढ़ाई शुरू की। यात्रा का संयोजक विनोद पंडित अपने दो अन्य साथियों को लेकर घोड़े पर सवार होकर अगले दस्ते के तौर पर कूच कर गया था। वाँगथ में स्थित नारान नाग (नारायण नाग) के दोनों ओर सघन वन और गंगबल से कल कल करती बहकर आती क्रेकनदी (पौराणिक कनकवाहिनी), जंगली विहग-पखेरू, ललितादित्य के बनाये धरोहर मंदिरों के भग्नावशेष, योगवसिष्ठ के रचनाकार ऋषि वसिष्ठ के आश्रम, भूतेश्वर व भरतगिरि के तीर्थों से भरे रहने की सभ्यतागत स्मृति अवशेष, राजा जलौक और उससे जुड़ी पुरा कथाएं, उनका ज्येष्ठरुद्र को श्रीनगर में स्थापित करना, सोदरतीर्थ (सोदरनाग) का वहाँ प्रकट होना आदि मुझे बार बार हँसते हुए याद आ रहे थे।

मुझे क्षमा कौल की यह बात बार बार याद आ रही थी कि हो न हो इसी नन्दिक्षेत्र में कश्मीर में मानव की प्रथम सृष्टि हुई है। इससे मुझे वो मान्यता याद हो आयी कि यहीं 'प्रंग' वो स्थान है जहाँ शिला पर बैठ कश्यप ऋषि पौराणिक सतीसर के जल निकासी का दृश्य देखने बैठे थे। उसने कल्हण की राजतरंगिणी और डॉ. रघुनाथ सिंह का अनुवाद दो एक वर्ष लगाकर अध्ययन किया है। मैंने तय किया इस यात्रा से लौटकर मैं उसे यह सब वरीयता से लिखने को कहूँगा।

यह 'नाराननाग' वही सुरम्य पर्वतीय सुरम्य वन प्रदेश था जहाँ 12वीं शती में परिहासपुर (पटन) से चलकर इतिहासकार कल्हण ने दो वर्ष का वानप्रस्थ लेकर अपनी कालजयी राजतरंगिणी की रचना की थी। यहाँ हम पिछली बार दो दिन तक टेंट लगाकर रुके थे। तब हमें यह देखकर दुख हुआ था कि आसपास के स्थानीय लोग यहाँ नारान नाग के भग्नावशेषों से मूर्तियाँ उखाड़कर बेचने के लिए इच्छुक ग्राहकों को टोहते थे। यह मूर्तिचोर नये भड़पे थे। यह अंचल कश्मीर के प्राचीन नन्दिक्षेत्र में पड़ता था। आज कितने लोग जानते हैं प्राचीन काल में कश्मीर में नन्दिक्षेत्र, वराहक्षेत्र, ज्येष्ठेश्वर क्षेत्र, विजयेश्वर क्षेत्र, भृगुक्षेत्र, हर क्षेत्र आदि इस तरह के भू-राजनीतिक जनपद हुआ करते थे। कोई सांस फूले बिना बुधेश्वर (भूतेश्वर गिरि) कैसे चढ़ सकता है! सब यात्री अभी से थके कदमों से लंबी सांस छोड़ छोड़कर आहिस्ता से इस पर्वत की खड़ी चढ़ाई चढ़ रहे थे।

मैंने संजय मोज़ा के साथ चल रहे भारी शरीरयष्टि वाले युवा विट्ठल चौधुरी को लोकप्रचलित कहावत सुनाकर उसे उत्साहित किया, "हमारी क्या बिसात है, कहते हैं, बुधेश्वर खसान छि सुहन ति दितिमुत्य दह थख...यानी भूतेश्वर गिरि की चढ़ाई करते तो शेर भी दस बार थका है।" थकान से उनके लाल हुए चेहरों पर मुस्कान फैल गयी। मेरे साथ साथ जो कश्मीरी पुलिसकर्मी चल रहे थे उन्हें भी हँसी आई। वे लोग अब तक मुझसे बातचीत करते घुलमिल गये थे। वे हैरान थे मेरी गाँव-गाँव की जानकारी से। वे लोग कश्मीर के जिस जिस गांव के थे मैं उन गांवों को जानता ही नहीं, बल्कि वहाँ कश्मीरी कहावतें, मुहावरे और लोक विश्वास संकलित करने के सिलसिले में गया भी था। मैं कश्मीर का लगभग चप्पा चप्पा घूमा यायावर हूँ, उन्हें यह क्या पता था!

पांच छह घंटे के पर्वतारोहण के बाद हम खुले मैदान में आ गये थे। यह हरा भरा मैदान था। ऊपर आकाश में कहीं कहीं मेघ थे। कुछ ही दूर चलने के बाद आकाश को जैसे पूरी तरह मेघाच्छादित होने की सुध आई हो। हवा ने कानाफूँसी की कि सम्भलो अभी मेघ बरसेंगे। हुआ भी ऐसा ही। प्रकृति मनुष्य से ऐसे ही संवाद करती है पहाड़ी यात्रा में।

हमें सेना के एक कैंप में रात गुज़ारनी थी। उन्हें संबंधित अधिकारियों ने अग्रिम सूचना दे रखी थी। हमारे वहाँ पहुँचने पर झमाझम वर्षा हुई। वहाँ तैनात संवेदनशील सैनिकों ने हम सब को गर्म जैकेट, कंबलें दीं। चाय पिलाई। गर्म गर्म दाल रोटी खिलाई। उनकी सेवा भावना से हम अभिभूत थे। सहसा मुझे साहित्यकार मित्र गौतम राजर्षि की याद आई जो मेरी सूचना के अनुसार कुछ समय पहले तक इसी इलाके में ड्यूटी पर तैनात थे और सेना को दानवी रूप में आए दिन पेश करने वाले तथाकथित कश्मीरी मानवाधिकारवादियों

का कच्चा चिट्ठा जानते थे। उसने एकबार मुझे कश्मीर केवैसे ही एक परिचित कवि का कच्चा चिट्ठा बताते हुए कहा था कि वह सेना विरोधी तथाकथित प्रगतिशील रचनाकार कैसे सेना के पेरोल पर था।

हमने कालोदक के सामने ढेरा डाला। विनोद पंडित व उसके साथियों ने यहाँ हाई-आल्टिट्यूड तंबू कतार में खड़े करवा दिए थे। संजय मोज़ा और मैंने भी एक तंबू में आराम किया। सब लोग हर्षित थे कि वे कश्मीर के उत्तर में 16,872 फीट ऊँचे हरमुख शिखर के पूर्वी दामन में कालोदक अथवा कालसर के किनारे पर विश्राम कर रहे थे। आसपास में अगल-बगल के तंबूओं से तरह तरह की आवाज़ें आ रही थीं। हमारी बगल में पुणे के राहुल कौल, वृषाली और विठ्ठल चौधुरी थे। पड़ोस में ही कहीं किसी अन्य तंबू से सुशील पंडित, रषनीक और लद्दाख से आए बादाम साहब की बतकही भी हवा में गूँज रही थी।

मुझे यहाँ पास में ही कालसर के तट पर एक मस्जिद निर्माण के लिए निशानबंदी की गयी देखकर। ऐसे कैसे हो सकता है और क्यों? यहां कौन मुस्लिम आबादी है? एक भी नहीं रहता यहां। फिर यह इस्लामी साम्राज्यवाद यहाँ तक कैसे आ पहुँचा है। मस्जिद के निर्माण के लिए शिलान्यास के रूप में एक विस्तृत क्षेत्र को पथरों से घेरा गया है और कहीं कहीं हरे रंग से चॉंद तारा भी पेंट किया गया है। मन यह देखकर दुखी था। तभी बगल के तंबू से हम तक जो बातें आ रही थीं उनमें भी यह तीर्थ अधिग्रहण की चिंता थी। "यह सीनाज़ोरी है"। "मैं दो साल पहले भी आया था, तब नहीं था ऐसा कुछ यहाँ"। "इससे बड़ी क्या मिसाल हो सकती है हमारे कल्चरल जीनोसाइड की " "नहीं यह कश्मीरियत, जम्हूरियत और इन्सानियत है!"

इसपर वहाँ हँसी का जैसे फव्वारा फूटा। यह प्रधानमंत्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी पर हज़ारों फीट की ऊँचाई से किया गया 'हाई-लेवल' मज़ाक था। संजय मोज़ा से रहा न गया। वह तंबू से बाहर निकला और उस ठहाके वाले टैंट की तरफ चला गया। इतने में पीछे से किसी की आवाज़ सुनाई दी, "अरे आकाश में बादल आ गये हैं। महादेव से प्रार्थना करो, हमारी रक्षा करे।" मुझे याद आया सन् 1988 में हम इसी कालोदक अथवा कालसर के तट पर दो टैंट गाड़कर तीन-चार दिन रुके थे। तब संयोग से एक दिन हमारे दल ने हरमुख की चोटी को बिना मेघों के देख पाए थे। अन्यथा यह गिरिश्रृंग मेघों से ढका रहता है।

हम अभिभूत होकर जैसे होशो हवास खो चुके थे। सामने मेघों की परतें धीरे-धीरे इस तरह खुल रही थीं जैसे शिव के

गले से लिपटे श्वेत-श्याम मेघों के नाग हों और हवा में लहराने का आनंद ले रहे थे। मनुष्य देहधारी बालक नन्दि को मृत्युंजय का वरदान देकर शिव उसे अपने साथ इसी हरमुख शिखर पर ले गये थे। देखते ही देखते क्षण भर में ही हरमुख की चोटी फिर मेघाच्छादित थी। मुझे याद आया तब हमारे एक भोले मित्र को हरमुख की निरभ्र चोटी देखकर निराशा हुई थी। वहाँ तो शिव उसे साक्षात् दिखे भी नहीं उसे।

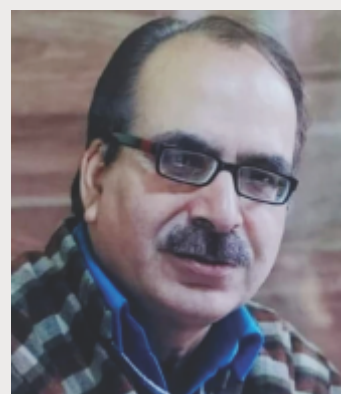
"अग्निशेखर, क्या इस बात का कोई समाधान नीलमतपुराण में हमें मिलेगा कि यहाँ कालोदक के किनारे से हरमुख पर शिव क्यों दिखाई न दिए?" उसने निरीहता से पूछा था। मैं क्या जवाब देता! मुझे स्मरण हो आया था... नन्दीश्वरस्य या मूर्तिदुराचारेन दृश्यते। नन्दीश्वर को दुराचारी नहीं देख सकेंगे। उस रात हमने तंबू के सामने कैप-फायर जलाकर सबने वो लोकप्रिय कश्मीरी गीत गाया था:

"हरम्वखँ बरतल प्रारय मदाँनो
यी दपहम ती लागयो
पोष दपहम ग्वलाब लगय मदाँनो
यी दपहम ती लागयो ..."

अर्थात् मैं हरमुख के द्वार/दर्रे पर बैठ तुम्हारी बाट जोहूँगी। तुम, ओ प्रिय! जो कहोगे मैं वही अर्पण करूँगी। तुम फूल कहोगे, मैं चुनिंदा गुलाब तुम्हें अर्पण करूँगी।

तब राजेश गगरू ने मुझे 'हरम्वखुक गोसोन्य' अर्थात् हरमुख के जोगी वाली कहावत के बारे में बताने को कहा था। कहते हैं एक जोगी ने कैलास की तरह अविजित इस हरमुख शिखर पर चढ़कर मृत्युंजय का वरदान पाने हेतु लाख प्रयत्न किए। वह दिन भर जितनी चढ़ाई चढ़ता, अगली सुबह अपने को यूनानी मिथक सिसिफस की तरह पहाड़ की तलहटी में वापस पहुँचा पाता। सिसिफस ने मनुष्य जाति के लिए मृत्यु को बंदी बनाया था। इसके दंडस्वरूप उसे एक अनगढ़ चट्टान को ठेलकर शिखर तक ले जाना होता है जहाँ वह कभी नहीं पहुँच पाता। बार बार हरमुख के गोसाई की तरह पुनः वापस पहुँचता रहता है। हालाँकि दोनों के आशय प्रसंग अलग हैं।

मैं अभी भी तंबू में अकेला था। अब एक दो पड़ोस के तंबूओं में युवा तीर्थयात्री भजन-कीर्तन करने लग गये थे। अजब रहस्यमय माहौल बन चुका था। संजय भी इन्हीं तंबूओं में कहीं होगा। मुझे अपने मोबाइल पर शिव तांडव स्तोत्र सुनने का मन हुआ। कुछ ही क्षणों में अब मेरे तंबू से तांडवी ध्वनियां गुंजायमान हुईं। अरे..अरे! यह क्या! चारों ओर से घबराई हुई आवाज़ें सुनाई पड़ीं। आकाश में मेघों के गर्जन



आफ़ताबिक नूरनिय वुछ

डॉ. रमेश निराश

कॉम रंगिर रंग बॅर यि जनतस अँलिमव वरकन फ़िरूय,,,,,,
आफ़ताबिक नूरनिय वुछ माहताबस रंग बरूय।।
आफ़ताबिक नूरनिय वुछ,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,

वारि हिंज़ बरजस्त फ़ुलया यावुनिक बामन फोलिथ
कायनाथस वोस्तिकारन मस्त श्रंगारा करूय।।
आफ़ताबिक नूरनिय वुछ,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,

ललुवाखव नुंदु श्रुकेव येति वाँरि कॅर ज़ीनत अता
तति शीनु थोसविय बालि थोंगेन वुछ मलुल मखमल जरूय।।
आफ़ताबिक नूरनिय वुछ,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,

दारि बर अथ वारि सौनि सिंज़ नीलु नागुक न्यूल पोण।
अहरिबलचेव वुज़मलव वुछ गज़लनिय मोखतय जरूय।
आफ़ताबिक नूरनिय वुछ,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,

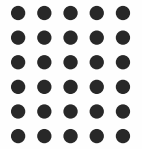
झीलि डल तय ब्य वलर संतूर सारंग नॉट रबाब
गुल ति बुलबुल आरवलनिय कुकलविय गवना करूय।।
आफ़ताबिक नूरनिय वुछ,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,

नर्गिसन सुंमबलन शबाबिय टेंकबटिनेन विरकिनेन।
शालिमारस तय निशातस बुलबुलव लोला बरूय।।
आफ़ताबिक नूरनिय वुछ,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,

ज़ागि जनतस रूद जाहनमु पेठ छु आमुत कुस सना।
ऋष मिरासस अँछ टुविथ येम दुशमनुत सौदा करूय।।
आफ़ताबिक नूरनिय वुछ,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,

ज़ूनि आसय चूनि जरिथिय ग्रहण करना दागदार।
उल्फ़तस कुलुफ़ा करिथ वन कॅम सना कुफरूय पोऱूय।।
आफ़ताबिक नूरनिय वुछ,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,

हँस दितुय शैतानिय क्यम मुफ़लिसिय कोरथन "निराश"।
दोस असिथ दुशमनी हुंद दुशमनव अज़ वेह बँरूय।।
आफ़ताबिक नूरनिय वुछ,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,



प्रसिद्ध कवि, लेखक, आयुर्वेदाचार्य और संगीत निर्देशक, डॉ. रमेश निराश ने भारत भर के बुद्धिजीवियों, कवियों और कलाकारों की एक बड़ी सभा में अपने साहित्यिक खजाने, कश्मीरी में "आचमन और नाबद" और हिंदी में "स्वरन्धरा" का अनावरण किया। डॉ. रमेश निराश को न केवल उनकी साहित्यिक उपलब्धियों के लिए सम्मानित किया गया, बल्कि प्रतिष्ठित अनसंग नेशनल हीरो अवार्ड से भी सम्मानित किया गया। कार्यक्रम के दौरान सम्मानित अतिथियों द्वारा डॉ. निराश की दो पुस्तकें, "आचमन और नाबद" का विमोचन किया गया। डॉ. निराश की हिंदी पुस्तक, "स्वरन्धरा" का विमोचन माननीय लेफ्टिनेंट जनरल जम्मू-कश्मीर यूटी श्री मनोज सिन्हा द्वारा किया गया।



महामहेश्वराचार्य अभिनवगुप्त और तंत्रसार१।

Lalit Parimoo

जब अमर कौल राजबाग के गेस्ट हाउस में शाम को लौटा तो वो काफ़ी थक चुका था। दिन भर की भाग दौड़ और कई सारी मुलाकातों ने उसे बुरी तरह क्लान्त कर दिया था। वैसे भी वो आज कश्मीर पूरे २२ वर्ष बाद आया था और भावनात्मक स्तर पर भीतर मन में उथल पुथल भी बोहोत हो रही थी। वो एक फ़िल्म निर्देशक है और अभिनवगुप्त पर एक वृत्त चित्र बनाने की कल्पना कर चुका है। अपने स्तर पर, मुंबई में रहते हुए जितनी सामग्री वो एकत्रित कर सकता था, उतनी वो कर चुका था लेकिन कश्मीर भूमि पर आकर, वहाँ के वातावरण को महसूस करते हुए, वो स्वयं को उस काल में कल्पना करते हुए कुछ समय व्यतीत करना चाहता था।

स्वामी लक्ष्मण जू की कुछ पुस्तकों का अध्ययन करते हुए उसे महामहेश्वराचार्य अभिनवगुप्त की महानता का पता चला और उनकी लिखी हुई अनेक पुस्तकों की सूची देखकर वो दंग रह गया था। अपने साथियों से वो अक्सर कहता था 'हम लोगों को अपनी महान विरासत का कितना कम पता है। हम सब यदि एक प्रतिशत भी अपने आचार्यों के ज्ञान को आत्मसात् करें तो हमारी आध्यात्मिक प्रगति किस तेज़ी से बढ़ेगी? ऐसा कैसे हुआ कि इतने सारे आचार्यों का कार्य आज साधारण जनमान नहीं जानता।' ऐसे प्रश्नों के उत्तर वो खुद भी नहीं दे पाता था और एक विचित्र सी बेचैनी उसे हमेशा घेरे रहती थी।

योग और तंत्र में उसकी रुचि अपने कॉलेज के समय से थी और धीरे धीरे उसने इन दोनों विषयों पर खूब ईमानदारी से अध्ययन और अभ्यास किया था। अलग अलग आश्रमों में जाकर उसने कुछ साधनाएँ भी सीखी थी और उनका विधिवत अभ्यास भी करता था। तंत्र साधना में कुंडलिनी जागरण के प्रति उसका विशेष आकर्षण रहा और इस विधि को भी उसने एक आचार्य से सीख लिया था। जब उसे ये मालूम हुआ कि जो साधक अपनी कुलकुंडलिनी को जगा लेते थे, उन्हें ही कौल की उपाधि दी जाती थी, तब उसे अपने उपनाम कौल होने पर गौरव महसूस हुआ। उसे हमेशा ये लगता रहा कि उसने ये विद्या पहले भी सीखी थी, शायद किसी पूर्वजन्म में, और साधना में उसे हमेशा सुखद आभास होता रहा। हालाँकि

वो अभी जागरण की अवस्था पर नहीं पोहोँचा था पर उसे विश्वास था कि जल्द ही उसे कुछ अनुभूतियों होंगी।

आचार्य अभिनवगुप्त द्वारा लिखित पुस्तकों का अध्ययन करने के दौरान उसे हठात् ये विचार आया कि आज की भाषा और शिल्प में उनके ग्रंथों को यदि जनमानस तक लाया जाय तो एक अद्भुत कार्य होगा। तब से वो एक वृत्त चित्र बनाने के प्रयास में लग गया, कुछ फ़ाइनैन्स भी इकट्ठा किया और उस रीसर्च में खुद को पूरी तरह से झोंक दिया।

इस कार्य में सबसे बड़ी चुनौती उसके सामने यही थी कि विज़ूअल मीडियम में गूढ़ और आध्यात्मिक विचारों को सरल भाषा में कैसे रखा जाय, ताकि देखने वाले ना सिर्फ़ अभिनवगुप्त के प्रति सम्मान से भरें बल्कि उनके बताए मार्ग पर चलने के लिए भी प्रेरित हों। यही वजह थी कि अभी तक उसने दस बारह ड्राफ़्ट बनाए और उन्हें डिलीट भी किया क्योंकि कोई भी स्क्रिप्ट अभी तक उसे संतोषजनक नहीं लगी।

कश्मीर में आकर वो कई विद्वानों से भी मिला और खूब सारी चर्चाएँ भी की और इसके अलावा अनेक गोष्ठियों में भागीदारी की ताकि अलग अलग स्रोत से उस तक कुछ ऐसे विचार आएँ जिनका समावेश वो अपनी कथा में कर सकता था। मगर अभी तक कोई खाका ठीक से बना नहीं जिसपर वो आगे काम कर सके, जैसे लोकेशन का चुनाव, कलाकारों को इकठा करना, तकनीकी टीम से बात करना इत्यादि। अभी भी बोहोत कुछ अधूरा लग रहा था उसे।

गेस्ट हाउस में आते ही वो लेट गया और आज डिनर करने की भी इच्छा नहीं हो रही थी इसलिए कमरे की लाइट बुझा कर अभिनवगुप्त और तंत्र पर कुछ सोचने लगा। सोचना क्या था, अपने आप विचारों का प्रवाह उस ओर चला जाता था।

कब नींद आ गयी उसे भी पता ना चला। गेस्ट हाउस के इस कमरे में एक पुराना समोवार रखा था जो अमर को बोहोत पसंद आया था। उसने गेस्ट हाउस के ओनर से उस समोवार को अपने साथ ले जाने की रिक्वेस्ट भी की

थी जिसकी मंजूरी उसने फ़ौरन दी थी। अमर उस समोवार को अपने वृत्त चित्र में इस्तेमाल करने की सोचता था और ये भी खयाल आता था कि मान लो ये समोवार आज से हजार वर्ष पुराना हो और इस समोवार के ज़रिए वो अपनी कहानी में उस काल में जाना चाहता था जिस काल में अभिनवगुप्त सक्रिय थे। ये बात उसे अक्सर एक्साइट करती थी और उसे लगता था कि वृत्त चित्र की शुरुआत का एक अच्छा बिंदु था।

रात का कौन सा वक्त था ये कोई नहीं जानता लेकिन अचानक समोवार के नीचे के हिस्से से जहाँ कोयले रखने की जगह थी, हल्का हल्का धुआँ निकलने लगा। थोड़े ही समय में ये धुआँ थोड़ा घना होता चला गया और अमर की नींद भी इससे टूट गयी। वो आधी नींद की अवस्था में हैरानी से इस धुआँ को देखने लगा। कुछ समय बाद वहीं समोवार के नीचे के छिद्रों से हल्का हल्का प्रकाश भी दिखने लगा। अमर समझ नहीं पा रहा था कि ये क्या हो रहा है। थोड़ा डर भी लगने लगा था। देखते देखते वो प्रकाश का घेरा बड़ा होता चला गया और एक मनुष्य की आकृति के जैसा दिखने लगा।

अमर को ऐसा लगा जैसे वो आकृति उसे पुकार रही है और वो मंत्रमुग्ध सा धीरे धीरे बिस्तर से उठा और उस प्रकाश पुंज की तरफ़ बढ़ने लगा। अब प्रकाश पुंज दरवाज़े की तरफ़ बढ़ रही थी और अमर उसके पीछे चल रहा था। दरवाज़ा बिना खोले ही वो प्रकाश पुंज बाहर निकल गया और साथ में अमर भी पीछे पीछे मैग्रेट की तरह चलने लगा। गलियारे में आगे आगे वो प्रकाश का घेरा चल रहा था, जो कभी लुप्त हो जाता था और कभी फिर से दिखता था और अमर उसके पीछे पीछे चले जा रहा था। दोनो बाहर बगीचे में पोहोँचे और एक वृक्ष के पास वो प्रकाश पुंज रुक गया। अमर भी वहीं सहमा सहमा खड़ा हुआ और एकटक उसको देख रहा था। गेस्ट हाउस का चौकीदार ऊँघ रहा था और गहरी रात में सब तरफ़ सन्नाटा था। प्रकाश का वो मानवीय आकार अमर को कभी पूरा दिखता था और कभी बिलकुल नहीं दिखाई दे रहा था। अमर ने थोड़ा ध्यान से चारों तरफ़ देखा और साथ में ये सोचा कि अगर उसे कहीं भागना पड़े तो वो किस तरफ़ जाएगा। अगर इस प्रकाश वृत्त ने उसपर किसी तरह का आक्रमण किया तो खुद को वो कैसे बचाएगा? फ़िलहाल उसे कोई रास्ता दिखायी नहीं दे रहा था क्योंकि उसने गौर किया कि वो भाग सकने की अवस्था में बिलकुल नहीं है। स्वयं को उसने अब अपने इष्ट पर ही छोड़ दिया।

प्रकाश पुंज का अस्पष्ट सा स्वर उभरा जिसने अमर को

और चकित कर दिया। स्वर धीमा था और ऐसा लग रहा था जैसे कहीं दूर किसी खाई या कुएँ से आ रहा है। शायद उसने अमर की बेचैनी भाँप ली थी। “तुम्हें घबराने की ज़रूरत नहीं है। तुम्हारी सहायता के लिए ही आया हूँ। जो ढूँढ़ रहे हो वो मुझसे मिल जाएगा। बस सिर्फ़ सुनो और गुनो।” प्रकाश पुंज की आवाज़ आयी। अमर कुछ बोल नहीं पाया और उसका गला जैसे किसी ने दबाया हुआ है ऐसा लग रहा था, लेकिन चेहरे के भाव स्वीकार भाव में प्रकाश पुंज को सुनने की मुद्रा में थे। स्वर फिर उठा “कश्मीर के स्वर्णिम इतिहास में महामहेश्वराचार्य अभिनवगुप्त द्वारा जो कार्य हुआ है वो इसी दृष्टि से हुआ था कि तंत्र के गूढ़ दर्शन और साधनाओं को एक जगह पर लिपिबद्ध किया जाय ताकि आने वाली पीढ़ियाँ उसका यथावत लाभ उठा सकें। तंत्रालोक एक बृहद टीका लिखी थी उन्होंने जिसका साधुवाद हर तरफ़ से हुआ था किंतु ये बात भी सामने आयी कि एक छोटा और संक्षिप्त संस्करण भी ज़रूरी है उनके लिए जो अभी नए हैं और तंत्र को समझना चाहते हैं। तब अभिनवगुप्त ने तंत्रसार नाम से एक और ग्रंथ की रचना की और उसी ग्रंथ के कुछ मुख्य बिंदु मैं तुम्हें बताना चाहूँगा।”

“यहाँ ये बात खयाल में रखना ज़रूरी है कि उस काल में वेदांत दर्शन ने अपना एक अनूठा स्थान बना लिया था और शंकराचार्य के आगमन के बाद पूरे भारत में वेदांत दर्शन की धूम मची थी। कश्मीर में भी वेदांत के अनुयायी बन रहे थे और ये भी एक कारण था कि तंत्र को पुनः स्थापित करने के लिए कुछ नए ग्रंथों की आवश्यकता बनी जिसे अभिनवगुप्त ने पूरा किया।”

वैदिक और तांत्रिक साधनाओं में शुरू से ही थोड़ा टकराव होता था और वेदांत के आगमन के बाद ये संघर्ष भी बढ़ गया। तांत्रिक गुरु एक शिव की छतरी के नीचे पूरे समाज को लाना चाहते थे इसलिए मनुष्य - मनुष्य में भेद को स्वीकार नहीं करते थे। दूसरी तरफ़ वैदिक पथ में जाति प्रथा पर और वर्ण व्यवस्था पर अधिक ज़ोर था जिसे तांत्रिक लोग मान्यता नहीं देते थे।”

“तुम अपनी वृत्त चित्र के माध्यम से जो कार्य करना चाहते हो वो शुभ है और तुम्हें कुछ और तत्वों को समझने की ज़रूरत है।

“अभी जिस दौर में मुख्य समाज है उसे तुम वैज्ञानिक दौर कह सकते हो और इसलिए तत्वों को समझाने के लिए

एक वैज्ञानिक दृष्टि रखनी होगी तभी लोग स्वीकार कर पाएँगे और तंत्र के पथ का अनुसरण कर सकेंगे। वैसे भी तंत्र के तमाम विचार बोहोत वैज्ञानिक हैं और उसे तर्क और विवेक से समझा जा सकता है हालाँकि ज़रूरी ये है कि अध्ययन के साथ अभ्यास भी हो वरना मुश्किल हो जाती है।

“सबसे पहले तुम शिव और शक्ति के ज़रिए बात शुरू करो। शिव कौन हैं? शक्ति क्या है? आँख से दिखने वाली सृष्टि शक्ति के तीन गुणों द्वारा ही सिश्ट होती है किंत पीछे शिव की मौजूदगी है। शिव अपने में पूर्ण है और स्वतंत्र है और शक्ति उनमें समाहित है, ठीक वैसे ही जैसे अग्नि के साथ उसकी दाहिका शक्ति है और पानी के साथ भिंगोने की शक्ति मौजूद है।”

“शक्ति के तीन गुणों के प्रभाव से शिव बंधन में आ जाते हैं। सत्व, रजस और तमस् गुणों से शिव परिवर्तित होते रहते हैं और सृष्टि की अलग अलग अवस्था में अलग अलग तत्व बनते रहते हैं। अंतिम अवस्था पृथ्वी तत्व की है या जड़ तत्व। पूरी सृष्टि में शिव मौजूद हैं, शक्ति के गुणों की वजह से, इसलिए पुराने तांत्रिकों ने शिव को आदिपिता माना और शक्ति को माता तथा पूरे त्रिभुवन को स्वदेश।”

“अब समझने वाली बात ये है कि जीव बंधन में है और शिव स्वतंत्र सत्ता है जो ज्ञान, आनंद और इच्छा के मालिक हैं। मनुष्य बंधा हुआ शिव है और यदि वो बंधनों को तोड़ सकता है तो शिव बन सकता है जो कि उसका मूल स्रोत है। वैज्ञानिक दृष्टि से बात कहो तो शिव ही शक्ति के कारण अलग अलग तत्वों में दिखायी पड़ते हैं और केवल मनुष्य जीवन में ये सम्भावना है कि वो अपने आदिपिता शिव के पास पोहोच जाय। ये यात्रा अंतर्यात्रा है और इसमें संग्राम की आवश्यकता पड़ती है जिसे साधना कहा गया है।”

“साधना के पथ पर आने के लिए दीक्षा की आवश्यकता है और वो बिना गुरु के सम्भव नहीं है। गुरु, का होना अनिवार्य है तंत्र के मार्ग में, क्योंकि इस मार्ग में पतन और

उन्नति दोनों ही तेज़ी से होते हैं। गुरु के बताए हुए निर्देशों का पालन नहीं करने से नुक़सान भी होता है और अधोगति की सम्भावना भी रहती है।”

“मनुष्य जो कि बंधा हुआ शिव है, गुरु के बताए मार्ग से ही मुक्ति की तरफ़ बढ़ सकता है जो कि उसका स्वभाव है। वो मुक्त ही है लेकिन अज्ञान की वजह से बंधन में है। अज्ञान ये कि वो स्वयं के शिव तत्व से खुद को अलग माने हुए है और अज्ञान ये भी कि वो खुद को शरीर, मन, प्राण इत्यादि समझ रहा है। इसलिए यहाँ अभिनवगुप्त ये याद दिलाते हैं कि शास्त्रों का पठन ज़रूरी है। इस संदर्भ में उनका मालिनिविजय तंत्र पर ज़ोर है जो त्रिक दर्शन का आधार है।”

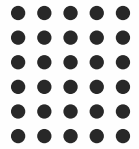
“मैं शिव हूँ” जो ये घोषणा कर सके उसने अपना स्वरूप जान लिया। इच्छा, ज्ञान और क्रिया तीन शक्तियाँ हैं शिव की और उन्हीं तीन पर आधारित है तीन उपाय या रास्ते या समावेश जो कि शांभव, शाक्त और आणव समावेश से जाने जाते हैं। साधक जिस अवस्था में है वैसा ही उपाय या मार्ग उसे मिलता है और उसी तरह से उसकी यात्रा शुरू होती है। अनुपाय एक और मार्ग है जिसमें कुछ भी करने की ज़रूरत नहीं होती लेकिन वो उन्हें ही मिलती है जो कई जन्मों से यात्रा करते हुए इस अवस्था में आ गए कि उन्हें हठात् ये बोध हुआ है कि वो शिव हैं। शांभव उपाय में गुरु की एक वाणी से ही साधक “मैं शिव हूँ” की अवस्था में आ जाता है। शाक्त मार्ग में साधना कस के करनी पड़ती है और आणव उपाय के ज़रिए अनेक प्रकार की पूजा विधियों का सहारा लेना पड़ता है।”

अमर ये सब ध्यान मगन हो सुन रहा था और उसके मन में कुछ प्रश्न भी उठ रहे थे। वो बोलना चाह कर भी कुछ बोल नहीं पा रहा था। काफ़ी प्रयत्न करने के बाद भी उसके गले से स्वर नहीं निकल रहे थे और वो पूरी शक्ति से जैसे ही कुछ बोलने को हुआ तो उसने खुद को गेस्ट हाउस के कमरे में पाया और प्रकाश पुंज का कहीं पता नहीं था। वो तेज़ी से उठा और दरवाज़े से बाहर निकल कर बाहर खुले में आया लेकिन वो लूमिनस बॉडी उसे दिखाई नहीं दी। हैरान परेशान वो इधर उधर तेज़ी से घूमने लगा और अपने शरीर पर आए पसीने को पोंछ भी रहा था।

चौकीदार को जगाकर उससे पूछा कि तुमने यहाँ किसी को आते हुए देखा तो जवाब नकारात्मक मिला। वो सोच में पड़ गया कि ये क्या था जो अभी अभी उसने अनुभव किया। वापिस कमरे में आकर अपने स्टडी टेबल पर वो बैठा सोचता रहा और लैपटॉप पर वृत्त चित्र की नयी स्क्रिप्ट लिखने लगा।

उसे हठात् कुछ नए विचार सूझ रहे थे जिन्हें वो फ़ौरन लिख लेना चाह रहा था। उसने ये ज़रूर सुना था कि साधना मार्ग में सिद्ध अक्सर सहायता करते हैं। आज क्या मालूम जो उसने अनुभव किया, कहीं वो उसकी एक सिद्ध से मुलाक़ात तो नहीं थी? जिस प्रकार गंधर्व शक्तियाँ संगीतकारों को नया राग सिखा देती थी ये सिद्ध भी तो साधकों को उनका पथ प्रशस्त करने के लिए आ जाते हैं।

ये अनुभूति उसे रोमांचित कर रही थी और आज उसे अपनी स्क्रिप्ट की एक स्पष्ट दृष्टि दिखायी दे रही थी। सुबह के चार बज रहे थे और वो लिख रहा था।



Professionally Lalit Parimoo is an Indian film and television actor known for his performances in Shaktiman, Haider, Scam 92, Mubarkan etc. He has also conceptualized ABHINAYA YOG which is a combination of acting skills and yogic techniques and has been imparting training to aspirants. Since the year 1993 he took deep interest in Indian philosophy, yoga, Tantra and spiritual practices and studied it under various teachers and organisations, got initiated into TANTRA under Guru Shri Shri Anandamurtiji and has been practicing the various aspects of Tantric Cult. Wrote a book titled Main Manushya Hun and a booklet Bhagvad Gita Ek Sanvaad in Hindi.



धरती मां

Kusum Dhar 'Sharda'

स्वर्णिम चादर ओढ़े
पर्वतों की श्रृंखला
झीलों सी स्थिरता
झरनों की चंचलता
सौंदर्य की प्रतिमा
ऋषियों की दिव्यता
तपोभूमि की ऊष्मता,
हरी भरी वसुन्धरा
संस्कारों की प्रबलता
शुद्ध विचार पवित्रता
विचरते हैं उपद्रवी
दूषित हुई वितस्ता
छलनी है मां का वक्ष
शत्रुओं की बर्बरता
ऋषियों मुनियों की
धरा में लगे शून्यता
रोती है मां धरा
कहां गई वो शूरता
अंधकार कब छटे
उपवन कब खिले
नीर आंखों में लिए
यही विचारे "शारदा" ।



Kusum Dhar is retired Senior Lecturer, Education Department J&K, Television Artist, AIR and Stage Poetess (Kashmiri, Hindi and Urdu) and a Social Worker. Her Poetry collection titled, "Lal'v'ni Dagg, in Kashmiri, got published in the year 1921.



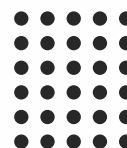


SECTION VI

XLVII

Kashmir and Beyond

2023 - 2024

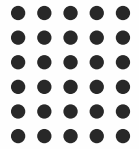


Zest For Life

Kadambari Kaul

My zest for life
Never dies
It lives on
Through all my moments
Of hope and despair,
When I'm right down there
Or when I'm up in the air,
For the aesthete in me
Cannot help but make me see
The underlying beauty
In the world around me,
That makes me forget all thoughts of
destiny
Of what we were, are or are yet to be,
As I allow myself to flow with the tide

Gently driven by my zest for life,
And my faith in the Divine order
Remains forever unshaken,
Because I know that
Just as after the darkness of night
Comes the light of day
So also, my troubled moments shall
someday
Dissolve into the warmth and
happiness of another day.



Kadambari Kaul is a poet and author of three books on Indian philosophy namely Brihadaaranyaka Upanishad, Verses from the Dhammapada and Gautama Buddha - A Noble Life. Writing poems is an integral part of her spiritual journey. Several of her poems have been published in Anthologies, both in India and abroad.



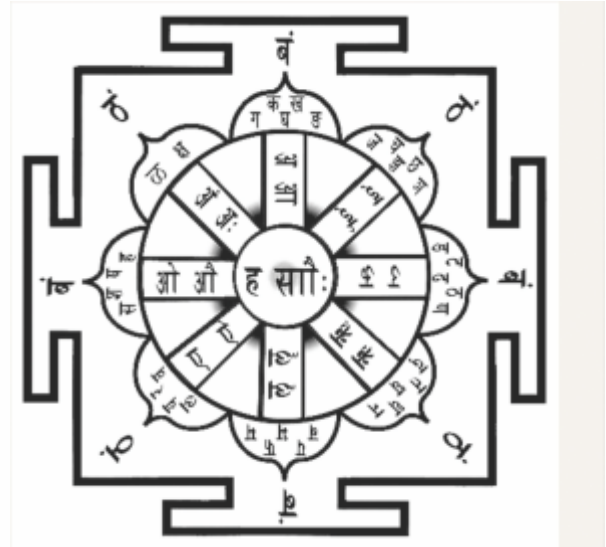
Language, art, culture and Heritage

Virender Bhat

Language, art, culture, all these are components of Heritage. All four combined are referred to as a Civilization, a hallmark of social well being of human beings existing over a period of time in different regions. Study of Civilization is topic immense, so it is better to discuss civilization concerning our region and community, as Kashmir is a cradle of civilization.

Language is the expression of sounds in the form of alphabets or letters. Alphabets have been an essential part of human communication and expression in any and all civilizations. What is their origin, and how did they evolve into the complex systems of writing and language that we use today? Kashmir Shaivism provides a profound insight into the nature of consciousness and the principles of spiritual practice through study of *matrika*, seed sounds of the Sanskrit language, which form the basis of the entire system of alphabets. Universe itself is said to be a manifestation of the primordial sound.

Primordial sounds or *bijmantra* are building blocks of the universe created by Shiva, the supreme consciousness, in its own existence and not separate from itself. Fifty *bija* mantras that represent the basic sounds of the Sanskrit language are the sounds of the Sanskrit vowels and consonants, which form the basis of the Sanskrit language.



Their specific order is called *matrika chakra*, the wheel of cosmic manifestation. Letters make words and words form sentences enabling all communication and knowledge. The *matrika* chakra consists of five groups of sounds, each containing ten *bija* mantras. The first group represents the five basic elements of the universe, which are earth, water, fire, air, and ether. The second group represents the five organs of perception, which are the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and skin. The third group represents the five organs of action, which are the hands, feet, mouth, genitals, and anus. The fourth group represents the five states of consciousness, which are waking, dreaming, deep sleep, *turiya* (transcendental), and *turiyatita* (beyond transcendental). The fifth group represents the four levels of speech, which are *para* (soundless speech), *pashyanti* (subtlest), *madhyama* (subtle), and *vaikhari* (gross speech). The last one is the medium of our

communication through speaking.

Panini's grammar remains one of the greatest achievements of the human intellect. It described the grammar of the Sanskrit language by a system of 4,000 algebraic rules, a feat that has not been equalled for any other language to this day. It appears that Panini arose in the same intellectual climate that characterized Kashmir during its Classical period. It also set the tone for scientific studies in India with their emphasis on algorithmic explanations. Patanjali's commentary on the Panini grammar was responsible for the exaltation of its reputation.

Sanskrit Language, in particular, deepens our understanding and provides us with a window into our cultural heritage, recognizing the importance of the sounds that gave birth to our letters, we can learn to appreciate the beauty and depth of our tradition so important for individual and society's well being.

Period From approximately 1750–500 BCE, refers to the Vedic Period during which Indo-Aryans settled into northern India, bringing with them specific religious traditions. Most history of this period is derived from the Vedas, the oldest scriptures in the Hindu religion, which were composed by the Aryans in Sanskrit.

However, Peace and stability are key factors required towards nurturing a rich civilization. A glimpse into the history of our region shall be important in understanding the origin of present-day language art and culture, hence our social well being

The Indo-Aryans preserved collections of

religious and literary works by memorizing and reciting them, and handing them down from one generation to the next in their sacred language, Sanskrit. The Rigveda, which was likely composed during this time, contains several poetical accounts of the origins of the world, hymns praising the creator, and ancient prayers to Gods for life and prosperity.

The Upanishads are a collection of religious texts, not chaptered in a single book. Each one stands independent of the others. These texts were written between 800 BCE and 500 BCE. They document the thoughts of men and women, many of whom had set themselves apart from society in order to spend time in contemplation of the truths of life. Over 200 texts make up the Upanishads, but they have some common themes running through them. One theme is the turning away from religious ritual and a greater emphasis on contemplation and questioning. The collection of writings is not so much a prescriptive list of what a person should and should not do. Instead, the books are a source of inspiration and a point of reference for the enlightened teacher.

At the mention of art, a glimpse of Nataraj comes to my mind. Art is translated as *kalaa* (कला) In Kashmir Shaivism philosophy. Supreme consciousness, (चैतन्य) Shiv, is the only possessor and holder of (unlimited) *chitt*, *anand*, *ichcha*, *Gyan* and *kriya*. However Shiv, in the process of manifestation, assumes role of limited being (*jeev*) with minimal (limited) skill (कला) in order to carry on its activities in the objective world. It further elaborates the role and importance of *vidhya* (विद्या) that

teaches *jeev* how to utilise skill for creativity. Each and every activity is an art as it requires creative power of skill. One can never master multiple skills and by honing one or more of these, a person is said to be a master of art. The amount of excellence one exhibits in any field of art determines his success in life and as such his resultant status in the society.

As per Leo Tolstoy 'Art is a human activity that one man consciously, by means of certain external signs, expresses to others, feelings, he has lived through, and that others are influenced by these feelings and also experience them'.

Art is occupational as well as contemporary. Terming a few visual and literary works in the category of art will not do justice to the definition of art. The continued efforts by humans in development of composite creativity of all art forms and their stockpiling over generations can be defined as culture. Research on the discoveries of the past opens a new vision of how societies develop a whole way of material, intellectual and spiritual lifestyle. Geographical and environmental conditions are responsible for development of specific cultural identities. Something acquired and inherited from the past is called heritage. It is a person's unique, inherited sense of family identity, the values, traditions, culture, and artefacts handed down by previous generations. Tangible cultural heritage refers to things that we can store or physically touch. Examples of tangible cultural heritage include scriptures and books, traditional clothing, tools, buildings, artefacts,

monuments, and modes of transportation. Intangible cultural heritage refers to things that are not physical items but exist intellectually. Intangible cultural heritage includes oral traditions, songs, rituals, values, superstitions and myths, beliefs, social practices, and the knowledge and skills to produce traditional crafts. External pressures can lead to the gradual diminishing of a civilization. The "fall" of what we often think of as Ancient Egypt is a good example of how external pressures can redefine a civilization over hundreds of years. Egypt had faced longstanding, intermittent conflict on its borders, with competing civilizations such as the Nubians (to the south), the Assyrians (in the Middle East), and the Libyans (to the west). Later, Egypt encountered the civilizations of Ancient Greece and Rome, and eventually became part of the Roman Empire. Ancient Egypt also faced external pressures not directly associated with armed conflict. The powerful forces of Christianity and Islam influenced the eradication of both hieroglyphics, the writing system of Ancient Egypt, and its polytheistic religion. Similarly ancient Kashmiri civilization was influenced by external intervention thus causing loss of scriptures, historic notes, language and script. Vedic religious philosophy got replaced by Islamic religion and Persian language. With advent of new religion, it's followers and preachers from Arab, Middle East, Persia etc settled in Kashmir with more languages, architecture, inherited culture, lifestyle etc. As such developed a composite culture. When we discuss term Art, Kashmir art comes to my mind comprising of carpet, crewel and

needle embroidery and its products like pashmina, shawl, furnishing rugs, papier mache products and paintings, walnut, wood carving and other artistic wood products and toys, kangri, willow wicker products, brass and copper decorative utensils and showpieces, stonecutting and sculpture, architecture, sericulture, horticulture.

The list is lengthy. Pandit community with Brahmanical lineage did not adopt vocational skills except agriculture in rural Kashmir. Kashmiri pandits did not at all inherit or adopt any vocation involving such skills possibly because of social stigma attached to the thought of doing anything not befitting a Brahmin. Naturally other three varnas, who might have been a majority would have undertaken this work and gradually converted to Islam. This is why we don't see Pandits sharing heritage of Kashmiri art and craft, distinctive music, architecture and everything requiring physical involvement and physical skill and labour. We should analyse the extent to which two Kashmiri communities nurtured their heritage. Then we will find how successfully, we as a society were able to preserve and promote our cultural heritage. Kashmiri pandit community may

take pride in having produced exemplary poets, writers, litterateurs in many languages. Many teachers, administrators, doctors, actors, musicians, singers etc have excelled and some in the field of fine arts. However, nothing was done to study, work or do research on Sanskrit and Sharda, the language of Vedic and Agamic philosophy. We did nothing to acquire and spread our Sanatan philosophies, instrumental in acquiring knowledge to higher consciousness and realisation of true self. Other community however remained involved in and promoting their heritage through thick and thin. So, present art, vocational and contemporary fine art, architecture etc. of Kashmir showcases overwhelming expression of Kashmiri Muslim culture and lifestyle to the world.

Interested in Trika Shiva Philosophy, Kashmiri saint bakhti / gyan lyrics, lallvaakh, laugaksh Karmkand practiced by our ancestors. Can read / write / translate Hindi, Urdu and English. Living in Pune, Delhi and Jammu.



'Sancha'-Ancient Treatise of Himachal Pradesh - A Glorious Gift from Kashmir

Upendar Ambardar

In the times bygone, Kashmir excelled in many spheres of art, literature and culture, in which it achieved great heights. The cross Cultural-religious strands that stretched between Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh successfully withstood the centuries old time-wrap and refused to fade-away into oblivion. Apart from the natural brilliance of the landscapes, both states share the deep-rooted faith of the people in the time-tested traditions, belief systems and ancient wisdom, which are enshrined in the holy scriptures. They form an integral part of our common heritage. The ancient Sancha scripture of Himachal Pradesh is an illustrious example of the same. It is a combination of Jyotish and tantric knowledge. Even today, in the present scientific age, this ancient priceless knowledge is quite popular in Shimla, Sirmour and Solan areas of Himachal Pradesh. The 'Sancha Granth' is believed to have travelled to Himachal Pradesh from Kashmir hundreds of years back. The presentday custodians of this ancient legacy, who are natives of Himachal Pradesh are believed to be the descendants of Kashmiri Brahmans. The 'Sancha' treatise is a unique combination of '*Mantra*' (sacred incantations), '*Yantra*' (hallowed implements) and '*Tantra*' (mystical hymns or invocations). The scripts of Sancha treatise are known by

the names of '*Bhatakshri*' or '*Pabuchi*', which are Himachali variations of '*Shardha*', the ancient language of Kashmir. In earlier times, the said script was also known as 'Takri'.



In Himachal Pradesh, in addition to 'Bhatakshri' and 'Pabuchi', the ancient 'Takri' dialect has survived in many resembling forms like '*Chambyali*', '*Kalluvi*' *Mandyali*' and '*Sirmouri*' etc., which are the present day spoken dialects of Chamba, Kallu Mandi and Sirmour areas of Himachal Pradesh. In earlier times, the scholarly and learned Himachali Brahmans were known as '*Pabuch*' due to their demonstrative grip and hold over the ancient 'Sancha' knowledge. The 'Sancha' growth deals with a wide range of topics ranging from necromancy, black magic fall-out from the witchcraft, occult effects and negative influences of evil spirits besides demonology. The 'Sancha' text offers solutions and remedies to the persons

who are troubled by the negative influences of the above. In addition to it, all those persons, who are saddled by anxieties and worries arising out of afflictions by various ailments can find health assuring remedies by consulting 'Sancha' system. The 'Sancha' treatise also guarantees a triumph over one's 'hidden' enemies by recitation of certain '*mantras*' i.e., secret incantations.

Its help is also sought in adopting a religious recourse to the matters connected with almost all the Hindu *Sanskars* right from birth to death. In addition to it, 'Sancha' knowledge also aids in the recovery of stolen items by giving clues and hints about the identity of the thief, the time of the occurrence of the theft and number of persons involved in the act. An accurate and exact knowledge of the auspicious timing or '*Hora*' is also possible by consulting 'Sancha' text. The word 'Sancha' owes its origin to the Sanskrit word '*Sanch*' or '*Sanchai*', which means a repository or a compilation.

The Brahmins well-versed with the 'Sancha' knowledge are called 'Pabuch' or 'Baat'. In addition to 'Pabuchi' or 'Bhatakshri' dialects, the 'Sancha' texts are also found in '*Chandvani*', '*Pandvani*' and '*Butakhshri*' dialects. The script employed by the Brahmins of the 'Panda' sect is called 'Pandvani', while as the inscription used by the Brahmins of the 'Bhat' sect is known by the name of 'Bhatakshri'. According to a legend, an ancient ruler of the erstwhile Sirmour

Kingdom came under the spell of a curse by a female dancer. As a consequence, the capital of the ancient kingdom of Sirmour was completely submerged under water and the royalty became kingless. Depressed by the loss of entire royal clan and to ensure a new heir to the Sirmour throne, two ministers of the Kingdom namely Roymoan and Roy Gopal are said to have travelled all the way from Sirmour to Srinagar, the capital of Kashmir in the eleventh century A.D.

The two Sirmour ministers are believed to have requested the then Kashmir King to send a Kashmiri Prince, who can take charge of the Sirmour Kingdom. According to the legend, out of the two queens of the then Kashmiri King, one had an adopted son, while as the second one named Sumitra was in a family way at that time. In pursuance of the then prevalent bestowal of alms custom, the King of Kashmir agreed to send his pregnant queen in the form of 'Shaya Daan' to the princely state of Sirmour. In furtherance of it and to facilitate the subsequent coronation of the Kashmiri Prince as a King of Sirmour, the queen Sumitra of Kashmir went to Sirmour. She was accompanied by a host of *Rishis*, saints, learned Brahmins, bards, artists and minstrels, in addition to numerous footmen and domestic helps. The accompanying Kashmiri Brahmins are said to have carried with them their prized possession the 'Sancha' knowledge system. In the historical documents of Himachal, this notable

event is recorded in the following lines "Loia Aana Mangtoo, *Purohit Sath Loia Aana Raoy Baat Loia Aana Vikram Samvat Saat thi todi 1152 Mahina Magh.*" It fully affirms and supports the historical fact that the carriers of the 'Sancha' treatise or knowledge to Himachal Pradesh were none other than the Kashmiri Pandits. Corresponding to the above Vikram *Samvat*, the exact year of the said event can be said to be 1095 AD.

The Kashmiri origin of the 'Sancha' treatise is further collaborated by the fact that even today before consulting the 'Sancha' text, Himachali Brahmans pay obeisance to Kashmir in the following lines, "Vidhya Suri Kashmiri Lagan *dekh Shodan Vichar*". The Sancha Granth has a detailed information about astrology, planetary placements, interpretation of Zodiac and planetary movements. Based on the intricate knowledge of 'Sancha Granth', the 'Pabuchi' scholars prepare a local variation of almanac (*Jantri*) called '*Chri*'. The three important components of 'Chri' are '*Var*' i.e. day of the week or an occasion, '*Tithi*' i.e. a lunar day or date and the planetary movements and their positions.

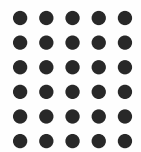
The '*Chiri*' is based on the solar planetary system, which regards Baisakhi as the first day of the New Year. To get solutions, answers and remedies for the different paradoxes that rock the day-to-day life, the 'Sancha' text is always consulted for the required help. Resembling a gambling dice, the 'pasha' or '*pasa*' is

employed in deciphering the required information from the 'Sancha' text. The 'pasha' or 'pasa' has an inscription of four numerical digits marked as 0,00,000 and 0000, which have the corresponding numerical strength of 1,2,3 and 4 respectively. These numerical digits are marked on the individual pages separately. Each numerical digit with an individual value of sixteen '*Horas*' makes a sum total of sixty-four 'Horas', with one 'Hora' being equal to one twenty fourth part of a day. The 'Pashas' or 'Pasa' are specially prepared only on auspicious days and involve elaborate religious rituals. The different 'Horas' that are in vogue in the 'Sancha Granth' are known as '*Kaalgaymi Hora*', '*Bhoot Prashan Hora*', '*Lagan Ki Hora*' and '*Tithi Ki Hora*' etc. The square shaped 'pasha' or 'pasa' is usually made up of an elephant tooth, being 1½ to 2 inches in length and with a width of a finger.

According to a belief in Sirmour area, the 'Yantra' and 'Lagans' made from the soil brought from the village Chanan, give better results while consulting Sancha' text. The Brahmans engaged in the 'Sancha' profession take every care to maintain the knowledge secrecy and imparting of its knowledge is confined only within the family. The Kashmiri origin of the 'Sancha' text has also been acknowledged by Sh. Sudershan Vashisht, who is a well-known author and researcher of Himachal Pradesh and has done note-worthy research work in this direction. The ancient and precious

Sancha texts are also found in tehsil Chopal, tehsil Shilayi and Chakrota area of Uttar Pradesh. Pandit Om Prakash and Pandit Devi Ram, the native Brahmans of the village Khadanka in Sirmour are experts in Sancha knowledge and its system. Another Brahman named Pandit Shivanand, a resident of the village *Janloag* in Sirmour has also thorough knowledge of 'Sancha' texts. He makes accurate predictions based on its knowledge. Pt. Mohan Lal, a native of the village Dehar in Sirmour is a well-known name due to his thorough and intimate Sancha knowledge. Undoubtedly, 'Sancha'

is an ancient and sacred 'knowledge of Kashmiri origin, which is a historical cultural heritage. It is a glorious part of our rich past and a proud contribution of Kashmiri Brahmans, who have left an indelible mark on the pages of history.



Upender Ambardar is writer cum Reseacher, Broadcaster, Having passion for writing on socio cultural-religious aspects, folk and oral history of Kashmir and community diaspora.



Art, culture, heritage and language

Tonmoy Chakraborty

Art, culture, heritage and language are not just facets of Kashmiri life, they are the lifeblood of the region's identity and the catalysts for spiritual awakening and social well-being. As Kashmiris continue to cherish and promote these elements, they ensure that their culture remains vibrant and resilient, serving as a source of inspiration and strength for generations to come.

Nestled in the breath-taking Himalayan region of India, Kashmir has long been celebrated for its stunning landscapes, rich cultural heritage, and diverse artistic traditions. The people of Kashmir, known as Kashmiris, have a unique identity deeply intertwined with their art, culture, heritage, and language. These elements not only contribute to the aesthetic beauty of the region but also play a significant role as catalysts for spiritual awakening and social well-being among its inhabitants.

Art as a Source of Inspiration; Kashmiri art is a reflection of the region's natural beauty, and it serves as a source of inspiration for its people. The intricate designs of Kashmiri shawls, the vibrant colours of papier-mâché, and the mesmerizing patterns of woodwork are a testament to the artistic prowess of the Kashmiri people. Engaging in the creation and appreciation of these art forms brings a sense of fulfillment and inner peace, contributing to the spiritual awakening of individuals.

Cultural Richness and Identity; the cultural diversity of Kashmir is a treasure trove of traditions that have been passed down through generations. Festivals like Navreh, Shivratri, and Eid are celebrated with great fervor, and they serve as occasions for the Kashmiri community to come together, strengthen their bonds, and preserve their cultural identity. This shared cultural heritage fosters a sense of belonging and social cohesion among Kashmiris.

Heritage as a Link to the Past; Kashmir's architectural marvels, including the exquisite Mughal gardens and ancient temples, stand as testament to its historical significance. These monuments connect the present generation to their rich history, serving as a bridge to their ancestors' lives and experiences. Preservation and restoration efforts not only maintain the physical structures but also nourish the collective memory of the Kashmiri people.

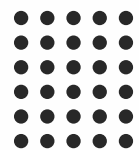
Language as a Cultural Anchor; Kashmiri, an Indo-Aryan language with its unique script, holds a special place in the hearts of Kashmiris. Language is not just a means of communication; it carries the essence of a culture. The preservation of the Kashmiri language is crucial in maintaining the distinct cultural identity of the region. Efforts to promote and teach the language not only empower the younger generation but also strengthen the bonds within the

community.

Spiritual Awakening through Sufism; Kashmir has a rich tradition of Sufism, a mystical branch that emphasizes the inner search for God. Sufi saints like Lal Ded and Sheikh Noor-ud-din Noorani (Nund Rishi) have left an indelible mark on the spiritual landscape of the region. Sufism encourages self-reflection, tolerance, and love, contributing to the spiritual awakening of Kashmiris and fostering an atmosphere of harmony.

Social Well-being and Harmony; the amalgamation of art, culture, heritage, and language in Kashmir contributes to the overall well-being of its people. By celebrating their traditions, Kashmiris

create a harmonious society that respects diversity and values its shared history. This social fabric provides emotional support and resilience during challenging times, such as the region's historical conflict.



Tonmoy Chakraborty is a professional with a Master's in Public Administration. Associated with EDII, ILO and FICCI. Having 40 years of experience in Entrepreneurship training.



Medical education - a distant dream still haunted by our community

Kanka Pandita

Getting quality healthcare service at affordable cost is not only our fundamental right but is the need of the hour. On this vital issue our nation lack behind, both at infrastructural level as well as its manpower strength, even through at its private or government delivery routes. Mostly good healthcare institutions in India, though costly are restricted to main cities depriving its large rural population of this much needed basic facility, when even we do not have any type of government social security scheme guaranteeing quality medical attention.

In our country, surprisingly we have merely one medical doctor for nearly 1500 citizens as compared to the ratio of one doctor for 250 persons in developed nations. Government is not seriously addressing the reduction of this gap despite putting in lot of money on the development of health sector. Society together with policy makers need to come up with concrete steps of spreading medical education to its maximum on urgent basis.

Development of more medical infrastructure require huge and continuous investment while as spreading medical education on larger scale can be easily considered to strengthen our overall health care system. Medical education is still considered to be the choicest professional courses, more preferred more by our community that can prove the

solution of choice to this much needed national problem.

In our present education system, aspiring to become a doctor actually start from 10th class schooling in which students are offered to study biology, pre requisite for studying medicine in India. Later they are being channelized to its specificity through 12th standard course and crafted competitively by undertaking extra tuition that has become order of the day. Screened by All India competitive examination, National Eligibility Entrance Test (NEET) these aspirants compete for nearly 85,000 under graduate medical seats which are available in both government and private medical colleges all across our country. Even this competition takes much more difficult turn due to social and economic reservations besides other lawful obligations. Still in addition to this quota, Government of the day has also reserved annually more than 30 seats exclusively for Kashmiri Pandit community for studying medical courses in various medical colleges in different states, of which maximum are being provided by state of Karnataka. Ironically our homeland, Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir does not grant any such reservation for displaced Kashmiri community. Now various other states and J&K must come forward in extending such deserving help to our meritorious student community.

But the admission to this study is still rated among the most competitive despite such reservations even among our community. On all India basis, every year out of nearly fifty percent biology studying students who opt for medical stream from sum total of about two crore 12th class students, only about twenty lac candidates qualify to become eligible to write NEET examination. Thereafter on the basis of qualifying percentile in NEET, again, about nine lakh aspirants compete for 85,000 under graduate medical seats that include even paid seats. Conclusively, every year only 1 out of nearly 100 biology studying students at class 10th level, make it to become a doctor in our country, which is competitively very difficult, especially for the education-oriented community like ours.

Still sizeable number of left out aspirants out of this competition from our

community, go abroad to countries like Bangladesh, Russia, Ukraine etc. for this type of education, that not only result in to brain drain and loss to financial exchequer but also a sort of ethnic cleansing for our community.

Conclusively, the option of opting for the medical education need to be eased out by increasing the number of medical seats and medical colleges in our country that will not only strengthen the delivery of efficient healthcare facility but will also make it cost effective and give much needed impetus for overall development of our deserving displaced community.



Kanka Pandita is a columnist pursuing medical education at NCR - Delhi





SECTION VII

XLVII

Glimpse of Sabha Activities

2023 - 2024



Annual Hawan





Blood Donation Camp at Sabha



Heritage Tram Fun Ride



Janam Ashtami celebration





Swami Lakshman Joo Jayanti



Dussehra Celebration



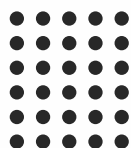


SECTION VIII

XLVII

CONTACTS OF OUR PERMANENT MEMBERS
IN WEST BENGAL, REST OF INDIA AND ABROAD

2023 - 2024





Permanent Members Residing in West Bengal

Atal Meenakshi

8-B, Golf Towers, 9 Prince Gulam Md. Shah Road, Kolkata- 700 095 (R) 24224949, 24224939 (M) 9831011767 Email: deepak.atal1948@gmail.com

Atal Vivek

Flat 2C , 7/1, queens park , Kolkata 700019 (R) 24615545 (M) 9830047709

Bangru Virrender / Sunita

C/o National Engineering Industries Ltd., 2, Beerpara Lane, Kolkata 700030 (M) 8882363139, 9073315935

Bhan Bharat Bushan

22/1/1A, Paschim Putiary, Kolkata 41 (M) 9163911727

Bhan C P

34 - C, Satyam Shivam Sundaram Complex, 1530 Garia Main Road, Kolkata 700 084 (M) 9674528322 Email: chakrapani.kakabhan.bhan@gmail.com

Bhan Sam

House No. 57, Das Nagar Colony, Near Das Nagar High School, Kolkata 700045 (M) 9875363147 Email: sambhan692003@gmail.com

Biswas Sammar/Nancy

58 Deshbandhu Road New Barrackpur Opp Jagriti Sangha Club Kolkata 700131 (R) 033 25277932 (M) 9903270197

Biswas Pammi

C J 146, Salt Lake City, Sector II, Kolkata 700091 (R) 23584102 (M) 9830157733

Chaku Dr. Usha

Flat no. 17C, Tower 3, South city apartments, 375, Prince Anwar Shah road, Kolkata 700068 (M) 98310 02667, 8447716759 Email: drushachaku@gmail.com

Chowdhury Bharati Smt.

Udayan, The Condoville, UD 020105(ii) , 1050/1, Survey Park, Kolkata 700 075 (R) 24188038 (M) 9051162951, 8420771692 Email: bharati.chowdhury@gmail.com

Dar, Gopal/Madhu

FLAT A1, BALAJI APPTS, 65 KALITALA ROAD, Kolkata 700078 (R) 24840297 (M) 9831384320

Dhar Anil

Queen - 2B, Duke Garden, RB-29, Raghunathpur, VIP Road, Kolkata 700 059 (O) 2289 3122 (R) 2500 6763 (M) 9831955311, 9830315045 Email: anildhar@hotmail.com

Dhar Ashok

Flat No. 3D, 9/3A, Gariahat Road (Singhee Park), Kolkata 700 019 (R) 24606721 (M) 9967017146 Email: dhar_ashok@yahoo.com, ashokdha@gmail.com

Dhar Priyanka / Kapoor Ranjan

Kolkata (M) 9477331953

Dhar Reena Smt.

311 C I T Road, Sch VI M, Kolkata 700 054 (R) 2362 8341 (M) 9432302449 Email: reenadhar@hotmail.com

Dhar Shruti

Natural Height, BL-7, FL-2A, Phase I 137 VIP Road, Koikhali, Kolkata 700052 (M) 9831205271 Email: navsandhya101@gmail.com

Dhar A.K.

Archis Panel Products Pvt Ltd , 5A&B, CHOWRINGHEE LANE , Kolkata 700016 (O) 22524266 (M) 9815075841, 6590901427 Email: akdharsg@gmail.com

Dhar Shashank

Office of the GM, ECL, Bankola Area , P.O. UKRA , WEST BENGAL 713363 (M) 9434796278 Email: coalindiasd@gmail.com

Ganju Ravi

R-402, DC Block, CITY CENTRE, SALT LAKE ,
Kolkata 700064 (R) 23581750 (M)
9836490222 Email: rkganju@yhao.com

Ganju Mrs. R.N.

57/1B, Ekdalia Road, Kolkata 700 019 (R)
24405405

Ganjoo Jitendra

Flat no 301, Dhakuria , 7 Gariahat Road ,
Kolkata 700031 (M) 9007713419

Ghosh Monika

Flat 15, Vivekananda Housing Society, 202,
MANIKTALA MAIN ROAD, Kolkata 700054
(R) 2355 7709 (M) 9830699335

Grover, Sunita Smt.

595, Block 'O', new Alipore, , Kolkata 700053

Gurtu Dr. J N

Flat 9/3, BLOCK B, SUNNY PARK
APARTMENTS, 6, SUNNY PARK , Kolkata
700019 (O) 2461 8252 (M) 9831018089 Email:
jngurtu@hotmail.com

Jalali Upendra

67 Tripura Rai Lane, Salkia, Howrah- 711 106

Jalali Amol

Hiland Park Flat No. 5A 1, Tower Loch, 1925
Chak Gariya Post Office Panchasayar,
Kolkata 700094 (M) 9831239078, 8336010821

Jinsi Deepak

Flat 1B, 246/4 Rishi Bankim Chandra Road,
Kolkata 700 028 (R) 25518902

Kachroo Akshay

Flat No. 303, Block B, 34 Chander Mohan
Roy Lane, Serampore (Hoogly), West Bengal
- 712 201 (M) 8582907123, 98304 34329

Kachroo Dr. Rajender

19 Salkia School Road, Salkia, Howrah, 711
106 (O) 2665 2068 (R) 2675 5349 (M)
9831103022 Email: dr.rajenderk@yahoo.com

Kalla T.N.

A-10/8, Phase II (E.M.Bye Pass) EKTP, Kolkata
700107 (R) 24422363 (M) 9681318373 Email:
pamposhprojects@yahoo.com

Kak Ashok

Flat No 2A, 33South End Park, Kolkata 700
029 (M) 9836701623 Email:
ashok_kak2@yahoo.co.in

Kapoor Nirmal Smt.

2nd Floor, 42 Ballygunge Place, Kolkata 700
019 (R) 2440 5899

Kaul G L/Barati

3 G, Rajsree Building, 6 Hastings Park Road,
31 Judges Court, Kolkata 700 027 (R) 2479
1997, 24794403 (M) 9906205610

Kaul Inder Krishan

Manikpur Naskar Para, Hari Navi, Kol- 148
(M) 9143353484

Kaul, Kadambari

8F, NEELKANTH APTS, 26B CAMAC STREET,
Kolkata 700016 (M) 9830331222 Email:
kadambarikaul@yahoo.co.in

Kaul L N

CJ 182, Sector 2, Salt Lake, Kolkata 700 091
(R) 2334 0837 (M) 9831257436

Kaul Mukesh

10/5, Anupama Hsg Complex, VIP Road ,
Mondalgonthi , Kolkata 700 052 (M)
9830018062 Email:
mukesh_kaul@supreme.co.in

Kaul Akhant

C/o Kashi Nath & Sons, Rishi Road ,
Kalimpong, Dist. Darjeeling - 734 301 (M)
9734620536 Email:
akshat_kaul2002@yahoo.co.in

Kaul M K

Flat F 1 A, Block FA, Purbabbasan, 1582/3 Raj
Danga Main Road, Kolkata 700 107 (R)
40668074 (M) 8335056693 Email:
kaulmaharaj2005@gmail.com

Kaul Manish

#1801, HORIZON TOWER 4, UNIWORLD
CITY, RAJARHAT ACTION AREA III, Kolkata
700160 (M) 9830690071 Email:
manishkaul@hotmail.com

Kaul Narender

Flat no. 3C, Keshavkunj Housing Society,
DC-001, Street no. 306, New Town, Kolkata
700 156 (M) 9903478588 Email:
neran45@gmail.com

Kaul Rakesh

Flat no. 3D, Keshavkunj Housing Society,
DC-001, Street no. 306, New Town, Kolkata
700 156 (M) 9007039276 Email:
rakeshkaul1958@gmail.com

Kaul Rajesh

Chandrani Appartments Flat No. C 1 3rd
Floor, 92 Bama Charan Roy Road Behala
Kolkata 700034 (M) 9830536127, 9836246335
Email: rajeshkaul2015@gmail.com

Kaul Rajive

14/1 Burdwan Road, Kolkata 700 027 (O)
2248 5102 / 8220 (R) 2479 1670

Kaul Ramesh

4e/ Jaishree appts., 320, banerjee para Rd.,
Chatterjee Bagan, Kolkata 43 (M)
9643003626

Kaul Reena

Sports Psychologist SAI, C 10, Jal Vaya Vihar,
LB - Block, Sector 3, Salt Lake, Kolkata 700
098 (O) 2335 2715 (M) 98313 67359

Kaul Roop

CJ 182, Sector 2, Salt Lake, Kolkata 700 091
(R) 2334 3952 (M) 9830376171 Email:
roopnkaul@gmail.com

Kaul S K

Apartment 3502, Tower 7, Urbana Complex,
783 Anandpur Road, Kolkata 700 107
(O) 3058 7832 (R) 2287 4039 (M) 98309
65969, 98307 65969 Email:
skkaul@eveready.co.in

Kaul Shiv Kumar

13 / A, Bansdroni, New Govt. Colony, P O
Bansdroni, Kolkata 700 041

Kaul Siddarth

P-311 CIT Road, Scheme VIM, Kankurgachi ,
Kolkata 700054 (M) 8872032915 Email:
koulsid7@gmail.com

Kaul Sudesh

11 Khelat Ghosh Lane, Kolkata 700006

Kaul Sudha

Flat No. 6, 3rd Floor, 373/1 Block G , New
Alipore , Kolkata 700053 (R) 23967990 (M)
9831887990 Email: sudha.kaul@gmail.com

Kaul Vivek

P - 311, CIT Road, Sch VI M, Kolkata 700 054
(R) 40630148 (M) 9038845000 Email:
cryptictruth@rediffmail.com,
vivekaul@gmail.com

Kaw Aditya

Sunrise Symphony, R1-3E, New Town,
Rajarhat , Kolkata (M) 981765599 Email:
aditya.kaw@heromoyocorp.com

Khar Arvind

2 Cental Base P.O., Military Camp, Teghoria,
A.P.O. - 56 (M) 8820312111, 8100024365

Kher Chitra

57, Rishi Aurobindo Sarani, Kolkata 700090
(M) 9163011233

Kitchlu V K

National Tower, 13 Louden Street, Kolkata
700 017 (R) 2281 5544 / 2280 4994

Kitchlu Veena Smt.

105B, Block `F' New Alipore, Kolkata 700
053 (R) 2287 2544 (M) 98300 60024

Kuchroo Nikhil/Thusoo Preeti

AC 164, Salt lake, Sec-1, Kolkata 700064 (M)
9073398025, 9676589895 Email:
nikhilkuchroo@gmail.com,
preetiniti@rediffmail.com

Lahori Anil

0 (M) 9899490215 Email:
alahori@yahoo.com

Mahnoori Sunil

45/D, " Baishakhi", Bediadanga 2nd Lane,
Flat 2B, (near Jahaz Bari), Kolkata 700039
(M) 9830135616 Email:
mahnoorisunil@gmail.com

Mattoo Parvesh

Panchvati Complex, Gangotri Apartments, 4
A, VIP Road, Kaikhali, P O Airport, Kolkata
700 052 (R) 2573 0099 (M) 9674070153

Misri B M/ Misri Bina

Flat No. 3B & 4B, 9/8 C, Jyostna Apartments,
M B Sarani, Moore Avenue , Tollygunge,
Kolkata 700 040 (R) 2411 2919 (M)
8999129839, 9830204063 Email:
binabrijmohan21098@gmail.com

Moza Akshai

Al 283, sector 2, near tank no 8, salt lake,
Kolkata 91 (M) 9582040213 Email:
akshaimoza@gmail.com

Moza Nikhil

Flat no.3, 11A, Alipore Avenue, Alipore,
Kolkata 700027 (O) 22889900 (M)
9831055457 Email: nikhil.moza@itc.in

Mukherjee Saroj Smt.

57 / 14, Ballygunge Circular Road, Kolkata
700 019 (R) 2475 5394

Munshi Sunil

9-B, Minto Park Syndicate, 13, D.L. Khan
road, Kolkata-27 (R) 2223 3662 (M) 98300
19050 Email: smunshi@yuletea.in,
munshianju@gmail.com

Munshi Surendra

Flat 1D, Siddhashree, 16 Udai Shanker Sarini,
Golf Club Road, Kolkata 700 033 (M) 92316
82964 Email: surmunshi@yahoo.co.in

Ogra Prabha

Venus Apartments, 9 Mayfair Road, Kolkata
700 019 (R) 2287 0146 , 22808752 (M) 98312
57402

Pandit Capt. A K

Golpark Co-operative Society, 11 - 4 - A, 49 B
Govindpur Road, Lake Gardens, Kolkata 700
045 (R) 2417 5004 (M) 8583919405 Email:
panditajaykumar@rediffmail.com

Pularu Gyani

C/O Pfizer LTD., Vasundhara, Sarat Bos Road
, Kolkata 700020 (M) 9794280004 Email:
gyani.pularu@pfizer.com

Raina P.K.

Ekta Floral, Block - 2, flat - 4B, 27-
christopher rd., Kolkata 46 (R) 23297976 (M)
9674348752, 9903840104 Email:
rpradman@gmail.com

Raina Roopa Smt.

672, 'O' Block, New Alipore, Kolkata 700 053
(R) 2400 3215

Raina Suman /Mahata Manoj

AE 41, Salt Lake, Sec -I, Kolkata700064 (M)
8420906100, 9674070153 Email:
rainasuman@yahoo.com

Razdan Ashok Kumar

82/1 Masunda Marwari Bagan New
Barrackpur Kolkata 700131 (M) 9874054625,
9903464514 Email:
mailarazdan@gmail.com

Razdan Naveen

Jamuna-14, Ballygunge Molitary Camp,
Ballygunge , Kolkata 700019 (M)
9051208008 Email: navraz@rediffmail.com

Razdan Ranjit

17/6 Sunny Park Apartments, 6 Sunny Park,
Kolkata 700 019 (R) 2461 5894 (M) 93318
42159

Razdan Vikas

Sanjeeva Orchard, Block 1 Flat 2D, Thakdari
Road, New Town, Kolkata 700156 (M)
9007092323, 9831092532 Email:
mailvrazdan@gmail.com

Roy Phoola Kumari

5/1A Govind Roy Lane Kolkata 700026 (R)
24553089 (M) 9432260089 Email:
phool.roy27@gmail.com

Roy Sunita Kaul/Roy Rakesh

86 C, Harsh Chatterjee Street, Kolkata 700
025 (R) 3205 8256 (M) 97487 31540, 98319
90517 Email: roy.sunitakaul@gmail.com

Sapru Rajiv / Sapru Jyoti / Sapru Kanta

T3 1001 Urbana, 783 Anandapur Road,
Kolkata 700 107 (R) 4068-3193 (M)
9830289100, 9830229155

Sapru Seema

Kolkata (M) 9830007444

Sapru Subhash

7/1A, Sunny Park, Flat 202, Rai Enclave,
Ballygunge (M) 9999098818 Email:
sapru.subhash@gmail.com

Sarthak

Kolkata (M) 9602754353

Seth Reena Nee Mattoo

157 Jodhpur Park, 4th Floor, Kolkata 700
068 (R) 2473 9821

Shangloo Ramesh

Green Valley Residency, 486, Boral Main
Road , Garia, Kolkata 700154 (M) 9831007026
Email: rameshshangloo@gmail.com

Sharma Krishna Smt.

6 Amar Basu Sarani, (Near Ram Mandir),
Kolkata 700 007 (R) 2241 6515 (M)
9830200887

Sikand Sunita

7/1A, Sunny Park, Flat 202, Rai Enclave,
Ballygunge, Kolkata 700019 (M) 9435092408

Sumbaly B N

57, Rishi Aurobindo Sarani, Kolkata 700090
(R) 25312629 (M) 9883514741

Shunglu Anil

155/1 Block `G' New Alipore , Kolkata 700
053 (R) 24789608 (M) 9830033616

Tankha V K

5, WELLESLEY MANSIONS , 44A Rafi
Ahmed Kidwai Rd, Kolkata 700016 (R) 2229
3623 / 7989 (M) 9830187033 Email:
vijaydenise2@yahoo.co.in

Thassu Avdesh

Sarosi complex, 197/A, BB chatterjee Rd.,
Flat no. 2D, Building A, Kashba Raktalla ,
Kolkata 42 (R) 64557894 (M) 9830305199
Email: athassu@hotmail.com

Thusoo Simram

Keshav Madhav Sadan, BD-89, Street no.
159, near 4 no. tank, Newtown, Kolkata
700156 (M) 7051196981 Email:
simramthusoo25@gmail.com

Tickoo Rajesh

DC 9/3, SHASTRI BAGAN , P.O.
DESHBANDHU NAGAR , JORA MANDIR ,
Kolkata 700059 (O) 3294 6711 (R) 3296 4958
(M) 9088955749 Email:
rajeshtikoo632@gmail.com

Tikku Ashok

3rd Floor, Ratnagiri , 153, Dum Dum Park ,
Kolkata 700 055 @ 25493500

Tutoo Sunil

94 NSC Bose Rd., Flat No. 1-B, Rani Kuthi,
Kolkata 40 (M) 9530478085 Email:
skt261@yahoo.co.in

Zutshi M N

FLAT E7, MUKUT APTS, 22A MANDEVELLI
GARDENS, Kolkata 700019 (M) 9830107490
Email: mnzutshi@gmail.com

Zutshi N K

CK 190 Salt Lake, Kolkata 700 091

Permanent Members Residing in Rest of India



Bhat Ashuni

RSM Wipro Networks Pvt. Ltd. 51 ground
Floor Okhla Industrial Estate Phase III New
Delhi 110020 (M) 9711104005 Email:
bhatashuni@gmail.com

Bhat Jayant

3A Cornwell Classic 13 Cornwell Cross Road
Langford Gardens Bangalore 560025

Bhat Renu kaul

17056, Devendra Vihar, Sector-56, Gurgaon -
122 011 (M) 9971009119 Email:
renukaulbhat@gmail.com

Bhat Dr. Rajiv Kr

12B, Deamland Apt. 1A Trikutanagar ,
Jammu (R) 0191 2472090 (M) 9797498888

Bhat Shambu Nath Halim

I - 1, Kashmiri Apartment, Pitampora, Delhi -
110034

Bhan Kapil

Royal Kashmiri Zaika Highway Complex,
Saheed Bhagat Singh Chowk, Near Gandhi
Udyan, Raipur Chattisgarh - 492 001 (M)
9831059318 Email: kapil3112@gmail.com

Dhar Ramesh

G 401 Aarohi Relegance Gala, Gymkhana
Rd, South Bopal, Ahmedhabad Gujrat -
380058 (M) 9824370680 Email:
rkdhar61@yahoo.com

Bhan Ratan

The GE links CHS, Kanshika E- 505, Ram
Mandhir Road Near Ram Mandir, Station
Mumbai-400104 (M) 9830133028 Email:
ratanbhan12@gmail.com

Dar Chitranjan

LCG 204 C, Laburnum, Sushant Lok-1, Block
- A, Sec-28, Gurgaon 122022, Haryana (M)
9008003388 Email:
chitranjan.dar@gmail.com

Dhar Sanjay

42, Sector VI, Panchkula, Haryana - 134 109
(R) 2586 500 , 2586 118

Dhar Dr. Aparna

Deptt. Of Mathematics, I I T, Kanpur - 208
016

Dhar Revati Raman

Flat No. 7, 2nd Floor, Anukool Bldg., 7
Bunlow, Varsova, Andheri (w), Mumbai - 400
061 (M) 9833876316

Dhar Utpal

B - 9, New Delhi South Extension II, New
Delhi - 110 049 (O) 011 - 5530 6375 (R) 011
5569 7071 (M) 0 98186 49612

Dhar Vijay

B4 Suraj CHS, NIBM ROAD, Kondhwa, Pune
(M) 9766631763 Email:
vijay_dhar21@yahoo.co.in

Dhar Vinod

F 23, Sector 46 , GREENWOOD CITY ,
GURGAON, HARYANA 122003 (M)
9716158059 Email: vinod.dhar@gmail.com

Dhar Sudhir

Pocket C- 68C, Gangotri Enclave,
Alaknanda, New Delhi - 110 019 (O)
1204221287 (R) 011 42143711 (M) 9711115834,
9811115384 Email: sudhirdar50@gmail.com

Hangloo T N

Lasun Basun', 23 Chatur Singh Gardens,
Govindpura, Jammu Cantt. - 180 003 (R)
0191 2262 108

Jalla Upendra

P-3/05, Silver Estate, F-29 Sector 50, Noida -
201301 Email: u.k.jalla@gmail.com

Jotshi Sushmita

Kak Ashok

66, Siddharth Enclave, Ashram Chowk, Ring Road, Delhi - 110 014 (R) 011 6844 719

Kaul Ashok

Flat no 28 C MIG Pocket 1 Mixed Housing Mayur Vihar Phase 3 N Delhi 96 (R) 9910373805

Kaul Ajay

1491 (Penthouse), ATS Greens Village , Sec 93A, Noida - 201 304 (UP) (M) 9871554040 Email: ajay_kaul_@hotmail.com

Kaul Bhavnesh

2219 Vasant D II Kunj, New Delhi - 110 070

Kaul C L

D 22, Shivloke Society, sector 6, Plot 6, Dwarka, new delhi 1100075 (M) 9810514292 Email: chunia_kaul@yahoo.co.uk

Kaul Jogindra / Mohit

M. F. 21/12, Canara Bank Appts, B. T. M. Layout, Mamnerghara Road, Bangalore - 560 076 (R) 080 678 6965

Kaul M L / A K

Flat no. 606, Riswhiovan Lavista Kju Pada Borivili (E), Mumbai - 400 066 (R) 28970090 (M) 9833057568

Kaul M N

A - 18, Pamposh Enclave, New Delhi - 110 048 (R) 011 623 1084 , 641 4975 (M) 9899431180 Email: mnkaul@iclou.com,mnkaul@yahoo.co.in

Kaul M N Smt.

138 Model Colony, Arhagarh, Dehradun - 248 001 (R) 0135 267 1879

Kaul Maj. Gen. Rattan

DCCI, ASC Centre & College, Bangalore - 560 007 Email: rattan-kaul@rediffmail.com

Kaul Makhan Lal

House No. 100, Sector 21 - C, Faridabad, Haryana (R) 222 3443

Kaul Ravi

(R) 0172 270 940 (M) 0 94172 59899 Email: khaskarv01@gmail.com

KAUL RAMESH

Email: Kaularyan1960@gmail.com

Kaul Rajender / Indu

Tower F-1502, Palm Drive, Golf Course Ext. Road, Sec-66, Gurugram Hararyana- 122018

Koul Ravinder

SKE 909, Shipra Krishna Vista Ahinsakhand, Indirapuram, Ghaziabad UP 201014 (M) 9667944288 Email: ravinder.koul24@gmail.com

Kaul S N

SOHOM, F 2, Raj Kunj Society, Chembur, Mumbai - 400 074

Kaul Sanjay

Flat No. 1402 Building 6B Sapphire Heights Lokhandwala Complex Mumbai 400101 (M) 0 99670 65546, 9930832232

Kaul,Vijay(HL)

C22, Divyajyoti Appartments, Sec 19, ROHINI , new Delhi 100089 (M) 9831072446, 9899114210 Email: vijaykaul_hll@yahoo.com

Kachru K.K.

Noida (M) 9868702802, 9899376686

Kemmu M K

Plot No. 81-A, Sec-18, Gurugram-122015 (M) 7718838442 Email: mkkemmu@gmail.com

Labroo Wg. Cdr. M K

P - 531, Sector 21, Noida - 201 301

Madan A K

78 Modern Complex, Bhuwana, N. H. 8, Udaipur - 313 004 (R) 0294 224 0269 (M) 9828426432

Mam Pawan Lata Kaul / Jawahar

L 53 Jalvayu Vihar Hiranandani, Gardens powai Mumbai - 400076 (M) 9920958267 Email: pawanlatakml@gmail.com

Mattoo Gopal Krishan

PYROCERAMICS, P.O. MAITHAN DAM, DIST DHANBAD , JHARGHAND - 828207 (O) 6540274447, 6540276661 (R) 6540274193 (M) 9431125107, 9199357750 Email: pyroceramic@hotmail.com

Monga K N

Sagar Cooperative Society, F 11, Flat No. 1, Sector 29, Vashi, Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra

Moza K L

B - 14, Sector 19, Noida - 201 301 (R) 0120 432 4506

Moza V Ratan

Parsvnath Panorama, Tower 9, Flat no 1001, Sector Tau, Kochnar Estate, Greater Noida, Dist. Gautam Buddha Nagar, UP- 201315 (M) 8420899072 Email: vrmoza2016@gmail.com

Misri Sanjay

Building `B', Flat No. 401, 18/8, Rahatani , Aund Annexe, Pune - 411 017 (M) 9823355547 Email: sanjay.misri@thermaxglobal.com

Nadir Amit

Flat No. 101, Royal Regency, 33 / 3 R P P S Road, Surendra Nagar, Nagpur - 440 015 (O) 0712 222 0773 (R) 0712 329 9346 (M) 9860352426, 8800777300 Email: amitnadir@yahoo.com

Nagu Prabhakar

C - 58, Sector E, Aliganj, Lucknow - 226 024

Ogra Dr. G L

House No. 24, Sector III, Poash Villa, Janipura, Jammu Tawi- 180 007 (R) 0191 253 1193

Pajan Maharaj Kishen

692, Sector 14, Faridabad - 121 007 (M) 9910166993 Email: raj_692@hotmail.com

Raina Lata

Bungalow Plot 37, Saheyjar Vijaya Garden, Baridih, Jamshedpur 831017 (R) 0657-2344013 (M) 8986606955 Email: bushen2000@hotmail.com, kaniakadal@gmail.com

Raina Dr. M K

S 525, G. K. II, New Delhi - 110 048 (R) 011 2921 2576

Raina Susheel

B-1901, Kakad Paradise, Penekarpada, Mira Road (East), Thane-401107, Maharashtra (M) 9920986263, 9820986073 Email: susheelraina1@gmail.com

Raina Upendra

Flat G & H Raheja Terrace Agha Abbas Ali Road Ulsoor Bangalore 560008 (M) 9845182599 Email: upendra.raina@tatatea.co.in

Raina P.K.

Flat No. G&H, Raheja Terrace Aga Abbas Ali Road, Ulsoor, Bangalore- 560 008

Raina Vipin

A 603, Tower 1, Adarsh Palm Retreat, Devrabishanhalli , Near RMZ Eco world , Bangalore - 560103 (M) 9874210076 Email: vipinraina@gmail.com

Razdan Sumant/Anjali

Block 6-101, Rain Tree Park, Malayasian Twonship, kukatpally, Hyderabad, Telangana - 500 085 (M) 9866556109, 9701671672 Email: sumantrazdan@getindia.com, anjalirazdan@hotmail.com

Razdan Mrs. J.L.

GH-13/119 Paschim Vihar, New Delhi - 110 087 (R) 011 25284685

Rawal R K

42/101, Silver Oak Appartments, DLF Phase-1, Sector-26, Gurugram, Haryana , Pin-122002 (M) 9810329490 Email: rawal_kaul@yahoo.com

Trisal Vikesh

Flat No 201 - West Block, GH 9 J & K Bank Employes Co-operative Group Housing Society, Sector 9A, Gurgaon - 122001 (O) 124 420 6016 (R) 124 420 6016 (M) 9999033518, 9650691514 Email: vikesh_trisal@yahoo.com

Tickoo Deepu

1487, Sector C, Paket 1 , Vasant Kunj , New Delhi 100070 (M) 9868063639

Tiku Raj Dulari

C/O Oasia-6, NHPC Society, Jal Shakti Vihar, Pocket P-4 Building Area, Greater Noida, UP-201308 (M) 7044634909

Tikku Dr. V.K.

T-078, Ashiana Utsav , Bhiwadi , Dist. Alwar Pin 301019 (M) 9929607550

Wanchoo Dr. R N

504-A, Shivansh Elegance, Hari Phatak Rd., Ujjain (M) 9830745676 Email: ravi1chu@yahoo.com



Permanent Members Residing Abroad

Bakshi Col. Sushil

Hamilton, New Zealand (M) 9051902666
Email: sushilbakshi08@gmail.com

Kaul Virinder

Mauritius (M) 9704854909 Email:
virinder.kaul@gmail.com

Cherwoo Sharda

61, Summer Road, Greenwich CT-06831,
U.S.A. (R) 001 916 756 4875

Daftary Dr. Inder

229 Pintail Place, Davis, Claifornia - 915 616
USA (R) 0065 90901427

Dhar Ajay

Eastern Mansion, Meyer Road, Singapore (R)
001 97399 28820

Dhar Omkar Nath

17 Lockhern Drive, Livingstone, N. J. 07039
USA (R) 001 51839 35744

Fotedar Dr. Akhilesh

526, River Hill Blvd., Nikayauna, N. Y. 12309

Gharyali Veena

321 Thompson Shore Road, Man Hassat,
New York - 11030 (U.S.A)

Kachroo Braj B

Pl. D. 2016 Cureton Drive, Urbana, Illinois -
61801 USA

Kachroo Girdhari Lal

17 Pleasant Village Drive, Succasuna, N. J.
07876 USA

Kaul, Ravi

(R) 13306886914 Email:
globalharmony@neo.rr.com

Kashkari Dr. Chaman

1358 Berkshire Road, BERKSHIRE,STOW,
Ohio - 44224 USA

Khashu Dr. Bhushan L

3 Sherwood Gate, Oyster, N. Y. 11771 - 3805
USA

Mattoo Dr. Nirmal K

25 Hill House L N Old Brooke Ville, N. Y. 11545
USA

Mattoo Sunil

20 Rolling Hill Road, Ridgefield, CJ - 06877,
USA

Mitra Dr. Nirmala

120 New York Avenue, Hutington, N. Y. 11753
USA

Munshi Meena

13504 Gum Spring Drive, Rockville, M. D.
USA - 20850

Raina Lalit

7366, Mont Calm Drive, Mc Clean V A -
22102, USA

Raina Mrs. Supriya

3679, Cabernet Vine Yard Circle, San Jose,
California 95117, U.S.A.

Saraf Brij Krishen

9 Fairfields Crescent, Kingsberry, London
NW 9 OPR

Sultan Ashok

11 Fass Court, West Orange, N J 07053 USA
(R) 001 847 228 5457

Tankha Anil

Apt. 208, 1380 S.Eluhurst Road, Mt. Prospect
IL-6005, USA (R) 001 617 492 5922

Tankha Sunil

784 Main St. No. 1, Cambridge MA-02139
U.S.A.

Wali Dr. Avtar K

1206 Miramar Drive, Fullerton, CA 92831,
USA

Wali Neelam

505 Middlese TPKE No. 8, Billerica, MA 01821,
USA

Wali Vijay

2050E Pioneer Blvd, Fullerton, C A 92831,
USA

Zutshi Surendra

26 Nive Brook Road, Apt. No. 40 B, Edison,
N.J. - 08820 USA

With best compliments from:-

Anand Chemicals and Rubber Pvt. Ltd.

Kolkata

With best compliments from:-

Purandar Investment (P) Ltd.

Kolkata



Sun Oil Co. Pvt. Ltd.

AN ISO 9001:2015 CERTIFIED COMPANY
LAB NABL (ISO 17025) CERTIFIED

40+ Year Old Established Manufacturers of :

LUBRICATING OILS, GREASES AND
SPECIALITY PRODUCTS

Sun Oil Company enjoy's OEM approvals of :

Greases Ltd., Simpson & Co. Ltd., Eicher Motors,
Swaraj Mazda, Hindustan Motors, Punjab Tractors Ltd., H.M.T.
Tractors, Kirloskar Oil Engines Ltd., Jasso Japan.

Sun Oil Company enjoy Industrial approvals of :

Research Design & Standards Organisation (RDSO, Lucknow)
Directorate General of Supplies & Disposals (DGS&D, Kanpur)
Steel Authority of India (SAIL)

Correspondence Address:

M.K.POINT, 6th Floor, Room No.604 & 605,
27, Bentinck Street, KOLKATA -700 001.
Telephone: 91.33.22436192 / 7935 & 22488813
Fax: 91-33-22480850
E-mail : info@sunoil.co.in
Website: www.sunoil.co.in

With best compliments from:-

**SHARIKA
ENTERPRISES**

*Manufacturers of all kinds of
Engineering Plastic Products*

3, Pagladanga Road
Plot No. 82,
Kolkata - 700 015

Kolkata's Ultimate Destination for **Fun** in the **Coollest** Zone



SHOW THIS AD CUTTING AT ENQUIRY/
CASH COUNTER TO AVAIL **30% DISCOUNT**
ON **ENTRY OR PARKS' PACKAGE**






This Offer is valid till 31st March 2024 for upto 6 persons. Terms & Conditions Apply.

Also book tickets **ONLINE** & get discounted **OFFERS** through **www.niccoparks.com**

Or Call Us **18002020080** (Toll Free)

Phone: +91 33 66285564 | 5509 (Between 11 am and 7 pm)

Follow us on :   

Nicco Parks & Resorts Limited, Jheel Meel, Sector IV, Salt Lake City, Kolkata 700 106

Nicco Park's Rules & Regulations are applicable at all times. Rides & Attractions are subject to its availability. Offer valid for all days of the week.*



Late Shanta Kaul (Surmali)

All that we are or hope to be, we owe to You.
Words will never be enough to Thank You.



V i t a s t a

THE PUBLICATION OF KASHMIR SABHA

CK35 Salt Lake City, Karunamoyee,
Kolkata 700 091

Phone: (033) 2358 3932

www.kashmirsabhakolkata.org



With best compliments from.....

Nicco Engineering Services Limited

"INFINIUM DIGISPACE"

4th Floor, Plot No.15 Block - CP, Sector-V, Salt Lake City
Kolkata - 700091

We specialise in...

- **ON-LINE LEAK SEALING SERVICE**
- **BELZONA INDUSTRIAL PROTECTIVE COATINGS & POLYMER REPAIR COMPOSITES**
- **ON-LINE SAFETY VALVE SET PRESSURE SETTING**
- **ON-SITE MACHINING**
- **'HELIFUSION' LOW HEAT INPUT SPIRAL WELDING TECHNOLOGY**
- **PUMP EFFICIENCY TESTING BY RIVENTA TECHNOLOGY**
- **SOLARTECH U.V. CURED LAMINATES FOR PROTECTION AGAINST CORROSION, ABRASION, IMPACT AND CHEMICAL ATTACK**
- **NTZ OIL FILTRATION SYSTEM**
- **METAL STITCHING OF CRACKED OR BROKEN CAST IRON EQUIPMENT**