

**REGION AND RELIGION: DEVELOPMENT, DEMOCRACY AND  
VIOLENCE IN CONTEMPORARY KASHMIR (1989-2017)**

Thesis submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University  
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**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

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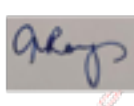
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## CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled, '**Region and Religion: Development, Democracy and Violence in Contemporary Kashmir (1989-2017)**', submitted by Ms. **Urba Mudasir Malik** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, has not been previously submitted in part or in full for any other degree of this university or any other university/institution.

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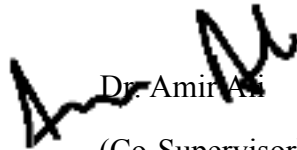


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## **Introduction**

The research under study is an attempt to analyze and explore the fragility of democracy in the Kashmir region, which eventually led to the poor record of democracy and eruption of separatism on the ground. The democracy in the Kashmir region was fragile, because it was introduced in 1977 and till the 1980s it was in the process of survival and consolidation phase. Although the first Legislative Assembly election has been conducted in 1962, whereas in other parts of the country elections were held in 1952. Similarly, the first Lok Sabha election in Jammu and Kashmir has taken place in 1967. Before the mid-1970s elections held in Jammu and Kashmir were manipulated by the regional party as discussed in chapter four. It is necessary to go back into the history of the region to understand the political events which took place in the 1980s. The separatism and violence of late 1980s and onwards were not primarily the logical outcome of the trajectory of the past events. History did not fundamentally decide the direction of events that occurred nor did it provide prescriptions for the future. The Kashmir region of 1947 may not be linked with the separatism and rise of violence that emerged in 1989. The separatism and violence are generally used as a label for all the violence that has occurred in the region over the past fifty-years and sometimes five hundred years. The political instabilities when Mughal, Afghan, Sikh, British and Dogra rulers in the region had grappled for power, have been different; whereas the eruption of separatism and violence in the late 1980s and 1990s have different causes. Although the politics in Jammu and Kashmir in the late 1970s witnessed a democratic period of integration with the Indian Union. The thesis will discuss the complexities woven around the process of democratization in the region by bringing forth the nuances embedded in the weak democratic institutions along with the characteristics of the political actors from an early phase. The inherent weakness in the democratic institutions have to be examined and analyzed in order to understand the fragility of the democracy, which was introduced in 1977. This implicitly will provide an understanding about implications for strengthening democratic institutions. It is also necessary to analyze if and how other variables like region, religion, ethnicity and socioeconomic factors did play the role in the outcomes. The study will also show how political actors manipulated the ethnic identity as a tool; they tactically exploited social and cultural values of the region in the form of a symbol 'Kashmiriyat' and this is considered as vital for the process of political mobilization. Old values are given new meanings and history is rewritten to befit political goals of the regional

leaders at a particular point of time. This forms an essential feature of the phenomenon of politicization of identity, which will be discussed in the first chapter of the thesis. Ethnic mobilization undoubtedly involves an appeal to a group's common identity, but at the same time social science theory does not necessarily explain that ethnicity always has significant implications in terms of political outcomes.

The Kashmir region holds significance during the post 1980s in the context of the transformation due to the eruption of separatism and important shifts in the competitive politics. The democratic space has been delegitimized during the 1980s and 1990s, but during 2002 it became vibrant to a greater extent as Kashmir region witnessed a significant change in terms of party competition, which pronounced the end of hegemonic politics of the National Conference. Although mainstream parties made efforts for Assembly Election in 1996 to bring back the democratic procedure, but it was only in 2002 that it could regain the ground. The result of competitive politics was the fractured verdicts of electoral process, which led to coalition politics as a consequential outcome of the democratic process. Thus, with the decline of hegemonic position of the National Conference, a new situation emerged in terms of regional equality — one party having its strong electoral bastion in the Kashmir region and other party in the Jammu region. The earlier situation was different in the sense that a single regional party, the National Conference used to secure most of the seats from one region without any dependency on another region. The analysis also encompasses the post 1989 politics of separatism, electoral politics with a focus on causes of separatism and the subsequent violence that followed along with changing party system and leadership. In this context the chapter four is designed to discuss this fundamental shift with complexities for the last two and a half decades by critically engaging with the academic, journalistic work and field interviews. The details regarding the changing response of the people towards militancy and politics of governance are also deliberated upon in its interconnected context besides the performance of different governments before the decline of democracy and after the rebuilding of electoral politics within the democratic space since 1996.

## **Hypothesis**

The rise of violence during the decade of 1980s was the outcome of the weak democratic institutions and decline of democracy in the Kashmir region.

## **Research Questions**

The study examines the following questions:

1. What are the factors that triggered the separatism and subsequent violence during the late 1980s in the Kashmir region?
2. Why did democracy in 1987 open a window to separatism and rise of violence in the Kashmir region?
3. Could the situation around the eruption of violence have been avoided to evade its implications?

## **Methodology**

This study is mainly historical and analytical. It uses both the primary and secondary sources. The secondary sources consist of existing literature in the form of books, journal papers, reports and newspaper articles, which have been used to analyze the historical development, political events in the region, especially during the 1980s and onwards. It has also used archival sources from Jammu and Kashmir Academy for Arts, Culture and Language and Archives Reference Library, located in Srinagar. While this study relies heavily on the secondary sources, it has also made use of freshly collected primary data. The primary data has been collected using qualitative method, mainly in the forms of semi-structured interviews.

In depth interviews were conducted with various observation groups that formed the principal source of narratives, copiously used in the thesis. These interviews helped in deriving meaning from an individual's everyday experiences in connection with decline of democracy and rise of violence. Structured interviews were avoided so as not to interrupt the flow of narratives of the respondents and to get a deeper understanding of their experiences as well as perspectives. Most of the interviews conducted with the men and women were generally of one-hour duration, but some of them stretched for 2-3 hours. The interviews were recorded in the language of the respondent — Kashmiri/Urdu, which were later on transcribed and translated into English

language. The efforts were put in to retain the accuracy of original meaning during the process of translation. Besides, the respondents were selected from the different districts across the region on the basis of incidences of violence. The districts with high incidences of violence during the decades of the 1980s and 1990s were selected for the purpose. To encompass wider geographical spread of the sample, interviews were conducted in Anantanag town and Dialgam village in the District of Anantanag and Lethpora in District of Pulwama from South Kashmir , Sopore town and Bommai village in the District of Baramullah from North Kashmir and downtown (Shehr -e-Khaas) in Srinagar from Central Kashmir.

The respondents were initially approached through a known and trusted contact. This was followed by chain-referrals through snowball sampling technique. Efforts were made to choose as diverse a sample as possible, because Kashmiri identity is not homogenous. Thus, the sample respondents were chosen from rural and urban areas, from different economic classes, and on the criteria of educational level, age, gender, and religion. The sample respondents consisted of working men and women, university and college students and people without formal education. Respondents consisted of various age groups to represent different generations — some belonged to the younger generation and others to the earlier generation. The categorization was done to bring out the intergenerational narratives. For example, a Kashmiri Muslim who in his late 60s or 70s, has lived with the Kashmiri Pandit community in a plural setting before the eruption of militancy, understands and defines violence differently from a Kashmiri Muslim who is in his 20s and 30s and has not experienced the joint community living. This generation born during and after the eruption of militancy, understands the idea of community and experiences violence differently from the previous generation. Similarly, class and level of education play an important role in the level of exposure to violence and the nature of violence as well. A Kashmiri man or a woman from a lower class or with a low level of education is relatively more prone to victimization and violence than the person of an upper class. The violence is pervasive in the region, but is experienced differently by differently placed people. Though the common denominator of all the interviews is violence, the categorization of area, class, gender, level of education, age and religion play an important role in understanding how violence is experienced by an individual.

A total of 65 respondents were interviewed in two phases during the years 2018 and 2019. The interviewees were first asked to give their consent and based on affirmative reply, they were interviewed. The interviewees were assured that their names and other details would remain



anonymous and confidential. They were also assured that the information would not be divulged to any other person, nor would be used for any other purpose other than the present research and subsequent publications. The interview was focused on finding out a connection between the weakening of democracy and the rise of violence, especially during the decade of the 1980s. The questions pertain to the historical background of the Kashmir region, functioning of democracy in the region, economic conditions, role of ethnic, regional and religious factors to understand the nature of separatism and subsequent rise of violence in a comprehensive manner.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study emphasizes the significance of democracy for restoration of peace and confidence building process in the Kashmir region. It highlights the importance of impartial functioning of democratic institutions to control violence and restore normalcy in the region. Besides, it considers the functioning of democracy in the region as an important political tool and a prerequisite for the integration and national unity.

1. The research contributes to the existing body of literature by offering fresh insights into the situation of the region by bringing forth the narratives that reflect the perspectives of the people from the field.
2. The study examines the problem of separatism and rise of violence in the region through the lens of democracy and argues that the democratic decline is the reason for persistent discontent among the people of the region, aggravated by other factors as well.

The thesis is divided into five chapters. The first two chapters formulate the background for the succeeding chapters. The first chapter titled *Kashmir: Region and Religion*, provides historical background to what formed the region. The social and cultural background of a region in terms of collective consciousness is discussed and how it operates as a unifying force in the society of a particular area. The meaning of the region is discussed through its networking between territorial, political, cultural, social, ethnic, lingual and economic factors of the past as well as the present, which develop collective consciousness over ages by co-existing in the region. The changing character of these factors makes the concept of region multidimensional and dynamic, wherein the past, present and future expectations play a crucial role in developing a holistic understanding of

the region. The chapter discusses that though the region presents itself as an open and dynamic entity, but carries within it certain boundedness and politics of distinction, which reflects how the region is an important source of identity as it allows its inhabitants to identify themselves with others and gives rise to a sense of shared identity called regional identity. However, shared identity is not essentially the cause behind the rise of violence but is used as an easy mobilizing tool for the group of the region along the ethnic lines. The chapter moves on to religion and analyzes it not as a set of belief or faith in the divine rather a line is drawn to understand it in the perspective of identity placed in the larger historical, social and cultural roots of a homogeneous group. Religion afterwards is discussed in terms of a 'syncretic religion' in the context of the Kashmir region and how it harmonized with the social and cultural life of the region. The chapter also brings forth how religion is used implicitly in politics and beneath that lies the political appeal for maintaining the political interests of state and non-state actors. The thesis then recounts how the Kashmir region changed its religion from Buddhism to Hinduism and finally to Islam. Islam in Kashmir is an amalgamation of various religions from various regions along with their respective culture. The Sufi affiliation of Islam with Central Asia and Persia played a complementary role to what in future came to be called as 'syncretic religion' in the Kashmir region. The chapter sums up with the description and analyses of the term 'Kashmiriyat', which pervades almost throughout the thesis. The objective of the second chapter is to engage with analytical and critical approach towards the history of the region from 1846-1947 and onwards. The chapter recalls Dogra rule, which started in 1820 and describes how Maharaja Gulab Singh was the autocratic ruler for the political convenience of the Britishers. Maharaja Gulab Singh through his loyalty to the British, had attained the kingdom of Jammu, Kashmir, Baltistan and Ladakh. At this juncture of history Kashmiris neither had a leadership nor the measures to resist the enforcement of Amritsar Treaty, which was signed between the British government and the Maharaja. The chapter demonstrates Dogra rulers' exploitative nature through the ruler centred and religion centred approach in the region. They ruled over Kashmiris in the same way as a slave is ruled by his master and in this way created a state which was personal and feudal in character. The people lost ownership of their own lands and became tenants. Trapped in a system of forced labour *begaar*, the peasantry as well as shawl weavers lived at the very bottom line of the economic scale. There was no touch between the government and the people rather the government had no sympathy with the peoples' needs and grievances. Since shawl weaving was central to the trade of Kashmir in the nineteenth century

it was intensely affected by the heavy taxation system imposed by the Dogra Maharaja; their inhuman practices dehumanized the cultivators and artisans. The thesis also focuses on how during the Dogra Maharaja's rule Muslims remained backward in education. It is reported that the government avoided its responsibility in this context on the basis of political concern that education may develop political consciousness among the masses against the exploitation by the rulers. However, with the help of Muslim organizations of the British India promising young Muslims in the region were given scholarships to pursue their studies. The education acquired by them created awareness regarding their rights to change the indifferent nature of the government with the support from the poor masses. The thesis moves on to show how educated youth got organized, which became the precursor of political consciousness and emergence of political identity in Kashmir. Thus, for the first time Kashmiri youth organized opposition against the Maharaja's autocracy. Among the educated youth Sheikh Abdullah was one of them. Since Sheikh Abdullah was an excellent orator, challenged the legitimacy of the Dogra Durbar with the support of influential religious leaders. He initiated a movement to put pressure on the Maharaja to democratize its institutions to provide legitimate rights to its citizens. It was the first political mobilization of the Kashmiri Muslims in the region. The chapter also recounts how at this juncture of history Sheikh Abdullah had actively pitched in the politics of Indian National Congress and saw the political movement of his regional party, Muslim Conference as an extension of the Indian National Congress in the Jammu and Kashmir state. Besides, Jawarharlal Nehru's visit to the Kashmir region brought the two parties closer to each other and Sheikh Abdullah renamed the party as the National Conference. The creation and dissemination of 'Kashmiriyat' became the component of *people-building* to mobilize the masses. Thus, during the 1930s the political loyalty was primarily based on religious boundaries, but during the 1940s the National Conference employed 'Kashmiriyat' as regional category to change the nature of political loyalty by persistently emphasizing religious syncretism, tolerance and region's unique shared culture as the history of Kashmiri people. The chapter proceeds to highlight the *Naya Kashmir Manifesto*, which contained a peasant charter, worker charter, women charter besides a programme for a constitution to be regulated in a democratic manner. The chapter comes to an end by discussing the moment of Accession which was signed by the Maharaja Hari Singh with the fullest support of Sheikh Abdullah.

The chapter three brings forth the development of the Kashmir region through the thriving business till the beginning of the twentieth century. The trade and economy of the state with the Indian subcontinent till 1947 was managed through three highways and four waterways and the people of both the regions of the state were beneficiaries of the business. The regions lost the traditional trade centers with the partition of India. The thesis also highlights that Dogra rulers were not interested in developing the Kashmir region rather were keen in drawing the wealth of the region and transforming it to the Maharaja's home town, Jammu. The chapter recounts the history of development during the post 1947 period, when the developmental changes took place in different spheres especially land to tiller and education for everyone were prioritized. The land to landless tiller was seen as a revolutionary step which generated tremendous progress in agricultural productivity. National militia was established, which provided an opportunity to the majority of the youth to get military training for the first time in the last four centuries. There has been consistency in the ideologies of the various governments at the centre that the development by modernizing and improving the condition of the people will bring normalcy in the region. This policy was given enormous impetus during the period when G M Bakshi was the Chief Minister. The network of roads within the three regions expanded the mobilization of people and goods. Besides, tourism was promoted which was badly hit in 1947 by the disturbances in the subcontinent. The chapter advances to the period of Sheikh Abdullah when he came to power again and his thrust on development from 1975-1982 was on the power sector, agriculture, transport and to overcome the unemployment problem. The thesis also argues why the situation turned violent in the late 1980s and brings forth the role of economic variable along with other variables substantiated by the arguments of various political scientists. To understand the inter linkages between the development, democracy and violence help is also taken from some narratives during the field work, each interviewee holds his/her view differently but the undercurrents are related to the various variables. During the times of hartals, curfews and clampdowns, progress and development suffered the setback. This also implicitly contextualizes that the economy can improve when there is sustained peace in the region. The research focuses on the state and its institutions as political variables and digs deep into the intricacies to explain the causes of turbulent situations in the Kashmir region during late 1980s and onwards in the subsequent chapter.

The thesis moves on to chapter four, wherein an attempt is made to explore how a functioning democracy in the Kashmir region from mid 1970s to early 1980s has supported the integration and the nation-building process in the country. It was a period marked by an unprecedented free and fair elections, which instigated a process of integration of Jammu and Kashmir with India. Although Kashmir region has gone through a poor democratic record from 1951-1972 state elections by the persistent rigging and various forms of intervention, which hampered the development of a popular democratic culture. However, democratic breakthrough started in 1977 elections, which was the most untainted electoral process. Democracy thrived and worked well and as a result the Kashmir region witnessed no fundamentalism, secessionism and no communalism for the successive ten years. The political atmosphere was secular and secular politics coexisted with democracy. The chapter reflects on ethnic peace in spite of the mix of religious groups and different languages inside the region. The ethnic parties even cooperated in 1981-82 local bodies election, when the National Conference supported the Bhartya Janta Party in Jammu. Besides, the separatist forces can be present in a functioning democracy as well, but remain insignificant as long as democratic institutions are stable. After the death of Sheikh Abdullah Farooq Abdullah reclaimed the heritage of his father and became the Chief Minister after contesting the election. Although people's sentiments were in favour of the peaceful democratic development, but institutional structures within the region were weak, which made the newly introduced democracy vulnerable. The chapter narrates how the blow was brought to the consolidation of democracy when Farooq Abdullah was dismissed from his office for the various reasons enumerated in the thesis. The focus of the chapter shifts to 1987 elections, which triggered the eruption of separatism and rise of violence. The thesis unravels how the hope for the continuation of democracy was slowly dissipated and the early decline of democracy was caused. The two major parties, the National Conference and the Congress (I) formed the alliance to create a political monopoly and simultaneously disregarded the democratic ethos by isolating the opposite competitive party. At this juncture democracy still had a chance to satisfy the discontent among the masses, but an extensive space was offered to separatism and violence. The chapter moves on to 2002 and the subsequent elections when democracy regained the ground and the hegemonic political party was for the first time replaced by the new regional party. The thesis engages with multiple arguments to substantiate the framework of the chapter.

Chapter five unfolds the debate on the rise of violence and its implications caused by the political events in the Kashmir region. What politicians aimed for turned out to be different from the outcome; their aim was political power but the outcome was separatism and violence, which could neither have been predicted nor desired at the outset of crisis. The chapter analyses the ambitions of power and how they produce unforeseen events like separatism and violence. Separatism was not primarily determined by historical background or ethnic factor as ethnic identity played a role only as a vehicle and not as a cause of violence. The socioeconomic factors can be one of the reasons as discussed in the thesis. The chapter depicts how people's sentiments favoured peaceful democratic development in spite of the diverse lingual and religious groups. During this period the democratic institutions were considered credible and region and religion had not become the dimension of polarization although democratic institutions in the region were nascent and weak. The rigging in elections of 1987 increased the distress, disillusionment and hindrance to free and fair political competition in the region. This chapter shows how these factors serve as the background of changing political climate against the democratic decline in spite of the opposition being loyal to the democratic process. An attempt is also made to establish multiple explanations as the causation behind the exodus of Pandit community. The academic studies mostly focus on the Muslim majority in the Kashmir region and the Kashmiri Pandits are generally overlooked. The chapter argues how violence created the void and broke down the mutual trust between the Muslims and the Pandits. The exodus of the Pandits has had the grave implications on the concept of 'Kashmiriyat' and the socio-political diversity of the region. The chapter precedes and tries to work out how violence breeds violence and amidst this violence how victimization of women and men takes place at different levels by the security forces and the militants, and how the society withdraws its collective support vis-a-vis the victims.

## Chapter One

### Kashmir : Region and Religion

The aim of the chapter is to have an understanding of the terms - regional and religious identity so as to investigate them in detail in the context of the Kashmir region in the following chapters. The chapter while focusing on the theoretical debates on region and religion attempts to explore the potential sites of overlap between the two terms. It therefore takes up a theoretical engagement of the two terms emphasizing the points of connection and contradiction. The section becomes central for the subsequent sections of the chapter to understand and analyse Kashmir vis-à-vis region and religion. The chapter then moves forward to the next section to explore the concepts the the two terms in the context of Kashmir. The relation between region and religion in Kashmir is discussed historically in this section. The section is followed by exploring the historical underpinnings of the Kashmir region and religion vis-à-vis the social, cultural, religious and economic aspects liked with the region of Central Asia. It resorts to a historical approach in its analysis. The focus is to explore the fluidity as well as rigidity of the two terms in the Kashmir region . The section is then followed by engaging with the genesis of syncretic religion and Kashmiriyat (marker of regional identity). Before exploring the political culture vis-à-vis region and religion in Kashmir's early modern history, the chapter briefly delves into the pre modern (sixteenth century) history of Kashmir, which is the formative history of Islam in Kashmir. The aim underneath is to engage in a comprehensive manner with the overlaps between region and religion in the case of Kashmir. The methodological question for going a long way back in time and picking up a hundred odd years of Kashmir's history belonging to the sixteenth century is a legitimate one. The explanation for the chronological bracketing for these hundred years of the century is that it was the period of mass conversions to Islam. A period where Islam was struggling hard to find its place within the culture and tradition of Kashmir, a period where the *new* Muslim vis-a-vis his religious identity, post *his* conversion was undergoing an intense period of social upheaval as he was still holding on to the cultural and folk traditions, challenged by Islam. The section will also analyze how the Kashmiri Pandit community, saw the process of the mass conversions, along with briefly discussing the social relations between the new Kashmiri Muslims and the Kashmiri Pandits during this period. This section has an important bearing in understanding the dynamics of the Pandit Muslim relation in the modern history, the much-contested concept of Kashmiriyat and even to some extent the migration of Pandits from the Valley. The period is also important for understand the current

political landscape. Islam is often described at times in the same breath, as tolerant and syncretic as well as militant and separatist. The reductive binarisation leads to an impasse. Such binaries other than looking neat and tidy on paper, do no further intellectual service in understanding such societies where identities persistently transcend these divisions.

## **Region**

There is no standard academic definition of the term region since scholars have approached the term in multiple ways. Region can be described on the basis of its geographical relatedness, lingual affinities, ethnic identity, religious customs, social order, economy and spirit of life. However, while defining region all the above attributes are connected to each other and become important to define its formation, instead of mentioning just one of the above factors as the only factor. Pavlovic analyzes the term region by arguing that, ‘by nature and character, the regions are the first forms of connecting people and the human community, which identifies the space which best expresses and realizes the interest of a community’<sup>1</sup>. In a similar way, Lilić writes, ‘historically, the regions and the regional concept of the organization of human communities are much older than modern nation states and states of nation.’<sup>2</sup> Michael Keating holds up the view that, ‘regions may be defined in purely topographical terms but usually they are taken to have a broader economic, social, and political meaning.’<sup>3</sup> Region can thus be defined on the basis of some salient characteristics like physical geography and territorial connection, wherein the geographical location and proximity, become the key variables to define the region. The region is also understood on the basis of its social background and cultural production. Unlike the geographical and territorial dimension, this is not a physical characteristic rather a collective shared feeling of oneness and belonging (collective consciousness) through similar social order, cultural patterns and symbols, that are developed over ages by dint of co-existing in an area. Paasi in this regard argues:

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<sup>1</sup>V Pavlović.1994.*O pojmu regiona i regionalizma*.In *Regioni I građani*. Subotica Subotičke novine.p.52. (Translation not available)

<sup>2</sup>S Lilić.2009.*Regionalizam Evropske unije i pravni okvir regionalizacije Srbije*. In *Izazovi regionalizacije*. Izazovi evropskih integracija. Belgrade, Official Gazette No. 6. p.7-21. (Translation not available)

<sup>3</sup>Michael Keating.2001.*Governing cities and regions: territorial restructuring in a global age* In *Global City Regions*. edited by Allen J. Scott. Oxford University Press.



Many current studies on regional cultures and identity often seem start from a set of at least implicit suppositions, such as understanding cultural distinctiveness or identity in a given region is an empirical phenomenon that can be analyzed by using such cultural elements or traits as dialects, music, regional food, literature, folklore etc. as indicators of this distinctiveness or identity. Ultimately regional identity is a label reserved for the existence of a kind of spatial shape for these traits. In this sense identity is a feature of the ‘region’.<sup>4</sup>

The term collective consciousness is introduced by French Sociologist, Emile Durkheim in 1893. It is described as shared common pattern of ideas, belief system, social and moral norms, which work as unifying force in the society. Durkheim in his work writes, ‘The totality of beliefs and sentiments common to the average members of a society forms a determinate system with a life of its own. It can be termed the collective or common consciousness’.<sup>5,6</sup> The term collective implies how the ideas and belief system is common to a group of people where collective consciousness is formed and influenced by religion, culture, art, education, science or political socialization. The social cohesion is established on the basis of a common history, common ethnicity, common societal beliefs, common language, common value system, similar patterns of socialization, similar levels of social integration along-with various cultural affinities and bonds. Tilly in his work writes, ‘culture provides politics with its repertoire of symbols that connote authority.’<sup>7</sup> ‘culture is thus the means to power.’<sup>8</sup> In this context Brass says, ‘cultural identity is a tool that can be used by political entrepreneurs in competition for power and resources or by states in establishing hegemony over society.’<sup>9</sup> Culture allows the state with the necessary centripetal force which enables it in shaping, binding and structuring the society. Unlike the conventional approach, wherein the society gets regulated by the state through physical force and control, culture equips the state to structure and control the society through ideology, hence empowering the state to rely less on coercion. In this context James Scott while citing Gramsci argues:

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<sup>4</sup>Anssi Paasi.2011.*The region, identity, and power, Procedia*. Social and Behavioral Sciences.14. p.14.

<sup>5</sup>Emile.Durkheim.1960.*The Division of Labor in Society*. Illinois.The Free Press of Glencoe.

<sup>6</sup>K Smith.2014. *Introduction to Part IV*. In *Emile Durkheim and the Collective Consciousness of Society*. Anthem Press pp. 133-134.

<sup>7</sup>Charles Tilly.1995.*Contentious Repertoires in Great Britain, 1758–1834*.In *Repertoires and Cycles of Collective Action*. edited by M. Traugott.Durham: Duke University Press. p.26.

<sup>8</sup>G M Joseph . D Nugent. 2012.*Popular Culture and State Formation In Revolutionary Mexico*.pp. 3–23.

<sup>9</sup>Paul Brass.1991.*Ethnicity and Nationalism: Theory and Comparison*.London.Sage Publications. p. 8.

States can easily dominate their subjects physically; but to effectively rule over them □ to establish hegemony over their lives in the Gramscian sense<sup>10</sup> □ they must also control their subjects ideologically □ that is control the cultural underpinnings of their socio-political outlook.<sup>11</sup>

While defining region, political benchmark is also taken into consideration. The region can show similar political behaviour or disposition. The political behaviour represents how the people of the region define their collective regional identity. In this context Keating writes, ‘a political region may be defined as a ‘political space’ whose inhabitants have a sense of territorial identity and in which issues are appraised by reference to their impact on the region.’<sup>12</sup> Region is also defined on the basis of economy and development. While understanding a region, sometimes there are powerful and complex networks of interactions, intricately meshed between political aspirations and socio-cultural dimensions or political, economic dynamics of the region. These arguments underscore the point that the formation of region is premised on multiple discourses. Thus, by defining region only through the prism of economy and development or only through the cohesive elements of cultural and social life, a holistic understanding of region remains incomplete. The meaning and definition of region is networked between territorial, political, social, cultural, lingual, ethnic, economic meanings, which manifest themselves differently in the past and the present as well, and make the region more inclusive, coherent and complete. Keating in his work explains:

A region is a construction of diverging elements with greater or lesser cohesion. He further contends that where 'geographical' elements such as nature or landscape, economic cohesion, cultural identity, administrative apparatus, popular identity and territorial mobilization coincide in space, strong regionalism results.<sup>13</sup>

The people of a particular region thus may have more in common with each other than with the people of other regions. In a similar vein, Cerulo while discussing regional identity argues that

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<sup>10</sup>Antonio Gramsci.1971. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*.edited and translated by Quinten Hoare.Geoffrey Nowell Smith.London. Lawrence & Wishart.

<sup>11</sup>James C. Scott.1985.*Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* .New Haven. Yale University Press.

<sup>12</sup>Michael Keating.2001.*Governing cities and regions: territorial restructuring in a global age* In *Global City Regions* edited by Allen J. Scott.Oxford University Press.

<sup>13</sup> Michael Keating.1998.*The New Regionalism In Western Europe*. Edward Elgar Publishing. p.10.

regional identity addresses the *we-ness* of a group, thereby stressing the similarities or shared common attributes around which group members coalesce.<sup>14</sup>

Region has multiple meanings and implications in different contexts. These contexts are not only historically produced, but as also mentioned above are very much contingent on the spatial, social, political cultural and economic experiences of the people of the region. In this regard Paasi argues, 'since regions and identities are historically and spatially contingent, both theoretical and empirical understanding of what regions and regional identities mean must be based on context.'<sup>15</sup>

As there are various factors which furnish meaning in making of region and regional identity, its formation and evolution hence cannot be described by one single factor. For example, political attitude of the group is just one element of identification of the people of the region amongst other socio-cultural and economic forms of identification. The people not only identify themselves and their group with one particular form of identity i.e., political identity rather at the same time identify themselves with other forms of identifications like socio-cultural or economic. Thus region cannot be explained by a single factor □ region and regional identity are seen as a 'social construct'.<sup>16</sup> In this context Paasi adds:

Regions are more often than not seen as 'social constructs', but this idea seems to mean different things to different authors. For some scholars, regions are ready-made constructs that are 'background' contexts for social action, while others see them as historically contingent social processes and discourses 'in the making' that may become institutionalized as part of wider social and material relations and frameworks of power<sup>17</sup>

According to scholars, region is formed, shaped and identified through the broader expression of relations, which have their origin in common and inter-related socio-cultural, political and economic process amongst the people of the region. Region is therefore a much complex construction having its origin in common shared patterns of identification and expression and a collective consciousness. In this connection Morrissey writes that 'regions are 'mental territories',

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<sup>14</sup>Karen A Cerulo.1997. *Identity construction: New issues, New directions*. Annual review of Sociology.23.pp. 385-409.

<sup>15</sup>Anssi Paasi.2011.*The region, identity, and power*. Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences.14. 2011. p.15.

<sup>16</sup>A.John Allen. Julie Charlesworth. Allan Cochrane.Gill Court. Nick Henry. Doreen Massey. Phil Sarre.1998. *Rethinking the Region: Spaces of Neo-Liberalism*. London. Routledge.p.176.

<sup>17</sup>Anssi Paasi.1991.*Deconstructing regions. Notes on the scales of spatial life*. Environment and Planning.23.p. 239-254. ;

Anssi Paasi.2010.*Regions are social constructs, but 'who' or 'what' constructs them? Agency in question*. Environment and Planning.42.p. 2296-2301.

the boundaries of which are drawn by the residents themselves.’<sup>18</sup> Similarly, Wirth explains that ‘regional identity of a group, is a subjective expression of a perceptual geography □ place as a ‘state of mind’ and ‘a sense of common belonging’.’<sup>19</sup>

Region is also sometimes defined as an enclosed and constant entity. However, the factors discussed above may not always be static rather keep transforming and evolving over time. Since region is embedded in political, social and economic relations, these factors furnish a complex nature to the concept of region. The changing character of these factors renders the concept of region multidimensional and dynamic by bringing in complexity and fluidity to it. The formation of region and regional identity is thus a dynamic process. Neither it is static nor rigid, rather it is premised on broad political, social and cultural experience, common feelings and shared memory down the generations. In this context Allan Pred argues, ‘regions are social constructs that do not rise in a vacuum but that are made in broader social practice □ regions are hence contested results of power relations. Such approaches challenge traditional ideas of regions as given, bounded, ahistorical, monolithic entities that have a specific essence and a permanent identity.’<sup>20</sup> Allen J further clarifies, ‘the so-called relational view has challenged the boundedness of regions, and suggests that regions should be recognized as open, unbound entities’<sup>21</sup> Therefore region is defined and understood as an open dynamic entity wherein the past, present and the future expectations play a much crucial role in developing a comprehensive understanding of region. Donaldson in his work explains how the production and reproduction of regions involve certain complex internal and external transformations. He works it out in these lines:

Regions are constructed and reconstructed in uneven ways that basically defy all assumptions of hierarchical scalar neatness and often reflect struggle around such themes as what are the identities and boundaries of these entities. Region is thus not a fixed 'scale'; rather it is a perpetual and dynamic process of scaling the practices and discourses through which the previous shapes are produced and reproduced.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>18</sup>Katherine G Morrissey.1997.*Mental Territories: Mapping The Inland Empire*.New York.Cornwell University Press. p.8.

<sup>19</sup>Wirth. Louis. *The Limitations of Regionalism*.In *Regionalism* edited by Jensen. p.392.

<sup>20</sup>Allan Pred. 1984.*Place as historically contingent process*. Annals of the Association of American Geographers. pp. 279-97.

<sup>21</sup>A.John Allen. Julie Charlesworth. Allan Cochrane.Gill Court. Nick Henry. Doreen Massey. Phil Sarre.1998. *Rethinking the Region: Spaces of Neo-Liberalism*. London. Routledge.

<sup>22</sup>A.Donaldson.2006.*Performing regions: Territorial development and cultural politics in Europe of the regions*. Environment and Planning A 38.pp. 2075-2092.

The formation of region involves broader political, social, cultural, economic practices apart from the physical and territorial aspects. The region is generally understood through a historical and geographical context, it is to be observed dynamically through the above mentioned interconnected variables. These variables keep on changing over the period of time thereby adding new categories of distinctions and identification to region. Though the region presents itself as a dynamic and open entity, it also carries within it a ‘certain boundedness and politics of distinction’<sup>23</sup> which reflects how the region forms its own distinction from other regions. Paasi in this regard elucidates that ‘boundaries are not merely lines limiting spaces □ rather they penetrate social (boundary producing) practices all over the society.’<sup>24</sup>

Region is an crucial source of identity as it allows its inhabitants to identify themselves in relation to others and thus gives rise to a sense of shared identity called regional identity as Bristow asserts in his work that regional identity, ‘is often taken for granted as an automatically positive thing that can contribute to well-being and social cohesiveness.’<sup>25</sup> The regional identity can be either territorial or non-territorial, depending on the context which is analysed. Besides, the identification with the territory, individuals also associate with the region through non-territorial markers like common community patterns, religious or cultural order, course of their life history etc. Regional identity is an important category as it plays the role of formation of a collective regional consciousness of the group of people of the region. Zigrá while describing regional identity argues, ‘it can be understood as a certain intellectual capacity of an individual or a certain set of people to identify with the spatial unit at a particular time. In other words, it is an emotional relationship with a specific area; however, attention has to be paid also to identification with the community inhabiting this area.’<sup>26</sup> Paasi states that the ‘identity can be respectively conceptualized analytically as consisting of two elements : the identity of the region and the identity or regional consciousness of people living in the region. These shapes are produced and reproduced in the perpetual structuration of individual and institutional practices and discourses of economy, politics, governance, culture/media and education.’<sup>27</sup> This manifests how the people place

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<sup>23</sup>Anssi Paasi.2011.*The region, identity, and power*.Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences. 14.p.12.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid.p.13.

<sup>25</sup>Gillian Bristow.2005. *Everyone’s a ‘winner’: problematising the discourse of regional competitiveness*. Journal of Economic Geography.5. pp.285- 304.

<sup>26</sup>Florin Zigrá.2000. *Možnosť použitia uzemnej identity ako kritéria pri vymedzovaní uzemno- správnych jednotiek*. Geografické studie. 7. pp. 2–11. (Translation not available)

<sup>27</sup>Anssi Paasi. 2011.*The region, identity, and power*.Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences. 14. p.12.

themselves in a complex constellation of identification with respect to the region. In *Place and Placelessness*, Edward Relph while corroborating the identification of people with places argues, ‘the identity with place is then defined by the concept of insiderness. Its essence is the degree of inter-connectedness, relationship and involvement, which individuals or groups have in relation to certain places’<sup>28</sup> How people identify themselves with the place is centred on the experiences the people have in the region. American geographer Yi-Fu Tuan, while analysing the relation people have with a particular region describes the relation either as topophilia or topophobia in these words :

With its positive influence, the place can reinforce the individual’s identity, sense of safety and confidence. These abilities of a place (Tuan) labeled as topophilia and its most important determinant is a stability of the place, from which originate the above mentioned effects. He talks about a special place representing home. As the opposite to topophilic places he defined topophobia, which in humans causes fear, anxiety, and a feeling of danger.<sup>29</sup>

The relationship people have with the region forms a key determinant to understand how they define and locate their regional identity in terms of social, cultural, political, religious or ethnic factors. For example David Harvey in this regard adds, ‘territorial identities, especially when conflated with 'race', gender, religious and class differentiation, are among the most dynamic bases for both progressive political mobilization and reactionary, exclusionary politics.’<sup>30</sup> Regional identity of the people is therefore multi-directional as people identify with different variables in different contexts. Regional identity is neither permanent nor unchanging as Vencalek states , ‘like many other social and economic phenomena, also the regional identity of the population changes or more precisely develops.’<sup>31</sup> These variables are inter-linked with each other, for example the experiences they had vis-a-vis their political, social or economic identity might be intertwined with their religious or ethnic identity as Bourdieu explains:

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<sup>28</sup>Edward Relph.1976. *Place and Placelessness*. London.Pion.p.156.

<sup>29</sup> Yi Fu Tuan.1974.*Space and place: Humanistic perspective*. Progress in geography. 6. pp. 233–246.

<sup>30</sup>Sarah Radcliffe. Sallie Westwood .1996.*Remaking the Nation* .London.Routledge; David Harvey.1993.*From Space to Place and Back Again: Reflections on the Condition of Postmodernity* In *Mapping the Futures*. edited by J. Bird. B. Curtis. T. Putnam. G. Robertson .L. Tickner .London, Routledge. p. 3.

<sup>31</sup>J Vencalek.1998. *Protismery uzemni identity*. Cesky Tesín.Olza, 207 .p.83. (Translation not available)

Struggles over ethnic or regional identity . . . are a particular case of different struggles over classifications, struggles over the monopoly of the power to make people see and believe, to get them to know and recognize, to impose the legitimate definition of the divisions of the social world, and thereby, to make and unmake groups.<sup>32</sup>

The genesis of region is hence a historically and geographically contingent process, resting on the network of time and space for its formation and evolution, apart from the cultural, social and economic discourses which take place. Anderson in this direction sets forth :

The resurgence of region can not be explained by any single, straight-forward reason. Such general tendencies as uneven development, observations on regional languages and cultures being threatened with decline, national devolution or federalization as a means of reducing the power of central states or as a means of managing separatist aspirations and conflicts have been identified behind the rise of regions.<sup>33</sup>

Region is thus formed of multiple elements resulting in the formation of regional identity. In a certain situation for example ethnic identity of an ethno-territorial group, with a historical origin, gathers a strong sense of regional expression thus cutting across different aspects of regional identities. Ethnic identity is defined as the common shared identity of a cultural group in terms of race, region, language, religion, common ancestry, or culture. Ethnic identity as acquired through birth, is defined as a static and unchallengeable feature of a group's identity. Paul Brass in his work *Ethnicity and Nationalism* argues that, 'primordialism has often been used to denote the view of ethnic identity as 'attachments derived from place of birth, kinship, relationships, religion, language and social practices' □ something that is primarily based on descent.'<sup>34</sup> Clifford Geertz adds that primordial attachments are understood as 'given'.<sup>35</sup> Brass further explains how the ethnic identity of a group gets mobilized and used as a social tool to put forth certain set of demands so as to alter the status of their group especially by means of political power. The ethnic identity of a group when in historical antagonism with the other form of identity sometimes may give rise to serious tensions hence becoming one of the mobilizing cause for violent separatism. However, the

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<sup>32</sup>Pierre Bourdieu.1991. *Language and Symbolic Power* .Cambridge.Polity. pp.220-221.

<sup>33</sup>James Anderson.2000. *The rise of regions and regionalism in Western Europe*. In *Governing European Diversity*. edited by.Montserrat Guibernau. London. Sage.pp. 130- 159.

<sup>34</sup>Paul Brass.1991.*Ethnicity and Nationalism - theory and comparison*.New Delhi.Sage Publications.p.69.

<sup>35</sup>Clifford Geertz.1963. *Old Societies and New States-The Quest for Modernity in Asia and Africa*. New York.The Free Press. p.109.

point to be highlighted is that in some cases of violent separatism, the ethnic identity is not quintessentially the reason behind the violence rather is politicised to mobilize the group along the ethnic lines. The reason that ethnic identity is so easily appropriated and used for other political interests is that the identity is invested with strong centripetal emotions and feelings which have deep historical roots embedded in them, thus rendering ethnic identity as an easy mobilizing tool.

Paasi in this context argues :

Boundaries may manifest themselves in practices and institutions that produce distinction (in the case of nations such institutions may include flagging days, national ceremonies and parades, in the case of regions, such as festivals, regional symbolism, regional museums, archives, and newspapers). Part of such institutions draw on emotional and historical attachments with a region, some others on efforts to benefit from such elements in economic terms.<sup>36</sup>

The regional identity within the territory thus gets exploited through various symbols, norms, values and rhetorical appeal in the socio-political sphere through various state and non-state actors for political or economic interests. Regional identity thus plays a crucial role in providing the actors with a vast repertoire of symbols, that has strong historical, cultural and social underpinnings. 'The challenge posed by contemporary regionalism is that the diversity of cultural forms (ways of life, languages, social manifestations); values rooted in history and geography are glorified by the regional elites seeking to develop their heritage.'<sup>37</sup>

## **Religion**

The chapter apart from understanding Kashmir through region also places it and analyses Kashmir through the spectrum of religion. Religion in the thesis is understood and analyzed not as a set of faith or belief in the divine rather a line is drawn here to understand it in the context of identity placed in the larger historical, cultural and social roots of a homogeneous group. In this context Michael Walzer writes, 'for Rousseau and for classical republicans generally patriotic feeling and political participation rested and could only rest on social, religious and cultural unity. They were

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<sup>36</sup>Annsi Paasi.2009.*The resurgence of the 'Region' and 'Regional Identity: Theoretical perspectives and empirical observations on regional dynamics*. European Review of International Studies. 35(S1) pp.121-146.

<sup>37</sup>Antoine Bailly.1998. *The Region: A basic Concept for understanding local Areas and Global Systems*.Cybergeog . European Journal of Geography.p.333.



the political expressions of a homogeneous group.<sup>38</sup> The thesis further attempts to explore how religion as a form of identity is resorted to and politicized for multiple purposes by the state and non-state actors. The factor that makes the identity of a group religious lies in the fact that it functions within a religious context. The religious context provides the identity of the group with a means of articulation over a certain set of issue or crisis. This is how the religious identity gets intermingled with politics and thus maneuvered by giving multiple meanings to it at different times for gaining certain political goals. The undercurrent of this argument is that religious or cultural identity of a group may not be a source of tension or conflict, but is politicized as a vehicle for mobilization of a political issue.

Religion is understood as a collective emotion. The emotion is linked with the collective social and cultural life through the mutual borrowing of rituals and symbols, and not only with the personal inner experience of an individual with the divine. Riis and Woodhead while mentioning Durkheim in this context argue:

Even though Durkheim identified certain types of emotions as distinctively religious, for him these were distinctively *social* forms of emotion. The most discussed is what he called ‘collective effervescence’ :an ecstatic sentiment generated by a concentration of members at periodic rituals . . . the experience attaches the individual to the group, emotions are felt to be trustworthy, since all of them experience it.<sup>39</sup>

Religious identity for Durkheim is integrated and harmonized with the social as well as cultural life of a region. The communication is through the collective social gatherings using the common collective symbols and rituals in their interactions. The expression of religious identity is not just an individual act of communication with the divine rather the act involves a collective context as well. In a similar context, Simmel emphasizes the interlinking of religious rituals with the social relations and the symbols, ‘the power and depth of religion lie in its persistent ability to draw a given item of religious data into the flow of the emotions, whose movements it must renew constantly.’<sup>40</sup> On the other hand Marx brings forth another dimension of religion. He links religion with the power relations and social and economic domination. The relation between power and powerlessness in an oppressive social or economic system makes religion a source of hope,

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<sup>38</sup>Michael Walzer.1980.*Radical Principles: Reflections Of an Unreconstructed Democrat*.New York. Basic Books.

<sup>39</sup>Ole Riis. Linda Woodhead.2010. *A Sociology of Religious Emotion*. New York.Oxford University Press.p.61.

<sup>40</sup>Georg Simmel.1997.*A Contribution to The Sociology of Religion*. In *Essays on Religion*. edited and translated by Jurgen Horst Helle.London. Yale University Press.p.119.

orientation and compassion at the group level against the experiences of human suffering, anguish and despair present in the wider oppressive structure. He states, ‘religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the sentiment of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless condition. It is the opium of the people.’<sup>41</sup> Mary Douglas in her work *Natural Symbols* whilst discussing religious rituals states how the group (bounded units) and the group cohesion operate as a form of pressure, that provides the individual with no option but to give his consent to the ‘overwhelming demands’ of the other people of the group, thereby highlighting that the collective and integrative feeling is at the very heart of the religious identity.<sup>42</sup> Clifford Geertz puts forth almost a similar argument. Because religion is tied with the social and cultural life, it thus has the power to be a comprehensive system to structure the life of the community or group. Geertz writes:

Religion is (1) a system of symbols (2) which acts to establish powerful, pervasive and long-lasting moods and motivations in men (3) by formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and (4) clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that (5) the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic.<sup>43</sup>

Religion is thus conceptualized as always in a state of flux with the society and the culture. It is not isolated or understood as an explicitly distinct identity. Religious identity transcends beyond ambit of religion into other spheres of life, wherein it is strongly politicized for the state formation, or for the cause of nation by state or also may be incorporated in a struggle and mobilized by state as well as non-state actors generated in the times of tension or crisis. Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr while discussing religion’s (Islam) influence on society and politics in Muslim countries puts forth the following argument :

To fully understand the expanded role of Islam in politics of Muslim societies, it is important to “bring the state back in”,<sup>44</sup> to look at it as an Islamist actor. For the state has played a key role in embedding Islam in politics . . . States have done so not merely in reaction to pressure from Islamist movements but to serve their own interests. State leaders have constructed Islamism as a threat, but at times also as an opportunity, and in doing so

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<sup>41</sup>Karl Marx. Fredrick Engels.1848/1969.*The Communist Manifesto, Marx/ Engels Selected Works.Vol. 1* Moscow. Progress Publishers.

<sup>42</sup>Mary Douglas.1970. *Natural Symbols :Exploration in Cosmology*. New York.Pantheon Books.

<sup>43</sup>Clifford Geertz.1971.*Religion as a Cultural System*.In *Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Religion* edited by Michael Banton. London. Tavistock Publications. p.07.

<sup>44</sup>Peter Evans.Dietrich Rueschemeyer.Theda Skocpol.1985.*Bringing the State Back In* New York.Cambridge University Press.

have found added incentive to pursue Islamist politics. The turn to Islam is not so much a defensive strategy as a facet of the state's drive to establish hegemony over society and expand its powers and control. Islamization is a proactive rather than a reactive process, in which state interests serve as a causal factor.<sup>45</sup>

Religious or cultural factors in the form of symbols, rhetoric, norms are linked with the interests of the state and society. The point is elaborated in the subsequent chapters in the context of Kashmir region, where both the state and non-state actors manoeuvre Islamic symbols to their advantage. In the Kashmir region, religion was appropriated in politics by the political parties alongside various competing and often contradictory ideologies. The purpose behind the politicization of religion is that the political party doing it, wants to stay powerful and in authority by being in state power. The party may not always necessarily resort to political appeal by using religion, but may do so in a fragmentary way whenever and wherever it gets confronted by a legitimacy crisis, hence the religious symbols are used and manipulated as an opportunity to maintain their power and interests. Vali Reza writes, 'the state has held on to the view that it needs Islam only for the narrow purpose of accomplishing a particular political objective. . . It has therefore accepted some degree of Islamization while it strives for its objectives, but once the goals have been attained, it has sought to end Islamization.'<sup>46</sup> The political appeal through the religious symbols is often an implicit approach to mobilize people imperceptibly. Unlike an explicit approach, 'emotionally implicit forms may be no less emotionally transformative or effective, but affect feelings by way of symbols and practices rather than making direct appeal to the emotions.'<sup>47</sup> For example Sheikh Abdullah maintained his and his party's (National Conference) secular credentials, but during the campaigning in the Kashmir region addressed the masses at the religious places like Dargah, Hazratbal<sup>48</sup> and also used to read the verses from the Quran. 'The

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<sup>45</sup>Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr.2001.*Islamic Leviathan: Islam and the Making of State Power*. New York.Oxford University Press.p.04.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid.p.22.

<sup>47</sup>Ole Riis . Linda Woodehead.2010. *A Sociology of Religious Emotion*. New York.Oxford University Press.p 76.

<sup>48</sup>The Hazratbal Shrine is a Muslim shrine situated in Hazratbal, Srinagar. The shrine contains a relic called *Moi-e-Muqqadas* which is popularly believed to be the hair of the Prophet Muhammad. It is said that the relic was brought in Kashmir in the year 1700.The name of the shrine is a combination of the Persian word *Hazrat* which means respected and the Kashmiri word *Bal* which means place.The shrine is located on the left bank of the Dal Lake in Srinagar.

charismatic leader can set emotional standards by word, deed, and example.<sup>49</sup> In this regard Ivakhiv writes:

Religious images and narratives rarely exist in isolation, but rather in relation to sacred texts and spaces, including buildings and landscapes . . . Such spaces are themselves emotionally impactful and sacred . . . Constructed spaces are deliberately planned to evoke certain feelings, such a sense of security and communion in an enclosed, circular space, or a sense of awe in a soaring vertical space. Natural landscapes can also become dense with emotional significance, a significance related not only to their unique natural form, but to human constructions upon them, including the myths, symbols, and other cultural products associated with them that mediate their significance.<sup>50</sup>

The above lines explain the implicit ways of appropriating religion in politics and beneath this lies the political appeal. Simultaneously, it aids the party in maintaining its other credentials, as otherwise a secular party resorting to religious symbols explicitly may generally sound contradictory. The implicit way to resort to religion in the Kashmir region to maintain the political interest is further explored in the following chapters. Religion thus is understood as a repository of tools and symbols, that are resorted to by the state to maintain its power and authority. The values and symbols are accommodated and incorporated by the state especially during the time of political crisis to accomplish a particular political purpose. The state attempts to diffuse the tension or crisis resulting from other sources like weak democratic institutions or rise in the tensions from ethnic identity of a group by instrumentally establishing a collaboration with the religious identity. Vali Reza argues:

The outward secular image of the state therefore was in contradiction to its own use of Islamic cultural manifestations. This contradiction became more apparent as the state faced economic and political crises, and in turn strengthened the role of Islam in politics. However, after decades of confrontation, state leaders often lacked either the legitimacy or institutional means to control Islamic forces that had been gathering strength outside of state control in the civil society and private spheres. The secular state itself, therefore, invited Islam back into the political process; and despite its continued commitment to

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<sup>49</sup>Ole Riis . Linda Woodehead.2010. *A Sociology of Religious Emotion*. New York.Oxford University Press.p 72.

<sup>50</sup>Adrian Ivakhiv.2001.*Reclaiming Sacred Ground: Pilgrims and Politics at Glastonbury and Sedona*.Bloomington IN.Indiana University Press.

secularism, paved the way for reentry of Islam into the public arena . . . Ad hoc uses of Islam had to give place to rethinking the relation of Islam to the state. Generally speaking, there are three types of state interaction with Islam and uses of Islamization evident in the Muslim world with differing outcomes for state, society, and the mediating role of Islam: the rejectionist secularists; the opportunist Islamizers; and the thoroughgoing Islamizers.<sup>51</sup>

The thesis in the second chapter attempts to explore and understand the social and political role of religion and religious identity in the Kashmir region and the extent to which its penetration was allowed by Sheikh Abdullah. The thesis also explores and analyses the effect of religiously manifested charismatic leader in the region, which is formed by multiple religious groups. It also understands the effect of this approach on the development, democracy, unforeseen and undesired violence across the Kashmir region.

### **Kashmir as Region**

To know Kashmir through the spectrum of region and religion raises a question, what is Kashmir and what it constitutes of?. Zutshi states ‘the answer depends on the historical moment, since the geographical extent of what we call Kashmir has shifted throughout the centuries depending on political circumstances and the political entities that consolidated their rule over this region that lies at the cross roads between Central and South Asia. However, whether an independent kingdom, a province of the Mughal or Afghan Empires, a princely state in British India, or a state in India, the Kashmir Valley has remained at the heart of all these entities that have been referred to as Kashmir’<sup>52</sup> Before working out the changing geographical boundaries of the region and its past history, a short introduction of the Kashmir region with regard to the present position is discussed.

The state of Jammu and Kashmir is devised from three administrative divisions □ Jammu region, Kashmir region and Ladakh region. The three regions are well defined from each other with regard to their history, geography, culture and ethnicity. The three regions harbour followers of diverse religions like Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, Christians and Sikhs. Apart from the religious diversity the state also is a haven for diverse ethnic and lingual groups. The multiple languages are spoken

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<sup>51</sup>Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr.2001.*Islamic Leviathan: Islam and the Making of State Power*.NewYork.Oxford University Press.p.21.

<sup>52</sup>Chitralekha Zutshi.2019.*Kashmir: Oxford India Short Introductions*. New Delhi. Oxford University Press.pp.vii-viii.

in the state besides English which include Kashmiri, Urdu, Punjabi, Dogri, Gojri, Ladakhi and Paharri. The identities become multi layered and also witness overlaps of the identities in the three regions. And no single homogenous identity in the region can be easily separated from the other type of identity in the region. Balraj Puri in this context says:

Another important fact about these diverse types of identities is that at places they overlap and at other places cut across one another. In fact, no single identity represents all urges of members of a community. Moreover the degree of consciousness of a particular identity did not remain constant and changed from time to time.<sup>53</sup>

The Kashmir region with regard to religion, culture and language is diverse as well. The region also consists of 4% non-Muslim population, 10% of the population of the Kashmir region are non-Kashmiris, which include Gujjars and Paharis, who are linguistically related to the Jammu region and religiously connected to the Kashmiri region, however Islam is the religion of the majority.<sup>54</sup> As far as the language is concerned, the other languages spoken in the region are Gojiri, Pahhari, and Dard languages namely Shina, Kohistani, Purkhi and Balti, but 89% of Kashmiris speak Kashmiri language. The Kashmiri language has a six-hundred year old recorded history and there is an influence of the Persian language on Kashmiri language. Sir George Grierson states that the Kashmiri language has a Dardic origin base rather a Sanskrit base.<sup>55</sup> The dialects spoken in Kashmir, Ladakh, Baltistan, Gilgit and Tibet are closely related to the Dardic and Tibetan languages<sup>56</sup>. Grierson puts forth :

The Kashmiri as it is spoken now-a-days has been considerably influenced by the neighbouring languages of Tibetan stock. The sounds of ts, tsha, etc, are entirely Tibetan. Moreover frequent references to famous cities and towns of Tibet and Central Asia in proverbs, sayings, folk, songs, and so on, testify to the close familiarity of the people with these regions.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>53</sup>Balraj Puri .2010. *Identities, Ideologies and Politics*. In *Identity Politics in Jammu and Kashmir* edited by Rekha Chowdhary. New Delhi. Vitasta Publishing. p.26.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid. p.34.

<sup>55</sup>Sir George Abraham Grierson. 1903. *The Languages of India: Being a Reprint of the Chapter on Languages*. Calcutta. Office of the Superintendent of Government Printing. p. 64.

<sup>56</sup> P N K Bamzai. 1980. *Kashmir and Central Asia*. New Delhi. Light and Life Publishers. p.9.

<sup>57</sup>George Abraham Grierson's. 1903. *Linguistic Survey of India*. Vol VIII. Part II. Calcutta. Office of the Superintendent of Government Printing.

The Kashmir region is dominated by pre-Aryan and non-Aryan races. Lawrence recounts in the *Valley of Kashmir*, ‘I have met some striking faces among old men and children, always of a decided Jewish cast . . . The hooked nose is a prominent feature, and the prevailing type is distinctly Hebrew.’<sup>58</sup> Similarly, Wakefield mentioning the race of Kashmiris in his book, *The Happy Valley* appraises, ‘the actual inhabitants of this country are undoubtedly a fine race, the finest perhaps existing in this part of Asia . . . and the type of old Aryan race. The features of the men are somewhat like the Afghan-Jewish in character, although there is nothing known that would connect their origin with any of the tribes, lost or otherwise, of the Jews.’<sup>59</sup> In a much related context Sufi expresses, ‘some habits and customs of Kashmiris are distinctly Jewish, as for instance, very early circumcision of children, keeping of forelocks . . . sixth day celebration after childbirth . . . It can therefore be maintained that the present population of Kashmir is an admixture of aborigines, Jewish, Aryan and some foreign elements.’<sup>60</sup> The region of Ladakh is inhabited by Tibetan, Dardic and Mongolian race, and Jammu region is dominated by Aryan race.

The thesis tries to explore how the Kashmir region has formed a relation with Central Asia in terms of geographical, linguistic, religious, cultural and economic relations. According to Chitrlekha Zutshi Kashmir is a , ‘product of ongoing exchange between the past and the present, myth and history, memory and forgetting, and the visual, oral and textual, a product of ongoing dialogue between self-representation and representation by others.’<sup>61</sup> Kalla in his work on the culture of Kashmir states, ‘the people of Kashmir, both Hindus and Muslims alike have their rituals and ceremonies which may differ from those of the people outside Kashmir.’<sup>62</sup> However, the culture and art of Kashmir have composite and syncretic traits. For example the Kashmiri music popularly known as Sufiana Kalaam, has features of both Iranian and Indian music. The cultural and social patterns of the Kashmir region have been influenced by multiple civilizations in the past like ancient Indian, the Persian, the Roman and the Greek. During the 13<sup>th</sup> century Hinduism and Buddhism flourished in the region during the 13<sup>th</sup> century and Lawrence in the book, *The Valley of Kashmir* states :

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<sup>58</sup>Walter Lawrence.1825. *The Valley Of Kashmir*.London.Henry Frowde. p.318.

<sup>59</sup>W.Wakefield M D.1989.*The Happy Valley:Sketches of Kashmir and the Kashmiris*.Srinagar.Gulshan Publishers.p.97.

<sup>60</sup>G M D Sufi. 2007.*Islamic Culture in Kashmir*.Srinagar.Gulshan Books.pp.13-14.

<sup>61</sup>Chitrlekha Zutshi.2018.*Kashmir: History, Politics, Representation*. United Kingdom.Cambridge University Press.p.12.

<sup>62</sup>K L Kalla. 1985.*The Literary Heritage of Kashmir*. New Delhi.Mittal Publications.p.11.

I have rarely been in any village which cannot show some relics of antiquity. Curious stone monuments of old Kashmiri temples, huge stone seats of Mahadev, phallic emblems, innumerable carved images heaped in grotesque confusion by some clear spring, have met me at every turn. They were the works of the Buddhists . . . when one comes to the recent period of the Mughals, tradition becomes more definite. And I have seen many mosques built in style unlike the present, of wooden beams with stones between, mostly raised by Aurang Zeb . . . Kashmirian architecture has been found by scholars to resemble various Grecian Orders. <sup>63</sup>

Kashmir region in the past had relation with Central Asia with regard to geographical, religious, cultural, and economic relations.<sup>64</sup> ‘Astride the caravan route from China, Central Asia and Tibet to India, Kashmir was ordained to be a meeting place of cultural waves from different directions.’<sup>65</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru also said while mentioning Kashmir as part of India that Kashmir is the heart of Asia.<sup>66</sup> The oldest and the longest route, silk route formed the trade route of Kashmir with Central Asia through Ladakh. The route was used not only for trade and commercial relations, but also had influx of people and their culture from both the sides □ Kashmir region and Central Asia. Kashmir region exported ‘saffron, fine quality shawls, numdas and gabbas (woollen rugs), silk, kouth (medicinal plant) etc and imported shawl-wool, carpets, silver and gold. In the olden times Kashmir was like China, great exporter of silk and the silk found its way to Damsacus and Bukahra.’<sup>67</sup> Cunningham reveals, ‘Moorcroft was informed that the population of Yarkand, was between fifty and sixty thousand , a number of which would require about 10,000 houses. Of these I was told that 500 houses belonged to Kashmiris alone.’<sup>68</sup> The cultural practices of the region also display great measure of similarity. For example, the people of Inner Asia use salt instead of sugar in their tea, and is popularly known as nun chai (salt tea) in the Kashmir region, its one of the ingredient is sodium bicarbonate that gives a pink colour to the tea. ‘With the inhabitants of Tibet

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<sup>63</sup>Walter Lawrence. 1825.*The Valley Of Kashmir*.London.Henry Frowde.

<sup>64</sup>Though the boundaries of Central Asia were never accurately defined, in the chapter it is demarcated from Caspian in the west to the Great Wall of China in the east; Siberia in the north and Khorasan (Persia), Afghanistan and Tibet in the south.

<sup>65</sup>P N K Bamzai.1980. *Kashmir and Central Asia*. New Delhi.Light and Life Publishers. p.vii.

<sup>66</sup>Keys to Kashmir. 1957. p.1.(author anonymous)

<sup>67</sup>P N K Bamzai.1980. *Kashmir and Central Asia*. Light and Life Publishers. New Delhi. p.29.

<sup>68</sup>Alexander Cunningham. 1998.*Ladak - Physical, Statistical and Historical*. p. 291.



as well as with those of Kashmir, the tea is taken daily. It is to be seen at every meal.<sup>69</sup> Similarly there are resemblances in the dress of the people of the two regions. ‘The *chapan* of a Central Asian, the *choga* of a Gilgiti, the long goatskin overall of a Ladakhi, and the loose long *phiran* of a Kashmiri belong to the same parent stock.’<sup>70</sup> Ladakh was the natural route for cultural and commercial exchanges between Central Asia and Kashmir. The roads from Russia, Turkestan and Kashgaria merged with the region of Khotan and came to an end at Leh. The government in Kashmir had constructed two serais (inns) for the traders of Central Asia. However, Bamzai in this context comes out with the following observation :

The trade came to an abrupt end in 1940 when due to the second world war and the troubling conditions prevailing in Sinkiang the borders were sealed. Since then many Kashmiri industries , particularly that of *shawls* and *Numdas*, have suffered set-back due to lack of raw material used to be imported from that region.<sup>71</sup>

### **Religious Relation of Kashmir with Central Asia**

The attempt is made to understand the regional and religious identities of Kashmir region during the period of sixteenth century and how the religious and social dynamics of the century had an impact on the dynamics of political movement in the early twentieth century. In Kashmir region Islam was an amalgamation of various religions and cultures from different regions. ‘Kashmir has been a place where synthesis of various Asiatic cultures has been forged, the wave of these coming from different directions and meeting in this Valley. First the Aryans from India, and later on the Kushans, the Indo-Scythians, the Mongols, and the Mohamedanised Turks from Central Asia and China, found here a congenial soil.’<sup>72</sup> Kashmir made its transitions with regard to religions from Buddhism to Hinduism and eventually to Islam. Buddhism offered a much less structured and more egalitarian society. This is the cause it spread rapidly in the Kashmir region. The religion, Brahmanism continued for a long period before and after the advent of Islam. As stated by Stein, Islam entered in the Kashmir region not by force but by gradual conversion for which the influx of foreign sufi saints from Central and South Asia had made the ground. Islam in Kashmir was

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<sup>69</sup> Baron Charles Hugel. 2008. *Travels in Kashmir and the Punjab(1835-1836)*. Srinagar.Gulshan Books.p.127.

<sup>70</sup> P N K Bamzai.1980. *Kashmir and Central Asia*. Light and Life Publishers. New Delhi. p.10.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.p.40-41.

<sup>72</sup> K L Kalla.1985. *The Literary Heritage of Kashmir*.New Delhi.Mittal Publications.pp.120-121.

introduced by the Persian and Central Asian Sufis in the sixteenth century, and this marks the presence of Sufi Islam in the Kashmir region:

Since Persia and Central Asia acted as the main source of inspiration and guidance for Kashmiri Muslims, the Islam of Kashmir could not be understandably different from its fountain head . . . By the time Islam penetrated into Kashmir, the Muslims of Persia and Central Asia had made vital compromises with their local cultures.<sup>73</sup>

Islam which was adopted by the masses during the later half of the fourteenth century did not affect the independence of the country and also did not introduce any change in the cultural and political traditions of the region.<sup>74</sup> The administration remained in the hands of the Brahmans as earlier, and the change of religion had no significance for them. Brahmans were having high positions under early sultans' rule and the Sanskrit continued as the official language even when the Hindu rule came to an end. And this is the rationale that numerous words of Kashmiri language have a Sanskrit origin, although more than six hundred years have passed away, when Sanskrit was the language of Brahman masses and also the official language. In this context George Grierson is to be referred who although does not consider Kashmiri as a Sanskritic style of speech, but at the same time admits that, 'part of its vocabulary is now of Indian origin and is allied to that of Sanskrit Indo-Aryan languages of Northern India.'<sup>75</sup> According to Shams-al-Din Ahmad, Kashmiri language is formed of 58- 60% Persian words.<sup>76</sup> The reason behind it is that Islam came to Kashmir region not from Arabia, but from Iran and Central Asia through the Iranian and Central Asian preachers. These preachers taught the religious and secular education through the books which were written in Persian language.<sup>77</sup>

### **Role of Bulbul Shah and Shah -i- Hamdan**

The existence of multiple religious' cults, social divisions on the basis of ethnicity, caste, professional status and especially the unstable economic order along with the Brahmanical social domination created room in the region for Muslim preachers from Central Asia and Persia. They

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<sup>73</sup>Muhammad Ashraf Wani.2005. *Islam in Kashmir (Fourteenth to Sixteenth Century)*. Kashmir. Oriental Publishing House.p.243.

<sup>74</sup> Dr Stein's introduction to his English Translation of Rajtarangini. Vol 1. p.130.

<sup>75</sup>George Abraham Grierson's.1903.*Linguistic Survey of India* .Vol VIII.Part II.Calcutta.Office of the Superintendent of Government Printing p.253.

<sup>76</sup> Shamas al-Din. *Shah- i -Hamdan :Hayat aur Karnamay*.p.321.

<sup>77</sup> Information is provided in Baba Da ud Khaki in his book *Dastur al-Salikin*..

preached the humanity, compassion, doctrine of love, and an ideology where hierarchy, caste, individuals' economic status in the society did not matter. Further, they put forward novel crafts and offered people with the means of livelihood and in this way supported them in their struggle against poverty. Though the Kashmiri Pandits and Muslims were conscious of their religious differences, however Sufism popularized a common way of understanding the world and forming the cornerstone of the unique Kashmiri culture which transcends religious boundaries. The most popular Sufi preachers were Bulbul Shah and Shah-i- Hamdan. Bulbul Shah is said to have been from Turkistan and belonging to Suharwadi order.<sup>78</sup> He is said to have made significant changes in the rigidity of the caste-ridden Brahman dominated society of the Kashmir region. G M D Sufi writes in his work while discussing the spread of Islam in Kashmir:

From the first to last spread of Islam has been, on the whole, peaceful. At any rate, Islam was never introduced into the Valley by a conqueror like Mahmud nor a warrior like Shihab-ud-Din nor a general like Muhammad bin Qasim. In fact, the process was reversed. Islam was introduced by a simple *Faqir* (Bulbul Shah) whose simplicity and piety impressed the reigning sovereign of the time (Renchana Shah). The work was taken up and continued by Faqirs.<sup>79</sup>

During the political invasion by a Turkic-Mongol called Daluch, handed over the region of Kashmir to Tibetan Bhudhist ruler Rinchana, to increase political and monetary suzerainty over Kashmir. After coming into contact with Bulbul Shah Rinchana converted to Islam and changed his name from Rinchana to Sultan Sardarudin Shah. He became the first Muslim ruler of Kashmir region. After having deliberations with religious scholars of different faiths including the Hindu, Muslim and Buddhist religious scholars of that period, Rinchana embraced Islam.<sup>80</sup> In Kashmir regions history of Islam, Rinchana's conversion became a turning point, because Islam received a political patronage and also formed a *reference group culture*.<sup>81</sup> Subsequently, the large number of people and also Rinchana's Hindu Prime Minister, Rawanchandra followed the conversion.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>78</sup>The Suharwardi order is a sufi order founded by the sufi saint Diya al-Din Abu Najib as-Suharwardi. It is a strictly Sunni order, and, like many such orders, traces its spiritual genealogy (silsila) to Ali Ibn Abi Talib through Junaid Baghdadi and Al-Ghazali.

<sup>79</sup>G M D Sufi. 2007. *Islamic Culture in Kashmir*. Srinagar. Gulshan Books. p.57

<sup>80</sup>Haidar Malik. *Baharistan-i-Shahi: History of Kashmir 1300-1600*. p.38.

<sup>81</sup>Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

After his conversion, many Hindus converted to Islam because they felt religion of masses should be in-conformity with the religion of their ruler.

Shah-i-Hamdan is the second major sufi from Kubrawi order.<sup>83</sup> He was a well-travelled scholar and entered Kashmir with seven hundred disciples who eventually settled down in different parts of the region. Shah-i-Hamdan's teachings were premised on the pillars of *Tawheed* (oneness of God), *Ikhlās* (purity and unity), *Taqwa* (God-fearing piety). Apart from purity and unity, surge of Islam in Kashmir was neither indigenous nor spiritual. However, the entry of sufi missionaries from Central Asia and Persia in the Kashmir region from fourteenth century played a pivotal role in the dissemination of Islamic teachings resulting in the gradual transition of Kashmiris to Islam over a period of five centuries. This led to the conversions in the society at mass scale. Ishaq Khan argues:

What is important, from the standpoint of history, is the creative response of Kashmiris to the belief structure of Islam at the societal level in the Hindu–Buddhist environment of the Valley during the fourteenth and eighteenth centuries. Such a response was intrinsically inspired by the Kashmiris' urge to understand or experience 'the divine' in terms of love rather than as an abstraction. This is the reason that all the Muslim shrines in the Valley continue to play a significant role in constituting a means of communication between society and faith not only in terms of emphasis on the performance of the prescribed five times prayers in the mosques attached to them but, also, through continued fostering of certain traditions rooted in the regional ethos.<sup>84</sup>

Khan explains that it was not necessary for masses to understand the *esoteric and exoteric version of Islam* in order to convert to Islam,<sup>85</sup> rather they needed the reasons on how the new religion can transform their social and economic life on practical grounds. Besides, people were impacted by the great thinking and simple living of Sufi saints as they lived a simple, moralistic life, struggled to build a just society, denounced worldly passion, advocated the cause of the poor, spoke against

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<sup>83</sup>The Kubrawi order is also known as Firdausia Silsila. It is a Sufi order which traces its spiritual lineage (Silsilah) to the Prophet Muhammad, through Ali, Muhammad's and the first Imam. This is in contrast to other sufi orders which trace their lineage to Ali. The Kubrawi order is named after its 13th-century saint Najmal-Din Kubra, who lived in present day Turkmenistan. The order emphasizes on a universal approach, applicable to both Sunnis and Shias.

<sup>84</sup>Muhammad Ishaq Khan. 2017. *The Rishi Tradition and the Construction of Kashmiriyat In Lived Islam in South Asia: Adaption, Accommodation and Conflict* edited by Imtiaz Ahmad . Helmut Reifeld. p. 62.

<sup>85</sup>Muhammad Ishaq Khan. 2002. *Kashmir's Transition to Islam: The Role of Muslim Rishis (15<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> Century)* . New Delhi. Manohar Publishers. pp.67-68.

the social evils, cruelty, vanity, jealousy, dishonesty, selfishness, ill treatment towards parents, wives, children, servants and slaves by referring to day-to-day examples, so as the common man could understand easily, as sufis were conscious that common man is to be preached in a common way.<sup>86</sup> In this manner Islam moved to the Kashmir region as a civilization-building religion. Further, they put emphasis on the rulers that they might not be annoyed by the uncivilized behaviour of the common masses, because ‘they should not expect the same behaviour from a man residing in mountains.’<sup>87</sup> Consequently, the rulers as well as the upper class of Srinagar turned to be the devoted ‘murids’ (disciples)<sup>88</sup>, and also the great guru of Kali Mandir in Srinagar along with his followers in large numbers embraced Islam.<sup>89</sup> The conversion of political elites and religious personages of Srinagar proved as a touchstone for the people living in other areas of Kashmir region, who eventually converted as well. In this regard Shah-i-Hamdan played a pivotal role through his persuasive intellectual teachings and his key work *Dhakhirat al- Muluk*, that comprises of a comprehensive study on code of life.

### **Syncretic Religion**

Islam in Kashmir region was an amalgamation of various religions from various regions along with their culture and traditions. As Wani writes, ‘Hinduism, once obeyed, is hardly ever to be eradicated from the minds of its followers even though their conversion may seem purely voluntary and unconnected with political events.’<sup>90</sup> The sufi affiliation of Islam with Persia and Central Asia performed a complementary role that in future was called a syncretic religion in Kashmir region. Thus Islam was received at multiple levels within the Sufis, Rishis<sup>91</sup>, Ulama and the higher echelons of the society. However at the mass level, ‘acceptance to Islam was little more than

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<sup>86</sup>*Dhakhirat al-Muluk*. Translated by Shamas al -Din Ahmad.Vol. I.

<sup>87</sup>Ibid.p.192.

<sup>88</sup>Haidar Malik. *Baharistan-i-Shahi: History of Kashmir 1300-1600*. pp.42-43.

<sup>89</sup>*Manqabat al Jawahir*. pp.301-304.

<sup>90</sup>Baron Charles Hugel. 2008.*Travels in Kashmir and the Punjab(1835-1836)*. Srinagar.Gulshan Books.p.vvi.

<sup>91</sup>The Rishi movement which emerged in Kashmir at the end of fourteenth century forms an essential link of Kashmiri Muslims past Hindu practices to their present. Much like the Hindu ascetics, the Rishis observed celibacy and sexual abstinence, rejected family life, abstained from meat eating as well as eating of garlic and onion, strictly believed in not killing animals and retired to the jungles. Wani argues that though the Rishi movement was firmly embedded in the local traditions, ‘yet it was impossible to imagine the Rishi movement becoming popular had it not received all out support from Sufism and had not the Sufis avowedly sanctified the practices of the Rishis.’ Sufi belief system and Rishi movement shared a common ground on many issues like controlling *nafs* (self), rejection of worldly possessions and even renouncing the world.

shifting of camps.’<sup>92</sup> Islam to which masses had converted, was a skin deep surface level acceptance, thereby initially delineating neither a sharp split nor even minor digression from their earlier religious, social and cultural past. Wani in this context explains:

Though the formal conversion from Hinduism to Islam took years . . . the actual conversion from Hindu to Islamic way of life remained far from achieved as it was a question of changing attitudes, habits and mentality of the people . . . The deeply embedded habit of many age-old practices and the resultant reluctance of the converts to completely part their ways with them impelled even the Shari’ah minded preachers to bring Islam in tune with the traditional religious practices of the converts.<sup>93</sup>

Walter Lawrence in his work on Kashmir region holds that ‘the Kashmiri Muslim is a Hindu at heart.’<sup>94</sup> Tyndale Biscoe, a Christian Missionary and a social reformer in Kashmir during the late nineteenth century, writes ‘In Kashmir anyway religion and life have nothing to do with each other.’<sup>95</sup> Khan also asserts a similar perspective while mentioning the two religious identities in Kashmir □ Kashmiri Muslim and Kashmiri Hindu identity. It is imperative to note that many Hindu and Buddhist practices, rituals, customs and ceremonies entered into Islam in the process of its historical evolution in Kashmir. It became at times very difficult to differentiate between a Muslim and Pandit in the observance of some set of customs and rituals.<sup>96</sup>

In the preceding centuries, the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the masses in the Kashmir region were ignorant of the basic knowledge of Islam and only had a minimal acceptance, wherein the core points of *Tawheed* (oneness of God), *Zakaat* (charity) *Salat* (prayer) and *Hajj* (pilgrimage) were considered as subsidiary to religion. A minimal acceptance was comprised of a Muslim name, nikah, male circumcision and abstaining from pork eating. Wani shows how there were many Muslims who even after conversion retained their pre-conversion names, did not observe fasts or offer prayers. During this period the conditions for conversion were minimal. He puts down that

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<sup>92</sup>Muhammad Ashraf Wani.2005.*Islam in Kashmir (Fourteenth to Sixteenth Century)*.Srinagar.Oriental Publishing House.p.232.

<sup>93</sup>Ibid.p.243.

<sup>94</sup>Walter Lawrence.1825.*The Valley Of Kashmir*.London.Henry Frowde.pp. 285-286.

<sup>95</sup>Cecil Earle Tyndale-Biscoe.1925.*Kashmir in Sunlight & Shade: A Description of the Beauties of the Country, the Life, Habits, and Humour of Its Inhabitants and an Account of the Gradual But Steady Rebuilding of a Once Down-trodden People*.Mittal Publishers.p.101.

<sup>96</sup>Bashir Ahmad Khan..2000.*The Ahl-i-Hadith: A Socio-Religious Reform Movement in Kashmir*.The Muslim World.Vol 90.p.135.

the causes for the mass conversions were nothing more than a nominal acceptance of Islam and formulates in these words:

If we take a closer look at the circumstances behind conversions it becomes clear that the underlying factor of mass conversion was rather than doctrinal or spiritual interest. The masses did not accept Islam because their intellectual or spiritual curiosity found an answer in it. In fact the common man's mind was too innocent to entertain any such curiosity or quest . . . The masses entered into the fold of Islam because their leaders embraced the new faith or because they regarded the Muslim Saint spiritually more powerful to cure their mundane problems; or they felt that Islam would elevate their social or economic position without demanding much from them.<sup>97</sup>

The second part of sixteenth century is characterized by the growing presence of khanaqahs, madrassas and mosques along with preachers. Kashmiris used the Hindu epithets of Rishi or Baba to refer to these sufi saints and owing to inherent universal appeal, their shrines grew into admired places of pilgrimage for both Muslims and Pandits. This practice brought the two religious communities together for common participation at shrine rituals as well as helped in building bridges between people of different faiths and castes, thereby adding to the communal harmony. Kashmiri Muslims' devotion to the shrines of the rishis and the sufis is deeply-rooted in the local context rather than Islam alone. Ishaq Khan in this context argues:

What is integral to the collective consciousness of the devotees is their determined will to preserve the heritage of the Sufis and the Rishis in the face of ideological, rather religious, threats to the Kashmiri Muslim identity from 'outside'. It is, indeed, the idea of self-definition and self-preservation that permeates the consciousness of a people living in what they call the Valley of spiritual masters (Pirwaer) or the Valley of Rishis (Rishwaer), the same as Rishivatika.<sup>98</sup>

In many Muslim areas, 'asthans' (Muslim shrines) and Hindu shrines have been facing each other and people from both the communities have made pilgrimages together to the shrines like Hari Parbat of Pandits and Makdoom Sahab of Muslims. During the field work an interviewee, Zafar Shah in a similar context mentioned an example :

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<sup>97</sup>Muhammad Ashraf Wani.2005.*Islam in Kashmir (Fourteenth to Sixteenth Century)*. Srinagar. Oriental Publishing House.p.234.

<sup>98</sup>Ishaq Khan.2017.*The Rishi Tradition and the Construction of Kashmiriyat In Lived Islam in South Asia: Adaption, Accomodation and Conflict* edited by Imtiaz Ahmad .Helmut Reifeld. p. 63.

Anantanag mai rishi bazaar, yahan pe Devibal ka ek mandar hai , aur ek masjid hai, aur mandar aur masjid ka ek hi gate hai. Ye humara culture tha. Aaj bhi wo wahan hai. humara kabhi conflict nahi hua ki mandar aur masjid saath mai , aisa kyu. Ye humari ‘Kashmiriyat’ hai.

In Anantanag (South Kashmir) there is a market called Rishi Bazaar. In the market one will find a temple of Devibal alongside a mosque. Both the temple and the mosque have a common entrance. We never had conflict with the Kashmiri Pandits over religion. This is a part of our syncretic culture and this is what ‘Kashmiriyat’ stands for. (*Translation*)

The humanistic philosophy of Kashmiri Rehis and Sufis has played a crucial role in building the Kashmiri ethnic identity and the impact of Hinduism continued for substantial period of time. Lawrence in his work on Kashmir clarifies:

In their hearts they are Hindus, and the religion of Islam is too abstract to satisfy their superstitious cravings, and they turn from the . . . mosque to the pretty shrines of carved wood and roof bright with the iris flowers where the saints of past time lie buried. They like to gaze on saint’s old clothes . . . Every Kashmiri believes that the saint will aid if men will call, and they think that a dead saint is more efficacious than a living priest. The Kashmiris are called by foreigners *Pir Parast*, that is saint worshipers.<sup>99</sup>

The *khanaqahs*, *mosques*, *madrassas* and even symbolic tombs affiliated with a saint, symbolized the presence of a *living Pir* (a sufi spiritual guide), hence were considered sacrosanct. This shows the mass acceptance of *Pir Parasti* (spiritual devotion towards the Pir) in the Kashmir region. The call to the *Pir* was centered around the Kashmiri Muslims’ mundane issues, as pointed out by Lawrence ‘Musalmaans from all parts of Valley flock to Charar Sharif (Muslim shrine, where Muslims as well as Pandits used to go), and when scarcity is imminent, calamities such as earthquake, cholera, and drought occur, thousands gather there and sit silent on the hills around, confessing and begging for pardon.’<sup>100</sup> People would also tie up d’ash (rags) to the sufi shrines for some mundane reasons, and this practice continues till date. The d’ash is untied as and when the purpose is fulfilled. The influence of Hinduism also continued simultaneously, as for example Naga worship was also considered the faith in the Kashmir region and is still existing by the names of springs. It is a strong belief among the common masses that the water of springs is the source

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<sup>99</sup>Walter Lawrence.1825.*The Valley Of Kashmir*.London.Henry Frowde.p.286.

<sup>100</sup>Ibid.pp.289-290.



of tutelary deities and these are present in the form of snakes and certain big springs are secured by nagas like Pantheon which occupies a high position.<sup>101</sup> In Kashmiri language spring is called *Nag*, which is a Sanskrit word and in English language it means serpent.<sup>102</sup> The long enduring evidence is present till date by the names of these springs like Veerinag, Seshnag, Nilnag, Konsarnag, Vecharnag etc. The popular belief among the masses of the Kashmir region is that *Nagas* represent snakes and are living in the water of springs. They can also appear in human form. Wani writes in his work that, Kashmiri Muslims hold the belief that springs are the abode of spirits with supernatural powers, even after the conversion to Islam. Similarly, Sufis and Reshis also believed in the sacredness of the springs. There is a local saying in Kashmir that *Nag gaade tsche wichini halaal khi ni haram* (It is permissible to see the fish of a spring, eating it however is forbidden). As Wani cites:

Suffice is to say that at the time of drought the peasants flocked to worship and made offerings of sheep or goat at the springs so that power residing in the springs would be pleased to release the water for irrigating their dry fields. The Kashmiri Muslims consider the fish of a spring *haram* (forbidden) and do not kill or eat them is understandably the legacy of deep-rooted Naga cult.<sup>103</sup>

Similarly, Buddhism also prevailed for a long period in the Kashmir region as is evident from the networks of monasteries (Sangrames) not only in Central Kashmir, but also in different quarters of rural Kashmir. Many villages are called by the name of Sangram like Sangrampora in North Kashmir. Besides, some *muhallas* bear the suffix *vihara*, *bhavana* like Avantabhavan, Khandabhavan etc in Central Kashmir. There is a famous town which is called Bhavan, and is located in Anantanag in South Kashmir. Since the second part of sixteenth century is marked by the growing presence of khanaqahs, mosques and madrasas, as mentioned earlier and that is why people of Kashmir region refer to their land as *Pir Vaer* or *Rishi Vaer*, which means *The Valley of Saints*. However, only the people from the capital city Srinagar had an access to these sufi shrines, because these shrines are situated in the capital city itself, where as rural masses were left ignorant even about the core tenants of Islam, because they had the limitations of access to these religious places. Besides, the economic and attitudinal factors were also reasons responsible for the lack of

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<sup>101</sup>S C Ray.1970. *Early History and Culture of Kashmir*.New Delhi. Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers.pp.155-158.

<sup>102</sup>Muhammad Ashraf Wani.2005.*Islam in Kashmir (Fourteenth to Sixteenth Century)*.Srinagar.Oriental Publishing House.p.37.

<sup>103</sup>Ibid.p.261.

religious knowledge. Since the Kashmiri Muslims were destitute □ living in a poverty stricken condition and grappling with hunger and were described as ‘nothing better than so many beggars’<sup>104</sup> The religious scriptures, religious literature even Persian and Arabic languages were not known to them. This led to their dependence on the emerging religious elite. Thus soon after this Pirs and Pirzadas developed interest in the mass pilgrimage of Muslims to the shrines and the khanaqas of the departed saints. This created the rise of Muslim religious elite, who gained the trust of people by dint of its new favourable position. As a result, these Pirs or Pirzadas enjoyed an upper hand as an ally to the Dogra rulers in the early twentieth century, as Wani explains:

A pilgrimage was incomplete without offering *nazr wo niyaz* at the shrine . . . Ultimately the *sajjada nishins*, *mutwalis*, *khuddam* and nearest disciples appropriate the income . . . Since the devotees visited the shrines for miraculous solutions of their worldly problems and as the material interests of the *pirzadas*<sup>105</sup> . . . were wedded to mass pilgrimages to their respective shrines . . . these custodians of the shrine threw the teachings of their *pir* overboard and just busied themselves in projecting the posthumous miraculous powers of the saints.<sup>106</sup>

While pointing to the dynamics of the mutual relations between the Muslims and the Pandits in the region with regard to the social status and importance of Pandit community Wani writes, ‘The Hindus enjoyed all high and low positions in the state; only the ruler was Muslim . . . For not less than half a century the Hindus formed the reference group. The Hindu culture was followed by the Muslims as a standard to evaluate their attitude, customs and rituals.’<sup>107</sup> By the end of sixteenth century the social landscape vis-à-vis the two communities in the Kashmir region had shifted to some extent especially in urban areas of Srinagar. The observations about the region made by Wani towards the end of twentieth century are:

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<sup>104</sup>Baron Charles Hugel.2008.*Travels in Kashmir and the Punjab(1835-1836)*. Srinagar. Gulshan Books.p.116.

<sup>105</sup>Nazr wo Niyaz are gifts and endowments; Sajjada nishins are the successors of the spiritual authority; Mutawalis are the administrators of the khanaqahs; khuddam are the servants of the shrines; Pirzadas is a generic term used for the custodians of shrines

<sup>106</sup>Muhammad Ashraf Wani.2005.*Islam in Kashmir (Fourteenth to Sixteenth Century)*.Srinagar.Oriental Publishing House.p.237.

<sup>107</sup>Ibid.p.244.

The high philosophical and literary tradition of the community, elevating Kashmir to one of the highest seats of Hindu learning buttressed their notion of being superior to other □ the notion which they held till our own times.<sup>108</sup>

Therefore, Islam in Kashmir region was accepted at various levels within the Sufis, Rishis<sup>109</sup> Ulamas and the higher echelons of the society, which formed a minuscule section of the society. Baron Charles argues, ‘Hinduism, once obeyed, is hardly ever to be eradicated from the minds of its followers, even though their conversion may seem purely voluntary and unconnected with political events.’<sup>110</sup> However, the mass conversion has been attributed to various reasons. First, masses in the region were inspired by the pious character of Sufis. Second, these group conversions had less to do with the philosophical or religious issues, rather such conversions were premised around the mundane and religion also revolved around the mundane priorities. Third, the religion of the masses was in conformity with the religion of their ruler as the people felt conversion of a ruler should be adhered to by conversion of the masses. Finally, the reason was also set in the socioeconomic mobility and this was one of the key factors which led to the gradual spread of Islam in the Kashmir region. Besides, the then limitations of the Hindu society encouraged the spread of Islam by its inclusive and accommodative nature, for example the economic discrepancies and oppression of the public by the Hindu upper castes attracted them towards Islam, which propagated monotheism and equality. People accepted it also because Islam does not uphold the concept of caste-system and the religious places are open to all. Although Kashmiri Muslims also have a system of classification which unlike the Brahmanic caste-system, is classified by a term called *zat* (caste). *Zat* is apparently manifested in a person’s occupation, ethnicity, culture, or religious background, but not in ritual purity, for instance, *kraale zat* (*zat* of potters). Thus *zat* does not hinder the prosperity and mobility of the person in the society as Madan and Wani have pointed out that the structure of *zat* does not carry rigidity nor is crippling on the mobility of an

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<sup>108</sup> Ibid.p.274.

<sup>109</sup>The Rishi movement which emerged in Kashmir at the end of fourteenth century forms an essential link of Kashmiri Muslims past Hindu practices to their present. Much like the Hindu ascetics, the Rishis observed celibacy and sexual abstinence, rejected family life, abstained from meat eating as well as eating of garlic and onion, strictly believed in not killing animals and retired to the jungles. Wani argues that though the Rishi movement was firmly embedded in the local traditions, ‘yet it is impossible to imagine the Rishi movement becoming popular had it not received all out support from Sufism and had not the Sufis avowedly sanctified the practices of the Rishis.’ Sufi belief system and Rishi movement shared a common ground on many issues like controlling *nafs*, rejection of worldly possessions and even renouncing the world.

<sup>110</sup>Baron Charles Hugel.2008.*Travels in Kashmir and the Punjab(1835-1836)*. Srinagar.Gulshan Books.p.xvi.

occupational group, for instance, Syed family does not generally show any hesitation for entering in matrimonial relations with non-Syed family.<sup>111</sup> The mass conversions on the whole were therefore largely characterized by the continuity of old patterns of life, at least for a substantially long period of time. After the conversion the frequent visits of Muslims to Sufi shrines and other religious places (which is a key characteristic of a large section of Kashmiri Muslims till today) is explained through in their belief in the miraculous solutions of their mundane problems by the saints. With regard to the saint worship, Kashmiri Muslims have retained certain elements of Hinduism till date, and thereby never breaking away from their Hindu past. However, Sufism had a paramount role in popularizing the practice of visiting the shrines in Kashmir.

It is also inevitable to mention that people are heterogeneous in nature □ having distinct approaches and different beliefs. Therefore, some embraced Islam whole heartedly, some were fascinated by the material interests in accepting Islam, whereas in some cases children were influenced by Islam, whereas parents were not impacted by Islam.<sup>112</sup> The period in the Kashmir region is marked by internal transition through fundamental shifts in religion and culture from the influx of Sufis from Central Asia and Persia. Besides, the conversion to Islam did take a long period of three hundred years amidst the heterogeneous scenario in the region. Nonetheless, the religious distinctiveness carried on mainly through the existence of the two identities □ Kashmiri Pandit identity and Kashmiri Muslim identity in shaping the socio-political future during the future decades of the Kashmir region.

### **Kashmiriyat and Role of Lal Ded and Nund Reshi**

The term ‘Kashmiriyat’ percolates almost throughout the thesis. The concept of ‘Kashmiriyat’ forms one of the frameworks to understand the Dogra rule of the twentieth century in the

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<sup>111</sup>Islam in Kashmir brought some structural changes. For example, Islam does not uphold the concept of caste system. The religious places unlike the Hinduism [Brahmanism to be more precise] is open to all Muslims. Though Kashmiri Muslims also had a system of classification, which unlike the caste system, was classified by a term called *zat* or *qaum*. *Zat* represented a person’s occupation, culture, ethnicity or religious background but not ritual purity. For example, kraale *zat* (*zat* of potters), bhatta *zat* (*zat* of Bhattas) etc. The occupation and therefore *zat* did signify a measure of mobility in the society. However as Wani and Madan have mentioned in their the structure of *zat* wasn’t rigid and crippling on the mobility of an occupational group. For example once a Non Sayyid family achieved matching “cultural” standards with that of the Sayyid family, in that case the Sayyids showed no hesitation in entering in matrimonial relations outside their own group. Unlike Brahmanism considering its rigid and permanent caste structure in which a person cant navigate within castes to change his social status, in Kashmiri Muslim, for example a *zat* called *Watal*, responsible for the janitorial tasks by giving up their job can improve their cultural and economic status.

<sup>112</sup>Muhammad Ashraf Wani.2005.*Islam in Kashmir (Fourteenth to Sixteenth Century)*.Srinagar.Oriental Publishing House.p.79.

region. The thesis also examines how Sheikh Abdullah employed the term for rise of regional Kashmiri nationalism apart from making use of the term for populism of his political party, the National Conference. 'As the Kashmiri nationalist movement gathered force in the 1940s and drew even closer to Indian nationalist discourse it articulated the narrative of a unique Kashmiri identity, known as Kashmiriyat . . . this narrative drew Kashmir into the ambit of a secular India.'<sup>113</sup> The need for this section is precisely noteworthy because the term 'Kashmiriyat' is reflected off and on in the thesis since the political elite has used the term recurrently in multiple contexts with various meanings. To comprehend the meaning of the term 'Kashmiriyat' a deeper engagement with its history is needed. G.N Gauhar writes in his book, *Kashmir: Mystic Thought*, 'The word: 'Kashmiriyat' denotes certain qualities of the region and its people which make it distinguishable from other regions and nations . . . It is such a 'distinguishable' national temperament of Kashmir which can be qualified as Kashmiriyat.'<sup>114</sup>

The concept of 'Kashmiriyat' was moulded and formed by certain religious and social reformers especially Lal Ded (Lalleshwari) and Sheikh Noor-ud-Din Noorani (Nund Reshi); both have shaped the psychological contours of Kashmiri masses and left their strong imprints on the history of Kashmir. To advocate 'Kashmiriyat' Lal Ded and Nund Reshi are the greatest exemplars of Hindu-Muslim communal harmony. According to Gauhar 'Kashmiriyat' is propagated, projected, preached and prescribed by Kashmiri literature from Lal Ded and Nund Reshi till the recent contemporary literature.

Lalleshwari, popularly known as Lal Ded among Kashmiri Muslims was a Brahman Shaiva Hindu and is perceived as a spiritualist of high order by Kashmiris. She is called Lal Yogishwari or Lalleshwari in Sanskrit literature. The verses she spoke are popularly known as *Lal Vaahks*, which are focussed on religious monotheism unlike pluralism. In one of her *Vaahks* Lal Ded says that God is present everywhere and not only in temples or mosques:

'Idol is of stone, temple is of stone :  
Above (temple) and below (idol) are one ;  
Which of them wilt thou worship, O foolish Pandit,  
Cause thou the union of mind with soul?'

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<sup>113</sup>Chitralekha Zutshi..2017.*Kashmir: History, Politics, Representation*. Cambridge.Cambridge University Press. p.7.

<sup>114</sup>G N Gauhar.2008.*Kashmir: Mystic Thought*. Srinagar.Gulshan Books. p.128.

Sir Richard Carnae in his work on Lal Ded states, ‘There is not a Kashmiri □ Hindu or Musalman - who has not some of them (*Vaakhs*) ready on the tip of his tongue, and who does not give reverence to her memory.’<sup>115</sup> When Shah-i-Hamdan and his followers came from Iran to preach Islam in Kashmir, Lal Ded ‘lost no time or opportunity to meet them and hear the exposition of the principles and tenants of Islam from the best informed and the most learned among them.’ Prem Nath Bazaz who refers her as a Sufi Faqir as well as a Shaivite philosopher writes:

She had long interviews and frequent arguments with Sayid Jalal-ud-din Bukhari, Sayid Hussain Simnani and most illustrious of the order, Sayid Mir Ali, known in Kashmir by the popular and adored appellation of Shah Hamdan . . . the glorious outcome of this mental churning was a synthesis of the two philosophies which was given in the form of poetic sermons . . . The sayings of Lalla contain the basic truths of both the Trika (which in itself was a blend of ancient Brahmanism and heretic Buddhism) and Islam as propounded by Shah Hamdan and his faithful band of Sayid preachers. Lalla is the originator, founder and first votary of the new creed □ the Religious Humanism □ which remains the mainstay of the Kashmiri culture till the modern times.<sup>116</sup>

Sufi saint, Nund Reshi was the younger contemporary of Lal Ded, as well as the founder of the Reshi order in Kashmir. He was followed and respected by the Muslims and Pandits as well. ‘His message has equally been received and accepted by all the sections of population of Kashmir, Hindus and Muslims, rulers and ruled and by the elite and commoners.’<sup>117</sup> His sayings are compiled in the volumes □ *Reshi Nama* and *Nur Nama*. Islam had reached Kashmir long before Nund Reshi, but the common masses had not understood the spirit of Islam fully. Nund Reshi simplified the Islamic teaching by initiating the religious linkages with the region. G.R Malik in this context writes:

Nund Reshi had grasped the basic fact that Islam needed consolidation and that the best way to consolidate it was to adapt it to the local circumstances - the *reshi* tradition . . . Kashmir had a well established *reshi* tradition even before the advent of Islam. *Reshi* , in Sanskrit, means a singer of hymns. As a religious term it was used to describe exceptionally

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<sup>115</sup>Sir Richard Carnae Temple.1985.*Lal Ded*. In *The Literary Heritage of Kashmir* edited by K L Kalla. New Delhi. Mittal Publications.p.122.

<sup>116</sup>Prem Nath Bazaz.2011. *Daughters Of The Vitasta:A History of Kashmiri Women from Early Times to the Present Day*.Srinagar.Gulshan Books.pp.128-129.

<sup>117</sup>G N Gauhar.2008.*Kashmir: Mystic Thought*. Srinagar.Gulshan Books.p.151.

religious, God-fearing and ascetic men irrespective of religion or denomination to which they belonged. The Sheikh (Nund Reshi) was drawn towards this cult in his early youth and after his meditation he decided to adopt *reshi* way to preach the teachings of Islam to the masses.<sup>118</sup>

The local tradition of *Reshism* adopted by Nund Reshi inspired the Muslims to comprehend the teachings and essence of Islam in a better manner. Likewise, Lal Ded engaged herself in establishing a meeting ground between Islam and Hinduism. 'Both exotic Islam and indigenous Brahmanism had their respective merits and demerits, but there was also much in common between the two. Wisdom consisted in retaining all that was abiding and lofty in both and discarding what would dis harmonize with the cultural traditions and the spirit of advancement. It was good fortune of Kashmiris that they had not to wait for long to see such a philosopher (Lal Ded ) rising from their midst.'<sup>119</sup> During the Reshi movement under the guidance of Lal Ded and Nund Reshi, self mortification was cultivated and generated in the psyche of the Kashmiris to the extent that prescription of simple living, simple diet, and simple behaviour became the code of conduct in both the communities, Muslims and Pandits. According to Walter Lawrence Kashmir has set up itself as the living laboratory of mutual understanding, tolerance and peaceful co-existence, although this trait of 'Kashmiriyat' has seldom faced tense challenges in the trajectory of history between Buddhists and Shavists, Shia-Sunni intolerance in the sixteenth century, between Ahl-e-Hadith and Hannafi sects, or the attacks upon Jamat-e-Islami cadres in the 70's are as a matter of fact such incidents. Nonetheless, Kashmir region has brought, 'to light the ever changing and yet interconnected political and religious institutions and ideologies, literary traditions and social classes that shaped the history of this region'<sup>120</sup>

Gauhar explains that the 'quadruples of the personalities who have, together laid the basis on which the present Kashmir culture has grown and developed are: Bulbul Shah, Shah-i-Hamdan, Lal Ded and Nund Reshi. The political revolution was brought by Bulbul Shah, soil for common revolution was prepared by Lal Ded, Shah-i-Hamdan cultivated this soil and yielded rich crop like Nund

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<sup>118</sup>G R Malik. 1985. *Sheikh Noour-ud-Din Noorani* □ *The Mystic Poet of Kashmir*. In *The Literary Heritage of Kashmir*. edited by K L Kalla. New Delhi.Mittal Publications.p.144.

<sup>119</sup>Prem Nath Bazaz.2011. *Daughters Of The Vitasta :A History of Kashmiri Women from Early Times to the Present Day*. Srinagar.Gulshan Books. pp.125-126.

<sup>120</sup>Chitralekha Zutshi..2019.*Kashmir:Oxford India Short Introductions*. New Delhi. Oxford University Press.pp.3-4

Reshi who in return revolutionized the soul and spirit of Kashmir.<sup>121</sup> This unique non-communal cultural heritage of Kashmir prevailed also under the period of Kashmiri rulers like Rinchana Shah, Zain-ul-abidin, Yusuf Shah Chak etc. Khan puts forth:

The concept of Kashmiriyat has evolved out of the yearning of the Kashmiris, both Hindus and Muslims, to situate their motherland (Mouj Kashir) in something unique is not merely reminiscent of their pre occupation with self- definition but also with certain historical contradictions. For a Kashmiri Pandit, the valley is a land of *tirthas* or pilgrimages. Numerous ancient pilgrimage sites continued to be visited by the Pandits before the onset of militancy throughout the year on particular days. Remarkably, in recent times, despite the continued trouble in the Valley, Pandit migrants have not totally severed their spiritual links with their motherland. A considerable number of them make it a point to visit the shrine of Kheer Bhawani at Tulmula annually. It is somewhat a rewarding experience to find local Muslims embracing their compatriots on such an occasion, notwithstanding the seeming divide between the two communities . . . Kashmiri Muslims' devotion to the shrines of Sufis and the Reshis is deep-rooted in the local context rather than Islam alone.

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Hogan whilst discussing Salman Rushdie's *Shalimar The Clown* mentions that, 'In the valley these words ('Hindu' and 'Muslim') were merely descriptions, not divisions . . . a central idea shared by writers on Kashmiri history is that Kashmiri culture was marked by an unusual degree of inter-communal harmony. The idea is expressed in the poetry of medieval mystic poets who opposed the sectarianism of Hindu and Muslim, favoring instead the unity of all in devotion to God. In this account the, ethno-cultural category of Kashmiriyat superseded and rendered innocuous the categories of religion . . . . As used today the idea of Kashmiriyat is the converse of emancipation; it is the myth of a lost paradise.' Further he speaks about Zain-ul-abidin as a model of Kashmiriyat and in fact in his novel *Shalimar The Clown*, the anti-communal orientation of the indigenous Kashmiri is demonstrated through the performance of the story of Zain-ul-abidin: 'To be a Kashmiri, to have received so incomparable a divine gift, was to value what was shared far more

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<sup>121</sup>G N Gauhar.2008.*Kashmir: Mystic Thought*. Srinagar.Gulshan Books.pp.151-152.

<sup>122</sup>Muhammad Ishaq Khan.2017.*The Rishi Tradition and the Construction of Kashmiriyat In Lived Islam in South Asia: Adaption, Accomodation and Conflict* edited by Imtiaz Ahmad .Helmut Reifeld. p. 63.



highly than what divided. Of all this the story of (Zain-ul-abidin) was a symbol.’<sup>123</sup> Before his reign, ‘officials seized the wealth of the Hindu temples, broke idols, imposed the hated *jaziya tax* (poll tax on Non- Muslims).’ At this time there was a vicious anti-Hindu policy allowing ‘forcible conversion’ and a ban on the wearing of distinctive Hindu symbols.<sup>124</sup> However Zain-ul-abidin abolished the poll tax and also practiced re-conversion.<sup>125</sup>

However, during the Dogra period especially from 1940s and 1950s the articulation and manipulation of the term ‘Kashmiriyat’ as a sense of belonging to a shared cultural life was politicized by Sheikh Abdullah. Abdullah and his party, the National Conference during the rise of the political movement in the decade of 1930s mainly enthralled on differences of religion and ethnicity in the Kashmir region, but afterwards while marching forwards towards the decade of 1940s, he enlarged the membership of the Muslim Conference by converting it into National Conference. At this juncture of political history Sheikh Abdullah redefined the political loyalty by putting forward the symbol of ‘Kashmiriyat’, which proclaimed the religious syncretism, ethnicity and unique history of the people in the Kashmir region. In this context Wani argues, ‘Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, who was its strong advocate, believed that *Kashmiriyat* is rooted in culture and language. Sheikh symbolized *Kashmiriyat* □ a spirit of independence and secularism by free will to a largesse comity.’<sup>126</sup> Besides, ‘political rallies and sermons were used for popularizing the symbol of ‘Kashmiriyat’ by saying, ‘even the people who came from Arabia, Iran, Afghanistan and Turkistan as late as 600 or 700 years ago were so mixed with Kashmiri Muslims in culture, civilization and matrimonial relations that all non-Kashmiri traces were completely absent from their life.’<sup>127</sup> And on other occasions the term ‘Kashmiriyat’ was offered and played in a manner to attract the feelings of regional nationalism. Sheikh Abdullah would recount the history of the Kashmir region while addressing the people in rallies and marches. As an advocate of ‘Kashmiriyat’, he advocated, that it is the advent of non-Kashmiri rulers like Mughals, Pathans,

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<sup>123</sup>Patrick Colm Hogan. 2016. *Imagining Kashmir: Emplotment and Colonialism*. London. University of Nebraska. Lincoln and London. p.50.

<sup>124</sup>M J Akbar. 1991. *Kashmir: Behind the Vale*. New Delhi. Viking. pp.27-53.

<sup>125</sup>Ibid. pp.27-28.

<sup>126</sup>Gul Mohammad Wani. 2010. *Labyrinth of Kashmiri Identity*. In *Identity Politics in Jammu and Kashmir*. Edited by Rekha Chowdhary. New Delhi. Vitasta Publishing. p.105.

<sup>127</sup>Sheikh Abdullah. 2013. *The Blazing Chinar* (English translation of Abdullah’s autobiography, *Atash-i-Chinar*, by Mohammad Amin). Srinagar. Gulshan Books.

Britishers and Dogras' rule over Kashmir, whose divisive religious and socio-political ideologies actually perpetuated and generated the violence in the Kashmir region :

Not from periods of Hindu to Muslim to Sikh rulers but from an age of Kashmiri rule, through a long interregnum of 'foreign' dominance beginning with the Mughals in 1586 before the end of Dogra hegemony marked a triumphant return to rule by Kashmiris. Day after day, and week after week, Kashmiris were told that they had been 'slaves' of alien rulers for more than 500 years.<sup>128</sup>

The difference between us as insiders and them as outsiders was articulated to generate a feeling of distinct regional (ethnic) nationalism to surpass religious ties and affinities. The memory of a common shared culture, shared past, a feeling of belongingness and mutual cohesion that formed the bedrock of the common regional identity was synonymously coined as 'Kashmiriyat' during this period and later as well. T.N Madan, one of India's pioneer anthropologists and a Kashmiri Pandit as well argues, 'The first thing to emphasize is that Kashmiriyat is not a Kashmiri word. It may not therefore be claimed to be native category of perception. It is an artificially produced clone of punjabiyat and a recent coinage of not earlier than the 1980s'.<sup>129</sup> Similarly, Wajahat Habibullah, who was a former officer of Indian Administrative service from 1968, mentions that the term Kashmiriyat 'was coined to project a common cultural heritage among Kashmiri Hindus and Muslims thereby papering over their religious dissimilarities'.<sup>130</sup> Ghulam Khan states that, 'apparently the relations between the Hindus and the Muslims were very cordial and peaceful (as depicted by 'Kashmiriyat'). But in fact there was a deep wave of suspicion, hostility and bitterness running at the bottom of their social relations.'<sup>131</sup> In the opinion of Toru Tak for Sheikh Abdullah, 'to create the strong Kashmiriyat (although he himself did not deploy the term) was doubly necessary □ first to show to his local supporters that Kashmiri identity remained intact even after his compromise with Delhi, and second to prove before Delhi that Kashmir is a secular and a natural part of secular India.'<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>128</sup>P N K Bamzai.1980. *Kashmir and Central Asia*. New Delhi.Light and Life Publishers

<sup>129</sup>T N Madan.1965.*Meaning of Kashmiriyat :Cultural means and political ends* In *Kashmir: Need for Sub-Continental Political Initiative*. edited by Gull Mohammad .New Delhi.Ashish Publishing House.p.63.

<sup>130</sup>Wajahat Habibullah.2008.*My Kashmir: Conflict and the Prospects of Enduring Peace*. Washington. United States Institute of Peace.pp.24-25

<sup>131</sup>Ghulam Hassan Khan. 2009. *Freedom Movement in Kashmir: 1931–1940*. Srinagar.Gulshan Books.p.31.

<sup>132</sup>Toru Tak. 2013. *The Term "Kashmiriyat" : Kashmiri Nationalism of the 1970s*. Economic & Political Weekly. 48(16).p.30.

‘Kashmiriyat’ can also be understood and explained by Rogers Smith’s *people-building model*<sup>133</sup> which is briefly summarized. Smith explains on the basis of the assumptions that constitutive stories are crucial factors for *people-building* system. The constitutive story is understood as an inter-generational myth, which proclaims to person’s identity and membership in a political community. Thus, in consonance with the model of Smith, Kashmiri regional leaders emphasized the importance of ‘Kashmiriyat’ as a political identity and to give legitimacy to the political organization, the National Conference as the representative party of ‘Kashmiriyat’. Further, the previous narrative of ‘Kashmiriyat’ for people-building was premised on religion as the primary faction, but later that narrative was re-defined in order to encompass all the religions and ethnicity into the newly formed Kashmiri regional political identity. However, the constitutive story of ‘Kashmiriyat’ was of exclusionary nature, as it did not incorporate religions and ethnicity from Jammu and Poonch Muslims in the ambit of its new political identity. Sheikh Abdullah admired by many as the father of Kashmiri regional nationalism formed a new constitutive story known as ‘Kashmiriyat’, which re-defined the existing regional national identities. The concept of Kashmiri regional nationalism had started in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century as a response to excessive repression from the Dogra rulers, who were seen as foreign and illegitimate. The Dogra rulers were the descendants of Dogra Rajputs speaking a different language, called Dogri. From 1931 to 1939 Kashmiri regional nationalism was not originally a nationalist movement, but a Muslim political movement to rectify the inequities of the Dogra rule. This movement was initially started along the religious lines, however afterwards it expanded and included all religions, hence culminating in the conceptualization of a unique Kashmiri regional nationalist identity in 1939 marked by the transformation of the Muslim Conference into All Jammu and Kashmir National Conference, that required the creation of a constitutive story known as ‘Kashmiriyat’, which propounded the Muslims and Pandits inside the Kashmir region as a distinct and synergic identity. ‘Kashmiriyat’ was popularized among the masses through political rallies, appeals for political equality, newspapers and religious sermons. Wani writes in the context of Sheikh Abdullah’s articulation of the term that, ‘far from being an abstract concept invoked from above by the political elite, *Kashmiriyat* has come to symbolize for all what being a Kashmiri is about.’<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>133</sup>Rogers Smith. 2001. *Citizenship and the Politics of People Building*. Citizenship Studies .5 p.73-96.

<sup>134</sup>Gul Mohammad Wani. 2010. *Labyrinth of Kashmiri Identity*. In. *Identity Politics in Jammu and Kashmir* edited by Rekha Chowdhary. New Delhi. Vitasta Publishing..p 94.

Smith after explaining the characteristics of *elite-driven people-building*, extends his theoretical framework by denoting *trust* and *worth* as the crucial factors for *people-building*. Smith's primary condition, *trust* for *people-building* was demonstrated by the National Conference through *Quit-Kashmir* movement that demanded the end of the oppressive feudal structure by the Dogra Maharaja and the establishment of the democratic constitutional government. The second important factor *worth* was signified by *Naya Kashmir Manifesto* by articulating demands like Abolition of Big Landed Estates Act and Distressed Debtors Relief Act. In this way, the National Conference gained *trust* and *worth* by engaging in people-building rationale and the legitimacy of their party by emphasizing on material resources like land reforms, religious tolerance, guaranteeing substantial opportunities and equality in appointment to government positions.<sup>135</sup> It is to be mentioned again that Jammu region was not included in the constitutive story of 'Kashmiriyat' because it affirmed the shared bonds between Kashmiri Muslims and Kashmiri Pandits, however the Hindus of Jammu region were mentioned only for electoral purposes in the later decades. Against this background Khan argues :

Kashmiriyat has therefore been defined more and more in syncretic terms by the official and semi-official media to serve the ideological interests of the Indian State. As a matter of fact the term Kashmiriyat is not of local origin. When and where was it coined needs to be explored; but it is certain that in the aftermath of the Indira-Sheikh Accord of 1975, the National Conference leadership sought to vindicate and reinforce its faith in Kashmiriyat . . . Kashmiriyat began to be used in the Indian press in the post-Accord period to establish the ideological credentials of the Indian state's sovereignty in the Muslim dominated state as against the two-nation theory.<sup>136</sup>

I met Ishfaq Mir who is a journalist, during the first phase of fieldwork. I asked him what he thinks about 'Kashmiriyat'. Citing Hobsbawn's *Invented Traditions*, he says:

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<sup>135</sup>Karan Arakotaram.2010.*The Rise of Kashmiriyat: People-Building in 20<sup>th</sup> Century Kashmir*.The Columbia Undergraduate Journal of South Asian Studies.Yale University.

<sup>136</sup>Muhammad Ishaq Khan.2017.*The Rishi Tradition and the Construction of Kashmiriyat In Lived Islam in South Asia: Adaption, Accomodation and Conflict* edited by Imtiaz Ahmad .Helmut Reifeld. p. 64.

‘Kashmiriyat’ was politically invented and hence a relatively new concept. It is politically constructed. ‘Kashmiriyat’ was used in the sense that Hindus and Muslims were brothers in history. If in history at one point Pandits and Muslims were brothers (as claimed by Kashmiriyat), then there is a period, which is called as *exodus* by Pandits. How do you correlate the two ideas? How does it go with the idea of Kashmiriyat? Does it not contradict? The right way to approach history is to see it as mutual toleration<sup>137</sup> and mutual living rather than seeing it as brotherhood. Brotherhood involves intermarriages, which did not happen. Brotherhood is premised on the fact that we are equal principally, whereas history of Pandits and Muslims contradicts it. As is clear from the Dogra period, when feudalism was institutionalized in Kashmiri society and most of the power and property was either with Kashmiri Pandits or with the upper class Muslims [*Syeds, Pirs, Pirzadas*].

When Dogra rulers established their state in Kashmir they desired to legitimize their rule in the state. In order to gain the legitimacy they formed strong alliances with their co-religionists and the Muslim upper class. This is how upper class Muslims and Pandits became the allies of the Dogra state in Kashmir. Ishfaq further says :

Political power gets imbricated in a society through its elite. To rule a foreign territory Dogras got ideological legitimacy and support from Pandits primarily and upper class Muslims, who became their allies and in return they were made jagirdars (landlords). He says, the Kashmiri Muslim masses became landless peasants, in Marxist terms, it was petit or lumpen proletariat.

Chitralkha Zutshi argues in her work on Kashmir that how the uncontested widespread acceptance of the term ‘Kashmiriyat’ and the discourse formed around it was actually engendered in the political project in the twentieth century. She explains, ‘academicians and intellectuals while engaging with the term ‘Kashmiriyat’ offer no critical engagement with its origin, its definition and its historically contingent nature, and as a result remains oblivious to the critical relationship between history, identities and nationalism . . . Kashmir regional identities have been far more ambiguous and certainly more complex than the term Kashmiriyat would lead one to believe.’<sup>138</sup> Thus it is implicit that political leaders articulated ‘Kashmiriyat’ through their respective

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<sup>137</sup>By toleration he means to set aside the differences and agree to co-exist.

<sup>138</sup>Chitralkha Zutshi..2003.*Languages of Belonging: Islam, Regional Identity and the Making of Kashmir*. New Delhi. Permanent Black.p.3.

perspectives. Therefore, the imprecision of the term ‘Kashmiriyat’ allows a considerable flexibility in describing political agendas and goals, thereby ‘Kashmiriyat’, its meaning varies according to time, place and situation.

‘Kashmiriyat’ occupies a historical and cultural space in the region today. It is as Ishaq Khan describes the ‘collective consciousness.’<sup>139</sup> It is a historical and cultural process that unites the Kashmiri Pandits and Muslims at a much deeper spiritual level. ‘Kashmiriyat’, as a form of identity is popularly considered as a manifestation of cultural linguistic bonds further strengthened by a common heritage and also enriched by a strong and old tradition of spiritual and intellectual development over the centuries. The geographical compactness of the region has made it possible to maintain the uniqueness, that gets reflected in various socio-cultural dimensions of Kashmiri community in day-to-day life.<sup>140</sup>

## **Conclusion**

There are multiple reasons which contribute to the meaning in formation of the region. The region is formed and understood through the broader exchange of relations, which have their source in inter-related and common political, sociocultural and economic process among the people of the region. Hence, the formation of region and regional identity is a flexible and dynamic process. However, regional identity cannot quintessentially become the reason behind the rise of violence, although can be politicized as a vehicle to mobilize the people of the region. Besides, the religious identity is understood as a collective shared emotion related to collective cultural and social life of the region. It thus transcends beyond religion and enters into the different spheres of life, where it gets implicitly politicized by the state and non-state actors, though religion is an amalgamation of various religions in Kashmir, which eventually has been popularly called as *syncretic religion*. The term ‘Kashmiriyat’ is also analysed and defined, through the spectrum of Lalleshwari and Nund Reshi. Later on the term ‘Kashmiriyat’ was politicised and popularized and by Sheikh Abdullah and his political party, the National Conference during the political movement in the decade of 1930s, which will be analyzed and discussed in the next chapter.

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<sup>139</sup>Muhammad Ishaq Khan.2017.*The Rishi Tradition and the Construction of Kashmiriyat In Lived Islam in South Asia: Adaption, Accomodation and Conflict* edited by Imtiaz Ahmad .Helmut Reifeld. p. 81.

<sup>140</sup>Rekha Chowdary. 1995. *Political Upsurge in Kashmir : Then and Now*. Economic & Political Weekly.30(39). p.2420.

## Chapter Two

### Emergence of Political Identity in Kashmir Region

The aim of the chapter is to understand how region and religion have coalesced in Kashmir's history before tracing its relationship in the contemporary Kashmir region. Which is to say how the discourses on religion influenced the formation of regional identities in the Kashmiri movement for economic and political rights at the turn of the twentieth century. The sections in the chapter are put in order, mostly chronologically. Before proceeding into the structure of the chapter the methodological explanation for choosing Kashmir Valley is explained. Though the state in its present political arrangement<sup>141</sup> comprises of three main entities – Kashmir valley, Jammu and Ladakh – the explanation for focusing on the Valley is its political, social and religious aspects, which are in congruence with the frame of the work. The chapter is chronologically divided in two broad parts followed by a brief thematic conclusion.

The chapter examines Kashmir temporally within the early modern period (1846-1947; 1953-1975). The explanation of method employed to examine this time period is that in Kashmir the modern history begins in 1846, when the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir is created through the Treaty of Amritsar, handing it over to the Dogra ruler, Gulab Singh. The Dogra rule and hence the princely state gets discredited and hence demolished in 1947 vis-à-vis the Instrument of Accession. The post partition Kashmir's 'integration' with Indian Union is critically analyzed. Especially the period from 1953, which marks the beginning of second period of the section, unravels multiple contestations and claims through a comprehensive spectacle of – history, identity, ethnicity, nationalism, regional assertions and its affiliation with religious identities, which spills over to next few decades. The closing point for the section and also for the chapter broadly falls in the decade of 70s, where in the accord of 1975 marks the closure of one phase of Kashmir's political landscape, and progresses into the decade of 80s where 1989 marks a sharp rupture taken up in the subsequent chapters. The history of Kashmir in this chapter has been explored and engaged in the *longue duree*<sup>142</sup> to understand the regional and religious identities

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<sup>141</sup> Since the work addresses Kashmir Valley till 2017 as its concluding time period. Changes in the political structure and arrangement of J&K State, post 2017 aren't engaged with.

<sup>142</sup> Braudel's concept of long duree (the study of history as a long duration) is understood in contrast with "l'histoire événementielle," event history (the study of history as battles, revolutions and the actions of great people). The concept extends the perspective of historical space as well as time. Braudel argues that when large time compass is considered, geographical features, economic systems, or political processes may have more significance for human populations than national borders. In this chapter Braudel's concept of long duree is helpful in forming inter connections in how

during the sixteenth and how the social and religious dynamics of this century impinged on the understanding of political movement in the early twentieth century.

History represents the social forces and make the dead facts speak and reflects how sentiments are converted into movements, while deciphering the pages of the past and personalities embedded in it. One historical epoch differs from another in its response to the basic human condition and in establishing new institutions of power and perception. Thus, it can be argued that people and personalities are the products as well as the creators of history. In the context Herbert Spencer has stated:

You must admit that the genesis of the great man depends on the long series of complex influences which has produced the race in which he appears, and the social state into which that race has slowly grown . . . Before he can remake his society, his society must make him.<sup>143</sup>

### **Dogra Rule: *less progressive and more exploitative***

It is natural to begin with the historical background to what formed the region and what it is today as Hobsbawm argues, 'history is the raw material for nationalist or ethnic or fundamentalist ideologies, as poppies are the raw material for heroine addiction. The past is an essential element, perhaps the essential element in these ideologies. If there is no suitable past, it can always be invented.'<sup>144</sup> The focus of the chapter is on Kashmir history from 1846-1947 so as to analyse and understand the formation of political identity within the framework of region and religion. The Muslim rulers have ruled for one hundred and thirty years, which continued till Mughal rule beginning in 1540.<sup>145</sup> The Mughal rule was put to an end by the Afghans, who have ruled ruthlessly from 1753 till the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. However, Muslim rule for more than five hundred years has ended in 1819, when Maharaja Ranjit Singh expanded his empire and made Dogra Rajput Gulab Singh the ruler of Jammu in 1820.<sup>146</sup> Soon Maharaja Gulab Singh shifted his loyalty to the British

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the events which unfolded in the political culture of Kashmiri society in the twentieth century were apropos of the nature of [Sufi] Islam and the relations between the New Muslims [Hindu converts to Islam] and the Kashmiri Pandit community in the sixteenth. Braudel while critiquing the concept of l'histoire événementielle considering its minimal aspect says how the approach eventually restricts a deeper understanding of a historical phenomenon

<sup>143</sup>Herbert Spencer.1873. *The Study of Sociology*. London.Henry S King & Co.

<sup>144</sup>Eric Hobsbawm.*The New Threat to History*.The New York Review of Books.16 December 1993 .p.63.

<sup>145</sup>Mohammad Ishaq Khan .1994. *Kashmir's Transition to Islam - The Role of Muslim Rishis*.Delhi.Manohar.p.167-204.

<sup>146</sup>Alastair Lamb.2003. *Kashmir: A Disputed Legacy 1846-1990*. Karachi. Oxford University Press. p.7.



empire<sup>147</sup> and then sold Kashmir through the treaty of Amritsar signed between the British government and Maharaja Gulab Singh of the Jammu region on 16 March 1948. According to Article 01 of the treaty Maharaja Gulab Singh was recognized as the independent supreme ruler of Jammu and Kashmir state. In consideration of transfer, Maharaja Gulab Singh agreed to pay to the British government the sum of 75 lakh Nanak Shahi rupees, fifty lakh to be paid on ratification of the Treaty and twenty lakhs on or before the first October, 1846. Thus 11 lakh Kashmiris, along with their fields, their crops, their rivers, lakes and springs were sold by the British at the rate of 75 lakh of Nanak Shahi rupees. Article XII of the Treaty was introduced as a prelude to the Treaty of Amritsar reads, 'The Maharaja hereby agrees to recognize the Independent, Sovereignty of Raja Golab Singh, in such territories and districts in the hills as may be made over to the said Raja Golab Singh by separate agreement between himself and the British government.' In this manner the state of Jammu and Kashmir came into existence. Afterwards Britishers added certain small entities to the state for their political convenience like Gilgit Agency in 1889, which was leased back to the Britishers in 1935; Pooch was also added to the state in 1936. These unrelated tracts had nothing in common except Maharaja Gulab Singh as an autocratic ruler for the political convenience of Britishers. In this context the Australian legal expert and United Nation mediator on Kashmir, Sir Owen Dixon said :

The state of Jammu and Kashmir is not really a unit geographically, demographically or economically, it is an agglomeration of territories brought under the political power of one Maharaja (Gulab Singh). That is the unity it possesses.<sup>148</sup>

The Chief Justice of India, Justice A.S Anand after examining the nature of the Treaty in his seminal *Treaties on the Constitutional History of Jammu and Kashmir* summarized , 'when you accept money in consideration regarding the nature of a material thing, the transaction is nothing but 'sale'.<sup>149</sup> Similarly Dr Allama Iqbal, the philosopher of the early twentieth century and of Kashmiri descent writes in this context :

*Their fields, their crops, their streams*  
*Even the peasants in the Vale*

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<sup>147</sup>Percival Spear.1965.*A History of India: From the Sixteenth Century to the Twentieth Century*. Vol 2. London. Penguin Books.p. 135-138.'

<sup>148</sup>Michael Brecher, 1953.*The Struggle for Kashmir*. New York. Oxford University Press.p. 4.

<sup>149</sup>Justice A.S Anand .2010.*The Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir : Its Development and Comments.sixth edition*. New Delhi. Universal Law Publishing. p.08.

*They sold all*

*Alas, how cheap was the sale.*<sup>150</sup>

In the words of Mahatma Gandhi, ‘The treaty of Amritsar was in reality a sale deed, which shall die on the 15 of August 1947.’<sup>151</sup> Gulab Singh by his loyalty to the British had attained the kingdom of Jammu, Kashmir, Baltistan and Ladakh. Sheikh Immamudin, the last governor of Sikh rule in Kashmir region carried his revolt against Dogra-British-Sikh for many months. In this connection Arthur Broome writes, that Immamudin had, “the chief power in the country and the popular feeling . . . (was) with him.”<sup>152</sup> Therefore, Immamudin by dint of people’s support and good resources defeated the army of Dogra Darbar and Lakpat Rai was killed, who was the representative of Gulab Singh. Later the troops of Britishers and the forces of Sikh rulers marched towards Kashmir and Immamudin surrendered, Gulab Singh as new ruler was enthroned; at this juncture of history Kashmiris neither had a leadership nor the measures to resist the enforcement of the Treaty.

Dogra regime was less progressive and more exploitative in nature, and it carried on, ‘the dynastic, feudal, ruler-centred and religion centred rule of the medieval ages.’<sup>153</sup> In order to derive benefit from the *sale deal* of 1846, Kashmir was deemed as the bought property by the Dogra rulers.<sup>154</sup> Thus, Dogras Maharajas ruled over Kashmiris in the same way as a slave is ruled by his master.<sup>155</sup> According to Bazaz, Dogra rulers did not know the principles of governance as they created a state which was personal and feudal in character.<sup>156</sup> The Dogra Maharaja appointed agents in the revenue administration faithful to it. Most of them were Punjabis or Dogras along with Kashmiri Pandits. The office holders from the state were drawn from the Hindu clerical caste of Kashmiri Pandits and also few prominent Kashmiri upper class Muslims like Sayyids and Pirs.<sup>157</sup> As Zutshi

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<sup>150</sup>Prem Nath Bazaz 1954. *The History of Struggle for Freedom in Kashmir*. New Delhi. Kashmir Publishing Company. p. 123.

<sup>151</sup>Das Gupta. Jyoti Bushan. 1968. *Jammu and Kashmir*. Springer Netherlands; Mehr Gill. *Explained: The significance of 1846 in the modern history of Jammu and Kashmir*. Indian Express. 10 August 2019.

<sup>152</sup>Demi official letter of Arthur Broome of 13 August 1846 is cited Mridu Rai. 2004. *Hindu Rulers Muslim Subjects*. Delhi: Permanent Black. p.58.

<sup>153</sup>Mohammad Yousuf Ganai. 2003. *Kashmiri Struggle for Independence*. Mohsin Publications. Srinagar. p. 77.

<sup>154</sup>Robert Thorpe. 1870. *Cashmere Misgovernment*. London. London publisher Longman and Co. p.26 ; Sheikh Abdullah. 2013. *The Blazing Chinar* (English translation of Abdullah’s autobiography, *Atash-i-Chinar*, by Mohammad Amin). Srinagar. Gulshan Books. p.34.

<sup>155</sup>P.N Bazaz. 1954. *The History of Struggle for Freedom in Kashmir*. New Delhi. Kashmir Publishing Company. p.122.

<sup>156</sup>Ibid.

<sup>157</sup>Commonly termed Pirzadas the social group included pirs, mullahs, ulemas and religious preachers. They made their living by performing rituals for the peasants. As Zutshi writes, the Pirzadas settled the disputes among the

also writes that, 'Gulab Singh endowed his rule with a framework of legitimacy drawn from Hinduism'<sup>158</sup> Maharaja's aim was *zamin* (land) and *zar* (wealth). At the outset of his reign he confiscated all unregistered *jagirs* (land) and declared that all land falls in his subjugated territories and frontier *illaqas* (area) belonged to him and the owners or the tillers of the land were simply tenants. This was one of the instances of the discriminatory treatment that Kashmiris received under the Dogra rule. And this was for the first in its history that Kashmiris as well as the people of frontier *illaqas* lost ownership of their own lands. Maharaja's agents regarded land in Kashmir region as the absolute property of the Maharaja and every year allotments were made to the cultivators. The agents had the power to collect the maximum of grains for Maharaja.<sup>159</sup> Maharaja used to take almost everything produced by the soil and his numerous agents took the rest of the produce. Out of every thirty-two *trakhs*<sup>160</sup>, the Dogra rulers took twenty *trakhs* as its share and the agents took almost two *trakhs* and the cultivators were given only ten *trakhs* for sustenance for the whole year.<sup>161</sup> It means that Maharaja took two thirds of the produce. In order to extract more agricultural produce from the peasants, the officials would use inhuman practices:

At the time of collecting the land revenue, the use of nettle scourge in summer and of plunging recurrent tax payer into cold water in winter were popular methods of torture carried out against the peasants. Through these corrupt practices and oppressive methods of the revenue department, the Muslim cultivators suffered unspeakable injustice and oppression.<sup>162</sup>

Maharaja fixed a number of men in each village to do *begaar* or forced labour on behalf of the government at the beck and call of officers.<sup>163</sup> Young and old were dragged like slaves out of their homes to carry loads for the officials and the government.<sup>164</sup> These people perished of hunger and

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peasantry, conducted marriages along with many other functions in exchange for a fixed amount of peasantry's produce. They also owned lands and orchards and were exempted not only from the taxes levied by the state but also from *begar*. The most powerful *Pirzadas* were the *mutawallis*, who were the managers of the Shrines (as mentioned in part I of the chapter). They held large areas of revenue free land grants along with an access to earnings of the shrines.

<sup>158</sup>Chitralekha Zutshi. 2003. *Languages of Belonging: Islam, Regional Identity and the Making of Kashmir*. New Delhi. Permanent Black.p 48.

<sup>159</sup>Walter Lawrence .1895. *The Valley of Kashmir*. London Henry. Oxford University Press.p.402-403.

<sup>160</sup>Unit of measurement. One *Trakh* was equivalent to 6 kgs.

<sup>161</sup>Robert Thorpe. 1870. *Cashmere Misgovernment*. London. Longmans. p.6.

<sup>162</sup>E.F. Knight.1893. *Where Three Empires Meet*. London.Longmans Green . p 29.

<sup>163</sup>K.M Panikkar. 1930. *Gulab Singh (1792 - 1858) - Founder of Kashmir*. London.Martin Hopkinson. p.136

<sup>164</sup>Mirza Saif-ud-Din. Report ending April 30, 1848. (R & P.D).

thirst on the roadside or died of cold on snowy mountain passes.<sup>165</sup> According to Akbar, 'insofar as they were autonomous, Gulab Singh and his successors were not particularly enlightened rulers. This is evidenced by the fact that, in 1924, Muslims were agitating for, among other things, abolition of forced labor and the restoration of all mosques seized by the state government.'<sup>166</sup> Although *begaar* was abolished by law in 1893, but its practice continued till 1947. Its continuity and misery for the people is validated by the Glancy Commission<sup>167</sup> report of 1932:

Complaints have been received that not un often the government officials disobey the orders of his Highness and force the villagers to carry the loads of the officials to far-off places without any remuneration. As a matter of fact they exact other kinds of unpaid services from them.<sup>168</sup>

Kashmir used to be the primary importer of wool and pashmina from Central Asia and Ladakh. In 1865 there were almost thirty thousand shawl weavers in Srinagar city.<sup>169</sup> King Zain-ul-Abidin had introduced various industries in Kashmir and significant among them were shawl, silk and papier-mache. The largest industry was shawl manufacturing and the Kashmiris were the experts in this industry even long before Zain-ul-Abidin. The writer of the work *Kashmir and its Shawls* cited by Bazaz states that 'a whole people do not learn to weave such stuffs as Kashmiris, have so long turned out, in a day or year or even in centuries.'<sup>170</sup> Similarly a French writer has commented on the olden origin of Kashmiri shawls:

But it must not be inferred that it is the produce of modern civilization. The Indian shawl dates four thousand years back, and the shawl cloth of Babylonia, the silky textures of Ruth, the mantles of Tamar, and the long pieces of cloth with which Biblical characters were clothed were no more other than the shawls of manufacture of which Asia enjoyed a monopoly. India especially produced them by means of precious wool obtained from animals bred on an Asiatic soil, such as the sheep of Kashmir, the goats of Angora, Kirman and Tibet, and the camels of Bokhara.<sup>171</sup>

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<sup>165</sup> Arthur Neve. 1913. *Thirty Years in Kashmir*. London. E. Arnold. p.140.

<sup>166</sup> M J Akbar. 1991. *Kashmir: Behind the Vale*. New Delhi. Viking. p.69.

<sup>167</sup> On 20 October 1931 Maharaja appointed a commission of inquiry under Bertrand J. Glancy, a senior member of the Indian political service, to address the grievances of the Muslims.

<sup>168</sup> Glancy commission Report vide Dastawaizat. p.140-41.

<sup>169</sup> File No. 320. (P.R) K.G.R.

<sup>170</sup> P.N. Bazaz. 1941. *Inside Kashmir* Kashmir Publishing Co. Srinagar. p.73.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid. p.74.

Trapped in a system of forced labour, the peasantry as well as shawl weavers lied at the very bottom rung of the economic scale. Lawrence also wrote against *begaar* or forced labour and has put forth a note to the Maharaja and thereby suggested its abolition.<sup>172</sup> Nandita Haksar in her work on Kashmiri nationalism cites Sir Albion Banerji, the foreign and political minister of the state:

With a large Muhammadan population absolutely illiterate, laboring under poverty and very low economic conditions of living in the villages and practically governed like dumb driven cattle. There is no touch between the government and the people. It (Government) has at present little or no sympathy with the peoples wants and grievances.<sup>173</sup>

However, the shawl industry prospered well during the reign of King Zain-ul-Abidin, Sultans and Pathans as is indicated in these words ‘as early as 1519 the Kashmir fabrics, even of the finer kind, must have been known in the West of Europe as may be inferred from the tradition that the light veil fastened by a thin golden thread over the forehead, covering the back of the head and falling on the shoulders of Leonardo De Vinci’s famous portrait of Mona Lisa, wife of Francesco of Giocondo, a citizen of Florence was in reality one of those earlier Kashmir fabrics that could be drawn through a lady’s ring as a test of its fineness.’<sup>174</sup> The Mughal rulers had also taken extraordinary interest in the development of shawl industry and the King used to wear two shawls at a time for adding beauty to his attire. In this manner the patronage of Mughal rulers gave a boost to shawl industry. In this context Bernier says that, ‘the Kashmiris possessed an almost exclusive and very considerable manufacture of shawls made in prodigious numbers attracting trade and money on which even little children were engaged . . . the produce of the foreign looms has never equaled that of Kashmir in its delicate softness.’<sup>175</sup> There are scanty sources to know how Kashmiri shawls were imported and introduced in West, but its importation resulted in revolution among the women folk as Larousse describes, ‘fashion adopted it (shawls), protected it and it soon became the indispensable item of an elegant wardrobe with all those who could afford to purchase and thus aspire to be considered well dressed.’<sup>176</sup>

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<sup>172</sup>File No.12/P-13 of 1892 (O.E.R) K.G.R.

<sup>173</sup>Nandita Haksar.2015.*The Many Faces of Kashmiri Nationalism: From The Cold War To The Present Day*. New Delhi. Speaking Tiger.p.xi.

<sup>174</sup>Sheikh Imaan Ashraf .Sheikh Numaan Ashra. Sibtain.Hafiz..2016. *Obstacles Faced By Craftsmen And Traders In Pashmina Sector: A Study Of J&K*.International Journal of Advanced Research.10.21474/IJAR01/88 .p.1230.

<sup>175</sup>Francois Bernier.1891.*Travels in the Mogul Empire: A.D. 1656-1668*.Second Edition Revised by Vincent Arthur Smith.Translated on the basis on Irving Bock’s version and annotated by Archibald Constable.London. Oxford University Press.p.497.

<sup>176</sup> P.N. Bazaz.1941.*Inside Kashmir* Kashmir Publishing Co.Srinagar.p.76.

When Kashmir region came under the Dogra rule this industry was flourishing at its height as according to Bazaz, 'it is a sad commentary on the economic progress of Kashmir during the reign of Dogras that such a gigantic industry which supported lakhs of poor people and supplemented the meagre income of a large part of the peasantry by keeping them employed during idle months of winter, became almost extinct by 1925.'<sup>177</sup> Dogra Maharaja took control of these shawl weavers<sup>178</sup> and levied hefty tax of Rupees 47 on every shawl weaver per annum in order to secure continual flow of income; besides everything except air and water was brought under taxation. He did not allow a worker to leave his loom without a replacement with another weaver.

The taxation system imposed by Dogra rule was harsh and inhuman. It was oppressive and lethal for the cultivators and artisans. The revenue officials were corrupt, as they not only ill-treated the poor and helpless masses, but also illegally levied in the form of *nazrana* (bestowment/gift) and *rasum* (customs/ conventions)<sup>179</sup> as has been observed by Sir Francis Younghusbad :

On the manufacture of shawls, parallel restrictions were placed, wool was taxed as it entered Kashmir; the manufacture was taxed for every workman he employed, and also at various stages of the process according to the value of fabric. Lastly there was the enormous duty of 85% ad valorem. Butchers, bakers, carpenters, boatmen, and even prostitutes were taxed. Poor coolies, who were engaged to carry load for travelers, had to give up half their earnings.<sup>180</sup>

After this the protest was launched against the Dogra oppression by the shawl weavers in 1865. Since shawl weaving was central to the trade of Kashmir in the nineteenth century and it was the acutely hit class by the heavy state taxation. As mentioned earlier a shawl weaver ended up paying nearly Rs 5 in taxes out of maximum earning of Rs 7 or 8 per month. The weavers had become conscious and agitated, the Dogra Maharaja convened the meeting of the representatives in 1910 at Srinagar for maintaining peace.<sup>181</sup> Consequently large number of shawl weavers fled to Amritsar, Agra, Lahore and several other places to earn and feed their family members, although its exportation had yielded a good revenue to the state. Similarly other smaller, industries like papier-mache, manufacturing of cotton, silk and ornamental arts turned worse. Thus, the Kashmir

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<sup>177</sup>Ibid.p.77.

<sup>178</sup>File No. 835(P.R) K.G.R.

<sup>179</sup>Walter Lawrence .1895.*The Valley of Kashmir*. London Henry. Oxford University Press.p.415.

<sup>180</sup>Sir Francis Younghusbad..1909.*Kashmir*. Edinburg. p.101.

<sup>181</sup>File No. 144/P-91 (Part II ) of 1901 (O.E.R) K.G.R.

region became dependent on outsiders, which once was self-sufficient. According to Whitehead, 'Valley Kashmiris were subject to high taxes, a punitive system of forced labour and had virtually no say in the running of the princely state and next to no chance of getting senior posts in the administration. The Maharaja's armed forces were closed to Valley Kashmiris of all religions, being the preserve particularly of communities with a stronger military tradition from Jammu and Poonch.'<sup>182</sup> One of the British representative has commented, 'Maharaja Hari Singh contributed no less than 60,000 first-class soldiers to fight for the Crown in the second world war, not a single one of them was a proper Kashmiri.'<sup>183</sup>

In a similar context Navnita Chahdha Behera writes, 'the lot of Muslims was even worse; they were excluded from the state services, the Muslim peasantry and the industrial workers were heavily taxed . . . Without access to modern education Muslims sank into a deep distrust of rule under the Dogra Hindus.'<sup>184</sup> Zutshi in her work cites Baron Charles Hugal who visited Kashmir in 1840's. While mentioning the manufacturers he writes that the condition of shawl weavers was, 'one of the most wretched abodes that my imagination could well picture.'<sup>185</sup> The Kashmir region though was governed by outside rulers for centuries together, but Dogra rule was a different scenario. The earlier rulers at least used to involve some sections of Kashmiris as local collaborators in the administrative policies, but Dogra Maharaja introduced new alternatives without informing Kashmiris. Rather Dogra rulers imposed inhuman practices on Kashmiris, which would dehumanize them. Colonel Torrens abhorred Dogra regime when he visited Kashmir in 1859-60 :

This last state (Dogra State) was worse than the first . . . for Gulab Singh went beyond his predecessors in the acts of undue taxation and extortion. They had taxed heavily it is true, but he sucked the very lifeblood of the people. They had laid violent hands on a large proportion of the fruits of the earth, the profits of loom and the work of men's hands, but he skinned the very flints to fill his coffers.<sup>186</sup>

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<sup>182</sup> Andrew Whitehead. 2007. *A Mission in Kashmir*. Viking Penguin Books India. New Delhi. p. 21.

<sup>183</sup> Krishna Mehta. 1954. *Crisis in Kashmir*. Kolkata. Republished as *Kashmir 1947: A survivors story*. 2005. New Delhi.

<sup>184</sup> Navnita Chadha Behera. 2006. *Demystifying Kashmir*. Washington D.C. Brookings Institution Press.

<sup>185</sup> Chitralekha Zutshi. 2003. *Languages of Belonging: Islam, Regional Identity and the Making of Kashmir*. New Delhi. Permanent Black. p. 83.

<sup>186</sup> Prem Nath Bazaz. 1954. *The History of Struggle for Freedom in Kashmir*. New Delhi. Kashmir Publishing Company. p. 124.

While considering the geographical location of Kashmir, it had its trade routes with various connecting civilizations, as Zutshi calls it a *brisk trade* in the items like salt, cloth, tea, metals and tobacco had started. The artisans and the peasantry travelled seasonally to Punjab through three routes: the Bannihal Tunnel connecting Valley to Jammu, Old Imperial Road that overflows to Pir Panjaal and reaches Gujrat and the Jhelum Valley Road which ran along the river Jhelum from Baramullah to Kohala in Punjab. The Treaty High Road, from Srinagar to Leh linked the Valley with Central Asian trade. The trade between Kashmir and Central Asia was flourishing during this period, as shawls, leather, grain, tobacco were exported from Kashmir to Ladakh, in return shawl wool (phamb and tosa), salt and tea were imported to Kashmir region.<sup>187</sup> The expansion and magnitude of trade had brought forth new growth to the shawl weavers and the peasantry.

The Muslims remained backward in education, 'devoid of education and freedom they cannot take advantage of natural blessings . . . out of the total population of thirty-one lakhs, the Muslims are twenty- four lakhs but as regards education even 100 persons cannot be found out of them, literate. The state exists on the shoulders of those twenty-four lakh Muslims and their hard earned money fulfills the state treasury but their share in administration is nil.'<sup>188</sup> All India Mohammadan Educational Conference submitted a memorandum to Pratap Singh for providing educational facilities to Muslims in the region.<sup>189</sup> At last Mr Sharp, the then educational Commissioner of Britishers was invited to Kashmir to examine the problems related to education in the region. He presented a report along with his recommendations<sup>190</sup>, but no heed was paid to it. The discrimination against the Muslim population was indicated in the census reports of 1911 and 1921. There were only fifteen educated Muslim men in comparison to four hundred fifty educated Pandits at the beginning of 1910 in the Kashmir region. In 1921 the number of educated Muslim men was nineteen and Pandit educated men were five hundred eight.<sup>191</sup> The figures of Muslim educated men belonged to influential families and rest of the masses were completely illiterate.<sup>192</sup> In this context Kashmiri Pandit, Bazaz in his work says, that government evaded its responsibility on the basis of political consideration that education might create awareness among masses against

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<sup>187</sup>Chitralekha Zutshi.2003. *Languages of Belonging: Islam, Religion, Identity, and the Making of Kashmir*. New Delhi. Permanent Black. p.103.

<sup>188</sup>Statement of Sheikh Atta Mohammad Advocate, in *Siyasat*, Lahore, November 7-8-1923.

<sup>189</sup>File No. 217/P-96. of 1913 (O.E.R) K.G.R.

<sup>190</sup>P N. Bazaz.1941.*Inside Kashmir*.Srinagar. Kashmir Publishing Co.p.83.

<sup>191</sup>Census of India Vol. XXII . Kashmir 1921. Part 1.Report.p. 121.

<sup>192</sup>Ibid.p.163.



the exploitation at the hands of Dogra rulers.<sup>193</sup> Besides, the conservative outlook of their own leadership like *mullahs*, *pirs*, *pirzadaz*, *khadims*, *muftis* was also responsible for the Muslim indifference to modern education. Later on these religious leaders were attacked by the Ahl-i-Hadith movement.<sup>194</sup> As Khan argues, ‘this age old hegemony of religious leadership was seriously challenged by Ahl-i-Hadith reformists.’<sup>195</sup> The poetry of Khalil Shah, a Kashmiri poet also is an evidence to this history as he writes in *Mullah Nama* :

*Mullahs are deceitful and treacherous,  
They are far removed from religious doctrines  
For some money, they will fall from their faith,  
They talk of Tawhid but are brokers of lust*<sup>196</sup>

Besides, the exploitative economic policies during the Dogra rule made people to flee to other territories of British India to get work in order to feed their starved family members. The state also witnessed consecutive famines, cholera's and epidemics in 1877-1879, 1888, 1892, 1900-1902, 1906-1907 and 1910 along with a breakout of plague from 1903-1904. Consequently the population was reduced in Srinagar from 127,400 to 60,000.<sup>197</sup> The situation brought forth the indifference of the unresponsive administration for offering protection to the people.

After this the concept of reformation was imposed on Dogra regime through the British intervention in the state on 25 February 1880, as the Viceroy, Lord Lytton wrote to Lord Cranbrook, Secretary of the State:

I consider that time has come when we must decisively intervene for the rescue of a perishing population, on whose behalf we certainly contracted moral obligations and

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<sup>193</sup>P N Bazaz .1959.*Daughters of Vitasta A History of Kashmiri Women from Early Times to the Present Day*.New Delhi.Pamposh.p 215.

<sup>194</sup>Ahl-I-Hadith follow only Quran and Hadith. They speak against shrine worship and consider it as shirk (assigning partners to God) as it also goes against the basic tenants of faith in Islam -- Tawhid or oneness of God.The Ahl-I-Hadith movement was founded by Sayyid Hussain Shah Baktu, who left Srinagar to study in Delhi.

<sup>195</sup>Bashir Ahmad Khan.2000.*The Ahl-I-Hadith:A Socio-Religious Reform Movement in Kashmir*.The Muslim World. Vol. 90. p .133.

<sup>196</sup>Chitralkha Zutshi. 2003.*Languages of Belonging: Islam, Regional Identity and the Making of Kashmir*. New Delhi. Permanent Black.p.153.

<sup>197</sup>Walter Lawrence .1895.*The Valley of Kashmir*. London Henry. Oxford University Press.p.213.

responsibilities when we handed them over to the uncontrolled rule of a power alien to them in race and creed, and representing no civilization higher than theirs.<sup>198</sup>

Cranbrook replied:

that (while) we are not directly responsible but we have relations with Cashmere which would justify strong interference with their enormities and the use of a tone which ought to have its effect. . . . We ought to have influence to prevent the annihilation of a race whose only crime is different religion from that of the powers in authority.<sup>199</sup>

The movement directly challenged the fundamentals of the traditional leadership. Unlike the traditional leaders of Kashmir, Ahl-i-Hadith were actively in touch with similar movements in Punjab, were well read besides being prolific writers. They placed the onus of the Kashmiri Muslims ignorance on the pirs, as they created a blind faith in the masses and made them dependent on their religious leaders.

### **Spread of Education and Political Awareness**

Muslim organizations of British India along with Punjabi Muslim intellectuals produced pressure on the authorities to establish an office called Special Inspector for Mohammadan Education<sup>200</sup> and under the Chairmanship of Mr Sharp and education commission was appointed in May 1916, 'to investigate and advise the Durbar on educational arrangements in the state.'<sup>201</sup> Mr Sharp acknowledged that the masses in the region had not been provided with educational opportunities and their condition in this regard be improved.<sup>202</sup> And ultimately in 1920 the number of Muslim students had become equal to the Non-Muslim students.<sup>203</sup> In this context Bazaz writes:

An organization had been set up in the Punjab by those wealthy and influential Kashmiri Muslims who had left their ancient land during the times of the Sikhs to reside in different parts of India. They collected funds and granted scholarships to the poor but promising young Muslims in the valley to pursue their studies.<sup>204</sup>

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<sup>198</sup>Robert A Huttenback.2004.*Kashmir and the British Raj 1847-1947*.Karachi .Oxford University Press.pp.60-61

<sup>199</sup>Ibid.

<sup>200</sup>Administrative Report of the Education Department. Jammu and Kashmir State, 1914-15.p. 07.

<sup>201</sup>File No. 124/F- 184 of 1915, Political Department (old English Records). J&K State Archives.

<sup>202</sup>Report of Glancy Commission, 12 November 1931, Jammu Ranbir Govt Press. 1922. p.17.

<sup>203</sup>Annual Administrative Report J&K.1921.pp 97-98.

<sup>204</sup>Prem Nath Bazaz 1954.*The History of Struggle for Freedom in Kashmir*. NewDelhi .Kashmir Publishing Company. p. 140.

After passing the secondary school level some Muslim students joined the educational institutions in the then British India for higher studies and the education acquired by them created awareness regarding their rights to change the insensitive nature of the government with the support of poor masses. Thus, after attaining the professional degrees these students returned to Kashmir and between 1921 to 1931 the number of the educated Muslims was the highest among all the communities in Jammu and Kashmir state.<sup>205</sup> Simultaneously, this educated youth was disappointed as they found the Dogra government unwilling to provide employment opportunities in the government service. According to Whitehead, ‘Muslims with education and ambition often felt constrained to leave the princely state, which is why Kashmiris who had settled in Punjab were of such importance in the initial political awakening.’<sup>206</sup> However, some got organized and started a Reading Room at Fateh Kadal, (Sher-e-Khas) Srinagar<sup>207</sup>, which became the precursor of political consciousness and new leadership in Kashmir.<sup>208</sup> Thus, for the first time Kashmiri educated youth had organized opposition movement against Maharaja’s autocracy. Among the educated youth Sheikh Abdullah was one of the highly educated man, who was severely discontented in respect of improving his socioeconomic condition. Since Sheikh Abdullah was naturally an excellent orator and challenged the legitimacy of Dogra Durbar with the support of influential religious leaders. He initiated a movement to put pressure on Dogra Durbar, to democratize its institutions in order to provide legitimate rights to its citizens. Thus, it was in the early 1930’s that the first political mobilization of the Kashmiri Muslims became visible. This reaction was met by Maharaja’s repressive approach with some limited concessions. In 1932 for the first time publications of newspapers along with public gatherings having political agendas were given permission by the Dogra Durbar on the basis of the report of the British Commission who had inquired into the escalating political tension in Kashmir region.<sup>209</sup>

### **Religious Pulpits and Political Momentum**

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century the shrines along with mosques such as Jama Masjid, Khanaqah-I-Moula in old city gave a political momentum to the moment of regional nationalism, hence leading

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<sup>205</sup>Census of India.1931, Vol. XXIV. J&K State.Part 1, Report.p.257.

<sup>206</sup>Andrew Whitehead. 2007. *A Mission in Kashmir*. Viking Penguin Books India. New Delhi. p. 21.

<sup>207</sup>Sheikh Abdullah.2013.*The Blazing Chinar* (English translation of Abdullah’s autobiography, Atash-i-Chinar, by Mohammad Amin).Srinagar.Gulshan Books.pp. 48-69.

<sup>208</sup>Ibid.

<sup>209</sup>Andrew Whitehead. 2007. *A Mission in Kashmir*. New Delhi.Viking Penguin Books India.p. 21.

towards the political dimension of the religious places. As Khan describes, ‘thus, Shaykh Mohammad Abdullah and other leaders mustered the support of the masses for their political objectives while making use of shrines, especially Hazratbal shrine . . . psychologically, the presence of large numbers of people at important . . . occasions and on Fridays facilitated the work of political activists in organizing rallies. The leaders of the present on-going movement have also made shrines the center of their political activities.’<sup>210</sup>

During the late nineteenth century major churning was taking place in the region. More Kashmiris were moving out the region and establishing contacts with British India for expansion of education. British missionaries including Anglicans and Catholics had emphasized on education in Kashmir region. In 1891 a mission school was established in Baramullah and in 1909 St. Joseph High School was founded in Baramullah, besides Burnhall and Presentation Convent Schools in Srinagar.<sup>211</sup> It goes to the credit of missionaries like Tyndale Biscoe Knowls who gave a fillip to modern education in Kashmir region with the establishment of Tyndale Biscoe Boys and Mallinson Girls School in Srinagar and Anantanag.<sup>212</sup> After this two colleges were established at Srinagar and Jammu. The foundation stone of Hindu College in Srinagar was laid in 1906.<sup>213</sup> Similarly, in Jammu a state college was established in 1907.<sup>214</sup> The growth of education led to competition between Kashmiris and non-Kashmiris and between Kashmiri Pandits and Kashmiri Muslims for jobs in the government. In 1912, a Kashmiri Muslim Conference had condemned the Maharaja’s administrative policy of preference given to non-state subjects over state subjects .<sup>215</sup>

There had been also expansion in publication of literature vis-a-vis their contacts in Punjab. Most of the literature was published in Punjab and Amritsar highlighting the growing intellectual contact between the two regions. There was a growing influence of press, wherein the circulation of English and Urdu newspapers showed a rapid increase.<sup>216</sup> The events nourished an intellectual atmosphere for the emergence of new Kashmiri Muslim leadership in the unfolding twentieth

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<sup>210</sup>Bashir Ahmad Khan.2000.*The Ahl-i-Hadith:A Socio-Religious Reform Movement in Kashmir*.The Muslim World.Vol 90.pp.146-147.

<sup>211</sup>Andrew Whitehead. 2007. *A Mission in Kashmir*. New Delhi.Viking Penguin Books India. p. 68.

<sup>212</sup>File No. 48 and 32 of 1891 (O.E.R) K.G.R.

<sup>213</sup>File No. 2 of 1906 (H.H.P.R) K.G.R.

<sup>214</sup>File No. 269/ 13- 157 of 1906 (O.E.R).

<sup>215</sup>File No. 254/P-127 of 1912 (O.E.R).

<sup>216</sup>Chitralekha Zutshi.2003.*Languages of Belonging: Islam, Regional Identity and the Making of Kashmir*. New Delhi. Permanent Black.p.157.

century. The century was characterized by a retreat of traditional religious leadership with a growth of educated Kashmiri Muslims, who transcended the question of identity beyond shrines:

The early twentieth century had set the stage for the emergence of a public discourse on identities that utilized religion as a political tool while attempting to transcend its “communal” component . . . The belief in the mobilizational power of Islam as the means to . . . political sovereignty . . . was able to consolidate the Kashmiri Muslim community more effectively than ever before.<sup>217</sup>

A class of educated Kashmiri Muslims transformed not only the Muslim leadership by cutting across the divisions of class and sect unlike the previous leadership, but their terms of negotiation with the Dogra State as well, wherein the discourse was now argued in the language of political, economic and social rights for Kashmiris. The delineation of the state by the Dogra rulers classified its subjects on the basis of religion. Consequently, the discrimination experienced by the Muslims in social, economic and political spheres was situated in their religious identities. The press in India wrote about Kashmir and its administration and it was complained that, ‘there is want of grip in the administration, absence of touch with the people and the negation of love and attachment on their part to the Government.’<sup>218</sup> The plight of the people had gone from bad to worse and prayers were made that, ‘His Majesty by its royal grace, may be pleased to extend to the people of Kashmir the new light of equality.’<sup>219</sup> Finally, the Muslims of Kashmir submitted their memorandum of grievances to Lord Reading, Viceroy of India in 1924 and also stood against Maharaja Hari Singh in 1931.

During early 1931 the political environment was set for a mass upsurge. As discussed earlier masses were groaning and passing through a difficult period of economic severity under the unresponsive bureaucracy of Dogra regime and the British encouragement to the Muslims changed the political scene rapidly. The Muslim press through leaflets and journals campaigned extensively against the autocratic rule of Dogra Maharaja. The Anglo Indian press also joined the campaign for the denouncement of the Dogra Maharaja’s government. And amidst this upsurge several unfortunate incidents took place in the Jammu region. It was reported that among several incidents mosque in Reasi, Jammu was demolished and the Holy Quran was disrespected by a

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<sup>217</sup>Ibid. p.167.

<sup>218</sup>T.V. Seshagiri Iyer. *United India and Indian States: Kashmir-lessons from the past*. 15 September 1921.

<sup>219</sup>Kashmir Magazine, Lahore, 27 February 27, 1920.

police constable. It caused massive outrage when the news reached Srinagar. There were denunciations, processions and public meetings. Abdullah in the initial period of his leadership allied with the traditional religious leadership of Mir Waiz, who had a strong base among the masses, therefore using religious identity to unify the Muslim community. In March 1931 Yusuf Shah became the new Mir Waiz on the death of his father who was the chief preacher of Srinagar (Central Kashmir). The new Mir Waiz was a young energetic man and as a student at the Theological College at Deoband, Uttar Pradesh had observed the struggle for freedom by the masses in India. Thus, he supported the ideas of the members of the Kashmir Muslim Conference, founded a few years earlier (presently known as the National Conference). The members of this organization like Sheikh Abdullah, Mirza Afzal Beg, G M Sadiq addressed the large gatherings of Kashmiri Muslims in different mosques of Central Kashmir and towns as well and thereby exposing the Dogra regime by throwing light on the deprived economic condition and rights of the subjects.

Sheikh Abdullah achieved a distinct ascendancy over the Dogra Durbar at Hazratbal shrine, as the shrine is considered the most sacred site in Srinagar, where large numbers of Muslims from the region used to go to satisfy their spiritual and material needs. The several annual fairs and Friday congregations at the shrine provided occasions for social contact among urban and rural Muslims.<sup>220</sup> Sheikh Abdullah used the pulpits of various mosques to draw a popular support especially by hearing to the grievances suffered by Kashmiri Muslims. Sheikh Abdullah struggled to reconcile his religious identity with his national identity as Zutshi writes, 'He most effectively wove the Islamic concepts of a just society and individual rights into this organizational agenda which appealed to Kashmiri Muslims precisely because social and political rights had been denied to them on their religion.'<sup>221</sup> In this context Bamzai adds that 'It is from that date that people took upon themselves the task of securing for themselves the rights of democratic self rule.'<sup>222</sup> At this juncture tension and pressure had risen to the flashpoint and required a trigger to explode and that trigger was provided by the speech of Abdul Qadir, a Punjabi who was in service to a European visitor in Kashmir. He gave a seditious speech in front of all Kashmiri Muslims in the surrounding

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<sup>220</sup>Mridu Rai.2004. *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects: Islam, Rights and the History of Kashmir*. New Delhi. Permanent Black.

<sup>221</sup>Chitralekha Zutshi.2003.*Languages of Belonging: Islam, Regional Identity and the Making of Kashmir*. New Delhi. Permanent Black.p.228.

<sup>222</sup>P.N.K Bamzai. 1994. *Culture and Political History of Kashmir*. Vol. 03, New Delhi. M D Publications. p.732.

area of the shrine, Khanaqah of Shah-i-Hamdan in Srinagar on 21 June 1931, registering his dissent against the Dogra Maharaja's oppression. As a result trial was conducted in the Central jail in Srinagar on 13 July, 1931 and a crowd of about 4000-5000 had gathered outside the jail. The angry crowd pelted the stones at the police and the police opened the fire at the crowd by the order of District Magistrate. In this happening twenty-one persons died and many others were wounded. The firing incidents took place in other towns of the region like Anantanag (South Kashmir), Rajpora (South Kashmir) and Handwara (North Kashmir) in which many people died. This incident gave a rise to the communal eruption and three Hindus also lost their lives. The Dogra Maharaja took the action immediately and hundreds of people were arrested. 13 July, 1931 was a significant day in the formation of modern Kashmir as on this day massive protests took place in Kashmir region. Although protest did take place earlier also by shawl weavers, silk weavers and peasants, but before this the Muslim population in entirety had never protested for their rights. The claiming of the public space via language of rights and freedom by the masses during these months was unanticipated to the Pandit community. The community which till now was well cushioned by dint of being co-religionists of the regime, was in the changed scenario appalled by the fear of becoming an insignificant minority if the political and economic balance tilted in favour of Muslims. According to Mattu, 'They (Kashmiri Pandits) were against any such agitation as would ultimately result in the government passing into the hands of majority □ the Muslims likewise, in the Valley of Kashmir, all the Hindus, with the exception of a few Kashmiri Pandits, were opposed to this movement. Since Kashmiri Pandits formed the bulk in the State services, they reckoned that Muslim government if it came into power, could deprive them of their positions for a representative government.'<sup>223</sup> To underscore their indispensability in the state administration they petitioned to the Viceroy and Governor General of India mentioning that unlike the Kashmiri Muslim community which they described as 'barbarous and ignorant'<sup>224</sup> Pandits who were the first to gain education and have been ancestrally serving the state, were 'enlightened, educated, law abiding'<sup>225</sup> felt a threat from the local Muslims. Maintaining their non-communal stand, Kashmiri Pandits however asked the Dogra state for protection premised on their common religious mooring. The Pandits felt that the Dogra state might give a representation to the Muslims in the administration.

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<sup>223</sup> Abdul Majid Mattu. 2002. *Kashmir Issue: A Historical Perspective*. Srinagar. Ali Mohammad & Sons. p.23.

<sup>224</sup> Chitralekha Zutshi. 2003. *Languages of Belonging: Islam, Regional Identity and the Making of Kashmir*. New Delhi. Permanent Black. p.222.

<sup>225</sup> Ibid.

Apprehending a fear of losing their traditional position and power they felt that the Dogra state was complying with the demands of the Muslims at the expense of Pandits. While opposing the giving of statutory recognition to the principle of communal representation, Pandit representatives in a letter to the Maharaja shared their apprehensions, 'that Kashmiri Pandits are being excluded from service because they are Kashmiri Pandits.'<sup>226</sup> According to Bazaz:

There was a sharp reaction to the communal aspect of the popular outburst from all shades of opinion among the Muslims after the first wave of anger had subsided. The traditional amity and good-will between Hindus and Muslims which had been shaken by this outburst asserted immediately. Soon it was realized that the movement, if it was to succeed at all, needed to be guided into healthy secular channels.<sup>227</sup>

### **Secular Approach: *rebirth of Muslim Conference as National Conference***

Sheikh Abdullah while emphasizing that Kashmiri movement was non-communal accused the administration of holding communal views. Thus while speaking to the audience in his Presidential address on 17<sup>th</sup> October 1932 he stated, 'Our movement is not directed against the minorities. I assure all of my countrymen, be they Hindus or Sikhs that we shall always try to redress their grievances. But they must also respect our just rights.'<sup>228</sup> Again on 26<sup>th</sup> March 1938 in his Presidential address of the sixth annual session Sheikh Abdullah stated, 'We must end communalism by ceasing to think in terms of Muslims and Non-Muslims when discussing our political problems.'<sup>229</sup> The response was uplifting because Hindus, Sikh and Muslim leaders addressed the meeting. N Gopalaswami Ayyangar, Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir (from 1937-1943) appointed by Maharaja, commented that a nationalist party has gained the strength in developing a common platform for the masses. However one of his political rivals Pandit Prem Nath Dogra characterized Sheikh Abdullah as a 'communalist in Kashmir, a communist in Jammu and a nationalist in India.'<sup>230</sup>

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<sup>226</sup>Chitralakha Zutshi. 2003. *Languages of Belonging: Islam, Regional Identity and the Making of Kashmir*. New Delhi. Permanent Black.p.225.

<sup>227</sup>P N Bazaz.1994. *Culture and Political History of Kashmir*. Vol 03. New Delhi. MD Publications.Pvt Ltd. p.732.

<sup>228</sup>Presidential address delivered by Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah to the First Annual Session of Muslim Conference on 17 October 1932 cited in. *Dastawez No 4. 17 October 1932*. Mirza Shafiq Hussain, *Kashmiri Musalmano ki Siyasi Jad-o-Jahad (1931-1939): Muntakhib Dastawezat, Gaw Kadal, Srinagar: Gulshan Publisher, 1991, pp. 219-220.*

<sup>229</sup>Presidential address delivered by Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah on 26<sup>th</sup> March 1938.

<sup>230</sup>Pandit Prem Nath Dogra from his statement in Madras. *The Hindu* .Madras.October 1952.



Besides, Dogra Maharaja framed a committee to conduct an enquiry into the 13 July firings, but the Muslims did not accept the committee and made a demand for impartial commission of enquiry, to uphold the secular fabric of the community, which was supported by the British. The British resident forwarded the message of the Viceroy to the Dogra Maharaja in these words, ‘The Viceroy wonders whether it would not be wise for His Highness to ask for independent outside assistance for a commission of enquiry . . . The Viceroy fears that findings by the present committee if local Muhammadans refuse to serve on it, would do little to allay agitation.’<sup>231</sup> And finally British Indian government took the control and delivered a precautionary note to the Dogra Maharaja wherein, he was asked for the acceptance of the note within twenty-four hours. The note contained the information that the government of India, ‘took a very serious view of the situation and feared widespread outbreaks in the Punjab. There were also apprehensions of Muslims from India sending Jathas (bands of volunteers) to the state.’<sup>232</sup> Besides, the British government of India had made suggestions for the following concessions instantly:

- i) That immediate measures may be taken to address the grievances of Muslims in respect of the prohibition of khutbah, azaan etc.
- ii) The Prime Minister should be appointed from European Indian Civil Service.

The Maharaja had no option but submit to the pressure and announce the formation of impartial commission in order to investigate the grievances of the masses with appropriate recommendations and on 12 November 1931 a commission was appointed under Sir B J Glancy of the foreign and political department of the government of India. The commission also comprised of four other members including one Hindu and one Muslim from Kashmir region. The commission submitted the report and recommended that the eligibility for appointment to government posts should not be needlessly high and action should be taken ‘to prevent the due interests of any community from being neglected.’ The Commission commended the grant of proprietary rights with regard to land, ‘of which the ownership is retained by the state and the right of occupancy is enjoyed by private persons.’ Besides, advocated the abolition of certain taxes and doing away with the unemployment problem by installing industries in the state.<sup>233</sup> Simultaneously, the political events were going on at a fast pace in the region and in March 1932, Civil Disobedience Movement was launched by the

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<sup>231</sup>P N Bazaz.1994. *Culture and Political History of Kashmir*. Vol 03.MD Publications. New Delhi.Pvt Ltd. p.732.

<sup>232</sup>Ibid. pp.733-34.

<sup>233</sup>Ibid.p 735.

Muslim Conference asking for Constitutional Reforms Committee, which should be presided over by B.J Glancy. Thus the commission proposed the establishment of a Legislative Assembly to be elected on a restricted franchise.<sup>234</sup>

The Assembly was called a *Praja Sabha* comprising of seventy-five members and thirty-three members to be elected on the basis of limited franchise, in which only 3% of the total population like priests, pensioned officers, district headmen, lawyers, medical practitioners, and middle pass persons could vote. The women were not given the right to vote on the pretext that 'inclusion of women votes would increase the administrative difficulties of the elections'<sup>235</sup> The Muslim Conference won 19 seats out of 21 in the first election to the Legislature in 1934. The *Praja Sabha* was empowered to move resolutions, introduce Bills and deliberate on the budget of the state. The Prime Minister appointed by the Dogra Maharaja, had the power to reconsider the Bill and put forth the amendments, so that the Bill could become an Act. Besides, the *Praja Sabha* provided an opportunity to the people for representing the interests of different communities. In this way the *Praja Sabha* played a positive role in the orientation of people with regard to political and economic policies. However, the Muslim Conference and the people felt the requirement for a broad based democratic government. When freedom of Press was given by the Dogra Maharaja at the recommendation of Glancy Commission, the newspapers also expressed a similar sensibility for the establishment of democratic government and people's urge for fundamental rights.

As mentioned earlier, Sheikh Abdullah developed secular outlook and approach towards politics, which was supported by the Kashmiri Pandit opponents of the Maharaja such as Prem Nath Bazaz, who worked in the Muslim Conference in the subsequent years and strengthened the secular and inclusive nature of the party. And unlike earlier period when Sheikh Abdullah largely harped on using Islam as the primary unifying tool, consequently the political and economic debates during that period were broadly defined by religion. To a common Kashmiri, Abdullah was a Muslim leader more than a national leader and the term 'Kashmiriyat' was yet to dominate the politics of the region. What Kashmiri masses understood as religious discrimination, was soon argued by Sheikh Abdullah as only a conflict of interests between Pandits and Muslims on employment opportunities. Thus, the coming years brought more changes in the politics of Sheikh Abdullah, marking his shift from religious and community identity to regional and national identity. His

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<sup>234</sup> Alastair Lamb. 2003. *Kashmir: A Disputed Legacy 1846-1990*. Karachi. Oxford University Press. p. 94.

<sup>235</sup> P N Bazaz. 1994. *Culture and Political History of Kashmir*. Vol 03. New Delhi .MD Publications.Pvt Ltd.p.736.

nationalist identity was concomitant with his streaming towards Indian National Congress politically. From the religious and the communitarian ways of addressing Muslims, Sheikh Abdullah's politics during this period witnessed a drastic change by addressing the Muslims with Pandits as Kashmiri nation as a whole. Nation and not community, region but not religion were now articulated by Sheikh Abdullah as a means of unifying Kashmiris due to his inclination towards Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. To unify Kashmir regionally, Sheikh Abdullah cut across religion to bind the divisions horizontally in the region. Jawaharlal Nehru's ideas on nationalism were actively being discussed by the party and a possibility of Kashmir becoming a part of India in future was considered. One important reason for the inclination of Sheikh for Congress was its leftist leaning on social and political issues, which resonated with his new ideology. In 1938 Sheikh Abdullah met Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and also came to know that he was rapidly becoming a dominant figure of Indian National Congress, the process of secularization was accelerated by Abdullah. Whitehead argues, 'from the late 1930s, Sheikh Abdullah developed a close personal friendship and political camaraderie with Jawaharlal Nehru.'<sup>236</sup> Sheikh Abdullah had actively pitched in the Congress politics and saw the political movement of his party, the Muslim Conference as an extension of the Indian National Congress in the Jammu and Kashmir state. However, internally the party was undergoing some disagreements over the new ideological shift of Sheikh Abdullah and several leaders like Chaudhary Ghulam Abbas from the Jammu region including the chief religious preachers of the Central Kashmir left the party. Nonetheless, on 11 June 1939, the Muslim Conference became the All Jammu and Kashmir National Conference thus transcending, religion as the major obstruction to unite Kashmiris for a secular Kashmir, which in the subsequent years was going to be associated with Jawaharlal Nehru's secular vision. Whitehead writes, 'In 1939 anxious to avoid any association with communalism, he renamed the party as the National Conference, though it remained overwhelmingly Muslim in membership and continued often to mobilize its support through appeals to religious identity and symbolism. Its main goal was responsible government in Kashmir and an end to the excessive powers of the maharaja and his ministers.'<sup>237</sup> However Behera argues, 'this was a body far more concerned with social and political issues, such as land reforms than with matters of Islamic theology.'<sup>238</sup>

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<sup>236</sup> Andrew Whitehead. 2007. *A Mission in Kashmir*. New Delhi. Viking Penguin Books India. p. 21.

<sup>237</sup> Ibid. 22.

<sup>238</sup> Navnita Chadha Behera. 2006. *Demystifying Kashmir*. Washington, D.C. Brookings Institution Press. p.96.

Thus, the shift in Sheikh Abdullah's ideology is attributed to his association with Jawaharlal Nehru as he publicly abandoned religious ideology in favour of a secular approach, as Bhat explains :

Like us the Hindus and Sikhs suffer innumerable disabilities under present system of government. They too are sleeped in ignorance. They too pay taxes. They too face hunger. The institution of the responsible government is as necessary for them as it is for us. So it is necessary that we change our organization and amend its constitution . . . . We must open our doors to all such Hindus and Sikhs who like ourselves believe in the freedom of their country from the shackles of an irresponsible rule.<sup>239</sup>

Sheikh Abdullah's statement lends credence to Smith's argument , 'that political community's are *asymmetrically* created by leaders articulating conceptions of political *people-hood* and that these leaders have *considerable freedom* in the type of people-hood they choose to adopt.' Initially the political movement of the Kashmir region was in response to the political economic and religious oppression of the Muslim by the Dogra rulers. However, after Abdullah's meeting with Nehru a clear example of a the political movement was re-framed to include Pandits as well as Sikhs. This shows that Abdullah was capable of *asymmetrically institutionalizing* a different concept of *people-hood* and that he used *considerable freedom* to re-define the boundaries of Kashmiri community.<sup>240</sup>

Though it is considered a major ideological shift in Sheikh Abdullah's politics, however religion was not exclusively discredited by the new National Conference. As Zutshi writes in this context, 'Local leaders continually invoked the religiously informed political identity of Kashmiri Muslims . . . . The expression of a national ideology for most of the leadership did not imply an alienation from their religious affiliation.'<sup>241</sup> A similar interaction between Sheikh's religious and regional identity can be observed in his politics in the subsequent decade of 1940s. He worked through this tension by not relegating Islam to a subordinate position, but by emphasizing the transcendental impact of Islam on communitarian identities, wherein it focuses on the welfare of all communities. Many of the speeches, included verses from Quran, addressed to the public on Friday congregations, in mosques especially at a famous mosque of Hazratbal, Srinagar. The mobilization

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<sup>239</sup>R K K Bhatt. 1984. *Political and Constitutional Development of the Jammu and Kashmir State*. Delhi.Seema Publications.

<sup>240</sup> Roger Smith.2001.*Citizenship and Politics of People Building*. Citizenship Studies. 5(1).February.

<sup>241</sup>Chitralekha Zutshi. 2003.*Languages of Belonging: Islam, Regional Identity and the Making of Kashmir*. New Delhi. Permanent Black.p.245.

by the leadership and within the masses therefore did not seem to function within the binary of religious or secular confines, as argued by Zutshi, ‘Abdullah was drawing attention to the fact that nationalism did not have to be devoid of religious sensibility.’<sup>242</sup>

The narratives of Kashmiri Pandits towards the Muslim community in general and National Conference in particular had not changed much. They had rejected National Conference and denounced their political movement. A lot of it had to do with their being the numerical religious minority in the light of the new political shift towards the Muslim majority. As being a Hindu minority, they were aligned with the Dogra regime and had historically benefited from them, authenticated by the references mentioned earlier in the chapter. They had a fear of losing administrative positions to the new educated Kashmiri Muslims, who were now demanding their historically deprived share of rights.

### **Kashmiriyat: ‘people building model’**

At this juncture Sheikh Abdullah had institutionalized a different concept to unify the people of the region:

As the majority and minority community dilemma threatened to bring down the foundations of Kashmiri “Nationalism”, Sheikh Abdullah turned increasingly to concepts such as *Kashmiriyat* to provide sustenance to the rapidly crumbling national edifice.<sup>243</sup>

The creation and dissemination of ‘Kashmiriyat’ at this phase of history became the component of *people-building*<sup>244</sup> as the creation of new constitutive story. It involved leaders persuading people to subscribe to the political identity they are advancing and to accept the leaders as the legitimate authorities of ‘Kashmiriyat’ through newspapers, political rallies, religious sermons and radio. Through this propaganda Sheikh Abdullah was able to get the support of certain Pandit voices including their newspaper *Hamdard*<sup>245</sup> They acknowledged the National Conference as the voice of ‘Kashmiriyat’. Thus during thirties the political loyalty was based primarily on the religious boundaries, but during forties the National Conference employed ‘Kashmiriyat’ to change the

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<sup>242</sup>Ibid.p.255.

<sup>243</sup> Chitralkha Zutshi. 2003. *Languages of Belonging: Islam, Regional Identity and the Making of Kashmir*. New Delhi. Permanent Black. p. 258.

<sup>244</sup>Roger Smith.2001.*Citizenship and Politics of People Building*. Citizenship Studies.5(1). p.73-96.

<sup>245</sup>The Daily Hamdard was a popular, secular newspaper in Kashmir during this period (1935). It was published in Urdu language. It was started by Prem Nath Bazaz and Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah to encourage secular and progressive nationalism in Jammu and Kashmir.

nature of political loyalty by persistently emphasizing that religious syncretism and tolerance were significant component of the region's unique shared culture and history of Kashmiri people. This re-definition of 'Kashmiriyat' was again employed for *people-building* to get implicitly the acceptance for alliance which Sheikh Abdullah had made with the Indian National Congress, a secular nationalist movement.

Thus, from the above arguments it becomes clear that in its initial stages from 1931 through 1939 Kashmiri nationalism was not originally a nationalist movement, but rather a Muslim political movement to correct the inequities in the Dogra Maharaja's government against Muslims. Although formulated along religious lines, this political movement expanded to include all religions, resulting in the conceptualization of a unique Kashmiri nationalist identity in 1939, signified by the transformation of the Muslim Conference into the All Jammu and Kashmir National Conference. After Abdullah's meeting with Nehru □ the political movement was re-conceptualized to include non-Muslims. This shows both that Sheikh Abdullah had *asymmetrically*<sup>246</sup> institutionalized a different concept of *people-hood* and he had *considerable freedom* to define the boundaries of this community.

Sheikh Abdullah's shift from religious approach to secular approach through 'Kashmriyat' as the common regional identity created chaos and confusion among the people. The rising confusion in masses and the deepening divides within the party were soon translated in the decrease of the party's base, which comprised of the weaker sections of the region such as peasants, labourers, artisans and youth. Sheikh Abdullah also lost support among non-Kashmiri Muslims in the Jammu region. And the role played by the non-Muslim members of the National Conference also created negativity in organization. In this context Bazaz reflects the picture of non-Muslims in these words:

Nearly all new (non-Muslims) entrants for years in different communalist Hindu and Sikh organization and had risen to eminence by espousing the cause of obscurantism, reaction and repression by merely joining the National Conference it was difficult for them to totally eschew their old mentality . . . At best from Hindu communalists they could take a big jump and become Hindu nationalists. Above that they could not rise.<sup>247</sup>

Bazaz argues that the main aim was to bring the party 'under the increasing influence of the Indian National Congress' and in doing so they 'were not prompted by any burning desire for freedom'

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<sup>246</sup>Roger Smith.2001.*Citizenship and Politics of People Building*. Citizenship Studies.5(1).p.73-96.

<sup>247</sup>P N.Bazaz. 1954.*Struggle for Freedom in Kashmir*. New Delhi.Kashmir Publishing Company.pp. 167-168.

but ‘prompted by the communal mentality.’<sup>248</sup> Since considerable section of the Muslim population were confused by this new political orientation of ‘Kashmiriyat’, Sheikh Abdullah celebrated 13 July as Martyr’s Day (as mentioned earlier on this day many people protesting against the oppressive Dogra regime had died in firing by the Dogra forces) in order to reestablish his position as leader and regain political loyalty among the Muslim masses. The non-Muslim members had protested and condemned Sheikh Abdullah as a ‘rank communalist’<sup>249</sup> and in the guise of nationalism he wanted to establish Muslim Raj without considering his political compulsion. Several Pandit leaders like Pandit Jai Lal Kilam and Kashyap Bandhu resigned from the National Conference prior to Nehru’s visit to the Kashmir region. P.N Bazaz also resigned in the next year. When the majority of the people were Muslims and the ruler was Hindu, Pandit community apprehended that communal politics would thrive. However, this situation did not happen on ground. Though regional and religious identities were always present, but concomitant and harmonious with each other. According to Madan, Muslims provided all types of goods and services, even idols were made by Muslims for the Pandit community.<sup>250</sup> The relations between Pandits and Muslims, regionally similar but religiously different communities, cannot be reduced to religious dimension rather have to be seen through a spectrum of economic, social, and cultural structure, and thereby creating a cohesion in the mutual relationship of both the communities. Religious differences never threatened the harmonious relations of the two communities. It was only at the political level that sometimes mutual toleration would get disturbed. But on the whole mutual harmony and tolerance have remained the bedrock with regard to inter-communal relations in the region, as Anand Koul writes while highlighting the continuity of customs and beliefs of Kashmiri Brahmans, ‘Even now, after braving storms of centuries, the usages, laws and institutions of the Kashmiri Brahmans are the same as they were ages ago.’<sup>251</sup> When Gandhi visited Kashmir in July 1947 he was inspired by the communal harmony of the region and stated what he saw in the large gatherings, ‘It was very difficult for me to know whether it was predominantly Muslim or Hindu.’<sup>252</sup>

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<sup>248</sup>Ibid.

<sup>249</sup>Ibid.p. 326.

<sup>250</sup>T N.Madan.1984.*Family and Kinship: A Study of Pandits of Rural Kashmir*. Delhi. Oxford University Press.pp.46-47.

<sup>251</sup>Anand.Koul 1991.*The Kashmiri Pandit*. Delhi. Utpal Publications.p .9.

<sup>252</sup>P.N.K Bamzai. 1994. *Culture and Political History of Kashmir*. Vol. 03, New Delhi. MD Publications.p.745.

## **Role of Region and Religion in *Emergence of Political Identity: an overview***

To understand the emergence of political identity during 1920s, it is quintessential to bring forth the shifting meanings of the regional and religious identity employed and popularized by Sheikh Abdullah to mobilize the masses at different junctures in the region. The Dogra state which was deeply religious in nature, set into motion a conflict among the religiously different communities for seeking political and economic rights. The religious discrimination by the Dogra state played a crucial role in the political mobilization and assertion of the Kashmiri Muslim identity, which during the 1920s was intimately enmeshed with the religious affinities. The antagonistic interests of the Dogra state and the Muslim community had turned into a complex and charged situation wherein the voice against the denial of economic and political rights of the Kashmiris Muslims was ready to pitch for the language of religious identity. The language of religion was resorted to by the Muslim masses because the denial of the rights by the Dogra state was premised on the religious neglect of the Muslim community. Soon religious places like sufi shrines and mosques were used as important sites of political assertion. Sheikh Abdullah, who during these years had returned from Aligarh Muslim University, joined the movement against the oppressive Dogra state. He worked with Mirwaiz Mohammad Yaseen Hamdani,<sup>253</sup> who upheld the sufi Islam, which already had a massive influence on the Kashmiri Muslims though sufi preachers from Central Asia unlike the Mirwaiz Jama Masjid, Yusuf Shah who was educated from Darul Uloom Deoband, Uttar Pradesh. Sheikh Abdullah along with Mirwaiz Hamdani formed a socially and politically broader base among the masses as against Mirwaiz Yusuf Shah, who was religiously and socially more exclusive.

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<sup>253</sup>Mirwaiz is a hereditary title of Kashmir's most important religious leader, who is also the imam (head priest) of the historical Jama Masjid (mosque). During the initial years Sheikh Abdullah worked together with Mirwaiz Yusuf Shah. They collectively formed the first opposition against the Dogra state. In October 1932, Sheikh Abdullah along with Mirwaiz Mohammad Yusuf Shah, Chaudhry Ghulam Abbas, Mirza Afzal Beg and GM Sadiq formed the Muslim Conference. Later G M Bakshi joined the group as well. However soon after a year of the formation of Muslim Conference, differences emerged between the Sheikh and Mirwaiz. Sheikh Abdullah began to expand the base of Muslim Conference by encouraging people from other communities like Pandits and Ahmadiyahs to join Muslim Conference. Mirwaiz Yusuf Shah felt that Sheikh was letting down the liberation of Muslims for his political interests. Soon serious disagreements cropped up between the two and their followers. Eventually Mohammad Yaseen Hamdani was raised by Sheikh Abdullah as a parallel Mirwaiz against Mirwaiz Yusuf Shah for Sheikh's political gains. Later on Mirwaiz Hamdani was given the mandate of the State Legislative Assembly from Pampore constituency where from he was declared successful in the election.



Sheikh Abdullah had himself taken to preaching at various mosques of the city and had diverted to himself offerings from Kashmiri Muslims that had formerly been given to the Mirwaiz-i-Jama Masjid. Sheikh Abdullah had claimed the Patthar Majid as his preserve, from which base he sought to establish an alternative religious authority by appropriating the right to issue fatwas through his own appointed Muftis. The contest (between the two was soon) . . . extended to the control of a new set of shrines such as the mosque at Hazrat Bal, which housed a hair of Prophet Muhammad . . . However over the following decades Sheikh Abdullah's party established a distinct ascendancy over its rivals at Hazrat Bal. Shrines such as Hazrat Bal were important to control for an emerging politician because they drew in allegiance of Muslims from the Valley. The six annual fairs and regular Friday congregations held there provided occasions for social contact between the urban and rural Muslims when both spiritual and material needs were satisfied. This explains the acute need felt by both parties to control such important symbols of the cultural and religious affinities of the Kashmiri Muslims. However, Sheikh Abdullah did more than just 'preach' politics from the pulpits of various mosques and directed considerable energy towards dominating these platforms. He managed to undercut the elitist and loyalist Jama Masjid mirwaiz to draw popular support by tapping into multitude of grievances suffered by Kashmiri Muslims.<sup>254</sup>

Sheikh Abdullah in the decade of 1930's took a different shift in terms of region and religion unlike the earlier years when he was only critical of the Hindu Dogra state and its Pandit allies as the co-religionists. His aim was now to gain political support by garnering a broader political base in the region. It became important for him to win the support of the Pandits to unify Kashmiris regionally against the Dogra state. As a result Sheikh Abdullah around the mid-1930s started to moderate and soften his anti-Hindu position. Now Sheikh Abdullah along with his party, Muslim Conference adhered to the secular ideology of the Indian National Congress. Late 1930s marked the beginning of the secularization of politics through a growing friendship and a political alliance formed between Sheikh Abdullah and Jawaharlal Nehru. Political mobilization during these years in the Kashmir region invoked the idea of 'Kashmiriyat' as a political symbol for the regional

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<sup>254</sup> Mohammad Ishaq Khan. 1992. *The significance of the Dargah of Hazratbal in the Socio-Religious and Political Life of Kashmiri Muslims*. In *Muslim Shrines in India*. ed by. Christain W Troll. Delhi. Oxford University Press. pp.172-188.

identity. The period was the heyday for articulation of the notion of ‘Kashmiriyat’ by the National Conference. Among the first goals that Sheikh Abdullah set for, was to involve all Kashmiris in a ‘nation-building’ programme.<sup>255</sup>

At this specific historical and political juncture which lasted till 1947, ‘Kashmiriyat’ was articulated as a ‘reflection of a peerless tradition of regional nationalism, standing above petty religious rivalries and founded on the historical survival of what is perceived as more salient legacy of cultural harmony.’<sup>256</sup> The common culture and tradition of the two religiously different communities was invoked under a shared Kashmiri regional identity as the road to freedom from the Dogra state. Rai in this context writes:

In other words, there were several moments when the political strategy of various groups, whether Kashmiri Pandit organizations or the Kashmiri Muslim dominated National Conference led by Sheikh Abdullah, or even the lyrics of Mahjoor, chose to build bridges across religiously defined – communities to evoke an ‘older tradition’ of culturally based regional co-existence . . . Identified as a secular conceptualization of regionalism, this identity (Kashmiriyat) relied on building bridges, at particular historical moments, across religiously defined communities to evoke a tradition of culturally based regional coexistence.<sup>257</sup>

In 1935 Sheikh Abdullah along with Prem Nath Bazaz started an urdu newspaper, *Hamdard*, which highlighted the problems of Kashmiris, cutting across religion, class and caste. Sheikh Abdullah’s attempts aimed at consolidating support from Kashmiri Pandit community as well, so as to build a mass base against the Dogra state. In a similar attempt in June 1939 Sheikh Abdullah renamed his political party from Muslim conference to All Jammu and Kashmir National Conference to buttress his secular approach. The point emphasized by changing the name of the party was to cut across religious diversity for regional unity. For instance, Abdullah states that if the Kashmiri Pandits desired the inclusion of the Devanagari script in addition to the Perso-Arabic in Kashmir, the Muslims would not object to it.<sup>258</sup> Similarly, Prem Nath Bazaz reiterated the point among his

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<sup>255</sup> Information Bureau. 1951. *Jammu and Kashmir (1947-1950): An account of activities of the first three Years of Sheikh Abdullah’s Government*. Jammu. Ranbir Government Press. p.121.

<sup>256</sup> Mridu Rai. 2004. *Islam, Rights and the History of Kashmir: Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects*. New Delhi. Permanent Black, p.224.

<sup>257</sup> Ibid. p.225,295,296.

<sup>258</sup> R/1/1/13789, CRR (Political Department), Fortnightly reports on the political situation in Kashmir state for the year 1942, report for the first half of May 1942, IOL.

Pandit community that the progress of the Kashmiri Pandit community was interlinked with the political, social and economic rights of the Kashmiri Muslims.<sup>259</sup>

However, the point to be analyzed is that though a secular position was maintained in principle by Sheikh Abdullah during this period, but on ground a clear demarcation was never drawn between religious sensibilities of the Muslim masses and his secular approach. Religion was revisited by Abdullah from time to time, because the essential root cause of the political mobilization of masses against the Hindu Dogra state was imbricated in religion. 'The demand for a parity of religious rights of Muslims expressed since the last decade of the nineteenth century was revived with verve by Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah in the late 1930s at the same time as it was placed within a regional setting.'<sup>260</sup> Simultaneously, the regional identity, 'Kashmiriyat' allowed Sheikh Abdullah a considerable flexibility to include masses from both the religious communities consequently resulting in the formation of a unique Kashmiri nationalist identity in late 1930's. Hence, the coming years witnessed similar changes in the position of Sheikh Abdullah marking his shift from religious and community identity to regional and national identity. But religion was not exclusively discredited by the newly renamed party, National Conference, as it did not alienate religious affiliation of the Kashmiri Muslims. The religion was not relegated to the background rather the transcendental impact of religion was brought back to focus on the coexistence of the two communities. In a speech of Sheikh Abdullah on 10 April 1937 he said:

The Muslims wished the Hindus to have their rights' but only so long as the Muslims had their own.<sup>261</sup>

Religious differences of both the communities never threatened the harmonious relations of the two communities. It was only at the political level that sometimes mutual toleration would get disturbed. On the whole mutual harmony and tolerance have remained the bedrock with regard to intercommunal relations in the region. 'The votaries of Kashmiriyat never lost sight of their religious affinities, or were these deemed incompatible with a regionally shared culture.'<sup>262</sup> Though the religious sensibilities were deeply imbricated in mobilizing the people, the process at

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<sup>259</sup>Prem Nath Bazaz. 1976. *The History of Struggle for Freedom in Kashmir*. Karachi. National Book Foundation. pp.161-162.

<sup>260</sup> Mridu Rai. 2004. *Islam, Rights and the History of Kashmir: Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects*. New Delhi. Permanent Black. p.279.

<sup>261</sup> Speech by Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah in Jammu. Dated 10 April 1937.

<sup>262</sup> Mridu Rai. 2004. *Islam, Rights and the History of Kashmir: Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects*. New Delhi. Permanent Black. p.285.

the same times did not visualize it as antithetical to the essence of the common regional unity and identity. Mehjoor, a Kashmiri poet in this context writes:

*Who is the friend and who is the foe of your (native land)?*

*Let you among yourselves thoughtfully make out.*

*The kind and stock of all Kashmiris is one;*

*Let you mix milk and sugar once again.*

*Hindus will keep the helm and Muslims ply the oars;*

*Let you together row (ashore) the boat of this country.*<sup>263</sup>

### **Quit Kashmir: protest against Dogra dynasty**

Jawaharlal Nehru had convinced himself that Sheikh Abdullah was, ‘definitely a man who counts and will count.’<sup>264</sup> Thus Jawaharlal Nehru rushed to Jammu and Kashmir state along with Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan and expressed his full support for the National Conference as the only National organization in the state.<sup>265</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru’s visit to Kashmir region brought the Indian National Congress and the National Conference close to each other and helped to stop the non-Muslim criticism against Sheikh Abdullah and his political party. Besides, to gain its losing political ground within its masses around mid forties the National Conference under went some radical changes. In September 1944 Sheikh Abdullah adopted *Naya Kashmir Plan* (New Kashmir Manifesto) and *Quit Kashmir* in 1946 in consonance with *Quit India* movement. Before declaring Quit Kashmir movement Sheikh Abdullah sent a memorandum to the British Cabinet Mission on 22 April 1947 on behalf of the National Conference, when the said mission had come to Srinagar from 19 to 24 April 1946. In the memorandum Sheikh Abdullah had denounced the *Treaty of Amritsar* and stated in these words :

As (Cabinet) Mission is at moment reviewing relationship of Princess with the Paramount Power with reference to Treaty rights we wish to submit that for us in Kashmir reexamination of this relationship is vital matter because hundred years ago in 1846 land and people of Kashmir were sold away to servitude of Dogra House by British for seventy-

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<sup>263</sup>Prem Nath Bazaz. 1976. *The History of Struggle for Freedom in Kashmir*. Karachi. National Book Foundation.p.296.

<sup>264</sup>Nehru to Krishna Kriplani .6 March 1940. Nehru Papers .412601. Nehru Museum and Library. Teen Murti. New Delhi.

<sup>265</sup>Selected works of Jawaharlal Nehru Vo. II. New Delhi. 1978. p. 407.

five lakhs of Sikh rupees, equivalent to fifty-lakh British Indian rupees. Then Governor of Kashmir (Sheikh Immamuddin) resisted transfer, but was finally reduced to subjection with aid of British. Thus sale deed of 1846 misnamed Treaty of Amritsar, sealed the fate of Kashmiri masses. We declare to world that this sale deed confers no privileges equivalent to those claimed by states governed by Treaty rights. As such, the case of Kashmir stands on unique footing and people of Kashmir press on mission their unchallengeable claims to freedom on withdrawal of British power on India. We wish to declare that no sale deed, however sacrosanct can condemn more than four million men and women to the servitude of an autocrat when the will to live under his rule is no longer there. We the people of Kashmir are determined to mould our destiny and we appeal to members of Cabinet Mission to recognize the justice and the strength of our cause.<sup>266</sup>

He had come in direct conflict with Dogra Maharaja and declared Quit Kashmir at that moment by saying that the sale by the British of the vale of Kashmir to Maharaja Gulab Singh in 1846 was an invalid act. The Dogra dynasty should hence leave Kashmir region. According to Lamb, Soon the Maharaja and the National Conference came into direct conflict during the so called *Quit Kashmir* movement when Sheikh Abdullah declared at the moment when the British cabinet mission was in India.<sup>267</sup> Thus he questioned the legitimacy of Maharaja Hari Singh and finally told him to *Quit Kashmir* and stated again on the 14 May, 'I announce it to the world that the descendants of Gulab Singh have no right to rule this land. We were not even asked that time when the British sold this land to him. Now when the British have to quit India, we tell Hari Singh to quit Kashmir. We will collect fifty lakhs by contribution and tell him to vacate this land.'<sup>268</sup>

According to Beissinger, political scientist, 'cycles of mobilization feed off connections that agents make.'<sup>269</sup> In this case the Indian national movement and Nehru gave Abdullah a secular approach for Kashmiri political mobilization and in his annual party address Sheikh Abdullah stated, 'we must open our doors to all such Hindus and Sikhs, who like ourselves believe in the of their country from the shackles of an irresponsible rule.'<sup>270</sup> *Quit Kashmir* is an example of Beissinger's

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<sup>266</sup>P.L. Lakhanpal.1995.*Essential Documents and Notes on Kashmir Dispute*. New Delhi.International Books. p.33.

<sup>267</sup>Alastair Lamb.2003. *Kashmir :A Disputed Legacy 1846-1990*. Oxford University Press. p. 94.

<sup>268</sup>Fida Mohammad Hassnain.1988.*Freedom Struggle in Kashmir*, New Delhi. Rima Publishing House, New Delhi.p.133.

<sup>269</sup>Mark Beissinger.2002. *Nationalist Mobilization and the Collapse of the Soviet State*.Cambridge.Cambridge University Press.p.174.

<sup>270</sup>Presidential address delivered by Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah on 26<sup>th</sup> March 1938.

*demonstration effect.*<sup>271</sup> Modeled after Gandhi's Quit India movement, *Quit Kashmir* also denounced the legitimacy of foreign occupier □ in this case the Dogra dynasty □ as mentioned earlier and demanded immediate independence. In his speech on 16 May Sheikh Abdullah had urged for *Quit Kashmir* movement through a secular approach, 'when we raise the slogan of the *Quit Kashmir*, we naturally visualize that the Princes and the Nawabs should quit . . . Why are we banned entry to the army? Why is it that everyday now and then we hear that a Jagir here and a Jagir there has been granted to the statellites of Dogra dynasty only in Kashmir? Why is not a Kashmiri given Jagir or land in the land of the Dogras? . . . Every man, woman and child will shout *Quit Kashmir*.'<sup>272</sup> In his autobiography Sheikh Abdullah states that, 'the people were galvanized, *Quit Kashmir* was on the lips of every Kashmiri.'<sup>273</sup> The Kashmiri poets also helped in mobilizing the masses. Poetry of Hafiz Jullandari in the form of elegy, wherein lamenting the *Deed of Sale* stands a witness to the history of the period:

*“Loot li insaan ki qismat pachattar lakh mein  
Bik gayee Kashmir ki Jannat Pachatter lakh mein”  
(The fate of human beings was sold for Rs. 75 lakhs/Kashmir's  
paradise was sold for Rs. 75 lakhs.)*<sup>274</sup>

People in large numbers responded to *Quit Kashmir* movement. Thousands of Kashmiris protested against the Dogra Durbar, which prompted the Dogra Maharaja to arrest Sheikh Abdullah and three hundred of his supporters. Thus, Sheikh Abdullah was arrested on 20 May 1946 along with

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<sup>271</sup>Demonstration effect is concept put forth by Beissinger wherein he argues that demonstrating trust and worth is crucial to the process people-building. Trust and worth is needed for people-building to be successful. In the case of Kashmir region it is placed in the context of the measures carried out by Sheikh Abdullah in the areas like religion and tolerance vis-a-vis Kashmiriyat and land reforms to demonstrate trust and worth in front of the Kashmiri people.. Arankotaram in his paper 'The Rise of Kashmiriyat: People-Building in 20<sup>th</sup> Century Kashmir' writes, 'Originally, the Kashmiri political movement was a response to religious, political, and economic oppression of the Muslim community. However, after Abdullah's meeting with Nehru – a clear example of a demonstration effect – the political movement was re-conceptualized to include Hindus and Sikhs. Similarly, 'The Quit Kashmir was another example of Beissinger's demonstration effects. Modeled after Gandhi's Quit India movement, Quit Kashmir denounced the legitimacy of the foreign occupier – in this case, the Dogra dynasty – and demanded immediate independence. In Abdullah's autobiography, he declares that, 'the people were galvanized. 'Quit Kashmir' was on the lips of every Kashmiri.' Thousands of Kashmiris in the Vale protested against the Dogra throne.'

<sup>272</sup>The Tribune. Lahore. 26 May 1946.

<sup>273</sup>Sheikh Abdullah. 2013. *The Blazing Chinar* (English translation of Abdullah's autobiography, Atash-i-Chinar, by Mohammad Amin). Srinagar. Gulshan Books.

<sup>274</sup>Ibid. pp. 369–370.

other leaders of National Conference and was put on trial under the case of sedition. After the arrest of Sheikh Abdullah twenty people died in police firing and many were injured, arrested within three days of the arrest.<sup>275</sup> There were demonstrations and hartals throughout the region. However, there was no response to the hartal call in Jammu or Ladakh.<sup>276</sup> Thus, it is apparent that the *Quit Kashmir* movement launched by Sheikh Abdullah was centred on Kashmir region. However, Kashmiri Pandits did not accept that Hari Singh was an autocrat.<sup>277</sup> They criticized Sheikh Abdullah for not taking into consideration the members of the National Conference Working Committee prior to the *Quit Kashmir* movement.<sup>278</sup> However, it is said that they feared that Sheikh Abdullah's , 'efforts in due course would transfer all political power into the hands of the state Muslims.'<sup>279</sup> Besides, Acharya Kripalani , the Congress President did not approve the *Quit Kashmir* movement claiming that it was a mischievous step and stated, 'unless the movement was withdrawn, there was no possibility of a compromise between the National Conference and the Kashmir government .'<sup>280</sup>

In response Jawaharlal Nehru and the Indian National Congress issued a statement reprimanding and urging the Dogra Maharaja for Abdullah's release. Nehru said, "what happens in Kashmir is off course of the first importance to India as a whole not only because of the past years occurrences there, which have drawn attention to it, but also because of the great strategic importance of that frontier state."<sup>281</sup> This implicitly makes the point that Sheikh Abdullah and his party, the National Conference had the support of the Indian independence movement and were effective enough to mobilize Kashmiris in large numbers to support their cause. Finally, Sheikh Abdullah was released from the jail on 29 September 1947. Soon after his release he again mobilized the people through his charismatic speeches.

### ***Naya Kashmir Manifesto: document of rights and economic emancipation***

In the background of political changes the National Conference prepared a political programme in a document, New Kashmir Plan popularly known as *Naya Kashmir* Manifesto in 1944, four years

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<sup>275</sup>Mohammad Yasin Rafiqi. 1980.*History of the Freedom Struggle in Kashmir*. New Delhi.Light & Life Publishers.pp. 143-166.

<sup>276</sup>Resident's fortnightly Report, 3 June 1946; Indian Office Records. S/13/1266.

<sup>277</sup> The Tribune, Lahore,.13 May 1946.

<sup>278</sup>Hamdard.Srinagar.15 May 1946.

<sup>279</sup>Eastern Times.30 May 1946, press cuttings on the Quit Kashmir movement. Department of Information. Srinagar.

<sup>280</sup>Satish Vashistha.1968.*Sheikh Abdullah, Then and Now*. New Delhi.Maulik Sahitya Prakashan.p. 40.

<sup>281</sup>Alastair Lamb. 2003.*Kashmir :A Disputed Legacy 1846-1990*. Oxford University Press.p. 109.

before Sheikh Abdullah came to power. It was published in the form of booklet, its cover page sketched with the red flag and white plough<sup>282</sup>, which was the flag of Jammu and Kashmir. And in the formation of *Naya Kashmir* Manifesto the experiences of Soviet Union were the primary inspiration. Besides Sheikh Abdullah explains in his foreword to the Manifesto:

Progress is a continuous struggle -- a tempestuous struggle . . . . The National Conference has been fighting the battle since the inception of the freedom movement. The struggle has continued but it should have a definite programme . . . . This struggle, of ours is the struggle of the workers against those stone hearted exploiters who as a class of discriminators have lost the sense of humanism . . . . In our New Kashmir we shall build again the men and women of our state who have been dwarfed for centuries of servitude and create a people worthy of our glorious motherland.<sup>283</sup>

Sheikh Abdullah adds, 'In our times Soviet Russia had demonstrated before our eyes not merely theoretically but in her actual day to day life and development that real freedom takes birth only from economic emancipation.' The Manifesto contained a programme for a constitution, economic plan and women's charter. The constitution assured human and political rights such as equal rights for all, freedom of worship, freedom of speech, press, street processions, right to assemble and universal suffrage through secret ballot. In this context the Manifesto was much like the constitution of any democracy. It guaranteed people the right to work and material security during sickness and in old age. It also guaranteed the right to personal property within the limits framed by the state. Further, it assures right to education and equal opportunity to all. According to this plan the National Assembly with unusual legislative powers was the highest organ with the jurisdiction to stand for the state in external relations, to administer the defence of the state, to formulate the economic plan and to execute programmes and policies. The Council of Ministers is accountable to the National Assembly and the constitutional head of the state is the ruler. Besides, judiciary was an independent body in order to discharge their duties. The new Kashmir Plan further envisaged, 'the economic life of the state shall be determined and directed by the National Economic Plan . . . . Cooperative enterprise should be stressed as opposed to destructive competition. Marketing and trade must not be spontaneous but controlled and organized. So far as the agricultural sector was concerned the plan abolished landlordism, assigned land to the tiller,

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<sup>282</sup>New Kashmir, Kashmir Bureau of Information, New Delhi.

<sup>283</sup>Abdul Rashid Taseer. 1968. *Tarikh-i-Hurriyat-i-Kashmir*. Srinagar. Mohafiz Publications. Vol I. pp. 314-383.



organized cultivation of land, fish farming, bee keeping, fair use of forest resources like timber, fuel etc.

A charter on peasants guarantees the right to work on the land and many facilities with regard to health along with social and financial benefits like waving off their debts. A charter on industry focuses on the industrial development as the growing living standard. In order to abolish private capitalism, all the important industries would remain under the control of the government. The worker charter of the Manifesto provided the right to demand work from the government concomitant with his self respect. The section pertaining to banking, currency and finance matters were nationalized and kept under the control of the national economic council. The woman charter encompassed, 'her just and rightful place in society' with regard to educational, economic, political, legal and cultural aspects.

According to Prakash Chandra, '*Naya Kashmir* Manifesto clearly spelled out in most unambiguous terms the *peasant chapter, workers charter, and women charter*' etc.<sup>284</sup> The blue print of New Kashmir Plan (Naya Kashmir) to build a New Kashmir society, economy and polity and called for an 'all sided advancement along all avenues of human activity, regulated in a democratic manner on a country-wide scale'<sup>285</sup> The Manifesto was comprised of two parts. The first part was focused on constitutional structure of the state and the second part with the *National Economic Plan*. The constitutional structure was based on the party's political vision following the

Democratic principle of responsible government with the elective principle applied from the local Panchayats right up to the legislative assembly. The plan envisaged the establishment of rule of law and equal protection of law for all citizens and recourse to quick, cheap and impartial justice, the establishment of legislature to be elected on the basis of adult franchise, the establishment of peoples' courts in all districts and tehsils with the high court at the apex of the judiciary the right of women to elect and to be elected in all the institutions on the basis of equality with men, equal opportunity for all children right to free education to all students etc. The 'National Economic Plan' envisaged a radically new rural economy. It suggested fundamental changes in prevailing land relationships. More specifically, it proposed a system of planned economy ensuring the people at reasonable standard of living. Reorganization of agricultural relations with emphasis on

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<sup>284</sup>Prakash Chandra.1985. *The National Question in Kashmir*. Social Scientist. 13(6). pp 35-56.

<sup>285</sup>The Naya Kashmir Manifesto pp. 22-24.

the principle 'land to the tiller', establishment of co-operative associations for cultivators, peoples' control over forests, industries, banks, regulation of the price level and fixation of wage bill, etc. The plan envisaged setting up of various 'National Councils' including those concerning with agriculture, public health, education and Housing. To the plan were attached three charters, first for peasants, second for workers and third for women.’<sup>286</sup>

It is obvious from above the *Naya Kashmir* Plan was a comprehensive programme in all dimensions. Sheikh Abdullah got the opportunity to implement this programme after the historic events of 1947. In the context Raina writes, ‘No sector of National movement in this sub-continent, conceived of anything like this document. The Fundamental Rights, resolution of Karachi Session of the India National Congress or even the Lukhnow or Faizpur sessions respectively in 1936 and 1937 are miles behind in their democratic content from the point of view of common people.’<sup>287</sup>

Chowdhary argues, ‘The emergence of labour movement as a distinct political bastion of the struggle for freedom thus, changed the basic philosophy and character of the movement . . . . It contained within it a vision of a New Kashmir □ a Kashmir that would not merely spelt prosperity to few privileged Kashmiris but that which would fulfill the aspirations of the masses -- the downtrodden, deprived and marginalized masses.’<sup>288</sup>

*Naya Kashmir* reflected the ideology of new social order, economic equality and political freedom as essential prerequisite of a democratic society. The plan appears to be comprehensive, but it does not clear the essential point about the future of Kashmir in the context of the forthcoming withdrawal of Britishers. It did not clear the status of Kashmir within the Independent India in future. It appeared that *Naya Kashmir* Plan envisaged that the state of Jammu and Kashmir would be autonomous. Ganguly argues, ‘Although these initiatives (land reforms) alienated a significant segment of Jammu based Hindu landed gentry, they won Abdullah the powerful loyalty of lower and middle class Muslims and Hindus’<sup>289</sup>

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<sup>286</sup>Rekha Chowdhary.1995.*Political Upsurge in Kashmir: The and Now*.Economic & Political Weekly. 30(39). p.2421.

<sup>287</sup>N. N. Raina.1978. *Hegemony of the Working People: A Specific Feature of Our Freedom Movement*.Studies of Kashmir Council of Research. Vol 3.p.13.

<sup>288</sup>Rekha Chowdhary.1995.*Political Upsurge in Kashmir:TheandNow*.Economic&Political Weekly. 30(39) .p.2420-2422.

<sup>289</sup>Sumit Ganguly.1996.*Explaining the Kashmir Insurgency: Political Mobilization and Institutional Decay* International Security. 21(2).The MIT Press.p.96.

The section on planning declared that land belonged to the tiller and the landlord did not have any right on the land or the peasants. And more importantly the tiller would be free from his debts. The section envisions:

Egalitarian society in which equal opportunities are provided for self expression and self fulfillment and adequate minimum of a civilized standard of life is assured to each member so as to make the achievements of this equal opportunity a reality.<sup>290</sup>

The *Naya Kashmir* Plan was summed up by Sheikh Abdullah in these lines:

The programme of Naya Kashmir is based on democratic principles of responsible government with an elective principle applied from local panchayats right up to the National Assembly. This is linked with Independence of judiciary and the ultimate responsibility of the executive to the people. In economic sphere we have proceeded on the principle that a planned economy is the essence of the progress and without it there can be no rising of the standard of living of the masses of the state.<sup>291</sup>

The *New Kashmir* Manifesto was criticized by the Muslim Conference, because they got the support from business families and landed aristocracy. Mirwaiz Yousuf Shah called *Naya Kashmir* Manifesto anti-Islamic.<sup>292</sup> Prem Nath Bazaz condemned the manifesto as an 'interesting though thoughtlessly drafted document, envisaging the establishment of a communist state. Yet, opportunistically enough, it guaranteed the perpetuation of the alien Dogra rule in Kashmir.'<sup>293</sup> However the *Naya Kashmir* Manifesto gave high hopes to common Kashmiris as reflected in the slogan:

Alyaban Hallakari, Dushmanan Challkari.

*When the plough moves it tears apart the enemy*

The New Plan on the whole was positive in nature, because it contained a vision that would fulfill the aspirations of the masses.

### **Moment of Accession**

The political atmosphere of Kashmir in 1947 was changing at a fast pace both within and outside the state, because Britain had already made up its mind to withdraw from India and in this

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<sup>290</sup> Abdul Rashid Taseer. 1968. *Tarikh-i-Hurriyat-i-Kashmir*. Srinagar. Mohafiz Publications. Vol I. pp. 314-383.

<sup>291</sup> The Tribune. Lahore. 15 October 1945.

<sup>292</sup> Khalid. Srinagar. 30 April 1945.

<sup>293</sup> The Tribune. Lahore. 15 October 1945.

atmosphere the role of Maharaja Hari Singh and Sheikh Abdullah is primarily pertinent in ideological position. Maharaja Hari Singh was concerned with protecting his autocratic monarchy rather than with his subjects. Birdwood argues, 'had there been in Kashmir in 1947 a ruler entrenched in the affections of his people within an effective undivided representative government based on popular support, a bid for Independence might well have been successful.'<sup>294</sup> Thus Maharaja might have drawn Independence with the support of Sheikh Abdullah, but that could not become possible due to the long standing enmity between the two and the feudal atmosphere of the court as well. Besides, Dogra Maharaja had apprehended that he would receive the worst from the newly created dominions, India and Pakistan □ Pakistan would prefer co-religionists to rule rather than Dogra dynasty; Pandit Nehru through Sheikh Abdullah would be after his downfall. Besides, Kashmir was a matter of ideological significance for India as well as Pakistan. In this context Josef Korbel says:

In the minds of Nehru and the Congress, Kashmir is, in miniature, another Pakistan, and if this Muslim nation can be successfully governed by India, then their philosophy of secularism is vindicated. Moreover, it would ease the tension among those forty million Muslims who still find themselves on Indian soil. But conversely, should the Muslim nation of Kashmir reject its present status and, by plebiscite, accede on the basis of its religion to Pakistan, then religious affinities and arguments of emotion have once more triumphed.<sup>295</sup>

Kashmir was important to Pandit Nehru's India for other factors and the security is the important one, which he explained to British Prime Minister, Clement Attlee on 25 October 1947 when the process for deployment of Indian troops had been going on:

Kashmir's northern frontiers, as you are aware, run in common with three countries Afghanistan, the U.S.S.R. and China. Security of Kashmir, which must depend upon its internal tranquility and existence of stable Government, is vital to the security of India, especially since part of southern boundary of Kashmir and India are common. Helping Kashmir therefore is an obligation of national interest to India.<sup>296</sup>

Before this Pandit Nehru had written an elaborate note to the Viceroy of India, Lord Mountbatten prior to his visit to Srinagar, in which he had described his claims to Kashmir and also emphasized

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<sup>294</sup> Lord Bird Wood. 1956. *Two Nations and Kashmir*. London. Robert Hale Limited. p.41.

<sup>295</sup> Josef Korbel. 1954. *Danger in Kashmir*. Princeton. Princeton University Press. pp. 42-43.

<sup>296</sup> White Paper on Jammu and Kashmir by Government of India. 1948. part IV.No. 1. pp. 45-46.

not moving Kashmir into Pakistan. Nehru was clear in his position that this could be done by pressurizing the Dogra Maharaja by removing the Prime Minister RC Kak, who had a fascination for Independence and also had contacts with the Muslim League leaders<sup>297</sup> and that would be replaced by a popular government headed by Sheikh Abdullah :

‘What happens in Kashmir, is of course of the first importance to India as a whole . . . because of the great strategic importance of that frontier state’ Nehru went on, ‘there is no doubt that Sheikh Abdullah himself is (by) far the most outstanding leader in Kashmir. . . . The National Conference has stood for and still stands for Kashmir joining the Constituent Assembly of India. . . . If any attempt is made to push Kashmir into the Pakistan Constituent Assembly there is likely to be much trouble because the National Conference is not in favour of it and the Maharaja’s position would also become very difficult. The normal and obvious course appears to be for Kashmir to join the Constituent Assembly of India. This will satisfy both the popular demand and the Maharaja’s wishes. It is absurd to think that Pakistan would create trouble if this happens’.<sup>298</sup>

Hence it is obvious that Jawaharlal Nehru was in constant and close touch with Sheikh Abdullah and might have got word of assurance about National Conference’s support for the State’s Accession to India. Nehru perceived Sheikh Abdullah as the most popular leader and sharing an ideological similarity with that of Congress. Sardar Patel, the first Home Minister of India wanted Kashmir’s Accession to India on the basis of its Hindu Past rather than on any ideological proximity as he considered Kashmir, ‘a Hindu state situated in Muslim surroundings.’<sup>299</sup> Therefore, he wrote a letter to the Dogra Maharaja on 3 July 1947 saying, ‘I wish to assure you that the interest of Kashmir lies in joining the Indian Union and its Constituent Assembly without any delay. It is past history and traditions demand it. And all India looks up to you and expects you to take this decision.’<sup>300</sup> Besides, Patel used RSS leader Golwaker to persuade the Maharaja to merge his State with India. In this context Walter Anderson writes:

Home Minister Vallabhbhai Patel solicited Golwaker’s help in an effort to convince the Hindu Maharaja of Kashmir to merge his princely state with India. Golwaker met the

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<sup>297</sup>M C Mahajan 1950. *Accession of Kashmir to India: The Inside Story*. Sholpur Institute of Public Affairs. p. 2.

<sup>298</sup>Transfer Documents.No. 229. pp. 442–448.

<sup>299</sup>Durga Das .1971.*Sardar Patel’s Correspondence, 1945–50*.Vol. I.Ahmadabad. p. 4.

<sup>300</sup>Ibid.p.33.

Maharaja in October 1947 and urged him to recruit Punjabi Hindus and Sikhs into his militia.<sup>301</sup>

In December 1947 Jawaharlal Nehru and Gandhi came to know that arms sent by the Indian Army to the National Militia which was raised by the National Conference to resist the tribal invaders were diverted towards RSS activists in the Jammu region and used there against Muslims in order to change the demographic profile. And on 30 December 1947 Nehru complained to Patel that, 'I am inclined to think that (Mehtar Chand) Mahajan (who was appointed Prime Minister by Maharaja at the recommendation of Patel after sacking pro-Pakistan R.C. Kak) sympathizes with these activities and perhaps help them'. Patel denied the charges a week later, by citing the inquiry conducted by Mahajan himself.<sup>302</sup>

Gandhi's visit to Kashmir region in August 1947 and his impressions about Kashmir as region and religion are:

The state had a predominantly Muslim population. But he saw that Sheikh Sahab had fired Kashmiris with local patriotism . . . they had one language, culture and, so far as he could see, they were one people. He could not distinguish readily between a Pundit and a Kashmiri Musalman . . . Common sense dictated that the will of the Kashmiris should decide the future of Kashmir and Jammu. The sooner it was done the better. How the will of the people would be decided was a fair question. He hoped the question would be decided between the two dominions, the Maharaja Sahib and the Kashmiris. If all the four could come to a joint decision, much trouble would be avoided.<sup>303</sup>

Gandhi had assessed Kashmir as a unique identity in terms of both region and religion, which implied that it was as much different from India as it was to Pakistan. Besides, his suggestion for quadratic dialogue in order to resolve the Kashmir issue was never tried till the issue slowly and gradually turned into a complex one. However, it is not clear whether Gandhi had any kind of influence on Dogra Maharaja's future decision for signing the Instrument of Accession to India. This was the time in the history of Kashmir region when a word from Sheikh Abdullah would have taken Kashmir to either dominions, but his first preference was for Independence, which he later made clear to Michael Davidson of the *London Observer*, foreign news service in May 1949,

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<sup>301</sup>Walter Anderson. Shridher Damle. 1987.*The Brotherhood in Saffron* .New Delhi Vistaar.p. 49.

<sup>302</sup>Durga Das .1971.*Sardar Patel's Correspondence, 1945-50*.Vol. I.Ahmadabad. p. 143-152.

<sup>303</sup>Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi.Vol. 89. Publications Division.Government of India. New Delhi.pp.5-6.

‘Independence would be best. Accession to either side cannot bring peace; we want to live in friendship with both the dominions.’<sup>304</sup> On 29<sup>th</sup> September 1950 Sheikh Abdullah was direct and clear in his take with the United States Ambassador, Loy Henderson in Srinagar:

vigorous in restating that in his opinion (it) Kashmir should be independent; that overwhelming majority populations desired this independence . . . Kashmir . . . people had language and cultural background (of) their own. There Hindus by custom and tradition widely differed from Hindus (in) India, and outlook and background; there Muslims is also quite different from Muslims of Pakistan. Fact was that population of Kashmir is homogeneous in spite of presence of Hindu minority.<sup>305</sup>

Sheikh Abdullah was aware about the region that ‘Independent Kashmir could exist only in case it had friendship with both of India and Pakistan; in case both these countries had friendly relations with each other.’<sup>306</sup> But afterwards it became a case of India or death for Sheikh Abdullah and he was left with no choice when Poonch, Mirpur rebels and Pakistani tribesmen from Northwest Frontier Province invaded Kashmir to liberate their co-religionists. The tribal march had created panic among the people, state administration and especially in the rank of the National Conference, because the slogan of the raiders was *Down with the National Conference and Sheikh Abdullah*.<sup>307</sup> Since an atmosphere of confusion and chaos was prevailing in both the regions of the State, within it Dogra Maharaja had requested Indian government for providing military help, which it had already promised before the invasion.<sup>308</sup> But Mountbatten, Governor General of India, ‘urged that it would be dangerous to send in any unless Kashmir has first offered to accede.’<sup>309</sup> The slogan of National Conference *Freedom before Accession* had become irrelevant due to tribal invasion and military intervention by India. Thus Sheikh Abdullah and his party changed their position by saying, *it would be disastrous for Kashmiris to be brought under control of government with Medieval Koranic outlook*. As a secular Kashmiri nationalist at the time and the most popular leader of the region, Sheikh Abdullah preferred to be with India and when popular opinion was

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<sup>304</sup> Hari Lal Saxena. 1975. *The Tragedy of Kashmir*. New Delhi: Nationalist. p.33.

<sup>305</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States. 1950. Volume V. pp. 1434–1435 In *Frontline*. 23(25) 16–29 December 2006. p. 82.

<sup>306</sup> Ibid.

<sup>307</sup> Secret Eighth Meeting of Defence Committee held at 11. a.m. on 25 October 1947.

<sup>308</sup> Durga Das. 1971. *Sardar Patel’s Correspondence, 1945–50*. Vol. I. Ahmadabad.

<sup>309</sup> Campbell Johnson. 1951. *Mission with Mountbatten*. London. Robert Hale. p. 224.

against his decision as Indira Gandhi informed Pandit Nehru on 31 May 1948.<sup>310</sup> Zutshi while analyzing the moment of Accession writes:

Instead of labeling these choices as the outcome of Pro-Indian and Pro-Pakistani Politics, it is necessary to view them in the context of political atmosphere at the time . . . as has been amply demonstrated Kashmiri political and public opinion was not in favour of either India or Pakistan, even among those who may have sympathized with one or the other . . . the individual Kashmiri as always was lost in the process.<sup>311</sup>

The Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir has written in his memoirs that R L Batra, a senior member of Maharaja Hari Singh's administration was sent to Delhi on 24 October 1947 'carrying a letter of Accession to India from the Maharaja and a personal letter to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and another to Sardar Patel.'<sup>312</sup> The typed letter, dated 23 October 1947 reads:

I hereby authorize my Deputy Prime Minister R.B. Ram Lal Batra to sign the document of Accession of the state with the Indian Union on my behalf, subject to the condition that the terms of Accession will be the same as would be settled with H.E.H. The Nizam of Hyderabad.<sup>313</sup>

Later on the instrument of Accession was endorsed by Sheikh Abdullah with the *fullest support*<sup>314</sup> While holding the chair as Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir Sheikh Abdullah said in the constituent Assembly on 5 January 1951, 'Since the people's representatives themselves sought an alliance, the government of India showed readiness to accept it.'<sup>315</sup>

The Accession got through on the basis of three crucial dimensions a) internal matters of the State, b) a provisional Accession c) its character in the context of three subjects only -- communication, defense and external affairs. Sheikh Abdullah later told Jawaharlal Nehru, 'that if I assured the Muslims that there would be no interference from India in the internal affairs of Kashmir, they would be modified.'<sup>316</sup> It seems that Nehru and Sheikh Abdullah had already discussed the

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<sup>310</sup>Durga Das.1971.Sardar Patel's Correspondence, 1945-50.Vol. I.Ahmadabad. p.317

<sup>311</sup>Chitralakha Zutshi. 2003.*Languages of Belonging: Islam, Regional Identity and the Making of Kashmir*. New Delhi. Permanent Black. pp.307-309.

<sup>312</sup>Father Severin De Jong. Undated.*The Sacking of BARAMULLA (Kashmir) by the Tribesmen of Pakistan* Mill. Hill archive.

<sup>313</sup>Larry Collins.Dominique Lapierre.1995. *Freedom at Midnight*. Delhi.p 357.

<sup>314</sup>S L Poplai.1959. *Selected Document on Asian Affairs: India 1947-50*.Bombay.Oxford University Press. Vol I. p. 75.

<sup>315</sup>Ibid.

<sup>316</sup>Gundavia.The Testament. pp. 40-41.



autonomy of the state in its internal affairs keeping in view the fear of Muslim population and accordingly India's constituent Assembly in October 1949 incorporated Article 306-A in order to provide such autonomy to both the regions of Jammu and Kashmir. Besides, it was made clear at the time of Accession that its finalization was conditional on 'a referendum to the people of the state'<sup>317</sup> and afterwards Pandit Nehru declared his government's pledge to 'hold a referendum under international auspices such as the United Nations to determine whether the people wished to join India or Pakistan.'<sup>318</sup> After India became a republic in January :

Article 306-A became the basis of Article 370 of the Constitution, which reassured Jammu and Kashmir's autonomy within the Indian Union. Under Article 370's provisions, India's federal government could legislate even on the three categories of subjects within its competence only "in consultation with the Government of Jammu and Kashmir state": and on other subjects in the Union list only with "the final concurrence of the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly."<sup>319</sup>

Nandita Haksar while mentioning Nehru's speech to the Kashmiris in Lal Chowk, Srinagar writes, 'Nehru had embraced Sheikh Abdullah and pledged before a mammoth gathering of Kashmiris that they would be free to decide their future . . . Pandit Nehru's words, 'India will never let down Kashmir!'<sup>320</sup>

This provision was important for Sheikh Abdullah in two ways: a) that people of the state and not the Dogra Maharaja had the right for its final confirmation b) that there was an escape route via this provision if Indian Government did not stand by its commitment. Besides, neither its provisional nature nor the commitment of Plebiscite and referendum had been regarded as contentious issues at the time of Accession. And both Pandit Nehru as well as Sheikh Abdullah were opposed to Kashmir's Accession to Pakistan.

In June 1949, Karan Singh, the son of Maharaja Hari Singh had become the regent, because his father was informally excluded from Jammu and Kashmir government. And three years later he had become the titular head of the state under Indian Kashmir's new constitution, named as Sadar-i-Riyasat at the age of twenty one, but eloquent and assertive. Karan Singh in the first year of his

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<sup>317</sup>Mountbatten's letter to the maharaja. 27 October 1947 ; Cited in White Paper. pp. 47–48.

<sup>318</sup>Pandit Nehru's Broadcast from New Delhi on 2 November. pp. 52–54.

<sup>319</sup>Sumantra Bose. 2003. *Kashmir: Roots of Conflict Paths of Peace*. New Delhi. Harvard University Press. p. 59.

<sup>320</sup>Nandita Haksar. 2015. *The Many Faces of Kashmiri Nationalism: From the Cold War to the Present Day*. New Delhi. Speaking Tiger. p. 29.

tenure after consultation with the government of India had sent Sheikh Abdullah in the prison on 9 August 1953, where Abdullah spent twenty-two years. The reason behind Abdullah's imprisonment was his being communalist along with harboring disruptive tendencies. In a letter Nehru wrote to Abdullah on 28 June 1953, 'My government has stood as you have so consistently stood, for a secular democracy. I do not know what your feelings are on this subject now.'<sup>321</sup> A.G Noorani, as a constitutional expert commented on Nehru's letter, 'it was a wounding letter to one whose secular credentials were as impeccable as his (Nehru's) own.'<sup>322</sup> Sheikh Abdullah in response had disagreed in these words, 'Muslims may rightly feel that in spite of you and many others the ideals of secular democracy are not much in evidence in so far as Kashmiri Muslims are concerned.'<sup>323</sup> Simultaneously, Nehru developed association with G M Bakshi, G M Sadiq, D P Dhar and others described as Pro-Indian by Karan Singh to replace Abdullah.<sup>324</sup>

## Conclusion

The Jammu and Kashmir state was formed by the British Rule for its imperial interests. Maharaja Gulab Singh had obtained Kashmir region from the Britishers through the *Treaty of Amritsar* and in return gave seventy-five lakhs in Sikh rupees. In 1947 Gandhi called it a 'deed of sale'. 'Thus Gulab Singh owed not only his title to Kashmir, but his actual possession of it, wholly to the support of British power.'<sup>325</sup> Sheikh Abdullah during 1930s became very popular and according to Lamb, 'he was a populist more than a democrat.'<sup>326</sup> Sheikh Abdullah used the pulpits of various mosques to draw a popular support, but afterwards Sheikh made shifts from religious approach to secular approach through 'Kashmiriyat' as the common regional identity to unify Kashmiris, which according to Beissinger are called *cycles of mobilization*. To gain its losing political ground within its masses Abdullah adopted *Naya Kashmir* Plan and *Quit Kashmir* in consonance with *Quit India* movement. During 1947 political atmosphere inside Kashmir region was changing at a fast pace. Nehru had perceived Sheikh Abdullah as the most popular leader and shared an ideological similarity with the Congress. Sheikh saw the relationship with India as the best

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<sup>321</sup>P N Bazaz. 1978.*The Untold Story of Kashmir Politics*.Srinagar. pp. 25-26.

<sup>322</sup>A G Noorani.1999.*How and Why Nehru and Abdullah Fell Out*. Economic & Political Weekly 34 (5). pp. 268–272.

<sup>323</sup>Alistair Lamb. 2003.*Kashmir: A Disputed Legacy 1846-1990*. Karachi. Oxford University Press. p. 312.

<sup>324</sup>Dr. Sheikh Showket .*Portrait of a Politician*.Greater Kashmir.5 December 2007.

<sup>325</sup>A G Noorani. 2013. The Kashmir Dispute 1947-2012 .Vol. 1. New Delhi. Tulika Books.p.5.

<sup>326</sup>Alastair Lamb.2003. Kashmir: A Disputed Legacy 1846-1990. Karachi.Oxford University Press. p.235.

available option in the circumstances; as the partnership was inspired by common ideals of democracy, autonomy, secularism and socio-political reform.<sup>327</sup> And finally Maharaja Hari Singh signed an instrument of Accession and Sheikh Abdullah endorsed it with the *fullest support*.

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<sup>327</sup>Ajit Bhattacharjea. 1994. *Kashmir the Wounded Valley* , New Delhi. UBS Publishers. pp.13-14.

## Chapter Three

### Development Scenario and Rise of Violence

The chapter is interweaved through three sections, wherein each section is inter linked to the rest, and is crucial in understanding the dynamics of different factors. The main aim of the chapter is to understand how and what role does economy play in the rise of violence in the Kashmir region. The purpose is to understand the dynamics of development in Kashmir region after the postcolonial nation building – how it impacted the political dimension, what are the areas of mutual convergences and divergences. These questions play a significant part in understanding *if and what* was the role of economic factor in shaping the rise of violence in the Kashmir region.

The chapter focuses on the development of Kashmir region in the decades of 50s, 60s, 70s and 80s. To understand the interlinkages better, help of some elaborate narratives is taken from the field, addressing a distinct but related aspect of the political economy of Kashmir Conflict. Not dichotomy but dialogue is taken up as an approach in understanding the intersections between violence and the economic factor.

The purpose of this chapter is therefore to provide explanation of the inter-connectedness between the developmental dimensions and the causes of separatism and rise of violence. The dynamics of uprising cannot be understood in isolation from the economic and political variables. By interweaving the dimension of development of the Kashmir region with the periods of uprising one can get a deeper understanding of the connections and dis junctures between development and the rise of violence. Till the beginning of the twentieth century the Kashmir region was one of the major entry pots of trade and economy between India and Central Asia.<sup>328</sup> Kashmiri traders had a prominent role with their business houses located in Russia as well<sup>329</sup>. Srinagar and Leh were important meeting grounds for traders during the different empires of the time<sup>330</sup>. However, this thriving business came to an end at the beginning of twentieth century after the Russian advancement towards Central Asia, followed by the Chinese occupation of Eastern Turkistan and

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<sup>328</sup>William Moorcroft, George Trebeck.1841. *Travels in Ladakh and Kashmir*. Calcutta. Asiatic Society. Vol 1.pp.306-388.

<sup>329</sup>Ibid.p.383-391.

<sup>330</sup>Janet Rizvi.2001.*Trans-Himalayan Caravans: Merchant Princes and Peasant Traders in Ladakh*.New Delhi. Oxford University Press.

Tibet<sup>331</sup>. Since the borders continue to be closed, which eventually in economic disadvantage to the Kashmir region. Besides the region has been deprived of the commercial and cultural relations with the neighbouring countries which had been built over centuries.

The trade and economy of the Kashmir region with the Indian subcontinent in 1947 was controlled through three highways and four waterways.<sup>332</sup> These highways and waterways connected the Kashmir region with the part of Indian subcontinent, presently part of Pakistan. The worth of business and trade by way of these routes added up to crores of rupees every year<sup>333</sup> and all the people of Jammu and Kashmir regions were beneficiaries of this trade, because highways and waterways were going through the important areas of both the regions. Since all these trade and commercial routes were closed with the partition of India, consequently the regions lost a high market and traditional trade centres.<sup>334</sup> Thus, political instability in the history of Kashmir has caused a disastrous effect on the economy of the region. The town of Baramullah (North Kashmir) especially has never recovered with regard to economy since 1947. The Sikh minority and Gurdwaras at different places lend an environment of pluralism to Baramullah. The economy of this town depended on markets which after partition became Pakistan Punjab. In the words of one of the famous writers of Baramullah, M Y Saraf, 'Baramullah was the biggest town in the Valley □ apart from Srinagar city, centre of fruit and timber industry, it boasted of the bug factories outside Srinagar. Since late 30's, it was fast developing as a tourist resort.'<sup>335</sup> But presently Baramullah gets its business from the contract of the security forces. Simultaneously, it can be inferred that the occurrences of the events during 1947 cannot demonstrate and offer the solution to the turbulence in the region. The subsequent actions cannot be justified by listening to the events which took place seventy years ago. According to Whitehead, it becomes important to comprehend how the separatism and violence emerged in the Kashmir region and what steps are to be taken to resolve rather than 'indulge in recriminations'.<sup>336</sup>

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<sup>331</sup>Ibid.

<sup>332</sup>Four waterways: Sindh, Vitasta (Jhelum), Chenab and Ravi; The three highways: The Jhelum Valley Road from Srinagar to Kohala by way of Baramullah and Dome, Banihal Road from Srinagar to Sialkot via Banihal and Jammu, and Abbotabad Road from Domel to Abborabad through Ramkot.

<sup>333</sup>Prem Nath Bazaz.2009.*The History of Struggle for Freedom in Kashmir*. Srinagar. Gulshan Books .p.416.

<sup>334</sup>Ibid.p.433.

<sup>335</sup>Mohammad Ishaq Khan.2007. *History of Srinagar ,1846-1947:A Study in Socio-Cultural Change*.Gulshan Books. Srinagar. pp. 34-37.

<sup>336</sup>Andrew Whitehead. 2007.*A Mission Kashmir*.Penguin Books India. New Delhi.p.241.

### **Dogra Rule: *decline in development***

During Dogra rule the Kashmir region was again going through the *great misfortune* as in the words of the historian and freedom fighter Prem Nath Bazaz, ‘British did not take the Valley under their control and instead handed it over to the medieval minded Dogras who brought nothing but misery.’<sup>337</sup> ‘The Dogras did not want to modernize Kashmir and if some improvements took place it was because of British intervention from the 1880s.’<sup>338</sup> The Dogra dynasty was interested in drawing the wealth of the region and transforming it to the Maharaja’s hometown, the Jammu and sharing a part of it with co-religionists and collaborators who according to Walter Lawrence, ‘formed a powerful ring of iron, inside which the village tax payer lay fascinated, and if he were wise, silent.’<sup>339</sup> The oppressed people of the region were ruled by the Dogra Maharaja through jagirdars, chakdars, corrupt officials and notorious police officers. The developmental policies carried no priority for the government except few departments were established by the colonial power and subsequently under the pressure of the freedom movement like certain departments, roads, hospitals and school were given priority.<sup>340</sup> In the context Godbole report states on the eve of 1947 :

In 1947 Jammu and Kashmir was one of the least developed states, which was reflected in the abysmal mass poverty, deprivation, hunger, disease and ignorance. In 1950 the state had a per capita income of Rupees 208. The rate of literacy was 5%. Agriculture which was the dominant sector was stagnant. Industrial development was almost negligible. Infrastructure bottlenecks crippled the state economy.<sup>341</sup>

At this point of time Sheikh Abdullah along with his colleagues was deliberating on the issues like the exploiter and the exploited, not in terms of the Muslims and non-Muslims, although the region was disintegrated on religious and economic lines. While addressing these issues Sheikh Abdullah explained in these words:

Our experience had convinced us that the basic conflict among the various sections of people was not that of religious but material interests. It was essentially a conflict between

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<sup>337</sup>Prem Nath Bazaz.2009.*The History of Struggle for Freedom in Kashmir*. Srinagar. Gulshan Books.p.108.

<sup>338</sup>Mridu Rai.2004. *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects*. New Delhi. Permanent Black. pp.136-144.

<sup>339</sup>Walter Lawrence. 2002. *The Valley of Kashmir*. Srinagar. Gulshan Books.p.401.

<sup>340</sup>Shirin Bakshi.1992.*Social Change in Kashmir with Special Reference to European Impact (1846-1947)*. PhD thesis, Department of History,University of Kashmir.

<sup>341</sup>Government of J&K, Report of the Committee on Economic Reforms for Jammu and Kashmir, General Administration Department, August 1998.p.3.

the exploiter and the exploited, between the oppressors and the oppressed. We had realized that we were confronted by a despotic regime, not by any one person. It was a quarrel between us and a feudal set-up, not with the person of the feudal lord. To put it differently, we hated the sickness not the sick man.<sup>342</sup>

The Kashmiri Pandits did not respond to the call of Sheikh Abdullah for joining the movement against the autocracy of the Dogra Maharaja's rule. The Muslims who were benefited by the Maharaja also did not join the movement like the co-religionists.<sup>343</sup> However, Sheikh Abdullah and his comrades believed in blending of democracy and secularism. The communists of India like Ehsan Danish, BL Bedi, KM Ashraf, Daniel Latif<sup>344</sup> found a socialist ideology in Abdullah and helped in drafting the *Naya Kashmir* Manifesto (New Kashmir Plan) and it was the first of its kind in the subcontinent. The Manifesto was inclusive for a holistic development of the state.

### **Development during the period of Sheikh Abdullah (1948-1953)**

In March 1948 Sheikh Abdullah took the charge of the office as the Prime Minister at the juncture when the Kashmir region was economically broken besides political instability and social rupture. The exports and the imports had discontinued due to the partition and closure of the commercial routes. The situation had become more adverse by the heavy floods of 1950. The state had Rs 208 per capita income. Agricultural growth declined and literary level was 5%.<sup>345</sup> There was the rule of the jagirdars and chakdars and the legislature was a titular institution. It was difficult for the poor masses to improve their economic condition as the corruption and nepotism had seeped into the economy of the region. Abdullah started to implement the *Naya Kashmir* Manifesto to bring remarkable changes in the region although he stayed in power for a short period.

### **Land Reforms and Abolition of Landlordism**

1950s was a decade marked by Agrarian Reforms<sup>346</sup>, led by Sheikh Abdullah. Land reforms which led to the abolishing of landlordism by distributing the land to the landless tiller, were seen as a

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<sup>342</sup>Sheikh Abdullah.2013.*The Blazing Chinar* (English translation of Abdullah's autobiography, Atash-i-Chinar, by Mohammad Amin).Srinagar.Gulshan Books. p.217.

<sup>343</sup>Ibid. pp.44-52.

<sup>344</sup>Ibid. pp.217-218.

<sup>345</sup>Mirza Afzal Beg.1951.*On the Way to Golden Harvest: Agricultural Reforms in Kashmir*.Government of J&K.

<sup>346</sup>In context of the unequal land relations vis-a-vis the power of the landed landlord and the powerless, landless peasant,the government under the Prime Minister Sheikh Abdullah in 1950 decided to implement an agrarian reform

revolutionary step of correcting the *historical wrongs* against the landless peasants. The total cultivable area of the land belonged to the Maharaja and his privileged persons which included: muafidars, jagirdars and mukarraries. The privileges and benefits received by these classes were abolished by Sheikh Abdullah and his government.

Passing of this Act (Big Landed Estates Abolition Act) led to the expropriation of 9,000 land owners (both in Jammu and Kashmir) who owned among themselves 8 lakh acres, without payment of compensation for the surplus land. Thus, 2.3 lakh acres were transferred to about 2 lakh tillers out of 4.5 lakh acres of land taken away from landowners.<sup>347</sup>

The state also provided protection to the peasantry by allowing the tenant to hold on three-fourths of the production of wheat, rice, and oil-seeds, and two-thirds of the production of pulses and cotton along with other agricultural products unlike the earlier situation wherein the peasants had to buy their own seeds and agricultural implements along-with giving 50% of their crop to the landlord.<sup>348</sup> Korbelt writes:

In April 1949 a committee was set up to prepare a plan for the transfer of land to the peasants. Eighteen months later, the Big Landed Estates Abolition Act superseded most of the preceding temporary measures and legalized a sweeping land reform. The landlord was allowed to keep not more than 160 kanals (20 acres) of agricultural land, 8 kanals (1 acre) of land for residential use or vegetable gardening, 4 kanals (1/2 acre) as residential site, and 10 kanals (1.25 acres) of orchards □ altogether 182 kanals (22.75 acres) . . . Extremely interesting was the provision for the confiscation of the property of “enemy agents”, these agents being largely defined as persons who had expressed a desire for Kashmir to join Pakistan.<sup>349</sup>

Though many argue that the real reason behind the land reforms was to appease a large section of Kashmiri peasants to give up the demand of plebiscite. Korbelt cited in Prasad argues:

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programme. The land reform programme owes its origin to the New Kashmir Manifesto (1944) as a promise of Sheikh Abdullah and his party, National Conference to the landless peasants while fighting against the oppressive Dogra Rule. Muhammad Ashraf Wani in Religion, Economy and Political Crises in Kashmir writes, ‘In 1950, the government passed the Big Landed Estates Abolition Act, under which a proprietor could retain only 223/4 acres of land, and the right to ownership in land in excess of this unit was transferred to the tillers’.

<sup>347</sup>Anirudh Kumar Prasad.2014.*Sheikh Abdullah and Land Reforms in Jammu & Kashmir*.Economic &Political Weekly. XLIX (31).p.131.

<sup>348</sup>Josef Korbelt.1954. *Danger in Kashmir*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.p.210.

<sup>349</sup>Ibid. p.211.



For the party, which has the more serious reasons to be fearful of the result of a plebiscite □ the government in Srinagar □ has been doing everything in its power to delay this day of reckoning. It has been working hard to change the conditions of life under the Maharaja and to bring some relief to the poverty-stricken masses.<sup>350</sup>

The land reforms therefore saved his losing popularity among the masses especially in the rural areas. Whatsoever the reasons behind, land reforms drastically changed the social structure of Kashmiri society since 1950s. The landmark step of implementing the land reforms resulted in the abolishing of the landlordism and feudal system in the agricultural structure of the society along with rendering thousands of peasants free from economic dependence and slavery. Land reforms hence beckoned the liberation of the peasantry. Gautam Navlakha in *Political Economy of Fiscal Autonomy* argues that the land reforms in Kashmir region from 1948-52 led to tremendous progress in agricultural productivity and generated surplus. Navlakha calls it an exceptional social transformation from poverty to prosperity. However, discussing the economic crisis of the decade of 1960s he argues:

But achieving the full potential were hampered because of debilitating policies of the Indian rulers, who saw in Kashmir's financial self-sufficiency the seeds of disunion. They thwarted industrialization . . . With the real and potential sources (hydro electric/ river transportation potential/ horticulture sector) for turning JandK self-sufficient remain blocked, the result has been Kashmir's over dependence on the government sector for employment and economic sustenance. The trouble is that even growth in agriculture and tourism is obstructed because J&K is denied access to a big markets for its products.<sup>351</sup>

Ishfaq Mir, one of the interviewee during the field survey discussed the impact of land reforms on the society:

Land reforms changed the structure of the Kashmiri society drastically. For the first time, power came to the Muslims, because land came in their possession. This economic power eventually got translated into social and political power . . . *Naya Kashmir Manifesto* □ it

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<sup>350</sup>Anirudh Kumar Prasad. 2014. *Sheikh Abdullah and Land Reforms in Jammu & Kashmir*. Economic & Political Weekly. XLIX (31). p.131.

<sup>351</sup>Gautam Navlakha. 2003. *Political Economy of Fiscal Autonomy*. Economic & Political Weekly. p.4214.

is a proper Communist Manifesto, the Constitution of our state itself. The land reforms came from a communist ideology.

When I asked him if the ideology still exists in Kashmir, he says:

No, I don't think it is. 'Once upon a time!' when communism was functional in Kashmir, it was a Kashmiri variant of communism, not the communism of Russia or South America. See!, the fundamental idea of communism is that there should be an industrial society, Kashmir in the first place wasn't an industrial society, and in fact it still isn't. It is an agricultural society. So some ideas were borrowed from outside, which were abstract ideas! to be clear. That's why communism failed here. Communism was meant basically for the industrial society and its fundamentals rested on a socialist revolution, to have a society which is more just, where economic relations are just. So in Kashmir's context it worked to demystify the unequal economic relations. *Feudalism nahi chalega, land to the tiller chalega!* (Feudalism won't work anymore, as it is not just, Land to the Tiller is just). Though land reforms weren't done properly and uniformly. There are many issues associated with it like lot of land wasn't distributed and it was done hastily. For example, land reforms didn't take place in Jammu and Poonch. But yes, I agree people were benefited. If I am speaking to you in English today, it's because of land reforms that improved the condition of my grandfather, who was a peasant.

Abdullah was keen to make the Kashmir region self sufficient and focused on the policy of increased agricultural production to evade the economic dependence on the centre. The government launched the policy of *Grow More Food* in 1948 and peasants were given permission to cultivate the land which was the property of the state and half of the production was given to the peasants.<sup>352</sup> During the same period landless peasants were allotted 185,583 kanals<sup>353</sup> of land.<sup>354</sup> All these agricultural reforms led to the increase in production by 200,000 maunds.<sup>355</sup> In addition to give more boost to the agricultural production the department of irrigation was created to restore old canals and construct new ones.

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<sup>352</sup>Government of J&K. Order No. 48-Cof. 17 April 1948. Archives Reference Library. Srinagar. Accession No. 1241. pp. 11-12.

<sup>353</sup>1 Kanal equal to 5445 square feet.

<sup>354</sup>On the Road to New Kashmir. Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Jammu. Ranbir Government Press.

<sup>355</sup>Ibid.

## **Restructuring of Educational System**

The government of Sheikh Abdullah restructured the educational system on the priority basis to enlighten people for their advancement in the educational landscape and also as an instrument to eliminate poverty. In this context Abdullah once asserted, 'Land to the Tiller and education for everyone were the two basic needs, if the people of the state were to emerge into the wider lands of plenty and enlightenment, the 'golden threshold' to a fuller life.'<sup>356</sup> Sheikh Abdullah ascribed such a great significance to education that the education portfolio was taken by the Prime Minister, Abdullah himself. He did not want the men and women of the state to become just clerical workers rather to grow as creative and constructive citizens for the holistic development of the state. The students with scholarly inclination were facilitated for further studies. In this direction a renowned educationist Mr M A Kazmi was nominated as the Director of Education to suggest improvements along with the education reorganization committee. The recommendations of this committee included the skill development in the form of arts and crafts as an essential part of the syllabus till the primary grade. The schools were authorized to select the particular skill which was accessible in the locality of that particular school, besides carrying economic value. Further, at the secondary level of education students were encouraged to opt for technical, agricultural and industrial based knowledge and skill to fulfill the developmental requirements of the state. The next step taken in the spirit of the *Naya Kashmir* Manifesto was to formulate a Text Book Advisory Board in 1948 and the Prime Minister chaired the board to frame the text books for the schools.<sup>357</sup> As a result 2,790,500 text books were published till 1950.<sup>358</sup> In addition teachers were given orientation training through refresher courses. Social education centres for adults were established throughout the state of Jammu and Kashmir to educate the common masses. For the development and expansion of educational infrastructure 35% of the annual budget was spent by the government every year.<sup>359</sup> A number of schools were constructed and two colleges were established in Sopore (North Kashmir) and Anantanag (South Kashmir), besides one college in Srinagar was exclusively

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<sup>356</sup>Government of J&K.Report of the Educational Reorganization Committee. Jammu. Department of Education.1950.

<sup>357</sup>Government of J&K, Report of the Educational Reorganization Committee. 1947-50.p.5.

<sup>358</sup>Josef Korbel.1954.*Danger on Kashmir*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. p.209.

<sup>359</sup>Sheikh Abdullah.2013.*The Blazing Chinar* (English translation of Abdullah's autobiography, Atash-i-Chinar, by Mohammad Amin).Srinagar.Gulshan Books. p.499.

founded for girls. In 1948, the Jammu and Kashmir University was also inaugurated. In this context Korbel proclaims, 'much has been done in this field.'<sup>360</sup> According to Neerja Mattoo:

The years from 1950 to the '70s were the kind of years when everything seemed within reach anything possible with hard work and determination. The achievements of women during these decades were so significant that they altered the gender landscape of schools, colleges, offices, courts, police stations, hospitals, hotels and business establishments. Women were everywhere, making their mark in every field.<sup>361</sup>

### **Establishment of Industries and Co-operatives**

The government established certain industries like Drug Research Laboratory in Jammu, two printing houses -- Ranbir and Pratap Government Press, cement factory at Wuyan, Awantipora, (South Kashmir), ply-board factory and joinery mill at Pampore (South Kashmir). Since the partition had badly hit the trade of timber due to the closure of waterways, the government constructed the Jammu-Pathankot road to restore the trade and the transport for plying the timber, which was provided to the traders at subsidized rates. Likewise, a boost was given to the silk factory as the government sourced the silk worm eggs from outside and distributed them among the silk weavers. Besides, industries pertaining to medicinal drugs, carpets, wool, sports goods were promoted by the government. In the spirit of the New Kashmir Manifesto the government focused on the co-operative enterprise, controlled and regulated markets to abolish the monopoly of private enterprise. Consequently, the thrust of the government on the development of the industries was to improve the economy and condition of the people. The small scale industries manufacturing hand loom weaving, embroidery, hosiery, papier mache<sup>362</sup>, furniture, ceramics got organized into industrial societies along with the artisans by the government.<sup>363</sup>

The multi purpose co-operatives were established especially in the rural areas to help the poor peasants. The co-operatives facilitated the basic necessities of daily life. Till 1950 306 co-operative societies with a capital of Rs 178,993 were established in the Kashmir region whereas 30 co-

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<sup>360</sup> Josef Korbel. 1954. *Danger in Kashmir*. Princeton. Princeton University Press. p. 209.

<sup>361</sup> Neerja Mattoo. 2002. *The Story of a Women's College in Kashmir*. In *Speaking Peace: Women's Voices from Kashmir* edited by Urvashi Bhutalia. Kali. New Delhi. p. 164.

<sup>362</sup> Papier Mache is a popular handicraft of Kashmir. It was introduced in Kashmir region by Muslims saint Mir Sayyid Ali Hamadani who came from Persia in the fourteenth century. Papier Mache which is done on paper pulp, is a richly decorated, colourful artifact, generally in the form of vases, cups, bowls, boxes, trays, lamps etc.

<sup>363</sup> P.N Bazaz. 1967. *Kashmir in Crucible*. Gulshan Books. Srinagar. pp. 47-48.

operatives with a capital of Rs 25,225 were established in the Jammu region.<sup>364</sup> According to Korbelt there were 1731 agricultural co-operatives, 378 non-agricultural co-operatives, 386 sale and purchase co-operatives in 1950.<sup>365</sup> The transport sector was established and organized by the government, which had 400 vehicles commuting from Srinagar to Jammu and vice-versa. Besides, around 1000 people got employment opportunities in this sector.<sup>366</sup> People largely were contended by the organizations like co-operatives, who were administering at the local level. In this context Korbelt puts forth, 'in truth the National Conference is the only effective political party in Kashmir, with local organizations in almost every village . . . On the surface considerable progress has been achieved in the local self government.'<sup>367</sup>

### **Employment Opportunities**

Sheikh Abdullah as mentioned earlier, had a socialist ideology, hence framed a policy of appointing the Muslims in proportion to the ratio of the population, who were under represented in the service sector during the Dogra Maharaja's government. The Muslim representation from 1947 to 1953 was increased from 30% to 50% in gazetted services.<sup>368</sup> The state for the first time got a Muslim Accountant General, Muslim Inspector General of Police, a good number of Muslim police officers and Deputy Commissioners. The service sector during Maharaja's rule was dominated by Dogra Rajputs, Kashmiri Pandits, Pirs and Pirzadas. To recount Sheikh Abdullah's words in this context :

When the country became free and we took over, we thought that justice and equality demanded that we take measures to uplift the backward sections of the Muslim community. Members of the Hindu community, who dominated the administration, misconstrued it as an assault on their monopoly. They knew that their position was weak. So, in order to confuse the minds they raised a hue and cry, and gave a distorted picture of the consequences of the land reforms. Patel on many occasions made queries in this regard, when we presented him with statistics concerning the number of employees in government

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<sup>364</sup>Government of J&K.1947-50.p.15.

<sup>365</sup>Josef Korbelt.1954.*Danger in Kashmir*.Princeton University Press. Princeton.pp. 215-216.

<sup>366</sup>Government of J&K,1947-50.p.9.

<sup>367</sup>Josef Korbelt.1954.*Danger in Kashmir*.Princeton University Press. Princeton.p.208.

<sup>368</sup>Mohd Yousuf Saraf. 2005.*Kashmiris Fight for Freedom*. Vol 2. Lahore.Ferozsons.p.1217.

departments with a ratio between Muslims and Non-Muslims, he was taken aback. The complaints should have come from the Muslims, and not from the Hindus, said he.<sup>369</sup>

### **Political Uncertainty: *tourism sector***

Since peace and prosperity are closely tied, so nobody wants to invest in the disturbed region and that is the reason Godbole report finds the Kashmir region untouched by the ongoing foreign investments.<sup>370</sup> The most important income source during the colonial era was the tourism, as about thirty thousand tourists used to visit Kashmir region every year and thereby providing a source of income to 200,000 people.<sup>371</sup> But, the effect of political uncertainty on Kashmir tourism during 1948-1952 in the contemporary sources reflects the present situation of tourism as well. According to Prem Nath Bazaz:

A great part of income of Kashmiri people and the state government is derived from influx of visitors. Experts in the tourist trade are of the opinion that by proper publicity and by affording reasonable amenities and facilities to the visitors, at the modest estimation more than a lakh people would like to visit the Valley every year. Before 1947 nearly 40,000 outsiders came annually. It gave an impetus to the local business and brought substantial revenue into the State coffers . . . Every year at the beginning of the season the Nationalist Government assures the Kashmiris that the coming year will bring business beyond expectations and more visitors that had ever come will be pouring into the valley but at every close of the season it is known to have been worse than the last. One unfortunate communal incident somewhere in the subcontinent, some controversy between India and Pakistan or an un-statesman like speech by some leader, mars the bright prospects.<sup>372</sup>

In a similar context Sheikh Abdullah unfolds the situation of Kashmir region in his speech on 8 May, 1952 in these words:

There is a tension in the atmosphere . . . For instance people do not invest any capital in business and when people do not invest it is difficult to progress. After all government cannot do everything. Many things are to be achieved by the people themselves. As

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<sup>369</sup>Sheikh Abdullah. 2013. *The Blazing Chinar* (English translation of Abdullah's autobiography, Atash-i-Chinar, by Mohammad Amin). Srinagar. Gulshan Books. p.342.

<sup>370</sup>Godbole Report 1.

<sup>371</sup>Josef Korbel. 1954. *Danger in Kashmir*. Princeton University Press. Princeton. p. 217.

<sup>372</sup>Prem Nath Bazaz. 2009. *History of Struggle for Freedom in Kashmir*. Srinagar. Gulshan Books. Srinagar. pp.420-21.

Kashmir is a place where visitors come and go. For their comfort hotels must be opened. But many friends have told me that due to uncertain conditions they cannot open any hotel. This is only an instance. I can give other instances of the same kind to show how due to the present conditions the progress . . . has stopped.<sup>373</sup>

The history of Kashmir region in the post-1947 period was predominantly the history of development. The developmental changes took place in different spheres and thereby divided the post colonial history of Kashmir region mainly into two phases, i.e., 1947-75 and 1975 till the present. The period saw fundamental changes in the political, economic and social set up in the region in which Sheikh Abdullah played a significant role.<sup>374</sup> He abolished the Dogra monarchical rule in the Kashmir region and made the office of the head of the state an elected one. He gave a set back to the feudal set up and the age old oppressed peasantry became the owners of the land and its agricultural produce. Besides, roads, canals and hospitals were constructed. A National Militia was established which provided an opportunity to the majority of the people especially the youth to get military training for the first time in four centuries.

### **Developmental Expansion during the period of G.M Bakshi (1953-1963): *analytical overview***

There has been consistency in the ideologies of the governments at the centre that development by modernizing and improving the condition of people will bring normalcy in the Kashmir region.<sup>375</sup> The state was given subject experts and planners to guide the government in drawing developmental plans. This policy was given an enormous impetus during the G M Bakshi<sup>376</sup> period to whom Pandit Nehru assigned the job of restoring peace and parting ways with Abdullah. Sheikh Abdullah's dismissal took place on the basis of the issues like corruption, intolerance towards opposition, political and financial crisis. To overcome the crisis of the region G M Bakshi addressed the economic problems faced by the people and framed the economic policy along with

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<sup>373</sup>Khidmat (Daily Newspaper).10 May, 1952.

<sup>374</sup>The theme of the chapter throughout its length is argued and analyzed through the larger framework of the thesis. Nowhere in the chapters, the focus of the work shifts from its central theme of understanding the decline of democracy and the rise of violence, to the economy of Kashmir conflict or to any other ancillary theme. Rather the chapter must be read as an associative ally chapter to the other chapters, in opening, for a deeper and comprehensive understanding of Kashmir region. The understanding of the economic aspect hence forms a part for a much-pronounced understanding of the Kashmir region and its associated aspects.

<sup>375</sup>Bidyut Chakravarty.Mohit Bhattacharya. 2008.*The Governance Discourse:A Reader*.NewDelhi.Oxford University Press.pp.45-46.

<sup>376</sup>G.M Bakshi was one of the allies of Sheikh Abdullah and during 1950's both were pulling in different directions.

his advisors to meet the challenge. On 5 October, 1953 Bakshi determined the policy in these words, 'By far the largest problem that confront us, and to which I attach the greatest importance is as I have already stated, not of any political or military nature, but of eliminating the economic distress which has been on the increase since 1947 and is today at its worst . . . . The first and the foremost step to be taken by us will be to find out the measures for arresting the economic degeneration.'<sup>377</sup> Bakshi received the full financial support from the central government to develop the condition of the Kashmir region and its masses. G M Bakshi had no mass base in the region, but he approached the people by addressing the economic problems and the holistic development of the region. The full financial support, policy suggestions, political co-operation along with Bakshi's capability and capacity kept the political environment normal and peaceful in the region. He won the loyalty of Shia sect, Kashmiri Pandits, Dogras and Ladakhis. Besides, he had the knack to interact and mix with the common man, which eventually reduced the public opposition against him. Besides, his accomplishment of developmental projects were accepted and appreciated also by the staunch opponents.<sup>378</sup> He ruled for one complete decade and would repeatedly say, 'One who would not be able to improve his economic position during my period, he would not be able to achieve it ever.' Bakshi did not hurt the political sensibilities of the people, rather he got the support by addressing the basic economy through modernizing and improving the condition of the people in order to win the pulse of the people and restore peace in the region. Bakshi approached the problem indirectly i.e., by fulfilling the requirements of people. In this context M Y Saraf states:

On his first visit to Baramulla as Premier he told a select meeting of Muslim elders that he needs their cooperation; . . . He told that he had services and scholarships to offer, enormous development funds for improvement of their economic well-being and in return, he needed their support. This argument he must have advanced at other places too; whether it was a strategy or a practical plea, it did succeed.<sup>379</sup>

The account of the economic development of the region was also given by international newspapers like New York Times, Economist (London), Al Joumhouria (Cairo), News Chronicle

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<sup>377</sup>An account of the proceedings of the State Legislature on the Motion of Confidence in Bakshi government.5 October,1953: Naya Kashmir Orient Press Jammu.p.30.

<sup>378</sup>C B Birdwood. 1956.*Two Nations and Kashmir*.London.Robert Hale.p.195.

<sup>379</sup>Mohd Yousuf Saraf.1997.*Kashmiris Fight for Freedom*. Vol 2. Lahore.Ferozsons .p.1222.



(London), Pravda (Moscow), and Stockholms (Tidningen).<sup>380</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru also validated Bakshi's progressive governance in these words:

It is really astonishing how Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad and his colleagues in the Ministry have, by their policy and hard work changed the entire picture and outlook in the state within two months. They have done so chiefly because of their economic approach.<sup>381</sup>

Bakshi adopted the policy of development by addressing the economic expectations of the masses with generosity and munificence to win all sections of people. According to Amrita Bazar Patrika, Bakshi and his Ministers could comprehend that the public support was premised on how 'expeditiously and effectively relief was provided for the people.'<sup>382</sup> When Bakshi took the charge of this office as Prime Minister, he had addressed the people through radio on 9 August, 1953 that they had suffered by dint of economic crisis during the governance of the previous government, but under the present government the masses would be benefited by 'the progressive economic policies' of the central government. According to Korbel, Bakshi accomplished tangible developments. In the same address on radio he announced a good package of the following economic concessions :

- a) Permanent ration on subsidized rates for the people of urban areas;
- b) Abolition of coercive extraction of food grains from the peasants;
- c) Free education to all from primary to university grade;
- d) Waiving off the co-operative debts;
- e) Abolition of the monopoly of the co-operatives;
- f) Increase in the salary of the government employees;
- g) Enhancement in the wages of the laborers.

Bakshi was a competent administrator and made full use of the flow of financial assistance from the Centre. Hydroelectric projects, housing colonies, roads spreading through the

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<sup>380</sup> *Kashmir: An Open Book*. 1958. Srinagar. Lalla Rookh Publications; *Kashmir Through Many Eyes*. 1957. Srinagar. Lalla Rookh Publications. Department of Information and Broadcasting. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

<sup>381</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru. 1987. *Letters to Chief Ministers, 1947-64, 1952-54*, Gen. ed. G. Parthasarathi. Teen Murti. New Delhi.

<sup>382</sup> Amrita Bazar Patrika. 19 March 1955.

valley, facilities for tourists, a lower-level tunnel at Banihal to improve communications with Jammu and the rest of India, all appeared. Rice was subsidized. The purpose was to demonstrate the benefits of closer ties with India.<sup>383</sup>

The network of roads within the three regions and the Banihal tunnel constructed during Bakshi's tenure expanded the mobilization of people, and goods, which had enormous economic, social, political and cultural implications. The construction of Banihal tunnel led to the increase in exports from Rupees 15 million to Rupees 165 million.<sup>384</sup>

### **Breakthrough in Tourism**

Since 1947 governments in New Delhi along with state governments prioritized the promotion of tourism. Therefore, the Bakshi government had been keenly interested in promoting the tourism, as it was badly hit in 1947 due to the disturbances in the subcontinent.<sup>385</sup> He had taken larger steps by setting up publicity policy throughout the country<sup>386</sup>, construction of 24 guest houses, 111 huts, 01 youth hostel, the tourist reception centre at Srinagar and good hotels.<sup>387</sup> besides, Dak bungalows and serai (inns) at Katra, Kud, Doda. The tourism in the Kashmir region would always reflect sense of security and political stability besides its economic value, which was becoming concomitant with constructive nation-building activity. It used to provide good business opportunities to the people eventually leading to a better standard of living besides bringing Kashmir closer to India. While validating the tourism in Kashmir one of the journalists claims, 'every tourist who goes to Kashmir this summer (1949) will be rendering as vital a service to Kashmir □ and to India □ as a soldier fighting at the front.'<sup>388</sup> Since 1947 promotion of tourism was one of the important concerns for the central and the state government. G M Bakshi during his tenure was avidly interested in reviving and invigorating the tourism sector. The measures taken in this direction were first of all the publicity programme across the country, network of roads, construction of huts, Dak bungalows, hotels, hostels, rest houses to facilitate and promote

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<sup>383</sup> Ajjit.Bhattacharjea.1994. *Kashmir the Wounded Valley*.New Delhi.UBS Publishers.p. 207.

<sup>384</sup> Hafsa Kanjwal. 2017.*Building a New Kashmir: Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad and the Politics of State-Formation in a Disputed Territory*.PhD thesis.University of Michigan.p.70.

<sup>385</sup> Hafsa Kanjwal.2017.*Building a New Kashmir:Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad and the Politics of State-Formation in a Disputed Territory*. PhD thesis.University of Michigan.p.217.

<sup>386</sup> M.A Pandit.1969.*Facilities for Tourists*. In *Jammu & Kashmir Trade Guide (J&K Guide)*.edited by Mulk Raj Saraf. Delhi.Universal Publications.p.201.

<sup>387</sup> Ibid.

<sup>388</sup> K A Abbas.*The Enchanted Valley*. Swantantra.23 April.1949.

the tourism. A large number of vehicles were arranged for commuting passengers, visitors and the required goods. All these measures led to an increase in tourist flux by 21,000 in 1954 and 63,370 domestic tourists and 11,190 foreign tourists till 1960.<sup>389</sup>

### **Promotion of Cultural Heritage**

The government of G M Bakshi promoted the cultural project by giving a boost to the organizations like Culture and Research Society, Cultural Forum and Literary Society to create modernism, secular outlook and to strengthen the integration of the state with India. To lay the sound foundations in this regard Jammu and Kashmir Cultural Academy, Tagore Hall, cinemas, publication of journals in Kashmiri, Dogri, Urdu and Hindi were brought forth to institutionalize the cultural project of the state. G M Baskhi rendered the promotion of culture in these lines:

We have earnestly launched schemes for the economic and social regeneration of the people of our State, it is necessary that adequate attention should be paid to our cultural heritage so that these traditions are nourished and carried forward. We feel that our progress would be incomplete, if side by side with these material things, we ignore our cultural needs.<sup>390</sup>

Different cultural programmes including poetic symposium, operas, folk-dramas and festivals were conducted. However, Jashn-i-Kashmir was scheduled and arranged every year in various towns of Kashmir to promote the cultural heritage of the region, which used to attract large local crowds, tourists and politicians from the country. Jawaharlal Nehru was also delighted by this festival and appreciated in these words, 'I am glad to say that these celebrations have evoked widespread interest outside the state and mass enthusiasm in Kashmir . . . . its success has surpassed our expectations.'<sup>391</sup>

### **Boost in Agriculture**

Bakshi government carried forward the agrarian reforms of Sheikh Abdullah and focused on increasing agricultural production to fulfil the demands of food grains of the population by introducing technological changes and research schemes on the following lines:

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<sup>389</sup>Mirza Nazir Ahmed. 2010. *Management of Tourism in Kashmir*. New Delhi. Dilpreet Publishing House.p.45.

<sup>390</sup>Government of J&K. Message By G M Baskhi.8 October, 1956 Archives. Reference Library. Accession No. 105/GACC.

<sup>391</sup>Hafsa Kanjwal.2017.*Building a New Kashmir:Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad and the Politics of State-Formation in a Disputed Territory*. PhD thesis.University of Michigan.p.173.

- i ) Soil research laboratory and glass-house were established for pursuing research;
- ii ) High yielding crops were introduced;
- iii ) Machinery and equipment were facilitated to control diseases of fruit trees and other crops;
- iv ) Chemical fertilizers were made available for increased production;
- v ) Private farms were put under cultivation to obtain superior varieties of wheat and paddy;
- vi ) Farms were established for demonstration to the farmers on modern lines.

During the government of G M Bakshi two production programmes were launched to give an impetus to the agricultural development, i) Community Development Programme, ii) Intensive Agriculture Development Programme. Irrigation facilities were provided to bring as much land under cultivation as possible. Besides, the most commendable work done for agricultural development was the cultivation of dry land agriculture and in the first Five Year Plan the priority was given to irrigation by ear-marking 16.5 % allocation with the assistance of central government.<sup>392</sup> In this direction canals were dug, and irrigation schemes were expanded. Consequently, all these measures made it possible to bring dry land and rain-fed areas under cultivation. The history of progress in the agricultural development especially the revolution in rice production through canals along with other irrigation schemes were started during the period of G M Bakshi government. In this context the table charts the number of canals and irrigation lifts to facilitate the peasants, who still remember G M Bakshi.

#### **Canals constructed in Kashmir Region during the period of G M Bakshi**

<b>S.No.</b>	<b>Name and Type of Irrigation Work</b>	<b>Year of Construction/Improvement</b>	<b>Land Irrigated in hectares for Kharif Crop</b>	<b>Land Irrigated in hectares for Rabi Crop</b>	<b>Location: Administrative Division</b>
1	Bewerah Canal	1956	783	341	Islamabad
2	Shalatang Canal	1956	1,827	-	Sonawari

<sup>392</sup>Javid.Aziz.2010. *Economic History of Modern Kashmir: with Special Reference to Agriculture 1947-1989*. PhD Thesis. Department of History. University of Kashmir.p.133.

3	Dalna Lift	1956	230	2	Baramullah
4	Ladoora Lift	1956	484	-	do
5	Padgampora (Lift)	1956	1,493	156	Pulwama
6	Dagripora Lift	1956	870	191	do
7	Barasoo Lift	1956	155	85	do
8	Gorkha Canal	1956	613	68	Srinagar
9	Babal Canal	1956	3,361	-	Sonawari
10	Awneera Canal	1956	833	271	Shopian
11	Sindh Power Canal	1956	820	273	Srinagar
12	Melhora Canal	1956	752	49	do
13	Reshipora Canal	1956	1,333	321	do
14	Mehand Canal	1956	1,316	736	Islamabad
15	Rakh Litter Canal	1956	1,761	259	Pulwama
16	Kandi Tank	1956	155	-	Sopore
17	Hajan Markandal Lift	1956	2,422	-	Sonawari
18	Bonikhan Lift Station	1956	359	-	do
19	Hakbara Pump Station	1956	645	-	do
20	Galibal Pump Station	1956	576	-	do
21	Aegi Canal	1956	15,410	876	Srinagar
22	Khanchi Canal	1956	1,767	372	do
23	Lolab Storage Tanl	1956	1,670	-	Sopore
24	Rajveer Tank	1956	586	-	do
25	Nathneesa	1956	124	-	do
26	Ompora Canal	1957	1,122	47	Srinagar
27	Heti Canal	1958	2,147	-	Sonawari
28	Paribal Lift	1959-60	603	-	do
29	Chandoosa Canal	1959-60	515	-	Baramullah
30	Kaniaz Lone Kuhl	1960	21	-	Sonawari
31	Krishi Nallahs	1960	776	-	Sopore
32	Tarzo0 Veer	1960	1,530	-	do

33	Rakh Shalwat Pump Station	1960-61	1,146	-	Sonawari
34	Daslipora Pump Station	1960-61	733	-	do
35	Dehgham Kuhl (Lolab)	1961-62	2,579	-	Sopore
36	Padshah Kuhl	1962	4,535	1,490	Srinagar
37	Sindh Extension Canal	1962	1,382	195	do
38	Arhi Canal	1962	1,264	430	do
39	Haider Canal	1962	1,120	11	do
40	Baba Canal	1962	1,743	212	do
41	Lar Canal	1962	3,972	1,157	do
42	Dab Kuhl	1963	3,937	996	do <sup>393</sup>

The irrigation facilities increased the food production from 8.256 million maunds in 1951-52 to 16.61 million maunds in 1964-65.<sup>394</sup> Besides, cattle development projects were started in both the regions of the state along with the cattle breeding farms at Chashma Shahi, Srinagar and Belicharna, Jammu.<sup>395</sup> The veterinary units and mobile veterinary laboratories were established to facilitate the live stock of the villagers. The Directorate for Development and Research of Sheep Breeding was given an importance in the third five year plan and sixty-four sheep and wool development units at the various places in both the regions were set up. The officers were given training in sheep development and wool extension in different states of the country and foreign countries as well.<sup>396</sup> In this way the upholding of sheep-breeding development and wool production was started and supported by the policy of the government during the period of G M Bakshi.

In 1957 and 1959 the Kashmir region faced two massive floods which resulted in enormous human loss, damage to crops of about 200,000 acres of land and houses of 1287 villages were submerged.<sup>397</sup> In order to save the region from this deluge Bakshi government took effective measures to

<sup>393</sup> Administrative Report. Government of Jammu and Kashmir. 1953-54, p.45; Administrative Report, Government of Jammu and Kashmir. 1955-56. p. 199; Abdul. Rehman Mir. 1981. *Kashmir Mein Abpashi*. Srinagar. Shaheen.

<sup>394</sup> Javid. Aziz. 2010. *Economic History of Modern Kashmir: with Special Reference to Agriculture 1947-1989*. PhD Thesis. Department of History. University of Kashmir. p.133.

<sup>395</sup> Shirazi. 1969. *Animal Husbandry* In *Jammu and Kashmir Trade Guide*. edited by Mulk Raj Saraf. Delhi. Universal Publications. p.154.

<sup>396</sup> G A Bandy. 1969. *Sheep Breeding* In *Jammu and Kashmir Trade Guide*. edited by Mulk Raj Saraf. Delhi. Universal Publications in 1969. p. 159.

<sup>397</sup> Mohd Yousuf Saraf. 1977. *Kashmiris Fight for Freedom*. Lahore. Feroz Sons. vol II.. p. 1229.

overcome the floods by establishing the Flood Control Board, wherein the engineers from Central Water and Power Commission worked and submitted the flood control proposals. The government started the project for flood control to save Srinagar as well as 50000 acres of fertile land and the project was completed in ten years.<sup>398</sup> These developmental steps of Bakshi remained effective for the region in the long run. The description of economic policies imply that G M Bakshi followed *populist strategy*.<sup>399</sup> He arranged rice, paddy and wheat from India at subsidized rates<sup>400</sup> and 900 vehicles were plying from Pathankot to Srinagar for carrying the rice. The Food Control Department in Srinagar issued the rice of Jammu from Rs 25 to Rs 8 and wheat flour from Rs 25 to Rs 20 per maund.<sup>401,402</sup> Similarly, the price of Kashmiri rice was reduced from Rs 18 to Rs 12. Besides, subsidized food ration was given to the people of the towns of Sopore, Baramullah, Bandipora, Anantanag. In 1954 the number of ration holders had increased in the city of Srinagar by about 25000.<sup>403</sup> Further, seventy relief centres were opened in the deficit areas of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh to distribute food grains among the masses at subsidized rates.<sup>404</sup> In this way Rs 15 million per year were spent during the period of G M Bakshi in comparison to Rs 1.9 million during the period of Sheikh Abdullah.<sup>405</sup>

### **Growth in Education and Health Sector**

Since education was considered important in the *New Kashmir* Plan for the development of the state, but Sheikh Abdullah could not implement it fully as was proposed in the plan due to the financial crisis. G.M Bakshi received the economic support from the government at the centre and thus completed the initiative taken by Abdullah. He took strong steps by abolishing the fee from the primary to University grade, distributed text books among poor students, provided scholarships to the students of the backward classes and also focused on fostering of local languages of the three regions □ Kashmiri, Dogri and Ladakhi. The period witnessed the growth in enrollment from

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<sup>398</sup> Government of J&K. Review of the Achievements of Bakshi Government. p. 25.

<sup>399</sup> A populist is a person, especially a politician, who tries to appeal to common masses who feel that their issues are ignored by the political elite.

<sup>400</sup> Government of J&K, Review of the achievements of Bakshi Government. p.10.

<sup>401</sup> 1 Maund is equivalent to 37 kg's.

<sup>402</sup> Government of J&K, Review of the achievements of Bakshi Government. p.10.

<sup>403</sup> Ibid. p.11.

<sup>404</sup> Amirta Bazar Patrika. *New Chapter Opened*. p17.

<sup>405</sup> G.N.S Raghavan. *Kashmir on the March*. Indian Express. October 1956.

107, 233 students on rolls in 1950, which was increased by 276,35 till 1960.<sup>406</sup> G M Bakshi took substantive measures to fulfill the objectives of education and constituted a committee of intellectuals chaired by the education Minister, G M Sadiq, who was a communist and a dedicated personage. The objectives of education were to encourage and create scientific temper in the students, to inculcate a secular vision in students, to channelize the youth in an environment of political instability through extra-circular activities, to develop the linkage between education and the everyday realities of life, to mould the students for attaining the education and to earn the living for sustaining their lives and above all facilitate an access to education for all.

To fulfill these objectives multi-purpose schools were established in large numbers and after passing tenth grade examination students were motivated for opting trade and industry as their career. And meritorious students were facilitated for pursuing higher studies. In order to de-politicize the youth, music, drama, art and social service were promoted under the centrally sponsored scheme, *Youth Welfare*.<sup>407</sup> Text books were written in the context of publicizing fellow feelings, human values and tolerance. In 1951 the number of schools increased from 1,115 to 2,859 and higher education was also leading on the path of progression as two colleges, Gandhi Memorial College, Srinagar and Islamia College, Srinagar were changed into science colleges. In 1960 the Government Agriculture College at Wadura (North Kashmir) was started to give an impetus to agricultural sciences. Before the period of G M Bakshi government Jammu and Kashmir University was only an examination conducting body and the new government made it an academic institution for higher studies. In this direction distinguished professors from different states of the country were assigned the task to teach and guide the scholars and students. In the spirit of the Women Charter of the *New Kashmir Plan* women education was given a prominent focus, as a result the number of girl students increased from 15, 753 to 19, 350 during 1952-1955.<sup>408</sup> Besides, medical education as well as technical education were given a boost by establishing the first Medical College, Regional Engineering College and an Ayurvedic College as well.<sup>409</sup> Further, seats in different professional institutions across the country were kept reserved for the fair representation of women students and for the students belonging to the backward classes.

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<sup>406</sup>S L Seru.1977.*History and Growth of Education in Jammu and Kashmir*. Srinagar.Ali Mohammad & Sons.p.150.

<sup>407</sup>G M Sadiq. 1955.*Our Educational Policy*. Srinagar. Ranbir Press.

<sup>408</sup>Amrita Bazar Patrika.*New Chapter Opened*. p.19.

<sup>409</sup>Government of J&K.Address to the Joint Session by Karan Singh.8 February.1960. p 6.



When G M Bakshi became the Prime Minister, health sector was in poor condition as there were only two hospitals and eighty dispensaries. The government invited the experts to frame the comprehensive programme to meet the demands of the health services and the budget was increased by 50%.<sup>410</sup> Consequently from 1960-1961 the number of hospitals got increased to 19 and dispensaries to 401.<sup>411</sup> The villagers were provided medical facilities through mobile medical units. The laboratories with standard apparatus along with blood-bank were established in the hospitals of both the regions. In addition Rs 230,775 and Rs 244,000 were allocated for establishing the Department of Tuberculosis in Jammu as well as Kashmir.

### **Infrastructural Build-up**

G M Bakshi was famous for the network of infrastructural development in the state. He improved the commuting connectivity of the Kashmir region with India through the construction of the roads especially the Banihal tunnel, Srinagar to Kargil road, Baramullah to Uri road, Srinagar to Teetwal road and this development was beyond the imagination of a common man in the state. Besides, two Secretariat buildings each for Jammu and Srinagar, housing colonies, hydro-electric projects and stadiums for sports were constructed. The network of roads carried vast economic, social, cultural and political implications particularly within the three regions of the state. Through the Banihal tunnel trade and tourism were promoted besides exports increased from Rs 15 million to 165 million.<sup>412</sup> The table below apprises about the network of roads:

### **Roads Constructed during the period of G M Bakshi**

<b>Names of Roads</b>	<b>Total Length</b>
<b>Srinagar Division</b>	-
Arigam Arihal Charpathri Road	3 miles
Awantipora Tral Road	7 miles
Budgam Chadoora Road	8 miles
Bemina Budgam Road	5 miles

<sup>410</sup>Daily Khidmat.25 December 1955.

<sup>411</sup>Government of J&K. Jammu and Kashmir: 50 years. p.346.

<sup>412</sup> Hafsa.Kanjwal..2017.*Building a New Kashmir Bakshi Ghulam Muhammad (1953-1963)* PhD Thesis.University of Michigan.

Charari - Sharief Pakharapora Remu and Kanidjan Yus Road	19 miles
Chadoora Budgam Road	4.5 miles
Chadoora Syrasyar Road	8.5 miles
Extension of Boulevard along Dal Lake	75 chains of 54 ft width
Humhama Raithan Road	11.5 miles
Humhama Naithan Road	12.0 miles
Improvement of Beehama Tullamullah Road	6.2 miles
Kakpora Romu Pulwama Nou Road	14 miles
Kangan Wangath Road	7 miles
Khunmukha Khrew Wahabkhar Road	10 miles
Metalling Beehama Safapora Road	7 miles
Nagam Rambagh Chrari-Shareef Road	18 miles
Narkara Budgam Road	1.5 miles
Natipora New Road	12 miles
Pampore Ladhu Road	5 miles
Pampore Awantipora Road	8 miles
Pulwama Rajpor Road	5 miles
Pulwama Romu Road	5 miles
Pulwama Tahab Road	3 miles
Rambagh Nagam Chrari-Sharief Road	16 miles
Rambagh Natipora New Road	12 miles
Road From N M to Khanaquo Maulla at Pampore	25 chains
Salooru Qamar Sahab Road	1 <sup>1/2</sup>

### **Anantanag Division**

Achabal Kokernag Viloo Road	7.07 miles
Anantanag Dooru Verinag Road	5 miles
Anantnag Town Road	1.5 miles

Approach Road from Kulgam Bazaar To Tehsil Bawan Acchabal Road	22 chains
Construction of Shopian Town Road	4 miles
Dhamhal Hanjipora Aharbal Road	21 chains
Dooru Town Road	10 miles
Fairweather Road from Dooru to Kokernag	46 chains
Improvement to the Bejbehera Langanbal Road	5 miles
Kachduru Kaprin Road	21 miles
Gopalpora Road	3.12 miles
Kaimoh Kardar Road	6 miles
Khanbal Anantanag Achbal Road	8 miles
Khanbal Pahalgam Road	27 miles
Khandroo Shanzas Road	2 miles
Pahalgam Chandanwari Jeep Track	8 miles
Pahalgam Circuit Road	4 miles
Qazigund Kulgam Road	10 miles and 4 chains
Remodelling Mattan Road	1.5 miles
Shopian Bejbehera Road	15.5 miles
Shopian Khazanbal Aharbal Road	8 miles
Shopian Kulgam Road	13 miles

### **Baramullah Division**

Baramullah Baba Rishi Road	18.1 miles
Construction of Baramullah Khadinyar Road	2.5 miles
Construction of Sumbal Tarzoo Road	13 miles
Handwara Langate Road	18 miles
Handwara Zachaldara Nichhama Road	14 miles
Improvement of Hajin Markundal Road	5 miles
Improvement Hjiwara Magma Road	5 miles
Jeep Track from Dyar Baali to Panapilla	-

Kupwara Sogam Chandigam Road	13 miles
Sogam Hayaatpora Dilbagh Dardpora Road	-
Tangmarg Baba Rishi Road	22.5 miles

### **Bridges Constructed during the period of G M Bakshi**

#### **Srinagar Division**

- Budshah Bridge
- Cement Bridge
- Construction of 1-45 span strutted bridge on Dudganga Nallah at Chatabal
- Raj Bridge
- Wangat Bridge
- Zero Bridge

#### **Anantanag Division**

- Arwani Bridge
- Badrani Bridge
- Chandanwari Bridge
- Ganeshpoora Bridge
- Kanganbal Bridge
- Khanbal Bridge
- Khudwani Bridge
- Mau Bridge
- Naninar Bridge
- Nohama Bridge

- Padgampora Bridge
- Remodelling of Akhad Bridge No.01
- Remodelling of Akhad Bridge No. 02
- Remodelling of Seligam Bridge
- Seer Bridge
- Songloo Bridge
- Sonawam Bridge
- Tangri Nallah Bridge

#### **Baramullah Division**

- Baramullah Bridge
- Kontra Bridge
- Seloo Bridge
- Shoolora Bridge
- Sisri Bridge
- Sopore Bridge<sup>413</sup>

#### **Development during Sheikh Abdullah and Farooq Abdullah (1975-1987)**

In 1975 an Accord<sup>414</sup> was signed between Indira Gandhi and Sheikh Abdullah called Indira-Abdullah Accord ; Abdullah assumed the power as Chief Minister and explained to the common masses that state power was a crucial means to accomplish *our ideals and objectives*.<sup>415</sup> Hereafter,

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<sup>413</sup>Masarat John.2012. *Jammu and Kashmir under Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad*. M.Phil Dissertation. Department of History.University of Kashmir. Srinagar.pp.112-121.

<sup>414</sup>The Indira–Sheikh Accord was signed in 1975 between Sheikh Abdullah and then Prime Minister of India Indira Gandhi. It decided the terms under which Abdullah would re-enter the politics of Kashmir as Chief Minister after 22 years of imprisonment.

<sup>415</sup>Sheikh Abdullah.2013.*The Blazing Chinar* (English translation of Abdullah’s autobiography, Atash-i-Chinar, by Mohammad Amin).Srinagar.Gulshan Books. p.541.

political stability and peace continued for about one decade and the region witnessed the development in all dimensions. Abdullah was a charismatic leader in the words of his principal secretary, G Ahmad :

Sheikh Abdullah has been variously called an enigmatic as well as magnetic personality, crowd puller, a volatile public figure who used different languages at different places and on different occasions depending upon the mood and response of the audience; a demagogue who swayed crowds in whatever direction he wished. In one breath, he would beguile and gullible crowds by his polemics and indulge in the other breath in pontificating and shibboleths moving them into tears.<sup>416</sup>

Nonetheless, he took certain outstanding steps and one among them was to abolish the policy of subsidy on food, because it had become a heavy burden on the budget of the state and an impediment to the path of development. Sheikh Abdullah stated that subsidy resulted in burden of Rs 200 million every year at the cost of development and employment opportunity.<sup>417</sup> This step was acknowledged also by his predecessor, Mir Qasim, ‘At every meeting of the Planning Commission we were told to stop the subsidy as it had become a luxury for the people of Kashmir. Neither Mr Sadiq (former Chief Minister) nor I as the Chief Minister had the guts to do that; only a leader of Sheikh’s stature could perform that feat.’<sup>418</sup> Besides, he focused on tourism, trade, agriculture, transport, power generation and unemployment. The per capita income was increased from Rs. 548 during 1970-71 to Rs 673 during 1982-83.<sup>419</sup>

### **Sheikh Abdullah: *impetus for development***

Sheikh Abdullah’s thrust of development from 1975 to 1982 was on developing infrastructure like power, transport, agriculture, trade, tourism, industry, social and community services besides to overcome the growing problem of unemployment and to increase per capita income.

The state domestic product (at constant prices of 1970-71) doubled from Rs 2,750 million in 1973-4 to Rs 4,170 million in 1981-2. The per capita income at the same prices which had shown sluggish movement from Rs 548 in 1970-71 showed quick growth from Rs 559

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<sup>416</sup>G.Ahmad.2008. *My Years with Sheikh Abdullah: Kashmir 1971-1987*.Srinagar. Gulshan Books. p .09.

<sup>417</sup>Sheikh Abdullah.2013.*The Blazing Chinar* (English translation of Abdullah’s autobiography, Atash-i-Chinar, by Mohammad Amin).Srinagar. Gulshan Books. p.613.

<sup>418</sup>Ibid.

<sup>419</sup>Government of J&K .*Economic Review of Jammu and Kashmir. 1973-84*.Directorate of Economics and Statistics. Planning and Development Department. Srinagar.

in 1973-4 to Rs 673 in 1982-3.<sup>420</sup> The annual plan allocation which was Rs 480 million in 1974-5 rose to Rs 1,850 million during 1983-4. Revenue receipts moved from Rs 1,230 million to Rs 3,530 million during the same period.<sup>421</sup> The export of fruits doubled from 1.689 million quintals in 1973-4 to 4.461 million quintals in 1983-4. Road transport was taken to all villages. The installed generation capacity moved up by 126 MW from 82.87 MW in 1973-4 to 209 MW in 1982-3 covering 81 per cent of the villages.<sup>422</sup>

According to Godbole Committee's report in spite of the rapid economic development in Kashmir until the mid-1980's, 'the state's full production potential remained constrained due to policy spiraled to an alarming degree. The employment market on the other hand, remained stagnant for decades.'<sup>423</sup> This led to allegations against Sheikh Abdullah being inefficient and recklessness in financial matters of the state. Sheikh Abdullah could have initiated great efforts with regard to the economy of the state without considering the popular reactions. The budget proposals of Abdullah's period suggest that the government was launching its economic prospects with an apprehensive approach. For instance the Finance Minister of the time, mentioned subsidy on food grains as a unproductive expenditure and as 'one of the constant drains upon our economy.'<sup>424</sup> The Bakshi government earlier had adopted the policy of food subsidy to gain the support from the masses in order to strengthen themselves in the region, but Sheikh Abdullah was a popular leader and did not require such strategy. Abdullah could have withdrawn the subsidy for the interest of the state in the long run. In this context Puri states, 'sound economics need not be unsound politics . . . unless the political dynamism of the Kashmir leadership is matched by a similar dynamism in the economic field, its political functioning too might not be too easy.'<sup>425</sup> There seemed a paradox from 1970 to mid 1980, because funds were growing at the state level and financial support to the state was increased by the central government, which increased the debt burden of the state and reportedly development projects were turning inefficient.<sup>426</sup> So far as the subsidy on the food grains

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<sup>420</sup>Government of J&K. *Economic Review of Jammu and Kashmir. 1973-84*. Directorate of Economics and Statistics. Planning and Development Department. Srinagar.

<sup>421</sup>Government of J&K. *Economic Review of Jammu and Kashmir. 1973-84*.

<sup>422</sup>Government of J&K. *Economic Review of Jammu and Kashmir. 1973-84*.

<sup>423</sup> Nisar Ali. *Where Is Work Culture?*. Greater Kashmir. 12 June.2007.

<sup>424</sup>Balraj Puri. 1975. *Jammu and Kashmir: Timid Economic Start*. Economic & Political Weekly. 10(39).p.1528.

<sup>425</sup>Ibid.p.1529.

<sup>426</sup>Balraj Puri. *Kashmir's Declining Development*. Nagpur Times. 2 July 1979.

is concerned, it was later withdrawn by Sheikh Abdullah as described earlier in this chapter. But by this time the economy of the state was lagging behind.

The state has been suffering in respect of power sector in spite of abundant resources for generating electricity and Sheikh Abdullah did nothing in this direction. The state had to shun the power generation of 15000 MW due to restrictions by Indus Water Treaty. The Treaty was signed between India and Pakistan and according to Article Two of the Treaty the waters of the three rivers flowing towards the east, the Sutlej, Beas and Ravi remained available to India. The rivers flowing towards the west, the Jhelum, Indus and Chenab remained available to Pakistan. The Indus Water Treaty in 1960 put Jammu and Kashmir behind Rs 6500 crore annually and also badly hit the power generation of the state by about 15000 MW.<sup>427</sup> Besides, the major power projects are controlled by the centre and on this reason committees had been formed to recommend the compensation for the Kashmir region.<sup>428</sup>

When Farooq Abdullah succeeded Sheikh Abdullah by acquiring state power, he did not carry out the development projects; his governance was seen as patron-client relationship. Nikhil Chakravartty while writing on the conditions in 1990 during Farooq Abdullah's period argues:

From personal experience borne out by two visits to the valley in that period, this corresponding gathered the very disturbing impression that behind all the high visibility political impetuosity and exhibitionism on the part of Farooq Abdullah, his ministry emerged as the symbol of utter corruption and mal administration. It was this very phase which saw the growing activity of the secessionist groups emerging out in the open.<sup>429</sup>

The Prime Minister, Narendra Modi paid a visit to Kashmir on 7 November 2015, and gave extra funds for the development of the state to rebuild the weak relation between the centre and the state. He announced a huge package of Rs 80,000 crore for the employment opportunities besides development. In the past the Prime Ministers Atal Bihari Vajpayee, and Manmohan Singh also visited the region during the decade 2002-2003 to 2012-2013 and provided economic packages. But at the same time it is to be examined whether the discontent among the masses and sense of alienation can be won over by announcing the huge sum of amount. The sentiment lurking among the people of the region is over dependence of Kashmiris on employment in government sector.

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<sup>427</sup>Mitul Thakkar. *Indus Water Treaty hit J&K growth : IWMI*. Business Standard. 6 February. 2013.

<sup>428</sup>Godbole Report.pp.194-195.

<sup>429</sup>Jagmohan Malhotra.1991. *My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir*. New Delhi. Allied. p.340.



According to the resolution of Jammu & Kashmir Assembly of March 2003, the state has been facing a loss of Rs 6000 crore annually in the power sector and Rs 530 crore in the irrigation and as many as 1.7 lakh hectares of land are without irrigation facilities, because the state can use only a set limit of water resources.<sup>430</sup> Besides, the states water resources have been traded off in 1960 due to the Indus Water Accord and consequently the huge potential of the state in connection with hydro-electricity, irrigation and water transportation remained unused. Further, loose and flexible alliances between Congress-People's Democratic Party (PDP) and between PDP and Bhartiya Janta Party(BJP) suffered from misplaced reasoning and fragility, which led to the complications in executing the economic policies.

### **Violence and Development : *possible linkages***

The chapter now moves to the main objective i.e., to explain why the situation turned violent in the Kashmir region in 1980s and what general conclusions can be drawn. It is widely argued that the violence in the Kashmir region is rooted in several variables like economic conditions, ethnic differences and the historical background of the region. In this context the writers argue:

A striking cultural fact in the present Kashmir crisis is the absence of any ideological content among the militant groups in the valley. The Kashmir crisis is political in nature only at the surface. At deeper level it has much more to do with economic well being and cultural identity.<sup>431</sup>

The reference points towards the three variables for explaining the causes of separatism and rise of violence in the region i.e., economic, political and cultural. Why the discontent evolved in 1980s, which finally turned the situation violent in late 1980s can be argued with a spectrum of scholarships. Further, it can also be argued that neither the ethnic identity nor the socioeconomic factors are the primary variables for the gradual discontent and subsequent violence. However according Horowitz one of the determinants in the emergence of violence can be the economic issue :

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<sup>430</sup>M K Narayanan.*How The Valley is Changing*. The Hindu. 24 November 2015; M K Narayanan was the former National Security Advisor.

<sup>431</sup>Sanjay Sharma . Yatish Mishra.1995. *Kashmir Tourism to Terrorism*. New Delhi .Sane Publications.

Economic interest may act either as an accelerator or a break on separatism. Yet, among the most frequent and precocious secessionists □ backward groups in backward regions □ economic loss or gain plays the smallest role, ethnic anxiety the largest.<sup>432</sup>

Pranab Bardhan argues in *Method in the Madness? A Political-Economy: Analysis of the Ethnic Conflicts in Less Developed Countries* that the rise of ethnic conflicts, which is quite widespread today, may not be linked with economic deterioration, sometimes it might be quite the contrary. He writes:

Economists in their turn often associate sectarian conflicts with precapitalism and expect these to fade away with the development of markets, modern technology and capitalist institutions. Yet there are cases (the conflict in the advanced state of Punjab in India or the frequent communal riots in recent years in Bombay, the booming financial capital of India, or in Ahmedabad, a leading industrial center, are examples) where capitalism and communalism have moved together. It is important thus to look for some clear patterns in the horrendous complexities of ethnic conflicts (without denying the historical, geopolitical and societal particularities in individual cases.)<sup>433</sup>

Simultaneously, this does not mean that economic factors can be discarded as the cause of violence. Lack of economic development may cause discontent, which can find an expression in demands for separate state. In this context Ted Gurr has also produced the theory of the effects of *relative deprivation*, which touches upon the gap between people's expected and real well being. Gurr defines *relative deprivation* as, 'the tension that develops from a discrepancy between the 'ought' and 'is' of collective value of satisfaction and that disposes men to violence.'<sup>434</sup> The term *relative deprivation* can be considered in Kashmir region's case as people may be comparing their situations and gaining a broader view of their situation and ultimately catalyzing in escalating the tension. Majid Mattoo, one of the interviewees argues his case through the language of haqq (rights), as he compares Kashmiri as a citizen with the citizens of other states of India. During the field work Aijaz Lone, who has worked as CEO in public sector undertaking with Government of India, revealed the Kashmir region's economy during 1990s.

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<sup>432</sup>Donald L. Horowitz .1985. *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*. Berkeley.University of California Press. p. 4.

<sup>433</sup>Pranab Bardhan.1997. *Method in the Madness? A Political-Economy Analysis of the Ethnic Conflicts in Less Developed Countries*. Pergamon.World Development. 25(9). pp. 1382-1383.

<sup>434</sup>Ted Gurr.1970.*Why Men Rebel*.Princeton. Princeton University Press.p.22.

After some years of militancy, around 1992 there was a complete downfall of tourism and hence there was no market for handicrafts; all these things started to pile up and the money got blocked. Bananay waala bhooka marnay laga. Unhounay is kaam ko band kar dia. (The worker was left with no work and hence closed down this work). Militancy comprised of 1%, and the rest of the youth was mostly unemployed. Thus, many of these people shifted to other forms of business. After 1996, Kashmiris started concentrating on their economy. Mandi logou ne Kashmir mai hi lagayi, aur direct export shuru kar dia. Abh baahar ka buopari idhar aata hai, humay baahar nahi jaana padta. (Now the market was set up by Kashmiris in Kashmir itself, and the produce was directly exported outside. Now the traders had to come to Kashmir unlike the earlier times when the Kashmiri trader had to seek his market in India.) Setting up of mandis (market) helped in the sale of fruits. Kashmiri craft outside Kashmir has now taken off to some extent as compared to the 1990s. Direct export of the local products increased as well. However, only three economies are sustaining today: horticulture, craft to some extent and government employment.

During 1989 and onwards political instability, militancy and uncertainty hampered the implementation of schemes and planned policies in the region. Although development in annual and five-year plan was framed, but due to the political turbulence those plans could not be executed on the ground. For instance in 2009 the government reported that it could not utilize 80% of the funds from Prime Ministers reconstruction programme since its launch in 2004-2005 and thus were transferred to the Jammu region for its utilization.<sup>435</sup> Consequently, the Kashmir region has been provided with the plan allocation, which was lesser in comparison to the Jammu region, though the population of Kashmir region is relatively more.<sup>436</sup> The table below depicts the allocation plan

#### **Per Capita Plan Investment in Jammu & Kashmir (in Rs)**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Jammu</b>	<b>Kashmir</b>	<b>Ladakh</b>
2002-03	2041.87	1752.16	4000.00
2003-04	2269.22	1948.19	4304.82

<sup>435</sup>Greater Kashmir. Srinagar. 22 August. 2009.

<sup>436</sup>Statistics issued by Planning Department, Govt of J&K.

2004-05	2652.91	2311.18	4867.19
2005-06	3707.20	2854.72	5678.25
2006-07	3092.12	2559.61	5856.63
2007-08	3948.39	3313.43	4266.02
2009-09	4798.39	4060.48	5052.84 <sup>437</sup>

In this context Dabla argues the numbers reflect that in the Kashmir region there was an institutional discrimination.<sup>438</sup> The economic growth-rate during the militancy period was 4% and some economic growth was found among political elite, high business class and upper middle class. Political elite got the money from the government and other sources. Nonetheless, as a matter of fact some people were economically profited at the cost of the majority of the people. The decade of 1990s was thus a decade marked by societal chaos, because by the time uprising began large amount of unaccounted money came in the region. As is mentioned by one of the interviewee Rouf Ali, a journalist □ the decade saw a deep nexus running between various groups as stakeholders. They were and still are stakeholders, because the unaccounted money led a certain section in Kashmir to accumulate wealth far greater than their income. The level of exploitation surged in almost all economic sectors particularly in tourism, agriculture, horticulture and handicrafts. The reason behind exploitation was less wages and more work. The over all effect of militancy on the economy and development is measured as *catastrophic*<sup>439</sup>, because it damaged the economic initiatives and business opportunities. The repercussions of the strikes and the curfew periods since 1989 have caused the loss of about 180,000 crores. Since 1989 tourism suffered in the region, the percentage came down to 20% with regard to hotels and houseboats. Tourism related business like shikara-wallas, transport operators, retailer, and handicraft sector were hit badly. The local artisans suffered the most as the local retailers were unable to sell the handicrafts in the absence of tourism market. Consequently, they sold their products to the wholesalers and the middle men at very low price, who afterwards sold those products in the national and international markets at higher rates. In this way the hard working artisans got exploited.

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<sup>437</sup>Ibid.

<sup>438</sup>Bashir Ahmad Dabla.2012. *Social Impact of Militancy in Kashmir*. New Delhi.Gyan Publishing House.p.69.

<sup>439</sup>Bashir Ahmad Dabla, *Role of Religion and Culture in Economic Development: The Case of Kashmir*. paper presented at 35<sup>th</sup> AISA Annual Conference held at University of Kashmir. October 2009.

So far as the agricultural sector is concerned it did not suffer much, but at the same time did not improve. One of the reasons behind it is that a large area of land is occupied by the security forces, as a result the local villagers cannot not work on their fields. According to Union Defence Ministry 5.85 lakh kanals of land is under security forces<sup>440</sup>, whereas the state government said that 10.54 lakh kanals of land is taken by security forces.<sup>441</sup> Besides, the government could not improve the agricultural production as they have been under the militant threats since 1989. Consequently, agricultural land has been used for the construction of houses. The problem of unemployment especially of the youth turned up as a critical problem. The majority of the Kashmiri youth are educated in professional, technical, skilled and general disciplines and their number has accumulated for employment.

The economic differences and strains of development may cause discontent, which spillover into violent movements. The economic factor does play a role in creating a political turbulence in the region. Tara Singh Rekhi, a political scientist, while discussing the problems of underdevelopment, particularizes that in Jammu and Kashmir, 'The life of a common man is becoming more miserable every day and the spread of progress does not match with the growing demand.'<sup>442</sup> The factors like underdevelopment and poverty are present in the Kashmir region, but its condition is not as worse when compared to other states of India in respect of per capita net domestic product since 1970 to 1990.<sup>443</sup> Similarly, other socioeconomic factors indicate that infant mortality rate in 1981 was seventy-two deaths out of thousand births and in 1989 the number fell to sixty-nine. Besides, during 1979 and 1988 the population living under the poverty line were relatively better.<sup>444</sup> Handicraft formulates one of the significant sector in the region and from 1970-1980 there was an increase of employment in this sector.<sup>445</sup> However, tourism has been badly hit since the breakout of violence. Thus, it cannot be ruled out that the factors like poverty and poor socioeconomic conditions can be the underlying causes of separatism and violence, but from the above facts and figures there is no evidence, which can significantly substantiate the linkage between the characteristics of underdevelopment of the region and violence. According to Jha

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<sup>440</sup> Greater Kashmir, Srinagar. June 2010.

<sup>441</sup> Ibid.

<sup>442</sup> Tara Singh Rekhi. 1993. *Socioeconomic Justice in Jammu and Kashmir*. New Delhi. Ideal Publications. p 228.

<sup>443</sup> Ibid.

<sup>444</sup> K.N Prasad. 1993. *Poverty, Inequality and Unemployment in India*. New Delhi. Concept Publishing Company. p.60.

<sup>445</sup> M L Misri. M S Bhat. 1994. *Poverty, Planning and Economic Change in Jammu and Kashmir*. New Delhi. Vikas Publishing House. pp.268-269.

In Kashmir militancy is not born out of poverty or economic deprivation, but of the despair of a small, select group of young people who form a new but disinherited middle class sector . . . A class that was trained to wield power but denied the opportunity to do so.<sup>446</sup>

Several writers have investigated the socioeconomic conditions as the reasons of conflict inside the Kashmir region especially discrimination against Muslims in government employment. Pandits have been over represented in banks and salaried jobs in the public sphere.<sup>447</sup> It can be expected that under representation of Muslims in Kashmir region can cause more discontent than in other states of India because it is a Muslim-majority region. But the data on the discrimination against Muslims in the region during the first half of 1980s is quite scarce. According to Tara Singh Rekhi, the violence inside Kashmir region increased during G M Shah's government, which caused the decline in the economy, apart from the climatic conditions and breakdown of law and order. Rekhi suggests that economic decline may not have caused the level of violence; it was the other way around. Economic decline appears to have been increased by the rise in violence to some extent. Although industry in the region is not mechanized but handicraft is one of the dominant economic sectors.<sup>448</sup> During 1970s to the end of 1980, when democracy was in decline, even the employment sector increased constantly.<sup>449</sup> However, tourist industry has suffered since the spiraling of violence.<sup>450</sup>

## Conclusion

If we have to adopt a micro study approach on the Kashmir region, the data on economic development points to certain conclusions, but the situation on ground points in the other direction which indicates that the economic status is not the only causal factor behind the rise of violence. Kurt Schock argues that *political opportunity structures* can have a moderating effect on political violence.<sup>451</sup> In a similar manner Ted Gurr also points out that the state and its institutions can play a crucial role in the development of discontent. Although statistical study on economy and

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<sup>446</sup> Prem Shankar Jha.1991.*Frustrated Middle Class-Roots of Kashmir's Alienation*. In *Secular Crown on Fire: The Kashmir Problem*.edited by Asghar Ali Engineer.Delhi.Ajanta Publications.p.35.

<sup>447</sup>Ibid.pp.34-37.

<sup>448</sup>Manzoor Ahmaed Shah.1992. *Export Marketing of Kashmir Handicrafts*.New Delhi.Ashish Publishing House.

<sup>449</sup>M L Misri. M S Bhat.1994. *Poverty, Planning and Economic Change in Jammu and Kashmir*. New Delhi.Vikas Publishing House.pp.268-269.

<sup>450</sup>Ibid.

<sup>451</sup>KurtSchock.1996.*A conjunctural model of political conflict.The impact of political opportunities on the relationship between economic inequality and violent political conflict*.Journal of Conflict Resolution. 40(1). pp.98-133.

development is important, but insights into the intricacies leading to rise of violence cannot be ignored. Therefore, the thesis has to focus on the state and its institutions as the explanatory political variables in the next chapter.

## **Chapter Four**

### **Between Democracy and Violence**

The chapter deals with key sections, where each section is located within a certain time period. Each time period though distinct, does not mark a sharp split from the other rather they transcend their respective periods, are influenced by each others political content and location and actively communicate on certain overlapping themes. Though each time period is contextualized with its interconnection to some major rupture resulting in the rise of violence, the successive time period has to be read and understood in continuation with the previous.

The first section located within 1977 to 1996 primarily examines the period with reference to the rigging of state assembly elections of 1989 resulting in the rise of separatism and violence in the Kashmir region. The electoral rigging of 1989 was Kashmir's first militant response against the decline of democracy in the region. The period where militant response, was a dominant phase in Kashmir region lasted some years, eventually fizzling out in 1996. This is followed by the assembly elections of 1996. The second section following the larger frame of the previous section locates and critically analyses the assembly elections within the period from 2002 to 2014. In 2008 elections were conducted against the backdrop of Amaranth land row in 2008. The chapter focuses on the period post 2010 especially between 2014 to 2017. The period largely reflects unrest and uncertainty in the public sphere. However, 2014 assembly elections mark the arrival of a deeply fractured state government, which was the first of its kind. It was the historic formation of an alliance between PDP and BJP in Jammu and Kashmir. The sections are created as part of the structural plan for the chapter, and should at no point be considered as a sudden break in rise of violence, as violence at different junctures was premised on the denial of democracy viz the electoral rigging. A better way to understand the the sections would be to read them not as rhetorical ruptures but in continuum where the subsequent section with a different form draws its content and meaning from the earlier section.

The attempt is made to put forth multiple arguments to explain the discontent of democracy among the people of Kashmir region, which evolved in the 1980s. It will be useful to analyze critically through different arguments to pursue the objective of the chapter. In democratic system Horowitz ascribes great importance to the institutions of the electoral system and constitution. He especially



observes the way how recruitment to political parties is regulated by these institutions.<sup>452</sup> Besides, Horowitz' assumption is that ethnic parties are *tactical democrats* and basically this label is given by Herbert Tingsten.<sup>453</sup> The *tactical democrat* is the opposite of the *democrat by principle*. The *tactical democrat* supports the democratic system as long as there are good prospects of winning the election and abandons the democratic system in case elections are lost. As against this a *democrat by principle* always supports democracy irrespective of the outcome for his party. Horowitz is also of the opinion that ethnic party competition in democracy is by and large more conflict prone in comparison to other types of party competition.<sup>454</sup> The political elites maneuver the ethnic identity as an instrument with other elites. These elites consider it important to symbolize and exploit the old cultural values tactically for political mobilization.<sup>455</sup> This is what has happened in the Kashmir region as well. The political party, the National Conference shifted from religious identity to regional identity through the symbol 'Kashmiriyat' and attributed different meanings to it to suit the political goals at that point of time.

Paul Brass has also argued this view in these lines:

More precisely it is the study of the process by which elites and counter elites within ethnic groups select aspects of the group's culture, attach new value and meanings to them and use them as symbols to mobilize the group, to defend its interests, and to compete with other groups.<sup>456</sup>

Brass's argument seems related to the term 'Kashmiriyat' as such constructions are shaped consciously for political gains and political competition. Samuel Huntington reveals that political instability generally arises in societies including ethnic tension from the breakdown of democratic institutions to cope with rapid economic growth and social change. He argues:

The relationship between social mobilization and political instability seems reasonably direct. Urbanization, increase in literacy, education, and media exposure all give rise to enhanced aspirations and expectations which, if unsatisfied galvanize individuals and

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<sup>452</sup> Arend Lijphart. 1977. *Democracy in Plural Societies*. New Haven. Yale University Press.

<sup>453</sup> Herbert Tingsten. 1967. *Den Sevnska Socialdemokratins Ideutveckling*. vol.2. Stockholm. Bonniers. p.11-82.

<sup>454</sup> Jack David. Eller Coughlan Reed. 1993. *The Poverty and Primordialism: the demystification of ethnic attachments*. Ethnic and Racial Studies. 16(2). p.191.193.

<sup>455</sup> Paul Brass. 1991. *Ethnicity and Nationalism □ theory and comparison*. New Delhi. Sage Publications.

<sup>456</sup> Ibid. p.75.

groups into politics. In the absence of strong and adaptable political institutions such increases in participation mean instability and violence.<sup>457</sup>

### **Decline of Democracy: *its causes***

This argument of Huntington is applicable to urbanization, increase in literacy, education and political awareness in the Kashmir region. Pasha refers to almost similar causes responsible for militancy in the region. He explains that increasing level of education and literacy produced a politically informed generation and simultaneously frustrated by the lack of employment opportunities and limitations for democratic expressions.<sup>458</sup> The political awareness among Muslims in the region seems to have increased during the 1970s after the democracy was introduced. Besides, the representation was proportional to the religious division in the state assembly by 1987.<sup>459</sup> Thus increase in education and political awareness are the reasons of heavy reactions during the 1980s against the decline of democracy than for instance in 1950s or the 1960s, when democracy was absent. Huntington's argument that impartial and functioning democratic institutions are very important for political peace and that too in current times when people have media exposure and political awareness. Although Ted Gurr and Tilly, 'generally ruled out the pace of industrialization and urbanization as causal factors in conflicts.'<sup>460</sup> John Linz's standpoint is that political actors, their capacities and their political demands are important variables in the perspective of breakdown of democratic institutions. Linz argues:

One or a number of crises will probably have undermined the consensus of the democratic parties and their capacity to cooperate. Such crises are the result of a lack of efficacy or effectiveness of successive governments when confronted with serious problems that require immediate decisions.<sup>461</sup>

This argument seems aptly applicable to the 1987 election alliance between the National Conference and the Congress (I). It was a unique kind of alliance, when the two major opposition

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<sup>457</sup>Samuel Huntington.1968. *Political Order in Changing Societies* .New Haven..Yale University Press. p.47.

<sup>458</sup>M K Pasha.1992. *Beyond the Two Nation Divide :Kashmir and Resurgent Islam*. In *Perspectives on Kashmir*. Boulder. edited by RGC Thomas. Boulder Co .Westview Press. pp. 371-372.

<sup>459</sup>P S Verma .1994. *Jammu and Kashmir at the Political Crossroads*. New Delhi.Vikas Publishing House.pp.187-189.

<sup>460</sup>Charles.Tilly.1973.*Does Modernization Breed Revolution*.Comparative Politics.5(3).p.433 ;

Ted Robert Gurr.1970.*Why Men Rebel*.Princeton. Princeton University Press.p.11.

<sup>461</sup>Juan L Linz.1978. *Crisis, Breakdown and Reequilibration*..Baltimore. John Hopkins University Press. pp.39-50.

parties entered into coalition and worked out the seat equation before the election. This alliance ignored the democratic ethos and competition. Besides, gaining the monopoly of votes, it provoked the opposition and produced discontent among the people in the region.

### **A Poor Record of Democracy**

Kashmir has gone through a poor democratic record since independence. The poor record of democracy inside the Kashmir region is indicated by the persistent rigging of elections and by various forms of intervention, which prevented a fair political competition among the political parties. Any form of possible check on the abuse of power was done away with by the National Conference, though the party faced allegations from different quarters. Some of the abuses resorted to by the party include disqualification of opponents on insubstantial and superficial grounds, use of government machinery for personal purposes, beatings, harassment and kidnappings of opposition candidates, threatening the voters and tampering with ballot boxes.<sup>462</sup> For instance, one of the most disturbing features of the 1951-1972 state elections was the incidence of unopposed electoral results, where the candidacy of opposition politicians was rejected allegedly on suspicious grounds, leaving only the ruling party's candidate to contest the electorate and thus eliminating any voter choice.<sup>463</sup> In the 1951 elections, seventy three of the seventy five seats in the Legislative Assembly were elected unopposed. Likewise the figure was 57.33 % for the 1957 election, 45.33% in the 1962 election and 29.33% in the 1967 election.<sup>464</sup> These irregularities and regional hostilities culminated in the discontent among the masses. Most of the elections held in Kashmir region before 1970's have been fraudulent in variety of ways. In the first constituent assembly elections in 1951, the candidates of the National Conference party won all the seventy-five seats. In 1957, when the second elections were conducted, the National Conference won sixty-eight seats and forty-three were unopposed.<sup>465</sup> In 1962, the National Conference candidates contested for forty-one seats in the Kashmir region and thirty-four returned unopposed. While in 1967 the National Congress got fifty-seven seats, out of which twenty-two were unopposed.<sup>466</sup> 'On all the three occasion -- 1951, 1957, 1962 -- the government machinery was completely and

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<sup>462</sup>P N Bazaz. 1967. *Kashmir in Crucible*. New Delhi. Pamposh Publications. P. 87.

<sup>463</sup>P S Verma.1994. *Jammu and Kashmir at the Political Crossroads*. New Delhi. Vikas Publishing House. pp.116.

<sup>464</sup>Mathew J Webb.2012. *Kashmir's Right to Secede*.London. Routledge. p. 42.

<sup>465</sup> Birbal Nath.1998. *Kashmir :The Nuclear Flashpoint*. New Delhi. Manhas Publications. p. 127.

<sup>466</sup> AG Noorani. 2002. *A Fractured Verdict*. Frontline. November 08.

unhesitatingly used in support of the ruling party; opponents were disqualified on flimsy and frivolous grounds; the few dauntless candidates dared to stand for the contest, were mercilessly beaten or kidnapped; Peace Brigade men were employed to intimidate voters and the ballot boxes were tampered enabling polling officers to declare the victory of the National Conference party men.<sup>467</sup> 1962 elections were also rigged, as a matter of fact Jawaharlal Nehru, then Prime Minister told G M Baskshi, 'it would strengthen your position more if you lost few seats to bonafide opponents.'<sup>468</sup> M J Akbar, the journalist and Congress (I) politician reveals that the results were accepted, because Sheikh Abdullah had a widespread support in the region. In terms of democracy, corruption and tyranny the post-colonial period was more disappointing than what it was earlier prior to 1947. Although the leadership claimed that *New Kashmir* Manifesto was the combination 'of the communist ideology with democracy and liberal humanism'<sup>469</sup> Against this background Bazaz argues that the National Conference obstructed the growth of opposition parties, controlling and regulating the popular opportunity to participate in the democratic process, thereby hampering any development of a popular democratic culture.<sup>470</sup> In the subsequent elections rigging and electoral malpractices did not stop. The fourth State Assembly elections conducted in 1967 were marked by same electoral malpractices and misconduct.<sup>471</sup> So far as the 1972 elections are concerned Syed Mir Qasim, Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir at that time has admitted in his memoir *My Life & Times*, 'If elections were free and fair, the victory of the Plebiscite Front'<sup>472</sup> was a far gone conclusion.'<sup>473</sup>

The rule of the National Conference was therefore the 'dictatorship of the National Conference' along with intolerance of opposition. The period saw the internal conflicts rooted in region and religion. In the words of Balraj Puri, 'The instances of administrative arbitrariness and excesses had

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<sup>467</sup> P.N Bazaz.1967. *Kashmir in Crucible*. New Delhi. Pamposh Publications. p 87.

<sup>468</sup> Ibid.

<sup>469</sup> Sheikh Abdullah.2013.*The Blazing Chinar* (English translation of Abdullah's autobiography, Atash-i-Chinar, by Mohammad Amin).Srinagar.Gulshan Books. p.218.

<sup>470</sup> P.N Bazaz.1967. *Kashmir in Crucible*. New Delhi; Pamposh Publications. pp. 64-65.

<sup>471</sup> Verma.1994. *Jammu and Kashmir at the Political Crossroads*. New Delhi.Vikas Publishing House.

<sup>472</sup>The All Jammu and Kashmir Plebiscite Front,was a political party in Jammu and Kashmir premised on the agenda of popular plebiscite. The patron of Plebiscite Front was Sheikh Abdullah.The Plebiscite Front was formed on 9 August 1955 by Mirza Mohammad Afzal Beg, a leader of the National Conference.

Source: Vitoria.Schofield.1996. *Kashmir in The Crossfire*. London. Taurus. p. 217.

<sup>473</sup>Ibid. p.122

a similar reaction in all the regions of the state.<sup>474</sup> The Gangendragadkar Commission appointed by the government to enquire into the factors of *irritations and tensions* in the region submitted their findings regarding the elections of December 1968 :

Some representatives who appeared before us have cast doubts on the manner in which elections have been conducted in the state in the past, particularly about the fairness of the last General Election. They have pointed out that at the last General Election, 141 nomination papers were rejected and 26 members were returned unopposed to the State Legislative Assembly and that the whole of Anantnag District failed to get an opportunity to go to the polls for electing its representatives to Parliament or to the State Legislature. These persons feel that all the elections held so far were systematically interfered with by the State authorities and this has undermined the faith of the common man in democracy.<sup>475</sup>

It is to be added that the commission made a significant observation in these words:

This (manipulation of elections) is a cause of irritation and tension and a note of this feeling has to be taken. We should, therefore, like to add that as the Jammu and Kashmir State occupies a strategic area, it is necessary to nurture the faith of the common man in democracy and democratic institutions in the state. We hope that the State Government will do all they can to build and sustain that faith.<sup>476</sup>

Similarly, Jay Prakash Narayan had written to the Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi in 1966, 'We profess democracy but rule by force in Kashmir . . . We profess secularism, but let Hindu nationalism stampede us into . . . establishing it by repression . . . Kashmir has distorted India's image in the world as nothing else has done . . . The problem exists not because Pakistan wants to grab Kashmir, but because there is deep and widespread discontent among the people'.<sup>477</sup> However, democratic breakthrough started in 1977 and the credit for the first free and fair Legislative Assembly Election is given to Indira Gandhi and Sheikh Abdullah. In the words of Bhim Singh of local Panthers Party in Jammu and Kashmir 'Morarji Desai (Prime Minister) openly declared that anyone who would attempt to pursue some form of rigging would be severely

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<sup>474</sup>Balraj Puri. 1968. *Jammu and Kashmir*. In *State Politics in India*. edited by Myron Weiner. Princeton. Princeton University Press. p.96.

<sup>475</sup>Gajendragadkar Commission Report. p.79.

<sup>476</sup>Ibid.

<sup>477</sup> M J Akbar. 1985. In *India: The Seige Within*. New York. Viking. p.267.

punished and this was quite effective.<sup>478</sup> Whitehead states, 'Of all Kashmir's exercises in state elections in India's first thirty years of independence, the 1977 polls were by far the most untainted.'<sup>479</sup> According to Habibullah, senior administrative officer, the 1977 elections were seen by many as free and fair and the only fair elections conducted in the state of Jammu and Kashmir.<sup>480</sup> In this election the Congress party was the largest party with 11 seats in the Assembly, Janta Party won 13 seats, National Conference obtained 47 seats out of the total 75 seats and Jamaat-e-Islami, a non-secular party won only 01 seat in the Assembly. It has been observed that the state electoral malpractices and misconduct carried out by the National Conference in the previous elections were questioned by the democratic legitimacy of the electoral polls of 1977 elections.<sup>481</sup>

### **Functional Democracy: road to nation-building**

From the perspective of Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi building nationalism and democracy were considered incompatible goals for a vulnerable border state like Jammu and Kashmir. And political opposition was perceived as an impediment to integration and nation-building had to be prioritized over democratization in view of the Congress party.<sup>482</sup> In this context Balraj Puri has given crucial analyses and suggests that the process of nation-building and democracy be considered as pre-requisite for the integration and national unity. Puri reveals that the process of integration of Jammu and Kashmir with the Union of India had started with free and fair elections.<sup>483</sup> Similarly, Robert Dahl sees democracy as a key component in the nation-building process and Balraj Puri's analysis seems to support this claim. The result of the democratization process during the mid 1970s was that 'there were ten years in Jammu and Kashmir with no fundamentalism, secessionism and no communalism.' Puri's point is not that Jammu and Kashmir was without the problems during this period, but he means that democracy worked for this period. The amount of violence and unrest during the early 1980s was insignificant in comparison to that of today.

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<sup>478</sup> Aksari Zaidi. Times of India. 7 November.1994.

<sup>479</sup> Andrew Whitehead. 2007. *A Mission in Kashmir*. Viking. New Delhi. Penguin Books India. p. 237.

<sup>480</sup> Wajahat Habibullah.2008.*My Kashmir: Conflict and Prospects of Enduring Peace*. Lahore. Vanguard Books. p.40.

<sup>481</sup> P N Bazaz. 1978. *Democracy through Intimidation and Terror*. New Delhi. Heritage Publishers.pp.124-132.

<sup>482</sup> Balraj Puri.1993.*Kashmir: Towards Insurgency, Tracts for the Times*.New Delhi.Orient Longman.pp.45-50.

<sup>483</sup> B K Nehru in an interview on 14 November 1994.

In this context additional evidence may be considered from Amanullah Khan, the leader of the separatist group, Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), which throws light on Jammu and Kashmir's political climate and process of integration in early 1980s. His observation indicates that when democracy was functioning in Jammu and Kashmir, the pressure to change the political status of the region was neither heard nor supported.<sup>484</sup> This lends credibility to Balraj Puri's analysis that democracy functioned well in early 1980s and consequently led to greater integration. Many persons admit that during 1977-1983 Jammu and Kashmir was a peaceful region.<sup>485</sup> Bhim Singh of the Panthers Party reveals that all the *politicians' minds* were fighting politically within the democratic set up in the early 1980s.<sup>486</sup> The political debates within the mainstream parties were not based on religion.<sup>487</sup> Abdul Ghani Lone, another leader of the separatist movement has also elucidated with some arguments. Lone had started his political career with the Congress party and afterwards in 1978 he founded his own party, namely the People's Conference and was afterwards the senior member of the separatist party, *Hurriyat Conference*.<sup>488</sup> Lone argues, 'The Indian National Congress and National Conference contested in politics before Independence, but that does not mean they accepted British Rule'<sup>489</sup> Lone means to say that democracy is undoubtedly functioning but may not end separatists demand, however they could not get support when democracy was functioning during the mid 1970s to early 1980s. At this juncture the political climate in the Kashmir region was not based on religion or region. For instance in the late 1970s it seems that there developed a certain amount of collaboration between the National Conference and a section of the Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh (RSS).<sup>490</sup> And during 1981 and 1982 the National Conference supported Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) in the Local Bodies Election of the Jammu region.<sup>491</sup> Although this seems incompatible with the ethnic party systems' behaviour explained by Horowitz in the light of cooperation that occurred across ethnic lines. Thus one can

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<sup>484</sup>Sten Widmalm.1997.*The Rise Fall of Democracy in Jammu and Kashmir*.Asian Survey.University of California Press.37(11).pp. 1005-1030.

<sup>485</sup>Balraj Puri. 1993.*Kashmir : Towards Insurgency, Tracts for the Times*.New Delhi. Orient Longman.p.50.

<sup>486</sup>Sten Widmalm.1997.*The Rise Fall of Democracy in Jammu and Kashmir*. Asian Survey.University of California Press. 37(11).pp.1005-1030.

<sup>487</sup> Ibid.

<sup>488</sup>The meaning of Hurriyat is freedom.Hurriyat Conference is an umbrella party which comprises of separatist groups in the Kashmir region.

<sup>489</sup>Sten Widmalm.1997.*The Rise Fall of Democracy in Jammu and Kashmir*. Asian Survey.University of California Press.37(11).pp.1005-1030.

<sup>490</sup>*RSS, NC link poll?*.Patriot. 8 November 1978.

<sup>491</sup>*BJP, NC may end alliance*. Hindustan Times. 8 January.1982.

infer that ethnic politics can become uncompromising however there is also a possibility of compromise as well. This also indicates that the political climate was secular and this secular politics co-existed with democracy. All this led to ethnic peace despite the lingual and religious diversity in both the regions of Jammu and Kashmir. There was not much discontent among the people, rather the popular sentiments inside the region valued democracy, which implicitly helped the integration of the Kashmir region and nation-building process in India. The separatist forces were present even during a functioning democracy, but observation indicates that they did not receive support in late the 1970s and early 1980s. Besides, political parties were originally ethnic, but did not polarize on the basis of religion rather they co-operated. The question arises what went wrong which caused the early decline of democracy in the Kashmir region.

### **Weak Democratic Institutions and Poor Governance**

Devi Das Thakur, the Finance Minister in Sheikh Abdullah's government and B K Nehru, Governor of Jammu and Kashmir played a pivotal role in the nomination of Farooq Abdullah as heir to the throne and in his appointment as Chief Minister in spite of difficulties from the opposition, but Sheikh Abdullah had a poor opinion about Farooq Abdullah as his successor. As B K Nehru says:

D D Thakur was a force trying to persuade him (Sheikh Abdullah) to make up his mind in favour of the son rather than the son-in-law (Gul Shah). This till virtually the moment the Sheikh did not do. He did not like Gul Shah anymore than anybody else did. But he thought so poorly of Farooq as a possible successor that he was not at all sure that the future of the state would be safe in his hands. He regarded him as a spoilt playboy, utterly irresponsible, not in the slightest interested either in politics and in administration, not capable of handling either, not particularly attached to his father and, on the whole, unfit to be given the responsibility of governing a state of the complexity of Jammu and Kashmir.<sup>492</sup>

There are certain reasons in selecting Farooq Abdullah in comparison to G M Shah, the son-in-law of Sheikh Abdullah. The Governor B K Nehru clarifies:

He (Farooq Abdullah) had, like modern young people neither interest in nor knowledge of religion, whether his own or that of others. Above all he felt himself to be an Indian. Unlike

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<sup>492</sup>B K Nehru. 2011. *Nice Guys Finish Second*. New Delhi. Penguin Books.



his father his loyalties went beyond the narrow confines of Kashmir to the country of India. He was certainly no lover of Pakistan . . . He had shown no particular interest in politics nor in public affairs, whether of Kashmir or of India. Among the two claimants, who were the only possible candidates for the succession (so strong was the dynastic hold of the Sheikh), I naturally preferred him.<sup>493</sup>

Finally, Farooq Abdullah was sworn as the Chief Minister on 8 September, 1982 before performing the last rites of Sheikh Abdullah. Sheikh Abdullah left a dual legacy to Farooq Abdullah when he passed away<sup>494</sup> :

1. The positive point was that the status and religion of the region had not become the dimension of polarization. In both the regions of the state people were in favour of peaceful democratic development.
2. The democratic institutions inside the state were still weak rather democracy was still in the consolidation phase and hence was vulnerable.

The party inherited by Farooq Abdullah from his father was internally fractured, torn by internal rivalry and under attack from external pressures. He also committed blunders and the first blunder was that Farooq Abdullah disgracefully dismissed the whole council of Ministers in a public gathering which he had inherited from his father.<sup>495</sup> All the Ministers were not corrupt as according to B K Nehru, ‘a few of them were actually honest’<sup>496</sup> Farooq Abdullah did not replace the previous ones by clean and honest Ministers as Nehru says, ‘a whole new set of Ministers was sworn in, most of them as or less competent and some of them only marginally less corrupt than the outgoing lot.’<sup>497</sup> A poor picture of governance during 1982-83 is revealed by B K Nehru in these words:

The state continued to be administered with the usual inefficiency and corruption. The Chief Minister had no idea of administration . . . The complaints against him were that he was far too often away from the state, that files sent up for his orders accumulate without any attention being paid to them . . . The fact was that, as his father had foreseen Farooq was not really interested in the governance of the state. He was a modern young man and

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<sup>493</sup>Ibid. pp.599-600.

<sup>494</sup>After some months the leader of Plebiscite Front and a colleague of Sheikh Abdullah, Mirza Afzal Beg died.

<sup>495</sup>B K Nehru. 2011. *Nice Guys Finish Second*. New Delhi. Penguin Books.

<sup>496</sup>Ibid. p.606.

<sup>497</sup>Ibid. pp.606-607.

was bored stiff in the company of the dull, stuffy, narrow minded, self serving politicians with whom he had to spend his time.<sup>498</sup>

However, Farooq Abdullah ruled for a short period as Assembly Elections were scheduled for 1983 and electoral alliance broke down in April 1983, he explained that alliance was avoided due to the fear that the National Conference might be marginalized.<sup>499</sup> Thus, both the parties were contesting all the seats on equal basis. Nonetheless, campaigning was fierce and violent as well, but the prime political concerns were framed on secular lines.<sup>500</sup> There was hardly any reference to religious rights during the campaigning and hence polarization between communities did not happen. Farooq Abdullah reclaimed the heritage of his father and agitated the unjust central intervention, whereas Indira Gandhi campaigned in the Jammu region and deliberated on the sentiments of alienation, neglect and injustice.<sup>501</sup> The Congress (I) was the main opposition to the National Conference and won 26 seats, whereas the National Conference won 46 seats out of total 75. Independent candidates won only 03 seats. The BJP and Jamaat-e-Islami were wiped out in the election and thus pointing towards secular political polarization.<sup>502</sup> Nonetheless, the National Conference was accused that the elections were plagued by the fraudulent methods and the objective of political elite was to grab certain vote banks by any available means and simultaneously this indicates that they could not rely on party structures to gain the goals. The malpractices and the misconduct of this election was observed by many as is stated in these words, 'the election machinery in the state functioned as a subordinate department of the National Conference. Even the senior officers of the state government flaunted their contribution to the return of National Conference to power . . . Several polling stations were allowed to count more votes than the number of voters on the rolls.'<sup>503</sup> The National Conference was accused of rigging the elections<sup>504</sup> and the Congress (I) demanded a new poll in 18 constituencies. The Congress (I) organized mass meetings and demonstrations which created widespread disturbances in Srinagar. In spite of accusations the electoral victory of the National Conference was later accepted by the

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<sup>498</sup>Ibid. pp.608-09.

<sup>499</sup>Ashutosh Varshney.1992.*Three Compromised Nationalism's: Why Kashmir has been a Problem In Perspectives on Kashmir: The Roots of Conflict in South Asia.* edited by R G C Thomas. New York.Routledge. p.220.

<sup>500</sup>Ibid.p.219.

<sup>501</sup>Ibid.

<sup>502</sup>In this election Congress (I) secured votes from the areas which were hitherto dominated by National Conference.

<sup>503</sup>Birbal Nath.1998. *Kashmir : The Nuclear Flashpoint.* New Delhi. Manhas Publications. pp.131-133.

<sup>504</sup>*Elections Rules being Violated in Kashmir.* Statesman. 20 May 1983.

opposite parties and the media as well, as it was written in one of the papers, 'yet, when everything is said, the popular mandate is beyond doubt. Sheikh Abdullah's mantle has truly fallen on his son who owes no thanks to any favours from any quarter.'<sup>505</sup> However, electoral malpractices had started to undermine the democratic credibility in the state.

### **Dismissal of Farooq Abdullah : *blow to democracy***

The blow brought to the consolidation of democracy in Kashmir region happened on 2 July 1984, when the new Governor of the Jammu and Kashmir state, Jagmohan Malhotra informed Farooq Abdullah that he had lost the majority in the State Assembly by the defection of 01 independent and 12 MLAs of the National Conference.<sup>506</sup> This group formed a new government with the support of Congress (I), which resulted in angry reaction and criticism as unconstitutional and undemocratic. Allegations were made that the defectors had accepted large amounts of money to defect.<sup>507</sup> Besides, it was also believed that Farooq Abdullah had openly supported N T Ramamrao, the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, who had given a defeat to Congress (I) in the election. These are some of the reasons which made Indira Gandhi to decide Farooq Abdullah's dismissal.<sup>508</sup> However, Jagmohan Malhotra propounds that Farooq Abdullah had supported separatist forces within the region and had met Sikh extremist Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale.<sup>509</sup> Farooq Abdullah was asked to step down by Jagmohan Malhotra without providing an opportunity to prove the support on the floor of the Assembly. During the leadership of Indira Gandhi, Congress (I) was willing to pullout any leader from their political opposition. This caused disdain for the central government and discontent with democratic institutions in the Kashmir region. In spite of the pre-emptive stationing of troops in the region, arbitrary dismissal of Farooq Abdullah and his popularly elected government resulted in tension and soon followed by the protests inside the region. During the spring of 1984 it was known that Indira Gandhi wanted to dismiss Farooq Abdullah from the office. There were indicators that the scheme hatched in the higher echelons□ the Prime Minister's Office

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<sup>505</sup> *Abdullah's Triumph*. Indian Express. 11 June 1983.

<sup>506</sup> Jagmohan Malhotra has twice served the state of Jammu and Kashmir as Governor. He has served as a civil servant and was also a politician in the BJP.

<sup>507</sup> Vernon Hewitt. 1995. *Reclaiming the Past?*. London. Portland Books. p.150.

<sup>508</sup> Alastair Lamb. 1992. *Kashmir: A Disputed Legacy*. Karachi, Oxford University Press. p.329

<sup>509</sup> Jagmohan Malhotra. 1991. *My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir*. New Delhi. Allied Publishers.

and the Central Government. D D Thakur explains that, he was called by Indira Gandhi to discuss the dismissal of Farooq Abdullah from the Chief Minister's office soon after the election of 1983:

She said, 'How do you go about Kashmir', and then I said that 'This is one of the ways which can do'(Indira Gandhi said) 'can you do it?' I said 'Yes I am capable of doing it' (Indira Gandhi said) 'but who is the horse that it is it that you are going to flog then?' I said 'G M Shah', '(Indira Gandhi said) 'but you are not pulling on well with him, how do you do it?' I said 'I'll surrender, I'll win him over' . . . And then I went to Kashmir. Then I had a meeting with G M Shah at my son-in-law's house, where he came for the dinner . . . And we planned the entire thing, and I came back and reported to her that this is the line of acting.<sup>510</sup>

Farooq Abdullah had been under consistent attack; Shah and Thakur were set on splitting the party within. Although under the constitutional law of Jammu and Kashmir floor-crossing should have been seen illegal.<sup>511</sup> One can draw far reaching conclusion from the political environment of the Kashmir region during 1984. During 1978 Sheikh Abdullah had peaceful relations with the central government, whereas during 1983 Farooq Abdullah did not have the same. Member of the Congress (I) even claimed that Farooq Abdullah was a member of Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF)<sup>512</sup> According to B K Nehru, he was persuaded by the central government 'everyday' to oust Farooq Abdullah<sup>513</sup> but neither did he welcome the intervention of the central government nor did he accept the truth of accusations. Although the road to democracy was full of turbulence and a rampant corruption existed among the parties and the bureaucracy, but democracy at least was in consolidation phase before the dismissal of Farooq Abdullah.

Jagmohan Malhotra, the Governor of Jammu and Kashmir claimed that he had to act in the national interest by taking action against Farooq Abdullah, as the central government accused Farooq Abdullah of being lenient with and giving encouragement to separatists.<sup>514</sup> G M Shah, Farooq Abdullah's brother-in-law with the assistance of DD Thakur, former Finance Minister in the state

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<sup>510</sup>Sten Widmalm.1997.*The Rise Fall of Democracy in Jammu and Kashmir*. Asian Survey.University of California Press.37(11).pp. 1005-1030.

<sup>511</sup>Jagmohan Malhotra. 1991. *My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir*. New Delhi. Allied Publishers.p.30.

<sup>512</sup>*Dr Farooq Abdullah was member of Liberation Front*. Statesman. Delhi. 28 February 1984.

<sup>513</sup>Sten Widmalm.1997.*The Rise Fall of Democracy in Jammu and Kashmir*. Asian Survey.University of California Press. 37(11).pp.1005-1030.

<sup>514</sup>Ashutosh Varshney.1992.*Three Compromised Nationalisms : Why Kashmir has been a Problem In Perspectives on Kashmir: The Roots of Conflict in South Asia* edited by R G C Thomas. New York.Routledge. p.232.

was about to form a new government with the support of Congress (I)<sup>515</sup>, but Jagmohan Malhotra instead of supporting Shah informed Farooq Abdullah that he would impose the Governor's Rule.<sup>516</sup> After this Indira Gandhi gave her blessings to Jagmohan Malhotra for the Governor's Rule. But according to Arun Nehru, cabinet sub-committee on political affairs overruled Governor's Rule option and stated, 'Let there be a split in the National Conference □ Shah will not last a year.'<sup>517</sup> Consequently, Shah was sworn in by Jagmohan Malhotra. All this led to the criticism against Jagmohan Malhotra that Farooq Abdullah should have allowed to test his support on the floor of Assembly rather than carrying out the orders of the central government without any question. Jagmohan Malhotra has argued in his defense that he opposed central government for the Governor's Rule and advocated the installation of G M Shah.<sup>518</sup> Hence, G M Shah was made the Chief Minister, D D Thakur became the Deputy Chief Minister and all the defectors got the port folios in the newly formed government.<sup>519</sup> The central government supported strongly the new government and it was declared by the Union Home Minister, P V Narasimha Rao that Jagmohan Malhotra had 'not committed any unconstitutional impropriety' in dismissing Farooq Abdullah as the Chief Minister.<sup>520</sup> In this context one of the newspapers, The Indian Express reported:

Replying to remarks that Mr Farooq Abdullah should have been allowed to test his majority, the Home Minister said it was not necessary that the majority should be tested always on the floor of the House. Every case depends on its merits, Mr (PV Narasimha) Rao said.<sup>521</sup>

However, among people, political elites and in the media newly formed government lacked legitimacy and Farooq Abdullah's dismissal was considered a breach of democratic standards.<sup>522</sup> The occurrence of events during 1983-1984 denote the beginning of the drastic decline of democracy in the Kashmir region, although there is difference between what characterized the rise of violence and what initiated the rise of violence. There is no authentic evidence about dismissal

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<sup>515</sup>Devi Das Thakur was the Finance Minister of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. He was removed by Farooq Abdullah in 1982.

<sup>516</sup>Jagmohan Malhotra. 1991. *My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir*. New Delhi. Allied Publishers. pp.284-302.

<sup>517</sup>Sten Widmalm. 1997. *The Rise Fall of Democracy in Jammu and Kashmir*. Asian Survey. University of California Press. 37(11).pp. 1005-1030.

<sup>518</sup>Jagmohan Malhotra. 1991. *My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir*. New Delhi. Allied Publishers. p.293.

<sup>519</sup>Farooq Abdullah. 1985. *My Dismissal □ As told to Sati Sahni*. New Delhi. Vikas Publishing House. pp.68-69.

<sup>520</sup>*Grave situation was developing in Kashmir*. Hindustan Times. 27 July. 1984.

<sup>521</sup>*Farooq govt dismissal not 'unconstitutional'*. Indian Express. 27 July. 1984.

<sup>522</sup>Balraj Puri. 1993. *Kashmir: Towards Insurgency, Tracts for the Times*. New Delhi. Orient Longman. p.34.

of Farooq Abdullah whether it was the outcome of irrational feelings of ethnic identity or because of the religious sentiment. But it seems that separatism and the rise of violence have been initiated by the declining democracy within the political institutions and the leadership inefficiency to handle the pressure of intervention from the central government. Nonetheless, it is not clear why the central government was set on ousting Farooq Abdullah. The national security was undoubtedly an important concern, but there were two other factors as well: a conflict between central and state government and personal conflict between Indira Gandhi and Farooq Abdullah. The first factor can be characterized primarily political due to the centralizing tendencies of the leadership by Indira Gandhi.<sup>523</sup> Farooq Abdullah's decision to join an alliance of regional parties of India called *opposition conclave* damaged the relation between the centre and the state, as Indira Gandhi became serious about Farooq Abdullah's joining a national anti- Congress (I) alliance, because the National Conference had never opposed Congress (I) outside the state of Jammu and Kashmir.<sup>524</sup> This happened soon after the breakdown of electoral alliance between the Congress (I) and the National Conference. Some point out personal animosity between Indira Gandhi and Farooq Abdullah as the cause of Farooq Abdullah's dismissal. Chandrashekar, the former Prime Minister reveals that there was a complicated relation between Indira Gandhi and Farooq Abdullah, because the later often used to say he was treated like a third son by Indira Gandhi.<sup>525</sup> Simultaneously Shekhar explains that, 'one could not say that socioeconomic factors and such were not the only factors behind the tense relations between the Centre and the State.'<sup>526</sup> In this context Jyoti Basu, former Chief Minister of West Bengal, has stated in his interview:

In Jammu and Kashmir the National Conference was divided and so Indira Gandhi could buy off those two MLA's in 1984 . . . But I told Mrs.Gandhi she should not intervene in Jammu and Kashmir. Farooq Abdullah was democratically elected and he was all for India in his politics, but she simply did not like him and that's why she bought those MLA's.<sup>527</sup>

However, from this juncture onwards democratic credibility could have been restored, but it seems over the following five years hope for continuation of democracy was slowly dissipated by the

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<sup>523</sup>Paul Brass.1994.*India□The Politics of India Since Independence: The New Cambridge History of India IV.1*.Cambridge.Cambridge University Press.pp.215-225.

<sup>524</sup>M J Akbar.1991.*Kashmir: Behind the Vale*. New Delhi. Viking Penguin India. p.203.

<sup>525</sup>Sten Widmalm.1997.*The Rise Fall of Democracy in Jammu and Kashmir*. Asian Survey.University of California Press. 37(11).pp. 1005-1030.

<sup>526</sup>Ibid.

<sup>527</sup>Ibid.

political elite of the Kashmir region. The dismissal of the elected government caused a shock and feeling of alienation among the people. All this led to speculations that democracy for the Kashmir region was out of bounds and people in Srinagar reacted. Consequently, government imposed curfew for a long period. B K Nehru writes, 'there was no less than seventy two days curfew in Srinagar during the first three months alone.'<sup>528</sup> Afterwards, Chief Minister, Gul Shah was named as *Gul Curfew*. G M Shah's government could last for less than two years precisely from 2 July 1984 to 6 March 1986, because he was considered a burden by the central government, as there were reports of insurgency in the region during Shah's governance period. And steadily separatist parties began to use region and religion for political mobilization. Lastly, the Governor's Rule was imposed by Jagmohan Malhotra in March 1986, which lasted for about six months. The Governor's Rule was replaced by the Direct Rule from New Delhi in September 1986. In November 1986 Direct Rule from New Delhi came to an end in consequence of an accord between Rajiv Gandhi and Farooq Abdullah. Thus, Farooq Abdullah was placed as the Chief Minister of the National Conference and the Congress (I) coalition and the suspension of the Legislative Assembly was lifted. Farooq Abdullah hence made an agreement with the Congress (I) to share power till the new elections. This alliance was surprising and not expected by the people. According to Chowdhary, 'Shah's replacement by Farooq Abdullah in 1986 did not help the process of governance. By this time Farooq had lost much of his credibility.'<sup>529</sup> The roots of the current crisis in the region can be mapped back to Farooq Abdullah's unconstitutional dismissal in July 1984. This also brought forth the hollowness of the Indira-Abdullah Accord, which had brought the National Conference back in the state power. Besides, the subsequent Governor's and President's Rule from 1986-1987 also offered space to the separatists who eventually gained the strength and simultaneously the National Conference, the secular party with nationalist credentials steadily lost its ground. Farooq Abdullah from his dismissal as Chief Minister had inferred the conclusion that to stay in power it was important to secure the faith of the government at the centre and the people's mandate was not decisive. This prompted him to form an alliance with the ruling Congress Party at the centre. The alliance undermined the credentials of Farooq Abdullah and his party to represent the aspirations of the Kashmiris. Balraj Puri sums up the period of the National

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<sup>528</sup>B K Nehru. 2011. *Nice Guys Finish Second*. New Delhi. Penguin Books.p.641.

<sup>529</sup>Rekha Chowdhary.2019.*Jammu and Kashmir: 1990 and Beyond Competitive Politics in the Shadow of Separatism*. New Delhi.Sage.p.195.

Conference in these words, ‘Farooq Abdullah had reached the lowest ebb of his popularity. It lied in the virtual collapse of all democratic and secular opposition to him.’<sup>530</sup> This also paved the way for the entry of Muslim United Front (MUF) in the electoral space to represent the aspirations of the masses. Nonetheless, Kashmir region saw a period of weak alliances and the Governor’s Rule, which eroded the region’s democracy.

### **1987 Assembly Elections: a critical turning point**

Since before the 1987 election there developed a co-operation steadily between the National Conference and Congress (I) that was hard to accept, because it had been observed that across India alliances were formed on ideological levels. And after some time both the parties were in the process of making an alliance and during this process an unknown organization namely the Muslim United Front (MUF) managed a strike inside the Kashmir region. This fragile political group was comprised of the Jamaat-e-Islami headed by Syed Ali Shah Geelani along with other groups. Afterwards, more groups were strongly aligned with the MUF, when the National Conference and Congress (I) drew closer. Later on, it was declared that the candidates of Congress (I) and the National Conference decided not to oppose each other, rather the National Conference would put up candidates for 46 seats and the Congress (I) for 31 seats out of a ratio 40:60 in the elections of 1987.<sup>531</sup>

The aim of the alliance between the two major opposition parties and seat equation before the election seemed an attempt to create a political monopoly in order to get all the votes. It can be called a *Tactical Alliance* as discussed earlier, in the context that if there is a common enemy, which both parties try to defeat and cannot be defeated individually, thus two major political parties formed an alliance. Lijphart describes it as *Election Cartel*, a situation when the constituencies and power are divided by the main opponents before the election.<sup>532</sup> Besides, dangerous political polarization is opposed by *Grand Coalition*<sup>533</sup>. The coalition between the Congress (I) and the National Conference was received well by some observers in the region in the sense that

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<sup>530</sup>Balraj Puri.1999.*Message of the Lok Sabha Election*. Economic & Political Weekly.34(45) p.3169.

<sup>531</sup>*Muslim Front Cracking Up*. Indian Express. 23 November 1986.

<sup>532</sup>Arendt Lijphart.1977.*Democracy in Plural Societies* New Haven.Yale University Press.pp.25-36.

<sup>533</sup>Grand Coalition is an arrangement in a multi-party system wherein the two main political parties of opposing political ideologies unite together in a coalition to form government.



communalist and anti-nationalist elements would be countered.<sup>534</sup> At the same time it seems this election cartel did not depict any respect for democratic ethos, because it is by dint of competition between the political parties that democracy thrives, and this seemed to be ignored by this kind of coalition. One of the correspondents of the Times of India writes an anecdote which reflects on the contempt for 'cartel' and the provocation of disdain:

When Rajiv was to announce the accord between the Congress (I) and the National Conference at a large meeting in Srinagar, high level Congress (I) representatives had to hide in the press tent since they were genuinely fearing that the rank and file members of the National Conference would beat them up if they were given the chance.<sup>535</sup>

It is worth mentioning that at this point of time there was a diversity of opinion within the leadership of the MUF and their difference of opinion reflects the presence of democratic space within the MUF. The convener of the MUF was Maulana Abbas Ansari, leader of the Shia Muslims in the Kashmir region. The two other popular religious and political leaders were Mirwaiz Farooq and Mirwaiz Qazi Nissar Ahmad. They criticized the MUF for communal tendencies and advocated 'unity of secular, democratic and patriotic forces in the state.'<sup>536</sup> These leaders opposed the radical members of the Jamaat-e-Islami group. This group had been criticized for the first serious communal clashes in Anantanag district (South Kashmir) in 1986, but afterwards it was known that to single out this party for the communal tension was not the fact, as after the riots Balraj Puri along with his team had visited the troubled area and talked to Pandits as well as Muslims which he concluded in these lines:

The easy transformation further confirmed the general impression in the valley that the communal incidents were not spontaneous but engineered through a planned campaign of rumors and other means. Curiously, while accusing fingers were raised against some members of secular parties, we found no evidence of the involvement of the Jamaat-e-Islami.<sup>537</sup>

Puri's argument suggests that religious political parties cannot alone be blamed for creating communal clashes during this period, rather it seems that the National Conference and the

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<sup>534</sup> *Congress-NC alliance*. Patriot. 4 February 1987.

<sup>535</sup> Sten Widmalm. 1997. *The Rise Fall of Democracy in Jammu and Kashmir*. Asian Survey. University of California Press. 37(11). pp. 1005-1030.

<sup>536</sup> *Mirwaiz calls MUF communalist*. Indian Express. 20 February. 1987.

<sup>537</sup> Balraj Puri. 1993. *Kashmir : Towards Insurgency, Tracts for the Times*. New Delhi. Orient Longman. p.35.

Congress (I) may be held responsible. It is important to reiterate that difference of opinion among the MUF leaders reflects the democratic environment which in the later phase did not survive in the Kashmir region. It simultaneously predicts the inability of leaders to become as one united organization.

In the spring of 1987 arrangements were made for the elections. Democracy as mentioned earlier was eroded, but was a right channel for political competition. The political environment was tense and resentment expressed by the candidates within the MUF and the BJP was disconcerting. At this juncture fair democratic process still had a chance to satisfy the discontent and disdain of the masses. This chance was obstructed by the decision of the National Conference and the Congress (I), who apprehended that *election cartel* was not sufficient for absolute victory. Many observers have stated the elections for State Assembly in 1987 was a critical turning point.<sup>538</sup> What has actually happened requires a deep digging. The *election cartel* undoubtedly created rigidity in the election dynamics due to the seat equation. The National Conference and the Congress (I) together got 87% seats in the Legislative Assembly out of only 53% of the voters. But the independent candidates won only 10% of the seats out of 35% voters. This depicts that in 1987 election the co-relation between seats and votes was weaker. The poor co-relation between seats and votes created suspicion for those who did not know the nuances of majority parties' alliance in election with single-member constituencies. Besides, the political accusations of the candidates from political opposition were overlooked. In this election, the leader of the People's Conference party, Abdul Ghani Lone had also fought the election from the constituency of Handwara (North Kashmir). Lone as well as his Lawyer were not allowed to observe the counting of votes at the regional counting office. Lone asserted that the election outcomes were altered and consequently a petition was filed with the High Court, but the judge did not act on this petition. There are similar such stories, when counting of the votes was interrupted in some constituencies; petitions were filed too, but no action was taken.<sup>539</sup> It was difficult to evaluate the extent of rigging, however, according to the Indian Intelligence Bureau the Muslim United Front (MUF) had lost around 13 seats through rigging, although formation of government would not have been possible by the political opposition with the available electoral support. According to Hewitt and Lamb, 1987 election was the most rigged and unfair in the history of the Kashmir region. The outcome of the

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<sup>538</sup>Edward Desmond. 1993. *Himalayan Ulster*. The New York Review of Books. p.26.

<sup>539</sup>*Top MUF Leaders Arrested*. Hindustan Times. 26 March.1987.

election was seen by many people as disproportionate to the numbers in the campaign rallies and the overall mood of the masses in the region.<sup>540</sup> According to Ganguly many Kashmiri's proclaimed rightly or wrongly that once again democratic procedures have been disregarded in the region.<sup>541</sup> 'The fate of Yusuf Shah's<sup>542</sup> third final attempt to become a legislator in the State Assembly is replicated throughout the valley and some parts of Jammu region. *India Today* recorded the happenings of Spring 1987. Its eyewitness report speaks of a pattern of 'rigging and strong-arm tactics all over the valley', 'massive booth capturing (forcible take over of polling stations) by gangs', 'entire ballot boxes pre-stamped in favor of NC', numerous citizens 'simply not being allowed to vote' and government nominated supervisors 'stopping the counting as soon as they saw opposition candidates taking a lead.' Meanwhile the bureaucrats and clerks administering the process 'worked blatantly in favor of NC-Congress alliance and the police refused to listen to any complaint',<sup>543</sup>

In spite of electoral malpractice machinery of justice was inactive. Just before the election eight MUF leaders were arrested for rousing religious sentiments of the people. *India Today* reports that 'starting about two weeks before the election 600 opposition workers were arrested in the areas where the MUF, Independent and People's Conference candidates were showing strength.'<sup>544</sup> The MUF demanded investigation in electoral rigging after the election<sup>545</sup>, but the election commission did not respond. It seems that the coalition between National Conference and the Congress (I) had made the watchdog institutions like the Election Commission, High Court and the Police hesitant to act as independent institutions. Thus, suspicions of electoral rigging and complaints from political opposition proved adverse. Besides, it is claimed that the Accord with Rajiv Gandhi dispossessed Farooq Abdullah of his fathers' role as a Kashmiri loyalist by standing up to New Delhi, hence resulting in a power vacuum and central interference in politically isolating parties like the Muslim United Front (MUF). Historically, when the Congress and the National

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<sup>540</sup>Vernon Hewitt.1995. *Reclaiming the Past: The Search for Political and Cultural Unity in Contemporary Jammu and Kashmir*. London. Portland Books .p.152;

Alistair Lamb. 1992. *Kashmir: A Disputed Legacy*. Karachi, Oxford University Press. p.331.

<sup>541</sup>Sumit Ganguly.1992.*The Prospects of War and Peace in Kashmir*. In *Perspectives on Kashmir*. Boulder edited by RGC Thomas. Boulder Co .Westview Press p.375.

<sup>542</sup>Yusuf Shah now Syed Salahuddin was the MUF candidate from the Amirakadal constituency. He was leading with a huge voter turnout but got defeated through rigging.

<sup>543</sup> Sumantra Bose.2003.*Kashmir :Roots of Conflict, Paths to Peace*. New Delhi.Vistaar Publications. p.49.

<sup>544</sup> Inderjit Badhwar . Pradhu Chawla .*A Tarnished Triumph*. *India Today*. 15 April.1987. p.41.

<sup>545</sup> *MUF tables copies of 'fake votes'*. *Statesman*. 2 April 1987.

Conference parties fought the election with each other, they used to do so acrimoniously in order to appropriate the issues during the campaign, which would strengthen their respective positions. As a result, the electoral outcome of their political rivals declined.<sup>546</sup> In this context John Linz writes on the breakdown of democracy and argues that the political actors, their capacities and their formation of political demands are the crucial variables in the political perspective.<sup>547</sup> The electoral success of the NC-Congress alliance was ‘nothing but a usurpation of power.’<sup>548</sup> Farooq Abdullah also confessed that these elections were entirely unfair, having been covertly rigged.<sup>549</sup> ‘This indifference to election malpractices on a gigantic scale has given birth to gruesome terrorism in post 1987.’<sup>550</sup> According to Whitehead, ‘Popular sentiment was so strong that the voting could not be rigged . . . In the eyes of its critics, the National Conference achieved a victory for which Kashmir is still paying the price. If there was any spur to the start of the separatist insurgency in 1989, it was the anger over the flawed elections staged two years earlier.’<sup>551</sup> The leader of People’s Conference, Abdul Ghani Lone who had been fighting elections through the democratic means throughout his political career, became the leader of separatist party and reveals in the context of 1987 election:

It was this that motivated the young generation to say ‘to hell with the democratic process and all that this is about’ and they said ‘let’s go for the armed struggle’. It was the flash-point. The thought was there, the motivation was there, the urge was there, the demand was there and the opposition was there. The situation became ripe, and then a flash-point.<sup>552</sup>

Thus, 1987 election offered an extensive space to the separatists. The separatist groups formed not only the Kashmiri militants, but also the common Kashmiris. Although common Kashmiris were not connected with the militants, but their voluntary response to the circumstances generally led them to join processions on the streets in early 1990’s. Whitehead writes, ‘Huge . . . street protests often ended in rioting and in a heavy handed military response, in which sometimes dozens of

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<sup>546</sup> P S Verma. 1994. *Jammu and Kashmir at the Political Crossroads*. New Delhi. Vikas Publishing House. p 151.

<sup>547</sup> Juan L Linz. 1978. *Crisis, Breakdown and Reequilibration*. Baltimore. John Hopkins University Press. 1978. pp.39-50.

<sup>548</sup> Sumantra Bose. 2003. *Kashmir: Roots of Conflict, Paths to Peace*. New Delhi. Vistaar Publications. p.49.

<sup>549</sup> H. Baweja. *Normalcy is a Pipe dream*. India Today. 31 August. 1992.

<sup>550</sup> Birbal Nath. 1998. *Kashmir : The Nuclear Flashpoint*. New Delhi. Manhas Publications. pp.131-132.

<sup>551</sup> Andrew Whitehead. 2007. *A Mission in Kashmir*. New Delhi. Viking Penguin Books India. p. 237.

<sup>552</sup> Sten Widmalm. 1997. *The Rise Fall of Democracy in Jammu and Kashmir*. Asian Survey. University of California Press. 37(11). pp.1005-1030.

demonstrators were killed. The fury . . . to repress the insurgency, the resort to torture and to vicious security crackdowns prompted more Kashmir men to . . . join the armed groups.<sup>553</sup> The primary local group responsible for heading the militancy and popularizing among the local youth of the region was the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF). JKLF was formed on the basis of a political vision for a plural and secular independent Kashmir, integrating territories falling on both the sides of the border. In addition to the JKLF many other local militant groups mainly the militant wings of the separatist parties were active on the ground, who had earlier contested the 1987 Assembly Election under the umbrella party, Muslim United Front (MUF). However, ‘The JKLF lost hundreds of its leading activists and fighters in the first few years of the insurgency . . . By 1994, the JKLF had moved away from armed activity.’<sup>554</sup> At this juncture the separatist politics had the benefit of not only synchronizing between the militancy and the public response, but also occupied the central place of the regions politics. The reason behind it was the local character of the militancy and its ideological and political proclivity. On the other side democratic politics of mainstream parties had turned redundant as early as 1990s by withdrawing themselves from the political scenario. This was indicated by the in-efficacious nature of the 1989 parliamentary election.

The situation during 1989 and 1990 turned so unstable that it was difficult to run the government, as there used to be militant attacks on political leaders and government functionaries. According to Bose more than a hundred political workers were killed during the six months period.<sup>555</sup> In this situation of violent uprising the government as well as the Assembly was dissolved. This was the rise of militancy (1988-1991), which was dominated by the secular, pro-independent Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) in urban areas of the region<sup>556</sup>; much of its intensity was in Srinagar and in certain pockets of rural areas like Anantanag (South Kashmir), Baramullah and Kupwara (North Kashmir). Most of the militants were university graduates, who had campaigned for the Muslim United Front (MUF) in 1987 elections. Often the militants engaged with the security forces in urban areas of the region, thereby resulting in the loss of civilians during retaliation between the two groups, thus further alienating the population from the security

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<sup>553</sup> Andrew Whitehead. 2007. *A Mission in Kashmir*. Viking Penguin Books India. New Delhi. p.238.

<sup>554</sup> Ibid.

<sup>555</sup> Sumantra Bose. 2003. *Kashmir: Roots of Conflict, Paths to Peace*. Cambridge. MA. Harvard University Press. p.108.

<sup>556</sup> Victoria Schofield. 1996. *Kashmir in the Crossfire*. London. Taurus. p.240.

forces.<sup>557</sup> The militants also attempted to disturb the everyday life by damaging bridges, schools, shops and government buildings.<sup>558</sup> Eventually, the number of militant groups steadily increased, and JKLF lost its dominant position.<sup>559</sup> The rise of other militant groups was centred more around the rural areas of the region.<sup>560</sup> The reasons behind the shift of militancy towards the rural areas is a matter of debate till date. However, one of the possible explanation behind the shift can be the reluctance of rural Kashmiris to join militancy, because of their loyalty towards the National Conference on the historical basis of Sheikh Abdullah's 1950s land reforms.

### **Democratic Scene in Kashmir Region: 1996 onwards**

During the next few years the democratic decline created such a political vacuum, there could not seem any space for any political activity. In January 1990 the Governor's rule was re-imposed in the state and in May 1990 Jagmohan Malhotra as Governor was replaced by Girish Chandra Saxena who continued the course of action started off by Jagmohan Malhotra in order to stop the insurgency and again on 11 March 1993 Girish Chandra Saxena, was replaced by General Krishna Rao.<sup>561</sup> In May 1996 attempts were made to conduct parliamentary elections for the 11<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha in Jammu and Kashmir for the first time since 1989 in order to restore some amount of political normalcy. Although the National Conference won all the three parliamentary seats in the Kashmir region amidst the situation when separatist organizations had given a call for boycotting the election and voters were also not ready to vote and the parties were also not willing to contest the election. According to Chaudhary and Rao 95% of the voters stayed away from casting their votes.<sup>562</sup> Many commentators suspected the election results and blamed that voter turnout of 40% on the basis of coercion by Rashtriya Rifles (RR) and Border Security Forces (BSF).<sup>563</sup> The

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<sup>557</sup>George Fernandes.1992. *India's Policies in Kashmir: An Assessment and a Discourse* In *Perspectives on Kashmir. Boulder* edited by RGC Thomas. Boulder Co .Westview Press. p. 289.

<sup>558</sup>Ministry of Home Affairs.1994. *Profile of Terrorist Violence in Jammu and Kashmir*, Government of India. p. 98.

<sup>559</sup>Simon Jones.2008.*India, Pakistan, and counterinsurgency operations in Jammu and Kashmir*. Small Wars & Insurgencies. Taylor and Francis.19(1). pp. 1-22.

<sup>560</sup>Howard.R.1999. *Evolving Rather Than Receding, the Killing in Kashmir Continues*.Jane's Intelligence Review. 11(1). p. 40.

<sup>561</sup>Sumit Ganguly.1997.*The Crisis in Kashmir: Portents of War, Hopes of Peace*.Cambridge.Cambridge University Press p.117.

<sup>562</sup>Rekha Chowdhary.V Nagendra Rao. 2003. *Jammu and Kashmir : Political Alienation, Regional Divergence and Communal Polarization in Jammu and Kashmir*. Journal of Indian School of Political Economy.15(1-2). p.196.

<sup>563</sup>Sumit Ganguly.1997.*The Crisis in Kashmir:Portents of War, Hopes of Peace*. Cambridge.Cambridge University Press. p.152.

Srinagar Parliamentary constituency remained uncontested, in the other two constituencies, Baramullah and Anantnag competition came only from the independent candidates and few people voted, consequently voter turn out in Baramullah was recorded as 5.03 % and 5.07 % in Anantnag constituency. In both the constituencies people exercised their vote in certain pockets. For example, in Baramullah constituency non-Kashmiri speaking voters from Pahhari Assembly segments like Uri and Handwara had cast their votes. Whereas in many segments of both the constituencies voting was negligible. It was again in September 1996 attempts had been made to revive the political activities and hold assembly elections. It was the time when counter insurgency operations had succeeded to some extent. The counter insurgency was carried out by the Border Security Force (BSF) and the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and the local state Police (JKP). Initially, the local police was mistrusted by the military as sympathetic to their fellow Kashmiris, however the local knowledge and contacts of the Jammu Kashmir Police proved an important tool against the militants. Further, in 1995 several locally based counter-insurgency groups called as *Ikhwan*<sup>564</sup> were created by the state government, which included former surrendered militants who had been provided with money, weapons and protection by the government.<sup>565</sup> They formed a kind of local militia to act as vigilantes. Besides, there was a change in the response of the people in the sense that they wanted some kind of normalcy on the ground. People became increasingly dispirited from the constantly increasing number of deaths as most of the victims were innocent civilians, who used to get entrapped in violence perpetrated by the militants as well as the security forces. Simultaneously, the political environment within the region was not devoid of apprehensions that election process might prove farcical. It was the situation when mainstream political leaders were not present on the political scenario and were quite hesitant to test the political waters inside the region. The National Conference was prevailed upon for taking political initiatives and the central government was willing to give maximum autonomy to the state. In this context Narsimha Rao, the Prime Minister of India on 4 November, 1995 stated, 'Only the sky is the limit.'<sup>566</sup> In this way the National Conference re-started its political activity and conducted the first Working Committee meeting after a period of five years, in which they

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<sup>564</sup>Ikhwan was a pro-government group who included generally the surrendered Kashmiri militants. They were installed by the security forces to counter the militant groups operating in the state. They were supported and paid by the security forces to counter the militancy.

<sup>565</sup>Ibid.p.153; Human Rights Watch .1996.

<sup>566</sup>Aijaz Ahmed. *Kashmir Conundrum*. Frontline.17 (15). 22 July 2000.

stated by passing a resolution, ‘time has come when this state of affairs should be reviewed in order to restore autonomy to its pristine and original form. It was on the basis of autonomy plank that the National Conference participated in the Assembly Election held in 1996’<sup>567</sup>

The government took several measures for conducting smooth elections and according to Syed since some surrendered militants were disappointed with the militancy and some were forced to surrender by the security forces.<sup>568</sup> The surrendered militants aided by the state also contested the election and they formed political organizations. The two surrendered militants Hilal Haider’s Awami Conference and Kukka Parrey’s Awami League came actively on the political scene and also supported the state and the security forces in creating a favourable environment for electoral process in the North Kashmir and according to Swami, ex-militant Kukka Parrey, who was one of the leading surrendered militants contested and won Assembly Election of 1996.<sup>569</sup>

Nonetheless, the electoral process during 1996 could not happen with much democratic credibility and was also disturbed by militancy and violence. The elections were boycotted by the people and rigged by the authorities that they were declared a ‘farce’.<sup>570</sup> ‘The Indian political establishment, however, insisted, against all evidences to the contrary, that the elections had been ‘free and fair’.’<sup>571</sup> Although the National Conference formed the government by getting huge majority in the election, but could not create a democratic environment in the region, because it faced the critique for winning the election and the formation of government by the support of security forces and counter insurgents. Besides, it became difficult for the government to change the people’s perspective from separatist to mainstream, because people had not forgotten the memories of 1987 Assembly Election in terms of democratic credibility. It is important to reiterate that in 1987 election youth had participated actively and enthusiastically with great hope and expectations, but the victory of alliance by damaging the democratic credibility injured the aspirations and confidence of the majority of the people. Similarly, the breakdown of democracy was reflected again in the parliamentary election of 1989. Such adverse harm cannot be repaired at least for some time.

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<sup>567</sup>Rekha Chowdhary.2000.*Autonomy Demand:Kashmir at Crossroads*.Economic & Political Weekly. 35(30).p.2599.

<sup>568</sup>Syed Firdous. *Straight Lines: Real Feelings, False Expressions*.countercurrents.org. 9 September 2007.

<sup>569</sup>Praveen Swami. *Death of a General*. Frontline. 27 September-10 October 2003.

<sup>570</sup>AG Noorani. 2002. *A Fractured Verdict*. Frontline.8 November 2002.

<sup>571</sup>Sumantra Bose.2003. *Kashmir Roots of Conflict, Paths to Peace*. New Delhi. Vistaar Publications. p. 155.



However, the National Conference government continued for six years in spite of its limitations and attempted to create a space for democratic politics. Some political activities were held in spite of the loss of large number of political workers by the militant attacks.<sup>572</sup> A link started to develop between the people and the government for addressing common problems of the public and in this manner the National Conference succeeded in activating the people for sharing their problems. Since the National Conference is the oldest political party and has a vast network inside the Kashmir region which the party could use in restoring the mainstream politics. The legislators of the opposition parties like Mufti Syed and Mehbooba Mufti from the Congress Party and Mohammad Yusuf Tarigami of Communist Party of India, CPI (M) also facilitated by looking at the situation from the people's perspective and asked for dialogue with the separatists. The central government claimed that in view of the conflicting agendas of the various separatist groups, it would be difficult to identify with whom to create a meaningful dialogue. Consequently, the various separatist groups made an attempt to formulate one political agenda by forming an umbrella organization called as All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC). According to Whitehead, 'The Hurriyat, though hobbled by divisions, walkouts and splits . . . has developed into the moderate, political wing of the separatist movement.'<sup>573</sup> However, since the creation of APHC there has not been much meaningful dialogue between the Hurriyat Conference and the central government. In this context Whitehead argues, 'The creation of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference in 1993 gave an institutional face to the moderate separatist groups. India made little use of this opportunity as it pursued a military solution to separatism.'<sup>574</sup> A dialogue between the central government and the Hurriyat Conference during this period would have remained significant in bringing better possibilities of peace in the region, although this assumption remains a hypothetical question. APHC has been consistently mentioning the unfair nature of the electoral process in the Kashmir region, thus calling upon the Kashmiris to boycott the elections. Nonetheless, the APHC was discredited among many Kashmiris, because the members of the various groups of this party accumulated wealth through unknown sources in addition to recurrence of differing arguments within the party.

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<sup>572</sup>Rekha Chowdhary.V Nagendra Rao. *National Conference of Jammu and Kashmir: From Hegemonic to Competitive Politics*. Economic & Political Weekly.39(14). 3-10 April 2004. p.1521-1527.

<sup>573</sup>Andrew Whitehead. 2007. *A Mission in Kashmir*. Viking Penguin Books India. New Delhi.p.16.

<sup>574</sup> Ibid.p.238.

### **Emergence of New Political Party: *an end to hegemonic rule***

In 1992 Mufti Syed along with his daughter, Mehbooba Mufti formed his own organization namely People's Democratic Party (PDP). This party contacted the people, heard their sufferings and in this way PDP introduced a *healing touch* policy, which was received well by the people of the region. The party adopted a political strategy in the context of *peace and dialogue* and raised a slogan, *Na Grenade Sey, Na Gole Sey, Baat Banegee Bole Sey!* The healing touch policy and this slogan mobilized the people, who by and large were in political suspension since 1987 Assembly Election.

The chapter moves on to 2002 Assembly Election, which provided democratic legitimacy as well as restored the political space for mainstream politics. Since elections had been perceived by the people of the Kashmir region as illegitimate except 1977 and 1983 Assembly Election. Besides, according to Chaudhary it was generally believed that the successive state governments did not enjoy the political autonomy and even for the process of sustaining themselves in power were dependent on the central government:

These were the commonly shared grievances □ that democracy was a sham since Kashmiris did not ever get a fair chance to represent themselves; that there was no relationship between the voters' response and the electoral outcome; that governments were imposed from above and many a time changed without reference to the mandate of the people.<sup>575</sup>

However during the electoral process of 2002, the Prime Minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee announced publicly *the free and fair election* in Jammu and Kashmir in order to redress the grievances of the people about the manipulated elections so as to maintain the transparency in the election process.<sup>576</sup> The election process took place without any kind of interference by the security as well as the government forces.<sup>577</sup> The election was held under the observation of the National and International watch in the presence of civil society and media. Consequently, there were no accusations of force, intimidation and rigging by the security forces or the state. Although the voter turnout in comparison to 1996 elections was less □ 29.60 % in 2002 and 46.17% in 1996 □ but

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<sup>575</sup>Rekha Chowdhary.2019.*Jammu and Kashmir:1990 and Beyond Competitive Politics in the Shadow of Separatism*. New Delhi. Sage. p.139.

<sup>576</sup>*Vajpayee to visit Valley again*. Times of India.15 June 2002;  
*Cong to go alone in J&K polls*. Times of India. 27 August 2002.

<sup>577</sup>Anjali Mody.*Observers Laud Conduct of J&K Assembly Elections*. The Hindu. 10 October 2002.

this time moderate election turnout was meaningful and carried a democratic credibility, because the people participated voluntarily. The Deputy Prime Minister during this period, L.K Advani stated that these elections were a victory for India and its democratic ethos.<sup>578</sup> The National Conference party did not get the majority, which also reflected the fair and transparent image of the election process. According to Vanashree Samant :

This first fair election in decades marked a triumph for Indian democracy . . . . (Although) the pre-election violence continued into the election itself. What the centre struggled to make the cleanest election was also the bloodiest one □ 46 activists were assassinated in October and November 2002 over 45 days of campaigning. Nonetheless, Kashmiris continued to visit the polls<sup>579</sup>

The PDP as a major party in alliance with Congress party formed the government and Mufti Syed became the Chief Minister. In this manner the People's Democratic Party (PDP) not only broke the hegemonic and dynastical control of the National Conference, but also changed the political discourse in the Kashmir region. The discourse was premised in the context of the political environment of that period. Mufti Syed made an attempt to convince the central government that bullets are no solution to the problems of Kashmiris, but a policy of understanding, reconciliation and initiative of unconditional dialogue with Kashmiris, separatists and militants.<sup>580</sup> The People's Democratic Party (PDP) tried to legitimize the party in the mainstream politics through the separatist agenda, because at that juncture it was difficult for a new mainstream political party like People's Democratic Party (PDP) to establish its legitimacy and populism against the separatist politics. The slogan of *peace with honour and dignity and not the peace of graveyard* was popularized by the party. Soon after the formation of coalition government, people found certain changes on the ground, for instance the people used to feel harassed by the security forces regularly due to frisking and there was positive change in this kind of inconvenience. The police help-lines were set up in Srinagar, Jammu and Delhi for lodging complaints and their cognizance.<sup>581</sup> Mehbooba Mufti personally contacted the victims of state forces and in this way popularized the *healing touch* policy. The 2002 elections marked an enormous change in the process of electoral

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<sup>578</sup> *Kashmir Election A victory for India :Advani*. Rediff.10October.2002.

<sup>579</sup> *Free and fair Elections in Kashmir*.Harvard International Review. p. 11.

<sup>580</sup> *Mufti Asks PM to initiate dialogue on Kashmir*. Daily Excelsior. 2 November.2000.

<sup>581</sup> Shujat Bukahri. *Geelani's release , Shot in the Arm for Mufti Govt*. The Hindu. 9 February 2003.

verdict, which was fragmented one and led to the implications in terms of regional balance of power. Thus, fragmentation and fractured mandate was the main characteristic of this election and the loss of hegemonic along with dynastic control of the National Conference was the outcome as well in the democratic space of the region.

Since the democratic parties in the Kashmir region had a limited nature of competition owing to the few number of regional political parties, as such the people could not express their discontent due to the power politics of a single dominating party. This led to the serious consequences in the context of the region's political crisis. The competition was at the inter-regional level and in the Kashmir region the National Conference maintained its position as the hegemonic ruling party. The People's Democratic Party (PDP) emerged as another regional party in Kashmir in 1999 and to make a choice between the two regional parties i.e., the National Conference and the People's Democratic Party (PDP), the democratic space in the Kashmir region became impartial and strong, which brought forth a regional uniformity to a greater extent. Besides, 2002 elections provided significant understanding of the political psyche of the people in the context of deep rooted sense of alienation and *wounded spirit* due to violence, which started recovering to some extent by the *healing touch* policy of the government. This election was seen as contrary to the 1987 Assembly Elections, which had eroded the democratic culture and had become a stimulant for separatist politics. Underlying the extreme popular response after that election were two commonly shared assumptions: i) electoral politics would never give a democratic chance to Kashmiris to represent themselves; ii) there was inter-connectedness between the political preferences of the people and the governments that are formed in the state. The 2002 elections have changed these popular opinions. This election has introduced a change through the popular electoral result and consequently had become significant in providing a linkage between the masses and the government. According to Rekha Chowdhary, 'a state (of Jammu and Kashmir) is known for its history of making and unmaking of governments at the behest of the centre and without any reference to the people it has indeed been a historic election.'<sup>582</sup> The National Conference which used to dominate the State Assembly, after the 1996 election was brought down with a substantial reduction in its number of votes and seats as well.

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<sup>582</sup>Rekha Chowdhary.2003.*Elections 2002:Implications for Politics of Separatism*. Economic & Political Weekly. 38(01).

This kind of electoral outcome in which Omar Abdullah of the National Conference party was defeated, highlighted the legitimization of the democratic process. The people's participation made the electoral exercise worthwhile in comparison to earlier elections in the Kashmir region. As far as the numbers are concerned the voter turnout has been less than it was in the 1996 elections, that was 29.60 % as against 46.17 % in the 1996 election. Instead of coercion it was more of a voluntary response in this election. Thus participation of the people was qualitatively different in the sense that the willingness of the voters who exercised their vote compensated for the ones who did not vote. Most importantly it provided a clear evidence of the shifting priorities of the people for democratic politics rather than violence. Besides, the variance in the urban and rural voting patterns also pointed out peoples perceptions against violence. The urban areas in Kashmir region preferred to stay away from the electoral process, whereas rural areas displayed an interest towards the democratic process by casting their votes, as people in the rural areas were sufferers of violence from both the sides □ security forces as well as the militant groups, along with the indifference of the state administration. Therefore they responded positively when the mainstream party, PDP promised a *healing touch* and administrative help. In this way *bullet* was replaced by the *ballot* in the 2002 elections. According to Chaudhary and Rao before 2002 Assembly Elections, the National Conference enjoyed an absolute hegemony in Kashmir region's mainstream politics.<sup>583</sup> The performance of People's Democratic Party (PDP) while in power remained effective and the political scenario progressed significantly inside the region.

### **Elections and Democratic Credibility: 2008 - 2014 onwards**

Again in 2008 Assembly Elections followed soon after the Amarnath Land Row<sup>584</sup>. The turnout and the results of the 2008 elections must be analyzed against the background of political dynamics operating at that time in the Jammu and Kashmir state. The Kashmir region witnessed in July and August of 2008 a mass uprising in the state against the Amarnath land controversy and the economic blockade. The public sentiments were tense, hence conducting elections appeared impossible. Most of the political parties contesting the elections were in favour of postponing the

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<sup>583</sup>Rekha Chowdhary.V Nagendra Rao. 2004.*National Conference of Jammu and Kashmir:From Hegemonic to Competitive Politics*. Economic & Political Weekly.39(14). p.1521-1527.

<sup>584</sup>On 26 May 2008, the government of India and the state Government of Jammu and Kashmir arrived at an agreement transferring 99 acres of the forest land in Kashmir region to the Amarnath Shrine Board (SASB) for setting up temporary shelters for Hindu pilgrims. This caused a huge controversy, with protests from the Kashmir valley against the transfer of the land.

elections. The political experts analyzed that the political circumstances during the period in the state were unfavourable so much so that, ‘the government will be lucky if they get more than 10% of people to come out and vote.’<sup>585</sup> Arun Jaitley, BJP General Secretary stated, ‘If Kashmir is not ready for elections why should Jammu and Ladakh wait for it.’<sup>586</sup> In this backdrop, the Election Commission of India decided to conduct elections in the state through seven phases from 17 November, 2008 to 24 December, 2008 after having multiple rounds of discussions with different political parties. This indicates that the authorities formulated a holistic framework to ensure the success of the elections. In this way the 2008 election was the most extensive election process ever held in the state. During 1996 and 2002, elections were conducted in four phases. Even the 15<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha elections in 2009 were held throughout India in five phases. By dividing the process in multiple phases, the government could place security forces in large numbers in the concerned constituencies to manage and control any form of violence.

The Bhartya Janta Party (BJP) published its sixteen point election manifesto which focused on the ongoing regional imbalances in the state, formation of provincial councils and to provide citizenship rights to refugees from Pakistan. In this manner BJP highlighted the matter of discrimination against the Hindu majority region of Jammu by Kashmiris Muslim rulers.<sup>587</sup> The National Congress released its election manifesto in which a former Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, Ghulam Nabi Azad stated, ‘Our plank is development, dialogue and promoting normalcy and we pledge to the people of Jammu and Kashmir that Congress is fully committed to the comprehensive devolution of power to Jammu and Kashmir state so that its people would be free to realize their full potential.’ Interestingly there wasn’t much difference between the Congress manifesto of 2008 and 2002 elections.<sup>588</sup> A common feature in the manifestos of all the parties was the absence of concrete discourse with pro-freedom groups and the militant groups in the state. Besides, for the first time since 1990 militant groups during the elections publicly announced that guns would not be used to impact the elections.<sup>589</sup> A call for boycott of the elections was given, but the militants did not forcibly stop the people from casting their vote. This shift is seen as one

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<sup>585</sup>Praveen Swami .*For secessionists, humiliation follows hubris*.The Hindu. 23 December 2008.

<sup>586</sup>*International Audience, Domestic Dissidence, Delaying Assembly Polls* .Epilogue. October 2008.p.7.

<sup>587</sup>Ibid.

<sup>588</sup>Bhisham Arora, a political observer said This (manifesto) is almost a repeat of the 2002 manifesto and they (Congress) have been able to deliver hardly anything out of it.The Indian Times. 16 November. 2008.

<sup>589</sup>Hizabul ( a militant group) says (it) wont use gun to enforce election boycott.. The Indian Express. 29 January 2009.

of the important factors for the increase in public participation in the elections. Afterwards the National Conference president Farooq Abdullah also acknowledged the same by stating, 'I would like to frankly state that we owe a lot to the militant organizations who silenced their guns as in case they had used it we would have been in trouble.'<sup>590</sup> Since no violence took place during any phase of the election, the higher voter turnout was hence ascribed to the absence of violence by the political observers.

The turn out of the 2008 elections reveals some new trends. The People's Democratic Party (PDP) enhanced its position in Jammu by winning two seats, and secured twenty-one seats in the total seats of the State Assembly. In 2002 PDP had won sixteen seats from the Kashmir region, but in 2008 elections it secured three more seats in the region in comparison to the 2002 elections. Analyzing the election dynamics one can say that People's Democratic Party evidently replaced the National Conference in the Kashmir region. The National Conference leadership saw that their party was marginalized against the new political party in the region, thus the leadership revisited its past approach. As a matter of fact during the election campaign the Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah apologized before voters for their past mistakes committed by Farooq Abdullah and the party.<sup>591</sup> In this election BJP for the first time in the state witnessed its strong position in view of the Amarnath Land controversy, strengthening it to reach its highest electoral numbers in the state by securing eleven seats in Jammu in comparison to one seat in the 2002 elections. However, the Congress party lost two seats each from the Kashmir region and the Jammu region as well against the backdrop of the allotment and then re-allotment of the land. It won seventeen seats in total in comparison to twenty seats in 2002. Thus, the electoral numbers indicated that no party was in a position to form the government independently. Therefore, a coalition government of the National Conference with twenty eight seats and Congress with seventeen seats was formed. The voter turnout resembled 2002 elections when the Congress-PDP coalition was formed as a result of fractured mandate.

Election contenders as many as 1354 candidates from 43 political parties along with 517 independents who contested the seven phased elections for the 87 seats of the Legislative Assembly were facilitated to participate in the election. This means that on average there were 16

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<sup>590</sup>We owe to militants . . . for peaceful voting : Farooq.Rediff. 28 December 2008.

<sup>591</sup>Rekha Chowdhary.2019.*Jammu and Kashmir:1990 and Beyond Competitive Politics in the Shadow of Separatism*. New Delhi. Sage.pp.180-184.

contenders for each constituency. Prior to this election there were not so many contesting political parties in the Kashmir region.<sup>592</sup> The election results revealed the support of the contenders from the electorate: only eight parties won the seats along with four independents out of 43 political parties.<sup>593</sup> Besides, 1100 out of 1354 lost their security deposits, whereas in 2002 elections 373 candidates had lost their security deposits.<sup>594</sup> According to political observers there was a curfew like situation during the elections in the region and it seemed that it was a political stratagem to gain desired results from the elections. The civil liberties were curtailed through coercion. Thus, free and fair election could not take place under the shadow of the security forces as it results in the subsequent breakdown of the democratic institutions in the region. Before the elections most of the members of separatist groups were kept in custody under the Public Safety Act (PSA), while others were placed under house arrest to minimize the effect of the boycott on the polling percentage.<sup>595</sup> During the election campaign Omar Abdullah of the National Conference party stated in his address, 'Elections . . . are only to resolve the day to day issues of the people.'<sup>596</sup> People's Democratic Party (PDP) used regional and religious sentiments. It presented its *Self Rule* doctrine.<sup>597</sup> Soon the National Conference also released its *Vision Document*, comprising of 53 pages, which focused on good governance, development and emphasized the checking of human rights violations and freeing of political prisoners.

The shadow of Amarnath agitation was reflected in the electoral results especially in People's Democratic Party (PDP) and Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP). The victory of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) in the two Muslim constituencies in the Jammu region makes one to believe in the indication of communal polarization.<sup>598</sup> Nonetheless, the National Conference-Congress coalition government was formulated and Farooq Abdullah left the political space for Omar Abdullah. However, the Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh mentioned that 'the large turnout in the Jammu and Kashmir was a 'vote for democracy and national integration', no matter who won the

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<sup>592</sup>Gautam Navlakha. *A shift in equation not in commitment*. Kashmir Watch. 3 February 2009.

<sup>593</sup>35 political parties failed to win a seat in J&K polls. Rediff. 29 December .2008.

<sup>594</sup>34 Parties, 1100 Candidates Bowled for Duck. Election Special. Epilogue Magazine. Jammu .31 January 2009.

<sup>595</sup>Gautam Navlakha. *A shift in equation not in commitment*. Kashmir Watch. 3 February 2009.

<sup>596</sup>Greater Kashmir. 21 December. 2008.

<sup>597</sup>*Jammu and Kashmir: The Self Rule Framework for Resolution*. 25 October 2008.

<sup>598</sup>Rekha Chowdhary. 2019. *Jammu and Kashmir: 1990 and Beyond Competitive Politics in the Shadow of Separatism*. New Delhi. Sage. pp.184-189.



elections.<sup>599</sup> The post poll survey of 2008 of CSDS also reflected the popularity of Omar Abdullah in comparison to Farooq Abdullah. Thus Omar Abdullah became the youngest Chief Minister of the State, which was a kind of hope in terms of generational change and the youth in the Kashmir region expected a lot from Omar Abdullah as their Chief Minister. Omar Abdullah faced tough times during the first two years as the Kashmir region was over taken by protests, hartals, curfews and separatist challenges during years of 2009 and 2010. The government could not function and it was towards the end of 2010 that the governance was carried. The government again faced a challenge due to massive floods in September 2014 and it became a major issue in the last phase of their governance. The response of Kashmiris around the disaster management is reflected in the survey of CSDS in 2014 in which 41.6 % respondents were dissatisfied with the management of flood situation as against 28.7% respondents who were satisfied. The overall image of the National Conference government during the coalition with Congress (I) was poor in respect of development and unemployment problem.

In the parliamentary election of 2002, Sajad Lone, the Chairman of People's Conference contested the election from the Baramullah constituency (North Kashmir). Lone was the first leader from the separatist group to contest the parliamentary election as he did not agree with the strategy of election boycott by the separatist group. He placed the proxy candidates during the 2002 Assembly elections.<sup>600</sup> However, electoral voter turnout in the three constituencies out of six in the Kashmir region was low : 27.09% in Anantanag<sup>601</sup> , 25.55% in Srinagar<sup>602</sup> and 41.84% in Baramullah.<sup>603</sup> Many political analysts argued that, 'those incharge of Kashmir policy in New Delhi would be committing a gross error in assuming they can go back to business as usual . . . it would be a mistake to assume the issue itself has been voted away.'<sup>604</sup> So, 'New Delhi must not view the elections as signaling a return to 'business-as-usual' in the politics of the state.'<sup>605</sup>

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<sup>599</sup> *J&K turnout a vote for democracy: PM Sonia*. The Indian Express .28 December 2008; *A lesson in Democracy for Pak: Sonia*. The Economic Times.29 December 2008.

<sup>600</sup> *Azadi Camp Loses Lone*. The Telegraph. 12 April 2009.

<sup>601</sup> *Nearly 26% Polling in Anantnag* .The Indian Express. 30 April 2009.

<sup>602</sup> *Srinagar sides with Separatists*. Greater Kashmir. 7 May 2009.

<sup>603</sup> Rekha Chowdhary.2009. *Electoral Politics in the Context of Separatism and Political Divergence: An Analysis of 2009 Parliamentary elections in Jammu & Kashmir In Context: Indian Elections 2009*. South Asia Multidisciplinary Academic Journal 3.

<sup>604</sup> Siddharth Varadarajan. *Kashmir Verdict Presents Opportunity, But some Dangers Too*.The Hindu. 29 December 2008.

<sup>605</sup> Amitabh Mattoo. *The Jammu and Kashmir elections and after*.The Hindu.3 February 2009.

In 2014 Assembly Election the People's Democratic Party (PDP) won 25/28 of its total seats in the Kashmir region and the Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP) won all the 25/25 seats in the Jammu region. Thus, for the third consecutive time elections in Jammu and Kashmir had a hung assembly with no single party being in a position to secure a majority on its own. It was for the first time that the Assembly election in the state witnessed the People's Democratic Party's rise at the top and a fast growth in the popularity of the Bhartiya Janta Party. These developments demonstrate how the interplay of identities – regional and religious have molded the political behaviour of the people. The five phase assembly election in 2014 was meticulously observed and analyzed by political observers during the voting process as well as after the declaration of the electoral results. Jammu and Kashmir has a distinctive nature in electoral politics in the eyes of international media, and the shadow of militancy and the dynamic nature of political loyalties in the state. It was for the first time the PDP of Mufti Syed emerged as the single largest party with 28 seats and turned out to be the prime winning party in this election. The BJP was the second with 25 seats. It was successful in winning more than double the number of seats it had won in the previous election as it gained a double digit increase in the voter turnout. However, this electoral results proved the worst for the hitherto popular National Conference since 1967 as it won only 15 seats. The Congress secured 12 seats, which were five less than the 2008 election. Bhim Singh's Panthers Party was wiped out in Udhampur of the Jammu region, where earlier it used to win some seats in the elections. Sajad Lone's People's Conference made its maiden entry to the Legislature by winning 2 seats from the Kashmir region. The three regions of the state cast their votes in differing ways. In the Jammu region 37 seats were contested between the BJP and the Congress and BJP won all the 25 seats from the Jammu region. An analyzed aggregate data showed that a lot was happening in both the regions of Jammu and Kashmir in terms of the electoral results. In the Kashmir region the People's Democratic Party performed well in South Kashmir in comparison to North Kashmir, whereas the dominant party in the Jammu region was the Bhartiya Janta Party. In 2002 and 2008 Assembly Elections, the National Conference had won 17 seats in both the elections. In 2014 elections the PDP was successfully able to make inroads into the strongholds of National Conference in the Kashmir region. The Congress lost 8 seats in the Jammu region; the National Conference lost 8 seats in the Kashmir region. Besides, the total number of candidates came down from 1354 in 2008 to 831 in 2014 elections. However, the number of parties participating in the elections witnessed an increase from 43 to 46. The electoral

defeat of National Conference can be ascribed to the mishandling of the floods in the region in the year 2014 and also to their unsatisfactory performance. The findings of CSDS survey also indicate high dissatisfaction among the masses with the state government.<sup>606</sup> Further, according to the opinion of the respondents government failed miserably in the two areas i.e., controlling corruption and providing employment opportunities to the youth.

The hung assembly opened an opportunity for the coalition government between the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and Bhartya Janta Party (BJP). The new opportunities came forth with new challenges of governance for the coalition government in spite of regional balance in representation. The process of governance faced the problems on the basis of ideological differences between the two coalition partners and consequently the aspirations of their corresponding regional constituencies could not be fulfilled. Although, the issue of ideological coherence had been persistently occurring since PDP-Congress and Congress-NC coalition governments, but the issue became serious during PDP-BJP coalition. Afterwards, a mechanism was made to solve the differences by addressing the common agenda like employment, development and corruption. However, the ideological gap widens, where the environment of conflict persists. In spite of the fact the parties tried to undermine the ideological differences to carry on with the power, but the region's different political logic placed the two parties apart. The issue like People's Democratic Party's (PDP) position on self- rule and removal of AFSPA remained problematic and turned the coalition partners uncomfortable and in vulnerable position.

### **The Panchayati Raj: *need for grass-root governance***

The chapter now interprets Panchayati Raj elections to bring forth a deeper understanding of democracy at the grass-root level. Sheikh Abdullah's removal in 1953 sidelined the proposed plan for grass-root democracy in the state, although it was charted out in the *New Kashmir Manifesto* in 1944. The land reforms were the only programme which the government carried out successfully in 1950. Although in 1957 when the constitution of the Jammu and Kashmir state was adopted, it was reiterated to establish the Panchayati Raj in order to decentralize the power by electing representatives from every village, who would be responsible for its day-to-day issues at the local level. In this way Sheikh Abdullah had provided an emancipating vision for democratic system to

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<sup>606</sup>Survey conducted by CSDS in the state of Jammu and Kashmir between 26 November and 08 December 2014 among 1696 respondents in 80 locations spread across 20 assembly constituencies.

empower the people at the grass-root level. The Manifesto affirmed , ‘all the regions of the state shall have right to participate in the political power and the same will be decentralized up to the district, block and panchayat levels. The people will elect appropriate institutions, so that they can exercise the powers thus transferred to them.’<sup>607</sup> The dismissal of Sheikh Abdullah’s government in 1953 gave a set back to the implementation of the New Kashmir Manifesto. As a result government at the grass-root level could not function in the state, although some efforts were put in towards this direction. The assumption of power in 1975 by Sheikh Abdullah after Indira-Abdullah, Accord resulted in constructive development in building the democratic fabric in the state.<sup>608</sup> In this context the state became one of the first few in the country to introduce the decentralized planning at the district and block level.<sup>609</sup> However, in spite of this decentralization process no serious attempt was made to reactivate the Panchayati Raj system. Nevertheless, when Panchayati Raj system gained momentum in some states of the country in 1980s, a new interest was generated in the Jammu and Kashmir state towards establishing the Panchayati Raj system in order to restore the democratic character to the local bodies. Consequently, the state government worked enthusiastically to frame a comprehensive legislation, which finally culminated in the adoption of Panchayati Raj Act by the Jammu and Kashmir state in 1989. The Act states at the very beginning that Panchayati Raj in the state would be, ‘an instrument of vigorous local self government to secure the effective participation of the people in the decision-making process and for over-seeing implementation of developmental programmes.’<sup>610</sup> The important characteristics of the Act include: i) voting age was reduced from 21 years to 18 years. ii) provision for direct election of the Panchs (assembly of five persons to be chosen and accepted by the people of the village and Sarpanch (chairperson) iii) provision for Panchayati Adalats (courts) comprising of five members to be nominated out of a panel recommended by the Halqa Panchayat. All this exercise empowered Panchayats to frame schemes in for controlling poverty, to generate employment opportunities and to focus on areas like health, elementary education, agriculture, industrialization etc.<sup>611</sup> In spite of the comprehensive framework, the execution of the Panchayati

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<sup>607</sup>The New Kashmir Plan adopted by the National Conference led by Sheikh Abdullah in September 1994.

<sup>608</sup>The Accord of 1975 buttressed the inclusion of J&K into the Union of India.

<sup>609</sup>M Sultan.2002.*Democratic decentralization past present and future* In *Towards Understanding the Kashmir Crisis* edited by Sri Prakash and G M Shah. New Delhi. Gyan Publishing.pp.189-220.

<sup>610</sup>The Jammu and Kashmir Panchayati Raj Act.1989.

<sup>611</sup>Noor Ahmad Baba.2002.*Theory and Practice of Panchayati Raj in Jammu and Kashmir*.State Resource Center.University of Kashmir.

Raj at the grass-root level however remained dysfunctional due to the eruption of militancy in 1989 which suspended the democracy in the region for a long time. Nonetheless, in 2001 Panchayati Raj elections were conducted amidst a challenging situation in the region. There was an enthusiastic response to the process in Jammu in view of the much peaceful situation in this region, but in the Kashmir region the reliability of this election was looked at cynically and thus considered as a futile exercise. Some of the separatist groups gave a boycott call.<sup>612</sup> Consequently, there was a high voter turnout in Jammu and Ladakh but on the contrary Kashmir region witnessed a negligible participation in the election. The militancy and violence in the region had a backlash on the dismal number of the votes in the Panchyati election. The number of candidates was less in comparison to the total number of constituencies. For instance, in Budgam district (central Kashmir) 85 % Sarpanch constituencies and 89 % Panch seats were declared vacant. Most of the Panchs and Sarpanchs were elected unopposed. In Budgam district no candidate filed nomination papers for 101 Sarpanch seats out of 119. Likewise 807 out of 903 Panch constituencies were vacant in this district. As a matter of fact 96 constituencies returned uncontested.<sup>613</sup> Simultaneously, the dysfunctional system of Panchayati Raj has undermined its electoral process and democratic credibility to a considerable extent. Again in 2011 Panchayati elections were conducted in a peaceful atmosphere, because no separatist group gave a call for boycotting the election process, rather even Syed Salahuddin recognized the need for grass-root governance to address the everyday issues of the people. Hence, a good number of people voted in this election to restore local governance at the district and block level. In June-July 2011 election process was completed, yet the government could not empower these local bodies to function effectively and again the people felt hopeless as in the past. Such electoral situation reflects the alienation and discontent among the masses, which has taken deep roots in mind and psyche of the people in addition to the situation resulting from the militancy in the region.

During my field survey one of the interviewee namely Tawheed Shah explained :

Kashmir region is an exception in the story of the country's democracy. We have not witnessed a democracy in the real sense here. We would also like to have a real democracy, which unfortunately is absent. We Kashmiri people never have been heard by the leaders. Only few Kashmiri leaders talk to central government from time to time. They do not

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<sup>612</sup>Rekha Chowdhary.2001.*Panchayat Elections in J&K*. Economic & Political Weekly.36(20). p1674.

<sup>613</sup>Ibid.

represent the voice of the Kashmiri people. They have become leaders by fraudulent elections and have almost always deceived the democracy, as the people of Kashmir do not matter for them. What is important for them is power politics, corruption, nepotism and arbitrary actions for their benefit and for the benefit of bureaucracy. Whereas the youth of Kashmir is hardly taken into consideration. This boy (Junaid) before me has come from Bangalore and after working hard has completed his MBA. What job opportunities he has here? There are thousands of such degree holders and scholars. Is the government even thinking about this youth and framing the policies accordingly? No, for them politics and democracy are the slogan of the day, and certainly not about policy formulation, because primarily they lack vision and then they are not considerate for the people especially the educated youth. Rest we are not a martial race, we have been compelled to become so in the absence of democracy which has created a void not only in the political space of the region but also in our hearts, which generally is labelled as *alienation* by the media. This is the reason our youth has resorted to violent means to awaken the so called political leaders, who are still in deep slumber.

### **Democracy and Violence: *observations***

The chapter moves on to certain ruminations wherein it becomes necessary to recapitulate the understanding of democracy in the Kashmir region. Democracy is supposed to be the free and fair exercise of universal adult franchise through periodical elections, but in the Kashmir region it hasn't been often the benchmark. Since the common man's choice did not matter much as elections were not fairly conducted. Thus, the system evolved was devoid of democratic character and credibility. Generally the governments in the state remained responsive towards the central government than to the common people of the region. The relationship of distrust was born out of the diminishing democracy. The eruption of violence also dithered the process of democratization<sup>614</sup> as well as the governance. Before the period of militancy there existed undemocratic dispositions, which were sneaking inside the political system. The glaring distortions in democracy emerged since the post 1953 period under the government of G M Bakshi. According

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<sup>614</sup>The process of democratization includes a democratic political system based on popular control. Democratization is the process of conducting regular, clean and free elections. It is the process through which a political system becomes accountable, more representative and hence democratic.

to Balraj Puri, there was not a proper system that could have made the power holders accountable for their actions.<sup>615</sup> In 1975 when Sheikh Abdullah returned to power, he found a different Kashmir in the sense that Kashmiris had become critical and sceptical about the government, who before 1953 had developed hope and trust in the progressive policies of the government. However, this scepticism changed into trust to a greater extent when Sheikh Abdullah won the election in 1977 through the massive voter turnout. This election earned the fame of the first *free and fair* election and also attributed legitimacy to the mainstream politics. Consequently, Sheikh Abdullah strengthened the governance and democracy by decentralizing the developmental policies from the state level to the district level. Hence, he made progressive efforts to provide legitimacy to the Indian democracy in the region. Although there had been tense moments between the centre and the state, but the separatism could not gain the ground as the democratic environment was peaceful. After the death of Sheikh Abdullah democracy and governance suffered a decline. This was the period when the Kashmir region was going through the phase of political discontent and alienation among the masses. Finally, after 1987 Assembly elections, political disturbance engulfed the region. Even at this juncture Farooq Abdullah as the Chief Minister did not address the growing discontentment of the people rather the youth in large numbers were detained in the jails.<sup>616</sup> All this led to the deterioration in terms of governance and democracy and in January 1990 Farooq Abdullah submitted his resignation. Afterwards the effect of separatism and militancy on the governance continued for more than a decade. In this context Sudhir Bloeria, the Chief secretary of this period reveals:

By the beginning of 1990 the administration in Srinagar and some other towns of the Valley had almost collapsed. Within a couple of months, efficacy of the government almost hit the rock bottom. With great difficulty a semblance of essential services and supplies was attempted and that too with unexpected disruptions for indeterminate periods.<sup>617</sup>

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<sup>615</sup>Balraj Puri.1968..*Jammu and Kashmir*. In *State Politics in India*. edited by Myron Weiner.N.J.Princeton University Press.

<sup>616</sup>Sumantra Bose.2013.*Transforming India: Challenges to the Worlds Largest Democracy*. Cambridge M.A.Harvard University Press.

<sup>617</sup>Sudhir Boleria .2016. *The Men Who Served Jammu and Kashmir*. New Delhi. Vj Books .p.36

**J&K Elections Result (1951-2008)**

<b>Political Party</b>	<b>1951</b>	<b>1957</b>	<b>1962</b>	<b>1967</b>	<b>1972</b>	<b>1977</b>	<b>1983</b>	<b>1987</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2008</b>
<b>Total Seats</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>87</b>
National Conference	75	68	70	8	**	47	47	40	57	28	28
Congress	-	-	-	61	58	11	26	26	7	20	17
Janta Party	-	-	-	-	-	13	0	0	-	-	-
Praja Parishad	*	5	3	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
BJP	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	2	8	1	11
PDP	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	16	21
MUF	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-
JI	-	*	*	*	5	1	0	*	*	*	*
Independents	0	1	2	3	9	4	2	4	2	15	4
Others	0	1	0	3	3	1	1	0	13	7	6

\* The party did not contest the elections.

- The party did not exist.

\*\* National Conference was merged into Congress, as the Party was taken over by Delhi sponsored politicians and the supporters of Sheikh Abdullah formed Plebiscite Front in 1955 after Sheikh Abdullah was imprisoned in 1953

**BJP:** Bhartya Janata Party

**PDP:** People's Democratic Party

**MUF:** Muslim United Front

**JI :** Jamaat-e-Islami

**Others:**

**JKPC:** Jammu and Kashmir People's Conference.

**CPI (M) :** Communist Party of India (Marxist).

**BSP :** Bahujan Samaj Party.

**JKPDN :** Jammu and Kashmir People's Democratic Nationalist, and



**PDF** : People's Democratic Front.

### **Conclusion**

A functioning democracy in the Kashmir region in the late 1970s and early 1980s seems to have supported the integration and the nation-building process in India. It was a period characterized by democratic progress at an unprecedented level in the history of the Kashmir region. It is to be reiterated that Balraj Puri also reveals free and fair elections had instigated a spontaneous process of integration of Jammu and Kashmir with India. Puri's analysis supports Robert Dahl's claim that free and fair electoral process becomes a crucial component in the nation-building process. The evidence suggests that there was ethnic peace in spite of the mix of religious groups and different languages. It supports Horowitz's definition that ethnic parties do not normally polarize as per religious allegiance. Instead, they even managed to co-operate as is true in 1981-82 local bodies election, when the National Conference supported the Bhartiya Janta Party in the Jammu region. This denotes co-operation across religious and ethnic lines. The separatist forces may be always present in a functioning democracy as well, but the evidence suggests that they attract little support as long as democratic institutions remain intact and stable. The democratic institutions in the region suffered from 1982 onwards. The 1987 election is the trigger of violence. It seems that the justification for violence cannot be inferred from puritanical religious fundamentalism or hardening of Sufi Islam in the Kashmir region. The reasons rather got manifested in the decline of democracy because the elections had been corrupted and channels for *exit* and *voice* were closed. The situation turned the youth of the region towards violence, which created an atmosphere of fear and uncertainty especially in the Pandit community. According to Hirschman, such system becomes unstable when avenues for *exit* and *voice* are closed.<sup>618</sup> This unstable scenario entered a spiral of violence in the Kashmir region at the beginning of 1990.

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<sup>618</sup>Alberto O Hirschman.1970. *Exit, Voice and Loyalty*. Cambridge. Harvard University Press.

## Chapter Five

### Rise of Violence and its Implications

In this chapter attempt is made to stimulate the debate on the rise of violence and its implications in the Kashmir region. The chapter is divided into two broad parts. The chapter begins by addressing the complex ways in which violence operates in the Kashmir region. The section puts forth the explanation underneath the rise of violence. Apart from understanding the potential reasons behind the rise of violence the section also engages with the multiple sites of violence – security forces, militants and the society at large in the region. The chapter then moves forward to the second section which is premised on the implications of violence in the region wherein the mass exodus of the Kashmiri Pandit community in the decade of 1990's and the reasons behind it, is discussed and analyzed critically. The second part of this section takes up the implications of violence vis-à-vis the violence committed on the Kashmiri men and women by security forces, militants and the society. The security forces and the militants exploit the patriarchal perceptions of the society as its functional ally, eventually using such perceptions to put down and defeat the masculinity of the society by inflicting morbid violence on their honour, especially symbolized by the female body. The local patriarchal power works in tandem with such forces. This alliance foregrounds the essential nature of violence in Kashmir, where the experiences of men and especially women do not remain a peripheral aspect of the violence but become an integral one. A comprehensive picture of the rise of violence in the region is provided by the political events, which were 'less as deliberate choices and more as outputs of large organizations' and going meticulously through the process of 'pulling and hauling that is politics'.<sup>619</sup> Allison critiques rational actor model, which explains the crisis 'as if it were simply describing the process of governmental reasoning choice and implementation.'<sup>620</sup> George Tsebelis describes intricate political situations as 'nested games'.<sup>621</sup> However, Lebow makes clear through his conflict studies as he says that what politicians aim for turns out different from the outcome<sup>622</sup>. In 1986 Rajiv Gandhi and Farooq Abdullah formulated the *election cartel*, which robbed off the democratic system of its credibility. Their aim was political power but the outcome was separatism and rise

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<sup>619</sup>Ibid.144.

<sup>620</sup>Graham Allison.1971. *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban missile crisis*. Boston. Little. Brown.p.246.

<sup>621</sup>GeorgeTsebelis.1990.*Nested Games:Rational choice in comparative politics*.Berkeley.University of California Press.

<sup>622</sup>Richard Ned Lebow. 1984.*Between Peace and War*.Baltimore. The Johns Hopkins University Press.

of violence, which they had not predicted and did not desire at the outset of the crisis. This indicates how ambitions of power produce unforeseen events like separatism and violence. Besides, a political climate may become highly risky with abysmal intelligence sources of the political elite for their counterpart along with distrust against them. This amalgamation of factors turned volatile, which have been substantiated through the arguments of Lebow and Allison.

The rise of violence in the Kashmir region from 1980s and onwards is an unforeseen sequence of events and unintended outcomes of political decisions of political actors. The outcome was radically different from what the politicians aimed for, thereby presenting an extremely complex situation. Separatism was not determined by historical background or ethnic factors. The poor socioeconomic conditions during this period added to the violence to some extent, as previously mentioned in chapter three that there is no obvious evidence which can reflect that violent separatism is only connected to low economic productivity. There are no indicators which can show that Kashmir region has economically suffered more in comparison to other states in the country during 1980s.<sup>623</sup> Ashutosh Varshney has depicted the rise of violence in the Kashmir region as the outcome of competing nationalisms.<sup>624</sup> The competition between nationalisms referred by Varshney may be considered one of the factors for the explanation of separatist violence, but it is not adequate. The cultural preconditions or the competing nationalisms did not create separatism; 'Kashmiriyat' as a cultural prerequisite did not produce violence on this scale as discussed in the chapter two, hence something more is required if we have to explain conflict in Kashmir region. Lawrence while in Kashmir has observed that there exists a strong confluence between Hinduism and Islam.<sup>625</sup> Kashmiri Muslims as well as Kashmiri Pandits have worked collectively to define Kashmiri culture on the basis of the cultural identity derived not only from the rich cultural heritage of the Rishis but also from the relationship between culture and politics<sup>626</sup> that marks the ideological similarity of both the communities.

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<sup>623</sup>H L Chandhok.1990 .*The Policy Group*. India Database-The Economy,New Delhi: Living Media Books;  
Ashish Bose.1991.*Population of India-1991 Census Results and Methodology*.NewDelhi.B.R.Publishing Corporation.

<sup>624</sup>Ashutosh Varshney.1992.*Three compromised Nationalisms: Why Kashmir has been a Problem*. In *Perspectives on Kashmir*. edited by RGC Thomas. Boulder Co .Westview Press.

<sup>625</sup>Walter Lawrence .1895.*The Valley of Kashmir*. London Henry.Oxford University Press.

<sup>626</sup>Mohammad Ishaq Khan. 2017.*The Rishi Tradition and the Construction of Kashmiriyat*.In *Lived Islam In South Asia*. edited by Imtiaz Ahmad. Helmut Reifeld.New Delhi Routledge p.61.

The culture and identity are neutral and play a role as a vehicle and not as a cause of violence.<sup>627</sup> However, there are other elements that need consideration in explanation for rise of violence. A study was carried by the Indian military establishment from 1990 to 1994, wherein 31 captured militants were interviewed and the conclusion drawn reveals that separatists were pushed by ‘deep sense of alienation.’<sup>628</sup> The study also depicts that violence was a means to attack corruption in the system rather than to fight a holy war or spread Islamic fundamentalism.<sup>629</sup> One of India’s journalist with his ample experience on conflict study, Harinder Baweja accepts and acknowledges the study and argues that :

Frustration with the political system headed by former chief minister Farooq Abdullah, economic backwardness and a feeling of oppression were motivating factors for even the better known militants who are now important leaders.<sup>630</sup>

Similarly Schofield points out ‘the whole Muslim population of the Kashmir Valley is wholly alienated . . . and their alienation has now turned into bitterness and anger.’<sup>631</sup> The statement submitted by M Syed Shah to the Legislative Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir on October 25, 1989 and the interview of Amanullah Khan in 1994 serve as a prelude in understanding the feelings of distress, disillusionment, discontent and hindrance to free political competition, which led to the separatist violence. The 1987 election triggered the violence and in September 1987 the National Conference and the Congress (I) passed the Jammu & Kashmir Special Powers Press Bill in the Legislative Assembly, and that brought almost complete Press Censorship to the political opposition, which had faced the election rigging in 1987 election and nonetheless the political opposition(MUF) still was loyal to the democratic system. These factors serve as the background of political climate against the democratic decline.M Syed Shah, from the Muslim United Front(MUF), member of Parliament submitted his resignation to the Legislative Assembly and these are the words of Shah at that point of time:

Hence our sincere advice to the government, despite resignation from the Assembly, is that it should refrain from performing the role of a grave digger. As far as freedom of Press is concerned any attempt to curb it will have grave consequences . . . The present Assembly

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<sup>627</sup>Because the meaning of the term culture is flexible with loose boundaries it gets exploited much easily in a given issue or crisis.

<sup>628</sup>Harinder Baweja.1994. *In the Mind of the Militant*.India Today.pp.120-122.

<sup>629</sup>Ibid.

<sup>630</sup>Ibid.

<sup>631</sup>Victoria Schofield.1996. *Kashmir in the Crossfire*. London. I.B. Tauris.p.38.

was constituted in May 87. The Delhi Government as well as State Government did succeed in winning the election and thus forming an 'allied Government'. However, the victory was achieved not only by crushing and perishing the confidence and aspirations of the majority of the people, but also by damaging the credibility of the Delhi Government (Government of India). Such losses and damages remain irreparable at least for the time being. During the 87 election, the youth was quite active and enthusiastic. They participated in the election with great hope and expectations and, having seen the support base of the MUF, they were confident that even if MUF does not form the Government, it will emerge as the strong and formidable opposition. But people like Farooq (Abdullah) and Sri Rajiv Gandhi ruined their aspirations. These people with might and force got rid of those who believed in democratic means and wanted to achieve their rights through the democratic and peaceful means.<sup>632</sup>

This document helps in explaining the cause of violence as the outcome of decline of democracy. As a matter of fact people's sentiments favoured peaceful democratic development in spite of the diverse lingual and religious groups. During this period the popular sentiment depicts that democracy was valued and region and religion had not become the dimension of polarization although institutional structures were nascent and weak, which made the democracy vulnerable in the region. Besides, according to Jaun Linz, the capabilities and capacities of political actors are important variables for the political environment:

One or a number of crises will probably have undermined the consensus of the democratic parties and their capacity to cooperate. Such crises are the result of a lack of efficacy or effectiveness of successive governments when confronted with serious problems that require immediate decisions.<sup>633</sup>

The important point of Linz's argument is that legitimacy of democracy may not be undermined. It is worth to note that the uprising in the Kashmir region encompasses a phase when MUF leaders rapidly achieved increased influence. These were the leaders, who upheld the democratic structure and participated in 1987 elections and the same political group may be mentioned paradoxically as *disloyal to the democratic framework*. For instance, Yasin Malik was the election agent of M Y Shah and these afterwards reappeared as separatist leaders and Shah is currently known as Syed

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<sup>632</sup>Syed Shah. Statement Submitted to the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly. 25 October 1989.

<sup>633</sup>Juan Linz. 1978. *Crisis, Breakdown, & Reequilibration*. Baltimore. Johns Hopkins University Press. pp.39-50.

Salahudin. Abdul Ghani Lone who throughout his political career had competed the election through democratic institutions, also became the separatist leader in view of the adverse consequences of the 1987 elections.

Amanullah Khan, JKLF leader has revealed in his interview that the 1987 election had increased the frustration among the people of the Kashmir region and the revolt was the outcome of frustration, corruption and ineffective watchdog institutions like Election Commission, High Court and Police. Khan said that he had planned to launch an offensive in 1983 in the Kashmir region, but he gave up the plan due to the lack of support and only three years later he found a political turbulence in the region and youth was ready and the ‘circumstances were right for an armed struggle.’<sup>634</sup>

Khan argued that the situation was created by the alliance between the National Conference and Congress (I) and the political system. He has added that ‘the psychology of the youth is very important here. Young people have strong urge to do something.’<sup>635</sup> The young boys came forward to join the struggle, which afterwards reached the flashpoint. Thus, initially during 1987 the violence was signaled by grenade blasts at different places in Srinagar, like the Coffee House, Residency Road, Office of the Daily Srinagar Times, residence of Justice Anand of J&K High Court and Iqbal Library of the University of Kashmir. Police reports reveal that the local youth was involved in these activities and the devices were also locally produced.<sup>636</sup> This youth was associated as election agents, counting agents and campaigners of MUF candidates in the 1987 elections.<sup>637</sup> They were frustrated not only by the rigged elections, but also by criminal treatment given to them by imprisonment and torture. The emotions of youth had to be channeled through the democratic option rather than the torture. During the second half of 1989 the pitch of violence increased by killing the block president of the National Conference, M Yusuf Halwai, advocate Tiklal Taploo and Neel Kant Ganjoo, former session judge by whom Maqbool Bhat, a separatist, was sentenced to death. Besides, cinemas and liquor shops were closed with the orders of the separatists. The striking feature about the development during 1990 to 1998 inside the Kashmir region is that none of the regional political force could break the violence. Neither the Governors □

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<sup>634</sup>Neera Chandoke.2005.*Of Broken Social Contracts and Ethnic Violence: The Case of Kashmir*. Working Paper. no. 75.Crisis States Research Centre. London.London School of Economics and Political Science.p.19.

<sup>635</sup>Ibid.

<sup>636</sup>A M Watali.2016. *Kashmir Intifada: A Memoir*. Srinagar. Gulshan Books. p.8.

<sup>637</sup>Ibid. pp.483-492.

Jagmohan, Girish Saxena and Krishna Rao □ nor the Chief Minister, Farooq Abdullah could decrease the level of violence. 25000 people died in the violence<sup>638</sup> and by the end of year 2000 the number of deaths exceeded to 30,000. The kidnapping of Dr Rubaiya Syed, the daughter of the then Union Home Minister Mufti Syed in December 1989 also led to the escalation of violence in the region. The Police Bureaucracy created a mess too. The Director General of Police, J.N Saksena did not trust Kashmir Police officers. ‘He openly accused them of being Pakistani agents’ and consequently could not win the confidence of the local police, which was critically important for the grip of the spiral of violence.<sup>639</sup>

The decline of democracy offered the space for separatism, which steadily gained the strength. At this phase discontent had to be channeled, instead government adopted flawed policies. The Chief Minister did not understand the ground realities and could not address the situation cautiously. In his conversation with Balraj Puri in 1989 his response to the 1989 uprising was:

I will bury those people alive who are trying to exploit religious feelings. I could break legs of my political detractors . . . I can send lakhs of people in jail. I have the backing of the Indian Government . . . . I will send them (arrested people) to Delhi where scorching heat will melt their fat . . . . Anybody seen carrying a gun will be shot dead . . . . I would throw out anti-national elements into Pakistan.<sup>640</sup>

Balraj Puri, while referring to this conversation says, ‘it was obvious Farooq’s main anxiety was to satisfy Delhi and not the people of the state.’ Similarly, the observation of V N Narayanan, editor of The Tribune, Chandigarh is ‘the impression in Srinagar is that he cannot run the government without Delhi’s orders, and paradoxically enough, he cannot run the government with Delhi’s orders either.’<sup>641</sup>

Azam Inquilabi, one among the separatists belongs to an educated middle class family. His father was a District Forest Officer. During my field interview he cited that the lack of peaceful approach to resolve the problems of political nature knocked around 1989. Besides, Azam added that the language of rights needs to be addressed. 1989 is agreed by Azam as the regions marked shift where the uprising of the youth forms the precipitating point. He continued that the uprising was

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<sup>638</sup>Michael E Brown.1996. *Ethnic Conflict and International Security*.Princeton.Princeton University Press.

<sup>639</sup>A M Watali.2016. *Kashmir Intifada: A Memoir*. Srinagar.Gulshan Books. p.57.

<sup>640</sup>Balraj Puri.2008. *Kashmir: Insurgency and After*. New Delhi.Orient Longman.p 62.

<sup>641</sup>Ibid. p.63.

also a response to the Pathribal encounter and the Gaw Kadal massacre<sup>642</sup> and not a holy war rather explained by Azam as the denial of rights.

Similarly, Bashir Ahmad Bhat, a lawyer by profession and Vice-Chairman of JKLF, while recalling the years before 1989 said:

Maine unsay kaha tha haumai is qadr majboor mat karo, ki ye hum bandook uthayae. Lekin jab pehli goli yahan par chali, mujhe giriftaar kia gaya. Halaanki mai us waqt bandook (violence) kay saath nahi tha, mai us waqt as President kaam kar raha tha (used peaceful means to protest). Bandook ka us waqt mujhe koi ilm nahi tha. Bandook ka ilm to mujhe, jail se aakay hua.

I told them that we should not be compelled to resort to violence. However when the first bullet was shot, I was arrested, though I was not in favour of violence. When I was working as the President I favoured the peaceful means to protest. When released from the Jodhpur Jail after two and a half years, I resorted to violence as a form of protest. (Translated)

## **Violence Breeds Violence**

### **Exodus of Kashmiri Pandits**

The major and grave implication of violence during the post 1989 period has been the exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from the Kashmir region. They formulate a unique religious and cultural minority in the region. There are other minorities too according to the 1981 census: 3,31176 Sikhs, 466 Christians, 189 Buddhists and 62 Jains.<sup>643</sup> And Kashmiri Pandits are the largest and significant minority in the region. The influence of Lal Ded (Lalleshwari), 14<sup>th</sup> century Brahmin mystic poetess and Nund Reshi, a Sufi saint are viewed in terms of syncretism and ‘Kashmiriyat’ between Muslims and Pandits. They ‘carried the torch of humanism, religious tolerance and Hindu-Muslim

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<sup>642</sup>The Gawkadal massacre is named after the Gawkadal bridge in Srinagar. On 21 January 1990, the security forces from Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) opened fire on a group of Kashmiri protesters. Hundreds of people were arrested. In protest the city came out shouting slogans of freedom. Jagmohan ordered the armed forces to curb the protest happening on the Gaw Kadal bridge. The army blocked the bridge from both the sides over the river, Jhelum. The shooting, which continued, for several rounds was one of the worst massacres witnessed in Kashmir's history. More than a hundred people died, while the many others were injured. Many people jumped into Jhelum to save themselves, many drowned in a failed attempt to live. Gawkadal massacre is seen as one of the worst massacres in the history of Kashmir. Pathribal Fake Encounter took place on 25 March 2000 when security forces killed five men in Pathribal village, Anantnag district, mentioning that they were militants.

<sup>643</sup>Census Commissioner of India. Census of India. 1981 .Delhi. Controller of Publications. 1988.



unity from generation to generation for over four centuries.’<sup>644</sup> Besides, Kashmiri Pandits held positions not only in the bureaucracy but also were doctors and teachers. They were connected with the whole Kashmiri society by dint of their positions as well and their presence led credibility to the concept of ‘Kashmiriyat’. Kashmiri society still has enough space for plural and shared cultural ethos as depicted by a Kashmiri Pandit, Trisal:

It is between the verses of Lal Ded and teachings of Sheikh Noor-ud-Dinn (Nund Reshi) that the ethos of Kashmiri plural society lies. Their percepts, verses and sayings formed the core of Kashmiri culture . . . This gave rise to that peculiar social relationship, among Kashmiris belonging to different faiths, which can be termed as the basis of Kashmiri identity.<sup>645</sup>

Kashmiri Pandits are the victims of the post 1989 violence like their Muslim compatriots in the Kashmir region.<sup>646</sup> There are a number of books and various articles offering various pictures of the community. They seem to be more opinionated than informative.<sup>647</sup> The academic studies mostly focus on the Muslim majority in the region and Kashmiri Pandits are by and large overlooked. However, there are different discourses, which can present the explanation and assessment of causation behind the beginning of the Pandit mass migration. As the violence spread in Kashmir during 1989 and 1990, the bonding and the cultural ethos between Muslims and Pandits came under strain especially when certain Pandit officials along with the National Conference political workers were targeted.<sup>648</sup> It has been claimed that they were attacked for being informers, whereas to Kashmiri Pandits attacks seemed to be communally motivated.<sup>649</sup> During the ensuing two months large number of Kashmiri Pandits had registered with the state government and officials had been deployed to deal with the Pandit community<sup>650</sup> and around

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<sup>644</sup>P N Bazaz.1995. *Secular Concepts in Kashmir Tradition*. In *The Story of Kashmir: Yesterday and Today*. Vol.2. edited by Virender Grover. New Delhi.Deep &Deep Publications.pp.735-740.

<sup>645</sup>O N Trisal.1995. *Kashmiri Pandit:At the Crossroads of History*. In *The Story of Kashmir:Yesterday and Today*. Vol.2.edited by Virender Grover. New Delhi.Deep & Deep Publications.

<sup>646</sup><http://www.jammu-kashmir.org.jk/>

<sup>647</sup>M V Kamath. 1996. *The fate of Kashmiri Pandits*. In *Kashmir: From Autonomy to Azadi* edited by G M Wani. Srinagar. Valley Book House. pp 406–408.

<sup>648</sup>Sumit Ganguly.1997.*The Crisis in Kashmir: portents of war, hopes of peace*. New York.Woodrow Wilson Center.p.107.

<sup>649</sup>Alexander Evans.2002.*A departure from history:Kashmiri Pandits,1990-2001*.Contemporary South Asia. 11(1).p.20.

<sup>650</sup>Anju Mohan.*No home away from home for Kashmir's refugees*.Inter Press Service.14 June 1990.

1,60,000 in total left the region since 1990, but a handful number are still living amidst the Kashmiri Muslims.

Kashmiri Pandits generally believe that they have been forced out of the region whether by the militant groups or by Muslim community. One of the Pandits, Pyare Lal Koul says that, Pandit migration happened due to communal intimidation by Muslims and mosques 'were used as warning centres'<sup>651</sup> Maroof Raza denotes the episode as 'a deliberate policy of ethnic cleansing'<sup>652</sup>. Another explanation suggests that Kashmiri Pandit community was deliberately asked to leave Kashmir region by the then Governor Jagmohan Malhotra, who had to deal with a free hand and the presence of the Kashmiri Pandits inside the region could have impeded the action. This explanation is supported by separatist leaders<sup>653</sup> and also by Professor Saifuddin Soz<sup>654</sup> However, Kashmiri Pandit leader's version is that the Governor Jagmohan Malhotra had no role in it and Jagmohan himself has stated the same.<sup>655</sup> Similarly, Om Prakash Mishra says, 'The exodus had began earlier . . . . of Jagmohan.'<sup>656</sup> Thus, the migration of Kashmiri Pandits which took place by the Indian government's complicity and state wide administration, falls short of authentic evidence. However, a Kashmiri Pandit K. L. Koul resident of Chanapora, Srinagar, who had migrated in 1990 in a letter published in the *Al-Safa*, on 18 September 1990, writes :

Pandits were told that the government has plans of killing about one lakh Kashmiri Muslims in order to overcome the uprising against India. They were assured that once the proposed massacre in Kashmir was completed and the movement curbed, they would be sent back to the Valley. That is how the Pandits left . . . The Indian government tried to fool the world by depicting the uprising as handiwork of Muslim Fundamentalists who had turned against non-Muslims and thrown them out of their homes. I know my community has lost the affection, love and respect and goodwill of Kashmiri Muslims for having betrayed them. I feel ashamed that my community has stabbed the Muslims in the back.<sup>657</sup>

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<sup>651</sup>Pyarelal Kaul. 1996. *Kashmir - Trail and Travail*. New Delhi. Suman Publications. pp. 56-57.

<sup>652</sup>Maroof Raza. 1996. *Wars and No Peace Over Kashmir*. Delhi. Lancer Publications. p.74.

<sup>653</sup>Alexander Evans. 2002. *A departure from history: Kashmiri Pandits, 1990-2001*. Contemporary South Asia. 11(1).p.21.

<sup>654</sup>No communal overtones in Kashmir Exodus: Mufti. Kashmir Times. 27 March 1990.

<sup>655</sup>Jagmohan Malhotra. 1991. *My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir*. New Delhi. Allied Publishers.

<sup>656</sup>Omprakash Mishra. 1999. *Kashmiri Pandits: aliens in their own land*. In *New Approach: Kashmir, Violence in Paradise* edited by Sekhar Basu Roy. Calcutta. p.119.

<sup>657</sup>Koul. Daily Alsafa. 18 September. 1990; Daily *Al-Safa* is a local Daily newspaper in the Kashmir region.

According to Wajahat Habibullah, a senior Indian Administrative Service Officer in Anantanag (South Kashmir), Kashmiri Pandits were not encouraged by the state administration for migration. He adds that in March 1990 Kashmiri Muslim delegations approached him for preventing the Pandit exodus: ‘Suddenly one day about 300 people arrived led by an MLA (Member of the Legislative Assembly). They said, ‘Look, Kashmiri Pandits are leaving, stop them.’<sup>658</sup> Habibullah made the television broadcast that Kashmiri Muslims wanted the Pandits to stay. And the Governor Jagmohan was informed as well; he instead announced the establishment of three refugee camps and the salaries would be paid to the displaced government servants in absentia. Habibullah adds that this announcement encouraged almost 90% Kashmiri Pandits to migrate to Jammu, although their departure was not a deliberate policy of the government, but it was an administrative failure. A security official points out, ‘I have no evidence that Jagmohan did anything to encourage but he also did nothing to discourage it’<sup>659</sup>

There is another explanation for what triggered Kashmiri Pandits’ migration is the legitimate fear. There existed a collective unease in the Pandit community due to violent incidents and massive protest marches in the region. Although the number of deaths and injured persons was low, but the violence induced widespread fear within the Kashmiri Pandit community.<sup>660</sup> As discussed earlier some leading Kashmiri Pandits were targeted; from Advocate, Tikalal Taploo on 14 September 1989 to Neelkant Ganjoo on 4 November 1989 may be considered targeted attacks for political or communal reasons.<sup>661</sup> Sumit Ganguly also agrees that Pandits migrated because of the hints of Jagmohan Malhotra about their safety which cannot be guaranteed and the violence created echoes of fear in the Pandit community.<sup>662</sup> P.S Verma points out that after interviewing the migrant Pandits, he found that few Pandits had been threatened for leaving the Kashmir region and many had been begged by their Muslim neighbors to stay.<sup>663</sup> In a similar context Trisal has also revealed in these lines:

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<sup>658</sup>Alexander Evans.2002.*A departure from history:KashmirPandits,1990-2001*.Contemporary South Asia. 11(1).p.22.

<sup>659</sup>Ibid.

<sup>660</sup>AIKPC asks militants to clarify stand .Kashmir Times. 21 February 1990.

<sup>661</sup>Hari Jaisingh. 1996.*Kashmir: A Tale of Shame*.New Delhi.UBSPD;

Anil Maheswari.1993.*Crescent over Kashmir: Politics of Mullaism*.New Delhi. Rupa & Co.

<sup>662</sup>Sumit Ganguly.1997.*The Crisis in Kashmir: portents of war, hopes of peace*.New York.Woodrow Wilson Center.p.107.

<sup>663</sup>P S Verma.1994. *Jammu & Kashmir at the Political Crossroads*.New Delhi.Vikas Publishing House.

In the late 1989, when militancy surfaced in the valley, the Muslims in general, whether as a neighbour, friend or colleague asked their Pandit brothers not to leave their homes and provided security to them. Many Muslims accommodated Pandit families in their houses to save them from militant attacks. There are instances when Muslim ladies, at the risk of their lives, stood at the doors of Pandit houses, to stop militants from entering their houses. Not only this, but when militancy gained the upper hand and the common Muslim came under the threat of the gun, timely information was provided to the Pandits so that they could flee to safety.<sup>664</sup>

Mirwaiz Maulvi Farooq also encouraged and assured safety to Kashmiri Pandits. To quote H N Jattu, President of All India Kashmiri Pandits Conference, Mirwaiz had stated:

During the 1986 communal disturbances in South Kashmir, he stood like a rock to ensure the safety of Pandits. Even in 1989 and early 1990, when militancy was at its peak he came up to Ganpatyar (Srinagar) the citadel of Pandits in the city. He assured me that the Pandits would not be harmed. That is what Islam, as known to Kashmiri Muslims, preached and the martyred Maulvi Farooq followed. No wonder, he was slain in his own house in broad day light in the valley of Kashmir.<sup>665</sup>

Jattu adds, 'Our Muslim neighbours were also rendered helpless. No Muslim family was in a position to protect the Pandits. Had they done so they too would have been eliminated.'<sup>666</sup> Other separatist leaders like the young Mirwaiz Umar Farooq and Shabir Shah vehemently state respectively, 'I will be the last one to oppose them being a part of Kashmir.'<sup>667</sup> Shabir Shah met Pandits in their refugee camps and said 'without Pandits we are not living.'<sup>668</sup>

A post graduate student in political science at the University of Jammu has reflected in his research work, conducted in 2001 that 2% of Kashmiri Pandits had received threatening letters and 80%

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<sup>664</sup>O N Trisal.1995. *Kashmiri Pandit : At the Crossroads of History*. In *The Story of Kashmir : Yesterday and Today*. Vol.2. edited by Virender Grover. New Delhi.Deep & Deep Publications.pp.735-740.

<sup>665</sup>Razdaan Onkar.1999.*The Trauma of Kashmir:The Untold Reality*.NewDelhi.Vikas Publishing House. pp.242-243.

<sup>666</sup> Ibid.

<sup>667</sup>Alexander Evans.2002.*A departure from history: Kashmir Pandits,1990-2001*.Contemporary South Asia. 11(1).p.33.

<sup>668</sup> Ibid.

had not received any kind of threat.<sup>669</sup> Verma draws the inference that most of the Kashmiri Pandits, ‘felt very much threatened in an atmosphere of unabated violence, particularly during January-February 1990 when the major exodus took place.’<sup>670</sup> Although legitimate fear became an important factor for Kashmiri Pandits to leave and simultaneously government would pay their salaries in absentia also encouraged them to migrate. In the beginning Pandits as migrants had expected that they would return to the Kashmir region after few months. Rekha Chowdhary in her work engages with the mass migration of the Pandits by answering three questions:

- I. Was the religious sentiment of separatists the cause for the exodus of Pandits?
- II. How the question of exodus and return of Pandits has been responded by the Kashmiri Separatists?
- III. Was there a trust deficit between Muslims and Pandits, which led to the exodus?

Her observations seem important in comprehending the issue at a deeper level:

In response to the first question, though one can refer to the role played by the fringe organizations that tried to give a religious colour to the movement in early 1990, the time the exodus took place, and their use of mosques and media to threaten the minorities, yet the scale at which the exodus took place cannot be attributed to this factor alone. The Pandits left the Valley in a situation of chaos and uncertainty as the Valley was in the grip of terror and there was total collapse of political authority and order. Not only the Pandits, but even the Muslims identified with the Indian State were targeted by the militants and many of them were forced to flee from Kashmir. Lot of brunt of the militant activities was to be faced by the political activists, especially those belonging to the National Conference.

As regards the response of the Kashmiri separatist leadership to the question of exodus and their return, most of them have expressed regret about the exodus of Pandits and blamed their migration to the Indian State. In recent period, almost every one of the separatists has argued that Kashmir and Kashmiri culture is incomplete without Pandits and has made appeals to them to come back to the Valley.

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<sup>669</sup> Department of Politics, University of Jammu MA students. unpublished research. April 2001.

<sup>670</sup> P.S. Verma. 1994. Jammu & Kashmir at the Political Crossroads. New Delhi. Vikas Publishing House.

In response to the third question, it is important to note the absence of acrimony between Kashmiri Pandits and Muslims before and after the exodus. There was quite a shared space between two communities. Apart from speaking the same language and sharing the same cultural ethos, they participated in each other's festivals and shared each other's moments of happiness and grief. So much so that they even shared the common spiritual space . . . . The bond between the Muslims and Pandits was visible all through up to the period of their exodus. Even during 1990, when Pandits left the Valley, they carried the memories of good will and co-operation from their Muslim neighbours and friends.<sup>671</sup>

Violence increased the gap and broke down the trust between the Muslims and the Pandits in the region. Hangloo writes that 'at the popular level . . . both the communities failed to view the crisis in an appropriate perspective . . . . The contacts between the communities that had been broad based shrank because of the suspicion and mistrust, heightened by the instigation of mainstream communal politics which was consistently on the ascendance from 1986 up to 2005.'<sup>672</sup> Besides, Hangloo states that, 'there has been misrepresentation of facts on both sides which has created a wedge between the two communities.'<sup>673</sup>

Category of Migrants	Number	
	Households	Members
1. Total number of migrant households	56,246	2,81,230
2. No. Of migrant households at Jammu	34,305	1,71,525
3. No. of migrant households at Delhi	19,338	96,690
4. No. of households at other places	2,603	13,015
5. No. of migrant h.holds in camps Jammu	4,778	23,890
6. No. of migrant h.holds at other places	238	1,190 <sup>674</sup>

The religious identity of the migrants is as under:

<sup>671</sup>Rekha Chowdhary. *Religion and Conflict in Jammu and Kashmir*. pp.164-166.

<sup>672</sup>Rattan Lal Hangloo.2012.*Kashmiriyat: The Voice of the Past Misconstrued*.In *The Parchment of Kashmir : History, Society and Polity*.edited by Nyla Ali Khan. London.Palgrave Macmillan. pp.37-70.

<sup>673</sup>Ibid.p.56.

<sup>674</sup>Bashir Ahmad Dabla.2008.*Sociological Implications of Pandit Migration in J&K*. Srinagar.Jay Kay Books.p.74.

Kashmiri Pandits : 1, 65,000 (91.01%)

Kashmiri Muslims : 8,000 (04.41%)

Kashmiri Sikhs : 8,820 (04.56%)<sup>675</sup>

The migration took place in phase wise:

**First Phase** : 1989 - 1992                      40% of the total

**Second Phase** : 1993 - 1999                      50% of the total

**Third Phase** : 2000 onwards                      10% of the total<sup>676</sup>

Conflict thrives on suspicion not only of one religious community over the other, but also within the same religious community. Suspicion and fear of uncertainty was not just a part of 1990s Kashmir rather is present in Kashmir's social fabric even more today. During the field work Murtaza, a lawyer from Anantanag (South Kashmir) in this regard said :

There is a social breakdown in Kashmir. Aapas mai baat karna to door, hum to apne saath baat karnay mai bhi dartay hai . . . When you introspect yourself, wahan bhi itna confusion hai, ki ussay dar lagta hai. Kaun kya hai, koi bharosa nahi, koi certainty nahi hai.

There lies a social breakdown in Kashmir. We don't talk to each other, not even to one's self. The more ones introspects one's self, the more fearful one feels . . . There is no mutual trust, no certainty in the Kashmir society. (Translated)

Khan points out, 'Apparently the relations between the Hindus and the Muslims were very cordial and peaceful. But in fact there was a deep wave of suspicion, hostility and bitterness running at the bottom of their social relations.'<sup>677</sup> Nonetheless, the exodus of Kashmiri Pandits has not happened in isolation in the Kashmir region nor was it a nefarious campaign against the Pandits by the Muslims. During 1989 and 1990 Muslim civilians of Kashmir far larger in number were

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<sup>675</sup>Ibid.p.75.

<sup>676</sup>Ibid.p.77.

<sup>677</sup>Patrick Colm Hogan. 2016. *Imagining Kashmir: Emplotment and Colonialism*. London. University of Nebraska. Lincoln and London. p.51.

killed in violence.<sup>678</sup> A film actor, Rahul Bhat believes that Muslims suffered more than Pandits in the region during the last 25 years. Bhat says, ‘I must admit that Muslims in Kashmir suffered heavily than Kashmiri Pandits. They suffered all the years more than any community in the state did.’<sup>679</sup> However both the communities Pandits and Muslims have suffered almost equally in terms of human rights.<sup>680</sup>

The exodus of Kashmiri Pandits has had the grave implications not only for Kashmiri Pandits, but also for the Kashmiri society at large. There is no doubt that their displacement and crisis of identity have been quite painful for the community, simultaneously there remains an intricate question borne by violence regarding the concept of ‘Kashmiriyat’ □ syncretic, plural, tolerant fabric of the society and the socio-political diversity as well. However according to Vijay Sazawal, Kashmir Pandit identity and culture are still maintained by the small community of Pandits, who have continued to live and dwell in the Kashmir region.<sup>681</sup> Similarly, two journalists of the Indian Express have reported in August 1998 that in two villages of Uri (North Kashmir) 1000 Pandits continue to live among the Muslim majority. In a village Laigama, ‘temple bells ring, women wearing red bindis pass by. Road side shops are adorned with posters of Hindu Gods and Goddesses.’<sup>682</sup> It is worth mentioning that one of the Pandits returned to Kashmir region and he was given a warm welcome by the local Kashmiris. He is today running a three storied departmental store namely, Nandlal Mawa in the downtown, Srinagar, which has been infamously known for violent incidents.<sup>683</sup> While talking to people on field, I one day met a Kashmiri Pandit who is a teacher in Matan, Anantanag (South Kashmir). He warmly welcomed me in his house. He and his family during 1990 did not migrate rather chose to stay. Calling me beti (Daughter) throughout the conversation, he said:

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<sup>678</sup>Profile of Terrorist Violence in Jammu and Kashmir. New Delhi. Ministry of Home Affairs. March 1998.

<sup>679</sup>Rahul Bhat. Kashmir Times. 3 February 2015.

<sup>680</sup>M Tikoo. 1994. *The 1989-90 migration of Kashmiri Pandits—focus on children*. Psychological Reports. 75(1). pp 259-263.

<sup>681</sup>Vijay Sazawal. *A new focus, a new vision. Koshur Samachar*. New Delhi. April 2000. p.3.

<sup>682</sup>Bishan Kumar .Mir Ehsan. *At home and at peace —1,000 Pandits beat the exodus*. Indian Express. 8 August 1998.

<sup>683</sup>Muhammad Raafi. *Kashmiri Pandit Businessman Returns to Valley 30 Years After he Was Attacked by Militants*. The Wire. 5 May 2019.



Few Pandits stayed back that year. I chose to live here because I did not feel any threat to my life and my family. I have Muslim neighbours around; you can see yourself . . . They have provided protection and comfort to me and my family since that year.

In the context Sumantra Bose writes:

The Pandit issue is more complex and ambiguous than the propaganda suggests. In 1995 I visited squalid camps housing poorer Pandit refugees in Purkho and Misriwala settlements near the city of Jammu. They uniformly narrated horror stories of intimidation and violence that had forced their departure, and portrayed the Valleys Muslim majority as *crazed fanatics*. However, when I continued my journey to the valley, I met a number of Pandits, in some cases entire families, living in the Valleys towns and villages. Their narratives were markedly different. These were representatives of a sizeable minority among the Pandits who had not joined the 1990 exodus, and there were also a few who had left in 1990 but returned in the intervening years. They spoke, in private interviews, of being well treated and in some instances protected by Muslim neighbors and friends. Several expressed sympathy and solidarity with the Valley's majority population living under Indian repression, although all were unequivocal in their opposition to armed militancy against the Indian state.<sup>684</sup>

Nonetheless, the roots of Kashmiri Pandits being in Kashmir without any connectivity with the region has developed a deep void. Chamanlal Gadoo, President of Kashmiri Samiti, Delhi says:

The Kashmiri Pandits will not renounce the right to their motherland. Kashmir belongs to us. Kashmir is our history. Kashmir is our home. Kashmir is our tradition. Our temples are in Kashmir and our entire past is associated with its soil. We will not allow to be dispossessed and our culture to be destroyed.<sup>685</sup>

Gadoo adds, 'Kashmiri Hindus firmly believe in the democratic process which would ultimately lead to peaceful solution of the Kashmir problem.'<sup>686</sup> Gadoo has rightly depicted the sense of attachment to Kashmiri soil and relationship between the two communities and homeland. The

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<sup>684</sup>Sumantra Bose.2003. *Kashmir: Roots of Conflict, Paths to Peace*. Delhi. Vistaar Publications. pp. 121-122.

<sup>685</sup>C L Gadoo.1992.*KPs at the Crossroads of History*. Koshur Samachar. New Delhi.15 February 1992.p.8.

<sup>686</sup>Ibid.

new generations born and grown after migration have not lived through ‘Kashmiriyat’. In the context Hangloo writes:

The generations born in the late 1980s and after, among both Muslims and Hindus, have no idea of Kashmir’s harmonious cultural fabric, because these generations were born and raised in a period of turmoil, and after migration they have not lived Kashmiriyat. The Kashmiri Muslim youth born post 1990 are surprised when they are told about Pandits and their present plight, and the Hindu youth born post 1986 and 1990 display no concern for Kashmiri Muslims because they were born outside Kashmir . . . The spaces of socialization and interaction that were available to both the communities in government offices, educational institutions, commercial establishments, religious places like Astens and Asthapan (Shrines) and on social occasions in the neighborhoods were all lost.<sup>687</sup>

In the words of Neerja Mattoo, ‘Young Kashmiris today have no idea of the inclusive voice our poets used in the past or even if they do have a vague idea they are rather embarrassed by it and tend to dismiss it as a rare aberration.’<sup>688</sup>

### **Violence against Men and Women**

The history speaks that violence in Kashmir region has been spreading for almost last thirty years and has pushed back the space for women in the region, thereby putting forth women in a disadvantageous position. The victimization of women takes place at two levels □

- I. state and non-state agencies amidst violence;
- II. patriarchal set-up

The numerous cases of rapes and molestation have happened either by the security forces or militants. According to Gayanendra Pandey, ‘Nations, and communities that would be nations, seem to deal with the moment of violence □ by the relatively simple stratagem of drawing a neat

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<sup>687</sup>Rattanlal Hangloo.2012. *Kashmiriyat: The Voice of the Past Misconstrued*.In *The Parchment of Kashmir:History, Society and Polity* by Nyla Ali Khan.London .Palgrave Macmillan.p.51.

<sup>688</sup>Neerja Mattoo.2012. *Syncretic Tradition and the Creative Life: Some Kashmiri Mystics Poets*. In *Islam, Women and Violence in Kashmir: Between India and Pakistan*.New York.Palgrave. Macmillan. p.89.

boundary around themselves, distinguishing sharply between ‘us’ and ‘them’ and pronouncing the act of violence as an act of the other or an act necessitated by a threat to the self.’<sup>689</sup>

In Kashmir region’s cultural and social legacy women and their sexuality are considered as the symbols of culture, tradition and family honour. The women of the affected areas are led into similar symbolic roles in a situation of political unrest. Although violence of ethnic or communal nature is directed almost against everyone, but violence against women occurs in a specific sexual manner. The section builds on the socio-political spaces of women and uses women’s narratives to analyze the dynamics of gender violence. The narratives take the reader on the journey to the affected spheres of the Kashmir region. Although the rationale dynamics between what is spoken, what is heard, what is witnessed, what is unspeakable or unspoken is complex, but the truth of violence can be understood between the lines of women’s narratives. The narratives reveal the atrocities, yet there is so much that is muted and silenced by the survivors, victims and perpetrators.

The different case studies reflect the different stories, but all are manifested with violence and horror. For instance, Shahnaz Kouser was abducted in the early phase of militancy by militants. She was raped and tortured. Afterwards one militant was given by her to the police and she in return was handed over to the Intelligence Bureau (IB) by the Police. At the hands of IB she met out the same treatment as she had met with the militants. Finally, Shahnaz had reached Jammu, where she got married and became the mother of two children. Later her husband abandoned her, when he came to know that she had been raped by the militants as well as the IB men. Initially the issue was agitated by the Hindu Right Wing in Jammu and then they too abandoned her and she again suffered the same fate at the hands of IB men. The story reflects how Shahnaz was subjected to victimization at different levels and how the society also withdraws its collective support and multilayered suffering is aggravated, which raises the question about the refusal to hear such voices.

The lives of women have become the play ground on which the militants play as per their will and wish. One of the militants namely Barkat Ali violently entered the house of Mohammad Din Sheikh in Kashmir’s Doda district and kidnapped his daughter Tahira Bano. He took her to a remote place, Behar Nallah (Dhar) and there several militants forcibly arranged the *nikah*

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<sup>689</sup>Gyanendra Pandey.2001.*Remembering Partition*.Cambridge.Cambridge University Press.p.177.

(marriage) of Tahira Bano with Barkat Ali.<sup>690</sup> In the same way many unemployed boys took up guns for their personal aims, as they lacked a sense of responsibility and at gun point they married a girl of their choice. Thus women suffered due to militants as well and rendered them voiceless. ‘The guns that initially had been taken up for us were ultimately aimed at us.’<sup>691</sup> An African proverb is to be quoted here, ‘if lions were to write history, lion hunters would never be heroes.’ In this context it is to be mentioned that in a seminar on Kashmir conducted in New Delhi, one of the young students said in her presentation:

In this armed conflict . . . masculine power emerged as all important, men became even more dominating and commanding than usual and (gender) discrimination . . . further heightened.<sup>692</sup>

According to an article published in The Hindu newspaper on 1 October, 2011 the Jammu and Kashmir government official figures show that 1,326 rape cases have been registered in the state since 2006 and only one person was convicted during the preceding five years. Another article in Kashmir times dated 9 October, 2013 reports that the state government has mentioned seventy cases of rape charged against security forces in the year 2013-14 in Kashmir and 29 in Jammu. However, due to certain restraints it’s difficult to ascertain accurate information and statistics on rapes and sexual abuse in the Kashmir region since the outbreak of violence. Besides, many cases are unreported because women themselves choose to remain within patriarchal norms for their and their family’s honour. In this way the legitimate voices of women are silenced. Their silence reflects the characteristics of a patriarchal society. Simultaneously, their voices are not a part of the mainstream discourses. In this way the concept of women empowerment becomes merely a theoretical framework.

### **Kunan Poshpora**

The experience of mass rapes in Kunan and Poshpora, the twin villages of Kupwara in North Kashmir by security forces during a cold night in February 1991 is a frightful incident. Being close

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<sup>690</sup>J&K Rebels Force Teen Girl to Wed Chief. The Asian Age. 28 August .2004.

<sup>691</sup> Seema Shekhawat.2014.*Gender, Conflict and Peace in Kashmir*.New York.Cambridge University Press.p.94.

<sup>692</sup>Sumona Das Gupta.2000. *Breaking the Silence:Women and Kashmir*.New Delhi. Women in Security, Conflict Management and Peace (WISCOMP). p.27.

to the border, Kupwara during 1990s became a place used by the militants to hide themselves sometimes for a night in its dense green forests. That is the reason amongst other districts; it witnessed endless crackdowns and search operations. Since these two villages are near the border, thus witnessed more crackdowns, cordons, search operations, enforced disappearances, torture inside and outside the interrogation centres, extra judicial killings, fake encounters resulting in the surfacing of unmarked mass graves

The mass rapes in Kuanan and Poshpora by 4<sup>th</sup> Rajputana Rifles and Mountain Brigade started with door to door search operations and the process is called crackdown.

This cordon-and-search operation was a different one. Instead of making an announcement of the operation on loudspeakers, the soldiers in search parties of 5-10 men, started assaulting the men, forcefully dragging them out of their houses and making the women stay inside. The light bulbs and candles were smashed and candles blown out.<sup>693</sup>

All the men of the villages were dragged and assembled outside the interrogation centres throughout the night in snow at a zero temperature. Men of the twin villages had later discussed with Jammu Kashmir Coalition of Civil Society and one of the survivors told them:

After they had dragged me for a few yards to the interrogation centre, my head was dipped in a bucket full of water ruthlessly till I consumed excess amount of water. It did not stop there, my upper body (neck, shoulders and back) were beaten using lathis. Since my house was not that far from the interrogation centre, I could hear the screams of my (female) family members through the night.<sup>694</sup>

The ordeal at the interrogation centre continued till morning. The interrogation centres used various methods of torture to the Kashmiri men □ heads immersed in ice cold water with red chillies, electrocution on the private parts □ men because of electrocution suffered physically for

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<sup>693</sup>Essar Batool. Ifrah Butt. Samreena Mushtaq. Munaza Rashid. Natasha Rather. 2016.*Do You Remember Kunan Poshpora?*. New Delhi. Zubaan Publishers.pp.75-76.

<sup>694</sup>Ibid.p.78.

several days, sometimes permanently. Abli Dar who was one of the victims in the interrogation centre told JKCCS that his leg was damaged by:

‘Roller Treatment’, placing a heavy log of wood on his legs, while two soldiers sat on it and rolled it for maximum pain, crushing his bones.

Dar who after the incident underwent multiple surgeries along with an amputation of the leg finally died in 2014 due to complications of the surgery.

The night witnessed mass rapes of women as old as 60 and girls as young as 13 along with a pregnant woman. ‘Their struggle against their community began the moment the sun rose after the fateful night of violence, the darkest night in the history of their villages.’<sup>695</sup> The women who were raped that night screamed, even when the army warned them not to shout else they would be shot. A pregnant woman, minor girls, one of them a polio patient, a physically handicapped girl, and deaf and dumb screamed. The army while raping them made it a point that the mothers watch how their daughters are being raped, and the daughters watch their mothers and grandmothers being raped in the same room. In this context Batool writes:

Sexual violence against women by men is not about a male desire for sexual gratification, but is a proven assertion of sexual power . . . Sexual violence against women is immediately a fatal combination of unquestionable power and absolute impunity, as is the case in Kashmir. . . The idea of the “other” . . . is strongly, actively nurtured and thus sexual violence by this “other” is seen as an aggression against the entire community<sup>696</sup>

Professor William Baker writes, that a member of J&K armed police was tied to a post and forced to watch the gang rape of his 70-year old grandmother, 45-year old mother and 18-year old sister in Kunan Poshpora. He adds that many women have been raped in front of their husbands and their children.<sup>697</sup>

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<sup>695</sup>Ibid.p.50.

<sup>696</sup>Essar Batool.2018.*Dimensions of Sexual Violence and Patriarchy in a Militarized State*. Economic & Political Weekly.LIII (47).p.60.

<sup>697</sup>In his testimony to the 52<sup>nd</sup> session of the United Nations commission on human rights.

They tore the women's *pherans*. While raping they continued to consume liquor. They took turns, and sometimes two rounds of a particular house . . . The survivors said they had bite marks on their chests, everywhere on their body, even on their hips. Many of them described bleeding from the mouth, from their private parts and from other injuries.

Tamana, who was pregnant by nine months, was raped. After three days when she gave birth to a child, the baby had a fractured arm. Another mother, who had clutched her baby while the army dropped in her house, was raped by throwing the baby out of the ground floor window. The baby who was lying on the floor was brought back into the house by his father as he returned back to the house from the interrogation centre in the morning. The mother who was unable to move from the floor could not get her baby in.

Tamanas's mother Ufaq while narrating the incident said:

I ran upstairs with my daughter to the second floor. I opened the door to the porch, and was planning to jump out as I realized there was no other option. I told my daughter that we should leave. My daughter, who was nine months pregnant, was terrified. She gripped my hair tight, and started screaming, 'don't leave me alone at their (the army's) mercy'. When the army men entered they had zips of their pants already open and they had clearly come with the intention of raping us.

Tamana who was taken to another room was raped there. Ufaq further narrated:

Three army men caught hold of me and 8-10 army men raped me in turns. They had huge battery torches with them, and they used them to see my naked body, while making lewd comments. They raped me for several hours. After some time I felt unconscious because of pain.<sup>698</sup>

The idea of home as inside and private, which represents a safe space from the outside violence transforms as an extension of the outside, a prison, *a site of incarceration*. The home in which the women of Kunan Poshpora were raped is the home where they have to live the rest of their lives, everyday reliving the horrors of that night in those rooms which witnessed their rapes. Home represents their suffering and loss and in their loss the meaning of home as safe shelter is lost.

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<sup>698</sup>Essar Batool. Ifrah Butt. Samreena Mushtaq. Munaza Rashid. Natasha Rather. 2016. *Do You Remember Kunan Poshpora?*. New Delhi. Zubaan Publishers.

However, in such situation home becomes not only a figurative but also a literal extension of the land of the people. When the land is unsafe, the home is unsafe.

One of the girls who was raped that night said that she bowed her forehead on to his shoes and pleaded for mercy by saying “*Khuda kay liye humai chhod do, hum nai kuch nahi kiya*” [for God’s sake please leave us, we are innocent.] She says after the rape, her mother who was in the same room, lying the floor after being raped when saw her *turned her face away from her*. Hearing someone crying in the room, she saw her brother.

I was naked . . . He covered me with something. I don’t remember clearly what it was. I haven’t asked him till now. We never spoke about that night again. But I remember I could not feel my lower body . . . That one night has become my life. No matter what I do, where I go, what I think. That night never leaves me. It’s with me all the time, when I pray, when I cook, when I clean myself. I curse them (army) all the time and will curse them all my life.

When people around tell her to forget the memory of the night, she finds it hard and says, ‘*It’s like losing your eyes and believing you never had them.*’ Thus memory gets reconstructed from the past and shapes their present. The night of mass rapes was collectively experienced by the women of the twin villages, making each individual memory a part of the collective memory.<sup>699</sup> The collective memory of that night becomes their reference point negating their wish or desire to live a whole life. Their struggle against pain and suffering of that night is also a perpetual struggle against memory and remembrance.

In such moments gender which is relegated to the social and not political, private and not public, is challenged by experiences of women vis-à-vis sexual violence, testifying the inextricable link of private with public and social with political. The violence in this context sustains through the social and the cultural, the bodies of women as repositories of *honor, chastity* and *chivalry* of men which when violated psychologically breaks the men of the community on their failure to *protect their women*, a role that patriarchy assigns to them.<sup>700</sup> The sexual violence exploits the unequal gender relations of the Kashmiri society, thereby furthering and deepening psychological frustration. Routh Seifert argues that the rape of the female body is transformed into a *symbolic*

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<sup>699</sup>Collective Memory is defined as the common way through which individuals of the society remember, feel, interpret and give meaning to the events of the past in particular and history in general.

<sup>700</sup>Radhika Coomaraswamy.2002.*Report of the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, Its Causes and Consequences*. United Nations Commission on Human Rights.



rape of the entire community.<sup>701</sup> Thus women being the symbols of collective honour in the region when raped also become a hidden psychological assault on the masculinity of the men which results in the feminization of men. The male owing to this failure to protect the collective honor of the community through the protection of the female feels emasculated and hence feminized. In this context it is to be mentioned that pervasive rape enhances male impulses to join the militancy as a means of protecting the female honor.<sup>702</sup> This reflects how violence breeds violence and its end becomes unforeseen.

The women of Kunan and Poshpora didn't have to resist only the sexual violence, but also the competing patriarchy from its community. Commonly called as the *Daughters of the Raped Village*, the raped women and their children face humiliation from the people around. Atifa, a girl with green eyes said:

I studied in a private school, Sunshine School, in a nearby village. I tolerated all the abuse directed against me by my classmates, but I lost patience finally by the time I reached the 10<sup>th</sup> grade. I decided to discontinue my schooling . . . Seema and I were good friends . . . (One day) In her anger she called me the daughter of a raped village and shouted loudly that my mother had been raped by the army . . . It was then I fully made up my mind not to go to that school. A few years later, I pushed myself to appear as a private candidate to qualify for my matriculation. Now I am studying in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade but it seems that I cannot continue my studies. We are not respected by people . . . It is not only limited to schools or colleges, we are looked down upon by people everywhere and every time when there is some issue, people humiliate us. They say your mothers and sisters were raped.<sup>703</sup>

In the context Malkki points out perceptively that 'women and children embody special kind of powerlessness.'<sup>704</sup> Most of the women who were raped twenty years ago are still unmarried. Their lives have stopped to make progress since the last twenty years. These women have stopped their mobility □ be it to schools, colleges, or bringing firewood from the surrounding forests for the

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<sup>701</sup>Ruth.Seifert.1996.*The Second Front: The Logic of Sexual Violence in Wars*.Women's Studies International Forum. 19( 1/2) .p. 39.

<sup>702</sup>Women Initiative.1994.*Women's Testimonies from Kashmir: The Green of My Valley is Khaki*.New Delhi.Women Initiative.

<sup>703</sup>Essar Batool. Ifrah Butt. Samreena Mushtaq. Munaza Rashid. Natasha Rather.2016.*Do You Remember Kunan Poshpora?*.New Delhi. Zubaan Publishers.p.109.

<sup>704</sup>Liisa Malkki.1995.*Purity and Exile:Violence,Memory and National Cosmology among Hutu Refugees in Tanzania*.Chicago. University of Chicago Press.

household chores etc. In this manner they have become invisible in the public spaces, fearing the taunting remarks of the people. The social boycott and the resulting isolation these women face turn so serious that their own families, husbands don't want to live with them anymore. Many men have accepted their wives back only after the force by militants. Another facet of social ostracism is of a woman, who pleaded her husband not to throw her away as her children will turn orphan. Though she was somehow allowed to stay in the house, but her husband refused to accept her as a wife after that incident. A woman of eighty, was also raped and wasn't pardoned by the society, not even by her own son. All this reflects gendered dimension of inflicted violence, which has disrupted the social cohesion at multiple levels □ individual, familial, communal and social. Zameer, a young boy was in 9<sup>th</sup> grade when he one day got into a fight with one of his classmates over the routine humiliation faced by him on being called as the son of a raped woman. He said:

I could not tolerate the regular abuse from my classmates . . . I made up my mind to quit school and decided to run away from the hostility I used to face at school. I torched my books and never went to school again.<sup>705</sup>

Women are seen as the carriers of family/community honour and sexual violence has reduced them to objects, used and then discarded. This condition has made their daily life not less than a battle field. In such moments the myth of gender which is relegated to the social and not political, private and not public is challenged by experiences of women vis-a-vis sexual violence, testifying the inextricable link of private with public and social with political. The violence becomes symbolically endless as it sustains through the social and cultural dynamics. The bodies of women as repositories of *honour*, *chastity* and *chivalry* of men, which when violated breaks the men of the community for being incompetent to 'protect their women', a role that patriarchy assigns to them.<sup>706</sup> Baker during his visit to the Kashmir region interviewed the raped victims in 1996 writes, 'the use of rape by . . . forces in Kashmir is not merely an isolated case or two of 'wayward' soldiers . . . but rather . . . to break the spirit and if possible, the soul of Kashmiri people.'<sup>707</sup> The stigmatized women have been fighting for justice from the state administration and also battling

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<sup>705</sup>Essar Batool. Ifrah Butt. Samreena Mushtaq. Munaza Rashid. Natasha Rather. 2016. *Do You Remember Kunan Poshpora?*. New Delhi. Zubaan Publishers.p.110.

<sup>706</sup>Radhika Coomaraswamy.2002.*Report of the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, Its Causes and Consequences*. United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

<sup>707</sup> William Wayne Baker.1994.*Kashmir:Happy Valley, Valley of Death*.Las Vegas. Defenders Publications.p.65

with the mindset of men for over twenty-five years. Jawahira Begum, one of the rape victim in response to the social stigma says:

Those Kashmiri men who were killed by the soldiers were called *martyrs*. How we are not martyrs then? Why is everyone ashamed of us and disrespectful to us?<sup>708</sup>

Shekhawat points out, ‘the most often narrated case concerned Kunan Poshpora village, where, at the insistence of separatist leaders, raped women testified in front of cameras only to be later abandoned not only by their families but also by those who had urged them to publicly provide details of their suffering. Following the incident, the village witnessed some married women being abandoned by their husbands, while many single women could not find bride grooms.’<sup>709</sup> Violence has targeted women in ways more grave than men. However, what is important to mention is despite such suffering women refuse to be passive inert victims of violence rather exercise considerable agency in such situations. These women take recourse to new independent roles, also referred as *stretched roles* by Rita Manchanda<sup>710</sup> challenging the notions of victimhood, and thereby reconstructing their devastated lives. The hardships and exigencies of survival push these women into new roles □ strengthening them as agents of transformation. Nonetheless, the experiences of humiliation have impaired the Kashmiri psyche. Women were and remain a gendered process, seriously impacted by being the product of circumstances and in addition absorb the abuse by their male counterparts. Since women are considered weak by men, it becomes convenient for them to give vent to their male frustration and in this way the familial and social fabric get shattered. In this context Afsana Rashid explains :

It (rape) is related to honour and dignity that should not be there . . . . They are left to fend (for themselves). There is a small percentage of families who support their daughters in such cases. But . . . in-laws do not accept them . . . . Such victims are unacceptable to society and they are treated more or less as prostitutes. Society never forgives them . . . On the contrary they are victimized by both family and society . . . Incidents of rape mostly get politicized . . . That time many people visit the affected person or the family and

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<sup>708</sup> *Spirited Fight for Dignity*. The Hindu. 7 February 2015.

<sup>709</sup> Seema Shekhawat. 2014. *Gender, Conflict and Peace in Kashmir*. New York. Cambridge University Press. p.94.

<sup>710</sup> Rita Manchanda. 2005. *Women’s Agency in Peace-Building: Gender Relations in Post Conflict Reconstruction*. Economic & Political Weekly 40(44/45). p.4739.

sympathize but that is all a momentary phenomenon . . . But finally everything ends . . . They are left to suffer.<sup>711</sup>

The threat of sexual violence pervades in Kashmir region due to massive military presence everywhere and the reports on sexual violence in the region have raised fair levels of anxiety and stress.<sup>712</sup> Day-to-day activities like stepping out of the home are filled with stress and anxiety in consequence of pervading fears regarding sexual integrity. One of the graduate student's experiences are:

I lived in a part of the city that was full of security bunkers. Ever since I can remember we became conscious of constant surveillance and intimidation by the forces, the whole family felt disturbed all the time. The surveillance was minute and intrusive; security personnel were there all the time and knew exactly who lived in which house. Going out of the house in such an atmosphere was a problem for me and my parents . . . There was great anxiety in the air . . . My mother was constantly worried about my going out . . . My parents always used to remind me to avoid the bunker road which was in front of our house and go to the college from the back lane.<sup>713</sup>

The consequences of the violence against women reach far beyond the moment of horror, humiliation or violence as is reflected in the experiences shared by the two University students:

They (security forces) are there everywhere, all the time. We do not cross the road when we see security personnel on the other side . . . We have learned to live with this insecurity; it is a part of our daily life. We try to get home early . . . There are recent reports of sexual crimes against women in rural areas, yet no action is initiated against the guilty. . . After the rape and murder of Asiya and Neelofar (two young women raped and murdered allegedly . . . in the town of Shopian) we feel particularly vulnerable . . . ; the incident really shattered us.<sup>714</sup>

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<sup>711</sup>Afsana Rashid. *Honour Need not be Associated with Rape*. Kashmir Times .20 January. 2006.

<sup>712</sup>Women's Fact Finding Commission. 1997. *Wounded Valley - Shattered Souls: Women's Fact Finding Commission Probing into Army Atrocities on Women and Children in Kashmir*. Sixth report of the Indian People's Tribunal on Environment and Human Rights. Mumbai. p.7-10.

<sup>713</sup>Seema Kazi. 2018. *Sexual Crimes and the Struggle for Justice in Kashmir* In *Resisting Occupation in Kashmir* edited by Haley Duschinski. Mona Bhan. Ather Zia. Cynthia Mahmood. Philadelphia. University of Pennsylvania Press. p.163.

<sup>714</sup>Ibid. p.163-164.

Hence the threat of violence against the women and girls is the part of their daily experience; fear and insecurity have a paramount impact on the student's psyche and their academic activities as well. Their daily activities get distracted and disrupted by the presence of camps and bunkers. The omnipresence of violence is almost the routine and lived experience. Duschinski and Hoffman write about such surroundings:

Throughout Kashmir, armed agents, including police officers in full riot gear as well as soldiers equipped with machine guns and automatic weapons, line the roadsides of towns and villages, manning checkpoints, guarding strategic buildings and positions and surveying their surroundings from make shift bunkers fortified with bricks, sandbags and concertina wire. These forces are housed in sprawling camps, some as large as cities, in rented hotels, abandoned homes, and appropriated orchards, as well as public institutions such as stadiums, parks and schools.<sup>715</sup>

### **Mubeena Ghani**

The reality of violence against women is not divorced from patriarchalization and social practices that jeopardize their future by further marginalizing them. Family, society, culture and nation concomitantly become a source of affirmation for sexual violence against women and also a source of their oppression. The patriarchal perceptions of sexuality and honour humiliate women and their families privately and publicly. Mubeena Ghani in the following narrative has been constantly witnessing the humiliation, and thereby contributing to the culture of silence around the issue of violence against women. The narrative helps in comprehending how concepts of silence and silencing define her victimization as well as her agency. The couple in this narrative has accepted compromises in order to maintain the dynamics of their family life. Although they have faced a gruesome incident, but have learned how to negate the corresponding humiliation, sorrow and anger. Kashmiris live in an uncertain zone where living and dying are of secondary importance and they are also not *grievable* in the normal sense.<sup>716</sup>

Mubeena Ghani was a bride who was raped by a group of Border Security Force (BSF) personnel on 18 May 1990, at Bodasgam crossing village in Hakoora village, making it one of the earliest

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<sup>715</sup>Haley Duschinski, Bruce Hoffman. 2011. *Everyday Violence, Institutional Denial and Struggles for Justice in Kashmir*. Race & Class. 54(2). p.46.

<sup>716</sup>Judith Butler. 2010. *Frames of War: When Is Life Grievable?*. London. Verso.

cases of sexual violence in the Kashmir region. The night she was raped was the night she got married. Basharat Peer, who in 2002 went to meet Mubeena in Chawalgam writes an elaborate account of the night she was raped as well as her life afterwards. Peer who on way to Mubeena's house when asked a local baker from her village about her address, writes in his book:

Where does Rashid Malik live? I asked. The baker stopped and without taking his hands of the dough said, 'Do you mean the one whose bride was raped?'<sup>717</sup>

As Rashid reached the brides house, a *nikah* was performed. As songs of celebration of *nikah* were sung, soon the couple along with the relatives and friends boarded and left for their home. Rashid's elder brother was carefully holding a curfew pass in his hand.<sup>718</sup> The curfew pass was given to them by an army colonel. As soon the bus reached Bodasgam crossing, the bus was stopped by BSF personnel. The decorative light bulbs glowing in green all over the bus were soon ordered by the BSF to be switched off. Peer while narrating Mubeena's story writes:

Rashid, his companions and his bride shivered in their seats . . . His brother rose from his seat, permission slip in one hand, and opened the door with his other hand . . . The BSF men did not even look at the slip. Rashid saw two of them grab his brother by the neck and drag him to the roadside, where they began beating him . . . The BSF men poured bullets into the bus. The next moment he felt something grazing his shoulder and a cry rose from the next seat. The bullet grazing his shoulder had hit his cousin, Sabzaar, in the arm. Another volley of bullets pierced the tin body of the bus and his cousin Asadullah's chest, leaving him dead. Rashid was yet to realize what had happened to his cousin, when he was hit in the back; doctors later found five bullets there. Three bullets hit Mubeena in her shoulder, back and hips . . . She was bleeding when a group of soldiers dragged her and the chambermaid to the mustard fields beside the road. An unknown number of BSF men raped the two injured women. 'I could not even remember how many they were. I had lost my senses,' Mubeena said.

After getting discharged from the hospital, as Rashid and Mubeena reached their village, Peer writes that they were welcomed with a *hostile silence*. For Rashid's family and the villagers,

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<sup>717</sup>Basharat Peer.2016.*Curfewed Night*. Gurgaon. Random House India.p.151.

<sup>718</sup>Curfew pass is small piece of paper, which gives you the permission especially to move around after dusk during curfews.

Mubeena was a bad omen. Rashid in this ordeal stood by Mubeena along with his parents and friends. Rashid who wanted to sell his share from his family property was refused by his family. He shared the physical pain, psychological scar and her humiliation by his unflinching support, which generally is not expected from men born and brought up in patriarchal culture. He decided to defy the people who ostracized Mubeena.

A year later, Mubeena gave birth to a son; the child died in a few weeks. She was suicidal; Rashid begged her to live; to be stronger.

Soon both of them started working, Rashid who was a manual labourer, carried bricks, harvested crops and ploughed fields. Mubeena apart from working on the fields, stitched and tailored. However, she does feel the village gazing at her, with every discomfoting stare penetrating deep within her.

At the village tap, waiting in the queue for water, she lowered her head. On the streets of the village, she moved like smoke trying to be invisible. The smallest altercation would become a reminder of her trauma. ‘Aren’t you the bride who was raped?’

Every time she sees paramilitary soldiers, she shivers at the sight of a uniform. She says:

The night lingers around her, like a ghost refusing to be exorcised.

Mubeena and Rashid along with their son and daughter, who they with pride say want to become doctors, walk Peer to the door, smiling and waving a good bye to him. Mubeena and Rashid’s story unlike the dominant discourse is also a story about resilience against the local patriarchal powers. These stories are the stories of survival amidst destruction of their very idea of home and happiness. Mubeena’s loss on the night she got married had left no life in her to face the reality of her new life, a life over which she and Rashid had lost their ability to control. It was a life, which owing to Mubeena’s continual desire to end her life was juggling between life and death. The violence was combined with the patriarchal dismissal of Mubeena as a bad omen. For standing by Mubeena, Rashid was not only seen as feminized, but collectively ostracized by his family and the village as *Husband of the Raped Wife*. Rashid by not accepting the patriarchal implications embedded in the rape of his wife along with Mubeena collectively navigated through the social ostracization. Their story unlike a myriad other stories of violence is an example of external violence in alliance with an internal patriarchal violence. Nonetheless, their narrative does not reflect only their victimization, but also their will to fight and survive. Mubeena survives the psychological warfare, simultaneously her story unravels her ways of survival and the ways she

deals with victimization. In spite of all this one hears the past echoes in her painful present. Mubeena and Rashid's narrative constitutes one of the voices amongst the many unknown and unsung discourses of resilience against violence, as there has been an increase in such incidents.

### **Half-Widows**

In Kashmir region's culture like in many other cultures, families still form the basic fundamental unit of the society and the traditional roles in Kashmiri society are gendered. Men bear the financial requirements and women fulfill other familial needs. But this positioning has been altered due to the disappearance cases and sexual violence against women. According to Association of Parents of Disappeared Persons (APDP), nearly ten thousand Kashmiri men have disappeared and their wives have turned *Half-Widows*. The absence of loved ones of these women has left deep scars in their lives and in their children as well, which seldom heal. As Arcels' study also points out, 'The death of a spouse or the loss of parents for young children and adolescents is the biggest crisis for most people creating unparalleled stress.'<sup>719</sup> It has become source of anxiety, as they experience mixed feelings about their being or not being alive. Without a body □ an evidence of death, many wives, mothers, grand-mothers, sisters and the relatives of the disappeared harbour a faint hope that their loved ones are alive somewhere. The unknown destiny of the disappeared is torturous for these women, who are refused the process of burial and closure. For many of these women the impact of disappearance of their sons and husbands is a deep emotional loss that impels them to overcome their inhibitions about engaging in public political displays against the violence. The Association of Parents of Disappeared Persons (APDP) in the Kashmir region is the vocal critic of human rights atrocities carried out during these years in the Kashmir region. This organization is demanding an accounting of the disappeared and to stop impunity of human and socioeconomic rights. These women frequently march and demonstrate and have constructed the political identity of this organization as mothers and wives of their disappeared loved ones and moved beyond the boundaries of their previous identities. The role of this organization has also been to rebuild women's self-esteem and sense of entitlement to educate women politically.

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<sup>719</sup>Libby Tata Arcel.1995.*Multidisciplinary Approach to Refugee Women and their Families*. In *Psycho-Social help to War Victim.: Women Refugees and their Families from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia* edited by Libby Tata Arcel.Vera Folnegovic-Smalc. Dragica Kozaric-Kovacic. Ana Marusi. Copenhagen. International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims.p. 25.



Parveena Ahanger is one such woman who has lost her son, Javaid Ahmad in 1990, as he became the victim of custodial disappearance. She heads the organization, Association of Parents of Disappeared Persons (APDP). She says:

Ladkay kay saath mera darr bhi kho gaya. (Along with my son, I have lost my sense of fear)<sup>720</sup>

Parveena today shows her strength and resistance by encouraging and mobilizing similar women, who like her have been consumed by the disappearance of their dear ones. Such acts of resistance by women like Parveena subvert the stereotype regarding women as victims by transcending the boundaries formed by the society. This organization is not funded by any regional or political organization of national level. She has adhered to her conviction and has refused to accept the financial compensation for her lost son. Parveena has assembled the near and dear ones of those persons, who had been subjected to solitary confinement, torture and death in the police and military custody. She has presented the papers regarding the human rights violations in the conferences in different countries. Parveena and the mothers and wives of disappeared sons and husbands want to know the fate of their dear ones. Parveena says, 'there are many families of disappeared persons who are on the verge of starvation. There are hundreds of half-widows, who are in a dilemma whether to remarry or not.'<sup>721</sup>

Amongst the numerous examples of women negotiating at multiple planes is an example of Haleema Begum. Though the disappearance of her husband has gripped her life in a number of challenges but such moments also have offered to her space for transition and empowerment. Haleema's husband is missing for the last eleven years. She publicly refuses the death of her husband, thus after his disappearance she went to the Minister's Deputy Commissioner and the police stations to investigate her husband's disappearance, but no one helped her. The police, which initially was not ready to file an FIR, afterwards registered it when she paid them an amount of Rs 15,000. Soon the problems surmounted Haleema's life from all directions. Initially her in-laws threw her out and she has been managing her four children on her own. She expresses her inability to approach any court of justice due to her financial constraints. What needs to be emphasized is that despite such adversities Haleema did not give up her fight. She did not allow

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<sup>720</sup>Sahba Husain.2002.*Will Peace Return? Trauma and Health-related Work in Kashmir*.In *Speaking Peace: Women's Voices from Kashmir*. edited by Urvashi Bhutalia. New Delhi. Kali Publications p.251.

<sup>721</sup> Nyla Ali Khan. 2006. *Islam, Women and Violence in Kashmir*.Srinagar.Gulshan Books.p.103.

her inability to become an impediment in the way of her struggle, she met Parveena Ahanger and started to mobilize such similar women by organizing monthly meet at Lal Chowk (Central Kashmir). Haleema who today heads the Kupwara district in Parveena's APDP says:

I do it on voluntary basis. Most of the disappearance cases are from Kupwara. I must say that ten thousand people have disappeared from this district alone . . . There are many families who don't even know how to file an FIR, I guide them.<sup>722</sup>

Most of the half-widows in Kashmir are deserted not only by their in-laws, but also by their parents. In many such cases they are forced to live alone in abject poverty, with no property rights. Haleema, who herself is a half-widow today has taken up multiple roles like counseling women who are suffering like her. She demands:

Return the dead bodies if they are dead or provide us with their whereabouts.<sup>723</sup>

Haleema along with many other half-widows today face a number of challenges – be it from the administration in the form of not delivering justice and to provide aid or be it from the patriarchal society which inflicts its humiliation, harassment and an eventual ostracism on them. Besides, the gendered work of half-widows entails not only the emotional, psychological and care-giving work, but also includes the economic crisis, lying on the shoulders of female single heads of households. Since the rate of female single heads of households increases, thus there is an increase in women's work load as well. Most of the family members disappeared outside their houses and in such cases the women become clueless as whom to approach and whom to accuse behind the disappearance. Another issue which becomes a potential challenge to these women is the fact that any source of information regarding the whereabouts of the disappeared members is most of the times not known. Under such circumstances resulting from absence of any concrete information the women do not know how and where to direct their efforts. Also most of the times when these women want to protest against the disappearances, they are discouraged not to do so by their families and society at large. Another critical challenge faced by the women is that in order to get the whereabouts of the disappeared persons, they are dragged into a zone of negotiation with the perpetrators and in many cases such negotiations get reduced to certain compromises on their principles and ethics.<sup>724</sup>

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<sup>722</sup>Afsana Rashid.2011.*Widows & Half Widows: Saga of extra judicial arrests & killings in Kashmir*. New Delhi. Pharos Media. p.120.

<sup>723</sup>Ibid.

<sup>724</sup>Paul D'Souza. 2015. *Conflict of Kashmir and the Problem of Disappearance*. Economic & Political Weekly (5). p. 81.

Though such conditions put a major challenge to these women, but it is in such everyday struggles that these women create survival strategies. These narratives not only therefore transform their lives, but also have the potential to transform the conventionally held image of women thus reflecting the agency of women. According to Mc Neill and Coulson, ‘it is more likely to be the men who breakdown, seemingly unable to find sufficient flexibility or resources within themselves to make the necessary adjustments between life as it was and how it is now.’<sup>725</sup>

Similar such story of dejection is of Shahmali □ mother of five girls and two boys Shahmali’s husband used to cultivate small piece of land. Though her life was moving on, until one day her husband was killed by some unidentified gunmen in June 1995. Her husband’s killing announced an ordeal of difficulties and struggles for Shahmali. Shahmali’s financial issues cropped up, forcing her to withdraw her daughter, Safeena from the school. Safeena today supports her mother and has become just a helping hand to her in the daily household duties. When asked how she could manage to send one of her sons to school, she replies:

Ladka to fatay huae kapdoun mein bhi school ja sakta hai, ladki ko to mein aise nahin bhej sakti. [The boy can even go to the school in tatters, but I cannot send my girl to the school in torn clothes or shoes, as she is a girl]<sup>726</sup>

Shahmali is not the only one grappling with the extremities life offer to these women after their husbands go missing, the village harbors 200 such stories where the existence of such women is burdened by their perpetual tussle for survival. While women hinge, on their neighbours’ help for the basic survival needs of food and clothing, some rely on charity and many others are bereft of any support, take to begging.

Most of the widows of this village are young generally from twenty-one to forty-five. The previous life of these women drew a distinction from their present one as they used to enjoy their work, collect firewood from the nearby forests, sell it, cultivate land, engage in handicraft works. Nonetheless, their present moments are defined by harassment, grief, withdrawal from the public spaces to avoid becoming a subject of ridicule and insult. Widowhood has become their only identity, which makes them vulnerable to the social scorn, deepened by harassment. Uncertainty has engulfed them □ be it their being unsure about the next meal or their being doubtful about their husbands’ return.

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<sup>725</sup>Pearlie Mc Neill. Meg Coulson.1994. *Women’s Voices :Refugee Lives*. New South Wales. Book People. p. 20.

<sup>726</sup>Kavita Suri.2011. *Voices Unheard: Women, Conflict and Kashmir*. Gurgaon. Shubhi Publications. p.22.

Rafiqa from Dardpora, North Kashmir also grapples with uncertainty. She is the mother of two children.<sup>727</sup> Rafiqahad married Suleiman in the village around ten years ago. Suleiman, a porter, and got involved with a militant group. The army suspected Suleiman and soon Rafiqa received the news of her husband being *missing*. Months passed into years and till this day Rafiqa is not sure whether her husband is alive or not, reducing Rafiqah to a half-widow. Soon her life became patterned by hardships and misfortune. She is facing the discomfort and trouble from her in-laws as they threw her out from their house. As a half-widow Rafiqah was not entitled to the government's financial relief before seven years from the date of disappearance of her husband. And if she chose to marry someone else during these seven years that would erase her chance of getting any financial help from the administration. Left with no other option Rafiqah returned to her house and the men of the village started pestering her, harassing and making fun of her. Such situation turns out to be a double-edged sword for these women □ not only they have to bear the loss of the male member, but also the loss of the breadwinner. Alongside, such irreparable loss they have to go through demeaning experiences, where their body becomes an object of use and ridicule by security forces, militants and society at large. Surviving such intensity of odds needs a resilience of spirit. According to Wing, violence affects women from outside and inside, constituting *spirit injury* Wing speaks of Patricia Williams's concept of *murdering spirit* and explains 'a fundamental part of ourselves and our dignity is dependent upon the uncontrollable, powerful external observers who constitute society.'<sup>728</sup>

The bitter realities of their lives sometimes turn women like Rafiqaharsh and unconcerned to others so much that a feeling as basic as care, sharing of experiences start becoming concepts alien to them. Violence has destabilized their social and emotional relationships. In the course of her struggle to find the whereabouts of her husband when nothing seemed to work she also compromised sexually in order to appease people to get help. In this way sexual manipulation becomes a norm for not only Rafiqah, but many other similar widows of this village. Since being well versed with the shorter routes of the mountains of the village, these women help militants, security forces in providing directions for return of favour's such as information about their husbands, some financial help etc.

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<sup>727</sup>Manisha Sobhrajani.2014.*The Land I Dream of: The Story of Kashmiri Women*. Gurgaon. Hachette. p.91.

<sup>728</sup>A K Wing.2000.*Global Critical Race Feminism:An International Reader*.New York. New York Press.p.333.

Dardpora forms a key example amongst the many other cases of Kashmir region. There is a plethora of similar narratives of resistance against the incongruities of life in the Kashmir region, who have lost their loved ones □ fathers, brothers, husbands and sons and are left with no alternative recourse to life. Rather they have to be strong enough, not only to come out of these tragic shocks, but also abruptly have to take up to 'new roles.'<sup>729</sup> Life does not come with agreeable safe options to them rather they have to create possibilities to survive on their own and shelter their children in the challenging situations. At such junctures where one feels helpless and vulnerable, but simultaneously gears up the strength to overcome the powerlessness providing the necessary condition for locating agency. They not only face political and social turbulence, but also negotiate their roles by breaking the dominant stereotypes and eventually building up new roles.

While narrating the discourses of women in the Kashmir region, Hajra Banu makes an important case emphasizing the resolve of women to fight against odds. Hajira resides in Wanigam, Bandipora, North Kashmir, scarcely has any money, leaves her house once in every month for the sit-in protest organized by APDP. Hajra lost her four sons during these years of political unrest □ three were killed and one has disappeared. While reflecting on her past, Hajra reminisces her happy memories with her four sons. The widow wails saying:

I wish to dig a grave for myself; at least that would relieve me from the perplexed situation.<sup>730</sup>

Hajra, who is living by herself unaided and unassisted, barely affords a meal once in a day. Her health is critical, but due to her appalling poverty she is unable to buy medicines. However, what needs to be mentioned is that despite the odds, Hajra's story offers a difficult choice for her reader to reduce her to a victim. In spite of all the troubles Hajra today has not given up, she is yet to surrender to the pressures of life. Hajra has single handedly filed a case in SHRC. The dilemma of whether she is going to win the case or not but despite vacillation of doubts she is resolute enough to fight for justice and pledges:

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<sup>729</sup>Rita Manchanda.2005.*Women's Agency in Peace Building: Gender Relations in Post-Conflict Reconstruction*. Economic and Political Weekly. 40(44/45). p. 4739.

<sup>730</sup>Afsana Rashid. 2011. *Widows & Half Widows: Saga of extra judicial arrests & killings in Kashmir*. New Delhi. Pharos Media. p. 62.

For the last so many years I am approaching SHRC to seek justice but till date my efforts have borne no fruits. There is no one except Almighty who might come to my rescue. I will fight till my last breath.<sup>731</sup>

Most of these half-widows are not able to get their compensations. Left with no male member these women in most of the cases are abandoned by their in-laws and families. They step out of their houses to search not only their husbands, but also to look for a source to survive and support their families. The modes of survival are related to working outside the home. An unending wait for their male members and the bleak provisions of aid leave the half-widows in a zone of uncertainty. They have been fighting against all kinds of injustice and thus suffering from stress disorders too.

### **Summaiya**

Violence is always local rather than generic, and these local people live in a mortal fear all the time due to uncertainty in their private and public space in the form of mid-night knock at the door, arrest, detention, disappearance, torture and death. The dynamics of violence against men and their innocent children is reflected in the discourse of Summaiya, as the violence was unleashed against her father in the presence as well as the absence of the family members. It was the month of December in 2019 when I reached Sopore (North Kashmir) and met her. Summaiya is 28 years old and has three sisters, Shayista, Sameena and Sumaira and one brother Zamaan. She is the eldest and narrates her story from the year 2019, which forms the reference point for Summaiya and her family for the rest of their lives:

My father was a businessman. It was 16 October 2009, when in the late evening army cordoned our village, as there was a militant hiding in our neighbor's house. However, the militant had managed to escape and no killing took place. But while searching for the militant the army entered our house and all of us were ordered to come out of our houses on the ground. I realized that our father was not with us. We assumed that he might have already left but did not find him anywhere on the ground. That is when we realized that he was stuck in the house. My father was a very sensitive and caring man and was so frightened that he could not move out from the house. They caught hold of my father and tortured him while we were standing helplessly outside on the ground. He was kept in the

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<sup>731</sup>Ibid.p.64.

house for the whole night and he was tortured by bringing his head closer into the fridge and hit on it multiple times. After this he was taken to Sopore jail where he was kept for two months. Then shifted to Udhampur jail under the Public Safety Act (PSA)<sup>732</sup> from March 2010 to November 2010. He was told in the jail at Udhampur that in another encounter they had killed his whole family along with his only son, did unjust things to his daughters, wife and killed them all. He was not able to bear this level of mental torture apart from the physical torture he faced there. He was released from Udhampur Jail in November 2010. Things started deteriorating fast for us! When we met him in the November of 2010, he did not recognize us! Nobody! not even me. He perhaps had lost his memory. He could not differentiate between past and present. My father was a man without memory. *Su ous khoutschaan*. (He would get scared easily). He however did remember things especially the torture he faced in the jail. He didn't lose his memory completely. He however never recognized us. He only talked to himself. He would keep repeating , *Mai maerikh shuir beghunah, mai maerikh khaandarin begunah*. (They killed my innocent children, they killed my innocent wife) Unkay bus yehi alfaz hotay the. (That's all he would say). We were in front of him all the time, yet he believed we were dead. You see this is painful! He was living with us, but to him we were all strangers. He never talked to us, or even thought about us. We were nothing for him. You can say a nobody! Yes, we were nobody to him. *Su ous damphit gomuth*. (He had become silent). You should have seen how much he used to love us and care for us. I had never seen as caring a person like my father. But he was a changed man now, we could see that. It was painful. He was a scared man , scared of everything after he came back from the jail. You know how jails in Kashmir operate. After his release whenever he would listen to the sound of a vehicle, it would remind him of the army trucks that came that day. Any sound of vehicle terrify him and he would repeatedly say, *aekya aai, mai nin win raetih* (they (army) have come, they will now take me with them). He had received severe blows on his head during the torture. Soon her

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<sup>732</sup>Public Safety Act is a preventive detention law which allows the State government to detain a person up to two years, without a trial. In police custody, a person who is detained is to be produced before a magistrate within twenty four hours of the detention. But the Public Safety Act allows the police to hold a person without producing him/her in the court. The person is detained to prevent him/her from acting harmfully against the security of the state or the maintenance of the public order. The person detained under PSA has limited rights. PSA was introduced by Sheikh Abdullah in the state in 1978. However, he had introduced it to prevent timber smuggling, and to keep the smugglers in prison.

father got paralyzed and ultimately died in 2014, when he was only 48 years old. This left the entire responsibility of the family on me (Summaiya) and I had to leave the school after 12<sup>th</sup>. Although my father was very fond of seeing us studying. When we were in school he used to help us in our studies at home. I had learnt tailoring and it helped me in getting a job at the local boutique, which fetched me 800 rupees per month and helps my brother Zamaan financially in completing his engineering.

Analyzing Kashmiri women's voices leads us to focus on their priorities for survival, because these voices are primarily and at once personal and subjective. Summaiya's story reflects the *spirit injury*, sacrifice, pain, loss, courage and patience. Summaiya survived the difficult periods of her life, creating a space of her own agency. In this context Nadera says, 'Thus external violence is inevitably reflected in the social and even more so in the personal spheres.'<sup>733</sup> According to William, 'The spirit injury becomes as devastating, as costly and as psychologically obliterating as robbery or assault.'<sup>734</sup>

In December 2018 during my fieldwork I met Tasleema, 37 in the district Baramullah (North Kashmir), whose husband Sheikh Altaf was working as a paramedic in the government hospital at Sopore. One day while returning home after his working hours at the hospital, some masked men fired at him on the roadside. He died there and then only and left his wife and three children. It was assumed that Sheikh Altaf was the sympathizer of separatists, which became the reason of his killing. After a great struggle his wife Tasleema got the job in her husband's place under the government SRO.<sup>735</sup> She says, 'Today I work among these men, who generally pass comments on me and make me feel miserable. When one has a husband, then men in the society look at you with respect, but when one has lost one's husband, their way of looking at that woman changes.' In a similar context Wing speaks of Patricia Williams's concept of *murdering spirit* that, 'a fundamental part of ourselves and our dignity is dependent upon the uncontrollable, powerful external observers who constitute society.'<sup>736</sup> Thus violence reflects patriarchal implications; it is never surprising that societal customs are generally structured as an instrument to maintain the existing divisions of power in gendered relations. Tasleema adds, 'I had very good relations with my husband and

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<sup>733</sup>Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian.2009. *Militarization and Violence against Women in Conflict Zones in the Middle East*. United Kingdom. Cambridge University Press.p.69.

<sup>734</sup>Patricia Williams. 1999. *Inflecting Critical Race Theory*. Feminist Legal Studies.7(2). pp.111-132.

<sup>735</sup>Statutory rules ordinance. Under SRO state government after taking cabinet decisions, issues fresh orders on any subject, which is of crucial importance and is in the interest of state.

<sup>736</sup>A K Wing.2000.*Global Critical Race Feminism :An International Reader*.New York. New York Press.p.333.



now I feel lonely and everything at the hospital reminds me of my husband. Besides, I run out of money as my children □ Ather Altaf, 10 (son) and two daughters, Shabnam Altaf, 15, and Shayista Altaf, 12 are pursuing education and their expenses are increasing which are not met by my meager salary.’ In rural areas of Kashmir region women are primarily seen as dutiful wives, mothers and daughters, in the absence of her husband, Tasleema has had to become sole breadwinner for her family. Thus Tasleema as an active and independent woman *deviated* from social expectations and this in turn raised the level of contempt against Tasleema. According to Nadera violence ‘can have the opposite effect; it can empower and turn women into creatures of survival strategies . . . as such women become more than passive recipients of violence.’<sup>737</sup>

Bhutalia in the context of partition has related the fact through an interview that he (interviewee) and his brother killed seventeen members of their families mostly women to guard the purity of their religion and culture. It was out of the fear that their women might be raped and may also be impregnated and that is the reason which compelled him to kill them as if their lives were disposable.<sup>738</sup> The challenge is not the only political and social context that activates violence against women; the concepts of virginity and perceptions of women’s sexuality are not confined to patriarchal or familial power, but exceed and occupy a much larger social sphere. The testimony presented by Bhutalia reflects the voices that inscribe the very body from which they arise. According to Massey, space comprises social relations and spaces manifested with meaning become places □ places are like containers within which social process transpire.<sup>739</sup> In the words of Graham and Regulska, ‘the project of reconstituting the political must look to the behavior and attitudes of women to discover what has meaning and what works for them.’<sup>740</sup> so that the need for self definition and autonomy of women is not ignored.

The other forms of violence include custodial deaths of militants and civilians, random arrests of young boys, illegal detentions, unprovoked and indiscriminate shooting, selective killings, dangerous beating irrespective of age and sex, retaliation killings, fake encounters, massacres, night raid, siege and search operations in which neighborhoods are cordoned off and ransacking

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<sup>737</sup>Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian.2009. *Militarization and Violence against Women in Conflict Zones in the Middle East*. United Kingdom. Cambridge University Press.p.70.

<sup>738</sup>Urvashi Bhutalia.1997.*A Question of Silence: Partition, Women and the State* In Gender and Catastrophe. edited by L Ronit. London. Zed Books. pp.92-109.

<sup>739</sup>Doreen Massey.1995.*The Conceptualization of Place* In *A Place in the World.?* edited by Doreen Massey. Pat Jess.New York. Oxford University Press.pp.45-86.

<sup>740</sup>Ann Graham.Regulska Joanna. 1997. *Expanding Political Space for Women in Poland: An Analysis of Three Communities*.Communist and Post-Communist Studies. 30(1). 30. pp.65-82.

the house during search operations. According to Jammu and Kashmir Human Rights awareness and documentation centre, more than 2000 people till 1994 have become the victims of custodial deaths. The bodies of the victims bore multiple torture marks in addition to one or more bullet marks. The dead bodies of these victims are thrown into the rivers, lakes and roadsides. This is what has happened to a famous lawyer and Human Rights Activist, Jaleel Andrabi who was picked up on 8 March, 1996 in broad day light in presence of his wife Rifat while traveling back home in their car. When approached by his wife, who is also a lawyer, for permission to meet her husband, she was refused that her husband Jaleel Andrabi has been picked up. The Kashmir Bar Association approached the court, which directed the Police to receive the FIR. The security forces submitted an affidavit to the court wherein they denied the knowledge of the whereabouts of Andrabi. Afterwards, as the case progressed through several stages it was established that Major Avtar Singh was involved in kidnapping and murdering Andrabi and finally his decomposed body was found floating on the waters of Jhelum river on 27 March, 1996. The custodial death of Jaleel Andrabi brought a shock around the world. The United Nations High Commissioner of Human Rights in April 1996 advocated the Indian Government to conduct a thorough investigation to establish the facts and impose sanctions on the guilty.<sup>741</sup> Jaleel Andrabi's custodial death provides an insight for similar forms of violence in Kashmir region.

Similarly Syed Basharat Ahmad Shah was picked and apprehended by the CRPF 50 Bn on 12<sup>th</sup> October 1990 at Warapora Road, District Baramullah, (North Kashmir) and his whereabouts are not known till date. The district magistrate conducted the enquiry and brought the report on record:

From the very fact that 50 Bn CRPF was given a number of occasions/ chances right up from the date proceedings were started by me i.e., 27-08-1991 till 28-08-1992 to produce the then commandant/ deputy commandant before me for establishing facts of the case and that the said Battalion did not produce these officers and that only in March 1992 they informed that these officers have retired/ are in the process of proceeding on retirement, clearly indicates that they are not interested in finalization of the findings. The present commandant of the said Battalion had vide his letter No. J11-1/91-92-50 dated 28-04-1992 given in writing that Sri. K S Pandey and Sri. Kewal Krishna, the then commandant/deputy commandant respectively have already been retired from CRPF services. Had the

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<sup>741</sup>Catch and Kill Report A report extra judicial executions in Kashmir. Vol. 03. pp.31-35.

concerned CRPF Personnel been keen to finalize the findings they could have produced these officers well before their retirement because much led time was given to them.<sup>742</sup>

Besides, there are horrific stories of sexual torture in various forms against adolescent boys and adult men, although limited research has been carried out on sexual violence against men in the Kashmir region. Sivakumaran argues in this context that sexual violence against men and boys has been recognized as ‘regular and unexceptional, pervasive and widespread.’<sup>743</sup> And several hurdles hinder men and boys from accessing the medical care due to many reasons including culture-specific reasons like social stigma, shame etc According to Oosterhoff and Zwanikken, most of the men and boys find it difficult to verbalize it as *sexual violence*, instead they prefer to use the word *abuse*, because sexual violence is generally understood only in the context of women and girls.<sup>744</sup> This is what has been happening in Kashmir region as well, where male prisoners/ detainees face sexual torture to damage their sense of manhood or *hegemonic masculinity*. These forms of humiliation carry in them strong symbolic meanings of gender dynamics.<sup>745</sup> Since men generally refuse to document their sexual violence, lest may be mocked as *effeminate*. In this context Sivakumaran writes, ‘men also may be loathed to talk about being victimized, considering this incompatible with their masculinity, particularly in societies in which men are discouraged from talking about their emotions.’<sup>746</sup>

The centrality of the previous reports was on specific violations like rape, forced disappearances, illegal detentions and torture. According to Human Rights Watch, 2006 report titled *Everyone Lives in Fear*, not only violations but also the fear of violations traumatizes the day-to-day life of common Kashmiris :

Suspicion and fear continue to permeate the Kashmir Valley. A knock on the door late at night sends spasms of anxiety through households afraid that a family member will be asked by the security forces or militants to step outside for “a minute” and then never

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<sup>742</sup>Ibid.p.45.

<sup>743</sup>Sandesh Sivakumaran. 2007.*Sexual Violence against men in Armed Conflict*. European Journal of International Law. 18(2). p.253-276. Cited In Sarah K Chynoweth, Julie Freccero . Heleen Touquet. 2017.*Sexual Violence against Men and Boys in Conflict and forced displacement: implications for the health sector*. Reproductive Health Matters:An international journal on sexual and reproductive health and rights.Taylor and Francis Group.p.2.

<sup>744</sup>Ibid. p.92.

<sup>745</sup>United Nations.2002.*Women, Peace and Security*.United Nations Publication.

<sup>746</sup>Sandesh Sivakumaran.2007.*Sexual Violence against men in Armed Conflict*. European Journal of International Law.18 (2) p.255.

return. . . Psychological trauma related to the violence has been enormous, as life itself is constantly under threat.<sup>747</sup>

Kashmiris are traumatized not only by violence, but also by the lack of accountability. As one of the Kashmiri commentator argued, that psychological wounds were produced by not only violence, but also by patterns of impunity.<sup>748</sup> Similarly, in 2010 a National Indian Human rights organization, the Human Rights Law Network, which has a branch in Srinagar, convened an Independent People’s Tribunal on Human Rights violations in the Kashmir region at the Broadway hotel in Central Srinagar. The victims of violence across the region gathered during the two-day event and gave heart wrenching testimonies regarding their near ones who had disappeared, cases of custodial torture, ill treatment and rape. The testimonies reflected the paradox that human rights discourses implicitly narrate the nature of civilized and uncivilized, savagery and rationality as essential binaries of debates on human rights and social justice. The published report of the proceedings on human rights violations in Kashmir in 2010 explained how victims of violence had been ‘socially discriminated and ostracized, landing them into a traumatic state of mind that has been permanent.’The report denounced the act of rape and its subsequent psychological outcomes reflected by trauma, which forms the language of suffering.

A field survey was conducted in the Kashmir region. The aim of the survey was to find out whom do the people of the region hold responsible for the outbreak of violence. The options given to the respondents included : political parties, the state government, the central government, security forces, external powers, separatist organizations or other organizations. The villages within the districts were categorized as highest affected by the conflict (HCA) and least conflict affected (LCA).

	HCA	LCA
Political Parties	47.2	62
State Government	56	74
Central Government	44	63
External Powers	52.1	57.4

<sup>747</sup>Human Rights Watch .*Everyone Lives in Fear*.Report 18(11).September 2006.

<sup>748</sup>Syed Junaid Hashmi.*Trauma of Daily Violence in Jammu and Kashmir Telling Upon Mental Health*. Counter Currents . 20 June 2007.

Security Forces	50.3	59
Militant Groups	32	23 <sup>749</sup>

322 respondents in both LCA and HCA held accountable the political institutions : political parties, state government and central government for the eruption of violence in Kashmir region. The highest number of interviewees in the LCA and HCA in Kashmir said that the state government is responsible for violence. However, lower number of people in Kashmir hold the separatists and the militant groups responsible. Chandoke in context of the survey writes:

When asked why these institutions were responsible , the answers ranged from corruption of all three institutions, failure to meet basic needs in the case of the state government, and failure to respect identity in case of the central government . . . . Almost majority opinion is that they (all three institutions) have exploited the conflict for political and economic gains.<sup>750</sup>

## Conclusion

The ambitions of power produced unforeseen events like violence in the Kashmir region. Ned Lebow elucidates in this context that what politicians aim for turns out different from the outcome. In 1986 Rajiv Gandhi and Farooq Abdullah formulated an alliance as two major parties, which hampered the democratic competition and democratic ethos in the region. Their aim was political power, but the outcome was separatism and violence. There is no clear evidence which can determine that violence is only connected to low economic productivity or under development of the region. The cultural factors are generally neutral and do not produce violence rather Muslims and Pandits have collectively defined Kashmiri culture on the basis of Kashmiri heritage of Rishis and Sufis. Thus, there are other factors responsible for the rise of violence. According to Schofield the Muslim population in the Kashmir region has been alienated which turned into bitterness and anger. Linz's argument is that crisis is the outcome of inefficient and ineffective governments, who undermine the legitimacy of democracy. The violent uprising encompasses a phase when

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<sup>749</sup>Neera Chandoke.2010.*Of Social Contracts: The Case of Kashmir*. In *Identity Politics in Jammu and Kashmir*. edited by Rekha Chowdhary. New Delhi. Vitasta Publishing. pp.73-74.

<sup>750</sup>Ibid.p.74.

MUF leaders upheld the democratic structure but they were undermined through various ways by the coalition leaders and the same group paradoxically became 'disloyal to the democratic framework'. The out come was political turbulence and violence with grave implications.

## Conclusion

The thesis in the beginning focused on understanding the historical background when in 1930s the National Conference emerged after Islamist groups had broken apart with Sheikh Abdullah, and who (Islamist groups) afterwards did not prove successful in terms of their voter turnout in democratic elections. The second interesting factor of the historical background is that in 1930s there was a single regional political party, National Conference in Kashmir and in spite of the periods of turbulence more regional parties emerged over the years. When democracy was introduced in 1977 as discussed in chapter four, the National Conference was the most popular party in the region and the Congress (I) was the main opposition. The thesis explores that the separatists did not get the support when democracy was functioning well during the mid 1970s to early 1980s. The political environment was secular and this secular politics co-existed with democracy and also resulted in ethnic peace despite lingual and religious diversity in Jammu and Kashmir. There was no discontent among the people rather people's sentiments inside the region valued the democracy, which implicitly helped the integration of the Kashmir region and nation-building process in India. The political parties did not polarize on the basis of religion rather compromised and co-operated. It supports Horowitz's definition that the ethnic parties do not normally polarize as per religious allegiance. Instead they even manage to co-operate as is true in 1981-82 local bodies election when the National Conference supported the Bhartya Janata Party (BJP) in the Jammu region. After the death of Sheikh Abdullah, Farooq Abdullah took over as the Chief Minister of the state. At this moment in time people's sentiments in the region were still in favour of the peaceful democratic development, but the institutional structures within the state were weak in combination with a state-centre conflict, which had begun as early as in 1983, and made the newly introduced democracy vulnerable. The party was internally fractured, torn by internal rivalry and under attack from external pressures especially G.M Shah (brother-in-law) of Farooq Abdullah and D.D Thakur were set on splitting the party within as corroborated in the thesis. The arbitrary dismissal of Farooq Abdullah and his popularly elected government in 1984 was considered a breach of democratic standards, caused a disdain among the masses and brought a blow to the consolidation of democracy. The hope for continuation of democracy was slowly dissipated over the following five years. And as the political intervention from the centre increased

and the strength of the National Conference declined, the incentive to resort to violence started to build up. It seems that the rise of separatism has been initiated during the years of declining democracy within the institutions and the leadership inefficiency to handle the pressure of intervention from the central government. The Governor's and President's rule from 1986-1987 also offered space to the separatists to eventually gain the strength. Farooq Abdullah inferred the conclusion that to stay in power it was important to secure the faith of the government at the centre and the people's mandate was not decisive. This prompted him to form an alliance with the ruling Congress party at the centre before the election, which led to Farooq Abdullah's popularity to the *lowest ebb* and paved the way for the entry of the Muslim United Front (MUF) in the electoral space to represent the aspirations of the masses of the region. This kind of alliance discussed as *election cartel* in the thesis did not depict any respect for democratic ethos, because it is by dint of competition between the parties that democracy thrives and this was ignored by the alliance between the two major parties. According to Neera Chandhoke:

The causes for the outbreak of violence in Kashmir do not belong to the sphere of 'happenstance', (but) are produced through political acts as much they are resolved through political acts. The reasons for the outbreak of militancy have to be looked for in the failure of political institutions in Kashmir. . . . The main reasons for political discontent and resort to violence in Kashmir has to do with repeated infringement . . . by the central government, acting often in tandem with the state government. This has been accompanied by the insistent erosion of the democratic space which permits articulation of political discontent . . . Therefore, dissatisfied groups had little option but to resort to the use of violence.<sup>751</sup>

Many observers have stated that the elections for the State Assembly in 1987 was a critical turning point, as at this juncture fair democratic process still had a chance to satisfy the discontent among the masses of the region, which was obstructed by the decision of the National Conference and the Congress (I), who apprehended that the coalition was not sufficient for absolute victory. Thus, elections were plagued by fraudulent methods and the objective of the political elite was to grab certain vote banks by any available means, which itself indicates that they could not rely on party structures to gain the goals. Besides, the party resorted to the various forms of violation including disqualification of opponents on insubstantial grounds, kidnapping of opposition candidates,

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<sup>751</sup>Neera Chandhoke.2010.*Of Social Contracts: The Case of Kashmir*. In *Identity Politics in Jammu and Kashmir*.edited by Rekha Chowdhary. New Delhi.Vitasta Publishing .pp.62-63.



beatings, harassment, threatening the voters and tampering with the ballot boxes. The political accusations of the candidates from the political opposition were ignored. The institutions like the Election Commission, High Court and Police did not act as independent institutions rather as a subordinate department of the National Conference. These irregularities and hostilities culminated in the rise of separatism and subsequent rise of violence in the region. Besides, the Accord with Rajiv Gandhi dispossessed Farooq Abdullah of his father's role as a Kashmiri loyalist, and isolated parties like the MUF created a power vacuum in the region. It is to be reiterated that Linz argues that political actors, their capacities and their formation of political demands are the crucial variables from political perspective, which undermined the democratic legitimacy and resulted in the breakdown of democracy. 'The indifference to election malpractices on gigantic scale has given birth to gruesome terrorism'<sup>752</sup> and as discussed in the thesis Whitehead argues that it was the anger over the flawed elections for which Kashmir is still paying the price. The ambitions of power produced unforeseen events like rise of violence. The separatism was not determined by the historical background or ethnic or religious factors. The ethnic and religious factors worked as a vehicle for political mobilization from time to time especially during election campaign and not as a cause of separatism and violence. 'Kashmiriyat' as a cultural prerequisite did not produce violence although it was maneuvered by attributing different meanings to it in order to suit the political goals. Though weak socioeconomic conditions added to the rise of violence, but there is no obvious evidence which can reflect that violence was only connected to low economic productivity, as substantiated in the thesis. There are no indicators which can show that the Kashmir region has economically suffered more in comparison to other states in the country. However, in this direction Samuel Huntington reveals that political instability arises in societies from the breakdown of democratic institutions to cope with rapid economic growth and social change. He further argues that literacy, education, urbanization and media exposure enhance aspirations and if those aspirations are not fulfilled, can galvanize people into politics. Huntington's argument that impartial and functional democratic institutions are very important for political peace especially in current times when people have media exposure and political awareness. Pasha also refers almost to the same causes □ lack of employment opportunities and limitations on democratic expressions are responsible for militancy in the Kashmir region. The increase in education brought

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<sup>752</sup>Birbal Nath.1998. *Kashmir :The Nuclear Flashpoint*. New Delhi. Manhas Publications. p. 131-132.

political awareness and caused reaction during the 1980s against the decline of democracy than for example in 1950s or the 1960s, when democracy was absent as recounted in chapter four.

The separatist forces can always be present in a functioning democracy, but the evidence suggests that they did not attract support as long as democratic institutions remained functional and stable as already discussed and substantiated through various sources in chapter five. The 1987 election was the trigger for rise of violence. It seems that the justification for rise in violence cannot be inferred from religious fundamentalism. The elections had been corrupted and channels for exit and voice were closed. And according to Hirschman, the system becomes unstable when both avenues are closed. The university graduates who had campaigned for the MUF in the 1987 elections turned militants and after the post-1987 period they disturbed the everyday life by damaging the bridges, schools, shops, and government buildings. They engaged with the security forces, which resulted in the loss of civilians during the retaliation, thus further alienating the population from the government and security forces. There was a chaotic atmosphere across the region and non state actors scrambled through situations without having a clear perspective towards pursuing the goal. Concomitantly, the rise of violence left the imprints in terms of grave implications. And one of the major and grave implications is the exodus of the Kashmiri Pandits as the victims of violence described and analyzed in chapter five through different discourses. Their displacement and sense of identity are painful and at the same time there remains an intricate question borne by violence regarding the concept of 'Kashmiriyat' □ absence of syncretic culture, pluralism, tolerant fabric of the society and the sociopolitical diversity, which have developed a deep void in the society. Similarly, the rise of violence has pushed back the space for women in the region and put them in a disadvantageous position. The numerous cases of rapes and molestation have taken place because of the security forces as well as the militants. The threat of sexual violence pervades due to the military presence across the region. The disappearance cases have hollowed the lives of their mothers, wives and children. They experience mixed feelings whether the men of their households are dead or alive. In this way violence has destabilized their emotional and social relationships. The thesis analyzes the dynamics of gender violence through women's narratives and thereby elucidates the sociopolitical spaces of women especially from the perspective of competing patriarchy from the community as well as the state. Although the rationale dynamics behind the narratives is complex between what is spoken and unspoken, what

is heard and what is witnessed, but the truth of violence can be understood between the lines of the narratives.

The late 1980s and early 1990s was the period in the region when mainstream political leaders were not present on the political scenario and were hesitant to test the political waters inside the region. Nonetheless, elections were conducted during 1996 not with much democratic credibility and it became difficult for the government to change the people's perspective from separatists to mainstream political perspective, because people had not forgotten the memories of 1987 elections in terms of the lack of democratic credibility, which had damaged the aspirations and the confidence of the majority of the people. The thesis analyses the subsequent Assembly Elections held in 2002, 2008, 2014—the voter turnout of these elections reflected the political environment of the region and the parties elected accordingly, which led to hung assemblies and coalition governments. It is to be mentioned that the National Conference maintained its position as the hegemonic ruling party till 1999, when the People's Democratic Party (PDP) emerged as another regional political party in Kashmir, which helped in making the democratic space impartial. Besides, 2002 elections provided important insights into the political psyche of the people by the *healing touch* policy of the PDP. The election is seen as a reversal of 1987 Assembly Elections, which had eroded democratic fabric and had become a catalyst for extension of separatist politics. Nonetheless, the new opportunities came forth with new challenges of governance on the basis of ideological differences between the two coalition partners and consequently the aspirations of the corresponding regional constituencies could not be fulfilled.

The Land Reforms of the 1950s leads an observer to ask why land reforms did not create legitimacy and stability in the region during the rule of Sheikh Abdullah. These land reforms led to a redistribution of 230,000 acres of the land in the years up to 1953, which doubtlessly provided legitimacy to Sheikh Abdullah's rule. It could have lend stability and legitimacy to the central government, but was possibly lost when Sheikh Abdullah was imprisoned soon after the land reforms in 1953. Another explanation for the democratic legitimacy and integration of Kashmir region with the Union of India is the hampering of popular democratic culture by the National Conference. Besides, from the perspective of Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi nation-building and democracy are considered incompatible goals for a vulnerable border state like Jammu and Kashmir. And political opposition was perceived as an impediment to integration, and nation-building had to be prioritized over democratization in view of the Congress party. In this context

as discussed in the thesis political writers like Balraj Puri has offered crucial analysis that the process of nation-building and democracy are per-requisite for integration and national unity, which had started with *free and fair* elections in Jammu and Kashmir. In a similar context Robert Dahl argues that democracy is a key component in the nation building process and Puri's analysis seems to support this claim.

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