

USE OF PERSIAN WORDS IN KASHMIRI

The Kashmiri language is one of the oldest languages of the world, and as a living language it has been borrowing from all those languages that came into contact with it and yet retained its structure. Kashmiri Language has a history of over five thousand years and in its vocabulary, idioms, proverbs, sayings and allusions it has been conserving its unique structure which rejects the opinion that it has originated from Sanskrit or Hebrew. It is not linguistically acceptable to declare a language derivative of another language purely on the bases of words, we have to take into account the unique structure, syntax and phonology of a language while undertaking a comparative study of the two languages. And in doing so the scholar must be having equal proficiency in both the languages to be compared otherwise they shall blindly believe that Kashmiri is a derivative of Sanskrit or Hebrew as we find certain loan items of the two languages in its lexis. Although Sir George Abraham Grierson, while finding the genealogy of Kashmir in the Dardic group of languages after making a thorough study of the structural features of Kashmiri, there has not been any serious attempt to verify the findings of greisens work after he put forth his monumental works. In case we are to find the source of a language purely on the basis of lexis, then how shall we be able to convince the supporters of the view that Kashmiri is related to

Persian because the bulked modern Kashmiri words have been loaned from Persian? And if this method continues, tomorrow one may try to seek its origin in Urdu and after that in English. The fact is that if we minutely study the word fund of two languages in contact, we shall find that they influence each other. However, if one language belongs to the rulers and the other that of those who are ruled, it is the language of the rulers that remains dominant. The ruled or dominated community always tends to know words and expressions from the language of their rulers. They feel a sort of pride or respect in using such loaned words and expressions from the court language. When they do not find equivalents of such words in their own language, they suffer from a kind of inferiority complex. The same is tone of the Kashmiri Language which for various political, cultural and geographical factors borrowed much from various languages and the words replaced sank into oblivion so much so that it is no more possible to trace them out.

Among the languages that have considerably influence the word found of Kashmiri, Persian and Sanskrit are at the top. Both language remained as court languages for several centuries and were used in all types of scholarly pursuits. Sanskrit is reminiscent of the Hindu period and Persian that of the Muslim period. Both these periods are preserved the Kashmir in the form of its cultural contents.

Persian has been influencing Kashmiri since Raja Lalitadityas period (725– 762 AD.). when Kashmir experienced the advent of Muslims¹. However, the Persian language flourished in Kashmir when it was made the official language of the court and the language of scholarship. The process of its popularization was *augmented* when hundred of *sadats* came to Kashmiri for the propagation of the illumining message of Islam. Kashmiri came into contact not only with a new faith but also with a new culture. It was a boostutinary period of Kashmir in which several old beliefs and customs became obsolete and new beliefs and customs

were accepted. At the same time the words from Sanskrit were replaced by Persian world, for example:

Kashmiri	Sanskrit	Persian
rav	siry-yi	aftab
vony	pony	ab
shuts	pevitar	pak
nab	gagan	asman

You must be getting surprised whether such words were really there in our language, because we no more retain any these words in our memory. But that is not the question. Borrowing from other languages does not kill a language; the language somehow or the other keeps its identity intact, which is preserved in its structure and phonological system. Take for example the first two words of the above list, i.e. "rav" and "vony", these two words are no more in common usage, but do we not say even today "Kajuk" which means the mid-day sun? No consider this expression in the form of a simile and metaphor:

"su pyav zanti kajuk rav thani" (Simile)

"daryi drav kajuk rav" (Metaphor).

If you do not agree to this usage, what about their use in poetry? The word "vony" even being obsolete is used by us repeatedly in a combination with other words, e.g. *rudi vony*, *adivony*, *gurivony*, *sahatabvony*, *vejvony* etc. Now let us see a few of those word which have already been replaced by Persian, but are still familiar to us are still being used. It perhaps because of the fact that the change in vocabulary does not change the nature and syntax of a language.

Persian	Sanskrit	Usage
asman	nab	nabi grany, nabi trath
zamin	butrath	pathar bihun,
nar	Pathiv	moj butrath
jisim	zong	zong lagan
	pan	panimor balipan

The mutual interaction between languages sometimes gives birth to such words, or compound words which combine two words of two languages to make out one meaning. For instance, let us take a few of such compound expressions.

<u>Persian</u>	<u>Kashm</u>	<u>Compound expressions</u>
<i>jan</i>	<i>zuv</i>	<i>zuv jan</i>
<i>poshokh</i>	<i>patar</i>	<i>palav poshakh</i>
<i>khwardan</i>	<i>khyan</i>	<i>khyan khwardan</i>
<i>atash</i>	<i>tsok</i>	<i>tsok atash</i>
<i>siyah</i>	<i>krihun</i>	<i>krihun siyah</i>
<i>nar</i>	<i>tot</i>	<i>tot nar</i>

Such combinational possibilities produce such changes in a language that enrich its lexis; Persian, too, has tremendously enriched Kashmiri at the lexical level. It is interesting to see how Kashmiri prefix RS and suffixes join with Persian words and how Persian prefixes and suffices join with Kashmiri words:

1. Kashmir word + Persian prefix : *be momdachh, beguv be buj, badbuth, beswakh.*
2. Kashmir word + Persian prefix : *poshidan, tsukhydar dakizad, dagdar, krtshykhwar.*
3. Persian word + Kashmi prefix : *vardav, adser, okang, hangitumar.*
4. Persian word + Kashmiri prefix : *shamipety, rathkyut, dyidan tal, yaribal, rophigor.*

Every language has its distinct phonological system which despite external influences preserves its original form. In this sense, when one language borrows from any other language, it automatically. Changes of phonetic character of the borrowed items. Sometimes it is the pronunciation of the words that undergoes the change, and sometimes it is the nature of the sounds that changes. Now see how the sounds of Persian undergo changes when transferred to Kashmiri while in usage:

Persian /u/ changes into /awa/,

Persian /a/ changes into /ee/,

Persian /kh/ changes into /kh/, /gh/ changes into /g/ and /q/ changes into /k/.

However in writing many of the letters for these sounds remain in their original form.

Sound	Persian	Kashmiri
/u/	ustad, khuda	vwastad, khwada
/a/	alim, aqil	eelyim, eekil
/kh/	khwab, khaliq	khab, kheeliq
/gh/	ghanimat, gham	genyimath, gam.

Language is the identity of a people which preserves the cultural heritage, and natural character of its speakers. When language accepts the influence of some other language, it takes the benefit of the cultural heritage of that nation as well ; Kashmiri too has enriched its cultural heritage by borrowing from Persian. In the meantime's words and their respective cultural meanings get overused and are replaced by new words with their new meanings. To influence or to get influenced, has three factors, one is conscious effort, the second is an unconscious usage and the third is the necessity. The first factor is a conscious effort because one aims at impressing others in using the words of a non-native tongue. One wants to show that one belongs to the elite class and the class in power. Even the illiterate sometimes use the non-native expressions just to show that he or she does not lag behind. See how we ignore our own words and use foreign words: problem, bad-character, beautiful, pain, dady, papa, mommy, sister, brother etc. We unwillingly forget our own beautiful words and use foreign words instead, e.g. metun in place of *samkhun*, intizar in place of *pararun*, Khotun in place of *mitsrun*, khada in place of *vwadnyi*, bistar in place of *vwathrun* etc.

The words are necessitated when we adopt a new religion, new culture or a new knowledge. These wores also enrich the treasure of words in a language: *nimaz, rozi, tawhid, jamat, momin, darvish, arsh, masjid, TV, radio, thermonetre, durbin,*

crackdown, bunker, cross-firing, curfew are some of these words used because of the need.

These are the factor which made Persian influence intellectually, culturally and socially to the extent that if we remove all these words, phrases and proverbs from our language, it shall be poor in the manner if we remove all Latin, French from English, or if we remove all Persian, Arabic, Hindi words from Urdu. The use of Persian words in Kashmiri so wide spread that sometimes we feel that is no more than the phonology and syntax of Kashmiri that is of its own origin, the rest is Persian. Consider, for instance the words under the following spheres of our life:

01. **Dress** : *dastar, takeeny, phyaran, qamyiz, paijama, syiniband, chwaghi, achkah, mozi, dustati, qasabi etc.*
02. **House Hold**: *deg, degchi, majmi, sarposh, pyali, tashneer, sonduq, phuldan, namdi, qaliyin, palang, ganjyini, rarsh, etc.*
03. **Diet**: *risti, kabab, goshtabi, abgosh, roganjosh, farashbyin etc.*
04. **Everyday Life**: *ilim, qalam, kyitab, zaban, subuh, stam, shair, faqir, khandan, madras, bayan, tashryih, tafsgil, ghazal, rubai, marsyyi, gwaleemyi, azedi, iftas, dost, dushman, khwash, naraz, ishq, ashaq, vasil, firaq, iztirab, intizar, inqilab, mosiqi, fan, tanqid, tahrir, hal, mazi, mustaqbil, islah, adam, qalamdan, ulfat, alvida, imta, nabud, bazaz, izhar, afvah, rakyim, iman, bab, jayizi, jad, harf, khalaq, khetiq etc.*
05. **Proverbs, Allusions, Sayings**: *gwadi, khwesh, adi darvesh, tu bakher ma basatamat, bad badi khwad giriftaryi, chah kun chah dar pesh, man tura haji bigoyam in mara haji bigo, ab na dyidam mozi keshidam naqli kufr kufr na bashad, khalaq bar khuda, khuda bar, khalaq, nari, namrud, sozi mansur etc.*

Most of the poetic genres in Kashmiri too, are borrowed from Persian, Mathnavi, Ghazl, Rubai, for instance and have come along with their conventions. But the fact is that we accepted these poetic forms because they were close to our taste. The 'sonnet' borrowed from English did not flourish in Kashmiri because it did not conform to our taste and sensibility. Some of you will certainly argue that then the form of 'nazm' too was borrowed from English, but the fact is that the notion of a poem or 'nazm' was already their in oriental poetry' Sheikh-ul Alam, for instance in Kashmiri wrote and in the *nazm* in the 14th century. It is therefore proper to believe that well before the influence of English language, the soil of our poetry was ready for the *nazm*. On the contrary, the influence of Persian is so deep rooted that our poets use the readymade similes and metaphors of Persian poetry, for example, our poet calls the curls of this beloved *sumbal*, although we know that the flower '*sumbal*' although we know that the flower '*sumbal*' has no resemblance with the curls. We could compare the curls with '*kukyli pot*' for being soft, delicate and blond, but a master like Rasul Mir also compare the curls with *sumbal*.

Not only this, our folk literature, especially our folk song abound on Persian words and expressions. The 'rof' or marriage songs sung from taking out of the bridegroom to his reaching his in-law are according to Prof. Rahman Rahi, similar to those sung in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan on such occasions. Here is an example, a song which has to melody of the Central Asia.

Jun kets may lavi pey may babirey

The Center of the Central Asian Studies would be contributing tremendously to the advancement of knowledge if in collaboration with the department of kashmiri sends talented research scholars to Uzbekistan and Tajikistan and thus serve our language and literature.

In order to appreciate the extent to which Kashmiri has imbibed the influence of Persian, one must study the bayan-al-Quran by Late Hazrat Maulana Mohammad Yousuf Shah, its language is the perfect and harmonious blend of Persian and Kashmiri.

Reference:

1. The Persian translation of the holy Quran by Fatehullah Kashmiri, which according to Mohammad Yousuf Teng was accomplished in 1237 AD, is a clear evidence that Persian was quite popular even in the 13th century in Kashmir;