

The life and poetry of Ghani Kashmiri

Ghani was born around 1040 A.H or 1020 A.H as held by the researchers but it can be said safely that when Sayib came to Kashmir in 1041. A.H, Ghani was in his prime youth. Ghani Kashmiri was a prominent Kashmiri poet of Persian language. He was famous from one corner of India to another. From Kashmir to Raskumari he was renowned. His fame reached outside India to Iran, Afghanistan, and Central Asia and to all those areas where Persian was being taught as a medium of instruction. Among the contemporaries of Ghani were Qudsi and Kaleem who were the famous poets of the time and also the malikul-al-shura in the court of Shah Jahan. But even these poets could not get the recognition and acceptance that was enjoyed by Ghani.

Even the famous poet Sayib has included the selected portions from the poetry of Ghani in his collections (Bayaz). As a result the poetry was included in their collections by several other writers. There are reports that show that some people used to transport the poetry of Ghani Kashmiri to Iran in order to get recognition for them by the mediation of this poetry.

In Majmu -al-Nafais it is very clearly expressed that Sayib was frantically in search of the poetry of Ghani after coming back from India. It is authentically reported that whenever any person used to come to Iran from India, Sayib would without fail ask him whether he has brought some portions of the poetry of Ghani with him as a gift from India or not. Mir Hussein Dost Sumbhli has gone to the extent of saying that it was for the purpose of knowing the meaning of one verse of Ghani, Sayib traveled all the way from Iran to Kashmir.

According to the same writer the purpose of his travel was to

know the meaning of the Kashmiri word "Krala-pan" which was used in this couplet. Although some scholars have not taken this report as authentic, however it shows the popularity of Ghani in Iran.

Ghani himself has mentioned this fact in his poems at several places. It is because of this reason that the copy of *Deewan -i-Ghani* is found in the libraries of Tashkent.

In the books of Iran, the mention of Ghani figures prominently along with other Persian poets. He was discussed along with the poets of Persia. Ghani Kashmiri was a very reserved person and a man of dignity, never allowing others to take advantage of his poverty or deprivation. He is said to have thrown his poetical collections into a river before his death in order to not allow others to sell it out for meager worldly gains. The poetical career of Ghani started from 1060. AH. It is due to the familiarity of the poetry of Ghani that his poetical collections have been published more than eleven times during these three centuries from various places. There are more than 22 manuscripts of his poetry available in

In the poetry of Ghani Kashmiri there are the subjects relating to 'ethics' and high moral values existing side by side. He talks again and again about the rich cultural and literary ethos of Kashmir in his poetry. He lays emphasis on the ascetic and austere style of life the hallmark of Kashmiri culture. The contemporaries of Ghani and their literary contribution and the impact of Ghani Kashmiri on the lives and culture of Kashmir and the subsequent Indian and Kashmiri Poets will be described also. Mir Taqi Mir and other poets of Urdu language have referred to Ghani again and again and according to our research even Ghalib was not left without the perceptible impact of Ghani Kashmiri.

Diwan Kirpa Ram

A Renowned Persian Historian of Dogra Period

Diwan Kirpa Ram belonged to the well reputed family of the great Diwans of Eminabad, well known all over the northern India by reason of their close association with the Jammu and Kashmir State. Sir Lepel Griffin says "they have from the commencement of Maharaja Gulab Singh's reign practically monopolised the office of Diwan or Prime Minister, and are therefore responsible for much of the good or evil repute attachment to the rule of the Dogra in Kashmir."¹

The family assumed a historical character when its ancestor Rai Ugarson of Bikaner became Peshkar or sacratry to the Emperor Babur (1526-30 AD) once he accompanied the emperor on a visit to Punjab, and marrying amongst the Kanungo Khatri of Eminabad in the Gujranwala district, settled there. One of his descendant, Bisham Das under Sardar Mohan Singh Sukarchakia (1774 AD) father of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.²

Grandfather of Diwan Kirpa Ram, Diwan Amir Chand was a visionary Persian, by his royal attachment to Gulab Singh's interest, he became very popular³ when Gulab Singh was granted as Raja of Jammu by Maharaj Ranjeet Singh. Diwan Amir Chand became Madar-ul-Maham or Chief Minister of Jammu⁴. Diwan Jawala Sahai was followed by his father Diwan Amir Chand as he was eldest son. He also did good job with Gulab Singh.

1. Griffin, Chiefs, p.131.
2. Abid, p.131.
3. Gulabnama, p.117
4. L Griffin and Famailies of Notes, p.131.