

INTERNAL ASSIGNMENT

{ SEM - 4 }

- **NAME : RANI ISHIKA**
- **CLASS : B.A. SEM 4**
- **SUBJECT : HISTORY (History of Jammu and Kashmir)**
- **ROLL NO. : 788**

Q1) Explain the sources of Kashmir history.

Introduction

The writing of the history of Kashmir from the time of the rise of the Karkota Dynasty onwards gains momentum with the availability of the historical work in Sanskrit, name 'Rajatrangini' written by a learned Brahmin Kalhana. This work belongs to the 12th century A.D. and contains very useful information about the history of Kashmir from the 7th century A.D. onwards up to 1149-50. The chain of history given in Kalhana's work was continued by Jonaraja from 1006 to 1400, by Sri Vasa from 1420 to 1489 and by Prajna Bhatta from 1489 to 1586, all written in Sanskrit. The Indian historical records, the accounts left by the "foreign visitors, the numismatic evidence are also very useful for the reconstruction of history of Kashmir. The sources, which help us in the reconstruction of the history of Kashmir, are diverse in nature and may be studied under the following heads:

- (a) Contemporary indigenous literature
- (b) Indian historical works
- (c) Foreign accounts
- (d) Numismatic and archaeological evidence
- (e) Kashmiri tradition and folklore

(A) Indigenous Literature

(i) Sanskrit Literature

The famous work Rajatrangini is our chief source of information for the history of Kashmir. A learned Brahman Kalhana in 1149-50 A.D. Dr. R.C. Majumdar remarks, "Rajatrangini is the only historical book in true sense of the term in the whole ancient Indian literature", wrote it. Stein observes that it is "the nearest approach to a work of regular history in extant Sanskrit literature." Kalhana took great pains to collect his material from the existing chronicles and other sources. He utilized the works of preceding historians, freely discussed the merits and demerits of kings and the causes of the rise

and falls of kingdoms and utilized the inscriptions recording the conservation of temples and grants of kings. His ideal of writing history was high. R. C. Majumdar observes that Kalhana set down a few general principles for writing history, which are remarkably far in advance of his age. Indeed these may be regarded as anticipation largely the critical method of historical research, which was not fully developed till the nineteenth century A.D.

The Rajatrangini is a history of kings and queens of Kashmir written in Sanskrit poetry. It records the history of the various dynasties, which ruled Kashmir from the ancient times down to the time of the author, who completed his work in 1149-50 A.D. For the contemporary history, it may be completely relied upon but as to the time preceding the author, we have a mixture of confused traditions and fanciful accounts. Allowing for the legendary character of some events mentioned in the first three cantos of this long poem, it retains a continuous and authentic record of the land, which has stood well the historical criticism. It can be easily accepted as a reliable account of the events of Kashmiri history from the seventh century onwards till the time of the author. The Rajatrangini was translated into Persian on the orders of Zainul Abidin in the 15th century. Later, during Mughal Emperor Akbar's reign, Abul Fazal incorporated long abstracts of this work in his work Ain-i-Akbari. Stein translated Rajatrangini into English in 1900 A.D. Jonaraja took up the narration left by Kalhana. His pupil Shri Vasa again followed him and Prajna Bhatta continued Shri Vasa's work. Prajna Bhatta left his work incomplete and Shika who brought the account of Kashmir to the time when Akbar conquered the country took it up. Kalhana mentions some ancient works and compositions on the history of Kashmir, which he consulted in writing his Rajatrangini. These works are Kshemendra's Nara-apavalli, chronicles of Padmamihara, Chavallakarana and the Nilamatpurana. Excepting the Nilamatpurana, all the other works are now extinct, and this invests the Rajatrangini with an added importance as the sole historical chronicle in Sanskrit literature.

(ii) Persian Literature

Some Kashmiri chronicles written in Persian are also a valuable source of information for the scholars. Malik Haidar, a Kashmiri nobleman in the service of Yusuf Shah of Kashmir (A. D. 1578), wrote his work "Twarikh-i-Kashmir". It narrates the history of Kashmir from the earliest times to 1617 A.D. Though mainly based on the Rajatrangini there are some additions in the later period. The work began in 1618 A.D., and was completed sometime after 1620-21 A.D. Narain Kaul Ajiz, a distinguished scholar of Persian language, wrote

his *Twarikh-i-Kashmir* in 1710. It is mostly based on Malik Haidar's work and gives an account of the Kashmir Sultanate and early Mughal from a liberal point of view. Khwaja Muhammad Azam Kaul wrote *Waquot-i-Kashmir* in 1746. It tells the growth of religious consciousness, social trends, and literary achievements of the Kashmiri Muslims under the rule of Later Mughal rulers. Pir Hasan Shah's work *Tarikh-i-Hasan* describes the history of Kashmir from the earliest time to the close of 19th century. It is the most comprehensive and detailed of all the indigenous Persian works on Kashmir history. Pandit Birbal Kachru wrote his "*Mukhtsar Tarikh-i-Kashmir*" in 1835, when Kashmir was under the rule of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. It gives a brief history of Kashmir under the Mughal and Afghan rulers and upto the Sikh rule. It throws light on the economic condition and the social life of the Hindus during this period. Maulvi Ghulam Hussain who died in 1898, wrote *Tawarikh-i-Kashmir* in three volumes. It deals mainly with the geography, political history and the arts and crafts of Kashmir. He gives a historical account of the terrible famine from which Kashmir suffered in 1875-76 and gives constructive suggestions for the prevention of such calamities in future. He put in great labour in writing his work and maintains a high standard of historical sense and impartiality in dealing with the subject.

(iii) English & Urdu Literature

Some Kashmiri scholars have also contributed to the writing of history of Kashmir in Urdu and English languages. Pandit Anand Kaul contributed two papers to the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1910 on the early history of Kashmir, Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din Sufi wrote *History of Kashmir*, which was published in 1919. It is a comprehensive and detailed account of Kashmir after the advent of Islam in the Valley. Another writer, Muhammad-ul-Din Fauq published his *History of Kashmir* in Urdu in 1910.

(B) Indian Historical Works

With the conquest of Kashmir by the Muslim invaders, the Muhammedan writers of Indian history began to take-interest in the chronicles of Kashmir and its people. The earliest reference to this land is in *Zalar Namah* by Sharif-ud-Din Ali, Yazdi who completed his work in 1424-25. It throws a flood of light on Sultan Sikandar's relations with Timur when the latter invaded India. It also gives information about the geographical position of Kashmir and life of its people. Another work *Malfuzat-i-Timur* probably written by Timur himself also contains references to Timur's relations with Sultan Sikandar. Mirza Haidar Dughlat, a cousin of Emperor Babur, wrote his *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*. It is primarily a history of the Mughals of Central

India. However, it also gives detailed account of his invasions of Kashmir and the Sultan a period of history of Kashmir particularly about the contemporary life of the land and the people. This work was completed in 1546 in Kashmir itself. Nazim-ud-Din, in a section of his work *Tabaqat-i-Akbari* gives an account of Kashmir from the earliest times to the conquest of Kashmir by Emperor Akbar. Muhammad Qasim Farishta's work '*Twarikhi-i-Farishta*' has a chapter which gives us information about the agricultural products, religion of the people and buildings of Kashmir. *Muntaklbat-ut-Tawarikh* by Badauni gives an account of Akbar's relations with the Chak rulers of Kashmir. Abul Fazal's celebrated work *Akbar Namaha* is a valuable source of information about the geography, history, antiquities, administration, agriculture, arts, industries, general social and economic conditions of Kashmir under the Shamiri and the Mughal rulers. Emperor Jahangir's memoirs, "*Tuzak-i-Jahangiri*" describes the social and economic condition and gardens and topography of Kashmir, the land he loved. Another work *Jinat-ul-Fardaus* written in 1714 gives a history of different provincial dynasties including Kashmir.

We have scanty information from the works of Indian history about the condition of Kashmir under the Afghans who occupied the Valley in 1752 A.D. and ruled it till 1819; when Maharaja Ranjit Singh drove them away from the Valley and established his rule there.

(C) Foreign Accounts

The great Chinese pilgrim Hieun Tsang who visited the Kashmir Valley, during 631-34 A.D. gives a detailed account of the Valley. He accurately describes the routes by which he entered the valley and left it. He provides the names of several viharas and temples whose identity with several ancient sites in Kashmir has now been established. He throws valuable light on the tolerant nature of the king and his subjects, the geographical limits of his kingdom and the current traditions about the origin of the Valley and its history. The historical records of the Tang Dynasty of China mention the arrival at the imperial court of the first embassy from Kashmir, sent by king Tahen-to-lo-pi-lo in about 713 A.D. and that of another embassy sent by his brother and successor Mu-to-pi. These kings of Kashmir have been identified as Chandrapida and Muktapida Lalitaditya of Karkota dynasty. Another Chinese traveller Ou -Kong visited Kashmir 759, A.D. He stayed in the Valley for four years. His description of the people of Kashmir though not as accurate as that of Hieun Tsang, is useful in as much as it corroborates some statements made by Kalhana in his *Rajatrangini*.

The early foreign Muhammedan writers on Indian history also give some valuable information about the history of Kashmir. The famous Muhammedan scholar Alberuni visited India. His account shows his master's keen interest in the Kashmir Valley. As Mahmud failed to conquer Kashmir, Alberuni did not get the opportunity to personally visit the Valley but he gives an account of Kashmir in Chapter XVIII of his book *Tahkik-i-Hind*. He mentions the routes, the mountains, rivers, streams, lakes and the fortresses. He also describes the composition of its population, their dresses, agriculture, industry, arts and crafts. Among the European travellers to visit Kashmir, Francis Bernier was the foremost. He accompanied Aurangzeb to Kashmir in 1665. Bernier has left an interesting account of the route the royal cavalcade followed from Delhi to Kashmir Valley. Bernier's observations are helpful in knowing about the social and economic life of the people 'of Kashmir during the Mughal rule. Another, European traveller of repute to write on Kashmir history was Desideri, a Jesuit priest who visited Srinagar in 1714. He gives an account of the various handicraft products, especially Kashmir shawls. George 'Forster, an officer of the Bengal Army, has left a useful contemporary account of the conditions prevailing in Kashmir. He visited Kashmir in 1784 but received a very harsh treatment at the hands of the Afghan rulers of that time. He gives, though a brief account of the social, economic, and political, conditions prevailing in Kashmir.

During the Sikh rule in Kashmir (1819-1846 A. D.) many European travellers visited the valley who left valuable accounts of the condition of the people of Kashmir. G. T. Vigne who travelled in Kashmir in 1835, gives the details of the earthquake of 1828 the memories of the disaster was still fresh in the minds of the people. Vigne also narrates interesting folklores and the odd superstitions current in the Valley during those days. Another traveller Moorcroft in his book 'Travels in the Himalayan Provinces' gives us valuable information on the political and economic condition of the Valley in his time. Baron Charles Hugel and Baron Von Schonberg who visited Kashmir during the Sikh rule have also left interesting accounts of their travel in the valley. In 1846, the Valley of Kashmir came under the rule of Gulab Singh, a Dogra Raja and the paramount of the British Indian Government. It is from this time onward that serious efforts were made by the scholars to make a close and scientific study of the State's geography, physical features, political, social, and economic history, antiquity, and the racial composition of its people. Fredic Drew, in his work, "The Jammu and Kashmir Territories" published in 1875 gives interesting details of the topography of Kashmir. Walter Lawrence, in his book 'The Valley of Kashmir' supplies very useful

information about the history, folklore, language, social customs and occupations of the people of this land. Alexander Cunningham's work gives useful information about Ladakh "The Land of the Lamas". He makes an exhaustive survey of the geography, ethnology of the people, their religion, social customs, history, and economy of this land.

(D) Archaeological and Numismatic evidences

Abundant archaeological and numismatic evidence is available to corroborate and supplement the literary sources of the history of Kashmir. Walter Lawrence in his work "Valley of Kashmir" writes, "The Valley of Kashmir is the holy land of the Hindus and I have rarely been in any village which cannot show some relic of antiquity. Curious stone miniatures of the old Kashmir temples, huge stone seats of Mahadeva (Badripith), phallic emblems, innumerable carved images heaped in grotesque confusion by some clear spring, have met me at every turn...I have seen curious mosques built in a style unlike the present, of wooden beams with stones between. Chance excavations, for irrigation and other works reveal curious sculptures and interesting relics of ancient history."

The Chinese pilgrims Hieun Tsang and Ou-Kong who visited Kashmir in the early 7th century, give an account of a number of temples and Viharas then existing in the Valley. In the medieval period, Mirza Haidar Dughlat, in his Tarik-i-Rashidi and Abul Fazal in his Ain-i-Akbari gives accounts of old temples and mosques in the valley. However, the European archaeologists and research scholars, who visited Kashmir in the middle of the 19th century, made a systematic study and survey of the ruins of ancient monuments and the coins. The foremost among them was Alexander Cunningham who came to the Valley in 1846 after the establishment of Dogra rule over Kashmir. He made a survey of the ruins of many ancient Hindu temples and succeeded in identifying correctly a number of ancient sites such as Puranadishthana, Jyestheshvara, Martanda, Padmapura, Pattan and Khonamusha. Cunningham's survey of the remains of ancient Hindu temples supplies very useful information with regard to the history of buildings mentioned in the Rajatrangini of Kalhana and by later Sanskrit historians. He gives exhaustive details of the development of their architectural style and the influence of Greek and Roman styles of architecture on them. His researches roused the interest of many other archaeologists in the study of the ancient remains of temples and monuments in the Valley. In 1865, W. G. Cowie studied more ruins of temples especially those not discovered by Cunningham. Later, Major Henry Hardy Cole, Superintendent of

the Archaeological Survey of India, took the photographs of most of the ancient temple ruins and published them in 1870.

In 1865, some enthusiastic amateurs and the officers of the Kashmir Government conducted a few minor excavations. For instance, on the suggestion of Bishop Cotton, the Government undertook excavations at Avantipura and a few sculptures were discovered. In 1882, Mr. Garrick made extensive excavations at Ushkur (ancient Huvishkapura) near Baramula, where he discovered a tope or Stupa of squared stones, held together with iron clamps. In 1891, Lawrence conducted excavations at Narasthan and found some interesting specimens of old sculpture. It was George Buhler whose excavations in the Valley led to the discovery of very useful material for a systematic study of the history of Kashmir. During his visit to the Valley, he also identified many old sites. He stressed the importance of a reconstruction of the historical topography for a thorough and critical study of Kalhana's work *Rajatrangini*. Dr. Stein followed Buhler's method and acquired a comprehensive knowledge of the antiquity of Kashmir. The results of his archaeological survey are contained in his famous work "Memoirs on the Ancient Geography of Kashmir". His observations about the castle of Lohara, on the long forgotten tiratha of Bheda and on the old confluence of the Vitasta and Sindhu etc., show his keen interest in this kind of research. By his concerted efforts, Dr. Stein has shown the close and important link that most of these ruins form in the chain of data for a study of history of Kashmir. W.H. Nicholls made an exhaustive survey of the Muhammedan buildings and mosques constructed after the Muslim conquest of Kashmir in the 13th century A.D. He drew attention of the archaeologists to a distinct wood architectural style of Kashmir.

R.C. Kak, Superintendent, Department of Archaeology, undertook extensive at Harwan near Srinagar in 1925. He discovered the foundations of an old temple belonging to the 3rd and 4th century A.D. and a large courtyard of terracotta tiles bearing figures with Central Asian features and dresses. In 1942, the Department of Archaeological Survey excavated the ruins of the base of a temple and fragments of some inscriptions at Tapar near Srinagar. The inscriptions helped in fixing the date of erection of the temple in the reign of Parmanudeva in the 12th century A.D.

I. Coins:

Though Kalhana tells us that he made use of the ancient coins while constructing the early history of Kashmir, very few coins of ancient period have been so far discovered. Some old coins of gold, silver, copper, and brass have been found which help in ~~the~~

reconstruction of the history of Kashmir. General Cunningham was the first to take up the study of the old coins of Kashmir and was able to solve a series of important problems regarding the chronological system of Rajatragini and the numismatic history of this land. Many coins of the Sultan kings of Kashmir have been discovered which have helped in fixing the chronology of the Muslim kings who ruled Kashmir in the 14th and 15th century. A large number of Pratapa type coins belonging to the 8th century have been discovered at distant places as Bhitwara (Faizabad District), Rajghat, Sarnath, Mongher, at some places near Banaras and from the university site of Nalanda. The discovery of these coins from such far off places corroborates the statement of Kalhana about Lalitaditya's conquests and chronology.

II. Manuscripts

Some old Sanskrit manuscripts inscribed on birch barks have been discovered from the old Tokhara country of Kucha, Karashahr and Turfan which throw light on the Buddhist art. Extensive excavations made by Sir John Marshall at Taxila show that there existed close cultural and economic relations between Kashmir and Gandhara in ancient times. Explorations of A.H. Francke in 1909 in Ladakh Zaskar, Purig and Lahaul resulted in the discovery of a number of Buddhist shrines, monasteries with wood carvings and other valuable antiquities. These indicate that there were social, economic, religious, and political relations between Kashmir and these regions. J.P. Vogel, after the study of some inscriptions and antiquities of Chamba suggests that the Lakshna Devi temple of Bharmor in Chamba was repaired under Lalitaditya in Kashmiri style.

(e) Kashmiri tradition and folklore

The biographies of saints, folklores, traditions, and customs also throw valuable historical light on Kashmir. *Khulasatul Manaqib* by Nur-ud-Din Jafar Badakhshi, *Tufaral Ahbad* by an unknown writer, and *Hilyatul Arifin* by Khawaja Ishaq throw light on the lives of influential Muslim religious leaders of Kashmir. *Tazkira-Mashaikh-i-Kashmir* by Baba Nasib and *Nur Nama* by Baba Nasib-ud-Din Ghazi narrate the life history of Nur-ud-Din Rishi, the patron saint of Kashmir. Abdul Wahhab wrote *Majmua dar Ansab Mashaikh-i-Kashmir* and *Fatuhah-i-Kabariya* that give an account of the spread of Islam in Kashmir during the Sultanate period. Lawrence, Knowles, and Grierson collected the folklores, traditions, and customs of Kashmir, which give us useful information on the social and cultural life of the people of Kashmir during the ancient and medieval period.

Q2) Define administration of Sultan Zain-ul-ab-din.

Introduction

Zain-ul-Ab-din was the eighth Sultan of Kashmir, who ruled over the kingdom from 1420 to 1460 A.D. Though not a great warrior, he consolidated and unified the kingdom. His fame rests mainly on his

policy of religious toleration and on several reforms for the betterment of his subjects. He was munificent patron of learning, poetry, music and painting. He developed agriculture by building a large number of dams, canals, and bridges. He also promoted trade and industry. Ten rulers from his dynasty ruled Kashmir after him in succession but none equalled him in popularity. He is still called Bud Shah (the Great Sultan) by the Kashmiris. Along with the task of establishment of an ordered and humane government, Zain-ul-Abidin reorganized his army, which had suffered in discipline and equipment during the rule of his predecessors. When he came to the throne, his army comprised of infantry and cavalry. He reorganized it in such a way as to leave no possibility of rebellion or rising taking place. Moreover, he treated his officers so amicably that they were ready to march with their men right into the jaws of death, on his bidding. He took great advantage of the recently discovered use of gunpowder and established an artillery division in his army. He ordered many types of cannons to be manufactured in Kashmir. He experimented with metals and their alloys and he found one, which was very suitable for casting the cannons. With it a cannon was cast and "at his command", says Shrivara, the author of *Jaina-Rajatrangini*, "I composed a few lines in praise of the weapon."

The fame of Zain-ul-Abidin rests mainly on his peaceful activities. His reign was an era of glory and prosperity for the people of Kashmir. His reforms touched all the aspects of life of the people social, economic, political, religious, and cultural. At the time of accession of Zain-ul-Abidin to the throne, the administrative machinery of the kingdom was broken down, and there was great frustration among the people. Due to the misconceived policies of Sikandar and Ali Shah, the whole administration had become paralyzed. The first task before the Sultan, therefore, was to restore order out of the chaotic conditions prevailing in the kingdom. For this purpose, he reconstructed the administrative machinery. To his good fortune, the Sultan had a band of trustworthy and able followers like Halmat Raina, Ahmad Raina, Malik Masud, Mirza Hussain and Muhammad Khan who helped him in his task. He appointed his brother Mohammad Khan as his Chief Minister.

I. Conquests of Zain-ul-Abidin

Jonaraja wrote the second part of the *Rajatrangini* during the reign of Zain-ul-Abidin. He mentions the conquests of Zain-ul-Abidin. Earlier Ladakh and Baltistan were conquered by Shihab-ud-Din and these territories had remained a part of the Kashmir kingdom till the end of the reign of Sikandar. However, during the weak rule of Ali Shah, these territories had become independent. Zain-ul-Abidin

decided to re-conquer Ladakh and Baltistan. He collected a large army and sent it under the command of such seasoned warriors like Malik Muhammad Magre, Hilmat Raina, Ahmad Raina, Sayyid Malik Hussain Biahagi and Malik Masud Thakur. The Kashmiri armies crossed the Zojila pass, met the Ladakhis at the battlefield of Shel, and defeated them. Next the Balti ruler was compelled to acknowledge Zain-ul-Abidin's; over lordship. He also carried his victorious army as far as Malubha or Malube, Gogga, and to another place named Saya (probably Sheh above Leh on the Sindhu) where he saved a golden image of Buddha from the Yavanas.

After some time, the chiefs of Ladakh and Baltistan again asserted their independence. In 1451 A.D., Zain-ul-Abidin sent his eldest son, Adham Khan, to bring these territories again under his control between 1460 AD and 1470 AD, the Sultan himself led a campaign to these territories, but no details of this expedition are known. Some Persian chroniclers hold that Zain-ul-Abidin won a victory over the Khan of Kashghar. It is said that the chief of Kashghar invaded Ladakh and advanced towards Kashmir. Zain-ul-Abidin, with an army of 25,000 horsemen marched against him and defeated him. Some historians however hold this account to be "spurious" on the ground that Jonaraja nowhere mentions this event in his chronicles. Jonaraja says that Jasarath assisted Zain-ul-Abidin in his campaigns, the Khokhar Chief, who defeated the king of Madara named Maladeva and captured him, but released him by the order of the Sultan. Nizam-ud-Din also states that Jasarath Khokhar, aided by the Sultan's power; brought the whole of the Punjab into his possession although he could not conquer Delhi, Tibet and the whole of country which is situated on the bank of the river Sindh came into Sultan's possession." Jonaraja tells that Zain-ul-Abidin supported Jasarath in the latter's fight with the Sultan of Delhi. He also gave shelter to Jasarath when the Sultan of Delhi hard pressed him.

1. The Khokhar Problem

In the beginning of his reign, Zain-ul-Abidin had to handle the Khokhars with whose help he had regained the throne of Kashmir before the death of Sultan Ali Shah. The chief of the Khokhar tribe was Jasarath. He had acted as Timur's informer and guide when the latter invaded India. However, later he incurred the wrath of Timur who took him as a captive to Samarkand. After Timur's death, he managed to escape, returned to the Punjab, and carved out a small independent principality for himself. In 1420 AD., he helped Zain-ul-Abidin to ascend the throne of Kashmir. In Kashmir, the Khokhars began to behave like an army of occupation and oppression. It seems that their chief Jasarath even wanted to usurp the kingdom of

Kashmir after the fall of Sher Ali, but his plans were foiled. Jasarath was a very ambitious person. He wanted wealth and supplies to embark upon the conquest of India. Zain-ul-Abidin met his demands and, thus, secured the early departure of Khokhars from his kingdom.

2. Foreign relations

Zain-ul-Abidin cultivated friendly relations "with his immediate neighbours as well as the rulers of distant countries like Khurasan, Turkistan, Tibet, Azerbaijan, Gilan, Sistan, Turkey, Egypt, and the Sharif of Mecca. He sent his ambassadors to these countries with rich presents. The king of Tibet reciprocated with suitable presents. He is said to have presented to Zain-ul-Abidin "a pair of geese that could separate milk from water, drink the milk, and leave the water." Zain-ul-Abidin maintained friendly relations with Jasarath Khokhar of the Punjab, Sultan Bahlol Lodhi of Delhi, Sultan Mahmud Bagran of Gujarat, Nizam-ud-Din of Sindh and Tonwar Raja of Gwalior. About the relations between Zain-ul-Abidin and Jasarath, says Jonaraja, "What the spring is to cupid, what the master's favourite is to the other seats, that was the king of the Gokhahars (Jasarath) to the monarch (Zain-ul-Abidin) the most beloved of all who served him." Shrivara in his Rajatragini writes, "Sultan Bahlol Lodhi was bound to Zain-ul-Abidin like a tame deer on account of his virtues."

3. Reappointment of Pandits in the Administration

Zain-ul-Abidin's predecessors, motivated by their fanaticism, had removed the Pandits, the old class of officials, from the government jobs and had expelled them from the state. However, Zain-ul-Abidin encouraged the Pandits to return to Kashmir and many responded to his call. He gave them many facilities and guaranteed them religious and civil liberties. Farishta remarks, "Preliminary to all other measures, he recalled the Brahmins who had been expelled, and caused a general toleration of all the publicly notified."

4. Eradication of Corruption in the administration

When Zain-ul-Abidin came to the throne, corruption in the country was rampant. Jonaraja writes that the judges were till then accustomed to taking bribes openly both from the plaintiffs and defendants. Zain-ul-Abidin severely dealt with the dishonest officials and rooted out corruption. He employed spies to inform him about the conduct of his officials of all ranks. His spy system was so efficient that the Sultan was able to know "all about his subjects except their dreams." Once a judge named Malvana Mallanasaka was found guilty of accepting a bribe. He was dismissed from the job and made to surrender the amount of the bribe.

5. Reforms in the Judicial System

During the preceding years, inefficient government and chaotic conditions had made the crimes of theft, highway robbery, drunkenness, and debauchery quite common among all the classes of the people. The Sultan put down every kind of crime ruthlessly. All the Criminals were apprehended and put behind the bars. Shrivara tells that the Sultan "published a common order that if any theft occurred anywhere, the headman of the village or town where the theft occurred should be held responsible. This system prevented crimes and travellers slept at ease in the woods as in a house." Realizing that poverty and unemployment were the real causes of criminal tendencies of the people, he made efforts to provide suitable jobs to the erstwhile criminals. He dispensed justice promptly and intelligently. He codified law and had it engraved on copper plates and placed in public places and the courts of justice. The Sultan, however, abhorred harsh punishments for ordinary crimes. Thus, the offenders of petty crimes were only imprisoned. Capital punishment was awarded only for serious offences. The Sultan established equality before law. Rich and poor, high and low, all were equal before law. Once a person named Sayyid Mir Shah, a great favourite of the Sultan, was found heavily drunk. He killed his wife in a fit of rage. The Sultan punished him to death. He even executed his own foster-brother, Sher when the latter was found guilty of having murdered his brother Masud. Besides establishing equality before law, the Sultan made the administration of justice simpler and easier. He codified laws and got them engraved on copper plates, which were displayed at various places. G.M.D. Sufi observes that Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin was, in this respect, perhaps first systems lawgiver of Kashmir.

The Sultan was the highest court of appeal. He himself took great pains to find out the truth in all complicated cases and obtained repute for his Salomon-like dispensation of justice. He was endowed with unusual commonsense and intelligence and decided many cases which even baffled his judges. Jonaraja gives an interesting story of how the king dispensed justice intelligently. Once a Brahmin, a resident of Kamraj (the Lake District) complained to the Sultan that he could not get back his stolen cow, which he had, after four years, found accidentally with a man who was a resident of the Miraj district. The king summoned the alleged thief to his court and asked him to reply to the charges of the Brahmin. The cow's present owner replied that the cow had been with him since its birth. In order to test the truth of his statement, the Sultan threw some green water-nuts before the cow and its calf. The cow ate them with relish while the calf did not eat it and turned away its head from this food. This

clearly proved that the cow originally belonged to Lake District and was accustomed to eating water-nuts, a wild growth in the Wular Lake, whereas the calf, which had been brought up somewhere else, was totally unaccustomed to this sort of food. The cow was restored to its lawful owner and the thief was severely punished.

6. Economic Reforms

To check profiteering and arbitrary rising of prices of commodities by the merchants, Zain-ul-Abidin introduced a system of price control. He issued orders that the merchants should not hide their commodities and should sell them at a small profit. The government fixed the rates of different commodities and informed the public of these prices in the form of bulletins engraved on thin copper plates and publicly shown in all the cities. The Kashmiri traders generally carried on their business in their houses. It discouraged competition and encouraged cheating and black marketing. Zain-ul-Abidin issued orders that the articles meant for sale should be openly displayed and sold at a reasonable profit in the open market. This greatly helped in checking hoarding of goods and black marketing. The currency of the country had been greatly debased during the rule of Sikandar and Ali Shah. Zain-ul-Abidin reformed the debased currency and issued a large number of silver and copper coins. He also recognized and reformed the taxation system and abolished many arbitrary taxes. He repealed Jazia, which was levied on the Hindus. While levying taxes, he, however, took care that not only the rich but the poor also contributed to the income of the state. The main source of income of the state was the land tax. The state also derived some income from a tax on gold dust collected by the people from the sandy banks of the rivers.

7. Development of Agriculture

To increase the agricultural production, the Sultan paid special attention to the promotion of agriculture, which was the backbone of the economy of the state. During his preceding reign due to lawlessness and insecurity, the condition of the cultivators had deteriorated. Much of the cultivable land had remained uncultivated due to the insecure and chaotic conditions in the state. The officials used to oppress the poor peasant. Zain-ul-Abidin took many useful measures for their uplift. Land revenue being one of the important sources of income, not unnaturally, attracted Sultan's first attention. He undertook the task of settlement of land revenue or land settlement. He divided the country into a number of parganas and each pargana comprised a number of villages. The holding of each cultivator was measured with a Jarib. The accurate measurements were either recorded on Bhoj Patras or inscribed on copper plates.

The land records were preserved in the Central Record Office established at Sopur..

As regards the state share of the cultivator's produce, there exists difference of opinion among the scholars. According to Mohibul Hasan state charged one-half or one-third of the gross produce as state share. However, the popular view as held by R.K. Parmu is that it was one-sixth of the produce. In case the crops of the cultivators were unavoidably destroyed during the famines, the sufferers were provided relief by the state. In the famine stricken areas, the normal rate of land revenue was reduced to one-seventh in the most affected areas. All the chroniclers agree that in the newly reclaimed parganas of Zainagiri, the state share was one-seventh of the gross produce. To safeguard the peasant from the oppression of revenue officials, the Sultan kept a vigilant watch over their activities. He prohibited by law the revenue officers from accepting any gifts from the cultivators. He enjoined upon them to be honest and lenient with the cultivators. To ameliorate the condition of the cultivators and to promote agriculture, the Sultan constructed several canals in the country. Shrivara writes, there was not a piece of land, and not a forest, where the king did not excavate a canal." The notable canals were:

- I. **The Kakpur Canal.** It irrigated tracts of land around the village Kakapur.
- II. **The Karla Canal** irrigated the territory lying between Shupiyān and Ramu. The Sultan also built a town Zainagiri after his own name on the bank of this canal.
- III. **The Chakdar Canal.** This canal originated from Nandmarg in the Pir Panjal range and irrigated the plateau of Chakdar.
- IV. **The Shahkul or Salalpur Canal.** It drew water from the Sindhu River. It carried water across the district of Lar and irrigated the plateau around the Mansabal lake.
- V. **The Avantipur Canal** irrigated the lands around the town of Avantipur.
- VI. **The Lachham Kul or Zainaganga canal** drew water from the Sindhu River and irrigated lands around Naushahara, a new town founded by the Sultan. This canal was extended to Jama Masjid and emptied itself into the Mar Canal.
- VIII. **The Mar Canal:** Before the construction of this canal, the surplus waters of the Dal Lake flowed out into the Jehlum River at Habba Kadal. The Sultan diverted this water into the Mar Canal. This canal was extended up to Sbadipur, where it flowed into the confluence of the Jhelum and Sindhu River. Seven masonry bridges were constructed over the canal. This canal linked Srinagar city with the Dal

Lake and, thus, formed an important inland highway for traffic.

- VIII. The **Lall Kul or the Pohru Canal** drew water from the Pohru river. A dam was constructed to divert the water of the river to the canal. The canal irrigated the territories up to Zainagiri, a new town founded by the Sultan.
- IX. The **Shah Kul or the Martand Canal** drew water from the Lidar River and irrigated the arid plateau of Martand. The Sultan made efforts to grow sugarcane in this area but the experiment failed due to the unfavourable climatic conditions for the crop.

Many of these canals provided water to the dry Karewa lands. The irrigation projects of the Sultan resulted in the draining of marshy lands and reclamation of large tracts of land for cultivation. Agricultural production increased considerably which made the peasants prosperous. Moorcroft estimates that in the reign of Zain-ul-Abidin, the annual production of rice in Kashmir was about seventy-seven lakhs of Kharwars.

8. Famine and Flood Relief

Towards the close of Zain-ul-Abidin's reign, a severe famine ravaged the Valley. Its immediate cause was the early fall of snow, which destroyed the ripe paddy crop. To add to the miseries of the people the succeeding winter was a severe one. The price of rice, the staple food of the Kashmiris, shot up enormously. A chronicler Shrivara records, "A hungry man distressed with the thought of what he should eat entered a house at night, and discarding gold and other riches, stole rice from a pot. Feeble, emaciated men in villages longed to obtain rice, which was like metal to them but lived on edible leaves, roots, and fruits. Formerly one Khara of paddy would be had for 300 dinnars but owing to the famine, the same Khara of paddy could not be obtained even for 1500 dinnars. The Sultan took various measures to alleviate the sufferings of the famine-stricken people. He distributed free food from his governmental stores, curtailed the revenue demands of the state on the cultivators, and distributed loans to the needy. Fortunately, the next crop was bumper one which soon relieved the distress of the people. When the normal conditions were restored, the Sultan apprehended the black marketers and hoarders who had harassed the people by selling the foodstuffs at high rates. They were made to return the excess of the prices charged by them. Besides, by a royal decree, he cancelled all the debts incurred by the people in the hour of distress when unscrupulous moneylenders had taken undue advantage of the people in distress.

Two years after the famine, another natural calamity afflicted the people in the shape of a devastating flood. Heavy rain fell incessantly for a number of days resulting in flood in the Vitasta and its tributaries. Numerous human beings, houses, cattle, and trees were swept away and perished. The city of Srinagar situated in a low-lying area, suffered very heavily. The houses were inundated and the people ran for safety to the hilltops. After the floods subsided, as a safeguard in future, Zain-ul-Abidin shifted his capital city to the hilly land round about the Hari Parbat Hill and founded a new city there, which to this day is known as Naushahara.

9. Trade, Arts and Crafts

Zain-ul-Abidin took a keen interest in the development of arts and crafts in his kingdom. He sent two persons to Samarkand to study the art of papermaking and bookbinding. He invited competent teachers and artisans from other countries to train his subjects in various arts such as stone cutting and polishing, bottle making, gold beating. He probably imported from Tibet the art of making Pashmina shawls, and the art of manufacturing of fireworks, for which Kashmir is well known. Nizam-ud-Din states that muskets were also made in Kashmir during his reign. Mirza Haidar Dughlat, in his *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*, writes, "In Kashmir one meets with all those arts which are in most cities uncommon, such as stone-polishing, stone cutting, bottle making, window cutting, gold beating etc. In the whole of *Maver-ul-Nahr* (the country beyond the river Oxus, i.e. Khorasan) except in Samarkand and Bukhara, these are nowhere to be met with, while in Kashmir they are even abundant. This is all due to Zain-ul-Abidin."

Pandit Anand Narain Kaul observes that Zain-ul-Abidin turned Kashmir into a small smiling garden of industry inculcating in the hearts of the people reasonable conceptions of labour and life and implanting in their minds the germs of real progress. He introduced correct measures and weights and made artisans and traders take solemn oaths (which in those halcyon days one could not easily break) not to kill their golden goose by cheating and swindling. He, thus, promoted commercial morality and integrity and industrial righteousness "qualities which constitute the back bone of a people's credit and reputation. It was through these virtues that the Kashmiris successfully carried on their shawl and other trade worth crores of rupees annually with distant corners of the globe at a period when Kashmir was an isolated country and communications with the outside world were difficult." Zain-ul-Abidin adopted novel methods to attract foreign artisans to his country and to induce them to settle down here permanently. They were given all the facilities needed by

them. However, if a foreign artisan insisted on leaving the state, after a brief stay, he was asked to train local men in his art or craft before he left. In case he was unwilling to do so, he was not allowed to leave Kashmir. The Kashmiris who wanted to go to foreign countries to learn new crafts, were given liberal state assistance. Lastly, persons were made to learn some art or craft in the jails.

10. Architecture

Zain-ul-Abidin was an enthusiastic builder. He introduced wooden architecture in his country and built numerous magnificent buildings throughout the length and breadth of his kingdom. He adorned the town of Zain Nagar (Naushahra) with a number of beautiful buildings. Mirza Haidar says that the royal palace 'Rajdan' was a unique building in the East. It had twelve storeys and contained numerous rooms, halls, verandas and staircases. It was decorated with expensive carvings and fresco paintings. The Sultan founded many other towns after his own name which included, Zainapur (Shopiyan tehsil), Zainkolt (near Srinagar), and Zainagiri (near Sopur). He built a palatial building, the Zaindab in Zainagiri, which was later burnt down by the Chaks. The Sultan also built a small town named Helalpura near the capital to commemorate the killing of a mad elephant by one of his servants named Hella. He built rest houses for himself and the inns for the travellers on the main roads. According to Lawrence, the Sultan laid out gardens wherever he went, four of his well-known gardens were Bagh-i-Zainagiri, Bagh-i-Zain Dab, Bagh-i-Zainapur and Bagh-i-Zainkut. However, these gardens are now extinct. The plans and designs of these gardens seem to have been of the purely Kashmiri type but improved upon by the influence of Samarkand and Bukhara types.

However, the greatest engineering achievement of Zain-ul-Abidin was the creation of a charming artificial island, Zaina Lank, in the wular Lake. It was built on a site in the Lake where once existed an island but had submerged in the water. The Sultan reclaimed this island by filling that site with wagons tired with stones thus raising that site above the water level of the lake. He built a palace, a mosque, and a garden there. The Sultan also built two other islands, Sona Lank and Rupa Lank in the Dal Lake. During the last years of Sultan's reign, when the lawn of Sopur was destroyed by fire, he not only rebuilt it but also constructed a swinging bridge over the river Jhelum that flows through the town. In his capital city Srinagar, he built the first wooden bridge on the Jhelum, which is still known by the name of Zaina Kadal.

11. Encouragement of Learning and Literature

Zain-ul-Abidin was a patron of learning and literature. He was himself a great linguist, scholar and a poet. He was proficient in Persian, Sanskrit, and Tibetan as well as in Kashmiri, which was his mother tongue. It is said that he wrote a treatise on pyrotechnics or the art of making fireworks, in the form of a dialogue, and another work named Shikayat, which discusses the human vanity and transitoriness of the world. The Sultan wrote the latter work towards the end of his life when he was greatly dejected and disillusioned owing to mutual bickering among his sons and the revolts of his disloyal ministers. The Sultan was also a poet and wrote under the title of Qutb. The Sultan took great interest in the intellectual development of his subjects. He unflinchingly extended his patronage to the learned men. A galaxy of scholars local as well as foreigners surrounded him. These included prominent scholars like Sayyid Mohammad Rumi, Qazi Sayyid, Ali Shirazi, Sayyid Mohammad Sistani, Maulana Kabir, Maulana Nadiri, Sayyid Mohammad Madani, Jonaraja, Shrivara, Yodhabhatta and Nothosoma Pandit. The Sultan held frequent discussions with them on literary as well as spiritual topics. He had arranged for their residence at his capital and provided them other facilities. He made grants of land and other privileges liberally on them. Jonaraja writes, "Possessed of merit and appreciating merit in others, the king encouraged learning and the stream of learning which had run down like a canal which breaks through a gap, now began to flow smoothly once more."

Many celebrated writers contributed to the growth of literature. Jonaraja continued the work of Kalhana's Rājatarāṅgini. He wrote the second part of Rājatarāṅgini and completed the work of writing the history of Kashmir upto 1458 A.D. in Sanskrit verse. After Jonaraja's death, another chronicler named Shrivara took up his work. Many Kashmiri Pandits well versed in Sanskrit wrote books of great merit. A Pandit named Nothosoma wrote Zain Charit in Kashmiri describing the life and achievements of Zain-ul-Abidin. Yodhabhatta wrote the biography of the Sultan under the title of Zain Prakasha. Another Pandit, Bhattavatara, who had studied the Shah Nama of Firdausi and other Persian works, compiled the sayings of the Sultan in his work Jainavilasa. Mulla Ahmad and Mulla Nadiri were also well-known chroniclers of his time. Each one of them wrote a history of Kashmir in the Persian language. Mansur Mohammad wrote a book on medicine. Zain-ul-Abidin caused the Mahabharata, the Ramayana, Kalhana's Rajatringini translated from Sanskrit into Persian, and had some Persian works translated into Sanskrit. The Sultan maintained a regular translation Bureau where eminent scholars were employed.

To spread knowledge, the Sultan established numerous schools, colleges and a residential university. These centres of learning began to attract students from within the country and far off places like, Herat and Transoxiana. Deserving students were awarded scholarships. For the poor students, the Government established hostels where boarding and lodging were free. The Sultan created endowments for the maintenance of these hostels and the educational Institutions. One of the schools founded by the Sultan at Naushahara survived until the seventeenth century. The Sultan's fondness for books led him to establish a big library, which could favourably compare with the one collected by the Samanids. He sent his men to India, Persia, Iran, and Turkistan to purchase books and manuscripts for his library. He was ever willing to pay liberally for the rare books. The library survived one hundred years after his death when it was destroyed. Because of the Sultan's efforts, education made rapid strides in his kingdom. Making an estimate of his work in this direction, Shrivara says, "Even women, cooks and porters were poets; and the books composed by them exist to this day in every house. If the king were a sea of learning and partial to merit, the people too become so. The meritorious king Zain-ul-Abidin, for earning merit, built extensive lodging houses for the students and the voices of the students studying logic and grammar arose from these houses. The king helped the students by providing teachers, books, houses, food, and money and he extended the limits of learning to all branches. Even the families, which never dreamt of learning produced men who through the favour of the king became known for their erudition. There was not a branch of learning of arts or literature or fine arts which was not studied."

Zain-ul-Abidin was greatly interested in music and other fine arts. He used to enjoy the company of musicians and rewarded them liberally. The Sultan's generosity and his love for music attracted accomplished musicians to his court. Two such artists were Mulla Udi and Mulla Zaidi who came from Khurasan. Mulla Udi played on the Ud to the great delight of the Sultan and his courtiers. Mulla Zaidi was an expert in playing the lute made of the tortoise shell. Another artist, Mulla Jamil was a master of vocal music. Shrivara the author of Jain Rajatragini, and Yodhabhatta were two popular Kashmiri musicians at the Sultan's court. The Raja of Gwalior heard about the Sultan's taste for music and sent him many standard books on Indian music including the Sangita Chudamani. It was also due to Zain-ul-Abidin's encouragement to music that this art reached a great height of excellence in Kashmir. Zain-ul-Abidin also revived the art of dancing in Kashmir, which had suffered due to the Puritanism of Sultan Sikandar, Zain-ul-Abidin invited many actors and dancers, both men

and women to his court and extended them his patronage. He arranged special festivals for their performance. Tara and Utsava were two famous dancers of his time.

12. Other administrative and Social Welfare Activities

The Sultan also undertook many other social welfare activities. He appointed many celebrated Hakims and Vaidis to look after the health of his subjects. He patronized Shri Bhatt and Karpura Bhatt, the famous physicians of his time. Many famous Hakims from Central Asia and India settled in Kashmir. The Sultan opened dispensaries at many places in his kingdom wherefrom medicines were supplied to the patients free of charge. The Sultan established charitable institutions. Jonaraja says that in many towns food articles were distributed free to the poor and disabled. He held special festivals frequently where poor were fed. Jonaraja further records, "The king caused rest houses for travellers to be built at the outskirts of the villages and they were supported by the villagers; he caused shelters to be built in the forests."

~Thank-You~

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