SOCIAL DIVERSITY AND POLITICAL DIVERGENCE IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR

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Identifying the Complexity of Conflict Situation and the Format for its Resolution

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Introduction

The study is aimed at identifying the complexity of the conflict situation in Jammu and Kashmir and focusing at the intricate internal political differences that have been characterizing this erstwhile state from the very beginning. These political differences, it is argued, form the 'third' layer of the ongoing conflict. Generally, the focus of conflict analysis remains either at the level of 'external'—(India-Pakistan relationship) or at the 'internal' level (defined by Delhi-Kashmir relationship). The conflict analysts don't pay any attention on the social and political realities within Jammu and Kashmir. This study, while acknowledging the realities of both the external and the internal factors, seeks to argue that unless the intricate patterns of internal political differentiations within the plural society of J&K are recognized, the conflict will neither be understood in its entirety nor the proper mechanisms of its resolution be identified.

During the last three decades of the recent phase of conflict situation marked by militancy and separatism, there has emerged a literature of substantial nature which has focused on the 'external' dimensions of conflict particularly, the context of the India-Pakistan relationship (Sumit Ganguly 2002; Wirsing, 1998; Schofield 2010, Rajat Ganguly, 1998); the role of Pakistan in sponsoring the militancy and encouraging separatism in Kashmir; accelerating the border hostilities; etc) (Swami, 2006). Literature has also been produced on the 'internal' dimension of the conflict, specifically the trust deficit between New Delhi and Kashmir; the democratic and federal lag; and the context of 'alienation' of the Kashmiris. (Bose, 2003; Behera, 2000 and 2007, Dulat, 2017, Habibullah 2008, Puri

1993) Much of this literature has also indicated the intermeshing of the two factors and the complexity added to the character of conflict because of the simultaneity and inter-linkages between the two.

In this literature, the third dimension of conflict has rarely been referred to and where it is referred, it has not been sufficiently acknowledged. It is in this context of the very crucial gap in the literature on conflict politics in J&K that this present study has been designed. The context of internal divergence, as this study argues, has the implications of not only generating internal discord, but also impacting the process of resolution of the conflict. With internal politics being informed by the contradictory pulls and pushes, any movement forward in this process is very challenging.

Jammu and Kashmir is a highly diverse society that reflects a multi-layered identity politics. Its diversity ranges from religious to regional-cultural markers and it operates in such a manner that it generates a picture of complexity. The political implications of the context of diversity are to be seen in the multiplicity of political voices and the articulation and assertion of multiple identity politics. Besides the Kashmiri identity politics, that forms the core of the conflict politics in the 'internal' domain, there have been host of other identity assertions in the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir. While some of these identities operate parallel to the Kashmiri identity politics, there are others which compete with and contest the fundamentals of this identity politics.

What is peculiar about the Kashmiri identity politics is its specificity in the ethnic-nationaist sentiments. Because of this specificity, it is largely confined to the Valley of Kashmir. Focused on Kashmir's relationship with Delhi, this identity politics has manifested itself in various forms ranging from the demand of 'plebiscite' to 'restoration of autonomy'. In the post-1990 phase, this identity politics got manifested through militancy and separatism.

The specificity of the Kashmiri identity politics gets clearly reflected from the fact that this does not have its reach beyond the Valley. To whatever phase we may refer to, and whatever manifestation we may point to, this politics did not have much reflection in other parts of the erstwhile state.

The phase of militancy provides a good example as to how

the Kashmiri identity politics does not have its outreach beyond Kashmir. During the 1989-90 period, the Valley was so swayed by militancy and separatism that it had affected the normal political order. While violence formed the logic of everything, the political processes were derailed and all the political actors, including the mainstream political parties had gone into hibernation. It took almost one and half decade for the mainstream politics to recapture some space. However, during the same time, it was altogether different situation in the rest of the state. Jammu remained normal most of the time and in fact, virtually became the political capital of the state with most of political parties operating from here. Though it was impacted by militancy, but there was no manifestation of separatism. There were certain areas in Doda and Poonch-Rajouri belts which were affected by militancy, and yet, the kind of popular identification with militancy that was clearly visible in Kashmir, was not replicated in these areas.

The trajectory of the politics of Jammu (and Ladakh regions) has always been different from that of Kashmir. Rather than sharing the sentiment of Kashmiri identity politics and the grouses vis-à-vis the Indian state, the regional sentiments here have always been articulated around the inter-regional relationships. There have been widely prevailing perceptions about the political 'domination' of Kashmir on the one hand and political 'deprivation' and 'neglect' of these Jammu (and Ladakh), on the other.

While much of the discourse around the political deprivation and neglect of Jammu and Ladakh emanated from the context of power politics within the state, what had intensified the feeling of 'regional neglect' emanated from the political attention that Kashmir attracted due to its being the epicentre of conflict politics.

However, it is not only the lack of political visibility of the other two regions, but also the absence of a sense of partnership that characterized the feeling of political neglect. In all matters relating to the state, it was the logic emanating from Kashmir's identity politics that had come to be equated with logic of the politics of the whole state. The fact that most of the political arrangements for this state, including the application of Article 370 of the Indian Constitution, had emanated from the logic of Kashmir's politics and had not been

linked to the political trajectory of the other two regions, generated a sense of marginalization among the people of these regions.

It is a different matter that the region of Kashmir had its own set of grievances in all these matters. Since early 1950s, the political class here has been reflecting its discontent vis-a-vis these political arrangements. The politics of Kashmir, therefore, has been shaped around the question of erosion of the Constitutional autonomy and the central intrusion in the politics of the state. However, in Jammu and Ladakh, these arrangements were seen to be imposed from above without any reference to their regional political sensibilities. This became a reason for a conflictual relationship between Kashmir region on the one hand and Jammu (and Ladakh) on the other.

Inter-regional irritations and tensions have formed a constant feature of politics of J&K. Rather than a consensual position on fundamental issues confronting the state, there has been a constant struggle for assertion around contradictory and competing ideas within the state. Rather than a common vision for the politics of the state and its development, the internal politics of the state has been characterized by mutually exclusive political positions and competitive regionalism.

The regional divide has posed a great challenge for the politics of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir. It not only generated internal disharmony and irritations but also the polarizing tendencies. Regional polarization in the absence of any conscious process of communication and dialogue, always had the danger of taking the communal turn.

It is in the background of the internal political divergence within Jammu and Kashmir that the present work has been undertaken. The study initially had to cover all the three erstwhile regions of the state, however, after the reorganization of the state, it was felt that there is a need for altogether separate study of Ladakh and its journey from a region of this erstwhile state to the Union Territory. And, therefore, while a future study on Ladakh has been planned, in this study focus will remain on Jammu's relationship with Kashmir.

Other than focusing on the complex pattern of social diversity and plurality of the erstwhile state, this study focuses on different political trajectories of Jammu and Kashmir regions in the pre and

post-1947 period. It goes into the details about the causes of political divide between the two regions and implications for the inter-regional relationship. Emphasis is, therefore, placed on the Kashmiri identity politics as it evolved from 1939 to post-1947 period and its implications for the politics of Jammu region. While analysing the political circumstances in which the politics of regional discontent evolved in Jammu region, the study focuses on various agitations (including the Praja Parishad Agitation in 1952 and Amarnath agitation in 2008); regional aspirations and demands of this region.

To understand the implications of social diversity and political divergence, the study also focuses on inter-community relations within the state. Thus, a chapter each is devoted to the inter-community relations in Kashmir with a focus on Kashmiri Muslim-Pandit relationship and inter-community relations in Jammu region.

Since the study has been undertaken at a historical time when the erstwhile state has been reorganized, bifurcated and downgraded into two Union Territories, it will also analyse the implications of these changes on inter-regional and inter-community relations in J&K. Other than asking some fundamental questions that the study originally posed, it will raise the questions about the implications of the changes.

The questions that the study originally posed included those related to relationship between diversity and nation-building processes. How does one explain prolonged conflict in the context of diversity? Is diversity in itself a problem in the process of nation-building and does it automatically lead to the conflict situation? Or, alternatively, it is because of the failure to address the context of diversity and homogenization that the nation-building processes leads to the conflict situation? The study also posed the fundamental question related to the exclusivity of the identity politics and sought to highlight its limitations beyond a point.

The new questions that are being raised in the context of changes in the structure of the state relate to the abrogation of the special Constitutional status of the state and its implications not only for Kashmiri identity politics but also for inter-regional relationship. Much of the irritation that existed within the erstwhile state was seen to be emerging from the 'dominant' position of Kashmir on the one

hand and the political neglect of Jammu region, on the other. Has that perception been addressed by revocation of the Constitutional status of the state or has it given rise to new issues within the new entity? And further, how are the two regions responding to the whole process of revocation of special Constitutional status?

There are also the questions that emanate from the reorganization of the state and its bifurcation into two Union Territories. Does that reorganization mean that the potential of conflict has already been addressed or has it led to new issues and a new context of divergence?

Political divergence, one can assume, is going to be the continued reality of Jammu and Kashmir. The inter-regional tensions are going to persist, at least in the near future. The third dimension of conflict, therefore, would remain intact even in the changed situation. To address this dimension of conflict, the minimum that is required is a systematic understanding of the basis of this conflict. The study seeks to do that.

I

Describing the Erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir

I

An Artificial State and Disparate Units

The state of Jammu and Kashmir, that was the largest princely states of India, had come into existence in 1846 following the signing of the Treaty of Amritsar between Gulab Singh, the ruler of Jammu and the East India Company. Prior to this, the three parts of the state—Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh were autonomous of each other and had no shared history.

Kashmir that has a recorded history of 5000 years and is said to have been a great centre of Buddhist and Shaivist philosophy, was always an insulated area. Till the fourteenth century, it was ruled by Hindu rulers but, with the conversion of Rinchen Shah (the then Tibetan ruler of Kashmir) to Islam, there was succession of local Muslim rulers. In the sixteenth century, it came under the control of the Mughals and then onwards, it continued to be controlled by outside rulers. Mughal rulers were succeeded by the Afghan, Sikh and the Dogra rulers. (Bamzai, 1994)

Jammu region meanwhile comprised various small semi-autonomous kingdoms which were consolidated under the Dogra rulers in the early eighteenth century. These kingdoms or principalities by conceding the supremacy of Mughals, retained their autonomy for most of the time (Dasgupta, 1968, 20). It was during the period of Raja Ranjit Dev in the eighteenth century that the 'formation of the present Jammu province took shape.' (Charak, 1971: ix) Raja Ranjit

Dev created Jammu into a compact administrative and political unit and 'unified the territories from Ravi in the east to Rajouri in the west, into one homogenous and compact political unit.' (Charak, 1971: ix) By the end of the eighteenth century, Jammu came under the influence and indirect control of Punjab and in 1822, the Sikh ruler Ranjit Sikh bestowed upon Gulab Singh, the Jagir of Jammu and made him the Raja.

The region of Ladakh, initially under the Tibetan influence, was an autonomous kingdom. Being located on the Silk route, it was physically and culturally connected with the Central Asia. Before it was conquered by Dogra General Zorawar Singh, it was ruled by a succession of local kings and was much closer to and 'resembled other Buddhist kingdoms such as Mustang, Sikkim and Dartsemdo (Tachienlu) to the east' although it was also getting linked with the Islamic world from 16th century onwards.' (Bray, n.d., 3) It was incorporated into the Dogra rule only in 1840 by Zorawar Singh. (Dasgupta, 1968, 17-23)

It was in 1846 that the three disparate regions of the state came under onefold. The process was started in 1822 when Gulab Singh became the ruler of Jammu and started bringing most of Jammu principalities under his control. By 1925, he had been successful in extending his control over the far-off hilly tracts of Jammu region. 'By 1827 he had brought under his effective control the numerous principalities lying between Kashmir Valley and Jammu, conquering in the process Reasi, Khistwar, Rajouri and Samarth, with which Jammu formed an impressive dominion for a subordinate prince'. (Dasgupta, 1968, 20) In 1834 Ladakh was also conquered by General Zorawar Singh and came to be under the control of Gulab Singh. Ultimately Kashmir was added to his kingdom in 1846.

It was after the Anglo-Sikh war in which the Sikhs were defeated that the territory of Kashmir was transferred by the British to Gulab Singh. By the Treaty of Amritsar that was signed on March 16, 1846, the 'territories situated between the rivers of Beas and Indus, including the provinces of Cashmere and Hazara' were transferred 'in independent possession to Maharaja Gulab Singh and the heirs male of his body, all the hilly and mountainous country with its dependencies situated to the eastward of the River Indus and westward

of the River Ravi', in consideration that 'Gulab Singh will pay to the British Government the sum of seventy five lakh rupees.' While the British Government committed itself 'to give its aid to Maharaja Gulab Singh in protecting his territories from external enemies', Maharaja Gulab Singh acknowledged 'the supremacy of the British Government'. (Text of Treaty of Amritsar reproduced in Dasgupta, 1968, 387)

It was, therefore, with the signing of the Treaty of Amritsar, that Dogra princely state was established and people with different socio-cultural, ethnic and linguist background came together as part of one state. The state at that time had its territories extending from Jammu to Kashmir, Ladakh, Hunza, Nagar and Gilgit.[1] The huge extent of the state gets clearly reflected from the way the state was administratively organized into various kinds of units.[2] Thus, there was the Jammu province comprised of the districts of Jammu, Jasrota, Udhampur, Reasi and Mirpur; the Kashmir province comprised of the districts of Anantnag, Baramulla and Muzaffarabad; the Frontier districts comprised of Wazarats of Ladakh and Gilgit and the internal jagirs comprised of Poonch, Bhaderwah and Chenani.[3]

Though the state was formed as one political and administrative

[1] Referring to its vastness Dasgupta notes that the state 'abuts on Tibet in the northeast, faces Chinese Turkestan and Afghanistan in the north-west. In the west, Pakistan shares boundaries with Kashmir, whereas to the south of it Pakistan and India confront each other.' (Das Gupta, 1968: 12)

[2] Though not a part of British India, it was certainly under the control of the British. The Dogra rulers had recognized the paramount power of the British crown.

[3] Referring to the political importance of J&K state, it may be interesting to see this note in 1941 census: 'To appreciate fully the political importance of its geographical position one must look at a map of Asia. On its northern borders three empires meet—the British, the Russian and the Chinese. The independent kingdom of Afghanistan lies to the north-west, the Punjab to the south and the North West Frontier Province to the west. On the east, it is bounded by Chinese Tibet and on the north and north-east by Russian and Chinese Turlcistan', Census of India, 1941, Volume XXII, https://archive.org/stream/in.ernet.dli.2015.62753/2015.62753.Census-Of-India-1941-Vol-Xxii-Jammu-Kashmir- State-Part-I_djvu.txt

entity, yet it continued to exhibit its internally disparate character. The administrative integration of the state did not lead to much cross-cultural influences. With the exception of few people who were close to administration or working in political arena having the opportunity for social interaction with people across the cultural divide, there was not much mixing of people belonging to different regions and cultural backgrounds. And for that reason, the social distinctions within the state continued to be maintained. Referring to cultural gap between the two major parts of the state, viz., Jammu and Kashmir, Mridu Rai notes that:

> Of course, during a century of Dogra control, certain segments of Jammu and Kashmir society had been drawing closer together... the Dogras, needing at least some dependable allies, sought to co-opt elite sections of Kashmiri society who now competed for the same government and administrative appointments, as well as the same symbolic resources of the state, as their counterparts in Jammu. Moreover, while the rulers were from Jammu, the state itself drew its primary identity from control over Kashmir, most clearly illustrated by the fact that shorthand resorted to in referring to the state was always Kashmir and never Jammu. However, these instances of integration were limited to the political arena and involved, at best, only a small minority of the population of Kashmir. Beyond this, Jammu and Kashmir continued to retain their distinctive linguistic traditions, social structures, and patterns of religious interaction. (Rai, 2004, 37)

Comprising three major provinces—Kashmir, Jammu and the Frontier (and the Gilgit Agency parts of which were leased to the British before 1947), the internal diversity of the state was reflected not only in the variety of socio-cultural patterns, religious divisions but also in its geographical terrain. The three regions were geographically unique and 'separated from each other by the snowbound outer Himalayan ranges. (Das Gupta, 1968, 12) While northern parts mostly comprised the high deserts; the Kashmir region was surrounded by green valleys, the Jammu region was characterized by mountainous kandi belt and plains. As Tickoo notes, the administrative divisions of the state were determined by the geographical divisions.

> The mountain ranges also determined the administrative divisions of the state. The climatic regions, therefore, roughly coincide with the administrative divisions; Ladakh, having arctic cold desert conditions, Kashmir, having mild template climate and the Jammu division having sub-tropical conditions.' (Tickoo, 2013, 2)

The state therefore comprised 'several distinct geographical regions' each of which was 'divided into a bewildering multiplicity of religious, ethnic, linguistic and caste groups' (Bose, 1999, 762). It could be divided into at least four natural or geographical divisions: the sub-mountain and semi-mountainous tract; the Outer Hills; the Jhelum Valley and Indus Valley.[4]

Before 1947, it was predominantly a Muslim state with 77.11 per cent of the people being Muslims. Hindus formed only 20.12 per cent of the population. There were few Christians and Buddhists. (Das Gupta, 1968, 12) These religious groupings, however, were not

[4] Of these, the first geographical division comprised sub-mountain and semi-mountainous tract. This included the plains bordering the Punjab and foothills of the Himalaya (height of 2000 ft) and comprised the teshils of Kathua in Kathua district, Jammu district and districts of Bhimber and Mirpur. While Chenab and Jhelum flowed through parts of this division, a substantial part of this area was defined as Kandi (stony and arid) with meager and scattered cultivation. The second geographical range formed by the 'outer hills' comprised of lower hills (south of Pir Panjal including Udhampur District) with a height ranging between 2000-4000 ft and higher mountains with a height more than 5000 ft. In administrative terms, this geographical range comprised Baderwah and Kishtwar tehsils on the one hand and Basohli and Kotli Tehsil, Districts of Reasi, Udhampur, Poonch and Chenani Jagirs. The major river that flows through this area is Chenab. The third geographical unit identified as the Jhelum valley comprised a huge valley also known as Kashmir valley and comprised the administrative districts of Anantnag, Baramulla and Muzaffarabad and seven tehsils including Srinagar, Anantnag, Kulgam, Pulwama, Baramullah, Sri Pratapsingh Pura and Uttarmachhipura. The fourth geographical zone known as Indus Valley or Tibetan or Semi Tibetan tract and consisting of administrative units of Ladakh district, Astore Tehsil. Gilgit (Leased Area) and Gilgit Agency.

homogenous as the people were more distinctly defined by their regional-cultural and linguistic affinities.[5]

The most important distinction within the state, from the beginning, was that of 'region'—the geographical entities that were defined by distinct cultural-linguistic patterns. Though religious divisions were also marked, however, these were overrun by the regional differences. Thus, the Muslims of Kashmir region did not have much in common with the Muslims of Jammu or Ladakh. Similarly, the Hindus of Kashmir, the Kashmiri Pandits, had more in common with the Muslims of that region rather than with Hindus of Jammu region. Though each of the three regions was internally plural with different religious, linguistic, tribal and caste groupings, what made it distinct was that it had some cultural continuity; some shared sensibilities and had a specific historical trajectory. The regional distinctions therefore not only formed the most crucial distinctions within the state but also had strong political implications, right from the beginning.

II

Jammu and Kashmir State in 1947 and After

The princely state as it existed from 1846 onwards underwent tremendous change in 1947 when it came to be divided in the aftermath of the tribal invasion and the consequently a large part of it came under the control of Pakistan. As the position stands now, of the total 2,22,236 square kilometres area of undivided state of Jammu and Kashmir, 78,114 square kilometre is in the control of Pakistan. Another 5,180 square kilometers area is under the control of China as Pakistan ceded this area to that country (Government of India, 2003, 366)

[5] Snedden gives reference to the classification used in 1941 census to describe the plurality of the state. To quote him, in this census, 'people either classified themselves, or were classified, as Dogras, Rajputs, Brahmins, Thakkars, Jats, Untouchables, Gujjars, Bakarwals, Poonchis, Syeds, Afghans, Punjabis, Maliks, Mians, Sikhs, Kashmiris, Pandits, Bodhs, Baltis, Shins and Yashkins.' (Snedden, 2013)

Compared to the Valley of Kashmir, it was in Jammu and Ladakh that the impact of the division was felt much more intensely. In fact, the culturally contiguous part of Kashmiri-speaking Valley remained fully intact. It was only the non-Kashmiri speaking area of Muzaffarabad which got separated from the administrative unit of Kashmir. However, Jammu region was divested of the major part of Poonch and Mirpur. Similarly, Gilgit-Baltistan area came to be separated from the rest of the Ladakh region. Within the area that came under the control of Pakistan, Gilgit-Baltistan was later administratively separated from rest of Pakistan administered Jammu and Kashmir (PAJK).[6]

One of the implications of the division of the state on the Indian side, was that it came to be characterized as a border state. (A total of 2062 km area forms border with China and Pakistan.) The border comprises the settled International border, the unsettled Line of Actual Control (LAC) and Line of Control (LoC). (Samaddar, 2004, 86) On the northern side, besides the International Border with China (270 kms), there is a large LAC (530 kms) in Aksai Chin area. The LoC that characterizes the unsettled border with areas under Pakistan control, passes through Ladakh/Kargil (198 km), northern parts of Valley of Kashmir (522 kms), and large parts of Jammu region (225 kms). In Ladakh, there is also a border of 124 kms which is defined as Actual Ground Position Line (AGPL)[7] (Tickoo, 2013: 3). These various kinds of borders reflect the unsettled question of the division of the state (Whitehead, 2007; Korbel, 1966; Schofield, 2003; Ganguly 2002).

The division of the state had significant implications for the demography and the socio-cultural patterns of the state. Though the

[6] Not only Gilgit-Baltistan was separated from the Pakistan administered Kashmir but it was also renamed as 'Northern Areas'. It is only recently that the name has been again changed to Gilgit-Baltistan.

[7] The line of Control (LoC) is the demarcation line that separates the parts of Jammu and Kashmir on the Indian side from the parts under the control of Pakistan. The Line of Actual Control (LAC) is the demarcation line between Indian side of the state and the parts of the state that are now under the control of China. Actual Ground Position Line is the line that defines the current Indian and Pakistani troop position in Siachen glacier.

state continued to be characterized as predominantly Muslim state, however, the proportion of Muslims and Hindus was significantly changed. As against the three-fourth of the Muslim population of the state before 1947, it now stood at two-third after 1947. As per the 1961 census, the demography of the state stood at 68.30 per cent Muslims, 28.45 per cent Hindus, and 1.77 per cent Sikhs and 1.36 per cent Christians (Das Gupta, 1968: 13). Impact of this change was more clearly reflected in Jammu region. From being a predominantly Muslim region, it became a Hindu-majority region.

As per another implication of the division, two new categories of people emerged—of these one was that of Refugees and the second one was that of Divided Families. Refugees were the people, mostly Hindu, who were dislocated from the area that came under the control of Pakistan. Broadly known as PAJK refugees, culturally they formed two major groups—the Muzaffarabad refugees and the Mirpur refugees. They were settled in different parts of the state, mostly in districts of Jammu, Poonch, Rajouri. Certain towns like Nowshera, Sunadarbani, R S Pura in Jammu region mostly comprise refugees from Pakistan administered areas. Though considered as Partition refugees, these people did not enjoy the same status as the Partition refugees in Punjab and West Bengal for the simple reason that they came from an area on which India placed its legal claim, they were treated differently. Rather than being permanently rehabilitated and compensated for the property left behind; they were given nominal support by the state in the form of land to cultivate for rural refugees and plot to make houses in urban areas. Much of the agricultural land on which these people were settled, remained in the name of the original owners and they did not enjoy the proprietary rights.

Another category that emerged at that time comprised the families divided across the two sides of the divide. Around the border belt, particularly on the Line of Control, there are large numbers of families that remain divided across the border lines. Almost every Muslim family in Poonch and Rajouri district has a close relative on the other side—in Rawlakot, Bagh, Kotli, Mirpur, Jhelum and other towns in areas under the control of Pakistan.

III

The State of Jammu and Kashmir: Social and Cultural Mosaic

The socio-cultural patterns of the J&K have been defined by complex diversities. Apart from the religious and regional diversities, the social structure has been characterized by cultural-linguistic, tribal and caste distinctions.

The erstwhile state was a Muslim majority state with 68.31% Muslim population, as per the 2011 census. Hindus formed 26.43 per cent of the population. Among others, there were Sikhs (1.87%), Buddhists (0.89%) and Christians (0.28 %). The religious divide however was not neat and clean but was much more intricate. It was only Kashmir region that could be characterized as a predominantly Muslim, the other two parts of the state were much more mixed in population. Thus, while the Hindus formed two-third of the total population of Jammu region, Muslims were one-third. Ladakh also had similarly a mixture of Muslim and Buddhist population. The Muslims formed 48.40 per cent of the total population of the region and the Buddhist 39.65 per cent (Census 2011).

Region continued to be the most important unit in the state and each of the three regions of the state—Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh—was characterized by distinct ethnic-cultural and linguistic features. Religion though formed an important marker of identity, however, got to be cut across by the regional, tribal and caste affiliations. Complexity was added to the context of diversity when one got to explore the regional setting. Though forming a cultural unit, every region, particularly Jammu and Ladakh, was internally differentiated on the ethnic, linguistic, cultural basis. In terms of the population, Kashmir was the largest region. As per the 2011 census, this region had 54.92 per cent of the population of the state, Jammu had 42.88 per cent population and Ladakh region had 2.1 per cent population.

Culturally the state was a mosaic comprising people from different ethnic and linguistic groupings. Among the prominent and largest cultural-linguist groups included the Kashmiris, Dogras, Ladakhis, Paharis and Gujjars. Kashmiris though concentrated in

Kashmir Valley, are located in many parts of Jammu region, particularly in Doda sub-region. There are also some Kashmiri speaking localities in Poonch-Rajouri belt and even in Reasi and Udhampur district. Most of these Kashmiri speaking people are Muslims. A minuscule minority of Kashmiris is comprised of Kashmiri Hindus, known as Kashmiri Pandits. With the exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from Kashmir, there are large localities of Kashmiri Pandits not only in Jammu city but also in Kathua and Udhampur towns. Dogras were mainly concentrated in Jammu region and form the largest culture-linguistic group of that region. Traditionally a mixed community, though largely Hindu, also comprise Muslims. Ladakhis are mainly located in Ladakh region and comprise both Muslims as well as the Buddhists. While the Buddhist Ladakhis are mostly located in Leh district, the Muslims are concentrated in Kargil. Paharis and Gujjars are 'all-state' categories and are to be found both in Jammu and Kashmir regions. Pahari is a linguistic-cultural identity of people who are concentrated in the Pir Panjal range—in the districts of Rajouri and Poonch in Jammu region and Kupwara-Uri belt in Kashmir. Speaking a number of Pahari dialects including Pothwari, Poonchi, Mirpuri, the Pahari people comprise both the Hindus and Muslims and have cultural-linguistic affiliations in areas across the LoC including Poonch, Muzaffarabad, Mirpur in Pakistan administered Jammu and Kashmir (PAJK) on the other side. Gujjars and Bakerwals while concentrated in Poonch-Rajouri belt are to be found in large numbers in Kashmir as well. Despite being Sunni Muslims, Gujjars claim a distinct identity of their own and distinguish themselves not only from the Hindus but also from the other Muslims of the state. On the basis of their tribal-linguist-cultural identity, they claim to be third largest group of the state besides the Kashmiris and Dogras.[8]

With people of different kind, the erstwhile state of J&K was also

[8] To quote Javed Rahi, a Gujjar activist, 'As per the 1931 census, Gujjars were the third largest linguistic group and second largest ethnic group in the region. If language is criteria, then after Kashmiri and Dogri, there is maximum population of Gujjars in the state. Ethnically, they have second largest population after Kashmiri ...' (Rahi, n.d.)

multi-lingual state. The Constitution of the state recognized eight regional languages including Kashmiri, Dogri, Balti (Pali), Dardi, Punjabi, Pahari, Ladakhi and Gojri. However, 2001 census listed more than hundred mother tongues spoken by people. Prominent among these include Kashmiri, Dogri, Gojri, Pahari, Hindi, Punjabi, Ladakhi, Bhaderwahi, Siraji, Shina, Gujari, Punchhi, Balti, Bengali. (Census, 2001, 38)

Apart from other kinds of diversities, there were caste and tribal diversities in J&K. Caste operated not only among Hindus but also among Muslims. Apart from the informal social hierarchy among Muslims, certain caste distinctions were maintained among them, especially in Jammu region. (Details given in the section on Jammu region) Caste distinctions are more clearly followed by Hindus. A large part of the population in areas with Hindu concentration comprised Scheduled Castes. As per the 2011 census, Scheduled Castes formed 7.36 per cent of the total population of the state. The Scheduled Tribes meanwhile were 11.91 per cent of the total population. Apart from eight communities of Ladakh, the Gujjars, Bakerwals, Gaddis and Sippis were recognized as the Scheduled Castes. Though the state did not recognize the OBCs the way the other states of India do, yet a few Backward Caste Communities have been acknowledged.[9] (Bhat and Mathur, 2011, 588)

What added to the intricacy of the diversities in J&K has been the fact that identities are internally differentiated and as a consequence, no identity is either exclusive or homogenous or can be privileged over the others.

The socio-cultural diversity of the state, however, was neither properly understood nor highlighted in the plethora of academic and journalist writings on the state. As Puri has rightly noted, there is not much understanding about the diversities of the state and if at all the diversities were mentioned, these were reduced to the level of religion (Puri, 2001). The state was seen in terms of internal religious

[9] These backward caste communities include: Hanjie and Shikara Wallas, Barbers, Bhand, Bambini Faquir, Doom, Fisherman, Grati, Jheewar, Kulfaquir, Kumhar, Kumaar, Madari, Bazigar, Mirasi, Sanshi, Shaksaz, Shoe-repariers, Suhpri Watal, Sikligar, Teeli, Teli, Lohar, Tarkhan.

divide with Kashmir as 'Muslim', Jammu as 'Hindu' and Ladakh as 'Buddhist'. In reality this did not represent a true picture of the diversities of the state. First, the religious divide was not neat and clean and secondly, the religious marker of identity was not the only identity that operated in the state, there were multiple other identities that cut across the religious identity and operated in their own right.

The binary of 'Muslim Kashmir' and 'Hindu Jammu' therefore fails to define either the distinction between the two regions of J&K or provides any clue to the identity politics here. The factor of religion, as we shall see in this study, operates in much more intricate manner. Though Kashmir region has overwhelming Muslim population, yet it is not merely the factor of religion that defines the identity of its people. Region forms an important component of their socio-cultural as well as political identity. It is in this sense that one can draw clear distinction between the 'Kashmiri' Muslims and 'Dogra Muslims', 'Doda' Muslims, 'Poonchi/Pothwari' Muslims or Gujjars. Regional identity cuts across the religious identity of people in significant ways, not only impacting their socio-cultural but also the political patterns.

IV

Regional Diversity: Kashmir Region

Of all the regions of the state, it is the Kashmir region which could be considered to be having some context of homogeneity. Here, people are largely having the same racial, linguistic and religious affiliations—Kashmiri-speaking Muslims who are said to have a history of five thousand years.[10] Originally, Kashmir is said to have been

[10] The extent of homogeneity that exists in Kashmir can be gauged from a study undertaken by Bhat and Mathur. They note that 'out of forty eight ethnic groups, thirty seven.... Speak Kashmiri within their community family, follow Islam (except two who have followers of Hinduism also)... There are four ethnic groups... (three Muslim and one Hindu) who are found in Kashmir division who dont't speak Kashmiri at the intra-community or intra-familial level' (Bhat and Mathur, 2011, 591).

inhabited by pre-Aryan tribes like Nagas and later it is said to have come under the influence of Buddhist, Shaivite and Islamic faiths. (Puri, 2010)

Bamzai refers to the legend, also mentioned in *Rajatarangini* and *Nilmatpurana*, about Valley being a 'vast mountain lake' that after being drained by Kashyapa Rishi, was inhabited by Nagas 'who were snake worshippers and animists'. Bamzai further mentions settlement of Aryans in the Valley around 5000 years ago. (Bamzai, 1994, 16) The historical accounts refer to pre-Buddhist history of Kashmir; the influence of Buddhism; the Hindu kingdoms of popular kings like Lalitaditya and Avantivarman; the coming of Islam to Kashmir in the fourteenth century; and thereafter the fall of Kashmir to the outside rulers including Mughals, Afghans, Sikhs and Dogras. (Bamzai, 1994; Sufi, 1974; Khan, 1983; Rabbani, 1986, Lawrence, 1893)

The geographical insularity has been the peculiarity of this region. Being cut off from the rest of the world, its 'cultural intercourse with other lands and people has not been on a scale one would notice elsewhere', but as Das Gupta notes, there has been 'the amazing capacity of the people to assimilate and engraft foreign customs and traditions'. (Das Gupta, 1968, 14) Thus from the ancient to modern times, one finds references about the spiritual and cultural influences from areas like Tibet, China, Central Asia and Iran. (Bamzai, 1994; Sufi, 1974)

Kashmiri Muslims

Of the Indo-Aryan stock, Kashmiri-speaking people are predominantly Muslim. As per the 2011 census, the Kashmiri Muslims formed 96.40 per cent of the total population of this region. Compared to the Muslims, the Hindus form less than five percent of the total population. As per the 2011 census, the largest percentage of Hindu population in any of the districts of Kashmir was found in Kupwara, i.e., 4.26 per cent. In the rest of the districts, it was much lower.[11]

[11] 3.43% in Srinagar District, 3.03% in Baramulla, 2.46% in Pulwama, 2.15% in Bandipore, 1.88% in Ganderbal, 1.34% in Badgam,

Though the number of Hindus has been significantly reduced due to their mass exodus in the wake of militancy in 1990, however even before the exodus, the non-Muslims formed the miniscule minority in Kashmir. Muslims formed overwhelming majority. As per the 1961 census, the population of Muslims in Kashmir was 94.91 per cent, in 1971 it was 94 per cent and in 1981 it was 94.96 per cent.

Besides sharing the religion, Kashmiris share the language, culture and history. Most of the people here are Kashmiri-speaking Muslims. Bhat and Mathur who have analysed the data about the communities provided by the Anthropological survey of India, have noted that out of the identified forty-eight ethnic groups of Kashmir, as large as thirty-seven groups have exactly the same characteristics. They follow Islam and speak Kashmiri within their community family. (Bhat and Mathur, 2011, 591)[12]

Though there are some Kashmiris who have foreign origin like Syeds, Pirs, Mughals, Afghans and Pathans, the predominantly large number of Kashmiris are local converts from Hindu Brahmans. They are known as Sheikhs.[13] Divided into two endogamous occupational groups, zamindars and nangars, these converts form the largest group of Kashmiri Muslims.

Conversion was a long-drawn process that involved both persuasion as well as oppression. Lawrence notes that around the middle and end of the fourteenth century, 'the mass of the people was converted to Islam, through the efforts of Shah-i-Hamdan and his followers and the violent bigotry and persecution of King Sikandar the iconoclast. (Lawrence, 1893, 302).[14]

1.22% in Anantnag and 1.17% in Shopian District.

[12] Among other languages spoken in Kashmir, are Pashto (only two groups); Pahari (one group); Nagari (one group) and Dogri (one group) (Bhat and Mathur, 2011: 591).

[13] As per Das Gupta, 'Before their conversion to Islam in the fourteenth century they were, by and large, Hindu Brahmins but there were other sects as well—Nishads, Khashas, Farads, Bhauttas, Bikhshas, Damaras, Tantrums etc.' (Das Gupta, 1968:14)

[14] While reference made to Shah-e-Hamdan indicates the smooth conversion process with large population of the Valley coming under the influence of Sufis, reference to King Sikandar indicates the treachery and

The Hindu lineage of the Kashmiri Muslims gets reflected from their family names which are similar to that of Kashmiri Pandits. As T.N. Madan notes:

> One of the most widely prevalent of such names among the Kashmiri Muslims is Bhat, which is, of course, the same as Bhatta, and obviously bears testimony to the fact of conversion. There are other examples of this kind of surname such as Pandit, Koul (Sanskrit kuala, originally the name of a Brahman sect), Naik and Rosh (Sanskrit rishi, saintly, learned man). (Madan, 1984, 109)[15]

Despite the common social, cultural and religious lineage of Kashmiri Muslims, there are recognizable internal differentiations. Though caste does not operate formally, however, there are certain hierarchies and distinctions that are maintained. Madan notes as to how distinctions were traditionally made on the basis of occupations and how these occupation names were made into the family names. He refers to term 'zaat' and elaborates:

> When used as a part of a person's name za:t has the narrower meaning of whether birth (e.g., Sayyid, Shaikh) or hereditary occupation (e.g., Kha:r, Na:vid, Gu:r). It does not, however, necessarily indicate a person's actual source of livelihood: a family of any occupational category may have enough source of livelihood: a family of any occupational category may have enough land not to want to exercise their

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persecution of Kashmiri Hindus under this infamous King of Kashmir. About this Lawrence notes that 'Tradition affirms that the persecution of the Hindus was so keen that only eleven families of Hindus remained in the valley. Their descendants are known by the name of Malmas, as distinguished from the fugitives and the Hindus of the Deccan, who came to Kashmir later on and are known as the Banamas' (Lawrence, 1893: 302).

[15] Lawrence noted that 'the Sheikh Muslamans of the valley may have retained, for some time after their conversion to Islam, some of the Hindu customs of endogamy within the taste and of exogamy outside the *gotra*. But there is no trace now of these customs, and the different tribal names of Krams are names and nothing more. There is no restriction on marriage... The only line drawn is that one must not marry into Saiyad families on the one hand, nor into the families of market-gardeners and menials on the other (Lawrence, 1893, 304)

> traditional calling; or, a particular individual may choose to enter a new occupation. These facts are ascertained by inquiring about ka:r, a general term for work or occupation, or about kasha, skills. It may be noted, however, that people rarely move from one skilled or specialist occupation to another, though agriculture is deemed to be open to all. Agriculturalists are called Zamindar and no-agricultural artisan groups are designated Nangar, literally "those in search of bread". (Madan, 1984,110)

Mridu Rai also notes the application of zat or kram for Muslim of Kashmir along with Hindus. 'For both groups the notion of zat or kram, evoking the concept of birth into a common clan group, was a decisive factor in specifying and living out their identities.' (Rai, 2004: 38)

However, whatever may be the import of 'Zaat', caste does not operate as strictly as it does among the Hindus. As Drew notes, that castes among Muslims, 'though often traceable to the same origin as those of Hindus, are not such strict divisions' among them. As he explains, there are no caste-like restrictions about eating in company. And though there is a 'general custom of marrying in the same caste, but this is often broken through, and outside marriages are made, which cause the divisions to grow less and less distinct.[16] (Drew, 1875, 179)

Notwithstanding the absence of strict caste-hierarchies, distinctions that reflect either the superior or the inferior status in the society are maintained. People are considered superior either because of their foreign origin or because of their lineage or both. Thus Syed, Pirs, Ulemmas are considered to be superior to other Muslims because they trace their lineage to Prophet Muhammad, and also having foreign origin. Syeds are said to have come to Kashmir along with Mir

[16] Distinctions, as Madan notes, were traditionally made on the basis of occupations. And the family names were linked with these occupations. These names continue to be used even in the present period. As examples he cites the family names associated with the occupations of blacksmiths, barber and milkman. To quote him: 'Thus, an Ali Kha:r is a blacksmit (kha:r)and a Rasul Na:vid is a barber (na:vid). A Samad Vagay will readily be recognized as a milkman, and even referred to as Samad Gu:r, for the Vagays are milkmen (gu:r) (Madan, 1984, 109)

Ali Hamdani, the Persian Sufi saint who spread Islam in Kashmir. Compared to the convert Kashmiris, Syeds have higher social standing. There are others like the Arabs, Pathans[17] and Mughals[18] who have foreign origin. Mridu Rai suggests that the superior status of these groups was also related to the fact that they belonged to the ruling groups at some point of time and also 'partially in acknowledgement of their having been "Muslims longer" than the more recently converted "native" Kashmiris' (Rai, 2004: 38). However, as Drew notes, 'they have lost their distinctiveness altogether with the passage of time' and they seem to be quite assimilated in Kashmiri society (Drew, 1875).

The lower castes distinctions are also clearly made in the Kashmiri Muslim society. Certain castes are considered to be lower than the others—the Watals, Dums, Galwans, Bhands, and Wagyas, for instance. While the Watals were mostly dealing with leather and scavangers, the Dums were the watchmen looking after the crops. Both these groups 'were regarded as "untouchables" both by Hindus and Muslims'. (Rai, 2004, 38) Galwans were the horse keepers and Bhands were the singer-beggers. (Lawrence, 311) Walter Lawrence makes reference to the process by which some members of these lower castes were using the upper caste names to gain respectability in the society.[19] Hanjis or the boats people were considered to be another

[17] Pathans are relatively larger in number as compared to the Mughals. Though Lawrence found changing the patterns for the younger people but for the elder Pathans, he noted that they still 'retain all the old Pathan customs, and still for the most part speak Pashto.' (Lawrence, 1893, 309)

[18] According to Lawrence, 'The Mughals are not a numerous body in Kashmir, and have so intermarried with the ordinary Kashmiri Musalmans that all trace of descent is lost. They came to Kashmir in the days of the early Muslaman kings and in the Mughal times. their Krams are Mir ... Beg, Bandi, Bach, and Ashaye.' (Lawrence, 1893, 309)

[19] To quote Lawrence: 'Thus of late years the Dums of Kashmir have steadily assumed the Kram of Ganai, much to the annoyance of the original Ganais. To make matters worse, the gardeners and butchers have also taken a face to the Kram name Ganai. The boatman of Kashmir have seized on the name Dar as a patent of respectability and Musalmans of the other Krams are now annoying the Ganais and the Dars by asserting that they were orig-

distinct class which, though not seen as lowly as the Watals or Dums, but certainly had a lower social status than other Kashmiris.

Among the other distinctions that are clearly maintained among Kashmiri Muslims are the sectarian ones. Though a large majority of the Muslims are Sunnis, there are few Shias also. Though it was introduced in fifteenth century, Shia sect could not gain much popularity in Kashmir (Rai, 2003: 39) One cannot give any official account of the number of the Sunnis and Shias in Kashmir but it is generally believed that Shias form at best 5-10 per cent of the total Muslim population. Writing in the late nineteenth century Lawrence noted their percentage to be 5 per cent. (Lawerence, 1895, 284) Concentrated in few pockets of the Valley, Badgam, Srinagar, Bandipora and Baramulla—Shias are known to be holding prestigious professions. Even in the late nineteenth century the Shias were known to be famous physicians and monopolising papier- mache industry.[20] (Lawrence, 1895, 295)

Non-Kashmiri Muslims of Kashmir

Though the large majority of Muslims inhabiting the Valley of Kashmir are Kashmiri speaking, however, in the outer fringes of the Valley, there are non-Kashmiri people. The most prominent of these

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inally Dums and Boatman. The barbers of the valley do not aim so high as the butchers and boatman, and have contented themselves with appropriating the Kram of Thakur; but there is nothing to prevent Abdullah, the Dum, calling himself Abdullah Pandit if he chose'. (Lawrence, 304-305)

[20] Lawrence has noted some kind of tension between the Shias and Sunnis in Kashmir. As he notes: 'The Sunnis ... look upon the Shias as outcasts, and will not speak of them as Musalmans... There is only one ziarat in Kashmir, that of Alam Sahib in the Narwara Mohalla of Srinagar, where Shias and Sunnis meet. Elsewhere their places of religion are wholly distinct. ...' (Lawrence 295) Mridu Rai also notes the tension. As she states: '... even in their small numbers, they found themselves in conflict with Sunnis quite frequently. A particularly bitter outbreak of violence, often mentioned but rarely elaborated upon by historians of Kashmir, occurred in 1872 in Srinagar. It was ostensibly caused by a dispute over a shrine but was probably also set off by economic discontent …' (Rai, 2004, 39)

are the Gujjars, Bakerwals and Paharis who are to be found in the upper reaches of the hilly areas. Most of such areas are also the border areas. Ethnically, the Gujjars are not Kashmiris and speak a language now known as Gojri but identified as Parimu or Hindi. Gujjars are nomadic tribe who are involved in cattle rearing and agriculture. They have their own ethnic and community life and though they are all Muslims and like majority of Kashmiri Muslims are from the Sunni sect, but they maintain their distinctions from Kashmiris. As part of endogamous group, traditionally their interaction with the Kashmiris has been quite limited. In Kashmir they are located in Anantnag, Srinagar and Pulwama. They have closer linkages with Gujjars in Jammu region as well as across the LoC. They also have affinities with Hindu Gujjars in northern India.

Though Sunni Muslims, Gujjars are not integrated into Kashmiri society, not only for the reason that they speak different dialect, but also because 'their semi-nomadic lifestyle made it difficult to incorporate them in any but the most transient manner.' (Rai, 2004, 38) T.N. Madan, giving reference to his ethnographic study of two villages in Kashmir, has noted the distinction that Kashmiris make between themselves and the Gujjars and Bakarwals. To quote him:

> The Gujar and Bakarwal are an important element in the life of the village but they are not of it. They look different from native Muslims, speak their own dialect, live in distinctive huts, follow their own traditional pursuits and customs, and have a system of social control centred around the jirga or tribal council. (Madan, 1981, 31)

The Paharis are another non-Kashmiri speaking group of people who live in the peripheral areas of the Valley. For instance, in Uri, Boniyar, Keran and Karna. Paharis also share their affinities across the LoC as well as with Paharis in Jammu region, especially in Poonch-Rajrouri belt. Paharis, like Gujjars are distanced from Kashmiri society because of their being non-Kashmiri and because of their affinity with the Punjabi culture.

Besides these non-Kashmiri-speaking Muslims, there are Kashmiri Pandits and Sikhs who form the religious minority of Kashmir. The Sikhs constitute a very small minority of Kashmir. As Das Gupta notes, they were originally Brahmins who were brought in

Kashmir during the rule of Ranjit Singh in the early nineteenth century. (Dasgupta, 1968, 15-16) However Ravinderjit Kaur argues that some of them were also local natives. 'They were Punjabi Brahmins who were already living here and they embraced Sikhism during the visit of Guru Nanak Dev ji to the Valley.' (Kaur, 2010, 230-231) Though spread all over the Valley, they were mostly concentrated in Bramulla in north and Tral in south Kashmir.

Kashmiri Pandits

The Kashmiri Pandits though formed a minuscule minority, however, have been quite significant part of Kashmiri society for a number of reasons. Well-versed in the official language of the court and capable of learning the new language, they could occupy important state positions irrespective of the fact as to who the rulers were. Along with the Muslim Sayyid and Pir families, the Pandits therefore enjoyed not only the proximity with the ruling class but also special privileges. As these three classes 'provided crucial service of revenue management', they 'were exempt from regular revenue assessment and other taxes that the state levied on cultivator. Furthermore, they received revenue-free land grants from the rulers in return for services rendered to the state'. (Zutshi, 2004, 62-63) However, there were internal social and economic differentiations among the Pandits and the lower classes did not enjoy all the privileges that the upper crust of Pandits did. As Zutshi notes, 'The lower ranks of the bureaucracy, including the patwaris, kardars and shakdars, most likely did not benefit as much from the system as British representations would have one believe. Furthermore, many Kashmiri Pandits in rural areas were simply cultivators with no connection to the revenue administration.' (Zutshi, 2004, 63)

Though they are all said to be belonging to Sarswat Brahmin caste, the internal distinctions among Kashmiri Pandits are characterized in various ways. Subhash Kak for instance mentions certain distinctions that were historically made but have disappeared in more recent period. To quote him:

> Two subgroups of Kashmiri Hindus, that were sometimes considered to be separate, are buher, and purib: buher from the Kashmiri word for grocer and purib for easterner. It appears most likely that these subgroupings, that have all but disappeared now, reflected the profession of business in the case of one, and ancestry that could be traced to an immigrant from east India in the case of the other. (Kak, 1996, 236)

Lawrence classified Pandits into three classes—the astrologer class (Jotshi); the priest class (Guru or Bachabat) and the working class (Karkun).

> The Jotish Pandits are learned in the Shastras and expound them to the Hindus, and they draw up the calendars in which prophecies are made as to the events of the coming year. The priest class perform the rites and ceremonies of the Hindu religion. The vast majority of the Pandits belong to the Karkun class and have usually made their livelihood in the employment of the State (Lawrence, 303).

Madan argues there was the presence of all the four varnas in Kashmir but with the advent of Islam and the process of conversion, the other varnas disappeared. (Madan, 2008, 119) Now they are one-caste community, and 'as Sarswat Brahmans, they have two subcastes'—the Karkuns and the Gors. With the former being seen as superior in status as compared to the latter.' [21] (Madan, 2008, 121) As the title would suggest, the Karkuns were those involved in 'service or state employment and the Gors who formed the priestly class and were involved in providing ritual service to the Karkuns.[22]

[21] According to Mridu Rai, besides the two-fold classification of Pandits as Karkuns and Gors, there was a third category of Pandits called Buher. 'They formed an endogamous set of their own and were employed mostly as grocers and confectioners. The Pandits neither intermarried nor interdined with the Buher, often also denying them access to their temples. (Rai 37-38)

[22] Referring to the traditional relationship between the Karakuns and Gors, Toshkhani and Warikoo thus note: 'Earlier the Gors held the Karakuls as their patrons or yajamans as the latter paid their customary fees in cash or kind for the ritual services they rendered. Every Gor household had a clientele fixed on a hereditary basis of Karkun household and the fees or dakshina as it is called depended entirely on the disposition of the Karkun

Karakuns traditionally formed the larger of the two classes in Kashmir. However, 'as State employment became harder to obtain and the number of the Pandits increased, the Brahmans of Kashmir sought other occupations' and many of them took to petty business and adopted other professions as 'cooks, bakers, confectioners and tailors.' (Lawrence, 1893, 303) However, despite their diversification into other occupations, the state employment remained the first preference and the 'natural calling' of the Pandits.

A peculiarity of the Kashmiri Pandits that has been generally noticed by many has been the absence of the orthodoxy despite their being Brahmins. Reflecting on the lack of rigidity among the Pandits, Sender noted that regional rather than religious qualities were the salient component of their identity. It would therefore be more appropriate 'to view the Pandits as Kashmiris than to view them as 'Brahmans'. (Sender, 1988, 32) It is in this context that Tickoo notes:

> historically, ethnically and culturally, the Kashmiri Pandits are closer to Kashmiri Muslims than to the Dogra Hindus of Jammu. They differ greatly from Hindus in Jammu region or even from Hindus in rest of India. Some of the religious and social practices of Kashmiri Pandits are very unique and are exclusively observed by them. Some of these differences are so great that they form a distinct group in themselves. (Tickoo, 2013)

One of the reasons offered for explaining the lack of orthodoxy of Pandits, is their geographical isolation from rest of India. As Sender notes, 'The geographical isolation of Kashmir from Hindusthan made compromise easier. Departure from the orthodox standards of the plains could go unnoticed. Moreover, the Kashmiri Brahmans were priests only to their own community. Outside restrains were not, therefore forthcoming.' (Sender, 1988, 24)

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client. The services included performance of religious rites and worship rituals, preparation of horoscopes and almanacs, providing information about auspicious timings and so on.' (Toshkhani and Warikoo, 2009, 72)

Jammu Region

Compared to Kashmir region, Jammu region is much more complex and represents diversities of various kinds. Starting from its terrain and geography one can see intricate patterns—a mix of hills and plains. While the area bordering with Punjab is comprised of the plains, the Jammu city is located in lower Shivalik range that extends upto Udhampur on one side and Basholi on the other. The middle Himalayas, or the Pir Panjal range meanwhile passes through the Doda belt on the one hand and the Poonch valley on the other. As one can see, the region 'is not geographically closed and compact' (Puri, 2010, 34) but on the other hand reflects differences in the terrain, climate and the nature of soil.

Balraj Puri calls Jammu a mosaic. 'It did receive new faiths and ethnic communities but far from merging them into a single entity as Kashmir did, it accommodated them as distinct separate identities. Thus, it is neither religiously nor ethnically homogenous.' (Puri, 2010, 34) Diversities here are quite layered and are based on religious, linguistic, cultural, tribal and caste categories. Although the region on the whole has a larger population of Hindus, there are areas which have concentration of Muslims. Thus, while Hindus form two-third of the total population of the region (62.55%), Muslims form one-third of the population (33.45%). It is only in the four of the ten districts of the region: Jammu, Samba, Kathua and Udhampur that there is an overwhelming majority of Hindus (84.26%, 86.33%, 87.61%, 88.11% respectively), the rest of the six districts of the region are having mixed population. Of these, five districts, namely Poonch, Ramban, Rajouri, Kishtwar and Doda have a majority of Muslims and the sixth district, namely Reasi, has almost an even population of Muslims and Hindus (49.66% and 48.90% respectively). While the percentage of Muslim population in Poonch district is 90.44% Muslim population, in Ramban it is 70.67%. in Rajori 62.71%, in Kishtwar 57.74% and in Doda 53.81%. (Census 2011).

Three Cultural Zones of Jammu Region

Dogra Belt

In cultural terms, Jammu can be divided into different cultural-linguist belts. The largest of these is the Dogra belt. The term 'Dogra' is a linguistic-territorial category applied to the people living in 'Duggar Des' comprising the outer hills and outer plains covering the districts of Jammu, Samba, Kathua and Udhampur. To quote K. S. Singh and others:

> The Dogra are a heterogenous community made up of various subdivisions…whose ancestors migrated to the Jammu hills from different parts of India between the fourth and fourteenth centries. Dogri is their mother tongue, but they are conversant with Hindi and Urdu. Formerly, they used to write in the Tankri script, but now they use the Devnagri script.' (Singh and others, 2003, 856)

People of Indo-Aryan race, the Dogras are both Hindus and Muslims. Prior to 1947, the region was a Muslim-majority area and the Dogra belt had lot of Dogra Muslims. However, after the division of the state, many of them shifted either to Pakistan or Pakistan administered Jammu and Kashmir.[23] The few who were left continue to identify with the Dogra culture. Of these, the famous singer of religious songs devoted to Mata Vaishno Devi, popularly known as *bhaints*, Choudhary Ghulam Mohammed, composed in Dogri and sang more than six hundred songs representing the changes in Jammu's society and culture.

Though Dogri is the language spoken in the Dogra belt, various other linguistic groups are also located in this belt. Thus, among others, there are nomadic Gujjars and Bakerwals who have their temporary winter habitats known as *Dhoks*. Also, there are Punjabis who have come from Punjab during different points of time and are well-versed with Dogri. However, they do maintain their Punjabi

[23] Among the famous 'Dogra Muslims' who had settled in Pakistan was Malika Pukhraj, the famous singer who was associated with the court of Maharaja Hari Singh. She contributed a lot in popularizing Dogri music in Pakistan. Her daughter, Tahira Sayed, another famous singer of Pakistan, continues to sing Dogri songs in Pakistan.

culture. There are also areas like Billawar, Bani, Basohli and Lohai in which there is cultural influence of Himachal Pradesh. In this area, there are few Kashmiri-speaking people as well.

Pahari Belt

The second major belt of the region is the Pahari belt comprising two present-day districts of Poonch and Rajouri. This area lies on the LoC and is culturally contiguous with the areas across the Line. (Bose, 2005, 148)[24] In 1947, it was this part of Jammu region that was affected the most by the tribal invasion and division of the state. While a large number of families came to be divided between the two sides of the LoC, a large number of people dislocated from the area under the control of Pakistan came to settle here. The belt, therefore, comprises 'PoJK Refugees' and the 'Divided Families'. (Luv Puri, 2012)

The belt is quite plural not only in terms of religious demography, with both the Hindus and Muslims making up the population, but also in terms of ethnic, tribal and linguistic identities. While the Muslims form a majority here (74.52%), it has also a substantial number of Hindus (22.73%). The Poonch district has predominantly Muslim population (90.44%), its major town similarly named Poonch is predominantly Hindu. Rajouri, meanwhile, has 62.71 per cent Muslim and 34.53 per cent Hindu population.

However, the most important distinctions that are made here are not on the basis of religion but on the basis of the cultural and tribal identities. This sub-region is known for its 'Pahari-Gujjar' divide. Such a divide that exists between two groupings of Gujjars and Paharis revolves around the competition for state employment and other privileges attached with 'reservation' policy. While the Gujjars enjoy the reservation, the Paharis are demanding it.

[24] Sumantra Bose (2005, 148) notes, 'Before the Division of J&K into Indian and Pakistani portions in 1947-48, Rajouri and Poonch formed part of a common linguistic-cultural and economic zone with the … districts of Mirpur and Muzaffarabad, the western (Pakistani) Punjab districts of Rawalpidi, Jhelum, Campbellpur, and Mianwali, and the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) districts of Abbottabad and Mansehra.'

Of all the Gujjars of the state, the largest concentration is found in this belt. They are mostly located in Haveli, Mendhar and Surankote in Poonch district and in Kalakote, Nowshera, Budhal and Rajouri in Rajouri district. Though hundred percent Muslims, they emphasize their ethnic rather than religious identity. It is for this reason that they not only distinguish themselves from other Muslims, but claim a distinct identity (in comparison to the two other major identities of the state, the Kashmiris and Dogras). Emphasizing their Gujjar identity, they proclaim their affinity not only with Gujjars in Kashmir but also with Gujjars elsewhere in the country. As Puri notes, 'as a community, the Gujjars have at least as much, if not more, emotional and ethnic affinity with the Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs of the neighbouring states of Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh as they could possibly have with their co-religionists in the State.' (Puri, 2001)

At par with the Gujjars, there are large number of Paharis in this belt. What defines them as Paharis is their distinct linguistic-cultural lifestyle. In religious terms, it is a mixed community comprised both of Muslims as well as Hindus. Among many Pahari Hindus, are those who have been dislocated from across the LoC. As such, they also comprise a large part of the PAJK Refugees.

Among many Pahari-speaking Muslims include the Rajput converts. Since the Pahari belt formed the major route for the Mughals and other outsiders to travel towards Kashmir, the Rajputs in this belt got gradually converted to Islam from twelfth century onwards. The Muslim Rajputs thereafter came to be known as Chabalis. As Malik notes, despite being Muslims, the Rajputs of Pahari belt follow the caste hierarchy and are stratified into various castes 'such as, Jarral, Malik, Chauhan, Janjua, Chib, Domal, Gakhar, Feerozal, Khokhar, Manhas, Bhatti, Thakkar, Kamlak, Salahria, Maial and Thakyal etc. As such there are more than 36 sub-castes of Muslim Rajputs in Rajouri District.' (Malik, 2009, 4-6) So strong is the impact of the caste among the Pahari Muslim Rajputs that they still practice endogamy.[25]

[25] As per the Rajput customs, only on rare occasions, the Pahari Muslims get wives from other castes, but generally they do not marry their

Doda Belt

The third major belt of the Jammu region lies adjacent to South Kashmir—the Doda belt that comprises three districts of Doda, Kishtwar and Ramban. This belt in itself is quite diverse with people of different religious and linguistic identities. In terms of religious diversity, it has 59.92 per cent of Muslim population and 39.22 per cent Hindu population. Of the three districts, it is only Ramban district that is predominantly Muslim (70.67% Muslim population 28.55% Hindu population). The other two districts are though Muslim majority but have almost even Hindu population. Thus, Kishtwar has 57.74 per cent Muslim and 40.71 per cent Hindu population and Doda district has 53.81 per cent Muslim and 45.76 per cent Hindu population.

Being adjacent to southern Kashmir, the belt has some level of ethnic continuity with Kashmir. Over the period, people from Kashmir have been migrating to this area for various reasons, including those related to famine. (Luv Puri, 2008, 30) These people of Kashmiri origin therefore not only speak Kashmiri language but also maintain the Kashmiri culture. These are mainly Muslims.

Besides Kashmiris, there are people of other linguistic-cultural groups. Thus, there are Sirajis, Bhaderwahi, Kishtwari, Padri and Bhalesi people. The area is linguistically plural. It is said that 22 dialects are spoken in this area. However, among the commonly spoken languages/dialects include Kashmiri, Dogri, Bhaderwah, Bhaleswi, Kishtwar, Siraji, Pogli, Khashali, Gojri, Padari, Punjabi, etc. Of all the parts of the Doda belt, it is Kishtwar which is most plural. In terms of its diversities, it can be defined as a cultural mosaic. It has had almost an even population of Muslims and Hindus, though Muslims are slightly larger in numbers. However, the religious grouping is not neat and clean since the linguistic-cultural and caste divide also intersects with religious identities. Thus, Hindus are divided on the caste basis—the upper caste Rajputs and the lower caste Dalits. Caste

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daughters outside the caste. And they follow all the customs of Rajput marriages. And as Malik (2009, 14-16) noted, in the past, the Muslim Rajput marriages differed from that of Hindu Rajput ceremony only in the ceremony of 'Nikah'.

operates among the Muslims as well and there are Muslim Rajputs who share with the Hindu Rajputs not only their caste background but also their social and cultural norms.

The Doda belt represents a very interesting case of inter-linguistic affinity. Here people are proficient in more than one language. Thus, while belonging to one language group, for instance, Siraji, people can converse in languages of people surrounding them, for instance Kashmiri, Bhaderwahi, Kishtwari, Dogri, Punjabi, etc. (Kotwal, 2000, 94)

Jammu region, as we can see from the analysis of these three cultural zones, is quite plural and complex. The trend of mixed Hindu-Muslim population is all over the region. Even in the predominantly Hindu districts, there is presence of Muslims. For instance, in Jammu, Kathua, Samba and Udhampur districts, apart from the settled Muslims, there are nomadic Gujjars who locate themselves in these districts during the winter months.

The demographic complexity of the region does not exhaust with the religious composition, since both the Muslims as well as Hindus are internally differentiated. Thus, each group of Muslims of the region—for instance, the Dogra Muslims, Gujjars, Paharis and Kashmiri Muslims of Doda belt—forms a distinct identity. Rather than claiming their identity merely as 'Muslims', people assert their identity by their cultural-linguistic affiliations. While it is their tribal identity that defines the Gujjars; it is the caste (Rajput) identity that defines the Muslim Paharis and the linguistic-cultural identity that characterizes the Dogra and Kashmiri Muslims. While most of these groups form endogamous groups, the two of these groups—Gujjars and Paharis, as already noted, are also embroiled in a conflictual relationship over the issue of tribal status and reservation.

Hindus are similarly differentiated on cultural-linguistic and caste basis. Thus, the Hindus of the Dogra belt are quite distinct in comparison to the Hindus of Pir Panjal areas or the Doda belt. Speaking Pahari languages mainly Pothwari, the Hindus of the Pir Panjal area have closer cultural affinities with people across the LoC as compared to Hindus of the Dogra belt. The Hindus of Doda belt also are distinct in terms of their linguistic and cultural practices. They have been followers of the ancient Naga cult. While a number of

famous naga temples are located in this belt, the most revered shrine is that of 'Basak (Vasuki) Nag'. (Takahashi, 2014, 136) In the Dogra belt, though most of Hindus are Dogras, there are distinct Hindu tribals also. Gaddis inhabit the areas adjacent to Himachal Pradesh. Like Gujjars and Bakerwals, Gaddis are semi- nomadic communities who travel from lower hills to upper reaches of Himalaya while grazing their flocks of goats. The concentration of the Gaddi population is to be found in Bhaderwah in Doda district, Bani, Basohli and Billawar in Kathua district, Chennani and Ramnagar in Udhampur district and in Ramban district. Many of the Gaddis are also Rajputs. (Chib, 1977, 64)

Caste Distinctions

However, rather than the tribe, it is the caste that is much more a prominent category that differentiates Hindus in this region. Caste, as we have seen above, operates even among the Muslims. Being the dominant community of the region, the Rajputs are found in large number both among the Hindus and the Muslims. While the Muslim Rajputs are mostly concentrated in the Poonch and Rajouri districts; the Hindu Rajputs are concentrated in Jammu, Samba, Kathua, Udhampur, Bhaderwah and Kishtwar. Among the Dogra Raputs, the Mian Rajputs enjoy the highest status and include various clans such as Jamwal, Charak, Chib and Balauria. (Singh, 1998, 856-857).[26] Though Brahmins in Jammu region also occupy privileged place along with the Rajputs, however, the Rajputs are considered to be the most powerful caste in Jammu region. (Takahashi, 2014, 131)

The powerful position of these two castes—the Brahmins and Rajputs, in Jammu region gets reflected from the fact that most of the land in the region, in the past, was held by people from these two castes. Even now, it is the people from these two castes only who capture the most important bureaucratic and political positions in the region. Though with the very radical land reforms undertaken by the

[26] The higher social status of Rajputs was linked with their being associated with the ruling clan. Jammu being earlier divided into 22 principalities with each principality being led by one or the other Rajput clan.

state government in post-1947 period, they did not enjoy the kind of privileges they enjoyed earlier, however, being the most advanced castes educationally, they continued to monopolize the state jobs.[27]

Mahajan and Khatris are the other two castes that constitute the 'upper castes' of the region. Mahajan are mostly involved in business, especially the petty trading. Traditionally, the Mahajans were concentrated in all urban centres of the region and were also involved in money lending which allowed them to usurp large portions of agricultural land. (Soodan, 1999, 46) Khatris were also the traditional trading classes of Punjabi origin.

Besides these upper castes, there are few backward castes including Jats, Labanas, Jogi and Saini. While Jats are the cultivating castes, the rest are the urban artisan castes.

What is particular about Jammu's caste composition is the presence of large number of Dalits, especially in the predominantly Hindu areas. Though as per the 2011 census the total Dalit population of the state is 7.36 per cent, the Dalit population in Jammu region is 17.06 per cent. There are certain areas where the Dalit population ranges between 30-40 per cent of the total population. In terms of district-wise Dalit population, Samba has the highest Dalit population of 26.80 per cent, followed by Udhampur 24.97 per cent, Jammu 24.96 per cent and Kathua 22.91 per cent. Dalits have also their presence in the Districts of Doda and Reasi (13.03% and 12% respectively).[28]

[27] Traditionally, a large number of the members of both these castes were recruited in the state army. The tradition continues till date and lot of them joined the armed forces.

[28] While analysing various socio-cultural groups in Jammu region, it is important to refer an amorphous group of refugees who have come from across the LoC in 1947 and later. These refugees come from various parts of what is now called Pakistan administered Kashmir including Mirpur, Kotli, Muzaffarabad, Bagh and Poonch. There are a number of areas in the region which are inhibited by the Hindu refugees from these parts. Thus, most of the border areas of Jammu and Samba district, the towns of Nowshera, Sundarbani, Rajouri, Poonch are inhabited by the refugees. To quote Sumantra Bose: 'Most of the Hindus and Sikhs settled in the township of Rajouri and Poonch are refugees, or descendants of refugees from

Cultural Continuities

Notwithstanding the cultural heterogeneity of the region, what is peculiar about Jammu as whole is that it has some sense of cultural continuity which not only qualifies it as a cultural unit but also distinguishes it from the other two regions of Kashmir and Ladakh. Despite the fact that it is a cultural mosaic and represents diversities of varied kinds, one can see a continuity from one part of the region to the other. Thus, there is some kind of affinity shared by Dogri, Gojri, Pahari, and various dialects spoken in the Doda belt. People speaking any one of these languages are in a position to make sense of the other languages. This is not the same case for the languages spoken in Kashmir or Ladakh. Also, there is cultural overlap between various cultural groups.

VI

Ladakh Region

Ladakh, the third region of the erstwhile state, was the largest in terms of its land mass, however, smallest in terms of its population.[29]'Located between Himalaya and Karakoram on the western edge of the Tibetan plateau', it has huge land mass. (Van Beek, 1999, 436) Region of 'high mountain ranges, elevated plateaus and rocky gorges', it is one of the highest deserts of the world. (Directorate of Census Operation, 2011, 11) Before it came to be divided in the aftermath of Partition and tribal raid, it was a wazarat comprising three tehsils of Leh, Kargil and Skardu and had a total area of 97,000 sq kilometres.

Pakistani Kashmir. It is quite common, to find Hindus or Sikhs in the town of Rajouri whose origins are in Kotli, an immediately adjacent AJK district to the west. Many Hindus and Sikhs in the town of Poonch are, likewise from Rawalakot, a town directly across the LoC in AJK.' (Bose, 2005, 148)

[29] As Puri has noted, the area of Ladakh is 'more than double than that of the rest of the state'. While the area of Jammu region is 26,000 sp kms, that of Kashmir region is 19,000 sq kms. (Puri, 2001A, 76)

(Kaul and Kaul, 2004, 19) However, after 1947, a large part of it came under the control of Pakistan and China. (Sen, 2010, 277) After the ceasefire line was drawn in 1949, following the first war between Indian and Pakistan, a large part of Ladakh, particularly Skardu and part of Kargil, came to be occupied by Pakistan. Later, a large part of Leh tehsil was also encroached by China.[30] (Kaul and Kaul, 2004, 19)

In every term—whether seen from the perspective of terrain, or its climate; its ethnic background or its linguistic-cultural basis, Ladakh was 'strikingly different' from Jammu and Kashmir regions. (Van Beek, 1999, 436) Historically, it was a 'busy entrepôt for Silk Route trade between Central and South Asia. (Fewkes, 2009,40) [31] For centuries, caravans passed through it 'carrying textiles, spices, raw silk, carpets, dyestuffs and narcotics'. (Directorate of Census Operation, 2011, 8) It was also famous for pashmina trade that started in Tibet and ended up in Srinagar. For the exposure that Ladakh got because of its being entrepôt, it had the influence of various cultures which were preserved due its peculiar geographical position. (Puri, 2001A, 76) To quote Rizvi, '... the problems of high altitude and mountainous terrain notwithstanding, it was, until 1947, the centre of a network of trade routes whose immediate destinations included Skardu, Srinagar, Hoshiarpur, Kulut and through these wide plains of India beyond Lhasa, and Yarkand.' (Rizvi, 1985, 14)

From such a dynamic place, Ladakh was drastically changed to a landlocked border region after 1947. It also became one of the most 'militarized frontier with Pakistan as well as China (Sen, 2010,

[30] With a large part of Ladakh coming under the control of Pakistan, the people sharing the culture of the area were divided and therefore like Jammu region, Ladakh also hosts a number of divided families. (Shukla, 2017)

[31] Fewkes notes that 'One of the most vital components of Ladakh's participation in the Silk Route was its geographical location. Leh town in Ladakh, located near key mountain passes, was a trading network "hub", a place that offered traders access to a number of routes... There were a variety of routes through Ladakh that were used by traders from the area as well as South and Central Asia.' (Fewkes, 2009,40)

277) As its trade relations with other countries were stopped, it was turned into 'inaccessible', 'remote', 'strategic', and a 'backward' border region' (Bhan, 2009, 73) The only road connection of the region with rest of India gets blocked due to heavy snow during the prolonged winter period. Thus, from November to May, the area is physically cut off from the rest of the world and is accessible only through one airport in Leh.

As the highest desert in the world, it has difficult terrain and therefore is very sparsely population. As part of the state of J&K state, the region contributed only 2% of the total population. (Census 2011) However, despite its small population, the society here is quite complex with not only religious but also racial and cultural differentiations.

In terms of its religious demography, Ladakh though generally known for its Buddhist population, has larger Muslim population. According to the 2011 census, Muslims formed 48.40 per cent of the total population of the region; Buddhists were 39.65 per cent; 12 per cent of the enumerated population was Hindu. The religious demography takes interesting turns as we analyse the two districts of the region—Leh and Kargil. While Buddhists are mostly concentrated in the Leh district, Muslims are mostly located in Kargil. Thus, in Leh, 66.39 per cent people are Buddhist, 14.26 per cent are Muslims and 17.14 per cent are Hindus. In Kargil, 76.87 per cent people are Muslim, 14.21 per cent are Buddhists and 7.34 per cent are Hindus. However, there are 'few Buddhist pockets in Zanskar tehsil and Shargol block'. (Puri, 2001A, 77)

This description of religious demography, however, does not reflect the internal differentiations among the religious groups particularly among the Muslims. Rather than forming one homogenous group, the Muslims of Ladakh can be classified into a number of groups. The largest group of Muslims is that of Shias of Kargil who have strong linkage with Iran.[32] With the exception of a small per-

[32] Luv Puri notes the regular visit of Kargil youth to Iran for the purposes of religious training. He further notes the impact of 1979 Iranian revolution on Kargil. To quote him: '... the markets of Kargil are full of Imam Khomeini's pictures... Unlike any other part of the State, here devel-

centage of Sunni Muslims in Kargil, most of the Muslims of Balti community in Kargil are Shias.[33] To quote Sikand:

> The Shias of Leh are almost all of Balti stock, ethnically similar to Buddhist Ladakhis and the western Tibetans. They trace their conversion to the sixteenth century Mir Shamsuddin Iraqui, who is credited with introducing Shia Islam in Kashmir and Baltistan. He and his disciple are said to have been responsible for the conversion of a number of Balti Buddhist princes to the Shia faith. Many of the local Shias, it is said, are descendants of migrants from Baltistan. They claim they settled in Leh in the early seventeenth century ... (Sikand, 2010)

Besides the Shias, there are Sunni Muslims of Leh who are known as Argons or 'mixed race'. They are 'reported to be the offsprings of Ladakhi women married to the non-Ladakhis of different ethnic groups and communities such as Turks, pathans, Muslims, Rajputs, Kisthwaris, etc.' (Singh, Pandita, et al, 2003, 58) Most of them, however, are originally Kashmiri, 'settled in Ladakh, mainly in towns. (Kaul, 1998, 94)[34] To quote Sikand:

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opments in Shia dominated areas such as Iran and Iraq are keenly talked about. Even a political novice would give a detailed analysis of the events in Iran-Iraq and also the latest statements of Shia clerics.' (Luv Puri, 2005)

[33] Shiaism, as Dar notes, became popular in Kargil because of the support of the rulers. The rulers of Karmang and Baltistan 'established rapport with some Shia Rajas and ulemas of Gilgit and invited them to permanent settlement at different places like Askardu, Khaplo and Kharmang. They organised a regular influx of Shia missionaries to Kargil and succeeded in converting Nurbakshias and the Buddhists into Shia faith. ' (Dar, 1982, 167)

[34] Argons are not homogenous and have internal differences. They maintain their ethnic distinctions. 'Each group born of Kashmiri, Turkish, Afghan or other groups of Central Asia has different surnames such as Khuda Brdi (Turkish), Beg (Mongol), Khan (Pathan), Sheikh (Kashmiri), Syed (Kashmiri), Gnai Gun (Kashmiri), Dar (Kashmiri), and Joo (Kashmiri). There is no perceptible hierarchy among these groups. ...These groupings have no function other than that of maintaining ethnic boundaries.' (Baqar R. Rizvi, 'Argon' in Singh, Pandita and others, 2003, 58)

> They were key players in the trans-Himalayan trade netweorks along the Silk Route connecting West Asia with Tibet and China. There were welcomed by the Ladakhi Rajas, who saw them as playing a valuable role in the local economy... They married local Buddhist women, and the Argon community of Sunni Muslims in Leh Today are descended from these unions. (Sikand, 2010)[35]

There are Sunni Muslims of Drass area in Kargil also whose language and culture is quite distinct as compared to other Sunni Muslims of Ladakh. In Zanskar also there is a small number of Sunni Muslims.

Besides these, there is also the presence of Nurbakshi sect of Islam. These are the followers of Sayeed Muhammad Nurbaksh, Persian mystic, mostly in Nubra valley, Turtuk area. At one time, the Nurbakshis formed a large number of Kargil Muslims, but many of them later came under the Shia influence.[36]

Historically, the Buddhism of Ladakh was influenced by Tibet. Many Buddhists even now look towards it (Tibet) for tracing the purity of their religious and linguistic lineage. Though Buddhist apparently form a singular religious group, there are some internal differentiations on the basis of philosophical basis of Buddhism as well as on the basis of culture. For instance, there are Buddhist Dards who distinguish themselves from other Buddhists as they follow ancient Dard culture. As Rizvi notes about the Buddhist Dards that their

> dress, customs and way of life all differ as much from those of the Muslim Dards as from the Buddhists of Tibetan orign in central Ladakh. The religion of the Dards retains even more than that of the Ladakhi Buddhists marked traces of the pre-Buddhist animistic religion, usually referred to as Bon-Chos. (Rizvi, 1996,166-167)

[35] The spoken language of Argons is Balti. 'The Argon speak in Balti language or nangpa but speak and write Urdu in Arabic script while communicating with others, who they call Cheepa" ‹(Baqar R. Rizvi, 'Argon' in Singh, Pandita and others, 2003, 58)

[36] Syed Mohammad Nurbaksh is said to be the first Islamic preacher who converted the mass of people to Islam and also laid foundation of various mosques of Kargil. (See, Dar, 1982, 166)

Besides the religious differentiations, there are many other kinds of differentiations among the Ladakhis mostly based on location, ethnicity and race. Kaul and Kaul who have lived in and studied Ladakh for quite long time have classified Ladakhis on the basis of their location: the people of Drass Valley, Suru Valley, Zanskar Valley, Indus Valley, Nubra Valley. Each of these valleys is distinct in terms of the ancestry, language, and religious affiliations. The people of Drass Valley 'who trace their descent to the Dards of Chilas in Gilgit area' are Sunni Muslims who speak Shina language; the people of Suru Valley are Balti Shias. Zanskar that falls within the Muslim majority district of Kargil has Buddhist people as its major inhabitants. The Indus Valley, that comprises the Tehsils of Leh (and Skardu, now under the control of Pakistan) though originally had Dards as its natives, however, at present, the people of Tibetan origin following Buddhist faith form the predominant group here. The two well-known groups of Leh are Botos and Argons. (Kaul and Kaul, 2004, 22-23)

As per another classification, there are racial distinctions among Ladakhis. Frederic Drew identified Champa, Ladakh, Balti and Dard as four races which inhabit Ladakh. Champas, who lead a nomadic life. Ladakhis who are mainly Tibetans of Buddhist faith; Baltis who are Muslims of the Tibetan race and Dards originally from Dardistan. (Drew. 1875, 238)

By another classification, Ladakhis have internal distinctions on the basis of their ethnic-cum- locational identity. According H.N Kaul, Ladakhis can be classified as Dards, Mons, Argons, Botos, Changpas, Rongpas, Stodpas, Zanskarpas, Brokpas, Drokpas, Baltis, Purigpas. Dards are the Indo-Aryan group who came from Dardistan in Gilgit. They are both Muslims and Buddhists. The Muslim Dards are mostly located in Kargil. The Buddhist Dards are termed as Brogpas or Dogmas. (Mann, 2002, 34) Mons of the Aryan stock are the first immigrants to Ladakh who came from Kullu and later from Tibet. They were earlier categorized as 'Rungnum' or the lower class. (Lal, 2003, 514) They are mainly concentrated in Leh district. Some mons are also located in Zanskar and Kargil district. Generally, they are Ladakhi-speaking people, while some of them also speak in Urdu with others. As stated above, Argons are the mixed races that

came from Kashmir and other places. Botos belong to the Mongloid race and are mostly located in Leh. Though majority of them are Buddhists, there are some Muslims in Kargil who were originally Botos but later converted to Islam. Changpas who are the natives of Changthang are Tibetan nomads. (Kaul, 1998, 95-98)

Notwithstanding their internal differentiation and division on racial, ethnic or cultural basis, there is lot of commonality among the Ladakhis. This is because of the fact that there has been lot of blending of groups. As Mann notes, there has been blending between the people of Aryan origin (Dards. Mons and Bedas) with people of Mongolian origin (Changpa and Baltis). In the process, the distinctions between the groups are not clearly visible. 'Because of intermixing, the Mons and Bedas do not seem to be categorically distinct from the Ladakhis'—like Changpa or Baltis. (Mann, 2002, 27)

Traditionally, not only on the ethnic-racial basis, but even in terms of religious affiliations, there was a lot of fuzziness and the distinctions among them were not so clearly made. Yoginder Sikand points to the blurring of religious boundaries, despite the strong religious identities. He refers to the shared Ladakhi culture, language and other cultural practices. He further refers to the practice of inter- community marriages, till very recently. 'Intermarriage between Argons, Baltis and Buddhists in Ladakh', he argues, 'was fairly common until recently. Such marriages occurred among both 'ordinary' people as well as among the royalty.' (Sikand, 2010) As a consequence of such marriages, it was very common (till a few decades back) to have within the same family the people belonging to two different religions. Over the time, as the issue of inter-community marriages formed the core of Buddhist politicization, this practice ceased to exist.

Though officially there are no caste hierarchies either among the Buddhists or the Muslims of Ladakh, however, there are certain groups which are revered as superior and the groups which are seen as inferior. Though the rules of caste structure do not operate in the Buddhist society, and yet Mons, Bedas and Garas are treated almost as 'untouchables' as there is no practice of inter-dining or intermarrying with these communities. Kaul and Kaul, thus, observe:

> An astonishing feature of the social system, a feature which should have no place among people who profess to be the followers of the Buddha, is the observance of diluted form of untouchability... The sections of society who form the victims of irrational and uncharitable discrimination go by the name of Beda, Mon and Gara. By avocation, they are blacksmiths, village drummers and carpenters. The other section of society do not interdine or intermarry with them so that they have virtually, the same status as the untouchables had in the Hindu society in India. (Kaul and Kaul, 2004, 153-4)

Similarly, the Baltis have been treated as socially inferior group by Buddhists as well by the Sunni Muslims.

There are also groups which claim superiority on the basis of their being 'original natives' and having the greater entitlement to the land. The Buddhists for instance assert their Tibetan connections and assert their superiority vis-a-vis the converted Muslims. As Pirie notes that even in contemporary period 'most of the Buddhist population continues to emphasise its religious identity as nangpa. Literally 'insiders' , this is the term used by them to refer to followers of Tibetan Buddhism.' (Pirie, 2007, 9) Pirie further notes the generally superior status given to the clergy within the Buddhist society. To quote him:

> In the twenty-first century, monasteries are still major landowners and even the poorest families send significant donations and, often their sons into these establishments. The monks are placed high in the social hierarchy and some have risen to senior positions within Indian politics. (Pirie, 2007, 9)

Among the Muslims, the Argons assert their superiority because of their foreign status and also because of their economic prosperity.

In terms of linguistic plurality of Ladakh, one can identify a number of languages including Bodhi, Balti, Shina. Most of these languages are interrelated. The language commonly spoken by people in Leh is Ladakhi which is also identified as Bodhi. There are also speakers of Tibetan and Balti languages.[37]

[37] According to 2011 census, 88.18 per cent people speak Ladakhi in Leh district and 5.19 per cent speak Tibetan and Balti is also spoken in the district.

The above description reflects the complex social and cultural profile of Ladakh. What bound the diverse communities together was the continuity of culture. Tibetan culture has had the biggest influence on Ladakh and despite the religious differences, it has had the capacity of binding the communities together.

II

Political Plurality and Multiple Identity Politics of Jammu and Kashmir

I

Different Political Trajectories of Kashmir, Jammu and Ladakh

The social diversity within the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir was matched by the political plurality. Though much focus of the political analysts was placed on the 'Kashmiri identity politics' and in many ways the state politics had been equated with Kashmiri politics, the truth remained that the range of the identity politics did not get exhausted by the Kashmiri identity politics. There were multiple identities at play within the internal politics of the state. While Kashmiri identity was the most dominant and the most visible one; there were various other identities that occupied the political space. While some of these identities operated parallel to the Kashmiri identity politics, there were others that captured the divergent political space.

Much of the multiplicity of the identity politics within the state could be located within the multiple perceptions of deprivation and minority feelings. Such perceptions of deprivation prevailed as much among the Kashmiri Muslims as among Jammu Hindus and Muslims, Ladakhi Buddhists, Kashmiri Pandits. Despite being part of majority community within the state, the Kashmiri Muslims of the state perceived themselves to be minority vis-à-vis the larger reality of the Indian state. Their sense of deprivation emanated from the context of state's relationship with the Centre. Placing a pre-

mium on the autonomy of Kashmiri identity, they saw a perennial threat to it by what they perceived to be an ever 'intrusive' Centre. People in Jammu region similarly raised the issue of deprivation and marginalization within what they defined as 'Kashmir-centric' politics of the state. In their understanding; the concentration of power in the hands of Kashmiri elite resulted in powerlessness of Jammu region. Similar sense of marginalization was also articulated in Ladakh region as the feeling of 'neglect' of the region remained strong here. People of remote peripheral areas like Doda, Poonch, Kargil meanwhile expressed a sense of deprivation both vis-a-vis the state as well as the regional elite. Since 1990, after their exodus from Kashmir Valley, the Kashmiri Pandits felt acutely vulnerable. The sense of deprivation was similarly articulated by many other groups including the Gujjars, Paharis, Scheduled castes, refugees, etc.

The multiple perceptions of deprivation gave way to multiple identity assertions. Though the Kashmiri identity politics remained the most visible and dominant identity politics within the state of Jammu and Kashmir, beyond the Kashmiri identity politics there were multiple identity assertions. While some of these political identities operated parallel to each other, many others were located in a mutually exclusive and contradictory relationship with each other. This mutual exclusivity and contradictory relationship within the identity politics of the state characterized the nature of political divergence.

It is a 'myth' that if there existed a political divergence within the state, it was around the religious identity of people. In no way it was the case that there was a 'Muslim' political response standing in opposition to the 'Hindu' political response. For one, religious identity was only one of the identities that people identified with. This identity was cross-cut by other identities like the regional, linguistic and tribal identity. Every religious identity was internally differentiated and therefore neither the Muslims nor the Hindus formed a homogenous category in Jammu and Kashmir state. Due to the complex character of plurality, the religious identity got overlapped by ethnic, linguistic, caste or tribal identity. Thus, the religious identity of Gujjars of the state, who happened to be hundred per cent Muslims, was overlapped by their tribal status and they asserted

their identity distinct from other Muslims of the state including the Kashmiri Muslims, the Pahari, Dogra or Ladakhi Muslims. In their case, being 'Gujjar' was as important or even more important as their being 'Muslims'. Similarly, despite asserting their distinction from the Kashmiri Muslims, the Kashmiri Pandits asserted their 'Kashmiri-ness' as an essential characteristic of their identity and distinguished themselves from Dogra, Punjabi or Pahari Hindus of the state.

For another more important reason, the religious identity on its own did not define the nature of political divergence within the state. Religion though formed an important component in the identity politics of certain kinds, and yet, no political identity assertion took place exclusively on the basis of religious factor and there were identity assertions cross cutting religious lines. The political aspirations and concerns of Kashmiri Muslims, therefore, were quite distinct as compared from those of Muslims of Leh or of Kargil; or Gujjars, Pahari or Dogra Muslims of Jammu region. The dominant discourse of Kashmir reflected a specificity of 'Kashmiri Muslim politics' which besides being 'Muslim' was also 'Kashmiri' in its nature. That is the reason that Muslims beyond Kashmir did not necessarily identify with it. Rather than the 'religious' context, it was the 'regional' context that fitted better the criterion of 'political divergence' within the state. This was mainly due to the fact that it was with the formation of princely state of Jammu and Kashmir in 1846 that three regions came together for the first time for the administrative purposes. Prior to that there was no formal linkage between them. Each of the three regions had its own historical trajectory and even after coming together, each of the three regions continued to maintain the specificity of its politics.

II

Kashmiri Identity Politics

The roots of the Kashmiri identity politics can be traced to decades of 1920s when the small but emerging class of elites started politically articulating the deep-rooted and widely prevalent perceptions

of marginalization and backwardness. What was distinctive of this identity politics in pre-1947 period was that it was rooted in anti-feudal struggle and it passed through various phases.

Background to this politics was provided by various workers' agitations in the nineteenth century. As early as 1847, there was a strike of *karkhandars* (Shawl factory owners) against the exploitative system of taxation. Among the demands that were made at that time related to 'reduction in taxes, fixed wages for artisans, and codified laws for the shawl industry.' (Swami, 2006A) In 1865, another major agitation of those involved in Shawl industry took place. This was known as *Shawl Bauf* agitation. (Hassnain, 2002, 181) There were similar agitations of silk factory workers in 1920 and 1924. (Kaur, 1996, 112-118)

It was in the decades of 1930s that an organized resistance politics started taking shape in Kashmir. In 1932, the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference was organized. This organization had limited goals linked with the class interests of middle-class Muslim intelligentsia, mostly related to educational and employment opportunities.

The religious sense of belonging of Kashmiris formed the crux of Kashmiri identity politics during this period. The distinction between the religion of common Kashmiris and the religion of their rulers, in the understanding of Kashmiri leaders, formed the basis of their backwardness, Being the 'Muslim subjects' of the 'Hindu ruler' they privileged their religion as central to their political identity.

It was due to the centrality of religion that in the initial stages there was an assumption of a 'unified Muslim identity' within the state. Cutting across the regional lines, this identity was extended to all the Muslims of Jammu and Kashmir. The Muslim Conference not only claimed to represent the 'Muslims' of Kashmir region but also of the Jammu region. The leadership structure of this organization also reflected a combined leadership from the two regions. Thus, along with Sheikh Abdullah who had emerged as a tall Kashmiri leader, the organization was led by Choudhary Abbas and Allah Rakha, both from Jammu region.

The objectives that were formulated for the movement politics at that time were linked to the interests of the emerging middle class

among Muslims. Thus, educational and employment opportunities were the most important goals of the Muslim Conference.

The conversion of the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference into the All Jammu and Kashmir National Conference in 1939 was a major shift in the Kashmiri identity politics. It not only changed the character of Kashmiri politics from a limited middle class-oriented politics to the mass politics but also 'regionalized' the Kashmiri identity politics. Since the Jammu Muslim leadership did not approve the objective of secularizing the Kashmiri identity politics or giving it a concrete anti-feudal direction, the Muslim politics of the state got split on regional basis. The Jammu leadership soon after revived the Muslim Conference. After 1940, there was no linkage between the Kashmiri identity politics with that of Jammu's Muslim identity politics.

The Kashmiri identity politics in the post-1940 period was sufficiently broadened and was imbued with progressive content. It redefined the political agenda of the movement and incorporated the interest of the most marginal and oppressed members of society. Since the feudal economic structure severely impacted the mass of impoverished Kashmiris, the new goals of the organization were directly aimed at reconstructing the economy of the state. In 1944, the National Conference adopted the *Naya Kashmir* Manifesto (New Kashmir Manifesto) that called for complete reorganization of the agrarian structure; eliminating its parasitical and feudal components and empowering the peasantry, artisans and other working classes.[1]

On the political side, the New Kashmir Manifesto adopted the goal of representative government and participation of the Kashmiri masses in it. The political goals followed the strong sentiments articulated during this period that Kashmiris had lost their political dignity due to the continued alien control over Kashmir since

[1] It also advocated for compulsory work for all residents of the state, the right to unemployment, the right to rest, the right to education, a minimum wage, and more. Elimination of economic inequalities and an adequate standard of living for all people were the major goals of the manifesto. Among the most important parts of the manifesto were a peasant's charter, a worker's charter, and a women's charter.

the arrival of Mughals in the latter part of the sixteenth century. Though the Mughals were succeeded by Afghans and Sikhs, it was the transfer of power from Sikhs to Dogras that became the focus for representation of 'alien' control over Kashmir.

It was the pursuance of these two goals of economic transformation to serve the best interest of the marginalized Kashmiris and the reclaiming the control over the political destiny of Kashmir that formed the logic of the Kashmiri identity politics in the post-1947 period. With these goals weighing upon the mind of the Kashmiri leaders, not much importance was given to the question of Accession. In fact, the question of accession itself was seen in the light of these basic goals of Kashmiri identity politics. Despite the fact that Kashmir was predominantly Muslim, Sheikh Abdullah and his colleagues were not comfortable with the idea of joining Pakistan. They felt that neither the political autonomy of Kashmir nor radical economic transformation would be possible in feudal Pakistan. Rather, there was a danger of Kashmiri identity being subsumed by the larger Muslim identity. Negotiation with India, in their opinion, was a better option. They negotiated asymmetrical federal system with a special status guaranteed by Article 370 of the Indian constitution that provided a near perfect scenario for fulfilling the twin goals of autonomy and radically transformative economic policy.

There was a smooth relationship between Kashmiri nationalism and Indian nationalism in the decades of 1940s and early 1950s. In pursuance of its logic of dignity, autonomy and negotiability, the Kashmiri nationalism was quite positively inclined towards the 'idea of India' with its plural society and secular ethos. It was Pakistan that was not only seen as a reactionary feudal society but also an 'aggressor' that sought to forcibly resolve the issue of accession of Jammu and Kashmir in its favour through the tribal invasion.

This project of harmonious construction of Kashmiri nationalism within the fold of Indian nationalism was disrupted in 1953 when Sheikh Abdullah, the architect of Kashmiri identity politics, was arrested and more significantly when the logic of Kashmiri identity politics, governed by its principles of autonomy and negotiability was challenged in Jammu and elsewhere in India.

In this first shift in the Kashmiri identity politics that took place

in 1953 following the removal of Sheikh Abdullah from politics, the progressive economic and social content was totally sidelined. This identity politics now came to be fixed on the political question of Kashmir's relationship with India. In 1953-1975 period, the Kashmiri identity came to be defined through assertion of Kashmiri nationalism which in essence was based on the idea of contestation of the finality of India's claim over Kashmir. It was during this period that Plebiscite Front was floated with the demand of plebiscite. However, this politics underwent another shift in 1975 when Sheikh Abdullah shunned the demand of plebiscite and returned to power politics. The core issue underlying Kashmiri identity in this period was 'autonomy'. Rather than resistance against the Indian state, the goals of the Kashmiri identity politics were now re-defined in the context of Centre-state relations. The demand for restoration of full autonomy of the state became core political issue for this politics. The issue of autonomy continued to inform Kashmiri identity politics even after the death of Sheikh Abdullah. Farooq Abdullah, his son and successor, pursued the demand for autonomy throughout the 1980s and later period. It was with the onset of armed militancy and separatism that Kashmiri identity politics witnessed another shift. In line with the separatist tendencies evolved during the 1953-1975 period, the post-1989 period saw the revival of the anti-State sentiments. Separatism and militancy that overtook Kashmir in 1990s itself underwent various changes in the last three decades. While separatism remained an overwhelming response of Kashmiris for a long time—however, neither this identity politics remained static nor homogenized. While the separatist streak in itself remained divided on various ideological strands, a democratic space came to be created and extended in post-2002 period that directly challenged the complete control of Kashmiri identity politics by separatists.

III

Kashmiri Identity Politics and the Context of Political Divergence

Kashmiri identity politics, though the most visible and dominant identity politics within J&K, did not extend beyond the Valley of

Kashmir. Due to its own historical trajectory (about which discussion follows later) it acquired a specific nature with no implications for Jammu (and Ladakh).

Kashmir region, over the period, had developed its own political sensibilities which made it difficult for anyone beyond Kashmir to relate to it. The political idioms, concerns and political discourse of Kashmir were very much 'Kashmiri' and neither the people of Jammu nor of Ladakh could identify with these. These regions, especially after 1947, had their own concerns and therefore had their own directions of politics.

The different trajectories of the identity politics in the three regions not only characterized the plurality of identity politics in J&K but also defined the context of political divergence. The regional identity politics of Jammu and Ladakh did not fall in the same paradigm as the Kashmiri identity politics. While Kashmiri identity politics operated within the framework of Centre-state relations; the regional identity politics operated within the paradigm of intra-state or inter-regional relationships. What lay at the centre of these two regional identities was the question of their relationship vis-à-vis the region of Kashmir. The 'dominance' of Kashmir within the state politics thus formed the major reference point of this politics.

'Dominance' of Kashmir was defined in multiple contexts including those of resource distribution, concentration of political power and ideology. While much of the regional narrative was built around the resource 'deprivation' and 'neglect' of these regions, however, the major concern in these regions, especially in Jammu, has been related to the power balance in favour of Kashmir.

In the context of Jammu region, political divergence from Kashmir has been also based on ideological gulf. Though the issues related to resource distribution and power politics have been very crucial but much of the gap between the two regions has been based around the context of conflict politics. Whether it is the conflict around the issue of the special constitutional status of J&K or the separatist context of politics of self-determination—there has been a strong ideological gap between Kashmir region on the one hand and Jammu and Ladakh on the other.

Political divergence resulted in a constant context of inter-re-

gional tensions. So acute have been these tensions at times, that these can be seen to be forming another layer of conflict- the third layer of conflict besides the two well-known external (India-Pakistan) and internal (Delhi-Kashmir) layers. This inter-regional context of conflict, this study seeks to argue is very important to understand and address.

IV

Jammu's Identity Politics: Grievances vis-a-vis Kashmir

The identity politics of Jammu region, as stated above has been articulated in response to Kashmiri identity politics. Unlike Kashmir region which saw a continuity of identity politics from pre-1947 period, Jammu's identity politics did not have any such continuity. !947, in fact, brought about much disruption not only in the context of its territorial integrity, demography and power structure but also in the context of politics. In fact, as we shall explore in later chapters, Jammu witnessed a political vacuum in 1947. With a total break in its politics, all its political responses were, therefore, evolved in reaction to the new political structure of the state in which there was centrality of Kashmir region and its political class. Jammu's 'neglect' vis-a-vis Kashmir therefore formed the central point of Jammu's identity politics as it evolved in post-1947 period.

The feeling of 'neglect' has been almost universal in Jammu and has run through the region across the religious, cultural and linguistic divide. Though mainly voiced and articulated in predominantly Dogra Hindu belt of this region comprised of the districts of Jammu, Samba, Kathua and Udhampur, the perception of neglect is shared in rest of the districts including the predominantly Muslim majority districts of Poonch, Rajouri, Doda, Kishtwar, Ramban and Reasi. Despite the fact that the people in these districts feel marginalized vis-a-vis the Dogra belt that dominates the politics of the region and yet, they share with the people of the region a strong feeling of 'regional neglect' and 'regional discrimination' vis-a-vis Kashmir region. To take the example of Poonch-Rajouri districts which is mostly located on the LoC and faces not only border-specific problems but also

the problems of backwardness, there persists a strong feeling that the area has been neglected by the successive 'Kashmiri' governments and its potentials and the resources had not been harnessed. One would often hear the statement that the Valley of Poonch is as beautiful as Kashmir but not much investment has been made on its tourist potentials. There has been a similar feeling in Doda that the area has not been properly developed. This is despite the fact that a large number of people here are ethnically of Kashmiri origin and have socio-cultural affinities with Kashmir. Even these people often articulate the feeling of being ignored by the political class in Kashmir.

Whether it was the issue of distribution of resources like development funds; educational and employment opportunities; location of administrative or other offices; and the like—there remained a general perception that preference had been given to Kashmir region and Jammu had been discriminated. One area where the sense of regional neglect had often been articulated related to state employment. Much of this perception has been linked with the competitive aspirations of the expanding middle classes in both Kashmir and Jammu regions and their yearning for coveted government jobs.

State employment is one of the most preferred vocation in J&K. The state in fact has an overdeveloped government sector and entry to it remains the most coveted at any level. The existence of large government sector is linked with post-1950 policies of the Indian State vis-a-vis J&K where a large amount of money was pumped in the name of 'development'.[2] There was this 'peculiar context of the state's economy which while being flushed with money was simultaneously defined by its perpetual status of dependency with no source of employment other than the government jobs. The artificially enlarged state sector therefore not only became the source of intense competition but also a terrain for regional contestation.' (Chowdhary, 2010, 119-133)

[2] Since there was a strong feeling of political discontent due to the prolonged incarceration of Sheikh Abdullah and Plebiscite Front was mobilizing Kashmiris into the anti-state politics, it was assumed that the politics of development would help ease the situation.

The middle-class competition on regional basis had been one of the most visible factor underlying Jammu's discourse of 'regional discrimination'. There have been a number of agitations around the issue of 'lower share of Jammu region' in government jobs as well as seats in profession institutions including medical, engineering, agricultural institutions. One of the most contested Institution in this context has been the Public Service Commission. With the responsibility of making recruitment for the government's gazetted jobs, this institution has been quite contested. Every time the appointments would be made, the issue of regional discrimination would invariably be raised. Similarly contested has been the issue related to the establishment of educational and professional institutions. Thus, enough regional politics has been generated around the establishment of Agricultural University, Central University, AIMS, IIT, IIM.[3]

However, while much of the protest politics of Jammu region revolved around the issue of 'development', the perception of political neglect arose from the feeling of lack of political parity between the two regions. Whether in terms of political power, or in terms of visibility and negotiability—there was a strong feeling of powerlessness in Jammu region. Ironically, when there remained a deep-rooted sense of discontent and alienation in Kashmir region and in a different context there remained a strong feeling of powerlessness in that region (vis-a-vis the Centre), the feeling of regional deprivation vis-a-vis Kashmir persisted in Jammu region.

The feeling related to lack of political parity between the two

[3] Establishment of each of these institutions in the state has been preceded by an agitation with the demand that these be established in Jammu rather Kashmir region. In many such cases, with the competitive demand for establishing these institutions in Kashmir region, the Government ended up in providing two institutions—one for Kashmir and one for Jammu region. Thus it was the result of competitive regionalism that when a decision was taken to establish one Central University in J&K and the process was started to establish it in Kashmir region, there was a prolonged agitation in Jammu region. The matter was ultimately resolved with the establishment of another Central University in Jammu region. Similar case was in relation to establishment of AIIMS and ultimately a decision was taken to have two AIIMS here rather than one, generally allocated to a state.

regions had started taking roots in Jammu's political discourse right in 1947 when power changed hands from the Dogra monarch to the National Conference. Referring to the situation as it existed in the immediate post-1947 period, Balraj Puri noted the psychological impact that the shift of power had from the Jammu-based Dogra monarch to a Kashmir-based political party. In his understanding, the adverse impact that the shift had on the psyche of Jammu could have been tempered if the power politics was representative of both the regions. Referring to the structure of power politics in the decades from 1950s to 1970s, he thus noted: 'While numerical superiority of the Valley to Jammu was nominal... the latter's share in new power structure was marginal. In a cabinet of five, four ministers including the Deputy Prime Minister belonged to the Valley. Top leadership of the ruling National Conference, including its president, vice-president, general secretary and the treasurer also were from the same region.' (Puri, 1981, 94)

The imbalance in structure of power has been an important grievance of Jammu region and forms the major component of identity politics of this region. So strong has been the feeling of Jammu's powerlessness that this was found to be one of the major source of irritations in Jammu by Gajendargadkar Commission appointed in the mid-1960s to enquire about the reasons for inter-regional tensions in the state. The Commission acknowledged the widely prevalent feeling of 'political neglect' in Jammu region and made suggestions about removing that feeling by creating a balance in power distribution among the regions. It therefore recommended that 'a convention should be established that if the Chief Minister belongs to one region, there should be a Deputy Chief Minister belonging to other region. By another convention, the number of the cabinet ministers belonging to the region should be equal.' (Report of the Jammu and Kashmir Commission of Inquiry, 1968, 83)

Till 2002, the political elite of Jammu region was not duly represented in power structure as the government was generally formed by a party that had its dominance in Kashmir region. For most of the time, it was the National Conference that controlled the power politics of the state. This party drew its strength from Kashmir region. In the successive governments formed by this party, Jammu was given a

token representation. (Puri, 1966; Puri, 1983) It is true that during the periods when Congress formed the government (1965-1975), the leadership in Jammu could evolve and play a comparatively more influential role, however, the role of Jammu leadership even under Congress governments remained secondary. The Kashmiri leadership remained at the centre of power even at that time.

It was after 2002 that the structure of power changed in the state and a practice of forming the coalition government was started. The governments, which were formed during this period, were based on partnership between a Kashmir-based party and a Jammu-based party. Thus in 2002, it was a coalition between PDP that had its larger share of seats from Kashmir region and Congress which had won most of its seats in Jammu region. In 2008, the coalition was formed between Jammu-based Congress and Kashmir-based NC. Similarly in 2014, it was the Kashmir-based PDP that formed the government in alliance with Jammu based BJP. This kind of coalition politics not only resulted in almost equal share of ministries on regional basis but also the sharing of the top jobs. In 2005, Ghulam Nabi Azad had the credit of being the first Chief Minister belonging to Jammu region. In other times, when the Chief Ministers have been representing the Kashmir-based political party, the Jammu based party has been holding the position of Deputy Chief Minister. (Chowdhary, 2019)

However, despite a substantial share in power, the feeling has persisted in Jammu region that Kashmir-based leadership is quite powerful and is able to sway the politics and decision making in its direction. Notwithstanding the regional parity in power politics, the feeling of 'neglect' and 'deprivation' has persisted.[4]

Irrespective of the fact that the region of Kashmir has had its

[4] In this context, one can give the example of the 2008 Amarnath agitation. This took place at a time when the grouse of Jammu not having a share in political power could not be made. From 2005 onwards the Chief Minister of the state belonged to Jammu region and there was an alliance between Jammu-based Congress and Kashmir-based PDP. Notwithstanding this fact, the agitation articulated, among other things, the feeling that the region was being taken for granted. (Chowdhary, 2009)

own sets of grievances and has continued to erupt frequently over one or the other issues related to Delhi-Kashmir relationship, the general perception in Jammu region has been that vis-a-vis Kashmir region, it has been facing political neglect. What has been the point of irritation in Jammu region is the Kashmir-centric developments in state's relationship with the Centre. With the state's relationship with the centre basically following Kashmir's logic of politics, Jammu has not only been rendered totally invisible but has been bypassed. Most of the political negotiations and arrangements, it was generally felt, have followed the context of 'Kashmir conflict' and it was assumed that Jammu, despite its political divergence, would fall in line.[5]

In this process, the feeling that developed in Jammu region has not only been related to its political marginality but also to its lack of negotiability. 'The lack of negotiability of the political elite of the region in the broader context of conflict or the Centre-state relations has gradually resulted in a perception that the region is being politically neglected both by the power centre within the state as well as in the Centre. There is a feeling that in all political negotiations that are undertaken to address the Kashmir problem, Jammu is taken for granted and the political arrangements are imposed on Jammu'. (Chowdhary, 2010, 119-133)

[5] Jammu's sense of deprivation is also linked with the conflict situation. Since Kashmir has remained the theatre of conflict right since 1947, it has had not only attracted much national and international attention and made this region more visible as compared to Jammu region. More importantly, it is because of the conflict politics, that much of the political arrangements that have been followed for the state have actually followed the logic of Delhi-Kashmir relationship without much appreciation of Jammu's political sensibilities and responses.

III

Political Divergence within the Princely State: A Historical Analysis

The political divergence that existed between the two major regions of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir had its basis in the history. As the state acceded to India in 1947, it was defined by four major realities. One, there was a clear cut political demarcation between the two major regions of the state. There was regional specificity to the politics with the consequence that there were no common political aspirations and there was no consensus around the major political issues confronting the state. Second, of the two regions, Kashmir had an overdeveloped political structure with a well-evolved organization, ideology and leadership structure. Jammu region, on the other hand, suffering from a major destabilization had a political vacuum. Third, all political arrangements that were adopted for the state followed the specificity of Kashmir's regional politics. The political class of Jammu region did not have the capacity and was not a part of the process of any political negotiation. Four, the centrality of Kashmiri identity politics resulted in sharpening the political divergence within the state.

I

The Evolution of Political Consciousness and Different Political Trajectories of Kashmir and Jammu Regions

One of the important reasons for the internal political divergence between Kashmir region on the one hand and Jammu and Ladakh

regions on the other was the very specific nature of Kashmiri identity politics which had no relevance to the other two regions. Kashmir had its own political sensibilities which were not extended beyond its physical territories. The political idioms, concerns and political discourse of Kashmir were therefore specific to Kashmir Valley and did not replicate in other regions.

It is in this specificity of Kashmir's politics that one can locate the political divergence within the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir. This specificity could not be overcome during any phase of the politics of the state. Even when the politics of Kashmir acquired a mass base and was opened to all kinds of people irrespective of religious differences, it could not extend to .masses either in Jammu or Ladakh (Chowdhary, 2016, 169) As the trajectory of this politics reveals, it generally remained confined to the Muslims of Kashmir.

However, there was a brief period when the Muslims of Kashmir and Jammu joined together to struggle for the interests of Muslims of the state. This period that started in the wake of 1931 riots and culminated in the formation of All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference saw the emergence of a joint leadership from Kashmir as well as Jammu regions that pursued the idea of a unified Muslim identity in the princely state ruled by a Hindu king. Presuming that the Muslims were discriminated in the state because of their religious affiliation, an organisation working in the interest of Muslims was considered important. Muslim Conference, therefore, basing its politics on the idea of common problems faced by Muslims within the state put forth common demands of all the Muslims of the state, irrespective of regional differences.

The background to the formation of the Muslim Conference was characterised by the coming together of Kashmir-based Reading Room Party and Jammu based Young Men's Muslim Association. (YMMA). (Choudhary, 2012, 25) Though both these organisations were the semi-political organisations having the purpose of articulating the grievances of the educated Muslims in the respective regions, the YMMA, under the influence of Punjab politics, however was more actively involved in anti-ruler protests. Its modus operandi was to make the Muslims aware of their religion-based grievances through its poster war. These posters printed in Lahore were pasted

at various places in Jammu region. And it was in connection of these posters that YMMA got in touch with the Reading Room Party in Kashmir. 'A bundle of posters was dispatched to the Reading Room Party in Srinagar which reached hands of many prominent men in the valley. This was the first contact between the Muslims leaders of Jammu and Srinagar in their mutual interests and they formally joined hands for the political cause later the same month. Under the aegis of Reading Room Party protests were held in different parts of Kashmir in solidarity with Muslims of Jammu.' (Choudhary, 2012, 26)

Soon a formal collaboration between the YMMA and the Reading Room Party was started. However, it was the spontaneous upsurge against the ruler in Kashmir on July 13, 1931 that brought the politics of the two regions together on a common platform. The leadership of the two regions , thereafter, was to come together to form the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference.

It was only under the banner of the Muslim Conference that element of Kasmiri-specificity and 'Kashmiri identity' was overtaken by the idea of a 'common Muslim identity' of Jammu and Kashmir. The Muslim Conference, that had 'reflected the class aspirations of the Muslim upper and middle classes for gaining political ascendancy in the state.' (Das Gupta, 1968, 60) had limited goals linked with the educational and employment opportunities for the Muslims of the State. The religious sense of belonging of Kashmiris formed the crux of Kashmiri identity politics during this period. The religious distinction between them and their rulers, in their understanding, formed the basis of their backwardness, Being the 'Muslim subjects' of the 'Hindu ruler' they therefore privileged their religion as central to their political identity. It was the religious factor in the assertion of Kashmiri identity politics during this time that a 'unified Muslim identity' cutting across the regional lines was assumed and the Muslim Conference not only claimed to represent the 'Muslims' of the whole state but was led by influential Jammu leaders (Choudhary Abbas and Allah Rakha) along with Sheikh Abdullah.

The idea of 'Muslim unity' across the regional divide, however, could not last for a long time as there were cultural and political differences between the two regions. Even at the time when the lead-

ership of the two regions had joined forces, there were differences between the two. Choudhary notes as to how even after July 1931 episode, there were differences between the nature and direction of the politics of Muslims of two regions. He particularly makes reference to the activities of Punjab-based Majlis-e-Ahrar in Jammu region. (Choudhary, 2012) As Mridu Rai notes, by the end of August 1931, 'the Ahrars decided to infiltrate Jammu territory with jathas (bands) of supporters.' (Rai, 2004, 263)

The Ahrars entered various parts of Jammu region and mobilized the Muslim peasantry as a result of which there was simmering discontent among Muslims particularly in Mirpur, Kotli, Rajouri and Poonch areas. It is in this discontent that one can locate the basis of communal direction of Muslim politics of Jammu region, even when Kashmir's Muslim politics started taking progressive form.

One major reason for the differences that were developing between the Jammu and Muslim leadership related to the ideological changes within Kashmiri leadership. As early as mid-1930s Sheikh Abdullah through the newspaper *Hamdard*, had started articulating 'the incipient national ideology ... in its weekly issues.' Rather than harping on the interests of the Muslims, this paper had started focusing on Hindu-Muslim unity. 'The newspaper contended that the formation of a responsible government in the state rested on the coming together of Hindus and Muslims under one flag since they were two sons of the mother nation.' (Zutshi, 2004, 249)

The Kashmiri leadership, particularly Sheikh Abdullah wanted incorporation of Hindus in the Muslim Conference as early as 1933, however, the Jammu leaders were opposed to this idea. The major difference that was developing between the leadership of the two regions was around the orientation of Sheikh Abdullah towards the Congress party. The Jammu Muslim leadership was quite wary of the Congress and wanted to keep the Muslim Conference away from its influence. However, Sheikh was quite appreciative of the Congress movement and wanted the Kashmir's politics to be associated with it.

In few years' time, there started developing strong ideological differences within the Muslim Conference on the ideological-cum-regional basis. When in June 1938 the proposal for changing the name of Muslim Conference was made before its Working Committee

by Sheikh Abdullah, it was opposed by all Jammu based members including Choudhary Abbas, Abdul Majid Quereshi and Sheikh Ahmed Din. (Choudhary, 2012, 29) It was, however, in 1939 that the resolution for the conversion of the Muslim Conference into the National Conference was passed. While a few Jammu based leaders totally opposed the resolution, the two top leaders of Jammu, Choudhary Abbas and Allah Rakha Sagar supported it after getting an assurance that National Conference will not be associated either with Indian National Congress or the Muslim League. An apprehension was expressed by Abbas and others about the presence of Hindu-Sikh elements within the NC on the ground that these elements having 'vested interest in the Dogra rule' may 'undermine the movement' (Bose, 2003, 21) However, very soon, the Jammu based members of newly named National Conference resigned from this organization and in 1940 they revived the Muslim Conference with Jammu as the centre of its activity. (Puri, 1981, 38)

Apart from the ideological differences, there were marked cultural differences between Kashmir and Jammu regions which played important role in the two regions taking different route to politics. As Choudhary notes, 'The cultural and linguistic difference between the two provinces were represented and personified by the two towering leaders. Sheikh Abdullah held a complete sway upon the Kashmiri speaking people of Kashmir which also included some Hindus. In Jammu, Choudhary Ghulam Abbas, a leader of Punjabi outlook, represented the Punjabi, Pahari and Gojri speaking Muslims across the province.' (Choudhary, 2012, 30) In this politics, while National Conference came to be seen mainly as the party of Kashmiri Muslims, the Muslim Conference had the reputation of being the party representing Jammu Muslims.

Emphasizing the cultural- regional factor in explaining the different direction of politics of the two regions, Zutshi thus argues,

> Abbas's moves toward reviving the Muslim Conference have to be seen in the light of regional rather than religious tensions between disparate people of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. If Muslims of the Kashmir Valley were divided along lines of sect and class, then geography and

> language created an even greater gulf between Muslims of the Valley and Muslims of Jammu region. Jammu is, for all intents and purposes, an extension of the plains of the Punjab, and the Jammu Muslims spoke Dogri, a dialect akin to Punjabi, which was also the language of the Dogra dynasty. Their co-religionists in the Valley spoke Kashmiri, and had developed ... a vocal political culture in oral media predominantly in that very language.' (Zutshi, 2004, 262)

In the ultimate analysis, it was the Kashmir-specificity and Kashmir-centric politics of the Muslim Conference-turned-into-National Conference, that resulted in political gulf between the Kashmiri and Jammu's Muslim politics.

Chitralekha Zutshi notes the 'hegemonic' role of the Kashmiri leadership as the reason for the Jammu's regional leadership coming out of National Conference. To quote her, 'The re- formation of the Muslim Conference would … enable Jammu's leaders to shake of the Kashmir Valley's hegemony in determining the course of political developments in their region.' (Zutshi, 2004, 263) In her understanding, the organization from the very beginning was dominated by Sheikh Abdullah and it remained 'unrepresentative of both Muslims and Hindus of the Jammu province, a flaw that would cause a rift in the early 1940s. Abdullah claimed to be the sole representative of Muslims of the entire state of Jammu and Kashmir, regardless of their class, sectarian or geographical location.' (Zutshi, Hurst & Co, 237)

The fact that the leadership of Jammu region did not find enough space within the politics of NC, had its implications in Jammu leadership parting ways from the NC. Luv Puri has mentioned that there was an agreement between Sheikh Abdullah and Jammu leadership that the leadership of the organization would be on rotational basis but Sheikh Abdullah continued to be the president of the organization. '... Ghulam Abbas entered into what was called a gentleman's agreement to rotate the presidentship of the new party between Kashmiris and Jammu leaders. But this agreement was breached as Sheikh continued to be president of the National Conference consecutively for the next three years. This led to the parting of ways with Abbas. The principle of rotation clearly underlines the varied nature of the state where both religious and non-religious diversities

played a crucial role in shaping its political processes.' (Puri, 2012, 16)

II

Different Direction of Regional Politics of Kashmir and Jammu in Post-1940 Period

Regional Split of J&K Politics

By 1940, the phase of the commonality of the Muslim politics of Kashmir and Jammu regions had ended and there was a clear-cut divergence between the Muslim politics of Jammu region and the Kashmiri identity politics—mainly representing the Muslims of Kashmir region. The divergence emanated not only from two different organizations representing the two regions (Muslim Conference and National Conference) but also different ideological directions that the politics that each of the two regions pursued.

The formation of the National Conference was a major shift in the Kashmiri identity politics because it not only changed the character of Kashmiri politics from a limited middle class-oriented politics to the mass politics but it also 'regionalized' the Kashmiri identity politics.

With the change of the nomenclature of the Muslim Conference, its character was also changed. Opened to 'all progressive forces in the country', it shed its exclusively 'Muslim character' and was now open to non-Muslims. Its 'national' and secular character was emphasized when a number of non-Muslim leaders were coopted in the working committee of the NC—these included Saradar Budh Singh, Pandit Jia Lal Kilam, L. Giradhari Lal, Pandit Kashyap Bandhu and Prem Nath Bazaz. Apart from opening it to the non-Muslims, what defined the changed character of the NC was its mass base. Unlike the Muslim Conference that was an organization meant to represent the interest of the elite, particularly the newly emerging Muslim educated classes, the National Conference was a broad based organization representing the interest of the peasantry, artisans and

working classes. It was its linkage with the peasantry that helped the National Conference in broadening its politics. 'The New Kashmir Manifesto that was adopted by the National Conference in 1944 was to become a reference point for the Kashmiri politics for all the time to come. The manifesto with its wholesome programme for annhilation of the fedual structure, and reconstruction of the economy and politics of the state from the perspective of the peasants, artisans and working classes...' (Chowdhary, 2016, 14)

Much of the broadening of the politics of the National Conference was due to the leftist influence on the politics of Kashmir. Since the mid-1930s, the leftist leadership of India had started getting associated with the Kashmiri leadership. It was under their influence that the economic concerns started getting highlighted within the movement politics of Kashmir. Andrew Whitehead notes, 'By the early 1940s, the Communist Party of India had identified Kashmir as a political issue worthy of active support and a small but significant number of local recruits had been made.' (Whitehead, 2018, 75) Under the guidance of Communist leaders like K.M. Ashraf and B.P.L. Bedi, a local Kashmiri left leadership also started becoming active. Prakash Chandra refers to the presence of a 'study circle' which was involved in spreading the leftist ideas in Kashmir. (Chandra, 1985, 45-46) Meanwhile, the trade union politics under the leftist influence was also asserting itself in Kashmir. In 1937, Mazdoor Sabha was launched which brought into its fold various local workers' organizations like the Kashmir Motor Drivers Association, the Carpet Weavers Association and the Tonga Driver Association. 'With the organization of Mazdoor Sabha, grievances of workers were now brought to the public domain. The Silk Factory workers, for instance, became very active and launched various activities including strikes and demonstrations. The Kissan Sabha was organised around the same time, though it was not as active as the Mazdoor Sabha.' (Chowdhary, 2016, 71)

The Kashmiri identity politics in the post-1940 period was sufficiently broadened and was imbued with progressive content. It redefined the political agenda of the movement incorporating the interest of the most marginal and oppressed members of society.

Since the feudal economic structure severely impacted the mass of impoverished Kashmiris, the new goals of organization were directly aimed at reconstructing the economy of the state.

It was under the influence of the leftists that the National Conference adopted the New Kashmir Manifesto in 1944. Set in a typical 'communist' language, the Manifesto had a very strong economic content. Besides providing a vision for the future political arrangement for the state, it incorporated a vision about the reconstruction of the economic structure of the state. Providing for the constitution of the state, it incorporated provisions related to citizenship and the rights of people; the provisions referring to the structure of government including the National Assembly, the Council of Minister, the judiciary, and the local administration. The New Kashmir Manifesto called for complete reorganization of the agrarian structure, eliminating its parasitical and feudal components and empowering the peasantry, artisans and other working classes. Among the major goals set in the manifesto were those related to the elimination of economic inequalities, adequate standard of living for all people; reorganization of the agrarian structure and empowering the peasants, workers and other members of society. This involved 'equitable distribution of land and elimination of parasites, middlemen and others who do not directly engage themselves in cultivation of land and do not con-tribute to its productivity. ('Naya Kashmir' reproduced in Teng, Bhatt and Kaul, 1977, 82-176) Among the most important parts of the manifesto were a Peasants' Charter, a Workers' Charter, and a Women's Charter.

While the National Conference was redefining its politics to incorporate progressive goals, the Jammu-based Muslim Conference was continuing with its earlier orientation. It retained its objective of representing the interest of Muslims and openly affiliated itself with the All Indian Muslim League. Its leadership was not only opposed to secularizing its politics but it was also not keen on pursuing the anti-feudal agenda. In its politics, it took contrary positions to the National Conference. Thus when the National Conference following the lines of the Quit India Movement, launched the 'Quit Kashmir movement' against the Dogra rulers, It (Muslim Conference) 'declared its stand that it refused to participate in it. On the con-

trary, it clearly took a position in favour of the Maharaja. It therefore pursued the goals of a 'responsible government' with maharaja as its constitutional head.' It 'maintained its stand until July 1947 when a resolution was passed asking the Maharaja to accede to Pakistan.' (Choudhary, 2012, 32)

In its stance towards the larger politics of the subcontinent, the position of the Muslim Conference and National Conference was quite different. To quote Choudhary 'Choudhary Ghulam Abbas, Hamidullah Khan, Allah Rakha Sagar and other leaders who sought to represent the Muslims of Jammu stood for a future course of action which is independent of both Indian parties—the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League. However, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, who claimed to represent all people of Jammu and Kashmir, irrespective of religion, aligned himself with the Indian National Congress so much that his critics would call him a Congress representative in Kashmir.' (Choudhary, 2012, 32)

It was around the linkage with Maharaja that one could clearly see the difference between the Muslim Conference and the NC. While Kashmir leadership was directly confronting the Dogra ruler, the Jammu Muslim leadership kept him (the ruler) in picture in the future dispensation of the state. Luv Puri has made reference to a press conference of the working president of Muslim Conference, Chaudhary Hameed Ullah Khan, wherein he clearly spoke of the association with the Maharaja. After expressing the decision of the Muslim Conference to stay away both from India and Pakistan and seeking independence for the state, he refers to the question of Maharaja: 'The … question now before us is what would be the position of the Maharaj? We have never been lacking in showing loyalty and respect for him and it is because of this attachment that we did not support the Quit Kashmir movement although in one way it was a natural movement... The best solution we have found is that the Maharaja should become a constitutional king as is the position in many countries.' (cited in Puri, 2012, 18)

By the mid-1940s, the two organizations had started operating as rival parties with both making claims to represent the people of the state, more specifically, the Muslims of the state. Such relation of rivalry came into open when Mohammed Ali Jinnah visited Kashmir

in 1944 and both the organizations sought to woo him. Both sought to lay claim of representing the people of the state.

The divide between the two organizations and thereby the Muslim politics of the two regions became wider after Jinnah favoured the Muslim Conference as the body representing the Muslims of the state. The NC thereafter came to be more openly aligned with the Congress and the leftist leaders.

By 1947, the biggest point of ideological difference between the Muslim politics of Jammu and that of Kashmir was related to the question of future of the state. Though taking a position till a long time that it wanted to stay away both from India and Pakistan, Muslim Conference in 1947, passed a resolution in favour of Pakistan. The National Conference, on the other, was opposed to the idea of joining Pakistan. It found basic contradiction between the idea of Pakistan as Muslim homeland and its goal of radical land reforms and reorganization of the agrarian structure. (Chowdhary, 2016, 20-25)

Jammu's political response in post-1940 period was quite communalized. Unlike Kashmir region which took a progressive turn to deal with the discontent of peasantry, in Jammu region, the similar issue of discontent of peasantry was responded through communal politics.

Like Kashmir region, the peasantry in Jammu region was also oppressed and was suffering under the burden of feudal structure of agrarian relations. The situation was quite acute in the predominantly Muslim areas in Jammu region—for instance in Mirpur, Kotli, Rajouri and Seri. Referring to the exploitation of the peasantry in this belt, particularly Mirpur, K.D. Sethi notes that the peasantry was exploited cruelly by landlords, moneylenders and officials. 'They were subjected to heavy taxation and were forced into beggary or compulsory labour … The moneylenders in Mirpur were mainly Hindus, while the landlords were both Hindus and Muslims, the former being mostly moneylenders who had become landlords through usury.' (Sethi cited in Sikand, 2006) However, in the absence of any progressive mobilization, the peasantry came under the influence of religion-based organizations.

Two Punjab-based organizations—All India Kashmir Muslim

Conference (AIKC) and Majlis-e-Ahrar—played important role in communal politicization of the Muslim peasantry in this area. The Majlis-e-Ahrar, in fact, sent groups of volunteers to the state which focused on mobilization of Muslim peasantry in Jammu region. It was the result of the communal mobilization that there were violent eruptions in Mirpur, Rajouri and Kotli. To quote Copeland, 'Oppressed indebted and grudgingly poor, the Muslim peasants of Jammu were ripe for mobilization, and they listened attentively to the speeches of the Ahrar and to the millenarian preaching of the Islamic clergy. They began to organise—and to hit back.' The Hindus, mostly landowners, moneylenders and officials were targeted. (Copeland, 1981, 243)

While Muslim peasantry was mobilized on religious basis, the Hindu peasantry, concentrated mostly in Jammu district, was mostly untouched by the political developments. To quote Balraj Puri 'Before Independence, the political soil of Jammu was fertile for sentiments of loyalty to the royalty and for communalism. Possibly Jammu was the strongest hole of the Hindu Sabha in the country. Muslim intelligentsia, too, could not escape the impact of communal politics in the neighbouring Punjab.' (Puri, 1966, 13)

There was a large class of Dalit and lower caste Hindu peasantry in the region which was equally oppressed as the peasantry in Kashmir. However, this peasantry remained unconnected with the political developments in the state. As Puri notes, the 'urban middle class did not provide an anti-feudal and revolutionary leadership. Hindu and Muslim communalism in the towns, to which the politics was mainly confined, provoked and sustained each other in a vicious circle.' And by the time, 'the issue of Accession was to be confronted, Jammu had become communally volatile.' (Puri, 1966, 14) In the region there was lot of tension. 'Almost every festival had become a moment of communal tension. Except for the Poonch town, which was generally free from communal tension, all the major towns of Jammu region witnessed communal tension.' (Chowdhary, 2016, 177)

It would be misleading to say that 'communal response' was the only response that was reflected in Jammu at that time'. There were progressive organizations and individuals as well. For instance, the

Dogra Sabha that was formed in 1905 was quite a progressive organization. It was an organization that 'provided a common platform for all communities of the state' and had in its Executive Committee, members of all communities—Hindus as well as Muslims. (Kaur, 1996, 40). Working for the unity among the different communities within the state was one of its major objectives. Its other objectives included working for eradication of social evils such as *Begar*. (Chowdhary, 2016, 177)

One instance of secular politics of Jammu region was the Roti Agitation which took place in 1943. This agitation that erupted against the rise in prices had the participation of both the Muslims as well as Hindus. (Puri, 1966, 15) One of the stalwart secular leaders of Jammu was Sardar Budh Singh. He was a progressive activist who voluntarily left his high-profile government job to work for the downtrodden people in Jammu region. He was the District Collector with the State government but resigned from his job in 1925. He mobilized popular protests against the problems in the land revenue system and the practices of *Begar*. Among other issues that he raised related to corruption in the state administration as well as poverty and backwardness. Seeking to generate a progressive politics in Jammu region, he made efforts to extend the influence of Indian National Congress in the region. Towards this goal, he used his position as the President of the Dogra Sadar Sabha to declare it as a branch of the Indian National Congress. But the central leadership of Congress did not welcome the move. With their concentration on the movement politics of Kashmir, they endorsed only the National Conference as a genuine party of the state and didn't want to have a parallel organization even in Jammu region. (Puri, 1983, 188).

However, due to the religious nature of the political mobilization in the region, its problems were addressed neither by the National Conference nor by the Muslim Conference. While the National Conference had confined itself to Kashmir region, the Muslim Conference was concerned only with the Muslims of Jammu region. There were a few pockets of Jammu region, particularly Chennani (near Udhampur) where peasantry was mobilized on class rather than religious basis and one could see here some influence of the National Conference. This was mostly due to the local initiative of

Dinoo Bhai Pant. With this very significant exception, there was no process of mobilization of peasantry in the Hindu belt—neither by the National Conference nor by any other organization.

The religious basis of political mobilization that was started in Jammu region in 1930s continued in the decades of 1940s. The 1940s saw a competitive mobilization by Muslim Conference on the one hand and Hindu Mahasabha and RSS, on the other. Both these organizations had taken roots in the Hindu majority district of Jammu and other towns of the region which had concentration of Hindu population. (Puri, 1966, 7-17) 'In 1942, RSS chief Golwalkar had sent one of the organization's most dynamic young pracharaks, Balraj Madhok, to the princely state, to establish *shakkhas* among Hindus in the Jammu area; the goal was to organize Hindus and thus enable them collectively to defend their interests from the Muslim majority.' (Walter K. Andersen & Shridhar D. Damle, RSS, A View to the Inside, Penguin, 2018)

It was the implication of this kind of mobilization that the region witnessed communal response in 1947 with both the Muslims and Hindus getting killed in large number—while a large number of Muslims were either massacred or uprooted in predominantly Hindu areas adjacent to Punjab, Hindus were similarly killed in large number and uprooted from the areas that came under the control of Pakistan.

III

Kashmiri Nationalism and Kashmir-Specificity

The post-1939 period saw the emergence of a 'Kashmiri sense of collective' or 'Kashmiri nationalism' that was inward looking It is this inward-looking Kashmiri identity politics that has had long term implications for the politics of the state. It not only characterized the internal dimension of conflict but also the inter-regional tensions. Despite its Kashmir-specificity, the conflict politics involved the whole of the state and the distinctions between 'Kashmir' region and the 'state of Jammu and Kashmir' tended to be dissolved. However, more importantly, this specificity led to internal contradictions,

ideological contestations and frequent inter-regional irritations. To comprehend these contradictions, contestations and irritations, it may be pertinent to explain the nature of Kashmiri sense of collective as it evolved in pre-1947 period and as it came to influence the politics of the state in the post-1947 period.

The Kashmiri sense of collective that took shape in the pre-1947 period revolved around the political history, culture and political sensibilities of Kashmir. The narrative around which Kashmiri emotions were invoked, emanated from the specific history of Kashmir—the fact of Kashmir being controlled by outsiders for centuries. It represented the 'Kashmiri' urge to restore political control in the hands of Kashmiris. (Chowdhary, 2016, 23)

In ingraining the sense of a political collective comprising 'Kashmiris' who lost their political freedom in the sixteenth century and who were striving to regain it, the literary and cultural movement played an important role. The decades of 1930s and 1940s saw the emergence of a number of literary figures, the most notable among these were Ghulam Ahmad Mahjoor, and Abdul Ahad Azad. Mahjoor is said to have 'infused the spirit of nationalism among Kashmiris' urging them to stand united in the cause of freedom. His poetry actually infused the nationalist sentiments among the mass of Kashmiris. His popularity among the mass of Kashmiris has been reflected in the following statement of Balraj Sahni:

> (his) 'songs and poems are the cherished property of every man, woman and child living between Baramulla and Pautsal. If he writes a poem today, it will be on the lips of populace within a fortnight, children on their way to school, girls thrashing rice, boatmen plying oars, labourers bending in their ceaseless trill, all will sing it.' (cited in Khazir, 1997, 169)

The poetry of Mahjoor served the purpose of instilling in people a sense of pride in Kashmir—in its beauty, culture, its mixed society etc. For instance, his song—'Gulshan vattan chu sonuy' talked about Kashmir being a garden of many kinds of flowers. Many of his songs revolved around the theme of the enslavement of Kashmir and the urge for freedom—for instance, his song about Bulbul starts with the following lines:

> *O bulbul, let the freedom urge possess your soul! Bid Good by to your cage, step out*

and ends with the message:

> *Mahjoor, throw away this belt of bondage! From now, you are free as a bird, Your heart commands, your voice obeys!*

Among other songs that popularized the idea of Kashmiri nation, its bondage and the desire for freedom include 'Arise of Gardener'. In this song, he urged the Kashmiris to work for freedom through all odds. The song was chosen by National Conference as the national song of Kashmir.

Like Mahjoor, Azad instilled in Kashmiris a sense of national pride in being Kashmiris. In his song one finds love for homeland and pride in Kashmir's heritage. Being a revolutionary poet, he talked of the miseries of Kashmiris in the Dogra regime. While he wrote songs in appreciation of Kashmir Valley, its dazzling beauty, he also talked about the stigma of degradation and the subjugation of Kashmiris. (Gauhar, 1997, 33)

The idea of a 'Kashmiri collective' was quite entrenched by the time the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir acceded to India. This idea not only reflected the exclusivity of Kashmir but also its specificity. The substance to this idea was provided by Kashmiri history, Kashmiri metaphors and Kashmiri sensibilities. In the words of Whitehead: 'The Kashmiri nationalism that Sheikh Abdullah espoused, although nominally embracing all of the princely state, was always more about Kashmiri-speaking heartlands'. (Whitehead, 2018, 74)

IV

Kashmiri Identity and the Binary of Kashmiri vs Dogra/Jammu

However, it was not only the 'specificity' of the Kashmiri identity politics and Kashmiri sense of collective that had the consequence of generating a political gulf between Kashmir and Jammu regions, but also its very content that was based on a binary between 'Kashmir'

and 'Jammu'. In the Kashmiri political discourse that evolved in the decades of 1930s and 1940s, the terms 'Dogra' (Dogra Rule) or 'Jammu' (Jammu Raj) were invoked as the 'other' of Kashmir and the source of all miseries of Kashmiris.

'Dogra rule' remained the reference point for articulation of Kashmiri grievances against their exploitative conditions, right from the time of Mughals. Central point of this discourse was the manner in which Kashmir came to be acquired by the Dogra rulers. The Amritsar treaty that formalized the transfer of Kashmir from Sikh to Dogra rulers (via the British) on the basis of payment of a certain amount of money was characterized as the symbol of Kashmiri enslavement and therefore it was termed as the 'sale deed'. That control over people was changed from one rule to another without any reference to people—was seen as a sign of humiliation of Kashmiris.

The following oft quoted verse of Mohd Iqbal, the poet who had Kashmiri origin, clearly reflects how Kashmiris visualized the Amritsar Treaty and the shift of power from Sikh to Dogra rulers.

> *Oh! Morning breeze! If though happen to pass by Geneva,*
> *Convey my message to the League of Nations.*
> *Their fields, their crops, their stream,*
> *Even the peasants in the Vale,*
> *They sold all, alas! How cheap was the Sale.* (cited in Singh, 1966, 232)

This was the same sentiment that was reflected in various speeches made by the leaders of the National Conference. An example as to how the Treaty was seen by the Kashmiri leaders can be provided by the following statement of Sheikh Abdullah before the Cabinet Mission:

> One hundred years ago Kashmir was sold for 75 lakh Nanakshahi rupees to Raja Gulab Singh by a sale deed of 1846 wrongly called the Treaty of Amritsar. Less than 5 lakh pound sterling changed hands and sealed the fate of over 40 lakh men and women and their land of milk and honey, without the slightest regard to public sentiment. We challenge the political and moral status of this sale deed, this instrument of subjugation handed by the East India Company agents to a bunch of Dogras. (Sheikh Abdullah, 1993, 87)

Dogra rule, for Kashmiris, therefore symbolized more than the rule of outsiders or a feudal rule. It also stood for the loss of Kashmiri dignity. Though 'autonomy' of Kashmir was seen to have been lost in the sixteenth century with the coming of Mughals and with the successive shift of power from Mughals to Afghans and Sikhs, it was the Dogra rule and specifically the manner in which it was established, that defined the' indignity' of Kashmiris.

However, as Puri argues, in the discourse against the Dogra rule, not much care was taken to assert a distinction between 'Jammu', 'Dogra ruler', and 'Dogra people' or 'Dogra community'. These words were used interchangeably. (Puri, 1967, 149-50) So common has been the use of word 'Dogra' for the rulers that it obviated the sense in which it was identified with the community. This had the dual implications—of generating negative feelings in Kashmir about Jammu and its people as well as of inducing reactionary political response in Jammu region towards Kashmir and Kashmiri movement politics. To quote him, 'Kashmiri leaders often insisted on calling Maharaja Hari Singh's rule as Dogra rule. Thus, they alienated Dogra people.'

It might, however, be pertinent to note the class factor that operated in the regional distinctions that were being made at that time. Most of the impoverished peasantry and artisans belonged to Kashmir region and most of those who owned land were Jammu Dogras (along with the Kashmiri Pandits). The historical accounts about Kashmiris in pre-1947 period refer to the abject poverty, hardship and oppressive conditions of life in Kashmir. (Bazaz, 1954; Zutshi, 1986; Sufi, 1974; Bamzai, 1966) Agriculture formed the major source of production for the majority of rural population, and yet the proprietary rights to land were not enjoyed by them. A large number of Kashmiris who were landless labourers were working as the serfs of the absentee landlords while many others, unable to earn sufficiently to meet their requirements and heavily indebted were compelled to leave the state to work as labourers in the neighbouring Punjab. (Chowdhary, 1998, 7) The oppressive tax conditions imposed by the regime, meanwhile, burdened the class of peasantry and artisans. Mridu Rai refers to extensive taxation system following

the establishment of Dogra rule including capitation tax on all kinds of works or occupations; heavy tax on production of shali; even tax on marriages. (Rai, 2004, 63)

Being part of the clan of the Dogra ruler, the Rajputs of Jammu held the privileged position in the state. They not only held much of the land in Jammu as well as in Kashmir, but also were associated with the Darbar and held powerful positions.

However, despite these class-based regional distinctions, there were realities beyond it. Not all the Dogras were the beneficiaries of the Dogra rule. The Dogras were a class as well caste-divided community. Apart from the upper class Dogras, mainly the Rajputs and Brahmins, there were middle and lower class Dogras who were as much victims of the feudal order as the Kashmiris were. The peasantry in Jammu faced similar misery and oppression as Kashmiri peasantry was facing. Besides the people of lower castes employed mostly as artisans or involved in petty menial jobs, there was at least one-third Dalit population among the Dogras that faced not only the economic consequences of the exploitative feudal system but also the social ostracism.

In creating the binary between the 'oppressed' Kashmiris and 'privileged Dogras', therefore, the reality of the mass of Jammu Dogras was not properly represented and in the process it contributed to the political gulf between the people of the two regions.

Despite its progressive nature, Kashmiri movement in the post-1939 phase, failed to touch the mass of Jammu people and they remained mostly indifferent to the political developments in Kashmir, and in certain ways were also offended. Balraj Puri argues that strong sentiments expressed in Kashmir against 'Dogras' pushed the Dogras of Jammu region to identify and sympathize with the ruler. To quote him: 'As a reaction to the anti-Dogra overtones of the Kashmiri moment, sentiments of loyalty to the Dogra ruler became more pronounced among most of the Dogras particularly among Hindus.' (Puri, 1967, 149-50) The binary of 'oppressed Kashmiris' versus 'privileged Dogras' that was created in Kashmiri discourse, in his opinion, was too far-stretched and was counter-productive.

It was the impact of the anti-Dogra sentiment in Kashmiri discourse that even the most progressive individuals, who were oth-

erwise sympathetic to the cause of oppressed peasantry in Kashmir, were disillusioned by the use of 'Dogra' in the Kashmiri political discourse. Dinu Bhai Pant, a great revolutionary poet of Jammu region, who himself was influenced by the political movement in Kashmir and who championed the cause of peasantry in the region and participated in the local anti-feudal movement in Chenani, regretted the way the Kashmiri leadership had projected the 'Dogras' as a community. Expressing such feelings of disillusionment, he stated in a Dogri verse:

लोग मिना मारदे डोगरे दा राज है
डोगरे दा हाल दिखो थोन्दा नई सांग है

(We are taunted that it is the rule of Dogras! Look at the condition of Dogras—we don't even get to eat the *saag* (the basic minimum))

The verse reflects the frustration of the poet about the lack of distinction between the 'Dogra' as a ruler and Dogra as community. It was a commentary on the plethora of writings of Kashmiris and on Kashmir that did not take into consideration the fact that impact of feudalism was as much felt by the peasantry in Jammu region as in Kashmir and though there were privileged class of Dogras, yet the privileges were not shared by all the members of the society..

The clubbing of all Dogras into the same category, therefore, resulted in limiting the scope of anti-feudal politics to Kashmir region. The very discourse of this politics assumed specificity to Kashmir and it did not take into consideration the cultural and psychological factors specific to Jammu region.

The 'Kashmiri sentiment' that defined the nature of Kashmiri nationalism, therefore, was not replicated in Jammu region. As Choudhary notes 'the popular Kashmiri gripe that they were bought like herds of goats by the Dogra Maharaja by way of the Treaty of Amritsar does not hold absolutely valid for Jammu region which was already under Dogra rule, though loosely.' Unlike Kashmir where people saw the ruler as one who had purchased and occupied their land, people in Jammu identified with the ruler due to their cultural and linguistic affinity. This cultural identification impacted their response. Treaty of Amritsar of 1846, therefore, 'did not come as an event of major political significance in most of Jammu province

where rulers shared the cultural and linguistic identities with their subjects cutting across religious lines.' (Choudhary, 2012, 11- 13)

Balraj Puri refers to the psychological identification of Jammu Dogras with the ruler. Such an identification was to be found not only among the Hindus of the region but also among the Muslims. That is the reason that even Jammu Muslims did not react the same way to the Treaty of Amritsar as the Kashmiri Muslims did. Their response to the Quit Kashmir Movement clearly reflected that. As already noted, the Muslim Conference did not support this movement and rather raised the demand for representative government with Maharaja as its head. In any case, the Quit Kashmir movement had a specific discourse woven around the 'sale deed' and the whole movement was built around the 'purchase' of Kashmir by the Dogra ruler. The question of feudal basis of the monarchical control over the whole state and its people was not raised. As Balraj Puri noted, 'The Quit Kashmir movement, by basing itself on the demand of abrogation of the Amritsar Treaty which was applicable to Kashmir alone, impliedly conceded the Maharaja's right to rule Jammu' (Puri, 1966, 40)

Apart from the fact that Dogra rulers had strategically incorporated the Muslim elite into the power positions in Muslim-dominated areas, there were distinct interests of Jammu Muslims. To quote Choudhary, 'Decades after consolidation of Dogra power and expansion of territories, indications of external influences, mostly from the neighbouring Punjab, seem to have been the more important galvanising factor for Jammu Muslims than their direct issues with the Dogra rulers.' (Choudhary, 2012, 14)

The binary created between Kashmir and Dogra Jammu during the period of Kashmiri political movement in the pre-1947 period, continued to haunt the state even after 1947. The understanding of the power structure in terms of regional divide continued in this period, even though in the reverse manner. Prior to 1947, in the Kashmiri discourse, power was seen to have been concentrated in 'Jammu region' and after 1947, in the Jammu discourse, it was said to be concentrated in 'Kashmir region'. The shift of power from the Dogra ruler to the National Conference was interpreted as shift of power from Jammu to Kashmir. As Puri notes it: 'After the transfer

of power from the Jammu-based Maharaja to Kashmir-based leaders, (Jammu leaders) opposed what they called the 'Kashmiri raj' just like Kashmiris opposed the 'Dogra raj' before 1947.' (Puri, 2008, 14)

IV

Inter-Regional Political Divergence—Immediate Post-1947 Period

The political divide between the two regions that was quite clearly established by 1947 was further widened in post-1947 period. The lack of a political base of the National Conference in Jammu region; the political vacuum of this region; and growing regional discontent and the politics around it were some of the reasons for the political divergence in post-1947 period.

I

Kashmiri Identity Politics and the Role of National Conference in Immediate Post-1947 Period

As per the goals laid down in the New Kashmir Manifesto, the major agenda before the National Conference was to dismantle the feudal structures so as to improve the economic lot of mass of Kashmiris; to regain the popular control over political power; and to maintain the distinctive nature of Kashmiri identity. It was in pursuance of this agenda only that the party and its leadership had made the choice regarding the future affiliation of the state. The question of Accession and the choice between joining India or Pakistan was linked with these goals only. (Chowdhary, 2016) As Puri notes,'The Kashmiri leaders, under their own compulsions, attached more importance to gaining freedom from autocratic rule and economic reform than the accession issue. They, in fact, justified accession of the state to India in terms of the former objectives.' (Puri, 1981, 92)

Sheikh Abdullah and other leaders of the party emphatically rejected the idea of Pakistan because it offered no promise either for structural economic reforms or maintaining the distinct 'Kashmiri' identity. Sheikh often referred to Pakistan as a feudal state which would not support the sweeping land reforms that the National Conference had envisioned in its manifesto. There was also the danger of 'Kashmiri identity' getting merged within the larger 'Muslim' identity of Pakistan, thereby leaving no scope for maintaining the distinct identity of Kashmiris. After the tribal invasion, Pakistan was seen as an aggressor and a serious threat to Kashmiri identity. However, association with India was seen to be more fruitful for Kashmiri objectives. For this reason, there was not much contradiction at that time between Kashmiri sense of collective/Kashmiri nationalism and Indian nationalism.

However, for the same reasons for which the option of joining Pakistan was rejected, relations with India were also negotiated. For preserving the Kashmiri identity and for bringing about the radical land reforms, National Conference entered into a negotiation which was formalized by incorporating Article 370 into Indian Constitution. What was implied by this negotiated relationship was that after acceding to India, the state would have its own set of principles of Centre-state relationship. After being part of the Union of India, it would be governed by asymmetrical federal principles. By implications it meant that while there would be limited applicability of the Constitution of India, the state will have its own constitution. Since the normal division of power between the Centre and the state did not apply to the state, the Parliamentary laws would not extend to the state unless their extension was consented to by the state.

Much of the concern about the applicability of the Constitution of India and the extension of Parliamentary legislations was related to the agrarian reforms. Between 1948-1950, the National Conference passed very radical land reform legislations—relating to abolition of intermediary classes, tenancy reforms and the most significantly reforms related to abolition of big landed estates. The first phase of reform led to the abolition of the intermediaries and their privileges—as many as 396 jagirdars and 2,347 mukkaridars lost their privileges in 1948. By another reform in 1948, by which the State

Tenancy Act of 1924 was amended, the rights of the tenants were protected and relief was given to a large number of tenants. The most important phase of reform however was in 1950, the Big Landed Estates Abolition Act. As per this last reform, ceiling on land holding was fixed and provisions were made for transfer of surplus land to landless tillers. The ceiling on the holding of land was placed at 22.75 acres. This ceiling excluded the orchards, fuel and fodder reserves and uncultivable wasteland. 'According to the figures made available by the Government of Jammu and Kashmir, by the end of the financial year 1952-53, around 200,000 acres of land had come under the direct ownership of tillers'. (Chowdhary, 2016, 75) As per a report of *Hindustan Times* (July 17, 1953) over one and half lakh tillers actually received land and around six lakh persons benefitted by this reform. By another provision the indebted peasants were provided relief. (Aslam, 1977, 59-64)

What made the ceiling laws radical was the acquisition of surplus land and its redistribution without applying the provision of compensation. No provision was made for compensation to those landowners whose land would be declared surplus and to be acquired by the state for redistribution purposes. As the Land Compensation committee constituted by the Constituent Assembly of the state had noted, there was no moral or legal case for providing compensation to the former owners of the land. It recommended that 'both on principles and policy the payment of compensation to the expropriated proprietors is not desirable. The payment of compensation would perpetuate the present inequitable distribution of wealth' (Jammu and Kashmir Constituent Assembly, nd,).[1]

The political and economic transition that followed the trans-

[1] The case for compensation was rejected as the big landowners were seen to be having concentration of wealth. The impoverished status of the tillers to whom the surplus land was redistributed was also offered as the reason for not compensating those whose land was acquired. They were in no position to pay the compensation amount in lieu of the land given to them. In their case, giving them land without payment of money was a way of doing justice to them. 'What was robbed from them immorally and is due to them morally, for what they are being asked to pay those who get it without morality.' (Jammu and Kashmir Constituent Assembly, nd, 265.)

fer of power from the Dogra monarch to the National Conference, generated a positive response in Kashmir. Despite the fact that the accession of the state was contested by Pakistan and the Kashmir question came to be internationalized (as it was being debated in the United Nations), there was no tension in Kashmir. On the contrary, the land reforms had helped legitimize the accession and Kashmir's association with India. Political and economic analysts observing the situation in Kashmir at that time noted the positive impact of the land reforms on the political inclination of Kashmiris. In his observations on Land Reforms, Leidjinksi, who travelled to various parts of Kashmir, noted how the politics followed by Sheikh Abdullah was endorsed by a large number of Kashmiris, mainly due to the reason that such politics was benefitting them. He notes how Sheikh was attaining more popularity because of the economic transition that Kashmir was witnessing and how due to such popularity of the leader, his political decisions were happily accepted by the people. (Ledijensky, 1952, 180)

Situation in Jammu was quite different.

II

Response in Jammu to Political Transition and Socio-Economic Changes

Jammu region had started facing turbulence much before the tribal invasion, especially in Poonch where there was rebellion by the local Muslims. The tribal invasion in October 1947 that led to the division of the state, affected the Jammu region the most. It was now a truncated region that had faced extreme communal violence in the months of October-November 1947 and was struggling with huge refugee population. Its problems were aggravated by the growing anxieties related to the shift in political power. In any case the division of Jammu had led to what Snedden calls 'geographic and demographic diminution' (Snedden, 2017, 194-195) As he notes, 'Jammu went from being the princely state's most populous and influential province to a clear second to the Kashmir Valley in the smaller political entity of Indian J&K.' Though in terms of land,

Jammu still was a bigger province compared to Kashmir region, however, in terms of population, Kashmir now emerged as the larger region. Along with the area that came under the control of Pakistan, there was also a shift of population to that area. Although most of the refugees came to be rehabilitated in Jammu region, however, in terms of population, it was Kashmir which emerged as the larger region.

Balraj Puri refers to the psychological impact that shift of political power from the Dogra ruler to the National Conference government had in Jammu region. In the context of binary that was already created, the loss of power of the ruler was seen in terms of loss of power of Jammu region as such. However, besides the psychological factors, there were many other factors that led to the anxieties about the transition that was taking place. To begin with, there was this specific class of the privileged Dogras who were adversely impacted by the policies adopted by the National Conference government. These included the class of privileged and big landowners, the state officials and kinsmen of the Dogra ruler. These classes enjoyed most of the benefits of the Dogra rule and the transition to the NC government with its declared policy to do away with the feudal structures certainly affected these classes in an adverse manner. The land reforms, particularly the Big Landed Estate Act of 1950 hurt the big land owners of this region. Apart from the Kashmiri Pandits and a small landed class of Kashmiri Muslims, much of the land was in the hands of the Dogra Rajputs. This class was severely affected by the ceiling limit and it had to forgo large portions of their land which was acquired by the state and distributed to the landless tillers. Most of the beneficiaries of the redistribution were the landless Kashmiri peasants and Dalits who formed a substantial number in the Hindu-dominated areas of Jammu region, particularly the Jammu district. (Brecher, 1953, 110) Though the loss of land and the privileges enjoyed by these Jammu Dogras was in itself a big source of discontent among them, however, their grievances were further accentuated due to the non-payment of compensation. They particularly compared their situation with the other landowners in rest of Indian states where the provision of compensation was applied. While it was constitutionally obligatory for other states to provide for compensation while acquiring the land, the Jammu and Kashmir state was not bound by these

provisions of Indian Constitution. Under Article 370, most of the provisions of the Indian Constitution including those related to the compensation provision within the chapter of Fundamental Rights were not applicable to this state. (S.O.; 1953; 394)

This had a clear-cut implication for the politics of Jammu region. The privileged land-owning class was the most articulate class in Jammu region and it developed a negative response not only against the National Conference government but towards the Article 370 itself. For them it was this particular article which made them to be treated differently as compared to their counterparts in the rest of Indian states. (Rao, 1999, 12)

With the vocal sections of society getting disgruntled, there developed a discourse about the 'communal' character of the land reforms. Despite the fact that landless people in Jammu region also got benefitted from the land reforms, this discourse that these reforms were 'pro-Muslim' and 'anti-Hindu' remained intact for two reasons. First, there was almost a regional cum religious divide between the beneficiaries of land reforms and those who were adversely impacted (while most of the Kashmiri Muslims, with the exception of few rich land owners, were landless peasants, the land was mostly owned either by the Kashmiri Pandits or Jammu-based Rajput landowners). (Chowdhary, 2016, 180) Second, the beneficiaries of the land reforms in Jammu region were mostly belonging to lower castes among Hindus who did not have any voice. Hence, irrespective of the benefit to this section of society, the land reforms were seen to be 'anti-Hindu' and also 'anti-Jammu'.

However, the discontent due to the radical policy decisions of the National Conference government was not limited to the privileged classes only, there were many among the not-so-privileged people in Jammu who were also discontented. This was mainly due to the fact that they were also adversely impacted by the transition. Apart from the big land owners, there were many medium and small landowners who were adversely impacted by these reforms. Due to the Kashmir-specific politics of the National Conference, this party while applying the principles of land reforms did not take into account the geographical peculiarities of Jammu region. Unlike Kashmir Valley which comprises the fertile land in plain areas, much

of land in Jammu region is known either for being *Kandi* (infertile) or being located in mountainous terrain. Here, as the productivity of land was much lower, the uniform ceiling limit which was imposed for the whole state, was considered to be unjust and discriminatory. (*The Hindu*, 3 February 1953)

This was not the only case where the radical policy frame of the National Conference did not take into account the peculiarities of Jammu region. As a matter of fact, most of the policies followed by the new government were Kashmir-specific and were at odds with the economic and occupational structure of Jammu region. Unlike Kashmir region where the large part of the population comprised those dependent upon agriculture and a small part were artisans; in Jammu region, due to the nature of land, besides agriculture, trading and soldiering formed important occupations. Both these occupations were adversely hit by the policies of the new government. Following the model of socialist economy, as per its commitment made in the New Kashmir Manifesto, the National Conference government started intervening and controlling the economy and shifting it from private to public sector, creating state monopolies and cooperatives. Thus, the state not only became the biggest trader and importer but also the distributor. It started importing various goods including cloth, food, salt, sugar and kerosene from other states and distributing to people through various cooperatives. (Chowdhary, 2016, 182) Trade in these and other goods became a monopoly of the state. This particular policy of the state affected large number of traders in Jammu region whose livelihood was dependent on importing of these goods from other states and selling it within the state. Similarly affected were a large number of those people whose livelihood was dependent on the transport sector. This sector also came under the state monopoly, leading to the sudden loss of income to these people.

Among those who were adversely affected by the state policies and were resentful of the National Conference government were a large number of people who were part of the Dogra army and now stood demobilized after the Dogra army was taken over by the Central government. Joining the state forces had remained a traditional source of occupation of this infertile and difficult mountainous

terrain. In the whole of Jammu region, the tradition of joining of army or other forces was so strong that almost every family had a member in the forces. For some families, it was the most favoured occupation running through the generations. This was not only true of the Dogra belt, but also of the Pahari belt. 'In the Muslim majority area of Jammu across the Chenab, … Muslim Rajputs were an influential group. They had fought many battles under the Dogra rulers to build up the State' (Puri, 1966, 14). That is the reason that a large number of army personnel were part of the British forces and as Puri has noted, 'in percentage of population, the region topped all regions of the country in providing recruitment to the army in the second war.' (Puri, 1966, 14)

Apart from these sections of society, there were many others who were resentful of the National Conference government in the immediate post-Accession period. With Jammu region having faced maximum turbulence in 1947, there were many kinds of people who had faced the brunt of the developments and needed urgent attention by the state. Among these were those who were impacted by the violence and division of the state in 1947—both Muslims as well as Hindus. However, in their perspective the kind of attention they required could not be given to them at that time. As Zafar Choudhary mentions, the Jammu Muslims who needed the state support in the aftermath of communal bloodshed and division of the region, felt 'neglected' by the 'Kashmiri leadership' including Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah. (Choudhary, 2012. 52) Choudhary states that 'the community was not reached out to when it needed a healing touch.' In his understanding, Sheikh had grudge against the Jammu Muslims for not identifying with the politics of the National Conference in pre-1947 period and therefore not doing enough for them when they needed the governmental support especially after 1947 violence. 'Deeply wounded, physically, psychologically, economically and politically', Jammu Muslims felt that they were not treated at par with Kashmiri Muslims and were certainly ignored in terms of share of power and other offices. Since the Kashmiri leadership did not represent them, they 'went into a prolonged silence.' (Choudhary, 2012, 51-52)

The Hindu refugees who had crossed over from the areas now under the control of Pakistan and were waiting to be properly rehabilitated, also felt ignored. As per the information provided by the Government of India, around 32,000 families of Hindus and Sikhs had been displaced from various parts of PAJK. Of these, 26,300 families had been residing in Jammu after their displacement. They were facing a lot of problems in the process of their rehabilitation and there was a general feeling that not enough was being done by the government. The refugees from Muzaffarabad were disgruntled that instead of being relocated in Kashmir province (of which Muzaffarabad was a part), they were forced to be located in Jammu region. (*The Statesman*, 10 September 1952) Most of other refugees had the grudge that the process of the assessment of their loss and rehabilitation had not been initiated.

III

Political Vacuum in Jammu Region

In explaining Jammu's relationship with Kashmir in post-1947 period, the political vacuum that the region was facing in the period of transition is very crucial. The situation in the region was quite opposite to that of Kashmir where one could get a reflection of strong Kashmiri regional personality—a sense of Kashmiri political collective, a well-entrenched political organization (the National Conference), a charismatic and mass leader, and a people-oriented political programme. The situation was quite in contrast to this in Jammu region. Not only the region stood divided, but also without a direction of politics. With the shifting of most of the Muslim leadership to the areas now under the control of Pakistan, the Muslim politics that was dominating the region so far, was no more available. As already stated, the National Conference did not have much hold here. Due to the regionalization of its politics, this party had confined itself to Kashmir region and did not extend itself to the oppressed peasantry and working classes in Jammu region.

There was also no presence of other parties like the Congress and the Communist Party of India. As per a conscious decision, the lead-

ership of these parties had chosen to operate through the National Conference. So, neither of the two parties had an independent organizational structure in this state. While some attempts were made by progressive Jammu leaders like Sardar Budh Singh to establish a branch of Congress in the region, however, they were snubbed by the Congress leaders at the national level. One major reason for this being that the focus of the Congress leadership was on Kashmir and its politics. Besides the personal linkage of leaders like Nehru with that of the leaders of the National Conference, it was the popular movement in Kashmir that had attracted the Congress leaders to Kashmir's politics. The same was true of the Communist Party of India. It found in Kashmir a readymade laboratory to experiment with its ideology and therefore right from the mid-1930s, it had started infiltrating in the Muslim Conference politics. By the time the National Conference emerged, it had succeeded in capturing the imagination of Kashmiri leadership. However, despite their strong influence within Kashmir, the communists did not formally operate in the state. Rather than having their own party, their energies were used in influencing policy direction of the National Conference party. So, like the Congress, the Communists also operated through the National Conference.

There was, therefore, no organization parallel to the National Conference that could articulate, mobilize and represent Jammu's regional politics. (Puri, 1981, 93) Apart from certain progressive individuals and a few semi-political organizations, there was no party that could represent Jammu people across the religious divide. The semi-political organizations like Hindu Mahasabha were limited not only by their constituency of the urban Hindus, mainly in the dominant Hindu Jammu-Kathua-Udhampur belt, but also because of their lack of mobilization of the mass of Dalits and other Hindus living in rural and remote areas.

It was in such a situation when the Muslim Conference, the dominant party of Jammu region had withdrawn itself from the region and when there was no presence of National Conference, Congress or the Communist Party, that there was almost a political vacuum in this region.

The political vacuum of the region had definite implications for

both the politics of Jammu as well as its relationship with Kashmir. With Kashmir-based National Conference in steering position, the logic of the state politics was defined by the politics emanating from Kashmir. 'Kashmir', in this situation, had become synonymous for the state and its politics was seen to represent the whole state.

What helped Kashmiri identity politics to dominate the politics of the state was the very well-organized politics of the National Conference on the one hand and the leadership of Sheikh Abdullah on the other. Much before the accession, the National Conference had emerged as the most credible voice of the state. Because of the progressive nature of its politics and its mass base, it had attained legitimacy and respectability. National support was, therefore, readily available to its politics. Both the Congress and the Communist Party of India were fully supporting the National Conference in its fight against the Dogra regime. As stated above, there was no such party in Jammu region that had similar stature.

The presence of an organized party with a clear-cut ideology, cadre and mass-base was in itself sufficient to lead to political superiority of Kashmir region (particularly in a situation where there was almost a political vacuum in Jammu region); however, it was the presence of Sheikh Abdullah as the charismatic mass leader that led to the dominance of Kashmir politics within the state from the very beginning. Sheikh not only represented himself as the popular leader with a following all over the Valley, but also commanded respect all over the country. Besides Sheikh, Kashmir had a number of other leaders, who though did not equal to Sheikh in his leadership qualities, but were mass leaders in their own right. Jammu's tragedy was that there was neither a mass politics nor a mass leader.

It was for these two reasons—a) the political vacuum in Jammu region and b) the edge of Kashmir region in terms of its party, ideology, mobilization strategies and established leadership—that Kashmiri political elite got a precedence over the Jammu leadership in defining the politics of the state. From the beginning, the politics of the state came to be defined as per the terms of the Kashmiri identity politics and its goals as these had evolved in the post-1930 phase. What helped in the process was the entry of National Conference in the power politics of the state after Accession. Being the ruling party, it completely controlled the political narrative of the state. It was this

party which was, in any case, seen to be representing the people not only of Kashmir but of the whole state.

The National Conference, on its part, sought to transform its ideology into the official policies of the state. It was the National Conference leadership that negotiated with the Centre the principles of asymmetrical federalism and ensured its basis by insisting on Article 370 of the Constitution of India and a constitution for itself.

There was no sense of identification with this ideology in areas beyond the Valley of Kashmir. Hence, the political arrangements that were negotiated by the National Conference were not 'owned' in the same manner in Jammu (or even in Ladakh) in the way these were owned in Kashmir region. For the the people here, these arrangements were seen to be emanating from Kashmir's politics and therefore linked with Kashmiri interests. Hence, while these arrangements especially Article 370 representing the special Constitutional status and Autonomy—remained sacred to Kashmiris, in Jammu there was either an indifference or hostility to these arrangements.

By another implication, the political vacuum of the region resulted in the appropriation of widely prevalent political discontent, especially in the predominantly Hindu-dominated belt of the regions, by the Hindu Rightist organizations. Since there was no other popular party or organization that could have given a direction to Jammu's regional discontent vis-a-vis the problems of transition, across the religious divide, it was only the discontent in the Hindu belt that came to be articulated. The discontent within the Muslim belts of the region remained mostly unarticulated. This had the implications of not only introducing the communal factor in the politics of the region, but also creating religious faultiness. Despite the fact that the regional discontent was an all-pervasive phenomenon and Muslims had their own share of grievances along with the Hindus, it could not take the shape of an inclusive politics. With the parties and organizations of Hindu Right mostly raising the regional issues, the Muslims remained outside this politics and therefore the politics of Jammu's discontent was mostly confined to the Hindu belt of the region.

A very crucial added factor that not only exacerbated the level of discontent in Jammu region but also the gulf between the two regions—was the way Jammu as a whole had come to be vilified by

the leaders of the National Conference and the national level leaders. Failing to make a distinction between the vocal politics led by the right-wing forces and the local aspirations of people, these leaders termed the politics of region per se as communal. Sweeping references were made to Jammu's communal politics. This, as per the arguments given by Balraj Puri, resulted in intensifying the level of discontent. In his words this meant the 'character assassination of the whole community and its humiliation. (Daily Ranbir, Jammu cited in, Puri, 1966, 18)

The Hindu right politics meanwhile was defined by the ideological position against the Article 370 and it not only problematized Jammu's relationship with Kashmir but also problematized State's negotiated relationship with the Centre. The special constitutional status of the state was challenged as early as 1952 in Jammu region, in a rather big way, via a massive agitation.

IV

Jammu's Grievances and Political Response—1947-1952

Praja Parishad—Jammu's Regional Party

Despite the political vacuum, the political discontent was simmering in Jammu region in the post-1947 period. This discontent came to be articulated by a newly floated local organization, namely the Praja Parishad.

The Praja Parishad was a Jammu-based local organization with its affiliation with the Hindu Mahasabha and the RSS and was strongly supported by the newly formed Bharatiya Jana Sangh at the national level. (Baxter, 1969, 120-121) As per Balraj Puri, the Praja Parishad was formed by a group of dissident RSS workers in 1947. (Puri, Jammu, Clue, 1966, 32-33) Though its President at the time of its formation was Hari Wazir,[2] however, the more popular face of

[2] According to Dasgupta, Hari Wazir died in Kashmir action, as a Commissioned Officer of the Indian Army. (Dasgupta, 1968, 195)

this organization was Pundit Prem Nath Dogra who later became its President. (Dasgupta, 1968, 195)

Formed at a time when the state was undergoing a phase of transition, this organization filled a very crucial political gap in Jammu region. As already stated, the division of the state and a substantial part of the region coming under the control of Pakistan had led not only to political uncertainties but also political vacuum in this region. With the demographic change there was loss of the dominant Muslim politics of the region and there also was no political organization that could represent the people of the region. However, being affiliated with Hindu Right organization, the Praja Parishad represented mainly the Hindus.

By its very ideology, the organization stood against the application of Article 370 of Indian Constitution and based its politics on the demand of its abrogation. Like the RSS and the Jana Sangh, it perceived the special Constitutional status of the state as an impediment in the full integration of the state with India. Despite the fact that the state had acceded to the Union of India and by the application of Article 1, it was one of the listed states of India, this organization like RSS and Jana Sangh, perceived the integration of the state with India as incomplete. It was opposed to the idea of the state having a separate constitution or for that matter a separate flag. Among the demands that were raised by this party included : repeal of Article 370; application of the Indian Constitution in its entirety to the state; removal of customs barriers and full integration of economic programmes and planning with the rest of India; application of all fundamental rights conferred by the Indian Constitution, extension of jurisdiction of the Supreme Court and full safeguard to civil liberties; statutory abolition of untouchability and adequate provision for the uplift of backward communities. It also stood for the retention of the ruling dynasty with the Dogra ruler as the constitutional head of the state (Chowdhary, 2016, 184-185)

As per Balraj Madhok, the ideologue of the Jana Sangh who inspired the local leaders to form the Praja Parishad, the main object of this organization was "to achieve full integration of Jammu and Kashmir State with the rest of India like other acceding States and safeguard the legitimate democratic rights of the people of Jammu

from the Communist-dominated anti-Dogra Government of Sheikh Abdullah." (Dasgupta, 1968, 195, citing Madhok, 1963, 37)

Soon after its formation, the Praja Parishad became a popular organization. Though its support base was quite ideological and came from its Hindu-rightist political stances, it also had a very local character and therefore its support base extended beyond its ideological politics. Among those who were the supporters of this organization included the disgruntled elements in the region, particularly the dispossessed classes that were resentful of the policies of the National Conference, including the big land-owning class whose land was acquired by the state and distributed to the tillers. Others who were equally affected by the dismantling of the feudal structure of the state also supported this organization as it directly pursued their interest.

However, the appeal of the Praja Parishad was not limited to only those classes that were adversely impacted by the radical economic policies of the National Conference. It actually emerged as the most popular organization of Jammu region and found support across the class-lines. To quote Puri, it was 'first though partial expression' of regional identity of Jammu.' And in its existence people found an outlet for reacting to the fast-pace changes that were taking place in the region.

What helped it gain its social base and popularity, at least in the urban centres of predominantly Hindu areas of the region, was the unaddressed discontent due to the transition taking place and a strong feeling that Jammu had lost its influence and power while Kashmir region had been disproportionately empowered. The party, therefore, had gained popularity in the Hindu belt of the region not only because of its linkages with the already operating Hindu organizations like the RSS and Hindu Mahasabha but also because it was supported by various sections of society across the class divide. (Jaffrelot, 1993, 129)

It therefore was, 'a coalition of hurt regional pride, protest against arbitrary rule, urge for share in power and democratic expression, a sense of insecurity about the future of the state, dispossessed feudal and vested interests and Hindu communal sentiments' (Puri,

1983, 189) Different groups therefore supported this organization for different purposes.

Despite its Hindu-rightist leaning, Puri saw this organization as more of a local/regional response to aggressive Kashmiri nationalism that had started asserting itself in the immediate post-accession period. To quote him, 'The origin and growth of Praja Parishad were largely due to local causes. It was essentially a reaction to the aggressive trends in the local nationalism of Kashmir and a region which felt politically ignored and condemned.' (Puri, 1966, 33-34) It is true that the organization came under the influence of Jana Sangh and at a later date also merged with it, however, its local origin and support base was important. It was due to the mobilization of this organization that anti-Kashmir discourse evolved and formed the logic of Jammu's politics. 'Contestation of Kashmir's politics, especially its emphasis on autonomy, became the hallmark of Jammu's politics in the immediate post-Accession period.' (Chowdhary, 2016, 184)

Despite the fact that the Praja Parishad was emerging as a popular party of Jammu region, its role was not recognized by the then Kashmiri leadership. The response of the National Conference towards it, was quite hostile. Rather than viewing the popularity of this party as a reflection of growing discontent in Jammu region, it merely dismissed it as a 'communal organization.' And rather than allowing it a democratic space, it (National Conference) sought to scuttle its politics. Following a protest organized by this party, large number of activists and leaders of the party were arrested. As Dasgupta records the incident: 'A large-scale arrest of the Parishad leaders including the seventy-year-old President, Mr. Prem Nath Dogra, was swiftly ordered. During the summer of 1949 as many as 294 members of the Praja Parishad found themselves lodged in prison." (Dasgupta, 1968, 195)

The effort of the Praja Parishad to enter into the Constituent Assembly of the state was also rebuffed by the National Conference government. On very flimsy ground a large number of nominations of the candidates belonging to the party were rejected. As a result, the Parishad decided to boycott the election. While announcing its boycott, the Parishad accused the Government of 'illegal practices

and official interference, wholesale rejection of the Parishad nomination papers.' (Korbel, 1966, 221-222)

With this boycott, the Parishad lost the opportunity to represent its viewpoint within the Constituent Assembly of the state. As Verma notes, this party 'commanded considerable influence among the Hindus of the Jammu region and would have won a couple of seats from there. The dissent expressed by the Parishad members of on the floor of the house would have also benefited the deliberations and discussion.' (Verma, 1994, 115)

Praja Parishad Agitation 1952

Remaining outside the Constituent Assembly, the Parishad continued to express its opposition to the ongoing developments, particularly those related to the political arrangements of the state. The organization with a strong support coming from the Jana Sangh and Hindu-Rightist organizations, protested against all such provisions symbolizing the special and differential status of the state vis-à-vis other stats of India. As a result of these protests, minor or major, there was often a confrontation between the NC and the Parishad and the situation in Jammu had become quite volatile. One of these situations of volatility resulted following the protest of students against the hoisting of NC flag along with the National flag during the official function in one of the colleges of Jammu which Sheikh Abdullah was to attend. Following the arrest of the protesting students, there were demonstrations and the situation became so bad that the Jammu city had to be kept under curfew for 72 hours. To quote Dasgupta, 'The distressing reports of the Jammu situation aggrieved the Indian leaders and Ayyangar came to Kashmir in April 1952 to cool passions. At his instance, the Parishad leaders were released, but matters did not improve' (Dasgupta, 1968. 196)

The political divergence between the two regions and the failure to address the divergence certainly led to intra-state tensions. While Praja Parishad made the opposition to the special constitutional status of the state as the central point of its politics, Sheikh Abdullah reacted by raising doubts and question about his decision of joining

the Indian Union. In April 1952, he expressed these doubts publicly in a speech that he gave in Ranbirsinghpura:

> No one can deny that the communal spirit still exists in India. Many Kashmiris are apprehensive as to what will happen to them and their position if, for instance, something happens to Pandit Nehru ... As realists, we Kashmiris have to provide for all eventualities ... If a special status for Kashmir was not granted in the Indian Constitution, how can we convince the Muslims in Kashmir that India does not interfere in the internal affairs of Kashmir? ... We have acceded to India in regard to defence, foreign affairs and communications in order to ensure a sort of internal autonomy... If our right to shape our own destiny is challenged and ... if there is a resurgence of communalism in India, how are we to convince the Muslims of Kashmir that India does not intend to swallow up Kashmir... such developments might lead to a break in the accession of Kashmir to India. (Puri, 1981,99, citing from *Khidmat*, Srinagar, April 13, 1952)

Much of the volatility of Jammu's politics under the influence of Praja Parishad related to the developments that were taking place at that time. The Constituent Assembly of the state was taking major decisions which were being opposed by the Praja Parishad. Of these decisions one related to the adoption of the State Flag. The Constituent Assembly of the state 'adopted, without any reference to India, a new Kashmir State flag in the form of a white plough on a red background, with three white vertical stripes running parallel to the staff, thus replacing the old State Flag.' (Dasgupta, 1968, 196-197) It also took the decision in relation to the abolition of hereditary monarchy. Identifying itself with the Maharaja, the Parishad was opposed to the idea of abolition of monarchy. Following the recommendation in an interim report of the Basic Principle Committee, the institution of monarch was declared as 'a relic of feudal system' and its replacement by an elected head of the state was recommended.[3] (Dasgupta, 1968, 196-197) Later in August 1952, a formal

[3] In the opinion of Dasgupta, all these important decisions were taken by the state leadership without keeping the Central government in loop.

resolution was unanimously passed in the Constituent Assembly for abolishing the monarchy and having an elected head of the state.

The situation however turned serious following the Delhi Agreement. It was following this Agreement that Praja Parishad launched a massive agitation.

As per Delhi Agreement, the direction of the future relationship between the Centre and the State was concretized. Going beyond the Instrument of Accession and Article 370, the Agreement clearly specified the areas in which the provisions of the Constitution of India would be extended and in which the provisions the Constitution of the state would be applied. The shape of Autonomy that the state would enjoy and the special provisions that would be applied to this state were made clear by this Agreement. Thus, it was resolved by this Agreement that unlike the rest of India where the residuary power is vested in the Centre, it would be vested with the state. Similarly, the state was to have its own flag along with the flag of India, even though the supremacy of the Union flag was asserted. Though the provisions of Citizenship were extended to the state and all the domiciles of the state were regarded as the Citizens of India, however it was accepted that the state would have the power to bring in a law for conferring special rights and privileges for the state subjects. Among other things agreed were those related to the extension of certain provisions of the Indian constitution related to the Supreme Court, Parliament, the President; the provisions related to Emergency.[4] There were, however, certain unresolved issues around which no immediate decisions could be taken. The extension of Part

[4] It 'was agreed that Articles 52-62 should be extended to the state. It was also agreed that the power of the President to grant reprieve and commuting of death sentence would be extended to the state. With regard to Supreme Court, it was decided to have only appellate jurisdiction. On the issue of conduct of election to the Houses of Parliament, the application of Article 324 to the state was agreed to'. On the issue of Emergency powers, while it was agreed that Article 356 and 360 would not be extended to the state, there were different opinions on the extension of Article 352. Hence, it was decided to add a proviso to the Article 352 that application of this Article would be 'at the request or with the concurrence of the Government of the state' (Chowdhary, 2019)

III of Constitution containing Fundamental Rights and the issue of Financial Integration for instance remained unresolved (to be resolved at a future date).

Soon after the declaration of this Agreement, the Praja Parishad started 'a civil disobedience campaign'.[5] In the understanding of Parishad, the Delhi Agreement formalized the 'excessive autonomy including a special status to the Jammu and Kashmir State.' (Verma, 1994, 40) Its campaign of civil disobedience was aimed at mobilizing the people against the Agreement as well as the special constitutional status of the state. The campaign took the form of massive agitation following the arrest of a number of Praja leaders including its President, Prem Nath Dogra.

The agitation popularized the slogan of '*ek vidhan, ek pradhan, ek nishan*' (one constitution, one president and one symbol/flag) and clearly reflected the ideological position of RSS and Jana Sangh that demanded the abrogation of the special constitutional status of the state as guaranteed by Article 370 of the Indian Constitution. As per the leaders of the Parishad, the Article 370 was a sign of incomplete merger of the State with the Indian Union and the separate constitution was an impediment for state's integration with India. They particularly objected to the nomenclature of the Sadar-e-Riyasat and Prime Minister as they found them replicating the position of Indian President and Prime Minister.

Besides opposing the Article 370 Praja Parishad raised various other issues. Referring to these issues, Dasgupta notes:

> Abdullah was accused of communalism, of intentionally breaking up Hindu majority districts for electoral purposes, of making Urdu a compulsory subject for all, of filling up key posts with the Muslims and of nationalizing the transport system, sacrificing the interests of the non-Muslims. It was maintained that the way the elections were

[5] Jammu observed a complete boycott of a reception of newly appointed Sadar-e-Riyasat, Yuvraj Karan Singh. Karan Singh was appointed as Sadar-e-Riyasat on 14th of November and on 24th he visited Jammu. However, to show resentment to the replacement of monarch with the elected head, even though the son of monarch, there was a complete boycott in Jammu. (Dasgupta, 1968, 202)

> conducted in Kashmir smacked of totalitarianism and that there was an evident tendency to enlist the support of the Communists. More fundamental was the charge that Abdullah contemplated the establishment of an independent Kashmir, the indication of which was visible in his insistence on a separate flag, Constitution and Head of State.' (Dasgupta, 1968, 202)

Reflecting their ideological difference from the Kashmiri leaders, some leaders of the Praja Parishad showed concern about the future relationship of the region with Kashmir and also demanded a separate state for Jammu. Raising the issue of discrimination of Jammu under the National Conference government, the Praja Parishad accused the NC government for catering mainly to the Kashmiri interest and ignoring the interests of people in Jammu region. In this context, it raised the matters related to compensation for land acquisition, rehabilitation of refugees, lack of employment opportunities for people of the region and issues related to the demobilized army people. (S.O., 1953, 395-6)

Besides the Jana Sangh that came openly in support of the Praja Parishad, other organizations that came in active support of the agitation included the Ram Rajya Parishad and Hindu Mahasabha. In fact, in order to give a systematic support to the Parishad, these three organizations made a common front, formulated a common programme and launched a joint Satyagraha in support of the agitation.[6] (Weiner, 1957, 200)

The Jana Sangh made it a national issue. Its President Shyama Prasad Mukherjee was actively associated with the leaders of the Praja

[6] As noted by Myron Weiner, 'On February 8th talks were held between Dr. Mookerjee and Mauli Chand Sharma of Jan Sangh and N.C. Chaterjee, Dr. N.B. Khare, and V G Deshpande of the Hindu Mahasabh, concerning the Praja Parishad agitation in Jammu. As a result of these meetings a joint program was formulated. ... A few weeks later the three organizations jointly launched a satyagraha in support of the four-months old Jammu Parishad agitation. Shortly after. Mookerjee, Chatterjee, Nand Lal Sharma (General Secretary of Ram Rajya Parishad), Guru Dutt (President of Delhi State Jan Sangh), and eighteen others were arrested in Delhi for leading a procession in defiance of a government ban on processions, but a few days later were released from jail...' (Weiner, 1957, 200)

Parishad. He engaged Pundit Nehru and Sheikh Abdullah, through a long correspondence, on the issue of Article 370 and special constitutional status of Jammu and Kashmir. In this correspondence, he not only spoke of this provision as inhibiting the full integration of the state with India but also complained about Sheikh Abdullah having established a 'republic within republic'. His basic objection to special constitutional status of Jammu and Kashmir was that it was not fitting in the model of 'uniformity' and therefore endangering the 'unity' of the state. In his correspondence with Sheikh, he thus stated:

> The flag is the symbol of unity... But if each State starts having its own flag, according to the wishes of the party in power, then it will be a blow on India's national and political unit. And that is what you have sought to have done...You call yourself as the Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir. There can and should be one Prime Minister and he is the Prime Minister of India as a whole. In all other States the first executive citizen is known as the Chief Minister, but you must have a separate nomenclature for yourself! The head of your State must be known as Sadar-i-Riyasat (President). India can have only one President and that is the President of India. Other Heads of States may be known as Governors, Rajpramukhs or by any other name as the constitution may provide. There cannot be a republic within a republic. There can be one and only one Sovereign Parliament and that is the Parliament of India. Consciously or unconsciously you are creating a new sovereignty for Jammu and Kashmir State. India has been torn into two by the two-nation theory. You are now developing a three-nation theory, the third being Kashmiri nation. There are dangerous symptoms and are not good for your State or for the whole of India.' (Mookerjee to Sheikh Abdullah, 13 February, 1953, Upadhyaya, nd, 76-7)

The Praja Parishad agitation was quite intense and had the impact of giving a direction to the political discourse of Jammu region for the times to come. Though the ideological basis was rooted in the Hindu Right response towards the special constitutional status of the State and Article 370, its legitimacy was drawn from the generally prevailing discontent in the region.

Another major impact that the agitation had was on increasing the political gap between the two major regions of the state.

The agitation in general and the demand for abrogation of Article 370 in particular, 'provoked sharp reaction in the Valley. Tensions between Kashmir and Jammu regions, got expressed in divergent and antagonistic popular attitudes—at any rate of their dominant communities—on the issue of the State's relation with the Centre.' (Puri, 1981, 98) The political divergence, particularly on the question of Accession of the state and state's relationship with the Centre, in the long run, had the implications of increasing the tensions between the two regions.

Competitive regional chauvinism and communalism were the long-term consequences of the agitation. The divergent political aspirations and the unaddressed political gap between the two regions had the implication of giving the 'regional' identity politics the 'communal' connotation. The regional identity politics of Jammu in its chauvinistic form came to represent the Hindus of the region and similarly the Kashmiri regional identity politics came to be identified with the Muslims. What was worse, the competitive communal and regional chauvinistic politics of Jammu and Kashmir reinforced each other. To quote Puri, 'The regional chauvinism, with communal overtones, formed a vicious circle which provoked and reinforced each other. (Puri, 1981, 98)

Rather than finding a reason to enter into dialogue and evolve a consensus, the leadership of the two regions often took extreme position. This at times generated a discourse related to the division of the state. Thus, Sheikh would often say that 'If Jammu and Ladakh so desire they can decide to integrate with India and leave the Valley free to have a limited accession.' (Puri, 1981, 99- 100) Meanwhile, Jammu leadership during the agitation also offered for zonal plebiscite, following the idea that different regions of the state can follow different paths for defining their relationship with the centre and in the process even opt for division of the state.

The agitation also had the implication of giving a sectarian basis to the regional discourse of Jammu. This was mainly due to the reason that though regional factor was important, however, the implicit use of religious identity of Jammu Hindus to refer to their 'discrimination' and neglect by various Hindu Rightist organizations, made it mainly a political discourse of the Hindus of the region. In any

case, the Praja Parishad even while agitating for regional interest of Jammu could not extend its appeal to the Muslims of the region and it remained limited to the upper castes located in urban areas of the predominantly Hindu part of the region. Muslims were not part of this politics. As Zafar Choudhary notes when this party came into being 'Muslims of the province were in complete chaos… and they had no political channel to express their views...' (Choudhary, 2012, 53)

Excluding the Jammu Muslims from its agitational politics, had the implication of giving a communal tag to the agitation and in the process created a base for communalization of regional politics in the state. As Verma notes, Sheikh Abdullah termed the whole movement in Jammu as communal. He accused the Praja Parishad of being a communal organization which jeopardized relations between Hindus and Muslims. While denouncing the role of the Parishad and the landlord classes he often blamed the entire Jammu region, particularly the Hindu dominated areas, for alienating his group from the non-Muslims and strengthening communal consciousness in different regions. (Verma, 1994, 40)

This tagging of 'entire Jammu region' as indulging in 'communal politics' further had the implication of alienating the people of Jammu from Kashmir's politics. Balraj Puri, who himself had observed the Praja Parishad agitation, has argued that this has had psychological impact on the people of Jammu region. In his words, 'by defaming Jammu, Kashmiri leaders have endeavoured to build up between Jammu and Kashmir a barrier higher than Pir Panjal.' (Puri, 1966, 21)

In any case, the developments in the immediate post-accession period resulted in polarizing the politics of the two regions. There were incidents, one after the other, which sharpened the political divide. Partition had resulted in communalizing the politics of the state. Praveen Swami argues that in the context of post-partition developments, there was mutual fear among Muslims and Hindus. While the Muslims feared about their safety within India, Hindus had the fears that they had become part of a state where the power was held in the hands of Kashmiri Muslim elite. 'Kashmiri elites used their new power to redress the historical grievances of their

region's Muslims. However, they demonstrated little regard for competing claims from Ladakh and Jammu. For example, the National Conference worked to give Kashmiri Muslims greater representation in the State's bureaucracy. However, they marginalized Hindu Dogras, Muslim Gujjars, and Ladakh residents of both religions.' Praja Parishad, according to Swami accentuated the fears among Muslims. He further notes: 'Sheikh Abdullah used the rise of the Praja parishad to stoke communal fears in Kashmir. In one speech, he claimed the Praja Parishad was part of a project to convert India 'into a religious state wherein the interest of Muslims will be jeopardized'. (Swami, 2008)

V

Continued Political Divergence: Jammu's Political Response in Post-1952 Phase

I

Agitational Politics

The Praja Parishad agitation left a deep impact on the politics of Jammu region. Though it was the abolition of Article 370 that formed the Central point of this agitation, however, it was seen as a response of Jammu region against its persistent situation of regional discrimination and neglect. It was seen as a moment of Jammu's regional assertion.

Though the demand for abolition of Article 370 remained an ideological issue for the supporters of Hindu Right, for the people of Jammu in general, it was the regional discrimination that formed the logic of the region's politics. Any political party or organization seeking political space in the region, had to make the issue of regional discrimination/neglect/deprivation as the core issue of its politics. That was the reason that protests articulating regional discrimination, in one form or the other, have remained the recurring phenomenon here. For years together, it had been the tradition of the region to have the first day of opening of Secretariat after the annual government move (*Darbar* move) as a day of protest when various Jammu-based political parties would protest against the government with Jammu's neglect as the core issue. Over the period Jammu witnessed various agitations in which the reference point remained

'Kashmir', 'Kashmir- dominated politics', 'Kashmiri power holders', 'Kashmiri government'.

After the prolonged Praja Parishad agitation, there were a number of other agitations, many of them quite intense and spread all over the region. In mid-1960s there was a students' agitation which was transformed into a regional agitation. The major demands raised during the agitation were those related to 'establishment of University, technical educational colleges, an ayurvedic college' etc. (Hindustan Times, 2013) The agitation is still commemorated in Jammu region and three 'black days' are observed every year in educational institutions in the memory of four students killed in the agitation. These days are also used by the political parties for reiterating the regional grievances and mobilizing the youth in the regional politics.

So massive had this agitation become that the Government of India had to appoint an enquiry commission headed by former Justice Dr. P.B. Gajendragadkar. The points of reference for the Commission were to examine, among other things, the causes that lead to regional irritations and tensions and to recommend remedial measures. The Commission acknowledged the regional discontent because of different sets of political aspirations of different regions. It therefore observed that 'even if all the matters were equitably settled, we feel that there would still be a measure of discontent unless the political aspiration of the different regions of the state were satisfied. In fact, we consider that the main cause of irritation and tension is the feeling of political neglect and discrimination, real or imaginary from which certain regions of the state suffer.' (Report of the Jammu and Kashmir Commission of Inquiry, 1965, 7) The Commission also recommended a full-fledged separate University for this region and creation of statutory State Development Board and Regional Development Boards for each region.[1]

There was another major agitation that took place in 1978.

[1] Though the University of Jammu was established following this recommendation, however, the statutory Regional Development Board were not established as per the recommendations of the Gajendragadkar Commission. To quote Behera, 'After vacillating for a year, the state government appointed boards comprising civil servants and experts. Since these

Initially a local agitation in Poonch around the issue of employment, it assumed the regional character with issue of 'regional imbalances' being the major grievance around which the people were mobilized. The issues that were raised, included those related to Kashmiri domination in the state secretariat; larger share of Kashmir in development resources and in political power; non-implementation of the recommendations of Gajendragadkar Commission. (Chowdhary and Rao, 2003, 201) Among other issues that were articulated during the agitation included 'statutory, political and democratic setups at the region, district, block, and panchayat level.' (Behera, 2007, 134) The agitation was initially spontaneous but became organized with the formation of an All Party Action Committee which was joined by all Jammu-based political parties. The agitation lasted for 94 days. (Jagmohan, 2006, 219) To pacify the agitationists, another Commission of Enquiry headed by Justice S. M. Sikri was appointed to 'suggest measures for redressing regional imbalances in development allocations, government services, and admissions in professional institutions' (Behera, 2007, 134) The Sikri Commission acknowledged that the reasons for regional irritations lay in the discrimination and favouritism in the field of development, employment and education. (Report of the J&K Commission of Enquiry, 1980, 7) Among the major recommendations of the Sikri Commission was the one related to financial allocations to region after applying a formula related to the population, area, backwardness and availability of natural resources. It also recommended the setting up of State Development Board. (Behera, 2007, 134)

In 1987, the 'Darbar Move' agitation took place when Farooq Abdullah government took the decision to stop the annual movement of the secretariat from Srinagar to Jammu. This was an old practice dating from the Dogra period when the whole Darbar used to move to Jammu in the winter months and to Srinagar in summer months. The practice continued after 1947 and officially the state came to have two capitals—Srinagar as the summer capital and Jammu as the winter capital. Since the movement of the whole secretariat along

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boards were neither statutory nor representative and never functioned, the entire exercise of the commission remained academic.' (Behera, 2007, 134)

with all the files and officers and staff meant not only huge financial cost but also loss of precious time (officially the secretariat would close for a week in summer and one week in winter, unofficially it would take much more time to restart the work) attempts were made from time to time, to find an alternative to the movement of secretariat. However, there have been a lot of political implications linked with the move because of which such a decision could not be taken. The location of the government in Srinagar and Jammu for six months each created a kind of balance between the two regions and also generated a sense of parity for the two. More so, as each of the two capital became politically prominent every six months—not only with the government functioning from here but also the sessions of Legislative Assembly being held here. Thus, while the budget session of the Assembly took place in Jammu, the Autumn session of the Assembly took place in Srinagar. Even though it was financially a bad practice but in political terms, it was a fair decision giving an equal capital status to both the regions. Any change in the decision would mean change in the status quo and therefore would upset the balance. Hence, the decision taken by Farooq Abdullah government to not to go for Darbar move and permanently locate in Srinagar resulted in huge resentment in Jammu region. An agitation was launched initially by the Jammu Bar Council but soon got the widespread support from various other political and non-political organizations. Besides the BJP, others who joined the agitation included the Shiv Sena, International Democratic Front and even Jammu members of CPI. (Verma, 1994, 222) It was also joined by the Congress party that was part of the ruling coalition led by NC.

Though initially the agitation was preponderantly led by Hindu organizations, however, as it gained momentum, it crossed the religious barriers. Besides the secular parties, a local Muslim body, the Muslim Action Committee of Jammu also joined it. So intense was this month-long agitation that it needed an intervention from the Home Minister of India. Only after the assurance that the decision related to stopping the annual Darbar move would be reversed, the agitation was called off.

Among other agitations that erupted in Jammu included the Riasi agitation (1988) demanding the implementation of the recom-

mendations of the Wazir Commission to create three more districts in Jammu regions and other agitations including the ones related to regional distribution of MBBS/BDS seats (1998) establishment Central University (2009) and for location of AIMS (2015).

II

Jammu's Response to Politics of Conflict in Kashmir

It is around the conflict politics one can see the widest gap between Kashmir and Jammu regions. Since 1953, the identity politics of Kashmir has been informed by the contestation of the state's relationship with India and it is around this contestation that the internal dimension of conflict has been organized. This context of conflict politics, as we have seen above, is ethno-centric in nature and is confined to Kashmir Valley and does not extend to Jammu. For that reason, the state had been prenially witnessing internal tensions.

It was in post-1953 phase that the internal context of conflict took shape. The conflict was defined by contestation of the finality of State's accession with India and the demand of 'Raishumari' (plebiscite). The demand was raised by Sheikh Abdullah and the Plebiscite Front formed in 1955. It was the consequence of this stance of Plebiscite Front that the mainstream politics lost its primacy and the separatist psyche took deep roots in Kashmir. Till the time the Plebiscite Front remained in existence, the popular separatist sentiment also remained strong in Kashmir. It was in 1975 that Sheikh Abdullah, shunning the demand of plebiscite, joined the power politics. The Plebiscite Front was dissolved and the National Conference was revived. The cadre of Front were accommodated in the NC.

The 'plebiscite' politics, though having a base in Kashmir, did not have any reflection in Jammu and Ladakh regions. If the Plebiscite Front had any influence in Jammu region, it was limited within the Kashmiri speaking areas of Doda belt. However, even here, the demand of plebiscite did not take the shape of popular politics. In rest of the region, it did not have any impact. Even the Muslims of the region remained unaffected by this politics. As Zafar

Choudhary has noted, the Muslims of Jammu region had their own specific issues with the Kashmiri leadership and they did not automatically follow or identify with the Kashmiri politics in post-1947 period. (Chowdhary, 2012)

The intensity with which the demand was raised in Kashmir and the indifference to the demand that was reflected in Jammu region clearly showcased the political divergence that existed between the two major regions of the state.

The demand for 'plebiscite' generated anxieties in Jammu region, especially in the early post-Accession period. This anxiety emanated from the possibility of a real plebiscite that might go in favour of Pakistan. As Puri notes, 'the spectre of plebiscite haunted the people' and 'fear of a pro-Pakistan verdict' generated a reactionary politics. (Puri, 1966, 50) The support that the Hindu rightist politics received from the urban sections, especially in the predominantly Hindu belt, was due to the such anxieties. (Similar anxieties were later generated by the Kashmiri separatist politics in the post-1990 period)

In response to the Kashmiri demand of 'plebiscite', there were three-fold reactions in Jammu region. On the one hand, it reinforced the politics of Praja Parishad and the demand for 'full constitutional integration' of the state. The demand to abolish Article 370 was raised with full force and legitimacy. The special constitutional status of the state was held responsible for emboldening the 'secessionist' forces. Second, it led to an enthused politics of regionalism. With the objective of asserting ideological and political difference from Kashmir, Jammu's political class started raising the issues of grievances of Jammu region vis-à-vis Kashmir in more assertive manner and making demands ranging from separation from Kashmir to having more political power and more autonomy for the region. Third, as a counter to Kashmiri nationalism, regional politics came to be combined with a strong tone of nationalism. Assertion of nationalism became a major component of Jammu's regional identity politics.

It was with the onset of armed militancy in 1989-90 period that conflict politics entered a new phase. However, the armed militancy did not operate in a vacuum and it was supported by an intense politics of popular separatism. Throughout the initial years of this phase, there were massive demonstrations reverberating with '*azadi*'

slogans. This was the time when almost the whole Valley was swayed into the separatist politics.[2]

The period of militancy and separatism, like the earlier phase of 'plebiscite' politics sharpened the political divide between Kashmir on the one hand and Jammu region on the other. Though the region of Jammu was impacted by militancy in a number of ways, the political gap between the two regions was quite evident.

Militancy was rooted in Kashmir and had emanated from the local political conditions as these were evolving over the period. This politics did not have much linkage with Jammu's politics which had altogether different logic of politics. This is not to argue that Jammu was not infested by militancy at all. By 1993, militancy had registered its presence in Jammu region especially in the Doda belt and certain areas of Udhampur belt (Gool, Gulabgarh, Mahore). Later, it was to impact the Poonch Rajouri belt as well. Though there were local recruitment to militancy from all these areas, however, the context of militancy here was altogether different.

Unlike Kashmir, militancy in Poonch-Rajouri was not backed by separatism. There was no public display of *azadi* sentiments and

[2] Since its beginning the separatist politics has taken various shifts and has gone through at least three phases—the militancy phase; the post-militancy phase; and the new age militancy phase. The militancy phase was characterized by the centrality of armed militancy which was initially comprised of indigenous and locally rooted militant organizations. What was peculiar about this phase of conflict politics was that legitimacy was attached to the militancy as people owned and supported militants. The post-militancy phase is the one which started with the decline of armed militancy. By the year 2002-03, militancy had started declining and in the next few years, the number of militant attacks as well as the number of active militants had been so reduced that the militancy ceased to have much effect on the politics of the state. The phase of new age militancy started soon after the 2014 Assembly election, which was, paradoxically quite normal and participatory. This phase saw the re-emergence of the militancy, though in much smaller scale. What differentiated this new age militancy from the initial phase of militancy was that it was much more locally rooted and much more intense.

no indication that people were swayed by the separatist politics.[3] To quote Zafar Choudhary, 'in Rajouri and Poonch militancy did not last for more than few months after its eruption in 1990 and then stayed dormant before externally induced revival across the state in late 1990s.' Whatever support there was for Kashmiri separatism in this belt, Suba Chandran argues, 'could not be sustained for the lack of physical, economic, cultural and political connections. As the militant movement became violent, the fault lines became apparent, leading to the decline.' (Chandran, 2007) In his argument it was the 'Kashmiri' character of the Hizbul Mujahideen, the major militant organization that 'kept the people from this belt away from militancy.' The role of the cultural factor in restraining the role of the militants, has been noted by many. Puri also argues that due to the fact the most of the militants were Kashmiri speaking, they did not have local support in this area. (Puri, 2012, 62)

The people of Doda, however, could identify with Kashmiri separatism because of ethnic and ideological linkage with Kashmir's politics. Hence apart from the foreign militants who had located themselves in this belt for its terrain, there were locally recruited militants who were highly motivated and came from middle-class background. However, the political response of Doda sub-region has been much more layered. Despite the local basis of militancy, separatism could not take deep roots here. This was clearly reflected from the vibrancy of the mainstream politics throughout the decade of 1990s. Apart from the regular party politics, there was a parallel politics around the demand of Hill council. While sentiments in Kashmir were being raised around *azadi* politics, the popular sentiment in this area were being articulated around the developmental politics of 'Chenab Valley Hill Council'.

Beyond these areas which came to be infested by militancy, the

[3] A respondent from Poonch thus noted: 'When Kashmir was being swayed by the separatist politics, we were very curious. We would talk about it among ourselves and even sympathise with them when we heard of people getting killed in cross fire. However, we were also concerned about the implications it would have on us the Muslims of Jammu region. We just hoped that militancy would not reach here.'

scenario in Jammu was altogether different from that of Kashmir. Despite the frequency of militant attacks in various parts of the region, Jammu, remained a 'normal' place. While the political life was totally paralysed in Kashmir, in Jammu there was lot of political vibrancy.

As political divergence between Jammu and Kashmir became more perceptible during the period of militancy and separatism, it had significant implications for Jammu's politics and its relationship with Kashmir.

III

Demand for Regional Autonomy

With separatism emerging as the dominant response in Kashmir; Jammu's identity politics was also sharpened. Various kinds of demands, aimed at restructuring of Jammu's relationship with Kashmir, were made in the region during the post-1990 period. These demands ranged from 'regional autonomy' to 'separation of Jammu from Kashmir'. The demand for regional autonomy was so strongly rooted in Jammu's politics in 1990s that all political parties included it in their manifesto. So much so that even the National Conference that had been opposed to this demand till now, incorporated it in its 1996 election manifesto. The BJP which also till now had not incorporated the idea of 'regional autonomy' in its politics due to its opposition to the Article 370 and the very idea of 'autonomy', also raised the demand for 'regional councils'.

The concept of Regional Autonomy, though used by various political actors in Jammu region, has not been clearly defined. It was only Balraj Puri who threw up the idea as a solution to the inter-regional tensions as well as for resolving the conflict politics at the internal level. Though initially, the idea was floated at the individual level, however, later on it attained a wide currency and came to be used by various political parties and organizations.

Puri's framework of regional autonomy evolved in support to as well as in critique of the overall concept of Autonomy. The concept of Autonomy, as traditionally offered by National Conference, in Puri's

opinion is incomplete without incorporating the idea of regional autonomy. Since the concept of autonomy is a federal idea, this idea should be extended to the regional and local levels. He emphasized the plural character of the state and argued that the unitary model of governance for this state is not suitable. And as the state enjoyed autonomy under Article 370, the same autonomy should have been extended to the region, district and village level. His model of autonomy and federalism was therefore comprised of five tiers—Centre, State, Region, District, Panchayats (Puri, 1981)

Since his model of Regional Autonomy was based on the extension of the idea of State Autonomy, it was not accepted by the Hindu Rightist organizations like the BJP. Since these organizations demanded abrogation of Article 370, they could not support the idea of its extension at the regional level. However, as the time passed, the concept started getting acknowledged in the region. For want of any other model for empowering the region within the existing structure, the demand was raised for regional autonomy. During various agitations that erupted in Jammu from time to time, when the regional grievances vis-à-vis Kashmir were voiced, the demand for empowering the region and providing it autonomy was also raised. Hence, by the decade of 1990s, regional autonomy became a popular goal of the region. 'What was demanded was greater regional share in governmental structure, devolution of political and administrative powers from state to regional levels; separate allocation of funds for each of the region and greater share of regions in state resources; employment opportunities etc.' (Chowdhary, 2019)

It was in response to the popularity of the demand that the National Conference committed itself to the goal of regional autonomy along with state autonomy during the 1996 Assembly election. One major reason for that was related to militancy and separatism in Kashmir. The National Conference rather than operating from Kashmir region, had located itself in Jammu region and therefore had to show its sensitivities for Jammu's popular discourse.[4] Other

[4] This was mainly due to the collapse of the democratic political space in Kashmir. With violence reigning supreme, no political party could oper-

than that, the party had never been open to the idea of regional autonomy for Jammu.

Following this electoral commitment, the NC after forming the government in 1996, did constitute the Regional Autonomy Committee along with a State Autonomy Committee with the objective of going into the question of regional grievances. Balraj Puri who had been championing the idea of Regional Autonomy was appointed its chairman. However, even before Puri could complete its assignment, he was removed as its chairman. The new chairperson did submit a report but that came to be highly contested in Jammu region. The reason for this was that rather than recommending ways by which Jammu region's grievances could be tackled and its empowerment could be suggested, the report negated the very idea of Jammu being a region. It saw Jammu as a conglomerate of disparate cultural and ethnic units and recommended the division of the region into three regions. The three disparate regions that it identified in Jammu were: a) Jammu comprising Jammu, Kathua and Udhampur (excluding Mahore tehsil) districts; b) Pir Panjal comprising Poonch and Rajouri districts and ; c) Chenab Valley comprising Doda district. The Mahore teshil that was to be carved out of Udhampur district, was to be included in this region. As per an alternative proposal, the Regional Autonomy Committee Report recommended that district be taken as a unit for devolution of powers from the state and instead of empowering the region and giving it autonomy, each district may be empowered by way of devolution of powers. Hence rather than devolving the power from the state to region, it was recommended that the powers be devolved from the state to the district.

The Regional Autonomy Committee Report generated lot of resentment in Jammu region and was critiqued on various grounds. It was seen as a politically motivated report that not only sought to negate the very claim of Jammu as a region but also sought to internally divide it and place people in confrontation with each other. By arguing that Jammu is not a region and that Doda belt and Poonch-Rajouri belt had equal claims to be called as regions—this was seen

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ate from Kashmir region. National Conference was a targeted party and score of its workers were killed during the period of militancy.

as a move by the National Conference government to create internal rift within the region.

However, the biggest critique of this report was that its recommendation of reorganization of the region was based on communal rather than cultural basis—that it sought to separate the predominantly Hindu belt of Jammu region from the Muslim majority belts of Poonch-Rajouri on the one hand and Doda belt on the other. The fact that the report had recommended the carving out of Muslim majority area of Mahore Teshil from Udhampur district and linking it with the Doda belt—was seen as a clear proof of this communal plan.

For many, this was a reflection of the plan of the Kashmiri leadership to pursue its theory of 'Greater Kashmir'. In the face of the regional divide, the Kashmiri leaders had been pursuing the idea of extending the notional boundaries of Kashmir region from the existing culturally homogenous Valley of Kashmir to include the predominantly Muslim areas of Jammu region. One would find this idea being floated in various ways. While defining Kashmiri identity, the Kashmiri leadership would often include the Muslims of Jammu belt and therefore extending the meaning of 'Kashmiri' to all the Muslims of the state.

The Regional Autonomy Committee Report along with the State Autonomy Committee Report, therefore, created lot of resentment in Jammu region. The State Autonomy Committee Report recommended the restoration of the autonomy as guaranteed by the Instrument of Accession and Article 370. While the National Conference got an Assembly resolution passed in favour of the restoration of autonomy in its pristine form, the political leaders, mostly belonging to the Hindu Rightist Parties opposed the demand. The other political parties were also not very happy with the two reports and critiqued it as anti-Jammu.

In Jammu's urban areas, meanwhile, the demand was raised for 'trifurcation' of the state and the formation of Jammu state. It was during this period that Jammu Mukti Morcha, an organization of University-based professors was organized with the demand for a separate state for Jammu state. By 2000 another organization Jammu State Morcha came into existence with the agenda of 'trufurcation' of

the State of Jammu and Kashmir with two separate states of Kashmir and Jammu and UT status for Ladakh. The emergence of these organizations reflected the urban fascination with the idea of separation of Jammu region from Kashmir. The demand for the trifurcation of the state was later supported by the RSS in its Nagpur resolution. (Chowdhary, 2010, 159)

Even when the idea of trifurcation has not caught the popular imagination and has generally remained at the periphery of Jammu's politics, the discomfort in the region about its relationship with Kashmir has been reflected at many levels. The 'reorganization' of inter-regional relationship had been demanded by many. While there is sufficient support for the demand for Regional Autonomy, the demand had also been structured in terms of 'devolution' of power; restructuring of state administration on regional basis and reorganization of the state resources—including finances and employment resources on regional basis. There had also been a demand for a 'fair delimitation' as there persisted a strong feeling that in allocation of seats in the state Assembly the region had not been fairly treated. Along with the demand for regional empowerment, demands have also been raised about empowering particular sub-regional belts. Thus, there was a demand for Hill Council both in Poonch-Rajouri (Pir Panjal Hill Council) as well as in the Doda belt (Chenab Valley Hill Council).

VI

Political Divergence—Amarnath Agitation

So different has been the logic of the politics of the two regions that it divides the state practically in two different political entities. Internally it is not only the political organizations and political parties that are divided on regional basis but also civil society organizations, the professional bodies and even the social organizations. Most interesting is the case of the Chambers of Commerce and the Bar Councils. The fact is that not only the two regions have parallel organizations—for instance Kashmir Chambers of Commerce and Jammu Chambers or Kashmir Bar and Jammu Bar—but also the fact that these organizations are deeply involved in the local politics and therefore are often found to be confronting each other in their political stances. The Kashmir Bar, for instance, is not only associated with the Hurriyat Conference but has been very actively involved in the separatist politics of Kashmir. And there have been many such situations, like the Amarnath agitation, when the two bars have been playing prominent role in their respective regions, albeit taking a mutually contradictory position. The Chambers have similarly been embroiled in conflictual situation during Amarnath and other agitations. Though political parties have been managing their public postures, but one can always see the internal tensions between the Jammu and Kashmir factions of the Congress and National Conference.

Regional sensitivities, meanwhile, have been so sharpened that on any issue the two regions taking opposite stand can enter into a mode of confrontation. In last one decade or so, so many issues have

been raised in which the mutually exclusive demands have been so raised that even the Central government has been forced to deal and placate both the regions. Thus, when the Centre announced the decision of one Central University for the state, it was difficult to choose where to locate this University—in Jammu or Kashmir region. In the end, the Centre ended up giving two Universities to the state—one located in Kashmir region and the other in Jammu region. Same controversy has been raised about the location of AIMS, IITs, etc.

The fragility of the inter-regional relations was clearly reflected in 2008 when Amarnath agitation engulfed the whole state (Ladakh being exception) and the two regions were clearly placed not only in mutually exclusive politics but also in a mode of confrontation.

I

History of Amarnath Yatra

Amarnath cave that is located at a height of around 3,888 meters above the sea level is located in Anantnag district, around 48 kilometres from Pahalgam. It is a holy place for Hindu pilgrims and is famous for the formation of ice *lingham*, the phallic symbol of Lord Shiva. The cave as per a legend was discovered by Buta Malik, a local Kashmiri Muslim shepherd and over the period it became popular among the Hindu devotees not only from Kashmir but from other parts of India. For quite some time, the Malik family was in charge of the pilgrimage. As per reference made to the Yatra in Walter Lawrence's account, Maliks were 'bound to keep the difficult mountain path in order, to carry sick pilgrims and to see that no property is stolen.' The Maliks in turn were given a major share of the offerings: 'the offerings at the cave are divided into three parts—one goes to Lal Gir Sadhu, one to the Pandits of Mach Bawan, and one to the Maliks of Batkot.' (Lawrence, 1895, 298)

Lal Gir Sadhu of Amritsar, would lead the procession. The tradition for the procession and its being led by Sadhu Lal Gir was started during the time of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. At that time the pilgrimage was started at Amritsar. This practice was discontinued in 1940s and instead of Amritsar, Srinagar became the starting point. The

Mahant Giri continued to lead the formal procession. (Shah, 2013, 62) In 2000, the shrine came under the control of Shri Amarnath Shrine Board (SASB) headed by Governor of the state. The formation of the SASB followed the Sengupta Report submitted by Nitish K Sengupta who was asked to inquire into the conditions leading to a disaster in which 243 people died during the pilgrimage in 1996. One of the recommendation of the Sengupta was that the Tourism Department should be administrative department responsible for conduct of the pilgrimage and a Board with Chief Minister at its head should be constituted to 'undertake the primary responsibility of looking into all matters relating to the Amarnath Yatra'. [1]Among the other recommendations made by the Sengupta Committee, one was about its duration and the number of pilgrims. It recommended that there should not be more than 10,000 pilgrims per day and 100,000 pilgrims for the whole period of pilgrimage. It also recommended that pilgrimage should not exceed for more than 45 days. The Board since then has been given the responsibility of managing the administration of the Yatra. (Shah, 2013, 62)

Though the Yatra was an-all India phenomenon for quite some time, however, it became much more popular in the decade of 1990s. This was despite the fact that it was a period of militancy and the *yatra* was affected. There were not only threats by the militants but also real attacks. One of the bloodiest attack that took place was in 2000 when 89 pilgrims were killed by militants. In 2001, 13 people were killed. However, despite these attacks, the *yatra* continued to remain popular. Though the number of pilgrims was reduced to 4824 in 1990, it could pick up by 1992 to 56,000 and reached up to 1,49,920 by 1998, it started progressively rising after 2002. From 1,53,314, it rose to four lakhs in 2004. In 2008 it was 4,98,198 and by 2012 it had come to 6,50,000 pilgrims. (Dept of Tourism, Govt of J&K cited in Shah, 2013, 62) In view of its increasing popularity, its duration was extended. Traditionally it used to be a two-week pilgrimage and it was extended to one and half months. (Sazawal, 2008)

[1] At present the Governor of the J&K is the Ex-officio chairman of SASB

II

Agitation in Kashmir

Among various powers of the SASB, one relates to undertaking 'developmental activities concerning the area of the Shrine and its surroundings.' The Board, therefore, made a case in October 2004 for the transfer of some land in Baltal and Chandanwari area, for which the permission was granted by the Forest Department but by an Order of the state, this permission was withdrawn. The case was again made for diversion of 39.99 hectares of forest land in July 2007 and following its clearance by the Forest Advisory Committee, the Cabinet approved the non-proprietary rights to the land to the SASB. However, soon a controversy started building around the Order. This controversy started on June 17, 2008 after the CEO made a false statement that the land was 'permanently' diverted to the SASB. A perception was built that there was a 'conspiracy' by the Government of India to maliciously divert the land in Kashmir to 'outsiders' and in the process use such decisions to allow the non-state subjects to start various enterprises in Kashmir and in the process change its demography. There were lots of rumours floating around the very purpose of diversion of the land. So much so that it was rumoured that soon a Pahalgam Development Authority is going to be established around the Amarnath area with the purpose of allowing big Indian corporate houses and businessmen to establish their business. Most of these rumours were linked to the argument that this was a tactic to be used by the Government of India to change the Muslim majority character of the state by swamping the Hindus (from India) in Kashmir.[2] The land transfer order, therefore, was seen a beginning

[2] There has been a deep-rooted anxiety in Kashmir about its demography. There is a persistent feeling that the there is a plan of the Indian state to have influx of non-Kashmiris and non-Muslims in Kashmir to deal with the political problem here. The fear goes back to the early post-1947 period. As Praveen Swami notes, even Sheikh Abdullah raised the issue of demographic change. He quotes him as saying immediately after Independence during his visit to Delhi : 'There isn't a single Muslim in Kapurthala, Alwar or Bharatpur' and that 'some of these had been Muslim-majority States'

of the process by which the religious character of the state would be compromised.[3] To quote Tremblay, 'Valley's Muslim population interpreted the land transfer as a civil occupation threatening its demographic dominance and diluting its religious/cultural identity. The SASB was seen as a foreign institution imposed on the state by the Indian authorities, whose activities were perceived as a Hindu invasion of the Valley.'[4] (Tremblay, 2009, 946)

The way the discourse over the Land Order evolved, the common Kashmiris came to believe that it had much to do with the demographic change. The political classes across the party as well as political lines were united on the 'intention' of the government and the linkage between the Land order and the demographic change of Kashmir.[5] The separatists contributed to this discourse by invoking the fear about the 'outsiders' in Kashmir. Swami reports that separatist leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani had tried to play on the fears of the outsiders by referring to cases of sexual violence and kidnapping of

Therefore he stated that Kashmiri Muslims 'are afraid that the same fate lies ahead for them as well.' (Praveen Swami, Frontline, May 24, 2019, 'Feeding on Fears' https://frontline.thehindu.com/magazine/ archive/)

[3] See for instance this statement made by Syed Ali Shah Geelani, 'the State government, in collaboration with New Delhi, wants to settle outsiders permanently in Kashmir to turn the Muslim majority into a minority'. (cited in Praveen Swami, State of Divide', *Frontline*, August 30, 2008, https://frontline.thehindu.com/static/html/fl2518/ stories/20080912251800400.htm)

[4] In the narrative of demographic change a parallel was made with Palestine—how the original residents were outnumbered and the land was usurped

[5] Much of this had to do with the resentment against Governor Sinha in the run up to the agitation. 'General Sinha had earlier incensed many Kashmiris through a pro-active politics … (and) a self-proclaimed agenda of changing the 'mindset' in Kashmir which he set about doing by redefining 'Kashmiriyat' based essentially on its … past. It was against this background that the separatists used the issue of diversion of land to SASB to invoke suspicion among many Kashmiris that there was a grand design behind the order aimed at altering the Muslim-majority character of the state. The fear of 'demographic change', therefore, became the basis of mass mobilization in Kashmir.' (Chowdhary, 2008)

children. 'Such crimes were unheard of in the [Kashmir] Valley, but the day the numbers of outsiders increased, the crime rate here also went up." Since outsiders were "promoting their own polytheistic culture" (Swami, 2008) He saw it as a conspiracy of the Indian State. Raising the fears about the outsiders, he went to the extent of asking Kashmiris not to employ outsiders or to provide accommodation to outsiders. It was in this context that he also asked migrant workers to leave Kashmir. (Swami, 2008) Geelani also invoked the presence of Army as one of the factors underlying the fear of demographic change. In one of his interviews with Asha Khosa, Geelani offered his reasons for the agitation. He linked the issue with huge land under the control of Army. To quote him: 'the transfer of 50 acres of forest land to the Amarnath shrine board made Kashmiris realize once again how insecure they feel. This acted as a trigger. Suddenly, people have started thinking about the 100,000 acres of land that is with the army.' He also blamed the army for 'cultural aggression of Kashmir' through the Sadhbhavana schools run by it. (Khosa, 2008)

Not only the separatists but the mainstream politicians also started arguing that the order was threatening the religious and cultural identity of Kashmir. The media contributed its bid by mixing the issue of Kashmiri nationalism with religious sentiments.[6] As Tremblay pointed out: '… many local newspapers such as Greater Kashmir, the Daily Etalaat (Daily Bulletin), Rising Kashmir, Srinagar Times, and the Daily Aftab (Daily Sun) carried reports and presented data from the Indian census documenting a consistent decline of the Muslim population from 72.4 per cent in 1941, to 68.3 per cent in 1961 and 66.9 per cent in 2001.' (Tremblay, 2009, 941)

As the separatists joined the agitation, it took a clear-cut separatist turn.[7] The agitation took place at a time when the separatist leaders

[6] Praveen Swami has quoted Rising Kashmir writer Khalid Wasim Hassan as writing that "India is now openly following a policy aimed at changing the demography of Kashmir." (Praveen Swami, Frontline, May 24, 2019, 'Feeding on Fears' https://frontline.thehindu.com/magazine/archive/)

[7] While Geelani gave a wake-up call to Kashmiris over the land transfer, JKLF Chairman Yasin Malik threatened fast unto death if transfer order

and organization were facing a crisis of identity in the face of expansion of democratic politics since 2002 and increasing involvement of people in this politics. In anticipation of the Assembly election due in 2008, Kashmir was politically very vibrant and a year in advance, massive rallies started being organized. Besides the local regional parties, the national parties were also organizing rallies and people were showing huge interest in these. As it is, the All Party Hurriyat Conference had been weakened due to its multi-cornered split and it had lost its exclusive control of political agenda in Kashmir since the issues raised by it were also being raised from the mainstream platform.

So, when the resentment started building up in Kashmir over the Land Order, the separatists found an opportunity to expand the separatist constituency and refurbish this politics.[8] The separatist politics therefore got a new life during the Amarnath agitation. The issue of the demography, soon turned into active separatist politics. So emotive was the mass response that the local government was totally shaken and ultimately collapsed.

The separatists led a united front under the banner of Action Committee Against Land Transfer (ACALT). The Action Committee was a broad-based civil society group and apart from the separatists, it included various civil society groups like the Bar Council, the media personnel, traders, chambers of Commerce, and others like trade unions, students' unions, etc.

During this phase and a later phase of agitation, '*azadi*' slogans and demands for self-determination became central. Not only there were massive protest demonstrations with newly invoked slogans but there was a separatist wave all over Kashmir. So massive was the

not cancelled. (https://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/gk-magazine/amarnath-land- rowchronology-of-events/Amarnath land row)

[8] Initially the protests were spontaneous. Gradually disparate organizations started leading these. At times. Jamaat-e-Islami, or even mainstream political parties including the NC or PDP, as well as Syed Ali Shah's Tehreek-e-Hurriyat and Mirwaiz faction of APHC.

response of Kashmiris that a comparison with the 1989-90 period was made.[9]

The Amarnath agitation, however, was not limited to the separatists, the mainstream political leaders were very much part of it. Sensing the mood at the ground level these leaders joined the agitation from the very beginning. Even while the PDP was a part of the coalition government along with the Congress, its patron Mufti Mohammad Sayeed started criticizing the decision of transfer of land. Despite the fact that it was with full involvement of the PDP that the decision was taken, he started publicly demanding the cancellation of the order. And very soon, this party took the decision to withdraw its support from the government.[10] The collapse of the Ghulam Nabi Azad-led coalition (Congress-PDP) government soon after was a result of such withdrawal of the support.

III

Agitation in Jammu Region

The agitation in Jammu started soon after the first phase of agitation in Kashmir. The intense agitation that lasted for around ten days

[9] What was peculiar about this phase of separatist politics that there was a generational shift in the separatist politics. Young boys in the age group of 12-19 were at the centre of the agitation. There would almost be everyday street battles between the security forces and the young stone-pelters. So overwhelming was their participation, that soon the initiative for protests was shifted to these boys and the street politics started dominating the protest politics. As a consequence, the leadership was forced to follow the sentiment on the streets. As the sentiment became hardened and extreme, the Kashmiri separatist politics also became extreme. It was during this time that the moderate separatist leadership was undermined and Syed Ali Shah Geelani emerged as a stronger leader.

[10] In this particular decision, the role of two of its ministers was very clear—the Law Minister Mr. Muzaffar Hussain Baig who was also the Deputy Chief Minister and Qazi Mohammad Afzal who was the Forest Minister. It was with their participation that the cabinet had taken the decision to transfer the land to the SASB.

against the land Order there had forced the government to withdraw the Order. This withdrawal was seen in Jammu as 'succumbing' by the government before the separatist forces and hurting the 'religious sentiments' of people of this region. Hence, soon thereafter Jammu erupted into an agitation. The agitation was centred around the demand for restoration of the withdrawn land order and invoked the debate about separatism being promoted and Jammu region being 'taken for granted'. The revocation of land Order was projected as another example of appeasing the mainstream and separatist leaders of Kashmir. It 'was portrayed as an anti-national and anti-Jammu decision taken under the pressure of separatists to appease the 'Muslims of Kashmir' without taking into consideration the sentiments of the 'Hindus of Jammu'. (Chowdhary, 2008)

The agitation in Jammu was organized under the banner of a newly organized forum that came to be known as Sangharsh Samiti. Although the Sangharsh Samiti was projected as a non-political organization, however, it clearly had political directions. A number of Hindu right parties and organizations including the BJP and VHP were very much part of it. BJP in fact made it a national issue and after the withdrawal of the order, called for a Bharat Bandh. During the peak of agitation its senior leader Lal Kishen Advani announced in Bhopal that the land issue would form a major issue in BJP's electoral agenda for the 2009 Parliamentary election. (*Greater Kashmir*, 2015) VHP was much more aggressive in its response. After the cancellation of the land order, the General Secretary of this organization, Praveen Togadia called for boycott for Kashmiri goods and asked people not to purchase Kashmiri handicrafts, saffron, dry fruits, etc. The idea was floated by various others as well and it became a sore point between Jammu and Kashmir regions at a later date.

Besides the BJP and VHP, other organizations that were involved in the agitation included the Shiv Sena and Bajrang Dal.

Like Kashmir, the agitation was quite participatory in Jammu region and besides the political parties it had involvement of civil society organizations including the local Bar Council, the Business Organizations, the Doctor's Association, University teachers organization, Women's groups and various socio-religious organizations. Jammu Bar Association led by its president, S.S. Slathia particularly

played a very active role in the agitation. While the Bar Association of Jammu also took the decision to provide free legal assistance to the victims of the ongoing agitation, members of legal fraternity suspended their work and staged protests outside J&K High Court complex in Jammu. (*Kashmir Times*, 2008A).

What was particular about the agitation was that it was not limited to Jammu city and its periphery, but was spread to all parts of the region. Protest rallies were organized on every day basis beyond Jammu city—in Bari Brahmana, Bishnah, Gangyal, Vijaypur, Samba, Lakhanpur, Kathua, Udhampur, Reasi, Katra, Ramban, Kishtwar, Bhaderwah, Doda. To have its effect in the whole region, the Sangharsh Samiti coordinated the protests and started the process of the chain hunger strike in all the district headquarters of Jammu region. Also, there was signature campaign with the purpose of involving larger number of people. The petition against the revocation of order transferring land to SASB were signed simultaneously in different places.

So massive was the mass response in Jammu region that the Prime Minister had to call for an all-party meeting. This meeting was attended by 39 parties. In this meeting a unanimous agreement was reached that 'an environment must be created when the agitation could be suspended and issues resolved through the process of dialogue.' Following this meeting, the Union Home Minister arrived in Jammu with all-party parliamentary delegation for talks. (*Greater Kashmir*, 2015)

The protests to begin with were quite moderate but half way through the environment became quite aggressive—especially after the suicide of one of the activist, Kuldeep Kumar, at the site of agitation. The problems aggravated with the handling of his body by the police. The intensity of protest and popular participation increased thereafter. Protests became so intense that these could not be contained even after the curfew was imposed. Defying the curfew, people would come out on the streets. As a result, the authority of the state became very fragile. This proved to be problematic in the handling of the highways. The protestors used the strategy of blocking the national highway (NH-1A) and since this highway linked the state with rest of the country, it created a lot of problem for the

authorities. While many people on their own would gather on the highway, the strategy of blocking the highway was also systematically used by some of the organizations.

One of the implications of the blocking of highway was that the supplies to and from Kashmir that passed through the highway were affected. This led to a fear about scarcity of essential goods like petrol and medicines in Kashmir. Meanwhile there was a lot of anxiety among the apple growers that their trade would be affected. State BJP president, early during the agitation, stated: 'The transfer of land issue has been communalized by the Kashmir-centric leaders. We oppose such moves and if the government fails to remain committed on its decision, BJP will go for "economic blockade". (Sharma, 2008)] The workers of BJP, VHP and Bajrang Dal gathered at various places at the Jammu-Lakhanpur highway and did not allow the movement of trucks and other vehicles towards Kashmir. This certainly had the impact on affecting the inter-regional relations. The supply of the petrol was also affected as the Petrol Tankers Association reacting to reports of thrashing of drivers of the petrol tankers in Srinagar announced the decision to stop the supply of Petrol to Kashmir region. [11]

The agitation at this stage assumed the form of direct confrontation between the two regions. While there were protests and attempts to blockade the highway in Jammu region, in Kashmir also there was a mass response. Massive protests that were led by Geelani and Mirwaiz Umar Farooq were organized to show their resentment against Jammu region.[12]

[11] As per a statement of J&K Sikh Ekta Manch, Jagmohan Singh Raina, eight vehicles belonging to Sikhs were damaged in Jawahar Nagar and Laal Chowk area and few drivers were beaten up. Confirming the report SSP Srinagar Syed A Mujtaba stated that 'Yes, in Parimpora area we have arrested a local driver today for attacking the trucks from outside. Four trucks from outside were attacked with stones and damaged in Parimpora. The business rivalry between the truck drivers is leading to such incidents'. (*Kashmir Times*, August 5, 2008) It was also reported that there were some incidents of beating by mob of non-local drivers at Wanpoh, Bijbehara and Awantipora. (*Kashmir Times*, August 5, 2008)

[12] One could see that this was the period when Jammu and Kashmir

The agitation saw much of the display of religious sentiments of people Apart from the centrality of religious slogan 'Bam Bam Bhole', there was the use of religious symbols and activities like *prabhat feri*, *bhajans* and *kirtan*. One of the implications of use of religious strategies was that there was increasing presence of women in the protests. A large number of women participated in the religious processions and religious rituals like *kirtan* and morning chants. Besides the religious basis of mobilization, there was active use of the symbols of nationalism. In fact, the religious and national symbols were quite inter-mixed. For instance, during the processions, there was display of *trishuls* along with the national flag. The agitationists used national flag and nationalist slogans and asserted that they were fighting against the separatist forces in Kashmir.[13]

Competitive nationalism, therefore was one of the highlights of the Amaranth agitation.[14] While there was renewed assertion of sepa-

regions were located in a binary relationship. In Jammu region, there was lot of pressure on the political and civil organization to take an extreme position—not only identifying with Jammu's regional cause but also opposing anything related to Kashmir. The political actors seeking to take moderate position were taunted as 'pro-Kashmiris' which also stood for being 'anti-Jammu. Ashok Khajuria, the president of BJP for instance accused the Congress, NC and PDP of working as anti-Jammu parties as these sought to consolidate their vote bank in Kashmir and in the process 'hoodwinked' and and 'mislead' the people of Jammu. (*Kashmir Times*, 2008B)

[13] Since long there has been a discourse in Jammu region about the 'patriotic' and 'nationalist' character of Jammu people. Locating themselves in the close proximity of Kashmir politics which essentially contests the Indian position on fundamental issues, the Jammu political leaders claim a moral/nationalist superiority of their politics—not only because of disapproval of Kashmiri separatism but also because of the claim that in the overarching environment of separatism, it is Jammu region that has been holding on to the 'nationalist' position in Jammu and Kashmir.

[14] Much of the manifestation of Indian nationalist response was in reaction to Kashmiri separatism and rejection of the Indian nationalist symbols in Kashmir. One such event which infuriated the Jammu people was the insult to Indian flag on 15 August 2008. On this day efforts were made by the Kashmiris to take down the Indian flag and in many places efforts were made to hoist the Pakistani flag. To quote Praveen Swami, 'Less

ratism in Kashmir through this agitation; there was a strong assertion of 'Indian nationalism' in Jammu region. Such assertion was mainly in response to Kashmiri nationalism.[15]

However, despite the religious and nationalist assertions, the agitation can be characterized as a regional agitation. The intensity of mass response and the wide-spread participation was there mainly because the agitation was seen to be a moment of regional assertion. There was a general feeling among the protestors that Jammu had been ignored and its dignity had been compromised over the period. The agitation, therefore, was seen as an opportunity to restore the regional dignity and regional pride.

While participating in the protests, people would say that they were fighting for 'dignity' and 'honour' of the region that had been compromised by the dominance of Kashmir region. As Leelakaran Sharma, convenor of Shri Amaranth Sangharsh Samiti (SASS) put it: 'In every walk of life, Jammu is treated like a pariah, a discardable part' hence 'Now it has become an expression of accumulated anger against the (Kashmir) Valley's discrimination for the last 60 years.' (Rediff.com, 2008A) The BJP leaders also stated that Jammu was 'oppressed' and 'humiliated' during the past 60 years. They, therefore, demanded 'political power for Jammu' for bringing to an end to the political and economic discrimination against Jammu region. (*Kashmir Times*, 2008B)[16]

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than two hours after the tricolor went up, though, Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel at Lal Chowk were told that an Islamist-led mob was marching there with the intention of hoisting Pakistan's flag on the tower. With strict orders not to fire, the CRPF pulled down the Indian flag rather than allow it to be ripped apart by the protesters. Elsewhere in the city, Islamist leaders such as Asiya Andrabi were doing just that.' (Swami, 2008B)

[15] Leelakaran, the convener of the SAYSS, terming the Jammu people as 'patriots' who were on the streets as defenders of the Indian nation, referred to the victimization of Jammu people because of their national loyalties. 'After all, how long will we have to suffer because we are patriots? (Rediff.com, 2008)

[16] BJP leaders like Hari Om and Ashok Khajuria linked the discrimination against Jammu with the context of political representation in the

One major implication of the agitation was that it sufficiently communalized the political spaces in both the regions. While the sentiments in Kashmir were raised around the demography and 'Muslim majority character' of the state, in Jammu, it was the issue of religious sentiments of Hindus that formed the central point of the agitation. In the communally polarized environment that was generated by the agitation, there were incidents of communal clashes, harassment and even face to face skirmishes. Praveen Swami notes: 'In both Jammu and Kashmir, the shrine war has strengthened the forces that want the State divided on religious lines—a dramatic reversal of the situation in 2002, when the Jammu State Morcha, which call for such a division, was decimated. Islamists in Kashmir, too, have made it clear that they see partition and incorporation of the Muslim-majority areas north of Chenab River into Pakistan as the only way out of the crisis.' In his opinion both the communities exaggerated the danger from each other. While the Muslim response was affected by what he calls 'amplified' picture of killing of Muslims and destruction of mosques, 'Hindus in Jammu, for their part, have been told that the expulsion of Kashmiri Pandits from the Kashmir Valley is a precursor to their eventual fate at the hands of the State's

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Legislative Assembly and other institutions of the state. "The people of Jammu have been reduced to non-entity for all practical purposes and it is Kashmir which has established its stranglehold over the state's political and economic institutions including the vital Civil Secretariat, Legislative Assembly, Revenue and Police Departments, recruitment agencies, financial institutions and technical and professional institutions.' (*Kashmir Times*, 2008B) The demand for constitution and implementation of delimitation was raised by Prof Bhim Singh also. In a meeting of Jammu Notables presided by him there was talk of 'increase in the Assembly constituency from 111 to 130 segments through Governor's ordinance and equitable distribution of the Assembly seats according to People's Representaion Act'. Among other demands raised by this group included ' civil and political rights' for refugees and their descendants of 1947 from Pakistan; elimination of discrimination against Jammu region; revocation of Indus Water Treaty, equitable regional funding, rehabilitation of ex-servicemen by granting them benefits in recruitment and other disciplines and road connectivity with each Panchayat according to central schemes.' (*Kashmir Times*, 2008C)

Muslim leadership.' (Swami, 2008B) There were a number of reported incidences of communal clashes as these erupted in various parts of the region. Despite the fact that the Jammu Muslims recognized the regionally polarized response and showed their solidarity to the cause of 'Jammu Hindus', however, the thin line between Kashmiri Muslims and Muslims in general started becoming fragile as some of the fringe elements started using openly communal language. (Puri, 2008, 8-11)

In many situations the clash between the communities was based on differing response of communities to the agitation. While there were Muslims organizations which had openly registered their support to the agitation,[17] there were many others who were either indifferent or not convinced about their participation in it. One of the situations which led to the tension between the Hindus and Muslims was the enforcement of the total strike which became the mark of the regional protest. Such occasions became provocative when one group sought to enforce the Bandh and the other group objected to forced closures.[18]

[17] Anwar Choudhary, President of Jammu and Kashmir Gujjars United Front: 'We appreciate the people of Jammu for their positive approach despite recent disturbances following the land transfer controversy. The land should be handed back to the Shri Amarnath Shrine Board (SASB)' Further that 'Wherever there is discrimination with any section of people on religion and regional grounds, the Gujjars shall stand with the people for mitigation of any such deprivation. (Gujjar United Front concerned over sectarian attacks', *KT*, July 12, 2008)

[18] This happened in early July in Bhaderwah where Seri market became the scene of tension. Here the activists of VHP who were enforcing the Bandh were confronted by the Muslim shopkeepers and this resulted in stone pelting between the two communities. While the police intervened and the mob was dispersed, however, the situation took an ugly turn when a grenade was lobbed. (*KT*, July 3, 2008) Similar situation developed in Kud on June 30 when BJP activists were enforcing closure of shops and when some people resisted, an argument followed among the two groups of shopkeepers and ended with police intervention and injury to 18 people in clash with police. On the same day clash took place in Reasi and the

There were also reported incidences of the members of minority being targeted. As per a report of *Kashmir Times*, tension was generated in Vijaypura area of Samba district where protestors were making attempts to 'set ablaze the temporary Kullas of Gujjars. (*Kashmir Times*, July 3, 2008) In many reported cases the stranded vehicles of drivers were targeted. As already stated, there were reports of Jammu drivers being targeted in Kashmir and the Kashmiri drivers being targeted in Jammu.

There were voices of concern as well, which sought to restore the inter-community trust and made appeals from time to time to maintain communal harmony. Of these, one was the voice of Jammu Muslim Federation which sought to work as bridge between the Sangharsh Samiti and the Muslims of Jammu and while extending support to the agitation, also made appeals for communal harmony. Similarly, Pradesh Vishawkarma Sabha appealed people to maintain communal harmony and asked people not to fall prey to exploitation in the name of religious sentiments. (*Kashmir Times*, July 31, 2008) Similar appeals were issued by Jammu and Kashmir Workers and Employees Joint Associations Committee. Appeal was made to uphold the plural and the composite culture of the region and the tradition of the secular values of the region.

As noted above, one of the major consequences of the agitation was that the relationship between Kashmir and Jammu was fractured. The kind of political polarization that took place, in the opinion of Balraj Puri, had 'no precedence' (Puri, 2008, 8-11) The agitation, for the first time, brought two regions in an open clash with each other. The issues were so articulated that a zero-sum regional relationship was evolved. In the process, there were lot of acrimonious issues and the situation became extremely difficult with some agitation leaders in Jammu calling for economic blockade of Kashmir and Kashmiri separatists giving a call for shunning the economic and trade relations with Jammu region and doing trade via Muzaffarabad. The 'Muzaffarabad chalo' call was given by Syed Ali Shah Geelani and

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VHP, BJP and Shiv Sena members were injured when they were forcing shopkeepers to close their shops.

other separatist leaders. In Jammu emotions were raised against anything 'Kashmiri' with the consequence that it became difficult for Kashmiri political leaders to even visit Jammu and the name of a local mall was changed from 'Kashmir square' to 'City square'.

VII

Region and Religion—Kashmir Region

Inter-Community Relations in Kashmir: Kashmiri Muslims and Kashmiri Pandits

Kashmiriyat: Discourse of Composite Culture and Fluidity of Religious Boundaries

Kashmiris take a pride in the 'composite' culture of Kashmir. This is despite the fact that it is rather a homogenous society—with people mostly belonging to one religion, and sharing the language, culture and history. The general refrain about Kashmir remains that it is a tolerant and syncretic society. Gandhi is often quoted as having acclaimed the tolerant nature of Kashmiri society. During his visit to Kashmir in August 1947, he had said that he had seen ray of light in Kashmir as there was total peace and harmony here when rest of India was burning with communal violence. (Jammu and Kashmir Legislature, Legislative Council, 1969, 7)

'Kashmiriyat' is a specific term that is used to describe the Kashmiri ethos of plurality, tolerance and syncretic tradition.[1] A construct, though popularized in 1940s and 1950s by Sheikh Abdullah, 'Kashmiriyat' was to become the benchmark to define the Kashmiri society and the standard of its politics for the times

[1] In recent years, there has been sufficient political use of the term Kashmiriyat more specifically in the context of engaging Kashmiris. While Atal Bihari Vajpayee made use of the phrase *Insantiyat, Jamhuriyat and Kashmiriyat*, while initiating the peace process, Narender Modi has also often invoked Vajpayee's usage of this term in his political discourse.

to come. It is a romanticized description of Kashmiri tolerance and inclusivity. (Snedden, 2015, 29)

The term *Kashmiriyat* has been used in a variety of manners. At one level it refers to the composite culture of Kashmir meaning thereby the co-existence of various religious communities, particularly the Kashmiri Muslims and Hindus. It refers to shared cultural-linguistic space as well as the shared history. To quote Gull Mohd Wani, '...Kashmiriyat can be conceptualized as consisting of core values of common heritage of Kashmiri civilization, geographical compactness, socio-cultural moors, linguistic identity, literary traditions, ethnic solidarity and religious humanism. These values fully capture the essence of Kashmiriyat and the varied ways through which it gets expression.' (Wani, 2006) For Riyaz Punjabi, *Kashmiriyat* is 'manifested in the solidarity of different faiths and ethnic groups in the state', and reflects 'fusion and assimilation of varied faiths and cultures' that 'resulted in their particular and specific ethnicity'. (Punjabi, 1990, 137)

Kashmiri identity in this sense is seen to be reflecting a continuity from its Shaivist past to its Islamic present. As a part of continuous philosophical process, the two streams of faith are seen to be merging with each other in the philosophy of the two popular saints of Kashmir—Lal Ded and Sheikh Noor-ud-Din. These two saints, one Hindu and one Muslim, are not only revered alike by Hindus and Muslims but also seen as the 'patron' saints of all Kashmiris.

Lal Ded, or Lalleshwari was a fourteenth century mystic Brahmin poetess of Kashmir whose poetic verses or *Vakhs* are still popular in Kashmiri households and are used on day-to-day basis.[2] 'The oral transmission for centuries illustrates the extent to which she has been a part of folk memory... Over the centuries, Lalla became the wise woman of Kashmir culture. She was invoked not only at moments of personal dilemma but also to celebrate moments of social togetherness.' (Kak, 2007, ix)

Popular among both Hindus and Muslims, Lal Ded is seen not only as one of the patron saints of Kashmir but also the one who

[2] Born as a Brahmin and married early, Lal Ded abandoned her family and wandered around composing and singing mystic poetry.

'helped develop Kashmiri identity, Kashmiri composite culture and language.' (Bhatt, 2008, 37) She is seen as a bridge between the mysticism as reflected in Shaivism and Islam. Her verses are 'suffused with a sense of the fluidity of religious boundaries and this has been interpreted as a manifestation of the Kashmiri ethos of tolerance.' (Zutshi, 2004, 21) Despite her Brahmin birth, she is seen as the precursor to the peculiar 'Rishi Order' of Kashmiri Islam. It is a fact that she is differently named by the Pandits and Muslims (Lalleshwari by Pandits and Lal Ded or Lalaarifa by the Muslims), she is equally revered by both the communities. (Hoskote, 2011, x)[3] Of the many verses of Lal Ded, following is the one that is often quoted to reflect the fluidity of religious boundaries in Kashmir:

> *Shiv chhuy thali thali rav zaan, mo zaan*
> *Hound to musalmaan...*
> *trukay chhuk tu panun paan praznaav ,*
> *Say chhay sahebas suti zanizaan* (Lal Ded)
>
> (Siva is everywhere, know him as the sun, know not the Hindu different to the Muslim
> If truly wise (Trikait) know your own self,
> That alone is the way to know the Saheb (Ultimate Reality)
> (Translation of Neerja Mattoo, 2012, 94)

While translating this verse from Kashmiri to English, Neerja Mattoo notes as to how 'the verse embodies in its own syncretic idiom, the religious, mystic and linguistic synthesis it advocates.' (Mattoo, 2012, 94) She argues that 'by invoking the image of sun shining upon everyone without distinction and going on to emphasise the idea of re-cognition', Lal Ded 'hangs the Islamist valence of Saheb to the apparent reference to the Siva'. (Mattoo, 2012, 94)

If there is anyone who is similarly revered by Hindus and

[3] Chitralekha Zutshi however notes the irony attached with Lal Ded—that she is celebrated for religious fluidity, but Muslims and Pandits have been seeking to appropriate her as 'Muslim' or 'Hindu'. She refers to the 'intense debate generated around the question of her religious affiliation. Kashmiri Pandits claim she was a *Shaivite* and a member of their community, while Kashmiri Muslims argue that though she was born in a Kashmiri Pandit family, Lal Ded accepted Islam later in her life'. (Zutshi, 2004, 20)

Muslims, it is Sheikh Nur-ud-din, the founder or the Rishi order or the order of Babas. Nur-ud-din accepted Lal Ded as his teacher and like her, spread the teaching of humanism and religious tolerance. His philosophy is similarly seen as the reflection of syncretism and a continuation of Lal Ded's mystic legacy and the fluidity of religious boundaries. The very Order of *Rishis* transcended the exclusivity of religious boundaries. The Muslim saints, as Dhar argues, 'absorbed the major tenets of the Hindu philosophy in their own spiritual practices and prescription. This became a very strong cementing factor between the Hindus and the Muslims.' (Dhar, 2009, 103) Bazaz notes that there was so much of fluidity in this Order that it was difficult to refer to *Rishis* either as Muslim or Hindu. To quote him:

> ... (Noor-ud-Din) founded the order of the "Rishis" or "Babas" who carried the torch of Humanism, religious tolerance and Hindu-Muslim unity from generation to generation for over four centuries. ... The "Rishis" wielded tremendous influence over the educated and the illiterate. Many of them had both Hindu and Muslim names; in fact it was difficult to call them either Hindu or Muslim... (Bazaz, 1995, 492)

The Sufi saints were successful in using the cultural space to popularize the religion. That is the reason that rather than acquiring rigid form, Kashmiri Islam continued not only the philosophical tradition of the past, but also the cultural practices and even certain rituals from earlier faiths. (Chowdhary, 1998, 3-6) That is the reason that many outsiders observing Kashmiris have sought to emphasize the uniqueness of Kashmiri Islam. Walter Lawrence, for instance, made famous comment about Kashmiri Muslims never really giving up their Hindu religion.[4] As he notes:

> Kashmiri Sunnis are only Musalman in name. In their heart, they are Hindus, and the religion of Islam is too abstract to satisfy their super-

[4] Riyaz Punjabi notes as to how Mir Shams-ud-Din-Iraqui, a Shia sect saint who had come from Persia to Kashmir in fifteenth century, was unhappy seeing the way Islam was being practiced in Kashmir and was forced to flee Kashmir after he invited the wrath of Kashmiris in his 'efforts to "purify" Muslims and restore the pristine purity' of Islam. (Punjabi, 1990, 112)

> stitious craving, and they turn from the mean priest and the mean mosque to the pretty shrines of carved wood and roof bright with iris flowers where the saints of the past time are buried. (Lawrence, 1893, 286)

Lawrence not only saw absence of the marked difference between the Hindu and Muslim places of worship but he also noticed much commonality between the religious practices of the two religious communities here. Giving instance of certain places being revered by Hindus and Muslims alike, he thus writes: '...at Fatthepura in the Vernal Ilaka, and at Waripura in the Magam Ilaka, I have seen the imprint of a foot in a stone worshipped by the Musalmans as Kadam-i-Rasul (the Prophet's footprint), and by the Hindus as Vishna pad (Vishnu's foot).' (Lawrence, 1893, 286)[5] Riyaz Punjabi similarly notes how the chanting of verses of Holy Quran sounds from a distance as recitation for 'Havana being performed by Brahmins'. (Punjabi, 1990, 103) He further notes the use of Vedic terms and symbols in the recitations of Sufi poets.

> The traditions and beliefs of Rishis have been carried forward by saints, sufis, seers and poets from fifteenth century onwards till date. The sufi poets have been the chief exponents of these traditions... One has to believe in some kind of divine knowledge or intuition because most of these saint poets particularly from the twentieth century, do not seem to have been formally exposed to Vedic or Shastric terminology; Yet they use these terms and symbols with such ease and finesse. They talk about the Vedas, Shastras, Brahma, Rama, Siva Janama with an expertise that they seem to have undergone the rigours of actually experiencing it. (Punjabi, 1990, 109)

He specially refers to the twentieth century poets who are local Kashmiri Muslims, most of whom follow Islamic Sharia 'yet they have strong streak of Trikka running in their belief system and

[5] It was because of the Sufi influence that Islam continued with the cultural and philosophical traditions that Kashmiris already had been following. Transition to Islam, according to Ishaq Khan, was 'a gradual and continuous process of social transition' (Khan, 1997, 65) and as Bazaz notes, it was a resurgence movement that contained the values of both Shaivism and Islam. (Bazaz, 1954, 83)

thought process.' (Punjabi, 1990, 110-111) *Trikka*, it may be noted, is a Kashmiri form of Shaivism which is quite distinct from other forms of Shiava philosophy. (Chowdhary, 1998, 3)

Common Kashmiris do not feel shy of owning their Hindu past and not only acknowledge their Brahmanic lineage but also the Buddhist and Shaivist past of Kashmir. Zaffar, a contemporary cultural philosopher, thus notes:

> I am a Kashmiri Muslim, but also an heir not only to Lal-Ded and Nund Rishi and many other Rishis like Abhinav Gupta, Somanand, Vasu Gupts, and Kashup Rishi. The very name Nund Rishi connects me with 5000 years of my history. The spiritual and aesthetic values that have come down to us from our Rishis and Munis have been a great source of inspiration for all Kashmiris.' (Zaffar, 2012, 72)

For many, it is in this owning of Kashmiri past, that the essence of Kashmiriyat lies. Balraj Puri therefore notes, 'Kashmir Muslims are perhaps the only Muslim community in the sub-continent which owns its pre-Islamic past with as much pride as the non-Muslim Kashmiris do.' (Puri, 1990, 308)

Kashmiriyat as a Political Construct

At another level, Kashmiriyat has a political meaning. It refers to the political sense of the collective that not only locates 'Kashmir' in the centre of the Kashmiri discourse but places positive value on plurality and inclusivity. As an ideology, its roots go back to the later years of 1930s when Sheikh Abdullah sought to shift the nature of Kashmiri identity politics from its 'religious' mooring to provide economic content to it. To quote Chitralekha Zutshi:

> From late 1933, the Kashmiri Muslim leadership began the gradual articulation of the agenda and discourse of the movement in clearly national terms, one that addressed the issues of the Kashmiri nation as a whole. Socialist ideals, which had the potential to unite people to different religious affiliations under a single political and economic program, became the basis of this movement. More significantly still, the concept of Kashmiriyat, with its emphasis on a united, syncretic

> Kashmiri cultural identity, although not overtly articulated, came to inform the political discourse of this period. (Zutshi, 2004, 244)

With the All Jammu and Kashmir 'Muslim' Conference converting into the 'National' Conference in 1939 and with New Kashmir Manifesto being adopted as the ideological blueprint of this new party in 1944, base was set for 'Kashmiriyat' as the official ideology of the party when it took over power in 1947. (Wani, 2006)

Invoking Kashmiriyat at a time when the state was going through a turbulence in 1947 (because of the tribal invasion, Poonch rebellion as well as the contestation of Accession by Pakistan on the other) was a strategic move of Sheikh Abdullah to gain legitimacy. While there were few voices in Kashmir, particularly that of Mirwaiz Yusuf Shah, stressing on the religious identity of Kashmir and making demands for joining Pakistan, the Muslim homeland; Sheikh who was strongly opposed the idea, emphasized on the idea of 'Kashmiriyat' and made the case for the partnership of all communities in building the 'New Kashmir'. '*Hindu-Muslim-Sikh Itihad*' or the unity of these communities, was the slogan that was popularized during this period. Chitralekha Zutshi has noted as to how 'during his brief reign, Abdullah's regime devoted much time and resources to the propagation of its mantra—Kashmiriyat.' She notes that the 'regime adopted poet Ghulam Ahmad Mahjoor as the main votary of this idea.' (Zutshi, 2004, 218)

Kashmiriyat, from that perspective, was Sheikh's project of nation-building that was imagined around the idea of a shared past, Mridu Rai thus notes:

> Among the first goals that Sheikh Abdullah's government had set for itself was to involve all Kashmiris in a nation-building programme—a fresh enterprise selected cultural fragments from an imagined past were collected to construct a Kashmiriyat that would draw in both the Pandits and Muslims.' (Rai, 2004, 196) l

As one of the evidences of this kind of imagination, Rai gives reference to 'reconstruction' of the Kashmir's history in such a manner that rather than the usual periodization—like the period of 'Muslim rule', 'Sikh rule' or 'Hindu rule'—the Kashmiri history came to be

divided into two periods—the period of 'Kashmiri rule' and the 'outside rule'. It is according to this periodization that Kashmir, in Kashmiri common-sense, is seen to have come under outside control in sixteenth century. The Mughals, Pathans, Sikhs and Dogras, therefore, all are treated as 'outsiders' irrespective of their religious differences.[6]

The political construct of 'Kashmiriyat' was Sheikh's pet venture to create a sense of 'Kashmiri identity' over and above the 'Muslim identity'—for the clear purpose of differentiating Kashmiri (Muslims) from Muslims elsewhere in the sub-continent. With 'Kashmiri Muslims' being central to his project, any religion-based identity politics that would privilege Muslims over their regional identity would be inimical to the interest of Kashmiris. His whole argument against the idea of Kashmir joining Pakistan was based on the logic that it would subordinate the Kashmiri identity to the larger Muslim identity and therefore, the specificity of Kashmiri identity would be lost. With regional nationalism providing the basis of this politics, it was logical for Sheikh to reject the exclusively Muslim identity and search for a politics of plurality.

From the political perspective, rejection of the idea of Pakistan as the homeland for Kashmiri Muslims, was decisive moment for assertion of *Kashmiriyat*. The option was rejected on the ground that it was a religion-based option and that it went against the interests of Kashmiri identity politics—whether of economic transformation of society and equitable land distribution or of local control over political destiny of Kashmiris and political autonomy.

Kashmiriyat and Kashmiri Muslim-Pandit Relationship

In the project of Kashmiriyat, the harmony between Kashmiri Muslims and Pandits forms the most important part. Being the only community that qualifies to be Kashmiri along with Muslims, and

[6] Mridu Rai thus notes, 'Their reconstruction of the 'biography' of Kashmir moved not from periods of Hindu to Muslim to Sikh rulers but from an age of Kashmiri rule through a long interregnum of foreign dominance beginning from Mughal in 1586 before the end of Dogra hegemony marked a triumphant return to rule by Kashmiris. (Rai, 2004, 196)

yet justifying the basis of diversity, the Pandits form important part of the 'composite' reality of Kashmir. No other minority of Kashmir—be they the Sikhs, the Gujjars or the Paharis enjoy the privilege of being defined as 'Kashmiri' as only the Kashmiri Pandits are seen as the 'original' Kashmiris in whom one can find the uninterrupted 5000 years old history of Kashmir. Majority of Kashmiris Muslims being converts trace their lineage to the Pandits—some more recent and many in the distant past.

Though even before their mass exodus in 1989, Pandits formed a minuscule minority in Kashmir, and yet they were an influential section of society and were quite visible in the public life. Though concentrated in Srinagar and other towns, they were present in all parts of the Valley. Despite the fact that they have been traditionally controlling the upper and lower rungs of bureaucracy, the Pandits had great visibility in the educational and health system of Kashmir. As teachers and doctors, they not only made their presence felt in Kashmiri Muslims society, but also earned respect, though generally at individual levels. (Chowdhary, 2016, 41) According to Balraj Puri, 'In Kashmir region, the microscopic minority of Kashmiri pundits have played a far more important part in the life of the Valley than their numerical strength should warrant... They represented the historical continuity of and provided intellectual content to the Kashmiri identity.' '(Puri, 1983, 230)

Much of the emphasis on 'composite' culture of Kashmir within the discourse of Kashmiriyat comes from shared cultural ethos of Kashmiri Pandits and the Muslims. The two communities have not only been sharing the language but also the socio-cultural sensibilities of Kashmir and thereby forming a cultural unit. This becomes the most important basis of defining and defending Kashmiriyat.

With the mass-exodus of Kashmiri Pandits, Kashmiri society has lost its context of diversity and the very idea of *Kashmiriyat* has been confronted with a major crisis. With the Kashmiri Pandits as a community migrating out of Kashmir, there has been loss of meaning and relevance of the concepts like 'syncretic culture', 'composite society'; 'shared ethos'. With no 'other' community being there that is 'different' in some respects but shares the same Kashmiri ethos, and Kashmiri sense of belonging—*Kashmiriyat* as a concept is difficult to be justified.

Referring to the crisis of *Kashmiriyat*, Riyaz Punjabi points out the 'signs of exclusiveness' in both the religious communities. In his understanding, the 'vitality' that earlier existed and led the Kashmiris to resist the supremacy of religion-based politics, has gone missing. He cites the example of 1947 tribal raid and 1965 armed infiltration from Pakistan—when Kashmiris resisted the pressure of religion-based politics. However, post the exodus of Pandits, it is the religious exclusiveness that has not only placed Kashmiri identity under strain, but has created 'fertile ground for suspicions, disenchantments and political mechanization to thrive. The religious edge in its exclusive form has been getting sharper, which in turn has been diluting Kashmir's ethnicity.' (Punjabi, 1992, 149-150)

The crisis becomes more acute as the very exodus of the Pandits is mired in controversies and mutual lack of trust—and not only physical distancing of the two communities but also developing wide social gulf between them. So deep is the gulf that the very concept of 'Kashmiriyat' has been challenged both by Kashmiri Muslims as well as the Pandits. While many among the Kashmiri Muslims see the project of Kashmiriyat as a part of 'Indian' conspiracy to flatten the Kashmiri history, privilege its Hindu past and erase the Islamic roots of Kashmiri movement politics[7]; many among the Pandits see it as an imaginary concept or worse an illusion that never formed a reality of Kashmir.

II

Kashmiri Pandit-Muslim Relationship

Social-Cultural Factors

In the literature on Kashmir, there are interesting descriptions about the relationship between the Kashmiri Pandits and Muslims. Walter

[7] As a Jamaat-Islami activist argues: 'The concept of Kashmiriyat is being propagated for personal interests by people of secular nationalists as was done by Sheikh Abdullah. It is being misquoted as religious assimilation to make the Indian occupation permanent'. (Faheem Ramzan, senior member of Jamaat-i-Islami cited by Hassan, 2010,5)

Lawrence observed that because of the physical insulation of the Valley, both the communities had evolved regional specificities and were quite different from their religious counterparts in rest of the sub-continent and consequently neither the Muslims nor the Pandits were orthodox in their orientations. While observing that Muslims were still 'Hindus at heart' and followed many rituals and traditions followed by the Hindus, he noted how the Pandits violated many of the accepted norms of Brahminical society. To quote him:

> There are some curious facts about the Kashmir Brahmans which deserve mention. They are said to be extremely strict in following the rules of Brahmanism when they visit India, but in their own country they do things which would horrify the orthodox Hindus. They will drink water brought by a Musalman; they will eat food cooked on a Musalman boat; the foster mother of Hindu children is usually a Muslamani, while the foster-brother often obtains great power in a Hindu household. (Lawrence, 1893, 300)

The absence of religious orthodoxy within the two communities that helped them bond with each other has been observed by many others. Riyaz Punjabi also notes the impact of the physical insulation of Kashmir of the two communities and the religious fluidity. About the Kashmiri Pandits, for instance, he thus observes:

> Kashmiri Pandits, as the Hindus of Kashmir are popularly known, rooted in the soil of Kashmir have created their own traditions, devised their own symbols and developed their own indigenous philosophies. They wrote their own Vedas and Shastras to guide them in the course of their lives. They had to make a long arduous journey through the plains to reach Gangotri or Haridwar. So they had discovered their own Gangotri at Gangabal and their Haridwar at Shadipur, and declared these places to be more sacred than those others. They held the religious shrines of India in esteem, but created their replicas in their own native soil. In so doing, they created, culturally, a small sub- continent in Kashmir. (Punjabi, 1990, 111)

The point that is made is that with religious boundaries being less sacrosanct, there was greater cultural continuity between the two communities. Though there are many who refer to the common cultural ethos, despite the distinctions that were being maintained,

there are some who present a very ideal picture of Muslim-Pandit relations. Thus to quote Khemlata Wakhloo,

> The dress, language, living style, culture and genetic origin of both groups are identical. The family names are identical too, going back as they do to a common ancestor. Both groups love each other, depend on each other and have got used to living in close proximity with each other for centuries. They are used to sharing each other's woes and happiness, participating marriages, deaths, and other social and religious occasions from time to time. One cannot distinguish easily who is a Muslim and who is a Hindu. There are many places of worship where all Kashmiris worship and pay their obeisance without any distinction. The cultural heritage is common to all, giving rise to many common customs and rituals at the time of birth, marriage and death. Many Hindu children had Muslim foster-mother and vice versa. Quite often most 'munshis' or teachers in the well- to-do household would be Kashmiri Hindus. And there are umpteen anecdotes, about sharing of love and mutual trust. (Wakhloo, 1992, 379)

However, in his sociological analysis, Madan notes clear-cut distinctions being made between Kashmiri Muslims and Pandits. In his view, the Muslims were:

> regarded in principle as being ritually impure. They are referred as mlechha (of lowly birth, outsider); theirs is the world of tamas (darkness, ignorance). Muslims are outside the pale of values by which a Pandit is expected as a Hindu to order his life. In practice, however, Pandits consider some Muslims as less polluting than other. (Madan, 1984, 24)

In the village where he conducted his ethnographic study, no Pandit ate 'food cooked or even touched by a Muslim. There are no exceptions to this rule except the acceptance of clarified butter, from milkmen, Gujar and Bakarwal... If transgressions occur they are so secretive that no Pandit claimed having actually seen another eating with Muslims.' (Madan, 1984, 24) He further notes that there was no sharing of Hookah between the Pandits and Muslims.

Madan even refers to the difference in the dress style of the Pandits and Muslims. To quote him:

> even when one encounters total strangers, there are several visible sighs which identify them as one's co-religonists or otherwise. Thus, Muslims and Pandits do not dress identically; the differences may not appear striking to an outsider but a Kashmiri would never make a mistake in this regard. Besides differences of male and female dress—of headgear, gown, trousers, and sometimes even footwear—many pundits wear *tyok* on their forehead: a mark of saffron of some other prescribed paste, oblong among men and round among women. Muslims wear Beards more often than Pandits, and of a distinctive cut. There are differences of speech, mainly lexical. Though native Kashmiris look very much alike... (Madan, 1984, 24)

These distinctions notwithstanding, Madan refers to the peculiar situation of Kashmir that led to relaxation in the strict rules of orthodoxy and consequently, compared to other parts of the subcontinent, there was greater level of interaction between the Pandits and Muslims. As he notes, Muslims were not only regular visitors to the homes of Pandits but some of them ate in their home. (Madan, 2015) Among those Muslims with whom the Pandits had regular interaction included the domestic helpers and service providers like barbers, milkmen, water, carriers and washermen and the craftsmen like carpenters, goldsmiths, potters. These essential services in all-Brahman community, as Rai argues, were provided not by the lower castes but by the Muslims. And this forced a relationship of ritual and economic interdependence between Kashmiri Pandits and Muslims. In the absence of the full panoply of *jatis* that characterized Hindu society elsewhere, the Pandits, whose caste status excluded them from either manual labour or work deemed polluting, relied heavily on Muslim specialist groups for the provision of essential services and liturgical goods. (Rai, 2004, 40)

That this remained the basis of Kashmiri Pandit-Muslim relationship even in the contemporary times, gets reflected from the following personal account of Pradeep Magazine:

> Right from the 1960s, when my memory of that place started taking root, the social chasm between two communities was deep: we were not allowed to eat in their homes and they were not allowed to enter our kitchens, for that would have "polluted" us. Yet both communities lived in peace, respecting each other's space. In my adult memory,

> the man who indulged me, placated my unjust, obdurate, fanciful demands was a Muslim servant, who still holds a warm fond place in my heart. (Magazine, 2013)

It is in this context of 'living in peace' and harmony without apparent social tension that reference is made about harmonious inter-community relationships till the time of militancy. In this picture of harmony, the two communities are said to have shared the socio-cultural space and bonded with each other. While many of them were concentrated in Srinagar, but mostly, they were spread all over the Valley. Even in remote villages, one would find the presence of a few Pandit families in the midst of the large number of Muslim families. In Srinagar, there were specific localities which were known as Pandit localities—Karan Nagar, Rainawari, Habbakadal—to name a few but whether in Srinagar town or in the remote villages, it was common to find a couple of Pandit houses in the localities inhabited mostly by Muslims.

However, as Rai would argue, in this picture of social harmony also there were fractures in social relationship. To quote her: 'While there is probably nothing factually incorrect about any of Lawrence's observations, a historically contextualized examination of Kashmiri society demonstrates that what was at one moment shared had within the potential for fracture at another.' (Rai, 2004, 42) However, despite these fractures, Rai noted that 'Hindu-Muslim strife tended to express itself less frequently in the form of 'riots', especially when compared with differently fraught history of both communities in British India.' (Rai, 2004, 43) The communal riots of 1931 form one such moment of exception.

1931: The Communal Moment

1931 witnessed the first major communal riots in Kashmir. The background in which these riots took place was defined by the hyped mass emotions following the arrest of Abdul Qadeer, a non-resident employee of the British officer and the killings of Kashmiris when they were protesting against his arrest. Abdul Qadeer was arrested after he made an inflammatory speech in which he asked the Muslims

to wage a war against oppression by the Dogra rulers. It was during his trial that the state police opened fire on the crowd outside the Central jail and killed a number of Kashmiris.[8] As Ravinderjit Kaur notes:

> The Jail firing led to widespread communal riots in Srinagar, there was an uprising at several places at the same time at Vicharnag, Nowsharah and Maharaj Gunj. A quarter of the city inhabited almost exclusively by Kashmiri Hindus and Panjabi Hindu traders was attacked by the Muslims who looted large quantities of goods and scattered what they could not loot on the streets and committed indiscriminate assaults. (Kaur, 1996, 149- 150)

It is interesting to see how Kashmiri Pandits and Muslims see 1931 in altogether different perspective. For the Kashmiri Muslims, 1931 holds great political significance since it is considered to be the starting point of the resistance politics. 13 July 1931, is particularly known as the 'Martyrs' Day' as the day that registered the first killings of Kashmiris in their anti-state response. However, for Kashmiri Pandits, the day is known as the 'Black day' since this was the day when the Pandits were targeted by the Muslims and there was looting and plundering of their property. That this was a major event that left long term impression on the psyche of Kashmiri Pandits is reflected from the following account of T N Madan. Referring to his growing up in Kashmir in 1930s, he notes: 'I did sometimes hear the elders recall the 'Loot': incidents of stray assault and looting in 1931 by Muslim mobs protesting the death of some demonstrators in police firing outside the city jail. Such things (demonstrations, police firings, retaliatory looting) had never happened before.' (Madan,

[8] Ravinderjit Kaur has thus recorded the events of the day (13 July 1931): 'The magistrate accordingly, proceeded to the Jail on 13th July, 1931 for the purpose of conducting the case. A huge crowd of Muslims, estimated at about five thousand; assembled outside the Jail. At first the crowd was orderly; but shortly afterwards, it got out of hand and demanded admittance into the Jail to hear the proceedings.... The crowd, then charged down on the police guards, three of whom had already been seriously injured by stones and brickbats. The guards then opened the fire and nine of the mob were killed.' (Kaur, 1996, 149)

2015) Though he adds that 'But by the late 1930s, memories of the loot had already softened', reference is continued to be made to this event by Kashmiri Pandits as an example of the first rupture between Kashmiri Muslims and Pandits. However, the rupture was not merely a reflection of religious divide between the two communities. There was certainly the political and economic angle to the whole episode. As Chitralekha Zutshi shows through archival evidence, 'the rioting on July 13, 1931 was not that of a frenzied mob looking to kill in the name of religion, but one intended to redress the immediate economic grievances of Kashmiri Muslims.' She has referred to the issues related to political and economic representation underlying the religious manifestation of the situation. 'Kashmiri Muslims, tired of being excluded from education, the government, and the lower rungs of the administration, rallied around the cry of "Islam in Danger" raised by youth recently returned from British India with professional degrees.' (Zutshi, 2004, 224)

There are others like Prem Nath Bazaz and Ian Copeland who also refer to the economic and power gap that existed between the Pandits and Muslims that underlay the events of 1931. Bazaz has argued that though the response of the Muslims took communal shape, however, it could be interpreted in economic terms as Muslims were asserting their 'class rights.' (Bazaz, 1954, 165) Similarly Copeland argues that the agitation was in response to the generally felt resentment 'against the lopsidedness of the bureaucracy' and the perception that the state administration run by the Hindu and Sikh officials was biased against the Muslims. (Copland, 1981, 234)

III

Kashmiriyat, Kashmiri Nationalism and the Kashmiri Pandit Response

Differing Class Interests, Political Divergence

Kashmiriyat, according to Chitralekha Zutshi, has been a 'homogenizing discourse' that obfuscated the socio-economic differences between the communities while overemphasizing the idea of co-

existence. To quote her, it was meant to 'paper over the widespread discontent within Kashmiri society, particularly among Muslims of the Valley. The concept of Kashmiryat was a neat way to propagate the idea of a peaceful co-existence of religious communities while obscuring the question of economic, material and social differences between them.' (Zutshi, 2004, 329)

There was certainly a clear and vast difference in the class background of the Kashmiri Muslims and Kashmiri Pandits and it was this class difference that characterized the political response of the two communities. As already pointed out, the Pandits were historically a privileged class due to their affiliation with the court, mainly because of their proficiency of the court language and their almost exclusive attention on the state jobs. (Sender, 1988, 31)[9] As Duschinski points out, 'By the late eighteenth century, Kashmiri Pandits, the small minority that had become established as the clerical caste of revenue administration and office holders, enjoyed privileged access to educational and occupational opportunities in relation to Kashmiri Muslim masses' (Duschinski, 2008, 44) Though there were internal class differences among the Pandits and not everyone was equally privileged, but for the Muslims they were the most visible face of administration as most of the revenue jobs were held by the Pandits.

With the emergence of a small middle class among the Muslims, the Kashmir's politics in the post-1930 period was characterized by the demands for expansion of educational and employment opportunities for the community. Following the 1931 riots, the Glancy Commission that had been appointed to enquire into the reasons of discontent among Muslims, was flooded with the demands of removing the state of educational backwardness of the Muslims and providing adequate employment opportunities to them. With the formation of All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference in

[9] As Mridu Rai notes, 'due to their long tradition of literacy', there was 'their indispensability to the administration of any regime in power in Kashmir.' It was in recognition of their administrative talent that Dogra rulers had continued with 'their dominance of the administrative machinery of the state, most particularly in the revenue department, where an intimate knowledge of tax-gathering procedure was critical. (Rai, 2004, 50)

1932, these demands were raised in more articulated and organized manner.

The process of politicization of Muslims around these demands, was certainly not to the liking of the Kashmiri Pandits. On the ground that they 'traditionally trained themselves for state services to the exclusion of all other occupations' (Zutshi, 2004, 245), they felt directly threatened by the politics as it was taking shape in Kashmir. Already they were struggling to maintain their exclusive right to the state jobs and had survived the onslaught on this right through the entry of Punjabis, by getting the state jobs reserved only for the state subjects.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, there were certain shifts in the state policies which made the Kashmiri Pandits vulnerable, specifically about the privileges that they were enjoying vis-à-vis the state employment. Background to this situation has been provided by Mridu Rai who traces the shift to 1889 'when the newly instituted State Council had changed the court language from Persian to Urdu and simultaneously framed rules for holding competitive examinations for appointment to government services.' (Rai, 2003, 244) It was the result of these major policy shifts that Kashmiri Pandits were severely affected as the state jobs in large numbers started being filled by people from Punjab:

> Suddenly deemed unqualified, the Kashmiri Pandits saw most of the plum jobs in the state going to large numbers of Punjabis deputed to the state from British India and bringing with them their own cohorts of relatives to fill vacancies. And with the special concessions made for the Dogras in Service and education, this threatened to leave the Pandits with little more than control over the lower echelons of the bureaucracy. (Rai, 2003, 244)

It was in this background that the demand of 'Kashmir for Kashmiris' was raised by the leaders of the Pandit community. What was demanded was the recognition of special claims for the '*mulki*' (natives) as against 'outsiders'. It was the result of this demand that the law related to hereditary state subjects was adopted by the Dogra state. Though it was in 1899 that for the first time some acknowledgement about the superior claims of state subjects was made, however,

it was in 1912 that a legalized definition of state subjects was provided.[10] It was in 1927 that a revised definition of State Subjects and their privileges was provided. As per this revised definition, state subjects included those persons who were born and residing in the state before the commencement of the reign of Maharaja Gulab Singh and also those persons who had since been permanently residing in the state. The special privileges enjoyed by these people included the right to employment and to purchase agricultural land.

Though the political claim for preferential treatment for natives was articulated in the name of 'Kashmiris', however, at that point of time, it was exclusively a demand raised by Kashmiri Pandits. Kashmiri Muslims were not in the reckoning as they were quite backward and were not exposed to modern education.

Hence, when the Muslim leadership started demanding increased share in educational and occupational space, the context of competition for Kashmiri Pandits shifted from Punjabis to Kashmiri Muslims. Being protective about their hold on state jobs, this demand was bound to antagonize the Pandits.

Religion as a Marker of Identity and the Pandit Response

The whole context of politicization of Kashmiri Muslims during the decade of 1930s and 1940s was such that the Pandits could not relate to it. Apart from the class context, it was the religious tilt to the Kashmiri identity politics in the initial period that alienated Kashmiri Pandits from it. The Kashmiri sense of belonging at that time was defined on religious terms and the grievances and issues that were being raised in the initial period were seen in the context of 'Muslim subjects' and the 'Hindu rule'. Sheikh Abdullah has noted in

[10] As per this new definition the state subjects comprised of all 'persons who ha[d] tended a duly executed Rayat Nama and ha[d] acquired immovable property within the state territories' as well as persons who had been living in the state for at least twenty years. While the privileged entry of subjects so defined in state service was acknowledged, exceptions were also made for state servants (and their descendants) who 'though not state subject[s] ha[d] not less than 10 years [of] approved service in the State'. (Rai, 2003, 252)

his autobiography as to how he interpreted the oppressive conditions of Kashmiri Muslims during the Dogra rule. Noting the differential socio-economic condition of Muslims and Pandits, he attributed the difference to the religious affiliations of the two communities as well as the religious prejudice of the ruler. To quote him:

> I started to question why Muslims were singled out for such treatment? We constituted the majority, and contributed the most towards the State's revenues, still we were continuously oppressed. Why? How long would we put up with it? Was it because a majority of government servants were non-Muslims, or, because most of the lower grade officers who dealt with the public were Kashmiri Pandits? I concluded that the ill- treatment of Muslims was an outcome of religious prejudice. (Abdullah, 1993,12-13)

The Muslim Conference was an exclusive organization committed to pursuing the interest of Muslims only. The Pandits were not only excluded but also defined as the 'other' of the Muslims. Mridu Rai has noted that in much of the content of the political propaganda of Muslim Conference, Kashmiri Pandits were projected in the negative light. 'Suggestion were made that the 'Kashmiri Pandit [wa]s by nature an enemy of the Muslims' and that there were 'as many kinds of pundits as [there were] snakes' (Rai, 2004, 274) In response, the organizations linked with the Pandits termed the politics of the Kashmiri Muslims as 'communal'.

With religion becoming an important marker of Kashmiri identity politics in the initial period, there had already developed a huge political gap between the Kashmiri Muslims and Pandits. It was for this reason that when Sheikh Abdullah changed the direction of Kashmir's identity politics and open it up for all the communities, there were not many takers among the Kashmiri Pandit community. With the exception of few committed socialists like Prem Nath Bazaz, the Pandits did not become part of the movement politics.

Kashmiri Nationalism—Post-1939 Phase

By 1935, there were signs of some shift in Kashmiri identity politics. By this time, Sheikh Abdullah, coming under the influence

of Indian communists and the Indian National Congress, had started hinting about the limitation of the communal approach of the Kashmiri movement. He had not only started talking about the common sufferings of people across the religious divide but had also started inviting Hindus to join the movement. In 1938, the Muslim Conference made the 'National Demand' for a 'Responsible Government' on behalf of all the classes of people irrespective of religious divide. However, it was in 1939 that the formal decision was taken to shun the exclusively 'Muslim' character of the movement and to open it to all the communities. The All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference was, therefore, converted into the All Jammu and Kashmir National Conference. With a view to broaden the base of the movement and to give it a mass character, there was also a shift in the ideology of the organization. Going beyond the limited goals of the Muslim Conference linked with the interest of the emerging middle class among Muslims, the National Conference adopted the Naya Kashmir or the New Kashmir Manifesto that called for reorganization of economy, polity and society. With a strong economic content in which land reforms formed the central focus, the Kashmiri identity politics thereafter assumed a progressive character. (Chowdhary, 2016)

The ideology and politics of the National Conference, rather than decreasing the gap between the Muslims and Pandits, actually increased it. With almost a neat division in Kashmir where most of the oppressed peasantry comprised the Muslims and much of the landed class of Kashmir was comprised of the Kashmiri Pandits, this politics generated much antagonism among Kashmiri Pandits.

Secularization of Kashmiri identity politics, therefore did not bring Kashmiri Pandits to the fold of this politics and they mostly remained away from it. There were certain notable exceptions like Prem Nath Bazaz and few other prominent Kashmiri Pandits who were associated with the National Conference, but on the whole, the community had a negative orientation towards this organization and its politics.

Soon after forming the government, the National Conference went ahead with some of the most radical land reforms including

those related to abolition of intermediary class, tenancy reforms and ceiling on landholdings. Of these, the ceiling laws affected the Kashmiri Pandits the most. By the Abolition of the Big Landed Estates Act of 1950, a ceiling on the holding of land was placed on 22.75 acres and the provision was made for the transfer of surplus land to the tillers cultivating on the land. With much of the land in Kashmir concentrated in the hands of Kashmiri Pandits, the community was severely impacted by these reforms. Though in concession to the Pandits, the orchards were left out of the ceiling laws, even so, many Pandits had to forgo large portions of land that they held.

In the context of the differing class interests of the Kashmiri Pandits and the Muslims, the politics of the National Conference, created a gap between the two communities. With this organization committed to the empowerment of Kashmiri Muslims—whether by working towards providing them greater opportunities for education or employment; or ameliorating their economic condition—Kashmiri Pandits were alienated. A large class of Kashmiri Pandits had to forgo their land without any compensation. Meanwhile, the educational and occupational opportunities opened up for the Muslims and they started competing for the resources which were till now controlled mainly by the Pandits. Even when the Pandits continued to retain their dominant position for a long time, they felt threatened by the increasing competition from the Muslims. Meanwhile, with the expansion of the educated class among the Muslims, there was growing resentment against the Pandits for their disproportionate presence in state jobs.

Conflict Situation, Sharpening of Kashmiri Nationalism and Kashmiri Pandits

The political divide between the Kashmiri Pandits and Muslims was clearly established in the period when Kashmiri movement was taking shape. Even when Kashmiri identity politics was positively oriented towards Indian nationalist politics in the early post-Accession period, the class interest of the Kashmiri Pandits had kept them away from the Kashmiri movement politics. From that perspective,

the Kashmiri movement politics was clearly a politics of 'Kashmiri Muslims'. Even when there was official construction of Kashmiryat as the political project of Sheikh Abdullah and emphasis was placed on the unity of Hindus and Muslims, the Kashmiri Pandits were not much enamoured by it. After accession, their orientations were taking different shape and politically they started looking towards India for their political emotions. Much before the rupture between Kashmir and Delhi developed in 1953, there was already a gap between the 'Indian' nationalist sentiment of Kashmiri Pandits and the 'Kashmiri nationalist sentiments' of Muslims.

How the politics divided the two communities despite their social and cultural bondage gets reflected from the personal account of Ishaq Khan, an eminent Kashmiri historian:

> I was around eight years old when my father swore to take revenge against his Kashmiri Hindu neighbours, the Thussos, following their bizarre expression of glee by clapping and embracing one another at the news of Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah's arrest... I never forgot the words of my father uttered in deep anguish and anger: "See these ungrateful Pandits. They are celebrating the dismissal of their savior. Didn't Sher-e- Kashmir protect them during the tribal invasion of 1947?' But Baba's tantrums did not last long. We continued to enjoy cordial relations with our Hindu neighbours. Our earnest participation in each other's festivals and marriage ceremonies was proverbial until the mass exodus of Pandits from their homeland, following the onset of militancy in the Kashmir Valley in 1989.' (Khan, 2012)

The political gap between the two communities, however, was much more increased in the post-1953 period when Kashmiri identity politics started assuming a confrontationist position vis-a-vis the Indian nationalist politics. With the demand for self-determination assuming centrality in the identity politics of Kashmir in post-1953 period and the emotions of Kashmiri Muslims getting attached with the idea of plebiscite, Kashmiri Pandits were completely alienated from it.

Even when the Kashmiri identity politics continued to claim representation on behalf of all Kashmiris, the Pandits were never part of it.

IV

The Exodus of Kashmiri Pandits and Kashmiriyat

Kashmiri Pandits in Kashmir before Exodus

Despite the competition that they faced from the Muslims in the post-accession period and despite the radicalization of Kashmiri identity politics, the community as a whole was quite influential in Kashmir and still dominated public-dealing jobs. Education and health, for instance, were the forte of the Pandits and the Kashmiri Pandit teachers and doctors were valued by the Kashmiri Muslims. They were also quite visible in lower and middle rank bureaucracy. Despite their small numbers, the Pandits were neither ghettoized nor isolated in any way. Their presence all over the Valley made Kashmir a mixed society with Kashmiri Muslims and Pandits sharing not only language and culture but also sensibilities. While in towns, there were some 'Pandit colonies', but they were comfortable living in Muslim areas. As per the rural pattern, there were a few Pandit houses, amidst the majority of Muslim population. This was the reality of even the most remote villages.

During our fieldwork many of the Kashmiri Pandits who had left the Valley in 1990 talked about the trust and harmonious environment of Kashmir before the exodus. With the exception of few who would reflect their bitterness about their life in Kashmir, most of them would say that they were respected in Kashmir. The respondents from the remote village areas particularly stated that despite being very few in the whole village, they never felt isolated. On the contrary, being educated and more influential, they were sought after for various things by the majority community. At the social-cultural level, they had the best of the relationship, sharing with each other not only the festivities of special occasions like Eid and Shivratri (Herath) but the day-to-day problems and grievances. Before exodus, therefore, rarely, one would hear of some kind of tension between the communities. There were, however, two exceptional moments, when tensions erupted between the two communities. Of these moments, one such moment was in the decade of 1960s when there developed a controversy about a Kashmiri Pandit girl (Parmeshwari Handoo)

marrying a Kashmiri Muslim. There were protests by the Pandits for some time and during this time tension prevailed in Srinagar city. The Pandits were organized under the banner of Kashmir Hindu Action Committee. It was with the intervention of the Union Home Minister that the protest was called off. (Mir, 2017) The other moment of inter-community tension was in 1986.

The 1986 Communal Riots in Kashmir

Like 1931, 1986 is another event etched in the psyche of Kashmiri Pandits. In response to the opening of temple in Ayodhya, there were protests in Kashmir. In the violence that broke out, Kashmiri Pandit property was attacked and various temples were damaged. (AP news.com, 1986) Though there are different accounts of the dimensions of the attacks, some exaggerated and some under-reported, one can get an idea of the scale of the destruction in Anantnag from the factual statement of Yusuf Jameel: 'In all 129 houses were looted, burnt or damaged, nine shops looted or ransacked or damaged, two 'Kothars' (paddy stores) and two cowsheds burnt in Anantnag district on February 20.' (cited in Maheshwari, 1993, 78) Some migration from Anantnag district where the impact of violence was felt the most was also reported. (Sahni, 1999, 25)

Though things seemed to have remained normal in the next few years, however, in the wake of the mass exodus of Pandits in 1989, it was the incident of 1986 that was most often referred to as the prelude to the situation in which migration took place in 1989. The following statement by Varad Sharma in his compilation of Kashmiri Pandit narratives of the exodus along with Siddharth Gigoo (Gigoo and Sharma, 2015) makes it very clear:

> My parents would narrate how Anantnag had witnessed communal riots against Kashmiri pundits in 1986. The time temples were desecrated and Pandits were attacked. It was a prelude to the large-scale desecration of Hindu temples and shrines which happened in the 1990s. The infamous riots happened not only in Anantang but the adjoining towns and villages of South Kashmir- Bijebahara, Sagam, Kokernag, Akura, Pulwama, among other.' (Sharma, 2015)

If militancy had not resulted in the mass exodus of Kashmiri

Pandits, the episode of 1986 would have remained isolated incident for most of the Pandits. However, the outbreak of militancy and the shifting out of almost the whole of community resulted in linking this episode with the 'exodus'. For many of the Pandits this was seen as a 'prelude' to the situation that was emerging. During our field work, many respondents noted that they had got the first inklings about changes in the ground realities in 1986. What remained etched in the memory of the Pandits about this episode was that 'temples' were attacked and that there was involvement of local Kashmiri Muslims—the 'mob fury' as a respondent termed it. Many Kashmiri Pandits refer to this episode in 'continuity' with the period of militancy. Note the following description in an article published in 2001:

> 1986 was the year, when mercenaries and trained militants ran amuck in Anantnag district in Kashmir creating a cyclonic terror for the innocent minuscule minority community of Hindus, popularly known as Kashmiri Pandits. They committed loot, arson, murderous assaults, kidnapping, rape etc. coupled with desecration and demolitions of dozens of their religious shrines. That was a clear signal for things to follow. (Bhatt and Bharati, 2001, 147)

Thinking retrospectively, the Pandit respondents sought to emphasize that the incidents of 1986 were not 'aberration' or 'exception' to the generally prevalent peaceful situation till that time but indications of the things to come. 'Just the beginning of a new situation'—as a respondent put it. To quote Rahul Pandita:

> '...I think, personally, from 1986 onwards, when I was 10 years old, I had been very conscious of my identity as a Kashmiri Pandit because of the bitter atmosphere. Once in a while, you become victims of communal riots that happened in this one part of Kashmir, in south Kashmir in 1986, where hundreds of Pandits were beaten up, their womenfolk raped, etcetera. From then onwards, it's been slipping away from us. (Cited in Peter Griffin, 2013)

The Period of Militancy: Violence, Azadi Politics and Religion

The mass exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from Kashmir in 1990 and after, is a major breaking point as for as the inter-community rela-

tionship in Kashmir is concerned. It was in the early months of 1990 that the exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from the Valley started taking place, by the end of the year, a large number of them had relocated themselves in Jammu and various other cities in India including Delhi, Poona, Mumbai etc. Of those who were left in Kashmir and chose not to leave at the time of exodus, also gradually left, over the years. By 2011, the total number of Kashmiri Pandits left in Kashmir was around or less than three thousand. (Essa, 2011)

The exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from Kashmir is mired with controversies and contradictory versions. On the one hand, there is a version of 'ethnocide' of Kashmiri Pandits and on the other, there is a version of 'engineered migration'. As per the first version, the exodus was a result of a systematic and well-planned conspiracy against the Kashmiri Pandits carried out by the 'Islamists' to push Pandits out of Kashmir. Those who represent this version do not make any distinction between the militants and the common Kashmiris and for them the latter were as much responsible for their leaving Kashmir as the former were. As per this version, there is a historical pattern in the persecution of the pundits in Kashmir and this is not the first time that pundits have been forced to migrate out of Kashmir.[11] They refer to the period of Muslim ruler Sikandar, or *But Shikan* who was so oppressive against the Pandits that all but eleven families of Pandits were either converted or were forced to migrate. An example of this version can be seen through the statements of the Kashmiri Pandit organisations like the Panun Kashmir and Jammu and Kashmir Sahayata Samiti. The Panun Kashmir resolution during

[11] As per *Jammu Kashmir Sahayata Samiti*, 'the persecution and migration of Pandits has been a continuous process since 1947 and till 1988 'more than 60 per cent of the members of the community had migrated to various parts of India and abroad due to educational, economic, and political discrimination and communal policies of local leaders. An undercurrent of fear in the minds of Hindus loomed large. The aggressiveness of Muslims went on increasing with the the appeasement policy followed by both state and Centre governments. Every minor incident against Muslims in any part of the world was taken as a challenge by these communal forces and Hindus were persecuted by sacrilege of their shrines and temples and attacks on persons...' (Jammu and Kashmir Sahyayata Samiti, 1991)

the Margdarshan convention held in Jammu on 26 December 1991 characterised migration as 'a Muslim religious crusade aimed at the secession of the State'. (Panun Kashmir, 1991)

Contrary to this version is the version according to which the migration of Kashmiri pundits was planned by the Governor Jagmohan who facilitated the transport and other arrangements for them to leave. (Hassan, 2010, 9-10) As per this version, the plan to send Kashmiris away from Kashmir was linked with the approach of the state at that time to deal sternly with Kashmiris. The presence of Kashmiri Pandits, scattered as they were all over the Valley, made hard handling of Kashmir and Kashmiri Muslims, a difficult task. Many among these who hold this opinion, are also of the view that the Pandits 'fled' the Valley leaving Kashmiri Muslims to their miseries. Note for instance, the following statement of Hameeda Nayeem, Professor of English and a political activist:

> Governor Jagmohan capitalised on the fear psychosis and asked the Pandits to leave. He wanted the Pandits to be safe as he was planning to kill five lakh Muslims, and he had conveyed the same to the Pandits. Soon after Jagmohan arrived in Kashmir, he asked the central forces to butcher Kashmiris. The massacres that took place during his tenure are amble proof of his Hitlerian designs ... Jagmohan told the Pandits that migration to Jammu was a temporary measure and they would return after the operations against the Muslims is over. (cited in Malik, 2016)

The reality of the exodus of the KashmiriPandits is much more complex and does not match either of the two versions. Neither were the Kashmiri Pandits pushed away by the majority of Kashmiri Muslim community nor did they escape Kashmir under a systematic plan of Governor.

Many of our respondents, during the fieldwork, gave us positive stories about their Muslim neighbours and friends. Though there were some bitter responses, however, the common refrain was that the neighbours came forward to assure the Pandits that they would not allow them to be harmed in any case. However, as the situation started getting deteriorated and violence started becoming more rampant, the neighbours also started reflecting their own vulnerabil-

ity and helplessness. Many others informed as to how they were still being visited in their camps in Jammu by the neighbours.

That their departure was not systematic but spontaneous, was informed by many respondents. Most of them stated that their decision to leave was triggered by some news of killing; some happening nearby; some threat; some extortion demand etc. Much of the migration took place in the month of March and continued for the next few months of 1990. Certainly, the state authorities did not intervene and did not make any positive efforts to stop the migration. However, the state in any case had become too feeble at that time. Therefore, if anything, it was the failure of the state that the exodus took place. In the absence of the authority of the state, the community felt too terrorized by the situation as it was taking shape.

It is important to refer to the situation in which the exodus took place. It was the time when for the first time in the history of Kashmir's politics, Kashmiris took the root of violence as a means of resistance. Militancy was not only a new phenomenon for Kashmir but it was also indigenous phenomenon. What was terrifying for Kashmiri Pandits was to see young Kashmiris involved in violence that was taking place on every day basis. Further what scared them as a community was the fact that among those targeted and killed, there were many Kashmiri Pandits. Many of them were quite high profiled and well known—like Tika Lal Taploo, the BJP leader; Justice Neel Kanth Ganjoo, High Court Judge; Lassa Koul, Director Doordarshan; Sarvanand Premi, poet; Prem Nath Bhat, advocate and RSS activist. Apart from this, there were killings of various other Kashmiri Pandits because they were seen as 'informers' or 'state agents'. Though the number of killings of the Pandits was much smaller than the killing of Muslims, however, in the context of their being very small number and a minuscule minority, these killings certainly had a psychological impact on the community.

Despite being spread all over the Valley, Pandits formed a close-knit community with a high level of bonding with each other. Any incident happening even in the remote part of the Valley would have impact on the whole community. An example of this can be found in the cases of Sarla Bhat a nurse in SKIMS and Girija Tickoo a resident

of Bandipora—both of whom have been said to have been raped and killed in gruesome manner. These cases seem to have shaken the whole Kashmiri Pandit community so much that every Pandit after migration would refer their cases to show the vulnerability of the Kashmiri pundits in Kashmir.

Being minority, the community was psychologically pressurized and traumatized by the situation. This gets reflected from their reference to the direct warning and threats issued by the militants. Two newspapers '*Al Safa*' and *Srinagar Times* have been reported to have published the threats of Hizbul Mujahideen asking Pandits to leave the Valley or face the consequences. Many Pandits also referred to the threatening posters being pasted outside their homes and threatening announcements blared from mosques.

When Kashmiri Pandits migrated from Kashmir, not only the law-and-order situation had totally collapsed but everything political had also gone under. The authority of the state was conspicuous by its absence. This was the time when militants roamed around the streets with their weapons with lot of confidence and were seen mingling with people. The fragility of the state was reflected in state-imposed curfews openly and boldly being defied with people in large number thronging the streets; calls for 'civil curfew' called by militants, meanwhile, being fully followed without any aberration; the street names being changed; instead of Indian time, the Pakistan standard time being observed; and youth freely crossing the border.[12] However, what grossly affected the Kashmiri Pandits was the political environment of Kashmir. As already noted, Kashmiri Pandits always differed from Kashmiri Muslims in their political perspective, and in many ways, they were not appreciative of the political stance of the Muslims, especially in the context of their questioning the Indian nationalism.

However, the situation as it was taking shape in 1989-90 was quite radical even from that perspective. It was not only the mil-

[12] There was also the lawlessness and crimes like extortion which put pressure on the Pandits. Many of the Pandits feel threatened by the environment, left the valley because of extortions. (Sazawal, 1995, 29)

itancy that put off the Pandits, but the overwhelming separatist sentiment among common Kashmiris. This was the time when the whole community was swayed by the separatist sentiments. So huge was the public response in favour of Azadi that even the skeptics were convinced; that 'azadi was around the corner'.

It was not only the strong azadi emotions that disturbed the Pandits, but the way these were boldly expressed. The massive processions chanting Azadi slogans were sure to intimidate any minority that staunchly diverged from the politics of the majority. For them it was the show of political power of the majority that made the minority Pandits feel their sense of vulnerability.

Added to the political assertion was the assertion of religious identity of Kashmir. Politics mixed with religion certainly destabilized the Pandits. That this was a politics that was based on religious identity of Kashmiri Muslims was reported by many of the respondents in the field. They often reported about the processions in which Azadi slogans were followed by the religious slogans like '*Yahan kya chalega, la illaha illilla*' etc. Also discomforting to them was the fact that mosques had become the political spaces from where the political sloganeering took place. (Hassan, 2010, 6)[13] That some of these slogans were directly threatening the Pandits was an added factor.[14] Meanwhile, there were various fundamentalist organizations that made their presence felt by issuing dictats and enforcing cultural and moral codes. While Muslim women were asked to veil themselves, the Pandit women were asked to identify themselves by wearing Bindi. 'Kashmiri Hindus felt an increasing sense of vulnerability and

[13] To quote Wajahat Habibullah, 'In early 1990, slogans started reverberating from the mosques that people who do not support the Kashmir movement should leave. Slogans and selective killings triggered panic among the Pandits and they requested their friends as well as the security forces for vehicles to facilitate their movement' (cited in Malik, 2016)

[14] Two slogans which are often cited by the respondents that they found specifically offensive to the whole Kashmiri community are: 'Ae Kafiroo, Ae Zalimoo, Kashmir Hamar Chod do' (You infidel, you oppressors, leave our Kashmir' and 'Assi gacchi panunuy Pakistan, Batav rostuy, Batanein saan' (We want our Pakistan, without Pandits men, but with their women)

insecurity in response to what they perceived as a threatening atmosphere in the region.' (Duschinski, 2008, 46)

Reference to Night of January 19, 1990

What remains etched in the minds of Kashmiri Pandits is the mass hysteria about Azadi with a religious flavour in it. That is why the night of January 19, 1990 has become the reference point for much of Kashmiri Pandit narrative about their exodus. This particular night stands for all that forced the Pandits to come out of Kashmir—the point of final rupture—the anti-India slogans; the religious sentiment enmeshed with the political sentiment; the swaying of the mass of Kashmiris in the direction of 'azadi politics'; the breakdown of the public order.

The episode that is referred to on this particular night is about the Kashmiri Muslims coming out in various parts of Srinagar, gathering in the roundabouts and mosques and chanting political and religious slogans. While their (Kashmiri Muslims) coming out at night has been reported as a protest against the widespread searches by the security forces, yet the simultaneity of these protests in various parts of Srinagar at night time seems to have created such an impact on Kashmiri Pandits that they attribute the mass exodus from Kashmir to this episode. The episode forms an important part of Kashmiri Pandit narrative. Following are some examples of Kashmiri Pandit description of the night:

> Rahul Pandita:
> The night of January 19, 1990 was a cold, winter night... We were inside our homes. But hundreds of thousands of people were out, most of them in mosques. At 10 pm, it began. Not in one street, not in one locality, not in one district; it began in the entire Valley, from north to south, east to west... it is all so well planned, and the Kashmiri Pandits have no clue: the Indian State has no clue—it is paralysed, it is on its knees. At 10pm, people are out on the streets shouting for our blood. In mosques, they are asking for our annihilation. [15]

[15] Pandita follows this account by narrating the slogans that they heard that night: "*Battan hund boy, Khodayan gol*" (The seed of the Pandits has been destroyed by Allah); "*Assi gacchi panunuy Pakistan, Batav rostuy,*

> Kundal Lal Chowdhury:
> On the long, dark, wintry night of 19 January, when the whole world was asleep, thousands of loudspeakers hoisted on as many mosques through the length and breadth of the valley suddenly boomed "Azadi" slogans and war cries, exhorting the masses to come out of their homes and march to Srinagar to capture power in the valley. They were urged to cleanse the land of kafirs, to subdue the Pandit women and drive their men out of Kashmir! This went on until midnight. The Muslims came out on the roads while the Pandits shrank back in terror, watching from behind their drawn blinds, trembling with fear from the shoocking slogans that windows and walls. They were witness to the acme of religious frenzy, a flagrant exhibition of mass hysteria. (Chowdhury, 2015)

> Khemlata Wakhloo and O.N. Wakhloo:
> Hardly anyone in Kashmir slept on the night... The sound of commotion and hysterical screaming spewed out of hundreds of mosques. Anti-Indian slogans rant the air coupled with Allah-o-Akbar and Nizam-e-Mustafa... People from all corners of the city poured out on the streets, milling around agitatedly in spontaneous processions... (Wakhloo and Wakhloo, 1993, 81)

Though there is not much mention of this night in Kashmiri (Muslim) narrative, Javed Shah's account seeks to give some perspective to the Pandit description of the night. In his understanding:

A fear psychosis had already taken hold in the Valley. This insecurity was heightened when Muslims participated in mass demonstrations all over Kashmir, on 19 January 1990. Most Muslims were privy to those planned demonstrations, but chose not to inform their Pandit neighbours and friends, leading to a breakdown of trust between communities.' (Shah, nd)[16]

Batanein saan' (We want our Pakistan, without Pandits men, but with their women); "*Dil mein rakho Allah ka Khauf, haath mein rakho Kalashnikov"* (In your heart keep the fear of Allah, and in your hands: Kalashnikov); "*Yahan kya chalega, Nizam-e- Mustafa"* (What will run here? The rule of Mustafa); "*Naara-e-taqbeer: Allah ho Akbar*". (Pandita, 2015)

[16] However, for many Kashmiri Muslims, including Peer Basharat, the night of 19th January forms another reference point: 'The night of 20th

Migration not only uprooted the Kashmiri Pandits but made them lose confidence in the majority community. Although at the personal level there were stories about the neighbours coming for help or asking them to stop, but at the collective level, there was no organized or even not-so-organized effort to stop the Pandits from leaving the Valley. It was much after the situation started normalizing in post 2000 period that some remorse was expressed or when some people started saying that Kashmir was incomplete without Pandits. There is a general feeling among the Pandits that their en masse migration could have been stopped had the majority community shown some kind of support for them. As Sanjay Tickoo, one of those Pandits who did not leave Kashmir states: 'The migration of Pandits could have been avoided had the majority community taken out a solidarity march against Pandit killings, and had religious clerics intervened and reassured them. That the Muslims remained silent made the pandits believe that a bigger disaster could hit them if they stayed.' (Sanjay Tickoo, Cited in Malik, 2016)

The Kashmiri Muslims, however, point out that they were themselves helpless and as much under threat. That it was not the normal time and not only the Pandits but even the Muslims were targeted and killed. However, the Kashmiri Pandits are not convinced by this response as they find Kashmiri Muslims complicit in the whole process of their forced migration out of Kashmir. It is certainly not the complicity in 'conspiring' their exodus, but complicity in endorsing the political environment that was created at that time. It was this environment in which Pandits found it difficult to survive in Kashmir—the intensity with which Kashmiris reflected their 'azadi' sentiments as well as anti-India emotions.[17] That the Kashmiri

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January was a long and sad night...Throughout the night of 19th January, paramilitary men slammed doors in Srinagar and dragged out young men. By morning hundreds had been arrested, curfew was imposed. Kashmiris poured out not the streets in thousands and shouted slogans of freedom from India. (Basharat Peer, 2009, Chapter 1 In their narrative, this is around the time when Gow Kadal massacre took place and scores of Muslims participating in a rally in favour of 'azadi' were killed.

[17] Referring to the complicity of the majority in creating the political environment in which the pandits were forced to leave the valley,

Muslims continue to manifest these sentiments in one way or the other, makes them firm about the appropriateness of their decision to come out of Kashmir. It also makes them emphasize as to how they felt politically 'oppressed' in the context of majoritarian politics of Kashmir.

During our fieldwork, an activist of a Kashmiri Pandit organization, stated that: 'when Kashmiris demand their right of self-determination, they do not think of us, the Pandits. We don't share the political sentiments of Kashmiri Muslims. We have our own 'nationalist' preferences. So what about our right of self-determination'?

Many respondents clearly stated that they felt hurt when they were made to hear the anti-India slogans. Another respondent who was a school boy when he left Kashmir talked about the 'lack of freedom to cheer the Indian cricket team in Kashmir.' Another respondent meanwhile said 'In the eye of the majority Muslims we were the 'Indian agents', 'informers' or even 'traitors' who betrayed the Kashmiri Muslims. But do the Muslims realise that we don't share the political sentiments of *azadi* and that we have our own nationalist sentiments.'

The issue of return of Kashmiri Pandits is as much mired in controversies as is the issue of their exodus. On the part of Kashmiri Muslims questions are raised about the seriousness of the Kashmiri Pandits to come back to Kashmir. It is argued that they left escaping the harsh realities of Kashmir and they may not be seriously interested in coming back. There are many who argue that being part of upward-mobile community, they are not interested in returning back. During our discussion with the students of University of Kashmir, one of them pointed out: 'though society generally wants them to come back, but the question is whether they will come back? More particularly when they have sold their land. Where will they

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Rahul pandita refers to the impact that he personally felt when he heard the Kashmiri crowd cheering Pakistan during the international match in Kashmir stadium. His reference to this episode that took place in 1983, reflects his discomfort with the slogan 'Pakistan zjindabad' and the intensity of the sentiment with which it was raised. (Pandita, 2013, 51)

settle, without land and without house what will they do?' (Personal Interview)

On the side of Kashmiri Pandits, the issues are raised about their safety and security. It is argued that the situation which forced them to leave Kashmir has not changed substantially and they remain as vulnerable as they were when they left Kashmir. It is on this ground that Kashmiri Pandit organizations like the Panun Kashmir, have been demanding the 'homeland' for Kashmir.[18] The demand is based on the assumption that the Pandits would not be safe in Muslim majority areas and hence they should be relocated in few districts in Kashmir.

Many Pandits see the question of return in the light of stagnated economy of Kashmir and the lack of economic opportunities for the upward mobile Pandits.

> The young Kashmiri Pandit is full of aspirations about his or her career, for which avenues are not available in Kashmir... The top priority in life for Kashmiri Pandits youth, as for anyone else, is new investments, a new car, a house. Perhaps it would have been possible had the older generation been living in Kashmir, that these corporate Pandits would have been going back to Srinagar or Anantnag to be at home, to visit parents.' (Moza, 2012)

One of the major issues that has been linked with the return of Kashmiri Pandits to Kashmir is about the mode of their resettlement. The plans of government to bring Kashmiri Pandits back to Kashmir have faced stiff hostility from the Kashmiris on various

[18] As per a Resolution adopted during the Margdarshan meeting organized by Panun Kashmir on 28th December 1991, demand was made for 'the establishment of a separate homeland for Kashmiri Hindus in the Kashmir Valley, comprising the regions of the Valley to the East and North of river Jehlum.' Demand was made that all Kashmiri Hindus, including the past and present migrants, be settled in the homeland. It was further demanded that in this area 'the constitution of India be made applicable in letter and spirit' in order to ensure 'right to life, liberty, freedom of expression, faith, equality and rule of law.'; further ''that their homeland be placed under central administration with a Union Territory status till it evolves its own economic and political infrastructre' .

grounds: first that the state driven projects are not successful and that the pundits left Kashmir voluntarily and they must come back on their own without the state support. However, the bigger objection is expressed about the state's decisions to locate them in particular spaces in Kashmir. The idea of locating them in safe zones is critiqued by the Kashmiri Muslim leadership on the ground that it is a pattern to create 'communal settlements' on the pattern of Palestine. Alternatively, it is suggested that the Pandits should be settled in mixed colonies in the same manner in which they were living earlier. For the Kashmiri Pandits, this is an impractical suggestion for the simple reason that Pandits have sold their property and cannot reclaim their houses.[19] For many others, to go back only in securitised areas provided by the state is their compulsion since they are still vulnerable and need psychological sense of security that can only be provided by the state.

Implications of Exodus

One of the implications of the exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from Kashmir has been that it has increased the gap between the two communities. As Gigoo and Sharma have noted, the religious and ideological divide between the communities' had led to the feelings of 'suspicion, betrayal and mistrust' (Gigoo and Sharma, 2015, 3) With the time passing, the gap has been further widened and concretized. What has contributed to the gap is the absence of the experience of shared life.

As years passed by, the memories of the shared life also started depleting. It is only the middle aged and the older people who have some experience of living together who have some memories of the mixed social life of Kashmir. However, for the younger people who were mostly born in the period after exodus, they have only the politicized reference of the 'other' community. In the last three

[19] As a community leader stated, 'We cannot go back to the places that we lived in before 1990. We sold our houses long back and now the area where we lived is all-Muslim area. Who is going to sell or rent us houses? Where would we go then? And how would we know where to go. It is for the state to identify a place, if it is serious to settle us back there.'

decades there has been enough reference to other community, albeit in a critical and negative manner. While in the dominant Pandit discourse the Kashmiri Muslims have been held responsible for their exodus and in the Muslim discourse the Pandits have been considered as 'traitors' who escaped the conflict situation to better pastures. As Sanjay Tickoo notes: The Muslim boys who were born after 1990 have been made to believe that Kashmiri Pandits were traitors. On the other hand, Pandit youth have been made to believe that their community was thrown out by the Muslims.' (Malik, 2016) Being stranger to each other, the young Kashmiri Pandits and Muslims have no direct experience of Kashmir or shared Kashmir life—all they have are the stories, many of them bitter, about the exodus and the gap that came up between the two communities. Kashmiri Muslim youth meanwhile have absorbed similar stories about the betrayal of the Pandits, and therefore they hardly trust them.

For the Kashmiri Pandits, their exodus has meant a crisis of their identity. Loss of homeland is a crucial loss as it is with reference to this homeland that they define themselves as 'Kashmiri'. In practical terms, the distance from Kashmir is making them not only to lose their language and culture but also their very qualification of being Kashmiris. Getting assimilated into the larger Hindu identity, they are in the process of losing their 'Kashmiri-ness'. Conscious of this fact, the Kashmiri Pandits have been making all-round efforts to maintain their linguistic and cultural specificities. However, the process is not so easy and embarked with lot of difficulties.

For the Kashmiri society, however, the implications of the exodus of Kashmiri Pandits are much more serious. With Kashmiri Pandits gone, Kashmir has lost reference of its diversity. It has become one-religion society.

On the whole, one can see the radicalization in both the communities and in the process the Hindutva ideology and reactionary Islamization have fed each other. As Punjabi has noted: Kashmiri Pandits who had laid foundations of this Kashmiryat and played a pivotal role in developing the identity of Kashmir, started identifying themselves with the larger Hindu religious majority of India. For various political and economic reasons, they abandoned their indig-

enous beliefs and traditions and started merging with the traditions and beliefs of India's majority religious community.' (Punjabi, 1995)

Meanwhile, many of the Kashmiris have also started identifying themselves with the larger Muslim world and donning the 'Islamic' rather than the 'Kashmiri' identity.

VIII

Region and Religion—Jammu Region

Inter-Community Relations in Jammu Region

Jammu is not as widely known as Kashmir is and hence for many it is either invisible or if visible, it is seen as an insignificant and smaller part of the state. The political invisibility of the region, in the vast literature on the state, gets reflected from the fact that for many, 'Kashmir' is a synonym of the state and instead of the state of Jammu and Kashmir, reference is made to 'Kashmir' only. Of many of those who refer to Jammu, the reference is made in binary terms—Jammu as the 'other' of Kashmir. For most of those who use this binary, it is 'Hindu' Jammu that stands against 'Muslim' Kashmir.[1]

In reality, however, Jammu is the most plural region of the state. To quote A.G. Noorani, 'Jammu province of the State of Jammu and Kashmir has a regional identity with a rich past and a composite culture. It has produced scholars, artists, poets and writers of high distinction.' (Noorani, 2008) Plurality, here is so multi-dimensional and complex that the region has been characterized as a 'mosaic'. To begin with, its religious diversity has its own context of intricacy. Though being a Hindu majority region, Muslims not only form a substantial number but are so located that it makes almost the whole of region, a mixed society. There are many districts where

[1] For many in the political, intellectual and media circles, Jammu has only 'news value' of negative kind. As already noted, it is represented as the 'other' of Kashmir and therefore gets to be in news in relation to some contradictory development vis-a-vis Kashmir region. Mostly, it is referred to as 'reactionary' or 'communal'.

they form the majority and many others where they form almost an even number. It is only the areas adjacent to the plains of Punjab—the Jammu-Samba-Kathua belt where their number is quite small (around 7-10% of the population).

Because of different patterns of religious composition—concept of 'majority' and 'minority' changes in different situations. While Muslims form 'minority' in the region as a whole, in certain parts they form the majority and Hindus consider and define themselves as minority here. Thus, in Kishtwar, Doda, Ramban, Poonch and Rajouri districts– rather than the Muslims, Hindus are termed as 'minority'.

However, as we have seen in the earlier parts of this study, it is not only the religious diversity that marks the plurality and complexity of the region but the cultural, linguistic, caste and tribe-based diversity that cuts across the religious divide. It is the multiple kinds and multi-layered diversity that characterizes this region. Thus, the people here are known and assert their identities as 'Gujjars', 'Bhaderwahi', 'Pahari', 'Kashmiri', 'Dogra', 'Punjabi', 'Poonchi', 'Mirpuri'—rather than as 'Muslims' or 'Hindus' only.

Jammu has no parallel terminology to 'Kashmiriyat'. There is no common usage of the term 'Jammu-iyat' even when certain individuals like Balraj Puri have been referring to it to emphasize the plural and composite character of Jammu region. The absence of the terminology to represent the plurality of Jammu region is very interesting and says a lot about the way the region has been represented. Rather than being known for its complex diversity and its composite character—Jammu is generally known for its 'communal response'. From the 1947 'massacre of Muslims' to 2018 Kathua rape case—it is the 'communal' tag that gets to be highlighted for the region.

What is the reality of Jammu? Is it really 'communal'? In what situation and what contexts, it tends to have a communal response? How does the plural character of the region operate and what are its intricate complexities in the context of inter-community relations—form the focus of this chapter.

I

Various Representations of Jammu

Before going into the details about the inter-community relations, it may be important to refer to the way Jammu is represented and the way it sees itself. The term Jammu is used in three different ways—Jammu as the city (or Jammu Tawi, the town that was built around the river Tawi); Jammu as the district (that spreads in the south to the area touching the International border in RS Pura to the north touching river Chenab in Akhnoor); Jammu as the region (that extends from plains adjacent to Punjab to Pir Panjal range linking Kashmir on one side and Pakistan administered areas, on the other).

One of the ways in which Jammu is known to the outside world is by its religious value—the religious tourism that has picked up in last half a century, mainly related to Mata Vaishno Devi. The Jammu city is, similarly, represented as the 'city of temples. Apart from Raghunath temple located in the old city—a temple complex with temples devoted to all the Hindu Gods and Goddesses and temple of Kali in Bahu Fort, there are many other temples spread all over the city. This representation, however, is partial to the character of the city, since as many Sufi shrines are spread all over the city as there are temples. Following the pattern that is to be found in the whole of the region, Jammu city has numerous big and small shrines that are integral to the social and cultural life of the region.

That this representation of Jammu being a temple city, has some kind of official patronage, gets reflected from the image that one gets when one lands in Jammu by air. The Jammu airport is designed on the pattern of Raghunath temple. However, this image of Jammu is intersected by simultaneous presence of shrines as right in the middle of the Airport, there lies the famous shrine of Baba Buddan Shah. So popular is the shrine among Jammuites, mostly Hindus, that its original site had to be retained while designing the Airport.

Jammu people, meanwhile, define Jammu, its society and culture in various other ways. '*Mithri hai Dogren di boli, te khand mithe log Dogre*' (Sweet is the Dogri language and the sugary- sweet are the Dogra people'. This is the most popular Dogri song that describes

Jammu as a pleasant place. Linked with this is the representation of Jammu being very 'accommodative' and 'tolerant' place. There is an interesting legend attached with the very 'foundation' of Jammu town. As per this legend, Jamboolochan, whose brother Bahulochan was ruling over Bahu area adjacent to Jammu, founded Jammu after his name in fourteenth century BC. While hunting around the place he was impressed by the sight of a goat and a lion drinking water together in a pond. It is the idea of 'tranquility' and 'peace' offered by the possibility of a weak and vulnerable animal co-existing with a powerful one—that underlies the legend. The popularity of the legend, and its use by the community as well as by the state reflects as to how the people here want to define themselves. The cultural historians[2], popular writers[3] as well as the state officials[4] fondly refer to the legend and in so referring, they tend to use the term 'Jammu' in rather ambivalent way: a way in which it may stand either for the city or the region.[5]

Of late, another representation about Jammu city has been invoked. This is about Jammu being a 'city of refuge'. In the context in which people from various parts of the state have been settling in Jammu city and other towns of the region during last three decades of militancy, reference is often made to a tradition of Jammu of offering safety and refuge to people affected by political turbulence elsewhere. Intellectuals like Ram Nath Shastri would often refer to Jammu's history and refuge given to 'Mughlani begum' by Raja Ranjit Dev, the Dogra king in Jammu in the middle of eighteenth century. (Personal Interview)[6] Reference here is to the time when there was turbulence in Punjab plains and Jammu was considered

[2] See for instance, Ashok Jerath (1998, 61)

[3] Suraj Saraf (2011)

[4] See for instance, official website of Jammu district

[5] There is also a belief that Jammu (city) is protected by two sides—by the temple of Goddess Kali (Bawey Wali Mata)—the presiding deity of Jammu on the one side and by the shrine of Peer Budhan Ali Shah, on the other side.

[6] The *haveli* where Mughlani Begum used to live is now a heritage place and is known as Begum di Haveli. (Personal interview with Professor Ramnath Shastri).

to be a safe zone. Recording the history of the time, Charak notes as to how the Kashmir trade was routed through 'safer hill route of Jammu'. He further notes that

> many political refugees also found an asylum in the hill states. The Mughal emperor's wife Malika Zamani was one of the most eminent of such refugees, while another was the famous Mughlai Begum, the widow of Mir Mannu, the Viceroy of Lahore, and several other courtiers. Thus Jammu became an active centre of displaced Mughal society and was fertile soil for cultural pursuits, such as the arts. They found a ready patronage in Jammu.' (Charak and Billawaria, 1998, 26)

This history would also be invoked by Balraj Puri to emphasize Jammu's 'traditional character of being a place for safe refuge'. (Personal Interview)

II

Inter-Community Relations in Jammu Region

Presence of Muslims in Jammu Region

The undivided Jammu, before 1947, was a Muslim majority region having 60 per cent of its population as Muslims. In 1947, a substantial part of this region came to be under the control of Pakistan. While the region lost a large part of its Muslim population to Pakistan administered Kashmir, it came to be characterized as a Hindu-majority region. The bloodshed and violence that was witnessed in the region at that time saw not only the killing but also the displacement of large number of Muslims, on Indian side of the region. On Pakistan side, there was similar process of killing and displacement of Hindus and that area, in the end, was totally devoid of Hindu population.

Due to the absence of recorded history of Jammu, there is not much historical evidence as to when Islam reached the region.[7]

[7] Much of Jammu's history is unwritten in the oral form. Elaborating on oral traditions, Jigar Mohammed thus notes: 'The oral traditions of the Jammu region are available in forms of heroic ballads, folk stories (*lokgatha*)

However, there is enough evidence to suggest that it had made an impact here by sixteenth century. Lalit Gupta, the cultural historian of Jammu, however notes that the first evidence of the presence of Muslims in the region can be traced to fourteenth century when Raja Mall Dev of Jammu was pressurized by Temur to accept Islam. However, as he argues, 'the presence of Pre-Mughal Sufi shrines... in Jammu city, testifies to the fact of Muslims being integral part of the local society by 16th century.' (Gupta, 2010) By the nineteenth century, when the Dogra rule was established, the province had already become the Muslim majority area. Charak refers to the 22 principalities of the region which were consolidated by Dogra king Ranjit Dev and notes that seven of them were ruled by Muslims. Most of these principalities were in the western part of the province—'the areas which make parts of today's Mirpur, Kotli, Nowshera, Rajouri and Poonch'. All these areas according to Zafar Choudhary 'were taken over by the Dogra warriors before the establishment of Dogra rule by Gulab Singh. It was the presence of large number of Muslims in the region that Dogra rulers after 1846 'ruled these territories through astute military and political strategies by appointing Muslims as Governors or to other administrative positions in many areas. (Choudhary, 2012, 14)

Islam seems to have been spread through the Sufis in the region. There is evidence of presence of Sufi saints with Sufi shrines all over the region. In some places, the conversion to Islam started with the rulers getting influenced by Islam. As Mohammed notes, 'Jai Singh, the king of Kishtwar, accepted Islam under the influence of Sayyid Farid-ud-din Qadiri during the 17th century and received the title

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and folk songs, among others. ... Moreover, these oral traditions are available in different languages and dialects of the region. Though Dogri is the major language in terms of the making of the oral traditions, other dialects such as Bhadrawahi and Kishtwari have also been used in making stories, songs and proverbs. The oral traditions are preserved by the people in accordance with specific themes. For instance, ballads known as *karaks* are sung to narrate the life and works of the saints of the concerned area. These are sung by hereditary and professional singers known as *garadi*. Similarly, the ballads sung to describe the valorous deeds of warriors are called *bars*.' (Mohammed, 2008, 118-120)

of Bakhtiyar Khan.' (Mohammad, 2009, 117) Of the eminent sufi shrines one can mention Shahdra Sharif in Rajouri, Shrines of Sayyid Farid-ud-Din and Shah Asrar-ud-di Sahib in Kishtwar, Mazars of Pir Choota Shah near Mendhar, Garb Shah in Samba, Pir Fazal Shah and Pir Chhatar Shah in Kathua, Anurag Ali Shah in Udhampur district. (Jamwal, 2006, 174) These shrines were so popular that these became integral part of Jammu's culture. To quote Mohammad,

> A large number of legends are associated with the arrival, settlement and the activities of the sufis of Jammu... It is very interesting to mention that the sufis and their shrines have been made parts of the local culture by the oral traditions and these legends, folklores and tales are reserved in the local languages and dialects such as Dogri, Kishtwari, Bhadarwahi, Gojri, and Pahari etc. (Mohammed, 2016)

Even in the Hindu dominated district of Jammu, there was significant presence of the Sufi shrines. As Sikand notes:

> The first major Sufi to come to Jammu region was Pir Raushan Ali Shah, whose dargah is located near the famous Raghunath Mandir, in the heart of Jammu town. He is said to have performed many miracles, which, so it is claimed, so impressed the Hindu Raja of Jammu that he became his devotee and requested him to settle in his city. When the Pir died, the Raja had a grave constructed for him, which today is a popular place of pilgrimage for Hindus and Muslims alike.' (Sikand, 2008)

Sikand also refers to the Peer Kho shrine that came up during the time of Raja Ajab Dev in fifteenth century. Among the other famous shrines in this area include the shrines of Pir Mitha, Pir Lakhdata, Baba Buddhan Ali Shah, Panj Pirs. As Mohammad notes, these sufi shrines were patronised by the Dogra Rajput kings.

> It is known that Gulab Singh, as a jagirdar of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, requested the Maharaja for the grant of land to the shrine of Shah Ghulam Badshah, situated in Rajouri district. Maharaja accepted the request and granted land for the expenses of the shrine. Similarly, Maharaja Gulab Singh granted fifty Kanal lands to the shrine of Pir Wali Shah at Katra in Udhampur district. Both Maharaja Ranbir Singh (1857-85) and Maharaja Pratap Singh extended financial support and

renovated a number of the sufi shrines of Jammu hills. (Mohammad, 2009, 117)94

Of all the rulers, Raja Ranjit Dev (1728-1780) is quite well known for his patronage of Muslims. The Raja, 'always kept before his exalted mind the protection of those who sought refuge. Ranjit Dev encouraged people of all sorts to settle in Jammu from every part of the punjab.' (Charak, 1971, 62) It was during his rule that the widow of Governor of Lahore, popularly known as Mughlani Begum, was given refuge in Jammu. Patronage was also given to Muslim artisans and craftsmen who were escaping Lahore during the attacks of Ahmad Shah Abdali. Ramnath Shastri described as to how the craftsmen like the weavers, barbers, leather workers, cracker makers etc. were given refuge by the Raja and how they permanently settled in Jammu city. As per his information, these craftsmen started living in the outer limits of the city and the localities where they lived came to be known by the crafts that they followed. Thus there was Julaka mohalla of Julahas (weavers); Naiyan di Dhakki (locality of Nais—barbers); Sirajan di Dhakki (locality of Sirajan—leather workers); Khatiqan da Talab (pond of Khatiqs—those who used to skin the dead animals) and Darugiren da Mohalla (locality of cracker makers) (Personal Interview with Ramnath Shastri) Lalit Gupta also notes the presence of powerful and wealthy Muslims in Jammu during the eighteenth century. 'Some of these were to later on hold important military and official positions, in the courts of number of princely states of Duggar, as bodyguards to the princes, courtiers, army commanders, governors, revenue officers and officials.' (Gupta, 2010, 246)

Interaction between Hindus and Muslims: Pre-1947 Period

Like elsewhere in northwest India, the interaction between the Hindus and Muslims was defined by the principles of 'purity' and 'impurity'. For the upper-caste Hindus, including the Brahmins, Rajputs, Mahajans and Khatris, the boundaries about inter-mixing and inter-dining were clearly laid down and followed by one and all. The distinctions were well maintained and accepted by both

the communities. It was within the limitations imposed by these boundaries that interaction between the two communities took place and the two communities shared the social and cultural life. The religious festivities were shared and the neighbourly relations were maintained. They participated in each other's marriages and other family and community celebrations and while maintaining the rules of purity, they maintained the social relations as well. Parvez Diwan refers to the complex way in which the Hindu-Muslim interactions took place while giving the example of the Dogra ruler Maharaja Pratap Singh:

> On the one hand, he allowed himself to believe that if he saw a Muslim before breakfast the purity of his piety would be compromised. On the other... he was as generous in his charity towards the Muslims as with his Hindu subjects. Miyan Lal Din, a high-ranking Muslim official, was one of Pratap Singh's closest advisors. Besides the Maharaja had great faith in holy men of all types. So did the people of Jammu (Diwan, 2007, 88)

Diwan has cited a number of examples of the cordiality of inter-community relations. To explain lack of religious fanaticism, he refers to the case of Malika Pukhraj, the famous Muslim singer of Pakistan, who grew up in Jammu.

> As a child Pukhraj was trained, by Muslim ustads to sing bhajans. ... When she entered her teens, every morning Pukhraj would sing at the temple in Mubarak Mandi. She did not consider this odd. On the contrary, she would later write, 'Singing Bhajans there was considered a great honour.' Nor did any Hindu feel that the temple (or the purity of the bhajans) had been compromised because of a Muslim. Indeed, the temple priests would chant prayers, blow into the sacred fire and ring the temple bells while Pukhraj recited bhajans' (Diwan, 2007, 91)

Diwan also notes the significant shared sacred spaces in Jammu region. He refers to various Sufi saints who not only had following among Hindus and Muslims but also used multi-religious symbols. Baba Roti Ram, for instance, was a follower of Kabir and used Hindu-Sikh symbols. (Diwan, 2007, 87)

M.M. Khajuria, who retired as Director General of Police in J&K and a columnist, observes the manner in which Hindus and

Muslims while maintaining some kinds of distinctions, maintained social interactions.

> Living the way they did with each other, respecting each other's sensitivities, they lived together with harmony. If not eating on the same dining sheet or table, they would spread a different sheet or table for them or would share dry ration with them. There were inhibitions but on both sides. But they were sensitive to these and had no tension. (Personal Interview)

A fairly smooth community life that existed in Jammu in the period before 1947 has been noted even by the Muslims who faced the brunt of 1947 partition and migrated to Pakistan in the heat of violence and bloodshed. In a very nostalgic memoir of Jammu, *Memory Lane to Jammu* edited by Pakistan-based Rehmatullah Rad and Khalid Hasan, the authors have not only noted the tranquility and the magic of Jammu but have also expressed the urge to go back to Jammu. Though very bitter about the communal violence, massacre and uprootedness that they had to face in 1947, they refer to the peaceful life of Jammu before 1947. Khursheed, for instance talks about the 'eternal magic' of Jammu. To quote her: 'There was something about that city which was different, otherwise why would one feel haunted so many years later by its eternal magic.' (Khurshid, 2004) Khaled Hasan meanwhile elaborates the feeling of nostalgia about Jammu:

> ...Even today, I would gladly return to Jammu, if I could, though cities by themselves are just so much mortar, stone and earth. Cities in the end are the people who live in them. And of course, the people of my childhood, are lost in the mists of time. The world has moved on. But the world that we once knew was a calmer, a more magical, a more caring place. Partition and 1947 brought that world to an end. Those Muslims of Jammu who survived were forced to flee to Pakistan where they remained strangers and are so to this day. The generation that was born in Pakistan and grew up there, of course knows nothing of Jammu and the way of life which was special to Jammu… Our parents, who are all dead and gone now, were never able to reconcile themselves to the loss of that way of life. As long as they lived, they kept missing Jammu, hoping, at least in their early years of Pakistan, that very soon things would settle down and they would return to Jammu. After some

> years, they gave up the hope. But they never overcame their nostalgia and their love of Jammu. (Khalid Hasan, 2004)

Repeatedly, the authors in the book have mentioned the 'fellow feeling' that existed in Jammu. Aziz Kash for instance asks the question: 'what was it about that city that still draws us back? What was its magic? What was it about its ambience that still sends us in a trance though so many years have passed since we left it behind.?' And he answers the question by referring to the way people lived together harmoniously. ' Maybe it was the great fellow-feeling that existed among its people. It did not matter what caste, family, tribe or clan one belonged to: we treated one another as if we were members of the same family... It is over half a century since we left Jammu but we still remember it...' (Kash, 2004)

The urge to return to Jammu, their native land, brought back many of these Pakistan-based Jammuites. Hasan himself visited Jammu, and so did many other including Arif Kamal, Masood Hasan and many others. Jammu for most of them stood as a city that presented a picture of mixed society where politics did not intervene in the interpersonal relationships. (Personal conversations with Arif Kamal, Khaled Hasan and Masood Hasan)

III

Communal Violence of 1947—Implications for Jammu

Of all the regions of the state, it was Jammu that got the biggest brunt of the violence and bloodshed of 1947.While Kashmir remained mostly untouched by the incidents of 1947, in Jammu, there was severe disruption. After things had settled down following the formal ceasefire in 1949, Jammu stood divided with as large as one-third of its area coming under the control of Paksitan. The ceasefire Line, that was later on converted into the Line of control ran through the region with areas like Mirpur, Kotli, Bhimber, Poonch, Haveli, Bagh and Sudhanti being separated from the rest of Jammu.[8] Much of

[8] A smaller part of Kashmir was also separated and came under

what came to be organized as Kashmir under the control of Pakistan was carved out of Jammu region—75.07% of the entire population' and 51.29% of the total area' of this entity was earlier part of Jammu region. (Choudhary, 2012, 45)

There was huge demographic change on both the side of the LoC. The overall Muslim majority region in pre-1947 period with 61% Muslim population, now stood divided into two differently patterned parts. On the Indian side, it became a Hindu-majority region with only one-third of its population now being Muslim. On Pakistan's side, meanwhile, it became an all-Muslim region with almost no Hindu population.[9]

The Partition violence involved both the Hindus and Muslims of the region. While a large number of Muslims were killed in the towns of Jammu, Kathua, Samba, Reasi, Udhampur, there was also the killing of thousands of Hindus in Muzaffarabad, Rajouri, Poonch, Mirpur and other areas. In the Hindu dominated districts, particularly Jammu, Reasi, Udhampur, a large number of Muslim were either killed or were pushed to Pakistan. (Bose, 2003, 40) There are reports about Muslims being killed in different parts of the region (in Udhampur, Reasi, Kathual) on the day of Eid around the last week of October 1947. (Choudhary, 2012, 39) There are horrifying stories as to how Muslims preparing to leave for Pakistan were way-laid and killed in organized manner. (Shivnath, 2007, 115) Of the most gruesome killings were those of the Kashmiri Tongawallas who had travelled from Srinagar to Jammu carrying the Hindus fleeing Kashmir. Choudhary notes the killing of hundreds of Muslims on the Eid day in various towns including Jammu, Udhampur, Reasi, Kathua.

Meanwhile, there were Hindu and Sikh killings in the Muslim

Pakistan's control. This part comprised Muzaffarabad, Jhelum Valley and Neelam Valley.

[9] Another major fall out of t1947 division was that a large population of the region was uprooted on both the sides. On the Indian side of the region, there were displaced people from Mirpur, Kotli, Muzzafarabad, etc. and were known as PoK refugees.

majority areas.[10] As Sumantra Bose notes, 'The entire Hindu and Sikh population of Muslim-majority districts in western Jammu like Muzaffarabad, Bagh, Rawlakot (western Poonch), Kotli, Mirpur, and Bhimber were killed or expelled.' (Bose, 2003, 40) There are stories of long siege of the town of Rajouri and Poonch and the killing and migration of Hindus in the process. As Choudhary notes, the suffering of the Hindus and Sikhs were 'no less' than that of the Muslims (Choudhary, 2012, 39)—they were similarly uprooted and killed in the areas where Muslims formed the majority.

Christopher Snedden has analysed the 1947 violence in Jammu region. To quote him:

> Perhaps between 20,000 and 100,000 thousand Muslims were killed in Jammu Province in 1947, although considerably further research is

[10] Bal K Gupta has recorded the siege of Mirpur City and the massacre of Hindus: 'Mirpur City (commonly known as Mirpur) was one of many small cities in Jammu and Kashmir that lay directly on the border of India and Pakistan Hindus, Sikhs, and Muslims had lived peacefully with one another for centuries in Mirpur, but on November 25, 1947, the Pakistani invasion forced the Hindu and Sikh populations to flee towards India. The migration was supposed to be an orderly event overseen by the (Hindu) Jammu and Kashmir army. However, improper planning by military officers and civil administration resulted in the abandonment of Mirpur before the evacuation was complete; thus, leaving Mirpur's remaining Hindu and Sikh populations at the mercy of the advancing Pakistani Army and heavily armed Pathans. During the city's capture, close to twenty-five hundred were killed in the infernos that erupted due to Pakistani artillery fire. Another twenty-five hundred escaped with the retreating Jammu and Kashmir army. The remaining twenty thousand were arrested by the invading Pakistani army and the Pathans, and marched in procession towards Alibeg. Along the way, the Pakistanis and Pathans killed about ten thousand of the captured Hindu and Sikh men and kidnapped over five thousand girls and young women. About five thousand Hindus and Sikhs who survived the twenty-mile trek by foot to Alibeg were quickly imprisoned.' (Alibeg prison—originally a large Sikh temple Gurudwara—converted into prison to retain Hindus and Sikhs—many of these killed—kept until January 1948 when the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) arrived and liberated the prisoners. (Gupta, 2011, xviii)

> needed to confirm what some call 'the Jammu massacre'. These figures also did not include rapes, abductions and serious injuries Certainly, a large number of Jammu Muslims, around 400,000, also fled to Pakistan or to the newly-found Azad Kashmir , which had about 150,000 refugees...(Snedden, 2017, 167)

He goes on to note further:

> While the violence against Muslims in eastern Jammu Province was alarming, Muslims in western parts of the province concurrently engaged in similar diabolical acts. In Mirpur District and the Poonch Jagir, Muslims killed large number of Hindus and Sikhs, raped and/or abducted females, or forced non-Muslims to flee either to Hindu dominant parts of Jammu Province or to India. By 1951, of the former approximately 114,000 non-Muslims who in 1941 had lived in areas that later came to comprise Azad Kashmir ... only a paltry 790 non-Muslims remained. (Snedden, 2017, 167)

The whole issue of communal killings in 1947 has been embroiled in political controversies. Unlike rest of India where the phenomenon has been much studied and analysed, there has not been much objective analysis of the phenomenon of partition and its implications for Jammu and Kashmir. The only information that has been circulated relates to the 'massacre of Muslims' in Jammu. The event forms a very important part of discourse about Jammu both in Pakistan as well as in Kashmir. The issue is referred to as an isolated event of Jammu region where with the state complicity, lakhs of Muslims were massacred. No mention is made of the Hindus being similarly killed in Pakistan administered Kashmir. On Jammu's side, meanwhile, there is a total silence about the event. No reference is made of this episode and therefore no historical analysis has been made about the event. It is in this process of silence that credence has been given to the singular narration that has been floated over the period. As per this narration, while Kashmir is presented as an example of peaceful co-existence, protecting its minority population; Jammu presented its 'communal' side and recorded the worst kind of 'massacre of Muslims' with the complicity of the state. No mention is made of Hindu killings or displacement.

How difficult is the question of analysing the episode is reflected

from the questions posed by Zafar Choudhary in his work on Jammu Muslims:

what exactly went wrong in 1947 is very difficult to decipher ... Was it a spontaneous, reaction to developments in Punjab or organized violence to alter democratic profile of the region. Was the Maharaja's government in control or had the tribal raiders shattered the law and order machinery leaving the communal elements to unleash an orgy. Published and oral sources point to a mix of circumstances placing the events of Jammu in a different order than those happening in Punjab after August 1947. (Choudhary, 2012, 34)

To put the issue in its proper perspective, it is important to note the background and the context in which the violence took place in Jammu in 1947. First thing to note is that when the neighbouring Punjab and other areas were struck up in the situation of violence quite early in 1947, Jammu remained untouched by it for a quite long time. It was only towards the month of October-November that there was outburst of violence.

Giving a perspective to the events before the Jammu violence, Choudhary thus notes that:

> It was in March 1947 that communal tensions broke out in western Punjab following elections of the previous year. The tension took violent turn leading to killings of at least 5,000 Hindus and Sikhs in Rawalpindi, Jhelum, Gujarat, Attock, Murree, Hazara, and Sialkote. In an atmosphere of fear thousands of Hindus and Sikhs fled to Jammu ...in the month of March to seek refuge until return of peace in these areas. These migrating people brought with them horrible tales of atrocities inciting passions among Hindus and Sikhs. (Choudhary, 2012, 35)

For those passing through Jammu, it was considered a safe area. With the violence further aggravating in the Punjab and NWFP, the number of people passing through Jammu was further multiplied. To quote Bose,

> Because of its location, after partition the Jammu region became a transit point for huge numbers of refugees in both direction—traumatised, terrorized Hindus and Sikhs fleeing to India from Pakistani Punjab and NWFP, and traumatised, terrorised Muslims fleeing to Pakistan from

> Indian Punjab—both sides with harrowing experiences of slaughter and atrocities. (Bose, 2003, 40)

The situation that was so evolving in the process of Hindu and Muslim refugees passing through Jammu, had its implications for the future developments. Om Saraf, a veteran journalist and eminent intellectual of the region was personal witness to the 1947 events. He has noted as to how the people affected by partition violence were getting in contact with the local people and affecting the environment of Jammu region. He informed that

> People kept on coming from East Panjab. The migration of Hindus was taking place in large scale. Passing through R S Pura on Sialkot border which was considered to be safer than the Lahore border, they were coming with their experience of violence and chaos and relating these to the locals.' (Personal Interview)

Shivnath, an eminent cultural personality of Jammu, similarly notes:

> Daily there would be news about attacks on and slaughter of Hindus in the Punjab—so many killed, so many wounded, so-and-so place set on fire, so-and-so bazaar looted. Tales of atrocities told by the refugees were horrifying. In October 1947, Pakistan closed down the train service from Sialkot to Jammu and blocked the import of commodities meant for the state. The last train from Sialkot brought a horde of Hindu and Sikh refugees... (Shivnath, 2007, 114-5)

In such a situation the overall environment was getting affected by rumours, mutual suspicions, insecurities and apprehensions. While Muslims were suspecting that Hindus are getting ready to strike them, the Hindus were apprehensive that Muslims were grouping to take some action. To quote Zafar Choudhary:

> Hordes of RSS workers and Sikh volunteers from states like Patiala began to pour into Jammu. This had the Muslims panicked who tried to seek support from Punjabi Muslims, their traditional support base. Rumours spread that the Muslims were grouping up to retaliate. The Maharaja's administration ordered for gradual disarming of Muslims. Tensions continued to prevail in Jammu, Reasi and Kathua districts for a couple of months...' (Choudhary, 2012, 35)

It is important to note that the political environment of the region was quite polarized on communal lines. As already noted, the politics of Jammu region, throughout the decades of 1930s and 1940s was communally organized. Due to the proximity with Punjab, the region had come under the influence of both Muslim and Hindu communal organizations. By 1947, there was sufficient mobilization of the Muslims on the religious lines. Of the most prominent organizations that were involved in the process of competitive mobilization of the two communities were the Muslims Conference on the one hand and Hindu Mahasabha, on the other.[11] 'Both these organizations were involved in competitive communal mobilization of people.' Meanwhile, there were also the organizations like the RSS and Muslim National Guard which were quite active at that time.' (Personal interview with Om Saraf)

Khajuria and Choudhary also note the impact of the earlier developments in Poonch, Mirpur and Pothwari belt on inter-community relations in the whole region. The area had become communally sensitive quite early in 1947 and much before it broke out in Jammu in the months of October-November, violence had already impacted the inter-community relations in this area. Choudhary argues that, 'some of the violence in Jammu province was in eruption months before—as early as March-April'. The anti-Dogra movement that had been taking place in this belt had 'assumed communal connotations leading to massive migration of Hindus and Sikhs—mostly influential businessmen—into Jammu city, its peripheral areas and also into the eastern Punjab.' (Choudhary, 2012, 34)

As per Khajuria, the impact of the tensions in Poonch-Mipur and Pothwari belt was being felt in the whole region and there was

[11] Muslim Conference was operating in Jammu region since 1932. At that time, it was a political organization with the common leadership of Jammu and Kashmir region. However, with Sheikh Abdullah taking the decision to dissolve it with the purpose of reorganizing it as the National Conference, it was briefly dissolved. However, it was revived in 1940 and was mainly located in Jammu region. RSS was meanwhile active in the region, right from the early days of establishment of this organization at the all-India level. Of many people involved in it, the most prominent was Balraj Madhok. (Shivnath, 2007, 112)

increasing communal polarization. Meanwhile tension was also brewing in other towns of the regions as well—in Doda, Kishtwar, Rajouri, Bhimbar etc. It was in this situation of the increasing communal polarisation that the partition developments started impacting the region. It was in this scenario that violence in Punjab and the resultant migration of Hindus from Sialkot and Muslims from Jammu to Sialkote set the stage for the developments in October-November period.

Choudhary has noted the role of external elements in the exacerbating the implications of the communal violence. To quote him:

> There is a striking feature of similarity between the killings of Muslims and Hindus—both were influenced by the external elements or the non-state subjects of Jammu and Kashmir. As long as the disturbances were indigenous, involving the people of the state, migrations did take place following confrontations between rebels and the state forces but there were no major selective killings of any community. Muslims in eastern parts of the province came under attack only when the Hindu and Sikh fanatics from outside the state took over in Jammu, Kathua, Reasi and Udhampur in September, October and November. Similarly, in the western side, particularly in Mirpur and Rajouri, the killings of minorities took place only when the tribal raiders had come in full aid of the rebels in the month of November following their exit by the Indian forces from the northern corridor of Kashmir Valley. (Choudhary, 2012, 39)

When seen in the totality of things, the communal violence that took place in Jammu reflects a combination of factors—related to its locality, its contiguity with Punjab, its demography as well as the local factors that were operative at that point of time. The extent of violence was massive and it had serious consequences for both the communities.

IV

Inter-Community Relations in Post-1947 Period

Aftermath of Violence and 'Moving On'

The 1947 division of the state and the bloodshed brought about qualitative change in Jammu—from being a Muslims majority region, it became a Hindu majority region. The division not only brought structural changes in the character of the region but also affected the life of large number of people. On the one hand there were large number of Hindu refugees who were scattered all over the place—in Jammu city, in areas around the International border in Jammu district, in the Poonch-Rajouri belt, especially Sundarbani, Nowshera etc. On the other, there were divided families, especially around the Line of Control. In the areas of Poonch and Rajouri, almost every family had some connection in the areas that had now come under the control of Pakistan. As the border on the LoC remained continuously volatile even after the end of India-Pakistan war in 1948, the families so divided remained unconnected with each other.

The communal violence and bloodshed during the division of the state had impacted the environment of the region. Not only it had psychological impact on the Muslims who didn't migrate and chose to stay on but also on the Hindu Refugees. Though there was no apparent tension between the communities yet the after effect of the violence was felt for some time.

As the time passed, these communities started putting the past behind them. The Hindu refugees, in their struggle to rehabilitate themselves, without much support from the state, got integrated into the local cultures of the areas where they were located. Distinguished as they were from other partition refugees due to the peculiarity of conflict in Jammu and Kashmir, these refugees had to struggle for decades for their proper rehabilitation. Since the area from where they were uprooted was legally a part of India, they were not treated at par with other partition refugees. Neither their loss was formally assessed nor were they compensated. Only with some meagre pack-

age given to them in the form of some land or housing plot, they started their lives from the scratch.

The Muslims also, meanwhile, gained confidence that there would be no repeat of 1947 violence and rather than remaining ghettoized in their religious identity, they became part of larger cultural identity of the region. To quote Lalit Gupta:

> Despite all kind of pressures to the contrary, the Muslims of Jammu have been integrated with their cultural identity and rather than having a sharp religious identity, have a stronger sense of cultural identity—be it the Dogra Muslim, the Pahari Muslim or the Gujjar. It is this sense of cultural identity that the Muslims of Jammu still have a regional identification and despite grievances against the regional elite, have a distinct identity. (Gupta, 2010, 252-253)

Zafar Choudhary similarly refers to the process of moving on for Muslims who were left behind in the wake of 1947 Partition violence:

> Things were unimaginably tough for those who were left behind. They had to make a fresh beginning. And in the new scenario they found it in the fitness of things to have cordial relations with the immediate neighbours. In times of joys and pains they had to fall back upon the neighbours who were the Sharmas, the Guptas and the Singhs. Whether out of compulsion or free will these relations grew by years to shape up the composite culture of Jammu. The fact is that a Muslim of Jammu had very little to deal with someone of the same religion in Kashmir as he had to with his Hindu neighbour. (Choudhary, 2008,13)

The Partition violence for these communities remained in the background, but did not affect their day-to-day relations with the 'other' community. What helped these people move on was the fact that after 1947 there was no serious communal clash within the region. Despite the political tensions that erupted from time to time, the inter-community relations were, more or less, smooth. There were a number of factors that helped in maintaining the smooth inter-community relations in the region.

To begin with, it was the very nature of Jammu's demography that provided a conducive environment for the communities to bond

with each other. With multiple identities cutting across the religious identities, the religious identity did not operate as the 'exclusive' or the only identity. Muslims and Hindus, besides being Muslims and Hindus, were also part of cultural communities—Dogras, Paharis, Gujjars, Mirpuris, Bhaderwahi, Bhalesi. There were times, when people strongly identified themselves as 'Hindus' and 'Muslims' but then there were other times, when they identified themselves as part of their linguistic-cultural groupings.

Mixed society, was a reality of the region and this is what helped in creating a plural ethos of the society. Jammu has been much more mixed than any other part of the state. Even the predominantly Hindu parts of the region (Jammu, Kathua, Udhampur) had the presence of Muslims and similarly the predominantly Muslim parts (Poonch, Doda) had the presence of Hindus. Most of the other areas of the region—(Kishtwar, Bhaderwah, Reasi, Rajouri for instance) were having almost even population of the two communities. What was the most significant implication of the mixed demographics of the region was the kind of associations that the Hindus and Muslims had with each other and the kind of shared cultural space that was maintained in the region.

Another factor that has been crucial in making the communities overcome their differences and bond with people across the religious divide is related to the shared religious spaces in the region. The large number of Sufi Shrines, provided 'a common space for people belonging to different religions. Not only in the city of Jammu but also in other parts of the Jammu region, including, Poonch, Kishtawar, the Sufi shrines have been part of the cultural landscape since a long time', and continue to be revered by people cutting across the religious affiliations. (Lalit Gupta, 2010, 254)[12] What is particular about the Sufi shrines of predominantly Hindu belt of

[12] Though the Sufi shrines spread all over the region continued to attract people across the religious divide, the shrine of Ghulam Baba Budshah located near Rajouri and the Shrine of Baba Fariduddin Bagdadi in Kishtwar particularly have been very popular in the region. Along with various other shrines in Jammu city, the shrine of Peer Budhan Shah is the most popular one.

Jammu is that these are so integral to the religious-cultural space that these are not seen as 'Muslim' religious spaces but as those 'spiritual' spaces which are owned as much by Hindus as by Muslims. Many of the shrines in the erstwhile predominantly Muslim belt (from where the Muslims migrated to PoK and Pakistan) are now protected by the Hindus. In the absence of Muslims in these areas, the Hindus have taken the responsibility of managing these shrines and maintaining their essential 'sufi' character. Besides all other rituals being followed, the annual *urs* are organized with lot of fanfare and attended by the local population.[13]

While these factors, on their own contributed to the 'living pluralism' of Jammu's society, efforts were also made by the individuals and organizations in post-1947 period to overcome the 'communal blot' that had come to be associated with the region. As Sati Sahney noted, 'partition violence had shaken the conscience of Jammu' (Personal Interview) and therefore prominent people, particularly in Jammu city, took the initiatives to generate an environment for communities to bond with each other.

Comrade Dhanwantri, a left-leaning intellectual who had come to Jammu in early 1940s, was quite influential in popularizing the ideas of communal amity within the region. He along with few other Jammu leaders including Isher Das Mengi and Capt. G. S. Manhas organized writers, peasants, youth and students and was able to create a small but significant space for progressive politics of Jammu region that sought to re-imagine Jammu's politics on non- communal lines. It was his influence that a number of Jammu's Dogra intellectuals, social activists and student leaders came forward to redefine the

[13] The inclusive character of the shrines has been defined by the legends attached to many of these. Invariably one finds reference to Hindus one way or the other. The legend of Kishtwar shrine, for instance, has multiple reference to 'Hindus'—for instance the Hindu wife of the Sufi saint who traveled from Kashmir and wherever her palanquin was halted is revered as the 'Hindu Asthan'. Only the Hindu men have the privilege of visiting her last resting place, the Muslim men cannot enter it. There is also the legend about the son of Farid-ud-din who also is revered as the saint, who was so attached to his Hindu friend that he used his power of miracle to revive him after finding him dead.

political ethos of Jammu region. Prominent among them were Ram Nath Shastri, K.D. Sethi, R.P. Saraf, Ved Bhasin, Balraj Puri, Om Saraf, Ved Rahi, etc.

It was during this time that efforts were made in the direction of giving a new orientation to Jammu region—overcoming its religious divide and defining it through its linguistic-cultural essence. These efforts led to the linguistic-cultural resurgence in Jammu region. Balraj Puri called it the phase of 'Dogri renaissance' that contributed to plural ethos of this region. (Puri, 1966) Much of this was achieved through the establishment of Dogri Sanstha.

Dogri Renaissance: The Alternative Politics of Cultural Assertion

The Dogri Sanstha that was established in 1944 sought to provide an alternative discourse for Jammu's pride.[14] Rather than defining Jammu from the perspective of rivalry with Kashmir, it opted for an inward-looking process of recovering the idea of Jammu as a land of 'Duggar'. This was not only the movement for recognition of Dogri language, but also the processes of reviving and revisiting the Duggar culture.[15] (Puri, 2001) Much attention was given to Dogra folk and oral tradition which provided people's perspective of Dogra society, culture and traditions. One major objective of this movement was to de-link the 'Dogra' from the ruler and to define it as a community enriched by its traditions, art and culture.

Much of the contribution of the Dogri Sanstha was in the direction of recreating the Dogri literature on the basis of local traditions while giving these traditions a modern turn. To quote Shivnath:

[14] Prominent among those who were involved in the establishment of Dogri Sanstha included, Ramnath Shastri (college Professor), D C Prashant (journalist), Sansar Chand Badu (arist), Dinoo Bhai Pant (poet). (Shivnath, 2007, 113)

[15] In the opinion of Puri, in the resurgence of Dogri, a great role was played by the recognition awarded by the Sahitya Academy to it as a literary language. He also notes a similar resurgence in Pahari and Gojri—two other languages of the region. 'The literary movements in all the regional languages have grown in harmony. In fact, they cut across communal barriers and tend to undermine them.' (Puri, 2001A)

> Between 1944 (the year of the founding of Dogri Sastha, Jammu and commencement of Dogri literary movement) and 1969 (the year when Dogri was recognised as an independent modern Indian language by the Sahitya Akademi), Dogri literature was built up, brick by brick as it were, with the dedication of a group of literary and cultural activists of the Dogri Sastha, Jammu, and some likeminded organisations like Dogra Mandal, Jammu and Dogra Mandal, Delhi on the foundations of the common folk literature heritage of Dogras. (Shivnath, 1997, 1)

The Dogri renaissance that took place during this time was based on revival of 'common Sufi- Bhakti saints, kisan martyrs, artists and political heroes of the past.' It also celebrated 'schools of Pahari music and art'. (Puri, 2001, 75) Among the 'Dogra Heroes' that the new Dogri movement talked about were those who had lived and sacrificed their lives for a cause—Baba Jittoo, Mian Dido and Ranapath. Baba Jittoo who represented the anti-feudal struggle of the peasantry[16], Mian Dido who fought for the honour of the land and its people[17] and Baba Ranpath who sacrificed his life for maintaining the idea of 'justice.'[18]. Among the Dogra intellectuals who were part

[16] Baba Jittoo is a well-known folk hero whose life struggle and sacrifice is remembered by the people till now. A three-day festival is celebrated every year which is attended by large number of people. The legend of Baba Jittoo is part of the oral history of Jammu. As per the legend, Baba Jittoo, a Brahman peasant had been given infertile land by a landlord under the agreement that he would work on the land and give one fourth of the crop to the landlord. However, finding that Baba Jittoo had succeeded in getting a good produce, the landlord insisted on having three-fourth share of the crop. Rather than agreeing to succumb to the exploitative demands of the landowner, Baba Jittoo spoiled the whole crop by killing himself and mixing the crop with his own blood.

[17] Mian Dido, a contemporary of Maharaja Gulab Singh, was a rebel who fought against the injustice of the Lahore Darbar of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and the exploitative taxation of landlords. He was known to rob the rich landlords and distribute the booty among the poor.

[18] Baba Ranpath's story is about a Brahmin made a judge to arbiter land dispute between powerful landholder and a poor vulnerable peasant. Despite the attempts by the rich landlord to corrupt him, Ranpath delivered judgement in favour of the poor peasant and was killed in the process.

of the project of Dogra renaissance, poet activist Dinoo Bhai Pant and Dogri writer Ramnath Shastri, were the most prominent one. While Dinoo Bhai Pant wrote 'Nawa Gran' (New Village') a Dogri sequel to New Kashmir Manifesto, Ramnath Shastri wrote 'Duggar de Loknayak' (the heroes of Duggar land).

One of the impacts of the Dogra renaissance was that it helped provide an alternative definition of Jammu region to the one that was being politically portrayed with reference to 'Kashmir'. Jammu in that definition, rather than being an equal socio-cultural and political entity, was projected as 'the other' of Kashmir. The emphasis in the cultural and literary movement was to bring 'Dogra culture' at the centre of Jammu's definition and thereby generating a positive sense of pride in this culture. What was particularly important about this movement was that it was influenced by the progressive thinking and was informed with anti-feudal sentiments. By recovering the popular culture and giving it a literary form, the movement sought to correct the projection of Jammu region being totally revisionist and reactionary in its political approach. The recovery of Jammu's heroes—particularly Baba Jittoo—was an attempt to recognize the popular basis of anti-feudal sentiment of the region.

Along with this cultural resurgence, there was also organization of socialist politics, albeit on a smaller scale. The tradition of radical anti-feudal struggle was already started in Chennani Jagir where peasantry had been organized against the ruler and Dinoo Bhai Pant was quite actively involved in the movement. This movement, on a very small scale, was parallel to the National Conference movement in Kashmir and introduced many young activist into the socialist politics. Meanwhile, there evolved a socialist camp in the Kathua-Samba belt after 1947 and a number of left-leaning activists emerged from there. Though the socialist politics was dwarfed by the Praja Parishad politics, however, it retained its visibility in this belt for quite some time.

It was in this background that one can argue that Jammu not only moved away from its Partition trauma but also established its plural ethos. Irrespective of the political situation in which the state came to be involved and the inter-regional irritations and tensions that erupted from time to time, the inter-community relations

remained more or less intact. Despite the mixed nature of society and intricate demographic patterns, there were no noteworthy cases of inter-community strife or tensions. Politics did certainly pressurize the communities at times, however, these pressures did not leave much impact on inter-community relations per se.

The decade of 1980s saw many of these politically provocative situations. Of these, one was related to the Resettlement Bills initiated during the fag end of Sheikh Abdullah's tenure as Chief Minister of the state. The Bill was aimed at resettling those state subjects back to the state who had shifted to Pakistan and as per the Section 6 of the state constitution, they could be rehabilitated in the state provided a law to the effect was made. The Bill seen as a pro-Kashmir and pro-Muslim bill created lot of resentment in Jammu region. Apart from the political parties which saw the issue also in terms of 'nationalist' and security perspective, there were the bulk of Hindu refugees who feared destablization as an implication of the resettlement law. These refugees mostly from PoK were rehabilitated in the property which continued to remain in the name of the original owners who had migrated either to Pakistan controlled parts of the state or in Pakistan. The Resettlement Bill, generated a sense of insecurity and this resulted in communally polarized political response—with Muslims supporting the Bill and the Hindus opposing it.

Communally polarized politics, however, took more organized shape in early 1980s and culminated in very much politically vitiated election of 1983. The state was regionally and communally polarized with Congress wooing the Jammu Hindus and the National Conference pitching in for Kashmiri Muslims. It was the result of the inter-regional polarization on communal basis that also resulted in effectively dividing the Jammu region on communal basis. The larger Muslim response in the region was in favour of the National Conference, while Hindus identified with the Congress.[19]

[19] The 1983 Assembly election was an exception rather than a rule. The electoral politics of the region, till recently has not been so communally polarized. Corresponding to the plural realities of the society, the electoral response has also been plural. Despite being a Hindu majority region, the

Another wave of regional and communal polarization could be seen in 1987 following a decision of Farooq Abdullah government to stop the annual Darbar move to Jammu region and locate the secretariat permanently in Kashmir.

These situations, notwithstanding, the plural ethos of Jammu region was not seriously disturbed. At the political level, the tensions certainly surfaced, but however failed to impact the inter- community relations in any serious manner. The situation however became more challenging during the period of militancy.

IV

Militancy and Separatism: Implications for Inter-Community Relations in Jammu Region

The period of militancy and separatism put lot of strain on the inter community relations in Jammu and Kashmir. In Kashmir, it resulted in converting the region as one-religion society, following the mass exodus of Kashmiri Pandits. In Jammu, the plural society faced the challenge, particularly in those areas which came to be infested with militancy and which were inhabited by large number of Muslims and Hindus. There was every danger. that not only these areas would be communalized but the region as a whole would be communally polarised.

With some exceptional situations in the militancy prone areas

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Hindu Right parties have not been successful in translating their vocal presence (through the protest and agitational politics) into the electoral victories. With the exception of 1957 Assembly election, when the Praja Parishad succeeded in winning five seats, the electoral capacity of this party or that of Bharatiya Jana Sangh or BJP has remained limited to a total one-three seats in the whole region. It is only recently after the onset of militancy that the BJP has been able to increase its influence tremendously in the region. However, with the exception of 2014 Assembly election, the electoral response of the region has been quite mixed with a number of political parties—including the Congress, National Conference and various other local parties competing and winning the elections. Even in 2014 the National Conference could win two seats from the Hindu dominated belt.

(about which a discussion is going to follow), Jammu presented a very positive picture. This was despite the fact that there were sufficient provocations for communal polarization of the region. These provocations came from targeted and selective killings and attacks on religious and public places in Jammu. Jammu's Raghunath temple for instance, was targeted twice and there were militant attacks on Jammu's Railway station a number of times. However, the most provocative attacks took place in the Doda belt during the late 1990s. The process of selective killings started in 1993 when 17 passengers in a bus, after being identified as Hindus, were massacred at Sarthal in Kishtwar. This was repeated in 1996 and 1997 when 15 villagers were similarly massacred in Barshalla and nine people were killed in Kamalari. (Swami, 1998) One of the most gruesome massacres took place in 1998 when 25 members of a marriage party were massacred in Chapnari. The same year 16 people were killed in two villages of Thukari. In 2006, in another episode of selective killings 22 people were killed in Kulhand and Tharva. (Swami, 2006B)

Selective communal killings were not confined to Doda district only, there were similar killings in Rajouri district. As Choudhary notes, between 1996 and 2001, '61 persons of seven Hindu families were killed in as many incidents'. (Choudhary, 2012, 69) Similar pattern of killings was followed in other parts of the region as well. In one of the massacres in Prankote in Udhampur district, 27 people were killed, in another case 35 labourers killed in Kalaban on Jammu- Himachal Pradesh border in 1999 and the same year nine people were killed at Barlyara- Udhampur. In Jammu city itself there were a number of cases of militant killings, especially in 2002. That year, twice, there was militant attack in the famous Raghunath temple and while 12 people were killed in the first attack, 14 were killed in the second attack; 28 people were killed in Kasim Nagar attack and 32 people were killed in the attack on Kaluchak army camp located at the outskirts of the city. (Chronology of massacres in Jammu and Kashmir, May 2, 2006, OneIndia news, https://www.oneindia.com /2006/05/01/chronology-of-massacres-in-jammu-and- kashmir-1146509028.html

The selective communal killings, especially in the late 1990s and after, were meant to generate a communal polarization in the region.

Aiming at the sensitivities of the region with patterns of demography where there were areas of almost even population of Hindus and Muslims or substantial minorities—the attacks were quite provocative. Most of the killings, for instance, in the remote areas of Doda belt or in Udhampur were of the vulnerable people. These attacks were so designed that these could have easily generated not only a serious communal divide in the region but also communal tension. In the affected areas and nearby, there was certainly an environment of fear and suspicion, which lasted for some time. However the response of the region, on the whole was quite mature. There was a general understanding about the nature and context of militancy which was seen to be located outside the region. There was also the feeling that the local people were caught in the situation in an involuntary manner. The fact that the militancy in the region was not complemented by the separatism, helped ease the response.[20]

Till 2008, when Jammu erupted in major agitation, there was no reaction to the selective killing spree and provocative militant attacks. Rather than falling prey to the provocation, the region helped in generating a political balance within the state, providing not only a sense of 'normalcy' in an otherwise abnormal situation as well as providing space for absorbing the shock of prevailing all-round violence.

There were few areas, however, which got impacted by the situation and the response was communalized. For instance, in

[20] What helped the inter-community relations to be retained in these areas is the lack of support to separatism. Though the Doda belt as well as in certain pockets of Poonch were infested by militancy for a number of years, there was no sway of separatism at par with Kashmir. With the exception of certain pockets where there were some expressions of sympathy with the Kashmiris—particularly on issues of Human Rights, there was no similar separatist sentiments. This helped in easing out the communal tension, in general. It was for that reason that there was no large-scale migration of Hindus from the area. The only recorded migration was in the initial period of militancy when around 250 families shifted from Bhaderwah to Chamba. (Chitkara, 1996,149) This migration from two villages of Goba and Seru took place after the killing of two militants in a confrontation of villagers with the militants. Following this incident, the entire population of these two villages migrated to Chamba. (Baweja, 1994)

Bhaderwah town which felt the severity of militancy, there was so much of tension between the two communities that even a normal communication between them was stopped. Balraj Puri refers to his visit to the town along with Nirmala Deshpande with the effort to build bridged between Hindus and Muslims. (Puri, 2012, 62) Situation, here, continued like that for a number of years. During the peak of militancy there was tension in other towns of the Doda belt as well. In Kishtwar, where the population of Muslims and Hindus was almost evenly distributed, there was lot of strain on the inter community relations. The Rajouri town in Rajouri district was also similarly affected and during the period of militancy, there was a clear-cut polarization on communal basis. In all these areas, militancy generated an environment of suspicion and distrust. The communally selective killings particularly led to the reconstruction of identities on the basis of religion and also in redefining the conflict on religious fault lines. Mutual suspicion and insecurity led to competitive politicization of the communities. As Lov Puri notes, 'In the insecure milieu dependance of Hindus on security forces increased and Muslims in turn started depending upon militants.' (Puri, 2008, 38) Situation had at certain points become so fragile that even a small rumour could trigger tensions at any point of time.

As one could get the impression during the fieldwork in the Doda belt, the two communities had developed contradictory perceptions and mutual suspicions during the period of militancy. While Hindus believed that they were specifically targeted for being Hindus and therefore killed in large numbers, the Muslims believed that since killings were more of political nature, both Hindus and Muslims were being killed. And for that matter apart from the Hindus and the RSS/BJP activists, there were many Muslims and NC activists who were also targeted and killed. According to them in the situation of militancy it was the community of Muslims which was facing the maximum brunt. There was lot of suspicion among Hindus about the linkage of the militants with the local Muslims. However, Muslims expressed their compulsion when approached by the militants for food and shelter. They said that, they had no option but to conform. This made their position much more vulnerable because they were to face the brunt of the security forces as well. One

of the issues in which both the communities had great discord was around the issue of Village Defence Committees (VDCs). For the Hindus, the VDCs were integral to providing security to the people in the militancy infested areas. However, the Muslims had the feeling that this was a process of arming of the Hindus. Most of the VDCs being located in the Hindu-majority areas and mostly comprised of Hindu and Sikh villagers, helped generate the impression. (Joshi, 1999, 401)

The impact of the inter-community divide that was generated during the peak of militancy in these areas, was to last for some time. With political parties and socio-political organization intervening and using the sense of insecurity and mutual suspicion for their electoral and political advantage, the communalized environment in certain areas continued to be perpetuated. There have been areas like Kishtwar which have become so polarized and fragile that these have continued to erupt from time to time. Interestingly, Kishtwar was known for its traditional communal amity and before 1990s there was no history of the communal clashes. However, since the onset of militancy, there have been communal clashes with regular frequency. Thus, communal eruption took place in 1993, 1998, 2003, 2008 and in 2013. (Swami, 2013) In most of these communal eruptions, the pattern has been the same—there has been arson and looting and burning of shops in the main market area and a few killings as well. (Kumar, 2014, 82-85) [21] Rajouri also has become communally very sensitive town after the onset of militancy and any small thing can trigger communal tensions here. (Swami, 2000) Communal polarization has affected many other towns as well. Poonch that had the reputation of being very composite and peaceful town, has erupted a number of times.

[21] As recently as 2013, the area saw the people of two communities face to face with each other, quite armed and rioting for the whole day. This kind of rioting in the end left three people dead and several people injured.

This kind of impact of militancy in certain areas of Jammu region, notwithstanding, the overall environment remained quite positive. The situation during the period of militancy was quite provocative. In the context of the mixed demography all over the region, the situation was quite precarious. But on the whole, the region not only maintained its plural ethos but also emerged as a space that could absorb the negative impact of the militancy and could provide a succour to the people from the violence-ridden Valley.

Changed Landscape of Jammu during the Period of Militancy

Seen from this perspective, Jammu emerged quite positively during the period of militancy. Particularly, the city of Jammu that absorbed a large conflict-ridden population of Kashmir Valley.

The period of militancy changed the landscape of Jammu region. While Kashmir lost its diversity, the Jammu region, on the contrary, gained in terms of its plurality. This was mainly due to the fact that the region was not impacted the same way by militancy and separatism as Kashmir region was. Kashmir was so much implicated in the situation of militancy, violence and militarism in 1989-90 period that there was not only a total breakdown of the political processes but also the collapse of normal social life. As violence overtook politics, all other processes were impacted. Not only the economy, business and tourism were affected but also the education and day to day life were disrupted. Apart from violence and uncertainty, the quality of life was affected by long periods of *Hartals*, curfews and 'civil curfews'. It was during this time that many people started shifting out of Kashmir. There was mass exodus of Kashmiri Pandits in early months of 1990 and with the exception of few thousand Kashmiris Pandits who remained back, scattered in various parts of the region, almost the whole community shifted to Jammu and other parts of the country. However, it was not only the Kashmiri Pandits who shifted out but there were a number of Muslims also who were forced to migrate. Initially, these were individuals, mostly those who were seen close to Indian state and felt targeted for one reason of the

other. However, gradually others also started coming out in search of normal life.

Jammu that had maintained a sense of 'normalcy' throughout the period of militancy, became the alternative space where Kashmiris affected by day-to-day violence could come and get a respite from the situation of turbulence. By the end of the decade of 1990s, the Muslim middle class had found Jammu a safe refuge and many of them who could afford to construct a second home, had constructed one in Jammu city. Others meanwhile rented out houses. Even after the situation became better in Kashmir, it remained a practice for Kashmiri Muslims to spend their winters in Jammu.

As the life was stalled in Kashmir, Jammu started becoming more vibrant. During the first ten years of militancy, it was the only functional capital of the state from where the official business of the state was carried out. While many Kashmiris involved in big business shifted to Bombay, Delhi and abroad, some small and medium entrepreneurs started running their business from Jammu. Most of the corporations that had their offices in Kashmir, shifted to Jammu. Political parties and leaders also found Jammu as safe haven. So much so that even Kashmir-based parties like National Conference operated from Jammu only, for a long time.

The educational, economic and social vibrancy of Jammu attracted Kashmiris and many of them adopted it as their 'second home'. With education getting seriously affected by prolonged period of disruptions in the later period (for instance whole summer moths of 2008, 2010 and 2016), Jammu became a major educational hub for Kashmiris.

During the months of winter when there used to be formal shifting of state offices to Jammu, Jammu became quite vibrant. Along with state employees, their families, relatives and friends—there were other Kashmiris who preferred to spend time in Jammu and one could feel their presence in large numbers through their visibility in local shopping areas, cinemas and other entertainment centres.

It is not only Kashmiris who found Jammu city a safe refuge but also the people from the militancy infested areas of the region itself. Many people from the Doda belt and Poonch-Rajouri belt—both Muslims as well as Hindus, started settling in Jammu city as well

as other towns of the region.[22] The implications of all this could be felt in expansion of the city—from a town mostly confined to one bank of Jammu Tawi, it came to be an extended city on both the sides of the river. Among the new colonies that came up were some exclusively inhabited by those who came to settle in Jammu in the period after 1990. Among these colonies, a number of colonies were those where Kashmiri Pandits came to settle—these included, Paloura, Janipur, Roopnagar[23]. There were similarly the colonies where Muslims settled and these included Bhatindi and Sunjwan. Apart from these there were other new colonies like Sidhra, Channi Himmat where the Muslim and Hindu elite came to live.

It is the implication of this situation that Jammu region in general and Jammu city in particular have become quite cosmopolitan with different communities, not only in term of being Muslim or Hindus, but different linguistic and cultural groups—Kashmiris, Gujjars, Ladakhis, Dogras, etc. living together. The demographic change of the town was tremendous, however, it did not generate much sensitivities. The rightist parties and groups made efforts to make this change as an issue, but they could not succeed it in the absence of support from locals. However, it is in more recent years that the issue of Jammu's demography has started being politicized.

The Cosmopolitan Versus the Parochial

The cosmopolitan culture of Jammu that has evolved over the period, often comes to be subdued by the parochial or communal responses. It is interesting to see as to how the cosmopolitan response has been somewhat matched by the communal response. Although much of

[22] It was the impact of such a process of migration and shifting that Jammu city started expanding and from a small town that was mainly confined to one bank of river Tawi, it came to acquire the status of quite a big city with a number of colonies coming up on the other bank of Tawi.

[23] Prior to their exodus, some Kashmiri Pandits were already residing in Jammu. As Devinder Singh notes, though they were scattered in different parts of Jammu city, but there were two residential areas where they were concentrated. These areas were Bhagwati Nagar and Mahendra Nagar. (Singh, 2015, 406)

parochialism is informed by the political agendas, yet these responses have continued to manifest in one form or the other.

Over the period, demography has come to assume politically sensitive issue and even when the society has been forthcoming in absorbing the conflict-ridden people from Kashmir and other places in Jammu region, the change in demography, especially of Jammu city, has come to be politicized. A number of issues related to 'conspiracy' to deliberately settle Muslims in Jammu city'; 'encircling of Jammu city' by Muslims; and a systematic plan to encroach and grab the land—has been evolved. Meanwhile, with an attempt to sharpen the religious identities of people, the political discourse has been taking a communal route. Much of this process of sharpening of religious identities was boosted during the Amaranth agitation. Though there were underlying dimensions of regional assertion during the agitation, the central point of the agitation was informed by the religious sentiments. In the long run, the agitation resulted in a religious divide of the region. In all those areas that form the predominantly Hindu belt, it got a massive popular response, but due to its religious nature, there was an ambivalent response from the Muslim. Even while some Muslim organizations in Jammu city came forward in support of the agitation, the large majority of them remained aloof. Many pointed the psychological impact that the agitation had on the minorities.[24]With the religious assertion and the mass frenzy, the situation at times could easily take communal turn and trivial incidences would lead to major tension in the localized areas.[25] Often

[24] Zafar Choudhary in his analysis of the agitation and its implications for Jammu Muslims, has argued that though the agitation was not against the Jammu Muslims, it had the implication of intimidating the community as such.' (Choudhary, 2012, 14)

[25] That the Amarnath agitation sufficiently communalized the spaces in Jammu region gets reflected from the reported incidences of communal clashes as these erupted in various parts of the region. In Bhaderwah Seri market, there was communal tension in early July around the issue of enforcement of Bandh. In Vijaypur Samba, there were attempts to set ablaze the *kullas* of the Gujjars. There were also reports about stranded Kashmiri Muslim drivers being harassed in Jammu and Jammu Hindu drivers being harassed in Kashmir and Surankote area of Poonch.

communal response in Hindu majority area would be retaliated by the communal response in the Muslim majority area and vice versa.[26]

It has been the resilience of Jammu's plural culture that despite the tensions so generated during the Amarnath agitation, the inter-community relations have not been seriously affected. The gap that was created during the agitation was filled immediately after the agitation was called off. On the occasion of annual Darbar move (movement of secretariat from Kashmir to Jammu), one interesting facet of Jammu was reflected on the first day of opening of the secretariat in Jammu. There was a huge banner in the Secretariat on behalf of Jammu people welcoming the Kashmiri employees to Jammu. This had a psychological impact on Muslims in general. The Assembly elections that were meanwhile announced helped in restoring the confidence of the two communities in each other. The political, regional and communal boundaries that were created during the agitation were all dissolved during the electoral process.

The communal political response in Jammu region certainly gets noticed and gets reported at the national level. Due to the binary representation of Jammu region as the other of Kashmir, very often, such a response is seen in isolation of the larger reality of the region. It is the narrative of 'Jammu being communal' that is conveniently built and reinforced after every isolated incident of parochial-communal response.[27]

[26] This situation was reflected in Hindu majority area of Sundarbani and Muslim majority area of Surankote or Poonch. The cases of harassment of Muslim bus passengers in Sundarbani were often retaliated in Surankote or Poonch.

[27] More recently, the Rasana rape case in which an eight year old Gujjar girl was raped and killed, brought national attention on Jammu region. The fact that a few local organizations rather than condemning the heinous crime unconditionally, had supported the accused and demanded a CBI enquiry into what was seen as a 'political conspiracy'—gave the region a negative projection. Notwithstanding the fact that there was a similar sense of shock and condemnation of the heinous crime in various parts of the regionthe response of the region as a whole did not match with the projected response of these organizations (since) it was seen as another instance of communal response of the region.

In reality, the ground situation of Jammu region is much more complex and layered. Even when the communal response gets to be sharpened and highlighted at times, the plural reality of the region gets to reaffirm and reassert itself from time to time. Irrespective of the developments that have taken place in last few decades, one can still find Jammu region to be relatively much more accommodative as compared to any other part of the erstwhile state. The plural structure of society; the mixed demography; multiple and competitive linguistic-cultural identities—all these make the region quite vibrant and open.

IX

August 2019 Changes: Implications for Inter-Regional Relations

The regional tensions and the political divergence within the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir has been a serious issue and as this study has argued it has added to an additional layer in the conflict situation. In what ways this third layer of conflict has been impacted by the August 2019 changes vis-a-vis Jammu and Kashmir is an important question to ask. Also, interesting to note is the political responses that these changes have generated in each of the regions. What has been the nature of inter-regional relations in the post-2019 period?

I

August 2019 Changes

On 5 August 2019, the Union Home Minister Amit Shah made two announcements in the upper House of the Parliament—one about repealing Articles 370 and 35A and the second one about the bifurcation of the state of Jammu and Kashmir into two Union Territories. In pursuance of these announcements, two Resolutions and two Bills related to Jammu and Kashmir were meanwhile introduced in the Parliament. These included, the introduction of Constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir) Order, 2019; Resolution for Repeal of Article 370 of the Constitution of India, introduction of

Jammu & Kashmir (Reorganization) Bill, 2019 and introduction of Jammu and Kashmir reservation (2nd Amendment) Bill, 2019.[1]

Modifications in Article 370 and Abrogation of Special Constitutional Status

The Constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir) Order, 2019 superseded the Constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir) Order, 1954 (as amended from time to time) and came into force at once. As per this Order, 'All the provisions of the Constitution, as amended from time to time, shall apply in relation to the State of Jammu and Kashmir and the exceptions and modifications' By the same Order, a new clause (4) was added to Article 367.[2]

Implicitly, by this Order, the Article 35A was repealed. Since the Article 35A was added by the Constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir) Order of 1954, its supersession by the Constitution

[1] The Jammu and Kashmir reservation (2nd Amendment) Bill, 2019 related to the promotion benefits for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in services in J&K and 10 per cent reservation or economically weaker sections in educational institutions and public employment in J&K. This Bill was preceded by approval by the Cabinet of 'Application to Jammu & Kashmir) Amendment Order, 2019.

[2] The clause that was added read as under:

"(4) For the purposes of this Constitution as it applies in relation to the State of jammu and Kashmir—(a) References to this Constitution or to the provisions thereof shall be construed as references to the Constitution or the provisions thereof as applied in relation to the said State; (b) References to the person for the time being recognized by the President on the recommendation of the Legislative Assembly of the State as the Sadar-i-Riyasat of Jammu and Kashmir, acting on the advice of the Council of Ministers of the State for the time being in office, shall be construed as references to the Governor of Jammu and Kashmir; (c) References to the Government of the said State shall be construed as including references to the Governor of Jammu and Kashmir acing on the advice of his Council of Ministers; and(d) In provision to clause (3) of Article 370 of this Constitution, the expression "Constituent Assembly of the State referred to in clause (2)" shal read "Legislative Assembly of the State."

(Application to Jammu and Kashmir) Order of 2019 automatically meant that Article 35A was repealed.

The official interpretation of the changes made by this Order were made clear in the gazette notification which stated that : 'In exercise of the powers conferred by clause (3) of Article 370 read with clause (1) of Article 370 of the Constitution of India, the President, on the recommendation of Parliament, is pleased to declare that, as from the 6th August, 2019, all clauses of the said article 370 shall cease to be operative...' and further that: 'All provision of this Constitution, as amended from time to time, without any modifications or exceptions, shall apply to the State of Jammu and Kashmir notwithstanding anything contrary contained in Article 152 or Article 308 or any other article of this Constitution or any other provision of the Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir or any law, document, judgement, ordinance, order, by-law, rule, regulation, notification, custom or usage having the force of law in the territory of India, or any other instrument, treaty or agreement as envisaged under Article 363 or otherwise'.[3]

In making changes in the Article 370, section 3 of Article 370 was invoked. As per this section, "the President may, by public notification, declare that this article shall cease to be operative or shall be operative only with such exceptions and modifications and from such date as he may specify: Provided that the recommendation of the Constituent Assembly of the State referred to in clause (2) shall be necessary before the President issues such a notification.

The reference to the Constituent Assembly, as per the past precedence, has been in practice the reference to the Legislative Assembly. Since the state had been under the Governor's rule since November 2018 and did not have a Legislative Assembly, hence it was presumed that the powers of Legislature were now vested in the President of India and the Parliament.

The route to modify Article 370 and abrogate the special constitutional status of the state was taken through Article 370 (1) (d). This part of the Article 370 granted the President of India the

[3] For details see, Ministry of Law and Justice, The Constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir) Order, 2019, The Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part II, Section 3, August 5, 2019.

authority to apply other constitutional provisions (other than Article 1 and Article 370) on the condition that these are applied after obtaining the 'concurrence' of the state government. So first of all, the President's authority was used to amend Article 367. This article provides guidelines on interpreting the constitution. By adding a new clause in this Article, it was clearly mentioned that 'reference to the Government of (Jammu and Kashmir) shall be construed as including reference to the Governor of Jammu and Kashmir' acting on the advice of Council of Ministers. Also, it was made clear by this amendment that the expression [Constituent Assembly of the State' shall read 'Legislative Assembly of the State.'

So, with the amendment of Article 367, the difficulties in making changes in Article 370 with the concurrence of the Constituent Assembly of the state and the concurrence of the Government of the state were eased. So, it became possible for the two Houses of parliament to pass a statutory resolution to abolish much of Article 370 by using the Article 370 itself. There was no more need to obtain concurrence from the Constituent Assembly as this could be obtained by the Legislative Assembly. And since the Legislative Assembly itself stood dissolved and the its powers transferred to the Centre under the Presidential rule, so the resolution of Parliament was considered sufficient.

The rationale for abrogating the special constitutional status of the state was provided by the Union Home Minister as lack of integration of the state with India. As per his statement, Article 370 had prevented J&K to merge with India and it was leading to separatism, secessionism and violence. Further, the law of the nation, in his opinion, did not reach Jammu and Kashmir and Pakistan used this Article to instigate separatism in the hearts of people there.

Article 370 was also held responsible for the economic backwardness of the state and was seen as an obstacle in the process of developing economy. The people from outside the state, it was argued, were held back from conducting business and making investments. With the abolition of special Constitutional status and 35A, it was assured that there would be increase in potential of development; increased investments; increased job creations; better socio-economic infrastructure etc.

The argument was also made that the Article 370 was discriminatory on the basis of gender, class, caste and place of origin. Special mention was made about the right of women to be treated equally along with men in terms of holding and inheriting property in case of their marriage outside the state. Reference was also made to the denial of rights to West Pakistan Refugees and Valmikis. These two groups were not able to enjoy certain basic rights because of Article 35A. Similarly reference was also made to the rights of Gujjars who were not able to get reservation in the state legislature despite enjoying the ST status.

Corruption and inefficiency of the political class was also stated as one of the outcome of Article 370. It was because of this provision that benefits of development could not reach the common people. The Union Home Minister gave the logic of democratic deficit as the outcome of Article 370. Apart from holding the dynastic politics responsible for this, he argued about the lack of democratic decentralization and effective Panchayati Raj system was the basis of democratic deficit.

One major argument in defence of the changes made in Article 370 was related to the very nature of the Article. The Article in the opinion of the Home Minister was 'temporary' and the process of its decimation or dissolution was provided in the Article itself.[4]

Article 370, it needs to be emphasized, has not been abolished but modified in a significant manner. However, while being retained in the Constitution, its essence has been compromised. While the Article remains a part of the constitution of India, however, the special constitutional status of the state has been withdrawn. While earlier there was a limitation to the extension of the provision of Constitution and the Parliamentary laws to the state, this limitation now stand removed. And all the provisions of the constitution have been extended to Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh. Meanwhile Article 35A which protected the special domicile law of the state from being challenged in the courts on the ground that it was

[4] 'Article 370 was a temporary provision... how long can a temporary provision be allowed to continue' This is what was stated by the Home Minister. Roy and Manoj, 2019.

discriminatory—have been fully repealed. The effect of the supersession of the Constitutional Order of 1954 by the 2019 Order has clearly rendered the Article 35A as redundant. What is implied by this is that the hurdles in the process of non-state people in buying property in the state or seeking jobs have been removed. The special privileges enjoyed by the Permanent Residents of the state have also been withdrawn.

One major implication of the changes so made in Jammu and Kashmir is that it ceases to be governed by its own Constitution. Since all the provisions of the Constitution of India have been made applicable to the state and since the 1954 Order has been superseded by the 2019 Order, the Constitution of the state has also been made redundant. Also redundant are other symbols of the state—for instance the state flag.

Reorganization of Jammu and Kashmir State

The Constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir) Order, 2019 paved the way for reorganization of Jammu and Kashmir state. Prior to the application of this Order, the Constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir) Order 1954 was applicable which had introduced a provision to the Article 3 of Indian Constitution dealing with the reorganization of the state. As per this provison, 'no Bill providing for increasing or diminishing the area of the State of Jammu and Kashmir or altering the name or boundary of that State shall be introduced in Parliament without the consent of the Legislature of that State'. With the 1954 Order being superseded by the 2019 Order, the provision of 'prior consent' of the Legislature of the State does not exist. And therefore the Centre could easily take the initiative of reorganizing the state.

A bill titled 'J&K Rorganisation Bill, 2019' proposing to bifurcate the state therefore was moved and passed by the Rajya Sabha.[5] Later it was passed by the Lok Sabha and it took the form of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019. By this Act the state

[5] There were 125 votes in favour of the bill and 61 against. One member abstained.

was reorganized in two ways: first, it was bifurcated and second, it was downgraded to the status of Union Territories. So instead of the State of Jammu and Kashmir, two Union Territories were organized—the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir and the Union Territory of Ladakh.[6]

As per the details provided by the Act[7], the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir was allocated five seats in the Parliament and the Union Territory of Ladakh was allocated one seat. Instead of the Governor, both the Union Territories were to be administered by a Lieutenant Governor. While the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir is to have a Legislative Assembly, the Union Territory of Ladakh is to have no Legislative Assembly.

While the requirement for fresh delimitation for the Legislative Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir was noted, the Reorganisation Act fixed the seats for the Assembly 'to be filled by persons chosen by direct election' to 107. Of these 24 seats representing the area of Jammu and Kashmir under the occupation of Pakistan are to remain vacant till the time this area ceases to be occupied and people residing in this area are able to elect their representatives. The Act also provided for the reservation of seats in the Assembly for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in proportion to the population. Like the earlier Assembly of the state of Jammu and Kashmir, two seats of the Assembly were added for women. These seats are to be filled by nomination by Lt. Governor and are in addition to the total seats of the Assembly. Significantly, the term of Legislative Assembly of the state which since 1977 was six years, was reduced to five years. Council of Ministers, as per the Act is to comprise not more than 10 per cent of the total members of Legislative Assembly.

[6] As per the provisions of this Act, on and from the appointed day (which was chosen later to be 31st October, 2019) the entry 15 in the First Schedule of the Constitution which provided the list of State was to be deleted. This entry marked Jammu and Kashmir as a 'State' of the Indian Union. And instead, the two new Union Territories were shown to be listed in the list of Union Territories.

[7] For details see, Ministry of Law and Justice, The Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019, the Gazetter of India, Extraordinary, Part II- Section I, August 9, 2019

The Act is supplemented with Schedules which among other things provide for the application of Central laws which are to be applied to the Union Territories; as well as the local laws which are to be retained.

The Act provides wide powers to the Lieutenant Governors and makes it the duty of the Chief Minister to communicate all decision and proposals of legislation with the LG. Being the UTs, the police and public order has been taken out of the preview of the government of UT and lies with the Centre. [8]

The rational for bifurcation of the state into two Union Territories was presented with reference to the long-standing demand of Ladakh. As per the Union Home Minister, Ladakh was a large region with sparse population and had a long-pending demand for UT status. It was to fulfil the aspirations of people of Ladakh that it was granted the UT status. Also, the prevailing security situation and cross-border terrorism were provided as the reasons for reorganization.

With the reorganization of the state, the State of Jammu and Kashmir has ceased to exist and it has been replaced by two Union Territories. This process of downgrading the state into Union Territory is unprecedented as till now it has been a reverse process. Several Union Territories have been upgraded to the status of State but this is the first time that a state has been downgraded as Union Territory.

[8] As per the implications of the reorganization, the two Union Territories have come under direct control of the Centre. The difference between the State and UT is that while the state is administered by the Chief Ministered, the UT is administered by Administrator appointed by the President. While the states have Governor as its executive head, the Union territories have President of India as its executive head. The Lt. Governor is therefore not the executive head of the state but the Administrator. Also, the state is related to the state in a federal relation—meaning thereby that there are powers distributed between the Centre and the state. However, in case of a UT, the federal arrangements do not apply.

II

Implications of August 2019 Changes

By its very nature, the August changes have made fundamental transformation in the structure of the erstwhile state, particularly in the context of inter-regional relations.

First, by abrogating the special constitutional status of the state and modifying Article 370 in a substantial way, the very essence of Kashmiri identity politics has been challenged. Article 370 was an arrangement that followed the logic of Kashmiri politics and its incorporation within the Constitution of India was a result of the negotiation that the Kashmiri leadership had entered with the national leadership. By reading it down and by withdrawing the special constitutional status of the state along with Article 35A, the historical political basis of Kashmiri identity politics has been significantly weakened.

In terms of its implications for the inter-regional relations, the August 2019 changes have removed the basis of what was perceived as the 'political domination' of Kashmir region within the state. With Article 370 intact, there was a feeling of grievance in Jammu (as well as Ladakh region) that the political arrangements that were followed for the state flowed specifically from Kashmir's identity politics and that these did not reflect the political aspirations of other regions. With this Article been read down, there is no way that structurally Kashmir region could be seen as 'dominant' within Jammu and Kashmir.

Second, it is not only the Article 370 which has been significantly modified, by the recent changes, the state has also been reorganized. The implications of reorganization are far reaching not only for Kashmir region but for whole of J&K. On the one hand, the state has been bifurcated and Ladakh, the third region of the state, has been separated from the rest of Jammu and Kashmir and organized as a separate Union Territory. On the other hand, the state has been downgraded and given the status of Union Territory.

Ladakh's separation from J&K opens another chapter in the Ladakh's political trajectory and its relationship with J&K. This rela-

tionship started with Zorawar Singh's capture of Ladakh and later, the formation of J&K state by the Treaty of Amritsar. As part of the state, it became a part of conflict politics and faced strategic issues, which will continue to impact this region.

Though comprising a very small population, Ladakh had the largest territorial share of J&K. With Ladakh gone, the land mass of J&K has reduced significantly. However, more than what J&K has lost is a major part of its diversity.

With Ladakh as a part of the erstwhile state, it served as an example of plurality of the state since the state represented people belonging to all major religions of South Asia. Thus, while Kashmir was predominantly Muslim, Jammu was Hindu majority and Ladakh had significant presence of Buddhists. That these three regions of the state represented three different religious groupings, was making this state unique. Further Ladakh had its own complex plurality and not only had multiple ethnic and tribal groups but it also represented a large land mass that had its strategic importance. Separation of Ladakh from Jammu and Kashmir therefore certainly matters. The diversity of J&K has been compromised and its historical unity that was there since 1846 has been affected. The earlier time when this unity was impaired was in 1947 when after the tribal invasion a large part of the state had come under the control of Pakistan.

The state being downgraded to the Union Territory, is an unprecedented situation. While there are many examples in reverse, of a Union Territory been upgraded as the State, there is no example of a state being downgraded as Union Territory. This is first time in the history of Indian federal politics that a State has been turned into a Union Territory.

Being downgraded as a Union Territory is full of irony for the political discourse of Kashmir, especially for those demanding restoration of autonomy in its pristine form. For them, the present structure represents the other extreme. Being a Union Territory, J&K has come under greater control of the Centre. This has not only made the very demand of autonomy redundant but also has provided a new situation in which a new struggle has already started—this struggle is related to restoration of the statehood for J&K.

The demand for restoration of statehood is being raised not only in Kashmir region but also in Jammu region. The Jammu region, on the whole, has not been very happy with downgrading the status of the state and every political party based in the region, including the BJP, has been raising the demand for restoration of statehood. Those having a sense of pride in Dogra legacy, have expressed their feeling of hurt since one of the largest princely state established by the Dogra ruler has been dismantled and reduced to the status of Union Territory.

As a matter of fact, the downgrading of Union Territory status is not the permanent situation. While introducing the idea of reorganization of the J&K, the Home Minister had given a commitment that the status of State would be restored. However, no deadline has been given for such restoration of the statehood. Since this is an initiative purely in the hands of government, there remains uncertainty in relation to this. More so, since the restoration of the state has been linked with the improved security situation of J&K. For a political and administrative unit that has been constantly facing security related problems since 1947, one can't predict an ideal situation which can be compelling for the Centre to reverse the status of J&K.

Bifurcation and not Trifurcation

In the context of inter-regional relationship between Jammu and Kashmir, it is important to emphasize that the state has been only bifurcated and not trifurcated. In the background of the political divergence that exists between the two regions—question has been raised as to why only Ladakh has been separated from J&K and why the two politically opposite regions of the state—viz., Kashmir and Jammu regions, have not been separated. There are many in Jammu region who feel that while Ladakh benefitted the most by the process of reorganization, Jammu region has been given a raw deal. For them, for the same logic by which Ladakh has been separated, Jammu should have also been separated from Kashmir. As stated earlier, there has been a constituency, howsoever limited, that has been putting forth the discourse on 'trifurcation' of the state and

demanding a separate state for Jammu region. The continuation of Jammu region with Kashmir under the same administrative unit, for this constituency, remains a problematic.

Seen from the perspective of complex plurality of the state, separation of Kashmir and Jammu region would have had disastrous effect. Though the separation of Ladakh from rest of Jammu and Kashmir has its own implication, but the implications would have been much more severe had Jammu also been separated from Kashmir. Such separation would clearly have communal implications and would have amounted to another episode of religion-based partition. Such division would have meant the separation of predominantly 'Muslim' Kashmir from the Hindu-majority areas of Jammu. Despite the fact that Jammu is a mixed society and also has a substantial population of Muslims, however, in the dominant discourse of the region, it is seen and projected as representing the Hindus. The division therefore would have been seen as a division on the religious basis.

The separation of Jammu from Kashmir would have serious implications for Jammu region as well. Unlike Kashmir which is much more homogenous, Jammu is a complex society in which more than half of the districts of the region are Muslim-majority districts. Even in the predominantly Hindu areas, there is presence of Muslims and for the most part, it is a society with mixed living. For such a mixed society, formation of a separate state or Union Territory of Jammu would have structural implications. With demographic character of this new Union Territory being redefined as the Hindu-majority unit; it might have created some tensions among the Muslims and Hindus of the region. With Jammu's religious diversity being much more complex than any other part of the erstwhile state, it is important to maintain its plurality and its secular character.

Seen from the perspective of Jammu's politics, though the demand for separate state has been raised from time to time, however, it has never caught the imagination of people of Jammu with an intensity that was to be witnessed in Ladakh's demand for UT state. Though being raised only in Leh (and not in Kargil), the demand for UT has been consistently raised in Leh and has been the predominant logic of the politics of that area. In Jammu region, on the

contrary, the demand for separate state is raised only in the urban centres and at best has been a media driven demand.

III

Impact on Inter-Regional Relations

What is the impact of August 2019 changes on the relationship between the two regions? Do these changes in anyway mean that the basis of the tension between Kashmir and Jammu region has been removed? Would these changes address the regional grievances of Jammu region? Would these bring about greater parity between Jammu and Kashmir. This is much more a complex question and needs to be analysed in a nuanced manner.

First, there is a psychological impact of the changes that needs to be noted. As Balraj Puri always emphasized Jammu's problems with Kashmir were much more psychological and political rather than developmental and economic. The changes that have taken place certainly have psychological dimensions. While there are clear indications that these changes have psychologically and politically hit the Kashmiri identity politics, there have also been the indications that there has been some sense of 'psychological satisfaction' in Jammu region.

The special Constitutional status, as already stated, was mainly linked to the Kashmiri identity politics and it was around it that much of the competitive politics in Kashmir was evolved. While the issue of 'autonomy' was central to the politics of National Conference, the other Kashmir-based parties also based their political agenda on this politics. With this provision gone, it has certainly created an impact on the psyche of political class here.

However, it has been different case for Jammu region. Since Article 370 was seen to be linked with Kashmiri identity politics, its reading down is not seen as having much impact in this region. In fact, there has been a constituency which sees this as a move in the interest of Jammu region. The binary politics in which the two regions have been located since 1947—any development that is seen negatively in Kashmir region, is seen as a positive for Jammu region.

That explains the celebrations that took place in Jammu region when the changes were introduced.

However, the August 2019 changes have also resulted in heightened expectations in Jammu region. One major expectation is that the political landscape of the state may change and the long-held grievance of Jammu's political neglect and deprivation may be addressed. The political developments in the last few years provide a mixed picture. While there is certainly a sense in Jammu region that the political elite in Kashmir region has been weakened to a large extent due to the August 2019 changes, and yet the baggage of the history continues to be felt. Despite the continued fragility of Kashmir's politics, the political class in Jammu region continues to raise the issues of relative political disadvantage to Jammu region. One can refer to the case of Delimitation process which has certainly redesigned the legislative balance in favour of Jammu region by allocating six of the seven additional seats to this region and yet there persists a feeling that Kashmir region by having 47 of the 90 seats in the Legislative Assembly (as against 43 of Jammu region) is still having a lead. The Delimitation process, it is pertinent to note, has generated lot of resentment in Kashmir region. The Kashmir based political parties have termed the changes as discriminatory as these are going against the logic of population—and yet these have not fully satisfied the political elite of Jammu region.

As the things stand, it seems that the context of political divergence between Kashmir and Jammu region is going to persist. The regional identity politics in both the regions is quite sharp and the binary notions are very much persistent. This is despite the fact that the August 2019 changes have for the first time thrown some common issues for the two regions. This in itself is quite unprecedented since never earlier in the history of politics of Jammu and Kashmir, there were common concerns of serious nature.

Of these common concerns, one can refer to two major ones—the concern related to the restoration of the statehood and the concern related to rights and privileges of the residents of this state-turned-into-Union Territory. The decision to downgrade the status of this state to that of Union Territory has been resented both in Kashmir as well as Jammu region and the political parties across

the ideological divide have been raising this issue.[9] Along with that, concern has also been expressed about the loss of exclusive privileges that the permanent residents of the erstwhile state enjoyed in terms of the government jobs and the ownership of land. The concern for the protection of these special privileges for the residents of the state has always been strong in Kashmir region, however, this has become a concern now in Jammu region as well. Though the demand for repeal of this Article 35A was quite vociferous in Jammu region, after its repeal, there is a sudden apprehension about the influx of 'outsiders' in this region. There is a strong feeling that with the protection given to the locals in terms of ownership of land and jobs gone; it is Jammu region that is going to be affected. Thus, it is apprehended that rather than Kashmir which remains conflict prone, it will be Jammu which would be open for the outsiders who would be interested in purchasing the land or seeking to establish their business or competing for jobs. Besides the fear of land mafia entering in large number; there is a fear that the youth will have lot of competition for jobs within the new Union Territory. There is also a fear that the influx of outsiders may endanger the local culture; the local environment and adversely affect the local heritage. Thus, from the very

[9] Interactive session of intellectuals organized by All Jammu and Kashmir Kissan Union (AJKKU) revolved around the issue of downgrading of the state into UT and it was stated that it is a matter of great concern and can be seen as 'award of punishment to the people of Jammu province against their continued loyalty towards the nation and working as a bridge between the volatile Kashmir and the Indian Union.' (*The Daily Excelsior*, Sept 12, 2019) One of the strongest critiques of the reorganization was given by Ravinder Sharma, Congress' Chief Spokesperson. He said that there was no justification for disbanding the oldest Dogra state and converting into powerless bodies of UTs with non-entity form of government in future. He said that 'the state which had a great and unique history of struggles and prestige of living in peace and harmony amidst contradictions and diversities has been dismembered and reduced to UT.' (*The Daily Excelsior*, October 20, 2019)

beginning there has been a demand for protection of the rights the natives.[10]

[10] The Jammu-based Jammu and Kashmir Panthers party raised the concerns about this issue. It therefore has been asking for a special domicile law for the people of Jammu and Kashmir—'so that outsiders could be barred from participating in slections in government jobs and stop purchase of property of poor through distress sales.' (Ashiq, 2019) Gulchain Singh Charak of Dogra Sadar Sabha also initially demanded some provision to prevent flooding of land mafia in Jammu. 'To save identity of Dogras/local and to prevent flooding of land mafias/grabbers an arrangement under Article 371' or something like HP and the North Eastern States should be adopted for both the Union Territories', he stated. (The Daily Excelsior, August 10, 2019) Team Jammu led by Zorawar Singh similarly stressed for constitutional measures on the pattern of neighbouring Himachal Pradesh to protect job security of locals and their cultural identity. Along with other issues, he raised the issue of ecology of Jammu and Kashmir. 'It must be ensured that ecology of J&K is not disturbed on the name of industrialization and only ecological industries should be preferred to set up their units here. (Daily Excelsior, August 12, 2019) As per a statement made by the president of National Student Union of India, students from Jammu and Kashmir would be most affected with the scrapping of Article 35A since they will have to face competition now at all India level. And this will affect Jammu youth more than Kashmir. In his opinion, no body will go to the Kashmir Valley. (*The Daily Excelsior*, August 14, 2019)

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