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Abstract

Politically Chack period(1556 to 1586) presents a dismal picture, but paradoxically enough, the education and learning thrived more than one knows about it during the period of Shahmirs. The simple reason for this seems that Persian language and scholarship in the field has so much deeply entrenched itself in the fertile soil of the valley that political changes and visissitudes hardly effected the healthy trend of education and learning. Persian literature was also fortunate to have got such patrons like Sufis, and sultans, especially Sultan Hussain Shah Chack (971 AH/1563AD) and Yusuf shah-i- chack(987AH/1579 AD). During this period profuse hagiological literature was produced by the famous Sufis like Baba Daud Khakhi, Mulla Ali Raina, Sheikh Ahmad Chagli, Baba Naseeb-ud-din, Khwaja Hassan Qari and others. It goes to the credit of this period that produced such a world famous. Yousuf Shah Chack was a great lover of art and literature. His court patronized the scholars; his more illustrious queen Habba Khatoon introduced her own rags into sufiana music and is known for poetic excellences.

Scholar poet Sheikh Yaqoob-e-Surfi who rubs shoulders with the greatest Persian scholar of medieval world. Two other famous poets: Ghani Kashmiri and Hubbi also spent a part of their adolescent age during this period. It is also during the Chacks that Kashmir produced three famous historians whose works have come down to us. These are Syed Ali, Malik Hyder Chack and the author of Baharistan-e-Shahi. We also find mention of some more Persian poets during the reign of Hassan shah Chack like Mulla Nami Awwal, Mulla Nami Saani, Mulla Mehdi, Baba Talib Isfahani etc. Hussain Shah Chack was not only patron of Persian poets and literature but he was himself a good poet, which is borne out by some of the couplets of his poetry present in contemporary literature. Yousuf Shah Chack is famous in Kashmir history not as much as ruler but a poet and singer. The top priority that he gave to any field during his reign was organizing concerts where poets and singers were especially invited to display

their talent, unfortunately only a few couplets of Yousuf Shah Chack's poetry have survived to posterity. We find the mention of some famous poets who flourished during this period because of sultans patronage of them, mention may be made of Maulana Ahmad, Mohammad Amin Mustaghni and Baba Talib Asfahani.

The dominant theme of Persian poetry produced during Chack period has been Tasaw-wuf, a sort of contemplative mysticism and ecstatic ritualism by means of which purity of life and soul, as well as unity with Allah can be achieved. This tendency of seeking refuge in the regions of abstract thought as a solace for the worldly repression ,is itself a Persian legacy .Historians have proved that most of the saints and Saiyids who came to Kashmir had left Central Asia in order to escape from the wrath of timer. Kashmir at that time had already its own tradition of mysticism based on Buddhist and Hindu philosophy and religious thought. Persian poetry has born in this cultural environment of interacting traditions exhibits complex multiculturalists.

As mentioned above a number of scholars like Baba Dawood Khaki, Sheik Yaqoob Sarfi, Khawaja Meeram Bazaz, Mulla Nami Awal, Mulla Nami Thani, Talib Isfahani etc. who wrote Persian masnavis, ghazals, qasaid and even khamsas. A critical analysis of their Persian poetry would reveal that most of them were content to play a sedulous ape to their masters and preceptors and only few of them utilized the Persian idioms for expressing the emotions born out of a proper understanding of and respect for their own cultural heritage.

In the conclusion, we can say that Persian poetry had made tremendous progress in this period in Kashmir.