

Kashmiri Folklore, Culture And People

Reyaz Ahmad Naik
Revenue
India

ABSTRACT:

Kashmiri Folk Literature is a hallmark of Kashmiri people in general and a sign of pride in particular. It is rich with all literary forms and basic material for modern literature & history. Undoubtedly it has been accepted & assessed with the assessment of scholarly approach that folk literature has charismatic characteristics & it preserved behavioural patterns of general people. Kashmiri folk literature or lore is richest in the world without any doubt. Most pedagogical most reliable most trustworthy and most hilarious part of it is poetry (*luki Shire*), Opera (*luki Peathir*) Oral Stories (*luki daleel*) proverbs (*luki Kathi*), riddles (*praitchi*) and children literature (*shuri Adb*) now all persevered in book shapes. This literature preserved the whole character & behavioural patterns of Kashmiri people and historical background of Kashmir. Kalhana's *Rajtarangni* had been extracted from this folk lore is authentic and primary source of Indian history everyone accepted it's authenticity and reliability. Not only this *Banasarvad Katha* the story book belongs to Kashmiri folklore, *Kathasaritasager*, *the vitaal pachece* the famous TV serial was part of it. This literature can help the planners to maintain peace, prosperity and tranquillity in the valley through its introduction in schools and colleges and organising cultural programs at various community halls, town halls, public places so that a period which was peaceful be broadcasted and visualized for revival of memories and events which are hidden due to turmoil and conflict in the J&K state. Human nature is flexible and humanity it's part, so if this literature flourished by one or other way it must inject peaceful elements in the minds of Kashmiri people and situation get altered with harmony. Hence Kashmiri folk literature can change the Scenario in J&K state, let us try to implement it's effective characteristics and check the scene which would be different than it is.

Keywords: Folklore, charismatic, primary source, broadcasted, visualized, Harmony.

1. Folk Literature or Lore:

Literature & society are two but one sided coin. One is incomplete without other, so both are naturally correlative things. There is no hindrance to say, literature is a X-ray machine of our society & heart of our social order. It is obvious that the relation of literature and society is that of Mother & daughter. Because the same blood courses in veins of the two. Literature is identity of our society & authors are socially recognized agents who are trying through their writings to expose all good & bad things in public so that the Unanimous & collective social character get enunciation.

Folk literature includes all the myths, epics, fables, legends & folk tales passed down by word of mouth through the generations. The authors of folk literature are unknown or unidentified, but mature & perfectionists & well equipped with all social knowledge. Debates about how folk lore should be defined have been waged continuously ever since the word was coined in 1846 AD by William Thomas. Mac. Edward leech

sees folk lore as “the accumulated knowledge of homogeneous, Unsophisticated people” E.S Martland defines it as “anthropology dealing with the Psychological phenomenon of uncivilized”. G.W Boswel define Folk lore “ an the unwritten history of ancient societies preserved in the minds of the people and handed down through age by the medium of language or practise” in the international Encyclopaedia of the social science the term folk lore has been defined as under:

“Folk lore means folk learning, it comprehends all knowledge that is transmitted by word of mouth & all crafts & techniques that are learned by imitation or example as well as products of those crafts.”

Different definitions by world renowned scholars & folklorists encourage the researchers for their better assessment & analysing of things. It may be plausible & great honour to express that folklore is the creation of civilization, the creation of the people who live in particular geographical area, share the same language, culture, mechanism, dress codes, livelihood & living conditions, whose way of life & traditional heritage are bound by common identity. The knowledge in folklore is the result of experience of life, ups & downs, social issues, exploitation, socio-religious, socio-economic, socio-political, domestic as well as agricultural, histocultural & horticultural know how etc this experience combined with knowledge resulted in the expression of folklore elements. The laments of folklore are social products. They are created, retained & transmitted by the folk and as such it stands as the true mirror of the people and the society. Folk lore has many shapes within the ambit of two catagories: (1) Prose (b) poetry.

2. Some shapes of folk lore are as under:

- i. Fairy tales => traditional stories, intended primarily for children. Imaginative stories of supernatural beings such as faries, witches, orges tec
- ii. Ballades => Traditional poem or folk song that tells a story.
- iii. Folk Art => Comprises a rage of artistic production & handicrafts. Like painting sculptures, quits, pottery, & furniture etc.
- iv. Folk dance => Traditional common featured dance held at social gatherings.
- v. Folk songs=> Traditional songs, of common range & credibility.
- vi. Legends => A legend is a traditional historical tales.
- vii. Myths => A traditional sacred story, usually featuring gods & heroes etc.
- viii. Riddles => A riddle is a linguistic puzzle posed in a form of a question.
- ix. Superstations => is an irrational belief, associated with rituals.
- x. Folk tales => traditional stories of a specific cultural group or society including, common as well supernatural and historical stories etc.
- xi. Proverbs => expresses truth and make comments briefly & pointedly.
- xii. Jokes => A joke is a short humorous piece of oral literature.

Kashmiri literature has inherited all these forms of folklore including some extra forms like, *Ladishah*, *vanvoun*, *rouv*, *Dastaan*, *watchun*, etc. Some have resemblance some not. But *Ladishah* is a unique & extra ordinary social character who exposes all calamities social imbalances, economic exploitation, religious exploitation, Govt negligence, social issues, historical events etc.

Kashmiri folk literature is richest in the world having tones of folktales, riddles, folk songs & ladi shah. Assimilation of Sanskrit & Persian morphological neologism added lot of folk literature in Kashmiri language.

Like *Katha Saritasagar*, *Panchtantntara*, *Brihat katha*, - which according to Grierson was written in the paiserchi language, spoken by the pre-Aryan people in the kashmiri between 700-400 BC *Gunadhya* is said to be the compiler of this great tale collection. *Brihat Katha Mangri* (11th century) by Kshemender & somadeva, epic stories from Persian literature including domestic skills & knowledge. Sanskrit & Persian language had been the official languages of J&K state during Hindu & Persian rule (except dogra rule 1846 – 1947).

3. Contribution of Europeans as well as local scholars and literary organisations:

European adventurism in the second half of the 19th century became research field especially in folk literature. As an administrative experts, explorers, and missionaries who played distinguished role in eradicating ignorance, poverty & disease which had eaten the very roots of Kashmiri society. Among other things which occupied the attention of these Zealous scholars, language & literature received high impetus at their end. To have an accurate and objective insight into the behavioural patterns and the life style of common kashmiris, there generous & talented people begin the study & discover the most authentic & reliable source of information i.e folk literature. They believe that the power & authenticity of literature a true mirror of society. That is why these people seriously undertook the job of collecting the different categories of folk literature. The first attempt by J.H Knoeles an European missionary Scholar who brought out a comprehensive collection of Kashmiri folk tales under the title of *Folk tales of Kashmir*. The same scholar penned down yet another book of great literary meant entitled “*A Dictionary of Kashmiri Proverbs and Sayings*”.

After J.H Knowle’s collection of Kashmiri proverbs & tales, other work on Kashmiri folk literature initiated by Aurel Stein & Grierson in the year 1937 they bought out small collection of Kashmiri folk tales under the title of *Hatam’s tale*, encouraged by the dedicated work of European scholars & writers some well qualified people with literature taste also undertook the job of collecting Kashmiri folk tales in 1955 Noor Mohd Roshan published a collection of thirty folk tales under the title of *Poshi Thair* & a Kashmiri poet Shambu Nath Bhat Haleem collected under the title of *Baliyaar* the collection contained six tales. Another work entitled *the wit of kashmir* by sudarshan Kashmiri. (Proverbs & sayings) .

Folk tales Kashmir by S.L Sadhu 1962 a good work on folklore preservation its foreword was written by G.M Sadiq the then Education Minister of J&K & Mohan Ji Raina produced the illustrations inserted in this book, & 30 stories were published.

Kashmiri folk lore got new heights & momentum under the scholastic guidance of Prof. Mohi-ud-din Hajni. He under took serious scholastic work & published two important books *Kashri Nasritch Kitaab* & *LUKI RAS*.

Jammu & Kashmir cultural Academy (1958) the nerve center of Kashmiri language & literature initiated the precious work to collect folklore through various channels & published special folklore numbers of *Sheeraz* & *Hamara Adb* in addition to this so many folk tales & folk songs had been published. Independent attempts & voluntary literary organisation also come forward & dedicated their organisational journals for Kashmiri folk lore studies. Prof. Shad Ramzan former HOD Kashmiri department Kashmir University (INDIA) dedicated his most time to teach & preserve Kashmiri folklore & published some papers & a book *Kashren Luki Batan Hund Intikhab*.

Some other scholars, writers, & authors preserve the knowledge of folklore in their papers published in various magazines & books. Zariel Ahmad Zariel is most important figure in Kashmiri folklore who is still collecting and

preserving folk literature, & having depth of knowledge about folklore and behavioural patterns of Kashmiri people. Ratan Talashi, shafi Shouq, G.N Atish, Naji Munwar, Moti Lal Kemu, Barkat nida, Moti lal Saki, M.Y. Teng, Qazi Gh Mohd are/were renowned scholars & authors who preserved the knowhow of folklore in their writings. Kashmiri folk literature is a treasure trove of unwritten Socio-cultural history spanning centuries. It is true particularly of our folk songs, these songs depicts life in various colourful aspects of the traditional Kashmiri society. Rich in depicting emotions, dreams & miseries, these folk songs bring to light various shades & values of Kashmiri society.

Kashmir has been an abode of many religions & religious philosophies & they have shaped Kashmiri society & the collective Psyche & collective social character irrespective of colour, creed, cast & religion. All Kashmiri people have same behavioural patterns because of God-centered belief. After changing political orders, religious willingness, official language changes and different transformational programmes the basic foundations of Kashmiri culture & behavioural patterns not changed and altered. Instead, this transition enriched & refreshed it. All the political shades as well as religious orders acculturation & assimilation influences did not change the basic outlook of the people. Ancient as well as medieval along with modern approaches of cultural influences made Kashmiris to absorb for unanimity of human values known as Kashmiriyat a multicultural and multi-religious aspect of Kashmiri society. This aspect was hidden quality of Kashmiri people, but recently it exposed due to political debate on Kashmiri culture & people on different public platform forms. Because of dispute on Kashmir between India & Pakistan.

4. Different shapes of Kashmiri folklore:

Thousand years of culture and behavioural patterns are preserved in our Kashmiri folk literature in the shapes of different literary forms like *Luki Daleel*, *Luki Shairy*, *Luki Beath*, *Ladi Shah*, *Vanvun*, *Pretychi*, *Doup*, *Manzil Beath*, *Shur Beath*, *Rov*, *Hiktchi Bainth*, *Nendi beath*, *Vatchun*, *Masnavi*, *Bandi pather*, *Kehvat*, *Talmi*, *Misali*, *Dastaan*, *gandit*, *Luki keth* & *Shuir baith*, all these genres have preserved Kashmiri culture, social character, socio-economic, socio-cultural, socio-religious, socio-political, histo-cultural, collective psyche, behavioural patterns, rituals, superstitions & mythical characters in a systematic way. This folklore has time and again preserved our collective consciousness without any prejudice, aversion, & biased approach.

5. Disbursement of planning for implementation of folk lore:

Mature & accountable system of planning ought to be in place for implementation of folklore effects on human psyche & consciousness of irretentive brains, whose consciousness went out to subconscious area. Planners are always giving concrete plans for concrete works but abstractive planning needs scholarly measure and involvement of psychologists, sociologists, psychiatrists, socio-linguists, anthropologists & language teachers who will prepare comprehensive plan for give & take effects of folklore at various institutions. Because folklore is the only literature of the society which can change or redirect the behavioural patterns of general masses as well as children the future asset of every society. Preservation of social character and historical events of that society considered to be the honour, pride & proud. So its impacts shall be evaluated through various colourful programmes, through a well planned manner.

6. Kashmiri folk lore:

Kashmiri folklore can help to develop new atmosphere if implemented through a well planned manner in schools, Hr. Secondary school, colleges, at various public places, institutions, community halls, town halls, coaching centres, study centres & counselling & Guidance centres.

6.1 Cultural programmes: Cultural programmes shall be inaugurated in schools and students participation shall be managed as an audience as well as performers so that its impacts permeate upto the family level only folklore elements can be given importance alongside. Like *Ladishah, Praetchi, Kahavetch, Daleel, Masnavi etc.*

6.2 Folk tales:- Special segment shall be managed for introduction of folktales through a language teacher & sociologist both will interpret the value of these tales, because treasure of these tales can open the stagnated minds rusted with modern conceit & trends. Folktales have stored amusement, allurements, recreation, Magic & magical objects preternatural powers, extraordinary strength, mission quest and supernatural powers, myths, historical honour & social character. All these qualities can redirect the fixed & stationary mind sets into a peaceful & harmonious agenda of life. Our society needs its immediate implementation because the whole community engulfed with uncertainty, despair, alienation, absurdity, & insecurity from last three decades due to war like situation in the state. Both the nations Indo-Pak revelry made J&K state as a buffer state. Thousands of innocent people died, thousand injured & thousands have been languished in jails. Hence, folklore can help to explore new ways the betterment of the state of J&K especially Kashmiri valley the most affected & afflicted area.

6.3 Special programmes at various public places:

Public places, community halls, town halls, & auditoriums shall be utilized for cultural activities including folklore elements even panchayat Ghars in rural areas are the suitable places where every member of the society can participate easily. *Bandi paether* the special opera form of folk dramas known to everyone having attention catching factor can divert attention early & its characters are specially trained and are professional. This tradition is old aged & it was common practice in the valley before some years due to turmoil in the valley it gradually disappeared. Now off and on seen on National as well as state owned TV channels. Its readaptation can open closed doors which can maintain balance in the human minds (because we lost everything) which can provide healthy treatment to disrupted & disturbed minds & hearts. We need peaceful atmosphere, harmony, tranquility, & amity. Beasts are far better than human-beings even not entrap their counterparts, but we are shameful creatures on the earth not wishing good & better for our colleagues & members of the same community. We made rules & regulations for whom what & why? Because we are not best creation on earth. Other creatures not need rules & laws because of their goodness. Therefore we need time & again special counselling & programmes for implementation of human values & courteous regard for peoples feelings.

6.4 Folk theatres renovation:- Govt patronage for renovation of folk theatres, clubs, encouraging of Bhand the characters of folk drama, & organisation of special events at suitable places with secure atmosphere. So that more participation can divert the attention of the people, especially youngsters & children, & innovative approaches shall be introduced for attention catching measure.

7. All events shall be broadcasted on TV:

If a person visualise his own face on T.V Screen he feels proud & his character shows some changes towards the gentlemanism. So every event should be broadcasted with admirable commentary, & explore new methods for presentation & implementation of cultural programmes having folklore tastes.

Hence, folklore can divert conscious attention of people of J&K state, because its power can regenvate & review the old memories which was rich in all respects, its treasure-trove amplitude help the people to overcome all mental ailments.

Conclusion:

All characteristic of folklore has been discursed & different view points & assessments, definitions, personal assessment and alignment of different perspectives have been evalvated. European contribution as well local scholar contribution including the contribution of some literary organisation has also been discussed. Kashmiri folklore its different shapes & its implementation with planning at various institutions for changing of behavioural patterns of Kashmiri people with modern technique & innovative approach shall also be canvassed in public domain. Sensible planning is needed through different academic excellence & scholastic help for true & effective outcome.

REFERANCE BOOK AND JOURNALS

1. Naji munwar, *PURSAN*, Srinagar, J.K printing press.
2. *KASHUR ZUBAN TI ADB*, "SUAN ADB" sgr. Cultural academy.(1984)
3. Mehfooza Jan 1992. *Kasheer ti Kasher Zabaan: Akh Lisanaiyati Jaizi* (Kashmir & The Kashmiri Language a linguistic study). Srinagar Bawath Publications. A collection of articles related to mother tongue education, language, society and community.
4. Allan Dindersm the study of folklore, P-83. Also refer Stith Thompo, *Folklore, Funk & Wagn II Distionary of folklore Vol. I, Page-6*
5. Leach, Maria, Funk & Wagnat's standard dictionary of folklore, Mythology & legends, Vol-I, P-6.
6. G.W Boswal, *Fundamentals of folk literature*, P-47.
7. *Dictionary of Folklore*, by Funk & wagnalls.
8. M.L Saki, *Forward, Kashir Luki Bath*, Vol-4, P-7.
9. Pf. Shad Ramzan, *Kashren luki Baetan Hund Intekhab*, P-7 to 13 Sahita Academy Delhi,

(Super Printers Delhi).

10. K.K Kala, literary Heritage of Kashmir, P-127.
11. J.H Knowls – Folktales of Kashmir, PP 491-504.
12. Lalita Hando, structural Analysis of Kashmiri folk tales P-12 & 27.
13. Allan Dundes, The study of Folklore –P, 4.

