

Composite Culture as Reflected in Ancient Art and Architecture of Kashmir

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Abstract: *Kashmir is most rich endowed region in terms of number and types of diversities. In an age when diversities, pluralism and multi-culturalism are celebrated, the unique nature of this region is the greatest asset. Kashmiri culture is a composite culture consisting of elements and influences of various cultures, mainly, from Central Asia, Iran, Rome, Greece and India. Its richness also owes to the fact that it has assimilated elements from some major world religions like Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism. It is a fact that since prehistoric times numerous cultures and civilizations have, from time to time, come into contact with Kashmir and have left their imprint on the said culture. Kashmir possesses a rich cultural heritage and this versatile, colourful and unique cultural merge, that is a characteristic of the culture of Kashmir, can be easily depicted by the absolute variety and richness of ancient literature, music, fairs and festivals, rites and rituals, seers and sagas, and languages in general and wealth of art and architecture in particular that thrive amongst the unparalleled cultural cohesion, which is exemplary. This paper will examine the role played by tangible as well as intangible culture in reflecting and preserving composite culture of Kashmir with special reference to art and architecture. The paper will explore cultural transformations seen through various elements on art and architecture of Kashmir and its impact on them. It is an attempted to prove that the various designs, patterns, expressions, motifs depicted in the art and architecture of Kashmir were not merely imitation or influx from various areas and foreign lands, but they were incorporation through conscious efforts as per the Kashmiri ethos. Besides the intellectual achievements, philosophy, treasures of knowledge, scientific inventions and discoveries architectural creations, monuments, material artefacts are also the part of composite culture and heritage of Kashmir. Coins found from the ancient period bear engravings in various scripts and figures of different entities providing evidence of a composite culture on coinage of Kashmir. The sculptures, paintings and crafts of Kashmir are the live examples of art which reflect the intermingling of various cultures. Adaptability has a great contribution in making the culture of Kashmir immortal. The culture of Kashmir has not only always survived but flourished in the process of changing according to time, place and period. It is an essential element of longevity of any culture. The culture of Kashmir has a unique property of adjustment, as a result of which, it is maintained till today. Receptivity is another important characteristic of the culture of Kashmir as it has always accepted the good of the invading cultures. All these characteristic features have made it a composite culture as is reflected from art and architecture of Kashmir.*

Keywords: Composite culture, Art and Architecture, Heritage, Artefacts, Monuments

1. Objectives

The purpose of this paper is to look at the nature of synthesis of art of different regions (technically referred as Composite Culture) which got developed and reflects from the art and architecture of Kashmir during the influx and efflux of different races and communities into the Kashmir as invaders, traders, adventurers, various missionaries, travellers etc. A plethora of literature has been produced over the composite culture of Kashmir during the last 60 years or so. However, the present work is chiefly focussed on the cultural composition and its nature as reflected by various arts and architecture of Kashmir through the ages. This paper makes an attempt to answer this inquiry that the art and architecture of Kashmir was not merely imitation or influx from various areas and foreign lands, but these were incorporation through conscious efforts as per the Kashmiri ethos. This is an attempt to show that composite culture in art and architecture is not only receiving or assimilation by accepting foreign elements but to donate or diffusion of the indigenous skills and artistic characters to other regions. Another objective of this article is an attempt to awaken the academicians and archaeologists to the new demands from different groups of society, especially indigenous peoples, regarding the preservation and appropriate use of their archaeological heritage according to the New World context of heritage policies and to adapt and focus their objectives and methods for keeping this composite culture always glowing.

2. Introduction

The Kashmiris are known as “*Shastra Shilpa*” or architects, because of their well-known skill in building and the most important skill of theirs was the amalgamation and synthesis of various artistic features of different regions and various thoughts applied on the single production. Alexander Cunningham remarks “Architectural remains of Kashmir show the traces of the influence of Grecian arts and even at a first sight one is immediately struck by the strong resemblance which the Kashmiri columnade bear to the classical peristyle of Greece”. Francis Young Husband admits regarding the temple architecture of Kashmir, “there is something of the rigidities and strength of the Egyptian temples, something of grace of Greece and owes much to the influence of Gandhara”. There are six types of influences that have shaped ancient architecture of Kashmir, which include, Geographical, Climatic, Geological, Religious, Social, and Historical influences. Among these the first three influences are physical, the next two civilizing and the last of the historical background and these influences reflect the synthesis of various cultures from the art and architecture of Kashmir accordingly.

Architecture

The splendid and wonderful ruins of ancient Kashmir demonstrate that Kashmiris were great architects and produced a beautiful and impressive temple architectural style, distinct as compared the temple architecture of other

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parts of India. The ancient temples of Kashmir possess some unique features in many aspects because Kashmir since antiquity has been functioning as a cultural bridge between India on the one hand and Central Asia, China and Tibet on the other hand. Consequently ancient temple architecture of Kashmir was greatly influenced by the art of these foreign countries very much, which is accepted by many national as well as international scholars like; Alexander Cunningham, Smith, Fergusson, D.R Sahani, R.C Kak, R.C Agarwal etc. This is a reason that the great ancient Kashmiri architects created a distinct temple architectural style which possesses its own features but affected by both Indian as well as central Asian and west Asian art styles. One more reason of these unique features of ancient temples of Kashmir is that the European art also imposed some influence on it because due to close contact of Kashmir with Gandhara Kingdom in the early centuries It is a well-established fact that the ancient Kashmiri temple architecture is greatly affected by many foreign art styles like Bactro-Gandhara, Graeco-Egyptian, Roman and Tibetan elements and the art styles of other parts of ancient India.

The building art was one in which Kashmiris were notably proficient, and three phases of that architectural movement are discernible. The first was an early or primitive form that began during Neolithic period up to 700 CE, the second was the classical period; sub-divided into Buddhist and Brahmanical from 700 CE to the beginning of fourteenth century and the architecture of Muslim period. There are numerous evidences of composite culture of Kashmir since prehistoric times that Kashmir is a cultural mosaic which took shape as a result of congregation of ideas and coalescence of influences of various cultures. So for the prehistoric architecture is concerned the Kashmiri Neolithic houses resembled simultaneously with the habitat structures found at Mehargarh, in Djeitun Culture (Turkmenistan), Hacilar and Can Hassan (Turkey), Beidh (Levant) and Deh-Luran (Iran).

During the early Buddhist period, is represented by bare foundations, but these are of the utmost significance, as they severely explain the origins of the building art in Kashmir, with the influences and associations. Ushkur and Harwan have yielded ruins of the structures of stupas which besides having other features, to Percy Brown, "there also appear to have been a free standing pillar of the Ashokan type erected on each side". At Harwan the Chaitya hall of the stupa, in plan and dimensions resembled with the Chaitya hall enclosed with rectangular courtyard that was found at the Indo-Greek city of Sirkap in Taxila. The terracotta plaques of Stupa at Harwan represents motifs suggestive of more than half a dozen civilizations of the ancient world which include, Barhut railing, the Greek swag, the Sassanian foliated bird, the Persian vase, the Roman rosette, the Chinese fret, the Indian elephant, the Assyrian lion, with figures of dancers, musicians, cavaliers, ascetics, and racial types from many sources as may be seen from different costumes and accessories. The mouldings, capitals and cornices of the Buddhist monuments at Parihaspora and Puranadhiathana reflect the architectural features of Doric architecture and resemble with the Parthenon at Athens. Hence, the remains at Ushkar, Harwan, Parihaspora, Pandrethan etc. indicate the memorable impact of diverse

historical cultures on the arts of Kashmir and a continuity of composite culture of Kashmir.

We have briefly noticed above the extent and depth of the influence of the Buddhist art of Gandhara on that of Kashmir. So great was it and it would be more correct to say that, excepting the natural and unavoidable difference in the material used, the two are practically identical. Moreover, the ancient Hindu temples of Kashmir borrowed features from the Buddhist stupas and sangharamas. It is of course not impossible for a new religion to commence an architecture of its own, but Hinduism and Buddhism both lived in mutual amity and exchange of good offices; mode of worship of both is practically the same, so it become almost inevitable that the sacred buildings of the new religion followed the style of those of the older one. This, at any rate, has happened twice in Kashmir, once when Buddhism slowly and gradually gave way to Hinduism, and again when, with the accession of Shah Mir, Islam, at first imperceptibly, but with increasing speed, supplanted Hinduism in the valley. To, Percy Brown, the conception of the Brahmanical temple architecture in Kashmir seems to have taken some of its characters and arrangements from the stupa courts of the Buddhist monasteries of Gandhara. Regarding the transformations, the similarity pointed out by Foucher between the "angular roofed" vihara (*le Vihara d toitanguleux*) of Gandhara and the temples of Kashmir, particularly the larger temple at Loduv, is especially interesting and instructive. In the same Temple round cella was built like the Guniyar Monastery in Swat Valley which is an influence of Gandhara art and is a unique feature.

The outstanding progress which Kashmir achieved on account of the influx of men of learning from the neighbouring world is evident from the world famous Martand and other great temples constructed by Lalitaditya which puzzle even the modern mind. The foreign styles which played a major role in the development of Kashmiri stone architecture filtered through West Asia. Not only this but Kashmir owes to Iran for a very important architectural feature namely formation of intersecting cross-members best known as "lantern" ceiling, derived from wooden models introduced by the Parthians in the North-West. Similarly writing about the origin of the variety of motifs carved on the pilasters of Avantiswamin temple built by Avantivarman (A.D 855-883), Robert E. Fisher says "Nearly all the pilasters are decorated with a rich variety of motifs, some native of India, others reflecting West Asian tastes, as found upon Sassanian silver: roundels that enclose lotuses, geese, mythical creatures, paired humans, birds and flowers as well as numerous geometric patterns." The monumental structures were raised on high platforms with paved ambulatory passage around that allowed the devotees to gaze on the sculptures or else would watch the main temple or its sculptures from the colonnade peristyle that formed cellular quadrangle around the main temple. Again set on high plinth the peristyle has Classical Greek fluted columns that remain the distinctive feature of the Kashmir structures. So it was during the Greek period that the cultural traditions of Rome, Byzantium, Syria, and Persia travelled to the valley and its influences can be traced in the constructional style of the various stone temples of Kashmir. Sir Aurel Stein accept the opinion of Fergusson, at least so far as the superstructure of

Shankarachariya temple is concerned. He states that “the circular cella, which contains a modern linga, in Shankarachariya temple was undoubtedly built in Muslim times. The imposing polygonal base, consisting of remarkably massive blocks and without mortar, must belong to a much earlier period and is influenced by temple architecture of Indian plains. Similarly, the temple at Payar reflects the Indian plan and style with four entrances and position of Linga.

The Kashmir valley type of the temple architecture is found in the Kanarese West Coast, western Dharwar and Mysore, which is probably due to some direct connection between those who built it and probably belonged to the Valley, according to F.H. Gravely. Kashmiri temple type multiple roofs are also found which are another style of temples in that region. According to *Fergusson* these temples bear two or three roofs "which are obviously copied from the usual wooden roofs common to most buildings in Kashmir, where the upper pyramid covers the central part of the building, and the lower a veranda, separated from the centre either by walls or merely by a range of pillars. In the wooden example the interval between the two roofs seems to have been left open for light and air; in the stone buildings it is closed with ornaments. Besides this, however all these roofs are relieved by dormer windows of a pattern very similar to those found in mediaeval buildings in Europe: and the same steep, sloping lines are used also to cover doorways and porches, these being virtually a section of the main roof itself, and evidently a copy of the same wooden construction: the pillars which support the porticoes are by far the most striking peculiarity of this style their shafts being so distinctly like those of the Grecian Doric and unlike anything of the class found in other part of India.

Sculpture

Throughout its history, because of certain reasons, Kashmir has experienced an art life very much synthesised and composite. On the one hand, although itself remote, Kashmir lay within that part of Central Asia which at one period was the clearing-house of several separate civilizations, and the influences of these found their way into this natural retreat. Moreover, there was a time early in the first millennium when it came into contact with the widespread eastern conquests of the Sassanid Empire with its neo-Persian culture, to be followed not long afterwards by a period in which its own territories extended far beyond their natural geographical limits. Yet with all these events and powerful cross-currents, with the ebb and flow of great external movements, the nature has given the inhabitants of this region that acute aesthetic understanding, inherent aesthetic sense and rare adaptability that has enabled them to design and create works of art of distinctive character. And combined with this natural gift is that of assimilation, that power to select extraneous elements and to absorb them so skilfully that they become an integral part of their own conceptions.

According to the historian of art Susan Huntington, “Kashmir served as a source of imagery and influence for the northern and eastern movements of Buddhist art. The Yunkang caves in China, the wall paintings from several sites in Inner Asia, especially Qizil and Tun-huang, the

paintings from the cache at Tun-Huang, and some iconographic manuscripts from Japan, for example, should be evaluated with Kashmir in mind as a possible source. A full understanding of the transmission of Buddhist art through Asia is dependent on developing a greater knowledge of Kashmiri art.”

Sculpture was introduced mainly to represent the divinities of Buddhism and Hinduism - the dominant and powerful religions of Kashmir before Islam was introduced there. The earliest sculpture that was produced in Kashmir is not of any deity but is a robust piece of architectural sculptural art – a double sided animal carved pillar capital of the 1st century BC. On both sides is a pair of seated bulls along with a pair of human heads with large head dresses akin to those of the Shunga's and ear pendants. The ornate capitals were introduced in India by Ashoka the Mauryan and followed by the Shungas who ruled thereafter. Such Indian capitals were for free-standing columns or else supporting the architraves of buildings in gateways of Buddhist establishments of stupa.

Hereafter small terracotta human figurines in relief from moulds were produced. There is no evidence of their religious affiliation, if any, even when these were produced in the 1st - 2nd century AD. They show wide variety of type and expression, and draw their inspiration from real life. Most of them have head-dresses and hair styles as Indian while a variety of body garments show Hellenistic features underlining the importance of Gandhara in terms of artistic influence at this comparatively early date. This type of sculpture gave rise to divine images, first in terracotta as at Harwan and Ushkar but subsequently to the stone sculpture in round. These sculptures mostly served Buddhism, Vaishnavism and Shaivism, even if Jainism was known in Kashmir, no artistic evidence are available. More Vaishnava and Shaiva stone sculpture are known than the Buddhist. The Buddhist metal sculptures are nevertheless plentiful which have been taken out of Kashmir and remain in Tibet or in Museums or else with private collectors. The metal sculptures were mostly made of bronze but there is literary evidence that gold and silver was also used for making colossal images of Buddha as principal deities in the temples.

Surviving sculptures, apart from those made of terracotta; indicate an eclectic style that emerged in Kashmir in the Post Gandharan space. The earliest example is an image of Buddha, in stone, of late 4th or early 5th century. Significantly this image marks the introduction of Buddhist sculptural art in Kashmir. Comparable to Gandharan schist images, even though not in quality of material, this grey stone slab is a replicate of the Gandharan types in style, in execution as well as in flowing drapery. Remarkable it is that most of the Gandharan style Buddhist sculptures were copied in the manifestations of the Brahmanical faith in the 6th century. In fact many of these look like the copies from Gandhara had not the iconography changed from that of classical Gandhara Buddhist images to the Brahmanical one in Kashmir. The example of *ekmukhlinga*, now under worship in a temple at Varamul, of early 6th century is partly Buddhist in iconography and execution as the *mukha* (face) and *jatha* of Siva is supported on the snail curls of Buddha.

The amalgamation of iconography is because the hand working for producing this early image was trained in Buddhist sculpture in Gandhara and while handling the Brahmanical image the sculptor simply executed Hindu iconography in conjugation with that of the Buddhists with refinements required under the Brahmanical faith. This is why many of the earliest images have modelling that of the Bodhisattvas or the ornaments like the short necklace the Bodhisattva images had in Gandhara were copied as *makara* faced short necklaces on many Brahmanical images.

In Lalitaditya's time, Roman, Syrian and Central Asian artists were available in Kashmir. On this basis, affinity of Kashmiri architecture with western architecture can be explained while sculptures of the same construction remained Indian in spirit. After Lalitaditya, Kashmiri style appears to have changed slightly and in its new get-up it sustained till 10-11th century. This phase is supposed to be the most developed stage of Kashmiri art style when its fame spread in the remote Himalayas and before facing decay in Kashmir due to lack of patronage and religious upheaval, it was grafted into Tibet for further flowering. Roerich has designated the Kashmir school of art of the 9th century as Avantipura school as the best examples of Kashmir art are found at Avantipura complex built by King Avantivarman (855 -883 A.D.) of Kashmir who was a great lover of fine arts. This new style of Avantivarman's time is an amalgam of various earlier prevalent forms like Gandharan, Greco-Roman, Sarcarenian, Chinese, Central Asian and over-all Indian. Best representation of this style is found in the good numbers of Kashmiri bronzes dated to 9th to 11th century cast by Kashmiri craftsmen for Tibetan patrons. The style of such bronzes presents a remarkable affinity to that of wall-paintings dating to 10-11th century decorated in the Buddhist temples of Western Tibet. In this connection, Roerich opines that the art of Avantipura School strongly influenced the development of art tradition of Western Tibet in 10-11th century.

The Gandharan elements in the early sculptural art was because artistry in Gandhara was uprooted when they lost the royal patronage and forced them to seek refuge in the neighbouring areas including Kashmir, after the White Hun devastation of the Buddhist establishments there, to play a vital role in the manifestation of Buddhist and Brahmanical images. The copying of Gandharan elements freely on early images of Kashmir illustrates the domination of Gandharan thought of sculpting, in particular in the three piece classical costumes; a short sleeved tight fitting tunic or *chiton*, a gracefully held shawl/scarf or himation and a long skirt - the three piece Hellenistic costume and patent motif of Gandharan art of the Buddhist school. This eclectically clad dress was copied for Lakshmi and the Gaja Lakshmi images of Kashmir that the sculptor in Gandhara had created as syncretic goddess combining elements of image of Persian Anahita, the West Asian Nana and Indian Lakshmi. This amalgamation was further carried forward in the Lakshmi images holding Greek cornucopia in the left hand was after the earlier images of Hariti/Ardoxsho in Gandhara, where it was borrowed from the Persian realm further west. The borrowal of the lion-seat in the images is from Nana/Anahita that was drawn from the Sassanian iconography. Some of the images of the goddess instead of *gajas* or elephants have

two cherubic celestials illustrating it that was after a Greek thought visible in Gandhara.

The Hellenistic stamp is also visible in many other images as the imitations and their perfect rendering is seen in the depiction of wearing moustaches by the male figures. Like in the Greek art of Gandhara where it was found in many images of Panchika, Bodhisattva and Buddha, in the Hindu deities of Kashmir this remained as an element of stylishness, in and after the 6th century. The remnants of Hellenism continued, in one way or the other, in the sculptural art of the 7th century in Kashmir, more particularly in the female images where the Greek skirt now became short and more stylised. The *tribangha* pose of the deities allowed the dress to flow in the direction of the movement to make these more elegant.

In addition Gupta mannerism also got incorporated in the images after the initial copying from Gandhara, like the manner the floral garlands in the images were shown in the loopy way falling up to knees. The elegance in pose appeared after the Gupta traditions in images showing how the sculptural art developed in Kashmir. With the passage of time a new repertoire of dress and ornaments appear that looks more Gupta than Gandharan. The fleshy treatment of face and body and the elaborate ornamentation including in the three peaked crown gave rise to the classical images in the 7th century having almond shaped eyes under arched eyebrows with long nose that was carried forward in the next two centuries to produce some excellent and exotic images in ivory, bronze and stone.

Paintings

Kashmir school of painting is an obscure topic in the otherwise scholarly field of Indian art history, although much has been written about the ancient Kashmiri architecture and sculpture in recent times. It is true that Kashmir yields no archaeological remains of paintings nor do we know anything regarding the painting to reorganise the chronological history of painting in Kashmir. The earliest surviving examples of Kashmiri painting come from Gilgit which date from about 8th century A. D. Paintings discovered from Gilgit represent a highly developed style which did not appear overnight. Kashmiri craftsmen, long-famed in the NorthWestern Indian peninsula, used to be invited to Central Asia and Tibet to decorate Buddhist monasteries. All the earliest monasteries of Tibet and Western Tibetan provinces used their services and their artefacts were in ever greater demand. From 7th-8th century onwards the school of Kashmiri art acquired distinct features when Kashmir emerged as a powerful kingdom in northern India. Before this period, the whole region from Kashmir and Gandhara to Bamiyana, Central Asia and Southern peripheries of Iran was under an unbroken chain of tradition which interlocked all the flourishing centres of trade and Buddhism contemporaneous to each other. The stucco figures found in the ancient sites of Ushkur, Akhnoor (in Kashmir), Hadda, Taxila, Baniyan, Fardukistan, Begram, Shoforak, Adzitepe, Fayaztepe, Airtam, Yarkand, Kizil, Dandanuik, Khotan, Kashgar etc. display a striking affinity in their style which points to a common artistic tradition that overwhelmed the whole region. These stucco figures approximately date from 5th-6th to 8th century and present a

beautiful synthesis of the Gandharan and the Gupta Indian tradition. Similarly fragmentary examples of paintings survived from Baniyan, Fondukistan, Balewatse, Dandanuilik etc., stylistically appear to be analogous to the stucco figures. The Indian influence crystallised into the art of Central Asia may be attributed to have transmitted through the medium of Kashmir as then Kashmir was one of the greatest centres of Buddhist learning and art which played a key role in the spread of Buddhism in Central Asia and Far East.

Coinage

There is no denying the fact that the credit for introducing coinage in Kashmir goes to Mauryans (322-185 BCE), however, only a few Mauryan coins, referred to as *Karashpanas* in the contemporary literature and termed as punch marked coins by modern historians and numismatians have been found in Kashmir. Coins of Indo-Greeks, Indo-Scythians and Indo-Parthians, who ruled over Kashmir before Kushans, have also been found in Kashmir, but their number is very small. It seems certain that coinage gained wider currency in Kashmir during the period of Kushan rule. This is clear from the fact that the coins of the above mentioned dynasties, even put together are less than the half of the number of Kushan coins found in Kashmir so far. Secondly, coinage of no other dynasty left such a profound influence on the subsequent coinage of Kashmir as was left by the Kushan coinage. This is supported by the fact that till the commencement of medieval period, Kashmir's coinage continuously carried some coin features of Kushans though in a slightly modified form. As degree of influence is directly proportional to time span and acquaintance, it can be concluded that Kushan coins must have circulated for a longer time span, and would have also played a prominent role in day to day transaction of people in Kashmir. The coins of Indo-Greek, Indo-Scythian and Indo-Parthian and Kushanas bear profound Indo-Greek, Indo-Scythian and Indo-Parthian and Kushana influences. These influences can be seen in the tradition of bi-metalism, bi-scriptualism, and bi-lingualism and also in the execution of obverses and reverses of their coins. Their coins also depict busts and royal heads on obverses and deities and religious symbols on reverses. The influence continued and had an impact on the Kashmiri coinage and the minds of people because of the materialistic value of these coins.

3. Conclusion

The very geographical position of the Kashmir straddling the trade routes between Central Asia, Rome, Iran and China, and India made it in many ways the very centre of the world and it was lying at the junction of many cultural spheres; the Indian sub-continent, Iran, Hellenized Orient, and the steppes of central Asia. Hence it is not surprising that its role in history was one of absorption and diffusion. And this function is eloquently illustrated in the art that flourished under the patronage of the rulers of various ruling dynasties of Kashmir both foreign and regional. On the other hand the Kashmiri artists knew that art form changes according to time and place, and according to the period of history and region. It is also understood that there should be no reproduction of nature except as seen through 'intuitive absorption of trance'. It can further be added that art and

architecture of Kashmir is the fusion or amalgamation of different cultures and traditions forming a new distinct cultural tradition and continued consistently to maintain a certain indigenous and independent type of culture. Kashmir is the custodian of valuable traditions, social, moral and artistic as reflected from art and architecture. The concept of traditional culture, introduces new complexities. It implies that what is traditional is always worth conserving. Moreover, the composite culture developed due to the liberal values of its rulers and the people who enjoyed the riches and pleasures of life which is evident in the art and architecture of Kashmir. The art and architecture of Kashmir is an immediate expression of Kashmiri civilization as a whole. It represents the influences and assimilations of beliefs and philosophies, ideals and outlooks, the materialized vitality of the society and its spiritual endeavours in varying stages of development. In its design and presentation the ancient art and architecture of Kashmir or is a conception which may be best described as the indigenous productions influenced by Greco-Roman schools and their classical character is fairly obvious as a result derived from contact with the Gandharan art. The Kashmiri artistic tradition of Lalitaditya's period seems eclectic in nature synthesizing the Gupta Indian, the Gandharan, the Central Asian, the Iranian and the Byzantine traditions. Lofty fame and prosperity of Lalitaditya's monarchy attracted many more traders and artists to settle in Kashmir from far afield. At the same time, emigrants from Egypt, Syria, Central Asia and Iran who were accompanied by the craftsmen settled in Kashmir who in turn enriched the art and culture of the age resulted in development of composite culture.

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