

SOURCES ABOUT ORIGIN OF KASHMIR

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Abstract:

Kashmir is rather like the Taj-Mahal- a seemingly impossible tourist chic, drenched in the purple prose of the scores of books, pamphlets and brochures written about it. There are many sources such as mythological sources, traditional sources, literary sources and scientific observations etc about origin of Kashmir.

Introduction:-

Kashmir is an oldest living city in the erstwhile united north India, the tribal life of aborigines, Nagas, Pishachas and Yaksh, arrival of Aryans, growth and fall of Buddhism, revival of Brahmanism, introduction of Islam through Sufi Saints and ruthless rule of Afghans, Sikhs and Dogras speak volumes, about the sufferings of Kashmir having faced through ages down to present era.¹

As per historians and researchers, Kashmir has survived through great ups and downs, which, if other people had to face, would have lost their gender (Biscoe) and would have vanished in the haze and dust of time. The great Kashmiri civilization, mostly still buried in this blessed land, having treasures (artifacts) yet to be explored, unfolded and exposed speak to the world that we, Kashmiri's can no more be ignored.²

The earliest history of Kashmir, however, was recorded by the poet chronicler Kalhana in 12th century A.D. In his Rajatarangini (River of Kings), he traces the rise and fall of dynasties, the changing fortunes of kings and faiths, peace and prosperity, strife and bloodshed are cyclical in his chronicle.³

Administratively, the valley is a part of the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir that rises in tiers from the plains to encompass mountains, high altitude valleys and plateaus.⁴

To its South, below the outer hills, lies the district of Jammu; to the north-east towers the great Himalaya which contains the stark and beautiful district of Ladakh; but to most people, Kashmir is the valley itself, enclosed in a magnificent amphitheatre of mountain ranges.⁵

In a profusely illustrated work, Kashmir, Sir Francis Young Husband, a British Resident, wrote about Kashmir in 1912: The beautiful Greece with its purple hills and varied contour, its dancing seas and clear blue sky produced the graceful Greeks. But Kashmir is more beautiful than Greece.⁶

Origin of Kashmir:-

There are many sources like Mythological, Traditional, literary and Scientific etc. about the origin of Kashmir which are as follows:

1. Mythological source: According to mythological source the valley actually was a huge lake called "Satisar" i.e. (Land of goddess Sati, consort of lord Shiva), and its waters were blocked near Varamulla (present town of Baramullah) the modern geologists also confirm this myth as true.⁷

2. Traditional source: According to most ancient traditions a tribal chief called Jaladbhav or Jal Dev, who lived in this Satisar, oppressed the people very much. In this situation the people went to Kashyap Rishi.⁸

Kashyap Rishi the chieftain of Kush tribe of Sammy race and having been come from Mesopotamia to Kashmir, Killed this demon called Jaldev and brought his cruelty to an end. The water was drained by Kshyap through Bararnulla.⁹

It is the reason that some historian think that the valley got its name Kashyapmira from Kashyap, which slowly changed into Kashmir.¹⁰

3. Legendry sources: According to Legends, people of valley appeared to a saint called Kashyap (Grand son of Brahma) to save them from the demons , who always oppressed the people very much.¹¹

Kashyap, the saint, devoted himself to religious exercises, in consequences of which Hindu traid, Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva appeared to aid them. Indira and other Gods had attempted to annihilate the demons on several previous occasions and had succeeded in destroying not a few but majority of the demons had escaped by hiding under water.¹²

Vishnu assuming the form of Varaha Struck the mountain at Varamulla (Baramulla) with his tail and cut up the remaining obstacles with his teeth and the waters of the lake rushed out, but the demon took refuge in the low ground near present Hariparvat hill.¹³

The goddess "Sharka" dropped a pebble on the demon Jaldev. The pebble grew into a mountain and the demon was buried under it, the smaller demons lost heart and the lake become inhabited.¹⁴

4. Literary sources: According to "Nilmata Purana" in this lake (Satisar) lived a demon called Jalodbowa, who tortured the people. A great Saint of our country "Kashyap" by name came to rescue of the people here. He cut the mountain near Varamullah (Baramulla) which blocked the water of this lake. The lake was drained, the land appeared and the demon "Jalodbowa" was Killed. The Saint encourage people from India to settled in the valley.¹⁵

It is without doubt that the name "Kashmir" also implies land desiccated from water i.e. "Ka" means the water and "shimeera" means to desiccate. ¹⁶

According to some scholars in the fifth year after the Buddha's Nirvana the disciple of Anand, called "Madhyantika"-the Arhat having obtained the six spiritual faculties and been gifted with the eight vimokshas of Buddha. His heart was overjoyed, and he repaired to this country.¹⁷

Once this Arhat, “requested this dragon lake to give me a spot in the middle just big enough for my Knees”.18

On this request the dragon withdrew the water so far, and gave him the spot, then by his spiritual power the Arhat increased the size of his body, whilst the dragon king kept back the water with all his might. So the lake became dry and the waters exhausted.19

Kalhan’s Rajatarangini testify that Kashmir was a vast expanse of water in the pre-historic era and Prajapati Kashyapa was assisted by Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva in killing the demon of the lake, Jalodbhava. After his death, the lake water was drained off and the land came to be known as Kashmir after Kashyapa.20

Nilamata Purana further mentions its (lake) occupation for six manvantaras, since the advent of Kalpa by a vast lake, six Yojanas long and three Yojanas wide called Satisara. During seventh manvantara, the water was drained off by Ananta with the help of plough at the order of Vishnu, who with other Gods and goddesses had come to kill the invincible demon Jalodbhava.21

5. Persian Sources: Baharistan-i-Shahi (1614-25) states that Kashmir remained submerged in water for two thousand years, in the neighborhood there dwelt a married hermit “Kash” from India. He made supplication to god for a piece of dry land where he would pray. God greeted his request and send down three angles with the command that the water be drained out.22

The order were carried out by the angles and they dried and available as much land, required by him. The dry land so formed was named after the sage Kashyapa.23

According to another Persian historian “Abdul Nabi” when the throne of Hazrat Solomon (God’s Messenger) landed on Takhit-i-Sulayman (Shankarachaya hill) only the summits of the mountains were visible. Solomon then ordered two Jinns (demons) called Kashf and Mir to drain the water out. The water flown out through Baramullah pass thus the valley emerged.24

Abdul Nabi further mentions that Saint Kashayap killed the demon called Jalodbhava and drained out the water from this deep lake called Satisara, which later on came to be known as Kahsmir.25

Other Persian chroniclers in their works reiterated more or less the same version regarding the origin of Kashmir. Notable among them are Hajji Mohi-ud-din, Haider Malik, Khwaja Azam and Many others.26

6. Scientific observation: The lacustrine or lake deposits of Kashmir Valley are preserved in the Karewas which were exposed, after the lake water was drained off at a George near Baramulla.27

These Karewas are characterized by layered and unlayered clay, sand, loess, plant and mega fossils and their scientific studies have posed many challenges for the workers who in the process have made some exciting observation i.e. there were controversies among the geologists regarding the existence of the lake and the area covered by it.28

For example according to R.D. Oldham the presence of true lacustrine deposits does not prove that the whole of the Kashmir rock basin was even occupied by a lake.29

It is more or less an established fact that in the pre-historic past, geological eruption and earth quacks caused the waters of the lake to flow out of the Baramulla George leaving the Jhelum and the lakes as left over’s and the surface of the Karewas or plateaus had formed the bottom of the erstwhile lake.30

Regarding prehistoric times, Dr. Sunil Chandra Ray writes, pre historic exploration have discovered the occurrence of quaternary glacial cycles in the valley. The chief geological formation of the ice age here are as the lacustrine deposits called the Karewas which overlay the terminal moraines of the first glaciations.³¹

From the above remarks we can say that the valley of Kashmir, which nestled in north western folds of the Himalayas and is surrounded on almost all sides by mountain range's is only drained off by one outlet called Baramulla Gorge.³²

CONCLUSION:-

According to many literary, mythological, traditional and other sources, the Kashmir Valley was originally a huge lake called Satisar and its water was blocked near Baramulla and a demon called Jaldev lived in this Satisar oppressed the people very much. In the bad situation a great saint Kashyap by name came to rescue of the people here. He cut the mountain near Baramulla which blocked the water of this lake. The lake was drained, the land of Kashmir appeared.

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