

**DEVELOPMENT OF PERSIAN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES
UPTO 1420 AD.**

The Iranian and Indian Civilization, one of the earliest and creative civilizations have played a vital and dynamic role in the formation and shaping of the world history. Their cultural heritage are very rich and luminous. As powerful civilization they had contacts with and influenced the other world civilizations of the earliest times.

The relations between these two civilized countries are very old and both had close affinity since Vedic Avesthan time. From the ancient past their mutual endeavour in respect of trade and commerce is widely known. The political relations between the Iran and India and the exchange of ideas and Culture between the two nations is not hidden. In short there are probably only a few nations in the world whose cultural, political and commercial ties are as entrancing and lasting as that of Iran and India.

Till the end of 16th Century, Kashmir had played a vital role as an independt and a powerful dominion in the Indian sub-continent. It has its separate identity. Kashmir which is known as Iran-i-Sagir (little Iran) had its relations and contacts with Iran and other Central Asian States. Kashmiri Culture is also one of the earliest cultures of the world the links between the two Civilizations are very old. Besides political and cultural ties, there was a free trade links between Iran and Kashmir. There is an

evidence of presence of an Iranian jeweler seller in the Court of Raja Sunder of Kashmir.

After the advent of Islam in the 14th Century in Kashmir, the Iranians played a very authentic and dynamic role in the formation, shape and establishment of Islamic Culture in Kashmir. It gave birth to the various religio-philosophical, Socia-Cultural and literary movements.

M.A. Stein has rightly said that "Islam made its way into Kashmir not by forcible conquest but by the Gradual Conversion for which influx of foreign adventures both from South and Central Asia had prepared the ground".

The Iranian scholars, saints and traders influenced and played a role in the transformation of Polytheistic Kashmir into Islamic Kashmir. The change of religion changed the entire horizon of Kashmir, its culture, history, language and way of living. The Iranians played a Pivotal role in the transformation of Kashmiri culture, idea and thought. Persian language was the basic source and the mechanism behind these changes. The introduction and establishment of Iranian culture in Kashmir changed the entire ethos of this region through the establishment of Iranian industries art and architecture, literature, literary symbols and mythology.

Kashmir history reveals that a powerful King of Kashmir Lalitadatya (694-736 AD) invaded Kabul, Herat, Khurasan, Bukhara, Samarqand and Tashkant etc., which became gradually the Centre for Persian learning and literature. During the Lalitadatya invasion to Iran and Turkistan he brought some men of learning and artisan with him to Kashmir, where they came in close contact with the people of Kashmir and exchanged their views and ideas. Raja Awanti Verman, Raja Jiya paida and Raja Shemkar Verman are also among those powerful rulers of Kashmir who invaded Khurasan. The main Centre of Avesta, Pehlvi and Persian language.

Sultan Mehmood Ghaznavi, a powerful king of a vast land of Persian speaking belt, invaded India several times. It is believed

that he came upto the borders of Kashmir. According to one account Sultan Mahmood had visited the Kashmir and stayed there for a short span of time. Farukhi Sistani, a court poet at Sultan Mahmood in the following Persian couplets shows desire of Sultan Mahmood to invade the Kashmir.

With these political interferences and designs, it is quite evident that people from both the regions visited each other land where they interacted with one another.

During the reign of Raja Shahdeva (705-24 AD) some foreign noblemen entered into Kashmir. Among their Shah Mirza bin Tahir Shah and Rinchan were the prominent. Rinchan hailed from Ladakh and Ram Chandran, the Minister of Raja, bestowed upon him an assignment in Kashmir. Rinchan was a wise and came in close contacts with other Kashmiri nobles. Due to his capability he succeeded in ascending the throne of Kashmir. Rinchan was basically a budhist but later accepted Islam at the hands of Syed Sharf-ud-Din bul Bul Shah (D. 727 AH). Bulbul Shah hailed from Turkistan and visited Kashmir twice. It is said that when the first meeting between the Bulbul Shah and Rinchan Shah took place the ideas and views shared by each other was transacted by a person whose name could not be ascertain.

Shah Mirza bin Tahir Shah came to Kashmir alongwith his family members from a Persian speaking belt known as Sawat Kumar or Kumar Sawat. Ramchandra also provided him an assignment in Kashmir. According to some historians his line-age is associated with the Arjun Dev Pandev, while the others is of the opinion that he belongs to the family of Ali Gushtasp.

Shah Mirza remained in close and constant touch with the last Hindu rulers of Kashmir. He was a capable man and with his capability he managed to hold his position as a noble man of Kashmir. He happens to be the tutor of Rinchan Shah's son Ralder. Shah Mirza ascended the throne of Kashmir with the name of sultan Shamsud-din Shah Mir in the year 1339 AD. His rule lasted for three years and five months. In this short span of time

there is no evidence –regarding the Persian language and literature. But the Shahmir introduced a new Islamic Calendar which starts from the reign of Rinchan Shah. The calendar was in existence upto the end of the Mughal Empire in Kashmir. However, this Calendar was followed till recent years in the villages of Kashmir.

Sultan Jamsheed and Sultan Alaud-Din the sons of Shahmir ascended the throne of Kashmir respectively – As per the statement of Kashmiri historian peer Ghulam Hassan Shah, during the reign of Sultan Alaud-Din a saint whose name is stated as Syed Jalalud-Din Jehanian Jehangird arrived in Kashmir and after his short visit he returned back to his homeland.

Sultan Shihabud-Din was a capable and powerful king of the Shalmiri dynasty. Due to his courage and wit he conquered besides India, Afghanistan and some parts of Central Asia. Among the prominent areas which he invaded are the Kabul, Ghaznah, Qandhar, Gilgit, Ladakh, Baltistan, Sindh etc. Joon Raja the historian, has made an account of sultan Shihabud-Din's invasions so nicely and vividly. According to writer of Hashmat-i-Kashmir, during the reign of Sultan Shihabud-Din many saints, men of learning, Calligraphists, artisians settled in Kashmir.

It is quite evident that during the reign of Sultan Shihabud-Din, on the instigation of Mir Syed Ali Hamadani some prominent Syeds namely Syed Tajud-Din, Syed Hussain Simnani, Syed Hassan Bahadur and Syed Haider came to Kashmir. They were very warmly received by Sultan Shihabud-Din, who bestowed upon the assignments in Kashmir.

The distinguished Syed Tajud-Din had a complete hold on the astrology and other sciences. He holds a high position in the mysticism and was a guide Kubreviya order. According to the writer of Tazkirat-ul-Arifeen, Syed Tajud-Din wrote a treatise on the truth of Islam namely 'Siraj'. Mir Syed Haider, the nephew or sisters son of Mir Syed Ali Hamdani wrote two books in Persian on the truth of Islam namely Nafhat-ul-Irfan and Hidayat-ul-Mustarshideen.

Mulla Ahmad Allama, is said to have been the disciple of Syed Sharfud-Din Bulbul Shah. It is believed that he was alive during the reign of Sultan Shihabud-Din. He was first Sheikhul Islam of Kashmir. He wrote two books in Persian language namely *ratwai-Shahabi* and *Shahabi Saqib*.

After the death of Sultan Shihabud-Din Sultan Qutubud-Din ascended the throne of Kashmir in 1372 AD. During his reign many religious leaders and great Sufi came to Kashmir from Iran. Sultan established a college – Peer Haji Mohammad Qari appointed as its Principal.

Sultan Qutubud-Din was himself fond of learning and poetry. According to the writer of *Waqat-i-Kashmir*, the Sultan was a poet. Dr. Sofi is also of the opinion that the Sultan Qutubud-Din was a great poet and his nom de plume was Qutub. But the author has not mentioned any of his verses. Noorud-Din Jaffer Badakhshi, a disciple of Shah Hamadan, has attributed the following to the Sultan which he wrote in praise of Shsh Hamadan.

During the reign of Sultan Qutubud-Din, Meer Syed Ali Hamadani, best known as Shah Hamadan came to Kashmir along with his seven hundred companions and disciples. Syed Mohammad Khavri a companion of Shah Hamdan, in the following couplets, lauds the role of Shah Hamdan, welcomes his advent to Kashmir and mentions the date of his arrival:

Mir Syed Ali Hamadani was a great religious leader. Preacher, renowned saint and an eminent scholar of his age. He was a man of learning and a poet too. Shah Hamadan wrote more than one hundred books in Arabic and Persian. Sheikh Abdul Wahab Noori is of the opinion that Mir Sled Ali Hamdani wrote one hundred and seventeen books. Dr. Syeda Ashraf Zafar provides a list of 83 books, out of which 20 are in Arabic and the rest 63 in Persian. The main subject of books of Mir Syed Ali Hamdani is art of Government, logic, philosophy, moral science, mysticism, religion of Islam and medicine etc.

Shah Hamadan was a well known poet also. He wrote his poetry under the pen name Ali and Alvi. His poetry is full of mystic and pious ideas and views. 'Chihal Asrar' is the collection of such mystic poetry. It begins with the verse.

In making concordant to the new course of Civilization, culture and history, Persian language had a central position. Because of foreign religious leaders and great saints for their missionary programme made the use of Persian language schools and monasteries were established, libraries came into existence. In these centres of knowledge and wisdom Persian became the language of contact at public level and with the patronage of the kings Persian became the official language of Kashmir.

After the return of Hazrat-i-Amir-i-Kabir Mir Syed Ali hamadani to his native land many religious preachers and saints stayed in Kashmir. They are many in number however, Syed Jalalud-Din, 'Maulana Ahmad, Syed Kamalud-Din, Syed Feroz, Syed Mohammad Qasim, Syed Ruknud-Din, Syed Fakhrud-Din, Syed Mohammad Qureshi and distinguished Syed Jalalud-Din stayed in Kashmir and established a School in Srinagar city. The Syed wrote a book namely: Tatheer-ul-Qulub.

Peer Haji Mohammad Qari, Principal of Colelge, was worthy of the name which he I bears because he learned the Quran by heart and was well versed in the seven ways of reciting it. Be settled in Kashmir till he breathed his last. It is said that at the time of death he recited these verses:

Jb. Syed Mohammad Qasim was the Chief Librarian of the Library of Mir Syed Ali Hamadani, on the insist of his master the Syed settled in Kashmir.

Sultan Sikander Shahi, the son of Sultan Qutbud-Din, ascended the throne of Kashmir in the year 1389 AD. Sultan Sikander was a powerful king and gave promotion to the learning's of Islam. A Persian poet whose name is not known, praised the Sultan in the following couplets and mentions his endeavour regarding the influence of Islam.

Syed Ali, the historian, writes that most of the Syeds, men of learning, worshipers, devotees, who were well versed in different knowledge's and other sciences came to Kashmir. Mir Mohammad Hamadani, Son of Mir Syed Ali Hamadani arrived in Kashmir along with his companions and disciples. The Sultan Sikander showed much aspect towards Mir Mohammad and became his disciple. In this connection Joon Raja, the contemporary historian says, that "he was a boy, and became the chief. The king waited on him daily, humble as a servant and like a student".

Mir Mohammad Hamadani (RA) was himself a saint and religious leader. Besides, he was a man of learning. Just like his father he was a writer of many books. The distinguished Mir wrote a treatise for Sultan Sikander. The name of the books, "Iskandariyatt which is on the subject of mysticism. He also wrote a commentary on a famous book of logic known as Shamsiya. Besides it is said that, he contributed near about 45 books to Persian literature of Kashmir.

Mulla Saeed Hamadani was one of the companions of Mir Mohammad. He was a reputed scholar. He wrote a book in Persian language.

Mir Syed Mohammad Isfahani was a friend and the follower of Mir Mohammad Hamadani. He wrote a commentary on a book namely Tanveer-i-Scharah-i-Siraf". The book is on the subject of duties.

Syed Mohammad Baqir was reckoned among the friends of Mir Syed Ali Hamadani and the followers of Mir Mohammad Hamdani. It is said that he is the writer of so many books. Among these one book is known as 'Noor'.

Qazi Syed Hussain shirazi, hailed from Shiraz and came to Kashmir along with Mir Mohammad Hamadani. He was appointed as a judge. He wrote a book on the sayings of Prophet Mohammad (S.A.W.) . The name of the books is: Adadith-i-Sunniah.

The aforesaid Syed Mohammad Khavari was the companion of Mir Mohammad Hamadani. Besides a writer he was a poet. His name de gure was Khawar. The Khawar Nama and the Shahrah-i-Lumat are his writings.

During the reign of Sultan Sikander Baba Haji Adham came to Kashmir along with his companions. He was unique in the speculative and other sciences. He was a writer also and wrote a book which is known as: Maqamat. It is said tht this biographical work deals with the life and works of the saints.

Mir Syed Mohammad Baihaqi who was associated with the court of Sultan Gaiyathu-Din of Delhi, arrived Kashmir during the reign of Sultan Sikander. He wrote many verses in praise of Sultan Sikander. His name de gure was according to the writer of Baharistan-i-Shah, was Darvish and had a Divan. On the sad demise of Sultan Sikander the following couplets of Mir Mehmood Baihaqi has been mentioned by the writer of Baharistan-i-Shahi:

The following verses of an elegy is also attributed with Mir Syed Mohammad Baihaqi:

On the occasion of the death of Sultan Sikander his court was full of poets and men of learning. This is evident from this reference.

Haider Malik the historian has mentioned verses of Mulla Ahmad Kashmiri which goes like this.