

HANDICRAFT TRADE IN KASHMIR USING THE BUILDING WASTE

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Abstract

The Mughal conquest of Kashmir in 1586 ushered in a period of significant transformation. It was immediately merged into Mughal Subah Kabul once it was annexed to the Mughal Empire. The valley's access to the rest of the world improved as a direct result of the country's decision to cease its political isolation, which in turn boosted the population's economic situation. The development of road communication has led to a great deal of change. In order to facilitate the development of industry, monarchs gave total autonomy to skilled workers and provided great patronage to them. After the Mughal empire came to power in the region, Kashmir developed a reputation as a prominent hub for the creation of handicrafts. The Mughal rulers of Kashmir maintained trade routes, constructed bridges and series, and so did a great deal to encourage the export of handicrafts. Kashmir was a part of the Mughal subregion of India. There has been an increase in the export of handicrafts, not just inside India but also to nations that are nearby. South India has emerged as a significant centre for the selling of Kashmiri handicrafts, which has resulted in enormous financial gains for the region of Kashmir. The export of Kashmiri handicrafts is the topic of discussion in this paper. How are these handicrafts exported, for example, and why are they so popular in India and the nations that border it? These are questions that people all around the world, including those in India's neighbours, want answered.

Keywords: Building waste, recycle, Handicrafts, reforms period

1. INTRODUCTION

Kashmir is an old region that is well-known for the high degree of civilization that its people have achieved, as well as for the natural beauty, intellect, and artistic quality of its people. Because of his ingenuity and the refined aesthetic sensibility he has, he was able to turn an ample supply of raw materials that had been supplied by nature into goods that are considered luxurious. Kashmir has a significant history of cultural production dating back to ancient times. It is often held that Kashmiris are among the most brilliant people in India, given their reputation for high levels of intellect [1].

After the Mughals took control of the region, Kashmir developed into a hub for the manufacture of various handicrafts. The acquisition of Kashmir by the Mughals brought fame to the people of Kashmir across the rest of the globe. Mughal authorities-maintained trade routes, erected bridges, and built shelters to shelter travellers, which made it much simpler to export products to the Mughal subculture that existed in Kashmir. Crafts from Kashmir quickly became popular throughout India and even far afield because to these trading channels. According to Abul Fazl, Kashmir was linked to the rest of the world via a total of 26 different trade routes. According to the information provided by Abul Fazl in *Ain-i-Akbari*, there were a total of twenty-six roads or routes that connected Kashmir with the rest of the world. Bhimber and Pakli were considered to be the most advantageous of these. However, only six of the routes

were of any significance. These passageways were accessible during the majority of the year [2]. Even during the coldest months of the year, merchants managed to travel along the routes, but with considerable difficulty. The following are the most significant of these routes:

Mughal Road: This route links Kashmir with Punjab, and it travels through Hastivanj and across the Pir Panjal pass. However, during the winter months, this route is blocked since it spans a very high [3]. **Kashtawar route:** There are two routes that run from Kashmir to Kashtawar: one goes via Islamabad (now Anantnag) through Singapore, while the other goes through Dasu, which links Kashtawar with Bhadarwah and Jammu through Ramban [4]. Both of these routes are accessible through Singapore. This road links Kashmir to Punch by way of the Haji Pir Pass, and Punch was linked to Jammu by way of Rajouri, Thana, Dharamsala, and Akhnoor. This route connected Kashmir to Rawalpindi and ultimately Peshawar. It was known as the Muzaffarabad Pakhli Route. This path was situated at a relatively low height, and as a result, it could be travelled at any time of the year [5]. **Central Asian Trade Road:** This route travels from east to west and through the majority of Ladakh. The only time of year when this path could be travelled was during the warm summer months; yet, because of the route's significance to commerce, merchants often travelled it during those months as well. It established a connection between Kashmir and central

Tibet, Kashgar, Yarkand, and China. This route has been used for commerce between Kashmir and Bhutan, Nepal, and Bengal in the past [7], and it is possible to travel it on horseback. Through these trade channels, Kashmiri handicrafts made their way to Central Asia, Russia, Bhutan, Nepal, Bengal, and Patna. The city states of Bijapur and Golconda were subsequently brought into the commercial fold [8]. Shawls, carpets, silk, paper and paper machines, carved wooden objects, and paper are only few of the main handicrafts that are produced in Kashmir for the purpose of commercialization. The most significant of them was the shawl, which has been distributed throughout India and the nations that are located in close proximity to it. The industry had been thriving for a considerable amount of time, but it reached its zenith under Mughals owing to the introduction of new methods, and Kashmir has become renowned all over the globe for its shawls that are warm, soft, and have a highly structured pattern [9]. During the time of the Mughal Empire, there were around 24,000 looms in operation in Srinagar for the purpose of producing shawls. After they were done, the shawls were presented to a wafarosh, who was the person who had hired them for the money, and a mokhim (a broker). These two individuals are responsible of setting pricing and bringing the deal to a successful conclusion with the retailer. Bernier claims that the shawl business in Kashmir [10] is unlike any other industry in the world. It contributes a substantial quantity of money to the region of Kashmir. Shawls made in Kashmir were very fashionable among India's upper nobility and aristocracy. It was often believed that Kashmiri shawls were the costliest thing. Shawls, which were traditionally worn as part of ceremonial clothing, have recently emerged as a popular fashion choice for any nobility.

The aristocracy and nobility of India, as well as those from other countries, were major lovers of Kashmiri shawls. Shawls made in Kashmir were often regarded as the most expensive commodity. Because it was considered to be a symbol of dignity, every nobleman was required to wear a shawl at all times. It was also customary for Mughal Emperors to present their allies with robes of dignity as a sign of gratitude. It was a present for the women who served in the harem of the royal palace [11]. According to Abul Fazl, Emperor Akbar wore the Shawl as a symbol of good fortune in order to ward off evil. In his Tuzuk, Emperor Jahangir calls the fabric one of his favourite articles of apparel, and it is mentioned in the text. The Mughals' obsession with Kashmiri materials led to a rise in the shawl business, which was one of Kashmir's most important exports at the time. The production of shawl cloth was started by Emperor Akbar in imperial workshops in Lahore, Patna, and Agra in order to promote the shawl industry. Akbar directed changes in the manner in which shawls were to be woven and dyed. Despite the fact that Akbar took every precaution, the shawls he produced never had the same delicate texture and plush quality as the shawls made in Kashmir. As a direct consequence of this, Shahjahan made extensive use of shawls and also gifted many of them to the rulers of other countries, including Bijapur, Golconda, Rome, Egypt, and Iran. The production of Kashmir shawls reached its zenith and was distributed to every region of the world under the reign of Aurangzeb. At around the same period, the East

India Company began taking a greater financial interest in Kashmir shawls. Beginning in 1665, its value began to rise, and it quickly became widespread across Europe [12].

South India has also emerged as one of the most important shawl trade locations in Kashmir. In addition to it, Lahore, Agra, Ahmedabad, and Gujarat also play a role in this. In addition, large numbers of Kashmiri shawls have been brought into Nepal and Kathmandu. During the time of the Mughal Empire, shawls and carpets from Kashmir were both popular items that were exported to other countries. It was believed that carpets made in Kashmir were of higher quality than those coming from Persia. During the time of the Mughal Empire, Kashmir was known for producing high-quality carpets, namda rugs, and pile rugs, which were then sent to South India. There, the monarchs of the Deccan were responsible for establishing prosperous markets. There is a good chance that the Gol Gumbaz Museum in Bijapur is home to some of the carpets in this collection. Investigations of a more technical nature have shown that there is an exceedingly high probability that the items in question were produced in Kashmiri Handicrafts Karkhanas [13].

In addition to this, Kashmir is well-known for its thriving silk industry. Mirza Haider Daughlat, Abul Fazl, and Jahangir all had very high praise for the Kashmiri silk industry. According to Mirza Haider Daughlat, it was one of the many wonders that might be found in Kashmir. Bernier reveals this information to us in his book *Movements*, which tells us that some of its goods were sent to Lahore.

Writing materials made out of Kashmiri paper were also quite popular in India at the time. It sparkled all throughout and had a plush surface to complement its opulent look. It was prepared in such a way that even after being cleaned, there would be no trace of ink left on the paper, allowing it to be repurposed for use in composition. The paper had a significant amount of popularity in India for the publication of compositions and was employed by anybody who wanted to demonstrate pride in the communication. Massive quantities of paper, which were presumably transported from Kashmir, were sold into Persia through Ahmedabad. These paper goods were in gigantic quantities.

In addition, Kashmir was known across India for its wonderful wood items, which were exported from the region. Bernier said in his book *Travels* that the "Kashmiri people are lively and hardworking [14]." Due to the fact that they were the richest, most influential, and most powerful layer in Kashmiri society, merchants played an essential role in the craft trade. They had established political connections with distant regions via the medium of trade, and they had played a significant role in the economic and political life of Kashmir. These merchants developed new markets in remote areas, so extending the economic ties that linked India to other countries such as Rome, Persia, Egypt, Central Asia, and Nepal. Because of the enormous earnings, merchants journeyed from mountain to mountain throughout the whole year to purchase pashm and other raw materials and to sell objects that they had created [15].

Handicrafts from Kashmir were exported via these routes to Central Asia, Russia, Bhutan, Nepal, Bengal and Patna. Commercial relations were eventually extended to Bijapur and Golconda [8]. Kashmiri shawls, carpets, silk, paper and paper-machine, and carved wooden items are some of the important handicrafts manufactured for commercialization. The most important of these was the shawl which has been exported to all parts of India and its nearby countries. The industry had been booming for a long time, but it reached its peak under Mughals due to the inclusion of new techniques, and Kashmir has become world famous for its soft, warm and finely structured shawls [9]. During the Mughal period, Srinagar had over 24,000 looms in operation for the production of Shawls. The shawls were given to a wafarosh (a person who had hired them money) and a mokhim after they were finished (a broker). These two are in charge of determining prices and finalizing the sale to the merchant. According to Bernier, the shawl industry in Kashmir [10] is one-of-a-kind. It generates a significant amount of wealth for Kashmir. Kashmiri shawls were popular among India's nobility and aristocracy. Kashmiri shawls were thought to be the most valuable item. It had become fashionable for every noble to wear a shawl, which was regarded as formal attire.

2. CONCLUSION

During the Mughal rule in Kashmir, the craftsmanship business was excessively lavishly coordinated to the point that handiworks used to be produced for a huge scope, for nearby utilization as well as for fare to each clime in India and its adjoining nations. The workmanship traders had their showcasing focuses all over India, Focal Tibet, Nepal, and Bhutan. The clients regularly proposed their preferred cloak examples and plans. Thinking about the quantity of nearby and unfamiliar dignitaries, who got Kashmiri painstaking work as presents and the utilization from the incredible promoting focuses, the requests seem to have been huge. During the era of the Mughals in Kashmir, the craft industry was very lavishly managed. As a result, handicrafts were made for a wide range of purposes, including local consumption as well as export to every climate in India and its neighbouring countries. The merchants of works of art had their marketing centres located all across India, as well as in Nepal, Bhutan, and Focal Tibet. The customers often provided samples and blueprints of their favourite cloak designs. It would seem that there was a significant demand for Kashmiri painstaking work due to the large number of dignitaries, both local and foreign, who were given gifts of Kashmiri painstaking work as well as the astounding number of promotional centres in the region.

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