HANDICRAFTS AND KASHMIRI ARTISANS DURING THE MUGHAL PERIOD (1586-1707)

Thesis Submitted for the award of Ph.D. degree in History

By

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Dedicated to My Parents
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# CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acknowledgement</th>
<th>i - iii</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
<td>1 - 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Geo-Political Features of Kashmir</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Inspiration of Nature on the Handicraft Production</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Sources</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter One</strong></td>
<td>17 - 37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Asian and Persian Influence on the Handicraft Industry of Kashmir</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter Two</strong></td>
<td>38 - 69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handicraft Industry: The State Patronage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter Three</strong></td>
<td>70 - 93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquisition of Raw-Material and the Handicraft Trade</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Acquisition of Raw-Materials</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Trade Routes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Export Trade of Manufactured Handicrafts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Mode of Transport</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter Four</strong></td>
<td>94 - 118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tools and Techniques of Handicraft Manufacture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Technology of Shawl Manufacture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Technology of Carpet Manufacture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Paper Manufacturing Techniques</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. <em>Paper-Machie</em> Technology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. Wood Craft Technology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter Five</strong></td>
<td>119 - 135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial Organisations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Administration of Karkhanas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. The Emperor and the Karkhanas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Child and Female Labour in Karkhanas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Working Days and Hours</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
V. Wages

Chapter Six 136 - 154

Socio-Economic Conditions of Artisans and Craftsmen

I. Training to Artisans
II. Economic Position of Artisans
III. Nature of Employment
IV. Loans and Advances
V. Political and Religious Disturbances
VI. Natural Calamities
VII. Food Habits of Kashmiri Artisans
VIII. Dress
IX. Housing
X. Fairs and Festivals
XI. Language of Artisans
XII. Status of Women Artisans

Conclusion 155 - 160

Appendices 161 - 171

Glossary 172 - 178

Bibliography 179 - 197
Map 1. Kashmir Political During the Mughal Period
Introduction

Kashmir is known for its rich socio-cultural history. The historians of 16th and 17th century are enormously in praise of Kashmir, its climate, flora, fauna and most importantly its artistic handicraft items. Though the modern scholars of Kashmir have dealt with all the aspects notable among them are Abdul Majid Mattoo in his Kashmir Under the Mughals, P.N.K Bamzai in his Socio-Economic History of Kashmir, G.M.D Sufi in his Kashir: Being A History of Kashmir From the Earliest Times to Our Own, and also Mushtaq Ahmad Kaw in his Agrarian System of Kashmir. These modern scholars have given a graphic picture of the agrarian structure, Mughal administrative and taxation system in the subah of Kashmir. One important aspect that is nearly missing from all these modern scholars that deal with Mughal period is the handicraft industry of subah of Kashmir. This thesis is an attempt to explore the foreign influences on handicraft industry, factors that led the Mughals to patronize handicraft industry. What where the source of raw materials for the handicraft industry. Tools and techniques applied in the manufacturing process will also be explained. The market for Kashmiri handicrafts or otherwise who were the consumers of handicrafts of Kashmir will be discussed. The roots used by the merchant communities for the import of raw material and export of manufactured handicraft items will also be explained. Organization of karkhanas is also studied here. Additionally, an attempt is also made to look into the socio-economic conditions of artisans of Kashmir who were engaged in the task. This work will focus on some of the important handicraft industries like shawl industry, carpet industry, paper industry, paper-machie, silk industry, wood craft industry and metal craft industry. All these industries existed before Mughal conquest but they reached to perfection during the Mughal period. The Mughal emperors because of their huge demands took keen interest for the development of handicraft industry of Kashmir.

Geo-Political Features of Kashmir

The history of Mughal rule in the subah of Kashmir dates back to1586 A.D i.e. with the conquest of region by Emperor Akbar after defeating Sultan Yusuf Shah Chak (1579-86 A.D), the last ruler of Chak dynasty of Sultanate era. No doubt with the conquest, Kashmiris lost their independence but nevertheless, the isolation which they had been living for centuries were broken. The conquest proved to be a blessing for
the socio-economic and cultural development of Kashmir. The Mughals rulers took to the overall development of Kashmir. They laid out a number of beautiful gardens. The handicraft industry got boost. Trade and commerce flourished. New trade routes were founded and old ones were repaired to promote the trade and commerce of Kashmir. These trade routes were guarded by the Naikan. A number of serais were made for the comfort of the travellers. Handicrafts of Kashmir began to be exported throughout India as well as to the neighbouring countries. This led to the economic prosperity of Kashmir.

Kashmir, including the Valley of Kishen Ganga river and the districts of Kashtawar, Bhadarwah, Naushera and Punch lies between 32° 20’ and 35° 5’ North latitude and 73° 30’ and 76° 30’ East longitude. It remains intensely cold for most of the year. When winter temperature goes extremely down then Kashmir witnesses the snowfall and rivers and lakes freeze down. The Valley of Kashmir is situated at an average elevation of 5200 feet above sea level. On the south-east lies the Banihal and Jammu mountains, on the north-east lies the Greater-Tibet; on the west lies the Pahki and Kishan-Ganga River, on the south-west the Gakkhar country. The area of Kashmir extends to about 5000 square kilometers. Out of the total area, 2500 square kilometers are under water. Its length is about 89 miles and breadth from north-east to south-west varies between 20 to 25 miles. The deepest part of the Valley lies along the course of river Jhelum, which is the principal river of the Valley. It is fed with a large number of tributaries. There has been extensive dissection of karewa beds, formation of terraces, low land swampy areas and lakes, such as, Wular, Dal, Anchar, Manasbal, Haigam, Hoksar, beside mountainous lakes like Gangabal, Sheshnag, Tarsar, Marsar, Kousernag, Alpatte, Butapathri, Nilanag etc.

3 Bates, Gazetteer, p.1
5 Bates, Gazetteer, pp.1-2 and map; See also, Parmu, History of Muslim Rule in Kashmir, p. 49.
The land and the people of Kashmir have a close connection in the creation of arts and crafts. The features of a particular land determine the effect it would create on the mind of an artist as a response to the resonant, visual, intellectual and spiritual environment of the land. The land that the artist belongs held a common culture and a unique taste. Kashmir is naturally a beautiful Valley surrounded from all sides by unending chain of mountains with narrow roots and passes. It is a land of extreme cold winters, lovely springs, glorious summers and flamboyant autumns. It is bestowed by nature with a variety of wonderful birds, plants and flowers. Its verdant greenery and numerous waterways are the principal character of the land which had inspired the people for creation of arts and crafts. The people of Kashmir since ancient times have abundantly worked for the cultural uplift of its land. Kashmir apart from its natural beauty has acquired fame throughout world for the manufacture of handicrafts. The abundant beauty of the environment has made the Kashmiri essentially mystical and imaginative and the sublime solitude of the place have made him thoughtful and the primeval charm of the land has made his expression transcendental. The artisans and craftsmen of Kashmir draw inspiration from the landscape, the river valleys with deep gorges, lofty mountains with snow caped high peaks, beautiful evergreen woods, flowers, birds and animals. It makes his mind astonishing and thought provoking which is reflected in their different forms of art. The artisans and craftsmen give their entire mind and heart in presenting the beauty of its land in their works of art. It is for that reason, the artisans of valley stand high in their stature than their counterparts in other parts of the world.

**Inspiration of Nature in the Creation of Handicrafts**

The handicrafts of Kashmir in their concepts, designs, decoration and style of presentation show the inspiration of nature. The decoration or ornamentation does not conceal the form and the nature of the material itself. It is taken from the nature by an artisan and craftsman and then he elaborates it and presents it in a new meaning. Even the nature of material is enhanced rather than subdued. For instance in wood work, the natural grain of the wood with varnish is an important element of design, while wood carving with its elements of design, which are dominantly floral with leaves and stems, not only embellish the wood articles but also in a way return it to the woods. Similarly, the woven and embroidered patterns of Kashmiri textiles in a large variety of colours and lines speak of the land in the movement of the patterns of
ornamentation in a static medium. The Kashmiri shawl when draped around one’s shoulders speaks not only of fabulous work of the Kashmiri artisan but also the beauty of the land from which it has been manufactured. The carved wooden articles and paper machie decorative designs in their miniature style of paintings portray the verdant green and colourful landscape and the flowers and birds of the beautiful valley of Kashmir. The artisans and craftsmen of Kashmir draw inspiration from the nature and try to pay all efforts to present the beauty of the land in which he lives in different forms of art.

The thesis has been divided into six chapters. The first chapter deals with the Central Asian and Persian influence on the handicraft industry. It is found that since the ancient times, Kashmir had close cultural relations with Central Asia. This is evident from the ancient sculptures of Kashmir and most importantly the tiles of Harwan monastery which bear huge Central Asian influence.\(^6\) With the establishment of Sultanate in Kashmir by Sultan Shamsuddin Shahmir in 1339 A.D, who was a Persian noble, direct cultural and commercial contacts were established with Central Asia and Persia. During the reign of Sultan Sikander (1389-1413), a number of artisans, craftsmen, scholars, sufis etc. immigrated to Kashmir from Central Asia due to the harassment perpetrated upon them by Timur (1329-1405). Most of the artisans belonged to the cities of Hamadan and Baihaq. They fled from their homeland to Kashmir for the safety of life. They involved themselves in the economic activities which were widely pursued by people. One large caravan of craftsmen was led by Mir Syed Ali Hamdani (1314-1386 A.D) also known as Shah-i-Hamadan or Amir-i-Kabir. The story of coming of saint is well known. He came to Kashmir from Hamadan along with seven hundred artisans and craftsmen. These craftsmen were expert in weaving, tile mosaics, book binding and the art of calligraphy.\(^7\) They introduced a number of crafts which were not known to the Kashmiri people and also refined and renovated the already existing crafts on Central Asian patterns.\(^8\)

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Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin (1420-70) also adopted various measures for the development of handicraft industry on the Central Asian model. He invited expert artisans from Samarkand and Bukhara and provided them several concessions to teach the local artisans the designs prevailing in Central Asia and not allowed them to leave the valley until they had done so. Mirza Haider Daughlat in his Tarikh-i-Rashidi has immensely praised Sultan and says that in Kashmir one finds all arts and crafts which are found nowhere in Transoxiana except in Samarkand and Bukhara. He gives all the credit of it to Sultan Zain-ul Abidin. Mirza Haider Daughlat further evolved the cultural relations between Kashmir and Central Asia. He was a man of artistic taste. He encouraged the handicraft industry of Kashmir and is himself credited with the introduction of latticed window work (tabdan tarashi) and khatamband in Kashmir. During the Mughal period the cultural assimilation between Central Asia and Kashmir evolved further. Abul Fazl in his Ain-i-Akbari informed us that Akbar brought skillful weavers and master craftsmen from foreign countries to teach the people an improved system of manufacture. The Mughal emperors being themselves of refined taste had a direct influence on the handicraft industry. During the reign of Jahangir, the carpet industry of Kashmir which had disappeared long ago after the death of Zain-ul-Abidin was revived on Andijan pattern and carpet weavers from Andijan were invited to teach the local weavers the techniques and designs prevailing in Central Asia.

The names of craft designs in Kashmir had their roots from Central Asia like Barg-i-Sosan, Chinar, Barg-i-Sarv, Mazar Posh etc. the fame acquired by the Kashmiri handicraft industry is largely due to the adoption of Central Asian patterns. Even today the Kashmiri introduces their handicrafts in the market with the names of

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10 Mirza Muhammad Haider, Daughlat, Tarikh-i-Rashidi, Edited with notes, commentary and map by N. Elias and Translated by E. Denison Ross, Sampson Low, London, 1895, p. 434; Hereafter, Tarikh-i-Rashidi.
11 Sandeep Sangaru, Integrated Design and Technical Development Project in the Area of Traditionally Manufactured Wooden Furniture Srinagar, Kashmir, Craft Development Institute, Srinagar, 2008, p .4; See also, Tarikh-i-Rashidi, pp. 432-33
12 Ain, I, p. 93.
Central Asian cities like Bukhara, Samarkand and Farghana. Their designs and motifs are much identical to those found in Central Asia.

The second chapter throws light on the Mughal court patronage of the handicrafts of Kashmir. Since the establishment of Mughal rule in Kashmir in 1586, the handicraft industry due to the royal patronage witnessed a tremendous improvement. This chapter deals with the reasons that led the Mughals to pay attention for the improvement of handicraft industry. It is found that, firstly, the Mughal emperors were fond of the Kashmiri handicrafts. Besides, the Kashmiri fabrics were a symbol of prestige for the Mughal nobility and aristocracy. Secondly, the Mughal Empire was a wealthy one. Its riches, grandeur, comforts, luxuries and etiquettes created a custom among themselves of presenting Kashmiri products to the mansabdar, jagirdars and umara and other dignitaries. The improvements in tools and techniques of manufacture in the karkhanas, particularly in the loom boosted the textile industries. The improvements in the loom enabled them to manufacture soft fabrics and fascinatingly designed carpets depicting hunting scenes and floral designs. Carpet industry which was almost lost with the death of Zain-ul-Abidin was revived during the reign of Jahangir on large scale. The paper making industry also improved following the liberal patronage of Mughals. It was in huge demand in India for writing manuscripts. Similarly the improvements in wood and metal industries made possible to fashion the articles with delicate ornaments such as palanquins, Quran-stands, opals, blood-stones, agatas, turquoises, bracelets and rings. Besides these improvements, the Kashmiri handicraft karkhanas expanded considerably. Towards


the end of the Mughal empire, the number of textile looms alone rose to 40,000\textsuperscript{17} giving employment to about 120,000 workmen and to the entire female population of the towns and cities. Even small children got employment in the karkhanas.\textsuperscript{18}

The third chapter deals with the import of raw materials and export of manufactured crafts. In this chapter I have discussed the sources of raw material for the handicraft industry and among them which were locally available and which were imported from distant lands. It also deals with the trade routes of Kashmir and how Mughals maintained those routes for the smooth passage of trade caravans. Kashmir was surrounded from all sides by an unending chain of mountains which hampered its trade and commerce.\textsuperscript{19} Though it had different routes and passes that could link it with the outer world but these routes were not maintained properly that can be easily traversed. But since the establishment of Mughal rule, special care was taken for the maintenance of these routes. Abul Fazl in his Ain-i-Akbari informs us that there were twenty-six routes that link Kashmir with the world. And says among all these routes Bhimber and Pakhli were the best.\textsuperscript{20} The other important routes were Punch Route, Kashtawar route and Central Asian trade route. This chapter aims to discover these routes and what were the arrangements made for the maintenance of these routes. For example, Watch stations were established which were known as darah or kartal.\textsuperscript{21} These watch stations were kept under the vigilance of Nayaks/Maliks,\textsuperscript{22} The bridges were constructed to span the rivers\textsuperscript{23} and a number of serais were made for the comfort of the travelers.\textsuperscript{24} All these steps promoted the trade and commerce of


\textsuperscript{20} Ain, II, p. 351; Jahangir also informs us that Bhimber and Pakhli were the best, see Tuzuk, II, p. 143.

\textsuperscript{21} Akbarnama, III, p. 412 and n.3.


\textsuperscript{23} The bridges in the local dialect of Kashmir were called ‘Kadal’, see, Tuzuk, II, p. 142.

\textsuperscript{24} Irfan Habib, An Atlas of the Mughal Empire, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1982, p. 3b, Hereafter, I. Habib, Atlas; Some of the important serais were Chingas serai, Aliabad serai, Khanpur serai, Sukh Serai and Shadimarg Serai, at Chingas the mortal remains of emperor Jahangir are buried.
Kashmir particularly the handicraft industry. The handicrafts of Kashmir through these routes used to be exported throughout India and its neighbouring countries.

The fourth chapter deals with the tools and techniques of craft manufacture. In this chapter an attempt has been made to find that how raw material was prepared for the handicraft production. It deals with role of different artisans’ expert in different fields of handicraft production. For example there were spinners who were just engaged in spinning the yarn. Then the spun yarn was dyed with different colours by the rangur then it was arranged into warp by panakam-gur (warp dresser). The warp is then fixed into the loom for weaving process. For drawing a design, naqqash wrought new designs on siyahtareh in black and white.25 Tara-gur or gandanwol26 was a reckoner and a colour caller whose job was to give a complete thought to the selection and arrangement of colours. Talim-gur or kitabwala27 was the writer of designs. Each of these experts was very essential for shawl industry for producing a range of new designs and patterns to satisfy the diverse taste of customers. The shawls after weaving went through certain processes like clipping, washing and calendaring. For weaving a carpet, same method is employed as is in the shawl weaving in converting the original design into a textile which is prepared by a naqqash. Similarly the production of paper-machie articles also include two different artisans expert in two different fields those were sakhtsaz (one who makes the object) and naqash (one who paints the surface). Apart from that an attempt has also been made to find out the tools that were used by the artisans for handicraft production.

The fifth chapter is about the organization of the handicraft karkhanas. In this chapter I have discussed how the karkhanas were introduced. What was the role of sufis in the establishment of karkhanas? It is found that the sufis in order to cater to their urban tastes which they had developed while living in the posh cities of Central Asia thought it necessary to establish the karkhanas. Apart from that, their primary objective was the propagation of Islam and it was possible only if they could engage the local masses in some kind of economic activity and for this establishment of karkhanas became necessary. The fondness of Mughal emperors and the wealth of

26 Bates, Gazetteer, p. 56.
Mughal empire also proved a mighty weapon for the development of handicraft *karkhanas* on large scale. Due to the huge demand of Kashmiri handicrafts, it was imperative for the Mughals to take special interest for the development of handicraft *karkhanas*.⁰⁸ The workmen in the *karkhanas* were employed in accordance with a complex division of labour.⁰⁹ There were different branches of artisans in the same *karkhana* and each branch was headed by an *ustad* (master craftsman) who supervised his *tsats* (workers). These developments in *karkhans* led to improvement and refinement in the quality of craft items. The Mughals also took proper care for the administration of *karkhanas*.³⁰ They were placed under the supervision of *khan-i-saman* who was assisted by other officials like *diwan-i-bayutat*, *darogha*, *tahvildar*, *mustaufi* and *nazir*. This chapter also deals with the conditions of *karkhanas*. Apart from that, the wages paid to the artisans of different categories are also discussed in detail.

The sixth chapter deals with the conditions of artisans. This is the most important part of my thesis because the study of history of handicrafts cannot be complete without analyzing the factors that were acting force for the creation of handicrafts. The artistic activities were not going itself but were carried on by the people to whom this chapter is ascribed to. The artisans of Kashmir always remained steeped in poverty throughout history. It was the oppressive taxation, less wages, lack of adequate facilities, natural calamities and exploitation by the middle men which had affected the lives of artisans and craftsmen adversely. However, a temporary change occurred during the Mughal period due to the encouragement provided by the rulers to the *karkhanas* and the artisans for the refinement and improvement of their skill. The master artisans of special crafts were brought before emperor in the *dewan-i-am* along with their exhibits. The emperor used to reward them handsomely for their work. Although the Mughal rulers transformed the wage system and started paying the artisans in cash in spite of kind and rewarding the master artisans who manufactured valuable artistic pieces. *Ain-i-Akbari* gives a long list of different categories of artisans and their wages. Abul Fazl’s account shows in satisfactory

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²⁸ *Ain*, I, p. 96; Jahangir also refers to Kashmir shawl as one of his favourite item of dress, see, *Tuzuk*, I, p. 384.
details, the interest shown by the Mughals for the handicraft karkhanas and the steps taken to ensure the regular supply of raw material for the manufacture of handicrafts. But in spite of all these administrative measures the artisans and craftsmen remained steeped in poverty due to the exploitation perpetrated upon them by the middlemen, merchants and karkhandars. They used to pay them loans in advance which made these artisans largely dependent on these middlemen. Bernier observed that, “an artisan can never become rich. If he gained money it does not go into his pocket but only serves to increase the wealth of the merchant.”\(^{31}\) The artisan had to surrender to the middlemen a considerable portion of his profit because the same product passed through several hands before reaching to the actual consumer. Kashmir also witnessed political and religious disturbances throughout history which affected the artisans also. Apart from that the natural disasters like floods, famines and fires had adverse impact on the lives of artisans. This chapter also deals with the food habits, dress and the housing pattern of Kashmiri artisans which were generally poor. Though poor, these artisans used to take part in a number of festivals and fairs celebrations which were both religious as well as regional in nature. Some light on the position of women artisans had also been thrown. And it is found that the women artisans generally faced hard life side by side with their counterparts. Evils and immoral practices were rampant among the artisanal community of Kashmir.

**Sources**

The period under review is rich in sources. Some of the Persian manuscripts that I consulted are preserved in Research and Publication Department, Srinagar and some are in Maulana Azad Library as well as in the Seminar Library of the Centre of Advanced Study, Department of History, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh. Besides Manuscripts, a number of sources are in printed form. Some sources are translated in English as well as Urdu. I made the use of the printed versions of sources wherever these are available. Below is a brief survey of sources that I have gone through while writing my thesis.

I have categorized the sources under the three main headings

1. General Historical works

\(^{31}\) Bernier, *Travels*, p. 229
2. Regional Historical works of Kashmir
3. Accounts of Travellers

General Historical Works

Among the earlier Persian sources Mirza Haider Daughlat’s personal memoir ‘Tarikh-i-Rashidi’ is of considerable historical value. It is an authoritative history of the Mughals of Central Asia. Mirza Haider Daughlat completed this work under the healthy climate of Kashmir. It is an indispensible work for the study of the history of Kashmir from 1420 to 1540. Mirza’s description of the geography of Kashmir, wonders of Kashmir, names of the Muslim rulers who ruled before him. Apart from that Mirza has also praised the arts and crafts of Kashmir. He describes that the arts and crafts that existed in Kashmir are found nowhere else in Transoxiana except Samarkand and Bukhara. Besides the English translation of Tarikh-i-Rashidi by Sir Denison Ross, I have also gone through the Persian manuscript, a copy of which is preserved in the Research and Publication Division, Srinagar.

After the Mughal conquest of Kashmir in 1586 A.D, both the emperor and his official historian have taken a deep interest on the history of Kashmir. Abul Fazl has himself accompanied Akbar to Kashmir therefore his account of Kashmir is regarded most authentic source of Kashmir history. In the Akbarnama, Abul Fazl has given a detailed description of the Mughal conquest of the region, relation between rulers and local masses, geography, climatic conditions, and apart from that he also provides references on the arts and handicrafts of Kashmir, trade, description of trade routes, wages paid to the artisans etc. In the Ain-i-Akbari, Abul Fazl has provided us information on the political and economic conditions of Kashmir. It deals with the revenue administration of Kashmir. It also deals with the flora, fauna, structure of villages and parganas in Kashmir. Apart from all that Ain-i-Akbari is a valuable source for the history of handicrafts of Kashmir. It has a separate chapter on the shawls of Kashmir. Besides shawls it provides information about other handicrafts like Kashmiri carpet, paper industry and wood work of Kashmir. It also deals with the conditions of artisans and craftsmen of Kashmir and also the categories of craftsmen and wages paid to them.
Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh by Mulla Abdul Qadir Badauni is also a mine of information about the history of Kashmir. The author was very much acquainted with the knowledge of Kashmir. He was a close friend of Shaikh Yaqub Sarfi Kashmiri, the famous Sufi saint of Kubariwiya order. They both used to transmit letters which are produced in the English translation of Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh by Ranking, Lowe and Haig. The author besides conquest of Kashmir by the Mughals and political developments of Kashmir also provides partly references about the handicrafts of Kashmir particularly the paper industry and shawl industry. Apart from these we have other two sources that deal with the history of Kashmir under Akbar; these are Tabaqat-i-Akbari by Nizam-ud-din Ahmad and Majalis-ul-Muminin by Qazi Nurullah Shushtri. Though both the sources provide information about Kashmir, but I could not find any reference that deals with the handicrafts and Kashmiri artisans.

For the reign of Jahangir we have his own autobiography (Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri) to which Motamad Khan had added Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri. Nuruddin Jahangir was the only emperor who was exceedingly interested in Kashmir. He paid several visits to Kashmir. He studied Kashmir and its people closely. He provides us information about the topography, gardens, birds, flowers, fruits, agricultural products etc. This source also provides a lot of information about the handicrafts of Kashmir. The interest taken by the author himself and his father, emperor Akbar in obtaining a Kashmiri handicraft. I also found more than twenty references of Jahangir presenting Kashmiri handicrafts to different persons. Besides this, it is a valuable source that deals with the social and economic conditions of the artisans and craftsmen of Kashmir, their food and dress habits, their housing pattern etc. It also deals with the great plague and fire of 1617 and 1619 and its effects on the life of the masses in general and the artisans and craftsmen in particular.

For the reign of Shahjahan, we have Shahjahannama by Amin Qazwini, Badshahnama by Abdul Hamid Lahori, Badshahnama by Muhammad Waris and Amal-i-Saleh by Muhammad Saleh Kanbuh. These sources provide us information about the socio-economic conditions of Kashmir, description of gardens, fruits, flowers, birds and the monuments etc. These sources also provide partly references about the handicrafts of Kashmir, trade and commerce. In all these sources, the trade routes and the serais constructed on the routes are described very interestingly.
For the post Shahjahan period our main sources are *Alamgirnama* written by Muhammad Kazim, *Maasir-i-Alamgiri* by Saqi Mustaid Khan, *Maasir-ul-Umara* by Shah Nawaz Khan, *Muntakhab-ul-Lulab* by Khafi Khan, and *Khulasat-ut-Tawarkh* by Sujan Rai Bhandari. The authors of these sources provide information about administrative changes, but the information on geography, flora, fauna, climate, agricultural products seems to be based on the previous historical works and we do not find any new information that deals with all the above mentioned aspects. However, we find partly references about the conditions of people particularly the artisans and craftsmen, their food and dress habits, visits of the emperor and relief measures taken out in Kashmir.

**Regional Sources of Kashmir**

Among the regional sources of Kashmir, the Sanskrit chronicle *Rajtavalipatika* or the fourth *Rajtarangni* by Suka and Prajayabhatta is a very valuable source of Kashmir history. They continued the tradition of Srivara. This work was compiled in 1598 A.D. Their work starts where Srivara left and ends with the conquest of Kashmir by Akbar in 1586 A.D. Like the previous Sanskrit chronicles, this work features the tradition of writing political history of Kashmir but nonetheless it also provides valuable information about the economic conditions of people particularly the handicraft industries.

Among the Persian sources, *Baharistanshahi* is the most important historical source written by some anonymous author. This work deals with events that occurred from the Hindu period onwards down to 1614 A.D. This work mainly deals with the political developments of Kashmir but a few aspects of Kashmir society and culture have also been dealt by the author. The topography of Kashmir, climate, and routes are also described in detail.

*Tarikh-i-Haider Malik / Tarikh-i-Kashmir*, by Haider Malik Chadura is also a very informative source. It is a comprehensive history of Kashmir from earliest times to 1620-21. The author was an eye witness of the events that took place during Akbar and Jahangir in Kashmir. He accompanied Yusuf Shah Chak during his exile. He was appointed in the army of Nuruddin Jahangir. His account is therefore regarded
as the most authentic source of Kashmir history under Akbar and Jahangir. This work deals with the socio-political institutions, rivers, lakes, climate of Kashmir. We also get partly references about the handicrafts of Kashmir.

*Mukhtasar Tarikh-i-Kashmir* written by Narayen Koul Ajiz is another source of history of Kashmir that deals with the Mughal period. Its compilation took place in 1710 A.D. This work is an abridgment of *Bahrastanshahi* and *Tarikh-i-Kashmir*. It does not provide any new information. It is sketchy and brief.

*Waqiat-i-Kashmir* is another important source for the period under review. It was written by Muhammad Azam Diddamari in 1746-47. It consists of three parts. The first deals with the pre-Sultanate period, the second deals with the Sultanate period and the third with the Mughal period. It is a biography of Sufi saints and scholars but side by side it throws light on the economic conditions of Kashmir. It is also very informative source for the handicraft industry of Kashmir.

*Gulshan-i-Dastur* written by Nath Pandit is an administrative manual. It bears the date 1710 but the events up to the end of Mughal period are also recorded. It is a voluminous work written both in prose and poetry. It consists of 73 chapters which are a mine of information about the socio-economic conditions of Kashmir during the Mughal period. It also provides a lot of information about the handicraft industry of Kashmir.

Similarly we have other important sources written during the late Mughal period like *Nawadir-ul-Akhbar* by Aba Rafi-ud-Din Ahmed, *Gouhar-i-Alam* by Mohammad Aslam. These are abridged sources of earlier works and do not provide any new information. We also have an important source that is *Tarikh-i-Hassan* by Hassan Khuihami. It was written in 19th century. It is very informative because the author has made extensive use of the sources of Mughal period. It is divided into four volumes. The first volume deals with geography of Kashmir, the second volume deals with the socio-political conditions of Kashmir, third volume deals with the biographies of sufis and saints and the fourth volume provides us the miscellaneous information. In every volume it gives partly references that deal with handicraft industry of Kashmir.
Travellers Accounts

The natural beauty of Kashmir had always been the attraction for European Travelers. They visited there and wrote their experiences in their Travelogues. The first European who visited Kashmir during the period under study was a Portuguese Traveler, Father Jerome Xavier. He visited Kashmir along with Emperor Akbar in 1597 A.D. He has written a vivid account of the natural beauty of Kashmir, its climate, transport and communication. He has given the first-hand account of the famine of 1596 and its effects on the people of Kashmir and its commercial products particularly handicraft industry. Xavier’s Letter is available in English version by Payne in the ‘Jesuit Missions to The Great Akbar.

The Remonstrantie of Francisco Palsaert is also a useful source of information for Kashmir during the reign of Jahangir. It provides us information about geography, climate, routes, agriculture, arts and crafts, trade and commerce. It also provides us enough information about the socio-economic conditions of Kashmir.

The account of Francois Bernier, Travels in the Mughal Empire is a very comprehensive source of Kashmir history during the Mughal period. Bernier visited Kashmir in 1663 along with convoy of Emperor Aurangzeb. He starts his narrative about Kashmir as soon as the imperial camp enters the Bhimber territory. His information on the topography of Kashmir is considered most reliable. This account is a mine of information about socio-economic conditions of Kashmir, its wonders, gardens, arts and crafts, trade of handicrafts etc. I have consulted its English translation by Archibald Constable.

The account by Niccalao Manucci, is also an important source of History of Kashmir during the Mughal period. It deals with the agriculture of Kashmir and the products produced. It also deals with the woolen stuffs. The Kashmiri shawl is referred to a number of times. It is translated into English by William Ervine in four volumes.

Desideri and Father Fyre also provide us information in their accounts. They visited Kashmir in 1714 A.D. They give us information about the Socio-economic conditions of the people of Kashmir, trade and commerce with Little and Great Tibet, Central Asia, Nepal and Bhutan. They provide us information about the handicraft manufacture in Kashmir and the merchant communities who dealt with the import of
raw materials and export of manufactured handicrafts. It has been rendered into English by De Filipi from its Italian version.

Apart from these, there exist some late 18th century and 19th century accounts of travelers which provide us enough information regarding the handicraft industry and the condition of artisans and craftsmen. Some of these travelers are George Forster (1783), Moorcroft (1822), George Trebeck (1822), G.T.Vigne (1835), Fredric Drew (1862), Younghusband (1906) etc.
Chapter one

Central Asian and Persian Influence on the Handicraft Industry

The distribution of artistic designs and techniques led to a distinct artistic unity with in the Islamic craft world. This unity was mainly achieved through the migration of craftsmen and their skills and craft making tools. The craftsman was the principled organism in history. He often moved as a refugee quite frequently in the history of handicrafts. For example Armenian artisans found refuge in Cairo (Egypt) under the Fatimid Caliphs after the Seljuk invasion of their country in the 11th century. The Baghdad tile-workers went to Tunisia to decorate the Mehrab of the famous Qairawan mosque. The Muslim metal-inlayers started their traditional craft manufacturing in Venice. A new industry of marble-marquetry was started by the Stone masons who migrated from Aleppo to reside in Seljuk Konya and Mamluk Cairo. An Isfahani architect built Timur’s mausoleum in Samarkand. Architects from Tabriz constructed the mosque of Amir Qasim in Cairo. Large communities of craftsmen from different nations in production centres of Syria, Iraq and Egypt included silk dyers and gold smiths from Asia Minor, silk-weavers and glass-makers from Palestine, silver smiths from Morocco etc.

The craftsmen were mostly the followers of Islam. They migrated in a large scale to different places and Kashmir was one among those places. The motive behind their large scale migration was to train the local artisans in different arts and crafts and also to convert them towards Islam.

The Muslim emigrants and the sufis generated self-respect and a sense of confidence among the common masses. They won over the large population by engaging them in different economic activities especially the manufacturing of beautifully designed handicrafts. They cited the Prophet where he says that, “God is

beauty and he loves the beauty.” With the help and active cooperation of sufis, the vision and perception of local craftsmen enlarged. They showed immense patience and took pains for drawing or carving or weaving a masterpiece. The sufı influence on the artisans and craftsmen was reflected in their work.

A sufı khankah often revolved around the needs of the community and in preaching of dignity and labour. The sufıs trained the unemployed masses in various manual skills. Some of the master craftsmen happened to be the favoured disciples of the sufıs or even at times sufıs themselves. The patron-saint of craftsmen always used to be a known mystic whose khankah after his death turned into a shrine and a big craft centre to attract the community on a regular pilgrimage from far and near. Bahauddin Naqashband (1318-1389), who is buried in Bukhara, was a patron saint of weavers from Central Asia to North India. He gave the mystic message like inner peace, graceful acceptance of life around, joy in loving and creating beauty and faith in the supreme lord, who guides the hand that works. He translated all this into devotional hymns and that became an abiding source of sustenance to craftsmen. Like the sufı silsilahs or orders, the brotherhood of craftsmen served as a unifying bond sharing the local responsibilities together and participating in universal ventures of Islam beyond national boundaries. It was this faith which brought many craftsmen from Khurasan, Bukhara and Persia to build and decorate mosques in Kashmir and revive and renovate many of the existing crafts and also introduce new crafts in Kashmir.

The History of cultural relations between Kashmir and Central Asia goes back to the ancient times. This is evident from the tiles of Harwan monastery near Srinagar and from the ancient sculptures of Kashmir which bear huge Central Asian features. Similarly, Central Asian influence can also be noticed from the use of titles for the official designations like dibir or divira after the Persian dabir and Ganjawara after the Persian Ganjwar. Nevertheless, since the time of Harsha in the 11th century,

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6 R. C. Kak, Handbook of Archaeological and Numismatic Sections of the Sri Pratap Singh Museum, Srinagar, Thacker, Spink & Co., Calcutta, 1923, pp. 4 & 65
Kashmir had been rife with petty civil wars, social anarchy and cultural vacuum during a long line of corrupt and dissolute local chiefs. Sultan Shamsuddin Shahmir who was a Persian noble found an opportunity in 1339 A.D and ushered in a series of administrative and military reforms. He opened the previously sealed frontiers of Kashmir and established direct cultural and commercial contacts with the Muslim near-east, especially Persia. His successor Sultan Sikander was even more energetic and the volume of architectural activity in Kashmir under him provided strong incentives to artisans and craftsmen who were commissioned to embellish palaces and mosques.\(^8\)

The harassment perpetrated by Timur in Central Asia sent waves of immigrants, such as nobles, scholars, sufis, missionaries, merchants and craftsmen to Kashmir. In 1386 a large caravan of Syeds was led by Shah-i-Hamdan with 700 disciples some of whom were skilled masters of weaving, tile-mosaics, book-binding and calligraphy.\(^9\) The Central Asians by their traditional proficiency always managed to catch up with the contemporary Muslim world in scientific and technical accomplishments.\(^10\) During the 15th Century in Kashmir history, close cultural contacts were maintained with Central Asia especially Samarkand, Bukhara and Khurasan.\(^11\) The old industries which were lost in chaos and anarchy were revived and renovated and also new industries were introduced. Also intimate contacts with Muslim kingdoms within India were maintained. The Central Asian artisans and craftsmen were never allowed to leave the valley until they taught the local craftsmen the techniques they were acquainted with.

The story of relationship between handicrafts of Kashmir and various Central Asian traditions is more complex, both because of the geographical position of Kashmir as well as the presence of influential Central Asian tribes on her soil. Kashmir like Gandhara nourished a special relationship with the numerous kingdoms

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\(^11\) *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*, p. 434; Samarkand and Bukhara were the centre of artistic and cultural activities in the 16th and 17th centuries, for details see, Mansura Haider, *Central Asia in the 16th century*, pp. 304-361.
of Central Asia. After the decline of Kushana empire, Sassanid Persia reclaimed much of Afghanistan which was once an integral part of the earlier Achaemenid empire and Afghanistan is immediately to the north-west of Kashmir. Moreover there were direct cultural contacts between Kashmir and the neighbouring states in the North and apart from that there must have been a constant exchange of scholars, missionaries, sufis etc. between the well-known Central Asian Kingdoms, such as Khotan and Kashmir.\footnote{Pratapaditya Pal, \textit{Bronzes of Kashmir}, Hacker Art Books, New York, 1975, p. 41.}

Kashmir is naturally a beautiful valley. Its people are known for their intelligence and artistic excellence. Nature has provided Kashmir with abundance of raw materials which its genius artisans and craftsmen manufacture into articles of luxury, displaying a highly refined artistic taste most delicately in harmony with sceneries with which he was surrounded. Though the origins of many crafts of Kashmir are usually credited to Central Asia, but there are a number of reasons to believe that the high level of artistic skills has been present in Kashmir well before that. The advent of Islam and the Central Asian influences began a new chapter in the art and craft evolution as it provided a new paradigm for these arts to become an organised industry combined with a philosophical approach.\footnote{Renuka Savasere, ‘Cradle of Craft’, \textit{India International Centre Quarterly}, vol. 37, No. 3/4 , p. 286-307.} The arts and crafts of Kashmir became more refined and obtained fame all over the world after they came into contact with Central Asia, mainly by the sufi saints of medieval period, not only the living sufis but even after their death, the \textit{urs} (fairs) celebrations gave chance to the people of far flung areas to meet in large gatherings and hence they exchanged their commercial products which promoted the handicraft industry to a great extent.\footnote{N. K. Singh, \textit{Islamic Heritage of Kashmir}, 2 volumes, Gulshan Books, Srinagar, 1997, Vol. II, p. 86}

Mir Syed Ali Hamdani/ Shah-i-Hamdan / Amir-i-Kabir (1314-1385) came to Kashmir during the reign of Sultan Qutubuddin along with about 700 followers. Most among these were the Central Asian craftsmen. They introduced various Central Asian Crafts which were not known to the Kashmiri people and also renovated and refined the pre-existing crafts on the Central Asian pattern. A number of crafts like, \textit{kar-i-kalamdani / paper-machie, khatamband} or the art of ornamental wooden-ceilings, \textit{namdas} and some metal and leather crafts came from Samarkand, Kashgarh, Yarkand, Khotan, Hamdan and Mashad. No doubt Kashmiris had the knowledge of
needle-work, carpet-weaving, tile-making, metal-work, but after the coming of such master craftsmen, new forms were introduced in techniques and orientation. Thus it was the influence of sufi saints that Kashmiri handicrafts reached to the highest climax of glory.\textsuperscript{15} The great master (Shah-i-Hamadan) worked like a mason to build the fate of Kashmiris. He gave them education, wisdom, culture and religion. He was a dignified mentor of this beautiful valley, a \textit{derwish} for the poor and an advisor to the rulers of Kashmir. The Valley of Kashmir, by his active patronage came to be known as “little Iran.” The people learnt arts and crafts through his guidance and became famous all over the world.\textsuperscript{16}

In Kashmir, a sufi \textit{khankah} was a community centre for the brotherhood, where they could stay, live, eat, prey and obtain guidance and around the \textit{khankahs} were working centres, where the craftsmen engaged themselves in the production of various handicrafts and earn their livelihood.\textsuperscript{17}

The Central Asian Muslims who settled in the valley due to persecution perpetrated upon them by Timur lent an active support to \textit{karkhanas} so as to make them functionally operative and economically viable. These were the Syeds who refused to acknowledge the suzerainty of Timur. They belonged to Hamdan and Baihaq. They fled for safety and entered Kashmir in the 14th century.\textsuperscript{18} These Central Asian Muslim emigrants made themselves popular among masses by involving themselves to an economic activity widely pursued by the people in the valley. They rendered their level-best help to the rulers’ of Kashmir in establishing \textit{karkhanas}. These Central Asian Muslim emigrants inspired the Kashmiri rulers to reorganise the handicraft industry on the basis of Central Asian \textit{karkhana} system.\textsuperscript{19}

The Central Asian Muslims lived in the cities like Iran, Yarkand, Samarkand, Bukhara and Isfahan had rendered tastes which they catered through the revival of

\begin{itemize}
    \item \textsuperscript{15} Fida M. Husnain, \textit{The Shah-i-Hamedan}, p. 43
    \item \textsuperscript{17} Ibid.
    \item \textsuperscript{18} Haider Malik Chadura, \textit{Tarikh-i-Kashmir}, MS. (R.P.D), Srinagar, f. 27; see also Parmu, \textit{The History of Muslim Rule in Kashmir}, pp. 102-03.
\end{itemize}
handicraft industry through karkhanas. Besides, they were trained in various arts and crafts and they thought it worth to engage themselves in other economic activities and this could be better done only through establishing karkhanas.\textsuperscript{20}

Zain-ul-Abidin adopted systematic measures for the improvement of handicraft industries in Kashmir.\textsuperscript{21} He endeavoured to organise the handicraft industry after Central Asian model and techniques.\textsuperscript{22} He invited experts from Samarkand and Bukhara and provided them several concessions so as to make the job more appealing to them. He also persuaded the Central Asian craftsmen to teach the Kashmiri craftsmen the designs prevailing in Persian not allowing them to leave the valley until they had done so.\textsuperscript{23}

The cultural intercourse between Central Asia and Kashmir received further impetus under Mirza Haider Daughlat\textsuperscript{24}. He introduced Central Asian customs into Kashmir. Being a man of artistic taste, Mirza Haider Daughlat encouraged the development of craft industries. He is credited with the introduction of latticed window work (tabdan) in Kashmir.\textsuperscript{25}

Mirza Haider Daughlat in Tarikh-i-Rashidi states, “in Kashmir one meets with all those arts and crafts which are in most cities uncommon, such as stone-polishing, stone-cutting, bottle-making, window-cutting (tabdan-tarash), gold-beating etc. In the whole of Mawraunnahr (Transoxiana) except in Samarkand and Bukhara, these are nowhere to be met with, while in Kashmir they are even abundant this is all due to Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin.”\textsuperscript{26} This statement of Mirza Haider Daughlat establishes that certain Kashmiri crafts were not found everywhere in India and secondly they had much in common with those of Samarkand and Bukhara.

The Mughals after the conquest of Kashmir followed the footsteps of Sultans of Kashmir and continued the tradition of inviting artisans and craftsmen from Central

\textsuperscript{20} A. Ahad, Kashmir to Frankfurt, p. 2.
\textsuperscript{21} Anonymous, Baharistanshahi, Translated into English by Kashi Nath Pandit, Firma KLM Private Limited, Calcutta, 1991, p. 64, Hereafter, Baharistanshahi
\textsuperscript{22} M. Hassan, Kashmir Under the Sultans, p. 92.
\textsuperscript{24} Mirza Haider Daughlat was born at Tashkent in about 1490-1500 A.D. His lineage is drawn to the Chaghtai Mughals. He was related to Babar on mother’s side.
\textsuperscript{25} Warikoo, Central Asia and Kashmir, p. 92.
\textsuperscript{26} Tarikh-i-Rashidi, p. 434

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Asia. Akbar’s thirst for collecting talent attracted some of the best artisans and craftsmen who were masters in diverse fields from abroad. He is credited with the projection of vast technical education programmes whereby young and unemployed learnt manual arts and crafts from master craftsmen, local as well as foreign. Abul Fazl says that, “skilful masters and workmen have settled in this country to teach people an improved system of manufacture” This suggests that Akbar brought foreign master weavers and *naqashbands* in his workshop to teach better techniques.  

Abul Fazl writes, “His majesty himself acquired in very short time a theoretical as well as practical knowledge of the whole trade and on account of the care bestowed upon the workmen of this country.” Here Akbar resembles Shah Abbas of Persia whose detailed personal interest led to a similar textile boom. How successful the imitations of foreign material were is seen from these lines of Abul Fazl, “All kinds of hair weaving and silk weaving were brought to perfection and the imperial workshops furnished all these stuffs which are made in other countries.”  

Akbar after consolidation took interest for the development of arts and crafts. As noted by Abul Fazl in *Ain-i-Akbari*, The emperor has sent for expert teachers and master-weavers to settle in his country to improve the system of manufacture. Abul Fazl further says that Akbar has caused the designs to be made of wonderful variations and charming textures. Akbar has appointed experienced artisans who have produced many masterpieces.  

The Kashmiri craftsmen wove the exquisite floral, faunal and geometrical designs exciting wonder and evoking immense praise among the rulers of foreign countries to whom handicrafts were sent as presents. Some of the principle industries of Kashmir that bear the influence of Central Asia during the Mughal period are as follows:-

**The shawl industry**

The shawl industry of Kashmir dates back to the Ancient times. It existed since the times of Kurus and Pandus. It was on a high stage during the period of Roman

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27 *Ain*, I, p. 93.
28 Ibid., p. 94.
29 *Ain*, I, p. 57
30 *Tuzuk*, II, p. 178
Empire. The Kashmiri shawls were in great demand and were worn by the proudest beauties at the court of Cæsars. It existed even during the time of King Ashoka (268-232 B.C) but thereafter this industry disappeared for a long. It was revived during the reign of Sultan Qutubuddin by the active cooperation of a Central Asian sufi ‘Mir Syed Ali Hamdani’. This industry flourished as an industry of national importance during the reign of Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin. Simultaneously one of the Central Asian artists Naghz Beg, who was the resident of Khokand, visited Kashmir with his master Mirza Haider Daughlat and introduced in the texture of shawl, red and green spots in regular rows. Naghz Beg got this idea when he found a piece of pashmina sprinkled with some drops of blood of the weaver. Naghz Beg found that the Pashmina looked prettier with the red spots and he got pashmina thread dyed with red and green colours and wound on twigs and with them the cloth was woven so that red and green spots were alternately in regular rows produced on it.

During the period under study, the shawl industry of Kashmir got such a progress that a shawl of one and a half square yards could be passed through an ordinary ring and was called ‘ring shawl of Kashmir’. The Andijan weavers were brought to Kashmir. These weavers adopted the jaruga design which was jewelled ornament in shape like an almond and was worn on the turban.

Central Asia was also a chief exporter of raw pashm to Kashmir and it is for that reason, the Mughals always interfered in the local politics of Ladakh and treated it as a feudatory part of their empire because Ladakh held the strategic location and acted as an entrepot for the import of raw pashm from Central Asia, Chantang and Rodokh to Kashmir.

The shawl industry of Kashmir for which Kashmir has attained the worldwide reputation was largely dependent on Central-Asia for its raw-material and also Central

31 N. K. Singh, *Islamic Heritage*, II, p. 113
34 Ain, I, p. 98
Asia was a market for Kashmiri manufactured shawls. Besides, the shawl industry was refined only after adopting the Central Asian techniques and with the active cooperation of Central Asian master craftsmen who taught the Kashmiri artisans the weaving designs and techniques prevailing in Central Asia. The embroidery which was introduced into Kashmir in the 16th century already existed in Central Asia during the Seljuq period (1037-1057 AD) under strong Chinese influence. Persian influence affected the Kashmir style also. It seems that embroidery was introduced in the latter half of the 16th century and received impetus from Akbar.\(^{36}\)

**The Carpet Industry**

During the 15th century, Kashmir received a large infusion of Central Asian and Persian expertise to reactivate the inert indigenous crafts. The raw material was already available in bulk. The sheep and goat wool of Kirman, Khurasan and Kurdistan was soft and lustrous and had natural variations of shades which could yield a design without always using dyes. However the best wool to Kashmir came from Turfan, Kichar and was exported to Kashmir via Yarkand.\(^{37}\) The carpet industry in Kashmir is mainly of Persian origin. Iran produces carpets of varying qualities in different parts of the country ranging from the coarser tribal carpets from Hamedan, Shiraz and Abade to the fine high quality silk and wool carpets from Isfahan, Kashan, Masched, Sarook and Kirman. Kashmir, however, only received the best court traditions of Iran and from the beginning the finest quality carpets were woven in the Valley, embodying the best designs of Shah Abbas tradition. The designs of Kashmiri carpets have always been comparable to the best in Persia and in technique, virtuosity and skill. There are craftsmen even today in Kashmir whose work matches the best production of their ancestors.\(^{38}\)

Carpet weavers were brought from Central Asia. Apart from that, during the 15th century, coaching classes were set up even in criminal reformatories where criminals were taught manual skills especially carpet weaving.\(^{39}\) Though no carpet of this period is surviving but it can be safely presumed that there must be close aesthetic


and technical affinities between Kashmir and those of Khurasan, Bukhara and Herat in view of the constant cultural overlap in this entire region. The industry flourished for a long time even after the death of Zain-ul-Abidin, but with the passage of time it declined. It was revived only during the time of Emperor Jahangir, when Kashmir was governed by the Mughal governor Ahmed Beg Khan (1614-18), an eminent scholar and saint of Kashmir named Akhund Mulla Rehnuma went to perform Hajj pilgrimage via Central Asian route. Akhund Rehnuma during his return visited Andijan where he saw carpets were manufactured. From Andijan he brought himself, the tools of carpet weaving and the carpet weavers to Kashmir and then restarted the industry on the Central Asian pattern. The carpets that were prepared in Kashmir were of great artistic excellence with floral designs of mosques, gardens, wild animals, gliding fishes, almond etc. It was due to the active cooperation of Akhund Rehnuma, the carpet industry of Kashmir flourished to a great extent, it is said that when after some years Akhund Rehnuma went to the carpet weavers of Kashmir they could not recognise him, thereupon Akhund Rehnuma cursed upon them (zindas dung dewoal marit nirnek na kafan ti) meaning, ‘during life time they may live in plenty and when dead even cloth for their shroud may not be forth coming.’ Akhund Rehnuma’s tomb at Srinagar is held in great reverence by carpet weavers.

Though the designs and patterns of Kashmiri carpets are mainly inspired by Persian carpets and Central Asian rugs, however, they also show heavy influences of Kashmir’s flora and fauna. The native flowers and plants of Kashmir have been incorporated in a number of Persian designs. In the gamla or vase design with its flowering branches, “sprays of flowers of many forms and colours burst like fireworks,” while the khatirast, a design of narrow stripes or bands with flowers ranged alongside is another speciality of Kashmir.

The Kashmiri carpet weaver feels proud for his ability to accurately produce old Persian carpets. In Iran there is a masterpiece – the ‘Ardebil mosque carpet’ which was manufactured in 1536 and now preserved in South Kensington Museum London. It was reproduced in Kashmir in 1902. This carpet was purchased and produced for

40 A. Riazuddin, History of Handicrafts, p. 183; see also, J. Jaitley, Crafts of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh, pp. 82-83.
41 Sufi, Kashir, p. 571. See also P. A. Koul, Geography, p.38
the Victoria and Albert Museum for 2,000 pounds. A copy of this celebrated carpet was purchased by Lord Curzon for 100 pounds. The main design of the carpet comprises a large central medallion in pale yellow surrounded by cartouches. The border is composed of long and circular panels with alternating lobed outlines on a brown background embellished with floral motifs which symbolises heavy Persian influences.

Silk Industry

The sericulture industry in Kashmir is not much on record before the Muslim rule. But it is believed to be an ancient industry in Kashmir. We do not find any reference in the historical sources that could deal with the silk industry of Kashmir. Huin Tsang, the Chinese pilgrim and scholar during his two years stay in Kashmir in the 7th century has mentioned only serge and cotton. Luxury silks are conspicuous in his narrative and it is difficult to claim that local industry of silk textiles existed before the medieval period. The first reference for the existence of silk industry comes from Mirza Haider Daughlat who claims that, it already existed there before his visit to Kashmir. The silk industry was considered as the queen of textiles. Silk manufacture spread vastly in Kashmir during the medieval period. It was a fashion during the Mughal times. Even a poor woman put it in the front rank of necessities and cherished it as a mystic kind of franchise. She thus asserted a claim to the right of living gracefully no less than the most favoured of fortune.

Mirza Haider Daughlat says that silk industry was one of the wonders of Kashmir and says that there were a large number of mulberry trees. The fruits were eaten and only their leaves were utilized as a food for the silk worms. The origin of silk industry is also connected with Central Asia particularly with that of Bukhara with which Kashmir had interchange of seeds and silk. The sericulture was an important industry in Kashmir during the Mughal rule. Abul Fazl in his Ain-i-Akbari

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43 Sufi, Islamic Culture, p. 287.
44 Ibid, p. 239.
46 Sufi, Kashir, p.574.
47 Tarikh-i-Rashidi, p. 425
48 P. A. Koul, Geography, p.58.
49 Tarikh-i-Rashidi, p. 425
writes that, “The mulberry is little eaten, its leaves being little reserved for the silk worm. The eggs are brought from the Gilgit and Little Tibet.”

Jahangir also says that, “there are mulberries (tut) everywhere. From the foot of every mulberry tree a wine creeper grows up. In fact mulberries of Kashmir are not fit to eat, with the exception of some trees grown in gardens, but the leaves are used to feed the silk worm. They bring the silk worm eggs from Gilgit and Tibet.”

One of the most revealing pronouncements in the textile history of Kashmir comes from Pandit Srivara. He says, “A large number of artisans adept in formulating original designs regarding him as the wishing tree came from a long distance like a swarm of bumble bees. The Kashmiris mastering the skilful use of shuttle and looms now weave costly and beautiful silks. The special woollen stuffs of foreign origin worthy of kings are now being woven by the Kashmiris. The painters seeing the complicated creeper designs obtained by intricate weaving processes are reduced to silence as a figure in painting with endless threads, motifs and colours. The art weavers became famous. The rich, ever-effulgent, unrivalled in virtues and good administration, the King by his own intelligence became renowned by his country and his textiles”

The quotation is filled with three implications especially in three fields – Firstly, that original designs were introduced; secondly, that new techniques of weaving and mastery of shuttles hitherto unknown to local artisans were taught and finally that foreign fabrics were copied and reproduced. Apparently, the draw loom was introduced from Central Asia and its complexities worked out by migrant master craftsmen to the benefit of local apprentices. The ‘complicated creeper designs’ which was the classic latticed compositions on single to triple planes was a characteristic of Persian textiles.

**Paper Industry**

Kashmir is naturally gifted by a number of resources and production of fine paper is one among them. Kashmir was famous for its paper. This paper was highly used in

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51 *Ain*, II, p. 353.
52 *Tuzuk*, II, p. 146; I. Habib, *Atlas*, p. 3b
India for writing manuscripts and was used by all who wished to impart dignity to their correspondence. Abul Fazl writes, “The Kashmiri people have a separate character which they use for manuscript work and they write chiefly on *tuz* which is the bark of a tree, worked into sheets with some rude art and which keeps for years.”

Besides *bhojpata*, the Kashmiri rag paper was also in great demand in India as well as in Persia.

The process of making rag paper was first discovered in China in the first or second century of the Christian era and from there was brought to Samarkand. During the 14th and 15th century AD, it was introduced into Kashmir by the Central Asian Muslim refugees. The paper industry of Kashmir got the royal patronage under Zain-ul-Abidin and he established such industries in his official residence. Lawrence says that the Paper Making Industry and the art of Book-Binding was introduced by Budshah, who invited the paper-makers from Samarkand to Kashmir and they settled in the Nawa Shehr District of Srinagar. He also mentions that three kinds of paper, *Farmashi*, *Damashti* and *Kalamdan* were in use and besides it was *Rangamas*, which was coloured paper, used for packing purposes.

Apart from paper-making, *paper-machie* was the other industry which like other industries was introduced into Kashmir from Samarkand during the 15th century. *Paper-machie* is actually mashed paper. *Paper-machie* work goes by the name *kar-i-kalamdani* or pen-case work, because it is usually applied to the ornamentation of pen-cases and small boxes. It is also called *kar-i-munaqqash* or painted work. The articles that were made of *paper-machie* include boxes, vases and *surahis*. Shawls were sent to France in *paper-machie* boxes which were separately sold there at high prices.

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56 *Sufi, Islamic Culture*, p. 297.
61 *Sufi, Kashir*, p.577.
62 P. A. Koul, *Geography*, p. 48
The motifs of *paper-machie* such as lotus and iris, *sosan*, water lily, *gul-e-neelofar*, narcissus, *nargis*, field crocus, *nyov* and flying geese comprise the essential vocabulary of *paper-machie* decorations and all these are the inspiration of Persian features.

**Wood Work**

Kashmir is a land where nature is entirely gracious. Its fertile land through which Jhelum and its numerous tributaries meander, its mirror like lakes and its lovely sceneries of green woods and meadows have the effect of making man beautiful and of polished taste which they involved in wood-work and wood-carving industry of Kashmir.

The wood-work of Kashmir lacks a little finish but in the opinion of Lawrence, the Kashmiri carver is second to none in his skills as a designer. He works with hammer and chisel, and a great deal of the roughness and inequality of his pieces is due to the difficulty of obtaining seasoned walnut-wood. In Islamabad the carpenter turns out a good deal of high coloured wooden articles, which look like lacquer work, but are really wood coloured and then highly polished by the use of lathe. Very elegant spinning wheels, candle sticks, bowls and cups are to be found among the products of this art.

Pandit Srivara and Mirza Haider Daughlat reports that the Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin’s entire palace comprised of twelve storeys, with fifty rooms, halls and corridors, all in wood. Mirza Haider Daughlat in *Tarikh-i-Rashidi* writes, “Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin built himself a palace in his own town of Nau Shehr, which in the dialect of Kashmir is called Rajdan. It has twelve storeys some of which contain fifty rooms, halls and corridors. The whole of the structure is built of wood.” He also says that the Rajdan is loftier and contains more rooms then found in those of Tabriz, Herat, Samarkand and Aqsaray. But nevertheless the structure indicates heavy influences of Central-Asian features.

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66 Ibid
The double storeyed mosque of Shah-i-Hamdan with eight sided wooden pillars, foliated bases, capitals, ornamental dados, arched and recessed mehrrabs, panelled walls and painted ceilings also carry indications of the influence of Central Asian features. Though much of the wood-work in the mosque seems to be renovated at various stages, yet a few pieces appear to be quite old, like the richly carved plinth with geometrical ornamentation and scrolls like those of Ahmed Yasavi’s doors in his palace at Russian Turkestan. The building composed of super-imposed airy and light structures in the form of arcades, verandas and porticos whose open spaces are filled with mashrabiya (lattice) and enriched by carved wooden plaques. The mashrabiya called pinjra in Punjab came to Kashmir from Khurasan. There is also possibility that it might have first reached to Punjab and from Punjab to Kashmir. Nevertheless, the mashrabiya draws its origin to Khurasan. The best kind of pinjra work is known by the names of posh-kandur, chahar-khana, sadah-kandur, shash-tez, shash-sitara, shash-pahlul, dwazdah-sar, shekh-sar, jaffari, jahan-shirin and totshesh-tez.

The khatamband or panelling in various geometrical designs applied to ceilings was also introduced from Central Asia during the Mughal period. It is said to have been introduced by Mirza Haider Daughlat on Central Asian pattern. The carpenter’s skill is reflected in charming ceilings in which various shades of the pine-slips blend together in perfect harmony. The khatamband has been given great impetus by the builders of house-boat. A good specimen of khatamband ceilings is the shrine of Naqashband Sahib near Jama Masjid in Srinagar. Ceilings of same construction and designs are found in Samarqand, Bukhara, Persia, and Constantinople, Algiers and Morocco. The best kind of khatamband work are known as, hazar-gardan, band-i-rum, hashtpahul, chaharbaksh, moj, hasht-hazar, badam-hazar, sehbaksh and dawazdah-gird.

Wooden ziarats with their sloping roofs rising in tiers to form a pyramid, gables and overhanging eaves have very little common with those of Central Asian features but the interiors are carved in same style of Central Asian ornamental

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69 P. A. Koul, Geography, p. 69.
70 Ibid; Sufi, Kashir, II, p. 586.
71 Sufi, Islamic Culture, p. 294.
features. The wood-carvings bear the influences of Gaznavids decorative devices, e.g. in the Madni mosque and Amir at Pampur.

Wood-work was not confined to architectural uses only. There were other beautiful items made of wood which bear the influence of Central Asia and Persia. Bernier accompanying Emperor Aurangzeb to Kashmir in 1665 noticed the workmanship and beauty of palanquins, bedsteads, ink-stands, boxes and spoons. He also says that Kashmiri exports of such items were found all over India. They perfectly understand the art of varnishing and are eminently skilled in closely imitating the beautiful veins of certain woods, by inlaying it with gold thread so delicately wrought that I never saw anything more elegant or perfect.  

The wood carvers of Kashmir are remarkable for their methods and smallness of the outfit.

**Metal Work**

The Kashmiri metal-work included the chased and engraved copper, silver and brass. These wares were mostly used by Muslims. Tinned copper was chiefly used on grounds of ritual purity. The art of tinned metals used in Kashmir was introduced from Persia. The Muslims used vessels made of copper for cooking and eating purposes. The objects that were made included a wide variety of domestic utensils like plates, bowls, surahis, lotas (water container), tea-pots, spouted-jugs, and samovars. These were all of pleasingly curved shapes. The decoration was done on elaborate chased and engraved designs with a black lacquer like substance which is rubbed into the background. The handles of these metallic articles were of brass and represent the head and tail of a Chinese dragon. The floral decorations and forms are mainly Persian. But these decorations also retained some of the features of Hindu art. Thus from a study of the metal-works of Kashmir it appears that the three civilizations- Persian, Chinese and Hindu met in the valley but the influence of

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72 Bernier, Travels, p. 402.
Persian overshadowed the other two, although it was modified by the native mode of expression.\textsuperscript{77}

The Kashmiris were not merely the imitators. Though they accepted foreign influence but at the same time they developed their own style. Thus some of their ewers are different from those of Persia. In fact some of their shapes are found nowhere in Asia.\textsuperscript{78} Like, Kashmiris excel in enamelling which can’t be found with Muslim workers in Persia and elsewhere. The copper was locally mined in Kashmir during the medieval times. It was extracted from the mountains of Aishmuqam and at Lsytial in the Lolab Valley.\textsuperscript{79} The Kashmiris also decorate their metals in a particular fashion which distinguishes their work from that of Persia, Central Asia and India. Apart from that unlike Indian, The enamels of Kashmir are not transparent and in this respect they differ from most of the Indian enamels.\textsuperscript{80}

Two copper bowls are preserved in the Victoria and Albert Museum. These bowls contain the Persian inscriptions which give the names of owners and dates. These bowls are the good examples of the style of decoration.\textsuperscript{81} One of the bowls which is dated 1026 A.H/1617 A.D\textsuperscript{82} is richly ornamented with a deep band of alternately spaced arabesque motifs on a plain ground. The motifs are linked vertically and differ in shape from row to row giving the impression that they fan out from the base of the bowl. The use of arabesque motifs is paralleled in other Indo-Muslim metal-work, for instance, a Mughal brass lota of the 17\textsuperscript{th} century in the Victoria and Albert Museum.\textsuperscript{83} The second Kashmiri bowl dated 1096 A.H/ 1685 A.D shows the arabesque interpreted as a deep band of close textured continuous design.\textsuperscript{84} Spiralling stems bear large bilobed leaves which act as springboards for new growth of tendrils. The stems are punctuated with lotuses and star like flowers. This style is more twisting and gracious then the arabesque motif style.

Although the historians credit Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin with the stimulating Persian influence on the Arts and Crafts of Kashmir, but we cannot give concrete

\textsuperscript{77} M. Hassan, \textit{Kashmir Under Sultans}, p. 425. \\
\textsuperscript{78} Ibid \\
\textsuperscript{79} J. Jaitley, \textit{Crafts of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh}, p. 184. \\
\textsuperscript{80} J. F. Blacker, \textit{The A.B.C of Indian Art}, Stanley Paul and Co., Delhi, 1975, p. 211 \\
\textsuperscript{81} See Plate 2; see also, Scarce and Sutton, ‘The Problem Piece of Kashmiri Metal-Work’ \\
\textsuperscript{82} Ibid \\
\textsuperscript{83} Ibid, Plate 3 \\
\textsuperscript{84} See Plate 1
support to this view of historians because there are none of the masterpieces of metalwork available which can be dated to his reign. The 17th century pieces, however strongly resembles to the contemporary Safavid pieces.\textsuperscript{85} It is possible that the stylistic developments in both the countries took place at an even pace.

After the 14th century there was a major change in the style of metal works. The heavy shapes and lavishly inlaid decoration gave way to more curving forms and designs. The main features of the new decoration were the use of exuberant floral motifs in which chased and engraved lines predominate. The full development of this style was reached in Safavid times, where it was expressed in the arts and crafts. The roots of the style may be found in Timurid times and it is important to mention that Kashmir had contacts with Timurid Iran since 15th Century. Timurid patronage also extended beyond Iran and Central Asia. The Question that how much were Central Asian ideas a formative influence on both Kashmiri and Persian styles. There can be no satisfactory answer to this until the material evidence is properly studied. What can be said is that Central Asian metal work was heavily influenced by the Persian decorative motifs.

A Timurid brass Pen box in the \textit{Musee Des Beaux-Arts}, Lyons, dated to the 15th century shows elements which later crystallized into definite stylistic features. The motifs are reduced in size and distributed on a plain background. They are filled with meticulously engraved tracery. The fully developed style is illustrated by a brass ewer of 17th century.\textsuperscript{86} The design and variations upon it formed a principle decorative theme of Safavid metal-work which was popular from the 17th century onwards. It consists of rows of alternately spaced and vertically linked arabesque motifs on a plain background. Other decorative themes included continuous arabesque often with animal and human figures.

Other Kashmiri and Persian pieces resemble each other is enough to say that Iran was the chief influence. The late 17th century copper bowl and brass ewer reveal this. The same technical process of manufacture and decoration has been used in each article. In both cases the main design element is a broadband of alternately spaced arabesque motifs against a plain background. The effect of the Persian background is,
however, softer and suppler rather like a patterned textile; the chasing is worked in thin lines and deeper relief. The motifs which vary in shape from row to row are similar in both pieces and are vertically linked. They are filled with arabesques based upon pairs of overlapping tendrils and large bilobed leaves. In the Persian motifs the arabesques are more skilfully managed, leaves divide to form tendrils which then again spring into flower in a smoother manner then in the Kashmiri piece. In summary, the basic difference of interpretation between these similar pieces is one of spirit rather than of design. An extra factor which has to be taken into account for Kashmiri metal-work is the influence of Tibet. Contacts with Tibet were naturally close. In metalwork the influence is seen in the massive shapes of some pieces, notably teapots with dragon spouts and handles. 87

The jewellery of Kashmir also indicates Persian and Central Asian influence. The prevalence of some jewellery items of this time in Kashmir resembles those which occur in Central Asia. This is a proof of the Persian influence on jewellery of Kashmir. The jewellery of Kashmir is unique in design and very minutely worked. The various items of Jewellery include earrings, necklaces, bracelets, anklets, amulets, rings, rosary, tin or silver-charm cases and head-bands are all delicately worked. 88 The Mughals were fond of the beautiful articles made in Kashmir. This made the Kashmiris to preserve all the existent types of jewellery, collect the best artisans and encourage the styles from Iran, Central Asia and the surrounding countries beyond Kabul. But the jewellery of Kashmir is so unique that it is difficult to trace any particular influence. Because the beautiful masterpieces of jhumkas, bell-shaped earrings with little silver and gold drops forming a thick fringe, bracelets delicately traced with leaves and blossoms and sprays, necklaces composed of plaques strung on thread and set with uncut stones can be found throughout India but the designing of them is very different and cannot suit with the Kashmiri dress. In fact so unique was every masterpiece of jewellery that it was easy to recognise that it had come from Kashmir. 89

88 Sufi, Kashir, II, p. 581.
89 John Ince, the Kashmir Handbook, Wyman and Company, Rawalpindi, 1876, see, Appendix, Hereafter: J. Ince, the Kashmir Handbook; See also, Sufi, Kashir, II, p. 582.
From the above discussion we came to the conclusion that the handicrafts and craftsmen of Medieval Kashmir were largely influenced by those found in Central Asia. Presently the names of various craft designs like those in shawl weaving and carpet-making are mainly based on Persian roots, e.g. *barg-i-sosan*, *chinar*, *barg-i-sarv*, *barg-i-badam*, *mazar-posh* etc. The fame acquired by the Kashmiri artisans in their art of wood-carving, door and window panel-making (*panjras*), *khatambandi* (ornamented ceilings) carpet and shawl making is largely due to the adoption of Central Asian patterns. Even today, the Kashmiri carpet manufacturers find it more convenient to introduce their goods in the market as Bukhara, Samarkand and Farghana carpets. No other region of India is so steeped in Central Asian aesthetics as Kashmir in its entire pageant of crafts. In silver and copper-work, paper-making and *paper-machie*, enamelling, carpets, shawls, ivory-inlay, embroidery and wood-carving the techniques and motifs are very much identical to those found in the Central Asian craft work.


Chapter Two

Handicraft Industry: The State Patronage

Since the beginning of medieval era in Kashmir, a large number of Central Asian craftsmen settled down in the valley. They took keen interest in the affairs of the state and inspired rulers to the modes of life for the welfare of the court and society. The rulers of Kashmir, therefore, earnestly strived to remodel the socio-economic system of state on the Central Asian pattern which had brought ample material prosperity to that region.\(^1\) As a result of this the economy of Kashmir was renovated and old industries were revived.

During the reign of Qutubuddin (1374-1389) the art of shawl weaving was renovated due to the active cooperation of Syed Ali Hamdani, the well-known missionary.\(^2\) It developed considerably in the reign of Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin (1420-1470) who made elaborate arrangements of making it an industry of great economic consequences. He provided the artisans all the necessary facilities for the advancement of the craft. Zain-ul-Abidin introduced a new type of loom for the shawl manufacture. Therefore the view of Walter Lawrence that shawl industry was introduced in India by Babur and then made entry in Kashmir is totally wrong because the facts reveal that it was an age old industry in Kashmir and was well established during the 15th century.\(^3\)

Zain-ul-Abidin’s successors were not as capable as he was and brought Kashmir to slow political decline and even unrest until Babar’s cousin, Mirza Haider Daughlat, an outstanding and cultivated Central Asian prince, took over and brought peace and order.\(^4\) His personal interest and perceptive patronage gave a renewed boost to craft industries, the benefits of which were followed by Chak Rulers.\(^5\)


\(^2\) Syed Ali Hamdani also known as “Amir-i-Kabir” was a missionary of great knowledge and wisdom and exercised considerable influence on the local society. When he visited Kashmir in 1381, on his way back he was provided with some Pashmina in ladakh for the purpose of making socks. On reaching Srinagar he provided some of it to the Sultan who was delighted enough to get it weaved into a shawl, see, Hassan Shah, *Tarikh-i-Hassan*, ed. Sahibzada Hasan Shah, 2 volumes, Vol. I. Srinagar, 1954, pp. 354-56.

\(^3\) Ibid, p. 434

\(^4\) *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*, pp. 423-24

\(^5\) Ibid, p. 434
henceforth experienced its second cultural resurgence whose impact lasted long. Abul Fazl writes, “Mirza rehabilitated Kashmir and craftsmen from other countries, reorganised the administration and gave Mughal civilization to the valley and attracted artists from abroad.” Then Abul Fazl adds, “Artificers of various kinds who might be deservedly employed in the greatest cities are found in Kashmir.” Jahangir in his *Tuzuk* praised Mirza for his versatility and the introduction of arts and crafts, “Kashmir is much indebted to Mirza Haider for its excellences” on a marvellous base of shawl industry built up by Zain-ul-Abidin, Mirza Haider Daughlat must have added refinements he was already familiar with in Central Asian Kingdoms from Farghana to Kashghar. This entire region was known for its manufacture of “fine kind of twill hair cloth and carpets skilfully woven.” Not only production but “export of choice woollen carpets and garments from Bukhara and Turkistan”.

Though Kashmir is much indebted to Central Asia because the origin of many crafts is linked to Central Asia but the fact can not be neglected that high level of artistic skill has been present in Kashmir since ancient times. The coming of Central Asian sufis, artisans and craftsmen began a new chapter in the art and craft development as it provided a new paradigm for these arts to become an organised industry combined with a philosophical approach. Kashmir is a naturally beautiful valley and its people are known for their intelligence and artistic excellence. Apart from that nature has provided Kashmir with abundance of raw material which the genious of mind of its artisans manufacture into articles of luxury displaying a highly refined artistic taste and clearly reflecting the sceneries of the land with which he was surrounded.

**Patronage of Shawl Industry:** Among the handicraft industries, shawl industry was the most important for which Mughal rulers paid great attention. The Mughal emperors immensely encouraged shawl weaving in every direction bringing it to such a perfection that it soon was regarded as a symbol of imperial prestige and a determinant of commercial ties with the foreign countries mostly Central Asian,

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7 *Tuzuk*, II. p.147
thereby accelerating the process of urbanising Kashmir. They set the industrial, commercial and production patterns of its karkhanas thereby creating new social relations among its craftsmen. The shawl karkhanas of Kashmir were included in the royal karkhanas. The state owned karkhana system developed phenomenally with the Mughals. According to George Forster 40,000 looms operated during the Mughal period.

The shawl industry of Kashmir is an age old industry. It existed even during the time of King Ashoka (268-232 B.C). The industry flourished as an industry of great economic importance during the Sultante period. Simultaneously one of the Central Asian artists Naghz Beg, who was the resident of Khokand, visited Kashmir with his master Mirza Haider Daughlat and introduced in the texture of shawl, red and green spots in regular rows. Naghz Beg got this idea when he found a piece of pashmina sprinkled with some drops of blood of the weaver. Naghz Beg found that the pashmina looked prettier with the red spots and he got pashmina thread dyed with red and green colours and wound on twigs and with them the cloth was woven so that red and green spots were alternately in regular rows produced on it.

The material used for the manufacture of shawl used to be of two types, one is known as ‘pashm’ and the other is known as ‘tus’. Pashm is the wool grown by the domestic goats of Chantang, Rodokh and Tibet. Pashm used to come from these places via Ladakh which was the entrepot between Kashmir and Central Asia. Tus was grown by the Tibetan wild goat also known as ‘Ibex’ or Skyin. This wool was collected from the bushes during spring season because during spring season Ibex

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10 Ain, I, p. 66
11 Bernier, Travels, pp. 258-59.
12 Forster, A Journey, p. 20.
13 N. K. Singh, Islamic Heritage, II, p. 113
14 G. M. D. Sufi, Islamic Culture in Kashmir, Light and Life, Delhi, 1979, reprint, Gulshan Books Srinagar, 2005, p. 283
17 Ibid
tries to free itself of the extra layer of insulation by rubbing against the bushes and
rocks. *Tus* shawls are generally more costly due to its warmth, softness and delicacy.\(^{18}\)

To manufacture a shawl, the wool either pashm or *tus* was first cleared of cow
dung and other impure substances like rough hair by cleaning, sorting, combing etc.
The next job was to treat it with the rice paste and after that it was spun into a fine
yarn. Spinning was the most tiresome job done on traditional *charkhas* called *inders*.
The spun yarn was than dyed with different colours by local dyers known as
‘rangrez’. Most of the tints used were derived from natural vegetables such as *kirmizy*
(light red), *gullaly* (red), *zaitoni* (olive), *badamy* (almond colour), *fakhtai* (grey) and
*zaharmuhr* (light brown).\(^{19}\) While some colours were obtained from various cities of
India mainly Punjab.\(^{20}\) Before the actual weaving of shawl, the yarn is adjusted for the
warp and the weft. The warp is fixed in the loom. The coloured yarn is wound round
on small sticks which may be around 1,500 in number in richly embroidered shawls.
The weaver has no idea what he has to produce, but works only on the basis of coded
script ‘*talim*’. After weaving, the shawl is washed in the nearby lakes the water of
which peculiarly suited to render the pashmina soft and the colours fast and bright.\(^{21}\)

During the Mughal period the shawl industry of Kashmir got such a progress
that a shawl of one and a half square yards could be passed through an ordinary ring
and was called ‘ring shawl of Kashmir’. The Andijan weavers were brought to
Kashmir. These weavers adopted the *jiugha* design which was jewelled ornament in
shape like an almond and was worn on the turban.\(^{22}\)

The Mughal interest in the technological development of the shawl industry on
a sound economic footing can be attributed to their strong fascination for the fabric
which they considered a symbol of court prestige and auspiciousness.\(^{23}\) Long before
establishing their rule in kashmir, the Mughals were very fond of Kashmiri shawl. In
1544, Shah Tahmashp I, The king of Iran issued an edict detailing the supplies to be
provided to the exiled Mughal emperor, Humaiyun. Among the textiles listed are

\(^{18}\) *Ain*, I, p. 91.
\(^{19}\) Ibid, p. 98.
\(^{20}\) Beyard Taylor, _Central Asia, Travels in Kashmir, Little Tibet and Central Asia_, Scribner, New
York, 1874, p. 94; William Moorecroft and George Trecbeck, _Travels in the Himalayan Province of
Hindustan and the Punjab, in Ladakh and Kashmir; In Peshawar, Kabul, Kunduz and Bokhara_, 2
\(^{21}\) P.A.Koul, _Geography of Jammu and Kashmir State_, pp. 24-25
\(^{22}\) *Ain*, I, p. 98; Lawrence, _Valley_, p. 375
\(^{23}\) Bernier, _Travels_, pp. 402-03; T. Vrema, _Karkhanas Under the Mughals_, p. 68.
shal-e-tarmeh and shal-e-Kashmir. The reference to Shal-e-Kashmir may plausibly be taken as an indication that there was already a well-established export of goods between Iran and Kashmir, and that they had gained recognition as a luxury textile fit for the reception of royalty.

More than just a trade item, the shawl industry was already of sufficient importance to be reflected in public policy. The first army sent by Emperor Akbar met with reverses and its commanders concluded a treaty with the Kashmiris. The terms of the treaty are reported differently in different source, but either way Kashmir enjoyed a tributary status to the Mughal empire, which was to benefit from certain important products of the country, including Saffron and Shawls. The fact that this treaty did not eventually take and that Akbar went on full scale conquest, by no means negates the fact that shawl industry must already have been a major issue in Kashmir, and probably an important source of revenue.

Abul Fazl on shawls of Kashmir

Abul Fazl is the only contemporary historian of the period under study who wrote a separate section on the shawls and its varieties produced in Kashmir. Once Kashmir was annexed by Mughals, Emperor Akbar ordered that the industry be developed. Emperor Akbar was extremely astonished by softness, warmth and delicacy of the shawls of Kashmir. He coined a new name ‘parm narm’ for the shawls of all kinds that were specialty of Kashmir. Shawls were regarded as the fashionable item. There was a separate department of shawls. The shawl karkhanas were placed under the bayutat department. Abul Fazl in his section of shawls in the Ain-i-Akbari, records that “His Majesty encourages in every possible way the manufacture of shawls in Kashmir and has ordered certain improvements”. He elaborates further that “His Majesty improved this department in four different ways. The improvements were primarily introduced in the tus shawls, which are made of an animal of that name, its

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25 Akbarnama, III, p.725; see also, Sir H. M. Elliot and John Dowson, The History of India as Told By Its Own Historians, Turlnder and Co. London, 1867-77, Vol. V, p. 452. Actually, the Akbarnama talks not of Shawls but of abresham, or silk. But the Tabakat-i-Akbari is specific that it was shawls, not silk. Silk does not seem to have been an important product of Kashmir at that time, Pandit Narain Koul Bamzai, Cultural and Political History of Kashmir, Vol. II, MD Publications, New Delhi, 1994, p. 502.
26 Ain, I, ed. Syed Ahmad Khan, Delhi, 1855, p. 73.
27 For details see, chapter V
28 Ain, I, pp. 73-74; see also Blochman’s edition, p. 91
natural colours are black, white and red, but chiefly black. Sometimes the colour is a
pure white. This kind of shawl is unrivalled for its lightness, warmth and softness.
People generally wore it without altering its natural colour, His Majesty had it dyed.
The most curious thing about the tus shawl is that it does not take a red die.\textsuperscript{29} It is
possible, of course, that, since Jahangir also talks specifically of tus shawls of
Kashmir, whicn his father, emperor Akbar adopted as a dress, that it was only this
finest fabric for which Mughals had shown keen interest.\textsuperscript{30} Bernier also uses the term
“touz” for the material of the finest shawls and says that “it comes from the breast of a
species of wild goat from Tibet”.\textsuperscript{31} This goat is also known as Tibetan ibex or skyin
and in Ladakhi it is called ‘ra-ba’.\textsuperscript{32}

The second improvement is visible in the form of safid alchahs also called as
tarahdars\textsuperscript{33} in their natural colours. These stuffs may be had in three colours, white,
black or mixed. The first or white kind was formerly dyed in three ways; His majesty
has given the order to die it in different ways.”\textsuperscript{34} In the royal wardrobe there was a
hierarchy of colours, and different garments were arranged according to their colours.
Among these garments shawls of Kashmir formed an important item in the imperial
wardrobe. Knowledge of colour combinations is evident from the description of Abul
Fazl. According to him white and black are the origins of all colours. They are looked
upon as extremes and component parts of the other colours. When white is mixed
with an impure black it yields yellow. If white and black are mixed in equal
proportions it yields red. White mixed with a large quantity of black gives a bluish
green. The other colours were formed by compounding these.\textsuperscript{35} Abul Fazl has given a
long list of colours of textiles in the imperial wardrobe like, “grey (tus), white (safid),
striped (alchah), scarlet (lal), brass coloured (brinji), carmine (qirmizi), deep blakish
green (kahi), almond coloured (badami), light yellow (gul-pumbah), sandalwood
coloured (sandal), deep red (arghwani), mauve (unabi), majenta (majithi), colour of
Kasni flower, apple green (sikki), grass green (alfi), pistachio (pistaki), purgul, orange

\textsuperscript{29} Ain, I, p. 73; see also Blochman’s edition, p. 91
\textsuperscript{30} Tuzuk, I, p. 384
\textsuperscript{31} Bernier, Travels, 402-03.
\textsuperscript{32} Alexander Cunningham, Ladak, Physical, Statistical and Historical, Allen and Co., London, 1854, p. 239. Hereafter: Cunningham, Ladakh
\textsuperscript{33} Alchahs or tarahdars were the terms used for any kind of corded stuff, see Ain, I, (Blochman), p. 91, n. 1.
\textsuperscript{34} Ain, I, p. 73; See also, Tuzuk, II, p. 147.
\textsuperscript{35} Ibid, p. 74, see also Blochman’s edition, p. 96
(narangi), leaf green (paran), pink (gulab), blue (asman), birch bark (zammuradi), chinese blue (cini), a kind of purple (banafsai), flesh coloured (cihrai), mango green (ambohai), musk (musqin), grey (fakhtai) and galghai.\textsuperscript{36}

Thirdly the attention was paid for the manufacture of a variety of shawls\textsuperscript{37} like:

1. **Zardozi:-** This shawl was seemingly embroidered with gold wire or silk thread.\textsuperscript{38}
2. **Kalabatun:-** The kalabatun design was brocaded with gold wire.\textsuperscript{39}
3. **Qasidah:-** In these type of shawls the pattern was embroidered and not woven.\textsuperscript{40}
4. **Qalghai:-** This type of shawl was made either of silk or gold wire or bore pine cone patterns.
5. **Bandhnun:-** These type of shawls were dyed differently in different parts of the piece.\textsuperscript{41}
6. **Chint:-** These shawls were seemingly painted or decorated with floral patterns.\textsuperscript{42}
7. **Alchah :-** It was a white banded stuff.\textsuperscript{43}
8. **Purzdar:-** These were all sorts of stuff of which the outside is plush-like.\textsuperscript{44}

The fourth improvement was in the lengths of all stuffs. Emperor Akbar ordered that the pieces to be made large enough to yield the making of a full dress. Here it becomes evident that Akbar introduced the concept of jamawar (shawls made so long that they may look enough for a full jama).

Akbar set a new fashion in wearing shawls. Abul Fazl informs that, “in former times people folded them in four folds and wore them for a very long time, now-a-days they are generally worn without folds, and merely thrown over the shoulder. His

\textsuperscript{36} Ain, I, p. 74, see also Blochman’s edition, pp. 91-92
\textsuperscript{37} Ibid
\textsuperscript{38} Ibid
\textsuperscript{39} Ibid
\textsuperscript{40} Ibid
\textsuperscript{41} Ibid
\textsuperscript{42} Ibid
\textsuperscript{43} Ibid
\textsuperscript{44} Ibid
Majesty has commenced to wear them double, which looks very well”. From this passage we can interpret that Akbar set the fashion of the doshala, two shoulder mantles stitched back-to-back so that the wrong side of the fabric is hidden.

The manufacture of shawls was not the monopoly of Kashmir. Abul Fazl informs that “in Lahore factories, Akbar encouraged new combinations, a kind of shawl called ‘Mayan’ is chiefly woven there, it consists of silk and wool mixed. These are of a standard size; both are used for chirhas (turbans) and fotos (kummer-bands).” Bernier also supports this view and informs that great pains were taken to get the Kashmiri shawls duplicated in Patna, Agra and Lahore. In spite, of every possible care they never attained the delicacy and softness of Kashmiri shawls. This is because of certain properties in the water of that country.

As far as the prices of shawls are concerned, according to Abul fazl during the time of Akbar, the prices varied from two rupees to twenty mohurs. Towards the end of 17th century the prices of shawls which were meant for umaras cost upto one hundred and fifty rupees and that of the shawls made for common people were sold for upto fifty rupees.

Emperor Akbar himself had acquired a practical knowledge of the whole trade. He brought master weavers from distant lands and also patronised indigeneous artisans thus brought all round improvement. All kinds of hair weaving and silk spinning improved and all the stuffs that were found in other countries especially in Central Asia were also manufactured in India. The Mughals are also credited with the introduction of Needle-work embroidery (shal-e-kaam).

By the Mughal Times, the Kashmir shawl industry reached its zenith and evolved new colour schemes and designs, the echoes of which were found in Mughal miniature paintings. It is from the period of Akbar that the pictorial references to

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45 Ain, I, p. 74
46 Ibid
47 Bernier, Travels, p. 403
48 Ain, I, p. 78. The value of golden Mohur fluctuated between 9 to 15 rupees throughout the Mughal period, for details see, Irfan Habib, The Agrarian System of Mughal India, 1556-1707, second and revised edition, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1999, pp. 436-39
49 Bernier, Travels, p. 403
50 Ain, I, pp. 87-88
shawls draped around men’s shoulders and necks first emerge. The richest source of such references is the *Akbarnama* manuscript, which contains several miniatures. One of the most interesting miniatures, dated around 1596, is a painting by Govardhan in which Abul Fazl, Akbar’s famous court chronicler, is seen presenting his book to Akbar.⁵² Here, apart from the emperor himself who is wearing a *patka* round his waist, more than half of his courtiers assembled around him are wearing either fully patterned shawls or what we now call the *palladar* types, where the field is left free of ornamentation, with decoration only on the borders and edges. A few of the courtiers, however, wear fully patterned shawls, particularly the one standing to the left of the painting. In other paintings from the *Akbarnama*, such as Akbar’s entry into Surat by Farrukh Beg, the preponderance of gold shawls, *patkas* and turbans among the nobility clearly signifies the solemnity of the moment.⁵³

Though in none of the contemporary miniature paintings is Akbar depicted wearing a shawl and nowhere is he depicted wearing a shoulder-mantle, whether single or double faced⁵⁴ and yet Abul Fazl reports, in the context of Akbar’s indifference to everything that is worldly that the emperor had a marked preference for woollen clothes especially shawls.⁵⁵ implying a material rather than a garment, and Jahangir confirms this when he talks in his memoirs of “*Tus* shawls, which my revered father had adopted as a dress”.⁵⁶ Compared to his success, Akbar seems to have preferred relatively simple attire. In some of the court scenes depicted in paintings, his *jama* is of fine transparent Bengal muslin, but on the other occasion it is of a thicker material. Very likely Akbar would on occasion have worn plain or brocaded silk, but given his confirmed preference for woollen clothing, particularly shawl and remembering his edict as to the weaving of shawl-material in *jama*-lengths, it’s more than probable that what Abul Fazl and Jahangir meant is that Akbar enjoyed wearing *jamas* tailored from Kashmir material.⁵⁷

⁵³ See painting 2; Victoria and Albert Museum, London, No.IS, 2-1896, 117/117
⁵⁴ See painting 1 & 2, in both the paintings of Akbarnama manuscript, Emperor is not shown wearing the shaw, only some of the front ranking nobles are depicted with shawls round their shoulders.
⁵⁵ *Ain*, I, p. 96; In the perso-Islamic tradition the wearing of wool was associated with the holy men and dervishes.
⁵⁶ *Tuzuk*, I, p. 384.
⁵⁷ *Ain*, I, pp. 88-90
Enormous wealth, splendour, might and majesty of the Mughal court, gave rise to a desire among the nobility and the courtiers for the precious and beautiful items both of which qualities the shawl amply possessed making it quite popular.\textsuperscript{58} Amidst the dancing girl’s anklets, jingling to the lilting tunes of delightful music, shawls were exchanged as gifts among umara, envoys, princes, jagirdars and others.\textsuperscript{59} on the occasion of Prince Parvez’s visit, Jahangir writes that the Prince’s “superb presents consisted of the eighty trained elephants of the highest value, two hundred horses of the best breed of Irak, with their capelines wrought in gold; one thousand camels of the dromedary sort… a number of large white oxen of Gujarat; four hundred trays of gold brocade, valvet, satin, and other pieces of the manufacture of rarest”\textsuperscript{60} which probably could have been the Kashmiri shawl. The Kashmir shawls were given as presents not only to the ladies of the imperial harem, governors and newly appointed state officials,\textsuperscript{61} but also to foreign envoys on state visit to India. E.g. Sir Thomas Roe, ambassador of James I, was presented one such shawl when he visited Surat in 1616 but it is necessary to mention that he refused the present.\textsuperscript{62}

The presentation of \textit{khilat} (robe of honour) by a ruler to his courtiers and others as a mark of favour was an ancient practice, dating back at least to the 14th century.\textsuperscript{63} It was probably Akbar, after the conquest of Kashmir in 1586, who made shawls a regular part of such presentations. It is not always clear, what is the meaning of the term “shawl”, there is for example a reference to “dopatta Gujarati shawls” being presented to middle-ranking officials, and occasionally the presentation shawls were embroidered in gold. Sometimes \textit{parm–narm} is specified which would certainly indicate a Kashmiri shawl.\textsuperscript{64}

\textsuperscript{58} Badauni, \textit{Muntakhab-ut-Tawariikh}, II, p. 352; see also, Hereafter: Desideri, \textit{An Account of Tibet}, p. 73.
\textsuperscript{59} A. Ahad, \textit{Kashmir to Frankfurt}, p.11.
\textsuperscript{60} Jahangir, \textit{Jahangirnama}, translated into English by Major David Price, Rare Books, New Delhi, 1918, p. 215.
\textsuperscript{62} Irwin, \textit{The Kashmiri Shawl}, p. 121.
\textsuperscript{64} \textit{Akbarnama}, III, pp. 1138, 1197, 1231, 1245-46. Abul Fazl himself was the in charge of administration of woollen textiles at the imperial court from 1582, and this, together with his well-known penchant for including every detail, significant or otherwise, of the events he recorded, makes it reasonably certain that whenever he does not mention shawls as a part of honorific presentation by the emperor, they were not included. There is no mention of shawls in this context until very late in
According to *Ain*, Shawl production was so extensive and massive that it catered for local consumption as well as export to every clime outside India. This is the second confirmation of shawl export to foreign countries, the first having come from Jonaraja during Zain-ul-Abidin’s reign. The fame of shawl industry of Kashmir had reached far and wide. Amin Ahmad Razi, the author of *Haft Iqlim*, writing in 1595 included production of shawl as the most flourishing industry of the Valley. In his beautiful portrait of Kashmir which is based on *Tarikh-i-Rashidi* of Mirza Haider Daughlat he wrote, “it was a heart ravishing place indeed. It was a land which abounded in natural beauty. The beautiful flower of tulip was grown in the Valley. The saffron was produced on large scale and four hundred mounds was sent to Hindustan. However, the shawl industry was the most booming industry of the region and people of Kashmir excelled in the craft. Kashmir was Akbar’s gift to India otherwise in the past it had been ruled by independent rulers. Akbar conquered it and made it part of his imperial dominions.”\(^\text{65}\) The huge demand of shawls gave rise to the number of shawl *karkhanas*, looms and the artisans. There were about 24000 shawl factories during the time of Akbar, more than 40,000 looms were busy in this city of Srinagar for the production of this costly stuff.\(^\text{66}\)

It may not be established whether shawls in Lahore were as fine as those of Kashmir. Presumably the Mughal administration must have secured the supply of *asli tus*, other fine varieties and artisans via Kashmir, but the climate of Lahore never produced the same quality even in latter times. Abul Fazl went on to add minute details of imperial wardrobes and storehouses, how shawls were weighed, priced, labelled and each entry dated. Then came the descriptions made by the emperor in fashions, names, colours and designs of shawl. In Lahore factories, Akbar encouraged new combinations, “A kind of shawl called “*Mayan*” is chiefly woven there, it consists of silk and wool mixed. These are of a standard size; both are used for

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\(^{65}\) Amin Ahmad Razi, *Haft Iqlim*, Qutubuddin collection, 100/20, manuscript section, Maulana Azad Library, AMU, Aligarh, quoted in Gulfishan Khan, ‘Representations From the Mughal Tazkiras (Biographical Memoirs) *Haft Iqlim* and *Subh-e-Sadig*’ ed. Azarmi Dukht Safavi, *Persian Writings: Important Sources of History*, Publication Division, AMU, Aligarh, 2015, p. 80

chirhas (turbans) and fotas (kummer-bands).” 

Akbar’s workshops are said to have evolved reversible shawls called “durukha” or “aksi”, and even if monochrome pashmina presented technical problems in weaving such styles, it could have been substituted by other grades of dyed wool. A long list of woollens in the royal wardrobe is given, viz, sufi-murabbas, jamewar,..... and parm-narm (Kashmir shawls).

Kashmir remained the private garden of Akbar, which he visited many times taking personnel interest in its overall development, especially in the shawl industry. It has not been clearly confirmed, if Lahore equalled the excellence of Kashmir shawls, nor is it established as to what levels of design and workmanship reached under Akbar because no shawl has survived in known records from this period. The royal inventory of treasures after his death includes shawls and pamris but gives no further details. The textile collections of several generations of Mughals were looted and Nadir Shah alone took away a caravan load of luxury fabrics including shawls. He is said to have despatched 15 elephant loads of Kashmir pashmina shawls as diplomatic gifts to Ottoman Turkey in 1739. 

The shawls from Akbar’s period could have been found in the royal wardrobes and tashakhanas belonging to the house of Jaipur owing to their close ties and matrimonial alliances with the Mughals. The shawls from Raja Man Sing’s time have not survived because the present collection in the Palace Museum as catalogued by Chandramani Singh begins from the 18th century and continues in the 19th century.

The Kashmir shawls established by Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin and further developed by Akbar reached their aesthetic climax under Jahangir. The shawls as we know them came on material record from Jahangir’s reign. Jahangir visited the lovely Valley many times and said a verse, “if there is a paradise on earth, it is here, it is here, it is here.” He commissioned his renowned artist Mansur to depict the bounty of spring in Kashmir. The artist is said to have painted over hundred flowers, only three of which have survived. The motifs inspired by such royal visits and paintings became

67 Ain, I, p. 92.
68 Ibid, pp. 88-90
70 Chandramani Singh, Textiles in Maharaja Sawai Man Singh,II Palace Museum, Jaipur 1979, XXXIV.
an integral part of not only Mughal architecture but nearly all art and craft ornamentation which predominates to this day in India.

The shawl industry was widespread under Jahangir as his memoirs indicate, “the shawls to which my father gave the name of parm-narm are very famous; there is no need to praise them. Another kind is taharam; it is like a Jull-i-khirsak and is put on carpets. With the exception of shawl they make other woollen material better in Tibet. Though they bring the wool for the shawl from Tibet they do not make them there. In Kashmir also they also weave the pattu shawl from wool by sewing two shawls together. They smooth them into a kind of saqarlet (broad cloth) which is not bad for a rain coat”\(^{71}\) From Tuzuk one collects a lot of information on shawls such as wearing of asli-tus shawl in court was a privilege granted only by the emperor. We have at least twenty references to the presentation of shawls often specifying parm-narm, as a personal mark of honour from the emperor, to favoured courtiers or some times to fakirs or other holymen in recognition to their spiritual excellence.\(^{72}\) It was not only shoulder mantles that were given. On one occasion, as a token of forgiveness to a noble who had been guilty of many offences against him, Jahangir impulsively took off the shawl round his waist and gave it to him”.\(^{73}\) This seems that patakas were already woven in Kashmir pashmina and the use of Kashmir jamawar at court is confirmed; for a few days later, Jahangir records a presentation of a qaba (coat) made of parm-narm. Not long after, he made a presentation of “a special Kashmiri phup (or phul) robe to Mirza Raja Bhao Singh, when he took leave to go to Amber which was his ancient native place.”\(^{74}\)

In the 12\(^{th}\) year of his reign, Jahangir ordered that certain garments were to be worn by no one but himself and those on whom he might bestow them. Among these was the tus-shawls and this is what Jahangir talks of his revered father adopting shawl as a dress.\(^{75}\) The custom of presenting shawl is also recorded in the reign of

\(^{71}\) Tuzuk, II, PP. 24,26, 147-178.


\(^{73}\) Ibid, p. 287.

\(^{74}\) Ibid, p. 297. The probable meaning of the phup is flowered. If so this is the first reference reliable to Kashmir Pashmina with a floral design.

\(^{75}\) Tuzuk, I, p. 384.
Shahjaha, particularly to the rulers of Ottoman empire of Rome, Safavid empire of Persia, Egypt, Golconda and Bijapur.

By the early 17th century, some European observers who talk of shawls of Kashmir mention integral ornamentation, often using variants of the word *pamri*, they talk of Kashmir as a rich source of pomberies which serve all Indians. “[In Kashmir] many *pamris* are also woven; these are clothes three ells long and three broad, woven from the wool (it is more like hair), which grows on the hindquarters of the sheep, very fine, and as soft as silk. They are worn [in Agra] as wraps in the winter because of the cold and looks very well and fine, having a surface like boratos.” The translators shine on this description by Palsaert, an employee of the East India Company who was in India from 1620-1627, is that, “Boreto was the name of a thin woollen cloth fashionable in Europe at this period. The word rendered ‘surface’ is keper [indicating] a twill or something of the kind.” Surely an onlooker observant enough to appraise the surface texture of Material would have remarked of any patterning that it might have had. And if Palsaert who never actually have visited Kashmir, got it wrong about the raw material, He was far from being the only person to do so.

In 1635, just a few years after Palsaert’s stay at Agra, a Portuguese priest called Sabstein Manrique and his party were shipwrecked and stranded in Bengal. They were rescued by a local official who, after entertaining them and arranging for their onward journey, gave them a present of “two pamurines of good quality and different colours, the two being worth sixty rupees.” Manrique’s account of the origin and manufacture of these *Pamris*, though it does involve Kashmir, is clearly second hand and grabbed. His description of the textiles themselves, on the other hand since he actually possessed one, may presumably be taken as reliable. “worth many ducats”,

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They are so light as well as warm, He says they are worn in cold weather by both men and women of the noble and well to do class. “They are made like sheets, their borders being ornamented with fringes of gold, silver and silk thread… These choice clothes are of white colour when they leave the loom, but are afterwards dyed and hue desired and are ornamented with various coloured flowers and other kinds of decoration, which makes them very gay and showy.”

Now how literally can we take this description? The fringes of “gold, silver and silk thread”, “the coloured flowers” and the “gay and showy” look, all are surely reported from direct observation. It’s questionable, however, if a priest would have sufficient discrimination to recognise whether a textile had been woven from coloured yarn or dyed after weaving, and whether the floral decoration was integral to the weave or added separately and there is no clue to the nature of the later- whether embroidery, brocading or kani, the characteristic of classic Kashmiri shawl.

Manrique’s observations can perhaps be related to some paintings of the late 17th and early 18th centuries featuring shawls which recall extant pieces, but differ from them in some important respects. In some of these, the colour of the pallav is quite different from that of the field, suggesting that it is either woven separately, on a different set of wraps, or that the field was dyed after weaving. In the former case, the pallav needs not have been pashmina, or in kani work. They could be silk brocade. There is in fact one late 19th century shawl with gold brocade pallavs and borders attached to a pashmina field, the whole finished with zari embroidery, which originally belonged to the royal family of Rampur.

By 1635, The Shawl reached a popular industry level in Kashmir while retaining its superiority in the sub-continent. Bernier, who accompanied Aurangzeb to Kashmir in 1665 and gave the following account, “large quantities of shawls are manufactured which gave employment even to children. These shawls measured one and a half ell long and an ell broad (ell =45 inch), ornamented at both sides with a sort of embroidery, made in the loom, a foot in width. The Mughal and the Indian men and women wore them in winter round their heads passing them over shoulders as a

mantle. One sort was manufactured from the wool of that country and other from the wool of the shawl-goat of Tibet. The price of the shawl ranged from 50-150 rupees.”

This shows how expensive even average shawls were even in those early times when a rupee had a tremendous buying power. Bernier also says that, “great pains were taken to manufacture similar shawls at Patna, Agra and Lahore but they lacked the delicate texture of Kashmir shawls.” These lines answer the question whether the Kashmir shawls would be duplicated in the climate of the plains. It also proves the persistent efforts of Mughal emperors to raise the shawl industry to a national scale.

Manucci, the Venetian physician to the Mughal Court (1635-1708), describes the Kashmiri shawl to be so soft and fine as to pass through a ring and described Lahore as glutted with woollen stuffs. Shawl production was at peak under Aurangzeb and Kashmir exported shawls to all parts of world. Shawls came to be linked with local bribes, coveted booty and regional politics. Tributes were given in the form of shawls. The commercial interest of the East India Company grew from 1685 onwards and how the European market was captured has been well detailed by Irwin in his monograph on shawls.

The production of exquisite shawls was lent further impetus by the Mughal patronage of culture, fine arts and urbanisation which immensely encouraged the handicraft industry. Apart from maintaining large wardrobes and stores for the preservation of various stuffs, either bought or woven to order, or received as tribute or presents, the Mughal rulers especially emperor Akbar made it compulsory for their courtiers and people of certain ranks to wear certain articles, such as takauchiya (coat), peshwaz (a coat open in front) and parm-narm (the Kashmiri shawl). According to Abul Fazl, “this was done to regulate and intensify the demand of various supplies to which Akbar paid much attention.

Ever increasing demand of the imperial court therefore strengthened the handicraft industry and its workers. Considering the number of dignitaries, national

82 Bernier, Travels, pp. 402-03.
83 Ibid
85 Jadaunath Sarkar, India of Aurangzeb, Bose Brothers, Calcutta, 1901, p. 111.
86 Ain, I, pp. 88-92.
87 Ibid
and international, who received Kashmir products as presents, and that of the people of ranks, who bought these in the markets, the demands appear to have been enormous. A special officer called khan-i-saman, took care of purchasing the stuff from the market and getting new ones manufactured well in advance. Also officers were stationed in Kashmir to purchase the best shawls.

The huge demand for the handicrafts proportionately increased the number of craftsmen. Even small children took to the occupation of craftmaking.

Having reached the zenith of delicacy and exquisiteness, the shawl thus went across the frontiers of India through the travellers who attended the court of great Mughals.

The shawl during the Mughal period is marked by a highly sophisticated woven pattern, a graceful, naturalistic rendering of the flowers of the boteh, and a carefully constructed hashia which served as a frame around the boteh itself, the extant pieces show remarkable artistic quality. During this period, the hashia or border became important and strict rules were made for its composition. A key element of the flower was harmoniously incorporated into the hashias meandering vine. In this way, the botehs design was enhanced by the hashia which echoed and framed it. If the boteh design was in itself aesthetically lacking, the hashia could compensate and thereby preserve the overall aesthetic effect. The results were often surprising. The ingenious blending of rectilinear and floral movement in the Mughal period demonstrates an acute awareness of the most subtle and delicate design technique, the rules of which were established by the court workshops.

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88 In 1690 the number of mansabdars was 11,500 all of whom received presents, see, Jadaunath Sarkar, *Mughal Administration*, p. 7
89 Khan-i-saman was very important officer of emperors household department. He had charge of the “whole expenditure of royal household in reference to both great and small things.” For details see, chapter 5.
91 Patterns woven on fabrics astonished experienced travellers (*Ain*, I, p. 94). among the travellers who visited India and Kashmir during this period, Father Jerome Xavier, Bendiet Goez and Francois Bernier were conspicuous
92 Boteh motif is an ancient Iranian motif inspired from a leaf. Even though, there are different ideas about the inspiration shape of this motif and the most accepted view is that Boteh is inspired of Cypress tree a Zoroastrian symbol of life and eternity.
The pashm (wool used in manufacturing the shawl) was produced by the goats found only in Central Asia, Chantan, Rodokh and Tibet. This wool used to come via Ladakh which was the entrepot between Central Asia and Kashmir since ancient times. The Mughal rulers, realising economic and commercial importance for the very existence of the shawl, treated Ladakh, as a feudatory part of their empire. Like their predecessors, they enjoyed the honour of receiving shawl-wool as a tribute. In 1634, the supply of shawl-wool was stopped\textsuperscript{94} when Shahjahan sent his forces to Ladakh in order to help the chief of Iskardo.\textsuperscript{95} The supply was however soon restored on account of peace made with the Raja.\textsuperscript{96} In 1682-83, the supply was again threatened due to Tibetan attack on Ladakh, but the Mughal intervention saved the situation\textsuperscript{97} and a treaty was concluded by which \textit{pashm} was agreed to be supplied\textsuperscript{98} and thirty years after the treaty we get a glimpse of the \textit{pashm} trade by the account of Father Desideri. He says that, “in May, June, July and August, thousands and thousands of men go from Kashmir to Leh, otherwise called Lhata, the capital of second Tibet, and carry back infinite loads of wool”\textsuperscript{99} The terms of the treaty\textsuperscript{100} gave the Kashmiri merchants exclusive monopoly on the purchase of pashm. They (merchants) procured pashm through their representatives stationed in the wool growing areas. The wool was sold against the fixed rates to none other than the Ladakhi’s who latter on exported it to Kashmir.

During the Mughal period there operated more than 40,000 shawl looms in the city of Srinagar and about 120,000 artisans were employed for the production of shawls.\textsuperscript{101} According to Bernier,\textsuperscript{102} what may be considered peculiar to Kashmir is its shawl industry. Kashmir acquires a lot of wealth out of it.\textsuperscript{103} The shawls were also sent to foreign rulers as a token of respect. During the period of Shahjahan, a large number of shawls were sent to the rulers of Bijapur, Golconda, Rome, Egypt and Iran.\textsuperscript{103}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[94] Bernier, \textit{Travels}, p. 419.
\item[95] Ibid, p.421-22, 425-26, Franckie, \textit{Antiquities of India Tibet}, p. 114 and note.
\item[96] Ibid.
\item[97] There arose a trouble between Ladakh and Tibet, The Ladakh sought the Mughal help and consequently the Tibetans were routed,\textsuperscript{100} (Franckie, \textit{Antiquities of India Tibet}, p. 116)
\item[98] Ibid
\item[99] Desideri, \textit{An Account of Tibet}, p. 73.
\item[100] Franckie, \textit{Antiquities of India Tibet}, p. 116.
\item[102] Bernier, \textit{Travels}, p. 402.
\end{footnotes}
Besides, Shahjahan needed a large number of shawls and carpets for the new palaces he was constructing. Apart from Lahore, Agra, Ahmedabad and Gujarat, South India also emerged as one of the great marketing centre of Kashmiri shawl. Nepal, Lhasa and Kathmandu also imported huge quantities of Kashmiri shawls.

Towards Declining Trade: Role of Machination: - Political unrest follow the Mughal break-up, the Afghan misrule and Sikh tyrannies in Kashmir brought down the level of shawl manufacture. Forster recorded only 16,000 looms during the Sikh rule as against 40,000 under the Mughals. However during the Afghan rule, the art of weaving _amli_ (needle embroidered) shawls was introduced. A Kashmiri named Syeda Baba _alia_ Ala Baba in the time of Azad Khan, an Afghan governor who ruled Kashmir from 1783 to 1785 A.D led to the invention of _amlikar_ shawls after observing a fowl walking on a plain sheet of cloth which left prints of his dirty feet on it. It gave him the idea that if he covered these stains with coloured thread with the help of needle the cloth would look prettier. He did so and finding his attempt successful, marvellously improved upon it. Sushil Chaudhary on the basis of western sources provides a statistical data of the of the Indian merchandise coming each year to Istanbul market by the end of eighteenth century and on the basis of that it is assumed that by 1785, shawls worth rupees five lacs were sold out in Turkey. In 1796, Kashmiri shawl for the first time reached France. Napoleon was presented a pair of Kashmiri shawls by the King of Egypt. He passed it on to his queen when he arrived France. Empress Josephine was immensely pleased and set the trend in fashion among women not only in Paris but all over Europe. By the end of

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105 Palsaert, _Jahangir’s India_, p. 19; Manucci, _Storia Do Mogor_, II, p. 402.
106 Mattoo, _Kashmir Under the Mughals_, p. 220
107 Desideri, _An Account of Tibet_, pp. 73, 132-33, 317.
108 Forster, _A Journey_, p. 191.
111 Haji Mukhtar Shah Ashai, _Risalah dar Fann-i-Shalbafi_, Lahore, 1887, translated into English by Bashir Ahmad Dar, _A Tract on the Art of Shawl Weaving_, Srinagar, 1992, p. 16; Susan Hiner, ‘Lust for Luxe: Cashmere Fever in Nineteenth Century France’, _Journal For Early Modern Cultural Studies_, Vol. 5, No. 1, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005, pp. 76-98. (Haji Mukhtar Shah Ashai, was a prominent figure of nineteenth century Kashmir. He belonged Ashai community who were mainly sunnis. Haji claimed that his forefathers had accompanied Shah-i-Hamadan from Bukhara on his way
eighteenth century, the Kashmir shawl trade was well established and had taken hold of European markets.¹¹² Kashmiri shawls were exported to France in huge quantities. The famous shawl merchant, Haji Mukhtar Shah Ashai writing in late nineteenth century says that his name was well known in France because of his knowledge and expertise of the craft of shawl making.¹¹³

The liking and popularity of Kashmiri shawls in France was followed by its popularity in Russia and it also emerged as an important market for Kashmiri shawls.¹¹⁴ From France, the Kashmiri shawls were also exported to America.¹¹⁵ Mukhtar Shah Ashai informs that on account of great demand, Kashmiri shawls were sent to London and in London auction of the merchandise took place for three days after every six month in June and December. Merchants of France, America and other countries used to come to London to buy shawls and send them to the desired places.¹¹⁶ From 1858 onwards, with the beginning of mutiny in India, the European people began to show less interest in shawls. Ashai says the number of European merchants coming to Kashmir decreased.¹¹⁷ Apart from that, by the beginning of nineteenth century, there started the imitation of Kashmiri shawl designs in Europe. The famous badami ‘almond motif’ came to be known as ‘Paisley’ because handmade Kashmiri shawls were copied on machines in Paisley (Scotland). Numerous efforts were made by the British to produce the fine shawls like that of Kashmir. Shawl goats were transported from Tibet to England but all these efforts failed and they could not attain the perfection of Kashmiri shawls but still the Kashmiri shawl industry had to

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¹¹³ Ashai, *A Tract on the Art of Shawl Weaving*, p.1
¹¹⁴ Ibid, pp. 10-11
¹¹⁵ Ibid, p.1
¹¹⁶ Ibid, p. 12
¹¹⁷ Ibid, p. 1
face competition because machine made shawls manufactured in Britain were cheaper then Kashmiri shawls.\textsuperscript{118} Similarly in 1804 started the imitation of Kashmiri shawls in France. Expert French artists were commissioned to imitate Kashmiri shawl designs and by 1840, D.N Sarraf says that French \textit{Kashmere} (shawls) dominated the European markets rather than true Kashmiri shawls.\textsuperscript{119}

According to Sir Walter Lawrence, the best shawls ever made in Kashmir were manufactured in the time of Maharaja Ranbir Singh, between the years 1865-72. These shawls were very soft in colour and fine in texture with graceful patterns.\textsuperscript{120} But at the same time aniline dyes made their first appearance in Kashmiri shawls and because of these aniline dyes French merchants refused to purchase shawls and the popularity of Kashmiri shawls declined in Europe owing to the use of aniline dyes in Kashmir.\textsuperscript{121}

\textbf{Patronage of Carpet Industry:-} Apart from shawl, the most important textile weaves was the handknotted carpets of Kashmir. Carpet weaving was a passionately ornate work of art. It was for the first time introduced by Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin who invited some expert carpet weavers from Samarkand and settled them in the valley. However this industry does not seem to be in a developed condition prior to the establishment of Mughal rule, because it is not mentioned in the sources of that period. It was perhaps because of the high cost investment which a finished carpet involves and the consequent limited internal demand and difficulties of the means of communication which affected its export in view of the bulky weight might have contributed to the lagging behind of the carpet industry.

Mirza Haider Daughlat, the cousin of Babar and the governor of Kashmir brought about a second cultural refloresence of major handicraft industries including the carpet industry of Kashmir. A further boost to carpet industry was given during the reign of Jahangir when Kashmir was ruled by the Mughal governor Ahmed Beg Khan (1614-18) who restarted many dormant weaving centres and quickened the languishing ones. The tomb of Akhund Rehnuma, the patron-saint of all weavers in Gojwara Mohalla of Srinagar to this day is held in high veneration and it is believed

\textsuperscript{118} Sarraf, \textit{Arts and Crafts of Jammu and Kashmir}, pp. 61-63
\textsuperscript{119} Ibid, p. 63
\textsuperscript{120} Lawrence, \textit{Valley}, p. 376
\textsuperscript{121} Lawrence, \textit{Valley}, p. 376
that he brought the carpet weavers and weaving tools from the Babar’s home-estate, Andijan in Central Asia in the 16th century. The imperial patronage and imported skills helped in the development of the craft industry. The pile carpets made in Kashmir had attained great perfection during the Mughal period. The pile carpets ever since the time of Mughals though mostly adapted from and modelled on Persian types but indigenous designs too were used. The exotic pile carpets, though foreign in origin has been so altered to local surroundings and infused with local elements that they have come to stay as peculiarly Kashmiri. The carpets were made of floral designs with mosques, gardens, wild animals, gliding fish etc. The carpets manufactured in Kashmir were considered superior to those imported from Persia. Lahori informs that carpet industry of Kashmir and Lahore developed to such an extent that woolen carpets are now prepared there at a cost of rupees 100 per yard, and the woolen carpets prepared in the karkhanas of the ruler of Iran are like a sackcloth before them. Now all the halls of the royal buildings are furnished with these woolen carpets. The carpet weaving industry gave birth to some small scale industries like spinning, dyeing, embroidery etc. Besides, they offered livelihood to a number of people and gave birth to professions like carder, cleaner, designer etc.

The wool used for the manufacturing of carpet was collected from the high altitude regions of Kashmir and Ladakh. However the best wool to Kashmir came from Turfan, Kichar and was exported to Kashmir via Yarkand. This wool consisted of two types - “Aar” and “Tooup”. The “Aar” wool is twisted in the form of rope so that it can take less space when sold out. This wool consists of shorter fibres. Tooup wool is twisted into a cap like shape. Its fibres are very long. The loom that was used for carpet manufacture was of a very simple construction composed of two horizontal cylindrical wooden beams. Between these two beams the

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122 Sufi, Kashmir, II, p. 571.
124 P. A. Koul, Geography, p. 40.
125 Lahori, Badshahnama, Vol. I, part I, p. 448
126 Ibid; see also, Ibn Hassan, Central Structure, p. 251
127 Ain, I, p. 97
128 Bernier, Travels, p. 403.
131 Ibid
warp is stretched. The warp threads which are of cotton are arranged in parallel order upright and the fabric and pattern are produced by coloured woollen threads upon the warp. The warp maker’s job is to encircle the length of warp to the correct number of threads and make it ready to fit in the loom. An interesting feature of the carpet industry of Kashmir is that the design is guided by the talim (a coded script committed to paper indicating the number of knots to be piled in a square inch, and also the colour scheme). The talim is fixed on the warp threads for execution. The senior weaver called wasta sings out the design talim to the weavers to manufacture. Very often the wasta recites the talim which he had memorised. He remembers the colour shades of each knot and while he recalls them the weavers automatically translate his instruction into knots. A colour chart containing actual dyed pieces of yarn is also used for reference. The talim writer employs different symbols for various colours and shades. The process being extremely intricate requiring considerable consideration and concentration. To encode a design for an average carpet takes over three months.

The quality of the carpet is determined by the number of knots to a square inch and fineness of the material used. Apart from that dying and finishing also determine the quality of a carpet. The medium quality carpets were woven of 256 knots per square inch while as the higher quality consist of 576 knots per square inch. The most common are those woven of 400 to 484 knots per square inch. Kashmiri carpets were mostly made of the sizes ranging between 2 feet × 2 feet to 12 feet × 15 feet. Other sizes are also made to order. The knots used to be of different types, but during the Mughal period, the Persian buff known as sinneh knot was originally used. In it one end of the warp was looped around a warp chain to emerge between the second warp chain and the chain that will carry the loop in the following knot. The knot can be tied around four warp threads by taking up two at a time. This is called the jufi or double knot and it allows knotting to progress more rapidly. It also affects the beauty and life of the carpet. It is believed that the larger the number of knots the higher is the quality of carpet. The fine knotting also makes it possible to depict the smallest

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133 Ibid  
134 Sarraf, Arts and Crafts of Jammu and Kashmir, p. 91  
135 Ibid  
136 Ibid, p. 87.  
137 Ibid
motif with precision. Over each row of knots, a double woof shot of thick twine cotton is passed. The fingers are used here instead of shuttle needles because the fabric is of a coarser description. The other process after weaving is clipping or cutting the pile of the carpet evenly. Only after clipping one can see the actual design of the carpet. It is also an expertise job because an uneven cut can destroy the whole carpet and is rightly considered as a delicate process in carpet making. The last process to make the carpet ready for market is washing. It is also a cumbersome and laborious job and is done only by the expert hands.

The tools used to make carpet in Kashmir are very simple. These include a blade (locally known as khur) for cutting the loops once the thread has been knotted. Wood or metal comb (locally known as kangen) for pushing the knots and weft tightly together. Scissor (locally known as dukaer) for cutting the carpet to an even form once it is finished.

The motifs in the designing of carpets in Kashmir are heavily influenced by the flora and fauna of the land. The quality and elegance of a carpet was determined from its designs. Abul Fazl in his Ain-i-Akbari says that “Emperor Akbar caused Carpets to be made of wonderful varieties and charming textures; he has appointed experienced workmen, who have produced many master-pieces. The carpets of Iran and Turan are no more thought of, although merchants still import carpets from Goshkan, Khuzistan, Kirman, and Sabzwar.” Some of the important motifs in Kashmiri carpets were boteh, gamlah, tree of life etc. The boteh motif has the origin from Hamadan but the Kashmiri carpet weaver produced his own boteh motif in which a multitude of rosebuds punctuate the guard bands that enclose the floral border. It is in curved form which lends great elegance to the pattern. In the gamlah motif two columns are resting on the lower column of the border. In the centre, the most delicate floral design emerges from the very handsome vase, filling the center of the carpet entirely. On either side of the vase sprays flower which does not grow out of a vase set on the lower border instead, they spread from the base of the carpet in successive waves.

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138 Ibid
139 P. A. Koul, Geography, p. 39.
140 Ibid, see also, D. N. Saraf, op. cit., p. 87
141 Ain, I, p. 55
‘The tree of life’ according to the craftsmen of Kashmir was the link between the paradise and earth. The idea of creating a tree as a symbol of paradise was perceived in various crafts. The ‘tree of life’ possesses different classifications. Some pictorial designs of tree represent no tree but weave it quite realistically, some include birds and animals round the tree, some form prayer designs and the tree is the right kind of shape to fit onto the ground, some merge single tree and vase of flowers together and others form garden design.

Carpets of Kashmir also formed an important exportable item during the Mughal period. The carpets of Kashmir were considered superior to those imported from Persia. The series of woollen carpets exhibited in Delhi in 1902-03 are believed to have been manufactured in Kashmir. G. Watt. Says that among the ten carpets that were exhibited, nine were lent by the custodian of Asar Mahal. Asar Mahal is an old palace built by Muhammad Adil Shah to serve as hall of justice. It acquired sanctity among Muslims because relics in the shape of two beard of holy Prophet (PBUH) are preserved in it. These relics were brought to Bijapur in the time of Ibrahim Adil Shah II (1580-1625). During his reign and under his successors Bijapur was widely known throughout the Muslim world which is evident from the rich offerings made by the foreign rulers to the shrine of Asar Mahal. As far as the woollen carpets preserved in the shrine of Asar Mahal is concerned, these are believed to have been received by Muhammad Adil Shah from Kashmir in 1657. Apart from G. Watt, Simon Digby also, while analysing the technical aspects of these carpets came to the conclusion that there is very much possibility that they were the products manufactured in Kashmiri handicraft karkhanas. During the seventeenth century, the relic of holy Prophet (PBUH) at the Hazratbal shrine in Srinagar was also brought from the shrine of Bijapur. This suggests that Kashmir had close cultural connections with Bijapur.

By the mid nineteenth century, with the decline of shawl industry, the carpet weaving industry received great impetus. A number of shawl weavers unable to find employment in their hereditary craft take to carpet weaving. The industry received

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143 Mattoo, Kashmir Under The Mughals, p. 224.
144 G. Watt, Indian Art at Delhi, 1903, pp. 431-32.
145 Simon Digby, Export industries and handicraft production under the Sultans of Kashmir, The Indian Economic and Social History Review, 44,4 (October to December 2007), New Delhi, p. 421.
146 Simon Digby, op. cit., p. 421, G. Watts, Indian Art at Delhi, p. 432.
fresh boost when European companies particularly the East India Carpet Company and Hadow & Company entered the field of manufacturing by mid nineteenth century. These firms developed extensive markets in Europe and America. In 1851, a Kashmiri carpet was exhibited in London which highlighted the Kashmiris superb craftsmanship and brought the craft of shawl weaving to great admiration and fame. The famous Iranian masterpiece, ‘the Ardabil carpet’ which was manufactured in 1536 and now preserved in South Kensington Museum London was reproduced in Kashmir in 1902 and was purchased by Lord Curzon for one hundred pounds. The carpet industry of Kashmiri has always been in flourishing state since the Mughal times. Kashmiri carpet weaver is known for his remarkable ability to reproduce the most intricate designs. It is said that once Maharaja Ranjit Singh was so much charmed by a carpet that he rolled on it in great joy.

**Patronage of pattu industry:-** During the Mughal period, Kashmir also witnessed the patronage of pattu industry to a great extent. The loom was improved and needle-work embroidery was introduced in Kashmir which was also applied in the pattu industry. The Kashmiri people were heavily benefited by the pattu. It saved them from the severities of winter and secondly the cotton cloth was not manufactured on a large scale which could fulfill the demand of the summer dress of the people. Besides, the cotton clothes were imported from foreign lands and was thus very costly. It was due to this that pattu were worn even in summer though it was fit only for the winter season. Without realising this constraint wearing of the poor classes, Jahangir remarks, “if they do not put on a woolen tunic, they believe that the air affects them and even that it is impossible to digest their food without it.” Thus the people except the rich satisfied their demands of both summer and winter seasons from pattu. Ultimately the pattu recieved the tremendous boost in Kashmir. The Kashmiri woollen cloth (pattu)was known for its warmth and durability which could last for years. Though we do not find any reference that whether pattu was

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150 *Tuzuk*, II, p. 147.
152 Ibid
exported or not, but there is no doubt that it would have been an important article of internal trade particularly between the rural and urban areas.

**Patronage of silk Industry:** Silk industry of Kashmir was also an important industry in Kashmir during the Mughal period. It was greatly patronised during the Mughal period. It was a favourite and esteemed dress of royalty. The gold and silver embroidered silken clothes were used by royalty and also conferred by them on their favourites as a mark of respect during the festivities organised on some special occasions like the birthday of the princes, occasion to the throne by a new ruler etc. The silk industry was an ancient industry in Kashmir. It achieved a tremendous progress due to the royal patronage during the Mughal period. The silk worms were rared on an extensive scale in Kashmir. Mirza haider Daughlat, Abul Fazl and Jahangir have given detailed descriptions on the silk industry of Kashmir. They say that in Kashmir, there were abundance of mulberry trees in Kashmir, exclusively cultivated for the rearing of silk worms to obtain the silk. The abundance of mulberry trees in Kashmir and their definite purpose of obtaining silk puzzled Mirza Haider Daughlat, who says, “among the wonders of Kashmir are the quantities of mulberry trees cultivated for their leaves from which silk is obtained. The Mughal period gave an impetus to the industry. The silk worm eggs were imported from Gilgit and Tibet where they were procured in abundance. The silk industry was a well developed and profitable industry during the Mughal period. As soon as Kashmir was annexed by Mughals, they like other lucrative industries of the valley declared it as the imperial monopoly.

The silk piece goods manufactured in Kashmir are rendered particularly attractive by the fine embroidery work brought by artisans with whom embroidery is a

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158 *Tarih-i-Rashidi*, pp. 349-50; *Tuzuk*, II, p. 146.
161 *Ain*, I, p. 479.
hereditary profession. A variety of designs, flowers and leaves, entwined roses and narcissuses, poppies and tulips, lillies and chinaria leaves, adorn the borders or the entire piece of these silken fineries. Flowering trees of almonds, plums are also embroidered in elaborate compositions of bright hues. Among birds, the most popular as copies for embroidery are the parrot, the magpie, the king-fisher, the woodpecker, and the sparrow. Butterfly designs, though popular, are not much in demand as those of flowers and foliage.162

The particular Kashmiri embroidery work called kasida is world famous. The cloth used for this type of embroidery is either silk or wool and the embroidery yarn is preferably silk thread, though wool was also imported for embroidery work as on shawls, namdas and gabbas. The embroidery show all the charm of free drawing from memory and the balance of symmetrical compositions. The stitches used are the plain stitch and the “amli” or the dense stitch. The later is a most difficult one and is very popular. This kasida work is classified into different types- like refugar, zalak dozi, vatatchikan, doria and talikar.163 The embroidery flourished in Srinagar city and its adjacent towns where huge quantities of embroidered articles are produced.

**Patronage of paper and paper-machie industry:** - The paper industry of Kashmir also reached its great heights under the Mughal patronage.164 Abul Fazl informs us, “the people of Kashmir write chiefly on Tuz which is the bark of a tree, worked into sheets with some rude art and which keeps for years.165 It was in great demand in India for writing purposes and for those who wished to impart dignity to their correspondance.166 Besides bhojpatra, the rag-paper of Kashmir was also in great demand in India. The Kashmiri rag-paper possessed a special quality that once the ink had been washed off, it can be reused for writing purposes.167

George Forster says that Kashmirians fabricated the best writing paper of the East which was formerly an article of extensive traffic.168 The best quality paper was

163 Ibid, pp. 246-47.
165 *Ain*, II, p. 354.
made from rags, hemp fibre and silk and large quantity of paper was obtained by pounding these materials.\textsuperscript{169}

Besides paper, the paper-machie work also received huge patronage in the Mughal court. The paper-machie work is known as kar-i-kalamdan, because the best paper-machie articles of the Medieval period were the pen-cases (kalamdan). Apart from pen-cases, tables, cabinets and trays were also made.\textsuperscript{170} Huge quantities with different colours of paper-machie articles like kalamdans were manufactured from pulp-paper decorated with floral motifs.\textsuperscript{171}

**Patronage of wood craft industry:** The carved wooden articles of Kashmir were also highly patronised during the Mughal period. The Kashmiri craftsmen produced excellent wooden articles. Bernier remarks, “the workmanship and beauty of their palekys, bedsteads, trunks, inkstands, boxes, spoons, and various other things are quite remarkable, and articles of their manufacture are in use in every part of the Indies. They perfectly understand the art of varnishing, and are eminently skilful in closely imitating the beautiful veins of a certain wood, by inlaying with gold threads so delicately wrought that nothing seems more elegant or perfect.”\textsuperscript{172} The Kashmiris are expert for manufacturing of wooden toys, turnerys, ornamental wood carvings, inlaying work on woods of different kinds, painting on the pen-cases and wooden boxes.\textsuperscript{173} Besides these, emperor Akbar showed great preference to reach the upper divisions of the Valley through boat, and a large number of boats were floated on the river Jhelum and Dal Lake. Abul Fazl says that there were 30,000 boats in the city of Srinagar but none fit for the Emperor. So, able artisans soon prepared the river palaces and made surface flower gardens on the surface of the water.\textsuperscript{174} Akbar introduced a new type of boat which was fashioned after the Gujarat and Bengal models.\textsuperscript{175} During


\textsuperscript{170} Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 378.


\textsuperscript{172} Bernier, *Travels*, p. 402.


\textsuperscript{174} *Akbarnama*, III, p. 835.

\textsuperscript{175} Ibid
the reign of Jahangir there were 5700 boats floating in Jhelum and its tributaries.\textsuperscript{176} The boats served as the important means of transport and the trade (internal) was largely carried on through these boats.\textsuperscript{177} The boats were of two types- \textit{bahats} and \textit{shikaras}. \textit{Bahats} were used for trade purposes were as \textit{shikaras} were used for general conveyance of the people.\textsuperscript{178} The construction and organisation of the department of boats was assigned to \textit{Mir-bhari}.\textsuperscript{179} Shahjahan is also said to have presented Jahangir with a boat made on Kashmiri style, its sitting place was made of silver and Jahangir at the end of the day used to embark on that boat and went round the tank.\textsuperscript{180}

To conclude, the Kashmiri handicraft industry though received royal patronage even before Mughals, particularly under Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin, who made different arrangements to make handicrafts an industry of great economic consequence, but with the death of Zain-ul-Abidin, the handicraft industry also received a set back because his successors were not as capable as he was and brought Kashmiri handicraft industry to slow decline until Mirza Haider Daughlat took over and his personnel interest and perceptive patronage gave renewed boost to the handicraft industry. By the Mughal times the Kashmiri handicraft reached its zenith. The Mughals immensely patronised it and regarded it as a symbol of imperial prestige and auspiciousness and determinant of commercial ties with the foreign counties. They used to exchange the handicrafts of Kashmir as honorary gifts. They also ensured the regular supply of raw materials for handicraft manufacture. The handicraft production due to the active patronage of Mughal rule was so massive that it catered for the local consumption as well as export to every clime outside India and as Bernier says, that even the small children took to the occupation of craft manufacture.

\textsuperscript{176} \textit{Tuzuk}, II, p.142.
\textsuperscript{177} \textit{Ain}, II, p. 170.
\textsuperscript{178} Lawrence, \textit{Valley}, pp. 380-182.
\textsuperscript{179} \textit{Ain}, I, pp. 144-45.
\textsuperscript{180} \textit{Tuzuk}, II, p.142.
Painting 1. Abul Fazl presenting the Copy of Akbarnama to Emperor Akbar, Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, MS.3, Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, folio 176b, here apart from the emperor himself who is wearing a patka round his waist, more then half of his courtiers assembled around him are wearing either fully patterned shawls or the palladar types.
Painting 2. Triumph entry of Emperor Akbar into Surat, No.IS, 2-1896, 117/117, Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Here most of the nobles are seen either wearing shawls or patkas and turbans.
Acquisition of Raw Material and the Handicraft Trade

Acquisition of raw material

The wool used in manufacturing the shawl is called pashm or poost. Pashm is originally a Persian word ‘pashm’ indicates the wool grown by the goats found only in Central-Asia, Chantang, Rodokh, and Tibet. The word ‘pashm’ can be applied to the raw-fibre of any of the wool producing animals of High-Asia, when the term is used without qualification, goat-pashm is understood. Pashmina is the yarn spun and the material woven from pashm. The under fleece of yaks and shepherd dogs of Chantang also provide pashm. Therefore, the wool for Kashmiri shawls was supplied mainly by the wild and domestic goats of Chantang, Rodokh and Turfan. This wool used to come via Ladakh, which was the entrepot between Kashmir and Central-Asia since ancient times.

Goats are believed to be the earliest animal to have been domesticated for human purposes, initially no doubt for meat and milk. Almost all goats, wild and domestic grow some amount of wool under their shaggy outer coats. For most of history only a few breeds, adapted for extreme winter cold, produced enough to be worth harvesting. Regions where the temperature dropped down sufficiently to stimulate significant growth of wool included south-west Russia (the Pridonskaya and Orenburg breeds), The mountains of Iran and Afghanistan (the Morghoz and Vatani breeds).

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2 Rodokh forms a region on the Northern border of Pon-Kong Lake. It is the frontier post of Tibet and crosses the Mariom-La, the highest (15,000 ft.) pass between Leh and Lhassa. Its plains are used exclusively for the grazing of wool producing goats, see, Vigne, Travels, II, p. 126.
3 Tibet is the land covering wider territory. It has influenced Ladakh throughout its history.
4 The Chantan dogs are domestic dogs known as Khyi in Ladakhi. They have shaggy coat of black colour. These dogs can be differed from the ordinary dogs due to their curled upward tail on the back. For more details see, Cunningham, Ladak, p. 218 and note 1.
5 Vigne, Travels, II, p. 124; Moorcroft, Travels, II, pp. 172-73; see also, Hereafter: J. Dowson, Route from Kashmir, pp. 372-385
6 Moorcroft, Travels, II, pp. 172-73; see also, I. Habib, Atlas, p. 3b.
7 J. Rizvi, Pashmina, p. 23.
reeds), Kyrgyzstan, parts of Xinjiang in south-west China and the high altitude plateau of north-west China and Mongolia. Pre-eminent among the down bearing goats were the Trans-Himalayan breed of Tibet and Ladakh, India’s northernmost region often referred to as the shawl goat or the pashmina goat.  

The goats have very short and neat heads and small bones. They grow pashm in the form of under-coat as protection against intense cold. Unlike the outer-Coat, the undercoat skin of these goats is not the product of usual fleecing. It is cut once in a year and is called ‘le-na’ in Ladakhi. The outer cloth is used for weaving coarse cloth and ropes. Before weaving starts, wool is cleaned and washed (snambu) with white chalk from the cliff, and then teased (malches) out carefully so as to release it from extraneous matter. It is spun then, by women, on a slender cone of wool, elongated at both ends, called pang in Ladakhi. After this, twisting (zhuchas) is done with the help of another peng, having a little wooden disc attached to one end, and also by attaching wool to hooks on the roof of a house from which the spindles are adjourned. The wool is then soaked and warped in order to put it at a primitive weaving machine, the shuttle of which is worked by a treadle. Until today similar terms are used for the above described techniques.

Apart from pashm, there was another material from which shawls of finer quality than that of pashm were made. It is grown by a Tibetan wild goat also called Tibetan ibex or skyin. This animal is called ‘ra-ba’ in Ladakhi. It causes much trouble to hunters, and is caught at night when it comes down to Ladakh. This wool is known asli-tus or keyl-phumb or simply tus. During the spring season, the wild goat tries to free itself of the extra layer of insulation by rubbing against the bushes and rocks. The local people collect this wool for sale. It is remarkably fine of light brown colour. While as pashm is of two kinds with white and brown colour or sometimes may be of light colour known as khudrang. The coloured pashm is costlier than white. The tus shawls are more costly due to its delicacy and generally used as a

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8 J. Rizvi, Pashmina, p.23.
9 See Plate 5; see also, Encyclopaedia Britannica. XIII, 1961, p.291.
10 Cunningham, Ladak, p. 239.
11 Ibid.
12 A. Ahad, Kashmir to Frankfurt, p.25.
13 See Plate 4; see also, Cunningham, Ladak, p.239.
14 Ibid
15 Ain, I, p. 91; Tuzuk, I, p. 384; Lawrence, Valley, p. 375; I. Habib, Atlas, p. 3b.
lining for shawls, woollens and gloves. Owing to the scarcity of this animal *keyl-phumb* is rarely exported to Kashmir.\(^{16}\)

**Plate 4.** Tibetan Antelope (*Toosh*) shawl goat

**Plate 5.** Pashm goat

The Ladakhi’s had the Ancient religious belief and were religiously bound to sell *pashm* to none other than Kashmiris and this continued even in medieval period.

\(^{16}\) Moorcroft, *Travels*, p. 165.
also. However, from the time of Sultan Shihabuddin of Kashmir (1355-1374) onwards, Kashmir began receiving pashm as a tribute from the Raja of Ladakh. Indeed rarely several of the Sultans used force and led many expeditions when the Rajas of Ladakh refused to pay tribute, comprising mainly pashm on which the shawl industry largely depended.\(^\text{18}\)

The Mughal rulers, realising its economic and commercial importance for the very existence of the shawl, treated Ladakh as a feudatory part of their empire. Like their predecessors, they enjoyed the privilege of receiving shawl-wool as a tribute. In 1634, the supply of shawl-wool was stopped\(^\text{19}\) when Shahjahan sent his forces to Ladakh in order to help the chief of Iskardo.\(^\text{20}\) The supply was however soon restored on account of peace made with the Raja.\(^\text{21}\)

In 1682-83, the supply was again threatened due to Tibetan attack on Ladakh, but the Mughal intervention saved the situation\(^\text{22}\) and a treaty was concluded which is known as treaty of Tingmosgang by which pashm was agreed to be supplied\(^\text{23}\) and thirty years after the treaty we get a glimpse of the pashm trade by the account of Father Desideri. He says that, “in May, June, July and August, thousands and thousands of men go from Kashmir to Leh, otherwise called Lhata, the capital of second Tibet, and carry back infinite loads of wool”\(^\text{24}\) According to the terms of the treaty,\(^\text{25}\) the fine wool of goats of Mnah-ris-skor-gsum (Western Tibet) would be sold only to Kashmiris. The price of the coarse wool mixed shall be fixed at forty nag to one rupee or the price of fine and coarse wool mixed be fixed at forty nag to one rupee. The price would be paid both in kind and cash.\(^\text{26}\) The Byan-Than (East Ladakh Province) would not be allowed to use the nag of Ron (Indus Region). If wool of Byan-Than contained soil, stone or moisture they will not be responsible and none can claim for that. Only the court merchants of Ladakh are to be admitted to Ru-thog

\(^\text{17}\) Moorcroft, Travels, p. 165.
\(^\text{18}\) A. Ahad, Kashmir to Frankfurt, p.19.
\(^\text{19}\) Bernier, Travels, p.419.
\(^\text{20}\) Ibid, pp.421-22, 425-26, see also, Francke, Antiquities of Indian Tibet, II, p. 114 and note.
\(^\text{21}\) Ibid.
\(^\text{22}\) There arose a trouble between Ladakh and Tibet, The Ladakh sought the Mughal help and consequently the Tibetans were routed, Francke, Antiquities of Indian Tibet, II, p. 116
\(^\text{23}\) Ibid
\(^\text{24}\) Desideri, An Account of Tibet, pp. 73-74.
\(^\text{25}\) Franckie, Antiquities of Indian Tibet, II, p. 116.
\(^\text{26}\) One batti was equal to 12 nags.
(Rodokh). Four Kashmiri merchants shall reside at Dpe-thub (village) for the trading purpose with the Kashmiris. Besides these men who are called Kha-chul-hgro-rgya, no Kashmiri shall be allowed to go to Byan-Than. Those Ladakhi-Kashmiris who used to go to Byan-Than, shall not be allowed to go down to Kashmir with loads of wool of goats.

On the basis of close examination of these provisions, it is clear that the Kashmiri merchants had exclusive monopoly on the purchase of pashm. They (merchants) procured pashm through their representatives stationed in the wool growing areas. The wool was sold against the fixed rates to none other than the Ladakhi’s who latter on exported it to Kashmir.

After the raw material (pashm) is received. It is handled by almost nineteen specialists. The wholesaler (baqal-i-Tibet) would sell it to the retailer (pashm-farosh) who in turn would sell it to the spinners. The spinners were the women of Kashmir. They did the job traditionally from ancient times. Father Desideri, while on his visit to Ladakh in 1715, found large number of agents (middlemen) kept by the merchants of Kashmir in Ladakh to collect pashm for the production of which he calls scials. The wool trade according to him is a great source of riches to Kashmir. The middleman and brokers transacting commercial affairs were taxed by the government of Ladakh. The money collected through this tax constituted an important source of income to the Ladakhi government. This also led to the transformation of out-dated marketing on regular scientific lines in turn helping the development of commodity economy. The development of commodity economy is an important factor stipulated by the expansion of domestic and foreign trade. It results in the development of productive forces and makes it necessary for the middlemen and merchants to play an important role both in production and marketing of goods. The producers were isolated from market due to advanced loans paid to them by the merchant class.

The commodity economy resulted in changing the entire system of production relations and established the economic domination of merchants over producers. This

28 Desideri, *An Account of Tibet*, pp. 73-74.
30 In commodity economy, commodities/goods are produced for the market to satisfy the wants and needs
31 Desideri, *An Account of Tibet*, p.73.
development was not confined to Kashmir alone. It was in operation throughout the Mughal Empire, changing the mode of production of handicrafts by making it subordinate to the capital invested by merchants in the purchase of goods. After its procurement, the middleman dispatched wool loads to Srinagar where it was again sold to retailers on profit basis.\(^{32}\) Before taking it, the retailers or local merchants had to pay a commission to the broker who conducted business transaction between them and the chief merchant.\(^{33}\) Then on their part the retailers would distribute the wool among spinners to spin it into yarn\(^{34}\) which was again sold to karkhandars who employed weavers for weaving it into delicate shawls. Thus, during the Mughal period, the merchant’s capital found its way into the system of shawl production, bringing about changes of far reaching consequences in production relations which eventually made producers of wool and other artisans as subsidiary parts of the mode of production. Earlier the handicrafts were produced for domestic use only but now they were produced on the broader scale and not only for domestic use but also for the market.

The system of procuring pashm continued to be regulated with slight modifications even after the Mughal rule and Ladakh and Kashmir remained inseparably connected together during the period of Afghans and Sikhs. Relations between Ladakh and Tibet also remained cordial and on account of this, pashm continued to be supplied to Kashmir without any interruption.\(^{35}\) The Kashmir rulers constantly received it as a tribute.\(^{36}\)

The wool used for the manufacturing of carpet was collected from the high altitude regions of Kashmir and Ladakh. During the summer months, when the snow melts, merchants with an experienced eye for the finest wool, start out on the long through mountainous regions and passes. They purchased the raw wool from the goat farmers that live in the hilly townships scattered throughout the Himalayas. The wool consisted of two types; one was called “Aar” and the other “Tooup”. The “Aar” wool is twisted in the form of rope so that it can take less space when sold out. This wool consists of shorter fibres and is sheared twice in a year.\(^{37}\) Tooup wool is twisted into a

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\(^{33}\) Ibid.  
\(^{34}\) Ibid.  
\(^{35}\) Frankie, *Antiquities of Indian Tibet*, II, p. 117  
cap like shape. Its fibres are very long. This wool is sheared only once in a year and that is why it is costlier than the Aar. The raw wool is brought to Srinagar where it goes for the dehairing which in Kashmir is called ‘chirai’. After the wool is cleared of coarse hair, the wool is then sorted in terms of quality, grade, thickness and shade of the strands and then is sold out to the local shopkeepers known as “pouwain” who then sell it to the spinners.

For the paper industry, prior to the introduction of the art of rag paper making, birch-bark (bhoj-patra) was used for writing purposes. Even after the introduction of rag paper, bhoj-patra was used for writing purposes because rag paper was less durable. It could not last long unless preserved suitably. The Kashmiri copyists did not use rag paper for writing precious documents. They used their own indigenous paper bhoj-patra which was used since ancient times. It was prepared from the inner bark of the Himalayan birch the supply of which was inexhaustible. It was available in huge amount in Kashmir itself. Abul Fazl in his Ain-i-Akbari informs us, “The people of Kashmir write chiefly on touz which is the bark of a tree, worked into sheets with some rude art and which keeps for years.” This paper was in great demand in India during the reign of Emperor Akbar. In fact, it was used by a sizable number of copyists particularly Hindus till the end of 19th century.

The materials that were used for the manufacturing of rag paper in Kashmir include besides rags, hemp fibre, sazi, fatkari and starch. The pulp from which the paper is made is a mixture of rags and hemp fibre. The rags were the old clothing mostly cotton with some linen. Hemp fibre was prepared by the villagers from the wild hemp plant. This hemp fibre is beaten in and mixed with the rag pulp under the lever mill worked by the water power. The hemp fibre increases the strength of the paper. A carbonate of soda known as saz/sazi was imported from Punjab and a small quantity of it was mixed with the rags during the beating operation. It also contains a meagre amount of slaked lime which assists to soften the rags and saponify the grease. These chemicals are used for the purpose that can be easily washed out. These

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38 Ibid
40 Ain, II, p. 352
41 Parmu, History of Muslim Rule, p. 415.
42 Moorecroft, Travels II, p. 217; see also, Lawrence, Valley, p. 379.
43 Lawrence, Valley, pp. 379-80.
chemicals have no effect on colour. Besides these, *fatkari* and starch was also used for making paper. *Fatkari* was a crude alum imported from Punjab while as starch was themselves prepared by paper-makers from rice. It was used as a sizing agent to enable the paper to carry ink.\textsuperscript{44}

The Kashmiri paper reminds of other industry and it is the paper-machie. It is made of Kashmiri scrap paper pounded and mixed with rice paste, cloth and copper sulphate.\textsuperscript{45} It is moulded around a base shape. The moulds are made of clay. After the pulp had dried and hardened to required shape. It is carefully cut from the mould. The two halves are then re-joined together with glue and the surface is made even with an iron file called *kathaw*.\textsuperscript{46}

The silk industry of Kashmir was dependent on silk worms. There were huge amount of mulberry trees which were fed to the silk worms. Mirza Haider Daughlat in his *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*, Abul Fazl in his *Ain-i-Akbari* and Jahangir in his *Tuzuk* had given detailed descriptions about the silk industry of Kashmir. Mirza Haider Daughlat says that in Kashmir there are a large number of mulberry trees. The mulberries were little eaten and their leaves were utilized as a food for the silk worms from which silk was obtained.\textsuperscript{47} Mirza included the mulberry trees among the wonders of Kashmir. Abul Fazl in his *Ain-i-Akbari* writes that,“the mulberry is little eaten, its leaves being little reserved for the silk worm. The silk worm eggs are brought from the Gilgit and Little Tibet.”\textsuperscript{48} Jahangir also says that, “there are mulberries (tut) everywhere” and says that, “silk worm eggs were brought from Gilgit and Tibet”\textsuperscript{49}

As far as the wood craft industry is concerned, Kashmir has been gifted by nature with dense forests. There are numerous specimens of wood work and wood-carving done out of the wood locally found. *Budlu* and *kair* wood was used for lattice work. Pine wood was used for *khatamband*. Carving was done on walnut wood.\textsuperscript{50}

\textsuperscript{44} P. A. Koul, *Geography*, p. 53; Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 380.
\textsuperscript{45} Ibid, p. 46
\textsuperscript{47} *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*, p. 425
\textsuperscript{48} *Ain*, II, p. 353.
\textsuperscript{49} *Tuzuk*, II, p. 146.
\textsuperscript{50} P. A. Koul, *Geograph*, pp. 68-69.
Trade Routes

With the establishment of Mughal rule, Kashmir became the center of handicraft production. The Mughal annexation made the Kashmiri craftsmen famous all over the world. The Mughal rulers maintained the trade routes, constructed bridges and *serais* to provide shelter to the travellers and this promoted to a great extent, the export of handicrafts in the Mughal *subah* of Kashmir. In the hilly and zig-zag terrains of Kashmir, passes and routes connected the various regions with one another. These routes also created access for them with the world outside.51

Kashmir is the land which is surrounded from all sides by an unending chain of mountains52 and this physically hampered it to keep place with the economic development of the rest of the empire. In a region with such restraints, trade and commerce could not flourish. This chain of mountains was pierced by various routes and passes which established links with the world outside. This fulfilled the needs of the people of Kashmir by coming into contact with the people inhabiting other lands. With the annexation of Kashmir under Mughal Empire, the importance of the suba was enhanced and a regular link was maintained with the rest of the Empire. The Mughals paid great attention for the maintenance of these routes. They made bridges to span the rivers53 and apart from that a large number of serais were made for the comfort of the travellers.54 The passes were guarded by *naikan*.55 Abul Fazl tells us that, Akbar, during his return in 1589, was accompanied by stone-cutters, mountain-miners and splinterers of rocks and beldars (diggers) to level the ups and downs of the road.56 All these steps gave a boost to trade and commerce of the country particularly the handicraft trade because it was through these routes that the handicrafts reached throughout the world and filled Kashmir with wealth.

Abul Fazl in his *Ain-i-Akbari* informs us that there were twenty-six routes that link Kashmir with the world. He further says that among all these routes, Bhimber and

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52 Akbarnama, III, p. 762
55 Akbarnama, III, p. 798.
56 Ibid, p.835.
Pakhli were the best. Jahangir says that though that by Bhimber is the shortest, yet if one wishes to find spring in Kashmir, he is confined to the road by Pakhli, for the other roads at this season are blocked with snow. The important among these routes were Bhimber route / imperial route, Muzaffarabad-Pakhli route, Punch route, Kashtawar route and the Central Asian trade route. These routes remained open for most part of the year. The merchants traversed these routes even during the winter months in spite of facing great difficulties due to the severities of weather.

**Bhimber Route:**- This was the imperial route. Bhimber is known as gateway to Kashmir. The Mughal emperors mostly used to visit Kashmir via this route. It connected Kashmir with Gujarat. It passes over Pir-Panjal via Hastivanj. Shawl merchants used this route to sell the shawls at the bazars of Lahore and Agra. This route passed mostly through the hills. After the Mughal annexation of Kashmir, Muhammad Qasim Khan, in 1589, was directed for the maintenance of the route. He leveled the ups and downs and also widened it and thereafter it became passable for packloads, ponies, mules and elephants. This route often remains closed during the winter months because it was situated on a high altitude and received huge amount of snowfall.

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57 *Ain*, II, p. 351; Jahangir also informs us that Bhimber and Pakhli were the best, *Tuzuk*, II, p. 143; for trade routes see, Map 2
58 *Tuzuk*, II, p. 143.
63 *Akbarnama*, III, p. 835
The starting point for the Valley was Bhimber. Bhimber is historically very important. Whenever the Mughals planned to visit Kashmir they used to station strong forces at Bhimber and apart from that, for the safety of their lives the Mughal rulers mounted heavy armour on Bhimber. After Bhimber, the next halting place was Adhidak. It is situated at a distance of six miles from Bhimber. The other important stages of this route were Saidabad which is situated at about seven miles away from Adhidak, Noushera which is situated at a distance of about 15 miles from Saidabad, Changas situated about twelve and a half miles from Noushera, Rajauri at about thirteen and a half miles distance from Changas, Thana which is at a distance of fourteen miles from Rajauri, Bahramgalla situated at a distance of fourteen miles from Thanna, Poshiana situated at a distance of ten and a half miles from Bahramgalla, Aliabad situated at a distance of eight and a half miles from Poshiana, Hirapura situated at a distance of eleven miles from Aliabad, Shupiyan situated at a distance of twelve miles from Hirapura and from there the last halting place was Kumpora which is situated at a distance of ten miles from the South of Srinagar.

The most difficult part of this route was where it connects Noushera and Aliabad and apart from that it was quite easily passable. On the sides of the road, there were over twelve serais situated. These serais were located at Jahangir-Hati, Noushera, Rajauri, Thana, Bahramgalla, Shaji-Marg and Kumpora. These places developed into busy trade centres and remained equally important even up to the establishment of the Sikh rule in the suba of Kashmir in 1819.

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65 Bernier, Travels, p. 390.
68 Bates in his Gazzeter and in the Survey map of Kashmir prepared by Montgomery in 1859, it is Adhidak; Beveridge translation of names it as Adi Dat, Akbarnama, III, p. 819
69 Naushera was in important town in the Mughal suba of Kashmir. It was considered as a gate way of Kashmir. A garrison was always stationed here, Akbarnama, III, p. 851
70 Changas, is half way between Noushera and Rajauri, Forster calls it Chingeque Hatti, Foster, Travels, p. 169.
71 For more details see, Akbarnama, III, p. 764
72 Ibid, p. 832.
73 Beveridge used the word Bahramgalla where as in the original text it is Paramkala. Bahramgalla is entrance to Kashmir and is 24 miles from Rajouri. The ascent to the Pir Panjal Pass begins from here, see Akbarnama, III, pp. 59 and n.1, 768 and n. 2.
74 see Akbarnama, III, p. 830
75 Ibid, p. 847.
76 Drew, The Jammoo and Kashmir Territories, p. 94; Forster, Early Travels in India, p. 169
Muzaffarabad-Pakhli Route:- This route was frequently in use during the Mughal period. It connected Kashmir with Rawalpindi and thence with Peshawar. This route was situated on a low elevation as compared to imperial route and the other routes. It received less snowfall as compared to other routes. It remained traversable even during the winter months. In 1589, Akbar left the Valley by the same route. He appointed Hashim Beg Khan, son of Qasim Khan to widen the route below Baramulla. Pack horses, ponies and elephants were carried on through this route. Jahangir also took keen interest for the maintenance of this route. He appointed Noor-ud-Din Quli to rebuild the road and span the rivulets. Noor-ud-Din Quli was also assisted by Malik Ali in 1655 for this purpose.

The starting point of this route was the ferryboat of the Indus near Attock. Then it passed through Hasanabdal upto river Kunhar. This river was known as Nain Sukh. A serai was built on the left bank of the river by Emperor Akbar. This river was forded below Gadhi Habibulah at Shangraf Kani, on the border of Pakhli. The route after crossing over Kishen Ganga moved along with the left bank of the Jhelum up to Baramulla. Baramulla was accessible to Srinagar through two routes, Noupora-Pattan route and the route over Jhelum River.

Punch Route:- This route was virtually an offshoot of Pakhli route. This was the easiest of the routes because it received less snowfall as compared to other routes and therefore remained traversable throughout the year. It connected Kashmir Valley with Punch through Haji Pir pass. Between Baramulla and Punch, the important stages of this route include Rampur, Gori, Hatina, Haidarabad, Aliabad, Khota and Punch.

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78 Akbarnama, III, p. 835.
79 Tarikh-i-Hassan, I, ff. 76-77; Cf. A. M. Matto, Kashmir Under the Mughals, pp. 210-11
80 Tuzuk, II, p. 142; Haider Malik, Tarikh-i-Kashmir, MS. (RPD) Srinagar, f. 221a, Cf. A. M. Matto, pp. 210-11
81 H. Malik, Tarikh-i-Kashmir, f. 221ab, Cf. A. M. Matto, pp. 210-11
82 Akbarnama, III, p. 853.
83 Ibid, p. 723; Tuzuk, II, p. 139
85 Noupora is a village about two miles away on the left side of Srinagar-Baramulla road; Akbarnama, III, p. 846, mentions this village with the name ‘Tapar’.
Punch was then linked with Jammu through, Suran, Thana, Rajouri, Dharamsala and Akhnoor.

Besides this Kashmir was linked with Punch through other route which runs across the Tosmaidan pass. Though it was strategically very important, but it received huge amount of snowfall because of being situated at a very high elevation and used to remain closed under snow for more than six months in a year.

Kashtawar Route:- During the Mughal Period, Kashmir was linked with Kashtawar by two routes. One route was Islamabad-Kashtawar route via Singhpura, another route was Ramban-Kashtawar route via Dasu. The Mughals launched the first attack on Kashtawar by the Ramban-Kashtawar route. This route linked Kashtawar with Bhadarwah and Ramban and Ramban was then linked with Jammu. This route remained traversable for most part of the year but can be traversed only on foot. It was not fit for Packloads or elephants but rarely ponies traversed through this route.

Central Asian Trade Route:- Kashmir and Central Asia had strong trade relations since Ancient times. The huge mountainous ranges did not affect its overland trade. With the passage of time and after the establishment of urban cultures in Central Asia, this trade developed further. The caravan traders, as a result, became the instrument of cultural transmissions and also assisted in the process of urbanization. Many areas along the trade routes became famous for their specific products. For example, Khotan was famed for jade, carpets and silken fabrics, Samarkand became famous for cotton fabrics, paper and hemp cords, Bukhara for its carpets, Badakshan for Lapis-Luzli and rubies, Tibet for pashm wool and musk, Turfan for pashm wool and Kashmir for saffron, shawls and calligraphed books.

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87 Suran is a village 13 miles south of Punch.  
88 Lawrence, Valley, p. 15; M. Hassan, Kashmir Under the Sultans, pp. 23-24.  
89 Singhpura is a village about 32 miles north-east of the town of Kashtawar in the lat. 32°28’ and long. 75°37’, for more details see, Bates, Gazetteer, p. 345; Tuzuk, II, 135  
90 Dasu is 3 to 4 miles above Nowbargh In the lat. 33°37’ and long. 75°28’, for more details see, Bates, Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh, Vivek publishing, Delhi, 1890, reprint 1974, p. 312, Hereafter, Bates, Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh  
91 Tuzuk, II, pp. 122, 135  
92 Drew, The Jammoo and kashmir Territories, pp. 139-40.  
93 Tuzuk, II, p. 135.  
94 Warikoo, Central Asia and Kashmir, p. 55.
These areas developed into important trading centres in the east-west trade which was carried on through the famous Central Asian trade route known as ‘Silk route’.  

The Kashmir-Central Asia trade route passes nearly the whole of Ladakh from east to west. This was the most frequently traversable trade route which passes from Kashmir via Srinagar-Leh-Yarkand-Kashgar-Khokand. This route was traversable only during the summer months because it received heavy snowfall and it was not easy to cross high passes like, Zojila, Khardong La, Sassser, Karakoram and Suget. But on account of its commercial importance and also because Kashmir was devoid of political turmoil, the merchants very often used it even during the winter months. This route connected Kashmir with Central Tibet, Kashgar, Yarkand and China. Kashmir also carried on the trade with Bhutan, Nepal and Bengal by the same route. The shawl industry of Kashmir was fully dependent on this route. The entire shawl wool was brought to the valley through this route. And apart from that Central Asia was an important market for the pashmina shawls of Kashmir.

The Kashmir-Central Asia route had both commercial and strategical importance. Mirza Haider Daughlat, in 1530, through the same route launched his first attack on Kashmir. Subsequently, during the reign of Shahjahan and Aurangzeb, the same route was facilitated for the invading forces for the invasions of Little and Greater Tibet.

The trade through this road was mostly carried by the porters on their backs because of being situated on a high elevation and the fodder for animals was very scarce. Horses, mules and yaks were also used to carry the burden. The beasts of burden were usually exchanged at Dras and Leh for onward journey.

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96 J. Dowson, op. cit.
97 Desideri, An Account of Tibet, pp. 74-75; Cunningham, Ladakh, p. 148; J. Dowson, Route from Kashmir, pp. 372-385; Moorcroft, Travels, II, pp. 211-51; Warikoo, Central Asia and Kashmir, p. 56
98 J. Dowson, Route from Kashmir, pp. 373-77.
99 Bernier, Travels, pp. 402-3; Desideri, An Account of Tibet, p. 53.
100 Tarikh-i-Rashidi, p. 423, for Zojila pass, the author has used the word Zuji.
101 For more details see, Mattoo, Kashmir Under Mughals, pp. 19-21, 24-26.
103 J. Dowson, Route from Kashmir, pp. 373-374.
104 Ibid
From Srinagar to Baltal, the road was easily traversable for all kinds of beasts of burden. On the other side of the Zojila pass lies Matayan at an altitude of 10700 feet above sea level. From Matayan, the route turned on along with the Dras river up to Kargil and passed to Purig valley as far as Waka leaving Pushkyam on the left side. It leaves Waka River behind and crosses Namyika Pass which is 1300 feet above sea level. It then keeps up with the defile and crosses river Kanji below Pho Law Pass and then leads to Lamayur. After crossing the river Indus, it moves along with the river and pass the valleys of Nurla, Saspul, Buzgo and Pitak. Near Pitak it leaves the river and moves North-East till it reaches Leh. From Leh, the outlets beyond take the form of about eleven routes crossing the Karakoram range of mountains. But the route which was commonly followed by the merchants was the one leaving behind Leh. From here it pass along with Lochela Khardongla also known as Leh Pass or Lo Ches La pass and crossed the Shayok below the confluence of Nubra river near Khelsar. It then passed along the Valley of Nubra River till it comes across Sasir pass. From Sasir pass it ascended the river Shayok. From Sasir Barangs, it gets divided into two parts; one went along the left bank of Shayok and the other after crossing Shayok passed through Murgo and Bursa. It passes through Delpsong plain and cross the Chapchaq upto Paloo. From Paloo, the route leads to the Chinese town of Tashigong. From Tashigong it was again divided into two branches, one leads to Central Tibet and other to Yarkand. Leh was also linked with Sipti and Lahole.

105 Baltal was the last inhabited village on the side of Kashmir. From Baltal onwards begins the mountainous track. It is about twenty miles from Sonamarg at an altitude of 1157 feet above sea level, see, Hashmatullah Khan, Tarikh-i-Jammu wa Kashmir wa Riyasat-i-Maftuha, Lucknow, 1939, pp. 415-17.
106 Desideri, An Account of Tibet, p.73; Cunningham, Ladakh, p. 148; Tarikh-i-Rashidi, p. 423; Lawrence, Valley, p. 23.
107 Pushkyam is a village about five miles from Kargil in lat. 34*30’ and long. 76*15’.
108 Lamayur is situated half way between Kharbu and Nurla in long. 76*50’ and lat. 34*20’. From here rout leads to Zanskar also, see Bates, Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh, p. 555.
109 Pitak is about five miles South-West of Leh in long. 77*35’ and lat. 34*10’ see Bates, Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh, p. 667; Drew, The Jammoo and Kashmir Territories, p. 132.
110 Sasir pass is situated at an elevation of 17820 feet, long. 77*40’ lat. 35*05’, see, Bates, Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh, p. 721; Cunningham, Ladakh, pp. 224-25.
111 Bates, Travels, p. 235
112 Bursa/Burtsi, is situated at an elevation of 16000 feet, long. 78*5’ and lat. 35*10’, See Bates, Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh, p. 246.
113 Desideri, An Account of Tibet, p. 81; J. Dowson, Route from Kashmir, pp. 380-81.
114 Moorecroft, Travels, II, pp. 218-54.
The greatest deficiency in the administrative machinery was that there was no Caravan *serai* on the Tibetan routes and also the rivers were spanned with swinging bridges.

**Serai**

The Mughal interest for Kashmir is well documented in the contemporary Persian sources as well as the accounts of travellers. What differs them from other conquerors was that there attention was fully caught by the natural beauty of Kashmir. The Mughal emperors because of the natural scenic beauty of Kashmir used to come time and again to Kashmir. They had to cover a long distance in the hilly terrains and for this they paid proper attention for the maintenance of its routes and conveyance of the travellers. Soon after the annexation, the Mughals constructed a number of serais/resting houses mostly on the imperial route. Prior to the reign of Akbar, the visitors to Kashmir, mostly used to encamp under the tents but during the reign of Jahangir and Shahjahan a number of serais were erected where the travelers used to have rest during their visit. The serais served as an important stopover for the travellers into the Valley. There the caravans took rest and refreshed before proceeding further on their passage. These serais were a comfort center and shelter for travellers who set out on their passage. The first serai was built by Muhammad Quli Khan at Khampora and Nari-Brari. During the reign of Jahangir, serais were built on the road sides. In one of the twelve edicts of Jahangir which he ordered to be observed as code of conduct (*dastur-ul-amal*) in all his dominions, he states, “On the roads where the thefts and robberies take place, which roads might be at a distance from habitations, the *jagirdars* of the neighbourhood should build serais (public rest houses), mosques, and dig wells which might stimulate population and people might settle in those serais. If these should be near a khalisa (land under direct state management) the administrator (*mustaddi*) of that place should execute the work. A number of serais were built on the way side of the Imperial and Pakhli route. During the reign of Shahjahan, a number of serais were made, some of them were at

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115 Inayat Khan, *Shahjahanama*, p. 5
116 Inayat Khan, *Shahjahanama*, p. 5
117 Bernier calls it Send-Brary, see Bernier, *Travels*, p. 413.
118 *Tuzuk*, I, pp. 7-8
119 Inayat Khan informs us that Jahangir had given orders that out of 12 halting stations resting houses should be made at 11 places, see Inayat Khan, *Shahjahanama*, p. 5
Changas, Rajouri, Thana, Bahramgalla, Poshiana, Shaji-Marg, Khampora, Aliabad, Sukh serai and Hirapora (built by Jahan Ara Begum).

The administration of these *serais* was entrusted to a high reputed noble. These *serais* although were built for the imperial use but they also served for the merchants and other travelers. Besides imperial service, these *serais* promoted to a great extent the trade and commerce of Kashmir, most importantly the handicraft trade. It was through these routes, the handicrafts of Kashmir were exported throughout India and beyond and Kashmir acquired a lot of wealth out of it.

**Handicraft Trade**

From the Mughal annexation onwards, Kashmir became an important centre of Handicraft production. The Mughals were equally fond of the handicrafts of Kashmir as were of the scenic beauty of Kashmir. The Mughal annexation promoted to a great extent the trade and commerce of Kashmir and particularly the handicraft trade. They maintained the trade routes well which made possible for the merchants to traverse throughout the world. They made the raw material available through these routes and apart from that exported handicrafts of Kashmir to Central Asia, Russia, Bhutan, Nepal, Bengal and Patna. In course of time, trade relations were extended as far as Bijapur and Golconda.

The important handicrafts of Kashmir which were manufactured for commercialization were, the Kashmiri shawl, carpet, silk, paper and paper-machie and carved wooden articles. Among all these, shawl was the most important and was exported to every part of India and its neighbouring countries. The industry though flourished long before, but it got perfection during the Mughal period, due to implication of new techniques and Kashmir came to be known throughout the world for soft, warm and delicate textured shawls. During the Mughal period there operated more than 40,000 textile looms in the city of Srinagar and about 120,000 artisans were

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120 *Changas serai* is the famous among Mughal *serais*. It is still existing and is visited by a number of visitors every day. The tomb of mortal remains of emperor Jahangir is within the serai and also a mosque was built which is near the tomb. It was built by an Iranian architect during Jahangir’s reign. Chingus Serai is situated on the stretch between Noushera and Rajouri.

121 *Tuzuk*, I, pp. 7-8


123 Desideri, *An Account of Tibet*, pp. 132-33, 37

employed for the production of textiles. The shawls after manufacture, were handed over to *wafarosh* (a person who had advanced money to them) and to the *mokhim* or broker. These two settled the prices and affect the sale to the merchant. According to Bernier, what may be considered peculiar to Kashmir is its shawl industry. Kashmir acquires a lot of wealth out of it.

The Kashmiri shawls were heavily consumed by the nobility and aristocracy in India and beyond. The Kashmiri shawls were used as a luxury. It had become a craze with every noble to have a shawl and was considered as a symbol of prestige.

The Mughal period led to a greater commercialisation of the shawl industry. The loom was improved, new tints were introduced and shawls of various measurements were manufactured. The Mughal emperors purchased shawls in large quantities and apart from that they were often offered as presents by the *subahdars* of Kashmir. The shawls were also sent to foreign rulers as a token of respect. During the period of Shahjahan, a large number of shawls were sent to the rulers of Bijapur, Golconda, Rome, Egypt and Iran. The Mughal rulers, especially emperor Akbar, apart from maintaining large wardrobes and stores for the preservation of various stuffs, made it compulsory for the courtiers and other officials to wear certain articles, such as, *Takauchiya* (coat), *peshwaz* (coat open in front), and *parm-narm* (the Kashmiri shawl). Abul fazl says, this was done to regulate and intensify the demand of various stuffs to which Akbar paid much attention.

The Kashmir shawl was also consumed heavily during the time of Jahangir and Shahjahan. We have at least twenty references in *Tuzuk* for the presentation of

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126 Chicherov, op. cit., p. 219.
131 Ibid.
134 For details see Chapter Five; see also, A.M. Mattoo, *Kashmir Under the Mughals*, p. 220; A. Ahad, *Kashmir to Frankfurt*, p.11
135 *Ain*, I, pp. 94-96.
Kashmir shawl to nobles, courtiers, fakirs, foreign envoys and others as a mark of favour. Consequently, during the time of Shahjahan a large number of shawls were sent to the rulers of Bijapur, Golconda, Rome, Egypt and Iran. Besides, Shahjahan needed a large number of shawls and carpets for the new palaces he was constructing. Under Aurangzeb the shawl production in Kashmir was on peak and was exported to every corner of the world. The commercial interest of the East India Company for Kashmiri shawls also grew from 1665 and soon it captured the European market. The shawls of Kashmir were also in great demand in Central Asia and Russia. In Central Asia there existed a tradition among the ruling nobility to present Kashmiri shawls to honoured guests and the high authority officials as a mark of authority. Central Asia maintained close commercial contacts with Russia. It acted as a transit station in forwarding the Kashmiri shawls to Russian market. Bukhara acted as a main transit centre receiving shawls and forwarding them for the consumption in Russia.

Apart from Lahore, Agra, Ahmedabad and Gujarat, South India also emerged as one of the great marketing centre of Kashmiri shawl. Nepal, Lhasa and Kathmandu also imported huge quantities of Kashmiri shawls.

Similarly like shawls, the carpets of Kashmir also formed an important exportable item during the Mughal period. The palaces were decorated with carpets. The carpets of Kashmir were considered superior to those imported from Persia. Kashmir produced rugs, namdas and pile carpets throughout the Mughal period.

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137 A. Ahad, Kashmir to Frankfurt, p.11; see also, D. Pant, The Commercial Policy of the Moguls, p. 206.
139 Sofi, ‘Handicraft Trade’, op. cit.
141 K. Warikoo, Central Asia and kashmir, pp. 62-67
142 Palsaert, Jahangir’s India, p. 19.
143 Ibid
144 Manucci, Storia Do Mogor, II, p. 402.
145 Palsaert, Jahangir’s India, p. 19.
146 Tarikh-i-Shahjahani-wa-Alamgiri, MSS 1671, Rotograph no. 45, f. 206b; quoted in, Mattoo, Kashmir Under the Mughals, p. 220.
147 Desideri, An Account of Tibet, pp. 73, 132-33, 317.
148 Ain, I, p. 46.
period and exported these to South India were the Deccan rulers provided eager markets. The woollen carpets preserved in the shrine of Asar Mahal at Bijapur is believed to have been received by Muhammad Adil Shah from Kashmir in 1657. These carpets are probably among those that have been preserved in the museum of the Gol Gumbaz at Bijapur. Simon Digby while analysing the technical examinations came to the conclusion that there is very much possibility that they were the products manufactured in Kashmiri handicraft karkhanas. During the seventeenth century, the relic of holy Prophet (PBUH) at the Hazratbal shrine in Srinagar was also brought from the shrine of Bijapur. This suggests that Kashmir had close cultural connections with Bijapur.

Kashmir is also known for its silk industry. Mirza Haider Daughlat, Abul Fazl and Jahangir have immensely praised the silk industry of Kashmir. Mirza Haider Daughlat regarded it as one of the wonders of Kashmir. It was in a flourishing state during the Mughal period. Bernier in his Travels informs us that some of its stuffs were exported to Lahore.

The paper manufactured in Kashmir was also in great demand in India for writing purposes. It was of silky texture and had glossy appearances. It was so prepared that if one could wash it away, no traces of ink will remain on the paper and the paper can be reused for writing purposes. The paper was much in demand in India for manuscripts and was used by all those who wished to impart dignity to their correspondence. George Forster in his Travels says that Kashmirians fabricated the best writing paper of the East which was formerly an article of extensive traffic. From Ahmedabad large quantities of paper was exported to Persia which was presumably brought from Kashmir. The paper-machie industry also thrived during the Mughal rule and employed a large number of craftsmen for the production of paper-machie

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150 W. W, Drew, Notes on Kashmir Carpets found in Asar Mahal Bijapur” for details see, G. Watt, Indian Art at Delhi, 1903, pp. 431-32.
151 Simon Digby, Export industries and handicraft production under the Sultans of Kashmir, The Indian Economic and Social History Review, 44,4 (October to December 2007), New Delhi, p. 421.
152 Simon Digby, op. cit., p. 421, G. Watts, Indian Art at Delhi, p. 432.
153 Tarikh-i-Rashidi, p. 425; Ain, II, p. 353; Tuzuk, II p. 146.
154 Ibid
155 Bernier, Travels, p. 403.
157 Ain, II, p. 354; Badauni, III, p. 144.
158 Lawrence, Valley, p. 379.
articles. The paintings of Kashmiri artists were sent to the Mughal court in the **paper-machie** boxes.\(^{159}\)

Kashmir is also known for the production of beautiful wooden articles which were exported throughout India. Bernier in his *Travels* noted that “Kashmiri people are active and industrious. The workmanship and beauty of their **palekeys**, bedsteads, trunks, inkstands, boxes, spoons and various other things are quite remarkable and articles of their manufacture are in use in every part of the Indies. They perfectly understand the art of varnishing and are eminently skilful in closely imitating the beautiful veins of a certain wood, by inlaying with gold threads so delicately wrought that I never saw anything more elegant or perfect.”\(^{160}\)

For the trade of handicrafts, the merchants played a vital role as they constituted the wealthiest, influential and the most powerful class of the Kashmir society.\(^{161}\) They had developed political connections with the far off territories through trade and commerce and played a vital role in the socio-economic and political life of Kashmir.\(^{162}\) These merchants created new markets in far off regions and thus strengthened commercial ties with foreign countries like, Rome, Persia, Egypt, Central-Asia and Nepal.\(^{163}\) The merchants due to huge profits, travelled throughout the year from mountain to mountain to purchase **pashm** and other raw materials and selling out the manufactured crafts.\(^{164}\)

**Mode of Transport:** The raw materials imported and the manufactured crafts exported were carried on by the routes already discussed. These routes were safely guarded against the possible dangers of robbery and plunder for smooth passage of trade caravans. Watch stations were established which were known as **darah** or **kartal**.\(^{165}\) These watch stations were kept under the vigilance of **Nayaks/Maliks**,\(^{166}\) who, besides collecting custom duties and **rasums**, examined **rahdari** and permits of


\(^{161}\) A. Ahad, *Kashmir to Frankfurt*, p. 89

\(^{162}\) Ibid.

\(^{163}\) Palsaert, *Jahangir’s India*, p. 9; Desideri, *An Account of Tibet*, pp. 73-74.

\(^{164}\) Desideri, *An Account of Tibet*, p. 73

\(^{165}\) Akbarnama, III, p. 412, n.3.

those who left or entered the boundaries of Kashmir. These officers often harassed the merchants by compelling them to pay more than what was their due. Without their active cooperation and vigilance, it could not have been possible to create markets for the handicrafts outside the Valley.

Although, there were many facilities available and security arrangements, but the trade caravans had to face enormous difficulties because of tortuous road and inadequate means of transport. The shawl merchants were having handicraft packages, food items and utensils packed and tied either around the ponies or the human back. They took months and even years to cross narrow and zig zag terrains and reach their destinations. Sometimes they might slip torrents below from the rope bridges or from mountain passes and lost their lives even before reaching their destinations. In Ladakh and Kashmir there were many rope bridges made of birch, bark and twigs. A footway was tied with the ropes. It was slung from stout rocks across the rivers so as to enable the load carriers to cross the bridge in a peculiar manner. The men with their loads, mounted the ropes and then leaned forward, placed their feet on the footway and make hold of each rope with both of their hands. It was a difficult process in which hands and feet of travellers torned and during the fast winds, they could hardly avoid slipping into the streams.

The merchants also ferried across rivers on inflated skins made of animal hides. They threw their arms over the skin, carefully sewn with an opening kept for inflation. They hold one of the closed legs of the skin with their left hand and a small paddle of wood with their right hand. They made themselves secure by firmly holding the leg of the skin and the ferryman’s shoulder who paddled with one hand and pushed the skin forward by striking his legs.

The most effective and common means of transport between Ladakh and the wool growing areas were the Ladakhi sheep and yaks called huniya. They carry the pashm to the hilly provinces on the South-West. The huniyas were having broad fat tail with their height about three feet. They can travel 8 to 9 miles a day with 4 to 6

167 Hugel, Travels, II, p. 171.
168 Cunningham, Ladakh, p. 169.
169 Ibid
171 Ibid, p. 210
172 Vigne, Travels, II, p. 126.
traks of pashm.\textsuperscript{173} However, the mountain passes were too high and steep that it was dangerous for the animals to traverse and made it necessary for men to carry the merchandise on their backs.\textsuperscript{174} Two men can generally carry the load of a strong mule. He had to carry a thick stick in his hand with the help of which he can walk at ease and at intervals he took rest. The carriers besides remaining away from their homes had to face a lot of hardships and some among them lost their lives in crossing the dangerous passes.

There were better means of transport for the internal trade in Kashmir with no risk of life. It was mostly carried on boats driven in the river Jhelum from Anantnag to Baramulla. These boats were put in intense use during the Mughal period. There were more than 30,000 boats plying in Kashmir bringing the handicrafts of Kashmir from production centres to market.\textsuperscript{175} The boats carried goods from one bank to another under the vigilance of guards.\textsuperscript{176}

To conclude, during the Mughal rule in Kashmir, the handicraft industry was so elaborately organised that handicrafts used to be manufactured on a large scale. It was not only for local consumption but for export to every clime in India and its neighbouring countries. Bernier says that even the children were employed in craft manufacture and says that huge wealth was achieved out of it. The handicraft merchants had their marketing centres all over India, Central Tibet, Nepal and Bhutan and payments from these places were mostly made by the hundis. The customers often suggested the shawl patterns and designs of their choice. Considering the number of local and foreign dignitaries, who received Kashmiri handicrafts as presents and the consumption from the great marketing centres, the demands appear to have been enormous. A special officer called khan-i-saman took care of purchasing the handicraft items and getting the new ones manufactured well in advance.\textsuperscript{177}

\textsuperscript{173} Vigne, \textit{Travels}, II, p. 126.
\textsuperscript{174} J. Dowson, \textit{‘Route from Kashmir’}, p. 373; Vigne, \textit{Travels}, II, pp. 126-27.
\textsuperscript{175} \textit{Akbarnama}, III, p. 835; According to Motamad Khan, there were 5700 boats and the number of boatmen was 7400. Jahangir also confirms the same number of boats, see, \textit{Tuzuk}, II, p. 142; see also, Motamad Khan, \textit{Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri}, p. 149
\textsuperscript{176} \textit{Akbarnama}, III, p. 835
\textsuperscript{177} Manucci, \textit{Storia Do Mogor}, II, p. 394; A. Ahad, \textit{Kashmir to Frankfurt}, p. 45.
Map 2. Routes and Passes
Chapter Four

Tools and Techniques of Handicraft Manufacture

This Chapter deals with tools and techniques of the craft manufacture. It is primarily based on nineteenth century travellers’ accounts particularly that of Moorcroft and Trackback and G.T Vigne. Unfortunately the Indo-Persian sources as well as the European travellers’ accounts of the period of our study are silent on the subject of techniques of craft production. With the exception of Abul Fazl’s remarks on colours, Badauni’s views on the production of unique quality of paper and Berneir’s views on the production of varieties of carved wooden and paper-mache objects. Apart from these, I have made a technical examination of the handicrafts preserved in the Craft Museum and School of Designs, Srinagar which are dated to the period under review.

Technology of shawl manufacture

Preparing the pashm wool:- The pashm at its first stage after procurement was oily, unsmooth and discoloured mixed with coarse hairs and many biological impurities like dung, dirt and even skin. Before it was spun into a delicate yarn it was going through certain processes like, cleaning, sorting, combing etc. The first job was to remove the rough hair and other foreign substances from the pashm. This job was generally done by the Kashmiri women folk in their homes in whatever time they can spare from their domestic duties. They buy the pashm from small retailers called poiwanis, process and spun it into yarn and sell it back to the same retailer.

The second and the most tiresome job was to get rid to it of the coarse hairs, weighing $1/3$ of the total weight, from the thin fibres. The fine pashmina was then needed with finger tips and this needing process was called vechenewun, which is now-a-days done with the help of a kangen or comb instead of finger tips. This kangen is made up of wood and is firmly mounted on a frame for the smooth conduct of the job. Vechenewun is the hardest and the annoying job for the eyes and therefore

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2. J. Rizvi, ‘Woven Textiles’, p. 44.
it was done speedily and abruptly. This operation was mostly carried out in the broad
daylight by women sitting patiently on the needling job after performing their daily
household activities.

The needed pashm was then divided into small balls which were afterwards
mixed with rice flour prepared from the wet rice by ladies for this purpose. The flour
was kept in clean cold water usually for twenty four hours till it would smell and
become soft.\textsuperscript{4} The water was then poured off and the pashm balls were completely
mixed with the rice flour for about one hour till they looked brighter.\textsuperscript{5} They were
occasionally doused with water if the weather is hot and dry else it is not necessary\textsuperscript{6}
and the wool was then cleared of the flour and hair was detached by nails\textsuperscript{7} or combs.
Pashm was thus cleaned of the phiri or the second’s wool. The needling process was
repeated till the needlers were satisfied that the wool has completely been freed from
phiri and twist or knot. If necessary, combing was repeated twice or thrice. The soft
and delicate pads of wool were kept safe from the dust or dirt and were later on spun
by the expert spinners.

**Spinning the yarn**: Spinning constituted mainly the job of women.\textsuperscript{8} There were
some male spinners also who were known for spinning the finest yarn. These male
spinners were called tarakhans.\textsuperscript{9} But unlike female spinners their number was very
small. During the 17\textsuperscript{th} and 18\textsuperscript{th} centuries almost the entire women population of the
city of Srinagar was engaged into spinning and by the end of 18\textsuperscript{th} century and
beginning of 19\textsuperscript{th} century their number increased to 100,000.\textsuperscript{10}

The spinning was done on traditional charkhas called inders.\textsuperscript{11} The most
serviceable and commonly used inders were katzkar\textsuperscript{12}, pachimdar or taklidar these
were the rough and rudest type wheel\textsuperscript{13}. Owing to the occurrence of the training of
young girls in the art of spinning, these inders had become progressively necessary

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\textsuperscript{5} Cunningham, *Ladak*, p. 216; J. Rizvi, ‘Woven Textiles’, p. 44.
\textsuperscript{6} Moorecroft, *Travels*, II, p. 169.
\textsuperscript{7} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{8} Schonberg, *Travels*, II, p. 132.
\textsuperscript{10} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{11} J. Rizvi, ‘Woven Textiles’, p. 44.
\textsuperscript{12} Moorecroft, *Travels*, II, p. 170.
for every household. The *inders* having bells were known as *pakchadar*. It was a costly wheel and was a prestige symbol among upper middle class women who would mainly spin for their personal use.¹⁴

The traditional *inder* was most effective for spinning but it required to be carefully and patiently handled. The length of the yarn spun with the *inder* was usually 700 *gaz* (each *gaz* comprised of 16 *girhas* almost equal to nails). It was cut into 200 lengths each consisting of three and a half *gaz*. The thread thus produced was sold to the *paiwoni*, sometimes by measure and sometimes by weight, which stored it and further went on adding to it by procuring some from the home of spinners through his agents. These agents moved from door to door and announced their coming by ringing a bell¹⁵ in response to which the spinners would deliver the yarn. The yarn thus gathered was sold by *paiwoni* to the loom master and the *karkhandars*.

**Dyeing the yarn:-** The yarn divided into hanks was given to the *rangrez* (dyer) but some of it was retained undyed for weaving shawls of *khudrang*. The undyed yarn was also called *ubra* (*ubr* in Kashmiri means cloud) or *alwan-i-sadeh*.¹⁶ The dyers constituted a separate class and were proficient in dyeing yarn with various brilliant colours and tints of permanent nature. Most of the tints used were derived from natural vegetables such as *kirmizy* (light red), *gullaly* (red), *zaitoni* (olive), *badamy* (almond colour), *fakhtai* (grey) and *zaharmuhri* (light brown).¹⁷ Some of these colours were obtained from various cities of India mainly Punjab.¹⁸ Only saffron and orange colours were locally available. Red blue and yellow colours possessed richness, permanency and beauty.¹⁹ Abul Fazl in his *Ain-i-Akbari* has given a long list of stuffs arranged in the imperial wardrobe according to their colours.²⁰ The yarn after dying was dipped into rice water to make the colour fast and flexible so that it could be easily handled in the shuttle at the time of weaving. The stiffness is then removed by washing.²¹

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¹⁷ *Ain*, I, p. 98.
²⁰ *Ain*, I, p. 97; see also Chapter II.
Arranging the warp:- Before the actual commencement of weaving, the yarn is subjected to warping, dressing and reeling. Each of these developments required the services of different workers. Naqat (the warp maker) adjusts the dyed yarn for warp and weft.22 The warp consists of 1500-2400 threads of double yarn cut into 12-20 meter lengths. The weft is usually of a single but thicker yarn wound round the bobbin in the shuttle. Normally it takes him one day to prepare the warp and weft.23 There are disparities in the arrangements of the yarns for the warp and weft depending on the closeness or openness of texture proposed and the kind of value addition that it has to take.

Pennakam-gur or warp dresser with the help of sticks would stretch the lengths into a band and engrossed it into boiled rice water.24 After getting it out from water, he enfolded it and then again drew it into a band which is brushed and then left to dry. In this process each thread is rigid and rests apart from each other. The yarn is then given to the warp threader who passes it through the heddles with the help of an assistant25 and the weavers later on fixed it on the loom.

Design Drawing:- For making an artistic shawl, three different artists who were specialized in three different fields were fixed. They were: (a) naqash, (b) tara-gur and (c) talim-gur.

Naqqash or designer of patterns was a person of considerable importance who wrought new designs on sivahtareh in black and white.26 Tara-gur or gandanwol27 was a reckoner and a colour caller whose job was to give a complete thought to the selection and arrangement of colours. He would count the number of threads required for each colour in the pattern. Talim-gur or kitabwala28 was the writer of designs. He was to write down intelligibly the instructions of tara-gur regarding various colours and their quantities in terms of threads to be used.

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22 Moorecroft, Travels, p. 176.
23 Ibid.
24 Ibid, p. 177.
26 Bates, Gazetteer, p. 56; see also, P. Nemati, Shawls of the East, p. 68; See Also, A. Ahad, Kashmir to Frankfurt, p. 31.
27 Bates, op. cit., p. 56.
Each of these experts was very essential for shawl industry for producing a range of new designs and patterns to satisfy the diverse taste of customers. The prosperity of shawl industry largely depended on them.

The aesthetic richness and artistic excellence of the shawl owed much to the zeal and enthusiasm of the naqqash, the gandanwol and the talim-gur, who worked in close co-ordination and very often sat late till evening to discuss the particulars and to fill the actual colours in the design. The final outcome of their efforts was the kitab (script) written by talim-gur in the form of symbols (as is used in the modern carpet industry of Kashmir).  

Plate 6. Drawn pattern translated into written form

Weaving:- After attaining the a copy of talim, three weavers worked jointly to weave two threads Kani-shawl on a ‘foot’ type of loom consisting of roller, backrest, reed and spools or tujis. The head weaver or ustad sitting in the middle used to read loud talim or symbol which was accordingly followed by khahanwol, the weaver second in command. The third weaver tsat or shagird, adjusted tujis or spools each of which contained four grains of coloured yarn. These tujis or tilis made of light smooth wood were used in place of a shuttle. They were eyeless needles with sharp edges and their number varied depending upon the simplicity or complexity of pattern. About 400 tujis were required for a shawl of simple design while a complex design needed about 1500. The former employed the weavers for three months

29 See Plate 6; see also, A. Ahad, Kashmir to Frankfurt, p. 32.
30 Barker, The Cottage Textile Industries, p. 60.
31 Ibid, p. 57.
whereas the later for about 18 months. Laden with coloured yarn under the supervision of *tara-gur* or *baranwol*, these *tujis* were inserted from the reverse side of the cloth. The right side of which faced downward. They were handled strictly in accordance with *talim* and once the process was repeated, a heavy comb was brought down vigorously to stiffen the woof or the first line of the weaving. This process would continue till the cloth was woven.

Shawls were of two kinds, one plain or of two threads *kani* and one twilled or of four threads. This cloth four to twelve *girhas* wide and 24 *girhas* broad, engaged two weavers at the loom, one throwing shuttle at the one edge and another receiving it at the other end and then repeating the process after inserting his fingers into the warp. This process would continue till the completion of the shawl which was often irregular and not so soft as the one of two threads. Thus in order to avoid this irregularity the shawl was woven separately and the design was woven afterwards by *refugar* (darned) so nicely that it was impossible to detect the joints. The joining of two or more fabrics and the process of overlapping and interlacing was called ‘*vat*’ which was done so artistically that viewers would be immensely fascinated. Some holds true of the silken borders which engaged experts like *refugar* (darned), *tabgar* (twister) and *alakaband* (reeler) to prepare and attach them with outer edgings of the shawl. Silk warps used for borders of shawls gave them strength to hang better.

**Clipping and Darning:** The woven shawls were subjected to thorough burling called *purz*, burling was necessary for the removal of knots, clusters, discoloured hairs and nepes mixed with the thread during spinning or twisting operations. *Purzgar* employed a pair of small pincers for pulling out hairs and clearing the face and back of the cloth of knots and nepes. *Refugar* (darned) was again consulted especially in case of a defect arising out of the operation.

**Washing:** After weaving, the shawl, which is at this point stiff and stained, is sent to a washer who is specialized in washing shawls. The shawl weaving was necessary to remove the stiffness of the rice starch remaining in the thread and for the purpose

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35 Ibid.
38 Moorecroft, *Travels*, II, pp. 177-78.
40 Ibid
of softening them. The shawls were washed very cautiously with a locally manufactured caustic-free soap. This soap was used for white shawls only and washing was done by feet in clear cold water on the banks of streams in Srinagar mostly in open air. Some ruins in large limestone blocks are still lying on the washing places. After washing, the shawls were dried in the shade and not in the sun light because the hot sun light spoils the colours.

Calendaring and packing:- The washed and dried clothes are subjected to calendaring done with the help of a wooden cylinder. This process may continue for two days. Then would follow processes like press and package. Before being pressed, shawls were packed and wrapped in sheets of smooth-glazed paper. After a thorough press, the package was sewn-up in strong cloth over which an envelope of wax cloth was attached. Then it was again sewn-up in a raw hide so that the package got compactness and protection.

Motifs:- The characteristic planning of delicately lightheaded flowering shrubs called “Mughal Motif par-excellence” or butas reflected almost in every craft came to be incorporated also in shawl palla and matan (endings and ground respectively). During the Mughal period the most distinguishing feature of Kashmir shawl, the ‘Paisley motif’ in its countless variances, became identical with the craft. Now there are many interpretations regarding the evolution of Paisley motif, the least correct being that it originated from the unripe mango (or kairi). According to one theory, the Paisley evolved from the Central Asian aigrette (jiugha) worn by princes on their turbans. The support for this argument is further sought in the local name for Paisley, which is ‘Qalghi’ meaning both aigrette and flower (coxcomb). According to another statement, Paisley (buta or cone) evolved from outlines of a cypress tree bending under the wind and this motif was evolved during the Safavid period of Iran (15th-17th centuries). Sarah Pauly in her The Kashmir Shawl has attested the same theory by illustrating cypress, cone and Paisley. G.M.D Sufi suggested that the Paisley had possibly evolved in Kashmir from the curving patterns that the river Jhelum makes around Srinagar. Lotika Vardarajan suggests that Paisley evolved from motifs in

41 B. Taylor, Travels, p. 95; Vigne, Travels, II, p. 129
42 Vigne, Travels, II, p. 130
43 Moorecroft, Travels, II, pp. 184.
45 Irwin, The Kashmir Shawl, p. 15
temple sculptures of 11th century Jammu where the carved deity, Bhairava wears a crown ornamented with such designs. The motif embossed in the sculpture however looks like a heart and is not remotely suggestive of Paisley. In the opinion of this writer, the Paisley’s origin would be pushed back to ancient Iran. In sculptured decorations or stamped silver plate that have survived from Achaemenid and Sassanid times respectively, the epic heroes and mythical animals have wings which curve like cone or Paisley. A gold bracelet from the ‘Oxus treasure’ ends in the figure of a griffin whose wings are shaped like Paisleys. There is a silver dish, cast and chased with a scene presenting Khusrou II hunting boars and gazelles. The monarch’s elaborate head-dress is topped with crescent resting on two wings formed exactly like Kashmir shawl cones. The dish belongs to the 6th century AD and is now seen in the Cabinet des Medailles in Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. In the Boston Museum there is a specimen of silk twill of Egypto-Syrian origin dated 6th-7th century AD. In its pattern are worked roundels, each of which is set with a tiny Paisley in the corners. This Paisley pattern was seemingly quite disremembered as it was rarely found repeated in surviving specimens. Safavid Iran seemed to have picked up and developed this motif in its ateliers which proved a source of inspiration for the Kashmir shawl industry. But the whole topic of motifs is still open to guesswork as fresh discoveries keep coating old theories. In view of characteristic motif of Kashmir shawls discussed above, it is surprising to find a textile historian in India commenting that kani-pashmina of Kashmir represents “cannons of designs prevailing in pre-Islamic India.” The scholar goes on to illustrate this point by quoting Ajanta Frescoes painted mainly between the 5th and 6th century AD, which indicates only tie-and-die and ikat patterns of dots and stripes. While most of the textile historians have resisted the temptation of reading too much meanings into such fresco-paintings. The Kashmir shawls were made in twill tapestry double interlock technique which was way ahead of any existing simple loom-embroidery called tapestry weave. In any case the simple

48 Khusrou II was the last great king of the Sasanian Empire reigning from A.D. 590 to 628
51 Vardarajan, “Kani Pashmina of Kashmir”, p. 16.
circles and stripes of Ajanta frescoes have no resemblance to elaborate butas, flowering shrubs, latticed diapers, cypress trees and Paisleys in various complex styles as found in pashmina shawls. There was, off course, a type of pashmina shawl made in Kirman and Kashmir which was woven in bands or ribbon like bands and then patched together, and it was called “Mehmat” both in Iran and in Mughal India. It will be too far-fetched to suggest that such shawls in a remote mountain kingdom of India or in Eastern Iran was influenced by motifs of Ajanta caves.

Certain basic motifs such as stripes and circles are not limited to any country but belong to common collective efforts happening independently and simultaneously all over the known world. Kashmir which is largely credited for the remarkable development of kani-pashmina shawl in all its advanced variety was more likely to be influenced in design, colour schemes and techniques by neighbouring regions from Balkh and Bukhara to Khurasan and Kirman because of its geographical proximity and close diplomatic and commercial exchanges. In the famous Delhi Exhibition of 1903, 500 shawls from all over India were displayed. Some of these were said to be from the 18th century or late Mughal period. The Maharaja of Kashmir and the ruler of Bikaner sent a few shawls dating from the 1700 onwards. The nawabs of Lucknow, Murshidabad and Rampur had a few of the old antiques in their collections. The clever menders or refugar from Kashmir could reshape old shawls in a way to look new. Hence it was and still is difficult to precisely date renovated shawls.52

An interesting cross section of Kashmir and Kirman shawls from 17th and 18th centuries now in the royal collection of Iran emphasizes the affinities that existed between the two regions particularly from the late Safavid, Zand and Qajar periods onwards. The same motif—Cypress and Paisleys prevail in both the categories. The same colour schemes, a hundred variations on pinks, mauves, maroons, greens, gold, ivory, indigo, black and oranges are common to both.

The technique and process of shawl manufacture as mentioned above continued to exist in Kashmir even today without any visible change. The Kashmiri shawl cannot be woven possibly on a power-loom or with the help of a shuttle for time being, because designs and patterns are difficult to be wrought through this process. Looking at the beautiful machine made Paisley shawls of the later 19th and

20\textsuperscript{th} centuries, it seems, however, there is enough scope for the indigenous \textit{kani}-shawl industry of Kashmir

\textbf{Plate 7.} \textit{Buta} designs on Kashmiri shawls (photos copied from the website http://www.kashmircompany.com/blog/kashmir-paisley-shawl-and-her-enduring-contribution-to-the-paisley-shawl/ )
The carpet in Kashmir is woven on the loom of a very simple construction composed of two horizontal cylindrical wooden beams locally known as “van”. Between these two beams the warp is stretched. The carpenter who made the loom is locally known as “kal baf chaan”. The weavers sit in doubled up postures during work which caused them health hazard by deforming the body structure. However, in modern carpet loom, the weaver can sit on a chair while weaving which has done away the apprehension of health hazard associated with traditional carpet loom. The difference between a carpet and other handloom textiles lies in the fact that short lengths of thread or yarn are tied to warp chains, commonly called knots to form the pile of the carpet.

The warp threads which are of cotton are arranged in parallel order upright and the fabric and pattern are produced by coloured woolen threads upon the warp. The warp maker’s job is to encircle the length of warp to the correct number of threads and make it ready to fit in the loom. The warp making job is generally performed by the weaver himself and it does not require the service of an expert. Abul Fazl in his Ain-i-Akbari says that “Akbar ordered carpets to be made of wonderful varieties and charming textures. Experienced workmen were appointed who produced many masterpieces.” This passage of Abul fazl gives a reader an insight to assume that how much interest was taken by emperor Akbar for the development of carpet industry. Experienced artisans and craftsmen were brought from far off places to teach the local artisans the advanced system of craft making. It is from the period of Akbar that carpets began to be made of wonderful floral as well as geometrical motifs. The carpet making reached to such a perfection that the carpets of Iran and Turan are no more thought of, although merchants still import carpets from Goshkan (a town in Iraq-i-Ajami, half way between Kushan and Isfahan), Kuzistan (south-west

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53 P. A. Koul, Geography, p. 38.
55 P. A. Koul, Geography, p. 38.
56 Ain, I, p. 55
Persia), Kirman (south-east Persia) and Sabzwar (north-east Persia), but those prepared locally were preferred.  

For weaving a carpet, same method is employed as is in the shawl weaving in converting the original design into a textile which is prepared by a naqash. His main job is to make beautiful designs. The weaver instead of working from a coloured diagram or drawing has the pattern translated on paper into rows of symbol, each of which expresses the number of threads to be tied in and the colour. The tarah-gur or the colour caller decides the colour combinations to make it look like a complete pattern and masterpiece of art with aesthetic look appealing to eye and heart. The deciding of different colour combinations is necessitated in view of changing customer tastes and varied colour combinations liked by customers in different countries.

The man who translates the pattern into written form is called khahanwol. When the warp is fixed on a loom, the naqash or the pattern drawer and the tarah-gur and taleem-gur are the persons who determine the prepositions of the yarn of different colours to be employed. The important feature of carpet weaving is that the design is guided by a taleem (a coded script on paper indicating the number of colours to be employed. The khahanwol uses different symbols for various colours and shades and the process is extremely intricate requiring considerable calculation and concentration to encode a design. He decided the number of knots per inch and the various colours which he codifies serving an instruction to the master craftsman while weaving the carpet. The copy writer is also employed to make several copies of the same design for use by many craftsmen.

The taleem is fixed into the warp threads for execution. The weaver has threads of every required colour in double or three folds wound up into balls hanging down from a string with its two ends tied horizontally with the upper end of the side pillars of the loom. Weaver decodes and transforms the taleem into a beautiful design. He also remembers the colour shades of each knot. The knots of different colours are

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57 Ain, 1, p. 55, n. 1; Shanti Swarup, Mughal Art: A Study in Handicrafts, Agamkala Prakashan, Delhi, 1996, p. 105.
59 P. A. Koul, Geography, p. 39.
60 Ibid, see also, D. N. Saraf, ‘Carpets’, p. 93.

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threaded according to the dictation of the master craftsman who is the reader of the coded pattern or *talim*. The knots consisted of different types, but during the period of our study, the Persian buff known as *sinneh* knot was originally used. In it one end of the warp was looped around a warp chain to emerge between the second warp chain and the chain that will carry the loop in the following knot. The knot can be tied around four warp threads by taking up two at a time. This is called the *jufti* or double knot and it allows knotting to progress more rapidly. It also affects the beauty and life of the carpet. It is believed that the larger the number of knots the higher is the quality of carpet. The fine knotting also makes it possible to depict the smallest motif with precision. Over each row of knots, a double woof shot of thick twine cotton is passed. The fingers are used here instead of shuttle needles because the fabric is of a coarser description. The other process after weaving is clipping or cutting the pile of the carpet evenly. Only after clipping one can see the actual design of the carpet. It is also an expertise job because an uneven cut can destroy the whole carpet and is rightly considered as a delicate process in carpet making. The last process to make the carpet ready for market is washing. It is also a cumbersome and laborious job and is done only by the expert hands.

The tools used to make carpet in Kashmir are very simple. These include:-

1. A blade (locally known as *khur*) for cutting the loops once the thread has been knotted.
2. Wood or metal comb (locally known as *kangen*) for pushing the knots and weft tightly together.
3. Scissor (locally known as *dukaer*) for cutting the carpet to an even form once it is finished.

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62 D. N. Saraf, ‘Carpets’, p. 87.
63 Ibid
64 A. Stacey, op. cit., p. 81; D. N. Saraf, ‘Carpets’, p. 87.
66 Ibid, see also, D. N. Saraf, op. cit., p. 87
The carpets were made with the colours extracted from vegetable or animal sources. The people of Kashmir were experts in the art of dying and the results of their artistry provided an extremely delicate and shining range of colours. The craftsmen made the dyes in their homes. The madder root which grew wild provided the most important range of pinks and reds. Cochineal and turmeric were also used for shades of red. The saffron crocus cultivated in the fields of Pampore in Kashmir provided pure yellow. Pomegranate skin and distilled turmeric provided reddish yellow. The rhubarb plant provided dark red and copper red. Green came from the grass (kusa) and brown from the leaves of kikar tree.

The motifs in the designing of carpets in Kashmir are heavily influenced by the flora and fauna of the land. The quality and elegance of a carpet was determined from its designs. Abul Fazl in his *Ain-i-Akbari* says that “Emperor Akbar caused Carpets to be made of wonderful varieties and charming textures; he has appointed experienced workmen, who have produced many master-pieces. The carpets of Iran and Turan are no more thought of, although merchants still import carpets from Goshkan, Khuzistan, Kirman, and Sabzwar.” Some of the important motifs in Kashmiri carpets were *boteh, gamlah, tree of life* etc. The *boteh* motif has the origin from Hamadan but the Kashmiri carpet weaver produced his own *boteh* motif in

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68 Ibid.
69 *Ain*, I, p. 55
which a multitude of rosebuds punctuate the guard bands that enclose the floral border, on which the *boteh-miri* motif is the basic element. It is in curved form which lends great elegance to the pattern. In the *gamlah* motif two columns are resting on the lower column of the border. In the centre, the most delicate floral design emerges from the very handsome vase, filling the center of the carpet entirely. On either side of the vase sprays flower which does not grow out of a vase set on the lower border instead, they spread from the base of the carpet in successive waves. ‘The tree of life’ according to the craftsmen of Kashmir was the link between the paradise and earth. The idea of creating a tree as a symbol of paradise was perceived in various crafts. The ‘tree of life’ possesses different classifications. Some pictorial designs of tree represent no tree but weave it quite realistically, some include birds and animals round the tree, some form prayer designs and the tree is the right kind of shape to fit onto the ground, some merge single tree and vase of flowers together and others form garden design.

**Paper manufacturing Techniques**

The origin of paper industry is credited with China. From China the art transmitted to Samarkand and from Samarkand it diffused to the different parts of world. In India, we do not find any pointed reference to the establishment of paper industry before the reign of Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin (1420-70) of Kashmir. During his stay at Samarkand he learnt the art of paper making and brought different artisans and craftsmen including the paper makers from Samarkand to Kashmir. The paper manufactured in Kashmir was far superior than the one manufactured in Khurasan, and that is why it was sent as a present to different rulers. However, from the excavations at Mansura in Sindh, which was destroyed in c. 1030, paper pieces from as many as seven burnt Arabic manuscripts have been found. Therefore it is presumed that the art of paper manufacture should have reached to the Arab ruled Sindh well before eleventh century and transmitted from Sindh to Ghaznavid Punjab. In Kashmir, *Satpatha*

74 Ahmad Nabi Khan, *Al-Mansurah: A Forgotten Arab Metropolis in Pakistan*, Department of Archaeology and Museums, Govt. of Pakistan, 1990, pp. 88-89
Brahmana Manuscript was copied on paper in 1089 A.D. From 1223–24 or even from 1180, Sanskrit manuscripts began to be written on paper in Gujarat because of close regional proximity with Sindh and also for the presence of mercantile communities in its ports.\textsuperscript{75} In Kashmir, birch-bark (bhoj-patra) was extensively used for writing purposes besides the rag paper. Rag paper lasted for less time than bhoj-patra, besides this was available in abundance. Therefore, it was preferred for writing precious documents.\textsuperscript{76} This view is also supported by Abul Fazl, “The people of Kashmir write chiefly on touz which is the bark of a tree, worked into sheets with some rude art and which keeps for years.”\textsuperscript{77} The earliest specimen of bhoj-patra available is in the Sri-Pratap Museum Srinagar. There is a written bhoj-patra sheet available. It is dated to A.D. 1576 and its size is 22 x 24 inches. It is a succession deed (wasiyat nama) of a sufi saint, Hazrat Shaikh Hamza Makhdum Sahib also known as Sultan-ul-Arifin. That bhojpatra as well as writing on it stands immersion in water.\textsuperscript{78} It was also remarkably experienced by S.A. Stein, his box containing the Codex Archetypus of the Rajtarangni of Kalhana, written in 1649; fell into the sea in the Ostende Harbour due to the carelessness of its porters in 1890. Fortunately, he succeeded in recovering it. He writes, “The soaking with sea water left no perceptible trace in the Codex. Kashmiri paper of the old make stands immersions of this kind remarkably well and the ink used to this day by the Kashmirian Pandits for their Sanskrit manuscripts is in no way affected by water.”\textsuperscript{79} The rag paper manufacture in Kashmir involves the processes like beating, moulding, couching, drying, sizing and glazing.

\textbf{Beating:-} Through the process of beating the raw materials are reduced to a state of separation in which the final threads founding the natural fibers are freed from each other and can be caused to float separately in water.\textsuperscript{80} The beating is done by

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{75} P.K. Gode, \textit{Studies in Indian Cultural History}, vol. III, BOR Institute, Poona, 1969, p.7
  \item \textsuperscript{76} Sujjan Rai Bhandari, \textit{Khulasat-ut-Tawarikh}, ed. Zaffar Hassan, Delhi, 1918, p. 80
  \item \textsuperscript{77} \textit{Ain}, II, p. 352
  \item \textsuperscript{78} See, appendix 10, \textit{Wasiyat-nama} of Shaikh Hamza Makhdum; see also Parmu, \textit{History of Muslim rule in Kashmir}, p. 415; Shaikh Hamza Makhdum popularly known as Makhdoom Sahib (1494-1576 A.D) was a sufi saint and scholar of Kashmir. He is sometimes referred to as Mehboob-ul-Alam (lover of knowledge) and Sultan-ul-Arifin (king of those who know God). His shrine is located on the southern side of Hari Parbat Hill (Kohi Maran) in Srinagar. For more information see, Peerzada Muhammad Tayyab Hussain Kashmiri, \textit{Auliya e Kashmir}, Nazir Publishers, Lahore, 1988, pp. 25-30
  \item \textsuperscript{80} P. A. Koul, \textit{Geography}, p. 53-54.
\end{itemize}
pounding in a stone mortar with an iron shod pounder put into action by a turned beam which is raised by a shaft driven by waterwheel. The bands of rags are then nourished into the mortar. The rags are justly checked with water and small tweaks of lime and soda are thrown into the mortar at breaks. The process is repeated for many times till the material reaches into a required stage. Between each stage, the pulp is washed in a trough formed by binding the ends of a piece of cloth in a stream. The dirt passes through the mesh of the cloth and is carried away by the stream. The pulp is then pressed into cakes about a foot square and one to two inches thick. These are put in the sun for bleaching which gives it a good cream white effect.

**Moulding:** - The pulp cakes after beating, washing and bleaching were sent to vats of Nowshahra to get manufactured in paper. The pulp cakes were firstly clutched in an earthen pot with water and were pressed by the men with their feet to bring them in a condition in which they can float freely in water. The pulp is then moved to the container filled with a large volume of water. The pulp settles down at the bottom of the container/vat. The knots and unbeaten particles often cause irregularities and marks in the sheet. Some of these knots and unbeaten particles are picked off from the sheet before it got merged on the mould. The thickness and weight of the sheet are controlled by the quantity of pulp. The vatman brings up from the bottom of the vat by the slight swaying tension he produces with the lower part of his mould when he judges the mixture of pulp and water has reached the bright uniformity and also by the number of dips which he superimposes on the top of each other on his mould. The regularity of weight and the thickness is strangely good and the practice of superimposing continual dips enhances largely to the strength of the sheet.

The mould was just a portion of cloth stressed over a wooden frame. The pulp was raised over this mould. The pulp floats on to it. The wet sheet can be moved from it and the mould can be reused by the vatman continuously. A sheet is moulded just by one dip and because of being rigid; the vat sheet can be moved to the transfer felt by one single and rapid motion. Further, in withdrawing it from the vat it generates a void under it, which sucks a substantial quantity of water out of the moulded sheet lying on its surface.

**Couching:** - Unlike Mould, couch used to be flat and rigid. The couch included of an oblique board larger than the size of the paper. Firstly, an old worn out mould and

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81 Lawrence, Valley, p. 379-80; see also, Bamzai, A History of Kashmir, p. 491.
then a square damped cloth was laid. The cloth is given the tough surface to which first wet sheet will follow in liking to penetrating to the mould. Succeeding sheets are moved on one another. The uneven surface of the wet paper becomes adequate to cause the required amount of the adhesive. A block of paper is shaped which conserves the beaten and rigid form required to take the transfer from a flexible mould. When the block consists of seventy to eighty sheets, another board is placed on it and this is loaded with stones and left all night to drain. Next day a final extra crush was given. The sheets are separated from each other very carefully and spread on a mud wall open to the sun. Six to eight sheets are fixed on one another, which they follow just by moist firmness. When the wind is dry they are easily disconnected from each other.\textsuperscript{82}

**Sizing:** Sizing includes the rubbing of rice starch on both sides of the sheet. The sheet is then hanged in the sun up on rope to dry.\textsuperscript{83} Sizing is very effective for enabling the paper to carry local ink laid on with the reed pen. The sized paper is then surfaced or polished by friction with a piece of polished agate fixed in a wooden handle.

The Kashmiri paper had a special quality that once the ink is washed off it can be reused for writing purposes and the paper will not show any traces of the previous ink.\textsuperscript{84} Sheikh Yaqub Sarfi, A Kashmir Sufi of the late 16\textsuperscript{th} century, addressed a letter to Abdul Qadir Badauni and writes, “if you should have any need for rough notes and drafts. I hope you will inform me of the fact, so that I may send you from Kashmir, the rough copy of my commentaries. The writing of which can be washed from the paper as completely that no traces of ink will remain as you yourself have seen.”\textsuperscript{85}

There were three types of paper, \textit{farmashi}, \textit{dahmashti} and \textit{kalamdani}, among them \textit{farmashi} was the most fine paper, highly glazed, made of pulp containing two parts of hemp fibre to every sixteen parts of rags, whereas \textit{dhamashti} was made from a pulp containing three parts of hemp fibre to every 177 parts of rags. \textit{Kalamdani} contains no hemp fibre.\textsuperscript{86}

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\textsuperscript{82} For details see, P. A. Koul, \textit{Geography}, p. 55; Lawrence, \textit{Valley}, p. 379-80; Sufi, \textit{Kashir}, pp. 576-77
\textsuperscript{83} P. A. Koul, op. cit., p. 56.
\textsuperscript{84} Badauni, \textit{Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh}, III, p. 144.
\textsuperscript{85} Ibid
\textsuperscript{86} Lawrence, \textit{Valley}, p. 380.
\end{flushright}
**Paper-machie Technology**

The technology of *paper-machie* in Kashmir is divided into two processes, i.e., making the object (*sakhtsazi*) and the second is painting the surface (*naqashi*). *Sakhtsazi* is a Persian term, ‘sakht’ means ‘basic’ and ‘sazi’ means ‘the act of forming.’ The popular name for the craft is ‘chat’ meaning ‘the plain and white.’

To prepare a *sakhtsaz*, several layers of Kashmiri paper are fixed on the clay mould of a vital object and then the pulp made Kashmiri scrap paper pounded and mixed with rice paste is put to compulsory thickness and over it again is pasted Kashmiri paper, layer upon layer, by the continual slow process of drying and adding. After the pulp has dried and hardened to the prerequisite shape, it is sagaciously cut from the mould with a realistic saw. The two shares are rejoined together with the glue and the surface is made even with an iron file *kathaw*. After that it is draped round with thin cloth and covered with *gutch*. The *gutch* was attained from an old plastered wall of a room. It is mixed with glue and water. The surface is then smoothened by rubbing it lightly with a piece of hard burnt brick (called *karkut* in Kashmiri). Over this is applied a stain (*astar*) which is prepared by rubbing together with water a kind of stone called ‘basvatar’ found only in excavation at Manasbal. On this *astar* is applied *safeda-Kashgari* (white powder) mixed with glue and water and over it is applied the ground colour.

Originally the art of *paper-machie* was known as *kar-i-kalamdani* (pen case making). Apart from pen cases different articles were made of *paper-machie*, like book-stands, picture-frames, trays, *surahis* etc. During the 18th century, shawls were sent to France in *paper-machie* boxes which were separately sold there at high prices. According to Bernier, the workmanship and beauty of their palekys, bedsteads, trunks, inkstands, boxes, spoons and various other things are quite remarkable and articles of their manufacture are in use in every part of the Indies.

The colours applied to the ground layer were gold, black, red, blue, verdigris (green) etc. The *naqash* (the pattern-drawer) and his subordinates prepared the colours.

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for painting the paper-machie objects. The patterns used in paper-machie naqashi are very complex and their presentation requires a great deal of skill and accuracy. The patterns are drawn free hand. The naqash draws from the reservoir of patterns and motifs in his memory. When the zamín colour dries, the pattern drawer draws the outlines with yellow colour and the spaces left for floral work are stained with astar and white paint. Then the painting of flower work is applied which resembles the real artistry of a paper-machie craftsman. The opening work called rakha or partaz was done with crimson or any other appropriate colour. If the floral work is to be done in gold and silver then over the spaces left for such work is applied the dor prepared from zarda mixed with glue and sugar and over it are applied gold or silver leaves. The leaves stick to only those parts were the dor has been applied. The opening work on gold or silver is done on silver with dust dissolved in water with glue or with purple or crimson colours. When carefully set, the whole is polished with kahruba (amber) or sandrius (copal) dissolved in linseed oil. It is then dried in the sun after which the surface is rubbed with a wet grass rope and washed clean. After this gold or silver leaves are dissolved in water with salt and glue. The surface is then polished by rubbing it with a piece of yasham stone (jade) imported from Khotan. Lastly a final varnish is applied and is then dried in the sun.

The motifs used in the painting of paper-machie objects were mainly derived from the nature like flowers, birds and animals, while the patterns are floral and arabesque. Sometimes calligraphy was also employed on the paper-machie objects. The popular designs of paper-machie objects include hazara (a thousand flowers) and gul-i-ander-gul (flower within the flower and the birds in foliage). The sabzkar or foliage design was selected by Aurangzeb. This design was highly polished then gold by which it created an alluring or fascinating depth.

Wood Craft Technology

The traditional wood-craft which are specific to Kashmir includes carved wooden objects like pinjra (lattice work) and khatamband or khatamkari (paneling on

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91 Lawrence, Valley, p. 378; Sufi, Kashir, p. 578; Bamzai, A history of Kashmir, p. 491
92 Ibid, see also, B. Kennan, Travels, pp. 206-09; Parmu, A History of Muslim Rule, p. 417.
ceilings) and other carved wooden objects like household utensils, toys and furniture and also decorative articles and articles of daily use like Quran stands.\textsuperscript{94} The workmanship and beauty of the wood-carved objects of Kashmir had inspired even the foreign travelers to Kashmir most importantly, Bernier, who visited Kashmir during the reign of Aurangzeb says that the wooden articles manufactured in Kashmir are in use in every part of the Indies. He further says that “They (Kashmiris) perfectly understand the art of varnishing, and are eminently skillful in closely imitating the beautiful veins of a certain wood, by inlaying with gold threads so delicately wrought that I never saw anything more elegant or perfect.”\textsuperscript{95} The wood-craft of Kashmir was mostly inspired by the richness of nature of the land like its landscape, mountains, forests, meadows etc.

**Lattice Work:** In the technological process of the famous lattice-work of Kashmir also known as *achchidar* or *jali-pinjra*,\textsuperscript{96} small pieces of laths wood with their edges exposed are held together within a frame to create a network of intersecting lines. In the traditional wood-crafts of Kashmir, nails or any kind of glue was not used. The thin laths of wood are held together by force, pressure, stress, strain and weight which they exert on each other and thus create a variety of intricate designs. The *Pinjra* panels were primarily used for decorative purposes in which the holes in the geometrical layout let the air in. 

*Pinjra* work figures frequently in the romantic folk-lore of Kashmir. One of the romantic verse refered by D.N.Saraf is that “*zaile panjra tale nazar trav, bali asi mae tamblav*” (bestow upon me one glance from behind the *Pinjra*, Oh: young beauty, pray do not tentalize me).\textsuperscript{97}

Bernier, who visited Kashmir during the reign of Aurangzeb, makes a special mention of the latticed window shutters and doors, and the houses of Kings and nobles which screened from view the beautiful ladies of their harem.\textsuperscript{98} Many other travelers of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century and late testify to the delicate workmanship of the *pinjra* carpenter. *Pinjra* work is still seen in old Kashmiri houses.

\textsuperscript{94} Vigne, *Travels*, II, p. 122.  
\textsuperscript{95} Bernier, *Travels*, p. 402.  
\textsuperscript{98} Bernier, *Travels*, pp. 105-106.
Many designs were popular in the pinjra work of Kashmir. The most were rising sun and cobwebs. The best kind of pinjra work was known by the Kashmiri names like, posh-kandur, chahar-khana, sadah-kandur, shash-tez, shash-sitara, shash-pahlu, dwazdah-sar, shaikh-sar, juj-jari, shirin and tota shesh-tez.\textsuperscript{99} Pinjra was put on many uses like windows, doors, railings, ventilators, ornamental partitions and screens etc.

Plate 9. Latticed Windows

**Khatamband:**- The khatamband technique of wood-craft is unique to Kashmir. In it, thin sheets of wood are held together by double grooved boards to create with the combinations of excellent joinery and beautiful designing, patterned ceiling panels. A pattern usually in the form of wood or any other metal was used to form an accurate copy of the geometric shape and size of the wooden sheets to ensure that the pieces can be interchanged. These wooden strips are fitted into the grooves of the boards which are in the form of short, flexible sawed strips of wood. The Naqashband mosque and the Charar-i-Shareef shrine, both in Srinagar are the finest examples of khatamband ceilings as well as pinjra work in Kashmir.\textsuperscript{100} The best khatambandi

\textsuperscript{100} Lawrence, Valley, pp. 378-79; P.N.Kachru and R. Thapaiyal, ‘Wood-work’, p. 103
designs are known as \textit{chahargul} (a pattern with regular and irregular hexagons) and \textit{dwazdeh gird} (pattern with regular hexagons)\textsuperscript{101}

As far as the tools are concerned, the wooden sheets are cut into shape by using a saw. Wedge is used to split and the surfaces are smoothened by using an adze. Besides these, the other tools include hammers, mallets, sledge hammers, chisels of various shapes, spindles for carving and also knives for finer carvings. The Kashmiri \textit{khatamband} craftsman is more concerned with the forms of decoration than with the form or shape of the object. Therefore he uses the tools of various sizes of chisels and hammers for carving out the rich, vibrant and extravagant designs. A great impetus to this industry has been given by the builders of the boats and houseboats which display excellent wood-work and show splendid and elaborate wood-carving and beautiful ceilings boasted with boldness and stunning detail the wonderful art of \textit{khatamband}. Abul Fazl in his \textit{Ain-i-Akbari} informs us about the construction of a model of ship in Kashmir on the orders of emperor Akbar and also informs us that an attempt was made to introduce the designs from the eastern part of the country.\textsuperscript{102}

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{plate10.jpg}
\caption{\textit{Khatamband} roof in the \textit{Ziyarat} of Naqashband Sahib}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{101} See plate 11 & 12
\textsuperscript{102} \textit{Akharnama}, III, p. 835
Wood-carving: Wood-carving is among the most important crafts of Kashmir. The carving on the surface of the wood is grooved with knives or notched with chisels or knives, cut through with the chisel and dotted with a drill. The tools used in wood-carving are very simple but the techniques of execution and style of decoration are very complex. In Kashmir four main types of carvings on wood were practiced, these are raised, engraved, undercut and plain. The best wood for the carving in Kashmir was walnut because it was strong, soft, mellow colour, even with plain polish,
durable, rich and fine grain and even texture and most importantly it has a greater diameter. Rose-wood and chikri were also used but on a less scale.\textsuperscript{103}

The finest wooden carved objects in Kashmir were varied items of furniture, trays, bowls, spoons, doors, windows, decorative penals, decorated ceilings, facades, pillars, boxes, picture frames, cradles etc.

The motifs in Kashmiri wood-craft is naturalistic and also geometric and abstract naturalistic decoration.\textsuperscript{104} The commonly used motifs are designs depicting the flowers of Kashmir like sunflower, iris, rose, tulip, narcissus, lotus, the images of animals and birds are also very popular. The designs in Kashmir wood-work like those of shawl and carpet weaving are also based on Persian roots like \textit{barg-e-sosan, chinar, barg-e-sarv, barg-e-badam, mazarposh} etc.

\textbf{Plate 13.} Wood Carving tools

\textsuperscript{103} Kachru and Thapaiyal, ‘Wood-work’, pp. 103-115
\textsuperscript{104} P. A. Koul. \textit{Geography}, p. 69
Chapter Five

Industrial Organisations

Long before the establishment of Mughal rule, Kashmir entered into a distinctive phase of industrial development which was made possible only by the genuine and determined efforts of its rulers and active cooperation of the populace. In collaboration with the sufis saints mainly of Central Asian origin, they introduced the karkhana system. It was aimed not only to boost the economy to ensure the general well-being of the public but also for preaching Islam in the valley. The karkhana system created ample employment opportunities by bringing about revolutionary changes in the production of goods, marketing system and production relations. The resultant marketing elaboration accelerated the development of division of labour and commodity economy to create, eventually an objective basis for the growth of a vibrant Kashmiri identity and personality.

The karkhanas were entirely based on a complex division of labour, an organized manufacturing system and an elaborate marketing structure. The karkhanas apart from renovating ideological and institutional mould of Kashmir made possible for its people to earn their livelihood through the pursuit of well thought-out manufacturing activities. The handicrafts thus produced were of considerable significance and economic worth; enabling Kashmir to become known as commercial and industrial hub on the map of Asia.¹

Kashmir, however, during the pre-Mughal era or even since the ancient period was not lacking of industrial base. Earlier the Kashmiris living in a land locked society were not having any easy contact with the world outside.² They felt obliged in consequence of the geo-historical circumstances to produce whatever they needed of, vindicating, thus, the proverbial wisdom, “necessity is the mother of invention”.³ They produced all material goods, including food and cloth for their sustenance and did not depend on outside world with which they had no communication, link and easy connectivity. Owing to technological constraints of time, the economy was a

¹ A. Ahad, Kashmir: Triumphs and Tragedies, p. 141
² M. A. Stein, Notes on Oukong’s Account of Kashmir, Spinger, Wein, 1896, p. 22
³ A. Ahad, Kashmir to Frankfurt, p. 141
mixed one in which the society as a whole had become an amalgam of self-sufficient and self-dependent village economic units and the people were working both as agriculturists and artisans. This system was fraught with the consequences increasingly unfavorable for the growth of industry. There was no division of labour or commodity based or market oriented relations.

It was against this background that since the establishment of Muslim rule in Kashmir, tremendous changes were brought in the socio-economic system by the introduction of *karkhanas*. These *karkhanas* were established on the Central Asian model with the active cooperation of the Muslim missionaries from Central Asia who had migrated to Kashmir. There were three reasons for the establishment of *karkhanas* in Kashmir these are:-

1. To improve the economic conditions of people.
2. The missionaries wanted to cater to their urban tastes which they had developed while living in the posh cities of Iran, Yarkand, Samarkand and Bukhara. Since Kashmir could not provide them amenities and benefits of city life, the introduction of *karkhanas* became absolutely necessary.
3. The missionaries wanted to engage themselves in some kind of economic activity, besides preaching Islam and this became possible only after the establishment of *karkhanas* with which they were thoroughly acquainted and in them they could have been easily employed as they were well trained in various arts and crafts.

During the period under study, *karkhanas* witnessed a tremendous improvement and entered into a new phase of their development that subsequently manifested itself in the simple capitalist mode of production. There were many factors responsible that led the Mughals to pay attention for the improvement of *Karkhanas*:-

Firstly, the Mughals were fond of Kashmiri textile fabrics. They had shown keen interest in obtaining the Kashmiri handicrafts particularly shawls. Abul Fazl writes in detail about the interest of Akbar for obtaining a Kashmiri shawl and says that Akbar wore the shawls as a sign of auspiciousness. Jahangir also refers to his fondness for the shawl and says that it was his favourite item of dress. Besides, the Kashmiri fabrics were a symbol of prestige for the Mughal nobility and aristocracy. It became imperative to organize the *karkhanas* on broader lines in order to get the
articles produced in abundance to meet the demand of the court. Thus the fascination of the Mughal nobility and royalty for the Kashmiri fabrics resulted in a boom for the karkhanas.4

Secondly, the Mughal Empire was a prosperous one. It had possessed immense wealth which proved an important weapon in changing the very complexion of the handicraft karkhanas of Kashmir. Its riches, grandeur, comforts, luxuries and etiquettes created a custom among themselves of presenting Kashmiri products to the mansabdars, the jagirdars and the umara and other dignitaries.5 Twice every year in the winter and in the rainy season khilats were presented by the emperor to every mansabdar whose number in 1690 was nearly 7500 and the number of those who held jagirs was 4000.6 Besides, the Kashmiri handicrafts were given as presents to princes, ladies of the imperial harem, governors and newly appointed state officials at the two birthdays of the emperor (lunar and solar), the day of coronation, the two Eids and Nowroz.7 Apart from that, The Mughal rulers sent Kashmiri products as presents to foreign monarchs and also offered them to the envoys who visited India from time to time.8

Considering the ever increasing demand of the imperial court and the number of dignitaries who received Kashmiri products as presents or in gifts, it became necessary for the Mughals to organize karkhanas on broader lines to ensure large production in order to meet the demand of the times. Apart from the state owned karkhanas in Kashmir the private karkhanas were also operational during the Mughal period.9

In the handicraft karkhanas of Kashmir, the workmen were busily employed on full time basis strictly in accordance with a complex system of division of labour10

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4 Ain, I, p. 96; Tuzuk, I, p. 384.
5 Badauni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, II, p. 352; Desideri, An Account of Tibet, p. 73; see also, Jahangirnama, p. 53; A. Ahad, Kashmir to Frankfurt., p.11.
6 T. Verma, Karkhanas Under the Mughals, p.17
7 Sarkar, Mughal Administration, p. 9; Nowruz is the traditional Iranian festival of spring which starts at the exact moment of the vernal equinox, commencing the start of the spring. It is considered as the start of the New Year among Iranians. The name comes from Avestan meaning “new day/daylight”. Nowroz is celebrated March 20/21 each year, at the time the sun enters Aries and Spring begins.
8 Irwin, The Kashmiri Shawl, p. 121.
9 Waris, Badshahnama, II, f. 373
10 Bernier, Travels, p. 259.
which according to Abdul Ahad led to the development of the simple capitalist mode of production\textsuperscript{11} which manifested itself in the:

1. Intensification of social division of labour,
2. Development of productive forces,
3. Improvement in techniques and designs,
4. Transformation of small scale into large scale production
5. formation of merchants capital

The social division of labour made possible not only the improvement in the quality of products but also the internal administration of the \textit{karkhanas} became more effective. The improvement is testified by the contemporary observers like Abul Fazl who speaks eloquently about the perfection and excellence of procedures of manufacture.\textsuperscript{12} The textile \textit{karkhanas} alone comprised more than twelve separate groups of workmen working under the master artisans on full time basis. Similarly, the division of labour was also prevalent in the wood-work and metal workshops\textsuperscript{13}

Following are some of these workmen:-

\begin{quote}
\textit{Vechenawanwool} (Spinner)
\textit{Rangrez} (dyer)
\textit{Nakatu} (Warp-maker)
\textit{Naqqash} (Designer)
\textit{Taraguru} (Reckoner)
\textit{Talimgur} (Script writer)
\textit{Rafugar} (Darer)
\textit{Tabgur} (Twister)
\textit{Alakaband} (Reeler)
\textit{Purzgar} (Burlers)
\textit{Woenen-wol} (Weaver)
\textit{Shawlbaf} (Shawl-weaver)
\textit{Kalbaf} (Carpet-weaver)
\textit{Shishter-Khar} (Iron-smith)
\textit{Thanthur} (Copper-smith)
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{11} A. Ahad, \textit{Kashmir: Triumphs and Tragedies}, p. 148
\textsuperscript{12} \textit{Ain}, I, p. 98.
\textsuperscript{13} A. Ahad, \textit{Kashmir: Triumphs and Tragedies}, p. 148.
Each branch was headed by an *ustad* (master craftsman) who supervised the work of the *tsats* (workers). The *vasta* used to have complete control over the *tsats*. He used to draw complete attention towards their work and formed the main link between the artisans and the entrepreneurs.\(^{14}\) In all the handicraft *karkhanas* of Kashmir during the Mughal period, work was done on the basis of division of labour and in those *karkhanas* caste system was also prevalent. No person outside the caste of craftsmen was admitted to the profession of craft manufacture. Each craft was hereditary and the skill of craft manufacture transferred from father to son.\(^{15}\) The provisions of the treaty of 1682-83 between Kashmir and Ladakh called treaty of Tingmosgang, concluded to regulate the supply of shawl industry further made it clear that Mughal rule created objective basis for its *karkhanas* to develop simple capitalist mode of production. It created a class of middlemen who represented merchants and their capital in the wool producing areas. They purchased *Pashm* on behalf of the merchants and later on exported it to Kashmir.\(^{16}\)

The improvements in tools and techniques of manufacture in the *karkhanas*, particularly in the loom boosted the textile industries. The improvements in the loom enabled them to manufacture soft fabrics and fascinatingly designed carpets depicting hunting scenes and floral designs. Similarly the improvements in wood and metal industries made possible to fashion the articles with delicate ornaments such as palanquins, Quran-stands, opals, blood-stones, agatas, turquoises, bracelets and rings etc.\(^{17}\) besides these improvements, the handicraft *karkhanas* expanded considerably. The number of textile looms alone rose to 40,000\(^{18}\) giving employment to about

\(^{14}\) Schonberg, *Travels*, II, p. 104
\(^{15}\) Bernier, *Travels*, p. 259
\(^{16}\) For more details of the treaty, see, Chapter III.
\(^{17}\) A. Ahad, *Kashmir: Triumphs and Tragedies*, p. 149;
\(^{18}\) George Forster *A Journey*, II, p. 22.
120,000 workmen and to the entire female population of the towns and cities.\textsuperscript{19} Even small children got employment in the \textit{karkhanas}.\textsuperscript{20}

The word ‘\textit{karkhanas}’ has been used in the sources in a very wide sense. It does not include only handicraft \textit{karkhanas} but also animals in the state stables, articles of food and drink stored for the royal use, finished goods kept in government stores and workshops where raw material was used and worked upon to produce finished commodities by employed labour. The Mughal emperors took special interest in the \textit{karkhanas} where the articles were produced not only for the general requirements of the state but also the articles of choice and quality were produced.

As far as the imperial \textit{karkhanas} are concerned, the Mughal emperors gave instructions to the \textit{subahdars} of various provinces to convince the best artisans’ expert in various crafts to join the \textit{karkhanas}.\textsuperscript{21} During the period under study foreign artisans were invited and the craft manufacturing was perfected. Abul Fazl informs that “skillful masters and workmen have settled in this country to teach the people an improved system of manufacture.”\textsuperscript{22} He also informs that “all kinds of hair weaving and silk spinning were brought to perfection; and the imperial workshops furnished all those stuffs which are made in other countries.”\textsuperscript{23} The term ‘\textit{bayutat}’ was commonly used by Mughals for \textit{karkhanas}. The workers had to work on the directions of \textit{malik} on wage basis.\textsuperscript{24} The raw materials were not purchased directly by the artisans from the market but their supply was ensured by the state itself. The artisans, though, were expert and skilled in their job, but they could not produce the designs of their own choice but according to the desires of the imperial court. The manufactured crafts were not meant for sale in the market but were for the needs of the court and camp and for distribution among nobles and foreign ambassadors as presents.\textsuperscript{25}

During the Mughal times, the state was the largest manufacturer of handicrafts and all necessary items. The modern system of giving contracts and getting all the

\textsuperscript{19} George Forster \textit{A Journey}, II, p. 22.
\textsuperscript{20} Benier, \textit{Travels}, p. 402.
\textsuperscript{23} Ain, I, p. 88
\textsuperscript{25} For details see, T. Verma, \textit{Karkhanas Under the Mughals}, pp. 15-33; See also, A. Ahad, \textit{Kashmir Triumphs and Tragedies}, pp. 140-158
necessities readymade was not prevalent at those times. The state produced commodities on a large scale for the imperial consumption. The imperial government was to keep ready the robes for its need throughout the year. Their supply was assured by the state maintaining many karkhanas of its own in the principle cities of the empire, where skilled artisans were brought together and placed under the darogha (government superintendent), and paid daily wages and were supposed to produce articles which were duly stocked in the stores.

The number of handicraft karkhanas prevailing in Kashmir during the Mughal period is not known but Abul Fazl in his account, Ain-i-Akbari gives a description of twenty-six karkhanas and indirectly ten others making a total of thirty-six in the whole empire and describes in detail about the workshops for the manufacture of shawls and textiles. The number thirty-six grew in view of new needs and it reached up to seventy during the latter part of the Mughal period. Bernier says that large halls are seen in many palaces called karkhanas or workshops for the artisans. In one hall the embroiders were busily employed, superintended by a master, in other you see gold smiths, in the third painter, the lacquer varnisher, joiners, turners, tailors and shoe makers, manufacturers of silk, brocade……. The artisans went every morning to their respective karkhanas, where they remained employed the whole day and in the evening return to their homes……, the embroider brings up his son as an embroider, the son of gold smith becomes a gold smith. No one marries but in his own profession or trade. The royal karkhanas were found all over the country. Big centers were found in Kashmir, Lahore, Ahmedabad, Agra, Fatehpur and Burhanpur. The workmanship of Kashmir was renowned. Its palkis, bedsteads, trunks, inkstands, boxes and spoons were used all over India. But its shawls were superb. Great pains were taken to manufacture similar shawls in Lahore, Agra and Patna but none excelled the delicate texture and softness of Kashmiri shawl.

The subahdars of Kashmir patronized the local crafts as they were obliged to supply the emperor all the same with choice specimens of these items. Manucci says that, “the king and the princes keep officials in every province whose business it is to

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26 Ishtiaq Hussain Qureshi, The Administration of the Mughal Empire, Low Price, Delhi, 1973, p. 59
27 Bernier, Travels, p. 259
put in hand the best goods that can be fabricated in each place. With this object in view they keep an eye certainly upon what is being done in that respect.”

In the state karkhanas, the artisan was concerned only with the wages he received and had nothing to do with the consumption of the goods produced by him. The raw material, tools and implements and the workshop was provided by the state. In the karkhanas, the handicrafts were produced keeping in concern the taste of emperors. The Mughal Empire had no dearth of finance and the emperors had no end to their fancy and refinements of taste.

Regarding the labour organization we do not find any reference which can indicate that any such kind of organization prevailed at that time in Kashmir. However, George Forster, who visited Kashmir just at the end of Mughal rule writes in his account that he was told by the Kashmiris that 40,000 looms operated during that time in the city of Srinagar each giving employment to about three men at a time, which indicates that labour organizations had reached its zenith.

**Administration of Karkhanas**

As far as the administration of handicraft karkhanas are concerned, they were placed under the supervision of khan-i-saman. The term ‘khan-i-saman’ was not in use during the period of Emperor Akbar. Abul Fazl in his Akbarnama has just made one reference to mir-i-saman, but he neither mentioned his duties nor defined his powers. During the reign of Jahangir, the term ‘mir-i-saman’ is maintained throughout the period. We just get one reference from ‘Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri’ where ‘khan-i-saman’ is mentioned and that is in connection with the appointment of Mir Jumla to the post of ‘khidmat-e-simnani’ in the fifteenth regnal year, but when he was replaced by Afzal Khan in the twenty-first regnal year, the term ‘mir-i-saman’ is again used. During the reign of Shahjahan, the term ‘mir-i-saman’ is maintained by all the contemporary writers. In the Dastur-ul-Amals, which were drafted during the reign of Aurangzeb, the term ‘khani-i-saman’ predominates.

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30 Forster, A Journey, II, p. 20
31 Akbarnama, III, p. 877
32 Tuzuk, II, p. 175
33 For details see, Ibn Hassan, Central Structure, p. 237
Thus Ibn Hassan concludes that during the reign of Akbar, this officer does not hold any office of rank, as was under his successors (Jahangir and Shahjahan). The entire work associated with *mir-i-saman* was not well-developed under Akbar. During the reign of Akbar, *diwan-i-bayutat* was associated with *karkhanas* and under his successors, whole house-hold department was put under his charge and his position was put in the administrative machinery and he came to be known as *mir-i-saman* and *khani-i-saman* under Aurangzeb and afterwards.\(^{34}\) The internal working of *karkhanas/bayutat* was managed by the state itself in different provinces for its own needs.

Being the second highest officer in the realm, the *khani-i-saman* stood immediately below the *diwan*. He was the highest officer of the *bayutat* department. He has been described as the ‘*diwan* of expenditure.’\(^{35}\) The *bayutat* department was mostly in the hands of highly skilled Persians such as Shukrullah Shirazi entitled Allami Afzal Khan, Mulla Murshid entitled Makarmat Khan (The supervisor of the great monument Taj Mahal), Jafar Khan, Qasim Khan through whom Persian artistic influences were transmitted to the Mughal arts and crafts.\(^{36}\) The duty of *khani-i-saman* was to maintain the annual records of expenditure under the heads of different branches of *bayutat*. He had to make sure the availability of *khilats*\(^{37}\) in the *khilats-khana* and in every *karkhana* when required. If the requisite stores demanded more supply of *khilats* and other crafts, he would write a statement of the expenditure and would get from the royal treasury the money or would take credit from the traders and make them ready at the market prices whenever government needed them. If the *khani-i-saman* is a rich man himself, he buys the handicrafts out of his own money so that he may not have to take credit from the others at the time of need. If *khani-i-saman* supplied his own goods at the market rate, the government will make savings by the transactions and apart from that *khani-i-saman* might be suspected that he is making profit out of it. Therefore, he used to seek permission first from the emperor beforehand and get money in advance to buy the necessary articles and stock it for

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\(^{34}\) Ibn Hassan, *Central Structure*, pp. 237-38

\(^{35}\) For details see, Sarkar, *Mughal Administration*, p. 32


\(^{37}\) *Khilat* was the robe of honor presented by Emperor to officials, princes, ladies of imperial, foreign envoys and other dignitaries on festive and other occasions.
supply whenever needed. The old and second hand articles were also maintained by him and were sold to the army with the permission of emperor. Their prices were fixed in consultation with the muqim. The khani-i-saman kept the rate list signed by the muqim with him.

The khani-i-saman kept ready the necessary items according to the likings of the emperor a month or two before the dates, so that he may not have to plead inability to supply in time of need. His treatment with artisans was very good and used to get attached with them by the ties of gratitude.

Some of the duties of khani-i-saman as enumerated in the Dastur are as under:

1. Attestation of the salary bills of workmen and menials from the newly recruits as well as increment in the salary of old ones.
2. New appointment, dismissal as well as posting of darogahs, amins, mushrifs and tahvildars of various karkhanas.
3. Laying down the rules for the work of karkhanas.
4. Writing slips for the hire and wages of labour.
5. Replying to the prayers of the managers of karkhanas.
6. Issuing permits for reward for taking possession of the houses allowing nobles to live in them temporarily.
7. Taking bonds for money security from menials and managers of the karkhanas.
8. To consider applications from the workshops and stores.
9. Permits for loan of articles from karkhanas.
10. Reply to the final presentation of accounts (muhasibat) concerning the recovery of state advances.
11. Things made according to the order of the emperor (farmaish) in the provinces.
12. Long sheet of letters from the karkhanas.

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38 See, T. Verma, Karkhanas Under the Mughals, pp. 45-46
39 Zawabit-i-Alamgiri, MS. British Museum Or. 1641, 20a-21b, quoted in, J. N. Sarkar, Mughal Administration, pp. 36-38, Hereafter, Zawabit-i-Alamgiri.
14. Appraising the different articles of *peshkash* received in either tribute or presents.

15. Distribution of porters among the different *karkhanas*.

16. The *tumars* (registers) of the cash realization of the amounts due on audit (*muhasibat*) should be sent by the auditors to the office of the *khani-i-saman* and a copy of them should be given to the office of the *muhasibat*.

Thus it becomes clear from the above mentioned duties of *khani-i-saman* that he was an important officer in the Mughal administrative machinery who was responsible for the supervision of the whole of the house-hold department. He was responsible not only for the production or manufacture of articles but also for stock and inventory. He carefully note down the instructions of the emperor out of the previous presents and also arranged for supply to provincial governments.

Though *khani-i-saman* was considerd subordinate to *diwan* but it was only in financial matters, otherwise, he too had direct access to the emperor. He was responsible for the administration of the internal finances of *bayutat*. He paid salary to the staff from the treasury and also made estimates of the expenditure and obtained the sanction from the *wazir* and the monarch.  

### *Diwan-i-Bayutat*

*Diwan-i-bayutat* was another officer of high rank in the Mughal administrative machinery. He was jointly responsible for the management of *karkhanas* with *khani-i-saman*. He was not subordinate to *khani-i-saman* as both could deal directly with the *diwan* and the emperor. ‘*bayutat*’ is the plural of Arabic word ‘*bait*’ which means ‘house’. During the Mughal period *bayutat* was an officer whose duty was to register the property of deceased persons in order to secure the payment of the dues of the state and to safeguard the property of the heirs of the deceased. In addition, he was closely associated with *khani-i-saman*. The following are some of his duties:

1. To allot money to various funds or cash balances out of the general treasury of expenditure or of the *karkhanas*.

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40 For details see, I. H. Qureshi, *Administration of the Mughal Empire*, p. 76
41 *Zawabit-i-Alamgiri*, f. 21b, quoted in, J.N.Sarkar, *Mughal Administration*, p. 35-36
2. To escheat the property of the deceased nobles in cooperation with the khan-i-saman.

3. To make provisions (saranjam) for the karkhanas.

4. To fix the prices of the articles manufactured in karkhanas.

5. To make estimates of the treasury of karkhanas and send the estimate of the monthly expenditure to the office of the diwan.

6. To prepare the daily accounts of karkhanas accompanying the emperor during his marches.

7. To reject the old and used articles or sale of them in the karkhanas.

8. To make assessment of the prices of things and keeping the cash under the seal of bayutat.

9. The requisitions of the karkhanas to be signed first by the Bayutat and then by the khan-i-saman.

**Darogha**

During the Mughal period, all the karkhanas had a darogha who directly dealt with the artisans of his respective branch or karkhanas. His duty was to distinguish artisans according to their respective daily works and took charge of raw-material under their possession every day and handover that to tahvildar. The unfinished item was handed over again and again every next day till it was finished. Its price was fixed taking into consideration its expenditure on the raw-materials and wages of the number of days the artisans were paid for its manufacture.⁴²

**Tahvildar**

Each karkhana during the Mughal period had a tahvildar who was in charge of cash and raw-material required for his branch. His duty was to keep the cash and necessary stock of material for use. Darogha used to take money from tahvildar and paid it to the workmen under him. After the completion of any article, for example, the shawl, its price was fixed by the tahvildar keeping in consideration cost of raw material and wages paid to the artisan.⁴³

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**Mustaufi (Auditor)**

The duty of mustaufi was to audit the accounts of the karkhanas, verify the expenditure with vouchers, prepare a statement signed by himself, put it before diwan and finally had the seal of khan-i-saman.44

**Nazir**

Nazir was an officer without any specific powers and duties. He was the assistant of the diwan and helped him to revise and check the accounts before submitting them to the central audit office. This post was created with the appointment of a very efficient man Qazi Ali Begh in the thirty-fifth regnal year of Akbar (1591 A.D). The reason behind creation of this post was that there was much income and expenditure in the karkhanas, therefore the more help there was better for working of the karkhanas.45 His actual working was connected more with the financial side then with the executive side. He went through whatever work was done by the diwan and placed his seal on it and in this capacity he becomes a revising officer to guarantee greater efficiency and accuracy.46

**The Emperor and the karkhanas**

The Mughal Emperors were very closely associated with the karkhanas. They showed interest for the efficient working of the karkhanas because of their likings of the handicrafts of Kashmir. Especially, emperor Shahjahan was keenly interested in arts and crafts. He not only had a passion for the art of building but was also dedicated to the promotion of other arts and crafts. His daily morning sessions with his artists in the daulat khana-i-khas wa am included the close inspection of his artists and architects.47 “Shahjahan spends a part of his time in the careful examination of the masterpieces of artists (karnamah-i-sanatgran) with magical skills such as the lapidaries (murassakar), enamellers (minakar), gold smiths (zargar) etc.48 Besides that the Mughal emperors were associated with the karkhanas in following ways:-

44 Zawabit-i-Alamgiri, ff. 20a-21b; Cf., J. N. Sarkar, Mughal Administration, pp. 34, 37, 57, 82 and n.2 of p. 82; see also, Ibn Hassan, Central Structure, p. 239
45 Akbarnama, III, p. 877
46 Ibn Hassan, Central Structure, pp. 239
47 Gulfishan K. ‘Thoughts on Shahjahani Architecture’, op. cit
48 Shahjahan-Nama, History 309, Library of Salarjung Museum, Hyderabad,ff. 87-88, Quoted in, Gulfishan K. ‘Thoughts on Shahjahani Architecture’, op. cit., p. 81
1. The *karkhanas* submitted its financial statement and need twice every year to the government. These were ultimately placed before the emperor and a sanction was issued in the form of a *farman* on which the royal seal was placed.\(^{49}\)

2. *Mir-i-saman* and the *diwan* appeared in the *darbar* every day and presented important cases connected with their duties and functions before the emperor and the emperor in return placed his own orders with the *karkhanas*.\(^{50}\)

3. The manufactured articles were placed before the emperor. If the work was of genuine nature and represent high artistic quality and according to the likings of the emperor, the artisan was summoned in person before the emperor and was handsomely rewarded.\(^{51}\)

**Child and Female labour in the *Karkhanas***

During the Mughal period, both men and women were employed in the craft production including the children. Though no information about their actual number is available in the contemporary Persian sources of Mughal period, but from the travel accounts of Bernier and George Forster, we are informed that maximum number of women and children were employed to meet the growing requirements of the Mughal period. George Forster even says that at one stage almost the entire female population of the city of Srinagar was engaged in the profession of craft manufacture.\(^{52}\)

The *karkhanas* were the major source of exploitation as they employed women as well as small children. The son at the age of five enters the *karkhana* to work and his wages were fixed taking into consideration his baby exertions. His wages are raised as he grows up in his age and skill. It was necessary for female population to take up spinning at an early age. Spinning was considered an economic necessity for girls to settle in married life. Apart from young girls, elderly ladies and widows were employed in spinning. The number of female workers in the *karkhanas* increased with the increase in the demand of the Kashmiri handicrafts.\(^{53}\)

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\(^{49}\) *Ain*, I, pp. 45, 263-64

\(^{50}\) *Ibn Hassan, Central Structure*, pp. 246-47

\(^{51}\) Ibid


\(^{53}\) For details see, Schonberg, *Travels*, II, p. 132.
Working conditions in Karkhanas

The condition of karkhanas was very poor, wretched and unhealthy. More than fifty looms were housed under a single roof in dilapidated houses mostly dirty and ill-ventilated. Three workmen worked under single roof which makes it one hundred and fifty workmen working together in a single workshop. Under such conditions, it was inevitable for the workmen to suffer from numerous diseases because under one single roof in which such a huge number of workers worked together there was possibility for the transmission of even minute infections from one worker to another, like chest infection, rheumatism etc. It is very common proverb in Kashmir that when a woman ill-wished another, she will say, “May you get a weaver for a husband”. The workers had to work in a squalid condition. They started their work in the early morning and continued till late evening and sometimes even extended to night. If they could not afford oil in the lamps they could work under moon-light.

Working days and hours

Out of the 365 days of a year, they would observe holidays on 52 Fridays, 2 Eids and other religious festivals, picnics to Shalimar, Nishat and Chashmashahi etc. which made about hundred days in a year. As far as the working hours are concerned, we have no written evidence that could deal with the hours of work but the current popular adage “bangi atsun ti tsangi nerun” makes it clear that they commenced their work just after the morning prayers and worked till late evening. The hours of work were also determined by workers needs and wages. Their needs compelled them to work for more and more, because their wages were too less and needs were very large, therefore the idea of a cut in the working hours never struck their mind.

Wages

A definite system of wages for the artisans working in different karkhanas was introduced for the first time during the Mughal period. The artisans were paid daily wages or monthly cash salaries according to the nature of the work. The skilled artisans were greatly favoured by the emperor. They were all summoned by him

54 Hugel, Travels, p. 120; Wakefield, Recollections: Fifty Years in the Service of India, Civil & Military Gazette, Lahore, 1943, p. 146; A. Ahad, Kashmir to Frankfurt, pp. 51-52

55 Moorecroft, Travels, II, pp. 171
whenever their work of art was exhibited. The skilled artisans received three to four
dams a day while a carpenter was paid three to seven dam daily. Apart from *Ain*,
we have some indirect references supported by inscriptions like the one on the *kathi-
darwaza* of Hari Parbat fort, constructed during Akbar’s time. The inscription informs
us that the weavers received the payments from the imperial treasury. The inscription
runs as follows:

*Bina-e qila’-e Nagar-Nagar bud*

*Ba ‘ahad-e padshah-e dad-gustar*

*Shahanshah-e ki dar ‘alam misalash*

*Na bud ast-o na khwahad bud digar*

*Karor-o dah lakh az makhzan firistad*

*Du sad ustad Hindi jumla chakar*

*Na kardah hechkas bigar anja*

*Tamami yaftand az makhzanash zar*

*Chil-o char az julusi padshahi*

*Hazar-o shash zi tarikh-e payambar.*

**Translation:** The foundation of the fort of Nagar-Nagar was laid in the reign of the
just sovereign, the king of kings, Akbar, unparalleled among the kings of the world,
past or future. He sent one crore and ten lakhs of rupees from his treasury and two
hundred Indian master-builders, all his servants. No one was forced to work without
remuneration. All obtained their wages from his treasury. In the forty-fourth year after
the accession of the Emperor and 1006 after the prophet (1597 A.D.).

The text of the lone inscription particularly the royal command that “no one
was forced to work without remuneration” breaths the spirit of a popular Prophetic

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56 *Ain*, I, pp. 225-26
57 The translation is obtained from Ram Chandra Kak, *Ancient Monuments of Kashmir*, The India Society, London, 1933, p. 89
*Hadith* reported by Abdullah ibn Umar, The Messenger of Allah, (PBUH) said, “Pay the worker his wages before his sweat has dried.” Further the emperor Akbar’s ideologue Abul Fazl also informs us that previously workmen engaged in saffron collection were paid salt in lieu of wages but Akbar abolished this system to the greater relief of workmen and used to pay them in cash in lieu of salary. During the subsequent period under emperor Shahjahan and his son and successor Aurangzeb, the wage system evolved further and suitable payments were paid to workmen.

The working condition in the *karkhanas* imperial and private both were not always conducive to peaceful atmosphere. The owners’ (*karkhandars*) private and imperial both witnessed various types of social tensions and occasionally confronted with labour problems. But those tensions did not assume the shape of organized protests. In spite of all that, it can be assumed that the handicraft *karkhanas* of Kashmir gave a boost to the economy consolidated the power of the Mughals in Kashmir and above all made achievable and unprecedented configuration of desperate social groups who were essentially caste ridden and close minded to form a collective Kashmiri identity. It was a formative period that had an important and lasting influence on the character and attitude of people. It threw open the doors and windows of world outside and embellished the identity of Kashmiris with those features and patterns which made it look more beautiful, effective, lively and heavily tilted towards Industrial and commercial growth.

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58 *Sunan Ibn Majah* 2436
59 *Ain*, I, p. 84
60 Bernier, *Travels*, p. 392
Chapter Six

Socio-Economic Conditions of Artisans and Craftsmen

No study of the history of handicrafts can be complete without analyzing the human factor or in other words, making socio-psychological portrait of those people who were the main acting force. The technological and organizational development of the medieval handicraft industries of Kashmir was in no way going by itself. It was carried on and implemented by the people with a specific set of relations, perceptions, aspirations and so on. The artisans formed an important class in building the socio-economic edifice of the Valley of Kashmir. Earlier before the medieval ages of Kashmir, the artisans lived in self-sufficient village communities producing all necessary commodities they needed for their daily sustenance. The artistic industries and agriculture were subordinated with each other. It neither encouraged any complex variety of division of labour and not any serious contradiction between the production and the consumption process which resulted in contented living and friendly spirit. This did not let the people’s character to get moulded for a long time. With the beginning of medieval ages, the community consciousness began to falter and started the contradiction between the production and consumption.

The separation of artisans and industries from agriculture lead to immense increase in population and commodity economy and this made the artisans dependable on merchants and the market. The artisans were exploited to a great extent and treated as bond slaves by the merchants who made huge profits out of the work done by artisans. Besides merchants, they were also exploited by the huge taxation of rulers and the nobility. The artisans ceased to show interest for improvement in the production process because they were deprived of everything they produced by the merchants, rulers and other officials for maximizing their selfish interests.¹

During the 15th and 16th centuries, the condition of artisans did not showed any improvement and remained steeped in poverty. Though, a temporary change occurred due to the measures taken by the rulers to better the conditions of artisans. The prices were reduced and fixed on the copper plates to be displayed in towns and public

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¹ Bernier, Travels, pp. 228-29
places. The poor were exempted from paying the debts. Besides, some oppressive taxes were also abolished which relieved the people in general and artisans in particular. In spite of all that, they suffered miserably on the part of black marketers and middle men which created the scarcity of essential commodities.

During the period under study, the most important feature to discuss is that the karkhanas provided greatest encouragement for the refinement and improvement of the skill of artisans and craftsmen. The articles were manufactured talking into consideration the refined taste of the emperors. Their tastes set the standards and models for the artisans to emulate them and lead to widespread diffusion of their skill throughout the valley. The skill of craft manufactures passed from generation to generation and still continues in Kashmir. The valuable artistic articles produced in the handicraft karkhanas were brought before the emperor in the diwan-i-am. The artisan who was the manufacturer of the articles was also brought along with the exhibit. This encouraged the artisans to perfect their skill in order to become the favourite of the emperor for their skill. The opportunity of being presented before emperor was considered as highest honour by the artisans.

The tradition of awarding locally manufactured robes as an honor was established in the Muslim world since the time of Caliph Amir Muawiyah (AD 661-80). The Mughals followed this tradition and the khilats were bestowed to the nobles and other dignitaries twice every year, the robes of condolence to the breaved heir, the khilats on the two birthdays of the emperor (according to lunar and solar calendar), days of coronation, two Eids, Nouroz (when the sun enters the aries), khilats to the new entrants in the nobility and on many other occasions like celebrations on the success in the battlefield. There are a number of references from Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri and Shahjahannama informing that Kashmiri shawl was presented to the nobles, princes, and other as a mark of respect. Jahangir informs that on October 1610, he presented a Kashmiri shawl to Murtaza Khan when he was promoted to the subedarship of Punjab which was one of the largest charges in the dominion of Jahangir. In September 1618, Rustam Khan who was made the in charge of Gujarat

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2 Ibn Hassan, Central Structure, p. 243
3 Tripta Verma, Karkhanas Under the Mughals, p. 124
4 Tuzuk, I, p. 178
by Shahjahan was honoured with the gift of Kashmiri shawl (parm narm). In March, 1610, Jahangir presented shawl to Hussam-ud-Din son of Ghazi Khan (a famous officer of Akbar) who had taken the ways of darwesh and seclusion. In 1612, Jahangir sent Abdu-r-Razzaq, the bakhshi of the palace (darkhana), to settle the country of Thatta (Sind) until a Sardar should be appointed who could conciliate the soldiers and the cultivators to bring the province into order. Jahangir increased his rank and presented him with an elephant and shawl. In April 1615, Raja Bikramajit obtained leave to go to his jagir, and a special shawl (parm-narm) was given to him. In 1615, Miran Sadr Jahan came from his native place and waited on for Jahangir with an offering of 100 muhrs. Ray Suraj Singh was dismissed to his duty in the Deccan. Jahangir presented him with a couple of pearls for his ears and a special Kashmir shawl (parm-narm). In 1616, Jagat Singh, son of Kunwar Karan obtained leave to go to his native country, when he took leave was presented with 20,000 rupees, a horse, an elephant, a dress of honour, and a special shawl. In 1616, the mansab of Rawal Kalyan of Jesalmir was fixed at 2,000 zat and 1,000 sawar, and was exalted with the gift of a horse, an elephant, a jewelled sword, a jewelled khapwa (dagger), a robe of honour, and a special Kashmir shawl. On the 14th September 1617, Jahangir distinguished Allah-Dad, the Afghan with the title of Rashid Khan and gave him a parm-narm (Kashmiri shawl). In January, 1621, Abul Hasan was sent on service for the conquest of the Deccan. He was presented many gifts including a special shawl. In 1621, Jahangir selected Zabardast Khan to be mir-tuzuk (master of ceremonies) in the place of Fida’i Khan and was presented with a special shawl (parm-narm).

Inayat Khan informs that “on the day of Coronation, all the mansabdars who were present in the court were reconfirmed in their previous ranks and were also honoured with increments and according to their status each noble received favours in the form of robes of honour. On 29 November, 1638, on the occasion of appointment of Ali

5 Tuzuk, II, pp. 33-34
6 Ibid, I, p.166
7 Ibid, I, p. 225
8 Ibid, I, p. 284
9 Ibid, I, p. 293
10 Ibid, I, p. 311
11 Ibid, I, pp. 333-34
12 Ibid, I, p. 390
13 Ibid, II, p. 193
14 Ibid, II, p. 196
15 Inayat Khan, Shahjahanama, p. 19
Mardan Khan as governor of Kashmir in place of Zafar Khan, was bestowed with a handsome robe of honour, some gold fabrics of Gujarat and pashmina shawls of Kashmir. On the occasion of first festival of nouroz in March 1628, following accession, Shahjahan presented the awards worth lakhs of rupees to ladies and children of the imperial harem and other nobles in the form of jems, jewellery and robes of honour. On March 1635, on the occasion of nouroz, 100 robes of honour were distributed among the chief nobles, and it was ordained for the next nine days also, 1000 persons from amongst the mansabdars and others should be daily invested. On January, 1656, on the occasion of birthday jubilee, robes of honour were bestowed on high ranking nobles. Shahjahan also accepted khilats as the offerings of princes and other high officials. The offering of Umdat al-Mulk Allami Sa’d Allah Khan comprised among many other items, the Kashmiri pashmina shawl. The khilats as a mark of respect were also sent to the foreign monarchs. On 31 August, 1654, Shahjahan sent Qa’im Beg as an embassy to Rum along with precious gifts including choice fabrics from Kashmir and Gujarat to the Qaiser of Rum. The value of which was amounted to one lakh rupees. On April, 1638, Yadgar Beg, the emissary from Shah Shafi of Iran was awarded a robe of honour and a jewelled ornament. On May 22, 1640, the Turanian envoy, Uzbek Khawaja was granted robes of honour and many other gifts. On 21 January, 1646, Nasar Shawait, the ambassador of Nazar Muhammad Khan was presented a robe of honour and other gifts. On 20th March, 1653, Ali Chalapi, the envoy of Sharif of Mecca to the court of Mughal emperor was bestowed with a robe of honour and bequest of 4000 rupees. The khilats were also given as a mark of forgiveness. For instance Jahangir informs that Khan Azam who had come to Agra from the fort of Gwalior was guilty of many offences. When he was brought before the emperor, he was pardoned for all his offences and Jahangir gave him the shawl that he had put round his waste. Similarly, the robes of honour were presented on other auspicious occasions like

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16 Inayat Khan, Shahjahannama, p. 252
17 Ibid, p. 22
18 Ibid, p. 148
19 Ibid, pp. 512-13
20 Ibid, p. 500
21 Ibid, p. 242
22 Ibid, p. 269
23 Ibid, p. 334
24 Ibid, p. 480
25 Tuzuk, I, p. 287
marriages of princes and princesses, birth of imperial children etc. in February 1633,
on the occasion of marriage of Prince Dara Shikoh, 100 robes of honour were
privately presented to illustrious princes and princesses, and the wives and daughters
of nobles, each of whom received not less than seven and not more than nine pieces of
rich fabric which probably would have included the Kashmiri shawl. Therefore the
huge demand of the khilats increased the number of artisans with the increase in the
nobility.

The nobles vied with each other in securing the crafts made by artisans and
offered them liberal rewards. Palsaert, speaking of Prince Khurram says that, “He
patronized all craftsmen and paid them high wages which attracted all the splendor of
his father’s court. The emperors and the nobility wanted the artisans to be treated
well and often instructed the mir-i-saman to do so. But, in reality, their fair treatment
was a myth. The artisans were not always free people. The services of only those
artisans were encouraged who had attained high degree of perfection in
manufacturing any particular craft.

The artisans of Kashmir inherited not only the professional skill and mode of
behavior, but the right to follow his ancestral occupation and this determined his
social status. The caste profession was nearly unchangeable. The artisans used to
acquire status by following the caste occupations. Caste profession also led to the
organization of exclusive castes and guilds. Bernier in his Travels remarks that, “The
embroider brings up his son as an embroider, the son of a gold smith becomes a gold
smith and the physician educates his son to become a physician. No one marries but in
his own trade or profession and this custom is observed almost as rigidly Mahometans
as by the gentiles to whom it is expressly enjoined by their law”

The caste organization in handicraft industry gave rise to middle class
consisting of shopkeepers, traders, bankers, brokers etc. Palsaert says that, “The
shopkeeper was held in great respect then the workmen and some of them were well
do but they must not let the fact be seen.” The caste organization was often used
by the artisans to struggle against the exploitation of the nobles and merchants. The

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26 Inayat Khan, Shahjahannama, pp. 90-91
27 Palsaert, Jangir’s India, p. 8
28 Bernier, Travels , p. 259
29 Palsaert, Jangir’s India, p. 63
nobles who directly or indirectly appropriated an enormous share of the trading profits also exploited the artisans on commercial lines. The nobles held the right of monopoly on the purchase of artisanal goods. They were the main consumers of the artisans made articles, particularly those of high quality shawls. Special decrees fixed the prices for various goods and the labour of the artisans. The arbitrary rule of the nobles extended to many spheres of the artisans socio-economic life. Sometimes the nobles opposed the introduction of technological innovations by artisans which tended to change the traditional techniques.

The authorities during the Mughal rule strove to control the relations between the artisans and the market. Abul Fazl in his *Ain-i-Akbari* informs us that, “The town head, the kotwal of every guild of artificers, should name one as guild master and another as a broker by whose intelligence the business of purchase and sale should be conducted.”

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The nobles often strove to use the caste organizations for their selfish interests. The artisans were subjected to all sorts of exploitation, plunder and violence on the part of various representatives of nobles, elite and middlemen. According to Bernier, “The jagirdars, governors and contractors have an authority almost absolute over the peasantry, and nearly as much over the artisans and merchants of the towns and villages within their district and nothing can be imagined more cruel and oppressive than the manner in which it is exercised.”

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During the Mughal period, the artisans were passive objects of exploitation by land owners and moneylenders. They conducted a stubborn and at times successful struggle to preserve and improve their position in the society. They often used to depart from the places where they were subjected to oppression. The artisans often used their caste organizations in the struggle against exploitation of nobles, merchants, money-lenders etc.

**Training of Artisans**

During the Mughal rule in Kashmir, there were no schools and colleges were people could be taught the art of craft manufacture. The primary training ground for a person

30 *Ain*, II, P. 44
31 Bernier, *Travels*, p. 225
interested in craft manufacture was the caste organization that he belonged to. The castes being the representative of various crafts made various occupations hereditary. The skill of craft manufacture was filtered downward from father to son and the family. Palsaert informs us that “Workmen’s children can follow no occupation other than that of his father, nor can they inter-marry with any other caste”. Palsaert’s view is further supported by Bernier. He says that, “The son of the embroider brings up his son as an embroider, the son of gold smith becomes a gold smith and the physician of a city educates his son for a physician.” Besides, Akbar, because of his keen interest for the development of craft industry brought foreign master weavers to teach the local artisans the designs prevailing in their respective lands in order to improve the system of manufacture.

Economic position of Artisans

We have very scanty information available that could deal with the economic position of the artisans of Kashmir. For instance, Abul Fazl mentions that skillful artisans and craftsmen have settled in this country. He also mentions the wages of both the skilled and unskilled labours of different categories.

The artisans of Kashmir can broadly be divided into two categories i.e free artisans working on their own and the artisans working to order under the karkhana system. The free artisans were possessing little resources. They worked at home on their own initiative from the raw materials to the marketing state. The artisans at times worked to order of merchants, brokers and the money lenders who used to pay them money in advance, but most of the times, the artisans could not complete the order and were not able to deliver the finished goods.

Under the karkhana system, the artisans worked as day labourers under the strict regimentation and dictation. Bernier informs us that, “the artisans repair every day to their respective karkhanas, where they remained employed for the whole day and in the evening return to their homes.”

32 Palsaert, Jahangir’s India, p. 60
33 Bernier, Travels, p. 259
34 Ain, I, p. 93
36 Bernier, Travels, pp. 238-39
The artisans of Kashmir during the Mughal period remained steeped in poverty. In spite of transforming the wage system and royal encouragement of craft manufacture, as previously mentioned that Emperor Akbar made necessary for nobles and other dignitaries to wear certain articles and imported textile weavers from foreign countries to teach the local artisans the designs prevailing in their countries. Abul Fazl says that all these steps encouraged the skill of manufacturers along with the increase in their number. In spite of all that, the artisans’ class constituted the unhappy a lot. They were exploited by the merchants and middlemen as Bernier in his *Travels* says, “The rather higher wages should not be inferred from the goodness of the manufacturers, that the workmen is held in esteem or arrives at a state of independence. Nothing but sheer necessity or blows from a cudgel keeps him employed, he can never become rich and he feels it no trifling matter if he has the meanings of satisfying the cravings of hunger and covering his body with the coarsest garment, If money be gained, it does not in any measure go into his pocket, but only serves to increase the wealth of the merchant, who in his return is not a little perplexed, how to guard against some acts of outrage and extortion on the part of his superiors”.\(^{37}\) Bernier says that under those circumstances, arts and crafts cannot flourish as they can under a better government… No artist can be expected to give his mind to his calling in the midst of a people who are either wretchedly poor, or who, if rich, assume an appearance of poverty and who regard not the beauty and excellence, but the cheapness of an article; a people whose grandees pay for a work of art considerably under its value, and according to their own caprice, and who do not hesitate to punish an im proportionate artist, or tradesmen, with the *korrah*, that long and terrible whip hanging at every *omarah*’s gate is it not enough also to damp the ardour of any artist, when he feels that he can never hope to attain any distinction, that he shall not be permitted to purchase either office or land for the benefit of himself and family; and that he must at no time make it appear he is the owner of the most trifling sum, and that he may never venture to indulge in good fare, or to dress in fine apparel, lest he could create a suspicion of his possessing money.”\(^{38}\) Bernier says that, “The arts would have long ago lost their beauty and delicacy if the emperors and their nobles could not have themselves employed the artisans who work in their houses,

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\(^{38}\) Ibid
teach the children and are stimulated to exertion by the hope of reward and the fear of korrah."  

Nature of employment

As far as the nature of employment is concerned, there was no state control. Under these conditions, there was possibility of the fullest extent of exploitation. Hours of work were fixed inordinately long and this affected the physical health of the artisans. There were no regulations that could fix the age group up to which the children can be employed. It was because of all these reasons; there was no interest on the part of artisans to put his excellence and efficiency in the art.

Loans and Advances

The merchants, karkhandars and the middlemen were mostly responsible for the sufferings of the artisans. They provided the artisans loans and advances which made them largely dependent on them. The loans and advances made them sufferers and extremely poor and subjugated them to merchants and middlemen who became richer at their expense. Their manufactured products were bought at very cheap rates. They were deprived of their personal belongings and this enormously affected the lives of artisans. The craftsmen had to surrender to the middlemen a considerable portion of his profit as the same piece of work passed through several hands before reaching to the consumer. It is because of this Bernier says that, “an artisan can never become rich. If he gained money it does not in any measure goes into his pocket but only serves to increase the wealth of the merchant”.

Political and Religious Disturbances:-

Kashmir witnessed various political disturbances throughout the history like, foreign invasions, civil strifes, dynastic changes etc. The Political disturbances tremendously troubled the life of masses in general and artisans in particular. It disrupted the social structure and shattered its economy. The rulers used to exploit the artisans through repressive taxation policies. Writing about the invasion of Mirza Haider Daughlat,

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39 Bernier, Travels, p. 228
40 Ibid, p. 229
The author of *Baharistanshahi* says that, “They plundered the people, burnt their houses and carried away their women and children”.\(^{41}\)

Since the beginning of medieval era, Kashmir also faced various religious conflicts - sectarian as well as communal. The religious disturbances proved detrimental to the handicraft industry, trade and commerce. The communal and sectarian riots took away the lives of a number of poor artisans.\(^{42}\) Those who survived were not able to give up their mind for the development of crafts or of their skill due to fear of death.

**Natural Calamities**

Kashmir also faced natural calamities time and again in history, like floods, famines, fires etc. and they all brought misery and starvation to the poor artisans. Due to these natural calamities, the necessary food items and other commodities became as scarce as to cost hundred times more than the original price.\(^{43}\) It was nothing surprising that the father deserted and emancipated his dying son not withstanding his dying entreaties, or the son his father, to provide his own maintenance.\(^{44}\)

In 1597, a severe and devastating famine broke out. Father Xavier writes about the gruesome effects of the famine and says that, “The mothers were rendered destitute and having no means of nourishing their children, exposed them for sale in the public places of the city, moved to compassion by the pitiable sight, the father brought many of these little ones, who soon after receiving baptism, yielded up their spirits to their creator. A certain Saracen, seeing the charity of the father towards these children, brought him one of his own; but the father gave it back to the mother; together with a certain sum of money for its support; for he was unwilling to baptize it; seeing that if it survived, there was little prospect of its being able to live a Christian life in that country. At day break, next morning, however, the mother knocked at the door of his lodging, and begged him to come to her house and baptize the child, having first obtained the consent of its father. The latter, after it was dead,

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\(^{41}\) *Baharistanshahi*, p. 126  
\(^{43}\) A. Ahad, *Kashmir to Frankfurt*, p. 72, n. 40  
\(^{44}\) Ibid, p. 65
wished to circumcise it, but for this the father would not permit, but buried it with Christian rites.”45

In 1617 AD, a devastative plague broke out. Jahangir in his Tuzuk writes about the plague and says that, “The plague had taken a firm hold of the country (Kashmir) and that many had died. The symptoms were that the first day there was headache and fever and much bleeding at the nose. On the second day the patient died. In the houses where one person died all the inmates were carried off. Whoever went near the sick person or a dead body was affected in the same way. In one instance, a dead body was thrown on the grass, and it chanced that a cow came and ate some of the grass, it died, and some dogs that had eaten its flesh also all died. Things had come to such a pass that from fear of death, father would not approach their children, and children would not go near their fathers.”46 Before Kashmir was freed completely from the plague, a fire broke out in the Valley in 1619 and Jahangir says that almost 3000 houses burnt down.47 The historical Jama Masjid of Srinagar also got fire for which the historian Haider Malik Chadura and his father Malik Muhammad Naji were alleged for firing the mosque, because of him being the Shia and the Sunni people of the city suspected them as a reprisal for the destruction of the khankah of Shamsuddin Iraqi by the Sunnis during the reign of Mirza Haider Daughlat. The Sunnis made petition to Jahangir for justice. Jahangir ordered that Haider Malik and his father should rebuild the mosque out of their own expanses.48 They constructed the mosque as was ordered by the Emperor Jahangir out of their own expanses. This fact is supported by an inscription on the stone slab on top of the entrance gate of the mosque. Again during the reign of Shahjahan in 1641, a great famine broke out due to the continuous and heavy rainfall. This famine completely destroyed the crops. The scarcity of food stuffs forced a number of artisans to migrate to other places. Lahore alone accommodated about 30000 people. Their hunger and wretched condition touched even Shahjahan

46 Tuzuk.I, p. 442
48 Parmu, Muslim Rule in Kashmir, pp. 305-6
and he gave them one lakh rupees in cash and gave orders to open up ten kitchens to provide free food for them.\textsuperscript{49}

All these natural calamities resulted in a huge loss of life and property of the artisans in particular and the people of Kashmir in general. In the words of Abdul Ahad, “Vitasta was converted into a graveyard for the people who died like dogs unwept and unsung and the persons who survived migrated to the plains of Punjab in search of food.”\textsuperscript{50}

**Food Habits of Kashmiri Artisans**

Kashmir is bestowed by nature with a variety of fruits like mulberry, apples, pears, cherries (sweet and sour cherries both), grapes, pomegranate, apricots, plum, walnuts, almonds etc. The mulberry production was so extensive that they are not sold or bought in the season. The one who own the garden of mulberry trees and one who does not makes any difference because the gardens were without walls and any one can go and take the fruit there. Apart from that the land of Kashmir has produced a variety of fishes, cattle and sheep and spices most importantly saffron for which Kashmir has attained the fame throughout the world.\textsuperscript{51} In spite of the extensive cold climate Kashmiri has the natural tendency to develop taste and eat rich food. The Kashmiri \textit{wazwan} is famous throughout the world since the medieval ages.

The staple food of Kashmiri artians was rice and green vegetables. The vegetables include beans, carrots, brinjal, turnips etc. Though gram production was absent but a number of pulses were produced throughout Kashmir.\textsuperscript{52} Vegetables were either cooked or fried. Spices of various kinds like pepper, turmeric, ginger, cloves, chillies, and saffron were added to increase the taste and flavor of dishes.\textsuperscript{53} Vegetables were also dried in the sun during summer months and preserved for winter months because during winter Kashmir always remained steeped in snow. These dried


\textsuperscript{50} A. Ahad, \textit{Kashmir to Frankfurt}, pp. 65-66

\textsuperscript{51} According to Bernier, “The fruit is certainly inferior to our own, nor is it in such variety; but this I am satisfied is not attributable to the soil, but merely to the comparative ignorance of the gardeners, for they do not understand the culture and the grafting of trees.” See, Bernier, \textit{Travels}, p. 397; see also \textit{Tarikh-i-Rashidi}, p. 425; \textit{Ain}, II, p. 353;Jahangir informs us that different types of fishes were found, \textit{Tuzuk}, I, p. 92; Desideri, \textit{An Account of Tibet}, p. 72

\textsuperscript{52} \textit{Ain}, II, p. 353; \textit{Tuzuk}, I, pp.92-95; Vigne, \textit{Travels}, II, p. 230.

\textsuperscript{53} Ibid, see also, \textit{Tuzuk}, I, p. 93; Palsaert, \textit{Jahangir's India}, pp.34-35.
vegetables are today known in the Kashmiri dialect as *hokhsein*. Only boiled rice was taken and it was prepared with the aid of cowdung cakes. Rice was commonly prepared once for two days. The artisanal class consumed the once prepared rice for several days and sometimes even to one week.\(^{54}\) According to Abul Fazl, “Though *shali* rice is plentiful, the finest quality is not obtainable, wheat is small in grain and black in colour, and there is little of it and little consumed. Gram (chick-pea) and barley are nowhere found. They have a species of sheep which they call *handu*, delicate and sweet in flavor and wholesome.”\(^{55}\) Besides rice, the other staple food was water chestnut flour found mainly in the Dal Lake and Wular Lake.\(^{56}\) The bread prepared from nut flour was considered highly nutritious.\(^{57}\) They also took fish, beef and mutton.\(^{58}\) The artisans also took walnut oil, limeseed, sesame etc.\(^{59}\) Though the rich artisans ate ghee, meat, fish, drank wine and milk, but the food of poor artisans did not contain the essential nutrients. Their food was so poor that it did not even contain the essential element like salt.\(^{60}\) It was because of the consequent intake of the unbalanced food, that they looked like beasts rather than men. Palsaert observes that, “The inhabitants of the country and the city are for the most part poor, but they are physically strong, especially the men, who can carry quite twice the load of a Hindustani; this is remarkable in view of the fact that men and women get so little food. Their children are very handsome and fair when they are young and small, but when they grow up they become yellow and ugly, owing to their mode of life, which is that of beasts rather than men.”\(^{61}\) The artisans of Kashmir remained steeped in poverty and most of the times with non-availability of food. The spinners, weavers, paper-makers and other artisans found it impossible to get good food. It was due to their poor conditions that during the time of Akbar almost eighty thousand received financial assistance to obtain food. Akbar made arrangements for the feeding of poor by opening *lunger-khana* in the city of Srinagar where they were provided free food.\(^{62}\) Abul Fazl, the official historian of Akbar’s period himself distributed the essential

\(^{54}\) *Ain*, II, p. 353

\(^{55}\) Ibid

\(^{56}\) *Tarikh-i-Hassan*, I, f. 63a; Cf. Mattoo, *Kashmir Under the Mughals*, p. 134; see also, , see also, Bates, *Gazetteer Of Kashmir and Ladakh*, p. 471; Lawrence, *Valley*, pp. 354-55

\(^{57}\) Lawrence, *Valley*, pp. 354-55

\(^{58}\) *Ain*, II, p. 353; *Tuzuk*, I, p. 92

\(^{59}\) *Tuzuk*, I, pp. 92-93, Lawrence, *Valley*, p. 339

\(^{60}\) A. Ahad, *Kashmir to Frankfurt*, p. 66

\(^{61}\) Palsaer, *Jahangir’s India*, pp. 34-35

\(^{62}\) Akbarnama, III, p. 1087
commodities among fourteen thousand needy Kashmiris in the Eidgah (The place where Eid congregational prayers are being held).  

They drank the waters of lakes (Dal, Wular, Manasbal etc.) rivers (Jhelum and its tributaries) and springs (achabal, Verinag, Kokernag, Chashma Shahi etc.). The water of neither of them appeared to be sweet or healthy and according to Palsaert they boiled it before they drank. According to Palsaert, “In Kashmir foreigners usually suffer from the flux, and many die of it; the cause must be the water, and also the quantity of fruit which is available”. Though liquor and other drinks were not consumed by the artisans owing to their poverty, but during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries tobacco was introduced in the Valley and was puffed by a larger section of society.

**Dress**

The dresses of artisans were the clear indication of their poverty. They were not having even the essential clothes that could shield their body and protect them from the winter cold. It was because of their poverty that they did not hesitate to receive the alms in the form of clothes mostly woolen, by the upper sections of society.

The artisanal class preferred woolen clothes more than the cotton due to their cheapness and also because cotton production was very meager due to poor yield whereas pastoral areas provided excellent grazing grounds for the wool growing sheep. So, wool was available in abundance and on cheap rates and apart from that it was durable for many years. Though mulberry was available in abundance and silk worms were reared on huge quantity and the production of silk was extensive, but these were wereared only by the privileged sections of the society. While as artisanal class wearred only the woolens. They most of the times could not even afford the woolen clothes and had to depend on alms and charity. Cotton clothes were considered luxury because of being very costly.

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63 Akbarnama, III, p. 956
64 Palsaert, *Jahangir’s India*, pp. 33-34; As Jahangir has mentioned in his *Tuzuk* that all the people drank the water of Dal Lake is unacceptable because it was not possible for the people living in Islamabad to go to the city every day to bring the water for drinking purpose, See *Tuzuk*, I, p. 93
65 Palsaert, *Jahangir’s India*, p. 34
67 A. Ahad, *Kashmir to Frankfurt*, p. 67
The artisans class went almost barefooted and most of the time without *izars* (drawers). While as the people of upper classes like the merchants, middlemen etc. wore *qamis* (shalwars), *saddris* and *choghas*. They wore a loose and long outer cloth called *pattu/phiran* the length of which was enough to shield up to the knees. They used to move bare legs and without drawers and this annoyed even the Emperor Aurangzeb who ordered Inayatullah Khan, the Mughal governor of Kashmir to force them to wear *izars.*

The male artisans used to shave their head and put on a turban. The female artisans dressed their hair in plaits (*luth*) attached with a long clout of dyed wool to the locks of hair and put on an ornamented head dress called *qasaba*. The foot wear of artisans which is rarely used even today was known as *pulhor*. This type of footwear was made from twisted rice straw. The ladies used wooden sandals (*khraw*). For heating up the body, *kanger* remained the constant companion of the artisans.

The artisans of Kashmir due to their economic backwardness lived in hygienically poor conditions. Jahangir in his *Tuzuk* says that, “They do not wear clean, washed clothes. They use a tunic of *pattu* for three or four years. They bring it unwashed from the house of the weaver, and sew it into a tunic (*kurta*). It does not reach the water till it falls to pieces. It is considered wrong to wear drawers (*izars*); They wear the tunic long and ample as far as the head and falling down to the feet, and they also wear a belt.” He further says that, “Although most of the houses are on the river-bank, not a drop of water touches their bodies. In short, they are dirty outside as inside, without any cleanliness.”

**Housing**

The houses are built of pine-wood, the interstices being filled with clay, and their style is by no means contemptible; they look elegant, and fit for citizens rather than...
peasants, and they are ventilated with handsome and artistic open-work, instead of windows or glass. They have flat roofs, made of planks of birch-bark entirely covered with earth, on which the inhabitants often grow tulips and onions, or which are covered with grass, so that during the rains the green roofs and groves make the city most beautiful on a distant view.\textsuperscript{75}

The Medieval Persian historians are in immense praise about the lofty buildings of Kashmir. These buildings were built in wood. They were up to five story high structure. Bernier in his Tarikh-i-Rashidi informs us that, “In the town there are many lofty buildings constructed of fresh cut pine. Most of these are five stories high and each story contains apartments, halls, galleries and towers. The beauty of their exterior defiles description and all who behold them for the first time, bite finger of astonishment with the teeth of admiration; but the interiors are not equal to the exteriors”\textsuperscript{76}

The lofty buildings that astonished the European travelers and for which Persian historiographers are of immense praise did not belong to the class of artisans. The artisans lived in dull, dingy and dark houses that looked like cowsheds. These houses were made of wood or mud. They were made of so poor quality that they tumbled down to every direction. Their roofs were slanting so to let the snow fall off from the roof during the winter months. The houses of artisans unlike that of rich people did not include rosaries, gardens and orchards.\textsuperscript{77} Earlier in the 16\textsuperscript{th} Century their houses were without enclosures but later on in the 17\textsuperscript{th} Century they made their houses within the mud enclosures (dosā). Their houses were having only few rooms in which the artisans spent their whole life with unending poverty, suffering and diseases. The rooms were drawn with mats known in the local dialect as \textit{wugu} and straw.\textsuperscript{78} There the food was cooked in earthen vessels known as \textit{lej} and \textit{degul} on the oven with the aid of pungent cow dung cakes.\textsuperscript{79}

\textsuperscript{75} Palsaert, \textit{Jahangir’s India}, p. 34; See also, \textit{Ain}, II, p. 352, \textit{Akbarnama}, III, p. 543, \textit{Tuzuk}, p. 94-95
\textsuperscript{76} Tarikh-i-Rashidi, p. 425
\textsuperscript{77} Bernier, \textit{Travels}, p. 398; Desideri, \textit{An Account of Tibet}, p. 72
\textsuperscript{78} Lawrence, \textit{Valley}, p. 69; G. Watt, \textit{Commercial Products of India}, p. 777
\textsuperscript{79} Ibid, pp. 249-50
The houses of artisans of Kashmir were without toilets and they frequently defected in open fields, public streets, road sides which gave rise to unhygienic conditions that affected their health and caused the diseases like cholera, itching etc.\textsuperscript{80}

**Fairs and Festivals**

The artisans of Kashmir observed both religious and secular festivals with pomp and show. They never missed a chance to participate in a festive occasion. Some of the festivals observed were the two *Eids, shab-i-barat, nouroz, diwali, holi, dussehra*, and the birth and death anniversary of holy Prophet.\textsuperscript{81} Besides these common festivals, some of the local and regional festivals were also celebrated. Jahangir mentions of a festivel ‘Vyeth Tarwah’ ‘Vyeth’ means ‘Jhelum’ and ‘Tarwah’ in Kashmiri means ‘thirteen’ It was celebrated on the thirteenth of Shawwal (ninth month of Islamic calendar) every year in which Kashmiris lit lamps and lined them on both sides of the Jhelum. It was an ancient custom and every one whether rich or poor who live on the bank of river used to light lamps as was on the *shabb-i-barat*.\textsuperscript{82} The birth and death anniversary of sufi saints were also celebrated and given due importance. The annual fairs (*urs*) of the saints like Shaikh Nooruddin Rishi at Cherari Sharif, Zain-ud-Din Wali at Aishmuqam, Baba Hyder Rishi at Islamabad, Syed Ali Hamdani and Shaikh Makhdoom at Srinagar were celebrated with great pomp and cheerfulness.\textsuperscript{83} On the new moon night of *kartik* (October), a feast was celebrated in which the boats, the river banks and the roofs were adorned with lamps. Abul Fazl says that, “Such was the lighting that the whole city presented a splendid appearance.”\textsuperscript{84} Besides those mentioned a number of other festivals were observed on village or area level some of which still continues.

**The language of artisans**

The language of expression is a unique feature of a man. God endowed man with the unique quality of expression of ideas through the medium of tongue. It represents his humaneness and culture. His socialization as a human being is made possible by his language and the way of talking. Considering these aspects, the language of Kashmiri

\textsuperscript{80} A. Ahad, *Kashmir to Frankfurt*, p. 68
\textsuperscript{82} *Tuzuk*, II, p. 167-68
\textsuperscript{84} Abul Fazl, *Akbarnama*, III, (Beveridge), p. 958
artisans is their proud possession like their natural environment. Their language is popularly known as Kashmiri. In a dialect form the Kashmiri language spreads in the south west to Kishtwar and to the south it has flown over the Pir-panjal range into the lower hills lying north of river Chenab where it is spoken in a number of dialects.\textsuperscript{85} Originally the word Kashmiri is a Persian or Hindi word and is derived from the Sanskrit, ‘Kashmirika’. According to Abul Fazl, “It is not the name used by the people of Kashmir itself, there the country is called ‘Kashir’ and the language called ‘Koshiru’.”\textsuperscript{86}

According to Abul Fazl, “Kashmiri belonged to the Dardic group of languages. It is most nearly related to Shina (China).”\textsuperscript{87} From many centuries, the Kashmiri language has been subjected to Indian influences and it included a large number of words which are of Indian origin. Though its speakers maintain that it is of Sanskrit origin in totality but it is not so. Kashmiri is a very old language.\textsuperscript{88} It bears the influences of Persian, Sanskrit and Pahari words and phrases. In 1835, Vigne noticed that in a group of 100 spoken Kashmiri words and phrases, 25 were Sanskrit, 40 Persian, 15 Hindustani, 10 Arabic and 10 Tibetan.\textsuperscript{89}

In Kishtawar, there is a dialect of Kashmiri language spoken known as Kishtawari. Kashmiri language has also overflowed the Pir-panjal range into the Jammu province, and in the valleys between the southern hills of the range, between the watershed and the valley of Chenab. There are a number of dialects such as Poguli, Siraji of Doda and Rambani. Poguli and Siraji represent Kashmiri merging into Dogri.\textsuperscript{90} Though there are minor differences in the standard Kashmiri language. These differences cannot divide it into further separate dialects, for example, the modern Kashmiri spoken by Muslims is different from that of spoken by Hindus, both in vocabulary and pronunciation.

\textsuperscript{85} Ain, II, p. 350
\textsuperscript{86} Ibid
\textsuperscript{87} Ibid, p. 351
\textsuperscript{89} Vigne, \textit{Travels}, I, p. 438; Parmu, \textit{History of Muslim Rule in Kashmir}, p. 453
\textsuperscript{90} Ain, II, p. 351
Status of Women Artisans

In Kashmir the women of upper classes enjoyed a privileged position in the society but the women of artisans were facing hard life side by side with their husbands. Besides spinning they worked in the fields and gardens. It was not obligatory for them to maintain purdah. They moved freely in streets. They also participated in the fairs and festivals. Polygamy, though legalized in Islam, was not practiced by the artisans of Kashmir. Child marriage was practiced among the artisanal class without any restriction and female children could own property.

Immoral practices were rampant during the Mughal period and the artisans were forced by their economic necessity to offer their women and children for sale in the open market in order to meet their bare needs. The women thus sold filled not only the Mughal Harem but also the brothels of Punjab, Lahore, Calcutta, Delhi, China and Central Asia.

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91 Palsaert, Jahangir’s India, p. 34; see also, Bernier, Travels, pp. 402-04
92 Ibid
93 Pandit Nath, Gulshan-i-Dastur, MS. 2314, (RPD), Srinagar, ff. 531ab; Cf. Mattoo, Kashmir Under the Mughals, p. 140
94 Cf. Mattoo, Kashmir Under the Mughals, p.141
96 A. Ahad, Kashmir to Frankfurt, p. 69
Conclusion

Kashmir has been bestowed with the beautiful valleys, wonderful birds, plants and flowers, greenery and the picturesque surroundings. This abundant beauty of the nature has made people mystical and imaginative and inspired them to reflect the beauty of their surroundings through different forms of art. Since times immemorial Kashmir is famous for its arts and crafts. However, the establishment of Mughal rule in 1586 A.D is an important landmark in the history of Kashmir. Though with the Mughal conquest, Kashmir lost its independence which it had enjoyed for centuries but the fact also remains that the Mughal rule proved a blessing for the overall development of the region.

The handicraft industries which already existed in Kashmir since the time of Sultans received great impetus during the Mughal period. For the development of handicraft industry of Kashmir, the Mughal rulers continued the old practice of inviting foreign artisans mainly Central Asian to teach the local artisans the advanced system of craft manufacture like the techniques and designs prevailing in their respective lands. The skillful master weavers and naqashbands settled in Kashmir and taught the people the improved system of craft manufacture. To reveal the study done on the theme, Kashmir and Central Asia were culturally in close contact since ancient times which is evident from Harwan monastery which bears the huge Central Asian features. During the Sultanate period, a large number of Central Asian craftsmen immigrated to the valley. One large caravan of artisans and craftsmen from Central Asia came to Kashmir in A.D 1386 during the reign of Sultan Sikander. They were the expert masters of weaving, book binding, calligraphy, lattice work, khatambandi, tile-mosaic, paper and paper-machie. Similarly, during the reign of Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin, a large number of master craftsmen were brought from Samarkand and Bukhara to teach the local artisans of Kashmir the advanced system of manufacture.¹ The Mughals followed the same tradition. It is because of this that since medieval times and even today handicrafts of Kashmir bear huge influences of Central Asia. The names of various weaving and carving designs itself show mainly their Persian roots, e.g. barg-i-sosan, chanar, barg-i-sarv, barg-i-badam, mazar-posh etc. The fame acquired by the Kashmiri artisans in their art of wood-carving, door and window

¹ See, Chapter, 1.
panel-making (panjras), khatambandi (ornamented ceilings) carpet and shawl making is largely due to the adoption of Central Asian patterns. Even today, the Kashmiri carpet manufacturers find it more convenient to introduce their goods in the market named as Bukhara, Samarkand and Farghana carpets. No other region of India is so steeped in Central Asian arts and aesthetics as Kashmir in its entire pageant of crafts. In almost every art of Kashmir such as the silver and copper-work, paper-making and paper-machie, enameling, carpets, shawls, ivory-inlay, embroidery and wood-carving, the techniques and motifs are very much identical to those found in the Central Asian craft work. The culmination of the indigenous artistic forms with that of Central Asian arts resulted in the formation of a unique and composite art culture which became a peculiar specialty of Kashmir making the artistic handicrafts more attractive and revenue generating.

The Mughal rule in Kashmir is also significant for patronizing the handicraft industry in order to meet their huge demands of the Kashmiri products. The present study reveals the Mughal Emperors’ fondness of Kashmiri products. References from Abul Fazl’s Ain and Jahangir’s Tuzuk have been used quite extensively which speaks eloquently about the fondness of Emperor Akbar and Jahangir for obtaining a shawl or any other craft item from Kashmir. Emperor Akbar has brought a number of improvements in shawl manufacture. Tus shawls which were formerly made of natural colours (black, white and red) after the orders of Emperor Akbar, these shawls used to be manufactures of different colours. Similarly, pashm shawls were also dyed with different colours and in the imperial wardrobe these shawls were arranged according to colours as well as dates of their manufacture. Apart from colours a number of new varieties of shawls were made since the establishment of Mughal rule like zardozi, kalabatun, qasidah, ghalghai, bandhmun, chhint, alchah, purzdar etc. The most important thing revealed from the study of all those varieties is that these varieties of shawls are still manufactured and are known by the same names. Apart from all that one important aspect that I concluded from the study is that the concept of doshalas (two shoulder mantles stitched back to back in order to hide the wrong end of the shawl) as well as jamawar (shawls made of huge lengths so that they may look like a jama) was introduced with the establishment of Mughal rule in Kashmir.²

² See, Chapter, 2.
During the Mughal period, to have a Kashmiri shawl was a moment of pride as is even today. Kashmiri shawl was regarded a luxurious item and it is because of this started the custom of presenting Kashmiri shawls as gifts to mansabdars, jagirdars, courtiers, ladies of the imperial harem etc. The study also reveals that Kashmir’s fine products were presented as valuable gifts to the foreign envoys during their visits. They were also sent as present to foreign monarchs as a token of respect and friendship. Therefore, the huge demand of Kashmiri products made it necessary for the Mughals to perfect the craft manufacture and undertook all possible measures for the improvement of handicraft industry. The Emperor Akbar’s decrees intensified and regulated the demand of various articles for the manufacture of which he paid much attention. For instance, the Mughal emperor made it necessary for officials to wear certain articles including the Kashmiri shawl.5

The study also reveals the significance of Mughal rule for the improvement of tools and techniques of manufacture particularly the loom which inspired the Kashmiri craftsmen to manufacture extremely soft shawls and fascinatingly designed carpets. Apart from that, the Mughals also ensured the regular supply of raw material for the handicraft industry. They treated Ladakh as a tribute paying state and for the purpose of uninterrupted supply of raw material from the region Mughals had to intervene in the local politics of Ladakh. Because, Ladakh was the entrepot between Kashmir and the wool producing areas of Chantang, Rodokh, Turfan and Tibet. In 1682-83, the supply was threatened due to Tibetan attack on Ladakh, but the Mughal intervention again saved the situation and a treaty called Treaty of Tingmosgang was concluded by which pashm was agreed to be supplied and after the treaty, thousands and thousands of men went from Kashmir to Leh, and carry back infinite loads of wool.4 This ensured the regular supply of the raw materials thereby boosting the production and consequently the increase in trading and commercial activities making Kashmir a regular supplier of handicrafts in India and its neighbouring territories. During the eighteenth century Kashmiri shawls were sent even to the rulers of European nations.

3 Ain, I, pp. 88-92; for details see Chapter, 2.
4 For treaty, see, Franckie, Antiquities of India Tibet, p. 116; see also, Desideri, An Account of Tibet, p. 73.
It was due to the huge demand of Kashmir products, the number of Kashmiri handicraft *karkhanas* expanded considerably. The number of textile *karkhanas* alone rose to 40,000 giving employment to about 120,000 workmen and to the entire female population of the towns and cities. Even small children got employment in the *karkhanas*.

One of the most important developments witnessed during the Mughal period was that Kashmir got permanently linked with the larger world which directly proved beneficial for the handicraft production. Raw materials like shawl wool and cotton seeds became easily available and manufactured crafts were sold out throughout India and its neighbouring countries. Though Kashmir had trade links with the outer world prior to the Mughal conquest as Abul Fazl informs that there were twenty six routes that lead Kashmir with the outer world but the fact as revealed from the study is that those routes were not maintained properly and cannot be traversed easily. The Mughal emperors undertook all possible measures for the maintenance of these routes to make them easily passable for the trade caravans. Akbar during his first visit to Kashmir was accompanied by stone cutters and miners to widen the route and level the ups and downs. For the smooth passage of merchants and other travelers a number of *serais* were made where they used to rest before reaching their respective destinations. Watch stations were established on the sides of the routes, bridges were made to span the rivers. The raw material for the handicraft industry was made available through these routes and manufactured crafts were sold throughout the Indian subcontinent as well as Central Asia and Iran and the Ottoman Empire. Thus various economic and commercial measures introduced by the Mughal administration stimulated trade and commerce of Kashmir particularly the handicraft trade.

The study also reveals the significance of Mughal rule in organizing the handicraft karkhanas in a systematic and scientific manner. The huge demand of the Kashmiri products made it necessary for the Mughals to organize handicraft karkhanas on broader lines to ensure regular and quality supply whenever needed. The Mughal rulers adopted all possible measures for the smooth functioning of the handicraft *karkhanas*. They were placed under the household department headed by

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5 Bernier, *Travels*, pp 402-3; for details, see, chapter 2

6 *Ain*, II, p. 351

7 *Akbarnama*, III, p. 835
khan-i-saman. His duties include the appointments, dismissals as well as posting of darogahs, amins, mushrifs and tahvildars of various karkhanas. He used to pay salaries to the craftsmen. He was obliged to keep ready the necessary items according to the imperial demands. He was assisted by other officials like diwan-i-bayutat, darogha, tahvildar, mustaufi and nazir. The various products were placed before the emperor. If the craft item was of highest artistic quality and as desired by the emperor and the concerned officials then the artisan was summoned in person before the emperor and was handsomely rewarded. This became a source of motivation for the craftsmen to perfect and improve the skill of craft manufacture.

One of the important conclusions revealed from the present study is that during the Mughal period, the artisans in order to refine their work were employed on full time basis strictly in accordance with a complex division of labour. The division of labour made possible not only the improvement in the manufacturing process but also the internal administration of the karkhanas. Each branch was headed by a separate person who used to be the master of that particular art. The division of labour was prevalent in all karkhanas. The textile Karkhanas alone comprised more than twelve separate groups. Similarly the division of labour was prevalent in other karkhanas as well.8

A remarkable feature of handicraft karkhanas in Kashmir as revealed in the present work was that of the prevalence of gender equality. Both men and women were employed on equal basis. We are informed by George Forster that at one time, the entire female population of the city of Srinagar was employed in craft manufacturing.9 This can be taken as reflection of gender equality prevalent among the artisanal class and secondly, we can conclude that it was perhaps the huge demand of Kashmiri handicraft products because of which the entire female population and even the children were also employed.10

One of the most important feature of Mughal rule in Kashmir as revealed from the present study is that the old system of payment of salaries in kind to the artisans was replaced by payment in cash. A definite system of wages was introduced for the first time during the Mughal period for all the artisans working in different

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8 See chapter 5, pp. 113-15
10 Benier, Travels, p. 402; see also, chapter 5, pp. 115-16
...karkhanas. But In spite of all that the fact also cannot be neglected that the artisans and craftsmen remained steeped in poverty due to huge taxation, unsuitable wages, lack of adequate facilities, natural calamities and exploitation of middle men. The middle men (merchants and karkhandars) provided them loans and advances against their manufactured products which they were supposed to keep ready before the due date. These loans and advances enormously affected their lives. It made them sufferers and extremely poor and subjugated them to the middle men who became richer at their expense. The craftsmen had to submit to the middlemen a considerable portion of his profit as the same piece of work passed through several hands before reaching to the actual consumer. Their poverty was clearly indicated from their dresses and food. Their food was hygienically very poor and did not contain even the necessary ingredients like salt. It was because of the consequent intake of unbalanced food that they looked more like beasts rather than men. Their dresses were also poor and they often remained without drawers. They used a tunic called pattu/pheran which was long enough and shielded their body up to knees. They used this tunic unwashed for several years. In short they lived in hygienically poor conditions. As Jahangir in his Tuzuk informs that, “though their houses were on the banks of rivers, not a single drop of water touched their bodies. They were dirty inside and outside, without any cleanliness.”

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11 See chapter, 5, pp. 125-27.
12 For the conditions of artisans, see chapter 5.
13 Tuzuk, II, p. 148
Appendices

Appendix I. *Ain-i-Shawl* by Abul Fazl in *Ain-i-Akbari*, ed. Syed Ahmad Khan, C.A.S, Department of History, AMU, Aligarh, pp. 73-74
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>نام</th>
<th>اسم</th>
<th>تیتر</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>رضا</td>
<td>مهندسی</td>
<td>پژوهش</td>
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<tr>
<td>محسن</td>
<td>علوم</td>
<td>تحقیق</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>محمد</td>
<td>زبان</td>
<td>تدریس</td>
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</table>

توضیحات

متن اصلی کتاب که در نمایشگاه نشان داده شده است.
Appendix II. Shawls of Kashmir during the Mughal Period, (Source: Craft Museum and School of Designs, Srinagar)

Appendix IV. Kashmir shawl fragment circa 1680, *(Source: Musée Guimet, MA 5685, AEDTA 2482)*

Appendix V. Kashmir shawl fragment, late Mughal period, *(Source: Harvard Art Museums / Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Bequest of Hervey E. Wetzel, Asian and Mediterranean Art, object no. 1919.228)*
Appendix VI. 17th century pashmina shawl design (*badamdar*) in it silk threads are used for embroidery (*Source: Craft Museum and School of Designs, Srinagar*)

Appendix VII. Shahtoosh shawl piece of kashmir belonging to late 16th or early 17th century. In it silk and shahtoosh is used for embroidery (*Source: Craft Museum and School of Designs, Srinagar*)
Appendix VIII. Seventeenth century Kashmiri carpet, (Source: Craft Museum and School of Designs, Srinagar)

Appendix IX. Kashmiri Carpet with scrolling vines and blossoms, Mughal period, ca. 1650, (Source: Bequest of Benjamin Altman, 1913, 14.40.725)
Appendix X. Wasiyat-nama of Shaikh Hamza Makhdoom, written on bhoj-patra, dated 1576, photo cited from, R.K. Parmu, History of Muslim Rule in Kashmir, Appendix H.1
Appendix XI. Paper-machie objects, (Source: Craft Museum and School of Designs, Srinagar)
Appendix XII. Carved wooden handicrafts. (Source: Craft Museum and School of Designs Srinagar)
## Glossary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Achchi-daer</strong></td>
<td>Latticed window</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alchah</strong></td>
<td>White banded stuff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alwand</strong></td>
<td>embroidery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Amli, Amlikar</strong></td>
<td>Kashmiri embroidered shawl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Angs</strong></td>
<td>Cutter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ari</strong></td>
<td>a hooked awl used by embroders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Arzi</strong></td>
<td>Petition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Asli</strong></td>
<td>original</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Astan</strong></td>
<td>Shrine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Astar</strong></td>
<td>Lining</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Baang</strong></td>
<td>Call to prayer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Badam</strong></td>
<td>Almond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bagwandor</strong></td>
<td>Flowered design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bahat</strong></td>
<td>Cargo boat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bandhnun</strong></td>
<td>Shawls made of tye-dyed pattern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bang-i-atsun-ti-tsangi nerun</strong></td>
<td>Surplus labour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Baqqal</strong></td>
<td>Merchant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Barunwol</strong></td>
<td>Carder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bati-chalan</strong></td>
<td>Rice spoon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Begar</strong></td>
<td>Forced labour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bhuta</strong></td>
<td>Floral design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bhutta land</strong></td>
<td>Tibet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bindoo</strong></td>
<td>Central Point or dot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bukhari</strong></td>
<td>Fire stove</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Byan-Than</strong></td>
<td>Eastern province of Ladakh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Caravan</strong></td>
<td>A group of people traveling together for security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chahar</strong></td>
<td>Four</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chamcha</strong></td>
<td>Spoon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chand-dar</strong></td>
<td>moon design of Kani-shawl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Charkha</strong></td>
<td>Spinning Wheel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chinar</strong></td>
<td>Persian name for platanus orientalis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chint</strong></td>
<td>Sprinkling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chogha  Cloak
Daerpardah  Curtain
Dag-i-Shawl  Custom duty on shawls
Dalal  Middleman
Darbar  Court
Darogah  Superintendent
Darvesh  Saint
Darwaza  Door
Dastaar  Turban
Degcha  Cauldron
Degul  Earthen Vessel
Dhera  Caravan
Dinnar  Coined money or cash
Dokad  Two lines
Doredar  With borders
Dranga  Watch stations established near the mountains for guarding the passes to the Valley and of collecting custom duty
Dukaer  Scissor
Dukkur  Hammer
Dunga  Residential boat
Dushala  Double shawl stitched back to back
Dusturi  Duty on shawl
Eid  Muslim festival observed twice in year
Ekka  A small one horse carriage
Faktahy  Ring dove colour
Faqir  Medicant
Gabba  Rug
Gaer  Water chest-nut
Gandanwol  Reckoner
Gash  Light
Gaz  Yard
Ghat  Bathing place
Gul-e-Anar  Pomegranate blossom design in kani work
*Gul-e-Hena* Flower design in Kashmir carpet

*Gullaly* Reddish colour

*Hala gola* Disturbances

*Hanz* Boatman

*Harem* Royal apartment of women

*Hartal* Strike

*Hashia bafi* Fringe weaving

*Hashia* Border

*Hatta* Market

*Hundi* A bill of exchange

*Huniya* A sheep, a yak

*Ikat* Weaves in which the thread is dyed according to a specific design prior to being woven

*Inder* Spinning wheel

*Izar* Drawer

*Jagir* Land-grant

*Jagirdar* Landlord

*Jamawar* A long shawl with flower motifs

*Kalabatun* Gold or silver fringe

*Kalamdan* Pen case

*Kalbaf* Carpet weaver

*Kalin* Carpet

*Kalm* Pen

*Kambala* Blanket

*Kangen* Comb

*Kanger* A portable brazier

*Kanikar* Twill tapestry weaves

*Kani-shawl* Shawl woven on loom. In kani weaving eyeless wooden bobbins/tujis are used instead of shuttle in weaving

*Kardar* Revenue collector

*Kar-i-Kalamdani* Pen-case making

*Karkhana* Workshop

*Kartal* A narrow usually dangerous pass or a defile

*Kashida* Drawing
Katzkar  Spinning wheel
Khalifa  Apprentice
Khandwao  Artisan
Khan-posh  Dish cover
Khangah  A hospice, a place where Muslim saints temporarily reside
Kharidar  Buyer
Kharwar  Ass load, weighing two maunds
Khatiras  Strips
Khawja  Lord
Khilat  Robe of honor
Khraw  Wooden clogs
Khushroz bazar  Fancy bazar
Kirmizy  Crimson
Kitab  Book
Kitabwallah  Book keeper
Kul  Stream
Kummerband  Girdle
Kyl-phumb  Tus shawl wool
Lanje-dar  Tree branches
Lej  Earthen vessel
Le-na  Under coat of pashm-goat
Lota  Water container
Lungar Khana  Public charity kitchen
Malches  Wool teasing
Malik  Superintendent of state Karkhanas
Malik  A hereditary chief who performed duties of collecting revenue and guarding the passes
Mansabdar  Holder of an office or rank
Masjid  Mosque or a place of worship for Muslims
Mnah-riskog-rum  Western Tibet
Mohul  Wooden pestle
Mokeem  Brooker
Moulvi  A doctor of Muslim law
Naaw
A small boat

Nadru
Leaf-stem of nilum-bum specicosum

Nag
Unit

Namaz
Preyer

Namda
Carpet made out of wool and cotton pressed together and embroidered in chain stitch

Naqash
Engraver

Naqat
The warp maker

Naqqash
Pattern drawer in kani work

Nayak
A chief who performed duties of collecting revenue and guarding the passes

Nazrana
Gift

Nikah
Marriage

Pai-woen
Wool retailer

Pakchadar
Spinning wheel

Pan
Slender cone of wool

Parm-Narm
Shawl

Pashm
Raw wool

Pashm-farosh
Wool retailer

Pashmina
Spun wool

Pattu
Coarse woolen rug

Pennakam-gur
Warp dresser

Peshwas
A coat open in front

Pharewalla
A hawker

Pheran
A long loose outer-coat or gown

Phiri
Seconds wool

Phumb
Kneaded wool

Pinjra
A complex form of wood craft in which lattices of thin intersecting slats of wood are built

Pir
A spiritual guide

Poost
Skin

Poshkar
Flowers all over design in kani work

Pritz
Large reel used for winding yarn in pashmina spinning

Pulharu
Straw shoes
Punja-dar  Five petalled flower design in kani work
Purmattan  Fully embroidered
Purz  Burling
Purzdar  Nap of cloth
Purzgar  Twister
Qalghai  Shawl was made either of silk or gold wire or bore pine cone patterns
Qamis  Shirt
Qanz  Mortar for pounding rice
Ra-ba  Sky-in or Tus shawl goat
Rafugar  Darner
Rahdari  Permit for leaving the territory of Kashmir
Rangrez  Dyer
Rasum-i-hirfagaron  Tax on craftsmen
Ron  Indus region
Rumal  Handkerchief
Sadabaf  Weaver
Sadri  Waist-coat
Salmali  The silk cotton tree
Samawar  A tea urn
Sandooq  Wooden box
Sar  Head
Sarai  Inn
Sarhiad  Artisan living in country side
Seer  A unit of weight. It is equal to two lb.
Sha  Shawl-goat
Shagird  Apprentice / Pupil
Shah-pasand  Royal choice design of kani shawl
Shah-tus  Superior shawl wool
Shah-tus  Fine and expensive wool obtained from mountain goats reared at high altitudes
Shali  Grain
Shalwar  Trousers
Shamla  Girdles for the waist
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
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<tr>
<td>Shawl-baf</td>
<td>Shawl weaver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shawl-tarah</td>
<td>Shawl pattern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shikara</td>
<td>A small boat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siyah-tareh</td>
<td>Black shaped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sozni</td>
<td>Needle work done on shawls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sufi</td>
<td>Mystic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tabgar</td>
<td>Twister</td>
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<tr>
<td>Taharma</td>
<td>A thicker shawl</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tajjer</td>
<td>Merchant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Takauchiya</td>
<td>Coat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talim</td>
<td>Written guide lines for weavers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talim-gur</td>
<td>Script writer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tambour</td>
<td>Needle</td>
</tr>
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<td>Taragur</td>
<td>Reckoner</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tarhdar</td>
<td>Corded</td>
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<tr>
<td>Telidar</td>
<td>Gold fringe</td>
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<tr>
<td>Telidozi</td>
<td>Embroidery in gold thread</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tila</td>
<td>Embroidery work using gold and silver thread</td>
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<td>Tills/Tujjis</td>
<td>Spools</td>
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<td>Tsat</td>
<td>Apprentice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tsathal</td>
<td>A training centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tus</td>
<td>Superior wool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urs</td>
<td>Festival</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ustad</td>
<td>Master craftsman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vastakar</td>
<td>Master craftsman</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vechenawun</td>
<td>Kneading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vyeth/Bihat</td>
<td>River Jhelum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wagu</td>
<td>Mat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zaitoni</td>
<td>Olive colour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zamindar</td>
<td>Landlord</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zanjir</td>
<td>Chain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zardozi</td>
<td>Shawl embroidered with gold wire or sequins</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zulm</td>
<td>Tyranny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zulm-parast</td>
<td>Worshipper of tyranny</td>
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</table>
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