

PRESENT MUSICAL FORMS OF KASHMIR

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Abstract

The majority of people's lives revolve heavily around music, which has long been considered the most significant means of expressing human emotions. People use music for a variety of reasons, including relaxation, bringing back memories, setting the mood, expressing emotions, forming an identity, and controlling emotions. The study of music psychology has only recently advanced in its knowledge of how music affects listeners' emotions and how it expresses them. All written documentation of the kind, type, and form of music that was prevalent in Kashmir in the distant past has been lost due to the ravages of time, making it difficult to compile a thorough history of Kashmiri music.

Key Words: Kashmir, Chhakri, Rouf, Wanwun, Hikar, Ladishah, Dastan, Bhand Pather

INTRODUCTION

Music is an integral part of Kashmiri culture. In Kashmir, music and dance have an old history. The basis of its development through various stages can be seen in several antique books like Rajtrangani by Pandith Kalhan, Jonaraja and Srivara. It is believed that music instills a new life in withered leaves, and with each note it turns green again. In fact, they are rejuvenated by it. Music is, in fact, spiritual food/diet for one's soul. Whenever music is played, it relegates the agony and weariness of the mind. One aspires to prolong his stay at such musical concerts and attain spirituality. (Zain-ul-Abideen)¹

Music is an arrangement of various notes that produces a tune to attract the listener with its sweet melody. A tune must be pleasing, set to a certain rhythmic pattern and sung and played according to a certain order. If we look at the sculpture of the past, particularly of the Hindu period, we shall find the various human figures, especially the women, in a dancing mood or posture. Their legs, arms, and thorax are shown in motion, with curves, clearly suggesting that they are in a dancing form. The traditional music of any community, region, area, or country that is performed in marriage ceremonies, fairs, and festivals is known as folk music. The quality of folk music has a social relationship with Kashmir culture. Folklore consists of folk literature, folk stories, folklore, and folk music. Most of the folk songs of Kashmir state stories of love, beauty, and nature's beauty.

The valley of Kashmir is a meeting point between northwestern India, Pakistan, and Central Asia. The grandeur of this environment manifests itself in Kashmiri folk music: as a linear note describes, "Heard across the lakes and water at night as it echoes over the surrounding mountains, it has a fascinating, romantic appeal" that attracts one to tread over the green carpet bestowed by nature. Linear notes include a description of Kashmir, track notes,

1 M. Ashraf Tak, Urdu Sheraza, Jammu- Kashmir- Ladakh I ancient travelogues P. 289

illustrations of instruments, and pictures¹. Folk music has evolved from the contributions of the people of the soil and its growth is spontaneous. Today, folk music is achieving tremendous familiarity and popularity in urban areas too, where earlier it was believed that people listen to western types of music only. Even our feature films contain at least one song based on folklore². The folk songs of Kashmir preserve the myths, customs, traditions, and legends of bygone days. Thanks to Sir George Grierson, Sir Aurel Sein, Rev. Hindon, Knowes, and Prof. Devendra Sastyathi, Kashmiri folk lore has been revived by them. The songs are resurrected in every rural home in Kashmir³. Folk music also existed in ancient Kashmir as a distinct kind or branch, not in competition in any capacity with classical music.

CHHAKRI

In Kashmir, Chhakri is the most popular traditional music. Chhakri was found by the king Bhiksacara in (1120) and is the oldest style of singing. Chhakri equally entertains young and old types of folk song in Kashmir, which is made by King Bhiksacara. In this song, utensils of clay or brass were used. Nowadays, Sarangi, Rabab, Noet, Tumbaknari, Harmonium, etc. are used by groups of singers to collectively sing Chhakri. They play an instrument and make a tune by themselves. The style of Chhakri singing is that a lead singer sings the first line of a song, and then other members of the singing group repeat that line. The people get started dancing when Chakiris is in full swing. A male dancer (Bachkot) gets to dance on the Chhakri. Famous love stories such as Laila-Majnun, Yousaf-Zulaikha, Sheera-Farhad, and others, as well as fairy tales, are told in this Chhakri. In urban and rural areas, Chhakri was sung on wedding occasions. Chhakri plays an important role in the Mahandi raat ceremony. Without Chhakri, Mahandi raat remains incomplete.



Today, in Muslim society in Kashmir, Chhakri has become so popular that even special programmers of Doordarshan and Radio Kashmir are engaged to perform on these occasions. Tourists from all over the world who come to explore Kashmir's cultural heritage are often captivated by Chakiris melodious song. In Muslim society today, Chhakri has become so popular that even special programmers of Radio Kashmir Srinagar and Doordarshan television are engaged to perform on these occasions. The people of Kashmir are fortunate enough to have a multi-cultural past. Chhakri is an excellent outcome of the musical history

¹ <http://www.folkways.si.edu/folk-music-of-kashmir/world/album/smithsonian>.

² Zafar Hyderi, Radio in Kashmir, P. 92.

³ S.N. Dhar, Folk Lori of Jammu and Kashmir, P. 511.

of the valley. Tourists who come from different parts of the world to explore the cultural heritage of Kashmir often get mesmerized by the melodic aura created by Chhakri¹.

Song

Katiev Chhukh Nundibane Walo Mashook Myane

Sharabik Pyale Baryo Gulaban Mali Kariyo Pagah

Ya Kail Maryo Walo Mashok Myane

Meaning: The maiden is separated from her lover and remembers him. She becomes him "Where are you, my lover? Please come to me. I have filled the cups of wine and made a garland of roses for you. Come, my lover, or else I will die in a day or two". Undoubtedly, it is a very popular and entertaining folk song in Kashmir.

WANWUN

Wanwun, a prayer in the form of music, has played a vital role in maintaining the continuity of Kashmiri culture. Wanwun is divided into the following categories:

- Manzi Raat (Henna Dye)
- Arrival of the bridegroom to the bride's
- 'Zarkasun' (removing the first hair and making the child bald during infancy)
- Mas Mucchravun (Opening of the hair of the bride before marriage)
- A group of women are invited to Tomul Cchattun (Rice Cleaning) to clean rice and keep it ready for the wedding day.



MANZI RAAT (HENNA DYE)

After washing the hands and feet of the bride and groom, the women sing a chorus song, and the hands and feet of the bride and groom are dyed with henna².

Song

Maanz Ha Lagayo Sadi Aftubai Rooi Ker Khanyi Qabas Kun

Maazi Lagoyoo Balai Thahazrai Maqdhoom Sabani Nazarai

Dastigeer Sebas Rahat Damanai Lalli Kiyuth Mangtoos Samanai

¹ Ibid

² Sayed Kaisar Kalandar, Hamari mosiqui, P. 216

Meaning: Let us dye you with henna facing the sun in the east turn your face towards the Kaaba let us dye you with henna on the hill hold the herd of Dastagir, s garments under the benevolent gaze of Makhdoom sahib. Hold the Dastagir, s garments.

Arrival of the Bridegroom to Bride's House:

Jeep Chhay Sonsenz Handle Sang Latuk Aawav Janglatuk Tasildhar

Bootus Phat Chhus Putloon Narai Ye Kasoo Pariya Aashiq Goakh

Meaning: The welcome song sung by Kashmir women at the arrival of the bridegroom praises the Jeep, which is made of gold and iron, at the Jeep handle. The look of the groom is so dashing and decent that he is called a Tasildhar, who held the position of King and came from the jungle. The next lines provide a description of his shoes and pants. He is looking at all dashing and has been delighted by the beauty of the bride.

ROUF

In the village it is called "Ruf" and in the capital it is called "ROW". It is an emotional and interesting type of folk dance. On the basis of the climatic conditions in the autumn and spring seasons, the black bee comes near the bud but does not touch it, as it is seen as too shy. For a long time, it revolves round the bud, creating a romantic mood. By moving the black bud and coming forward again and again, at least the bud yields and accepts the offer. This movement of the bee has led to the creation of "RUF."



Beautiful ladies in the RUF form two or four groups consisting of four or five girls, and they face each other. Each girl puts her arms on the arms of the other ladies, and they make a half circle. The dance proceeds as all the girls bring their feet towards and then backward jointly. The song is in question-answer form; one group questions and the other answers, musically while dancing. During the performance of Ruf, no musical instruments are used.¹

Song

Zoon khkach Mai Lawe Pemaï Bubrai Wasti Zooni Be Kasni Khabrai

Baai Wajnem Baai Yiwan Khabrai Yasni Aasan Sochhye Nyiram Nazrai

Maal Wajnem Maal Yiwan Khabrai Yasni Aazaz Sochhye Nyirin Nazri

¹ Ibid

Meaning: The Moon has risen I am mist with dewdrops Step down, O Moon, to enquire. Following the helpless Brothers look after those who have brothers; she who has no stands out as unusual. Those who have a father are taken care of by them. She, who has no father, stands out as a person.

HIKAT

The word hikar has been derived from two words, "hi-krit", which means any piece of work done joyfully and happily. It is an inseparable part of raas, and it can be even called a form of raas. In Hikar dance, two girls stand in a circle facing each other, interlocking their arms, holding each other's hands, and bending their bodies and hands backward, while the girls take turns singing during the round. It is also performed at wedding ceremonies¹.



“Samav Karav Ativaas Pakiv Nerave Gindney”.

Meaning: Let us get jointly and dance.

BACHHI NAGMA

The bacha nagma dance is one of the major folk-dance forms which are very prevalent in the valley of Kashmir. The bacha nagma dance is a popular form of dance that is performed at Kashmir cultural programmers' events, wedding ceremonies, and young boys' parties, among other places. In the oldest days, Bacha nagma was used to entertain themselves. But this bacha nagma dance still exists as a folk-dance form because it is considered the oldest component of Kashmir culture. The bacha nagma is a famous other form during harvest season by the boys of Kashmir. The dress of the bacha nagma dance is round in shape and very loose and long in type. When a boy performs or shows the bacha nagma dance, he wears the bacha nagma dress to perform in front of gathered people during social culture or wedding functions. The meaning of "bacha nagma" is adolescent melodious voice and dance, and it was performed



¹ Ibid

during the Pathan era (1787-1818). During the bacha nagma dance (Bachkot), the dancer collected money from the people.

BENTHS

Benthic music is founded by Bakerwal and Gujjar in the lyrical tradition of Benth. A group of people gather to sing the benth song in the chorus. The people gathered have a limited range of about five or seven people to perform for each other. The melodious style of Kashmir music in benth owes its origin to the people of the tribal areas of the Kashmir valley. The vagrants and nomads (Bakerwal and



Gujjar) are prominent in the form of benth. The benth is a local category of music in the valley of Kashmir. They are performed on different occasions; the variation in the musical form of Kashmir is concerned; the benth is performed during the celebration of some social ceremonies etc. Belonging to two different close-knit interrelated families, both Bakerwal and Gujjar enjoy the music of benth by performing with each other.

NAIDAI GYAVAN

Naidai Gyavan is a folk song sung during the removal of unwanted weeds from the paddy field (in the Kashmiri language, we call this zameen dour) where the Naidai Gyavan is performed. The word "Naind" is changed from the Sanskrit word "Ninad" and the word "Gyavan" originates from the Sanskrit word "Gayan". In every state region, the tradition of an agriculture song is prevalent. The Naidai Gyavan is very joyful. It is very difficult to prepare the paddy field for the required hard labour with proper playing, but singing makes



the difficult task easy and enhances their zeal and zest. The former backers soil lamps and make soil smooth, which is called "Yattpur." After "yattpur," the former sowing paddy plant is called "thal." After that, the former removing the unwanted plants from the paddy field and making the paddy field suitable for agriculture is called "Naidai. In October and November are harvest season. The forms harvest and carry grains for storage. The farmer takes a rest for

a while. The former sits beneath a tree and entertains them with singing. These songs are sung in chorus¹.

BHAND PATHER

The word Bhand comes from a Sanskrit word. In Sanskrit, the word 'band' means comical behavior or imitation and mimicry it is found in most of the northern Indian languages. The village minstrels of Kashmir are locally known as Bhands. Every year, after the harvest, strolling Bhands go from village to village to collect alms in cash and kind. The team usually



consists of two Shehnai players, two drummers, a clown, and a couple of boys who are dressed in long robes and dance and sing to the accompaniment of music. Their performance consists of songs, humorous skits, and parodies from across the centuries. The Bhands have provided the sole entertainment to the villagers of the valley. The origin of this type of music and drama is traced to the tenth century A.D. and even from earlier periods; traces of their existence in the culture of the valley are seen. According to Nilamatpuran, the Band pather performed during the festival and similar occasions, and Band pather was very famous in Kashmir. The word "Mandavanam" is mentioned in the Nilamatpuran, which means dance and song sung by the bhands. Singing and dancing by the bhands has contributed a lot to the traditional music of Kashmir, and not only in Kashmir, but also in other places from the ancient times, bhand pather has remained prevalent in the culture of Kashmir according to Nilamatpuran. The word "bhand" comes from the root "bhanna", which means "realistic drama" and "satirical". It is a social drama but not a monologue. The instruments used during the bhand pather are Shahnai, Nagara, Dhol, and Thalij².

Razi Liafital Chaav Bekhabar Gachhith

Wazir Chhu Doyri Athav Dear Parathan

Looth Gov Gamas Looter Gayi Chalith Chee

Mun Liafital Razi Khurkonaraam

Meaning: The king is unmindfully sleeping under a heavy and warm quilt. The villages have been ransacked and the king is sleeping peacefully under the six-foot-long tree".

1 Syeed kaiser kalandar, Hamari mosiqui, P.217.

2 Moti lal kemmu, Bhand Natyam, P. 67

LADISHAH

Laddi Shah is the simplest but interesting form of folk music. It is very popular with the villagers. The tradition of Laddi Shah virtually is the representation of the problems of society sarcastically. These problems are highly influenced by a person known as Laddi Shah. Wearing a long gown, commonly known as Pharen and a turban with a long fine cloth hanging on their shoulders, this tradition has been resurrected by a TV channel, E.TV Urdu. Just after the news from Kashmir, Ladishah appears on the screen every Sunday.



Song

“Hawai Jehaz Aav Mulki Kashmir Yimav Wucch Timav Kor Tobi Takhsir

Jamals kamals Nas Kami Wath Yimav Wucch Tamv Kor Tobi Takhsir

Zooni Wun Razas Tufaan Chhu Yiraan Yimav Wucch Tamv Kor Tobi Takhsir

Shor Chhu Yutu Zan Kan Cheeran Yimav Wucch Tamv Kor Tobi Takhsir”

Meaning: Everyone who saw it let out a cheer and rushed out of the house to see the plane. Jamal and Kamal also came out to see the airplane. Everyone who saw it made a shout and hue. Zooni told Razas that storms were coming; the Aeroplan went circular just like an eagle, and who ever saw it made a shout and hue. The ears got deafened by the noise that was created by the airplane. Everyone who saw it let out a yell and a hue.

LALNAVUN

Lalnavun is a folk song which is sung by a mother for her child. The mother sang to coax the child to sleep. Lalnavun is a Kashmiri word. In Hindi it is called "Lori" and in English it is called "Lullaby".



Song

“Chhopu Karu Chhopu Karu Rop Nari Ggarayo Kar Moj Lajiyo, No Taye No

Chachi Sandi Gobro Takiya Garayo Kar Moj Lajiyo Ho Taye Ho

Raj Sandi Gabro Vajiathth Garayo Kar Moj Layiyo Ho Laye Ho

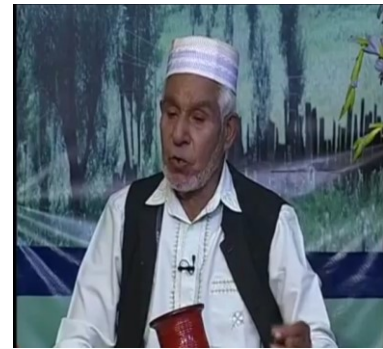
Mam Sandi Jigro Sham Naau Karayo Karu Maj Lajiyo No Taye No”

Meaning: The mother is trying to console the crying child by singing this lullaby. She says, “My child, do not cry. I will get you the jewelry made of silver for your arms. I will get a nice

pillow for you so that you can sleep well. I can sacrifice everything for you and get everything nice for you. You must not cry.

DAASTAN

Daastan refers to a tale, a story, or a legend. It is a tale or story narrated in verse. The head of the party starts the day with a verse. Then he narrates an episode, and at the close of the episode, he recites the relevant and concluding verses of the episode, and at the time of the verse, the other performers repeat the verse in a melodious tune. Thus, the head of the party goes on narrating the episodes and concluding every episode with a verse recital. The instruments used are the harmonium, Rabab, Sarangi, and Ghadda (the ear-tear pitcher) Mohammad Ismail Mir is a famous artist from Daastan Guv¹.



SUFIANA MUSIC

Sufiana music is the classical music of Kashmir, which uses its own ragas known as Makam. Sufiana music was introduced to Kashmir in the 15th century; it originated in Iran. The sufiana music of Kashmir continues to capture the interest of the audience. In past times, the numbers of Indian rags have been added to the Kashmir in Sufiana music, various numbers of instruments are used, such as Santoor, Sehtar, Saaz Kashmir, Wasul, and Tabla etc.



HAFIZ NAGMA

Hafiz nagma is a type of classical Sufiana music that is based on Kashmiri classical music. Santoor, a hundred stringed instruments played with a strike, is also used in hafiz nagma, as is a female dance and the other partner of the male with instruments. This type of dance is known as hafiz. The dance moves her feet to the musical notes. In 1920, hafiz nagma was banned in Kashmir by the ruling king (Maharaja)².



CONCLUSION

In conclusion it can be stated that the music of Kashmir is very rich and sundry. Kashmir has its own classical music which is known as Sufiana Mausiqi. Sufiana Mausiqi is influenced by Persian and was born in 14th century during the reign of Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin. Traditional

¹ Dr. Altaf Niyaz, Music & Melody, P. 24.
² Dr. Rashid Nazaqi, Soun Aadab, P. 152.

music of Kashmir which includes Chakri, Ruff, Ladishah, and Bhand Pather is related to festival occasion, marriage ceremonies, harvest, and ministerial songs.

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